



unicef 
for every child

Child Protection Programme Strategy and Action Plan for Dratshang Lhentshog

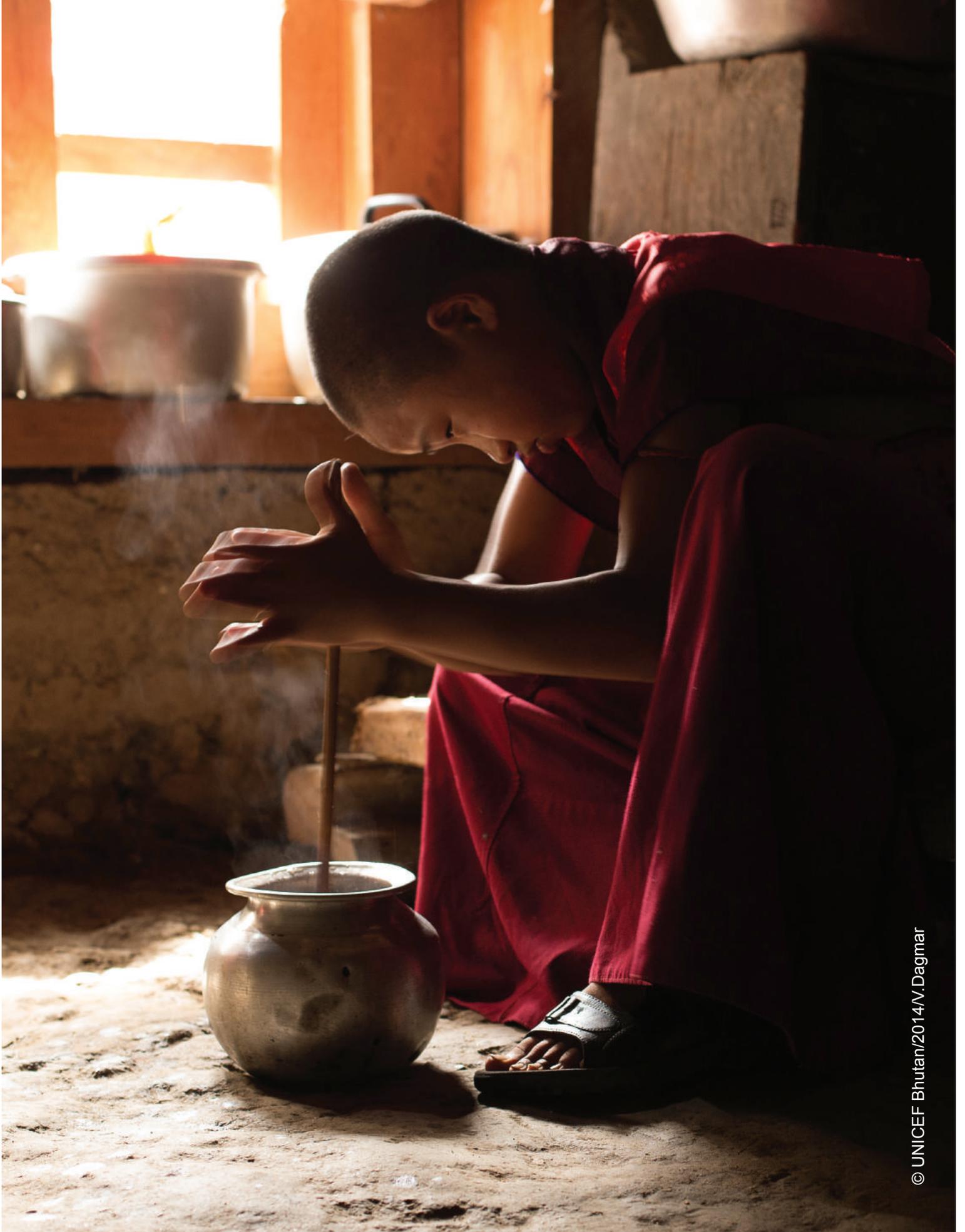
Prepared by:
Child Care and Protection Office (CCPO), Dratshang Lhentshog
with support from UNICEF Bhutan

Child Protection Programme Strategy and Action Plan for Dratshang Lhentshog

(July 2017—June 2022)

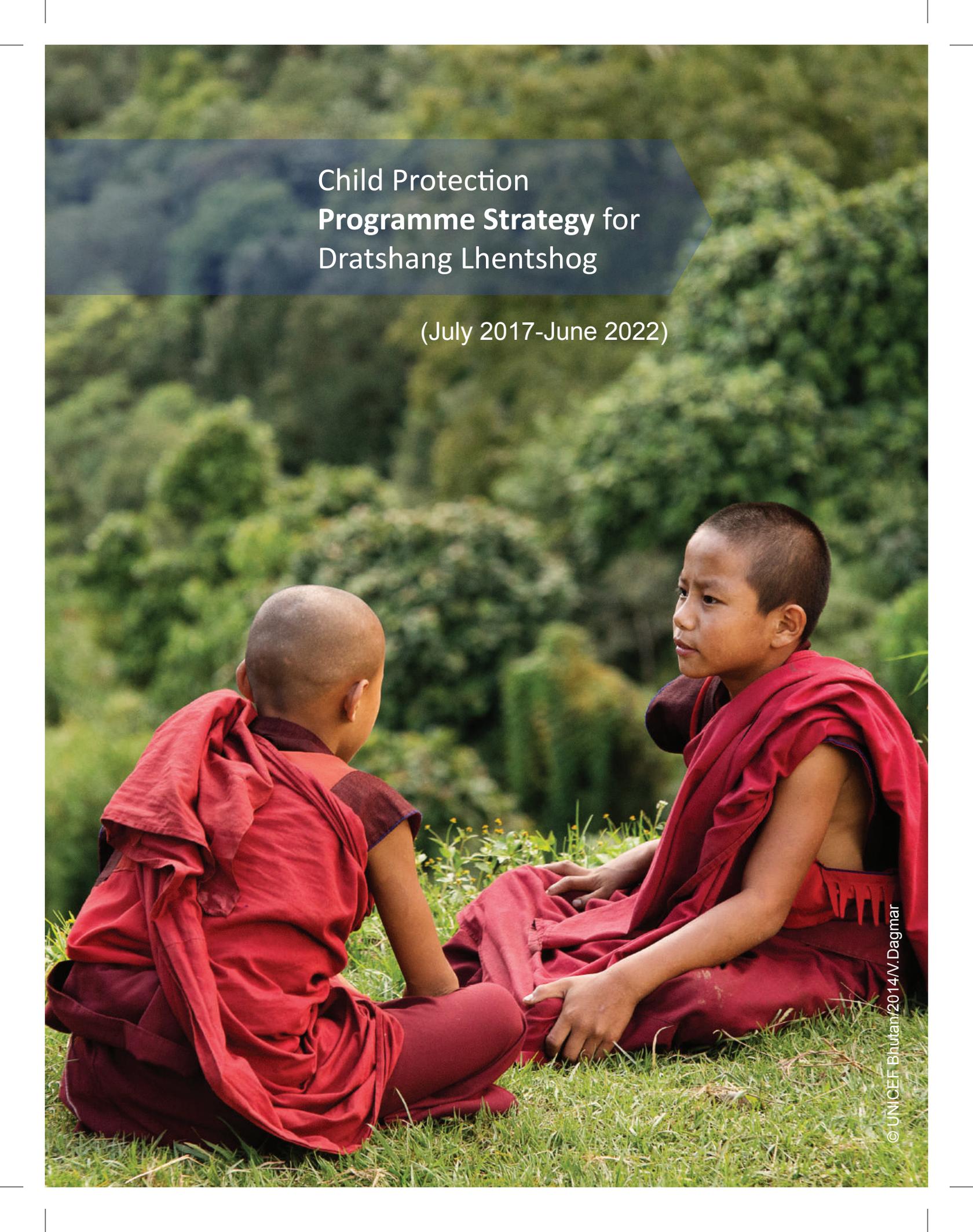
Prepared for the:
Child Care and Protection Office (CCPO), Dratshang Lhentshog
& UNICEF Bhutan





CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Background	3
1. Child Protection Issues in Monastic Institutions and Nunneries	3
General Background of Children	3
2. Initiatives Taken and State of Redress Mechanisms	10
Thirteen Members Expert Committee	10
Child Care and Protection Office	12
Informal Systems of Support	13
Case Handling	13
3. Gaps and Challenges	14
Lack of Clear Data	14
Low Awareness about the CCPO and Lack of Essential Capacities	14
Loss of Momentum and Lack of Ownership	15
Social Norms and Attitudes	16
4. Protective Factors and Opportunities	17
Recognizing different abilities and interests, clarifying expectations and boundaries, and being consistent	17
Accessing available services and strengthening partnerships	18
Strategy	21
1. Purpose and Scope	21
2. Problem Statement – Hypothesis	23
3. Key Interventions and Expected Outcomes	23
4. Theory of Change – Graphical Presentation	32
Concluding Remarks	33
CHILD Protection Action Plan	35
Goal/Desired Impact	35
Key Interventions	35
Expected Outcomes	35
Outputs and Activities	36
Budget Requirement – Initial Estimates and Caveats	46
Broad Timeline of Activities	48



Child Protection
Programme Strategy for
Dratshang Lhentshög

(July 2017-June 2022)

INTRODUCTION

Established in the 17th century by the founder of the nation, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel, the *Zhung Dratshang* or the Central Monk Body is a highly respected institution that fulfils critical functions in Bhutanese society. Besides upholding the spiritual and cultural heritage of the country, it caters to daily spiritual needs of the people while also providing essential care and education to a significant number of children and youth.

Today the central monk body has 7127 monks, 418 nuns and 4 affiliated monastic institutions registered with it, as well as 388 monastic schools and five nunneries across the country.

Traditionally it was common practice for most Bhutanese families to send at least one child to become a monk, given the importance of the Buddhist spiritual traditions in daily life. In recent times, it has become more common for children from difficult circumstances to enrol in monastic institutions and nunneries. Many look upon this as an opportunity to not only avail religious education and skills, but also as a source of support for their most basic needs.

This changing context of monastic enrolment makes it especially challenging for an institution entrusted with not only national-level responsibilities, but also with providing education and round-the-clock care to young monks and nuns. As with other institutions involved in caregiving, the *Dratshang* too faces its own set of issues and challenges when working to ensure the overall wellbeing of children and young people in its care.

As such, in the context of child protection, concerns are associated mainly with the alternative living arrangements. Issues surrounding nutritional needs, living and learning spaces, health facilities, sanitation, among others, are all highly relevant to the monastic care setting.

Even as families and children benefit from the support provided by the *Dratshang*, the fact that most of the children are enrolled at a young age and start living away from their families very early on in life presents potential issues. Besides being exposed to issues related to separation, the possibility of encountering various types of abuse, neglect and violence generally associated with institutional care cannot be ruled out.

In this regard, the Dratshang Lhentshog has taken some important steps over the years. Several sensitization and awareness programs on child rights and protection have been conducted for key monastic figures since 2007. Efforts continue to be made in improving the overall living conditions in monastic institutions, as well as in institutionalizing alternative forms of discipline.

In addition to establishing an Expert Member Committee in 2009 as an advisory body to the senior management on policy and programming advice and guidance, a Child Care and

Protection Office (CCPO) including an emergency shelter for child monks and nuns were set up in 2010. Some progress has therefore been made.

However, the need to strengthen the child protection program within the Dratshang Lhentshog has been recognized for some time now. In absence of a clear strategic direction, and without the requisite human capacities and resources essential to its proper functioning, it has not been possible for the program to move forward. A lack of clarity and difficulty in assessing and monitoring conditions in the various monastic institutions across the country thus continues to be a significant challenge.

Therefore—in order to lay down the steps and interventions that the Dratshang Lhentshog can take in the next five years to build a protective environment for children in the monastic institutions and nunneries—a Strategy, Plan of Action and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) have been developed.

The process of developing these products entailed a qualitative research approach, including the review of relevant literature, focus group discussions with child monks and nuns, and key informant interviews with other stakeholders. Further details on the fieldwork and desk assessment process are provided in the Annexures.

This strategy document contains two main sections. Section A presents an analysis of key findings of the qualitative study including child protection concerns in the monastic setting, state of redress mechanisms, gaps/challenges, and opportunities. Based on this context, Section B sets out the Strategy for the Dratshang Lhentshog's Child Protection Programme for the next five years (July 2017—June 2022), outlining key interventions to prevent, identify and respond to child protection concerns in the monastic institutions and nunneries.

The Strategy is further elaborated into a detailed Plan of Action, and an SOP for preventing and responding to child protection issues. These are provided separately as individual (but related) documents.

BACKGROUND

1. CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES IN MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS AND NUNNERIES

General Background of Children

Most of the child monks and nuns come from humble and difficult circumstances. Many come from broken families or are orphaned, and the monastic institutions are looked upon as a place for alternative care. There are of course exceptions to this categorization, but by and large it is now quite rare for children from financially and socially better-off families to be enrolled as child monks and nuns. As indicated by literature referencing global norms and patterns, *all* children are at risk of facing some form of violence, exploitation or abuse; however socioeconomic status can increase this risk.

The monk body is now also being looked upon as an option for those not able to perform well in conventional schools—typically joining after having studied in the primary to lower-secondary levels. In all, children joined the monastic institutions at ages ranging from six years up into the late teen years.

Some of the common reasons cited for joining the monastic system are:

- Everything is provided free, so their parents don't have to struggle financially as they would in keeping them home or sending them to school
- It is a better alternative because these days it is not easy to get a job even after studying up to class 15
- As they were not performing well in school they have joined the monk body
- They were facing some personal difficulties (parents divorced, no adequate care at home)
- A good monastic education will enable them to be of benefit to their parents, community and larger society in the future (in providing spiritual services)
- Some of them have a strong interest in following the spiritual path and “to benefit all sentient beings”.

The Dratshang Lhentshog currently does not maintain a centralized database of the number of monks and nuns enrolled across its various institutions. Individual *Rabdeys* and nunneries across the country keep their own records, but there is not as yet a comprehensive set of data that indicates how many monks and nuns are children and youth in their different age categories.

The only figure available to date is from the 2010 *Assessment of Situation of Young Monks and Nuns in Monastic Institutions*, which estimated that 5,609 children were living in the monastic institutions at the time. As this data has not been updated, the accompanying estimates across various categorizations (age group, lack of family care, orphaned, disabled) are also not up to date.

Main Issues Impacting Wellbeing of Child Monks and Nuns

The main protection issues for child monks and nuns are associated with living conditions in the monastic setting, which have an impact on their overall development and wellbeing. The recent consultations in the field indicate that the general picture presented by the 2010 *Assessment* continues to be relevant today, with a wide variation in the provision and quality of basic facilities and services across different institutions still apparent.

(i) Accommodation space and living arrangements

The 2010 *Assessment* recognized and recommended the need for separate sleeping quarters, dining room and classroom facilities, as most institutions had reported crowded and unsanitary living spaces. This increased the risk of spreading contagious disease and led to a non-conducive environment for learning.

Related to this, an earlier report had also mentioned a link between the limited facilities and many of the protection issues including sexual abuse. The same report noted the management's awareness of such issues whereby stringent actions were taken when incidents were reported, but that most of the time such reports were not made to the management.

In this regard, the variation across institutions is apparent from the recent field visits. Children live quite comfortably in some of the places with separate sleeping quarters, dining and classroom facilities. In other places without adequate space and infrastructure, the same room/hall is used for dining and studying, sleeping quarters are crammed, and basic furniture like cupboards to store personal belongings are lacking. Crammed conditions are especially difficult to endure in climatically hot places, where bunk beds used to address the space issue makes the atmosphere difficult to bear.

Age-appropriate sleeping arrangements also vary, with some institutions keeping children of similar age together and others keeping them mixed in big groups without consideration of developmental stages.

While some of the institutions are crammed and over capacity, other newer and larger ones are underutilized. However, some of the newer infrastructures built with the intention to cater to larger numbers of children are already facing issues stemming from poor technical oversight in the quality of planning and construction. For example, although quite grandly constructed, one of the institutions has no provision whatsoever to enable installation of water geysers and the lack of hot water in a cold place is impacting the general health of the children.

(ii) Sanitation

Sanitation facilities and conditions also vary across institutions, with some in very poor condition and others with room for improvement. Overall, there is a general inability to maintain toilets and bathrooms in proper functioning condition. Although conditions were quite good in the two nunneries visited, anecdotal evidence suggests that the toilet facilities in some nunneries are inconvenient for use by females because of their distance from living quarters. Such layout of infrastructure compels some nuns to refrain from using the facilities at night even if they need to.

As related by some of the Lopens and older monks, one of the main reasons why the smaller children get into trouble is because they are unable to keep their clothes and bodies clean. The provision of *namza* (robe) only once a year in many of the places is seen as an issue, especially for these younger children who tend to be quite careless and get their clothes worn out very fast.

(iii) Nutritional needs

The *2010 Assessment* found that nutritional quality varied across institutions, with many reporting that quality often had to be compromised in order to cater to unregistered novices who do not receive the government-provided stipend. Privately owned monastic institutions and in particular the nunneries relied on whatever came their way from donors.

This appears to still be the case based on the recent field visits, with some institutions serving full meals three times a day and others serving twice a day. While some places reported more than adequate food, helped in part due to grain and other food offerings made by local communities, others reported some difficulty.

Likewise, while some of the institutions have dedicated cook/s and children are not even required to wash their own dishes, young monks and nuns in some other institutions take turns cooking for everyone. This places some pressure on their time as they have many other activities to get through, with their daily schedule generally starting from 4:30-5:00 am and ending between 9:30-10:00 pm.

According to the Dratshang Lhentshog administration, institutions are entitled to one cook for a total of 70 people although they say it is difficult to verify the actual number of inhabitants in most of the institutions.

Anaemia is reportedly high among monks and nuns, even more so than among the school children who are provided iron supplements. The Dratshang Lhentshog's Religion and Health Project has raised this nutritional concern in bilateral discussions.

However, there is a need to pursue this further with the relevant government authorities to ensure that children in the monastic institutions & nunneries are provided iron supplements, and also explore possibilities of inclusion in the fortified rice programme initiated for the schools.

(iv) Evolving educational needs

The *2010 Assessment* had reported that most institutions expressed the need for a permanent English language teacher. While English is being taught to the monks and nuns in all the institutions visited for the recent study, there is still an issue of consistency and sustainability as the English language teachers are mostly recruited on a temporary or voluntary basis, and many institutions have to look for external support to pay the teachers.

According to the Dratshang Lhentshog administration, currently only one English language teacher has been hired of the total seven slots approved for the Dratshang Lhentshog. Even for this limited number of slots (considering the many monastic institutions and nunneries around the country), it is reported that there have not been many candidates applying for the job.

Concern was also expressed by some of the Lams and older monks about the general qualification, quality and disposition of some of the teachers/Lopens assigned to different institutions, as well as lack of age-appropriate teaching methods in the monastic institutions.

(v) Children with special needs

The *2010 Assessment* had classified more than two percent of the children in the monastic institutions and nunneries at the time as disabled. So far, the Dratshang Lhentshog has not looked into the special needs of the disabled but recognizes that this is important to do so.

In at least two of the monastic institutions visited for the fieldwork, there was mention of children with certain behavioural issues. Though not classified with a disability, the general consensus among the children and Lopens interviewed is that they didn't know how to deal with the children and usually just let them be.

One institution visited has three monks with clear disabilities. One monk (into his late twenties) is severely impaired with minimal mobility on wheelchair, and has not been home since he joined the institute eight years ago due to lack of road access. During the winter break, he was practically alone except for the cook who stayed behind. The other monks are generally helpful with bringing him food, washing his clothes, and accompanying him to the local hospital.

The Lam/principal says there is not much else they can do except to encourage him to say prayers and engage in self-study. Another monk, now in his early 20s and at the institution since he was a child, has difficulty with speech and hand movement. He has more support as his family lives near the monastery, but has a hard time expressing himself and sometimes gets teased by the other monks.

(vi) Registration status

All institutions have registered as well as non-registered monks and nuns. Registered monks are those with *Tsenzen* or entitled to benefits from the government and the Dratshang. The Dratshang Lhentshog currently records a total of 7,531 monks and nuns as receiving *Tsenzen*. Of this, 7,027 are allocated to the *Dratshangs/Rabdeys* located in each of the Dzongkhags; 317 to monks in *Yenlag Dratshang*; and 187 to the five nunneries affiliated with the Zhung Dratshang.

Individual institutions across the country maintain their own records of non-registered monks and nuns. If they inform their respective *Rabdeys* (Dratshang in the district) with relevant documentation/list of non-registered monks and nuns, it is possible for these monks and nuns to receive support from the Dratshang's internal budget (maintained through offerings made by people to the various monasteries). The difference is that those unregistered or without *Tsenzen* are not provided health insurance, pension and a monthly stipend—which the government provides for those registered or receiving *Tsenzen*.

The number of unregistered monks and nuns in most institutions often exceed the set allocation, by almost the same or even double (or more) the amount allocated. Many of the Lams and Lopens expressed the need for provision of *Tsenzen* according to the actual number of monks/nuns enrolled at the respective institutions. Some also suggested looking into other factors like the size of the communities they have to provide religious/spiritual services to, as it is not possible to sustain a larger group of monks at the institutions for this purpose without adequate resources at hand.

(vii) Access to health services and support, and gender-specific needs

The difficulty in accessing health services is an issue for some of the institutions, especially those located far from the district centre. This is a problem especially for the nuns who tend to get sick quite frequently and don't have easy access to public transport.

A specific issue faced by child nuns relates to menstruation-related discomfort. In this regard, they often feel uncomfortable to express their needs—such as to take time off, or on the need for proper disposal facilities for sanitary pads—as their teachers and principles are Lams and Lopens from the Dratshang.

Lack of adequate care and support during times of illness is also cited by some of the children as well as the older boys. In some cases when they are referred to the hospital in Thimphu, they are unable to meet the expenses required for travel, and unless they have relatives or friends who can help them, it becomes very difficult to manage. Some of the monks were not clear what kind of support they should be getting in such circumstances.

This seems to be related somewhat to the categorization of registered and non-registered monks and nuns, although accounts given by different individuals vary and it was not possible to get a very clear picture about this.

However, the suggestion seems to be that in addition to the free health services accorded to all Bhutanese, registered monks and nuns get additional support to cover related expenses if they require treatment outside of their place of residence (for example, if they need to travel from another district to Thimphu or outside the country for treatment). This same level of support is not available to unregistered monks and nuns, as they are not provided with health insurance.

(viii) Recreation and other child development needs

The *2010 Assessment* reported that the various developmental needs of children in accordance with their age, maturity and degree of vulnerability did not receive any special consideration. While some institutions had outdoor recreational facilities these were mostly utilized by senior monks and the children had less access to them.

The recent field visits showed most of the institutions have scheduled recreation time for the weekends, as well as one hour each during the weekdays. However, there is generally a lack of proper space and facilities for outdoor/physical games, sports and exercises. It is common for many of the monks to play carom, and in some cases to watch TV programs, on the monastic institution premises generally unsupervised during these times. Many children cited that lack of space for physical exercise is an issue, and that many of their peers had high blood pressure and diabetes.

(ix) Scheduled breaks

Over the years, the monastic institutions have made provision for scheduled winter breaks in periods ranging from two weeks to one month. There is a variation in how different Heads of institutions implement this. Some keep a smaller number of monks/nuns behind (in turns) at all times as essential daily prayers and rituals need to be carried out in the monasteries.

Others choose not to schedule such breaks and discourage the children from going home at all, unless in times of family emergency or annual *Lochhoe*. They say this is because of increasing chances of non-returnees and the dwindling number of enrolments. In addition, there are invariably a number of children that “choose” to stay behind even if there are scheduled breaks, usually due to not having adequate support at home or elsewhere.

(x) Disciplinary measures

The practice of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure is said to have declined significantly since H.H. the Je Khenpo issued a decree to this effect in 2009. The practice of alternative forms of discipline is often mentioned, with many of the institutions following a three-step process to correct bad behaviour.

This generally entails Lopens providing advice or counsel to the offender in the first instance; in the second instance the offender is either liable to pay cash fines or required to chant extra prayers and do extra prostrations; and in the third instance the offender may get three whippings. As shared by some stakeholders in the field, physical punishment (spanking and whipping) continue to be used in some instances when other methods are found ineffective.

Specific Issues of Violence

The findings of the *Study on Violence Against Children in Bhutan (VAC)* shed some light on various forms of violence that children in monastic settings, especially child monks, can face. In this study, violence as a child protection issue is classified into several categories, based on which some incidents are reported by young monastics.

Though the number of incidents reported are very small, it is still an important finding given that the number of child monks and nuns included in the study was also very small. It is also worth noting given the fact that such issues are generally considered sensitive, and not always as openly or easily discussed. The qualitative part of the study highlights accounts of young monastics in terms of:

- (i) Physical violence** in the form of being bullied by peers and older students, which involves kicking and punching; as well as beatings by teachers for disciplinary measures in varying levels of severity;
- (ii) Sexual violence** including verbal sexual harassment and exposure to digital pornography; and
- (iii) Emotional violence** in terms of not being able to see their parents frequently, not being allowed to return home if they ran away from the monastery, and the resulting feeling of isolation.

The VAC study across its three phases also captured a generally accepting attitude of children as well as teachers on the use of light beating and harsh words as necessary forms of discipline for corrective measures, so long as it is not done without reason; it is however viewed as violence if such actions are carried out excessively and for no valid reason.

The recent field consultations undertaken for the current report suggests similar trends. While extensive discussion on these areas did not arise during interactions with the child monks and nuns, a few incidents from the recent past were narrated by some of the stakeholders.

For instance: the beating of a child monk accused of involvement in theft, to the point of bleeding; a case of some older youth monks bullying and beating up child monks under the influence of alcohol, and physically fighting with the teachers who confronted them; and some cases of physical confrontation between older youth monks and teachers.

Verbal abuse in the form of shaming children was suggested to be a common practice, especially in the nunneries. The occurrence of **bullying** among peers and by elders (more so in monastic institutions than in nunneries) is also an issue that stakeholders brought up. Likewise, the occurrence of **sexual abuse** (verbal as well as physical) in both monastic institutions and nunneries was mentioned anecdotally.

To what degree such incidences occur was not something that could be ascertained through the available literature, nor from the field consultations. However, there was concurrence that as in other institutional settings involving children and youth, such incidences do occur and need to be addressed.

2. INITIATIVES TAKEN AND STATE OF REDRESS MECHANISMS

Thirteen Members Expert Committee

In 2007, the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), with approval from H.H. the Je Khenpo, started sensitization programs and consultations with members of the Zhung Dratshang including the Lam Netens (district-level Monastic heads) in all twenty dzongkhags, Udzin (Shedra and Lobdra principals), and Lopen Gom (head teachers of monastic institutions).

Aimed at increasing awareness among the monastic community on the need to safeguard and promote the rights of child monks and nuns while striking a balance with traditional practices and sentiments, the series of consultations led to the appointment of an Eleven Members Expert Committee in 2009 by the Je Khenpo, which later expanded to a Thirteen Members Expert Committee.

The Committee, which includes one representative from the nunneries, was set up with the mandate to monitor child protection issues in the Dratshang and Monastic Schools, and to also advise the monastic body on advancing promotion and protection of child rights issues.

Since its set up, the Committee fulfilled several short-term responsibilities such as reviewing, readjusting and approving certain outputs from the earlier consultative and training programs initiated by the NCWC. Significantly, H.H. the Je Khenpo issued a decree to protect and monitor the rights of child monks and nuns, banning all forms of corporal punishment in the Dratshang. Since then efforts have been made at institutionalizing alternative forms of discipline through sensitization and awareness raising programmes for the heads of Lobdras, Shedras, Lam Netens and monks.

The Committee also conducted, in collaboration with NCWC and with financial support from UNICEF, an assessment on the situation of childcare and protection issues in the Dratshang and the institutions (referenced in earlier sections of this report). More on this assessment is provided in the next subsection.

As a priority need, an attempt was also made to establish a complaints and response mechanism for child protection in the Dratshang. Committee Members shared their mobile numbers with all children who participated during the data collection for the situational assessment, as a means for child monks and nuns to report any issues.

However, given that child monks and nuns have generally not been permitted to use mobile phones and do not have access to fixed lines in the monasteries, this mechanism could not take off. This also rendered the option of establishing a telephone hotline service for child monks and nuns irrelevant.

The use of wooden boxes for child monks and nuns to deposit written complaints and concerns was also considered. However, this option was also found to be impractical as monastic institutions are spread out across remote parts of the country, making it difficult for the Committee Members to regularly check these boxes.

The Expert Committee's long-term responsibilities included: acting as the advisory body to the senior Dratshang management on issues pertaining to childcare and protection issues; reviewing and guiding the Dratshang and the NCWC in terms of prioritizing areas of work; assisting the NCWC and Dratshang in advocacy, social mobilization and resource mobilization for children and women in the monastic system; and conducting monitoring visits to assess the impact of collaboration.

However, the last time that the Committee Members got together was in 2014, and the Committee for the most part has been non-functional in the years thereafter. *More on this is provided in the subsequent sections under "Gaps and Challenges".*

2010 Assessment of Situation of Young Monks and Nuns in Monastic Institutions

The assessment included all monastic institutions in 17 Dzongkhags, and covered 3091 children (3043 monks and 48 nuns, aged between five and 18 years) from 115 monasteries and 11 nunneries.

Based on the findings of this assessment, the Expert Committee had made several recommendations, which are summarized below:

- Train heads and teachers of monastic institutions on alternative forms of discipline;
- Further sensitize all monastic institutions on child rights and other protection issues by using the expert committee members and others trained in the subject;
- Frame clear guidelines to set and maintain a certain standard in terms of nutrition, accommodation spaces, health facilities, and sleeping arrangements, making it the

- responsibility of the expert committee to ensure their application and thus minimize the huge variations found between institutions in terms of infrastructure, budget and support;
- Seek government acknowledgement and budgetary support for unregistered monks and nuns, recognizing the role played by monasteries and nunneries as poor homes and orphanages;
 - Include English and Math in the monastic education curricula and formalize the teaching of these subjects;
 - Equip monastic institutions with adequate teachers and basic facilities like blackboard, books and stationaries;
 - Support institutions with development of infrastructure including proper toilets, bathrooms, kitchen, dining facilities, and variety of recreational facilities for children; and
 - Train monks and nuns on first aid, and sensitize them on various health issues so they in turn can train and spread key messages in their own institutions.

The assessment report indicated a clear willingness on the part of the institutions to bring about positive changes to their way of functioning. However, it emphasized that this would clearly require resources and other forms of support, especially given the variation between monastic institutions in terms of their infrastructure, set up and needs.

Child Care and Protection Office

The Dratshang Lhentshog's Child Care and Protection Office (CCPO) was established in 2010, to oversee child protection plans and activities, and to provide support and services to child monks and nuns. A Child Protection (CP) Officer and an assistant monk currently run the office. A Senior Lopen had also been assigned to the CCPO since its inception, though old age did not allow much activity on the job.

In terms of physical set up, the CCPO has a room each for child monks and nuns to serve as emergency shelter, an office space, kitchen, and common areas. It is centrally located in Thimphu and is close to the Tashichho Dzong.

The CP Officer has recently (in 2016) developed some literature for awareness-raising purposes: one booklet on alternative forms of discipline, and one booklet on the Buddhist teachings and its relevance to child welfare and protection. Since the printing of these materials, the CP Officer has distributed them in a number of institutions coinciding with his visits to a number of districts for various other purposes.

The CP Officer has, however, already been presenting the subject matter of these booklets at various sensitization programs conducted for internal stakeholders over the past several years. Talking mainly about the Child Rights Convention (CRC) and on positive discipline, the three-day programs have been conducted in the districts of Samdrup Jongkhar, Mongar, Paro and Thimphu. Participants include Lobdra Lopens, Anims, Dratshang Sector Heads, and some senior monks, with each program attended by about 20 participants at a time.

Whenever possible, the CP officer also takes the opportunity to talk about aspects of the CRC and child protection, as well as about the Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO and emergency shelter. For instance, short presentations are made during the World Day of Prayer Action on 20 November every year; and as a resource person for the Dratshang Lhentshog's Health and Religion Project (WASH program), he also touches upon these aspects during those programs.

Informal Systems of Support

In spite the presence of the CCPO, child monks and nuns have so far hardly accessed support through this unit. Instead, they seek informal systems of support, usually by identifying a supportive individual within their religious community, which may be the *Lam*, *Lopen* or the *kudung*. Most often, they seek the help of their friends in the particular institution, or get their parents or relatives to intervene in some cases. Some parents and children may also reach out to RENEW with their grievances, and in turn the CCPO will be informed of the case.

Case Handling

As confirmed through consultations with internal stakeholders, the particular monastic institutions usually settle smaller cases like theft or indiscipline, while referring major cases to the Chief Investigator (*Zhipchey Gupon*) of the Dratshang Lhentshog. However, it is also suggested that some major issues do not get reported and are known about only after considerable time has passed.

The system currently in place is that any possible child protection violation is to be investigated and managed internally with the involvement of the CCPO, and led by the *Zhipchey Gupon*. The *Zhipchey Gupon* is also the current chair of the Thirteen Members Expert Committee, and his office is responsible for looking into issues like auditing and any cases related to monks.

The usual process is to report matters (whether by CCPO or other entity) to the *five Lopens*, who in turn would inform the *Je Khenpo* and also instruct the relevant parties to investigate the matter. Based on the investigation, the ultimate decision on the particular matter is taken by the *five Lopens*.

The understanding between the Dratshang and state authorities is that if an internal investigation finds evidence of a serious criminal offence as per Bhutan's Child Care and Protection Act (CCPA) and other laws, the case is to be handed over to the state authorities for further investigation.

Conversely, if state authorities first learn of a child protection issue related to monks and nuns, they are expected to refer the case to the Dratshang for initial investigation, and the same process as earlier described takes place. However, in the case of unregistered child monks and nuns, the Dratshang may choose to bypass an internal investigation and refer cases directly to external authorities such as the NCWC or police.

3. GAPS AND CHALLENGES

Lack of Clear Data

As mentioned earlier, the Dratshang Lhentshog lacks a centralized/comprehensive set of data providing essential disaggregated information pertaining to child monks and nuns. This is a significant shortcoming in the context of planning, and for the CCPO in particular as it is the most basic data required.

Without a proper sense of basic information regarding its main beneficiaries or constituents, the allocation of essential resources equitably across the various institutions will be all the more challenging. As it is, there is not as yet a proper inventory of the resource conditions and needs across all the institutions and nunneries based on which such allocation can be made.

The absence of a baseline generally presents complications in terms of assessing improvements or worsening of conditions. For instance, although stakeholders in the field say that in general there has been vast improvement in sanitation, nutrition, health and living conditions of monks and nuns over the years, there are great variations in standards.

Low Awareness about the CCPO and Lack of Essential Capacities

With the exception of some of the Lams and Lopens, most the monks and nuns consulted during the fieldwork had never heard about the Dratshang's CCPO. Some who had heard about it didn't know very much about its activities and functions. Even though many workshops and programs have been conducted over the years, those who have known about the CCPO for a while now suggest that its visibility be strengthened through consistent and systematic awareness raising programs, and not by relying on ad hoc and piecemeal activities.

This, however, is a real challenge for the CCPO given that it is effectively functioning with only one person. The program itself does not feature anywhere in the Dratshang Lhentshog's Five-Year Plan program and activities. While the physical structure of the office and designated emergency shelter is there, key essential human capacities and a guaranteed safe environment are missing. The CCPO lacks essential staff such as senior management, counsellors, and additional program officers.

More specifically for the shelter, it lacks any security, a dedicated cook, and female staff should the need arise. Some rooms in the building are currently occupied by another unit of the Dratshang, which-while understood to be a temporary arrangement—raises the question of

the CCPO's ability to provide a safe environment for children in case of emergencies. Basically if some emergency were to come up, the CCPO would be at a loss as to how to handle the situation.

Loss of Momentum and Lack of Ownership

While the Thirteen Members Expert Committee had been set up with a monitoring role, and members were responsible for making visits to monastic institutions within their regions, not much could be accomplished after the initial years of its establishment. According to NCWC's 2012 Mapping and Assessment Report, its members had limited understanding and capacity; and the majority of the members represent *Shedras* where most monks are older than 18 years and therefore not representative of the children themselves.

During the recent fieldwork consultations, some of the committee members themselves were not clear whether the body still existed and was operational. They confirmed that the recommendations made based on the 2010 *Assessment of Situation of Young Monks and Nuns in Monastic Institutions* had not been followed up on as far as they knew. With the exception of banning corporal punishment and instituting alternative forms of discipline, the other recommendations concerning the resource needs of the various monastic institutions and the living conditions of children had not been addressed.

For this, they expressed frustration and a diminishing level of trust towards those institutions that had initiated the child protection process in the Dratshang in the first place. While they had adopted the change in disciplinary measures with great difficulty and doubt—facing increasing disciplinary issues in the monastic institutions along the way—they felt that the other parties had not seen through the other important aspects of child protection. Whether this is due to resource constraints or management issues was not clear to them, but one member expressed embarrassment at being called an expert member.

He said that in the beginning some of them had made several visits to institutions within their regions, talking about child rights and alternative forms of discipline out of respect for the *Kasho* issued by H.H the Je Khenpo. At the same time they also made enquiries into the issues and needs of the children in the institutions; but over time nothing materialized and they felt that they were also letting down the people they were meeting.

So while some of them still try to talk about some of the child protection components whenever there's an opportunity, they are not able to dedicate much time to it in a systematic way.

Difficulties in Instituting a Holistic Response Mechanism in the Monastic Setting

A challenge in the overall context of the Dratshang's functioning stems from its adherence to a traditional system, whereby administrative and other decisions are "made in accordance with the age-old culture of harmony and fraternity".

This means that every decision has to be “unanimous and righteous”, and it is not often that proposed changes that might otherwise be considered necessary in accordance with the times get approved. As such, given that the Zhung Dratshang by and large functions within its own framework for operation, instituting a robust response mechanism for possible child protection violations in the monastic institutions and nunneries is a challenge.

For instance, victims of various forms of violence need immediate medical attention and sustained counselling services. In the event of such occurrences within the monastic setting, the case even if reported to the CCPO or *Zhipchey Gupon* has to be dealt with internally as previously described.

In the meantime, while that process takes its course, the specialized services required to care for the abused party is not currently available within the Dratshang; neither is there a clear referral process to enable them to avail of these services from the wider child protection system in the country. This presents a very clear conflict as the “best interests of the child”-one of the core principles of the CRC and on which aspects of Bhutan’s CCPA 2011 and CCP Rules and Regulations 2015 is based-comes into question.

Social Norms and Attitudes

The general attitude among internal stakeholders towards corporal punishment appears to be one of measured acceptance. While many said that change must take place in accordance with the times and with international practices, they also expressed that corporal punishment is warranted in some cases. The view is that so long as it is not practiced viciously and out of malice, it is acceptable at times as an effective disciplinary measure if the intention is to improve the child.

Many of the child monks and nuns, as well as the older ones, said that while they feel/felt upset when Lopens whipped or beat them (in the past), they later reflected and realized that this was done for their own good. However, most were quick to point out that unwarranted and unreasonable beating is wrong and not acceptable.

Some internal stakeholders worry that without corporal punishment, the discipline in the Dratshang is deteriorating. They feel that a suitable alternative has not been provided. Although agreeing in principle to positive forms of discipline, the concern is that the proper sensitization and capacity/skills development to effectively institute alternate forms of discipline has not taken place, and this has caused many problems.

Related to this, most stakeholders also expressed that when imparting messages on child rights, there tended to be an imbalanced focus on rights without adequately talking about responsibilities. Likewise, the term ‘child protection’ tends to convey an immediate image of

children needing protection from very serious forms of violence and abuse, and the language can be off-putting for many. It is not very obvious until closer examination that child protection also entails ensuring children's wellbeing in a holistic manner.

In terms of comfort level and approachability, most child monks and nuns indicated some hesitation in going straight away to their *Lopens* to discuss any difficulties or needs. They much rather preferred to go to the *Lam* or *Kudung*, but the first preference in any case is to talk to their friends and their elders, often asking them to take the matter to the *Kudung*, *Lam* or *Lopen* for them. When probed on this, the reason is: just the fact that the person is their teacher makes it difficult for them to approach him.

Besides resource availability and location, the vast differences in the conditions across different monastic institutions are associated with the management capacities, personal abilities and outlook of the heads of the institutions. A striking and recurrent comment that came through during the recent study is that the *Lams* and *Lopens* have to play so many critical roles in the lives of the children, and that is not always easy.

Not only do they have to impart education as teachers, they also have to provide care and nurture the children as parents. At the same time they have to be good disciplinarians, and are also expected to have good management skills in ensuring the proper functioning of the institutions. And in quite a few cases, some of the parents never come to visit their children (perhaps out of lack of financial capacity) even when they are called to tend to them during times of sickness.

As one of the *Lams* commented over the course of the field visits: "...it is as though once their children are enrolled with us, they [parents] have no responsibility at all over their own children".

4. PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Recognizing different abilities and interests, clarifying expectations and boundaries, and being consistent

Consultations with the various stakeholders pointed to some practices that have a positive bearing on improving child protection conditions in the monastic institutions. For instance, not all children are inclined or suited to the regular monastic education content or approach.

Recognizing this, some *Lams* and *Lopens* have decided to be proactive in identifying appropriate solutions, rather than resorting to shaming or punishing the child/children for poor performance in their studies or prayers. By discussing with them and assessing their interests, the *Lams* or *Lopens* might encourage them to develop their skills in painting or statue making, for example, and send them to the *Zorig Chhusum Pekha* in Trongsa Dzongkhag.

Such an approach could also provide greater options for those youth who might decide to leave the monastic system at some point. A key concern for one of the Lams consulted was that with increasing numbers of young monks leaving, their underdeveloped knowledge and limited skillset made them vulnerable to unemployment and all kinds of related social ills.

In some of the institutions, the Lams and Lopens have made it a point to develop daily schedules that incorporate not just studies, prayers and chores, but also adequate time for recreation even if it means some time to watch TV. The point is that children get some “space” to exercise their autonomy, while the Lopens make it very clear from the beginning on what is acceptable and what is not. By being consistent with expectations and boundaries, they find that there is less temptation for children to misbehave therefore reducing the risk of disciplinary issues.

Accessing available services and strengthening partnerships

Stakeholder consultations also pointed to various opportunities that the Dratshang Lhentshog’s CCPO could tap into, in its efforts to address child protection concerns in a more holistic manner. These include:

- (i) Efforts underway by the **Dratshang Lhentshog’s Education Division on curriculum development**, which present opportunities to incorporate key aspects of child wellbeing and protection into the regular education programme by drawing from relevant Buddhist texts already being studied by the monastics;
- (ii) Coordinating with the **Dratshang Lhentshog’s Health and Religion Project**, as many of its programme components (sanitation, nutrition, safe drinking water, behaviour change communication, etc.) are strongly related to key aspects of child welfare and protection. Efforts are also underway for the WASH program to collect comprehensive data across all institutions, and this will help provide more accurate data on child monks and nuns;
- (iii) Exploring collaborative efforts with the **Ministry of Health/Education and UNFPA through the Life Skills Programme**, which has relevance to many aspects of child protection, and which by many accounts is found to be highly beneficial and well-received by monks and nuns across the country;
- (iv) Looking into additional support mechanisms for child protection case management, by collaborating with the **NCWC who is spearheading the development of a Case Management Information System (CMIS)**. While any cases reported in this system would remain confidential, NCWC would be able to provide appropriate protection options for victims of violence and abuse;
- (v) In the meantime, **in the event that any emergency arises** and is reported to the Dratshang’s CCPO—given its lack of capacity in case management—it **may need**

to consider seeking out the support mechanisms available in the wider child protection system in the country. Some of the **essential stakeholders in this respect would include Health personnel, counsellors from RENEW or the network of school guidance counsellors**, among others;

- (vi) Exploring collaborative efforts with **Bhutan Nuns Foundation in advocacy programmes**, given the existing interactions on child protection-related efforts and their focus on the welfare of nuns in the country; and
- (vii) Exploring partnerships with **Ability Bhutan Society to tap into tools for early detection, as well as other relevant intervention programs** to help develop approaches in addressing the **special needs of child monks and nuns.**



STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this strategy is to provide clear direction and plan of action for the Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO for the next five years (July 2017-June 2022), to address the various issues concerning child protection in monastic institutions and nunneries. It is anticipated that the CCPO's efforts will have significant impact in the larger context of the role of the Zhung Dratshang. As earlier stated, the Central Monk Body plays a critical part in upholding the country's spiritual and cultural heritage based on Buddhist values.

One of its key objectives therefore is to strengthen the spiritual education system in the country, and in the current 11th Five-Year Plan (2013-2018), strategies towards this end are: to improve conditions in those institutions with limited academic and residential facilities; improve nutrition and sanitation at the primary education level; and upgrade existing monastic institutions to improve access to secondary and higher level of Buddhist studies.

In addition to the challenges posed by inadequate financial and skilled human resources, the Zhung Dratshang is also seeing a growing trend of decreasing enrolments. As it navigates its course in a fast-changing society increasingly exposed to new innovations and values, keeping children and youth engaged in the monastic system is also an emerging challenge.

At this critical time of introspection on what needs to be done to preserve and strengthen the institution, it is important to acknowledge that the Dratashang Lhentshog had already made early efforts at instituting a child protection program as earlier outlined. Rebuilding the momentum that was generated years ago and taking the program forward now will be immensely important.

As this strategy aims to build a strong prevention program to minimize potential harmful conditions for child monks and nuns—while also strengthening the response component—key interventions will be in line with the larger objectives of the Zhung Dratshang. In other words, in the process of working to ensure a protective environment for child monks and nuns, their overall life conditions and opportunities to contribute meaningfully to their communities and society will be improved as a matter of course.

As expressed by internal stakeholders, this entails a few fundamentals such as ensuring that all institutions follow proper schedules and positive disciplinary measures to improve enrolment and retainment. Effective management of resources is also understood to be an important factor in ensuring the posterity of the Zhung Dratsahang.

This includes, among others, a more *equitable* distribution of resources across monastic institutions and nunneries so that living and study conditions are improved for all, and there is more considered investment into attracting and retaining essential staff with the appropriate qualifications and disposition.

In this respect, the *Dratshang Lhentshog* or the Council for Religious Affairs operates to support the Zhung Dratshang by acting as the bridge with the government and wider society. It has the critical responsibility of keeping abreast of developments of benefit to the Bhutanese people and translating these holistically into the Zhung Dratshang's context.

Thus, the importance of the CCPO cannot be overstated. Besides its obvious benefit to child monks and nuns, it also has the potential to contribute positively to the longer-term sustainability of the Zhung Dratshang. In addition, as an integral part of the country's larger child protection system, the Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO can and must contribute to upholding international and national commitments. Key among these include:

- The International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which Bhutan is party as one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Convention in 1990; and
- The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, in particular Article 9.18, which states that, "the State shall endeavour to take appropriate measures to ensure that children are protected against all forms of discrimination and exploitation including trafficking, prostitution, abuse, violence, degrading treatment and economic exploitation."

Directly related to these fundamental commitments are the Child Care and Protection Act 2011, the Child Care and Protection Rules and Regulation 2015, among many other important and relevant legislation.

As is evident upon proper examination and understanding of these international commitments and national legislation, advocating a child rights-based approach is essentially about recognizing the value of all life (and children) and enabling the development of their fullest potential, thus benefitting society as a whole. This is in consonance with basic Buddhist principles of wisdom and compassion, and the Zhung Dratshang as the upholder of the nation's spiritual heritage is one of most appropriate institutions to promote and ensure the wellbeing of Bhutanese children.

Situated in this larger context, the long term goal or impact that the Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO wishes to have is: ***Child monks and nuns in the Zhung Dratshang enjoy a secure and nurturing environment that is conducive to their holistic development, and enables them to contribute positively to upholding Bhutan's spiritual and cultural heritage.***

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT – HYPOTHESIS

The findings of the qualitative study suggest that the Dratshang Lhentshog's child protection program has been in a state of limbo owing to a number of interrelated causal factors. These include a lack of direction and ownership of the program within the Dratshang Lhentshog; lack of essential human capacities and resources for the program; (perceived) lack of consistency in supporting the program over the years by external initiators of the program; weak communication; and entrenched views and norms.

As such, currently there is low awareness about the child protection program within the Dratshang, especially among key stakeholders like child and youth monks and nuns, Lopens/ teachers and Kudungs, among others. In the event of child rights violations, it is questionable whether the children themselves are knowledgeable and adequately empowered to recognize and report such matters, and there is not much clarity in dealing with cases. Resource management continues to play a significant role in conditions related to child protection across various monastic institutions and nunneries.

3. KEY INTERVENTIONS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

In moving forward, the CCPO will need to focus on incorporating strong preventative measures so that harmful behaviour and practices are minimized in monastic institutions and nunneries across the country. At the same time, it will also need to strengthen its response capacities to be able to provide appropriate and quality services in the event of child rights violation cases.

In all these efforts, it will be necessary to collaborate with the relevant internal and external stakeholders where there are clear opportunities for the CCPO to tap into, to help address the current gaps in its own resources and capacities. In this regard, a number of key interventions are outlined below, and is further detailed through a plan of action provided as a separate document.

Intervention 1: Strengthen the capacities of the CCPO and revamp its support network, to ensure sustainable provision of essential prevention and protection services

In order to take the child protection program forward in the monastic institutions and nunneries, the **CCPO needs to be adequately staffed** with personnel who will carry out essential program functions. Potential candidates will have to be identified, and **appropriate skillsets developed** and kept up to date through regular trainings.

The requirements at this stage include the appointment of a senior monk or *Lam*, with the appropriate disposition to work on child protection matters, and the ability to **provide leadership as well as strong representation of the CCPO within the Dratshang**. In addition, if possible, six more monks and possibly nuns should be appointed to the CCPO, to assist with **program work, and to manage cases, and to provide counselling services**.

While it would be ideal to have all the required staff in place at the earliest, it may be necessary to increase staff strength in batches depending on the availability of potential candidates for the post from within the Zhung Dratshang.

Candidates could be identified from Tango Shedra—having completed at least *Dzirim Gupa* or Level nine, with an English language background of at least class 8-10, and a generally compassionate disposition. This is to ensure sound grounding in the country's spiritual and cultural context, and openness to learning and drawing best practices and techniques, especially in terms of case management and counselling.

They can also take up program work, so that other activities of the CCPO can be carried out, including monitoring and assessing program activities. With a surge in information pertaining to child protection across the various institutions expected to come in over the course of implementing this strategic plan of action, **it will be necessary for the CCPO to develop and have in place a proper system to capture and utilise the incoming data.**

To ensure a safe environment in case of emergencies, and also to ensure confidentiality, the CCPO building needs to be retained solely for the child protection program. The current occupants of part of the building will need to relocate from the premises at the earliest possible. In addition, as an emergency shelter there is need for a cook who could in the intermediate term also serve as a caretaker of the premise.

Given that the monastic institutions and nunneries are spread out all over the country, and given also that promoting positive social change for child protection needs to be integrated into the work of other relevant sectors, the CCPO requires the consistent support of **an effective support network within the Dratshang.**

The main purpose of this network would be to support the CCPO in several key areas i.e. as an advisory body and to support its strategic direction and programming, as well as to network with relevant external partners; for carrying out advocacy within the institutions of the Zhung Dratshang and eventually beyond; and in monitoring situations in the monastic institutions and nunneries.

The network would have **three main sets of actors** within the Zhung Dratshang, and another set of external partners. The first set is those post-holders based at headquarters and whose functions are highly relevant to the strategizing and programming of activities for the CCPO, and could serve as part of an **Advisory Committee to the CCPO.**

These include: the Secretary of the Dratshang Lhentshog; the *Yangchhab Lopen*/ Dratshang General Secretary; the *Zhipchey* Gupon; the Religion and Health Project Manager; the Tsugla/ Education Secretary; the Dratshang Lhentshog's Administration/Officiating Planning Officer; the Head of a Close-by Nunnery; and the Head/Programme Manager of the CCPO.

The second set is the previously established Expert Committee, which will require a proper review and rework in its composition in order to ensure its effectiveness. The number of representatives could be reduced as the CCPO's experience has shown that some members are hardly available and unable to attend to their responsibilities as well as the general meetings over the years.

A smaller group of **CCPO Regional Representatives**-who are given clear terms of reference and appropriate resource support-may be more effective. An option is to have a total of six persons representing the western, central and eastern regions of the country. Each region would be represented by a fairly senior monk/Lam, along with another appointee who would serve as the second-in-command.

This set up is proposed so that there is more than one person in each region familiarized with the program, to ensure some continuity and to avoid potential disruption in the event of transfers to different locations. Given the possibility of new members as well as the considerable time lapse in the Expert Committee's functionality, it will be necessary for all the members to undergo the appropriate training and orientation sessions to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.

The third set is the **Child Protection Focal Points** that should be identified for each of the monastic institutions and nunneries where children are residing. During the sensitization programs and workshops, **child protection focal persons can be identified from among the adult post-holders, as well as from among the children themselves.**

While there are only five nunneries registered with and under the purview of the *Zhung Dratshang*, the overall number of nunneries in the country totals 28. In line with discussions and consensus reached during the stakeholder consultations on 26th June 2017, the identification and sensitisation of **Child Protection Focal Persons should also be extended to all the other/private nunneries.** In this regard, it will be useful to work together with the Bhutan Nuns Foundation given their close working relationship with the nunneries in the country.

The **external network of partners** that the CCPO could/would need to work with for advocacy, preventative and response purposes include key government and non-government agencies with related mandates in the wider child protection system in the country. More on the particular roles and responsibilities, basic selection criteria, and other information pertaining to the functioning of the Dratshang Lhentshog's child protection programme is outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document.

The **CCPO will also require adequate funding to carry out all the other interventions and sets of activities** listed for the next five years. While activities for these early years will need to be kick-started with the financial support and expertise of the appropriate international and national development partners, the CCPO should aim to eventually incorporate the child

protection programme into the national planning cycle as part of the Dratshang's overall strategy in the five-year plans. The **CCPO is ultimately responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan of action**, and will report to the Advisory Committee on the progress.

Expected Outcome 1: *Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO has adequate skilled staff, appropriate resources and support network in place to deliver on its mandate.*

Intervention 2: Advocate for effective management and utilisation of resources, in order to minimise unfavourable living conditions contributing to protection issues across institutions

Many of the recommendations made in the *2010 Assessment Report* of the Expert Committee are still valid and need to be followed through. Given that the main protection issues for child monks and nuns are associated with living conditions in the monastic setting, and considering the wide variation across different institutions, some essential steps that should be taken are outlined.

One is to **review and establish minimum standards for all monastic institutions and nunneries to follow** (sleeping arrangements, bedding and sanitation facilities, daily schedule and annual breaks, nutrition). The particular needs of nuns regarding sanitation and access to toilets require careful consideration. A screening process/criteria for the appointment of Lopens and Kudungs should also be worked out in conjunction with the relevant authority in the Dratshang.

In instituting these minimum standards, it is essential to follow through with the provision of appropriate resources and support for all the monastic institutions and nunneries as per their particular needs. In this regard, it would be ideal if the CCPO can carry out **an assessment of all monastic institutions to determine needs and ensure equitable resource allocation**.

This would also be useful in terms of establishing baselines and monitoring conditions over the longer term. Such essential information-for instance, the number of children residing in each institution according to age, sex, registered/not registered, orphaned/not orphaned, and other basic disaggregated data-can be collected by engaging the help of the *rabdeys* in each dzongkhag.

The CCPO should also work closely with the Dratshang Lhentshog's Religion and Health Project, which is currently collecting baseline information for WASH, including basic data on children enrolled in each institution. Given that two of the stated objectives of the Dratshang in the 11th five-year plan is to improve academic and hostel facilities, and to improve nutrition and sanitation, the CCPO should work with the relevant programme officers in establishing needs of different institutions and to work out minimum standards as appropriate.

Some aspects of working towards ensuring minimum standards can proceed ahead of the assessment, such as in **securing the regular provision of iron supplements for child monks and nuns**. While Bhutanese school children across the country benefit from the iron supplement programme, this has not as yet been instituted in the monastic institutions and nunneries. Given the high incidences of anaemia reported especially among the monastics in the country, **the support of the ministries of Health and Education must be sought at the earliest** by the Dratshang Lhentshog.

In addition to this immediate course of action, **the support of relevant government agencies should also be sought for addressing other concerns such as nutrition needs, classroom/ education facilities, and recreation needs among others**. For instance-once the baseline assessment has been completed-the Dratshang Lhentshog could pursue and follow up with nutrition-related programmes of the Ministries of Health and Education, as well as relevant programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests. Similarly, support could also be sought from related agencies such as the Bhutan Olympic Committee and/or the Department of Youth and Sports (Ministry of Education) for recreation/sporting related activities.

Child monks and nuns with disabilities require focused attention, and for this it will be important to have the appropriate data including their location and particular needs including cognitive and behavioural issues. It will be necessary to enlist the assistance of competent professionals in identifying the needs as well as in working out appropriate approaches to addressing these needs.

Besides the lack of appropriate services and resources, children with physical, sensory, cognitive and/ or communication impairments are generally more vulnerable owing to negative societal attitudes towards disabilities. Research generally indicates that disabled children are at increased risk of abuse or neglect, and yet they are underrepresented in safeguarding systems.

Discussions would also need to be initiated with the *Tsenzen Gupon*, the Dratshang Lhentshog Secretary and relevant decision makers to address the particular issues faced by unregistered monks and nuns i.e. those not supported with the **Tsenzen allocation**. In accordance with the actual number of children enrolled in the monastic institutions and nunneries, a systematic solution should be worked out to provide equal support to those children not receiving the Tsenzen-whether through seeking additional government support, or by working out other internal means of providing equal benefits to all children residing in the institutions.

Expected Outcome 2: *Monastic institutions and nunneries follow basic standards and codes of conduct in daily living arrangements.*

Intervention 3: Provide systematic awareness-raising and skills-building programmes related to rights and responsibilities for child monks and nuns, to enhance their participation in the monastic setting

The CCPO's efforts in behaviour change initiatives have so far not included the direct participation of child monks and nuns themselves. This critical preventative intervention is largely missing and needs to be initiated systematically and at the earliest.

Regular workshops can be scheduled to engage child monks and nuns, as a way to build their awareness and skills. These would focus on rights as well as responsibilities, social and emotional skills, address discrimination including towards children with special needs, challenge harmful practices, etc.

These **messaging components could also be built into other recreation-type events such as weekend picnics or sporting events**, to break the monotony of lecture-based advocacy and also to provide the children with opportunities to have supervised and educative fun.

Among the children themselves, **it would be useful to identify “champions” who will be able to communicate and take the message further among their peers. These children can also serve as focal points for child protection matters** that other children may want to report about.

Another avenue through which to impart such awareness and skills is the regular curriculum, which is currently being developed. The **CCPO should work out the desired content to be incorporated so that the curriculum also targets long-term behaviour change.** In this regard, the Dharma offers a wealth of wisdom from which appropriate content relevant to child protection could be drawn.

An additional option to explore is the adaptation of the UNFPA-supported Life Skills training programme. While only a few stakeholders from the *Zhung Dratshang* have taken part in some of the trainings conducted by the Bhutan Nuns Foundation (BNF) for nuns across various institutions, the programme is viewed as being highly relevant to child protection and to ensuring the wellbeing of children.

The CCPO will need to work with the relevant internal and external partners in this regard, to avoid duplication and ensure soundness of the content. It will also be important to ensure that the messaging is consistent so that *all* stakeholders (adults as well as child monks and nuns across all monastic institutions) have a common understanding of the fundamentals.

In order to provide further clarity and clear reference points, it will be useful to **develop communication material containing behaviour guidelines. This could be in the form of a**

reader-friendly booklet containing easy-to-understand written material and appropriate illustrations, as to what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behaviour towards and between children.

The wide distribution of such material can be useful to: ensure that all stakeholders understand and abide by behaviours that create a safe and conducive environment for child monks and nuns; help children to know what behaviour to expect from each other and from their elders/adults, and to recognise any harmful attitudes and practices; and to avoid potential misunderstandings that could lead to false allegations of child abuse.

Expected Outcome 3: *Child monks and nuns are knowledgeable and skilled about their rights and responsibilities, such that their participation in monastic institutions and nunneries is enhanced.*

Intervention 4: Provide systematic sensitisation and capacity building programmes for key stakeholders (adults/post holders) in the monastic institutions and nunneries, to minimise unfavourable attitudes and promote positive practices

While sensitisation programmes have been conducted and continue to be carried out, the effort needs to be scaled up and systematically planned to ensure that key stakeholders from all institutions are covered regularly.

A proper record of the number of stakeholders should be drawn up i.e. the Udzins/principles, Lopens, Kudungs, and any other post holders of all the institutions-based on Dratshang records if there are any, or else by collating the information. A schedule of sensitisation programmes should also be drawn up so that all institutions are covered each year.

The **content of the programmes should be given a thorough review to ensure that the material presented is holistic and balanced** conveying not only rights but also responsibilities of children. The needs of children with disabilities requires special consideration; it will be important to work out a proper protocol as to how institutions handle caregiving and education needs for disabled monks and nuns.

Besides sensitising on the legislative aspects, more awareness-raising content must be included so that stakeholders understand the harm caused by certain practices and behaviour, and of the long lasting benefits to the Dratshang/larger community and society of employing more positive approaches.

In this regard, it will be **essential to provide skills training on non-violent approaches to classroom as well as hostel management, including the building of interpersonal capacity skills; as well as on identifying signs of abuse, exploitation and neglect.**

Full and clear information must also be shared about the Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO and various processes and mechanisms in place. From among these adult/post holders, a Child Protection Focal Person (CP FP) should be identified in each of the monastic institutions and nunneries. They must be trained to have basic skills in counselling in addition to other basic functions they can carry out as the focal persons for child protection in their respective institutions.

Expected Outcome 4: *Key stakeholders in the monastic institutions and nunneries have sound knowledge about child rights and responsibilities, such that unfavourable attitudes and practices are minimised.*

Intervention 5: Institute a Standard Operating Procedure to address issues of child rights violation with a clear response mechanism

While interventions geared towards awareness raising and behavioural change are highly important in the Dratshang's context, it must be accompanied by clear and functional mechanisms for dealing with any cases of child rights violation. As such, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been developed/drafted with two core elements to it.

The first element clarifies the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders related to child protection in the monastic institutions and nunneries, which in many cases are a combination of preventative and response functions. The second element constitutes the standard response mechanism for specific cases, encompassing: identification, reporting and assessment, planning of response and care, referral, and follow up.

The SOP across all its elements adopts a systems approach to the extent possible, recognising the need and benefits of working with the appropriate partners and tapping into the required resources that are currently absent in the Dratshang.

For example, specialised services like medical aid or counselling are required in times of emergency, and can be arranged through partnership with the Health Ministry or RENEW respectively. Even in terms of advocacy, partnerships can be useful for example with the Bhutan Nuns Foundation for Life Skills workshops, or with Ability Bhutan Society or Health Ministry for components related to child monks and nuns with special needs.

The CCPO with the support of the proposed Advisory Committee will need to get the SOP reviewed by the relevant authorities (Dratshang Lhentshog Secretary and the five Lopens), and once approved it will have to be instituted. This means that all the relevant stakeholders will have to be sensitised on the SOP, preferably with everyone gathered together over a workshop for this purpose.

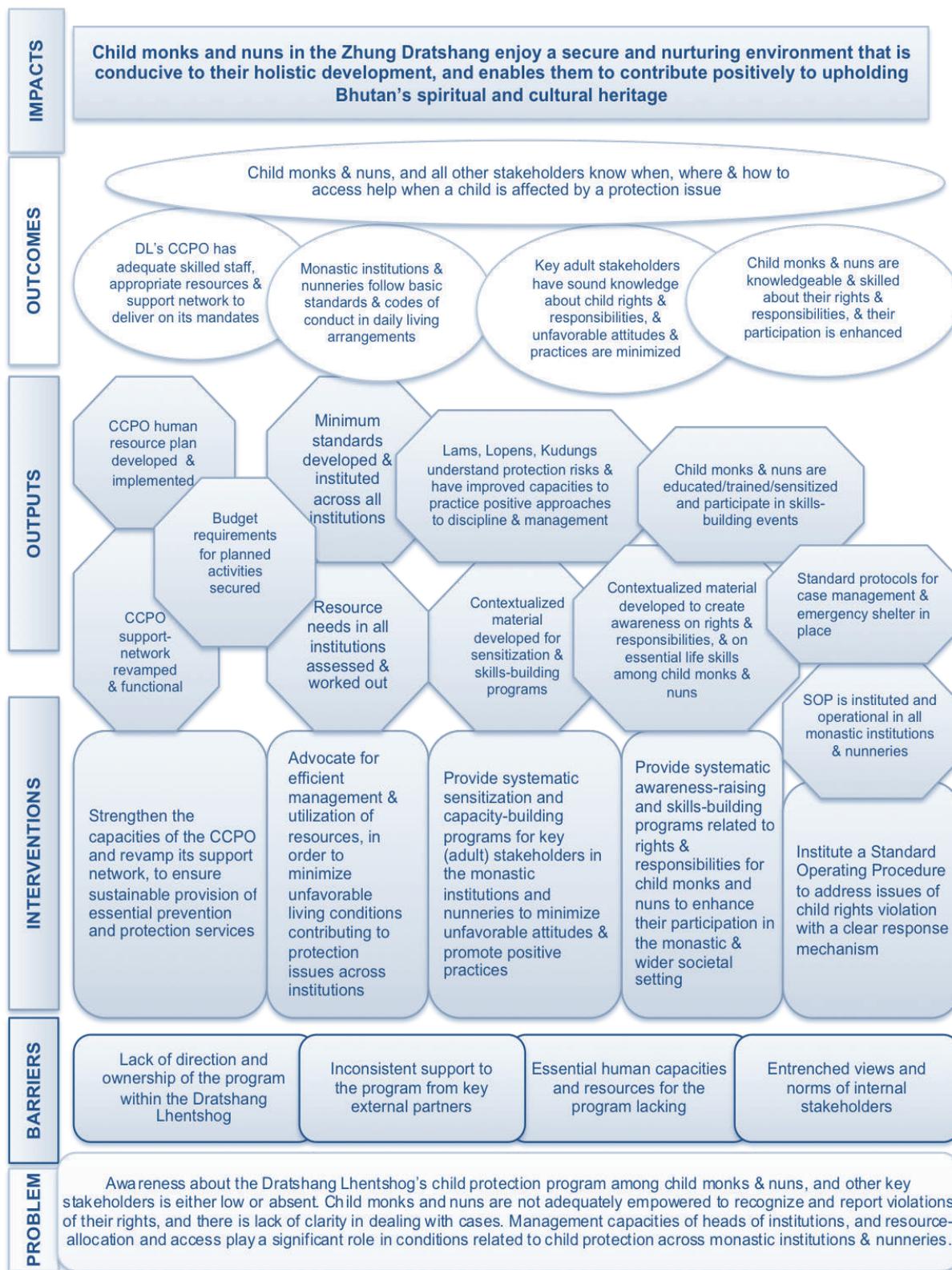
Those stakeholders not able to attend this initial workshop (CP Focal Persons who will not as yet have been identified) should be thoroughly sensitised on the SOP during their first skills-building workshop after their appointment.

Such a process is necessary to ensure that everyone has a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities, and that clear lines of communication are established. In addition, once the SOP has undergone the necessary review and approval, it should be printed and made available to all stakeholders. The finalised SOP should also be incorporated into the awareness programmes that are/will be held for child monks and nuns as well as the adults/position holders.

In addition, **the CCPO will also have to ensure that essential documents to facilitate case management are developed, reviewed and approved for internal use.** These include **a confidentiality protocol, and a protocol on how to deal with child offenders or perpetrators** in protection cases, among others that may be deemed relevant over time.

Expected Outcome 5: *Child monks and nuns and all other stakeholders know when, where and how to access help when a child is affected by a protection issue.*

4. THEORY OF CHANGE – GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION



CONCLUDING REMARKS

This Strategy document, together with a detailed Plan of Action and SOP have been developed with the intention of taking the Dratshang Lhentshog's child protection programme forward. However, these documents will only be of value if their suggested interventions and activities are implemented-which requires the CCPO to be adequately supported by its partners, from within the Dratshang as well as from among government, civil society and international development agencies.

The kind of support it requires is not just in terms of technical capacities and financial resources-though these are just as important-but also in terms of moral support. The concept of child protection, while inextricably linked to ensuring child wellbeing in a broader sense, is still generally considered a fairly sensitive matter. Thus, the need to keep in mind and heart the principle of "the best interest of the child" is of paramount importance.

The emphasis of this strategy is to build a strong preventative programme, but it is just as critical to ensure that the response component is incorruptible and takes into account this principle every step of the way. Doing so will require some hard decisions to be made by key stakeholders-decisions that convey an important moral signal as to what is acceptable, tolerated and/or ignored, or unacceptable.

The Zhung Dratshang holds an important position in Bhutanese society, and as emphasised recurrently by many internal and external stakeholders, it is uniquely positioned to be a role model. It has enormous potential and ability to provide guidance and counsel to individuals, families, local communities, and society at large.

There is deep appreciation for the Dratshang's periodic teachings and explanations of Buddhist and cultural practices on the Bhutan Broadcasting Service television channel. It has also been increasingly noticed and appreciated that members of the Dratshang have started imparting key messages related to health and hygiene, child rights, and other social causes during major religious ceremonies presided over by H.H. the Je Khenpo.

There is a clear sense that people are keen to see a greater level of engagement from the Dratshang in advocating for a wide range of social causes. Internal as well as external stakeholders suggested that the Dratshang also consider the needs and welfare of children residing in private monastic institutions and nunneries.

The Zhung Dratshang is thus well placed to become a positive change agent in the larger child protection system in the country. Enabling the CCPO to implement its Strategic Plan of Action and SOP to improve conditions within the Central Monk Body will be a critical step forward, and the moral signal will not be missed.

A young child with a shaved head, wearing a maroon robe, is shown in profile, looking upwards and to the right. The child is holding a piece of red fabric. The background is dark with a red circular light effect.

Child Protection
Action Plan for
Dratshang Lhentshog

(July 2017-June 2022)

CHILD PROTECTION ACTION PLAN

In view of the need to strengthen the child protection programme of the Dratshang Lhentshog, a Strategy, Plan of Action and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) have been developed.

This document contains the Action Plan, which is an elaboration of the strategic interventions outlined in the Strategy document. It details the specific activities that need to be taken by the Child Care and Protection Office (CCPO) of the Dratshang Lhentshog with the support of internal and external stakeholders, to build a protective environment for children in the monastic institutions and nunneries.

GOAL/DESIRED IMPACT

The long term goal or desired impact of the Dratshang Lhentshog's child protection programme is articulated as: ***Child monks and nuns in the Zhung Dratshang enjoy a secure and nurturing environment that is conducive to their holistic development, and enables them to contribute positively to upholding Bhutan's spiritual and cultural heritage.***

KEY INTERVENTIONS

Intervention 1: Strengthen the capacities of the CCPO and revamp its support network, to ensure sustainable provision of essential prevention and protection services

Intervention 2: Advocate for effective management and utilisation of resources, in order to minimise unfavourable living conditions contributing to protection issues across institutions

Intervention 3: Provide systematic awareness-raising and skills-building programmes related to rights and responsibilities for child monks and nuns, to enhance their participation in the monastic setting

Intervention 4: Provide systematic sensitisation and capacity building programmes for key stakeholders (adults/post holders) in the monastic institutions and nunneries, to minimise unfavourable attitudes and promote positive practices

Intervention 5: Institute a Standard Operating Procedure to address issues of child rights violation with a clear response mechanism

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Outcome 1	Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO has adequate skilled staff, appropriate resources and support network in place to deliver on its mandate
Outcome 2	Monastic institutions & nunneries follow basic standards & codes of conduct in daily living arrangements
Outcome 3	Key adult stakeholders have sound knowledge about child rights and responsibilities, and unfavourable attitudes and practices are minimized
Outcome 4	Child monks & nuns are knowledgeable & skilled about their rights & responsibilities, and their participation is enhanced
Outcome 5	Child monks & nuns, and all other stakeholders know when, where and how to access help when a child is affected by a protection issue

OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

Based on the strategic interventions and expected outcomes listed in the previous sections (and described in more detail in the Strategy document), the CCPO will coordinate specific activities to produce the corresponding outputs as listed in the table below, within the next five years (July 2017-June 2022).

Outcome 1	Dratshang Lhentshog's CCPO has adequate skilled staff, appropriate resources and support network in place to deliver on its mandate				
Output 1.1	CCPO human resource plan developed and implemented				
Activity	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/ Support	Cost Estimate (NU.)
Activity 1.1.1	Finalise staffing requirement and prepare detailed ToR	Within Sep. 2017 (1 month)	CCPO	Advisory Committee	-
Activity 1.1.2	Identify and appoint potential candidates (Programme & specialist staff) for CCPO from <u>within the Zhung Dratshang</u>	Within Oct-Nov. 2017 (2 months)	CCPO	Advisory Committee	-
Activity 1.1.3	Provide basic orientation (in-house) to the new recruits on Child protection, the CCPO Strategy & SOP	Within Nov. 2017	CCPO		-
Activity 1.1.4	Send CCPO staff for their respective short-term training courses in case management + counselling + CP & programme management (including skills to manage and utilise incoming data, monitoring, etc.) in the region	Jan-March 2018 (2-3 months)	CCPO	NCWC/UNICEF help identify appropriate courses; UNICEF support	3,000,000/- (5 persons x Nu. 600,000 per person)
Activity 1.1.5	Develop and maintain a system to capture all incoming information and data pertaining to child protection from across the various monastic institutions and nunneries	Within April 2018 (1 month)	CCPO in-house		
Activity 1.1.6	Follow up shorter-term trainings/ exposure trips etc. to keep skills of programme & specialist staff updated	Annually in two separate batches (2019-2022)		UNICEF support	8,000,000/- (5 persons/4 times over 4 yrs/ Nu. 400,000 per person)
Activity 1.1.7	Recruit Driver, ensuring clear past records + positive character assessment	By March 2018 (together with vehicle procurement)	Dratshang Lhentshog	Salary & Benefits in line with existing govt. rules	-

CCPO Support Network revamped, skilled and functional					
Output 1.2	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 1.2.1	Finalise Advisory Committee Members composition, ToR and make appointments	Within July 2017 (1 month)	DL Secretary + CCPO	With order issued by Je Khenpo/Five Lopens	-
Activity 1.2.2	Provide basic orientation to the newly appointed Advisory Committee on Child Protection and on the CCPO Strategy & SOP	Within August 2017	CCPO		-
Activity 1.2.3	Set criteria, select and appoint members of the Regional Representatives	Within Oct-Nov. 2017 (2 months)	Advisory Committee + CCPO		30,000/- (Working lunch over 3 days x 10 persons x Nu. 1000)
Activity 1.2.4	Convene a meeting of the Regional Reps. + Advisory Committee and provide 3-day sensitisation workshop	Within December 2017	CCPO		190,000/- (TA Nu.1000/day & DA Nu. 1000/day for 7-10 days average = Nu. 20,000 x 6 Regional Reps = Nu. 120,000); (3-day workshop cost for 20 participants @ Nu.1000/person/day for meal +refreshment = Nu. 60,000/- + conference facilities & office supplies Nu.10,000/-)
Activity 1.2.5	Identify CP Focal Persons in all institutions (during the first round of general sensitisation programmes)	Within Nov-Dec 2018	CCPO + Regional Reps.	With assistance from the institutions	-

Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
<p>Activity 1.2.6</p> <p>Provide series of skills-building workshops for CP Focal Persons in 3 regions, with parallel workshops running at each time for “Champions”/ Child FPs and for Adult FPs</p> <p>Note: The training content for the Adult focal persons must also include basic counselling skills</p> <p><u>Estimated figures:</u> 388 monastic schools + 28 nunneries (inclusive of private nunneries) = 416 institutions....Assuming 1 FP from among children + 1 FP from among adults at each institution, 416 x 2 = 832 focal persons across the country</p>	<p>Within Jan-March 2019</p>	<p>CCPO staff + 2 local consultants (with expertise in conducting workshops for children, to prepare for and lead total 9 days of workshop each, amounting to approx. 1 month engagement incl. prep. of 10 days & travel of 9-11 days by each)</p>	<p>Participation of Regional Reps, and Advisory Committee members if available</p>	<p>9,664,400/-</p> <p>Cost of workshops/hosting the CP focal persons & participants based on TA/DA rates Nu. 2000/day/per person for a total of 832 CP FPs = 5 x 2000 x 832 = <u>8,320,000</u></p> <p>+ TA/DA for 3 CCPO staff + provision for 5 more among members of Regional Rep/Advisory Committee members who may attend if available, over 15 days = 8 x 15 x 2000 = <u>240,000</u></p> <p>+ (2 local consultants x 30 days @ USD 200/day all-inclusive = USD 12,000/ @ Nu. 67/\$1- = Nu. <u>804,400/-</u>)</p> <p>+ Contingency Nu. <u>300,000/-</u></p>
<p>Activity 1.2.7</p> <p>Follow-up training sessions for Child Protection Focal Persons</p>	<p>At least once within the period (2020-2022)</p>	<p>CCPO staff</p>	<p>Participation of Regional Reps, and Advisory Committee members if available</p>	<p>8,860,000/-</p> <p>(As calculated above, minus the cost of consultants required for the initial round)</p>
<p>Activity 1.2.8</p> <p>Conduct quarterly meetings of Advisory Committee (Thimphu)</p>	<p>4 times a year (2018-2022)</p>	<p>CCPO + Advisory Committee</p>		<p>100,000/-</p> <p>(Working lunch for approx. 10 persons x Nu. 500 x 4 times/year x 5 yrs.)</p>
<p>Activity 1.2.9</p> <p>Conduct biannual meetings of Regional Representatives, spanning 2-3 days (This will entail total travel time of 2-4 days back & forth for each of the representatives assuming the meetings are held at CCPO Thimphu. If location is elsewhere, TA/DA of CCPO staff will have to be factored in.</p>	<p>Twice a year (2018-2022)</p>	<p>CCPO + Regional Reps.</p>		<p>840,000/-</p> <p>(TA Nu. 1000 + DA Nu.1000 = Nu. 2000/day for 7 days average = Nu.14,000 x 6 Regional Reps = Nu. 84,000 per meeting x total of 10 meetings over 5 years</p>
<p>Activity 1.2.10</p> <p>Conduct ToT workshops for Advisory Committee + Regional Reps. + CCPO staff</p>	<p>Annually, with first workshop in October 2018 (2018-2022)</p>	<p>CCPO-hired consultant</p>	<p>With support from NCWC and/or UNICEF</p>	<p>2,500,000/-</p> <p>(Based on CCPO practice of conducting 3-day workshops in each region, with 20 participants each, each workshop @ Nu. 400,000/- PLUS consultant fee Nu. 100,000/- = Nu.500,000 x 5 years)</p>

Activity	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 1.2.11	Exposure tours to selected monastic institutions in India/Sri Lanka/Thailand for selected CP Focal Persons/ Child Champions, and Regional Representatives <i>Additional exposure tours could also be planned in-country</i>	Annually (2019-2022)	CCPO to organise the tours CCPO to also set the criteria, with guidance from the Advisory Committee, for selection of CP Focal Persons	With support from regional representatives in the selection of participants from among the adult & children CP focal persons	20,250,000/- (Approx. 150 persons in total over the four-year period x Nu. 7500/day x 14 days = <u>15,750,000/-</u> Plus airfare/transport costs Nu. 30,000 x 150 = Nu. <u>4,500,000/-</u>)
Output 1.3 Budget requirements for planned activities & essential office equipment obtained					
Activity	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 1.3.1	Prepare & submit detailed programme and budget proposals for first year of activities	Within July-August 2017 (2 months)	CCPO + DL Planning Officer/ Admin & Finance	Resource mobilisation support from UNICEF	-
Activity 1.3.2	Obtain one Hilux/4WD vehicle as Pool Vehicle and for use during emergencies by CCPO (ensuring regular provision of govt. budget for fuel & maintenance)	By March 2018	DL Adm/Fin. to explore options for procuring in line with govt. rules	Dratshang Lhentshog/ RGOB	-
Activity 1.3.3	Purchase computers, printers & other office equipment required for new staff	By March 2018	DL Admin/ Finance to procure for CCPO	With budget mobilisation support by Advisory Committee and/or UNICEF	450,000/- (5 computers x Nu. 60,000 = Nu. <u>300,000/-</u> ; 1 heavy-duty common use printer Nu. <u>100,000/-</u> ; 2 smaller printers x Nu. 25,000 = <u>50,000/-</u>)
Activity 1.3.4	Prepare & submit detailed programme and budget proposals for subsequent years of activities	Annually (2018-2021)	CCPO + DL Planning Officer/ Admin & Finance	Resource mobilisation support from UNICEF, NCWC, GNHC	-

Monastic institutions and nunneries follow basic standards and codes of conduct in daily living arrangements					
Resource needs in all institutions assessed and allocation worked out					
	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Outcome 2					
Output 2.1					
Activity 2.1.1	Conduct field assessment of resource needs in all institutions and nunneries, including the needs of non-registered monks & nuns	By end-June 2018	CCPO in close working collaboration with DL Religion and Health Project + Education division	Advisory Committee + Regional Reps	720,000/- 1 month TA/DA for 12 persons (6 CCPO staff + 6 Regional Reps) = 12 persons x Nu.2000 x 30 days
Activity 2.1.2	Conduct an assessment of child monks and nuns with special needs	Complete assessment by end-June 2018	CCPO-hired consultant	Ministry of Health/ Education guidance	Cost included in guideline development
Activity 2.1.3	Initiate discussion and work out solutions for allocating equal support for non-registered child monks & nuns, at par with the support/benefits provided for those receiving <i>Tsenzen</i>	By end-August 2018	CCPO in close working collaboration with <i>Tsenzen Gupon</i> and the Advisory Committee	With additional budgetary support sought from Zhung Dratshang and/or RGOB	-
Output 2.2					
Minimum standards reviewed/developed and instituted all monastic institutions and nunneries					
	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 2.2.1	Review and set minimum standards for accommodation including age-appropriate sleeping quarters, sanitation, nutrition, classroom facilities, recreation facilities, regular schedule, annual winter break, and screening process for Lopen/Kudung appointment	By end-August 2018	CCPO in close discussion & collaboration with the Religion and Health Project, and the Education division	Advisory Committee + Ministry of Agriculture & Forests, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health+ other potential agencies as relevant on nutrition, classroom facilities/education, recreation components	-

Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 2.2.2 Develop guidelines for catering to child monks and nuns with special needs	Finalise guidelines by end-August 2018	CCPO - hired consultant	Seek guidance from Ministry of Health & Education + explore support from GNHC given that vulnerable groups are highlighted as priority in the 12 th FYP	1,206,000/- (3 month local consultancy at a minimal rate of USD 200/day all inclusive = USD 18,000/-)
Activity 2.2.3 Prepare & secure budget for the provision of appropriate resources to those institutions requiring support for ensuring minimum standards	Within Sept. 2018-June 2019	CCPO + Advisory Committee	NCWC and/or UNICEF support in resource mobilisation + RGOB agencies including GNHC, MOAF, MOH, MOE on relevant components	<i>Cost estimates to be worked out based on the assessment that should have been carried out</i>
Activity 2.2.4 Propose & follow up on obtaining the regular provision of iron tablets for child monks & nuns across all monastic institutions & nunneries (as is currently being provided for school children)	Within July-August 2017 (2 months)	CCPO and Health & Religion Project Office with support of Advisory Committee	Ministries of Health & Education	-
Activity 2.2.5 Carry out regular monitoring in the monastic institutions & nunneries to ensure standards are maintained	Annually (2019-2022)	Regional Reps in their respective regions	With CCPO support	855,000/- (TA/DA 2000/day x 30 man days = Nu. 60,000/- plus Porter/pony Nu.750 x 15 days = Nu.11,250/-; amounts to Nu. 71,250 per region x 3 regions = Nu. 2,13,750/- x 4yr)

Outcome 3	Child monks and nuns are knowledgeable and skilled about their rights and responsibilities, and their participation in monastic institutions and nunneries is enhanced.				
Output 3.1	Contextualised material developed to create awareness on rights and responsibilities, and on essential life skills among child monks and nuns				
Activity	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 3.1.1	Prepare workshop material focusing on child rights and responsibilities, skills building for child monks and nuns to prevent and report on protection issues: 1 international consultant to be hired for 1 month, and to be assisted by CCPO staff to develop the material; Int'l consultant to impart necessary workshop skillset to CCPO staff to conduct children's workshops).	Within July-September end 2018	International consultant assisted by CCPO staff	NCWC and/or UNICEF support with resource mobilisation & hiring of consultant	1,105,000/- (30 days int'l consultant @ USD 500/day + Airfare & local travel/incidental Nu. 100,000/- = Nu. 1,105,000/-
Activity 3.1.2	Prepare in consultation with relevant partners, Child Protection relevant learning material to be incorporated into the regular curriculum (at Lobdra level). Content could be drawn/adapted from: - Relevant Dharma material available with the Dratshang - The Life Skills Programme as suggested during the stakeholder consultation	Within July-December 2017 (As curriculum development is currently underway & planned for completion soon)	CCPO to work closely with DL Education Secretary	Advisory Committee to review	-
Output 3.2	Child monks & nuns are educated/trained/sensitised and participate in skill-building events				
Activity	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 3.2.1	Develop schedule of workshop & recreation-type events to cover all children from the relevant institutions	Within July-September end 2018 (3 months)	CP/Programme Officers at CCPO		-
Activity 3.2.2	Conduct a first round of 2-day workshops during which CP focal person/Champions are to be selected) (Assuming participation of approx. 4000 children in total, with workshops to be planned in several convenient locations where children from across multiple institutions can convene at each time. CP focal person/champions to also be identified from the private nunneries.	Within Nov-Dec. 2018	CP/Programme Officers at CCPO	With the support of NCWC/UNICEF	16,460,000/- 2 months TA/DA for 3 CP Officers = 60 days x 3 x 2000 = Nu. 3,60,000/-; Cost of workshops/hosting children based on TA/DA rates Nu. 2000/day/child = 2 days x 4000 children = Nu. 16,000,000/- Incidentals Nu. 100,000/-

Activity	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 3.2.3	Follow up/refresher programmes in accordance with the schedule of planned activities/events developed by the CCPO to increase participation of child monks and nuns in the monastic institution & nunneries	At least once within 2020-2022	CP/Programme Officers at CCPO	Regional Rep./Advisory Committee members to participate if available	16,460,000/- Comparable amount as initial round of workshop expenses
Activity 3.2.4	Incorporate the appropriate Child Protection learning material for children into the regular curriculum	By December-end <u>2017</u>	CP/Programme Officer and DL Education Secretary		-
Activity 3.2.5	Prepare contextualised material for awareness-raising and skills-building, including behaviour guidelines (<i>to clarify appropriate and inappropriate behaviour towards and between children</i>) to be printed as CP advocacy booklets	Within July-September end 2018 (3 months)	CCPO Staff		
Activity 3.2.6	Print for distribution among children as well as adults, the CP advocacy booklets	Within October 2018			750,000/- (Printing costs including for layout & design Nu. 150 x 5000 copies)

Outcome 4	Key adult stakeholders in the monastic institutions and nunneries (<i>Udzin, Lopens, Kudungs and other management-level stakeholders</i>) have sound knowledge about child rights and responsibilities, and unfavourable attitudes and practices are minimised				
Output 4.1	Contextualised material developed for sensitisation and skills-building programmes				
Activity	Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate
Activity 4.1.1	Review and refine sensitisation material to ensure that content is holistic and balanced, including the special needs of children with disabilities	Within July-September end 2018 (3 months)	CP/Programme Officers + other specialist staff at CCPO	Ability Bhutan Society and/ or Ministry of Health for guidance on disability component	-
Activity 4.1.2	Prepare training material for skills-building in positive approaches to discipline and management – including the building of interpersonal capacity skills	Within July-September end 2018 (3 months)	CP/Programme Officers + other CCPO staff		-

Output 4.2					
Udzins, Lopens, Kudlungs & other post holders in the monastic institutions and nunneries understand protection risks and have improved capacities to practice positive approaches to discipline and management					
Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate	
Activity 4.2.1 Develop an annual schedule of workshops including institutions and number of participants to be covered by each programme	Within July-September end 2018 (3 months)	CP/Programme Officers at CCPO	In consultation with the monastic institutions and nunneries	-	
Activity 4.2.2 Conduct a first round of 2-day workshops during which CP focal persons are to be selected from among the adult post-holders (Assuming approx. 1000 adult stakeholders in total, with each workshop session to cover 60-100 participants) CP focal persons to also be identified from the private nunneries	Within Nov.-Dec. 2018	3 CCPO staff + 6 Regional Rep. (GRR)	Advisory Committee members to participate if available	4,640,000/- TA/DA for 9 persons x 30 days x 2000/day = Nu. 5,40,000/-; Plus Cost of hosting workshops/stakeholders based on TA/DA rates Nu. 2000/person x 2 days x 1000 persons = Nu. 4,000,000/-; Plus Incidentals Nu. 100,000/-	
Activity 4.2.3 Conduct follow-up/refresher programmes in accordance with the schedule	At least once within 2020-2022	CCPO + Regional Rep.	Advisory Committee members to participate if available	4,640,000/-	
Activity 4.2.4 Conduct sensitisation workshop for mid-level to senior monks & nuns at the Zhung Dratshang HQ (Based on stakeholder suggestion)	Twice over the course of the 5-year period (2018-2022)			200,000 (3-day workshop cost for 30 participants @ Nu.1000/person/day for meal + refreshment = Nu. 90,000/- + conference facilities & office supplies Nu.10,000/-) = Nu. 100,000/- x 2 times	

Outcome 5 Child monks and nuns and all other stakeholders know when, where and how to access help when a child is affected by a protection issue					
Output 5.1 The SOP is instituted and operational in all monastic institutions and nunneries					
Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate	
Activity 5.1.1	Present proposed SOP to key decision makers in the Dratshang for their review and approval	Within September 2017	CCPO and Secretary of the Dratshang Lhentshog	-	
Activity 5.1.2	Conduct a workshop with the key internal and external stakeholders (with the exception of the CP Focal Persons who will not yet be appointed, and will have to be sensitized at a later date) to establish common understanding of roles and responsibilities, and to establish clear lines of communication for approved SOP At a later stage, CP Focal persons should be clearly informed of their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the SOP, once they have been selected/appointed and during their first round of sensitisation workshops (and any follow up events thereafter). The printed SOP should also be used to facilitate their full understanding and participation.	Within December 2017	CCPO With the participation of Advisory Committee, Regional Reps, & External Stakeholders	190,000/- (TA Nu.1000/day & DA Nu. 1000/day for 7-10 days average = Nu. 20,000 x 6 Regional Reps = Nu. 120,000) (2-day workshop cost for 30 participants @ Nu.1000/head/day + Nu.10,000/- conference facilities = Nu.20,000/-)	
Activity 5.1.3	Print finalised SOP and distribute to all stakeholders including all monastic institutions and nunneries (distribution can be done during the conduct of other awareness programmes)	Within January 2018	CCPO	500,000/- (Printing as pamphlets or small booklets, inclusive of layout & design: Nu. 100 x 5000 copies)	
Output 5.2 Standard requirements for case management and emergency shelter are in place					
Activity	Time Frame	Responsibility	Collaboration/Support	Cost Estimate	
Activity 5.2.1	Reclaim the office space/rooms in the CCPO & emergency shelter building currently occupied by non-CCPO staff. Provide notice by August 2017 for office space to be handed over by January 2018 or earlier.	August 2017 -January 2018 or earlier	Advisory Committee	-	
Activity 5.2.2	Develop confidentiality protocol for case management for internal use by CCPO	Within April-May 2018	CCPO Advisory Committee to review	-	
Activity 5.2.3	Develop a protocol for dealing with children when they are the offenders in child protection cases	Within April-May 2018	Advisory Committee with support from CCPO	-	
Activity 5.2.4	Recruit Cook/Night Guard for the emergency shelter at the CCPO premises ensuring clear past records + positive character assessment	Within Jan-Feb 2018	CCPO Salary & Benefits from Dratshang Lhentshog	624,000/- (52 months x Nu. 12,000 p.m. up to Jul 2022)	

BUDGET REQUIREMENT – INITIAL ESTIMATES AND CAVEATS

As provided in the following table, the total estimated budget requirement to take the Dratshang Lhentshog's Child Protection Programme forward over the next few years is approximately **Nu. 102,234,400/-**.

However, this is only an initial indicative figure, pertaining to the most pressing requirements to take the programme forward in the first two years i.e. largely for capacity building activities.

It should be noted that this total figure does not account for other essential resource requirements that will have to be determined at a later date by the CCPO, once a baseline assessment covering all monastic institutions and nunneries has been conducted and minimum standards are set (as indicated in the outcome/output/activities table).

Other details likely to emerge later into the programme, and for which costing will have to be reviewed and updated, include (but are not necessarily limited to): the choice of training programmes that CCPO staff choose and are approved to undertake, the kinds of events and activities planned for building children's skills and for increasing their participation, the choice of locations for exposure tours, among others.

It should be noted that the current estimates for essential activities (such as sensitisation and awareness programmes for key stakeholders) have been made using a broad assumption of figures, based on the general picture presented by the *2010 Assessment*. In the absence of readily available disaggregated (and updated) data—i.e. how many of the total Zhung Dratshang strength are children across various age groups; how many are Lams/Lopens/Kudungs; and in how many of the total monastic institutions and nunneries child monks and nuns actually reside—very broad approximations are made.

The budget estimates will therefore require further review and verification when the CCPO prepares its annual work plan and budget proposals, based on updated data once they are available.

Lastly, it should also be noted that the current budget estimates do not include regular operational expenses such as salaries for CCPO staff, and for major capital expenditures such for the purchase of a 4WD pool vehicle for the CCPO. While these are some components implicit in the Action Plan, it is assumed that such expenses will be covered through the Zhung Dratshang/Dratshang Lhentshog's regular budget allocations.

#	Activities (July 2017 through June 2022)	Amount in Nu.
Activity 1.1.4	Send CCPO staff for their respective short-term training courses in case management + counselling + CP & programme management (including skills to manage and utilise incoming data, monitoring, etc.) in the region	3,000,000
Activity 1.1.6	Follow up shorter-term trainings/ exposure trips etc. to keep skills of CCPO programme & specialist staff updated	8,000,000
Activity 1.2.3	Set criteria, select and appoint members of the CCPO Regional Representatives	30,000
Activity 1.2.4	Convene a meeting of the Regional Reps. + Advisory Committee and provide 3-day sensitisation workshop	190,000
Activity 1.2.6	Provide series of skills-building workshops for CP Focal Persons in 3 regions, with parallel workshops running at each time for “Champions”/Child FPs and for Adult FPs	9,664,400
Activity 1.2.7	Follow-up training sessions for Child Protection Focal Persons	8,860,000
Activity 1.2.8	Conduct quarterly meetings of Advisory Committee (Thimphu)	100,000
Activity 1.2.9	Conduct biannual meetings of Regional Representatives, spanning 2-3 days	840,000
Activity 1.2.10	Conduct ToT workshops for Advisory Committee + Regional Reps. + CCPO staff	2,500,000
Activity 1.2.11	Exposure tours to selected monastic institutions in India/Sri Lanka/Thailand for <u>selected</u> CP Focal Persons/Child Champions, and Regional Representatives	20,250,000
Activity 1.3.3	Purchase computers, printers & other office equipment required for new staff	450,000
Activity 2.1.1	Conduct field assessment of resource needs in all institutions and nunneries, including the needs of non-registered monks & nuns	720,000
Activity 2.2.2	Develop guidelines for catering to child monks and nuns with special needs	1,206,000
Activity 2.2.5	Carry out regular monitoring in the monastic institutions & nunneries to ensure standards are maintained	855,000
Activity 3.1.1	Prepare workshop material focusing on child rights and responsibilities, skills building for child monks and nuns to prevent and report on protection issues	1,105,000
Activity 3.2.2	Conduct a first round of 2-day workshops <u>during which CP focal person/Champions are to be selected</u>	16,460,000
Activity 3.2.3	Follow up/refresher programmes in accordance with the schedule of planned activities/events developed by the CCPO to increase participation of child monks and nun in the monastic institution & nunneries	16,460,000
Activity 3.2.6	Print for distribution among children as well as adults, the CP advocacy booklets	750,000
Activity 4.2.2	Conduct a first round of 2-day workshops <u>during which CP focal persons are to be selected</u> from among the adult post-holders	4,640,000
Activity 4.2.3	Conduct follow-up/refresher programmes in accordance with the schedule	4,640,000
Activity 4.2.4	Conduct sensitisation workshop for mid-level to senior monks & nuns at the Zhung Dratshang HQ	200,000
Activity 5.1.2	Conduct a workshop with the key internal and external stakeholders (with the exception of the CP Focal Persons who will not yet be appointed) to establish common understanding of roles and responsibilities, and to establish clear lines of communication for approved SOP	190,000
Activity 5.1.3	Print finalised SOP and distribute to all stakeholders including all monastic institutions and nunneries	500,000
Activity 5.2.4	Recruit Cook/Night Guard for the emergency shelter at the CCPO premises	624,000
	Total (Ngultrums)	102,234,400/-

BROAD TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

The following table presents the action plan along a linear timeline, to give a clearer sense of the sequence of activities to be carried out from July 2017-June 2022.

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility/Partner	Period of Implementation
1	Finalise Advisory Committee Members composition, ToR, and make the appointments	DL Secretary and CCPO- With order issued by Je Khenpo or Five Lopens	July 2017
2	Prepare & submit detailed programme and budget proposals for first year of activities	CCPO + DL Planning Officer/Admin & Finance- Resource mobilisation support from UNICEF	July-Aug 2017
3	Propose & follow up on obtaining the regular provision of iron tablets for child monks & nuns across all monastic institutions & nunneries	CCPO and Health & Religion Project Office with support of Advisory Committee, to approach the Ministries of Health & Education	
4	Prepare in consultation with relevant partners, Child Protection learning material to be incorporated into the regular curriculum (at Lobdra level)	CCPO to work closely with DL Education Secretary – Advisory Committee to review	July-December 2017
5	Provide basic orientation to the newly appointed Advisory Committee on Child Protection and on the CCPO Strategy & SOP	CCPO	August 2017
6	Provide notice for non-CCPO occupants to hand over office/rooms by January 2018 or earlier	Advisory Committee	
7	Finalise CCPO staffing requirement and prepare detailed ToR	CCPO- With Advisory Committee to review	September 2017
8	Present proposed SOP to key decision makers in the Dratshang for their review and approval	CCPO and Secretary of the Dratshang Lhentshog	
9	Identify and appoint potential candidates (Programme & specialist staff) for CCPO	CCPO + Advisory Committee	Oct-Nov. 2017
10	Set criteria, select and appoint members of the Regional Representatives	Advisory Committee with assistance from CCPO	
11	Provide basic orientation (in-house) to the new recruits on Child protection, the CCPO Strategy & SOP	CCPO	Nov. 2017
12	Convene a meeting of the Regional Representatives + Advisory Committee + and provide 3-day sensitisation workshop	CCPO	Dec. 2017

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility/Partner	Period of Implementation
13	Conduct a workshop with the key internal and external stakeholders (<i>with the exception of the CP Focal Persons who will not yet be appointed</i>) to establish common understanding of roles and responsibilities, and to establish clear lines of communication for approved SOP	CCPO— With the participation of Advisory Committee, Regional Reps, & External Stakeholders	
14	Incorporate the appropriate Child Protection learning material for children into the regular curriculum	CP + Programme Officer and DL Education Secretary	Dec. end 2017
15	Print finalised SOP for distribution to all stakeholders including all monastic institutions and nunneries (<i>distribution can be done during the conduct of other awareness programmes</i>)	CCPO	Jan. 2018
16	Take over the office space/rooms from non-CCPO occupants in the CCPO & emergency shelter building	Advisory Committee	
17	Recruit Cook/Night Guard for the emergency shelter at the CCPO premises ensuring clear past records + positive character assessment	CCPO	Jan-Feb 2018
18	Send CCPO staff for their respective training courses in case management + counselling + CP & programme management (short term)	NCWC and/or UNICEF to help identify appropriate courses	Jan-March 2018
19	Obtain one Hilux/4WD vehicle as Pool Vehicle (and for use during emergencies)	DL Admin/Finance to explore options for procuring in line with govt. rules, with support from Dratshang Lhentshog/RGOB	March 2018
20	Procure computers, printers & other equipment required for new staff	DL Admin/Finance to procure for CCPO with budget mobilisation support by Advisory Committee and/or UNICEF	
21	Recruit Driver/Messenger, ensuring clear past records + positive character assessment	CCPO	
22	Develop and maintain a system to capture all incoming information and data pertaining to child protection from across the various monastic institutions and nunneries	CCPO in-house	April 2018
23	Develop confidentiality protocol for case management for internal use by CCPO	CCPO Caseworkers; Advisory Committee to review	April-May 2018
24	Develop a protocol for dealing with children when they are the offenders in child protection cases	Advisory Committee with support from CCPO	

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility/Partner	Period of Implementation
25	Conduct field assessment of resource needs in all institutions and nunneries	CCPO in close working collaboration with DL Religion and Health Project + Education division/Advisory Committee + Regional Reps	June-end 2018
26	Conduct an assessment of child monks and nuns with special needs	CCPO-hired consultant/ Ministry of Health support or guidance	
27	Develop schedule of workshops & recreation-type events to cover all children from the relevant institutions	CCPO— In consultation with the monastic institutes and nunneries	July-September end 2018
28	Develop an annual schedule of workshops including institutions and number of (adult) participants to be covered by each programme		
29	Prepare workshop material focusing on child rights and responsibilities, and skills building for child monks & nuns to prevent and report on protection issues	International consultant assisted by CCPO staff— NCWC and/or UNICEF support with resource mobilisation & hiring of professional	
30	Prepare contextualised material for awareness-raising and skills-building, including behaviour guidelines (<i>to clarify appropriate and inappropriate behaviour towards and between children</i>), to be printed as CP advocacy booklets	CCPO Staff	
31	Review and refine CP sensitisation material (for Udzins, Lopens, Kudungs, and other adult/post-holders in the monastic institutions & nunneries) to ensure that content is holistic and balanced, including the special needs of children with disabilities	CCPO— Reach out to Ability Bhutan Society and/or Ministry of Health for guidance on disability component	
32	Prepare training material for skills-building (for Udzins, Lopens, Kudungs, etc.) in positive approaches to discipline and management, including the building of interpersonal capacity skills	CCPO	
33	Initiate discussion and work out solutions for allocating equal support for non-registered child monks & nuns, at par with the support/benefits provided for those receiving <i>Tsenzen</i>	CCPO in close working collaboration with <i>Tsenzen Gupon</i> / Advisory Committee	August-end 2018
34	Review and set minimum standards for accommodation including age-appropriate sleeping quarters, sanitation, nutrition, classroom facilities, recreation facilities, regular schedule, annual winter break, and screening process for Lopen/Kudung appointment	CCPO in close discussion & collaboration with the Religion and Health Project, and the Education division— With the support of the Advisory Committee	
35	Develop guidelines for catering to child monks and nuns with special needs	CCPO-hired consultant – With guidance/support from Ministry of Health	

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility/Partner	Period of Implementation
36	Prepare and secure budget requirements for the provision of appropriate resources to those institutions requiring support for ensuring minimum standards	CCPO + Advisory Committee— With resource mobilisation support from NCWC and/or UNICEF	Sept. 2018— <u>June 2019</u>
37	Print for distribution among children as well as adults, the CP advocacy booklets	CCPO	October 2018
38	Conduct ToT workshops for Advisory Committee + Regional Reps. + CCPO staff	CCPO-hired consultant— With support from NCWC and/or UNICEF	Annually, with <u>first workshop in October 2018</u> (2018-2022)
39	Conduct a first round of workshops for child monks and nuns	CP/Programme Officers at CCPO	Nov.-Dec. 2018
40	Conduct a first round of workshops for Lams, Lopens, Kudungs and other management-level stakeholders	CCPO + Regional Rep.— Advisory Committee members to participate if available	
41	Identify CP Focal Persons (child champions + adult FPs) during the conduct of the (above) first round of sensitization workshops for children + adult stakeholders in the monastic institutions & nunneries. <i>CP focal persons also to be identified from among the private nunneries.</i>	CCPO + Regional Representatives, with assistance from the respective institutions	
42	Conduct quarterly meetings of Advisory Committee (in Thimphu)	CCPO + Advisory Committee	4 times a year (2018-2022)
43	Conduct biannual meetings of Regional Representatives	CCPO + Regional Reps.	Twice a year (2018-2022)
44	Conduct sensitisation workshop for mid-level to senior monks & nuns at the Zhung Dratshang HQ	CCPO	Twice over the course of 2018-2022
45	Prepare & submit detailed programme and budget proposals for subsequent years of activities	CCPO + DL Planning Officer/Admin & Finance// Resource mobilisation support from UNICEF, NCWC, GNHC	Annually (2018-2021)
46	Provide series of skills-building workshops for CP Focal Persons in 3 regions, with parallel sessions running at each time for “Champions”/ Child focal persons and for Adult focal persons	CCPO-hired consultants with participation of CCPO staff, Regional Reps, and Advisory Committee members if available	Jan-March 2019
47	Follow up trainings, exposure trips etc. to keep skills of CCPO programme & specialist staff updated	CCPO	Annually in two separate batches (2019-2022)

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility/Partner	Period of Implementation
48	Carry out regular monitoring in the monastic institutions and nunneries to ensure standards are maintained	Regional Representatives in their respective regions, with CCPO support	Annually (2019-2022)
49	Exposure tours to selected monastic institutions in India/Sri Lanka/Thailand for CP Focal Persons, Child Champions, & Regional Representatives (CCPO Support Network). <i>Additional exposure tours could also be planned in-country</i>	CCPO to organise with support from Advisory Committee	Annually (2020-2022)
50	Conduct follow up/refresher programmes in accordance with the schedule of planned activities/events developed by the CCPO to increase participation of child monks & nuns in the monastic institutions & nunneries	CCPO + Regional Rep./ Advisory Committee members to participate if available	At least once within 2020-2022
51	Conduct follow-up/refresher programmes for adult stakeholders in the monasteries & nunneries in accordance with the schedule developed	CCPO + Regional Rep./ Advisory Committee members to participate if available	At least once within 2020-2022
52	Follow-up training sessions for Child Protection Focal Persons	CCPO + Regional Rep./ Advisory Committee members to participate if available	At least once within 2020-2022