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Informing the Blueprint: Bhutan's Strategy for Girls' High-Quality Learning Outcomes

Nima Tshering

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Informing the Blueprint: Bhutan's Strategy for Girls' High-Quality Learning Outcomes

Nima Tshering



POLICY CONTEXT: THE QUALITY OF GIRLS' LEARNING MERITS PRIORITY

Bhutan has made great progress in girls' access to education. However, the quality of girls' learning outcomes (i.e., academic performance or competencies) remains an issue and merits priority as a strategic policy item in the "Bhutan Education Blueprint 2014–2024."¹ Because gender parity in access has been achieved, this policy brief aims to ensure that the next steps toward achieving fuller gender equality will be possible: supporting girls' transitions to higher secondary school and beyond, and preparing girls and women for formal engagement in society.² Using Bhutan's annual education statistics for public and private higher secondary schools, this policy brief analyzes transition and completion data from class 10 to 11 and trends in Gender Parity Indexes (GPIs) over the last decade (2003–13) to inform the Blueprint on the quality of girls' learning. Prioritizing girls' high-

quality learning in the Blueprint would have positive effects not only on girls' educational outcomes and life transitions but also on the economic, social and political empowerment of women in Bhutan.

Education is a number one priority for Bhutan, having been envisioned and advocated at the highest level by His Majesty the King.³ On average, Bhutan spends about 7 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP),⁴ or 17 percent of the national budget, on the education sector, among the highest in the region.⁵ The country provides free education from preprimary to grade 10 to all children as a basic right guaranteed by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan.⁶ The government's level of prioritization for education has most recently been reflected in the historic and nationwide consultation related to the development of the "Bhutan Education Blueprint 2014–2024."⁷

Nima Tshering | Bhutan
Professional Assistant, His Majesty the King of Bhutan

Through his work as a professional assistant as well as a former deputy royal chamberlain to the King of Bhutan, Mr. Tshering has contributed to the implementation of several social welfare programs in the region, including a land redistribution effort for the poorest members of Bhutanese society. During a three-year period, he conducted interviews with impoverished families in over 300 remote villages in the Himalayas, where he sought to understand their hardships and give voice to their concerns. Since then, he has held other positions within the Bhutanese government, worked as a public policy consultant for the World Bank, and was named a young global leader by the World Economic Forum in 2013. Mr. Tshering holds a M.P.A./I.D. from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, a M.E.M. from the University of Canterbury, and a B.Sc. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Kansas, which he attended as a Fulbright scholar.

THE COUNTRY CONTEXT: BHUTAN

Bhutan is a small, mountainous, landlocked country in the eastern Himalayas in South Asia, sandwiched between China to the north and India to the south, east and west. The country extends over an area of 38,394 square kilometers (23,857 square miles), and its terrain is rugged, with hardly any flat land, which leads to tremendous challenges for infrastructure development, such as building schools. About 72 percent of the country is covered with virgin forests, scattering 70 percent of its population into small, rural villages.⁸ Bhutan has a relatively young population, with half of its 745,153⁹ people below 25 years of age.¹⁰

Politically, Bhutan is a peaceful and stable country. It became a democracy in 2008, when the king voluntarily abdicated the throne and the nation transitioned peacefully to a democratic constitutional monarchy. The Constitution was enacted in 2008, and national elections were held in 2008 and 2013.

Bhutan has one of the smallest economies in the world, based on hydropower, tourism, foreign aid, subsistence agriculture, and a narrow industrial and export base. Agriculture, consisting of largely subsistence farming and forestry, provides livelihoods for more than 60 percent of the population. The country's real annual economic growth has averaged 8 percent over the last decade, with a GDP of \$1.6 billion (2014) and a per capita income of \$2,590 (2011).¹¹

Bhutan's development is being guided by the holistic philosophy of Gross National Happiness, with four balanced pillars of sustainable

economic growth, environmental conservation, cultural preservation and good governance.

BHUTAN'S PROGRESS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

Modern education began to be developed in Bhutan in 1961, with the country's First Five-Year Plan. Despite this late start, Bhutan has made impressive progress in gender parity in access to education. For example, in 1970 for every 100 boys enrolled in primary school, only 2 girls were enrolled (a GPI of 0.02).¹² By 2013, for every 100 boys enrolled in primary school, 101 girls were enrolled (a GPI of 1.01).¹³ There are more girls than boys, even at the secondary level (classes 7–10), with a GPI of 1.08, or 108 girls for every 100 boys.¹⁴ In less than 50 years, Bhutan has achieved gender parity in access to basic education (i.e., preprimary through class 10).¹⁵ Table 1 is a 2013 snapshot of all Bhutan's schools, both public and private, which indicates an impressive representation of girls at all levels in terms of access.

The key policies and strategies that have enabled Bhutan to become a leader in girls' education include making basic education free and a constitutional right, expanding the number of primary schools to almost every village, and taking serious measures to implement the United Nations' Education for All agenda and Millennium Development Goals.

Yet, while Bhutan has been successful in terms of access, there remains a gender gap in terms of the quality of learning and transitions from basic education to class 11 (higher secondary) and beyond.¹⁶ Though not apparent at first glance, this gender gap lies hidden in the distinction

between the GPIs of public and private higher secondary schools. This gap is the analytical focus of this policy brief and the impetus for en-

couraging the Ministry of Education to consider how existing educational policies and practices affect girls more than boys.

TABLE 1. A SNAPSHOT OF BHUTAN'S SCHOOLS (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE) AND STUDENTS IN 2013

Type of School/ Institute	GPI (index)	Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) (percent)			Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) (percent)		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary (classes preprimary–6)	1.01	116	116	116	95	96	96
Lower and middle secondary (classes 7–10)	1.08	86	93	90	82	89	86
Higher secondary (classes 11–12)	0.97	56	54	55	21	25	23
Tertiary education	0.77	31	23	27	No Data	No Data	No Data

Source: Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, *Bhutan Annual Education Statistics 2013* (Thimphu: Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, 2013), xv, 7.

THE HIDDEN GENDER GAP IN THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TRANSITIONS

Because the government cannot absorb all students who pass the class 10 national examinations and qualify for class 11, in about 2003 the Ministry of Education began to mandate that public (free) higher secondary schools enroll a minimum of 40 percent of the graduating class 10 based on merit.¹⁷ This policy created market opportunities for the emergence of private higher secondary schools, where students must pay tuition. Less than a decade later, Bhutan now has 17 private higher secondary schools, in comparison with 36 public higher secondary schools.¹⁸ While this policy has successfully enabled the government to pursue public–private solutions for increasing access to education, this policy may have produced unintended negative consequences for girls' high-quality learning outcomes more so than for boys.

The percentage threshold mark for passing the class 10 national public examinations is 40 percent. However, since the free public higher secondary schools have limited seats, not all qualifying class 10 students can gain entry. Over the years, the entry requirement for public higher secondary schools has increased up to 61 percent average pass marks on the examinations.¹⁹

Private higher secondary schools, however, can enroll any student with an average pass of 40 percent but who did not get accepted into a public higher secondary school. As such, it appears that a two-tier hierarchy of higher secondary schools has emerged, where high-performing students go to the public higher secondary schools and low-performing students go to the private higher secondary schools.²⁰

This hierarchy of upper secondary schools has alarming implications for girls' education. If transition rates can be used as a proxy for learn-

TABLE 2. GIRLS' ENROLLMENT IN CLASS 10 AND CLASS 11 IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS, 2003–13

Year	Class 10		Class 11 (Public)		Class 11 (Private)	
	% Girls	GPI	% Girls	GPI	% Girls	GPI
2013	51	1.06	45	0.83	54	1.17
2012	50	1.01	47	0.88	53	1.15
2011	51	1.03	42	0.72	51	1.06
2010	49	0.95	41	0.70	53	1.14
2009	49	0.95	42	0.71	50	0.99
2008	49	0.96	39	0.63	52	1.08
2007	48	0.92	41	0.70	49	0.97
2006	48	0.91	37	0.60	51	1.02
2005	47	0.90	33	0.49	50	1.02
2004	46	0.83	32	0.48	49	0.96
2003	45	0.81	33	0.48	49	0.98

Source: Data from Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, *Bhutan Annual Education Statistics 2013* (Thimphu: Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, 2003–13).

ing outcomes, the sex-disaggregated data for class 10 to class 11 transitions over the last decade indicate that the quality of girls' learning outcomes has been less favorable than for boys. Table 2 shows a gender gap between public and private higher secondary school enrollments, a point hidden by positive GPI ratings and enrollment statistics that combine public and private school data, such as those given in table 1 above.

An examination of the GPI trends over the last decade for classes 10 and 11 in the public and private secondary schools shows that there is a gender gap in the quality of learning outcomes (as measured by transition) that negatively affects girls more than boys. For example, in 2013, there were only 83 girls for every 100 boys in the public higher secondary schools, whereas there were 117 girls for every 100 boys in the private higher secondary schools. Even a decade earlier, in 2003, there were only 48 girls for

every 100 boys in the public higher secondary schools, and 98 girls for every 100 boys in the private higher secondary schools.

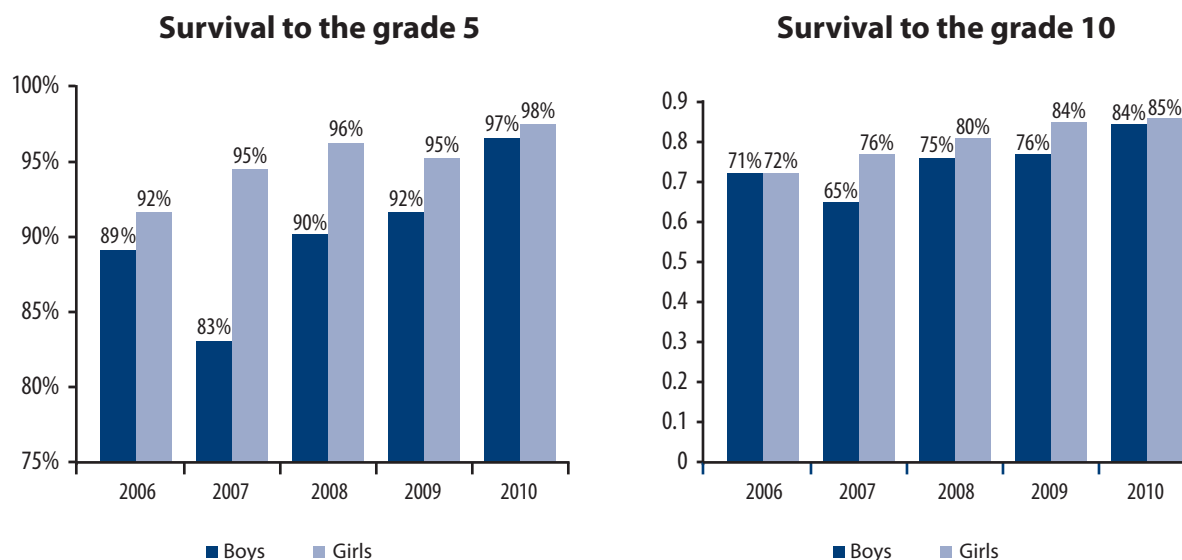
To illustrate further, figure 1 shows that the survival rates in basic education (preprimary to class 10) are higher for girls than for boys.²¹

However, this pattern that favors girls shifts at the higher secondary level after class 10, when national examinations act as a merit-based filter with large gender implications, as shown in table 2 above.

As shown in table 3, comparative performance data disaggregated by sex from class 10 national examinations show that, on average, girls are performing more poorly than boys.

Although the low scores by both boys and girls suggest that the quality of learning outcomes is an overall issue in Bhutan, the gender gap

FIGURE 1. TRENDS IN BASIC EDUCATION SURVIVAL RATES, 2006–10



Source: Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, *Bhutan Annual Education Statistics 2013* (Thimphu: Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, 2012), 68.

points to a further disadvantage that girls face. Boys are performing better than girls in subjects like economics; mathematics; science; and history, civics and geography (HC&G)—whereas girls are doing marginally better in English, Dzongkha (the national language) and com-

puters. Although small, the smallest difference has significant implications for entry into public higher secondary schools with limited seats. The merit-based cutoff point is calculated using the English test score, plus scores of the best of any four subjects from the remaining subjects.

TABLE 3. MEAN SCORES (OUT OF 100) FOR BOYS AND GIRLS IN CLASS 10 NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS, 2013 AND 2012

Subject	2013 Exams		2012 Exams	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
English	55.94	57.04	56.31	57.15
Dzongkha	63.23	64.57	65.19	65.46
Economics	60.40	57.78	54.57	51.21
Mathematics	57.28	54.39	55.23	51.43
HC&G	59.59	55.97	61.94	58.40
Science	53.74	51.31	54.70	51.68
Computers	76.74	76.97	73.51	74.70
Total score*	315.90	312.33	312.18	307.39
Percent score**	63.18	62.47	62.44	61.48

Note: HC&G = history, civics and geography.

* Total score is based on English plus the best four subjects.

** Percent score is based on an average percentage of English plus the best four subjects.

Source: Ministry of Education, "Pupil Performance Report 2013," 25.

All subjects are weighted equally. Based on this data, on average, girls are unable to compete with boys on merit for the limited seats in public higher secondary schools.²² For example, the cutoff point for entry into class 11 in 2014 was 61.4 percent.²³

While the reasons for this hidden gender gap in learning remain inconclusive in the absence of rigorous data or research, it is nonetheless a gap with potentially serious implications for girls' transitions. It must be acknowledged that basing entry requirements for public higher secondary schools in a way that stacks girls against boys leads to inequitable gender outcomes in terms of transitions. Based on the number of girls enrolling in private higher secondary schools, one could argue that there is no lack of aspiration among girls to pursue additional years of education. But, on average, girls are not making merit, and are thereby unable to compete for the limited spaces in publicly funded higher secondary schools. Fortunately, this is a policy issue that can be addressed by a strategic national agenda for girls' high-quality learning in the "Bhutan Education Blueprint 2014–2024." Without such a focus, the issue could have more serious negative consequences for gender equality in Bhutan, especially with regard to women's representation in politics and the economy.

THE NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ADDRESSING THE GENDER GAP IN THE QUALITY OF LEARNING

Bhutan is a country of gender paradoxes. It is a matrilineal society, and thus more women (60 percent) hold land registration titles than

anywhere else in South Asia.²⁴ Yet matrilineal inheritance patterns have increased women's responsibilities to care for aging parents, constraining their social, political and economic choices. Coupled with these factors, people have held the belief that daughters should remain close to home. As a result, at the introduction of modern education in 1961, families sent only their sons to school while keeping their daughters behind to tend to domestic responsibilities. These educational disadvantages experienced by girls have contributed to today's low participation rates of females in the higher positions in politics, business, and the civil service.

For example, only 7 percent of elected officials in the Parliament and one minister are female.²⁵ This means that Bhutan ranks 130th out of 142 countries for women's political empowerment.²⁶ One explanation for this low political participation rate is that Bhutan's election laws require candidates for national elections to have a minimum of a university bachelor's degree.²⁷ However, only 4.3 percent of women in Bhutan have higher secondary education or better qualifications.²⁸ In fact, Bhutan ranks 117th out of 142 countries in female tertiary enrollment.²⁹ Thus, without focusing on the quality of girls' learning outcomes and transitions, the political empowerment of women will be an unachievable goal, because women will not have the chance to obtain the educational qualifications to run for election in the first place.

Similarly, there is also a gender gap in the economic empowerment of women; only 6.1 percent of the female labor force holds jobs as regular paid employees, compared with 17.8 percent of the male labor force.³⁰ According to the Bhutan Labour Force Survey 2012, women

are overrepresented (81 percent of the female workforce) in unstable, unprotected and unregulated low-paying jobs in the informal economy—for example, as street vendors, domestic workers and subsistence farmers. Without focusing on the development of 21st-century skills for girls, increasing women’s participation in the formal sector will continue to be a development challenge.

Socially, 68 percent of women have been found to accept and tolerate gender-based domestic violence, such as believing that a man is justified in beating his wife or partner; most of these women are illiterate.³¹ Without focusing on the quality of girls’ learning outcomes, domestic violence and other forms of female disempowerment will continue to be a barrier to achieving gender equity and equality in Bhutan.

Therefore, the need to strategically focus on girls’ high-quality learning outcomes and transitions is of national importance for Bhutan’s democracy, economy and society. Unlike other countries, Bhutan’s real problems are downstream, in the quality of learning outcomes and transitions.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the analysis given above, the following points are recommended to be included in the “Bhutan Education Blueprint 2014–2024”:

1. Include a separate strategic policy objective for enhancing the quality of girls’ learning outcomes, especially in the middle and higher secondary schools, so that girls can compete with boys on merit in transitioning from class 10 to class 11 and from class 12 to public tertiary education.

2. Eliminate the clause in the National Education Policy that says: “A minimum of 40% of the cohort graduating from class X annually will be enrolled in the government higher secondary schools on a merit basis.” Implementation of this policy clause has, unintentionally, affected girls more than boys. Instead, mandate schools to allocate places through the use of a lottery system.³² Girls and boys eligible for class 11 could be randomly selected through a gender-equitable lottery to allocate the limited seats until the government devises solutions for providing enough seats or offering alternative options. Or introduce affirmative action for girls in admission to public higher secondary schools, where 50 percent of seats are allocated for girls.
3. Boarding schools—especially girl-friendly boarding schools with gender-sensitive facilities, gender-sensitized female matrons and teachers, and a gender-sensitive curriculum—could be adopted as part of a strategic national policy for creating holistic learning environments to improve girls’ learning outcomes.³³ These boarding schools should prioritize rural girls, who face the double burden of needing to travel long distances to school and being responsible for household chores at home.³⁴

These three policy recommendations should be considered for direct inclusion in the Blueprint. In addition, the following recommendations for the Ministry of Education address long-term research needs, because much is still unknown about girls’ education in Bhutan due to the lack of data:

- In order to provide a technology-savvy curriculum that develops 21st-century job skills (as advocated by His Majesty the King), conduct a comprehensive survey of technology usage by girls and boys across the country to determine (1) the current state of technology skills by youth and the distribution of these skills across geography, class, gender and age; (2) the kinds of technology skills that need to be developed or leveraged in order to achieve a technology-savvy workforce; (3) the kinds of technological infrastructural improvements that need to be invested in and completed in order to support the development and rollout of a technology-savvy curriculum; and (4) the kinds of training that teachers would need in order to effectively deliver this curriculum.
- Collect annual gender-disaggregated data on a range of international standard indicators in order to better understand the factors shaping the quality of girls' learning outcomes and transitions in Bhutan.

These recommendations for further research are especially important since comprehensive and consistent educational sex-disaggregated data are lacking in Bhutan, specifically data on learn-

ing outcomes and gender differences in learning. The questions that need to be answered include: How do teaching styles in Bhutanese schools shape girls' and boys' learning differently? What about the gender of teachers, the quality of learning resources or cultural beliefs about and norms for girls and boys? How much of an impact does teenage pregnancy have on girls' learning outcomes in Bhutan? How does the double burden affect girls' study time and learning outcomes? What are the factors preventing women from entering the formal economy? Collecting data on these questions would not only provide a more comprehensive picture of girls' education in Bhutan; it would also help strengthen the country's ability to monitor and evaluate its progress toward achieving women's full formal engagement in the economy and politics—in essence, toward achieving full gender equality—over the next 10 years.

This policy brief is a humble attempt to inform the designers of the “Bhutan Education Blueprint 2014–2024” to consider how existing educational policies and practices affect girls more than boys. It suggests prioritizing a specific girls' high-quality education agenda over the next 10 years.

ENDNOTES

- 1 See <https://sites.google.com/a/gov.bt/blueprint/>.
- 2 Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, *Bhutan Annual Education Statistics 2013* (Thimphu: Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, 2013), xv, <http://www.education.gov.bt/documents/10180/12664/Annual+Education+Statistics+2013.pdf/2cbf8c93-947e-4860-a1e3-b9285c86e1d6?version=1.0>.
- 3 See <http://www.kuenselonline.com/i-believe-in-education-hm/#.VGOHUm8hIRE>.
- 4 UNESCO's recommended threshold for educational spending is 6 percent of GDP; see <http://www.unescap.org/stat/data/syb2011/I-People/Financial-and-human-resources-for-education.asp>
- 5 World Bank, "Bhutan Country Snapshots 2014," 8, <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/SAR/bhutan-country-snapshot-spring-2014.pdf>.
- 6 Article 9.16 of the Constitution states, "The State shall provide free education to all children of school going age up to tenth standard and ensure that technical and professional education shall be made generally available and that higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." See <http://www.bhutanaudit.gov.bt/About%20Us/Mandates/Constitution%20of%20Bhutan%202008.pdf>.
- 7 This is available at Kuensel, October 9, 2014, <http://www.kuenselonline.com/nationwide-consultation-on-education-underway/#.VF0Stm9KBRE>.
- 8 National Statistics Bureau, *Bhutan Living Standards Survey 2012* (Thimphu: National Statistics Bureau, 2012), ix.
- 9 National Statistics Bureau, Royal Government of Bhutan, *Statistical Yearbook of Bhutan 2014* (Thimphu: National Statistics Bureau, 2014), xv, <http://www.nsb.gov.bt/publication/files/pub8sf8803mf.pdf>.
- 10 National Statistics Bureau, *Bhutan Living Standards Survey 2012*, 8.
- 11 Gross National Happiness Commission, *The 11th Five-Year Plan 2013–2018* (Thimphu: Gross National Happiness Commission, 2013), 80.
- 12 World Bank, "Bhutan Gender Policy Note," 2013, 1.
- 13 Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, *Bhutan Annual Education Statistics 2013*, xv.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Asian Development Bank and United Nations, *Bhutan Gender Equality Diagnostic of Selected Sectors* (Manila: Asian Development Bank and United Nations, 2014), 29.
- 16 Because data on the quality learning in Bhutan are limited or lacking, this analysis also uses transition rates to class 11, which is merit based, as a proxy.
- 17 Bhutan National Education Policy, section 7.1.9, states: "A minimum of 40% of the cohort graduating from class X annually will be enrolled in the government higher secondary schools on merit basis"; <http://www.gnhc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/NEP-2012-21st-March.pdf>. See also http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2004/bhutan.pdf.
- 18 Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, *Bhutan Annual Education Statistics 2013*, xiii.
- 19 Last year a national TV news headline read: "Class X Results Out, Cutoff Point at 61.4%"; <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=23595>.
- 20 Though there are no data to confirm or explain the quality of schooling at public versus private higher secondary schools, national opinion points to the low quality of students accepted into private schools as an explanation for the lower learning outcomes of students at private schools. E.g., a national newspaper carried an article titled "Why Private Schools Perform Poorly," in which most private school principals are reported to agree with the statement: "Admitting students who had scored just 40 percent was the main reason for poor performance of private schools"; <http://www.kuenselonline.com/why-private-schools-perform-poorly/#.VGYXI28hIRE>. Private secondary schools often target low-performing students. E.g., a typical private higher secondary school's homepage on the Internet welcomes prospective students with: "Students in the east, who could not make it to government schools after class X, can continue their higher studies closer to home with the opening of the first private higher secondary school in Mongar"; <http://www.bhutanmajestictravel.com/news/2009/eastern-bhutans-first-private-school.html>.

- 21 UNICEF defines the survival rate as the “percentage of children entering the first grade of primary school who eventually reach the last grade” of primary education or basic education, <http://data.unicef.org/education/primary>. Survival rates are used in this analysis because completion rates are not disaggregated by sex.
- 22 See also Bhutan’s “Annual Status of Student Learning,” a study conducted in 2008 by the Royal Education Council, <http://www.ei-india.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Student-Learning-Issue-1.pdf>.
- 23 Again, see the TV new story “Class X Results Out, Cutoff Point at 61.4%.”
- 24 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Who Is Benefiting from Trade Liberalization in Bhutan? A Gender Perspective* (Geneva: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2011), 20, http://unctad.org/en/docs/osg2011d1_en.pdf.
- 25 Bhutan ranks lower than the South Asian average for women’s political participation of 19.76 percent; see <http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/thebordercrossingobservatory/files/2013/02/UNDP-Women’s-Political-Participation-in-Asia-and-the-Pacific.pdf>.
- 26 See http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR_CompleteReport_2014.pdf.
- 27 Sections 176 (d) and 177 (d) of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008 state that a person shall be qualified to be elected as a member of the National Assembly (the lower house of Parliament) and as a member of the National Council (the upper house of Parliament), if he or she possesses a formal university degree, http://www.nationalcouncil.bt/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Elec_Eng_08.pdf.
- 28 National Statistics Bureau of Bhutan and Asian Development Bank, *Bhutan Living Standards Survey 2012 Report* (Thimphu and Manila: National Statistics Bureau of Bhutan and Asian Development Bank, 2013), 12, <http://www.nsb.gov.bt/publication/files/pub1tm2120wp.pdf>.
- 29 See http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR_CompleteReport_2014.pdf.
- 30 Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, *Bhutan Labour Force Survey 2012* (Thimphu: Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, 2012), 21.
- 31 National Statistics Bureau, *Bhutan Multiple Indicator Survey 2010* (Thimphu: National Statistics Bureau, 2010).
- 32 C. Stasz and C. Stolk, “The Use of Lottery System in School Admissions,” 2007, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/working_papers/2007/RAND_WR460.pdf.
- 33 H. Kazianga et al., 2013, “The Effects of ‘Girl-Friendly’ Schools: The Evidence from the BRIGHT School Construction Program in Burkina Faso,” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 5, no. 3 (2013): 41–62, http://www.leighlinden.com/BRIGHT_Schools.pdf.
- 34 A study done in Kenya concluded that when the distance to school is lowered by 1 kilometer, girls’ academic performance is increased by 64 percent, while there is no effect on boys’ performance; see http://www.academia.edu/5004492/An_Evaluation_of_Home_Environmental_Factors_Affecting_Performance_of_Boarding_Secondary_School_Students_in_Kenya.

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Lana Slezic - DFATD-MAECD
Julien Harneis
Khasar Sandaq - World Bank

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