

# Bhutan National Values Assessment

*Steve Evans\**

## Introduction

His Majesty King Khesar, The 5th Druk Gyalpo of Bhutan, recognised in his coronation address on November 7, 2008 that core values form a common thread that binds and guides the nation, especially in the wake of current democratic processes. His deepest concern, he said, is that as the world changes Bhutan may lose its fundamental values on which rest its character as a nation and people.

His Majesty said:

“Our generation of Bhutanese have been gifted a strong, dynamic nation by our forefathers. I am confident that as long as we are willing to work with their commitment and dedication and follow their example we can bring greater peace, happiness and prosperity to our country. I am confident because I know the worth and character of our people. You are the true jewel of this nation. As citizens of a spiritual land you treasure the qualities of a good human being – honesty, kindness, charity, integrity, unity, respect for our culture and traditions, love for our country and for God. Throughout our history our parents have upheld these values and placed the common good above the self. My deepest concern is that as the world changes we may lose these fundamental values on which rest our character as a nation and people. It is critical that we are able to recognise Bhutanese character irrespective of how far we look back into the past or into the future. The Bhutan we see is vastly different - unrecognisable even - when compared to the Bhutan in the time of our first King. Yet, the character of our people and the nature of our fundamental values have remained unchanged. Henceforth, as even more dramatic changes transform the

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world and our nation, as long as we continue to pursue the simple and timeless goal of being good human beings, and as long as we strive to build a nation that stands for everything that is good, we can ensure that our future generations for hundreds of years will live in happiness and peace.”<sup>1</sup>

The *Bhutan National Values Assessment*<sup>2</sup> confirms that the nation and its people are, indeed, healthy when it comes to personal and national values. The survey was conducted by the International Center for Ethnographic Studies (ICES) in partnership with the Barrett Values Centre, the Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS), East Tennessee State University (ETSU), and the Brimstone Grant for Applied Storytelling. Results were released on January 9, 2009. The author of this paper coordinated the study.

Research focused on three key areas – Bhutanese’ personal values, the values and issues perceived to drive the current national culture, and the values that Bhutanese want their society to embrace. Demographic information collected in the survey includes gender, region, education, and age. 403 people from western and central Bhutan participated in the survey during the year 2008. Volunteers affiliated with ICES and CBS conducted the survey using a standard form developed by The Values Centre, and then transferred the information to an online database maintained by the Barrett Values Centre. Consultants of The Values Centre ran and interpreted the data, then produced the report.

The *Bhutan National Values Assessment* reveals those values that unite the nation in shared understanding, direction and purpose, while providing clarity to any challenges ahead. The data is invaluable for informing government, public agencies,

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<sup>1</sup> Coronation Address of His Majesty King Khesar, The 5th Druk Gyalpo of Bhutan, 7th November, 2008. Retrieved January 29, 2009 from <http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/>

<sup>2</sup> For the full report go to <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/main/index.php>

non-profit organisations and corporations about what is most important to Bhutanese. Results are to be used to inform public policy and strategic initiatives and to help bring resulting efforts into alignment.

### **Seven Values Levels of Personal and National Consciousness**

To fully understand the *Bhutan National Values Assessment*, this report, and the implications of the data, it will be necessary to first comprehend the concepts of *The Seven Levels of Personal Consciousness* and *The Seven Levels of National Consciousness* developed by Richard Barrett of the Barrett Values Centre.<sup>3</sup>

#### **The Seven Levels of Personal Consciousness**

Individuals and nations do not operate from any one single level of consciousness. They tend to be clustered around three or four levels. Individuals are usually focused at levels 1 through 5, with a particular emphasis at level 5.

##### *Level 1: Survival*

This level focuses on physical survival and safety. It includes values such as financial stability, health, nutrition and self-discipline. The potentially limiting aspects of this level are generated from fears around not having enough and not being able to survive. Limiting values include greed, control and caution.

##### *Level 2: Relationships*

The second level focuses on the quality of interpersonal relationships in an individual's life. It includes values such as open communication, family, friendship, conflict resolution and respect. The potentially limiting aspects of this level are generated from fears around not belonging and not being

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of the Barrett Values Centre go to <http://www.valuescentre.com/index.php>

acknowledged. Limiting values at this level include rivalry, intolerance and being liked.

*Level 3: Self-esteem*

This level focuses on an individual's need to feel a sense of personal self-worth. It includes such values as being the best, ambition, career focus, and reward. The potentially limiting aspects of this level are generated from fears about not being enough in the eyes of others, and a lack of positive self-regard. Potentially limiting values include status, arrogance and personal image.

*Level 4: Transformation*

This level focuses on self-actualisation and personal growth. It contains values such as courage, accountability, responsibility, knowledge, and independence. This is the level at which individuals overcome the anxieties and fears they are holding onto from the first three levels. It is also the level where individuals begin to find balance in their lives and source their decision-making from their values rather than their beliefs.

*Level 5: Internal cohesion*

The fifth level focuses on the individual's search for meaning. Individuals operating at this level no longer think in terms of a job or career, but of aligning their work with their personal sense of mission. This level contains values such as commitment, creativity, enthusiasm, humour, fun, excellence, generosity, and honesty.

*Level 6: Making a difference*

This level focuses on actualising the individual's sense of mission by making a positive difference in the world. Individuals operating at this level seek to cultivate their intuition as their principal means of making decisions. They

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<sup>4</sup> There are no potentially limiting values in levels 4 through 7.

also recognise the importance of working with others to leverage their impact on the world. This level contains values such as empathy, counselling, community work, and environmental awareness.

*Level 7: Service*

The seventh level is attained when making a difference becomes a way of life. It reflects the highest order of internal and external connectedness and shows up as selfless service to others or to a cause. Individuals operating at this level display wisdom, compassion, and forgiveness, and are at ease with uncertainty. They have a global perspective. They are concerned about issues such as social justice, human rights and future generations.

**The Seven Levels of National Consciousness**

All human group structures grow and develop in seven well-defined stages. Each stage focuses on a particular existential need that is common to the human condition. These seven needs are the principal motivating forces in all human affairs. The level of growth and development depends on the ability of the leaders to create conditions that enable the members of the group to satisfy these seven existential needs. If these needs are not met, then the consciousness of the people in the group will stay focused on these needs until they are met.

*Level 1: Survival*

The three major areas of focus or concerns in nations that are operating from this level are: defense and the protection of borders; economic health and prosperity of the masses; and the health and nutrition of all citizens. Dysfunction at this level leads to unemployment, corruption, environmental degradation, and large income disparities between the rich and poor. Crime and violence ensue as those who are closest to survival attempt to meet their needs in any way they can.

*Level 2: Relationships*

At this level there is a focus on: the peaceful resolution of conflicts between individuals and groups; the creation of a sense of belonging that embraces all citizens; and the loyalty of citizens to the government of the nation. Dysfunction in this area leads to inter-ethnic or inter-religious violence, and the victimization or unfair treatment of minorities or sub-groups based on gender, sexual preference, race, etc.

*Level 3: Self-esteem*

The areas of focus or concerns in nations that are operating from this level are: establishment and enforcement of law and order; creation of institutions of governance based on efficient systems and processes; and provision of public infrastructure and services that enhance the productivity of the nation and the well-being and prosperity of the people. Dysfunction in this area leads to a higher incidence of criminal activity and a lack of public protection from unscrupulous businesses.

*Level 4: Transformation*

The focus of the fourth level is on the consolidation of internal stability by creating a multi-cultural, non-discriminatory, egalitarian society that respects the rights of all citizens. This is the level of democracy and freedom, where citizens act responsibly for the good of the whole with a focus on continuous improvement and renewal.

*Level 5: Internal cohesion*

At this level the focus is on the deepening of the internal resilience of the nation by focusing on fairness, openness, and transparency, thereby creating a climate of trust. At this level there would be a sense of a shared vision and values where citizens can play a part in building the nation.

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<sup>5</sup> There are no potentially limiting values in levels 4 through 7.

*Level 6: Making a difference*

The sixth level concerns building mutually beneficial strategic alliances with other nations that share similar values, as well as deepening the sense of internal cohesion in the nation that began at level 4 with materialising the values of freedom and equality, and continued at level 5 with the practice of fairness, openness and transparency. There is an awareness of the importance of nature and the environment.

*Level 7: Service*

The seventh level builds upon level 6 by expanding the depth and breadth of international cooperation with regard to solving the problems of humanity, and at the same time deepening the sense of internal cohesion in the nation by supporting the self-actualisation of the people and expanding the focus on social and environmental sustainability to include ecological sustainability.

**An overview of Bhutan**

**Current strengths of Bhutan**

The personal values of the people of Bhutan show that they demonstrate:

- Support for and connections with others
- Focus on enriching their knowledge and understanding
- A positive outlook
- Inner drive and strength

Their top value is “friendship,” and the Bhutanese have a high number of relationship-type values, indicating that people and their connections to them are notably important. The study indicates these values are concentrated at level 2 of the values scale, relationships, while their overall values are concentrated at level 5, internal cohesion. Level 5 shows that the people of Bhutan seek meaning and purpose in their lives.

The current culture of Bhutan is driven by values that promote:

- Access to information and knowledge and a commitment to the betterment of society
- Intelligent stewardship of resources
- Being guided and united by a common set of values and a common direction
- Protection for the rights of the people to make political choices
- Moral structure that provides guidance and encourages comfort

Bhutan's top national value perceived by its people is "continuous improvement," and there is a strong concentration of organisational-type values showing that the people have a powerful focus on governance that is based on efficient systems and processes, along with a provision of public infrastructure and services that enhance the productivity of the nation and the well-being and prosperity of the people. The nation's top values are grouped at levels 3, 4 and 5 (Self-esteem, transformation, and internal cohesion), but the strongest concentration is at level 4 – transformation. Level 4 focuses on democratic processes, institutional accountability, renewal and development. The people of Bhutan see the nation as open to change.

#### **Key issues for Bhutan**

The entropy in Bhutan is notably low at 4% and could possibly be one of the lowest in the world. As with any nation, there are issues that could be addressed in order to create greater stability and prosperity within the nation.

#### **The way forward for Bhutan**

The participants in this survey experience six values in the current culture of the nation that they would like to see remain in the culture they desire. This shows that they have confidence in the current direction of the country. These values are education, continuous improvement, social justice,



contentment, environmental protection, and strict moral/religious codes. Education and social justice received the most significant increase in the desired culture, showing that these are of rising importance to the people. The desired values show that the people want to be able to freely express their views and seek a stronger focus on growing the economy and on creating opportunities for them to thrive and support themselves. They want their personal sense of compassion to be a guiding value in their nation.

### **Personal values of the Bhutanese**

#### **What is important to the people of Bhutan?**

Personal values in order of predominance are: friendship (180 votes, level 2), continuous learning (160 votes, level 4), compassion (128 votes, level 7), caution (122 votes, level 1), sincerity (121 votes, level 5), social justice (118 votes, level 7), self-discipline (102 votes, level 1), optimism (95 votes, level 5), helpfulness (94 votes, level 2), and caring (92 votes, level 2).

From an analysis of the personal values chosen by the people of Bhutan it can be determined what are the principal values that guide their decision making (top values), and how their values are distributed across the seven values levels (all values). Every value chosen can be classified as an individual, relationship or societal value (IRS). As stated in the overview of Bhutan, key themes from the Bhutanese' top values include: 1) support for and connections with others; 2) seeking to enrich their knowledge and understanding; 3) having a positive outlook; and 4) inner drive and strength.

In the people's top personal values, the values are located in five of the seven levels with a concentration at level 2 - relationships. This concentration shows that many in this group have a focus on the quality of interpersonal relationships. In considering all of the values chosen, the greatest focus is at level 5 - internal cohesion (25%). Level 5 represents personal cohesion, maturity and/or a search for

meaning. The distribution of all values shows where the most energy is concentrated for this group, not just where there is consensus on specific values.

A values gap occurs where one or more of the seven levels has no top values. This can mean one of three things: that the levels 1) are unconsciously taken care of, 2) are a blind spot, or 3) represent the next area of growth. Here, there are no top positive values in the following levels: level 3, self-esteem, focusing on performing to a high standard, and level 6, making a difference, focusing on creating positive change through awareness and contribution from a personal and community perspective. It is important to consider all values at the levels where there are no top values to see if the percentage of total votes at that level is significant. A high percentage at a level with no top values indicates that there is focus in this area but there is little agreement as to which values are important. Here, while self-esteem and making a difference are not top personal values of any respondents, 10% of respondents indicated that each of them is of some value.

Of the top positive values chosen four are individual values, four are relationship values and one is a societal value. It is common in the personal values to see a concentration of individual-type values. However, this group shows a high number of relationship-type values, indicating that people and their connections with them are notably important to the citizens of Bhutan. There is one potentially limiting value in the top ten list, and that is “caution.”

### **Current culture values of Bhutan**

#### **What is shaping the Bhutanese’ experience?**

Current culture values reflect citizens’ perceptions of the nation’s culture and the day-to-day living environment – both the positive aspects of their experiences and the potential problem areas. In addition to the values types for personal

values (IRS), there are also organisational-type values (IROS). These values in order of predominance are: continuous improvement (195 votes, level 4), environmental protection (104 votes, level 1), strict moral/religious codes (104 votes, level 3), political rights (102 votes, level 3), education (100 votes, level 4), nature conservation (91 votes, level 6), shared vision (90 votes, level 5), information availability (88 votes, level 3), shared values (88 values, level 5), contentment (87 votes, level 5), and social justice (87 votes, level 4).

Key themes from these top values include: 1) access to information and knowledge, as well as a commitment to the betterment of society; 2) intelligent stewardship of resources; 3) being guided and united by a common set of values and a common direction; and 4) a moral structure that provides guidance and encourages comfort.

In the current culture, top values are distributed in five of the seven levels with concentration at level 5 (internal cohesion), level 4 (transformation), and level 3 (self-esteem). This shows that much of the people's energy goes toward building a sense of openness, trust, transparency, shared values and vision, democratic processes, institutional accountability, renewal and development, institutional efficiencies, system performance, and/or pride in the nation. Considering all values, both positive and potentially limiting, the highest focus is at level 4 - transformation (32%). Level 4 focuses on democratic processes, institutional accountability, renewal and development.

There are no top positive values in the following levels: level 2 – relationship, which focuses on social stability and family or group relationships- and level 7 – service, which reflects a focus on creating a sustainable future for humanity. This indicates a values gap. Of the top positive values that were chosen, one is an individual value, none are relationship values, eight are organisational values and two are societal values. This shows that the people see a powerful focus on governance based on efficient systems and processes, as well

as provision of public infrastructure and services that enhance the productivity of the nation and the well-being and prosperity of the people.

When comparing personal and current culture values, those that match indicate alignment. The greater the number of matching personal and current culture values, the greater degree to which citizens experience a sense of community. In a highly aligned culture, one would expect to see two or three matching personal and current culture values. The presence of only one or two values matches indicate that the people are not highly aligned with the values of the nation, which can cause some level of social unrest. Here there is only one matching value – social justice.

### **Current entropy of Bhutan**

Potentially limiting values create cultural entropy. Entropy is a measure of the degree of dysfunction in a system and represents the proportion of votes for potentially limiting values. Potentially limiting values for Bhutan are found only at levels 1, 2 and 3 of the seven values levels. Specific issues contributing to the entropy at each level are:

- Level 1 – Survival (74 votes, 2% of total): drunkenness (2 votes), crime/violence (6 votes), drug addiction (9 votes), corruption (9 votes), autocracy (9 votes), poverty (10 votes), unemployment (14 votes), and environmental pollution (15 votes).
- Level 2 – Relationships (36 votes, 1% of total): racial/ethnic discrimination (3 votes), gender discrimination (3 votes), inequality (9 votes), conflict/aggression (10 votes), and loneliness/isolation (11 votes).
- Level 3 – Self-Esteem (36 votes, 1% or total): isolationist attitudes (3 votes), information hoarding (5

votes), conservative attitudes (14 votes), and bureaucracy (14 votes)

Only 4% of all votes were for potentially limiting values. This is a low and healthy level of entropy and shows that fear is not predominant in the way Bhutan makes decisions and protects its people. There are no potentially limiting values in the top values of the current culture, and the entropy, while low, is slightly concentrated at level 1. Bhutan's entropy is one of the lowest in the world.

### **Desired culture values for Bhutan**

#### **What values do Bhutanese want for their future?**

Desired culture values reflect what participants believe to be important for the well-being of their nation. These values provide insights into the direction participants' want the nation to take, possible antidotes to current problems, and values that need strengthening. The desired culture values expressed by the people of Bhutan for their nation, in order of predominance, are: education (115 votes, level 4), continuous improvement (113 votes, level 4), freedom of speech (113 votes, level 4), economic growth (107 votes, level 1), social justice (100 votes, level 4), contentment (93 votes, level 5), environmental protection (89 votes, level 1), compassion (83 votes, level 7), full employment (82 votes, level 3), and strict moral/religious values (82 votes, level 3).

Key themes from top desired cultural values include: 1) providing more opportunity for people to learn, work and strengthen the economy; 2) allowing people to express their views and have access to fair systems; and 3) demonstrating care and empathy for people.

Matching values indicate alignment. The greater the number of matching current and desired culture values, the greater the degree to which citizens believe their nation is on the right

track. In a highly aligned culture, one would expect to see six or more matching current and desired culture values. The *Bhutan National Values Assessment* indicates six matching values: continuous improvement, environmental protection, strict moral/religious codes, education, contentment, and social justice. These are the attributes that Bhutanese experience now and want to continue to support in the future. Four to six values matches shows that people have a strong level of confidence in the current direction of the government. Bhutanese have six matches. They would, however, like to see some changes in priorities.

In comparing personal values and desired culture values, there are two matches: compassion and social justice. These are the values that, if chosen to be guiding principles of the nation, could easily be supported by the people, as they are important in their daily lives. There is one across-the-board matching value among the personal, current and desired culture values, and that is social justice. In a highly aligned culture, one would expect to see three or four personal values that are also found in the current and desired culture.

New values in the desired culture are values among the desired culture values that are not included the current culture values. They are values that participants would like to see implemented to improve the overall well-being of the nation and create a sustainable future for everyone. There are four new values in the values plot diagram: freedom of speech, economic growth, compassion, and full employment.

In the desired culture, the top values are distributed in five of the seven levels with concentration at level 4 (transformation), showing that the participants want effort directed towards democratic processes, institutional accountability, renewal and development. In looking at all of the values chosen, the focus continues to be at level 4 (31%). In this case, level 4 indicates that participants want to focus on continuous improvement – learning, researching and modernising. There are no top positive values in the level 2 (relationship), which

focuses on social stability and family or group relationships, and level 6 (external cohesion), which focuses on quality of life issues and/or creating mutually beneficial strategic alliances. Of the top positive values chosen, one is an individual value, one is a relationship value, seven are organisational values and one is a societal value. This shows that the main focus remains on efficient systems and processes, along with provision of public infrastructure and services that enhance the productivity of the nation and the well-being and prosperity of the people.

#### **Distribution of all values**

The distribution of all values indicate the percentage of votes for values in three major areas – self interest, transformation and common good. Self Interest is represented by levels 1, 2 and 3, and encompasses basic needs, such as financial and physical health, interpersonal relationships, and systems and processes that support individual and national needs. “Transformation” is represented by level 4. This level is about giving people a voice, beginning to challenge and question ideas, and embracing opportunities for growth and learning. Common good encompasses levels 5, 6 and 7. In these levels, individuals and nations are focused on the well-being of the collective, finding meaning in their lives and work, and how they can support others in building a long-term sustainable future.

Three comparisons are made: 1) between personal values and current culture values; 2) between current culture values and desired culture values; and 3) between personal values and desired culture values. Also, the comparisons are made across four general categories: entropy, self-interest, transformation, and common good.

The first comparison – between personal values and current culture values – reflects 6% cultural entropy in personal values and 4% cultural entropy in current culture values; 27% self interest in personal values and 29% self interest in current culture values; 19% transformation in personal

values and 32% transformation in current culture values; and 49% common good in personal values and 37% common good in current culture values. There is misalignment here between the make-up of the values people hold personally and those they currently experience in Bhutan.

The second comparison – between current culture values and desired culture values – reflects 4% cultural entropy in current culture values and 4% cultural entropy in desired culture values; 29% self interest in current culture values and 28% self interest in desired culture values; 32% transformation in current culture values and 31% transformation in desired culture values; and 37% common good in current culture values and 38% common good in desired culture values. There is near exact alignment between the distribution of values people are currently experiencing and those they would like to see in the desired culture. This alignment shows that they support the amount of focus the nation currently has in each area.

The third comparison – between personal values and desired culture values – reflects 6% cultural entropy in personal values and 4% cultural entropy in desired culture values; 27% self interest in personal values and 28% self interest in desired culture values; 19% transformation in personal values and 31% transformation in desired culture values; and 49% common good in personal values and 38% common good in desired culture values. There is misalignment between the group's personal values and the direction they are asking for in their desired culture.

#### **Positive values by level**

Once again, the seven values levels are: 1) survival; 2) relationships; 3) self-esteem; 4) transformation; 5) internal cohesion; 6) making a difference; and 7) service. It is important to see the percentage of personal, current and desired culture votes for positive values by level. These indicate values chosen by participants at the levels where they are requesting more new focus. They are significant



since they provide clarity around the desired direction of the nation.

Positive values at level 1 (survival) are 5% personal, 8% current culture, and 8% desired culture. At level 2 (relationships) positive values are 12% personal, 8% current culture, and 8% desired culture. Positive values at level 3 (self-esteem) are 10% personal, 13% current culture, and 12% desired culture. At level 4 (transformation) positive values are 19% personal, 32% current culture, and 31% desired culture. Positive values at level 5 (internal cohesion) are 25% personal, 18% current culture, and 17% desired culture. At level 6 (making a difference) positive values are 10% personal, 10% current culture, and 10% desired culture. Positive values at level 7 (service) are 14% personal, 9% current culture, and 11% desired culture. Clearly, the greatest numbers of votes by participants of the survey are at levels 4 and 5: transformation and making a difference.

On the personal side, level 4 (transformation) focuses on self-actualisation and personal growth. It contains values such as courage, accountability, responsibility, knowledge, and independence. This is the level at which individuals overcome the anxieties and fears they are holding onto from the first three levels. It is also the level where individuals begin to find balance in their lives and source their decision-making from their values rather than their beliefs. The focus of level 4 on the national side focuses the consolidation of internal stability by creating a multi-cultural, non-discriminatory, egalitarian society that respects the rights of all citizens. This is the level of democracy and freedom where citizens act responsibly for the good of the whole, with a focus on continuous improvement and renewal.

On the personal side, level 5 (internal cohesion) focuses on the individual's search for meaning. Individuals operating at this level no longer think in terms of a job or career, but of aligning their work with their personal sense of mission. This level contains values such as commitment, creativity,

enthusiasm, humour/fun, excellence, generosity and honesty. The focus of level 5 at the national side focuses on the deepening of the internal resilience of the nation by focusing on fairness, openness and transparency and thereby creating a climate of trust. At this level there would be a sense of a shared vision and values where citizens can play a part in building the nation.

#### **Values jumps or increases**

Here are the values that received the greatest increase in votes from the current culture to the desired culture. Three are top values in the desired culture. These are values the participants consider need to be enhanced for the future well-being of the nation: full employment (a top value) – from 37 to 82, with a jump of 45; human rights – from 14 to 52, with a jump of 38; military strength – from 11 to 49, with a jump of 38; freedom of speech (a top value) – from 80 to 113, with a jump of 33; economic growth (a top value) – from 74 to 107, with a jump of 33; equal opportunities – from 26 to 58, with a jump of 32; peace – from 49 to 73, with a jump of 24; liberal attitudes – from 34 to 55, with a jump of 21; entrepreneurship – from 27 to 46, with a jump of 19; and wisdom – from 34 to 51, with a jump of 17.

Three key requests are reflected in these values jumps: 1) create a strong economy in which all people can support themselves and are given equal opportunities to thrive; 2) protect people's rights and developing strong a strong defence system; and 3) more openness and acceptance – drawing on experience for guidance.

#### **Demographic breakdown**

A majority of the 403 participants of the *Bhutan National Values Assessment* survey were urban educated males under the age of 35. It is interesting to note that in all categories (female, male, rural, urban, under 35, age 35 and over, no education to completion of primary school, education beyond primary school) the values level with the highest number of

votes was level 4 (transformation), followed by level 5 (internal cohesion). Entropy was consistently low across all demographics.

The number one personal value for females was friendship, while continuous learning was the number one personal value for males. For those participants under the age of 35 it was friendship, while it was continuous learning for those 35 and over. The highest personal value for those with an education beyond primary school was friendship, while it was continuous learning for those with no education to completion of primary school. Both rural and urban participants rated friendship as their top personal value.

The number one current culture value was continuous improvement for all demographic categories.

The number one desired culture value for females was education, while continuous improvement was the number one desired culture value for males. For those participants under the age of 35 it was education, while it was freedom of speech for those 35 and over. The highest desired culture value for those with an education beyond primary school was education, while it was friendship for those with no education to completion of primary school. For those from the rural areas the highest desired culture value was environmental protection, while it was freedom of speech for urbanites.

A full demographic breakdown of the *Bhutan National Values Assessment* can be seen online, posted by the Centre for Bhutan Studies.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Go to <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/main/index.php>

**Recommendations<sup>7</sup>**

1. Develop a plan to disseminate the results of the survey among the population. Set up focus groups to gain greater understanding around specific areas of improvement or policy issues, and determine what needs to be done to implement these changes.
2. While the entropy is low, there are themes present in the potentially limiting values that should be examined with a focus on reducing the cultural entropy in the nation. Ask the focus groups what they see as the causes, limiting behaviours, and negative results of each of these values and the corrective actions that need to be taken.
3. Define the key areas the nation will focus on. Develop specific actions and programs that will foster these changes. Consider repeating the survey process every two to five years to gauge the progress made in these areas.
4. Pay particular attention to any personal values that are being asked for in the desired culture. Talk to the focus groups about what these values mean to them and what they can do in order to better support these values.
5. Look at the values gaps in the current culture. What does this signify? Is there a strong call for values at this level within the desired culture?
6. Examine the new values requested in the desired culture: freedom of speech, economic growth, compassion and full employment. Determine their

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<sup>7</sup> It may be necessary to go to the full report and supplements, posted online by the Centre for Bhutan Studies, to get adequate information to complete these recommendations.

meanings and what changes in behaviour are necessary to implement these values.

7. Discuss how Bhutan can continue to live the values of continuous improvement, environmental protection, strict moral/religious codes, education, contentment and social justice.
8. Consider the values jumps from the current culture to desired culture. Are there values jumps that do not show up in the top ten desired culture values that are significant?
9. Investigate why the various demographic groups differ from each other. Determine if there are groups with higher entropy than others, it is important to uncover the root causes that are creating this situation.