

Celebrating people in our community who are making a positive impact by starting businesses that work towards a fair and sustainable society.







MISSION

Inspiring Impact

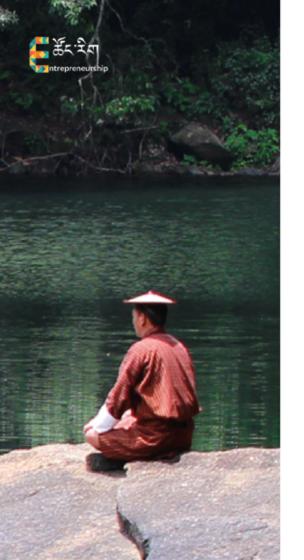
President Message DTG till date from 2018 Power of diversity and Inclusion

Connecting Communities

Director General Message Program highlights

Enabling Entrepreneurs

Flea Market - BBS and Product launch and Stalls



— MISSION Our Ambition

Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG), launched in 2018, is Bhutan's primary festival celebrating socially responsible businesses and inspiring young entrepreneurs. The recently concluded 2023 event, held in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Employment, featured insightful panel sessions and impactful keynote addresses at the Startup Center in Changzamtog, Thimphu. With the theme "Moving Forward," the festival symbolizes a commitment to overcoming challenges post-pandemic and celebrates Bhutan's entrepreneurial spirit.

Beyond being a celebratory event, DTG serves as a crucial platform for diverse stakeholders, fostering discussions on vital issues, launching initiatives, and creating opportunities for various segments of society. The festival's mission includes reducing inequalities and making entrepreneurship accessible to all, with a focus on women, people with disabilities, youth, seniors, and those with limited resources. DTG's impact extends globally, contributing to the development of a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem in Bhutan.

The success of DTG is attributed to the dedication of inaugural committee members, and gratitude is expressed to key partners like MoICE, UNDP, and BAEyul for their pivotal contributions and support. This collaboration has elevated DTG to a dynamic force shaping Bhutan's entrepreneurial landscape with a global influence.



— MISSION

Building Better Businesses, Designing Impactful Solutions and Moving forward.

DTG serves as a catalyst, inspiring, connecting, and empowering Impact Makers to amplify their positive impact within the community. Our approach is straightforward and extends beyond conventional programmatic models. Through linking entrepreneurs and innovators with major organizations, investors, the public sector, and one another, we facilitate inclusive and sustainable innovation on a large scale.

we inspire

19 sessions 2 side events.

89% participants expressed satisfaction with sessions.

we connect

10% connected with business incubator.

2%
partnered /
collaborated
with other

67%
felt part of a larger community and network.

we enable

5 products successfully launched. 30 stalls and a flea market officially inagurated.

college business ideas pitched.



fill (someone) with the urge or ability to do or feel something, especially to do something creative.

DTG 2023 STRIVES TO INSPIRE AWARENESS AND MOTIVATE **IMPACT MAKERS TO** ADDRESS PRESSING CHALLENGES **THROUGH** ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVES.





Message from The President

Dear Readers.

I am honored to write the foreword for this Druk Tshogrig Gateon 2023 report, and lextend my sincere gratitude to all partners, supporters and all players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. As the president of Loden Foundation, Ihave had the privilege of witnessing the dedication and hard work that went into making Druk Tshongrig Gatoen 2023 happen and the series before, culminating into the creation of this report. The theme for DTG 2023 being moving forward, Loden Foundation is happy to have been able to bring together the stakeholders to network and engage prior to the 13th Five Year Plan.

In 2018, Loden initiated the annual Druk Tshogrig Gatoen and over the years, worked with Bhutan Entrepreneur of Association (BAEyul) and ni 2023, with the Association of Bhutanese Cottage and Small Industries (ABCSI) to bring forward the Annual Event.

I want to commend the team or individuals for their remarkable achievements and unwavering commitment to excellence throughout the process. Their collective efforts have resulted in a comprehensive and valuable resource that will undoubtedly benefit the target audience or community.

As you delve into the pages of this report, lencourage you to consider the implications of its contents and reflect on the opportunities it presents.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this foreword, lam confident that the DTG report wil be a source of inspiration, knowledge, and innovation for all who engage with it.

Sugary Thering President Liden boundation



POWER OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The essence of diversity and inclusion extends far beyond providing opportunities for marginalized groups; it embodies a commitment to integrating diverse knowledge and engaging all stakeholders toward a shared vision. Our focus goes beyond merely offering chances to minority or disadvantaged groups; it's about fostering an inclusive environment where varied perspectives contribute to constructing a resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem. Through collaboration, resource mobilization, and the cultivation of a diverse network, we strive to build better businesses with a lasting impact on the entrepreneurial landscape. By taking concerted actions today, we aim for a ripple effect that will resonate and yield even greater positive outcomes in the future.

This collaborative effort was led by ABCSI, comprising Sonam Choden, Kesang Om, Sonam Chopphel, Jigme Tenzin, Yeshi Samdrup, and Tashi Wangdi. The active participation and support of the Loden Foundation team, including Sangay Tshering, Kunzang Wangmo, Rikesh Gurung, Karma Losel, Karma Jamtsho, Pema Tshogyal, and Choeying, were integral to orchestrating and executing the successful DTG 2023 event. With all partners from the ecosystem, we achieved tremendous success with DTG 2023.

In a world evolving at an unprecedented pace, embracing diversity and inclusion is not just a moral imperative; it is a strategic necessity.DTG 2023 delves into the profound impact of fostering a culture that transcends tokenism and actively integrates diverse perspectives and talents. It is not about ticking boxes; it's about building a powerful entrepreneurial ecosystem that thrives on the strength of its diversity.

At the heart of DTG is a fundamental belief that diversity goes beyond merely providing opportunities for marginalized groups. It is a commitment to weaving

together a tapestry of diverse knowledge and engaging all stakeholders in the pursuit of a shared vision. Our focus extends beyond offering chances to minority or disadvantaged groups; it's about creating an inclusive environment where every voice is heard, and every perspective contributes to the resilience and innovation of our entrepreneurial landscape.

Throughout our exploration, we've highlighted the transformative potential of collaboration, resource mobilization, and the inclusion of a diverse network. By showcasing the collaborative effort led by ABCSI and the invaluable support of the Loden Foundation team, we exemplify how diverse teams with unique perspectives can orchestrate and execute impactful initiatives, such as the resounding success of DTG 2023.

DTG 2023 serves as a testament to the power of inclusivity, where the collective actions of individuals from different backgrounds and experiences converge to shape a more vibrant entrepreneurial future. As we reflect on the achievements of DTG 2023, we see a blueprint for building better businesses, leaving a lasting impact on the entrepreneurial landscape.

DTG 2023 underscores the enduring impact of our current actions, asserting that the ripple effect will extend well into the future. By embracing diversity and inclusion, we not only unlock the full potential of individuals but also pave the way for a more resilient, innovative, and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem. It is a call to action, urging organizations and leaders to recognize the power that lies in diversity and inclusion, and to harness it for the benefit of all.









Connect

Verb:/kə'nɛkt/

bring together or into contact so that a real or national link is established.

DTG SERVES AS A DYNAMIC PLATFORM, BRINGING TOGETHER LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM TO COLLABORATIVELY ADDRESS PRESSING ISSUES THROUGH IMPACTFUL ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIONS.



Message from Director General



The Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship (DoEE), Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE) is pleased to be part of the Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG), the celebration of entrepreneurship that has continued to inspire and invigorate since its inception in 2018. This year's theme: "Moving Forward," speaks volumes about our collective resilience in the wake of a challenging global pandemic. The commitment to progress, innovation, and unity displayed through this festival is truly commendable.

The diverse range of sessions held during this year's festival provided invaluable insights and motivation for our aspiring entrepreneurs. Some noteworthy sessions were "SheMeansBusiness" which celebrated the indomitable spirit of women in entrepreneurship. "Breaking Barriers in Entrepreneurship" highlighted the importance of inclusivity for persons with disabilities, the deaf community and LGBTQIA community, and digital innovation by Bhutanese students' startups leading the ways to leverage digital resources to drive positive change and solve the problem in the community.

As our country steers towards the 13th Five-Year Plan, it is imperative to acknowledge the significance of digital entrepreneurship, gender equality through initiatives like "SheMeansBusiness," and the inclusivity of diverse communities in our entrepreneurial ecosystem. These elements are instrumental in achieving the vision of our 13th FYP. The Department will continue to prioritize these areas in the upcoming plan, working hand-in-hand and diligently with the relevant ecosystem actors to foster an environment where entrepreneurship knows no bounds. We remain committed to nurturing innovation, supporting aspiring entrepreneurs, and breaking down barriers that hinder inclusive growth.

Lastly, on behalf of my Department I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Loden Foundation, Association of Bhutan Cottage and Small Industry (ABCSI), Impact Hub Thimphu, as well as our partners and speakers who enriched the festival with their expertise. Special thanks also goes to the Ministry for the unstituting support particularly to the Department of Media, Creative Industry and Intellectual Property (DoMCIIP) and Department of Tourism (DoT).

I wish all our readers a joyful experience as they peruse the pages of this Report.

May the spirit of entrepreneurship continue to thrive in our beautiful nation!



Director General DOEE

Program Highlight

DTG went beyond intellectual discussions to create a multifaceted and engaging experience for participants. The institutional visits to Royal Thimphu College and NRC stand out, where over 75 students received hands-on training in business idea generation. This initiative, supported by the Loden Foundation, Society Switzerland Bhutan, and Impact Hub Thimphu, aimed to instill awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities in Bhutan among students, nurturing the next generation of innovators.

Another impactful event was the "Fundamentals of Intellectual Property" workshop, held in collaboration with DolIMCP, USPTO, and Impact Hub Thimphu, specifically designed for female entrepreneurs and students. With 35 participants, the workshop contributed to empowering individuals with crucial knowledge on intellectual property, fostering innovation, and protecting creative endeavors.

Adding a festive touch, the "Screw Up Night" provided a platform for Mr. Karma and Mr. Diego to candidly share their experiences of failure and the valuable lessons learned. The main objective was to encourage individuals to embrace failure, view it as a stepping stone to success, and foster a risk-taking mindset.

The intellectual richness of DTG extended to 12 panel sessions and three keynote addresses, featuring insights from 51 speakers. This not only covered various topics critical to building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem but also attracted more than 117 engaged participants.





Program Highlight

On the second day, the business idea competition showcased the entrepreneurial spirit, with participants from RUB College, entrepreneurs vying for the Best Loden Entrepreneur, and Desuups from DSP Business Incubation. The platform also offered Spring Board participants an opportunity to share their training experiences and lessons learned.

Highlighting innovation, five business ideas were launched, supported by MolCE, and a cheese product from the highlands, in partnership with UNDP, was introduced by the Department of Livestock. Additionally, a flea market, developed with support from MolCE, was successfully launched.

These diverse activities not only enriched the intellectual landscape of DTG but also contributed to the practical skills, cultural vibrancy, and innovative spirit that characterize this impactful event, making it a comprehensive and dynamic platform for entrepreneurial development in Bhutan.





SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

KEYNOTES



Phuntsho Namgay

INSIGHTS INTO THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

Officiating Director of the Department of Innovation and Technology at Druk Holding and Investments.



Pinda Rika Dorji

SHEMEANSBUSINESS! CELEBRATING WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Brigadier Jaswinder Singh

PIONEERING THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MODEL



Niteen Subash Yeola

STRENGTHENING BILATERAL BUSINESS TIES

Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of india in Thimphu.



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS: A Recap of Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG)

Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG) successfully hosted a diverse and dynamic array of sessions, creating an impactful platform for entrepreneurial development in Bhutan. The second day was marked by a spirited business idea competition, featuring participants from RUB College, entrepreneurs competing for the Best Loden Entrepreneur title, and Desuups from DSP Business Incubation. The event also provided Springing Board participants an opportunity to share their training experiences and lessons learned.

In terms of innovation, five business ideas supported by MoICE were launched, along with the introduction of a highlands cheese product in partnership with UNDP by the Department of Livestock. The successful launch of a flea market, developed with support from MoICE, added to the vibrancy of the event.

DTG extended beyond intellectual discussions, offering a multifaceted experience for participants. Institutional visits to Royal Thimphu College and NRC provided over 75 students with hands-on training in business idea generation, supported by the Loden Foundation, Swiss, and Impact Hub Thimphu. The "Fundamentals of Intellectual Property" workshop, in collaboration with DolIMCP, USPTO, and Impact Hub Thimphu, empowered 35 participants with crucial knowledge on intellectual property.

The "Screw Up Night" brought a festive touch, allowing Mr. Karma and Mr. Diego to candidly share their experiences of failure, emphasizing the importance of embracing failure as a stepping stone to success and fostering a risk-taking mindset.

The intellectual richness of DTG expanded across 12 panel sessions and three keynote addresses, featuring insights from 51 speakers, covering topics critical to building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem and attracting over 117 engaged participants.

Strengthening Bilateral Business Ties: India and Bhutan

The close and friendly relationship between India and Bhutan was explored further at DTG, with Niteen Subhash Yeola, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of India in Thimphu, providing insights into the evolving business ties and support between the two nations.

Digital Innovations: Bhutanese Student Startups Leading The Way

GCIT student startups showcased their digital innovations, addressing challenges in business, healthcare, and education. Two groups successfully launched chatbots, sharing their experiences and shedding light on the qualities and efforts required to excel in digital innovation.



Role of Local Government Administration in creating an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Chukha's Entrepreneurial Journey

The event delved into Chukha's successful entrepreneurial ecosystem, examining its current status and planning for the next decade. With participants from various Dzongkhags, the goal was to apply Chukha's success model to energize rural development nationwide, emphasizing the key role of Local Governments in fostering entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Queer Entrepreneurship: Understanding and Supporting LGBTQIA Community

Recognizing and supporting the entrepreneurial aspirations of the LGBTQIA community in Bhutan was highlighted as crucial. Stakeholders actively engaged in supporting the LGBTQIA community, contributing to a nuanced understanding of its dynamics and demonstrating a commitment to empowerment.

SheMeansBusiness! Celebrating Women in Entrepreneurship

An empowering TED Talk-style event celebrated successful women in business, addressing gender disparities and providing insights into entrepreneurial challenges. The event encouraged attendees to break free from gender norms and drive positive change in the business world.

Innovation and Creative Industry

The session explored improved access to finance in Bhutan, including banks, crowdfunding, civil society support, and DHI-initiated seed funding. Despite progress, there was a gap in acceleration funds and alternative financing mechanisms, prompting discussions on areas for further improvement.

Financing Entrepreneurship in Bhutan: Improving Access to Finance

Despite significant progress in access to finance, gaps in acceleration funds and alternative financing mechanisms persisted. The session aimed to explore and discuss alternative financing options within and outside Bhutan, identifying areas for further improvement.



Making PWD Entrepreneurs Inclusive, Accessible and Sustainable A panel discussion addressed the persistent exclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and the Deaf community in entrepreneurship

programs. The session aimed to create a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem through structured aftercare programs and fostering awareness.

Pioneering the Public Private Partnership Model

Brigadier Jaswinder Singh shared insights into the evolution of Project Dantak's operations in Bhutan, focusing on its innovative adoption of a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) approach.

Enhancing Mentorship Networks For Bhutanese Startups

A panel discussion explored strategies to cultivate a robust mentoring culture in Bhutan's startup landscape, targeting startups, entrepreneurship facilitators, funding bodies, and policy framers. The goal was to broaden and diversify the mentor pool, invigorating the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Promoting The Export Competitiveness Of Entrepreneurs

Discussions focused on comprehensive strategies and policies to boost Bhutan's capacity to sell goods and services globally, emphasizing collaboration among government agencies, the private sector, and other stakeholders to create a conducive environment for successful exporting. The session aimed to stimulate dialogue on this critical topic.





LEVELLING UP FOR POSITIVE CHANGE



Product Launch

Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

With invaluable support from the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Employment (MoICE), DTG served as a launchpad for five distinct businesses to introduce their products to a wider audience. This collaborative effort not only provided these enterprises with a unique opportunity to showcase their offerings but also facilitated direct engagement with potential customers. The support from MoICE played a crucial role in empowering these businesses to take a significant step forward in their entrepreneurial journey, fostering innovation and contributing to the overall growth of the business ecosystem. This initiative exemplifies the impactful collaborations forged during DTG, emphasizing the event's role as a catalyst for economic empowerment and the promotion of emerging enterprises.

CHEESE LAUNCH

During DTG, the Department of Livestock and UNDP Bhutan organized a Cheese Show and Taste event, providing a unique platform to showcase and savor diverse cheese products, fostering collaboration in the agricultural and culinary sectors.

Flea Market

The Flea Market, a collaborative venture between the Loden Foundation, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Employment, and ABCSI, embodies a concerted effort to cultivate a vibrant weekend market culture and nurture entrepreneurial spirit. For small businesses, the market offers a valuable platform for heightened visibility and increased market exposure, presenting opportunities to expand customer reach and enhance brand recognition. Entrepreneurs can directly engage with potential customers, fostering sales, building relationships, and exploring new



avenues for business growth. Furthermore, the Flea Market serves as a nexus for collaboration and



networking among small businesses, facilitating the exchange of experiences and the formation of partnerships that fortify the overall business ecosystem. On the governmental front, support for the Flea Market translates into tangible economic benefits. By promoting a weekend market culture, the government contributes to local economic growth, job creation, and the establishment of a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. The market becomes a catalyst for community engagement, instilling a sense of local identity and pride. In essence, the Flea Market not only introduces a dynamic commerce space but also aligns with broader economic objectives, symbolizing a collaborative commitment to fostering economic development, entrepreneurship, and community well-being.

LODEN BEST ENTREPRENEUR



Tashi Dhendup Dorji, founder of Laykha Dairy Delights, has been honored with the Best Loden Entrepreneur Award at this year's Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG). With a degree in sociology, Tashi founded Laykha Dairy Delights in 2019, introducing flavored yoghurt in innovative 'spout pouch' packaging. His dedication to producing high-quality local products earned him the Entrepreneur of the Year award in 2020 and the Best Trademark award in 2021.

Laykha Dairy Delights aims to showcase the excellence of Bhutanese entrepreneurs and foster inclusivity in the workplace. Tashi envisions expanding small-scale manufacturing facilities to enhance Bhutan's self-sufficiency and boost the export of high-quality Bhutanese products.

The award serves to encourage Loden entrepreneurs to create social impact and timely loan repayments, with a cash prize of BTN 200,000 presented with the support of Society Switzerland Bhutan. The ultimate goal is to support aspiring entrepreneurs and contribute to the community and the nation.

RUB Business Idea Competition Winner

ZhayChhop, the winner of the RUB Business Idea Competition, specializes in manufacturing flavored instant bathup, emphasizing the transformation of local dishes into convenient alternatives. The company aims to promote local cuisine, utilizing regional resources to support farmers and enhance local production. Positioned as an affordable substitute for imported instant noodles, ZhayChhop not only targets the local market but also aspires to expand globally. The long-term vision includes capturing international markets and showcasing the diverse flavors of Bhutan on a global scale.



Screwup Night

"Screwup Night," a revolutionary initiative held as part of Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG), attracted over 85 participants and featured two inspiring speakers, Mr. Karma and Mr. Diego. This groundbreaking movement aims to dismantle limiting paradigms that hinder individual potential by leveraging the power of failure. The event provided a safe space for leaders to champion authenticity, fostering an organizational culture rooted in innovation. By addressing the conventional fear of failure, "Screwup Night" encourages open conversations and cultivates an ethos that views failure as a catalyst for progress. Attendees included a diverse spectrum of individuals, from aspiring entrepreneurs to seasoned startup founders, corporate leaders, government representatives, educators, and those on personal and professional growth journeys. The event successfully sparked challenging and profound discussions, contributing to the evolution of a mindset that embraces failure as a steppingstone to success within the entrepreneurial and professional community.

Instutional Visit

As a part of Druk Tshongrig Gatoen - DTG, we conducted a training event that occurred on October 6-7, 2023, at Rigter Tshongrig Club and on October 14-15, 2023, at Royal Thimphu College, drawing over 55 enthusiastic participants. The NRC session featured intense competition with 39 exceptional business ideas, and the top honor went to an impressive e-commerce business concept. Simultaneously, at RTC, the highly sought-after first prize for the most outstanding business idea was presented to the Pottery concept.

Fundamental of Intellectual Property

The Intellectual Property Workshop hosted during Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG) on October 19, 2023, marked a successful collaboration with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Supported by the Department of Media, Creative Industry & Intellectual Property and the Startup Centre, Thimphu, the workshop attracted 33 participants from various schools and the startup community. The comprehensive sessions, focusing on the basics of Intellectual Property, provided valuable insights to creative young minds and entrepreneurs. The success of the event was not only a testament to the engagement of the diverse audience but also a demonstration of the ongoing commitment to fostering innovation and awareness in the realm of Intellectual Property.

TESTIMONIAL

"Thank you for opening the doors to a world of possibilities and helping us youths take the first step to this exciting journey of entrepreneurship" - Anisha Chhetri, Student

"Never had I imagined that I would be a panelist for an important session while I am still an undergrad" - Tashi Dhendup, College student, GCIT





"As a student we were able learn, network and get inspired, these are somethings that might not have been possible in a classroom" - Ananth Chhetri, Student

"Thank you Loden Foundation and everyone involved in DTG, this was an eye opening event, and we were able to connect with many new individuals as well."

- Ngawang Chojey Rai, College student, GCIT

Druk Tshongrig Gatoen - 2023 Statement of Receipt and Payment

Particular	Amount (Nu.)
Receipts	
Sponorship Tier Package	
Diamond	450,000
Platinum	894,287
Gold	450,000
Sliver	136,240
Programme Sponsor	145,000
Goodwill Sponsor	5,000
Total	2,080,527
Expenses	
Pre Event Expenses	28,140
Advertisement Expense	6,659
Event Coverage Expense	451,000
Honorium Expense	42,500
Internet Expense	12,086
Meals & Entertainment Expense	367,651
Miscellaneous Expense	49,995
Post-Event Expense	70,000
Preparation Expense	951,648
Printing & Stationeries Expense	49,888
Purchase of Assets	43,136
Subscription Expense	7,824
Total	2,080,527

PARTNERS











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ORGANIZER

















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