

LEGAL AID INCEPTION DOCUMENT



Legal Aid Center
Supreme Court Complex
Lhadrong: Thimphu



GYALPOI ZIMPON

ཀླུ་པོའི་གཞིས་དཔོན་ཡིག་ཚང་།
OFFICE OF THE GYALPOI ZIMPON
HIS MAJESTY'S SECRETARIAT
TASHICHHO DZONG

RC-OGZ/LEGAL/2022/2909

Chief Justice of Bhutan,
Supreme Court of Bhutan,
Hejo, Thimphu:11001

17th June 2022

Royal Command

His Majesty the King has commanded the immediate establishment of the Legal Aid Center at Bhutan National Legal Institute.

This is to further strengthen the rule of law and the justice system by enabling all the people to access the Courts and the legal process as enshrined in Article 9.6 of the Constitution. Thus, legal aid is indispensable, especially for indigent persons, to have fair and full access to the justice system.

In the absence of any formal institution to provide legal aid, the Office of the Gyalpoi Zimpon has, thus far, provided such aid in terms of meeting the cost of appealing a case as kidu upon Royal approval.

In order to improve outreach and enhance access to legal aid and ensure its sustained operations, it has become imperative to establish a Legal Aid Center that is organized, systematic and purposeful in serving the needs of the people.

As the BNLI embarks on this important task, the following documents are enclosed for reference as they may be beneficial to expedite the establishment of the Center;

- Standard Operating Procedure for the Legal Aid Service Unit at HMS,
- Draft Legal Aid Rules 2022, Office of the Attorney General.

Yours sincerely,

Ugyen K. Namgyel
GYALPOI ZIMPON

CC to:

- Hon'ble Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office for necessary action;
- Hon'ble Finance Minister, Ministry of Finance, for providing the Legal Aid Fund and necessary action;
- Hon'ble Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Thimphu, for kind information; and
- ✓ Hon'ble Director General, Bhutan National Legal Institute, Thimphu, for compliance

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1. Background and Objectives

1.1. Background

The need for legal aid was foreseen decades ago under the *Civil and Criminal Procedure Code of Bhutan 2001*, which emphasizes that an indigent accused be provided with legal aid for one's defense in the interest of justice. Further, *the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008* provides basis for legal aid under the Principles of State Policy.¹ It envisages legal aid as a sacrosanct legal premise based on the principles of equality and justice.

Due to various constraints including the absence of a dedicated system of financial and human resources allocation, and more so due to the absence of a clear legislative framework and designated authority to administer legal aid services in Bhutan, the provision of legal aid did not materialize. However, the ROYAL AIDJUST (Aid for Justice) under His Majesty's Secretariat has been providing legal aid to the recipients of *Kidu*. In addition, the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) provide legal aid services to the vulnerable groups of people including children and women. To further the formalization of Legal Aid, the Bhutan National Legal Institute (Institute) has been entrusted to establish a Legal Aid Center that is organized, systematic, and purposeful in serving the needs of people. In obedience to the Royal Command, the Institute has initiated this inception document that will create a foundation for implementing legal aid in Bhutan.

1.2. Objectives of Legal Aid

Legal aid is a provision of assistance to the most needy, who cannot afford legal services. Those eligible often do not understand the legal processes and complexities of law and lack equitable access to legal counsel, which affects the administration of justice. In such a situation, legal aid can help the needy to better understand legal and Court processes enabling exercise of their rights to settle disputes, and seek remedies for grievances, and enjoy equal protection of the law. In

¹ *Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008*, Art. 9 (6).

essence, legal aid is aimed at minimizing the gap created by economic and social disparity.

Achieving this objective has its many challenges, which are discussed within this document. One of the biggest challenges would be providing urgent legal aid services at the pretrial stage, considering the time taken to process and review the applications. To start with, the Center will provide legal aid services to indigent accused charged with offences, which are felony in nature. However, the Center shall endeavour to ensure prompt and accessible legal aid services to all indigent accused in the future.

1.3. Purpose and Objective of the Inception Document

The purpose of this document is to lay down a clear framework on institutionalization of legal aid, which is sustainable, effective, and efficient in its implementation and in assisting people who need legal aid service the most.

The inception document will:

- a) Lay down eligibility criteria for availing legal aid services;
- b) Define scope of legal aid services;
- c) Develop collaborative approaches among stakeholders with specific roles;
- d) Standardize legal aid services; and
- e) Map out a way forward for a feasible service delivery.

2. Eligibility Criteria for Legal Aid

One of the important tasks is to select indigent through clear criteria. Eligibility criteria will be determined through tests aimed at improving “quality of service” and fulfilling “genuine legal needs” of indigent persons. An indigent person means a person who cannot provide the necessities of life (food, clothing, decent shelter) for himself/herself, and one without sufficient means to afford a lawyer. The following tests will determine the eligibility for all three types of legal aid services.

2.1. Means Test

In order to determine indigence and the need for genuine legal aid, the applicant must undergo a means test, which examines the applicant's financial capacity. The Center will consider both household income and disposable capital to determine the applicant's financial capacity. The income threshold is based on the per capita poverty line set by the National Statistics Bureau of Bhutan, which is published every five years.

2.2. Merits Test

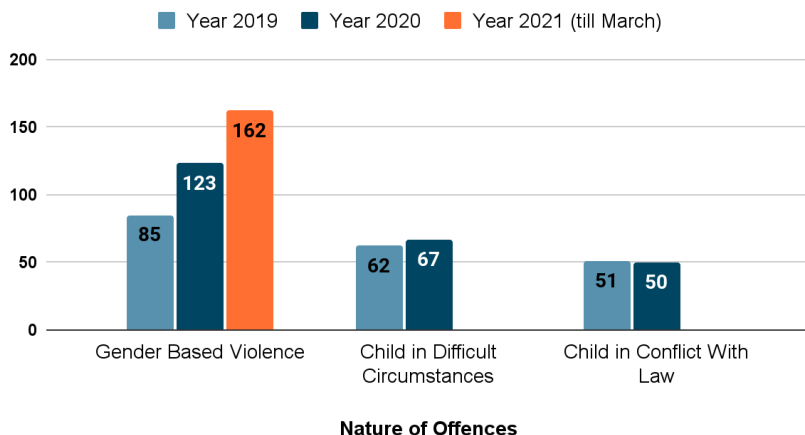
Under the merits test, the Center will assess information and documents relating to the applicant's case to understand the applicant's legal problem and assess whether or not it is the type of issue the Center may grant legal aid.

All applicants must qualify means test and merits test for all types of legal aid. However, children in conflict with the law (CICL) and persons with permanent physical or mental and social disabilities are provided legal advice and assistance regardless of his or her financial capacity, when the interest of justice so requires.

2.3. Beneficiaries

Many Bhutanese in need of legal assistance are from vulnerable groups whose legal problems exist due to social problems such as poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, and language barriers. These people face difficulty identifying legal issues in their situations. Oftentimes, these unresolved legal issues can have cascading negative effects on their lives.

Figure showing the number of CICL, CIDC and GBV cases



According to the OAG's Annual Report 2019, there were 62 cases of offences committed against children, 32 cases of offences committed against women and 51 cases of children in conflict with the law (CICL) respectively. In 2020, the OAG recorded 67, 12, and 50 cases, respectively. The statistics from the NCWC reported 85 Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases in 2019. It increased to 123 in 2020 and 162 by March 2021. These statistics cover only those cases reported to NCWC and charged by OAG, those cases reported to CSOs, RBP and other authorities are not included.

The Population and Housing Census of Bhutan 2017 (PHCB) recorded 15,567 disabled people in Bhutan. Most of them have been reported to be residing in rural parts of the country, where there are a few or no legal practitioners.² These indicate that there are multiple legal aid needs for a limited number of legal practitioners in the country. Further, this might pose a challenge to our limited national resources. Therefore, legal aid services should be provided only to those eligible vulnerable persons upon careful scrutiny.

² Currently, 119 private lawyers and 78 paralegals are registered with the Bar Council of Bhutan. Of the total twenty Dzongkhags and fifteen Dungkhags, only a few Dzongkhags have law firms.

3. Operational Strategies and Work Plan

The Center should implement strategies to make the best use of resources and provide quality legal services. The State shall provide the Center with adequate funds to cover the costs of legal aid and any other costs that the Center is required to bear. Legal aid costs shall mean the sum of fees or costs attributable to the service provider, to be specified in the Rules.

3.1. Plan of Action

This table outlines list of activities briefly:

Activity & Description	Time frame	Lead Responsibility
Draft Rules & Regulations	August 2022	BNLI
Consultation meeting with the stakeholders on the Rules	September 2022	BNLI
Inauguration and operation of the Center	October 2022	BNLI
Coordination meeting with the Bar Council of Bhutan and other stakeholders	October 2022	BNLI
Preparation of detailed strategic document and other documents for legal aid services	November 2022- January 2023	BNLI and the Center in consultation with other stakeholders

Rules and Regulations

Legal aid should be governed by the Rules and other applicable documents until formal legal framework is established. The Rules and documents framed in relation to legal aid will ensure organized, systematic and purposeful legal services to the most needy. The Rules will broadly cover:

- i. Establishment of the Legal Aid Center and legal aid services;
- ii. Service providers' obligations and accountability for quality legal aid;
- iii. Legal aid application process;
- iv. Conditions for grant of legal aid and its revocation; and
- v. Monitoring and evaluation of legal aid services and others.

3.2. Establishment of the Legal Aid Center

The Legal Aid Center will be the nodal agency for legal aid, which will function as part of the Institute. The Center shall ensure that legal aid is provided in accordance with the applicable policies, regulations, laws and ethical standards. Among other things, the Center shall:

- i. Review legal aid application and monitor legal aid services;
- ii. Liaise with relevant stakeholders; and
- iii. Frame policies, strategic documents, standard operating procedures, manuals, guidelines and other documents on various aspects of legal aid.

The Center will consist of the following personnel, who will coordinate and administer legal aid:

- i. Drangpon Rabjam/the Chief Legal Officer;
- ii. Two Bench Clerks; and
- iii. One Supporting Staff.

While the Institute shall utilize its existing resources to establish the Center and operationalize services, additional staff may need to be recruited to commensurate the demand for legal aid services. As an interim measure, the staff and lawyers of the Institute will provide assistance and support, on a rotational basis.

In the future, legal aid could be provided primarily by lawyers recruited by the Center, as full-time employees of the Center. It is considered an ideal arrangement because it is cost-effective and sustainable. At present, due to inadequate human resources, the Center will provide

legal aid in collaboration with relevant institutions, relying primarily on private lawyers and paralegals.

3.3. Types of Legal Aid Services

Legal aid services include legal advice, legal assistance and legal representation.

- i. **Legal Advice:** Legal advice is the provision of giving professional or formal advice to a client in resolving a legal problem. Legal advice often involves analyzing a set of facts and recommending a course of action to the client based on the applicable law.
- ii. **Legal Assistance:** Submissions to the Court are required mostly in the Court language (Dzongkha). Most litigants have difficulty finding suitable individuals to draft petitions and other Court documents. For simple tasks such as filling out judicial forms and other documents, litigants have to spend a lot of time and financial resources to find the necessary persons and help. Providing drafting services could ease the burden on indigent persons to navigate the legal process.
- iii. **Legal Representation:** Legal representation before the Court can be facilitated for people who genuinely merit the service, which will be stipulated under the Rules. This is to facilitate an effective legal safeguard, and advance services based on principles of equity, justice, and equality of representation before Courts.

In addition to the above three services, the Center will also provide legal information and education.

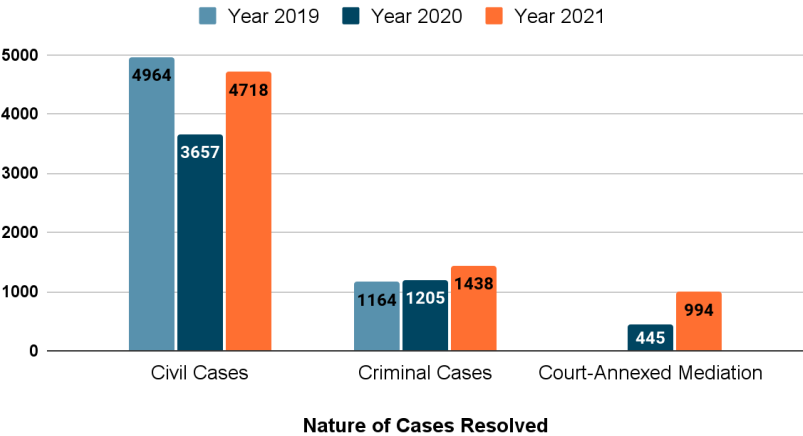
3.4. Nature of Cases Eligible for Legal Aid Services

In criminal cases, an applicant may be eligible to receive legal aid, if s/he is accused of an offence punishable with felony under the *Penal Code of Bhutan, 2004* or any other laws. Approximately 294, 526 and 157 cases of felony were recorded in the past years (2019-2021). In civil matters, eligible applicants will be provided only legal advice and

assistance. However, the Center may also provide legal representation in civil matters, if the interests of justice so require.

Both civil and criminal cases will be subject to means and merits tests in addition to certain other conditions. For instance, certain civil and criminal matters will not be eligible for legal aid. For example, judgment enforcement proceedings and proceedings, where the only question to be brought before the Court is the time and mode of payment (including liquidated damages and costs); election petitions; insolvency proceedings, foreclosure; etc.

Figure showing the number of Criminal and Civil Cases (including CAM)



According to the Annual Judicial Reports, a total of 4964, 3657 and 4718 civil cases were registered in 2019, 2020 and 2021, respectively. Similarly, 1164, 1205, and 1438 criminal cases were decided in 2019 to 2021, respectively. These case statistics show that the number of civil cases is slightly decreasing and the number of criminal cases is increasing every year. However, the decrease in civil cases may be due to the institutionalization of Court-Annexed Mediation units (CAMUs) in various Courts. These units mediated a total of 445 and 994 cases in 2020 and 2021, respectively. CAM is designed to offer disputants the opportunity to opt for a negotiated settlement during the trial, with the help of neutral judicial mediators, until the final judgment is rendered.

The above case statistics did not include cases that are settled out of Court. Also not included are cases in which the parties did not use any formal dispute resolution methods due to lack of knowledge and insufficient resources or for other reasons. Once the center becomes operational, most of these people will seek legal aid, and the number of cases is expected to increase significantly.

3.5. Procedure for Service Delivery

Overview of service delivery process:

- i. **Submitting applications:** Applications for legal aid may be submitted directly to the Center or may be channeled through relevant institutions in a prescribed manner. For instance, if applications are submitted to the Court, as may be relevant in a particular case, the Court, after assessing all relevant criteria and establishing genuine cause, shall forward the application to the Center. These applications shall be accompanied by necessary documents from the Court to expedite assessment process at the Center.

Likewise, respective institutions assisting the legal aid applicant shall ensure that all prescribed documents and information are verified and forwarded to the Center. This is designed to streamline and expedite the process of verification and assessment of applications. Respective institutions and individuals assisting a legal aid applicant shall also exercise due diligence in submitting necessary documents and information.
- ii. **Review of applications:** One of the main functions of the Center is to review applications and ensure that the services are granted only to the most needy. The Center shall request information from relevant public, corporate or private sectors to ascertain the legal aid applicant's financial capacity.
- iii. **Making decision:** After reviewing applications, the Center shall make decision to either grant or deny services, which

shall be final and binding unless appealed to the Review Committee. The Center shall come to the conclusion solely on the basis of household income and disposable capital, and merits of the case. The Center will communicate the decision (either grant or denial of services) to the applicant with proper justification.

- iv. **Appointment of the service provider:** If the Center makes a decision to grant legal aid, it will appoint a legal aid service provider who is required to sign an undertaking at the time of assignment of the case. The legal aid recipient will be informed of the type of legal aid service and details of the service provider. The service provider assigned by the Center shall start services immediately from the date of assignment of the case.
- v. **Revocation of legal aid:** The Center may revoke legal aid if the applicant knowingly provides false or misleading information or representation in his/her application; or fails to make full disclosure of his/her means; or fails to update the change in circumstances to the Center; or for any other reasons. Further, s/he will not be extended legal aid for the subsequent cases or requests.
- vi. **Monitoring and evaluation:** From the day of assignment of cases till the final disposition, service providers will be monitored from time to time. The main objective of this monitoring exercise is to ensure that service providers inform the Center and others of the progress of the case. Secondly, the Center will be able to address issues related to legal aid and ensure legal aid recipients receive the highest quality of legal aid services. After successful disposition of the case, the Center will carry out evaluation of the service provider and may recommend changes for better services in future.

4. Stakeholders

A successful legal aid program will require coordinated efforts of all relevant institutions. Following institutions are identified as relevant

stakeholders for the purpose of implementing legal aid in Bhutan. These stakeholders are varied in terms of their institutional mandates, competencies, resource availability, and public engagement.

- 1) Judiciary;
- 2) Law Enforcement Agencies;
- 3) Bar Council of Bhutan;
- 4) Competent Authority for Women and Children;
- 5) Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law (JSW LAW);
- 6) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) - RENEW, Disabled People's Organization of Bhutan (DPO) and Nazhoen Lamtoen, and others; and
- 7) The PEMA Center Secretariat.

The Institute will identify crucial areas of collaboration among stakeholders. Legal aid is required in police stations, court proceedings, one-stop crisis centers and other places, where constant criminal and civil matters arise. Stakeholders involved in legal aid will play an important role in every stage of legal aid services, such as facilitating, monitoring, and developing legal aid services. Few will perform the dual function of facilitating and providing legal aid services as well.

4.1. Judiciary and Law Enforcement Agencies

The Royal Courts of Justice will be in a better position to assess legal needs of litigants coming before respective Courts. Therefore, the Center will be working closely with the Judiciary. Respective Courts will assist the Center to collect information and documents on means and merits of the applicant's case. In criminal matters, OAG, RBP and other investigative bodies will be in a better position to assess means and merits of the applicant's case.

4.2. The PEMA, CSOs and competent authority for women and children

They are the first point of contact for vulnerable persons, such as persons with disabilities (physical, mental and social), children in conflict with

the law (CICL) and children in difficult circumstances (CIDC). They can provide legal aid services apart from their institutional mandate of counseling, medical treatment, reintegration, etc. They can also assist applicants in applying to the Center for legal aid.

4.3. Bar Council

Legal aid will depend mostly on services of private lawyers and paralegals registered with the Bar Council of Bhutan. Based on the agreement with the Bar Council, the Center will engage private lawyers and paralegals to provide legal aid services. Alternatively, the Center may request the Bar Council to appoint lawyers and paralegals to provide legal aid services. Appointment of lawyers and paralegals shall follow procedures that ensure fair and equal opportunity for all.

The Bar Council will also assist the Center in monitoring services and take necessary actions in cases where service providers violate their duties and responsibilities. Thus, in addition to the Center the Bar Council of Bhutan will also act as supervisory body to ensure the quality of services.

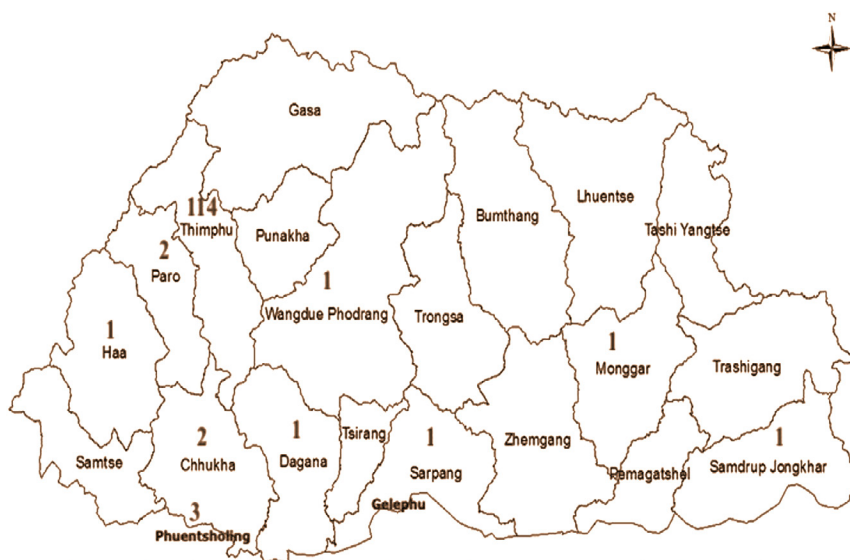
Private Lawyer Scheme: There are multiple options to provide legal aid services. Under the private lawyer scheme, private lawyers, organized in the following manner, will provide legal aid services:

- i. **Fee-based Scheme:** The Center may refer the case to the private law firms through the Bar Council. The procedure for the referral will be stipulated in the Rules, manuals and guidelines. The service remuneration will be determined by the Center on a case-by-case basis, which shall not exceed the maximum amount set by the Center.
- ii. **Pro bono Scheme:** Within the legal aid system, the provision of *pro bono* legal services by lawyers could also enhance access to justice. However, *pro bono* legal service is different from legal aid. In Bhutan, the Bar Council has the mandate to provide *pro bono*³ legal services. Therefore, *pro bono* services may not be a substitute to legal aid services in its entirety but it will complement the legal aid services provided by the Center.

3 *The Jabmi (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2016*, Section 9(f).

- iii. **Volunteer Scheme:** Legal Aid Volunteers (LAV) will consist of paralegals and legal professionals who wish to register with the Center to render free legal services.

The map in the following page shows an approximate number of private lawyers registered with the Bar Council of Bhutan from different Dzongkhags. Although the Bar Council has registered 119 private lawyers, all of them may not be actively practicing in the market. Moreover, some of them practice in multiple Dzongkhags, leading to duplication in the total number of registered private lawyers. The Center will maintain a proper list of actively practicing private lawyers to forecast availability and feasibility of legal aid service providers.



Paralegal Scheme: In the Dzongkhags where there are no legal firms or limited paralegals, litigants spend both time and money to get appropriate people who can read and draft court documents in Dzongkha. This causes stress, burden and delay in the administration of justice.

Paralegals will provide complementary services and expand access to legal information and assistance to individuals who do not qualify

for legal representation. With proper monitoring and supervision, paralegals could become essential members of legal aid service providers.

4.4. Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law (JSW Law)

The Center will outline a long-term strategy for developing and supporting law students to undertake legal aid works and services. To this end, the Center in partnership with JSW Law will engage the services of Law Clinics to support legal aid services with a focus on legal advice and assistance. This would enable students to learn and accrue academic credits.

4.5. Other Relevant Institutions

The Center shall coordinate with the Local Government Leaders, National Statistics Bureau, Anti Corruption Commission and the Financial Institutions in obtaining vital information required for the means test. Through such collaborative efforts, the process for eligibility tests may also be expedited.

5. Mode of Service Delivery

The Center will encourage use of technology to enable access to legal information and conduct virtual legal aid services. Wherever practicable, facilities such as e-litigation, e-filing, and remote hearing will be adopted to connect with legal aid recipients and Courts, in far and remote locations.

6. Conclusion

In line with the noble vision and following the initiative of the Royal AIDJUST, the Legal Aid Center will strive to strengthen the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice. In doing so, it is important to provide legal assistance to those most in need, as changes in the socio-economic environment and the increasing complexity of the law often make access to justice difficult for ordinary citizens, especially vulnerable groups. Complex legal issues require the services of a lawyer, but some people are unable to get one due to cost. Therefore, the introduction of legal aid will facilitate access to justice for those most in need and minimize miscarriages of justice.

The establishment of the Center will therefore ensure equal access to justice through fair, accessible and accountable legal aid procedures. The Center will screen applicants on their means and merits against the eligibility criteria. Legal aid will be limited in its scope and coverage and will be provided only in certain civil matters and criminal cases of felony in nature considering the resource constraints. However, the Center shall endeavour to expand the scope of legal aid to all criminal cases in future. To ensure that the needy receive appropriate and quality services, service providers and their performance will be closely monitored. The Center will develop appropriate regulations, strategic documents and action plans for the progressive implementation of legal aid. In the long term a formal legal framework is needed for the effective operation of the Center, and for regulating the service providers and applicants as well.

To ensure effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery, the Center will work through a well-coordinated inter-agency collaboration. Among other things, relevant stakeholders must assist the Center in identifying indigent and vulnerable persons and facilitating the legal aid application process so that the Center can make the correct and final decision. As a collective responsibility, it is most crucial that all stakeholders play their part in achieving the noble goal of improving access to justice for needy and vulnerable segments of our society.

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Symbolism of Legal Aid Logo

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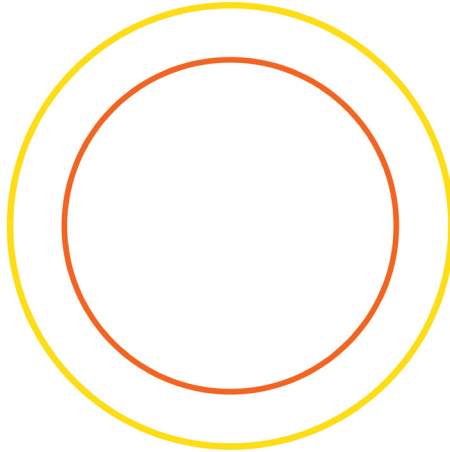
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གྱི་ཐོག་ལས་ རྒྱལ་གཅེས་ལྷན་བསམ་རྣམ་པར་དཀར་བའི་བརྟོན་དང་།

བར་ན་ལུ་ ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་སྟེགས་གསེའི་བད་རྟགས་མོར་བུ་དང་ མིང་གི་འོག་ལུ་དར་སེར་པོའི་རི་
མོ་བཀོད་དེ་ཡོད་མི་འདི། ཞི་རྒྱས་དབང་འག་བཞི་ལས་རྒྱས་པའི་ཕྱིན་ལས་ཀྱི་སྟོན་ལས་
བཞིའི་ཕྱིན་ལས་རབ་འབྱམས་ལྷན་གྲུབ་ཏུ་རྒྱས་པའི་བད་མཚོན་ཨིན་མ་དང་།

ནང་དུ་ལགས་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་ མོར་བུ་བཏེགས་པའི་རི་མོ་བཀོད་དེ་ཡོད་མི་འདི་ ཆོས་སྤྲེལ་ལུགས་
གཉིས་བཟང་པོའི་དྲང་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་སྟེགས་ལས་ དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པའི་འབངས་མི་སེར་ཚུ་གི་རེ་
དོན་ཚུ་ ཚུལ་མཐུན་ལེགས་ཤོམ་སྟེ་འགྲུབ་ཚུགས་ནི་དང་། དེ་འགྲུབ་པར་བྱེད་པའི་འདོད་
འབྱུང་ཡིད་བཞིན་གྱི་མོར་བུ་དང་འདྲ་བའི་ དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པའི་ལུགས་བྱང་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་སྟོན་
ལས་ ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་སྟེགས་གསེའི་ཕུལ་བའི་བད་དོན་ལགས་སོ།

Symbolism of Legal Aid Logo



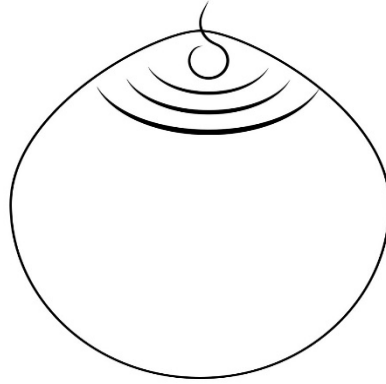
1. The Wheel [*Khorlo*]

The *Khorlo* or the wheel is an essential Buddhist symbol. *Khorlo* represents the possession of *Chakravartin* [*Khor lo gyur wai gyalpo*]. It is one of the eight auspicious signs of the Buddhist teachings. Symbolically, the yellow outer rim of the wheel signifies the secular tradition. The orange inner rim represents the timeless Buddhist spiritual tradition. The colours represent the harmonious co-existence of secular and spiritual traditions in Bhutan.



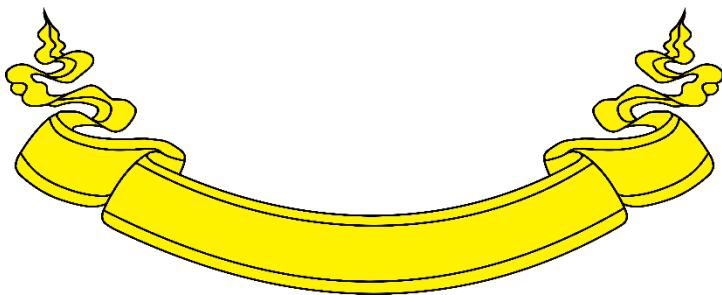
2. The Hand Mudra

Mudra is a physical expression of energy and space. The *abhaya* mudra represents protection, peace, benevolence and the dispelling of fear. In this, the hand mudra symbolizes reassurance, blessings and protection thus sharing deep analogical relations with support, service, mutuality and compassionate aspect of legal aid services. It represents open-handed support and empowerment of Justice based on temporal and spiritual laws to realize the dreams and aspirations of the people.



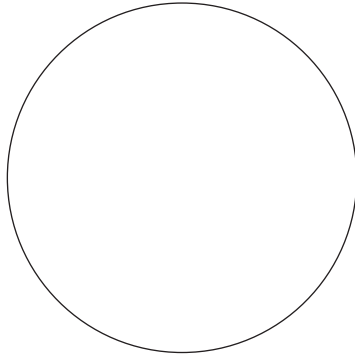
3. The Precious Jewel [Ratna]

The wish-fulfilling Jewel [*yi zhin norbu*] metaphorically represents the right conditions that fulfill our wishes and aspirations. In Buddhism, the Precious Jewel removes illnesses and clear imperfections. It is a vehicle [*yana*] to fulfill the aspirations of the people: thus, creating right cause and conditions to remove limitations of our laws and access to Justice. Further, it symbolizes the virtues of empathy, wisdom and power-reflecting the sacred nature of legal aid.



4. The Golden Silk Scarf

Silk is the softest material associated with faculty of touch. The golden silk scarf draping below the hand mudra with swirls up on the either side represents the *Four Activities* [*Ley zhi*] of the tantric path to purification. It constitutes the approaches of pacifying, increasing, mastering and wrathful subjugation [*zhi gya wang drag*]. Essentially, the yellow colour of the golden silk scarf represents *Gyapa* [*paustika*]. The colour represents the increase of glory, merit and richness creating a ripe space for generation of virtue. Keeping with these analogical relations, it symbolizes the proliferation of legal aid services and spontaneous accomplishment of good deeds.



5. The White Background

In Buddhism, white colour is associated with virtue and good deeds [*zepa thinley*]. Here, it signifies the narrative element of purity, cleanliness and immaculacy. The inner white surface of the Logo imputes the white and chaste actions and services of the *Tsa-Wa-Sum*. It reflects non-defiled and liberated actions and service, thus illustrating the sublime nature of governance and *rule of law* in Bhutan. It provides a visual representation that signifies the concept of clear wisdom.

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