

Mr. Tashi Wangchuk from Bhutan



I am Tashi Wangchuk from Bhutan, a small country that lies between China and India. I joined Bhutan's civil service as a District Assembly Officer in Lhuentse District in August 2005 under the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs. I had been working on disaster related activities before my formal appointment as a Disaster Management Officer in the Monggar District in 2015.

Working in local government gave me a deeper knowledge of planning and decision-making processes in Bhutan as I was involved in developing the 8th Five Year Plan of Lhuentse District and have worked extensively on developing democratic processes in Bhutan since 2006. Since then, I have acquired a great deal of knowledge on national and local elections and on participatory socio-economic development processes at the local level. I had an opportunity to come to Japan in January 2009 for a class in "Participatory Local Social Development: Theory and Practice."

In mid-2010, I was selected as an ADB scholar to study environmental management and development at the Australian National University. While studying for my master's degree, I learned the best management skills and research methodologies. After returning to work in Bhutan, I had the opportunity to serve in one of the largest districts of Bhutan. This area consists of 17 blocks, and managing them in an orderly way can prove quite challenging. This gave me a great opportunity to showcase best management skills and experiences on local cultures.

As for my current posting, it is been challenging for a highlander like me to work in a place with very hot and humid summers. Bhutan is prone to disasters due to its location and rugged terrain. It is a difficult place to live that poses particular challenges during the monsoon season. The country experiences many landslides and flash floods since most settlements are located along the rivers and streams. Seismological events add another deadly nightmare over other conventional and new hazards.

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) visiting research program has given me a golden opportunity to study good disaster management systems around world and to go on field visits to key Japanese disaster institutions. My studies have allowed me to learn about disaster management organizations at different level of hierarchy. All of the field visits and lectures I have encountered will contribute to my research on the ways that various methods, skills and risk reduction strategies can be mainstreamed into local development plans.