



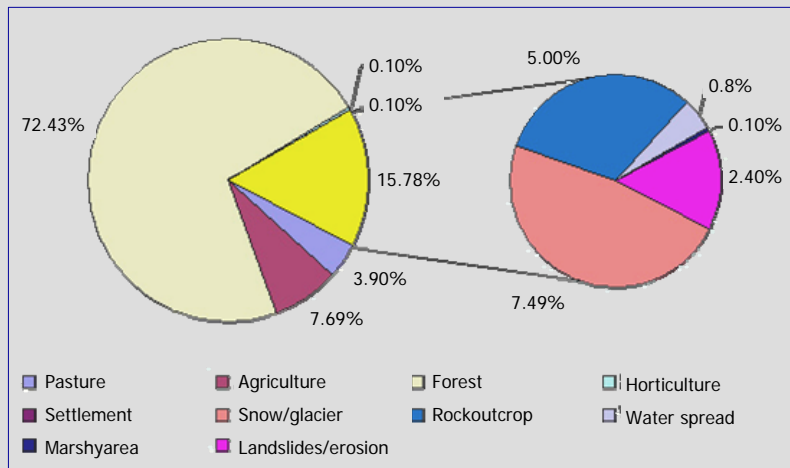
**ROLE OF LAND FRAGMENTATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT:
A BHUTANESE PERSPECTIVE**

Introduction

Bhutan lies sandwiched between the giant nations of China in the North and India in the South with an area of just 38,394 sq. km. Currently the population stands at 7,52,700 with a population density of 19.65 persons per sq. km with an alarming population growth rate of 2.5 percent per annum. The urban population of the country is 21 percent and the rural population is 79 percent which depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The grave situation of the land cover statistics of the country is displayed alongside.



Land Use type as a percentage of total area



Objective

The main objective of the research was to analyze land fragmentation in Bhutan and its role in rural development.

Methodology

1. Interview with households
2. Semi-structured interview with experts
3. Literature review

Theory

1. Regional Rural Development (GTZ)
2. Sustainable Livelihood Concept (DFID)
3. Reaching the Rural Poor (World Bank)
4. Gross National Happiness (Development Philosophy of Bhutan)

Source: RNR Annual Statistics 2003

Area in acres	No of plots (16 districts)	Percentage
0.01-0.10	62164	15.17
0.11-0.20	70987	17.32
0.21-0.30	49125	11.99
0.31-0.40	57894	14.13
0.41-0.50	28122	6.86
0.51-1.00	73951	18.04
1.01-2.00	37263	9.09
2.01-5.00	20388	4.97
5.01-10.00	3398	0.83
> 10	6526	1.59
Total plots	456,993	

Source DSLR 2005

Findings

- Land fragmentation is constituting a grave problem in Bhutan.
- True land consolidation in the Western sense will not work in Bhutan because of the rugged topography.
- Land fragmentation features the main issue in poverty and one of the issues of rural urban migration in the country.
- Land fragmentation must be taken up as a separate entity in rural development.