

Election Commission of Bhutan



Charter for Volunteers for Voter Information, Communication and Education

(Volunteer-VOICE)

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"... I would like to seize the historic Tenchongling as the right venue to announce that we will work on two initiatives that is to form Volunteer-VOICE (Volunteers for Voter Information, Communication and Education) of all Bhutanese who are interested to carry out voter and civic education and a Network of Bhutanese for Electoral Democracy Bhutan (Network). The latter will comprise of individuals who are bubbling with ideas to help Bhutan on the righteous democratic path through sharing of ideas."

Dasho Kunzang Wangdi, Chief Election Commissioner of Bhutan at the 7th Batch of Desuung Training at the Military Training Centre, Tenchongling, Wangdue Phodrang on 17th of April 2013.

1. Introduction

The Election Commission of Bhutan is an independent Constitutional Body entrusted with the mandate to conduct free and fair elections in Bhutan. It is also responsible for dissemination of information on democracy and elections, to organize programmes on voter awareness, electoral and civic education in the Kingdom.

Towards this it is considered useful to harness the services of volunteers from among the Bhutanese citizens, the principal stakeholders, in carrying out civic education to create an informed democratic society.

The Election Commission of Bhutan thus initiates the Volunteer for Voter Information, Communication and Education (*Volunteer-VOICE*), a new programme to involve the interested Bhutanese citizens to serve as volunteers.

2. Objectives

Volunteer-VOICE is an initiative to provide opportunity to all Bhutanese who have the passion to be involved in reaching out correct voter information towards building a responsible and involved democratic citizenry.

It shall encourage wide participation of interested individuals to work with Election Commission of Bhutan to carry out public awareness on electoral democracy and civic duties enhancing the sense of social responsibility through participation in the democratic process.

It shall create a responsible and concerned group for the community, a pool of trained interested individuals, to serve as volunteers for dissemination of electoral and voter education, and motivate voter participation in elections.

3. Registration of Volunteers

The Electoral Education and Training Division (EETD) of the Election Commission shall invite interested citizens to register as Volunteers under this Scheme.

A Bhutanese interested to carry out voter and civic education, who is not affiliated to a political party or required to remain above politics under the Constitution, shall be considered eligible to be registered as a Volunteer.

4. Main Activities

The EETD will conduct annual courses to train the registered volunteers to carry out voter education courses in their respective areas.

- The registered members will be required to attend a training programme to orient and educate on the electoral process and democracy in Bhutan.

The members will be issued with Certificate of Competence declaring them certified to be educators and implement the voter education programme in their respective areas as per the Work Plan proposed by them in consultation with the EETD and approved by the Election Commission.

A regular newsletter of *Volunteer VOICE* will keep the volunteers connected and kept abreast of the ECB news and activities.

5. Responsibilities of the Volunteers

A specific programme shall be developed that would addresses all the issues necessary to guide the volunteers in proper performance of their duties.

All members are expected to respect confidentiality and privacy and adhere to the organization's policies and procedures.

Volunteers will be designated as trainers and educators in their areas of residence or employment.

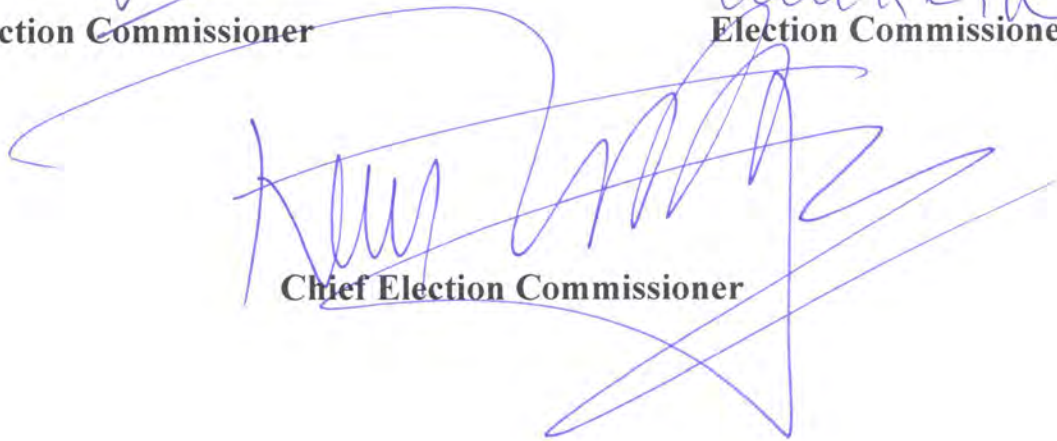


A Volunteer shall be required to carry out the assignment strictly in accordance with a specific Terms of Reference (ToR) issued to guide him/her in the performance of his/her duties and responsibilities.

This Charter for the Volunteer VOICE outlining its purpose, authority, key activities, responsibilities and membership is hereto adopted by the Election Commission on this day, the **13th of August 2013.**


Election Commissioner


Election Commissioner


Chief Election Commissioner