

From Pandemic to Recovery:

# Building Resilient Economies through Transparency, Integrity, and Trust

ACC, Bhutan's approach to fighting corruption during  
the Covid 19 Pandemic.



Presenter: Kelden Jamtsho

# HISTORY OF ACC: HOW ACC WAS ESTABLISHED?



**4 January 2006:** ACC established under the Royal Decree



The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan

**Article 27(1) of The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008** establishes ACC as an independent body

**Anti-Corruption Act of Bhutan 2011 & Amendment 2022)**



# MANDATE OF ACC

Take corrupt people to task

Create effective deterrence

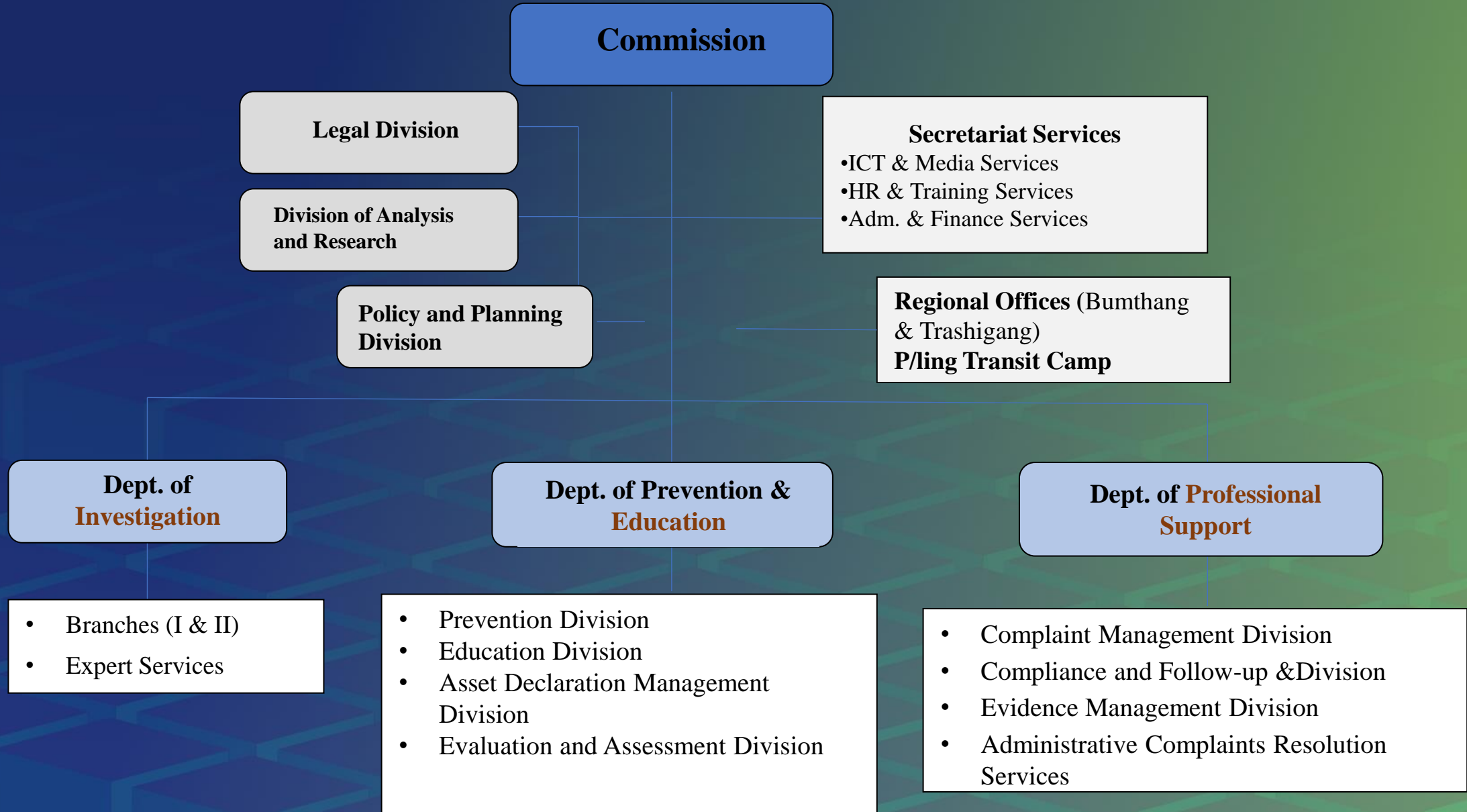


Build corruption resistant systems, policies and procedures in agencies

Create anticorruption awareness

Behavioral change

# ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE





# GENERAL ISSUES/CHALLENGES



## High societal tolerance

- Compassionate & complacency
- Small society syndrome



## Weak ownership

- Promotion of anti-corruption is still seen as ACC's responsibility
- Regulatory based  
*(Additional Responsibility & poor cooperation)*
- 53.6% of the total complaints are administrative related complaints



## Inadequate Capacity & Resources

- Inadequate investigative & preventive capacity – *increasing complexity of corruption cases*
- Low attraction & high attrition rate – *social security and motivational factors*
- Capital intensive – *anti-corruption programs*
- Rigorous decentralization of resources to LG (greater preparedness)



## Weak monitoring & evaluation

- Critical gap in the follow up of prevention programs
- Weak citizenry engagement
- Nascent Media and CSO

# BEST PRACTICES

- **Remote Judicial Proceedings:**

The pandemic has also forced courts to conduct judicial proceedings remotely. This has raised challenges related to obtaining warrants, issuing subpoenas, calling witnesses remotely. Thus, the Judiciary of Bhutan launched the e-Litigation platform in April 2021 to ensure uninterrupted access to justice.

## e-Litigation platform- to ensure uninterrupted access to justice

April 23, 2021



To ensure uninterrupted access to justice particularly for remote, far-flung communities during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, the Judiciary launched its e-Litigation platform on Saturday with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

# BEST PRACTICES

## Remote Interview Techniques and Best Practices:

Remote interviews have become an essential part of conducting investigations during the pandemic. The use of digital technologies such as video conferencing, secure messaging platforms helped investigators and prosecutors to overcome geographical barriers and continue their work despite social distancing measures. Ensured that the interviewee is informed of their rights and obligations.



# BEST PRACTICES

## Desk review of backlog cases

Conducted desk review of over 61 cases and presented to the Commission Members. The desk review of the cases was conducted mainly to see if investigation would still serve public interest and if those complaints could be still relevant to be investigated.

The Commission decided to drop 21 cases purely on the basis of meeting the public interest and evidentiary tests. Some of the reasons are lack of critical information to pursue further, no time relevance, accused has already deceased and et al.

7 cases were to be enriched further for the want of more pertinent information and 33 cases remained to be investigated.




# BEST PRACTICES

## Thematic and Interactive Sessions

Over 12 such sessions were conducted virtually covering officials of the LEAs ,Local Government, corporate and financial institutions.

The screenshot displays a Zoom meeting interface. The main content is a presentation slide from the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). The slide features the ACC logo in the top left, which includes a circular emblem with a scale and a sword, and the text 'བན་ལྷན་བཀའ་ལློན་ལྷན་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་འཛིན་སྐྱོང་ལྷན་ཁང་།' and 'ACC ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION'. The slide title is 'Thematic Session to the staff of RSTA and RBP (Traffic Police)' and the main topic is '“Sustaining Trust and Confidence in Traffic Regulations and Services”'. At the bottom right of the slide, the ACC contact information is provided: 'Anti-Corruption Commission, Thimphu, Post Box 1113, Tel: + 975 2 334863/64/66/6/7/80/89, Fax No: + 975 2 334865'. The Zoom interface shows a grid of 12 participants, each with a video thumbnail and a name label. The names visible are: You, Rinchen Tshering, Namzang Derna, Karma Dorji, Phurba Dorji, sonam dorji, Tashi Phuntsho, Tshering Yangzo..., Kinza Yeshey, Lhatu Lhatu, Ugyen Wangchuk, and Sherab Gyeltshen. At the bottom of the Zoom window, there are controls for muting, ending, and leaving the meeting, along with a 'Start' button and a notification that 'Rinchen Tshering is presenting'.



**“ALLEGATION OF BRIBERY, EXTORTION AND OTHER CORRUPT PRACTICES BY THE LEAs AT THE MINI-DRY PORT, PHUENTSHOLING LEADING TO INSURGE OF COVID-19 CASES IN THE COUNTRY.”**

**INTEL**





## OPERATION GARUDA DURING COVID



# OPERATION

☐ Drugs



☐ Tobacco products





# INVESTIGATION FINDINGS



**Smuggler**



**Customs Officer**



**Police Officer**



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**Thank you!**

