



# **JSW Law 2022 : A Year of Milestones and Continued Service**



*As we close out another extraordinary year of both challenges and accomplishments for our law school and Bhutan as a whole, including the graduation of JSW Law's very first class of law students and the launch of our Climate Change Centre, we are grateful to our partners and donors and look forward to 2023 with renewed dedication and a spirit of optimism.*

*JSW School of Law's mission is to shape young students into lawyers who can navigate the modern global legal environment while remaining mindful of Gross National Happiness and Bhutanese culture and traditions. This Report describes our progress in 2022, highlighting the way in which the JSW Law family came together with poise and resilience, committed to positioning our law school for success and as an institution of choice for legal education globally – in the next year and beyond!*



# First-ever Graduation Ceremony

His Majesty The King graced the Graduation Ceremony for the very first class of law students, 13 women and 12 men from Bhutan's first and only law school, the Jigme Singye Wangchuck (JSW) School of Law at Pangbisa, Paro on 25 November 2022. Her Royal Highness Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck, President of JSW Law, the Prime Minister, members of the Governing Council, and distinguished guests and representatives of the partners and donor organizations attended the ceremony, together with the staff and families of the graduates.

The graduation ceremony was not merely a celebratory event but also a solemn event aimed at instilling in students the true sense of Service to the Tsa-Wa-Sum with justice and wisdom. The twenty five graduates are expected to take up a variety of law-related jobs in the public and private sectors.



***The very first class of law students, 13 women and 12 men, celebrated their graduation.***



# Largest Number of Student Applications Ever

The admission process for the Class of 2027 was conducted from March to May 2022. The law school received a total of 1151 applications out of which 754 applicants sat for the computerized Bhutan-LSAT and the Dzongkha Test conducted on 30 April and 1 May in 6 test centres (4 in Thimphu, 1 in Paro College of Education and 1 in Sherubtse College). This is the largest ever number applying for admissions to the Law School. The top 46 applicants were shortlisted from 754 for the face-to-face interviews conducted from 23 to 30 May 2022. Following the interviews, 17 applicants (13 young women and 4 young men) were selected in May as the new Class of 2027.



***Applicants appearing for the Bhutan-LSAT and the Dzongkha Test at the different Test Centres***



# Successful Move to New Campus

We successfully relocated to our permanent campus in Pangbisa, Paro and began the Spring Semester virtually, with students in containment mode on campus amidst the 5th lockdown for Thimphu and Paro.



***Students in containment mode on campus***



***New campus  
beautification efforts  
by the students***



# Law Clinics Achieve Client Satisfaction

JSW Law offers its students a world-class legal education, a central component of which is a strong commitment to experiential education, or “learning by doing.” The centerpiece of JSW Law’s experiential education program is its “law clinics,” which students participate in during the fourth and fifth years of their studies. Working under the careful supervision of qualified clinical faculty practitioners, students provide crucial real-world access to justice for clients and community partners who would otherwise not be able to afford such representation.

**The Human Dignity Clinic (HDC)** helps protect vulnerable individuals in Bhutan (women; children and young people; the elderly; and persons living with a disability). In 2022 the HDC helped improve diversion services for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICLs), produced a report to get an understanding of relevant aspects of Bhutan’s juvenile justice system and the effectiveness of the current sentencing practices for CICLs; and made the Advocacy Toolkit on Legal Proceedings more user friendly and accessible to people with all sorts of varying disabilities in Bhutan.

***HDC making sure no one is left behind***





**The Social Enterprise Clinic (SEC)** enables students to engage their legal skills and creativity towards helping idealistic and socially-minded entrepreneurs build sustainable business models in communities across Bhutan. In 2022, the SEC helped prepare legal documentation for Bhutan Blossoms, a community based social enterprise, assisted the Bhutan Youth Development Fund Social Enterprise Committee, and has initiated a legal programme to protect Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCEs) and to give students hands-on experience in intellectual property.

*During the consultative meeting on the legal programs for the protection of Bhutan's Traditional Cultural Expressions*



*“Intrigued by the business model that operates with a mission to achieve a social or an environmental cause, I opted for the Social Enterprise Clinic and after almost a year with the clinic, I am very proud of my decision. My journey with the clinic was full of fun learning experiences that involved exploring places and people and applying theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios. The variety of projects that we undertook provided us with hands-on experience and helped us hone our skills and knowledge. The clinic provided me with an incredible learning experience guided by an excellent mentor and has helped me grow both personally and professionally.”*

**Yeshi Yuden, Class of 2023**



**The Appropriate Dispute Resolution Clinic (ADRC)** ensures that Bhutan's centuries-old traditional dispute resolution practices continue to flourish and adapt as Bhutan develops and modernizes and provides students the opportunity to expand their range of dispute resolution tools used when solving problems. In 2022, the ADRC students observed and took part in mediation at Thimphu District (Family and Child Bench) Court Annexed Mediation Unit, provided legal assistance to the Bhutan Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre by helping conduct legal research for amendment of the Centre's rules and regulations.

We are pleased to report that all clients gave ratings between 90% and 100% in terms of satisfaction rate with student services, including service delivery, the legal services provided, timeliness and efficiency, communication, creative solutions, confidentiality regarding the student practitioners' credibility and service, and prompt responses to their needs.



***“ADRC is more than just a clinic; it is a place to test your skills, a tool of growth in different forms and a miracle that helps bring the best out of you!”***

**Pasang Wangmo, Class of 2023**



# World-Class Research, Publications, and Conferences

The Research Center (RC) organized various conferences and forums in 2022 to foster, encourage and promote legal scholarship not only for students and faculty of the law school but also to support the legal fraternity in the country. For example, the Research Centre (RC) hosted the first-ever National Conference on Public Contracts from 21 - 23 February 2022 coinciding with the Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the King and JSW Law's Foundation Day, funded by the Royal Government of Bhutan and the US Department of Commerce.

## *National Conference on Public Contracts*





# Launch of Climate Change Centre

Thanks to a recent start-up grant and pledge for three additional years of support, totaling US\$939,900, from the Karuna Foundation, JSW Law will launch the new Climate Change and Policy Project, to be implemented by the JSW Law Climate Change and Environmental Law Centre of Excellence. We have also received US\$60,000 for this Project from The Asia Foundation. These commitments will enable us to hold a special Paro Forum in February of 2023, which will gather leaders and stakeholders from Bhutan and around the world to impart lessons and drive forward momentum in effectively addressing climate change.

**JSW Law welcomes donors and partners to join the Karuna and Asia Foundations in supporting our work to address climate change. For more information on this and other giving opportunities, please contact Kinley Wangdi at [kinley.wangdi@jswlaw.bt](mailto:kinley.wangdi@jswlaw.bt).**







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