



Gelephu Mindfulness City Index Report (November - December 2025)

***Baseline and Pilot Study Report for the Gelephu
Mindfulness City***



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About this report

This baseline and pilot study assesses individual and societal indicators to test the effectiveness and reliability of the Mindfulness City framework. The report provides an initial understanding of the current mindfulness landscape in Gelephu, highlighting strengths, weaknesses, and emerging challenges. Beyond generating a ranking, it analyses the components behind the score to support informed decision-making. The process and findings aim to inform GMCA policymakers, planners, and institutions as they shape urban policy, corporate strategy, and the future development of Gelephu Mindfulness City.

Working Group



Acknowledgement

We offer our heartfelt gratitude to His Majesty for his visionary leadership and for the privilege of contributing, in whatever small way, through the esteemed Pelsung program. We extend our sincere appreciation to the Pelsung coordinators, GMCA officials, and session speakers whose guidance, support, and expertise greatly enriched this work. Our deepest thanks go to our mentor, Ms. Cui, for her trust and for giving us the space to explore and create. We are also grateful to every respondent who generously shared their time, and to the experts from various organizations whose insights were invaluable to this study.

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Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC)



GMC is envisioned as a new model of urban development. “Established as a Special Administrative Region, it aims to create a vibrant economic hub through a conducive business environment and compelling incentives, while embedding mindfulness, sustainability, and ethical enterprise at its core. Rooted in Bhutan’s Buddhist spiritual heritage and national identity, it seeks to balance innovation with tradition, economic growth with environmental stewardship, and development with the well-being of people.”



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CONTENT

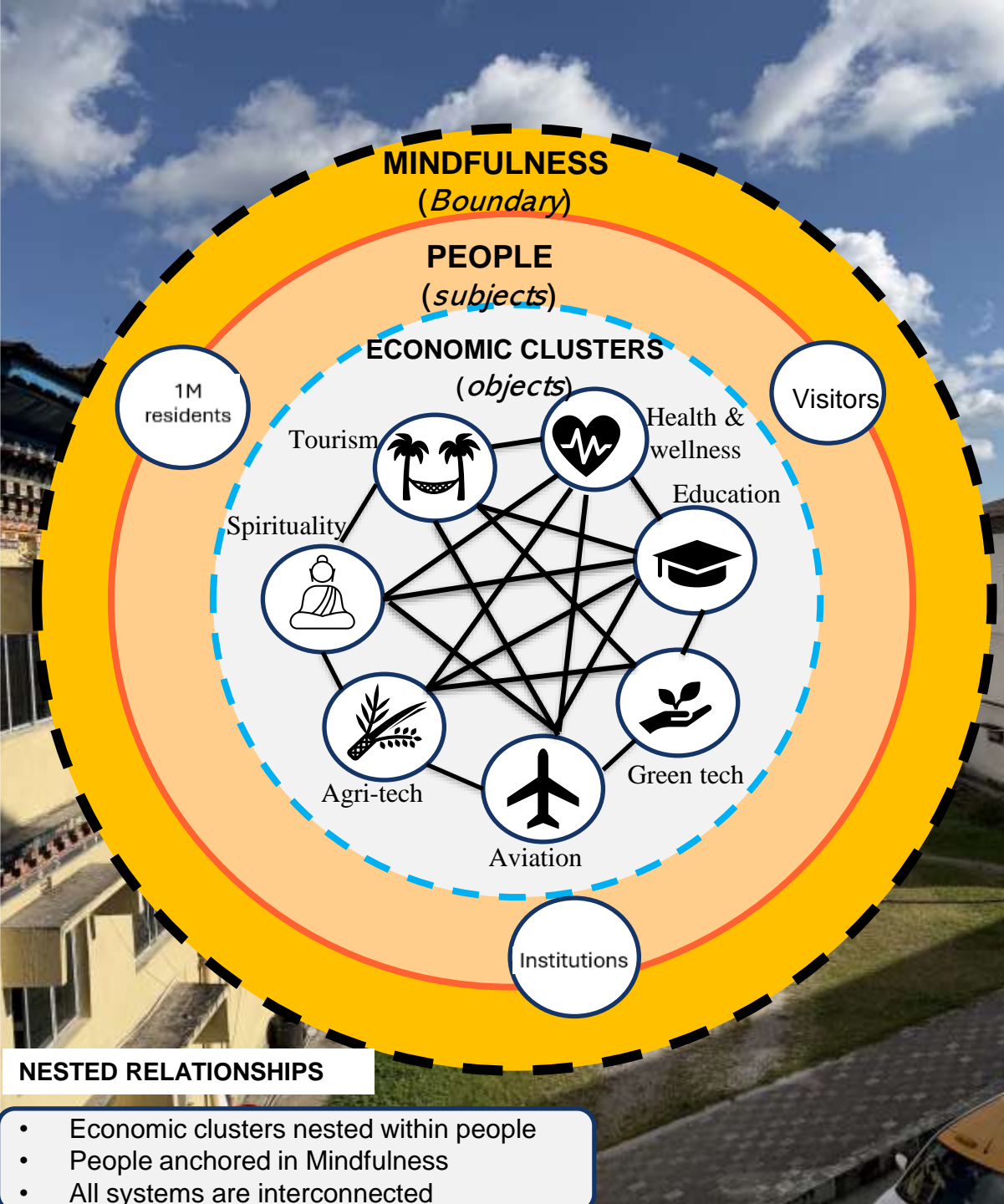
1. Background
2. Mindfulness City Framework
3. The Mindfulness City Index Methodology
 - 3.1. Survey
 - 3.2. Standardization
 - 3.2. Weighting
 - 3.3. Transformation
4. Results
6. Key insights; challenges and limitations
7. Wayforward





1. Background

This report introduces the Mindfulness City Index, built upon a framework developed by our team that integrates four interconnected levels, nine dimensions, and fifty-eight indicators. The index is designed to capture how mindfulness is expressed and experienced across individuals, society, institutions, and the broader urban environment. As GMC is still in its development stage, this pilot study assesses only the micro (individual) and meso (societal) levels, where changes are most immediate and measurable. The results offer an initial baseline of social conditions from a mindfulness perspective, providing valuable insight to guide future planning, framework development, and policy-making for the city.



2. Mindfulness City Framework



4 Levels



1. Micro; Individual

2. Meso; Societal

3. Exo; Governance

4. Macro; Ecological

9 Dimensions

1. Mindfulness and spirituality
2. Physical health
3. Mindful lifestyle

1. Relational mindfulness
2. Community vitality
3. Cultural vibrancy

1. Mindful governance
2. Education and knowledge
3. Health and wellness
4. Agri-tech and forestry
5. Green energy and technologies
6. Finance and digital assets
7. Aviation and logistics
8. Tourism
9. Spiritual

1. Local ecological (thriving within its natural habitat)
2. Global ecological (respect health of whole planet)

15 Indicators

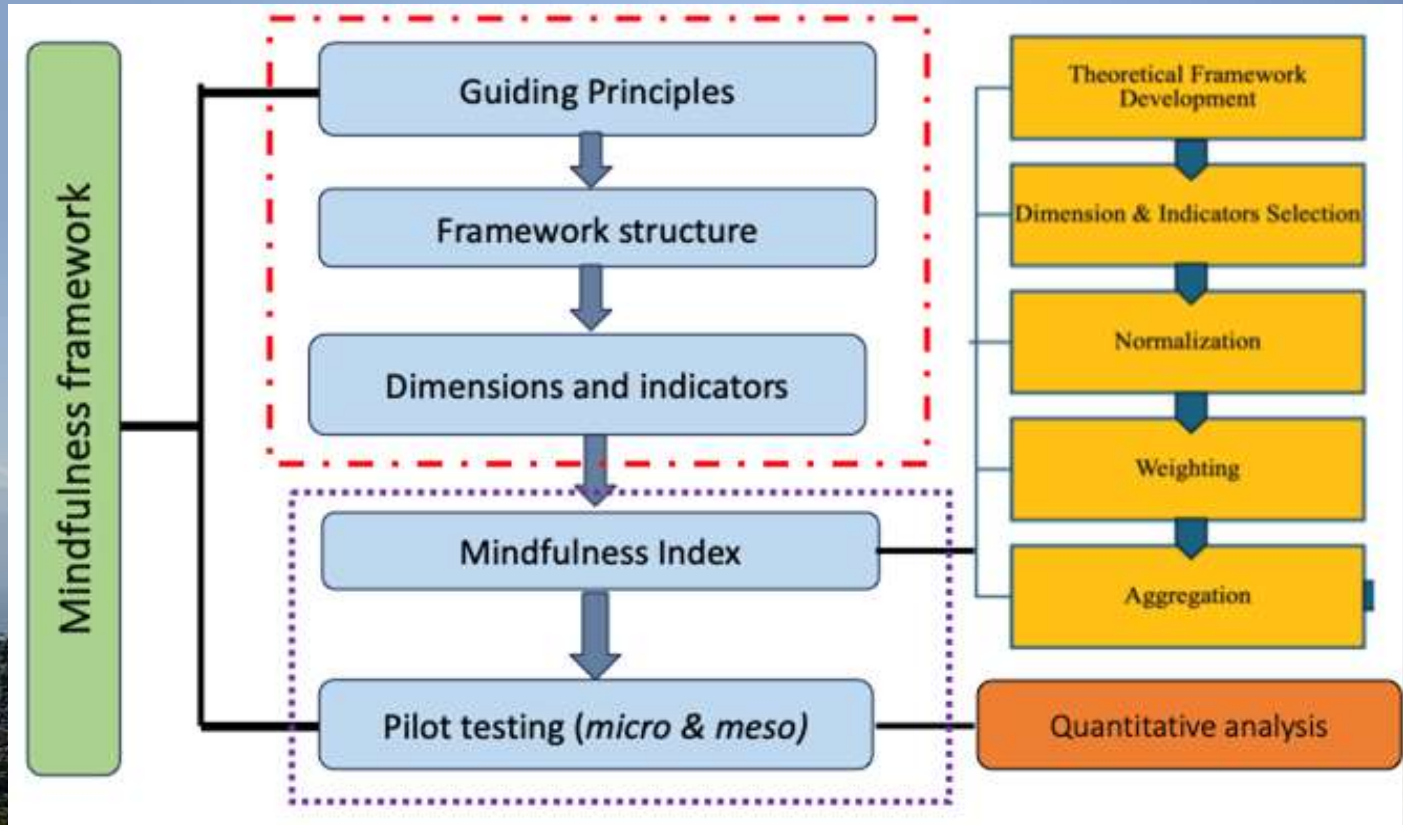
6 Indicators

30 indicators

8 Indicators

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3. The Mindfulness City Index Methodology



Guiding principles

GMC aspirations

GNH framework

Buddhism

Global city frameworks

Personal development frameworks

SDG 11 and safe operating space values

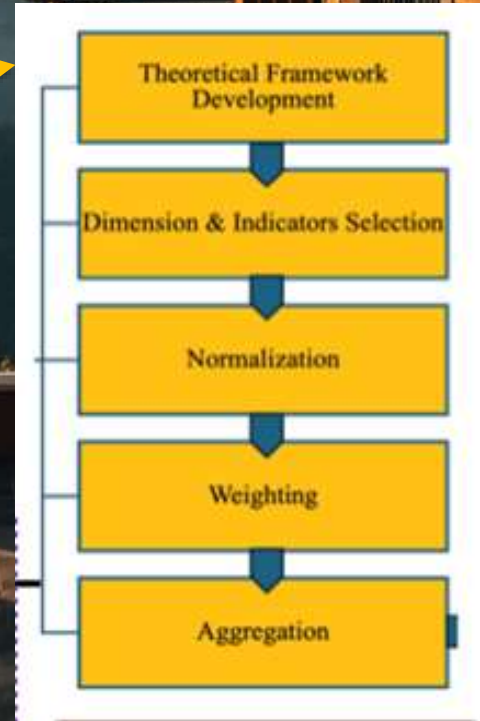
3. Mindfulness City Index

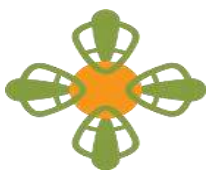
In this approach, the synthetic index is composed of 4 interconnected levels (individual, society, governance, ecological). The index construction method followed OECD (2008) [Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators](#) and UN-Habitat's [the global urban monitoring framework \(2022\)](#).

The index value transform range of levels, dimensions and indicators into single value allowing comparison across cities and countries.

$$I = \sum_{k=1}^4 \mu_k \sum_{i=1}^9 \omega_i \sum_{j=1}^{M_i} \omega_{ik}^j \nu_{ik}^j$$

- $k = 1, \dots, 4 \rightarrow$ Levels
- $i = 1, \dots, 9 \rightarrow$ Dimensions
- $j = 1, \dots, M_i \rightarrow$ Indicators under each dimension
- $\mu_k \rightarrow$ Weight of level k
- $\omega_i \rightarrow$ Weight of dimension i
- $\omega_{ik}^j \rightarrow$ Weight of indicator j under dimension i and level k
- $\nu_{ik}^j \rightarrow$ Normalized indicator score





3.1. Survey Description

The pilot survey consisted of 29 questions across six dimensions at the micro and meso levels, relying entirely on primary data. The questionnaire included both subjective and objective items to capture a comprehensive picture of mindfulness-related perceptions and behaviors. The survey was conducted across Sarpang and Gelephu town, with 69 respondents aged 20 to 65 representing a diverse mix of occupations.



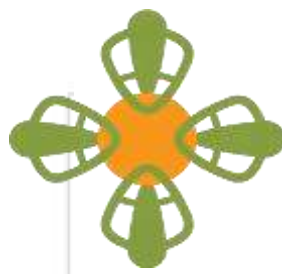
Survey question:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/18TeLzhn0uaeK8xITuOTx6RJHpQkaFXb23Rqtk7Y11H8/edit>

Survey overview (18th to 22nd November, 2025)



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3.3. Weighting



This step assigns relative weights, defining how strongly each level and dimensions influences the overall development of a Mindfulness City. Here, weightage across levels and dimensions are allocated based on 23 experts judgement through Analytic hierarchy process, a structured decision-making method.

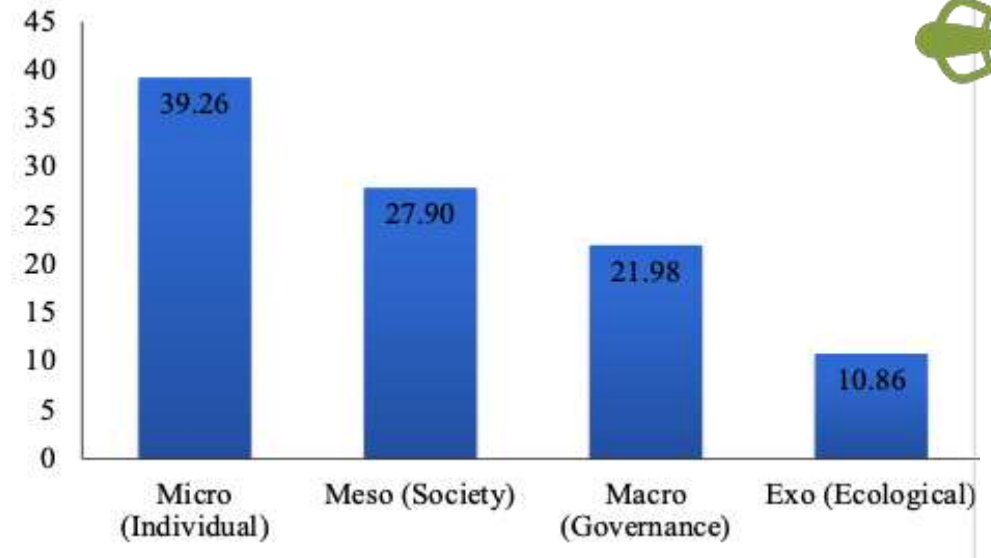


Fig. Weight across levels (%)

Expert background	Number of experts
Spiritual	1
Policy/planning	7
Education	4
Economics	8
Environment	2
Agriculture	1
Engineer/tech	5

23 experts from diverse background and workplace participated.



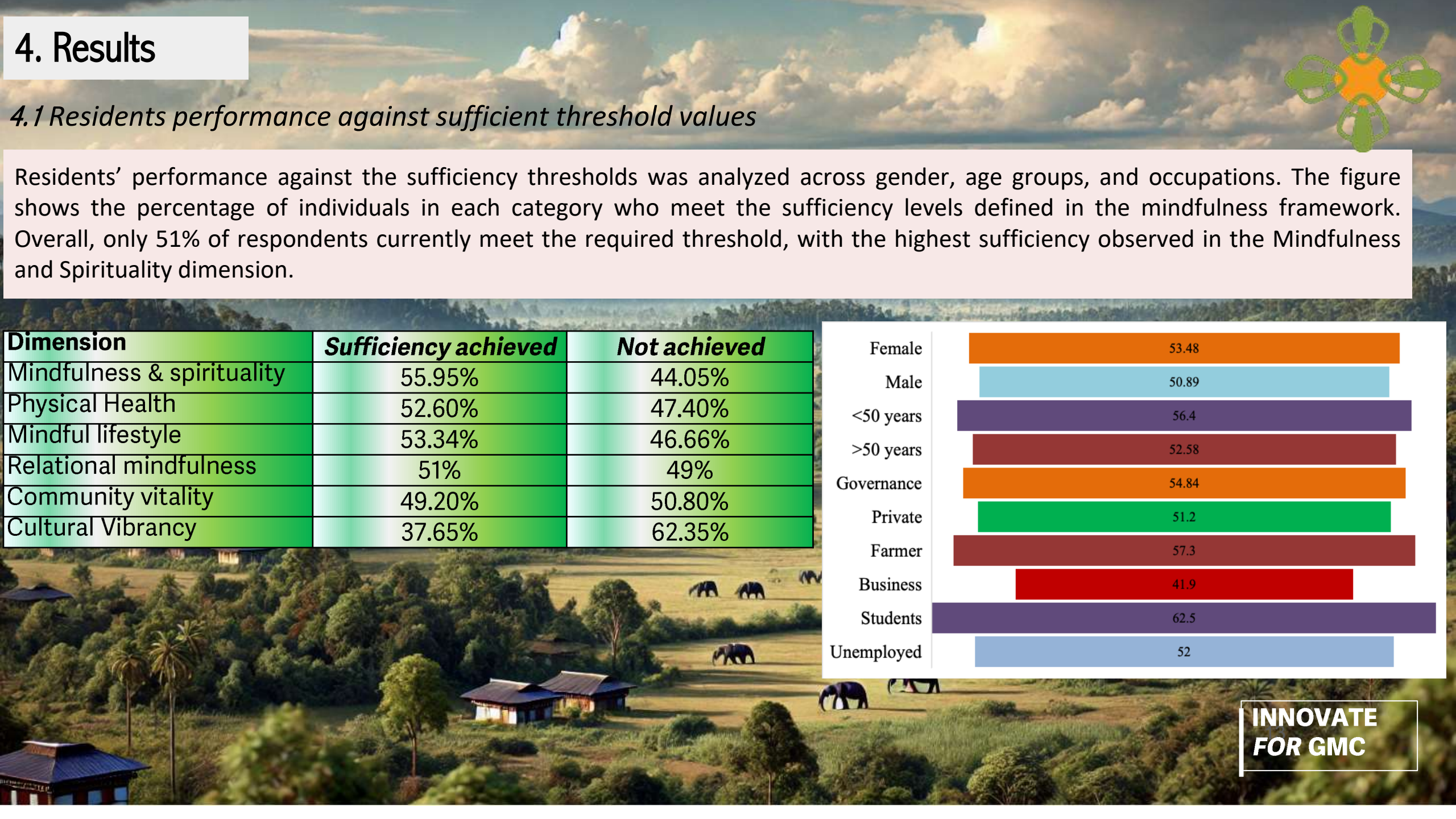
Fig. Weight across dimensions (%)



Team meetings, expert consultations, and mentor/expert presentations (Nov–Dec 2025).



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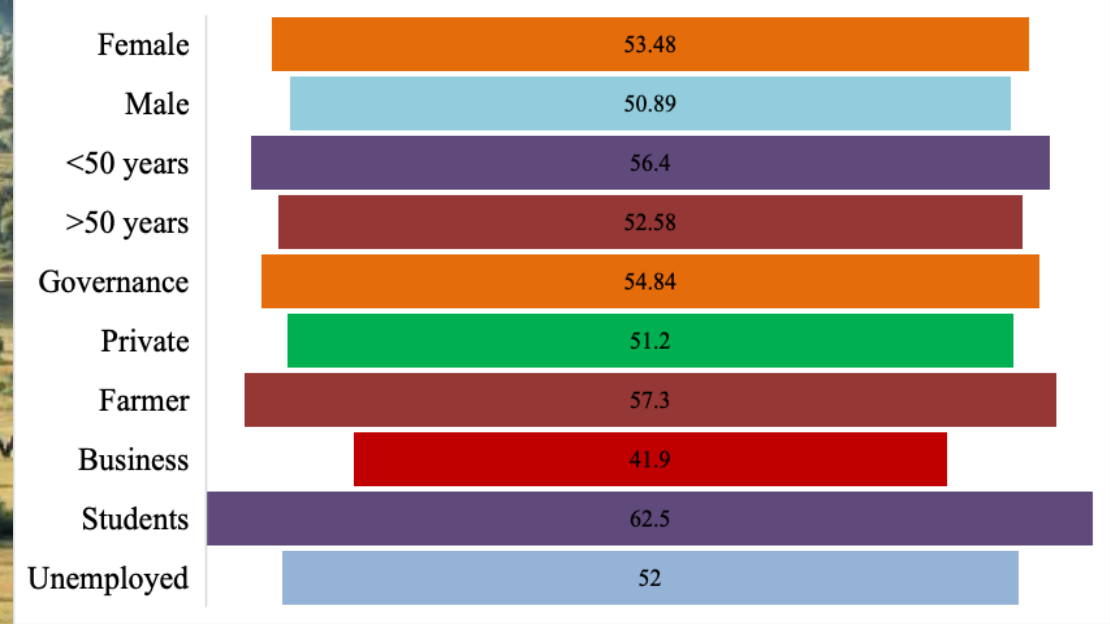


4. Results

4.1 Residents performance against sufficient threshold values

Residents’ performance against the sufficiency thresholds was analyzed across gender, age groups, and occupations. The figure shows the percentage of individuals in each category who meet the sufficiency levels defined in the mindfulness framework. Overall, only 51% of respondents currently meet the required threshold, with the highest sufficiency observed in the Mindfulness and Spirituality dimension.

Dimension	Sufficiency achieved	Not achieved
Mindfulness & spirituality	55.95%	44.05%
Physical Health	52.60%	47.40%
Mindful lifestyle	53.34%	46.66%
Relational mindfulness	51%	49%
Community vitality	49.20%	50.80%
Cultural Vibrancy	37.65%	62.35%



4.1 Residents performance against sufficient threshold values					
Dimension	Question	Sufficiency Threshold	Suffiency achieved	Not achieved	Source
Minfdulness & spirituality	self-awareness	>4 (often & regularly)	44.40%	55.60%	Subjectively set by team
	Balanced mind	>4 (often & regularly)	62.30%	37.70%	GNH
	Mindful ethics	>4 (often & regularly)	82.60%	17.40%	Subjectively set by team
	Engagement in spiritual activities	>4 (often & very often/regularly)	63.80%	36.20%	GNH
	Access to dedicated contemplative spaces	<15 mins	49.30%	50.70%	Weng et al. (2019)
	Mental health	<2 (rarely, not at all)	33.30%	66.70%	
Physical Health	Healthy days	26	88.40%	11.60%	GNH
	Physical activity	more than 4 hours	20.30%	79.70%	Bull et al. (2020)
	Access to physical facilities	<1000m (15mins)	52.50%	47.50%	Weng et al. (2019)
	Mindful nutrition	>4 (often & regularly)	49.20%	50.80%	
Mindful lifestyle	Income sufficiency and security	>3 (moderate -) and >4 (secure -)	48.50%	51.50%	
	House affordability and space	≥ 10 m ² per person, >26–50%	52.15%	47.85%	WHO Housing and Health Guidelines (2018)
	Basic quality service (water, waste, electricity, education)	> 2km(school) (7-12 years edu); >4 (mostly, always)	59.38%	40.62%	various (UN, UNESCO, and OECD; HDI)
Relational mindfulness	Ethical presence and relational awareness	20	51%	49%	GNH
Community vitality	Social support and volunteerism	<5 days, <10% income	44.90%	55.10%	GNH
	Community relation and neighbor trust	8 (strong & very strong,)	39%	61%	GNH and GMC
	Safety and crime	100% (safe & very safe)	63.70%	36.30%	GMC
Cultural Vibrancy	Socio-cultural activities	> 6days/year	36.20%	63.80%	GNH framework; Happy city index
	Diversity support and inclusion	9 (strongly & very strongly)	39.10%	60.90%	Happy city index; Doughnut economics

4. Results

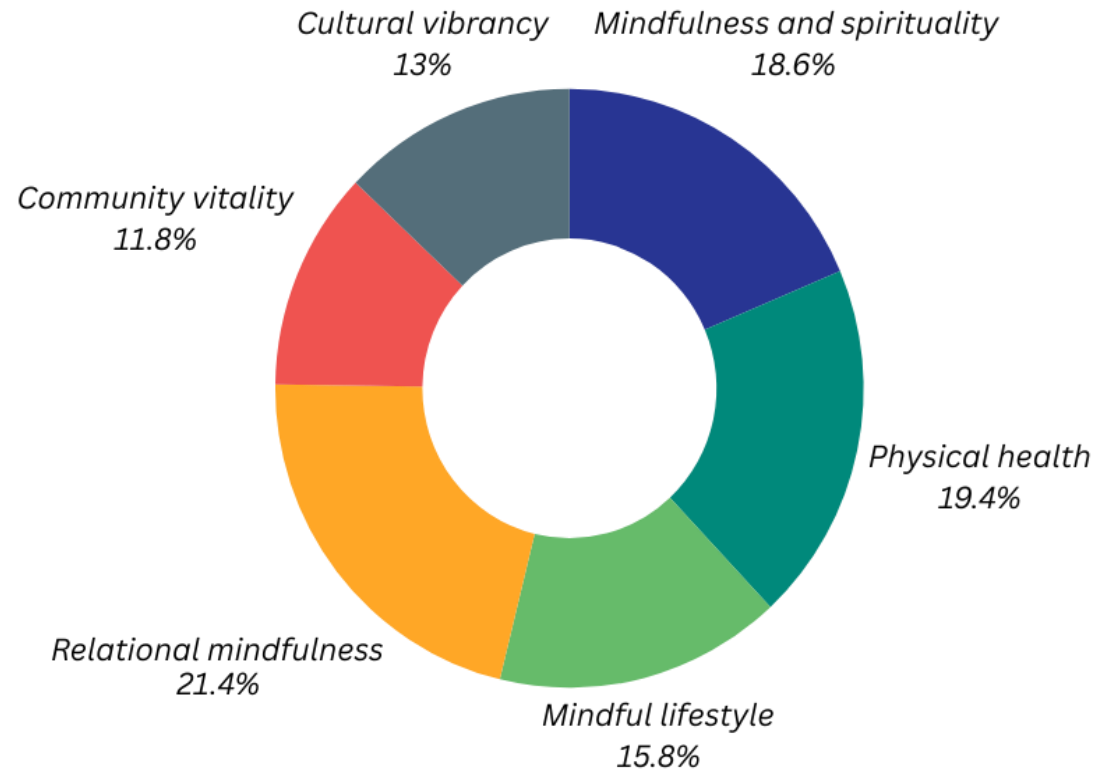


4.2 Residents who did not meet the sufficient threshold values across indicators.

Indicators	all	Female	Male	age <50	age >50	Government	Private	Farmer	Business	Student	Unemployed	Other
1. Self-awareness	39	60	52	53	78	40	78	78	50	33	63	50
2. Balanced mind	26	33	45	37	44	47	33	67	25	67	44	17
3. Mindful ethics	12	23	10	13	44	27	0	44	13	0	13	17
4. Engagement in spiritual activities	43	55	72	67	33	53	78	56	75	50	75	33
5. Access to dedicated contemplative spaces	35	50	52	52	44	67	56	56	25	50	38	67
6. Mental health	46	70	62	68	56	60	78	67	63	50	81	50
7. Not Healthy days	26	30	48	37	44	33	44	22	38	17	56	33
8. Physical activity	55	80	79	85	56	93	89	67	88	83	81	17
9. access to physical facilities	33	45	52	45	67	53	56	78	50	33	31	33
10. mindful nutrition	35	55	45	52	44	67	44	56	38	50	38	67
11. Income Security and sufficiency	41	60	79	60	56	47	44	67	63	83	75	33
12. sufficiency	30	40	48	45	33	27	33	67	13	100	50	33
13. House affordability	51	75	72	73	0	47	44	100	50	33	81	33
14. House space	15	23	21	22	22	20	44	33	13	17	13	17
15. Education	14	30	7	13	67	0	44	67	13	0	0	50
16. Basic quality service (water)	15	18	28	22	22	20	44	11	13	17	31	0
17. Basic quality service (waste)	39	65	45	55	67	53	56	89	38	50	50	67
18. Basic quality service (electricity)	63	93	90	92	89	87	89	100	75	100	94	100
18. Basic quality service (education)	35	48	55	50	56	60	33	67	38	33	63	33
19. Ethical presence and relational awareness (compassion)	18	28	24	45	33	33	33	33	0	33	25	17
20. Ethical presence and relational awareness (right speech)	19	35	17	28	22	40	11	44	13	33	31	0
21. Ethical presence and relational awareness (gratitude)	13	23	14	18	22	33	11	11	13	17	19	17
22 Ethical presence and relational awareness (loving kindness)	12	23	10	18	11	33	22	22	0	17	13	0
23. Ethical presence and relational awareness (patience)	28	48	31	43	22	53	11	67	38	67	38	0
24. volunteerism	51	78	69	75	67	67	78	89	75	83	69	67
25. contribution	38	70	34	53	67	73	22	67	75	50	44	50
26. Neighbor trust	49	83	55	73	56	87	44	89	50	83	75	50
27. Safety and crime	25	38	34	35	44	40	44	33	0	33	56	17
28. Socio-cultural activities	25	50	17	35	44	27	11	44	75	67	19	50
29. Diversity support	36	55	48	53	44	67	22	56	25	33	63	83
30. Inclusion	28	45	34	52	44	60	22	56	25	33	63	0

4. 3. Mindfulness Index results: individual & society levels

Although a comprehensive overall index is not yet available, the mindfulness index has been calculated across six dimensions.



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6. Key insights and way forward



- ❖ Certain indicators need refinement to better capture the intended dimensions.
- ❖ Sufficiency thresholds should be clarified and aligned with GMC's objectives.
- ❖ Subjective responses may be biased, suggesting the need for either indirect questioning or proxy objective indicators .
- ❖ Few respondents are hesitate to provide honest answers in some cases.
- ❖ Weighting methods and aggregation approaches should be improved, favoring non-compensatory techniques.

Detailed analysis:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RJSJY5q1UGmqGZoyA8LC6m14fbTmK3Mf/edit?usp=sharing&oid=105310914137851590371&rtpof=true&sd=true>



Gelephu Mindfulness City Index Report (December 2025)

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Thank You

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