

2nd Quarterly Report



Community Initiatives for Common Understanding

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Project Title: Community Initiatives for Common Understanding

Donor: USAID - CMM

Award No.: AID-367-F-13-00001

Status of Report: Quarterly Report, 1 September 2013 – 30 November 2013

1. Introduction

Saferworld, in collaboration with Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN) and Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), is implementing a 3-year project entitled ‘Community Initiatives for Common Understanding’ (CICU), funded by USAID. Based on the assumption that constructive interaction and cooperation at the community level for peace and development can bridge political, ethnic and ideological divides, the project aims to contribute to an environment that is shaped by trust and strong social ties between communities, including conflicting groups and local authorities, which makes them resilient to social divides, insecurity and conflict.

The project has three expected results:

- **Result 1:** *Barriers to peaceful dialogue are broken down and mutual understanding and appreciation of grievances between conflicting groups increased.*
- **Result 2:** *Conflicting groups are able and willing to identify activities for development and reconciliation and collaborate toward their implementation*
- **Result 3:** *State actors at district and national level are better aware of and willing to integrate lessons learnt into conflict sensitive development and rehabilitation programming.*

While the project follows a community-based approach, it mainly focuses on 9,000 hard-to-reach and at-risk young people, including former ex-combatants. Secondary audiences for this project are government stakeholders and decision makers at the district and national level. The project is implemented in 5 districts of Nepal: Kailali, Surkhet, Banke and Bardiya in the Mid- and Far West; and Sunsari in the East. It targets 3 VDCs in each district.

2. Context Update

This quarter was dominated by the festival period (Dashain from 11-15 October and Tihar from 3-5 November) and by the elections which took place on 19 November 2013.

As expected, election related activities increased in the reporting period. While those parties which participated in the election were busy with campaigning, those which continued to oppose the elections carried out obstructive activities at the district and national level, including *bandhas*.

Despite the obstructive activities of the opposing parties, the election took place peacefully, with a 70% turnout of registered voters. While the elections were seen as largely peaceful, no single party achieved a two thirds majority and as such a coalition will need to be formed. Negotiations among the political parties are already underway, but it may take several months before such a coalition can be established. There is a strong debate around whether to elect a new president or continue with the current one and the two largest parties, Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), have major differences on this issue.

3. Accomplishments

This progress report covers the second quarter (Q2) of the CICU project. During this period, preparations for the project were moved forward, including for the selection of VDCs; the baseline study; and M&E. The first Quarterly Regional Meeting for USAID's CMM partners and Pact was also organised by Saferworld in this quarter.

While no Milestones have been completed during this period, the following progress towards related outputs has been made this quarter:

a) Milestone 2, Output 2.1 Identification and selection of 15 VDCs in USAID approved districts

In consultation with implementing partners, and based on secondary resources as well as primary data, Saferworld selected 15 VDCs that are suitable as CICU target districts. The criteria applied for selecting the VDCs include:

1. Tensions, incidences of insecurity/violence (data from SW analysis; CWIN analysis; data from INSEC and the police; desk research)
2. Presence of ex-combatants
3. Youth population (if possible, number of youth who have migrated to other countries for work)
4. Other similar initiatives by different stakeholders (to avoid duplication and maximise synergy); who is doing what?
5. Reach of service providers (government line agencies and other service providers)
6. Willingness of the communities, including of local govt. stakeholders, to work on this issue
7. Partners' presence (or outreach possibilities and challenges)

8. Key reasons to work in this VDC
9. Other key challenges to work in the VDC

In addition, Saferworld sought to reduce the number of VDCs in which other organisations engage on similar issues. Saferworld consulted with Pact and Mercy Corps to ensure that activities carried out under the respective projects are not duplicating or undermining efforts.

The VDCs selected are:

Kailali:	Pahalmanpur, Phulwari, Chaumala
Bardiya:	Mahamadpur, Dhadhwar, Kalika
Banke:	Baijapur, Binauna, Kachanapur
Surkhet:	Chhinchu, Uttarganga, Hariharpur
Sunsari:	Laukahi, Bharaul, Singiya

VDCs will now be presented to district stakeholders for their feedback to ensure that there is district-level buy-in.

b) Milestone 2, Output 2.2 Baseline study carried out and draft baseline survey completed

To avoid fuelling election-related tensions and to comply with codes of conduct developed for the elections, Saferworld and partners decided not to collect primary data relevant for the baseline study addressing more sensitive issues. However, desk research has been carried out that will contribute to the baseline study. Aspects covered include the following: the incidences of insecurities over a period of a year, presence of ex-combatants, youth population, mapping of initiatives by other organisations, and presence of government service providers in the working VDCs.

Because of a nation-wide *bandha* from 11-20 November called by parties opposing the elections, the training for partner organisations on how to collect primary data for the baseline study could not be carried out as initially planned in early November 2014. It will be taking place in early December.

All other Milestone 2 and 3 outputs are taking place between December and early February. More specifically, output 2.3, Project Advisory and M&E committees established in each district with key stakeholders from administration and civil society agencies, and 2.4, project presented to each of the 15 selected VDCs, will be completed in December. Outputs 3.1, RDFs established in each of the 15VDCs, and ToRs developed, and 3.2, RDFs' training needs assessed, will be completed by January and output 3.3, all 15 RDFs participated in capacity building activities based on training needs report, by February

c) Milestone 20, Output 20.1 M&E draft framework developed based on baseline findings

As mentioned in the last quarterly report, an initial outline for a draft M&E framework has been developed to guide the baseline assessment. This draft will be adjusted and revised once the baseline study has been carried out, which will also complete the milestone 20.2, M&E Framework refined and baseline indicators adapted. This Milestone is not due until the 3rd quarter of the project, and work is progressing as planned.

d) Milestone 26, Output 26.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance and quarterly events calendars

On 24 October 2013, Saferworld organised the First CMM Quarterly Regional Meeting in Kathmandu. Representatives from USAIS, Mercy Corps, Care, Saferworld and Pact participated.

The objectives of the CMM Quarterly Regional Meetings are:

- to increase understanding of CMM project components;
- to discuss progress;
- to share best practices and lessons learned;
- to share existing and potential challenges and identify ways to overcome them;
- to identify risks of duplication and avoid overlapping activities;
- to explore opportunities to maximize the use of existing resources and complement each other's program;
- to increase cross-programme and partner learning.

The first meeting mainly focused on sharing information about the different CMM projects and Pact's Sajhedari Bikaas project, incl. the M&E approaches chosen by the respective projects; identify (common) actors to engage with; discuss potential challenges and mitigation strategies; and identifying areas for coordination and cooperation. A report has been shared with the participants – see Annex C for the full report.

CMM 1st Quarterly Meeting Agenda:

Time	Session	Lead
8.00	Registration, tea	
8.30	1. Welcome by USAID and Saferworld	USAID; Saferworld
8.40	Introduction of participants	Saferworld
9.00	2. Presentation of CMM projects and Sajhedari Bikaas project, incl. goals, objectives, geographic locations, approach and progress to date (powerpoint, max. 15 minutes each)	All organisations
10.50	Tea break	
11.15	3. Identify key actors we are a) going to engage with and b) seeking to influence; and discuss how we are planning to influence decision makers.	Facilitated by Saferworld, input from all organisations
12.15	Lunch break	
13.15	4. Discuss M&E strategies, the changes we want to see and how we are planning to measure these changes. Includes presentation of USAID on USAID's DG strategy, and presentation of partners' M&E strategies.	Saferworld with M&E experts of the organisations (as far as they participate) and USAID
14.45	5. Identify existing and potential challenges as well as mitigation strategies (incl. lessons learnt and best practices from past work)	Facilitated by Saferworld, input from all organisations
15.45	Tea break	
16.00	6. Strategies for coordination and cooperation; Discuss way forward (incl. planning for next quarterly meeting and what sessions we would like to have included)	Facilitated by Saferworld, input from all organisations
17.15	Recap, closure	USAID, Saferworld

Quarter 2 Events/Activities Calendar:

SRN	Activity	Date
1	Project introduction at the District level	9-12 far and mid-west 22 Sunsari and 23-Siraha
3	Project introduction at the VDC level	Kailali by 21 Dec Surkhet, Bardiya, Banke by 22 Dec Sunsari by 28 Dec
4	Project advisory & M&E committee	10 Dec Kailali 11 Dec Surkhet 12 Dec Banke and Bardiya 22 Dec Sunsari

5	Baseline primary data collection	By Jan. 2014 from all the districts
6	Baseline report	By February 2014
6	RDF formation	By 20 Jan. 2014 all districts
8	RDF need assessment and Training	Need assessment and training by the second week of February

4. Challenges and Lessons Learnt

As expected, challenges were experienced during the pre-election phase, especially related to *bandahs* and a heightened risk of insecurity, A number of activities were postponed to avoid putting Saferworld and partner staff at risk by asking them to travel (for example to attend the baseline workshop), and to eliminate the risk of potentially fuelling tensions by asking questions about sensitive issues (e.g. for the baseline study).

The sudden death of Saferworld's Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator (PM&E) Ramesh Nidhi Bista in November 2013 at a time when the project's focus is on establishing the baseline and M&E framework is adding to those challenges. While the team will be able to finalise both pieces of work, the added workload until a new PM&E Coordinator has been hired might lead to further minor delays. However, we foresee that by the end of Q4 (May 2014) the project will again be fully on track.

Since the project is at its initial stage, there are no lessons learnt yet.

5. Success Stories

Since the project is at its initial stage, there are no success stories to report.

6. Quarterly Work Plan

Please see Annex A for a full overview of the Work Plan.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation Performance

The following activities were completed in the area of Monitoring and Evaluation:

a) *Preparation for baseline*

As highlighted above, preparations for the baseline study have continued and secondary data has been collected. Templates were developed for this purpose to make it easier for the implementing partners' district coordinators to collect the data in a systematic and consistent

way. Preparations have also been made for the baseline workshop that will familiarise district coordinators further with baseline requirements and with techniques on collecting primary data. The workshop will take place from 4-6 December 2013.

8. List of Annexes

The Annexes included here are the following:

- A) Quarterly Work Plan
- B) List of Milestone reports and delivery dates
- C) First CMM Quarterly Regional Meeting Report
- D) Photos of CMM Quarterly Regional Meeting Report

Annex A – Quarterly Work Plan

Milestone	Outputs/Activities Planned for this Quarter (Sept 1 – November 30 2013)	Planned Timeline	Status (Completed / On track / Not completed / Not on track)
2. Programmatic project start-up completed	2.1 Identification and selection of 15 VDCs in USAID approved districts	September, Q2	Completed, report will be submitted after completion of all Milestone 2 Outputs
	2.2 Baseline study carried out and draft baseline survey completed	November, Q2	Not completed, revised timeline to Jan/Feb 2014 (Q3)
	2.3 Project Advisory and M&E committees established in each district with key stakeholders from administration and civil society agencies	October, Q2	Not completed, revised timeline to Dec 2013 (Q3)
	2.4 Project presented to each of the 15 selected VDCs and support gained	November, Q2	Not completed, but on-going, revised timeline to Dec 2013 (Q3)
3. Reconciliation and Development Forums (RDF) established	3.1 RDFs established in each of the 15 VDCs, and ToRs developed	Q2	Not on track, revised timeline of Jan/Feb 2014 (Q3)
	3.2 RDFs' training needs assessed	Q2	Not on track, revised timeline of Feb 2014 (Q3)
	3.3 All 15 RDFs participated in capacity building activities based on training needs report	Q2	Not on track, revised timeline of February 2014 (Q4)
26. Documentation of project progress in year 1 on quarterly basis	26.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance and quarterly events calendars (CMM Quarterly Meeting)	November/December, Q2	Completed, CMM quarterly meeting (MOV 26.1.2) completed in October
Milestone	Output/Activities Planned for next Quarter (Dec 1 2013 – February 28 2014)	Planned Timeline	Status (Completed / On track / Not completed / Not on track)
20. M&E framework developed and project partners and RDFs trained	20.1 M&E draft framework developed based on baseline findings	February, Q3	Not on track, to be completed by early fourth quarter
	20.2 M&E framework refined and baseline indicators adapted.	February, Q3	Not on track, to be completed by the mid of the fourth quarter
	20.3 At least 1 training for project staff and RDFs on M&E	February, Q3	Not on track, to be completed by the end of the fourth quarter

23. Partners technical and organization capacity assessed	23.1 Technical training in Do No Harm, participatory conflict analysis, and DDR training for project partners completed 23.2 CWIN and INSEC's capacity assessment and action plan developed	February, Q3	Not on track, to be completed by the end of the fourth quarter
26. Documentation of project progress in year 1 on quarterly basis	26.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance and quarterly events calendars	February/March, Q3	On track
Milestone	Output/Activities Planned for Fourth Quarter (March 2014 – May 2014)	Planned Timeline	Status (Completed / On track / Not completed / Not on track)
4. Hard-to- reach youth and other at-risk groups and individuals identified and initial engagement taken place	4.1 Outreach and trust-building Strategy developed/ refined according to the context	March – May 2014, Q4	On track
	4.2 200 at-risk youth and individuals from other at-risk groups identified in each VDC (200 x 15 = 3,000)	March – May 2014, Q4	
	4.3 In each VDC, at least one initial interaction conducted between youth and other at-risk groups and RDFs	March – May 2014, Q4	
7. At-risk youth and other at-risk groups engage constructively to create functional peace rooms in 5 target locations	7.1 Five Pilot Peace rooms established in 5VDCs (one per district)	March – May 2014, Q4	On track
26. Documentation of project progress in year 1 on quarterly basis	26.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance and quarterly events calendars	March – May 2014, Q4	

Annex B – Quarter 1 Milestones: September 1 2013 to November 30 2013

Quarter	Milestones	Estimated Timeline for Completion	Description of milestones and Outputs	MOV - Reports Required	Date Completed and Submitted
Q2	2. Programmatic project start-up completed	November 29, 2013, Q2	2.1 Identification and selection of 15 VDCs in USAID approved districts	2.1.1 USAID’s receipt of a selection report as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages: 15-20, with a 1 page profile per VDC • Content: selection process, rationale, identification of selected 15 VDCs; the VDC profile (including demographics - by age, ethnicity, party affiliation, caste, religion, and gender - conflict history, reconciliation needs, key stakeholders) 	Not submitted, districts selected, and the report in progress
			2.2 Baseline study carried out and draft baseline survey completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex: photos, supporting documentation 2.2.1 USAID’s receipt of the draft Conflict Baseline survey report as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages: 5-7 • Content: executive summary, introduction, methodology, findings, target objectives given baseline, conclusion, recommendations • Annex: photos, other supporting documentation 	Not submitted, In progress
			2.3 Project Advisory and M&E committees established in each district with key stakeholders from administration and civil society agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content: executive summary, introduction, methodology, findings, target objectives given baseline, conclusion, recommendations • Annex: photos, other supporting documentation 2.3.1 USAID’s receipt of a signed Terms of	Not submitted, In progress

			2.4 Project presented to each of the 15 selected VDCs and support gained	<p>Reference (TOR) of Project Advisory and Monitoring and Evaluation Committee members in selected district</p> <p>2.4.1 USAID's receipt of project presentation verification report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages: 7-10, with 1 page per district • Content: executive summary, district profile (M&E committee make up, project interests and response in each district, broken down by VDC), findings, lessons learned, conclusion • Annex: agenda, participants list, agenda, and 2 photos from each of the project presentations in the 15 VDCs, press coverage and clippings, supporting information 	Not submitted, In progress
Q2	3. Reconciliation and Development Forums (RDF) established	November 29, 2013, Q2	3.1 RDFs established in each of the 15 VDCs, and ToRs developed	<p>3.1.1 USAID's receipt of RDF establishment verification report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages: 15-18, with 1 page profile per RDF • Content: summary, RDF Profiles to include selection methodology, location, organization affiliation, hours of operation, services, target population, background on RDF manager, list of members and demographic breakdown (by age, ethnicity, party affiliation, caste, religion, and gender), and overall next steps • Annex: TORs used for the RDFs; 2 photos of 	Not submitted, In progress
			3.2 RDFs' training needs assessed		Not submitted, In progress

			<p>3.3 All 15 RDFs participated in capacity building activities based on training needs report</p>	<p>each RDF; press clippings and coverage</p> <p>3.2.1 USAID’s receipt of RDF training need assessment report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages: 4-6 • Content: 1 page executive summary, general findings, recommendations, and conclusions • Annex: a 1/3 page paragraph summary of training needs for each RDF, proposed training agendas, need assessment survey questionnaires, interviewee list for each RDF <p>3.3.1 USAID’s receipt of 15 activity summaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages: 15-16, with 1 page per RDF • Content: each RDF profile to include summary of training needs, capacity building received, remaining gaps and how they will be addressed • Annex: description of each capacity building activity including agenda, methodology, pre and post training tests, signed participants lists; one photo for each training 	<p>Not submitted, In progress</p>
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Annex C – First CMM Quarterly Regional Meeting Report

First CMM Quarterly Regional Meeting Summary Report

To ensure good communication and coordination between USAID’s CMM partners, and between CMM partners and other USAID-funded projects that include a conflict mitigation component (such as the Sajhedari Bikaas project), USAID proposed to organise CMM Quarterly Regional Meetings.

The objectives of the CMM Quarterly Regional Meetings are:

- to increase understanding of CMM project components;
- to discuss progress;
- to share best practices and lessons learned;
- to share existing and potential challenges and identify ways to overcome them;
- to identify risks of duplication and avoid overlapping activities;
- to explore opportunities to maximize the use of existing resources and complement each other’s program;
- to increase cross-programme and partner learning.

This report summarises major discussion and action points from the first CMM Quarterly Regional Meeting which took place on 24 October 2013 at Dhokaima Café at Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur. It was organised by Saferworld. Representatives from USAID, Mercy Corps, Care, Saferworld, Pact and Saferworld’s partner organisations INSEC and CWIN participated in the meeting.

Meeting agenda:

Time	Session	Lead
8.00	Registration, tea	
8.30	1. Welcome by USAID and Saferworld	USAID; Saferworld
8.40	Introduction of participants	Saferworld
9.00	2. Presentation of CMM projects and Sajhedari Bikaas project, incl. goals, objectives, geographic locations, approach and progress to date (powerpoint, max. 15 minutes each)	All organisations
10.50	Tea break	

11.15	3. Identify key actors we are a) going to engage with and b) seeking to influence; and discuss how we are planning to influence decision makers.	Facilitated by Saferworld, input from all organisations
12.15	Lunch break	
13.15	4. Discuss M&E strategies, the changes we want to see and how we are planning to measure these changes. Includes presentation of USAID on USAID's DG strategy, and presentation of partners' M&E strategies.	Saferworld with M&E experts of the organisations (as far as they participate) and USAID
14.45	5. Identify existing and potential challenges as well as mitigation strategies (incl. lessons learnt and best practices from past work)	Facilitated by Saferworld, input from all organisations
15.45	Tea break	
16.00	6. Strategies for coordination and cooperation; Discuss way forward (incl. planning for next quarterly meeting and what sessions we would like to have included)	Facilitated by Saferworld, input from all organisations
17.15	Recap, closure	USAID, Saferworld

Major discussion and action points

1. Welcome from USAID

An overview of goals, development objectives and intermediate results of DO 1 is attached in the annex.

- Performance level plans will be updated once the Country Development Cooperative Strategy (CDCS) is finalised. However, the essence of the current CDCS will remain the same. Therefore, the goals, development objectives, and intermediate results will still be valid for the CMM projects. Furthermore, CMM projects' directly contribute to Development Objective 1 (DO 1) and its intermediate result 1 and 3 (IR 1.1 and IR 1.3). USAID's headquarter in Washington DC is particularly interested in IR 1.4, as the ultimate goal of CMM projects and others is to see the changes in the countries' policies and their implementation.

2. Presentation of CMM projects

Presentations on the CMM projects and the Sajhedari Bikaas project are attached in the annex.

- Since almost all projects have small grant component, the key requirements and principles around its implementation should be standardised as much as possible. For example, PACT expects 10% matching fund from the communities (in the form of in-kind investments such as labour hours and space among other things), whereas, Mercy Corps asks 25%. It may not be possible to harmonise such things exactly, but a range could be agreed.
- Gender mainstreaming is essential for all CMM projects. Mercy Corps is employing appropriate approaches to be gender sensitive, e.g., it will work with women and men groups separately in the beginning to provide better opportunities for women to develop their skills and will gradually mix groups later once the women feel more confident.
- There is a high level of corruption in the Mid- and Far West regions in District Forest Offices and Forest User Groups (FUGs). The access of ex-combatants, landless people, and new migrants to FUGs is very limited. Mercy Corps will deal with such issues by convincing the community that inclusive natural resource management will benefit everyone more including those who are currently benefiting from such resources. It will also collaborate with other initiatives around resource management which will be identified in the conflict mapping exercise such as Hariyo Ban initiatives. ***USAID will help to establish contact for coordination.***
- USAID shared that CMM projects could benefit from a secret ballot decision making practices that were successfully implemented in other parts of the world as it allows women, youth, and marginalised communities to voice their concern better. As a consequence the decisions made have higher ownership and the interventions are more sustainable. ***USAID will share the report with partners.***
- There are many issues around national parks such as community members being harassed by the Nepal Army that might be of interest to Mercy Corps.
- One of the key coordination points is best sharing the resources that each partner already has. ***PACT will share information on its selected working VDCs and its scoping reports that outlines why those VDCs were selected.***
- Coordination with VDC, DDC, and central level government agencies: PACT regularly follows up with MoFALD, it sees DDC and VDC as their partners, their feedback was sought during VDC selection and does not duplicate with government initiatives in its working VDCs. Therefore, they work using existing government mechanisms instead of creating new ones and also support DDC in their planning processes. It offers support to other CMM partner for coordination with district level government agencies. The planning process of the DDC starts in November, so ***if CMM partner want to include their activities in DDC's plan, they should send list of their activities to PACT.*** The list doesn't need to be comprehensive and detailed.
- Challenges with SWC: Government regulations and requirement need to be respected and steps should be taken to fulfil the requirements such as application for the project approval. However, it is not always possible to keep everything on hold until the project is approved as it is a very lengthy process. Sajhedari Bikas project is seen as complimentary to MoFALD's LGCDP program as it fills gaps on social mobilisation and other aspects of LGCDP. Therefore, a joint agreement between USAID and MoFALD is in the process but has not been finalised yet.

- Presentations showed that the CMM projects as well as the Sajhedari Bikaas project target those who were or are being affected by local tensions, insecurities and conflicts, including but not limited to the civil conflict. However, terms such as ‘conflict affected people’ need to be clearly defined to avoid confusions around whether it only refers to those affected by the Maoists insurgency or also victims of other (often smaller-scale) conflicts. This will be particularly relevant for CARE's project as it will be partnering with MoPR who targets past armed conflict victims exclusively. CARE will address this by supporting those not covered by the MoPR's activities through other sources. CARE will address both the demand and the supply side issues to achieve its goal.
- It was expressed that the LPC and other government mechanism may not have the expertise to provide services for mediation including psychosocial support. So relying only on LPCs and other such structures for mediation work may not be effective. CARE will explore such issues through their baseline study and will prepare accordingly. Referrals for such services including women's issues would be very vital. However, referral services should be properly planned to avoid confusing and or further harming beneficiaries.
- CMM projects should also support the government initiatives by raising awareness of communities on the availability of such services.
- Existing mechanisms will be used as much as possible. However, such mechanisms need to be inclusive and allow the respective project to work with them. For example, Saferworld will work with mechanisms that will have strong representation of youth, women and marginalised groups from all wards the project is engaging in.
- Saferworld’s project focuses its activities mainly at the VDC and to a slightly lower extend at the district level. However, it also plans to influence national level actors through sharing of best practices and lessons learned, for example by organising one-on-one meetings, larger events, joint monitoring visits to the working VDCs, bringing VDC and district level actors to Kathmandu, and through publications. Saferworld’s project will also include a small video component through which youth can express their needs and concerns which will be shared to raise awareness.
- As except for Care all projects have some overlap concerning the working districts, so ***opportunities for cooperation need to be identified.***
- Approaches on 'Do no Harm' and ‘Conflict Sensitivity’ will be mainstreamed throughout the projects to avoid any negative impacts on the beneficiaries and the overall community and to maximise positive results that contribute to conflict resolution and prevention. How this could best be done should be discussed in detail as a separate session in the upcoming quarterly meetings, incl. on whether joint capacity building opportunities could be organised.
- USAID hopes to work directly with the local partners in the future. Therefore, CMM partners are expected to build the capacity of their sub-grantees so that they can apply for direct partnership with USAID when such opportunity arises.

3. Key Actors and activities to engage with these actors

- Project teams identified the specific key actors at the VDC, district and central level they were planning to engage with or influence, and indicated the planned level of engagement (from H = high to L = low). It turned out that projects will mainly target stakeholders at the VDC level and that for most of those actors, medium to high level of engagement was foreseen. Actors at the VDC level included youth, at risk youth, women, men and representatives of the marginalised groups, local government

authorities, CBOs, journalists, and political party members. Second to the VDCs level, projects will focus at the district level with mainly medium level engagement. Government line agencies, media, NGOs, lawyers, political parties, and others were identified as main actors at the district level, At the central level, stakeholders included key ministries and institutions such as the MoFALD, MoHA, MoWCSW, MoPR or NWC, media, (I)NGOs and external stakeholders. *SW will share the complete list of these actors in a matrix.*

- Some key recommendations resulted from the subsequent discussion:
 - while talking to district stakeholders, organisations should do not represent other organisations' projects as this might lead to misinformation and misunderstandings;
 - wherever possible, CMM projects and Sajhedari Bikaas should seek to co-ordinate with other projects in the region that are supported by USAID or other donors;
 - co-ordination on VDC selection and how each CMM partner is planning to engage in that VDC is must to avoid duplication;
 - Staff capacity of VDCs/DDCs (which is often low) should be taken into account when requesting their time for meetings or involvement in activities.
- USAID shared that they are considering opening a field office in Nepalgunj.

4. M&E session

- USAID shared information about the M&E system for the CMM projects. USAID's standard indicators (= 'F indicators') for the conflict mitigation sector of the performance management plan focuses mainly on output level indicators so that the results from around the globe can be aggregated. However, the costume or project-specific indicators should also include outcome level indicators. Therefore, CMM partners are required to report both on output level indicators that feed into the standard USAID's indicators as well as on the project-specific outcome level indicators. However, CMM partners will only report on the list of indicators agreed with the USAID.
- USAID will also pull out indicators from CMM partners' M&E framework and design common indicators for all project but this will be done after CDCS is finalised.
- Partner made presentations on each project's M&E system. **Presentations will be shared.**
- Pact is using 'control VDCs' to establish progress and changes over time between VDCs in which the Sajhedari Bikaas project has and has not been implemented. However, concerns were raised that the word 'control VDC' may not be the right one as it would not take into consideration that other projects and activities might be implemented in that VDC outside of the Sajhedari Bikaas framework.
- PACT's secondary data collection for the baseline of their working VDCs will be ready by November. The data will outline VDC activities, budgets, population, and other information of those VDCs. Household surveys will be conducted using mobile phone technology after election (21st of November) and will be completed by December 15. Due to real time date compilation in a cloud server, the research and the report production will take significantly less time than through conventional measures.
- PACT is also implementing a component on SMS reporting of incidences. The data will be reported via SMS by the community mediators which will directly feed into the system and produce user friendly reports. The data will be geo-enabled. In the initial phase this data it will be for PACT's internal purposes only; however, the

system has the capacity to send alerts to the police or other relevant actors, and these opportunities will be explored in later phases.

- Saferworld presented their participatory approach to M&E which involves beneficiaries in designing and assessing the progress and changes resulting from the project. Saferworld is ‘harvesting’ outcomes to ensure that beyond pre-established indicators, other changes that might result from the project are equally captured.

5. Challenges and lessons learned

- Using four different categories (contextual, implementation-related, government requirements/admin/bureaucracy, and internal organisational/logistics/Human Resources/Operational), participants identified potential challenges that might come up and have negative implications on the projects.
- Two of these challenges identified as the particularly significant for this quarter were: 1. Disturbances of field level activities during election and what could be done in this period to move the project forward, and 2. Challenges in dealing with government authorities such as SWC, DDC and VDC and how best to engage with them.
- Challenge 1: Partners shared that they felt that the current situation was not appropriate to conduct certain key field activities, such as VDC selection or perception surveys for baseline studies. Reasons for this decision include factors such as authorities and community members being occupied with election activities; the environment not being right for community members to share sensitive information; the information received may not be accurate; or activities could violate the election code-of-conduct for I/NGOs.
- It was highlighted that it is important to share the election code-of-conduct with the district level staff members and all partner staff members to follow the principles and maintain political neutrality.
- Activities that participants felt could be done during election included preparations for baseline studies (including training of project staff, desk research and secondary data collection), and preparations for the post-election period.
- Challenge 2: government rules should be respected and due diligence to be followed such as getting the approval letters from the DDC, applying for the project approval with SWC on time, etc. However, in some cases it not be possible to put all activities on hold until the project was approved. Personal relationships count in dealing with the SWC. In PACT's experience it was more effective to hire a lawyer to accompany the PA application the process than to leave that to other project staff members; however, other organisation had made good experiences working through their own staff. The SWC's requirement on hardware was particularly challenging for CMM projects.

6. Coordination

- The meeting identified a number of issues that will require good coordination such as:
 - coordinating with existing initiatives in the districts,
 - establish a range of per-diem and transportation allowance rates among CMM partners/Pact, overlapping VDCs,
 - designing common advocacy messages,
 - not speaking on behalf of other projects as one may not have enough information and could create confusion and raise expectations,
 - sharing of data from scoping, conflict mapping, and the PACT's conflict assessments.

However, due to the time limitation it was not possible to discuss all of these points, and separate meetings will be held to discuss these coordination issues in more in-depth.

- ***Mercy Corps will meet with the Hario Ban project to discuss coordination, facilitated by USAID (Leah).***
- ***CMM partners to send their policies on per-diem and transportation allowances to Leah who will compile them.*** This data collection will help to establish common standard as much as possible.
- ***USAID to share monthly update on CMM projects with all the CMM partners.*** It was also discussed how best to include sub-grantee in sharing this information.
- ***Overlap in VDCs to be discussed among relevant actors.***
- ***Sharing of existing reports, material and data.*** Sajhedari Bikaas has already a lot of information that could be shared. Leah will identify an appropriate online tool to share these documents.
- ***M&E team could meet separately either face-to-face or over skype to share information and ideas on the M&E framework development.***
- Mercy Corps and CARE have designated media persons
- ***Baseline: since all of the CMM partners and Pact are doing their baseline, it is imperative to be strategic in sharing the plans and findings to avoid duplication and increase synergy.*** For example, one partner could be conducting household surveys and another could be doing more qualitative research. Both the findings could be used to produce more robust reports. Sharing of experiences with the research partner also very important.
- ***It is important to think more about referrals and design a referral mechanism for the Mid-and Far West regions where PACT and two of the CMM partners are working.***
- ***CMM partner to share contacts of their project staff members including district level ones.***
- ***Actors mapping, if done by any partner recently, to be shared with other CMM partners.***
- ***Partners to share plans for upcoming activities with PACT if they want them to be incorporated in the DDC planning, which starts in November*** (but it could be postponed due to the election).

Next quarterly meeting

- The next meeting will be organised by Mercy Corps or Care (tbd).
- The next meeting is likely to take place in one of the working districts. It will be 1.5 - 2 days long, dedicating one day to visit one of the project sites.
- USAID will share a map listing all their projects (not just CMM projects and Sajhedari Bikaas project). Once the VDCs are selected USAID will include them in the map.

Key Action Points

USAID

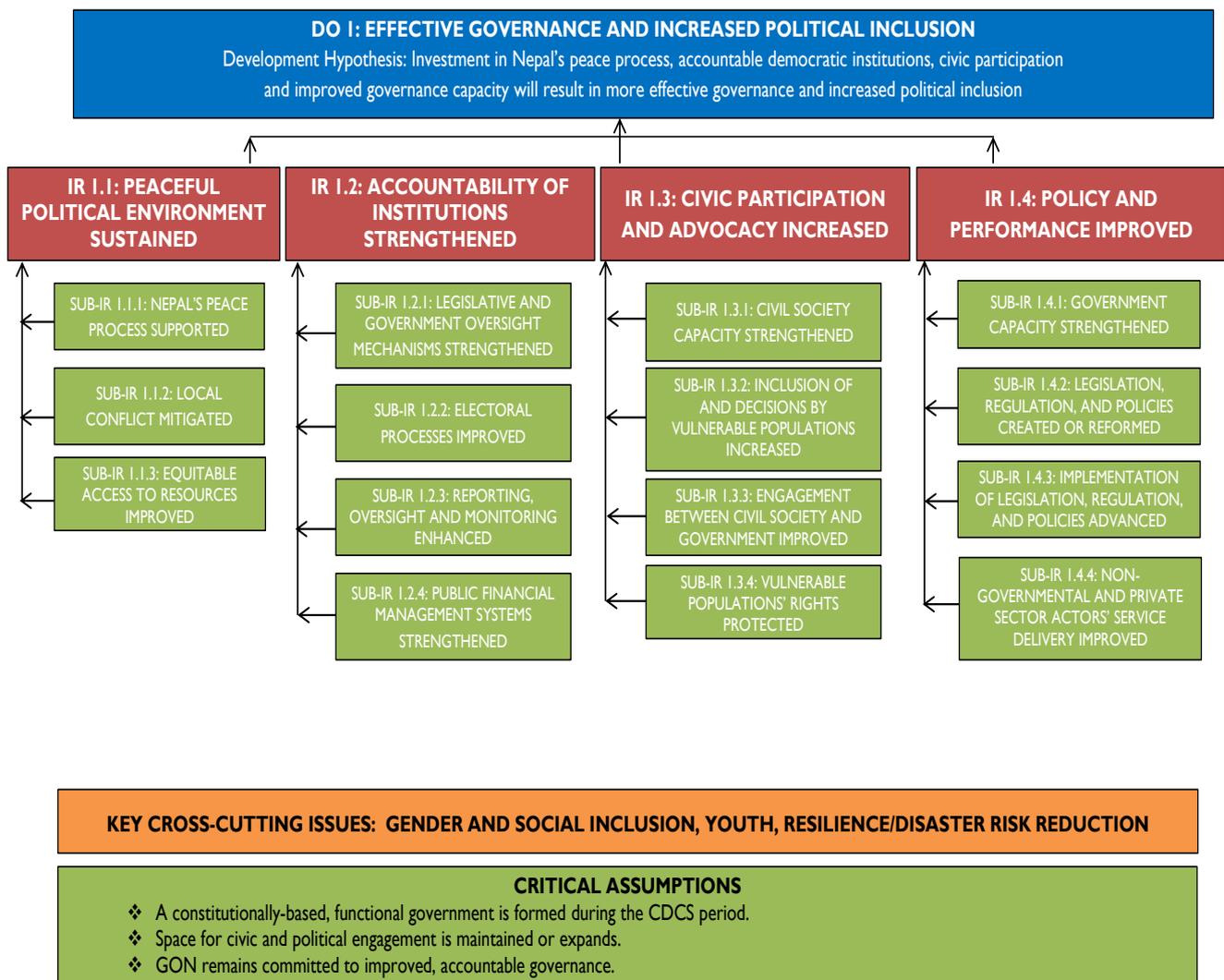
- ***Secret ballot decision making report***

- *Facilitate coordination between Hario Ban and Mercy Corps*
- *Collect policies on per-diems and transportation allowances from partners to design a common standard*
- *Share a map of overall USAID projects*
- *Share JICA report and Bio diversity assessment report*

CMM partners

- *Share their per-diem and transportation allowance policies with USAID*
- *PACT and SW to share their scoping data and other materials that could help Mercy Corps on selecting their VDCs*
- *SW to develop an excel matrix on the actors identified during one of the exercises in the meeting and share with the partners*

Annex 1. DO1 goals, development objectives and intermediate results



Annex D: Photos of CMM Quarterly Regional Meeting Report



CMM Partners meeting

