

7th Quarterly Report



Community Initiatives for Common Understanding

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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 five districts of Nepal: Kailali, Surkhet, Banke and Bardiya in the Mid and Far West; and Sunsari in the East. It targets 3 Village Development Committees (VDCs) in each district.

2. Context Update

In December, Rastriya Prajatantra Party - Nepal (RPP-N) organized the East to West chariot procession including CICU working districts demanding Nepal return to a Hindu Nation. Kamal Thapa - the leader of the party voiced his concerns about recent drives by Christian Missionaries to convert poor and uneducated Hindus into Christians by luring them with incentives.

During the reporting quarter the national context in Nepal largely revolved around drafting the new constitution of Nepal. Despite rounds of bilateral and multilateral dialogue between the major political parties and/or alliances to seek consensus on the conflicting issues to draft the constitution, the Constituent Assembly (CA) again failed to promulgate the constitution by 22 January 2015. The major issues of disagreement between the ruling and opposition parties were state restructuring, forms of governance, electoral system, and judiciary where consensus was not reached and opposition disrupted the CA process that led to failure to promulgate the constitution on 22 January. Also, there has been no further constructive dialogue among the political parties in regards to a new deadline for the promulgation of the new constitution. The security situation remained more peaceful than expected, despite an extended protest programme scheduled by an alliance of political parties led by UCPN-M, CPN-M (Baidhya) and Federal Limbuwan State Council (FLSC) before 22 January. However, the Constituent Assembly turned violent on 19 January when CA Chair asked Nepali Congress Chief Whip to table the proposal to form a 'Questionnaire Committee' to put constitution drafting into action, which eventually interrupted political dialogue and prevented negotiation from seeking consensus.

In the backdrop of the lapsed deadline of 22 January, the CA chair formed a 73 member (49 filled and 24 expected from opposition parties) Questionnaire Committee amidst protest by UCPN Maoist-led alliance. The Committee was supposed to start working for five days, which was revised to 11 days, to submit its report with questionnaires to be asked to the general public on the issues to be included in the constitution. According to the chair, efforts to forge consensus on the abovementioned four contentious issues will be continued and it will supersede (if reached) the works of the Committee. From thereon, neither the Questionnaire Committee was fully formed nor the constructive dialogue to forge consensus resumed during the reporting period.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Commission on Investigation of Disappeared Persons (CIDP) were formed with complete members on 10 February 2015 chaired by Surya Kiran Gurung and Lokendra Mallik respectively. Further, the Supreme Court has ruled that the TRC and CIDP cannot grant amnesty in cases of grave human rights violations. A special constitutional bench of Justice Kalyan Shrestha, Baidhya Nath Upadhyay and Cholendra Shamsher JB Rana gave the verdict in response to a writ filed by Suman Adhikari and other conflict victims.

Context from working districts

All VDCs have accomplished the VDC councils in the CICU working districts in the reporting quarter.

In Banke cases related to domestic violence have not decreased, where 210 cases related to divorce were registered during the reporting period. Banke's District Court sent back 103 cases for mediation but only 25 cases have been resolved through this mechanism. In Sunsari, issues related to religion are escalating gradually in the district, where Christian supporters launched door to door programmes and distributed pamphlets and brochures. In Mohammadpur VDC of Bardiya district, flood victims have received relief packages from the government. The Women and Children Development Office, Surkhet, has officially stated that Babiyachaur, Rakam, Latikoili, Ramghat, Maintada and former Chhinchu VDCs are at risk of human trafficking of girls.

3. Accomplishments

This progress report covers the seventh quarter (Q7) of the CICU project. During this period, activities under Milestones 9.2, 10.1 and 21 were completed and progress has been made towards achieving Milestone 5.1.1 and 10.2.

The following activities were completed this quarter:

a) Milestones 9, Output 9.3 validation workshop carried out involving at least 5 key community representatives from each of the 5 districts

As part of conflict mapping research, a validation workshop was organized among the research participants in order to collect their feedback on findings that will assist in shaping the report. The validation workshop was held in Thakurdwara, Bardiya on 7 January 2015 and attended by the requisite representatives including community members, political party members, conflict victims, Reconciliation and Development Forum (RDF) and Youth Group (YG) members, and former combatants from each of five CICU working districts. Among the 39 participants in the workshop, 14 were Bhramin, 6 hill-Dalit, 5 hill-Janajati, 14 Terai-Janajati, and one Madeshi. 12 were female and 27 were male participants.

Further, the participants for the validation workshop were selected from those who were involved in the data collection and conflict mapping training during the fieldwork. However, gender, ethnicity and geography were balanced while selecting the participants. Additionally,

the workshop was also attended by the local partners' regional coordinators, district coordinators and staff members from Saferworld.

The one day workshop was divided into four key aspects, focusing on the conflict mapping research findings. These aspects were brainstorming, group discussion, district-wide presentation and sharing of best practices. The workshop was facilitated by INSEC and CWIN staff members.

b) Milestone 10, Output 10.1 Psychosocial strategy and directory developed

The psychosocial strategy and corresponding service-provider directory have been developed during the 7th quarter. The purpose of the strategy and directory is to outline ways to refer community members who need psychosocial counselling to the relevant service providers, agencies or individuals at the VDC or district level. The directory will map key actors able to provide support, the types of services needed and ways to ensure that those in need have access to services.

In order to prepare the directory, consultation meetings were organized with YG and RDF members, local communities, health institutions, and other organizations involved in psychosocial counselling. Both primary and secondary information were gathered to prepare the directory, which highlights resources available at the community level, existing major psychosocial problems, groups such as unemployed youth, ex-combatants, and returned migrant workers of the population identified with the need for psychosocial care, and the strategy to address them.

Consultation meetings revealed that addressing psychosocial issues is new for some districts and communities. However, many psychosocial cases/problems exist, yet the communities have very low capacities to deal with such issues. There have not been any significant initiatives taken so far to address psycho-social problems of the people aside from small-scale support in local capacity building by I/NGOs.

c) Milestone 21, Mid-Term Review conducted

Mid-Term Review was conducted on 11-12 February 2015 in Pokhara with the participation of CWIN and INSEC district coordinators, regional coordinators, CICU project coordinators, CWIN's Executive Director, Saferworld's CICU team, including Country Manager LaChelle

Amos and Reshma Thapa and Pramod Pyakurel from USAID. Prior to the CICU mid-term review meeting in Pokhara, two regional review meetings were conducted with the participation of RDF and YG representatives and CWIN and INSEC district coordinators. The Mid-Term Review meeting was an opportunity to review one and half years of CICU project implementation, draw results, reflect on challenges, assess the way forward and plan activities for the rest of the project period.

As part of the partner's capacity development under Milestone 24, CICU conducted a half-day training on financial management to improve financial reporting and procurement by INSEC and CWIN. Saferworld's Finance and Operation Manager conducted the training where USAID Finance Officer Pramod Pyakurel provided valuable input. Similarly, the active participation of Reshma Thapa from USAID excelled the discussion during review and was helpful in improving CICU implementation and reporting.

d) Milestone 27, Output 27.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance and quarterly events calendars

The Conflict Mitigation and Management (CMM) partners' quarterly meeting was organised by Mandwi and Saferworld in Janakpur on 4-6 February 2015. As a co-organizer Saferworld provided technical support to successfully accomplish the CMM quarterly meeting.

Saferworld Country Manager, Project Manager Ashim Pandey and MEL Coordinator Poshra Raj Adhikari actively participated in the CMM quarterly meeting, along with the Project Coordinators of CICU project sub-partners, INSEC and CWIN.

Work in Progress

e) Milestones 5, Output 5.1.1 at least one interaction in each VDC engaging beneficiaries; including the production of at least one short video documentary on a topic related to the conflict and/or conflict resolution

Work towards achieving Milestone 5 has begun. '*Kathaharu*' has been selected as the service provider company to produce the video documentary. The timeline to produce the video documentary has been developed. Saferworld and CWIN conducted a meeting with *Kathaharu* to discuss and to provide a brief about the CICU project, its objectives, and

corresponding activities to achieve the objectives. The draft script has already been received and reviewed, and is in the process of being finalised. The field work to shoot video footage will be conducted from the second week of April with a tentative time allocation of 30 days. The main video documentary will be 9-14 minutes. Furthermore, 5 additional video documentaries will also be developed with a length of 8-9 minutes each from each project working district, which will be combined to develop one video documentary of 40-45 minutes in total. The video documentary will be completed by mid-May 2015.

f) Milestone 10, Output 10.2 at least 3 orientation/training, based on the localized needs and gaps identified under MS description 10.1 carried out for the actors working on psycho-social support from all 15 VDCs

Progress has been made scheduling training dates for 6-10 April 2015 on 'Basic Psychosocial Care and Support' followed by group psychosocial counselling in the working VDCs. In total, 26 participants will participate in the training including YG members, identified counsellors available in the working VDCs, and CICU district coordinators. During the training, the participants will draw the detailed plan of conducting group counselling in their respective VDCs and creating/solidifying referral mechanisms. The group counselling will identify those with psychosocial problems for whom a trained counsellor will provide support; complex cases in need of additional resources and/or assistance will be further referred.

g) Milestone 27, Output 27.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance and quarterly events calendars

The 7th quarterly progress report will be submitted to USAID in March 2015.

4. Challenges and Lessons Learnt

The RDFs have started implementing their action plans in the 7th quarter with the majority of the activities, amongst others, revolving around the facilitation of dialogue between conflicting communities and groups. While RDFs and YGs facilitate dialogue as a measure of reconciliation, the facilitation of dialogue itself is a complex task requiring specific technical skills and knowledge. With in-depth skills and knowledge on dialogue, the RDFs and YGs will conduct the dialogue meeting and workshop more effectively. As part of capacity building for implementing partners, the project will plan training on dialogue facilitation in the next quarter. In the interim, two district coordinators from sub-partner INSEC and CWIN

will take part in ‘Training of Trainers on Dialogue and Negotiation’ in March 2015, organized by CMM partner, IRMI.

5. Success Stories

DPAC meetings were conducted on 17 December 2014 and 2 January 2015 in Sunsari and Bardiya, respectively. RDFs shared progress made and their action plans during the meetings. The forum was useful for receiving feedback on the RDF action plans and consolidating coordination and collaboration with district stakeholders, including local government line agencies.

All RDFs and YGs were invited to the VDC councils, which are traditionally held during December and January. RDFs used this as an opportunity to share their action plans with the VDCs and strengthen their stake in annual VDC development plans. Similarly, YGs presented their annually planned activities in the same forum. In response and acknowledgment of CICU project activities in the working VDCs, the respective VDCs have allocated budgets for the activities of RDFs and YGs from the VDC block grant. RDFs and YGs from Sunsari, Banke, Bardiya, and Kailali received VDC block grants ranging from NPR 10,000 to as much as NPR 61,000.

6. Quarterly Work Plan

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

7. Monitoring & Evaluation Performance

Saferworld has introduced ‘community data boards’ in the working VDCs. RDFs and YGs will collect information on the general security situation of their VDCs. The collected information will be displayed on a flex board in the VDC premise and within the Peace Rooms, which will be revised every four months. The aim of collection and displaying information is to sensitize community members on the security situation of the community as well building the capacity of RDF and YG members in advocacy on gender, peace and security.

USAID DGO team including Maria Barron, Reshma Thapa, Sabita Shrestha and Ganga Maharjan conducted a field visit with LaChelle Amos, Ashim Pandey and Posha Raj Adhikari from Saferworld to CICU the working municipality of Ramdhuni Bhasi (formerly

Singhiya VDC) and Bharaul VDC of Sunsai district on 2 February 2015. The visiting team observed a dialogue facilitation event organized by Singhiya RDF to resolve a community forestry dispute. They then visited the Bharaul Peace Room, where they interacted with RDF and YG members, local youth and political party representatives.

8. List of Annexes

The Annexes included here are the following:

- A) Quarterly Work Plan

Annex A – Quarterly Work Plan

Milestone	Outputs/Activities Planned for this Quarter (December 2014 – February 2015)	Planned Timeline	Status (<i>Completed / On track / Not completed / Not on track</i>)
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	Q3	Completed, report will be submitted in March 2015 (revised from previous report)
	23.2 CWIN and INSEC's capacity assessment and action plan developed	Q4	Completed, report will be submitted in April 2015 (revised from previous report)
9. Communities have better understanding of existing tensions through constructive engagement in conflict mapping	9.1 Preparation and training for conflict mapping	Q5	Completed, report will be submitted in April 2015 (revised from previous report)
	9.2 Conflict mapping conducted in the 5 districts	Q5	Completed, report will be submitted in April 2015 (revised from previous report)
	9.3 Validation Workshop carried out involving at least 5 key community representatives from each of the 5 districts	Q5	Completed, report will be submitted in April 2015
24. Partners technical and organization capacity needs built for year 2	24.1 CWIN and INSEC capacity needs for year 2 addressed	Q5	Delayed, planned in May 2015

5. Trust and more constructive interaction/dialogue established between hard-to-reach youth and other at-risk groups and individuals	5.1 At least one interaction in each VDC engaging beneficiaries; including the production of at least one short video documentary on a topic related to the conflict and/or conflict resolution	Q7/8	On track
10. Psycho-social support mechanism is functional and selected actors have capacity to provide psycho-social support in 15 VDCs	10.1 Psycho-social strategy and directory developed	Q8	Completed, report will be submitted in April
	10.2 At least 3 orientation/training based on the localized needs and gaps identified under MS description 10.1 carried out from the actors working on psycho-social support from all 15 VDCs	Q8	On track
	10.3 Service providers identified meet with individuals to provide psychosocial support	Q8	On track
21. Mid-term progress monitoring conducted	21.1 Mid-term review conducted	Q7	Completed, report will be submitted in April 2015
27. Documentation of project progress in year 2 on quarterly basis	27.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance, and quarterly events calendars	Q5	Completed
	Output/Activities Planned for Seventh Quarter (March –	Planned	Status (Completed / On

Milestone	May 2015)	Timeline	track / Not completed / Not on track)
24. Partners technical and organization capacity needs built for year 2	24.1 CWIN and INSEC's capacity needs for year 2 addressed	Q6	Delayed, planned in May 2015
16. Informal justice mechanism have been identified in each VDC	16.1 Methodology for informal justice mapping update has been refined	Q8	On track
	16.2 capacity building for at least 10 researchers conducted	Q8	On track
	16.3 Field research conducted in all districts, data analyzed and validated to produce draft justice Mapping report	Q8	On track
13. RDFs take lead in implementing action plans to address communities' needs to prevent conflict in 5 communities	13.1 Phase I – Group A (5 communities) security needs identified and discussed in participatory manner, and Community Action Plans developed	Q8	On track