
NEPAL PEACE SUPPORT PROJECT (NPSP)

Final Report

Submitted by



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List of Abbreviations

CWCs	Central Working Committee
CJ	Chief Justice
CoED	Commission on Enforced Disappearances
CNP-M	Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Accord
CA	Constituent Assembly
CPDCC	Constitutional-Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee
FSP	Federalist Socialist Party
FNJ	Federation of Nepali Journalists
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GoN	Government of Nepal
KDI	Korean Development Institute
LPC	Local Peace Committee
MJF-N	Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum-Nepal
MoPR	Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
NPSP	Nepal Peace Support Project
NTTP	Nepal's Transition to Peace
NTTPI	Nepal Transition to Peace Institute
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PAM	Peace Accords Matrix
PRU	Peace Research Unit
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PSA	Public Service Announcements
SRC	State Restructuring Commission
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TJ	Transitional Justice
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCPN(M)	United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
CPN-UML	Communist Party of Nepal - Unified Marxist-Leninist
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMIN	United Nations Mission In Nepal
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee

NEPAL PEACE SUPPORT PROJECT (NPSP)

FINAL REPORT

I. Executive Summary

Working for the development of a peaceful, prosperous, just, and open Asia-Pacific region, The Asia Foundation (TAF), a non-profit, non-governmental organization works with both government and non-governmental institutions toward effective, responsible, and accountable governance, economic growth, and stable social transformation. Through financial support, technical assistance, training, and research, TAF focuses its efforts in Nepal on four critical areas: law and government accountability, conflict transformation and peace-building, market-led economic growth, and women's security. As part of its strengthening skills and constituencies for peace and reform program, TAF developed and managed the Nepal Peace Support Project (NPSP) from February 1, 2009 to January 31, 2015. Full-fledged support was received from USAID (CA No. 367-A-00-09-00005-00) for the entire project period except for the period from September 2011 to August 2012 (limited support received during this period). Between September 2011 and January 2015, full-fledged support was also received from the Swiss government. Before September 2011, support received from the Swiss government was granted only for specific activities.

The evolution of Nepal Transition to Peace (NTTP) Forum as trusted dialogue space for political parties since 2005 has yielded in vivo existence of NTTP Forum in the peace process of Nepal. Having senior politicians as members of the NTTP Forum and the autochthonic facilitators to convene and facilitate the informal, low-key and confidential dialogue process during critical junctures of the peace process and the constitutional writing process built the legacy of the success of NTTP as an acceptable assembly for all political actors.

Nepali politics has witnessed many unforeseen ramifications in the past four and a half years. NTTP process has been a crucial expedient in many culminating points in the highly fluctuating political process including the facilitation for writing the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) in 2006 and reaching agreement on the modalities and number of the integration of Maoist combatants. Lately, unimagined by the Interim Constitution, the election to the second Constituent Assembly (CA) was held in November, 2013 by an Interim Council of Ministers led by sitting Chief Justice (CJ). When all political parties were not positive about participating in the elections, NTTP played key role in facilitation of talks between Government of Nepal (GON), High Level Political Committee (HLPC) and dissident parties leading to the participation of Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum (MJF-Nepal) and Federal Socialist Party (FSP) in CA-II election. Amidst fear of violence from the hardliner splintered Maoist party, another success of NTTP Forum can be inferred to facilitation between GON, Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) and other political parties on the eve of Election Day ensuring non-violent boycott by CPN-M resulting in peaceful CA-II election.

Meanwhile, TAF strengthened the capacity of the NTTP to achieve meaningful negotiation, both by supporting the facilitators (for example, arranging visits for them to different districts to gain an understanding of local concerns and peace issues) and providing international

consultants including Prof. John Paul Lederach and Lt. Prof. John Darby to bring in international comparative experiences and to ameliorate facilitation skills.

With support from the Swiss government, a conference was organized in Steckborn, Switzerland in Feb 11-17, 2011 for NTTP members. The educational visit was instrumental in producing an agreement on mixed form of governance model and Constitutional Court among the political parties. Similarly, a week-long seminar was organized at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame, USA from April 22-28, 2013 with the support from the Swiss government. The seminar focused on strategies and approaches to enable negotiators and facilitators to improve trust and address key challenges in Nepal's political transition and the peace process. The NTTP political leaders from major political parties, including the former Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, and senior peace process facilitators participated at the intensive seminar on the themes of negotiation approaches and skills needed with regard to Nepal's protracted political transition.

Alongside the main NTTP Forum, the thematic groups held regular meetings, mostly more than once a month to discuss on main political issues and thematic issues as well. Over the time, youth, women, Madhesi and Janajati thematic groups have held significant discussions producing outputs like articles in national daily newspaper jointly by thematic group members. Dalit group has been recently formed as the fifth thematic group.

TAF also worked to investigate the wider meaning of transitional justice and local needs from victims' perspectives by teaming up with Committee for Social Justice, a victim-led organization. The public report disseminated after the study set the foundation for a core set of principles for transitional justice (TJ) process when the formal process on Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Commission on Enforced Disappearances (CED) was in limbo.

The Peace Research Units (PRUs) maintained at NTTP have provided research and analysis to the Peace Unit Coordinators of the political parties and through them to various other mechanisms like the main NTTP Forum, other thematic groups, political party committees, senior political leaders and sometimes the wider public (via media). The Peace Unit workshops conducted in various parts of the country have richly informed the discussions at the NTTP Forum and the thematic committees. Peace Unit workshops have been organized and participated by 4140 participants in various parts of the country. Also, capacity on peace building, constitutional process and conflict resolution skills were enhanced in 1582 political/civil society actors through civil society interactions conducted in various parts of the country.

As of January 2015, NTTP process has been institutionalized into an independent organization called Nepal Transition To Peace Institute (NTTP-I). TAF explored the options for registration regimes for the new entity and NTTP-I was finally registered as a professional institute at the Ministry of Home Affairs. TAF hired an organizational development consultant to work on the strategy of NTTP-I. Subsequently, financial manual, operations manual, internal governance policy, human resources policy and sustainability strategy were prepared. TAF also helped NTTP-I in preparing a framework on its monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy. To document the NTTP process, TAF hired a documentation consultant and produced a report for the potential future treatment of the past documents and compilations.

Below is a detailed report on each of the major program activities under the NPSP, beginning with the background of the project, objectives set along the entire project and a list of key achievements.

I. Project Background and Description

Characterized by a tumultuous journey to peace and democracy, Nepal has been caught in a prolonged transition. Some historical changes brought about by the peace process, including the establishment of a federal democratic republic state, are still under threat. Although the Maoist rebels were brought into the mainstream politics and the state of war was altered to negative peace, writing a new constitution to institutionalize the historical achievements is facing challenges. Ensuring transitional justice to the victims of the conflict has turned into a challenge hindered by differences over political, legal, and institutional arrangements.

Under the fluid circumstances, it was highly essential to keep the key political stakeholders in continuous engagement through dialogue and necessary compromise in order to avoid a dire consequence in the Nepali peace process. To tackle these challenges, a project was proposed aimed at providing the political parties with access to a stable, trusted mechanism for Track-1.5 dialogue through a strengthened NTTP Forum, and to support robust analysis of the key conflict issues facing the nation through technical assistance to the NTTP Forum as well as to the Peace Units embedded in the major political parties. Lastly, USAID proposed to institutionalize the NTTP process such that a national institute is established to increase trust and effectiveness among the stakeholders and sustain the NTTP process without external support.

USAID's assistance until 2011 created an important foundation upon which NTTP operated with resolute proficiency in the last four years. The ongoing Track-1.5 negotiation among the major political actors was buttressed by the creation of Peace Research Units which enhanced the capacity of the parties to understand the technical complexities of key conflict issues and develop negotiating positions and policy responses. The NTTP process was invigorated with the USAID's assistance leading to the successful transition from a technical process into a subsisting institution.

II. Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the project was to advance Nepal's peace process by achieving the core objectives listed below. Since the project was affected by changing political dynamics, the objectives and activities also changed over the six years of the project (2009-2015). Broadly, the five years can be divided into three phases, according to project extensions:

Project Period	Objectives	Activities
	1. Maintain and strengthen the NTTP Forum as the center for Track 1.5 agenda setting, dialogue, and negotiation	<p data-bbox="766 1776 1406 1845"><i>1.1 Continue funding for administrative and logistical support to the NTTP Forum and MoPR</i></p> <p data-bbox="766 1883 1406 1953"><i>1.2 Maintain the Forum's library and resource center</i></p> <p data-bbox="766 1991 1406 2022"><i>1.3 Conduct an initial strategic planning</i></p>

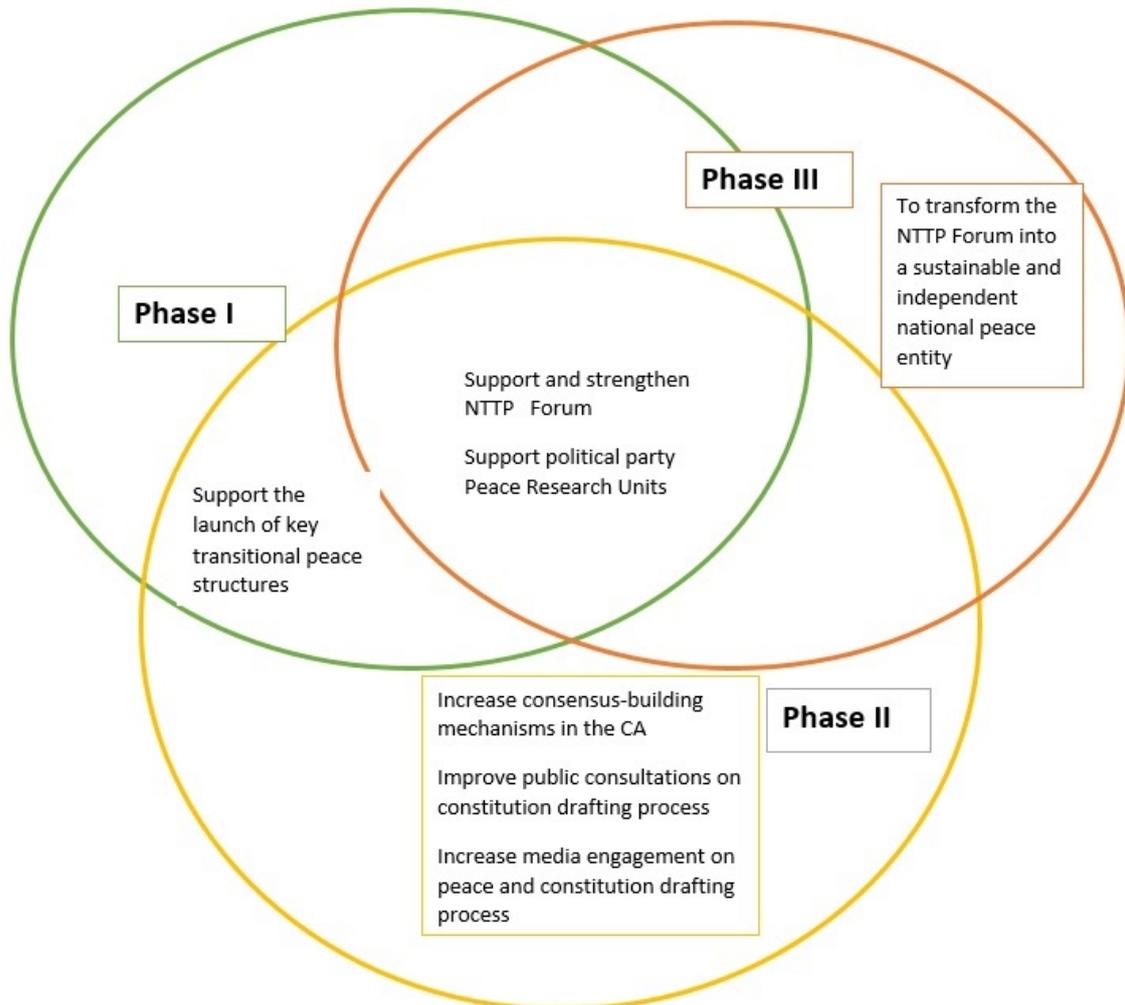
Phase I: January 2009 - September 2009		<i>workshop to develop an agenda for the NTTP for the coming year</i>
		<i>1.4 Provide the NTTP Forum with funding and logistical support to conduct field visits</i>
		<i>1.5 Conduct regularly scheduled expert briefings and sessions on key conflict issues</i>
	2. Support the launch of key Transitional Peace Structures	<i>2.1 Conduct briefings within the NTTP Forum in cases of deadlock over technical demands facing transitional peace structures</i>
		<i>2.2 Provide technical assistance to newly-formed Transitional Peace Structures on relevant conflict issues, as well as on organizational design, management, and oversight</i>
		<i>2.3 Conduct orientation sessions on the terms of reference for Local Peace Committees (LPCs)</i>
		<i>2.4 Train selected LPC members as facilitators (Rolled over to Phase II)</i>
		<i>2.5 Provide small grants to support post-training activities for LPCs (Rolled over to Phase II)</i>
		<i>2.6 Conduct experience-sharing workshops (Rolled over to Phase II)</i>
		<i>2.7 Following the revision of the LPCs' terms of reference, design and broadcast awareness-raising radio programs</i>
3. Increase the base of support for Peace Units within political parties	<i>3.1 Conduct intra-party workshops on the role and capabilities of Peace Units</i>	

Phase II: October 2009 - August 2011	1. Maintain and strengthen the NTTP Forum as a center for Track 1.5 agenda setting, dialogue, and negotiation	<i>1.1 Operational and administrative support for the NTTP Forum and MoPR</i>
		<i>1.2 Maintain the Forum's library and resource center</i>
		<i>1.3 Conduct strategic planning workshops to review/revise the NTTP Forum's role</i>
		<i>1.4 Support NTTP Forum to conduct field visits</i>
		<i>1.5 Create NTTP thematic sub-groups on the issues of women, Madhesh, and Janajatis</i>
	2. Support the launch of key Transitional Peace Structures	<i>2.1 Train MoPR officials on fundamentals of the peace process</i>
		<i>2.2 Produce orientation toolkits for LPC Members</i>
		<i>2.3 Train selected LPC members as facilitators</i>
		<i>2.4 Pilot enhanced local level peace-building capacity in selected districts</i>
		<i>2.5 Pilot village-level peace action groups</i>
		<i>2.6 Conduct experience-sharing workshops</i>
		<i>2.7 Design and broadcast awareness-raising audio-visual programs</i>
	3. Support the political party peace and research units and expand the peace constituency within each party	<i>3.1 Conduct intra-party workshops on the role and capacity of Peace Units</i>
		<i>3.2 Prepare roster of national experts on the peace process and constitutional issues</i>
	4. Increase consensus-building mechanisms in the CA	<i>4.1 Convene roundtables on constitutional development</i>
<i>4.2 Organize confidential dialogue sessions among political parties</i>		
5. Improve public consultations on constitution drafting process	<i>5.1 Facilitate youth-focused constitutional dialogues in small towns</i>	

	6. Increase media engagement on the peace and constitution drafting process	<p><i>6.1 Form editors' roundtable on CA affairs</i></p> <p><i>6.2 Provide journalism fellowships for CA affairs correspondents</i></p> <p><i>6.3 Create interactive radio shows on constitutional issues for remote areas</i></p>
Phase III: September 2011 - January 2015	1. To strengthen NTTP capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace process	<i>1.1 Provide operational and administrative support to the NTTP Forum</i>
		<i>1.2 Train NTTP facilitators on technical facilitation skills</i>
		<i>1.3 Maintain the NTTP Forum's library and resource center</i>
		<i>1.4 Support NTTP Forum to conduct visits</i>
		<i>1.5 Support NTTP thematic groups focused on the issues of marginalized groups</i>
		<i>1.6 Support the launch of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)</i>
	2. To build the capacity of Political Party Peace and Research Units to serve as a resource on the peace process	<i>2.1 Maintain support to political parties in information analysis, research, and transparency of the negotiation process</i>
3. To transform the NTTP Forum into a sustainable and independent national peace entity	<i>3.1 Establish an NTTP national peace institute to ensure NTTP's future sustainability</i>	

III. Project Achievements and Impacts

Some common objectives ran through all three project phases, with slight differences, while others were specific to a particular phase (see table in section II). The following Venn-diagram clarifies which objectives ran through more than one project phase:



There is significant overlap between objectives and activities of the three phases. This section therefore divides objectives and related activities into five broad achievements:

- A. Strengthening of NTTP
- B. Support key transitional peace structures
- C. Support political party Peace and Research Units (PRUs)
- D. Facilitate debate and engagement on constitutional issues
- E. Create an independent national peace institute (NTTP-I)

A. Strengthening of NTTP

The following objectives focused on strengthening NTTP:

- **Maintain and strengthen the NTTP Forum as the center for Track-1.5 agenda setting, dialogue, and negotiation.** (Objective 1, Phase I & II)
- **To strengthen NTTP capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace process.** (Objective 1, Phase III)

In order to achieve these objectives, the following activities were conducted and outputs achieved:

- *Continue funding for administrative and logistical support to the NTTP Forum and MoPR.* (Activity 1.1, Phase I)
- *Operational and administrative support for the NTTP Forum and MoPR.* (Activity 1.1, Phase II)
- *Provide operational and administrative support to the NTTP Forum.* (Activity 1.1, Phase III)

When the project was launched in January 2009, TAF managed the transition, over a month and a half, from the previous implementer (Academy for Educational Development) of the Nepal Transition to Peace (NTTP) program. TAF contracted the existing NTTP facilitators to continue their work for NTTP and gave them logistical and technical support and capacities provided by technical staff and international consultants. Project activities with the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) and political parties were also managed by TAF.

TAF maintained adequate facilities and provided administrative support in order to effectively conduct meetings and dialogues on the NTTP premises. The Forum's existing building and support services were duly maintained. Planned NTTP Forum meetings were held twice a month (sometimes even up to three times a month) to discuss various issues of the peace process and developments of the constitution writing process. Apart from regularly planned Forum meetings, separate individual meetings were also held with different stakeholders as required.

After the second phase of the project, operational/administrative support for NTTP and MoPR was limited to NTTP only.

Outputs:

- Facility maintained and operational/administrative support provided.
- Between February 2009 and January 2015, TAF helped to facilitate 62 NTTP Forum meetings.
- Between February 2009 and July 2011, TAF supported 10 retreats, 11 negotiations, and 18 civil society interactions for NTTP. (Phase I & II)

- Progress was made on 10 contentious issues (integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army combatants, CA extension, state restructuring and federalism, electoral system, judiciary, forms of governance, power-sharing, structured dialogue, trust building and deadlock breaking mechanisms). (Phase II)
- MoPR website was maintained and updated; internet was provided. (Phase I &II)
- More than 4 meetings monthly were held of NTTP Facilitators during highly fluid times; in total, 111 such meetings were held during the entire project period.
- More than 7 individual and small group meetings monthly were conducted with stakeholders during critical times.
- Progress was made in critical situations such as after the failure of CA-I and during and after the CA-II elections: New options were explored after the failure of CA-I, including those of a civil society-led or neutral government for elections. This eventually led to the political agreement on a Chief-Justice-led interim government, ensuring the participation of dissident parties – including Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF-Nepal) and Federal Socialist Party (FSP) – in the CA-II elections. CPN-M was convinced of a non-violent boycott of the CA-II elections. After the CA-II elections and following the shift in power from UCPN(M) and Madhesi parties to NC and CPN-UML, the participation of UCPN(M) and the Madhesi parties in the government was ensured, and the rift between NC and CPN-UML was solved before the formation of Koirala government. Further, informal dialogues were continued when formal negotiations were halted after the introduction of a joint proposal of the ruling parties in the Constitutional-Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee (CPDCC). (Phase III)
- ***Train NTTP facilitators on technical facilitation skills. (Activity 1.2, Phase III)***

Technical inputs and guidance to the facilitators on matters related to the dialogue process were provided by international consultants. Prof. John Paul Lederach visited Kathmandu 25 times during the five years of the project. During each visit, he played a key role in providing knowledge on facilitation, conflict analysis and approaches for political resolution during crises.

Late Prof. John Darby also contributed with his expert guidance during his 4 visits to Kathmandu and one visit to Steckborn, Switzerland before his untimely demise on 02 June, 2012. Apart from this, Prof. Darby also supported NTTP from a distance. For example, when Prof. Lederach visited Kathmandu from June 8-20, 2009, he provided options for Nepal's peace process in consultation with Prof. Darby. Further, Prof. Darby included Nepal's CPA into the Peace Accords Matrix (PAM) developed at the Kroc Institute, which helped NTTP in comparing the components of Nepal's peace accord with peace accords signed in other parts of the world. Prof. Darby's words, "Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed", are used by NTTP members as a motivation to work hard for consensus. He also helped parties reach an informal agreement in Steckborn, Switzerland – a low key visit, supported by Embassy of Switzerland from Feb 11-17, 2011.

Conflict expert Chris Spies brought in his South African knowledge to support Prof. Lederach in June, 2014. Andries Odendaal, Senior Associate at the Centre for Mediation in Africa at the University of Pretoria, also teamed up with Prof. Lederach in October 2014 to maximize the technical skills of the NTTP facilitators and provide sophisticated political analyses and frameworks for negotiations.

The facilitators have thus garnered significant skills including technical assistance in crafting understandings between parties, finding common grounds and generating narratives acceptable to parties for a final agreement and structuring the negotiation process depending on the issues on the table. The expertise brought by international consultants has amplified the facilitators' capabilities by complementing their historical experiences, activism and national knowledge on domestic conflict and the peace process.

- The list of visits by international experts is included in *Annex F*.

Outputs:

- Guidance provided by senior international consultants on a regular basis leading to improved technical facilitation skills of the NTTP Facilitators.
- Sophisticated analyses, negotiation frameworks and techniques provided by international consultants were crucial to the negotiation process at various times.
- ***Maintain the NTTP Forum's library and resource center. (Activity 1.2, Phase I & II; Activity 1.3, Phase III)***

A local consultant was hired to organize and improve the NTTP Library. A total of 479 books were entered and maintained in the NTTP library in Phase I. TAF hired a librarian on a part-time basis who assessed and updated the library with additional books and reference materials (Phase II).

The already existing NTTP library was upgraded in Phase III as a resource center with more books on peace processes and constitution writing. The upgraded library has been helpful for the Facilitators and NTTP members as a resource to improvise facilitation skills and knowledge of theoretical and comparative studies on peace processes. Books on negotiation skills have helped the Facilitators to improve convening and facilitating roles, inculcating sound facilitation skills of younger members.

The available resources have been highly useful to researchers in the Peace Research Units (PRUs) to produce research papers on various subjects related to the peace process, transitional justice, local peace structures and different aspects of the new constitution.

Outputs:

- Facilities maintained and updated.
- 5602 volumes of 932 books registered in the NTTP library.
- 40 volumes of 31 documentaries/movies registered.

- Facilitators, PRU researchers, politicians (NTTP Forum members) and NTTP staff used the updated facilities.
- 62 research papers produced on various issues.
 - Details of issues covered by these research papers are in *Annex D*.
- 25 Research Papers translated for increased public access.
- ***Conduct an initial strategic planning workshop to develop an agenda for the NTTP for the coming year. (Activity 1.3, Phase I)***
- ***Conduct strategic planning workshops to review/revise the NTTP Forum's role. (Activity 1.3, Phase II)***

NTTP met regularly, primarily to discuss the management transfer and to formulate its strategic plan in February and March, 2009. They received assistance from Prof. John Paul Lederach and Prof. John Darby, the two international consultants for the project, and Mr. Vidhyadhar Mallik, the former Secretary of the MoPR, who assisted the facilitators in their work and produced some analytical reports and mapping of conflict for the NTTP facilitators. The strategy meetings conducted in March 2009 with Prof. Lederach and Prof. Darby identified a concise list of strategies to improve the dialogue process and suggested some priority issues to be taken up by the forum in the following months.

The issues and priorities of the peace process constantly changed and the NTTP Forum had to keep pace with those changes in its strategic approach.

Outputs:

- 5 planning sessions held. (Phase II)
- Sustainability plan included support and exit strategy after ensuring an additional two years of funding for the NTTP from European donors.
- ***Provide the NTTP Forum with funding and logistical support to conduct field visits. (Activity 1.4, Phase I)***
- ***Support NTTP Forum to conduct visits. (Activity 1.4, Phase II & III)***

Regular visits to different districts outside the Kathmandu Valley were organized to assess the first hand information from the grassroots level and feed the discussions at the center with pertinent inputs. These field visits were not only helpful for the Facilitators and Forum members to gain knowledge about local level initiatives but also to become aware of gaps in understanding of the issues in Kathmandu. The members of the Forum representing various political parties acknowledged that the field visits gave them a better picture of the local situation than the information they received through their party channels.

Through field visits, the Forum identified causes of conflict at the local level and used this information to refine and sequence its internal agenda and strengthen its analysis of connectors and dividers in society.

The NTTP Facilitators also visited India in July 2013 and July 2014 to seek ways to garner regional support in favor of Nepal's constitution writing process. Discussions were held with Delhi-based intellectuals, analysts and other relevant actors. TAF organized these visits in coordination with its India office and the Indian Embassy in Nepal.

TAF provided the Forum with financial and logistical support for field visits of Forum Facilitators, members, and experts throughout the project. This included funding for local vehicle hire, airfare for in-country travel, phone service, and per diem for Forum members and Facilitators. Each field visit was followed by an appraisal by Facilitators for political leaders inside and outside of the government.

Outputs:

- 28 field visits (excluding peace unit workshops) and 24 civil society interactions completed leading to more sophisticated understanding of local-level conflict dynamics.
- 5 visits by NTTP Facilitators to India.
- ***Conduct regularly scheduled expert briefings and sessions on key conflict issues. (Activity 1.5, Phase I)***

TAF organized five expert briefings with experts on key conflict issues. This included strategic sessions with TAF's international consultants, outgoing head of UNMIN Mr. Ian Martin, constitutional lawyers and influential CA members. The experts made their presentations to NTTP and it helped the facilitators gain deeper insights into the nature of deadlocks of the peace process and constitution writing.

Outputs:

- 5 expert briefings on key conflict issues.
- ***Create NTTP thematic sub-groups on the issues of women, Madhesh, and Janajatis. (Activity 1.5, Phase II)***
- ***Support NTTP thematic groups focused on the issues of marginalized groups. (Activity 1.5, Phase III)***

In order to integrate voices of marginalized groups in the broader political transition and constitution writing process, TAF created three NTTP sub-groups, attaching them to the NTTP Forum structure. To work on issues related to marginalized groups, three professionals were contracted to convene and moderate these groups.

Discussions held in the thematic groups focused on addressing the voices of Madheshis, Janajatis, Dalits, youths and women and debating highly contested issues such as inclusion and state restructuring. These discussions fed NTTP Forum dialogues as well as the respective structures inside political parties.

Specific workshops targeting youth and the disabled were also conducted successfully. Thousands of youths attended workshops on the constitution conducted in different parts of the country including some in Kathmandu.

Outputs:

Phase II:

- 3 sub-groups on women, Madhes and Janajatis formed and made functional.

Women:

- 14 meetings, including 4 on citizenship issues
- 4 interactions: 1 on fundamental rights on citizenship issues and 3 on electoral options

Madhes:

- 1 workshop on Tharu-Madhes issues
- 2 meetings

Janajatis:

- 5 meetings:
 - Audited all CA committees reports from Janajatis' perspective
- 1 interaction for conceptual clarity on Janajati issues
- 4 workshops:
 - 1 on Dalit/Janajati thematic issues
 - 3 on pros and cons of ethnic federalism

- Workshops targeting youth and disabled were conducted:

Disabled:

- 1 workshop on ensuring rights for people with disabilities in the new constitution.

Youth:

- 2 workshops for young CA members regarding peace and Constitution writing.
- 6,750 youth participated in workshops to improve public consultations on the constitution drafting process.

Phase III:

- Four thematic groups, NTTP Women Group, NTTP Youth Group, NTTP Janajati Group, and NTTP Madhesh Group, continued with higher effectiveness in Phase III.
- A fifth thematic group, NTTP Dalit Group was formed in Phase III.
- More than 1 meeting of each thematic groups (except for the recently formed NTTP Dalit Group) held every month (except during the festive season in October/November).
- Youth leaders, women leaders, Janajati leaders and Madhesi leaders were trained by Prof. Lederach and Andries Odendaal during their visit in October 2014. PRU researchers were a part of this training.
- NTTP Women Group:
 - Key issues discussed included federalism and electoral system with respect to women's representation (Interaction with Nicole Topperwean, UNDP and Prof. Kare Vollen).
 - Recommendation to the State Restructuring Commission on gender sensitive approach.
 - Nepali women's movement (Interaction with the Pakistani team of Aurat Foundation); triangulation of discussions from the CA.
 - Inter-Party Women Alliance and Party Central Working Committees (CWCs) with regard to state restructuring and representation and paths to solution of political deadlocks.
- NTTP Youth Group:
 - Key issues discussed: role of youth politicians in the CA, parliament and the political party structures, strategies on pressurizing the senior party leadership towards common understanding through common efforts, development of strategies for youths in peace-making, role of youths in institutionalizing democratic practices, and probable power sharing arrangements among political parties to resolve standoffs.
 - Interactions were held with civil society for creating a better environment for elections.
 - Training were held on trust-building, reconciliation and peace building.
 - Dialogues were held on technical and political challenges in implementing federalism.
 - The Youth Group members and other key professionals were taken to South Korea for an orientation on the Korean model of economic development with support from TAF Korea and the Korean Development Institute (KDI) School in Korea.
 - The Youth Group were trained in mediation skills twice by German mediators (October 12-14, 2011 and April 4-5, 2013). And they were trained three times on gender responsive training skills for inclusive constitution writing and peace process and gender legislation (February 20-22, 2014, May 9-10, 2014 and January 30, 2015), under a separate TAF-funded arrangement.
- NTTP Madhesh Group:
 - Key issues discussed: participation of Madhesi parties in CA-II election, federalism and delimitation of constituencies, perspective of Madhesis on

State Restructuring Commission's (SRC) report, issues of representation of Madhesi women, analysis on probability and requirement of Madhesi caucus in CA-II.

- NTTP Janajati Group:
 - Key issues discussed: sharing of resources in a federal system, the proportional electoral system (with Presentation by Prof. Kare Vollen), boundaries of federal states and settlement of communities, and role of the indigenous movement in the changing political context.
- NTTP Dalit Group:
 - Key issues discussed: Dalit movement and political context, and the inclusion of Dalit voices in state restructuring
- ***Support the launch of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). (Activity 1.6, Phase III)***

Related to the delay in the formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Commission on Enforced Disappearances (CED), TAF worked with the Committee for Social Justice, a victim-led NGO, to investigate what constitutes transitional justice from the victims' point of view. A participatory action research was conducted to investigate a victim-centric understanding of the transitional justice process as well as the development of a core set of politically acceptable principles regarding transitional justice amongst political parties and conflict stakeholders. The research was conducted with the participation of activists from victims' families and associations using qualitative research methods, with the aim of empowering and mobilizing victims' organizations. Conducting semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and consultations, peer-researchers from the victims groups tried to determine the wider meaning of transitional justice in the Nepali context. The peer researchers were trained in participatory action research, their roles and data collection methods before doing fieldwork. The interview guidelines were developed during the training collectively by the researchers.

Four Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 8-10 participants in each discussion were carried out in Sunsari, Kaski, Dang and Kathmandu respectively. Similarly, three consultations in different regional centers (Dang, Pokhara, Itahari) were held to understand victims' perception of justice and needs. In each region, about 30 participants representing all types of violations (disappearance, killings, torture, injured and displaced), perpetrated by both Maoist and State forces participated in the consultations. Consultations were also held to support local mobilization and initiate a local dialogue within victims' families affiliated with family associations and individual members not associated with victims' groups. The consultations provided families a wider platform to raise their concerns and allowed for the inclusion of context and voices of members who were not included in the limited interviews and FGDs.

In order to gain a better understanding of different perspectives in relation to the transitional justice process and to engage actors on the attitude of victims, a total of thirty (30) interviews were conducted with noted civil society actors in Kathmandu (10 respondents from NGOs and civil society interviewed), with former members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) from different parts of Nepal (12 ex-PLAs interviewed),

and political actors at local and central level (8 political leaders and CA members interviewed).

The results were disseminated widely in both English and Nepali languages especially targeting victims and other key actors including government institutions, political parties, civil society, human rights agencies, lawyers, media and the wider public. The final report of the study consisting of the findings and conclusion was publicly shared by Committee for Social Justice in a public event in Kathmandu amidst concerned stakeholders

Outputs:

- Participatory action research conducted in partnership with a victim-led organization.
- Four FGDs conducted in Sunsari, Kaski, Dang and Kathmandu; three consultations conducted in Dang, Pokhara, Itahari; 30 key informants interviewed in Kathmandu.
- A report incorporating a victim-centric understanding of the transitional justice process was published improving the understanding of a core set of politically acceptable principles regarding transitional justice amongst political parties and conflict stakeholders.

B. Support key transitional peace structures

The following objective focused on supporting key transitional peace structures:

- **Support the launch of key Transitional Peace Structures.** (Objective 2, Phase I & II)

Background on this objective:

The CPA envisioned a number of transitional peace structures as key building blocks of long-term peace in Nepal. These transitional peace structures included a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), Local Peace Committees (LPCs), and a Commission on Disappearances. Despite their importance, the transitional structures are barely functional years after the signing of the CPA. TAF supported the MoPR in expediting the launch of key transitional peace structures and assisting in deploying essential capacity for these new structures at the national and local levels. TAF conducted regional consultation meetings on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission bill where victims of conflict, political parties, and representatives of civil society provided a number of suggestions for amendments on the proposed TRC bill in early 2009. TAF transcribed these consultation workshops and submitted them to the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation (MoPR).

In order to achieve this objective, the following activities were conducted and outputs achieved:

- ***Conduct briefings within the NTTP Forum in cases of deadlock over technical demands facing transitional peace structures.*** (Activity 2.1, Phase I)

The NTTP Forum conducted three briefings on LPCs when the MoPR was not able to move ahead with the implementation of LPCs due to lack of political consensus at the national level. Similarly, the Forum conducted two briefings on the TRC as the MoPR was conducting regional and cluster consultations on the proposed bill. The briefings helped generate a certain degree of consensus among the political parties to move ahead.

Outcomes:

- 3 briefings on LPC
 - 2 briefings on TRC
- ***Provide technical assistance to newly-formed Transitional Peace Structures on relevant conflict issues, as well as on organizational design, management, and oversight.*** (Activity 2.2, Phase I)

In partnership with the MoPR, TAF conducted two regional and four cluster consultation meetings on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission bill in Hetauda, Godawari, Udaypur, Ramechhap, Jumla, and Dang. Victims of conflict, political parties and representatives of civil society suggested amendments on the proposed TRC bill in order to make it more responsive to victims' concerns. Minister, State Minister, Secretary and

other senior officials from the MoPR attended the programs. TAF funded the participation of victims from each district covered under the region of consultation.

TAF hired a local consultant to compile outcomes of the consultation meetings on TRC and to transcribe deliberations of the consultative meetings. The information was used by the MoPR.

In addition, TAF assisted the MoPR in preparing a detailed study of the feedback and suggestions submitted to the Ministry to improve the bill. The study was translated into English for the wider use of the international community interested in and supporting Nepal's transitional justice process through the MoPR. TAF provided the MoPR with basic equipment (computers, recorder, fax machine etc.) to enhance the capacity of the TRC division of the Ministry.

Outcomes:

- 2 regional and 4 cluster consultations on TRC draft bill.
 - Compilation of outcomes of the TRC consultation meetings.
 - Support to MoPR to prepare transcripts of the TRC consultation workshops and synthesize public submissions on the TRC (input from 225 individual respondents was collected), and to translate into English.
 - Provision of basic equipment for the TRC division at MoPR.
- ***Conduct orientation sessions on the terms of reference for Local Peace Committees (LPCs). (Activity 2.3, Phase I)***

Local Peace Committees were formed in 62 districts out of 75 as per the ToR approved by the Cabinet. The MoPR recruited and assigned a secretary for each district LPC. However, with a change in the leadership of the Cabinet and the MoPR, the LPCs could not be fully functional and the term of the contracted secretaries was not extended. This created a situation of limbo.

TAF regularly discussed with the minister at the MoPR, the secretary, and other senior officials to plan how training could be conducted for the LPC coordinators and secretaries, awareness raised about their activities, and steps to make the LPCs more effective.

At the request of the MoPR, TAF hired a local consultant to assist in preparing a detailed LPC manual and translated this into Nepali. The Minister requested TAF to help start a pilot of LPCs in a few Village Development Committees (VDCs). However, due to the fluid leadership situation at the MoPR, TAF could not fully implement its planned activities supporting the LPCs.

Outcomes:

- Discussions with MoPR on trainings for LPC coordinator and secretaries, awareness raising, and rendering LPCs more effective.
- Preparation of a LPC manual and translation into Nepali.
- ***Train MoPR officials on fundamentals of the peace process. (Activity 2.1, Phase II)***

TAF worked with MoPR officials to increase their capacity to support the peace process. Since many MoPR officials did not have any background on the peace process as they were abruptly transferred from one government department to another, there was a constant capacity crunch at the MoPR at various levels. TAF conducted quarterly trainings for MoPR officials on basic conflict management as well as advanced thematic areas such as transitional justice, local level peace-building, and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons. The trainings were targeted at section officers, under-secretaries, and joint secretaries, all of whom have had the day-to-day responsibility of backstopping the peace structures at the operational level.

Output

- 2 trainings held for MoPR officials.
- ***Produce orientation toolkits for LPC Members. (Activity 2.2, Phase II)***

Since the MoPR stopped initial support to LPCs, many districts were left without a basic understanding of the LPCs' powers and responsibilities. Further, lack of funding left many districts unable to circulate copies of the terms of reference. This created widespread misunderstanding of the procedures to establish LPCs or the functions they are to assume once formed. Misunderstandings regarding the functions of the LPCs, in turn, deepened divisions over their composition. Many local party leaders believed that the LPCs would serve as conduits for the disbursement of reconstruction funds, leading to strong competition for LPC seats and influence.

In close consultation with MoPR, TAF produced orientation toolkits for LPC members in all districts. The toolkits contained an LPC Manual, a copy of the Comprehensive Peace Accord, a leaflet describing LPC's official mandate, jurisdictional boundaries and accountabilities and other documents relevant to the functions of LPCs. The toolkits were distributed through the MoPR to the districts as LPCs were formed. Toolkits provided LPC members with the critical information necessary to help them facilitate peace processes at the district level.

Outputs:

- 4000 toolkits were produced, with 500 copies handed over to the MoPR and 45 copies to each district.
 - LPC manual
 - 1 interaction with LPCs and stakeholders to improve toolkit
 - 2 consultations with MoPR to finalize LPC toolkit

- 10 workshops
 - 3 workshops for LPC district coordinators, secretaries, and female members
 - 2 workshops to encourage political parties and Chief District Officers to form LPCs
 - 1 capacity building workshop on conflict transformation for senior MoPR officials
 - 1 peace-building workshop for local leaders
 - 1 cross reference workshop of LPC ToR and toolkit
 - 2 practice sharing workshop and orientation on LPC toolkit
- 3 assessments/analysis of LPCs
- ***Train selected LPC members as facilitators. (Activity 2.3, Phase II)***

The vast majority of LPC members joined LPCs without any prior exposure to formalized conflict mediation. While formal training was not a prerequisite for participation in the LPCs, its absence weakened both the capacity and potentially the legitimacy of LPC members to mediate conflicts in their communities.

Building on the experience of its community mediation program and working through its partner organization, Pragma Management, TAF designed and implemented a training program to develop facilitators in 73 LPCs. Designed as a “train the trainer” exercise, the program incorporated key skill sets required for mediation and dialogue facilitation, as well as components designed to move the dynamics within the LPCs from conflict to cooperation. The training of several facilitators for each LPC served to foster greater cohesion and impartiality within the LPCs, which in turn strengthened the capacity of the LPCs to mediate and transform conflict at the grassroots level.

Outputs:

- 184 LPC members from 73 districts trained
- 15 personnel working in the area of peace and conflict trained as LPC facilitators
- ***Pilot enhanced local level peace-building capacity in selected districts. (Activity 2.4, Phase II)***

TAF partnered with the Rural Women’s Development and Unity Center, The Center for Legal Research and Resource Development, Service to Underprivileged Sectors of Society, and the Forum for Protection of Public Interest to pilot a program in selected districts that built on the staff and resources of TAF’s ongoing community mediation program. TAF developed a curriculum and conducted a six-day training workshop for 30 current community mediation district trainers. These trainers then conducted two rounds of training in 12 districts for LPC members and other local community leaders including political party leaders, civil society, and government officials.

Both rounds of workshops - the training of trainers and district level training - produced agents who carry peace-building skills back to their communities. The workshops included three major components: 1) communication, relationship-building, and collaborative problem-solving skills; 2) reconciliation; and 3) appreciative conflict transformation skills. The orientation taught skills and practices for transforming conflict by focusing first on strengths in the relationship and commonalities. Participants learned and practiced ways to identify and create positive resources for changing perceptions, resolving issues, and making sustainable agreements.

Outputs:

- Conducted two rounds of five-day workshops in twelve project districts on conflict resolution and peace-building for local community leaders including Local Peace Committee members, political party leaders, civil society, and government officials
- ***Pilot village-level peace action groups. (Activity 2.5, Phase II)***

Years of violent polarization in Nepal had fractured and weakened the social infrastructure of daily life. Many people (particularly in the mountain and rural areas) faced daily and continuous threats with little ability protect their basic rights. Unless an effective and sustainable fabric for peace was rebuilt, functional social, economic, and political life could not be restored in these areas. In recognition of this problem, TAF piloted a village level peace-building action by convening, training, and mobilizing local peace action groups in 24 conflict affected villages or municipal wards.

TAF selected 24 VDCs/municipalities in 12 districts with on-going community mediation activities. TAF developed a curriculum and delivered an intensive five-day training of trainers to 30 mediators, 2 from each targeted district and 6 from the center (see Phase II, Activity 2.4). The trainers and local community mediators organized and conducted informal community workshops to introduce local citizens to skills and practices of conflict resolution and appreciative inquiry in all selected VDCs. Participants learned and practiced listening without judgment, skills for clearing up misperceptions, breaking down negative stereotypes, and humanizing notions of “the enemy.” These village level sessions also produced local peace plans. The participants shared their peace plans with the district-level LPCs.

The action plans contained new initiatives to engender peace. Small grants ranging from five to ten thousand rupees were made to invest in these local peace-building initiatives. The grants were administered by implementing partners.

Outputs:

- Conducted a three-day informal community level workshop to introduce local peace action groups to the skills and practices of conflict resolution
- 24 small peace-building grants were administered in 24 program locations of 12 districts. The programs focused on diverse peace-building activities including: the role of LPCs in peace-building in the district, a peace rally, a peace-building

interaction program, a folk song competition on the theme of local level peace, and street drama to disseminate awareness on the importance of peace at local level

- ***Conduct experience-sharing workshops. (Activity 2.6, Phase II)***

Although many LPCs were rendered non-functional by a combination of political and budgetary pressures, a small number of districts – notably Chitwan, Dhankuta, and Rolpa – nonetheless developed active LPCs. In its work to support local-level mediation in Nepal, TAF noted that experience-sharing could provide a highly effective mechanism to transmit practical knowledge and lessons learned. Accordingly, TAF organized experience-sharing workshops at the regional level. Two representatives from 50 districts with LPCs participated in the workshops, which were facilitated by Pragma Management.

Outputs:

- 5 experience-sharing workshops held
 - These workshops had a total of 210 participants: 3 LPC members from each LPC participated (or the Office Secretary for districts that do not have LPCs)
- Prepared LPC practice-sharing report and shared it with the MoPR for distribution

- ***Design and broadcast awareness-raising audio-visual programs. (Activity 2.7, Phase II)***

Due to the uneven rollout of the LPC program, popular awareness regarding the resources offered by the LPCs remained weak. Potential beneficiaries of the LPCs – including women, poor and marginalized populations, and conflict victims – were in many instances unaware of their existence and function. Until the broader public became aware of the LPCs and their mandate, the LPCs would lack a constituency to serve and would not face pressure for accountability and performance.

The terms of reference for the LPCs were revised in response to longstanding calls by political parties for a rebalancing of the LPCs' composition. TAF partnered with Interface Nepal to sponsor awareness and outreach campaigns at the district level, relying primarily upon radio programs and televised Public Service Announcements. The programs provided basic information regarding the new ToR.

Outputs:

- Six half-hour radio episodes produced and aired through 26 radio stations
- Partnered with Interface Nepal to telecast two Public Service Announcements (PSA) through Nepal Television and Kantipur Television for 28 days each

C. Support political party Peace and Research Units (PRUs)

The following objectives focused on supporting key transitional peace structures:

- **Increase the base of support for Peace Units within political parties.** (Objective 3, Phase I)
- **Support the political party Peace and Research Units and expand the peace constituency within each party.** (Objective 3, Phase II)
- **To build the capacity of political party Peace and Research Units to serve as a resource on the peace process.** (Objective 2, Phase III)

In order to achieve these objectives, the following activities were conducted and outputs achieved:

- *Conduct intra-party workshops on the role and capabilities of Peace Units.* (Activity 3.1, Phase I)

TAF re-activated and expanded the Peace Units of the political parties in 2009 (February-September). During that period, two TAF interns, one American and one Nepali, assisted the Peace Unit researchers with training and preparation of a research manual.

The Peace Units organized 11 regional inter-party workshops. The workshops had various resource persons and experts presenting papers on federalism, constitution drafting and the peace process. The objective of these workshops was to widen the peace constituency within each party and help them understand issues related to the peace process and constitution writing.

The Peace Units researchers have been assisting the NTTP member politicians of the respective parties with research, analysis, data collection and other related technical works. The interns also assisted the Peace Units researchers in compiling research data and analyses.

The researchers met almost every week to coordinate research activities and provide regular data and analysis to their respective parties. The Peace Units researchers conducted two field visits to Dang and Chitwan districts. They carried out research on the implementation of the CPA and the emerging political situation at the local level.

Output:

- 11 regional inter-party workshops to widen peace constituency within parties.
- Preparation of a research manual.
- 2 field visits by Peace Unit researchers on implementation of the CPA and local political situation.

- ***Conduct intra-party workshops on the role and capacity of Peace Units. (Activity 3.1, Phase II)***

TAF held a series of workshops to build support for the Peace Unit coordinators both within the party core in Kathmandu and in the districts. TAF supported the Peace Unit coordinators in forging linkages to party members at the district level. Accountability within the political parties – including that of the Peace Unit coordinators – remained highly Kathmandu-centric. In order to expand both the informational flow and enhance the legitimacy of the coordinators, TAF supported Peace Units in holding consultations in four regions outside of Kathmandu.

Output:

- 33 political parties Peace Units workshops with over 3000 participants.

- ***Prepare roster of national experts on the peace process and constitutional issues. (Activity 3.2, Phase II)***

TAF prepared a roster of national experts capable of helping parties develop and organize ideas on technical issues related state restructuring through the new constitution. Given challenges related to the development of a constitutional framework for federalization, TAF employed the services of a constitutional expert, Menaka Guruswamy, to assist the Consortium of Constitutional Experts in producing compromise solutions on the most contentious issues. The Peace Units mobilized related experts from the roster and worked with the thematic sub-groups of NTTP as well as members of the Constitution Drafting Committee of the CA. The experts helped coordinate and inform dialogue sessions between CA members and Peace Units on constitution drafting issues. The experts also helped to train and inform CA members on contentions issues in the constitution so that they can provide professional support to CA members and the CA Secretariat.

Outputs:

- Roster of experts prepared
- 4 policy papers produced (on constitutionality, judiciary, citizenship and right to self determination)

- ***Maintain support to political parties in information analysis, research, and transparency of the negotiation process. (Activity 2.1, Phase III)***

The Peace Research Units (PRUs) of various political parties maintained at NTTP were maintained and strengthened with more technical and infrastructural support. Peace Unit researchers, headquartered at NTTP office, met every week to coordinate research activities and provide data and analysis to their respective parties. The researchers were provided necessary trainings on various research methodologies as required. Also, the updated resources of the NTTP library proved to be beneficial to the researchers in gaining knowledge.

The feedback and analytical reports provided by the researchers enabled the Forum members to quickly grasp fresh issues and contexts. The Peace Unit workshops held in various parts of the country helped to develop a common understanding of complex policy issues and local responses so as to devise mutually agreeable responses and proactive efforts from the center.

Local level cadre and members of political parties also benefitted from the Peace Units workshops allowing them to access and influence the various issues of the peace process and constitution writing process. Civil society interactions held in addition to the workshops gave a closer picture of the NTTP process to the lower rungs of political parties, civil society organizations and activists.

Outputs:

- 53 Peace Units workshops/civil society interactions (over all three phases) conducted in various parts of the country.
 - *Annex E* presents the dates, location and number of participants in each location.
- Guidelines for conducting peace workshops/interactions for mitigating local level conflicts disseminated in each workshop
- 12 field visits by PRU researchers to study local political contexts and changing dynamics
- 46 Research Papers produced by the PRU in Phase III
 - See *Annex D* for a list of these research papers.

Box 1: Example of Peace Unit Workshop in Mahendranagar



The NTTP political party peace units conducted a joint workshop in Mahendranagar on December 04, 2014 on the content of the new constitution. The workshop conducted Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) with 40 participants from four groups (10 participants in each group) representing Undivided Far-West Movement, Kamaiya Mukti Aandolan, Vumihar Aandolan and Tharuhat Struggle Movement respectively. The FGDs focused on major five questions:

1. What were the major demands of the movements in the Far-West?
2. What is the status of the demands and agreements made?
3. What is the major agenda to be incorporated in the constitution?
4. If the constitution cannot incorporate this agenda, what would be the other ways to address them?
 - a. Passing a new law?
 - b. Circular from the government?
 - c. Revising the laws and rules?
5. What would happen if those demands/agendas are not incorporated in the constitution?

In the plenary session, the groups presented their discussions from the FGDs and worked on the recommendations. The voices of the Undivided Far-West Movement and the Tharuhat Struggle Movement were politically opposed regarding the creation of federal state in the far-western region. However, all groups asserted that their demands and agenda were for social harmony, use of resources for regional/community development and recognition and representation in state structures. The recommendations were compiled by the peace unit researchers and shared with the political party representatives in the NTTP Forum as well as with the other members of NTTP.

D. Facilitate debate and engagement on constitutional issues

The following objectives focused on supporting key transitional peace structures:

- **Increase consensus-building mechanisms in the CA.** (Objective 4, Phase II)
- **Improve public consultations on Constitution drafting process.** (Objective 5, Phase II)
- **Increase media engagement on the peace and Constitution drafting process.** (Objective 6, Phase II)

Background on these objectives:

The CA and the peace process have been intrinsically linked at various levels. The CA is the venue where the foundations for lasting peace will be built and the outcomes of the peace process legitimized. In order to strengthen the linkage between the CA process and the Track 1.5 negotiations at the NTTP Forum, TAF concurrently engaged the Constitution Drafting Committee of the CA and the NTTP Forum on key issues of constitutional development and political transition. A key strategy was to link the technical support provided to the CA process to the outcomes of the political negotiations supported by the NTTP Forum.

The legitimacy of the Constitution and the resultant political stability will heavily depend on the sense of ownership and participation that the CA process can imbue in the citizens of Nepal. The most critical constituency to draw into this process is the youth, whose ownership of the constitutional process can drive the legitimacy of the Constitution in the future.

The broader transitional instability prevailing in the country since the inception of the peace process in April 2006 kept the media incidence-driven. The front pages of popular broadsheets filled with sensational political statements, crime reports, unruly protests, political abductions, supply scarcities and political "scoops" of various kinds. On the CA process, while procedural events and political statements managed to get some media attention, content issues are mostly crowded out by more sensational news. Since direct participation in such events as dialogues, consultations, and grassroots civic education is limited, broadening and deepening the discourse on constitutional development through a more engaged media has become critical to generating greater ownership and participation in the CA process.

In order to achieve the above listed objectives, the following activities were conducted and outputs achieved:

- ***Convene roundtables on constitutional development.*** (Activity 4.1, Phase II)

The NTTP Forum facilitators convened a series of roundtables on constitutional development in order to connect the political negotiations at the NTTP Forum to the constitutional debates at the CA. The facilitators then presented the compromise solutions drafted by the expert panel to each political party for further consultation.

Outputs:

- Dozens of small consultative programs on key constitutional issues before the Constituent Assembly of Nepal were conducted.
 - Through its partner, the Nepal Constitution Foundation (NCF), more than 21 compromise constitutional solution papers based on these consultative meetings, seminars and discussion programs were produced.
 - Solution papers were submitted to the Constituent Assembly and the members working on writing the first integrated draft of the Constitution. Compromise solutions were offered to the Constituent Assembly on controversial issues involving selection of forms of government, independence of judiciary, several federalization issues, electoral system, quota system, social inclusion commission, etc.
- ***Organize confidential dialogue sessions among political parties. (Activity 4.2, Phase II)***

TAF conducted informal confidential dialogue sessions to facilitate compromises and break deadlocks on the most contentious provisions of the Constitution. These dialogues were led by the NTP Facilitators. TAF partnered with the CA Secretariat to conduct dialogues with committee members. TAF established an effective coordination mechanism for such informal confidential dialogue: "Promoting Informed Development of the New Constitution in Nepal", supported by the Department of State. Through this mechanism, the relevant CA Secretariat officials accompanied key members of the Constitution Drafting Committee of the CA to a roundtable in a confidential venue to work on a draft text of particular provisions of the Constitution.

Outputs:

- 2 dialogues held (citizenship issues, right to self-determination).
- ***Facilitate youth-focused constitutional dialogues in small towns. (Activity 5.1, Phase II)***

Ideas that have driven constitutional debates so far have come from the older generation who dominate the social and political life of Nepal. The scope for youth to assert their views and aspirations in the CA process has been negligible. To strengthen the voice of the youth in the CA process, particularly in small towns of Nepal where there has been a rapid proliferation of high school educated and under-employed youth, TAF worked with a coalition of partners to conduct a civic education and constitutional consultation program. TAF worked with Women ACT Nepal, Rural Community Development Council, and Samudayik Sarathi Nepal to conduct town hall meetings in 36 communities.

Outputs:

- 135 Town Hall meetings conducted in 36 municipalities, with more than 6,750 youth participants.

- ***Form editors' roundtable on CA affairs. (Activity 6.1, Phase II)***

TAF convened a monthly roundtable for editors of popular print and electronic media outlets, at the invitation of NTTP facilitators, to discuss recent developments of constitutional developments and the broader peace process. Besides increasing the editors' focus on the CA process, these monthly meetings helped to identify key issues, ideas, and events that need further investigation and reporting under Activity 6.2 (Phase II).

Outputs:

- 6 roundtables conducted (publishers, senior journalists, chief reporters, female reporters, editors, feature writers)
- Editors from 7 media outlets shared experience with peace facilitators (KTM post, Nagarik, The Himalayan Times, Karobar daily, Kantipur, Samacharpatra, FNJ)
- Before the CA extension, a countdown for CA term started in daily newspapers
- 2 meetings with media members regarding sensitivity to peace

- ***Provide journalism fellowships for CA affairs correspondents. (Activity 6.2, Phase II)***

TAF partnered with the Center of Investigative Journalism to institute journalism fellowships for investigative reporters working for popular media outlets to enable them to file more in-depth features and investigative pieces on constitutional development and the peace process. Two-thirds of the fellowships went to the print media and the remaining to TV and radio stations.

Output:

- 29 short features and 14 investigative reports published in different print media and radios.

- ***Create interactive radio shows on constitutional issues for remote areas. (Activity 6.3, Phase II)***

For areas with minimal TV and print media access, TAF partnered with Equal Access to produce and air an interactive radio show called "This Week in Constituent Assembly" over six weeks. The program was designed in the form of an interactive radio program between the CA stakeholders, experts and listeners. Program formats included news on the CA, discussion of CA issues with concerned stakeholders and experts, question and answer round between CA members and listeners, information on thematic committees, and people's opinions. The radio show was produced in the six major languages spoken in Nepal.

Output:

- 37 radio programs were produced and broadcasted.

E. Create an independent national peace institute (NTTP-I)

The following objective focused on supporting key transitional peace structures:

- **To transform the NTTP Forum into a sustainable and independent national peace entity.** (Objective 3, Phase III)

In order to achieve this objective, the following activity was conducted and outputs were achieved:

- ***Establish an NTTP national peace institute to ensure NTTP's future sustainability.***
(Activity 3.1, Phase III)

In accordance with consultations with USAID, NTTP facilitators, and Forum members, TAF completed the transformation of the NTTP Forum into an independent national entity with the name: Nepal Transition to Peace Institute (NTTP-I). The institute was registered under the Home Ministry on May 26, 2014 as a professional nonprofit organization to work on peace-building and political processes. To explore different options for registration, TAF conducted a comparative analysis of the registration and legal regimes that would apply in order. Subsequently, a constitution for the functioning of NTTP-I was developed and the management and advisory boards were determined.

TAF assisted NTTP-I in developing various strategies and documents including a financial manual, operations manual, internal governance policy, human resources policy and sustainability strategy through an organization development consultant. TAF also helped NTTP-I in preparing a framework on its monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy. TAF recruited a consultant to strategize archiving documentation and compilation of meeting materials.

Outputs:

- NTTP registered as a national peace institute
- Financial and operations manuals, internal governance and human resource policies
- Sustainability strategy developed
- Framework for monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy developed
- NTTP's management and advisory boards formed, and a professional team established
- Conference on NTTP-I's sustainability and networking held

IV. Issues and Challenges

With the failure of the CA-I to generate a new constitution, Nepal was pushed into an unpredicted and unexpected political deadlock to which some referred as the ‘condition of failed state’. The Interim Constitution did not foresee the failure of the CA and did not provide for the election of a second CA. With the collapse of the first CA, issues of legitimacy and political transition processes were resolved by de facto political power until the election of a new CA in November 2013 restored a more widely accepted institution to legitimize the use of political power. This failure highlighted the need of a non-state, informal and low key process like the NTTP initiative to provide a safety-net when formal mechanisms struggle to cope or fail.

When formal dialogues among the political parties and/or government could not get organized, let alone get conducted, informal and highly confidential dialogues continued at the NTTP Forum. Ultimately, the overemphasis on Nepal prone to being a ‘failed state’ proved to be a false deduction of ‘a composite reality’, as the informal and confidential dialogues led to the election of CA-II, formation of an elected government and resumption of the constitution writing process.

The 2006 People’s Movement turned out to be a historical juncture, which opened up space for political reforms. Inclusive political institutions are required to transform conflict and address people’s need for prosperity. Since conflict, democracy and economic development and deeply intertwined, a major challenge of Nepal’s peace process is to guarantee inclusive political institutions through the drafting of a new constitution. This process of political transition must be accompanied by a peace process that focuses on transitional justice and human rights. However, given the contentious relationship between the parties and the reluctance of elite political groups to give up power and privileges, the process of political transformation in Nepal remains a big challenge. This also raises the possibility of a future conflict, which will depend on the ability of the current processes to enact institutional reforms as well as the ability of the state and civil society to manage emergent conflicts around identity, natural resources and distribution of political power.

Under these circumstances, a challenge for an informal process like NTTP is the inability to control the influx of roles of multiple inputs into the complex political system, leading to difficulty in triangulation of causes and effects. For instance, the discord between political parties caused by multifarious factors and agencies in the broader political landscape, especially on federalism, affect NTTP Forum's ability to push the dialogue process forward and generate a commonly desired outcome. On the other hand, as evidenced by history, the opportunity for NTTP-I to play a key role in facilitating well-informed political dialogue is keenly sensed as the political transition lingers. While it is encouraging that the four major political parties have struck a deal on the content of the constitution, the constitution writing process is not yet complete. In addition, the four-party deal has delayed the project of federalism, which is equivalent to delay in addressing the conflict issues related to identity and management of resources within a new federal structure. The NTTP-I therefore will have to focus on some of these key areas of the peace process and political transition, which are yet to reach a stage of “logical conclusion.”