

10th Quarterly Report



Community Initiatives for Common Understanding

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Milestone:	Milestone 28.1, “Documentation of Project Progress on in Year 3 on Quarterly Basis” 28.1.1 USAID’s receipt of four quarterly progress reports per year – due within 30 days of the last day of each reporting quarter <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pages: 5-8• Content: political/security context update, challenges, accomplishments v. milestones comparison, lessons learned, success stories, next quarter plan, performance indicator data• Annex: list of Milestone reports and dates delivered to USAID each quarter, list – and photos – of equipment purchased each quarter, M&E indicator data updated for each quarter

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 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 VDCs in each district.

2. Context Update

The context during the reporting period has been dominated by the formation of the new government in October 2015, the *Terai* unrest, border blockade, commodities (including fuel, cooking gas, and medications) shortages, and violent protest in parts of the central *Terai* and aggressive action of security forces resulting in the killing of protestors. *Madesh*-based political parties continued strikes and protests – now exceeding more than 100 days – in the *Terai*. The protesting parties forwarded an 11 point demand as a precondition to negotiate with the State. Several rounds of dialogue between the government and protesting parties have repeatedly heeded no tangible results. The major demands remain defining the provincial demarcation (and process), allowing for electoral constituencies on the basis of population, and proportional representation in the state mechanism. *Madeshi morcha* leaders allege that the current federal demarcation has been devised in a way that supports the *Pahadi* communities to rule over the *Madheshi*. The ruling government views the *Madesh* movement as an anti-national movement. Amid violent protests over the country’s new Constitution, KP Sharma Oli was elected as the new Prime Minister of Nepal defeating incumbent Sushil Koirala in a contest which became necessary after parties failed to forge a consensus.

Increasing mistrust among *Madheshi* and *Pahadi* communities has been observed by the project but it has not yet manifested itself in a way that could create communal violent conflict at present. However, if the strike (and contributing factors) prolongs, communal conflicts may be likely in the districts. This has also been fuelled by the *Madheshi* leaders citing the example of the Surkhet protests by the Undivided Far West movement, which was quickly addressed by the state; yet *Madheshi* demands have not been met despite large-scale protests. Over the reporting period, local *Madheshi* people's participation in the protests has decreased, but tremendous sympathy for the *Madesh* political agenda remains on the part of that group.

The so called “unofficial” border blockade has affected the lives of people across the country. Prices have increased and the black market of petroleum products is flourishing. Some district-level sources allege that some portion of the black market profits are going into the pockets of the protesters. This also appears to be supported by smugglers seemingly running their black market business without hindrance.

This national crisis is reflected in the project working districts and VDCs with the shortage of essential goods, increasing communal divisions, political polarization, and shrinking business and development activities. There was limited movement in Sunsari district due to protest; Laukahi VDC was heavily affected by protest compared to the other two working VDCs there. Vehicular movement and economic activities in Banke and Bardiya were reported as normal with no organized protest. Seven VDCs with significant *Tharu* population in Kailali were affected due to heavy patrolling of security forces and fear after August's Tikapur incident. In Kailali, long-distance buses continue to run with police escorts; people's movement and business activities have slowly resumed. Due to protest and large-scale political disturbance, CICU activities have been partially affected with a few Milestone activities postponed and delayed, as detailed below. As a mitigation measure VDC-level activities are being implemented in close consultation with the local community, local political parties and authorities.

3. Accomplishments

This progress report covers the tenth quarter (Q10) of the CICU project. During this period, progress was made towards achieving Milestone 5, 13, 14, 15 and 16. Progress reported in Milestone 10 and 24 in the previous quarter (Q9) have not advanced further in this quarter, largely due to the festivals and the *Terai* unrest.

Work in Progress

a) Milestone 5 (Trust and more constructive interaction/dialogue established between hard-to-reach youth and other at-risk groups and individuals), Output 5.1.2 USAID receipt of video documentary/documentaries:

A longer version of the youth video documentary (approximately 22 minutes) and a shorter version (approximately five minutes) are finalized. The five district level video documentaries will be finalized by the end of December 2015. All video documentaries will be reproduced for

dissemination purposes with a short summary after the finalization of the five district-level video documentaries.

b) Milestone 13, 14 and 15 (RDFs take lead in implementing action plans to address communities' needs to prevent conflict in 15 communities)

For Milestones 13, 14 and 15, output 13.1.1, 14.1.1 and 15.1.1 security needs were previously identified in quarter 5 and Action Plans developed for each VDC as a strategy to address those needs. In the reporting quarter a total of 25 activities from the RDF Action Plan were implemented, which were largely related to dialogue to enhance community reconciliation and social harmony and advocacy against gender-based violence. In the reporting quarter, 32 activities from RDF Action Plans were scheduled, but only 19 activities were implemented due to limited movement of community members and project staff amid unrest and strikes. Relatively fewer activities were planned in the Q10 from Action Plans, due to festivals and continuous unrest in the Terai. Sunsari, Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet and Kailali have accomplished 2, 3, 5, 7 and 2 Action Plan activities respectively and 6, 7 and 6 activities were conducted in September, October and November respectively. However, six supplemental activities were conducted by RDFs to maintain social and communal harmony amid Terai unrest. Please see detail provided below in the 'Success stories' section.

c) Milestone 16 (Informal justice mechanisms have been identified in each VDC), Output 16.3 Field research conducted in all districts, data analysed and validated to produce draft Justice Mapping Report

Under Milestone 16, output 16.3, field research was conducted in all five working districts during the reporting quarter. The teams each comprised of one independent researcher and one Saferworld staff member. The qualitative data required for the research, based on the methodology, was collected with the use of research tools, including focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs) and actor mapping. At least four FGDs and 10 KIIs were conducted in each district. Initial district-wide finding reports have been prepared. Based on the initial findings and recommendations, validation workshops were conducted in Banke, Bardiya, and Surkhet. Sunsari and Kailali validation workshops will be conducted in December 2015; these had to be postponed during the reporting quarter due to limited staff movement as a result of protests and the festival season.

4. Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Challenges

Continuous protests and strikes called by *Tharuhat/Tharuwan* and *Madesh*-based political parties have had a moderate to high impact on CICU working districts of Sunsari, Banke, Bardiya and Kailali. Implementation of CICU activities have been partially affected due to the psychological impact on individuals due to shortages of essential goods, protest and national political crisis on the community people, as well concerns around safety and security. RDF action plan activities

have been implemented across the working districts but the large-scale activities were avoided due to security concerns. No activities were conducted in Laukahi VDC, Sunsari in the reporting period due to higher than average political tensions, as well as requests from local political leaders. The context has also affected other Milestone activities such as the validation workshop for the justice mapping research (detailed in the section above), Milestone 10 and 11 activities on psychosocial support (resuming in Quarter 11), and the development of RDF's advocacy plan on Milestone 17 (postponed until Quarter 11).

Lessons Learnt

Despite an unfavourable operating context in the working districts due to the blockade and *Terai* unrest, the majority of the activities were implemented. The project has applied the principles of conflict sensitivity since its inception, by inclusively engaging all relevant stakeholders in the planning process, collaboration with authorities and communities, promoting inclusivity in terms of RDF and Youth Group formation, and a strong consultative RDF Action Plan development process, which has increased ownership and acceptance by community level stakeholders. As a result, more than 3,600 community people from all caste/ethnic groups and political affiliations participated in nine supplemental social and communal harmony activities conducted in Sunsari, Banke, Bardiya and Kailali during the reporting quarter.

Similarly, reputation, capacity, and well-connected implementing sub-partners enable the project to carry forward planned activities amid the limited operational context. While the country, including project communities and stakeholders, have been increasingly polarized along communal and political lines, the field-level project staff members have maintained neutrality and enhanced coordination with all different groups in the VDCs/districts, which has helped to attract targeted beneficiaries for the activities.

5. Success Stories

While the ongoing strike and unrest has exceeded 100 days, the scheduled Action Plans and supplemental project activities also have continued in Sunsari, Banke, Bardiya and Kailali without much interruption. Surkhet has not been disturbed by *Terai* unrest, thus Action Plan activities continued as planned. Conflict and gender sensitivity in planning and implementation has enabled the project to operate fairly successfully in the difficult context. The project continues to apply a people-to-people approach, collaboration, participation, and inclusion in its processes, which has enhanced visibility, acceptance, and leverage in the working districts. Despite the limited operational space and not all planned activities being implemented, more than 19 RDF Action Plan activities (as compared to 32 planned) and more than 19 Youth Group and Milestone activities were conducted over the period of the last three months (with 32 planned). Nine supplemental activities were jointly conducted by RDFs and YGs. These supplemental activities were cultural events and multi-stakeholder dialogues to maintain harmony and peace amid unrest. The cultural events consisted of the performance of songs and dances by community people and speeches by guests (CSO, political party representative and government authorities). They attracted representatives of all groups in the communities, including those protesting and those against the protest.

Major Achievements in the reporting period

- CICU has conducted a series of dialogues and provided capacity building support to Amaha Community Forestry User Group (CFUG) in Bharaul VDC, Sunsari, which was not functioning properly. As a result of project support, Amaha CFUG has prepared an audit report and conducted annual general meeting (AGM) on 10 October. They have implemented their action plan in a systematic manner and are regularly conducting monthly meetings. An annual progress report was disseminated to CFUG members during their AGM. They now regularly coordinate with the District Forest Officer (DFO) and Chief District Officer (CDO) and Police office. Amaha CFUG has prepared a work plan in consultation with members and conducted their AGM in a democratic way among the members for the first time in the 13 years since its establishment.
- A number of activities were conducted to mark the “16 Days Activism Against Gender Based Violence” the last week of November in collaboration with VDCs and CSOs across all CICU working districts. Despite on-going unrest in the *Terai*, more than 1,000 community women and men participated in mass rallies, interaction programs and street drama in Banke, Bardiya and Surkhet. The project has planned activities on the 16 days across Sunsari and Kailali in the first week of December.
- Binauna VDC, Banke was padlocked by Tharuhat/Tharuwan cadres as part of their protest. The RDF, in collaboration with the Local Peace Committee, successfully conducted dialogue with dissident groups to reopen the VDC office to resume services after almost a month from the first week of October 2015.
- RDF, Hariharpur, Surkhet has advocated with the Hariharpur VDC and the local community to prepare a policy and programme to minimize gambling and alcohol abuse, which the VDC implemented as of October 2015.
- The psychosocial counselling service in Mohammadpur VDC, Bardiyahas supported eight conflict victims to overcome their respective psychosocial problems in Mohammadpur VDC over the course of the reporting period.
- A mock council workshop was conducted in Kailali, Banke, Bardiya and Surkhet in order to orient youth on the 14 step planning process, prepare them to engage constructively in the upcoming planning process, prepare the groups to tap into the VDC block grant for their Action Plans, and to build relationships with VDC and DDC in view of group’s sustainability. The workshops were facilitated by their respective DDC Officer. A Sunsari mock council is planned in December 2015.
- The project has conducted conflict analyses in Bardiya and Sunsari with selected district stakeholders including youth, CSOs representatives, and political party representatives. The aim of each conflict analysis is to better understand conflict dynamics in and around the ongoing *Terai* unrest at VDC and district levels through cause and effect analysis, actor mapping,

dividers and connectors analysis, and brainstorming on potential ways forward. The conflict analyses will help to better inform the project's future interventions through a conflict sensitive approach and may shed some light on larger potential conflict resolution mechanisms to be employed by stakeholders more broadly. Conflict analysis will be continued in other districts in Quarter 11.

- A total of nine supplemental activities to promote social and communal harmony were conducted in Quarter 10, which attracted more than 3,600 community members in Sunsari, Banke, Bardiya and Kailali.

6. Quarterly Work Plan

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

7. Monitoring & Evaluation Performance

In this quarter Saferworld reported PPR (Performance Plan and Report) to USAID. The reported PPRs included both standard and custom indicators. As agreed on the DQA conducted by USAID in August 2015, Saferworld also reported the additional standard indicator 1.6.1-14, 1.1.1-4, and 1.1.1-2 in the PPR. In addition to the standard indicator, Saferworld agreed and reported on the following custom indicators in the PPR:

- Number of vulnerable and at risk youths engaged in livelihood activities.
- Number of conflicting issues identified in the working VDCs with an objective of addressing those conflicts.
- Number of resolved conflicts which were identified in the working VDCs.

This quarterly report includes, for the first time, an update on the indicators 1.6.1-14, 1.1.1-4, and 1.1.1-2, thus the update is based on the PPR but not on the previous Quarter's update. In addition to above-mentioned three new indicators, the updates on the remaining indicators are based on the last Quarter's report.

8. List of Annexes

The Annexes included here are the following:

- A) List of Milestone reports and dates delivered to USAID each quarter.
- B) List and photos of equipment purchased each quarter.
- C) M&E indicator data updated for each quarter.
- D) Quarterly Work Plan – Status Update and Upcoming Quarter.

Annex A: List of Milestone reports and dates delivered to USAID each quarter

No Milestone reports were submitted during the 10th quarter.

Annex B: List-and photos-of equipment purchased each quarter

In the reporting quarter no equipment was purchased for the project.

Annex C: M&E indicator data updated for each quarter

M&E indicator update for the reporting quarter is as below:

Number of local women participating in a substantive role or position in a peace building process supported with USG assistant (1.6-6, Standard)

The project has continued to work with the same women members from RDFs and YGs who have played a substantive role in peacebuilding processes this quarter, thus there is no change in the reporting quarter.

Number of new groups or initiatives created through USG funding, dedicated to resolving the conflict or the drivers of the conflict (1.6.1-12, Standard)

In the reporting period the project continued to work with 45 groups created in 2014 and 2015.

Number of Media stories disseminated with USG support to facilitate the advancement of reconciliation or peace process. (1.6.1-14: Standard)

Reconciliation and Development Forums (RDFs) of Bardiya district had developed their action plan to minimize domestic violence, gender-based violence, and maintain social harmony at community level. To address these issues they collaborated with a local radio station, named Gurubaba FM of Bardiya, to air the program. A total of 10 episodes have been aired from September to November 2015.

Number of USG-funded events, trainings, or activities designed to build support for peace or reconciliation on a mass scale. (1.6.2-12, Standard)

In the reporting quarter a total of 47 different events (i.e. mass scale activities, training, and interactions) have been organized for peace, social harmony, and awareness and advocacy under USG funds. Out of 47 different activities; 17 were mass scale activities (including rallies, 16 days campaign against domestic violence, teej special, child marriage, etc.); eight were interaction and dialogue; 20 were training and two were meetings with stakeholders. These activities were designed to build capacity for peace and reconciliation at the community level. These activities were implemented by Reconciliation and Development Forums and Youth Groups based on local needs.

Number of people participating in USG-supported events, trainings, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation. (1.6.2-14, Standard)

In this quarter, a total of 3,130 people participated in different USG supported events i.e. mass scale activities, training and interactions at community level. Out of the total participants 55% were female and 45% were male. Similarly, as per the caste and ethnicity the highest percentages (35%) were from Janajati communities, followed by Chhetries at 29% and 16% from the Brahmin community. The Dalit communities' participation (12% from Dalit, Pahadi and Madheshi) is

proportionately satisfactory and 7% Madheshi and Muslim participated in various events.

Number of people from marginalized groups participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported with USG assistance (1.1.1-4)

In the PPR, the number of people from marginalized groups participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported with USG assistance was 230. There is no additional number increased in the reporting quarter.

Number (and per cent) of successfully mediated local level disputes among women, youth or people from marginalized groups as a result of USG assistance (1.1.1-2)

No additional cases mediated in the reporting quarter.

Annex D: Quarterly Work Plan

A. Milestone implementation status update of 10th Quarter

Milestone	Progress update on Outputs/Activities Planned for reporting Quarter (September – November 2015)	Planned Timeline	Status (Completed/ On track /Not completed / Not on track)
5. Trust and more constructive interaction/dialogue established between hard-to-reach youth and other at-risk groups and individuals	5.1.2 USAID’s receipt of video documentary/documentaries	Q7/8	On-going
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, draft report prepared
	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	Completed, draft report prepared
	10.3 Service providers identified meet with individuals to provide psychosocial support	Q8	On-going

13, 14 and 15. RDFs take lead in implementing action plans to address communities' needs to prevent conflict in 5 communities	13.1.1, 14.1.1 and 15.1.1 Phase I – Group A (5 communities) security needs identified and discussed in participatory manner, and Community Action Plans developed	Q8, Q10, Q11	Completed
	13.1.2, 14.1.2 and 15.1.2 USAID's receipt of Action Plans for each group A,B, C community, including how the community security needs assessment is addressed, target population, and oversight methods for the plans' successful implementation	Q8, Q10, Q11	On-going
16. Informal justice mechanism have been identified in each VDC	16.1 Methodology for informal justice mapping update has been refined	Q8	Completed
	16.2 capacity building for at least 10 researchers conducted	Q8	Completed
	16.3 Field research conducted in all districts, data analyzed and validated to produce draft justice Mapping report	Q8	Field research completed, initial district wise report prepared, validation conducted in three districts
17. RDFs develop Advocacy Plans and are trained via regular policy- oriented advocacy meetings (linked to training provided under Result 2)	17.1 RDFs trained and Advocacy Plans developed with each of the 15 RDFs	Q9	Delayed, planned in Q11
25. Partners technical and organization capacity needs built for year 3	25.1 CWIN and INSEC's capacity needs for year 3 addressed	Q9	Delayed, will be completed in Q11

B. Work Plan of 11th Quarter

Milestone	Output/Activities Planned for 11 th Quarter (December 2015 – February 2016)	Planned Timeline	Status (Completed / On track / Not completed / Not on
5. Trust and more constructive interaction/dialogue established between hard-to-reach youth and other at-risk groups and individuals	5.1.2 USAID's receipt of video documentary/ies 5.1.3 USAID's receipt of video documentary report	Q7/8	On track, will be completed in Q11
10. Psycho-social support mechanism is functional and selected actors have capacity to provide psycho-social support in 15 VDCs	10.3 Service providers identified meet with individuals to provide psychosocial support	Q8	On track, will be completed in Q11
16. Informal justice mechanism have been identified in each VDC	16.3 Field research conducted in all districts, data analysed and validated to produce draft justice Mapping report	Q8	On track, will be completed in Q11
17. RDFs develop Advocacy Plans and are trained via regular policy- oriented advocacy meetings (linked to training provided under Result 2)	17.1 RDFs trained and Advocacy Plans developed with each of the 15 RDFs	Q9	Delayed, planned in Q11
25. Partners technical and organization capacity needs built for year 3	25.1 CWIN and INSEC's capacity needs for year 3 addressed	Q9	On track, will be completed in Q11