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**SAJHEDARI BIKAAS PROGRAM**

Rapid Conflict Assessment:

A Snapshot of Conflicts, Tensions and Insecurity in  
Eight Selected Districts in Nepal's Far West and Mid-West Regions

Produced by Nepal Participatory Action Network (NEPAN)

(Contract No: AID-367-C-13-00003)

Submitted to

THE DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE OFFICE  
THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)  
NEPAL MISSION

Maharajgunj, Kathmandu, Nepal

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July 17, 2013

*This report was produced and converted to pdf format using Microsoft Word 2010. The images included in the report are jpg files.*



# Rapid Conflict Assessment

A snapshot of conflicts, tensions and insecurity in eight selected districts in Nepal's Far West and Mid-West regions

## Table of contents

Introduction.....	1
Executive summary.....	2
Contextual background.....	6
Kailali district.....	7
Kanchanpur district.....	13
Surkhet district.....	18
Banke district.....	23
Bardiya district.....	28
Dang district.....	32
Salyan district.....	38
Rolpa district.....	44
Recommendations.....	49
List of acronyms.....	51
Bibliography.....	52
About Saferworld.....	52
Annex A	
Annex B	

## Introduction

**This report summarises key findings from a rapid conflict assessment that was carried out by Saferworld between mid-February and mid-March 2013 in the framework of the Sajhedari Bikaas project.<sup>1</sup>**

The project, which is carried out by Pact and funded by USAID, aims to improve the ability of targeted communities in six districts in the Far West and Mid-West regions of Nepal to direct local development. It will do this by establishing and improving an enabling environment for community development; improving communities' ability to access resources for development; improving communities' ability to effectively implement inclusive development projects; and increasing the ability of existing and new government units to function effectively.

Existing, but also emerging conflicts are, or have the potential to become an obstacle to community development, inclusive and accountable decision-making, and improved governance. As the project will specifically promote community mediation mechanisms to reduce or prevent conflicts, it was seen as necessary to get an accurate overview of the current conflict situation in the potential target districts.

This rapid assessment has a dual purpose:

<sup>1</sup> This report is the result of a rapid conflict assessment carried out in February/March 2013 in eight districts of Nepal by Saferworld. The research was conceptualised by Saferworld's Nepal Programme team, with support from Sophie Hodgson. Field research was carried out by Roshan L. Chitrakar, Prawin Limbu, Anuj Tiwari, Suniti Bhattachan, Mohit Pant, Tripti Rana, Sophie Hodgson, Evelyn Vancollie, Chiran Jung Thapa and Ojaswi Shah, who also coordinated the field research and analysis. The report was written by Ojaswi Shah, Evelyn Vancollie and Chiran Jung Thapa, with inputs from Sophie Hodgson and Julie Brethfeld. The research and report were carried out within the framework of the Sajhedari Bikaas project, which is led by Pact and funded by USAID. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the conceptualisation, data collection, analysis and write-up of the report. Special thanks go to all the participants in the group discussions (GDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs), without whom this report would not have been possible, and to the local coordinators in the districts who organized the KIIs and GDs.

a) to begin to identify and provide an initial snapshot on key issues around existing or potential tensions, including conflict and security issues at the district and Village Development Committee (VDC) level, which will inform the further design and implementation of the project;<sup>2</sup> and

b) to support an evidence-based approach to the selection of target districts and VDCs.<sup>3</sup>

The rapid conflict assessment was carried out in eight districts in the Mid and Far West of Nepal that could be potential target districts for the Sajhedari Bikaas project: Kailali and Kanchanpur (Far West); Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet, Dang, Salyan and Rolpa (Mid-West). To provide the deeper analysis necessary to understand potential conflict factors and dynamics, the assessment used qualitative research methods rooted in a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach, in addition to an initial phase of desk research. In total, 86 key informant interviews (KIIs) were carried out with representatives from the administration, security and justice service providers, civil society and others well placed to comment on conflict and security dynamics, and 15 group discussions (GDs) were held with representatives from local communities, including marginalised groups, women, youth and ex-combatants, mainly at the district and regional level. Six KIIs were carried out in Kathmandu in order to uncover initial and complementary information on the context and dynamics between the central and district/regional level (see methodology section in the annex). As the findings are based on qualitative research, they reflect the perceptions and opinions of those consulted; many of the findings would benefit from more in-depth analysis, as the assessment was only able to touch upon them rather than exploring these issues in detail. Field research took place from 21 February to 2 March 2013; this coincided with discussions around the appointment of the Chief Justice to lead the government, which led to protests in different parts of the country, including in some of the research districts.

In line with the issues the Sajhedari Bikaas project is intended to address (that is, communal conflicts that could potentially have larger implications on peace and stability at the regional/national level), and in consultation with Pact, this rapid conflict assessment provides an overview of the following conflict-related issues:

- simmering dissatisfaction and tensions that could potentially result in protests and violent conflict;
- insecurity and local-level crime, as this can be a result of instability/poor governance and have destabilising effects; and
- more pronounced conflicts around political issues (including war-related grievances), identity-based issues or resources, and others that informants brought to our attention.

The report starts with an executive summary that outlines key findings from the districts, highlighting the main commonalities and differences between the locations researched. This is followed by a chapter that provides background information to the context in which the assessment took place. The district chapters, which all follow the same structure, present findings on key issues of tensions, conflict and insecurity encountered. They focus specifically on conflicts and tensions related to political and identity-based issues; crime and insecurity, including activities of armed groups; resource-based issues; and any other emerging issues that were mentioned during the assessment. Within those categories of conflicts and tensions, they examine causes, actors and existing or potential responses. The report concludes with some initial recommendations for Pact on key issues and priorities to consider in the upcoming project phases. A list of acronyms can be found at the end of the draft report. The methodology, final versions of tools and guiding questions used, a list outlining KIIs and GDs, a summary comparison of districts and VDCs by conflict category, and lists of surveillance data on armed violence in target districts can be found in Annex A, which is complemented by a matrix showing projects carried out by key INGOs and NGOs in the eight target districts (Annex B).

## Executive summary

**This report provides a snapshot of key issues around existing or potential tensions, including conflict and security issues, in eight selected districts in the Far and Mid-West: in Kailali, Kanchanpur, Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet, Dang, Salyan and Rolpa, looking at both the district and, as far as possible, VDC**

<sup>2</sup> Due to the short timeframe of 5 weeks, the assessment does not provide a fully comprehensive and in-depth analysis of existing and emerging/potential conflicts.

<sup>3</sup> This selection process will be further informed by two other rapid assessments that are going to be carried out in parallel to the rapid conflict assessment: one on governance, the other one on community development. By overlaying the findings from the three assessments, Pact will get a picture of the diverse situation in the respective districts and VDCs that will support analysis for a well-informed and rational decision on target districts and VDCs. For further details on the selection process and criteria, please see the Data Analysis and Selection Criteria document provided by Pact.

**level. It focuses specifically on conflicts and tensions related to political and identity-based issues; crime and insecurity, including activities of armed groups; resource-based issues; and any other emerging issues that were mentioned during the assessment.**

The rapid conflict assessment findings are based on qualitative research, and reflect perceptions of key informants and participants in group discussions carried out in late February and early March 2013; the report does not provide a detailed analysis of these findings. Many of them would benefit from more in-depth analysis, as the assessment was only able to touch upon them rather than exploring them in detail. Some of the problems highlighted in this report are specific to certain districts, while others are more generally shared. The biggest difference encountered was between Kanchanpur and Kailali in the Far West, where the level of tension seems to be higher than in the other districts, and Mid-Western districts such as Rolpa and Salyan, where the situation was described as relatively quiet.

In comparison to the conflict era, the prevalent general perception was that the security situation had improved in the above-mentioned districts. It was apparent that public trust in and expectations of political actors have waned to a great extent following the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. High levels of frustration with political actors and the wider political system were reflected in the sentiments of the informants. The divisive issue of federalism, which had brought about fissures in the ethnic fabric of the two regions during April-June 2012, remains latent and unaddressed in most districts. Although they may have subsided momentarily, the impending election is viewed by many as an event that could potentially reignite these tensions, particularly in Far Western districts such as Kailali and Kanchanpur. Additionally, other insecurities continue to afflict all districts. Cases of domestic violence and rape were widely reported across both regions. An increase in substance abuse, especially amongst male youth, was another major problem reported by informants. The trend of migration from the hills is increasing in some Terai districts and reportedly has the potential to cause tension/conflict in the future if not managed properly by the local administration. A tendency to resolve disputes within communities was also mentioned by informants in some Mid-West districts, and this was attributed to a combination of lack of access to formal security and justice providers and unawareness of legal policies on those issues, but also to an increase in village-level paralegal/community mediation programmes implemented by NGOs and INGOs.

## **Key findings**

### **Discrepancy in perceptions of the overall conflict and security situation between government stakeholders and community members**

Across all districts, most informants felt that the situation, especially related to security, had improved since the end of the Maoist conflict. However, in some districts perceptions differed between community and civil society members, who often had considerable concerns and pointed out security challenges, and security providers and district level authorities, who often provided a more positive analysis of the security and justice scenario within their district. In some instances, media reports also contradicted the statements of security providers on how good the situation was; this was particularly evident in Surkhet and Bardiya. Grievances resulting from the conflict still exist.

### **People display resignation over current political leaders**

In Nepal politics is part of everyday life, and many people engage in discussions on political issues. While there is generally a high awareness of political issues, most people have lost hope in political actors and the political system because of on-going scandals, corruption and lack of progress. The assessment findings do not indicate that this resignation is about to lead to major protest involving the majority of people; however, some of the ex-combatants who were interviewed, particularly in Kailali, Kanchanpur and Salyan, displayed higher levels of frustration.

### **Political tensions affect everyday life and overall development**

Where political tensions exist, they very often have a direct impact on people's everyday life and on broader development. The 31-day *bandah* (shutdown or strike) in Kailali and Kanchanpur in April-June 2012 brought life to a halt, and in more remote places even threatened food supply and provision of basic services, including health services. Even Bardiya and Dang were affected during this particular movement, as there is a large Tharu population within these districts. In Surkhet and Dang, frequent protests by student wings of political parties disrupt teaching at Mid-Western University in Surkhet and Sanskrit University in Dang and thus have a negative impact on the quality of education.

### **Political party interference is seen as a key factor driving insecurity and tensions**

Key informants and community informants from all districts researched felt that the protection of criminals by political actors and political interference in police investigations were major contributors to increased insecurity and tensions. Political interference was seen as promoting impunity and a key obstacle to improved security provision. This challenge is widely recognised, even by the political parties themselves; in one district, Dang, they have committed themselves not to interfere in police work.

**While identity-based tensions are dormant, people are more aware of identity issues**

Between April and June 2012, during the last weeks of the Constituent Assembly's tenure and after its immediate dissolution, heated discussions took place on whether a new federal system should have states based on single or multiple ethnic identities. In this period identity-based tensions escalated dramatically. Protests took place in many districts across the country; districts in the Far West were among the ones most affected, with 31 days of *bandah* in Kailali and Kanchanpur. While tensions have since gone down, fears that one's own group could be disadvantaged by other identity-based groups have become deeply ingrained in some districts, to a level where even children are affected. People are wary that tensions and violence could flare up if elections are confirmed and, linked to this, if discussions around federalism are reinitiated. Another contentious issue is religion, with informants voicing mutual resentment and prejudice between Hindus and Muslims, particularly in Dang, and raising concerns about Christian proselytisation among Hindus. Discrimination between and within castes continues to exist. It is also noticeable that people are more aware of identity issues, and that differences between 'us' and 'them' play out not only along ethnic, religious or caste divisions, but also along regional/geographic and linguistic lines.

**Crime is perceived as on the rise**

There is a perception in most districts that crime is on the rise. Types of crime include trafficking of drugs, arms, women and wood; robbery, looting and theft; extortion; and crimes related to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence (DV). Crimes such as gang rape, drug trafficking, robbery and theft were perceived to have increased in the past two years by many informants in all the districts researched. Informants, including security providers, local authorities, civil society and community members particularly mentioned male youth and criminal groups as primarily involved in illegal activities, but this seemed to be a vague notion rather than certainty. Alcohol abuse was frequently mentioned as contributing to tensions and violence, including to SGBV, VAW and DV. Unemployment and substance abuse by youth is also reportedly fuelling crimes in these districts. Security providers also linked easy access to SIM cards to the increase in crime, as this allows mobile phones to be used anonymously for extortion or to coordinate crime.

**Sexual and gender-based violence, violence against women and domestic violence are rampant**

Across all districts, SGBV, especially VAW and DV, was identified as a major security risk for women and girls. There was a perception that this type of crime is on the rise and that cases are getting more violent and extreme, including rape and gang rape. Women and girls across all age groups are targeted. The fear of becoming a victim of this type of crime results in women and girls not going out alone, especially after dark, which has a significant impact on their freedom and ability to live an independent life. However, in some districts such as Kailali and Kanchanpur, some informants from security agencies and civil society mentioned that the increased numbers could be a result of increased reporting of such crimes. They attributed the increased reporting to greater awareness of laws related to SGBV and DV as a result of community-based mechanisms such as para-legal committees (PLCs) and women's groups who are actively working on these issues.

**Border-specific tensions**

In districts bordering India, such as Kailali, Kanchanpur, Banke, Bardiya and Dang, informants and community members mentioned a number of forms of border-related insecurity and tension. They include contraband trafficking of drugs, wood, women, etc., and the perception that criminals commit a crime on one side of the border and then cross the border to seek shelter. Communities which were closer to the Indian border than to Nepali infrastructure and service providers were mentioned as locations that faced bigger security risks. Tensions were also related to a perception that India encroaches on Nepali territory, thus reducing the availability of arable land for communities living in these border areas.

**Resource-based tensions**

Disputes related to land were among the key issues informants mentioned concerning resource-based tensions. The Kamaiyas (former bonded labourers) are not content with the relief package provided by the government, while landless people (Sukumbasis and people displaced due to natural disasters such as floods and landslides) who have not yet received land from the government are angry about the delay. In addition, there are tensions between the Kamaiyas and other community members who consider themselves as 'natives' on one side, and landless people who are considered as outsiders and whose claims on parcels of land are questioned by the locals on the other. These issues are more prevalent in Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur. Amongst these districts, Bardiya is salient because almost half of the households registered in that district claim to be landless.

In certain districts, water scarcity has forced residents to leave their homes. Salyan residents, for instance, are migrating to neighbouring districts such as Dang and Banke because of lack of water and electricity; more affluent Salyan residents are moving to Kathmandu. In some districts, dissatisfaction with the distribution of electricity (in Rolpa) or with the management of hydropower plants (in Surkhet) has become a major bone of

contention. Involvement of political actors has the potential to further aggravate tensions. Tensions over ownership and usage of community forests were palpable in most of the districts. Although this has not led to any violent clashes, disputes are quite frequent. Concerns over the hauling of sand from Nepali rivers across to the Indian side were frequently brought up by various community members and key informants in Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur.

### **Migration is emerging as a key challenge**

Labour migration has a huge impact – both positive and negative. While some informants mentioned the benefits of remittances, a majority pointed to negative aspects of migration. These included what is seen as a lack of sustainable investment of remittances, but more particularly the negative socio-cultural consequences of migration, including brain drain, extra-marital affairs, alcohol abuse and gambling. It is also resulting in increased problems in families. For example, while migrants are abroad, their spouses in Nepal elope with lovers. Other problems include divorce and abortion. Cases of broken families due to extra-marital affairs have become a common feature of society, which is heavily affecting children.

### **Economic challenges are increasing risk of tensions and insecurity**

Poverty and unemployment constitute big challenges that can increase the risk of tensions and insecurity. In the absence of employment opportunities, there is a great propensity amongst youth to seek job opportunities abroad. Cases of youth aspirants duped by various agencies and individuals are rife in all these districts. Others are resorting to crime to make ends meet. A reported rise in suicide cases was also attributed to poverty and unemployment, as were alcoholism and gambling problems witnessed in some of the districts. Load-shedding was described as a major inhibitor of economic development in most districts, as it is severely crippling investment and retarding economic growth. Another recurring impediment mentioned by informants in Kailali, Kanchanpur and Surkhet was the lack of decentralised economic policies and neglect by authorities at the central level. This is apparently leading to a lack of investment and an undeveloped or inadequately developed market, which in turn is forestalling economic growth.

### **Elections and discussions on federalism are seen as potential triggers of conflict and violence**

Asked about what could potentially trigger conflict and violence, most informants across districts pointed to future elections and renewed discussions around federalism. There was also a widespread perception that political developments at the district level, including tensions and conflicts resulting from these, would largely be influenced and driven by what is happening at the central (and, in the case of Bardiya, regional) level. Thus, any radicalisation and polarisation at the central level, including the use of polarising rhetoric, is seen as a potential risk for district-level political and social harmony. This was reported in Kailali, Kanchanpur, Banke, Bardiya and Dang. At the same time, the view was voiced that lack of significant progress in the current political status quo could equally result in tensions.

### **Political actors and young men are involved in conflict and insecurity**

When asked about the actors mainly responsible for conflict and insecurity, informants pointed to political actors on the one hand, and young men on the other. Political actors included party members and particularly youth wings or political student organisations at the district level, who were seen as fuelling and mobilising people for tensions, conflict and insecurity, and, in the case of political youth wings and student organisations, were often directly involved in protests, *bandahs*, or in some cases obstruction of tender-bidding processes. However, people also blamed central-level political actors for influencing and mobilising district level party members for their own political purposes. Men were seen as particularly at risk of getting actively involved in conflict and insecurity, although cases were also mentioned in which women participated in protests, or were working as carriers to traffic drugs. This particularly concerns young men from economically marginalised groups who can easily be mobilised or pulled towards becoming engaged in dangerous or illegal activities, whether of a political or criminal nature.

### **Resentment towards I/NGOs in some districts**

In some districts, particularly in Kailali and Dang, there is considerable resentment against NGOs and INGOs. This resentment stems from the perception that such organisations supported the Undivided Far West (UFW) movement against supporters of a Tharuwan state, particularly in Kailali. Many informants, including members of civil society, authorities, media, the business community and youths, voiced the opinion that international organisations and some diplomatic missions fund local NGOs and movements that polarise ethnic communities and incite ethnic conflicts among the people. However, more in-depth research is required in order to analyse and substantiate this claim further.

### **Constructive consultation and co-operation between different stakeholders can strengthen resilience to tensions and conflict**

Particularly in locations where tensions are high, such as Kailali and Kanchanpur, informants emphasised the ability of constructive consultation and co-operation between stakeholders such as civil society members representing opposing groups, security providers and political actors to reduce tensions and prevent renewed

escalation. There was a strong feeling that political actors, who are seen as contributing to conflicts and tensions, need to play their part in identifying ways to mitigate tensions, for example by avoiding the use of hate speech or mobilising sympathisers in a peaceful and non-violent way. While the role of security providers, especially the Nepal Police (NP), was seen as important, and examples of good policing and committed individuals within the NP were highlighted, many community and civil society informants would like to see better coordination in security provision, increased presence of the police in remote locations, more gender-sensitive policing, and an end to political interference in police investigations.

## Contextual background

The year 2012 was marked by the failure of the Constituent Assembly (CA) to fulfil its mandate and promulgate a new constitution for Nepal. Political parties were unable to reach consensus on a number of key constitutional issues, the most contentious of these being the model for state restructuring. Discussions on whether the federal model should be single ethnicity based or multi-ethnicity based divided political parties and polarised the nation as a whole, leading to the emergence of identity-based movements amongst disparate caste and ethnic groups across the country. Nationwide protests by identity-based movements erupted in the lead-up to the deadline for the CA (28 May 2012) as each group pressed for their own ethnic-based federal state. In spite of a widespread lack of understanding of the proposed federal models amongst the general public, clashes between the proponents of single ethnicity based federalism and those opposing it were frequent and sometimes violent. Generally, supporters of single ethnicity based federalism were members of minority ethnic communities (Janajati) while those who opposed it belonged to higher-caste Hindu hill communities (Brahmin and Chhetri). The emergence of identity-based agitation in the run-up to the CA deadline led to concerns that it may incite longer-term communal violence across the country.

Intra-party tensions within key political parties also intensified during this period. Many cadres belonging to Janajati groups from the Communist Party of Nepal – United Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML) and a few from the Nepali Congress (NC), including those holding senior positions, left these parties because of party opposition to a single ethnicity based state model, and formed new parties on the basis of shared ethnicity. Tensions between senior leaders of all the major political parties became more pronounced due to differing ideological standpoints on federalism and led to the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (UCPN(M)) splitting into two rival factions in June 2012 – one headed by Puspa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’ and a more radical faction led by ex-vice-chairman Mohan Baidya. The impact this may have on tabled national elections is unclear, as the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (CPN-M, Baidya’s faction) are not formally registered as a political party.

While political discussions and related protests surrounding federalism ended abruptly following the dissolution of the CA on 28 May 2012, the resulting political crisis paralysed the country for the next 10 months. The political crisis had a negative impact on development and service delivery as the full budget could not be agreed upon by the beginning of the financial year in July 2012. Instead a three-month ordinance budget was put in place, and in November a second ordinance budget was announced to cover the remaining months.

The unelected caretaker government led by then Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai consistently failed to forge consensus with other political leaders on several key issues. There was no unanimity on issues such as how and whether new CA elections should be held (despite having announced elections for 22 November 2012). Contentions over selection of an appropriate electoral model, including updating the electoral roll, distribution of citizenship certificates and other matters relating to the broader peace process such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) were not resolved. In response to this stalemate, nine opposition parties, including the NC and CPN-UML, announced a 21-day protest beginning on 19 January 2013. Demonstrations and *bandahs* took place across the country, frequently resulting in violent clashes between rival political party cadres and the security forces. The opposition parties blamed the government for repeatedly violating the law of the land, misusing state funds, abusing power and blocking the process to form a consensus government.

In an attempt to end the political stalemate and stabilise the deteriorating security situation in the districts, on 8 February 2013 the UCPN(M) led government proposed to form an election government under the leadership of incumbent Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi. Major opposition parties, namely the NC and the CPN-UML, initially rejected the UCPN(M)’s proposal and continued with their demonstrations and *bandahs*. On 14 March 2013, four key political parties (UCPN(M), NC, CPN-UML and Madhesi Morcha) finally agreed to form an election government under the Chief Justice, but heated public debates and protests by 22 fringe parties led by the CPN-M about the constitutionality of the Chief Justice leading the government and the required constitutional changes are still ongoing.

In spite of what could be considered a positive step towards resolving the political crisis in the country, the vast majority of outstanding issues essential for the successful conclusion of the peace process, such as a decision on an appropriate federal model and the formulation of a TRC Bill in full conformity with international standards, have not been resolved. Failure to do so will continue to imperil the future peace and security situation in the country.

## **Kailali district**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses findings from Kailali district, Far West Nepal. There are 42 Village Development Committees (VDCs) and two municipalities within Kailali. Dhangadhi municipality is the district headquarters and the district has a total of six electoral constituencies. The majority of the 775,709 people living in Kailali are Hindu (94.81 percent), with Buddhists and Christians making up 2.01 percent and 1.87 percent of the population respectively. The Muslim population stands at 0.61 percent.<sup>4</sup>

Kailali was perceived to be the district most affected by political and identity-based tensions and violence. All informants reported Kailali to be relatively insecure due to a perceived increase in the crime rate.

### **2. General situation**

Most informants perceived that the overall security situation in Kailali district had improved compared to the pre-2006 era. As Kailali district was highly affected during the conflict, this improvement was attributed to the fact that the UCPN (M) is now no longer a conflict actor, but part of mainstream politics. However, the majority of the district-level stakeholders felt that in the aftermath of the Akhanda Sudur Paschim movement (Undivided Far West, UFW)<sup>5</sup> that took place in April-June 2012 during the last few weeks of the Constituent Assembly (CA) tenure, the current situation remains politically tense. In Kailali, the UFW movement in early 2012 brought out tensions between Tharu and Pahadi groups, leading to violent clashes, protests and a 31-day *bandah*, and resulting in bitter sentiments between Tharu and non-Tharu people living within the districts. However, increased collaboration among security agencies, local authorities, political actors, media and civil society in order to ensure peace and security has reportedly led to improved security provision.

### **3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence**

#### *3.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

During the clashes between the UFW movement and supporters of a Tharuwan state in April-June 2012, the political atmosphere was charged in all 42 VDCs and two municipalities of Kailali according to all informants interviewed. Political tensions were and still are primarily linked to regional identity and social identity-based issues, i.e. divisions between Tharu and Pahadi community members and between the Far West and East regions of Nepal. This led to many violent clashes between Tharu and Pahadi political groups and community members, particularly in Dhangadhi municipality, Tikapur municipality, Masuriya VDC and Phulbari VDC. Many civil society and community members perceived that although the protests started through the initiation of political actors, they reached a point where they were no longer controlled by them and things quickly deteriorated when community members and local community leaders got involved. This led to increased animosity amongst community members from remote VDCs as well. The clashes and protests stopped immediately after the dissolution of the CA; however, since then community members have become more aware of social and ethnic divisions within their communities. The political situation since July has been stable, but the majority of the informants felt that this could change with upcoming elections in May or if any changes take place in the national government.

#### *3.2 Causes and/or triggers*

As stated above, political tensions are mostly linked to regional identity and social identity-based issues. Informants revealed that many of the root causes of the Maoist conflict are yet to be addressed, including equal rights for all social and caste-based identity groups, decentralised development of infrastructure, market access

<sup>4</sup> *Village Development Committee and Demographic Profile of Nepal 2013*, Mega Publication and Research Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal.

<sup>5</sup> The Undivided Far West Movement that occurred in April-June 2012 saw Tharu and non-Tharu (Pahadi) groups clash with each other politically as well as socially in many parts of the Far West and in some Mid-West districts such as Bardiya and Dang. Kailali and Kanchanpur were most affected during this movement as Kailali was the political base of this movement. Previously, Tharu and some non-Tharu political actors had publicly stated that these two districts would be part of the larger Tharuwan federal state, however when Lekhraj Bhatta of the UCPN(M) stated that the Far West region would not be divided in one of his public political rallies in April 2012, protests against his statement erupted immediately.

and creation of employment. According to them this is an underlying cause of the political tensions. Lack of central-level stability and decision-making along with weak governance was also cited as a key cause of political tensions and in some cases violent political clashes within Kailali. It was perceived that the local dynamics of political activities in Kailali were governed by central-level political actors, and their decisions were often criticised by community members and key civil society informants. In addition, they also highlighted the lack of government policy on development of the Far West and systemic neglect by the government towards the region as key causes contributing to weak governance.

The main trigger of the violent political clashes and protests that took place in Kailali in May-June 2012 was the UFW movement. The movement was linked to the fact that Kailali and Kanchanpur had been demarcated as part of Tharuwan state by the UCPN(M) in 2007/8; however, during the last few weeks of the CA's tenure, a key member of the UCPN(M) central committee publicly stated that these two districts were part of the United Far West and could not be separated into another federal state. The majority of informants perceived this public statement as the immediate trigger of violent protests and clashes in Kailali. Furthermore, polarising opinions from both Tharu and Pahadi political leaders ignited the broader community even more, resulting in a 31-day Far West *bandah* in April-June 2012. Furthermore, it was also perceived that the media worsened ethnicity-based polarisation by reporting the news in a one-sided way that indirectly supported the actors leading the UFW.

### **3.3 Actors**

Many informants attributed responsibility for the violence of the UFW/Tharuwan clashes to political party leaders and their cadres. The involvement of political actors from the UCPN(M), NC, CPN-UML, Madheshi Janadhikar Forum (Democratic) (MJF(D)) and Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) was mostly referred to as having a negative role in creating and sustaining political violence that was inter-linked with identity issues. While community members perceived that central-level political actors were at the forefront of using identity politics to gain popularity and votes, they also stated that district-level political leaders of these major parties were carrying out central-level decisions and sending local party cadres and sympathisers, who are mostly male youths, and adult community members to protest on the streets. Furthermore, according to key informants and some community members the media played the role of catalyst in fuelling negative feelings between the two groups by reporting in a biased and one-sided way causing further communal polarisation. Another interesting finding from this assessment was that in the political protests and agitation during the UFW/Tharuwan clashes, new actors emerged from civil society and the private sector including other influential members of the Pahadi and Tharu communities. These groups had not been politically active before, but played a leading role in the movement.

### **3.4 Impact**

The impact of UFW was mostly perceived as negative. The majority of informants believed that previously existing social relationships among community members, including grass-roots communities and key governmental stakeholders, have yet to return back to normalcy. It was believed that there is a high risk of returning to violence if someone were to raise the divisions between Tharus and Pahadis again. Because political tensions were linked with identity issues, Tharus and Pahadis felt that their identity was put at risk and they were made to believe by their respective parties that they were at risk of losing property, assets and even life if one particular group were to have a specific identity-based federal state. However, many community members and some informants also perceived that people in general might have lost faith in political actors as they could not provide a solution to the April-June 2012 political clashes and used people for their own political gain.

### **3.5 Response or potential interventions**

The relationship between civil society and security providers was perceived as improving as a result of the April-June protests, as both groups were concerned that such ethnic clashes could have a long-lasting negative impact and disturb social harmony. There is now an informal mechanism that includes local authorities, security providers, civil society, the media and political actors, and they conduct regular meetings at the District Administration Office (DAO). Although all informants perceived political leaders and their cadres to be the major actors in political and identity-based tensions and in some cases violent clashes and protests, they also mentioned that the same political actors should play a key role in potential responses and solutions. They further elaborated that political actors are present in each ward of each VDC and municipality and hence are the only actors who can reach everyone. As the most influential actors, political parties have a strong role to play in mitigating tensions and violence linked to politics and identity-based issues and should be included in any potential intervention.

## **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

#### **4.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

The UFW/Tharuwan clashes, which saw Tharu and Pahadi groups attack each other politically and in many cases physically, took place in April-June 2012. Identity-based tensions were very strong during these weeks, which also saw a continuous *bandah* of 31 days in Kailali and Kanchanpur districts. These clashes and tensions took place in all 42 VDCs and both municipalities of Kailali. However, since the dissolved CA failed to deliver a new constitution and no federal states have been demarcated yet, the movement has been halted and tensions have reduced.

Some community members also discussed the simmering tensions between recent Christian converts and Hindu community members. This was particularly mentioned by communities from Chaumala, Darak and Pahalmanpur VDCs. As there are many Christian missionaries operating in this district, some community members feel that they are further alienating the Tharu and Dalit population by converting them to a different religion which clashes with their local culture. Conversion to Christianity has been perceived as growing in recent years.

#### **4.2 Causes and/or triggers**

See section 3.2 above.

#### **4.3 Actors**

See section 3.3 above. Christian missionaries who are operating in Kailali and converting community members, mostly from the Dalit and Tharu communities, were perceived as an actor that could cause tensions in the near future. Although tensions around religious conversion were not raised at the district level, informants from the local communities mentioned that there have been many conversions. Some community members, particularly from the Pahadi community, expressed their dissatisfaction towards these conversions.

I/NGOs were perceived as actors that had contributed to the UFW/Tharuwan clashes in April-June 2012 by the majority of key informants and youths, particularly from Pahadi communities. They explained that because these organisations funded pro-Tharu rallies and protests, they were financially supporting the Tharuwan movement.

#### **4.4 Impact**

See section 3.4 above. Women and children were part of the UFW/Tharuwan clashes, but many informants including members of civil society believed that they participated without any knowledge of the issue or the consequences. Although this perspective could be perceived as gender-insensitive, as the social structure of the Far West is highly patriarchal, many women community members may have supported a specific group because they were forced to, or because their family and friends were supporting it. This has, however, created more polarised feelings between Tharu and Pahadi communities, even amongst children: one civil society informant mentioned that while visiting schools in Kailali recently, they noticed that Tharu and Pahadi children were purposely keeping away from each other and playing exclusively with members of their own identity groups. This is a notable impact of the UFW/Tharuwan clashes.

Informants perceived that community members who have converted to Christianity are facing some levels of social and cultural isolation, particularly those belonging to the Dalit and Tharu communities. They were previously perceived as inferior by Brahmins and Chhetris, and are now further looked down upon as they do not adhere to the cultural and social practices of the broader community and thus do not participate in many cultural festivals.

#### **4.5 Response or potential interventions**

Civil society organisations such as NGOs and activists were unable to have a positive impact or help to control the UFW/Tharuwan clashes, and many key informants believed that security providers were not very effective in mitigating security threats. However, political actors, civil society actors and government and security authorities have started holding regular meetings and developing security strategies to mitigate the risk of such violence taking place in the future. Meetings are convened by the Chief District Officer (CDO) and take place each month or more frequently if required. Efforts to create more public awareness about social harmony are being coordinated by civil society in collaboration with security providers, namely the Nepal Police (NP), District Administration Office (DAO) and some political actors at the district level. The majority of community members, including men, women and youths, recommended that public awareness and dialogue-building initiatives be conducted for a few years to increase social harmony.

### **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **5.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

There were various perceptions about crime and armed group-based tensions in Kailali. While some informants, particularly authorities and security providers, believed that crime-related activities have decreased compared to the previous year, key informants and community members perceived that it was still highly unsafe in Kailali. Although overall, all informants agreed that compared to the pre-2006 period the situation has improved a lot, for many of them insecurity remains a key concern. Drug addiction-related crime, robbery, abduction and trafficking of contraband, which includes drugs, small automatic arms and ammunition, wood and other forest resources, have increased in the last 12 months. These activities reportedly take place primarily in Dhangadhi municipality, Bauniya VDC, Phulbari VDC, Pandaun VDC, Baliya VDC and all the VDCs that are close to the border. The fact that Kailali is close to the Indo-Nepal border means that trafficking is comparatively easier as perpetrators can easily escape through the porous border.

Informants perceived that violence against women, mostly sexual harassment and rape, but also trafficking of women, has increased in the past 12 months. This is more prominent in Nigali and Udasipur VDCs and Dhangadhi municipality. Suicide rates were also perceived to be increasing. Cases of murder and youth gang-fights were perceived to be increasing, particularly in Masuriya, Bauniya, Sugarkhal, Chuha and Godawari VDCs. Obstruction of government-allocated development budgets was also perceived to be rampant previously; however this has reportedly decreased in the past 12 months since the government started the e-bidding process. E-bidding has allowed the whole tender process to be conducted electronically, hence there are fewer chances of manipulation by local authorities and groups.

### **5.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Various causes for increasing crime and armed group-based tensions were mentioned by informants, among which closeness to the Indian border was most frequently mentioned. Informants felt that due to the open Indo-Nepal border, it is easy for perpetrators to operate within Kailali while escaping prosecution. Open borders have also resulted in the easy availability of small arms, which was perceived to have had a negative impact on the current security situation. Many community members felt that political interference during criminal investigations and pressure from various political actors to release perpetrators is contributing to increased crime.

### **5.3 Actors**

Criminal groups comprised primarily of male youths were referred to by informants as the main actors of crime. Members of these groups can be of any socio-cultural origin, but were perceived to be mostly male youths, unemployed and in many cases having some affiliation with a political actor. Political actors belonging to various parties<sup>6</sup> were mentioned as protecting perpetrators and in many cases pressuring the local authorities and security providers to release alleged perpetrators. In some cases, political youth wings such as the Youth Force (currently known as Youth Association Nepal) of the CPN-UML, the Tarun Dal of the NC and the Young Communist League (YCL) of the UCPN(M) were perceived as engaging in obstruction of the tender-bidding process for government development budgets. However, these youth wings are reportedly mostly engaged in physical violence against each other, including in colleges and campuses.

### **5.4 Impact**

Many community members and key informants felt that crime and armed groups were a key cause of insecurity and perceived moving on the main roads after dark as highly unsafe. This was worse for women and children due to increased reporting of rape (including gang rape) that have taken place within Kailali. In some cases, community members, particularly young boys and youths, reportedly find it acceptable to commit crimes such as illegally logging trees for wood smuggling; one civil society informant mentioned that a case of two young boys illegally logging a forest tree was recently registered in the district police office. The young boys were illegally cutting trees in one of the VDCs adjoining the Mahendra Highway in order to purchase footballs and other recreational materials. The police arrested them immediately but the children continued to believe that they had done nothing wrong as other older boys and men had done the same thing on a much larger scale without being arrested.

### **5.5 Response or potential interventions**

Community members expressed concerns as to whether police responses to the above incidents were sufficient, and many key informants including civil society, security providers, media and authorities felt that the police lack adequate infrastructure and resources to provide adequate security and prevent crimes. Many community members thought that the numbers of police personnel posted in Kailali are not sufficient. However, with support from civil society and organisations such as INSEC, Youth Initiative, local organisations such as

<sup>6</sup> Informants mentioned parties such as the UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, MJF(D) and CPN-M.

the PLC (Para-Legal Committee) and the media, security providers have been able to improve coordination with non-state actors for effective security delivery. This was linked to an increase in reporting of crimes such as domestic violence and other forms of violence against women through informal mechanisms such as mothers' groups and PLCs.

## **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### *6.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

There is reportedly a high level of resource-based tension in Kailali, as it holds one of the largest areas of cultivable land in the whole of Nepal and is rich in forest and river resources.

In terms of land, informants raised two notable issues: that of the Mukta Kamaiyas<sup>7</sup> and that of landless people (known as Sukumbasis). The Mukta Kamaiyas were given land during the rehabilitation phase that started in mid-2000 and resettled in parts of Kailali along with other districts. They belong to the Tharu community and regard themselves as natives of Kailali and Kanchanpur. The Mukta Kamaiyas are unhappy with the government's decision to provide a large number of people who belong to the landless population, including IDPs (internally displaced persons) who have fled the conflict and natural disasters, with land in Kailali which they consider as more valuable than the land that had been provided to them, and feel that they have been unfairly treated. Mukta Kamaiyas and other native community members also expressed doubts that all of those who claim to be landless are genuinely landless. A growing number of landless people in Kailali, on the other hand, have been demanding land and compensation from the government. The government has allocated land to some of them, but this often takes time as the authorities have to verify their status. Landless people have also occupied land from which they have subsequently been cleared by the police. This has in the past led to some altercations between the landless population and government authorities, especially the Nepal Police, Nepal Army and Armed Police Force. Compared to the last two years, informants perceived that tensions had decreased, but landless people are still continuing their peaceful protests in front of the government authorities' offices. This is mostly occurring in VDCs that adjoin the Mahendra Highway.

Informants also reported the occurrence of tensions related to land along the border, particularly as community members perceived that Nepali communities living alongside the Indo-Nepal border are harassed by the Indian security forces. In many cases community members and key informants mentioned that Indian security forces shift border pillars to control more land, which has led to tensions between affected villages along the border and the Indian authorities, particularly the Border Security Force (BSF) and in some cases the Nepal Police. This problem has been ongoing for some years and is particularly prevalent in VDCs such as Hasuliya and Phulbari.

Informants reported disputes related to river resources as well, specifically between Pandaun VDC in Kailali and the neighbouring VDC across the river in Surkhet district. The point of contention in the dispute is the dam built on the Babai River that affects these VDCs during the monsoon, as either side can be flooded depending on whether the barrage gates are opened or remain closed. This dispute has been ongoing for the past few years without any long-term solution. In addition to these, there are frequent tensions around exploitation of community forests linked to criminal activities, as explained in above sections 5.1 and 5.2. These mostly occur in Baliya, Godawari, Malakheti, Mohana, Masuriya, Sugarkhal, Bhajani, Thapapur, Joshipur and Lalpur VDCs.

### *6.2 Causes and/or triggers*

Weak government policies for the rehabilitation of the Mukta Kamaiyas over the last decade and for addressing the problems of landless people were reported as the key causes of land-related tensions in Kailali. In addition to this, political interests behind the agenda of land distribution to landless people that is being pursued by all political parties have further exacerbated this problem. Water-related tensions were linked to the government's inability to address the river dam issue and mediate between the communities affected. Tensions and violence over forest resources were mostly linked to criminal groups who seek to profit from the trafficking of logged trees and rare herbs found in the forests. The open border with India was also cited as a cause of trafficking of forest resources.

### *6.3 Actors*

Land-related tensions were perceived as mainly serving the interests of political actors, who want to gain political allies and votes from the beneficiaries of land distribution. The majority of informants also believed that not all landless people are genuine and that many are falsely claiming to be IDPs and want to access free land in the Terai for commercial purposes. Political actors from all the political parties that are active in Kailali were

<sup>7</sup> *Mukta kamaiya* means freed bonded labourer. These labourers were from Tharu communities who were forced to work in the fields of Brahmin/Chhetri landlords, and in some cases even Tharu landlords, who would enslave them for work purposes without being obliged to pay any money for their services. In 2002 the government prohibited this practice and since then it is illegal to keep anyone as a Kamaiya.

perceived to be involved in this, including the UCPN(M), CPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, MJF(D), Sadhbhawana Party, RPP and other local parties. Regarding trafficking of forest resources and illegal sand and stone quarrying, it was reported that criminal groups were primarily involved. These were perceived to be predominantly male youths and male adults belonging to all communities, who commit these crimes for profit motives and benefit from political protection.

#### **6.4 Impact**

Distribution of free land to landless people has reportedly led to growing animosity between community members from Kailali and IDP settlements, and in some cases between Mukta Kamaiyas and landless people as well. There is growing resentment towards the landless settlements<sup>8</sup> as people perceive them to be falsely identifying themselves as displaced to gain profit from owning land in Kailali. This could lead to future tensions and violence between these communities and the potential risk and mitigation factors need to be further researched. Women continue to have less access to resources such as rivers, community forests, state-led infrastructure development and state-allocated budgets, and women community members and key civil society members felt that they were not part of the decision-making process for development and allocation of these resources.

#### **6.5 Response or potential interventions**

Both key informants and community members felt that the government has not been able to address the problems of landless people in a conflict-sensitive manner, and they were unhappy with the random distribution of land. They therefore recommended that the state take honest and independent measures to verify the IDP status of individual claimants and provide them with adequate compensation. Some informants suggested that rather than providing each individual with land, the government could instead create communes for them, which would allow them to share their socio-cultural practices and create market opportunities as well as mitigate the risk of losing cultivable land in Kailali. According to community members in Kailali a conflict-sensitive infrastructure to mediate and address the problem of river dams is required from the state, and many felt that security providers should be mobilised in adequate numbers in remote VDCs to control illegal logging and sand and stone quarrying.

### **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

Violence against women, particularly SGBV, was frequently mentioned by the majority of informants at the district and community level as a key cause of insecurity for women. Rape and sexual harassment were perceived as frequently occurring in Kailali, and many informants stated that the perpetrators in most cases are male youths who are involved in drugs and trafficking of drugs and firearms. The cause of increase in rape cases is unclear from the research findings, and some youths and community members felt that SGBV rates have not increased, but that reporting of such crimes has increased. They attributed increased reporting to higher levels of public awareness about gender-based violence and the role of local organisations such as PLCs, mothers' groups and women's groups.

### **8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspots**

Dhangadhi municipality is a hotspot for many tensions. Key informants feel that it is an operational space for all influential stakeholders to make political statements and conduct political activities; this is also linked to the rise of identity-based politics that has accompanied discussions of federalism at the national level. Although it was perceived that all locations are politically affected, Dhangadhi municipality, Tikapur municipality, Masuriya, Urma, Pathariya, Phulbari, Hasuliya and Darakh were the areas most affected.

Resource-based tensions were seen mostly in Pandaun, Hasuliya, Phulbari, Baliya, Godawari, Malakheti, Mohana, Masuriya, Sugarkhal, Bhajani, Thapapur, Joshipur and Lal Bojhi VDCs. It was unclear which districts were most highly affected, but the first six VDCs were frequently mentioned. Informants reported that in locations where there are river resources, there are usually tensions relating to theft of sand and stones for commercial usage. In areas with community forests, tensions relating to the theft of wood and illegal tree-logging are present.

SGBV and VAW was perceived to be higher in Masuriya, Sugarkhal, Kahirala, Gadariya, Udasipur, Bauniya, Chuha, Pandaun and Godawari VDCs, and Dhangadhi municipality.

<sup>8</sup> Landless people were not represented among the informants in Kailali and Kanchanpur districts due to the short time-frame for the fieldwork. Further in-depth research is required to validate these findings from their point of view.

Masuriya, Sugarkhal, Kahirala, Gadariya, Udasipur, Bauniya, Chuha and Godawari VDCs were identified as the major hotspots in Kailali for crime-based tensions and violence. Additionally, Dhangadhi municipality, Bauniya VDC, Pandaun VDC and Baliya VDC were also seen by some as moderately affected.

## Kanchanpur district

### 1. Introduction

This chapter discusses findings from Kanchanpur district. Along with Kailali, Kanchanpur is one of the two Terai districts of Far West Nepal. There are 19 VDCs and one municipality within Kanchanpur. The district headquarters is Bhim Dutta municipality and the district has a total of four electoral constituencies. The population of Kanchanpur is 451,248, of which the majority is Hindu (95.09 percent), with Buddhists and Christians making up 1.15 percent and 2.65 percent respectively, and the Muslim population standing at 0.1 percent.<sup>9</sup>

At the district level, Kanchanpur was perceived to be affected by political and identity-based political discussions that have taken place in Kailali. However, it was reported as relatively safe compared to Kailali and Surkhet. Political actors were perceived to be highly influential and were found to be active in decision-making affecting the overall peace and security of the district.

### 2. General situation

According to all the informants, Kanchanpur did not see security threats as significant as those in Kailali in the past 12 months. While the political situation in Kanchanpur was tense during the UFW/Tharuwan clashes up to April-June 2012, identity-based politics has taken a back seat since the dissolution of the CA and is no longer the main contested issue. In terms of security, as Kanchanpur is very close to the Indian border there are crime-related tensions and incidents, but according to the majority of informants the overall security situation is normal with very few reported incidents. Informants from civil society and the media mentioned that compared to other Terai districts of Nepal Kanchanpur is fairly safe. However, many incidents occur involving individuals and households, including minor community-level disputes such as cattle-grazing on neighbours' farms, which are often reported to the police and district/local authorities, and/or resolved by the individuals involved themselves. The recent transfer of the Superintendent of Nepal Police (SP) to Kanchanpur was mentioned as positive by some key informants, as they feel that the current SP has initiated effective measures to control crime that takes place using the open border between Nepal and India.

### 3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence

#### 3.1 *Problem: trends, frequency and location*

Like Kailali, Kanchanpur witnessed high levels of political tensions, clashes and violence during the UFW/Tharuwan clashes in April-June 2012. Bhim Dutta municipality and VDCs along the main highway (Mahendra Highway) were most affected. Since the dissolution of the CA and the failure to provide the country with a new constitution, the issue of identity-based federal states has subsided among the political actors, civil society, media and general community members in the district.

According to some informants, including former combatants, the CPN-M has on a number of occasions protested against the current government headed by Baburam Bhattarai of the UCPN(M)<sup>10</sup> and the decisions it has taken, but those protests did not escalate into violence. However, during the time of the field research, a sudden *bandah* was called for by a UCPN(M) affiliated student union after they had a scuffle with the Nepal Congress's student union regarding an upcoming annual campus function and campus elections for the student body. The protest resulted in some physical violence and the Nepal Police made several arrests that day.<sup>11</sup> The *bandah* was most effective and visibly enforced in Bhim Dutta municipality and in the VDCs along the main highway.

<sup>9</sup> Village Development Committee and Demographic Profile of Nepal 2013, Mega Publication and Research Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal.

<sup>10</sup> At the time of research, the prime minister was Baburam Bhattarai of the UCPN(M) who leads a caretaker government of ministers from the UCPN(M) and the MJF(D).

<sup>11</sup> On 26 February 2013, a CPN-M affiliated student union called a one-day Kanchanpur *bandah* from 10.00 to 17.00 resulting in shutdowns of transportation, the whole market and educational institutions.

### **3.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Political tensions in Kanchanpur were perceived to be interlinked with issues of regional and social identity, for example divisions between Tharus and Pahadis (which community members and key informants understand as a regional issue, as Tharus are originally from the Terai and non-Tharu communities are from Pahadi districts). Examples of differences include divisions between community members who associate themselves with a particular district even though they are from the same ethnic group, such as Darchula versus Achham, Baitadi/Bajhang versus Doti, and so on. The marker of identification for these various groups is often the different Nepali dialect spoken in Far West Nepal, which means that a Brahmin or Dalit from Darchula will speak differently from a Brahmin or Dalit from Doti. However, these were perceived to be simmering causes that could trigger a potential conflict in future. Key causes mentioned by community members and informants were poverty, unemployment, youth frustration over weak governance and political instability and social discrimination against certain identity groups, particularly the Tharu groups and the Dalit population. These were cited as the motivations for participation by the broader community and youths in political protests and rallies. These causes were particularly highlighted by some key informants, community members and ex-combatants during the research.

While a key triggering factor for the political tensions and clashes in April-June 2012 was the UFW/Tharuwan clashes, as in Kailali (see section 3.2 in the chapter on Kailali district), this did not lead to outbursts of violence similar to those in Kailali, although there were some incidents of political violence in the form of direct physical attacks and mass protest rallies. Accusations against Tharu political and social leaders in the media, which was perceived as supporting the Pahadis, and reciprocal accusations in the small number of Tharu media outlets also led to an escalation of violent identity-based political protests. In the case of Kanchanpur, a key trigger for an immediate show of violence from the Tharu community was when a prominent social and political Tharu leader was attacked and severely injured by unidentified male youths. This led to an immediate *bandah* and protests on the streets by a large number of Tharu youths.

### **3.3 Actors**

Political party leaders were perceived to be the main actors responsible for causing political tensions and violence in Kanchanpur, both during the UFW/Tharuwan clashes and thereafter. Similarly to Kailali, the involvement of political actors from the UCPN(M), NC, CPN-UML, CPN-M, MJF(D) and RPP was referred to as playing a negative role in creating and sustaining the political violence of the UFW movement, which was linked to identity-based issues. Informants stated that it was mainly central-level political actors who were using identity politics to gain popularity and votes. District-level political actors, namely the local political leaders of these major parties, were seen as carrying out central-level decisions, but they also played a role in sending local party cadres and sympathisers – mostly male youths – and adult community members to protest on the streets. As in Kailali, the media played the role of catalyst in strengthening negative feelings between groups by reporting events in a biased and polarising way. According to some informants, some civil society leaders from the Pahadi community also played a negative role in inciting violence during the April-June 2012 protests by using hate speech against Tharu leaders and communities in public rallies and functions.

### **3.4 Impact**

While the majority of informants felt that the UFW/Tharuwan clashes have negatively affected the population, they also stated that social harmony is returning back to normal. The movement did not reach the more remote VDCs of Kanchanpur, but was limited to the municipality and VDCs closer to the municipality such as Suda, Jhalari and Getta (see section 8 for more information). However, because political tensions were linked with identity issues, Tharu and Pahadi men and women felt that their identity was at risk: Pahadi communities were made to believe that if Tharuwan state was formed then all Pahadi people would be driven out and the Tharus would take over their property and assets. Many male youths from both sides were mobilised to join the protests, and some still harbour negative feelings towards each other due to their role in the protests.

### **3.5 Response or potential interventions**

Since the May-June 2012 protests, civil society leaders have forged better relations amongst themselves in order to mitigate future risks of violent clashes. Leaders from both Pahadi and Tharu communities have engaged in dialogue and discussions since then. Security providers have also been engaging with civil society leaders from both communities and political actors in order to be able to respond to such situations. In terms of possible interventions, many community members and stakeholders suggested that dialogue to build social harmony and unity should be encouraged and that all stakeholders should be a part of this process. Community members and key informants specifically suggested that political actors need to be part of this dialogue process as they are the ones who need to be made aware of the negative consequences of their political campaigning around identity issues. Some civil society informants and youths mentioned a recent

dialogue programme conducted in Dhangadhi municipality which saw participation from all stakeholders in Kailali, with a national-level constitution expert facilitating a discussion panel on dialogue for constitution building.

#### **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

##### *4.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

Issues around identity-based tensions were the same for Kailali and Kanchanpur as the districts share similar geography, demography, political actors and history. The UFW/Tharuwan clashes, which saw Tharu and Pahadi groups attack each other politically, were most evident in Bhim Dutta municipality and in VDCs along the main highway such as Suda, Jhalari and Getta. Like Kailali, Kanchanpur witnessed a *bandah* of 31 days, but it was less intense than in Kailali. The *bandah* lost its impact quickly in Kanchanpur compared to Kailali, and the issue is currently a latent one since the failure of the CA to agree on a constitution.

##### *4.2 Causes and/or triggers*

See section 3.2.

##### *4.3 Actors*

See section 3.3.

##### *4.4 Impact*

See section 3.4. Although the impact was perceived to have been less significant in Kanchanpur compared to Kailali, during the research it was evident that there are emerging identity-based tensions centred on people's districts of origin. For example, Brahmins from Darchula share more affinity with Dalits from Darchula than with fellow Brahmins from Doti. Although this cannot be substantiated with existing literature, and more in-depth research is required, it was mentioned by some informants during the research. All the informants from Kanchanpur identified themselves by their district of origin in addition to their ethnic identity, which adds another layer of social identity.

##### *4.5 Response or potential interventions*

See section 3.5.

#### **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

##### *5.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

The trafficking of drugs to India, specifically marijuana and hashish grown in the Far West region, was perceived as the most frequently occurring crime in Kanchanpur. This has been ongoing for a few decades. Informants stated that this particular contraband is trafficked to India in huge quantities amounting to 10-12 trucks in one trip each week to be sold off in other countries. While there are reportedly some drugs-related crimes and social problems amongst male youths in Kanchanpur, this was seen as negligible by the local authorities and the production is mostly for foreign consumption. However, VDCs like Dodhara and Chadni were perceived as being highly affected by drug addiction and crimes related to drugs such as theft, robbery and physical attacks. Trafficking is reportedly primarily visible in these two VDCs, which are located on the other side of the Mahakali River towards India, as well as in Bhim Dutta municipality and Jhalari VDC.

In addition to this, there are reportedly high crime rates in Dodhara and Chadni VDCs. The geographic location of these VDCs was perceived as a hindrance to the safety of their inhabitants, as there are no police posts here. This puts them at immediate risk since they are on the Indian side of the river and the Indian border security forces (BSF) monitor them rather than the Nepal Police. The river needs to be crossed in order to reach these VDCs, making it challenging for security providers to cover these two VDCs and respond immediately to security issues. Trafficking of arms and drugs, murder, rape, extortion, robbery and fake currency production reportedly take place frequently in these VDCs. Other VDCs that are closer to the Indian border such as Tribhuwanbasti and Parasan were perceived to be unsafe because of trafficking of arms, drugs and women as well as serious forms of violence against women such as gang rape.

##### *5.2 Causes and/or triggers*

The open border with India was perceived as a key cause of crime and armed group-based tensions and violence in this district, especially in the VDCs mentioned above due to the lack of control by security providers. In addition to this, informants also felt that weak governance and the lack of decentralised infrastructure in Nepal has motivated people to join criminal groups in order to earn a living. Community members and ex-combatants mentioned these two factors in particular as limiting economic opportunities for people living in Kanchanpur. Furthermore, gaps in policies allow people to engage in criminal activities, as they have closer access to Indian markets and the border in many cases lacks proper security mechanisms to prevent cross-border crimes. Some community members also cited illiteracy and a lack of knowledge about laws and policies as causes; they explained that as many poor families lack education and information about the laws of Nepal, they are unaware of the legal consequences of their activities and thus continue to act illegally. Political interference during criminal investigations and pressure from various political actors to release perpetrators was also mentioned as contributing to increasing crime.

### **5.3 Actors**

The main actors of crime mentioned by a majority of informants were criminal groups. Members of these groups were described as coming from different socio-cultural origins, but are mostly male youths, unemployed and in many cases reportedly have some affiliation with specific political actors. Political parties<sup>12</sup> were often mentioned as interfering to protect perpetrators and to pressure the local authorities and security providers to release alleged perpetrators. Ex-combatants in particular perceived many of these criminal actors as engaging in crime due to poverty and lack of economic opportunities and that they are individuals from poor families.

### **5.4 Impact**

The majority of community members and key informants believed that it was highly unsafe for women to move outside alone, especially after dark. There have been several cases of rape in the district ranging from an 80-year-old woman to an eight-year-old girl being gang-raped by two youths, so women community members do not feel safe travelling, which has limited their mobility. Trafficking of drugs is not a direct threat to the broader community; however, cases of minor robbery and theft related to drugs have created fear. Informants perceived those who engage in taking and selling drugs to be mostly male youths, and they are at a higher risk of getting involved in criminal activities. A key cause for this tendency was unemployment and lack of job opportunities within their district.

### **5.5 Response or potential interventions**

While there have been recent initiatives by security providers to reduce insecurity, such as a ban on vehicles with Indian number plates after a certain hour to prevent trafficking and smuggling, community members and key informants believed that the police have not been highly effective in providing adequate security, specifically to communities that are close to the Indian border. Overall, many informants believed that security providers need to be strengthened and coordinated to become more effective. PLCs have reportedly been effective in dealing with some cases related to women, and there are existing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms dealing with small-scale disputes, such as the community mediation programmes in Kanchanpur funded by The Asia Foundation (TAF) and currently implemented by CeLLRd.

## **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **6.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

River resources are a very sensitive issue in Kanchanpur. While there are vast water resources in the form of rivers, there are high levels of water scarcity during the dry season due to a bilateral treaty with India<sup>13</sup> and constant tensions among community members over access to water. Tensions over access to rivers have been ongoing for several decades and remain unresolved.

Land disputes reportedly take the form of internal as well as cross-border issues. Internally, the issues are the same as in Kailali: access to land for Mukta Kamaiyas and landless people (which includes IDPs and those displaced by natural disasters such as floods). This is mainly a concern in VDCs along the Mahendra Highway. There have been tensions related to land along the border as well; people perceive that Nepali communities that live alongside the Indo-Nepal border are harassed by the Indian security forces and that in many cases,

<sup>12</sup> Informants specifically mentioned the UCPN(M), NC, CPN-UML, MJF(D), RPP and CPN-M.

<sup>13</sup> The Mahakali River was recognised as the boundary between India and Nepal under the Mahakali Treaty, which was signed in 1996. According to the treaty, both countries are to benefit from this. Adopting a downstream river policy, India agreed to maintain the flow of water into both countries through the Sarada barrage. However, community members living alongside the river on the Nepali side have been complaining that during the dry season when water is scarce, barrage gates remain closed for the Nepali side, causing problems for agriculture, whereas during the monsoon the floodgates are opened, resulting in many villages being flooded for months and loss of crops, land and property. This occurs every year.

Indian security forces shift border pillars and encroach on Nepali territory which has negative implications for the communities as it reduces the land available for cultivation and asset division. In Kanchanpur two VDCs, Dodhara and Chadni, are also located on the other side of the river which forms most of the border with India, and this has resulted in a crisis of national identity for the community members living in those two VDCs.

There are frequent tensions around theft of resources from community forests by criminal groups. These incidents mostly occur in places that are close to the Suklaphanta Reserve and VDCs at the foot of the Chure Hills to the south and south-east.

### **6.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Weak government policies for the rehabilitation of the Mukta Kamaiyas over the last decade and for addressing the problems of landless people and IDPs are the key causes of internal land-related tensions in Kanchanpur. In addition to this, political interests behind the agenda of land distribution to landless people that is being pursued by all political parties have further exacerbated this problem. Water-related tensions are linked to the government's inability to mediate in disputes and address the bilateral issue between India and Nepal or to offer an alternative solution that is sustainable. Tensions and violence over forest resources are mostly linked to criminal groups who seek to profit from trafficking logged trees, rare herbs found in the forests and poaching wild animals. The open border with India has also made trafficking of forest resources and poached wildlife products easier and more lucrative.

### **6.3 Actors**

Land-related tensions were perceived by community members and key informants as mainly serving the interests of political actors, who want to gain political allies and votes from the beneficiaries of land distribution. The majority of informants also believed that not all landless people are genuine and that many are fake IDPs who want to access land in the plains of Terai for commercial purposes. Political actors from all the political parties that are active in Kanchanpur were perceived to be involved in this, including the UCPN(M), CPN-M, Tharuwan Rajya Samiti, NC, CPN-UML, MJF(D), RPP and other local parties. Criminal groups are mostly involved in trafficking of forest resources and illegal sand and stone quarrying. These are mostly male youths and male adults from all communities who commit these crimes for profit; they reportedly benefit from political protection.

### **6.4 Impact**

See section 6.4 in the chapter on Kailali district.

### **6.5 Response or potential interventions**

The majority of informants felt that the government has not been able to adequately address the problems of Mukta Kamaiyas and landless people in a conflict-sensitive manner, and both communities are unhappy with the random distribution of land. Similarly to Kailali, it was recommended that the state should initiate independent and effective measures to verify the accuracy of individual claims to Sukumbasi status and provide them with adequate compensation. A conflict-sensitive infrastructure to mediate and address the problem of river-based tensions is required from the state, as this involves bilateral discussions between India and Nepal. Informants recommended that the government should at least be able to develop a solution to prevent floods in border VDCs and water scarcity leading to irrigation problems each year.

## **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

Violence against women, including domestic violence, was reportedly very high in Kanchanpur district. Many community members, both men and women, stated that traditional values and practices linked to patriarchy such as preferences for male children continue to exist. This has led to many forms of domestic violence including rape, child marriage, polygamy and physical and sexual abuse of women. This was reportedly prevalent in all the VDCs including the municipality, but was more prevalent in Dodhara and Chadni VDCs. Former combatants and community members also mentioned that security forces from India and Nepal sexually harass women and girls crossing the border during inspections at checkpoints. They said that male security providers often poke women and girls in sensitive body parts during these inspections. Linked to this, the suicide rate is also reportedly higher in comparison to other districts of Nepal. Community members and key informants perceived this to be a result of depression, especially among women and adolescents from poor families and Tharu women; however these perceptions need to be substantiated with further research. Informants provided examples such as a quarrel between a brother and sister within a family leading to the sister committing suicide.

## 8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspots

Bhim Dutta municipality, Jhalari, Suda, Raikawar Bichuwa and Rampur Vilaspur VDCs are the main hotspots for political tensions and identity-based conflicts, but such tensions are present in all the VDCs, and community members perceived political party cadres as being present everywhere. In Dodhara and Chandni VDCs there are disputes over the location of the border between Nepal and India which often lead to tensions. Similar issues were also reported in Tribhuvanbasti and Parasan VDCs.

Community members reported that Piplari and Daiji VDCs have a higher number of domestic violence cases. In addition, in Parasan and Rampur Vilaspur VDCs women and young girls reportedly risk abuse at the hands of male criminal actors and male security forces.

Dodhara, Chadni, Krishnapur and Daiji VDCs were perceived as most affected by resource issues. Additionally, small-scale resource-based disputes reportedly occur in Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and the villages around the periphery in Rauteli Bichuwa VDC, Bhim Dutta municipality and Beldandi.

Crime was reportedly higher in Jhalari, Dodhara, Chadni, Parasan, Laxmipur and Tribhuvanbasti VDCs along with Bhim Dutta municipality. Of these districts, Jhalari, Dodhara, Chadni, Parasan and Tribhuvanbasti were perceived as the most insecure.

## Surkhet district

### 1. Introduction

This chapter discusses findings from Surkhet district, one of the hill districts of Mid-West Nepal. There are 50 VDCs and one municipality in Surkhet.<sup>14</sup> The Bheri and Karnali rivers, two of the most important in Nepal in terms of water resources, flow from Surkhet. Surkhet has three electoral constituencies: Constituency No. 1 is perceived to be the most developed compared to the other two constituencies, while Constituency No. 3 is perceived as the least developed. Ironically, this constituency is the richest in terms of natural resources and many leaders of major political parties come from this constituency.

Surkhet was perceived by many informants as having many crime-based tensions and violence such as drugs trafficking, robbery and shoplifting, extortion, illegal smuggling of forest resources, sexual violence against women and young girls, forced commercial sex work, youth violence among other violent activities. Much of the violence occurring in Surkhet was also linked to political actors such as members of political youth wings and political cadres. Additionally, political parties were perceived to be protecting criminal groups and individuals from prosecution.

### 2. General situation

There are many ongoing development projects in Surkhet district and these play an important role in shaping local and regional tensions and conflicts. Hydropower projects are a major cause of tension, and local community members protesting against them are in turn supported and mobilised by certain political parties. The disputes are mostly linked to dissatisfaction over management of the projects and usage of external rather than internal resources for their construction. This tension affects the government-funded Bheri Babai diversion project and the Upper Karnali hydropower project which is being constructed by the Indian company GMR. In addition, there is the proposed Birendranagar-Badechour link road project, which has not yet commenced, reportedly due to corruption.

Journalists and civil society members perceived the security situation as unsafe, as criticism of certain political leaders has resulted in physical threats and attacks. Although the majority of informants thought that identity-based tensions and conflicts were negligible to non-existent in Surkhet, political tensions linked with crime and resource-based tensions were frequently mentioned. Resource-based tensions were most frequently associated with political actors and criminals who reportedly receive political protection.

The situation of women seemed to be a key cause of concern, with cases of violence against women including rape, child marriage, traditional practices such as *chhaupadi* and other forms of sexual harassment continuing to take place. Drug addiction and trafficking were another key cause of concern linked to crime-based tensions which were frequently mentioned by all informants including community members, representatives of civil society, the media and the business sector, and security providers.

<sup>14</sup> Village Development Committee and Demographic Profile of Nepal 2013, Mega Publication and Research Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal.

### **3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence**

#### **3.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

Tensions between various political actors and parties exist in the district, which in a few cases have even resulted in deaths. One example is the murder of former CA member Rishi Ram (CPN-UML) by unidentified people, although CPN-UML political leaders have made allegations that the NC was involved. The investigation of his murder has not provided any conclusive findings and no arrest has been made, but according to some informants this is linked to political enmity between the NC and the CPN-UML in Surkhet. This case was the only example cited which involved the murder of a political leader, however small-scale tensions resulting in physical confrontations between different political parties were perceived to take place quite frequently in Surkhet. A recent example is the conflict between CPN-M and UCPN(M) cadres over political control in the district. This often results in physical violence between the cadres of both parties. This is present in all three constituencies of Surkhet, especially in Constituency No. 1.

Political tensions have also had a negative impact on the education sector and infrastructure projects, for example the Mid-Western University and the Upper Karnali hydropower project. The Mid-Western University is a political centre for various student unions and political parties who are looking to control the main student union of the university and use the institution as a centre for political recruitment. This has led to frequent *bandahs* since the establishment of the university, which have affected students and lecturers. Hydropower projects have suffered from management difficulties and tense relations with local community members as political parties constantly protest against the hydropower companies' policies and politicise disputes between the locals and the companies (see section 6).

#### **3.2. Causes and/or triggers**

According to informants, political tensions were linked to political instability at the national level, which was seen to be reflected by district-level political actors as well. A lack of coordination between various political parties and lack of political will were highlighted as contributing to this issue. However, at the district level political interest in controlling access to resources such as state budgets and infrastructure was seen as a key cause of tensions. Informants reported that when development tender bids are announced or there are new development projects they often lead to disputes between local communities and the concerned project management group. The majority of the informants believed that these disputes are politicised by various political parties and leaders for their own interests.

Informants expressed concerns that CA elections in the near future could lead to the escalation of political tensions.

#### **3.3. Actors**

Political leaders at the central and district level were most frequently mentioned as the main actors causing political tensions in Surkhet. This included political leaders from various parties, political cadres active in different political wings and in some cases political sympathisers.

#### **3.4. Impact**

Students, who are mostly comprised of male and female youth, as well as lecturers at the Mid-Western University have been affected by political tensions. Many informants mentioned that political tensions in Surkhet district resulted in shutdowns and *bandahs* of the university or some of its departments in the past 12 months. While some of the students are reportedly members and cadres of political parties, many were subjected to sporadic *bandahs* which disrupted the smooth running of university classes.

While some key civil society informants said that women actively participate in political discussions, community members thought that female voices were not heard during these discussions. This perception could be due to the fact that community members are guided by patriarchal norms and consider women to be home-makers rather than breadwinners.

There was a feeling among informants that political interference has led to more insecurity, as political actors protect criminals which in turn increases impunity.

#### **3.5. Response or potential interventions**

Many believed that political actors need to coordinate with civil society, media and security providers in order to respond to potential political tensions and conflicts. As political actors are thought to be the main cause of problems and tension, initiatives to help political actors engage in constructive dialogue with each other were suggested as a positive intervention. It was unclear whether such initiatives were already taking place during the research.

#### **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

##### *4.1. Problem: trends, frequency and location*

Most community members and key informants were of the opinion that there are no serious identity-based tensions and conflicts in Surkhet. A few key informants mentioned that there are still discriminatory practices towards the Dalit community by so-called higher-caste communities such as Brahmins and Chhetris. Discrimination has been practiced for many decades, and while it was perceived to have gone down in comparison to a few decades ago, it is still prevalent. This issue was perceived to exist primarily in Constituencies No. 2 and 3, but was also reported as prevalent in most parts of Surkhet including Birendranagar municipality. Many informants were also of the opinion that women and other members of the Badi community still face social isolation and discrimination based on their social background.<sup>15</sup> Surkhet does not have significant identity-based tensions or disputes compared to other districts.

##### *4.2. Causes and/or triggers*

A lack of education and information about ethnic groups and laws that prohibit caste-based discrimination were seen as the main causes contributing to identity-based issues.

##### *4.3. Actors*

They key actors perceived to be responsible for the continuation of identity-based discrimination were community members, both men and women, mostly belonging to the older generation who still hold on to the traditional value system and practices of caste-based and gender-based discrimination. These values are mostly adhered to by the Brahmin and Chhetri communities.

##### *4.4. Impact*

People from Dalit communities were thought to remain vulnerable to risks associated with being perceived as 'low class', and women from these communities are even more vulnerable. In particular, these risks included not having equal access to resources and not being able to enjoy civil liberties guaranteed by the state such as the right to freedom of religion; visiting some places of worship can reportedly result in violence against Dalits. According to some civil society informants, Dalit women were perceived to be at higher risk of SGBV by men as they are considered to be inferior and thus can be physically mistreated, often including sexual violence. Community members were also of the opinion that most criminal actors were from the Badi community, indicating negative identity-based stereotyping of a particularly vulnerable community.

##### *4.5. Response or potential interventions*

According to civil society informants, NGOs have been doing good work on community forestry issues and gender and child issues. Informants felt that these NGOs should continue to operate with support from political actors. In particular, NGOs that work on Dalit and women's issues, such as the National Dalit Network, Tewa and Awaz, were frequently mentioned as having done a lot of work in the district.

#### **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

##### *5.1. Problem: trends, frequency and location*

Crimes that were most frequently mentioned in the district by both male and female informants and community members include drug addiction and alcohol-related crime such as robbery, juvenile delinquency, theft, murder and attempted murder, sexual harassment and high levels of domestic violence. Drugs for local consumption are not produced locally, but rather trafficked from the Indian border close to Nepalgunj (Banke district) and brought to Surkhet via the highway from Kohalpur. This is reportedly more prevalent in Constituencies No. 1 and 2 than Constituency No. 3. However, women from the hill districts who have migrated to Surkhet and a few

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<sup>15</sup>The Badi community emerged through male landlords buying women as their mistresses. The offspring resulting from these relationships were not allowed to take on their father's names, and did not receive formal recognition by the state until recently. The women and children later formed what is known today as the Badi community. Badi women were and still are frequently considered as commercial sex workers, and often treated badly by society.

women from Surkhet have also been arrested for trafficking drugs. The majority of these women were caught with marijuana and hashish in large amounts. Some informants mentioned that more and more women are being arrested in this trade, which shows their increasing involvement. However, informants reported that few women consume drugs themselves, and they are mostly used as carriers.

Violence against women (VAW) was also raised as another serious issue in Surkhet; some informants claimed that Surkhet has the third-highest rate of VAW in Nepal. SGBV, which includes rape, verbal harassment, domestic violence and socio-cultural practices of gender violence such as *chhaupadi* and child marriage, is still prevalent and continues to put women and young girls at risk. SGBV reportedly exists everywhere in the district. However, there were discrepancies in the perception of levels of VAW: some informants, particularly security providers, felt that VAW is negligible in Surkhet. Recent media reports (last week of February 2013) about a 61-year-old woman who was raped by a security provider and the case of a young girl who was sexually molested by a group of youths while walking on a road in Birendranagar Municipality contradict this.

There were some discrepancies in informants' perceptions, particularly security providers, who described the use of firearms and ammunition as limited. Although sharp and lethal household weapons such as *khukuri*, axes and rods are used, pistols and guns are uncommon. Numerous media reports in late February 2013 stated that weapons such as homemade pistols and guns used by security providers during the late 1990s along with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) had been found in the jungle in Surkhet and recently used by criminal groups; these weapons had reportedly been hidden by then Maoist rebels and their whereabouts had long been forgotten.

### **5.2. Causes and/or triggers**

Political instability and weak security provision were mentioned as causes of crime. Political interference during criminal investigations and pressure from various political actors to release perpetrators was mentioned by the majority of informants as contributing to an increase in crime. Drug addiction and lack of employment opportunities amongst youths were also cited as key causes of crime-based tensions in the district. However, many were of the view that a lack of parental guidance and youths having too much pocket money to spend were among the reasons for increasing drug addiction. Some informants also stated that traditional practices such as *chhaupadi*, child marriage and Badi<sup>16</sup> practices cause violence against women. Informants mentioned that patriarchal structures and sociocultural values continue to influence the attitudes and practices of female and male community members towards women and girls which are in many cases of a discriminatory nature, such as the belief that women are at fault if they are teased or harassed by men and boys.

### **5.3. Actors**

The majority of informants repeatedly singled out youths as the main perpetrators of crime, specifically male youths and adolescents ranging from 14 to 35 years of age. These actors were found to be involved in most criminal cases. Many of them were perceived as receiving protection from the various political parties that are active in Surkhet.

Political actors, mainly youth wings, were also mentioned, including their alleged involvement in the murder of a former CA member from the CPN-UML (although the investigation of this particular case was inconclusive). Political actors were frequently alleged to be protecting criminals and thus encouraging criminal activities.

In addition to this, people from the Badi community were perceived by some community members and key informants as being involved in criminal activities in the district, including trafficking of women, wood trafficking and prostitution. However, these perceptions could be due to stereotyping a particular community that has been socially ostracised for decades for its traditional practices.

### **5.4. Impact**

Youths were perceived as being most at risk of violence in Surkhet, both as potential perpetrators and victims. They include boys between 13 and 17 years old, 18- to 35-year-old men, and in some cases young women from all communities. According to community members, everyone is at risk of violence and many people live in fear of being robbed or walking after dark because of drug users and youth gangs. However, some key informants including security providers and a few civil society informants believed that these fears were the result of a small number of cases of violence that have been reported in the media, particularly recent rape cases and thefts related to drugs.

Women and young girls were perceived to be at higher risk of becoming victims of conflict and insecurity than men due to the high levels of violence against women. Many girls and young women were reportedly scared to walk alone or after dark for fear of sexual harassment.

### **5.5. Response or potential interventions**

Some key informants and community members felt that security providers are not as effective as they could be in curbing crime. The lack of proper investigation of murder cases such as that of former CA member Rishi Ram, several rape cases including the recent case involving a 61-year-old woman, and growing drug addiction were cited as examples where security providers and authorities have not been able to respond effectively. Political interference and politicisation of crimes has also reportedly prevented adequate responses from security providers. Many community members felt that security providers need to coordinate with civil society, specifically NGOs that are locally active, in order to fulfil their functions more effectively.

## **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **6.1. Problem: trends, frequency and location**

With regard to resources, hydropower and water-related tensions were most frequently mentioned by informants. The Upper Karnali hydropower project managed by GMR has had many problems due to political actors, namely the UCPN(M) and CPN-M, protesting about its management and operational policies. The main reason for dissatisfaction in local community settlements close to the project location is that they feel the project should use local resources to construct its buildings and infrastructure and prioritise local manpower over external manpower. The protests have been ongoing since the bidding process at the start of the project. However, they have become politicised, as political parties, namely CPN-M have supported the protests and in many cases lead them, often engaging in violent tactics such as throwing stones at officials, rubbing black soot over their faces, forcefully padlocking offices and so on. Scarcity of drinking water and water for irrigation has caused minor tensions in VDCs close to the Jhupra River. VDCs near the Jhupra River also reportedly have problems relating to the nearby sand and stone quarry from which materials have been illegally extracted.

It was also mentioned that there are tensions related to community forests, mostly linked with illegal logging as well as misuse of forest resources. These tensions have existed for many years.

The issue of landless people was also raised. These communities mostly live in the north side of Surkhet in Uttar Ganga. They have reportedly been supported by ex-combatants to acquire proper government documentation verifying their status as landless people and receive land as compensation.

### **6.2. Causes and/or triggers**

Corruption was cited as a key cause of tensions related to community forests, especially in local government bodies such as VDCs. Community members stated that due to corruption within the VDCs, many infrastructure projects have not been built, implemented or maintained because government officials are motivated by personal greed and are only interested in gaining personal profit by siphoning off the state-allocated budget. They also alleged that money allocated for development is being used for personal expenses rather than VDC development and that political leaders and cadres receive their cuts from the pervasive corruption. However, further research is required to substantiate these perceptions.

Deforestation was also identified by some key informants as a cause of resource-based tensions, as depleting natural resources have led to scarcity of wood and other forest plants for the increasing population.

### **6.3. Actors**

See section 3.3. In addition to political actors including political parties and youth wings, informants stated that there are a number of criminal groups active in smuggling forest and river resources. Reportedly, these criminal groups are mostly comprised of male youths of varied social origins and are often protected by political parties.

### **6.4. Impact**

See section 5.4.

### **6.5. Response or potential interventions**

Many felt that government authorities and security providers have not been able to respond to the tensions and crime related to natural resources in a transparent and effective way. They explained that political interference and corruption are barriers to an effective response from the state.

Some informants discussed the idea of a women-only mechanism for community forestry as a positive initiative to control misuse and logging of wood. This idea has been initiated in the Gomi community forest area by FECO, and community members felt that it has been effective in curbing crime related to forest resources so far.

Several key informants felt that investing in education and awareness-raising on environmental issues and natural resources would lead to more people becoming aware of environmental issues and bring about attitudinal change.

## **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

Suicide was often mentioned as frequently occurring in Surkhet, mostly among female members of the community. Some informants related this to domestic violence, assuming that women who had engaged in extra-marital relations were committing suicide due to social shame; however, the researchers had the impression that this assumption was related to existing gender stereotypes rather than confirmed facts, so further in-depth research is required to establish the magnitude and cause of this problem. Overall, patriarchal values and practices are pervasive in Surkhet. This was evident during the research in discussions where male community members felt that women and girls were to blame for being verbally harassed by male youths due to their self-conduct.

Health-related security risks such as a lack of health services and an increasing number of HIV/AIDS infections were also mentioned as a cause for concern in Surkhet.

## **8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspots**

Resource-based tensions are reportedly higher in Sattakhani, Jarbuta, Latikoili and Ratu VDCs along the Jhupra River, and VDCs around the Upper Karnali hydro-power project next to Dailekh district. Deforestation, disputes over usage of community forests and theft of resources from these forests were reported to be more prominent in VDCs such as Taranga, Hariharipur, Kunathari, Latikoili, Lekhaparajul, Ramghat, Satakhani, Babiyachaur and Jarbuta. Crime-based tensions were frequently mentioned by the community members and youths as occurring in Taranga, Hariharipur, Lekhaparajul, Uttarganga, Latikoili, Jarbuta and in Birendranagar municipality. In addition to this, road accidents were frequently mentioned as a key cause of insecurity, occurring more frequently in Birendranagar municipality and Latikoili VDC. In addition to the criminal activities described above, cases of violence against women were reported to be higher in Birendranagar municipality, Latikoili, Jarbuta, Taranga, Hariharipur, Uttarganga and Lekhaparajul VDCs.

Political tensions were described as mostly taking place in Birendranagar municipality, and also frequently occurring in VDCs such as Lagam, Betan and Ghatgaun.

A majority of informants felt that there were no tensions around identity issues. However, Latikoili VDC was mentioned as a location where these have occurred in the past, although they were perceived as minor disputes.

# **Banke district**

## **1. Introduction**

Banke district is a commercial and administrative hub for the Mid-West region. Located in the Terai, it shares a border with India. It has one municipality, the district capital Nepalgunj, and 46 VDCs. In 2005/06 it had a population of 385,840 people, 78.49 percent of whom were Hindu, 18.99 percent Muslim and 2.02 percent Buddhist.<sup>17</sup>

Banke was reported by many informants to have been comparatively stable in the past six months in terms of political and identity-based political activities. Although crime and violence were reportedly still occurring, informants perceived that the security situation had improved, which they attributed to proactive policing.

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<sup>17</sup>Banke District Profile 2005/06, Statistics Office, Banke.

## **2. General situation**

The security situation in Banke has generally improved over the past twelve months and people feel more secure now than they have for many years. However, political instability at the national level continues to have a negative impact at the local level, and a combination of political in-fighting and institutional corruption hampers development across the district from the ward level upwards.

Increased cooperation between civil society organisations, district-level administration (Chief District Officer and Local Development Officer) and the Nepal Police (NP) has had a positive impact on the security situation in the district. A combination of targeted awareness-raising activities and improved and coordinated responses to a variety of tensions, conflicts and violence by civil society organisations, the local administration and the NP have helped bring about these positive changes. Development planning has also become more bottom-up and mechanisms have been established by district-level civil society representatives and religious leaders to prevent and address disputes from the village level upwards.

## **3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence**

### *3.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

Over the past twelve months there has been very little political tension, conflict or violence in Banke. One key informant said that it was almost as if the district was sleeping. The Baidya/Prachanda split within the UCPN(M)<sup>18</sup> has thus far not resulted in any obvious tension between party cadres in the district, although relations between the two factions have the potential to deteriorate should cadres receive instruction from district-level leaders. In general, political parties exploit people's emotions, personal grievances and underlying identity or rights-based tensions for political gain without any regard for the consequences.

### *3.2 Causes and/or triggers*

The majority of key informants said there were still a lot of political/identity-based grievances in the district as none of the root causes of previous tensions had been addressed, and that violence was therefore almost guaranteed if/when elections are announced. Some informants said that if central-level discussions on federalism are resumed there may be some tension in the district even if elections are not confirmed. There were also some concerns because the Baidya faction has stated that they would not only refuse to participate in elections, but also prevent elections from taking place.

A potential future political/identity-based trigger mentioned by one informant was the debate around secularism versus Hinduism, particularly as there is a lack of understanding of what secularism is.

### *3.3 Actors*

Members of the political parties are key actors involved in tensions. A large number of people at the local/VDC level were more concerned with daily survival than politics and had little interest in or knowledge of district or national-level political debates. However, political parties sometimes pay villagers to participate in demonstrations, though the villagers often do this without fully understanding the underlying reasons behind these demonstrations.

### *3.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)*

As there have been very few political tensions over the last year, there was no reported impact.

### *3.5 Response or potential interventions*

The relationship between political parties remains fractured and unpredictable, but efforts have been made by various political parties (including the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum – Democratic) to bring all political stakeholders together in order to increase cooperation at the district level. Cooperation between the parties is important to reduce the chances of tensions and violence if elections are announced.

Around four to five years ago a Local Peace Committee was established to seek justice for all conflict victims from both sides (state or Maoist), which would not have been possible in the past as communities were too polarised. This more open environment has been partially due to peacebuilding initiatives from civil society

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<sup>18</sup> In June 2012 the senior vice-chairman of the UCPN(M), Mohan Baidya, split from the party and formed his own political party, the CPN-M, which is perceived as more radical and ideologically closer to the Maoist party as it was at the onset of the 'people's revolution' in 1996.

organisations working with conflict-affected groups. However, most conflict victims or their families were still awaiting compensation.

#### **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

##### *4.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

There have been no incidents of identity-based tension, conflict or violence in Banke over the past few months. This is clearly related to the absence of regional-level political activities as the two are closely interlinked. However, there are sensitive issues in the district, including Madhesi/Pahadi rivalries and religious, especially Hindu/Muslim divisions.

In 2007/2008 there were violent communal riots in Nepalgunj between Hindu and Muslim communities which resulted in a number of deaths. In the wake of this violence, several inter-religious dialogue initiatives, including the Religious and Social Harmony Committee (RSHC), were established to try and ensure that any potential communal tensions are dealt with before they deteriorate into violence. While these initiatives have proved remarkably successful and there have been no further incidents of communal violence in Nepalgunj, relations between Hindus and Muslims remain fairly sensitive in the district.

##### *4.2 Causes and/or triggers*

Banke has a heterogeneous population comprised of various Madhesi and Pahadi castes, ethnic and religious groups, and Nepalgunj is home to one of the largest Muslim communities in the country. While these disparate caste, ethnic and religious groups co-exist peacefully on a day-to-day basis, there are still concerns that the security situation could deteriorate quickly if manipulated by political/criminal elements, which would have a negative impact on the security situation in the whole region.

##### *4.3 Actors*

See sections 4.1 and 4.2 above.

##### *4.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)*

As there have been no identity-based tensions in the district for several months, no examples of any impacts were reported.

##### *4.5 Response or potential interventions*

Civil society organisations have been extremely active in countering religious tension, conflict and violence in the district. In particular, the RSHC, which is run by prominent religious leaders (Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh and Christian), has played a vital role in improving inter-religious relations over the past five years. There were repeated concerns that elections or tensions at the central level could cause violence, but there are no plans yet on how to tackle this. One suggestion was to give the religious leaders of RSHC training on conflict management to prepare for any possible tensions, as they are considered to play a crucial role in mitigating violence and tension.

#### **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

##### *5.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

While crime levels have reportedly reduced over the past twelve months, a combination of the recent change in district-level NP leadership<sup>19</sup> and elections for the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) resulted in a spate of criminal activities over the past two weeks. Two shootings (one fatal), a kidnapping and repeated incidents of extortion of local businesspeople were perceived as having destabilised the security situation. In general, extortion of local businesses and kidnapping for ransom by loosely organised criminal groups, though reduced, remains a problem in the district. Criminals benefit from political insecurity and use politics as a cover.

VDCs south of the Rapti River bordering India are extremely remote and have become a hub for criminal activities such as smuggling (including small arms). Police presence in these VDCs is minimal, creating an enabling environment for illegal activities by low-level and opportunistic criminal groups.

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<sup>19</sup>There is anecdotal evidence that when a new SP is appointed, criminals will try to test how far they can go.

Drug-smuggling and drug use has decreased over the past twelve months, but it is still a big problem in Nepalgunj and some border VDCs, particularly Jaispur VDC.

There has been an increase in the number of reported cases of domestic violence, violence against women and rape, though it was not clear if this is due an increase in the number of cases occurring. It was noted that rape cases are often settled in the village due to concerns of delayed justice. Though there are awareness-raising programmes dealing with these issues, there were differing views as to whether women are becoming more comfortable bringing cases to the police.

It was also noted that security is good where there is no political interference, but weakened where such interference occurs. There were also a variety of views on the extent of political, or even lower-level police links to or involvement in criminal activities.

### **5.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Two key reasons were mentioned for the recent incidents of insecurity in Banke: there was an assumption that with a new SP in place, criminals were trying to test how far they could go. The previous SP was perceived to be highly effective by all informants in ensuring security in the district. In addition to this, the FNCCI elections in late February 2013 resulted in an increase in violent crime and extortion of election candidates and other local businessmen by criminal elements in an attempt to control the outcome of the elections.

Drug abuse and alcoholism was mentioned as a key reason behind what were referred to as 'social crimes', including petty theft, domestic violence and violence against women.

### **5.3 Actors**

Low-level criminal groups, allegedly with strong links to India (threats to businesspeople were sent via Indian mobile numbers and four people arrested in connection with the above incidents had Indian citizenship), have been held responsible for the recent spate in criminal activities. These groups were reported by some to be purely criminal in nature and have no political linkages. However, others reported threats from armed groups perceived to have links or informal connections to political parties. Threats to FNCCI leaders were reportedly made by one underground armed group through the use of Indian mobile numbers, which are easy to access and difficult to detect from across the border.

Illiterate women from the hill districts (particularly Rukum and Jajarkot) were perceived as being increasingly targeted for work as drug carriers by criminal groups. Either 24 or 100 Nepali women (according to different key informants) are currently detained over the border in India for drug smuggling and have no access to legal assistance.

### **5.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

In 2012 all VDC secretaries were forced to take refuge in Nepalgunj due to a mass extortion of VDC offices by armed groups. This problem was brought under control but there are concerns it may occur again.

### **5.5 Response or potential interventions**

The police response to the above incidents was immediate and fairly strong, which many informants hoped would ensure that the security situation would stabilise within a few days.

In response to the deteriorating security situation in Jaispur VDC, local people set up a committee to tackle the problem and declared their VDC a 'drug-free area', which reportedly has reduced the incidence of drug-smuggling and drug-related criminal activities. The police have also been active in carrying out awareness-raising programmes in local schools in an attempt to reduce drug use among youth in the district.

Civil society organisations and media act as watchdogs and ensure there is political space to raise security-related concerns. Civil society also has several informal mechanisms which mediate local disputes: particularly mentioned was the work of INSEC, the Bar Association and the Human Rights Network.

## **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **6.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

There was very little resource-based tension in Banke district. There has been criticism of some local community forest user group committees, which are reportedly highly corrupt and sell forest resources (wood

and animal products) without the consent of the local communities in which they are based. There have also been reports of wood, sand and stone smuggling.

There were also recently tensions over the displacement of freed Kamaiyas for an infrastructure project.

VDCs south of the Rapti River are subject to severe flooding during the monsoon season, which has hampered development in the area. Many of the wards in these VDCs still have no access to electricity, in spite of their relative proximity to Nepalgunj.

### **6.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Displacement of freed Kamaiyas from their land because of road expansion has recently caused some tension. They have not been allocated any new land as yet. In Kohalpur, the government is also planning to evict landless people from the place they have been living in for the past ten years without any planned alternative location for them (there may also be problems in Bhankautwa and Rajuwa VDCs involving landless people). In Balapur VDC, people were displaced by the government for the Sikta irrigation project and conservation area. So far the government has not been able to address their demands for compensation and this might lead to conflict in the future.

### **6.3 Actors**

See section 6.2 above.

### **6.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

See sections 6.1 and 6.2 above.

### **6.5 Response or potential interventions**

The government was said to be trying to address the problems of flooding of the Rapti River, but there were concerns that if the building of a stone wall went ahead, or if something were to go wrong with it, it would negatively impact fertile land.

## **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

The local government was described as weak, with local government employees unaccountable and frequently absent. Local elections for VDC secretariat positions have not been held for 15 years, which could be a source of future tension at the local level. Corruption was also widespread.

Difficulties in getting citizenship documentation were noted several times as causing problems and could also lead to tensions.

Migration from remote hill districts to Banke in search of better employment and education opportunities has increased within the last few years, putting additional strains on local resources. If not managed correctly, this could potentially lead to increased tension between recent migrants and long-term residents.

## **8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspots**

Nepalgunj municipality and Kohalpur VDC are reportedly most affected by political tensions and strikes, as there have been violent protests in these two places in the past. In some cases these protests have also been linked to identity-based issues.

VDCs south of the Rapti River (Katkuiya, Laksmanpur, Kalphanta, Matehiya, Gangapur, Holiya, Phattepur and Binauna) are hotspots for criminal activity and resource-based tension. Jaispur VDC is a hotspot for criminal activity, particularly illegal drug use/smuggling. Kohalpur and Nepalgunj municipality were perceived as the main transit point for trafficking of women. In addition to these locations, Jaispur, Bhawaniapur, Phattepur, Laxmanpur, Kalaphanta and Katkuiya were identified as the most insecure VDCs for women.

In Kohalpur VDC there are several land issues relating to displacement and eviction which could lead to tensions in the future. Resource-based tensions were mostly reported in VDCs such as Katkuiya, Laxmanpur, Kalaphanta, Matehiya, Gangapur, Holiya, Phattepur, and Baijapur.

# Bardiya district

## 1. Introduction

Bardiya is a district in the Mid-West region bordering India. Bardiya is well known for its fertile land and wildlife reserve. More than 50 percent of the district's inhabitants are Tharus. Some Bardiya residents like to introduce their district as the 76<sup>th</sup> district of Nepal because people of various castes and religious communities are said to have migrated there from all 75 districts. The population of Bardiya is 338,785 according to the latest census results; of this total, 160,352 are males and 178,433 are females.<sup>20</sup> The district has 30 VDCs and one municipality. Bardiya borders Banke in the east, Surkhet in the north, Kailali in the west and India's Uttar Pradesh state in the south.

Bardiya was found to be politically stable compared to the two neighbouring districts of Kailali and Banke, and it was often reported that political and identity-based political decisions taken in the other two districts filter across to Bardiya. In terms of crime and overall security, much of the illegal activity is linked to the abundant natural resources found in Bardiya as well as the open border with India which has increased trafficking and is seen as providing criminal actors easy escape from prosecution.

## 2. General situation

The perceptions of local community informants about the general conflict and security situation in Bardiya did not correspond to that of the state authorities in the district. The general public felt unsafe and vulnerable due to various insecurities, while the state authorities reported a more positive perspective. For example, a senior law enforcement officer mentioned that there were very few cases of crime reported to the police. For him, this meant there was a good security situation in the district.

Regardless of these differences, there were a number of commonalities in the issues mentioned by the informants. Rape, trafficking of women, domestic violence, prostitution, abduction, and drug abuse by youth were described as the most significant problems in the district.

Latent tension between the Tharu community and Pahadis also persists. Although there were no reports of overt confrontation or conflict between the two communities, sentiments expressed by informants hinted at the underlying tension between these communities. Conflicts related to land, security issues related to the open border with India and migration were among other key challenges mentioned by informants.

An informal dispute resolution mechanism exists in the Tharu community. This is known as the *badhgar* system, where the eldest or most respected member of the community acts as a mediator/facilitator to resolve disputes and tensions. Tharus tend to use this mechanism to resolve disputes more frequently than the formal legal system.

## 3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence

### 3.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location

There was no indication of any district-level political tension, conflict or violence. However, it was quite apparent that politics and politicians were disliked by the general public because of the perennial squabbles between political forces. Essentially, community members perceived that politicians are simply wrangling for power and positions; each party is only concerned with installing their party's candidate as prime minister and they care very little about the daily concerns of the general public. Some viewed the prevailing political calm as the 'calm before the storm', and thought that this could change in the future. The establishment of the Baidya faction following the split in the UCPN(M) was reportedly being watched warily by people in the district.

### 3.2 Causes and/or triggers

Some informants believed that the current political calm could change in an instant if the central-level senior politicians wanted to opt for confrontation. The general perception was that elections could potentially trigger tensions and conflict between the various political forces in the district.

<sup>20</sup> National Population and Housing Census 2011, Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu, Nepal, November 2012; <http://cbs.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/National%20Report.pdf>

Construction contracts tend to stoke tensions between the political parties. According to one key informant youth groups affiliated to political parties struggle to secure these contracts because they are financially very lucrative.

### **3.3 Actors**

The youth groups affiliated to political parties are considered their vanguards. When tensions over political issues arise it is the members of these youth groups who take part in confrontations. Party leaders were mentioned as actors who generally serve as provocateurs, encouraging party cadres to engage in confrontations against their rival forces by employing inflammatory rhetoric. Party cadres are perceived to be acting at the behest of their leaders rather than independently.

### **3.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

As informants did not mention any immediate, acute political tensions, the impact was mainly limited to general concerns that tensions between political parties and groups might flare up again and potentially escalate.

### **3.5 Response or potential interventions**

The Local Peace Committee (LPC) is the existing political mechanism that serves as a platform to maintain peace in the district. The LPC in Bardiya organised a 'Mass Gathering for Peace' in Rajapur VDC to address the unstable political situation. This programme was directed by the government and tried to propagate a message of peace and harmony. It also called on the community to be aware of elements in society that wanted to undermine peace and create chaos. It was perceived as a successful initiative by the informants.

## **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **4.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

Identity-based tensions exist in Bardiya between the Tharu community and Pahadis (people of hill origin). Although there were no reports of overt confrontation or conflict between the two communities, sentiments expressed by informants hinted at the underlying tensions between these communities. Expressions such as "people of hill origin came with a hat and they should leave with a hat because they belong to the hills" were reportedly heard among the Tharu community. Tharus reportedly do not allow Pahadis to collect water from their taps, and call the Pahadis 'buffalo eaters'.

### **4.2 Causes and/or triggers**

The majority of Bardiya residents are Tharu. They constitute more than 50 percent of the district's population and are supporters of the Tharuwan movement, which is demanding a Tharuwan state if the country is divided into federal units. To date this movement has not displayed bellicose assertiveness. Members of the other half of the district's population, which is comprised of individuals from different identity groups, are somewhat concerned about Tharu assertiveness but are not reported to be fleeing the district.

### **4.3 Actors**

The Tharu and Pahadi communities could potentially be the two rival camps if the issue of federal states based on identity were to re-surface. As the Tharus support the creation of a Tharuwan state and the Pahadi community is against it, tensions between these two groups cannot be ruled out. Prominent members of these communities are seen as able to rally them around certain issues, especially political leaders and intellectuals.

### **4.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

The non-Tharu population is fearful of claims for a Tharuwan state and the potential consequences this might have for non-Tharu residents. There is a strong tendency among residents to congregate along ethnic identity lines rather than according to political convictions or affiliation. As one respondent noted, people definitely attend programmes organised by members of their own ethnicity in the name of their identity group. However, they are less inclined to go for programmes organised by the parties they are affiliated with. Ethnicity is reportedly a better rallying call than party affiliation.

Events and activities in the adjoining districts were also mentioned as having an impact on Bardiya district.

### **4.5 Response or potential interventions**

No examples were given of interventions or responses to the tensions between the Tharu and Pahadi communities.

## **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### *5.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

The official data on tensions, conflicts and violence related to crime in Bardiya did not correspond to community members' statements. According to district law enforcement officials, only eight cases of crime have been reported in the district in the last seven months. Community members, however, stated that crimes were being committed but they were afraid of the perpetrators. There was a tendency to turn a blind eye to criminal activities due to the fear of reprisals from the criminals. Some doubted the government authorities' ability to curb crime, as there was a general perception that even the authorities fear the criminal elements.

Drug abuse among youth was reported by many key informants. Youth are also reportedly involved in hooliganism and brawls. Informants mentioned the use of home-made weapons such as knives, swords and metal rods during these fights and to commit crimes.

Due to Bardiya's proximity to the open border with India, there was a general perception that the unregulated border is a major factor contributing to insecurity in the district. Criminals from the across the border can easily cross over, commit a crime and flee. Similarly, it is easy for criminals to commit a crime in Bardiya and then sneak across the border and evade penalties. Informants mentioned cases where Bardiya residents had employed Indian criminals to commit a crime in the district. Reportedly, crimes are more frequently committed in Gulariya VDC.

Women also felt unsafe venturing out in their communities at night due to the fear of being robbed or sexually assaulted. This is apparently a recent phenomenon.

### *5.2 Causes and/or triggers*

Unemployment was viewed as one major factor fuelling crime. As many youth are unemployed, they resort to crime in order to meet their personal economic needs. The open border with India also serves as an incentive because perpetrators can easily cross the border to avoid prosecution.

### *5.3 Actors*

Political parties reportedly provide patronage to criminal elements in the district. There was a general perception that a clear nexus exists between politicians and criminals. Their symbiotic relationship serves mainly to earn quick money. Some key informants expressed the opinion that the police are helpless and cannot take action against criminals because of their links to powerful political actors.

Young people, mainly men, are involved in drug-related crimes. Some key informants even mentioned the involvement of children in criminal activities. Women are also involved in smuggling drugs such as hashish and marijuana. Out of 39 people arrested in 13 recent cases, eight were men and 31 were women.

### *5.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)*

Although the rise in crime in Bardiya has affected the whole of society, it is the youth who were described as being affected the most. Youth are mostly involved in substance abuse and crime according to informants in the district. Younger children are emulating teenagers and becoming drawn into crime. Women also felt vulnerable in their communities due to criminal activities.

### *5.5 Response or potential interventions*

Informants highlighted that due to political interference, the police are not able to take necessary action against criminals with political connections.

## **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### *6.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

A conspicuous issue in the district is the presence of landless squatters. Of the 83,000 or so households in the district, around half (approximately 46,000) claim to be landless. Some are genuine landless households because their land has been swept away by the monsoon floods. Others, however, were perceived as staking a

false claim in order to receive free land from the government. While there are no acute tensions or conflicts around this issue, the large number of landless claimants in the district could potentially lead to tensions in the near future. In addition, even though the landless people may not be squatting on private property, the residents of one particular area did not want landless people around their village or town. They viewed the landless as a nuisance and as a threat.

Another land-related issue is that some of the land occupied by the Maoists during the conflict era has yet to be returned.

Water for irrigation is scarce but so far no conflict or violence has ensued. Allegations that stones from the Karnali River were being transported to India also caused concern over the exploitation of natural resources by foreigners.

Mukta Kamaiyas also reside in the district. There was reportedly a clash between these Kamaiyas and the local population in Dhodari VDC because the Kamaiyas were felling trees in spite of opposition by the locals to logging.

## **6.2 Causes and/or triggers**

The primary cause of tensions over resources is the ownership and use of land. Landless claimants in the district constitute around half of the households. This includes those who have migrated from other districts as well as those who have lost land due to erosion or flooding. However, the local inhabitants viewed these landless claimants as frauds who had migrated from other districts. They believed that the claimants own land in other districts but are claiming to be landless in the hope of receiving free land from the government.

## **6.3 Actors**

Tensions exist at one level between those who have legal ownership over land that has been occupied and the landless. Another level of tensions exists between landless people and those who reside close to their settlements, who view the landless as a nuisance and as a threat. Political forces are also involved in the issue of landlessness. Since landless people are also voter banks for the political forces, they try to woo these voters by providing them access to land.

## **6.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

The presence of landless people has resulted in the illegal occupation of land belonging to the government or other owners. Landowners are frustrated with the encroachment and claims made by the landless. One key informant mentioned that an area previously designated as a conservation area had decreased significantly in size. Krishnasaar Conservation Area reportedly used to be 708 hectares, but has been reduced to 400 hectares because it is now occupied by people claiming to be landless who are being used by political parties. The administration has not been able to evict them because they are protected by Maoists and were previously being protected by the UML. The Maoists were reportedly collecting Rs 100 from each landless household in the conservation area in return for political protection.

## **6.5 Response or potential interventions**

Within the Tharu community a traditional conflict resolution mechanism exists. Tharus go to the *badgar* (a respected individual within the community) if there is any conflict between members of the community. Another informal mechanism to resolve conflicts also exists in the district. Known as Samudayik Madyasthakarta (Community Mediators), they are active in Maina Pokhar, Madyapur and Soraha VDCs.

## **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

Migration to foreign destinations is common among Bardiya residents. Women constitute a large number of these migrant labourers. VDCs like Jamuni, Sanosiri and Taratal are witnessing a large exodus of migrant labourers via India. As a result of this migration, many cases of social problems were reported. Cases of women eloping with lovers after taking all the wealth sent by their spouses from abroad are increasing.

Some key informants were worried that Nepali citizenship was being distributed to Indian nationals and that they could then demand land and other facilities from the government. There were also concerns that they could play a pivotal role in tilting election results.

The level of domestic violence was reported by most of the informants to be high in the district. Violence against women, especially rape, is also frequent.

## 8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspot/s

Identity-based tensions were reported in Rajapur, Mantapara, Bhimapur and Dhodari VDCs and Gulariya municipality. Most of the incidents between Madhesis and Muslims were perceived to be taking place in Mohamadpur, but it was not clear whether this was factual or a perception by people mostly Pahadi settlements.

Resource-based tensions were reported in Dhodhari, Bhaniyabhar, Taratal, Bagnaha, Padanaha, Magaragadhi, Patabhar, Kahairi Chandan, Sorhawa and Dhadhwar VDCs. Most of these areas had irrigation and river-related disputes.

Gulariya municipality and Sanosiri, Mainapokhari, Kalika, Neulapur, Magaragadhi and Baiyabar VDCs were identified as political hotspots.

Locations mentioned as hotspots for criminal activities were Gulariya municipality and Sanosiri, Bhaniyabhar, Magaragadhi, Belwa, Jamuni and Pashupatinagar VDCs.

## Dang district

### 1. Introduction

Dang is a Mid-Western Terai district which shares a border with India. It also serves as a transit hub for districts like Rolpa, Salyan, Rukum and Pyuthan. Dang has 38 VDCs and two municipalities; the headquarters are Ghorahi and Tulsipur. Of its population of 552,583 people, 96.46 percent are Hindus, 1.34 percent are Christians, 1.16 percent are Buddhists and 0.87 percent are Muslims.<sup>21</sup>

Dang was mentioned as relatively insecure and rife with criminal activities compared to Salyan and Rolpa. This was attributed to Dang being a transit point for people travelling to Mid-West hill and mountain districts of Nepal.

### 2. General situation

People in Dang, at least in some areas such as Ghorahi, are better off than in other districts and most people were reported to own their own land. However, many rural VDCs are less developed, including in social development and in some areas women do not even know their own age. These were said to be mostly from the Tharu community, which is indigenous to Dang.

A lack of irrigation is limiting agricultural potential. Load-shedding is also a problem in Dang for businesses and creates uncertainty which discourages entrepreneurs. In addition to these, unemployment is also a problem. These concerns are increasing migration out of Dang, and even women are migrating to Qatar, Malaysia and Dubai for work. At the same time, people from other districts have migrated to Dang, but this was not reported to have created any tensions. Other problems mentioned were that development activities are hampered by political interference and political parties seeking their share of commissions, a lack of drinking water, and what is known as *pani muni raheko ko pul* ('a bridge below the water') – rivers flowing over a causeway on roads that are designed to allow this – which are very hard for pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists to cross during monsoons. Traffic accidents are also a major problem in Dang, with two or three accidents daily.

Dang was highly affected by the civil war as it is located in the Rapti zone where the conflict started and where thousands of people rallied. To this day many conflict-affected people have not received relief, which is a lingering source of frustration. In addition, after the end of the civil war, many Maoist combatants felt they could not return to their place of birth and be rehabilitated back into the community because of what they had done during the war, and thus many settled in Ghorahi and Tulsipur municipalities.

### 3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence

#### 3.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location

<sup>21</sup> Village Development Committee and Demographic Profile of Nepal 2013, Mega Publication and Research Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal.

National politics greatly affect the political situation in Dang. The major political parties in Dang are the Maoists, NC and UML and to some extent the former Home Minister's party,<sup>22</sup> the MJF(D), though there are other minor parties as well. During the CA elections, Maoists took all the seats for the district. There have reportedly been no political clashes between any political party or faction for six months. The political parties have also committed themselves not to interfere in the work of the police so that the police can conduct fair investigations, though there were contradicting opinions about whether this is really happening.

During the CA elections in 2008 there were clashes between UCPN(M) and NC, which left seven people dead and casualties on both sides. But more recently there have not been any such clashes as politics has become more centralised, and there is a perception that in Dang, district-level parties are only engaged in 'tea talk'— that is, political discussions that are not leading to decisions. The situation now is perceived to be cordial.

### **3.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Elections were perceived as a big threat to security, and there were concerns that political groups would seek to 'capture' voting booths, which could fuel tensions and result in clashes. However, it was seen as the responsibility of the political parties to ensure that elections were peaceful and that bad incidents did not happen, for example by avoiding the use of harsh words which could incite clashes and by mobilising youth in a peaceful manner.

It was mentioned that any tensions in national political debates would be likely to raise tensions in the district. However, delays or inaction in national level politics were also noted as a potential source of insecurity, as was foreign interference, which was said to have increased a lot (one key informant said that the country has started looking like an NGO).

There were still feelings of revenge for incidents which happened during the war, particularly in the villages. As no reconciliation commission has been established to try to resolve such negative incidents, these could lead to conflict in the future, particularly around elections.

### **3.3 Actors**

In October 2012 a man from the MJF(D) shot two NC cadres at a festival. Both survived but the perpetrator escaped before the police were able to arrest him. The NC first protested against the administration before they arrested him, claiming they were not acting because the perpetrator was from the then Home Minister's party. When he was arrested and sent to court, his party issued a press statement against the administration saying they had been high-handed and that it was a conspiracy against their party. As a result the district administration was criticised by both groups.

There have reportedly been two to three incidents since 2012 of fights between youth groups, including youth wings from political parties, but these did not escalate further. These were perceived to have been caused by political or individual disagreements, as sometimes the work of one youth group can be hampered by another youth group. Particularly mentioned were clashes between the YCL and the Youth Force (YF), which resulted in many injuries. One youth from YF was severely injured by YCL members and YF sought to take revenge. Another incident involving youth was in Beljhandi where the student wing of UCPN(M) locked the campus of Sanskrit University for 2 months. They unlocked it after meetings between the all-party mechanism and civil society, but it was commented that there must have been pressure from the central level and local level as well.

### **3.4 Impact**

See section 3.3.

### **3.5 Response or potential interventions**

Political parties were reportedly said to coordinate their work, including work on development. It was also thought that there was some kind of informal agreement between all the political parties that social harmony should be maintained in the district.

The police and local government seemed to be dealing with many disputes, but it was noted that there were also organisations working on women's issues and human and child rights (including child labour), and youth networks working to prevent youth from getting involved in drugs and alcoholism.

## **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

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<sup>22</sup> Bijay Gachhadar from the MJF(D) was Home Minister at the time the assessment was carried out.

#### **4.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

In the past there have reportedly been *bandahs* by Tharus demanding the establishment of a Tharuwan state. However, the current situation was perceived as peaceful as the population is very mixed and there are many non-Tharus in Dang as well. Indeed, some key informants reported that Tharus were moving out of Dang to Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts. At the time of research there were no big conflicts or tensions about identity-based issues, and though there may be small arguments, these have not escalated.

Since the CA election in 2008, several ethnicity-based groups have reportedly formed their own associations which advocate for separate ethnic identities.

According to informants, in the villages there are incidents of caste-based discrimination at a personal level, but these do not turn into wider tensions or clashes. Even conflicts over inter-caste marriages are not known publicly.

More people are perceived to be converting to Christianity, particularly among the Janajati and Dalit communities. By early 2013, this has not created any problems on a community level, but there were examples of it creating problems within families between those who had converted and those who did not want to.

One key informant mentioned that in 2005 there were clashes between the Hindu and Muslim communities after a Muslim killed a Hindu in Chanauta VDC. In response two Muslim shops were burned down by Hindus in Tulsipur, and in Ghorahi thousands of Hindus demonstrated in the streets, terrifying the Muslim community. However, the FNCCI was able to calm the tensions and hold a dialogue with the Hindu community, and was successful in stopping the clashes. It was reported that there is now harmony between the Hindu and Muslim communities.

#### **4.2 Causes and/or triggers**

At one time there was a danger of conflict when an oppressed caste/ethnic group<sup>23</sup> wanted to assert their identity as their rights had been suppressed, but a caste/ethnic group perceived as privileged did not want to give up their positions of power. Conflict was avoided but disagreements over caste and ethnicity should be addressed promptly or they may cause problems in the long run. It was mentioned that if identity issues are politicised, with political parties backing one group against another, there could be clashes.

#### **4.3 Actors**

In May-June 2012 Brahmins and Chhetris protested to demand their inclusion as Janajatis.<sup>24</sup> There were several protests at different times, but they did not result in any clashes.

#### **4.4 Impact**

See section 4.1 for the impact of caste-based discrimination and conversions to Christianity.

#### **4.5 Response or potential interventions**

See section 4.1.

### **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

#### **5.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

Drug abuse is reportedly very high in the district, especially among youth in the cities, and drug addicts were suspected of committing crimes. Some drugs are coming in from India while others are exported from Dang to India. Informants mentioned that people from Rolpa and Rukum, including elderly women, have been involved in smuggling hashish and there was even a case of an ambulance being used to smuggle hashish, though it was later determined that the driver had not known about the drugs he was transporting. Poverty was seen as the main reason people get involved in smuggling. However, the investigative unit of the district police was praised as effective by few key informants.

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<sup>23</sup> The names of groups were not given.

<sup>24</sup> Brahmins and Chhetris demanded to be considered as natives of Nepal as well.

Violence against women, SGBV and domestic violence are perceived to be occurring frequently in Dang (see section 7).

As the district is a transit point, people are able to commit crimes in Dang and then flee across the border to India.

Robbery is frequent in Dang and there are also cases of shootings and traffic violations. On a smaller scale, there are cases of forgery, blackmailing, threat calls, extortion, hooliganism and burglary, but these were reported to have decreased. Threat calls use Ncell SIM cards as they are easily available and can be bought without a reliable form of identification. More regulations on who can buy Ncell SIM cards and what form of identification is needed would make things more manageable for the police. There was also a case of the Bank of Kathmandu being robbed, but this was an inside job organised by one of the cashiers working at the bank.

There was an incident on the Tulsipur VDC-Salyan district border about two months ago where an IME (International Money Express) employee was shot on a 25 km stretch of road which has no security checkpoints. The victim survived but the money was stolen by a gang; the investigation is still ongoing. (This case is also mentioned in the chapter on Salyan).

There is still a problem with child labour, particularly female child labour. Police and certain organisations rescue children who are victims of child labour and take them back to their parents. It was reported that these children are mostly from the Tharu community because of cultural practices,<sup>25</sup> though economic challenges, including lack of food, were also mentioned as a reason why the children were forced to work. It was noted that it is usually the organisations who inform the police of such cases, and informants criticised the police for not being sufficiently proactive on this matter. There were concerns that even though Kamalaaris (female bonded labourers) have been freed, this will not be much help if there are no comprehensive programmes to help them with education and employment so their lives can be improved. Without employment opportunities, poverty is driving some children to go back to the houses where they used to work.

There are a lot of land occupation cases dating from the conflict period, but there were very big differences of opinion as to whether progress was being made on this issue: one informant said almost no progress had been made while another said that 95 percent of these cases have been resolved. The latter informant said that the state authorities handle such cases, mostly returning the land, but they do discuss it with the Maoist leaders – though the Maoists reportedly say that the issue is between the tiller and the owner and not part of the Maoist agenda.

## **5.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Alcohol was seen as either a reason for crimes or a factor contributing to them. Police have tried to curb it, for example by not allowing vendors to sell large amounts after 9 pm. However, people manufacture it illegally and while police destroy any stocks they find, they cannot eradicate it as the political parties interfere because this affects their voters.

It was thought that crime was increasing (at least partially) due to unemployment, particularly among those involved in the war who settled in the cities as they were not able to go back to their villages. The lack of political stability was seen as encouraging cases of extortion.

A lot of crimes which happened during the civil war have not been addressed yet, causing tensions between the victims and perpetrators which could lead to revenge attacks.

## **5.3 Actors**

Tulsipur VDC was said to have a high crime rate. There has been an increasing number of gang fights there, but it is suspected that those involved are protected by the police as even if they are arrested, they are released in the morning. There have also been many cases of rape in Tulsipur, but these are not taken seriously by authorities and the perpetrators frequently escape punishment. In addition to the shooting incident (see section 5.1) there was also a reported case of a gold shop being robbed in Tulsipur and an increase in cases of extortion. Cases of such extortion occurred one year ago when the Ganatantrik Terai group called business people and teachers to demand money. Tulsipur is only 24 km from Ghorahi so this affected business in both areas and travel between the two. The security sector and FNCCI took initiatives to stop this.

There has been an increase in such forced donations. Youth engaged in gang fights, drugs and even the use of guns in the western part of the district were thought to be behind this. This occurs mainly in the VDCs of

<sup>25</sup> This might refer to the fact that the previous feudal system used Tharus as bonded labour (Kamaiyas), and children were often bought by wealthy landlords from their families.

Urahari, Tarigaon and Hekuli and in Tulsipur municipality. They use phones to make threats for extortion and in some cases even shoot villagers. One person was killed while gambling in Urahari VDC during the last Diwali festival when 12 to 15 criminals, mainly minors aged between 14 and 15, were stealing money. These minors were detained and sent to a correction home in Kaski district as there is no correction home in Dang. However, they did not say who was mobilising or using them. If they had, the police could have pursued the main criminals. Youth networks were encouraged to organise programmes in the areas where this happened as it was believed that these crimes were due to a lack of awareness.

#### **5.4 Impact**

One key informant said a bomb was set off in a vehicle of the Western Development Bank in Ghorahi, which caused an environment of fear. This was mentioned when discussing the high crime rate in Tulsipur (see section 5.3), but no further information was given, nor did the informant elaborate whether there was a connection between this event and crime in Tulsipur.

#### **5.5 Response or potential interventions**

Except for Saigara and Siuja VDC, there is road access to all other VDCs in Dang, which is very helpful to the police as it allows them to respond faster – this is seen as key to being effective and trusted as well as ensuring things do not get out of hand and escalate into something bigger (informants said that even in cases like traffic accidents it is important to get there in time and convince the victim not to make ‘outrageous demands’).

There is a Women and Children Service Centre in the District Police Office in Ghorahi, and more people are aware of it and are now coming to the police. The police felt that there was no difference between men and women in terms of access to security and justice provisions, though other informants were not of the same opinion. There is a demand for more police presence, and in three cases communities have built buildings and are demanding that the police send personnel to man them.

Police do much of the dispute resolution, though there are also organisations working on women’s issues and human and child rights. Informants also mentioned that there are community mediation centres in many VDCs with trained mediators who handle cases, as well as youth networks and Mother’s Groups who try to resolve issues at the local level but sometimes go to the Nepal Bar Association for help. There are peace committees as well but these reportedly only handle the financial aspect of the re-integration process. In Dang there is a tendency to compromise rather than bring a case to the criminal justice system.

### **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

#### **6.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

The increasing population means that resources have to be divided, which can be contentious. There were also problems with landless people, but people felt that the government should create policies for this and thus far it has not led to any clashes.

There are two cement factories operating within 10-15 km of each other, and another being built in the district. These have brought benefits such as increased movement and business opportunities in the area, as well as problems, such as locals only getting lower jobs while senior jobs go to Indians, increased prostitution and environmental problems. Though these factories are new, the police have already been approached by several groups claiming that the pollution from these factories and associated activities was covering their grass with dust and that the tippers were restricting the movement of locals as they cannot walk on the roads without being covered in dust. There are also concerns that the stone mining for these factories is increasing the risk of landslides and land erosion and is causing a lack of drinking water, though these were concerns and the actual impact remains to be seen. The police see a conflict brewing between the operators and the community. However, there were already discussions on how to prevent pollution, which might be causing illness, and the slow destruction of existing roads. The most affected VDCs are Saidha, Syuja and Kabhre, where most of the mining occurs. In Kabhre, however, women already said that going to the jungle was risky because of the fear of falling stones, and that this was limiting their ability to go to the jungle. However, these are recent developments and the only protests known to have happened so far were when locals in Rolpa (also affected by the mining and dust) protested that they would not allow the tippers to move on their road. In response, the cement factory now sends a water tanker to put water on the road in the village to reduce the dust. This is seen as having relieved the problem somewhat but not resolved it.

Other resource concerns in Dang include frequent disagreements over the usage and ownership of community forests and smuggling of wood, stone and sand. Deforestation on hills such as Dakshin Chure (Northern Hill) and Mahalekh was highlighted as a particular problem. The Community Forest Users Group and the District

Forest Office were reported to have good relations, but one key informant mentioned that political interference was hampering police efforts to stop wood smuggling.

A lack of irrigation and drinking water were also mentioned as resource problems. In places where there is no well water available, people need to collect water from the canals used for irrigation, often having to collect it at night when the water is less dirty. Such problems are especially found south of the Rapti River as well as in Hapur and Saidha VDCs where locals have to walk for one to two hours to get water.

There was also a minor conflict between two groups over *guthi* (a social association that is implementing social, cultural and economic activities). One group said that their ancestors were looking after it so it was their culture and right to look after it, while the other group said the community should take charge of it.

## **6.2 Causes and/or triggers**

In Purandhara VDC in the west of Dang there was talk of integrating some of the forest in Dang into the Banke National Park. This led to a conflict as locals in Dang protested against designating Dang forest as a conservation area. However, this has quietened down for the past eight to nine months.

## **6.3 Actors**

In Deukhuri area three to four months ago there was a case of deforestation where members of the community forest user groups had been working with smugglers to log wood illegally, but this was stopped by the police who apprehended them and forwarded the case to the court.

One incident of tension occurred three years ago when a group of people living near the border came to the forest and captured forest land near the Mahendra Highway. They moved there to receive services such as electricity and water (which were their demands). The police were later deployed to move them and they were returned to their original land with a promise that they would be provided with such services. It is not known if this promise was kept.

There were also claims that in some border areas India had occupied some land that was part of Dang and that this caused a conflict but nothing had been done about it. These claims could not be verified.

## **6.4 Impact**

See section 6.1 for the impact of the cement factories and lack of drinking water.

## **6.5 Response or potential interventions**

See sections 6.1 and 6.3 for responses.

## **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

Domestic violence and violence against women are perceived to be major problems, particularly in the villages, and often fuelled by alcohol and drugs. There were also reports of rape cases. There are many unemployed people who drink and gamble all day and this causes problems in their homes, according to many informants. Though violence against women is a crime by law, in general it is still not considered a crime by many people in Dang. There is also a lack of awareness and application of human rights. Polygamy was also reported as being widespread and child marriage is common in Dang, particularly with uneducated and unskilled women/girls. One specific case mentioned was in Urahari VDC, where a husband beat his wife to death. It was reported that there are many such incidents in the villages.

In terms of domestic violence, it was noted that if in a family both the man and woman work, then there is less domination by the man. However, if only the husband works, then his wife is dependent on him and is more likely to be dominated by him. Also, if a wife is economically dependent on her husband, then the cost of seeking justice can be a problem, as can concerns by these women about what will happen afterwards if they need their husbands. However, women are becoming more aware and active, even in politics.

There are many women's organisations which help victims, and women can also go to the police station though this happens less often. There is a perception that criminals do not get punished as police and authorities are corrupt and that the process takes a very long time. In addition, there is an expectation that the woman will have to go back to her husband and his family in the end, so it is better not to cause problems. However, cases relating to women are increasingly being referred to the district level if they cannot be resolved at the VDC level. Some women bring the cases to the district level themselves while others, especially women from the

villages, are assisted by other women or NGOs. WOREC was specifically mentioned as one organisation a lot of rural women turn to if they have problems. The Bar Association is organising literacy classes on the topic of access to justice. This is a central-level programme supported by the Norwegian Bar which is run in 12 to 15 VDCs and will be expanded to other VDCs. However, it was also noted that many of the I/NGOs working on this issue are based in the cities, while the need is greater in the villages.

There are cases where wives are not given citizenship documents or wedding registration by their husbands. They then need to go to the CDO's office to get such documents. The local authorities also deal with cases where husbands try to sell land without the consent of their wives. In such cases the authorities bar the man from selling it.

Something else which was noted was suicide. In Dang a nine-year-old girl committed suicide for unknown reasons. In general in Dang, the two main ways of committing suicide are through hanging or through poison (which is normally used on farms). Many reasons were cited for this, such as arguments between husbands and wives (either one might commit suicide), poverty, inter-caste marriages or cases linked to the war such as loss family members or land.

## **8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspot/s**

Tulsipur municipality was perceived as the most sensitive location due to the substantial population of Muslims, and there were previous tensions there in 2005-6. As well as Tulsipur, there are have reportedly been some cases of Hindu-Muslim tensions in Ghorahi. Tulsipur was also mentioned as sensitive to Tharu-Pahadi tensions. In addition to these locations, some informants also perceived Gadhawa and Tribhuvanagar VDCs as relatively sensitive to identity-based issues. For political tensions, Tulsipur, Ghorahi, Hapur VDC and Tribhuvanagar VDC were mentioned as key hotspots.

Tulsipur municipality and Ghorahi were reported to have a high crime rate. Along with these two locations, Koilabas, Bela and Rajpur VDCs were reported as insecure due to various criminal activities. Satbariya, Urahari and Gobardaha VDCs were also mentioned by some as relatively unsafe. Urahari VDC, Tulsipur and Ghorahi were frequently mentioned as the most insecure areas for women. In addition to this, VDCs near the border such as Bela, Rajpur and Koilabas were also described as relatively insecure.

Kabhre VDC along with Saigha and Syuja VDC were mentioned frequently as hotspots for resource-based tensions. Purandhara and Dhanauri were also mentioned as VDCs linked to deforestation and illegal tree logging. VDCs near the Indo-Nepal border such as Bela, Koilabas, Rajpur and Gobardaha were frequently mentioned as having land-related disputes.

# **Salyan district**

## **1. Introduction**

Salyan is a hill district in the Mid-West region, close to the Terai. It has 47 VDCs but no municipalities. Out of a population of 242,444 people, the vast majority, 97.71 percent, are Hindu, but there are smaller religious groups including Christians (1.28 percent), Buddhists (0.82 percent) and Muslims (0.11 percent).<sup>26</sup>

Salyan was described as relatively secure and most of the problems reported were related to lack of development and infrastructure in this district, leading to unequal distribution of basic resources such as water and electricity.

## **2. General situation**

Most of the people in Salyan are engaged in agriculture for at least part of the year, often working in the fields for six months and then spending six months doing other labour. Agriculture is going well and the district even exports vegetables to other districts, but the lack of a proper market or cold store facilities limits economic returns on products. In addition, water was mentioned as a particular concern, as well as lack of electricity and development.

Overall, peace and security in Salyan was said to be good. There are very few tensions politically and most incidents of political tensions happened several years ago. Concerns of identity or caste were thought to exist on an individual level but there have not been open tensions based on identity. National politics and uneven

<sup>26</sup> *Village Development Committee and Demographic Profile of Nepal, 2013*, Mega Publication and Research Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal.

distribution of opportunities were the issues which have the greatest potential for causing problems in the future.

Insecurity is increasing, however, as there has been a rise in criminal activities. Particularly mentioned were robbery and the worsening situation for women in the district. Marital problems, including extra-marital affairs, have increased, caused by people (both men and women) going abroad to work, and were often linked to other problems such as illegal abortions. Divorce rates and polygamy have also increased, as had the number of cases of domestic violence, violence against women and rape. Women also faced discrimination outside the house, including at work.

It was often noted that people in Salyan frequently resolve their problems at the community level, or occasionally at the police station. Not many cases are registered with the courts.

### **3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence**

#### *3.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

While the political awareness of people in Salyan was said to have increased since the end of the civil war (one key informant noted that even in the furthest VDC from the district headquarters people have contact with all political parties), there seemed to be little interest among the people in political discussions or tensions. While it was frequently mentioned that there are disagreements between individuals for personal reasons or political parties both at the village and district level, these were always described as small and not leading to bigger problems or violence. However, one informant, a local female journalist, thought such arguments were increasing in number. Among the political parties, it was mentioned several times that relations have improved a lot in recent years after clashes two to three years ago. The all-party mechanism was working well in Salyan which has helped relations between the parties (see section 3.5).

The specific incident two to three years ago which was mentioned was a clash between the CPN-UML and the UCPN(M) when the CPN-UML had a district convention in Salyan which was addressed by the CPN-UML chairman Jhalnath Khanal. The problem between the parties was later resolved in the presence of the district administration office and police personnel. Everyone who spoke on this matter mentioned that relations between the political parties had since improved.

Other incidents mentioned included a recent protest rally organised by the CPN-M against appointing the Chief Justice as prime minister. 20-22 party cadres attended this protest but it was not violent and ended peacefully in the presence of security personnel.

There was one incident six to eight months after the dissolution of the CA, when the national newspaper *The Kantipur* reported that there had been discussions about dividing Salyan district geographically. The political parties accused each other of dividing Salyan and people called for a 'single Salyan' (*akhanda Salyan* in Nepali). There were tensions in the district for three to four days. However, civil society mediated to calm the situation and the UCPN(M), Nepali Congress and CPN-UML soon stated that they had not proposed dividing the district. It was decided that the news report had been false.

Regarding youth, it was reported that the youth organisations of political parties are mobilised around special issues like elections. One interviewee did mention that one year ago there was quite a big fight between Youth Force and the YCL which involved stone-throwing, but it was noted that now the arguments were small (see section 3.3).

Several key informants mentioned corruption and political interference. Some community members claimed that political leaders solved their disagreements over budgets by dividing up the money among themselves, and another noted that political support was needed for everything, including filling a vacancy.

In general, people seemed to have little interest in politics and little faith that politicians could or would change anything. They also believed that politicians were only working for their own interest. If there are tensions between political parties or between political parties and government agencies which cannot be resolved between the two groups, then civil society leaders are usually called on to solve the problems and after two to three days relations normalise. Salyan was repeatedly described as being tolerant and it was stated that the people did not have time for tensions.

#### *3.2 Causes and/or triggers*

Adverse national level politics and events were thought to be able to create tensions in the district in the future. There were concerns that elections could trigger political tensions, but it was felt to be a 'wait-and-see' situation.

Another potential trigger mentioned which could cause tensions in the future is the distribution of compensation to war victims. Both the internal mechanisms which determine who is eligible to receive compensation and concerns about political parties withholding aid are issues which could bring out social tensions between individuals and villages.

Finally, concerns were raised by some informants that children associated with armed forces and armed groups (CAAFAG) or verified minors and late recruits (VMLRs) are sometimes labelled as 'disqualified' and this is causing tensions and hindering their reintegration into society.

### **3.3 Actors**

See 3.1 for examples of which actors were involved in incidents.

Political youth wings have been mentioned as actors that have been, and might again be, involved in tensions and violence. Of these, the YCL was reported to be quite organised in Salyan, with meetings and regular activities. The Youth Force of CPN-UML is also well organised, meaning these two groups are more prepared if called upon. Tarun Dal, the youth organisation of the Nepal Congress party, on the other hand, was said to only be mobilised around specific issues, but is generally weaker and does not have regular political meetings.

### **3.4 Impact**

Political leaders reportedly prefer to spend budgets on visible projects such as roads and schools. This means that although the District Development Office, Local Development Officers and NGOs discuss women's and children's rights or other development issues, even if they agree on projects to address these issues, there are no budgets for these as they are not prioritised by the parties. This has negatively impacted those for whom the budget was allocated and distanced local authorities and civil society from the political parties.

Few civil society informants did mention that political parties sometimes force locals to join them unwillingly during their party conventions, but this could not be verified by other sources.

There were also concerns that political connections allowed criminals to go unpunished.

### **3.5 Response or potential interventions**

In cases of small arguments, these are usually addressed by civil society leaders and the CDO and sometimes even by the leaders of the groups themselves. The political parties are perceived to be cooperating well with each other. There was reported to have been a meeting where they decided to work together to solve problems through the all-party mechanism, and this has led to mutual cooperation between the parties. However, they still make decisions internally and choose their own people for development work. There was also some confusion over whether one party was left out of the cooperation mechanism, and if so whether this would cause problems in the future.

## **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **4.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

There was a general perception that there are low levels of caste-based discrimination in Salyan. There were concerns, particularly at an individual level, from minority groups about caste and identity-based discrimination and rights, but this has not created any wider tensions or clashes. Within the Dalit community it was perceived that so-called higher-caste Dalits dominate so-called lower-caste Dalits, but this also has not created any larger issues. So-called higher-caste people sometimes also blame lower castes for social ills (see section 7). The only time tensions occurred, they were resolved peacefully.

Some civil society informants, however, perceived that much attention and protection has been focused on the Dalits and even the Madhesi, and that recently Chhetris and Brahmins have started to feel left out. It was reported that they were forming small groups to demand their rights as well. This has not created any problems as yet but it has the potential to lead to problems in the future. Similarly, few informants said that minority groups were becoming more assertive about the quotas provided for them and one particular group, Salyani Rautays, started making demands from the government, but this had been resolved.

## **4.2 Causes and/or triggers**

See section 4.1.

## **4.3 Actors**

See section 4.1.

## **4.4 Impact**

The only impact mentioned was that new identity groups were being formed (see section 4.1).

## **4.5 Response or potential interventions**

As identity was not seen as a problem in Salyan, there were no examples of mechanisms or responses designed specifically to address identity issues. Such mechanisms were mentioned in connection with political disagreements (see 3.5).

# **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

## **5.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

Overall, Salyan was considered safe and there have been few criminal incidents. However, there were varying opinions about how safe VDC secretaries were outside of the district headquarters.

Theft/robbery committed by unknown groups is increasing, particularly in the villages but less so in the headquarters. These groups are sometimes armed and steal money from teachers and businessmen or ask for donations, sometimes robbing a person who has just collected money from IME (International Money Express).

There was a recent case repeatedly mentioned in Damachaur VDC where a teacher carrying the salaries of other teachers was robbed by an unknown armed group. The case was reported to the police but at the time of research there had not been any outcome. The police did provide the victim with documentation so that he could collect some money from locals to pay the other teachers.

There are reportedly groups who collected money, particularly from businessmen, giving a receipt saying '*janatanrik*' in return. It is not known what the money was used for. Even though some of the collectors were arrested, the informant suspected that they were later released. The collectors were thought to come from Salyan as well as other districts and they were suspected of being affiliated with political parties who protected them and encouraged them to collect money, but it was not known who they were and thus this could not be confirmed. The collection of money was noted to have increased during festival seasons.

In another incident, Rs 400,000-500,000 were stolen from an IME employee who was shot by a rifle on the road from Dang to Salyan. The victim survived but the perpetrators got away as there was no police presence on the long forest roads in Salyan. (This was on the district border and may actually have taken place in Dang; there was some confusion about this – see Dang chapter).

It was also reported that cases of extortion by groups threatening people through phone calls demanding money or favours had increased. Such groups used easily-available Ncell SIM cards, but may rotate their target area and thus after operating in Salyan one and a half years ago, they may now have moved on to another district. The police also apprehended one member of an extortionist group, which may have contributed to halting such incidents. It was also reported that a group named 'Tiger' called rich people and asked them for money or to do some work for the group. It was unclear if this was the same group involved in another incident where a bomb was found at the premises of the FNCCI, claimed to have been carried out by a 'Tigers' group.

Other crimes mentioned included high rates of suicide and homicide (some accidental, but also including wives killing their husbands in revenge for violence), fights regarding land and problems with personal money lending. This can lead to crime as often no documentation is made of the loan, so if the party who borrowed the money later refuses to return it or denies having borrowed it, the lender has no proof and this has caused fights. Drug use does not appear to be as prevalent as in other districts as it was mentioned by only few informants as a problem in Salyan.

There was reported to have been an increase in criminal activities relating to extra-marital affairs, domestic violence and violence against women. Extra-marital affairs were noted to lead to murder and illegal abortions,

with several cases of women killing newborns who resulted from such affairs. Violence against women has also increased in the last two to three years, including cases of rape (or at least the reporting of such cases has increased). Worryingly, the trend of rape is changing compared to three or four years ago and recently children have been raped as well. On domestic violence, few civil society informants noted that while it was mostly women who suffer from this, in some cases men had also experienced such violence. Other forms of discrimination against women are discussed in section 7 below.

One interesting note mentioned by a female respondent when discussing domestic violence was that she thought that, while normally it was the victim who reports domestic violence, sometimes it was the perpetrator who goes to the police to report the problem. She did not give a reason as to why this might be.

### **5.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Some informants perceived that the main reason for robbery was poverty and that people had learned to do this during the war. Now that they are unemployed and have suffered during the war, they are using the skills they have. This could not be verified by other sources.

### **5.3 Actors**

See section 5.1.

### **5.4 Impact**

There was said to have been an increase in rape cases, especially in the Dalit community. The perpetrators are sometimes from within the same community as the victim and sometimes from other communities. Some cases are reported to the police, who investigate, but if the perpetrator belongs to a political party it is suspected that they are released without punishment. People were frustrated by this but no major action has been taken against it.

### **5.5 Response or potential interventions**

The district police department has tried to solve cases and there were discussions about establishing new police stations but people were sceptical that this would happen. To make Salyan more secure, it was suggested that there should be more police posts as people sometimes need to walk for two to three days to reach the police, and that the police should patrol more regularly on the road from Dang to Salyan. It was noted that in some VDCs such as VDCs 2, 7, 9 and 10 there is no police presence. There have been calls by some VDC secretaries who stay in the headquarters due to insecurity for police stations to be opened in their areas, but not much appeared to have been done on this matter. Informants also pointed out that police stations should also have sufficient personnel so that the station is not vacant when the police go on patrol. There should also be more female police officers so women can be more comfortable going to the police.

It was suggested that there should be points or centres where information on security-related issues could be exchanged between security personnel and the public. It should be noted that the police station in Khalanga did have a 'citizen's help desk' at the front to improve public service.

Worryingly, it was reported that 90 percent of domestic violence cases supposedly did not go to court. They were solved either in the community or in the police station. Even compared to other districts in the area, Salyan has a low number of registered domestic violence cases per year. In cases where domestic violence was reported, victims reported it to the police, human rights activists or lawyers.

When probing why people did not go to court, several informants noted that the police were corrupt and would solve cases or problems inside the police station for their own benefit, charging a 'fee' for having solved the case. Cases such as polygamy, rape and even women being thrown out of their house after being accused of being a 'witch' were all reported to have been solved inside police stations.

## **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **6.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

The shortage of water was repeatedly mentioned as a big resource problem, including a lack of drinking water. It was noted that this leads to health and sanitation problems. In Khalanga in particular this reportedly causes arguments over water at an individual level, especially between women, and at a community level. In other places people sometimes need to walk for two or three hours to get water, or even a whole day if there are no roads.

Wood smuggling was also noted as a big problem and was thought to be increasing, though those involved were believed to be coming from outside Salyan. There are three VDCs where forestry is abundant, which if managed properly could be very beneficial to the district. However, there was a suspicion that political parties and even the police were involved in wood smuggling, though this could not be verified. There were also reported to be occasional disagreements in border areas (Salyan-Rukum, Salyan-Rolpa) over forest use, but it was thought that these rarely become violent. Forest tensions or fights often involve women as they are the ones looking after the household.

Finally, there are major problems with electricity and load-shedding throughout the whole district, including the headquarters. This is exacerbated as the schedule for electricity is not followed, which makes things more difficult.

It was noted that people do not like to share resources, thus resources need to be well managed to avoid tensions in the future, and solutions require sufficient funds.

## **6.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Misunderstanding and lack of awareness among resource users on how to manage resources, especially over water and especially among women who are usually the ones who get water, was said to be making matters worse.

## **6.3 Actors**

There was a suspicion that political parties and even the police are involved in wood smuggling, though this could not be verified. One reason for this suspicion was a case where a person was caught smuggling wood worth Rs 400,000, but it is suspected that he bribed some people as his case was dismissed.

## **6.4 Impact**

See section 6.1 for the impact of water shortages and tensions over forestry use.

## **6.5 Response or potential interventions**

See section 6.3 for the response to a smuggling case.

Scarcity of resources such as water and electricity, and the difficulty this causes, was mentioned as a reason for people migrating out of Salyan (see section 7 for more detail on migration).

## **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

There has been a lot of migration out of the district due to the hardships and lack of opportunities for young people. Those with more money go to Kathmandu while the others go to Dang or Banke's district capital Nepalgunj. Nepalgunj is becoming more popular as a destination as there is no load-shedding and it is both close to the Indian border and to Salyan. People are also going to India and Gulf countries to work and send back remittances. This is leading to a brain drain and is also causing problems as the remittances are not being used properly, with 80-90 percent spent on daily consumption and not much saved. Migration, especially for work, is leading to a lot of social problems such as extra-marital affairs.

There are also cases of discrimination against women which may not be criminal but still contribute to social insecurity and tensions. Examples include cases where women are labelled as 'witches' or 'prostitutes' and thrown out of the house. In fights between husbands and wives, women are sometimes accused of being *boksi* (witches), and this can lead to domestic violence. Many people (women and human rights activists, reporters, etc) were reported to be helping to reduce the levels of domestic violence and it was said that even for *boksi* problems the Women's and Children's Office (WCO) and the police would help. However, there are cases where women fear serious consequences if they complain to the police and some informants perceived that women do not feel safe to lodge complaints in the police stations. It was also noted that, although reduced, there were still cases of so-called higher-caste people blaming so-called lower-caste people for these problems.

Reportedly, divorce has recently become a major problem for women as well, including in inter-caste marriages, as have cases of polygamy (often with the husband leaving his first wife and children) and fights with in-laws.

Discrimination against women was mentioned to be increasing both in the house and in the office. Curiously, some civil society informants perceived that discrimination had even increased since people had become more educated, though the reason for this could not be explored.

Community-based groups such as women's group and mother's group was identified as the first point of contact for women to report any problems they have, but without a budget there is not that much these groups can do even if problems are reported to them. The Women and Children's Office, or other governmental agencies such as DDC and VDC, mediate in cases involving discrimination against women. Lack of awareness was mentioned as a reason why problems for women are likely to increase in the future and women themselves think they are weak. Illiterate women were identified as more likely to face problems. In terms of gender disparities in access to police and judicial services, for smaller cases women do not try to access such services at all and men very rarely do so. People try to solve their problems between themselves and only rarely come to the VDC with their problems. Cases that had been brought to the court included husbands leaving their wives and land disputes.

It should also be mentioned that alcoholism was identified as a major problem as well. Mostly found among men, it is also increasingly seen among women, which was thought to be due to loneliness while their husbands were abroad.

Looking at what could cause tensions in the future, few informants thought that the lack of political concern about people migrating to other countries and the social problems caused by migration and the money which is sent back would lead to problems in the future. There were also concerns that if opportunities or assistance were distributed in an unfair or biased manner, including to civil war victims, this could increase tensions. Ex-combatants also specifically mentioned class as a concern which could cause future tensions or conflict.

## **8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspot/s**

Khalanga was described as the area most affected by political tensions, and in some cases this was linked to identity-based tensions which were perceived to be very minor. Some informants identified Jimali VDC as another future hotspot for identity-based tensions.

The road between Dang and Salyan, where an IME employee was shot and robbed, was said to be in need of more patrols as it was noted that long forest roads often do not have a police presence. Damachaur, Kalagaun and Kajeri VDCs were perceived as the most insecure in terms of crime. Along with this, Khalanga was also noted as having significant levels of crime-related activities. Some community members also identified Sinbang, Kabhrechaur and Warhukhola as affected by crime and insecurity.

Some areas along the Salyan-Rukum and Salyan-Rolpa borders were prone to disagreements over forest use. Khalanga and Dhakadam were described as facing acute water shortages and several disputes have reportedly already taken place. Kalagaun, Tharmare, Warhukhola and Kotmola VDCs were reported to be most affected by community forest-related disputes and tensions. Kotbara, Kajeri, Sinbang and Rim VDCs were also mentioned by some as having minor disputes related to community forests and water resources.

# **Rolpa district**

## **1. Introduction**

Rolpa is a hill district in the Mid-West region. It borders Pyuthan, Salyan, Dang, Rukum and Baglung districts. According to the latest census results, Rolpa has a total population of 224,506, of which 103,100 are males and 121,406 are females. 85 percent of the inhabitants are Hindus. Most of the inhabitants are Kham Magars. Other ethnic groups such as Dalits, Brahmins and Chhetris also reside in this district.

Rolpa is often romanticised as the heartland of the Maoist insurgency. There are numerous narratives of how social, economic and other grievances festering among the populace coupled with the rugged terrain made this district ripe for revolt. In fact, Thawang VDC in Rolpa was acknowledged by the Maoist party as their capital. As a consequence, Rolpa has become synonymous with remoteness and the Maoist insurgency.

Rolpa was found to have more stability regarding local political and identity-based issues than any other researched districts. Cases of reported crime were few in Rolpa. However, violence against women and domestic violence were perceived to be increasing and were often linked to migration of male household members and alcoholism.

## **2. General situation**

The current situation in Rolpa can be characterised by the absence of outright conflict and violence, but there are indications of simmering tensions. The fear and uncertainty that pervaded the psyche of the Rolpali during the conflict has certainly subsided to a great extent. Residents feel more secure than during the conflict days. However, they are still vulnerable because the remnants of the conflict have not been completely gone (the damage inflicted by the conflict on the psyche of Rolpali residents is still an uncharted territory). In absence of a formal healing and reconciliation process, the district's future still remains difficult to ascertain. Additionally, other insecurities continue to pose a serious challenge.

Following the peace accord, however, there have been some remarkable development works in Rolpa. During the conflict, the Maoists frequently coerced the populace to build roads in the remote areas of the district. Road building has continued in the aftermath of the conflict as well. There was unanimity among informants about the fact that road access in the district had increased significantly in the last five years. Telecommunication facilities, especially the use of mobile telephones and wireless internet service, are improving. In the district headquarters, the sight of building construction is common. Informants also remarked on the improvement of healthcare facilities and an increase in the number of educational institutions in the district.

Among the insecurities plaguing the district, unemployment is perceived as a key cause. Many informants believed that unemployment is the root cause of the district's insecurity. Unemployment has a direct correlation to migration, which in turn is linked to the rise in crime, domestic violence and divorce rates in the district. It is also leading to alcoholism and a rise in child labour.

Tensions between different religious groups have begun to surface in Rolpa. Tensions between the slowly expanding Christian community and the non-Christian community (particularly Hindus) are coming to the fore.

The culture of compromise and reconciliation seems to be widespread in the district. The tendency to resolve disputes and conflicts within the household or the community seems prevalent. Community members and informants perceived that Rolpali are less inclined to take their disputes or conflicts to the state authorities for deliberations. Instead, they prefer to settle them among themselves. Even in criminal cases when one party has been killed or injured, there still exists a tendency to resolve the issue through reparations from the responsible side. This preference for reconciliation was often attributed to ignorance of the parties involved and also to the long and tedious nature of legal mechanisms, which serves as a deterrent.

Some of the credible entities engaged in social development of Rolpa are Mahila Sanjal, Ama Samuha, RUDAS, INSEC, WOREC and CWIN. The names of these organisations came up frequently during the interviews.

## **3. Political tension, conflict and/or violence**

### *3.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location*

In the political arena there seemed to be harmony among the various political forces in the district. Most of the informants affirmed that there had not been incidents of political tension, conflict or violence between the political parties in the district. While many still believed that the Maoists continue to have a formidable influence in the district, others begged to differ. Those who differed argued that their grip has waned to a great extent because people are disillusioned by the squabbling in central-level politics and the inability of the Maoist government to deliver on their promises. However, some believed that the harmonious relationship between the parties could easily be shattered if the central-level political discourse becomes acrimonious. Despite having amicable relations at a personal level, incidents of local political actors attacking each other verbally during functions remain common, according to informants.

### *3.2 Causes and/or triggers*

Informants voiced concerns that decisions at the central level to take a more confrontational stance against other political parties and their constituencies could trigger tensions at the district level. The split of the UCPN(M) into two different factions seemed to be a major concern of many informants. The uncertain political course of the new Maoist party seemed to have unsettled certain residents. They worried this new outfit would re-engage in violent activity. This fear mainly stems from the party's public remarks about taking up arms and re-institutionalising its conflict-era military formations to complete the real revolution.

### *3.3 Actors*

See section 3.2.

### **3.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

The harmony between political parties was perceived as a great contributor to security in the district. People equated peace to the absence of violent clashes between the political forces. Even the state authorities find the working atmosphere pleasant when the political parties have amicable relationships and cooperate and co-exist in harmony.

### **3.5 Response or potential interventions**

No specific responses or interventions were mentioned.

## **4. Identity-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **4.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

Informants consistently referred to Rolpa as a Magarant area. The Maoist party has labelled Rolpa as a Magarant region, citing the Magar majority in the area. Despite Rolpa being categorised as a Magarant district, there appeared to be no tensions between the various ethnic groups residing in the district. Amicable relations persisted between the various ethnic groups. Informants mentioned that cultural harmony had existed between the various ethnic communities residing in the district until the Maoist insurgency, which to a great extent tore the communities apart. However, following the peace accord, the previous bonds have been revitalised.

Although the Maoists had barred the age-old tradition of untouchability, it is slowly re-surfacing in Rolpa. The untouchables themselves are returning to the traditional mores of not entering the homes of so-called upper castes. This was due more to self-imposition rather than enforcement by so-called higher castes.

Interestingly, there is an on-going tension between two Magar groups in the district known as '12' and '18'. There is a slight variance between their respective dialects, but both want their dialect to be the primary dialect of the entire Magar community. No violence has yet ensued as a result of this tension.

Following the political upheaval of 2006, Rolpa has witnessed a marked rise in the number of churches. The rise in the number of churches and converts was perceived as a potential problem by the non-Christians. The non-Christian community is observing the rise cautiously and discussing the reasons for and methods of conversion. Non-Christians alleged that proselytisers are exploiting their ignorance and impoverishment of the Rolpals. Although there have not been cases of violence between these two communities, simmering tensions over proselytising were easily discernible.

### **4.2 Causes and/or triggers**

The increase in proselytisation was being viewed as a cause of tension. For example, some community members during group discussions related how the proselytisers were deceiving innocent Rolpals by saying that if they converted to Christianity, then all their ailments would be cured. As a result many are converting in the conviction that Christianity will cure their ailments.

If one of the two Magar dialects were to be recognised as the official dialect of the Magar community, it could potentially trigger some conflict between these two groups. According to one respondent, if either one of these dialects is used during a function, then there is a tendency for the other group to protest against the decision not to use their dialect.

### **4.3 Actors**

There are existing frictions between two Magar groups ('12' and '18'), primarily over linguistic dominance.

There are simmering tensions over religious conversions. The non-Christian community views the increasing presence of missionaries and conversions negatively.

### **4.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

According to majority of informants, those from the economically deprived communities were being deliberately targeted for proselytisation. This is increasing the existing divide between those from the lower economic strata (who are converting to Christianity) and the so-called upper castes (who still remain Hindu). As a result, it is creating divisive identities. Previously both groups at least had a common religious identity. With religious

conversion, different identities are becoming more distinct and both sides tend to adhere to those identities even more stringently.

#### **4.5 Response or potential interventions**

No responses have been devised to curb the tensions between the two religious communities. Neither has there been any initiative to resolve the ongoing tension between the two Magar groups.

### **5. Crime/armed group-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

#### **5.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

Both the state authorities and various other informants interviewed for this research stated that there was no organised crime in the district. However, the production and transportation of hashish from the district indicates otherwise. Production and smuggling of hashish seems to have increased in recent times. The number of arrests of individuals ferrying hashish to other districts illustrates that hashish smuggling is a major criminal activity in Rolpa.

Other than that, domestic violence, rape, polygamy and drug use remain the major crimes in the district. Robbery and burglary are also common crimes committed in the district and many informants attributed this to the widespread unemployment among youth. Cases of rape are also reportedly on the rise. In one case in February 2013, a father was apprehended for having repeatedly raped his daughter who was a minor.

A number of informants brought up the case of an armed outfit called "Mongolian Revenge Group". Reportedly, this group was led by a Nepal Army deserter named Tek Pun. The group attacked a police outpost in Pyuthan in 2009 and then moved to Rolpa with the looted weapons. Later, however, Tek was killed and the other members of the outfit were arrested by the police.

#### **5.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Many informants perceived that the monetary needs of the youth as being the primary driver behind a surge in crime. In the absence of employment opportunities or any other source of revenue, drug addicts were thought to resort to crime to purchase illegal substances and finance their habits.

Along with unemployment among youth, the misuse of technology was cited as a direct cause of the increased crime rate. While technology can be a deterrent against crime (it is now easy to communicate and report crime), it equally facilitates crime because it also allows immediate and easy communication between the perpetrators.

Alcoholism was viewed as another factor fuelling crime. In a district where alcohol consumption is an integral part of culture and tradition, excessive consumption has resulted in various crimes, especially assaults by inebriated individuals.

The rise in the number of reported crimes was also attributed to the cessation of the conflict. During the conflict, all crime cases were taken up by the Maoists' courts. The Maoists issued verdicts rather than the state. The state was confined to the district headquarters and the police rarely dealt with criminal cases. Also, the trust and faith the public had in the police was low. Following the cessation of the conflict, the rise in awareness is resulting in an increase in crime reporting. The activities of certain NGOs have also served to bring out cases. In addition, people rarely committed any crimes during the conflict, due to fear of the Maoists. The Maoists had a tendency to impose harsh punishments for crimes. Following the peace accord, however, fear of the Maoists has significantly reduced. According to many informants this is another factor contributing to a surge in criminal activities. Some of the Maoists are also engaged in criminal activities. Some were reported to have used cantoned weapons to commit crimes.

Finally, media reporting about cases was also seen as having helped uncover cases of crime.

#### **5.3 Actors**

It is mostly youth aged between 16 and 30 who are perceived to be engaged in criminal activities. The terms *munday* and *tyabay* were frequently used to characterise these criminal youth groups. *Munday* refers to someone with an earring and *tyabay* refers to someone who consumes drug tablets.

#### **5.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

Becoming a victim of crime is perhaps the primary source of fear for most Rolpalis, according to many community members. Women in particular feel vulnerable due to the possibility of being sexually harassed or assaulted. Verbal sexual harassment, often referred to as 'eve-teasing', is common in Rolpa.

### **5.5 Response or potential interventions**

More educational and employment opportunities targeted at the youth could potentially reduce crime. Secondly, more awareness programmes highlighting the negative aspects of committing crimes would serve to temper criminal mindsets.

## **6. Resource-based tension, conflict and/or violence**

### **6.1 Problem: trends, frequency and location**

Resource-based tensions were not in evidence on a significant scale in Rolpa. No entrenched patterns of contention over the ownership and usage of any resource by members in the community were reported during the assessment. However, there have been sporadic cases. One case of a dispute over the ownership and usage of community forest in Hwama VDC was mentioned repeatedly. Another case was the protest against the usage of electricity generated by Jhimruk power station by other districts. Rolpalis protested against distribution to other districts following load-shedding in the district. Reportedly, some unruly protesters caused extensive damage to the power station during the course of the demonstrations. Following this protest, however, there has been no load-shedding in Rolpa.

Disputes over water were frequent but there were no incidents which had flared up into conflict or violence. Usually, they were resolved by the communities themselves (often with mediators such as village elders, political party leaders or police/government authorities).

### **6.2 Causes and/or triggers**

Disputes or tensions over resources mostly emanated from the use of resources by individuals who were not resident within a particular geographical area. For example, if someone from A VDC cuts trees from the community forest or collects water from a source in B VDC, then this can spark tensions between the residents of the two VDCs.

### **6.3 Actors**

Most of the resource-based tensions reportedly begin with quarrels between women collecting firewood or water. However, as these escalate, men of all ages get involved. Often residents of adjoining districts have disagreements over the use of natural resources. The case of Rolpalis uniting against the load-shedding is a unique example where the district residents banded together irrespective of their identity or affiliation simply for the preferential rights to the usage of a natural resource.

### **6.4 Impact (including age, gender and identity dynamics)**

Continuous electricity after the protests over load-shedding has benefited the people of Rolpa, though its impact on other districts could not be determined.

### **6.5 Response or potential interventions**

In many instances, contentions over resources have been settled amicably. Political party leaders in the area and often state authorities or the police serve as facilitators or mediators.

## **7. Other tension, conflict and/or violence**

While no other tensions, conflict or violence were reported, one aspect of insecurity in the district is the presence of an unknown quantity of unexploded ordnance (UXO). While travelling to Libang, the district headquarters of Rolpa, the research team was halted by the police for 20 minutes. A mine was being exploded by the army in the nearby barrack perimeter. Large numbers of mines were laid by the security forces and the rebels during the conflict era. Some have been removed but many still remain scattered across the district. There have been incidents of people being injured or killed by these UXOs.

Notably, a large number of Rolpalis send their children to work in brick kilns in the Kathmandu valley. Compelled by unemployment and economic deprivation, this has led to a rise in child labour. Suicide rates have also increased significantly in recent times.

Domestic violence and violence against women is pervasive in Rolpa. Almost all informants interviewed for this assessment affirmed that this was one of the worst social ills affecting this district. Despite being rampant, there have been no reported initiatives to tackle this problem with a systematic approach.

## 8. Tension, conflict and/or violence hotspot/s

Libang was often described as the only hotspot for political tensions, as the majority of the informants perceived that there are no political disputes and tensions in Rolpa at the moment. However, Thabang VDC was seen as having a history of political violence and some informants felt that it could be a future hotspot. Additionally, Gam VDC was identified as a possible hotspot for future violence based on identity issues.

Libang, the district headquarters, reportedly has many youngsters abusing drugs. Jamkot and Libang were mentioned as having higher rates of VAW/SGBV, while Gam VDC was also reported to have some cases of VAW.

Uwa and Thabang VDC were most frequently mentioned as having resource-based tensions. Some informants also suggested Ota, Jugar, Ghartigaun and Badachaur VDCs as potential hotspots for resource-based tensions due to several cases of disputes that have taken place in the last three years.

## Recommendations

This rapid conflict assessment only provides an initial overview of the conflict and security situation in the eight target districts, rather than an in-depth analysis. Nevertheless, based on the assessment findings, there are a number of points Pact should take into consideration for the further design of the Sajhedari Bikaas project.

### Target groups

The assessment identified a number of specific groups that are either already involved or specifically at risk of getting actively involved in tensions, conflict and violence, or that are vulnerable to become victims of tensions, conflict and insecurity.

- Young men are seen as the main actor category directly involved in violence, tension and conflict, and most at risk of getting involved in the future. This concerns particularly young men – as young as 14 years of age – from economically deprived backgrounds. Pact might want to consider engaging with young men to strengthen their resilience to conflict and violence. This could be done in a number of ways, from awareness raising to demonstrating the value of engaging constructively rather than in an aggressive way, to addressing some of the causes of why young men are drawn towards tensions and violence, for example through economic empowerment.
- Women and girls are particularly at risk of becoming victims of SGBV, especially VAW and DV. VAW is sensitive and victims are often stigmatised by society, which makes it even more difficult for women and girls to report what happened to them to the police, especially if there are only male police officers to talk to, and to get the institutional and social support they require. More often than not, they are pushed towards having their cases mediated, even in cases as serious as rape, although mediation mechanisms are important to address other types of disputes, and research has shown that many women approach those mediation mechanisms. Pact might want to consider working particularly on activities addressing conflict and security issues related to women and girls, either by directly engaging with women and girls, or by strengthening gender-sensitive approaches by institutions or other actors engaging on conflict and security issues. While various community-based organisations as well as district-level NGOs work on women and gender issues, there are limited collaborative efforts to systematically curb VAW and DV. Programmes aimed at uprooting/reducing VAW and DV would have a tangible impact on the overall security situation of women and children in these districts and should be carried out in coordination with and/or build upon existing formal mechanisms such as the Women and Children Service Centres of the Nepal Police, the Women and Children Office, and informal mechanisms such as PLCs, community mediation programmes and other local NGOs working on women and gender issues. As Pact will work closely with community mediation mechanisms, it will also be relevant to ensure that crimes related to sexual and gender-based violence are not mediated, but referred in a sensitive way to the relevant formal justice and security providers.
- Political actors have been identified as playing a key role in fuelling tensions and violence in a number of ways. At the same time, they are quite influential and have a wide reach, including to fairly remote

locations. Thus, they are an important actor to directly engage with.<sup>27</sup> However, this is also potentially linked to a number of challenges, including the risk of being seen as politically biased towards one or several parties, but also the risk of being perceived as an external actor trying to intervene in internal issues, which can then lead to severe obstructions of planned project activities. Thus, Pact should develop a strategy on whether and how to involve political actors, especially in times running up to elections when the situation is particularly sensitive.

### **Economic challenges contributing to conflict and insecurity**

Unemployment was a recurring factor identified by the majority of informants as contributing to crime and insecurity in the researched districts. The lack of employment and income was perceived as pushing people to seek employment opportunities abroad and/or engage in criminal activities. Programmes aimed at increasing employment opportunities for the youth, such as skill-based income-generation or micro-enterprise programmes, could contribute to reducing the risk of tensions and insecurity caused by economic challenges, and to strengthening the overall economic as well as social advancement of the districts. The Sajhedari Bikaas project is seeking to strengthen local development and access to resources, which might include the implementation of economic empowerment activities; if that is the case, Pact should seek to mainstream peacebuilding aspects into those activities.

### **Drug abuse and alcoholism**

Across all the districts, drug abuse and alcoholism is prevalent. Youth, in particular are reportedly taking drugs while people of all ages, including women, were described as excessively consuming alcohol. The consumption of drugs and alcohol is seen as both a consequence of, as well as a factor contributing to violence (including DV), crime, unemployment, cultural disintegration and breakdown of the traditional value system. Since this problem is perceived as increasing in all the districts researched – also confirmed by other research carried out by Saferworld – it requires immediate attention. Unless these social problems are systematically addressed, the situation for development and security could further deteriorate steeply in the upcoming years as the emerging generation will be adversely affected by this affliction.

### **Resource-based disputes**

Resources such as land, community forests and rivers have led to community-level disputes in all the districts researched. Lack of developed infrastructure that provides easy access to water for irrigation and drinking purposes, as well as limited cultivable land, have led to small-scale disputes among community members and should be considered when designing development projects. Land-related disputes among various groups, most notably landless people and Mukta Kamaiyas can lead to potential conflicts in future if the government is unable to address the issue in a sensitive manner. This issue also affects the broader community, who feel that they are not being accommodated by the state while it provides free land and compensation to the landless people. Pact should be conflict-sensitive while designing infrastructure projects; specifically, they need to accommodate all groups and ensure ownership by the broader community.

### **Specific precautions during period running up to elections**

Many informants have expressed security concerns for the period running up to elections. Many believe that violence and clashes could potentially ensue during that time. Pact should take a number of precautions in that regard:

- It is likely that programmes will be disrupted repeatedly and possibly for longer periods of time, so Pact and partners should develop a strategy to accommodate such interruptions, providing a 'Plan B' to keep the negative impact on the programme to a minimum.
- Conflict sensitivity is of utmost importance, especially in times of tensions. Thus, Pact should build the understanding of partners on how to ensure conflict sensitivity in project design and implementation, and how to behave in a way that is conflict-sensitive. For guidance on conflict sensitivity, see for example Saferworld's 'how to' guide.<sup>28</sup>
- Priority needs to be given to the safety of staff (both Pact and partner organisations' staff) and beneficiaries. Clear guidelines and mechanisms should be in place that helps to reduce risks for staff and beneficiaries, including in emergencies, possibly based on the UN Basic Operating Guidelines.<sup>29</sup>

### **Be aware of the way (I)NGOs are seen in certain districts**

There are big differences in how (I)NGOs and their work are seen by different constituencies in the districts. While some welcome them and their work, others have much more critical and even negative views. Thus, Pact needs to be aware of negative perceptions about INGOs and external actors in general, including diplomatic

<sup>27</sup> This is in addition to engaging with political actors at the national, district and VDC level for administrative purposes and to establish constructive working relationships with them, without which implementing a programme will be difficult.

<sup>28</sup> This is available online at [www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/646](http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/646).

<sup>29</sup> <http://un.org.np/thematicareas/bogs>.

missions, in Nepal. In Kailali and Dang, informants perceived the work of INGOs as foreign interference inciting ethnic tensions and financially funding the UFW/Tharuwan clashes. Therefore, it is necessary to pre-screen perceptions regarding (I)NGOs in the specific district. It might also be useful to be aware of how NGO partners are seen.

Furthermore, conflict sensitivity is required at all stages of project design and implementation, including concerning the selection of local partners in the districts and communication regarding the project.

### **Be conflict-sensitive in selecting who to work with – risk of alienating so-called higher-caste group members**

(I)NGOs, IOs and donors have tended to focus on deprived and marginalised communities, especially on so-called lower-caste groups, to reduce inequalities. While this was done with good intentions, it has led to a lot of discontent amongst those communities that are not considered as marginalised, and thus do not benefit from many of the (I)NGO and donor programmes, resulting in considerable tensions in May/June 2012. For reasons of conflict sensitivity it is therefore advisable to develop a strategy that reduces the risk of alienating non-marginalised communities.

### **Consultation and collaboration between stakeholders to reduce and prevent conflict and tensions**

The rapid assessment found that inclusive, constructive and cooperative approaches that involve a wide range of stakeholders from local and district-level authorities, security providers, civil society, the private sector and community representatives (both male and female, and from different ethnic, religious and caste groups) have proven effective to reduce tensions and conflict. Pact might want to envisage a way in which those stakeholders, including NGOs and INGOs working locally, can engage in a constructive dialogue process to find means to identify and address tensions and conflicts before they escalate, and to ensure that the work each of those actors is carrying out complements rather than duplicating or obstructing the others' efforts.

### **List of acronyms**

<b>BSF</b>	Border Security Force
<b>CA</b>	Constituent Assembly
<b>CAAFAG</b>	Children associated with armed forces and armed groups
<b>CDO</b>	Chief District Officer
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organisation
<b>CeLRRD</b>	Centre for Legal Research and Resource Development
<b>CPN-M</b>	Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist
<b>CPN-UML</b>	Communist Party of Nepal – United Marxist Leninist
<b>DAO</b>	District Administrative Office
<b>DDC</b>	District Development Committee
<b>DV</b>	Domestic violence
<b>FECOFUN</b>	Federation of Community Forests Users Nepal
<b>FNCCI</b>	Federation of Nepal Chambers of Commerce and Industry
<b>FGD</b>	Focus group discussion
<b>GD</b>	Group discussion
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced people
<b>INGO</b>	International non-governmental organisation
<b>IO</b>	Implementing organisation
<b>KI</b>	Key informant
<b>KII</b>	Key informant interview
<b>MJF(D)</b>	Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (Democratic)
<b>NC</b>	Nepali Congress
<b>NP</b>	Nepal Police
<b>PLC</b>	Para-Legal Committee
<b>RPP</b>	Rastriya Prajatantra Party
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and gender-based violence
<b>SP</b>	Superintendent of Police
<b>TAF</b>	The Asia Foundation
<b>TRC</b>	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
<b>UCPN(M)</b>	Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
<b>UFW</b>	Undivided Far West movement
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNRCHCO</b>	United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office

<b>UXO</b>	Unexploded Ordnance
<b>VAW</b>	Violence against women
<b>VDC</b>	Village Development Committee
<b>VMLR</b>	Verified minor and late recruit
<b>WCO</b>	Women and Children Office
<b>YCL</b>	Young Communist League

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## **About Saferworld**

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We work with local people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. We use this evidence and learning to improve local, national and international policies and practices that can help build lasting peace. Our priority is people – we believe that everyone should be able to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from insecurity and violent conflict.

We are a not-for-profit organisation with programmes in nearly 20 countries and territories across Africa, Asia and Europe.

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## Annex A

Annex 1: Summary comparison of districts and VDCs by conflict category

Annex 2: Surveillance data on armed violence in target districts

Annex 3: Methodology

Annex 4: KII guiding questions

Annex 5: GD guiding questions

### Annex 1 – Summary comparison of districts and VDCs by conflict category

This annex summarises how the different districts and, as far as possible VDCs/municipalities, compare in terms of the different types of insecurity, tensions and conflicts. For more details on the respective issues, the relevant district chapters should be consulted.

In all districts, municipalities were mentioned as being particular hotspots of conflicts, tensions and insecurity. At the same time, respondents pointed out that while many agencies work in the municipalities to address these issues (or generally to engage in projects that contribute to the development of the district), support often did not reach locations in more remote VDCs.

#### 1. Political conflicts, tensions and insecurity

According to current perceptions, political conflicts, tensions and insecurity were seen as highest in Kailali, followed by Kanchanpur. Tensions in Kailali have an impact on the situation in Kanchanpur and Bardiya; this is partly because many political actors operate from Kailali, so Kailali can be considered as a hub for political tensions. Kailali and Kanchanpur are followed by Surkhet and Salyan; while the situation in Banke and Bardiya is currently described as quiet, there have been tensions in the past that might come out again.

Affected locations within the eight districts:

**Kailali** – Although it was perceived that all locations are affected by political tensions, conflicts and insecurity, Dhangadhi municipality, Tikapur municipality, Masuriya, Urma, Pathariya, Phulbari, Hasuliya and Darakh VDCs were mentioned as being most affected.

**Kanchanpur** – Bhim Dutta municipality, Jhalari, Suda, Daiji, Raikawar Bichuwa and Rampur Vilaspur VDCs were identified as the most affected.

**Surkhet** – Although community members perceived that frequent political strikes have taken place in many parts of Surkhet, Birendranagar Municipality, Lekhgaun, Betan and Ghatgaun VDCs were identified as the most vulnerable locations.

**Banke** – Nepalgunj municipality and Kohalpur VDC are the locations which are most affected during political tensions and strikes according to respondents, as in the past there have been violent protests in these two places.

**Bardiya** – Gulariya municipality was identified as most affected by political tensions and conflicts. VDCs such as Sanosiri, Mainapokari, Neulapur and Baiyabar were frequently mentioned as hotspots for political disruptions and tensions. Kalika and Magargadhi were reported to be facing some political tensions.

**Dang** – Community members perceived that the current political situation is normal and there are no tensions, but Tulsipur and Ghorahi were perceived as locations where political protests and demonstrations usually take place and are reportedly sensitive. Hapur and Tribhuvannagar VDCs were also mentioned by some as having political disputes based on previous political events.

**Salyan** – Warhukhola and Jimali VDCs were identified as the main hotspots for political tensions. Although the scale of such tensions is minor compared to other districts, respondents identified these locations as potential hotspots in future. Khalanga was also mentioned by some as having political tensions at the district level.

**Rolpa** – Libang was mostly mentioned as the only hotspot for political tensions as the majority of the respondents perceived that there are no political disputes and tensions in Rolpa at the moment. However, Thabang VDC was perceived as historically having had cases of political violence and some respondents feel that it could be a future hotspot.

## **2. Tension, insecurity and conflict-related SGBV (including DV and VAW)**

Very high levels of SGBV, including VAW and DV, were reported across all districts (especially DV). In Kailali, Kanchanpur and Surkhet, rape and gang rape were specifically mentioned; however, this could have been because there have been recent cases of rape that people might still have had in mind.

Affected locations within the eight districts:

**Kailali** – Cases were reported in all locations, but perceived to be higher in Masuriya, Sugarkhal, Kahirala, Gadariya, Udasipur, Bauniya, Chuha, Pandaun and Godawari VDCs, and Dhangadhi municipality.

**Kanchanpur** – Piplari and Daiji VDC were reported as locations where a higher number of cases of DV was occurring. In addition to these locations, Parashan and Rampur Vilaspur VDCs were perceived as places where trafficking of women was taking place. Dodhara and Chadani VDCs were also mentioned as highly insecure for women and young girls.

**Surkhet** – Cases of violence against women were reported to be higher in Birendranagar municipality, Latikoili, Jarbuta, Taranga, Hariharpur, Uttarganga and Lekhaparajul VDCs.

**Banke** – Nepalgunj municipality and Kohalpur were identified by many respondents as the main transit points for trafficking of women. In addition to these locations, Jaispur, Bhawaniyapur, Fattepur, Laxmanpur, Kalaphanta and Katkutiya were identified as the most insecure VDCs for women.

**Bardiya** – Gulariya municipality was noted to be most affected. VDCs like Jamuni, Sanosiri and Taratal were reportedly insecure for women due to migration of male household members leaving the women members at risk of GBV. Belwa, Kalika and Pashupatinagar were also mentioned by some as having higher rates of VAW and various forms of GBV.

**Dang** – Urahari VDC, Tulsipur and Ghorahi were frequently mentioned as the most insecure locations for women. In addition to this, VDCs near the border such as Bela, Rajpur and Koilabas were also said to be relatively insecure.

**Salyan** – Damachaur VDC and Khalanga were reported as the most insecure locations for women with many cases of VAW. In addition, there have been some cases of VAW in Tharmare, Badagaun and Bhalchaur VDCs.

**Rolpa** – Jamkot and Libang were mentioned as having higher rates of VAW/SGBV. Gam VDC was also reported to have some cases of VAW.

### 3. Identity-based conflicts, tensions and insecurity

In Kailali and Kanchanpur, identity-based tensions were perceived as strong, and linked to political tensions (especially in Kailali). Banke, Bardiya and Dang are in the 'mid-range' for identity-based tensions, while tensions in Salyan, Rolpa and Surkhet are perceived as lower, and in Surkhet mainly linked to caste issues.

Affected locations within the eight districts:

**Kailali** – Identity-based tensions were closely linked to political tensions in Kailali and perceived to be present in all locations that are politically affected, but highest in Dhangadhi municipality, Tikapur municipality, Masuriya and Phulbari VDCs. In addition to this, some felt that Urma, Pathariya, Hasuliya and Darakh also have some levels of identity-based tensions and in some cases small-scale violence. In terms disputes and tensions around Christian conversion, it was perceived that Chaumala, Darakh and Pahalmanpur VDCs were most affected.

**Kanchanpur** – Bhim Dutta municipality, Jhalari VDC, Suda VDC, Daiji VDC, Raikawar Bichuwa VDC and Rampur Vilaspur VDC were identified as the most affected.

**Surkhet** – Almost all respondents stated there were no identity-based tensions in Surkhet at the moment. However, Latikoili VDC was highlighted as one place where tensions related to caste-based identity could arise in the future.

**Banke** – Nepalgunj municipality and Kohalpur VDC were identified as locations where there have been previous violent protests and tensions around identity.

**Bardiya** – Identity-based tensions were reportedly taking place in Rajapur, Mantapara, Bhimapur and Dodhari VDCs as well as in Gulariya municipality. Some community members perceived that there were tensions in Mohammedpur VDC regarding Madheshi communities.

**Dang** – Tulsipur was perceived as the most sensitive location due to the substantial population of Muslims and previous tensions during 2005/6. Along with Tulsipur, there were reportedly a few cases of Hindu-Muslim tensions in Ghorahi as well. Tulsipur was also mentioned as sensitive to Tharu-Pahadi tensions. In addition to these locations, some respondents also perceived Gadhwara and Tribhuvanagar VDCs to be relatively insecure in terms of identity-based issues.

**Salyan** – Khalanga was mentioned as the area most affected by political tensions, and in some cases this was linked to identity-based tensions which were perceived to be very minor. Some respondents identified Jimali VDC as another future hotspot for identity-based tensions.

**Rolpa** – Gam VDC was identified as a possible hotspot for future violence based on identity by the respondents. Some felt that Thabang VDC could also be a potential hotspot as it has a history of violence related to politics and identity-based political protests.

### 4. Resource-based conflicts, tensions and insecurity

In the case of resource-based conflicts, tensions and insecurity, it is necessary to distinguish between the different types of resources in question. Concerning land issues, Bardiya was perceived as most affected, followed by Kailali and Kanchanpur. Resource-based tensions related to development projects and political issues, such as hydropower projects, were particularly relevant in Surkhet. Tensions related to community forests were present in all districts, but particularly in Surkhet, Salyan and Rolpa. Tensions related to water (partly related to bilateral agreements between Nepal and India) were highest in Kanchanpur (related to use of the river), Salyan and Kailali.

Affected locations within the eight districts:

**Kailali** – Resource-based tensions were seen mostly in Pandaun, Hasuliya, Phulbari, Baliya, Godawari, Malakheti, Mohana, Masuriya, Sugarkhal, Bhajani, Thapapur, Joshipur and Lal Bojhi VDCs. It was unclear which were the most highly affected, but the first six VDCs were frequently mentioned.

**Kanchanpur** – Dodhara, Chadani, Krishnapur and Daiji VDCs were perceived as most affected. Additionally, Suklaphanta wildlife reserve and the villages around the periphery in Rauteli Bichuwa VDC, Bhim Dutta municipality and Beldandi were reported to have small-scale resource-based disputes.

**Surkhet** – Sattakhani, Jarbuta, Latikoili and Ratu VDCs were perceived as locations where resource-based disputes frequently occur due to tensions around the Jhupra Khola (river). Taranga, Hariharpur, Kunathari, Latikoili, Lekhaparajul, Ramghat, Satakhani, Babiyachaur and Jarbuta were mentioned as locations linked to resource-based criminal activities such as theft from community forests and illegal logging. Bidyapur and Kunathari were also mentioned by some as places with resource-based tensions. Violence and tensions surrounding the Upper Karnali hydropower project within VDCs in Surkhet near the border with Dailekh were also seen as problematic by many.

**Banke** – Resource-based tensions were mostly said to exist in VDCs such as Katkutiya, Laxmanpur, Kalaphanta, Matehiya, Gangapur, Holiya, Phattepur, Binauna and Baijapur. Kohalpur VDC is more prominent for land-related tensions and protests.

**Bardiya** – Resource-based tensions were reportedly higher in Dodhari, Baniyabhar, Taratal, Bagnaha, Padanaha, Magaragadhi, Patabar, Kahairi Chandan and Sorhawa VDCs. These disputes were linked to irrigation and usage of rivers. Out of these, Dodhari, Baniyabhar, Taratal, Bagnaha and Padnaha were perceived as more affected.

**Dang** – Kabhre VDC was mentioned frequently along with Saigha and Syuja VDCs as hotspots for resource-based tensions. Purandhara and Dhanauri were also mentioned as VDCs linked to deforestation and illegal logging. VDCs near the Indo-Nepal border such as Bela, Koilabas, Rajpur and Gobardaha were mentioned frequently as having land-related disputes.

**Salyan** – Khalanga and Dhakadam were perceived to be facing acute water shortages and several disputes have reportedly already taken place. Kalagaun, Tharmare, Warhukhola and Kotmola VDCs were perceived as most affected by community forest-related disputes and tensions. Kotbara, Kajeri, Sinbang and Rim VDCs were also mentioned by some as having minor disputes related to community forests and water resources.

**Rolpa** – Uwa and Thabang VDC were most frequently mentioned as having resource-based tensions. Some respondents also suggested Ota, Jugar, Ghartigaun and Badachaur as potential hotspots for resource-based tensions due to a few cases of disputes that have taken place in the last three years.

## **5. Crime-related conflicts, tensions and insecurity**

According to respondents, Banke, Kailali and Dang seem to be most affected by crime, followed by Surkhet. Resource-related organised crime was mentioned as particularly relevant in Kailali, Kanchanpur and Banke. People in Banke felt that activities carried out by armed groups were a security issue, particularly for the business community.

Affected locations within the eight districts:

**Kailali** – Masuriya, Sugarkhal, Kahirala, Gadariya, Udasipur, Bauniya, Chuha and Godawari VDCs were identified as the major hotspots in Kailali. Additionally, Dhangadhi municipality, Bauniya VDC, Pandaun VDC and Baliya VDC were also seen by some as moderately affected.

**Kanchanpur** – Crime was reportedly higher in Jhalari, Dodhara, Chadani, Parasan, Laxmipur and Tribhuvanbasti VDCs along with Bhim Dutta municipality. Out of these, Jhalari, Dodhara, Chadani, Parasan and Tribhuvanbasti were reportedly the most insecure.

**Surkhet** – Taranga, Hariharpur, Kunathari, Latikoili, Lekhaparajul, Ramghat, Satakhani, Babiyachaur and Jarbuta were mentioned as locations linked to resource-based criminal activities such as theft from community forests and illegal logging. In addition to this, crime-related insecurity was reported in locations such as Taranga, Hariharpur, Lekhaparajul, Uttarganga, Latikoili and Jarbuta VDCs as well as Birendranagar municipality.

**Banke** – Jaispur VDC and VDCs bordering India such as Bhawaniyapur, Holiya, Gangapur, Matehiya, Narenapur, Kalaphanta, Laxmanpur and Katkutiya were identified as the most insecure, with high levels of crime (such as drugs and small arms trafficking, trafficking of women, murder, extortion, theft and robbery). In addition to these VDCs, Nepalgunj municipality and Kohalpur were identified as relatively insecure due to different types of criminal activities.

**Bardiya** – Gulariya municipality was perceived as the most insecure and having a high crime rate. Along with the municipality, Sanosiri, Bhaniyabhar, Magaragadhi, Belwa, Jamuni and Pashupatinagar VDCs were frequently identified as locations where there are perceived high crime rates, with the first four VDCs being the most insecure.

**Dang** – Tulsipur was perceived to have the highest crime rate by many respondents. Along with Tulsipur, Ghorahi, Koilabas, Bela and Rajpur VDCs were reported as insecure due to various criminal activities. Satbariya, Urahari and Gobardaha VDCs were also mentioned by some as relatively insecure.

**Salyan** – Damachaur, Kalagaun and Kajeri VDCs were perceived as the most insecure in terms of crime. Along with these areas, Khalanga was also noted as having significant levels of crime-related activities. Some community members identified Sinbang, Kabhrechaur and Warhukhola as insecure.

**Rolpa** – Hwama, Khumel, Libang and Gam VDCs were frequently mentioned as the most insecure. In addition, Ghartigaun, Talabang and Rangkot VDCs were mentioned by some as insecure due to criminal incidents that occurred over the past 3 years.

## **6. Other issues**

Issues related to proximity to the Nepal-India border were mentioned as particularly relevant in Kailali, Kanchanpur and Banke districts.

Affected locations within these districts:

**Kailali** – Ratanpur VDC, Phulbari VDC, Malakheti VDC, Dhansinghpur VDC and Bhajani VDC.

**Kanchanpur** – Dodhara, Chadani, Tribhuvanbasti and Parasan VDCs.

**Banke** – Bhawaniyapur, Holiya, Gangapur, Matehiya, Narenapur, Kalaphanta, Laxmanpur, Betahani, Piparhawa, Saigaun and Katkutiya VDCs.

## Annex 2 – Surveillance data on armed violence in target districts

This data covering the period from 2010 – 2012 is from INSEC’s surveillance database that is monitoring incidents of armed violence across all 75 districts of Nepal. It captures incidents resulting in injuries and deaths caused by firearms, *khukuri*, knives and other sharp objects.

### Kailali

	2010	2011	2012
District with VDCs & MPs <sup>1</sup>	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents
Baliya	1	2	4
Bauniya			2
Chaumala	1	2	
Chuha		2	
Darakh			2
Dhangadi	2	6	4
Dharakh		1	
Fulbari			5
Geta		1	
Malakheti			1
Pathariya			1
Patthariya		1	
Sadepani			1
Sahajpur			2
Santoshi Tol		1	
Shripur			2
Sugarkhal		1	
Tikapur	1	2	1
Uttharwedi		1	
	<b>5</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>

<sup>1</sup> MPs stands for ‘municipalities’

**Kanchanpur**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>District with VDCs &amp; MPs</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Incidents</b>
Bhimdatta	1		
Bhimdatta	1		
Bhimdutt		1	
Bhimdutta			1
Daiji		1	
Dauji			1
Kalika			1
Krinshnapur		1	
Krishnapur			1
Raikabar Bichuwa	1		
Shantipur			1
Shripur			1
Tribhuvanbasti	1		1
	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

**Surkhet**

	2010	2011	2012
District with VDCs & MPs	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents
Babiyachaur		1	
Betan			1
Bidhyapur		2	
Birendra Nagarpalika	1		
Birendranagar			8
BirendraNagar	20	9	4
Chinchu	1		
Dadakhali	1		
Dasarathpur		6	1
Dharapani		4	
Garpan		1	
Ghatgau	2		
Ghoreta	1		
Ghumkharahey	1		
Gumi		1	
Gumi	2		
Gutu		2	
Gutu	3		
Hariharpur	2		
Jaburta	4		
Jarbuta		7	
Jatuwa	2		
Kalyand	2		
Lagam			2
Latikoili	3	2	1
Latikoilki		1	
Lekhfarsa	4		3
Lekhgaun		1	
Lekhparajul	1	1	
Mainathda	1		
Malarani	1		
Mehelkuna	1	6	
Neta	1	2	
Neta	2		
Pokharakada	1		
Rajena	1		1
Rakam	1		
Ram Ghat		2	
Ramghat			1
Satakhani	7	2	
Sattakhani		1	
Taranga			1
Tatapani		2	
Uttarganga	4	3	
	<b>70</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>23</b>

**Banke**

	2010	2011	2012
District with VDCs & MPs	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents
Khajura	1		
Bageshwori		2	
Baijapur	1		
Bankatti		2	
Bankatti	1		
Basudevpur		1	
Belhari		1	
Betahani		1	
Bethani		2	
Binauna	1		
Gangapur		1	
Godiyanpur	2		
Holiya			1
Indrapur	2		
Jayaspur		1	
Kamdi	3	1	
Karkado		3	
Khajura Khudra		1	
Khaskarkado	2		
Kohalpur		3	
Kohalpur	1		
Mahadev Puri		1	
Mahadevpuri	1	2	
Manikapur	1		
Minakapur	1		
Napaljung	1		
Nepalgunj	5	7	2
Nepalgunj	3		
Paraspur		2	
Phatterpur	3		
Purauni	2		
Rjhen		1	
Shamser Jung		1	
Udarapur	1		
	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3</b>

**Bardiya**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>District with VDCs &amp; MPs</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Incidents</b>
Badalpur	1		
Badauda		1	
Bardiya National Park, Banspani	3		
Deudhakal	1		
Deukala			1
Dhadabar			1
Gulariya		3	2
Gulariya	1		
Gulariya MP	1		
Kalika		1	1
Magaragadi		1	
Mahamadpur	1		
Mahammadpur			1
Manau	1	7	
Manau, Gupyipur	1		
Motipur		2	1
Neulapur		6	
Pathabhar	3		
Rajapur		2	
Sanoshree	1		
Sonashri		6	
Sorahawa		1	
Suryapatuwa	2		
	<b>16</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>7</b>

**Dang**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>District with VDCs &amp; MPs</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Incidents</b>
Bela		2	
Bijauri		1	
Chaulahi	1		
Dorahi	2		
Gadhawa		2	
Gangaparspur Kumal Gau	2		
Ghorahi		3	
Gobardiha		1	1
Goverdiya		1	
Halbar	1		
Hapur			1
Hapur Gurje	1		
Narayanpur	1	1	
Rajpur		1	
Rampur		1	
Satbariya	1		
Satbariya	1		
Saudiyar		1	
Shreegau Parasaduwa	1		
Tulasipur		2	
Tulsipur	1	4	1
Urahari	1		
Urhari			1
	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>

### Salyan

	2010	2011	2012
District with VDCs & MPs	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents
Bhalchaur	1		
Chayachetra		1	
Dadagau		1	
Darmakot		1	
Ghajaripipal			1
Kalimati Rampur			1
Korwangjimpe			1
Kotmaula			1
Kotmola		1	
Kotwara			1
Mukhkhola		1	
Sejwaltakura		2	
Singwang	1		
Syabun		1	
Tharmare	1		
Triveni			1
Unauliya		1	
	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>

### Rolpa

	2010	2011	2012
District with VDCs & MPs	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents
Budagaun			1
Dubidada		4	
Fagam			1
Ghartigaun			1
Gumchal			2
Harjung		1	
Jaulipokhari		1	1
Jhenam	1		
Jinawan		1	
Khumel			1
Kotgaun			1
Liwang	2		4
Nuwa		1	
	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>

### **Annex 3 – Methodology**

Saferworld's methodology for this rapid assessment was built upon proven methodologies and tools used previously for conflict assessments in Nepal and other contexts, and tailored to the specific requirements of this research. Particularly, this means that the number of respondents, the number of tools used, and the depth of the research were limited due to the limited time available (see below for limitations).

In order to collect the required data a number of research methodologies were utilised:

**Phase 1 – Desk Research** – provided the foundations for further, deeper research. Existing research, originating both inside Nepal and out, provided a deeper understanding of the conflict and security situation and developments in Nepal, as well as the specific situation in the target districts and, to some extent, existing responses, thus enabling a formative understanding of possible approaches to be taken in the Project's programming. Sources that have been consulted include the National Census; the Village Development Committee and Demographic Profile of Nepal; the Banke District Profile 2005/06; research conducted by Saferworld, IDA, the UN BOGs, the Carter Centre, and others; and data from INSEC's armed violence surveillance system.

**Phase 2 – Participatory Consultations and Research** – was the key phase of data collection and therefore entailed more complex data collection techniques. This phase was rooted in a PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) approach utilising tools that were crucial to ensuring the research was as participatory as possible given the various social and cultural factors that may diminish this, especially considering the limited timeframe for this study. This phase mainly took place in the eight target districts where most of the data informing the research came from; this was complemented by interviews at the regional level (that is, within the Mid-West and Far West development regions) and at the central level in Kathmandu. Three working days were spent in each district to carry out key informant interviews (KIIs) and group discussions (GDs), and an additional day was spent on KIIs at the regional level. For initial and complementary information on the context and dynamics between the central and district/regional level, 2 days were spent carrying out KIIs in Kathmandu (for more details on the purpose of the research at the district, regional and central levels, please see elaboration below). The principal research methods used during this phase emphasised the gathering of perspectives from key stakeholders and informants who have a good understanding of conflicts at the national and district level, including in specific VDCs, and the linkages between them, as well as community perspectives, including those of specific sub-groups who are either marginalised or specifically relevant in the conflict and security context. Participatory Research Techniques (PRTs) that were applied include the following:

**Key informant interviews (KIIs) at the central, regional and district level** – KIIs were conducted at the central, regional and district level with the following objectives:

- To the extent possible in the limited timeframe, get a comprehensive picture of the conflicts, tensions and insecurity at the district level, including the causes, actors and dynamics and how they are influenced by or impact on developments at the regional or central level;
- Be informed about key issues that could potentially be expected at the district level before going there, thus being better prepared and able to focus on getting additional and in-depth information on those issues through the district-level KIIs and GDs;
- Be better able to plan and conduct the research in a conflict-sensitive manner by being aware of existing sensitivities;
- Be better able to ensure Saferworld staff and researchers' safety and security during the research by being aware of potential sensitivities and risks;

- Use the limited time more efficiently by learning about conflict issues in several districts or regions through a limited number of interviews at the central or regional level;
- Ensure quality standards of the assessment.

**Regional and central-level KIIs** – In the preparatory phase of the research, six KIIs were held with informants based in Kathmandu who have a good understanding of the overall conflict and security situation and dynamics in Nepal and in the target regions/districts. These interviews were considered as crucial for the reasons outlined above. Particularly, as many of the conflicts at the district level are closely linked to developments at the central level, it was important to have a better understanding of the overall situation concerning conflicts, tensions and insecurity in Nepal, including ongoing discussions and developments at the national level that could have implications on the situation at the local level. Also, a number of key informants with excellent understanding of developments at the district level are based in Kathmandu. Key informants included representatives from the BOGs office, the RMO, Carter Centre regional offices and the UN.

Five KIIs were conducted at the regional level in the Mid-West and Far West to get an overview of regional issues. Key respondents and institutions based in the development regions relevant for this assessment – Mid and Far West – have specific knowledge (including on conflicts and tensions) about several districts or the entire region. Consulting these respondents is relevant because they are able to provide a good overview of issues and dynamics that exist across districts, and can point to issues we might want to follow up on in more detail when in the districts – thus providing information relevant for the scoping purpose of the rapid assessment. These people were mainly based in Nepalgunj and Kailali, and included journalists with regional reach, regional CSO coordinators and UN field coordinators.

**District-level KIIs** – were considered the core category of interviews for obtaining district-specific information, and provided qualitative data on perceptions of conflict, community safety and security issues. Moreover, they served to provide crucial information for determining structural and proximate causes of tensions, conflict, insecurity and violence, actors involved, and an initial assessment of ongoing initiatives and stakeholders working on those matters. Key informants were also able to provide VDC-specific information, which will be valuable for Pact’s identification of VDCs to work in. KIIs allowed information to be elicited from target respondents who are strategically placed to speak on the relevant issues. The KIIs were designed to probe certain issues in detail that have a special relevance to the purposes of this assessment (e.g. conflict/security trends, actors and responses, and individual and community priorities on conflict and insecurity). Semi-structured interview guideline questions were developed, and care was taken to amend standard questions to suit specific interviews. Saferworld was responsible for developing the semi-structured interview questions; identifying interviewees; coordinating and conducting KIIs (with support from local researchers); and quality control of collected information and analysis.

Eight to twelve KIIs were conducted in each of the eight target districts. Interviewees were selected to represent a cross-section of administration, security and justice provision service providers, civil society and others well placed to comment on conflict and security dynamics. The sample included target respondents who were able to provide a deeper understanding of views and priorities concerning conflict, community safety, and security. To the extent possible, the respondent sample included a balanced representation of both men and women, given the limited number of KIIs we were able to conduct in the given timeframe; however, due to the need to focus on those best informed about the region or district, this was only possible to a certain extent. In total, 19 women and 56 men were interviewed at the district level.

Kills mainly took place in Kathmandu and locations at the district level (mainly district headquarters as a high number of key informants are expected to be based there, or other locations that are easily accessible) and have ranged between 45 and 90 minutes on average.

**Group Discussions (GDs)** with communities, including ex-combatants or youth groups where possible, took place in the eight target districts. GDs provided qualitative data on public perceptions of conflict, community safety and security issues and sought to identify the security needs of different groups and priority areas of intervention that could guide the Project’s implementation. They also endeavoured to identify key reasons for conflict, tensions and insecurity, actors and trends, as well as geographic differences within the districts/regions. GDs allowed information to be elicited from groups that tend not to be well represented due to demographic and geographic limitations, such as ex-combatants, women, youth and marginalised communities including Tharu and Dalit communities; however, due to the short timeframe this was only possible to a certain extent. GDs were designed to probe certain questions in more detail. GD guideline questions were developed by Saferworld in consultation with Pact and local researchers. Care was taken to amend standard questions to suit the local context and composition of the groups.

Two GDs were conducted in each of the eight research districts, with the exception of Bardiya where due to changes in the research schedule the GD with youth could not be organised. In total, out of 51 community members who participated in these GDs, 25 were women; these community members represented various ethnic and caste-based groups such as Brahmins, Chhetris, Tharus, Dalits, Magar and Tamang among other groups. 18 male and female ex-combatants and 49 male and female youths belonging to various ethnic and caste-based communities participated in the GDs. Each GD accommodated approximately 6-10 participants.

The following tools were used during the GDs:

- Guiding questions that covered the specific topics the assessment focused on, tailored to the specific group, and probing particularly interesting aspects of the responses provided;
- Basic mapping of VDC/municipality-specific conflict and security issues.

This combination of research methodologies represents a ‘mixed methods’ methodological approach which takes a soft social constructionist approach to the research topic. Research methods were combined to provide a more complete set of findings than could be arrived at through the administration of one of these methods alone. The desk research findings were triangulated with the results of the various PRTs employed to test and validate findings, adding credibility and making the findings stronger.

The short timeframe did not allow holding validation meetings in the districts.

### Respondents for KIs and GDs

- **National-level KIs** – six KIs were conducted in Kathmandu with national and international conflict and security experts based in Nepal:

S. N	Key informant interviews (KIs) at the central level	Quantity
1	Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs) office, Risk Management Office (RMO)	1
2	UN agency	2

3	Media representatives	1
4	Carter Centre Far-West Regional Office	1
5	Carter Centre Mid-West Regional Office	1

- **Regional-level KIs** – five KIs were conducted in the regional headquarters of Far West and Mid-West Nepal, in Kailali and Banke districts respectively. These interviews helped to better understand the regional and local dynamics.

S. N	Key informant interviews (KIs) at the regional level	Quantity
1	CAFAAG working group, Far West	1
2	UNRCHCO Field Coordination Offices	1
3	CAFAAG working group, Mid-West	1
4	INSEC Regional Offices	2

- **District-level KIs** – A total of 74 KIs were conducted in each district, as shown in the table below.

S. N	Key informant interviews (KIs) at the district level	Quantity
1	Municipality/VDC or DDC Officer	4
2	Local authority (CDO or LDO)	6
3	Civil society (development practitioner)	16
4	Legal expert, judiciary	8
5	Civil society (women-issue based)	9
6	Journalist	16
7	Security provider	7
8	Business community	8

- **Group discussions** – a total of two group discussions per district, using participatory methods, allowed us to get a better picture of perceptions on conflict and insecurity from community members and specific groups.

S.N	Group discussions (GDs)	Quantity
1	Community members (men and women)	7
2	Youth or ex-combatants	8

### 3. Key principles and limitations; challenges encountered during the field research

The rapid conflict assessment was guided by key principles underlying Saferworld's work, but was restricted because of a number of limitations. In particular, because of the time constraints and the limitations resulting from this, we had to be flexible in changing aspects of the methodology, proposed key informants and group discussion members, or guiding questions to get the information required. Other considerations included:

**Conflict and context sensitivity:** Issues related to conflict and insecurity are highly sensitive, particularly in a post-conflict society where different views can be polarising. Saferworld is committed to implementing the principles of conflict sensitivity in its own work, and supporting other actors to operate in a way that is conflict-sensitive. Thus, we applied the principle of conflict sensitivity in the rapid conflict

assessment throughout the methodology design, data collection, analysis and write-up. To do that, we were, for example, transparent about the purpose of the research; involved respondents and researchers in a way that did not put them at risk; selected and designed questions in a way that would not increase tensions, fuel stereotypes, etc.; and ensured confidentiality and anonymity of respondents at all times.

**Inclusivity:** Inclusivity is fundamental to Saferworld's approach, with the views and perceptions of the most vulnerable groups in society (which often include women, youth, elderly and minorities) being key considerations. While due to the limited timeframe, we were not able to talk to as many of those vulnerable and marginalised groups as we would usually do in our conflict assessments, we ensured that we got a good understanding of the perceptions and specific concerns of those groups.

**Gender and age-specific conflict and security concerns:** Conflict and insecurity often affect men and women, as well as old and young differently, and any project that wants to be successful and effective will have to take this into consideration when designing responses. Thus, we talked to both male and female respondents from different age groups, and sought to get information on how conflict and insecurity affect different gender and age groups differently, and whether there are specific differences in how those groups perceive the current situation or potential future developments. However, as we had to reduce the number of KIIs and GDs due to the time constraints, we did not have the time to do separate GDs for female and male respondents. Nevertheless, we managed to include a fairly gender-balanced set of respondents in the GDs and KIIs.

**Depth of the assessment:** When doing conflict assessments, it is important for Saferworld to consider and identify a wide range of acute or potential categories of conflict, tensions and insecurity; the causes; actors; how they affect different groups; and the dynamics between those factors. This creates an in-depth picture of the specific situation. This rapid conflict assessment is of a different nature as it had an additional scoping focus which was prioritised by Pact and the timeframe was very limited. Thus, the assessment was only able to look at a limited number of categories of conflict and insecurity, which were selected based on Saferworld's experience and initial consultation with key informants; however, additional issues that emerged during the assessments are mentioned in the report findings.

**Participatory methodology:** The views and perceptions on conflict and security of community members and other key stakeholders are crucial to get a good understanding of the current situation, potential developments and opportunities for programming responses. To get this information, using participatory tools proved effective for getting rich qualitative data. Due to the short timeframe, Saferworld identified a limited number of tools that were applied and that were expected to provide good information on certain aspects. However, as we had to be selective in the tools we could apply in the time available, we had to compromise on the level of detail and richness of information to a certain extent.

**Validation of findings:** Validation of findings in the locations where the research took place is important for a number of reasons, including a) to confirm findings; and b) to get clarification or additional information on specific issues that are either unclear or specifically interesting. Unfortunately we did not have the time to validate findings that way; to compensate to some degree, we sought feedback from Pact.

**Challenges during the field research:** Due repeated delays of the start date of the project, field work planning was challenging, often leading to confusion for the local coordinators. In many cases, coordinators at the district level had to cancel a GD due to delays arising from the donor contractual agreement. Further delays were caused by the one-day general strike in mid-February and the two-day general strike in early March called by CPN-M. The research team also suffered a setback in

Kanchanpur as a sudden shutdown was called by the UCPN(M)'s political youth wings and student unions on 26 February, causing the cancellation of some KIIs. The timing of the research coincided with district-level Security Council meetings in Surkhet, causing the cancellation of some KIIs with local authorities.

#### 4. Research schedule

Three research teams, comprised of Saferworld staff and 6 local researchers, carried out research in the districts in parallel, each team covering 2-3 districts. Interviews in Kathmandu were carried out by Saferworld staff. Furthermore, the assessment was supported by senior Saferworld staff based in Kathmandu and London, and by an external consultant, particularly during methodology development, analysis of findings, reviewing the initial draft report and quality control.

The research schedule was as follows:

Phase	Activities	Timeframe
Phase 1	Desk research and logistical preparations including methodology workshop  Initial preparations, especially for methodology development and central level KIIs, took place <i>pro bono</i> prior to phase 1.	14 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> February
Phase 2	Research in identified districts	21 <sup>st</sup> February – 2 <sup>nd</sup> March
Phase 3	Analysis of findings and production of first draft  Additional debrief meeting on interim findings bringing together all research teams  Draft report shared for feedback  Feedback included and final report submitted	4 <sup>th</sup> March – 18 <sup>th</sup> March  8 <sup>th</sup> March  20 March  5 April

Due to several *bandahs*, the original timeframe had to be adjusted slightly by 4 days.

## Annex 4 - KII guiding questions

Please introduce the project and its objectives (see PACT messaging for this)

There are five thematic areas that we want to explore and we have to ask similar questions for them. The four thematic areas are:

- political tensions/conflicts/violence
- identity-based tensions/conflict/violence
- tensions and violence related to crime and armed groups
- resource based conflicts/tensions/violence
- other security-related tensions/violence

### General situation

1. Can you tell me something about your district/village?
2. Can you give me an example of 3 things that are going really well in your district at the moment? Or three areas of development that you really like in your district?
3. Can you tell me three things/problems you see at the moment in your district/ village? (*establish whether this problem is potential or is already creating tensions within the district/village*)

### Identifying the problem; trends/frequency/location

4. What are the big things happening in terms of political discussions? What do people get passionate/ heated about?
5. Do you see that people have completely different opinions, politically? (*probe on intensity and nature of the opinions based on change in time*)
6. What do these different opinions result in – what does it lead to? Do they take their political differences personally? These political debates, is there a risk that they might result in tensions at the community level? (*can link to identity-based issues*)
7. What are the differences about? Is it getting more frequent or heated? What do you think this will result in? Do see any issues that are uniting different social groups? (*Political actors – please ask about specific groups – youth wings, political parties, identity-based political groups – who are stronger on the streets, in district-level decision-making and so on*)
8. Are these (*political debates, tensions*) linked to identity issues, caste-based issues? Are there any tensions between specific identity groups – can you elaborate?
9. Where have these tensions occurred? Can you elaborate on the location?
10. Is this an increase or decrease from the previous year? (*intensity or frequency*) Why?
11. What are the key issues, in terms of crime and crime-related activities in the area?
12. Has insecurity increased? What type? Is it more or less frequent? (*probe if this is a perceived or real threat*)
13. Are there any specific trends in terms of crime and insecurity? Are weapons being used? If yes, what kind? Is this a new phenomenon – please elaborate? (*ask the respondent to provide examples and location*)
14. Can this link to larger stability and peace tensions within the district?
15. Are there any resource-related issues, tensions within the area? (*could be over land, forest, river, sand, state infrastructure*)
16. If yes, where do these tensions occur mostly?
17. Are there any other issues that are disturbing the peace and security of the district?

### Causes

18. You mentioned [*insert what they told you about the political tensions/ identity*], what were the key causes of this situation or event?
19. Do you think there is any link between the political tensions that you mentioned and the identity-based tensions in this district? If so, what and why?
20. Are there any specific gender/age/identity-related causes?
21. Are there any other related causes (economic/social/cultural/religious)?
22. On resources such as water, river, forest, sand/stone, land – what could be the reasons for tensions?

### Actors

23. Who are the main actors involved in political tensions/clashes/conflict/violence?
24. Can you briefly explain their background?
25. Is it only party cadres, sympathisers, leaders? Do they get defensive with each other? (*if the respondent mentions political actors only, inquire about other actors who could be supporters/sympathisers*)
26. On the identity-based tensions and discussions you mentioned earlier, who is leading these discussions? Are there any opinion makers involved, and who are they? Are they organised, or are these sentiments shared and moved forward by the broader community?
27. Are there any women/minors involved in these discussions? How many men are involved in such political/identity discussions?
28. Were there any violent clashes relating to political tensions?
29. Who were the perpetrators/victims?
30. Were there any clashes/incidents relating to identity-based tensions?
31. Who were the perpetrators/victims involved? Are they the same actors who have been involved in such activities for the past 12 months? Have they changed?
32. What about the perpetrators of criminal activities? Who are they? Where do they come from?
33. What motivates them? Are these individuals organised? Is someone running them or are they solely operating? (*inquire about any linkages with national level actors*) Have they changed in the past 12 months?
34. Who are the victims of such criminal activities? (*inquire about gender/age*)

### Impact

35. What has the impact been on peace and security? (*probe on political/ identity/ crime/ sociocultural/economic impact*)
36. Have any specific groups/geographical areas been disproportionately affected? How and why? (*inquire about specific political/identity-related/crime/resource-related issues and the specific impact*)

### Response

37. Who is responding to address these issues? (*inquire about specific political/ identity-based crime and other security-related responses and responders – could be security agencies, political parties, traditional leaders*)
38. Are there any informal mechanisms within the district that have been contacted to address these issues?
39. Who are they? What do they do? (*inquire about the mechanism*)

40. Who contacted the responding agency? Victim/family member or friend/CSO/other? (*probe if there is a gendered dimension*)
41. Who do you contact if you have such problems?

Gender/age/identity dynamics

42. Are men and women differently affected by the tensions/conflicts/insecurity?
43. Do you think there is any difference in men and women with regard to accessing security/mediation/ other informal security and justice services within your village/district?

Triggers

44. Are there any specific events in the past that have led to outbursts within the district? (*escalation of tensions*)
45. What could trigger tensions turning violent and bad in the future?

Possible interventions

46. What are the existing practices/institutions within the district/village that have the capacity to address conflict/tensions?
47. Are there any specific mechanisms/individuals/people within your community that help in bringing people together or preventing identity-based clashes?
48. Can you provide examples of these existing practices/institutions?
49. Who are the actors that could support in strengthening sociocultural harmony? (*If tensions have not escalated to violence, why? What was the resilience to violence?*)

## Annex 5 \_ GD guiding questions

Please introduce the project and its objectives (see PACT messaging for this)

There are five thematic areas that we want to explore and we have to ask similar questions for them. The four thematic areas are:

- political tensions/conflicts/violence
- identity-based tensions/conflict/violence
- tensions and violence related to crime and armed groups
- resource based conflicts/tensions/ violence
- other security-related tensions/violence

### General situation

50. Can you tell me something about your district/village?
51. Can you give me an example of 3 things that are going really well in Nepal at the moment? Or three areas of development that you really like in your district?
52. Can you tell me three things/problems you see at the moment in your district/village? (*establish whether this problem is a potential or is already creating tensions within the district/village*)

### Identifying the problem; trends/frequency/location

53. What are the big things happening in terms of political discussions? What do people get passionate/heated about?
54. What do these different political opinions result in – what does it lead to? Do they take their political differences personally? (*please ask about specific groups – youth wings, political parties, identity-based political groups – who are stronger on the streets, in district-level decision-making and so on*)
55. What are the differences about? Is it getting more frequent or heated? What do you think this will result in?
56. Do you see any issues that are bringing different social groups together?
57. Are these (*political debates, tensions*) linked to identity issues, caste-based issues? Are there any tensions between specific identity groups – can you elaborate?
58. Where have these tensions occurred? Can you elaborate on the location?
59. How many times in last 6 months has this occurred? Compared to the months before CA dissolution, is this less or more (*intensity or frequency*)? Why?
60. What are the key issues, in terms of crime/criminal activities in the area?
61. Has insecurity increased? What type? Is it more or less frequent? (*probe if this is a perceived or real threat*)
62. Is there any particular crime/criminal activity that is taking place more or is new to this area? Are weapons being used? If yes, what kind? Is this new to this area – please elaborate? (*ask the respondent to provide examples and location*)
63. Do these tensions that you mentioned link to stability and peace within the district?
64. Are there any resource-related issues, tensions within the area? (*it could be land, forest, river, sand*)
65. If yes, where do these tensions occur mostly? Why? Is it linked to identity-based issues?
66. Are there any other issues that are disturbing the peace and security of the district?

### Causes

67. You mentioned [*insert what they told you about political tensions/identity*], what were the key causes of this situation or event?
68. Do you think there is any link between these political tensions and identity-based tensions in this area? If so, how and why?
69. Why do you think there are more men involved in political and identity-based tensions (*conflict/violence*)? Do women participate? If yes/no, why?
70. Is there any specific age group that are involved in the tensions/clashes/events/violence? Why is that age group more involved?
71. Is there a particular social group that is more involved than the others? Why is it that this particular social group is involved in the protests/demands/clashes?
72. Are there any related social and cultural causes to these tensions?
73. Are there any economic causes to these tensions?
74. Are there any religious causes to these tensions?

### Actors

75. Who are the main actors involved in political tensions/clashes/conflict/violence from your village?
76. What do these actors/people do economically? What social and cultural background are they from? (*just to ensure we get their political party, whether they are originally from the area or not, their social background*)
77. Is it only party cadres, sympathisers, leaders? Do they get defensive with each other? (*if the respondent mentions political actors only, inquire about other actors who could be supporters/sympathisers*)
78. On the identity-based tensions and discussions you mentioned earlier, who is taking up these discussions in your community? Are there any opinion makers from your community involved, and who are they?
79. Are these people organised? Or do the village people in general share the same feeling and they are moving this discussion ahead?
80. Do women and young people from your village share the same ideas on identity? Do they participate in these discussions/protests/demands?
81. In your opinion, how many men do you think were involved in such political/identity discussions? (*want to inquire if the issues have come from broader community or just few opinion makers*)
82. Have there been any violent clashes in terms of political tensions in your village or neighbouring village that you know of? (*get names of the locations*) Can you tell me about it?
83. Who were the perpetrators/victims during this/these violent clash (es)?
84. Were there such clashes/incidents related to identity-based tensions within your village or nearby that you know of? Can you tell me about it – who was involved? Where did this take place, why and what happened?
85. These perpetrators and victims that you mention, are they the same people who have been involved in such activities for the past 12 months? Have they changed?
86. What about the perpetrators of criminal activities? Who are they? Where do they come from?
87. What motivates these people committing crimes? In your opinion, are these individuals organised? Is someone running them or are they operating alone? (*inquire about any linkages with national level actors*) Have they changed in the past 12 months?
88. Who are the victims of such criminal activities? (*inquire about gender/age*)

### Impact

89. What has the impact been on peace and security? (*probe on political/identity/safety/sociocultural harmony/reconciliation/economic impact*)
90. Have any specific groups/geographical areas been disproportionately affected? How? (*inquire about specific political/identity-related/safety/resource-related issues and the specific impact*)

#### Response

91. Who is responding to address these issues? (*inquire about specific political/identity-based/security and crime, and other security-related responses and responders – could be security agencies, political parties, traditional leaders*)
92. Are there any informal mechanisms within your village that have been contacted to address these issues?
93. Who are they? What do they do? (*inquire about the mechanism*)
94. Who contacted the responding agency? Victim/family member or friend/CSO/other? (*Probe if there is a gendered dimension*)
95. Who do you contact if you have such problems? Why do you contact them?

#### Gender/age/identity dynamics

96. In your village, are men and women differently affected by the tensions/conflicts/insecurity?
97. Do women report more cases or men? Why?
98. What age group is usually affected? Do they report cases?
99. In your village, do people go to police or to village leaders when there face insecurity, violent tensions? What about women – who do they go to first, when they face such problems?

#### Triggers

100. Do you know of any specific events in the past that have led to tensions getting out of hand or getting violent within the district or your area? (*escalation of tensions*)
101. In your experience, what do you think can make a normal tensions turn violent and bad in the future? (*violence escalation*)

#### Possible interventions

102. In your village/area, what are the existing practices/institutions that have the capacity to address conflict/tensions?
103. Are there any specific mechanisms/individuals/people within your community/village that help in bringing people together or preventing identity-based clashes?
104. Have you approached any of them for your problems? Do you know of any case in your village that has gone to such mechanisms/people and how did they deal with it? Was it effective?
105. According to you, what can be done to strengthen these mechanisms/people/institutions?
106. Who are the actors that could support in strengthening sociocultural harmony? (*If tensions have not escalated to violence, why? What was the resilience to violence?*)

## Annex B

### Mapping of work carried out by NGOs and INGOs in the field of peacebuilding, conflict prevention, mediation, reconciliation and local safety and security provision in eight selected districts in Nepal's Far West and Mid-West<sup>1</sup>

Organisation	What topics are your programmes (past, present or future) addressing?	Can you briefly describe the approach you are using?	Which VDCs or municipalities are you working in?	Who are your target groups?	Which other actors are involved?	What mechanisms or processes did you establish, work with or are aware of which worked well?	Any other mechanisms or projects the Sajhedari Bikaas project should be aware of/link with?
Kanchanpur							
UNDP-PBRU	The socio-economic rehabilitation of the verified minors and late recruits discharged from Maoist cantonments through Vocational Skills training, microenterprise development, training in health related trades and enrolment in school. Community engagement in supporting the rehabilitation of the verified minors and late recruits	The programme offers training and education support complemented by cross-cutting services such as individual counselling, family counselling, gender specific support, health and psychosocial support in a conflict and gender sensitive manner	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 66 VMLRs in Kanchanpur	UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO and implementing partners	N/A	Natural Resource Conflict Transformation program (NRCT) of FECOFUN. Redcross, NNSWA, Tharu Mahila Munch, DCWB, DEO, Gharelu, DHO. It would be useful to link up with the Informal network of Tharu groups called Badghar/Bhalmansa, as well as the Civil Society Network (CSN) comprised of different NGOs, Nepal Bar Association, professional organizations and intellectuals. Both are present in Kailali and Kanchanpur.
TAF	<b>Mediation</b>	Interest-based facilitative mediation, in which the parties involved can constructively explore ways to resolve a dispute with the help of local trained mediators. It is based on the principle that the mediator is neutral and does not make decisions for the disputants. Rather, the mediator assists the disputants in a search for their own solutions. The interest-based approach	Municipality: Mahendra Nagar Municipality; VDCs: Suda, Daiji, Pipaladi, Parasn, Dodhara, Krishnapur	Community members	Local government, local leaders, and civil society members	i) Six-phase mediation process; ii) Involvement of local stakeholders from the planning of the program; iii) inclusive mediation panel reflective of community composition; iv) Nepali core trainers with years of direct mediation experience; v) Mediation manual based	

<sup>1</sup> Information compiled as provided by the (I)NGOs that responded to our request.

		focuses on the discovery, understanding, and respect for the needs and interests of all parties involved in a dispute instead of just focusing on legal rights of the disputing parties. Mediated agreements are based on the parties' recognition of the interdependency of their interests.				on practice and experience of community mediation in Nepal
CeLRRd	Mediation	Understanding Each Others of disputing parties and resolve through interest based approach of mediation.	6 VDCs: Suda, Daijee, Pipladi, Parasan, Krishnapur, Dohara; and 1 Municipality: Bhimdukt Nagar MC	Community People	VDC Staffs, Local Political Parties and district Level stakeholders	4 steps interest based mediation process
ICTJ	Assessment of Impact of Disappearance on wives of disappeared - November - December 2012; Research - Right to Reparation - March/April 2013	Household Survey	N/A	Conflict victims and survey included especially wives of disappeared person	Victim organizations and civil society organizations such as Advocacy Forum and INSEC	We normally invite the participants from Victim organizations, TJ Networks and occasionally establish Regional TJ Network to which the ICTJ is a secretariat. Likewise, Advocacy Forum is a partner organization in our activities most of times and we use their expertise and coverage while doing so. In case of research relating to wives of disappeared, we took help from NEFAD (Networks of Families of Disappeared), Nepal and Gender and TJ Network members organizations.
INSEC	Human Rights Education (HRE), Human Rights Year Book (HRYB), INSEC Online (IO), Early Warning Programme, Data Bank Programme	Selection & Mobilization of CBOS, Awareness Classes on Human Rights & Legal Rights, Information Collection of Human Rights Violation through District Representatives, Coordination & Collaboration etc.	Suda VDC of HRE Program and others all over the district	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, Lawyers, Political Parties	Local Government Authority (Police, DAO, DDC, VDC etc.), NGOs, INGOs, religious groups, District peace Committee (DPC), INSEC representatives, Teachers, Students etc.	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned Stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization

CWIN	Peace Building, sustainable reintegration	1) A systematic baseline research on the rights, concerns and aspirations of the target group 2) policy recommendations based on an analysis of the research and in accordance with the Human Rights treaties 3) Protection Monitoring 4) direct support for education (formal, vocational and life skill), vocational training and small enterprise development for children and youth (and where necessary families) 5) Indirect support through referrals 6) Capacity development of the local/community based organizations on protection monitoring, structured dialogue, psycho-social support etc. 7) Coordination and collaboration with district and community based organization	Entire District	Children formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups (children who fled armed groups prior to the signing of the CPA and who are either residing in protective institutional care, are living with their families, or who are living as internally displaced persons)	As CWIN is working in coordinative and collaborative approach, different actors available in the districts like District Child Welfare Board (DCWB), District Education Office (DEO), District Women and Children Office (DWCO), District office of Small and Cottage Industries Development, Local NGOs, CBOs, Health Organizations, Political parties etc are involved in the process of sustainable reintegration of former CAAFAG	We (CWIN) have been working with the networks, institutional set ups and mechanisms established so far locally (district and community level). However, we have initiated community based 'former CAAFAG Reintegration Support Committees' in different districts.	
TCC	Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting at the local level. Topics include political party youth wing activity, voter registration, political space and security. Also observe peacebuilding, conflict prevention, mediation, reconciliation and local security provision policies at local level.	Our observers based in the Far Western region conduct local level interviews with peace process stakeholders (CDOs, SP, journalists, political parties, civil society, local government and citizens. Once qualitative data has been gathered (on whichever topic of the peace process. The information is analysed and put into a private report for our research team in Kathmandu. Based on these reports - a long with others from our teams in the field who are based in each development region of Nepal - we compile public reports and informal briefings for the international and national community throughout Nepal.	N/A	Political parties, local government, media, civil society, police, citizens.	All peace process stakeholders and state groups	UN, RMO, BOGs Officer over security issues, such as the April/May protests in 2012	
Kailali							

UNDP-PBRU	Socio-economic rehabilitation of verified minors and late recruits	same as above	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 99 VMLRs in Kailali	same as above	N/A	LPC's and VLPC's, community mediators. NRCT; UNDP funded Community Mediation Program. Red Cross, BASE, DCEB, CDO, DDC, DHO, Gharelu, INSEC, Mukta Kamlari Bikas Munch, Kamaiya Pratha Unmulan Samaj, FAYA. It would be useful to link up with the Informal network of Tharu groups called Badghar/Bhalmansa, as well as the Civil Society Network (CSN) comprised of different NGOs, professional organizations and intellectuals. Both are present in Kailali and Kanchanpur. LGCDP, Community Support program(CARE Nepal/DEFID), Helvatas, Rojagari, practical action, GIZ project are running in Kailali.
GIZ STPP	Peace building , conflict prevention , mediation , conflict transformation	Peace visioning workshop for young leaders: Discussion on future of Nepal, understanding of peace, conflict, violence; involvement of youth for peace building; Get together event to bring ex- combatants and community members in one forum.	Sadepai, Masuriya , Chaumala, Baliya	Maoist ex-combatants and community members, Marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, disabled persons	CBOs and NGO of working communities, college students, representatives of technical training providers, civil society members, VDCs, Community Development Committee.	Coordination with local stakeholders , formation of Community Development Committee, regional pool of dialogue facilitators trained by STPP creating space for dialogue, mediation, and peace and trust building measures/events	
TAF	Mediation	same as above	Municipality: Dhangadi; VDCs: Geta, Beladevipur, Sripur, Pulbari, Urma	Community members	same as above	same as above	
CeLRRd	Mediation	same as above	8 VDCs: Pahalmanpur, Durgauli, Pathlaiya, Sadepani, Malakheti, Chaumala, Masuriya, Chuha; and 1 Municipality: Tikapur	same as above	same as above	7 steps interest based mediation process	
ICTJ	Gender and Transitional Justice - Discussion Program in May 2012; Assessment of Impact of Disappearance on wives of disappeared - Research November - December 2012; Regional Hub for Research - Right to Reparation - March/April 2013	Workshop, Discussion, Training, Household Survey	N/A	Conflict victims and survey included especially wives of disappeared person	Victim organizations and civil society organizations such as Advocacy Forum and INSEC, Gender and TJ Network	same as above	
INSEC	Child Rights Protection (CRP), Human Rights HRYB, IO, Early Warning Programme, Local Initiatives for Rights Democracy and Peace (RDP), Security and Rule of Law, Sensitizing Responsible Authorities being	Formation and Mobilization Victim's Reconciliation Forum (VRF), Selection & Mobilization of CBOS, Awareness Classes on Human Rights & Legal Rights, Information Collection of Human Rights Violation through District Representatives, Coordination & Collaboration etc., Interaction &	Urma, Fulbari, Darakh & Pahalmanpur for RDP ( <i>Not Now, RFP Project VDCs</i> ), Dhangadi an Tikapur Municipality, Bhajani, Baliya VDCs for Security & Justice Program	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, Lawyers,	Local Government Authority (Police, DAO, DDC, VDC etc.), NGOs, INGOs, religious groups, District peace Committee (DPC), INSEC Representatives, Local Reconciliation	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization. Mobilization of the group is best for their ownership.	

	Responsive towards the Education, Food and Health Issues of Local People	Dialogue on Security & Justice Issues		Political Parties	Committee, Teachers, Students etc.	
CWIN	<b>Peace Building, sustainable reintegration</b>	same as above	Entire District	same as above	same as above	same as above
TCC	Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting	same as above	N/A	same as above	same as above	In addition to our public reporting, we conducted regional stakeholder sessions in each development HQ/major town near to our LTOs bases in all five development regions, to disseminate information on voter registration in the summer 2012. For more, see our website.
AFP	<b>Peacebuilding, conflict prevention and mediation</b>	Capacity building (training on PBCT) and networking (formation of Youth Peace Networks), sustained dialogues, working closely with local government	Public colleges in district headquarter and VDCs	Students and youth organizations	LPC's, VLPC's, district level politicians, Youth Peace Networks	Youth Peace Dialogue Centres and Youth Peace Networks
Care	<b>Livelihood, UNSCR 1325/1820</b> NAP sharing session with community groups, <b>Peace building</b> , <b>Income generation</b> , small infrastructure, livelihood programme, disaster prevention	Empowering community through reflect method, Conducting research on underlying causes of poverty to identify intervention area ; Partnership Approach with local organization for project implementation	Ram Shikar Jhala, Mohanal, Pandaun, Sugarkhal, Tatanrpur and Pourere	Poor and excluded people (Poor and excluded include all women, disadvantaged Janajatis, all Dalits, religious minorities and other excluded groups, including women and girls)	Government , Local organizations, networks, user group, civil society and media	1) Supporting government planning process forming and mobilising Community Awareness Centres.2) Public Audit process integrated in project cycle.

<b>International Alert</b>	<b>Access to justice</b>	The main approaches used in this project are research, accompaniment, training, dialogue and advocacy.	In this project Alert is mainly working in the district headquarter (Dhangadhi Municipality). We are also working in the VDCs level, however, we are not limited in any specified VDCs. For example we are providing training to informal justice actors both traditional i.e. Badghar, Bhalmansa, Maulana etc. and development intervention groups i.e. Paralegal, Mediation groups etc. on Human Rights and Gender sensitivity norms. These informal justice actors mainly come from the various VDCs.	People from vulnerable and marginalized groups	State and non-state justice sector actors; actors supporting and overseeing the formal and informal justice sector; media and interested public	The project has established Justice Facilitation Groups (JFG) in the district. JFG comprises 14 members representing from both formal and informal justice mechanisms and Civil Society. There are 33% women's participation in the JFG. The main objective of JFG is improving and strengthening the coordination between both state and non-state justice sectors, improving their understanding and clarity of their roles and responsibilities and leading district-level debates on the problem of inadequate access to justice.	
<b>International Alert</b>	<b>Improve local security provision</b>	The main approaches using in this project are research, accompaniment, training, dialogue and advocacy.	District headquarter (Dhangadhi Municipality)	Local private sector including the FNCCI and Chamber of Commerce in the district.	Local security providers such as District Police Office, District Administration Office, Armed Police Force; Civil Society; Media.	This project is implementing with the close collaboration of the District Chamber of Commerce.	
<b>Bardiya</b>							
<b>UNDP-PBRU</b>	<b>Socio-economic rehabilitation of verified minors and late recruits</b>	same as above	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 173 VMLRs in Bardiya	same as above	N/A	PLCs, community mediators, WCF, mothers groups, youth and child clubs. LPC's
<b>GIZ STPP</b>	<b>Peace building , conflict prevention , mediation , conflict transformation</b>	Pool of dialogue facilitators trained to provide safe spaces for dialogue facilitation to address the latent conflict and existing resentments in the community.	Magragadi	Maoist ex-combatants and community members, Marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women, youth,	CBOs and NGO of working communities, college students, representatives of technical training providers, civil society members, VDCs, Community	Coordination with local stakeholders , formation of Community Development Committee, regional pool of dialogue facilitators trained by STPP creating space for dialogue, mediation, and peace and trust building	and VLPC's, community mediators. Red Cross, BASE, HIM RIGHTS, NNDSW, NHRC, Ekal Mahila Sanjal, Advocacy Forum, ICRC, Nyayaka Lagi Dwandwapidit Samaj, DCEB, CDO,

				disabled persons	Development Committee.	measures/events	DDC, DHO, Gharelu. Alliance for Peace (AfP), a local NGO, works with youth wings. They are present in a number of districts, including Bardiya and Rolpa.
CeLRRd	Mediation	same as above	17 VDCs: Shorahawa, Mainapokhar, Shanoshree, Kalika, Mohammadpur, Taratal (original sites); Bhimmapur, Rajapur, Daulatpur, Manpurtapara, Deudakala (added in 2009/10); Nayagawn, Badalpur, Manau (added in 2010/11); Pashupatinagar, Gola, Patavar (added in 2011/12); and 1 Municipality: Gulariya	same as above	same as above	7 steps interest based mediation process	
ICTJ	Gender and Transitional Justice - Discussion Program in May 2012; Assessment of Impact of Disappearance on wives of disappeared - Research November - December 2012; Research - Right to Reparation - March/April 2013	Workshop, Discussion, Training, Household Survey	N/A	Conflict victims and survey included especially wives of disappeared person	Victim organizations and civil society organizations such as Advocacy Forum and INSEC	same as above	
Saferworld	Community safety (with INSEC)	Apply consultative and community based approach to improve relationships between communities, administration and security providers, and address safety and conflict issues, incl. economic challenges, through local means	Kalika, Dudhbar and Mohamadpur	Community members, incl. marginalised groups; local security providers; local administration	INSEC; MEDEP-supported mechanisms	working with and through community safety working groups at the VDC level which include a wide range of community members from different groups, and are closely linked to and working with VDC Secretary and local police	

INSEC	Community security, Human Rights HRE, HRYB, IO, Early Warning Programme	Through Public Committee in each VDC, Information Collection through INSEC Representatives, Coordination and Collaboration	Kalika, Mohammadpur and Dhadhawar	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, Lawyers, Political Parties	VDC Office, Security Agencies and Health Offices, DR, DPC, Teachers	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization. Mobilization of the group is best for their ownership.	
CWIN	Peace Building, sustainable reintegration	same as above	Entire District	same as above	same as above	same as above	
TCC	Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting	same as above	N/A	same as above	same as above	N/A	
AFP	Peacebuilding, conflict prevention and mediation	Capacity building (training on PBCT) and networking (formation of Youth Peace Networks), sustained dialogues, working closely with local government	Public colleges in district headquarter and VDCs	Students and youth organizations	LPC's, VLPC's, district level politicians, Youth Peace Networks	Youth Peace Dialogue Centres and Youth Peace Networks	
Banke							
UNDP-PBRU	Socio-economic rehabilitation of verified minors and late recruits	The programme offers training and education support complemented by cross-cutting services such as individual counselling, family counselling, gender specific support, health and psychosocial support in a conflict and gender sensitive manner	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 110 VMLRs in Bardiya	UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO and implementing partners	N/A	Himrights, INSEC, Maiti Nepal, B Group, CWIN, CELLARD. Beautiful Nepal Association, Advocacy Forum. NGCCI initiated a Social Harmony Council or Committee, designed to foster good communal relations. UNIRP, which seems to have been extended until March.
UNDP	UNDP - Collaborative Leadership and Dialogue Project under Conflict Prevention Programme	1. Bringing political parties together for dialogue around issues of national importance with entry points as less-disputed local issues or issues of shared /common interests, 2. Enhancing capacity and skills of political party leaders, government officials, civil society leaders and media leaders to hold constructive dialogue, 3. Encourage the people equipped with dialogue skill to train more people and apply their skills in the field	Bankatawa, Indrapur, Jaispur and Phattepur	Political party leaders, government leaders, youth and women groups, civil society leaders	NGO activists, academicians and community development workers	A single-member team of Collaborative Leadership and Dialogue has been deployed to work full time in the field. Some NGOs have been selected as implementing partners who have set up a secretariat at Fatima Foundation's office. Evaluation is yet to be conducted to find whether directly implemented programmes or	

						programmes implemented through NGO partners had good impact.	
GIZ STPP	Peace building , conflict prevention , mediation , conflict transformation	Peace visioning workshop for young leaders , Discussion on future of Nepal, Understanding of Peace , conflict , violence Involvement of youth for Peace building , Why it is important to involve youth and community members in peace building?	Rajhena , Kohalpur, Bajjapur, Bianuna	Maoist ex-combatants and community members, Marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, disabled persons	CBOs and NGO of working communities, college students, representatives of technical training providers, civil society members, VDCs, Community Development Committee.	Coordination with local stakeholders , formation of Community Development Committee, regional pool of dialogue facilitators trained by STPP creating space for dialogue, mediation, and peace and trust building measures/events	
TAF	Mediation	same as above	Municipality: Nepalgunj; VDCs: Puraini, Khajura Khurd, Rajhena, Shamshergunj, Kohalpur, Bageshwori, Parashpur, Chisapani, Monikapur, Mahadevpuri, Kachanapur	same as above	same as above	same as above	
CeLRRd	Mediation	same as above	11 VDCs: Bageshory, Chisapani, Khajurakhurd, Kohalpur, Paraspur, Puraini, Rajhena, Samsergunj, Manikapur, Madhavpuri, Kachanapur; and 1 Municipality: Nepalgunj	same as above	same as above	4 steps interest based mediation process	
ICTJ	Regional workshop on Gender and Transitional Justice in June 2012; Assessment of Impact of Disappearance on wives of disappeared - Research	Workshop, Household Survey	N/A	Conflict victims and survey included especially wives of disappeared person	Victim organizations and civil society organizations such as Advocacy Forum and INSEC, Gender and TJ Network	same as above	

	November - December 2012; Regional Hub - Research - Right to Reparation - March/April 2013						
INSEC	<b>Community security, Human Rights</b> HRA, HRC, HRYB, IO, <b>Early Warning Programme, Security and Rule of Law</b> , Sensitizing Responsible Authorities being Responsive towards the Education, Food and Health Issues of Local People	Through Public Committee in each VDC, information collection through DR, coordination and collaboration	Baijapur, Kachanapur and Binauna, Fattepur	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, Lawyers, Political Parties	Local Government Authority (Police, DAO, DDC, VDC etc.), NGOs, INGOs, religious groups, District peace Committee (DPC), INSEC representatives, Teachers, Students etc.	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization. Mobilization of the group is best for their ownership.	
CWIN	<b>Peace Building, sustainable reintegration</b>	same as above	Entire District	same as above	same as above	same as above	
TCC	<b>Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting</b>	same as above	N/A	same as above	same as above	In addition to our public reporting, we conducted regional stakeholder sessions in each development HQ/major town near to our LTOs bases in all five development regions, to disseminate information on voter registration in the summer 2012. For more, see TCC website. Also, we coordinate with UN, RMO, BOGs Officer over security issues, such as the April/May protests in 2012	

<b>International Alert</b>	<b>Access to justice</b>	The main approaches used in this project are research, accompaniment, training, dialogue and advocacy.	In this project Alert is mainly working in the district headquarter (Nepalgunj Municipality). We are also working in the VDCs level, however, we are not limited in any specified VDCs. For example we are providing training to informal justice actors both traditional i.e. Badghar, Bhalmansa, Maulana etc. and development intervention groups i.e. Paralegal, Mediation groups etc. on Human Rights and Gender sensitivity norms. These informal justice actors mainly come from the various VDCs.	People from vulnerable and marginalized groups	State and non-state justice sector actors; actors supporting and overseeing the formal and informal justice sector; media and interested public	The project has established Justice Facilitation Groups (JFG) in the district. JFG comprises 15 members representing from both formal and informal justice mechanisms and Civil Society. There are 33% women's participation in the JFG. The main objective of JFG is improving and strengthening the coordination between both state and non-state justice sectors, improving their understanding and clarity of their roles and responsibilities and leading district-level debates on the problem of inadequate access to justice.	
<b>Saferworld</b>	1. <b>Community safety</b> (with INSEC); 2. <b>advocacy on gender and security</b> (with IHRICON)	1. Apply consultative and community based approach to improve relationships between communities, administration and security providers, and address safety and conflict issues, incl. economic challenges, through local means; 2. improve capacity of district-level CSOs to advocate constructively for gender-responsive security provision	Kachanapur, Binouna and Bajapur	1. Community members, incl. marginalised groups; local security providers; local administration; 2. local CSOs/NGOs	1. INSEC; MEDEP-supported mechanisms; 2. IHRICON	1. working with and through community safety working groups at the VDC level which include a wide range of community members from different groups, and are closely linked to and working with VDC Secretary and local police; 2. working with advocacy platform (of district level CSOs, WDOs and district police) at the district level	
<b>Dang</b>							
<b>UNDP-PBRU</b>	<b>Socio-economic rehabilitation of verified minors and late recruits</b>	The programme offers training and education support complemented by cross-cutting services such as individual counselling, family counselling, gender specific support,	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 237 VMLRs in Dang	UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO and implementing partners	N/A	UNDP funded Community Mediation Program. DNGOCC, Nepal Mahila Samudayik Sewa, SISA,

		health and psychosocial support in a conflict and gender sensitive manner					BCD (Boat for Community Development). BASE, which works with Tharus, and according some informal reports, also has worked with returned PLA. LPCs.
GIZ STPP	Peace building , conflict prevention , mediation , conflict transformation	Joint program for community members and ex - combatants.	Purandhara , Satbariya , Bijauri , Naryanpur	Maoist ex-combatants and community members, Marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, disabled persons	CBOs and NGO of working communities, college students, representatives of technical training providers, civil society members, VDCs, Community Development Committee.	Coordination with local stakeholders , formation of Community Development Committee, regional pool of dialogue facilitators trained by STPP creating space for dialogue, mediation, and peace and trust building measures/events	
TAF	Regional Dialogue	facilitated dialogue forum to identify and resolve local/regional conflicts	Tulsipur municipality	Local political actors, civil society and ethnic/identity activists			
CeLRRd	Mediation	same as above	7 VDCs: Manpur, Duruwa, Bijauri, Tarigawn, Chaulahi, Gadhawaa, Urahari; and 2 Municipalities: Tulshipur, Gorahi	same as above	same as above	7 steps interest based mediation process	
ICTJ	Assessment of Impact of Disappearance on wives of disappeared - Research November - December 2012	Household Survey	N/A	Conflict victims and survey included especially wives of disappeared person	Victim organizations and civil society organizations such as Advocacy Forum and WOREC Nepal	same as above	
INSEC	CRP, HRYB, IO, Early Warning Programme, Local Initiatives for Rights and Democracy, Data Bank Programme	information collection through DR, coordination and collaboration	Manpur, Panchakule, Duruwa, Purundhara ( <i>Not Now, RFP Project VDCs</i> )	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, Lawyers, Political Parties	Local Government Authority (Police, DAO, DDC, VDC etc.), NGOs, INGOs, religious groups, District peace Committee (DPC), INSEC representatives, Teachers, Students etc.	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization. Mobilization of the group is best for their ownership.	

CWIN	Peace Building, sustainable reintegration	same as above	Entire District	same as above	same as above	same as above	
TCC	Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting	same as above	N/A	same as above	same as above	N/A	
International Alert	Public security and justice: building constructive role of youth	The main approaches used in this project are research, accompaniment, training, joint activities between security providers and youth, dialogue and advocacy.	District headquarter and some of the VDCs	Youth (boys and girls)	Local security providers such as District Police Office, District Administration Office, Armed Police Force; Traffic Police, Political youth wings, Civil Society; Media; local youth clubs	Project has established a Joint Pilot Initiative (JPI) group in the district. The group comprises around 15 members from the representatives of District Police, Community Police, Traffic Police, Political youth, youth clubs, civil society, media and local youth. This group identified the key priority issues of security; possible intervention to address the issues and designed and implemented the initiatives with the small funding from the project.	
Surkhet							
UNDP-PBRU	Socio-economic rehabilitation of verified minors and late recruits	The programme offers training and education support complemented by cross-cutting services such as individual counselling, family counselling, gender specific support, health and psychosocial support in a conflict and gender sensitive manner	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 113 VMLRs in Surkhet	UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO and implementing partners	N/A	LPCs. Beautiful Nepal Association, Advocacy Forum. ITCJ is doing transitional justice work here and possibly also in Banke. LGCDP, Community Support program(CARE Nepal/DFID)
GIZ STPP	Peace building , conflict prevention , mediation	Dialogue facilitators from different communities were trained in 3 modules of dialogue facilitation to provide safe spaces for dialogue facilitation to address latent conflict and existing resentments.	Hariharpur , Uttarganga, Dadhrathpur	Maoist ex-combatants and community members, Marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, disabled persons	CBOs and NGO of working communities, college students, representatives of technical training providers, civil society members, VDCs, Community Development	Coordination with local stakeholders , formation of Community Development Committee, regional pool of dialogue facilitators trained by STPP creating space for dialogue, mediation, and peace and trust building measures/events	

					Committee.	
CeLRRd	Mediation	same as above	8 VDCs: Utarganga, Chhinchu, Jarbuta, Latikoili, Mehelkuna, Satakhaani, Kunathari, Gadi; and 1 Municipality: Birendranagar	same as above	same as above	7 steps interest based mediation process
ICTJ	Assessment of Impact of Disappearance on wives of disappeared - Research November - December 2012	Household Survey	N/A	Conflict victims and survey included especially wives of disappeared person	Victim organizations and civil society organizations such as Advocacy Forum and WOREC Nepal	We normally invite the participants from Victim organizations, TJ Networks and occasionally establish Regional TJ Network to which the ICTJ is a secretariat. Likewise, Advocacy Forum is a partner organization in our activities most of times and we use their expertise and coverage while doing so. In case of research relating to wives of disappeared, we took help from NEFAD (Networks of Families of Disappeared), Nepal and Gender and TJ Network members organizations.
INSEC	CRP, HRYB, IO, Early Warning Programme, Local Initiatives for Rights and Democracy	Information Collection through INSEC District representative, Coordination and Collaboration	Chhinchu, Latikoili, Uttarganga, Ramghat ( <i>Not Now, RFP Project VDCs</i> )	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, Lawyers,	Local Government Authority (Police, DAO, DDC, VDC etc.), NGOs, INGOs, religious groups, District peace Committee (DPC), INSEC representatives, Teachers, Students etc.	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization. Mobilization of the group is best for their ownership.

				Political Parties			
CWIN	Peace Building, sustainable reintegration	same as above	Entire District	same as above	same as above	same as above	
TCC	Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting	same as above	N/A	same as above	same as above	N/A	
Care	Livelihood, UNSCR 1325/1820 NAP sharing session with community groups, Peace building, Income generation, small infrastructure, livelihood programme, disaster prevention	Empowering community through reflect method, conducting research on underlying causes of poverty to identify intervention area; Partnership Approach with local organization for project implementation	Agrigaun, Bajedichaur, Bijora, Chhapre, Dandakhali, Dharapani, Ghatgaun, Guthu, Hariharpur, Kaphal Kot, Lekhparajul, Mehelkuna, Pokharikanda, Taranga Ghat, Tatopani,	Poor and excluded people (Poor and excluded include all women, disadvantaged Janajatis, all Dalits, religious minorities and other excluded groups, including women and girls)	Government, Local organizations, networks, user group, civil society and media	1) Supporting government planning process forming and mobilising Community Awareness Centres. 2) Public Audit process integrated in project cycle.	
Salyan							
UNDP-PBRU	Socio-economic rehabilitation of verified minors and late recruits	same as above	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 84 VMLRs in Salyan	same as above	N/A	Red Cross, RRN, Dalit Development Samaj, HRPLES, BASE
ICTJ	No particular project but invited to participated in regional program		N/A	Conflict victims	N/A	We normally invite the participants from Victim organizations, TJ Networks and occasionally establish Regional TJ Network to which the ICTJ is a secretariat. Likewise, Advocacy Forum is a partner organization in our activities most of times and we use their expertise and	

						coverage while doing so. In case of research relating to wives of disappeared, we took help from NEFAD (Networks of Families of Disappeared), Nepal and Gender and TJ Network members organizations.	
INSEC	HRYB, IO, Early Warning Programme	Information Collection through INSEC District representative, coordination and Collaboration	Not focused at VDC Level Activities	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, lawyers, Political Parties	Local Government Authority (Police, DAO, DDC, VDC etc.), NGOs, INGOs, religious groups, District peace Committee (DPC), INSEC representatives, Teachers, Students etc.	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization. Mobilization of the group is best for their ownership.	
CWIN	Peace Building, sustainable reintegration	same as above	Entire District	same as above	same as above	same as above	
TCC	Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting	same as above	N/A	same as above	same as above	N/A	
Rolpa							
UNDP-PBRU	Socio-economic rehabilitation of verified minors and late recruits	same as above	All VDCs/municipalities	Community people and 88 VMLRs in Rolpa	same as above	N/A	HUREC, HRPLES, DECOSE, RUDASE, RRN, Red Cross, Shanti ka lagi Yuwa Samaj. DPO reportedly working on Village Security Committees; AfP
ICTJ	Gender and Transitional Justice - Discussion Program in May 2012; Assessment of Impact of Disappearance on wives of disappeared - Research November - December 2012; Research - Right to Reparation - March/April 2013	Workshop, Discussion, Training, Household Survey	N/A	Conflict victims and survey included especially wives of disappeared person	Victim organizations and civil society organizations such as Advocacy Forum and INSEC, Gender and TJ Network	We normally invite the participants from Victim organizations, TJ Networks and occasionally establish Regional TJ Network to which the ICTJ is a secretariat. Likewise, Advocacy Forum is a partner organization in our activities most of times and we use their expertise and	

						coverage while doing so. In case of research relating to wives of disappeared, we took help from NEFAD (Networks of Families of Disappeared), Nepal and Gender and TJ Network members organizations.	
INSEC	HRYB, IO, Early Warning Programme	Information Collection through INSEC District representative, coordination and collaboration	Not Focused at VDC Level Activities	Community People, Victims, Students, Teachers, parents, Women Groups, GoN Officials, Police, Lawyers, Political Parties	Local Government Authority (Police, DAO, DDC, VDC etc.), NGOs, INGOs, religious groups, District peace Committee (DPC), INSEC representatives, Teachers, Students etc.	Good Linkage & Coordination among Concerned Stakeholders and Other Like Minded Organization	
CWIN	Peace Building, sustainable reintegration	same as above	Entire District	same as above	same as above	same as above	
TCC	Long-Term Observation of the peace process and constitution drafting	same as above	N/A	same as above	same as above	N/A	
AFP	Peacebuilding, conflict prevention and mediation	Capacity building (training on PBCT) and networking (formation of Youth Peace Networks), sustained dialogues, working closely with local government, research	Public colleges in district headquarter and VDCs	Students and youth organizations	LPC's, VLPC's, district level politicians	Youth Peace Dialogue Centres and Youth Peace Networks	