

THEORIES OF CHANGE IN PEACEBUILDING

Learning from the Experiences of
Peacebuilding Initiatives in Nepal



Theories of Change in Peacebuilding:

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This study is conducted as part of the initiative Strengthening Capacity to Design, Monitor and Evaluate Peacebuilding Programming, a collaborative project between CARE International UK and International Alert, implemented in Nepal, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The overall goal of this initiative is to strengthen the institutional and operational capacity of civil society organisations and governments to design, monitor and evaluate peacebuilding and conflict prevention programming.

This research explores the theories of change and underlying assumptions of six peacebuilding initiatives of six organisations in Nepal: Alliance for Peace, CARE Nepal, International Alert, Search For Common Ground (SFCG), Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction and Youth Action Nepal.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AfP	Alliance for Peace
AIN	Association of International NGOs in Nepal
AISC	Army Integration Special Committee
CA	Constituent Assembly
CBO	Community-based Organization
CDO	Chief District Officer
CFUG	community forest users group
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Accord
CPDC	Conflict Peace and Development Co-operation
CPN-M	Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist
CPN-UML	Communist Party of Nepal–Unified Marxist and Leninist
CPP	Community Peace Project
DAO	District Administration Office
DDC	District Development Committee
DLPPG	district-level peace pressure group
DM&E	design, monitoring and evaluation
DPAC	District Project Advisory Committee
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAN	Equal Access Nepal
EC	European Commission
FGD	focus group discussion
FM	frequency modulation (local radio stations)
FSU	Free Student Union
FNCCI	Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
GBV	gender-based violence
GD	group discussion
GNI	Gross National Income (formally GNP per capita)
GoN	Government of Nepal
HLPM	High-Level Peace Mechanism
HR	human rights
IA	International Alert
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
JSSR	Justice and Security Sector Reform
LDO	Local Development Officer
LPC	Local Peace Committee
MJF	Madheshi Janaadhikar Forum

MoPR	Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NC	Nepali Congress
NGO	non-government organisation
NYSF	Nepal Youth Social Forum
PA	peace ambassador
PC	peace centre
PF	programming framework
PG	peace group
PPG	peace pressure group
PVSE	poor, vulnerable and socially excluded
RATDA	research, accompaniment, training, dialogue and advocacy
RTM	research team member
SC	steering committee
SFCG	Search For Common Ground
SLC	school-leaving certificate (conducted after class 10)
SMC	school management committee
SPA	seven-party alliance
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TOC	theory of change
TMDP	Terai Madhesh Democratic Party
UNMIN	United Nations Mission to Nepal
UCPN-M	United Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist
VAW	violence against women
VDC	Village Development Committee
VLPC	Village-Level Peace Council
VLPPG	village-level peace pressure group
WDO	Women Development Officer
WYPSP	Women and Youth as Pillars of Sustainable Peace
YOAC	Youth Action
YPDC	Youth Peace Dialogue Centre

Executive Summary

This study is conducted as part of the initiative Strengthening Capacity to Design, Monitor and Evaluate Peacebuilding Programming, implemented in Nepal, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The overall goal of this initiative is to strengthen the institutional and operational capacity of civil society organisations and governments to design, monitor and evaluate peacebuilding and conflict prevention programming.

This research explores the theories of change (TOCs) and underlying assumptions of six peacebuilding initiatives of six organisations in Nepal: Alliance for Peace (AfP), CARE Nepal, International Alert, Search For Common Ground (SFCG), Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) and Youth Action Nepal (YOAC Nepal). The effectiveness of these TOCs, drawn from their peacebuilding programmes, is critically analysed, with evidence seen at various levels at varying degrees of success.

This research has been conducted in response to the limited available amount of accumulated knowledge of what makes for effective peacebuilding and under what conditions it works. Peacebuilding initiatives have proven difficult to evaluate using the traditional evaluation tools. A TOC approach offers an explanation of how and why a set of activities will bring about a desired change. This focuses on the underlying assumptions and provides an alternative strategy for assessing the impact of peacebuilding projects.

The research team learned that the process of clarifying the TOC in order to examine their programming design and implementation has led to a more rigorous approach towards their work. It has sharpened the review of planning and implementation of peacebuilding programmes and helped reveal the underlying assumptions about what each organisation intends to do to reach its goals. These inputs strengthened the monitoring and evaluation of the projects as well as contributed to the empirical body of peacebuilding knowledge.

Key findings and the learning of the research into the six peacebuilding initiatives:

- The holistic approach comprising different methods (dialogue, training, awareness raising, advocacy, capacity building, and formation of alliances and network building) employed by all six organisations has helped the youth and women to develop confidence, realise their potentials and enhance their collective bargaining power. This resulted in personal behavioural changes in the youth and women, enabling them to contribute to local-level peacebuilding initiatives.
- The perceptions, towards the youth are gradually changing. Acceptance of the youth as 'agents of change' and having an important role in the peacebuilding process is increasing.
- Many of the youth involved in the projects had undergone significant personal changes and imbibed the

value of non-violence. Factors such as mediation and dialogue helped to facilitate bigger and more accepted roles for the youth in their communities. However, structural and cultural changes had not been as significant, especially for young women.

- Entrenched paternalistic power structures continue to exist and, although the youth were being involved in local discussions, their decision-making powers were still limited. There is a risk of this group becoming disillusioned and frustrated with the lack of significant change in civil society.
- The entrenched traditional and paternalistic local power structures, where male elders reserve the right to wield the decision-making authority, continue to be a structural impediment to the youth gaining legitimate access to decision-making corridors at all levels. Women's inclusion still remains an issue. While advancements have definitely been made after the conflict at national level, with 33 per cent of the parliamentary seats being held by women, there continues to be little involvement of women at local and community levels, especially in the Terai. Multi-tier discrimination still persists based on women's age and (in)experience, and is pervasive in the districts of the Terai. These findings illustrate that inclusion efforts have yet to reach the local level.
- Women's agency resides in their communal endeavours and is constantly reinvented in line with the social change. Through their collective action, women have been able to change some societal rules and norms and to translate their individual experiences of subordination into collective action and act against harmful social practices, such as domestic violence.
- The concept of 'agents of peaceful change' and peace constituencies draws attention to local partners, and with it, the greatest potential for affecting systemic change.
- The sustainability of the results generated by the programmes must be incorporated into the programme, as failure to ensure a sustainable 'exit' may lead to further violence after the phase-out of the project.
- Initiatives of the civil society organisations which support attitudinal change and a culture of peace are only effective when they can reach a critically large number of people. Discrimination based on sex, caste, religion, region and gender are instances of how cultural changes are yet to be realised through peacebuilding initiatives.
- The constantly changing contextual factors either limit or strengthen the organisations' peacebuilding abilities.
- Creating a 'social space' for discussion not only introduces the youth and the community at large to others in the community and community-level peace initiatives, but also creates a location for dialogue and conflict resolution.

- Awareness of and access to peacebuilding programmes and mechanisms like local peace committees are clearly needed to improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives.

The following recommendations are made towards widening and deepening the peace constituency in Nepal:

To the Peacebuilding Community

- TOCs must be identified in the project design phase itself and proper context analysis should be conducted so that they can be monitored, evaluated and adjusted as the programme is implemented as well as reviewed and evaluated.
- Amplifying the impact of the programme requires integrated or collaborative approaches between different civil society organisations, where cross monitoring mechanisms are implanted and best practices are shared and transferred. Furthermore, when one single organisation cannot impact all levels of change, a culture of cooperation and synergy amongst the peacebuilding organisations would be effective and, therefore, needs to exist in order to contribute to *peace writ large*.

To the Donor and the International Community

- There must be effective two-way communication and flexibility between donor agencies and grant recipients. Peacebuilding project

implementation requires flexibility during implementation because of the constantly changing contexts in the conflict and post-conflict environment.

- Continue to build an emerging common strategy for post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding in Nepal in order to better coordinate efforts. Such coordination would help to avoid duplication whilst ensuring that all geographical areas and groups are considered in the projects.

To the Government Agencies

- The government should seek to financially strengthen the Local Peace Committees (LPCs), forge greater synergy between LPCs and other local administration mechanisms, and refrain from politicisation of LPCs to ensure their effectiveness.
- The government should set up an NGO liaison desk in order to gain better understanding of national and local level peacebuilding efforts and to contribute to the agenda for donor support and coordination on issues of peacebuilding and development.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This first chapter will provide a brief background of Nepal's political and social contexts since the end of the decade-long insurgency in the country in 2006. The concept of Theories of Change (TOCs)-an explanation of how and why a set of activities will bring about a change-will be introduced and how these will be applied to this research will be explained. This chapter will also define 'youth' for the purpose of this study.

1 National Context

Nepal is a country with an extremely diverse population in terms of caste, ethnicity, religion, culture, language and geography. With a Gross National Income (GNI) of US\$480 and an estimated 77 per cent of the population living on less than US\$2 a day.¹ The 2001 Census reports that there are over 100 different caste and ethnic groups living in Nepal. However, social exclusion, corruption and lack of opportunities exist for a significant proportion of the population, and not everyone has access to development opportunities.

Nepal has recently emerged from a ten-year armed conflict and is currently passing through a period of immense transition. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) in November 2006 brought an

end to Nepal's decade-long insurgency. The country successfully held its Constituent Assembly (CA) elections on April 10, 2008. The outcome of these elections has dramatically reshaped Nepal's political landscape with the traditional mainstream parties; the Nepali Congress (NC) and the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), being demoted to second and third positions respectively, behind the Maoists. New parties such as the Madheshi Janaadhikar Forum (MJF) and the Terai-Madhesh Democratic Party (TMDP), representing particular communities and regions, also emerged as strong political players.

During the first sitting of the CA on May 28, 2008, the 240-year-old monarchy was abolished and Nepal was declared a federal democratic republic. However, in the years following the CPA, there has been a significant shift in violent conflict, from the Maoist-led armed conflict, the People's War, predominantly in the hills during 1995–2005, to a new wave of violence, predominantly in the Terai region. This conflict has exposed the latent divisions and distrust between different ethnic groups, castes and classes, resulting in divisions on ethnic lines and political manipulations, leaving many vulnerable communities to violence. In 2009, the Ministry of Home Affairs reports, there were at least 109 armed groups

¹ Source: *World Bank Development Indicators 2011* and the *IMF World Economic Outlook 2010*

operating in the region and these groups were increasingly drawing unemployed youth into a 'culture of violence'. Similarly, the *Janajati* (ethnic groups) in the eastern hills and the Tharu ethnic group in the Far Western Terai are attracting young members of their community to increasingly engage in violent activities conducted by them, often with the goal of establishing ethnicity-based federal states, reclaiming the rights previously denied or to create a sense of discontent.

The newly elected and politically diverse CA, with 24 political parties represented and with one-third of its 601 members women, due to quotas, was given the job of consolidating the peace process and drafting Nepal's new constitution by May 2010 (later postponed to May 2011, then August 2011, November 2011 and most recently, May 2012). Whilst there is a broad national agreement on the need to address critical development challenges and to undertake political reforms, progress has been hindered by an inability to achieve political consensus. Lack of significant progress has deepened the existing political and social divisions. The country, with a weakened civil society, and damaged infrastructure has failed to meet the often unrealistic expectations of the public. Advances are impeded by ongoing changes to the government leadership and by the unrest caused by various interest groups, demonstrated through nationwide and regional general strikes (*bandhs*) and blocking of government functions. A new constitution needs to be agreed upon and local and national elections held.

2 Theory of Change (TOC) in Peacebuilding

The field of peacebuilding is relatively new, and, as such, has a limited amount of accumulated knowledge of what makes for effective peacebuilding, and under what conditions. In particular, there is little documented learning to help build a body of knowledge in this field. As realised by peacebuilding practitioners, peacebuilding programming is built on numerous assumptions (or Theories of Change [TOCs]) about how we can contribute to peace: 'by doing x, we will achieve y'.

The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) notes: 'Aid work in relation to conflict and peace is often based on approaches and tactics that are rooted in implicit TOCs. In many cases such theories are subconscious and unstated.'² When TOCs remain implicit or unstated, establishing causality, the relationship between causes and effects to prove that any particular theory is appropriate in any one context will remain elusive. For example, in-depth research on a wide range of peacebuilding programming in Kosovo³ identified that many peacebuilding interventions were not significantly contributing to prevention of violence. The weak or no impact often related to inappropriate TOCs underpinning interventions.

There is a strong linkage between TOCs and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes in terms of enhancing the impact of peacebuilding programming. The Conflict Peace and Development Cooperation (CPDC)

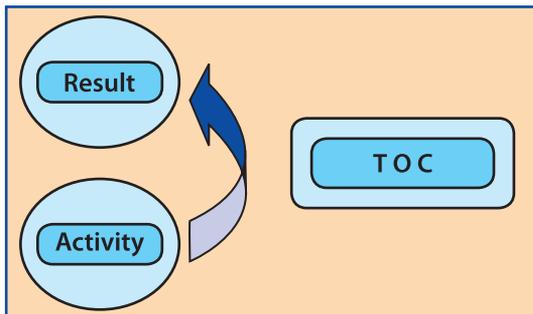
² OECD DAC (2008) *Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities* p 77

³ Collaborative for Development Action (2006) *Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo?*

submission to the OECD DAC highlights this link in asserting that one key precondition for reliable M&E is that ‘... interventions should articulate their results chains— or TOCs—so that its logical development can be tracked.’⁴

A TOC is a tool that explains and articulates the process of change, and can be used to design, monitor and evaluate social change initiatives, such as peacebuilding. A basic TOC explains how programme activities are connected with each other and how they contribute to achieving results at different levels: output, outcome and impact.

A TOC can be explained through the connection between an activity and its result.



An explicit TOC articulates the assumptions about the process through which change will occur and specifies the ways in which all of the required early and intermediate outcomes relate to achieving the desired long-term change. Articulating the TOC offers a clear picture of the intended result from direct action.

Although TOCs help to explain the process of change, they cannot stand alone and

need to be embedded, and considered, in the specific context. There are different structures and stages of conflict and different levels of trust in society or community. Is a society in transition? Depending on this, opportunities and willingness to change may vary. For example, before violence starts, people tend to hold on to power and traditions; after a conflict people are more willing to change and admit that there was a problem. Thus, it is very important to understand the context.

All programmes and projects have theories implicitly built into them and, therefore, a strategy and TOCs are bound together. But, in order to examine and reflect on the TOC, they must be made explicit. One needs to be able to go back to the original intent of the action in order to question and test them to see if they were correct for the particular intervention.

In addition, one needs to continuously keep reviewing and testing (and amending) the TOC to find out whether the activities are contributing to expected results or not.

3 TOC Approach in the Present Study

There are different approaches to articulating the TOC in programme design, monitoring and evaluation. One example is *outcome mapping*⁵, which depicts the relationship between strategies and intended results. These results will include both short- and long-term outcomes and may also reflect changes at different levels. The method applied in identifying TOCs in this research is *results chain* or *hierarchy of results*. This was chosen because it is possible to observe the

⁴ DCD/DAC/CPDC(2007)CPDC framing Paper: *Designing, implementing and Monitoring Armed Violence Reduction* (2007) p 22

logical flow of the linkages or results and, therefore, it is easy to identify the gaps in the chain. The first step in this process was to articulate all the expected results (output, outcomes and impacts) of the project/programme. Then, these were organised into a hierarchy (a results chain) where the goal is placed at the top and the activities are placed at the bottom. Following the flow of the chain should then explain *why* an activity was being done, and looking down, the results chain should explain *how* to achieve the result. Thus, articulating the TOCs that connect the lower level to the higher level results within the hierarchy should aid to review and suggest if the actions being implemented are feeding the results.

It is essential to revise the results and TOCs on an ongoing basis to check that they are clear and coherent and that they remain relevant to the changing context. Annex I presents the six projects/programmes in which TOCs are articulated by applying the hierarchy of results. The TOCs selected for the purpose of this study for the respective hierarchy of the results tables of the organisations concerned are as follows:

- i. *'If the youth embody and internalise peacebuilding norms and values, their behaviour will change towards non-violence.'* Alliance for Peace
- ii. *'If peace centres are strengthened and the capacities of peace ambassadors, citizen journalists, peace pressure group and mediators are developed to enable them to raise the issues of the PVSE, then peace groups will contribute to local peacebuilding processes.'* CARE Nepal
- iii. *'If there is increased cooperation and understanding developed aimed at addressing key security concerns through dialogue activities between young people and justice and security service-related stakeholders, then local or national-level initiative/action will occur.'* International Alert
- iv. *'If peacebuilding mechanisms generate interactions between conflicting parties, then it will build an environment of understanding and trust.'* Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
- v. *'If there is evidence of peaceful resolution of conflict, then confidence in, and acceptance of, peacebuilding mechanisms will develop.'* Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
- vi. *'If the youth are accepted as partners in local (peacebuilding) activities, then their participation in local decision-making process will be more widely accepted and hence actual participation in decision-making will increase.'* Search For Common Ground
- vii. *'If we create engagement opportunities for young people, then we can increase youth participation in community-level peace initiatives.'* Youth Action Nepal

⁵ Organizational Research Services (2004) *Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning*

4 Youth in Nepalese Context

There has been a growing realisation that inclusion of the youth is vital for the peacebuilding process and therefore they should be given priority. There currently is no universal consensus on what age group should be classified as 'the youth'. For example, the United Nations considers people between the ages of 15 and 24 years as youth. The Government of Nepal (GoN)'s National Youth Policy defines the women, men and third gender between the ages of 16 and 40 years as youth. For the purpose of this study, the definition of the youth set out by the National Youth Policy, that is men, women and third gender between 16 and 40, years will be followed.

In Nepal's recent past, the youth, especially men, were engaged by most political parties as part of the trend of militarisation employed during the armed conflict. The youth were encouraged to voice their concerns often in disruptive and violent ways. The manipulated youth of Nepal continue to be vulnerable to armed groups

and acts of violence. However, the youth continue to be overlooked, ignored and disregarded in policy and social reforms and are often excluded from decision-making processes. Nepalese youth under the age of 35 make up over 50 per cent of the population⁶ and, therefore, must be considered in all peacebuilding plans.

5 Organisation of the Report

This chapter introduced the TOC approach to peacebuilding in the context of the current study and the definition of the youth in Nepalese context. The next chapter will outline the present study and its research methodology. Chapter 3 will present the research findings and analyses of the respective projects of the six member organisations of the research team and discuss these in relation to their TOCs. Chapter 4 will analyse the particular TOCs with regard to the four levels of change, discuss the factors that facilitated the change and present the lessons derived from the research findings. The final chapter will draw conclusions and offer recommendations.

⁶ USAID country notes 2011

CHAPTER 2

THE STUDY

This chapter will outline the Strengthening Capacity to Design, Monitor and Evaluate Peacebuilding Programming project, including the rationale and the objectives of the present study. It will also describe the locations, methodology employed in the research, and the scope and limitations of the study.

1 Introduction

This study was undertaken as part of the European Commission (EC)-funded project Strengthening Capacity to Design, Monitor and Evaluate Peacebuilding Programming, a collaborative project between CARE International UK and International Alert. The overall goal of this project is to strengthen the institutional and operational capacities of civil society actors and governments to design, monitor and evaluate peacebuilding and conflict prevention programming.

The 30-month project, which began in July 2009, critically evaluated the assumptions underpinning peacebuilding programming in Nepal, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These countries were selected because of their fragile status as a state or the post-conflict period they were passing through and also because CARE International and International Alert were implementing projects there.

phase of the project, examined the TOCs employed in peacebuilding initiatives while building local capacity in Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (DM&E) for peacebuilding programming in each country. For this purpose, it explored and tested the effectiveness of a number of peacebuilding TOCs. These TOCs, drawn from existing peacebuilding programming in the country concerned, were analysed and critically assessed as part of in-depth research by local research teams. A steering committee (SC) of four experts⁷ in peacebuilding and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) guided these research teams in designing a research methodology and during the research process.

The Nepal Research Team comprised the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) of the Government of Nepal (GoN) and five I/NGOs, namely Alliance for Peace (AfP), CARE Nepal, International Alert, Search For Common Ground (SFCG) and Youth Action (YOAC) Nepal. Through action research, the six member organisations of the research team examined the theories and effectiveness of their respective peacebuilding projects and critiqued those of others. This process not only strengthened the peacebuilding projects being implemented, but also facilitated

This research, undertaken as part of the first

⁷ Hans Giessmann, Diana Chigas, Peter Woodrow and Mark Rogers

capacity building within these groups for development of future initiatives. The team worked with a wider group, called National Reference Group (NRG), which is made up of some of the organisations working on peacebuilding in Nepal.

This project comprised three components: i) desk research and in-depth research on peacebuilding TOCs; ii) piloting of M&E frameworks; and iii) dissemination of the outcomes of the first two phases. As part of the first phase of the project in Nepal, this report presents the findings and recommendations of six peacebuilding initiatives in Nepal and their effectiveness in relation to their respective TOCs.

2 Statement of Problem

The field of peacebuilding is relatively new, and thus, has a limited amount of accumulated knowledge of what makes for effective peacebuilding, and under what conditions. In particular, there is little documented learning to help build a body of knowledge. This reduces the ability for the peacebuilding field to learn from its mistakes, or for peacebuilders to learn from the experience of other peacebuilding programmes. Interventions may be restricted to 'what we knew worked once' rather than 'what is the most effective and appropriate intervention for this context at this time'. This is a challenge for both the civil society organisations and the donors implementing peacebuilding programming.

Peacebuilders globally want to maximise the impact of their interventions and to be able to demonstrate results. To achieve this, two key challenges emerge. Primarily, one must be able to identify effective change objectives: How do we know what is effective peacebuilding for the specific circumstances we face; and how can we best assist and help construct peace in any specific context? Second, the implementers need to find the most effective and efficient way to monitor and evaluate the change.

Peace is an elusive goal and the conflict being addressed may evolve. Thus, tangible results are often elusive and difficult to achieve. Intangible changes are often sought through peacebuilding, such as changes in attitude, behaviour and perception, and knowing how to best influence these appropriately and measuring those changes is a complex task. Those working with stakeholders for whom recourse to violence is 'normal' must often work outside conventional development models, in which violence is considered 'abnormal'. If a return to conflict is actually prevented how can we demonstrate the counterfactual? How can interventions that target grass roots-level actors/participants (peace writ little) 'add up' to impact conflict at meso or macro level (peace writ large)?

3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of this research is to explore and test TOCs of the six selected peacebuilding projects in Nepal.

The specific objectives are:

- To understand the effectiveness of peacebuilding projects in relation to the respective TOCs of the project concerned; and
- To consolidate lessons learned from peacebuilding projects and provide recommendations for effective programming for other and future programmes.

4 Methodology

The desk research comprised the first step in the review and analysis of the peacebuilding work undertaken by the research team member (RTM) organisations in Nepal in order to understand the intervention logic, TOCs and the M&E processes. This process contributed to the subsequent design of the methodology for in-depth research. Furthermore, it helped the research team to better understand the local peacebuilding context in Nepal.

The research teams from three project countries shared and discussed the findings of desk research during a methodology meeting held in London in February 2010. This was attended by the members of the steering committee, representatives of the country research teams and project coordinators. During this meeting, a general outline of the methodology for the research for the three countries and their TOCs were developed.

The Nepal Research Team identified projects for in-depth research, selecting one

project from each of the six organisations. Workshops were organised with the respective project teams to share the knowledge of the TOCs and to identify them for further investigation to be used for this study. In these workshops, the research team worked together with the teams of the selected projects to map the activities and results by putting them in hierarchy and articulating the corresponding TOCs for each step in the hierarchy. The outcomes of these exercises are presented in Annex I. From the set of the TOCs, one TOC (two in the case of the MoPR) was selected from each of the projects, to be explored and tested by this study.

Following this process of articulating and choosing the TOCs of the projects, a joint preliminary field visit was organised among the RTMs and an ST member in order to better understand and learn about each other's projects. This visit helped to design the methods for research into the six peacebuilding initiatives of the six organisations. The research team organised a workshop to share the research methodologies among the project teams and the NRG to incorporate their comments and feedback.

The RTM organisations then conducted fieldwork to collect primary data using their respective methodologies. The RTMs assisted each other during the data collection process and analysis of findings. For analysis of research into the six peacebuilding initiatives, a research summary table called 'TOC grid' was designed with inputs

from the SC (presented in Annex II). It is significant to note that through this process of assisting each other in analysis, reflection and learning from each other, the RTMs and the project teams became a ‘community of practice’.

Different research tools such as interviews, case studies, focus group discussions (FGD), group discussions and meetings were used for data collection over a six-month period in 2010. The RTMs also reviewed secondary information such as the projects’ annual reports, evaluation reports, programming frameworks, strategy documents and case studies to crosscheck the information. This information was analysed through narratives, tables and charts for qualitative data and through the Statistical Package for

Social Sciences (SPSS) for quantitative data.

The RTM organised a meeting with the rest of the team, representatives of RTM organisations and the NRG to share the initial reports of the individual research and to collect comments and feedback. After incorporating the comments, the research reports were consolidated into a single report for Nepal and again the same group validated it in Kathmandu. After this validation, this report was shared in London in February 2011 with the SC and the research teams in the other two countries, who also shared their respective reports. The inputs and comments from this validation meeting in London were further incorporated into the report.

The districts of Nepal covered by the research team are as follows (also see the map):

Organization	Districts covered
AfP	Dolakha, Sunsari and Rupandehi
CARE Nepal	Gorkha, Dhading, Rupandehi and Kapilbastu
International Alert	Bara, Dang and Kathmandu
MoPR	Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Saptari, Rupandehi, and Rolpa
SFCG	Dang, Dhanusha and Mahottari
YOAN	Jhapa, Bara, Palpa, Dang and Kailali
<p>Regions</p> <p>Eastern Development Region: Jhapa, Saptari and Sunsari</p> <p>Central Development Region: Dolakha, Gorkha, Dhading, Bara, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Dhanusha and Mahottari</p> <p>Western Development Region: Rupandehi, Kapilbastu and Palpa</p> <p>Mid-Western Development Region: Dang and Rolpa</p> <p>Far-Western Development Region: Kailali</p>	
<p>Geographical area</p> <p>Hill: Dolakha, Gorkha, Dhading, Palpa and Rolpa</p> <p>Terai: Jhapa, Saptari, Sunsari, Bara, Kailali, Dang, Rupandehi, Kapilbastu, Dhanusha and Mahottari</p> <p>Valley: Kathmandu and Lalitpur</p>	

Research Sites



5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The area coverage of the research represents all the administrative and geographical regions of Nepal, which strengthens the findings of the research. The study conducted an in-depth analysis of the process of change in peacebuilding projects and provided an opportunity to understand how this contributes to higher and national-level results.

There were some limitations to this research. The research focuses only on 'programme effectiveness' and explores the programme's

TOCs. As a result, one cannot get a sense of how these processes contribute to *peace writ large*.⁸ Hence, this research does not focus on the 'peace effectiveness' nor this evaluation and does an overall impact evaluation of the projects under review. As the findings are dependent upon the particular context and interventions, as defined by the TOCs, there is a risk that they might not be applicable if there are significant changes in the situation or context.

⁸ The impact at the national or societal level from the contribution of many small peacebuilding initiatives

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter summarises the research findings and their analyses against the selected TOCs of the six case studies that form the basis of this research. Each of the six organisations; AfP, CARE Nepal, International Alert, MoPR, SFCG and YOAC Nepal, explored and examined the effectiveness of its selected peacebuilding TOC(s). Each of these organisations identified conflict transformation and peacebuilding as two of its key priorities of work for the social and political changes required for peace in Nepal.

The cases, however, differed on significant variables: the type of project implemented; the main target groups of the project, viz. the youth, women, vulnerable and excluded groups, and the community at large, the project districts, and the TOCs underpinning the projects. This chapter will also propose recommendations for the individual projects, whereas general recommendations for peacebuilding in Nepal discussed in Chapter 5.

1 Alliance for Peace (AfP)

1.1 Introduction

The main focus of the AfP in Nepal is to foster social and political harmony, build cooperation and establish strong networks among the diverse youth of the country who come from different

political ideologies, geographical areas and institutional affiliations. The immediate objective of the AfP project selected for this research is 'to enhance the capacity of the youth to promote human rights and peace through non-violent means and to encourage the Nepalese youth to become active practitioners of democratic governance.' The project also seeks to enhance and support active participation of the youth and students in establishing a peaceful and democratic society by ensuring involvement and leadership of the youth in the constitution-drafting and peacebuilding processes.

1.2 TOC and Methodology

TOC: If the youth embody and internalise peacebuilding norms and values, their behaviour will change towards non-violence.

The rationale behind selecting this TOC is the assumption that, in any post-conflict situation, active participation of the youth⁹ is vital to facilitating localisation of the peace process. Positive changes in youth behaviour, including acceptance of non-violence by internalising the peacebuilding norms and values, are considered a prerequisite to peaceful and non-violent societies. Since the youth are considered the key to post-war political and economic

⁹ *Youth*: According to AfP's definition, any person, male or female between the ages of 16 and 35 years.

reforms and, in general, the transition from crisis to development, they should be seen as an indispensable target group in achieving sustained progress towards peace and end of armed conflicts.

The research study was carried out in three districts (out of the ten that AfP is operating in) and measured how the AfP intervention supported its TOC. A total of 72 respondents were interviewed, using a questionnaire, along with six FGDs.

1.3 Research Findings

1.3.1 Contextual Relevance

The research conducted by the AfP found that, while only 28 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the overall progress of the peace process in Nepal, the majority (70 per cent) felt that the overall security situation in Nepal had improved compared to two years ago. However, the respondents were very concerned about the emergence of the new armed groups and emphasised that the emerging violence must be resolved politically. The respondents from the Terai region also raised strong concerns over security issues, as indicated by one Terai-based male student leader:

'The threat of violence from the armed groups that emerged in the Terai after the CPA was signed is higher than during the ten years of the armed conflict. We were not as terrified during the armed conflict as we are now of the armed groups of the Terai. There is need to urgently address the Terai conflict in the peace process.'

Whilst there was an increasing sense of security in many communities, the fear of the escalating regional violence (specifically, in the eastern Terai region) was increasing amongst the youth interviewed.

1.3.2 Youth Engagement

The youth interviewed in this research were critical of the role of the civil society of Nepal. They felt that the civil society was mainly guided by the political ideologies of one political party or the other, which gave priority to providing jobs for their political cadres over the greater good. They were also critical of, and dissatisfied with, their limited participation in the peace and constitution-writing processes of the civil society. They felt that the civil society was only addressing the superficial issues of the conflict, often neglecting its root causes. To quote one of the young respondents: [‘Civil societies are working in the area of conflict reduction for short term rather than for conflict transformation.’]

The respondents believed that the youth had the ability to bring about social and political changes, but they were not able to institutionalise these changes, as they were still often left out of the decision-making process. The youth had yet to realise that they were victims of political strife and often manipulated by the political parties to indulge in acts of violence. Some of the respondents noted that the youth were now more concerned about what they could get from the state (as a right) rather than what they could contribute to the

state and the peacebuilding process in their communities.

Almost all the respondents were pursuing their studies in colleges where the Free Student Union (FSU), an elected body of student wings of political parties, was present. Sixty-five per cent of the respondents who had participated in the AfP's peacebuilding programme found the activities conducted by the different student wings of political parties in colleges peaceful. Furthermore, 53 per cent claimed that they had taken adequate measures to ensure that the activities of the student wings were peaceful in their campuses. It is encouraging to note that more than two-thirds of the respondents had launched collaborative efforts with various stakeholders to make their educational institutions more peaceful. However, the students were disappointed with the role of the student wings and the lack of contribution they were making to the peace process, as well as their overall behaviour, with a tendency towards violence and destruction. To cite an example, when strikes were declared by political parties, the youth willingly and eagerly participated, but their participation in constructive development work was conspicuous by its absence. There also was a general lack of concord amongst the student youth on issues of common concern.

The research showed that youth were hopeful of a more peaceful society. When asked for their opinion on the choice of means to express their grievances, the

majority of the respondents voted for the non-violent means as opposed to the violent ones, and expressed their opinion that another armed conflict was not needed in Nepal.

1.3.3 Progress towards Results

The youth, who were once seen on the frontline of *bandhs* (strikes), were now willing and eager to solve issues through dialogue and cooperation. Furthermore, 86 per cent of the respondents acknowledged that the AfP's programme and empowerment efforts had brought positive personal behavioural change. For example, as many as 94 per cent of them were playing a constructive role in their community peacebuilding efforts.

The respondents acknowledged the efforts of the AfP in reducing violent conflicts in their educational institutions and felt that the Youth Peace Dialogue Centres (YPDCs) established by the AfP were effectively serving as common platforms for the political youth to hold their discussions, both formal and informal. They implied that those involved with the YPDCs often acted as mediators in discussions and tried to prevent disputes from taking a violent form, thereby solving problems and disputes in non-violent ways. In this regard, YPDCs were working towards conflict prevention as well as peacebuilding. According to one male (age 26) FSU member:

'The AfP has taught our people how to carry out peaceful protests, get involved in peacebuilding, and contribute to

conflict transformation, leadership enhancement and much more. I have found positive behavioural change in my people and believe that has also happened to people representing other political parties as well.'

The YPDCs were being used as resource centres, where the youth including students belonging to different political ideologies gathered and held their internal meetings as well as intra-party meetings, and the centres also acted as conflict mediation centres. The presence of the YPDCs helped in minimising political conflicts involving the youth and members of student wings. This had led to a culture of discussion and cooperation rather than physical confrontation. There was recognition amongst the respondents that the activities of the AfP had empowered the youth, imparted them with the norms and values of peacebuilding and paved the way for them to achieve their rights in a non-violent way.

1.4 Conclusion

There continue to be grave concerns over the slow pace of the peace process and statute drafting. The current efforts at national level were inadequate, as well as inappropriate, to minimise conflicts in Nepal. Moreover, given the active involvement of the civil society in peaceful revolutions in the past, it was expected to play a much more vigilant and vibrant role for the sake of Nepal's nascent democracy.

The need for engaging the youth constructively in peacebuilding will not be

realised until and unless they become aware of their responsibilities. Young people were once seen as 'agents of violence', and they have yet to be recognized as important actors in the peacebuilding process and as having an active and positive role in redressing violence. Although the youth are urged to act as peacemakers, they are seldom mentioned in the solutions for the conflict transformation processes.

Affiliation of students or the youth to one political party or the other heavily influences their behaviour. Thus, good leadership is essential as a role model and hugely influential source. The political youth do not act as watchdogs to their political parties nor inform them about social issues. Rather, they work as a tool for fulfilling the vested interests of their political leaders and risk being misused. Although there were sporadic incidents of violence in colleges, there was a marked reduction in violent activities. Moreover, there was evidence of a shift from the youth being a violent force to a more constructive peacebuilding force. However, this shift is not necessarily of a permanent nature because the opportunities for youth participation provided by the state continue to be minimal. Involvement of the youth in the peace process is still not adequately considered by the state, and its continued reluctance to recognise the youth could prolong the peacebuilding efforts and, worse still, may give rise to yet another conflict of different nature and intensity. Thus, the TOC applied by the AfP is both appropriate and successful.

1.5 Recommendations

- AfP should continue assisting the activities of the YPDCs and mobilise the resources necessary to support them in their dual nature as information hubs and dialogue centres.
- The youth need to be educated about non-violent and alternative methods of dealing with all forms of conflict and antagonism and channeling their aspirations to become successful future political leaders.
- AfP should continue to implement programmes which help to empower and mobilise the youth.
- AfP should ensure that the youth are not being manipulated by the student wings of political parties.
- AfP should look to expand this project model to the police and army.
- AfP should continue to facilitate opportunities for exchange of information and experiences and provide skills training at locations or events where youth from different districts in Nepal (and even from other countries) could meet.

2 CARE Nepal

2.1 Introduction

CARE Nepal began its four-year project, Women and Youth as Pillars of Sustainable Peace (WYPSP), in January 2008. This project aims to build the capacity of the poor, vulnerable and socially excluded

(PVSE) women and youth by advocating for their rights and influencing policies at community, institutional and policy levels. The overall objective of this project is to develop the capacity of all civil society networks to engage the PVSE groups of women and youth in the process of influencing a democratic constitution in Nepal, leading towards sustainable peace and the fulfilment of their aspirations. At community level, the capacity of the PVSE groups of women and youth will be enhanced to enable them to prioritise issues of their rights and to engage in peace and political processes at community and central levels. At institutional level, the capacity of the district and national-level civil society networks will be built to make it possible for them to advocate for the needs, rights and interests of the PVSE women and the youth. The target beneficiaries include 88,000 PVSE women and youth. The final beneficiaries are CSOs, networks, local NGOs and policymakers.

2.2 TOC and Methodology

TOC: If peace centres are strengthened and the capacities of peace ambassadors, citizen journalists, peace pressure group and mediators are developed to enable them to raise the issues of the PVSE, then peace groups will contribute to local peacebuilding processes.

Thus, the aim of the TOC is to enable the capacities of peace groups (PGs) to contribute to local peacebuilding processes. In order to achieve this, local peacebuilding mechanisms are created,

such as peace ambassadors who belong to the PVSE community, mediators and citizen journalists who are members of PGs, and village-level peace pressure groups (one in each Village Development Committee [VDC]) that consist of representatives of PGs and district-level peace pressure groups which consist of like-minded organisations and networks. The peace centres located at district headquarters provide technical advice and support to peace ambassadors, mediators, citizen journalists and village-level peace pressure group.

The research for the CARE Nepal project was conducted in four districts of Nepal: (i) Dhading, (ii) Gorkha, (iii) Rupandehi and (iv) Kapilvastu. At community level, FGDs were conducted with the PGs and village-level pressure groups. Altogether 60 respondents were interviewed, out of whom, 44 were under 26 years. Peace ambassadors, citizen journalists and mediators were also interviewed. At district level, meetings were organised with the WYPSP district team and board members and relevant stakeholders such as WDO and the representatives of LPCs, NGOs and media. The ethnographic analysis of the respondents showed that 48 per cent of the respondents belonged to the ethnic groups that were generally excluded from the mainstream development process, 10 per cent were *dalits* (who are often called *untouchables*) and the remaining 42 per cent were Brahmin/Chhetri.

2.3 Research Findings

2.3.1 Peace Mechanisms

Peace Groups

The Peace Group (PG) members addressed the issues of violence and discrimination while discussing the prevalence of conflict in the communities, including domestic violence, caste and religion-based discrimination, land and ancestral property conflicts, etc. The PGs of the Terai districts clearly articulated issues of discrimination based on sex, caste, religion and region, which was not the case in the hills. In the hill region, most of the reported issues of violence were related to violence and discrimination against women. It was observed that the potential risk to violent conflict on the basis of religion, region and caste is high in the Terai.

Peace Centres

Peace centres were established in each district to support peace ambassadors, village-level peace pressure groups, mediators and citizen journalists and to build the capacity of the PGs to organise and mobilise the civil society to claim their rights and to link their issues at district level. The peace ambassadors responded that they received support from the peace centres whenever required, especially when they were not able to manage the issues discussed in the groups on their own. However, the respondents felt that the frequency of field visits and meetings by the peace centres needed to be increased in order to closely monitor the programmes

and provide regular guidance. It was stated that the peace centres in all four districts were devoting too much time to the peace ambassadors and were not making enough efforts to coordinate and clarify the pressing issues of the PVSE at district level:

'We collectively raise our voices to resolve community problems. For example, we do not get medicines at the health posts and also are not clearly told the reasons for it. We have been discussing this issue in our group and also in the peace centre. It is helping us to hold a meeting with the District Health Office.'

Village-level Peace Pressure Groups

Village-level peace pressure groups were aware of the services provided by the peace centres and how district-level peace pressure groups functioned. They may have heard of the centres and even participated in the interaction meetings, but did not know how the programme could be supportive for increasing the rights of the PVSE. Despite a few good examples, most of the district-level peace pressure group members were not clearly informed about their roles and responsibilities. In most of the cases, they knew about the roles of the peace ambassadors but not those of the citizen journalists, mediators or village-level peace pressure groups. Respondents were also frustrated at the lack of progress the village-level groups were making. For example, in Gorkha district, district-level members shared the fact that the only issue they had been discussing over a period of two months was the formation of local

peace committees, rather than the issues of the PVSE in the district.

District-level Peace Pressure Groups

District-level peace pressure groups had organised a series of activities to put pressure on local authorities on issues concerning them. The member organisations affiliated to the district-level peace pressure groups were vibrant and were recognised in the district, but the associated peace centres were not effective in capitalising on this strength to raise the issues and concerns of the PVSE at a higher level.

Peace Ambassadors

Ninety per cent of the peace ambassadors believed that the training provided by the project to them were useful, but not sufficient, especially when they had to deal with cases of discrimination. These peace ambassadors identified the need for intensive training in advocacy, peace-building issues, facilitation, linkage-building and networking. Similarly, the local community believed that peace ambassadors were associated with political parties, rather than supported by CARE Nepal, and, as a result, many of the group members were hesitant to join the classes and discussions organised by the peace ambassadors.

Fifty per cent of the peace ambassadors said that they had got opportunities to collaborate with other members and groups when addressing local problems

and challenges. For example, they would seek support of women's networks when there were cases of violence against women and domestic violence. They also discussed their problems with key members of the community such as teachers, community leaders, etc. However, in districts where groups were geographically scattered, like in Gorkha and Dhading, it was difficult to conduct regular meetings and, as a result, they did not get enough opportunities to interact with other peace ambassadors to discuss mutual issues and concerns. Except for a few cases, in most of the districts, the community appreciated the role played by the peace ambassadors. They were often invited to share their opinions at different programmes organised by other groups and institutions within their VDCs (the smallest administrative unit of the government).

Mediators

The mediators said that they faced various challenges while performing their role, including acceptance and trust of the community members. One of their biggest challenges was settling family disputes, where family members found it difficult to share such matters with outsiders. Some of the youth mediators said that, because of the intergenerational gap, they were not able to build trust in their communities in order to work effectively as mediators. Despite these challenges, most of the mediators were able to successfully deal with cases of domestic violence and violence against women, alcoholism, polyandry, accusations of witchcraft against women, disputes

between husband and wife and in-laws, unequal distribution of water resources, land use, non-payment of debt, etc.

Though most the mediators did not have the capacity and social acceptance to work officially as mediators, they were contributing towards social harmony in their communities either through collective action or by raising voices against injustice. Despite these achievements, nearly 20 per cent were unclear about their roles and responsibilities. While analysing the reasons for this, it was found that the selection of mediators was the key factor for the effectiveness of the mediation service.

Citizen Journalists

All citizen journalists had received the basic three-day journalism training, although some had received advanced training. As shared by a few PG members, they often discussed the issues of violence against women, domestic violence, caste-based discrimination, VDC resources, etc. However, as stated by most citizen journalists, because they did not have any official authorisation to work as citizen journalists, they often encountered difficulties while collecting information. Despite the financial and technical challenges, such as access to phone and the Internet, the respondents were confident that there was a scope for effectively mobilising them for communicating the issues of the PVSE. Their role is particularly relevant since the local journalists are not always able to reach the field areas.

2.3.2 Progress towards Results

PG members stated that they had become more aware of their rights through this project, such as the right to life, education, food, health, sanitation, expression and freedom. They also expressed that they had contributed to social and community activities such as peace rallies, environment cleanliness, free labour contribution for road and *chautari* (a public resting place) construction and so on. There was increase in coordination with other informal groups and NGOs to seek resources for community development, which helped to build trust and acceptance from women in the community. The incidence of caste-based discrimination had reduced, particularly in the public sphere, thanks to the activities of the PGs. However, most of the members of youth groups from the Terai expressed that some caste and ethnicity-based discriminatory practices still existed between the peoples of hill and Terai origins.

The PGs were successful in resolving many cases related to violence and discrimination, and alcoholism, through the collective efforts of their members. Furthermore, they disseminated awareness of various topics, often through songs and dramas, to their communities. In many instances they also collectively addressed the issues of domestic violence and property rights. In almost all the cases they worked closely with the peace ambassadors, but less closely with mediators and even less with citizen journalists.

2.4 Conclusion

The results demonstrated examples where the PVSE groups were able to engage in local peacebuilding initiatives; claim rights, including making demands on service providing institutions and organisations for accessing existing resources, thus demonstrating the effectiveness of the CARE Nepal programme. Different groups and organisations now invite these previously excluded groups to meetings, especially because of their involvement in PGs. Women from PGs and village-level peace pressure groups are participating in various community groups and committees and are advocating for their rights. The role played by the PVSE groups is admirable in many instances where they are able to fight against violence and discrimination, take collective action against harmful social practices, resolve disputes through negotiations, etc. They are contributing to maintaining social harmony, engaging in community development work, creating space for community members to participate in development work, and contributing free labour to construct and repair roads, drainage system, *chautaro*, etc. However, it is questionable as to whether PG members will have sustained engagement in such types of activities in the absence of economic benefit or livelihood opportunities.

It was observed that the contexts of Terai and hills are different. Unlike in the hills, the extent of discrimination based on caste is very firmly established in the Terai. Similarly, there are potential risks of violent conflict

based on region (Terai and *Pahadi*) and religion (Hindu and Muslim). The PGs had reduced or prevented potential conflicts by being more inclusive and creating common platforms for sharing the issues and concerns.

2.5 Recommendations

- There is a need to widely communicate mediators' roles and capacities within the PGs and at VDC level. Advanced mediation training would be both beneficial and necessary for some of the existing mediators who have the potential to work as professional mediators.
- Attention must be paid to improving linkages and coordination amongst the different mechanisms. It is not always clear to some PGs, citizen journalists, village-level peace pressure groups, district-level pressure groups on how they are connected and what are they supposed to do to raise the issues and concerns of the PVSE.
- Further study and monitoring is required to ensure that CARE Nepal's project is reaching its goals of advocacy and peacebuilding amongst the PVSE.

3 International Alert

3.1 Introduction

International Alert has been implementing a three-year project, entitled Public Security and Justice in Nepal: Building a Constructive Role for Youth, in Dang, Sunsari and

Kathmandu districts since October 2009. This project was designed to work with young people and to critically inform security and justice policies and practices so that the specific and diverse needs and experiences of the youth are addressed. In doing so, it seeks to explore and expand avenues for more constructive youth engagement by supporting the effective and accountable provision of public security. Therefore, there is an emphasis on young people to develop an understanding of key issues, and to reach out to other stakeholders for support in addressing these issues jointly.

3.2 TOC and Methodology

TOC: If there are increased dialogues between young people and justice and security service related stakeholders, then local or national-level initiative/action will occur for improved security.

The research to test this TOC was conducted in three project districts: i) Dang, ii) Bara and iii) Kathmandu. Respondents for the research were project staff, young people involved in the project, young people in the community, government officials and stakeholders.¹⁰

This TOC is focused on dialogue as a key peacebuilding methodology. Other methodologies employed by the project are: research, accompaniment, training and advocacy, in line with International Alert's core approaches. This research explored

¹⁰Stakeholders included police personnel, civil society organisations, district administration office, local peace committees and local bar associations

how effective the dialogues were in this particular project and whether they had been able to contribute to the envisaged results. The factors, inputs and conditions for a successful dialogue process leading to mutually beneficial relationships, problem-solving and practical action are outlined in the definition of dialogue in the Alert's Programming Framework (PF).¹¹ The initial TOC that was tested has been modified after the completion of the research based on the findings. The new TOC now reads: 'If there is increased cooperation and understanding developed aimed at addressing key security concerns through dialogue activities between young people and justice and security service-related stakeholders, then local or national-level initiative/action will occur.'

3.3 Research Findings

3.3.1 Contextual Relevance

Research findings confirmed that young people perceived insecurity to be an acute problem in their communities. Youth in general, including college students and the general public, reported concerns over increased political unrest, strikes and violent protests. One member of the District Project Advisory Committee (DPAC) of the project stressed the continued relevance of this project as 'security being a major problem in Terai district'. It is clear that criminal groups and violence associated with them continue to influence young

men and women outlook, with young people noting that insecurity negatively affects their education and employment prospects. In addition, journalists and youth leaders reported that violent disruptions and crime were experienced more intensely by younger rather than older generations.

A deep lack of trust on all sides—security service providers, district administration and the youth—in each other was reported. For example, the police force perceived the youth as a threat to the community rather than as a group that is vulnerable to violence or as potential 'agents of positive change'. During the research, a series of dialogues were conducted, which helped form collaboration between different initiatives of stakeholders. Such collaborations have generated interest in the topic amongst the CSOs and have put pressure on the security and justice service providers to deliver.

However, during the research, several interviewees, including youth leaders, young journalists and researchers pointed out the bleak outlook of the youth on economic conditions, which were identified as being a major concern. One young male respondent of the research, who was engaged in the project as an intern, stressed:

'The project will be sustainable only if it tackles livelihood issues, as employment is a major problem for the young.'

¹¹ Alert's understanding of dialogue is described in p 16 of its Programming Framework, available at http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/library/Programming_Framework_2010.pdf

3.3.2 Dialogue as a Peacebuilding Methodology

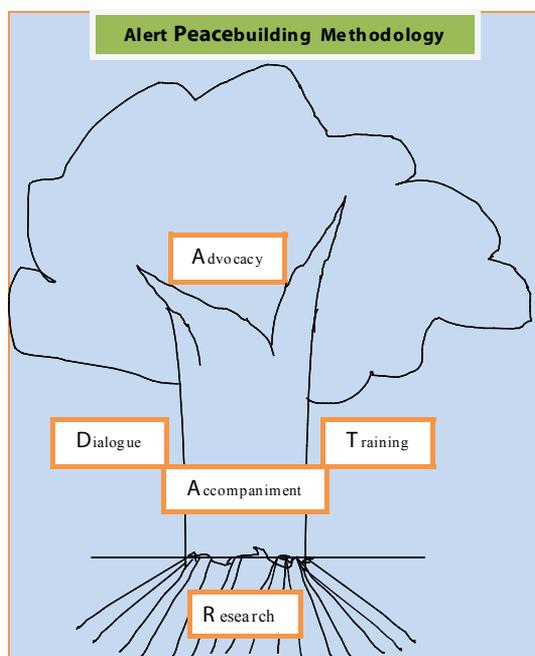
Dialogue is one of five key peacebuilding methodologies employed by the International Alert project. As seen in the accompanying diagram, research is at the root or base of the 'peacebuilding methodology tree' where, accompaniment, dialogue and training are the trunk and advocacy the offshoot of the trunk. A key finding of this research was that, although dialogue is critical to the project's success, project partners need to continue to work to ensure that it is linked to the other methodologies used (for example, that research informs dialogue, which then informs the basis for advocacy).

One outcome of the dialogues and radio discussions appeared to be the response of the security actors in requesting support

from civil society, specifically with the youth in the community. Security stakeholders have begun to highlight their need for civil society to help deliver security and to reduce political pressure on security providers. The project is beginning to highlight the link between community responsibility and security threats and how the community can help mitigate some of the immediate threats of smuggling, domestic violence and other crimes by raising their voices. Furthermore, the police appeared keen to build trust by highlighting a more positive image of their service through the dialogue and radio component. As one youth leader noted:

'police responded to discussions by presenting a request for more positive aspects of policing to motivate people.'

The series of dialogues conducted through this project, during its first year of implementation, have adopted the organisation's Programming Framework approach, which assumes that dialogue brings together and enables communication between people or groups who would not normally come together or would not normally communicate effectively on important conflict issues. Dialogue, therefore, is an extended process that can develop relationships between diverse groups around common issues, builds confidence and fosters local ownership. The dialogue-related activities, such as youth retreats, in this project are reported to have contributed to fulfil these purposes of dialogue. Dialogues have also been able



to bring together the young people and the police, who would not normally come together to discuss security issues such as gender-based violence.

Although dialogues have been constructive for building trust and relationships with the stakeholders, there remain some concerns. First, the geographic reach and narrow target group of the project limit the effectiveness of dialogues. In the first phase, outreach has mostly been with the youth based in the district headquarters. Second, the project is yet to proactively engage with the youth groups known to be involved in criminal activities. Some youth dialogues are in danger of becoming stale if the diverse ranges of participants representing divergent viewpoints are not present nor represented. Therefore, two suggestions were made: the project should be extended beyond the district headquarters to the youth and their networks in the VDCs, and it is important to connect with those known to cause insecurity. One member of the District Project Advisory Committee (DPAC) noted that, increasing the reach of the project to VDC-level youth networks would be essential for sustainability and impact.

3.3.3 Progress towards Results

Activities such as the youth–stakeholder dialogues, youth dialogues, open air discussions, youth retreats and youth outreach programmes at district headquarters level through media programming are beginning to empower the youth in a number of ways. The youth are

increasingly seeing and accepting security as relevant to their lives and as a basic right, alongside food and housing. Dialogues are beginning to ‘break the silence’ on security and desensitising the issue by placing it in the public realm. Dialogues are also reported as being successful in engaging the previously excluded ethnic groups. For example, young people from Magar and Tharu ethnic communities groups held separate dialogue and discussion sessions in Dang district on topics such as what does security and justice mean to them and what are the security challenges in the district. Interviewees noted that this project had created space for ethnic groups to voice their specific security needs, which in turn helped build confidence.

The youth are beginning to recognise they can engage with decision-makers. One interviewee stated that perceptions of the young people in the community are beginning to change. By building constructive dialogue, the project is ‘raising the awareness that young people, who were once seen as destructive, can actually be agents for positive change’.

There are some reported cases where the dialogue activities were able to encourage young people to take action (e.g. form ‘youth networks’ and discuss the issues further amongst themselves) and put pressure on the local police and the administration to take necessary action. In Bara, for example, a network of student wings of political parties was formed after some students participated in a dialogue

activity organised in the district. According to the respondents, this had worked better here because the activity from this project was integrated with an existing activity of another project run by YOAC Nepal. This project was also one of the research case projects of this study. This collaboration demonstrates a great potential to work with other organisations and groups that complement each other within the district, thus enhancing their potential for success.

It was, however, determined that it was too early to evaluate the policy impact as the project had only completed its first year at the time of this study. The respondents felt that the focus on the constitution-making process and various political concerns was at the expense of the technical aspects of security and justice provision, thus making it difficult to engage at policy level. It was suggested that the project should convene more dialogues relevant to the themes or issues for policymakers and stakeholders.

3.4 Conclusion

The research concluded that the dialogue activities did not directly translate into joint initiatives and actions. Rather, the dialogue activities were found to have contributed to increased cooperation and understanding, which then led to local-level initiatives aimed at addressing key security concerns. Therefore, the initial TOC was changed after the findings were analysed. The TOC was changed because it was found that dialogues were not automatically leading to local- or national-level actions or initiatives,

but instead were helping to improve relationships and build trust among the young people and stakeholders, which paves the way for joint problem-solving, leading to joint initiatives or actions at local level. During the later phase of the project, it can be expected that there will be some initiatives taken at higher levels.

3.5 Recommendations

The recommendations relating to the TOC under consideration for this research are as follows:

- Increase outreach beyond the district level to the youth in VDCs to build a broader, deeper and more sustainable network of young people across the districts.
- Open channels with the youth known or suspected to engage in criminal activities and encourage their participation in radio programmes and dialogues.
- Outreach actively to women's networks and paralegal committees to facilitate and increase women's engagement in the district and national dialogue and advocacy activities.
- Tackle women's participation barriers such as illiteracy and assist women's long-term prospects of engaging in public debate around security by linking up with existing women's literacy programmes.
- Tackle the economic dimension of insecurity by opening avenues with youth employment and skill

development programmes in the districts.

- Provide guidance on how dialogues, especially horizontal¹² dialogues, can be more accessible, youth-friendly and less hierarchical in nature by developing a dialogue help-sheet. Such guidance could include ideas on how to make physical spaces more conducive to building trust and to learning and how to include creative components (such as music, role play or linking dialogues to other popular events in the community).
- In the long term, develop a concise Alert dialogue handbook that gives guidance of different dialogues techniques, methodologies and tools that can be used across the organisation.
- Support direct and constructive avenues for community and the police to liaise by developing a youth and security liaison volunteer that acts as a police 'go-to' point and represents the youth networks and project beneficiaries.
- In the long term, expand the youth and security work to include a gender-specific objective that proactively tackles the capacity of young women to advocate for their security needs as well as those of their community.

4 Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR)

4.1 Introduction

The GoN approved the terms of reference (ToR) of local peace committees (LPCs) in August 2007, which were amended in October 2008 and February 2009. LPCs could not be formed in all districts under the previous two mandates because of political disputes at national level. Under the present ToR, LPCs have been formed in 74 districts out of the total 75 districts in the country. LPC is one of the transitional structures envisioned by the CPA, and so far the only transitional structure at local level with broad mandate for peacebuilding that has surfaced in Nepal's protracted transitional period.

The main purpose of the establishment of LPCs is to consolidate peace from the community level and to provide a common forum for people to resolve conflicts and disputes locally and directly address the impact of conflict. The rationale for instituting LPCs was the insufficient attention paid to the need to secure peace at local level, without which sustainability of the national peace process would be threatened. The deep-rooted nature of conflict at local level, the psychological effects of violence and neglect on local communities in which antagonists had to co-exist, the possibility of intense political competition, and the dynamics and inherent instability of the transition period provide sufficient justifications for the establishment of LPCs.

¹²These are dialogues between similar groups without hierarchy as opposed to vertical dialogues, which refer to dialogues between groups of different status/hierarchy

The LPCs comprise of representatives from major political parties, conflict victims and major CSOs present in the districts. The LPCs have ensured adequate representation of different communities, including women, *Dalits*, *Janjatis*, Muslims, *Madheshis*, representatives of private sector and other marginalised communities. However, the representatives from the major political parties, namely UCPN-Maoist, NC and CPN-UML, are the most influential in these districts and usually hold the position of coordinator.

4.2 ToC and Methodology

TOCs: i) 'If the peacebuilding mechanisms generate interactions between conflicting parties, then it will build an environment of understanding and trust', and

ii) 'If there is evidence of peaceful resolution of conflict, then confidence in, and acceptance of, peacebuilding mechanisms will be developed.'

The TOCs of the research were tested in five districts of Nepal: i) Kathmandu, ii) Lalitpur, iii) Rolpa, iv) Rupandehi and v) Saptari. The respondents of the research were members and secretaries of LPCs, conflict victims and MoPR officials.

4.3 Research Findings

4.3.1 Contextual Relevance

Members of the LPCs expressed that the issues covered by the LPCs were very diverse in nature and the purpose for their establishment was both rational and necessary because very few legal

procedures were required to become involved in settling conflicts. The members of the committee in Rolpa felt that whilst composition of the LPC was not problematic in itself, the mandate outlined by the ToR for the LPC, which needs to address political and ideological issues of conflict, had some practical problems. The composition of the LPC was accepted and appreciated by most respondents in all five districts.

The members explained that additional meetings were conducted when there were pressing issues raised in the community in addition to monthly regular meetings. If there was a situation of conflict in the community, the committee members would come together to discuss the necessary steps to be taken to intervene through the identification of the causes of the conflict before it approached the conflicting parties.

4.3.2 Progress towards Results

The LPCs were observed to operate more effectively in the central region, most likely because of their proximity to the national capital and support from the centre. However, there were some well-functioning LPCs in other regions as well. In districts like Kathmandu, LPCs were facilitating relief assistance to conflict victims. Kathmandu LPC was also able to resolve some local conflicts. For example, when the Teaching Hospital in Kathmandu remained closed for two weeks following the declaration of a strike by its administration and doctors, the situation worsened so much that even

the emergency services were shut down. The LPC in Kathmandu took the initiative to invite the Chief District Officer (CDO), Local Development Officer (LDO) and influential members of the civil society to negotiate with the striking parties, and, following negotiations, the hospital re-opened. The Lalitpur LPC also had some successful examples of settling local conflicts through mediation. Similarly, one district in the Terai region was able to persuade six underground armed groups to join peace dialogue with the MoPR.

LPCs in various districts were able to a limited extent in resolving pressing and complex problems, issues and local disputes such as those related to land, construction of local infrastructure and allocation of resources. They had also contributed to improving the relationship between parties at local level by serving as a neutral mediator in cases of local disputes.

Involvement of political parties was also proven to be effective in resolving local disputes. Although there were occasions when the LPCs' identity as a 'neutral body' was partially eclipsed by political ideologies, the overall result was positive, i.e. the disputes were resolved peacefully.

4.3.3 Challenges

Members expressed that, as a temporary body with a wide-ranging role, a persistent challenge of the LPC was to fulfil its capacity gap to function effectively, as outlined in its ToR. Many LPC members themselves were

unsure of their understanding of the LPCs' functions, authority and approaches. In districts like Rolpa, despite the LPCs being an important institution, its possible role in peacebuilding was hardly discussed. Ambiguity regarding its role, activities and relationship with the District Administration Office (DAO) and other stakeholders persists. Also, a sense of ownership and belonging was found to be weak in the LPCs as some of the members were not adequately informed about the activities the committees were involved in. When asked about their activities, some of the members directed the question towards the office secretary of the committee to answer to the query, as they felt unsure. Some members felt that LPCs should be made more autonomous. Planning of future activities was also observed to be weak.

The LPC members stated that they had initiated several peacebuilding activities. However, external stakeholders such as conflict victims, members of the civil society and the general community members were not fully aware of the LPC activities. Some of the external stakeholders expressed the opinion that the LPCs had not been very active and had contributed little towards peacebuilding. Social marketing tools and awareness-raising activities had not been sufficiently carried out, resulting in low level of awareness amongst the public about the existence, functions and role of the LPCs. For example, most of the conflict victims interviewed in Rolpa were not aware of their LPC and its activities. Awareness-raising campaigns were carried out in districts like

Saptari where participation was low. The MoPR and the LPCs had conducted various seminars, information dissemination and orientation about the mandate, role and responsibilities of the LPCs. The LPCs were involved in providing skill development training to the affected people. However, they were inadequate.

The respondents expressed their view that the committee should be given an independent leading role in the peacebuilding process at local level. However, coordination of efforts with various political parties and involvement of civil society as a neutral body were preferred. As quoted by one of the respondents:

'LPC is an important institution, but it has not been used to its full potential. Even though it has organised some interaction programmes and a few seminars, it has not been able to carry out many of the functions laid down in its ToR and guidelines.'

Most respondents raised the need for the formation of an inclusive political structure at the centre. They felt that, without a national-level peace structure comprising top leaders of major political parties, the LPCs could not, and would not be able to, function properly. The LPC members stressed the need to form a national-level committee which could guide and support LPCs. Committee members from Lalitpur emphasised that, although political representatives would be helpful during the policy formation phase, it would be more helpful if there were a

separate implementation body comprising the civil society, NGOs and conflict victims.'

Another impediment to the effectiveness of the LPCs was the lack of proper mechanisms to coordinate with the GOs and NGOs that work on similar agendas. For example, cases first go to the district police, the court, or the CDO office before the LPC. Several problems were identified in the working of the LPC at grass roots level. The causes of the conflict were analysed from political perspective, and conflict prevention measures were not applied where relevant. In most cases, the members of the LPC were informed about the situation because of their identity as members of political parties, rather than that of the LPC. Therefore, many of the LPCs felt that the majority of the cases were resolved due to the political recognition of the LPC members rather than the identity of the LPC as a neutral body to resolve the issue.

Budget allocation was yet another concern. The LPC gets limited budget to conduct regular activities for its office rather than for programme intervention at community level. Often, there are difficulties in obtaining allocated resources as it has to come through the complex channel of the DAO. The DAO considers this task as an added responsibility in its already overworked office, whereas the LPCs also consider it as a hurdle to their smooth functioning. The members suggested that the resource constraint was the primary factor for the inability of the LPCs to carry out the functions in accordance with the needs of society.

With regard to recommending conflict victims for reparation, the members felt that it would be helpful if there was a one-stop system to distribute relief aid. This would create a more straightforward and easier system for the government to keep track of distribution, and, at the same time, less complicated for victims to claim and receive aid. The victims lacked knowledge of the procedures that they had to follow to get the allocated relief aid.

4.4 Conclusion

A level of ambiguity remains amongst the members of the LPCs and in the community about the purpose, mandate and role of the LPC. National politics continues to affect the functioning of the LPCs. Many respondents raised the need for the formation of an inclusive political structure at the centre. The CPA envisions a High-Level Peace Commission, which to date has not been established. Also, the Peace and Rehabilitation Consultative Committee envisioned in the ToR has not yet become functional and the lack of such a mechanism is widely felt and is affecting the performance of the LPCs.

Some LPCs have earned good reputation in their districts for undertaking effective peacebuilding work, particularly when engaging in successful conflict mediation efforts. Those LPCs that are near the capital are more successful in settling disputes and preventing potential conflicts. Though operating in conditions of minimal efficacy and capacity, the LPCs provide a

peacebuilding value. Being a transitional mechanism they have great clout and mandate to engage all local stake holders, enable local communities to call on political and infrastructural resources at national level and the ability to facilitate or mediate solutions to disputes that threaten the fragile peace in communities.

4.5 Recommendations

- It is imperative that all LPC members receive orientation and training in order to better understand the concept, mandate, roles and responsibilities of the members and for the efficacy of the LPCs themselves.
- There is a need for better coordination and networking among stakeholders for effective functioning of LPCs at local level and also for them to be recognised as a 'neutral' and 'effective' peacebuilding institution.
- As LPC is an entirely new mechanism, the members and officials need to be provided skill-oriented training in dialogue, coordination, mediation and negotiation in order to materialise the objectives and create opportunities to share their experience and knowledge.
- There must be more strategic social marketing strategies to raise the awareness and effectiveness of the LPCs. The current low level of awareness has impeded their effectiveness.
- The LPCs must continue to provide legitimacy to local institutions and help

in bringing local communities closer to government and line agencies.

- In order to amplify the performance of the LPCs in the districts, there need to be not only well-trained staff but also an increase in financial and material resources available to implement monitoring and mediating activities.
- In order to improve the functioning of the LPCs, there is a need for the establishing an independent, autonomous and inclusive central coordinating body, as envisaged in the ToR, in order to guide, support as well as manage unresolved disputes referred to it by the LPCs.

5 Search for Common Ground (SFCG)

5.1 Introduction

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) began its three-year project, called Youth and Peacebuilding, in 2008. This project aimed to engage young people from all castes, ethnic and political lines into dialogue and peacebuilding processes and facilitate their participation in local decision-making processes. The focus is on the peace process and working towards building and enhancing relationships with local decision-makers and community elders in order to gain access to decision-making mechanisms.

5.2 TOC and Methodology

TOC: If the youth are accepted as partners in local (peacebuilding) activities, then their participation in local decision-making process will be more widely accepted and hence actual participation in decision-making will increase.'

This study tested the effectiveness of the TOC in three districts of Nepal: Dang, Mahottari and Dhanusha. The study interviewed a total of 44 youth: 32 men and 12 women. The analysis of SFCG's TOC in relation to the project findings helped shed light on whether the youth were accepted as partners in local peace initiatives and whether this had led to their increased stake in local decision-making.

5.3 Research Findings

5.3.1 Contextual Relevance

The youth who had participated in the training conducted by the SFCG reported that, as recently as a year ago, adults used to distrust the youth and underestimate their capabilities, often questioning their potentials and abilities. Furthermore, adults were not interested in their activities or their role in the community and did not think of involving them in community activities, let alone in decision-making. Even when the youth started engaging in community activities through youth clubs, adults did not take their efforts seriously and offered no support because of the general notion, fed by the long-held practice, that youth clubs were only for organising sports and cultural programmes. Because of this,

adults had not taken their involvement in community development activities into serious consideration. Youths from the Dalit communities additionally reported that adults from the so-called higher castes looked down upon them because of the deep-entrenched system of caste discrimination. There used to be no adult participation in programmes conducted by the youth nor were the youth invited to participate in the programmes organised by adults.

5.3.2 Youth–Adult interactions

The project's youth adopted the strategy of inviting adults to their programmes in order to enhance interactions between the two groups, as well as garnering more recognition and support from influential adults within their community. For this purpose, they relied on informal interactions where they inquired about, and gave their opinions on, pertinent issues concerning the community and formal meetings where they sought advice on activities they planned to conduct. The majority of the youth (95 per cent) said they had participated in some community-level meetings last year. All the young men participated in such meetings, while 75 per cent young women did the same, with slightly more female participation in Dang in Western Nepal than in Dhanusha and Mahottari in the Eastern Terai. The respondents were also asked to name the types of community meetings they had attended. Almost half (49 per cent) of all respondents said they had attended VDC meetings during the

past year where discussions were held on budget allocation, VDC activities, budget for youth activities, etc. More than one-third said they attended meetings of various community-level organisations like women's group, VDC, various users' groups and infrastructure development committee, etc. Around one-fourth had attended school management committee (SMC) meetings where they discussed the most effective ways of conducting SMC elections, improving academic standards in schools and developing school code of conduct. The youth also attended political party meetings, conflict mediation meetings, district-level meetings and campus meetings. Data disaggregated according to district again shows that the youth from Dang interacted with formal leadership more than the youth from Dhanusha and Mahottari.

5.3.3 Progress towards Results

The adults involved in the study agreed that the youth leadership had improved over the past couple of years and the 'active youth' were an inspiration to others. A large number of youth reported that, in the past couple of years, there had been gradual increase in the trust that adults had in the youth and also in the belief that youth had the capacity to make substantive contributions to society. The youth attributed the change in adult perception to their increased involvement in community activities like infrastructure development, organisation of local fairs during festivals, sanitation programmes, vocational training, youth leadership development training, intergenerational

dialogues, public awareness programmes, as well as their engagement in local dispute resolution. Adults agreed there had been a considerable rise in youth involvement in community activities over the past year. They further said that youth activities had contributed to establishing local peace by promoting cooperation and harmony among people. The youth also made significant contributions in managing local disputes in everyday life, as well as managing local activities and events such as fairs and gatherings.

The youth respondents claimed that other youth from their villages had started seeking their advice while conducting programmes. Some had even been inspired to establish youth clubs, like in Bhatauliya VDC in Mahottari, while others replicated successful programmes in their own VDCs, such as the village cleaning campaign. The youth also claimed the adults' trust in them had increased because of the transparent way they conducted their activities. They invited community adults to their planning meetings and were also transparent about how they spent their budget. A youth from a local youth club in Mahottari said: 'Every year we organise local fairs through individual donations. Once we collected around Rs. 500 thousand, which we spent on celebrating the Chhath festival. We also conducted a social audit through public hearing.'

This had also led to improved cooperation between the youth and adults, especially with respective VDC offices for the

construction of local infrastructure like roads, irrigation canals, *dalan* (local meeting place), etc. Responses from all the districts researched indicate that there was a definite improvement in the relations between the youth and the adults in the communities.

5.3.4 Challenges

The interviews conducted with female respondents, however, gave a different picture. While the overall youth engagement in community activities was now seen in a positive light, girls continued to be at a disadvantage. Female respondents from Dang complained that adults either looked on with suspicion at boys and girls working together, or considered girls to be inferior to boys. Although this perception had changed for the better after the community observed that the activities they were involved in actually had positive outcomes for society, adults were still less receptive of girls' engagement in youth club activities. Girls were also less likely to be involved in club activities because they often could not spare time from household chores or their families disapproved of their involvement in such activities. This was especially true for married women from the poor, rural Dalit communities in the Western region. One married respondent had to rush home in the middle of the interview because she had been 'out [from home] for too long'. Another female respondent from the same Dalit community had to be interviewed in the confines of her in-laws' home because she was not allowed to participate in a largely male dominated gathering as this was perceived socially unacceptable.

Though the sample size of female respondents (12 women: 5 from Dang and 7 from Dhanusha and Mahottari) is too small to come to a definite conclusion, there was unanimity in their answers that 'adults do not listen to them.' A young woman (who was also a school teacher) from the Terai, when asked why she did not participate in community meetings, replied: 'This my husband's home (Sasural), and a married woman should not speak in front of her father-in-law and other elders.'

The youth were also asked if they were members of any local decision-making body. Only 42 youth responded to this question, out of which 40 per cent replied in affirmation. Various types of organisation they were associated with included mothers' group, eco club, local youth club, youth network, child protection committee, radio listeners' club, youth volunteers' group, press *Chautari* (forum), community forest users' group and water users' committee. Most of the youth respondents (76 per cent) said they always participated in discussions. A good proportion (43 per cent) said they frequently participated in decision-making now that adults had begun listening to them and involving them. However, even if they participated in decision-making, no one could provide examples of the decisions that they helped make or that had been implemented.

A little more than half of the respondents (51 per cent) said they rarely influenced decision-making or had no influence whatsoever. Although they were invited

to meetings, their opinions were often not taken into consideration while making decisions. A Tharu female member of the Youth Network in Dang said, she was not able to contribute to decision-making because elders were present at the meeting and they often did not consider youth voices. Youth also reported that, since only the voices of politically affiliated adults were heard and they influenced discussions as well as decisions, they lost interest. A youth representative in VDC council in Mahottari added:

'Though I frequently participate in decision-making, only a few decisions have been implemented. Political party representatives, who are also VDC council members, make decisions on their own and leave me out; it is because they want to control the VDC budget.'

Interviews with adults showed that, although they agreed that youth engagement in public decision-making was very important, youth were consulted only when the issue under discussion directly related to the youth. However, most youth respondents said that, while adults might appear to consider their opinions on issues during decision-making, this did not imply that they actually had any influence on the decisions or outcomes.

Most (81 per cent) of the youth respondents said they had collaborated and undertaken joint initiatives with adults, improving the relations between them. More than half of these activities were initiated by the youth,

and the youth suggested that adults had a different understanding of 'collaboration' than what the project envisaged. For example, out of the 84 examples the projects provided, only 45 per cent were actual joint initiatives, while the rest were activities in which the youth invited adults as advisers and participants. In addition, the youth had no role in planning almost one-fourth of these joint activities. However, most of the activities in which the youth were actively engaged in planning and implementing were conducted by youth clubs or networks with support from VDC officials, community elders and political party representatives. Support from adults was most often limited to the role of 'advisers' and 'financial sponsors'. This was especially true in cases where the youth 'collaborated' with VDC offices in conducting community development activities.

5.4 Conclusion

The youth leadership training conducted by the SFCG has helped to develop their leadership capabilities. A positive (though gradual) change in the adults' perception of the youth has been possible because the youth have demonstrated excellent leadership capabilities and a strong commitment to community welfare. The youth still tend to have a limited role in decision-making. Those youth who are involved in community activities are appreciated as role models for other young people and are encouraged by village elders to motivate others to participate in the good work. Given the short duration of the project,

it is encouraging to observe that, although the youth have not been accepted as full partners, there is a growing trend of valuing youth opinion and considering their views during decision-making. However, there is still a hierarchical relationship between the youth and adults, where adults play the role of advisers and financiers, while the youth do the 'hard work'. This is also how most 'collaborative initiatives' appear to have been carried out.

The research indicates that the youth in the programme locations are slowly moving away from the non-participation category (manipulation, decoration and tokenism) to participation (assigned and informed and informed to adult initiation and shared with the youth). While overall youth engagement in community activities is now seen in a positive light, girls remain disadvantaged due to the preconceived notions of accepted gender roles. Young women continue to face multiple forms of discrimination because of their age and inexperience, but can experience further prejudices and criticism because of their gender. For example, interaction with their male counterparts in youth clubs and activities outside the home is often considered an unacceptable social behaviour. Added to this is their family's reluctance to let them continue with their engagement with youth clubs or CSOs. They were also not allowed to participate in training that required overnight stay, as a result of which the proportion of girls among the trained participants is comparatively low, despite the SFCG policy of ensuring gender balance in all its programmes.

The current TOC--'If the youth are accepted as partners in local (peacebuilding) activities, then their participation in local decision-making process will be more widely accepted and hence actual participation in decision-making will increase'—needs to be revised to: 'If the youth are accepted as partners in local (peacebuilding) activities, then their participation in local decision-making process will be more widely accepted'. In order to determine whether the participation of the youth in local decision-making process is accepted and their participation in actual decision-making is increased or not, further monitoring and evaluation is required before it can be claimed that acceptance of the youth as partners in local peacebuilding activities automatically leads to participation in actual decision-making. The project has been successful in increasing youth engagement in decision-making mechanisms; however, it has not yet been successful in facilitating the participation of youth as full partners in the local decision-making process, as envisaged by the programme.

5.5 Recommendations:

- Further intensive training in youth leadership, peacebuilding and negotiation skills for larger number of youth and adult decision-makers is required. Involving more decision-makers in capacity-building training in youth and peacebuilding to orient them on the need of involving the youth in decision-making mechanisms and accelerating collaboration

between the youth and local decision-making bodies is vital to achieving the SFCG goal.

- More emphasis on activities that promote peace and democratic values and meaningful participation in decision-making processes are required to reach the goal of promoting youth partnership in the peace and democratisation process.
- Increase the visibility of youth capabilities by sponsoring more youth activities (increasing the amount of sponsorship, including funds made available, and increasing the number and regularity of peace and development activities), especially those that aim at cooperation and harmony.
- The programme should aim to increase its geographic and demographic coverage as the research showed that the reach of the project is limited to a small number of VDCs and to a small youth population in the working VDCs, thus limiting its sphere of influence.

6 Youth Action Nepal (YOAC Nepal)

6.1 Introduction

Youth Action Nepal (YOAC Nepal) began its three-year programme, Youth Initiatives for Sustainable Peace and Community Development, in 2009, by integrating and involving the youth in the ongoing peace process in order to strengthen democracy

and human rights for overall development of the country. The project aims to strengthen social harmony in the community and the confidence of the local youth through training, dialogue, trust-building activities and awareness campaigns.

6.2 TOC and Methodology

TOC: If we create engagement opportunities for young people, then we can increase youth participation in community-level peace initiatives.

This TOC has been tested on the projects in five districts of Nepal: i) Jhapa, ii) Dang, iii) Bara, iv) Kailali and v) Palpa. Youth Action-Nepal engaged with 250 community youth from 25 VDCs for this research.

6.3 Research Findings

6.3.1 Youth Engagement

Prior to the YOAC Nepal project, young people were not involved in collaborative action for sustainable peace and community development. The local youth organised activities ranging from cultural initiatives, public interaction, intergenerational dialogue, work camp and discussion, focusing on peacebuilding and conflict transformation. There have been a number of mediation initiatives from the local youth to mitigate the conflict situation. For example, in Bara and Dang districts, the youth were involved in conflict due to communal divisions between '*Pahadi*'¹³ and

'*Madheshi*'¹⁴. The respondents believed that peacebuilding was a necessary component in living a life without fear of violence. The young people had initiated community work projects, intergeneration dialogues and cultural programmes that were instrumental in promoting youth participation in their communities. However, political parties and armed groups were yet to initiate the activities which provided young people with an opportunity to contribute to peacebuilding initiatives at local level.

6.3.2 Progress towards Results

The youth networks, with the motive to contribute to community peacebuilding, organised various activities, including cultural programmes, peace dialogues, practical community work and social awareness programmes. The participants involved in community counselling are now more engaged in this project. Furthermore, with a view to minimising conflicts, the participants had organised a range of activities such as sports events, small reconstruction and entrepreneurship programmes and, in some locations, family-level conflict resolution.

The youth networks have been able to develop relations with the local GOs and I/NGOs. Community relations of the youth networks have also increased through a series of discussion with different stakeholders in their communities. These discussions were considered by the respondents as instrumental for building trust of the community in young people,

¹³ '*Pahadi*' refers to the people of hill origin.

¹⁴ In this project, '*Madheshi*' is defined as people of Terai origin.

which, in turn, has contributed towards community peacebuilding initiatives. Relationships with political parties, women's organisations, VDCs, District Development Committee (DDC), different advocacy groups, schools, users committees, security agencies, CBOs and intra-networks have increased in some districts. Relationships with the media had increased in all the districts as demonstrated by the coverage of the print, radio and electronic media of the activities carried out by the youth. By establishing relationships with these developed networks, the youth had been able to obtain funds at local level and function independently on peacebuilding-related issues.

Youth networks had also increased their representation in SMCs and water user groups (WUGs) and forest user groups (FUGs). These communities had identified the importance of young people in decision-making, which had translated into a culture of involving the youth in decision-making forums. For example, the youth having representation in SMC and FUG in Palpa district and the youth network members of Bougha Pokhara were now invited to the local-level planning process of the VDC council. In addition, they got an opportunity to vote in SMC and FUG elections.

In the Terai, there has been a reduction in geographical/region-based discrimination, fostering an environment of respect between *Madhesi* and *Pahadi* communities. It was observed that youth leaders belonging to different geographical

regions, castes and ethnicities have started coming together to discuss social issues. This is especially significant as the Terai movement in 2007 led to severe lack of trust between the youths belonging to the *Pahadi* and *Madhesi* communities. In Dang and Bara districts, there was a distinct social divide between these youth groups, which was a consequence of the Terai movement. Now, *Pahadi* and *Madhesi* youth jointly come together on a single forum to discuss the issues related to their mutual interest. They now plan and carry out community initiatives together.

The resource centre of Mahendra Jyoti Higher Secondary School of Jhapa was renovated, thus creating a venue for holding community-level discussions. The resource centre is being currently used by parents, teachers, local stakeholders, members of the FUG and WUG to discuss community issues. In Bara, the locally raised funds were used to improve the quality of education and upgrade the resource centre in the college. It has also offered a space for parents and teachers to discuss different issues related to education and community development. For example, the venue was used to discuss the construction and establishment of a community library. In Palpa, the people belonging to ethnic groups were mainstreamed in youth clubs and community development tasks. Work camps, cultural initiatives and dialogue programmes greatly supported to build peace and contributed to social harmony.

The respondents of Jhapa felt that compared to the past, the number of human rights violations had reduced in this community, which may be due to the intergeneration dialogues and cultural initiatives. The Democracy Fora in Jhapa had sensitised more than 1,000 youth in peace, human rights and democracy-related issues.

Reduction in the number of family disputes in Palpa and Dang and increasing awareness of peace, human rights and democracy in Bara are some of the tangible contributions, which have greatly supported peace and social harmony in the community through intergenerational dialogues and mediation initiated by youth network members engaged in the project. The respondents stated there were several other organisations operating in the districts which had also contributed to the achievement of peace in the community, including Plan Nepal, SFCG, ActionAid, USAID and some UN agencies.

In all these five districts, activities such as renovation of child development centres and *Shanti Batika* (community peace park), distribution of educational materials and school supplies, placement of youth information notice boards, painting of wall murals with peace messages, conducting of street theatre, trust-building, organizing of sports events, distribution of educational materials on peace and peace education were carried out. Interactive programmes on conflict transformation and the role of the youth, cultural programmes, radio programmes and radio jingle partnerships

with LPCs were also organised. The capacity of the engaged youth was built through several local and national programmes such as study sessions, work camps and dialogues and youth retreats. Parents of participating youth and communities with youth programmes now had greater trust in the community youth, which helped to reduce intergeneration gaps and supported peacebuilding actions at family and community levels. It was also acknowledged that family and social mediation skills, a culture of accountability and the ability to speak fearlessly had allowed for the development of the youth leadership skills to mediate disputes. Hence, the youth, to a certain extent, had begun to become agents of positive change and important peacebuilding actors.

6.3.3 Challenges

The respondents stated that the youth lacked proper mediation skills, which limited their role as mediators. During the research, the respondents' concern was highly focused on capacity to mediate local conflict issues as most of the networks were not yet engaged in significant cases of conflict resolution. YOAC Nepal needed to reach wider range of young people in all the districts. This calls for redefining and re-planning of the communications strategy of the project. Youth networks appeared to function well when there was regular technical support. The next step will be to implement more trust-building initiatives amongst young people and stakeholders of the community for sustained engagement in joint peacebuilding initiatives.

The findings showed that youth networks and local peacebuilding initiatives needed more attention on programming, capacity building/training in peacebuilding and local dispute resolution. The youth realised that growing unemployment was often a source of conflict in addition to physical violence, displacement, foreign labour migration and insecurity. The youth had high expectations from YOAC Nepal's project. In order to achieve some tangible peacebuilding effects at community level, the youth must be mobilised and motivated with various programmes. Youth networks played a significant role in building peace and promoting a culture of harmony at community level, as demonstrated by their engagement in mediating local and family disputes.

6.4 Conclusion

The youth network members have proactively developed relations between the government and line agencies. Prior to YOAC Nepal's intervention, there were a few cases where youth groups were recognised and the situation has since improved, although slowly. There is now more recognition, participation and trust-building among family members, community members and I/N/GOs. This has helped motivate the youth to continue to engage in peacebuilding actions and activities.

The youth have adequately addressed the needs of community and engaged in various community and social activities.

The network, being at community level, has also raised youth voices at national level. Considering all these aspects, the TOC 'If we create engagement opportunities for young people, then we can increase youth participation in community-level peace initiatives', tested as part of this study, looks promising. The youth engaged in the networks are school and college students who have high mobility and leadership turnover must be regularly supported with community-based activities, or there is the risk of dispersion and non-engagement of the youth. However, the main challenge is how to effectively manage these networks and increase youth participation at wider VDC level.

The youth want to be financially self-sustainable and are, therefore, seeking entrepreneurial skills to support themselves, their networks and their families. They believe this financial independence will allow them to become self-sustainable, and thus they can play a more crucial role and higher level of engagement in mitigating conflicts and building peace. One of the concerns expressed was that youth networks and local peacebuilding initiatives lacked funds for implementing programmes, and due to insufficient trust amongst network stakeholders, the youth haven't been able to undertake activities jointly. Also, the research found that most of the members of the youth network believe linking peacebuilding activities with livelihood programmes will create more opportunities for the community youth, thus addressing the poverty-structural causes of conflict.

Therefore, it is crucial that these initiatives should be taken up.

6.5 Recommendations

- Continue find ways to keep the youth network intact and engaged. In all the project VDCs in the five districts, continuous programmes and interventions are necessary to keep all the youth networks intact so that the role of youth networks remain proactive in action and community peacebuilding initiatives.
- Continue the programmes that address the lack of trust between the senior members of the community and young people.
- Continue to address the issues raised by the youth, including opportunities for employment, education and entrepreneurship.
- Find ways to increase the coverage of the programme. Currently, the YOAC Nepal has been able to directly engage with 25 youth networks and their members. A major challenge is giving continuity to effective management and to increase the coverage of youth participation at the wider VDC level. YOAC Nepal should aim to reach a wider range of young people in the districts. For the purpose, redefining and re-planning of the communications strategy of the project is necessary.
- Continue to build relationships with the VDC and DDC. YOAC Nepal should enhance the capacity of the youth networks with mediation, decision-making, negotiation and good communication skills of youth networks.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This chapter will analyse the particular TOCs with regard to the four levels of change, discuss the factors that facilitated the change and present the lessons derived from the research findings.

1 Four Levels of Change

This research mapped the activities implemented and expected results of each of the organisations and put them in hierarchy against the various levels of the TOCs generated by them (See Annex 1). It was found that all six organisations found the four levels of change, as defined by Lederach (2003)¹⁵, to varying extents and for varying purposes with varying degrees of success: behavioural change, relational change, structural change and cultural change. Youth and women, being shock absorbers of social change and profoundly affected by the different forms of violence—direct, cultural and structural (Galtung, 1969)¹⁶—have been considered as important target groups by most of the organisations.

1.1 Behavioural Change:

Out of the six projects studied, five could illustrate the changes realised by the youth involved at personal/individual

level. In particular, there was progress in internalising the democratic values and norms, building tolerance and trust, and adopting non-violent conflict resolution practices. Engagement with a broad array of stakeholders such as media and CBOs through advocacy and training efforts has proved to be significant in reinvigorating the youth potential and leadership and resulted in reduction of violence, as exemplified by YOAC Nepal. Most of the youth interviewed during the course of the study responded that they had indeed experienced positive personal transformation after the mediation sessions. One of the main skills gained was the ability to listen to concerns of others before making their own judgement.

LPCs have contributed to a certain extent to bring about behavioural change in its members, political parties cadets and the antagonists by creating space for dialogues. There were also positive examples of transformation observed in women and the youth who had attended programmes run by the AfP, International Alert and SFCG. The continued efforts of women and rights organisations in providing social resources, awareness-raising, leadership skills and training have made women conscious about their rights, and have brought significant and positive changes in their attitudes and behaviour.

¹⁵ Lederach, John Paul (2003). *The little book of conflict transformation*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books

¹⁶ Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilisation*. Oslo: PRIO

1.2 Relational Change:

Although there were significant and observable changes in behaviour, changes in the relational context were less obvious. A positive shift has occurred in public perception of the youth after the signing of the CPA, and the stereotype of the youth being a destructive force has, to a degree, changed in some of the programme areas. This positive improvement of the perception of the youth has also led to reduction in violence in many areas, as demonstrated by the findings of the AfP. The AfP study shows that, while 94 per cent of the youth respondents interviewed believed that they played a constructive role in peacebuilding, a large number of them were critical of the role of the civil society and the political parties. This signals that, whilst there have been advances in promoting personal and behavioural changes with values of peacebuilding, it has yet to be realised at relational change level.

LPCs have contributed to the relational change between leaders of the political parties by providing common forums for dialogues. Some insteps have been made, some synergy with like-minded stakeholders, for example between political youth and CSOs, has been made and observed. The findings of CARE Nepal and SFCG also reject significant changes at relational level. The conclusion drawn from the initiatives of CARE Nepal stated that, one of the main challenges still faced by the youth is to be accepted as mediators in their communities and by older generations.

Thus, it would be premature to attribute significant relational or generation-related attitudinal change towards the youth from older members of the community.

1.3 Structural Change:

The entrenched traditional, paternalistic and existing local power structures represented mainly by male elders still hold most of the decision-making authority and the youth are forced to continue to adhere to the norms and rules of behaviour prescribed by them. This is seen to be most prevalent in the Terai. With only a bleak 28 per cent of the respondents optimistic about the peace process, this underlines that the positive individual behavioural changes and gains made by the youth, through peacebuilding initiatives of the AfP, have yet to be transformed into structural changes.

Initiatives by CARE Nepal outline the potential transformative power of collective bargaining to bring about structural change. Sustained engagement of the poor, vulnerable and socially excluded (PVSE) youth and women was observed in the increased levels of inclusion into community decision-making and implementing community projects, including contributing free labour to repair of roads and drainage system, construction of a *chautari*, etc. These actions have heralded substantial cultural changes. However, one can question whether PG members can have sustained and influential engagement once the project has ended or funding is no longer available.

Despite living in a society where rules and cultural norms predominate, women have been able to translate their individual experiences of subordination into collective action and act against harmful social practices such as domestic violence. Their influence resides in their communal endeavours and is constantly reinvented in the line of social change. The concept of 'agents of peaceful change and peace,' with regard to the programmes designed by CARE Nepal and AfP, highlights the importance of working with local partners in order to gain the greatest potential for affecting systemic change.

The findings of the SFCG research, however, signalled that, despite the youth participating in local decision-making bodies and collaborations and joint initiatives with adults, they are still perceived as junior, less significant and less influential. Thus, the programmes have not translated into a concrete structural change. The geographical variations in the implementation of programmes could be one of the reasons for difference in the findings of the AfP and SFCG. In the context of the Terai, where SFCG had most of its respondents, discrimination based on caste, sex and religion is very firmly entrenched, and there are very few opportunities for women and the youth to engage in community and peacebuilding activities.

The peacebuilding programmes have been running only for three or four years. There remains the substantial challenge to address (and see results of) the structural

conditions of violence or the contributing structural causes of problems, such as gender discrimination, caste-based discrimination, geographical and ethnic discrimination between the peoples of Terai and hill regions, and religious division between Hindus and Muslims. Perhaps, it is too early to expect substantive structural changes. Even the LPC—the only 'official' transitional mechanism of the CPA at local level—has had only minimal participation of marginalised groups, and their local impact has been limited to change in individual perceptions. Therefore, this project has not been as successful in addressing the attitudinal manifestations of conflict and the deeper structural impacts that could help to promote social cohesion and reconciliation at local level. The combination of gaps in coordination and networking process among stakeholders, resource constraints and impact of national-level politics has resulted in deficient functioning of LPCs at local level and low recognition as a 'neutral' and 'effective' peacebuilding institution.

1.4 Cultural Change:

Previous research suggests that the initiatives of local organisations and CSOs that support attitudinal change and a culture of peace are only effective when they can reach a critically large number of people (Anderson and Olson 2003¹⁷). Discrimination based on sex, caste, religion and region is still apparent, for example towards the *Madheshi* and *Dalit*

¹⁷ Anderson, M. & L. Olson 2003: *Confronting War. Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*. Cambridge MA, Collaborative for Development Action pp. 30-36

communities, and discrimination based on gender continues in the hill districts, as demonstrated by CARE Nepal. This exemplifies how cultural changes are yet to be realised through the peacebuilding initiatives. The perception of the police force of the youth as a threat to the community, rather than as being vulnerable to violence or as being a potential constructive 'force of change', as demonstrated by IA's research, shows that cultural change is still a long way away.

The existing patriarchal culture, which continues to influence social structures and values, continues to affect, undermine and restrict a woman's ability to fully participate in community activities and decision-making, including peacebuilding efforts. The post-conflict initiatives have yet to alter the traditional gender roles between women and men; so their roles often remain exclusively focused on the domestic sphere. Multi-level discrimination still persists based on women's age and inexperience, especially in Terai districts, and families are still reluctant towards girl's involvement in community and social activities, as highlighted by the programmes implemented by CARE Nepal and SFCG.

2 Factors that Facilitate Change

All the TOCs used by the organisations in the research refer to the need for transformation of behaviour, structures and cultures of violence, especially in times of post-conflict transition, from violent social dynamics

to constructive social change. These can only be achieved through complementary strategies carried out in coordination with other major participants and stakeholders at local and national levels. Though it remains a challenge to identify the type of data that would best measure the effectiveness of the TOCs in peacebuilding and the impact of interventions contributing to those changes, the six organisations have attempted to draw up basic criteria for evaluation focusing on impact and coverage, timeliness and sustainability, and effectiveness and efficiency of the TOCs. The factors that facilitate the changes listed below have been found to have fostered peace.

2.1 Mediation

Mediation is considered a key mechanism to build culture of peace and to increase the likelihood of sustainable peace. For the three organisations that employed this mechanism, viz. CARE Nepal, MoPR and YOAC Nepal, it was evident that mediation not only helped in transforming adversarial tensions among families, societies and communities, but also empowered people from poor, marginalised and vulnerable communities such as the youth and women. In the case of CARE Nepal, with women and youth involvement in mediation activities in cases of domestic violence, alcohol abuse, accusation of witchcraft, unequal distribution of water resources and land use, mediation has helped in resolving interpersonal and family disputes. It has also transformed lives of women and empowered

them, particularly in villages where women traditionally had limited roles in public life. Similarly, the mediation initiatives of YOAC Nepal have supported the local youth to mitigate conflict situations, such as conflicts with armed groups.

Concerns, however, were raised about the mediators' ability to mediate disputes at national level. There was increased interest in building mediation skills and acquiring essential knowledge. The interventions of the three projects demonstrated that community disputes were often resolved before they could escalate into large-scale violence, and this could be useful at national level. For example, the case of LPC members mediating a local dispute at a hospital in Kathmandu, which was closed for two weeks due to striking administration and doctors. Through the mediation efforts, the situation was resolved and essential services restored. The LPCs in different districts have also been able to resolve pressing and complex problems and issues concerning the community such as land disputes, construction of local infrastructure and allocation of resources. The LPCs have also contributed to improving the relationships between parties at local level by acting as neutral mediators in local conflicts. However, the mediators expressed that they faced several challenges while performing their roles, including acceptance and trust of the community members, difficulty in managing private household issues that are difficult to share with outsiders and coordination and funding issues.

The mediation efforts undertaken by these initiatives have contributed to peacebuilding at large, with a number of disputes and problems that threaten the fragile peace in communities being resolved. Mediation has also contributed to building mutual trust and confidence in both individuals and communities.

2.2 Dialogue

All six cases identified that creating a space for dialogue and discussion focused on peacebuilding and conflict transformation was another important factor that facilitated change. This creation of 'space' for dialogue was considered to be imperative for successful implementation of their TOC. In times of political transition, intense dialogue initiatives are often the only channel of communication between various disputing parties. All six organisations have assisted by creating a space for interaction between the various stakeholders, including grass roots populations, local elite, and a broad cross-section of civil society, including I/NGOs, media, the business community, educators and community leaders fostering multi-track approach to peacebuilding. The multi-stakeholder dialogue platform provided by LPCs in their programme districts has helped by breaking down stereotypes and promoting peace and harmony in society.

Providing an opportunity for the youth and women to air their views, express their concerns, and engage in discussions and dialogues focusing on peacebuilding and conflict transformation has not only

developed their leadership skills to mediate disputes, but also provided them with a means of resolving conflicts without violence. Thus, the created space for dialogue has transformed not only behaviours, but also relationships and cultural practices to a certain extent. CARE Nepal's project demonstrated that, through public forums and platforms for interaction, discriminatory practices and beliefs could be changed and PVSEs were included in the community and peacebuilding processes. Similarly, YPDCs, which were part of the AfP's programme served as public platforms where youths of different or similar political ideologies could discuss and share experiences of practical peacebuilding experiences. This has proved to be beneficial in two ways: one, as a resource centre and, the other, as a source for knowledge generation. With these initiatives there has been a decrease in level of political conflicts because the potential conflicts that were discussed were often resolved before they could escalate.

There is a need to facilitate and increase horizontal dialogues, which are more accessible, youth-friendly and less hierarchical in nature. Developing a dialogue help-sheet could include ideas for how to make physical space more conducive to building trust and to learning opportunities, and how to best include complementary creative components (such as music, role play or linking dialogues to other popular events in the community). In the long term, International Alert is developing a concise dialogue handbook that will give guidance of different dialogue techniques,

methodologies and tools that can be used across the organisation to help create these spaces and create constructive dialogue.

2.3 Grass roots Advocacy

Advocacy is one of the key factors that facilitate change in peacebuilding. Most of the organisations have recognised and incorporated the need to include women, other marginalised groups and the youth in their projects and to create effective communications channels to raise public awareness and facilitate the inclusion of issues in public agenda.

Two organisations; International Alert and CARE Nepal, found that their influence on peacebuilding was not limited to local and individual advocacy and communication, but also had the potential to exert pressure on political parties and security agencies and to successfully advocate for specific issues. LPCs advocate for peace through various ways such as peace rallies. This has been a particularly important element with regard to transforming social norms, public attitudes and behaviour towards the existing discrimination against women and the youth, rights violations and abuse. Organisations have used radio campaigns, seminars, group discussions, stickers, dramas, songs, training workshops and other activities to reach larger audiences and communities.

2.4 Cultivating Knowledge and Enhancing Leadership

Cultivating knowledge of political processes and peacebuilding was considered to be imperative by all six projects for influencing the participation in community and political spheres. All the projects found that, through awareness raising, there had been a change in the perceptions and attitudes of individuals, particularly the youth. Both the youth and women have shown increased leadership in problem-solving and decision-making skills. By involving the youth in community and local level activities in meaningful ways, they were more likely to be involved in community activities, thus highlighting potential benefits to communities and to a democratic society in general. The knowledge and capacity acquired though should not be limited to participation in community development projects but also used to help build critical capacity such as literacy training, micro-savings and cooperative marketing.

2.5 Capacity and Influence

Most of the projects focused on building capacity of the youth to increase their influence in public decisions and policy-making. With this increased capacity, the youth have been able to participate and engage in community and social spheres, contribute to maintaining social harmony, and participate in the construction of roads or drainage systems. However, their capacity has yet to become significant in influencing the community and local-level hierarchy and challenge established norms.

The SFCG found that, even after numerous capacity-building efforts, the youth have not been fully accepted as partners and that the hierarchical relationship between the youth and adults, where adults play the role of advisers and financiers, while youth do the 'hard work', still exists.

Patriarchal structures in villages continue to persist, particularly in the Terai, where youth voices are not considered in the policy or decision-making process. One of the members of CARE Nepal project stated:

'Gaun Panch (community leaders) are highly respected and powerful people in the village and their decisions are final; they have to be accepted by everyone. In such a situation, I can't even think of speaking out.'

The youth and adults both accept that there is need for generating a larger mass of capable youth to ensure their acceptance and constructive role in decision-making. Therefore, intensive training in youth leadership, peacebuilding and negotiation skills for larger numbers of youth and adult decision-makers is required. Also, a sensitisation process of other participants would help in minimising potential misunderstanding of role and responsibilities. Involving more of the current and traditional decision-makers in capacity building training in youth and peacebuilding in order to inform them of the need for involving the youth in decision-making mechanisms and enhancing collaboration between the youth and local

decision-making bodies is also of high importance to achieve the desired goal.

2.6 Alliance and Network-building

Building alliances and networks is important for women and youth organisations to link diverse stakeholders, foster dialogue and negotiation, and to harness the collective efforts and actions required for peacebuilding. SFCG and CARE Nepal demonstrated that collective effort is imperative for strengthening women's voices at both national and community levels in order to bring cultural and structural transformations. What also became evident is that alliance building must be viewed as a long-term strategy for sustained social change. Women must recognise that it is only through their collective efforts that any strategies for sustained social and political change will come about. In all six study cases, organisations have worked for peacebuilding.

However, this effort has to be sustained through discussion with different stakeholders of the community and collaboration through their engagement with various stakeholders such as elders, CBOs, media, government officials and line agencies. The LPCs demonstrated that trust-building initiatives are crucial for stronger network-building and to tap into the community aspiration for peace and reconciliation. LPCs enhanced local leadership in resolution of local conflict promoting peace from the grass roots. When the alliances are formed and

strengthened, it is important to build on existing resources, networks and activities by involving and identifying organisations and activities that are already in place, assessing the benefit of bringing them together, and determining how collaboration could enhance them.

3 Lessons Learnt

This study analysed the progress towards results of the peacebuilding initiatives of the six organisations from the TOC approach. The key findings and the learning derived from the research include:

- The holistic approach comprising various methods (dialogue, training, awareness raising, advocacy, capacity building, and formation of alliances and network building) employed by the six organisations has helped the youth and women to develop confidence, realise their potentials and enhance their collective bargaining power. This has resulted in personal behavioural changes in the youth and women, enabling them to contribute to local-level peacebuilding initiatives.
- The perceptions, as well as level of inclusion of the youth, are gradually changing. Acceptance of the youth as 'agents of change' having an important role in the peacebuilding process is increasing. Factors such as mediation and dialogue help to facilitate bigger and more accepted roles for the youth in their communities.
- Structural and cultural changes are not as significant, especially for young

women. Although the youth are being involved in local discussions, their decision-making powers are still limited. There is a risk of this group becoming disillusioned and frustrated with the lack of significant change in civil society. Armed groups are still operating with impunity and violence is escalating, especially in areas where ethnic and sporadic religious strife exists.

- The entrenched traditional and paternalistic local power structures, where male elders reserve the right to wield the decision-making authority, continue to act as structural impediments to the youth gaining legitimate access to the decision-making corridors at all levels. Women's inclusion still remains an issue. While advancements have definitely been made in the post-conflict period at national level, with 33 per cent of the parliamentary seats being held by women, there continues to be little involvement of women at local and community level, especially in the Terai. Multi-tier discrimination still persists based on women's age and (in)experience, and is pervasive in the districts of the Terai. Families are reluctant to involve their female members in community and social activities. These findings indicate that inclusion efforts have yet to reach the local level.
- Women's agency resides in their communal endeavours and is constantly reinvented in line with the social change. Through collective action, women have been able to change some societal rules and norms and to translate their individual experiences of subordination into collective action against harmful social practices, such as domestic violence.
- The concepts of 'agents of peaceful change' and 'peace constituencies', designed by organisations, draws attention to local partners, and with it, the greatest potential for affecting systemic change.
- The sustainability of the results generated by the programmes must be incorporated into the programme, as failure to ensure a sustainable 'exit' may lead to further violence after the phase-out of the project.
- Initiatives of the CSOs which support attitudinal change and a culture of peace are only effective when they can reach a critically large mass of people. Discrimination based on sex, caste, religion and region, still pervasive in the Terai, and discrimination based on gender, largely pervasive in the hill region, exemplify how cultural changes are yet to be realised through peacebuilding initiatives.
- The constantly changing contextual factors such as ethnic conflicts in the Terai and the eastern region of Nepal, demographic characteristics and influence in the space for organisations to act either limit or strengthen the peacebuilding abilities of the organisations.

- Creating a 'social space' for discussion not only introduces the youth and the community at large to others in the community and community-level peace initiatives, thereby increasing their involvement, but also creates a location for dialogue and conflict resolution.
- Awareness of, and access to, peacebuilding programmes and mechanisms, e.g. local peace committees (LPCs), are clearly needed to improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research set out to explore the selected Theories of Change (TOCs) and the assumptions guiding the work of six peacebuilding organisations working in Nepal. Each of the organisations; Alliance for Peace, CARE Nepal, International Alert, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Search for Common Ground and Youth Action Nepal, selected a particular project to test the effectiveness of their TOC(s), and critically analysed and reviewed the effectiveness of their TOCs. Based on the research findings and analysis, this chapter will draw conclusions and provide recommendations to the peacebuilding community, donors, international community and government agencies.

1 Conclusion

It is imperative to sustain the change at relational and cultural level and to advocate for larger issues at local and national levels by strengthening and supporting partnerships and cooperative efforts with community and youth organisations. From the findings of the research in all six cases (projects), changes have been observed at individual and behaviour level, where the youth, women, and other vulnerable and marginalised groups of people have internalised the values and norms of peacebuilding and democracy. Significant structural and cultural changes are yet to become apparent, but some

gains have been made with inroads into intergeneration dialogues, increased women's advocacy and participation and the changing of perceptions of the youth by the community.

While some of the theories and the efforts of peacebuilding programmes have had some success, organisations haven't yet tested theories at the higher level of the hierarchy which address structural and cultural changes. Factors such as short duration of peacebuilding projects and exogenous factors, such as the renewed conflict in the Terai and ethnic tensions in the eastern region, have produced setbacks, over which organisations don't have control. One of the premises and core principles for the effectiveness of the efforts of peacebuilding organisations is that peacebuilding programmes need to respond to the unique causes and dynamics of the specific conflict context, which can quickly change at any given time.

The wider efforts of organisations and government institutions have indeed transformed conflict at local level by building the capacity of local people, strengthening local organisations and institutions to respond to a conflict, and creating spaces for dialogue and mediation. Opportunities for the poor, marginalised, vulnerable, youth and women, who in

the past were ignored, have increased. However, local-level changes are hard to sustain without progress at national level. Development of conditions and frameworks at national level that are complementary and conducive and concentrated efforts of civil society, international community and national government in order to prevent escalation of conflict are required for local-level changes to become sustainable.

The researchers and the research team learned that the process of making explicit the TOC to examine their programming design and implementation has led to a more rigorous approach to their work. It has sharpened the review of planning and implementation of peacebuilding programmes and helped reveal the underlying assumptions about what each organisation intends to do to reach its goals. These inputs will also strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of projects as well as contributing to the empirical body of peacebuilding knowledge.

2 Recommendations

The armed conflict in Nepal was primarily ignited and fuelled by structural impediments of social and ethnic marginalisation, high levels of poverty and lack of universal development opportunities. Thus, post-conflict peacebuilding would necessitate inclusion, breaking down of stereotypes, and challenging of existing cultural and social structures and barriers. Critical junctures of national transformation, like the historic peace process, have redefined

the rules of civic engagement and brought opportunities and platform to groups previously ignored or not allowed access in decision and policy-making. The need for long-term engagement with the youth and women has been recognised as crucial by donor communities and the government for the peacebuilding processes. Despite the challenging political environment and delays in writing a new constitution, there exists substantial potential for change and progress for peacebuilding initiatives. Based on the findings and analysis of this research, the following recommendations are guided towards widening and deepening of the peace constituency in Nepal:

2.1 Recommendations to the Peacebuilding Community

- In project design, TOCs must be identified in the project design phase itself so that it can be monitored, evaluated and adjusted as the programme is implemented so that they can be reviewed and evaluated.
- Efforts should be made to ensure that there is coordination within the civil society and peacebuilding community. Their aim is to make their initiatives complementary and strategic at local and national levels.
- Amplifying the impact of programmes requires integrated or collaborative approaches between different CSOs, where cross-monitoring mechanisms are implanted and best practices are shared and transferred. Furthermore,

when one single organisation cannot impact all levels of change, a culture of cooperation and synergy amongst the peacebuilding organisations would be effective and, therefore, needs to exist in order to contribute to *peace writ large*.

- Regular and joint context analysis together with partners/stakeholders should be conducted for the effective peacebuilding programming.
- In order to institutionalise the changes brought about by the initiatives, a sound phaseout/exit strategy and post-programmatic evaluation are required. For peacebuilding to be sustainable, it must effectively deal with the major factors that drive conflict.
- Peacebuilding programmes should ensure that they accommodate economic development components, including employment and livelihood opportunities within their programmes, particularly when the programmes are youth-focused.
- When peacebuilding programmes are designed at local level, there should be a strategy to engage and to complement the activities of LPCs in order to have greater coordinated impact.

2.2 Recommendations to the Donors and International Community

- Continue to build an emerging common strategy for post-conflict

reconstruction and peacebuilding in Nepal in order to better coordinate efforts. This coordination would help to avoid duplication whilst ensuring that all geographical areas and groups are considered in the implemented projects.

- Proper exit strategies should be in place at the beginning of the programme. The low priority often given to phase-out strategies means the gains attained by the programme implementation often risk a lack of sustainability.
- Sustainability of peacebuilding strategies largely depends on its financial autonomy. To sustain the programme impact, emphasis on ownership is required. Local organisations and grass roots communities need to be financially secure through mechanisms like matching funds, income-generating and self-reliance programmes that are embedded within the programmes, thus allowing for long-term engagement and results.
- There must be improved two-way communication and flexibility between donor agencies and grant recipients. Peacebuilding project implementation requires flexibility during implementation because of the constantly changing contexts in the conflict and post-conflict environments. Contextual change or review of project effectiveness during monitoring and evaluation means

adjustments that, if taken up, could produce greater results. Donors must be willing to enter into an ongoing dialogue with grant recipients and allow for project implementation adjustments as required.

2.3 Recommendations to the Government Agencies

- The government should seek to financially strengthen the LPCs, forge greater synergy between the LPCs and other local administration mechanisms, like DAOs and DDCs, and refrain from politicisation of LPCs to ensure their effectiveness.
- Ensure that effective channels of communication and support exist between the LPCs at district level and at the MoPR. There should be better coordination between the civil society and government on peacebuilding initiatives as lack of coordination brings about duplication in peacebuilding programmes and may prevent holistic partnerships between public, government and nongovernment, which would ensure greater legitimacy and effectiveness.
- The government should set up an NGO liaison desk to gain better understanding of national and local-level peacebuilding efforts and to contribute to the agenda for donor support and coordination on issues of peacebuilding and development.
- Expedite the process of setting up the commissions and committees specified in the CPA with inclusive participation.
- Given the changing political landscape, care should be taken when changing and transferring government officials from one ministry to another, in order to ensure continuity and knowledge of the programmes, so that the programmes do not suffer setback.
- District-level mechanisms should be put in place to retain the LPC staff for more than one year and prevent frequent hiring and transfer as this is disruptive to the information network and ultimately the mandate of the LPC. Ensure that orientation training, capacity-building and support are made available to all LPCs as this will help to ensure their understanding and delivery.
- Develop independent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to learn from the government-led initiatives and adjust accordingly as per the change in context.

ANNEXES

Annex 1

Hierarchy of Results and Theories of Change

Alliance for Peace - AfP

	Hierarchy of Results	Theories of Change
Impact	Enhanced the culture of non-violence through increased knowledge of peacebuilding and conflict transformation	<i>If youth embody and internalize peacebuilding norms and values, their behaviour will change towards non-violence</i>
	Reduced the incidence of violence by youth through acceptance of non-violence	<i>If there is space for youth to learn about and share this knowledge about peacebuilding, there will be greater acceptance of non violent behaviour</i>
	Promoted the acceptance of non-violent behaviour among youth	<i>If more youth are knowledgeable about peacebuilding, then it will create space for the expansion of knowledge on peacebuilding</i>
	Created space for youth to expand knowledge of peacebuilding	<i>If trained youth become 'multipliers', they convey and share knowledge with others</i>
	Conveyed and shared peer knowledge	<i>If training is implemented appropriately, then youth will develop their capacity</i>
	Strengthened capacity of substantial number of youth in peacebuilding and conflict transformation	<i>If a proper training module is developed it will provide appropriate training to youths</i>
Outcome	Developed appropriate training module for capacity building	<i>If there is sharing of experiences then appropriate training modules can be created</i>
	Shared knowledge about peacebuilding	<i>If YPDCs are created, then they can build knowledge on peacebuilding and conflict transformation through sharing of experiences</i>
Output	Expanded youth peace dialogue centres (YPDCs) - Nine new YPDCs established	

CARE Nepal

	Hierarchy of Results	Theories of Change
Impact	Contribute to integrate rights and issues of Poor Vulnerable and Socially Excluded (PVSE) women and youth into the new political agenda (through national level peace network) leading towards sustainable peace and the achievement of their aspirations	<i>If PVSEs get space to meaningfully participate in influencing a democratic constitution, they can contribute to sustainable peace</i>
	Capacity of civil society networks developed to engage PVSE groups of women and youth in the process of influencing a democratic constitution in Nepal	<i>If there is increased understanding among the Civil Society Organisations and networks on the rights of PVSEs, they will start engaging PVSEs in the political process</i>
	Strengthened capacity of Civil Society Organisations at the institutional and network level in the constitution building and broader political process	<i>If there is more interface between PVSEs and district level institutions, they can understand and internalize the issues of PVSEs</i>
	Raise awareness on political/peace related issues of PVSEs at the institutional level (micro-macro linkage VDC-district-national)	<i>If the PVSEs (Peace Groups, Peace Ambassadors, Peace Pressure Groups, Mediators, Citizen Journalists) collectively bring their issues and up/demand rights they can inform key people/institutions within the district</i>
	PVSE people participate in local peacebuilding processes	<i>If the peace centres are strengthened and capacities of Peace Ambassadors, Community Journalists, Peace Pressure Group and Mediators are developed to enable them to raise the issues of PVSEs then peace groups will contribute to local peacebuilding processes</i>
	Enhanced community level – Peace Ambassadors, Mediators, Citizen Journalists, Peace Pressure Groups’ capacities through the establishment and strengthening of peacebuilding process and mechanisms (knowledge sharing at institutional level and (micro-macro linkage Village Development Committee-district-national)	<i>If PVSEs are organized and sensitized on their rights related issues they start discussing their problems/issues collectively</i>
Outcome	Identified PVSEs, formed peace groups, and take weekly sessions	<i>If Peace Ambassadors receive capacity building training they can support identifying the needs of PVSEs, facilitate sessions and identify the potential members from the group to work as mediators and journalists</i>
	Provided trainings to Mediators, Citizen Journalists and Peace Pressure Group	
	Provide training to Peace Ambassadors	<i>If peace centres are operationalised, then there will be resources, space and mechanisms to build local capacity</i>
Output	Operationalised Peace Centres	

International Alert

	Hierarchy of Results	Theories of Change
Impact	Improved public security and justice policy and practice	<i>If local and national level actions occur then youth access and accountability to justice and security will increase</i>
	Local and national level joint initiation/action to address issues of justice and security	<i>If there is increased understanding developed through dialogue activities between youth and justice and security service related stakeholders then local/national level initiative/action will occur</i>
	Increased dialogues between youth and stakeholders	<i>If there are soft advocacy initiatives from young people backed by research, a good relationship will build up between the stakeholders/service providers and the young people</i>
	Advocacy initiatives by young people	<i>If there is wider awareness and understanding on this issue the stakeholders will positively respond to the needs and experiences of youth</i>
Outcome	Wider awareness/understanding of needs and concerns of youths in security and justice provision	<i>If young people have a common understanding of their needs and experiences and their role in improving justice and security provisions they will be in a better position to play a more constructive role</i>
	Greater knowledge and awareness generated amongst youth of how young people experience and contribute to current security challenges and responses	<i>If the research/knowledge is documented and disseminated via various means including the radio programmes that will generate understanding and awareness amongst others; especially youths</i>
	Research/knowledge produced on specific experiences and perceptions of diverse groups of young people regarding security and justice challenges and provision	<i>If young people conduct research on public security and justice issues and make radio programmes themselves, it will be more appealing to other young people and generate interest and create ownership of the issues</i>
	Youth have capacity to conduct conflict sensitive research and produce quality radio programmes on public security and justice issues	

Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction - MoPR

		Hierarchy of Results	Theories of Change
Impact		Local Transition is peaceful as envisaged	<i>If there is acceptance of the Peacebuilding mechanisms by the stakeholders, then they will be used widely</i>
		Political and social conflict at local level resolved peacefully	<i>If there is evidence of peaceful resolution of conflict, then confidence and acceptance of the Peacebuilding mechanism is developed</i>
Outcome		Relationship and trust among conflicting parties improved at local levels	<i>If the Peacebuilding mechanisms generate interaction between conflicting parties, then it will build an environment of understanding and trust</i>
		Create space/ platform for dialogue and debate among concerned stakeholders	<i>If the peacebuilding mechanisms are accessible to the concerned stakeholders, then it will create an understanding that they can come together for a dialogue at a common platform</i>
Output		Inclusive and Decentralised mechanisms for peacebuilding at local level established	

Search for Common Ground - SFCG

	Hierarchy of Results	Theories of Change
Impact	Improved cooperation between youth and adults	<i>If youth participate in local decision-making processes, they will jointly initiate programmes with adults to support local peace process</i>
	Youth participation in local decision making process	<i>If youth are accepted as partners in local (peacebuilding) activities, then their participation in local decision-making process will be more widely accepted, which will increase actual participation in decision-making</i>
Outcome	Acceptance of the youth role in local peace process	<i>If youth improve their relationship with people from across dividing lines, then they will be accepted as partners in local peace process</i>
	Improved relationships of youth with people from across dividing lines	<i>If capacity of multiplier youth / youth organizations are built, then they will organize peacebuilding activities reaching across dividing lines</i>
	Enhanced capacity of multiplier youth / youth organizations on leadership, peacebuilding and institutional development	
Output		

Youth Action Nepal - YOAC

	Hierarchy of Results	Theories of Change
Impact	Personal behaviour of youth network members is changed	<i>If youth are empowered and enabled, then it will bring about positive behavioural change</i>
	The capacity of participating youth is enhanced	<i>If youth actively engage and make use of peace, justice, and development activities, then they will be more empowered and capable</i>
Outcome	Increased participation -- Youth seek, create and initiate more peacebuilding initiatives and practices at their community level	<i>If we create more engagement opportunities for young people then we can increase youth participation at the community level peace initiatives</i>
	Avenues for youth engagement opportunity in peace, justice and development are created	<i>If programmes targeted to youth are implemented effectively, then avenues for youth engagement opportunities are created</i>
Output	Youth programmes are implemented at the VDC level	

Annex 2

Theory of Change Grid

Alliance for Peace

TOC	Research Question(s)	How does the TOC contribute to the results above?	What is your evidence of the result being achieved?	Did the activities and lower level results add up to the needed result?
<p>If youth embody and internalize peace building norms and values, their behaviour will change towards non-violence.</p>	<p>How have youth embodied and internalized peace building norms and values, so that their behaviour has changed towards non-violence as a result of program intervention?</p>	<p>Building a culture of dialogue among student wings of different political parties taking place that is instrumental in solving issues through conversation rather than violent means.</p> <p>Youth who are trained about peace building norms and values have internalized the same, leading to the change in their behaviour from violence to non-violence.</p>	<p>There has been a significant decrease in the violent protests and strikes caused by youth.</p> <p>Youth act as a mediator in the local level conflicts. This role of youth has been accepted by the community.</p> <p>Youth have internalized the fact that peace is the only medium for overall national development.</p>	<p>Most of the youth who participated in the training accepted non-violent behaviour.</p> <p>Youth claimed that there has been a positive behavioural change in them after the intervention of AFP.</p> <p>Youth have participated and contributed in the local peace building initiatives. Their participation reflects that they have been able to embody and internalize peace building norms and values.</p> <p>Youth share the knowledge of peace building with others which in turn promotes non-violence thereby acting as multipliers.</p>

What changed in the context?	What other factor(s) could have contributed to the result?	What else would make this TOC successful?	Why?
<p>Violence in general has decreased overall but some low levels of violence still occur in other areas than where the intervention had taken place.</p> <p>Price of petrol increased and supply decreased.</p> <p>Changes in university policy provoked students' protests.</p> <p>Decision of LPC in reparations for a high profile student case is rejected by students.</p> <p>The security situation has slightly improved due to the reduction of violence from armed groups.</p>	<p>LPC working locally to raise awareness on peaceful resolution of conflicts.</p> <p>Similar initiatives taken by other NGOs' at the community level have contributed to the reduction in the incidence of violence through youth.</p>	<p>The TOC holds true under the given circumstance and under evaluation</p> <p>Outreach work to police and army.</p> <p>If youth are provided with opportunities to interact with other youth from other districts/countries, their experiences are enhanced.</p>	<p>The intention was achieved with the chosen activities.</p> <p>This occurred in a context of a worsening environment.</p>

CARE Nepal

TOC	Research Question(s)	How does the TOC contribute to the results above?	What is your evidence of the result being achieved?
<p>If Peace Centres are strengthened and the capacities of PAs, CJs, PPGs and Mediators are developed to enable them to raise the issues of PVSEs up then, Peace Groups will contribute to local peacebuilding processes.</p>	<p>How PG's contribute to local peacebuilding process by developing capacities of PAs, PPG, mediators, CJ and strengthening peace centres?</p> <p>How do we know that peace centres are strengthened?</p> <p>- What are the areas of capacity development for PAs, CJs, PPC and mediators?</p> <p>- How do you know that PGs have capacity to contribute to local peacebuilding processes?</p>	<p>Gives legitimacy for district and national level advocacy when issues come up from the village particularly from PVSEs.</p> <p>Since PGs are organized in groups they can collectively raise their voices and can participate in local level forums to raise their issues and concerns.</p> <p>The community mechanism can support raising the voice and concerns of PVSEs up.</p>	<p>PAs delivering sessions to the PG members.</p> <p>Trained mediators dealing with local disputes and CJs updating the activities of PGs work through local FMs.</p> <p>There is evidence where PGs are raising the issues concerns of PVSE, claiming rights, accessing and demanding existing resources with service providing institutions and organizations. Different groups and organizations invite them in the meetings. Women from PGs and VLPPG are representing in various groups and committees and are advocating for their rights. They have been able to fight against violence and discrimination, taking collective actions against harmful social practices, resolving disputes through negotiations etc. They have contributed in maintaining social harmony; engagement in community development work, creating space for the community members to participate in such type of work, contributing free labour to repair roads, drainage system, construct chautaro etc.</p>

Did the activities and lower level results add up to the needed result?	What changed in the context?	What other factor(s) could have contributed to the result?	What else would make this TOC successful?	Why?
<p>Yes.</p>	<p>The activities of armed groups have decreased since when the project was designed during 2008. During baseline the people were not far the memories and the affects of a decade long armed conflict where as now they are have started talking about harmony to rebuild their relationships, satisfying basic needs, claiming rights, seeking justice etc.</p> <p>However the potential risk of violent conflict (on the basis of hills/Terai, Hindu/ Muslims) is still there especially in Terai districts.</p>	<p>Availability of local FM to communicate messages.</p> <p>Other informal groups and networks in the community.</p> <p>Mobile phones.</p> <p>Women's committee formed by VDC.</p>	<p>Intensive trainings on advocacy to the PAs.</p> <p>Group focused activities including livelihood support to the PG members.</p> <p>Common platforms/ space where PVSEs can update on their activities and share issues and concerns with service providing agencies.</p> <p>Common understanding among the entire project team on how all these mechanisms and work are connected with each other.</p> <p>Space for debate and discussions (more interface_ among PVSEs and district level networks.</p>	<p>Because PAs can prioritize issues for advocacy and can link with wider stakeholders.</p> <p>Because group can have sustained engagement.</p> <p>It helps to establish themselves and can be recognized.</p> <p>For better coordination and better results.</p> <p>For micro macro linkages and to their issues in policy debate and discussions at different levels.</p>

International Alert

TOC	Research Question(s)	How does the TOC contribute to the results above?	What is your evidence of the result being achieved?
<p>“If there is increased understanding and cooperation developed aimed at addressing key security concerns through dialogue activities between young people and justice and security service related stakeholders then local/national level initiative/ action will occur”.</p>	<p>How are the dialogues activities being conducted in Y&S project and how effective are they so far?</p> <p>Does increased understanding developed through dialogue activities between youth and the stakeholders lead to the local and national level actions/initiatives? If yes, then how and to what extent?</p> <p>How do the Justice and Security theme and the project’s engagement with ‘youth’ interact with each other in relation to the dialogue activities?</p>	<p>Dialogues are beginning to break the silence on security and desensitize the issue by placing it in the public realm.</p> <p>By building the relationship and trust between the youth and the stakeholders.</p> <p>The TOC also contributes to the result by putting pressure/ or creating demand for better security from the side of young people who are often regarded as a cause of insecurity.</p>	<p>There are some reported cases where the dialogue activities have been able to encourage young people to form ‘youth networks’ and discuss the issues further amongst themselves. In Bara for example, a network of student wings of political parties was formed after some of them participated in a dialogue activity organized in the district.</p> <p>The dialogue activities which included open air discussion and interactive media programming and have put pressure on the local police to act on a situation in Dang where the members of a youth gang involved in fighting in the district causing insecurity were caught by police following the dialogue event for investigation.</p> <p>Some local level initiatives and actions have been implemented jointly by young people and the stakeholders.</p>

Did the activities and lower level results add up to the needed result?	What changed in the context?	What other factor(s) could have contributed to the result?	What else would make this TOC successful?	Why?
<p>The TOC is slightly at a higher place in the hierarchy of results and the project is designed for 3 years. Therefore, the activities and lower level results had not added up yet to the needed result. However, there are already some evidences of lower level results contributing to the needed result.</p>	<p>Overall, the security situation has not changed significantly. However the instances of activities of the armed groups have decreased since when the project was designed during 2008.</p> <p>Criminal gangs and violence associated with them, continue to impact young men and women's outlook, with young people noting that insecurity negatively affects their education and employment prospects.</p>	<p>Other complementary initiatives in the districts could/have contributed to the results (e.g. the formation of youth network in Bara is also supported by another initiatives of YOAC in the same district).</p>	<p>Training on organizing dialogues and its objectives to the project participants.</p> <p>Accompaniment to the partners on the first round of dialogues.</p> <p>Evidence based research and analysis feeding into the dialogue process.</p> <p>If the research publication could have been produced before the dialogue activities in the districts to distribute to the participants, this would have made the TOC more successful.</p>	<p>Because training and accompaniment on dialogues will make them more effective.</p> <p>Strong research will give dialogues proper focus and the timely publication of it will provide legitimate and authentic reference for dialogues.</p>

Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction

TOC	Research Question(s)	How does the TOC contribute to the results above?	What is your evidence of the result being achieved?
<p>If there are evidences of peaceful resolution of conflict, then confidence on and acceptance of Peace Building mechanism is developed.</p> <p>If the Peace Building mechanisms generate interaction between conflicting parties, then it will build an environment of understanding and trust.</p>	<p>How has LPC contributed to develop a positive relationship between conflicting parties?</p> <p>What are the initiatives taken by the LPCs to resolve local conflicts peacefully?</p> <p>Have past experiences of peaceful conflict resolution helped enhance people's belief that conflicts can be resolved peacefully?</p> <p>Do the concerned stakeholders consider LPCs as a neutral platform?</p>	<p>In some cases, conflicts that could have escalated to a much larger scale were mediated by the LPCs thus resulting in the prevention of larger scale conflicts.</p> <p>But overall there is little evidence of the TOC contributing much to the result above.</p>	<p>In areas of low conflict, that are urban, there is a higher level of confidence of the programme's delivery and mandate.</p> <p>The result above wasn't achieved but the one below was. Those who go through the process were satisfied, but there continues to be a full understanding of it.</p>

Did the activities and lower level results add up to the needed result?	What changed in the context?	What other factor(s) could have contributed to the result?	What else would make this TOC successful?	Why?
<p>Not enough activities were done at the lower level to add up to a substantial result at the higher level.</p> <p>But in cases where some good activities were done at the lower level, it did add up to some of the results at the higher level.</p>	<p>Increasingly low level violence in Terai.</p> <p>The security situation has slightly improved due to the reduction of violence from armed groups.</p> <p>Worsening of relationship between the different political parties has led to a direct impact on the functioning of the LPC's</p>	<p>If there were a culture of consensus and coalition amongst the political parties at the national level, it would have helped in effective implementation of the LPC's work at the district level.</p> <p>Village level peace councils (VLPC) would have been more effective instead of one LPC overseeing the whole district. Currently, the VDC level LPC are being formed in many districts.</p>	<p>The TOC under test was found to be partially successful but was mostly unsuccessful</p> <p>Functions of LPC need to be more need specific of the requirements for the individual districts rather than same general activities throughout the country.</p> <p>The monitoring mechanisms need to be strengthened.</p> <p>Sufficient resource allocation to be delivered.</p> <p>Effective and increased awareness campaigns to be implemented.</p>	<p>The intention was not achieved properly with the chosen activities.</p> <p>This occurred in a context of a worsening political environment.</p>

Search for Common Ground

TOC	Research Question(s)	How does the TOC contribute to the results above?	What is your evidence of the result being achieved?	Did the activities and lower level results add up to the needed result?
<p>If youth are accepted as partners in local peacebuilding activities, then their participation in local decision-making process will be more widely accepted and hence actual participation in decision making will be increased.</p>	<p>How has there been an improvement in relations between youth and adult members of the community?</p> <p>How have improved relations led to increased participation of youth in local decision-making process?</p> <p>How does the participation of youth in local decision-making process affect the process of decision-making?</p> <p>Have youth and adults jointly initiated programmes to support the local peace process?</p>	<p>If youth are accepted as partners in local peacebuilding activities (as a result of a display of improved leadership and commitment to community's wellbeing), it will add to their credibility which will then open avenues for them to participate in local decision-making processes, thus resulting in the collaborative action between youth and adult decision makers. This will contribute to the broader goal of transforming youth into a positive force for peace and democratization.</p>	<p>There has been a considerable increase in trust between youth and adults because of the improved perception of adults regarding youth that they can also make valuable contributions to the community. This increase in trust has helped build relations between the two where youth often ask adults for advice and support and adults also invite youth to participate in community meetings. There are numerous examples collected where youth have been consulted during decision-making, with some even holding positions of authority in these decision-making bodies. There is also evidence of adults and youth collaborating for community development.</p>	<p>SFCG training programmes and its seed grant activities have helped build leadership capacities of youth and increased their involvement in community activities. This has helped improve the credibility of youth among adults, especially those in decision-making bodies. As a result, there is an increasing trend of youth opinions being considered during local decision-making. However, youth have yet to be fully accepted, as equal partners in decision-making where they equally participate in planning and implementation – to date youth are more active in implementing decisions. However, even if they do not actively participate in decision-making, they always offer their opinions/suggestions when asked.</p>

What changed in the context?	What other factor(s) could have contributed to the result?	What else would make this TOC successful?	Why?
<p>Increased participation of youth in the political sphere has helped reinforce the need for youth representation and provision of financial support to youth initiatives.</p>	<p>1. Only those adults who are familiar with the limited activities youth clubs/networks conduct have changed their perceptions towards them – the general community is still not completely receptive to the youth and their increased engagement in traditionally adult led roles. This suggests that there is poor visibility of youth leadership capabilities (pertaining to the limited number of activities they can conduct in the lack of adequate funds).</p> <p>2. Youth and adults both accept that there is need for generating a larger numbers of capable youth in order to ensure their acceptance and constructive roles in decision-making.</p>	<p>1. In this context, increasing visibility of youth capabilities by sponsoring more youth activities (increasing the amount, number and regularity of seed grant activities) – especially those that aim at cooperation and harmony.</p> <p>2. Further training on leadership and negotiation skills.</p> <p>3. More public debates on youth representation in decision-making should also be done by instigating public debates on these issues. Putting special emphasis on youth participation in community decisions and representation in decision-making bodies could eventually lead to them being accepted as equal partners by their elder counterparts.</p> <p>4. Involving more decision makers in capacity building training on youth and peacebuilding to orient them on the need of involving youth in decision making mechanisms and accelerating youth and local decision making bodies' collaboration.</p>	<p>1. Increasing youth visibility will contribute to increased acceptance of their role in community development, which will then increase acceptance of their role in decision-making as equal partners.</p> <p>2. Further training will add on to their leadership capabilities and help them negotiate better for support and stake in decision making.</p> <p>3. An increase in the awareness of the whole community on the importance of addressing youth issues, in addition to the overall community issues they already raise, could lead to wider acceptance of youth.</p>

Youth Action Nepal

TOC	Research Question(s)	How does the TOC contribute to the results above?	What is your evidence of the result being achieved?
<p>If we create more opportunities for young people then we can increase youth participation in community level peace initiatives.</p>	<p>What opportunities are provided by YOAC to enhance the participation of the youth at the community level peace building initiatives with respect to the proposed theory of change?</p> <p>Sub questions</p> <p>How has YOAC created more opportunities for youth at the community level? How have youth gotten involved in community level peace building initiatives?</p>	<p>A holistic peace process should be locally owned and should offer enough scope for the youth and the marginalized groups in the communities to engage them in the peace process Creation of enough opportunities for the youth to participate actively in local level peace building initiatives would change the perception of youth being portrayed as problem makers to becoming solution seekers. This breaking of stereotypes would help restore the existing broken social fabric, thus enabling the prerequisites for peaceful and non violent societies.</p>	<p>Youth at the local level have organized activities of different form included; cultural initiatives, public hearings, intergenerational dialogues, work camps and discussions and dialogues focusing peace building and conflict transformation.</p> <p>There has been a substantial increase in the representation of youth in local bodies (youth clubs, community user groups).</p> <p>The youth have taken the initiative to conduct intergenerational dialogues which have promoted the level of trust between the youth and adult members. Moreover, the youth are in constant collaboration with local I/NGOs to incept peace building initiatives together.</p> <p>There has been numerous instances that local disputes being resolved by the youth groups.</p>

Did the activities and lower level results add up to the needed result?	What changed in the context?	What other factor(s) could have contributed to the result?	What else would make this TOC successful?	Why?
<p>The TOC is placed on the middle of the hierarchy of results. Since the project is ongoing, it is still too early to evaluate how the TOC and hierarchy of results are cumulatively contributing to each other at the functional level. However there are enough evidences to demonstrate that the lower level activities are contributing to the TOC.</p>	<p>Nepal's fragile peace process, inter party disputes, and delay in constitution building process has created both apathy and frustration in the young people.</p>	<p>The initiatives by other youth organizations/ other organizations could have contributed to the results.</p> <p>The presence of several other organizations existing in the districts has contributed to the achievements of peace at the community level. Some of them include: PLAN Nepal, SFCG, Action Aid, USAID, United Nations etc.</p>	<p>Capacity building of youth on conflict mediation: During the process of the research, the respondents' concern was highly focused on building the capacity of young people to mediate local conflict issues. As most of the youth networks were not engaged in significant cases of conflict resolution.</p> <p>Communication strategy: It was also discovered in all the districts that YOAC should reach to wider range of young people of the districts. For this purpose, redefining and re-planning of communication channel, communication strategy is necessary in order to handle the conflicting situation.</p>	<p>In order to resolve the local conflicts, the young people should be provided with proper knowledge and skills on conflict mediation.</p> <p>Strong coordination amongst the members of the youth network is essential for increasing youth participation local level peace building initiatives. If a proper communication strategy is set up and there are channels of effective communication, it will help promoting youth participation.</p>

Annex 3

Research Team Member Organizations' Profile

ALLIANCE FOR PEACE

Alliance for Peace is a non-profit and non-governmental independent organisation working for a peaceful and democratic Nepal. It is a pioneer organisation working on political party reforms through democratisation of student and youth wings of political parties in Nepal. It was established in 2002 and working in different thematic areas such as strengthening democracy, protection and promotion of human rights, peacebuilding and conflict transformation, gender mainstreaming, social inclusion and conflict-sensitive approach as crosscutting issues. For further information, please visit: www.afpnepal.org

CARE Nepal

Care has been working in Nepal since 1978. It reaches out to the poor, vulnerable and socially excluded sections of society through local partners. It maintains formal and informal partnerships at multiple levels: with local NGOs, government agencies, communities, civil society groups, federations, networks and the private sector. CARE Nepal is currently working in partnership with over 80 local NGOs, 10 different networks and approximately 1,000 community-based organizations. For further information, please visit: www.carenepal.org

INTERNATIONAL ALERT

International Alert is an independent peacebuilding organisation working in over 20 countries. Its dual approach involves working directly with people affected by violent conflict as well as with government, EU and UN to bridge the gap between policy and practices in building sustainable peace. It has worked in Nepal since 2002, with a focus on developing local capacity for peace, particularly within the fields of community security, public security, access to justice, and economic recovery. For further information, please visit: www.international-alert.org

MINISTRY OF PEACE AND RECONSTRUCTION OF NEPAL

Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction was established in 2007 with the mandate to accomplish the functions assigned to the Peace Secretariat and other additional functions relating to reconstruction of physical infrastructure damaged during the conflict, relief and rehabilitation of the conflict victims, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, High Level Monitoring Committee, and management of Maoist combatants and the cantonments. The Ministry has envisioned formation of a peaceful, prosperous and new Nepal by ensuring social justice, equity and harmony among all sections of society. For further information, please visit: www.peace.gov.np

SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

Search for Common Ground works to transform the way the world deals with conflict—away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative problem-solving since 1982. It works with local partners to find culturally appropriate means to strengthen societies' capacity to deal with conflicts constructively: to understand the differences and act on the commonalities. In Nepal, SFCG established a full peacebuilding programme in 2006. The overall mandate of SFCG Nepal is to support Nepal's transition to peace and democracy. SFCG works to bring people together from across ethnic, caste and political dividing lines – all of which fuel conflict and threaten peace. For further information, please visit: www.sfcg.org

YOUTH ACTION Nepal

Youth Action Nepal (YOAC) is a leading youth NGO committed to working in the field of democracy, peace and social harmony. Since its establishment in 2003, YOAC educates, engages and empowers diverse youth in the nation-building process by making them responsible to contribute in the peace process. For further information, please visit: www.youthaction.org.np



CARE Nepal

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