

1. Peace Building and Recovery



Supporting the peace process: building and consolidating peace

On the peace building front, Nepal faced many challenges in 2007 in implementing the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of the Arms and Armies (AMMAA). These challenges included establishing mechanisms to involve marginalised groups in the implementation of the agreements, developing initiatives to address the future of the security sector, ensuring overall improvements in the law and order and human rights situation, and mobilising resources for the implementation of the CPA.

Another major challenge was to ensure an appropriate atmosphere for elections to a Constituent Assembly (CA) to draft a new Constitution, which would be the first-ever constitution drafted by democratically elected representatives from all parts of the country. The challenges increased when the CA election was twice postponed. At the same time, urgent action was needed to rebuild damaged infrastructure and restore and expand the basic service delivery systems destroyed during the conflict, as well as to rehabilitate the people who were displaced or otherwise affected during the insurgency.

UNDP's response

To help respond to some of these challenges, UNDP established a Peace Building and Recovery Unit in early 2007, with four main focus areas: Recovery and Reintegration; Constitution Building Support; Electoral Assistance; and Peace-building. The major donors supporting this initiative were Britain, Norway and Switzerland. The UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) supported the work of this cluster through financial contributions and advisory and technical support.

UNDP introduced a series of peace-support activities and continued to place a major emphasis on reaching communities to foster grassroots reconciliation through development.

Support to registration and verification of Maoist army personnel

Key support was provided to UNMIN to design and implement a comprehensive strategy to register and verify the Maoist army, and their weapons, and to

TABLE 1: UNDP support to peace building in 2007

Project	Expenditure (Funding Partners)	Focus
Assistance to the Peace Process in Nepal	US\$ 1,730,000 (DFID, UNDP/BCPR, UN Peace Fund)	Support to UNMIN for verification of Maoist army personnel, registration and storage of Maoist and NA weapons, development of an effective strategy for maintenance of cantonment sites, and technical support for the Government's Peace Trust Fund.
Support to Constitution Building Process in Nepal	US\$ 771,800 (DFID, SDC, Norway, UNDP/BCPR,)	Developing the capacities and readiness of key national actors and the public at large to participate in a successful constitution building process, and provide immediate support to the Election Commission.
Participation in Peace and Constitution Building	US\$ 880,800 (UNDP/BCPR)	Empowering people from traditionally excluded communities to engage meaningfully in peace and constitution-building process.
Quick Impact and Peace Support Initiatives (QIPSI)	US\$ 1,446,400 (UNDP)	Providing tangible and immediate livelihood benefits to the poor and excluded communities in conflict-affected areas of the Terai.

Box 1: UNDP support to registration and verification of Maoist Army Personnel

Subsequent to the cantonment of the Maoist army in 7 main and 21 satellite cantonments, a team of 12 experts from UNDP Afghanistan's New Beginning Programme and 9 from Rwanda's Discharge and Reintegration Programme was brought to Nepal at a very short notice in early January 2007 to assist UNMIN with the design and management of the registration and verification process, and to train 45 national staff to undertake the process. In February 2007, 75 staff (15% women) - 21 international and 54 national - were deployed to assist in the assessment of the status, to register verified personnel's biographic details, and provide documentation and analysis of the verification process. UNDP's DREAM software, specially designed for post-conflict discharge operations, was tailored to suit the needs of the Nepal process.

The team worked closely with UNMIN's arms monitors, a professional military physician, and experts from UNICEF to identify minors and late recruits through extensive interviews conducted between June 19 and December 23, 2007. Out of the initially registered 31,318 combatants, 19,602 were verified (comprising 15,756 men and 3,846 women). Of the remaining combatants, 8,640 did not appear for the verification and were automatically disqualified while 2,973 were identified as minors under the age of 18 and 1,035 as late recruits.

facilitate the lock-up of an equivalent number of Nepal Army weapons as part of the agreement. The successful registration of Maoist combatants and UN monitored storage of weapons, completed in February 2007, helped pave the way for inclusion of the CPN (Maoist) into the Interim Government (Box 1).

Establishment of peace funds

A major challenge for the implementation of the CPA was funding. At the request of the Ministry of Finance, UNDP provided technical assistance to the Government's initiative of establishing a *Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF)* to help mobilise and coordinate development partners' financial support to various projects related to the implementation of the peace agreements.

To enable the funding of peace support activities which fall outside the parameters of the NPTF, a *UN Peace Fund for Nepal* was established in 2007. UNDP deployed a Trust Fund expert to assist in the design and establishment of both these funds. While the UN Peace Fund is administered by UNDP's Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office in New York, the Executive Board in charge of reviewing and approving proposals is composed of Government, UN and donors meeting locally in Kathmandu.

Support to constitution building

As preparation for the CA election and constitution drafting process, a UNDP Constitutional Advisory Support Unit was set up in late 2006 to help build the understanding and readiness of key national actors and

the public at large to participate actively in the constitution building process.

- Advice and expert technical support on constitution building, federalism and post-conflict systems of government were provided to political leaders, civil society groups, Government officials and other key players, resulting in improved understanding of critical constitutional issues in advance of the establishment of Constituent Assembly.
- 5 national conferences were organised on issues central to the constitution building process: Constitution Making in Nepal; Restructuring and Federalism; Human Rights, Diversity and Social Justice; Justice Systems; and Systems of Government. They were widely attended by civil society groups, politicians, parliamentarians, and Government officials. National and international experts contributed to animated discussions and stakeholders' awareness and understanding of these issues to enable them to play a stronger role during the constitution drafting process.
- Technical and financial support was provided for the planning and organization of 5 regional Dalit workshops to promote awareness, debate and understanding about issues related to Dalit inclusion in the new constitution. This led to the production of a Dalit Charter which was presented to the Prime Minister during the national conference. The charter will be one of the reference documents during the constitution drafting process.
- Public information materials on a variety of constitutional themes were produced, translated and widely distributed, including a bilingual version of the Interim Constitution. In

addition, constitution building related books and materials were distributed to 50 libraries and institutions, across the country.

- A constitution building website www.undp.org.np/constitutionbuilding with thousands of key documents, resources and links was launched in December 2007 in an effort to increase public access to and knowledge about the development of a new constitution.

Support to the Election Commission

- Provided a range of specialist technical experts to support the work of the Election Commission in its preparation for the CA elections, in close collaboration with UNMIN.
- Helped establish an *Electoral Observation Resource Centre* in the run up to the CA elections in order to provide training and assistance to domestic and international election observers.
- Supported the Election Commission in drafting a long-term capacity development strategy to enhance the capacity of electoral institutions. This strategy is expected to be implemented after the CA elections, rescheduled to April 2008.

Promoting participation in peace at the local level

July 2007 saw the beginning of a unique peace-building collaboration between UNDP-supported Community Based Organizations, local community radios and the BBC World Service Trust as part of UNDP's *Participation in Peace* project. The main objective of this initiative was to empower people from traditionally-excluded communities to engage meaningfully in peace and constitution-building processes through interactive radio programmes targeting 25,000 community organisations in 66 of Nepal's 75 districts.

The first phase of the project focused on the production of a weekly radio discussion programme *Sajha Sawal* (Common Questions) between a live audience composed of local people and civil society representatives and leading Nepali politicians (Box 2).

A new grassroots *Quick Impact and Peace Support Initiative (QIPSI)* was launched in October 2007 to bring immediate benefits in the most vulnerable and marginalised communities of 10 conflict-affected districts of the Tarai, especially for youth, women, indigenous nationalities, Dalits and religious minorities. This initiative provided support for community infrastructure, micro-enterprise development and disaster mitigation.

Box 2: *Sajha Sawal* (Common Questions)

Sajha Sawal has featured interviews and Q&A of senior political party leaders with the active participation of a live audience composed of local people from UNDP-supported community groups. These interviews were broadcast through a network of 70 community radios, the BBC Nepali Service and on television.

By the end of December 2007, six such interviews had been broadcast. During these interviews, local people, many of whom would never have had the opportunity to question or speak with senior political leaders, presented their concerns, fears, priorities, and questions about the peace process to the most powerful politicians in the country including the Prime Minister, Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, General Secretary of CPN-UML Madhav Kumar Nepal and Maoist Chairman Prachanda.

Vision for 2008 and beyond

While Nepal has made significant progress towards a resolution of the conflict, critical challenges remain or will need to be addressed during 2008 if this progress is to lead to a durable peace. UNDP, in close collaboration and coordination with the national and international partners, is ready to support the National Goal of *Peace Building* and the UNDAF outcome of *Consolidating Peace* in a number of areas including:

- Supporting Nepal's new Constitution drafting.
- Raising awareness and participation of the public, especially women and other under-represented and excluded segments of the Nepali society on electoral and democratic processes for Constitution making.
- Supporting to capacity development of the Election Commission.
- Supporting to concerned Ministries, Commissions and Committees in the implementation of the CPA.
- Supporting to developing a strategy for reintegration of ex-combatants and those affected by the conflict, taking into consideration the specific needs of women as highlighted by UN Security Council Resolution 1325. ■