

3. Building peace

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (November 2006) and the Agreement on Monitoring the Management of Arms and Armies (AMMAA — December 2006) marked the formal end of 10 years of violent conflict between the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and Nepal's Government. The conflict disrupted life across the nation and hindered development progress. The main 2008 progress on the peace process was the successful holding of the Constituent Assembly elections, the election of the most representative assembly in Nepal's history and the assembly beginning work to write the new constitution.

There was, however, only mixed progress on many other parts of the peace process. Box 2 lists the main challenges to peace building during 2008, all of which remain in early 2009.

Box 2: The main challenges to sustaining the peace process in 2008 and 2009

- **Completing the constitution drafting process on time, while ensuring meaningful popular participation.**
- **Addressing uncertainty about what model of federalism to introduce and how to meet the competing demands of different groups through state restructuring.**
- **Extending the benefits of the peace process to marginalised groups.**
- **Negotiating with new agitating groups to reverse the increased prevalence of local conflict, particularly in the Terai.**
- **Enhancing the limited Government capacity to implement the peace agreements.**
- **Dealing with the uncertainty around the future of the Maoist combatants, as planning for integration and rehabilitation continue to be delayed.**

UNDP's response

Eighteen percent of 2008 expenditure went on the peace building initiatives described in this chapter. Assistance was channelled through the Assistance to the Peace Process in Nepal and the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Support to Nepal projects (see Table 1). This support included helping the Government run its Nepal Peace Trust Fund (Box 3). Support for constitution building was delivered by the SCBP, PiP and INSPIRE projects (all completed in 2008), and the on-going Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal project (see Table 2). At the request of the donor community UNDP also played a leading role in coordinating support for the constitution making process.

Chapter 2 describes how almost all the projects we supported in 2008 contribute in one way or another to consolidating peace by building up local democracy, improving people's livelihoods and providing more opportunities at the local level. Support specifically aimed at promoting women's involvement in building peace is described in Box 5.

Supporting the peace process

Verification and preparations for discharge — The landmark achievement of UNDP's support to the peace process in 2007 was the verification of the Maoist army's personnel. This process was carried out under the direction of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) with the last of the 30,852 personnel and their 3,428 weapons being processed in December 2007. In all 19,594 Maoist personnel were verified as Maoist combatants and 4,008 minors and late recruits were disqualified according to the criteria set out in the 2006 AMMAA. In 2008 the results of the verification process were entered into a database and UNDP prepared identification cards for the Maoist army

Table 1: UNDP support to the peace process in 2008

Project	Duration — all phases (implementor)	2008 expenditure (donors)	Status/focus
Assistance to the Peace Process in Nepal (APPN)	Jan 07–Aug 09 (UNDP)	\$1,581,536 (UNDP, UNPFN, DFID, BCPR, Norway)	Provided technical support to the Government to verify Maoist combatants and assisted the Government to set up and manage the Nepal Peace Trust Fund, conduct a capacity assessment of MoPR and other key aspects of the peace process.
Crisis Prevention and Recovery Support to Nepal (CPRSN)	May 08–Apr 09 (UNDP)	\$207,604 (BCPR, UNDP)	Supporting MoPR to develop the national strategy for local peace committees and UNDP to develop new peace initiatives.

personnel and the disqualified recruits. During the year, the registration team also assisted the UNMIN arms monitors to re-assess Maoist army weapons and ammunition in the 28 cantonment sites, and replace barcodes on all the weapons.

At the request of UNMIN and the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, UNDP went on to prepare for discharge and reintegration into civilian life of those verified as minors and post-May 2007 recruits. Our Assistance to the Peace Process project (APPN) developed a series of plans and guidelines to assist Government preparations for discharge, building on the knowledge and experience from the registration and verification. The project also identified and assessed potential service providers to provide

training, equipment and counselling to discharges and, working with UNFPA and UNICEF, helped develop gender-sensitive and youth-sensitive reintegration strategies to ensure that the reintegration packages can be easily tailored to suit the disqualified personnel, many of whom are young women.

With the scaling down of UNMIN, UNDP also took over a number of important functions to support arms monitoring including administering the contracts of 29 personnel to provide logistics and security support to UNMIN's arms monitors in the cantonments and Kathmandu. UNDP continue to manage and update the Maoist army database whilst the UNDP reintegration team provided analysis and reporting to support the arms monitors.

Box 3: Nepal Peace Trust Fund

In 2007 UNDP provided advisory and technical support to help the Government set up the Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF). Since then the fund has successfully mobilised more than \$100 million with over \$30 million from bilateral donors (DFID, SDC, Finland, Norway and Denmark) and \$70 million from the Government. In 2008 the funds went to build and run the camps for Maoist combatants, assist internally displaced persons, organise the Constituent Assembly elections and other peace process priorities.

The NPTF is the first multi-donor trust fund managed by a national government. UNDP's continued advisory and logistical support to the fund helped it overcome some of the planning and capacity development challenges it faced during the year. Two developments in particular led to the fund attracting increased support and new donors in 2008. First, since July 2008 all NPTF contributions have been channelled through the Government's budget. This has increased the transparency and accountability of the fund as all expenditure is subject to inspection by the Auditor General's Office and parliament. Second, the relocation of the NPTF Secretariat to the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction places the fund under the control of the ministry responsible for the practical implementation of many important parts of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. This ministry is well placed to decide on what initiatives to prioritise and to follow-up on project implementation.



IMAGE 3.1: Nepal Peace Trust Fund workshop

Strengthening the architecture of peace — One of the main bottlenecks to the implementation of the peace process has been the limited capacity and resources available to the institutions tasked with managing and implementing the process. The Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) is the apex peace building body, established in April 2007 with wide-ranging responsibilities.

UNDP has developed a strong working partnership with the ministry and in 2008 supported it to:

- strengthen its new high level Peace and Conflict Management Committee (PCMC), thus enabling the committee to carry out its mandate of maintaining peace and stability, especially during the sensitive Constituent Assembly election campaigning period;
- develop a national strategy for supporting the establishment and effective functioning of local peace committees; and
- carry out a self-assessment that led to the ministry identifying its personnel training needs and the technical and material support needed to successfully oversee implementation of the peace agreements.

Constitution building

A new constitution that brings Nepal's traditionally excluded groups into the political and social mainstream is crucial for the fundamental resolution of the conflict and to prevent new insurgencies erupting in the future. In 2008 UNDP supported the four projects listed in Table 2, which have raised awareness amongst the general public and fostered debate among the general public, technical experts and civil society representatives on important constitutional issues.



IMAGE 3.2: Constituent Assembly in session

Table 2: UNDP support to constitution building in 2008

Project	Duration — all phases (implementor)	2008 expenditure (donors)	Status/focus
Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal (SPCBN)	May 08–Dec 10 (UNDP)	\$1,274,266 (UNDP, Denmark, Norway, BCPR, DFID)	Supporting the Constituent Assembly to enable the participation of all sectors of society in drafting the new constitution.
Participation in Peace & Constitution-Building Project (PiP)	Jul 07–Nov 08 (UNDP)	\$949,031 (BCPR, UNDP, DFID)	Ran a series of TV and radio broadcast debates (<i>Sajha Sawal</i>) and an award winning radio drama, which raised awareness about the Constituent Assembly, elections, the restructuring of the state and Government accountability. The project also developed the capacity of 63 community radio stations to broadcast similar programmes.
INSPIRE: Reconciliation and Democracy Building	Apr 07–Dec 08 Equal Access	\$332,500 (UNDEF)	UNDP administered UNDEF funding for producing and broadcasting 52 local dialogues on democracy, human rights and reconciliation across a network of 40 radio stations.
Support to Constitution Building Process in Nepal (SCBP)	Nov 06–Apr 08 (UNDP)	\$285,363 (DFID, BCPR, SDC, Norway, UNDP)	Increased awareness and debate about the elections and the constitution drafting process in the lead up to the April elections.

Participatory constitution building

Over the course of 2008 UNDP supported the Government at critical stages of the constitution building process.

Pre-election — The Support to Constitution Building Process in Nepal project (SCBP, Nov 06–Apr 08) fostered informed debate about key constitutional issues through a series of national conferences, seminars and debates, publications and a website in the lead up to the elections.

This support included facilitating eight high level meetings for representative groups from Madhesi, Janajati, Dalit and disability rights organisations. These meetings with constitutional experts informed them about the options for constitution making and how they could influence the new constitution as well as providing forums for them to develop common positions. An example of this from the previous year was published in 2008 as the Kathmandu Charter of Dalit Rights summarised the Dalit agenda for the new constitution.

SCBP's publications informed opinions and provided important reference materials. The outcomes of project-sponsored meetings and key thematic reports were published and widely disseminated in 2008 (see Box 4).

Election support — in 2007–2008 UNDP supported the important task of managing the many observers who helped ensure the largely fair conduct of the elections. The APPN project supported the Election Commission to set

up and run its Electoral Observer Resource Centre. This centre compiled a database of observers and accredited and briefed the 14,847 domestic observers and 856 international observers who attended the elections.

Constitution writing — The great desire of the Nepali people for change led to the Nepali electorate voting in by far the most diverse and representative parliament in the country's history. The electoral process, which was supported by awareness-raising initiatives from UNDP and other donors, culminated in 32% women, 8% Dalit and 23% Madhesi membership of the Constituent Assembly, amounting to over five times more representation for these groups than in the previous (1999) parliament. This provides a very promising framework for producing a new constitution that mainstreams the concerns of Nepal's women and marginalised groups.

UNDP is helping Nepal realise this promise. UNDP launched its Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal project (SPCBN) as the new assembly sat for its first session in May 2008. In 2008, the project began to support the assembly to carry out its mandate and to inform and involve the public in constitution making. It carried out a baseline assessment of the Constituent Assembly secretariat and the assembly to identify needs and the type of training, equipment and other support that the project could provide. Soon after, the project provided advisory support and planning and budgeting assistance, refurbished the assembly's secretariat, committee offices and meeting rooms and provided transport assistance for the new thematic committees.



IMAGE 3.3: Democratic dialogue taking place in Dang district

The project began to engage with assembly members at five orientation workshops, which were attended by 42 female and 58 male assembly members from the most disadvantaged communities. A series of informal and formal meetings were run for all 601 assembly members. The project continued the work of the SCBP project by producing and disseminating reference material on key constitution building issues (see Box 4).

Box 4: SCBP and SPCBN publications in 2008

The following new publications were distributed to Constituent Assembly members, civil societies, libraries, INGOs, donors and UN agencies.

- Booklets on the state and religions, federalism, human rights, and systems of government in the Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tharu, Tamang, Magar, Newari, Nepali and English languages.
- The books *Dalits of Nepal and a new Constitution*, *Designing the Federal State in Nepal* and *Towards a New Nepal through Cartoonist's eyes*.
- Updated bilingual versions of the Interim Constitution including the amendments.



IMAGE 3.4: Kathmandu Dalit Declaration and Interim Constitution

The project also continued to support civil society organisations as vehicles for increasing the general public's knowledge of constitution-making and informing the public's views on key issues and processes in the making of the new constitution. This involved supporting conferences on corruption and the federal system, the management of water resources in a federal system, the rights of the disabled in the new constitution, and providing technical guidance for civil society organisations.

The Centre for Constitutional Dialogue (CCD) opened its doors in January 2009. Preparatory work in 2008 located suitable premises close to the assembly and equipped the centre to a high standard ready to provide information, facilities, and venues for training courses and for promoting dialogue on the new constitution. Since then most of the project's activities have been run from the centre.

Box 5: 2008 support for gender equality and women's empowerment from the peace building projects

- Under APPN a gender-sensitive strategy for the discharge and reintegration of ex-combatants was prepared.
- The SPCBN project produced a strategy for supporting women and members from excluded groups in the Constituent Assembly and provided training on constitution-building processes. A strategy was also produced to engage civil society that represents women and other excluded groups in constitution building.



IMAGE 3.5: Women and men from rural community participate in Sajha Sawal - 'common questions', dialogue between politicians and people

Radio is recognised as the best communication medium to reach the largest number of people in Nepal. In 2008 two UNDP-supported radio programmes raised awareness about the pressing issues for ending conflict, building peace, improving governance and writing the new constitution.

- ***Sajha Sawal*** — The first episode of *Sajha Sawal* (Common Questions) was broadcast in November 2007. Since then this weekly programme has attracted large audiences across the BBC Nepali Service, a network of 56 FM stations, Radio Nepal and Kantipur TV. Each show is broadcast live with a leading politician taking unscripted questions from an audience usually made up of members of community groups from UNDP-supported projects. The episodes have seen ordinary Nepalis hold politicians accountable in front of hundreds of thousands of listeners. UNDP supported the programme under its Participation in Peace and Constitution-Building Project (PiP) until November 2008 when it was incorporated into the SPCBN project as part of a wider community outreach strategy. This component also supported community radio stations to develop home-grown talent for producing similar democratic accountability programmes. It provided on-the-job training for 13 producers, training on radio station management and financial and programme administration for 56 stations and recording and broadcasting equipment to 63 FM stations and Radio Nepal.
- ***Katha Mitho Sarangiko*** — The same project (PiP) produced and broadcast the radio drama *Katha Mitho Sarangiko* (Sweet Tales of the Sarangi). This drama was aired on Sunday evenings from February tracking the adventures of a roving traditional musician (*a gandharba*) as he travelled around Nepal with his musical instrument (*sarangi*). His encounters with people from different communities provide a fitting way to explore the social and political tensions and conflicts challenging Nepal's peace process and society. The programme's format captured the attention of a large audience about sensitive peace-related issues, such as inter-caste relations and the treatment of women.

In 2009

In 2009 we will continue to support the Government to respond to the many challenges it faces to implement the peace process. The Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal project is expected to continue to play a major role in facilitating the involvement of all sectors of



IMAGE 3.6: In 2009, the radio drama *Katha Mitho Sarangiko* won the prestigious BBC Global Reith Award, which was presented to the project team by Sir David Attenborough in London. Fiona, the editor of the show receiving the award.

society and especially disadvantaged groups in shaping the new constitution. The project will also continue producing radio and TV programmes and other forms of outreach to encourage participation in constitution writing.

Depending on political developments, UNDP expects to launch several new initiatives to support key parts of the peace process. Preparations are well advanced to support the reintegration and rehabilitation of the 4,008 Maoist combatants who were verified as minors and late recruits. Other support will go to strengthening the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (based on the findings of the self-assessment), the national peace commissions, and local peace committees. We will also continue to support the management of the Nepal Peace Trust Fund.