

FACT SHEET

Democracy and Governance Program Sambad: Dialogue for Peace

Addressing conflict in local communities.

The decade long armed conflict in Nepal caused thousands of human rights violations. Many of these abuses pitted neighbor against neighbor and community against community. As the Nepal peace process moved forward, there was a need to focus on community level issues where there happened to be significant levels of strife and confrontation over politics and ideology. After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed, the Government of Nepal (GoN) created various peace mechanisms including Local Peace Committees (LPCs), Village Local Peace Committees (VLPCs) as well as the Interim Relief Program (IRP) as ways to resolve conflict, promote agreement and cooperate toward common objectives. However, there are still the mental scars left by the conflict, on the one hand, and the need to move on, on the other. Poverty, inequality and social prejudice are still key factors that create difficulties with regard to victims' access to justice and other public services. In addition, there is lack of trust among victims over the government's peace support mechanisms. Rebuilding trust in institutions and within communities is key to contribute to strengthening rule of law and meaningful community participation which has a direct impact on the peace building process.



Photo: Sumitra Manandhar

Community members in Rupandehi to discuss on Sambad project

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Sambad: Dialogue for Peace is a three-year, \$ 1.15 million project that seeks to promote peace by building mutual trust and social harmony among conflicting groups. The project, part of the larger USAID/ Nepal Conflict Management and Mitigation Program, is implemented in 37 Village Development Committees (VDCs) of two Terai districts in the western region of Nepal. Sambad is implemented by Care Nepal in partnership with the GoN's Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) and local organizations.

The project enlists "Key People" such as political leaders, Local Peace Committees and Village Local Peace Committees representatives, Peace Building Facilitators, woman activists, and potential peace spoilers to link into "More People" such as social networks, community user groups, women's groups, and faith-based organizations to promote interaction between and among conflicting groups and help resolve conflict by communicating through personal contact and identifying common ground. As a result, interpersonal and intergroup relations are expected to improve.

SNAPSHOT

Life of Project: August 2013 to May 2016

Goal: A consolidated peace process in two districts in Nepal.

Implementing Partner: Care Nepal

Geographic Focus: Rupandehi and Nawalparashi (lower plains bordering India)

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Increase conflict affected communities' access to Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction benefits such as access to counselling, skills training, and resource information and services. The project connects victims' groups to the peace building mechanisms and programs as well as strengthening and capacity building of Local Peace Committees and local organizations to mitigate conflict.
- Improve reconciliation between and among conflicting groups and individuals using safe spaces for dialogue along with connecting key people with more people (people to people or P2P approach). This improves relationships between and among conflicting parties and reduces the risk of conflict.
- Increase conflict affected families' income through assistance in finding job opportunities, skills development, and providing access to credit for small enterprise. The training plays a catalytic role in building healthy relationships among conflicting parties.

KEY RESULTS

- Conflict affected communities' increased access to Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction benefits and services including an understanding of the peace building policy and process, peace mechanisms, and programs.
- Reconciliation between conflicting groups and individuals improved using safe spaces for dialogue and the P2P approach.
- Conflict affected families' income increased through job opportunities, the revolving fund, and livelihood support.

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