

Field Visit Report



Nepal Peace Trust Fund Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation

Singha Durbaar, Kathmandu
Nepal

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Monitoring Team Members:

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Date	Activity	Programme/Project title:	Districts/VDCs visited	Participants
11 July	Interaction with community/police post	Police Project	Melamchi	Monitoring Team
11 July	Interaction with CDO and LPC Chair	LPC Project	Chautara	Monitoring Team
11 July	Interaction Election Commission Officials	EC Support Project	Chautara	Monitoring Team
12 July	Interaction with conflict victims	CDECF Project, UNPFN	Kunchok	Monitoring Team, community members and NGO representatives
13 July	Interaction with community/police post and external monitoring members	Police Project	Mangaltar	Team members
13 July	Meeting with School of Law (KSL)	UNPFN Project	Dadhikot VDC, Bhaktapur	Team members and KSL representatives

Purpose of the visit:

1. The joint GoN-Donor and UNPFN monitoring visit took place from 11th July to 13th July 2011. This is the second time a joint visit combining the monitoring of both NPTF and UNPFN project has been conducted. The team visited NPTF and UNPFN funded projects in Sindhupalchowk, Kavre and Bhaktapur districts. These included: Melamchi Police Post, Mangaltar Police Post, District Election Office, Conflict Affected Victims and Conflict Affected projects funded by the UNPFN.
2. During the visit the team met with the GON officers, community members, conflict victims, youths, and police. This was a good range of people, and comparatively this visit noticed a significant number of women representatives.
3. The team consisted of representatives from; NPTF, EU, GIZ, DFID, UNPF, German Embassy and French Embassy.

Mission Findings

Project 1 - Reconstruction of Police Units:

Activity: Visit to Melamchi (Sindhupalchowk) and Mangaltar (Kavre) Police Post and Meetings with Chief of District Police and Community Members.

Mission findings:

4. The Police Post in reconstruction was one of the 728 destroyed (partially or totally) during the civil war. Until now, the security of the village in Melamchi was never insured in a constant way, they alternated with rented place (few policemen for a short period) and a total absence of security (policemen tended to follow the move of banks).

The team visited Melamchi Police Posts, the first in Sindhupalchowk, the second in Kavre. The construction was, in both cases, nearly finished. In both locations, the monitoring team met with the police and the community representatives. While it consisted of a joint meeting in Kavre, in Melamchi the team had separate meetings. The latter is to be recommended.

In Melamchi the general idea was to rebuild the police post at the same place as the previous one. No preliminary studies have been made, and they are already facing the problem of rock falls on the back of the building. It appears as a real consensus on the necessity to build this post: the community confessed that they feel safer. This construction allowed increasing the work possibility for people there, the entrepreneur having tried to favour materials and local workforce.

5. Both the districts are considered as highly affected areas during the time of the insurgency. Considerable numbers of police posts were destroyed during the time of the conflict and the presence of security forces was highly sporadic.

6. Community relations and involvement appear to be good in both cases. In both the places community representatives expressed their satisfaction of the process and how the local community has been involved. In Mangaltar, the community representatives explained how the relationship had been good during the construction. The community was involved in monitoring the process and were advised and were informed about the selection of the local contractor. Both communities appear to be satisfied with getting the police posts placed in their area. There is a greater sense of security due to the constant availability of Police personnel.

7. The communities in Melamchi identified the biggest security problems as domestic violence, alcoholism and associated problems, property division amongst children and trafficking of women. While the biggest security issues facing in Mangaltar are fighting over small issues and gangs, but this APO had been selected for reconstruction because of the high number of police that had been killed there during the conflict.

8. They had been involved in monitoring the construction process. They were generally happy with the work but they had noticed that the contractor was not following the plans. As a result the contractor had been obliged to re-do the work. The construction committee in Mangaltar again were vigilant during the building process and were generally happy with the quality of work. The in-charge had noticed that the sand was substandard and required the contractor to replace it with sand of decent quality. However, this can't be relied on in all construction work, it was lucky that he happened to be knowledgeable about construction.

9. In Melamchi land had been provided by two local community members. However, it was not clear if the land had been sold or given. The original owners seemed to have no issues with their land being used.

10. Some concerns were raised about the lack of quarters for married couples as this meant that those with families stayed elsewhere and so were not available all the time.

11. The lack of canteen in the new structure was also raised as a concern as it was felt that provision of a canteen would encourage police to stay in the building. Similarly the design of the police post did not include a draining water system as a result leading to a drinking water problem now resolved through a parallel system.

12. The District Police in Charge noted that in the next phase, feasibility studies should be conducted in advance of building and a longer term perspective should be taken. The plot selected at Mangal Tar was too small and left no room for expansion that would be needed as a result of the increasing population. He also said that the NP should consult with local bodies to understand what they wanted, rather than taking a one-size fits all approach. He also noted that a kitchen was needed.

13. The community expressed the fact that the returning of the police in the area increased their feeling of security. However, the correlation between the building of the police post and policing activities would need to be further looked at.

14. From our own observations, it seemed that this was not the best site as the police post was on raised ground with a steep sloped hill close to it.

15. In Mangaltar we observed the external monitoring team conducting a social audit, as well as visiting the APO. Whilst the social audit took a while to warm up, it seemed to be relatively interactive. However, it is hard to comment on the process as our monitoring team, because of its size, was slightly intimidating and will have affected the course of the meeting. If possible, we would suggest that the audits are held in a bigger space and less formally.

16. The DSP was new and had not been involved in the tendering. He said that 15 tenders received, of which 6 were invited to compete.

17. The DSP said that the community participation element should be dropped. People were too poor to contribute, many lacking access to water, and that this put too much pressure on them. However, the team noticed significant amount of contribution from local business community.

He identified 10 police buildings that urgently needed reconstruction in the district. He particularly identified Deurali and Katike as needing reconstruction. It seems that the main criteria for sorting out

which post should be renovated first, is the level of destruction of the former posts but not the frequency or recurrence of security incidents even after the cease-fire.

Activity – 2 Meeting with the CDO of Sindhupalchowk district

18. We met with the CDO who had recently moved to the district. Originally 302 people were identified as IDPs but after further outreach, as a result of successive new governments, an additional 2850 had registered.

19. 281 of the original 302 had received compensation. Money remains to compensate the rest of the 302 but no-one else. The 21 yet to claim payments are senior Maoist leaders and will not collect compensation.

20. Verification of the 2850 is being done through the VDCs. The revised list will be sent back for review by an all-party mechanisms at the DDC level. In few cases the risk of manifold registration is possible.

21. Establishment of the LPC has been delayed because of political disagreement about who should chair the LPC. It was formed four months ago, ensuring an inclusive representation and will now also help screen applications.

22. It remains to be seen how active the LPC will be, although they are planning to work on peace messaging and possibly dispute resolution.

23. Additionally, information sharing sessions have been conducted and 18 LPC s were created at the VDC level.

24. The CDO also acknowledged to the monitoring team that a significant number of the conflict victims lack information regarding the relief packages offered by the government. This problem is more pertinent among the disability/injury and property damage subgroups of the victims.

25. The CDO appreciated the role of LPCs in identifying and recommending conflict victims for reparation. He argued that since the victim groups are well organised no political influence has been experienced in recommendations made by the LPCs for compensation.

26. Limited information was made available on the number and status of the Conflict Affected persons.

Project 2 Activity – 3 Election Commission Support Project in Sindhupalchowk

27. They have already covered the 79 VDCs in the district with 152 registration centres. This has had to be done in only 2 months because of delays caused by disagreements between political parties about the nominated enumerators.

28. Many people were missing when they carried out the registration, although people can come to the district office as a stop-gap arrangement.

29. Officials said it would have been better to have two teams working together issuing citizenship cards and registering voters, but even where people had not been able to register, the visits had raised awareness.

30. Additionally, it was suggested that a second voter registration process be conducted using a cluster approach (grouping VDC s) to enable people more people from the district to register.

31. People were generally not very positive about voting but had registered because they were worried that failure to do so would prevent them from claiming allowances (teachers may be entitled to pension) and getting National ID cards.

32. The office had been well supported by the ECN centrally.

33. The outreach and awareness-raising about voter registration and citizenship cards has been weak. The EC expresses concern about the lack of interest the political parties are showing. The parties do cooperate, but are not active in outreach.

34. The EC especially pointed out that they had no capacity to do problem solving on the system for voter registration, therefore training for this purpose should be enhanced, it was stated that the underlying assumption on computer literacy while designing the programme had been too high.

Project 3 Activity – 4 UNPF Project

Project 3 - Support to Conflict Affected Victims

Source of funding	UNPFN
Implementing Agencies	Community Development and Environment Conservation Forum, Sindhupalchowk through OHCHR's "Peace through Justice" project.
Total approved budget	US \$ 12,740
Status	Completed
Project description	The goal of the project is to contribute to a successful transitional justice process in Nepal through victim documentation and awareness raising initiatives.
Peace-building Impact	1) To improve awareness and capacity of marginalized, vulnerable and conflict affected communities on transitional justice. 2) To develop conflict victim's profile so that collective efforts could be made to ensure justice to the conflict victims.
Project Outcome(s) relevant to field visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased awareness on transitional justice among conflict victims and other marginalized communities• 6 village level Peace and Justice Alliances established as victims referral mechanisms to support the local conflict victims at the local level for accessing justice

35. The project had provided a forum for conflict-affected people to discuss issues and guidance had been provided by project staff on how to access services. This had included helping people to document their cases and work through the official channels.

36. This support was recognized as helpful to receive information on the compensation process.

37. Four people in the village had applied for compensation.

38. Community members raised the issue that there was no compensation for those who had been beaten or lost property.

39. Besides compensation, employment and scholarships were raised by the victims as key needs.

40. Victims expressed divergent opinions as to the sequencing between compensation and justice.

41. The community visited remains fragmented since the conflict and reconciliation efforts should complement the compensation process.

42. The VDC secretary and previously elected officials were not resident in the area. One woman, who was proposed as the female candidate, was present.

Activity 5 - Peace through Justice: Support to Transitional Justice

Source of funding	UNPFN
Implementing Agencies	Kathmandu School of Law through OHCHR's "Peace through Justice" project.
Total approved budget	US \$ 15,170
Status	Completed
Project objective	To promote transitional justice and combat impunity in Nepal by enlarging the circle of awareness among general people, students and youths about transitional justice and its relationship with democracy, good governance, human rights and rule of law.
Peacebuilding Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop and publish a demystified literacy booklet on 'transitional justice' and a training manual for transitional justice and impunity • To prepare a group of youth students to spread awareness on and advocate for transitional justice and speak against impunity
Project Outcome(s) relevant to field visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a literacy booklet on 'transitional justice' and training manual on transitional justice and impunity • At least eight thousand students, youths and teachers are informed through public advocacy and education campaign about transitional justice and impunity in the society and encouraged to address the problems.

43. The project focused on creating awareness of youth on transitional justice preparing youths to stand up against impunity through 1/civic education on issues of transitional justice and reconciliation training and 2/the development of a booklet on transitional justice and a training manual on transitional justice and impunity.

44. 36 KSL students were trained which in turn trained 500 students in schools (public and private) which in conducted awareness raising and advocacy activities with their peers reaching out to 85,000 students.

45. The trained youths have expressed not only their enthusiasm with the project but also how the project has increased their knowledge and capacity with regards to transitional justice and more broadly about the decade long conflict and the need for developing a democratic and secure society that operates by the rule of law.

46. Efforts were made by the students to reach out to kids from public schools and rural areas within the project scope noting that further reach out efforts in this direction are needed.

47. In terms of sustainability, KSL has included in Transitional Justice component to its programme to reach out to new groups of student as well as created a focus group of beneficiaries of the project scheduled to meet every other month as a refreshed mechanism.

48. The KSL project shows the interests of the young generation in the peace process and related issues and avenues of increasing and developing such similar projects should be explored.

Recommendations

General

- The monitoring team commends the set up and conduct of the second joint monitoring visit to both NPTF and UNPFN projects and recommends this practice to be further replicated when relevant and applicable. The projects should jointly plan the visits and brief each other about the projects in advance.
- To the NPTF/PFS to develop and implement monitoring guidelines. The projects visited in this trip did not have knowledge about the source of funding.
- Need to ensure team members have adequate time and briefing when visiting vulnerable communities especially in remote areas. It would also be more appropriate to meet victims in smaller groups rather than in plenary.
- Keep monitoring group to maximum of 6 people
- Interview the Security Forces separately from the community to assess their perception of the relationship with the community

Police posts project

- The design phase should include broader consultation processes, which should include consultations at the local level.
- The design should be comprehensive and should include all necessary structures such as kitchen, mess, toilets and etc. and avoid being too thinly spread, with compromise in basic needs.
- The selection of the priorities for reconstruction should be based on the recurrence of security incidents amongst other criteria.

Election Commission

The second Phase of the project should ensure an outreach and communications support in order to ensure that communities are well aware of the registration. Further, the EC in the districts will require support on logistics such as computers, generators and technicians. The idea of issuing citizenship certificates while voter registration should be further explored.

UNPFN Peace through Justice: Support to Conflict Affected

To the UNPFN, to share the monitoring results with the Line Agency and explore the possibility to create linkages between this project and other MoPR and UN initiatives. For instance the responsibility of reparations lies with the MoPR, but as observed in the field, confusions are deep hence coordination with other UN agencies to support the victims with other packages can be filing for interim relief.

Existing initiatives that can be linked to relief, especially livelihood and income generation or youth focused initiatives should be considered.

UNPFN Support to Transitional Justice

The UNPFN should consider further expanding the project into some of the more remote districts. Further, considering the success of the project UNPFN should share the findings with PFS and explore possibilities of funding the project through NPTF.

Conclusions

This visit marked a positive step forward in terms of regularizing and combining monitoring visits of the NPTF and UNPF. A few important issues were identified that needs to be addressed and followed up for better utilization of monitoring information and smooth implementation of NPTF and UNPF supported projects. Similarly almost all monitoring visits indicate considerable amount of follow-up work to be done at the centre, which should be taken up more seriously. Upon completion of the monitoring visits a joint briefing should be done to the relevant implementing agencies. This can establish better synergies between NPTF and UNPFN initiatives.