



Monthly Newsletter

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Workshop on effective communication

Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) organized a half-day workshop for officials of the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR), and the NPTF and its Implementing Agency (IAs) officials on 9 January. The workshop focused on understanding communication and also understanding the media in order to effectively interact with them while sharing information related to peace and peace building.

Laxmi Datt Kalauni, Under Secretary, NPTF, welcomed the participants and briefed them about the workshop agenda. He also spoke about the importance of understanding communication for interacting effectively with external stakeholders, including the media.

Binod Bhattarai, Communication Expert at EU-TA, led the discussions through presentations on “Communicating effectively and interacting with media”. The presentation covered effective public speaking and presentations and also on ways to



Mukunda Prasad Paudyal, Director NPTF, and participants at the Communication Workshop.

*Participants
at the
Communication
Workshop.*



prepare for and face media interviews, including ways to look out for and avoid possible ‘traps’. The presentation also covered how the media – print, broadcasting and Internet-based – functioned.

The participants included joint secretaries, under-secretaries and section officers from MoPR, and officials from different IAs with ongoing projects supported by the NPTF. The orientation workshop included presentations and discussions.

Mukunda Prasad Paudyal, Director, NPTF, thanked to all the participants for their presence and participation and said such knowledge sessions would help in day-to-day operations of both the fund and the ministry. He added that communication issues that were discussed had been faced at one time or another by himself and many other participants in the past. Now we have knowledge to prepare ourselves better for sharing information with the media, print and broadcasting.

NPTF has been supporting Nepal’s efforts to implement the Comprehensive Peace Accord for establishing lasting peace since 2006. Since 2013 the European Union has been providing technical assistance to the NPTF for improving financial management and communications.

The orientation session covered three broad areas – effective communication and understanding the media and working with journalists.

PROGRESS REPORTING

OPMCM

The NPTF organized a mid-term review of projects being implemented by two Implementing Agencies – Office of the prime minister and council of the ministers (OPMCM) and Nepal Police (NP) – on 19 and 29 January. Both the meetings were held at the Peace Fund Secretariat (PFS).

The OPMCM is implementing a project for strengthening capacity and mechanisms of State institutions for implementing human rights plans and policies in Nepal. The project involves activities of about NPR. 117 million.

The project seeks to attain the following objectives:

- To ensure that the human rights agenda is the overriding policy of Government and to incorporate it functionally in national development plan and policy and to fulfil the international obligations effectively. The project also supports the implementation of National Human

Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) and to prepare a new plan.

- To enhance capacity of Government officers in fulfilling Treaty obligations better with periodic reports and for planning the implementation of concluding observations of international bodies on human rights.
- To follow up on implementing recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review 2011 and UPR recommendations and prepare the next UPR report on time, and
- To ensure that resources and documentation on human rights and human rights mechanisms are available to all state institutions at central, regional and district levels.

Discussed below is the progress of the project so far:

The Cabinet approved the NHRAP on 16 July 2014 and it has been printed and disseminated through district level workshops and expert consultations. The project has received eight proposals for small grants and the project is preparing a framework for monitoring the NHRAP. The project has also

prepared a report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that is to be published and has also prepared a status report on reporting obligations to Treaty Bodies on core human rights conventions. It has also planned a number of capacity building activities and has begun correspondence for collecting literature and documents on human rights for maintaining a human rights database.

The implementation of the project was delayed for lack of a responsible officer, which has begun gaining momentum following the hiring of a Human Rights Project Officer with the support the United States aid agency USAID.

The expenditure of the project was low NPR 5.3 million in November 2014 against the total budget of NPR 117 million. The reason provided for low spending was that many activities have low or no cost implications such as organizing meetings, preparation of the zero draft of the 2nd UPR Report, preparation of responses to Treaty Bodies, etc. Further, many activities, such as meetings and consultations, were implemented in-house

Nepal Police Personnel during a presentation session at PFS.



and that helped to keep the spending from the project low.

The project now plans to expedite the activities, mainly the capacity building activities, consultations, workshops and meetings and release funds for ministries that have applied for small grants, and complete the project on time (December 2015).

Nepal Police

The Nepal Police has been implementing five projects supported by the NPTF. The review meeting focused on the inception report of the project to improve service delivery and improve the capability of the Nepal Police. The police officials at the review said that some of the project activities have been delayed owing to issues related to the selection of service provider but it has a draft Terms of Reference (ToR) ready for undertaking a baseline survey of 43 police units.

The projects being implemented by the police add up to about NPR 738 million of which NPR 660 million has been released.

Mukunda Prasad Paudyal, Director, NPTF asked the project officials to expedite the implementation and encouraged them to seek PFS assistance they needed for timely completion of the tasks. NPTF can provide support in public finance management and communication for the IAs under the EU-TA. NPTF officials, representatives from USAID and Denmark and the EU-TA team attended the meeting.

Project Accounts

NPTF submitted its unaudited project account for FY 2013/14 (2070/071 BS) to the Office of the Auditor General and the Donor Group on 12 January 2015. The report is submitted to these agencies within six months of the fiscal year. The most recent report covers transactions of all NPTF supported projects until 16 July 2014.

Impact study of Local Peace Committees

The EU-TA commissioned a Review and Impact study of Local Peace Committees (LPCs) in December. The assessment was being carried out by Management Innovation, Training and Research Academy (MITRA) Pvt. Ltd. and seeks to review the impact of on-going support and recommend future directions. The study will be submitted to the NPTF for review and approval.

The LPCs have been functioning in all 75 districts, and in 55 municipalities and around 2,519 Village Development Committees (VDCs). The committees have three staffs (Office Secretary, Office Assistant and Office Helper) and are supported by the MoPR that covers their regular administrative and program costs through the government budget.

The NPTF has been providing NPR 120 million under a project of the MoPR for supporting the LPC. The project will come to an end in mid-July 2015. Besides, the LPCs are also being supported by various projects run by the United Nations agencies, and in the past, also had support from the Asian Development Bank.

NPTF's joint monitoring visits, external monitoring, and MoPR's experience suggest that the work of the LPCs is crucial for local peace initiatives and reconciliation processes, and that there are also many problems associated with their functioning mainly related to their terms of reference and understanding of their work by the members.

The main purpose of the assignment is to review on-going support to the LPCs, their work and to consult with stakeholders to draw lessons and directions for engagement in the coming days. The plan is to use this information to support development of concept notes, program document and project proposal for funding.

The review has three phases: Review of the on-going support and situation of LPCs and challenges, organisation of a stakeholders' conference, and recommendation of future support to the LPCs. The assessment included five FGDs in Morang, Chitwan, Rupendehi, Dang, and Kailali districts.

The first FGD was organized in Kavre District on 24 December. Other FGDs were organized in Biratnagar (Morang) and Dhangadi (Kailali) on 29 December.

The remaining FGDs were held in Kathmandu on 2 January 2015. The FGDs brought together different stakeholders – government officials in the districts, LPC members and coordinators – from neighboring districts. Representatives from 25 Hill, Terai and Mountain districts participated in the FGDs.

MoPR ACTIVITY

MoPR forms CAP Task Force

The MoPR has constituted seven-member task force to look into matters for resolving the problems faced by decade long conflict victims. The Council of Ministers had approved the Terms of Reference of the task force on 27 January.

The team is tasked with updating the list of Conflict Affected Persons (CAPs) and their families, destroyed structures and recommending relief packages. The task force is expected to complete the task in three-months.

The task force's objectives would be to review and recommend the medical checkup mechanism for the injured and those disabled, and to update the

list of deceased, displaced, enforced disappeared, children affected by conflict, property destroyed, and those who were abducted. It will also study seized/captured land. It is also expected to recommend the relief packages for the CAPs.

Nar Bahadur Pun, is the coordinator of the task force, and Sudev Kumar Pokharel the secretary. Ramchandra Ghimire, Shiv Bahadur Bhujel, Sharmila Tripathi, Maina Karki Rawal, Laxmi Kumari Thakuri and Bhoj Raj Timilsina are members.

CDU Activities

The Capacity Development Unit at the MoPR carried out the following activities in the past month: Induction program for new staffs entitled "The Peace Process, MoPR and I". There were 14 participants including the PFS Director. The two-days program was organized on 2 and 3 January. The secretary of MoPR attended the opening and closing sessions of the induction.

The CDU organized a retreat for MoPR officials with the theme "MoPR strategy and interdivisional team building". The event was held on 26 and 27 January and was inaugurated by the Minister of Peace and Reconstruction Narahari Acharya.

The CDU organized an exposure visit for MoPR officials from 24-31 January 2015. A joint secretary at the ministry lead the team of eight to the Philippines where they observed and learnt about approaches of "Peace Sensitive Development".

The MoPR has received the final draft strategies of the ministry as well as a policy paper on "Peace Sensitive Development" that will be reviewed and adopted.



*Nar Bahadur Pun,
Coordinator,
CAP task force.*



Eight years of a unique collaboration

By Laxmi Datt Kalauni

The NPTF has successfully assisted peace-building endeavors in Nepal since its establishment in January 2007. The Fund was formed primarily for assisting the implementation of Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA), which marked the beginning of the peace process. The core areas of support were cantonment management, support to Conflict Affected Persons (CAPs), Constituent Assembly (CA) elections, and security and transitional justice.

The Fund is unique mechanism in that it is owned and managed by the Government and supported by a group of donors. In the past eight years NPTF has worked with eight donors and sup-

ported efforts of about 25 Implementing Agencies (IAs) that execute projects. The IAs have included different ministries, departments, constitutional bodies and security agencies. The fund has supported 65 projects of about NPR 23 billion benefitting millions of people across Nepal either directly or through conflict-damaged infrastructures that were rebuilt and rehabilitated. Twenty-two projects are in different stages of implementation.

Even though not obvious the partnership among government, non-government and donor agencies has produced results that have helped to bring the peace process where we are today. The

Former-Maoist combatants at the cantonment.



support to cantonment management and rehabilitation of combatants was key to ending fears of potential violence, and support to voter education and the CA elections made it possible for the government to hold two elections. The successful completion of these two projects was instrumental in steering the political process towards stability and democratization.

Another successful project is the reconstruction of police units damaged or destroyed in the country. Official records suggest 768 police units were damaged during the conflict. Today 230 of these units have been rebuilt and around 100 are under reconstruction. The re-establishment of these units in communities has contributed towards increasing public security and providing locals a sense of security. Because communities were involved in steering the construction locally, the relationship between citizens and the police has also improved over the years.

The projects aimed to support CAPs and women have directly benefitted the victims of violence. Training and awareness carried by 10 projects for implementing the National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 have spread awareness and also increased involvement of victims in peace building. A project run by the National Disabled Fund has reached out to individuals who were injured in the conflict. Following is a re-cap of the roles played by the different partners in peace building projects through the Fund.

(a) Government of Nepal

The Government has played a major role in the NPTF process. It has remained the largest contributor of funds to NPTF. Sixty per cent of the NPTF budget has come from the government, which is also a measure of the contributions made by the people of Nepal. Further, government policy to prioritize peace, and its willingness to be flex-

Journalists in conversation with police personnel at Bardhaghat, Nawalparashi District. The building was reconstructed with NPTF support.



ible throughout the past eight years underscore its commitment. The Fund is also one project in Nepal where political party leaders and high level officials play an active role in appraising and approving projects through different NPTF mechanisms – the Board, Technical Committee, Core Cluster and sectoral clusters.

(b) Donor Group

Donors have provided support to NPTF since its inception. Denmark, Finland, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom began supporting the NPTF in 2007. Other development partners joined at different dates: European Union (2011), Germany (2010-2014), and the United States (2012). Donors have been providing both financial and technical support and also participate in project appraisal and monitoring. Donors have provided about 40 per cent of the NPTF budget and have also spent considerable time and efforts in assisting the Fund to ensure successful project completion. The several platforms where they interact with government officials have also served in knowledge transfer and introducing best practices.

(c) Implementing Agencies

The IAs have mostly been state institutions like ministries, departments, constitutional bodies and other agencies. These institutions prepare concept notes and detailed proposals, implement activities and monitor implementation. While most IAs have successfully completed projects there have been some that could not do so largely because of faulty design and institutional issues. Mostly IAs don't have separate staff for projects and the project responsibilities are carried out by government employees in addition to their regular duties.

(d) Non-Government Actors (NGAs)

The NPTF began working with NGAs in 2012/13 with donor funds. So far seven NGAs have implemented projects supported by the NPTF. The Peace Fund (Operation) Regulations 2008 envisages contributions of Non-Resident Nepalese (NRN), charities, the private sector and even individuals for supporting its activities. However, there has been no support from these groups so far.

(e) Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of projects supported by the NPTF have been CAPs and their families. Their involvement was vital for the success of projects. They have been engaged not only in project implementation but also in monitoring and evaluation. For instance, Public Facilitation Committees work closely and have been providing important feedback to the Police Unit Reconstruction project. NPTF supported projects are monitored through social audits, technical audits and through joint monitoring visits with donors. However, the same level of beneficiary engagement has not been seen in project preparation and planning.

Peace building is a process, and an initiative such as the NPTF is bound to have shortcomings. NPTF has also had its share of issues, which have been addressed or are in the process of being resolved. For example, NPTF has now realized that the support to CAPs has been inadequate and it is in the process of refocusing efforts to ensure all the victims are assisted in continuing with their lives. This is one issue that will be addressed in the new NPTF strategy now being prepared.

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