

# Field Visit Report



## **Nepal Peace Trust Fund Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation**

Singha Durbaar, Kathmandu  
Nepal

[www.nptf.gov.np](http://www.nptf.gov.np)

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Programme /Project title:</b>	<b>Districts/V DCs visited</b>	<b>Participants</b>
14 September 2011	Interaction with District Election Officer, voter educators at District Election Office, observation of voter registration	EC Support Project	Bhairahawa, Rupandehi	Group1 (Arvind, Diana, Teresa, Kristine, Maria); District Election Officials, voter educators
	Attend consultation session CSO, Local authorities and CAPs) regarding the drafting of the GON reparation policy	UNPFN Project (Reparations to Conflict Affected Persons)	Bhairahawa, Rupandehi	Group 2 (Sheila, Bandana, Anne, Subhash, Juliet, Barsha); facilitators, victims of conflict and relevant groups
	Interaction with District Election Officer, voter educators at District Election Office, observation of voter registration	EC Support Project	Tansen, Palpa	Group 1(Bandana, Kristine, Diana, Teresa, Arvind, Subhash); District Election Officials, voter educators
	Interaction with community/police at police post, observation of newly constructed building	Police Project	Bertung, Palpa	Group 2 (Maria, Sheila, Juliet, Anne, Barsha); District Superintendent of Police; Sub Inspector; construction committee members
15 September 2011	Interaction with community (separate women's groups) /police/contractor/engineer at police post, observation of newly constructed building	Police Project	Mujhung, Palpa	Arvind, Kristine, Maria, Sheila, Bandana, Anne, Subhash, Juliet, Barsha; Sub Inspector; construction committee members
	Interaction with LPC members	LPC Project	Tansen, Palpa	Team members(as above) and LPC members
16 September 2011	Briefing on UNIRP Program	UNPFN Project/ UNIRP	Bharatpur, Chitwan	Team Members (as above) and UNIRP Program Staff
	Interaction with former trainees who became entrepreneurs	UNPFN Project/ UNIRP	Bharatpur, Chitwan	Team members, UNIRP staff, VMLR
	Observation and Interaction with VLMRs in skills trainings (3)	UNPFN Project/ UNIRP	Bharatpur, Chitwan	Team members (2 groups), UNIRP staff, trainers, VMLR

## **Project: Election Commission Support Project**

**Activity:** Interaction with District Election Officer, voter educators at District Election Office and observation of voter registration at Rupandehi and Palpa Districts

1. DEO Officials are aware of the Strategic Plan of the Election Office and have been involved in the preparations. In general, there is bottom- up approach and most of the demands from the district are heard by the central office.
2. In both the districts, voter registration kits were received and used for the first campaign of voter registration at municipalities and VDC level. The registration kits are stored, awaiting the reopening of the registration centres in the VDCs. According to the DEOs are perfectly functional ( none or very few were damage during the campaign)
3. In both district the DEO offices counts with a person in charge of IT. However the academic preparation of these persons is not as IT engineer. They are in charge of the data management and of training the computer operators ( for voter registration).
4. The data management is weak. DEO have servers in place were the information is stored. In one district they had a consolidated list while in the other they had several list to be yet be consolidated ( according to DEO this will be done in Kathmandu). There is no clear protocol on how/when to transfer/send the information to Kathmandu. The presence of IT engineers in the regional offices ( Pokhara) has proven very useful to support the DEO offices
5. Number of voter registration centres is found to be adequate, the estimates for which come to be 1000 citizens per centre.
6. Complementary support mechanisms such as ESP<sup>1</sup> is also benefitting specially in trainings and gender issues. They had quite a large number of female enumerators, however, their capacity in terms of voters education is found to be limited.
7. On the other hand, continuous voter's registration is not fully understood by the officials.
8. District Election Office are in rented premises which limits their effectiveness, as they are not allowed to make infrastructural modifications and they have to shift premises frequently.
9. In these districts, there seems to be insufficient coordination with the District Administration Office to facilitate the potential voters to register. A registration centre at the DAO would be helpful. There is lack of clarity and information on the ID card. DEO, enumerators and citizens are confused and some think that a voter card will be provided.
10. No proper mechanism in place to guide the people who missed their voter registration due to their absence during the voter registration campaign. There is no specific strategy to capture the missing people in the new wave of registration

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<sup>1</sup> Institutional Strengthening and Professional Development Support for the Election Commission of Nepal (ESP) implemented by UNPD in partnership with the Election Commission

11. The number of people above the age of 16 years without citizenship was reported 26,674 in Palpa alone. There has been a lack of explanation by voter registration teams on the importance of and how to receive a citizenship certificate to be able to register.

### **Mission Recommendations**

- **To the donors:** to follow up on the kind of financial reporting by DEOs segregated by the funding source.
- **Donor** to check on the language of training
- **To the NPTF:** to follow up with the EC for having structured efforts on voter's education, for example, better prepare the enumerators/voter educators for explaining to people about the importance of voting and democratic principles. Information on the new voter registration phase should be provided before actual opening of the voting registration centres
- **To the NPTF:** to suggest to Election Offices to strengthen their links with DAO as well as explore the possibilities that a mobile citizenship certificate distribution team accompanies voter registration team if second round of voter registration takes place in villages.
- **NPTF** to suggest the EC to prepare a strategy to capture the mission voters (particularly the out of district). Reopening of voter registration centres seems to be needed at VDC level for sometime
- **Future joint monitoring teams** to follow up on the storage of the equipments.

### **Project: Reconstruction of Police Units:**

**Activity:** Visit to Bertung and Mujhung Police Units in Palpa and Meetings with Police Officers and Community Members.

12. Construction committee members have been able to monitor and successfully intervene to ensure the quality of the building.
13. The police follow gender sensitive approaches to handling women related cases. Furthermore, in the absence of policewomen they can count on the support of the women service center ("women cells") located in Tansen to deal with gender related cases.
14. In Bertung Police Unit, the committee has at least one woman and one Dalit member.
15. The presence of policewomen has been recognized as a key asset to deal with specific cases related to women such as domestic violence. In Mujhung Police Unit, there is one female police officer who was on maternity leave during the team's visit. However in Bertung Police Unit, they are not able to have women in custody so far because they don't have women police officers.
16. All gender components are included in the building (cells, toilets and barracks)
17. The sensitivity of issues around gender based violence and sexual violence followed by high level of trauma for women calls for higher number of trained female police officers and sensitized male officers in the police units. Generally, sexual violence seems to be taboo in the community and is generally not being reported.
18. In Mujhung Area Police Office, the community is planning to set up a protection committee, following the completion of construction which may prove to be helpful in management of the

infrastructures and longer term sustainability. Women have also been involved in the monitoring process.

19. The construction was finished on time and within the budget. It should be noted that the management committee in Mujhung put pressure on the contractor to recruit additional manpower to finish the construction on time.
20. The newly constructed police unit buildings have been considered to be very helpful by the police since it provides them more space to operate systematically and allows better case handling.
21. The police post has increased women's access to police by its proximity to the surrounding communities. However, women have recognized that they would rather use alternative community based dispute resolution mechanisms before going to the police.

### **Mission Recommendations**

- **To NPTF** – to communicate to police to consider acquisition of land seriously in the planning process.
- **To the NPTF:** The team considers the involvement of women in construction committee as effective and further recommends the NPTF to continue in this practice. However, women are typically not as involved in decision making. Care should be taken that their participation also can influence decisions.
- **To the NPTF:** The team notes that the police post (2) was finished 3 months prior to its planned inauguration and could have been used in the meantime. The team recommends to the NPTF to ensure that the police posts become operational as soon as the construction is completed.
- **To Donors:** to follow up with Peace Support WG to stress the need for more female police officers.

## **Project: Strengthening LPCs**

**Activity:** Interaction with LPC members

22. Establishment of the LPC had been delayed initially because of political disagreement about who should chair the LPC. It was formed eight months later than expected, however, ensuring an inclusive representation from various political parties, representatives of civil society, victims of conflict groups with 33% of the women members.
23. Members reported the LPC actively working on various peace initiatives at the local level, the outcome of which was reduced tensions among people of different political parties as well as victims of conflict by the State Party and the victims of conflict by the Maoist party, also within the LPC itself.
24. The committee was informed about the NAP on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and had been given copies of the plan, however, they were unclear of the way to use it as a part of their work.
25. The need for better management and own systems for budgeting and accounting was recognized as well as capacity building to support this. LPC members also wanted to have a vision of thinking long term about what is needed for successful conflict transformation.

26. The LPC did not keep accounts on funds spent for their activities and the accounts were kept at the LDO. 500,000 and 700,000 rupees had been made available to them by MoPR in 2010 and 2011.
27. To date, no training has been given that can be considered related to capacity building of the LPC from NPTF.
28. It is not clear if all the LPC members have a common understanding of their mandate and priorities. The LPC members expressed their need for further capacity building on peace building tools to better play their mediation role at the community level. Furthermore, they expressed the need for increased information sharing on funding sources.
29. The team noted that the LPC activities are more focused on hard ware of the peace process and a dire need of focus on soft and long-term issues for sustainable conflict transformation such as the psychosocial counselling, structured dialogue in committee, skills developing training.

### **Mission Recommendations**

- **To donors:** The end of contract for the LPC secretary was unhelpful and jeopardises the NPTF-funded LPC programme. The secretary is a key component in improving the effectiveness of LPCs and continuity and increased capacity is critical to this. The team recommends to donors to communicate this to the Secretary/Minister as this was a ministerial decision applied to all LPCs.
- **To the NPTF:** LPCs could be used more proactively, given their cross-party membership, but they need ideas. Visits between LPCs and lesson learning through the NPTF-funded project could assist with this. The NPTF to communicate to Implementing Agency about this.
- The team notes that the short term mandate of the LPC Secretary is problematic, while noting that this situation is linked to the LPC mandate, the team recommends **the donors/ MoPR**, however to make efforts to strengthen the organizational structure of the LPC, for example, through rolling contracts, permanent staff.
- The team notes the need for the set up of financial management systems and for strengthening the LPC members' capacity in this regards and as a result recognizes the key relevance of the NPTF project and further recommends **the NPTF** to follow up with the MOPR with the implementation of this project
- The external monitoring team (Scott Wilson) should look into how the LPCs are working and the results of capacity building support, including first hand information from visiting LPCs. **To the donor and NPTF**, when revising the TOR for their contract, ensure this is one of the priorities during the next period.

### **Project: UNPFN Project (Reparations to conflict affected persons) UNPFN-E4**

**Activity:** Attended a consultation session with CSO, Local authorities and CAPs regarding the drafting of the GON reparation policy

30. The monitoring team recognizes this initiative as an important step for preparing a reparations policy with wider consultation from the beneficiaries that may prove to be useful starting point

for Truth and Reconciliation Commission, once it is established. The consultation process promotes the principle of participation by involving the victims in providing inputs to the policy that is being drafted for the victims themselves.

31. Though the policy may be established, possibilities of practical difficulties associated with accessing the services by victims of conflict exist and outreach mechanisms to victims should be carefully considered. Additionally, the decision making process to settle which victims categories are to benefit entitlements, is a crucial aspect that needs to be carefully considered and developed.
32. Some women indicated their clear preference rather towards income generating activities/ job opportunities rather than cash compensation.
33. Enthusiasm of participants to return with workshop message to whom they represented and to disseminate results of workshop (however as the monitoring team assisted to only one session of the workshop this needs to be further confirmed with overall workshop conclusions. The UNPFN could follow up on this).

#### **Mission Recommendations**

- **Donors and NPTF** to follow up with the relevant actors involved in interim relief process to further look at potential mechanisms to reach out to the victims in remote locations.
- The workshops participants indicated that lack of information is a key reason for victims not to access interim relief. It is recommended that the reparation policy includes a strong information and communication component to close the information gap and reach out to victims. **The UNPFN SO** to convey this element to the implementing agencies responsible for the project implementation.
- The workshop illustrated the key role of CSOs in representing the voices of CAPs and in reaching out to them and should be further taken into consideration when developing a reparation policy. **The UNPFN SO** to convey this element to the implementing agencies responsible for the project implementation.

### **Project: UNPFN/UNIRP - Training for verified minors and late recruits (VMLRs) UNPFN-A7**

**Activity:** Briefing on UNIRP Program; Interaction with Verified Minor and Late Recruits

34. A really interesting visit and great to see three people making the most of the package to create a livelihood for themselves.
35. Coordination between UN agencies seems to work well.
36. Counselling is provided by CVICT and TPO with a focus on future career opportunities and less on trauma and possible implications of this (including sexual and gender based violence (SGBV)).
37. There is a referral system to UNICEF/ CAFAAG in cases where additional psychological treatment is needed, although none/few such cases were said to have come up largely because of “the culture of silence” and stigma attached.

38. The programme also takes care of children of the VMLRs attending the training programs, which is encouraging the women VMLRs to attend the training program.
39. Beneficiaries have expressed their confusion about the source and funding mechanism of the programme, in particular they are hearing contradicting information on the programme and its potential follow-up. Transparency about funding of the program is lacking vis-a-vis the beneficiaries. They were not informed about the sources of funding for the skills training, and when inquiring about this it was not shared.
40. The linkages between the 1612 monitoring activities and UNIRP programme were found to be unclear to the monitoring team. There needs to be more coherence in the UN system to ensure that minors receive sufficient protection.
41. Some of the conducted training had been very short - from 5 days to 2 months and beneficiaries indicated that it should be much longer to be efficient.
42. Beneficiaries indicated that salaries and other kinds of support included in the package, especially for mothers, is not sufficient. Also, it was noted that for the establishment of small businesses that required(s) initial investment, loans were taken on top of the contribution from the program.
43. The monitoring team noted limited information and follow-up of graduated VMLRs.

### **Mission Recommendations**

**The UNPFN SO** to convey to UNIRP to consider the following:

- The monitoring process in place for those who had been through the programme was perceived as unclear and dependent on patchy communication systems and the monitoring team inquired whether this is being addressed in the second phase of the programme?
- Financial support to participants does not cover the costs of supporting their families whilst they are in the scheme and the monitoring team wonders whether this could be increased?
- Are there ways of reducing the living expenditure for the trainees- e.g. through providing housing to participants?
- Beneficiaries said that they would like to receive additional resources to be able to pass on the skills they had gained to others. Could the programme investigate ways to do this?
- Additional complementary training activities should be considered, in particular financial management related to start up of small businesses.
- More focus on risk mitigation may be given for those who have established own businesses (e.g. advise on getting insurance for the investments as there have been experiences of entire shops being stolen nad the entrepreneurs having to contract a new loan to keep the business running)
- The monitoring team requests additional information on the linkages and noted the potential need for further coordination with CAFAAG mechanism.

**To the donors/ GoN**, for the forthcoming rehab of ex-combatants (the 19,000):

- o Early support and intervention should be stressed. (Calls were given to the VMLR 6-7 months after discharge to offer training, this should be done sooner).
- o Link compensation that may be given to the newly discharged with what the VMLRs got, and match (supplement) with additional support to them to avoid further discrimination and manage potential resentment,
- o Give more attention to psychological trauma identification in counselling sessions, and provide appropriate referral/ treatment.

- Skills training should look beyond specific vocational skills to cross-cutting skills such as financial management, risk management/;
- Ensure those going through any rehabilitation process have adequate general support to participate in programmes (e.g. living costs)

## Conclusions

1. UN-donor and Government Joint Monitoring was effective to facilitate the discussion and consultation on various issues.
2. 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 UNPFN supported projects. Generally, we could consider a Kathmandu 'field visit' to meet with some of the agencies here and look at the projects from a more central, programme management point of view as well as allow for the monitoring of projects which are more policy-based and do not have regular activities in the field.
3. Presence of men and women on the team deemed useful to facilitate separate and specific consultations.
4. Breaking down the monitoring team in sub groups has proven to be efficient and should be adopted in future missions
5. There is a need to be better prepared as donors about the status of each project/programme before the visit. Also to have a better understanding of each donor's expected aims with the field visits.

There is a need to be more structured on the aim of the monitoring mission with a view to better structure the interviews.

As a way forward, it is recommended to:

1. Provide an update on the project's implementation status, especially for new pilot projects such as the LPC (has the project started? What has been achieved) and if the project is being monitored through other means (i.e. for the police posts, to know whether they were included in the NVC mission or external social audit).
2. Look at some of the newer projects such as the constitution support project.
3. Organise a KTM-based visit to meet with central bodies such as the ECN, the NP, NEFDIN etc
4. Disseminate clear information on the purpose of the visit to projects' stakeholders to ensure a clear understanding of the role and aim of the monitoring mission.
5. The duration of the monitoring mission in some instances has proven to be too short to properly monitor some project activities, therefore, either the number of days need to be added or the number of districts need to be reduced.