

# Report on Conflict Sensitivity of Norwegian NGOs' Development Assistance in Nepal

NORAD COLLECTED REVIEWS 9/2007

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**Norad collected reviews**

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**NORWEGIAN AGENCY FOR  
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (NORAD)**

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**REPORT ON CONFLICT SENSITIVITY  
OF NORWEGIAN NGOS' DEVELOPMENT  
ASSISTANCE IN NEPAL**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|       |  |    |
|-------|--|----|
| 1     | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....                                | 1  |
| 2     | INTRODUCTION.....                                      | 5  |
| 2.1   | Background .....                                       | 5  |
| 2.2   | Objective & Scope of Review .....                      | 5  |
| 2.3   | Approach & Methodology .....                           | 5  |
| 2.4   | Limitations & Constraints .....                        | 7  |
| 2.5   | Overview of report .....                               | 8  |
| 3     | BACKGROUND.....  | 9  |
| 3.1   | Definition of Conflict Sensitivity .....               | 9  |
| 3.2   | Conceptual understanding of conflict sensitivity ..... | 9  |
| 3.3   | Context Analysis of Nepal.....                         | 11 |
| 3.4   | Indicators of Conflict Sensitivity .....               | 13 |
| 4     | OVERVIEW Of NORWEGIAN SUPPORT TO NGOS .....            | 15 |
| 4.1   | Norway and Nepal.....                                  | 15 |
| 4.2   | Norwegian organisations.....                           | 16 |
| 4.3   | Categorization of NGOs.....                            | 18 |
| 4.4   | Partner Organisations in Nepal .....                   | 21 |
| 5     | FINDINGS .....   | 24 |
| 5.1   | Context analysis .....                                 | 24 |
| 5.2   | Targeting causes of conflict.....                      | 28 |
| 5.2.1 | Geography .....  | 28 |
| 5.2.2 | Choice of partners .....                               | 28 |
| 5.2.3 | Choice of target group.....                            | 29 |
| 5.2.4 | Poverty focus.....                                     | 31 |

|     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| 5.3 | Communication .....                         | 32 |
| 5.4 | Flexibility/adaptability of programmes..... | 35 |
| 5.5 | Coordination and cooperation .....          | 36 |
| 5.6 | Good development practices .....            | 38 |
| 5.7 | Impartiality .....                          | 40 |
| 5.8 | Staff security.....                         | 41 |
| 6   | ASSESSMENT .....                            | 44 |
| 6.1 | Relevance .....                             | 44 |
| 6.2 | Effectiveness .....                         | 46 |
| 7   | CONCLUSIONS.....                            | 48 |
| 8   | RECOMMENDATIONS.....                        | 50 |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Annex I    | Terms of Reference                        |
| Annex II   | List of people and institutions consulted |
| Annex III  | Context Analysis                          |
| Annex IV   | Interview Guide                           |
| Annex V    | SWOT Analysis                             |
| Annex VI   | BOGs                                      |
| Annex VII  | Bibliography                              |
| Annex VIII | Tools for analysing conflict              |
| Annex IX   | Case Studies                              |
| Annex X    | List of Nepali partners of SCNN and LWFN  |

## Abbreviations

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| BN    | Norwegian missions in development                               |
| BOGs  | Basic Operating Guidelines                                      |
| CoC   | Code of Conduct   |
| CSA   | Conflict Sensitive Analysis                                     |
| CVICT | Centre for Victims of Torture                                   |
| CWIN  | Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre                         |
| FFO   | Norwegian Federation of Disabled People's Organisations         |
| FORUT | Campaign for Solidarity & Development                           |
| GoN   | Government of Nepal   |
| INGO  | International Non-Governmental Organisation                     |
| KTM   | Kathmandu   |
| LHL   | Norwegian Association of Heart and Lung Patients                |
| LWFN  | Lutheran World Federation - Nepal                               |
| NA    | Nepalese Army   |
| NABP  | Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted        |
| NAB   | Nepal Association of the Blind                                  |
| NBA   | Norwegian Bar Association                                       |
| NCA   | Norwegian Church Aid  |
| NCG   | Nordic Consulting Group   |
| NEBA  | Nepal Bar Association   |
| NFDN  | National Federation of Disabled Nepal                           |
| NFU   | Norwegian Association for Persons with Development Disabilities |
| NGO   | Non-Governmental Organisation                                   |
| NHAM  | Norwegian Himal-Asia Mission                                    |
| Norad | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation                    |
| NRCS  | Nepal Red Cross Society   |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| ODC/IDMS | Organisation Development Centre/Institute of Development Management Studies |
| PRS      | Poverty Reduction Strategy  |
| RT       | Review Team   |
| SAFE     | Social Awareness for Education  |
| SCA      | Strategic Conflict Assessment   |
| SCN      | Save the Children Norway  |
| SCNN     | Save the Children Norway - Nepal  |
| SPA      | Seven Party Alliance  |
| TOR      | Terms of Reference  |
| UEN      | Union of Education Norway   |
| UMN      | United Mission to Nepal   |
| VDC      | Village Development Committee   |

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Review of Norway's support to Norwegian non-governmental organisations in Nepal with special focus on Conflict Sensitivity (CS) was commissioned by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kathmandu and handled by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) in Oslo. The review was undertaken by a team of consultants from Nordic Consulting Group, Oslo and Organisation Development Center (ODC), Kathmandu. In addition, an advisor from Norad's department of Civil Society was part of the Review Team (RT).

The purpose of the Review was to assess to which extent the development assistance of Norwegian NGOs in Nepal is conflict sensitive. The RT was asked to map weaknesses and strengths of the NGOs in terms of CS; how do the NGOs interpret conflict sensitive development aid and how is CS operationalised in choice of partners, staff, and their code of conduct. Important principles for the review have been consultation, participation, and inclusion of as many stakeholders as possible given the limited time frame.

Over a period of almost two months the team reviewed existing project documents from 15 Norwegian organisations, visited projects in West and Central part of Nepal, and engaged in consultation with key stakeholders in Nepal, mainly the local partner organisations, representatives from the Norwegian Embassy, and the Norwegian organisation based in Nepal. Experts from like-minded organisations and institutes working with sensitising their development programmes to the conflict were also consulted. The field survey was concluded by a debrief session for the Norwegian Embassy and a Workshop for the partners based in Nepal where preliminary findings were presented for discussions and feedback. The findings were also presented to the Norwegian organisations in Oslo.

The Review's approach and methodology is based on CDA's 'do no harm', the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) of DFID (Phase I), as well as DAC's Principles for working in Fragile States. The RT found it necessary to adjust its methodology in order to fit the mandate outlined in TOR (see Annex 1), with a special focus on assessing the organisations' systems, routines and procedures for CS. The TOR asked for a review of existing support to the NGOs, their 'value added', and the extent of cooperation and coordination among them - not a complete mapping of all existing development interventions and design of a new strategy (as the SCA of DFID outlines).

Root causes relating to conflict have been addressed in three main categories: social, economic, and political exclusion. However, the RT recognises that development cooperation does not necessarily have an immediate impact on the military motivations of the parties to the conflict. What started out as a fight for social, political, and economic access to resources ten years ago has developed its own dynamics. Development interventions are crucial for removing the root causes, but the violent fight for power is a reality of its own. During the field survey the Seven-Party Alliance continuously negotiated with the Maoists about a peace-agreement.

The Review concludes that the Maoist insurgency has compelled many development actors to rethink their strategies while addressing the underlying causes of poor governance, conflict, and a disappointing development record. Many Nepali organisations have revisited their development practices increasingly focussing on self-critical examinations of their missions,



transparency, and accountability. Projects perceived to reinforce social, economic, and political inequalities have sometimes been stopped by the Maoists. Public audits have become standard. However, INGOs based outside Nepal have to a much lesser degree been held accountable to the public the way organisations working in Nepal have.

A majority of the Norwegian organisations follow up their programmes and projects from a distance in Norway, although a few have hired their own project coordinators. The Norwegian Embassy in Kathmandu has encouraged the organisations to be more sensitive to the root causes and dynamics of the conflict in order to increase the impact and synergies of the projects.

The review found indicators that some organisations have shifted their approach and geographic outreach during the last years due to the conflict in Nepal, while others have not implemented any major change of strategy. The findings suggest that just half of the organisations reviewed can be labelled ‘conflict sensitive’ when using indicators such as existence of context analysis, project targeting causes of conflict, transparency, generating learning from the field and coordination. These findings will be shared directly with the organisations involved, Norad, and the Embassy, though individual organisations have generally not been linked to each specific finding in this report.

The non-adaptability among some of the organisations (ref. definition of CS in 3.1) can be ascribed to several factors: lack of in-depth knowledge of the conflict context, well-established existing partnerships with Nepali organisations that are not easily shifted or ended, and the category of organisation it represents. Here it seems as if organisations that are tied up to ‘who they will work with’ based on their organisation’s mandate/bylaws (profession, ideology, or international membership), are less flexible in choice of projects, partners, geographical areas, as well as sectors and thematic areas.

The projects supported might be highly sensitive, their Nepali implementing partners too, but several plans and reports presented to Norad were not in line with conflict sensitive programming. This indicates that in order to fully assess the organisations’ level of conflict sensitivity, individual assessments must also be made of projects/programmes in the field

The value-added of Norwegian organisations on conflict sensitivity was in some instances remarkable, (SCNN, NCA, DF, NHAM), but, in general, the Nepali partners were much better trained and aware of ‘do no harm’ and other tools for conflict sensitive monitoring and implementation, than were their Norwegian counterparts. The organisations seemed better trained on conflict sensitivity than on e.g. gender sensitivity, but there was a noticeable under-representation of female project staff and leaders in the Nepali partner organisations. However the RT could not conclude on whether the tools for ‘do no harm’ and gender sensitivity were ‘internalised’ in the Nepali organisations.

Organisations based in Nepal are operating according to the Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGS) developed by international donors and seem to have a united policy for dealing with both Maoists and the Nepali army. Norwegian organisations doing project follow-up from Norway had limited knowledge of the BOGS (with a few exceptions).

Good development practises were seen as one of the most important indicators of conflict sensitivity in Nepal due to widely held mistrust of aid given by I/NGOs among people. While the majority of the Norwegian organisations seemed to have solid financial and administrative monitoring, a few had weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of their projects in Nepal.

The review also found a lack of importance attached to ensuring that planning and budgeting are inclusive and participatory.

Norwegian NGOs are not coordinating or cooperating in a systematic manner, neither in the field nor in Norway. Several efforts have been made, but there is a need for strong mechanisms to enforce it. Some organisations which support the same project and the same organisation might meet annually, but do not harmonise funding or reporting, or in other ways practically coordinate.

### **Key Recommendations (summary)**

1. Norwegian development actors are known for promoting national ownership in the countries in which they work, and for promoting donor coordination and harmonisation. This report recommends that Norway should consider operationalising its long-term commitment to supporting national ownership and donor harmonisation in a Country Policy paper for Nepal where the bi- and multilateral, as well as the support to the NGO-sector are outlined. Such a Policy paper would help the Norwegian civil society organisations to find their roles and priorities within the overall Norwegian support to Nepal. Norwegian organisations based in Nepal and/or those with a substantial field experience from Nepal could give valuable input to the Policy.

2. In the current situation<sup>1</sup> of a recently agreed-upon peace agreement between the SPA and the Maoists, it is more important than ever to ensure that all interventions are geared towards strengthening the country's fragile peace agreement by providing safe and effective development aid that are transparent and accountable towards its target groups. Inclusion of groups previously excluded based on caste-ethnicity-geography is vital. The same is true as regards including women as actors in peace-building efforts.

3. Norad could consider adapting its formats for planning and reporting so that they allow for more elaborate context analysis of the programmes and projects. All projects being supported by Norway in Nepal should fulfil at least some minimum requirements for conflict sensitivity developed in this report. This needs to be viewed in the context of Norad's strategic focus and the ongoing process of simplifying forms and procedures for the organisations.

4. Communication between Norwegian and local partner is crucial when working in a conflict context. Even though the political/security situation might improve in the near future due to the peace agreement, reports from the districts suggest that most development actors will still face challenges related to the conflict in Nepal. Norwegian NGOs must have better routines for frequent communication with their local partners.

5. Norwegian organisations working in Nepal are encouraged to critically review their own projects and programmes, considering if the choice of projects and partners is actually contributing to reducing causes of conflict and/or strengthening capacities for peace in Nepal. As minimum measures, the organisations should:

- a. Adhere to BOGs through-out all phases of project/programme implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> The report was finalised on 23 November 2006.

- b. Be trained in conflict sensitive programming.
- c. Strengthen their follow-up development practices (financial and administrative management, audits, reporting on conflict and context).
- d. Coordinate both in the field and in Norway in order to maximise each others' experiences and best lessons, e.g. revitalise the 'Nepal network'.
- e. Strengthen learning from the field to head offices by establishing organisational systems that absorb the information and feed it into the organisations' policies and strategies.

6. Finally, the report reminds the organisations and Norad to be focused on the importance of flexibility of development work in conflict settings. Planning for various scenarios must be encouraged since fragile peace processes such as the one as in Nepal might collapse. Organisations must ensure that contingency plans are ready and available.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

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### 2.1 Background

Norway has in recent years stepped up its efforts to be more aware and knowledgeable about how conflict affects development assistance and vice versa. The Norwegian Embassy in Kathmandu has spearheaded the process by organising several seminars on conflict sensitivity (CS). A large portion of the official development aid to Nepal is channelled through Norwegian organisations. For 2006, NOK 26.2 million was channelled to 11 organisations (including two umbrellas). In the CS seminars cooperating NGOs from both Norway and Nepal participated in the discussions and elaborations along with external experts on the particular conflict in Nepal.

One of the tangible results of this process, apart from the learning sustained, is Norad's work with developing a Handbook for Conflict Sensitivity. As a natural continuation of this process, the Norwegian Embassy in Nepal asked Norad for an external review of the Norwegian NGOs in order to assess how they are implementing the long-term aid with particular focus on being conflict sensitive.

### 2.2 Objective & Scope of Review

The report presents the outcome of a review of the level of conflict sensitivity among Norwegian organisations in Nepal.

The main purpose of the review was to:

*assess to which extent the development assistance of Norwegian NGOs in Nepa, is conflict sensitive. The review will map weaknesses and strengths of the NGOs in terms of CS; how do the NGOs interpret conflict sensitive development aid and how is CS operationalised in choice of partners, staff and their code of conduct.*

The review will contribute with assessments of a selected number of projects funded by Norway and feed into the continuous dialogue between the Embassy/Norad and the NNGOs.

### 2.3 Approach & Methodology

The review was carried out from August/September to November 2006 by one Norwegian consultant from Nordic Consulting Group (NCG), one researcher from Organisational Development Centre (ODC), and one advisor from Norad's Department for Civil Society.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) stressed that the review should be participatory and focus on promoting learning among all involved actors. Thus, the consultants chose a participatory working method which involved all stakeholders: Norwegian NGOs, Nepali organisations, Norad and the Embassy in Kathmandu. Norad's advisor was involved in as much of the field survey both in Norway and Nepal as possible, along with providing key inputs in the analytical and writing process.

The review encompassed three phases; preparatory phase, field survey in Nepal, and input-

presentation phase. The preparatory phase started with several meetings between Norad and NCG in order to draft and finalise Terms of Reference for the review. Then, the review was introduced to the Norwegian Non-Governmental Organisations (NNGOs) during the Annual Meeting between the Norwegian Ambassador to Nepal and Norwegian NGOs in Oslo.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, TOR along with an explanatory letter from Norad was distributed to the Norwegian NGOs in early September.

The consultants developed their approach & methodology for the field survey during this period. An interview guide containing two sets of questionnaires was drafted: one for the Norwegian (non-implementing) organisations and another for the implementing organisations in Nepal (see Annex IV). When drafting the interview guide, the Review Team (RT) used existing tools for conflict sensitising programming and the draft Norad manual on CS (see also chs. 3.2 and 3.4).

Despite short notice, and thanks to the flexibility of the Norwegian organisations, the Norwegian members of the RT managed to conduct individual interviews with most of the 15 organisations in the first week of September, and the remaining two organisations were interviewed after the field survey.

The second phase which included the field survey took place from 12-22 September whereby most (but not all) of the Nepali cooperating partners were visited and interviewed. Apart from visiting projects and partners around the Kathmandu Valley, the consultants spent three days in Nepalgunj and one day in Dhading. The field survey was concluded by a debrief session for the Embassy and a workshop with the Nepali partners based in Kathmandu. In both settings, preliminary findings were presented for discussions and feedback. Again, participation and inclusion of stakeholders were stressed by the RT when inviting Nepali partners for the workshop.

In the third phase, collected data was systematised and analysed. All findings are based on two to six of the following sources:

- 1) Project documents submitted by Norwegian organisations to Norad; mainly multi-annual plans for the organisations with a framework agreement with Norad, annual plans for the other organisations, and annual progress reports for 2004-5.
- 2) Interview with representatives from the Norwegian organisations; 15 organisations with offices in Norway, as well as one with a country office in Nepal (SCNN).
- 3) Interview with Nepali partners; apart from the 31 partners of SCNN, most of the Nepali cooperating partners were interviewed. For the umbrella organisations, one of BN's (two) partners were interviewed, and two of Atlas' (four) partners were interviewed.
- 4) Field visits to the projects of NHAM, Plan Nepal/Norway, SCNN, NBA, FORUT, and NAB. Interview with beneficiaries, program staff, and local authorities
- 5) Evaluation reports, or other studies conducted by the Norwegian or Nepali partner (see Annex VII for list of evaluations compiled and reviewed by RT).

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<sup>2</sup> Meeting in Norad, 29 August 2006, Ambassador Tore Toreng and Norwegian NGOs. NNGOs had been informed about the planned external review of NGOs and Conflict Sensitivity during the Embassy's seminar in April 2006.

6) Secondary sources like books, reports and studies on conflict sensitivity and Nepal.

Given the difficulties of obtaining reliable information for undertaking conflict analysis, the consultants found it useful to use a variety of data gathering methods (“triangulation”), by doing first a desk study, then qualitative surveys, expert interviews, stakeholder consultations and feedback workshops to present and discuss the conclusions. Follow-up interviews were done by telephone or e-mail with organisations where the RT needed to verify information.

Finally, a draft report was distributed in mid-October to the key stakeholders. The draft was presented to Norwegian NGOs based in Norway for discussion. Written feedback to the draft was encouraged by all NNGOs. The final report was distributed in December 2006.

## 2.4 Limitations & Constraints

There are several limitations to this study. First, it is a review of the conflict sensitive performance of the Norwegian organisations with an agreement with Norad, not an evaluation of individual projects. It was not feasible to review all projects, but a select few was chosen for assessing links between context analysis provided in project documents or interviews and the situation on the ground where the project was implemented. Secondly, the review chose certain questions that it looked at in detail among the 15 organisations as *indicators* of CS. The questions chosen determined to a large degree the information received. The sources of information varied from organisation to organisation. In some instances, the RT got hold of the right person and was immediately given access to proper documents, contacts, and addresses, while in other NGOs relevant staff were unavailable due to field visits, sick leaves or other reasons.

The review does not set-out to give a comprehensive context analysis of the Nepali situation. The focus is on assessing the organisations’ knowledge, understanding of how they work, and which routines, systems and procedures are in place for ensuring that their programmes and projects are in line with conflict sensitive programming.

In the case of the field work in Nepal, the timing of the review affected the access and availability of contact persons. Most organisations were closed for a week (September 29 – October 5) due to the Dashain festivals. This is also the time of the year when many of the staff tend to take longer annual leaves – which posed some challenges in terms of following up with organisations and individuals for additional information and clarifications as the report was being prepared. Thus the quality of the information varied. The RT tried to compensate for this by offering the NGOs to forward information after in-depth interview by e-mail.

On a more practical level, the RT faced limitations due to the lack of unified collected information on the 15 organisations and their 70 projects. An overview of their geographical location would have helped immensely when planning field survey and choice of projects for in-depth study. Access to the Nepali partners was another challenge. Again there was a lack of access to one place where information, contacts, & names of the partners were collected. Despite the fact that many of the organisations referred to a “Nepal-network”, there was no updated e-mail list that included all Norwegian organisations working in Nepal and names/addresses of contact persons.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the RT chose not to attempt to conduct any formal interviews with either the Maoists or government representatives. There were several unsuccessful attempts at reaching the Social Welfare Council that coordinates the efforts of the international NGOs, but no formal interview was conducted.

## **2.5 Overview of report**

The report is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter provides an Executive Summary of the report with main findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The second chapter outlines the objective and scope of the evaluation as well as explaining the Approach and Methodology chosen in the work. The third chapter provides the conceptual basis for the terms used in the study of Conflict Sensitivity, and provides a short contextual analysis of the conflict in Nepal. In chapter four, an overview of the Norwegian development assistance to organisations in Nepal is provided with a brief categorisation of the NNGOs along with a brief overview and categorisation of their Nepali partners.

In the fifth chapter the main findings of the review are presented according to the following themes: context analysis, geography, target groups, communication, coordination, & cooperation, gender sensitivity, development practises, including transparency and accountability, impartiality, staff security and flexibility/adaptability of the programme. Finally, chapter six assess the relevance and effectiveness of the organisations' approach with regards to Nepali national plans, the Poverty Reduction Strategies, Millennium Development Goals and Norwegian development policies and strategies. Chapter seven and eight set out some conclusions and recommendations for Norway and the Norwegian organisations.

There are ten annexes: Terms of Reference, list of the persons and institutions consulted during the field survey, Context Analysis, Interview Guide, SWOT-analysis, BOGs, Bibliography and Two Case studies (one from Nepalganj & one from Dading) and a List of Nepali partners.

## 3 BACKGROUND

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### 3.1 Definition of Conflict Sensitivity

This study uses the concept of conflict sensitivity as developed in *Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A Resource Pack (2004)*<sup>3</sup>.

Conflict sensitivity is the capacity and ability of an organisation to:

- understand the context in which you operate;
- understand the interaction between your intervention and the context; and
- act upon the understanding of this interaction, in order to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive impacts.

Note: the word ‘context’ is used rather than ‘conflict’ to make the point that all socio-economic and political tensions, root causes and structural factors are relevant to conflict sensitivity because they all have the potential to become violent. Conflict can also have positive outcomes because it offers opportunities to address unjust issues. When a conflict is not addressed in a timely and effective manner, it can become violent.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.2 Conceptual understanding of conflict sensitivity

Much work has been done on theories of conflict sensitivity and various models of the original Mary B. Anderson’s ‘do no harm’, which was developed ten years ago. All major developmental agencies (DFID, GTZ, SIDA, USAID, World Bank, OECD/DAC) have developed their own approaches, models, and tools for how to analyse and sensitise their programmes.

Norad has reviewed existing resources and compiled a first draft of a Manual intended for the use of embassy staff and executive officers at the MFA and Norad, but is planned to be available also for the NGOs. Some of the main points in the draft manual are outlined below.

#### 1. Context Analysis

The starting point for any Conflict Sensitivity Analysis is an understanding of the conflict context, in particular the actors involved and the dynamics that sustain the conflict. It is also important to understand the role and responsibility of development actors, both national and international.

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<sup>3</sup> Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance, and peacebuilding. A Resource Pack (2004). Africa Peace Forum, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, International Alert, Saferworld.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted from “A Guidebook to Safe and Effective Development in Conflict” (*draft*), RMO 2005



### What is the Conflict About?

- What are the key conflict factors – root causes, consequences/legacy of conflict?
- What factors are keeping the conflict alive (conflict dynamics)?
- What factors support peaceful relations?

### Who are the Main Actors?

- What actors are present in the relevant context?
- What actors may sustain or aggravate the conflict?
- What actors may lessen conflict dynamics?

Societies have systems and institutions that separate people and cause tensions between them. Mary B. Anderson refers to these factors as **dividers**, often also called spoilers. Dividers may be rooted in deep-seated historical injustice or rapid changes in power-balances, while others may be recent, short-lived or manipulated by certain leaders. Some may be entirely internal to a society, while others may be promoted by outside powers. Often, internal dividers may be manipulated by external forces to support their own interests, and so serve to sustain, intensify, and prolong the conflict. Some examples of dividers may include illegitimate government, lack of political participation, lack of equal economic and social opportunities, unequal access to natural resources, poor governance, culture of violence and discrimination, uncontrolled security sector, human rights abuses, war economy, flow of refugees and internally displaced people. Understanding what divides people is critical to understanding how the programme/project may feed into or lessen these forces.

Even in the most war-torn society however, there are always more institutions and factors that work in favour of peace, than those supporting conflict. These are called **connectors**. Examples of connectors include informal and formal trade networks, electrical, water and communications systems, sporting events, associations that include all sides to the conflict, values, health, education, and other social services. Connectors may also refer to individuals and groups that assert the values of peace even when prevalent warfare makes such propositions unpopular and dangerous.

Connectors are the existing and potential building blocks of systems of political, economic, and social interaction that can ensure stable, peaceful and just futures for societies in conflict. It is important to identify connectors and to support and reinforce them to the extent possible, or at least relate to them in a conscious way. An increased focus on connectors however, may make them more susceptible for hostile attacks.

## **2. Consider the Role of other International Actors**

International actors (donors, NGOs, other interested countries, regional and international organisations) are integral to conflict processes and consideration of these should be included in your assessment. Activities of international actors should be mapped in order to avoid unnecessary overlap of effort, pockets of exclusion should be identified, and ongoing efforts should be strengthened/weakened accordingly.

## **3. Assess the Programme/project in relation to the context (factors and actors)**

This step involves a review of the various aspects of the programme/project, identified in step 1, and how this may influence the conflict, as well as be influenced by the conflict. One can ask how the issues identified in step 2 and 3 are likely to influence the programme/project, and how

the project/programme may influence the issues identified:

- How may the dividers/connectors identified above affect implementation of the programme/project?
- In what ways are connectors and dividers addressed by the programme/project?
  - What connectors are not targeted by the programme/project, and how may this affect the conflict?

#### 4. Adjusting the programme/project

Step 4 should help to understand the strengths and weaknesses of a programme/project, and give indications as to what actors and factors need to be strengthened/weakened. Deciding on how to actually adjust the programme/project if considered necessary depends on the particular context. It may help to listen to the experience and advice of other colleagues as well as to other local and international actors.

### 3.3 Context Analysis of Nepal

Many international and Nepali research institutes and organisations have made context analysis of the root causes, dynamics, and actors of the conflict in Nepal. The RT has worked according to the following analysis of causes of conflict and dynamics (what triggers conflict) in Nepal<sup>5</sup>.

|               | Security   | Political  | Economic  | Social   |
|---------------|--|--|---|--|
| International | Foreign military aid (UK, US)<br><br>Strategic buffer state btw. India and China | US, UK (West) against Maoists<br><br>Support for Maoists from international leftist movement                   | Drop in tourism due to conflict; improved prospects if peace holds?<br><br>Remittances from Nepalese abroad (Gulf states, West); Foreign development assistance | Lack of INGO sensitivity to local conditions<br><br>Media influence (TV, radio, newspapers): modernisation, cultural influences; awareness of relative deprivation |
| Regional      | Military support from India<br><br>India-Pakistan tension                        | Nepalese migrant workers in India<br><br>Anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal<br><br>Naxalite movement in 60s & 70s | Trade relations with India<br><br>Uncertain import transit agreements via India   | Feudalistic system<br><br>Dalit movement<br><br>Maoist movement  |
| National      | Human Rights abuses by police: Op. Romeo-95, Op.                                 | Birendra killed-01; Gyanendra usurped executive power 2002;  | Rural/urban divide<br><br>Discrimination/exclu  | Ethnic/caste discrimination  |

<sup>5</sup> Some points are borrowed from United Nations Development Programme (2003), Conflict-related Development Analysis (CDA), Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)

|       |  |   |  |   |
|-------|--|---|--|---|
|       | <p>Kelo-Sera-98</p> <p>Weak but relatively disciplined army</p> <p>Maoists declared “People’s War” -96; violence, HR abuses</p> <p>Shifting relations btw. King, 7-party alliance (SPA), Maoists, army, police</p> | <p>decentralised local govt collapsed; Deuba gvt. ousted 2005; instability</p> <p>Maoists mobilised based on exclusion; 12-point agreement btw. SPA &amp; Maoists Oct.-95.</p> <p>King renounced executive power April-06; Shifting alliances btw. King, SPA, Maoists</p> <p>Role of Parliament</p> <p>Interim Govt.: organise elections for Const’l Assembly: draft Constitut.</p> | <p>sion of dalits, indigenous groups and ethnic minorities</p> | <p>Violence</p> <p>Limited resources</p> <p>Relatively benign inter-religious relations</p>   |
| Local | <p>“People’s War” in countryside; Maoist demands for NGOs to register, pay “taxes”</p> <p>Criminal elements acting as Maoists; availability of arms</p>  | <p>Opposition to negotiations from local groups, armed groups</p>   | <p>Economic exclusion, Increasing poverty</p>                  | <p>Social exclusion; ethnic &amp; caste, gender discrimination</p> <p>Maoist mobilisation based on social, ethnic, economic, gender exclusion</p> |

In addition to what is mentioned above regarding the political and social divide, this Review places emphasis on the economic exclusion of large groups in Nepal. Data from the PRS and World Bank shows that the average per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$260 (2004) making Nepal the poorest country in South Asia and the twelfth poorest country in the world. Despite the fact that over the last decade the country has made considerable progress reducing poverty, one third of the population still live under the official poverty rate. Some data from the Asian Development Bank’s Nepal Country Strategy:

- Headcount poverty rate declined from 42 per cent to 31 per cent between FY95/96 and FY03/04
- Urban poverty declined from 22 per cent to 10 per cent
- Rural poverty declined from 43% to 35%

Poverty is more prevalent and severe in rural areas where poverty incidence is almost double that in urban areas. The incidence of poverty in the Midwestern and Far western regions and in the mountain districts greatly exceeds the national average.

However, the decline in poverty has been accompanied by an increase in inequality. Overall, people who tend to remain poor are households of agricultural wage earners, those who are landless or have small land holdings, those with illiterate household heads, and those living in large households (with seven or more members).

In terms of different caste and ethnic groups, Hill and Terai Dalits represent the poorest segment of the population, despite a decline in poverty - from 58 per cent to 46 per cent. Indigenous groups, the so-called *janjatis*, account for more than 35 per cent of the population. There are 59 official indigenous groups in Nepal, among the more prominent groups are Newars, Gurungs, Rais, Limbus, Tamangs and Magars, while there are other groups that are very marginalised when it comes to access to political and economic power. For further elaboration on the political and social divisions of Nepal, see the full Context Analysis in Annex III.

### 3.4 Indicators of Conflict Sensitivity

Based on the context analysis of Nepal and the existing tools of CSA, the RT drafted the first indicators of CS. When conducting the desk study and field surveys in Norway and Nepal, the RT tested and revised these indicators in order to assess more aptly the level of conflict sensitivity in the particular context of Nepal. The main indicators utilised:

1. Context Analysis & Understanding, including capacities to identify connectors (Local/National Capacities for Peace) and dividers
2. Project targeting causes of conflict
  - Choice of geographic location of projects/choice of Nepali partner
  - Choice of Target group (disaggregated data on socially excluded groups).
  - Ability to modify/change project/programme
3. Communication and information-flow between partner organisations and levels of decision-making (field-KTM-Oslo)
4. Flexibility of programmes to programme
  - Any modifications in the way the projects are being designed and implemented? Lessons learnt
  - Mechanisms for conflict sensitive monitoring, how to get reliable information? (dialogue with stakeholders)
5. Good development practices (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency) including special focus on organisations' accountability & transparency
  - Knowledge and adherence to Basic Operating Guidelines developed by INGOs
  - Use of social audit on projects
  - Transparency of INGO
6. Coordination and communication with national and international development actors
7. Partnership approach of the cooperating organisations.
8. Impartiality (do organisations provide services or rights-based development irrespective of

politics, ethnicity, religion, gender?),

- How is the organisation perceived (explicit/implicit signals) among parties in conflict

Input to indicators were absorbed from the minutes of the seminars organised by the Norwegian Embassy in 2005 in which the participants had identified areas and ways of working in a conflict sensitive manner. <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> List of 10-15 points from Minutes from Seminar 2006, undated document from the Embassy

## 4 OVERVIEW OF NORWEGIAN SUPPORT TO NGOS

### 4.1 Norway and Nepal

Relationships between Nepal and Norway date back to the time after World War II. Norwegian missionaries were the first ones to establish themselves in the Himalayan country, and in 1964, the first official development cooperation project was supported. As in other parts of the world, solidarity and development organisations as well as academics followed in the 1970s and 1980s. The cooperation also expanded into private joint ventures in the field of hydro-power due to Nepal's natural disposition and Norway's particular expertise in hydropower.

In 1996, the Norwegian Parliament decided that Nepal be a main partner country for development assistance. Government-to-government development cooperation was established with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in accordance with Nepal's own priorities and Poverty Reduction Strategies. Four years later diplomatic relations between Norway and Nepal were further enhanced when an Embassy was opened in Kathmandu. At that point 12 Norwegian organisations were working in Nepal receiving approximately 18 million kroner.

Norway has in the MoU with Nepal's government concentrated on three main sectors: a) basic and primary education, b) good governance and human rights, c) energy sector development (with focus on hydro power and electrification)

The total level of development aid to Nepal has fluctuated from NOK 24 million in 1995 to NOK 70 million in 2000, to NOK 143 millions (of which NOK 125 million was channelled through Norad) in 2003, reaching a peak of almost NOK 162 million NOK (23 million USD).in 2005.

Norway provides support to Nepal through three channels: bilaterally, from government to government; through multi-lateral channels in the UN system; and through Norwegian non-governmental organisations (NNGOs). For the budget year of 2005, the distribution was as follows:<sup>7</sup>

| Aid channel                                      | Amount in 1000 NOK | % distribution |
|--|--------------------|----------------|
| Bilateral (govt-govt) <sup>8</sup>               | 67 177             | 41,5 %         |
| Multi-lateral organisations <sup>9</sup>         | 60 068             | 37,1 %         |
| Norwegian non-governmental organisations (NNGOs) | 31 390             | 19,4 %         |
| Local (Nepali) NGOs                              | 1 604              | 1,0 %          |

<sup>7</sup> Norad's annual report 2005 (in Norwegian, September 2006)

<sup>8</sup> Including support for education, rural energy programme in public institutions, departments, consultancies, private sector etc

<sup>9</sup> Earmarked for multi-laterale institutions like UNDP, WFP, UNICEF etc

|                    |                |       |
|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| International NGOs | 1 566          | 1,0 % |
| Total              | <b>161 805</b> |       |

40 per cent of the funds thus went directly to His Majesty’s Government. Due to political events (see full Context Analysis, Annex III) Norway decided in July 2005 to reduce development assistance by 10 per cent as a reaction to the negative democratic development in the country. No new agreements were signed with HMG.

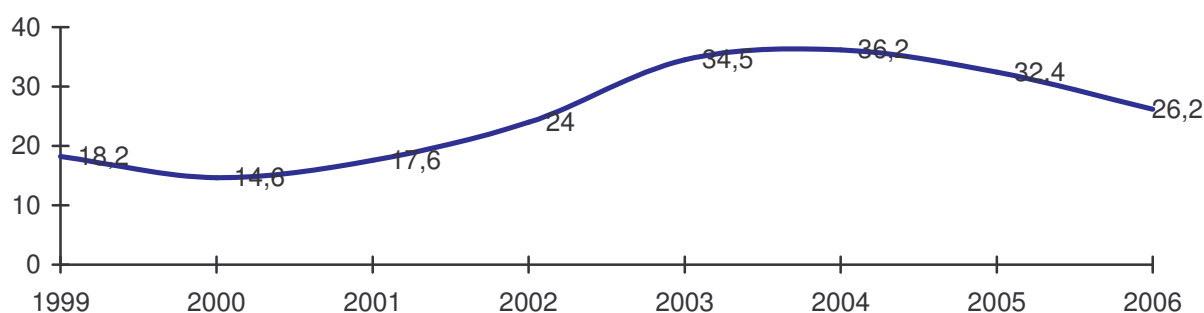
However, when democracy was restored after the popular uprising (*Jana-andolan*) in April 2006, the decision was reversed and governmental officials have indicated that the Norwegian support to Nepal may increase if the positive development continues.

## 4.2 Norwegian organisations

In the period 1999 to 2005, NOK 177 million kroner (around USD 25 million) was channelled to Norwegian organisations supporting partners in Nepal. The number of organisations was at the most 25, while today the number of Norwegian recipients is down to 11, two of which are aid networks which further channel the funds to individual member organisations of the network. So the number of individual organisations receiving funds is 15.

As seen in Figure 1 below, there has been a steady increase in the funding to the organisations from 1999 to 2005, reaching a peak in 2004 with more than NOK 36 million. For 2005 and 2006 the total amount has been reduced to 32 million and 26.2 million respectively.

**Figure 1: Norwegian development assistance to Norwegian organisations in Nepal (1999-2005) in million NOK**



Among the 11 organisations that have been funded for the last years, four are members of the network Atlas Alliance working mainly with disabled peoples’ organisations. Two organisations are members of the Norwegian missions in Development (BN). The network has its main functions with regards to the donor; annual plans & reports are submitted from the networks to Norad, and Norad channels the fund to the network.

When assessing the organisations’ conflict sensitivity the RT has looked directly at the projects implemented by the individual organisations, thus this report will refer to 15 individual organisations when focussing on their performance in the field/at home, but to 11 organisations when focussing on funding.

Save the Children Norway (SCN) is the largest recipient (33 per cent) of the total assistance channelled to the organisations from 1999-2005, followed by the Atlas Alliance (17 per cent) which until 2005 included three organisations working Nepal (LHL, FFO and NFU). The Norwegian Association of Blind and Partially Sighted (NABP), has received nine percent of the total funds since 1999. From 2006, NABP has returned to the coordination of funding in the Atlas Alliance.

As seen in Table 1 below, SCN and the four members of the Atlas Alliance have handled almost 60 per cent of the Norwegian funding the last seven years.

For the remaining 40 per cent, the Norwegian Red Cross has received 12 per cent, while Norwegian Church Aid has six percent and Norwegian Missions in Development, which is composed of member organisations like the Norwegian Himal-Asia Mission (NHAM) and Normisjon, has received five percent of the funds. The share of the Development Fund and FORUT is three percent each.

| <b>Organisation</b>  | <b>1999</b> | <b>2000</b> | <b>2001</b> | <b>2002</b> | <b>2003</b> | <b>2004</b> | <b>2005</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>in %</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Save the Children Norway  | 5 822       | 4 009       | 5 091       | 8 521       | 11 867      | 14 175      | 9 325       | 58 810       | 33 %        |
| 2. Atlas Alliance  | 4 969       | 2 813       | 4 492       | 4 080       | 4 687       | 4 669       | 4 151       | 30 349       | 17 %        |
| Norwegian Association of Blind and Partially Sighted <sup>10</sup> | 1 866       | 1 951       | 2 485       | 2 434       | 2 883       | 2 247       | 2 752       | 16 617       | 9 %         |
| 3. Norwegian Red Cross   | 276         | 687         | 1 060       | 2 950       | 4 604       | 6 458       | 4 458       | 20 492       | 12 %        |
| 4. Norwegian Church Aid  | 1 713       | 1 213       | 1 471       | 1 312       | 1 166       | 2 285       | 826         | 9 986        | 6 %         |
| 5. Norwegian Missions in Aid                                       | 1 111       | 1 172       | 964         | 1 126       | 1 428       | 1 550       | 1 976       | 9 328        | 5 %         |
| 6. Norweg. Bar Association   | 636         | 636         | 700         | 962         | 1 091       | 1 524       | 1 173       | 6 722        | 4 %         |
| 7. Development Fund  | 424         | 1 338       | 318         | 756         | 893         | 1 009       | 1 338       | 6 077        | 3 %         |
| Fredskorpset <sup>11</sup>   |             |             | 123         | 875         | 1 914       | 1 547       | 1 461       | 5 920        | 3 %         |

<sup>10</sup> As of 2006, NABP has been included in the Atlas Alliance.

<sup>11</sup> Support to the Peace Corps is of such a different character that it was not included in this Review.



|   |               |              |              |              |              |              |              |                |      |
|---|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|------|
| 8. FORUT  | 700           | 700          | 700          | 802          | 842          | 1 002        | 972          | 5 716          | 3 %  |
| 9. Plan Norway  |               |              |              |              |              |              | 2 007        | 2 007          | 1 %  |
| 10. Union of Education (incl Norsk Lærerlag up to 2002) | 134           | 22           | 129          | 251          | 144          | 194          | 175          | 1050           | 1 %  |
| 11. Humanist Association Norway, HAMU                   |               |              |              |              |              | 150          | 320          | 470            | 0 %  |
| Various NGOs  |               |              |              |              |              |              |              | 3502           | 2 %  |
| <u>Totalt 1999-2005</u>                                 | <u>18 284</u> | <u>14622</u> | <u>17632</u> | <u>24068</u> | <u>34520</u> | <u>36259</u> | <u>31390</u> | <b>177 046</b> | 100% |

### 4.3 Categorization of NGOs

Among the 15 individual organisations working in Nepal through partners, there is a great variety of level of professionalism, cooperation modality, and agenda.

A review of Norway's support to NGO's and civil society in Nepal (Kruse et al) from 2001 commissioned by the Embassy in Kathmandu and Norad in Oslo gave useful input regarding the different characteristics of each organisation. The study divided the organisation according to the sectors they worked in (children, eye health & disability, tuberculosis, community development, energy, and human rights/legal aid) while documenting their working modalities in Nepal in the various sectors.

For the purpose of assessing the level of conflict sensitivity among the NGOs, the RT has found it useful to categorize the organisations both according to the sectors they work in and in terms of their set of values/norms: what are their vision and mission for the development work in Nepal, how do they present themselves, and what values are promoted. In a conflict situation, individuals and the organisations will usually be perceived in a particular way according to the values held and the ethical/implicit messages conveyed through those values or other activities. For the purpose of describing how the Norwegian organisations work in Nepal, the below rough categorization might be helpful.

**Category 1) Development/humanitarian organisations<sup>12</sup>:** organisations whose sole mission is development or humanitarian work guided by universal human rights or rights conventions, for example Children's Rights Conventions.

<sup>12</sup> The Norwegian Refugee Council attempted to set up a permanent presence in Kathmandu in 2005/6, but due to various reasons NRC was not operational during the time of the Review.

- ✓ Save the Children Norway (SCN)<sup>13</sup>
- ✓ Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)<sup>14</sup>
- ✓ Development Fund (DF)
- ✓ Plan Norway
- ✓ Norwegian Red Cross (RCN)
- ✓ FORUT<sup>15</sup>

**Category 2) Professional unions:** group of professionals organised to promote the interest and rights of a particular profession (teachers & lawyers) in their home countries, and which have later developed branches concerned with providing development assistance in their respective fields of expertise.

- ✓ Union of Education Norway
- ✓ Norwegian Bar Association

**Category 3) Interest-based groups:** groups of people with similar interest organise to defend and promote their access to services and rights:

- ✓ Norwegian Association for Persons with Development Disabilities
- ✓ Norwegian Association of Blind and Partially Sighted
- ✓ Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People
- ✓ The Norwegian Association of Heart and Lung Patients<sup>16</sup>

**Category 4) Faith and ideology-based organisations:** organisations established to promote certain faiths, beliefs or ideologies. Their main focus is development or solidarity, but specific values/norms sprung out of the beliefs guide their choice of projects/partners (staff).

- ✓ Norwegian Himal-Asia Mission<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Save the Children Norway's Vision is “a world that respects and values each child, that listens to children and supports their influence, and where all children have hope and opportunity to live in freedom and security.”

<sup>14</sup> Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) is “a non-governmental and ecumenical organisation that works to ensure the individual's basic rights. Anchored in the Christian faith, NCA supports the poorest of the poor, regardless of gender, political conviction, religious affiliation and ethnicity.”

<sup>15</sup> “FORUT’s vision is a world in peace and without poverty, where all are secured human rights and social justice, and where alcohol and drugs do not prevent people’s well-being and fulfilment of human potential”

<sup>16</sup> LHL is a member of the Atlas Alliance, but its programme in Nepal focuses on health development assistance (interview with LHL 28.09.06).

- ✓ Normisjon<sup>18</sup>
- ✓ Humanist Association of Norway (Hamu)<sup>19</sup>

Keeping in mind that SCN is the only organisation with a permanent presence in Nepal, its situation differs significantly from the other 14 organisations, which do their project follow-up being based in Norway.

Most of the organisations in Category 1) Development/humanitarian organisations have long-term partnerships with their Nepali counterparts or partners based in Nepal and follow-up on annual or semi-annual project visits. Some also use their regional networks and offices in other parts of South Asia to strengthen operations in Nepal.

For example, NCA has supported the Lutheran World Federation Nepal (LWFN) since 1984. LWF is cooperating with 22 Nepali NGOs and/or community-based organisations (CBO) with a long-term perspective. NCA provides core funding to the whole of the Nepal programme, and follows up support from its regional office for South Asia in Colombo (previously from Bangalore). Emergency assistance is normally coordinated through Action by Churches Together, NCA's international network for humanitarian assistance. For competence-building, NCA also has facilitated links with resource organisations/consultants in India, and a regional gender network of NCA-partners (SAGA/South Asian Gender Alliance).

Plan Norway, the most recent addition to the Norwegian organisations in Nepal, has a similar type of long-term commitment to Plan Nepal. The support goes to three specific projects (not core funding). Plan Nepal has one-year contracts with their implementing partners.

Both of the organisations in Category 2), Union of Education Norway and the Norwegian Bar Association conduct development work as a “side” activity to their regular activities. Both organisations have considerable experience from international work, but only UEN has employed staff for following up the projects. NBA lawyers devote two months work to the follow-up, but admit that they need to further professionalise their follow-up of the development projects.<sup>20</sup>

The four organisations in Category 3) are all members of the Atlas Alliance. Nepal is one of Atlas' main cooperating countries with currently six projects within the field of strengthening disabled people's rights, eye health, and rehabilitation. In addition, LHL has been supporting the National Tuberculosis Programme (NTP) since 1987. The NTP is the largest single project supported financially by Norway (3,5 million kroner for 2006). The project has been evaluated

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<sup>17</sup> NHAM's vision: “We are an organization with a mission from God to share the testimony about Jesus with the people in the Himalayan region. We are workers that carry with us the mission about Jesus through our work, what we say and what we do in our daily lives”

<sup>18</sup> Normisjon's basis and vision: “Normisjon's activity is founded on the Word of God and the confession of the Church of Norway. Normisjon wants to reach the unreached and make disciples”

<sup>19</sup> From the HAMU webpage: “The Humanist Association is an organization for people who base their life stance on human values. The Association will work to develop humanism and contribute to ensuring that people may practise their humanist life stance”

<sup>20</sup> NBA has already started the process of professionalising the international work. Interview with NBA 6.09.06

by WHO as a highly successful intervention that has reduced the mortality due to TB greatly. The organisations of Atlas Alliance refer to UN's Standard Rules for Persons with Disabilities and Chronically diseases, which includes also LHL's work with TB control is within this definition of disabilities. The other three members are working with disabled peoples' organisations in Nepal.

For the organisations in Category 4) the faith and ideology-based organisations, the NHAM has long traditions in Nepal, having worked in the country since 1954. NHAM has been a key player in developing the hydro-power sector in Nepal. Normisjon started in Nepal much later, although it had a Norwegian school in the country, the support to the Okhaldunga hospital was agreed upon in 2004. Both organisations are members of the BN network. A majority of BN's local organisations have a religious identity, and BN sees the conflict sensitivity aspect becoming even more important. BN sees their cooperating partners in the recipient countries as important actors in peace building.<sup>21</sup>

HAMU, which springs out of the Norwegian Humanist Association, recently got involved in supporting projects in Nepal. Since 2005, it has channelled support to the Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT) and a project of mobile health clinic in the area around Nepalganj.

#### **4.4 Partner Organisations in Nepal**

There are approx. 48 different Nepali partner organisations through which the Norwegian NGOs work in Nepal. Of the 48 organisations, 31 are implementing organisations for Save the Children Norway (SCN). In addition, SCNN works with government institutions such as the Department of Education, the Central Child Welfare Boards and the National Human Rights Commission, as well as with 3000 child clubs, 1500 school management committees, and 320 village child protection committees at local level. As the only Norwegian NGO that is institutionally present in Nepal, SCNN is able to uphold a large network of partners.

The Nepali partners of the remaining 14 Norwegian organisations can be categorised into three broad areas according to their status as legal entities in Nepal. Four are international non-governmental organisations (INGOs); Save the Children Norway – Nepal (SCNN), Plan Nepal, Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and United Mission to Nepal (UMN). As mandated by the Social Welfare Act (1992) and also due to changes in working approach of INGOs in the recent years in response to the political conflict, these INGOs work mostly in partnership with other Nepali organisations for implementing programmes/projects. LWF partners with 22 different NGOs for programme/project implementation. In addition to various government and other local and national NGOs, Plan Nepal has links with over 600 CBOs for different community-managed projects. The implementing organisations of Plan Nepal specifically for Norwegian supported projects are the National Federation of the Disabled Nepal (NFDN) and Central Child Welfare Board (CCWB). Similarly, UMN implements its projects through the Okhaldhunga mission hospital and an NGO called PEEDA.

Two of the Nepali partner organisations of Norwegian NGOs are government institutions: the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Health (MoH). These government institutions

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<sup>21</sup> Comments to draft report from BN 7.11.06

are the highest recipients of support among the individual Nepali partner organisations. In 2006, the MoH has received NOK 4.6 million (17 per cent of total funds) through Atlas Alliance to implement two programmes. Similarly, the MoE received NOK 2.6 million (9 per cent) for the Education-Nepal programme.

The remaining partner organisations are mostly NGOs, federations, and associations of special interest groups or professions. These include a range of organisations in terms of their size, capacity, outreach, values, and mission. The Nepali partner organisations can be classified using the framework used earlier for classifying Norwegian NGOs as listed in table below: <sup>22</sup>

| NNGO  | NEPALI PARTNER  | GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION   | CATEGORY   |
|---|---|---|------------|
| <b>1. Save the Children</b><br><br>- has 31 partners in Nepal, see Annex X for full list, examples presented in table | Nepal Resource Centre for Rehabilitation  |   | 1          |
|   | District Educational Office, Kavre<br>Nepal Ministry of Education                               | Kavre   | Government |
|   | SAHARA  | Kathmandu   | 1          |
|   | SAFE  | Nepalgunj – Banke   | 1          |
|   | IHRICON – Institute for Human Rights  | Kathmandu   | 1          |
| <b>2. Atlas-alliance:</b><br><br>a) NABP  | Nepal Association of the Blind; Rehabilitation Programme and Organisational Development of NABP | 23 districts (Ilam, Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Kapilbastu, Chitwan etc)    | 3          |
|   | Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh - Nepal Ministry of Health (Rapti Eye Hospital)                         | Dang, Pyuathan, Salyan, Rolpa, Rukum and Kapilbastu.                    | Government |
| b) NFU  | Nepal Parents Network   | All regions except mid-Western and far-Western                          | 3          |
| c) LHL  | Nepal Ministry of Health  | Kathmandu   | Government |
| d) FFO  | National Federation of the Disabled Nepal   | Kohalpur, Biratnagar, Butwal<br><br>(Hetauda and Mahendranagar by 2007) | 3          |
| <b>3. Norwegian Red Cross</b>   | Nepal Red Cross Society   | Taplejung, Bojpur, Nuwakot, Parsa and Bajhang (HIV & Aids)              | 1          |

<sup>22</sup> For more information on the Norwegian organisations in Nepal, see Bihari Krishna Shrestha & Basudha Gurung (2001), *A Review of Norwegian Support to NGOs in Nepal, Case Studies*, study for Royal Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu & Norad.

|                                     |   |   |                               |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
|                                     |   | Kanchanpur & Khotang (CD)   |                               |
| <b>4. NCA</b>                       | LWF -see Annex X for full list  | Kathmandu + many districts  | 4                             |
|                                     | Martin Chautari   | Kathmandu   | 1                             |
| <b>5. Development aid (BN)</b>      | United Mission to Nepal   | Dhading   | 4                             |
|                                     | a) Tibet mission – UMN  | Kathmandu University  | Dhulikhel, Kavre<br>Education |
| b) Normisjon                        | United Mission to Nepal   | Okhaldhunga   | 4                             |
| <b>6. Norwegian Bar Association</b> | Nepal Bar Association, Central Project office in Kathmandu 10 current branch offices: | Arghakhanci, Baglung, Chitwan, Udaypur, Parbat, Dadelhdura, Pachathar, Pyuthan, Nawalparasi, Sindhuli | 2                             |
| <b>7. Development Fund</b>          | NCDC – Namsaling Community Development Centre   | Ilam  | 1                             |
|                                     | LIBIRD (Local initiatives for Biodiversity), VDC Humla                                | Pokhara, Humla  | 1                             |
| <b>8. FORUT</b>                     | Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN)  | Kathmandu   | 1                             |
| <b>9. Plan Norge</b>                | National Federation of the Disabled Nepal   | Kathmandu   | 1                             |
|                                     | Central Child Welfare Board   | Kathmandu, Banke  | Government                    |
| <b>10. Union of Education</b>       | NNTA and NTA  | Kathmandu   | 2                             |
| <b>11. Humanist Association</b>     | Centre for Victims of Torture   | Kathmandu, Nepalgunj  | 1                             |

## 5 FINDINGS

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The Norwegian Embassy in Kathmandu for some years emphasised the need for the organisations to be aware of the effects their projects might have on the conflict and vice versa. A minimum requirement has been following the ‘do no harm’ principles. Although conflict sensitive reporting has not been integrated as an explicit reporting or planning criterion in the Norad formats, all 15 Norwegian organisations were present in one or two of the seminars organised by the Norwegian Embassy in 2005 and 2006. Conflict sensitivity was the major topic for presentations and discussions at both seminars.<sup>23</sup> So, what have the organisations learnt from this, are they analysing the context of their programmes & projects? And are they adjusting their project according to the situation?

The findings are presented in accordance with the chosen indicators in 3.4, in addition to points mentioned by the ToR; Norwegian organisations’ value added, coordination and cooperation, and gender sensitivity (including organisations’ follow-up of UN Security Council 1325).

### 5.1 Context analysis

Following the main schools of thought (and ‘do no harm’) among development actors and researchers working in the areas of aid and conflict, the first step in a process of conflict sensitive programming is to conduct a context analysis.

In general, the RT found a weak understanding among the Norwegian organisations of the need for context analysis. A common statement from the NGOs was “we do not have any problems with the Maoists”, “our project is not directly related to the conflict,” or “we don’t work in areas controlled by the Maoists, so there’s no need for conflict sensitivity.” Some organisations defined ‘conflict’ as mainly violence-related incidences. There was less attention to the underlying root causes of the conflict.

In the desk study of project documents, the RT found that around one third of the 15 Norwegian organisations had included analysis of the context in their project documents. Through the in-depth interviews the projects documents were elaborated and detailed.<sup>24</sup> However, it reinforced the finding that several of the organisations lacked detailed information about the context in which their projects were being implemented.

As regards **the development/humanitarian organisations**, the Norwegian Development Fund is probably the organisation with the most elaborate context analysis – both as seen in project applications and verified through in-depth interviews with key staff and cooperating partners in

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<sup>23</sup> Interestingly, only a few of the interviewed organisations referred to the seminars as ‘seminars on conflict sensitivity’, the main thing mentioned was that they got the chance to meet and exchange information with other Norwegian counterparts.

<sup>24</sup> One organisation noted that some of the information regarding the warring parties in the conflict is so sensitive that they cannot write everything. The in-depth interviews were therefore a good opportunity to elaborate the applications in more detail.

Nepal.<sup>25</sup> Since both projects are being implemented in areas that have experienced frequent violent clashes (Ilam and Humla), the documents outline in great detail which actors are involved, their interests and the risks and assumptions attached to the success and potential impact of the project (including approval by the Maoists of the projects). DF states openly that there are considerable risks in supporting projects in a volatile and inaccessible area like the Humla Development Initiative. The transparency in reporting on potential risks to the donor is a good indicator of CS.

NCA and Plan Norway have good tools for analysing the context of their partners' interventions at the national level (Nepal), but not for individual projects the way DF does. For NCA, this is explained by the NCA's funding strategy; the organisation funds the core programme of its partner organisation, Lutheran World Federation, not individual projects.

For a country like Nepal with such geographic, ethnic, social, and cultural diversity, a good contextual analysis at the national level may not be sufficient with regards to project design and implementation at the specific district or community level. For NCA, the lack of context analysis for individual projects would imply a need for a closer follow-up, communication and information-sharing from the field to Oslo in order to ensure that the project is conflict sensitive. For Plan Norway, there seems to be a challenge in describing detailed project modalities such as the way in which the project will be implemented, through which channels and actors, and the type of partnership, indicating a relatively weak contextual analysis at the district or community level. Through in-depth interviews with Plan Nepal in both Kathmandu and in one of the field offices, the RT asked for specific information, but was unable to identify the organisation's capacity for analysing the specific contexts of the two projects supported under the Norad frame. Plan Norway explains this with reference to the fact the projects are part of larger programmes and thus such analysis would be found at a higher level.<sup>26</sup>

The Norwegian Red Cross (Red Cross) is the organisation that via its partner, the Nepal Red Cross Society, probably has the most extensive outreach and contacts in all 75 districts of Nepal. The Norwegian Red Cross supports directly two projects in seven districts (among them Bhojpur and Taplejung where there have been both clashes and abductions). In Red Cross's project documents there is an absence of context and conflict analysis.<sup>27</sup> During in-depth interviews with staff in Norway the context was elaborated. The RT also found that there were ongoing processes both in Norway and Nepal for developing guidelines and code of conduct for working *in* conflict, but less focus on how aid can affect the conflict. The Red Cross is mandated by strict neutrality principles through the Geneva Conventions, which should make it imperative to have strong context analysis of the projects to ensure that its Nepali partner is perceived as neutral in all operations. It was outside the scope of this review to check the field reality and understanding among NRCS's staff of the context they are working on. Red Cross acknowledges that working through national societies worldwide presents challenges. In every country the national societies often suffer from developmental problems that encounter the rest of the country. NRCS has gone through a process of raising the awareness of its own staff regarding the importance of being neutral. This issue was found to have been raised in internal Red Cross documents.

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<sup>25</sup> See for example DF's Multi-Year Application 2006

<sup>26</sup> Comments from Plan Norway to draft report.

<sup>27</sup> Red Cross application 2006-8



SCNN, which is working mainly in the rural areas of Nepal, has detailed analysis of the contexts of their programmes. However, each programme contains many projects, and it was outside the scope of this review to assess the many project documents of SCNN. Instead the, RT assessed the systems of communication between was the various levels of Save the Children Norway, their partnership approach and capacity, in order to assess the extent of sensitising the programming to the conflict (see also Case Study1 in Annex IX and point 5.2).

The campaign for solidarity and development (FORUT) has been working in Nepal for more than ten years and demonstrated a good knowledge of the political situation in interviews with the RT. However, the project documents are not providing an analysis of the context that the projects Balika home for young girls and the Centre for self-reliance, are being implemented in. FORUT explains this with reference to the Norad formats for plans and reports that do not explicitly ask for a context analysis. Their Nepali partner, CWIN, is one of the leading child rights advocacy organisations, and has carried out several workshops and participated in advocacy campaigns (such as the Children as Zone of Peace) throughout Nepal. CWIN has also been managing a programme on children in armed conflict.

The lack of adequate context analysis in the case of project Balika home supports two general observations made throughout the review. First, the extent of conflict analysis done for different projects (by the same implementing organisation) varies according to the project. Second, a general tendency was that the conflict analysis was perceived more relevant and therefore necessary, only in projects that were directly linked with the conflict – due to either the nature or the geographical location of the project. This reflects on the level of understanding of conflict sensitivity of each organisation.

The **professional unions** (teachers & lawyers) are well informed of the political context their partners are working in, but this is not reflected in analysing the effects of their own project intervention and the potential impact of the conflict setting on the project. The Norwegian Bar Association works with the Nepal Bar Association building up Branch Offices for free legal aid in 10 new districts each year.

In recent years, the number of cases reaching the project has been reduced greatly. The Norwegian Bar Association is acutely aware of it, and has discussed it with NEBA. However in the reports to Norad, there is no mentioning of the conflict situation and how it has affected the impact of the project.<sup>28</sup> NEBA explains that it has raised the issue with Norad, but without having received any proper feedback on how to deal with the challenge.<sup>29</sup>

The plans and reports from the Union of Education Norway clearly reflect the immense challenges their Nepali partners are faced with; there are several teachers organisations (NNTA, NTA and TUN), UEN has encouraged them to unify into one, but due to historical reasons, the teachers' organisations have been unable to do that. UEN is well aware of the fact that public

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<sup>28</sup> According to one Progress Report from NEBA in 2006, 10 branch offices handled 70 cases, which give an average of 7 cases per office for 3 months. The NBA explains that they have raised the issue with NEBA, but has been unable to adjust project.

<sup>29</sup> Comments to report from NEBA, November 2006.

school teachers in Nepal do not have a neutral image due to their politicisation, but these issues are not thoroughly analysed in the project documents. Issues like the implications of teachers being political, are highly relevant in order to assess the impact of the UEN's project. Many teachers have been killed and abducted as a result of the conflict. Is it because they are political more than professional teacher unionists? Although the Nepali teachers unions insist that they work for the professional rights of the teachers (and not their political parties), the RT would suggest that it is very difficult to retain two "hats" in such a politicised and violent conflict situation.

Both of the professional unions have strong insight into their respective fields (education & law), but seem to have weaker tools for analysing the context, its dividers and connectors, than e.g. the humanitarian development organisations.

The existence of context analysis in the project documents of the four members of Atlas working with **Disabled People's Organisations in Nepal** vary. Atlas plans and reports to Norad are brief. The 2005 country report counts four pages for six projects. The umbrella organisation reports that "[w]ork with and for disabled people's rights is being regarded positively by the Maoist guerrillas which control some of the areas where the Atlas Alliance works, but the conflict has influenced possibilities for travelling freely."<sup>30</sup>

LHL and NABP, both with long experience in Nepal, can document an institutional memory and understanding of the Nepali context. Being focused on a) reducing mortality due to TB and b) providing services for the blind, rehabilitation and building capacity of the Nepali Blind Association, both organisations are operating in the rural countryside where there are often violent conflicts. Although the RT was impressed by the detailed knowledge of the project context, geographical locations, staff recruitment and policies in the NABP, the project documents from Atlas refer mainly to the lack of freedom of movement when listing conflict-related challenges. NFU and FFO have not included context analysis of their projects in the documents sent to Norad.

Among the **faith and ideology-based groups**, the RT found good analyses of the conflict in both organisations in the BN-network; the project documents of the Normisjon, which is supporting the only hospital in the district of Okhaldunga, through UMN, show sensitivity to the impact of the project on the conflict and vice versa. Normisjon is in fact – along with DF, among the organisations writing most candidly about the challenges they face being caught in the middle between the Maoists and the Army (see also textboxes below).

The Norwegian Himal-Asia Mission and its partner in Nepal, UMN have radically altered their modalities and direction of work in the last years. From working mainly in the energy sector and technical education, NHAM has shifted to peace and conflict transformation – integrating the peace and conflict transformation as a cross-cutting issue for all of its projects. The pilot project "Pro-Poor Hydropower" was chosen as one of the case studies for this review. The RT found that the strong context analysis present in the project document was also reflected in how UMN is engaging the targeted local community in the field where the hydropower station is to be built (see Annex IX for Case Study).

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<sup>30</sup> Page 1 "Års- and landrapport" GLO-01/411 Atlas sekretariatet

The Humanist Association's HAMU channels support to a project of mobile health clinic in the area around Nepalgunj. Operating in an area of conflict trying to provide health services to survivors of torture from either side in the conflict, there is a weak context analysis in the project documents. This impression is also verified through in-depth interviews with staff of HAMU in Norway and CVICT in Kathmandu. There *is* an awareness of 'do no harm' and conflict transformation in CVICT. The centre, which is well-known and recognised as the leading agent on training social counsellors and workers in psycho-social healing, is implementing an interesting project of Local Mediation in three rural districts.<sup>31</sup> However, the learning and modalities of 'do no harm' seems to be insufficiently internalised since it has not been transferred to the Norad-supported project in Nepalgunj.

Summing up, a majority of the humanitarian development organisations possess the tools and skills for context analysis, while the faith-based organisations (except HAMU) have the *lived* experience of providing health and technical services during conflict. The professional unions and the organisations working with disabled people's organisations have elements of context analysis in place, but have so far attached less importance to the issue in their project documents.

## 5.2 Targeting causes of conflict

### 5.2.1 Geography

When reviewing the geographic distribution of the projects and partners supported by Norway, the RT found that 13 out of 15 organisations support Nepali partners with head offices located in the capital of Kathmandu, or can be defined as national NGOs. One organisation that is not working with KTM, is DF, whose partners are based in Ilam, LI-Bird in Pokhara and in the Far-Western district of Humla. SCNN is working in 35 districts with their main focus on the rural areas.

Although the head offices are in KTM, most of the projects are implemented outside of Kathmandu. The overall impression is that most organisations are focussing on partners that are more easily accessible in terms of geography and conflict.<sup>32</sup> Many are concentrated in the plains of the Terai belt, around the major cities and towns. A few of the partners and those that have a nationwide presence, such as NRCS, have projects running in remote hills and mountains (NRCS HIV/AIDS project in Taplejung, Bhojpur, Bajhang and UMN in Okhaldhunga).

### 5.2.2 Choice of partners

The RT tried to map the mechanisms used by Norwegian NGOs to select and form partnerships. Do the Norwegian NGOs rely on Nepali organisations to approach them or do they actively seek suitable partners in Nepal? If the former is true, then the national level NGOs would have greater

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<sup>31</sup> Local Mediation project in three districts Jhapa, Saptari and Ilam funded by DFID.

<sup>32</sup> On a comparative note, the Swiss development organisation Helvetas supports 50-70 partners in Nepal, but not one of them is based in the capital. See [www.helvetas.ch](http://www.helvetas.ch)

access to the Norwegian counterpart NGOs, thus explaining the high level of partnerships with Kathmandu-based organisations. Given the limited capacity of many of the district/community level NGOs or local CBOs, very few would have the ability to access the Norwegian NGOs, unless they were actively sought after for specific project implementation. As mentioned above, only one of the 15 Norwegian NGOs has an office in Nepal, SCNN. By virtue of being in Kathmandu with contact offices in Nepalgunj, Baglung, Doti, Surket, Palpa, Kavre, Damauli and Itahari, SCNN would have greater access to and be more accessible for the community level organisations. This also allows SCNN to be more proactive and selective in choosing partners rather than relying on proposals sent in by Nepali partners (which would most likely be national level or urban-based NGOs).

SCNN was described by one of its partner as being “very receptive to learning from the field.” For instance, the income generation guideline was proposed by SAFE and did not come from above. However, some of the other donors have been relatively detached from the field. SAFE therefore feels that the partnership approach of the donor agency, their attitude and value addition to the organisation is key when it comes to working towards conflict transformation.

Few of the Norwegian organisations were found to have specific criteria for choice of partners, a majority had stayed with the same partner for many years irrespective of changes in the external environment (conflict) in Nepal. For organisations such as Plan Norway and the Red Cross, the choice of partners is largely taken by their Nepali sister organisations. The Norwegian organisations trust the criteria used by their Nepali partners. The same is also the case with most of the Atlas members; NABP is working with the Nepal Blind Association and the Norwegian Federation of Disabled Peoples Organisations is working with the National Federation of Disabled in Nepal.

#### **BEST LESSON: NATURAL RESOURCES**

Plan has been emphasizing the use of natural resources such as public land, water and degraded forest for generating income for the highly marginalized communities. Villagers who do not fall in this category sometime create uproar and do not agree with this idea. Rounds of meetings were organized with the community with the facilitation of the VDC, local clubs and NGOs and agreements were reached in allocating part of the land in developing as community forest for the use of the families not benefited from the scheme. This settled the dispute. (Rautahat/Bara)<sup>33</sup>

### **5.2.3 Choice of target group**

As seen in the context analysis in chapter 3, the social, economic, and political exclusion of groups of people based on their castes, ethnicity, or gender is part and parcel of social systems that have existed in Nepal in various forms for centuries. It is only in recent years however that these forms of exclusion have become catalysing causes for the Maoist insurgency.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Best lesson from Plan Nepal.

<sup>34</sup> The RT experienced first hand during the field survey how effective the Maoists demonstrations can paralyse all

Social exclusion in Nepal is not limited to caste. Nepal has one of the world's highest maternal mortality rates, illustrating the fact that women are frequently isolated from public services and proper healthcare, but women are also denied basic rights such as access to citizenship and inheritance. In addition, there are many social practices and norms that suppress women's freedom and rights in Nepal, including the right to education, freedom of speech, mobility, and the right to proper nutrition and food.

That said, it is important to separate between the political and the social conflict. Even if women have been excluded for years, they do not necessarily become violent and join the warring parties. The conflict in Nepal has changed the role of Nepali women in the rural setting in two ways. First, a large number of women have actually joined the Maoists due to the widespread repression in Nepali society. Many joined voluntarily, but for others this was not a voluntary act and they were forced to join the Maoist army.<sup>35</sup> However, by being in the army, many young Nepalese women have departed from the traditional role of women in the rural Nepali context. On the other hand, women who did not join the Maoists have also had to redefine their roles. Many have been widowed or left behind by their husbands who have either gone to join the Maoists or in search of employment opportunities. This has drastically increased the household work and farming work for women. As heads of households in the absence of their husbands, they have also had to deal and negotiate with the Maoist militia and the army.

Civilians, and particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those affected by the armed conflict in Nepal, many of the Norad-supported projects target the rights of women and children, and providing them with protection. The issue of trafficking of women and children into the sex-industry is raised by both SCNN and NCA. Few projects however were found to directly target women as stakeholders and actors in resolving the conflict or promoting their roles in peace-building (ref to UN Security Council Resolution 1325).

Studying the staffing in the Nepali partner organisations, women were also found to be greatly underrepresented. On average the partners had 20-30 per cent female staff working in the partner organisations, but very few in leading positions. Only one of the Nepali partner organisations interviewed had female leadership, and a few had female program coordinators. The Nepali partners explained that it is difficult to recruit women as project coordinators in the field due to the lack of safety for staff.

To assess if socially excluded groups are targeted by the projects, the RT asked all organisations if their projects include measures to ensure that excluded groups are integrated or given easier access (i.e., affirmative action) to services, protection, or rights. Only a few organisations responded positively to the latter issue. In fact, most organisations were male-dominated in terms of staff. Since the study was limited to only a few in-depth field visits (2 case studies out of more than 70 projects), the RT was unable to verify to which extent the organisations actually succeed

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the traffic in the capital of Kathmandu. The occasion was a demonstration for some interest groups demanding their rights. The conflict with the Maoists has brought social exclusion to the fore. Many groups have (been) mobilised and started demanding their rights.

<sup>35</sup> According to Li Ernesto's book *Dispatches from the people's war in Nepal*, Pluto Press, 2005, women report that they are relieved to be in the revolutionary movement because here men treat them as equals, but the book also mentions cases where women were more or less forced to join the People's Army. See also Human Rights Watch's testimony before the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, Thursday, May 18, 2006 Testimony of Saman Zarifi, Research Director, Human Rights Watch. [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)

in including socially/economically/politically excluded groups.

#### 5.2.4 Poverty focus

Most of the Norwegian organisations have stated that their development mission is to reduce poverty in Nepal. Knowing that 85 per cent of the population lives in rural areas, and that 30 per cent of the population live under the official poverty rate, there is a need for every organisation to scrutinise their programmes in Nepal in order to assess whether it is reducing poverty as much as it can.

However, as far as this review is concerned<sup>36</sup>, only a few Norwegian organisations include projects with poverty reduction as their main goal: SCNN addresses poverty reduction directly in its programme by targeting social inclusion and education; the Development Fund's improved livelihood projects and the NHAM's pro-poor hydro-power project (although it is still a pilot and has not yet been implemented) both have poverty reduction as their key goal.

The community development project of the Red Cross has elements of improving livelihood (ex self-help groups), but the main focus is on empowering people so their life situation improves. Whether such projects actually lead to poverty reduction depends on other factors. An external evaluation of a similar community development project concluded that the project had brought about "significant change in social conditions of people" such as health, hygiene, literacy etc., and "raised their level of self-esteem, equipping them with new skills and launching campaigns against male alcoholism."<sup>37</sup>

For NCA's partner LWFN, the main objective for the programme is "civil society for accountable governance." This is also confirmed by an external evaluation report. However the second strategic objective is 'improved livelihood' and LWFN has two partners, CEAPRED in the West and 10 savings and credit groups in the central district of Lalitpur.

The organisations working with disabled people's organisations view the promotion of disabled's rights as an important contribution towards reducing poverty among the most marginalised, namely people with disabilities.

The BOGs highlight the importance of being focused on poverty in order to reduce the causes of conflict. BOGs first point states: "We are in Nepal to contribute to improvements in the quality of life of the people of Nepal. Our assistance focuses on reducing poverty, meeting basic needs and enabling communities to become self-sufficient."

Furthermore, point 3) "We provide assistance to the poor and marginalized people of Nepal, regardless of where they live and who they are. Priorities for assistance are based on need alone, and not on any political, ethnic or religious agenda."

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<sup>36</sup> It should be underlined that this point is based on a study of the organisations' project documents. Review of projects in the field might have found more projects actually leading to reduced poverty.

<sup>37</sup> Quotes from page 6 in NRC's Nepal Country Report 2003-5, to Norad

Point 4) stresses the need to be “transparent and [that] we involve poor people and their communities in the planning, management and implementation of programmes. We are accountable to those whom we seek to assist and to those providing the resources.”

The BOGs were developed so that international organisations would immediately recognise the key issues for relevance (i.e. conflict sensitivity) when working in Nepal.

The Swiss organisation Helvetas, which is one of the largest and most established NGOs working in Nepal shared their experience: -Social exclusion is a root cause, we all agree on that. But some places social inclusion can lead to exclusion; for example in Accham, our entrance point was mobilising the Dalits, but that caused more problems. We focused on a mixed community, the organisation was a livelihood projects. They developed local resource persons, entry through the poor and then spreading to the rich. However, after a while we saw that this caused heavy tensions and pressures from the richer groups. The Maoists didn't like it either. They said “it's we who mobilise the Dalits, not you!”. Our learning was that to promote inclusion, you need to build a consensus. Mobilise people for a universal value (as people) and not on basis of their ethnicity, caste or religion<sup>38</sup> (see also discussion in point 6.1 for how to balance the focus on social exclusion without increasing tensions)

Still, the “political conflict” has developed a self-sustained dynamic. As the Swiss Development Cooperation Strategy for Nepal points out, “[t]he strategies and tactics of the main parties to the conflict have lost a direct connection with the social and economic realities of the country and cannot realistically be influenced by improving the latter. Neither can they be influenced by reducing the tensions and the structural violence generated by injustices and exclusion (“the social conflict”). As a consequence, development cooperation has no immediate impact on the military motivations of the parties to the conflict. The violent fight for the conquest of the State must be recognised and addressed as an independent reality by all donor agencies operating in Nepal.<sup>39</sup>

### 5.3 Communication

For a foreign organisation to be sensitive to a local cooperating partner's working environment, especially in conflict, there needs to be frequent communication and contact. Most of the organisations in visit their partners at least once a year - some twice a year (eg. the Atlas organisations of NFU, FFO, as well as UEN and DF). One organisation (Plan Norway) has one project visit both ways annually: the Nepali partner comes to Norway once a year and vice versa. Some of the smallest of the organisations follow up less frequently. Due to a lack of human resource capacity, FORUT for example, was seen to have a relatively weak project follow-up, with no system of filing travel reports from project visits, evaluations or monitoring reports. The same was found with HAMU.

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Helvetas, October 2006. Lessons from Helvetas publication “Empowering Dalits”, Learning and Sharing Series no. 1, (2005) Kathmandu, Nepal

<sup>39</sup> Page 10 in Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Nepal 2005-2008, Swiss Agency Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Apart from annual or bi-annual visits, the frequency and quality of communication between the Norwegian organisations and the partners in Nepal vary greatly. Some have e-mail contact every week, while others said that they e-mail mainly in the time of the project cycle for reporting and planning to Norad.

The type of contact depends of the type of partnership modality/funding model between the Norwegian organisation and the Nepali partner. For example, LHL and NCA which both channel their funds into a joint pool with other international partners, conduct joint follow-up visits and reviews/evaluations. UEN also coordinated some of its follow-up of the organisation development and training for Nepali teachers through Education International (EI), the global trade union for teachers<sup>40</sup>

Communication depends on language and culture. While it is not at all a requirement or expected that Norwegian organisations should have Nepali-speaking staff, the RT observed that the organisations which came across as the most aware and sensitive had a project coordinator and a technical advisor that spoke Nepali (DF & UMN/NHAM).

The RT found several cases of serious misunderstandings and lack of communications between the partners in Nepal and Norway. In some cases, there were pieces of information that the RT was unable to verify since both parties presented different versions of reality.

Some of the organisations have hired project coordinators that follow up their projects in Nepal. NABP, NFU and FFO have their own staff that provide reports and updates on how the project is progressing. SCNN has a system of field visit on quarterly basis and half yearly review of progress with partners. The RT reviewed a large number of evaluation reports and studies commissioned by the SCNN and found that good communication with the field and partners has become a “trademark” for SCNN.

When assessing the level of communication between the central level and the field in the Nepali partner organisations, the RT found that the level of conflict sensitivity can be influenced by the management style and the organisational culture. When the senior management has a more “hands on” approach working with their team, partners and local community, they are more in tune with the ground realities of the target areas. This style of management may be inefficient due to detail-orientation under normal conditions, however, under situations of uncertainty due to conflict, this helps them to be more flexible at the strategic level and adjust their programme approach according to the field realities.

The communication mechanisms are also influenced by the culture of the organisation: how often communication occurs and the nature and quality of the communication. In one of the organisations, the RT observed that the senior management including country representatives or directors like to be in the field in order to get a better sense of people’s needs and the situation there. This culture and practice of being in close communication and relationship with the partners and community was seen throughout the organisation, including at the regional offices. In some other organisations, the managers at the centre did not visit the field as frequently and

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<sup>40</sup> Education International represents more than 29 million teachers and education workers with 348 member organisations operating in 166 countries, from pre-school to university. In Nepal both NTA and NNTA are members. [www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org)



delegated more through project coordinators. This study suggests that there is a link between how often management is in the field and the level of conflict sensitivity in the organisation.

#### BEST LESSON: **DIALOGUE – COMPROMISE**

In one remote area, an INGO was working in 16 VDCs (Village development Committee) supporting community health post and health centre. One day the health posts came under attack of the Maoists because they were governmental. The INGO was asked to stop the work. The hospital leadership had several meetings with Maoists and discussed with them. Finally the Maoists agreed to allow the INGO to do the health services, but in a separate location (not the governmental health post). The INGO suspended its health activities in 10 VDCs, but continued in 4 VDCs.<sup>41</sup>

**Umbrella organisations:** The value-added of the umbrella organisation of the Atlas alliance with regards to conflict sensitivity is unclear, as in the case of the Norwegian organisations in Nepal. For purposes of communication the existence of an umbrella organisation ought to have been an advantage, but for RT it is uncertain whether this was the case. The RT used the same methodology with all the Norwegian organisations; a) contacting the organisation, b) asking for an interview where the Norwegian organisation could provide all relevant information with names and contact addresses of partners in Nepal, c) meeting with Nepali partners, and d) if in need, referring back unclear issues to the Norwegian organisations. But with the Atlas Secretariat it caused communication problems.<sup>42</sup> There is a Nepal network among the Atlas organisations working in Nepal, but the RT was unable to benefit from the network and meet with them.

On a different level, the Atlas organisations are using the same formats for reporting to the secretariat, but there is no coordination on issues like auditing, reporting or training in the field in Nepal. When RT raised the issue of a closer follow-up of audits or even using the same auditor that could report to the Atlas secretariat in Norway on all four Norad-supported projects, this was seen as “internal processes” that Atlas does not want to interfere in. A higher awareness of the use of public audits, transparency, and accountability as key indicators for conflict sensitivity in Nepal is probably needed. There is a danger of more bureaucratisation and delays for both plans and reporting.

For the other network, Missions in Development (BN), through which two organisations are working, some of the same issues of lack of coordination exist, but the flow of information seems to be much better, although also here, the field confirmed that there are challenges in the lines of communication between BN – the Norwegian partner – the Nepali partner – the field (often a CBO). However, the BN secretariat responded rapidly to the RT requests, a crucial ability for organisations working in conflict areas. Both NHAM and Normisjon work with the same partner in Nepal (UMN), a fact which probably facilitates closer contact.

<sup>41</sup> This story is from one of the organisations where RT has withheld names.

<sup>42</sup> A letter from Norad was sent to all organisations on 4 September 2006 informing about the Evaluation, including to the Atlas Secretariat. However, one of Atlas’ members did not receive information about the Evaluation until one month later. Information from Comments to Report from Atlas Secretariat 2.11.06

Although Norad has encouraged the establishment and expansions of umbrella organisations, it demands more efforts from the organisations in order to be CS, especially in terms of information-flow and sharing of vital knowledge related to the conflict. Conflict sensitivity implies knowledge and closeness to the field – and that is weakened by multiple levels of administration and management.<sup>43</sup>

**BEST LESSON: Model of Financial Transparency in Mugu<sup>44</sup>**

A five-days training on Parenting Education was organized for the Non-Formal Education (NFE) Facilitators by UMN in Mugu district. On the final day all participants were informed of the total expenditure in different headings and the participants had signed the expenditure sheet.

The 13 participants from Ruga and Pina VDC had very much positive response of this way of transparency. They affirmed that they have never seen this done in any training. Some of them replied they always had suspicion about the expenditure made for the program, but this type of deed has eliminated their mistrust. In addition, one of the participants mentioned that now he knows such a big amount had to be spent, he will be more responsible to practice the knowledge and skills learnt during the training.

## 5.4 Flexibility/adaptability of programmes

In the definition of Conflict Sensitivity chosen for this study, the organisations’ are asked not only to analyse and understand the interaction between their intervention and the context; but also to *act* upon the understanding of this interaction, in order to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive ones.

Thus, the RT asked all organisations to give examples of best lessons from the field, any examples of how projects have been adjusted or changed to accommodate or actively counter negative aspects of projects. The existence of best lessons from the field is an indicator of how much and what kind of reporting Nepali partner send to their Norwegian partners, and thus how learning generated from the field is fed into the organisations funding the projects.

Some organisations were unable to give any examples, while others wrote several pages of stories.<sup>45</sup> Some of these “best lessons” are scattered around in this report.

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<sup>43</sup> This point goes directly against the recommendation of the Rattso report on Norwegian support to the NGOs, which recommended an expanded use of umbrellas in Norwegian development assistance to the civil society.

<sup>44</sup> Best lesson provided by UMN

<sup>45</sup> The RT gave several opportunities in the period after the in-depth interviews for the partners to send their ‘best lessons’.

### **BEST LESSON: OWNERSHIP**

The Grameen Bank based microfinance program was regarded as too much controlled by the microfinance institutions with little ownership of clients. Therefore, this program was targeted and obstructed by the rebels in several Plan program areas. Plan designed a Self-reliant group program methodology which has ownership of the community but is linked to the promoting microfinance institution for financial and technical resources. This new methodology implemented in our Banke PU area is regarded as one of the highly successful scheme and is being replicated in many areas by the partner microfinance institution. This program has been accepted by the community as their own and has not been affected even in such an intense political conflict (Banke PU).<sup>46</sup>

The organisations with strong links to their field were more apt to provide us with lessons learnt and success stories of their work. SCN-N has an obvious advantage by being present in the field with an office in Kathmandu. But does that mean that INGOs need to be permanently based in the country in order to be conflict sensitive? The RT would answer: “it is certainly an advantage.” Moreover, specific measures need to be taken to address CS in cases where the organisation is not present, such as the use of strengthened internal coordination and prolonged periods of project follow-up (months instead of weeks).

When not knowing the context well enough, there is a danger that foreign aid reinforces cleavages in the Nepali society such as rural-urban, high-low caste, janjati-non janjati etc.

The RT found incidences of projects where both the Norwegian and Nepali organisation were uncertain if the project was having its best impact due to the conflict. Although the implementing organisation was aware of it, nothing had been done to adjust the project. Instead the funding from Norway continued as normal. It is not unlikely that more examples could have been found if the field survey had been more extensive.

## **5.5 Coordination and cooperation**

The review was asked to look into the level of cooperation and coordination among the Norwegian organisations. Lack of mechanisms for coordination and monitoring among INGOs often lead to duplication of activities, and programmes being centralised. Such weaknesses often lead to ordinary people’s further alienation of development aid. As noted in 3.4 development is widely distrusted among the economically excluded social groups and I/NGOs lack of coordination further exacerbates that.

The embassy seminar in April 2006 ended with an agreement on “improving co-ordination between Norwegian organisations working in Nepal and between the Embassy and the

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<sup>46</sup> Best lesson provided by Plan Nepal

organisations and their partners.” According to the minutes from the seminar, the participants agreed on 12 points:

1. Visit each others’ projects to learn from each other.
2. Invite the embassy if possible to join in the combined field visits not only concentrating on meetings at the embassy.
3. Follow-up point for the embassy on improving the overview of organizations working in which themes and in which districts.
4. Make contact with other NGOs working with the same partner or in the same area.
5. Using the different networks at different levels will benefit at the impact level.
6. Be more open and active in sharing information when there is more than one donor.
7. Area development approach: Involvement in VDC and DDC planning process.
8. Use the existing structures for e.g. members of AIN receiving funds from Norwegian NGOs to have a meeting once a year to share information and create a platform of learning for each other.
9. Involvement of more members of the organization for co-ordination of activities.
10. Joint programming e.g. if one organization is receiving funds from three different organizations then three donors and the partner organization can have a joint programme incorporating all the issues.
11. Set up a network of organizations working under Norwegian funding or use the existing one and invite the embassy to the meetings.
12. Information is available in Norad about the different Norwegian NGOs and their partner organizations as well as the projects they are involved in. This can be made available so members of each organisation will understand the areas that others are working on.

Despite the good intentions, there are still no tangible results of coordination or cooperation among the Norwegian organisations with one exception: point number 2 related to embassy visit in the field has been followed up. The embassy has committed to and joined in several field visits.<sup>47</sup>

According to the Development Fund<sup>48</sup>, there has always been some kind of Nepal-Network based on personal communications and knowledge of each others activities, including links with academic institutions in Norway such as NORAGRIC, SUM etc. However this has never been formally organised or acknowledged. DF states that the main effect of the connections has been learning from one Norwegian partner to the other, including ideas about new partners. As such,

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<sup>47</sup> Representatives from the Embassy have visited among others the Okhaldunga hospital supported by Normisjon/UMN, the educational project in Kavre district by SCN, and a FFO-supported project.

<sup>48</sup> Email from DF 11.11.06

the "network" in Nepal has been a part of an extended expatriate network built individually, while the Norwegian connections "at home" have been more deliberate, but limited.

The embassy's decision to cut 10 per cent of the support to Nepal for political reasons in 2005 mobilised the Norwegian organisations. 12 of them signed a joint letter to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting MFA to change its policy towards Nepal. Two joint meetings were held with good representation and the rest of the communications were by email. A later meeting was organised including the ambassador's yearly meeting with Norwegian NGOs during his summer home leave. As a direct result of this review process, the network has again been revitalised and plans are made for meetings and joint training on conflict sensitivity etc.<sup>49</sup>

Within the network of the Atlas Alliance, there is contact and exchange of information between the organisations working on Nepal. But, RT found some challenges among the members to cooperate and coordinate their activities in the field, especially since some of the member organisations are working in some of the same geographical districts in Nepal.

#### **BEST LESSON: NO "FREE" MONEY**

We always ensure that there is no extra money for the organisation in the budgets, only 5 per cent for the overhead. When we work in partnership with the CBOs, there is a local partnership between schools, CBOs. When the Maoists come, they see that all the money they have is already budgeted for development activities – no free money lying around – so no donations.<sup>50</sup>

## **5.6 Good development practices**

A key principle for sensitising aid to a conflict environment such as Nepal's is to promote transparency & accountability among involved actors. How is this done on practise among the Norwegian organisations and their partners?

There is a high knowledge about issues such as public/social audit among the Nepali partners, i.e. a local partner invites the local community to be a part of auditing the expenses of a project implemented in their village. Public audits are often written on the walls of a community building. SCNN is conducting social audits regularly with most of its projects, especially in the villages. UMN and LWF are also doing social audits, especially for construction activities. But most of the organisations interviewed for this review did not conduct social audits on the Norad-funded projects, especially not on project activities taking place in the capital. The RT sees social audit and accountability as something very positive for the Nepali civil society organisations (it is not yet widespread and common in other countries of conflict). Sharing information on accounts is beneficial for all participants, enforcing a sense of empowerment among those

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<sup>49</sup> Email from DF 24.10.06

<sup>50</sup> Lesson received from the Development Fond.

benefiting.

An issue raised by several of the Nepali partners is the lack of transparency on the part of the international NGOs. Many voiced a sense of ‘hypocrisy’ when the INGOs constantly stress the need for local organisations to be transparent, some are even asked to reveal their salaries to the public (including to the Maoists), while the INGOs do not share their budgets, how much they spend on administration, salaries, and travel costs and daily subsistence allowance (DSA). The *raison d’etre* for the INGOs are the developmental problems and poverty in Nepal, thus the need for INGOs to reveal how much overhead they “charge” to the projects seem to be a legitimate claim.<sup>51</sup>

The RT found a lack of good development practises among some of the organisations, in particular weak monitoring and evaluation of the projects among the professional unions, one of the humanitarian organisations and one of the faith-based organisations. One project had not been evaluated for ten years, and others not for 7-8 years. During project follow-up visits, it was found that some Norwegian organisation’s representatives do not always visit the field and the project. If it is due to a serious security situation, that is acceptable, but the RT found some examples of a lack of follow-up which seemed unrelated to the security situation. A few of these organisations do not meet with the local auditor when in Nepal. They do not even know the name of the auditor, but rely solely on the audits they receive from their cooperating partner. Finally, it was found that some organisations do not have proper written contracts with their Nepali partners.

These last points are only valid for a few of the 15 organisations. However, the fact that some of the organisations receiving funding from Norad lack basic knowledge of what is required for conducting ‘sound’ and standard procedures for project follow-up, is also an indicator of weak monitoring from Norad’s side of the organisations’ systems for financial and administrative management.

**Registration with the Social Welfare Council:** The Social Welfare Act states that any foreign NGO, “if [it] desires work within the kingdom of Nepal, before starting the work shall submit an application to the council for permission.” However, in practise, it seems that the foreign organisation is only required to register with SWC if it sets up a permanent presence in the country.<sup>52</sup> Foreign organisations channelling financial supporting have not been asked to register. SCNN has for many years cooperated closely with the SWC. The last evaluation of SCNN in Nepal with SWC was conducted in 2004.

However, there is a different practise among the Norwegian organisations based in Norway. Organisations like NABP, FFO, DF, and SCN are registered and cooperate with SWC.<sup>53</sup> NFU

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<sup>51</sup> Quoted from Save the Children Norway review of Partnership policy, INTRAC (2000) page 3 in Executive Summary

<sup>52</sup> The RT was unable to obtain an interview with the SWC and thus the information is obtained through secondary sources and the webpage of the SWC.

<sup>53</sup> According to information from SWC from 2006, <http://www.swcnepal.org.np/ingos.shtml>. Added by information from “Coordinating aid to Nepal during Conflict”, lecture by Ganesh Gurung, Social Welfare Council, at Norwegian Embassy’s Seminar for NGOs in 2005.

noted that they have registered, but did not appear in the files of the SWC obtained by the RT.

All of the Nepali partner organisations are registered with the Social Welfare Council. Before a contract is renewed, SWC takes the lead in conducting an external evaluation of the project (paid by the Norwegian donor). NCA, Red Cross, and NABP have taken part of such joint evaluations by the SWC in recent years.

The agreements reviewed by the RT made between the Norwegian organisations, its Nepali partner, and SWC, like for example the agreement between NAB, NABP and SWC is a transparent and clear agreement, with a detailed budget, provisions for reporting, auditing and good development practises.

#### **BEST LESSON: TRANSPARENCY**

One organisation shared that as a community based organisation they need to be inclusive and have good relationships with all including the Maoists and local government line agencies. The organisation often shared all the information regarding the project with all sides in community mass meetings. “Once we did a mass meeting, and we provided daily subsistence allowance (DSA) for all those present, which included community members from the Maoists. The Maoists collected the per diem support and gave it to the local school. Because the Maoists knew the exact budget, they also knew how much to collect.”<sup>54</sup>

## **5.7 Impartiality**

Impartiality is a challenge for many organisations working in conflict. In general, the interpretations and understanding of the concepts of impartiality and neutrality varied. Among the Nepali partners, only a few organisations distinguished between neutrality and impartiality. Many regarded the two terms as being synonymous. As one respondent explained, “We try to maintain a neutral image by having no political affiliations and also through our actions. But when it comes to impartiality, we look at basic rights of the individual; for us, a child is a child, not a Maoist or a party worker”.

The Nepali NGO Federation has approved a Code of Conduct for its members which directly tackle the issue of impartiality.<sup>55</sup> According to point 2) Impartiality Conduct:

- 2.1. No campaigning of political party/ group or thought, or attempts of political influence on others in institutionalized way is allowed. Political grudges are not to be mixed with work.
- 2.2. Preaching religious conversion or speaking for or against religions in institutionalized manner is not allowed.

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<sup>54</sup> Best lesson from DF/NCDC

<sup>55</sup> Under the Constitution 2048 (amendment 2054) Act 27 of the NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN), the following directions are in force with regard to the conduct of all the Non Governmental Organizations, office bearers and Members associated with NFN, as passed by the Fourth Convention and Ninth General Assembly of the NGO Federation of Nepal. Interview with NGO Federation, Kathmandu, October 2006.

### 2.3. Discrimination or partiality on the basis of caste, ethnicity, religion, gender or regionalism is not allowed.

The RT found most the Nepali partners very aware of the need for being impartial. They also shared that perceptions of their impartiality depended on the donor of the project. Some said that the reason why they were still able to work in areas under Maoists control was the neutral image of Norway among the Maoists. One organisation shared that initially when they were approached by the Maoists they were questioned if their donor was among the G8 nations. Some of the faith based organisations, NCA and NHAM, which are working with the socially excluded groups have faced allegations of instigating or supporting the Maoists movement based on the assumption that many of the socially excluded groups have been encouraged to join the Maoist movement as a result of being empowered by such organisations.

On the other hand, the same organisations have also had to face criticism from the Maoists for “diverting their critical mass away from the people’s movement by engaging them in development work”. Hence the issue of impartiality is difficult as it is not just a matter of practising impartiality, but of appearing impartial to the parties in the conflict.

It did seem like several organisations had got used to imposing a kind of self-censorship in their reporting to Kathmandu on conflict-related incidents/issues. Regarding the issue of paying part of one’s salary to the Maoists, BOGs advise not to do it. However in order to operate, the RT got the impression that quite a few of organisations’ staff pay the ‘fees’ – albeit on a ‘personal level’, not in the name of the organisations, for pragmatic reasons.

It is a difficult balance for many local organisations: how much can be given in to either side in the conflict to them ‘friendly’ so they are allowed development space to work.

#### **BEST LESSON: MOBILISING BENEFICIARIES**

One organisation shares that when they had to develop a new strategy, “we moved into a new remote location of the district centre. Also this time we had several meeting with Maoists. That period was very hard and stressful. Other NGOs and INGOs stopped and withdrew. But then the local community people were feeling that during conflict, health problems also increased, so they formed a committee and held a meeting with the Maoist. The INGO is following the do-not-harm principle with the community. The Maoists finally realised and understood our programme, then they stopped disturbing us.”<sup>56</sup>

## **5.8 Staff security**

Working in remote geographical areas has increased the security threats against the I/NGOs. Rough estimates (until November 2006) show that the Maoists control up to three-quarters of the area outside the capital Kathmandu and the country's other major cities. In the ten-year long

<sup>56</sup> Best lesson from UMN/Normisjon



conflict very few development workers have been killed, but many have been injured, abducted for shorter periods, or subjected to extortions, threats, and blackmail. In 2005, several development organisations suspended their work in some of the Maoist controlled areas after Maoists attacked their field staff.

Several organisations set up a Risk-Management Office (RMO), among them the German GTZ, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), SCNN, and the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV). These donors decided to stop work until the Maoists apologise and publicly agree to honour the groups' basic operating guidelines, which include, 'We do not accept our staff and development partners being subject to violence, abduction, harassment or intimidation'.<sup>57</sup>

The process of formulating Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs) for how to work in conflict was initiated due to incidences such as the above in 2001 (see Annex 5). 10 international donors (among them Norad and SCNN) took part in the process. The guidelines were finalised in 2005 and printed in both English and Nepali for wide distribution.<sup>58</sup>

For the Norwegian-funded partners of SCNN, DF, NCA, NABP, NHAM, Red Cross and, to a lesser extent, Plan, concerns for staff safety were high on their agenda during interviews and discussions with the RT. The partners of NCA and Plan Norway have pulled out of areas due to security risks and inability to work due to the Maoists pressures.

SCNN interacts directly with the Maoists in order to ensure staff safety and (oral) approval of projects. This has also been an issue for the Development Fund and UMN.

Apart from SCNN, which is based in Nepal, only DF confirmed that they are actively referring to the BOGs when in the field. Eight organisations were not familiar with the contents of the BOGs at all. RT interprets this as an indicator of weak understanding for how to work in a Nepali conflict context. It seems like some of the Norwegian organisations are so distant from the conflict that they are not familiar with the specific work situation of their Nepali partners. This finding could be ascribed to the lack of communication between the field and head office – Oslo, possible self-censorship among the Nepali partners, as well as a lack of information-sharing between the organisations regarding practical field-related issues. Finally, it could simply be an expression of the fact that the partners of the eight organisations do not work in areas where there have been security risks.

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<sup>57</sup> Quoted from “Marty Logan, “Nepal: Civil Society Caught Between the Devil and Deep Blue Sea”, IPS, 23 May, 2005

<sup>58</sup> UN also developed its own guidelines “UN Basic Operating Guidelines” with more or less similar points, but more comprehensive and complicated.

**Findings summed up:**

- ✓ There is a great gap in the level of conflict sensitive programming among Norwegian NGOs in Nepal.
- ✓ The development/humanitarian and faith-based organisations are more aware of the context and conflict sensitivity, and are in possession of more tools for analysing conflict sensitivity, than are the professional unions and the organisations working with disabled peoples organisations.
- ✓ A majority of project documents are weak on context analysis, a finding supported by interviews with project staff in field and in Norway
- ✓ Some NGOs have continued their support to projects like ‘business as usual’ with no or little adaptation to a changed conflict environment, even if the project’s impact is not measured.
- ✓ A conflict sensitive tool such as “Do no harm” is sometimes treated as a specific ‘project’, or as a topic for specific workshops, while not being internalised with staff or integrated into the overall programmes as a cross-cutting issue.
- ✓ Social inclusion in the main theme in Nepal, but women as leaders, actors and peace-builders are still underrepresented in the projects supported by Norwegian NGOs
- ✓ Many Norwegian organisations are not familiar with the BOGs while the Nepali partners are working in accordance with BOGs.
- ✓ Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of some Norwegian NGOs.
- ✓ Weak coordination among NGOs despite encouragement, funding, and facilitation from the Norwegian Embassy in Kathmandu. Lack of coordination is probably a reflection of the fragmentation of the Nepali partners.
- ✓ Lack of Norwegian presence in the field inhibits in-depth knowledge and understanding of the local context, making flow of information more crucial.

## 6 ASSESSMENT

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Based on the findings presented in the previous chapter, this chapter assesses some of the major features of Norwegian support to the NGO sector on the basis on Norway's overall goals for Nepal and the DAC principles for development, such as relevance, and, to a lesser extent, the effectiveness of some programmes. The efficiency, sustainability, and impact of programmes and projects were outside the scope of this review, although one assumption made is that if a project is found not to be conflict sensitive, its impact (and thus sustainability) is likely to be limited.

Norway has not developed separate country strategies for Nepal like some other donors (EU, World Bank, Switzerland). However, a paper from Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>59</sup> states: "Nepal's own plans and strategies are the basis for Norway's development interventions."

Accordingly, the goals of Norway's development assistance to Nepal are:

- Reducing poverty
- Supporting Nepal's efforts for peace and development

When assessing the Norwegian NGOs operating in Nepal, the RT thus makes references to Nepal's existing country strategies and programmes:

- ✓ Nepal's Tenth Plan/poverty reduction strategy (PRS) 2002-2007
- ✓ Nepal's Millennium Development Goals

In addition, reference is made to Norad's guidelines for NGO funds from 2001 and the Norwegian Embassy's Activity Plan for 2006,<sup>60</sup> Among the main priorities mentioned are:

1. Continuing the work with developing the cooperation with Nepal to be as conflict sensitive and relevant as possible. This includes making existing interventions more conflict sensitive and ensuring that new activities are conflict sensitive.
2. Ensuring that the Embassy has the needed flexibility and preparedness for various scenarios, from a humanitarian crisis to a peace process, which would precipitate support for activities such as demobilisation and preparations for elections.

### 6.1 Relevance

Nepal's Tenth Plan for Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2002-2007 explicitly identifies social exclusion as a fundamental development challenge, and outlines four pillars for reducing the

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<sup>59</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2003) in Norwegian only, *Norsk bistand til Nepal* ("Norwegian Development Assistance to Nepal").

<sup>60</sup> In Norwegian only *Virksomhetsplan for 2006*, Ambassaden i Kathmandu, dated 11.11.2005 ("Activity Plan for 2006").

poverty: Broad-Based Economic Growth, Human Development, Social Inclusion, and Governance.

Nepal endorsed the Millennium Development Goals declaration in September 2000 and declared its commitment to follow the global agenda of MDGs and to work toward achieving the MDGs by the year 2015. Most of the MDG-related indicators are incorporated in PRS.

Most of the Norwegian NGOs state that they are working towards reducing poverty and reaching the most vulnerable groups, especially women, children and excluded groups, making their interventions highly relevant to the above mentioned policies. Although, as shown in the findings, looking at their geographic location and approach, it can be questioned whether the Norwegian-supported interventions are aimed at reducing poverty (and thus causes for tensions).

As shown in the geographic distribution of partners, some of the NGOs are not in the poorest and most remote areas. I.e., some organisations are working mainly in the Terai, which is most densely populated, while the poverty prevalence is highest in the hilly areas. Assessing the overall relevance of the Norwegian NGOs is difficult because the geographical spread and fragmentation of projects.

As seen in the findings, many of the Nepali partners had conducted do no harm or conflict mitigation training for their staff, or other tools for practically handling conflict situation.

All of the Nepali partners registered as international NGOs (SCNN, LWFN, Plan Nepal, UMN) as well as some of the local organisations were actively using the Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs) when assessing how to deal with the Maoists.

Apart from the organisations based in Nepal, only DF confirmed that they are actively utilising the BOGs when in the field. None of the eight other organisations were familiar with the contents of the BOGs. This might be another indicator of the lack of communication between the organisations regarding practical issues of field concern – or an expression of the partners of the eight organisations not working in the 80 per cent of the country which is conflict-affected.

Few of the project documents make reference to integrated aspects like supporting local capacities for peace or connectors. This was also confirmed during the in-depth interviews with the Norwegian organisations, very few could give examples of projects that had found ‘connectors’ and reinforced them through specific project activities. In the interviews with the Nepali partners, the RT was given many examples and best lessons. This gives us an indication that there is weak learning generated from the field to the Norwegian partners.

The organisations are also highly aware of the social exclusion issues at stake in Nepal, but do not necessarily see the links to their own ‘projects’. It can be seen as a discrepancy, when organisations have elaborate policies on ‘do no harm’ in the central office, while in the field the project staff send out implicit ethical messages (ex driving fancy vehicles, mixing private and the project’s economy, being the president of an NGO while at the same time being a paid staff member, ‘dual roles’ etc).

Specific targeting of marginalised group is a challenging issue in conflict sensitive planning because it can sometimes lead to unintended consequences. For example, during the recent agreement between the Government of Nepal, the SPA and the Maoists, The Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) alleged that the Agreement had neglected the spirit of the

community and their role during popular movement. NEFIN said that the political parties ignored calls by indigenous peoples for the establishment of a federal republic with ethnic guarantees of self-determination, inclusive state mechanism, proportional representation in the constituent assembly and restructuring of the state.

This illustrates the challenges that also development actors are faced with in terms of addressing the root causes of social exclusion without spurring further conflict. NCA had reflected on this dilemma, but among the other organisations, there was low awareness on that issue. The Swiss NGO Helvetas shared their views on how to balance the focus on including excluded groups without ‘tilting’ it, i.e., making excluded groups so focused on their exclusion that it actually spurs conflict.

Summing up some of the strengths of the Norwegian NGOs, it should be highlighted that they generally have a long-term commitment and support to their Nepali partners: the majority has stayed with the same partner for more than ten years. Conversely, in some instances this might be viewed as a weakness, since it might indicate a lack of re-direction or adaptation to a changing conflict environment. Hence, while continuity of partnerships might be positive, a precondition for a long-term, fruitful relationship is that it be sufficiently flexible to adapt to changing circumstances.

## 6.2 Effectiveness

The RT found a difference between the organisations in terms of the type of partnership approach chosen. The approach depended on the criteria used for selecting partners, the level of commitment/agreement, the frequency of visits/follow-up/contact and information-sharing/reporting.

The review would suggest that the conflict sensitive effectiveness of the organisations would vary according to the type of follow-up. There was a difference perceived by the Nepali partners that *some* of organisations with a long-term commitment are more susceptible to understanding the context of their projects. Plan Nepal was given as an example of an organisation that provides its partners with annual contracts. This leaves the implementing organisation with a high degree of insecurity. It needs to spend substantial time on fundraising. An organisation such as the

SCN-N was provided as an example of a partner that provides in-service capacity-building of the Nepali partners coupled with a long-term commitment (and contract).

The lack of coordination among NGOs receiving Norad support was seen as an impediment to the effectiveness of the aid. Some examples:

- Plan Nepal, FORUT, and SCN support the same partner, CWIN. They do conduct meetings when FORUT is in Kathmandu, but with little tangible results (joint formats for reporting, auditing, monitoring etc) have been developed.
- HAMU supports CVICT, so do SCNN and Plan.
- FFO and Plan Nepal are both supporting the Nepali Federation of the Disabled (NFDN).

- Plan Nepal, SCNN and LWFN all support the Dalit Welfare Organisations
- NCA/LWFN and Red Cross are both supporting Nepal Red Cross Society

The review would suggest that organisations that follow-up from Norway have a particular responsibility for ensuring that it coordinates with donors locally.

At another level there is a lack of coordination and cooperation among the organisations in Norway. This is not peculiar to Nepal, but considering Nepal's special development problems like accessibility and complicity of conflict, it would encourage coordination.

One of the partners of the Development Fund, NCDC, invites all its international partners for a joint donor meeting annually whereby the whole budget is agreed upon and donors commit themselves to certain budget posts. This approach ensures local ownership to the planning and budgeting, while on a parallel level eases the coordination for the donors.

Measuring the results of the projects supported by Norway seems to be a challenge for some of the Norwegian partners. Many of the project documents reviewed in this study report on activities rather than overall results that develop due to inputs and activities. A more result-oriented monitoring would help reviews such as these to extract the main results. Few of the organisations had a system for absorbing lessons learnt from the field.

Summing up, RT is certain that most of the Norwegian organisations would benefit greatly and enhance their learning from coordinating with each other, which in turn would enhance their level of conflict sensitivity.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

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1. The insurgency that started ten years ago has compelled many development actors to rethink their strategies trying to address the underlying causes of poor governance, conflict, and a disappointing development record. Some Nepali organisations have revisited their development practices increasingly focussing on self-critical examinations of their missions, transparency, and accountability. Projects perceived to reinforce social, economic, and political inequalities have sometimes been stopped by the Maoists. Public audits have become standard. INGOs based outside Nepal have to a much lesser degree been held accountable.
2. The Norwegian Embassy has repeatedly encouraged the organisations to become more ‘conflict sensitive’ in order to increase the impact of the projects. The review found some indicators that there has been a shift in the organisations’ approach during the last years, but with a few organisations there had been no change. The findings suggest that just half of the organisations reviewed can be labelled ‘conflict sensitive’.
3. The non-adaptability of some of the organisations (ref. definition of CS in 3.1) can be ascribed to several factors: lack of in-depth knowledge of the conflict context; well-established existing partnerships with Nepali organisations that are not easily shifted or ended; and the category of organisation it represents. Here it seems as if organisations that are tied up to ‘who they will work with’ based on their organisation’s mandate/bylaws (profession, ideology or international membership), are less flexible in choice of projects, partners, geographical areas, as well as sectors. The RT searched for ‘lessons learnt’ during interviews with Norwegian and Nepali organisations, as well as when reviewing projects documents and evaluations, but found that only a limited number of projects have been adapted in order to strengthen e.g. local capacities for peace or other connectors.
4. The projects supported might be highly conflict sensitive, as may their Nepali implementing partners. However, several plans and reports presented to Norad were not in line with conflict sensitive programming, an indication that in order to fully assess the organisations’ level of conflict sensitivity there must also be individual assessments in the field.
5. The value-added of Norwegian organisations on conflict sensitivity was remarkable with a few (SCNN, NCA, DF, NHAM/UMN), but in general, the Nepali partners were much better trained and aware of ‘do no harm’ and other tools for conflict sensitive monitoring and implementation than were their Norwegian counterparts. The organisations seemed better trained on conflict sensitivity than on gender sensitivity, but whether these tools were ‘internalised’ and actually operationalised fully during project implementation was outside the scope of this study and also difficult to conclude on.
6. Organisations based in Nepal are operating according to the BOGs developed by international donors and seem to have a united policy for dealing with both Maoists and the Nepalese Army. Norwegian organisations following up the project from Norway have limited knowledge of the BOGs (with a few exceptions) something which has resulted in unintended ‘violations’ of the BOGs, such as weak transparency (point 4 in BOGs) and accountability towards the involved recipient communities.

7. Social exclusion is a main theme in Nepal. Many organisations are trying to address these challenges. However, there is often a lack of practical application of measures intended to address them. For instance, indigenous groups and low-castes like Dalits are underrepresented in the Nepali partner organisations studied. There are also remarkably few women involved as actors in the programmes of the Norwegian supported partners.

8. Good development practises were seen as one of the most important indicators for conflict sensitivity in Nepal due to widely held mistrust of aid among many people. A few of the Norwegian organisations had weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of their projects in Nepal. Similarly, the review found a lack of importance attached to ensuring that planning and budgeting are inclusive and participatory. Being transparent with those whom one supports – provided that strict impartiality is effectuated - is often the best security protection for development workers in conflict areas.

9. Efficient and open communication between Norwegian and local partner is crucial when working in a conflict context, not only to ensure staff safety, but also for monitoring that the project is on right track; strengthening the positive connectors in society, working to mitigate dividers and unintended negative consequences. Many of the Norwegian organisations were found to have an insufficient system (or no system at all) for information-sharing and communication between the three (sometimes four) levels; Norad (funding/reporting) - (Norwegian umbrella) Norwegian partner – Nepali partner (KTM) - implementing partner in the field.

10. Related to the above, input from the local partners in terms of analysing the context and identifying (root and proximate) causes of conflict as well as connectors, were in many cases not reflected in the project documents developed. Two conclusions arise from this particular finding:

a) The Norwegian partners lack tools for asking questions that bring forward relevant information: what to look for when following up projects/programmes in the field, and how to act on the information received

b) The current Norad formats for plans and reports are not encouraging the organisations to include context analysis, elaborations on and explanations regarding how the organisations are adapting and sensitising their programmes to strengthen the connectors.

11. Norwegian NGOs do not sufficiently coordinate or cooperate either in the field or in Norway. Some organisations support the same project and the same organisation, but do not harmonise planning or reporting requirement even if the donor (Norad) is the same.

12. The Norwegian Embassy in Kathmandu is given credit by the Norwegian and Nepali organisations for taking several initiatives for increasing their awareness on what aid does/can do to the conflict in Nepal.



## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. Norway has a long tradition for supporting the international work of numerous larger and smaller Norwegian NGOs and civil society representatives, but in countries of conflict it is in everybody's interest that these organisations sensitise their development programmes to the context. The responsibility lies with the organisations themselves. Norad's role is to develop systems for ensuring that the Norwegian organisations are flexible, effective, transparent and in line with the country's own priorities, when such plans exist, for targeting root causes of conflict (in Nepal's case; to work along the poverty reduction strategies).

2. Norwegian development actors are known for promoting national ownership in the countries in which they work and for promoting donor coordination and harmonisation. Taking the PRS seriously would imply that all development projects, whether multi- or bilateral or through the NGO-channel, should be geared towards achieving the four PRS pillars.<sup>61</sup> This report recommends that Norway could operationalise its long-term commitment to supporting national ownership and donor harmonisation in a Country Policy paper (or Strategy) for Nepal. Such a Country Policy would help the Norwegian civil society organisations to find their own roles and priorities within the overall Norwegian support to Nepal.

3. In the current situation<sup>62</sup> of a recently agreed-upon peace agreement between the SPA and the Maoists, it is more important than ever to ensure that all development interventions are geared towards strengthening the country's fragile peace agreement. Inclusion of groups excluded based on caste-ethnicity as well as reaching geographically remote areas, is important in that process. The same is true as regards including women as actors in peace-building efforts.

4. Norwegian organisations based in Nepal and/or those with a substantial field experience from Nepal could give valuable input to such a Policy Paper.

5. Norad could consider adapting its formats for planning and reporting so that they allow for more elaborate context analysis of the programmes and projects. All projects being supported by Norway in Nepal should fulfil at least some minimum requirements for conflict sensitivity developed in this report. This needs to be viewed in the context of Norad's strategic focus and the ongoing process of simplifying forms & procedures for the organisations.

6. Communication between Norwegian and local partner is crucial when working in a conflict context. Even though the political/security situation might improve in the near future due to the peace agreement, reports from the districts suggest that most development actors will still face challenges related to the conflict in Nepal. Norwegian NGOs must have better routines for frequent communication with their local partners.

7. Emphasising a bottom-up approach, input from the Nepali partners could be used more

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<sup>61</sup> PRS 4 pillars are broad-based economic growth, human development, social inclusion, and governance. It was outside the scope of this review to look at the multi and bilateral aid of Norway to Nepal, but knowing that it is focused on energy, education and governance, at least of two of three sectors are prioritised in the PRS.

<sup>62</sup> The report was finalised on 21 November 2006.

actively among some of the Norwegian organisations' programme planning. This implies that programmes need to have a larger degree of flexibility for acting on input from partners in the field.

8. Norwegian organisations working in Nepal are encouraged to critically review their own projects and programmes considering if the choice of projects and partners is actually contributing to reducing causes of conflict and/or strengthening capacities for peace in Nepal. As minimum measures, the organisations should:

- a. Adhere to BOGs through-out all phases of project/programme implementation and ensure that Nepali partners' staff at all levels have knowledge of, and are acting in accordance with these guidelines.
- b. Be trained in conflict sensitive programming, for example by SEDC (Safe and Effective Development in Conflict). Leadership in Norwegian organisations also needs to be sensitised to the importance of understanding the context.
- c. Strengthen their follow-up development practices (financial and administrative management, audits, reporting on conflict and context).
- d. Coordinate both in the field and in Norway in order to maximise on each others' experiences and best lessons, e.g. revitalise the 'Nepal-network', a mailing list, and complete map of all Norwegian supported project activities. Coordinate training activities, exchange of administrative and financial routines and practises, and exchange of information on political/social/economic developments in Nepal.
- e. Strengthen the learning from the field to head offices by establishing organisational systems that absorb the information and feed it into the organisations' policies and strategies.

9. Finally, the report reminds the organisations and Norad to be focused on the importance of flexibility of development work in conflict settings. Planning for various scenarios must be encouraged since fragile peace processes such as the one as in Nepal might collapse. Organisations must ensure that contingency plans are ready and available.

## ANNEXES

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### Annex I: Terms of Reference

#### Review of level of conflict sensitivity of Norwegian NGOs' development aid in Nepal

##### 1. Background

Development assistance in conflict settings is facing particular challenges. In an environment of violent conflict where lives are lost, property is destroyed, and society's political, economic, and social fabric disintegrates, development aid is often hampered by a further deterioration in a protracted conflict situation, and sometimes feeds into the conflict, despite good intentions.

Experience shows that development assistance is not only affected by conflict, it also affects the conflict itself. Resource transfers, choice of alliances and partners, target populations, priorities and methods, the political engagement and motivation behind the assistance – all factors play a role in the development assistance. With whom do we work? Who do we strengthen - or weaken? Where do we work? What are our priorities? How do we perform and behave? More than relating to programme design and impact assessment, these questions relate to the wider context. In a conflict situation these issues will inadvertently affect the pace of the conflict and the actors involved. As such, development assistance becomes part of the conflict.

Being conflict sensitive (CS) means that development programmes/project are adjusted according the conflict situation in which they are being implemented with the goal of avoiding unintended negative impacts, and maximise positive ones.

Consequently, this requires an understanding of the conflict context; the actors involved and the dynamics that sustains the conflict, as well as the roles and responsibilities of national and international development actors.

Norway has in recent years stepped up its efforts to be more conflict sensitive. In Nepal – a country that has experienced violent conflict for last ten years, the Norwegian Embassy has spearheaded the process by organizing several seminars on conflict sensitivity.

A large portion of the official development aid in Nepal is channelled through Norwegian NGOs (hereafter NNGO). For 2006 26,2 million NOK was channelled to 11 organizations. In the CS seminars cooperating NGOs from both Norway and Nepal participated in the discussions and elaborations along with external experts on the particular conflict in Nepal.

One of the tangible results of this process, apart from the learning sustained, is Norad's work with developing a Handbook for Conflict Sensitivity.

As a natural continuation of this process, the Norwegian Embassy in Nepal asked Norad for an external review of the NNGOs in order to assess how they are implementing the long-term aid with particular focus on being conflict sensitive. In order to sustain the learning generated from the Review process one consultant from Norad will take part on the process.

## **2. PURPOSE, CONTEXT AND INTENDED USE**

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The main purpose of the review is to assess to which extent the development assistance of Norwegian NGOs in Nepal, is conflict sensitive. The review will map weaknesses and strengths of the NGOs in terms of CS; how do the NGOs interpret conflict sensitive development aid and how is CS operationalised in choice of partners, staff and their code of conduct.

The review will contribute with assessments on a selected number of projects funded by Norway and feed into the continuous dialogue between the Embassy/Norad and the NNGOs. Projects funded through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and directly by the Embassy will not be included in the study.

The review should be participatory in nature and focus on promoting learning among all involved actors as a complementary step to the process initiated by the Embassy.

Main stakeholders in the review are:

- Norway as a donor (Norad, Embassy)
- Norwegian NGOs (see Annex for list)
- Nepalese partners (for 2006; more than 25 implementing partners ranging from small community-based organizations, CBOs via national NGOs to governmental bodies and ministries)

Indirect stakeholders that should be consulted:

- Government of Nepal
- Political opposition groups
- Development actors in Nepal

The intended use of the Review Report is mainly for Norad/Embassy and the Norwegian and Nepalese organizations. A wider distribution might be considered at a later stage. Main findings and experiences should be incorporated into the ongoing work with the Handbook for Conflict Sensitivity.

## **3. Scope of work**

The review should study the level of Conflict Sensitivity among the Norwegian NGOs, and their Nepalese partners by assessing:

- Level of CS in project documents (plans, reports, strategies)
- Existence of conflict/context analysis in projects/programme
- Awareness of CS among staff (Norwegian/Nepali), partners
- Norwegian NGOs 'value added' in the conflict setting of Nepal
- Self-assessments of the NGOs with regards to CS
- Level of flexibility/adaptability of programmes
- Lessons learnt for solving conflicts in field, obstacles & challenges
- Level of Risk Planning and Management among Norwegian NGOs and partners
- Level of coordination and cooperation between NGOs
- Partners' gender sensitivity (incl UN Security Council Resolution 1325)

Through a few selected projects (case studies), the following main questions should be addressed:

- a) What factors are strengthened and/or weakened by the specific project, and how do they relate to the conflict?
- b) Who gains and/or loses, and what is the potential impact of this on the conflict?
- c) What resources (e.g. personnel, funds, and supplies) are brought into the context, and what effect does this have on the conflict?

- d) In what ways will the project affect the ability of key institutions in society, central, and/or local, to uphold or strengthen their performance, and gain legitimacy?
- e) How is the project likely to influence the security situation, and vice versa?
- f) What political signal(s) is the project likely to send out, and how may this affect the conflict context?
- g) In what ways is the project implemented, and how may this affect the conflict context?

The Review should also assess the professional input from the Embassy/Norad to the NGOs with regards to CS.

## 4. Implementation of review

### Consultants

This Terms of Reference anticipates to consultants (one international, one local) working for respectively 37 and 20 days each between 15 August and 31 October, 2006. The international consultant will manage and coordinate a local consultant over the course of the contract to the maximum benefit of the outputs described below.

In order to sustain the learning generated from the Review process professionals from Norad will also take part on the fieldwork and the collection of information from the NGOs in Norway.

The team will undertake a consultancy organised as follows.

### Proposed Work plan

#### 1. *Preparation phase* [period 15 August - 8 September]

- a. Background reading
  - i. Project proposals and reports of 13 NNGOs for years 2004-6
  - ii. Norad's handbook on Conflict Sensitivity
  - iii. Literature and experiences from other countries on 'do no harm', CSA, PCIA and other models for integrating CS into development aid on all levels
  - iv. Conflict analysis on Nepal
- b. Discussions and interviews
  - i. Interview organisations based in Norway
  - ii. Discussions and close consultation with Norad's civil society section (ESS)
  - iii. Phone meeting btw Team, Norad and Embassy
- c. Drafting TOR
  - i. TL drafts TOR for Norad
  - ii. TOR is shared with NGOs and input incorporated
- d. Plan field survey
  - i. Draft work plan
  - ii. Develop questionnaires, tools for collecting information

#### 2. *Field survey in Nepal* [11 – 23 September] – in country from 12-22

- a. Refine research methodology (TM & TL)
  - i. Review work plan for subsequent 8 days
  - ii. Finalize questionnaires, plan focus groups
- b. Interview stakeholders
  - i. A sample of Nepalese partners, collect their perspectives on level of CS in NNGO
  - ii. Assess Nepalese partners' level of CS

- iii. Government officials, independent NGOs, academic research milieus, and other Kathmandu-based stakeholders.
  - iv. visit some projects, in Kathmandu and one other district. Specific district be determined in consultation with Embassy
  - c. Debrief/present preliminary findings to Nepalese NGOs and Embassy 22 September
3. *Process & verify information* [25 September – 13 October]
- a. Analyse information
    - i. process and analyse information collected from field survey using triangulation.
    - ii. refine and adjust analytical framework if required.
    - iii. determine additional information requirements.
  - b. Conduct additional interviews with NNGOs (*if needed*)
  - c. Produce first draft of report
    - i. Distribute draft report to all involved actors (TL)
    - ii. Present draft report in Oslo/Kathmandu
4. *Final report*
- a. Receive input comments on draft report 24 October
  - b. Produce final report
    - i. revise draft report based on input and comments
    - ii. final report to be submitted 2006

**Budget;** the consulting company should submit a budget with estimated costs of Team Leader (37 days) and Team Member (20 days) including travel expenses.

## 5. Reporting

The consultants should produce a report (no more than 40 pages excl annexes), which will include sections outlining:

- Executive Summary including key findings & recommendations
  - Background
    - Context Analysis of Nepal (refer to already existing)
    - Brief overview of conflict sensitivity theories
    - Approach and methodology chosen by consultants
    - Stakeholders' Analysis
    - Obstacles
  - Findings
  - Overall assessments
  - Conclusions and Recommendations
- The Report should be delivered in electronic form.

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

The sharing of responsibilities among involved actors is outlined below. Asterix (\*) indicates who has the overall responsibility for the task.

|                                     | Norad (Oslo) | EMBASSY | NNGOs | TEAM LEADER (TL) | TEAM MEMBER (TM) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|---------|-------|------------------|------------------|
| Contract TL                         | x            |         |       |                  |                  |
| Nominate TM                         | x            | x       |       | x                |                  |
| Contract TM                         |              |         |       | x*               |                  |
| Drafting TOR                        |              |         |       | x*               | x                |
| Input TOR                           | x            | x       | x     |                  | x                |
| Finalize/approve TOR                | x            | x       |       |                  |                  |
| Supply project documents            | x            | x       | x     |                  |                  |
| Work Plan                           |              |         |       | x                | x                |
| Interviews Norway                   | x            |         | x     | x                |                  |
| Develop schedule for field survey   |              | x       |       | x                | x*               |
| Schedule interviews                 |              | x       |       |                  | x*               |
| Field survey                        | x            |         |       | x*               | x                |
| On-site debriefing                  | x            | x       | x     | x*               | x                |
| Analyse & verify data, write report |              |         |       | x*               | x                |
| Distribute draft report             |              |         |       | x                |                  |
| Present draft report Nepal          |              | x       | x     |                  | x*               |
| Present draft report Oslo           |              | x       | x     | x*               |                  |
| Written input on draft report       | x            | x       | x     |                  |                  |
| Write up final report               |              |         |       | x*               | x                |

## ANNEX 2: INSTITUTIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

| NAME                           | INSTITUTION   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Tore Toreng                    | Royal Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu                                     |
| Kikkan Haugan                  | Royal Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu                                     |
| Elin Gjedrem                   | Royal Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu                                     |
| Margaret Myklebust             | Royal Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu                                     |
| Kamla Bisht                    | Royal Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu                                     |
| Vigdis Halvorsen               | Norad, Oslo   |
| Petter Bauck                   | Norad, Oslo   |
|                                |   |
| <b>NORWEGIAN NGOS - NORWAY</b> |   |
| Signe Lise Dahl                | Plan Norway   |
| Bjørn Rongevær                 | Plan Norway   |
| Ståle Stavrum                  | FORUT   |
| Trond Botnen                   | FORUT   |
| Jorid Almås                    | FORUT   |
| Peter Wood                     | Save Children Norway  |
| Bodil Lawrence Ravn            | Norwegian Red Cross   |
| Gideoen Tesfai                 | Norwegian Red Cross   |
| Torben Henriksen               | Norwegian Red Cross   |
| Elisabeth Oksum                | NABP  |
| Terje Iversen                  | NABP  |
| Anders Tunold                  | NCA   |
| Tale Steen-Johansen            | NCA   |
| Vidar Raugland                 | Norwegian Bar Association   |
| Knut Johan Onarheim            | Norwegian Bar Association   |
| Olav Myhrholt                  | Development Fund  |
| Tor Skudal                     | Development Fund  |
| Eva Helene Østby               | Development Fund  |
| Svend Skjønsholt               | Development Fund  |
| Marianne Næss                  | Norwegian Himal-Asia Mission  |
| Egil Holte                     | Norwegian Himal-Asia Mission  |
| Lajla Blom                     | Union of Education Norway   |
| Katrine Blyverket              | Union of Education Norway   |
| Kjartan Selnes                 | HAMU  |
| Silje Handeland                | Norwegian Association for Persons with Development Disabilities (NFU) |
| Olav Aalberg                   | Norwegian Association of Heart and Lung Patients (LHL)                |



|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Astrid Westby             | Norwegian Federation of Disabled People's Organisation (FFO) |
| Nils Mangnar Ture         | Normisjon  |
| Erik Bøhler               | Normisjon  |
| Trine-Riis Hansen         | Atlas Secretariat  |
|                           |  |
| <b>INTERNATIONAL NGOS</b> | <b>NEPAL</b>   |
| Mary Martin               | United Mission to Nepal                                      |
| Kjartan Gullbra           | United Mission to Nepal/NHAM                                 |
| Valter Tinderholt         | Save the Children Norway - Nepal                             |
| Kapil Roka                | Save the Children Norway - Nepal                             |
| Marceline P Rozario       | Lutheran World Federation Nepal                              |
| Krishna Bahadur Rawal     | Lutheran World Federation Nepal                              |
| Subkhakar Baidya          | Plan Nepal   |
| Prem Raj Panth            | Plan Nepal – Nepalgunj                                       |
| Tara Kandel               | Plan Nepal – Nepalgunj                                       |

**NEPALI ORGANISATIONS**

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Sukh Lal Nepali     | SAFE (SCN-partner in Nepalgunj)                        |
| Saguni Nepali       | SAFE   |
| Prakash Nepali      | SAFE   |
| Bishnu Nepali       | SAFE   |
| Mahesh Nepali       | SAFE   |
| Manju Nepali        | SAFE   |
| Rakshya Timilsina   | Student, Mangal Prasad Secondary School, Nepalgunj     |
| Padma Shrestha      | Student, Mangal Prasad Secondary School, Nepalgunj     |
| Ram Sagar Harijan   | Student, Mangal Prasad Secondary School, Nepalgunj     |
| Gauri Pradan        | CWIN (FORUT-partner KTM)                               |
| Rashmila Shakya     | CWIN   |
| Ganesh Man Malla    | Nepali Bar Association (NEBA) - KTM                    |
| Shanta Sedhai       | NEBA - KTM   |
| Shailendra Guragain | Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT - HAMU-partner)   |
| Jamuna Poudel       | CVICT  |
| Suresh Kumar Paudel | Nepal Bar Association, Nepalgunj                       |
| Khim Raj Giri       | Nepal Bar Association, Nepalgunj                       |
| Lok Bahadur Shah    | Nepal Bar Association, Nepalgunj                       |
| Hom Nath Adhikari,  | Namsaling Community Development Centre (partner of DF) |
| Nar Bahadur Limbu   | Nepal Association of the Blind (NAB)                   |
| Amrit Rai           | NAB  |
| Hari S Bista,       | Project manager, NABP & Infil Foundation               |

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Umesh Prasad Dhakal       | Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)  |
| Dev Ratna Dhakwa          | Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)  |
| Birendra Raj Pokharel     | National Federation of Disabled- Nepal  |
| Babu Ram Adhikari         | NNTA  |
| Birendra Prakash Shrestha | NTA   |
| Gokarna Rupakheti         | Chandra Jyoti Integrated Rural Development Society (CIRDS (UMN-partner Dhadang) |
| Sher Bahadur Gurung       | CIRDS (UMN-partner Dading)  |
| Urmila Regmi              | CIRDS (UMN-partner Dading)  |
|                           |   |
| <b>RESOURCE PERSONS -</b> | <b>EXPERTS</b>  |
| Basudha Gurung            | ODC Inc.  |
| Mohan Das Manandhar       | ODC Inc.  |
| Ram Risal                 | Helvetas - Nepal  |
| Tulsi Nepal               | Helvetas - Nepal  |
| George Weber              | Helvetas - Nepal  |
| Dan Huntington            | RMO – DFID/GTZ  |
| Marshall Wallace          | Collaborative Learning Projects - CDA   |
| Shanta Lal Mumi           | NGO FEDERATION  |
| Kanak Dixit               | Editor, Himal Times   |
|                           |   |

## Annex III Context analysis of Nepal.

### A. Structures

#### Security

The army: The Nepalese Army occupies an important position in any assessment of Nepal's security environment, having been instrumental in supporting the King at the time of the overthrow of the Deuba government in 2005. However, it is interesting to note that the army, during the reign of King Birendra, refused the government's request to attack the Maoists. It was only after King Gyanendra's take-over as King in 2001 that the Maoists attacked the army for the first time and the army responded with raids against the Maoists.

The NA has, however, been relatively weak, suffering from a lack of arms and training. The US has supported it with funding, equipment and training: USD 12 million in financial support; M16 rifles, helicopters and other aircraft, ammunition and various forms of non-lethal weaponry.

The police: The police has been loyal to the government at any given moment, but has been responsible for serious transgressions, not least during Operation Romeo during 1994-1995, which has been described as "little more than the use of police for looting."<sup>63</sup> Both Operation Romeo and Operation Kilo-Sera in 1998 were directed at the Maoists and were "very harsh and ruthless operations with little respect for human rights".

The Maoists: After King Mahendra's overthrow of the elected government of B.P.Koirala in 1960, the communist party split over whether to support the King or the parties. At least until the latter half of the 1960s, both the pro-Soviet and the pro-Chinese factions supported the king, while the faction led by Pushpalal, from his base in India, worked along with the Nepali Congress to oppose the king.

Towards the latter half of the 1960s and the early 1970s, the Communist Movement in Nepal developed more radical sections. Their rise was influenced by the Chinese cultural revolution and the rise of Maoists in India who came to be known as the Naxalites, named after the area of Naxal Bari in West Bengal where they started their early operations. Following in their footsteps, the Nepali Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) also carried out killings of the local feudals in the Jhapa area of eastern Nepal during the early 1970s (the Jhapani uprising). During the 1980s, these groups were joined by young, well-educated and ideologically motivated leaders such as Dr. Baburam Bhattarai and Pushpa Kamal Dahal-Prachanda.<sup>64</sup> Operating under the umbrella organizations labelled United National People's Movement (UNPM), they demanded the abolition of monarchy and the declaration of a republic in Nepal. This was to be achieved through a Constituent Assembly, which was to draft a national democratic constitution. While initially against participating in the general elections of May 1991, they changed their position and prepared for the elections through a two-tiered organization, i.e., a revolutionary and political front known, respectively, as the Communist Party of Nepal – Unity Centre and the United People's Front of Nepal (UPFN). The political front, which participated in the elections that year, won nine seats and 4.9 per cent of the vote. Gradually, however, the Unity Centre disintegrated and the UPFN split into two factions, one of which was led by Dr. Bhattarai and Prachanda. It is this latter movement that represents the Maoist insurgency in Nepal.

Having been denied participation in the 1994 elections, this group, calling itself the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) claimed a "boycott" of the elections and went underground. Moreover, in the areas of their influence, they started attacking landlords and government representatives as well as voters and candidates. These actions were, however, undertaken in retaliation against a severe police action against them during what was called "Operation Romeo" during 1994-5. On 13 February 1996, the Maoists declared their People's War (PW) in Nepal, attacking and looting a bank in Gorkha and three police posts in the districts of Rolpa and Rukum.

The basis for Maoist support rests with teachers and students in both urban and rural areas, but also draw support from other lower middle class groups. Women's cadres constitute another source of support, as do the many people

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<sup>63</sup> Muni, Maoist insurgency in Nepal: 9-10.

<sup>64</sup> Muni, *op.cit.*: 3.

of Nepalese origin living in India. Moreover, given the widespread and variegated social, political, and economic exclusion in Nepal, the Maoists appear to have been relatively successful in mobilizing people on this basis. For instance, dalits and other underprivileged groups across Nepal appear to support the Maoists in many cases, despite the fact that the leadership of the Maoist movement itself is dominated by higher castes. Moreover, Dixit observes that “[i]ronically, the seeds of the Maoist insurgency had been sown in the Panchayat years, when Nepal evolved an education system capable of churning out literate, but under-educated, school-graduates who had a highly developed sense of nationalism but got little in the form of job opportunities.”<sup>65</sup> The key agenda items remain the abolition of the monarchy and declaring Nepal as a republic; establishment of an interim government to organize elections for a Constituent Assembly (CA); and the drafting of a Constitution by the latter body. The movement has received little support from external partners, and most of its funding has come from exactions (illegal taxes), looting of Nepalese banks and contributions from the Nepalese diaspora.

## Political

The Nepalese monarchy. The political history of modern Nepal is commonly divided into three periods:

(a) *Establishment of the Gorkhali empire and the Rana regime (1769-1950/1960)*, characterised by “Parbatiyasation”, i.e., the spread and imposition of the culture of the Parbatiya, most notably their language – Nepali – and their religion – Hinduism. The model espoused by Prithvi Narayan combined cultural pluralism with a hierarchical caste system. In practice, the system translated cultural differences into hierarchical “caste” categories.

(b) *the Panchayat period (1961-1990)*: After a decade of “confusing political arrangements” following the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1951, Nepal experimented briefly with multi-party democracy in 1959-1960. In December 1960, King Mahendra overthrew the elected government of B.P.Koirala and later instituted the Panchayat political system, with himself as absolute monarch. The ensuing thirty years saw a concerted effort to implement the ideals of the nation-state with a common culture and language through the centralization of politics and administration. Cultural diversity was seen as an impediment to nation-building, modernisation and development; hence, great emphasis was placed on the homogeneity of the population.

(c) *1990-2001: following the restoration of democracy*: While Nepal has remained relatively free of ethnic, religious, linguistic and caste violence, subordinate groups have begun to question the picture of tolerance and pluralism. Particularly since the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990, the open political atmosphere allowed the emergence of an energetic movement of ethnic assertion, whose leadership might regard Nepal as a pluralistic society, but one characterized by hierarchy, dominance and oppression. After the restoration of democracy in 1990, ethnic, religious and linguistic communities as well as “low-caste” groups, emboldened by the rights bestowed by the Constitution, organised themselves to protect their interests. Similarly, the 1991 census for the first time classified and recorded the population according to linguistic, religious and ethnic affiliations. However, the Constitution also circumscribed cultural pluralism with two important qualifications: first, its definition of Nepal as a “Hindu kingdom”; and, second, its declaration of Nepali as the language of the nation (rastra bhasa) and official language.

(d) *The Palace massacre and beyond: 1 June 2001 - the present*: On 1 June 2001, King Birendra, his wife and all his children were killed during a massacre at the Royal Palace. According to one account, Crown Prince Dipendra conducted the massacre in frustration over not being allowed to marry his girlfriend, before he finally killed himself.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Dixit, op.cit.: 67

<sup>66</sup> Although, while in a coma, he lived for a couple of days, thus technically being King until he died. Against this version of events, a conspiracy theory exists which holds that King Birendra’s younger brother, Gyanendra – who became King after the death of King Birendra’s son shortly after the massacre – was behind the massacre, and that the current Crown Prince, Gyanendra’s son Para, was directly involved in the killings. For an account strongly endorsing this view, see Baburam Bhattarai: *Monarchy vs. Democracy: The Epic Fight in Nepal*, New Delhi, 2005: 21-25. For a discussion of this conspiracy theory, see Dixit: “A new king and the challenge of democracy”, in Dixit and Ramachandaran (eds.), op.cit.: 67-71.

### The government and parliament

With Nepal a constitutional monarchy from 1978, the government should be based on a parliamentary majority and be in control of taxation as well as the state's customary means of violence: the army, the police and the intelligence services. However, with King Gyanendra's usurpation of executive power in October 2002, the parliamentary parties found themselves outside of the power structures to which they had been elected.

### **Economic**

Nepal's economy: Nepal is a poor country, with large sections of its population living at or below the poverty line. At the same time, a thin layer of privileged elites are rich, while growing segments of the population are growing steadily more affluent. A key source of income for the state is tourism, though income from this sector have been limited by the ongoing violence in the country.

INGOs: represent an important, source of income for the Nepalese economy, as well as provides jobs to a number of local employees, notably at the country headquarters.

LNGOs: provide many jobs as well as implement a large number of projects across the country. Many LNGOs have experienced pressure to either register with or provide funding for the Maoists in rural areas. While most organizations employ a non-payment policy, individual LNGO employees often pay – willingly or not – in order to be able to move and operate in their designated areas.

### **Social**

Ethnicity/Caste/Religion: The Nepali population can be differentiated by way of religion, language, region (hills vs. plains), caste/ethnicity as well as cross-cutting identities. The 2001 census counted 80% Hindus, 10.7 per cent as Buddhists, 4.2 per cent as Muslims and 0.45 per cent as Christians.<sup>67</sup> For languages (1991) 77% had Indo-Aryan languages as their mother tongue (altogether 14 languages), including more than 50% Nepali-speakers; 20% spoke Tibeto-Burman languages (17 languages); and three per cent spoke other languages.

In terms of caste and ethnic break-down, Chhetris constituted 16 per cent of the total population, and Bahun (or Brahmin) constituting 13 per cent. Together with the dalits (untouchable and other service casts), which constituted 11.3 per cent, these major groups together constituted so-called hill-based Parbatiyas. In turn, another, more rough, grouping distinguishes between the Pahadi (hill communities), comprising both the caste-structured Parbatiya and the ethnic janajati (altogether 66.8 per cent of the population) – though in fact many of them live on the plains - and the Madhesi (the remaining 33.2 per cent), a linguistically and religiously heterogeneous group based on the plains.

Gender and exclusion: Gender plays a crucial role in differentiating between access vs. exclusion in Nepal, whether viewed in social, economic or political terms. Even basic rights normally considered part of being a citizen of a given polity are in Nepal limited to men, such as the right to apply for and obtain a visa for travelling abroad, which for women still generally requires that the married woman be accompanied to the issuing office by her husband. Alternatively, another male relative can accompany her, but if the woman is unmarried or a widower (or even divorced) and no male relative is available – or willing – to accompany her, she simply does not have the right to apply for and obtain the requisite documents herself.

The discrimination of women is not limited to the judicial area. Women in Nepal are routinely considered, and treated, as secondary to (and, as a result, should be deferential to) their male counterparts, and attitudes permeate large sections of society, including women themselves.

On the other hand, the de facto position of Nepali women will inevitably vary, from group to group and individually, and many women are vocal in speaking up for women's rights as well as position in society in general.

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<sup>67</sup> Sudhindra Sharma, "The Hindu state and the state of Hinduism", in Kanak Mani Dixit and Shastri Ramachandaran (Eds.), State of Nepal, Himal Books, Lalitpur, Nepal, 2005: 30-33.

One result of growing awareness of the need for a more equal position to men has been the support for the Maoists, a process which has in turn been strengthened by various forms of exclusion and discrimination. The Maoists relatively strong endorsement of women’s role, and acceptance of women’s cadres as central actors in the Maoist movement, have clearly contributed to the growth of the Maoist movement among women across large sections Nepal (notably in rural areas).

**B. Actors**

The following is a brief overview of what interests, relations, resources/capacities, peace agendas and incentives that characterize key actors on the Nepali scene. It is not an attempt to provide an extensive, in-depth analysis of each factor, but rather to map the landscape of actors and to include some brief comments on how they relate to each other.

***The King***

Interests: *Institutional self-preservation:*

Despite having been forced to relinquish executive power in April 2006, there is little reason to believe that King Gyanendra will willingly accept an end to the monarchy as a key institution in Nepal and the establishment of a republic. Tradition, a sense of obligation, stability in sheer self-interest, financially and otherwise, all indicate that the king and his court will work hard to stay in the game in Nepal.

Relations. *Shifting alliances:*

*With the RNA:* Over time, the Palace has taken a flexible stance towards the various institutions and actors in Nepal. First and foremost, the King has enjoyed close and generally stable relations with the Royal Nepali Army (RNA), of which he is formally the “Supreme Commander-in-Chief” (after May 2006, the RNA was renamed ‘Nepalese Army’)

*With the police:* Against this, and linked to the Palace’s varying relations with the parliament-elected government, relations with the police have been characterized by ambiguity and sometimes opposition.

*With the Maoists:* King Birendra at times entered into a tacit understanding with the Maoists, not least to weaken the political parties in parliament. However, this changed after the Palace massacre of 1 June 2001 and King Gyanendra’s ascendance to the throne, when the Maoists started to raise clear demands (including a round table with the king) and conducted their first attack on the RNA. For a more detailed account, see below under the Maoists and their relation with the King.

*With the SPA:* See below.

Capacities      *Leverage through powerful networks:*

*NA, judiciary, police, civil service, party mb., feudal elites, clans, business*

*Symbolic resources*

*Religious leader (hindu)*

Incentives      *Continued (constitutional) monarchy*

*Economic resources*

*Political resources*

***The Seven-Party Alliance (SPA)***

The Seven-Party Alliance (SPA) is an alliance of all the major political parties in parliament, which were ousted from government by King Gyanendra in October 2002. In November 2005 the SPA entered into a 12-point

agreement with the Maoists aiming to overthrow the King

Interests: The key strategic interests of the SPA can be summarized as follows:

- Continuing political power (government, parliament)
- Maximise power in the Constituent Assembly
- Upholding the 12-point agreement with the Maoists
- Including the Maoists in the interim government
- Constitute a high-level commission to investigate state abuses ag. pro-democracy demonstrations
- Declare null and void “unconstitutional decisions” by the King

Relations

With the Maoists: As noted above, King Birendra and the Maoists entered into a tacit, tactical understanding to weaken the political parties. However, after King Gyanendra’s take-over in October 2002 and the Maoists turning on the army for the first time, relations between the Maoists and the political parties started improving. The temporary culmination of this process was the 12-point principle agreement entered into between the parties on 8-10 October 2006. The only real bone of contention, i.e., that of republic vs. continued constitutional monarchy, will have to be dealt with at a later stage.

With the King: Relations with the King have been ambiguous and not always the best, not least as a result of the King usurpation of power in October 2002.

With the NA: Future SPA control over the army depends, in large part, on whether or not the former will succeed in upcoming debates about forming a constitutional assembly.

With the police: The political parties have generally had overall control over the police, though the latter have sometimes abused the trust placed upon them to beat up political opponents, notably the Maoists.

Capacities      *Current government control*

*Broad political spectrum*

*Internal differences (royalists vs. republicans)*

*Urban control*

Peace agendas      *Elections to a Constituent Assembly*

*Upholding the 12-point agreement with the Maoists*

*Including the Maoists in the interim government*

*Constitute a high-l. commission to investigate state abuses ag. pro-dem.*

*Declare null and void “unconstitutional decisions” by the King*

Incentives      *Continued participation in government*

*Agreement with the Maoists*

***The Maoists***

*Interests:* The key strategic objective for the Maoists remains full participation in the government of Nepal; abolition of the monarchy and declaration of Nepal as a republic; social inclusion of disadvantaged/excluded groups (ethnic, caste, religion, gender); and a significant reduction in poverty levels across the country, not least in rural areas, which have hitherto lagged far behind urban areas in terms of indicators from poverty to literacy and other development indicators. For this, the Maoists in 2000 adopted a 40-point plan consisting of demands relating to nationalism, public welfare, and livelihoods (“people’s living”).<sup>68</sup>

In the near term, the Maoists tactics include the following aims<sup>69</sup>:

- (a) pressurizing the gvt. to proceed with an unconditional constituent assembly
- (b) increasing their political leverage and presence among the general public
- (c) using goodwill gestures such as unilateral ceasefire to earn popular credit
- (d) building broader alliances with groups, including other leftist parties
- (e) maintaining relations with the IC, even if only at the level of basic dialogue

*Relations with the King, the NA, the SPA and the Police*

As the Maoist insurgency spread and it became clear that the dispirited civilian police was not equipped to deal with it, the question arose of whether to employ the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) against the Maoists. Under the 1990 Constitution, the army was to function under the directives of a civilian-majority National Security Council. However, the military have traditionally been led by men from Rana-Thakuri clans who consider themselves close to royalty. Throughout the decade following the People’s Movement, the army brass remained wary of the party politicians and their waywardness. In particular, it wanted nothing of the politicization of the Nepali police. As a result, the generals saw it all the more necessary to place their loyalties firmly on the side of the monarch, seremonially the “Supreme Commander-in-Chief”. And when the government asked them to employ the army against the Maoist insurgents, the generals refused.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, the Maoists “had a tactical understanding and tacit cooperation with King Birendra, who on his part might not have been averse to allowing the Bhattarai Maoists weaken and discredit the political parties. Baburam has admitted of having a ‘working unity’ and understanding on some principles with King Birendra.”<sup>71</sup>

This changed after King Gyanendra entered the throne during the summer of 2001, and particularly after he dismissed the government led by Deuba and assumed governmental control on 4 October 2002. In fact, while the Maoists limited themselves to attacking the police during the 1996-2001 period, their first attacks on the army occurred on 23 November 2001. However, it was only after Gyanendra’s usurping political powers in October 2002 that the Maoists established contact with the political parties, leaving the monarch in a steadily more precarious position.

With military dominance in the countryside and a willingness to translate military action into political means in order to achieve their strategic goal of political power, the Maoists initiated a mass movement directed towards the overthrow of King Gyanendra, the replacement of the monarchy by a republic and elections to a Constituent Assembly. In November 2005 the Maoists had entered into a 12-point agreement with the 7-member coalition of political parties that was to provide the basis for the ensuing mass movement. During three weeks of demonstrations in Kathmandu, the King was forced to issue one, then another, declaration, the latter relinquishing political power and accepting a return to a constitutional role.

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<sup>68</sup> Muni.: 82-87.

<sup>69</sup> Nepal: From People Power to Peace: 18.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.: 67.

<sup>71</sup> Muni, op.cit.: 29-30.



### Capacities

The Maoists resources or capacities are quite wide-ranging, and have grown during the years of violent conflict with the government. Briefly, some key capacities include:

Political mobilisation of excluded groups, including those of ethnicity, caste, gender. Dalit support has been important. In terms of professional groups, the major supporters are to be found among poor farmers, teachers, students, workers, and generally people from the lower middle class.

People's War strategy: Launched in Rolpa and Rukum on 13 February 1996 in response to the heavy-handed Operation Romeo (police operation). Gradually, the Maoists have captured weapons from the RNA, in addition to having probably got hold of some weapons on the illegal market. In addition, their military strategy has been able to evolve over time. Areas of Maoist domination generally include rural areas in the east, central and west, while gradually spreading westwards towards the mid-west and the far west.

Key sources on income include looting, exactions and war booty, notably made possible through the Maoists control over rural areas. This way, also INGOs and LNGOs have been targeted for payment of "taxes" to the Maoists. And some INGOs have been pressured to either stop or not start new projects in Maoist-controlled areas.

In financial terms, many contributions come to the Maoists as contributions from the Nepalese diaspora. Organizationally speaking, the Maoists are a well-organized group with great flexibility and ability to adapt to conditions on the ground.

Tactical resources/capacities include:

- Blockades (highways), Strikes, Demonstrations, Rural uprisings, Public relations offensive, Mass meetings, Urging people not to pay taxes

### Peace agendas

Key peace agenda items for the Maoists include:

Elections to a Constituent Assembly

Upholding the 12-point agreement with the SPA

Constitute a high-level commission to investigate state abuses ag. pro-democracy demonstr.

Declare null and void "unconstitutional decisions" by the King

Incentives      *Political participation*

*Social inclusion of formerly excluded groups*

### ***The international community***

#### Interests

Geo-strategic interests (US): The US interest in Nepal has to be understood in terms of Nepal's geo-strategic location as a buffer state between India and China, with which the US has strong interests both security-wise and in terms of trade and investment. Long-term, the US would be expected to continue its overall strategy of encircling China and containing India. It is in this perspective one needs to view the recent decision by Nepal's government to set up a seismic centre to monitor possible nuclear explosions in the region under the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty regime. For the US, the deep-seated fear of communism seems to have played, and still play, a role in its

stance towards the Maoists.

Regional interests (China, India): Both India and China have an interest in Nepal, but perhaps India more than anyone else. The proximity between India and Nepal; security considerations; economic links; cultural and religious affinities; and the large presence of Nepalese in northern India – not to speak of historical links since before as well as during the time of the British Empire in India – all indicate that India still considers itself a country with “legitimate interests” in Nepal and its development.

Other countries appear to have taken a somewhat more neutral stance, notably one bent on strengthening the economy, stability and development in Nepal, including the EU, Japan, Switzerland and Norway.

It is worth noting, though, that the international community as a whole, with very few exceptions, through its pressing for an unworkable compromise between the King and the parties (SPA) betrayed whatever trust there might have been between them and the Nepalese people.

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <u>Relations</u>     | US-Nepal  |
|                      | India-Nepal   |
|                      | China-Nepal   |
|                      | EU  |
|                      | Norway  |
|                      | Others  |
| <u>Capacities</u>    | Financial resources                                 |
|                      | Military resources (financial, equipment, training) |
|                      | Development resources (staff, finances, know-how)   |
|                      | (Lack of) understanding of local context            |
|                      | (Lack of) coordination                              |
| <u>Peace agendas</u> | International community / UN                        |
| <u>Incentives</u>    | Financial   |
|                      | Political support                                   |

**C. Dynamics.** Analysis of:

***Long-term trends of conflict***

The long-term conflict trends in Nepal are linked to whether or not one succeeds in replacing social, political and economic exclusion with more inclusive institutions, processes and practices. Continued exclusion on the basis of caste, ethnicity, gender or other means of distinction will provide the basis for continued conflict, including the possibility for further violence.

In political terms, the key issue revolves around the ongoing efforts to establish legitimate political institutions accepted by all groups in society. In socio-economic terms, this system will also have to, over time, succeed in becoming more genuinely redistributive than the current system.

### ***Triggers for increased violence***

In the short term, several factors might trigger increased violence in Nepal, including:

**Breakdown of negotiations:** With the latest encouraging steps towards agreement on key issues (8-12 October 2006), this prospect has receded somewhat, though increased expectations might lead to serious consequences were the negotiations to break down at a later stage.

**Increasing poverty:** As noted above, the poverty and exclusion issue will remain central, in particular for the new regime when it will be established. Meanwhile, the government should succeed in providing at least some symbolic progress on the economic front in order to encourage belief in the system and indicate the way forward.

**Ethnic mobilisation:** With widespread exclusion and discrimination still the norm across Nepali society, the danger will remain that some groups might mobilise on the basis on violence. This danger will grow unless the government and Maoists succeed in driving the negotiations forward and ensure redistribution in broad terms.

**Lack of INGO sensitivity to local conditions:** While indigenous factors are probably paramount in terms of driving violent conflict, INGO insensitivity might contribute negatively (as well as mitigate) unless being sensitive to local conditions and adapting projects/programmes on this basis. Continuing forms of exclusion and discrimination in terms of employment practices, services rendered and areas prioritized might all affect the level of conflict in a given area, and might have an impact on staff safety and security as well as on the prospects for effective project and programme implementation.

### ***Capacities for managing conflict***

Local government structures, Traditional institutions, LNGOs INGOs, Financial resources, Knowledge about local conditions, Do No Harm, Impartiality, Good development practices, Transparency and accountability, Genuine partnerships

### ***Likely future conflict scenarios***

Key issues after the king's relinquishing of executive power on 25 April 2006 remain. These will have to be accommodated into the ongoing negotiations about Nepal's political future.

Notable among these issues are:

*The restored parliament's agenda; The composition of the cabinet; Handling of longer-term constitutional change;*

*Transitional justice; Constituent assembly and elections;*

In political terms, the key point of disagreement has concerned whether to hold a constituent assembly first or whether the Maoists will have to demobilize their weapons first. Encouragingly, during ongoing negotiations in Kathmandu between the Maoists and the SPA, the parties on 10 October agreed to hold elections for a constituent assembly by mid-June 2007. An election commission is to be named by 17 October tasked with preparing the elections in collaboration with the UN. Media statements by the Maoists indicate willingness on their part to gather members of the People's Army in camps, and, in co-operation with the UN, to work out a mechanism for disarmament and monitoring of arms caches. In return, the SPA is said to be willing to include the Maoists in an interim government foreseen to be established by mid-November 2006. The leaders of the respective negotiating teams, the Maoists' Mahara and Minister of Interior Sitaula, both expressed their strong commitment to ensuring that the talks lead to a joint, logical conclusion in honour of the April revolution.

## Annex IV Question Guide

*A) For Norwegian organisations based in Norway, and Nepali non-implementing partners*

### **1. Programme in Nepal.** What is your conflict/context analysis?

- Relevance to programme/project
- Situational analysis pre-programme intervention?
- Risk analysis/risk management?
- Contingency planning?
- Existence of CSA (Conflict Sensitive Analysis?)

### **2. Choice of local cooperating partners/project**

- Selection criteria? Match with own value-added? (Gender aspects, UNSC 1325?)
- Staff of partner organisations, any particular criteria for recruitment (in addition to professional qualities)
- Any quotas for socially excluded groups

### **3. Follow-up of project**

- Frequency and type of contact (what kind of follow-up)
- Contents of project visit (meet with auditor, review accounts)
- Meet with user groups/beneficiaries?

### **4. Learning generated from field to Norway**

- Are your ‘best lessons’ or generated learning absorbed by the Head Office, and taken into account when changing development strategies or policies?

(for NGOs based in Nepal, ex SCN-N: - How do you benefit from the contact with the Norwegian partners? What kind of support are you getting?)

- What kind of hindrances do you meet with Norwegian partners?)

**5. Best lessons, success stories of conflict sensitivity,** any examples of how projects have been adjusted or changed to accommodate or actively counter negative aspects of projects?

### **6. What is your own assessment of your programme in Nepal?**

- What is the value added of your organisation?
- Relevance, effectiveness, sustainability?
- What is level of flexibility/adaptability of your programme

### **7. How is the follow-up & dialogue with the Embassy/Norad?**

- Type & frequency of contact?
- Input & signals from Embassy/Norad
- How is the match between reporting requirements and what you receive as inputs (is it clear what Norad asks you to report on?)

8. Do you **coordinate or cooperate with other INGOs** (Norwegian?) and NGOs? How?

*B) Questions for implementing organization/CBO*

1. CONTEXT

**What is your analysis of the context in which the project is operating?**

- What are the Root Causes?
- What **factors** are being strengthened and/or weakened by the specific project, and how do they relate to the conflict?
- What are the Dividers (systems and institutions that separate people and cause tensions)?
- What are the Connectors (Local Capacities for Peace)? I.e., local customs, norms, holidays, festivities, rituals?

2. STAKEHOLDERS' ANALYSIS (ACTORS)

- Who have a stake in the project? Make a list.
- Who runs the project? CBOs as implementing agency?

Who **gains and/or loses** as a result of the project, and what is the potential impact of this on the conflict?

- Breakdown of who loses/gains at the ethnic level?
- Ex. Are socially excluded groups (women, ethnic groups, castes, disabled) included in the project? How?

3. INPUT - RESOURCES

What **resources** (e.g. personnel, funds, and supplies) are being brought into the context, and how do they affect the conflict?

*Personnel* (staff recruitment & training):

- How is staff recruited? (any considerations of socially excluded groups?)
- Are members of the target group included? - How is personnel being trained?

*Funds*: - How is budgeting done (participatory process)? How are funds being dispersed?

- Communication with donor regarding budgeting? How?

*Supplies*: What are your tender processes? Are they being followed?

- Who delivers major services (equipment, supplies)

*Cross-cutting issue: Transparency & accountability:*

- What mechanisms exist to ensure transparency? Explain the process.

- Do you share information with the beneficiaries. How?

- With the Maoists? How?

- Do you disclose your donor? To whom?

#### 4. OWNERSHIP – LEGITIMACY - AUTHORITIES

In what ways will the **project affect the ability of key institutions in society**, formal (central & local) or informal (religious & traditional leaders) to uphold or strengthen their performance and gain legitimacy?

- How do you relate to central/local authorities?
- How do you relate to traditional authorities (ex Hindu priest etc)?
- Do you consult/invite authorities for project events?

#### 5. HOW IS THE PROJECT LIKELY TO INFLUENCE THE SECURITY SITUATION, AND VICE VERSA?

*Neutrality/impartiality:* - How do you deal with the warring parties in the conflict?

*Arms/violence?* Can project resources be used for violent actions? How? What preventive measures exist?

#### 6. SIGNALS/IMPLICATIONS

What **political signals** (value systems) and ethical implications (implicit/explicit values) are the project likely to send out, and how may this affect the conflict context?

- Who works on the project (background of personnel)? - Where is the project office located (close to VDCs, Maoists)? - Management practices: do you have a monitoring system for staff ethics (Code of Conduct)? How does it function? - To staff: how to handle beneficiaries' queries? Do you bring documentation regarding complaints from the field? If not, why? - Do you think beneficiaries feel listened to and respected?

*Language policies:*

- Do you have specific language policies in the project/programme? What are they?
- How are they being practised/followed?
- Ex. how many ethnic minorities/janjatis (newar/tharu/limbu etc)-speaking staff do you have?
- Do you have social mobilisers in the office?

#### 7. HOW IS THE PROJECT BEING IMPLEMENTED, AND HOW MAY THIS AFFECT THE CONFLICT CONTEXT?

*Adaptability:*

- Is learning generated from projects shared or fed into programme level or national strategy? How? Examples?
- To what extent does the Head Office listen to experiences in/advice from the field?

*Relevance:*

- How do you perceive or assess the relevance of your own project to the particular local conflict context setting?
- What are the linkages between peace and conflict in your project?
- What aspects of peace/conflict exist? Please describe.

## Annex V SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis of Norwegian organisations with focus on conflict sensitivity<sup>72</sup>

| Strengths  | Weaknesses   |
|--|--|
| <p>Long-term commitment to partners in Nepal</p> <p>Agreements 3-5 years</p> <p>Supportive to partners' needs</p> <p>Comprehensive partnership approach</p> <p>High awareness of social exclusion issues</p> <p>Nepali partners present in most districts</p> <p>Nepali partner close to grassroots/target group</p> <p>Focus on vulnerable groups like women, children, excluded groups (Dalits, Kamaiya, Janjatis)</p> | <p>Weak understanding of project context;</p> <p>Little adaptation to a changed conflict environment</p> <p>Scattered geographically, no focus (or cluster areas), reaching the poorest?</p> <p>Discrepancies btw. elaborate policy documents &amp; actual practises</p> <p>Weak development practises</p> <p>Weak monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>Weak on transparency of own budgets and expenses</p> <p>Weak learning generated from field to Oslo</p> <p>'Value added' of some NGOs questionable</p> <p>Lack of coordination in Norway</p> <p>Support to KTM-based NGOs</p> |
| Opportunities  | Threats  |
| <p>Clear PRS from Nepali govt</p> <p>Human development index from Nepali UNDP makes selection of areas easier</p> <p>Conflict encouraged organisations to revisit development principles &amp; practices, mission, transparency &amp; accountability</p> <p>Social exclusion and poverty brought to fore</p> <p>Towards Nepali-driven development – away from dominance of international donors?</p>                     | <p>Development widely distrusted</p> <p>Foreign organisations seen as non-transparent</p> <p>Vulnerability to warring parties' pressure and extortion</p> <p>Security threats in rural areas</p> <p>Government restrictions in rural</p>   |

<sup>72</sup> This should not be taken to include all the organisations; some points are valid for all the organisations, while other points are just valid for a few organisations.

## Annex VI: Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs)

Since 1996, Nepal has suffered from a Maoist insurgency creating a conflict situation with a tendency to becoming more violent. In view of the resumption of armed hostilities and the break-down of the ceasefire on 27 August 2003, the European Commission together with other bilateral donor agencies adopted a set of **Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs)** to emphasise the importance and responsibility of all parties to the conflict to **maintain development space** and **provide access to beneficiaries in Nepal**. The BOGs rely strongly on internationally recognised Humanitarian Law principles and reflect the specific conflict situation in Nepal.

The BOGs were agreed among donors in Autumn 2003 and are intended as operational guidelines or aspirations for how we would like donor-funded development and humanitarian activities, project partners and their staff to operate in Nepal. The BOGs do not represent any change in donor policies or implementation modalities; simply they have been drafted and made public to state how donors operate in Nepal and to appeal to parties to the conflict not to interfere in our project activities.

The **Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs)** consist of 14 specific points:

1. We are in Nepal to contribute to improvements in the quality of life of the people of Nepal. Our assistance focuses on reducing poverty, meeting basic needs and enabling communities to become self-sufficient.
2. We work through the freely expressed wishes of local communities, and we respect the dignity of people, their culture, religion and customs.
3. We provide assistance to the poor and marginalized people of Nepal, regardless of where they live and who they are. Priorities for assistance are based on need alone, and not on any political, ethnic or religious agenda.
4. We ensure that our assistance is transparent and we involve poor people and their communities in the planning, management and implementation of programmes. We are accountable to those whom we seek to assist and to those providing the resources.
5. We seek to ensure that our assistance tackles discrimination and social exclusion, most notably based on gender, ethnicity, caste and religion.
6. We recruit staff on the basis of suitability and qualification for the job, and not on the basis of political or any other considerations.
7. We do not accept our staff and development partners being subjected to violence, abduction, harassment or intimidation, or being threatened in any manner.
8. We do not work where staff are forced to compromise core values or principles.
9. We do not accept our assistance being used for any military, political or sectarian purposes.
10. We do not make contributions to political parties and do not make any forced contributions in cash or kind.
11. Our equipment, supplies and facilities are not used for purposes other than those stated in our programme objectives. Our vehicles are not used to transport persons or goods that have no direct connection with the development programme. Our vehicles do not carry armed or uniformed personnel.
12. We do not tolerate the theft, diversion or misuse of development or humanitarian supplies. Unhindered access of such supplies is essential.
13. We urge all those concerned to allow full access by development and humanitarian personnel to all people in need of assistance, and to make available, as far as possible, all necessary facilities for their operations, and to promote the safety, security and freedom of movement of such personnel.

We expect and encourage all parties concerned to comply strictly with their obligations under International Humanitarian Law and to respect Human Rights



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| 1. | Baseline study on sexual abuse in project area of P.6331- Creating safer environment for girls                           | SCNN                       |
| 2. | Final Review of Juvenile Justice component implemented by Advocacy Forum Under P.6333 Child initiative project           | SCNN                       |
| 3. | Mid Term Review of P.6316 - Education rights of dalit children implemented by Dalit Welfare Organization (DWO)           | SCNN                       |
| 4. | Mid Term Review of Partnership with The Concern for Working Children in Nepal (CWIN) P.6303 - Rights of children at risk | SCNN                       |
| 5. | Final Phase out related Review of SAATHI's Work with Bar Girls under P.6331 - Safer Environment for girls                | SAATHI (supported by SCNN) |
| 6. | Mid Term Review - P. 6370 - Children In Armed Conflict Project   | Elizabeth Jareg            |

Y 2004

| SN | Evaluations / Studies / Reviews   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | External mid-term Review- P.6322 Child club support programme   | SCNN |
| 2. | Global Review - Violence and sexual Abuse<br>P.6313 - SAFE, P.6315 - Maiti Nepal and P.6325 - Shakti Samuha | SCN  |
| 3. | Review of psychosocial intervention component of P.6370 - Children in armed conflict project                | SCN  |

|    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 6. | External mid term evaluation of SC New Zealand/ VASS funded of following projects under P.6330 Stepping together for education<br>- Voice for Education (VfE) and<br>- Rights to basic education for dalit girls project<br>(Inherited from SCUK) | SCNN |
| 7. | External mid term evaluation of P.6331 Safer environment for girls project implemented in Kaski, Tanahu and Surkhet districts<br>(Inherited from SCUK)  | SCNN |
| 4. | Study: The experience of inclusive education for children with disabilities as a result of P.6324 Childhood disability support project  | SCNN |
| 5. | Study- Conflict induced sex trade in mid west Nepal   | SCNN |

Y 2003

| SN | Evaluations / Studies / Reviews   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | Internal Review–P.6324 Childhood disability support project   | SCNN |
| 2. | Internal Review- P.6307 Media for child rights project implemented by Hatemalo Sanchar                                | SCNN |
| 3. | Internal Review- P.6314 Rights of children at risk project implemented by the Under Privileged Children’s Association | SCNN |
| 4. | Internal Review- P.6319 of Working children project implemented by CONCERN  | SCNN |

Y 2002

| SN | Evaluations / Studies / Reviews  |                 |
|----|--|-----------------|
| 1. | Study- Impact of conflict on children by IHRICON                       | For SC Alliance |
| 2. | Study- Situation analysis of children and HIV/AIDS                     | SC Alliance     |
| 3. | Study- Child sexual abuse in Kathmandu valley - Children’s perspective | SCNN & CWIN     |
| 4. | Study-ECD Longitudinal Study   | SCNN & SCUS     |

*In addition:*

- a) Caroline Arnold (2001) with Nupur Bhattacharya, Gopini Pandey, Agatha Thapa et al. “Seto Gurans National Child Development Services, A Review” submitted to SCN
- b) SCN, (2005) “Mid Term Review Report, Child Club Support Programme (CCSP)”
- c) INTRAC/ODC (2002), “Save the Children Norway’s Cooperation with partners in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Ethiopia and Nepal - Country Report on Nepal”d) ODC, SCN, CWIN (2002), “SCN Partnerhsip Evaluation Study, October 2001 – March 2002”
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## Annex VIII: Tools for analysing conflict

### Matrix of Conflict Causes

|               | Security | Political | Economic | Social |
|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| International |          |           |          |        |
| Regional      |          |           |          |        |
| National      |          |           |          |        |
| Sub-national  |          |           |          |        |
| Local         |          |           |          |        |

### Actor & Capacity for Peace Analysis

| Actors/<br>Capacities<br>for peace | Stated<br>Interest | Hidden<br>agenda | Connects<br>with/<br>Contradicts<br>with | Resource<br>s they<br>have | Resources<br>needed |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Local                              |                    |                  |  |                            |                     |
| Sub-national                       |                    |                  |  |                            |                     |
| National                           |                    |                  |  |                            |                     |
| Regional                           |                    |                  |  |                            |                     |
| International                      |                    |                  |  |                            |                     |
|                                    |                    |                  |  |                            |                     |

## Annex IX: Case Studies

### Case Study 1: Social Awareness for Education (SAFE): Working with a socially excluded group

*(Case study prepared based on the interview with SAFE staff & director, Mr. Sukh Lal Nepali field visit to secondary school and the Badi community in Gagangunj)*

Social Awareness for Education (SAFE) is a non governmental organisation in Nepalgunj, Banke district, supported by Save the Children Norway for almost ten years. SAFE works for the education of children of the 'Badi' caste.

The Nepali society is characterized with social exclusion, disparity of power and poverty. The Badi community is among the socially excluded groups in Nepal. "Badis are untouchables even among the untouchable groups in Nepal," says SAFE leader Sukh Lal Nepali.

SAFE has been working in Gagangunj, a small Badi community originally infamous as the "red light area" of Nepalgunj. The Badi community in Nepal were traditionally in the profession of entertainment as dancers and musicians at social events; many of the Badi women got sexually exploited by their elite clients and with gradual social and cultural changes and due to lack of alternative opportunities being a socially excluded group, were forced to enter prostitution to make a living. This had several adverse affects on the overall community in and around Gagangunj:

- Risk of HIV/AIDS
- Social/sexual misconduct – the behavioural influences not limited to the Badis
- High level of social conflict in settings where there is prostitution – usually there is drinking and fighting associated
- Whole of Gagangunj area in Nepalgunj was stigmatised as a "red light area."

As a result the whole of Badi community were stigmatised and socially excluded. Many of the Badi women would bear fatherless children adding another dimension of political exclusion. Many of the Badi children were denied citizenship by the state which further restricted many of their political rights – right to vote, right to education.

Mr. Sukh Lal Nepali strongly feels that the Government's definition of *dalit* should be clear and there should be prioritisation even among dalits; "You cannot lump all dalit into one category." Mr. Sukh Lal adds, "I would like to place Nepali dalit into three categories – there is the hill dalit, the terai dalit and then the Badi dalit. I place the Badis in a separate category because their issues are very unique to this group." There are about 60,000 Badis all over Nepal – 243 in Nepalgunj. The Badi issue was not recognised before 2000. Now the Badis themselves have started speaking about their issues.

In order to address the issue of social injustice and lack of opportunities for the Badi community, SAFE's activities focus on three distinct objectives: Social Empowerment, Economic Empowerment, and Political Empowerment of the Badi community. Within these objectives, SAFE has been carrying out the following activities:

- Awareness raising among the Badi community
- HIV/AIDS programmes for Badis and other sex workers, youth, migrant and transport workers
- Advocacy for policy
- Education and Capacity building
- Infrastructure development

#### After SAFE's Intervention

When SAFE started there was a lot of anti-SAFE campaign as its existence came into the way of political interest of other people; mostly local elite groups and politicians that had been exploiting Badi women. The Badi community defended SAFE and now SAFE is synonymous with "Badi community" – so SAFE is also known as the "Badi organisation." Hence, the Badi community has a strong ownership to the organisation.

In 1997, when SAFE partnered with Save the Children Norway, a hostel was established for young girls aged 9 – 20. Due to poverty and lack of opportunities and awareness, many of the families would not hesitate to send their young girls off for prostitution. Hence, the hostel became a safe haven for these young girls where they could focus on their education. The girls often visited their families during festivals. They went back to their family and into the Badi community once they completed their high school. The hostel was closed in April 2005, as the community has transformed and been sensitised enough not to send their young girls into prostitution.

SAFE has also been directly supporting the education of Badi children. There are about 1000 Badi children supported by SCN in the five districts: Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Surkhet and Kanchanpur. Of that group, 800 are supported through SAFE. There are around 80 Badi students at the local Mangal Prasad Secondary School (popularly known as the MP School) in Nepalgunj supported by SAFE.

According to Mr. Sukh Lal Nepali, when SAFE first intervened for the education of Badi children, they targeted the parents first, as they had to make them realise the importance of education. Then they approached the children. They also had to run awareness programs at the school to ensure that the children were not discriminated against and were in a safe environment. SAFE has also been organising awareness programmes at the school on Health and sanitation, child rights etc. They also support the Child protection committee (CPC) run by students of the school. Mr. Sukh Lal shared the impact of SAFE's work:

- The Badi children are actively involved in different curriculum activities in school- one of the students, Sunita Nepali was in the women's cricket team that won the district level tournament.
- There is no preferential or discriminatory treatment towards the Badi children , all students are treated equal
- The way teachers address and behave with the Badi children has changed
- Integration and acceptance of Badi children in classroom is also visible – the Badi students are sitting together with children from other ethnic communities
- Friendships with other community children
- Invitations to birthdays and other social ceremonies among students and acceptance of invitations

Despite these changes within the community, Mr. Sukh Lal admits that it is still very difficult to change the social perception/social stigma faced by Badi children and girls. There are so many other women from many different caste groups – some even higher caste groups that enter prostitution due to various other reasons. But for Badi women and girls – there is no choice- whether they are in prostitution or not, they still get stigmatised as prostitutes and often harassed or excluded by the neighbouring communities.

### **SAFE working in Conflict**

Many social scientists have attributed social exclusion and injustice and lack of opportunities as one of the underlying causes of the conflict in Nepal. The Maoists have used this as a cause to push their agenda and movement forward – trying to appeal to all marginalised groups. The Badi community was also approached for the same reason. Except for a few individuals, the Badis have not joined the Maoists, according to the information given by SAFE. This is mainly due to the lack of political awareness in the community.

SAFE's working approach in conflict consists of:

**Social Inclusion** – SAFE is working in 15 clusters in 5 districts in the Mid-west and Far west – Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Surkhet, and Kanchanpur. In all programmes there is inclusion of all stakeholders including those from Maoists and government as part of the society/community. SAFE also works through community groups – children's group, women's group, and other clubs.

SAFE has a total of 37 staff members, 40% of which are women; mostly working as social mobilisers, community leaders and project officers. 95% of staff is from the Badi community. The remaining 5 % are Tharu, Muslim, Newar, and Brahmin. The executive board is 100 % Badi; the manager level staff is also all Badi, only the support staff are from other caste groups.

**Conflict Transformation** – This is now one of the goals of the project. SAFE is assisting in the process of conflict transformation through the political, economic, and social empowerment of the community.

**Neutrality and Impartiality** – For SAFE, Neutrality relates to the political affiliation – SAFE tries to be politically

neutral with no affiliations with any party. The staff has individual rights to be affiliated to a political party but cannot be active through SAFE. Impartiality relates to the rights of the people; the right to live and right to basic needs. “A child is a child – not a Maoist, or a party worker.”

**Transparency** – SAFE has tried to enhance transparency through social audits, sharing of annual plans and reports and regular updates to donors. It also needs to get approval/verification from community on budgeting and progress reports. From Nov/Dec 2006, the board and the programme will be separated.

**Cooperation and Coordination** - with several other dalit organisations and INGOs; especially in activities of birth registration, land rights, citizenship issues.

**Partnership with SCNN** - Over the years SAFE has received support from different organisations but since partnering with SCNN, SAFE has expanded and grown a lot because SCNN focuses not just on service delivery but advocacy and IS/OD of partner NGOs. There has been personal capacity building of SAFE leadership too; as a result he was able to enter the Federation of Dalit NGOs as an advocate.

**Some key issues/learning:**

- In the global arena, there has been some debate regarding prostitution – whether it should be legalised or banned completely? But the case of prostitution with Badi community cannot be analysed through the same perspective. According to SAFE, it is necessary to ban prostitution altogether if the stigma associated with the community is to be eliminated. Now SAFE feels this approach has brought better results, as many of the individuals realise that there are other alternatives to make a living.
- However, as the Badi community in Nepalgunj (and the west of Nepal in general) was dependent on the women to earn a living for the family, families have been struggling to make a living since the intervention. Some of the men have started doing labour work. Those who could not find work locally and without any skills, have followed the trend of going to India for work, especially younger boys. Thus, one unintended consequence of this project is that young boys migrate to India, unprotected and into a rough labour market.
- If the opportunity is given, target beneficiary can become leaders, policy leaders. The beneficiaries should be allowed to define the issues and agenda – not the donors.
- SCNN is very receptive to learning from the field. For instance, the income generation guideline was proposed by SAFE and did not come from above. However, some of the other donors have been relatively detached from the field. SAFE therefore feels that the partnership approach of the donor agency, their attitude and value addition to the organisation is a key when it comes to working towards conflict transformation.



## **Case Study 2: The Pro-poor Hydropower Project (PPHP) – a pilot project in Dhading**

**The Concept:** The pro-poor hydropower project (PPHP) is an initiative project supported by the Norwegian Himal-Asia Mission/United Mission to Nepal (UMN), implemented and coordinated by the NGO People, Energy, and Environment Development Association (PEEDA) and at the community level implemented by a local community based organisation in Dhading called Chandra Jyoti Integrated Rural Development Society (CIRDS).

The concept of pro-poor hydropower has been designed to facilitate the poor into profitable ownership of hydropower. Currently, the project is still in pilot phase to test the viability of such a project. The idea is to construct and operate a small scale power plant (capacity 1 MW) at the local river. The poor of the community will be included in majority share ownership (at least 51%) of the plant and they will receive a regular stream of dividend through the sale of electricity. It is assumed that this dividend will be sufficient to pay off for their initial investments into the project and also provide additional income.. The poor will be enabled to invest through labour contribution in the project and provision of a grant and soft loans to purchase the company shares. However, those in the community who can afford any amount of investment will also have the opportunity to do so

**The Context:** The target area under consideration around Mel River in Tasarpu VDC in Dhading has in total 500 households. Of these, those living by the river have been using the river for irrigating their lands. This group is not assumed to fall under the category of “poor” as defined for this project. Most of the households in this group belong to the higher castes such as Brahmin and Chetri. Most of the group of households that are poor and the actual target beneficiaries for the project live on the hills above the river. The majority of these households belong to the Tamang ethnic group. There are a few issues of concerns for the managing organisation CIRDS:

- Will those groups irrigating from the river be willing to give up access to the river for the power plant and at what cost?
- How can those households living farther away from the river on the hills but constituting the core target group be involved to become beneficiaries of the project?
- How to ensure that the possible conflict arising due to the first two concerns are managed in the most effective way?
- How to ensure that there is the desired representation (at least 51 %) of women and poor in the ownership of the power plant?

### **Context Analysis against “Do No Harm”**

These are just some of the immediate concerns for CIRDS in the initial phases of the pilot. In terms of the design of the project, evidence can be found in the project documents that the concept has also been analysed against the “do no harm” framework to ensure that the project does not feed into any conflict and rather contribute in local capacities for peace. As a result of this, some changes have been suggested in the implementation of the project; e.g. providing food for work rather than cash for work. Thus, conflict sensitivity has been integrated in the design of the project. Such adjustments may be necessary as the pilot project further progresses.

### **Selection of Implementing Partner**

The UMN cluster office in Dhading provided the technical support for the coordinating organisation PEEDA in the selection of the local implementing partner of the project. PEEDA’s partner on this project is also a partner of UMN. The selection process involved the Participatory Organisation and Technical Assessment (POTA) method. After an initial round of screening, five organisations were short listed as potential partners. Then more in-depth assessment of all five organisations was carried out. In addition to technical expertise, various aspects of the organisation were scrutinized; policy, structure, systems and organisation culture. Given the context of the project and the complexity of the project, emphasis was placed on level of transparency (assessed from accounting/financial practices), relationship with other organisations and coordination skills. Interviews were also carried out with target/beneficiary group members to assess the acceptance level and image of the organisation in the community.

### **Chandra Jyoti Integrated Rural Development Society (CIRDS)**

CIRDS is a small community based organization (CBO) in Thakre VDC of Dhading. The CBO has been in

existence since 1996 and working in 6 different VDCs in the Dhading district. With the PPHP work, its working area will expand to the Tasarpu VDC. CIRDS has a total of 7 staff members, 3 female and 4 male including one from the dalit community. All the staff members are from the local community. The CIRDS office is housed in a two room apartment with modest facilities typical of a CBO.

CIRDS is to manage the entire process of the local poor investing in the project. In order to coordinate the community mobilization activities necessary for the pilot project, CIRDS has been provided with technical support; a project coordinator, Mr. Sher Bahadur Gurung.

### **Conflict Sensitive Approach**

The local community in the target area consists of a diverse group with different interests and needs. The society consists of 80% janjatis (Tamang, Magar) where almost all of them are farmers growing rice and vegetables. There are groups affiliated with the Maoists as well. The initial part of the pilot project implementation involves awareness raising and motivation among the community. This includes awareness rising among the local poor and the others about the pro-poor hydropower concept including the various financial aspects (investing and shareholding) of the project. The next step would be to motivate the local poor to invest their time and resources in the project. The most challenging aspect of this initial phase is to ensure that the various groups in the community clearly understand the nature of the project, how it works, and they all are in clear agreement and support of the project. CIRDS has thoroughly analysed the context, identifying essential factors such as who would lose and who would gain from the project; what could be the potential dividers and local capacities for peace in the given setting. Again, this has all been done using the framework of “Do No Harm” for the analysis.

CIRDS is currently working with the community on building consensus and cooperation for the project. They have been talking and negotiating with various groups including the local Maoists, talking to village elders and chiefs.

UMN has been very proactive in promoting conflict sensitivity from the design phase of this project. Although the project is still in the initial phases of its pilot stage; there are several factors indicating integration of conflict sensitivity into this project:

***Pro-poor focus*** – This aspect of the project addresses three key areas: Empowerment, economic opportunity and security from social and economic vulnerability. Also the project requires active participation from the community for it to be successful, ensuring that if the project succeeds, and there will be high level of community ownership.

***Detailed Context Analysis*** – From the interviews conducted, it was evident that there is a very good analysis and understanding of the context. The target beneficiaries have been clearly identified with potential areas of conflict. As a result, the initial phase of the pilot focuses on mitigating these potential sources of conflict to ensure that the project succeeds with its pro-poor objectives.

***Selection of Local Partner*** – the process was carried out in a transparent and participatory manner within the community.

***Capacity building at local CBO*** – Given the complexity of the task of mobilizing the local community to participate in the project, the local CBO which consists of local community members has a key role to play in making the pilot successful. This will largely depend on their capacity and expertise as social mobilisers, negotiators, and peace builders. UMN has been supporting the capacity building of the CBO members through various trainings and workshops so that they are equipped to carry out their roles in the community most effectively. In this respect, the value added to the CBO due to its partnership with UMN is not just limited to the technical and financial support, but includes organization strengthening through capacitating its members.

## Annex X: Partner organisations of NNGOs

### LWF Nepal Interventions

| Partner NGOs   | Name of the Programs/ Projects  | Districts               |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| <b>WESTERN</b>   |   |                         |
| Conscious Society for Social Development (CSSD)  | Community Organization Development through Empowerment (CODE)                     | Kailali                 |
| Social Empowerment and Building Accessibility Centre-Nepal (SEBAC-Nepal)                       | Empowerment Project, Doti (EPDA)  | Doti                    |
| Youths in Empowerment Sector-Nepal   | UpekchhitJanBikas Pariyojna (UJBP)  | Kailali                 |
| SahakarmiSamaj(SS)   | Strengthening Awareness and Knowledge Through Education For Empowerment           | BankeAchham             |
| Centre for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED) | Livelihood Empowerment Programme for Marginal & Disadvantaged Households (LEPMDH) | Doti, Kailali, Banke    |
| Kamaiya PrathaUnmulanSamaj   | Freed Kamaiya Empowerment Programme (FKEP)  | Kailali                 |
| Nepal National Depressed Social Welfare Organization (NNDSWO)                                  | Dalit Empowerment Programme (DEP)   | 9 farwest districts     |
| Manushi for Sustainable Development  | Humanitarian Assistance tothe Internally Displaced Persons                        | Banke, Kailali, Surkhet |
| <b>CENTRAL</b>   |   |                         |
| Dalit Welfare Organization (DWO)   | Dalit Janjagran Radio Programme (DJRP)  | All                     |
| Society For Empowerment-Nepal (STEP)   | Gender Sensitive HIV/AIDS/STD Programme (GSHAP)                                   | Lalitpur                |
| Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO)   | Awareness and Advocacy for Dalit Women's Rights                                   | Lalitpur                |
| Nepal National Depressed Social Welfare  | Mass Media Campaign Against   |                         |

|  |   |                                |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Organization (NNDSWO)  | Disparate Treatment Towards Individual Based on Caste   | All                            |
| Centre for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED) | Livelihood Empowerment Programme for Marginalized & Disadvantaged Families through Income Generating Activities (LEPMD) | Lalitpur                       |
| Development Project Service Centre (DEPROSC-Nepal)   | Socio-Economic Empowerment Project (SEEP)   | Ramechhap                      |
| National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET)  | Training Programme on Earthquake Risk Management  | Kathmandu valley               |
| Development Project Service Centre (DEPROSC-Nepal)   | Micro Credit Services   | Lalitpur                       |
| Meet Nepal   | Immediate Support for Internally Displaced Women and Children in Nepal  | Kathmandu                      |
| Manushi for Sustainable Development  | Humanitarian Assistance to the Internally Displaced Persons   | Lalitpur                       |
| Human Right Council Bhutan   | Human Right and Justice   | Jhapa, Morang, Kathmandu       |
| Direct Implementation by LWF Nepal   | Care and Maintenance of Tibetan New Arrivals in Nepal   | Kathmandu                      |
| Nepal Red Cross Society  | Community Based Disaster Preparedness   | Makwanpur, Rautahat, Mahottari |
| <b>EASTERN</b>   |   |                                |
| Women Development Association (WDA), Salakpur, Morang  | Empowerment Project in Morang (EPM)   | Morang                         |
| Women Development Association (WDA), Garamani, Jhapa   | Empowerment Project in Jhapa (EPJ)  | Jhapa                          |
| Social Awareness Development Group (SADG)  | GENDERSENSITIVE HIV/AIDS/STD Programme (GSHAP)  | Ilam, Jhapa, Morang            |
| Development Project Service Centre (DEPROSC-Nepal)   | MicroCredit Programme   | Jhapa                          |

|                                    |   |                      |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Sahara Nepal                       | Meche Santhal Empowerment Program   | Jhapa                |
| Human Development Centre           | Vocational Training   | Jhapa                |
| AMDA, Jhapa                        | GENDERSENSITIVE HIV/AIDS/STD Programme (GSHAP)  | Jhapa, Morang        |
| Direct Implementation by LWF Nepal | Bhutanese Refugee Project (BRP)   | Jhapa, Morang        |
| Direct Implementation by LWF Nepal | Bhutanese Refugee Support Program   | Jhapa, Morang        |
| Direct Implementation by LWF Nepal | Children Program  | Jhapa, Morang        |
| Direct Implementation by LWF Nepal | Bhutanese Refugee Care and Maintenance  | Jhapa, Morang        |
| Direct Implementation by LWF Nepal | Refugee Host Community Support Project  | Jhapa, Morang, Illam |
| Bhutanese Refugee Women Forum      | Skills Training   | Jhapa, Morang        |
| Children's Forum                   | Skills Training to Children   | Jhapa, Morang        |
| BRAVVE                             | Micro Skills Training Project   | Jhapa, Morang        |
| BRRRC                              | Advocating for repatriations of all the Bhutanese Refugees to their original homestead with Security and honour | Jhapa, Morang        |
| Nepal Red Cross Society            | Community Based Disaster Preparedness   | Udayapur             |

## List of partners SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY - NEPAL

| Sl. No. | Name of partner                                     | Known as (abbreviations / short name) | Type of organisation (civil society, public bodies, private sector, mixed groups) | Initial year of cooperation | Planned phasing out of partner relation | Cost centre/ project codes for cooperation |
|---------|---|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 1       | Center for Victims of Torture, Nepal                | CVICT                                 | Civil Society   | 2002                        | 2007                                    | 020 / 610126                               |
| 2       | Community development centre Doti                   | CDC                                   | Civil Society   | 2004                        | 2009                                    | 010 / 610105                               |
| 3       | Community Based Rehabilitation, Biratnagar          | CBR, Biratnagar                       | Civil Society   | 1990                        | 2009                                    | 100 / 610201                               |
| 4       | Community Based Rehabilitation, Palpa               | CBR, Palpa                            | Civil Society   | 1995                        | 2009                                    | 100 / 610202                               |
| 5       | Child Workers and Environment Concern Centre, Nepal | CONCERN                               | Civil Society   | 1998                        | 2009                                    | 101 / 610213                               |
| 6       | Central Child Welfare Board                         | CCWB                                  | Government  | 1997                        | 2009                                    | 060 / 610185<br>020 / 610128               |
| 7       | Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre             | CWIN                                  | Civil Society   | 1987                        | 2009                                    | 020 / 610122<br>010 / 610113               |

|    |  |         |                       |      |      |                              |
|----|--|---------|-----------------------|------|------|------------------------------|
|    |  |         |                       |      |      | 101 / 610211                 |
| 8  | Children and Women in Social Service and Human Rights            | CWISH   | Civil Society         | 2003 | 2009 | 030 / 610143                 |
| 9  | Concerned for Working Children, India                            | CWC     | Civil Society         | 1989 | 2007 | 060 / 790100                 |
| 10 | Dalit Non-Governmental Organization Coordination Committee, Dang | DNGOCC  | Civil Society Network | 2002 | 2009 | 020 / 610123                 |
| 11 | Department of Education  | DOE     | Government            | 2006 | 2009 | 010 / 610111                 |
| 12 | Dalit Welfare Organization                                       | DWO     | Civil Society         | 1998 | 2009 | 010 / 610112                 |
| 13 | Gaja Youth club  | GYC     | Civil Society         | 2004 | 2009 | 010 / 610106<br>020 / 610130 |
| 14 | Gongatri Gramin Bikash Manch, Achham                             | GGBM    | Civil Society         | 2000 | 2009 | 040 / 610161                 |
| 15 | HosteHaise Child Development Society, Tanahu                     | HHCDs   | Civil Society         | 2000 | 2009 | 060 / 610187<br>010 / 610114 |
| 16 | Ilaka child Development Society, Udayapur                        | ICDS    | Civil Society         | 2000 | 2009 | 060 / 610183<br>010 / 610109 |
| 17 | Institute of Human Rights  | IHRICON | Civil Society         | 2001 | 2007 | 020 / 610121                 |

|    |   |           |                |      |      |                              |
|----|---|-----------|----------------|------|------|------------------------------|
|    | Communication, Nepal  |           |                |      |      |                              |
| 18 | Indreni Samaj Kendra Palpa  | ISK       | Civil Society  | 2000 | 2009 | 060 / 610182<br>010 / 610108 |
| 19 | Kavre District Education Office                                     | DEO/Kavre | Government     | 2003 | 2009 | 010 / 610101                 |
| 20 | Karnali Integrated Development and Research Centre, Jumla           | KIRDARC   | Civil Society  | 2003 | 2009 | 010 / 610102                 |
| 21 | National Human Rights Commission                                    | NHRC      | Statutory Body | 2004 | 2009 | 020 / 610127                 |
| 22 | Participatory Effort At Children Education & Women Initiative Nepal | PEACEWIN  | Civil Society  | 2000 | 2009 | 010 / 610107                 |
| 23 | Resource Centre for Rehabilitation and Development                  | RCRD      | Civil Society  | 1997 | 2009 | 100 / 610203                 |
| 24 | Samaj Sewa Doti   | SSD       | Civil Society  | 2004 | 2009 | 040 / 610162                 |
| 25 | Shakti Samuha   | SS        | Civil Society  | 2002 | 2009 | 030 / 610142                 |
| 26 | Social Awareness for Education                                      | SAFE      | Civil Society  | 1997 | 2009 | 020 / 610124<br>030 / 610141 |
| 27 | Social Awareness Centre, Surkhet                                    | SAC       | Civil Society  | 2004 | 2009 | 010 / 610104                 |



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|----|--|--------|---------------|------|------|------------------------------|
|    |  |        |               |      |      | 060 / 610145                 |
| 28 | Social Awareness and Helping Activities in Rural Areas | SAHARA | Civil Society | 2004 | 2009 | 020 / 610125<br>060 / 610186 |
| 29 | Setogurans National Child Dev. Services                | SGNCD  | Civil Society | 1997 | 2009 | 010 / 610100                 |
| 30 | Team organizing and Learning Institution               | TOLI   | Civil Society | 2000 | 2009 | 030 / 610144                 |
| 31 | TUKI Sangh, Sindhupalchowk                             | TUKI   | Civil Society | 2004 | 2009 | 010 / 610103020 /<br>610129  |
| 32 | Under Privileged Children's Association, Sunsari.      | UPCA   | Civil Society | 1997 | 2009 | 101 / 610212                 |
| 33 | Women Shelf help Centre, Lamjung                       | WSHC   | Civil Society | 2002 | 2009 | 060 / 610184                 |

