Impact of NGOs Peace-Building on Communities in Nepal: A Case study from Dhading District

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Centre for Development and Emergency Practice (CENDEP), School of Built Environment
Abstract

There are many armed conflicts around the world destroying people’s lives, livelihoods and communities. Since 1990 many of the traditional relief and development non-governmental organisations (NGO) have expanded their scope into also addressing conflicts by implementing peace-building projects. The two main goals of peace-building projects are to end violence and to build equal and just relations and structures in the society.

In Nepal an armed conflict between the Maoists and the government started in 1996. It deteriorated onto national scale in 2001, and ended with a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2006. The root causes of the conflict were caste and ethnic discrimination and government failure.

Research on the impact of peace-building projects performed by NGOs in Nepal is limited. The research question underpinning this research was therefore: “What changes have occurred in communities in Nepal and to what extent are these changes results of impact from NGOs peace-building projects?” In order to investigate this, a field research was conducted in Nepal between 13th July and 14th August 2009. The research was performed using qualitative methodology. Nineteen people from four different Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Dhading District were interviewed about their communities. The individuals were selected from professions known to be well involved in their communities; e.g. teachers, health workers and shopkeepers. In addition, representatives from five NGOs in Kathmandu and four NGOs in Dhading were interviewed about their organisations’ peace-building activities.

In accordance with the goal of peace-building, the interviewees in the communities were asked about changes regarding violence, relations and structures. This research found that the CPA was the most important cause of the reduction in violence. However, there were still incidents of political, caste-related and domestic violence. Most people felt secure, but were concerned about the lack of political cooperation and lawlessness. Furthermore, caste discrimination had decreased, but was still frequently observed in the VDCs. Importantly, there were several complaints about Dalits receiving all the government benefits. The relationship between Maoists, the army and other political parties were reported to have improved since the war, but reconciliation was still seen to be needed. In addition, several interviewees had a limited understanding of democracy, and surprisingly a multi-party system was seen as a threat to the community.

The NGOs reported to have peace-building projects in all of the 4 VDCs. However, very few of the interviewees in the VDCs knew of any peace or development projects in their community. In contrast to this, a majority of the NGOs’ representatives expressed that they were satisfied with their own influence, and were not particularly concerned about their overall impact on community. The main limitation of this research was however that the findings from the interviews in the VDCs were not discussed with the NGOs. This research indicates a limited impact of NGOs peace-building projects in Nepal. This may partly be due to the potential gap between NGOs own goals and their activities. More comprehensive field research is required to monitor and assess the impact of the NGOs peace-building on communities.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Simon Fisher, for inspiration and for guiding me to a field of research I was enthusiastic about. I am grateful to all the interviewees who gave me the honour of getting to know their stories and their view of the community they are living in. A special thank to those who invited me and the interpreter for tea or to stay for the night. I thank those in the NGOs who took time for an interview, and especially Joe Campbell for positive replies and valuable information during the research process. I also particularly want to acknowledge Tara Bhusal, my interpreter, for her good company in the field and for providing insight to the Nepali culture. Furthermore, I thank Federica Lisa for transforming the maps, and Renny Gye, Monica and Ian Verhaeghe for reviewing my dissertation. I am grateful to my parents for giving me an interest in justice. Thanks be to God. I am deeply thankful to my loving husband, Gunnstein for all his questions, patient and practical help.
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### Acronyms

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AF</td>
<td>Asia Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA CLP</td>
<td>Collaborative for Development Action Collaborate Learning Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Collaborative for Development Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>Care Nepal</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPN(M)</td>
<td>Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN</td>
<td>Focus Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HN</td>
<td>Helvetas Nepal</td>
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<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>International Alert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICDC</td>
<td>Integrated Community Development Campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSEC-D</td>
<td>Informal Sector Services Centre Dhading office</td>
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<tr>
<td>JCDS</td>
<td>Jagatjyoti Community Development Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNA</td>
<td>Royal Nepalese Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UML</td>
<td>Unified Marxist Leninist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMN</td>
<td>United Mission to Nepal</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMN-D</td>
<td>UMN Dhading office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollar</td>
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<tr>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>Village Development Committee</td>
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1. Introduction

There are around 70 current or potential conflicts in the world (Crisiswatch 2010), but there has been a decline of wars since 1990 (Goodhand 2006). On the other hand the remaining conflicts are more complex (Goodhand 2006), and more often internal or civil wars (Fisher et al 2000). Furthermore, wars and armed conflicts cause damages on people, places, nature and infrastructures, resulting in lose of lives, livelihoods, relations, mobility and culture among others (Fisher and Zimina 2008 and Goodhand 2006). A conflict can be defined as “a relationship between two or more parties (individual or groups) who have, or think they have, incompatible goals” (Fisher et al 2000, p. 4). An armed conflict can be defined as war when there are more than 1000 deaths related to battle in a year, but often the beginning and end of a war is not clearly defined (Goodhand 2006). Therefore this dissertation use the term armed conflict to also include wars.

Many NGOs work in armed conflict environments, and they have broadly three different ways of approaching this; either to work around the conflict, in the conflict or on the conflict (Goodhand 2006). The first approach tries to avoid the conflict; the second mitigates the risk by working in a hostile environment and ensuring they “Do No Harm”\(^1\) with their projects; the third approach addresses the conflict situation with peace-building (Goodhand 2006). During the 1990s NGOs became significant actors in peace-building due to the end of the cold war which opened a new space for NGOs (Goodhand 2006). This new space was also related to a new role of the United Nations, a more limited understanding of national sovereignty, and expansion of liberal capitalism (Goodhand 2006).

Following the NGOs entering the peace-building arena there has been a growing concern about their performance. One of the most comprehensive projects trying to identify characteristics of effective peace-building is the “Reflecting on Peace Practice” project conducted by CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA CLP) from 1999. In the first phase of the project they interviewed more than 200 NGOs involved in peace-building and the outcome was presented in the report “Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners” (Anderson and Olson 2003). One of the findings was an assumption among many practitioners that all good work would lead to peace, and the report recommended the link between projects and peace to be clearly articulated. Another key finding was that effectiveness could be improved by connecting different levels and target groups. Lastly the report provided an overview

\(^1\) A conflict sensitive approach written by Mary B. Anderson (1999).
of factors that prevent peace efforts from having a greater positive impact. After the outbreak of violence in Kosovo in 2004 the CDA CLP was invited to assess the effectiveness of peace-building to prevent violence in Kosovo. Some of the key results were that inter-ethnic contact was not enough to prevent violence, but on the contrary were intra-ethnic relations important to do so. Furthermore did not peace-building contribute significantly to preventing inter-ethnic violence due to the failure to build deeper inter-ethnic relations, failure to address key driving factors of conflict, focus on multi-ethnicity which increased division instead of improving relations, and peace projects failed to engage key people and areas (CDA Collaborative Learning Project 2006).

Despite these efforts to investigate the impact of peace-building there are still many unexplored areas. The goals of peace-building are to end violence and to build equal and just relations and structures in the society. The CDA CLP Kosovo report focused mainly on preventing violence and there is a need to investigate the impact of peace-building on relationships and structures. In addition more case studies are needed to investigate whether the findings from the CDA CLP are relevant in other contexts.

In order to provide a case study and investigate the effectiveness of peace-building, a field research was conducted in Nepal between 13th July and 14th August 2009, where nineteen people were interviewed in four Village Development Committees (VDC) in Dhading District and nine NGOs in Kathmandu and Dhading were interviewed. The findings from the field research were analysed and discussed in relation to the NGOs’ peace projects.
1.1 Aim

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate how selected communities in Nepal have been impacted by peace-building activities of NGOs.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives to fulfil this aim are:
- To investigate effective ways of executing peace-building and hence to provide criteria for impact assessment
- To perform a field-study in order to explore the changes that have occurred in selected Nepali communities where peace-building activities have been performed by NGOs
- To investigate potential impact of NGOs’ peace-building activities on these communities
2. Literature review: Impact of peace-building

This chapter defines peace-building and explores the criteria for effective peace-building and hence provide the criteria for impact assessment.

2.1 Peace-building as transformation

There are different theories of peace-building. Some separate the main ones into the categories conflict resolution, conflict management and conflict transformation (Fisher et.al 2000, Lederach 2003 and Miall 2004), whereas others distinguish between technical and transformative peace-building (Fisher and Zimina 2008). Technical peace-building is activity “which aims to make a practical difference in a specific domain, without necessarily challenging the deeper context” (Fisher and Zimina 2008, p. 20), whereas transformative peace-building aims for “fundamental political and social change” (Fisher and Zimina 2008, p. 20). One of the main differences between these theories is the view of conflict. Conflict transformation theory argues that conflict in itself can be an engine for change. Therefore the aim is not to end the conflict but to address the root causes of it through building equal and just relationships and structure which then may end the violence. John Paul Lederach, a widely cited practitioner in conflict transformation, states,

Conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.

(Lederach 2003, p 14).

The different theories of peace-building also reflect different views on peace. A minimalist view is satisfied with what is called negative peace, which is, “re-establishing a monopoly of force” (Goodhand 2006, p. 102), whereas an ambitious view would aim for positive peace, which includes, “popular participation in political processes, rule of law, etc” (Goodhand 2006, p. 102). This dissertation is based on a transformative view on peace-building which embed an ambitious view of peace.

2.2 Impact assessment of peace-building

Hoffman (2004) argues that peace-building is not about a set of activities, but about the impact one aims to have. This section will first explore where in society impact could be expected. Secondly, it will explore the aims of peace-building (to end violence and build new relations and structures) and suggest criteria for assessment.
Third, it will look at factors of effectiveness in peace-building and lastly the importance of context in peace-building and impact assessment.

**Level of impact**

NGOs often work with individuals or groups, but their ultimate goal is to transform society. To have an impact is more than achieving outputs or having results from activities; impact is about, “overall pattern of change” (Hoffman 2004, p.13). Despite this, Anderson and Olson (2003) found that NGOs rarely articulate the theory of change which directs their peace work, and the NGOs assume the contribution to peace at a larger level without considering the connection between their activities and the bigger picture. Furthermore, CDA CLP (2006) found that personal changes in attitudes and behaviour did not transfer from those participating in dialogue or training to the wider society without being addressed specifically. Therefore, when it comes to impact assessment it is not enough to ask people who have or are participating in peace projects, but the general population has to be included.

Goodhand (2006) argues that NGOs often have a limited effect on the macro level so they should be held accountable for their impact on a community level. By investigating impact at community level, one can reveal whether peace-building has the wider and deeper effect which is desired. The focus of the assessment is therefore the community rather than the NGOs. On the other hand this is an indirect way of assessing the impact of NGOs, and a disadvantage is that the findings will be less certain. This is due to a complex society without simple cause-effect chains between activities and changes. “At best one can talk about increasing or decreasing the probabilities of peace or conflict. Precise cause-and-effect chains relating to discrete projects may be desirable for accountability purposes, but they do not exist in this field” (Goodhand 2006, 103). Furthermore, an advantage of a community focused impact assessment is to place the, “intervention within the wider context and enable us to understand the relative importance of intervention in relation to other changes going on” (Giffen 2005, p 3). Another advantage of this kind of assessment is that the perception and priorities of the people in the community are easier to reveal. Goodhand (2006, p.102), states, “there may be a considerable discrepancy between agencies’ perceptions of performances and the perceptions of the affected population.” This examines that a community is an adequate level to investigate for impact of NGOs peace-building activities.
To end violence

Anderson and Olsen (2003) found that many peace projects focus only on building relations and structures and therefore never address violence, but to end violence or prevent it is one of the core goals of peace-building, and it is therefore crucial to assess whether the NGOs have an impact towards it. Violence is defined by Fisher et al (2000, p. 4) as consisting, “of actions, words, attitudes, structures or systems that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damage and/or prevent people from reaching their full potential.” In other words violence is not only certain behaviour, but it can be less visible and embedded in structures and institutions, which threaten lives and livelihoods. Both behaviour and structural violence have the source in attitudes, feelings and values and these have to be addressed in order to build sustainable peace (Fisher et al 2000). In addition are there different scales and levels of violence, from fights between armies, fights between political supporters in a community and down to domestic violence for instance, and often the violence does not end with the formal ending of a war (Goodhand 2006).

In addition to assess the reduction of violent incidents, the threat of violence and people’s perceptions of vulnerability are important (Anderson and Olson 2003, and Goodhand 2006). If the perception of threat is overstated, people will more easily act and can escalate violence by trying to prevent it. In these situations is it effective to reduce the perception to a realistic level. However, on the other side if the threat is realistic it is necessary to protect the vulnerable and reduce the threat (Anderson and Olsen 2003). Furthermore, effective peace-building increases people’s capacity to resist violence and provocations to violence (Anderson and Olsen 2003). On the contrary have NGO activities the potential to create and intensify tension, and hence undermine peace-building (Hoffman 2004), and an assessment need to look out for such negative impacts.

NGOs’ peace-building should therefore be assessed in relation to:

- Reduction in violent incidents
- Reduction in threat of violence
- Reduction in peoples perception of being vulnerable to violence (if unrealistically high)
- Increase in people’s capacity to resist violence and provocation of violence
- Avoidance of creating or increasing tension
Relations and structure

To build new, equal and just relations and structures in a community with conflict is the other core goal for peace-building and hence important to assess. A relation is understood as direct contact between people or groups, whereas a structure is a organisation or system in the society (Lederach et al 2007). There are many relations and structures in a society, therefore is it important to identify which it is important to address for peace-building and hence also assess. In this respect is it crucial to concentrate on relations and structures which are causing or fuelling the conflict (Anderson and Olsen 2003). This can be unequal and unjust relations and structures which involve access and control for individuals or groups to material or non material resources, like “water, land, food, political institutions and processes, economic resources, social/cultural status, information, legitimacy, and authority” (Hoffman 2004, p.9). In addition it involves access and influence over the political, economic and social structures that provide these resources (Hoffman 2004).

In addition to addressing these relations and structures, is it important to work on reconciliation of relationships after a conflict. Reconciliation consists of truth, mercy and justice (Fisher et al 2000). There is a “tension in peace processes between stabilizing the situation and creating the mechanisms for reconciliation and justice” (Goodhand 2006, 139-140). As a result reconciliation is also a question of right timing.

One of the findings from the Kosovo assessment (CDA CLP 2006) was that contact between groups which had been enemies in war (in Kosovo different ethnic groups), was not enough to prevent violence, as long as the peace-building activities did not address the dividing issues. On the other hand the internal relationships in the groups were more relevant to preventing violence. Where these relationships were strong they were important for spreading information and mobilising collective action (CDA Collaborative Learning Projects 2006). When relations and structures are addressed in peace-building in an effective way it will prevent violence and hence build sustainable peace.

NGOs’ peace-building should therefore be assessed in relation to:
- Whether root causes and driving forces of the conflict are identified, and furthermore addressed
- Increase of marginalised groups’ access to and control of resources
- Increase of marginalised groups’ access and influence on political, economic and social structures
Interconnection of peace-building

In order to have a sustainable impact on both ending violence and building new relations and structures in the society, Anderson and Olson (2003) identify the importance of working both with key people and the larger part of the population (more people), at both a personal and socio-political level.

Figure 1 - Interconnection of peace-building
The arrows indicate importance of connection

First, regarding different target groups. Experience indicates that without addressing both key people and more people, peace processes will fail. Of key people, Anderson and Olson (2003) find it especially important to include government, but also militias, commanders and others with a direct interest in continuing the conflict. This is supported by Goodhand (2003), who finds that NGOs which engage and do not avoid political processes, have a significantly better outcome. At the same time CDA CLP (2006) points out that NGOs need to balance the engagement in order to open and not close their space for peace-building by becoming too politicised. Furthermore, Anderson and Olsen (2003) find that peace projects often are biased in working with those easy to reach; these are often children, women, schools or churches. In addition, CDA CLP (2006, p 61) found, “Failure to reach the “harder to reach” who could undermine progress (…) threatens both the sustainability of projects that are being implemented and their ability to affect the wider environment”. Therefore, CDA CLP (2006) emphasises the importance of addressing those “harder to reach” in order for peace-building to have a greater impact.
Secondly, regarding level of impact, Anderson and Olson (2003) state that it is essential to address changes both at a personal level of attitude and behaviour, and on a socio-political level. It is especially important that changes on a personal level result in action on the socio-political level. This is not always necessary in the opposite direction, although personal change will support institutional changes (Anderson and Olson 2003).

Therefore, in order for peace-building to have a transformative impact, it is important to address both key people and more people at both a personal and socio-political level. However, this does not mean that each organisation has to do everything, but if they cooperate with others working with different target groups or at different levels they will have a greater impact. Also Goodhand (2006) supports the suggestion that strategic collaboration increases NGOs ability to have impact.

An impact assessment should therefore:
- Investigate whether peace-building projects in the community are addressing different target groups at different level
- Explore whether those “harder to reach” are targeted

**Context**

Peace-building efforts have to be designed for the particular conflict context. All conflicts have something unique, at the same time as they have similar patterns. Different factors shaping the conflict context are; the history of conflict, the stages it goes through, the actors involved and their positions, interests and need, the relationship between the actors, the causes of the conflict and the driving forces (Simon et.al 2000). In addition these factors will change over time as the conflict evolves. Furthermore the conflict will, “reshape politics, the economy, social institutions and the state” (Goodhand 2006, 70). It is therefore important for the NGOs to assess the context in order to keep the peace-building relevant. When it comes to impact assessment is it important to be aware of the context and investigate the relevance of NGOs responses. Furthermore is it relevant to explore the mutual interaction between the context and activities in shaping the impact. In other words, it is important to find out, “What works (or doesn’t), where and why?” (Hoffman 2004, p.13). This is important to assess in order to make the findings relevant to peace projects in other contexts and hence increase learning.

Besides the conflict context, the general international response to the conflict and the donors influences NGOs’ impact (Fisher and Zimina 2008 and Goodhand 2006). In
addition to all these external factors NGOs performances will be influenced by internal issues in the NGOs like values, resources (administrative, technical and financial), and leadership (Fisher and Zimina 2008, Goodhand 2006).

An impact assessment should therefore:
- Investigate the relevance of NGO projects to the context
- Investigate what in the context makes the projects work or not
3. Nepal
This chapter provides a general overview of Nepal and particularly the history and root causes of the conflict in order to give the context for the case studies and the discussion of them.

3.1 General background
Nepal is a landlocked country between India and China. It rises from the Ganges plateau (Terai) up the hills and to the Himalaya Mountains. Nepal is divided into five development regions: Far-Western, Mid-Western, Western, Central and Eastern. Furthermore Nepal is divided into 75 Districts and 3914 Village Development Committees (VDC), and all VDCs include nine wards which is the smallest administrative unit in Nepal (United Nations Nepal Information Platform 2002).

The population in Nepal has grown rapidly from 11.6 million in 1971 (Bastola 2005) to 23.1 million in 2001 which was the last census, and the population was in 2007 estimated to be 28.3 millions of which more than 80 percent live in rural areas and are dependent on agriculture (Human Development Report 2009). The population is diverse when it comes to ethnicity and castes. Approximately 20 percent of the population is untouchables or Dalits (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice 2005), 34 percent are from an ethnic group (Bonino and Donini 2009), and the rest belongs one of the four main castes or their many sub-castes. The four main castes are...
Bahun (priests), Chhetri (warriors), Vaisyas (merchants) and Shudras (labours and artisans) (Human Right Watch 2001).

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in Asia (Human Development Report 2009), and it received 600 million USD in official development assistance in 2007 in comparison was the inflow of remittances 1,743 million USD (Human Development Report 2009).

Table 1 - Key Human Development Index figures for Nepal

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy at birth (in years)</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>65.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy rate in population above 15 years</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita in PPP USD</td>
<td>1.049</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children below 5 years that are under weight</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Population with less than 1,25 USD per day</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Population with less than 2 USD per day</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population below national poverty line</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
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Nepal was for more than 200 years a monarchy, and at the end of the 1950s there were attempts at democracy, but that was replaced with a panchayat system of councils which were governed directly by the King (BBC 2010). In 1990 there was a democratic revolution resulting in a new constitution where the King received a more constitutional role.

3.2 Armed Conflict history

In February 1996 the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN(M)) revealed a 40 point demand and declared “People’s War” (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice 2005, and Bonino and Donini 2009). Central to their demand was the replacement of the monarchy with a secular republic, ethnic autonomy and abolition of “untouchability”. This was the start of a decade long armed conflict between the Maoists, the other political parties and the King. In the beginning the Maoists attacked local police in the western regions and through this they gained ammunition and weapons. As the Maoists gained armed control, they also took political control by replacing the local government structure with “‘people’s government’ that assumed state functions” (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice 2005, p. 3). Until 2001 the Maoist insurgency was seen as a security problem of the western regions of Nepal and only fought back by the local police. In June 2001 King Gyanendra was crowned after the former King and his close family were killed, and King Gyanendra took a more active role in the government (Upreti 2006). In September 2001 the Maoists announced the formation of “People’s Liberation Army Nepal” (PLA) and in
November they attacked a military barracks in Dang District (International Crisis Group 2005). As a result of this the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) were deployed “against the Maoist insurgency as part of the “global war on terror”” (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice 2005, p. 4). King Gyanendra closed the Parliament during autumn 2004, and February 1st 2005 he took direct power by dismissing the Prime Minister, and declaring a state of emergency in order to defeat the Maoists (BBC 2010). In November 2005 the main political parties and the Maoists formed an alliance in order to restore democracy, and in April 2006 there were nation-wide protests and strikes against the King, and he agreed to reinstate Parliament and a political government (BBC 2010). In November 2006 the Maoists and the government signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). This marked the end of a decade-long armed conflict, with approximately 13,000 killed\(^2\), 1500 disappeared and thousands displaced (OHCHR-NEPAL 2009). After the CPA 19,602 Maoist combatants\(^3\) were placed in United Nations (UN) supervised cantonments (United Nations Country Team Nepal 2009).

After two postponements, an election for the Constituent Assembly was held on April 10\(^{th}\) 2008\(^4\). During the first session of the Constituent Assembly they voted to end the monarchy and established a Republic (OHCHR-NEPAL 2009).

Many actors in Nepal (OHCHR-Nepal, Amnesty International and International Crisis Group) are concerned about the lack of investigation of disappearances and murders during the conflict time and the sense of impunity reinforced by the Government recommending “withdrawal of 349 cases “of a political nature”, including cases against some senior CPN(M) that were members of the Cabinet. Charges withdrawn included murder and attempted murder, rape, robbery and arson, as well as violations of arms and ammunition laws” (OHCHR-NEPAL 2009, p.11). There is still unrest and lack of public security in Terai, and bandha (Roadblock and strike) is used to get Governments attention to certain issues. In the beginning of May 2009 the CPN(M)-led Cabinet dismissed the Chief of Army, but the President overturned this decision and the CPN(M) Prime Minister resigned as a result. A new Unified Marxist Leninist (UML)-led Cabinet was formed.

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\(^2\) Informal Sector Services Centre reports 13347 killed.

\(^3\) Of these were 15,756 men and 3,846 women. 4,008 of the members were disqualified because they were below 18 on May 18\(^{th}\) 2006 (2,973), or they were recruited after this date (1,035) (United Nations Country Team Nepal 2009).

\(^4\) Of the 17.6 million eligible voters, 63 percent voted (OHCHR-NEPAL 2009). “Out of the 575 seats of the Assembly, women hold 33 per cent, Janajatis[ethnic groups] 33 per cent, Dalits 8 per cent and Madhesis 34 per cent of the seats.” (OHCHR-NEPAL 2009, p 19)
### 3.3 Root causes of the conflict

There is no single cause for the conflict in Nepal, but there are several root causes which contributed to the decade long armed conflict. The main causes are explored in the following sections.

#### Discrimination, inequality and poverty

Nepal is a hierarchical divided society based on the caste system. One inherits the same caste as one’s parents, and traditionally the caste determines one’s occupation and this implies ritual purity. Those below the four main castes are called untouchables or Dalits. Although the Dalits only comprise 20 percent of the population,

> Dalits represent 80 percent of the “ultra poor” in Nepal, dramatically increasing their vulnerability to bonded labour, slavery, trafficking, and other forms of extreme exploitation. “Upper-caste” community members force Dalits to live in segregated communities, prevent them from entering public spaces, deny them access to food, water, and land, and relegate Dalits into caste-based occupations considered too “ritually impure” for “higher castes” (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice 2005, p. 3).

According to International Crisis Group (2009, p. 31) Nepal has “the greatest levels of inequality in South Asia – and the gaps are growing wider.” In addition to the Dalits, are ethnic groups in Nepal also discriminated against. Doubly discriminated are the Dalit women and girls, “They bear the brunt of exploitation and violence and are routinely forced into sex work” (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice, 2005, p 3). Discrimination is related to poverty and in 2008 almost 25 percent of the population needed food assistance (United Nations Country Team Nepal 2009). The discrimination has marginalised the Dalits and ethnic groups socially, economically and politically. In other words, “Nepal has suffered from extremely high levels of what Johan Galtung describes as ‘structural violence’” (Bonino and Donini 2009, p. 7).

It is argued that the Maoists both addressed and capitalised on the caste discrimination. They punished publicly those practicing caste and gender discrimination at the same time as they took advantage of discrimination by “heavily recruiting Dalits and women for their militia” and that especially the Dalits were “literally taking the bullets for the Maoist insurgency” while the leaders of the Maoists were upper-caste men (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice 2005, p.4).
Government failure

After the democratic revolution in 1990 Nepal had nine different governments within the first ten years (BBC 2010). The upper caste groups, Bahun and Chhetri, continued to rule the country together with the Newars, which is the ethnic group of Kathmandu valley. According to Bonino and Donini (2009), they have together controlled all key administrative positions in the country. As a consequence “the chasm between democratic aspirations and democratic practice led to growing dissatisfaction” (Goodhand 2006, p. 56). Therefore the rural people lost trust in the government and supported the Maoists (Centre for Human Right and Global Justice 2005).

Development aid

Some authors claim that development aid or the failure of it is a cause or at least a driver of the conflict (Bonino and Donini 2009, Goodhand 2006). Some of the reasons they give for this are that poverty alleviation programmes have been badly targeted or failed to “trickle down”, there is a perception of the elite benefiting most from the aid, and withdrawal of projects from conflict affected areas increased the exclusion (Bonino and Donini 2009, Goodhand 2006). However, one of the arguments is that development projects raised expectations that the government could not meet and that the Maoist capitalised on that (Bonino and Donini 2009). Therefore, development aid can be seen as a contributing factor but not a root cause.

Bonino and Donini (2009) also found that for the first five or six years of the armed conflict few NGOs focused on the conflict, and only when the development space had “manifestly shrunk to levels that donors found unacceptable” (Bonino and Donini 2009, p. 22) did they focus on it. They argue that from 2004 donors changed from working around to work on conflict.

In summary, a combination of the larger parts of Nepal’s population suffering discrimination and living in poverty at the same time as unaffected politicians are most concerned with keeping their positions became the source of the armed conflict in Nepal.
4. Methodology

A field study was organised to investigate the research questions “What changes have occurred in communities in Nepal and to what extent are these changes results of impact from NGOs peace-building projects?” For the field research qualitative methods were chosen as the most appropriate to explore the communities’ views. This gave the researcher space to ask open questions and follow up what the interviewee said. Nepal was chosen since the researcher already had some knowledge of the conflict and society from previous work experience and hence wanted to gain a better understanding.

The organisation CDA CLP’s report “Has peacebuilding made a difference in Kosovo?” from 2006 was used as a template for the field study methodology. CDA The CDA CLP study was conducted in three steps; first the pattern of violence was investigated by a desk study and workshops, secondly 200 people were interviewed about peace-building and inter-ethnic violence in their community, and finally the findings were analysed in several workshops (CDA Collaborative Learning Project 2006). The research conducted for this dissertation followed similar steps.

4.1 Stages of the research

The first stage was to explore and understand more of the background both of the conflict and the society. This was conducted by a literature review and interviews with non-governmental organisations (NGO). The interview guide for the NGOs was developed on the basis of the literature review, and focused on four issues (see Appendix 2);

- The causes of the conflict
- The organisations’ peace-building activities
- The NGOs theory for how their activities contributed to peace
- Social structures and relations in the society

The first to be contacted was the lead advisor on Conflict Transformation in United Mission to Nepal (UMN). UMN provided advice regarding which organisations would be relevant or important to interview in Nepal. On the basis of this, eight international and national organisations were contacted and of them five were interviewed in Kathmandu\(^5\). In addition four organisations were interviewed in

Dhading District\(^6\). These interviews were conducted between July 21\(^{st}\) and August 5\(^{th}\) 2009.

The next stage was to interview people about their community, the interviews in Dhading were conducted between 3\(^{rd}\) and 12\(^{th}\) of August 2009. The questionnaire used the CDA CLP questionnaire as a starting point, but this had to be adjusted from an inter-ethnic conflict in Kosovo to a more political, class and caste conflict in Nepal. In addition the questionnaire was expanded to include changes in relations and structures and further developed to take into account the four dimensions of change that Lederach et.al. (2007) outline in “Reflective Peacebuilding: a planning, monitoring, and learning toolkit” and overall the questionnaire was adjusted to the Nepali context. The questionnaire covered the following topics (see Appendix 3):

- Background information including demography, livelihood and history of the armed conflict time
- Experience of violence and resistance after the CPA
- Change in relations and structures since CPA
- Local peace-building projects

Most of the questions were open to enable the interviewee to tell their version and interpretation of history. In some of the interviews not all of the questions were asked due to different reasons, such as time constraint or the interviewees not being in the main target group. There were also some occasions where other people turned up during the interview and made the interviewee uncomfortable and unwilling to talk; different approaches were tried by sometimes waiting with more of the controversial questions until the interfering person had left or excluding some questions totally. When the interviewees were asked about peace projects in their community very few knew any, therefore the question was changed to include development projects as well. The interviews were conducted in English and Nepali. An interpreter was used in most of the interviews. It worked well but sometimes the interpreter summarized what the interviewee said instead of translating everything. This can affect the data in the way that some information is lost, however it is more likely to be nuance lost than core issues. A recorder was not used since it was considered to prevent the interviewee from telling sensitive but important information. This can have affected the data in the way that information can have been missed out. To ensure that the notes from the interviews were correct, most of them were looked through by the researcher and interpreter together. Some sweets or biscuits were brought and shared during the interviews, since this was brought up during the situation it was considered not be a motivation to participate.

\(^6\) United Mission to Nepal, Focus Nepal, Informal Sector Services and Integrated Community Development Campaign.
The third stage was to analyse the data. After the interviews were completed a feedback meeting for the organisations in Kathmandu was planned, but due to time constraints only one organisation could participate. This points to one of the major weaknesses with this dissertation, namely that the findings from the VDCs were not discussed with the NGOs in order to get their view of their impact. The information from the interviews in the VDCs was placed in a matrix, and then four cases were written up. Where relevant and possible the information was triangulated with other sources. Similarly was the information from the interviews with the NGOs placed in a matrix and the general findings were written in the findings. Finally, the changes in the four cases were analysed and the impact of NGOs peace-building were discussed in relation to the issues identified in the literature review.

4.2 Selection of places and people

When Nepal was chosen as the country, the level of the study was considered, and a development region was seen as too large within the timeframe and a VDC too small to draw any conclusions. Therefore a District was seen as the right level for the research. Since Kathmandu was less affected by the war than much of the rest of the country, a District outside the Kathmandu valley was seen as the best option. On the other hand were the Western Districts not accessible within the timeframe of the study due to monsoon. Furthermore, the report “Peace Project mapping: A profil of AIN Members Contributing to Peace Building in Nepal” (The Association of International NGOs 2009) gives an overview of the peace work of seventeen international organisations in Nepal, and was used to select Districts where several organisations worked. Hence, Dhading was selected on the basis of being the only District outside the Kathmandu valley within the Central Development region where several organisations performed peace projects.

Dhading District was not one of the worst affected by the armed conflict or by security incidents after the CPA. The Nepali Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction have an “Emergency Peace Support Project”. One of the main objects in the project is to pay 100 000 Nepali Rupees to the family of those “killed as a result of conflict” (World Bank 2008). In Dhading compensation has been paid out for 185 deceased (Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction). Informal Sector Service Centre reported 180 people killed in Dhading District related to the armed conflict, of which 103 were killed by the State and 77 by the Maoists (Informal Sector Services Centre). Furthermore, according to Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Nepal and their mapping of security incidents from November 2005 to
September 2009, Dhading District is in the same category as most of the other Districts in Nepal most of the time when it comes to the number of incidents. Two exceptions are in November and December 2006 when most Districts had no incidents and Dhading had two\(^7\), and the other is for the whole of 2008 when Dhading were in the category of 15-33 incidents which is more than most of the Districts (OCHA 2006a, 2006b, 2008, 2009a and 2009b). In summary, although Dhading is either one of the worst or least affected by the armed conflict or of security incidents since the CPA, it was affected in the same way as most of the Districts in Nepal. Furthermore, although it was not at the heart of the armed conflict, Dhading is an interesting District to investigate.

Within Dhading 4 VDCs were chosen to be visited. In the beginning the plan was to select two VDCs with peace projects and two without, and then compare them. After talking to the first local NGO four VDCs were chosen. Later it was found out that other organisations performed peace projects in the two VDCs believed to be without. It was considered to select two other VDCs without projects, but they were hard to find. Therefore, in the end all the four VDCs had some peace projects.

Those selected for interviews were persons from the general population who had a certain overview or contact within the community. Furthermore, it was decided to interview teachers, medical workers and shopkeepers as in the CDA CLP (2006). Because of the timeframe, 20 to 30 interviews were seen as a manageable size to build the cases. The individuals for the interviews were partly selected on the basis of being available. In most VDCs institutions like health posts and schools were approached, and the first person available was interviewed. Also shops were approached and here the options were larger and often women were chosen to get a better gender balance. In each place at least one teacher, one medical worker and one shopkeeper were interviewed. In addition, one person was interviewed to provide demographic information on the VDC. All interview candidates were given a Participant information sheet (See Appendix 5), and written informed consent, provided in English and Nepali, was collected from all the interviewees prior to the interviews (See Appendix 4).

Nineteen people from four different VDCs were interviewed (See Table 2). Twelve of the interviewed were men and seven women. The caste of the interviewees was indicated by their surname: ten of the interviewees were from a high caste (Bahun or Chhetri), three were Newar, two had an ethnic background, whereas for the last four

\(^7\) A Nepali Congress (NC) member was threatened by death of CPN(M) members (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2006b).
the caste or ethnic background could not be identified. There were no Dalits among the selected interviewees.

Table 2 - Overview of interviewees in VDCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health worker</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health worker</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health worker</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health worker</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health worker</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDC secretary</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDC secretary</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDC secretary to secretary</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO worker</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social worker</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Findings

5.1 Four cases from Dhading

Dhading District is situated in the west of the Central Development Region of Nepal. There are 50 VDCs in the District, the capital city is Dhadingbesi and the total population was 334,889 in 2001 (Digital Himalaya). In the following sections the findings from the research conducted in the VDCs Jogimara, Maudi, Murali Bhanjyang and Sangkosh is presented as four cases. Background information for each of the VDCs e.g. regarding the local armed conflict history is given in Appendix 6.

Figure 3 – Map of Dhading

Source: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2006)
5.1.1 Jogimara VDC

Jogimara VDC is situated in the south west of Dhading District, and the highway from Kathmandu to Pokhara goes through the north of this VDC. In 2001 the population was 6,682 people (Digital Himalaya), but according to a local census this had increased to 7,945 in 2008. The population is diverse when it comes to ethnicity and caste (See table 3).

Table 3 - Population groups in Jogimara

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chepang (e)</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahun and Chhetri (hc)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magar (e)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurung (e)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar (e)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damai, Kami, Sarki (lc)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamang (e)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giri and Pori (hc)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jogimara VDC secretary

Violence and resistance after the CPA

When it comes to violence in the period after the CPA, Jogimara has been a relatively peaceful place. People interviewed had very different experiences of what they were afraid of today, one said they were not afraid anymore, another was worried about the Chepang health, and one said people were afraid because of lack of rules and regulations. These differences were also reflected in the answers regarding how secure they were feeling. Most felt secure within their village, and they had started to be more open to strangers. Some were also concerned about having different political parties and the disagreement that brought to the society. Some of the interviewee said that trust had deteriorated and was more limited than before. One of them explained why, “This is because of what people did. People used to express feelings about political parties, Maoist and the army. But it was disclosed by the people, they told it to the Maoist and the army, and trust decreased”. However, another said that they trusted each other.
None of the informants reported any open violence in the community either now or during the election last year, but they expressed fear of articulating political views and their opinion of bhanda. One puts it this way, “In this area there are demonstrations and strikes. People accept it, they don't want to talk about it, only in their families, with friends, but they will not talk publicly.” Furthermore, regarding domestic violence there were contradictory messages from the interviewees. The health worker said that they did not see anyone at the health post, but another said that one case had just happened with two women fighting, and at least one of them needed treatment for injuries. In Jogimara, the interviewees did not think the conflict would come back, but one reflected on the lack of response from the government on the diarrhoea outbreak in the Western part on Nepal and that it could result in a conflict later.

Social relations and structure
The people interviewed said the Chepang people were the poorest. Furthermore was it revealed that although people said there was no discrimination of Dalits, there was. One said that “Generally, we do not say there is any caste discrimination, but in practice there are. The high caste people do not trust them; will not eat food or drink water touched by low castes. Old Bahun or Chhetris do not like, but young people do. It is decreasing by generation -because of education”. However, there is at least one local organisation or group in the VDC, and according to the leader they include all castes and ethnic groups.

When it comes to the relationship between Maoists and people of other political parties in the VDC it is not restored. One illustrated that by saying, “Everyone celebrates festivals, but it has been politicised. Maoists do not want to go to other political party to celebrate. Even if they are in family, it has been seen that they are not celebrating together.”

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8 Bhanda is the Nepali name for strike which includes all vehicles with wheel.
9 The outbreak of diarrhoea was in the news at the time, and thousands were sick and several hundred died (United Nations Nepal Information Platform, 2009)
According to the interviews there was confusion about how decisions were made in the VDC. One claimed that decisions in the VDC were made by the leaders in the political parties and those who owned large land. Another said that the VDC budget was decided by the VDC secretary together with one from the health post and one veterinary, and that political party leaders and other groups sent their representative to raise their issue and get some funding. However, only one articulated that he would like to have more influence in decision-making.

**Peace-building projects in Jogimara VDC**

Apart from VDC secretary, none of the other interviewees knew of any peace projects in the VDC, but one knew about some relief given to the families of the 17 killed in Kalikot. According to the VDC secretary there were around twelve organisations working in the VDC. In addition there were at least one local group in the VDC, a woman’s group, and they organised talks about health and they saved money together. However, the people interviewed did not mention a need for peace projects. At the same time a sense of hopelessness was reported to be increasing, and one said, “In the negotiation period, we had lots of hope. We thought things would be easily improved. People in general are lacking hope”.

Interestingly, according to the NGOs interviewed in Dhading they all had peace projects in Jogimara. Focus Nepal had one Peace Ambassador there facilitating three peace groups consisting of 27-29 members who worked on influencing their neighbourhood, in addition did they work to get the media’s attention onto the Chepang situation. UMN Dhading had a partner in “Highway Peace“-project working in Jogimara, they had trained 25 mediators to deal with bhanda along the highway in Dhading. In addition ICDC were having a reintegration project concerning a few children in Jogimara, these children had been in PLA or in RNA.
5.1.2. Maidi VDC

Maidi is situated in the west of Dhading District with a border to Gorkha District. There is a road into the VDC but it is unreliable in the monsoon period, most people therefore walk in and out of the VDC. In 2001 the population in Maidi was 10,275 (Digital Himalaya), but according to a local organisation the number had increased to 11,570 in 2007. When it comes to ethnic and caste the population is divers (See Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4 - Population groups in Maidi</th>
<th>Percent of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahun (hc)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magar (e)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhetri (hc)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar (e)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamang (e)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komal (e)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarki (lc)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami (lc)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damai (lc)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suryasi</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurung (e)</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jagatjyoti Community Development Society

Violence and resistance after the CPA

People interviewed in Maidi said they were not afraid anymore, but they were concerned about the political situation. They were disappointed by the political parties hiding criminal acts from the past and only calling for positions now. When it comes to security most people interviewed felt as secure now as before the civil war. One linked the security with the return of the police post in the VDC. In addition, the interviewees said that trust among people had come back.

When asked about violence in the community all of the interviewee talked about incidents that had happened lately; fights, rape and that the police were beaten. In interviews it was told that about a month before the interviews were conducted one
member of the Youth Force had beaten the leader of the Maoists, and the next day the Maoists had demanded that the police catch him. The police did, and on their way back to the police post they were attacked by members of the Young Communist League, and both the boy and his father were injured and the boy needed to go to the hospital in Dhadingbesi for treatment. The police in Dhadingbesi had urged the police in Maida to catch those who did this, but one of the interviewees said that the police were too afraid of the Maoists to do so. One also mention an episode around 20 days before the interviews, when some drunk youths had beaten the police, and others accepted it, they did not want to help the police, the interviewee had tried to stop the fight, but had then been beaten. Others said that social workers or social leaders tried to stop fights when they occurred. While staying in the VDC for the interviews it was a festival and in the evening there was a fight in the village. In addition to these recent incidents, in April 2008 a few days before the election, a petrol bomb was detonated at the house of the Nepali Congress Village Committee President where a political party meeting was held, and six Nepali Congress cadres were injured. However, one commented on the improvement,

Now this place is very peaceful compared to conflict time. One can walk in the night time if you need it. At that time if you asked, we would not want to talk. Now there is very nice overall, but things can happen with a single person. After peace agreement police came back. The VDC chairperson moved to Dhadingbesi during the conflict, now they can stay here. During the conflict time, when money or budget were distributed it used to be in Dhadingbesi. Now they can do it here.

INSEC confirmed all the incidents reported by the interviewee.

When it comes to domestic violence, one said that it “is happening a lot, but people do not want to tell that it happens to me”. Despite all the violence, most interviewees were confident that peace would last since there was a peace agreement and the Maoists got so many votes in the election, and only one was concerned that war could

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10 Youth Force is the youth organisation of the political party Unified Marxist Leninist
11 Young Communist League is the youth organisation of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
come back. Disagreements in the community were reported to be settled by political leaders coming to an agreement or by social leaders mediating.

**Social structure and relations**

According to the interviewee there is still a lot of discrimination towards the Dalits in Maidi, one characterised it as apartheid. Several of those interviewed in Maidi said there was a difference between the young and the old; the youth did not mind visiting the Dalits or eating together with them in a cafe, but they could not take Dalits home because of their parents’ attitude. One interviewee illustrated the extent of the discrimination, “Sometimes we have training here, and Dalits use to come. If we have tea or snacks the Bahun and Chhetri leave, and we ask them why. They say that they don't like to eat together with Dalits.” Furthermore, several interviewees mentioned how people should cleanse themselves if they had touched a Dalit\(^{12}\). On the other hand a couple of people also mentioned that the Dalits demean themselves by behaving like untouchables. Everybody said that there had been a change in caste relations in recent years, from the conflict time up to now, but they had different time perspective on when the change started. Furthermore people gave different reasons for the changes; several pointed to education in general and awareness training done by the local NGO, others mentioned political parties’ support for change, new input from people who migrated and the radio.

Regarding the relationship between Maoist and RNA families or other political party families, people felt that there were no problems. They said that the anger was gone. On the other hand several mentioned the Maoist wanted to be “superior in this place”, and that they demanded to be the leaders of committees and local institutions like schools although they did not have qualified people to fill the positions. In the same way one commented on local corruption, and said that most people working with electricity were from one of the other political parties and the interviewee thought they would distribute electricity when it arrives to party members first. Furthermore, when it comes to decision making in Maidi interviewees said it was the political leaders together with headmasters that made the decisions. In addition social groups like Dalits and women sent their representatives to influence the decisions, and most interviewees expressed satisfaction with the way things are and their own influence.

\(^{12}\) By scattering water, which had touched gold, over them people could be purified after direct contact with Dalits.
Peace-building projects in Maida VDC

Several pointed to the local NGO, Jagatjyoti Community Development Society (JCDS) and said that it had played an important role in peace building. JCDS have had projects in vegetable production, they were about to bring toilets to every household, and they had awareness projects with special focus on the Dalits and mediation training for social leaders and political leaders. In addition, small local clubs were reported to have local initiatives for development. Other organisations were also mentioned, ICDC worked with children, they had given scholarships to children whose parent had died in the civil war and training for teachers in child mental health, and Focus Nepal had Peace Ambassadors that gathered the mediators and supported the police. Most of those interviewed in Maida knew about peace projects in their community, only one said that there was no peace-building. One reflected on the importance of the different actors on different stages, he said “I think during the time of the conflict the NGO was the most important to stop fights, and then after the peace agreement all the groups are important, political parties, police, NGO, and educated people.”

All the three NGOs interviewed in Dhading had projects in Maida. Focus Nepal had, as mentioned, a Peace Ambassador who facilitated three peace groups consisting of 24 to 30 people. ICDC worked with reintegration of 10 children in the community and UMN did capacity building of the local NGO, JCDS, and they supported their community mediation project.
5.1.3. Murali Bhanjyang VDC

Figure 8 – Map of Murali Bhanjyang

Murali Bhanjyang is situated west of Dhadingbesi, and a road goes through the VDC and ends up in Gorkha District. The population in Murali Bhanjyang had grown from 7,463 in the 2001 census (Digital Himalaya) to 8,604 people distributed on 1,597 household, according to the VDC. For population diversity see Table 5.

Table 5 - Population groups in Murali Bhanjyang
(e–ethnic, hc–high caste, lc–low caste)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Households</th>
<th>Newar (e)</th>
<th>Bahun (hc)</th>
<th>Chhetri (hc)</th>
<th>Kami (lc)</th>
<th>Komal (e)</th>
<th>Gurung (e)</th>
<th>Damai (lc)</th>
<th>Bada (e)</th>
<th>Magar (e)</th>
<th>Sarki (lc)</th>
<th>Tamang (e)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Murali Bhanjyang VDC

Violence and resistance after the CPA

Half of the interviewees in Murali Bhanjyang answered that there was nothing they were afraid of, the other half were concerned about lack of agreement and cooperation among the political parties. All of the interviewees felt secure and some of them characterised the security as similar to before the conflict. On the other hand one commented that there had been some theft and that they needed police in the community. The trust among people in the community seemed to be restored; one said “We trust each other now. During the conflict time we were not sure if some people were passing messages, so we did not say anything. If we said anything about the Maoists or army we suffered.” Furthermore, people did not have any current violence to report. People were not aware of domestic violence and at the health post they had not observed any change, but the health worker assumed they had a case to the clinic from the VDC annually or every other year. According to INSEC there had been two incidents of caste violence lately: A Kami was beaten after he had touched a high
caste, and another Kami had been shouted at and beaten in a hotel because he did not wash his own plate after eating.

Some of the people were concerned about the future and that the war could return. One said “Peace is not fulfilled” and added that there had not yet been a solution to the future of the PLA combatants, and another had heard on the news that the Maoist would go to war again. According to the interviewees there is a hierarchy to resolve disagreements, first the head of the family will try to solve it, but if he is unable they will go to the village leader, and if the problem is still not solved they will go to the VDC, and lastly they will go to the District Office.

Social structure and relations
People answered differently about how the caste discrimination was manifested in their community, but several said that the Dalits were the poor in the community. One said that earlier the Dalits needed to collect water from a different place than the others, they were not allowed to enter the Temple or to sit and eat with the others, and they had to give way in the road to the others. Still it was claimed that some of the older people said, “you are low caste” to the Dalits, and one of the interviewees said, “People are not so wide in their mind, so Dalits can not enter houses and eat with people, only if they are close friends.” Although there still is discrimination towards the Dalits, there have been improvements. The interviewees saw different reasons for the changes, two said it was a process of awareness, which came through education and time, and one said that the conflict improved the situation. Furthermore, one mentioned that neither conflict nor peace had brought any economic development to the Dalits. Moreover, two of the interviewees expressed a concern about all the programmes to help the Dalits, one said, “Now the Dalits are more forward, maybe we will be backwards? There is no good news to the Bahun and Chhetri from the VDC or the government.”

Figure 9 - Shop and the Maoists office in Murali Bhanjyang
Regarding the relation between Maoists and RNA, police or other political parties one said there were no problems while two said they did not talk to each other as they used to do before. Furthermore, an interviewee explained the relationship was all right since, “People used to forget if time goes. They have interest in peace. They don't want to open that again.” Another interviewee said they needed some programmes to talk about what had happened.

When it comes to decision making in the community most people answered that the VDC secretary, party leaders and one working with agriculture and one from the health post allocate the VDC budget. In addition some mentioned that each village could send their representative to bring up their issues. Several expressed that they would like to be more involved in and informed about the decisions for the VDC. At the same time several of those interviewed said they could participate at village level or by informal contact with VDC people.

**Peace-building projects in Murali Bhanjyang VDC**

Some interviewees knew of some development projects in Murali Bhanjyang, but none of the interviewees knew of any peace projects in their VDC. According to the interviews the most known organisation was Santi Nepal, others were Asman Nepal, the World Bank, Focus Nepal with a drinking water project, Song, ICDC had helped a group of families by giving them training and helped them to set up a shop.

Of the NGOs interviewed in Dhading, Focus Nepal had a Peace Ambassador there which facilitated three peace groups consisting of 27 to 30 people. ICDC conducted reintegration of five to six children in the community, and they supported a silk production project.
5.1.4. Sangkosh VDC

Sangkosh VDC is situated north of Dhadingbesi only divided from the town by a river. In 2001 the population of Sangkosh was 5,579 (Digital Himalaya). The current population is unsure; the VDC secretary’s figures were below the one from 2001\textsuperscript{13}, but a health worker operated with a figure of 6,524 people as the current population. According to the same health worker, the ethnic group Gurung were the largest in the VDC, but the Bahun and Chhetri groups were together equal in size to the Gurungs. After years without a VDC secretary, one was appointed during summer 2009, but he also worked for other VDCs and his office was in Dhadingbesi. Two of the interviewees in this VDC preferred to answer on behalf of their ward, which was number 2 called Bahun, and not the whole VDC, if relevant it will be explicit where information relates to.

**Violence and resistance after the CPA**

When asked about what they were afraid or worried about; three of those interviewed were concerned about the return of the war, one was worried about the prices going up and one about the absence of rain which may result in lack of food. Furthermore, regarding security all the interviewees felt secure, but if they compared the community now and before the conflict one missed the cultural celebrations they had before when all gathered, and another one said,

> Now people are confused, what will happen? What will happen? They think nowadays that if all Maoists were finished it would be peace, or if the other parties were finished there would be peace. There are no rules and regulations. Now we used to talk about that. Those who are supposed to get punished are not getting it, but those criminals are saved by the parties. In this ward there are simple social criminals like simple fights, they beat each other. The party hide the one beating but the one beaten gets punishment.

\textsuperscript{13} The VDC secretary had been in the position less than a month.
Moreover, all said that trust was restored, but some expressed a more sceptical attitude to strangers; one said, “…we have trust, first to our family and close neighbours, those we know. I talk with you now, but I don’t know. In conflict time I could not talked openly with you, you could be from the Maoist”. All the interviewees said that there were no violence now, neither in the ward nor the VDC, only one said that some small fights could occur when people were drinking. Furthermore, the interviewees did not report any domestic violence. Some of the interviewees were open about the possibility of the war returning, and two of them gave the unstable government as the reason, one of these mentioned the problems in Terai.

The interviewees referred to different options for solving a local conflict, one said that if there were a conflict in the past they brought the issue to the ward chairman and the ward party leaders and if they could not agree they went to the VDC chairperson. Another said that they had a mediator now who arranged a talk between the different parts and settled the conflict in this way.

**Social structure and relations**

Most of those interviewed stated that discrimination towards the Dalit had changed, but the one who had an ethnic background said “…I think they say it has changed, but it has not changed. It is the same, same.” The changes the others claimed were in access to education, water and permission to enter local cafes. Furthermore, one claimed that the Dalits received more support from the government and another complained that the Dalit children were not clean and did not attend school regularly, and he told of some Dalits who had taken advantage of scholarships from the government by enrolling in two schools. Furthermore, one stated that the change in attitude towards the Dalits came from the Maoist government, and two others said that the change came after the conflict time.
Since there had been few Maoists in this ward during the conflict, there was no problem with the relationship between them and other groups. One of those answering on behalf of the VDC said she did not know who was Maoist and therefore she did not know of any problems. When it comes to decision making in their community, the VDC chairperson, the different party leaders and one representative from health, education and agriculture met and made decisions regarding the VDC, for instance the VDC budget. In addition, one said that selected people from other groups also participate, like women, Dalits and some ethnic groups. Three of those interviewed were among those participating, one of the others would like to know more about what was decided, and one did not want to be involved.

Peace-building projects in Sangkosh VDC

Two of the interviewees did not know of any development or peace projects in their community, but the three others (all men involved in decision making) knew about various organisations doing development projects, but only one of these knew of a former peace project. This project was conducted by ICDC and they were reported to form children’s groups and teach them about peace. The following organisations were mentioned to do development projects Prayas Nepal, Narijagaronkindra, UMN, Room to Read, Somerachadmench, Focus Nepal, Newar Bank and ICDC.

According to the NGOs interviewed in Dhading, Focus Nepal had a Peace Ambassador in Sangkosh which facilitated three peace groups consisting of 28 to 30 people, and ICDC conducted reintegration of six children to the community and they supported a silk production project.
5.2 Interviews with the NGOs

Representatives from nine NGOs were interviewed in Kathmandu and Dhading (see Table 6).

Table 6 - Overview of NGOs interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Place of interview</th>
<th>Type of organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helvetas Nepal (HN)</td>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
<td>International development org.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia Foundation (AF)</td>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
<td>International development org.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Nepal (CN)</td>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
<td>International development org.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Alert (IA)</td>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
<td>International Peace-building org.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMN Dhading office (UMN-D)</td>
<td>Dhading</td>
<td>International development org.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Nepal (FN)</td>
<td>Dhading</td>
<td>Nepali development org.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Community Development Campaign (ICDC)</td>
<td>Dhading</td>
<td>Nepali development org.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSEC Dhading office (INSEC-D)</td>
<td>Dhading</td>
<td>Nepali human right org.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the NGOs had different goals for their work from harmonious communities, peace with justice to empowerment of marginalised groups and helping partners to integrate conflict transformation in all their work. Only two NGO representatives talked about the gap between their goal and the reality in the communities. One admitted that the delivery at community level was not as good as they had hoped due to two constraints, first that it was difficult to truly partner with the local organisations and not dominate them with their ideas, the other was that most Nepali thought that peace was something signed two years ago. The other representatives talked about domestic violence and how the NGO needed to teach people that it was not acceptable to beat one’s wife two or three times a month, so they did not expect equality between the genders until the next generation grew up.

The representatives were asked whether they worked according to any particular theory of change. A few refused the question as a donor driven focus, but most of them did. One explained their work having impact through their advocacy work, like “a stone in a pond.” Others had a different theory of change for each projects; one wanted to show and give leadership to those who wanted change, and be patient with those resisting change. In addition, it was argued that the culture and religion in Nepal needed to be woven in to the change in order for it to take a deeper root in society. Most of the NGOs worked at a socio-political level addressing “More people” (see Figure 12).
### Figure 12 - Overview of peace-building activities conducted by interviewed NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Level</th>
<th>Socio-Political Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>More people</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key people</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychosocial counselling: (HN) and (FN)</td>
<td>Relationship between politicians: Trust (UMN), and “Collaboration Nepal Transition” (AF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconciliation: forgiveness seminars (UMN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with war victims:</td>
<td>Advocate for solutions among NGOs (IA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Economic support: livelihood and infrastructure building (HN),</td>
<td>Research for political parties (AF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- empowerment (CN),</td>
<td>Reporting HR abuse: INSEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awareness campaign about reintegration (ICDC)</td>
<td>Bringing cases forward to Media (FN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth: skill training (HN)</td>
<td>Local Peace Committees: want to work with them (HN) and (AF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor and vulnerable: Economic development (CN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women (CN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children: Schools zone of peace (UMN), Reintegration of child soldiers (ICDC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith groups (UMN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict sensitive business (IA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community mediation (AF), (UMN) and (ICDC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhanda: Highway mediation (UMN)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community peace groups (FN)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace centre (FN)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Figure 13 - Overview of peace-building activities conducted by interviewed NGOs in Dhading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Level</th>
<th>Socio-Political Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>More people</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key people</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychosocial counselling: (FN)</td>
<td>Relationship between politicians: Trust (UMN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconciliation: forgiveness seminars (UMN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with war victims:</td>
<td>Reporting HR abuse: INSEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awareness campaign about reintegration (ICDC)</td>
<td>Bringing cases forward to Media (FN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children: Schools zone of peace (UMN), Reintegration of child soldiers (ICDC)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith groups (UMN)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community mediation (UMN) and (ICDC)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhanda: Highway mediation (UMN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community peace groups (FN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace centre (FN)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6. Discussion: What changes have occurred and to what extent were these influenced by the NGOs’ peace projects?

The two goals of peace projects are to end violence and to build just and equitable relations and structures in the society. For each of these main goals this chapter will first analyse the changes that were reported in the case studies, and then discuss to what extent the NGOs interviewed have influenced these changes and evaluate the effectiveness of their projects.

6.1 Impact on ending violence

Changes in violence and threats of violence

In most places in Nepal, including Dhading, the large scale violence with army attacks and fights ended with the CPA in 2006, but other kinds of violence have continued, with various intensity. Of the four VDCs, Maidi was the only area where people reported current violence. In the other VDCs people only reported some domestic violence when asked. In contrast, INSEC reported violent incidents in all the VDCs the last year. The most severe and highest number of incidents was in Maidi. For Murali Bhanjyang and Sangkosh, INSEC reported incidents of caste related violence, and for Jogimara there were reports of political violence. Nobody in there three VDCs mentioned these incidents. INSEC reported that the number of human rights incidents in Dhading by July 2009 was the double of the annual figures from previous years. They partly explained the increase of number was due to people having greater awareness and more confidence to speak up about violation, but they also believed there were more cases.

There are potentially many reasons for why Maidi was the VDC with most reported violence. For instance, one reason could be related to the level of violence during the armed conflict. This reason is supported by the findings that Maidi were both the most...
violent then\textsuperscript{14} and now, and Sangkosh were the one with least reported violence then\textsuperscript{15} and now. Furthermore, INSEC related the high number of incidents to the number of Maoists in Maidi. This evidence is also supported with Sangkosh as the VDC with lowest number of Maoists. On the other hand, there were no significant differences in number of Maoists reported in Maidi and in Murali Bhanjyang. Therefore, the number of Maoist is not the only reason for an increase in violence.

Both caste and domestic violence were highly underreported in the interviews. In Murali Bhanjyang INSEC reported one domestic and two caste related cases, neither of which were reported in the interviews. According to INSEC, the most reported kind of cases in Dhading was domestic violence. People interviewed had little awareness of domestic violence. This supports what the one interviewed from Asia Foundation said, that people have to learn that it is not acceptable to beat their wife two or three times per month. She added that men in Nepal are taught to dominate.

**Perception of security in the VDCs today**

To assess people’s perception of violence, they were asked what they were afraid of, how secure they felt and who they trusted.

The most surprising finding is that Sangkosh is the VDC where most people expressed that they were afraid, and their concern was the return of war. In the three other VDCs most people were not afraid, but there were some people in all of those VDCs concerned about the lack of political cooperation and agreement and lawlessness. It is challenging to find a certain explanation for why more people in Sangkosh were afraid, but the most probable explanation is that the Maoists in the days before the interviews in Sangkosh had been stating in the media that they were going to take more serious steps of protests against the government. Therefore, most probably the fear in Sangkosh examines how national events influence peoples feeling of security.

The feeling of security is relatively similar in all the VDCs, but it is interesting that most people in Maidi, which was the most violent of the VDCs, felt as secure as before the conflict. There can be several reasons to this, and one could be the improvement in contrast with the armed conflict period. Another explanation could be as one interviewee said that violent incidents were limited to single persons and hence

\textsuperscript{14} Maidi during the armed conflict: more people were reported to be kidnapped by the Maoists, to move away because of threat, and to enrol in the RNA and police.

\textsuperscript{15} Sangkosh during the armed conflict: few visits from the Maoists, few violent incidents during the armed conflict reported in interviews although the number of killed is similar to the other VDCs, nobody were reported to join the PLA, but on the contrary a few Maoists were forced to leave the VDC.
were not seen as a community problem. In addition, a couple of interviewees in Maidi related their feeling of security to the return of the police post. This is in many ways a paradox since the police were not respected by all or had the power needed to control the violence. This indicates that the people in Maidi might feel more secure than the reality justifies.

When it comes to trust in the communities, there were no apparent differences between the VDCs; most people said they trusted others, at the same time several would limit the trust to people in their own village. Both in Jogimara and in Murali Bhanjyang people said that they could not trust each other during the conflict time since they did not know who disclosed information to RNA or PLA, and in Jogimara some were still sceptical about people within their community and they would not express their political view or opinion of bhanda publicly. The overall return of trust seems to be related to the absence of threat. Also the fact that there were no spies in the community as in the armed conflict time may influence the return of trust. However, it is difficult to say how deep their trust is and how it could be affected if a tense situation returned.

**Resistance to violence**

Since Maidi was the only VDC where people reported violence it was also the only place relevant asking about resistance to violence. Several groups of people tried to stop fights when they occurred such as: the police, social leaders, political party leaders, and people from the general public. Although there was some interference, they were not always powerful enough to stop the fights. When the youth factions of the political parties fought, the political party leader could not prevent injury. For instance, a boy was severely injured, and when other youth had beaten the police others accepted it. In addition, the police were reported to be too frightened to arrest the Maoists responsible of the severe beating of the boy. This illustrates that there are groups resisting and interfering when violence occurs, at the same time as they are not powerful enough to end it.

Finally, in all the VDCs most people said they had mechanisms for solving disagreement or disputes. Most people referred to a hierarchical system where they first went to the ward chairman. Furthermore, if the case was not resolved they went to the VDC and lastly to the District office. It was not asked specifically what kinds of cases were brought to this system, but domestic dispute and violence were mentioned in relation to this in interviews. It was not asked whether people respected the decisions, but one from Asia Foundation said their training of mediators helped the
relationship between the government and the people because the former system with government mediation had created losers and winners, and the one loosing usually made problems for the government later. This indicates that the “government mediation system” was not respected by all. In addition to this system a few people in Mardi and Sangkosh mentioned social leaders as mediators.

NGOs influence on ending violence
When discussing how the NGOs’ peace-building projects have influenced the changes regarding violence in the VDCs it is important to mention that most of the interviews with the NGOs were done before the interviews with the people in the VDCs, and hence the findings in the VDCs are not discussed with the NGOs. In addition, only a minority of the people interviewed in the VDCs knew of any peace projects so in most cases it was not relevant to ask of their impact. Therefore this discussion builds on what the NGOs said they wanted to do and have been doing.

First it is clear that there have been major changes regarding violence in the VDCs visited, and this is mostly due to the CPA, as a direct effect the visits of RNA and PLA ended. According to the interviewees this represented the largest impact on people’s everyday life. After that trust and mobility increased whereas fear gradually decreased. Both the community people and the NGO staff interviewed realised that this was not an instant effect, but a gradually process. The NGOs could have influenced this process, but there are no certain data on this. In addition, there were still many violent incidents in the communities. The most frequent violence reported were, political, caste and domestic violence.

Of the local NGOs interviewed, UMN Dhading is the one most concerned of addressing the violent situation and having activities correspond with the current issues. They had arranged training for 15 politicians in 5 VDCs where there had been problems, and one of the immediate changes UMN Dhading reported from this was that the politicians wanted to cooperate for development instead of threatening people if they did not vote for them. Also they have trained different kinds of mediators in the “Highway Peace” and “Community Mediation” project, and in Mardi the political leaders had asked for the same mediation training as the social leader had received. This indicates that the training is perceived as relevant in the community.

Despite UMN working through a local NGO in Mardi and the two other NGOs conducting peace-building there, Mardi was still the most violent VDC. Clearly the NGOs have not managed to end the violence in Mardi. On the other hand, they can
have prevented violence from happening, but that is difficult to measure. Interestingly, Maidi was also the place where most people reported current violence in accordance with INSEC data and they reported a high level of security. This can be related to the police and the peace projects. And it indicates a positive impact on threat of violence and people’s perception of violence.

Both UMN and ICDC performed community mediation projects. Furthermore, if the role of the mediators is examined from what was told by the interviewee in the communities, the mediators were approached when a fight had happened, but it was not reported that they targeted the groups most likely to conduct violence as a means of prevention. It is not clear from the data, but it is possible that their project failed to deal with the “harder to react” people and also to deal with key issues, such as impunity. One of the findings in the CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2006) is that a failure to engage key people and areas makes the peace projects less effective. According to the interviews in Maidi the Maoist there claimed to be “superior” and thus claiming leadership in social institutions which they were not qualified. This indicates that the Maoists are “harder to reach” and the effectiveness of the community mediation is linked to whether they are involved or not.

In the other three VDCs most people referred to the ward, VDC or District leader for settling disagreement. It is not clear from the data whether these are a target for the NGOs training of mediators. Since the population refer to these leaders, they seem to be important in train in order to improve the impact of ongoing mediation projects.

Some of the people interviewed said they were afraid due to lawlessness, and impunity was identified by some of the NGOs as a driving factor of the ongoing conflict. International Crisis Group (2009, p. 33) states on Nepal, “The judiciary is corrupt, ineffective and in need of reform” and “there has been next to no action on addressing conflict-era crimes, including investigating disappearances”. Furthermore in relation to building the social contract between the government and the citizens, Goodhand (2006, p.73) states that “it is fairly clear from the case studies that an effective social contract – including the rule of law (...)is fundamental to avoiding war or building peace”. Therefore, is it important at all levels to combat impunity and the impression that with the right political link one avoids prosecution. The NGOs can play a part locally, and Focus Nepal told they talked about Human right in the Peace Groups. One of the concerns the interviewee at International Alert had in relation to this, was the capacity of the police, and that the NGOs when talking about human rights did not take into account the capacity of the police. Watson and Crozier (2009, p 8) state that, “The Nepal Police are, officially, on the front line of security service
provision but lack the necessary capacity and resources and do not have the full trust of the people.” The interviewee at International Alert recommended a discussion regarding the security role and capacity of the police where both the community and the police participated. This is especially relevant in Mardi, where the police did not have the adequate equipment or capacity to protect those arrested from attacks from other groups, they were attacked themselves, and they were reported to not arrest Maoists responsible for crime. This is important to address, as the CDA Collaborative Learning Project identified, that if the NGOs failed to address the driving factor of the conflict they were “unlikely to have an impact on the conflict” (2006, p. 55).

Regarding resistance to violence in the community, UMN stated they wanted to build non-violent attitudes. The case studies indicate some impact in Mardi where several groups interfered when fights occurred, but the impact is still too limited to end fights or to prevent them from occurring.

### 6.2 Impact on building new relations and structures

**Changes in social relations and structures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 15 - Impact assessment criteria for building new relations and structures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Whether root causes and driving forces of the conflict are identified, and furthermore addressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Increase of marginalised groups access to and control with resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Increase of marginalised groups access and influence on political, economic and social structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Preparation or performance in a reconciliation process</td>
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One of the root causes of the conflict in Nepal is discrimination and poverty of low castes, ethnic groups and Dalits. The Dalit groups are the most discriminated and marginalised. Therefore, in order to assess impact of peace-building by the NGOs it was crucial to investigate the relationship between the Dalits and the higher castes. Additionally, the relationships between the former actors in the armed conflict, the Maoists, the army and the political parties, were identified as important to explore. Lastly, government failure were also one of the root causes and therefore were the political structure, local decision-making found interesting to investigate.

**Caste related changes**

In order to build a better society and sustainable peace in Nepal it is crucial to change the caste relationships, and specifically improve the situation for the Dalits, ethnic
groups and low caste groups. A weakness in the research for this dissertation is that none of those interviewed in the communities were Dalits, and only one was from an ethnic group.

In all of the VDCs it was reported that the discrimination towards Dalits had decreased. Some said there was no discrimination anymore, but others argued it still was in practice. The Dalits were reported to be the poorest in all the VDCs except in Jogimara, where the Chepang were the poorest. And in all the VDCs people said they were not allowed to enter other peoples house. The changes in discrimination indicate that open caste discrimination has been reduced in the public sphere like schools and cafes, but were still accepted in private homes.

The data indicates that Murali Bhanjyang and Sangkosh were the two VDCs with most caste discrimination, the three violent caste incidents reported by INSEC were here, yet ironically most of the changes were also reported here. The population data from Sangkosh is not reliable, but Murali Bhanjyang is the VDC with highest percentages of both Dalits and high castes. Perhaps this contributes towards a stronger polarisation between the groups. Moreover, it was also in these two VDCs that new complains were expressed regarding Dalits receiving many benefits, and the high caste feared they would lag behind in comparison. If many holds this view of Dalits in communities, this is alarming and a concern. For example, it can cause a backlash towards the Dalits, which can have a negative impact on the caste relationships. According to Anderson and Olson (2003), the most common negative impact identified from peace projects is that one group is receiving all the benefits or seen as favoured, which in turn undermines peace-building.

In all the VDCs it was reported a difference between generations in their attitude towards Dalits. Youth were more liberal than the old although some of the interviewee ate with Dalits none of them could take Dalits home because of their parents’ attitudes. Maidi was the place where most people talked about a generation gap and the only place where several mentioned how to be cleansed after contact with Dalits. Perhaps this was a method of accepting more contact. However, the older generation of high castes still left if one served tea or snacks at a meeting where Dalits were present. The generation gap in discrimination indicates that the old people are “harder to reach.” In addition, one of the interviewees commented that it was older people who were most concerned with religion and hence as people grew older they could change to be more restrictive. This indicates that the discrimination will not die out with the generation.
Changes in relation between Maoists, the police, RNA and other political parties

There were mixed opinions on the relationship between the Maoists and others in the communities. In Sangkosh there were no Maoists during the armed conflict time and currently there are few. All the interviewees said there were no problems with the Maoists relations with others. In Murali Bhanjyang most people reported that the former enemies did not talk when they met, similar to what they did before the armed conflict, or that the relationship seemed okay since people suppressed what had happened. One person claimed that they needed a project to talk about this issue. Also in Jogimara one person stated that the Maoists did not celebrate festivals together with other family members who were active in other political parties. The relationship was reported differently in Maidi, here everybody said the relationship was good and that there was no anger anymore. Yet Maidi had several incidents of political violence which involved Maoists, and several there complained about how the Maoists claimed control of social institutions such as the schools and local committees. This indicates that in all the VDCs with a significant number of Maoists, the relations were not good.

None of the interviewees talked about children of killed combatant or other youth who wanted revenge, as some of the NGOs reported. On the other hand there were no youth interviewed therefore, this research only indicates that the general population were not concerned about this issue.

Decision making and understanding of democracy

In decision making, it is important to build a structure which is inclusive, approachable and fair (Lederach at al, 2007), hence is it important that people know who makes the decisions.

All the interviewees suggested some of those people involved in decisions for their VDC, but in all the VDCs these were different people mentioned, which indicates a confusion regarding who makes the decisions for the VDCs. It could also be due to the open question which people understood in different ways, and hence mentioned different levels of decision making, but this is only indicated in a couple of interviews. However, who makes decisions is not clear and hence it is difficult for people to approach it. When it comes to influencing decisions, several of those interviewed participated in VDC decisions, as they were headmasters, political party leaders or health workers. However, in all the VDCs there were some who did not participate, but would like to be involved, particularly in Murali Bhanjyang were there a majority
wanting this level of involvement. There were also some who would not like to participate, but they would like to know what was decided. This reveals that the current decision making structure is not inclusive, and difficult to approach.

Democracy is a framework for decision making in Nepal. Although it was not particularly asked for a view on multiparty system, a distinct view came up several times in interviews and it deserves some attention. In all the VDCs, one or more people mentioned that it was a problem with disagreement between the political parties, for example one commented in Sangkosh, “They [people] think nowadays that if all Maoists were finished it would be peace, or if the other parties were finished there will be peace.” This indicates that people have not understood the multiparty system were debate is crucial, and they see disagreement as a threat to the community. One interviewee commented, “There are many parties and they are against each other. So there was more peace before the conflict. They are not violence, but ‘she is in that party and he is in this party’. So they talk and there is no peace inside”. This suggests that people in general are not very knowledgeable about democracy. Furthermore, a broader public discussion about democracy and political parties would be an advantage, since several of the political parties were claimed to take control over social institution in Mardi.

**Influence by the NGOs**

**Caste**
The research examines that caste discrimination has decreased but is still at an unacceptable level. The reasons for the reported changes are many. In several of the VDCs interviewees pointed to the armed conflict and to education as a reason for the improvement. Regarding the armed conflict as a reason for change, the one interviewed in Helvetas Nepal commented, “The NGOs had tried to work on the issue, but during the conflict time it changed either because of fear or awareness.” Focus Nepal supported this by arguing that the Maoists addressed the caste system, and “the conflict supported the breakdown of the caste system”. Awareness through education has also contributed to the observed changes. A teacher interviewed talked about education as an engine for change, and the generation gap in attitudes support that education has influenced the young people. Some of the organisations are involved in education and have an indirect impact through this. In addition, one interviewee in Mardi related the change to awareness due to NGO activities. It is not surprising that this was mentioned in Mardi, as there was an active local NGO there, and it was the only VDC where most people knew of any peace projects at all.
The relationship between Dalits and others is not addressed specifically in any of the peace activities conducted by the three NGOs in Dhading, although both Focus Nepal and UMN include it. Focus Nepal said they work for social cohesion through their peace groups in all the VDCs, and UMN had one Dalit organisation as their partner which they capacity built. In addition, the Dalits are addressed in UMNs’ other development projects. The research indicates that change in caste discrimination issues is mainly due to awareness through education and the Maoists forced demand during the armed conflict. The NGOs have an indirect impact through education projects and by supporting the ongoing change.

Since the NGOs projects is limited in addressing the Dalits they are not the main responsible for the new complaints regarding Dalits receiving more support. Also those who voiced their complaints talked about this as government projects. However, the NGOs are actors in these VDCs and they have to become more aware of how their support is communicated. There is no doubt that Dalits need more support than others, but the others in the community have to be included.

Maoists relationships with others
This research indicates that the relationship between the Maoist and the police/RNA and other political parties is still troublesome. From the data collected through the interviews it seems however, as the relationship have improved over time since the CPA and this improvement was related to people wanting to forget the past rather than due to forgiveness and reconciliation. One commented on the armed conflict situation by saying “It was a hard situation, we can not dig it out from our mind, it was so hard time!” On the other hand, people will not forget what happened if they have not forgiven, and if the wounds of the war is not dealt with they will not grow (Fisher at al 2000).

The NGOs have tried to address these relationships in different ways. Focus Nepal was the only NGO offering psychosocial counselling and their peace groups in all the VDCs tried to influence the neighbourhood. UMN Dhading said they wanted to work on relationships, reduce desire of revenge and build relationship and forgiveness through community mediation project. The ICDC worked on reintegration of child soldiers in the communities. It is difficult to find explicit links between the NGOs projects and positive change in the relationships between Maoists and others in the communities. UMN Kathmandu also admitted a shortage in relations work, and none of the NGOs in Dhading talked about reconciliation. This can also be linked to trust, or still lack of trust. According to the interviews, the issue of trust seems to be
restored due to the amount of time that has elapsed and absence of threat rather than as an outcome of a reconciliation process.

**Decision making**

Decision making was not a focus in peace-building of the local NGOs, nor for most of the international NGOs. However, International Alert mentioned decision making at the national level and how exclusion had been cleverer. For example, the Parliament which had become more representative regarding gender and caste/ethnicity, yet their decisions were mostly made by a few men. Several of the people interviewed wanted to be involved in decision making and a few would be satisfied by at least knowing what was decided. There is a need for NGOs to address this. If the NGOs could support a more inclusive and approachable local democracy, this could be built on in order to address the national level. One person interviewed in UMN Kathmandu stated, “The politicians are elected to serve the party, so their family and then the people. Democratisation takes long time. They need more education of what democracy is and not.”

When it comes to building democracy, some of the NGOs activities were underpinning this. Both Focus Nepal through their peace groups and UMN through their capacity building were strengthening the civil society, which is an important factor in building a democracy. Goodhand (2006) stated that local civil society represents alternative power centre to the conflicting groups. Furthermore, the perception of multiparty system that was revealed among several interviewees is an important issue for the NGOs to address, in order to build new structures for a sustainable peace.
7. Conclusion

This dissertation aims to investigate how selected communities in Dhading District in Nepal have been impacted by peace-building performed by NGOs. The goal of peace-building is to end violence and to build equal and just relations and structure in the society. Due to the scope of this research the NGOs have not been assessed on whether they are fulfilling their project goal, but the aim is to look at the bigger picture of impact. There are many actors and factors influencing a community, therefore the findings of impact are about probabilities and nothing can be stated with certainty. This kind of impact assessment is not done with the purpose to identify results for the donors, but in order to learn and thus design projects which is more relevant and adequate in order to have an impact on building sustainable peace.

There have been many changes in these communities since the CPA, but the impact of the NGOs peace-building seems rather limited. When it comes to ending violence, the strongest evidence of impact is on reducing threat of violence and perception of vulnerability. In addition were some resistance to violence identified as influenced by the NGOs. On the other hand, there were still many violent incidents and one of the driving factors of the conflict, impunity, was inadequately addressed.

When it comes to relationships and structures, the most surprising finding was, the complaints regarding Dalits as the only beneficiaries of government programmes. This is the most common negative impact of peace-building. Since caste discrimination is one of the root causes of the conflict, this have the potential to worsen perception of the Dalits and hence set back the peace-building effort. Furthermore, the NGOs were one among several factors influencing the caste -and ethnic relationships, but they had no clear positive impact on the relationship between the Maoists and others in the community, in fact several interviewees pointing to the lack of reconciliation. The NGOs underpinned local democracy by building a stronger civil society, but several people expressed limited understanding of democracy.

Nepal is in a post-conflict situation, and in order to build a sustainable peace it is crucial to address the root causes and driving forces of the conflict. This research examines that the NGOs have limited impact on these factors. One of the reasons is that although many of the NGOs goals for peace projects were at a community level, their theory of change and following activities were not related to this level. Generally, the NGOs were satisfied with their own outreach to those participating in project activities and expressed no concern about their impact on the community as a whole. Only the representative from UMN Kathmandu expressed a concern about the
delivery on a grass root level. This indicates the same finding as the “Reflecting on Peace Practice” project revealed (Anderson and Olson 2003), namely that many peace-building practitioners assume their small projects will automatically lead to peace in the society. The fact that so few interviewees knew of any peace-building projects or development projects in their VDC, is alarming and indicates the NGOs limited outreach and potential impact.

Limitations and further study
The research for this dissertation was conducted in Dhading District, and the findings are first and foremost relevant there. On the other hand, several of the NGOs interviewed worked nationally and some of the findings can be relevant other places in Nepal. The main limitation of this research is that the findings from the VDCs were not presented for the NGOs in order for them to discuss influence from their activities. Retrospectively, that may have made a significant difference to the certainty of the findings, and improved the research. In addition, relatively few persons were interviewed in each VDC and this also contributes to the uncertainty of findings. On the other hand, those interviewed were people with wide contact pattern in their communities.

This dissertation examines the limited impact of NGO peace-building projects performed in Dhading District. More research is needed to investigate in depth the relations between NGOs peace-building projects and the context, in order to better understand how changes are made in a community. It is important that the NGOs themselves are concerned about their impact and do more monitoring and research on how they can make greater impact.
8. Recommendations

In order for the NGOs to improve their impact, they need to work more strategically towards the whole community. To achieve this, the following areas are identified as important:

- Address the “harder to reach”, those behind the violent incidents and those still practicing severe caste discrimination.
- Address impunity, which is one driving factors of the conflict, locally. One of the ways NGOs could do that is by facilitating dialogue between police and community regarding police capacity and limitations.
- Addressing the root causes: although the NGOs are not responsible for the complaints regarding the Dalits, they might contribute to it, and they should address the issue. The research indicates that a participatory process is needed in order to build awareness in the general population about the Dalits situation, and their need for support in order to take advantage of services available.
- Although a national reconciliation process is not yet started, the NGOs may have an impact by preparing the process at local level.
- Better knowledge about democracy in the general population and among the political party leaders locally is needed.
Bibliography


http://www.intrac.org/resources_database.php?id=165


The Association of International NGOs (2009): Peace Project mapping: A profil of AIN Members Contributing to Peace Building in Nepal. Hardcopy received from one of the member organisations.


Appendix 1: Map of Nepal

(Source: United Nation Nepal Information Platform 2005)
Appendix 2: Interview guide for NGOs

1. What do you or your organisation see as the root causes of the conflict
   a. in Nepal generally?
   b. in the selected area specifically?
2. What kind of peace work do your organisation perform in Nepal (generally and in selected area)?
3. Conflict transformation
   a. If your organisation are performing conflict transformation projects, How do you define conflict transformation projects
   b. In what way would you say Conflict transformation projects are different from other peace work?
4. What is the goal of your organisations peace building projects?
   a. Is there any difference between the ideally goal and the reality?
   b. If there is a gap between the ideally and the reality goal is this discussed
      i. among peace practitioners here in Kathmandu?
      ii. or with your with partners?
5. Do you have a theory for how your projects contribute to peace?
   a. Do you have a theory of change that explains why your organisation is doing what you are doing?
   b. How do you think your projects are influencing the peace situation?
      i. (Because… Why? Try to find assumption, cultural explanations)
   c. Collaborative for Development Action has for 10 years had a “Reflecting on Peace Practice Project”. One way they categorise projects is whether you work with “more people” or “key people”, and either you work one individual/personal level with this people or at a Social-political level.
      i. Where do you think your organisations work fit in?
      ii. Do you cooperate or partner with organisations working within other categorise?
   d. Do you think your projects/programs are mostly preventing violence or building new relations and structures in the society?
      i. What is the aim, and what is reality?
6. When I am doing my research in the communities there are 2 main issues I am interested in:
   a. Whether the violence has decreased, increased, change pattern
   b. Whether there has been build new relationships or social structures that will make the community a better place.
      i. What kind of relationship do you think have changed? (husband-wife, friends… everyday contact)
      ii. What kind of relationship do you think need to change in order to build a better society for all?
      iii. What kind of social structure do you think have changed? (structures in society determine peoples behaviour etc)
      iv. What kind of relationship do you think need to change in order to build a better society for all?
7. I would ask for some practical advice:
   a. Places to visit?
b. Interpreter, do they know one? Normal daily wage?
c. If some of the people I talk to are traumatised, is there any particular organisation dealing with that, or do I have to find out locally?
d. Do you think I should give people something for participating? If so, what would be a proper gift?
e. Place to get my research approved at District level.

8. Lastly, after I have done my interview I would like to share some of the findings with you,
   a. When? 11, 12 or 13 of August
   b. Where?
   c. Email address

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<tr>
<th>More People</th>
<th>Key People</th>
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<tr>
<td>Individual / Personal Level</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Socio-Political Level</td>
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Appendix 3: Interview guide community

I. Community overview (who, where, what is the community?)
1. What community level?
2. Who is the community?
   2.1. Size of the community in numbers
   2.2. Ethnic & religious make-up
   2.3. Approximate gender distribution
   2.4. Age distribution (0-15,16-30,31-45,46-60,61-75, 76-)
   2.5. Language spoken at home, and learned at school?
3. How do people live in the community?
   3.1. What do people do for living? Caste?
   Agriculture, office, daily labour?
   unemployment rates,
   new businesses being started, businesses being closed,
   3.2. Physical make-up of the community – e.g. high density
   population or low density, divided by a river, etc.
4. Communication networks
   4.1. Messages – how are messages distributed within the community?
   How do you get news about the rest of the country?
   4.2. Media availability –
   i. TV, radio, radio.
   ii. Language of programming,
   iii. Perceived bias of information, objectivity, do they fuel
   the conflict?

II. Background to conflict in the community
Here I want to understand what the nature of conflict has been in the community
over the last 4.5 years (2005-present), how things have changed. I also want to
understand the historical background – what historically has fed conflict.

5. Draw a timeline of the brief history of conflict/tensions:
   5.1 before the maoist 1996/2001,
   5.2 war experience up to April 2006
   5.2.1. Maoist
   • When did you first heard about the Maoist? What, where, from
   whom?
   • When did you first experience one? What, where?
   • When did the Maoist first come to the community?
   • What did they do? (ask for food, shelter, money, information
   or other things)
   • Where the Maoist approaching particular groups of people?
   Whom?
   • What were the community’s thoughts/feeling about that,
   personal?
   • Did the community support the Maoists idea? Why?
   5.2.2. When did the army/police appear in the community?
   What, where?
• What did they do? (ask for food, shelter, money, information or other things) Where the army approaching particular groups of people? Whom?
• What were the community’s thoughts/feeling about that, personal?

5.2.3. Anyone from the community that joined the army or the Maoist?
• If so, approximately number, age, gender, background?
• Where any of those injured or killed?
• What is the status of the war veterans, war invalids/martyrs and families associations – do they exist, what do they do, what do the community think about them, what status are they given?

5.2.4. What was the frequency and nature/type of violence?
• What kind of violence, fighting, damages were happening in the community during the war time (beating, injuring, killing, abduction)
• Whom did the violence against whom (domestic violence? Political violence, Caste violence, intra political or intra caste violence)?
• How often did this happen?
• Why do you think this happened, what was the motivation? (More violence against those who have contact with the “other side” of the conflict?)
• What was the effect on the community of this violence?

5.2.5. Missing persons: number, profile/importance of this issue in the community

5.2.6. How many fled the community during the conflict?
• Whom were they? (caste, age, gender)
• Why did they flee
• Where did they flee
• Have they returned? Who returned?
• When did they return?

5.2.7. Did anyone from other places flee to this community?
• Who were they? (caste, age, gender)
• Why did they flee
• Where did they flee
• Have they returned?

5.2.8. Where there any differences in the food situation during the conflict time compare to before?

5.2.9. Where there any differences in the education system during the conflict time compare to before, access?
5.2.10. Where there any differences in the health services during the conflict time compare to before, access?

5.3 The period after the King withdraw, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and up to now

5.3.1 When and how did you heard about the Kings withdrawal?
5.3.2 What were the communitys thoughts about that, personal?
5.3.3 When and how did you hear about the Peace Agreement?
5.3.4 What were the communitys thoughts about that, personal?

III. Experience of violence and resistance after the peace agreement

6. What are people here afraid of?

7. How secure/ comfortable do people feel in their community,
   - Compare to the war?
   - Compared to the time before the war?
   - What behaviour indicates that people are secure/insecure? (Outside after dark? Mobility?)

8. Are people trusting eachother?
   - Compare to the wartime?
   - Compared to the time before the war?
   - What behaviour/ attitude indicate that people are trusting eachother?

9. Have there been any violence here lately?
   - Are there any examples of people in the community whom peacefully resisted those who were threatening violence. A sense of frequency of these examples.
   - What was the situation (bhanda, riot, demonstration, children throwing stones)?
   - Who were they who organised and appeared (gender, age, education, job, position in community, etc.)?
   - What did they do? What happened/what was the result?
   - Was this characteristic for them or were you surprised by their behaviour? Why?
   - Why do you think this person(s) did this – what made them behave this way?
   - What was the reaction from the community of this action?

10. If outsiders are the violent? What could the community do to protect themselves from them?

11. What happens here when violent or high profile events that are negative to your community occur elsewhere in Nepal?
• What about when those events happen within the municipality?

12. The highest reported Human right abuse is domestic violence
   • Why do you think that is so high?
   • What can the community do to prevent it?

13. Examples of times when you thought things could explode in violence or that someone would be intimidated, but nothing happened.
   • What happened that made you think things would explode/person would be intimidated?
   • What happened instead of violence?
   • What was the community reaction to no-violence occurring?
   • Why did nothing happen?

14. Do you think the war can come back?

15. When people disagree about important community issues, how is that resolved?

IV. Change in social relations and structures

16. How is poverty experienced in this community?
   • Who is considered poor (access to resources)?
   • Does the poor have any similar background (caste)?

17. How was caste/ethnic discrimination experienced in this community before the conflict:
   • education?
   • entering houses?
   • water, food?
   • same opportunities?

18. The relationship between the castes/ethnic groups
   • How have they changed over the last 3 years after ceasefire?
   • What did you first see that told you things were changing?
   • What do you see now that you wouldn’t have seen three years ago?
   • What do you think caused the change?
   • Has your community tried anything to help improve relations?
   • Do you talk to the other castes? In what occasion?
   • If not, why do they never talk to each other?
   • In what situations would you consider talking to them?
   • What would other people say if you talked to them?
   • What activities can or can you not do together with the other castes?
   • Why is it like that?
   • Could you wish it were different?
   • What do you think is needed in order for you to feel confident when you are talking to them?
19. If there are both Maoist and army/police people in the community,
   • How has their relationship/contact changed over the last 3 years after ceasefire?
   • What did you first see that told you things were changing?
   • What do you see now that you wouldn’t have seen three years ago?
   • What do you think caused the change?
   • Has your community tried anything to help improve relations?
   • (Do they talk to the each others, do you? In what occasion?
   • If not, why do they never talk to each other?
   • In what situations would you consider talking to them?
   • What would other people say if you talked to them?
   • When and about what do you talk to the others?
   • What do you feel when you talk to them?
   • What do you think is needed in order for you to feel confident/not angry when you are talking to them.

20. Who is making decisions about your community? about government money?
   • Who can participate?
   • Do everyone understand how they can participate?
   • Do you know what is decided?
   • Would you like to be involved in the decisions?
   • Has there always been like that? Change in relation to the conflict?

V. Peacebuilding

21. Which organisations are operating in the community
   • What is their primary work (agriculture, roads, schools) and which are considered peacebuilding activities (by the community and by the agencies)?
   • History of the peacebuilding efforts in the last 3 years.
     o Who started it – person and/or agency?
     o What do they do (activities)?
     o How long has it run?
     o Why did they choose to do this activity and not something else?
     o How will this activity bring peace?
       (If integration is the answer then explore why is integration important?
     o What will it mean if it is achieved?
     o Who is involved in it [participants]? Why did they get involved? (Identify not only gender, education, social status but also the war experience).
     o Who has chosen not to be involved in these activities? Why? Who has actively resisted these activities from happening? Why?
     o What difference has this project made – positive and negative?
     o What initiatives have helped build bridges between the communities?
     o What evidence is there of these changes? Be sure to connect with those involved in the initiative and those who were not as a means
to cross-check the connection between the initiative and the change.

o Has the work of the international community done any harm or damage to this community?

o Are the different NGO projects linked in any way? If so how are they linked and why is that link important or not important? (linkages exploration)

o If there are lots of peacebuilding activities and you could only pick one which has been the most significant for your community? (significance)

o How have the peacebuilding activities affected the amount of violence in the community?

22. Is there anything you think is important about the conflict time or the peace that I have not asked you about?

Thank you very much for your time!
Appendix 4: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Study title: Impact assessment of Conflict Transformation projects in Nepal

Name, position and contact address of Researcher:

Marianne Nassa Norheim - student
20 Beech Road, flat 11
Oxford
OX3 7TU
United Kingdom
Email: mariannenass@yahoo.no

Please initiate or finger print the boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above interview study.

4. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in the dissertation.

Unique interviewee code

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Research ethics consent form / Last updated: December 2006
Appendix 5: Participant information sheet

Study title: Impact assessment of Conflict Transformation projects in Nepal

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of peacebuilding projects, and you will be asked questions about your community. The research is not done for any organisation or government, but to collect information for a Master dissertation. The dissertation will be available at Oxford Brookes University, and also sent to organisations working with peace projects in Nepal. The interview will take approximately 1 hour.

You are invited to be part of this study because your profession have wide contact in the community. The research will consist of 20-30 individual interviews conduct in Dhading District of Nepal between 13 of July to 14 of August 2009. Both urban and rural places where peacebuilding projects have been performed and not, will be selected.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in the study. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

The information you give will be written down, and then included in a dissertation. You will be asked about your name, but your name will not be kept together with the information you give, and your name will not occure in the dissertation, so the information you give about yourself will be kept strictly confidential.

The data generated for the research will be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of five years after the completion of the research project. If you want to take part of the study, the interview will be arranged as soon as feasible for you.

The research will constitute the basis of a Master degree in Development and Emergency Practices at Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, United Kingdom. This research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

For further information contact Marianne Næss Norheim at Oxford Brookes University, email: mariannenass@yahoo.no or cell phone: +44 755 1986209. If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information.

11th of July 2009
सहभागी जानकारी पत्र

शिष्याङ्क संख्या: नेपालमा इहुन रूपांतरण परियोजनाहरूको प्रभावको लेखाजोखा

तपाईंले एक अनुसंधान अध्ययनमा भएपैने निम्न विनिमय भएको देखिएको भविष्यको लेखाजोखा विनिमयको लेखाजोखा विनिमयको लेखाजोखा

यस अध्ययनको उद्देश्य शारीरिक निर्माण परियोजनाहरूलाई रचना र तपाईंलाई अत्याधुनिक संगठन मात्रैत भएको साथै समाधान गर्नुहोस्। तपाईंले तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई तपाईंलाई

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यस अध्ययनमा हिस्सा लिने को निर्णय गर्नुहोस् भने तपाईंबाट भएका अनुसन्धान तपाईंमा निर्भर गर्दछ। यदि भए पैसाको निर्णय गर्नुहोस् भने तपाईंलाई र यसैलाई र यसैलाई र यसैलाई र यसैलाई र यसैलाई र यसैलाई

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यस अनुसंधानलाई अस्तित्व र सबैभन्दा विश्वविद्यालय, अस्तित्व, विश्वविद्यालय र विश्वविद्यालय स्थायीत्वस्वरूप दिनेको लागिने आधार बनाउनेछ। यस अनुसंधानको लागि Marianne Naess Norheim at Oxford Brookes University, email: marianne.naess@yahoo.no or cell phone: +44 755 1998209, Oxford Brookes University मा स्वीकृत दिएको छ।

अर जानकारीको लागि समार्थक टेलिन: Marianne Naess Norheim at Oxford Brookes University, email: marianne.naess@yahoo.no or cell phone: +44 755 1998209

यदि तपाईंलाई यस अनुसंधानले रूपमा रूपांतरित भएको भने यस अनुसंधानको लागि समार्थक टेलिन: ethics@brookes.ac.uk

यस जानकारी पहिलाई समयको निकालुम्बको हार्डवेक ध्यानबाट दिनेको छ।

११ जुलाई २००९
Appendix 6: Background information about the VDCs

Jogimara

Background information on population and livelihood

The 2001 Census examine that only 49 percent of the population are women (Digital Himalaya). When it comes to religion, according to the interviewees, the population are mostly Hindu, except the Gurung which is Buddhist and some other few Christians and Muslims. Most of the people in Jogimara live of agriculture, and the Chepang have a “slash and burn” livelihood. Most of the land is owned by Bahuna and Chhetri people, and people from the ethnic groups (except Newar) work mostly in seasonal agriculture, outside the VDC in construction, or as carrier for tourists in Pokhara. There are some shops by the highway and limited number of government jobs in health and education. There were very different opinions among the interviewee regarding unemployment, some said that especially the Chepang were unemployed other pointed to many high caste youth which could not find jobs in the VDC. One complained that youth were needed in agriculture, but that they were not interested so the old people were digging and “the sons only talk in mobile. The new generation don’t want to follow the traditional kinds of work and they are not trying new technology. This is why they are unemployed.” According to a local organisation the Chepang people have generally low education and high mortality rate. According to the interviews the main source of information for most of the people are radio, which reaches the whole area, but a few people by the highway have TV.

The armed conflict in Jogimara

The interviewees told that the largest war incident affected this VDC when seventeen young people, most of them with Chepang ethnicity, worked for the Maoists making an airport in Kalikot District and were killed by the RNA in February 2002. The Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation has paid out compensation to seventeen survivors in Jogimara. Furthermore, most of the people interviewed in this study were from the highway area and they saw themselves as more frequently affected since both the Maoists and the RNA visited there more often. The Maoists came and asked for food and shelter and the RNA searched for Maoists. One reported that they became afraid the Maoists would kill them if they did not give them what they

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16 Low female ratio can be an indication of high discrimination against women. Although more male are born, the male mortality is higher in all age groups. Therefore in a population where male and females have the same access to nutrition and health care there are more female (Coale 1991).

17 Thirteen of the deceased were from ward no. 5, two from ward no.1, one from ward no. 9, and one from ward no. 4 (Ministry of peace and Reconciliation). These people are still regarded as disappeared by the International Committee of Red Cross (International Committee of Red Cross, 2008).
demanded and that this fear increased after the Maoists had burned the VDC office\textsuperscript{18}. When the Maoists burned the VDC office they also commanded people from the village to cut down trees by the highway which were put on fire. There is a RNA camp in the VDC close to the highway. One said “We were afraid of both; if there is Maoist here the army will attack, if the army is here, the Maoist can attack. They used to ask for information after one group had left, "who was that person, where is he from?"”. In addition, there was some fighting, a landmine went off and there were violent blockades of the road which resulted in several people being injured and one killed\textsuperscript{19}. The interviewees explained that only a small number of people from Jogimara VDC were recruited to the PLA and the RNA or Police. After the CPA several of the former soldiers have returned to the VDC, and one commented, “The community is happy that they came back because then they will not die” another claimed, “Some of them have not changed, and they still threaten people and people are scared of them”.

According to the interviews there had been no significant migration in the VDC related to conflict; only one informant reported that a few high caste families had moved because they felt threatened and these had not returned. Most people reported that the food situation was worse during the conflict time than before. In addition, some girls stopped going to school because they were afraid of being taken by the Maoist on the way to school through the jungle. On the other hand, the health worker reported that their work continued throughout the VDC during the armed conflict, being only affected by curfews.

\textbf{Maidi}

\textbf{Background information on population and livelihood}

The 2001 census reported that 52 percent of the population were female, the local organisations census reported that only 48 percent were female. Moreover, most of the people are Hindu, but between 5 and 10 percent are Christians and 1 household were Muslim. Most of the people in Maidi are dependent on agriculture, but they do not produce enough food. The interviewee assumed that only 10-15 percent had enough food for the whole year from their agricultural production. The Dalits do not own their own land and have to work for others, but many of them were reported to be unemployed. It is common for the men to go abroad for work; to India, Malaysia or

\textsuperscript{18} The UN Nepal Information platform (2007) confirms that the VDC buildings were partially destroyed during the armed conflict, and that the VDC secretary was not displaced from this VDC. Only three of Dhadings 50 VDC secretaries were not displaced during the conflict (UN Nepal Information platform, 2007).

\textsuperscript{19} In February 2005 “a security man was killed and five others injured when a landmine planted by the Maoist militant went off.\textsuperscript{19} Maoists torched 13 trucks near Jwangkholo at Jogimara-1 on the Pirthivi Highway for defying their blockade” (Chandrasekharan 2005).
the Gulf countries. There are some few shops and government jobs in Maidi. When it comes to news, most people get them from radio, and only a few people have electricity and hence TV.

The armed conflict in Maidi
Maidi was the VDC visited with most violence in the conflict time. The interviewees said that the police post was bombed and later the VDC office and communication centre were attacked and partially destroyed\textsuperscript{20}. The police left the VDC for 2 years after that. Moreover it was reported by the interviewees that political leaders, teachers, some pupils, social worker and health worker were captured\textsuperscript{21} by the Maoists for between a day and a month while they were taught about the Maoist movement. Furthermore the interviewees reported frequent PLA and RNA visits to the area; the Maoists asked people for food and money, and one informant said, “They gave mental torture, and some people left the village because of this, people were afraid.” Another explained how attacks on her family from Maoists stopped her from going to school. The RNA searched the area during the conflict, and one claimed, “The army gave more torture to the people; they blame that the people gave the Maoist food and "you helped them with money and your support".”

Several of the interviewees reported that as many as several hundred from this VDC joined the RNA, and a few young people joined the PLA. At least two Maoist soldiers and one policeman were killed in the area\textsuperscript{22}. According to the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation there has been given compensation for three people killed in Maidi\textsuperscript{23}. The widow of one of the Maoist combatants was reported in interviews to be the current leader of the Maoists in the area. According to the interviewees, several people were reported to move away because of threats during the armed conflict; these were political leaders, rich people and one teacher. Some of these had not returned. During the armed conflict the food and health situation were said to be deteriorated by Maoist asking for supplies. Likewise, education deteriorated due to strikes and threats of pupils being captured which kept them home from school.

Murali Bhanjyang

Background information on population and livelihood

\textsuperscript{20} The UN Nepal Information platform (2007) confirms the VDC secretary was displaced and the VDC buildings partially destroyed. Other sources confirm that there were attacks on the police in Maidi in June 2000 and September 2001 (Human Right Server 2000, Chandrasekharan 2001).
\textsuperscript{21} Chandrasekharan (2004) confirms that Maoists captured a Nepali Congress cadre and his land in Maidi in December 2003.
\textsuperscript{22} Information confirmed by Nepal News (2004).
\textsuperscript{23} The people killed were from ward no 1, 2 and 9 (Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation).
The 2001 Census states that there is a majority of female in the population, but the figures given by the Murali Bhanjyang VDC shows that the male population is larger in all the age categories. Tamang, Magar and Komal have their own mother-tongue which they speak at home. One of the interviewee explained that these ethnic groups and Gurung lived in clusters of their own within the villages. Most people in the VDC are Hindu, and some are Buddhist and Christians. Most people in Murali Bhanjyang live of agriculture, but only a third of the population have enough food for the whole year, approximately a third has enough food for 6 month and the last third have food for only 3 month. It was said that most of those having enough food were Bahuna and Chhetri whilst those not having enough were Dalits. The Dalit men often went to Kathmandu or Pokhara to find work in construction, often carrying sand. Most people in the VDC have radio, and only few have TV and newspaper.

**The armed conflict in Murali Bhanjyang**

According to the interviewees were there several killings during the Maoist insurgency in Murali Bhanjyang. Several of the interviewees said that the RNA killed three or four Maoists in 2001, and as a response to that a Headmaster was killed by the Maoists; he was thought to have passed on information about the Maoists to the RNA. Until then it was reported that the teachers had not paid the fee the Maoists demanded, but following this incident all the teachers in the VDC started to pay a fee of half a month’s salary in a year to the Maoists. For a periode, the Maoist leader of the area was a teacher and he did not ask for fees, but he was also killed and replaced by one who did. In addition one RNA soldier and a pastor were reported in the interviews to be killed. However, the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation has only paid out compensation for three killed from Murali Bhanjyang. According to the UN Nepal Information platform (2007) the VDC secretary was displaced and the VDC buildings were partially destroyed. Furthermore, most of the interviewees expressed that both the Maoists and the RNA had spread fear during the conflict time. One said that the Maoists for a period came once a week and asked for food and shelter. One described it as, “It was hard for us. Who are army, who are Maoist? Sometimes the Maoists said they were army and the army sometimes said they were Maoists, so we could not know. Both had guns and we did not know who was who.” Moreover, some of the hillsides in Murali Bhanjyang are seen from Dhandingbesi, according to one interviewee this was utilised by the Maoists to spread fear in Dhadingbesi by blasting bombs during the night, but nobody was injured or killed by this. On the other hand,

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24 Two of those killed belonged to ward no. 4 and the last one to ward no. 5. The name of the Maoist leader which also was a teacher was given in an interview and found on the list from the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation.

25 Chandrasekharan (2002) confirms that “A group of terrorists hurled a home-made bomb at Biyan of Murali-Bhanjyang Village Development Committee (VDC).”
the Maoists were praised for stopping people who were drinking and playing cards. One of the interviewees had once been threatened by RNA in her house during night.

According to the interviews did maybe as many as a hundred from this VDC joine the RNA and police, but only four or five joined the PLA. Furthermore, during the armed conflict some political leaders and the VDC chairperson moved to Dhadingbesi because they were threatened. They came back to Murali Bhanjyang after the CPA. The interviewee reported the food situation during the armed conflict to be similar to now, and most people did not think the health situation was much affected, but a health worker referred to a lack of medicine due to the Maoists demand, and problems of going to Dhadingbesi hospital during curfews. Moreover the schools were closed during bhanda, which lasted for 1 to 30 days, and according to a teacher the children some years missed as much as two months of school. In addition, in several schools the pupils were kidnapped by the Maoists for some hours or days and taught by them about their ideology.

Sangkosh

Background information on population and livelihood

The interviews indicated that people lived more separate in this VDC, one ward was dominated by Bahunas, another by Gurung and a third by Magar. Both in Sangkosh VDC and the ward Bahuna most of the people lived of agriculture, at the same time did everybody say that for most of the people the land they had were too small so only a minor part of the population had enough to live of from their own production. To coop with the situation some went abroad, some sent their children to fish and sell the fish in Dhadingbesi or to work on stones, some had job in Dhadingbesi, some worked in government and a few had a shop. Regarding unemployment one said that as many as 60 percent of the VDC were half unemployed or did not have enough field to work on. When it comes to contact within the VDC the interviewees indicated that it was less than before due to the VDC office being in Dhadingbesi; this may decrease the contact inwards in the community since people now walk to Dhadingbesi instead of to the former VDC centre within the VDC for services.

The armed conflict in Sangkosh

According to the interviewees neither the ward nor the VDC were affected by any major war related incidents, except for the VDC building being damaged. The people interviewed had not experienced many visits from the Maoists, but one had

26 This is confirmed by the UN Nepal Information platform (2007) which also states that the VDC secretary was displaced.
been forced to pay an annual fee to the Maoists. On the other hand, the RNA established a camp in Dhadingbesi, on the hill just across the river from Sangkosh VDC. They were reported to visit the area frequently, but half of the interviewees said they were not afraid of them. Only two of the interviewees reported that two people were killed, but according to the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation compensation was paid for four killed in Sangkosh\textsuperscript{27}. Although most of the interviewees reported the area to be relatively peaceful during the armed conflict, one described the situation like this, “People heard it would come war in Dhadingbesi and that dead people would be carried by village people. And during the conflict we heard that they would draw the villager to fight and force us to carry dead bodies. In that time some people when they slept wore ladies clothes.” None of the interviewees knew of any in Sangkosh joining the Maoists, but 10-20 people were reported to have joined the RNA or police.

Most of the interviewees had not noticed any migration related to the conflict, only one told that a few Maoists had been forced by the RNA to move, but they were all back in the community now. Most of the interviewees had neither noticed any differences in the food or health situation, but they reported deterioration in the education due to national bhanda. Bhanda were reported to last from one to twenty days, and one said it was “uncountable” how many times it had occurred, and hence it had a negative influence on the curriculum taught.

\textsuperscript{27} Two from ward no 8, one from ward no 2 and the last from either ward no 4 or 5 (Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation).