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**DRG Learning, Evaluation, and Research Activity:
Final Performance Evaluation of the Nepal Peace Support Project
Final Report**

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DRG LEARNING, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH ACTIVITY

FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE NEPAL PEACE SUPPORT PROJECT

FINAL REPORT
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Authored by:
Simon Richards (Team Leader)
Pankaj Adhikari
Indra Adhikari

Contractor:
NORC at the University of Chicago
Attention: Renée Hendley
Bethesda, MD 20814
Tel: 301-634-9489; E-mail: Hendley-Renee@norc.org

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
AED	Academy for Educational Development
APF	Armed Police Force
CA	Constituent Assembly
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategies
CDO	Chief District Officer
CMM	Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CPDCC	Constitutional-Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee
CPN-M	Communist Party of Nepal - Maoist
CPN-UML	Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist and Leninist
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DDC	District Development Committee
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DFID	Department for International Development
DRG-LER	Democracy, Human Rights and Governance – Learning, Evaluation and Research Activity
DSC	District Security Committee
EU	European Union
FEDO	Feminist Dalit Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GON	Government of Nepal
IDF	Institutional Development Framework
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KII	Key Informant Interview
LPC	Local Peace Committee
MoPR	Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
MSI	Management Systems International

NA	Nepal Army
NC	Nepali Congress
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-government Organization
NID	National Investigation Department
NIPS	Nepal Institute for Policy Studies
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NORC	National Opinion Research Center
NP	Nepal Police
NPSP	Nepal Peace Support Project
NPTF	Nepal Peace Trust Fund
NTTP	National Transition to Peace
NTTPI	National Transition to Peace Institute
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PRU	Peace and Research Unit
RA	Regional Administrators
RPO	Regional Police Office
RSC	Regional Security Committee
SOW	Statement of Work
SS	Sambad Samuha
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TOC	Theory of Change
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNDPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VDC	Village Development Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the DRG Learning, Evaluation, and Research (DRG-LER) Activity, USAID requested NORC to conduct a final performance evaluation of USAID's Nepal Peace Support Project (NPSP). The Final Evaluation is intended to be both retrospective and prospective in nature, focusing on findings, lessons learned, and recommendations for any follow-on work. The Final Evaluation examines the program's results against the objectives, reviews activities' level of success in meeting project objectives, and validates the effectiveness of the project's approach. Findings will be used to shape the direction of future support to any assistance related to the NPSP objectives, particularly in the context of the new USAID/Nepal Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

The evaluation seeks to answer the following five main questions:

1. To what extent did the project meet its own stated objectives? Can it be considered effective?
2. To what extent did the program engage women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups? Did those groups feel served by this process, and, if not, what measures could be taken to improve upon the representation of marginalized groups, including women, in the peace process?
3. What were the results of NPSP's efforts to link local level peace initiatives to the NTTTP forum?
4. What are the pros and cons of disseminating already produced, but hitherto private, studies and reports from the NTTTP to the general public now? If this information should be distributed now, how should this be done?
5. How is the effort to establish an NTTTP Institute (NTTPI) that is owned, managed and controlled by Nepali citizens – and that is sustainable – faring at this time? What can be done to ensure its viability after USAID funding ends?

PROJECT BACKGROUND

USAID/Nepal began providing assistance to the peace process negotiations, actors and institutions in 2003, upon the request of the Government of Nepal (GON). In 2004 the Nepal Peace Support Program (NPSP) was designed, conceptualized and launched in August 2005, being implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) until February 2009 when the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) and other stakeholders requested continued support to the peace building process through the NPSP. At this stage the project and its management was taken over by The Asia Foundation (TAF). The NPSP project began in March 2009 working on three initial objectives contributing to the broad goal of advancing Nepal's peace process until 2012. These evolved to the current ones below:

1. Strengthen NTTTP capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes.
2. Build the capacity of political party Peace and Research Units (PRU) to serve as a resource for the peace process.
3. Transform the NTTTP Forum into a sustainable and independent national peace entity.

This five-year \$4.1 million project has been implemented under a cooperative agreement, originally aiming to end on August 2014 and now extended through January 2015.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS, DESIGN, METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach to collect data to inform each of the evaluation questions. The three main data collection methods used in Kathmandu and three regional sites (Dang, Jhapa and Dhangadhi) were: 1) Key-Informant Interviews (KIIs): The team conducted semi-structured interviews with 57 key individuals representing relevant stakeholder groups. 2) Group Discussions (GDs): Thirteen stakeholder group discussions were conducted. 3) Desk Study: An extensive review was undertaken of TAF, NTTPI and USAID/Nepal program documents, as well as relevant materials concentrated on the political context and peace process. The emerging qualitative data was analyzed using outcome mapping, pattern/content/trend analysis, comparison analysis, and response divergence/convergence analysis.

Various limitations and constraints affected the data and their collection. While this was a performance evaluation, the nature of the project, its confidential and low public visibility, as well as its emphasis on iterative processes, created challenges in deciding exactly what should be evaluated, resulting in the wide range of questions. This has led to varying degrees of relevance when contrasted with project design or whether an evaluation is the most appropriate tool to answer some of the questions posed. In the absence of a counterfactual and given the low profile nature of the project, the design sought to identify likely results but cannot definitely attribute causality to the project. While every effort was made to triangulate reporting, objective and external corroboration was exceptionally difficult, as interviewees were effectively divided into those who knew and were involved in the project and everyone else who did not really know of it.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Key Findings: The NTTPI forum is a unique indigenous mechanism in Nepal to resolve differences, and enable a different quality of communication between top leaders, through informal conduits and mediation from the senior facilitators. There was almost unanimous appreciation for NTTPI and its role, by program participants and those knowledgeable of its work, particularly for the historical dimension of mediation work in the early years of the peace process. There was almost unanimous articulation of the continued need for, benefit, and relevance of the forum and its approach in explicitly bridging the peace process agenda and politics through the creation of a non-partisan space for dialogue, given the confrontational approach and characteristics of Nepali politics. All respondents consulted considered these groups to be important and very beneficial to them, with appreciation of the opportunities for cross-party fertilization, sharing documents between parties, increasing technical knowledge and input from external experts, and access to data and resources from the PRUs. Some cautious concerns were voiced by respondents around the possible diminishing levels of influence and access of the senior facilitators to critical leaders, and the degree to which this methodology would continue to be effective in the future.

There are a number of tensions and challenges facing the NPSP given the context and culture, such as how best to influence top leaders, and how to balance inclusion with functionality, proactive approaches with responsiveness, and reinforcing gatekeepers and ensuring the right power-brokers are at the table. Given the non-linear nature of social change and the way the project operates, it is difficult to fit it into a meaningful time-bound Results Framework which then challenges traditional measurements of success.

It was noted that there are insufficient women in the larger Forum and ways to develop increased representation of women and other marginalized groups need to be progressed. Linkages with the

regional forums at present are yet to be developed, and this is an area for potential fruitful improvement. While both women and youth groups believe there is considerable outreach to other civil society and marginalized groups, quality and consistency of outreach could be improved. There is room for the development of specific thematic research on the linkages between marginalized groups and peace and conflict.

Sambad Samuha regional forums are highly valued and operating well. Reflecting the immediate needs of the environment, they have stepped into an active role addressing societal conflict at the regional level. Their original longer-term purpose and transference of the “forum model” for cross-party dialogue is also operating but appears to be a secondary function. There is a significant communications and understanding gap between stakeholders in the regions and those in the center, and there also appear to be limited linkages between the Sambad Samuha forums and the NTTPI forum in Kathmandu. What linkage there is is fundamentally reliant on a few visits from the center by NTTPI staff.

Respondents were divided on whether or not to release private studies and reports. There are both retrospective and prospective aspects to consider. The main issues considering past documents are the basis for their creation and their sensitivity. In the worst case there could be a breach of confidentiality and breaking of trust that would undermine the credibility and future effectiveness of NTTPI’s work. However, research documents that inform forum or party discussions provide more room for maneuver, as they are less sensitive in content. Some could easily be modified for public consumption if stakeholders agreed. On the positive side, if some documents were released it may result in improved transparency and raised awareness, with an increased contribution to public debate and heightened profile for NTTPI.

Given the short time period that the institution-building project has been underway, there has been impressive progress. Using some of the elements of the NGO IDF Matrix and Framework to organize findings and make an overall assessment, one can classify the new NTTPI as within the “developing” category for the majority of the Institutional Resources informally assessed. Even within the period of the evaluation, there has been significant progress on the strategy, vision and mission of the new Peace Institute. In particular NTTPI has put in place a number of policies related to procurement, finances, human resources and operations. The new institution has also been assessed by USAID-contracted chartered accountants who have verified that the financial systems and accountability are sufficiently strong to qualify to receive USG funding.

Conclusions: The NPSP and NTTPI forum can be considered very effective providing a crucial, safe, non-partisan space for political dialogue that compensate for inadequacies in overcoming the Nepali “*landscape of division.*” Without it, the possibility of failure, deadlock, and lack of progress in important political and peace processes is likely to be increased. Although the mechanism may not always appear to result in positive outcomes, and causal linkages are difficult to establish, it is important to understand this does not negate the approach or critical value of the activity. A strength is its ability to bridge peace and political processes and address these interstitial spaces that can easily lead to deeper social and political divisions.

The project has largely been able to meet its own stated objectives, though with stronger performance in some areas than others. Its ability to engage key stakeholders requires ongoing work to deepen progress and reduce future vulnerability in generational transitions. Similarly, the different facets of its portfolio require development and greater cohesion to reinforce their relative strengths. There is a strong foundation on which to build further, to develop the unique niche of NTTPI and maximize outcomes in the future, particularly in the regions. USAID should be affirmed on its support to date, but needs to internalize the importance and value of long term accompanying of such process-oriented

peace support, not only to acknowledge the intrinsic value of “good office,” but also as a form of risk management, reinforcing stability and protecting other development investments.

The creation of the different thematic approaches is a useful and exciting approach to develop greater inclusivity of marginalized voices into the peace process. It has potential for further improvement, and NTTPI needs to build on the foundation to develop an intentional systematic approach to increase its effectiveness. This should include both improved center/regional linkages as well as more formalized ways to include voices in the main forum. NTTPI has a significant and meaningful role to play in the regions. Regional forums also provide an important opportunity to bridge the gap between the center and periphery and establish one type of foundation for future NTTPI work that should be developed more deliberately. Regional forums in the form of Sambah Samuha have a significant role to play in resolving conflicts at the regional levels, but may not always be the optimal mechanism in the long term for all types of conflict.

Caution should be exercised in releasing past documents, but whether considering past or future documents, NTTPI needs to develop a risk analysis matrix and classification typology coupled with its developing communications strategy, to enable clear decisions to be made and consent processes followed.

The new NTTPI has made tremendous progress on its institution-building project and is well on track in all areas. However, financial sustainability is still the Holy Grail that needs to be addressed if full independence is to be achieved.

EVALUATION PURPOSE & QUESTIONS

EVALUATION PURPOSE

As part of the DRG Learning, Evaluation, and Research (DRG-LER) Activity, USAID requested NORC to conduct a final performance evaluation of USAID's Nepal Peace Support Project (NPSP).¹ This five-year, \$4.1 million project has been implemented by The Asia Foundation (TAF) under a cooperative agreement with USAID/Nepal, beginning in March 2009 and now extended through January 2015.

This Final Evaluation is intended to be both retrospective and prospective in nature, focusing on findings, lessons learned, and recommendations for any follow-on work. It examines the program's results against the objectives, reviews activities' level of success in meeting project objectives, and validates the effectiveness of the project's approach.

The Final Evaluation's findings will be used to shape the direction of future support to assistance related to the NPSP objectives, particularly in the context of the new USAID/Nepal Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

This final evaluation seeks to answer the following five questions of particular interest to USAID/Nepal:

1. To what extent did the project meet its own stated objectives? Can it be considered effective?
2. To what extent did the program engage women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups? Did those groups feel served by this process, and, if not, what measures could be taken to improve upon the representation of marginalized groups, including women, in the peace process?
3. What were the results of NPSP's efforts to link local level peace initiatives to the NTTP forum?
4. What are the pros and cons of disseminating already produced, but hitherto private, studies and reports from the NTTP to the general public now? If this information should be distributed now, how should this be done?
5. How is the effort to establish an NTTP Institute (NTTPI) that is owned, managed and controlled by Nepali citizens – and that is sustainable – faring at this time? Does TAF assistance appear effective? What can be expected of the NTTPI in the near to mid-term? What can be done to ensure its viability after USAID funding ends? Related questions include:
 - a. To what extent were the recommendations of the Mid-term Evaluation implemented, particularly with respect to organizational strengthening and sustainability? What have been the resulting outcomes?
 - b. What other GON and donor activities support objectives similar to NPSP's? Where do gaps and opportunities exist that NTTP might address?

PROJECT BACKGROUND

USAID/Nepal began providing assistance to the peace process negotiations, actors and institutions in 2003, upon the request of the Government of Nepal (GON). In 2004 the Nepal Peace Support Program

¹ The evaluation was conducted by MSI, NORC's subcontractor under the DRG-LER contract.

(NPSP) was designed and conceptualized, then launched in August 2005 and implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) until February 2009. In 2009 the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) and other stakeholders requested USAID to provide continued support to the peace building process through the NPSP. At this stage, TAF assumed NPSP project implementation and its management. Between March 2009 and 2012, NPSP project implementation focused on three core objectives that contributed to the broad goal of advancing Nepal's peace process. These objectives included: (a) maintaining and strengthening the NTTP Forum as a center for Track 1.5 agenda setting, dialogue, and negotiation; (b) supporting the launch of key Transitional Peace Structures; and (c) increasing the base of support for Peace Units within political parties. A short transitional bridging extension allowed for the project to evolve into the current form with the following modified project objectives:

1. Strengthen NTTP capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes;
2. Build the capacity of political party Peace and Research Units (PRU) to serve as a resource for the peace process; and
3. Transform the NTTP Forum into a sustainable and independent national peace entity.

TAF's focus in this latest phase of the project has been to build the capacity of the NTTP Forum so it can function as an independent peace institution implementing peace process programs. The NTTP Forum engages political leaders to build consensus around sensitive political issues and to share it further with the larger political parties. NPSP also works with party researchers in the PRUs to identify a range of information to inform the work of the forum and the political parties more broadly. This is specifically intended to enhance the capacity of the parties to understand the technical complexities of key conflict issues and to develop negotiating positions and policy responses.

This five-year, \$4.1 million project has been implemented under a cooperative agreement, originally terminating in August 2014, and then extended through January 2015. Between June and July 2013, the Foundation for Development Management (FDM) conducted a mid-term evaluation of NPSP to review achievements made to date as well as inform progress in the final year of the project.

USAID's NPSP supports the Mission's CDCS (2014-2019) Development Objective 1: More Inclusive and Effective Governance. It is also complementary in form to USAID's assistance to the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation. As can be seen above, the project's objectives have evolved over time from an initial focus on NTTP Forum Track 1.5 activities, and on Transitional Peace Structures and political party Peace Units. In recent years, the NPSP focused its assistance primarily on the NTTP Forum and its work in consensus building and constitution drafting processes, along with additional mechanisms such as Local Peace Committees (LPCs), and various thematic groups established to make NTTP Forum processes more inclusive.

While USAID has committed in principle to continuing support for a new phase of the project with the newly established NTTPI, building onto the Mid Term Review (MTR), this final performance evaluation examines the effectiveness of the project and inform future directions.

EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

NORC presented evaluation methods and limitations in the Concept Note that was approved by USAID as a precursor to conducting the evaluation. The Concept Note is included in this report as Annex II, Evaluation Methods and Limitations. Methods and Limitations included in the Concept Note did not change during the evaluation.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The approach adopted in the report will be to try and minimize duplicating the same ground as the recent comprehensive Mid Term Review and instead complement and deepen the analysis.² This greater emphasis placed on discussion of issues and lessons associated with the forum aims to better inform the developing strategic direction for NTTPI.

A note on terminology: While NTTP is now registered as NTTPI, nevertheless the report will use the term NTTP except when referring to future roles when the name NTTPI will be adopted to acknowledge its new status.

THE CONTEXT

The project and fundamental purpose of NPSP and NTTP has been to find ways to support the peace process in reaching a satisfactory conclusion, primarily through track 1.5 negotiations and technical support of the PRUs. To achieve this and assess the effectiveness, it is important to consider the current political context of Nepal, its history and evolution, including the role of the project over the course of the last five years. This section is based on a combination of insights from KIIIs combined with the results of the desk review and perspectives of the evaluation team. The contextual elements described here are of direct relevance in their importance, impact and how they affect the work of NTTP.

Characteristics of the Political Context Affecting the Peace Process (& NTTP)

The increasing complexity of issues: Nepal has always been a complex environment, but peace processes experience different issues at different times of their evolution. Despite the horrendous communication divide in the early Nepal Peace Process that was extraordinarily bridged by the senior facilitators of the NTTP Forum, once initial steps are taken by main stakeholders, agreeing to broad principles of peace can be relatively straightforward compared to addressing the increasing multiplicity and complexity of issues when trying to transform principles into practical form. Protagonists often note that the devil is in the detail. While principles still drive the content of discussions today, nevertheless they may take on a more technical and detailed hue. The current difficulties in writing a new constitution encapsulate this increasing complexity. In the words of an African proverb, “*To make an agreement does not prevent future disagreement,*” and the current situation is rife with disagreement.

Pervasive political party culture: The all-pervasive nature of party politics and its associated culture of and patronage and accompanying “partyization” of institutions and decision-making processes dominate the Nepali political context.³ Access to power and positions is dependent on membership and ones relationship with a political party, and in turn, its ability to influence appointments or processes.

² This was conducted in July 2013, less than 18 months before this final evaluation.

³ For the interested reader, examples of texts that mention or consider this issue include: Hoftun, Martin, William

Hierarchical patronage systems: There is a strong vertical hierarchy within parties and the modus operandi is a fairly rigid top-down approach to decision-making. Power is heavily invested in the top leadership and cult of the leader, with support from a small senior (usually male) oligarchy, which may represent various factions, that dominates the politburos of the parties. The long-lived nature of leadership has entrenched this way of working and has implications for how political change and decisions are taken and how NTTP pierces and influences these practices.

Short-term politics and self-interest: The national hunger for compromise, consensus and peace, marking the early days of the peace process, has long since been left behind and there is an increasing emergence of short-term, self-interested politics from parties and leaders reported by many stakeholders. This obscures potentially more significant long-term national visions from being addressed.

Shifts in power: Following the significant loss of seats in the Constituent Assembly (CA) by the Maoists in the 2013 elections, there has been an incremental increase of power from the conservative side of politics and an erosion of the fundamentals agreed to in the CPA. In the words of one key informant, there has been increasing “resistance by stealth” to the ideals of state restructuring and federalism.

Intense regional and identity politics: Intense regional and identity politics are developing, exacerbated by the Kathmandu/regional divide in knowledge and understanding. The intense positioning different stakeholders are engaged in around federalism and the “names, number and boundaries” debate is preventing groups from keeping their eye on achieving the bigger picture.

The Peace Process

Peace Process “complete”: Key informants suggested that some high-level conservative politicians believe the peace process to have largely been completed since the Maoists laid down their arms and agreement was reached on their integration and rehabilitation. Remaining issues and agreements embedded in the CPA, such as the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and principles of federalism and restructuring of governing architecture, are considered negotiable by them. One suggestion is that deeper post-conflict issues do not seem to have been internalized or assimilated by current dominant conservatives. This is seen in the writing of the new constitution, the lynchpin of the peace process, whose development is stalled and in an increasingly tenuous position.

Loss of confidence: The result is an increasing loss of confidence by a significant portion of society in the peace process and in the political leaders. The leadership does not seem to be concerned by this situation, with the conservatives considering they are in a position of strength and can effectively “finish the Maoists,” in the words of one key informant. The left wing of politics is in a difficult position, having laid down arms and, with a population with no appetite to return to violence, they are not in the same position of power at the bargaining table and cannot easily mobilize popular support again. This is partly a result of the increasing complexity of the political ecosystem. Maoists originally mobilized a broad range of disenfranchised stakeholders to their cause. Following the cessation of violence and the early years of peace, these stakeholders initiated their own political parties and platforms to espouse their agendas. Thus aside from the splintering of the Maoist party into different factions and secondary

Raeper and John Whelpton. 1999. *People, Politics and Ideology: Democracy and Social Change in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point; Hachhethu, Krishna. 2002. *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point; Borre, Ole, Suhil R. Pandey and Chitra K. Tiwari. 1994. *Nepalese Political Behaviour*. New Delhi: Sterling.

parties, social groups such as the Dalits and Janajatis, as well as ethnic groups and Madheshi peoples, also created their own parties. This has weakened the left position overall and contributed to the right feeling stronger.

Shift in international development: The international community is unwittingly reinforcing the perception that the peace process is over through shifts in its development assistance. Donors reported increasingly focusing on “traditional” development, e.g. education, health, livelihoods and infrastructure, and away from peace and stability programs. This shift appears to be driven by several impetuses, ranging from domestic politics, turnover and altered perspectives of new staff, a lack of nuanced interpretation of the context, with an “it all seems to have been peaceful for the last ten years” attitude, and direct responding to GON messages encouraging this role for international assistance.

These different contextual elements interact with and shape the responses and effectiveness of NTTPI as well as the evaluation findings.

NTTPI is already responding to the context in a range of different ways, but at present these responses are mainly a function of the immediate needs of the political environment rather than an analysis of the characteristics of the context itself. Thus in the weekly meetings and senior management meetings NTTPI utilizes its fundamental iterative, flexible and organic nature to good purpose through an analysis and identification of the issues, blockages and needs emerging from political progress (or not) to date.

That being said, there are already implicit agendas of change underlying current practices, but a more deliberate response to some of the deeper contextual features will require senior management to scrutinize the purpose, role and ways of working of the institution and the extent to which they wish to take on these challenges more explicitly. Those already addressed implicitly may require decisions on whether they are deepened, addressed over the long term and brought to the center of activities or that conversely whether levels of organizational energy investment are reduced for some of the approaches. This is because the level of action taken will require different degrees of public profile and sometimes taking more than simple neutral positions. The more vigorously that NTTPI chooses to adopt an approach may need to be reflected in the degree of proactivity necessary to promulgate it. The table in Annex VII suggests some illustrative generic approaches to these types of challenges, but whether, or in what ways, any may be taken up or not, it would be sensible to approach them with caution and establish first with trusted advisory members of the forum their relative importance, potential degrees of traction and appropriate approaches to tackle them.

QUESTION ONE: To what extent did the project meet its own stated objectives? Can it be considered effective?

This section will be structured as follows: First, general findings on the effectiveness and value of the NPSP and NTTPI will be introduced, followed by consideration of Objective One and Objective Two. Objective Three will be addressed under evaluation question five as this section looks at this aspect in depth. A discussion considering some of the key challenges to effectiveness and ways to enhance effectiveness will be presented at the end of the section, followed by conclusions and recommendations.

It is helpful at this point to refer back to the original objectives of the project:

1. Strengthen NTTPI capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes.
2. Build the capacity of political party Peace and Research Units to serve as a resource for the peace process.
3. Transform the NTTPI Forum into a sustainable and independent national peace entity.

GENERAL FINDINGS ON EFFECTIVENESS TO DATE

Unanimous appreciation: There was almost unanimous appreciation for NTTP and their role, by program participants and those knowledgeable of their work.⁴ This was particularly the case for the historical dimension of mediation work in the early years of the peace process. This emphasis is most likely due to the public role of the senior facilitators and the historic nature of the agreements achieved.

Unique nature of the Forum: The NTTP forum is a unique indigenous mechanism in Nepal. No other similar mechanism was cited. There *are* other mechanisms but with different characteristics. For instance, there have been short-term, ad hoc, bilateral or multilateral meetings of political leaders over particular issues as well as some successful sector-focused forums (such as the security sector); but these have had limited life spans. There also have been even longer-term regular cross-party meetings (for instance at the NPTF) but they do not operate at the leadership level, and while second tier leaders discuss political issues and points of difference there are different levels of confidentiality. This latter point is critical as public arenas create different dynamics and influence what participants express. As one senior Maoist political leader noted “*The NTTP forum is the only one we participate in as we trust it.*” Given the historical difficulties of engaging the Maoists in political processes, this is a strong statement of support for NTTP, although its unique nature means that there are no other benchmarks to enable effective comparison.

Low visibility of NTTP work: Many key informants interviewed were understandably unsure of what service or role NTTP actually undertakes outside of the national profile of the senior facilitators. This is a function of the confidential nature of the project as well as the Chatham House Rules under which they engage there. This meant that it was hard to triangulate observations and insights from participants with any depth.

Continued need and relevance: There was almost unanimous articulation of the continued need for, benefit and relevance of the forum and its approach of explicitly bridging the peace process agenda and politics through the creation of a non-partisan space for dialogue. There was strong recognition from respondents that the confrontational approach and characteristics of Nepali politics require innovative, Nepali-based mechanisms to resolve differences, and enable a different quality of communication between the top leaders, through informal conduits and mediation from the senior facilitators.

Given the difficulties of identifying direct causal links between the forum’s operation and progress on the peace process, in discussions with the different thematic groups and forum stakeholders respondents were asked to consider what changes have occurred as a result of the forum. In other words, an Outcome Mapping Approach oriented towards people, behaviors and processes was adopted. Box I below identifies some of these changes identified by participants, resulting from the national, regional forums and thematic groups.

⁴ In fact only one person who was interviewed and who was a participant did not specifically say how important NTTP is. Equally they did not in fact express the negative side of the equation. They avoided answering the question directly, perhaps because they were more interested in expressing a very concerned perspective on the current situation. Given the total number of people interviewed, this is effectively 100% support for the work of NTTP.

Box 1. Changes in Participant Behavior Resulting from the Forums

- Establishment of an alternative political culture putting aside party perspectives.
- Change in behaviors of participants in the thematic groups and discussions from trying to dominate to a more listening, objective, consensus orientation.
- Change of emphasis in discussions from resistance and oppositional dynamics to group problem-solving.
- Cross-party peer-support to build pressure for change – e.g. joint analyses in the media, joint approaches to their leaders.
- Participants' recognition of and frustrations with the limitations of party decision-making processes to address national issues.
- Establishment of, and engagement with, new and different networks and relationships – both within the forums and with external linkages.
- Increased confidence from women to speak out in discussions (particularly at the regional level).

Possible diminishing influence: Some cautious concerns were voiced by respondents around the possible diminishing levels of influence and access of the senior facilitators to the critical leaders, and the degree to which that particular methodology would continue to be effective in the future. The age and health of the facilitators was often mentioned as an issue and a few of the political party members expressed concern that while their leaders had a very high degree of respect for the facilitators and their past contribution, they were unsure of the degree of influence they were now able to exert. This is also possibly a consequence of the issues noted in the context section, which have changed the nature of the work, shifting slightly to addressing blockages in details rather than concentrating on principles.

Wave change processes: Several stakeholders' noted contextual patterns influencing and informing how the NTTP Forum does business. For instance the apparent characteristics of crisis "wave change processes" in the Nepali political context, where political processes appear to stall. Pressure then builds up until either the process is extended or eventually a last minute solution is found at the twelfth hour. As these crises develop, the pattern is reflected in the work of the Forum that intensifies in parallel. The pattern is then repeated over the next issue. This raises the question of whether there are ways to better manage potentially contentious issues earlier in the process so as to avoid the wave syndrome, which would demand a greater degree of planning in the dialogue and meetings processes.

Disaggregation and integration of work streams: At present the work of the Forum appears to be led more by a crisis response mentality. It is important to note that this has also been one of its strengths as well and it has successfully averted serious political crises through quick action. For instance, when the Madheshi were arrested in Terai in 2013 close to the elections, NTTP convened all parties and urged the UML to release them, preventing unhelpful political attention and the possibility of triggering violent protests. However, this may obscure focus on long-term strategy, although this issue is now being addressed in the current developing strategy. The different streams of work, such as crisis management, longer-term peace processes and the foundations for social transformation, need to be disaggregated and pursued in parallel (with cross-over connections) to ensure that one stream does not dominate another. Similarly and potentially paradoxically, exploration is needed of how research and new ways of doing business integrate and achieve multiple objectives simultaneously across these streams.

Box 2. Key Positive Features of the NTTP Forum

Descriptions by stakeholders

- A trusted confidential nonpartisan space.
- A Nepali-based forum responsive to needs rather than imposing external agendas on participants.
- A semi-formal structure – neither formal nor informal but rather a guided process.
- The significant convening power of the Facilitators.
- The forum is owned but not controlled by the political stakeholders.
- Provides a platform for sustained internal dialogue.

OBJECTIVE ONE

Strengthen NTTP capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes.

To achieve this objective TAF and the NTTP Forum considered five elements:

1. Developing consensus and momentum for restarting high-level negotiations among political parties on issues of the constitution and political transition;
2. Strengthening peace constituencies within each party and broadening the NTTP engagement to make the process more open;
3. Enhancing engagement with civil society leaders with leverage on political parties in support of the two facilitators. TAF will form a Peace Support Group (PSG) with national and international experts on peace, which will assist the NTTP Forum in its work on peace, constitution, and political transition;
4. Convening inter-party roundtables on constitutional development and organizing open dialogue sessions among political parties; and
5. Working with youth leaders from major political parties, Madhes, Janajati, and women to support their engagement and voice in the constitution drafting and implementation processes.

Developing consensus and momentum for restarting high-level negotiations among political parties on issues of the constitution and political transition continues as a primary function of the Forum and facilitators. Peace constituencies within each party and broadening the NTTP engagement have been taking place effectively with the development and success of the current thematic groups. This has opened the process up to more participants establishing a platform for further development and improvement.

As can be seen from Table I below, elements IV and V were covered substantially through the array of dialogues and meetings that took place throughout the project (the records reviewed go back further than this phase of the project). A more careful look at the data suggests that, as expected from the nature of the work, there are periods of substantial activity reflecting the need when strong input is required to maintain momentum in the political processes or address blockages. Note that the thematic groups are the areas in particular where the youth, women, Madhes and Janajati were engaged. The youth thematic group is particularly vibrant and successful.

Linkages between thematic groups and the Forum: What is not clear though from this table is the level of engagement and linkages between the thematic groups and the main Forum. Women participants in the thematic group had mixed perspectives on the extent to which their voices were heard in processes. Members consulted were consistent in their reflection of its importance, but some considered it could be more active. In the words of one respondent discussing the possibility of further outreach to external civil society and other outside stakeholders, *“the thematic group needs more outreach and a regular program plan so that it can play a greater role,”* the intent being to draw on a greater diversity of voices to inform the thematic group and therefore both the broader discussion as well as those that may take place within the main forum. The commentator was also identifying the need for greater planning and a more systematic approach to the management of the thematic group and its development of topics, to enhance the possibility of greater effectiveness.

One of the biggest issues facing NTTPI, alongside the tension around determining the agenda versus being responsive to participants’ needs, is the general Nepali cultural and “laid back” attitude to meeting procedures. As one key informant, who had been heavily involved in some of the most important meetings in the early days of the peace process, noted, “Negotiations are generally poor. Meetings have little purpose and participants are unprepared. There is often no firm agenda, it is all too vague with no

‘meat’.” As he put it, the purpose of a meeting is either to debate or to decide. Second tier leaders should debate and then the next meeting with leaders should be to make decisions. The evaluation team did not attend any of the forum meetings, but consideration of the informal meeting minutes suggests that these criticisms applied to the early high-level meetings, and also have some validity when applied to the NTTPI forum. It is difficult to judge how significant this is and where the balance lies in the aforementioned tension. Nevertheless, what can be said is that the distinction between the purpose of meetings to “debate or decide” needs to be clarified and more closely managed if the causal links between meetings and outcomes is to be more clearly delineated. NTTPI will need to scrutinize its practice to determine the validity overall of these comments and -- if process needs to be more firmly established -- how to go about changing the culture of meetings.

In terms of the other listed approaches, there has been a Peace Support Group (PSG) created but it is not yet fully functional. The intent of NTTPI is to form a Nepal Peace Support Group (PSG) consisting of national and international experts on peace, to assist them in assessing the unfolding situation of peace and political process and meet every two months. It is intended to have representatives from the Swiss Embassy, USAID, and CCD/UNDP and possibly from other relevant embassies, missions and agencies also supporting Nepal's transitional process. From the national level, the NTTPI facilitators, Secretary of the MoPR, and a few civil society pioneers will also be members.

While it is acknowledged that all of these stakeholders have important perspectives, at this point in time the most important aspect is to ensure that NTTPI accesses this type of analysis and input regularly to inform their activities. In effect it is a secondary broader advisory committee, with the first being made up of the political party stakeholders. It is difficult to judge whether or not it will be useful, given that it has not yet started, but in the opinion of the evaluation team leader, a more useful way to approach the concept of the PSG at this stage would be to:

- (a) Ensure that key informants are identified and that the Director meets with them “one to one” on a regular basis, as part of a broader networking and outreach program. This enables personal relationships and a deep trust to be developed which in turn allows for these informants to share perspectives, analyses and information on a more confidential and deeper level;
- (b) For an annual or semi-annual “review” process to be held by NTTPI. This would be effectively a day’s reflective workshop (possibly using a strengths-based approach) with key participants such as those outlined above. At this meeting there should be sessions on (i) analyzing the context and status of the Peace Process, (ii) identifying what initiatives are taking place and the relative strengths that they bring to the table, (iii) identifying the contribution of NTTPI to the peace process in this period, (iv) identifying constraints and challenges through an appreciative approach, and (v) considering what other initiatives or steps that NTTPI could take. Such an approach allows for greater flexibility in deciding who should be at such an event given the evolving needs of the environment and the peace process and what skills or understandings may be needed to draw on, as well as who is currently up to date and active in peace.
- (c) In the medium term, as NTTPI develops, there will need to be a broader advisory committee for NTTPI than that currently being suggested with representatives from political parties. This will need to have a range of participants and could emerge from this reflective process.

Table 1: Summary number of meetings, dialogues, etc.

Activity	Year	Specified in the PMP	Actual number of Meetings
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Activity	Year	Specified in the PMP	Actual number of Meetings
NTTP Forum meetings	2009	1 per month	From March, 1 x in 2 months, 2 x in 10 months = 22
	2010	1 per month	3 x in 2 months, 2 x in 5 months, 1 x in 5 months = 21
	2011	1 per month	Jan-Aug not found. 2 x in Oct. and Nov., 1 x in Sept. and Dec. = 6
	2012	1 per month	4 x in 1 month, 2 x in 7 months, 1 x in 2 months, = 20
	2013	1 per month	2 x in 3 months, 8 in 8 months, 0 in 1 month = 14
	2014 (to Sep)	1 per month	3 x in 1 month, 2 x in 3 months, 1 x in 5 months = 14
NTTP Facilitators meetings	2009 - 2014	4 per month	Very few months with less than 4 times a month (only during festive seasons) = ca. 44
Meeting with individuals and small groups	2009	7 per month	March -Oct. Not Found. 7 in Nov. 10 in Dec. = 17
	2010	7 per month	More than 7 in 9 months except Feb., Oct., Aug., Met up to 22 times (Dec.), 14 times (May and Sept.) =
	2011	7 per month	More than 7 in all months as many as 24 times (Jan.), 17 times (Aug. and Sept.) = 113
	2012	7 per month	More than 7 in all months as many as 27 times (March), 22 times (May), 20 times (Sept., Nov.) = ca. 145
	2013	7 per month	More than 7 times in all months except May (6 times). As many as 25 times (Nov.), 20 times (Dec.) = ca. 114
	2014	7 per month	7 times in Jan. (Feb- present not found)
Thematic Group meetings	2009 - 2014	1 per month	Few months without meetings in some of the thematic groups, mostly more than once a month
Research Papers Produced and Translated	2014	12 papers	61 papers produced overall throughout the project (no exact number of translated papers known yet)
Capacity enhancement of local political/civil society members	2014	300	Total no. of participants in peace unit workshops is 4,362 throughout the project (till Aug. 2014).
Field Visits	2014	12 visits	28 visits excluding workshops outside of Kathmandu

OBJECTIVE TWO

Build the capacity of political party Peace and Research Units to serve as a resource for the peace process.

Loyalties: A number of challenges emerged in considering to what extent Objective Two was achieved. From the perspective of the new NTTPI and in the words of a senior member of NTTPI, *“The PRU is constituted from people recommended by the major political forces and so the limitation is that they are not our creature. It is easy to get very talented people but is very difficult to get people committed to the peace mission.”*

Access to party leaders and influence: The assumption is that PRUs have access to leaders and are able to influence colleagues. In practice this is very variable with PRU members admitting party leaders are sometimes receptive and sometimes not. Their receptivity is dependent on the following: their current level of understanding of the issue at hand; how “hot” or important it is, and how pressured they feel; and if various solutions or options are offered they are more appreciative. Levels of interaction also depend on personal access. Research is first shared in the Forum and then with party leaders, sometimes through oral or sometimes written briefings. Most felt their influence in the party had increased a little over time but this varied between parties.

Behavior change: How the researchers work together has changed and is now across party lines with agreed divisions of labor and good teamwork. PRU respondents felt particularly successful in improving communications *between* the political parties and secondly bridging communications between the center and the periphery. This second aspect was interesting as they felt the 4-6 visits to the regions were very successful. They now travel in a cross-party group and hold a problem-solving workshop with multiple stakeholders on regional issues, collecting views on disputes and helping work out how to address them. In one sense this does build resources for peace, but the methodology is somewhat limited, with one-off visits to different locations, so long-term benefits are dubious.

Research agenda: The research agenda itself is somewhat ad hoc and short term at present, although responding to immediate needs. The researchers thought there is insufficient attention to thematic research such as women’s or Janajati issues. In the words of one of them, *“We are not strong yet in that department.”* A look at the list of titles of research documents in Annex IV tends to support this view, with only one identifying women’s issues in the title. In contrast to this, senior NTTPI staff consider thematic issues *are* addressed, but within the context of the research rather than as stand-alone issues.

Capacity building: The PRUs noted they had facilities in their own party offices but the atmosphere was not conducive to research and they preferred NTTPI. Commitment to research in the party appears to be limited and dependent on resource availability, and the concept of a PRU in the party does not really fit with the reality that at present this is a PRU with divided loyalties lodged only in the NTTPI.

There are opportunities to develop and deepen the research skills of the PRU members. The PRUs have all undertaken research at the Master’s level but would like more training, which fits with the NTTPI longer-term goal of strengthening their research capacity. While PRUs themselves would like opportunities to travel and study overseas, this is clearly not a financially realistic option. Instead, it would make sense to take advantage of visiting academics from overseas as well as using well-respected Nepali academics (as NTTPI builds up a stable of associates to draw on for serious research in the future) and those with specific skills in research. A series of short modules could be developed over time (that could then be used later to train new research associates or NTTPI teams) to be given to the PRUs to develop their skills. For instance covering the following illustrative topics (one could list

everything, but this just gives a flavor, concentrating on practical qualitative research and how NTTPI could approach it):

- Ethics and research in the Nepali context
- Qualitative research skills
- Interview techniques
- Focus group discussion management
- Participatory data collection approaches
- Qualitative analysis techniques
- Use (and pros and cons) of Qualitative Analysis Software

One could request visiting academics to provide short 2-3 hour seminars with practical exercises on each visit as part of their duties, or a Nepali academic could be commissioned to provide this practical training, but also ensure that the module remains with NTTPI for future service provision or capacity building. More formal training opportunities could be developed within a longer-term partnership (e.g. with the Kroc Institute) for an action research agenda that would be housed with NTTPI but include mentoring and practical training from the international partner for NTTPI staff.

Without doubt NTTPI needs to continue to have a research capability for both its current roles as well as future directions. This is critical. However, the form this research function takes is open to discussion, with the main issue being the extent to which it is useful to have the PRUs continue to be “lodged” in the political parties or whether they should break that formal link and be stabled in NTTPI fully. Considering the continued political party option, the first question is whether or not there is a possibility of expanding or increasing their influence with leaders at all or using them somehow for further outreach within the party to other “targets.” In other words, rather than trying to use them to influence the leaders, instead acknowledge that they may better be utilized as a means to educate and reach a broader number of people in the party system about the findings of the research conducted. This would be a shift from the intended immediate role of PRUs in providing a knowledge foundation to assist in trying to unblock political blockages in the peace process and instead looking at a greater focus on long-term societal change and how to influence future generations. They are not mutually exclusive roles, but there is a different emphasis. So, for instance, looking at reaching a broader audience, NTTPI could have the whole group of cross-party PRUs provide a presentation and discussion to each of the parties on their research findings (rather than individually going to their leaders, which is what happens at present). This could be informal - a bit like a ‘brown bag’ approach in the US parlance, or it could be more formal with presentations and a facilitated panel discussion. This could be developed in two streams: (a) a regular occurrence at each of the party headquarters and (b) in the future for more regular updates to a broader audience of stakeholders, e.g. civil society, academia.

Once again this would have implications for resources as, if the PRUs took on a broader role, then they would need to become more fully employed staff. This would mean investing in PRUs to a greater extent and bringing them further into the NTTPI fold, providing them with further training and capacity building (see below). They would then have a much greater role: instead of only part-time piecemeal work on their research, they could be part of the NTTPI investment in regional linkages, developing their expertise in some specific geographic areas (or issue based knowledge), as well as undertaking the more presentation and outreach and discussion roles noted above.

So should the PRUs and this research capacity still be linked to the political parties or should they be firmly under the NTTPI wing instead with no formal linkage to parties? The evaluation team would suggest the latter as it does not necessarily mean that political parties could not still call on them to conduct research, but this would be via a procedure of asking NTTPI more directly. An advantage of

this approach would be that there would be greater control by NTTPI on research products and whether or not they should be in the public domain or to what extent and in what form.

NTTPI should consider further the strategic directions involved with building the capacity of PRUs and their roles and to what extent this should be under NTTPI and disassociated with the political parties or not. Consideration of the pros and cons of these possible approaches could be undertaken over the course of the year and a decision made on whether or not PRUs should continue to be linked to parties or just under NTTPI.

Table 2: Chronological presentation of NTTP Forum’s most Significant Contributions to the Peace Process and Constitution-building

Significant Events	Year
Facilitation among political parties to solve the stalemate after the introduction of joint proposal of ruling parties in the Constitutional-Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee (CPDCC).	2014
Negotiations between NC and UML in the course of formation of Koirala government to solve the major standoff over sharing of portfolios and re-election of the President.	2014
Negotiations among major political parties in the aftermath of CA-II elections amidst threats of non-participation in the CA by UCPN (M) and Madhesi parties citing fraud in the election process.	2013-2014
Facilitation of talks between GON, High Level Political Committee (HLPC) and dissident parties leading to the participation of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF-Nepal) and Federal Socialist Party (FSP) in CA-II election.	2013
Facilitation between GON, CPN-M and other political parties ensuring non-violent boycott by CPN-M resulting in peaceful CA-II election.	2013
Organized conference in Steckborn, Switzerland for NTTP members, instrumental in producing an agreement on mixed form of governance model and Constitutional Court.	2011
Negotiations with top leaders of political parties to stress the importance of the term extension of the CA.	2010
Facilitation of talks to end deadlock between Maoist, other opposition parties and the gov’t of Madhav Kumar Nepal over the formation of a national consensus government.	2010
Resolution of the Prachanda-President stalemate after the President’s move to block the sacking of the Commander in Chief of the Nepal Army, Rukmangad Katwal.	2009
Facilitation of talks between the Maoists and the government to avoid possible bloodshed after 6 Maoist cadres were killed in Dang, two days before the CA elections.	2008
Ensuring successful completion of the CA elections by facilitating talks between the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF), threatening to boycott elections, and the government.	2008
Facilitated establishing the Peace Secretariat, establishment and capacity building of LPCs.	2007
Facilitated writing the Comprehensive Peace Accord.	2006

KEY CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVENESS

Influencing political party leaders: Stakeholders were consistent across all parties in their identification of a key challenge to the Forum’s effectiveness in ensuring outcomes and agreements are reached and then carried forward with commitment. This is the nature of ageist leadership and the culture of relational power dynamics in the party political system. The difficulty is identifying the best way to influence the senior leaders who, in the current cultural context, ultimately make decisions. This

is a particular difficulty for the second tier of leaders who appear to be changing their behaviors to a more democratic approach.⁵

Tensions within the modus operandi: The multi-factor nature of change in political processes affecting the peace process means that determining the associated significance and contribution of inputs and processes from the forum is difficult to assess. As noted in the findings, the NTTPI Forum is very much valued and some of the foundational features of its value are listed in Box 2. However, its ability to be effective also incorporates a number of tensions within its modus operandi, illustrated in Table 3. The ability of the facilitators and NTTPI staff to judge these balances to improve the possibility of an outcome rather than simply being a “talking shop”⁶ is a feature that cannot be reduced to an easy formula.

Nevertheless feedback from some stakeholders suggests that it may be appropriate for the NTTPI to gently experiment with being more proactive on less controversial issues to reach outcomes more deliberately. Approaches could be trialed in thematic groups where stakes are not so high. For instance in the women’s thematic group one could create a progressive agenda around the development of an action plan to increase the involvement of women in the political process at the local, regional and national levels. This might start off with a general brainstorm on ways to achieve this with the group, but with NTTPI having already considered a series of meetings and their topics to encompass facets of the discussion. As well as this, NTTPI could also have briefly discussed a set of concrete actions that could be supported and how they might be supported, or if they cannot be supported then how might the group take them forward. For example, this could include the formation of a cross-party group or committee that takes the lead on the development of a set of regional visits, or outreach to civil society or other stakeholders to discuss constraints and ways to overcome them. The emphasis here is to encourage NTTPI to have developed their own plan on such a topic that could then help them facilitate a more productive set of outcomes from the thematic group. In other words, greater preparation from NTTPI will enable them to steer and support the group to (a) develop their own skills to prepare their thoughts on a topic, (b) debate it from their positions, (c) make decisions on actions to be taken and then organize those actions (be they advocacy to their own parties, or whatever), and (d) report back to the group and create the next steps. This approach will eventually allow NTTPI to develop a theme and how to sequence individual meetings and topics within it as well as create the environment for more active practical engagement of their members. This moves away from the “talk shop” to the “action-oriented debate shop.” This will breed self-confidence in members as well as create a more meaningful set of forums.

The setting up of the new Dalit thematic group is an ideal opportunity to trial such an approach. For this group, it might start with a similar topic of how to increase inclusivity in the major political parties. This could be action research oriented – link the group with the PRUs and the thematic youth group to start a gentle “social audit” of the different parties. What is written in their party policies about inclusivity of Dalits? How many Dalits are in positions of senior management? How do these parties reach out to marginalized groups such as Dalits? Following this initial mapping they could engage in a group analysis of the results, and the development of action plans that are cross party and involve other thematic groups. This type of approach does not rule out involvement with other elements such as the important political issues of the day around the development of the constitution or how to feed their ideas into the main forum. Rather, NTTPI could set up a running theme that is brought up over the

⁵ It remains to be seen whether they will later adopt the same behaviors as the current leaders when they themselves become the party leadership or if they will maintain their current practices.

⁶ This term was used by a number of stakeholders concerned with improving efficacy of the Forum.

course of several meetings after the main business has been discussed. This would both create some greater structure but still allow the immediacy of dealing with “crisis issues” in parallel.

Table 3: Tensions Affecting the Effectiveness of the Forum

Aspect	Tension	Explanation
Facilitators' Role	<i>Convener vs. Facilitator</i>	These are two different skills not necessarily always found in the same person. There is increasing recognition by NTTTP that this difference needs to be addressed to ensure high quality and professional group facilitation and achieve stronger outcomes.
Participation	<i>Power-brokers vs. Gatekeepers</i>	To achieve outcomes requires the right people to be at the table. If there is a key faction missing then agreement reached can easily be undermined without full buy in. The risk, though, is that having these “power-brokers” at the table is reinforcing their power and creating stronger “gatekeepers” that weaken some of the democratic principles the forum is trying to instill.
Inclusivity	<i>Inclusivity vs. Functional Management</i>	Similarly, thematic groups and the forum have limited inclusivity. This raises two points, firstly the relevance of who attends and the primary purpose of the forum, and secondly its functional management. It becomes hard to manage discussions well with large groups, a possible consequence of increased inclusivity.
Achievement of Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Principle-ism vs. Pragmatism</i> 2. <i>Responsiveness vs. Proactivity</i> 3. <i>Short-term Needs vs. Long-term Peace</i> 	Meeting agendas are determined by stakeholders through an informal consultative mechanism, and meeting direction is a light touch from NTTTP. To reach an outcome may require stronger guidance and this shifts the role of the forum conveners from non-directive to possibly espousing a view. Similarly, responsiveness to stakeholders could be balanced on occasion by a more proactive role. In turn links to tensions in the functioning of the forum as crisis responsive to addressing longer-term and structural issues to ensure sustained peace in Nepal.
Donor Needs	<i>Linear logic vs. Non-linear change</i>	The causal chain of specific results is not always clear and iterative process-orientation creates challenges for donors fitting non-linear social change into linear logical frameworks.

Accompanying the process: USAID is to be congratulated on its sustained engagement with the process and the important *accompanying* function it has held along with the Swiss Embassy. As noted, it is hard to fit such an initiative into a project mentality and framework, but the NTTTP Forum is a *critical* aspect of the peace process and political landscape in Nepal. Nevertheless while the engagement is positive, there are challenges for all parties, and NTTTP should not need to rely on donor complementarity to fulfill their role effectively. USAID needs to develop more flexible funding mechanisms for chronic or long term transition states – particularly post-conflict ones – that allow greater freedom for context-specific innovation.⁷

⁷ It is noted that OTI serves this purpose but often transition-type features continue for many years (typically for peace processes more than ten years) and it is rare for OTI to be present for this length of time.

Box 3. NTTP and the 2013 Elections – An Illustration of Process and Outcome

The election announced for November 2013 by the Regmi-led government was opposed by a 33-party coalition led by CPN-M and other parties including the Federal Socialist Party and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Nepal. CPN-M publicly stated its strategy of not only non-participation in the election, but also active disruption before and on the polling day. Demands from the dissident parties included:

- A call for the resignation of Khilraj Regmi from the position of Chief Justice,
- An increase in the proportional representation percentage,
- The total number of members of the Constituent Assembly II to be returned back to 601,
- Qualification of candidates for the election, and
- A round table conference of all parties.

Extensive dialogues conducted in the NTTP forum (9 meetings), the Youth Group (8 meetings) and a number of individual discussions with stakeholders were crucial in helping meet the demands of the dissident parties. A series of negotiations facilitated by the national and international facilitators paved the way for increasing the number in the CA to 601. This ensured the participation of Federal Socialist Party and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Nepal in the election. The NTTP facilitation between the CPN-M and other political parties on the eleventh hour before the election led to a peaceful Election Day and a non-violent boycott by some of the Maoists.

Linear causality: TAF and NTTP, as well as USAID, noted the challenge of applying a meaningful time-bound Results Framework approach to the initiative due to the lack of fit and appropriateness for the work being conducted. The difficulty is encapsulated in the tension between the use and description of a linear causal development chain and non-linear processes of social change that do not necessarily follow logical, unidirectional, visible and incremental positive progressions. Direct causal assumptions underlying this approach bring an associated difficulty if change does not appear to be progressing in a positive direction. When this occurs it presents the possible and incorrect interpretation that an initiative is not useful (as it appears not to be working or successful).

Measurement of change: Outputs along the way may or may not be particularly meaningful so the challenge is how to measure change, success and impact. Outcome mapping is one form developed to address these issues, although not often used systematically, but it could be applied to the NTTP Forum along with “process monitoring” mechanisms focused on frameworks that validate approaches.⁸ These forms of monitoring require more human resources and energy to keep track of ongoing changes and dynamics. Such approaches resonate with other accepted inductive, reflective practices in peacebuilding programs,⁹ emphasizing the dynamics of the development process, transactions, and decision-making. It should be noted this leads to a slight contradiction between earlier recommendations on developing theories of change based on deductive reasoning, i.e. the project puts forward a general hypothesis on how change occurs, while the above process-oriented approach works from inductive reasoning whereby analysis of particular instances can provide insights into general ways of working.

Surviving generational change: The development of new expanded convening power and a team of facilitators is a continuing challenge to NTTPI as they reduce reliance on the senior facilitators and create the environment for a generational handover. While this is clearly underway, NTTP should continue to find ways to deepen the team and create trust with stakeholders through continual symbolic

⁸ E.g., some early work from ODI undertaken by Rew and Brustinow (1998).

⁹ E.g. Lederach, Neufeldt, Culbertson, 2007, *Reflective Peacebuilding*, Kroc Institute and CRS.

but meaningfully reinforced demonstrated handovers and transitions.¹⁰

ENHANCING FUTURE EFFECTIVENESS

Intentionality: An important issue that stems from the findings is the extent to which NTTPI's role should be trying to bring about specific results or outcomes, or whether it should just be a "space" where these occurrences can happen. To what extent should NTTPI be active in the process? In interviews, staff and facilitators took both positions, stating the forum only responds to the needs of the participants but simultaneously agreeing that they did involve themselves to some extent in discussions to move towards goals of consensus and compromise. So, without identifying specific positions and content and thereby becoming political actors themselves, NTTPI can and does clearly attempt to enhance the achievement of explicit outcomes.

Given this position, it is apparent that NTTPI should explore and develop more strategic and tactical methodologies for achieving these results (whatever they may be). This means strengthening processes and developing greater "intentionality." Where are the blockages in the decision-making processes and those who make the decisions? How can the relevant stakeholders influence these parts of the whole more effectively? Some of this is already known and can be captured through analysis of lessons already learned and further developed and nuanced. The importance of "process monitoring" and outcome mapping, coupled with deeper periods of reflection, could yield methodologies as well as drawing on experience from other disciplines. The fact that there is no *singular* experience to document, given the range of stakeholders, also potentially provides a richness to explore different experiences of change and what works or occasionally works in influencing leaders with actors who are open to new approaches (e.g. the youth and women's thematic group). This more intentional approach to achieving outcomes is important as NTTPI moves towards a longer-term role around policy influence and the use of evidence bases for change.

CONCLUSIONS

The NPSP and NTTPI forum can be considered **very effective** as the forum provides a crucial, safe, non-partisan space for discussion and political dialogue, allowing a significant and critically different quality of communications between leaders around peace issues. This "*insider/partial mediation approach*" uniquely provides channels that compensate for inadequacies in overcoming the Nepali "*landscape of division*."¹¹ Without this mechanism the possibility of failure, deadlock and lack of progress in important political and peace processes is likely to be increased. Although the mechanism may not always appear to result in positive outcomes, and causal linkages are difficult to establish, it is important to understand this does not negate the approach or critical value of the activity.

A strength of the NTTPI approach is how it specifically bridges peace and political processes. It is often hard for development projects to acknowledge their deep inherent political nature, let alone embrace it. The provenance of development emerging from the humanitarian sector with its necessary self-

¹⁰ Some examples of what is meant by this: having the senior facilitators open meetings but then have them run by Stella Tamang or Vidya Dhar Mallik; having other facilitators call and convene meetings "on behalf" of their senior colleagues who are present but not active in the meeting; increasing the role of the next generation in all aspects under the "guidance" of the senior facilitators. If possible explore different modalities with the senior facilitators there to "normalize" new ways of working but always demonstrating that this has their support and is at their behest.

¹¹ This apt description and the term "insider partial mediation approach" is borrowed from John Paul Lederach.

duplicious assumption of apolitical neutrality flavors it, so development tends to avoid acknowledging political aspects of work inherent in social change. This is not the case here and in complex transitions there are significant benefits in having such an organization bridging peace and political processes addressing the interstitial spaces that easily lead to deeper social and political divides.

The project has largely been able to meet its own stated objectives, though with stronger performance in some areas than others. While continuing to serve a critical role, its ability to engage key stakeholders requires ongoing work to deepen progress and reduce future vulnerability in generational transitions. Similarly the richness of different facets of its portfolio (e.g. PRUs, thematic groups, regional forums) requires developing and bringing them together in a more cohesive whole to mutually reinforce their relative strengths. There is a strong foundation on which to build further, to develop the unique niche of NTTPI and maximize outcomes in the future, particularly in the regions, and through “thoughtful intentionality.” NTTPI continues to have an important ongoing and expanding, evolving role as the context unfolds.

USAID should be affirmed on its support to date, but needs to acknowledge, and internalize as an institution the importance and value of long term accompanying of such process-oriented engagements. This is not only an acknowledgement of the intrinsic value of the role of “good office,” but also acknowledges this initiative as a critical “value for money” form of risk management and insurance that reinforces stability and protects their other development investments. The absence of such a mechanism jeopardizes all other aspects of their work, across all sectors, due to the lack of political stability. It is difficult to guarantee the success of development investments when the overall environment is vulnerable. For instance, whatever the sector, investment in human resources risks brain drain, economic investments tend to end up supporting capital flight rather than domestic investment, and so on. There does not necessarily have to be active violent conflict for this effect to take place (for instance a classic example would be Zimbabwe, whose agricultural, health and education sectors have been devastated due to political instability despite very little active open violence).¹²

RECOMMENDATIONS

For USAID:

Flexible funding mechanisms: In protracted complex transitional situations, USAID DRG offices need to develop very flexible funding mechanisms in tune with context-specific, iterative, process-oriented, accompanying approaches that are accountable yet do not constrain stakeholders.¹³

Explicit complementarity: The complementary nature of Swiss and USAID support to NTTP has been extremely useful to provide the flexibility needed for success and more explicit work on intentionality and roles would benefit all stakeholders.

Gauging progress: Additional support (both financial and human resources) needs to be built in to these types of initiatives to develop innovative ways to gauge progress and value, and avoid reductionist

¹² Of course this does not include the political intimidation and violence around elections. Nevertheless the flight of educated people is substantial and world health systems have sadly benefitted from the severely reduced capacity in Zimbabwe, due to their flight to Europe or other safer environments such as South Africa and Namibia.

¹³ This includes addressing difficulties of activity/management ratios. Mediation, conflict resolution activities and conflict management appear to have a disproportionate weighting to management and overhead costs, as dialogue per se is not expensive. This should be considered when analyzing the project.

measures and wasted effort. Partners and USAID need to develop these together in a collaborative manner, for mutual understanding, learning and comfort with products.

Assessing change: CMM or a similar “learning” or “piloting” arm of USAID needs to invest in developing more thoughtful approaches to assessing change that can then inform the sector and further learning through application in different field contexts. The case of NPSP would be an excellent opportunity to develop such an approach and possibly an accompanying manual. There is a need across the sector for thoughtful assistance in addressing this challenge.

Stability insurance: Similar to the above, CMM should develop a learning agenda on the importance of long-term accompaniment of this type of initiative and its role in the bigger picture. An investment in this understanding and the development of evidence in its support would assist USAID as an institution (and others) to inform stakeholders to grasp the role that these initiatives (with apparently no clear visible direct impact) play in creating stability and managing risk to other more substantive development investments if instability or at worst, violence were to re-emerge.¹⁴

For NTTPI:

Linkages with other technical working groups and committees: Coupled with the acknowledgement by stakeholders that more technical aspects of issues addressed in the constitutional process and discussed in the Forum increasingly dominate the peace process, and while there are always party political overlays, the question arises as to how the Forum links with other technical processes and committees in the broader field. As the Forum transforms, it will need to interact more deliberately with other ongoing processes in the public arena while maintaining its successful characteristics. One approach to opening up the work of the forum more in the public domain and developing a further thread to diversify modes of operation might be to explore how to better directly support or advise some of the critical technical committees (such as the Constitutional-Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee (CPDCC)) to prevent their stalling in dialogues, and simultaneously potentially create opportunities for marginalized groups like women and the Madhesh to have greater input.

Intentionality and effectiveness: Development of a more deliberate intentionality in this next phase could help address some of the challenges noted by respondents. While not wishing to drive processes, NTTPI could nevertheless demonstrate such intentionality in the following domains:

- Strengthening of the Forum through more deliberate planning and management of overall processes. It is important not to lose the strengths of the existing iterative approach but rather consider more clearly the objectives the forum wants to achieve and how, rather than relying on ad hoc methods.
- Strengthened technical approaches, such as use of enhanced technical mediation, negotiation and facilitation techniques within the Forum and its associated bi-lateral meetings with key stakeholders.
- Disaggregation of the convening and facilitation processes. Development of a team of both conveners and exceptional facilitators to reduce reliance on the senior facilitators and more deliberately address the issue of generational transitions in the NTTPI (this is underway).

¹⁴ For instance, if one considers the cost of support to this initiative when weighed up against the cost of the whole development portfolio, it is insignificant as a form of insurance. One may debate whether this policy always pays off in terms of effectiveness, but there is always small print (!)...Imagine not being insured at all.

- Deeper structured periods of reflection that could include more specific lesson learning about what has worked in the past and what has not in achieving outcomes.

Building on lessons for change: The youth group has identified various ways to break through, and the Forum should invest in collating and trying various approaches to see how it can more effectively translate agreement and consensus into commitment and change back in their parties and most importantly the leadership. The development of a “toolbox” for youth and women participants out of these “lessons learned” might be useful and may reinforce the collegiate atmosphere of the next generation.

Expanding changed behaviors into the public domain: Similarly there are opportunities to explore how the forum might support youth leaders in bringing their new ways of working into the public domain in the CA and parliament in non-threatening ways to contribute more explicitly to social change and the erosion of established rigid leadership models and cultures, without placing them at risk of appearing to challenge the leaders.

QUESTION TWO: To what extent did the program engage women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups? Did those groups feel served by this process, and, if not, what measures could be taken to improve upon the representation of marginalized groups including women in the peace process?

FINDINGS

Universal appreciation: All respondents consulted considered these groups to be important and very beneficial to them. There was recognition in the women’s group that improvement in their status was going to be a long journey. There was appreciation of the opportunities for cross-party fertilization, sharing documents between parties, increasing technical knowledge and input from external experts,¹⁵ and access to data and resources from the PRUs.

Potentially competing purposes: It was noted that there are insufficient women represented in the larger Forum, although this is partly a function of the tensions described earlier in Table 2 between increasing inclusivity in the main Forum and creating both potential difficulties in group management and more importantly undermining one of the primary functions of the main forum to circumvent or unblock political deadlocks. For this purpose the Forum needs the key power brokers to be the major priority members and focus, rather than trying to strengthen the representation of women per se. At its most serious there is a risk of undermining some core crisis work in the interests of long-term change. Nevertheless, ways to develop increased representation of women and other marginalized groups at the main forum need to be progressed. Similarly NTTPI needs to consider ways in which these groups can influence the agenda, discussions and agreements that emerge from the forum.

Linkages between the women’s and Janajatis thematic groups and the other Forums: The formal mechanism to ensure that voices from the groups are heard in the main forum is by having two members from the main forum sit on the thematic groups, but it is unclear the extent to which these assumptions about representation and reflection of the voices upwards actually happens. All of the women group members consulted thought linkages were insufficiently strong and one requested

¹⁵ For instance, the workshops on federalism provided by Nicole from SDC and inputs from Jean Paul Lederach.

structured opportunities to discuss issues with the main forum. Dalits are currently insufficiently included at present, but this gap is being addressed, as plans are already underway to develop an additional thematic group addressing Dalit issues specifically. One of the potential members of this thematic group consulted was extremely excited at the prospect and the opportunity to engage at the Forum. Linkages with the regional forums at present are yet to be developed and this is an area for potential fruitful development.

Outreach to broader constituencies: Both women and youth groups believe there is considerable outreach to other civil society and marginalized groups by the thematic groups. Youth leaders mentioned youth associations, youth party wings and student associations. Women similarly mentioned groups such as the Women's Inter-party Alliance as well as media and journalists. However, it would appear that the quality and consistency of outreach could be improved. In the words of one woman participant, *"There is no structured plan, we need more outreach."* This again points to the need for greater intentionality while recognizing the need to remain nimble and responsive. It would be helpful to track the frequency and density of these expanding networks to better understand how they operate and how best to develop them further.

Research opportunities: There is room for the development of specific thematic research on the linkages between marginalized groups and peace and conflict. Examples might include research on: the emergence of identity politics of the different ethnic groups in Nepal and its implications for peace and stability (a comparative study with Myanmar might also draw some interesting parallels and lessons around ethnic issues); regional lessons on religious tensions, conservatism and their management (e.g. India and Myanmar); regional lessons and best practices from countries that have significant dalit populations on how political representation is undertaken (e.g. via proportional representation, affirmative action etc.); and best practices on increasing women's participation in politics in developing countries, etc.

CONCLUSIONS

The creation of the different thematic approaches is a useful and exciting approach to developing greater inclusivity of marginalized voices in the peace process. It has potential for further development and in this next phase NTTPI needs to build on the foundation to develop a more structured and intentional systematic approach to increase its effectiveness. This should include both the development of centre/regional linkages as well as more formalized ways to include voices in the main forum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further developing marginalized voices: NTTPI should develop a document that outlines the different approaches they will take and explore in a practical way to ensure that the voices of women are more keenly felt and expressed in the main forum on a regular basis. Some examples of how this could happen include: rotating incremental "observer" status at the table from a member of the women's thematic group, occasional structured sharing or joint sessions, specific presentations to the main group on women's and other marginalized issues, rotating participation from a member of the youth forum at the women's group, and having a male represent women's or Janajati and Dalit issues.

Other actions that could be taken in this area include:

- Ensure there are appropriate "slots" for development of understanding of all stakeholders; for example, short presentations when the "facilitation wave" is in a trough. This does not mean a more inclusive forum but a better-structured process for hearing voices.
- Dedicate more staff time and resources to work on these linkages and appropriate supporting activities (this requires additional staff).

- Decide on specific longer term research agendas reflecting linkages between marginalization, peace issues and potential regional conflict to be introduced into the main forum
- Link youth forum members with the other groups so that not only cross-party but also cross-issue learning and empathy is developed; for instance, a male is partnered with the women’s group and has to present their issues on their behalf, or a non-dalit represents the positions alongside a dalit, to encourage a deeper understanding and ensure that main parties cannot avoid issues nor patronize participants by “half listening.”

QUESTION THREE: What were the results of NPSP’s efforts to link local level peace initiatives to the NTTP forum?

There is a significant caveat to be made here in answering this evaluation question. An analysis of NPSP documents reveals that linking local level peace initiatives to the NTTP forum was not really within the scope of the project. There was one relatively small activity that potentially addresses linkages in this manner. This is activity 1.4, “Support NTTP forum to conduct regional visits,” but the purpose of the activity is broadening the understanding of the forum and facilitators rather than the implied and specific vertical linkage in the question. Nevertheless, responding to the spirit of the question, and with notable NTTPI/TAF flexibility and complete support, the team explored NTTPI’s DFID-funded activities in the regions and considered the implications of their work for NTTPI more broadly. The major element of this work is the formation of *Sambad Samuha* forums in “hotspot” regions with important potential conflict dynamics that are broadly based on a replication of the forum model in Kathmandu.¹⁶ To this end the evaluation team visited Jhapa, Dang and Dhangadhi where regional forums are operating or just about to start activities and interviewed key stakeholders as well as groups who had been gathered by NTTPI for other project activities.

Drawing on the NTTP criteria, the regional forums – ‘*Sambad Samuha*’ - can be described as consisting of 12-15 influential community leaders who represent the main ethnic and social constituencies and are able to connect and mediate across ethnic, political, linguistic, and religious divides. These “leaders of influence” may be picked from civil society organizations, ethnic movements, political parties, academia, media, religious leaders, and social workers. There is also a criterion of minimum female participation of 30%. The *Sambad Samuha* focuses on reconciliation of emergent discord/conflict between the political parties working towards informal agreements (at the local level). It is effectively led by two key local interlocutors¹⁷ who can play the role of connectors and mediators between the diverse communities. The forum is informed by a “*conflict analysis group*” made up of the Chief District Officer (CDO), the Police, active civil society members, a Village Development Committee (VDC) officer, a District Development Committee (DDC) Officer and other personnel involved in local security. This group is expected to meet every two months and when necessary there are additional community and stakeholder consultations to inform the agenda of the forum.

In 75 of the districts there is also a government-formed Local Peace Committee (LPC). This structure, formed by the government with the agreement of the Maoists, was encouraged by NTTP in the early days of the peace process. As noted by the MoPR, there is enormous diversity across the board with

¹⁶ One important difference here is the inclusion of some additional key actors such as CSOs that are not solely political parties.

¹⁷ These two interlocutors are considered to be impartial, neutral and have a basic understanding of conflict mitigation and peace-building;

the LPCs and many are not functioning at all well. In fact there are similarities in composition between Sambad Samuhas and LPCs. The latter (according to MoPR ToR) should be made up of no more than twelve members from political parties that took part in the CA election at the district. Four members should be from local civil society, four from victims of conflict, one from the chamber of commerce and the remaining two from minority groups. They are constrained by a variety of issues such as the extent of their mandate (and their ability) to manage conflicts and lack of resources. Their role traditionally centered on assisting victims of the conflict to receive support and relief and assessing applications and deciding who was eligible for what sort of assistance. The small amount of support provided to LPCs is often used to disseminate public messages about these packages. Nevertheless, where the Sambad Samuhas are present, NTTTP ensured that there is coordination and understanding between the bodies. The coordinator of the LPC is also a member of the Sambad Samuha and when the evaluation team visited the field they found that a number of members were in both the LPC and the forum. The LPC is a temporary governance structure during the interim period and should eventually be disbanded when the MoPR also completes its work.

FINDINGS

Regional Contexts: There is a significant and marked divide and gap in understanding of the peace process, and the status and significance of federalism in particular, between stakeholders in the regions and those in the center. Political players in Kathmandu appear to have only a shallow understanding of the regions, nor do they understand regional stakeholder perspectives deeply. Similarly stakeholders interviewed in the regions appear to be under the impression that leaders in the center have information about what is happening at their level. This gap is exacerbated by the strong top-down system within the political parties that does not really cater to a more consultative approach.

Institutional Diversity: Institutional diversity in the regions is limited. There are few initiatives and mechanisms addressing societal conflict per se.¹⁸ Structures that are there, such as Local Peace Committees (LPCs), as well as formal government security structures such as the District and Regional Security Committees (as well as the judicial system), either focus purely on traditional and narrower government perspectives on law and order and internal security or have limited mandates, rather than addressing societal tensions and flaws.¹⁹ The number of civil society organizations operating in the regions, while growing in number, is still low, and few have mandates for peacebuilding. The functionality of these mechanisms is also dubious, with LPCs reportedly²⁰ varying in their effectiveness and government structures having little experience dealing with the emerging conflict issues. Nor do they have the right stakeholder input and participation necessary to resolve issues between groups and that enables access to key conflict protagonists, although UNDP has been implementing an initiative called Collaborative Leadership and Dialogue that is starting to look at early warning and conflict management in the regions.

¹⁸ Conflict here is considered from the broad perspective looking at the incompatibility of two or more opinions, and not violent conflict.

¹⁹ Under Article 7 of the Local Administration Act 1971, the CDO heads a District Security Committee made up of representatives from the Nepal Army (NA), Nepal Police (NP), APF and National Investigation Department (NID) of the district. Under Article 4 C of the same act, there is also provision for a Regional Security Committee chaired by Regional Administrators in charge of maintaining peace and security in five development regions. The members of the committee are from the NA, the NP, the APF and the NID of the respective regions. The Regional Police Office also works under the Regional Administrator to maintain peace and security.

²⁰ Both government and non-state actors acknowledged this situation.

LPCs: There is a range of questions that arise with respect to the LPCs and the extent to which they are a useful body to invest in and support, whether their roles should and can evolve and into what. Given that it is a government body, it is likely to face a number of challenges in addressing conflict issues at the regional level. Often such bodies can be partisan as the government often has a stake in certain outcomes and can be an active protagonist in the very conflict it is trying to settle. Equally they can turn into security or de facto intelligence bodies that then lose the trust of communities. While this is not the place to debate the issues in a deep manner, these inherent flaws in LPCs tackling regional conflict suggest that there is a need for another type of body to serve this purpose.

Sambad Samuha: The Sambad Samuha regional forums are highly valued in the sites visited and operating well in Jhapa and Dang. Due to time constraints, the evaluation team was only able to interview direct participants and not a broader mix of observers and stakeholders in each region. This has meant that triangulation of these findings is weak, but nevertheless, assuming that the evidence cited by respondents is accurate (for instance the significant role, involvement in and resolution of some serious regional conflicts – see Box 4), their importance is clear. That there was unanimous and vigorous articulation of their importance by *all* respondents suggests that, even in the event that there is a significant, positive “halo effect” bias, they are still serving a useful and relatively unique role.

While there are only two Sambad Samuhas at present, with a third still nascent, these are worth investing in further. Based on this assumption and recognizing their “youth,” they could be strengthened in the following ways:

- Discuss and identify the parameters for action and involvement in each Sambad Samuha – in other words clarify the mandate in more detail. Which conflicts should the forum be involved in and why? Which types of conflict should they *not* be involved with and why not? If not, then what should their role be in these cases? What is the role of Sambad Samuha with respect to addressing the structural causes of conflict in Nepal versus those that are emerging now or are currently latent?²¹
- Provide a series of trainings in conflict management, mediation and negotiation for the members of Sambad Samuha and the conflict analysis group, so that they all have a common language and similar levels of basic understanding.
- Continue to deliberately support and reinforce a culture of inclusivity and listening at the Sambad Samuha at every opportunity and systematically.²²
- Provide the Sambad Samuha members with regular briefings/newsletters on peace issues from the center and ensure that regional briefings are reflected in the center as well. This will mean that criteria and clarity on expectations regarding the quality and content of briefings will need to be developed so that the standard is high and useful. Better a few high quality briefings, analyses and updates than a steady stream of low quality communiqués.
- Continued skills training on early warning systems and rapid response mechanisms.
- Develop a common analysis on upcoming conflict risks in each region and develop an action plan

²¹ These questions also point to an issue for NTTPI, which is to define the nature of its interaction with conflict over the long term. What is the nature of its long-term engagement with these issues in the regions?

²² While commonly voiced positive feedback from those interviewed in the Sambad Samuhas was that members had altered their behaviors to be more open to listening, to be “softer” and to accept what others had to say, the practice that was observed by the evaluation team did not accord with this perception! While it is acknowledged that such change is relative, and they may have moved from a starting position, nevertheless there appears to be a long way still to go before such behaviors are the norm.

that (a) considers how to mitigate or reduce the risk of conflict and neutralize any triggers that may be identified (e.g. elections, announcements of borders etc.), (b) identifies and maps particular geographic hotspots that may be linked to particular concentrations of ethnic groups, youth, and “conflict fault lines” such as areas where groups have an interface or sites of symbolic importance, (c) maps stakeholders and identifies additional leaders of key groups, particularly those that may be likely to be involved in conflict (e.g. youth leaders), and (d) considers various scenarios and who within the Sambad Samuha will respond to the different threats.

- Identify a range of possible research issues at the regional level that will have national relevance that could be the subject of (a) long term action research, (b) one-off research pieces, or (c) analysis pieces.
- Consider identifying a set of outreach activities to local civil society and
- Create strong and more systematic linkages with the forum at the national level, particularly with the youth, women, Janajatis and, in the future, the Dalit thematic group, and have some members occasionally come to the forum to provide briefings and vice versa.

“Mixed mandates”: The original intention in setting up Sambad Samuha forums was that they would operate on a similar model to the national forum, i.e. a confidential “track 1.5” approach for discussing and addressing differences between political parties and achieving greater consensus on contentious political issues associated with the national peace process. However, the lack of functional mechanisms to address conflict described in the finding above created an important need for a different sort of mechanism; one that can actively engage with, and resolve, the increasing number and complexity of conflicts emerging and becoming visible (as opposed to latent) at the regional level. The Sambad Samuha forums in Jhapa and Dang have therefore stepped in to this role reflecting the immediate needs of the environment. The original longer-term purpose and transference of the ‘forum model’ for cross-party dialogue is also operating simultaneously but appears to be a secondary function.

The NTTPI support mechanism: Relationships with local “supporting NGOs” that provide a conduit for support to the Sambad Samuha forums are complex, with implications for NTTPI in the longer term.

Vertical linkages: There appear to be limited linkages between the Sambad Samuha forums and the NTTPI forum in Kathmandu, but the linkage is fundamentally reliant on a few visits from the center by NTTPI staff. Nevertheless there are significant expectations and assumptions reported from Sambad Samuha participants about these linkages. They are assuming that their views are consistently and significantly discussed in the NTTPI forum on a regular basis so their voices are being heard at the national level. There also appears to be relatively superficial understanding of the role of the NTTPI forum, with a focus on the roles of the senior facilitators.

Box 4: Examples of Regional Successes of Sambad Samuha

Sambad Samuhas (SS) were found to be active in Dang and Jhapa and in the formative stage in Kailali.



Dang Strikes: In May 2012, SS in Dang was successful in bringing the Tharuhut Party to the dialogue table and their giving up strike action during the last days of CA-I. This ended a violent strike with passengers travelling in more than 300 buses stuck in Bhalubang, Dang for a number of days.

Dang Buffer Zones: In January 2013, SS successfully mediated conflict between citizens in 3 Dang VDCs and government officials. Ward numbers 1, 9 and 9 of Goltakuri, Panchakule and Purandhara VDCs respectively were incorporated into the newly declared Banke National Park Buffer Zone. Locals demanded the decision be dissolved, as there had been no consultation with local people. Government efforts to establish an army camp and National Park offices in the Buffer Zone were stalled. Signboards barring government officials from entering the area hung at a number of entry points (see photo above). Active SS mediation led to the creation of a Task Force headed by the SS Facilitator to study the buffer zone boundaries. Resulting current demarcations are acceptable to locals and the National Park is back in operation.

Dang Farmers: SS in Dang also facilitated successful negotiations between authorities and agitating farmers who were demanding a sufficient and timely supply of fertilizers and seeds.

Jhapa Strikes: In 2013 SS played a notable facilitation and mediation role during strikes called by different political parties and interest groups. Many *Bandhas* were given up by their organizers way before the declared threatened implementation deadlines due to the active engagement of SS in dialogues with them. An example is the *Bandha* declared by the Federal Limbuwan Party and other Limbuwan groups before the CA-II polling day and challenged by locals. The situation was nearing the verge of violence but was avoided with rapid diplomatic shuttle talks by SS between locals, organizers and the authorities.

Jhapa Transport Stoppages: The conflict between Ujjyalo and Mechi Transportation Committees that led to several days of travel stoppages in Jhapa and surrounding hilly districts was solved through the mediation of SS.

Jhapa Tea: Another example of engagement is in the conflict between laborers and tea estate owners, small farmers and big farmers and small farmers and factory owners. Although, the conflict in tea production is recurring and which needs to be addressed by national level legislation, SS has been successful in solving the conflicts temporarily every year.

DISCUSSION

There are a number of important questions that arise as a consequence of the findings that should be discussed in relation to the strategy formulation process. For instance, to what extent should NTTPI be involved at the regional level? Should NTTPI be involved in a more direct role in implementation of conflict management, be it direct or indirect? What level of support is possible and in what areas can it be expected from NTTPI? What are the implications working through NGOs? While this is not the

place for detailed discussions of these questions, it is appropriate to consider some of the implications, given both the prospective aspect of the evaluation and where the institution-building project has reached. There are enormous possibilities for NTTPI to contribute to the national development of a peaceful Nepal through engagement at the regional level. Some of these opportunities include:

- Using core NTTP capacity to engage, through dialogue and a variety of methods such as participatory action research, to tackle contentious and potential political and conflict flashpoints. Issues could include identity politics, the use of resources such as water or river corridors, land use and boundaries. This should be under the rubric of “research” to neutralize risks and work towards emergent participatory policy development.
- Identifying specific long term regional research agendas (over the course of three to five years) linked to long term peace issues or conflict/development issues, that can be conducted and that will start to create an evidence base to inform policy (i.e. start practicing one of the long term purposes of NTTPI now).
- Developing Nepali-based solutions and methods to address deep social divides at the regional level.
- Assisting in improving understanding of regional conflicts and flashpoints at the center in the various parties.
- Contributing to narrowing knowledge and understanding gaps, establishing relationships and avenues for information flow between the center and periphery (not duplicating party lines, but around issue based national challenges).
- Increasing the potential and reality for regional input into national agendas and policy briefs.
- Introducing regional expertise and input into the thematic groups – so there is mutual mentoring rather than a one-way exercise in knowledge extraction from the center.
- Undertaking cross-regional learning visits around approaches to issues at the national level e.g. federalism, the politics of identity, and its implications in the long term.
- Develop horizontal linkages between regions to deepen understanding and create opportunities for learning and stronger coalitions and advocacy opportunities at the center.
- There will need to be discussions with UNDP to ensure complementarity and no duplication.

CONCLUSIONS

NTTPI has a significant and meaningful role to play in the regions. Regional forums provide an important opportunity to bridge the gap between the center and periphery and establish one type of foundation for future NTTPI work that should be developed more deliberately. Regional forums in the form of Sambad Samuha have a significant role to play in resolving conflicts at the regional level but may not always be the optimal mechanism in the long term for all types of conflict. NTTPI should try and reduce reliance on other NGOs for servicing the forums.

In considering the balance of energy investment between the three main streams of work that are required by NTTPI -- the institution-building project, the national level work and the regional level work -- it is apparent that all three need to progress simultaneously in parallel, each informing the other. Without additional resources though, both financial and human, it will be difficult to achieve this without compromises. Nevertheless, as described throughout the report, the role of NTTPI in addressing the needs in the regions and the creation of improved linkages between the regions and the center are critical in the establishment of a peaceful, stable Nepal in the long term as well as crucial to the achievement of a successful peace process. For instance, in theory, a greater realization of the perspectives of the regions by the center should lead to a greater willingness to achieve a more pragmatic and workable compromise between the numerous tensions involved in the creation of a workable federal system. Ipso facto the process of reflecting and representing the voices of ethnic

groups and marginalized voices in the regions is more likely to achieve participation and inclusivity of marginalized groups as well. Naturally an investment by NTTPI in this area at this time will also serve to establish its own foundation, and develop significant relationships and credibility for the future. This too will allow the possibility of marketing itself to donors with a greater array of offerings for funding. Practically though, a significant amount of energy will continue to be needed at the center to concentrate on improving praxis, process and hopefully outcomes, while working on current core business and national political processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain the forums under the NTTPI wing, but with greater clarity, definition and purpose around NTTPI support.
- Identify key specific potential conflict flashpoint issues in each region and develop a long-term research agenda for each issue to be pursued in each region. Co-author research proposals and seek funding with international partners as a team but with NTTPI as the recipient and controller of the funds. Develop clear mutually supportive roles as a team to ensure quality of research and capacity development and complementarity.²³
- Analyze the risks, costs and benefit to the involvement of local organizations acting as the facilitator or conduit for support, be that logistic support or otherwise, versus taking on the responsibility and burden of direct support.
- Significantly increase investment in and cultivation of the links between the thematic groups and the Sambad Samuhas.
- Deliberately create linkages between the thematic groups and the regions. This could take the form of pairing members at the center with specific regions so there is acquired expertise and understanding going both ways, as well as breaking down barriers and creating a more national identity. (This approach could include possibly more than one member, e.g. a small working group consisting of someone from the women's group, youth group and JJ group with a regional forum and even the main forum.) One could have someone from a region linked with someone from the center, deliberately not from that area, with a mutual mentoring role to support each other on information exchange, solutions, advocacy, etc.

Question Four: What are the pros and cons of disseminating already produced, but hitherto private studies and reports, from the NTTPI to the general public now? If this information should be distributed now, how should this be done?

The range of documents, according to NTTPI and TAF staff, that is in its archives and filing systems seems to be extensive and consists of meeting minutes, meeting agreements, analyses, comparative analyses, project documents, reflections and a broad range of research documents (see Annex IV for the list of titles). Many of these are written in Nepali. The evaluation team has not reviewed the documents, but eventually this task will need to be conducted by NTTPI in detail if they wish to pursue this line of action.

²³ I am grateful to John Paul Lederach for articulating this shared research agenda so clearly following my voiced concerns of a potentially unbalanced relationship between an international partner and NTTPI.

FINDINGS

Respondents were divided on the question as to whether or not to release private studies and reports. Responses ranged from those who felt that all documents should be in the public domain for transparency's sake to those who were diametrically opposed and considered that none of the work should be published, as it would be a breach of confidence of the participants. The fact that there was little consensus and no clear picture emerged from interviews was partly because many of those interviewed were unaware of the types of documentation that were available and being held by NTTPI and so did not feel able to respond knowledgeably. A second aspect of the lack of consensus on direction was also most likely a consequence and shortcoming of the interview and evaluation process, coupled with the complexity of the issues at stake. There was insufficient time to cover all dimensions of all evaluation questions in depth in KIs, given their broad range. This particular evaluation question has an array of nuances and facets that deserve to be explored in more detail (see Annex V). Given the constraints outlined, it is also likely that the responses emerged from diverse interpretations and understanding of different aspects of the question depending on the respondent.

DISCUSSION

There are a number of elements to consider that are retrospective and prospective in nature, in keeping with the purpose of the evaluation. First, there is the possible release of past documentation. Second, there is the release of possible documents in the future, particularly in the light of the intention to transform and move towards being an independent institute practicing conflict transformation and considering, researching and publishing on peace issues in Nepal with the intention of influencing policy.

Past documents

The main issues considering past documents are the basis for their creation and their sensitivity. There is likely to be a divide between those emerging from forum discussions subject to Chatham House Rules and other documents. Release of the former risks the viability of the forum as an environment where sensitive discussions can take place behind closed doors. This would breach confidentiality and break trust, which once broken is difficult to develop again. Political parties may dispute versions of events and create public dissent and bickering over interpretation of what was said or not said and what that might mean. They may also vie with each other to claim a greater degree of responsibility for positive outcomes and the process may create jealousies. Additional risks are outlined in Table 5. The second major category consists of documents researched by PRUs to inform forum or party discussions. Here there is more room for maneuver as they are less sensitive and more neutral in content. Some could easily be modified for public consumption if stakeholders agreed.

Options for dissemination and form: In the event that it is decided to release some of these carefully reviewed documents, there are a variety of options for dissemination depending on the type of document and its sensitivity. Thus there might be cases for full or selective dissemination to purposively chosen stakeholders, and a further set of classifications around a final option considering deeper confidentiality. This subset could include recommendations on documents' possible release after different periods of time; for instance "never," ten years or a shorter period, e.g. after five years. The form of documents released will vary depending on the intention with which they are being introduced to a broader audience. In its broadest form for instance, one stakeholder was keen to suggest the publication of a book narrating the extraordinary story of the NTTPI forum and Peace Process. Other pieces may best be rewritten for public consumption or combined in a variety of ways to better inform specific policy development or as information pieces in their own right, such as media articles, thought pieces, analyses, etc.

How this is taken forward by NTTPI will need to be considered within the context of their communications and broader strategies, rather than only a set of suggestions in this report.

Data ownership and rights: Looking at past records, there may also be an issue over ownership of the data and the information. Whom does the information belong to? Does the research data belong to the parties and the researchers who are party members and view themselves as working for the party rather than NTTPI? Or does it belong to NTTPI which paid for its collection and the researchers’ time? These issues need to be considered for the future with regard to how research is conducted and data ownership.

Future Documents

NTTPI and party research: Posing the evaluation question also raises further questions concerning the future role of research and the nature of the linkages with the political parties in the new NTTPI. The future role of NTTPI as an independent institute suggests that there will need to be clear divide between work that is conducted on behalf of the political parties to inform forum discussions and for internal party consumption, and any research that may be published under the banner of NTTPI as an independent institute.

Data ownership and rights: As noted above, NTTPI needs to consider issues around ownership and use of research conducted and data collected, especially if continuing in partnership with political parties. If NTTPI moves faster down the track of independence, they may wish to consider hiring their researchers independently, with no formal or informal relationship or expectations related to political parties, so these issues are not then later open to dispute. Although clearly dependent on the nature of the information collected, an illustration of potential difficulties concerning data use, confidentiality and ownership was provided by one independent institute stakeholder interviewed who noted that personal narratives they had collected were subsequently used in a court of law in another country. Equally important, if NTTPI does continue arrangements with political parties, is the need for agreed use of the data in the public arena. Clear dispute resolution avenues are necessary in case of differences in interpretation of data (e.g. if raw data appears to show negative trends for parties reflecting badly on them).

Table 5. Potential Benefits and Risks Associated with Document Release

Potential Benefits	Illustrative Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced awareness of issues • Increased transparency • Increased accountability of parties to their agreements • Increased public debate • Increased NTTPI effectiveness • Assist NTTPI transition to a different and more public role • Acknowledgement of positive NTTPI role in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be considered a breach of trust • May be withdrawal (e.g. UML researcher), or non-engagement • May undermine NTTPI credibility and ability to function effectively • May alter the way that meetings take place as personal behaviors alter • May harden or polarize positions if people regress to party lines to avoid misunderstanding • May create confusion as to what is “on the record” and what off • May damage relationships if disputes arise over authenticity of records • May damage consensus achievements if discussions are perceived as being against the “party line” or a betrayal of party ideology • May enhance an atmosphere of political pettiness, diverting attention from issues into disputes over who did/said what

Potential Benefits	Illustrative Potential Risks
the past – enhancement of credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May increase jealousies over ownership of positives • Data may potentially be used as evidence in courts of law

CONCLUSIONS

Given the range of reputational risks and considerations and lack of consensus from respondents on this topic, NTTPI should approach the issue with a strong degree of caution and develop clear positions and associated rationales that clarify their position.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a broad communications strategy (underway) that considers what sort of information will be produced and for whom. Given the transition into an independent institution, this strategy could encompass past, present and future roles of NTTPI.

Consideration of past documents:

- NTTPI needs to develop a Risk Analysis Matrix to classify and develop a typology of available documents analyzing the relative risks of dissemination associated with each typology.
- NTTPI should review and classify all documentation in line with the Matrix. In particular, identifying documents that must remain confidential, ensuring stakeholders know trust will not be breached.
- Develop a clear rationale, process and set of principles for parties to consent to the release of documents to be released, as well as for future releases.
- Possibly consider piloting a few examples for the lowest risk types of document with the new system to test it and understand and document issues as they arise. Alternatively, specifically develop some low risk documents to be published, for example, lessons learned documents.

Future considerations:

- Develop a clear policy on the documents NTTPI will develop for the public domain in the future and which will remain confidential (possibly with conditionality for an agreed period of time).
- Ensure there is a clear process for all current stakeholders that identify which works may or will be released into the public domain. Such a process should include a consensus form of agreement.
- General research documents should be released by NTTPI into the public domain in an appropriate form (may be a policy brief, update on website, newsletter or a research paper).
- NTTPI may need to develop a clear policy distinguishing between the rules of engagement for work under the forum and other work undertaken by NTTPI alone and independently.

QUESTION FIVE: How is the effort to establish an NTTPI Institute that is owned, managed and controlled by Nepali citizens – and that is sustainable – faring at this time?

RELATED QUESTIONS

1. Does TAF assistance appear effective? What can be expected of the NTTPI in the near to mid-term? What can be done to ensure its viability after USAID funding ends?
2. To what extent were the recommendations of the MTR implemented, particularly with respect to

- organizational strengthening and sustainability? What have been the resulting outcomes?
3. What other GON and donor activities support objectives similar to NPSP's? Where do gaps and opportunities exist that NTTPI might address?

Box 5. The Newly Emerging Peace Institute

As a **peace institute**, the NTTPI aims to focus on finding and implementing durable solutions that prevent and transform root and emerging causes of conflict by working effectively with all its stakeholders. Over the medium to long term, the Institute plans to support peace through careful study of conflicts in Nepal, and facilitate inclusive and sustained dialogue and non-partisan processes to forge consensus on political and social issues. The Institute intends to focus on building capacity for conflict analysis, pattern forecasting, and preventative dialogue around strategic issues emergent in Nepal while continuously providing space for dialogue on short-term crisis issues. The institution needs to retain its convening power and enhance skills in both convening and facilitating dialogue that will, with time, sustain and deepen respect and legitimacy for the new NTTPI. The image of the new NTTPI as a convener requires an ability to locate strategic issues and fault lines, engage people constructively, and develop processes of sustained dialogue that make a difference in both finding particular solutions to a crisis issue and encouraging longer term change to address the root causes of conflict.

Vision: **Social and political exclusion gradually eliminated, paving the way for peaceful coexistence, good governance and economic prosperity.**

Mission: **To become a trusted and credible institute to prevent and transform conflict**

By way of background to the following section, it is important to understand the direction that NTTPI is intending to pursue. This is evolving continuously and has changed emphasis slightly even since the evaluation team was having discussions with the stakeholders.²⁴ As a flavor of the current thinking, in Box 5 above is an extract from the most recent draft of the 2015-2019 strategy that describes the new peace institute, as well as the latest version of the vision and mission.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Impressive progress: Given the short time period that the institution-building project has been underway, there has been very good and impressive progress. Using some of the elements of the NGO IDF Matrix and Framework to organize findings and make an overall assessment, one can classify the new NTTPI as within the "developing" category for the majority of the Institutional Resources informally assessed.²⁵ Even within the period of the evaluation there has been significant progress on the strategy, vision and mission of the new Peace Institute.

Oversight / Vision: A governing board is in place as well as an advisory committee, although a few minor governance glitches remain.²⁶ This is a sound starting point and can be considered an interim position while skills and personnel required for longer-term membership of the board are determined. There are some important elements of governance that will need to be worked through in the coming

²⁴ As a consequence there may be slightly different emphases in the section below, reflecting different prior understandings. These have been left as they are for the purposes of stimulating discussion.

²⁵ The Capable Partners Institutional Development Framework (IDF) Matrix classifies organizations at four levels: Founding, Developing, Expanding/Consolidating, and Sustaining.

²⁶ For instance a staff member is also on the governing board at the moment.

period such as the extent to which the new NTTPI wishes to reflect the principles of the peace process and model the rhetoric of ideals they would like to see in the Nepal of the future (e.g. inclusivity, participation, etc.). Perhaps more significant are the tensions between reflecting accountability to current stakeholders and how they might change in the future. This reflects the potential divide between current activities and future developments. Thus current key stakeholders are political parties, but as the Institute moves towards being a practitioner and independent institute working directly on conflict issues and influencing policy on peace matters, then they may not be appropriate as the only basis for the advisory committee. While development of a mission and vision is underway, work is still needed, as was highlighted in the recent experience-sharing workshop with Sri Lankan colleagues and “counterpart” from One Text Initiative.

Legal status: Full legal registration of the new organization with the Ministry of Home Affairs under the National Directive Act (1961) as an association of facilitation and mediation professionals was achieved in May 2014. The legal requirements are not as onerous as those if registering under the Ministry of Social Welfare; however, there are many misperceptions about what NGOs are and do, with implications for the forum. There is no common understanding of what this means for current forum activities and more than one respondent was concerned to be associated with an “NGO” and the changed, formal relationship with government. This needs to be explicitly explained to stakeholders to avoid misunderstandings and ensure they know the forum will continue in current form without compromise.

Management systems: Significant progress has been made in terms of management functionality and independence from TAF. There are procurement policies and systems in place. The expected organizational structure has also been drafted but will need to be road tested to ensure balanced workloads and that pragmatic management considerations are taken into account. Despite being small and in early days, conscious thought needs to be given to organizational culture. Investment in considering how to operationalize the new and impressive principles and consciously apply them to create participatory management practices, and an optimal degree of horizontal management systems, will yield dividends later down the track. The strategy development process is well underway and has accelerated considerably even during the evaluation period. This is clearly a working document, though, and will most likely need to be tweaked and adjusted as appropriate along the way.

While not a high priority at present, consideration will also need to be given to the development of a very initial and tentative regional strategy looking at how to establish a regional base for research and possible provision of relevant services. USAID and the Swiss should also look at their own work in the regions, particularly Myanmar, and consider how NTTPI might contribute or add value at this stage so that they obtain some regional footholds and understanding as a basis to develop their thinking further.

Human resources: There is a human resources policy awaiting approval from the Executive Committee, poised to be in place in preparation for expansion. At this stage the evaluation team considers that NTTPI is understaffed. Aside from a real danger of burnout for existing staff, the new institution needs capacity to undertake all work streams at a quality level. To reflect on, plan and develop the new Institute, a considerable additional investment of time and energy is required. At present, due to existing high workload (partly resulting from building pressure in the constitutional process), there are likely to be inevitable compromises on other aspects of work or potential burnout. It is imperative that existing work continues without compromising quality. This means more staff is needed to free up capacity and key staff for more strategic reflections on transformation issues and how to move forward. The sustainability of the Institute and its ability to raise funds will depend fundamentally on the quality and thoughtfulness of its work now and getting the right foundations in place.

Areas that would benefit from additional dedicated staff include documentation and M&E, logistics, and support to thematic groups and the development of regional platforms. The external support in the form of the organizational development consultant provided by TAF has been extremely helpful and well worth the investment. To improve the potential for sustainability, it is also suggested that capacity for external mentoring and coaching of senior staff is also built into the next grant. The role of TAF in this aspect has also been helpful and, whether this continues formally or informally, it would be beneficial for NTTPI to have access to experienced senior staff to bounce ideas off, discuss programming options, improve quality and other elements, as well as further establish the foundations for the Institute.

Financial resources: The evaluation team did not inspect the financial systems per se, but are aware they are of a suitable standard to qualify for funds directly from the USG. NTTPI has a DUNS number (Data Universal Numbering System) and has registered with a SAM Cage Code Number fulfilling the validation of mandatory procurement reports. A USAID-contracted team of chartered accountants has visited NTTPI and confirmed the financial systems are strong enough to receive funding directly from USG. This is an important step towards financial sustainability and real independence.

External resources: This aspect of the organization is still at an early stage. While NTTPI has a number of informal partnerships and networks, more formal arrangements are still in the tentative exploratory stage. Nevertheless there are opportunities for partnerships with other international peacebuilding institutions, notably the Kroc Institute of Notre Dame University and Conciliation Resources in the UK, as well as like-minded organizations in Nepal such as the Donor Resource Centre (DRC), Social Sciences Baha, and the NITI Foundation. In terms of traditional donor base expansion, again it is early days, but several donors have in the past expressed interest in working with NTTPI and as the organization articulates its vision it will be in a better position to reach out.

Program administration: There are a few areas that have already been identified by the management as needing some work but deserve noting here. For instance:

- i. **Development hypothesis:** At present there is no overarching development hypothesis or theory of change (TOC) although these are in the process of development. In fact, given the different areas of work NTTPI is developing, there will need to be multiple TOCs as well as greater rigor of analysis on the implications of the assumptions underlying them. This will enable the team to focus on identifying stronger processes and techniques to achieve outcomes.
- ii. **Innovative monitoring systems:** This needs extensive work and support in their development, including possible database development, outcome mapping approaches, media watch systems, and analysis of information and data collected. Purchase of data processing software and research tools needs to be undertaken, along with training of staff in their use. NTTPI will need to develop a system to apply a more rigorous effort to determine the value and impact of their future reports, advocacy efforts, etc. This will require additional dedicated human resources and support from an institution such as CMM.
- iii. **Reporting:** Currently reporting and documentation is pragmatic, but (inevitably) more about activities or minutes (who said what) than actual outcomes or analysis. This is linked to the intrinsic difficulties in a meaningful M&E approach for this type of initiative. Consideration needs to be given to what documentation would be useful and for whom. The intention should be to develop a range of documents for different audiences that include analysis, data and information for more deliberate systematized adaptive management loops and to inform improvements in NTTPI work. While weekly meetings already analyze the political situation, the desk review nevertheless suggests the need for more structured reflection opportunities built in to the ways of working for the team and key stakeholders.

Sustainability: The issue of sustainability and its meaning in most development contexts is fraught and can be interpreted at many levels. The first assumption to question is whether there is actually a need for peace organizations to be sustainable. Many organizations rise to meet a need and then fade away when that need is fulfilled or they are replaced by other mechanisms. However, in the case of NTTPI there is both a continuing need for its services (as evidenced by the strong evaluation findings) as well as further conflict management and policy and research gaps where it could play a strong role in the future. There has been a commitment from donors and stakeholders to find ways to support NTTPI as it embarks on this journey. The evaluation team interviewed three other policy institutes in Kathmandu that are facing similar issues, to better understand the context in which sustainability is being sought, and to understand their experience to date. All three admitted they are struggling to maintain themselves.

The de facto USAID interpretation usually considers an organization “sustainable” if it has management systems in place to enable it to access donor funds from sources other than the USG.²⁷ At its most unfair (and simplistic) this suggests USAID has only short-term project perspectives, with a “we cannot support the organization forever” approach. This interpretation²⁸ assumes there are other donor funds to be obtained. However, usually any reduction or shifting of emphasis in USAID priorities away from peace and stability is also reflected in the broader donor-funding environment, with similar moves from others. This means there is rarely a similar level of funding available when USAID downsizes. On the basis of this one-dimensional interpretation though, NTTPI is indeed now sustainable. It is competent to obtain and manage funds from other donors with stringent accountability clauses.

The next level is to consider what the future might look like for NTTPI with reduced donor funds for this type of work. In this regard there are four basic models (or a combination of them) to achieve financial sustainability in a realistic manner, including:

- The service model
 - The business inflows model
 - The association or membership model
 - The endowment fund model
- i. **The service model:** This model proposes to sell services to users or clients who value them sufficiently to pay “market rates” for them. Income generated is supposed to maintain the Institute as a not-for-profit business. However, there are a number of challenges in the Nepal context, the first being that there is not yet sufficient demand for services on a “user pays” basis. The “market” is not yet strong enough and, even if services are valued, domestic clients may not have sufficient funds to pay for them.²⁹ The user pays culture (e.g. for space rental, training, mediation services, etc.) is also not yet developed, particularly in a nebulous sector such as peace which does not have a natural entrée into the business or economic sectors. This means that realistic levels of funding are more likely to come from contracts to multi-laterals such as the World Bank where the organization has to respond to the contracts on offer rather than determine their own work. Two of the institutes interviewed noted they had to undertake these types of contracts, not really in line with their mission, but needed to survive. Then they try and save money for the work they really

²⁷ This admittedly assumed interpretation comes from the evaluation team leader’s experience over twenty five years in capacity building on USAID funded programs.

²⁸ In fact, most donors work in the same way, but usually acknowledge that they do not expect an organization to be sustainable at the end of the process.

²⁹ For instance political parties, when asked about this, usually said they had no money. This may mean that they do have funds but do not wish to invest them in these services as there are other priorities for them.

wish to undertake. This approach diverts energy, time and resources from the core raison d'être of the institute and makes it harder to build up a sound track record. A glance at the websites of nascent Nepali policy institutes shows they exist more in name than substance, despite the best will in the world. Similar cautions should be applied to expectations of external partnerships. Universities and institutes in developed countries are under increasing pressure to generate funds themselves for their own institutions that can mean at worst partnerships are unequal and at best may cover the costs of doing business as margins are shaved down.

- ii. **The business inflows model:** This model proposes that organizations set up separate business wings that then enable funds from profits to be channeled into the not-for-profit activities.³⁰ In fact one of the institutes interviewed is also in the fortunate position of owning the property they work from and so able to reduce overheads (no rent) and gain income (rent the space they are not using to other organizations) at the same time. This approach does require business acumen and/or the support of business people to invest and assist in a project with important national dimensions.
- iii. **The association or membership model:** In this model, the organization develops a membership that pays a subscription, with a variety of levels and classes of membership benefits. Unless there is a very high membership fee or a large number of members, it is rare for this approach to generate sufficient income to sustain activities. It is more usually a way to create interest and awareness amongst sectors of the community (sometimes corporate subscriptions can assist).
- iv. **The endowment fund:** The most feasible option for long-term financial sustainability at this stage is to develop an endowment fund -- a capital fund slowly built up that allows interest generated to fill gaps, assure staff salary continuity and new business development. The question is how best to develop such a fund. The ideal is that all donors provide a direct endowment grant to the institute. This should be a one-off payment or could be a proportion of the project fund as a contribution to sustainability (in the same way that donors currently are able to support institutional investment in capacity building, but instead this goes into the fund). If current donor regulations prevent such an approach, they should explore contractual arrangements that have sufficient flexibility to enable such a fund to be developed. At one institute interviewed, staff apportion a certain amount of their own salary into such a fund to build up their independence.

Independence and the production of quality work in keeping with the mission of the institute are reliant on the institute being able to determine the agenda and not being dependent on others. One institute noted that the cost of "independence" was the level of ongoing energy they had to invest in the project. It included working for free (not taking any salary), expecting others to donate their time and energy, and finding business and other organizations who were willing to make contributions such as to cover travel costs. Occasionally it also included covering costs out of their own pockets. This is very laudable but preferable to that is to be able to concentrate on the actual work needed, ideally under a sound endowment fund.

In practice sustainability will require following several options simultaneously. The achievement of financial sustainability also requires USAID support to explore and develop different options and projections of "real" financial sustainability and to set up, test and implement the option (or several options) chosen.

³⁰ The team leader has seen this in operation in other contexts in the form bus services, transport services (trucks) and restaurants, amongst others. The most ambitious effort seen is with the Red Cross in Kenya that has developed and owns a luxury hotel which provides an income stream for its independence.

Status of Mid-term evaluation recommendations: With respect to the progress of NTTPI in fulfilling the recommendations of the Mid-term evaluation, please see Annex VI. In summary, NTTPI has taken most of the recommendations on board and completed them already.

The conflict management landscape: A rapid (and rather shallow) scan of the donor landscape revealed a number of elements. In summary:

- There is little depth within the conflict management program “ecosystem” in terms of specific dedicated programs addressing conflict management.
- There are a variety of approaches reflecting different donor institutional cultures, particularly through mainstreaming.
- There is coordination and cooperation, particularly through the basket funds.

There are a number of pooled funds supporting various aspects of the peace process and some of the structural issues affecting peace. These include support to transitional justice, access to justice, human rights and democracy, and a governance facility supported variously by Danida, Norad, the Swiss, and DFID, as well as the GON-managed Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF).³¹ DFID has also taken a “mainstreaming” approach to conflict sensitivity across its portfolio. Those that directly support conflict management programs or specific conflict mitigation mechanisms are fewer. JICA has been supporting mediation mechanisms at the district and community levels, as has DFID through TAF. In the case of JICA this has been in only a few districts, but the program is to be rolled out through the Mediation Council and Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFAD). German development assistance through GIZ was also supporting local level peace initiatives in selected districts, but this has come to an end recently due to changes in domestic policy priorities. The most significant program that has similar objectives to NTTPI, but at the regional level rather than the national, is the UNDP-supported Collaborative Leadership and Dialogue initiative under their conflict prevention program. The main activity is supporting dialogue among national and regional leaders to prevent escalation of tensions and promote consensus on contentious issues. This is also one of the aims of the work undertaken by NTTPI. UNDP uses the same senior facilitators for their program as well. While there may have been some usefulness in the past in having this program under the banner of the UN, given that it is Nepali staff on the ground running it and there is some overlap, it would make sense if UNDP and NTTPI met and discussed coordination and collaborative models of working on these issues. Ideally this discussion should aim to identify complementarity, synergies and how to mutually support each other, with the aim of ultimately ensuring sustainability of the work and full Nepali ownership, given the costs and short-term perspectives of the UN.

CONCLUSION

The new NTTPI has made tremendous progress on the institution-building project and is well on track in all areas, but financial sustainability is still the Holy Grail that needs to be addressed if full independence is to be achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- USAID should use this opportunity to explore and develop more sophisticated and replicable approaches to long-term organizational financial sustainability that could benefit and protect US

³¹ NPTF has international support from a range of donors including EU, Germany, Switzerland, UK, Denmark, Norway, GIs, and USA

development investments in other environments, for instance, how to create an endowment fund in an accountable and secure way that protects all interests.

- USAID should support the recruitment of an external consultant to develop options on financial sustainability and recommend an appropriate model to pursue.
- Ensure that there are sufficient funds built into future grants to continue to employ an external organizational development consultant to continue to assist the institute to develop its foundations but also bring a broader perspective to the institution-building project.
- NTTPI and UNDP should meet together to identify areas of complementarity, synergy, gaps and how to work together to support each other both in the short term, as well as identify common directions and mutual goals in the conflict management field for the longer term.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I – EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

This purpose of this statement of work (SOW) is for USAID/Nepal to contract professional services to conduct the Final Evaluation of the Nepal Peace Support Project (NPSP) implemented by The Asia Foundation (TAF). The cooperative agreement with TAF serves as the follow-on project to an earlier agreement in support of the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA). The \$4.1 million activity is a five-year effort that began in March 2009 to continue USAID's support to the peace process. A Mid-Term Evaluation was completed early last year and a report submitted July 2013. The NPSP concludes in August 2014.

The Final Evaluation will focus on findings, lessons learned, and recommendations for any follow-on work. The Final Evaluation will examine objectives against the program's results, review activities level of success in meeting project objectives, and validate effectiveness of project's approach. Because the Mid-Term Evaluation provided substantial information and analysis for consideration in the Final Evaluation, the evaluators are also requested to examine the implementation of the Mid-Term Evaluation's recommendations and the resulting outcomes.

The Final Evaluation's findings will be used to shape the direction of future assistance to any assistance related to the NPSP objectives, particularly in the context of the new USAID/Nepal Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and the CPA. The Final Evaluation's report will have different audiences, including USAID and State Department leadership, NPSP beneficiaries and stakeholders, political party members, civil society, and relevant Government of Nepal (GON) officials.

BACKGROUND

Beginning in 2003, upon the request of the GON, USAID provided critical assistance and support to peace process negotiations, actors, and institutions. NPSP was first implemented by the Academy for Educational Development from August 2005 to February 2009. In 2009, the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction and other peace stakeholders requested that USAID continue this assistance until the peace process reached a "logical conclusion." USAID entered into a cooperative agreement with TAF in March 2009 to continue NPSP. After several cost, time, and activity modifications due to the evolving political situation, the NPSP will now end on August 31, 2014.

Initially, TAF's interventions contributed to the broad goal of advancing Nepal's peace process by achieving three core objectives: 1) To strengthen Nepal Transition to Peace (NTTP) Forum as a focal point for Track 1.5 agenda setting, dialogue and negotiation; 2) to support the launch of the Transitional Peace Structures; and, 3) to increase the base of support for Peace Units within political parties. In its last years, the NPSP focused assistance primarily on the NTTP Forum and its work in consensus building and constitution drafting processes. Along the way other mechanisms were added such as the Local Peace Committees, and the various thematic groups to strengthen the overall process and increase gender and social inclusion.

TAF applied a staged approach to its support for the NTTP Forum, initially focusing on putting in place the Forum's physical and human assets and, then, introducing capacity-development activities designed to increase the Forum's ability to define and carry out a forward-looking agenda for negotiations and consensus-building and finally mobilizing resources to actively engage in vetting and resolving urgent peace process issues.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As a result of how the project was evolving from its inception, the objectives of the project were revised in September 2012 to adjust to the unfolding peace process. From September 2012 to August 2014, USAID revised the objectives for the project accordingly:

- Objective 1: To strengthen NTTP capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes.
- Objective 2: To build the capacity of Political Party Peace and Research Units to serve as a resource for the peace process.
- Objective 3: To transform the NTTP Forum into a sustainable and independent national peace entity.
- The NPSP supports the Mission's CDCS (2014-2019) Development Objective 1: More Inclusive and Effective Governance contributing to the achievement of three of four intermediate results (IRs):
 - IR 1.1, Peaceful Political Environment Sustained
 - NPSP is working to build the capacity of the NTTP Forum so that it can function as an independent peace institution capable of facilitating disputes between political party leadership as well as serve to archive progress to date related to the CPA.
 - IR 1.2, Accountability and Institutions Strengthened
 - NPSP engages citizens in the political process by engaging political party leaders to build a consensus on sensitive political issues and, in turn, sharing this information with their constituents.
 - IR 1.4, Public Policy and Performance Improved
 - NPSP assists the GON to develop and implement its legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks related to the peace process, such as agreements and legislation to move the peace and constitution drafting process forward.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CHALLENGES FOUND IN MID-TERM

The 2013 Mid-Term Evaluation cited the following accomplishments and challenges of the NPSP and the NTTP.

Accomplishments:

- The NTTP Forum is a well-accepted mechanism, providing a low profile space where political parties engage in negotiations and dialogue to resolve contentious issues in the peace process and constitution making process.
- The NTTP Forum's national facilitators are widely respected for their convening power and seniority which has made them acceptable to all the parties.
- NTTP Forum made major contributions to the peace process. Some examples: Facilitation between the United Democratic Madeshi Front and the GON for the successful completion of Constituent Assembly (CA) elections in 2008; resolution of the Prachanda-President stalemate after the President's move to block the sacking of the Nepal Army's Commander in Chief by the then Prime Minister; Agreement on mixed form of government in the Steckborn Conference in Switzerland; recommendations on the formation of the interim government and Chief Justice-leadership; the 11-point and 25-point agreements drafted by key NTTP members; and, facilitation between the Maoist breakaway group and other political parties.

- NPSP contributed to the knowledge building of political leaders on the peace process and constitution making through exposure visits, experience sharing by international experts and providing a research facility to serve NTTTP members.
- NPSP's Thematic Groups worked to build consensus on sensitive constitutional issues regarding marginalized groups through informal negotiations.
- The Peace and Research Unit (PRU) provides NTTTP with needed information for constitution drafting and peace-building by conducting research and workshops.
- The NPSP facilitated negotiations on numerous contentious issues such as federalism, the electoral system, representation and inclusion of minorities, and the like which have resulted in crystallizing issues and providing an emerging framework for a constitution if not an actual draft.

Challenges:

- The timing of the constitution drafting and other CPA-related decisions and the timing of the NPSP or sustainability of related mechanisms may not coincide.

EVALUATION PURPOSE, AUDIENCE AND USE

The audience of this evaluation report will be USAID/Nepal's Front Office, Office of Acquisitions, Program Office, and the Democracy and Governance Office, as well as USAID/Washington's Asia Bureau and Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Bureau. Within the US Government, the report will be shared with State Department colleagues. Additionally the Final Evaluation will be shared with the implementing partner, TAF, and the NPSP facilitators. An executive summary and recommendations will be provided to NPSP's beneficiaries and stakeholders, including members from political parties who have been working with NPSP, as well as civil society and relevant GON officials. USAID will use the report to shape any follow-on activity.

In addition to satisfying the purpose described in Section 3, the evaluation design should be framed in order to answer key evaluation questions listed below.

1. The Peace Process has been underway for over a decade and the semblance of political stability is taking shape: A second Constitutional Assembly has been elected recently, general outlines of a constitution are being vetted and a formal committee structure to draft a constitution has been put in place. Given this evolving scenario, is an organization like the NTTTP still necessary going forward, why, and what roles should its roles/functions be and how do those roles impact on the organization in terms of size, budget, staffing, etc.?
2. To what extent did the program engage women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups? Did those groups feel served by this process, and, if not, what measures could be taken to improve upon the representation of marginalized groups including women in the peace process?
3. An effort in the project was made to link local level peace initiatives (Local Peace Committees, local facilitators, local mediation interventions, and the like) to the NTTTP Forum to enrich NTTTP understanding about what was unfolding beyond the Kathmandu Valley. Did bringing local experiences to the NTTTP improve and enrich the dialogue in addressing conflict and help shape the peace process?
4. Most of the studies and reports as well as peace negotiations have been conducted in private and away from the press and general public. There are various points of view about the extent to which it would be useful to be more transparent. What are the pros and cons for disseminating this information and would it be useful to disseminate this information to the general public now? If so, how should the NTTTP proceed to do so at this point in time?
5. Beyond September 2014, what other GON or donor-funded mechanisms continue in support of the constitutional/peace building process? Please summarize other mechanisms in a matrix and include

the name of project, funding level, project start and end date, implementer, corresponding GON agency, objectives, and a brief summary of accomplishments to date.

ANNEX II – EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation will focus on the value of what has been accomplished, lessons learned from that experience, how well the NTTPI is faring under the extension, and its prospects for the future, particularly in lining up future donors.

The main research questions, as derived from the Statement of Work (SOW) provided by USAID (July 24, 2014, version), are as follows:

1. To what extent did the project meet its own stated objectives? Can it be considered “effective”?
2. To what extent did the program engage women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups? Did those groups feel served by this process, and, if not, what measures could be taken to improve upon the representation of marginalized groups including women in the peace process?
3. What were the results of NPSP’s efforts to link local level peace initiatives to the NTTPI Forum?
4. What are the pros and cons of disseminating already produced but hitherto private studies and reports from the NTTPI to the general public now? If this information should be distributed now, how should this be done?
5. How is the effort to establish an NTTPI Institute (NTTPI) that is owned, managed and controlled by Nepali citizens – and that is sustainable -- faring at this time? Does TAF assistance appear effective? What can be expected of the NTTPI in the near to mid-term? What can be done to ensure its viability after USAID funding ends? Related questions include:
 - a. To what extent were the recommendations of the Midterm Evaluation implemented, particularly with respect to organizational strengthening and sustainability? What have been the resulting outcomes?
 - b. What other GON and donor activities support objectives similar to NPSP’s? Where do gaps and opportunities exist that NTTPI might address?

Overall Approach

NORC’s approach to this performance evaluation reflects the program logic, research questions being addressed, availability of data and available budget, as well as USAID Evaluation Policy. In particular, given the limited funding available for this evaluation, the methodology will rely on qualitative methods.

NORC’s evaluation will entail reviewing implementer reports, considering the data and opinions elicited during interviews, analyzing achievements against a variety of metrics (see below), and taking both the local context and USAID needs into consideration.

NORC will conduct the NPSP evaluation in a participatory manner, finalizing the evaluation design in consultation with USAID/Nepal and implementing the evaluation in close coordination and/or consultation with the USAID mission, the implementer, and other stakeholders, as needed, through various phases of the evaluation. This includes working collaboratively to: 1) identify participants for key informant and group interviews, and population groups from which Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants might be drawn 2) develop questions for interviews and FGDs; 3) review existing data available from TAF; and 4) reach findings, conclusions and recommendations.

We expect the evaluation to take approximately 10 weeks; more details are provided below under Evaluation Timeline and Deliverables.

Methods

NORC’s final evaluation of NPSP will rely on qualitative data collection and analysis. Qualitative approaches can address aspects of research questions that are not well suited to quantitative analysis, as in this case where quantitative data from the project appear not to exist, and a cost effective survey is not feasible given the dispersed nature of the target populations and activities. Qualitative approaches are well suited to investigating complex processes, and in many cases qualitative research can reveal unanticipated project effects. For example, interview guides are flexible and can be modified up until the beginning of the actual interview (whereas survey instruments must be developed and finalized well in advance). This approach is also appropriate for evaluations on tight timelines and budgets.

The evaluation design matrix (see Annex A) provides the initial framework for breaking down the evaluation questions into sub-questions and possible factors that have and will condition results. Based on the document review, the evaluation team has fine tuned these questions, and turned them into data collection instruments (see Annex C).

Qualitative data collection and analysis will include the following:

- Desk review of materials related to the NPSP, such as the SOW, TAF’s logical framework and Performance Management Plan (PMP), previous evaluation reports and supporting documents, monthly or quarterly and annual reports, press releases, NTTP documents, and other materials produced by the NPSP.
- Key informant interviews (KIIs) and group interviews or focus group discussions (FGDs) with USAID, TAF NPSP local and expatriate staff, NPSP members, members of Thematic Groups, Government of Nepal (GoN) representatives, political party members, Constituent Assembly (CA) members, donor representatives, and representatives of CSOs, as well as of other stakeholders with interesting perspectives, such as the military, potential spoilers, ex-combatants, the media and similar independent institutes. This evaluation uses semi-structured open-ended interview guides that can be modified as additional information is acquired in the field (see Annex C). Respondents will be identified with assistance from USAID, TAF and other stakeholders. Snowballing will be used to identify other stakeholders with relevant information and experience of the project. This process is the most efficient and effective way to obtain informed feedback on a project with multiple activities, stretching across a relatively long time period. The methodology used in conducting the KIIs is outlined in Exhibit 1; that for FGDs is in Exhibit 2.
- Analysis of the data will include such approaches as outcome mapping, for example of policy recommendations to implementation, contribution analysis, Content, Pattern and Trend Analysis of qualitative data, Divergence/Convergence Analysis, mini-cases studies of significant results, comparison of achievements against stated targets and objectives, and comparison of achievements against reasonable normative expectations for the project. The analysis will also entail examination of such prior questions as whether the project was well designed, and whether activities were implemented as planned.

EXHIBIT 1: Methodology for Conducting KIIs

- KII guides for various classes of stakeholders will be prepared in advance of fieldwork, outlining the key questions and probes to be addressed during the interview; the guides may be adapted before each individual interview.
- The interviewer will take written notes during the interview
- Respondents will be offered anonymity and the option of speaking “off the record,” and where

such protection is requested, data will be coded and stored so that the respondent's identity cannot be matched to the interview content, except by the interviewer.

- Analysis of the KIs will include content, pattern, and trend analysis of the qualitative data, as well as divergence/convergence analysis. Where appropriate this will be supported by quotations from the participants.

EXHIBIT 2: Methodology for Conducting FGDs

- Each FGD will include a maximum of 10 participants who will engage in an open discussion structured in accord with the discussion guide.
- Each discussion guide will be based on the evaluation questions best addressed by the participants
- Notes will be taken and analyzed.
- FGDs will be conducted in the language with which the majority of participants are most comfortable, with translation provided to the evaluation team as necessary.
- The discussion guide will include the following types of questions: opening, introductory, transition, key, and ending. The questions will be neutrally worded and neutral probes will be used.
- The report of the discussion will consist of a general summary of participant's response to each question.

The evaluation team will attempt to analyze existing secondary data where it exists, such as quantitative project monitoring data, to establish the scope of project outputs and, where possible, contribute to the verification of project outcomes. The project budget and timeline do not allow for primary survey data collection.

Generally, we will assume the mid-term evaluation to have verified major results, and this team will consider more recent major results.

Team Roles and Responsibilities

The Team Leader will be responsible for reviewing all documents in English, interviews outside Nepal, and the majority of interviews conducted in Nepal; he will be responsible for writing the bulk of the report and for ensuring sections written by the Nepal Specialist are integrated into the larger report. The Nepal Specialist will review documents as directed by the Team Leader, conduct and write up interviews and FGDs, help to set up fieldwork, provide contextual background, and write sections of the report as directed by the Team Leader. A Local Coordinator will help to arrange interviews and local travel, and provide translation/ interpretation, research assistance, and other support as needed. The team leader will be responsible for completing all the deliverables as stated in the SOW.

EVALUATION LIMITATIONS

It is important to identify the limitations inherent to the design of this evaluation:

- **Data availability and data quality:** While the implementer and evaluation team will collect and generate primary data, some administrative data may be difficult to obtain or be of questionable quality. The team will seek to triangulate on important matters.
- **Recall bias:** Since a number of questions raised during the interviews will address issues that took place in the past, *recall bias* will likely affect their response. This bias will be addressed by framing question in such a way as to assist accurate recall (without "leading" responses) and by triangulating where possible.

- **Halo bias:** There is a known tendency among respondents to under-report socially undesirable answers and alter their responses to approximate what they perceive as the social norm (*halo bias*). The extent to which respondents will be prepared to reveal their true opinions may also vary for some questions that call upon the respondents to assess the attitudes and perceptions of their colleagues or people on whom they depend upon for the provision of services. Similarly, respondents who may have played a role in the project may report a greater degree of success than was actually the case. To mitigate this limitation, the NORC Evaluation Team will ensure confidentiality and anonymity guarantees to all who participate in interviews and FGDs, and will conduct the interviews in as neutral a setting as possible where respondents feel comfortable. The team will also triangulate key findings where possible.
- **Causality not provable:** The design above would not be able to answer a question about what would have occurred in the absence of the NPSP, or measure the absolute effect of project interventions, as it cannot test for counterfactuals.. In other words, while this design seeks to identify likely results of the project, it cannot definitely attribute causality to the project.

ANNEX III – DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Guide I: Key Informant Interview Guide: TAF and NTTP Staff

Name of organisation:

Respondent:

Role of respondent and main responsibilities:

Date:

Location:

Feeding into Evaluation Questions: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

1. General

- What is position in the organization and role? How long have you been with TAF/NTTP?
- What do you consider to be the major achievements of the project to date? What are you most proud of? (Look for Case Studies / success stories to follow up)
- Where do you think you can improve further? What aspects would you change in the light of hindsight?

2. Effectiveness: To what extent did the project meet its own stated objectives? Can it be considered effective?

- Objective 1: To strengthen NTTP capacity to engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes.*
 - Objective 2: To build the capacity of Political Party Peace and Research Units to serve as a resource for the peace process.*
 - Objective 3: To transform the NTTP Forum into a sustainable and independent national peace entity.*
- What results were anticipated for each of the three objectives? Which of them do you consider have been achieved and to what extent?
 - Were other, unanticipated results achieved?
 - Were any anticipated results NOT achieved?
 - What factors contributed to or hindered the achievement of results?
 - Did TAF have a well thought out strategy for each of the objectives, and for the project as a whole? Did the strategy change over time? Why?
 - Were activities implemented as planned? If not, why not?
 - Was there a constructive relationship between TCC and USAID and other donors on the project?

3. Inclusion:

- To what extent did the program engage women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups?
- Did those groups feel served by this process, and, if not, what measures could be taken to improve upon the representation of marginalized groups including women in the peace process? (this will be triangulated with field work)

- Did TAF have a strategy for engaging marginalized groups? Did it change over time? How? (was this challenge addressed only through the “thematic groups”?)
- How were groups prioritized? Are some groups doing better than others – and if so why is this so?
- What activities did the project undertake to engage these marginalized groups? Were they implemented as planned? If not, why not?
- Was there a constructive relationship between TAF and USAID and others on this aspect?
- Do these groups feel like they are included in the peace process? What activities or outcomes make them feel like they are included?
- To what extent do you think that their voices influenced discussions or were heard in the higher discussions?
- To what extent do you think leaders’ attitudes and behaviors are changing with respect to marginalized groups inclusion?

4. Vertical linkages

- What were the results of NPSP’s efforts to link local level peace initiatives to the NTTTP forum?
- How did the project seek to link local level peace initiatives to the NTTTP?
- What evidence is there that local experiences were brought into dialogues?
- What consequences did this integration (if verified) have?

5. Publications and Visibility

- What are the pros and cons for disseminating already produced, but hitherto private studies and reports, from the NTTTP to the general public now? If this information should be distributed now, how should this be done?
- What is the nature of the studies and reports?
- Which are most useful, to which stakeholders and to the general public?
- Will editing be needed to optimize their value if they are released?
- How might they best be disseminated?
- What resources exist for this editing and dissemination?

6. NTTPI Independence, Sustainability and Viability

- How is the effort to establish an NTTTP Institute (NTTPI) that is owned, managed and controlled by Nepali citizens – and that is sustainable – faring at this time?
- Does TAF assistance appear effective? What can be expected of the NTTPI in the near to mid-term? What can be done to ensure its viability after USAID funding ends?
- What is the current level of administrative capacity?technical capacity?
- What constituencies exist for sustaining the NTTPI? To whom does this body have continuing relevance?
- What is needed for the NTTPI to be effective and sustainable?
- What is needed for the PRUs and LPCs to be effective and sustainable?
- What objectives and activities best respond to the changing context?
- How might the NTTPI generate funding?
- How can the membership be refreshed AND expanded?

- How can the NTTPI transition to a more transparent approach?
- To what extent are the recommendations of the Midterm Evaluation implemented, particularly with respect to organizational strengthening and sustainability? What have been the resulting outcomes?

7. External Environment

- What other GON and donor activities support objectives similar to NPSP's?
- Where do gaps and opportunities exist that NTTTP might address?

8. Learning and Recommendations

- What are the most important lessons that your organisation learned during the course of the past few years with respect to processes addressing conflict and bringing about change (both root causes and mitigation)? (e.g. could discuss negotiation, mediation, cultural context, directions for the future, etc.)
- What lessons do you think have been learned more broadly from these experiences to be applied in the future?
- What recommendations do you have for NTTTP and USAID?

Guide 2: Key Informant Interview Guide:

External Stakeholders

Name of organisation:

Respondent:

Role of respondent and main responsibilities:

Date:

Location:

NB: Questions will be adjusted depending on the KII as not all are appropriate for all.

Feeding into Evaluation Questions: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

1. General (including effectiveness from an external perspective – not related to project objectives)

- What is position in the organization and role? What do you know of the NTTF/NTTP?
- What would you consider to be the major achievements of this forum to date? What do you think their added value is? (Look for *concrete examples* - Case Studies / success stories to follow up)
- In what areas do you think you the forum could improve further? What aspects would you change in the light of your experience?

2. Effectiveness: (But also looking at outcomes and impact)

- To what extent did NTTP engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes (Ob 1)? Were key groups excluded or missed out? Why do you think this was so? Do you think it was effective in this regard?
- Who benefited most? Were any groups disadvantaged? (Follow-up)
- To what extent do you think the forum has been able to positively influence these processes? In what way? How?
- What could the forum or NTTP do better? What are the issues that affect its ability to perform these functions? How could they be overcome?
- Do you think that the NTTP forum should continue in the future (Ob 3)? Why? In what form? What should it be doing (what are the needs of the context and stakeholders)? (Try and collect specific concrete examples of added value)? Who are the fundamental stakeholders now and who should/might they be in the future? Why?
- Does your party have Peace and Research Unit? (Ob2)? If yes, what is the type of research undertaken? How is this research used by the party and by the leaders? What changes have occurred as a result of undertaking this type of research (e.g. importance of evidence base, establishing positions, changed behaviors on process, decision-making etc.?)

3. Inclusion

- To what extent do you think NTTP engaged women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups? What evidence do you have?
- Do you think this is important? Why/Why not? Have there been any changes as a result of their inclusion? What are they? (evidence)
- How were groups prioritized? Are some groups doing better than others – and if so why is this so?

- To what extent do you think that their voices influence/d discussions or were/are heard in higher discussions? Why/why not? What evidence is there?
- Do you think there have been changes in the relative influence of these groups through these processes?
- To what extent do you think leaders' attitudes and behaviors are changing with respect to marginalized groups and their inclusion? Why?
- If not, what measures could be taken to improve the representation of marginalized groups including women in the peace process? (this will be triangulated with field work)

4. Vertical linkages

- To what extent do you think that local level peace initiatives at the regional level are linked to higher peace and constitutional discussions or at the NTTPI forum? Why/Why not? Evidence
- What evidence is there that local experiences were brought into dialogues?
- What consequences did this integration (if verified) have?
- Do you think that this is important? Why/Why not? Do you think that this is the role of NTTPI/F if so how should they undertake it?

5. Publications and Visibility

- Do you think that research (from NTTPI/F and PRUs) should be more widely available to the general public now? Why/why not?
- Which are most useful, to which stakeholders and to the general public?
- If this information should be distributed/ disseminated now, how should this be done?
- What information is lacking in the public domain around these issues? What sort of information do you consider the most important and why?

6. NTTPI Independence, Sustainability and Viability

- Do you think that the NTTPI still has a role and if so what should that role be? Explore the extent of transparency versus under the radar. Who should have access to this facility and for what?
- Who are the stakeholders (or who should be) of NTTPI? What would happen if it closed? To whom does this body have continuing relevance? Should the membership be refreshed AND expanded? If so how?
- What is needed for the NTTPI to be more effective?
- Do you think that there is a continuing need for the PRUs and LPCs? Why/Why not? What should their role be?
- What objectives and activities best respond to the changing context?

7. External Environment

- What other GON and donor activities support objectives similar to NPSP's?
- Where do gaps and opportunities exist that NTTPI might address?

8. Learning and Future

- What are the most important lessons that your organisation/party learned during the course of the past few years with respect to processes addressing conflict and bringing about change (both root causes and mitigation)? (e.g. could discuss negotiation, mediation, cultural context, directions for the future, etc.)
- What lessons do you think have been learned more broadly from these experiences to be applied in the future?
- Can you provide me with your best examples or stories that illustrate the impact (or lack of impact) from the initiative? Who has benefited? Has anybody 'lost out' from the process?
- Have there been any negative impacts from the initiative (context, relationships, etc.)?

Guide 3: Focus Group Discussion Interview Guide: (Marginalized Groups)

Name of organisation:

Type of Respondents:

Date:

Location:

Feeding into Evaluation Questions: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

1. General (including effectiveness from an external perspective – not related to project objectives)

- What do you know of the NTTF/NTTP? What has been the level of your participation or role in peace/constitutional discussions?
- What would you consider to be the major achievements of this forum to date? What do you think their added value is? (Look for concrete examples - Case Studies / success stories to follow up)
- In what areas do you think you the forum could improve further? What aspects would you change in the light of your experience?

2. Effectiveness: (But also looking at outcomes and impact)

- To what extent did NTTP engage key stakeholders in the constitutional development and peace processes (Ob 1)? Do you think that key groups excluded or missed out? Why do you think this was so? Do you think it was effective in this regard?
- Who benefited most? Were any groups disadvantaged? (Follow-up)
- To what extent do you think the forum has been able to positively influence these processes? In what way? How?
- What could the forum or NTTP do better? What are the issues that affect its ability to perform these functions? How could they be overcome?
- Do you think that the NTTP forum should continue in the future (Ob 3)? Why? In what form? What should it be doing (what are the needs of the context and stakeholders)? (Try and collect specific concrete examples of added value)? Who are the fundamental stakeholders now and who should/might they be in the future? Why?

3. Inclusion

- To what extent do you think you have had an opportunity to participate in the peace/constitutional discussions to date? NTTP engaged women, youth, dalits and other marginalized groups? What evidence do you have?
- Do you think this is important? Why/Why not? Have there been any changes as a result of your inclusion or voices being expressed? What are they? (evidence)
- How did you get involved? Did you actively seek opportunities or did NTTP come to you? How were groups/participants prioritized? Are some groups doing better than others – and if so why?
- To what extent do you think that your voices influence/d discussions or were/are heard in higher discussions? Why/why not? What evidence is there?
- Do you think there have been changes in the relative influence of your group through these processes? Why/why not?

- To what extent do you think leaders' attitudes and behaviors are changing with respect to your group? Why?
- If not, what measures could be taken to improve this representation in the peace/constitutional process? (this will be triangulated with field work)

4. Vertical linkages

- To what extent do you think that local level peace initiatives at the regional level are linked to higher peace and constitutional discussions or at the NTTP forum? Why/Why not? Evidence
- What evidence do you have that local experiences were brought into dialogues?
- What consequences did this integration (if verified) have?
- Do you think that this is important? Why/Why not? Do you think that this is the role of NTTP/F if so how should they undertake it better?

5. Publications and Visibility

- What information have you received from NTTP? What would you like?
- NTTP discussions and research has been confidential in the past, do you think it should be available to the general public? Why/why not? What are the pros and cons?
- What information is lacking in the public domain? What sort of information do you consider the most important and why? What form would be most useful (e.g. Social media, reports, TV, etc.)

6. NTTPI Independence, Sustainability and Viability

- Do you think that the NTTP still has a role and if so what should that role be? Explore the extent of transparency versus under the radar. Who should have access to this facility and for what?
- Who are the stakeholders (or who should be) of NTTP? What would happen if it closed? To whom does this body have continuing relevance? Is it important to you? If so why? Should the membership be refreshed AND expanded? If so how?
- What is needed for the NTTPI to be more effective?
- Do you think that there is a continuing need for the PRUs and LPCs? Why/Why not? What should their role be?

7. External Environment

- What other peace/constitutional activities are ongoing who supports them? (GON and donor)?
- Where do gaps and opportunities exist that NTTP might address from your perspective?

8. Learning and Future

- What are the most important lessons that your group/organisation/party learned during the course of the past few years with respect to processes addressing conflict and bringing about change (both root causes and mitigation)? (e.g. could discuss negotiation, mediation, cultural context, directions for the future, etc.)
- What lessons do you think have been learned more broadly from these experiences to be applied in the future?
- Can you provide me with you best examples or stories that illustrate the impact (or lack of impact) from the initiative? Who has benefited? Has anybody 'lost out' from the process?
- Have there been any negative impacts from the initiative (context, relationships, etc.)

ANNEX IV – SOURCES OF INFORMATION

INTERVIEWS/FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS CONDUCTED

KEY	
W	Women
D	Dalits
J	Janajatis
M	Madhesis

Kathmandu

Political Parties:

- Arjun Narsingh KC, NC
- Pradip Kumar Gyawali, CPN-UML
- Khimlal Devkota, UCPN(M)
- Laxman Lal Karna, Sadbhavana Party / M
- Suresh Ale Magar, CPN-M / J
- Yogesh Bhattarai, CPN-UML
- Dr. Amresh Kumar Singh, NC / M
- Jay Puri Gharti Magar, CPN-M / J&W
- Dr. Deepak Prakash Bhatta, CPN-UML/Army Integration Technical Committee
- Pushpa Bhusal, NC / W
- Sabitra Bhusal, CPN-UML / W
- Sashi Shrestha, UCPN(M) / J&W
- Parshuram Tamang, Sanghiya Ganatantrik Samajwadi Party, Founder member of Indigenous People's Organizations/ J
- Gagan Thapa, NC

Civil Society/NGOs/Academia/Research Institutes/Media:

- Dr. Bipin Adhikari, Constitutional Expert
- Ex. Lt. Gen. Balananda Sharma, Ex-Coordinator of the Secretariat/ Army Integration Special Committee
- CB Gurung , Ex-Lt. General, Nepal Army / J
- Lenin Bista, 'Disqualified' PLA Nepal
- Dr. Mukta Lama, Tribhuvan University, Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology / J
- Professor Krishna Hachhethu, Tribhuvan University, Central Department of Political Science / J
- Professor John Paul Lederach, Notre Dame University
- Tula Narayan Shah, Nepal Madhesh Foundation (NEMAF) /M
- Durga Sob, Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO) / W&D
- Moti Nepali, Dalit Welfare Association (DWA) / D
- Kopila Adhikari, Advocacy Forum (AF) / W
- Sharada Pokharel, Women Security Pressure Group / W
- Anil Giri, The Kathmandu Post
- Aditya Adhikari, Writer/Media
- Madhavi Dhungel, Nagarik Dainik mEDIA
- Geja Sharma Wagle, Nepal Institute for Policy Studies (NIPS)
- Santosh Gartaula, Institute for Integrated Development Studies

- Hari Sharma, Social Sciences Baha

GoN:

- Mukunda P. Poudel, Peace Fund Secretariat
- Laxmi Kumari Basnet, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction /W

NTTP:

- Damannath Dhungana
- Padma Ratna Tuladhar / J
- Vidyadhar Mallik / M
- Stella Tamang / W&J
- Phanindra Adhikary
- Ajay Bhadra Khanal
- Sajana Maharjan Amatya / J&W
- Bishnu Sapkota
- Dhruva Wagle, (Ex-PRU from NC)
- John Paul Lederach

TAF:

- George Varughese

DONORS/INGOS:

- Maria E. Barrón, USAID
- Amanda Cats-Baril, USAID
- Martin Stürzinger, Senior Peace Advisor, FDFA, Switzerland
- Tania Hoerler Perrinet, Embassy of Switzerland
- KENZA Aqertit, NDI
- Heidi Gutsche, GIZ
- Nama Raj Adhikari, JICA
- Diana Garcia, EU
- Thomas Thomsen, EU
- Peter Barwick, UNDP
- Rohan Edrisinha, UNDP
- Ed Bell, Conflict Advisor, DFID

FGD I (with Youth Leaders/Political Parties):

- Surendra Pandey, NC
- Rabindra Adhikari, CPN-UML
- Hemraj Bhandari, UCPN(M)
- Balawati Sharma, UCPN(M) / W
- Suresh Mandal, Terai Madhesh Loktantrik Party / M
- Yogendra Shahi, CPN-UML

FGD 2 (with Peace Research Unit researchers):

- Ram Adgar Yadav (PRU – Madesh based party)
- Raghu Ghimire (PRU – Maoist Party)
- Bal Bahadur Kunwar (PRU – CPN-UML)

DANG

KIIs:

- Sushil Kumar Basnet, Facilitator, Sambad Samuha
- Yogina Shakya, BASE / J&W

FGD 3 (with ruling party NC, Tharuhut and Tharu civil society):

- Bishnu Mani Dhital, NC
- Karkat Choudhary, Tharu Civil Society leader / J
- Prakash Choudhary, Tharuhut / J

FGD 4 (with influential political parties):

- Ramjee Choudhary 'Milan', UCPN(M) / J
- Dhundi Raj Lamichhane, UML, former Mayor
- Sushma Giri, NC / W
- Mahesh Rijal, National People's Front

FGD 5 (with Womens' Group):

- Ritu Shahi, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Democratic / W
- Fana Sharma, CPN-Maoist / W
- Sushma Choudhary, Tharu woman / J&W
- Sarita Devkota, Women rights and Human rights activist / W
- Kritani Choudhary, Tharu woman / J&W
- Januka Regmi, UML / W
- Sushma Giri, NC / W
- Sabitra Acharya, Paralegal / W
- Sumitra Choudhary, Tharu activist / J&W
- Sita Choudhary Adhikari, UCPN(M) / J&W
- Janaki Choudhary, CPN-M / J&W
- Lalita Chodhary, Tharu Women Development Centre / J&W
- Anuradha Choudhary, Tharu activist / J&W
- Sharmila Choudhary, Tharu woman / J&W

JHAPA

FGD 6 (with Sambad Samuha members):

- Kundan Bhattarai, CPN-UML

- Bhagirath Kumar Poddar, NC / J
- Dhan Bahadur Pangdhak, Federal Limbuwan Party / J
- Sangita Rauniyar, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum Nepal / M&W
- Bhim Nembang, Federation of Nepalese Journalists
- Surya Narayan Ganesh, Sadbhavana Party and Coordinator, LPC / M
- Jasmaya Gajmer, Dalit Jagaran Abhiyan / D&W
- Sharada Rijal, Women Security Pressure Group / W
- Uma Karki, Nepal Bar Association / W
- Tom Rajbanshi, Kochila Unified Front / J
- Arun Rajbanshi, Sarvekshyan Nepal / J
- Nabin Dhungana, All Nepal National Free Students Union

FGD 7 (with Womens' Group):

- Jasmaya Gajmer, Dalit Jagaran Abhiyan / D&W
- Sharada Rijal, Women Security Pressure Group / W
- Uma Karki, Nepal Bar Association / W
- Sangita Rauniyar, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum Nepal / W&M

FGD 8 (with major political parties):

- Deu Kumar Thosej, NC
- Dharma Sheela Chapagain, UCPN(M) / W
- Kundan Bhattarai, CPN-UML

FGD 9 (with Sambad Samuha team):

- Dipendra Bhattarai, Coordinator, Sambad Samuha
- Khagendra Kharel, Facilitator, Sambad Samuha
- Ekraj Giri, Facilitator, Sambad Samuha
- Ranju Giri, Office Secretary, Admin., Sambad Samuha / W

FGD 10 (with Kochila) :

- Tri Narayan Rajbanshi, Kochila Sangharsha Samiti, Terai Madhesh Loktantrik Party / J
- Bharat Kumar Rajbanshi, Kochila Gabhur Front / J
- Pukar Chandra Rajbanshi, Rajbanshi Society Development Committee / J
- Pani Lal Rajbanshi, Kochila Sangharsha Samiti / J

FGD 11 (with Limbuwan) :

- Dhan Bahadur Pangdhak, Federal Limbuwan Party / J
- Dil Keshar Thapa Chhetri, Federal Limbuwan Party
- Prangma Bokhim, Federal Limbuwan Party / J&W
- Magen Rai, Federal Limbuwan Party / J
- Nanda Kumar Bista Chhetri, Social worker/ Federal Limbuwan Party

KAILALI

FGD 12 (with Sambad Samuha):

- Khemraj Pandey, Coordinator-Sambad Samuha, District Chair-Transparency International and former Mayor
- Hukum Saud, CPN(United)
- Hari Krishna Pandey, Rastriya Janamorcha
- Bir B. Jethera, Advocate

LIST OF RESEARCH TITLES THAT HAVE BEEN PRODUCED FROM NTTTP

- Matrix of basic agenda of armed groups –December 2009
- Contentious issues of constitution writing-April 2010
- Proposed Electoral System for the New Constitution of Nepal of major parties/front- July 2010
- International Examples of Military Integration-July 2010
- How can the integration and rehabilitation of former combatants contribute to the Nepal's peace process and long term development? August 2010
- Can Nepal survive without UNMIN? February- March 2011
- Peace friendly media strategy –June 2011
- Federal structure of Nepal, a historical perspective-Chandramani Gautam-June 2009
- Security Sector Reform in the peace and democratic transition in Nepal-Hari Krishna Devkota (hired consultant on request of UCPN (M))-May 2010
- Rehabilitation options for Maoist's combatants by Ram Udgar Yadav-July 2010
- A concept note on alternative plan for the purposeful integration and rehabilitation of the armies for new Nepal by Raghu Ghimire-August 2010
- Integration/Rehabilitation: As Part of Peace and Nation Building by Chandramani Gautam-August 2010
- Need for Nepal-China-India tripartite understanding through dialogue by Raghu Ghimire-January 2011
- Bureaucracy in Federal structures of Belgium, Spain and South Africa by Robert Ordman and Archana Singh- August 2011
- Study on TRC and amnesty-December 2011
- Criteria for the selection of the members of the TRC-January 2012
- Researchers' papers & research produced (September 2011-August 2012)
- Positions of different political parties on integration-September-October 2011
- Comparative table on the report of the High Level State Restructuring Suggestion Commission (SRC) and views by Parties of Mainstream Politics with their Stance-March-April 2012
- Party's stance and Leaders' opinions before CA's dissolution: Nepali Congress, UDMF & MPRF-N- June 2012
- Constitution Assembly of Nepal: Breaking away from the norm-June 2012
- New Analysis around the CA dissolution: May 20-28, 2012 (International opinion/interference, lack of coordination among/in parties, interest and benefit to kill CA, consensus and its benefits/repercussions and disappointment/review)- June 2012
- Arguing the possibility of Nepal transforming/transformed into a failed state- August-September 2012
- Underlying Reasons for Future Conflict: Probably after Promulgation of New Constitution-mid May 2012
- Semi-Presidential System: A comparative study-May 2012
- Nepal Peace Agreement Matrix- December 2011 and August 2012
- Bureaucracy in federal structures-September 2012
- Overview of TRC's regarding political conflict-November 2011
- A brief report on the provision and role of Non-Partisan Caretaker Government (NCG) in Bangladesh-July 2012
- Evaluating the implementation status of key negotiations of the Peace process from November 2006 to December 2007-Chandramani Gautam-September 2011

- Agreements and implementation of peace negotiation from January- December 2008-Brikha Khadka- September 2011
- Evaluating the implementation status of key negotiations of the Peace process of 2011 - Ram Udgar Yadav-September 2011
- Chronology of Maoists' infighting- Chandramani Gautam- July 2012
- Peace process and various opinions/reactions- Bal Bahadur Kunwar-April 2012
- Researchers' papers & research produced (September 2012-August 2014)
- Arguing the possibility of Nepal transforming/transformed into a failed state- August-September 2012
- Bureaucracy in federal structures-September 2012
- Suggestions to Task Force on TRC Bill through Mr. Khim Lal Devkota-March 2013
- Non-partisan electoral government- a critical analysis-April 2013
- Peace Agreement Matrix-June 2013
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Nepal – Mapping the Challenges-June 2013
- PAM study on second CA election, referendum, round table conference, addressing issues of inclusion, broad composition and broad mandate-October 2013
- Comparison of political party manifestos-CA election 2013- December 2013
- Reform in the Electoral System in Nepal- January 2014
- TRC, Disappearance and Reparations Commission: Comparison on established, implementation records, and variations of operation March 2014
- Understanding and agreements among the parties in the previous CA and views of the main parties regarding the ownership of those understandings-June 2014
- Internal Divisions in the parties and impact in constitution writing-July2014
- Local Elections: Context of Peace Building through State Re-structuring-August 2014
- Non-partisan government for election-A critical analysis_ December 2012
- Role of political parties in the peace process since 1996- March2013
- State subsidies for Mainstream Political Parties As a Means to prevent Corruption and Public Resentment-July 2013_Final in August 2013
- Code of Conduct of CA election-II: A critical review-October 2013
- Comparative study of political party election manifestos of CA election 2008- Bhimarjun Acharya –September 2013
- Comparative study of political party statutes– Shashi Adhikari-September 2013
- Hydropower resources and conflict: A toolkit for intervention-Sunil Pokhrel (in request of CPN (UML)-January 2014
- Comparative and analytical study of the result of the Constituent Assembly Election, 2013- Lokendra KC (in request of CPN-UML)-January 2014
- Violence against Women in Nepal- May 2014
- Possible conflicts in Terai-May 2014
- Unity among Madhesi parties-July 2014
- NTTP Study on How Federal structure of Nepal would be viable –July 2014
- Compilation of International Party Manifestos -July 2014
- Comparison and discussion of constitution and bylaws of major international political parties- July2014

ANNEX V – QUESTION 4

Key Question	Examples of Possible Responses	Pros	Cons	Other Considerations for the future
What types of possible documentation might be released?	Party positions on issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater transparency • In the public interest • To inform public debate and stimulate discussion • As a historical record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties may not wish to be held to old positions • If there have been changes then energy may be taken up in justifying or disputing the positions 	
	Negotiations / processes / minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater transparency • To inform public debate and stimulate discussion • To create pressure for consensus and progress in the political process • As a historical record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breach of trust and loss of confidence in the forum • Could create caution on how NTTPI will function in the future, and may change how participants engage there • Risk of withdrawal from the forum by parties • Possible risk of hardening of party positions if information is no longer confidential and therefore forces a regression to standard party lines in the public domain • A similar risk of polarization of positions 	
	Agreements reached	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Transparency • To create pressure for consensus and progress in the political process • To create pressure on parties to adhere to agreements reached in the forum • To inform public debate and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing that agreements may enter the public domain may mean that participants or leaders are not willing to commit to agreements in case they are held to account in the public domain • Therefore risks undermining 	There have been cases when forum participants e.g. the cross-party youth thematic group has called the media and their own leaders together to address agreements and encourage public commitments to

Key Question	Examples of Possible Responses	Pros	Cons	Other Considerations for the future
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stimulate discussion As a historical record 	the forum rather than strengthening it	them. This strong approach though, to be successful, has to come from the participants rather than NTTPI itself.
	Comparative analysis on issues, models or party positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Transparency To inform public debate and stimulate discussion To increase the accountability of political parties to constituencies Increase awareness of different positions Understand points of commonality and difference between various parties Assist in creating consensus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be considered party information and therefore up to them to release. All depends on the basis on which the information was originally gathered and who for 	Agreement should be reached between all stakeholders before these types of document are developed, whom the audience is and whether the document will be released into the public domain and under whose banner.
	Technical Lessons Learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important to inform the broader peacebuilding sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should not use names or identifiers of situations 	A possible series of monographs could be developed on various aspects for CMM or under the NTTPI label (or both) that could explore different elements.
	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Transparency To inform public debate and stimulate discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If written for the public domain – should not be a problem 	In the future
Who is the Information for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public Specific Stakeholders (e.g. civil society, political parties, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If written with an audience in mind may have greater impact Need to ensure that by writing to one audience, another is not upset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could put people off side or upset hem seeing how they are portrayed 	

Key Question	Examples of Possible Responses	Pros	Cons	Other Considerations for the future
	etc.)			
Who releases the Information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May increase their accountability May increase public debate around differentiated positions For articles may provide greater credibility to authors and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May reinforce their power, legitimize their behaviour and hegemony depending on the type of document My undermine the perceived objectivity of NTTPI if it becomes know that these are emanating from NTTP and are from discussions there. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTTPI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For research in the future all documents should be released under NTTPI for quality, profile and neutrality except possibly some specifically for use in the forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disputed ownership of data, information Undermine NTTPI who may be seen as 'exploiting' party research 	
How should the information be released – in what form and where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be in keeping with the NTTPI communications strategy Needs care on obtaining stakeholder consent to ensure buy in and not disputes later 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on the material and the media used to disseminate it, could undermine the neutrality and perceived confidentiality of the forum 	

ANNEX VI – PROGRESS ON MID-TERM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Title: Nepal Peace Support Program			
Date of Mid-term Evaluation Report: September 2013			
Date of Management Response: March 2014			
B. Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3: Strengthen PRU by taking into account the following specific recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and implement strategy to disseminate outcome of the research conducted by NPSP to the wider audience • Involve thematic groups in future research projects • Invest in building the capacity of researchers working in the PRU, both in NTTP and political parties • Set up PRU in each political party and make provision for adequate and timely technical and logistic support for its long term sustainability 			
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree) – Agree			
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: Recommendation to set up PRU in each political party is rejected. Please refer to next page for reason.			
Actions Planned	Completion Date	Implementation Stage:	Actions Taken
Prepare and implement strategy to disseminate outcome of the research conducted by NPSP to the wider audience	March 2014- August 31, 2014	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Feb 2014, TAF has reduced the net expenses on researchers in view of transition of the NPSP. • A retainer contract will be issued to the researchers and the services will be used on need basis tied to deliverables upon request of NTTP political party leaders • Researchers will use NTTP facility to conduct study/research upon request of party peace unit coordinators who are also NTTP Forum members. • Researchers will share NTTP research/study with their party members • Study reports will be shared to the wider audience through two (2) joint interactions/workshops. One interaction was held in Udayapur in February.
Involve thematic groups in future research projects	March 2014 onwards	Not started	Routine research questions emanating out of theme groups will be referred to the researchers.

Invest in building the capacity of researchers working in the PRU, both in NTTP and political parties	Feb 25, 2014	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers Forum created. They will meet last Monday of every month. • A researchers will be trained on research methodology: one on qualitative and one on quantitative during the implementation period.
Set up PRU in each political party and make provision for adequate and timely technical and logistic support for its long term sustainability		Rejected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be difficult to ensure quality of research and monitor performance of PRUs under direct control of political parties.
C. Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4: Improve the overall management of NTTP by implementing following recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a system to follow up on the agreements/decisions made in the NTTP Forum meetings • Ensure the involvement of top leaders of major political parties in the NTTP process • Continue ensuring political neutrality in the NTTP Forum • Maintain NTTP Forum's flexibility being guided by the larger objective of constitution drafting and peace building • Introduce rotational facilitation system among the NTTP members until young group of facilitators are identified • Strengthen the secretariat of the NTTP Forum by increasing budget for fulltime staff and for logistic support for national facilitators • Continue providing flexibility to NPSP in terms of planning, implementation and expenditure forecasting 			
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree) – Agree			
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:			
Actions Planned	Completion Date	Implementation Stage:	Actions Taken
Develop a system to follow up on the agreements/decisions made in the NTTP Forum meetings		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues raised by NTTP Forum meetings are taken into consideration while designing dialogue process and activities on a weekly or monthly basis
Ensure the involvement of top leaders of major political parties in the NTTP process		Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTTP Facilitators will meet with the top leaders on a routine basis. In the last reporting period, they held four meetings with top leaders.
Continue ensuring political neutrality in the NTTP Forum		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutes one of the core values of NTTP
Maintain NTTP Forum's flexibility being guided by the larger objective of constitution drafting and peace building		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace process and constitution drafting remain the key objectives
Introduce rotational facilitation system		Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Among the two new facilitators; Mr. Vidyadhar Mallik takes the floor often

among the NTTP members until young group of facilitators are identified			enough and Ms. Stella Tamang has been encouraged to do the same. Rotational system will be gradually started.
Strengthen the secretariat of the NTTP Forum by increasing budget for fulltime staff and for logistic support (vehicle, incidentals, support staff etc.) for national facilitators		Rejected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTTP secretariat currently has adequate support for national facilitators; on a need basis, when the facilitators require extra assistance, NPSP has been providing those under contract.
Continue providing flexibility to NPSP in terms of planning, implementation and expenditure forecasting		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPSP is committed to provide flexibility and has been so
D. Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5:			
Establishment of NTTPI based on the three alternatives and their pros and cons, as suggested by the study team			
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree) – Agree			
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:			
Actions Planned	Expected Completion Date	Implementation Stage:	Actions Taken
Establishment of NTTPI based on the three alternatives and their pros and cons, as suggested by the study team		Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering the different options, proposal for registration of NTTPI is submitted to Ministry of Home, if the government refuses to register, there is alternative plan to register it following other options.
E. Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6:			
Constitute a scoping committee to further detail out the best possible alternative, taking into account the pros and cons of each of the three alternatives suggested by this study, as well as those recommended by the committee			
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree) – Agree			
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:			
Actions Planned	Expected Completion Date	Implementation Stage:	Actions Taken
Constitute a scoping committee to further detail out the best possible alternative, taking into account the pros and cons of each of the three alternatives suggested by this study, as well as those recommended by the committee		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While we have not formally constituted a scoping committee, there have been series of consultations with NTTP Forum members, NTTP Forum Facilitators and Prof. John Paul Lederach, the international adviser for the NTTP.

F. Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 7:

Set up the NTTPI by January 1, 2017

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree) – Agree**If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:**

Actions Planned	Expected Completion Date	Implementation Stage:	Actions Taken
Set up the NTTPI by January 1, 2017		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Registration process completed

ANNEX VII – POSSIBLE NTTPI RESPONSES TO THE EVOLVING CONTEXT

Contextual Issue	Possible NTTPI Responses
<p>The increasing complexity of issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a range of ways to address this facet of the political domain and much of it will be dependent on time and energy available. The assumptions underlying these options assume positive political will and that there is agreement that the peace process is NOT yet complete. It may be that NTTTP will also have to consider how to develop political will and that understanding. Options include (again note that NTTTP already undertakes some of these): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuing the current methodologies that may or may not alter levels of influence and change. This should be continued but it may be that there are other streams that should flow simultaneously. ○ As noted elsewhere in the report, expand activities to target and attempt to support (directly or indirectly) all other key mechanisms addressing the same issues in the broader scene. For instance the CPDCC. In other words increase the scope of interaction with any particular issue. The forum providing the hub for secondary focal points. ○ Increase the intentionality of methods adopted to achieve change. Firstly in identifying areas of contention that can be addressed earlier in the political process by greater investment in foundational education and knowledge before they reach the critical twelfth hour. Secondly apply intentionality more rigorously through the process by utilizing advanced techniques and associated processes to bring about change. ○ Concentrate efforts on 'log-jams' i.e. the most significant issue that if overcome may reduce the levels of tension around less important issues. ○ Concentrate support and primarily focus on achieving possible specific wins. In other words identify elements more objectively within the peace process and political issues where progress is more likely and then work more exclusively to achieve that progress. This approach slightly alters the emphasis in the way that the forum operates from being only responsive to the agendas that emerge on a continuing basis to one that is still fundamentally responsive but that assists the participants prioritise and identify areas of <i>most possible progress</i>. More difficult areas are postponed until later, to allow more time for preparation and understanding to develop. This approach could be interpreted as being a form of procrastination but other peace processes have demonstrated the importance of maintaining momentum where it is possible. This increases confidence in all stakeholders to tackle the more contentious issues positively.³² • In terms of the organisation structure and staffing, very little institutional change is required, unless expanding activities. Change of focus should not have too big an impact but would require the development of common approaches and possibly some increased technical skills for staff.

³² This was a particular feature of the Northern Ireland peace process.

Contextual Issue	Possible NTTPI Responses
<i>Pervasive political party culture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a long-term cultural issue that is very hard to tackle, and is probably outside of the realm of NTTPI but even so is being gently and indirectly addressed. See box 1 that identifies changes in behaviour by forum and thematic group participants. The question then is the extent to which NTTPI wishes to develop this further. See below section for suggestions that address a similar issue. • One way to start to broaden these changes is to work more explicitly with the party youth arms and groups as well as for the women. A rotating system for similar cross-party discussions to those in the forum, but perhaps more foundational around could be developed, but would require considerably more staffing. • Similarly in the regions
<i>Hierarchical patronage systems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden the youth group and set up equivalent youth thematic groups in the regions, as capacity develops. Focus more clearly on the next generations of leaders and continually challenge them on what aspects of leadership are positive in the Nepali political culture and which ones are less helpful. Once identified and agreed then establish ways to help them work on how they change them in the future. • Establish clearer linkages with the NDI program to develop a leadership program to specifically educate NTTPI forum members on best practice around party cultures and practices that they could introduce in the future (if not now). • More clearly establish explicit democratic principles on which the Sambad Samuha should operate. • Introduce specific discussions on behaviour and institutional culture change in the political domain around these issues during 'quiet times'. This needs to be sensitively undertaken but could be introduced around the concept of intentionality as noted elsewhere in the report.
<i>Short-term politics and self-interest</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a series of informal leadership meetings for party leaders and their second tier on modern leadership. One way to get interest from party leaders could be to have inspirational leaders come and address the group on issues and aspects of 'party leadership and the national good' and then have an informal, facilitated discussion on what this means for leaders and their issues. For example have 'The Lady' and senior member of government come from Myanmar. Leaders from moderate Indian parties, Sri Lanka, etc. This could be a variation on the Woodrow Wilson leadership training in DRC. • Continue to encourage second tier leaders and forum members to put out joint statements in the media that reflect cross-party compromise in the national interest
<i>Shifts in power</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While this is a feature of the current political scene, this is where the principles of respect and inclusivity need to be firmly established and continually and demonstrably applied throughout the activities of the new NTTPI. Essentially they need to be drummed into all participants of the forum. No matter the current balance of power, ensuring that significant voices are heard is critical to the establishment of a peaceful Nepal³³. • The second aspect is to ensure that NTTPI continually finds ways to maintain that the CPA agenda alive in the public domain. The message being that whoever is in power and government, they have a moral duty to abide by national and

³³ As one key informant noted, the lack of representation of the Maoists in the most recent CA may well be a reflection of the normal pendulum of politics and criticism of whosoever is in power at the time, rather than a more damning rejection of their core principles and their platform as a whole (reflected in the CPA and in the original struggle).

Contextual Issue	Possible NTTPI Responses
<i>Intense regional and identity politics</i>	<p data-bbox="569 224 1003 253">multiparty agreements made in the past.</p> <ul data-bbox="527 256 1894 721" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="527 256 1894 318">• This is a particularly important area for NTTPI to develop itself for its work now and in the future. The reader is referred to the findings of evaluation question three. <li data-bbox="527 321 1894 412">• Ideally NTTPI staff should have a stronger presence in the region. This probably requires a new staff person at the centre to help further build up capacity and support and assist in the determination of priorities, directions and networking, and learning between Sambad Samuhas. <li data-bbox="527 415 1894 565">• One element of the regional dimensions is NTTPI understanding. A useful initial step would be a mapping exercise of the conflict and political issues now and those that are latent at present but have the potential to emerge in the future as well as identification of which political issues need a greater degree of research at this time. Within this mapping exercise a stakeholder analysis would also be helpful to provide the basis for understanding where greater outreach would be helpful for NTTPI. <li data-bbox="527 568 1894 721">• While there has been some engagement and research undertaken in the regions, this needs to be developed more systematically to inform a deeper understanding by NTTPI. One issue is the extent to which NTTPI uses the PRUs for this work. At this stage it is probably important to continue with the PRUs but ensure that there is a longer-term approach to the research and it requires several visits and investment rather than 'one-off' visits that have been undertaken in the past.
<i>Peace Process 'complete'</i>	<ul data-bbox="527 727 1894 1138" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="527 727 1894 850">• Approaching this issue directly requires sustained advocacy. This in turn would require planning and the development of a strategic approach by NTTPI to the peace process and development of positions. This would require a significant shift by NTTPI in the way that it operates. If this direction were taken it would need to be in conjunction with the communications strategy. <li data-bbox="527 854 1894 945">• A more functional approach is to continue utilizing the low profile, indirect approach. This would require that NTTPI continue to encourage forum members to unite and voice opinions that reinforce and maintain the importance of working on the CPA and other cross-party agreements. <li data-bbox="527 948 1894 1039">• Similarly reach out to other groups that hold similar opinions and assist them to network and encourage them to develop messages for public consumption. This may require the forum to have some more public spaces where such meetings could take place. <li data-bbox="527 1042 1894 1101">• The development of communication messages (see below in international shift section) that maintain the profile and importance of all aspects of the CPA. <li data-bbox="527 1104 1894 1138">• Encourage the media to publish and have short updates on the CPA regularly.
<i>Loss of confidence by the people</i>	<ul data-bbox="527 1138 1894 1422" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="527 1138 1894 1196">• Sustain centre/periphery engagement, so that voices from the regions can be heard to a greater extent, in the centre and by the party leaders and media. <li data-bbox="527 1200 1894 1258">• Conduct a series of discussions/seminars in the regions to discuss these issues and then invite regional leaders to present in the capital and meet with the forum and ask forum members on the best way to enable leaders to hear these voices. <li data-bbox="527 1261 1894 1295">• Conduct a series of seminars on the regions and their issues, and the peace process, in Kathmandu. <li data-bbox="527 1299 1894 1333">• Consider how to connect thematic groups and the regions systematically <li data-bbox="527 1336 1894 1422">• Consider setting up a series of 'focal groups' in regions for systematic perception collection. Decide on a series of qualitative questions about their opinions on the peace process and then convene and ask these 'representative groups' the same questions every 4 months to develop a data set that is a time series. This could be undertaken by a group of the

Contextual Issue	Possible NTTPI Responses
	<p>PRUs (and in the relevant areas in conjunction with the Sambad Samuha) – so that these opinions continually get fed into the parties and can also be useful for NTTPI to use in their advocacy to other stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater outreach to
<p><i>Shift in international development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in direct and ongoing advocacy to international donors, to ensure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuing commitment to the peace process ○ Continuing understanding of the need to continue investment in support to the peace process. This should include various recommendations to the international community to broaden their involvement and support, through (a) continued lobbying of GON by the international community to maintain pressure on all stakeholders to honor commitments to the CPA, 12 point process etc. (b) Specific continued diplomatic activities e.g. high level meetings of visiting senior government officials (e.g. President Obama!) with party leaders to affirm support, interest, attention on and the importance of progress in the development of the constitution, federalism, inclusivity and new governing architecture. (c) Possible ‘incentivization’ of progress linked to increased levels of aid. • Occasional and strategic advocacy to India to encourage their greater interest in seeing continued progress in the peace process. This could be in the form of updates or briefs with suggestions on how the international community could support GON and stakeholder initiatives. • Develop a short newsletter or monthly brief with analysis on the peace process and progress or blockages in key elements – e.g. the constitution. With associated recommendations.

ANNEX VIII – USAID MECHANISMS

There are a number of types of governance conditions and initiatives where the supportive fit of existing USAID mechanisms is currently not ideal. This creates difficulties for USAID and all its partners trying to develop sophisticated, nuanced, context-driven responses that are innovative and likely to be more effective.³⁴ As the sector’s understanding of social change and complexity progresses this should be mirrored by a similar development of appropriate mechanisms to create the space for best practice responses to be developed. A failure to react to this stimulation risks important initiatives slipping through the cracks between mechanisms. Aside from the current pertinent example of NPSP, the following typologies reflect situations or aspects that require a different type of response to maximize the effectiveness of initiatives and assist the USG to fully realize its objectives and ensure its development investments are secure.³⁵

- *Diversity of conditions within one country:* When and where the topography of violence and stability is not uniform, it can present difficulties for addressing governance (and in particular conflict and peace) issues. Thus some parts of a country may require more flexible types of work, be they rapid response, short-term or long-term accompaniment, while others are still best served by “normal” mechanisms. The issue here is that the country may not be perceived as a whole as being in transition or indeed requiring the level of support that might justify the entry of an OTI.
- *Unique governance environments:* There are environments that may be relatively stable (or perceived as such) and may not easily fit a definition of “transition” but that still have special needs that may not lend themselves to the normal responses. For instance an oppressive environment where governance space is severely constrained needs a nimble mechanism that can respond with speed to take advantage of an opportunity for widening space before it closes again, or requires a quick shift in the type of response or location of response. While cooperative agreements do have flexibility, on occasion it would also be useful to shift partners or use a grant making mechanism that may not be available within the agreement.
- *Unique interventions:* Interventions such as NTTP may have a broader impact on the environment as risk reduction “insurance mechanisms” as well as unique characteristics of their own in bridging sectors (political/peace) or that are iterative and process oriented, and that may be long term in character. These types of intervention may be relatively small-scale but are critical to stability or the success of wider transition interventions.
- *Hybrid environments:* There are also other hybrid environments that still require OTI-type mechanisms as well as long-term development mechanisms simultaneously, but integrated in nature. There are countries where there are both OTI and USAID DRG initiatives simultaneously being implemented, but these may experience tensions due to the different institutional cultures, management systems and reporting lines. The success of integration and program efficacy is varied and highly dependent on personalities.

³⁴ And if they are not as effective as hoped for, they allow for the possibility of increased learning for the next generation of responses.

³⁵ For the purposes of this discussion it is assumed that the current OTI approach is characterized by its relative speed of disbursement, programs tend to be catalytic, short-term, innovative, and contributing to transitions. They are often in environments that require an injection of significant funds that are often ‘peace dividends’, or that provide moral boosting visible change and input into critical elements of change. Whereas ‘normal’ DG type programming is suited to longer-term development and change, under ‘stable’ conditions and based on an incremental change model.

- *Long-term transitions:* While there are examples of mechanisms attempting to address long term instability at scale (e.g. SWIFT for South Sudan), a different approach is needed for environments such as Nepal that are engaged in a long-term peace process that is effectively a long term transition. This may not need the large-scale, grant-making approaches of an OTI, but they do require a slightly different mindset than the “standard” development context and an associated mechanism that is both in synchronicity with the long-term development progression but also informed by an in-country perspective on needs, rather than determined in the US. Importantly, it would still enable specific, possibly short-term inputs to be made at strategic and opportune occasions as demanded by the context or, conversely, long-term transition approaches to supplement and accompany or bridge sectors.

Recommendation: That an in-country, flexible mechanism planned for and controlled by the USAID mission be developed for DG responses in long term transitions.