



UNITED NATIONS  
UNIVERSITY

**UNU-CPR**

United Nations University Centre for Policy Research

**What Works in UN Resident Coordinator-led Conflict Prevention: Lessons from the Field**

June 2018



---

## Nepal 2007-15

---

Sebastian von Einsiedel\*

*This case study is part of a broader research project, carried out by the UNU Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR) with the support of the UK Mission to the United Nations, on the role of UN Resident Coordinators in Conflict Prevention. The project aimed to extract lessons from case studies of Resident Coordinator-supported preventive action in nine countries (Bolivia 2000-09; Colombia 2012-16; Guinea 2009-15; Guyana 2003-15; Kenya 2008-17; Kyrgyzstan 2010-17; Malawi, 2011-17; Nepal 2007-15; and Tunisia 2011-17). All case studies, and the resulting policy paper synthesizing lessons and findings can be accessed at [cpr.unu.edu](http://cpr.unu.edu).*

## Introduction

In April 2006, after suffering ten years of civil war between a Maoist insurgency and an increasingly autocratic royal government, the people of Nepal took to the streets and forced the country's King to hand power back to the political parties. Peace negotiations between the leaders of the newly empowered political parties and the Maoists culminated first in a ceasefire agreement in May 2006 and then in the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in November 2006. Since then, Nepal has struggled with interlocking transitions from war to peace, from autocracy to democracy, and from an exclusionary and centralised state to a more inclusive and federal one.

Although the peace process was largely domestically driven, it was accompanied by wide-ranging international involvement, including by India, the United Nations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs); significant investments by international donors; and the deployment, from 2007-11, of a Security Council-mandated civilian UN peace operation, the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). UNMIN has been the object of much attention by the UN-focused policy and scholarly community. By contrast, the role of the UN's development presence in supporting the peace process has not been sufficiently examined. This case study aims to fill that gap and examine the role of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and the UN Country Team (UNCT) in supporting peace process implementation and in leading initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict and reducing the risk of conflict relapse.

Specifically, this study will illustrate how RCs can successfully a) reorient a UNCT's posture towards prevention priorities and mobilize a whole-of-UN approach to prevention, including by exploiting the full potential of Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes; b) raise resources locally to strengthen their offices' prevention capacities; c) develop field presences beyond the capital, thus strengthening their early warning, coordination and analytical abilities; and d) lead successful efforts in providing multi-disciplinary, interagency assistance to the reintegration and rehabilitation of former combatants. This case study will cover the period from 2008 (arrival of new Resident Coordinator Robert Piper) to September 2015 (adoption of a new Constitution marking the end of the peace process).

This case study is the only one of this broader research project in which the considered timeframe overlaps (from 2007-11) with the presence of a UN peace operation, namely UNMIN. We justify this deviation from the "non-mission setting" – criteria with the fact that UNMIN was a non-integrated mission and the UNCT was operating largely independently (albeit in coordination and consultation with UNMIN). We thus posit that the lessons from Nepal during that period have potential applicability for non-mission settings elsewhere.

## 1. Country Context<sup>1</sup>

### Underlying conflict risk factors

Key to understanding Nepal's fragility are its endemic poverty and group inequality, both of which also constituted structural causes of Nepal's civil war.<sup>2</sup> Its development gains over the past six decades notwithstanding, Nepal today still finds itself in the bottom 20% of per capita GDP rankings. Nepal's modest economic growth tended to disproportionately benefit traditionally privileged segments of the population. Indeed, the pervasive political and economic exclusion of large parts of the population based on caste, ethnicity, religion, gender, or regional provenance features prominently in all explanations of the country's civil war. In rural areas, social injustice and inequality had long manifested itself in particular in the relationship between landlords and the peasant population, often taking the form of bonded labour and giving rise to the Maoist claim, which resonated widely, that Nepal constitutes largely a feudal society. Building a more inclusive state remains one of Nepal's fundamental challenges to this day and is a prerequisite for long-term stability.

Discontent caused by poverty and inequality has long been exacerbated by the weakness of both Nepali state institutions and the rule of law, with limited accountability for state authorities and few legal recourse mechanisms for ordinary citizens. Moreover, since its first democratic elections in 1991, Nepal's fledgling democracy has suffered from centralized and autocratically structured political parties, which tend to be organised around individuals rather than programs. Outside the capital, party politics has long manifested itself primarily in the form of landholding "strongmen," who sit along state officials at the centre of corrupt "distributionary coalitions," which control the allocation of resources and delivery of services in line with their personal and political interests, leading to the elite capture of aid and state funds.<sup>3</sup> Change in Nepal remains difficult as elites remain invested in the status quo, in which the state's role is to generate patronage networks that ensure its own survival.

### Medium-term political dynamics affecting conflict risk

The period following the end of the civil war was marked by the challenge of implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of November 2006, which provided an ambitious roadmap for the peace process. In return for being accorded a central role in open politics, the Maoists agreed to withdraw their People's Liberation Army (PLA) to 28 newly erected cantonment sites (to be monitored by UNMIN), dismantle parallel state structures, and return confiscated land. PLA members were also promised subsequent partial integration into the country's security forces, including a "democratically restructured Army." Other key elements of the agreements included the adoption of an interim constitution, the institution of an interim parliament and an interim government, the latter two with Maoist participation. Most importantly, the CPA committed the parties to: hold

elections to a Constituent Assembly in June 2007, which would decide on the future of the monarchy and give birth to a new Nepal; and, in order to address the concerns of the marginalised groups, the "restructuring of the State in an inclusive, democratic and progressive way by ending its present centralised and unitary structure."<sup>4</sup>

The UN had a limited but important role in supporting the implementation of the peace agreements. Most importantly, the Security Council established UNMIN as a special political mission in early 2007 to provide technical assistance for the election of a Constituent Assembly, monitor weapons and armies on both sides, and support the monitoring of non-military aspects of the ceasefire. A separate OHCHR mission, which had already been deployed in 2005, complemented UNMIN's mandate through human rights monitoring and reporting. The OHCHR mission's mandate, which ended in 2012, was widely credited with bringing scrutiny of abuses committed during the People's War, and reducing levels of violence during its tail end. The OHCHR mission also promoted a wider understanding, including among the wider UN family, of the role of systematic human rights abuses and marginalization in driving instability in Nepal and helped open-up the UN to the voices of disadvantaged groups. Meanwhile, The UNCT, operating outside the mission structure, was expected to help Nepal advance the socio-economic aspects of the peace accords, in particular those related to exclusion.

Implementation of the peace agreement was halting and interrupted by repeated political crises. Shortly after the CPA was signed, an interim constitution was adopted and an interim parliament and government with Maoist participation were established. Around the same time, an at-times violent Madhesi uprising ("Andolan") broke out in the Terai region (Nepal's southern flatlands bordering India). The Madhesi people, who account for roughly a fifth of Nepal's population, have experienced a long history of discrimination and exclusion from politics and state institutions. The Andolan, as well as subsequent protests, strikes and local uprisings, were triggered by Madhesi fears of being once again left out of the (re)-negotiation of Nepal's social contract. Other than leading to increasing insecurity in the Terai region, the Andolan foreshadowed a rise in identity politics that also manifested itself through growing agitation of other formerly excluded ethnic and caste groups.

Ethnic unrest also forced repeated postponements of the Constituent Assembly elections but it was eventually held successfully in April 2008. The elections resulted in the most representative legislature in Nepal's history, with the Maoists emerging as the largest party, leading to the creation of a coalition government under former rebel leader Prachanda. Shortly after the elections, Nepal was proclaimed a federal democratic republican state by the Constituent Assembly, ending the 239-year-old monarchy.

The Maoist government resigned in May 2009 after a tussle

over control of the Nepalese Army, the leadership of which resisted PLA integration into its ranks. The Army's positions were reinforced by India and the major political parties, both of which preferred a powerful and unaccountable military over one that might emerge neutered through the significant integration of Maoist combatants. However, the arrival, in September 2009, of a more compromising army leadership combined with the formation of a new, Maoist-led government in 2011 (the return to political power making them less reluctant to relinquish their army), paved the way for a resolution of the issue in 2012, albeit without the involvement of the UNMIN, which had departed Nepal the previous year.<sup>5</sup> That resolution consisted of some 1,500 Maoist combatants being incorporated into the (otherwise un-restructured) Nepal Army, while the rest retired with cash packages. The dissolution of the Maoist Army made a return to conflict – at least in its old guise – highly unlikely.

Meanwhile, the Constituent Assembly was proving unable to agree on a new constitution – mainly because of disagreements over the federalist restructuring of the state – which were accompanied by major bandhs and protests, by groups, in particular in the far-western region, demanding greater autonomy, as well as violent clashes between political activists.<sup>6</sup> When the 28 May 2012 deadline passed after multiple renewals of its term and without a new Constitution in place, the Assembly was dissolved. Elections for a new Constituent Assembly were held in 2013, in which the traditional parties emerged victorious and the Maoists lost two-thirds of their seats. That Constituent Assembly, too, was unable to meet the January 2015 deadline for the adoption of a new Constitution, the issue of federalism once again being the central bone of contention. Traditional elite groups were highly reluctant to dismantle the unitary state that had guaranteed their privileges for so long.

Amid this political deadlock, a major earthquake hit Nepal in April 2015, killing over 8,000 people and leaving much of central Nepal in ruins. The leaders of the major parties represented in the Constituent Assembly responded poorly to the disaster. Keen to regain their credibility, they hammered out a hasty deal on a new constitution, which was eventually adopted in September 2015.

However, the new constitution, which was meant to constitute the crowning achievement of the peace process, became a highly contested document mainly because it mostly failed – once again – to address concerns of the Madhesi. The Madhesi felt their demands for inclusion and representation, especially with respect to the delineation of state boundaries, had been ignored in the drafting process.<sup>7</sup> Following the Constitution's adoption, months of violent protests in the Terai ensued and clashes with the police left over 50 dead. Reportedly with the partial support of India, Madhesi political and civic groups imposed a 135-day blockade of vital supplies coming into Nepal from customs points bordering India.<sup>8</sup> The adoption of the constitution thus repeated a pattern that had marred the entire peace process, in which the political parties, including

the Maoists, negotiated last-minute deals that did not take into account the interests of minority groups. The resulting Madhesi flare-up of 2015 is a testament to Nepal's unresolved inclusion challenges.

## 2. RC-Led Prevention Initiatives

### Context: historical role and perception of UNCT

The record and perception of UN development actors prior to the peace process was mixed. International aid, including that channelled through the UN, has long financed key aspects of Nepal's development efforts, and has helped Nepal achieve important development gains, both in terms of GDP growth and human development. However, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the UN (and other) development actors failed to take necessary steps to enable more equitable and sustainable development. Foreign aid sustained traditional power structures and even positive aid achievements added to conflict risk. Specifically, aid was unevenly distributed in ways that benefited urban centres over rural districts, some rural districts over others, and some classes and castes within urban and rural districts over others.<sup>9</sup>

The UN development community's inadequate attention to the exclusionary nature of the state – the root cause of Nepal's failed development – was, among other factors, the result of: Kathmandu-centrism (which led development actors to interact primarily with representatives of high-caste elites); an apolitical outlook; and a tendency to follow a one-size-fits-all approach to development with little regard to local conditions.<sup>10</sup> The UN, along with the broader donor community, shied away from promoting the types of (admittedly hugely challenging) reforms that could have sustainably addressed deeply entrenched social injustice, such as land reform.

Even after the armed conflict had broken out in 1996, aid agencies initially saw the violence primarily as a law and order challenge and struggled to understand its political dimensions. Donors followed a mistaken strategy of promoting macroeconomic reforms in the hope of addressing what they saw as the "root cause" of the conflict, namely structural poverty, ignoring exclusion as an explanation of aid ineffectiveness. They also turned a blind eye to the increasingly autocratic rule of the King, failing to understand that they were intimately associated with an ever more illegitimate state. During this period, both the leadership of the UNCT and the World Bank remained close to the King, with the latter, praising his economic policies without giving much consideration to growing evidence of the unsustainability of his rule.<sup>11</sup>

Because of these analytical gaps, the development actors' programs allowed the lion's share of development resources to be captured by a small elite, tainting international assistance in the eyes of many Nepalis. UN agencies' hiring practices tended to reinforce caste and class divisions, as well as their

own myopia, as they recruited heavily from traditionally elite groups, which offered the most Western-oriented candidates with the most advanced English-language skills.<sup>12</sup>

After the conflict escalated in 2000, some donors and UN agencies, including the World Bank, began to recognise socio-economic disparities as a root cause, and to integrate social inclusion in their assistance plans. These small shifts in donor practice gained momentum in 2005, after King Gyanendra's coup spurred donors to distance themselves from his regime. At this point, the development community displayed enhanced sensitivity for the need to ensure that poor and marginalised groups would benefit from external interventions.<sup>13</sup> Some donors and UN agencies also slowly began to: embed development activities in broader context analyses (starting with attempts to identify the agents and beneficiaries of development programs and their links to the conflict parties); proactively promote human rights; and help push for a UN role in the peace process despite Indian resistance. However, a more fundamental repositioning of the international development presence in Nepal in line with peacebuilding priorities only took place in the wake of the peace accords.

Indeed, the signing of the CPA in 2006, which focused on state restructuring and inclusion, highlighted the need for development actors to underpin the peace process by helping to address underlying conflict drivers. The accords thus provided the impetus and the opening for UN and other development actors to fundamentally review their programming. At the same time, the peace process provided "space" for the UN's development presence to assume a more political posture, which was expected to complement UNMIN's activities by aligning its posture and programming with peacebuilding priorities.

### RC-led Situation Analysis, Strategy, and Coordination

Embedding the UNCT's activities in a systematic and common analysis of the root causes of Nepal's conflict was an important step in the exercise of reorienting the UNCT towards a more conflict sensitive posture. The first step in this direction was taken through the UN's 2007 Common Country Assessment (CCA), which identified human rights, governance and inclusion as overarching priorities.<sup>14</sup>

However, the 2007 CCA initially failed to translate into a concerted shifting of the development community's outlook towards peacebuilding. Overall, the UNCT had only limited understanding of the political dynamics in which they were operating and showed little intent to lead the UNCT in developing a common peacebuilding strategy. Hoping UNMIN would fulfil that role, they were awaiting a return to normality to continue their business-as-usual development work. Many UN agencies remained stuck in the bubble of Kathmandu, with the notable exceptions of OHCHR, UNICEF and WFP (the latter of which drew on its presence in remote regions to generate reports on political and social dynamics

from difficult-to-reach districts around the country). The senior leadership of the UNCT “differed widely in their post-conflict experience and readiness to adapt activities under their authority to the particular circumstances of Nepal” and struggled to deploy staff with relevant backgrounds.<sup>15</sup> Although the scopes of all UN agencies were, in varying ways, relevant to addressing structural drivers of violence (e.g. ILO with respect to inequalities in the labour market; UN Women with respect to inclusion of women; FAO with respect to land reform), very few understood their work in these terms prior to the arrival of a new RC in 2008. The fact that the donor community did not share a common analysis of the peace process at various points did not help matters.<sup>16</sup>

A noticeable shift occurred with the arrival, in early 2008, of a new UN Resident Coordinator, Robert Piper, who became a driving force for rallying the wider development community behind a common peacebuilding strategy and pushing the UNCT towards more conflict-sensitive programming.

In 2011, Piper and the UNCT spearheaded the development of a new CCA which eschewed the traditional sectoral or themed approach and instead zoomed in on the all-important question of exclusion, centring on questions of which groups had been left behind by recent development gains and why, as well as how longstanding group grievances might jeopardise peace.<sup>17</sup> In drawing up the CCA, the RC Office drew heavily on information and analysis provided by four Field and Coordination Offices (FCOs), established in 2011 (discussed in greater detail below), which ensured that the assessment was solidly based on ground realities in rural areas.

Reflecting the analysis of the 2011 CCA, and its focus on underlying conflict drivers and peace process support, the 2013-17 UNDAF was organized around priorities emerging from the peace process, most importantly inclusion. Driven by the RC’s goal to rally the UN Country Team behind a peacebuilding agenda, the development of both the CCA and the UNDAF were highly inclusive, collaborative and time-consuming processes, building on lengthy inter-agency consultations at the deputy-head-agency-level. Several RCO staff and Country Team members involved in the process and interviewed for this study highlighted the extraordinary amount of effort that went into drawing up these documents, with one long-time UN field staff stating that “it was the only UNDAF process I’ve ever seen that started from scratch, from a joint CCA, and meant to trigger new programming, rather than one starting with pre-determined agenda of adjusting UNDAF around pre-existing programmes of individual UN agencies.”

While the UNDAF process generated a common vision for the Country Team in which agencies felt they had buy-in, even those involved concede that it ultimately fell short of substantively driving UN programming, partly because of turnover of key UN personnel (first and foremost the RC himself as well as his head of office, both of whom left Nepal in 2013)

as well as the difficulty of adapting agencies’ HQ-generated strategies into joint UN programming, the priorities of which were determined by a genuine needs assessment exercise.

The UNDAF did succeed, however, in grabbing the attention of Nepal’s government by “pushing uncomfortable buttons”<sup>18</sup> and raising issues around the discrimination of marginalised groups, including in the Terai region.<sup>19</sup> On the day the UNDAF was meant to be signed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which unlike other ministries had not been closely involved in the UNDAF’s development), objected to the draft document’s assertion that Nepal suffered from “structural discrimination,” complaining this would wrongly imply fault on the side of the government. As a result of this veto, the RCO had to embark on a 3-months long process of renegotiating the UNDAF’s language with the government, in the course of which at least some of the UNDAF’s effort to refocus the UN’s development work on the root causes of conflict was undone. The episode, well covered in Nepal’s national media,<sup>20</sup> might have triggered some helpful public discussion around issues of discrimination, but it also illustrated the narrow wiggle room in which RCs operate in trying to make development programming conflict sensitive.

From independent evaluations of these two UNDAFs conducted in 2011 and 2015, respectively, one issue that emerged as particularly relevant to their ability to refocus the UNCT’s activities around the issue of exclusion was related to indicators and data. Indeed, the 2008-10 UNDAF was rightly criticised for basing outcome indicators (for instance on maternal or child mortality) on aggregate data and national averages rather than on data that would disaggregate by marginalized groups and gender, which is crucial in Nepal’s context.<sup>21</sup> By contrast, and reflecting learning on the part of the Country Team, the 2013-17 UNDAF was singularly focused on tackling the structural causes of exclusion of specific social groups and districts identified in the 2011 CCA’s vulnerability analysis as being in greatest need for programmatic support. While the relevant evaluation praised this approach as a “highly effective method to identify where to focus efforts,” it also noted that it was impossible to measure any progress in this area as a result of the lack of existing disaggregated data and UN agencies’ inability to compensate the gap through their own data-gathering.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, effective targeting of vulnerable groups was further undermined by limited geographic coverage by UN agencies of remote districts.<sup>23</sup>

Recognizing the importance of shaping common peacebuilding outlook not only among UNCT members but also among the wider donor community, Robert Piper led a process from late 2009 to early 2011 to formulate a “Peace and Development Strategy” (PDS), a resource-intensive process that consisted of consultations with a wide cross-section of local and international actors, involving more than 60 people from 12 major development partners.<sup>24</sup> The Strategy articulated a common vision not only for UNCT members but also for bilateral and multilateral donors. (Remarkably, the World Bank, reflecting limited interest in engaging with the

UNCT, was the one significant development actor that chose not to sign the document). The Strategy detailed how these actors could “assist Nepal in the years ahead [to] realise the agenda laid out in the [CPA],” with emphasis on inclusion, good governance and state restructuring.<sup>25</sup>

This process certainly served as a demonstration of the convening power of the UN and proved useful as an information-sharing tool and stock-taking exercise among development partners. That said, according to an evaluation of international development actors’ support to the overall peace process conducted by the government of Denmark, the process ultimately “failed to have a life beyond publication date.” The reasons for the short shelf-life could be partly found in the inherent difficulty of coordinating a fragmented donor-landscape that is driven by divergent interests and partly, in possible shortcomings of the process, including an overly broad set of issues and activities combined with the absence of an implementation strategy or mechanism and the failure to secure the buy-in from the Nepali government.<sup>26</sup> Interviews conducted by this author confirm these shortcomings, while pointing out that getting buy-in from the government would always have been a challenge given its instability and dysfunctionality at the time. These interviews also pointed to another factor explaining the PDS’s limited traction, namely that many of the donor embassies’ key personnel involved in its development left the country after its completion, with their replacements feeling no ownership over the document.

While the PDS may not have succeeded in significantly affecting the programming of donors, it was certainly used as a basis for subsequent planning by the RC, who, as a follow-up step to the PDS developed a UN Peacebuilding Strategy which identified programming priorities for the UNCT. This then formed the basis for a second Nepal Priority Plan submission for funding through the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

### Resourcing

The establishment of new financing mechanisms for peace-related UNCT activities and the raising of additional resources to strengthen the RC Office in key areas were prerequisites for the office to play an enhanced role in prevention and peacebuilding.

An important tool to promote strategic and conflict-sensitive programming across multiple UNCT members has been the UN Peace Fund for Nepal (UNPFN), a multi-donor trust fund established by UNMIN in 2007 (and in place until 2016) and meant to finance UN-led projects to deliver “tangible peace dividends [addressing] gender, human rights and social inclusion needs... with a special emphasis on the most marginalized.”<sup>27</sup> Transferred to the RC Office in 2009, the fund has helpfully underpinned the UNCT’s peace process support activities.<sup>28</sup> Most importantly, it served as a key tool to incentivize strategic and coordinated UNCT approaches to support peacebuilding and development. Receiving

contributions from the UN’s Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in New York (indeed, Nepal was the first country where the PBF contributed to a pooled fund) and donor countries, the UNPFN helped address gaps in the implementation of the CPA that could not be implemented or funded by other mechanisms, including a parallel fund administered by the government, the Nepal Peace Trust Fund.<sup>29</sup> Throughout its lifetime, the UNPFN disbursed a total of US\$26 million through eighteen projects (constituting an estimated 10-15% of overall ODA spent on peace process support).<sup>30</sup>

A 2016 independent evaluation of the UNPFN praised the fund for creating convergence within the UN system and for its consistent support for projects that addressed root causes of the conflict, namely issues of inclusion of marginalised groups, especially women, Dalits, and indigenous ethnic groups (Janajatis).<sup>31</sup> It found that “there are indications that UNPFN has made a strong contribution” to the prevention of conflict relapse in Nepal, in particular through its support to the reintegration of demobilised Maoist combatants (to which a full third of its total funding was dedicated and which is discussed in greater detail below), the 2013 elections and demining.<sup>32</sup> It concluded that “the UNPFN maintained a continuous focus on the underlying issues which, if left unresolved, would have triggered the unravelling of the peace process.”<sup>33</sup>

As part of a “Transition Support Strategy,” the RC also proved highly successful in raising funds with donors locally to strengthen its ability to play a proactive peace process support. The rationale for strengthening the RC Office’s role in supporting the peace process grew significantly from 2008 onwards as UNMIN and OHCHR were forced to dramatically reduce their presences outside Kathmandu and both missions eventually withdrew in 2011 and 2012, respectively. Raising funds from various bilateral donors through their representations in Nepal,<sup>34</sup> the RC was able to set up an expanded Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator’s Office (RCHCO) in August 2010, designed to provide enhanced and integrated support on a range of peacebuilding issues.

Key elements of that expanded office, which grew from five to a total of 60 staff within 18 months,<sup>35</sup> included:

- a) the addition, in 2010, of a “Peace Unit” within the RC’s office (composed of a “P-4” Peacebuilding Advisor, a “P3” Programme Specialist, and Programme Analyst, with the latter two principally acting as the Secretariat to the UNPFN), which allowed the RC to step up his coordination and strategy formulation around peacebuilding priorities.
- b) the creation of four “Field Coordination Offices” to provide early warning, analysis and UNCT coordination at the district-level.

Complementing the strengthened RCHCO was the establishment, in 2011, of a three-member UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) liaison team to ensure continued

political engagement of the UN system in Nepal following UNMIN's departure and to support the RC's good offices.<sup>36</sup> (Both the Field Coordination Offices and the DPA Liaison Office will be discussed in greater detail below.)

A 2016 review by the Clingendael Institute on the lessons learned from the role of the expanded RC Office during Nepal's transition pointed to a number of prerequisites for successful resource mobilization. It singled out, in particular: a) an eager donor environment combined with close engagement of donors by the RC; and b) effective countering of potential concerns by other UNCT members that the RC's resource mobilisation might compete with their own fundraising efforts. In this context, the RC's credible commitment that his expanded office would carry out a service provider role that would benefit the wider country team and his framing of the "Transition Support Strategy" as a programme focused on conflict prevention were helpful in overcoming potential UNCT concerns.<sup>37</sup>

However, the RC's fundraising success in Nepal also had a downside by creating an expensive infrastructure that was initially only conceived for the short-term, which proved overly optimistic as political turmoil delayed the adoption of a new Constitution again and again. As a result, the RCO soon found itself in a precarious financial situation, forcing it to be in constant fundraising mode, significantly diminishing its ability to conceive of and commit to more medium-term and substantive efforts, because of a lack of clarity if certain RCO capacities would still be funded 6-12 months down the line. As one interviewee put it: "I think the big lesson is that donors need to accept that such fragile/transitional contexts are often enduring and non-linear and don't stick to timetables laid out in peace accord".<sup>38</sup>

### Specific Interventions and Initiatives

In the case of Nepal, there were numerous initiatives, projects and programmes launched by individual UN agencies aimed at addressing specific conflict drivers or advancing specific peacebuilding goals, including such signature successes as making Nepal a mine-free country within a few years of signing the peace accord. This section, however, will only look at those initiatives, in which the RC had a significant role and/or which were jointly carried out in an interagency context.

#### *An enhanced political role for the Resident Coordinator's Office*

Against the background of UNMIN's departure in 2011, and in what is widely seen as a major innovation, the UN DPA and the RC in Nepal piloted a model on how to ensure continuity in terms of political engagement in the context of a transition from a mission to a non-mission setting. Upon DPA's initiative and with its funding, a DPA Liaison Office was established, collocated with the RC Office, to provide political analysis and support to the RC after the departure of UNMIN. The Liaison

Office, which continued to be in place as of December 2017, consists of three analysts (one international at P5 level and two national professionals). Reporting to UN Headquarters (HQ), but keeping the RC informed, the Liaison Office ensured that the DPA was kept abreast of developments in Nepal after UNMIN's withdrawal and that UNHQ engagement and messaging on peace process-related issues would be well-informed, timely and productive.<sup>39</sup> The Liaison Office also built networks and relationships with key actors across Nepali politics and society, providing a solid basis for ongoing political engagement, including by senior UN officials.

RC Piper and an independent assessment<sup>40</sup> suggested that the DPA Liaison Office was a helpful asset for the RC's efforts to engage politically and assume a more preventive posture, by ensuring that RC and UNCT activities related to peacebuilding were underpinned by political analysis. Several other members of the UN Country Team agreed that the Liaison Office had potential value but lamented that its actual value was undermined, at least in its early years, by the fact that it did not have a reporting line to the RC and was not well integrated into the work of the RCO and Country Team.

#### *Local-level early warning, situation analysis, and coordination*

As mentioned above, to compensate for the contraction and subsequent withdrawal of UNMIN and the OHCHR mission, the RC Office established in 2010 four three-member Field and Coordination Offices (FCOs), staffed with humanitarian and development coordination specialists, providing the RC Office with eyes and ears on the ground, allowing for early warning and analysis of trends in the Terai region and elsewhere.<sup>41</sup> Initially headed by an international P4, by 2013 the FCOs were staffed exclusively by Nepali nationals, "as both a cost-saving and sustainability measure."<sup>42</sup> (The offices were closed in March 2017, when donor funding ran out). While the rationale for the creation of these field offices was specific to the context of a transition from a mission to a non-mission setting, one could well imagine that similar offices might prove useful (and politically feasible) in other non-mission contexts, making an assessment of their value worthwhile.

Providing ongoing situation analysis, the FCOs also fed into bi-weekly "Field Bulletins" and "Monthly Updates"<sup>43</sup> published by the RC Office, that provided real-time updates on developments critical to the peace process, ensuring that development partners would be sensitized to opportunities and risks to peacebuilding. Given the political sensitivities at play, these bulletins were remarkably straightforward in pointing to issues, such as: a) emerging risks to the peace process;<sup>44</sup> b) "hotspot areas" at imminent risk of identity-based conflict and violence;<sup>45</sup> c) caste-based discrimination in certain districts;<sup>46</sup> d) mobilization strategies of certain ethnic groups;<sup>47</sup> and e) drivers of certain groups' underrepresentation in the Nepalese Army.<sup>48</sup> Some of these bulletins also provided in-depth analysis of local capacities that have helped prevent the outbreak or escalation of violence soon after instances

of major tension in volatile districts, that could potentially be bolstered by international support.<sup>49</sup> The analysis provided by the field offices also helped inform the 2011 CCA by ensuring that voices from the field were heard through facilitation of discussions between staff of UN agencies and local stakeholders.

Over time, the field coordination also came to fulfil an early warning and conflict prevention function, acting as “information hubs that actively gather timely information and channel it to appropriate responders as critical situations evolve”<sup>50</sup> – and occasionally acting by themselves to avert escalation. For instance, in the context of significant unrest and violent clashes in Nepal’s far-western region in the run-up to the 28 May 2012 deadline for the adoption of a Constitution, the field offices seemed to have played a critical role in preventing a volatile situation from spiralling out of control. The RCHCO, thanks to daily situational reports provided by the field offices, “was one of the only independent actors to be able to provide regular (often almost ‘real-time’) field-based and preventative analysis on events and dynamics (...) dramatically increas[ing] awareness of escalating violent confrontation not only amongst international development partners, but also amongst Nepali political elites.”<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, drawing on its wide networks on the ground, the field offices successfully activated human rights actors to get engaged in preventive dialogues and dispatched UN staff to hotspot locations to show their presence, signal the UN’s concern, and to engage actively with local actors.<sup>52</sup> At one point in May, the field office in Dadeldhura successfully dissuaded two opposing groups from organizing major demonstrations on the same day in the same town, which, in the heated atmosphere at the time would have been a recipe for violence.<sup>53</sup>

### *Conflict-sensitive Programming*

A further prevention related initiative in Nepal from which interesting lessons can be derived is the RC-driven effort to push UN agencies towards more conflict-sensitive programming. At the “vision” level, as discussed above, he did so by focusing the CCA and the UNDAF towards underlying conflict drivers, in particular marginalisation. This effort, along with the RC’s emphasis on the importance of conflict sensitivity more broadly, created a conducive environment for a complementary effort at the operational level, namely the establishment in 2010, of a conflict prevention programme within UNDP that featured a dedicated five-member conflict sensitivity unit. That unit, one of the few of its kind, was tasked to support the UN Country Team in conflict sensitive programming and application of “do no harm” approaches through training, workshops, guidance, and the sharing of best practices, all aimed at programmatic agency staff at the mid- to senior management level.

The effort featured a number of innovative and good practices worth emulating: a) the strong push toward conflict sensitivity coming from the very top, i.e. the RC himself; b) dedicated

effort, as part of a joint initiative with the RCO and UNICEF, to provide training on conflict sensitivity to key staff across UN agencies, where literacy on the issue tends to vary widely; and c) the extension of conflict sensitivity training to Nepali civil servants by developing a training module to be taught at Nepal’s National Administrative Staff College.<sup>54</sup>

Importantly, the RC’s focus on promoting conflict sensitivity also included a dedicated effort towards more inclusive hiring practices among UN agencies, to balance the predominance of staff from high-caste advantaged ethnic groups as well as periodic reviews of UN agencies’ practices of selecting local NGOs as development partners (who are the implementers of much of the UN’s development programmes) to encourage attention to their ethnic and caste composition. To foster greater workforce diversity among Nepal’s UN Country Team, the RC tried to generate baseline data on UNCT staff composition, from which to develop targets for a positive discrimination policy in recruitment. That proved difficult, however, in light of some agencies’ disingenuous claim that asking staff to reveal their ethnic identity constituted an infringement on their human rights. In 2010, the RC also initiated a UNCT-wide Joint UN Trainee Programme for Socially Excluded Groups in Nepal. The programme, which ran for several years, targeted recent university graduates among historically excluded groups and was meant to enhance their professional competencies in fields such as general administration, project management, M&E, and human resource management through 11 months full-time on-the-job training and mentorship in a UN office setting. Around 20 trainees were selected during the programme’s first year at a cost of around \$5,500 per trainee. Trainees were allowed to apply and compete for UN posts after graduation from the traineeship programme.

However, interviews carried out for this study also revealed a number of inherent challenges of driving conflict sensitivity programming and explain why the initiative in Nepal, while competently implemented, “never panned out in a strategic way.”<sup>55</sup> First among these challenges was the difficulty of getting managerial level buy-in to such an initiative within UN agencies. This difficulty was arguably compounded by the fact that the conflict sensitivity unit was housed within one specific agency rather than the RC Office as well as the fact that the unit was set up relatively late in the peace process, at a time when Nepali authorities, donors, and UNCT members were starting to talk about “normalisation” and reverting to a development-business business-as-usual posture.

Second, and at a deeper level, is the fact that the way the UN (and the wider development community) engages in development planning and implementation is inherently unconducive to conflict sensitivity. Indeed, conflict sensitivity, by nature, requires constant adaptation to political processes that tend to be non-linear, contested, characterized by setbacks, and different from one locality to another. By contrast, UN development planning, embedded in multi-year programmatic cycles, progress on which is measured



in tight log-frame formats, does allow for little flexibility and adaptation. And instead of programme implementation being accompanied by ongoing context analysis, including at the local level, development planning tends to be informed by a single, “big picture” assessment undertaken at the outset of the program cycle (i.e. the CCA). While this structure still provides room for introducing conflict sensitivity in the programme design phase, it disincentivizes course correction down the road, with programme managers and donors reluctant to review, adjust and question programmes mid-way through the lens of conflict sensitivity.

Meanwhile, to do conflict sensitivity well requires additional time and resources. With donors and UN agencies always seeking to minimize costs, it would be unrealistic and inefficient to expect individual agencies to engage in context analysis, which is a function that should be, as a matter of standard practice be embedded in RC Offices.

#### *Reintegration of ex-combatants*

One of the CPA central provisions was related to the integration and rehabilitation of former Maoist Army personnel as well as the downsizing and democratization of the Nepalese Army. The UN, however, possessed very limited leverage to influence implementation of these aspects. UNMIN’s mandate was limited to monitoring weapons and armies on both sides (and it competently discharged this role, including the cantonment of 32,000 Maoist combatants and the eventual verification of about 19,600 of them).<sup>56</sup> However, both India and the Nepalese Army resisted UNMIN’s discreet efforts to assist with the integration of the Maoist army as the first step of broader security sector reform. UNMIN withdrew in January 2011 with Maoist Army integration still unresolved.

While the UN found itself unable to facilitate progress at the macro-level, the UNCT was able to assist the process on the margins, in particular with respect to supporting the reintegration of Maoist Army personnel who had been “disqualified” during UNMIN’s verification process in 2007-08 because they were minors at the time of the May 2006 ceasefire or were recently recruited during that time (and, therefore, were ineligible for integration into Nepal’s security forces). When the Maoist Army, in 2010 and after a two-year negotiation process, finally agreed to release from its cantonment camps the around 4,000 “verified minors and late recruits”, the UNCT stood ready to offer support to their transition into civilian life. This was made possible thanks to a year-long planning process within the context of the UNDAF thematic groups and the setting aside of stand-by capacity, leading to the establishment of a UN Interagency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP). UNIRP ran from 2010-14 and was jointly managed by UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, and ILO and most of the US\$12 million in programme costs were funded by the UN Peace Fund for Nepal.<sup>57</sup>

The Programme, which constituted the only significant effort at ex-combatant reintegration in Nepal,<sup>58</sup> included offering

vocational training, education, micro-enterprise development and health-related training to the 2,234 verified minors and late recruits who enrolled in the programme.<sup>59</sup> By December 2013, 71.5% of those who graduated from UNIRP education and vocational training programmes had been employed or running their own business, corresponding to 32% of those disqualified.<sup>60</sup>

An independent evaluation of the UNIRP programme, carried out 21 months before its conclusion, concluded that the programme, given the political constraints, “performed satisfactorily”, and contributed to moving the fragile peace process forward by helping to resolve the issue of minor and late recruits and thus removing an important hurdle to a negotiated outcome regarding reintegration of the remaining Maoist combatants. Among the programme beneficiaries interviewed for the evaluation, 81% said they would not join any armed struggle in the future.<sup>61</sup> Among the good practices it identified relevant to this case study was the UN’s delivering-as-one approach through joint planning, programming and implementation, which was exceptional to DDR-related planning, that also helped ensure extensive gender support, health training, and psycho-social support to participants.<sup>62</sup> It also praised the dedicated engagement of the RC, a necessity given the high political sensitivity of the programme.<sup>63</sup>

### **3. Overall Contribution of RC and UNCT Activities to Prevention**

The Nepal case study shows the potential of RC Offices in reorienting the UNCT’s posture and activities toward peacebuilding and prevention, attuned to underlying conflict drivers. The arrival in 2008 of a new RC, Robert Piper, who invested significant energies in aligning UNCT activities behind peacebuilding priorities, mobilized the UN’s development presence towards enhanced and integrated peace process support. In doing so, he benefited from strong donor support as well as the existence of a pooled peacebuilding fund (UNPFN), which facilitated catalytic funding and UN coherence, providing a positive contrast to evaluations of many UNCT-led peacebuilding activities elsewhere perennially lamenting a fragmentation of the UN effort.

Specific activities that had a demonstrably positive effect on the peace process – the absence of which might have taken the peace process on a different path – includes the successful rehabilitation and integration of “verified minors and late recruits” among the cantoned Maoist combatants. The expansion of the RCO, and in particular the establishment of field coordination offices, allowed the Resident Coordinator to show the UN’s presence outside the capital even after UNMIN’s and the OHCHR’s departure, signalling to Nepalis that the UN had not given up on the peace process – and the country at large. The field offices also provided an important early warning and early response function, possibly mitigating the risk of wider intercommunal violence in the run-up to the

28 May 2012 constitution deadline.

The UN's achievements notwithstanding, the UN peacebuilding efforts in Nepal ultimately only made a moderate impact in meaningfully and sustainably addressing the root causes of Nepal's conflict. This is largely a function of the resistance of Nepali elites to changing the status quo, impeding progress toward fulfilling the CPA's commitment to a restructured, more inclusive state capable of redressing the grievances of marginalised groups. Despite the CPA and other on-paper commitments, including a 2007 civil service law requiring 45% of posts to be reserved for women and marginalised groups, the representation of women, minorities and Dalits in state institutions remains low, especially in the highest ranks of government.<sup>64</sup> Poverty and illiteracy rates remain significantly higher among Hill and Terai Dalits than among other groups, and Dalits and Terai Janajatis continue to experience discrimination in the labour market.<sup>65</sup> Progress has stalled on the land reform mandated by the CPA.<sup>66</sup> Rather than illustrating the futility of internationally-led development efforts, this state of affairs demonstrates the fact that addressing structural root causes is a long-term endeavour, which should guide long-term UN agency programming beyond short transition periods.

#### 4. Lessons, Good Practices and Recommendations

**For the RC to play an enhanced preventive role, entry points are helpful – but RC leadership is a sine qua non:** The CPA, with its focus on socio-economic conflict drivers, combined with significant international (and donor) attention to Nepal, provided entry points, political space and a conducive funding environment for the RC to adopt and pursue an activist approach to peacebuilding and prevention. However, it required the arrival of a new RC, who was ready to fully exploit these opportunities, for his office and the broader UNCT to live up to their full peacebuilding and prevention potential.

**The CCA, UNDAF and dedicated coordination processes around prevention strategies can be helpful tools for the RC to align the UNCT and donors behind prevention priorities and drive conflict sensitive programming:** Although RCs have no "directive authority" over UNCT members, the Nepal case shows that they still have important mobilising potential in aligning both the UNCT and the donor community behind common peacebuilding goals. In the Nepal case, the CCA, the UNDAF, and the establishment of coordination processes around the development of peacebuilding strategies for both donors and the UNCT have served as useful tools in fostering a common prevention outlook among development actors. However, to run these processes in productive ways required significant staff resources and was only possible because the RC could rely on donor support for a significantly expanded RC Office.

**However, CCAs and UNDAFs cannot be the end-all, be-all in efforts to promote conflict sensitivity:** CCAs and

UNDAFs, with their four-year and notoriously inflexible programming cycle, while helpful to ensure conflict sensitivity at the outset of a programming cycle, are ill-suited to respond to often volatile dynamics in transition settings. The CCA will need to be complemented by ongoing context analysis which should feed into regular review and, if necessary, adjustment of programmes throughout programming cycle to ensure conflict sensitivity. Meanwhile, the UNDAF may need to be complemented by shorter-term and more flexible transition strategies, providing strategic guidance to UN Country Team members on evolving prevention and peacebuilding priorities.

**Development interventions need to be embedded in risk and context analysis:** The role of development actors in Nepal throughout the 1990s and early 2000s shows that to improve upstream prevention, development interventions need to be sensitive to political contexts. In fragile countries affected by pervasive exclusion, aid agencies need to be more attuned to the dangers of elite capture of aid flows, which might fuel horizontal inequalities and exacerbate conflict risk. This implies that development actors need to have access to capacities to design development interventions based on in-depth analysis of conflict risks and the political economy.

**The establishment of conflict sensitivity units can prove helpful in promoting conflict sensitivity and do-no-harm approaches across agencies:** The establishment of the conflict sensitivity unit in Nepal spearheaded some innovative practices and its experience allows to draw a number of lessons for similar exercises elsewhere, including: a) the advantage of setting up such units within the RCO rather than any individual agency – both in terms of cost-efficiency and ability to get buy-in from other agencies; b) the value of offering UNCT wide-trainings in conflict sensitivity; c) the need to extend such trainings to the host government and local implementing NGOs; and d) the critical importance, in settings affected by structural exclusion of ethnic groups, of proactively pursuing inclusive recruitment practices (which will likely require a policy decision at the level of the RC) and the ethnic composition of local NGOs in the selection of implementing partners. To foster the latter, the RC initiated a UNCT-wide Joint UN Trainee Programme for Socially Excluded Groups in Nepal, which helped increase the pool of qualified candidates among historically marginalized groups and could serve as a model for UNCTs elsewhere.

**For the UNDAF to drive conflict sensitive programming in settings marked by exclusion, indicators need to be based on data disaggregated by different marginalized groups:** Where exclusion is an important conflict driver, any development programming should be based on an in-depth analysis of the dynamics of marginalisation, as well as a detailed identification of particularly vulnerable groups. The 2011 CCA in Nepal is widely viewed as a model approach in this respect. For the UNDAF to measurably drive priority attention of UN agencies' programming to these vulnerable groups, it is essential that outcome indicators are formulated

accordingly. This in turn requires the availability of baseline data that disaggregates according to marginalised groups and gender, which is often not readily available, calling for concerted and UNCT-wide efforts to generate such data.

**Enhanced preventive action by the RC requires dedicated resources, which, in the right conditions, can be raised locally:** The ability of the RC to engage proactively in peacebuilding and prevention was in no small degree a function of added capacity and resources. For the RC to assume leadership necessary to mobilize and align UNCT members and donors around common conflict analysis and peacebuilding in 2010-11, it required significant investments in time and human resources, which was only made possible by adding a dedicated peacebuilding team to the RC Office. The Nepal case, in this respect, illustrates the potential of the RC Office in locally mounting and leading fundraising efforts with bilateral donors stationed in-country – at least in a situation where the presence of a highly entrepreneurial RC coincides with the necessary donor interest. Meanwhile, the Nepal case also shows the difficulty of sustaining the funding at levels necessary to maintain the expanded capacity, especially when peace or transition processes hit a snag – as they often tend to. If donors and the UN are going to establish such capacities, they need to be prepared to sustain them for the medium-term and be willing to absorb setbacks.

**Staff continuity reinforces effective prevention:** The Nepal case study offers numerous examples where important prevention initiatives and strategies (e.g. the 2013-17 UNDAF or the 2011 Peace and Development Strategy) lost steam as a result of turn-over of staff both among UN agencies as well as the donor community. Meanwhile, Robert Piper attributes any successes he achieved at least partly to the fact that he was deployed to the country for five years, a continuity that allowed him to build lasting relationships and to accompany for an extended period peacebuilding and prevention efforts that tend to be long-term in nature. UN Country Team members as well as bilateral donor agencies should therefore place greater effort in fostering staff continuity and longer-term deployments in transition settings.

**Establishment of a DPA Liaison Office within RC Offices can significantly enhance their preventive role:** The establishment of a DPA Liaison Office provides a useful model for enhancing political and preventive engagement of RCs, that could be applied beyond settings marked by a transition from a mission to a non-mission setting. The Nepal case also suggests that for such Liaison Offices to live up to their full potential in terms of enhancing the preventive role of RCs, they should be closely integrated into the work of the RCO and prevention-related activities of the UN Country Team.

**Small field presences outside the capital can significantly strengthen the RCO's conflict analysis and early warning components:** While in Nepal, the rationale for the creation of these field offices was specific to the context of a transition from a mission to a non-mission setting, similar offices might no doubt prove useful (and politically feasible) in other non-mission contexts. In Nepal, these offices were groundbreaking in serving an early warning (and at times an early response) function and in providing real-time analysis of local political dynamics that informed the interventions and programming of all major development actors.

**Dedicated pooled funding mechanisms can enhance coherence and effectiveness of RC-led preventive action:** In Nepal, the existence of a pooled peacebuilding fund available to support all UN agencies has helped underpin the realignment of UNCT programming around peacebuilding priorities. Among the UNPFN's specific practices that should be replicated elsewhere are: a) its projects tailored for vulnerable populations or geographic areas and particular attention to gender sensitivity across all projects; b) its flexible modalities for rapid mobilisation and disbursement of funds; and c) exemplary stakeholder involvement in project design, including at the community level.<sup>67</sup> The Nepal case also shows that for such a fund to live up to its potential requires a dedicated Secretariat running it (in the case of Nepal, 2 full-time staff), as neither an RC nor a fund's executive committee will have the time, technical specialization or programme management capacities to run such a fund.

**RCs and UNCTs can successfully carry out major programmes on the rehabilitation and reintegration of former combatants even in non-mission settings:** The Nepal case, where the UN Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Programme was established to support the socio-economic rehabilitation of "verified minors and late recruits" discharged by the Maoist Army from cantonment sites, shows the potential of UNCT contributions to DDR processes even in non-mission settings. The Rehabilitation Programme also serves as a model for UNCT-wide approaches to DDR in planning, programming and implementation.

## Endnotes

Cover Image: Shutterstock/ Anna Tamila. Kathmandu, Nepal. 4 March 2012. Communists (CPN-UML) against the Maoist (UCPN) party in Kathmandu.

- \* The author would like to thank the following individuals for agreeing to be interviewed and/or reviewing the draft: Peter Barwick, Marlies Bull, Rohan Hemantha Edrisinha, Lach Fergusson, Sarah Hilding, Ian Martin, Prem Singh Nayak, John Norris, Robert Piper, Tamrat Samuel, Catherine Sung, Caroline Vandenabeele. The author bears sole responsibility for any mistakes or omissions in this report, and the views expressed in this report are not necessarily shared by the individuals listed above.
- 1 This section draws in parts on Sebastian von Einsiedel, David Malone, and Suman Pradhan (eds.), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to Fragile Peace*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). This section analysis is indebted to the insights provided by the authors who contributed chapters to this edited volume, in particular Rajeev Chaturvedy, Jörg Frieden, Prashant Jha, David Malone, Ian Martin, Devendra Raj Panday, Suman Pradhan, Frederick Rawski, Mandira Sharma, Catinca Slavu, Deepak Thapa, and Teresa Whitfield.
  - 2 Collier, Paul et al. *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, A World Bank Policy Research Report (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 97, 2003, pp.75–90.; Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers*, no.56, 2003, pp.563–95. Although empirical research on the motivation of those joining the conflict has yet to be undertaken in the Nepali context, such research in other contexts suggests that grievance-based models are incomplete because poverty is also a factor in people's decisions to join both insurgency and counterinsurgency rebellion and counter-rebellion. In addition, involuntary participation is a fundamental, poverty-related aspect of revolutionary mobilization and political violence. See: Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy Weinstein. "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War." *American Journal of Political Science*, vol.52, no.2, April 2008, pp.436-455, [www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/who\\_fights.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/who_fights.pdf).
  - 3 Pfaff-Czarnecka, Joanna. "High Expectations, Deep Disappointment: politics, state and society in Nepal after 1990." *People's War in a Hindu Kingdom: Maoism in Nepal*, edited by M. Hutt, Hurst, 2004, p.175.
  - 4 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, para. 3.5.
  - 5 "Nepal's Peace Process: The Endgame Nears." International Crisis Group, ICG Report 131, 13 December 2011, p. 1.
  - 6 "Monthly Update – April 2012." UN Resident Coordinator's Office. 2012, pp.1-2; See also "Monthly Update – May 2012." UN Resident Coordinator's Office, p. 1-.
  - 7 The Terai is the southern flatlands bordering India, inhabited in its eastern and central regions mostly by Madhesis who share a common culture and languages with people across the border in India, and in its western portion by Tharus, an indigenous group with a separate identity from Madhesis.
  - 8 Ibid, p. 19.
  - 9 Leve, Lauren. "'Failed Development' and Rural Revolution in Nepal: Rethinking Subaltern Consciousness and Women's Empowerment." *Anthropological Quarterly*, vol. 80, no1, 2007, p. 128.
  - 10 Panday, Devendra Raj. "The Legacy of Nepal's Failed Development." 2012. pp. 81-99.
  - 11 Interview with John Norris. 3 April 2017.
  - 12 "Do No Harm: International Support for Statebuilding." Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2010, p. 86.
  - 13 For evidence of the shift in thinking, see: "Unequal Citizens, Gender, Caste and Ethnic Exclusion in Nepal." DFID and the World Bank. 2006.
  - 14 "Common Country Assessment for Nepal." United Nations Country Team. Kathmandu, 2007. CCAs are the first step undertaken by United Nations Country Teams when preparing for a forthcoming programming cycle.
  - 15 Whitfield, Teresa. "Focused Mission, Not So Limited Duration." 2012, p. 19.
  - 16 Ibid.
  - 17 "A Country Analysis with a Human Face." United Nations Country Team in Nepal. 2011, updated February 2013, [www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/Nepal\\_CountryAanalysis\\_2011\\_Feb2013.pdf](http://www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/Nepal_CountryAanalysis_2011_Feb2013.pdf)
  - 18 Interview with Robert Piper. 27 March 2017.
  - 19 "United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Nepal 2013-2017." United Nations Country Team Nepal. 2012. For details on the UN's tussle with the government of Nepal over the UNDAF, see Jha, Prashant. "Walk the Talk." *Kathmandu Post*, 22 August 2012. and "On with inclusion." *The Kathmandu Post*, 5 December 2013.
  - 20 See for instance Jha, P. "Walk the talk: PM Bhattarai must rein in his bureaucrats, who are undermining an inclusive development agenda." *The Kathmandu Post*, 22 August 2012.
  - 21 UN Country Team, *Independent Evaluation: UNDAF 2008-10*, Kathmandu, 2011, pp. 13-14. Similarly, a 2011 Evaluation of the gender equality and social inclusion pillar of the 2008 UNDAF lamented the absence of disaggregated indicators. See: Kelles-Vitanen, Anita and Ava Shrestha. "Gender Equality and Social Inclusion: Independent Evaluation." UN Country Team Nepal. Kathmandu, 2011, p. 15.

- 22 "Nepal UNDAF 2013-2017 Evaluation Summary." United Nations. pp. 3-4
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 "Joint Evaluation of the international support to the peace process in Nepal 2006-12," Independent Evaluation, Ministry of Foreign affairs Denmark, August 2013.
- 25 "Nepal Peace and Development Strategy 2010-2015." United Nations. January 2011, [www.un.org.np/report/pds-2010-2015](http://www.un.org.np/report/pds-2010-2015).
- 26 "Joint Evaluation of the international support to the peace process in Nepal 2006-12." 2013, p. 72-73.
- 27 Nepal Peacebuilding Support Strategy, Section 3a.
- 28 See: "United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal." United Nations Nepal Information Platform. [un.org.np/coordinationmechanism/unpfn](http://un.org.np/coordinationmechanism/unpfn).
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 For absolute numbers, see U Development Group, "Final Report on Activities Implemented under the UN Peace Fund for Nepal: for the period 2007 to 2016." August 2016, p. 11; For share of over ODA, see "Joint Evaluation of the International Support to the Peace Process in Nepal – 2007-2012," Danish International Development Agency (Danida). 2013.
- 31 "Independent Evaluation of the UN Peace Fund for Nepal." Environmental Resources Institute. September 2016, pp.7-8.
- 32 Ibid, p. 55.
- 33 Ibid, p. 8.
- 34 The two-year overall budget for the expanded RCHCO amounted to US\$5,550,000. See UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office: "Status of the implementation of the Transition Support Strategy (TSS)," Internal UN document. June 2011, p. 3. Donors included DFID, Norway, Switzerland, and Sweden.
- 35 Price, Megan and Lina Titulae, "Beyond Transitions: UNDP's role before, during and after UN Mission withdrawal." The Clingendael Institute, Conflict Research Unit Report, The Hague, September 2013, p. 28. The 60 staff, however, included two dozen administrative and logistical support staff, such as drivers or assistants. Interview with former UN staff in Nepal. 13 October 2017.
- 36 Piper, Robert. "Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office in Nepal: Project Document." 27 October 2009; See also "Status of the implementation of the Transition Support Strategy (TSS)," UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office. Internal UN document. June 2011, p. 2.
- 37 Price, M and Lina Titulae. 2013, pp. 25 and 27.
- 38 Interview with former UN Staff in Nepal. 13 October 2017.
- 39 See for instance "Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on Nepal" of 14 May 2012, adopted in the context of rising tension in the country's far-west in the run up to the 28 May 2012 Constitutional deadline, which was triggered by the DPA Liaison Office and helped to signal to national actors that the international community was watching events on the ground. Interview with former UN Staff in Nepal. 13 October 2017.
- 40 Price and Titulae, "Beyond Transitions," p. 26-27.
- 41 Interview with Robert Piper. 27 March 2017.
- 42 Price, M and Lina Titulae. 2013, p. 25.
- 43 All Field Bulletins can be found at: <http://www.un.org.np/resources/field-bulletins>. The Monthly Updates can be found at: <http://www.un.org.np/resources/situation-update>.
- 44 See, for instance: "Field Bulletin: 2012: Potential Risks to Peace and Development in the Field." UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Issue 33, January 2012, [www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/2012-01-30-Field-Bulletin-Issue-33.pdf](http://www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/2012-01-30-Field-Bulletin-Issue-33.pdf).
- 45 See "Field Bulletin: Confrontation over Federalism: Emerging Dynamics of Identity-based Conflict and Violence," Issue 41, May 2012.
- 46 "Field Bulletin: 2013: Caste-based discrimination in Nepal: a local-level perspective from Dadeldhura District." UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Issue 59, August 2013, [www.un.org.np/headlines/rchco-field-bulletin-59](http://www.un.org.np/headlines/rchco-field-bulletin-59).
- 47 "Field Bulletin: 2013: An Overview of the History of Tharu Mobilization." UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Issue 54, April 2013, [www.un.org.np/headlines/field-bulletin-54](http://www.un.org.np/headlines/field-bulletin-54).
- 48 "Field Bulletin: 2013: Inclusiveness of the Nepal Army: Why is the Madheshi community under-represented?" UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Issue 52, February 2013 [www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/2013-03-01-field-bulletin-52.pdf](http://www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/2013-03-01-field-bulletin-52.pdf).
- 49 "Field Bulletin: 'Local capacities for peace.'" UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Issue 55, May 2013, [www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/2013-05-03-field-bulletin-55.pdf](http://www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/2013-05-03-field-bulletin-55.pdf).
- 50 "Status of the implementation of the Transition Support Strategy (TSS)." UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office. Internal UN document, June 2011, p. 7.
- 51 "Transition Support Strategy (TSS) Nepal: Autumn 2012 Status Report: Achievements, Challenges, Way Forward." UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office Nepal. Undated and unpublished document prepared for donors of the TSS, p.25.
- 52 "After Action Report: Early Warning and Prevention Measures During April/May 2012." UN RCHCO Nepal. Internal unpublished UN document, 16 February 2013, pp.2-3.
- 53 Interview with UN staff in Nepal. 17 November 2017.

- 
- 54 "UNDP and NASC partner for mainstreaming conflict sensitivity in the Government of Nepal." UN Development Programme. 1 October 2012, [reliefweb.int/report/nepal/undp-and-nasc-partner-mainstreaming-conflict-sensitivity-government-nepal](http://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/undp-and-nasc-partner-mainstreaming-conflict-sensitivity-government-nepal).
- 55 Interview with UN staff. 13 October 2017.
- 56 "Nepal: From Two Armies to One." International Crisis Group, ICG Report no.211. September 18, 2011, p. 4.
- 57 "Final Narrative Programme Report United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Programme," UN Development Group and UN Development Programme, submitted by the Programme Manager for the period of June 2010 to December 2014.
- 58 Robins, Simon and Ram Kumar Bhandari. "Poverty, stigma and alienation: Reintegration challenges of ex-Maoist combatants in Nepal." Berghof Foundation. May 2016, p. 17.
- 59 "Final Narrative Programme Report United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Programme."
- 60 UNIRP Newsletter. December 2013.
- 61 Ibid. p.31.
- 62 "Independent Evaluation of the UN Interagency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP) in Nepal." Transition International. 21 March 2013.
- 63 Ibid. p. 19.
- 64 See: "Freedom in the World 2016: Nepal." Freedom House. 2016, [freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/Nepal](http://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/Nepal).
- 65 "Nepal Social Inclusion Survey 2012: Caste, Ethnic and Gender Dimensions of Socio-Economic Development, Governance and Social Solidarity." Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology at Tribhuvan University. Kathmandu, March 2014, p. xxxii-xxxiii.
- 66 The issue is unhelpfully linked with land confiscated by Maoists during the conflict. As of late 2007, Maoists still occupy confiscated land in 132 of 401 VDCs surveyed. 2007 OCHA/WFP sample data.
- 67 This recommendation is borrowed from "Independent Evaluation of the UN Peace Fund for Nepal." Environmental Resources Institute. September 2016, pp. 9, 27-30