

## Building Local Capacity for Peace-Sensitive Development in Nepal

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After a decade-long civil conflict, Nepal faces the challenges of a transitional situation wherein conflict sensitivity has been a significant element of development assistance. Since 2010, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been adopting a conflict-sensitive approach (or positively termed as peace-sensitive approach) to development in Nepal. This approach refers to understanding the local context, and identifying and addressing potential risks to development assistance. The peace-sensitive approach, particularly using the peacebuilding tool (PBT), is being used to inform ADB strategies, programs, and projects in Nepal.<sup>1</sup> ADB, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has engaged the government to adopt this approach at the central and local levels through capacity building.

Building local capacity for peace-sensitive development in Nepal enables the government to formulate and implement policies that are sensitive



In a postconflict situation, local stakeholders must understand that negotiated settlements are needed for effective state building.

to conflict, minimizing the risks to development interventions. Conflict sensitivity provides ways to reduce conflict, helps communities build peace, and enables institutions to address the structural causes of conflict.

<sup>1</sup> ADB. 2012. *A Peacebuilding Tool for a Conflict-Sensitive Approach to Development: A Pilot Initiative in Nepal*. Manila. [www.adb.org/publications/peacebuilding-tool-conflict-sensitive-approach-development-pilot-initiative-nepal](http://www.adb.org/publications/peacebuilding-tool-conflict-sensitive-approach-development-pilot-initiative-nepal)

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This publication aims to share the experiences and lessons from the capacity building for peace-sensitive development in Nepal. It also aims to raise awareness of the importance of government leadership and ownership in mainstreaming the peace-sensitive approach in the context of

a transitional or postconflict situation. Other countries experiencing fragility and development agencies may replicate or build upon the conflict-sensitive approach in Nepal to increase aid effectiveness in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCAS).

## Peace Sensitivity Matters in Development

There has been an increasing recognition in the developing world of the importance of and the close linkage between peace and development, and the need to pay more attention to peacebuilding for greater development effectiveness. In 2007, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development established a set of guiding principles for development agencies to enhance engagement in FCAS and help prevent or mitigate conflict.<sup>2</sup> The fragile states principles call for a conflict-sensitive approach to development.<sup>3</sup> Prior to this, in 2005, signatories of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness had agreed to comply with the fundamental principles of ownership, alignment, harmonization, results, and mutual accountability.<sup>4</sup>

ADB adopted a conflict-sensitive approach in FCAS following the Paris Declaration. In 2007, ADB reexamined the situations of its developing member countries with weak governance, civil unrest, ineffective public service delivery, and deteriorating rule of law. The 2007 ADB approach to FCAS calls for better ways of engagement in complex environments and a clear understanding of the local context as a prerequisite to determine relevant or practical approach to development.<sup>5</sup>

ADB's conflict-sensitive approach in FCAS has evolved over time as a key priority in its country operations. ADB has increasingly recognized the interrelationships among state stability, fragility, aid effectiveness, and development. Experience has shown that conflict-sensitive or peacebuilding

principles and processes emphasize the need to address the challenges of working in FCAS, especially in the planning and implementation of development and humanitarian assistance. FCAS presents the most challenging development context that is often affected by political interferences from national to subnational levels and exacerbated by social conflicts. Since fragile contexts vary according to their nature, scale, needs, and opportunities, ADB's conflict-sensitive approach in Nepal involves the application of a PBT (footnote 1). The tool helps development practitioners to understand better the peculiarities of the postconflict situation in Nepal and provide a more coherent and relevant development assistance.

The Government of Nepal and its development partners recognize the importance of a conflict-sensitive approach given Nepal's decade-long civil conflict, delicate and challenging peace process, and postconflict political transition that began in 2006. As a conflict-sensitive approach, the PBT was developed during the preparation of ADB's country partnership strategy, 2010–2012 for Nepal. The PBT was introduced in ADB operations in Nepal to reduce social tensions in the delicate political transition, and to contribute to peacebuilding and development efforts.

Since 2010, a conflict-sensitive approach using the PBT has helped enhance the design and implementation of some 20 community-based projects supported by ADB. As a result, there have been wider

<sup>2</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2007. *Principles for Fragile States and Institutions*. Paris. [www.oecd.org/dac/fragilestates/the10fragilestatesprinciples.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/fragilestates/the10fragilestatesprinciples.htm)

<sup>3</sup> ADB defines a conflict-sensitive approach to development as an institutional capacity to understand both the context in which it operates and the interaction between the intervention and the context, and to act upon this understanding to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive ones.

<sup>4</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2005. *Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action*. Paris. [www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/parisdeclarationandaccraagendaforaction.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/parisdeclarationandaccraagendaforaction.htm)

<sup>5</sup> ADB. 2007. *Achieving Development Effectiveness in Weakly Performing Countries (The Asian Development Bank's Approach to Engaging with Weakly Performing Countries)*. Manila. [www.adb.org/documents/achieving-development-effectiveness-weakly-performing-countries-asian-development-bank-s-a](http://www.adb.org/documents/achieving-development-effectiveness-weakly-performing-countries-asian-development-bank-s-a)

participation of local stakeholders, greater ownership of project activities, and more effective delivery of the intended project outputs and outcomes. Using the PBT has helped improve the quality of project designs by identifying key peacebuilding indicators, incorporating innovative ideas on interventions, and suggesting implementation approaches that could contribute to social cohesion by addressing specific ethnic or geographic issues.

Some of the outcomes of using the PBT to enhance ADB project designs are the integration of social activities in a highway project, the inclusion of livelihood interventions in an energy project, and the identification of target groups in an urban development project. The PBT was also used in project implementation, particularly in monitoring, midterm reviews, and assessment of the local context. The PBT has, for example, helped in improving a rural road project by providing an opportunity to capture and address local demands. The PBT also assisted in selecting a suitable geographic location for an urban project. As a result of using the PBT, adjustments have been made to grant subprojects as peace dividends to conflict victims. These outcomes have raised awareness among district project implementation units of

the effectiveness of the PBT. The implementation issues that have surfaced through the PBT were shared with staff members, which prompted them to remain flexible and make the necessary changes in a project. It should be noted that there are specific conflict contexts based on geographic location, where project designs should be tailored in response to the local situation.

Applying the PBT and achieving the intended results were not without challenges and shortcomings. The PBT has been developed and introduced under Nepal's country partnership strategy, 2010–2012, requiring difficult and significant efforts in raising institutional and public awareness of the need for and benefits of such new approach. The PBT was based on learning by doing (given the challenges of limited resources for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation); institutional capacity (both in the government and within ADB); and Nepal's ongoing complex and protracted political transition. Overall, lessons from using the PBT show that there is a need to build capacity in government executing and implementing agencies to understand the purpose of the conflict-sensitive approach and the use of the PBT to strengthen the quality of project design and implementation.

## The Challenges of Transition

Nepal's decade-long civil conflict—fueled by, among other factors, widespread poverty and deep-seated social exclusion and socioeconomic disparities—ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2006. The peace process that began soon after was marked with further major political upheavals, including the Madhesh movement<sup>6</sup> against the interim constitution in 2007 and the abolition of the 250-year-old monarchy in 2008. There were other historic milestones, such as the holding of Constituent Assembly elections that would draft a new constitution, declaration of a republican and secular state, smooth decommission of the Maoist fighting force, and the successful completion of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Nepal in 2011.



Since 2006, several civil society organizations and nongovernment organizations have emerged in Nepal to address postconflict issues.

<sup>6</sup> The Madhesh movement has raised social exclusion issues, adding new dimension to the peace process.

The Constituent Assembly was, however, dissolved in May 2012 without promulgating the constitution due to differences among the political parties on the federal structure to be adopted in the new constitution. Nevertheless, many other contentious issues were resolved through consensus. This consensus led to the election of the second Constituent Assembly in November 2013. The Constituent Assembly has committed to promulgate the new constitution by 22 January 2015. The constitution drafting has made significant progress, building on the achievements of the previous assembly. But the process has been slow with the contentious issues on federal structure, form of governance, and electoral and judiciary systems.

The November 2013 election also saw the establishment of a new coalition government, which has restored political stability and the enabling environment for advancing the country's economic

reform and development agenda. However, with the continued absence of elected local governments since 2002, full public accountability has been a challenge. The new government is seeking to restore the local governments through local elections, even on an interim basis until the provisions in the new constitution come into effect.

Although the conflict has ended, Nepal continues to be in a challenging political, social, and economic transition toward lasting peace, stability, and sustained economic growth. While the major milestones of the peace process have been achieved, its logical conclusion with the promulgation of the new constitution remains to be seen. The country still faces the challenges of transitioning into the new political, social, and economic order it envisages. In this context, the conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding approaches in development work remain valid, although they will need to be updated and retooled in line with Nepal's evolving transition.

## Using the Peacebuilding Tool as a Conflict-Sensitive Approach

As an input to the country partnership strategy, 2010–2012, ADB conducted a conflict assessment using the PBT. The objectives of the PBT were to (i) gain a better understanding of the postconflict local context and development dynamics; (ii) identify potential risks of postconflict social tensions to development interventions, especially at the local and community levels; and (iii) improve project designs to mitigate social tensions and contribute to overall peacebuilding and socioeconomic development. The PBT was developed to help enhance project designs by promoting wider stakeholder participation and exploring ways to address social exclusion issues (a root cause of the decade-long conflict). Using the PBT also provides an opportunity to sensitize and build the capacity of public institutions on conflict-sensitive approaches to project design and implementation.

The PBT is an analytical framework consisting of seven different issues with corresponding questions that help lead discussions on associated risks to development projects and potential opportunities for peacebuilding through the



Conflict-sensitive or peacebuilding principles and processes emphasize the need to address the particular challenges of working in fragile and conflict-affected situations, especially in planning and implementation of development and humanitarian assistance.

proposed interventions and approaches. Proposed project interventions are analyzed whether they are supportive of peacebuilding or they can exacerbate conflict. Thereafter, recommendations are made to avoid potential conflict and strengthen peace. During implementation, project stakeholders are

asked informally with the questions from the PBT matrix (see Appendix). Additional questions may be prompted based on the local situations. Given the sensitivity of the theme, questions are asked indirectly so as not to offend the interviewees. The PBT is a living document and a flexible guide that requires changes depending on the local context.

The assessment showed a diverse socioeconomic status across various districts in Nepal. In general, the country has 125 caste and ethnic groups, 123 language groups, and 10 religions; and about 2% of the population has some form of disability.<sup>7</sup> The root causes of the country's decade-long conflict revolve around the issues of social exclusion (i.e., discrimination against multiple castes and ethnicity, unequal access to resources), employment, justice, land ownership, and identity-based political representation. Specific social tensions are aggravated by domestic violence and discrimination against women, including child marriages, human trafficking, and dowry-related tortures.

The conflict assessment confirmed that the significant participation (about 30%) of women in the 10-year insurgency is attributed to socioeconomic and political discrimination of women at large and especially among vulnerable groups. There had been an immense social diversity in the political representation during the 2008 Constituent Assembly due to the inclusion of *dalits*,<sup>8</sup> Madhesis,<sup>9</sup> women, indigenous people, and physically challenged people. Their vulnerabilities significantly vary. For instance, the vulnerabilities in Rolpa, a hot spot of the Maoist insurgency in the western region, are totally different from Sunsari. The Sunsari district in the eastern *terai*<sup>10</sup> was more influenced by criminal

activities in the bordering town of India, whereas Rolpa saw displacement of youths and violence against women. A marked number of women, who suffered from sexual violence during the conflict, seem to be vocal and constantly seeking justice in Rolpa district. Similarly, youth displacement remains a key phenomenon across districts due to lack of employment, which, in turn, continues to affect the infrastructure projects. Ethnic- and caste-based discriminations are commonly observed in the project areas. The more remote districts show worse trend in the peace index. Banke and Kapilvastu districts saw religion-based violence leaving dozens of people injured and significant amount of property destroyed in Banke in 2006, and 14 people killed in Kapilvastu in 2007. The presence of Limbuwan<sup>11</sup> and Khambuwan groups in the eastern hills, with ongoing separatist movement, may pose risks to constitution making and political stability in the longer run. The Tharuhat movement<sup>12</sup> poses, a similar challenge in the federal divisions of the new constitution—the Tharus claiming that they are the aborigines and demanding inclusion and a separate subdivision. Other emerging issues related to Haliya,<sup>13</sup> Kamalari,<sup>14</sup> and Kamaiya<sup>15</sup> have surfaced, and their lingering rehabilitation process shows sporadic disputes in selected districts of mid- and far-western region, which has been a concern of stability at subnational levels. The minority groups including professional associations stage frequent protests seeking their political rights.

The PBT was conceived, designed, and applied to avoid these kinds of social exclusion issues and to identify ways to mitigate them and contribute to the peacebuilding process. The assessments

<sup>7</sup> Government of Nepal. National Planning Commission Secretariat. Central Bureau of Statistics. <http://cbs.gov.np>

<sup>8</sup> Dalits in Nepal are a systematically victimized disadvantaged community who have been compelled to lag at the bottom of the social structure and excluded from national development mainstream due to the caste system and extreme Hinduism for centuries. See Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization. [www.nndsw.org.np/index.php](http://www.nndsw.org.np/index.php)

<sup>9</sup> The Madhesi people of Nepal are those who reside in the southern plain region, the *terai*. While the majority of Madhesi are caste-observant Hindus with minority Muslims, there is a great cultural diversity among them. The social structure of Madhesi Hindus is somewhat similar to that of Pahadi Hindus, but the Madhesi population has multiple mother languages, such as Maithili, Bajjika, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, and Tharu.

<sup>10</sup> Terai is the low-lying flat land at the foot of the Himalayas, south of the border with India. The Terai region is geographically and culturally distinct from the hills. According to the census in 2001, it occupies 23% of the total area and 48.5% of the population of Nepal.

<sup>11</sup> Limbuwan is an area of the eastern mountain historically made up of 10 Limbu kingdoms or "Land of the Limbus." It comprises about 2% of the population of Nepal, residing in 10 districts in the eastern region.

<sup>12</sup> The Tharu population comprises 6.6% of the total population in Nepal, residing in five districts of the mid- and far-western regions.

<sup>13</sup> The Haliyas are bonded agricultural laborers, with an estimated population of 17,808 residing in 17 districts of mid- and far-western regions. The Government of Nepal has abolished the bonded labor system in 2008.

<sup>14</sup> A Kamalari is a girl who works as a domestic laborer, released from the bond in 2006. The full rehabilitation of the Kamalaris is not yet completed.

<sup>15</sup> A Kamaiya is a boy who works as a domestic or land laborer, released from the bond in 2006. The rehabilitation process for Kamaiyas is not yet completed.

using the PBT also revealed that there is adequate scope for peacebuilding that would help create an enabling project implementation environment. Such opportunities exist either in the form of peace institutions, or informal or traditional practices of reconciliation at the community level. These arrangements have not only been useful in managing local disputes, they have also aided in establishing stability through development activities. Such prospects, in turn, create a favorable environment for development, and efforts have been made to incorporate such findings into project design. A few examples, based on the interactions with stakeholders, include:

- A women's network in Parbat district is engaged as a watchdog against girl trafficking, thus the district has no reported cases of such exploitation.
- Women social mobilizers in Gorkha district facilitate dispute resolution on domestic violence, reducing such cases.

- Interreligious committee in Banke district acts as vigilante against any dispute induced by religious issues, preventing such disputes even before they surface.
- Youth and human rights groups in Morang district act as mediators in disputes related to youths, ethnic groups, and industrial labors in the region.
- Nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in Baitadi district constantly monitor cases of social and caste-based discrimination, resulting in a remarkable reduction of such discriminatory acts.
- Leadership and strategy of the security agency in Parsa district have significantly improved the security and business environment.
- Women are increasingly engaged in nontraditional jobs, attaining economic empowerment across districts.

## Institutionalizing the Conflict-Sensitive Approach

Building on the experiences of applying the PBT to ADB operations (design and implementation of selected projects) and in view of Nepal's ongoing transition, ADB has continued the peacebuilding support under the country partnership strategy, 2013–2017. One of the components of such support is the institutionalization of conflict sensitivity and the PBT in government institutions. The Nepal Administrative Staff College (NASC)—an institution dedicated to training government staff—was selected as a medium to transfer knowledge and skills on conflict-sensitive approach and to apply the PBT. This initiative was in response to the government's felt need for peace-sensitive approach to development, as underlined in its development plans and Nepal Peace and Development Strategy 2010–2015.<sup>16</sup> The assistance also responds to the commitment made by the government in different international forums to

apply the conflict-sensitive approach to development and conduct context analysis in the project cycle.

Keeping in view the importance of raising the awareness of wider stakeholders on the conflict-sensitive approach toward building the capacity of local actors in applying the PBT, a training package was developed as the first step. This intervention was intended to fill the gap in human resource development. Realizing that a partnership approach would be more effective in institutionalizing the PBT, NASC took leadership in partnering with ADB and UNDP for financial and technical assistance to undertake capacity-building activities. During 2010–2012, ADB piloted similar activities in partnership with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, World Bank, and UNDP in orienting more than 75 government staff of various agencies on conflict-

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Nepal Information Platform. 2011. [www.un.org.np/report/pds-2010-2015](http://www.un.org.np/report/pds-2010-2015)



The peacebuilding tool is designed to help enhance the designs of development projects by promoting wider stakeholder participation and exploring ways to address social exclusion issues.

sensitive approaches, including the PBT. Knowledge-sharing sessions among peacebuilding advisors and various agencies in 2011 saw opportunities as well as challenges in mainstreaming conflict analysis and analytical tools into the government system (footnote 1). Building on the positive experience of these initiatives, strong development partner coordination, and the recognition of the need for conflict-sensitive approaches, the initiative with NASC was conceptualized in collaboration with UNDP, resulting in a successful tripartite partnership in 2012. The expected outputs of this joint initiative were the following:

- integration of peace sensitivity, “do-no-harm” principle, and PBT in NASC’s regular training courses;
- development of a session on peace-sensitive approach to development as a regular course in NASC’s training program; and
- development of a stand-alone trainers’ manual for a 2-day training course on conflict sensitivity and the application of the PBT.

To begin with, NASC conducted a needs assessment among civil servants of selected institutions to identify knowledge gaps on peace-sensitive development. NASC took the lead in designing the training content based on the assessment findings. The NASC team of experts developed a 1-hour-and-40-minute module to be integrated into its regular training programs, with technical support from ADB and UNDP. This session will be applied in 20 to 30 regular training events reaching over 400 to 600 civil servants at all government levels annually. A trainers’ manual on “Peace-Sensitive Approach to Development: Use of a Peace Building Tool” has been developed as a 2-day stand-alone course designed to cater to specific needs.

During 2013–2014, 17 trainers from 11 public training institutions have been trained on the conflict-sensitive approach and the use of PBT.<sup>17</sup> They have, in turn, sensitized and trained over 550 government officials of class II and III through various management, leadership, and thematic courses. A workshop with key government agencies (Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Ministry of Home Affairs, Nepal Police, and Nepal Army) and civil society experts was organized focusing on the refinement

<sup>17</sup> Nepal Administrative Staff College. 2014. *Periodic Report*. Lalitpur.

of the PBT. In all these sessions, the participants were given sufficient time to practice the tool using some sample projects.

Refinement of the PBT based on the lessons from past applications has been one of the key outcomes of this initiative. The refined PBT has been perceived as a more user-friendly tool in the government system. A government-led model of the PBT has also been developed (see Appendix). The workshop on the refinement and strengthening of the PBT helped in adopting clearer terminologies, simplifying the questionnaire, and making the tool more practical for government institutions. The participants also

helped develop the Nepali version of the PBT. NASC recognized the technical capacity of NGOs and mobilized them in designing and conducting sessions, thus setting a good practice of coordination between the government and NGOs.

Production of the trainers' manual has been a valuable asset for NASC for future use, with necessary updating over time given the evolving context in Nepal. Building the capacity of local trainers has also been a significant achievement of this initiative, contributing to the already scarce human resource familiar with the conflict-sensitive approach.

## Key Outcomes of Capacity Building

Though capacity-building activities took a longer time to demonstrate tangible results, there have been some key achievements. The Local Development Training Academy under the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development has replicated the approach in the planning process in villages. Likewise, the Tourism Training Center has integrated a session on the topic into its regular training course.

Upon initiation of the project, NASC's senior management team conceptualized a Friday talk series on peace-sensitive development approach. Professional staff delivered talks on "peace sensitivity and aid effectiveness" and "peace sensitivity and sustainable development." Around 60 NASC professional staff took part in these knowledge-sharing sessions, thus strengthening the institutionalization of the approach.

During the midterm of the NASC activity, an exchange program was organized between Nepal and Timor-Leste under the auspices of UNDP. The NASC team visited Timor-Leste to give a knowledge-sharing session to government officials about Nepal's experience in mainstreaming conflict-sensitive initiative, and to orient them on the process. The high-level delegates from Timor-Leste also visited Nepal to meet with key stakeholders and NASC trainees to learn from their experiences, and expressed willingness to replicate the initiative in Timor-Leste.

A resource center has been established within NASC for interested development practitioners, trainers, and planners to access literature and



The trained central government staff have shown interest in replicating the program in local districts.

"We thought we are the only one suffering from the underlying issues, but learning from other districts with different dynamics of fragility is an opportunity to enhance our knowledge on natures of fragility."

- Rolpa District Development Committee staff

information on conflict sensitivity in development and other relevant reference materials. A director-level staff under NASC's Research and Consulting Department oversees the operations of the resource center.

As an initial outcome, a network of knowledgeable officials has been formed. They meet periodically to discuss the achievements and challenges of mainstreaming the conflict-sensitive approach in



“As I was looking over development deliberations, one of the two pillars of NASC services, the opportunity to provide insights to government staff into peace and conflict sensitivity was very tempting. As Nepal is moving toward socioeconomic transformation, all public services, including NASC activities and development interventions should be conflict-free.”

- Dr. Dileep Adhikary, Program Director, Nepal Administrative Staff College



Participants were given sufficient time to practice analysis using the peacebuilding tool on selected project documents.

their respective institutions. Such dialogues are expected to further mainstream the peace-sensitive approach by promoting institutional debates.

Feedback from the field supports the continued application of the PBT in project implementation:

- Sensitization on the PBT in Kavre district revealed that such tool should be built into project implementation plans since building the capacity of implementation units is necessary to manage the local environment and associated risks. There was an increasing interest among the government staff in such knowledge to upgrade their ability to respond to conflict situations.
- Stakeholders of Rolpa and Sunsari districts expressed that the issues underlined in the PBT bear significance in field operations, and this can be an excellent example of learning from individual issues and specific mitigating measures.

“We also conduct some assessments on a regular basis. I have learned important concepts in this workshop that I want to integrate in my framework. The PBT is very useful in the Nepal Army wing of development works.”

- Major General Arjun Basnet, Nepal Army

“The method of context analysis suits very well in the local planning process, for which the Local Development Training Academy under the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development will be ready to prepare its regional trainers to replicate the approach. I would like to create a pool of regional trainers under the Academy to enhance village-level planning process.”

- Mahendra Khanal, Local Development Training Academy

“The Local Development Training Academy is the best place to apply a risk assessment framework such as the peacebuilding tool. It should be disseminated to all the local level administrative units. The Academy is prepared to adopt it through its regional training centers by creating a pool of trainers and using the tool in the local planning process.”

- Deepak Thapa, Local Development Training Academy



A number of government officials have been familiarized on conflict and peace terminologies and sensitized on conflict assessment frameworks, thus creating a pool of trainers within government institutions.

“There were two compelling fronts: first, the idea of engaging with two different organizations for the same concept was not appreciable, but they could be drawn together for a series of activities required to formulate the proposition of inclusion in the training courses. The courses simply cannot accommodate the varying demands for inclusion coming from different quarters and occasions. They need to be contextual and could be reviewed once a year at the start of a fiscal year. Second, within NASC, I was overseeing a development stream of core competency regular training courses along with management stream, and arguing for at least 7 out of 30 days training courses for Class III and Class II officials of the Government of Nepal and wherein conflict sensitivity could possibly be allotted a one-day slot. This has required us to go through NASC’s Training Consultancy and Research Committee for approval of the same.”

“While peace or conflict sensitivity construed the same philosophy, there are varying tools for application. UNDP is more focused on Do-No-Harm approach while ADB is promoting the peacebuilding tool. Incorporating them in NASC’s training curricula requires an appropriate process to be followed. A series of separate and joint meetings with ADB and UNDP led to a tripartite plan of action that defined steps to be followed, which included training needs assessment, course design, and preparation of training materials including trainers’ training and piloting. Though a memorandum of understanding was separately signed with ADB and UNDP, the training events finally kicked off by combining the resource plan.”

*- Dr. Dileep Adhikary, Program Director, Nepal Administrative Staff College*

# Lessons in Mainstreaming Peace-Sensitive Development

## *Longer term engagement and government leadership.*

A government institution taking the lead in the process is more sustainable and yields greater impact compared to having development partners or individuals as the lead. Ownership of a major and credible organization like NASC also helps build a leadership role. Since NASC is undergoing a reform process, accepting and welcoming new approaches and ideas to its curriculum were timely. Raising awareness and sensitization on peace-sensitive development should be sustained through commitment of senior management, longer term engagement of government institutions, mobilization of relevant experts, incentivizing concerned staff, and resource supplement by development partners to fully institutionalize the approach. Leadership, authority, and mandate in an institution are all important considerations in mainstreaming the approach.

*Standardizing terminologies.* While conflict, peace, and fragility are relatively new concepts in the country, the conflict-sensitive approach or the use of the PBT is also a recent and new phenomenon. This initiative helped familiarize the stakeholders with new terminologies and concepts, to help them better understand their work in their respective organizations. Linkage between gender issues and statebuilding were also a new learning for some participants. Moreover, there is a proliferation of NGOs involved in peacebuilding initiatives in specific areas of conflict analysis, resolution, management, and prevention. There are also different interpretations of terminologies among government institutions. As discussed during the workshops, it is recommended to publish a glossary to standardize the terminologies and publicize it in all government and NGO training programs or planning processes.

*Partnerships count.* As NGOs usually possess technical knowledge and human resource to support the initiatives, partnership between the government and NGOs is necessary, particularly in training



Partnership helps maximize resources and build local capacity in a collaborative manner.

facilitation, framing of monitoring tools, third-party monitoring of project implementation, assessments of ongoing projects to observe peace sensitivity and other processes, and peace-sensitive project planning. Such partnership helps maximize resources and build local capacity in a collaborative manner by creating a common understanding of the context. Likewise, the joint support of ADB and UNDP has been extremely useful in building shared views of the peace-sensitive approach and strengthening advocacy for it—allowing both development partners’ institutional strength to complement each other. In addition to contributions of resource persons, training materials, equipment, and the budget, local partners’ input in each activity was a creative way of garnering local commitment to and ownership of the initiative, thus demonstrating a good coordination. This initiative has also strengthened the leadership and managerial capacity of NASC as a capacity-building institution to work with multiple partners under one intervention.

Shared initiatives on local capacity building should continue for more meaningful development partnership to strengthen messages on peace-



Involvement of NASC as a training institution complements the capacity-building efforts of ADB and UNDP.

sensitive approach and to contribute knowledge, resource, and logistics. Joint application of the PBT by multiple partners and shared practices between departments and ministries should be encouraged to deepen understanding of the local context and build local capacity in using analytical frameworks.

*Targeting policymakers.* Sensitization of policymakers is necessary to gain support for staff engaged in the process. As expressed by most participants, to attain leadership on peace-sensitive development, policymakers, supervisors, and planners should be equally familiarized with its importance. Therefore, NASC's effort of building knowledge and skills on peace sensitivity for civil servants at all levels should be sustained. In addition, there should be mechanisms for the trained participants to practice analysis and apply the peace-sensitive approach in their respective institutions. Integrating the use of

the tool in project monitoring or assessments and informing the policymakers should help generate better ideas and more effective program designs.

*Challenges must be anticipated.* The mainstreaming efforts are expected to face challenges. It is important for the concerned institutions to understand what determines success in mainstreaming, what and how to define indicators of peacebuilding, and why it is important to work differently toward strengthening peace. Allocation of staff time and efforts for monitoring the qualitative aspects of peacebuilding is equally important in mainstreaming efforts. In general, the lack of contextual knowledge and peace-sensitive skills, shortage of staff in addressing the crosscutting issues, high staff turnover, and the lack of motivation in changing the work culture are some of the key challenges in institutionalizing peacebuilding.

# Sustaining the Peace-Sensitive Approach

Realizing its importance, the government has increasingly prioritized peace-sensitive approach to development. For instance, the National Planning Commission has dedicated a separate section under Chapter 7 of its Three-Year Plan (FY2014–FY2016) on Peace, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation. It presented an elaborate subsections spelling out 10 broad areas of statebuilding interventions that are expected to strengthen peacebuilding. The interventions are addressing issues of conflict victims, reconstruction of damaged infrastructure, good governance, improved access to justice, improved financial management, combating corruption, citizens' participation in development, security, transport, national volunteer services, and protection of human rights. This can be an excellent opportunity for government institutions to work on the results-oriented project management by setting up a monitoring framework to track the peacebuilding indicators. This can also help the local institutions to manage projects from a peacebuilding perspective, and hence support the peace-sensitive approach to development. In addition, it is recommended that government institutions:

- respond to and advocate for the need to create awareness on peace sensitivity approach at all institutional levels, where relevant;
- use the analytical tool to better understand the local context and as a prerequisite to the planning process or the project cycle;
- ensure that the application of the PBT is a continuum and built into the system—both in project design and monitoring—without overburdening the staff;
- set up a monitoring framework with peacebuilding indicators to help track and measure progress in mainstreaming and institutionalizing peacebuilding; and
- introduce change in the organizational work culture by communicating between the top and lower level management toward the longer-term interest of the institutions in building peace.



Only a shared understanding built between the policy and working levels will aid in a meaningful planning and implementation process.

Participants that were interviewed expressed mixed reactions in terms of the opportunities and challenges of applying peace-sensitivity in their work:

“Though I have difficulty in sensitizing my supervisor on the concept, I have been making some effort to apply my analytical skills in my professional engagements. As a trainer, I have an opportunity to advocate the use of such tool-based analysis, which I often disseminate through gender equality and social inclusion and need-based practicum under my institution.”

- *Narahari Acharya, National Health Training Center*

“I conducted a training of trainers for educators that produced 29 trainers on the ‘do-no-harm’ approach, whereas I have been practicing myself to work on the peacebuilding tool, and thinking to use it in the next batch of training.”

- *Kunti Adhikari, National Center for Educational Development*

“I became familiarized with conflict-sensitive approach in the trainings organized by my institution. So far, I have shared the importance of the same to 25 staff members and 50 lead farmers. Provision of a training manual on the subject could be helpful for integrating it in other training activities.”

- *Rabindra Adhikari, Directorate of Agriculture Extension*

# Appendix

## Peacebuilding Tool Matrix

The peacebuilding tool (PBT), developed by Nepal Administrative Staff College under the assistance of the Asian Development Bank, aims to support the postconflict sensitive approach in Nepal. The PBT should be used as an analytical tool to help project planners, social experts, and practitioners identify potential project risks linked to social conflicts and develop adequate mitigation measures. The PBT should not substitute but help structure the projects' conflict-sensitive analysis which should be built into the program and project planning. The questions proposed in the PBT should help focus the context analysis, suggesting areas where a potential for social tensions may exist or develop.

The PBT focuses also on finding opportunities for the project under preparation to build peace and social cohesion. Not all questions may be relevant to the project under preparation, hence, they should be used when applicable. However, given the importance of a comprehensive context analysis, the users should try filling in the matrix as much as possible to ensure that government projects do support the end of social tensions and the successful conclusion of the peace process, or, at least, do no harm.

The PBT is meant to be a flexible and living guide. It should be first duly filled in during fact-finding or needs assessment and then revised during implementation. The tool should be incorporated in the project approval process. In the case of projects in which the existing social risks are significant, the tool should be applied during monitoring for making necessary adjustments. The tool can also be used during project midterm reviews to check whether the identified risks are mitigated during implementation. Based on the lessons learned, the matrix can be revised as necessary.

After the initial filling in of the matrix, the mission leader, guided by the answers, should determine whether the project team should envisage the services of a conflict sensitivity specialist or a peacebuilding specialist to identify and recommend solutions to the risks and concerns. At the end of the analysis, the users should write a summary note. The practice of filling in the matrix; undertaking short training programs when necessary; and making efforts to use the PBT in design, monitoring, reviews, and evaluations help strengthen the tool as well as the skills in context analysis.

Peacebuilding Tool Matrix

Aspects	Current State of Affairs	Project and Context	Risks to Project (Demands on Project)	Peacebuilding Opportunities	Peacebuilding Indicators	Recommended Adjustments to Project
Baseline or pre-intervention situation	<i>Political stability</i>	<i>Positive or Fragile</i>			Is there a functioning parliament or local institution?  Is there a potential for consensus (national, local)?  Number of peace agreements settled  Growth of civil society and private sector  Independent and impartial media  Number of women and marginalized members nominated in key positions  Relationship among identity groups	

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Appendix Table continued

Aspects	Current State of Affairs	Project and Context	Risks to Project (Demands on Project)	Peacebuilding Opportunities	Peacebuilding Indicators	Recommended Adjustments to Project
	<i>Social harmony</i>	<i>Positive or Fragile</i>			Active presence of civil society, associations, and legitimate constitutional bodies (election commission, CIAA, women, and Dalit Commission)  Public awareness of rights and responsibilities  Accountability of political participation  Degree of sovereign relationship with neighbors  Relationship with international partners  Responsiveness of security institutions  Effective territorial reach  Mechanism for crises management  Absence of violence  Perception of security sector  Perception of justice  Are traditional institutions active in reconciliation?  Status of justice to victims of conflict  Criminal and civil justice for women and children  Presence of transitional justice mechanisms  Are there formal peace structures active in reconciliation?  Resumption of education institutes  Increased interaction between state and citizens  Fairness and acceptance  Resumption of trade and economy  Are there transparent hiring practices?  Is there presence of peacebuilding initiative or institutions?  Presence of state and nonstate actors -in service delivery  Fair distribution of services  Types of employment infrastructure  Sources of livelihood, including agriculture	
	<i>Indicative effects on project</i>	<i>Positive or Negative</i>				
	<i>Peace structure</i>	<i>Acceptable or Conflict</i>				
	<i>Project relations</i>	<i>Interactive or Reactive</i>				
	<i>Project specific – staff hiring</i>	<i>Equitable or None</i>				
	<i>Project specific – decision making</i>	<i>Transparent or Opaque</i>				
	<i>Project specific – implementation</i>	<i>Acceptable to stakeholders or Not</i>				
	<i>Direct beneficiaries</i>	<i>Equitable, Transparent, Inclusive, or Not</i>				
	<i>Indirect beneficiaries</i>	<i>Equitable, Transparent, Inclusive, or Not</i>				
Informal peacebuilding structures	<i>Social interrelationships</i>	<i>Conflict preventing or Provocative</i>				
	<i>Traditional institutions</i>	<i>Conflict preventing or Provocative</i>				
	<i>Unintended groups</i>	<i>Positive or Negative interest</i>				
	<i>Project relations</i>	<i>Collaborative or Indifferent</i>				
Social issues	<i>Interest groups</i>	<i>Participative or Disruptive</i>				
	<i>Social tensions</i>	<i>Softening or Escalating</i>				
	<i>Project impacts</i>	<i>Relation improving or Disruptive</i>				
Socioeconomic issues	<i>Social: Education</i>	<i>Promoting or Challenging</i>				
	<i>Social: Health</i>	<i>Promoting or Challenging</i>				

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Appendix Table continued

Aspects	Current State of Affairs	Project and Context	Risks to Project (Demands on Project)	Peacebuilding Opportunities	Peacebuilding Indicators	Recommended Adjustments to Project
	<i>Social: Employment</i>	<i>Promoting or Challenging</i>			Capacity of tax administration	
	<i>Resources: Natural</i>	<i>Renewal state or Dwindling</i>			Sources and diversification of revenue	
	<i>Resources: Productive</i>	<i>Growing or Declining</i>			Accessibility of market and resources	
	<i>Resources: Land and property</i>	<i>Balancing or Encroaching</i>				
	<i>Project impacts</i>	<i>Contributory or Not</i>				
Geographic issues	<i>Within region or area</i>	<i>Positive linkage or Divisions</i>				
	<i>With adjoining areas</i>	<i>Positive linkage or Divisions</i>				
	<i>Between rural and urban</i>	<i>Positive linkage or Divisions</i>				
	<i>With international border</i>	<i>Positive linkage or Divisions</i>				
	<i>Project impacts</i>	<i>Contributory or Not</i>				
Security issues	<i>Conflict-affected groups or area</i>	<i>Orderly or Challenging</i>				
	<i>Security of women and children</i>	<i>Orderly or Challenging</i>				
	<i>Stability of area</i>	<i>Orderly or Challenging</i>				
	<i>Local security issues</i>	<i>Orderly or Challenging</i>				
	<i>Project implementation effects</i>	<i>Contributory or Not</i>				

CIAA = Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority.  
Source: Nepal Administrative Staff College.

Summary notes:

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