

United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal (UNPFN) Project Status Update

As of (June-Sep 2010)

Participating UN Organization:	UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO	UN Fund cluster and Nepal PBF Priority area:	Cantonment and Reintegration
Project number:	UNPFN/A-7	Funding round Strategic Outcome:	
Title:	United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP)		
Total approved project budget:	US\$ 13,828,680		
Funds committed:	9,349,660	% of approved:	67.61%
Funds disbursed:	7,517,820	% of approved:	54.00%
Forecast final date:	May 2012	Delay (months):	None
Anticipated total project duration:	24 Months		

Outcome	Progress: achievements / results / outputs delivered	% of planned
<p>Verified Minors and Late Recruits (VMLRs) participants are supported in their socio-economic rehabilitation</p>	<p>Individual Rehabilitation Option Packages (ROPs) are prepared and made available to participants:</p> <p>Prior to the reporting period, 5 UNIRP Regional Offices were established to facilitate the rehabilitation processes and required staff, including the work force for attending the toll free calls. Guidelines for the implementation of the rehabilitation packages were also prepared in consultation with all stakeholders and vetted through the National Technical Committee on Integration and Rehabilitation. During the reporting period, the Long Term Agreements signed with three principal service providers for undertaking various training programmes. Demand of the discharged combatants for these services were reviewed and in light of deviation from project levels of participation and corresponding absence of economy of scale, contract pricing has been re-evaluated to identify batch-size costing to address fixed and variable costs.</p> <p>Based on the market demand and participants' interest, 16 new rehabilitation packages have been added into the rehabilitation options. Similarly, in order to enable participants pass the entrance exam to access health related education packages, additional preparatory courses were made available to eligible Verified Minor and Late Recruits (VMLRs).</p> <p>Access to employment and livelihood opportunities promoted:</p> <p>A draft report on socio-economic mapping in relation to the 4008 discharged Maoist combatants is prepared and submitted to the programme. The report aims to support the development of a more comprehensive strategy for post-training support including linking the participants graduated from rehabilitation training to employment opportunities and micro-finance institutions for self-employment. Formulation of the strategy is in process.</p> <p>A set of comprehensive monitoring tools is being developed to enhance monitoring of the programme implementation and feed into the broader programme dynamic M&E strategy.</p>	

In collaboration with I/NGOs, International Alert, GTZ and Saferworld, the objectives of the UNIRP, including the necessity of job creation support to ex-combatants, has been presented to the representative institutions of the private sector (e.g. National Business Initiative-NBI, Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries-FNCCI) and improved liaison for exploration of collaborative modalities has been developed.

Participants received career and psychosocial counseling:

So far, 40% of the 4008 verified minors and late recruits (VMLRs) have been provided with detailed career counseling and referral in one of the five interagency rehabilitation programme regional offices.

Psychosocial support mechanisms have been established, including the establishment of a regional referral system for long-term and intensive support. Female psychosocial counselors are located in all regional offices to handle the psychosocial aspects of the rehabilitation programme. So far, more than 140 participants have received or are receiving psychosocial support. Several serious cases requiring clinical psychosocial support have been referred to UNICEF partners for longer-term clinical support.

Contrary to the initial assumptions, caused largely by the lack of access to the VMLRs in the cantonments, the programme has found that most of the 4,008 VMLRs need psychosocial support.

Based on increased demand, UNICEF, with the CAAFAG Working Group has revised the Project Implementation Supervision and Monitoring Plan to provide additional support on psychosocial to district implementing partners. Simultaneously, verified minors and child/youth clubs will be engaged in community based peace building activities to support their social reintegration.

Similarly, one additional psychosocial counselor has been deployed in each of the five regions whose primary function will be to provide out-reach psychosocial care and support to VMLRs in the training centers.

Specific Gender needs of VMLRS are met:

Women and girls constitute 55% of the total participants engaged in the Micro Enterprise package, of these, 30% are women with special needs (pregnant women, lactating mothers and women caring for young children under five). These women have been provided with special support that includes: nutritional support for pregnant women and lactating mothers, one to one childcare support, special baby food for infants and meals for children under-5 years of age. As a result, these women smoothly participated in the training and most of them have completed their training or have established own micro enterprise. **Thus the provision of special support to women participants is expected to help increase the number of women participants in future.**

The programme has made arrangements to provide similar support to women with special needs under vocational training and health packages.

The programme has also maintained one to one counseling of female participants by female counselors to identify protection concerns and gender specific needs. Also measures have been taken at regional offices for taking care of accompanying children to facilitate uninterrupted career counseling to women participants.

Individual rehabilitation packages are implemented:

The rehabilitation support services including four sectoral packages - Vocational Training, Education, Microenterprises and Health Training - are made available to all 4,008 VMLRs.

	<p>Of the total 4,008 VMLRs originally identified and discharged from the Maoist cantonments, 2225 (or 56% of the total number) have made initial contact with the UN interagency rehabilitation programme through its toll-free phone number.</p> <p>Of those 2225 VMLRs, 1646 (or 41% of the total number) have already received individual career counseling in one of the five regional offices and have been referred to specific service providers to undertake training/ education programme.</p> <p>Of these 1646 VMLRs, 1015 (or 25% of the total number) are receiving training / education in one of the four rehabilitation packages.</p> <p>To date, 261 participants have completed training programmes in vocational training and microenterprises. The programme is assisting / facilitating the graduates to find employment or linking them for micro-credit support.</p> <p>Monitoring of the programme implementation including implementing partners is regularly conducted.</p>	
<p>Communities were engaged in supporting the rehabilitation of VMLR participants</p>	<p>Public Sensitization and Information Campaign designed and implemented: UN interagency communication working group has been meeting regularly to support implementation of the UNIRP programme communication and public information strategy. The following are key achievements during the reporting period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Public Service Announcements each for 15 days period were made through 120 FM radio stations across Nepal. The aim of PSAs was to inform the communities about the rehabilitation programme and encourage VMLRs to participate in the rehabilitation programme. • Press Meetings with national media were organized to brief media on programme updates and strategies. • Software and services were procured for sending out text messages via mobile phones to support direct dissemination of programme information to VMLRs including no show cases – those VMLRs who were not present when discharge ceremonies at cantonments completed. • Communication documents i.e. information brochure, FAQ, fact sheets etc. were revised and printed. <p>Facilitation for media access (both national and international) to training sites and updated information was provided. The Children Associated with Armed Groups and Armed Forces (CAAFAG) network was actively engaged in tracing discharges at the community level and sharing information about the rehabilitation support.</p> <p>Lessons learned from the rehabilitation of 4,008 VMLRs and global best practices have been presented to the National Technical Committee on Integration and Rehabilitation of the 19,000+ Maoist army personnel.</p> <p>Broader community assisted in addressing socio-economic rehabilitation of VMLRs: UNICEF, with support from UNDP and other UN partners, has been engaged in community peace building and sensitization activities as mentioned below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided to 50 youth leaders (including CAAFAG and VMLRs) on peace building, peace civic/education and life-skills. • Training provided to 30 implementing partner’s staff to help them design and manage community based peace building programmes. • Inclusion of peace and civic education with life skills in partners training 	

manuals.

- As a result of training to 50 youth leaders, they have developed individual action plans for their respective districts to work with youth/child clubs engaging CAAFAG and VMLRs in the communities to implement peace building activities. Implementing partners in some regions have organized community based activities with the participation of VMLRs and youths for the community to enhance social harmony and reconciliation.
- Structural support is provided to community based schools that have enrolled VMLRs under the education package.

Capacities of Vocational Training service providers to deliver demand driven training enhanced:

Capacity assessment of principal service providers and service providers for vocational training package was conducted by the ILO.

Two training workshops targeting principal service providers and service providers were conducted in Nepalgunj and Kathmandu by the ILO.

Special gender considerations within the broader community associated with the process are prioritized:

An interagency gender support matrix has been developed to address the immediate needs of the female participants in a broader context of socio-economic rehabilitation. key provisions stipulated in the matrix are as followings:

- Training of UNIRP core team, implementing partners/service providers (IPs/SPs) and UNIRP regional offices by UNFPA on 1325, 1820.
- Training and orientation of IPs/SPs on gender mainstreaming, integration of gender into M&E and joint monitoring and assessment of programme from gender perspective.
- Facilitating full participation of women with special needs in training programmes. Ensuring gender friendly environment during counseling and referral including childcare support.
- Nutritional diet for pregnant women and lactating mothers in training and arrangement of childcare and childcare grant for children under-5 for women in training and single mothers (VMLR) in the community.
- Linkages of women to micro-credit groups, cooperatives and employment.
- Sensitization of women federation /cooperative leaders to support return of the VMLRs into the communities.
- Referral of women to special health and legal support including special support to GBV cases.
- Social reintegration including family and community counseling, mediation and psychosocial support.
- Empowerment of the community and VMLR to participate in social and economic activities, by organizing Peace/Civic education to youth leaders to replicate the knowledge back to communities/youth groups.

The programme has initiated addressing the immediate needs of women (pregnant and lactating) in training. The gender matrix will be fully operationalized by the last quarter of 2010.

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results and any challenges

Key Achievements:

- Two national rehabilitation Steering Committee (SC) meetings were convened respectively, 04 June and 22 August 2010 chaired by Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR), one of which was attended by UCPN-Maoist representatives. The most recent meetings recognized the relative success of the UNIRP and promised greater national support and collaboration. Maoist representatives promised that obstruction to the UNIRP would cease and that regional commanders would be instructed accordingly.
- The provision of individual career counseling and referral services has risen to 1646 VMLRs.
- Rehabilitation support training and education were provided to 1015 VMLRs. (*refer to page 3 for details*)
- Women with special needs were provided support through specific activities as outlined in a newly developed robust gender matrix of support elements.
- In close collaboration with interagency partners, guidelines were developed to address basic health needs of the participants in training.
- Dynamic M&E is being continuously strengthened at regional and central levels, supported by the development of a unified reporting system.
- Programme communication strengthened (Revision of related documents, database for SMS, facilitation of media access to information and training programme).
- Regional Offices have been strengthened (staffing and working space).
- Efforts have been made to strengthen coordination with the GoN and UCPN-M at central and local levels.
- Collaboration with key actors (Nepal Institute for Policy Studies-NIPS, GTZ, International Alert, Saferworld, National Business Initiatives-NBI and Helvetas) to engage Industrial, Private Sector and microfinance institutes to support employment and micro-credit.
- Psychosocial support elements of the programme have been strengthened.
- Community and peace building activities have been initiated.
- A toll-free database has been developed to compile callers' information to enable easy status search and access to toll-free call records. It will allow timely generation of reports for further analysis.
- A consultant was hired to review UN interagency rehabilitation programme with due consideration of the political developments and to identify, analyze and highlight bottlenecks that are affecting programme success in terms of numbers and participation in the rehabilitation programme. The consultant submitted a comprehensive report, including analysis of programme political situation and some of the key strategic recommendations that has been considered by the programme are the followings:
 - Continue the existing project within existing parameters;
 - Make technical improvements on the basis of ongoing data analysis, monitoring and evaluation;
 - Consider engaging a Nepali anthropologist/academic in order to research the local dynamics which are typically invisible to outsiders;
 - Continue to encourage implementing partners to find local solutions within the framework of agreed central guidelines;
 - **Re-establish operational channels of communication for political dialogue with UCPN-M and Government, with UNMIN support, but with clear proviso that discussion is on the basis of the existing project parameters;**
 - Downplay the political significance of the project in communication and information strategy in order to reduce the counterproductive effect of disproportionate focus whilst addressing the ignorance amongst VMLR as to why they are categorised as VMLR and qualified for ROP;
 - **Aim to shift towards a mainstreaming of the approach into national strategies for gender sensitive job creation, social safety nets, improved educational outcomes for marginalised communities and reparation schemes for victims of conflict related rights abuses.**

Major Challenges:

- Inadequate political leadership by the GoN to facilitate access of the participants to public services.
- Lack of support from UCPN-Maoist at central and local levels to facilitate access to rehabilitation programme.
- Artificially high expectation of the VMLRs regarding the rehabilitation programme creates obstacles to implement the Programme.
- Providing rehabilitation to all the 4008 discharges remains a challenge because of UCPN-M's official

position on the rehabilitation packages (UCPN-M has not agreed to the rehabilitation packages) and the continuation of the existing link between the Maoists (party and PLA) and verified minors/late recruits.

- The imposed ceiling by the Government of Nepal on the Value of rehabilitation packages (NRs. 100,000 or US\$1400) has challenged programme flexibility.
- In a poor and limited job market situation, employment after completion of training including linkages to micro-credit support for self employment.
- VMLRs are scattered in large geographical area which makes monitoring and follow up extremely difficult.
- A large number of VMLRs are suffering from injuries and different forms of disabilities that require support beyond the life and capacity of the programme. Lack of special provision to fulfill the long term health support to war wounded and people with disability will seriously challenge smooth rehabilitation of these individuals.