

**United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal (UNPFN)
Project Status Update
For the period of [January – March 2012]**

1. Project Overview

Participating UN Organization(s):	UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO	UNPFN Project number:	UNPFN/A-7
		UNPBF Project number (if applicable):	

UNPFN Cluster area:	Cantonments / Reintegration
UNPFN Funding round Strategic Outcome:	
UNPBF Priority area (if applicable):	NA
UNPBF PMP Result and indicator (if applicable):	NA

Project Title:	United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP)		
National Partners:	Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR)		
Project start date:	01 June, 2010	Original Project end date:	31 May, 2012
Revised end date (if applicable):	31 Jan, 2013	Anticipated total Project duration:	24 Months

Total approved project budget:	US\$ 9,349,660		
Funds committed and spent to-date by the project:	Committed: US\$ 9,349,660	As % of approved budget:	100%
Funds spent to-date by the project:	US\$ 7,797,782	Project delivery rate:	83.41%

2. Description of project goal and strategy

The project aims to support the socio-economic rehabilitation of the 4,008 Verified Minors and Late Recruits (VMRLs) through direct support to the individuals combined with the community engagement to support and facilitate their rehabilitation. The project promotes gainful employment and livelihood opportunities for these individuals. The project is intended to contribute to the national peace-building effort, as the rehabilitation of VMRLs forms a key component of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the Agreement on the Management and Monitoring of Arms and Armies (AMMAA).

3. Overview of progress to-date against project outcomes

Project Outcome(s)	Progress: achievements/results/ outputs delivered to-date	% of planned
1. Verified Minors and Late Recruits (VMRLs) participants are supported in their socio-economic rehabilitation	<p>1.1. Individual Rehabilitation Option Packages are prepared and made available to participants</p> <p>Vocational Skill Training (VST): The programme is providing VST support to the last group of 33 participants through qualified public and private Technical Training Providers (TTPs). In total, 564 VMRLs were referred to VST option of which 485 participants enrolled (2% Female) and 398 of them completed their training programmes. For various reasons, 54 participants have dropped out of the training before completion. The UNIRP regional offices are making efforts to trace and provide counselling to facilitate reenrolment of these dropout cases in other suitable options. As a result of this, of the total 54 dropouts, 4 have already re-joined the training and were shifted to microenterprises while many others have shown interest to re-enrol in the training. To date, of the total 398 graduates, 155 are employed while 59 others refused job offers that were facilitated by the UNIRP.</p>	54%

Micro-Enterprises (ME):

ME is the most popular option amongst four rehabilitation options on offer with 55% of the total caseload enrolled. Due to the female friendly nature of this option, 68% of the total women enrolled in the rehabilitation programme are participating in ME option which constitutes 51% of the total participants under this option. In addition, the analysis of programme results revealed that this option was the most suitable for local market economy and for VMRLs who wanted to return back to their community and have a self-initiated livelihood opportunity.

As of end March 2012, 1,256 VMLRs (51% female) have been referred to the ME option, of which 1,172 participants are enrolled into the programme. Of these, 339 are in training while 26 participants have dropped out of the programme before completion of their training.

To date, 807 participants have completed ME skill training and have received Start-up support of which 524 or 65% have successfully established their own microenterprises. Around 250 entrepreneurs have completed full cycle of ME training by receiving business promotional support in the form of either refresher skills training or second round capital support for the expansion and sustainability of their enterprises. The programme is bringing constant adjustments to ensure sustainable self-employment of the participants.

In this quarter, based on lessons learned and field realities, a review of more than 10 different programme guidelines e.g. Microenterprise Training/Support Guidelines, Socioeconomic Support Guidelines etc. was conducted to adjust programme approaches according to the current social and economic context of the rehabilitation programme.

Education:

Among 432 VMLRs enrolled in education, 415 continued attending school in this quarter, while 12 are reported to have dropped out (mostly for foreign employment N=10). Five among the enrolled have graduated (passed class 12 examination). In this quarter 89 participants (40% female) appeared for SLC (School Leaving Certificate) examination. Tutorial support was provided to those students who appeared for SLC exam.

Out of the total enrolled, 16 % are studying in the lower-secondary level (grade 6-8), 43% in secondary level (grade 8-10) and remaining 40 % in higher-secondary level (grade 11-12). 1% have completed grade 12. The higher secondary students are also preparing their board exam which is coming near. Tutorial support has been arranged for them too. Those receiving education support are enrolled in 254 different schools in 49 districts across Nepal.

Total 115 (110 F and 5 M) participants are receiving additional stipend (NRs 4000) as they are studying away from home. From this quarter 5 male participants have started receiving special education support due to their critical needs - as they happen to be living away from their family members and have no means to sustain themselves. Of the total VMLRs receiving education support 40% are married. A total of 43% (80 out of 185) of Female participants are receiving gender specific support, including child grant, nutritional grant, child care, etc.

Health Related Trainings:

The level of satisfaction and confidence amongst the participants of health related training and education remains high with the first batch of 44 participants completing their institutional and On the Job Training (OJT) training in January 2012. This group is proud of their achievement of a new profile, transitioning from a combatant to a health worker. In the training completion ceremony organized at the Rapti Technical School (RTS) in Feb 2012, a great level of confidence, happiness and transformation was demonstrated by the outgoing participants. One of the participants Ms. Gopali expressed her emotions by stating “the hands that carried guns in the past will be holding stethoscope to serve the community”.

Three participants in Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) training have started their OJT which will end in April 2012. Participants of health training and education have received jobs offers during their OJT; however, due to awaiting results of final examination and certification from CTEVT, they are unable to join the employment. Though, two Lab Assistants have already gained employment. In order to effectively engage the participants while they wait for the final examination result and to capitalize on their leadership skills, five-day training on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), Reproductive Health (RH) and HIV/AIDS was organized by UNIRP. Through this training participants will be mobilized with knowledge and skills on key issues mentioned above to go back to their communities and replicate the information to broader communities. This will help them to socially rehabilitate and gain new status in their community of return.

By March 2012, out of 75 VMLRs referred to health related training and education, 60 enrolled in the programme. Amongst them, 44 participants have completed their training and are awaiting their examination results; 13 individuals are still undergoing the training and three participants have dropped out from the training for reasons related to family problems.

1.2. Access to employment and livelihood opportunities promoted:

By March 2012, 1,210 participants completed different trainings and education options. Of these, 681 are employed or have started own microenterprises which represents an overall employment rate of 56% - increased by 1% compared to the last quarter of 2011. There are 59 graduates of VST who for various reasons refused job offers; this constitutes 5% of the total graduates. According to anecdotal evidence, a major reason for job refusal has been mismatch between high expectations of the graduates and available jobs offers in the market. UNIRP has been constantly tracing and providing follow-up support to graduates particularly those who are not in job and/or have not established their microenterprises. Similarly, UNIRP regional offices and implementing partners are continuously mapping potential employers and microfinance institutions at the local levels for possible linkages.

1.3. Participants received career and psychosocial counseling

Participants receive career counseling during and after the training programmes provided by UNIRP regional offices and service providers. During this quarter, psychosocial supervisors of UNIRP visited 10 districts where mentoring support was provided to psychosocial workers of the respective districts. Total 286 individuals were visited by regional psychosocial counselors (65% Female) for individual, group and family counseling. These sessions were mostly conducted in the training centers, schools and in the houses of individual participants.

1.4. Specific gender needs of VMLRS are met and special gender considerations within the broader community associated with the process prioritized

Participation of women has been a key indicator of success for UNIRP with over 38% of women participating in training and education programme compared to the ratio of women in the total 4,008 VMLRs (30%). Of the 1,210 graduates, 37% are female while the ratio of self/employment is 43% for women. Among those who have established own microenterprises, 56% are women. This reflects the level of participation ensured through gender specific support of the programme. In addition, the programme is addressing gender specific needs of male participants and their immediate dependents to create a positive training and education environment.

UNIRP enhanced the delivery of gender specific support¹ including regular need assessment of the participants. By March 2012, over 1150 participants and their immediate dependents received gender specific support from the programme. Further, over 600 participants involved in various training and education options

¹UNIRP considers gender specific needs of both male and female participants such as nutritional support to pregnant and lactating mothers, childcare facility in training centers and within communities, childcare grant, maternity/paternity allowance, specific psychosocial and health support to victims of SGBV, special reproductive health support and many other services available

were identified with a form of gender specific needs and have been provided with the necessary support. This includes 400 (300 in last quarter) pregnant women and lactating mothers including spouse of men participants who received nutritional support and about 575 (360 in last quarter) children of both male and female participants have benefitted from the 12-month childcare grant and childcare support. Some 112 women received reproductive health support, 60 children have been provided with health support and 57 (23 in last quarter) women and men have received maternity/paternity allowances.

Under the education option, female participants who are deemed to have protection concerns or who could not join community based schools continued to receive extra financial support (NRs. 2,200) on top of the two-year NRs. 1,800 monthly stipend to facilitate their participation in education. Of a total of 185 women enrolled in the education program, 110 who are studying away from home have received additional stipend to enable them to continue with their education.

During the reporting period, 112 participants including VMLRs, service providers and implementing partners received 5-day training on Reproductive Health, Sexual and Gender Based Violence and HIV/AIDS. The trainings were organized in five development regions with the aim to create a network of ‘champions’ who will replicate the information to the local communities. These trainings were organized in close coordination with the Department of Women, Children and Social Welfare and District Administration Offices.

1.5. Individual rehabilitation packages are implemented:

The rehabilitation support services including four sectoral options, Vocational Skills Training, Micro-Enterprise, Education (formal and non-formal) and Health related Training and Education were offered to VMLRs.

- As of March 2012, of the total 4,008 VMLRs originally identified and discharged from the Maoist army, 2,689 or 67% have made initial contact with the UNIRP through its toll-free phone number.
- Of these VMLRs, 2,460 or 61% of the VMLRs have already received individual career counseling in one of the five regional offices, 2,384 of which have been referred to specific Service Providers to undertake training/education options.
- Of these, 2,149 enrolled in one of the four rehabilitation options. By March 2012, 800 of the VMLRs were still participating in one of the four rehabilitation options, with 1,254 having completed their training/education. Of the total enrolled, 92 (4%) VMLRs have dropped-out.
- By March 2012, 681 or 56% of the total graduates are employed or have established own businesses.

Monitoring of programme implementation and rehabilitation options has been regularly conducted, including monitoring of implementing partners’ performance and implementation of training curriculum as well as distribution of materials and toolkits (i.e. theoretical and practical, in-house and on-the-job training by UNIRP staff). The programme monitoring is an integrated approach that involves constant follow-up with the participants, needs assessment, career and psychosocial counselling, family interventions and linkages to job and microcredit opportunities. Through the dynamic M&E, the programme identifies participants’ day-to-day social and economic challenges and provides on the spot support to facilitate their smooth socio-economic rehabilitation. UNICEF has adapted a case management approach through district implementing partners with the support from regional and central staff to ensure social reintegration and smooth participation of VMLRs in community based schools.

Communities were engaged in

2.1. Public sensitization and information campaign designed and implemented

<p>supporting the rehabilitation of VMLR participants</p>	<p>The general perceptions towards UNIRP have significantly improved during the first quarter of 2012. This attributes to the consistency of information sharing and continuous efforts towards improved programming. UN senior management and key MoPR officials have supported the reflection of programme achievements in various forums at national and international levels.</p> <p>The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nepal released an Op-Ed titled “Putting the Record Straight on Rehabilitation of VMLRs”, which was published in national print media.</p> <p>Public information and sensitization activities of the programme have been focused towards publication of programme success stories, development and dissemination of information materials and production of video documentaries. Further, UNIRP was presented in 2012 Delhi Cluster Knowledge Zone – the theme 2015 and Beyond: Positioning UNDP in Asia and the Pacific for Transformational Change.</p> <p>The programme has continued to collect audio visual footage of good practices of the programme. This will contribute to the knowledge management and documentation of programme achievements that could be shared with wider audience including GoN, community of practice, donor agencies and other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>2.2. Broader community assisted in addressing socio-economic rehabilitation of VMLRs:</p> <p>Of the total 432 VMLRs enrolled in schools, 63 participants have become member of youth club - among them 26 are female and are actively participating in different peace building activities. Programmes like blood donation, street dramas, plantations, sanitation, were some activities conducted in community by youth club through the support of CAAFAG Implementing partners. During reporting period, 9 (6M 3F) VMLRs have been linked to Micro Finance groups.</p> <p>2.3. Capacities of service providers for VST enhanced to deliver demand driven training:</p> <p>Through continuous capacity development efforts, the training service delivery has significantly improved and service providers of UNIRP are mobilized with necessary skills to plan and implement more effective programmes. In this reporting period needs assessment and preparations have been carried out to organize two regional level training for trainers (ToT) on Effective enterprise development based on Start and Improve Your Business’ (SIYB) package in Biratnagar and Nepalgunj in April 2012.</p>
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4. Overview of project results, achievements and challenges in this quarter

Key Achievements

In this quarter, the following results have been achieved:

- The final enrollment number is 2,149 being 54% of the total 4,008 VMLRs.
- During the first quarter, one official visit from MoPR was facilitated to observe UNIRP activities in Central and Western Development Regions of Nepal. The visit included participation of Mr. Naresh Chapagain, Under Secretary from MoPR accompanied by PBRU and UNIRP staff.
- The programme continued to maximize positive impact of the programme through regular Conflict Sensitivity ‘Do No Harm (DNH)’ analysis and capacity development of the UNIRP and service providers at central and regional levels. During the reporting period, three regional context analysis / DNH analysis workshops were organized in Bharatpur, Nepalgunj and Biratnagar. In these workshops, region specific contexts linked to the broader context of Nepal were analysed, major sources of tension (dividers) and local capacities for peace (connectors) including the interaction of UNIRP with the local context was thoroughly assessed. As a result, conflict sensitive programming options were developed to bring appropriate adjustments for maximum positive impact. These options will be further reviewed and incorporated into programme phase-out strategy. This initiative is technically and logistically supported

by Peace Building and Recovery Unit (PBRU)/Conflict Prevention Programme (CPP).

- The UNIRP has initiated development and implementation of its Knowledge Management Strategy including documentation of lessons learned and good practices in the form of knowledge management products and establishment of an online resource library. This will help the programme in documentation and dissemination of its key lessons learned and good practices with the international community, in particular the Inter Agency Working Group on DDR (IAWG), and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR).
- In close coordination with the GoN and interagency partners, UNIRP has initiated development of programme phase out strategy. The phase-out strategy includes operational phase-out, staffing phase-out, assets management and handover of responsibilities to MoPR for any continuation of services beyond the life of UNIRP. The strategy will be presented in the next project executive board meeting in April for discussion, recommendations and endorsement with two distinct areas: one will be programme policy level issues that will include operational and staffing phase-out including assets management which will be broadly discussed and endorsed by the project executive board. The second will be state policy level issues that will be broadly discussed and put forward for government's consideration.
- UNIRP has initiated preparation for the programme external evaluation including development of ToR for procurement of services from international expert organizations to carry out this important activity.

Major Challenges:

- After the 31st July 2011 deadline for enrolment in training/education, 1,859 individuals have lost the opportunity to enrol in the programme. It represents 46% of the total 4,008 VMLRs including those who have visited the regional offices and received career counselling but did not enrol in training programmes. As per the information collected from the field, a large number of these individuals were initially discouraged to enrol in the rehabilitation programme while a good number of them left the country for foreign employment (data collected by UNICEF through CAAFAG network). These VMLRs do not have an alternative opportunity to support their rehabilitation. However, 126 of these individuals have shown interest to join the rehabilitation programme. As a clear cut-off for enrolment was agreed with relevant parties, the programme is unable to enrol these individuals.
- The recent government's decision, to provide cash based voluntary retirement package to PLA members, has contributed to the growing frustrations among VMLRs, because they did not receive that amount of cash as their fellow PLA members. This has led the VMLRs to intensify their protest programmes including some threats to UNIRP and its partners in order to have media attention towards their demands.
- The scattered and sparse geographical spread of VMLRs has continuously challenged the programme in the area of monitoring and post-graduation follow-up. Many of those graduated live in remote areas. This has also implications on their ability to find sustainable livelihood options. This is being addressed by increased outreach by regional offices staff through improved collaboration with working partners that have a reasonable reach to many districts as well as CAAFAG partners present in remote districts.
- In a poor and limited job market situation, employment after completion of training including linkages to micro-credit support for self-employment is considered an extremely difficult challenge. In addition, many graduates of the programme refuse low paid jobs for various reasons including high expectations, lack of trust from the potential employers and microcredit institutions and engagement in political activities.

5. Progress against key indicators in the UNPFN Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

UNPFN PRIORITY CLUSTER A. Cantonment/Reintegration

Intermediate Objective: The safe verification, discharge and reintegration of Maoist Combatants

(if applicable) UNPBF PMP Result: NA

Indicator: NA

Strategic Outcome	Contributing Outputs	Verifiable Indicators	Baseline (by year)	Milestones and Target (by year)	Current / Final Status
1. <i>The Government of Nepal and Maoist Army have the capacity to meet the CPA and AMMAA commitments for the cantonment, discharge, integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist army</i>	Third-party UN registration and verification of all cantoned Maoist army personnel in accordance with the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Arms and Armies (AMMAA)	2.1 # of registered personnel verified as qualifying for cantonment in accordance with agreed criteria	1.1 0 out of 32,250 registered (Dec 2006)	2.1 19,602 legitimate personnel verified (Dec 2007)	2.1 Registration accomplished during Jan-Feb 2007
		2.2 # of registered personnel verified as not qualifying for cantonment in accordance with agreed criteria	1.2 0 out of 32,250 registered (Dec 2006)	2.2 4008 verified as minors and late recruits (Dec 2007)	2.2 Verification accomplished during Jun-Dec 2010
	Improved reproductive health status of cantonment inhabitants (particularly women) and immediate surrounding communities	2.3 Rapid commencement of discharge and rehabilitation activities further to final agreement on discharge	1.3 16 Dec 2007, agreement on discharge is signed	2.3 Timely start of the discharge process	2.3 A team of almost 60 UN personnel was deployed to Sindhuli cantonment on Jan 06, 2010.
		2.4 % former combatants (VMLRs) successfully discharged with UN support.	1.4 0 out of 4,008 registered VMLRs in Dec 2007	2.4 4008 of VMLRs registered and discharged by 23 March 2010	2.4 The discharge process began on 8 th Jan 2010 and completed on 23 rd March 2010.
	A strategy immediately available to facilitate the Maoist army discharge and provide rehabilitation assistance Orderly discharge of verified minors and late recruits (VMLRs) from Maoist army cantonments in line with the AMMAA	2.5 A timely offer and start of the rehabilitation assistance to discharged combatants	1.5 No rehabilitation programme (Dec 07)	2.5 Effective start date of the rehabilitation prog. (08 Jan 2010)	2.5 A toll-free line as first line of contact for VMLRs & five regional offices were opened on 8 th Jan 2010 & closed in Aug 2011.
		2.6 % of VMLRs participating in the rehabilitation programmes offered by the UN (disaggregated by gender)	1.6 0% (2008) *100% of VMLRs need rehabilitation support 40% of the 4,008 were absent during the discharge ceremony (discharge database 2011)	2.6 50% of 4008 VMLRs received rehabilitation support (Dec 2010) 80 % of 4,008 VMLRs received rehabilitation support (Dec 2011) 100 % of 4,008 VMLRs received rehabilitation support (May 2012)	2.6 54% of VMLRs enrolled and supported for rehabilitation by end of March 2012
		2.7 % of VMLR participants enrolled in rehabilitation programme received psychological support	*30% of the VMLR participants are women & girls (2011) % of the women combatants		

<p>VMLRs are supported in the socio-economic rehabilitation and reintegrated into civilian communities with suitable livelihood options and inline established global standards</p> <p>Communities engaged in supporting the rehabilitation of VMLR participants</p> <p>The UN is a strategic partner to the GoN that plays key role in providing rapid response to cantonment management, registration & verification, discharge & rehabilitation of Maoist army Personnel</p>	<p>2.8 % of VMLR engaged in constructive livelihoods six months after the completion of the rehabilitation training (disaggregated by gender)</p> <p>2.9 Communities perception of the local impact of the rehabilitation process</p> <p>2.10 % of VMLR participants who report being rehabilitated in their families & communities without stigmatization</p> <p>2.11 The UN provides and deploys quick and strategic assistance and support to the GoN</p>	<p>1.7 70% of VMLR participants come with psychosocial needs</p> <p>1.8 0% (2008)</p> <p>1.9 NA</p> <p>1.10 0% (2008)</p> <p>1.11 The UN is seen by the parties as a neutral and strategic partner to support the CPA and AMMAA commitments for the cantonment, discharge, and rehabilitation of the Maoist army (2007)</p>	<p>2.7 30% of VMLRs with psychological needs benefited from psychosocial support</p> <p>2.8 60%² of VMLRs which completed training (May 2012)</p> <p>2.9 70% of communities positive (Apr 2012)</p> <p>2.10 50% of VMLR participants rehabilitated into their communities (Apr 2012)</p> <p>2.11 Provision by UN Agencies of quick, neutral and technical assistance along the different steps of the cantonment, discharge, integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist army</p>	<p>2.7 41% of those counselled (2,384) assessed by March 2012. Of these, in first quarter of 2012, 458 cases were followed-up by counsellors and community psychosocial workers. Out of these, 4 cases were referred to Kathmandu for specialised support, while 24 cases needed regular follow-up and counselling.</p> <p>2.8 1,254 out of 2,149 VMLRs (58%) completed their training by the end of March 2012.</p> <p>2.9 To have better integration of VMLRs into civilian life, UNIRP continued interaction at community level through peacebuilding activities, collaboration with CAAFAG partners & targeted public information sharing</p> <p>2.10 As per the study carried out by UNICEF, 38% VMLRs living with friends, 31% living with parents, 15% living with spouse, 4% living with siblings/other relatives, 9% living alone and 3% unknown.</p> <p>2.11 *Rapid deployment of UN registration team Upon request from Government of Nepal, winter clothing were procured and delivered to cantonment over a period of three months. It involved procurement of goods in china and its shipment to Nepal. *A UN Technical and logistic Team of 60 staff hired, trained and deployed in less than two weeks to conduct the discharge of 4,008 Verified Minors and Late Recruits. *There are weekly coordination meetings among partner agencies on technical issues & meetings at senior level at regular interval where the UN Monitoring Team also attends.</p>
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² The rehabilitation support goes for a period two years with except to participants under health and education which goes beyond the life of the programme (max 4 years).