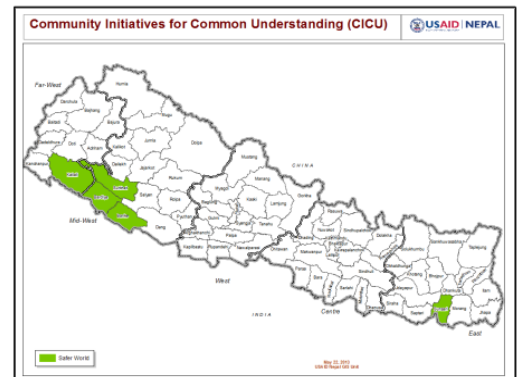


FACT SHEET

Democracy and Governance Program

Community Initiatives for Common Understanding (CICU) project

CICU will foster mutual understanding and cooperation among youth and other types of groups in conflict in a safe space to seek common solutions, as well as collaborate together on small-scale development and peacebuilding efforts in their communities.



Map by USAID/Nepal GIS Specialist

The November 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accords (CPA) formally ended the decade-long armed conflict and marked the beginning of the path to sustainable peace and development. However, the country's progress on political reforms remains slow and the underlying drivers of conflict and impediments to reconciliation remain unchecked. Community level tensions that put local peace and stability at risk involve a number of different groups, including neglected and dissatisfied youth, former combatants, and other disenfranchised, marginalized populations. There is major political polarization among youth leading to violence and criminal activities. There are also tensions involving gender and ethnicity resulting in cases of sexual and gender based violence, caste based discrimination and other identity based issues. The State has limited capacity to ameliorate these socio-economic problems or reduce the levels of crime and insecurity. Trust and peace must be strengthened at the grassroots level through constructive engagement across ethnic and gender lines that lead to tangible benefits.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

CICU is a three-year \$1.139 million project that seeks to foster understanding and cooperation between conflicting groups in 15 VDCs in the conflict-affected districts of Kailali, Bardiya, Surkhet, Banke, and Sunsari. Engaging 9,000 at-risk, conflict-affected youth, including ex-combatants and their communities, the project seeks to:

- Reduce barriers for peaceful dialogue and increase mutual understanding and appreciation of grievances among conflict groups.
- Help conflicting groups collectively identify development activities and collaborate towards their implementation as a means of reconciliation and rehabilitation.
- Increase awareness of district and national level government actors about the existence of conflicts, why they are occurring and how can underlying conditions be addressed through development and rehabilitation programming.

SNAPSHOT

Life of Project: June 2013 to June 2016

Goal: Conflict mitigation in targeted areas improved

Implementing Partner: Saferworld

Geographic Focus: Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Surkhet, and Sunsari

USG Contribution: \$1,139,500

The project will be implemented by Saferworld, in partnership with two local organizations, Child Workers in Nepal and the Informal Sector Service Centre. Using a “people-to-people” approach the project will break down barriers for peaceful dialogue, and build on healthy relationships to identify and collaborate together on community development activities. CICU will simultaneously raise district and national level actors’ awareness of conflict sensitive development and rehabilitation programming.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Create Reconciliation and Development Forums in each community to serve as the grassroots facilitation groups for project activities.
- Conduct conflict-mapping to understand where conflicts exist and needs to be addressed.
- Identify and implement small scale community development activities in order to solidify positive relationships among former adversaries.
- Develop and execute advocacy plans to share project lessons learned at district and national levels.
- Produce and share a video documentary highlighting youths’ primary issues.
- Provide capacity building support to the two local partner organizations: Child Workers in Nepal and the Informal Sector Service Centre.

KEY RESULTS

The project will improve the mutual relationship between the conflicting groups, communities and local authorities, and increase the ability of key stakeholders to effectively address conflict at the local level.

CICU will achieve the following results:

- Cooperative relationships will be established among conflicting groups to address factors contributing to local tensions within communities.
- Community development-based action plans will be implemented to address drivers of conflict.
- Community identified conflicts will be referred to the appropriate conflict-resolution mechanisms.
- Lessons learned will be integrated into conflict sensitive development and rehabilitation programming at district and national levels.
- Local partner organizations’ capacity increased to implement peace programming.

Progress so far:

- Inclusive local mechanisms to bring conflicting parties together have been formed in all participating VDCs and its members have been trained in participatory M&E and action plan development. There are two such mechanisms in each VDC, Reconciliation and Development Forum (RDF) and the youth group.
- Peace Rooms, a safe space to bring conflicting parties together, have been established in all VDCs and youth and community members have started using them.
- A strategy has been developed to serve hard-to-reach youth and vulnerable groups, and a list consisting of approximately 200 such beneficiaries in each VDC has been developed.
- In some VDCs, local authorities have contributed funds to promote RDFs and youth groups’ work.

CONTACT

U.S. Agency for International
Development
G.P.O. Box 295
Brahma Cottage, Maharajgunj
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4234000
Fax: 977-1-4007285
Email: usaidnepal@usaid.gov
www.usaid.gov/nepal
www.facebook.com/usaidnepal
www.twitter.com/usaidnepal

CICU Office
Anil Poudel
Program Manager
Saferworld, Nepal Office
Jhamshikhel, Lalitpur
Tel: 977-1-5522491