



GIZ-CPS

CIVIL PEACE SERVICE NEPAL

An Introduction



IMPRINT

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FOREWORD

The idea for this book emerged during a team meeting, reflecting on our experiences at a regional conference and the inspiration we received from GIZ-Civil Peace Service (GIZ-CPS) projects from other countries. At this conference, we introduced the Nepal programme and our work through stories, food, and scents, and it resonated well at the time. Nonetheless, the notion arose, that a tangible product visualising our core activities would be meaningful. This publication is the result of a process of reflection, the destination of a journey - a path of self-definition through collective creation.

The book's primary objective is to offer a glimpse into the work of the GIZ-Civil Peace Service in Nepal. We aim to illustrate our goals, good practices, and the challenges we confront. While providing a historical overview embedded in the context of the country, we want to deliver insights into our fields of expertise and thematic areas. The ongoing project "Dealing with the past and shaping a non-violent future – strengthening non-violent conflict transformation approaches for sustainable peace in Nepal" has been implemented since 2022. We collaborate with local partners to strengthen structures for cooperation and dialogue and work to create safe spaces where parties of conflict can meet. Our strongest pillars are grassroots CSO's (civil society organisations) that are committed to conflict transformation and peace work. This publication puts a spotlight on these vital partnerships. Our main objective is to strengthen the key actors in civil society to enable social cohesion and harmony and, together, build resilience to transform ongoing conflicts and learn from the past to contribute towards transitional justice.

In the first chapter, we provide an overview of the worldwide engagement of the Civil Peace Service. In the second chapter, we introduce CPS Nepal, the mission and vision, contextual information about Nepal, its history, culture, politics and the interrelations of the violent conflict that lasted a decade along with the current situation.

Building upon this foundation, we present a detailed view of the Civil Peace Service's engagement in Nepal, highlighting the intended outcomes, indicators, thematic areas and approaches to conflict transformation. Fundamental to our work is collaboration. Therefore, we spotlight our valued partners, elaborating their roles and their impactful contributions to peace.



1

**ABOUT
THE CIVIL
PEACE
SERVICE**

CIVIL PEACE SERVICE GLOBAL PROGRAMME

The Civil Peace Service (CPS) is a programme consisting of nine different organisations based in Germany, that share the common goal of preventing violence and promoting peace around the world. Currently, the Civil Peace Service is active in 44 countries.

The following strategic focus areas were identified in the joint strategy for 2021-2025 developed for Nepal: dealing with the past, equal participation of women and marginalised groups in political decision-making processes, strengthening the rule of law and implementing constitutionally guaranteed rights, and overcoming sexualized and gender-based violence.

The areas of CPS work in Nepal include strengthening the role of women in peace work, dealing with the past and reconciliation work, peace education, protection of human rights defenders, support of dialogue and mediation, integration of refugees, as well as conflict-sensitive journalism and media work. The foundation of CPS work is civil conflict resolution, nonviolence aimed at positive peace, civil society commitment, long-term cooperation with local partner organisations and the deployment of national and international experts.

The Civil Peace Service has been present in Nepal since 2008 and is represented by four German organisations: Bread for the World, GIZ-CPS, KURVE Wustrow and Peace Brigades International. Funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), CPS globally supports the peace work of local partners by engaging thematic experts and fostering local activities.

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

pbi
making space for peace

KURVE
Wustrow

Brot
für die Welt

GIZ-CPS NEPAL

The Civil Peace Service Programme is a project of GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH).



GIZ has been active in Nepal since 1974. The priority areas of Nepali-German cooperation are sustainable economic development, renewable energy and energy efficiency, and health.

Strengthening actors for peace is the working area of the GIZ-CPS. GIZ-CPS contributes significantly in Nepal to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 16, "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels."

In GIZ-CPS, we support groups of victims and conflict survivors in developing their ideas for memory work, raise concerns with local government bodies, and advocate for the implementation of transitional justice processes.

We strengthen conflict transformation through capacity development, promotion of creative forms of social transformation and dialogue, psychosocial support, and establishing systems to document and report human rights violations. We enable media actors to follow a conflict-sensitive approach, counter mis- and disinformation and report on non-violent conflict transformation.



MISSION AND VISION

Lederach (2003) defined conflict transformation as envisioning and responding to “the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.”

Since its founding in 2009, GIZ-CPS has been supporting civil society actors in addressing the causes of the decade-long armed conflict and the effects of the conflict on social cohesion in the present.

Our vision is to strengthen civil society actors to support the development of Nepal’s local peace structures in a post-conflict context where victims and survivors are heard, justice is received, and conflict transformation methods are used to prevent recurrence.

Violent conflicts within society can only be reduced by establishing an effective system for transitional justice. The aim of such structures for peace is to create accountability for acts of violence and crimes committed in the past at the individual and societal levels. In parallel, it is equally important to address needs that must be met to ensure that these crimes are not repeated in the future.

This includes rehabilitation and reparation, as well as activities that help find the truth and provide opportunities for different perspectives to be expressed and heard. Above all, institutional reforms are needed to combat impunity, strengthen rule of law, and establish an inclusive, representative system of government, that also supports the empowerment of women and marginalised groups, and promotes their participation in political, social and economic decision-making.

Our partners create safe spaces for victims and survivors to remember, to share their experiences, and to inform the public about the violent past. Through various initiatives, our partners contribute to the public discourse around conflict and related transitional justice processes, amplify silenced or unheard voices, and support victims and survivors in demanding justice.

GIZ-CPS Nepal collaborates further with local partners to strengthen structures for cooperation between the citizens and the state, foster dialogue across lines of conflict, and work to create safe spaces where parties of conflict can meet. Psychosocial service structures at the local level increasingly offer counselling to citizens to support healing and to improve their well-being.

MISSION AND VISION

Through participatory theatre approaches critical and sensitive social issues such as Gender-Based Violence (GBV), discrimination and conflict are being discussed by the audience in the capital as well as in rural areas of Nepal to create a platform for exchange and to foster social cohesion in communities.

Additionally, journalists and media actors are being trained to take a more inclusive and conflict-sensitive approach to reporting on social change, conflict transformation and peace consolidation narratives.



NEPAL CONTEXT

Background

The Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) of 2006 marked the end of a decade-long armed conflict in Nepal, ushering in the establishment of a federal republic with the adoption of an interim constitution in 2006-2007. The first constituent assembly (CA) election in 2008 aimed to draft a new constitution, yet its timely completion proved elusive. The subsequent election in 2012 reshaped political power dynamics, culminating in Nepal's new constitution in 2015, albeit contested by historically marginalised groups. The devastating earthquakes of April 2015 exacerbated conflicts over resource allocation, adding another layer of challenges to the country.

The new constitution of 2015 provided a framework for a federal state comprising of one federal, seven provincial, and 753 local-level governments. This re-organisation was meant to distribute power, but it also presents significant challenges. One of the major challenges up to this point has been the absence of clear laws, acts, and regulations to delineate the roles and responsibilities of these various government tiers. Various governance processes including the transitional justice process remained stagnant.

Commissions, acts, and Supreme Court verdicts faced political interference, hindering progress. Moreover, the credibility of these commissions was often undermined, as they appeared to be influenced by centres of political power.

Amidst ongoing protests, local, provincial, and federal elections were held in 2017. The polls produced a federal majority government led by the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) and ended nearly two decades of a democratic vacuum on the subnational level. While the CA elections of 2008 and 2013 focused on constitution writing and the peace process, the electoral debate in 2017 concentrated on issues of stability, economic and infrastructure development, and the cost of outmigration. Despite the shifting political focus, key aspects of the peace process remain unaddressed, and fundamental conflict potential persists.

Peace Process

While Nepal successfully reintegrated Maoist combatants into the national army, the promise of transitional justice within the peace accord lingered, the needs of the victims were not sufficiently addressed.

NEPAL CONTEXT

The peace accord promised to find the whereabouts of the disappeared persons in 60 days and conclude transitional justice within two years. Despite forming the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Commission on Investigation of Enforced Disappeared Persons (CIEDP) after a nine-year delay, the process remains slow and politically influenced, and victims continue to await justice.

Present Context

Despite the establishment of federal local governments, the provincial and federal levels deal with instability and ineffectiveness and are accused of corruption. Emerging political forces, such as the Nepal Swatantra Party, Janamat Party, and Nagarik Unmukti Party, underscore shifting dynamics.

The country faces economic crises, contributing to public frustration with existing political parties. This frustration is being capitalised by ultra-Hindu Royalist parties, amplifying social, communal, religious, and political disaccords. Nepal's diverse cultural and religious landscape coexists with significant social stratification, particularly in caste hierarchy.

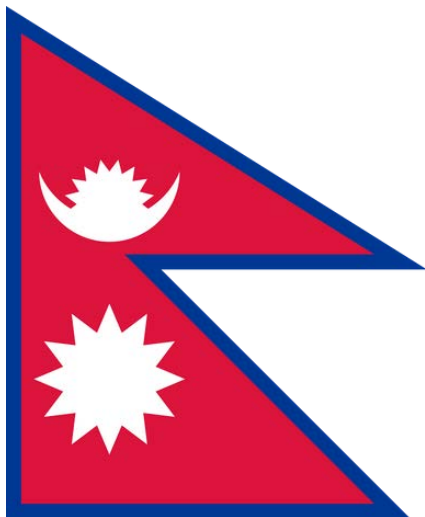
Citizens of rural areas face major inequalities in land ownership, primarily benefiting the Hindu hill area elite. Although the constitution aims to enhance inclusion, its implementation remains weak, hindering the meaningful participation of women and marginalised communities.

While some discriminatory laws have been amended, progress often remains superficial. Women and girls face intersecting forms of discrimination, particularly Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

Transitional justice processes remain stalled, intensifying the frustration and hopelessness of conflict victims and survivors. With over 60,000 cases registered with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and over 2,000 with the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons, progress has been minimal due to various reasons like disagreement of political parties in regards to appointment of the members of the Commissions, limited resources, and the transitional justice (TJ) laws and regulations not being accepted by the victims and survivors as they do not address their demands.

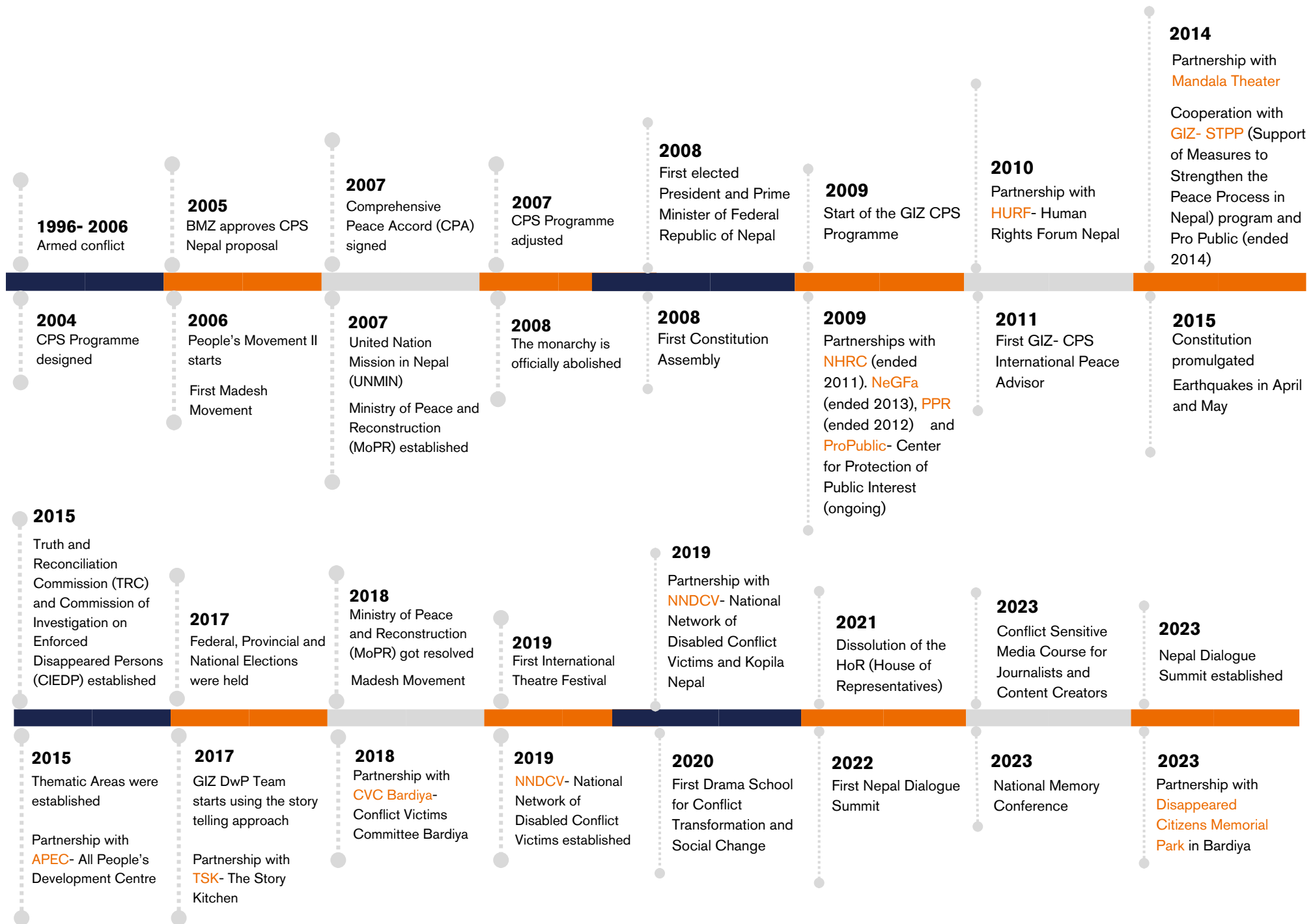
NEPAL CONTEXT

The appointment of commissioners through cabinet decisions has raised doubts about their independence, ignoring calls for compliance with international human rights law and lack of proper consultations. Formal transitional justice procedures are marred by political interference and a lack of credibility. Cases of sexual violence were not addressed. The process calls for supporting measures and initiatives in the areas of memory work and memorialisation, as well as in strengthening local peace structures such as judicial committees and mediation centres. This support to CSOs and local governments offers citizens, including victims and survivors to be heard and to maintain hope for truth and justice amidst the prevailing challenges, while contributing to the healing process of conflict victims and survivors.



NEPAL FACTS AND FIGURES

- Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal (since 2008)
- Monarchy 1743 to its dissolution in 2008
- Located in South Asia, landlocked
- Neighbouring India and People's Republic of China
- Diverse geography: plains, subalpine hills and eight of the world's ten tallest mountains (including Mount Everest)
- Capital: Kathmandu
- 147,516 km²
- Population: nearly 31 Million (2022 estimate)
- Currency: Nepalese Rupee (Rs, रू) (NPR)
- Motto: जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी - "Mother and motherland are greater than heaven"



2

OUR WORK

OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

The results of our work have been contributing to a non-violent social discourse around the conflict, while mainstreaming demands of victims and survivors at institutional level. Positive changes have been achieved on policy level, an increasing amount of conflict victims and survivors are organized in networks and the groups of victims and survivors continue to receive technical and financial support as they develop their own ideas for local remembrance work and raise their concerns with local government bodies. Measures to deal with the past in communities have been strengthened, which create a more conducive environment for the prevention of violent conflicts at local level.

Outcome 1

A rising number of survivors and conflict victims in the catchment areas of the partner organisations are addressing their experiences, sharing them with one another, documenting them, and thus participating actively in the societal discourse to deal with the violent past. In this they are standing up for and pursuing their right to the truth, justice, redress, and dignity. They are increasingly gaining attention in their personal environment and in their communities, in the public discourse on dealing with the past, and among the responsible state actors.

Outcome 2

Civil society actors (individuals, NGOs, networks, etc.) work regularly and continuously with state actors (political office holders, judicial committees, deputy mayors, ward chairs, members of the National Planning Commission, etc.) to address social conflicts at local level. In this, they exercise their mandate constructively within the framework of formal and informal structures. They increasingly use non-violent conflict transformation approaches, such as mediation (restorative) dialogue and NVC, and focus in particular on the participation of women and marginalised groups.

INDICATORS OUTCOME 1



Partner organisations, NGOs, local leaders and policymakers at local level join conflict victims/survivors in calling for concrete measures that allow them to exercise their right to the truth, justice, redress, dignity and non-recurrence.

Marginalised groups of victims/survivors meet in safe spaces, where they find support that will help them live with the consequences of violence and where they can share and document their stories and perspectives in a protected setting (e.g., in story workshops, community dialogues, self-help groups, peer interviews).

A first public archive is established offering personal witness statements of victims/survivors and documentation of the conflict. The establishment of the archive will be supported by PR work.

Victims/survivors cooperate within networks in which women and marginalised groups increasingly assume leadership roles and participate in decision-making processes in order to advance their needs and rights at local, provincial and national levels.

Local communities and the three levels of government are engaged with victims/survivors in designing meaningful remembrance activities.

Media report in a conflict-sensitive way on issues related to the country's violent past and the correlation between current and historical conflicts.

Knowledge, skills and best practices for formal and informal approaches to dealing with the past and to conflict transformation have been documented and discussed by partner organisations and networks of victims/survivors and are shared with networks of victims/survivors and other relevant actors including local government and the media.

Professional psychosocial support services are available to victims/survivors of violence and their communities at local level, and the services are used.

Knowledge, expertise and skills, as well as the opportunities for assigning practitioners in the field of MHPSS (mental health and psychosocial support) are enhanced by increasing the number of training courses and the level of supervision in project districts, so that the effects of violence and trauma can be addressed more frequently and more professionally.

INDICATORS OUTCOME 2



Local peace actors, in particular marginalised groups and women are enabled to use non-violent conflict transformation and peace consolidation approaches. They can establish links to relevant interest groups (e.g., media, government representatives) in order to share their stories and perspectives and to stand up for their rights.

Citizens at municipal level in the project areas are aware of their fundamental rights and duties and know how and where to demand these rights.

Informal local peace structures are established to address conflicts and are operational. They work inclusively and involve both state actors and marginalised groups.

State actors in the project regions (deputy mayors, political office holders, ward chairs, etc.) exercise their mandate by setting up judicial committees and mediation centres in their area of responsibility and by promoting their work.

The media publish reports on non-violent conflict transformation and peace consolidation approaches, as well as success stories. There is more conflict-sensitive reporting in the media and public discussion, e.g., reports and success stories relating to non-violent conflict transformation approaches and perspectives and voices of marginalised groups and women.

The significant and meaningful involvement of women and marginalised groups in leadership and decision-making within partner organisations, networks and local government in the project regions has increased and is appreciated.

THEMATIC AREAS

Dealing with the Past (DwP)

Uncovering the truth constitutes one of the main needs for peace and conflict transformation. We seek to provide safe spaces to help conflict victims and survivors deal with their past sufferings and trauma. Stories shared in these safe spaces describing experiences of the conflict and the resilience of the conflict victims and survivors work both to document the truth and as a healing approach. These stories also serve to inform and educate citizens, thereby reducing the potential for future violence. This is accompanied by supporting conflict victim groups to organize and build their capacities for advocacy in their fight for truth, justice, dignity, and reparations.

Dialogue

A dialogue (Nepali Samwad) is a way of collectively creating meaning for a group of individuals or institutions. In dialogue, they can examine their individual and shared assumptions, concepts, worldviews, emotions, and needs. The underlying idea is that actors disregard hierarchy to deeply comprehend one another. Methods such as active listening, respecting, suspending judgements and voicing are some of the principles in dialogue. To strengthen the social fabric and prevent conflicts on local levels, we are supporting CSOs to strengthen inter-religious dialogue committees and dialogue groups at schools, train dialogue facilitators and facilitate knowledge exchange and networking among dialogue practitioners.

Cross-cutting issues GESI and Peace Education

The topics of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) as well as Peace Education are cross-cutting issues in the work of GIZ-CPS Nepal. Incorporating gender equality and social inclusion principles into conflict transformation initiatives promotes a holistic and sustainable approach to peace and social justice. It recognises that conflict affects individuals and groups (women, men, children, sexual minorities, marginalised communities, etc.) in distinct ways and that their participation is essential for lasting solutions. Peace education and conflict transformation are closely linked, as they both aim to prevent, mitigate, and resolve conflicts while promoting a culture of peace and social justice. Peace education provides the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for individuals and communities to engage in conflict transformation effectively. It lays the groundwork for understanding, prevention, and peaceful resolution of conflicts, making it a crucial component of efforts to build a more peaceful and just world. Peace education is an integral part of GIZ-CPS Nepal as we are working for instance in schools on the topics of DwP through story telling sessions, Dialogue and NVC, as well as through theatre performances, and radio programs to enhance knowledge around peacebuilding.

THEMATIC AREAS

Conflict-Sensitive Media (CSM)

Due to the multi-ethnic, multilingual, multireligious, and multicultural environment in Nepal, media actors need to have a strong sense of context and conflict sensitivity and the willingness to address societal challenges. By strengthening conflict-sensitive media production and providing space for knowledge-exchange, learning and reflection, the CSM component works on the intersection of media and non-violent conflict transformation.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

The working area of mental health and psychosocial support focuses on empowering people at an individual level, connecting people with MHPSS services, promoting knowledge about mental health, reducing stigma, and raising awareness of the importance of mental health as part of general health. The work aims to contribute to healthy and resilient communities and hence the society.

Human Rights

Access to social support, education, basic health care and nutrition are fundamental human rights. This access is not always assured, especially in rural areas of Nepal. We work at many levels to raise awareness about human rights and ensure that as many stakeholders and service providers as possible are resourced to offer the necessities of a healthy and just society.

Mediation

Nepal's constitution defines the mandate to establish mediation centres across the country at the municipal level. This supports local communities in resolving conflicts without resorting to the legal system. The availability of highly qualified mediators is important to fulfil this aim, thus our partners are training mediators to ensure services to the citizens.

Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

Nonviolent Communication empowers practitioners to understand the fundamentals of human motivation based on universal human needs. This allows us to connect with ourselves and others to find strategies that take care of all the needs in each given situation instead of resorting to violence. In Nepal, NVC is applied in dialogue, education, mediation, and psychosocial support, among other fields.

Theatre

Theatre for Social Change and Conflict Transformation is a creative and participatory approach that uses theatre and performance as a tool for addressing critical social issues and transforming conflicts. In Nepal, Theatre for Social Change and Conflict Transformation harnesses the power of the arts to promote peace, reconciliation, and social cohesion.

3

OUR PARTNERS

OUR PARTNERS

Our partners organise and design remembrance initiatives, curate and establish memory sites, document and archive stories of victims and survivors, and implement peace education in schools. Interfaith dialogue groups have been established in communities to prevent and transform conflicts at a local level. Psychosocial counsellors have been trained to offer counselling services at the local level to prevent violence and support victims of violence. State actors and teachers are being trained in mediation and NVC to foster a culture of nonviolence and enhance knowledge of conflict transformation methods. In the following chapters we will introduce the fields of work and the contribution of our partners to conflict transformation in detail.





APEC/ ALL PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Vision & Mission

The vision of APEC (Samagra Jan-Utthan Kendra/All People's Development Center) is to achieve justice for all people, grounded in human rights, through a collaborative and peaceful process within society.

The goal of APEC is to actively participate in building an inclusive, self-sufficient, and resilient community. In this community, everyone is not only conscious of the intrinsic worth of human rights but also enjoys equal access to all available opportunities.

APEC has been a Civil Peace Service partner organisation since August 2015.

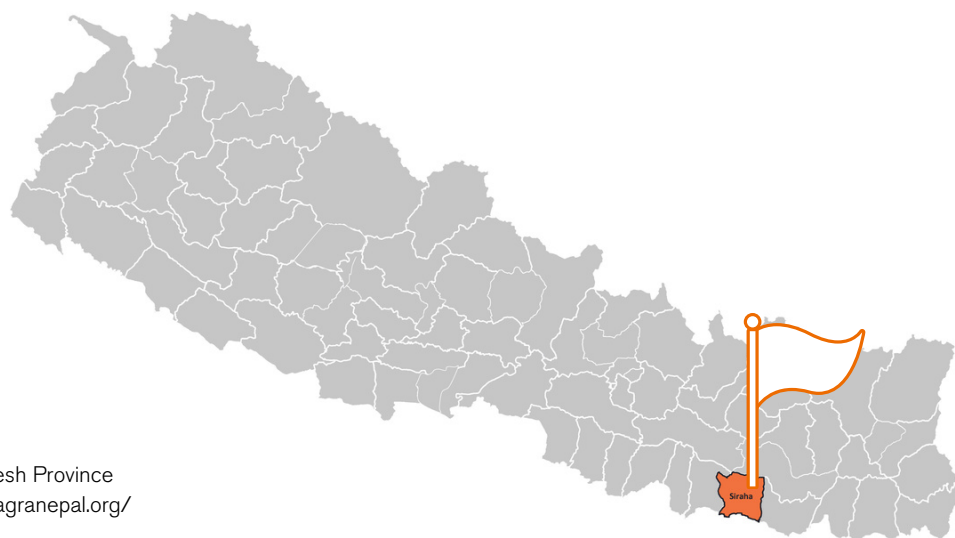
Areas of work

- Dialogue
- Peacebuilding
- Human Rights
- Peace Education

Working with

- Religious Leaders
- Civil Society Members
- School Management Committee
- Teachers
- Parents
- Children and Youth (students)
- Marginalised Groups
- Local Politicians

Based in Lahan and working in Siraha District Madesh Province



Office: Lahan, Siraha, Madesh Province
Contact: <https://www.samagranepal.org/>

APEC/ ALL PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Two dialogue committees were formed in Lahan and Dhangadhimai municipalities, further supplemented by the establishment of two school dialogue committees in Lahan and two school dialogue committees in Dhangadhimai. To enhance their effectiveness, the capacity of board members, project staff, and dialogue committee members has been strengthened in dialogue facilitation, enabling them to address conflicts and social issues more adeptly. Trained dialogue facilitators from these committees are actively using their skills to resolve local issues, while dialogue committee members are initiating and organising regular meetings. Furthermore, APEC has contributed to peacebuilding efforts through the publication of two important documents, "Dialogue for Peace" and "Religious Message for Brotherhood."

APEC has undertaken various peacebuilding activities, including the development of organizational capacities for policy and guideline formulation (such as GESI policy and safeguarding policy), to ensure the smooth execution of activities. Additionally, APEC has focused on the development of conflict-sensitive communication, resource mobilisation, GESI mainstreaming, and knowledge management, along with the creation of tools for peacebuilding and conflict transformation.



APEC/ ALL PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Story of change

Here is a firsthand experience from Firoj Siddique, Lahan municipality, Siraha:

I am an active member of the Hatemato Interreligious Dialogue Committee in Siraha, representing the Muslim community. This local peace initiative emerged in response to a conflict in Lahan municipality involving the alleged killing of a cow, which escalated tensions between Hindus and Muslims, leading to violent clashes.

As a journalist, I was approached by APEC members Bhairab Gelal and Ram Bharoshi Mahato to facilitate dialogue between Hindu and Muslim leaders to promote social harmony and peace. Initially sceptical due to the high tension, I eventually saw glimmers of hope during small group dialogues among Muslim members. We discussed the purpose of our dialogue through numerous sessions, paralleled by similar dialogues within Hindu groups.

With the support of the GIZ Civil Peace Service, APEC initiated a joint dialogue programme in Lahan, inaugurated by Muslim Maulana and Hindu priests symbolically placing water on a flower. Despite initial separation between Muslim and Hindu attendees, the joint dialogue proceeded successfully, resulting in an 11-point solidarity agreement for religious tolerance and peace. This led to the formation of the Hatemato Interreligious Dialogue Committee, which has expanded to include Christian and Buddhist representatives. We have been actively engaging in dialogues and training sessions across various locations. I am proud of our committee's efforts in fostering peace and harmony in our community and aspire to expand this initiative throughout the country.





CONFLICT VICTIMS' COMMITTEE BARDIYA (CVC)

Vision & Mission

CVC Bardiya envisions an advanced, creative, respectful and peaceful society by obtaining truth, justice and reparation for the conflict-affected communities. Its mission is to make general people aware of the rights of conflict victims' communities through advocacy, awareness raising, service delivery, training, sustainable use of local resources and heritage, by coordinating and collaborating with national and international human rights institutions/networks and diplomatic missions.

CVC was a Civil Peace Service partner organisation from 2018-2020 and again since 2023.

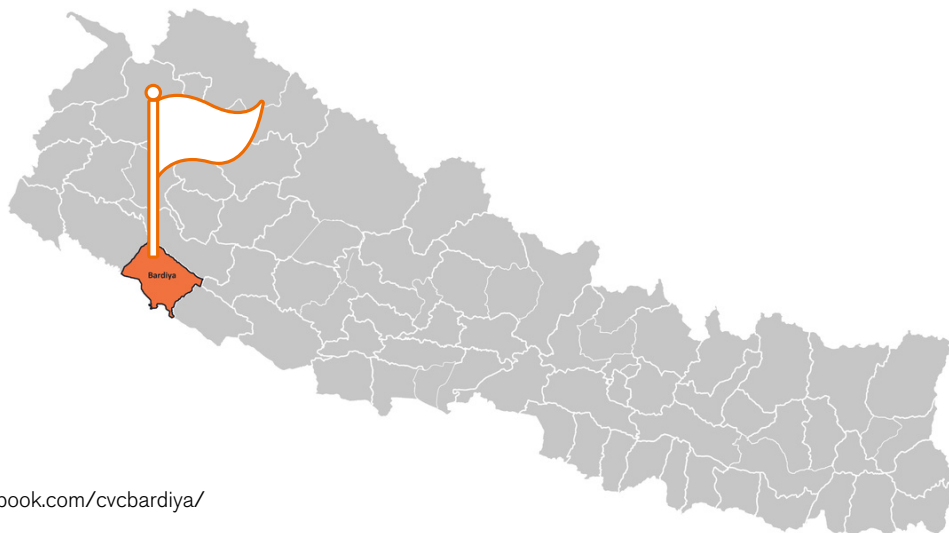
Areas of work

- Advocacy including advocating for policy changes
- Peacebuilding
- Storytelling
- Transitional Justice and Memory Work

Working with

- Conflict Victims
- Policymakers
- Local Government Officials

Based in Gulariya, Bardiya District and working in Bardiya District, Lumbini Province



Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/cvcbardiya/>

CONFLICT VICTIMS' COMMITTEE BARDIYA (CVC)

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Story-writing: Nine storytellers who have been trained in story-writing using a narrative practice approach are working to document the experiences of conflict victims and their families (in the case of enforced disappearances) in Bardiya.

Advocacy: CVC works with policymakers at the local, provincial, and federal levels to bring attention to the issues of conflict victims (including families of disappeared persons).

Capacity building of conflict victims.



CONFLICT VICTIMS' COMMITTEE BARDIYA (CVC)

Story of change

Bardiya has the highest number of enforced disappearance cases during the armed conflict. In 2018, we supported the Conflict Victims' Committee to organise a felicitation and commemoration event for conflict victim families, including families of the disappeared. To prepare for the event, photos of all the disappeared and killed victims were collected. During this process, some families shared that their only photos of family members had been taken by organisations and never returned. To remedy this, CVC then contacted these organisations to get back the photos. These photos were also compiled as part of a collage, contributing to the collective memory of conflict in Bardiya.

During the event, families then lit traditional lamps in front of each of the conflict victim photos, remembering and honouring them. The Chief District Officer then felicitated each of the conflict victims. CVC worked closely with the local government in organising this victim-led local memorialisation event. This was the first time many families had been publicly acknowledged or honoured by a local government official.

Chamfi Chaudhary, a family member of the disappeared person from Geruwa rural municipality, shared this after the event. "I used to feel that the victims by the state and by the Maoist were completely different. But during this program, we sat together. When the municipality honoured us without any discrimination, I felt that the pains created [by the armed conflict] were the same and we all are the same. The hope that the government will give us justice and bring smiles to our faces has awakened in me after this program."

The sustained positive effects of the CVC local commemoration events in 2018 have been observed in Bardiya as five local governments have taken ownership of the event. They have continued the initiative of symbolic recognition and acknowledgment by organising such events on a yearly basis.



DISAPPEARED CITIZENS' MEMORIAL PARK

Vision & Mission

The Disappeared Citizens' Memorial Park envisions a prosperous and peaceful Nepal with social justice. Through peace education and memory work, the Park works to create a society where everyone can live with self-respect without repeating the incidents of conflict.

The objectives are to preserve the memories of the armed conflict and encourage the new generation to learn from the past. To document and archive the events of the conflict, develop the park as a study and research center and foster an understanding and appreciation of the experiences of families of disappeared persons to contribute to the writing of the history of the people. Further, the aim is to develop income for conflict-victim families through tourism while protecting biodiversity.

Disappeared Citizens' Memorial Park has been a Civil Peace Service partner organization since July 2023.

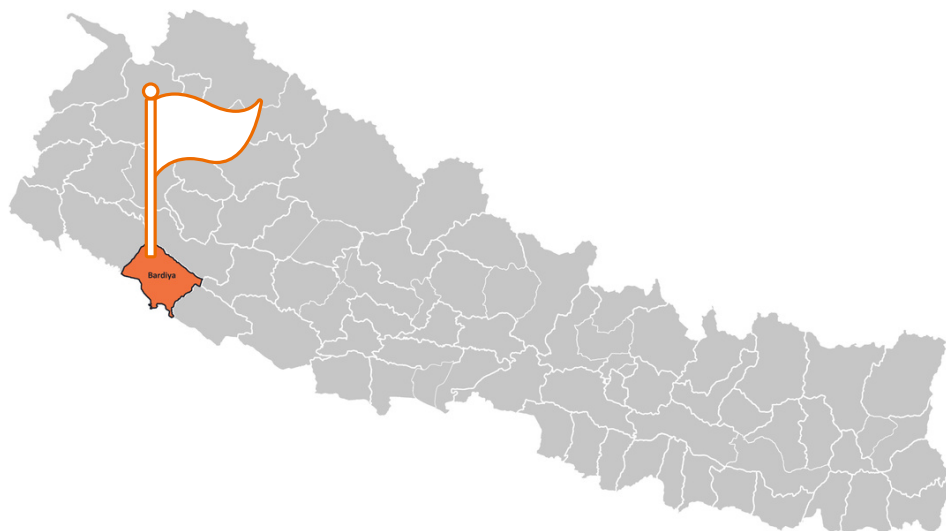
Areas of work

- Archiving
- Peacebuilding
- Research and Advocacy
- Sustainable Tourism
- Nature Conservation
- Memory Work and Memorialization

Working with

- Schools and Colleges (students and teachers)
- Youth
- Families of Disappeared Persons
- Conflict Victims
- Policymakers
- Local Government Officials
- Researchers

The Memorial Park is located in Bardiya District, Lumbini Province



DISAPPEARED CITIZENS' MEMORIAL PARK

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Story-writing: Eight storytellers who have been trained in story-writing using a narrative practice approach are working to document the experiences of families who disappeared in Bardiya.

Peace Education: The Park also hosts schoolchildren, teachers, and general visitors with whom the issue of disappearances in Bardiya is shared.

Advocacy: The park committee works with policymakers at the local, provincial, and federal levels to bring attention to the issues of families of disappeared persons while continuing to ask for answers.



DISAPPEARED CITIZENS' MEMORIAL PARK

Story of change

When the 'Dealing with the Past' team started working with the park, the park already had a Detailed Project Review (DPR) for the physical infrastructure to be constructed. But they did not yet know what could accompany these infrastructures. The park had collected more than 50 personal belongings and objects ranging from clothing to books from families of enforced disappearances. But there are still no concrete plans on how to preserve these objects and bring them to life when they are put on display (in an in-house museum) in the future. Through continued technical input from the Peace Advisors of the 'Dealing with the Past' team, the process of archiving and story writing has begun in earnest.

In parallel, the park's own institutional development has been emphasised in the cooperation. In August 2023, a strategic planning workshop brought together the park committee and different stakeholders relevant to the park, including local politicians. Participants in the strategic planning workshop came up with many new visions for the park, including as a one-stop research, learning, and resource centre for conflict-era disappearances. Niranjana Chaudhary, whose father disappeared during the armed conflict and who leads the park committee, shared this after a strategic planning workshop: "We were so focused on what to show the park visitors that we almost forgot it was equally important what we tell them and how. The workshop has helped create a bridge into our vision for the future and now we know how we can get there collectively. I feel like our dream of using these objects to prevent future violence is finally coming true."





HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM NEPAL

Vision & Mission

HURF envisions a civilised and prosperous society with human rights upheld in all sectors. HURF actively works to establish justice and sustainable peace through monitoring, protection, and promotion of human rights. This aims to improve access to justice and promote peace at the community level, as well as supporting effective democratic practices and meaningful participation of excluded groups/communities in governance and society.

Human Rights Forum Nepal (HURF) is Civil Peace Service partner organization since 2010.

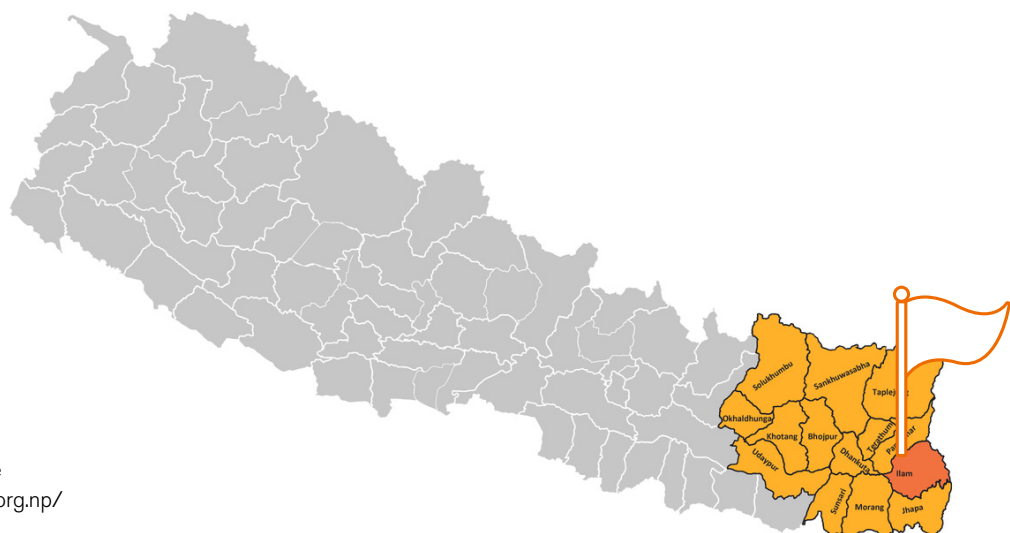
Areas of work

- Promotion of Human Rights
- Community Mediation
- Support of Local Government
- Establishing Local Judicial Structures

Working with

- Mediators
- Judicial Committees
- Local government officials
- Counsellors
- Marginalised Communities
- Children and Women at Risk

Based in Ilam, Ilam District and working in Koshi Province.



Office: Ilam, Koshi Province
Contact: <https://www.hurf.org.np/>

HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM NEPAL

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

HURF activities include awareness programmes about Human Rights, child rights and women's rights, enhancing the capacity of Human Rights defenders who are working at the grassroots level to monitor human rights cases in Koshi Province.

HURF is supporting the peacebuilding process by facilitating community mediation and dialogues. They also organise training sessions covering essential topics such as the new constitution, democracy, and federalism.

They are supporting local governments on policymaking, law-making, planning and implementation skills on the issues of children, women, Dalits, indigenous, senior citizens, etc., and helping establish local judicial structures and mediation services. HURF also provides legal, psychosocial, mediation, emergency rescue and shelter support to victims of violence.



HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM NEPAL

Story of change

Last year in 2022, the HURF trained mediators of Sandakpur met with a complex land dispute case that had been in conflict for many decades and across generations. The families involved had tried various settlement approaches, including going to court, and none of these attempts led to a meaningful resolution.

The case was as follows: in 2001 BS (1945 AD), two Rai families of two clans (Deusali and Bangdel) were living in Sandakpur and each clan claimed 36 ropani (1.83 hectares) of hill-land that actually belonged to the Subedi clan. Then in 2029 BS (1972 AD) the Subedi clan wanted compensation for the land. It was only in 2060 B.S (2003 AD) that the Deusali family were able to buy the land and it was transferred solely to them. The Bangdel family who had also been on that land were not consulted in this process. After the Deusali family bought the land, they started to force the Bangdel's to leave the land that they had lived on for generations.

As the dispute and enmity grew, they eventually went to the District Court Ilam. The court decided that the whole land belongs to the Deusali family. This decision was not acceptable for either family because the Bangdel families became landless, and the Deusali families didn't want to take the Bangdel families' land from them.

After the court decision, both families went to seek justice in different places but didn't find any suitable avenue to resolve the dispute. Finally, in 2079 BS (2022 AD) their case was registered in the mediation center of Sandakpur. The mediators, who had been trained by the Human Rights Forum, offered two mediation sessions, and the families themselves came up with an agreement. The Bangdel family gave the same amount of money the Deusali family had paid, and they gave the Bangdel family 31 ropani (1.58 hectares) of land.

It took them just two sessions of mediation to resolve a five decades long conflict and all the eight families from both sides have good relations these days and are in cooperation after the mediation.





KOPILA NEPAL

Vision & Mission

A peaceful society where all citizens enjoy their fundamental human rights and have equal access to information, opportunities and services.

Kopila Nepal emphasises eliminating social disparities of all kinds and strives to ensure that the most marginalised women, children, people with psychosocial problems and people with disabilities can enjoy their rights and psychosocial wellbeing.

Kopila Nepal has been a Civil Peace Service partner organization since 2019.

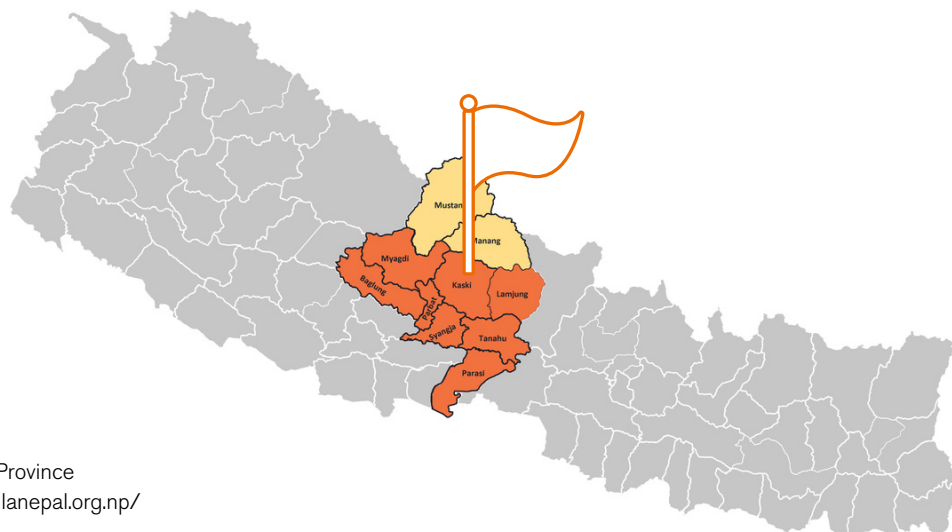
Areas of work

- Capacity Building through Training and Awareness
- Advocacy
- Livelihood Development Support
- Group Formation and Mobilisation
- Psychosocial Counselling and Mental Health Treatment
- Social Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Reunification

Working with

- Women
- Children
- People at risk of psychosocial (mental and health) disability
- Families
- Communities
- Teachers
- Policymakers and Implementers

Based in Pokhara, Kaski District and working in nine districts in Gandaki Province



Office: Pokhara, Gandaki Province
Contact: <https://www.kopilanepal.org.np/>

KOPILA NEPAL

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Resilience for Peace is a project initiated in 2019. The project aims to support people who were affected by and experienced torture during the armed conflict, people who are at risk of psychosocial disabilities, gender-based violence, and torture, among others.

Kopila Nepal helps to build the capacity of community-based organisation (CBOs) for victims of torture – Yatana Pidit Society (YPS), Kopila Independent Development Societies (KIDS), registered umbrella organisations of self-help groups (SHGs) to empower the members in dealing with conflicts and concerns and to find solutions autonomously.

The groups are supported through psychosocial support, counselling, advocacy and innovative initiatives.

Kopila Nepal also dedicates efforts to research and educating on mental health and gender-based violence through awareness-building programs and training activities, and in collaborating and influencing through advocacy with relevant stakeholders, specialists and decisionmakers.



KOPILA NEPAL

Story of change

Here is a first-hand experience of Ran Maya Gurung, president of KIDS:

“I'm 50 years old single woman. In my childhood, I saw many women left alone by their families. So, I decided not to get married but to take care of my siblings. Looking back, I realize I never really thought about what I wanted. We went through natural disaster, 10 years long war and a devastating earthquake, they all started their family, and I had no one.

Then, I found out about self-help groups and a chance to discover myself. I learned to lead, to stand up for what's right, and to be a voice for others. Kopila Nepal, brought us training, education, and a sense of belonging. With time our self-help group became something bigger – Kopila Independent Development Society (KIDS), and I became its President, a proud moment I cherish.

Today, I'm not just someone who survived tough times. I survived my own doubts too. My story shows that even when things are hard, there's always hope. I'm Ran Maya Gurung, a sister who became strong, found friends, and learned to speak up for what's right. I am thankful to Kopila Nepal helping us on the journey of resilience and strength.”



MANDALA THEATRE-NEPAL

Vision & Mission

The driving spirit of Mandala Theatre-Nepal is people's freedom, happiness and betterment. We envision a society that strongly appreciates and celebrates each other's cultural diversity.

We want to develop Mandala Theatre-Nepal as an inclusive and open space that encourages and fosters dialogue, exchange and the celebration and strengthening of Nepal's cultural diversity. In addition, we strive to offer a platform especially to young theatre artists and activists to explore and collaborate for innovative performances and artworks.

Through our theatre and productions, we are committed to developing and practicing a creative style that is strongly based on Nepali theatre and culture, as well as deeply rooted in our desire to be a strong, yet aesthetical voice for social justice, political awareness and human rights.

Mandala Theatre-Nepal has been a Civil Peace Service partner organisation since 2014.

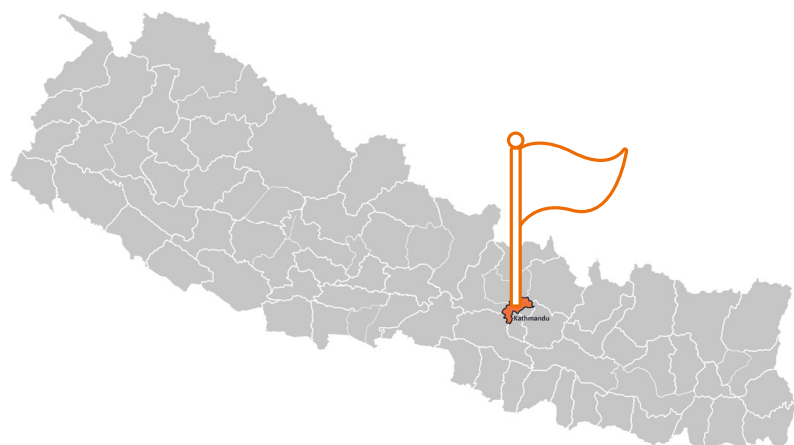
Areas of work

- Mandala Drama School
- Memory 30th August Event (International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappeared)
- Theatre Productions
- Nepal International Theatre Festival (NITFest)
- Playwriting Project
- Community Engagement
- Capacity Building
- Cultural Exchange
- Advocacy
- Mobile Theatre Tour

Working with

- Communities
- Artists, Theatre Directors, Playwrights, and Theatre Technicians
- Local, Federal and National Level Politicians
- Journalists/Media
- Conflict Victims and Survivors, Family Members of the Enforced Disappeared
- Activists
- CSOs and Government Local Bodies
- School and College Students
- International Theatre Groups

Based in Kathmandu and working in different parts of Nepal.



MANDALA THEATRE-NEPAL

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Mandala Theatre-Nepal is a dedicated group of theatre enthusiasts committed to cultivating a creative style deeply rooted in Nepali culture and theatre traditions. Our artistic endeavours are firmly rooted in the pursuit of social justice, political awareness, and the advocacy of human rights.

From its inception in 2008, Mandala Theatre-Nepal has been committed to its mission to use the power of theatre and the arts to foster peace and social change. This commitment to peacebuilding took shape when Mandala Theatre partnered with the Civil Peace Service (GIZ-CPS) in 2014.

Mandala Theatre has staged a wide array of programmes aimed at supporting conflict transformation, transitional justice, and addressing historical grievances in Nepal. We have organized creative interventions such as playwriting workshops, play making workshops, drama school and other short term trainings, international theatre festivals and series of relevant dialogue sessions to strengthen the awareness about conflict issues in Nepal. We approach these critical issues with creativity and nonviolence, contributing to the socio-political discourse. Our work is especially focused on amplifying the voices of marginalised communities. Our effort not only provided support to these disadvantaged groups but also served as a catalyst for raising social awareness among artists.

As a collective of artists and peace advocates, Mandala Theatre continually reflects on pressing social and political matters. We firmly believe in the transformative potential of art in shaping and enriching reality through constructive dialogue and creative expression.



MANDALA THEATRE-NEPAL

Story of change

Here is a first-hand experience from Susmita Pokhrel / Mandala Drama School (1st Batch, teaching in the second batch):

Before my journey through drama school, I had heard whispers about theatre's healing and therapeutic potential. It was said that theatre could help you understand yourself better. However, I was uncertain about how this worked, as there was a prevailing stereotype that drama equalled pretence. Little did I know that drama and acting would redefine honesty for me. My drama school odyssey taught me that growth thrives beyond our comfort zones. Prior to this, I had never even entertained the thought of entering the theatre world. When I stumbled upon a scholarship opportunity for the first batch of Mandala Drama School focusing on social change, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding, the areas close to my heart, this revelation was both exciting and daunting. I hailed from a non-theatrical background and committing to a demanding 1.5-year programme amidst the chaos of a pandemic and my master's thesis was no small feat. However, my innate zeal for exploration and a desire to contribute to my community compelled me to dive into the unknown. I sought to unravel how theatre could be a catalyst for social change.

The initial days of my drama school journey were far from easy. As an introvert unfamiliar with the theatre, I vividly recall shedding tears when tasked with an animal act on the very first day. Doubt often crept in, and I questioned whether I truly belonged in this new world.

Yet, I persevered, pushing myself to confront challenges head-on, even though I preferred to act last and needed time to process my thoughts. It was far from my comfort zone, but this journey unlocked dimensions of theatre I had never before encountered.

Looking back, I'm grateful for taking the leap into the drama school realm, exploring territories I had never imagined. This experience was a crucible of learning and growth, reinforcing my belief that stepping out of one's comfort zone is the path to uncovering the best version of oneself.

I must extend credit to Michael Thonhauser, Bijay Baral, Somnath Khanal, Rajan Katiwada, and Anup Baral for their unwavering support throughout this journey. They served as guiding lights, motivating me to unearth a previously undiscovered aspect of my identity.





NNDCV

National Network of Disabled Conflict Victims

Vision & Mission

NNDCV envisions a non-violent, peaceful, and beautiful Nepal with the guarantee of social justice. NNDCV's mission is to create a society where conflict victims with a disability can live a dignified life with a sense of justice.

NNDCV has been a Civil Peace Service partner organisation since 2023.

The main objectives and focus areas of work are to organise the issues of civilians made disabled due to conflict across the country and collectively bring the issues of disabled conflict victims to the forefront, to make the state accountable by organising campaigns for social and legal justice for disabled conflict victims, to establish the issues of disabled conflict victims and exert pressure on different agencies of government (including TRC and CIEDP), to address these issues and to assure the meaningful participation and access of disabled conflict victims in resources and policy making.

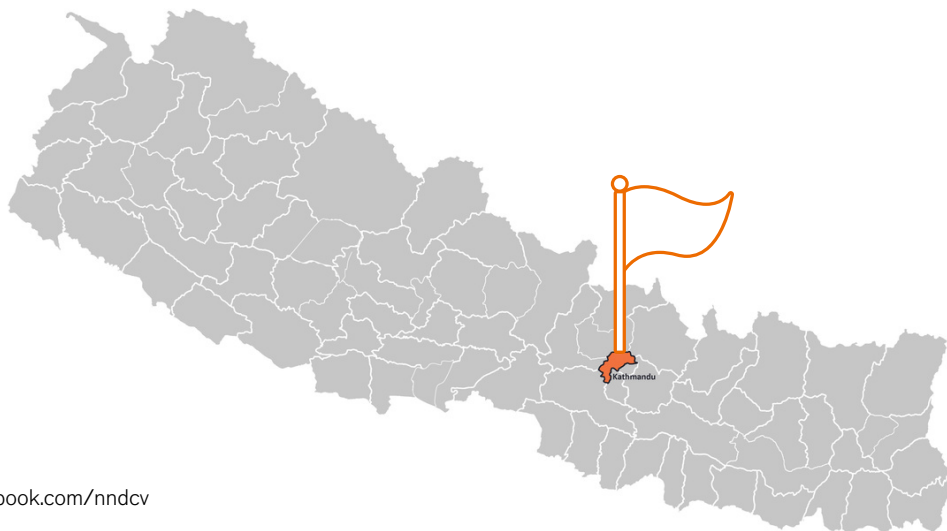
Areas of work

- Advocacy
- Storytelling
- Peace Education

Working with

- Civilians made disabled due to conflict
- Organisations of People with Disabilities
- Policymakers
- Youth (school and college students)
- Journalists
- Teachers

Based in Kathmandu and working in different parts of Nepal.



Office: Kathmandu
Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/nndcv>

NNDCV

National Network of Disabled Conflict Victims

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Story-writing: Nine storytellers who have been trained in story-writing using a narrative practice approach are working to document the experiences of civilians disabled during conflict from across Nepal.

Peace education: The network uses storytelling, its 14 Stories book and a travelling photo exhibition to make audiences (the majority of whom are young people) understand the effects of conflict and works towards non-recurrence.

Advocacy: The network works with policymakers at the local, provincial, and federal levels to bring attention to the issues of civilians disabled due to the conflict and has been continuously trying to broaden the definition of conflict victims to include those who became disabled due to abandoned bombs or landmines left from the conflict.



NNDCV

National Network of Disabled Conflict Victims

Story of change

Here is a firsthand experience from Surendra Khatri, Chairperson of the National Network of Disabled Conflict Victims:

I could never imagine I would be living with a disability. Ever since I was young, I had planned to join the Indian army and continue the family legacy started by my father. But my life took a complete 360-degree turn when I was 18. My hometown, Beni, had been the site of one of the deadliest battles of the conflict between the State and the Maoists. On June 24, 2006, a harmless looking package I picked turned out to be one of the bombs left behind. The bomb caused injuries to both my hands leading to their amputation below the wrist.

After the incident, I was unsure of where my life was headed now. It took me five long years to gain back my lost confidence. In 2017, I was invited to a story workshop where I met with 14 other civilians made disabled by conflict from across the country. The workshop created a safe space to bring out the yet unheard stories of these civilians. These stories came together first in the form of a book entitled “14 Stories” and then transformed into a traveling photo exhibition. I feel that the exhibition and book helped to cast us storytellers in a new light within our own families/communities and rallied support for us. It was during one of these travels in 2018 that I saw a new dream: Having met others disabled by the conflict in different parts of Nepal, I now wanted to bring them together in one place.

Like they say, where there is a will, there is a way. In 2019, the national assembly of 55 civilians made disabled during conflict led to the formation of National Network of Disabled Conflict Victims. Our network registered formally a year later, and I was elected its chairperson. In the process of chasing my new dream, I have become one of the most recognized disability advocates in the country.

If I had been recruited into the Army, I might have had money, but I would not have had the chance to serve people like me. I would not have had the recognition and self-satisfaction I have today. Now my life has a new meaning. I use my story to spread the message of peace. I feel most hopeful when I tell my story and see the empathy and understanding in my young audience. I now view my disability as both a possibility and an opportunity.





PRO PUBLIC

Vision & Mission

Pro Public's vision is that Nepalese people's basic rights are guaranteed through social, economic, environmental, and political justice. This requires government and private sector accountability and transparency through good governance advocacy, and judicial activities.

Their mission is to support social change to empower the Nepalese people through research, advocacy, litigation, and capacity building, including infrastructures for peace.

Forum for Protection of Public Interest (Pro Public) is a Civil Peace Service partner organization since 2009.

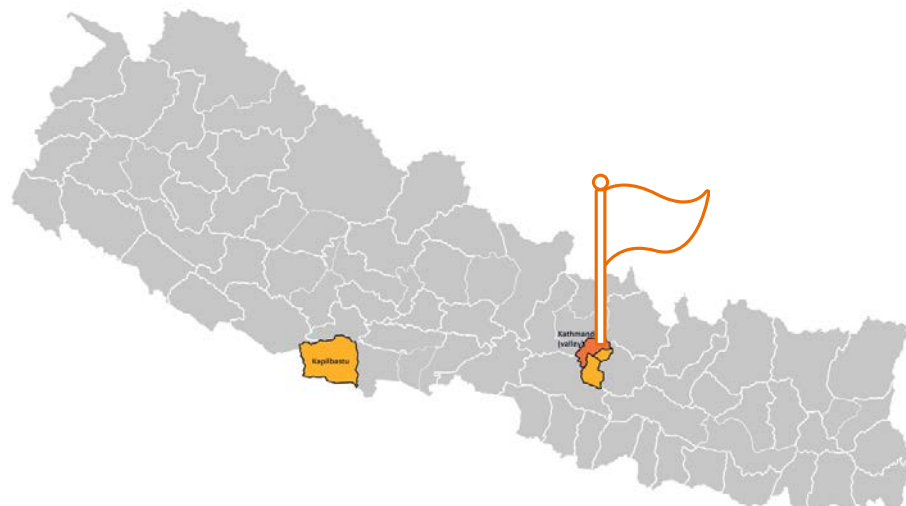
Areas of work

- Nonviolent Communication
Capacity Building
- Life-Enriching Education
- Model Municipality

Working with

- Mediators
- Judicial Committees
- Peace Builders
- Schools, including Teachers, Students and Staff
- Local Government Officials
- Legal Protection

Based in Kathmandu and working in different parts of Nepal.



Office: Kathmandu
Contact: <https://propublic.org/>

PRO PUBLIC

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Capacity building through Nonviolent Communication (NVC). The programme of sharing NVC supports CSO's to better implement peacebuilding activities, schools to adopt a model of Life-Enriching Education, and the NVC community to grow and offer nonviolent approaches to various sectors of society. The vision is to support Buddhabhumi to becoming a model municipality by working closely with the local government, justice committees and mediation centres, so that dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution become the norm. Litigation of social and environmental justice cases in Nepal's courts.



PRO PUBLIC

Story of change

“First-hand experience from Geetika Gautam (teacher at Brihaspati Vidhya Sadan school, NVC training participant): “See me beautiful”

In my class, there was a mischievous child who was an only child to her parents. Both her parents were working abroad. She never went out to roam around the town and was living with her old grandparents.

At school, she loved spending time with her friends and hardly paid attention to or interest in her studies. She was one among those who was very mischievous, and it was hard to make her understand. None of the teachers, including me, liked her behaviour and we were always complaining to her parents, which was never a solution. It never helped any of us, neither her, nor teachers, nor her parents.

When I attended the nonviolent communication training organised by Pro Public, there were lots of learning opportunities for teachers like us.

The training brought a new vision to me and a few of my colleagues, probably for the first time in our entire lives, without knowing what the terms actually mean and what were the philosophies associated with it. I personally got to learn that everyone has their own needs, which we have to figure out. After the training, the learnings touched me in such a way that, whenever I look at her, one thing that was impulsive to my mind was Marshall Rosenberg’s song “SEE ME BEAUTIFUL”.

The training I attended helped me to learn the need of “Connection before Correction” and we started a better communication. This led to a good understanding and rapport between us (student and teacher). She started getting close to me, being open, sharing more and trusting me more. I had learnt the empathy process and I started being a giraffe, listening without judgments and interruption. Therefore, it brought better relations, good mental health, and a better environment for both of us. Previously, I never liked her presence in the class and wished she would be absent for some days, but these days when I don’t see her for a single day, I am worried that something could be wrong with her.



THE STORY KITCHEN

Vision & Mission

The Story Kitchen (TSK) was founded in 2012 with the mission to add women's voices and perspectives to the dominant narrative of Nepali society and unravel systems of gender oppression and patriarchy in the country. TSK recognised that the omission of women's voices in Nepali history and current Nepali media has led to a failure to acknowledge women's contributions to the country and left dominant systems of gender oppression and patriarchy unchallenged. TSK was established to make Nepali women's ideas, work, and experiences visible. TSK does this through the power of narratives and storytelling. TSK is driven by the passionate belief that upholding the stories of women can unravel systems of gender oppression and patriarchy that continues to exist in Nepal. It brings together women of different castes, ages, communities, cultures and languages to experience the powerful transformation of storytelling and narrative journalism.

TSK works closely with women victims and survivors of the decade-long armed conflict in Nepal to create safe spaces for women to share their experiences, build solidarity and amplify their voices for truth, justice, and dignity.

The Story Kitchen has been a GIZ Civil Peace Service partner organisation since 2017.

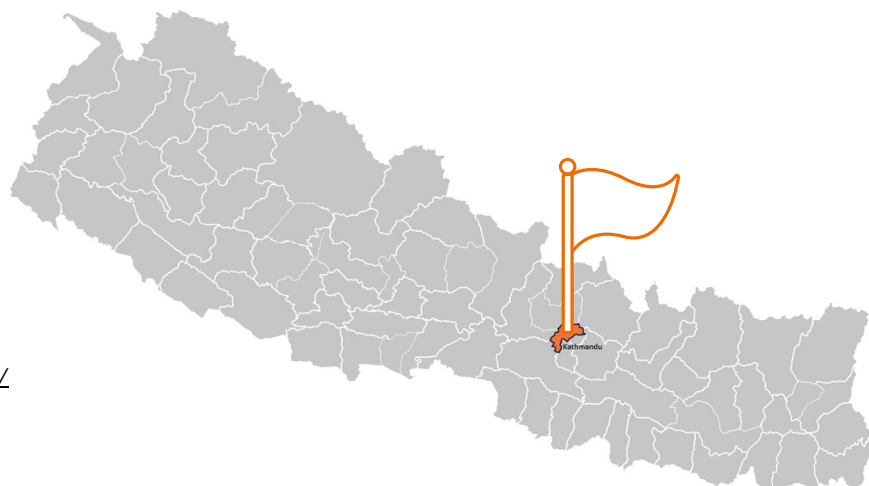
Areas of work

- Storytelling
- Feminist Leadership
- Advocacy for Gender Justice
- Research and Innovation

Working with

- Women Conflict Survivors (WCS) including survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV)
- Policymakers
- School Teachers and Students
- Artists

Based in Kathmandu and working in different parts of Nepal.



Office: Lalitpur, Kathmandu
Contact: <https://thestorykitchen.org/>

THE STORY KITCHEN

Key activities with Civil Peace Service

Story workshops: These workshops bring together conflict victims and survivors of different kinds of violence and serve as a healing and reconciliation space.

Justice Reporters: Conflict survivor women are trained to write or document stories of other conflict survivor women using a narrative therapy approach.

Network-building and advocacy: Provide technical capacity and know-how to help conflict survivor women to organise themselves at the local, provincial, and national level to advocate for issues affecting conflict survivor women.

Collaboration with the artistic community: TSK collaborates with artists to first sensitise them on issues of conflict-related sexual violence survivors and then produce art stories highlighting the experiences of these survivors.



THE STORY KITCHEN

Story of change

The Story Kitchen works directly with women conflict survivors to empower them to tell their own and others' stories from the conflict. Prior to its collaboration with GIZ-ZFD, TSK had already pioneered a novel approach to storytelling. The survivor-to-survivor and women-to-women approaches trained women conflict survivors to go into their communities to collect audio stories. With the Dealing with the Past team of GIZ-ZFD, TSK extended the skills of these women to story writing by training them in a narrative therapy approach. Narrative therapy believes that each person has their own unique ways of coping with trauma, stress, and violence. So, the approach puts the storytellers at the centre of the process and believes in co-creation in every step (rather than leaving the storyteller behind).

Justice Reporters have written over 150 stories using this approach. This has empowered storytellers and enabled them to see the multiple identities (beyond being victims) and strengths they have. In this way, Justice Reporters have challenged the existing power hierarchies around how stories are collected and who decides what happens to these stories.

Through this work of sharing, recording and documenting stories, trust and solidarity have also been built among women conflict survivors. In several districts, they went on to form local networks to support each other and campaign for truth and justice. This momentum led to the formation of a national network for women conflict survivors in 2020.

31 Justice Reporters working in 18 districts across Nepal continue to amplify the stories and voices of women that have been deliberately silenced until now. By doing this work, the reporters have had an identity shift themselves from victims to story writers. One Justice Reporter shared: "The work we are doing has not only given us knowledge and skills, but it has also given us strength." Another said: "After working as Justice Reporters, we changed our tears to power." Their identity within the communities has also further expanded to include becoming local resource persons for human rights and conflict-related issues, advocates for others' rights and leaders (in social and political spheres). Two Justice Reporters have been serving as Provincial Assembly members since the November 2022 elections. Overall, women conflict victims have been transformed from being a mere tokenistic target group to being actors. 31 Justice Reporters working in 18 districts across Nepal continue to amplify the stories and voices of women that have been deliberately silenced until now.



4

A WAY FORWARD

A WAY FORWARD

Working in the field of peacebuilding can be as rewarding as it is challenging. During the process of finalising this publication, the situation in Israel/Palestine violently escalated, the war in Ukraine is still ongoing, 1.5 years after the invasion, and various districts in Nepal faced violent outbreaks of inter-religious conflicts in communities. Living costs are rising and various countries, including Nepal, still suffer from the economic aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. On a global level, the rights of women are being cut, LGBTQ communities threatened, and structural discrimination and racism are taking place. The effects of climate change are already tangible. Environmental issues, such as climate change and limited resources, have exacerbated conflicts and driven forced displacement as competition for limited resources intensifies. The impact of all these global phenomena can be witnessed and felt in Nepal, especially amongst the most vulnerable within the society. While the number of interstate wars have decreased, intrastate conflicts, civil wars, and terrorism remain persistent challenges. The digital age has brought various new challenges to the forefront, with increasing hate-speech, and rapid spread of mis- and disinformation.

Social movements advocating for human rights, equality, and justice have gained importance. While they have the potential to drive positive change and peace, they can also become vulnerable by shrinking spaces within civil societies when met with resistance from governments. The societal changes and challenges are demanding new approaches, such as a focus on upholding human rights on all levels of our work, investing in digital literacy and conflict sensitive journalism, peace education and an increased focus on preserving of civic spaces.

Towards an inclusive peaceful society

From an economic perspective, there has been significant global economic growth over the past 50 years, leading to an increase in average per capita income. Many countries have experienced improvements in living standards.



A WAY FORWARD

The world has made progress in reducing extreme poverty. The percentage of people living in extreme poverty (defined as earning less than \$1.90 per day) has declined around the world. Looking at the Human Development Index (HDI from UNDP), life expectancy has increased due to improvements in healthcare, improved living conditions, sanitation, and nutrition, and child mortality rates have decreased significantly. Access to education has increased leading to a rise in global literacy rates.

However, these trends are not uniform across all regions, and there are ongoing challenges and emerging issues that require attention. But what it shows is that we can contribute to positive change.

In the face of these changes, the world has also seen moments of hope and resilience. Civil society, grassroots movements, and regional organisations continue to play vital roles in conflict prevention and transformation. Advances in technology enable better communication, and data-driven conflict analysis. Additionally, a growing awareness of the interconnectedness of global challenges, from climate change to pandemics, has reinforced the need for trustful international cooperation.

This book aims to provide insight into the work of GIZ-CPS in Nepal, focusing on its goals, thematic areas, challenges, and partnerships. Our partners, local civil society organisations, create safe spaces for dialogue between conflict parties and strengthen social cohesion and resilience. They encourage survivors of the conflict to share their experiences and contribute to the discourse around the armed-conflict, and the effects in the communities, contributing to the transitional justice process. They work to strengthen good cooperation between the citizens and the state, foster dialogue across conflict lines, and provide psychosocial support to improve well-being. Our partners are the core and the heart of the work of GIZ-CPS in Nepal, and we hope that with this book the impact and the relevance of their important work receives the attention that it deserves.

Evaluating our impact, we know that GIZ-CPS Nepal's work has contributed to non-violent discourse surrounding the conflict and demands of victims. By focussing our efforts on nonviolent communication, dialogue, conflict-sensitive media, mental health, and psychosocial support, dealing with the past, mediation, human rights, theatre, and the cross-cutting issues gender equality and social inclusion and peace education, we strengthen a vast field of peacebuilding efforts.

We are hopeful that these initiatives will not only help individuals and communities within Nepal to heal after the conflict but can also strengthen resilience against any ongoing and upcoming challenges. We are grateful to be able to work together towards a just and peaceful future.

A WAY FORWARD

List of CPS Nepal team members since 2009

We would like to wholeheartedly thank every team member who worked with us at GIZ-CPS and contributed in shapening the programme in Nepal from its beginning in 2009 until 2023 and beyond.

Anne Dirnstorfer

Anuja Sapkota

Ayush Pokhrel (trainee)

Barbara Jochheim

Beate Arnold

Bernhard Emmerich

Bhakta Bahadur GC

Carola Becker

Claudia Schraewer

Cornelia Liebhart

Deeva Yonzon Lama

Elisabeth Gliesche

Esther Mydla

Eva Gaderer

Goma Devi Karki

Joanna Hadjicharalambous

Jeannine Suurmond

Jill Greene

Julia Scharinger

Jyotirindra Chakma

Kanchan Mulmi

Karolina Anna Buszko

Kismat Thapa Magar

Kristin Anderson Cain

Lisas Ibscher

Malte Schnittger

Maria Fanlo Torrecilla

Marjolein Wijnand

Martin Hennings

Maya Böhm

Mironel de Wilde

Michael Thonhauser

Nand Kishor Yadav

Rajendra Subba

Ramesh Adhikari

Robert Bartel

Ruth Marsden

Sadhu Ram Tamang

Saharsha Joshi Rani (trainee)

Shaileshwori Sharma

Sophie Schmitt

Stephanie Theis

Svenja Schmelcher

Udo Krenzer

Verena Hinze



GIZ-CPS Nepal team December 2023

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- Page 03) A mother attends the 14 Stories Traveling Photo Exhibition to Karnali Province with her baby, Surkhet/Nepal, September/2023, photo credit Elisabeth Gliesche
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