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## Transforming Atypical Challenges into Innovative Solutions: A Gendered Analysis of the UN Interagency Rehabilitation Program in Nepal

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# Transforming Atypical Challenges into Innovative Solutions: A Gendered Analysis of the UN Interagency Rehabilitation Program in Nepal

## Abstract

Nearly five years after signing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended ten years of civil war in Nepal, key issues are still unresolved and political progress on implementation has been slow at its best. While every disarmament demobilization and reintegration (DDR) operation is unique, Nepal's DDR process has included atypical conditions such as no government support, continued military command over program participants, an unusually long time spent in cantonments prior to discharge, and the absence of an adequate pre-planning phase. This analysis is presented in the form of a case study and examines the United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Program (UNIRP) response to these challenges using primary documents and interviews conducted with UN staff members in Nepal. The author argues that atypical challenges acted as drivers that resulted in programmatic innovations, including dynamic monitoring and evaluation, a centralized information system, and specific gender supports, that may be applicable to more traditional DDR operations, particularly those with a large female caseload.

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TRANSFORMING ATYPICAL CHALLENGES INTO INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS:  
A GENDERED ANALYSIS OF THE UN INTERAGENCY REHABILITATION  
PROGRAM IN NEPAL

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University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Master of Arts

---

by

Sarabeth Harrelson

August 2011

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Author: Sarabeth Harrelson  
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## I INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) is increasingly recognized as a critical opportunity to contribute to the peace and stability of post conflict countries (Gamba 2006; Specker 2008; Muggah 2009; United Nations "IDDRS" 2010; Stankovic, Torjesen and Bleie 2010). As there is often a lack of national capacity in post-conflict environments, international organizations (IO) such as the United Nations (UN) have become increasingly involved in the oversight and implementation of DDR programs (Muggah 2009). Gender-sensitive programming and the importance of a "do no harm" approach are emphasized in recent DDR literature and are predominant in the International Disarmament Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), published by the UN in 2010. Both concepts form cornerstones of the DDR operation currently in progress for Maoist ex-combatants in Nepal.<sup>1</sup> This operation, referred to as rehabilitation in the Nepali context, is exceptional, due to the lack of government support, the length of time ex-combatants spent in cantonments, and the absence of an adequate pre-planning phase. Desmond Molloy, Senior Rehabilitation Advisor in Nepal, described this operation as, "especially complex and raising difficulties that I have not found anywhere else" (Molloy email correspondence with the author, April 13, 2011).

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<sup>1</sup> Due to national sensitivities the term "rehabilitation" is used in Nepal rather than "DDR." With this in mind, the author most frequently uses the term "rehabilitation" when referring to the process unfolding in Nepal. However, there are times when this is confusing and because DDR theories, best practices and lessons learned are directly applicable, the author occasionally uses the term "DDR" to describe the ex-combatant rehabilitation process in Nepal.



However, these challenges have made innovation imperative in the Nepali context.

Innovative measures taken to ensure program adaptability and the participation of female ex-combatants will likely be appropriate for more traditional DDR operations as well.

Nearly five years after signing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended ten years of civil war<sup>2</sup> in Nepal, key issues are still unresolved. Political progress on CPA implementation has been slow at best and often nonexistent. For example, a new constitution has yet to be finalized and more than 19,000 Maoist Army (MA) members remain cantoned<sup>3</sup> in encampments around the country while the government debates the terms of their rehabilitation into society and integration into the Nepal Army (NA). This debate has been one of the most contentious issues of the peace process. From a humanitarian perspective, one of the most significant successes since the signing of the CPA was the discharge of 4,008 verified minors and late recruits (VMLRs) who fought with the People's Liberation Army (PLA)<sup>4</sup> and were held with certified MA combatants for two and half years as the terms of their release were negotiated.

The UN has played a limited but significant role supporting the peace process (Suhrke 2011; Tiwari 2009), and is administering the VMLR rehabilitation program through the specially created United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Program (UNIRP). Proportionally, this is one of the largest female caseloads for the UN in any

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<sup>2</sup> Technically, in order for a conflict to reach the intensity of war there must be 1,000 or more battle-related deaths within one year's time (Harbon and Wallenstein 2010, 501), meaning that some years of the conflict in Nepal do not qualify as war.

<sup>3</sup> A cantonment is a temporary or semi-permanent military or police headquarters (Oxford English Dictionary). There are a total of 21 Maoist cantonment sites in Nepal, each under the control of Maoist military commanders. The length of time spent in cantonments is significantly longer than the normal time, which is usually some months (Stankovie, Torjesen and Bleie 2010, 29).

<sup>4</sup> PLA is used when referring to the conflict period prior to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and Maoist Army is used when referring to the post-conflict period.

DDR operation. An agrarian revolution that denounced discrimination and championed gender equality, the Maoist cause had broad appeal for the women who form the backbone of Nepal's agricultural economy. They receive few benefits for their labor and are discriminated against by laws and traditions that restrict women from owning property (United Nations Country Team 2007, 37). Gender equality is a key component of the Maoist platform in Nepal and Maoist leadership has often referenced high levels of female participation, both to legitimize the movement and as a measure of their success (Yami 2007; Ariño 2008, Tamang 2009).

The United Nations Mission to Nepal (UNMIN), responsible for the verification and registration process, found that women constituted 20 percent (3,846) of the PLA, although Maoists estimate 40 to 50 percent of combatants were women (Saferworld 2010, 58).<sup>5</sup> UNMIN disqualified 4,008 persons from serving as regular combatants with the MA, either because they were minors (2,973) or because they had violated the terms of the CPA by joining after it was signed (1,035), thus making them ineligible for consideration as Maoist army personnel. 30 percent of VMLRs are female. At this time only VMLRs are eligible to participate in the UNIRP rehabilitation program. UNIRP initially prioritized women and girls in its gender approach, noting that this population is doubly marginalized in Nepal—first for being women and second for fighting with the PLA.<sup>6</sup> Conflict sensitive programming modeled after the "do no harm" approach was also

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<sup>5</sup> The mandate of UNMIN lapsed in January 2010 amid controversy whether the departure is premature given the absence of the finalization of the constitution-making process.

<sup>6</sup> UNIRP is currently working to integrate a male gendered approach as well (UN staff member interview by the author June 20, 2011).

emphasized, as the post-conflict environment has remained troubled and uncertain (Suhrke 2011, 38).

The Maoists were incorporated into the government, winning an overwhelming majority in the 2008 Constituent Assembly elections, shocking not only competing political parties and the international community, but also the Maoist party (Lawoti "Maoist Electoral Victory" 2010, 287).<sup>7</sup> Intense tension and mistrust between Maoist and non-Maoist parties has culminated in the debate over how to handle the 19,602 cantoned MA combatants. This debate also delayed the VMLR discharge, despite the fact that cantoning them with regular combatants was a human rights violation.

Political difficulties resulted in operational difficulties as UNIRP was forced to launch the rehabilitation program on short notice, with restricted access to VMLR socioeconomic data and under tight financial and time constraints. The heightened vulnerability of female VMLRs (FVMLRs) in Nepal compounded the challenges associated with developing an effective program.<sup>8</sup> Anticipating that many programmatic elements would be added as participant data became available, the UN designed core programs on a basis of adaptability, facilitating adjustment as new needs are discovered. Several of the most successful components of this program were created and executed

---

<sup>7</sup> The Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) received two times more seats than their nearest rival and although the Maoists used violence and intimidation in some districts, they likely would have become the largest party even without these tactics (Lawoti "Maoist Electoral Victory" 2010, 301).

<sup>8</sup> UNIRP anticipated vulnerability associated with the traditional role of women in Nepali society where women are less educated than men, are denied access to economic opportunity, and whose health concerns are often neglected (United Nations Country Team Nepal "Common Country Assessment" 2007; Colekessian 2009; Tiwari 2009; United Nations Country Team Nepal "Development Assistance Framework 2007). However, they were not anticipating the vulnerability associated with a high number of inter-caste marriages, pregnant or lactating mothers, and women caring for small children.

during the implementation phase. This dynamic approach to DDR has particularly benefited FVMLRs.

### **Why Nepal**

Every DDR process is unique and occurs in a distinctive environment. However, the VMLR rehabilitation process in Nepal is atypical in that there is no government support, there was no break in military command, VMLR's spent an abnormally long duration of time cantoned before discharge, and the absence of a pre-transition planning phase that included VMLR needs assessment.

This rehabilitation program is also significant to sustained peace within Nepal. Violent behavior learned during combat does not automatically disappear upon discharge and 80 percent of all current combatants indicated that they would be forced to return to violence either in criminal or political groups if not satisfied with their rehabilitation package (Saferworld 2010, xxiv).

Women in Nepal experience high levels of discrimination and initial rehabilitation efforts indicate that those who were associated with the PLA are marginalized to an even greater extent. The UNIRP rehabilitation program has the potential to support Nepal's goals of achieving greater gender equality through their support of FVMLRs. Proportionally, this is one of the largest female caseloads ever handled in a UN DDR operation (UN staff member interview by the author June 29, 2011).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> "We have developed a very strong and special gender perspective, noting that more than 30 percent of ex-combatants coming from the cantonment are women. This is indeed a very high number and would probably be the second highest number of any similar type of rehabilitation program in the world"(UNIRP press release March 7 2011).

Finally, several UNIRP program components, including dynamic monitoring and evaluation, the rehabilitation information system (RIS), and gender supports may be valuable in future DDR operations with a large female caseload.

### **Methods**

The author chose to conduct a case study because of the benefits associated with this method when faced with relatively limited research sources (Lijphart 1971, 291). This method permitted an intensive examination of the rehabilitation process in Nepal, specifically for female ex-combatants, revealing variables not previously considered for DDR operations and generating the hypothesis that some UNIRP programmatic elements should be considered for future DDR processes.

The focus on FVMLRs is appropriate because their rehabilitation process has the potential to further progress gender equality in Nepal, and also because it contributes to the current discussion concerning women and war in peacebuilding literature. Although a variety of organizations are involved in rehabilitation and reintegration efforts in Nepal, this case study focuses exclusively on UN programming because it is officially approved by the government and also because of the increasing role played by the UN in DDR processes around the world.

Data was gathered through a review of primary documents and personal interviews conducted in Nepal and via email. Primary documents include the rehabilitation program's project proposal, concept notes, field reports, newsletters, and presentation outlines from a UNIRP training and evaluation workshop held in Nagarkot, Nepal, May 2011. Interviews were conducted with ten UN staff members including:

Robert Piper, Desmond Molloy and Isabella Leao. Robert Piper currently serves as the UNDP director in Nepal as well as the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, making him the top UN official in-country and the director of the UN country team. In addition to being a published DDR scholar, Desmond Molly is also the Senior Rehabilitation Advisor of the UN Country Team, Nepal. Isabella Leao, working with Folke Bernadotte Academy recently facilitated a workshop for UN staff regarding rehabilitation in the Nepali context.<sup>10</sup> The remaining interviewees shall be kept confidential to protect the integrity of the program, currently in progress in a very sensitive environment

The exceptional nature of the DDR process in Nepal; its potential impact on FVMLRs, female combatants, and the country at large; and its potential for replication in diverse international contexts, warrant close examination. The next section provides a contextual history that covers root causes of conflict in Nepal, conflict impact, and termination as well as initial peacebuilding phases. The third section places the case of Nepal in the context of current peacebuilding literature; while findings are reported in section four. The final section discusses the strengths and weaknesses of rehabilitation in Nepal and makes suggestions for future research.

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<sup>10</sup> The Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) is a Swedish government agency dedicated to improving the quality and effectiveness of international conflict and crisis management, with a particular focus on peace operations. FBA hosted a workshop on the Nepali rehabilitation process for UN staff members in May 2011 in Nagarkot, Nepal (<http://www.folkebernadotteacademy.se/en/About-FBA/>).

## II NEPAL CONTEXT

### History

Separating religion, caste, economic opportunity and politics has been impossible for the majority of Nepal's history. Although there are more than 90 distinct languages spoken and a variety of ethnic and religious groups living in Nepal,<sup>11</sup> Hindu culture as expressed by government elites has dominated and dictated the country's course. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Prithvi Narayan Shah unified three rival kingdoms, creating the country that is known today, and introduced the Hindu caste system to non-Hindu ethnic minorities.<sup>12</sup> The Rana dynasty overthrew the Shah dynasty in the mid 1800s, retained a nominal monarchy, and established an inherited prime minister-ship through which they controlled the actions of the king. Treating Nepal as their personal fiefdom, they formally codified the caste system and feudal style government in 1854. Peasants were required to pay a yearly tribute including half their agricultural gains and 70 days of unpaid work; society was governed by a complex set of religious rules guiding inter-caste interaction, including commensality, sexual relations, marriage, entry into rooms, and both food and

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<sup>11</sup> The United Nations Country Team reports that Nepal is home to more than 60 ethnic groups speaking 92 distinct languages. Religion plays an important role in the country with 81 percent of the population identifying as Hindu, 11 percent as Buddhist, 4.2 percent Muslim and the remainder as Kirats, Sikhs, Jains and Christians. Socioeconomic status is significantly related to both ethnicity and religion (United Nations Country Team 2007).

<sup>12</sup> A detailed discussion of the caste system is beyond the scope of this work, but those interested in learning more about the effect of the caste system on women and the ways in which ritual purity equated to power in Nepal should consult *On the Edge of the Auspicious: Gender and Caste in Nepal* by Mary M. Cameron (1998).

nonfood transactions (Cameron 1998, 12). Legislation blurred the line between structure and culture and although some of these laws have been modified, many continue to discriminate against women (United Nations Country Team Nepal "Common Country Assessment" 2007, 37).

As Nepal opened its doors to the outside world, Nepalis were exposed to alternate systems of government and became dissatisfied with Nepal's standard of living (Marks and Palmer 2005, 94). Responding to demands for change, King Mahendra launched Nepal's first experiment with democracy in 1951. Concerned with power and control rather than democracy, the king drafted a constitution that granted him executive, legislative, and judicial powers as the sovereign ruler of Nepal. He continued to exercise authority through previously established political and military bureaucracies, later banning political parties in favor of a partyless system known as the *panchayat*.<sup>13</sup> This system created political institutions that operated in silos, preventing citizens from uniting across district lines. Although this was initially beneficial for maintaining dominance, the Maoists exploited this as a weakness during the conflict when the government was unable to communicate across previous established lines of communication. The infrastructure to mount an effective counterinsurgency did not exist.

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<sup>13</sup> The *panchayat* system was a three-tiered political structure. The first tier was composed of representatives elected directly by the local population. This group sent representatives to serve in a zonal or regional tier. Members of the national tier were selected from village and regional tiers, professional organizations and class-based unions using a complex voting system. The structure gave the appearance of political representation while reinforcing feudal traditions through a patron-client network in which only bureaucrats enjoyed true political power. Representation remained virtually unchanged and average citizens, especially in rural regions remained politically voiceless.



In 1990, violent protesters fought for democracy and the monarchy again resisted change, creating a quasi-monarchical democracy and retaining emergency powers and military control. Rhetorically the new constitution embraced multiculturalism, but the representation of many marginalized groups actually declined between 1990-2002 (Kantha 2010, 159).

In 1995, one year before conflict broke out, John Metz published the article, "Development in Nepal: Investment in the Status Quo," addressing Nepal's continued underdevelopment despite having received billions of dollars in aid. Highlighting areas that have since been described as causal factors in conflict outbreak, he points to the extractive state and poor infrastructure as development inhibitors. Rather than effectively using aid monies, the feudal elite directed and diverted aid flows to consolidate their power and infrastructure development ignoring the needs of 90 percent of the country, most of which was devoted to subsistence farming (175-184). Ironically, the years spent consolidating power and neglecting infrastructure development in rural regions later hampered the government's ability to respond to the Maoist insurgency.

### **Political, Economic and Social Complaints**

The Nepali state has traditionally prevented true political participation, neglected to facilitate economic development, and actively imposed a repressive social regime. Whether in the feudal systems of the Shah and Rana dynasties or the "democracies" that followed, political representation was not priority for governing elites who also restricted access to economic assets. Land ownership rights and economic access were based on

caste, and the government's attempt to grant land ownership rights to peasants actually consolidated the power and position of high caste members<sup>14</sup> (Joshi 2010, 95). Income inequality was drastic at conflict outset. For example, income in the Rolpa district was only 25 percent that of Kathmandu (Murshed and Gates 2005, 125).<sup>15</sup> High levels of unemployment, particularly in relation to urban centers in the mid-western districts are credited with easing recruitment for the Maoists. Neither Rukum nor Rolpa had benefited from economic growth and development in Nepal (Murshed and Gates 2005), perhaps lowering the economic threshold to take up violence as a means of enacting change (Mancour 2009, 9).

Socially, Hindu cultural norms provided a framework for the ideal citizen.<sup>16</sup> The likelihood of falling below the poverty line and having fewer livelihood resources and opportunities increases for women, members of indigenous ethnic groups, those with a low caste ranking, and devotees of a religion other than Hinduism (United Nations Country Team Nepal "Common Country Assessment" 2007, 53). The cultural and linguistic hegemony imposed by elites is significant because it both justified and provided a foundation for discrimination in Nepal and has been described as both a

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<sup>14</sup> The Tenancy Rights Acquisition Act of 1951 was intended to break down the feudal system by providing land titles to peasants paying taxes or rent on land they cultivated. However, because landlords routinely reported the taxes they collected in their own name instead of the tenants who paid them, landlords were able to claim a permanent legal title to lands they had previously managed in trust for the state.

<sup>15</sup> Additionally, high unemployment compelled many citizens from rural areas to migrate to Kathmandu or abroad in search of livelihood opportunities with 23.4% of households receiving remittances in 1996 (Kollmair et al 2006, 157).

<sup>16</sup> As evidenced in a speech in which King Mahendra defined the notion of equality among citizens into Hindu terms saying that, "all the devotees of Vishnu [have] an identical substance that unites them within the subtle body of Vishnu," in the way that all in Nepal are 'one and the same' in their devotion to the state (de Sales 2000, 43).

consequence and a cause of conflict (Lawoti "Evolution and growth of the Maoist insurgency" 2010, 11). One of the more contentious elements of cultural imperialism has been the state's emphasis on Nepali as a national language (Riaz and Basu 2007, 128) that fails to recognize the 92 distinct languages spoken in Nepal and prevents non-Nepali speakers from accessing state, legal, or educational resources.

### **The Maoist Alternative**

Assisted by Indian communists, the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was established in Calcutta in 1949. The communist movement spread clandestinely as the Nepali government was quick to silence voices of dissent. The movement fractured frequently due to disagreements over policy and personality conflicts. Influenced by the violent Naxalite Maoist movement in West Bengal, Nepali communists launched their first violent movement in 1971 killing several "class enemies" in eastern Nepal. Adopting both political and market compromises, the movement had grown considerably by the 1990s.

One of the communist coalitions won nine seats in the 1991 elections, two of them in the neighboring districts of Rukum and Rolpa. Despite the fact that the Nepal Congress Party won the majority of seats in parliament, they were concerned about growing support for communism-especially in Rukum and Rolpa as they had a history of communist interest. The Congress Party fabricated accusations against Communist leaders in the two districts deploying the police who burned houses, looted cash and goods, raped women and arrested hundreds of people. This event has later been described

as the conflict flashpoint as the conflict broke out in Rolpa shortly thereafter (Cottle and Keys 2007, 170).

Prachanda<sup>17</sup> launched CPN-M and sustained the insurgency against the government of Nepal. His extension of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism takes specific account of the Nepali experience and is known as the Prachanda Path. Because Maoist ideology centers on liberating the oppressed from the oppressor, it has broad appeal for marginalized groups in Nepal, including women. Maoist activists exploited widespread disappointment with the government by offering what they described as efficient and representative alternatives (Eck 2010, 38). Although they didn't hesitate to use terror and authoritarian tactics when it suited their purposes, Maoists improved political participation in many of the districts they controlled. For example, the seventeen-member committee of the people's government in Dolakha included at least one representative from every ethnic group living in the district (Schneiderman and Turin 2004, 80).

The Maoists vehemently opposed the class, gender, linguistic, religious, and ethnic oppression associated with Hindu chauvinism as outlined by their 40-point demand issued in February of 1996.<sup>18</sup> Prachanda declared that the participation of women who had suffered under the double oppression of gender and class was one of the main factors behind the success of the movement (Yami 2006, 2). Components of the Maoist ideological platform devoted to agricultural reform are particularly pertinent for women in Nepal because most are involved in agricultural work, but legally prevented from owning or inheriting land (Yami 2006, 12).

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<sup>17</sup> Puspa Kamal Dahal is his given name, but he is better known as Prachanda.

<sup>18</sup> Please see Appendix C to read these demands.

Hisila Yami, a prominent member of the party since 1996, identified the economic, social and political arenas as the three main categories of female oppression. Land ownership is often a precondition for banking transactions, further limiting the economic opportunities of women. Socially, the value of a woman is defined by her relationships with men: they are born as daughters for whom a dowry must be provided, become wives beholden to their husbands, and die mothers who find honor in the number of sons they bore. These social norms bleed into laws, which reinforce social discrimination and institutionalize political discrimination.

#### PLA

Challenging the traditional image of women, the PLA has been a powerful agent of change within Nepali communities.<sup>19</sup> Although precise numbers are still not available it is estimated that between 20 and 40 percent of the Maoist army was female, with, 70 percent of these women coming from traditionally excluded Tibeto-Burman ethnic communities.<sup>20</sup> Although women in Nepal have a rich fighting tradition, it was the first time that they were given a formal role, exchanging sickles and sticks for guns and

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<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that while beyond the scope of this paper, changes in gender roles did occur at the village level as well. Some women helped provide food, shelter, and supplies for Maoist insurgents. In some areas, virtually all men remain disappeared because they joined the Maoist army, fled to avoid recruitment or were killed. Women were forced to step into roles traditionally reserved for men. For example, although it was religiously forbidden for women to plow the fields and not culturally permitted for women to thatch roofs, women began to complete these and other traditionally male roles out of necessity. Some women are eager to preserve these higher levels of leadership and decision-making power.

<sup>20</sup> Twenty percent of the cantoned forces registered by UNMIN are women and 30 percent of the minors who fought with the PLA are female. Maoists continue to insist that 40-50 percent of the PLA was composed of women. These figures do not account for women associated with the PLA in support roles.

formal command. Looking to the experience of the Shining Path in Peru, Maoists viewed female participation in the insurgency as a way to legitimize the movement (Scott and Palmer 2005; Yami 2005; Bouta, Bannon and Frerks 2005). Women were assimilated into a typical hierarchical military structure, in which they were promoted and attained a variety of military positions. It is rare to find women in the upper echelons of party leadership, but women have been promoted to commanding positions within the army with a few units entirely female.<sup>21</sup> Each guerilla squad consisted of nine to 12 members and had a policy of recruiting at least two female guerillas. The PLA offered basic education alongside military training and for many women, this was their first and only opportunity to learn how to read and write.

Although there are reports of men being forced to join as combatants, it seems that most women joined the military of their own volition, commonly citing autonomy and a desire to fight on the side of justice as principal motivations. Additionally, several women indicated that they joined in order to protect themselves from sexual abuse and rape committed by state security agencies. Every female combatant interviewed by Saferworld in 2010 stated that they felt more empowered as a woman, physically and politically, after joining the Maoist PLA and that the training they received meant that they were politically astute and able to defend themselves (Saferworld 2010, 6-7).<sup>22</sup> Although the PLA does not have a perfect record and there are reports of gender inequality and insensitivity, current combatants believe that the Maoist Army treats

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<sup>21</sup> These entirely female squads are actually famous for their vicious fighting skills and have a reputation for operating without mercy.

<sup>22</sup> One hundred thirty-six female combatants were interviewed for the report.

women better than do other security agencies (Bridgham 2008; Saferworld 2010; Koenig 2010).

### Community Changes

The Maoist regime tackled common societal issues and may have had a positive impact on the lives of women (Lawoti and Pahari 2010). Gambling, alcoholism, and domestic violence are significant problems in rural Nepal, intensifying women's burdens. The Maoists often prohibited the public sale of liquor, punished men engaged in domestic violence, enforced monogamous relationships, and introduced ideas that began to erode notions of sexism, ethnic prejudice, and discrimination (CARE 2010, 4). Rates of crimes involving female victims, including rape, trafficking, and domestic violence, declined as the insurgency spread. Women mobilized into supportive village and district-level organizations and in districts where people's courts were established, cases against women's exploitation were successfully brought to book.

### Peace Negotiations

The trajectory of conflict termination can be viewed as a series of phases punctuated by turning points in the conflict. Turning points in Nepal were associated with shifts in the balance of power between the monarchy, Maoists, and Parliament.<sup>23</sup> While the Monarchy was eager to protect and preserve the status quo, the Maoists pursued dramatic change. Members of parliament were ideologically divided and it was not until

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<sup>23</sup> Power struggles and infighting are common in Nepali politics as elites shift their goals and strategies to advance their own interests and of course each conflict actor sought greater power with which to advance their political agenda.

the primary goal of the government and the primary goal of the Maoists converged that peace talks gained a lasting momentum.

Two major turning points in the conflict and negotiation process are associated with King Gyanendra's moves to demonstrate authority and consolidate power. The first occurred when he deployed the RNA in 2001 departing from a previous strategy that only permitted the police force to respond to Maoist attacks. Secondly, Gyanendra dismissed Parliament and placed key party leaders under house arrest in 2005. This resulted in the formation of the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) as government officials fought to restore Parliament.<sup>24</sup> They worked with the CPN-M to remove the king from power and negotiated the CPA, initiating a process that eventually cost Gyanendra his throne. Mismanagement of the conflict on the part of the state played into the attempt of political entrepreneurs to overthrow the monarchy (Palmer and Scott 2005).

Working together, the alliance directed all its energy against Gyanendra. They fought to gain official state recognition, announcing a 21-day protest in Kathmandu in April 2006.<sup>25</sup> Desperate to preserve power, Gyanendra announced that he would return power to the people, calling for elections to be held as soon as possible. The restoration of Parliament paved the way for further negotiations between the SPA and CPN-M, but

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<sup>24</sup> Parliament was split in terms of goals for most of the Maoist insurgency with some leaning towards Communism and others supporting the monarchy. Royalists supported the monarchy and acted to prevent change. Those that supported change varied in terms of ideology and the degree to which they agreed with the CPN-M platform. Some representatives, particularly independent leftist Padma Ratna Tuladhar acted as links between the Maoists and other conflict actors, facilitating negotiations throughout the conflict.

<sup>25</sup> Gyanendra responded by proclaiming a citywide curfew and ordering the RNA to shoot protestors on sight. On April 21 between 300,000 and 500,000 citizens took part in the protests and RNA commanders informed Gyanendra that soldiers were unwilling to continue firing upon Nepali citizens.



the parties were unable to move forward due to serious disagreements concerning arms and armed personnel management. It was at this point that they turned to the UN for formal assistance in the peace process. The pre-assessment mission quickly deployed and recommended the appointment of a senior UN political interlocutor, supported by a small team of advisors in Nepal. Shortly thereafter the SPA and the CPN-M sent separate but identically worded letters to the Secretary-General formally requesting UN assistance. Ian Martin was appointed as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Nepal. On November 21, 2006, the SPA and the CPN-M signed the CPA, officially ending the war.

### **The CPA and Path Dependencies**

Patterns established during peace negotiations set the stage for the post-conflict peacebuilding process in Nepal. Difficulty in determining a plan for DDR, a tendency for all parties to cheat, and tension over the role of the UN were key issues during negotiations and have carried over into current peacebuilding efforts. Mutual distrust necessitated a vague agreement that left central issues to be resolved through future processes. The conflict ended in a mutually hurting stalemate leading both Maoist and non-Maoist parties to declare victory in Nepal. The vague nature of the CPA allowed each to claim that it fulfilled their primary objectives. All parties are therefore reluctant to compromise on current points of contention regarding CPA implementation.

The CPA outlined the cantonment process but did not address integration and timing. The CPA stipulated that an elected constitutional assembly would promulgate a

constitution based on the restructuring of the state along federal lines but there was no agreement as to the criteria that constitutes federalism. The CPA affirmed the principle of land reform and that those responsible for gross human rights violations during the war would be held accountable, but did not specify the process of implementation.<sup>26</sup> The CPA seems to have set the stage for what has been termed conflictual peacebuilding (Suhrke 2011, 38-39) as violence continues to threaten the peacebuilding process. The relatively limited role of the international community set a pattern for external involvement in the post-conflict phase as well, in that all parties have been clear that the peace process belongs to Nepal rather than the international community.<sup>27</sup>

Five and a half years after signing the CPA, political parties are still debating its terms rather than focusing on the needs of the Nepali people. Central to the debate is the issue of integrating certified MA combatants into the NA.<sup>28</sup> Parties do not agree on the number that should be integrated or if the process should occur before or after the promulgation of a new constitution.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Amnesty International reports that as of February 2011, not one prosecution was brought to bear on conflict-related crimes including extrajudicial killings, disappeared persons, torture, and other human rights violations perpetrated by the army, police, and Maoist forces (Amnesty International 2011).

<sup>27</sup> Although the CPA restricted international involvement in some arenas it also contains milestones that require external financing indicating that there was no intention to cut off aid supplies which accounted for more than one quarter of annual public expenditure in 2010 (Australian Government Aid Program et al).

<sup>28</sup> While extremists on both sides had argued either for total integration or no integration the current situation in the country indicates that Maoist and non-Maoist parties are working toward a compromise, integrating between 6-8,000 MA members into the NA. Although there has been a great deal of discussion, there is no official position as to the fate of the remaining 11-13,000 cantoned combatants or whether they will receive a rehabilitation package or not.

<sup>29</sup> There is also a debate as to whether or not integration should occur at all.

Political parties, consumed with the tensions that divide them, have devoted all of their energy towards issues related to the immediate peace process at the expense of longer-term concerns (Australian Government Aid Program et al 2011, xii). In her final briefing to the Security Council as the head of UNMIN, Karin Landgren reported that the peace process was deadlocked with little progress on critical issues, and that parties had experienced difficulty in maintaining consensus or negotiating power-sharing arrangements. Referencing those in Nepal who deride the peace process as unproductive and too slow she noted, "there is a real risk that the failure of the peace process will become a self-fulfilling prophecy" (Landgren 2011, 3).

Non-Maoist parties argue that they cannot move forward with the Constitution process until the MA issue is resolved because it is unfair to try to deal politically with an armed party. The Maoists on the other hand have never officially renounced violence as a party strategy and are reluctant to lose leverage, arguing that they cannot abandon control of their army until they are guaranteed that their concerns are appropriately addressed in the new Constitution. Meanwhile, infrastructural and domestic concerns unrelated to the CPA's terms are virtually ignored. Political instability weakens the country's ability to implement economic reform or create a stable environment for development.<sup>30</sup> The longer the political transition stretches on, the harder life gets for the average Nepali citizen.

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<sup>30</sup> Nepal now has the lowest GDP per capita in South Asia (United Nations Country Team Nepal, "CAP" 2010, 10).

### **III CONCEPTUAL ORIENTATION**

Addressing the root causes of war and the combatants' motivation to mobilize is critical to the success of any DDR program (Steward 2008, Muggah 2010; Stankovic, Torjesen and Bleie 2010). Scholars have pointed to religion, ethnicity, economics, poverty, geography, social groups, individuals, and various combinations thereof to explain war. The linkages between root cause analyses and programmatic interventions determine a program's focus, strategy, and priorities and is critical for the "do no harm" approach that requires careful contextual analysis in an effort to avoid actions that unintentionally exacerbate tension and causes for conflict.

#### **Root Causes of War**

Many of causal analyses of the conflict in Nepal mirror the "greed versus grievance" debate sparked in 1998. Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler set the tone for a decade of discussion when they published a paper arguing that conflict is caused by, "opportunities for primary commodity predation," and that, "objective grievance is not a powerful primary cause of conflict" (Collier and Hoeffler 1998). Critics protested that history, politics, and social conditions cannot be ignored, thus igniting the greed versus grievance debate. Specifically related to Nepal, Murshed and Gates (2005) emphasize grievances associated with ethnicity, pointing to intergroup inequality, poverty, and

human rights abuses.<sup>31</sup> Acharya (2010), on the other hand, denies a causal link between the Maoist insurgency and grievances, social factors, or ideology, arguing that economic incentives were of primary importance.<sup>32</sup>

Combatants fight for a variety of reasons that change over time, (Stankovic, Torjesen and Bleie 2010, 43) and the scope of both the greed and the grievance approach are too narrow to explain Nepal's recent conflict. A framework presented by William Zartman (2005, 256-284) is a better fit, addressing a variety of important factors by using the intersection of need, creed, and greed to elucidate root causes of war. According to Zartman, state weakness and neglect in conjunction with rising expectations and unmet need sets the stage for conflict. Political entrepreneurs capitalize on this situation, promising an alternative to an ineffectual government and creating a fighting identity that is based on ideology. In the final phase of the conflict cycle, the focus may shift from the provision of group benefits to the seizure of individual benefits. Need is transformed into creed which then shifts to greed.

### State Weakness and Neglect

In Nepal, neglect and weakness stemmed from both a lack of concern and a lack of capacity. As an extractive state, Nepal has failed to invest in infrastructure or

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<sup>31</sup> Wennmann (2009) refers to socio-economic inequality as a major catalyst for conflict while Hatlebakk (2009) finds that income poverty and land inequality are main determinants of Maoist influence.

<sup>32</sup> Do and Iyer (2007) find that ethnic and caste polarization, land inequality, and political participation are not significantly associated with violence (1).

development, particularly in rural areas.<sup>33</sup> When the Maoist insurgency began, Nepal's government was unable to respond quickly or efficiently due at least in part to the dearth of infrastructure including roads and electricity.<sup>34</sup> Partial democracies are also highly vulnerable to conflict (US Agency for International Development 2004, 15) thus contributing to Nepal's fragility.

### Unmet Needs and Rising Expectations

The need component of Zartman's model is complemented by Francis Stewart's work on horizontal inequalities. Horizontal inequalities are inequalities in economic, social, political dimensions, or cultural status between culturally defined groups (Stewart 2008, 3). Stewart explores five categories of horizontal inequality: political participation, economic assets, income, employment, and societal aspects. In Nepal, each of these categories is intricately intertwined with the others and tied to the Hindu caste system as interpreted by governmental elites. Women consistently bear the brunt of inequality in each category. Although horizontal inequalities were a normal feature throughout Nepal's history, expectations began to rise in the mid-twentieth century as Nepali citizens were exposed to forms of government in other countries (Scott and Palmer 2005, 94).

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<sup>33</sup> For a more complete analysis of the history and effect of development of the extractive state in Nepal, please see "Development in Nepal—Investment in the Status Quo" by John Metz (1995).

<sup>34</sup> Even today, the only possible form of motorized transport to the district of Rukum, one of the conflict flashpoints, is by airplane. Those who wish to travel by ground must go by footpath.

## Political Entrepreneurs

The role of political entrepreneurs in initiating conflict is widely acknowledged (Palmer and Scott 2005; Arnson 2005, 10; Zartman 2005; Stewart 2008; Acharya 2010). Zartman emphasizes political entrepreneurs as catalysts who transform need into creed. The Maoists used ideology to solve the problem of collective action, mobilizing groups to fight one another (Murshed and Gates 2005) and providing a powerful sustaining force for the conflict. Economic need and grievances provided the conflict's launching point, but for many combatants, ideology eventually superseded other motivations.<sup>35</sup>

## Greed

Access to resources was a major problem for the CPN-M because its base areas were among the poorest regions in the country. As a result, the CPN-M was forced to rely on criminal activity including bank robbing, kidnapping-for-ransom, and extortion, to generate funds. Although these activities were occasionally quite profitable, they were not sufficient to meet the demands of rapid expansion (Marks and Palmer 2005, 103) and the conflict failed to evolve into one revolving around greed. This is likely due to Nepal's lack of capturable resources. However, while looting material resources has not played a significant role, the pattern in which group benefits are traded for the acquisition of individual gain has occurred in terms of power. Political culture in Nepal is based on the theory, "might makes right," (Stankovie, Torjesen and Bleie 2010, 12) and in many ways

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<sup>35</sup> Ideology helps answer Acharya's (2010, 280) challenge to the idea that grievance was important. He argues that if grievance really were a casual factor, than revolutionary leaders would have sprung up in some of the more downtrodden regions of Nepal. However, while objective conditions may support perception they are secondary to the subjective sense of deprivation (Zartman 2005, 267).

former and current combatants are little more than bargaining chips in a power struggle between political parties (Isabella Leao, interview with the author June 27, 2011).

## **DDR**

The concept of disarmament demobilization and reintegration (DDR) as a formal process developed as the Cold War thawed and states started exploring the collective management of conflict resolution (Gamba 2006, 53). Maoists protest the use of the term DDR, as they did not experience a military defeat. DDR is absent in more ways than name in Nepal. Maoist combatants have been disarmed, but the process has stalled at that point. VMLRs were finally discharged after protracted negotiations and given the option to participate in a voluntary rehabilitation program based on the IDDRS.

First published by the UN in 2006, the IDDRS bring together knowledge, lessons, and good practice. According to the IDDRS, the primary objective of DDR is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflictive environments thus enabling recovery and development (United Nations "IDDRS" 2010, 53). Early DDR operations focused on reducing the number of uniformed soldiers, weapons, and defense expenditures assuming that the physical removal of weapons and disbanding of armed groups would automatically result in loyalty for the government on the part of combatants (Muggah 2009, 123). Recognizing the simplistic nature of this approach, efforts that focus on individual combatants and technical procedures have been replaced by strategies that take a longer-term view, focusing on development and seeking to involve the community at large as well as combatants (Annan and Patel 2009, 9). The



goal of second generation DDR is to place weapons beyond use in the context of improving human security<sup>36</sup> through social and economic investment (Gamba 2006; Annan and Patel 2009; Molloy 2009; Muggah 2009).

Disarmament refers to the collection, documentation, control, and disposal of arms and ammunition, including the development of responsible arms management programs. Demobilization is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The R-phase of DDR is conceptualized in a number of ways, making a clear working definition key for successful implementation and evaluation (Specker 2008). The UN distinguishes between reinsertion and reintegration, defining reinsertion as short-term transitional assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization but prior to reintegration, which is a long-term process (United Nations "IDDRS" 2010, 25). Transitional assistance may include food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, and employment tools. Reintegration is a long-term social and economic process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Because the community plays an integral role in the reintegration of ex-combatants, an approach that focuses on both the community and individual combatants mitigates risk and capitalizes on opportunity (Stankovic, Torjesen and Bleie 2010, 47). This focus helps prevent problems stemming from the perception that combatants are being rewarded for the use of violence—a current tension in Nepal. Also germane to Nepal is the realization that some communities will not or cannot economically absorb ex-combatants (Molloy 2009;

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<sup>36</sup> The concept of human security shifts the focus from state to individual security, frequently defined as "freedom from fear" and the removal of force and violence from people's everyday lives (Krause 2009, 150).

United Nations "IDDRS" 2010, United Nations Country Team Nepal "Development Assistance Framework" 2009). Ex-combatants in Nepal have faced difficulty in obtaining employment both because of generally high levels of unemployment and discrimination associated with fighting in the PLA.

Increasing numbers of female combatants in conflicts around the world<sup>37</sup> have drawn attention to the need for DDR programming that addresses specific gendered needs.<sup>38</sup> Women are associated with armed groups in three primary ways: as regular active combatants, in supportive roles, or as dependents of a combatant (United Nations "IDDRS" 2010, 194). Twenty percent of the Maoist combatants registered by UNMIN are women and thirty percent of the VMLRs are female. Some women chose to fight with the PLA while others were forced. The UN has also identified a significant number of female dependents (Robert Piper, interview by author June 22, 2011; "Women's Participation in Peacebuilding; Report of the Secretary General" 2010).

The particular challenges associated with meeting the needs of female participants in DDR programs are confirmed by the Nepali experience. Because female dependents and support staff may not be listed on official registers additional effort is required to communicate with them and explain the benefits for which they are eligible. Fearful of repercussions, commanders of armed forces may deliberately prevent females who were forced to join the fighting force or who experience sexual and gender based violence

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<sup>37</sup> Estimates indicate that 10-30 percent of armies and guerilla groups are comprised of women (Bouta, Frerks and Bannon 2005, 9).

<sup>38</sup> Gender in this context is sometimes mistakenly equated to women when it actually indicates the need for a focus that addresses the different needs of both men and women. It is beyond the scope of this paper to address the gender specific needs of both men and women in post-conflict Nepal. For a discussion that addresses needs of men as well please see the 2010 Saferworld report.

(SGBV) from accessing DDR programs. Females also hesitate to come forward because of the stigma associated with living and fighting among male combatants. Because women often experience greater levels of SGBV during conflict, their psychosocial needs are unique and may be more intensive than those of men (Bouta, Frerks and Bannon 2005, 16). Women and girls frequently join armed groups as a means by which to flee oppression and obtain gender equality and are not eager to return to communities that expect them to submit to a more traditional role (Colekessian 2009, 6). These challenges resulted in a push for gender mainstreaming<sup>39</sup> within DDR operations, not only as a normative requirement but also as a sustainability measure. The IDDRS also emphasizes a conflict sensitive approach based on the "do no harm" principal, meaning that careful attention and consideration should be paid to local context dynamics, as well as the possible ramifications of each action to avoid unintentionally exacerbating conflict dynamics (United Nations "IDDRS" 2010, 204).

### **Domestic-International Interactions**

As with any domestic-international interaction, the relationship between the international community and domestic events and actors is complex with the actions of both affecting the actions of the other. Doyle and Sambanis (2006) argue that international organizations can substitute for local capacity and Gamba (2006) declares that the constructive involvement of a regional umbrella of concerned states contributing to the implementation of peace exponentially increase the chances of success for a DDR

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<sup>39</sup> Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, politics, or programs in all areas and at all levels.

operation. However, the importance of local ownership has also been increasingly emphasized (Muggah 2009, 174). It is increasingly common for DDR to be overseen by international organizations that must balance the need for a quick and efficient DDR process with the need for national ownership, something that requires capacity, time, and energy. This balance does not exist in Nepal, where Maoist and non-Maoist parties alike are opposed to the rehabilitation program even though the majority of its eligible participants joined the PLA as minors.

The political situation in Nepal made it difficult for the UNIRP to supplement local capacity, as the government is divided and often hamstrung. This experience seems to confirm the doubt that international assistance can compensate for local capacity in Nepal (Suhrke 2010, 37). For example, Stankovic, Torjesen and Bleie (2010) argue that, "DDR is effective—or not effective—not so much due to the organization and character of a given DDR program, but due to a host of macro- and micro- factors in specific country contexts" (9).

The relatively limited role of international actors in Nepal's peace negotiations set a pattern for external involvement after the war as well. Nepali politicians have fiercely defended their right to address Nepal's problems in their own manner. Nepal views itself as a provider of peacekeepers, not a receiver, and therefore established a minimal role for the United Nations Mission to Nepal during peace negotiations. This has carried over into the post-conflict phase as well. Comparative politics and international relations scholars have investigated how the global system empowers and constrains

domestic interest groups (Drezner 2003, 2), but there is little precedent to explain domestic-international interactions between Nepal and UNMIN or UN.

## **IV FINDINGS**

Because the fate of the 19,602 certified combatants has yet to be determined, the current rehabilitation process in Nepal includes only the 4,008 individuals that UNMIN disqualified from serving in the MA, either because they were minors or because they joined after the signing of the CPA. Of this number, small in relation to many other DDR caseloads, 30 percent are female and 75 percent were minors at the time of certification. All parties agreed to the term "disqualified," but once translated it carried a negative connotation, prompting the UN to use the term verified minor and late recruit (VMLR) instead (Piper interview with Mikel Dunham, April 2011). Due to the post-conflict political situation, VMLRs were not immediately released, living in cantonments for more than two years during a protracted negotiation process that finally culminated in their discharge in early 2010.

### **Maoist Cantonments**

VMLRs were cantoned with regular combatants for two and a half years. The Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies (AMMAA) was signed November 28, 2006; one week after the CPA was signed. It stated that the parties agreed to seek UN assistance in monitoring management of the arms and armies of both sides and outlined a process by which the Maoist army would be cantoned and its

weapons stored in a manner that preserved the normal MA chain of command, including control of communication and information.<sup>40</sup> There are seven main cantonment sites, each with three satellite sites (AMMAA).

**Table 1**

Location and Size of Primary Cantonment Sites		
Division	Location (city, district)	Number of Cantoned Combatants
First Division	Chulachi, Ilam	1933
Second Division	Dhudhauri, Sindhuli	1632
Third Division	Shaktikhor, Chitwan	3951
Fourth Division	Jhyaltungdada, Nawalparasi	3077
Fifth Division	Dahaban, Rolpa	2442
Sixth Division	Dasarathpur, Surkhet	3100
Seventh Division	Talbandi, Kailali	3327

Source: "The People's Liberation Army" by Ameet Dhakal in *The Nepali Security Sector (2009)*

### **Introduction to UNIRP**

UNIRP is a new interagency project that seeks to build on existing projects and experience, utilizing the expertise of several UN agencies while enhancing coordination and strategic coherence. Staff members were pulled from the UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and ILO and focus on program areas in which their agency has relevant experience.

Policy direction to UNIRP is provided by a steering committee that includes the heads of the relevant agencies, UNFPA, ILO, UNICEF, and UNDP, chaired by the Resident Coordinator. The joint initiative builds on existing United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal (UNPFN)-funded projects related to discharge and rehabilitation that are currently being implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. UNIRP is halfway through a two-year mandate. VMLRs who contact UNIRP and register for the program participate in a career

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<sup>40</sup> An equal number of NA members are confined to barracks and an equal number of NA arms registered and stored in locked, monitored storage facilities.

counseling session to help them decide which package best fits their needs.<sup>41</sup> Five regional offices are responsible for monitoring and evaluation, administration and issuing daily reports to UNIRP headquarters in Kathmandu. The following table shows pre-existing programs and the areas of responsibility for each implementing agency.

**Table 2**

Agency Contributions		
Organization	UNIRP Mandate	Pre-existing Program
UNDP	Manages vocational training and micro-enterprise development packages	<i>Discharge and Reintegration Assistance to the Maoist Army</i>
UNICEF	Manages education and psycho-social counseling program	<i>Program of Support for Children and Adolescents Formerly Associated with the Maoist Army in Nepal</i>
UNFPA	Provides gender and health support	<i>Support to Female Members of the Maoist Army, among the 4,008 to be discharged, in the divisions and host communities during the discharge and peace-building process</i>
ILO	Builds capacity and monitors providers of vocational training	

Source: UNDP factsheet, "Assistance to the Peace Process" (2010)

### UNIRP Objective

The primary objective of UNIRP is to have as many possible minors and late recruits involved in gainful employment or livelihood opportunities by supporting their rehabilitation. Additionally, UNIRP seeks to address possible feelings of hostility and fear toward discharges from the general public through a public information and

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<sup>41</sup> The deadline to register for the rehabilitation program passed in April of 2011 and participants must begin their packages by July 2011 (Piper interview by the author April 22, 2011).



sensitization campaign that promotes understanding, acceptance, and reconciliation as the discharges re-enter civilian life.

**Table 3**

UNIRP Program Summary	
Duration:	June 2010-May 2012
Budget:	\$14.5m
Funded/Unfunded budget:	\$8.2m (57%)/\$6.3m (43%)
Location:	Communities of Resettlement
Implemented by:	UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and ILO
Donors and Implementing Partners (amounts committed so far):	UNDP (\$5m) UNICEF (\$1.55m), UNFPA (\$0.7m), UNDP BCPR (0.7m), ILO (\$0.2m)
Partners:	Ministry of Peace and Reconstructions and services providers
Budget per participant	RS100,000 or roughly \$1,428

**Source:** Project Document, UNDP factsheet "Assistance to the Peace Process" and UN staff member interview.

### **UNIRP Priorities and Approach**

UNIRP has focused on the "do no harm" approach and prioritized the needs of FVMLRs. DDR has the potential for significant impact in the process of post-conflict stabilization and setting the foundation for development and the do no harm approach seeks to avoid any unintended negative impacts of intervention or development (United Nations "IDDRS" 2006, 6). As one UN staff member explained, because concerns related to VMLRs and MA combatants have been at the center of political tension and debate, UNIRP is critically analyzing the context in Nepal before acting. They are careful to consider decisive and connecting actors when deciding with whom to work with at the community level (UN staff member interview by the author June 29, 2011). Guidelines for the implementation of the rehabilitation packages were also prepared in consultation with all stakeholders and vetted through the National Technical Committee on Integration and Rehabilitation (unpublished UNIRP update, June-September 2011).

Although UNIRP is currently exploring the expansion of its gender focus to include male-specific needs, initially, in light of program constraints, the UN decided to focus on FVMLRs, considering them likely to experience doubled marginalization. The program document sets the goal that no FVMLR will be prevented from full participation in rehabilitation programming because of a gender-related constraint. This goal has resulted in female-specific supports developed during program implementation as problems are recognized.

### **Pre-planning Phase and Discharge Process**

Orientation, a sensitization campaign, awareness raising, and consultations with VMLRs were not a part of the pre-planning phase due to Maoist constraints. The first time that UNIRP staff had contact with VMLRs in an official capacity was during the discharge ceremony, which was closely monitored by Maoist commanders (Piper interview with the author, June 22, 2011). UNIRP provided ID cards and explained rehabilitation options at discharge ceremonies held in January 2010. However, some 1,700 were not in attendance as they had already left the cantonments. Maoist commanders claimed they left in disgust the preceding week upon hearing what the rehabilitation packages would entail.<sup>42</sup> UNIRP has made contact with about 20 percent of the 1,700 that were absent for the official discharge ceremony, but are unaware of the remainder's whereabouts. Some VMLRs have reported that several of them migrated to Nepali and Indian urban centers looking for work (Saferworld 2010).

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<sup>42</sup> The timing of their departure matters because the cantonments receive a monthly stipend for each resident combatant.

## Packages

Four different packages were made available to VMLRs at the time of discharge. They are education, vocational training, micro and small-enterprise training, and health sector training. Although the packages vary in terms of length, they all operate with the same budget. VMLRs go through an initial career counseling session that helps them determine which package will best fit their needs. All participants receive a monthly stipend during their training period. Psychosocial support is also available through a network of partner agencies and over 300 participants have received this support.

## Education

The education package supports individuals to pursue formal and informal education. Various formal education opportunities are also available through government schools throughout the country. Although there was initially some trouble with the informal education option it has recently been reintegrated into the package.<sup>43</sup> Hostel stays are facilitated for FVMLRs who have to pursue education away from home.

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<sup>43</sup> Initially, there was a non-formal education component that included bridging courses that allowed students to make-up primary, lower secondary, or secondary education. Some Maoist commanders took advantage of the informal education very early in the program by directing groups of VMLRs to demand this option as it allowed them to study at a distance and only required occasional check-ins at regional centers. Their goal was to receive the stipend monies while maintaining command of VMLRs. When this was brought to the attention of Prachandra, he advised that the informal education option be suspended. This was done early in the program and the option reopened under tighter controls, in March 2011.

### Micro and Small-enterprise

The micro and small-enterprise development packages include technical and business training. Participants attend an orientation designed to help them draft a business plan that prepares them for success within their own community. Options are varied and training may include apprenticeships and follow-up training courses. Literacy and numeracy bridging support is also offered to individuals who require it. Training periods can range from two weeks to eight months depending on the course being pursued. After training completion, each participant receives in-kind support toward his or her business launch.

### Vocational Training

The vocational skills training package covers a wide range of vocational work. Training ranges from three to eight months, with many of the programs falling at the longer end of the range. Interviews indicated that this option is less desirable for FVMLRs, many of whom are lactating, pregnant, or raising children, making the longer training periods difficult. Additionally, there may be cultural barriers that prevent women from pursuing vocations that are traditionally perceived as masculine work. For example, included in the project document are welder, mason, and motorcycle service mechanic training. Currently, no women are enrolled in this package.

## Health Services Training

Packages similar to the health-training package have only been available in a handful of DDR operations (UN staff member interview by the author June 21, 2011). This program is different from the others in terms of its duration—two years—and the level of education that participants must have coming into the program. In addition to having passed the tenth grade, they must also pass an entrance exam to be eligible for the medical courses. Because women are at a greater disadvantage when it comes to education in Nepal there are fewer of them who meet these requirements and are eligible to participate in the program. However, FVMLRs who are enrolled are generally performing well. Most of the women enrolled in this package are unmarried and without children so there hasn't been much need to adjust the program as with other package options.

Training for a variety of positions in the health sector is available. Unlike the other packages, where employment continues to be a challenge even after package completion, there is a high demand for medical positions in rural areas and it is expected that every participant will be able to find a job post-graduation.

Of the four packages available to VMLRs, three of them have significant numbers of female participants. The table below summarizes the numbers of participants enrolled in each program and what percentage is female as of May 2011.

**Table 3**

Rehabilitation package	Number Enrolled	Female percentage
Vocational Training	89	0%
Microenterprise	279	53%
Education	373	44%
Health Training	47	26%

**Data from UNIRP Bi-Weekly Report, Reporting Period 16-21 May 2011**

### **Challenges**

Many of the challenges faced by UNIRP are unique to the Nepali context and seem to have disproportionately affected women. These include the lack of government support, continued Maoist military command, the length of time spent in cantonments, and the absence of an appropriate pre-planning phase. Most of these seem to have disproportionately impacted women, increasing difficulties associated with their reintegration into civil society.<sup>44</sup>

#### **No Government Support**

A key challenge frequently identified is the lack of governmental ownership and national support (Piper interview with the author June 22, 2011; Molloy email correspondence with the author April 23, 2011; Saferworld viii, 2010). Perceiving

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<sup>44</sup> At this point, analyses and reports have focused on anecdotal information, indicating the need for more quantitative research in this area.

themselves as proud victors, Maoist parties resent the rehabilitation program and its connection to DDR. They also find the program insulting, declaring that the government should play a greater role in the financing and delivering of services, thus honoring the sacrifices combatants made during the war (Saferworld 2010, vii). They believe that combatants deserve a reward, not rehabilitation. Non-Maoist parties are hesitant to support UNIRP, arguing that the program rewards violence by providing training and various benefits to ex-combatants while ignoring the innocent victims of war.<sup>45</sup>

Lack of Maoist support has effectively blocked some VMLRs from participating in the rehabilitation program (Saferworld 2010) while disagreement between Maoist and non-Maoist parties has put the UN in a position of administering the program with virtually no support (Piper interview by the author June 22, 2011). It has also resulted in gross human rights violations, including the prolonged cantonment of minors with regular combatants.

#### No Break in Military Command

Although a break in the chain of command is typical for DDR operations, the MA continues to operate under its normal command structure (AMMAA) and continue regular training operations within the cantonments. There is a theoretical division between the political party and military commanders, but its validity is widely questioned

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<sup>45</sup> Security sector reform (SSR) has made little progress and the state has done little to address the concerns of these victims. The security sector has a long history of control by the feudal autocratic political system and there has never been any precedent for maintaining civilian supremacy over security forces. Security forces are known for human rights abuses and focusing on their reform made increasingly difficult by the proliferation of armed groups throughout Nepal, especially in the Terai, since the signing of the CPA (Pathak and Uprety 2010).

(Piper interview by the author April 22, 2011). VMLRs served and trained under these conditions for more than two years and many continue to maintain relationship with commanders.

Commanders encourage VMLRs to fight for increased benefits and encouraging artificially high expectations. For example, VMLRs believe that they should be guaranteed high paying jobs for life in spite of high unemployment rates throughout the country despite the fact that the current job market makes it difficult for the average Nepali to obtain employment (Saferworld 2010; UN staff member interview by the author 2011). In July of 2011, VMLRs formally requested that the government ensure them a, "guarantee of food, lodging, clothes, job, health and education," in addition to allocating a budget to help them become self-employed (*My Republica* "'Disqualified' combatants want guarantee of basic needs" 2011). Maoist commanders also discourage VMLRs from accepting training for work that is beneath them. For example, adamant that agriculture is a lower-status profession, Maoist leadership forced UNIRP to remove the agricultural package they initially planned to offer as a rehabilitation option. This is both an interesting and surprising departure from Maoism, but VMLRs and current combatants alike continue to protest that the government does not properly recognize their sacrifices. Although managing high expectations is typically part of DDR operations, practitioners are unused to expectations as artificially high as these (Piper, Molloy and UN staff member interviews by the author 2011).



## Length of Time in Cantonments

Also unusual for a DDR operation is the length of time spent in cantonments. Many of the minors that entered the cantonments upon their creation were legal adults by the time they were discharged in early 2010. Regular combatants have been cantoned nearly five years—long enough for GIZ, the German Humanitarian Organization,<sup>46</sup> to implement extensive programming within the cantonments. For example, more than 10,000 combatants have received training, 1,500 of whom have completed training as health assistants ("GTZ. Supporting Measures to Strengthen the Peace Process").

Information concerning camp conditions is extremely limited,<sup>47</sup> but the encouragement of inter-caste marriage and the lack of attention paid to female reproductive health concerns has been noted (Saferworld 2010; UN staff interviews by the author 2011). Inter-caste marriages complicate re-entry into a highly socially stratified society and have caused a "baby boom" in cantonments. A UN radio program shared the experience of a UNFPA doctor who noted that pregnancies became more frequent as the time in cantonments progressed. Most FVMLRs are pregnant, lactating, or caring for small children. Pregnant women are unable to perform the military exercises expected of them within the camp and are therefore required to live outside the cantonments, so many women live in temporary shelters located just outside the cantonments.

Basing policies on equity rather than equality, the MA does not address women's reproductive health concerns. FVMLRs experience a variety of health problems,

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<sup>46</sup> The former GTZ is now GIZ (Duetsche Geselleschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)

<sup>47</sup> Information regarding rates of SGBV is currently unavailable.

including high rates of uterine prolapse, a condition in which the uterus falls out of the body.<sup>48</sup> This can occur when women are not provided adequate time to rest after giving birth and are forced to resume intense labor while their muscles are still soft. Women have indicated that they have gendered health needs apart from those associated with pregnancy that are ignored by Maoist commanders (Saferworld 2010, 9).

#### Absence of Pre-planning Phase

The Maoists denied the UN's request for confidential interviews with each VMLR prior to discharge with the result that UNIRP did not have adequate socio-economic profiling or relevant market information during the design of the program. The Maoists denied the request on the grounds that VMLRs neither needed nor desired to participate in the rehabilitation program (Piper interview with Mikel Dunham, April 2011). UNIRP staff did not have access to VMLRs until the discharge ceremony and even then it was not confidential. This gap prevented adequate preparation both in communities of return and among VMLRs. Sensitization and awareness-raising campaigns are just now being developed and neither VMLRs nor community members were briefed about the challenges often associated with the reintegration of ex-combatants. UNIRP was also unaware of the frequent occurrence of inter-caste marriage and pregnancy among FVMLRs, meaning that these needs were not initially addressed in the rehabilitation program.

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<sup>48</sup> Uterine prolapse, a maternal illness where the pelvic organ, uterus or bladder protrudes into the vagina is encountered by a number of Nepali women. The condition is related to poverty and discrimination against women. Its prevalence is increased by several factors including early marriage and pregnancy, lack of skilled birth attendants and heavy manual work (United Nations Population Fund Nepal, 2011).

### **Community Response: Motivation to Mitigate Challenges**

Every DDR operation faces a unique set of challenges to mitigate. Addressing challenges is important to sustain peace and encourage development. In Nepal, challenges further marginalize women who already experience the brunt of discrimination within the country. Some communities have not welcomed FVMLRs, particularly those in inter-caste marriages. Women have been disowned, coerced by physical violence, and even killed as a result of inter-caste marriage (Saferworld 2010, 32). This lack of support highlights the importance of UNIRP support.

The fact that participation is voluntary and dependent upon VMLR initiation further increases the importance of mitigating challenges. Unlike traditional DDR programs, participation is voluntary and dependent upon VMLRs contacting the UN and indicating interest. Maoist interference, the inability to track VMLRs who left before the official discharge process, the absence of an adequate pre-planning phase, limited initial communications options, and the artificially high VMLR expectations have all affected rates of participation. Increasing program attractiveness for FVMLRs is an important priority because of their need for additional support in a particularly challenging environment.

Discrimination within communities has been particularly difficult for those FVMLRs in an inter-caste marriage, a practice encouraged within cantonments.<sup>49</sup> Many FVMLRs are missing legal documents including citizenship papers, marriage certificates,

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<sup>49</sup> These marriages were both by choice and force (Saferworld 2010, xxii).

or birth certificates for their children, and families have refused to acknowledge inter-caste marriages or the children of inter-caste marriage that are not legally documented.

Discrimination affects not only the individual FVMLR, but also their families. For example, one UN staff member reported an incident in which the immediate family of one FVMLR suffered because of her marriage to a lower caste man. They were shunned by the larger family unit and denied their previous role of religious leadership within the family (unpublished internal report entitled "Case of FVMLR").

Inter-caste marriage is a drastic departure from cultural norms but FVMLRs also report difficulties associated with lesser changes.<sup>50</sup> For example, most communities expect women to be quiet, demure, and defer to the opinions of male family members; FVMLRs, however, have returned as bold, articulate, and opinionated women who are unwilling to renounce the freedom they experienced while serving with the PLA and living in the cantonments. Communities perceive FVMLRs as overly aggressive and sexually promiscuous and while similar opinions may be held about male VMLRs, these behaviors are more culturally acceptable for men (Bouta, Bannon and Frerks 2005; Saferworld 2010, 38 Annan and Patal 2009; Colekessian 2009; unpublished report "Case of the FVMLR 2010; UN staff member interviews 2011). A number for FVMLRs have chosen to resettle in new urban communities where they can hide past affiliation with the PLA. These women and their children are nearly impossible to reach, meaning that this highly vulnerable group has little to no access to support networks or the rehabilitation packages available to them (Saferworld 2010, xv).

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<sup>50</sup> Numbers aren't available due to the sensitive and ongoing nature of the program.

## **V DISCUSSION**

Piper comments that while the UNIRP rehabilitation program has faced severe challenges, the UN did not, "go blindly into the situation" (interview by the author July 22, 2011). Noting the current position of women in Nepali society, increased levels of discrimination that are often associated with female ex-combatants and the lack of socioeconomic VMLR data prior to discharge, UNIRP devised a program that facilitates quick response as information is gathered and problems discovered in the field. Program strengths include adaptability and a robust gendered-approach. Weaknesses include inadequate social cohesion programming, the prohibitive distances that some VMLRs must travel for training and psychosocial care, a weak approach in terms of addressing the unique needs of adolescents, and a limited budget. The author faced several limitations that can be used as a starting point for further research.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

Adaptability and a robust gendered-approach were frequently cited as program strengths (Piper, Molloy, Leao and UN staff member interviews July 2011). The success of the gendered-approach is demonstrated by the high participation rates of FVMLRs.

### Strength: Innovation

Adaptability and a robust gender-based approach are significant strengths of the UNIRP program. The UNIRP focus on adaptability facilitated a transition from a general approach to one that focuses on the individual. Although this is a typical pattern for any DDR program, the rehabilitation program in Nepal was initially more general than most due to the absence of a thorough pre-planning phase. UNIRP emphasizes a case management approach in which each participant is treated as a unique project rather than a component of one large project. UNIRP's unique dynamic monitoring and evaluation (DME) system and the rehabilitation information system (RIS) have facilitated both adaptability and the program's robust gender-based approach.

### **Innovations Facilitating Adaptability**

Molloy explains that the UNIRP program was developed on a "best guess basis," noting that the entire program has had to be adjusted and improved in real time during implementation as they receive better information (Molloy email correspondence with the author July 12, 2011). In other words, innovation is imperative in the Nepali context. DME and RIS are important programmatic components that have facilitated adaptability. This adaptability is key for FVMLRs because the UN was least aware of their special needs before discharge and because of the particularly challenging social dynamics involved with their reintroduction to civil society. DME and RIS allow staff to quickly acquire and respond to in-the-field experience. Of the innovations generated in the Nepali

context it seems likely that these might be the most broadly applicable to other DDR operations.

The RIS is a central online information database that can be accessed from program headquarters and each of the regional offices. In past DDR operations, it was common for regional offices to maintain their own records, separate from other offices. This system is easily taken advantage of and has difficulty in accurately tracking program participants. RIS allows staff to share information efficiently and reduces the workload previously associated with transferring files or locating particular information about a participant. It also prevents VMLRs from registering at multiple offices while granting them the ability to easily transfer districts should they want to move and resume their rehabilitation package in a new community. Each VMLR has an individual file within the RIS that allows staff to track services received, progress made, and changes in their socioeconomic status. This has particularly benefited FVMLRs because it allows UNIRP to respond quickly to the kinds of special needs that have been often neglected in other DDR programs, including pregnancy, reproductive health needs, and community discrimination (UN staff member interview by the author June 21, 2011).

DME seeks to cut the time needed to respond to issues that arise in the field. One UN staff member reported that instead of waiting to compile reports that take weeks or months to generate, they are often able to respond to individual problems within 24 hours of discovery (interview by the author June 23, 2011). For this to work, UNIRP created a wide range of standardized forms, implemented daily reporting, and has promoted a culture of listening to the field and rapidly sharing experiences. Standardized forms are

an important component of DME in this context, because the sensitive political situation requires many decisions to be made at higher levels of management. These forms expedite the process so that decisions can be made quickly despite the levels of bureaucracy through which they must travel. DME makes use of qualitative and quantitative information and allows management to act in real time to provide authorization, guidance, or necessary additional recourses while also encouraging initiative at the field level (Molloy email correspondence with the author July 12, 2011).

### **Innovations that Strengthen UNIRP's Gender Approach**

Recognizing the already difficult position of women in Nepal, UNIRP decided to prioritize FVMLRs, who they predicted would experience further discrimination based on their association with a fighting force. As the rehabilitation program enters its second year, women constitute 36 percent of total participants despite constituting only 30 percent of the VMLR caseload. Although the percentage of female participants is just slightly higher than the percentage of female VMLRs, 36 percent is impressive when one considers the difficulties associated with female participation on previous DDR operations and that participation in this context is voluntarily. Furthermore, 45 percent of the total participants who are employed or self-employed are women and girls (Unpublished internal document "Gender Review Report"). Part of this success is due to additional programmatic provisions that are continually added as programmatic issues arise. Several programmatic elements have been added in order to mitigate challenges specific to FVMLRs. Because UNIRP did not have access to socioeconomic data prior to



the discharge process, they were unaware of the large number of FVMLRs who were pregnant, lactating, or caring for small children.<sup>51</sup> Additions include nutritional support, childcare provision, and the implementation of a robust communications strategy.

### *Nutrition*

All pregnant women and lactating mothers who are currently enrolled in rehabilitation programs are eligible to receive Rs 50 (approximately \$0.71) per day on a monthly basis. Additionally, up to two children per participant are eligible to receive baby food based on the recommendation of the UNIRP regional office (Unpublished information package on Special Gender and Health support for FVMLRs).

### *Childcare*

VMLRs are required to travel to one of five regional centers for psychosocial counseling and may also have to spend extended periods of time away from home in order to participate in education or training. Noting that a lack of childcare options prevented some women from fully participating in the rehabilitation program, provisions were made for children to attend either a previously established government childcare center, or a center at the regional center. In the case of women who choose to bring their own childcare provider, an additional stipend to cover his or her living expenses is available.

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<sup>51</sup> Exact figures are not currently available but UN staff estimated that a majority of FVMLRs currently fit into one of these categories.

### *Communications Strategy*

When VMLRs were discharged from cantonments, they were provided with a toll free number with which they could contact UNIRP if they so chose. Although preliminary brochures with program details were distributed prior to discharge, press and media conferences, additional brochures, and an SMS campaign were all developed during implementation. The SMS campaign is viewed as a great success because it allowed UNIRP to reach potential participants individually, protecting the privacy of VMLRs who continue to face Maoist pressure and may be hiding their true identity from the communities in which they now live. Additionally, this allowed UNIRP to access participants without contact information through the social networks connecting VMLRs throughout the country

### *Weaknesses*

Navigating re-entry into potentially discriminatory communities is one of the program's weak points. Although the UN anticipated some difficulty in this area, reactions in some cases have been more severe than anticipated. Moreover, VMLRs have resettled in a widely dispersed geographical pattern, making community outreach and sensitization efforts difficult for a program with limited resources. Piper notes the importance of addressing this weakness stating that while FVMLRs need the support of the communities in which they live, those same communities need the change that FVMLRs bring with them. FVMLRs have been exposed to unique ideas, training, and education; both in the PLA and in UNIRP's rehabilitation program. They have skills and

expertise that will benefit the broader Nepali community. For example, one FVMLR completed the microenterprise package and is currently earning 3-5,000 rupees per day (UN staff member interview by the author June 27, 2011). Stories like this are rare in a country that structurally and culturally prevents women from entering the business realm. Hopefully more attention can be paid to the relationship between FVMLRs and their communities in order to set a positive pattern for future gender equality.

Also related to the wide geographical resettlement pattern, some VMLRs have found travel associated with the program prohibitive to participation. Psychosocial care, health training programs, microenterprise training and follow-up are currently available only at the regional centers. This presents a particular challenge to pregnant and lactating mothers or women caring for small children.<sup>52</sup> Although childcare is available upon arrival, some participants fail to return for follow-up exercises.

The majority of minors serving in the PLA were between the ages of 14 and 18 and many were legal adults at the time of discharge. Educational UNICEF brochures thoroughly address the issue of returning child soldiers, but very few of the VMLRS are children—most are adolescents closer to adulthood than they are to childhood. This being said, they still have needs that are unique compared to adults (Piper interview by the author June 22, 2011). Programming focused on the needs of children and the needs of adults and was not able to adequately address the needs of those hovering between childhood and adulthood (Leao interview by the author June 20, 2011).

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<sup>52</sup> UNIRP is currently exploring options to bring trainings and psychosocial care to participants in their communities, but this idea has not yet materialized.

Finally, Piper, Leao and UN staff members all referenced the financial limitations of the program as a weakness. Program participants have also noted that the stipends provided them are not enough to cover their basic expenses. UNIRP cannot spend more than Rs 100,000 (approximately \$1,428) per participant. Some of the programs require additional supplies such as uniforms and training materials, which must also come out of this budget. Although there is little that can be done to change this weakness, a larger rehabilitation budget should be encouraged for currently cantoned combatants.

### **Summary**

Unique challenges including, no government support, continued Maoist military command, the length of cantonment, and the absence of a thorough pre-planning phase were drivers for innovation. General programmatic innovations include DME and the RIS. Innovations specific to gender-based programming include supplemental nutritional support and the provision of childcare. Although these elements were developed in Nepal's distinctive context, their general applicability should be considered for more traditional DDR operations around the world.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

As with any research project, the author encountered a number of limitations while gathering the information for this case study. However, they point the way to potential research projects in the future that can benefit both Nepal and DDR practitioners in general.

## Limitations

- Some information is restricted due to the sensitive and ongoing nature of the rehabilitation program. For example, the precise number of FVMLRs who have accessed psychosocial support or reported social discrimination, or SGBV as a result of discrimination is unavailable at this time.
- Limited financial resources coupled with time constraints on the part of the author and UN staff prevented travel to regional offices.
- A true program analysis would include interviews with all of the stakeholders in this process including constitutional parties, program participants, and community members. The results of this case study are confined to the perspective of UN staff working in Nepal.
- Although the case study method offers several benefits, particularly for qualitative analysis, it also has certain drawbacks, including little in the way of a quantitative contribution.
- Some key staff members were unavailable for interview during the author's time in Nepal.

## Research Recommendations

Some information has been gathered regarding psychosocial trauma encountered by FVMLRs during service with the PLA while cantoned and since discharge, but there has not been a systematic study addressing these issues. One UN staff member suspected that a great deal of trauma has gone unreported and therefore is not properly addressed through the rehabilitation program (Interview by the author June 13 2011). Due to fragility of post-conflict Nepal, the results of such a study would likely remain confidential, but greatly improve programs that target FVMLRs.

This case study revolves around the perspective of staff that is primarily located in Kathmandu, Nepal. Considering the impact of UNIRP innovations from a regional and community level is important if their success is to be truly measured. The high

participation of FVMLRs is a positive indication, but more research is certainly required for a definitive analysis of success.

Finally, considering the programmatic gap regarding the relationship between FVMLRs and the community, potential modalities for sensitization and social cohesion initiatives are also necessary. UN staff members indicated that there has been little to no research done in this area and indicated its importance considering the extreme discrimination faced by some FVMLRs upon return. This would likely be a complex endeavor, as it would seek to understand changes in perception associated with conflict. These perceptions need to be examined at both the community and combatant level in order to investigate current community-FVMLR interactions and to make social cohesion programming recommendations.

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## **Appendix A: List of Commonly Used Acrynms**

<b>AMMAA</b>	Agreement on Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies
<b>BCPR</b>	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
<b>CAAFAG</b>	Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups
<b>CPA</b>	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
<b>DME</b>	Dynamic Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>FVMLR</b>	Female Verified Minor or Late Recruit
<b>IDDRS</b>	International Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration Standards
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IO</b>	International Organization
<b>MA</b>	Maoist Army
<b>NA</b>	Nepal Army
<b>PLA</b>	People's Liberation Army
<b>RIS</b>	Rehabilitation Information System
<b>RNA</b>	Royal Nepal Army
<b>SSR</b>	Security Sector Reform
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNIRP</b>	United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Program
<b>UNPFN</b>	United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal
<b>VMLRs</b>	Verified Minor and Late Recruits

## Appendix B: Timeline of Significant Events

- 18<sup>th</sup> century Prithvi Narayan Shah unifies three rival kingdoms, creating Nepal.
- 1854 Rana dynasty formally codifies the caste system in Nepal
- April 1949 Communist leader Pushpa Lal translates the Communist Manifesto into Nepali.
- 1955 Nepal joins the UN.
- 1959 Multi-party constitution is adopted.
- 1960 King Mahendra seizes control, suspending parliament, the constitution and party politics after Nepali Congress Party wins elections.
- 1980 Constitutional referendum is held following agitation for reform. The king agrees to allow direct elections to a national-assembly but on a non-party basis.
- 1985 Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) begin civil disobedience campaign for the restoration of multi-party system.
- 1990 Pro-democracy agitation leads to street protests and deaths. The king agrees to a new democratic constitution.
- February 1996 The CPN-M begin their insurgency.
- June 1, 2001 King Birendra and members of his family are shot to death by the crown prince.
- July 2001 The government and Maoists agree to a truce
- November 23, 2001 Peace talks fail and Maoists launch attacks on army and police posts.
- October 4, 2002 The king dismisses the prime minister and assumes executive power.
- January 2003 Government and Maoists declare a ceasefire.
- August 2003 Maoists pull out of peace talks and end truce.
- February 1, 2005 King Gyanendra dismisses the government and assumes direct power.
- September 2005 Maoists declare a three-month ceasefire
- November 22 2005 Maoist and Seven Party Alliance (SPA) agree on a common platform for restoring democracy.
- January 2006 Maoists ended a four-month ceasefire
- April 5, 2006 The people's movement starts with the SPA general strike and Maoist blockades.
- April 24, 2006 King Gyanendra surrenders power and agrees to reinstate parliament after street protests.
- April 26, 2006 Maoists announce a unilateral three-month ceasefire.



- May 26, 2006 Maoists and SPA sign ceasefire code of conduct.
- July 2, 2006 SPA writes to the Secretary-General proposing decommissioning of Maoist arms.
- July 24, 2006 Maoists write to UN protesting SPA's letter with reference to decommissioning.
- July 27-August 3, 2006 UN assessment mission visits Nepal.
- August 9 2006 Maoists and SPA send parallel letters to UN Secretary-General requesting monitoring of arms and elections.
- August 25, 2006 Ian Martin is appointed as the Secretary-General's personal representative to Nepal.
- October 29, 2006 Ceasefire is extended for three months.
- November 8, 2006 Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies is signed by the Maoists and SPA.
- December 16, 2006 The Maoists and SPA agreed on the interim constitution.
- January 15, 2007 An interim constitution is adopted by Nepal's House of Representatives, which dissolves itself to make way for the interim parliament.
- March 7, 2007 UNMIN completes registering and storing the weapons of Maoist forces.
- April 1, 2007 An interim government is established consisting of eight political parties, including the Maoists.
- April 12, 2007 UNMIN completes registering and storing the weapons of the Nepal Army.
- June 14, 2007 UNMIN begins second phase of registering and verifying former Maoist combatants and their weapons.
- June 24, 2007 The interim government agrees to hold elections for the constituent assembly on November 22.
- September 9, 2007 Bombs explode in Kathmandu for the first time since the August 2006 peace agreement.
- September 14, 2007 5,000 soldiers leave their camps to protest wages lower than those paid to soldiers in the Nepali Army.
- September 26, 2007 The Nepali Congress party passes a resolution calling on the special assembly to be elected in November to order the king to give up his throne.
- October 5, 2007 Constituent assembly elections, set for November 22 are indefinitely deferred.
- April 10, 2008 The constituent elections are held. The Maoists emerge as the single largest party. Four people are killed on polling day.
- May 19, 2008 UNMIN condemns the killing of a local businessman, Ram Hari Shrestha, inside the Maoist cantonment as a breach of commitments made in the Agreement on Monitoring the Management of Arms and Armies (AMMAA).
- May 28, 2008 The Constituent Assembly convenes for the first time and proclaims Nepal a republic.

- June 20 2008 Seven Maoist ministers resign collectively during a meeting of the seven ruling parties after negotiations failed to break the deadlock over the formation of government.
- October 21, 2008 Agreement is reached by all parties to form a special committee for the integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist combatants.
- October 22, 2008 Key parties objected to a member of the CPN-M heading the committee as PLA combatants would be a part of the integration process.
- March 2, 2009 In response to the February announcement by the NA that it had recruited 3,000 new troops, the PLA announces it will begin recruiting to fill the positions of 12,000 troops disqualified by UNMIN's verification process
- March 13, 2009 The Supreme Court upholds a challenge to the recruitment by the Nepalese army and orders them to cease recruiting. .
- May 4 2009 Maoist Prime Minister "Prachanda" resigns after the President blocks his firing of the army chief
- August 24, 2009 19 armed ex-Maoist soldiers verified as combatants are arrested outside of cantonments in Kapilvastu district with weapons registered by UNMIN
- September 1, 2009 The Constitutional Committee is tasked with preparing the final constitution draft from the submissions of 11 thematic committees met for the first time since the new government was formed
- December 14-17, 2009 Radhika Coomaraswamy visits Nepal to try to accelerate the release of VMLRs
- December 16, 2009 The Nepalese government and the UCPN-M sign an action plan committing both sides to release the former child combatants over a forty-day period starting in early 2010.
- January 7, 2010 VMLR discharge process begins.
- April 2010 VMLR discharge process ends.

## Appendix C: 40-point Maoist Demand, February 1996, organized by theme

Nationalism (7)	Political (13)	Economic (13)	Socio-cultural (7)
1. Abrogation of 1950 Treaty	10. Republican constitution	6. End capital aggrandizement	18. Secular state
2. Abrogation of Mahakali Treaty	11. End royal privileges	7. Self-reliant economy	19. Equality to women
3. Border regulation	12. Civil authority over army	27. Land to the tiller	20. End ethnic oppression
4. Discontinue Gurkha recruitment	13. Repeal repressive regulations	28. Nationalization of dubious property	21. Abolish untouchability
5. Introduce work permit system	14. Release prisoners	29. Employment generation	22. Equality of languages
6. End cultural invasion	15. End state terrorism	30. Set minimum wage	35. Access to education and health services
7. Stop imperial elements (INGO)	16. Enquiry on actions against Maoists	31. Resettle squatters	40. Protection of the disabled
	17. Recognition on martyrs and penalty to perpetrator	32. Debt relief, credit provision	
	20. Ethnic autonomy	33. Cheap inputs, fair price for agricultural products	
	23. Freedom of speech	36. Control price	
	24. Freedom of thought	37. Provide road, electricity, water supply to rural areas	
	25. Regional devolution	38. Promote cottage industries	
	26. Local governance	39. Control corruption	

Source: Gurung, Harka. *Social Exclusion and Maoist Insurgency*. Paper presented at National Dialogue on ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and tribal People, Kathmandu, Nepal, 19-20 January 2005.