



Common ground?

Gendered assessment of the needs and concerns of Maoist Army combatants for rehabilitation and integration



November 2010



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Contents

Acronyms	i
Definition of key terms	
Map of Nepal	
Executive summary	i
1. Introduction	1
2. Key research findings	5
2.1. Putting integration and rehabilitation in context – combatants’ prior experiences	5
2.1.1. Reasons for joining the Maoist PLA	5
2.1.2. Experience during conflict	7
2.1.3. Experience since the end of the conflict and in the cantonments	8
2.2. Perspectives and priorities for the future	9
2.2.1. Findings relevant to both rehabilitation and integration	9
2.2.2. Key findings on integration	10
2.2.2.1. General findings	10
2.2.2.2. Structure	15
2.2.2.3. Training	17
2.2.2.4. A gender-sensitive approach to integration	19
2.2.3. Key findings on rehabilitation	23
2.2.3.1. General findings	23
2.2.3.2. Economic rehabilitation	26
2.2.3.3. Social rehabilitation	30
2.2.3.4. Psychosocial rehabilitation and healthcare	34
2.2.3.5. Community security	37
2.2.3.6. Political rehabilitation	39
3. Recommendations	42
3.1. Recommendations relevant to both rehabilitation and integration	42
3.2. Integration	48
3.2.1. Preparatory transition and planning phase	48
3.2.2. Implementation phase	50
3.2.2.1. General	50
3.2.2.2. Structure	52
3.2.2.3. Training	52
3.2.2.4. Gender sensitivity	53

3.3. Rehabilitation	56
3.3.1. Focus implementation of rehabilitation recommendations in target geographic areas	56
3.3.2. Rehabilitation planning and implementation must be holistic in approach	56
3.3.3. Be sensitive when hiring contractors to implement different components of the rehabilitation packages	56
3.3.4. Transparency in expenditure of budget for rehabilitation	57
3.3.5. Ensure rehabilitation packages are conflict-sensitive	57
3.3.6. Support to those who have fallen through the net	58
3.3.7. Deliver rehabilitation programming at the local level	58
3.3.8. Preparatory transition and planning phase	59
3.3.8.1. General	59
3.3.8.2. Economic rehabilitation	60
3.3.8.3. Social rehabilitation	62
3.3.8.4. Psychosocial rehabilitation and healthcare	64
3.3.9. Implementation phase	65
3.3.9.1. Economic rehabilitation	65
3.3.9.2. Social rehabilitation	68
3.3.9.3. Psychosocial rehabilitation and healthcare	69
4. Conclusion	71
ANNEXES	
ANNEX 1: Lessons learnt from rehabilitation of discharged combatants	72
ANNEX 2: Analysis of existing laws and policies relevant to rehabilitation and integration and recommendations for strengthening policies	80
ANNEX 3: Methodology	85
ANNEX 4: Proposed organisation of the Nepal Rehabilitation Commission	96

Acronyms

AMMAA	Agreement on Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies	NC	Nepali Congress
APF	Armed Police Force	NDC	National Defence Council
CA	Constituent Assembly	NGO	non-governmental organisation
CAAFAG	children affected by armed forces and armed groups	NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
CBP	community-based policing	NID	National Investigation Department
CDO	Chief District Officer	NP	Nepal Police
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement	NSS	National Security Strategy
CPN-UML	Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)	PLA	Maoist People's Liberation Army
CVICT	Centre for Victims of Torture, Nepal	PSC	psychosocial counsellor
DDC	District Development Committee	RPP(N)	Rastriya Prajatantra Party Nepal
DDR	disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration	SC	Special Committee for supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants
DRO	District Rehabilitation Officer	SGBV	sexual and gender-based violence
DMO	District Monitoring Officer	SLC	School Leaving Certificate
FNJ	Federation of Nepalese Journalists	SME	small micro-enterprise
FGD	focus group discussion	SOPs	standard operating procedures
FGL	Front Guard Line	SSP	Special Security Plan
FNCCI	Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry	SSR	security sector reform
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for Technical Co-operation)	TC	Technical Committee for supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants
ILO	International Labour Organization	TITI	Training Institute for Technical Instruction
INGO	international non-governmental organisation	ToR	terms of reference
KII	key informant interview	TPO	Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
MEDEP	micro-enterprise development program	UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs
MJF	Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum	UCPN-M	Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist
MJF-D	Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum – Democratic	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
MoD	Ministry of Defence	UN DPKO	United Nations Department for Peace Keeping Operations
MoE	Ministry of Education	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
MoH	Ministry of Health	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs	UNIRP	United Nations Inter-agency Rehabilitation Programme
MoLTM	Ministry of Labour and Transport Management	UNMIN	United Nations Mission in Nepal
MoPR	Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction	UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
MoW&C	Ministry of Women and Children	VDC	Village Development Committee
NA	Nepal Army	VMLR	Verified Minors Late Recruits
		YCL	Young Communist League

Definition of key terms

Bridging training For the purpose of this report ‘bridging training’ refers to training that is given to someone to get them from one standard to a higher standard that is necessary for a given role, e.g. they need extra formal education to fulfil requirements or they need additional training to be a particular rank. This could require formal education, physical, military or tactical training.

Community security For the purpose of this report, ‘community security’ refers to security and safety at the community level which is comprised of and determined by different social, economic, political, environmental, gender, violence issues and in the case of rehabilitation is determined by and cuts across the different social, economic, political and healthcare/psycho-social aspects of rehabilitation.

Conflict-sensitive Being conflict-sensitive¹ is about:

1. Understanding local conflict dynamics
2. Analysing the potential effects of activity by governments, donors and other organisations on these conflict dynamics, and vice versa
3. Ensuring that any actions that are undertaken avoid negative impacts and maximise positive effects

Current combatants Refers to qualified/eligible Maoist Army combatants

Democratisation of security agencies For the purpose of this report, democratisation of security agencies refers to ensuring accountability to a democratically elected government and fiscal transparency (where possible) to government; inclusion of different ethnic groups, caste groups, men and women equally in the security agency and in higher ranking positions; transparency in appointment and promotion of staff, and conduct during military operations; the satisfactory treatment of staff in line with international human rights, labour and employment standards.

Discharged combatants The official term ‘discharged’ (otherwise referred to as ‘disqualified’) has been used in this report to refer to the 4,008 former Maoist Army combatants who failed to meet the criteria² established by the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) and were discharged from the cantonments by February 2010. The term discharged has been used to ensure compatibility with the current policy context and does not reflect Saferworld’s support for the use of the term which may be perceived to be derogatory and carry negative connotations. The alternative term Verified Minors Late Recruits (VMLRs) has recently begun to be used by the United National Inter-agency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP) in response to the stigma attached to the term ‘disqualified’, but use of this term has yet to be commonplace.

Economic rehabilitation For the purpose of this report, economic rehabilitation includes employment, vocational training, education and all aspects contributing to generation of income.

¹ For more information of conflict sensitivity and the tools required to analyse the conflict context, see Saferworld et al (2004), *Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A resource pack*

² Those who joined before they were 18 years old or joined after the first ceasefire was announced between the Nepal Army and Maoist Army on 26 May 2006.

Former combatant For the purpose of this report, former combatants refer to those people who have already returned to civilian life. This includes both the discharged (minors or late recruits, also known as 'disqualified', see definition above) and those who left the Maoist Army voluntarily (see definition below), unless otherwise specified.

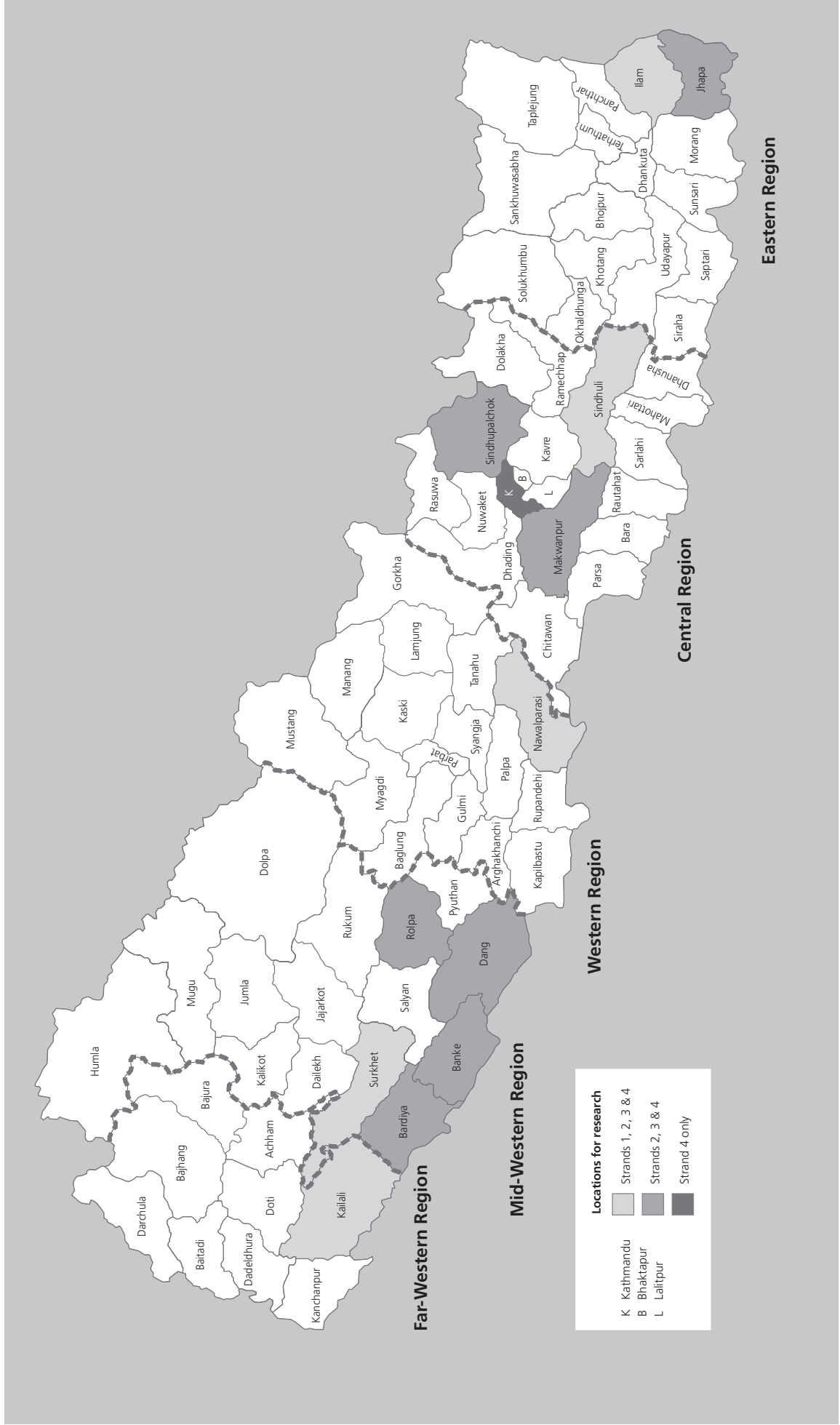
Former qualified combatant For the purpose of this report, the term former qualified combatants is used when referring hypothetically to a future scenario when current Maoist Army combatants may be returned to civilian life through rehabilitation or enter into security agencies through integration.

Gender sensitivity Gender sensitivity refers to the consideration of the differing and accumulative impact of all policies and programmes on women, men, girls and boys

Political reconciliation For the purpose of this report, political reconciliation can be seen as reconciliation between those operating at the political level and reconciliation between the polity and the population, and social reconciliation can be seen as the ongoing development of functioning relationships at the community level.

Social rehabilitation For the purpose of this report, social rehabilitation refers to the dialogue, trust-building, mediation and reconciliation components of rehabilitation packages and relates specifically to relations between different groups at the community level (specifically between the returning former qualified combatants and community members).

Voluntary left For the purpose of this report, the term 'voluntary left' is used in the report to refer to all those who left the cantonment before the UNMIN verification process, those who were categorised as disqualified in the UNMIN verification process but were not present at the discharge ceremony ('no shows') and those categorised as qualified combatants in the UNMIN verification process who have already left the cantonment on their own accord.



Executive summary

Introduction

The Nepal context

SINCE MAKING ITS TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN 1990, Nepal has experienced considerable political and social turmoil. The country was plunged into civil war after Maoist insurgents launched a revolution against the state between 1996 and 2006. The conflict was ended by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the warring parties in November 2006. However, the failure of major political parties – which now include the former Maoist rebels – to compromise has prevented significant progress on key aspects of the peace process. Indeed, the deadline of 28 May 2010 for drafting a new constitution has lapsed and been extended until 13 April 2011 as Nepal once again flirts with political crisis.

Consequently, the integration of the Maoist Army combatants³ into state security agencies and the demobilisation and rehabilitation of former Maoist Army combatants into civilian life, as enshrined in Article 4.4 of the CPA, have been desperately slow.⁴ By February 2010, all of the 4,008 who had failed to meet the criteria⁵ established by the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) had been discharged.⁶ Meanwhile, the 19,602 qualified combatants who had met the criteria remain confined to seven main and twenty-one satellite military cantonments spread over the five development regions of Nepal.

Successful rehabilitation and integration is dependent upon political consensus among and buy-in of all political parties, including the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), and state security agencies. Success can also be built upon responding to lessons learnt from the process of rehabilitating the discharged combatants. Successful rehabilitation and integration is complicated by the fact that these qualified combatants have been subjected to a further four years of Maoist political education while living in the cantonments and the growing number of new armed ethno-political and criminal groups who are eager to recruit militarily trained and politically aware Maoist cadres. Thus, there is a risk that integration and rehabilitation could intensify conflict dynamics and worsen the risk of violence if not done in a conflict-sensitive⁷ and gender-sensitive⁸ way that considers and responds to the different

3 According to internal UN documents and verbal information provided by staff from UNIRP on outcomes of UNMIN Verification Data (undertaken in 2007), the total number of current Maoist Army combatants is 19,602.

4 Based on international best practice, integration and rehabilitation should be undertaken as part of a comprehensive disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme that manages the demobilisation of security agency personnel which is linked up to and/or a component of a broader security sector reform (SSR) programme. However, in the Nepali context the terms DDR and SSR are not considered to be sensitive to all parties, and are thus not used in this report. The terms rehabilitation and integration are used to refer to return to civilian life and integration into state security agencies, respectively. Nonetheless, the authors of the report and many stakeholders consulted, concur that a comprehensive and holistic approach to rehabilitation and integration is necessary.

5 Those people who joined before they were 18 years old or joined after the first ceasefire was announced between the Nepal Army and Maoist Army on 26 May 2006.

6 2,394 of the 4,008 were present at the discharge ceremony and the remaining 1,614 (categorised as 'no-shows' by UN) are believed to have left the cantonment beforehand (UNDP 2010).

7 See explanation of the use of the term 'conflict-sensitive' in definitions section above.

8 See explanation of the use of the term 'gender sensitivity' in definitions section above.

needs and concerns of the qualified (and discharged) Maoist Army combatants (men and women equally), communities, state security agencies and political parties.⁹

Research objectives and methodology

This research project sought to identify the different needs, concerns and priorities of Maoist Army combatants (men and women) regarding their rehabilitation into civilian life and/or integration into the state security agencies. The main aim of this project is to support the development and implementation of gender-sensitive policy and programming on the rehabilitation and integration of qualified/eligible combatants, including the potential role of communities, local authorities and security agencies in support of this process. Where appropriate, suggestions have been made for who specifically should be responsible for implementing recommendations.

This executive summary presents the research findings on the needs, concerns and priorities of current Maoist Army combatants – with particular focus on variations between male and female combatants – regarding their integration into state security agencies and/or rehabilitation into civilian life. It then provides a series of recommendations based on these findings that seek to facilitate the development and implementation process in a gender- and conflict-sensitive manner. References are made in the executive summary to numbered sections in the full report so please look at that for more detailed information on the findings and recommendations. The full report follows the executive summary in this publication.

Primary research was qualitative and involved focus group discussions (FGDs) with target groups, one-to-one interviews with current combatants¹⁰, former combatants¹¹ ('discharged combatants'¹² and 'voluntary left combatants'¹³) and in-depth key informant interviews (KIIs) with a range of actors at the local and national level – including community members, personnel from security agencies, representatives of political parties, local authorities, representatives from the private sector and civil society and agencies/organisations involved in the delivery of the rehabilitation programme to the discharged combatants. The research was undertaken between 16 February and 20 August 2010 in cantonments and communities in Ilam, Kailali, Surkhet, Sindhuli and Nawalparasi districts as well as additional communities in Jhapa, Dang, Bardiya, Banke, Sinhapalchuk, Makwanpur, Morang, Rolpa and Kathmandu. See Annex 3 for more detailed information on methodology and terminology.

The report aims to support the development and implementation of successful and sustainable gender-sensitive integration and rehabilitation policy and programming in Nepal. It is primarily aimed at Nepali policy makers tasked with the development and implementation of a policy and programming framework for the rehabilitation and integration of Maoist Army combatants in Nepal and members of the international community who may have the responsibility of supporting this process once agreed at the political level. Secondary audiences include a broad range of other Nepali actors and the international community in Nepal and elsewhere.

⁹ For more information on the political context, SSR and ethnic political violence in Nepal, see Housden, O, 'Nepal's Elusive Peace', Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies Journal, Vol 155(2), April/May 2010, pp70–77. For more information on people's perceptions of security and justice in Nepal, see Saferworld (2010), *Treading Water? Security and Justice in Nepal in 2009*, <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/Treading%20water%20reduced.pdf>.

¹⁰ See explanation of the use of the term 'current combatant' in definitions section above.

¹¹ See explanation of the use of the term 'former combatant' in definitions section above.

¹² See explanation of the use of the term 'discharged combatants' in definitions section above.

¹³ See explanation of the use of the term 'voluntary left combatants' in definitions section above.

Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations¹⁴

The research produced findings on stakeholders' views about both the integration and rehabilitation processes, drawing also upon lessons learnt from the experiences of former combatants where relevant. These are the views and opinions articulated by those interviewed, and should not be taken as those of Saferworld itself.

Because the United Nations Inter-agency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP) for discharged combatants began implementation during the research phase of this project, this report also benefits from lessons learnt from the initial stages of that programme.¹⁵ See Annex 1 for full details of lessons learnt from the discharged process.

The recommendations in this report have therefore been developed from both the findings of the research and lessons learnt from the UN programme for the discharged combatants.¹⁶ There are also recommendations based on Saferworld's own analysis of how to ensure rehabilitation and integration processes are both gender- and conflict-sensitive. Where appropriate, suggestions have been made for specific stakeholders who should be responsible for implementing recommendations (e.g. government ministries/departments/committees/commissions, local authorities, private sector/institutions, civil society, political parties, international community and security agency personnel). The main report should be consulted for a more comprehensive understanding of the findings and recommendations.

1. Overarching findings, lessons learnt and recommendations: integration and rehabilitation

Develop a comprehensive policy for rehabilitation and integration

Civil society representatives, security agency personnel, Constituent Assembly (CA) members and all political parties highlighted that while laws and policies do exist that will influence the integration and rehabilitation processes, there is currently no existing legislation in place that clearly sets out the strategy for the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants and clarifies the technicalities around exactly how these processes should take place (Annex 1 and Section 3.1). This has contributed to the following recommendation:

- The Technical Committee for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants (TC), in consultation with key stakeholders including security agencies, the Maoist Army, communities, the private sector, civil society and the government, should develop a comprehensive policy that clearly sets out the strategy for the integration and rehabilitation processes and clarifies exactly how these processes should take place (Section 3.1). Specifically, the development of this policy should seek to maximise political buy-in to the process.

A preparatory 'transition and planning phase'

A key challenge to the effectiveness of the rehabilitation packages for the discharged combatants has been the absence of a 'pre-return phase', which would help prepare communities, discharged combatants and security agency personnel for challenges that may arise at the local level as an outcome of the rehabilitation process and address these in a proactive and sensitive manner (Annex 1).

¹⁴ Although it is beyond the primary objectives of this report to provide an in-depth analysis of the reasons why combatants joined the Maoist Army and their different experiences during and since the end of the conflict, some understanding of these motivations and experiences was essential in order to contextualise the research. A summary of the responses former combatants gave in this area can be found in Section 2.2.

¹⁵ Although many of these constructive lessons have been developed from analysis of why some discharged combatants have not taken up rehabilitation packages, this should not be seen as criticism of a process that is currently in only an early stage of implementation. It should also be noted that the UNIRP are taking ongoing steps to revise the rehabilitation packages to respond to these challenges, and that some of the challenges identified are attributable to constraints within the political context as opposed to characteristics in the design of the packages.

¹⁶ All recommendations in this report are in line with the UN's International Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), 2005. See <http://unddr.org/iddrs/framework.php>

- Although rehabilitation and integration may happen very quickly, this does not guarantee the effectiveness of the processes (including conflict and gender sensitivity of the processes, see below). Therefore, the initial stages of implementation should be regarded as only the beginning of a longer process which includes a preparatory transition and planning phase but also a realistic implementation timeframe that is overseen by neutral rehabilitation and integration commissions (see below).
- The integration and rehabilitation processes should commence with a minimum of six months for a preparatory ‘transition and planning phase’ which would include orientation, sensitisation, awareness-raising, communication, and consultation activities with all key stakeholders to be involved in the integration and rehabilitation processes – including current combatants, communities in target geographical areas (Section 3.3.1), security agency personnel, civil society with expertise in relevant areas, government, personnel working in the health and education sectors and the private sector. During this transition phase, combatants due to be integrated or rehabilitated should be housed in ‘transition centres’ (Section 3.1).

During the preparatory ‘transition and planning phase’ consultations with combatants should be held in order to conduct pre-return sensitisation and needs assessments (see below and Section 3.3.8.2), socio-economic profiling (see below and Sections 3.3.8.1 and 3.3.8.2), orientation of programme options (see below and Section 3.3.8.1) and technical aspects of integration (see below and Section 3.2.1).

Ensure rehabilitation and integration processes are ‘conflict-sensitive’ and ‘gender-sensitive’

Communities, current and former combatants, security agency personnel and civil society representatives criticised the rehabilitation process of the discharged combatants for not effectively involving community members, arguing this would have supported more effective social and political reconciliation,¹⁷ thus emphasising the importance of taking a community-driven approach in the rehabilitation of the current combatants (Annex 1 and Section 2.2.3.1). Some community members, particularly men in areas affected by the conflict, felt it would be unfair for Maoist Army combatants to be rewarded with money, vocational training, support in accessing employment opportunities, healthcare services and other services for, as they perceive, inflicting terror on communities during the conflict. To reduce the risk of tensions arising at the community level as a result, civil society representatives, non-UCPN-M political leaders and security agency personnel emphasised the importance of ensuring that rehabilitation packages also benefit the wider community, particularly unemployed youth who potentially pose a similar security risk unless their needs are also responded to (Section 2.2.3.1). Other security agency personnel, non-UCPN-M political leaders and civil society representatives argued that if combatants are not given a choice for their futures, or are integrated or rehabilitated against their primary wishes, there is a risk of tensions arising in security agencies and communities (Section 2.2.1).

All target groups emphasised the importance of responding to the different needs of male and female current combatants in the rehabilitation and integration processes. A gender component is currently being added to the programme for rehabilitation of discharged combatants. The absence of a socio-economic profiling exercise meant it was not possible to do this at an earlier stage of the process, therefore not ensuring that the different needs of men and women were addressed from the outset (Annex 1).

- To ensure that rehabilitation and integration are ‘conflict-sensitive’:
 - Rehabilitation should be ‘community focused’ (ensuring that communities benefit as well as discharged, voluntary left and former qualified combatants¹⁸), for example

¹⁷ See explanation of the use of the term ‘political reconciliation’ in definitions section above.

¹⁸ See explanation of the use of the term ‘former qualified combatant’ in definitions section above.

through creating employment opportunities that benefit both community members and returning former qualified combatants, such as infrastructure development, which also promote social and political reconciliation (Section 3.3.5). The approach taken in the education option in the rehabilitation packages for the discharged combatants – to strengthen services of the school the former combatant is attending and provide the same support to one child from the local community – is an example of a community-focused approach and should be built upon (Annex 1). Community ownership should also be promoted through the establishment of Community Rehabilitation Committees to play a lead in the implementation of the social, psychosocial and monitoring aspects of rehabilitation programmes at the local level (see social rehabilitation section below and Section 3.3.8.3).

- Delivery of rehabilitation at the local level should be informed by an analysis of the local context in target geographic areas (Section 3.3.1) to ensure that programming is designed in a way that it does not strengthen divides between groups and exacerbate existing tensions (Section 3.3.5).
- Rehabilitation and integration should be based on the outcome of consultations with all key stakeholders in the preparatory transition and planning phase – including combatants, communities in target geographical areas, security agency personnel, private sector, and government (Sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.8). Ideally, consultations with current combatants (men and women equally) should be linked to the undertaking of an individual socio-economic profiling exercise in the transition and planning phase, which acquires information on where the combatants are from, their age/ethnic group/caste, their life experiences, healthcare needs, educational qualifications, skills and capacities, and psychosocial needs, among others. This will inform the design of the rehabilitation programme and ensure it responds to their different needs, and the different needs of men and women (Section 3.3.8.1).
- Once the consultation phase is completed, adequate time should be allocated to digest findings and consult with key stakeholders in order to ensure that the needs and concerns of different stakeholders identified in this phase are taken on board in the planning for the rehabilitation programme and integration process (Sections 3.3.8.1 and 3.2.2.1).
- Rehabilitation and integration should respond to the informed individual preference of Maoist Army combatants to the options available, to the extent possible within the agreed timeframe for the process (Section 3.1).
- To ensure rehabilitation and integration are ‘gender-sensitive’, they should be based on a socio-economic profiling exercise undertaken in the transition and planning phase to determine the different needs of female and male Maoist Army combatants (Section 3.3.8.1). The importance of undertaking a socio-economic profiling exercise to inform the design of gender-sensitive rehabilitation programming is illustrated through the challenges faced in the rehabilitation of the discharged combatants which was designed in the absence of this information (Annex 1).

Neutral mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Political party leaders (all parties), civil society representatives and security agency personnel raised concern over the management of the integration and rehabilitation processes, arguing that responsibility should lie with non-political actors, particularly those with technical expertise. While there was a broad understanding that integration and rehabilitation processes constitute a political issue, it was felt that neutral bodies should be established for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of integration and rehabilitation once political agreement had been secured (Section 2.2.1).

- Establish a non-political and government-owned national-level **Integration Commission** or a similar body to manage implementation and monitoring of the integration process, which is co-chaired by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA).¹⁹ The Integration Commission should include an advisory panel with representatives from each security agency (also to include (former) Maoist Army representation), national security experts (and international security experts where they can offer relevant and required additional support but must work with a national counterpart to build capacity), MoD, MoHA, Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Women and Children (MoW&C) and the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR). The advisory panel members should be politically neutral and would provide technical advice on the different components of integration as well as advising on the implementation framework and oversight mechanisms (Section 3.1). Advisory panel members and Integration Commission staff should be inclusive of all marginalised groups (specifically women, youth and marginalised ethnic and caste groups).
- Establish a similar national-level politically neutral **Rehabilitation Commission** based within, and owned by, a government ministry agreed upon through political consensus. This should include an advisory panel with representation from MoPR, MoHA, Ministry of Labour and Transport Management (MoLTM), Ministry of Education (MoE), MoH, MoW&C and national experts on rehabilitation (including technical experts from the UN and any other international institutions agreed by all parties and international advisors where necessary working with a national counterpart), one representative from the (former) Maoist Army from each of the five development regions and current and former security agency personnel (drawn predominately from the Nepal Police (NP) and Armed Police Force (APF) who will have a more direct role in responding to any tensions that arise out of the rehabilitation process). It should also include representatives from the private sector and civil society organisations working on issues relevant to rehabilitation – including health care, income generation and vocational training, legal services, gender sensitivity, and education. Representatives should be politically neutral and should be able to contribute on technical aspects of rehabilitation. The advisory panel would also make recommendations on the composition of, and division of responsibilities within, the Commission, in addition to providing general oversight and suggestions of oversight mechanisms during implementation.

The work of the Commission should be co-ordinated by a number of different teams each tasked with managing the implementation of work related to the different thematic components of rehabilitation, including:

1. Information, Monitoring and Evaluation Department
2. Finance and Administration Department
3. Operations Department (which comprises of a number of sub-teams including a Health and Psychosocial Team, Economic Rehabilitation Team, Social Rehabilitation Team, Gender Team and District Liaison Team).

Delivery of the different components of rehabilitation programming at the district level should be co-ordinated by three members of staff based in each district in target geographical areas²⁰ – including:

1. District Rehabilitation Officers (DROs) managed by the District Liaison Team
2. District Monitoring Officers (DMOs) managed by the Information, Monitoring and Evaluation Department
3. Psychosocial Counsellors (PSCs) managed under the Health and Psychosocial Team.

¹⁹ In the absence of such a commission, the Special Committee for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants should play this role.

²⁰ See rehabilitation section in executive summary. **Target geographical areas** should include 1) all large urban areas in the Terai and hill regions (such as Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Biratnagar, Birganj, Birtamod and so forth), 2) areas where the cantonments are located and combatants have established relationships and friendships in the local community since entering into the cantonment and wish to remain in this area (particularly in the Central, Mid-Western and Far-Western Terai) and areas where the majority of the Maoists originated from and may return to at some point in the future (i.e. Mid-Western and Far-Western hills including Rolpa, Kalikot, Mugu, Rukum and Bajura), especially if there are employment opportunities.

All district representatives should be responsible for outreach at the Village Development Committee (VDC) and ward level, and should collaborate with Community Rehabilitation Committees based at the VDC level (Section 3.3.8.3) in the delivery of all activities. These district-level representatives should connect with and be managed by the national-level commissions and should function in the same manner as outlined above by implementing policy and standard operating procedures (SOPs) developed at the national-level. (See Section 3.1 and Annex 4 for a proposed organogram for the Rehabilitation Commission). Advisory panel members and Rehabilitation Commission staff should be inclusive of all marginalised groups (specifically women, youth and marginalised ethnic and caste groups).

- The Special Committee for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants (SC) should make a recommendation for the establishment of these commissions. The tenure for these commissions should be decided by the SC and should be for a substantial and realistic length of time given the extensive time required to ensure adequate co-ordination between stakeholders and implement and monitor both the transition and implementation phase activities effectively. Based on lessons learnt from other contexts, tenures of at least three years should be considered, with room for extension up to a total of five years if required. However, the size and scope of the commission would reduce incrementally over time in accordance with need, for example training activities may reduce and be replaced by increased monitoring (Section 3.1).

Effective public communication

Former and current combatants, communities, government officials, political leaders and civil society representatives emphasised the importance of ensuring effective communication to all stakeholders on the details surrounding the rehabilitation process. These perceptions were based specifically on lessons learnt from the rehabilitation programme for the discharged combatants, where public communication on the rehabilitation packages was perceived to be inadequate. Both communities and former and current combatants had a lack of (and sometimes incorrect) information about the options available in the rehabilitation packages, which has led to a significant number of those interviewed choosing not to access the packages (Annex 1).

Some have also criticised the packages for, as they perceive it, profiting private institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)²¹ and the UN without benefiting the discharged – a perception which has created anger and which emphasises the importance of clear public communication on how funds are allocated, division of responsibilities between different stakeholders for implementation and the reasons why certain service providers were selected (Section 2.2.3.1 and Annex 1).

- Beginning in the transition and planning phase but continuing through the whole rehabilitation process, a comprehensive package for communicating details on the rehabilitation packages to the combatants themselves and the broader public should be developed and administered. This should include detailed information on package options, information on the division of responsibilities and allocation of budget for implementation (on request), and the management of expectations, dispelling of rumours, promotion of reconciliation, and reduction of any stigma attached to the processes (Sections 3.1, 3.3.3, 3.3.4 and 3.3.8.1).

Financing and role of government

Many current combatants felt that the government should play a greater role in the financing and delivery of rehabilitation and integration programming as opposed to the private sector, international community and civil society, as a way of repaying them for the sacrifices (as they perceived it) they made during the conflict. Some

²¹ Formally referred to in the packages as 'principal service providers' and 'service providers'

political leaders, civil society representatives, security agency personnel and political leaders emphasised that this too would strengthen government ownership over the process, which in turn would strengthen the overall effectiveness of the rehabilitation and integration processes. A lack of government ownership over the rehabilitation process for discharged combatants was identified as a key underlying challenge (Annex 1). Despite this, all target groups recognised that the international community would need to provide funds to support the processes where the government is unable to do so. These funds would need to be adequate and reasonable, in line with international best practices.

- Current demands faced by the government have stretched its capacity making it difficult for the government to implement and finance all aspects of the rehabilitation packages. It is therefore unavoidable that the private sector and civil society will play a key role in the delivery of the rehabilitation packages, in partnership with the government whose capacity should be strengthened (Section 3.3.3).
- Funding for the rehabilitation and integration processes to take place should be provided by the government (where possible) and the international community. At the very least, the government should allocate non-financial resources (e.g. equipment and staff as well as support from and participation of existing national and local government bodies) and ensure political buy-in and national ownership (Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3).
- Integration and rehabilitation should be affordable. A detailed and realistic cost analysis of integration and rehabilitation plans should be undertaken by the Integration and Rehabilitation Commissions (or by the TC and SC in their absence). Fundraising should be undertaken by the international community and domestic authorities and co-ordinated by the Integration and Rehabilitation Commissions (or the SC in the absence of an Integration Commission). Availability of funding and budgetary constraints may impact on planned activities, and contingency plans should be developed in advance (Section 3.1).
- To ensure a conflict-sensitive approach is maintained and tensions are not exacerbated within the communities as a result of the rehabilitation process, stipends provided to former qualified combatants participating in rehabilitation packages should be adequate for covering living costs but appropriate to the local context in Nepal (i.e. not exceeding local average wage) and be in line with international best practice.²²

2. Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations specific to the integration process

This section looks at integration issues, both generally and with specific regards to structure, training, and gender sensitivity. Recommendations that are intended for the preparatory transition and planning phase are indicated below.

General integration issues

When interviewed in a group, most current combatants stated a preference to integrate into security agencies as opposed to returning to civilian life. When interviewed one-to-one, approximately 40 percent were adamant that they considered integration to be the only option, with 60 percent willing (and some of these explicitly preferring) to return to civilian life (Section 2.2.2.1).

The research highlighted the risk of violence if integration does not take place. At the same time as recognising that integration may not benefit all of them and a proportion expressing a willingness or preference to return to civilian life, around 70 percent of current combatants interviewed in a group (and some discharged combatants) said

²² See Module 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration in UN Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) for guidance: <http://unddr.org/iddrs/04/30.php>

that if the constitution was not promulgated and integration does not take place, or does not meet their aspirations, then they would be forced to rebel against the government (Section 2.2.2.1). This is because they regard integration to be symbolic of their achieving the objectives that they joined the Maoist People's Liberation Army (PLA) to attain, and a clear illustration of other parties' respect for the CPA. Thus, even if they are not personally selected for integration, they expressed a determination to defend its cause.

- Integration should be undertaken as a matter of urgency as a priority for moving the peace process forward (Section 3.2.2.2).²³
- During the transition and planning phase, the Integration Commission should consult current combatants and state security agency personnel to ensure that agreements on the technical aspects of integration reflect individual needs (Section 3.2.1).

While recognising integration to be a necessary component of the peace process and crucial to internal security, a number of security agency personnel, non-UCPN-M political leaders and community members feared adverse impacts on community security because the integrated former qualified combatants would either not maintain political neutrality or would be unable to integrate with former adversaries. A general fear that integration would politicise and thus destabilise the security sector was noted by a number of security agency personnel and most non-UCPN-M political leaders as well as many community members. However, many current combatants were optimistic about the willingness of both themselves and security agency personnel to integrate. In support of this, some national-level security agency personnel and just over 20 percent of community members argued that the likelihood of current combatants promoting their political beliefs was minimal given that they would have to conform to strict rules and regulations and would be motivated by retaining their employment over and above political affiliations (Section 2.2.2.1).

- During the transition and planning phase, separate 'orientation and sensitisation' training should be provided for former qualified combatants and state security agency personnel that prepares them for the integration process by providing an objective assessment of the current situation, emphasising the rights and responsibilities of all citizens of Nepal and giving information on the peace process and human rights (Section 3.2.1).
- Security agencies should develop internal policies and establish mechanisms to promote reconciliation between state security and integrated former qualified combatants, organise trust-building recreational activities, and mediate tensions that arise on a case-by-case basis, with support and guidance from the Integration Commission (Section 3.2.2.1).
- Relations between community members and security agency personnel (including integrated former qualified combatants) should be strengthened through the establishment of 'community security dialogue mechanisms' in target geographical areas which bring together community members (including representation from discharged, voluntarily left and former qualified combatants), local authorities and security agencies (including representation from integrated former qualified combatants) to identify and prioritise key security concerns faced at the local level and develop joint solutions for addressing these concerns (Section 3.2.2.1). Mediation training should also be provided to district-based security agency personnel for the same purpose (specifically NP and APF personnel who play a direct role in provision of security at the local level) who would then form a 'mediation task force' in security agencies and be responsible for mediating disputes between existing security agency personnel and integrated former qualified combatants (Section 3.2.2.1).

²³ See also under 'structure' below.

Overall, there was a lack of understanding regarding the integration process within communities (especially women) and among current and former combatants and political leaders and security agency personnel at the district level. Much of the discussion revolved around whether or not integration should take place and the numbers of combatants that should be integrated rather than technical aspects of the process (Section 2.2.2.1).

- Beginning in the transition and planning phase but continuing through the entirety of the integration processes, public awareness should be raised on the technicalities of integration at the national and local levels – involving a range of stakeholders including civil society organisations, communities, local authorities and government ministries, security agency personnel and the private sector – in order to avoid tensions arising from misunderstandings (Section 3.2.1).

The recruitment of injured and disabled former qualified combatants to non-combatant roles in the security agencies was a key issue raised and supported by current combatants (Section 3.2.2.1).

- The recruitment of injured/disabled former qualified combatants for non-combatant roles in the security sector such as administrative, intelligence, communication and IT functions, where applicable should be prioritised. To avoid the risk of tensions arising, these positions should be equally prioritised for injured/disabled ex-security agency personnel (Section 3.2.2.1).

Structure

Approximately 75 percent of current combatants as well as UCPN-M leaders stated that a National Security Strategy (NSS) should be agreed, which establishes a Military Act providing for the restructuring and formation of a national army and the establishment of new security agencies, such as a Border Security Force and an Industrial Security Force, into which current combatants should also be integrated. Security agency personnel and most non-UCPN-M political party representatives argued that the Nepal Army (NA) does not need to be restructured but, rather reformed as part of a broader security sector reform process. Nearly 70 percent of the security agency personnel were, however, also in favour of establishing new security agencies into which current combatants would be integrated, for varying reasons (Section 2.2.2.2).

- A thorough analysis of national security and defence needs should be completed which is incorporated as part of a NSS outlining ways to address identified gaps and challenges, strengthen existing and establish new Nepali security apparatus to reflect this. This, in turn, would lead to the development of a more responsive, effective and efficient security sector and serve as a catalyst for movement beyond the current political impasse and provide the foundations for political and social reconciliation in Nepal (Section 3.2).
- Nevertheless, integration is a priority for moving the peace process forward and should therefore be undertaken as a matter of priority, even if a NSS has not yet been undertaken, as this will only delay the process further (Section 3.2).

Research also highlighted that rank allocation is a contentious issue, with stark differences of opinion held by current combatants (most of whom would not accept lower ranks than they currently hold) and community members, security agency personnel and non-UCPN-M political parties, who argued that current combatants do not necessarily have the prerequisite training and education for comparable ranks in the NA or other security agencies and entry should be based on current recruitment criteria agreed by security agencies. However, some security agency personnel interviewed, particularly higher-ranking officers in the NP and APF, recognised the need to be flexible (particularly on age and educational criteria) and create honorary positions for certain amounts of time, providing the professionalism of the security agencies was not compromised (Section 2.2.2.2).

- Political parties must agree on recruitment criteria and rank allocation/conversion for current combatants who may be integrated. However, once agreed politically, the Integration Commission should oversee implementation of the criteria and rank allocation/conversion in collaboration with security agencies and the Maoist Army (Section 3.2.2.2).
- Men and women must be treated equally in the process of allocating positions and rank, with women having meaningful roles including high ranks, management positions and combat roles (Section 3.2.2.2).
- Democratic oversight of the security sector should be promoted to ensure transparency and accountability, including as a means of guarding against political interference. This should involve the strengthening of existing mechanisms for democratic oversight, including the National Security Council and Secretariat for a National Defence Council among other bodies (Section 3.2.2.2).

Similarly, most current combatants were also opposed to mixed structures (with former qualified combatants and current security agency personnel serving alongside each other) out of a concern that their identity would be lost and they will be dominated by the security agencies, and also partly for this reason, opposed to individual rather than group entry into security agencies. However, most representatives of security agencies and around 60 percent of community members (particularly men) strongly felt that Maoist Army combatants should be mixed with currently serving personnel, with some arguing that otherwise there would be little difference between the cantonment and the separate military structures within the security agencies (Section 2.2.2.2).

- To engender reconciliation and organisational cohesion, Maoist Army combatants selected for integration and state security agencies should be mixed within security structures such as regiments, units, platoons and brigades across all security agencies with effort made to ensure the concerns of integrating Maoist Army combatants are considered (Section 3.2.2.2).

Training

While sensitivities exist on both sides concerning training for those selected for integration, specifically with respect to ensuring neutral experts provide the training, most current combatants recognise the need to undergo training to enter state security agencies. The importance of ‘bridging’ training²⁴ was raised by security agency personnel in connection to aligning the norms of Maoist Army combatants with those of the security agencies, to ensure that the professionalism of the security agencies is not compromised throughout the integration process (Section 2.2.2.3).

- After segregated ‘orientation and sensitisation trainings’ have taken place in the transition and planning phase, joint tactical and advanced training programmes should be delivered for Maoist Army combatants and existing security agency personnel on areas of weakness identified in both the Maoist Army and security agencies to synchronise capacity. Joint training programmes would contribute to reconciliation and confidence-building within security agencies and would, consequently, potentially build a more cohesive, responsive and effective service (Section 3.2.2.3).
- Where ‘orientation and sensitisation training’ and advanced training leave gaps in the capabilities and skills of former qualified combatants integrated into the security agencies, bridging training including, for instance, fitness training, weapons handling and formal education should be given. The security agencies in consultation with the Integration Commission should determine the nature of this training and resources required. Neutral security experts should deliver the training to ensure it is conflict-sensitive and promotes reconciliation (Section 3.2.2.3).

²⁴ See explanation of the use of the term ‘bridging training’ in definitions section above.

Civil society representatives together with representatives of the UCPN-M and other political leaders raised the need for ‘democratisation training’ for, and the strengthening of democratic structures in, state security agencies.²⁵ Among other things, this would promote inclusion of under-represented groups throughout the security agencies, transparency in appointments and promotions, and equal treatment of personnel. Most security agency personnel openly agreed they needed training on gender and human rights in order to meet international standards although some contested that they needed ‘democratisation’ training, as they have already taken steps to strengthen democratic standards in response to international pressures to meet requirements for UN peace-keeping missions (Section 2.2.2.3). It was consequently argued that certain groups should be prioritised for integration, although political dilemmas surrounding this issue that could impede this process were also identified (Section 2.2.2.3).

- The Integration Commission should ensure that women and previously excluded ethnic and caste groups are included in the integration process in order to strengthen the inclusivity, representation and tolerance of such groups throughout the state security sector (perhaps through a quota system). Most Maoist PLA combatants came from poor backgrounds, regional communities and approximately one-fifth²⁶ were women (Section 3.2.2.1).
- Democratisation training should be conducted in which participants develop an understanding of the modern military security sector and international standards regarding democratisation. Specifically this should elaborate on the requirement of military and security structures being brought under the control of democratically elected representatives in addition to human rights, gender and conflict sensitivity and inclusivity. All members of security agencies at all levels should receive this training after the initial merging process (Section 3.2.2.1).

Gender sensitivity

Many current combatants alluded to the poor record of security agencies on gender equality and gender sensitivity in comparison to that of the Maoist Army.²⁷ Women’s security, in particular, remains a significant concern among many current combatants (particularly women) regarding integration into security agencies. All current combatants (men and women) and a number of former combatants, political representatives, civil society representatives and community members raised gender-related considerations. In addition, current combatants (men and women) said that integration proposals should include provisions to ensure women are treated equally to men in terms of assignment of rank (including high ranks), promotion and training in security agencies. In support, civil society representatives suggested that this would support the social development of society. Current combatants also suggested that gender-sensitive integration policies should draw upon existing best practices and lessons learnt in other countries (Section 2.2.2.4).

- The Integration Commission should provide technical support to all security agencies in the development and implementation of a ‘gender policy’ which: sets guidelines for recruitment, training, rank allocation and promotion; sets procedures for treatment and leave related to reproductive health issues; ensures adequate maternity and paternity cover and continuation of duty after pregnancy; establishes a disciplinary code (and enforcement mechanism) proscribing discrimination, intimidation and violence, particularly against women; and establishes new and/or strengthens the capacity and scope of existing similar ‘gender units’ in headquarters, with ‘focal points’ throughout the agency (Section 3.2.2.4).

²⁵ See explanation of the use of the term ‘democratisation of security agencies’ in definitions section above.

²⁶ According to internal UN documents and verbal information provided by staff from the UNIRP on outcomes of UNMIN Verification Data (undertaken in 2007).

²⁷ However, it should be noted that some respondents also highlighted such issues with regard to the Maoist Army.

- Security agencies should draw lessons from international best practice on the development of a gender-sensitive approach to integration, such as in Northern Ireland and South Africa, with support and guidance from the Integration Commission (Section 3.2.2.4).

A number of current combatants (men and women), security agency personnel and non-UCPN-M political leaders also identified the need for state security agency personnel of all ranks to receive training on gender sensitivity and human rights as part of the integration process. Although some civil society representatives, security agencies and political leaders interviewed at the national level were aware of UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889,²⁸ most, if not all, of the target groups interviewed at the local level were unaware of these resolutions and their relevance to integration and rehabilitation (Section 2.2.2.4).

Current combatants (men and women), political leaders and security agency personnel identified the need for the government to raise public awareness on gender sensitivity and equality to help in dispelling patriarchal cultural beliefs, generate acceptance within society concerning the role of women in security agencies and promote gender equality in state security agencies and national security-related policies and programmes (Section 2.2.2.4).

- The Integration Commission should co-ordinate the delivery of gender sensitivity training for security agencies that includes awareness of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and its impact on individuals, families and the community; a consideration of the role women can play in military and security agencies (particularly in responding to the security needs of other women, but not limited to addressing SGBV cases); the role of modern military and security agencies in peace-building and community-based development/security; and accountability of the Nepal government to UNSCRs 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889. These trainings should seek to complement (and not duplicate) existing trainings on gender sensitivity currently being supported by UN agencies in the NP, APF and NA, through for example providing trainings on institution-wide gender sensitivity (at the policy, programmatic and individual personnel levels) and the broader role women play in security provision outside of responding to SGBV cases, rolling out trainings to personnel based at the district-level and in all ranks and focusing on staff departments not being targeted through current activities, including personnel other than peacekeepers and training staff in the case of the NA (Section 3.2.2.4).
- Basic training for all new recruits into Nepali security agencies should encompass modules in gender and conflict sensitivity and human rights in line with the training implemented throughout the integration process. This will ensure the continued democratisation of security agencies and increase their ability to operate as modern security providers (Section 3.2.2.4).
- There should be a public awareness campaign on the role of women in security agencies, beginning in the transition and planning phase but continuing through the whole integration process. This could be done through targeted radio programmes, articles in newspapers, information leaflets, street drama, public seminars and so forth, to strengthen public demand for gender equality/sensitivity in security agencies and in turn, put pressure on security agencies to take action (Section 3.2.1).

Additionally, concern was expressed about provision for women during and after the integration process. Specifically, this would include reproductive health services, support in caring for dependants, education for dependants of personnel based in barracks, and protection against SGBV. The critical importance of improving basic domestic facilities in security agencies was also emphasised. Others, particularly in

²⁸ UNSCR 1325 calls for the integration of a gender perspective in all aspects of conflict prevention, resolution, peace-building and post-conflict resolution; UNSCR 1820 calls for UN-led SSR and DDR activities to explicitly include consultations with women's organisations; UNSCR 1888 addresses the need to end sexual violence against women in conflict-affected countries; and, UNSCR 1889 calls for measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution, post-conflict planning and peace-building, including through gender mainstreaming.

the NA, recognised the need to increase numbers of, and facilities for, women but argued the biggest obstacle was a lack of government support (Section 2.2.2.4).

- Each security agency should establish/strengthen mechanisms for responding to SGBV cases to tackle reported cases of sexual, physical and psychological harassment and to facilitate victims' access to medical services, trauma counselling, and legal services (Section 3.2.2.4). Such mechanisms have been established in the NP and more recently in the NA (women's cells) and priority should be placed on strengthening the capacity of these mechanisms.
- Security agencies should provide support to dependants, including the provision of family unit homes for barracked personnel with families, the provision of education services for children when barracks are distant from available schools, and the provision of day-care services during working hours for children too young to go to school (Section 3.2.2.4).
- The Government should allocate funds for ensuring separate sleeping quarters, washing and toilet facilities for men and women, as well as adequate lighting of barracks (Section 3.2.2.4).

3. Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations specific to the rehabilitation process

The research suggests that while many current combatants were keen to integrate into security agencies, 60 percent were willing to return to civilian life if a favourable rehabilitation package is offered, based on the perception that in reality not all Maoist Army combatants will be able to integrate. Out of this 60 percent, two-fifths actually preferred to return to civilian life as their first choice over integration, particularly women with children and men seeking political careers. Equally, those who were seriously injured or disabled felt they would not fulfil the criteria for integration and thus decided to mentally prepare to return to civilian life (Section 2.2.3.1).

- If 60 percent of the current combatants are willing to rehabilitate, it is essential that a strong rehabilitation package is developed to accommodate a group of this size. If a favourable rehabilitation package is not offered, a group of this size of disgruntled former qualified combatants returning to society could seriously undermine security and heighten tensions at the local level (Section 2.2.3.3). To avoid this, it is imperative that a socio-economic profiling exercise is undertaken in the transition and planning phase to determine and respond to the different needs of current combatants, including those of men and women equally (Section 3.3.8.1).
- Rehabilitation needs to be holistic in approach, in both its transition and implementation phases. This means looking at economic (employment, training and education), social, psychosocial and healthcare issues (Section 3.3.2).

Crucially, the research indicates that approximately 85 percent of current combatants (men and women) who are open to returning to civilian life prefer not to return to their community of origin due to limited employment and education opportunities, fears about feeling humiliated or rejected (see social rehabilitation section below) and, for those who lost their family during the conflict, because they do not see any reason to return. Instead, some said they felt more comfortable remaining in the districts where the cantonments are based as they have established relationships and friendships in these communities since they entered the cantonments. Others said they would prefer to reside in any area where there are greater employment options, particularly urban centres (Sections 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.3).

- Implementation of rehabilitation programming in target geographic areas should be focused on where most of the current combatants are most likely to return. These include 1) all large urban areas in the Terai and Hill regions, 2) areas where the cantonments are located and combatants have established relationships and friendships in

the local community since entering into the cantonment and wish to remain in these areas, and 3) areas where the majority of the Maoist Army combatants originated from and may return to at some point in the future.

- Beginning in the transition and planning phase but continuing through the whole rehabilitation process, pre-return orientation and sensitisation activities should be undertaken for communities in target geographic areas and for returning former qualified combatants as a way of sensitising and preparing both parties for rehabilitation, reducing fear, maximising the impact of rehabilitation packages and strengthening prospects for social reconciliation (Sections 3.3.8.3 and 3.3.9.2).

A key challenge undermining the rehabilitation programming for the discharged combatants to date has been the lack of decentralisation in service delivery. The delivery of rehabilitation services from five main regional centres has restricted participation, where for example, certain training programmes are often offered only in particular regions, meaning that people have to travel long distances to participate. The discharged felt that this has resulted in dropout cases (Annex 1 and Section 3.3.7).

- To strengthen participation in the rehabilitation process, all aspects of rehabilitation programming should be delivered at the local level, although the level of implementation (i.e. whether implemented at the community, VDC or district level) will vary depending on the specific components of the rehabilitation package. In particular, recognising the high costs involved in decentralisation and the relatively low case load, vocational and micro-enterprise trainings should be provided at the district-level in a number of different target geographical locations across the country and closer to prospective participants. In terms of education and healthcare, options for participating in these services at the local level (ideally VDC level) in collaboration with local government education and healthcare services should be provided. In terms of trauma counselling, social reconciliation and trust-building activities, which require long-term participation for effective outcomes, it is imperative that these services are available at the local level (at the very least at the VDC level but ideally ward level) so that returning former qualified combatants can access these services without disrupting daily life. These services should be delivered in co-ordination with the Community Rehabilitation Committees (for information on these Committees, see Section 3.3.9.2) (Section 3.3.7).

Research has identified that a significant number of former female combatants have run away from the Maoist Army of their own accord²⁹ as a result of having been rejected because of their inter-caste marriage or stigma associated with having been a member of the Maoist Army or, alternatively, experiencing SGBV or harassment. There are reports³⁰ that these women, some with children, have run away to India or urban areas within Nepal to find work, possibly in the sex industry (Section 2.2.3.3). This group of women (and their children) are highly vulnerable as they do not have support networks and will not qualify for rehabilitation packages if they do not register.

- Efforts should be made to identify and make contact with these women in a sensitive manner. Support should be provided to them in finding employment and accommodation that does not put them at risk, and providing trauma counselling and education for them and their children. Other stakeholders focusing on addressing vulnerability of women and SGBV more generally in Nepal should also seek to target this group of women, especially as they may refuse rehabilitation support as a result of the stigma attached from being labelled as a 'Maoist Army combatant' and the fear of challenges they will face if they return (Section 3.3.6).

Research and consultations with discharged combatants, service providers, civil society representatives, leaders from all political parties and security agency personnel

²⁹ Before and since the UNMIN verification process (in 2007), including those categorised during the verification process as disqualified, i.e. before they were formally discharged in February 2010, and those categorised as qualified combatants.

³⁰ This is based on the views of these target groups and was not validated during the research by local authorities, security agencies or any allegedly involved family or individuals.

have emphasised the importance of securing buy-in from the UCPN-M to ensure the effectiveness and success of the rehabilitation packages. The research highlighted examples of how a lack of buy-in from the UCPN-M can prevent participation in the rehabilitation packages and therefore the effectiveness of the broader rehabilitation process. For example, some discharged combatants and district UCPN-M leaders said that the UCPN-M was restricting them from participating in the packages in the Far-Western Terai (Annex 1 and Section 3.3.8.1).

- Those tasked with responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the rehabilitation packages should take steps to consult with the UCPN-M at national and district levels during the design phase to ensure buy-in and commitment to the process. In addition, there should be regular consultations with all political parties at both the national and district levels during implementation to ensure effective communication and collaboration and to reinforce buy-in and commitment (Section 3.3.8.1).

Economic rehabilitation³¹

While all current combatants accepted that finding employment was desperately hard for ordinary Nepalis, they argued that their sacrifice warranted exceptional treatment from the government, the private sector and NGOs to help them rebuild their lives. All those open to returning to civilian life wanted guarantees of long-term employment to be incorporated into the rehabilitation packages, particularly after having completed the training or education components of a rehabilitation package. Most current and former combatants identified the lack of marriage, birth and citizen certificates and knowledge on how to access these, as a key obstacle to accessing land and employment.

- The government (specifically the MoLTM) – and local authorities with support from the private sector, international agencies (in particular the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other UN agencies) and NGOs where relevant should undertake national- and local-level labour market needs assessments (focused in target geographical areas) in the transition and planning period to identify opportunities and gaps in the national and local labour markets and the specific sectors/professions that vocational training should be focused on in order to ensure higher likelihood of accessing employment as an outcome of the trainings (Section 3.3.8.2).
- The government should establish mechanisms based within local governance structures for supporting all returning former qualified combatants (as well as the discharged and voluntarily left combatants and broader society), to apply for birth, citizen and marriage certificates (Section 3.3.9.1).

Most current combatants (men and women) were adamant that they did not want to be trained in agro-based production or other lower-status professions and would not accept training similar to that offered to the discharged combatants. Many of the criticisms levied at the training provided to the discharged combatants were, however, based upon misinformation (Annex 1). Many argued that they became Maoist Army combatants to escape poverty and a life of economic exclusion and agriculture-based livelihood and were not willing to return to it now. Instead, most said they wanted to be trained in professions such as teaching or healthcare, which were more highly respected within society, infrastructural development and other skilled professions (men specifically expressed an interest in engineering, small shop operators, information technology and so on). Women expressed a specific interest in social work, community health work and community mobilisation. It appears that infrastructural development and the establishment of business and/or co-operatives are viable and sustainable options, on the basis of feedback from business leaders in Nepal. Nonetheless, recognising the limited availability of jobs in Nepal, approximately 30 percent of male current combatants expressed an interest in using skilled labour training to access employment overseas.

31 See explanation of the use of the term 'economic rehabilitation' in definitions section above.

Discharged combatants (men and women) strongly felt that the stipend of 3,000 NRs per month and three meals a day (in-kind) for the discharged combatants who are joining vocational and micro-enterprise training is inadequate for covering living costs in urban areas (including accommodation costs) and transport to regional centres for trainings. They also felt that receiving subsistence in kind is patronising (Annex 1). The UN is however unable to increase the stipend as it has been capped at the political level, thus emphasising the importance of buy-in from the government and all political parties.

- The existing capacity for vocational training should be assessed in target geographical areas during the transition and planning phase, and capacities of training service providers should be built where necessary in the implementation phase (Sections 3.3.8.2 and 3.3.9.1). This information is particularly important regarding the rehabilitation of the current combatants if recommendations are taken on board for providing trainings in professions which respond to their interests and the outcomes of the local/national labour market needs assessment, and for decentralising the delivering of trainings to the local level, as a greater number of vocational training service providers will be need to be identified and involved in the process.
- Vocational trainings should be provided in professions acceptable to both male and female current combatants and in professions/sectors positively identified during the consultations and socio-economic profiling exercises undertaken in the transition and planning phase. These trainings should endeavour to provide guarantees for employment through discussions with relevant employment sectors, government bodies and private sector. A monthly stipend should be provided to participants undertaking vocational training programmes to help them to sustain themselves (and their families) during this period when they are not in employment. Drawing upon the challenges faced in the rehabilitation of discharged combatants, an increase in monthly allowance above the current rate of 3,000 NRs per month should be provided (this stipend or any less should come with allowances for subsistence but also accommodation and so on). This is fundamental for promoting trust between the service providers and combatants, and the self respect of combatants. Further and adequate allowances for travelling long distances to regional training centres should be offered (Section 3.3.9.1).
- As there is a risk that some combatants may go overseas to find work on their own accord once they leave the cantonment (i.e. not through the formal rehabilitation process) and before or after they have received vocational training, guidance on accessing work overseas should be provided in the transition phase to ensure that they are not exploited through the process and to minimise the risks they may face (Section 3.3.8.2).

Although all political parties suggested that education should be included in rehabilitation packages, approximately 80 percent of current combatants (men and women) stated that they would prefer to receive training and guarantees of long-term employment rather than return to formal education (if it was a choice between one or the other). Approximately 30 percent of current combatants said they would be open to returning to education in parallel to pursuing vocational training or employment opportunities if separate schooling options for former qualified combatants were established. In addition, although most current combatants stated they would prefer long-term employment opportunities, around 25 percent (particularly men) said that would prefer to be given a lump sum to support them in establishing their own business, finding work in skilled labour overseas or to start a political career.

- Education classes and the opportunity to obtain key qualifications, e.g. School Leaving Certificate (SLC), should be provided to strengthen access to employment and to build the self-esteem of illiterate former qualified combatants. To counter the apprehension felt by most that returning to formal education will be humiliating, flexible teaching modalities should be provided for returning former qualified combatants, for example, evening classes or former qualified combatant-only classes, in co-ordination with the

MoE. Drawing lessons from the provision of formal education in the rehabilitation packages for discharged combatants, education classes could also be offered from a government school of choice if preferred in collaboration with local education providers in target geographic areas (Section 3.3.9.1 and Annex 1). With regards to the alternative of providing informal education classes as opposed to formal (i.e. separate classes for former qualified combatants in an informal setting and using an informal education curriculum), challenges faced in the provision of informal education classes in the rehabilitation programme for the discharged combatants emphasise the risk involved in this approach and that the process may become politicised (Annex 1). Informal education classes should therefore only be provided if risks of politicisation are minimised and there is buy-in and commitment from the UCPN-M.

- A recommendation to provide a cash lump sum has not been included in this report. Evidence from other contexts has shown that lump sum payments create obstacles to successful reintegration because they are rarely invested by former combatants to provide long-term benefits, tend not to benefit dependants equitably, can lead to attempts to defraud the rehabilitation process and often create divisions and bitterness among receiving communities (Section 3.3.9.1).

Regarding private sector employment, most current combatants were open to the prospect but had doubts that private companies would accept and trust them (Section 2.2.3.2). Although some business leaders were against the prospect of employing former qualified combatants out of a concern that they may corrupt the workforce, most felt open to discussion on the employment of former qualified combatants providing that a number of conditions are met. Business leaders suggested the need for the following conditions to be met: former qualified combatants do not bring political ideologies into the workplace; trade unions and political parties make a legal commitment not to interfere in issues about the employment of former qualified combatants in the private sector once the rehabilitation process has commenced; orientation training is given to former qualified combatants to prepare them mentally for working in the private sector; and incentives are developed to encourage businesses to recruit former qualified combatants. Some business leaders also expressed that they would feel more comfortable hiring returning former qualified combatants in areas they originally came from in order to minimise risks of tensions arising within communities regarding competition over jobs (Section 2.2.3.2).

Approximately 30 percent of current combatants (both men and women) expressed an interest in self-employment and establishing their own businesses. Positive experiences of former combatants (who left voluntarily) in successfully setting up their own co-operatives and small businesses suggest that this could be an important economic (and social) rehabilitation option. Business leaders (particularly at the national level) also supported the idea of establishing business co-operatives, and suggested that instead of making a formal commitment to employ former qualified combatants, they would prefer to contract businesses established by the former qualified combatants independently, as this carries less risk.

- The private sector should be encouraged to create long-term job opportunities for returning former qualified combatants in the transition phase in order to address concerns within it regarding such employment, especially that they may bring their political beliefs to the work place. Pre-employment sensitisation of returning combatants should also be conducted to prepare them adequately for working in the public and private sectors and adhering to an employment code of conduct for the employer and employee (Section 3.3.8.2).
- Incentives should be developed for the private sector to employ returning former qualified combatants such as 'on the job training' which benefit the former qualified combatants through skills training and employment and benefit the private sector through lower apprenticeship wages and by building the skills of former qualified combatants which could benefit the private sector in the long term if they stay within the company (Section 3.3.8.2).

- Relevant skills training and advice should be provided to returning former qualified combatants on setting up small businesses/co-operatives (micro-enterprise training). Guidance should also be offered on what industries/sectors to focus small businesses on, depending on the types of businesses/industries there is demand for in the local/national market and by private sector, as an outcome of the local and national market needs assessments undertaken in the transition phase (Section 3.3.9.1).

Female current combatants were very keen to pursue employment and undertake vocational training. However, many current combatants (particularly women) identified the need for support facilities, such as childcare centres for children too young to attend school, to be established in communities to support women single parents in order that they are able to take advantage of such employment and vocational training opportunities (Section 2.2.3.2). The importance of these support facilities is emphasised in the challenges faced regarding the participation of women in the rehabilitation packages for the discharged. Discharged combatants (particularly women) felt that most women participating in the rehabilitation packages had chosen the micro-finance option as support facilities for dependants are available in this package and not others, including vocational training.³² This emphasises the importance of providing these support facilities in connection with all rehabilitation options. Discharged female combatants also identified the lack of family allowances as a fundamental reason why many women are unable to participate in the packages, and emphasised the importance of increasing the monthly stipend for single women with children participating in the micro-enterprise and vocational training (and other options) to include adequate costs for travel to the towns where trainings are being delivered, accommodation, childcare and subsistence costs for all dependants (Annex 1). These considerations are important as the research identified that there is a significant number of single female former and current combatants with children as a result of rejected inter-caste marriages by families and communities, SGBV and loss of husbands (see social rehabilitation section and Section 2.2.3.3).

Most injured/disabled current combatants stated the need for an economic package which included free health and transportation facilities and life-long pensions, particularly if they are unable to access employment, although most illustrated a keenness to work in employment suitable to their physical needs as a way of maintaining self and community respect (Section 2.2.3.2).

- Facilities should be provided for single women with children and married former (qualified and/or discharged) combatants to encourage participation in the rehabilitation packages – including childcare services for children not old enough to attend school. Adequate family allowances should be provided for single women with children and married former (qualified and/or discharged) combatants participating in all rehabilitation options to cover accommodation and subsistence costs for the whole family. Further and adequate allowances for supporting the family to travel long distances to regional training centres should also be offered (Section 3.3.9.1).
- Tailored employment options should be created for the disabled and badly injured (in line with labour demand), and provide long-term pension packages for those entirely unable to access employment. Employment options should be created in conjunction with disabled in the community (such as co-operatives) as this will help facilitate community cohesion (Section 3.3.9.1).

Some service providers involved in the delivery of vocational trainings in the rehabilitation programme for the discharged felt that principal service providers contracted to hire and co-ordinate the implementation of rehabilitation activities by service providers were responsible for late payments and poor communication and overly profited from the process (Annex 1).

³² See Annex 1 for information on what support provisions for women with children are included in the different options in the rehabilitation packages for the discharged combatants.

- The co-ordinating body responsible for implementation of rehabilitation should collaborate directly with service providers regarding the implementation of different aspects of the rehabilitation programme as opposed to handing over management responsibilities to middlemen in order to strengthen effectiveness and tighten co-ordination and communication (Section 3.3.3).

Social rehabilitation³³

While most community members said that former (discharged and voluntary left) combatants had been, as former qualified combatants would be in the future, accepted back into the community providing they did not return to violent behaviour, only 20 percent of current combatants said they would be able to return to civilian life without challenge (i.e. from the receiving community).

Many current combatants were reluctant to return to their community of origin because of fears that the community would consider them to be a failure by returning 'empty-handed' (particularly men) or because their community and/or families would reject them (both men and women). Approximately 40 percent of current combatants (men and women) feared rejection because of their inter-caste marriage, which is common within the Maoist Army but less accepted within broader society. These concerns have been validated by the experience of discharged combatants, who have faced similar rejection.

About 60 percent of current combatants (men and women) raised concerns about readjusting to a set of beliefs different to those of the Maoist Army. The majority of current combatants (men and women) feared that female combatants would face more difficulties in returning to civilian life than men as a result of community perceptions that they have acted against culturally determined gender roles, participating in inter-caste marriages or behaving in ways regarded as 'promiscuous' or 'aggressive' while in the Maoist PLA. These fears were corroborated by the views of members of all communities, civil society, all political parties, local authorities and security agencies as well as by the experience of former combatants. According to some community members, there have been a number of incidents where the lower-caste spouse within an inter-caste marriage (particularly women) has been rejected by her in-laws on returning to or temporarily visiting her spouse's family and forced to leave, leading in some cases to returnees being coerced by physical violence or even killed (reported as 'suicide').³⁴ Consequently, a number of current and former combatants, community members, security agency personnel, and civil society and local government representatives argued that efforts need to be made to raise public awareness on the changing role of women in society and dispel myths regarding female combatants (Section 2.2.3.3). The importance of long-term reconciliation efforts (of at least ten years) was emphasised by all target groups (Section 3.3.9.2).

- Commencing during the preparatory transition and planning phase, **Community Rehabilitation Committees** should be established at the VDC level in each district in target geographic areas to support dialogue, reconciliation and trust-building within and between communities and returning former qualified combatants to promote community ownership of the rehabilitation process. In particular, the Community Rehabilitation Committees will support implementation of the social, psychosocial, communication and monitoring aspects of the rehabilitation programme in collaboration with and through support to the DMOs and DROs (representing the Rehabilitation Commission at the district level, see above). A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) focal point should be allocated within each Committee. Committee members should include representatives from the community, former security agency personnel and returning former qualified combatants (including equal numbers of men and women

³³ See explanation of the use of the term 'social rehabilitation' in definitions section above.

³⁴ This is based on the views of communities and was not validated during the research by local authorities, security agencies or any allegedly involved family.

as well as members of different ethnic, caste, religious and age groups proportionally representative of the local context), civil society and traditional/community leaders, and local authorities. Committees should be based within the structure of VDCs in order to build upon existing structures at the local level and encourage ownership of local authorities and government, but should function independently and be neutral of political influence. The Committee members will be responsible for outreach at the ward level. The government should provide funds for this purpose or seek donor funding. The responsibilities of the Committees should include promoting trust-building and organising joint reconciliation activities, mediating disputes, supporting community dialogue on contentious issues responsible for creating stigma or dividing communities and former qualified combatants (including perceptions towards women and stigma attached to psychosocial trauma), establishing and helping to facilitate support groups for returning former qualified combatants,³⁵ monitoring and reporting on progress and challenges in collaboration with the DMOs, and supporting delivery of communication activities in communities (regarding rehabilitation packages for former qualified combatants) in collaboration with DMOs.

- Once established and in the implementation phase, orientation and capacity-building trainings should be provided for the Committees to support them in performing reconciliation/trust-building/mediation responsibilities where necessary (Section 3.3.9.2).
- To reduce the prospect of tensions arising in the initial stages of rehabilitation, it is crucial that efforts are made to plant the seeds of community reconciliation, trust-building and social cohesion during the transition and planning phase before current combatants return to civilian life:
- Beginning in the transition phase but continuing through the whole rehabilitation process, socialisation and orientation activities are necessary to help sensitise communities in target geographical areas to the return of former qualified combatants, reducing fear and dispelling myths and rumours (particularly regarding female combatants), and tackling stigma and ultimately maximising the impact of rehabilitation packages. Orientation activities should include targeted radio programmes, documentaries, articles in newspapers, information leaflets, street drama, public seminars and so forth (Sections 2.2.8.3 and 3.3.9.2).
- During the preparatory transition and planning phase, 'socialisation and orientation training' for all returning former qualified combatants should be provided to help to prepare them mentally for their return and encourage and support them to take a proactive role in gaining acceptance into their community (Sections 2.2.8.3 and 3.3.9.2). Once they have returned to civilian life, they should participate in community sensitisation activities outlined above and co-ordinated by the DROs.

Psychosocial rehabilitation and healthcare

Only five percent of current combatants explicitly stated that they personally were suffering from trauma and depression and required counselling. However, based on experiences in other countries and feedback from organisations that are providing psychosocial trauma and other counselling services to the discharged combatants, the proportion of those suffering from conflict-related trauma and depression is likely to be much higher (Section 2.2.3.4).

A number of current and discharged combatants (particularly women) talked about the need for psychosocial care to be provided, raising specifically as concerns psychosocial trauma as a result of SGBV experienced during and after the conflict (particularly women), forced inter-caste marriages and rejection from families as a result of

³⁵ Separate community-level support groups for men, women and badly injured/disabled should be established depending on the local context and demand. Support groups would meet regularly and provide a forum for sharing experiences and challenges faced in terms of social rehabilitation, generating mutual support and identifying ways to help each other in overcoming challenges faced. These groups would also help in providing psychosocial and emotional support (Section 3.3.9.2).

inter-caste marriages (particularly women), feelings of abandonment and isolation from the Maoist Army and difficulties integrating into civilian life, and feelings of being a failure and socio-economic exclusion (men and women) (Section 2.2.3.4). Concerns that both male and female current combatants returning to civilian life may face depression and require psychosocial support services were illustrated by lessons learnt from the experienced of discharged combatants (particularly young men), who often showed signs of depression and trauma (Annex 1).

Consultations with service providers and discharged combatants participating in the rehabilitation packages have highlighted that the provision of trauma counselling services from regional centres has prevented a significant number from making use of the service as this would require travelling long distances to participate³⁶ (Annex 1).

- If not addressed, trauma suffered during and after conflict risks undermining all other aspects of the rehabilitation process. Additionally, domestic and community security can be threatened by returning combatants, receiving community members, and security agency personnel who have unaddressed psychosocial needs. In particular, men in post-conflict contexts are often at greater risk of unaddressed psychosocial trauma linked to notions of masculinity that prevent them from accessing trauma counselling services, leading to increased risk of alcohol abuse, SGBV and general violence in their communities (Section 3.3.9.3). This emphasises the importance of focusing psychosocial counselling services equally on men and women and not assuming women are in greater need. The following psychosocial counselling services should be delivered at the local level:
 - During the transition and planning period, assessments should be conducted of psychosocial needs of communities in target geographical areas so as to identify the experiences of the community during the conflict, and assess the number and intensity of unaddressed cases of trauma. This will provide an indication of community absorption capacity regarding returning former qualified combatants and the level and type of conflict-related trauma management and reconciliation activities that need to be implemented as part of the social rehabilitation component (Section 3.3.8.4).
 - Beginning in the transition and planning phase but continuing through the whole rehabilitation process, awareness-raising activities should be undertaken to highlight the effects of psychosocial trauma among returning former qualified combatants (particularly men, see above) in order to increase understanding and reduce the stigma attached to those returning exhibiting symptoms of trauma, particularly among men (Sections 3.3.8.4 and 3.3.9.3). In the implementation phase, these activities can be continued by the Community Rehabilitation Committees in collaboration with the DMOs.
 - Individual and group counselling services should be provided at the local level (in target geographical areas) in the implementation phase for former qualified combatants to ensure counselling services are accessible. One PSC should be based in every district in target geographical areas for this purpose. Service users should have the choice of attending counselling sessions on the Committee premises or a counsellor visiting them at home to minimise feelings of embarrassment or stigma. These services should equally be available to ex-security personnel and community members to ensure neutrality and avoid tensions arising between the former qualified combatants and the broader community (Section 3.3.9.3).
 - A toll-free phone line should be set up for confidential or anonymous psychosocial trauma counselling for returning former qualified combatants, ex-security agency personnel and groups of people who do not feel comfortable attending counselling sessions in person. This is particularly important in terms of accessing and providing support to men (Section 3.3.9.3).

³⁶ This may also be because the service providers and discharged combatants do not have the correct information regarding trauma counselling services and/or because the service has only recently been added to the rehabilitation package (see Annex 1).

Approximately 60 percent of current and former combatants stated that they were suffering from health concerns which needed to be addressed through rehabilitation packages, particularly women and injured/disabled combatants. Two-thirds of female combatants (particularly those with children but also those without) reported reproductive health concerns as a result of injuries sustained during the conflict, which had worsened due to poor access to health services. All injured/disabled current and former combatants (men and women) raised concerns regarding accessing adequate health care, and most urged that healthcare be a key component in the rehabilitation packages,³⁷ including services to address long-term health concerns acquired during the conflict. UCPN-M leaders and injured/disabled current combatants themselves suggested the establishment of ID cards so they could qualify for discounts on transport and health care and the establishment of rehabilitation centres to support them in different aspects of daily life (Section 2.2.3.4).

- Healthcare needs of current combatants (due to be rehabilitated) should be assessed as part of a social-economic profiling exercise (see above and Section 3.3.8.1), to identify which healthcare support services need to be included in the rehabilitation packages in order to respond to their different needs (Section 3.3.8.3).
- Local health services should be strengthened in target geographical areas during the implementation phase in order to respond to the health care needs of returning former qualified combatants identified through the socio-economic profiling exercise undertaken in the transition and planning phase. Arguably, the key approach to this should be strengthening the long-term capacity of the national health sector to be able to respond to all health concerns experienced at the local level as opposed to providing special health services to former qualified combatants as part of the rehabilitation package in the short-term, which could exacerbate tensions and jealousy in the community. However, there are a high number of former (qualified, discharged and voluntarily left) combatants, ex-security personnel and community members suffering long-term health concerns as a result of the conflict which need to be addressed as a matter of priority, and cannot wait until the capacity of the health sector to address these concerns is strengthened in the longer term. Specialist healthcare services co-ordinated by relevant local and national government ministries/departments and supported through the rehabilitation packages should therefore be established within local health structures in target geographical areas for addressing longer-term conflict-related health concerns (Section 3.3.9.3).
- Consideration should be given to establishing an ID card scheme for supporting injured/disabled former qualified combatants with transport and health care services. Provision of the ID cards and monitoring of these services should be co-ordinated by DROs and DMOs in collaboration with central government, local authorities and civil society actors.
- Consideration should be given to establishing a rehabilitation centre for injured/disabled former qualified combatants particularly in districts where cantonments are located as well as in target geographical areas more generally, keeping in mind that some injured/disabled combatants will find it difficult to travel far from areas where cantonments are based. The centres should provide accommodation, subsistence, access to healthcare and guidance on accessing suitable employment. These services should equally benefit injured/disabled former security agency personnel, who are suffering from similar challenges, to ensure neutrality and avoid tensions arising (Section 3.3.9.3).

³⁷ UNIRP has recently added a provision to the rehabilitation packages which entitles the discharged combatants to local health services worth a small sum. However, this is only available on a case-by-case basis and support in addressing longer-term health concerns is not included in the packages (Annex 1).

Community security³⁸

Concerns were also raised by community members, security agency personnel and all political leaders that rehabilitation could undermine community security and heighten the risk of violence. This risk was due to the potential for returning former qualified combatants to engage in criminal and violent activities and also due to the potential for tensions to arise between returning former qualified combatants and communities and/or state security agencies. Such hesitancy to accept former qualified (discharged and voluntary left) combatants back was particularly evident in communities most affected by Maoist PLA activities during the conflict despite most community members (in all locations) being supportive of rehabilitation on the basis that it is an integral part of the peace process (Section 2.2.3.5).

Despite the primary wish for a peaceful future, 80 percent of all current combatants (men and women) said they would be forced to return to arms and violence through forming their own criminal groups or joining the Young Communist League (YCL) if they were not offered a favourable rehabilitation package in order to secure a stable income. This risk is validated by the views and experiences of former combatants: Two-thirds of the discharged (particularly young men as opposed to late recruits) interviewed in the Terai who originally came from Far- and Mid-Western regions stated that they were currently considering establishing or joining other criminal groups and returning to violence as a result of the challenges they have faced in returning to civilian life. Moreover, many security agency personnel and all political leaders expressed concern regarding possible tensions after rehabilitation has begun, which could affect community security, citing examples of how some of the discharged combatants had already engaged in criminal activities and other violent acts in the Terai (Section 2.2.3.5).

- Community security dialogue mechanisms should be established (see integration section above and Section 3.2.2.1).
- Beginning in the transition phase but continuing through the whole rehabilitation process, 'sensitisation and mediation trainings' should be provided for security agencies (particularly NP and APF who play a direct role in delivery of security at local level) based in target geographic areas. These trainings will help to build capacity to facilitate trust-building, promote forgiveness and employ a neutral, sensitive and non-violent approach to the way security agencies respond to and deal with conflict in the community, particularly involving former qualified combatants, in collaboration with DMOs and Community Rehabilitation Committees (this recommendation is relevant to both integration and rehabilitation – see Sections 3.3.8.3 and 3.3.9.2 regarding rehabilitation and Section 3.2.2.1 regarding integration). Participants in these mediation trainings will form a 'mediation task force' responsible for mediating disputes within these security agencies that arise as a result of the integration process (Section 3.2.2.1).

Many community members and other stakeholders considered that the provision of economic opportunities would best promote community safety and reconciliation, because it would engender societal respect towards former qualified combatants. It would also occupy former qualified combatants and provide them with a means to sustain themselves and their families (Section 2.2.3.5).

Ensuring that former qualified combatants are able to gain meaningful employment is one of the most effective ways to mitigate the security risks of rehabilitation (see economic rehabilitation section). But it is important that such employment enables them to provide for themselves and their families without inadvertently creating or reinforcing disparities between former qualified combatants and communities which could lead to hostility (Section 3.3.5).

³⁸ See explanation of the use of the term 'community security' in definitions section above.

1

Introduction

The Nepal context

SINCE MAKING ITS TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN 1990, Nepal has experienced considerable political and social turmoil. The country was plunged into civil war after Maoist insurgents launched a revolution against the state between 1996 and 2006. The conflict was ended by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the warring parties in November 2006. However, the failure of major political parties – which now include the former Maoist rebels – to compromise has prevented significant progress on key aspects of the peace process. Indeed, the deadline of 28 May 2010 for drafting a new constitution has lapsed and been extended until 13 April 2011 as Nepal once again flirts with political crisis.

Consequently, the integration of the Maoist Army combatants³⁹ into state security agencies and the demobilisation and rehabilitation of former Maoist Army combatants into civilian life, as enshrined in Article 4.4 of the CPA, have been desperately slow.⁴⁰ By February 2010, all of the 4,008 who failed to meet the criteria⁴¹ established by the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) had been discharged.⁴² Meanwhile, the 19,602 qualified combatants who had met the UN criteria remain confined to seven main and 21 satellite military cantonments spread over the five development regions of Nepal. Successful rehabilitation and integration is dependent upon political consensus among and buy-in of all political parties, including the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), and state security agencies. Success can also be built upon responding to lessons learnt from the process of rehabilitating the discharged combatants. Successful rehabilitation and integration is complicated by the fact that these qualified combatants have been subjected to a further four years of Maoist political education while living in the cantonments and the growing number of new armed ethno-political and criminal groups who are eager to recruit militarily trained and politically aware Maoist cadres. Thus, there is a risk that integration and rehabilitation could intensify conflict dynamics and worsen the risk of violence if not done in a conflict-sensitive⁴³ and gender-sensitive⁴⁴ way that considers and responds to the

³⁹ The total number of current Maoist Army combatants is 19,602 according to internal UN documents and verbal information provided by staff from UNIRP on outcomes of UNMIN Verification Data (undertaken in 2007).

⁴⁰ Based on international best practice, integration and rehabilitation should be undertaken as part of a comprehensive disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme that manages the demobilisation of security agency personnel which is linked up to and/or is a component of a broader security sector reform (SSR) programme. However, in the Nepali context the terms DDR and SSR are not considered to be sensitive to all parties, and are thus not used in this report. The terms rehabilitation and integration are used to refer to return to civilian life and integration into state security agencies, respectively. Nonetheless, the authors of the report and many stakeholders consulted concur that a comprehensive and holistic approach to rehabilitation and integration is necessary.

⁴¹ Those who joined before they were 18 years old or joined after the first ceasefire was announced between the Nepal Army and Maoist Army on 26 May 2006.

⁴² 2,394 of the 4,008 were present at the discharge ceremony and the remaining 1,614 (categorised as 'no-shows' by UN) and believed to have left the cantonment before hand (UNDP 2010)

⁴³ See explanation of the use of the term 'conflict-sensitive' in definitions section above.

⁴⁴ See explanation of the use of the term 'gender sensitivity' in definitions section above.

different needs and concerns of the qualified (and discharged) Maoist Army combatants (men and women equally), communities, state security agencies and political parties.⁴⁵

Research objectives

This research project sought to identify the different needs, concerns and priorities of Maoist Army combatants (men and women) regarding their rehabilitation into civilian life and/or integration into the state security agencies. The main aim of this project is to support the development and implementation of gender-sensitive policy and programming on the rehabilitation and integration of qualified/eligible combatants, including the potential role of communities, local authorities and security agencies in support of this process. Where appropriate, suggestions have been made for who specifically should be responsible for implementing recommendations.

Research methodology

The research for this report has been conducted through four main strands, each focusing on capturing the views and perspectives of a different **target groups** relevant to the objectives of the research.

- **Strand 1** focused on documenting the views and perspectives of male and female **current combatants**.⁴⁶
- **Strand 2** focused on capturing the views and lessons learnt from the experiences of **former combatants**⁴⁷ – including discharged⁴⁸ combatants and those that returned to communities on their own accord (voluntarily left⁴⁹).
- **Strand 3** focused on identifying the views and perspectives of **communities** regarding the rehabilitation and integration of current (and former) combatants and how this differs between and towards men and women.
- **Strand 4** focused on detailing the views of **security agencies and political parties**⁵⁰ regarding the rehabilitation and integration of current combatants.

The information included here is based on research undertaken between 16 February and 20 August 2010 in cantonments and communities⁵¹ in Ilam, Kailali, Surkhet, Sindhuli and Nawalparasi districts as well as additional communities in Jhapa, Dang, Bardiya, Banke, Sinhalchuk, Makwanpur, Morang, Rolpa and Kathmandu. It incorporates information gathered during focus group discussions (FGDs) with target groups; one-to-one interviews with current and former combatants; and in-depth key informant interviews (KIIs) with political party leaders, teachers, social workers, security agency personnel and members of the private sector and civil society and agencies/organisations involved in the delivery of the rehabilitation programme to the discharged combatants at the local and national levels. Former combatants and their receiving communities were consulted during this process specifically in order to identify key lessons learnt to inform the different aspects of the rehabilitation process for qualified combatants. Because the United Nations Inter-agency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP) programme for ‘discharged combatants’ began implementation during the research phase of this project, this report also benefits from lessons learnt

⁴⁵ For more information on the political context, SSR and ethnic political violence in Nepal, see Housden, O, ‘Nepal’s Elusive Peace’, Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies Journal, Vol 155(2), April/May 2010, pp70–77. For more information on people’s perceptions of security and justice in Nepal, see Saferworld (2010), *Treading Water? Security and Justice in Nepal in 2009*, <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/Treading%20water%20reduced.pdf>

⁴⁶ See explanation of the use of the term ‘current combatant’ in definitions section above.

⁴⁷ See explanation of the use of the term ‘former combatant’ in definitions section above.

⁴⁸ See explanation of the use of the term ‘discharged combatant’ in definitions section above.

⁴⁹ See explanation of the use of the term ‘voluntary left’ in definitions section above.

⁵⁰ The views of political parties outlined in this report are those expressed during the time of research, although in some cases the positions of different political parties on certain issues may have since changed.

⁵¹ Communities consulted during the research include 1) those located in the same districts as cantonments, 2) communities in areas where former Maoist Army combatants are most likely to return to which were selected on the basis of data regarding where discharged combatants have returned and 3) areas where Maoist Army combatants originally came from, e.g. Mid- and Far-Western hills. Where particular findings relate to specific communities and/or communities in particular geographic areas, this is highlighted in the report.

from the initial stages of that programme.⁵² See Annex 1 for full details of this lessons learnt process.

The methodology has been carefully designed to enable disaggregation by gender and a gendered analysis. While a large number of research activities have been undertaken, emphasis has been placed on quality not quantity with priority given to building trust with interviewees.

The following research activities were undertaken:

- 124 KIIs at local level
- 41 KIIs at national level
- 6 FGDs with female current combatants
- 6 FGDs with male current combatants
- 2 FGDs with mixed male and female current combatants
- 27 FGDs with female community members
- 16 FGDs with male community members
- 8 FGDs with mixed male and female community members
- 30 one-to-one interviews with female current combatants
- 47 one-to-one interviews with male current combatants
- 34 one-to-one interviews with female former combatants
- 28 one-to-one interviews with male former combatants
- Group interview with 15 family members of Maoist Army or Nepal Army (NA) personnel
- Group interview with members of 1 Maoist school called Martyr Memorial School
- 1 FGD with male former combatants (voluntarily left)
- 10 FGDs with male former combatants (discharged)
- 2 mixed FGD with former combatants (discharged)
- 2 mixed FGD with former combatants (voluntarily left)

In total, the project has consulted **136** female and **151** male current combatants, **51** female former combatants (**17** disqualified and **34** voluntarily left) and **215** male former combatants (**173** disqualified and **42** voluntarily left),⁵³ **457** female and **308** male community members, and **15** family members of current Maoist Army combatants, conflict-affected family or NA. A further **144** key informants were interviewed (**124** at the local level and **41** at the national level). **The views expressed in this report are those of the aforementioned target groups – set in bold italic where relevant – and not those of Saferworld.** The recommendations outlined in the report are based upon these views. See Annex 3 for a detailed overview of the methodology and information on those consulted during the research.

Report structure

The introduction (Section 1) provides an overview of the political context as well as the research objectives and methods (which are detailed in Annex 3).

The following section (Section 2) provides a detailed overview of key research findings concerning the needs, concerns and priorities of key stakeholders regarding the integration of former Maoist Army combatants into security agencies and/or their rehabilitation into civilian life. Distinction is drawn between perspectives of and towards men and women. The overarching issues of integration and rehabilitation planning, management and decision-making are addressed first (Section 2.2.1) before moving on to two substantive sections separately addressing integration and rehabilitation.

⁵² Although many of these constructive lessons have been developed from analysis of why some discharged combatants have not wanted to take up rehabilitation packages, this should not be seen as criticism of a process that is currently in only an early stage of implementation. It should also be noted that the UNIRP team is taking ongoing steps to revise the rehabilitation packages to respond to these challenges, and that some of the challenges identified are attributable to constraints within the political context as opposed to characteristics in the design of the packages.

⁵³ This means that approximately 1.5 percent of the total qualified combatants (19,602) and 4.74 percent of discharged combatants (4,008) were consulted during the research.

Concerning integration (Section 2.2.2), special focus is devoted to exploring the different perspectives of current and former combatants, community members, security agency personnel, and members of civil society and political parties on how organisational cohesion within security agencies and the delivery of security at the community level will be affected by integration. Issues concerning security agency organisational structure, identity, training and gender sensitivity in respect of the integration process will also be addressed.

In respect of rehabilitation (Section 2.2.3), the different perspectives of various stakeholders concerning the economic, social, psychosocial and political rehabilitation of current combatants are presented, particularly in order that their specific needs and expectations can be attended to.

By way of contextualising these findings, the first part of this section (Section 2.1) addresses some of the reasons why people joined the Maoist People's Liberation Army (PLA).⁵⁴ Their experiences during and after conflict are also touched upon to inform recommendations for successful integration and rehabilitation processes.

Section 3 outlines comprehensive recommendations for how the transition and implementation phases of integration and rehabilitation can be undertaken in a conflict-sensitive and gender-sensitive manner, in support of effective post-conflict reconstruction and the broader peace process, and in line with relevant laws and policies (as detailed under Annex 2). Although the research findings have included information on the different perspectives of current and former combatants regarding entry into political careers as a third option, recommendations on this issue are beyond the focus of this report and have not been included in this section.

Annex 1 outlines some of the lessons learnt from the rehabilitation of discharged combatants in an endeavour to contribute to the successful rehabilitation of current combatants.

⁵⁴ Maoist PLA is used when referring to the conflict period preceding the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2006 and Maoist Army is used when referring to the post-conflict period (post 2006).

2

Key research findings

2.1. Putting integration and rehabilitation in context – combatants’ prior experiences

2.1.1. Reasons for joining the Maoist PLA

IT IS BEYOND THE FOCUS OF THIS REPORT to provide an in-depth analysis of the different reasons why male and female combatants joined the Maoist Army and their different experiences during and after the conflict. However, an understanding of these motivations and experiences is essential in order to develop and implement integration and rehabilitation programmes that meet the needs and expectations of combatants and are thus successful. Consequently, a summary of key points identified during the research on combatants’ prior experience are outlined below.⁵⁵

■ To gain social and political empowerment

A sense of empowerment was cited as the major reason for most **current combatants**⁵⁶ (both men and women) for joining the Maoist PLA. Almost all **current and former combatants** interviewed came from lower socio-economic backgrounds and communities that felt oppressed by the state and economically excluded from the mainstream development agenda. Many came from the Mid- and Far-Western Hills, where poverty and exclusion are prevalent. A proportion of those who were economically excluded are also members of marginalised groups including Tharu, Limbu, Magar, Dalits and Tamang⁵⁷, and women.⁵⁸ Nearly 90 percent of **current combatants** interviewed stated that the major reason for joining the Maoist PLA was to change the existing system which had created massive gaps between rich and poor, men and women. For example a male current combatant stated:

“We have been suppressed by the state and rich people for centuries; we are unable to access state resources and are politically powerless. I think it is because of the monarchy we are facing this discrimination. Thus, I joined the PLA to fight against the king and establish a republic.”⁵⁹

⁵⁵ For more detailed analysis on the reasons why men and women joined the Maoist PLA and their experiences during the conflict please refer to publications that focus explicitly on this issue, including: 1) Manchanda, R (2004), *Maoist insurgency in Nepal, Radicalizing Gendered Narratives*, South Asia Forum for Human Rights, Nepal; 2) Sharma, R (2006), *Changing Realities and Challenges for the Peace Process of Nepal*; 3) Ariño, M (2008), *Nepal: A Gender View of the Armed Conflict and the Peace Process*; and 4) Ogura, K (July 2009), *A Chapamaar’s Peace*, Himal South Asian.

⁵⁶ Unless stated otherwise, assume views of interviewees – whether communities, former combatants, security agencies, civil society or political parties – are shared equally by men and women.

⁵⁷ According to internal UN documents and verbal information provided by staff from UNIRP on outcomes of UNMIN Verification Data (undertaken in 2007) 16.11 percent of the PLA were from the Bahun caste, 15.78 percent from Chhetris, 12.11 percent from Magar, 10 percent from Dalit, 6.9 percent from Tamang, 6.6 percent Madheshis and 5.5 percent Tharu.

⁵⁸ According to internal UN documents and verbal information provided by staff from UNIRP on outcomes of UNMIN Verification Data (undertaken in 2007), women constituted 20 percent (3,846) of the PLA, but the UCPN-M estimates the figure to be closer to 40–50 percent.

⁵⁹ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (09/03/2010)

■ To gain gender equality

All **female combatants** interviewed stated that they felt more empowered as a woman after joining the Maoist PLA. They explained how they enjoyed equal footing with men within the Maoist PLA structure and UCPN-M organisation. Ninety percent of female combatants (both current and former) stated that they found themselves to be different from other women in society as they felt more empowered, both politically and physically. **Current and former combatants** (both men and women) attributed the patriarchal nature of Nepali society to be the main reason behind the subjugation of women especially in rural areas.

Nearly 20 percent of **female combatants** explained that the political ideology of the UCPN-M, which promoted gender equality and the empowerment of women, was the main reason for joining the party. They further added that they wanted to challenge socio-cultural gender discrimination and fight for the rights of all women. A female current combatant interviewed in Kailali stated:

“The reason behind me joining the PLA was to change the existing system of structural inequality in society and to overthrow the monarchy. I wanted to see equality between men and women, rich and poor, Dalit and non-Dalit and allow the poor to access state resources. Furthermore, I wanted to see poor people being represented in the decision-making levels of state authority.”⁶⁰

■ Attraction towards UCPN-M political ideology and cultural programmes

Most **current and former combatants** (men and women) expressed their enthusiastic commitment to the Maoist political ideology and Marxist-Maoist doctrines. They explicitly stated that political ideology of the UCPN-M is what initially attracted them to the Maoist PLA, arguing that it was the only existing ideology in Nepal that was scientific, visionary and based on people’s interests. Some combatants were also attracted by the Maoist’s cultural programmes, where troops of singers and dancers would visit villages as part of their recruitment campaigns. For example, a male discharged combatant stated:

“They used to come to our village with drums, dancing and singing, and we would attend these functions either at our school or somewhere else. I wanted to join them and dance and sing as well, so I left school and home to join them. Later on I learnt about Maoist political philosophies and decided to stay and join the revolution.”⁶¹

■ Forced recruitment due to pressure from the Maoist PLA and/or threats from state security agencies

Some combatants (mostly **former combatants**) mentioned that they were forced to join the Maoist PLA due to pressure from the UCPN-M. They explained that Maoists would conduct their recruitment drives in rural villages and ask for at least one household member to join their revolution. Some women joined because they wanted to protect and prevent the male members of their household from joining. A female current combatant stated:

“The Maoist party while recruiting in our village announced that it was compulsory for one person from each household to join the insurgency. They also said if participation was not followed through then the party would capture land. Therefore, I was forced to join PLA ... otherwise my family would lose property and would suffer because of me.”⁶²

Many **current and former combatants** (men and women) said that they had to flee their communities to protect themselves from state persecution during the insurgency as the Nepal Police (NP) and NA would randomly raid their houses, physically torture

⁶⁰ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (10/03/2010)

⁶¹ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (08/03/2010)

⁶² A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (20/02/2010)

them and, in case of women and girls, could even abuse them sexually. Nearly 25 percent of female current combatants (particularly from Mid-Western hills) said that they decided to join the Maoist PLA because of sexual abuse and rape from state security agencies. In addition, a substantial number of female combatants also said that they joined after being tortured by security agencies because their family members were Maoists. For example, a female current combatant stated:

“Once in our village [Kotbada VDC of Kalikot district], during a [Nepal] Army operation, 12 women were raped and some got pregnant. There was a high level of terror and abuse from state security forces... After that incident ... all the young men and women either joined the PLA or left the village.”⁶³

In addition, a male current combatant from Kailali stated:

“In my village, during the war, the Nepal Army used to come and torture us... At that time I was in class eight. Even I was beaten many times by the NA. I had no option left and... I joined the PLA in 2001 as revenge. A huge number of people from my village joined the PLA as they could not tolerate the actions of the army or state anymore. Why does one get tortured without doing anything wrong?”⁶⁴

2.1.2. Experience during conflict

■ Feeling of empowerment

Current and former combatants (men and women) explicitly mentioned feeling empowered politically and physically in the Maoist PLA during the conflict. They said that the political and military training they had received meant they were politically astute and physically able to defend themselves.

■ Undertaking continuous political and military training

Current and former combatants (both men and women) explained that they were continuously involved in mandatory political training and military exercises. The political training was based on Marxist and Maoist doctrines and conducted at least once a month.

■ Life as an underground rebel

Many **current and former combatants** described their lives during the insurgency period as exciting, dangerous and difficult but worthy of their sacrifice. Many (both men and women) explained further that they had to sacrifice their families and leave their homes uncertain about their future. However, they justified that their sacrifice was worthwhile because they had helped abolish traditional political practices and make Nepal a republic.

■ Different roles within the Maoist PLA

Current and former combatants explained that most newly recruited Maoist PLA combatants worked part-time for a few years so that they could be more visible, and engage directly, in the community. Only after organising and participating in numerous advocacy campaigns and fulfilling other non-military roles – such as informants, messengers, cultural performers, bomb-makers and political campaigners – would they perform full-time duties and function under specific sections, platoons and battalions. Most of the **current combatants** interviewed (men and women) had undertaken full-time roles although some had been assigned to non-military tasks and had worked on a part-time basis at some stage.

⁶³ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Surkhet (10/03/2010)

⁶⁴ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (11/03/2010)

2.1.3. Experience since the end of the conflict and in the cantonments

■ General living conditions

Most **current combatants** (men and women) said their present living conditions inside cantonments were poor and unhygienic and that physical infrastructure and facilities were inadequate. In particular, all current and former combatants (particularly women and injured or disabled combatants) said healthcare services provided within cantonments were inadequate. Many **female combatants** argued that the state should provide free education and health services for their dependants. Similarly, **current combatants** often argued it was unfair they had a lower standard of living compared to that of state security agency personnel.

Such poor living conditions make it difficult for these men and women to care adequately for their families. Consequently, many combatants with families now lived outside cantonments (particularly women, see below). Many have also left cantonments – and even the country – in order to seek employment to financially support their families adequately.

Approximately 75 percent of current combatants expressed discontent with living in the cantonments; 20 percent of whom explicitly said they were keen to leave the cantonments. Some thought cantonment life was akin to being imprisoned, as one male current combatant stated:

“I am fed up with staying in the cantonment. I feel that I am staying in a prison. The state has not provided us with adequate facilities; we live like prisoners bunked up in small cells and look at our living conditions. Had I been living outside I would have done far better, I could be engaged in any occupation, doing something with my life rather than sitting here doing nothing.”⁶⁵

In addition to feelings of imprisonment, many combatants were also worried about their future, as expressed, for example, by a male current combatant interviewed in Sindhuli:

“We are really concerned about the future, what will happen to us? How will the peace process come to an end? We just want a decision to be made now so we can move forwards with our lives.”⁶⁶

It must be said that while many feel trapped or insecure about what the future may hold, others find comfort in the daily activities in cantonments and the support provided by UCPN-M, particularly the education and vocational training opportunities. They consider these opportunities to be helpful and are eager to make use of them.

■ Military training and exercises

All **current combatants** (men and women) said that inside the cantonments they were involved in military exercises and training, including daily physical exercise. They performed similar military exercises during conflict. However, while previously their training was focused on guerrilla warfare now it was focused on professionalising themselves as an army. Combatants felt it was normal to train as they were an army and that military exercises would increase their professionalism and chances of integration into the state security agencies. For example, a female current combatant from Ilam, stated:

“It has been educational living inside the cantonment... Our life inside is just like another army, and we have made use of this time to learn new things and to professionalise ourselves.”⁶⁷

However, many female combatants felt that the physical differences between men and women meant it was difficult for themselves to participate in all military activities.

⁶⁵ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Sindhuli (10/04/2010)

⁶⁶ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (11/03/2010)

⁶⁷ A female current combatant, interviewed in a group, Ilam (18/02/2010)

For this reason, they also explained the UCPN-M had made it mandatory for pregnant women to live outside the cantonment for a minimum of three years during and after pregnancy. For example, a female current combatant stated:

“The party has a policy that women combatants should stay outside cantonment for three years after being pregnant, but we get our monthly allowance. This is because we are not able to participate in military exercises and other required physical exercises. We also find it difficult during menstruation to participate in activities that require strong physical strength. This is sad; but we are born this way... so at times we need special requirements.”⁶⁸

Unfortunately, this policy of requiring pregnant women to live outside cantonments puts added financial and emotional pressure on families, particularly when male combatants remain in cantonments and where there is no family home to go to. This forces many such women into desperate living circumstances.

2.2. Perspectives and priorities for the future

2.2.1. Findings relevant to both rehabilitation and integration

■ Management of the rehabilitation and integration process

The Special Committee for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants (SC) was established in October 2008. The nine-member Committee is headed by the prime minister and composed of representatives from the main political parties (including UCPN-M), including those holding key ministerial posts (defence, home affairs, and peace and reconstruction). A work plan was developed by its Technical Committee for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants (TC) in January 2010, which aims to put in place a timeframe for the successful management of the Maoist Army combatants either through their integration into the state security agencies or their rehabilitation back into the community. The eight-member TC consists of technical experts proposed by the four main political parties. In terms of practical application, the work plan offers little more than a basis from which further planning, discussion and decision-making should take place.⁶⁹ To date, bar the development of the work plan, little progress on planning the integration and rehabilitation of current combatants has been made, particularly in terms of securing the required political agreement.

A number of *political party leaders* (all parties), *civil society representatives* and *security agency personnel* interviewed, especially at the national level, raised concern over the management of the integration and rehabilitation processes, arguing that responsibility should lie with non-political actors, particularly those with technical expertise. However, they recognised that since integration and rehabilitation were already a political issue, consensus and compromise between political parties were essential requirements for the process to begin in earnest. *Security agency personnel* and *UCPN-M leaders* argued that once political agreement had been secured, the management of the process could be handed over to a politically neutral committee or co-ordination mechanism. This neutral body would comprise international technical experts, security agency and Maoist Army personnel, and key civil society leaders. For example, one senior-level NA officer stated:

⁶⁸ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (11/03/2010)

⁶⁹ The work plan states that all verified Maoist Army combatants should be advised about the positive and negative aspects of each option so as to be able to make an informed choice. The options outlined by the work plan include entry into the political field (with no support package available), integration into the security agencies (NA, APF, NP, National Investigation Department (NID) and other potential forces such as the Border Security Force (BSF) or Industrial Security Force (ISF) yet-to-be established and rehabilitation into the community (through formal education, educational training, vocational training, employment, small income-generating business and other forms of assistance). However, limited time is allocated to the advisory process (an estimated ten minutes per current combatant). Similarly, the detail required to inform decisions about integration training and rehabilitation does not exist in the work plan. In short, while the work plan makes an initial effort to timetable the process, its inadequacies highlight both the lack of understanding and consensus as to how the process will take place.

“Politics should be kept away from this. Why are political parties deciding on technical matters of integration? What knowledge do they have on military issues? I think a separate mechanism should be established to manage integration, which includes representatives from all security agencies and the PLA.”⁷⁰

■ **Integration and rehabilitation on the basis of informed individual choice**

Many **security agency personnel**, **government authorities** (local), **civil society representatives** and **political leaders** (all parties) argued that rehabilitation and integration should be based on individual choice. These stakeholders and, of the political leaders, UCPN-M and Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum (MJF) representatives, maintained that individual consultations should determine whether each current combatant entered the NP, NA, the Armed Police Force (APF), other new security agencies or returned to civilian life. It was argued that these individual combatant consultations should take place before political parties agree on the total number to be integrated to ensure that this number reflects the preferences of the combatants as much as possible. It was also highlighted by many **security agency personnel** and **non-UCPN-M political leaders** that these should be informed decisions. Consequently, current combatants should receive detailed information about how these choices would affect their lives.

Some non-UCPN-M political leaders argued that if Maoist Army combatants were not given a choice or were rehabilitated or integrated against their primary wishes there was a greater risk of tensions arising in security agencies and in communities where they return to, undermining community security. The experience of the discharged combatants to date was used as an example to support this point. For example, one Nepali Congress (NC) leader stated:

“Rehabilitation [of current combatants] can happen but there are certain risks involved: was rehabilitation their choice or were they forced to be rehabilitated because they could not be integrated...? A lesson from the discharged is that they are angry because they were forced to return and it was not their choice.”⁷¹

2.2.2. Key findings on integration

Key findings in this section have been broken down to illustrate general findings and then detail specific findings on technical aspects of integration – such as security sector and organisational structure, training and gender sensitivity – which are important to the design of an effective integration policy.

2.2.2.1. GENERAL FINDINGS

■ **Lack of understanding about integration within communities and among combatants**

Overall, there was a lack of understanding about integration within **communities** (especially women) and among **current and former combatants** and political leaders and security agency personnel at the district level. Much of the discussion revolved around whether or not integration should take place and the numbers of combatants that should be integrated. Only political leaders at the national level from different parties and some senior-level commanders in the Maoist Army went beyond the issue of numbers and raised questions about the actual technicalities of the integration process.

■ **Current and former combatants keen to integrate**

When interviewed in a group (in FGDs), most **current combatants** (both men and women) said that they would prefer to integrate into security agencies as opposed to returning to civilian life. However, when interviewed one-to-one, approximately

⁷⁰ KII with high-ranking officer, NA, Kathmandu (04/07/2010)

⁷¹ KII with national-level NC leader, Kathmandu (04/06/2010)

40 percent (both men and women) were adamant that they considered integration to be the only option. Conversely, 60 percent were happy to return to civilian life if a favourable package were offered – in recognition that not all of them would realistically be able to integrate or because they preferred to return to civilian life (particularly women with children and men who sought political careers).

In addition, approximately 40 percent of **former combatants** expressed a willingness to join the state security agencies if they were given the opportunity. For example, one male discharged combatant stated:

“We either should be integrated into any existing or newly formed state security agencies... If they cannot include us in these agencies, then they should guarantee our economic security.”⁷²

■ Integration regarded as an inevitable part of the peace process

All **current combatants** (men and women) and **UCPN-M political leaders** perceived integration as a necessary component of the peace process and crucial to internal security. Although some **community members** opposed integration (see below), approximately 85 percent supported it, primarily because the CPA and the 12 Point Agreement stipulated that integration should occur. In addition to the UCPN-M, approximately 80 percent of other national- and district-level **political leaders** and most **security agency personnel** said that integration must be undertaken for there to be a logical conclusion to the peace process. **Non-UCPN-M political leaders** also argued that integration was not only an inevitable aspect of the peace process but also a favourable option in comparison to rehabilitation in terms of maintaining peace in the country and ensuring that community security was not undermined.

■ Opposition to integration

Opposition to integration taking place at all was most notable within **communities** (such as Sindhuli and Surkhet) that were either affected by the Maoists during and after the conflict or who perceived they might be threatened in the future. These communities feared their security and safety would again be under threat as a result of integration. In addition, a small number of **security agency personnel** and **non-UCPN-M political leaders** (particularly at the district level) were adamantly against integration ever being implemented. These views were based on a number of concerns including the risk of Maoist political ideologies infiltrating the security sector, potential tensions arising between current security agency personnel and former qualified combatants⁷³ being integrated, threats to community security, and the delivery of effective security (see below).

■ Expectation that integration will not be implemented

Some **security agency personnel**, **civil society representatives** and **non-UCPN-M political leaders** argued that the political consensus necessary to enable integration to take place was unlikely to be achieved (at least not in the short term) as political parties would fail to negotiate on key sticking points. These include the numbers to be integrated, rank conversion and training requirements. In addition, whether modality of entry into security agencies was conducted on an individual or group basis and whether it took place before or after the promulgation of the constitution were identified as two key issues that political parties were unlikely to resolve soon.

⁷² A male discharged combatant, Banke (21/05/2010)

⁷³ See explanation of the use of the term ‘former qualified combatant’ in definitions section above.

■ Threat of violence if integration does or does not take place

Around 70 percent of **current combatants** (and some discharged combatants) said that if the constitution was not promulgated and integration does not take place or meet their aspirations then they would be forced to rebel against the government and return to looting and killing. For example, one male combatant stated:

“We are patiently waiting for 28 May and a new constitution. If it is not completed on time, we will revolt again and support political parties and other groups who have clear vision of eliminating gaps between rich and poor.”⁷⁴

A number of **security agency personnel** and senior figures from all **political parties** at the national level (particularly the UCPN-M) expressed concern that violence could emerge if integration did not take place or only included a small proportion of the current combatants (as those not selected for integration could revolt against the government and the UCPN-M). However, some security agency personnel (all ranks/agencies) thought that even if integration takes place and involves all the current combatants, it would fail and result in heightened insecurity. In particular, it was argued that if current combatants were integrated into mixed military structures – for example one or two integrated into an NP unit of 1,000–2,000 – they could feel isolated and drop out.

■ Fear that integration will threaten delivery of effective security at local level

Approximately 80 percent of **community members** (again predominantly from places directly affected by the conflict) feared that integration could threaten the delivery of security at the local level. This was based on the argument that Maoist Army combatants once integrated would maintain their political ideologies and thus fail to execute neutrality with regards to whom and how security is provided security. For example, a male community member in Ilam stated:

“I feel that problems may arise during the integration process, as it will be difficult for the PLA to remain neutral and discard their political ideology when they enter into security agencies... I have doubts as to how the PLA will provide equal and transparent security to all citizens of Nepal when their political ideology ... is so entrenched.”⁷⁵

A number of **security agency personnel** shared the concern that integration, particularly into the NP and APF, would have a negative impact on the provision of security at the local level. This argument was based on the perception that Maoist Army combatants could not now be integrated into security agencies against which they had fought so fiercely or provide security to communities that they (as they perceived) had once terrorised. For this reason, it was argued by some security agency personnel (particularly different ranks in the NP) that integration into the NA was the only option as the NA was not responsible for internal security provision; otherwise public trust in the effectiveness of the NP as providers of security would be undermined. For example, one senior police officer in the Mid-Western region stated:

“You cannot integrate them into the NP... The NP is in direct contact with people and therefore if PLA enter into the NP then communities ... will view their activities with suspicion.”⁷⁶

■ Concern that integration will politicise and thus destabilise the security sector

A number of **security agency personnel** (all ranks and agencies), most **non-UCPN-M political leaders** at both the national and district levels as well as many **community members** (particularly men) expressed concerns that Maoist Army combatants, once integrated, would corrupt the security agencies by spreading their political beliefs.

⁷⁴ A male current combatant, interviewed in a group, Kailali (16/03/2010)

⁷⁵ A male community member, FGD participant, Ilam (18/02/2010)

⁷⁶ KII with high ranking officer, NP, Mid-Western Terai (25/05/2010)

Many questioned how this would be managed and it was for this reason that security agency personnel (all ranks and agencies), non-UCPN-M political leaders at the national and district levels and approximately 80 percent of community members demanded that integration be based on individual rather than group entry into security agencies and on skills and ability. For example, a police officer from the Mid-Western region stated:

“At present they are talking about bulk entry into security agencies. But this is absolutely impossible. It could be a tactic by the Maoists to bring down the NP, and I do not underestimate them on this. They want to enter the national security institutions and destabilise them to capture the state.”⁷⁷

However, some national-level security agency personnel (particularly higher-ranking NA officers) and just over 20 percent of community members argued that the likelihood of current combatants promoting their political beliefs was minimal, given they would have to conform to strict rules and regulations. A junior-ranking officer from the NP in the Mid-Western Hills supported this argument through highlighting examples of colleagues who had been members of political parties before joining the police, but who now identified themselves with the police having dropped their association with political parties⁷⁸. Maoist Army combatants, in his opinion, were likely to follow a similar pattern. This perception was also based on the argument that many Maoist Army combatants joined the Maoist PLA because of poverty and deprivation rather than politics. Therefore once they had a job with the security agencies they would abandon their political associations.

■ **Shared responsibility of state security agency personnel to facilitate successful integration**

More than 90 percent of **current combatants** (men and women) interviewed in a group appeared positive regarding the ability and willingness of both themselves and security agency personnel to integrate. However, when interviewed individually, many combatants (particularly women) doubted that positive relationships could be formed. For example, one female current combatant stated:

“NA and other security personnel do not respect women’s rights. They have often oppressed, tortured [physically and mentally] and been disrespectful towards women. How can we trust them?”⁷⁹

Many women feared for their own security in state security agencies. They often shared their or others’ experiences of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and other human rights abuses by the NA and other state security agencies, arguing that the perpetrators have not yet been brought to justice.⁸⁰ Linked to this fear, many combatants (particularly women) emphasised the need for integration processes to consider and respond to the specific vulnerabilities faced by women (see Section 2.2.2.4 on gender-sensitive integration below).

Some **civil society representatives** emphasised that organisational cohesion was dependent not only on the behaviour and beliefs of the former qualified combatants being integrated but equally on how security agency personnel responded to and interacted with them. If security agency personnel did not treat the former qualified combatants being integrated with respect, organisational cohesion within the security agencies would be threatened resulting in high drop-out rates thus threatening community-level security.

⁷⁷ *ibid*

⁷⁸ KII with low ranking officer, NP, Mid-Western Hills (19/06/2010)

⁷⁹ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (10/03/2010)

⁸⁰ Two particular cases were referred to most regularly – 1) a case where police woman Suntali Dhami was allegedly gang-raped by her male colleagues while on duty in the District Police Office in Achham on 27 September 2009 and 2) a case where three women – Ms Devisara Bishwokarma (35 years old), Ms Amrita Bishwokarma (33 years old) and Chandrakala Bishwokarma (12 years old) were allegedly killed by the NA on 10 March 2010 inside the Bardiya National Park and the NA defended the case by accusing them as poachers who were killed in an ‘encounter’.

■ Belief that successful integration and organisational cohesion is possible

The views of *security agency personnel*, *political leaders* and *community members* regarding the potential for organisational cohesion between Maoist Army combatants and state security agency personnel were mixed. Views were often based on whether they believed Maoist Army combatants would relinquish or promote their political beliefs. Some security agency personnel (all ranks and particularly at the district level) argued that there would not be any tensions between state security and former qualified combatants following integration as they had already begun to forget the past and think about the future. For example a junior-level police officer from the Eastern Terai stated:

“Although the police and PLA fought each other they are putting their differences aside and we don’t have any negative feelings towards them now. I think this will help to reduce conflict between [them] after integration.”⁸¹

Some *security agency personnel* agreed with the argument put forward by many *current combatants* that society and security agencies will accept them as they had made sacrifices for the country. For example, an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) in the NP interviewed in Kathmandu stated:

“We respect them for their sacrifice so we don’t have any negative feelings towards them. They are like us.”⁸²

In addition, some *political leaders*, including those from UCPN-M and NC, argued that the integration of Maoist Army combatants would help engender a radical (but positive) transformation of values within state security agencies. For example, a Constituent Assembly (CA) representative stated:

“Integration of PLA combatants will bring about positive, cultural change. That politically indoctrinated cadres will corrupt the security agencies is a baseless accusation.”⁸³

On the other hand, some state security agency personnel, particularly lower-ranking district-based officers from the NP, and 80 percent of community members (particularly those from Sindhupalchowk, Surkhet and other areas affected by the conflict) were fearful that tensions would arise between security agency personnel and Maoist Army combatants after the latter’s integration. It was felt that the risk of this was particularly high if Maoist political identities were retained after integration and current combatants were allocated high ranks within state security agencies without adequately fulfilling the criteria. For example, one male community member stated:

“Integration is very risky because on the one hand we have an army [PLA] that is extremely political and on the other we have a professional army [NA] which is trained solely to look after our security. This can result in the army being politicised after integration and we are worried that this could result in another conflict.”⁸⁴

The particular concern of lower-ranking NP officers regarding the impact of integration on social and cultural cohesion is reflective of the fact that tensions are more likely to play out in the lower ranks where they have more direct contact with each other and also because the perceptions of the NP are particularly influenced by experiences of fighting against the Maoist Army combatants in the conflict and a fear of these tensions re-emerging. Consequently, some proposed integration should be restricted to the NA and others suggested the establishment of a counselling or reconciliation mechanism in all security agencies to promote reconciliation and build trust prior to, during and after integration.

⁸¹ KII with low-ranking officer, NP, Eastern Terai (21/02/2010)

⁸² KII with low-ranking officer, NP, Kathmandu (01/07/2010)

⁸³ KII with non-UCPN-M political leader, Kathmandu (04/06/2010)

⁸⁴ A male community member, FGD participant, Ilam (22/02/2010)

■ **Concern that integration of Maoist Army combatants will lead to demands from other ethno-political groups**

Some *community members* (approximately ten percent) and most *security agency personnel* raised concerns that allowing members of the Maoist Army combatants to enter into the state security agencies would only lead to demands from other ethno-political groups to do the same. For example, one police senior officer from the Mid-Western Terai region stated:

“If we integrate them today then we will open Pandora’s box, and tomorrow the government will have to answer to other armed political groups. Integration cannot be an example for other political groups to follow.”⁸⁵

However, a number of *political leaders*, including from the MJF contested that integration should include other ethno-political groups in the Terai to strengthen the democratic nature of the army (see training section below).

2.2.2.2. STRUCTURE ■ **Perspectives on the implementation of a National Security Strategy (NSS) and establishment of new security agencies**

Approximately 75 percent of *current combatants* (both men and women) interviewed in a group as well *UCPN-M leaders* stated that a NSS should be agreed. This would outline plans for establishing a Military Act which would provide for the restructuring and formation of a new NA as well as the demobilisation and integration of Maoist Army combatants into the national army. *Security agency personnel* and most *non-UCPN-M political party representatives* in contrast argued that the NA did not need to be restructured but instead reformed as part of broader security sector reform.

Current combatants and *UCPN-M leaders* argued that the NSS should also make provisions for the establishment of new security agencies – a Border Security Force (BSF) and an Industrial Security Force (ISF) – and that current combatants and serving security providers (NA, NP and APF) be integrated into these agencies as well as existing security agencies. This was based on the understanding that not all qualified Maoist Army combatants would meet the criteria for the army and that there was a need to consider other options, along with the demand for the creation of these security agencies in and of themselves.

Nearly 70 percent of the *security agency personnel* (including lower- and higher-ranking officers from the NA, NP and APF interviewed at the local and national levels) were also in favour of developing and integrating Maoist Army combatants into new security agencies. For some, this was because they viewed this as a way of managing the Maoist Army combatants and preventing them from integrating into the NA, APF and NP. For example, an APF Inspector stated:

“If the integration of PLA combatants will threaten the professionalism of the security sector, we should think about establishing new security forces in the country where the PLA can be managed.”⁸⁶

For others, particularly lower-ranking officers in the NP, support for integration into these new security agencies was based on the assumption that it was unlikely that all Maoist Army combatants could be integrated into the NA, NP and APF and so there was a need for an additional option. They also argued that Maoist Army combatants should be spread across the NA, NP and APF as well as these new security agencies in order to minimise risk of political infiltration and promote organisational cohesion and reconciliation. Leaders from political parties interviewed – mostly NC and Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (CPN-UML) – civil society representatives and high-ranking officers in the NP also argued that Maoist Army

⁸⁵ KII with high-ranking officer, NP, Mid-Western Terai (25/05/2010)

⁸⁶ KII with middle-ranking officer, APF, Kathmandu (02/07/2010)

combatants should be trained as forest guards as an alternative. For example, a high-ranking NP officer stated:

“Nepal lacks an appropriate mechanism for protecting forests and natural resources so we should use integration as an opportunity to strengthen this [aspect of security].”⁸⁷

■ Rank structure

Eighty percent of current combatants interviewed argued that they would not accept lower ranks in the NA or security agencies relative to those they occupy in the Maoist Army. Many argued that they have the required skills and capabilities, if not the educational standards due to coming from poorer backgrounds, and have made sacrifices. Consequently, they argue, they should be integrated at equivalent ranks. In contrast it was argued by nearly 85 percent of **community members, security agency personnel** and **non-UCPN-M political parties** that Maoist Army combatants did not have the prerequisite training and education for comparable roles in the NA as they held in the Maoist Army. Rather, allocation of rank should be based on the current criteria⁸⁸ agreed by state security agencies (using existing legislation such as the Police Act [see recommendations section] for guidance) and that the existing organisational structures of security agencies should be maintained.

Most of the **security agency personnel** interviewed at the national and local levels were not comfortable with the prospect of Maoist Army combatants entering top ranks in any of the state security agencies – as most current combatants and UCPN-M political leaders argue – without the same qualifications and skills as those already in such positions. For example, a former senior NA officer stated:

“There are many differences in terms of rank between the NA and PLA. For example, a colonel in NA has to have a minimum of 16 to 17 years of commissioned service experience. So if a person joined the army at the age of 18 or 19 they would usually become a lieutenant colonel between the ages of 34 and 35. But in the PLA, at the same age they are already a division commander; in the NA a person cannot be a major general until he reaches 50.”⁸⁹

However, some security agency personnel interviewed, particularly higher-ranking officers in the NP and APF, wanted to be flexible and create honorary positions for certain amounts of time, providing the professionalism of the security agencies was not compromised. In particular, flexibility was suggested on age and educational criteria. This was predicated on the belief that Maoist Army combatants could be educated while working in the security agency to bring them up to similar levels of education as fellow agency personnel. For example, a major in the NA stated:

“If the PLA commit to meeting physical criteria then we can reduce the educational barrier for them, but this needs to be based on a common understanding between the PLA and NA.”⁹⁰

To a certain extent, non-UCPN-M political parties agreed that a compromise should be reached which did not threaten the professionalism of the security sector.

■ Organisational structures

As illustrated throughout this section, most **current combatants** (approximately 80 percent, both men and women) and UCPN-M leaders were generally opposed to mixing Maoist Army combatants and state security agencies in military structures such as regiments, brigades and platoons – at least in the beginning – due to the risk

⁸⁷ KII with a high-ranking officer, NP, Central Hills Region (15/06/2010)

⁸⁸ For example, criteria for entry into the NA include a minimum height of 5'3" for men and 4'10" for women, a minimum weight of 50kg for men and 40kg for women, good eyesight, no loss of teeth, not physically injured or disabled, chest size of 32–34" (men only), ability to perform certain exercises, clear medical test, matching BMI and the ability to write as per SLC certificate.

⁸⁹ KII with former high-ranking officer, NA, Kathmandu (13/05/2010)

⁹⁰ KII with middle-ranking officer, NA, Kathmandu (04/07/2010)

that it may threaten their identity and preservation of their beliefs – a reason why most also favoured the modality of group rather than individual entry into security agencies. For example, one male current combatant stated:

“We must have separate cantonments like we do now because it will help create a more conducive environment for establishing a positive working relationship between [Maoist Army combatants] and [the NA]. I cannot say how long we need to be in a separate cantonment for after integration but it will depend upon the state policies, methodologies and procedures.”⁹¹

In contrast, representatives of **security agencies** (of all ranks and in all agencies, particularly the NA) and approximately 60 percent of community members (particularly men) interviewed during the research were adamant that Maoist Army combatants should be mixed with currently serving personnel based on individual entry into the state security agencies to avoid infiltration of political views. Some argued that if mixed military structures were not established, there would be little difference between the cantonment and the separate military structures within the security agencies.

In an endeavour to address this contentious issue, some **civil society representatives** and **non-UCPN-M political leaders** (particularly CPN-UML) as well as 40 percent of **community members** and approximately 15 percent of **current combatants** suggested that segregation in separate military structures could be on a temporary basis (6–12 months) during initial training and orientation.

■ **Non-combatant roles**

Approximately 50 percent of badly **injured/disabled current combatants** (both men and women) said that they would rather take up clerical and other support roles within state security agencies than return to civilian life, as this would give them a greater sense of security, honour them for the sacrifice they made for the country during the insurgency, enable them to maintain their identity within the UCPN-M and avoid challenges associated with returning to civilian life.

■ **Organisational identity**

Community members, security agency personnel, non-UCPN-M political party representatives and **current combatants** said the identity of the NA and other state security agencies – through uniforms, insignia and values – was an important and contentious issue. Community members, non-UCPN-M political leaders and security agency personnel expressed concern regarding Maoist Army combatants retaining their political ideology and Maoist symbols which might politicise and undermine the professionalism of the security agencies whereas current combatants raised concern about the loss of these symbols and their political identity. However, most current combatants said that they would respect the joint decisions made by political parties regarding this issue.

2.2.2.3. TRAINING

■ **Perspectives on strengthening the professionalism of the Maoist Army combatants**

Most **current combatants** (men and women) argued that it would be humiliating if they had to undergo training as they had been operating as a military for many years. However, many recognised that they needed to undergo training for entering state security agencies. For example one male combatant stated:

⁹¹ A male current combatant, interviewed in a group, Kailali (16/03/2010)

“There should be greater professionalism within the PLA and democratisation within NA before integration... Although we fought a guerrilla war, we are still lacking some professional military training.”⁹²

Current combatants and **UCPN-M political leaders** argued that training should not be provided by the security agencies themselves but by neutral actors. It was also suggested that professionalisation training for Maoist Army combatants should take place abroad and be delivered by neutral international technical/military experts.

Many **security agency personnel** (both lower and higher ranks) argued that training to build the professionalism of the Maoist Army combatants was a key aspect of promoting organisational cohesion between former qualified combatants being integrated and state security agency personnel.

The notion of ‘bridging’ training⁹³ was raised on numerous occasions by security agency personnel from the NA, NP and APF (higher- and lower-ranking officers), especially in connection to aligning the norms of Maoist Army combatants with those of the security agencies. This would be so as not to undermine the professionalism of the security agencies as well as to facilitate successful integration.

■ Perspectives on strengthening the democratisation of state security agencies⁹⁴

Civil society representatives supported the argument made by UCPN-M leaders that the NA needs to become more democratic by bringing the security sector under the control of democratically elected government to which it is accountable; members should receive training in this regard as this was a critical aspect of the CPA. In addition, a number of civil society organisations argued that expenditure and budgetary allocations need to be more transparent and monitored by the Public Accounting Committee. For example, one civil society representative stated:

“Democratisation of the NA means improving transparency and inclusiveness within the institution. The NA should receive more training and be educated to be responsible to civilians just as they were educated to be responsible to the King in the past... The NA should comply with the law and not act above it.”⁹⁵

A number of **non-UCPN political leaders** (including NC, CPN-UML and ethnic-based political parties) supported the argument that the democratic values of the security agencies needed to be strengthened, as they did not adequately represent marginalised caste and ethnic groups and women. For example, a Madhesi political leader stated:

“I feel democratisation in the army is strongly needed. The army should be the pride of country but it’s not. For example, the Madhesi people do not feel confidence in the ownership of the NA which is only represented by a few high-caste groups. The language in the army is typical to elites which the Madhesi cannot speak.”⁹⁶

In addition, an NC leader stated:

“Integration is a major part of the CPA, so it should be done, but only in a manageable number. It needs to prioritise including women, Dalit and Madhesi who are under-represented in the security forces.”⁹⁷

A number of **non-UCPN-M political** and **civil society representatives** also agreed that certain groups should be prioritised for integration. However, they identified some political dilemmas surrounding this issue which could impede this process. First, it was argued that the UCPN-M would prioritise men for integration because, in their perspective, this would give them greater influence in new amalgamated security

⁹² A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (16/03/2010)

⁹³ Defined as training for someone to get them to a higher standard necessary for a given role or rank. This could require formal education, physical, military or tactical training.

⁹⁴ See explanation of the use of the term ‘democratisation of security agencies’ in definitions section above

⁹⁵ KII with national-level civil society leader, Kathmandu (07/06/2010)

⁹⁶ KII with district-level MJF-D, Banke (23/05/2010)

⁹⁷ KII with national-level NC leader, Kathmandu (02/06/2010)

agencies. Many female combatants have had children since joining the Maoist Army and now have other priorities which could undermine their dedication to the Maoist cause. It was also argued that the UCPN-M would not be in favour of prioritising the integration of marginalised caste and ethnic groups as this could spark a revolt of other caste groups in the Maoist Army against the UCPN-M. Conversely, they argued that the state security agencies, particularly the NA, would object to excessive numbers of female Maoist Army combatants being integrated as this would mean that they would exceed the number of women currently in the security agencies. However, some civil society representatives and non-UCPN-M political leaders said that security agencies would prefer women to be integrated over men as they perceive them to be less likely to corrupt or revolt against the security agencies after integration has been completed, and because an increase in women within security agencies would increase the attractiveness of having Nepali forces serve as peacekeepers in UN peacekeeping missions.

Most **security agency personnel** (particularly in higher ranks from all agencies) openly said they needed training on gender and human rights in order to meet international standards. However, some (all ranks and agencies) contested that they need ‘democratisation’ training, arguing that they were already democratic, having already taken steps to introduce human rights standards and gender equality in response to international pressures to meet requirements for UN peacekeeping missions. For example, a former NA major-general stated:

“Democratisation is the wrong notion used by the UCPN-M. The NA leadership believes that the army should come under the democratic control of the people’s representatives. So, democratisation starts and ends there.”⁹⁸

2.2.2.4. A GENDER-SENSITIVE APPROACH TO INTEGRATION

All **current combatants** (men and women) and a number of **former combatants**, **political representatives** (from all parties), **civil society representatives** (both national and district levels) as well as **community members** raised key issues to consider when designing a gender-sensitive integration policy. They argued that Maoist Army combatants, unlike those in the NA and other security agencies, had received training on gender issues and fought for the rights of women during the insurgency. For the Maoist Army, of whom a significant number were women (although accurate numbers have not yet been confirmed), the issue of securing women’s rights in an integrated military was crucial. For example, one male current combatant stated:

“The patriarchal nature of Nepali society means women are discriminated everywhere. Women are not treated as equally in the NA as they are in the PLA. So there needs to be a policy developed which will guarantee the rights of women in integration.”⁹⁹

Additionally, concern was expressed about provision for women during and after the integration process. Specifically, this would include reproductive health services, support in caring for dependants and protection against SGBV. For example, a senior civil society leader stated that:

“Our security forces need to recruit more women. But our basic facilities are not designed for women’s needs. Some of the NA barracks are worse than [the] cantonments and the living conditions are not good. You need separate toilets and wash rooms to accommodate women and reduce risks of them being vulnerable [to SGBV]. Currently, the NA does not have such facilities and infrastructures so investment in these is needed.”¹⁰⁰

Security agency personnel (all ranks), particularly the NP, recognised the gender disparities between state security agencies and the Maoist Army regarding treatment, representation and gender-sensitive policies. However, some (particularly in the NP) felt that efforts were already being made to promote gender sensitivity. For example a middle-ranking officer in the NP stated:

⁹⁸ KII with former high-ranking officer, NA, Kathmandu (13/05/2010)

⁹⁹ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (18/03/2010)

¹⁰⁰ KII with national-level civil society leader, Kathmandu (22/05/2010)

“We have facilities for women here, they are given two months maternity leave and women have the same opportunities as men in the NP. If their husband is also in NP he is also given 11 days of paternity leave. Women are not given special leave during training but if they have some biological problem then we give them leave even if it is not official policy. We also allow women with families to live outside barracks provided their husbands live nearby. We also have separate facilities for women such as separate barracks and toilets. They have every opportunity to succeed and there are many women in higher posts at the NP.”¹⁰¹

Others, particularly in the NA, recognised the need to increase numbers of and facilities for women but argued the biggest obstacle was a lack of government support.¹⁰² For example, a high-ranking (retired) army officer stated:

“The NA wants to increase the number of women but the government is not supportive. We know that women need privacy and separate sanitation facilities but the government has to realise and implement this into policy.”¹⁰³

Although some civil society representatives and political leaders were aware of UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 1325,¹⁰⁴ 1820,¹⁰⁵ 1888¹⁰⁶ and 1889,¹⁰⁷ most if not all of current and former combatants, community members, political leaders and security agency personnel interviewed during the research, particularly at the local level, were unaware of these resolutions and their relevance to integration and rehabilitation.

■ Maternity cover

Most **current combatants** (particularly women) expressed the need for integration proposals to include provision for maternity cover and help continuing their duties during pregnancy.

Some **security agency personnel** (particularly in the NP) were supportive, while others regarded the issue of maternity cover and women’s cultural duties within the family as a nuisance rather than an institutional obligation to accommodate and positively respond to. For example, one senior police officer stated:

“The entry point of the NP is 18 years old, meaning that shortly after joining the police women will often get married and have children. This has a negative impact on the ability of women to perform their duties. On the one hand, women say they are equal to men and yet on the other hand they say that they cannot perform some duties [such as evening shifts] because of their family commitments. As the number of women police is increasing we are considering adopting new policies, such as prohibiting marriage for the first few years of service, to manage these technical challenges.”¹⁰⁸

In addition, a high-ranking officer in the NA stated:

“We cannot compromise regarding time off for having children. We do not take pregnant women for this reason. Women with children face more challenges in successfully carrying out duties in comparison to men.”¹⁰⁹

This highlights the importance of integrating gender sensitivity at the institutional level: working with Nepali security agencies to ensure the needs of women are taken into account in employment, training and general job functions. In addition, employment law pertaining to security agencies should reflect such gender sensitivity within

¹⁰¹ KII with middle-ranking officer, NP, Sindhupalchok (07/06/2010)

¹⁰² KII with former high-ranking officer, NA, Kathmandu (13/05/2010)

¹⁰³ *ibid*

¹⁰⁴ UNSCR 1325 calls for the integration of a gender perspective in all aspects of conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding and post-conflict resolution.

¹⁰⁵ UNSCR 1820 calls for UN-led SSR and DDR activities to explicitly include consultations with women’s organisations.

¹⁰⁶ UNSCR 1888 addresses the need to end sexual violence against women in conflict-affected countries.

¹⁰⁷ UNSCR 1889 calls for measures to improve women’s participation during all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution, post-conflict planning and peace building, including through gender mainstreaming.

¹⁰⁸ KII with high-ranking officer, NP, Kathmandu, (06/06/2010)

¹⁰⁹ KII with high-ranking officer, NA, Kathmandu (04/07/2010)

the context of Nepal the need for equal opportunities and standards to be promoted in labour laws relevant to all employment sectors across Nepal.

■ Support to families

Current combatants (both men and women) highlighted the need for support in caring for dependants during working hours to be incorporated into integration proposals. This is particularly important given that a significant number of the current combatants have been rejected from, or have strained relationships with, their families due to their involvement in the Maoist Army and/or inter-caste marriages (see Section 2.2.3 below on rehabilitation), and are therefore unable to rely on support from family members for childcare. Therefore providing childcare support during working hours was seen as critical for ensuring that women play an equal role to men in state security agencies. Suggestions included the provision of family unit homes in barracks for those with children (including the relatively large number of single-parent families).

■ Education for dependants

Many **current combatants** (both men and women) said that education services for children should be incorporated into integration proposals, especially for those who do not receive family childcare support (especially single parents). Some combatants suggested that integration proposals include support for sending children to boarding schools or the establishment of education facilities in barracks where state schools are not in close proximity. For example, one female current combatant stated:

“The state should provide free education and books for our children and ensure [they]... grow up in a secure environment. Children should be provided education in boarding schools because we will be integrated in the army and it may be difficult to look after them or there may not be any schools nearby.”¹¹⁰

A small number of **security agency personnel** also raised this argument and suggested that dependants attend schools attached to state security agencies which children of parents in NA, APF and NP currently attend. For example, a former senior police officer stated:

“The dependants of combatants who are integrated can make use of existing educational and health facilities. All rates are subsidised and deserving candidates from low economic backgrounds are given priority. That is the main goal of these welfare institutions.”¹¹¹

■ Gender equality in training, rank and promotion

Current combatants (men and women) said that integration proposals should include provisions to ensure women are treated equally to men in terms of assignment of rank (including high ranks), promotion and training in security agencies. In support, **civil society representatives** suggested that this would support the social development of society.

■ Establishment of a mechanism to prevent and respond to cases of SGBV within the security agencies

Many **current and former combatants** (particularly women) and **security agency personnel** (particularly NP) highlighted the need for a new mechanism to be established for responding to incidents of, and reducing the vulnerability of women to, SGBV. This mechanism should address practical measures that could be undertaken, including the provision of separate sleeping and sanitation quarters and making trauma counselling available in barracks. It would also incorporate legal mechanisms, as articulated by one female current combatant:

¹¹⁰ A female current combatant, interviewed in a group, Ilam (19/02/2010)

¹¹¹ KII with former high-ranking officer, NP, Kathmandu (19/05/2010)

“We feel we might be at threat from sexual violence after integration. So ... there must be strong legal mechanisms put in place to respond to and punish the culprits of sexual violence.”¹¹²

Security agency personnel (all agencies and ranks) identified this as necessary as they did not currently have adequate facilities and living conditions were worse than in the cantonments (particularly in the NA barracks).

■ Public awareness raising on gender equality in security agencies

To support the effective implementation of gender-sensitive integration policy, a number of **current combatants** (men and women), **political leaders** at the national and district levels (all parties) and **security agency personnel** identified the need for the state to raise public awareness on gender equality through training, seminars and the mass media. This would help dispel patriarchal cultural beliefs, generate acceptance within society concerning the role of women in security agencies and promote gender equality in state security agencies and national security-related policies. For example, a former high-ranking army officer stated:

“If the mindset of society does not change towards working women in general, you cannot expect to change institutions such as the NA and other similar organisations. If a woman becomes a captain in the army and then has to go back home in the evening whereupon Nepali socio-cultural practices and her family expect her to cook and clean for her family, then she may have difficulty keeping up with the job like other male soldiers. This evolution of traditional gender roles will be gradual. Nevertheless, it needs to change.”¹¹³

■ Gender sensitivity training

A number of **current combatants** (men and women), **security agency personnel** (all agencies and ranks) and **non-UCPN-M political leaders** also identified the need for state security agency personnel of all ranks to receive training on gender sensitivity and human rights as part of the integration process. Security agency personnel linked this to the need to better meet international standards. This would build their capacity to promote gender equality, identify and respond to differing needs of men and women and ensure gender issues are mainstreamed at the institutional and operational levels.

■ Suggestion to draw upon gender-sensitive integration best practices

Some **current combatants** (particularly women) suggested that gender-sensitive integration policies should be developed from existing best practices and lessons learnt in other countries. Many of those interviewed said that they found it difficult to make suggestions on how integration proposals could be more gender-sensitive without having knowledge on what gender-sensitive security sector policy and programming look like in practice. For example, a male current combatant stated:

“Now, there are few females in the NA and I am sure they have been competing with their male counterparts. Although there are few areas where female soldiers may seem weaker than men, they [NA] must review the military forces of other countries where they have recruited women and have been successful. They have to give opportunities to women and learn how to do this from other countries that have experience in gender-friendly policies within army structures.”¹¹⁴

¹¹² A female current combatant, interviewed in a group, Surkhet (25/03/2010)

¹¹³ KII with former high-ranking officer, NA, Kathmandu (13/05/2010)

¹¹⁴ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Surkhet (25/03/2010)

■ **Suggestion to deploy female former qualified combatants selected for integration to UN peacekeeping missions¹¹⁵**

Some *security agency personnel* (particularly higher-ranking officers in all security agencies), national-level *political leaders* (all parties) and *civil society representatives* suggested sending female former qualified combatants selected for integration to participate in UN peacekeeping missions overseas as a way of building their individual experience as well as the professionalism and gender sensitivity of state security agencies. For example, a civil society leader stated:

“Nepal is a big player in UN peacekeeping missions, and recruitment of women is prioritised. The NA doesn’t have many women but the PLA does; so when they integrate, we should send them to these missions. This will provide them with professional training and when they return they will be tremendous assets to the security agencies and the country.”¹¹⁶

2.2.3. **Key findings on rehabilitation**

Key findings in this section have been broken down to illustrate different findings on rehabilitation relevant to economic (employment and livelihoods) and social rehabilitation (reconciliation) at the community level, and psychosocial and healthcare needs for individuals. This is based on the finding that the most successful rehabilitation packages, leading to the most sustainable results, address both individual and community needs through a holistic approach.

2.2.3.1. **GENERAL FINDINGS**

■ **Willingness of Maoist Army combatants to return to civilian life if a favourable package is offered**

As mentioned above, approximately 60 percent of *current combatants* interviewed individually said that they would be willing to return to civilian life if they were offered a favourable rehabilitation package (see below for specific details of what this should include). For example, one male current combatant stated:

“If the government can assure that they will provide us with food, shelter, education, vocational training and economic benefits then I am positive that many PLA will be happy to go back to society rather than joining national security agencies.”¹¹⁷

Of the 60 percent that expressed a willingness to return to civilian life, 40 percent of these were men and 60 percent women (predominantly women with children). For many, this willingness to return to civilian life was based on personal assessments of the current political situation and the perception that in reality relatively few Maoist Army combatants would qualify for integration. Consequently, many of the current combatants (both men and women), including injured/disabled current combatants who felt they would not meet the criteria for integration, decided to prepare mentally to return to civilian life, whether this was their preference or not. For example one male current combatant stated:

“We know that not all of us can be integrated so alternative provisions must be made. We should not be treated like how the state treated discharged PLA. We need money or jobs to make us economically independent.”¹¹⁸

For others, returning to civilian life was their first choice. This was particularly evident among men who wished to pursue political careers and women with children who were concerned about who would care for their children upon integration, as exemplified in the following:

¹¹⁵ In line with UNSC Resolution 1325 and 1820

¹¹⁶ KII with national-level civil society leader, Kathmandu (22/05/2010)

¹¹⁷ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (25/02/2010)

¹¹⁸ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Sindhuli (10/04/2010)

“I’ve spent six years of my life in the PLA and I am not sure about integrating into the Nepal Army. I don’t think it’s essential to integrate women like us in the army because we have children. Some women are pregnant or have very young children with no one to help care for them. But we hope our party will support us properly as we sacrificed our [livelihood and education] opportunities for themselves and society in general.”¹¹⁹

■ **Most current combatants do not want to return to their community of origin**

Approximately 85 percent of **current combatants** (men and women) preferred not to return to their community of origin. For some, this was primarily because of a lack of education options for their children and employment opportunities for themselves, particularly in the case of those who came from very isolated rural Mid- and Far-Western Hill regions. For those who lost their family during the conflict, they did not see any reason for returning home. For others, this reluctance to return home was because of concerns about feeling humiliated for returning ‘empty handed’ or being rejected by communities and families on return. This was especially true for those returning to the Terai and areas most affected by the Maoist PLA during the conflict (see social rehabilitation section below) and for female combatants. For example, a female current combatant stated:

“It is very difficult to go back home and more so for women. Men can go anywhere for work. But where do women go? Most of them have broken relations with their families and communities or they no longer have a family so they can’t go back. It is very depressing.”¹²⁰

By returning to a different community, it was believed that this fear of humiliation could be avoided, especially if their identities and experiences in the Maoist PLA were withheld from these new communities. **Discharged combatants** that had not returned to their community of origin identified similar concerns. For example, a male discharged combatant stated:

“We have not gone home after being discharged because it is humiliating as they will tease us... It is difficult to return home so we are staying here [in a different community].”¹²¹

Geographical areas identified by **current combatants** as possible locations for return to civilian life were urban areas where employment opportunities were perceived to be greater (such as in Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Birganj, Biratnagar and other urban areas in the Terai where the cantonments are located). Many current Maoist Army combatants have already begun to establish lives in the Central, Mid-Western and Far-Western Terai. However, some – particularly those who do not want to return home as a result of lack of employment opportunities – expressed an interest in keeping ties with family members and friends from their communities of origin. This is particularly true of those originally from the Mid- and Far-Western hills including Bajura, Kalikot and Mugu.

■ **Concerns about who is contracted to deliver rehabilitation packages**

Some **current combatants** (particularly men) expressed discomfort with the prospect of private companies, the UN and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) being contracted to provide training and different aspects of a rehabilitation package for the current combatants. They did not want the private sector or these organisations to profit (as they perceived it) in the way they had with the rehabilitation packages provided to discharged combatants. This sentiment was shared, in part, by some **government officials** and **political leaders**. Some current combatants argued that the government should fulfil this role instead and in doing so repay them for the sacrifices they felt they made for the country by joining the Maoist PLA. For example, one male combatant stated:

¹¹⁹ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Surkhet (26/03/2010)

¹²⁰ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Nawalparasi (22/04/2010)

¹²¹ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (08/03/2010)

“The discharged combatants have not been provided with justice. We know that the Ministry for Peace and Reconciliation has a lot of money for managing the disqualified combatants and, furthermore, we have been hearing from media reports that the UCPN-M requested the government to allow the party to support the disqualified as the packages have not been satisfactory. However, the government and the private contractors refused, which is wrong as it is clear to us that they are only interested to profit themselves personally. It would have been better if we had received the allocated budget as we could have established self-managed co-operatives on our own.”¹²²

The views of discharged combatants support these concerns. A male **discharged combatant** in Banke stated:

“The UN and others who work on this project ... are not interested in us. They just want to ensure their allowance for each day spent in the field. There have been many like you who have come here representing different organisations like human rights and international NGOs and they say they care, but they have done nothing for us so far.”¹²³

Despite this, implementing agencies are of less importance to **current combatants** than whether the contents of the packages are considered to be favourable.

■ **Arguments that rehabilitation should benefit broader society and not only returning former qualified combatants**

A number of **civil society representatives, non-UCPN-M political leaders** and **security agency personnel** argued that rehabilitation packages should benefit unemployed youth as well as returning former qualified combatants because they are an equal risk to community security if other groups are unable to access employment and sustain a livelihood. For example, a senior officer in the APF stated:

“There are many unemployed youth in Nepal who are educated but have no opportunities, which is why you see a mob-like crowd at the international airport of people who want to get out of Nepal for jobs elsewhere. So when you focus only on 19,000 PLA, you miss out on other unemployed people who could easily become jealous of those who receiving these privileges.”¹²⁴

Linked to this argument, some emphasised the need to ensure the rehabilitation process takes a community approach to avoid tensions arising between communities and returning former qualified combatants (see recommendations section below). For example, an NC leader argued:

“A problem is that everyone is only focusing on the PLA and all rehabilitation projects and programmes are solely focused on them. But it is very important to accommodate the wider community in this process so there is no gap between them and the communities and also to prevent jealousy and tensions arising.”¹²⁵

The risk of such tensions arising was evident in the attitudes of some **community members** towards the prospect of rehabilitation packages only being provided to returnees. Around 20 percent of community members (particularly men) felt it was unfair for former (qualified and discharged) combatants to be rewarded with money, training and employment opportunities for (as they perceive) inflicting terror on communities during the conflict. This was more evident in communities directly affected by the conflict such as communities in Surkhet and Jhapa. Some community members suggested creating employment opportunities that benefited both community members and returning former (qualified and discharged) combatants, such as infrastructure development, which also promote reconciliation (see recommendations section below).

¹²² A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Surkhet (25/03/2010)

¹²³ A male discharged combatant, interviewed in a group, Banke (21/05/2010)

¹²⁴ KII with high-ranking officer, APF, Kathmandu (05/07/2010)

¹²⁵ KII with NC political leader, Kathmandu (04/06/2010)

2.2.3.2. ECONOMIC REHABILITATION¹²⁶

■ **Maoist Army combatants are interested in vocational training dependent on guarantees for subsequent long-term employment**

While all current combatants accepted that finding employment was desperately hard for ordinary Nepalis, they argued that their sacrifice warranted exceptional treatment from the state, business community and NGOs to help them rebuild their lives. All **current combatants** (men and women) open to returning to civilian life also wanted guarantees of long-term employment to be incorporated into the rehabilitation packages. Some combatants highlighted examples of where they had received professional healthcare training from organisations such as the German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ), which was very well received but did not lead to any employment opportunities. Criticism was also levelled at the rehabilitation packages offered to discharged combatants for the same reason. For example, a male discharged combatant stated:

“We have received training for driving from this institute but who will provide us a vehicle to drive.”¹²⁷

■ **Most Maoist Army combatants want a lump sum of cash but prefer long-term employment opportunities**

Although most **current combatants** stated they would prefer long-term employment opportunities, around 25 percent (particularly men) said that would prefer to be given a cash lump sum – ranging from five to thirty *lakh*¹²⁸ depending on the number of years served – to support them in establishing their own business, finding work in skilled labour overseas (see Section 3.4) or to start a political career. All current combatants criticised the cash lump sum (22,000 NRP) given to the discharged as too low and poorly managed, stating that they would not accept a similar amount.

Some **security agency personnel** and a number of **community members** felt that a one-off payment between five and thirty *lakh* was too high, would cause resentment in the community and would be regarded as unfair by security agency personnel. This would increase the risk of tension arising between returning Maoist Army combatants, community members and the security agencies. However, some security agency personnel suggested a smaller sum of two to three *lakh* would be a fairer amount to help them start their own businesses and rebuild their lives. Moreover, some **non-UCPN-M political parties** suggested that the money should be given as non-interest loans as a way of ensuring that the money is spent wisely and sustainability, or that the money should only be provided once training in establishing one’s own businesses has been received.

■ **Maoist Army combatants unwilling to undertake vocational training and employment in unskilled or lower-status sectors**

All **current combatants** (men and women) were adamant that they did not want to be trained in agro-based production or other lower-status professions and would not accept training similar to that offered to discharged combatants. In particular, they were critical of the training having been provided only in professions where economic benefits would not be visible for a long time. For example, one male current combatant stated:

“The training opportunities included in the package for the discharged – training in driving, agriculture and poultry farming – are not acceptable to us. The discharged themselves were very angry with the package.”¹²⁹

However, it is important to note that criticism levied at these training opportunities (from **community members** as well as **former and current combatants**) was often

¹²⁶ See explanation of the use of the term ‘economic rehabilitation’ in definitions section above.

¹²⁷ A male discharged combatant, interviewed in a group, Banke (24/05/2010)

¹²⁸ Equivalent to 100,000 Nepali Rupees (NRs)

¹²⁹ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Nawalparasi (22/04/2010)

misinformed by poor communication at a local level about the options available in the packages and the UN verification process.

All current combatants (men and women) also felt that the empowerment they had experienced through their role in the Maoist Army would be undermined if they took up a lower-status job. Many argued that they became Maoist Army combatants to escape poverty and an agricultural-based livelihood and were not willing to return to it now. Instead, most said they wanted to be trained in professions such as teaching or healthcare, which were more highly respected within society. As previously mentioned, a number of current combatants had received health training while inside the cantonment and were keen to pursue this line of work. For example, one female combatant stated:

“As a health worker, when integration takes place, I do want to receive more professional training regarding health... We received a month-long training by GTZ a few months back in Kohalpur Hospital, taken exams twice and have received certificates already.”¹³⁰

Other acceptable jobs that were highlighted included infrastructural development, hydro-power development and other jobs associated within the development of the state. **Community business leaders** at the national and district levels validated this as a possibility given that construction work represents a gap in the current labour market. Around 30 percent of **current and former combatants** (particularly men) also said that other skilled labour professions such as engineering, IT, plumbing and electrical services were satisfactory options for employment. Many female **current combatants** also suggested employment as community mobilisers and social workers at the local level to build upon the skills they had acquired through the Maoist Army. Some **political leaders** (UCPN-M) at the national and local levels suggested employment in tourism as an option.

Some injured/disabled combatants (men and women) also stated that they would prefer to work if opportunities arose that suited their physical needs, as this would provide them with greater respect in society; otherwise they suggested a life-long pension would be required to support them to address their needs (Section 2.2.3.4).

■ Keen interest in self-employment and establishing own businesses and co-operatives

Approximately 30 percent of **current combatants** (both men and women) expressed an interest in self-employment and establishing their own businesses. For example, one male combatant stated:

“I would not like to go to the NA, as I don’t like their law and order systems... [or any] other security agency. I want to be rehabilitated with sufficient money to help me to sustain my family and a livelihood... If I get an economic package, I will marry and start my own business.”¹³¹

Political leaders from all parties supported the argument made by many current combatants (men and women) that they should be provided with training and guidance on what types of businesses to establish that would suit the current economic climate.

The experiences of **former combatants** (particularly those who left voluntarily) who successfully set up their own co-operatives in fisheries and transport industries suggest that co-operatives could be an important economic rehabilitation option to be included in the package for current (and all former) combatants. For example, a male **former combatant** (who left voluntarily) stated:

“We have established a co-operative in the fisheries industry and are now reaping the benefits. Collective co-operative business enhances the economic capacity of former

¹³⁰ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (11/03/2010)

¹³¹ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Sindhuli (10/04/2010)

combatants and provides collective economic benefits. The government should invest in such co-operatives for those who will be rehabilitated.”¹³²

Business leaders interviewed at the national and district levels also supported the idea of establishing business co-operatives. For example, a male business community member from Kailali stated:

“We have the potential [natural reserves] for fisheries here. If the government is willing to give them [current combatants] the chance ... and they are willing to set up a group and register themselves legally they should get involved. I also hear that people come here from Chitwan for beekeeping so there is the potential to get involved in that business too.”¹³³

In addition, some business leaders at the national and district levels also suggested that instead of making a formal agreement to hire returning former qualified combatants as part of the rehabilitation process, they would prefer to contract businesses established by the returning former qualified combatants independently. For example, a national-level business leader stated:

“We can’t necessarily create business opportunities for all of them. However, if they are willing to set up their own businesses and register them legally, we can give them business. This is already working where businesses are hiring transport companies set up independently by former Maoist Army combatants in the Terai.”¹³⁴

Political leaders (CPN-UML, UCPN-M and NC) supported the option of establishing co-operatives as part of the rehabilitation packages as they felt that this would allow returning former qualified combatants to live and work together. This would provide them with extra emotional support and limit the risks of depression and feelings of isolation.

■ **Concerns regarding limited availability of jobs in Nepal and interest in receiving training in skilled labour for overseas work**

Approximately 30 percent of male **current combatants** expressed an interest in using skilled labour training to access employment overseas, as they did not feel there was sufficient demand for skilled labour jobs available in Nepal. The **business community** supported this concern as articulated by a leading businessman from Chitwan:

“In our country there are many who are not in the PLA that are unemployed: so how can employment be generated for the former [qualified] combatants? In this country, what options can be generated for employment – tell me? How many jobs are being created? ... Right now they are employed as they are receiving 5,000 NRs each month as a form of salary. They could therefore be used for development work and building infrastructure. Otherwise, we cannot guarantee employment for them, so maybe they can be sent abroad for employment. But I do not know how feasible it is.”¹³⁵

Some **non-UCPN-M political leaders** also argued that by sending former qualified combatants overseas for work, the risk that rehabilitation will undermine community security would be reduced.

■ **Perspectives on private sector employment**

Most **current and former combatants** felt open to the prospect of working in the private sector, identifying potential opportunities in private security and infrastructure development companies as acceptable. However, they had doubts that private companies would accept and trust them. They emphasised the importance of rehabilitation programming including sensitisation for the private sector on their potential role in creating employment opportunities for former (qualified and discharged)

¹³² A male former (voluntarily left) combatant, interviewed in a group, Sindhupalchowk (09/06/2010)

¹³³ KII with business community member, Kailali (15/03/2010)

¹³⁴ KII with business leader, Kathmandu (07/07/2010)

¹³⁵ KII with business community member, Chitwan (23/04/2010)

combatants. For example, one discharged combatant stated:

“I am ready to work with the private sector. But just getting training in driving is not enough, I need a guarantee after undertaking training of getting a job. Who is going to give me vehicle to drive? Not the private sector – they and society do not trust us.”¹³⁶

The views of **business leaders** on the prospect of hiring returning former qualified combatants were mixed. Most at the national and district levels felt that former qualified combatants willing to rehabilitate would be welcomed by the business sector depending on a number of conditions being met. The first was that political ideologies were not brought into the workplace. To ensure this condition was abided by, business leaders suggested that trade unions and political parties make a legal commitment not to interfere in issues about the employment of returning former qualified combatants in the private sector once the rehabilitation process has started. In addition, they also suggested that returnees were provided with orientation training to prepare them mentally for working in the private sector, including trauma counselling where required, which was particularly important given many of them have spent all of their working lives in the Maoist Army and not yet worked in other employment environments. Business leaders also suggested offering incentives to encourage businesses to recruit returning former qualified combatants. This could include providing on-the-job training which would mean that businesses gained labour resources and flexibility while returnees gained particular skills that would help them access employment once they finish their training assignment.

Some business leaders also stated that they would feel more comfortable hiring returning former qualified combatants in areas they originally came from in order to minimise risks of tensions arising within communities regarding competition over jobs. It was suggested that should be taken into account when designing the rehabilitation packages.

On the other hand, some business leaders, particularly at the district level, were uncomfortable with the idea of hiring returning former qualified combatants out of fear that they may corrupt the workforce. In addition, some stated that they did not want unemployed and disgruntled former (qualified, discharged and voluntary left) combatants returning to industrial areas as this would threaten community security, heighten the risk of *bandhs* (strikes) and wreck economic production. Linked to this, most business leaders were adamantly against the idea of Maoist Army combatants entering into the ISF should it be established as part of the integration process. This view was also supported by some **security agency personnel**. For example, a senior security agency officer stated:

“Maoists are still perceived as a threat... So if we place them in the ISF and BSE, will the business community accept them? Business community and labourers are continuously affected by strikes and factory shutdowns because of Maoist-affiliated trade unions. It is very important to understand this perspective as well.”¹³⁷

■ Requirements for support in caring for dependants during working hours

Female current combatants were very keen to pursue employment and undertake vocational training, particularly as a result of the empowerment they had experienced through their role in the Maoist Army. However, many **current combatants** (particularly women) identified the need for support facilities, such as childcare centres, to be established in communities to support women and single parents in order that they are able to take advantage of such employment and vocational training opportunities.

A female **discharged combatant** stated:

“How can you ask a woman with a small baby to participate in training? Where will she keep her baby? Who will take care of the children? Are there any facilities provided by the

¹³⁶ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (12/03/2010)

¹³⁷ KII with high-ranking security agency officer, Kathmandu (05/07/2010)

government for such women? Just offering training is not enough, it should be suitable for us as well.”¹³⁸

■ Perspectives on returning to education

Although all **political parties** suggested that education should be included in rehabilitation packages, approximately 80 percent of **current combatants** (men and women) stated that they would prefer to receive training and guarantees of long-term employment rather than return to formal education (if it was a choice between one or the other). This was because most felt it would be humiliating to return to formal education system at their age (most are in their 20s) and accessing employment and livelihood security was their primary aim. This perception is reflected by the experience of discharged combatants. One male **discharged combatant** stated:

“We cannot continue our education because we are too far behind to complete it with our friends who are already finishing intermediate levels or are teaching in schools by now. It is humiliating not to be with them.”¹³⁹

However, approximately 30 percent of **current combatants** said they would be open to returning to education in parallel to pursuing vocational training or employment opportunities if independent schools for returning former qualified combatants were established. Many did not seek to pursue education as a majority (one half to two-thirds) had undertaken, or were currently undertaking, their School Leaving Certificate (SLC) and around ten percent were undertaking or had undertaken their higher level-educational (intermediate or bachelor level) qualifications.

■ Support in accessing birth, citizen and marriage certificates

Approximately 60 percent of current and former combatants (mostly women) interviewed expressed a concern that they needed support obtaining citizenship and birth certificates for their children, or marriage certificates for themselves, so that they could access employment opportunities and property rights.

2.2.3.3. SOCIAL REHABILITATION¹⁴⁰

■ Positive perspectives regarding community acceptance of returning former qualified combatants

Only 20 percent of **current combatants** (men and women) interviewed individually stated that they would be able to return to civilian life without challenge (i.e. from the community), on the basis that their relationship with their community was strong. For example, one female combatant stated:

“The community is very positive towards us, as we have fought for the people’s rights and as such we have been able to do away with social customs which are based on caste and hierarchy.”¹⁴¹

UCPN-M political party representatives, particularly those at the district level, argued that communities would welcome returning former qualified combatants because they had fought for their country and been instrumental in the ending of the monarchy.

This view was supported by some **community members** (as well as security agency personnel, see below), particularly in areas that were less affected by the Maoist PLA and/or more affected by the state security agencies during the conflict (such as Rolpa and Kailali). Most community members, particularly in areas affected by the conflict (including Jhapa, Sindhuli, Kailali, Surkhet, Dang), said that Maoist Army combatants had been, and would be, accepted back into the community providing they did not return to violent behaviour. In addition, most community members (in all locations)

¹³⁸ A female discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Dang (13/05/2010)

¹³⁹ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (08/03/2010)

¹⁴⁰ See explanation of the use of the term ‘social rehabilitation’ in definitions section above.

¹⁴¹ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (19/02/2010)

supported rehabilitation because it was an integral part of the peace process. For example, one male community member stated:

“We have no problem with the Maoists here in this village, we think of them also as our Nepali brothers and sisters, so we should not think of them negatively. After the Maoists were able to enter mainstream politics after the 12 point agreement, nobody was biased against Maoists or Maoist supporters in my village. So there won’t be any problem for rehabilitation or finding acceptance in society.”¹⁴²

A positive attitude towards the returning former qualified combatants was also notable in some (not all) communities located in close proximity, or the same districts, to the cantonments. This was because some current combatants (men and women) had established relationships and friendships in these communities since they entered the cantonments. In addition, around 20 percent of community members (specifically those within close proximity to the cantonments, including Ilam, Surkhet and Sindhuli) said that the Maoist presence had improved security and access to facilities in their communities (especially the building of infrastructure). For example, a female community member in Ilam stated:

“The presence of the cantonment [here] has meant that there is more security now than during the conflict. The Maoists used to extort and threaten us before and we feared for our lives but now we feel safer. We feel that the Maoist cantonment presence has not had any negative impact on the community’s security. There is minimum interaction between the cantonment and the community, so we have not faced any threat so far.”¹⁴³

However, others said the construction of cantonments had led to higher demand and prices for food and other essential goods, which were now beyond the means of most local people.

For most community members (in all communities consulted), acceptance of returning former qualified combatants was dependent on whether they were economically independent. Most community members therefore supported returnees being provided with economic opportunities in their rehabilitation package (Section 2.2.3.5).

■ **Concerns that current combatants will face difficulties in being accepted back into civilian life**

Stigma around the term ‘rehabilitation’ risks undermining social rehabilitation

Concerns that the term ‘rehabilitation’ (similar to the term ‘discharged’, see below) would worsen relations between communities and returning former qualified combatants was raised by **former and current combatants** (especially Maoist Army commanders) and **community members**. Current and former combatants – drawing upon the experiences of the discharged – argued they did not need to be rehabilitated as there was nothing wrong with them and by referring to their return to civilian life as ‘rehabilitation’ gave the impression to communities that they needed to be rehabilitated from bad behaviour to good. This highlights the importance of using sensitive terminology in the ‘rehabilitation’ process.

Concerns that returning former qualified combatants will face humiliation risks undermining social rehabilitation

As outlined above, many of **current combatants** interviewed (men and women) were concerned that families and communities would perceive them as a failure and reject them; consequently, the majority of those interviewed said that they did not want to return to their community of origin.

However, the reasons why men and women are anxious about rejection from communities and families differed. Approximately 70 percent of men feared being

¹⁴² A male community member, FGD participant, Rolpa (20/05/2010)

¹⁴³ A female community member, FGD participant, Ilam (22/02/2010)

humiliated returning home 'empty handed'. Men also feared harassment from other political parties as a reason for not wanting to return home. Yet roughly 80 percent of women interviewed feared being rejected by their family or community because of negative community perceptions towards female Maoist Army combatants.

These concerns regarding humiliation and rejection are supported by the experience of **discharged combatants**. For example, one male discharged combatant (who had returned to his community of origin) stated:

*"The community looks at us with disgust and they try to look down upon us saying that we failed from being in the PLA and that we are not joining the [Nepal] Army. They say that we left the village to join the PLA and fight for the country ... but still we have returned with nothing."*¹⁴⁴

Another female former combatant (who left voluntarily) stated:

*"There are some people who look down upon us. They say, 'Look at their daughters, they joined Maoists and wandered around jungles with strange boys.' They say, 'Look, she went to get a job, and look she returned back fat because they have been lazy and been doing nothing... How come you returned fat when you went to get a job?'"*¹⁴⁵

Concerns regarding rejection by families and communities of inter-caste marriages

Approximately 40 percent of **current combatants** (men and women) feared rejection because of their inter-caste marriage which is common within the Maoist Army but less accepted within broader society. For example, one female combatant stated:

*"Most PLA combatants have inter-caste marriages which have been creating tensions between them and their families and communities who are not ready to accept this."*¹⁴⁶

According to **community members**, there were a number of incidents where married (former and/or current combatant) couples had returned to the family (either to move back permanently in the case of former combatants or to visit in the case of current combatants) and had either been rejected or the lower-caste spouse had been forced to leave. In some cases (in the perceptions of those interviewed¹⁴⁷) returnees have been coerced by physical violence or even killed (reported as 'suicide').

*"There was a recent case in the community where the family of a male combatant demanded a dowry from his wife, also a PLA combatant. Unable to provide a dowry, she was killed by the family when the male combatant was away and the death was purportedly registered as suicide. This is an example of what the female combatants will face when they are back in society."*¹⁴⁸

A number of cases were reported where female former combatants had run away, sometimes to India, to find work after being rejected from their or their husband's family as a result of their inter-caste marriage. For example, one female current combatant described the experience of a friend (formerly of the Maoist Army):

*"A (Dalit) friend got married to a Rai man in the PLA. When he took her to his home to introduce her to his family, his family refused to let her enter the house. The girl ran away as a result of the rejection. I don't know where she went but heard she went abroad."*¹⁴⁹

Most community members therefore supported returnees being provided with economic opportunities in their rehabilitation package.

Concerns that women will face greater stigma and challenges in returning to civilian life than men

The majority of **current combatants** (men and women) feared that female combatants

¹⁴⁴ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (08/03/2010)

¹⁴⁵ A female former (voluntarily left) combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Sindhuli (09/04/2010)

¹⁴⁶ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (20/02/2010)

¹⁴⁷ This is based on the views of communities and was not validated during the research by local authorities, security agencies or any allegedly involved family.

¹⁴⁸ A female community member, FGD participant, Ilam (23/02/2010)

¹⁴⁹ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (20/02/2010)

would face more difficulties in returning to civilian life than men as a result of community perceptions that they have acted against culturally determined gender roles, participating in inter-caste marriages or behaving in ways regarded as ‘promiscuous’ or ‘aggressive’. These views were compounded by perceptions of members of all **communities** who discussed the traditional role of women in society which was now ‘foreign’ to female combatants having spent years training and living with the Maoist Army. For example, a female community member stated:

“Female combatants will face challenges when they come back to society. The inter-caste marriages between the combatants will make it difficult for female combatants to be accepted in society... They will be scrutinised for living in cantonments and in camps during the insurgency period where they have been in close contact with many men. Our community will look down upon these female combatants.”¹⁵⁰

In addition, a male community member stated:

“There were rumours spread about women PLA combatants that they slept with male [combatants] in the jungles and they are loose. This taints their image.”¹⁵¹

This perception was supported in the views of **civil society**, all **political parties**, **local authorities** and **security agencies** as well as by the experience of **former combatants**. In addition, some security agency personnel and civil society representatives said women would face greater challenges returning to civilian life because they had experienced more intense political education than men while in the Maoist Army. For example, a former senior police official stated:

“Women are subject to greater degrees of stigma and are seen as being highly sexualised and violent, as women who have lain with many men. Women have experienced more indoctrination as well so it is more difficult for them; they need more support.”¹⁵²

Similarly, a civil society representative stated:

“Some communities, particularly those with traditional mindsets, panic about these female combatants. They say they have slept with men, they have had illegitimate children and all sorts of other biases. I think they should go back to society but there is a risk they will not be accepted by communities. The process of sending women combatants back to society needs to be done in a sensitive and proactive way.”¹⁵³

Some **community members** (especially women) expressed a certain level of sympathy towards returning female combatants. However, around 30 percent of community members said female former qualified combatants were more likely to be rejected by other women than men in the community and the family, as they felt unable to relate to former female combatants who had not conformed to cultural expectations. For example, one female community member from Surkhet stated:

“When I sent my daughter to stay in my aunt’s home, she sent her back saying, ‘You are Maoists, even a dog won’t help you’. Women in the community say, ‘Your daughter has gone to the Maoists, she will not be sellable now, who will marry her? She is someone who has walked and slept with many boys, so now who will touch her?’”¹⁵⁴

Another female community member stated:

“A mother-in-law may think that her daughter-in-law does not know how to do anything at home because she has grown up walking and roaming the jungles. So she may not be very supportive towards her.”¹⁵⁵

Consequently, a number of **current and former combatants**, **community members**, **security agency personnel**, and **civil society** and **local government representatives**

¹⁵⁰ A female community member, FGD participant, Surkhet (22/03/2010)

¹⁵¹ A male community member, FGD participant, Nawalparasi (26/04/2010)

¹⁵² KII with high-ranking officer, NP, Kathmandu (19/05/2010)

¹⁵³ KII with national-level INGO worker, Kathmandu (20/05/2010)

¹⁵⁴ A female community member, FGD participant, Surkhet (22/03/2010)

¹⁵⁵ A female community member, FGD participant, Kailali (08/03/2010)

argued that efforts need to be made to raise public awareness on the changing role of women in society. In addition, some security agency personnel and civil society organisations suggested that some business co-operatives which may be established should target returning women as part of their rehabilitation packages.

Concerns regarding adapting to a different culture

About 60 percent of **current combatants** (men and women) raised concerns about readjusting to a set of beliefs different to those of the Maoist Army. Many female current combatants in particular said that society was inherently patriarchal and that they were apprehensive about returning to the disempowered position they had before the conflict. Views of **community members** validate these concerns. For example, one female community member stated:

“The women will also find it difficult to adjust, because the way they view the world is different now. But in time they will return back and do the same house chores of fetching water or rearing cattle as before.”¹⁵⁶

The experiences of female **former combatants** also validate these concerns. Some who returned to civilian life voluntarily explained that it took them several years before being able to re-adjust and be accepted by their communities of origin, as one woman stated:

“I want to give you my own example. It took me two years ... to adjust to this social life. However, I still don't like the culture my mother used to follow. I am also a daughter-in-law but I don't follow the traditions that I don't like. But in my case I am earning for myself. If I didn't have an independent source of income I would be forced to go to my husband's house everyday and take on the traditional role of daughter-in-law – can you imagine that?”¹⁵⁷

Social rehabilitation made more difficult as a result of harassment from political parties

Some **former combatants** (those who were discharged as well as those who left the Maoist Army voluntarily) said that harassment from non-UCPN-M political parties had undermined their ability to integrate back into civilian life. This was because it negatively impacted on their relationships with members of communities, security agencies and local authorities who may be influenced by or associated with these political parties. This harassment was reported in a number of cases particularly in communities most affected by the conflict.

In addition, 20 percent of former combatants (specifically those who returned voluntarily) reported harassment from the UCPN-M for leaving the Maoist Army, as one man indicates:

“We are seen as ‘deserters’ from [the] Maoist party and as Maoist cadres by other political parties. None of them care about us. We feel that we are neglected from both sides and feel very bad.”¹⁵⁸

As a result, many former combatants (particularly voluntary left) tried to maintain a low profile in the community, and withheld their identity and association with the UCPN-M. This had negatively impacted upon their ability to have open relationships with community members and social rehabilitation in general.

2.2.3.4. PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND HEALTHCARE

■ Feelings of depression and requirements for psychosocial trauma counselling and support

Only five percent of **current combatants** explicitly stated that they were suffering from trauma and depression and required counselling. However, based on experiences in

¹⁵⁶ A female community member, FGD participant, Kailali (08/03/2010)

¹⁵⁷ A female former (voluntarily left) combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (25/02/2010)

¹⁵⁸ A former (voluntarily left) combatant, interviewed in a group, Dang (13/05/2010)

other relevant contexts and feedback from organisations that are providing psychosocial trauma and other counselling services to former combatants, the proportion of those suffering from conflict-related trauma and depression is likely to be much higher and it may be that interviewees did not feel comfortable revealing this personal information or do not identify the symptoms. Nonetheless, a few current combatants (particularly women) talked about the need for psychosocial care to be provided to current combatants.

Some **current and former combatants** raised psychosocial trauma as a result of SGBV experienced during and after the conflict as a particular concern. For example, a female former combatant (who left voluntarily) when referring to other specific female current combatants, stated:

“My friend got married with another man from the PLA. After having a baby, she started to live outside the cantonment. But she was sexually abused by her husband. Since now suffers mentally, physically and economically, and cries all the time. We tried to complain to the party but there is chain of command and we don’t have a place to voice our personal feelings and problems. The commanders are not serious about such issues. So, nothing changed. We don’t know what to do, she is suffering and her husband is roaming freely.”¹⁵⁹

Forced inter-caste marriages in the Maoist Army (sometimes leading to domestic violence) were also reported which led to psychosocial trauma issues being faced by some female current combatants. Some of these women were still in the marriage and others had run away, making them more vulnerable. For example, a female former combatant (who left voluntarily) stated:

“When I was in the PLA I was proposed to but I was not interested at all. I refused [a man in the Maoist Army] but he talked to the commanders and they fixed my marriage. I was afraid to talk with the commanders. That day nine marriages were fixed. Finally I ran away from the cantonment and did not go back.”¹⁶⁰

These statements are important as they question widely held assumptions that the Maoist Army is fully gender-sensitive, thus supporting the argument that gender sensitivity training should be delivered to all Maoist Army combatants being integrated and not just security agency personnel (see recommendations Section 3.2.2.4).

Concerns that both male and female current combatants returning to civilian life may face depression and require psychosocial support services were illustrated by lessons learnt from the experiences of discharged combatants, who often showed signs of depression and trauma. For example, a male discharged combatant stated:

“We feel as if we are in a worse situation than that of a stray dog wandering the streets. Our future is not guaranteed and we feel at a crossroads. We participated in battles and fought for many years. To just stop was very difficult. People also tease us so we feel humiliated and cannot keep our minds fresh. I am in turmoil.”¹⁶¹

The depression suffered by these combatants was largely associated with feelings of abandonment and isolation from the Maoist Army and difficulties integrating into civilian life. For example, a male discharged combatant stated:

“After I returned home I could not sleep as I was worried about my friends I left in the cantonment... Many were injured, lost their limbs or even died and I would remember these incidents and events. I witnessed a lot: a brother lost his hand and I saw a friend with shrapnel in his face. This is why I feel so depressed.”¹⁶²

It was felt by a number of current combatants (men and women) that many female combatants could suffer from depression when they returned to civilian life as a result of limited economic opportunities, feeling humiliated and rejection from the

¹⁵⁹ A female former (voluntarily left) combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (25/02/2010)

¹⁶⁰ A female former (voluntarily left) combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Surkhet (22/03/2010)

¹⁶¹ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (08/03/2010)

¹⁶² A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Nawalparasi (26/04/2010)

community. For example, one male current combatant stated:

“If they have no employment or livelihood opportunities they may suffer from depression or even turn to suicide.”¹⁶³

Echoing concerns that male and female combatants would suffer psychologically upon returning to civilian life, some **civil society representatives** reported a few cases where discharged combatants had committed suicide, although the accuracy of these claims is unknown.

■ Ongoing health concerns and need for healthcare support services

Reproductive health needs

Approximately 60 percent of **current and former combatants** stated that they were suffering from health concerns which needed to be addressed through rehabilitation packages, particularly women and injured/disabled combatants. The majority of female combatants (two-thirds) (particularly those with children) reported reproductive health concerns as a result of injuries sustained during the conflict, which had worsened due to poor access to health services. For example, one female current combatant stated:

“Many current and former PLA women face reproductive problems such as prolapsed uteruses, internal and external bleeding and other related problems ... because of the impact that the insurgency has had on their physical health.”¹⁶⁴

Although efforts to provide reproductive health services inside the cantonments had been made, the majority of female combatants interviewed did not feel that these were adequate.

Health needs of the seriously injured and disabled

All **injured/disabled current and former combatants** (men and women) raised concerns regarding accessing adequate health care. For example, one female current combatant stated:

“During the battle, hundreds of PLA were injured by bullets and bombs. Many of us still have bullets or shrapnel in our body and have lost limbs. We lack health facilities, which make our lives more difficult. I strongly urge the government to provide proper health facilities so we can live our lives more easily.”¹⁶⁵

Another male combatant stated:

“I was shot in the Beni Myagdi battle. That bullet is still inside my body. Then I was shot again in the Bardiya battle. I could not take either bullet out because it was too dangerous. Now my both legs have been paralysed. Initially the government was taking care of us but now they did not. Now only my party has been looking after me.”¹⁶⁶

Most **injured/disabled combatants** stated the need for an economic package which included free health and transportation facilities and life-long pensions. For example, one female current combatant stated:

“We cannot integrate the physically disabled in the [Nepal] Army but they must be properly managed. They should be provided with public transportation, education for their children, health facilities and a pension. This would help create a more conducive environment for reintegration...”¹⁶⁷

At the same time, many of the injured/disabled combatants said that they would prefer to work if opportunities arose that suited their physical needs, as this would provide

¹⁶³ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Sukhet (25/03/2010)

¹⁶⁴ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (11/03/2010)

¹⁶⁵ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Surkhet (26/03/2010)

¹⁶⁶ A male current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Nawalparasi (23/04/2010)

¹⁶⁷ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Surkhet (25/03/2010)

them with greater respect in society. Some **political leaders** (UCPN-M) argued that the injured and disabled combatants should be provided with ID cards and housed in rehabilitation centres near to cantonments (as many are unable to be transported) to help them access healthcare, transport and educational benefits.

Community members were sympathetic towards the needs of seriously injured and disabled combatants. **Security agency personnel** (all ranks and agencies) and **non-UCPN-M political leaders** were also sympathetic, although they emphasised the importance of also addressing the ongoing health concerns faced by current and former security agency personnel as part of the rehabilitation packages, in order to minimise potential tensions arising.

2.2.3.5. ■ **Concerns that rehabilitation could undermine community security and heighten the risk of violence**

COMMUNITY SECURITY¹⁶⁸

Risk of returning former qualified combatants engaging in criminal and violent activities despite a primary wish for peace

Despite a primary wish for peace, 80 percent of all **current combatants** (men and women) said they would be forced to return to arms and violence if they were not offered a favourable rehabilitation package in order to secure a stable income. Many said that under these circumstances they would rather join the Young Communist League (YCL) or form their own criminal group and revolt against the government. For example, one male combatant stated:

“If we are neglected by the state and not provided with adequate money or job security that will provide us with economic independence, there will be no other options left: only confronting, fighting and resuming war with the state.”¹⁶⁹

The experiences of **discharged combatants** support the presence of this risk. Approximately two-thirds of the discharged (particularly young male minors as opposed to late recruits) interviewed in the Terai (specifically Kailali, Jhapa and Banke) who were originally from Far- and Mid-Western regions (such as Bajura, Rolpa, Mugu), stated that they were currently considering establishing or joining other criminal groups and returning to violence as a result of the challenges they have faced in returning to civilian life. Such challenges include the inadequacy of the rehabilitation packages offered to meet their needs, feelings of being abandoned by the government, UN and the UCPN-M itself and rejection by their communities of origin. For example, one male discharged combatant stated:

“We are living in very fragile situation: we don’t even have money to buy a Colgate toothbrush. I already feel disheartened. To be frank, we have the choice to either revolt or die. We will form groups of 12–15 to loot and kill those who are rich and powerful. We won’t join any political party or fight for a cause; it will be direct violence with the purpose of looting and robbing.”¹⁷⁰

Another male discharged combatant stated:

“We will be forced to carry guns again. We know how to make guns, bombs and how to destroy everything. We are only waiting for guarantees of a good future. But if we don’t get that or any support, we will start a revolution again. We are closely watching the UN too. If nothing happens – if they don’t care about us and do nothing for us – watch to see how long these UN vehicles will be driving down this road... This is our threat to them. Please pass this message to all concerned agencies.”¹⁷¹

Community members and **security agency personnel** (particularly district-level officers in Banke, Makwanpur and Kailali) also gave examples of how some of the

¹⁶⁸ See explanation of the use of the term ‘community security’ in definitions section above.

¹⁶⁹ A male current combatant, interviewed on one-to-one basis, Ilam (19/02/2010)

¹⁷⁰ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (09/03/2010)

¹⁷¹ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (08/03/2010)

discharged combatants had already engaged in criminal activities and other violent tactics as a result of being offered what is perceived as an unfavourable rehabilitation package (particularly in the Terai). For example, one senior police officer in the Mid-Western Terai stated:

“Look what’s happening with the discharged combatants... They are doing this because they have been excluded, they have nowhere to go, no skills to earn a living and acquire food.”¹⁷²

Political leaders from all parties (especially the UCPN-M) also expressed this concern and the need for rehabilitation packages to meet the needs and desires of returning former qualified combatants to prevent them from engaging in criminal and political violence.

Risk of tensions arising between returning former qualified combatants and communities as a result of rehabilitation

Concerns were raised regarding heightened insecurity for communities. Many **community members** expressed fears about the impact of former qualified (as well as discharged and voluntary left) combatants on deteriorating security conditions in communities and were hesitant to accept them back. Maoist involvement in extortion, threats, beatings and killings was frequently raised. This perspective was particularly evident in areas where communities were badly affected by Maoist PLA activities during the conflict (such as Ilam, Jhapa, Surkhet, Dang, Bardiya and Sindhuli). For example, one male community member from Ilam stated:

“Theoretically, if we look at it then rehabilitation seems like the best option, but practically it may not be possible to rehabilitate all the combatants. They have looted, made threats and killed many before, which is why it will be very difficult to find people who will accept them back into society.”¹⁷³

In addition, many **security agency personnel** and **non-UCPN-M political parties** expressed concern regarding the tensions which might arise after rehabilitation has begun, which could impact on security. This apprehension was particularly notable among district-based political leaders and lower-ranking officers in the NP and APF as it is these individuals who would be directly involved in managing local security during the rehabilitation process.

Many community members and other stakeholders including **security agency personnel**, **political party leaders** and **civil society representatives** considered that the provision of economic opportunities would best promote community safety and reconciliation. This was thought to be the case because it would occupy former qualified combatants and provide them with a means to sustain themselves and their families and engender societal respect towards former qualified combatants (both men and women) from the community members. Most community members therefore supported returnees being provided with economic opportunities in their rehabilitation package. For example, one male community member stated:

“What will the discharged and the qualified that follow now do? They are unemployed and only a small handful are getting work. In this situation they will have to resort to what they know best [to use guns]. This is why the government should give them work, so that their minds are not idle and they don’t have time to think of violence.”¹⁷⁴

Concerns were also raised over heightened insecurity for returning former qualified combatants. Some **current combatants** (particularly men), **community members**, **civil society representatives**, leaders from all **political parties** and **security agency personnel** raised concerns about backlash attacks on returning former qualified combatants at the community level. For example, a female community member stated:

¹⁷² KII with middle-ranking officer, NP, Mid-Western Terai (25/05/2010)

¹⁷³ A male community member, FGD participant, Ilam (18/02/2010)

¹⁷⁴ A male community member, FGD participant, Sindhuli (09/04/2010)

“There are community members who will await their arrival for revenge.”¹⁷⁵

However, many community members and security agency personnel felt that the risk of such a backlash depended on the conduct of returning former qualified combatants. For example, a senior-level officer in the NP stated:

“There may be a security threat to them if their previous and existing behaviour does not change. They need to maintain discipline if they want society to respect and accept them. If they behave in an anti-social and violent manner, they will be discriminated against by society. Society’s response depends on their behaviour.”¹⁷⁶

Consequently, there is a risk of (possibly violent) conflict between community members and former qualified combatants. Linked to this, community members, security agency personnel, current and former combatants, civil society and local government identified the need for rehabilitation programmes to include long-term mechanisms for raising public awareness, orientation and socialisation training for returning former qualified combatants, and programmes that promote reconciliation and dialogue between community members and former qualified combatants.

Risk of tension arising between security agencies and returning former qualified combatants at the local level

Twenty-five percent of **community members** and some lower-ranking officers from the NP and APF expressed concern that former qualified combatants returning to communities where they had fought against state security agencies during the conflict would threaten community security. They felt this was likely to be a higher risk in Maoist stronghold areas (such as in Rolpa, Kailali, Dang and Surkhet) where distrust of state security agencies is greater. In support of this concern, the research identified some levels of mistrust towards security agencies in the Mid-Western Hills. For example, a male community member stated:

“We cannot trust [that the] Nepal Police will protect us since they killed many of innocent villagers and raped our sisters and daughters during the conflict.”¹⁷⁷

2.2.3.6. POLITICAL REHABILITATION

■ **Openness to joining different wings of the UCPN-M as an option for the future (in addition to rehabilitation and integration)**

Around 60 percent of **current and former combatants**, particularly those from Makwanpur and Sindhupalchuk, discussed entry into the various wings of the UCPN-M party as a potential option for their future, although many current combatants said they would still prefer the option of integration. Many regarded entry into various wings of the UCPN-M as a better option than receiving rehabilitation packages because it provided them with more security, allowed them to work alongside friends with similar political beliefs, maintained their political identity and enabled them to avoid the potential challenges associated with returning to civilian life. For example, a female current combatant said:

“I don’t think I should be integrated. I can serve the country by being civilian as well. I think politics needs me more than the army.”¹⁷⁸

Others (especially women with children) were more keen to pursue other civilian careers that were perceived to be a safer option for their children.

■ **Lessons from the experience of former combatants**

The experiences of former combatants to date provide an indication of how likely it is that current combatants will remain attached to the UCPN-M party once they have

¹⁷⁵ A female community member, FGD participant, Ilam (18/02/2010)

¹⁷⁶ KII with high-ranking officer, NP, Kathmandu (01/07/2010)

¹⁷⁷ A male community member, FGD participant, Rolpa (20/05/2010)

¹⁷⁸ A female current combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Nawalparasi (21/04/2010)

returned to civilian life. However, it is important to recognise that experiences of discharged combatants may differ from those of the current (UN verified) combatants as the discharged combatants' perspectives on this issue largely reflect their personal experience of being 'disqualified' and discharged from the Maoist Army as an outcome of the UN verification process, which is not applicable to the current combatants, and the political landscape has changed.

Former combatants (specifically the discharged) maintaining contact with the UCPN-M

Most of the **discharged combatants** said that they had remained in contact with the UCPN-M in order to keep their Maoist identity and hoped that the party would support and protect them. One such man stated:

*"I will be staying with the Maoist party because they are the ones who are going to look after us financially. So even though we are currently disqualified and living outside the cantonment we will be members of the UCPN-M and support PLA in one way or other... As far as I know the [party] will take care of us in terms of logistics, and only if that is not done then we will be forced to revolt as a last resort."*¹⁷⁹

Some said that they had been offered membership in different wings of the UCPN-M in the district and others said that they were already, or going to be soon, engaged in YCL activities. For example, one discharged combatant stated:

*"There is no possibility of joining other political parties or armed groups. We have fought for the people and [the] country and will continue to work under [the UCPN-M] as this is the only one party who will [fight for these goals]. Soon we will join the YCL or other wings of the Maoists."*¹⁸⁰

Security agency personnel (particularly district-based lower-ranking officers within the APF and NP) and **non-UCPN-M political leaders** at the national and district levels reported cases where both current and former combatants had joined the YCL. Their decision to join was attributed to perceptions that the YCL provide them with security and a family in a context where many of them have lost their home, land and family as a result of the conflict. For example, one UCPN-M political leader stated:

*"During the war many people lost their families and homes, and [therefore have] no alternative but to live with other former/current PLA combatants or the YCL in a group. If they don't have family support what alternative do they have? They live in a group because they have to."*¹⁸¹

This is however likely to increase the risk that former combatants (and potentially the former qualified combatants that follow them if they also decide to join the YCL) are rejected by their communities.

Former combatants feel abandoned by the state, the UN and the UCPN-M

The majority of **discharged** combatants felt that, to some extent, the UCPN-M had abandoned them or used them as pawns for political bargaining even though, as mentioned above, most former combatants remain in contact with the party in part in the hope that it will support and protect them. For example, one male discharged combatant stated:

*"We feel betrayed by both the state and the party. The state was not honest looking after us, but we feel more betrayed by the [UCPN-M] who humiliated and failed to look after us."*¹⁸²

This finding is supported by interviews with local **civil society** and **government** representatives as well as a small number of UCPN-M leaders at the district level. For example, one UCPN-M district-level leader stated:

¹⁷⁹ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (08/03/2010)

¹⁸⁰ A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Ilam (25/02/2010)

¹⁸¹ KII with national-level UCPN-M leader, Kathmandu (29/06/2010)

¹⁸² A male discharged combatant, interviewed on a one-to-one basis, Kailali (09/03/2010)

“I worry about those who were disqualified, what will they do, where will they stay? The state has wronged them and actually the Maoist party has let them down and is also responsible for this. This will invite a serious and big conflict in the near future soon. They fought for many years, and now they were just sent home with nothing.”¹⁸³

Former combatants leaving the UCPN-M since returning to civilian life

Around 20 percent of **discharged combatants** have not maintained links with the UCPN-M. This was often because they felt betrayed or let down by the UCPN-M. For others it was because they were disillusioned with politics more generally. And for others it was because they were interested in forming or joining a criminal group (see above). **Current and former combatants** did not explicitly state that they have or were considering joining other ethnic-political groups. However, leaders from these parties stated that a number of former combatants (mostly the discharged combatants as well as some who left voluntarily) had approached them regarding joining their group. For example, one Limbuwan Volunteer leader stated:

“Many of the discharged PLA are willing to join us and help us in getting our demands met.”¹⁸⁴

However, for others this was because they now had family commitments that prevented them from dedicating time to the UCPN-M.

¹⁸³ KII with UNPN-M political leader, Far-Western Terai (09/03/2010)

¹⁸⁴ KII with representative from Limbhuwan Volunteers, Ilam (17/02/2010)

3

Recommendations¹⁸⁵

THE RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH FOLLOW have been drawn from suggestions made by target groups – including current and former combatants, community members, security agency personnel and representatives of political parties, local authorities and civil society – interviewed during the research (see Section 1 and Annex 3). Recommendations are also informed by the articulated experiences of discharged combatants (see Annex 1). These recommendations also include suggestions made by Saferworld based on a synthesis of findings and an analysis of how to ensure rehabilitation and integration processes are implemented in a conflict- and gender-sensitive manner. Saferworld has also contributed to identifying implementation timelines and responsible actors.

Although the research included a focus on the different perspectives of current and former combatants regarding entry into political careers as a third option in addition to rehabilitation and integration, recommendations on this are beyond the focus of the report and have not been included in this section.

Development and implementation of recommendations should be co-ordinated by the Integration and Rehabilitation Commissions (see below) and, in their absence, the SC and TC.

3.1. Recommendations relevant to both rehabilitation and integration

3.1. ■ Political consensus and buy-in

Most importantly, political consensus and buy-in are critical to ensuring that integration and rehabilitation take place effectively and, more broadly, to enabling the successful realisation of the peace process. All political parties will need to apply a certain level of flexibility regarding positions on key controversial issues – including numbers to be integrated, rank conversation/harmonisation, training to professionalise Maoist Army combatants, modality of integration (individual or group basis) and whether Maoist Army combatants enter into mixed or segregated military structures – in order to negotiate an agreed consensus.

■ Develop a comprehensive policy on rehabilitation and integration that is conflict- and gender-sensitive

While laws and policies do exist that will influence the integration and rehabilitation

¹⁸⁵ All recommendations in this report are in line with the UN's International Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), 2005. See <http://unddr.org/iddrs/framework.php>

processes¹⁸⁶, there is currently no existing legislation in place that clearly sets out the strategy for the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants and clarifies the technicalities around exactly how these processes should take place. Therefore, political consensus on the development of a policy concerning the integration of Maoist Army combatants into existing and (potentially) new security agencies and rehabilitation into civilian life, which clearly articulates how these processes should be implemented, must be prioritised.

The policy should incorporate provisions for implementing recommendations outlined in this section and must be sensitive to the context. It should also consider and respond to the different needs of men and women (including Maoist Army combatants, security agency personnel and community members) equally. The TC is well placed to be responsible for developing this policy in consultation with key stakeholders including security agencies, the Maoist Army, communities, civil society and government. Once a comprehensive policy has been developed it should be adopted without undue delay.

■ **Recognition of the need to undertake preparatory transitional and planning activities**

Although rehabilitation and integration may happen very quickly, this does not guarantee the effectiveness (including conflict and gender sensitivity) of the processes (see below). Therefore, the initial stages of implementation should be regarded as only the beginning of a longer process which includes a preparatory transition and planning phase but also a realistic implementation timeframe that is overseen by neutral rehabilitation and integration commissions (see below).

To ensure maximum impact of the rehabilitation and integration processes, **a minimum of six months should therefore be allocated to the implementation of preparatory transition and planning phase activities**. These activities should include orientation, sensitisation, awareness-raising, communication and undertaking assessments and consultations (Sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.8).¹⁸⁷ This is fundamental to ensuring that the rehabilitation and integration processes respond to the different needs of male and female current combatants, state security agency personnel, and communities, and to the local context, thus strengthening their overall effectiveness.

Lessons learnt from the challenges faced in the implementation of the rehabilitation programme for discharged combatants – which did not include an adequate transition and orientation phase as a result of a lack of political buy-in for this and pressure to commence implementation within a short timeframe – emphasise the importance of including this preparatory period. During this preparatory transition and planning phase, Maoist Army combatants due to be integrated or rehabilitated should be housed in current cantonments (as ‘transition centres’) that act as bases for pre-integration and rehabilitation consultations, orientation and sensitisation training to take place.

■ **Establish neutral mechanisms for implementing and monitoring rehabilitation and integration**

Two national-level politically neutral and government-owned mechanisms should be established – one for managing the implementation and monitoring of rehabilitation and one for managing the implementation and monitoring of integration. To ensure these mechanisms are politically neutral, they should not include the participation of representatives from political parties. Instead, a government-owned national-level **Integration Commission** should be established which includes an advisory panel with representatives from each security agency (also to include former Maoist Army representation), national security experts (and international security experts where

¹⁸⁶ See Annex 2 for a detailed analysis of existing laws and policies relevant to integration and rehabilitation and recommendations on how they need to be strengthened.

¹⁸⁷ With regards to rehabilitation, this is referred to as a ‘reinsertion’ phase in DDR programmes.

they can offer relevant and required additional support but must work with a national counterpart to build capacity), the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Women and Children (MoW&C) and the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR). The advisory panel members should be politically neutral and would provide technical advice on the different components of integration as well as advising on the implementation framework and oversight mechanisms (Section 3.1). Advisory panel members and Integration Commission staff should be inclusive of all marginalised groups (specifically women, youth and marginalised ethnic and caste groups).

The Integration Commission should be co-chaired by the MoD and the MoHA (and be physically based in one of these ministries). The Commission should be responsible for the implementation of the integration framework and methodology (once agreement on numbers and process has been made) and will specifically provide technical support where necessary to the NA, NP and APF (in addition to any new security agency established), in particular: training provision, facilitation of public awareness and the development of civil-military and police-community relations in an advisory capacity, the mainstreaming of gender responsiveness at the policy, programming and personnel level within each agency and the streamlining of agency policy and codes of conduct to maximise reconciliation within each agency. Other recommendations made in this report are also applicable to the functioning of the Commission. The Commission should also conduct monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to ensure the process is effective. The SC should make a recommendation for the establishment of this Commission.

In addition, a politically neutral and government-owned national-level **Rehabilitation Commission** should be established and be responsible for the implementation and management of the rehabilitation programme. This should incorporate an advisory panel with representation from the MoPR, the MoHA, the Ministry of Labour and Transport Management (MoLTM), the Ministry of Education (MoE), the MoH, the MoW&C and national experts on rehabilitation (including technical experts from the UN and any other international institutions agreed by all parties and international advisors where necessary working with a national counterpart), one representative from the (former) Maoist Army from each of the five development regions (i.e. representation from those in the rehabilitation process to be identified through the commission's representation at the district level) and current and former security agency personnel (drawn predominately from the NP and APF who will have a more direct role in responding to any tensions that arise out of the rehabilitation process). It should also include representatives from the private sector and civil society organisations working on issues relevant to rehabilitation – including health care, income generation and vocational training, legal services, gender sensitivity and education. Representatives should be politically neutral and are able to contribute on technical aspects of rehabilitation. The advisory panel would also make recommendations on the composition of, and division of responsibilities within, the Commission, in addition to providing general oversight and suggestions of oversight mechanisms during implementation.

The Rehabilitation Commission should be owned by a government ministry agreed through political consensus. The work of the Commission should be comprised of a number of different teams each tasked with co-ordinating work related to the different thematic components of rehabilitation – e.g. education, psychosocial counselling, healthcare and vocational training. Specific team roles, numbers and composition should be decided upon by the advisory panel but should include: Finance and Administration Department (responsible for accounts, budget, procurement, administration and personnel and IT), Operations Department (with health and psychosocial, economic rehabilitation, social rehabilitation, gender and district liaison teams) and an Information, Monitoring and Evaluation Department (including information and public relations as well as management information systems (MIS)

and M&E units). Advisory panel members and Rehabilitation Commission staff should be inclusive of all marginalised groups (specifically women, youth and marginalised ethnic and caste groups).

The SC should make a recommendation for the establishment of, and handing over of responsibility for implementing and monitoring rehabilitation to, this Commission. See Annex 4 for a suggested organogram for the Rehabilitation Commission.

District-level Rehabilitation Commission presence, through District Rehabilitation Officers (DROs), District Monitoring Officers (DMOs) and psychosocial counsellors (PSCs) should also be established and maintained, to co-ordinate implementation and monitoring of the rehabilitation process at the district level. District-level presence should connect with and be managed by the national-level commissions and should function in the same manner as outlined above by implementing policy and standard operating procedures (SOPs) developed at the national-level.

The DROs should play a key role in managing, co-ordinating and supporting rehabilitation at the district level. Their primary function should be to provide support to rehabilitating former qualified combatants by working with them on an individual and group basis, liaising with local authorities (Village Development Committees (VDCs) and District Development Committees (DDCs)) and Community Rehabilitation Committees (Section 3.3.8.3), vocational training providers, health providers, education providers, PSCs and other stakeholders involved in the different components of programme delivery at the local level. This will involve regular outreach and will seek to reinforce community sensitisation on an ongoing basis and facilitate the transition period from combatants to civilians (Sections 3.3.8.3 and 3.3.9.2).

The DMOs should be responsible for data collection in collaboration with Community Rehabilitation Committees – which should also have M&E focal points (Section 3.3.8.3) – regarding successes and challenges being faced in the implementation of rehabilitation programmes at the district level which will feed into the Commission's M&E systems.

PSCs should be responsible for delivering counselling to former qualified combatants and communities (Section 3.3.9.3), working closely with the DROs and DMOs and Community Rehabilitation Committees (Section 3.3.8.3) and should form part of the Health and Psychosocial Team in the Rehabilitation Commission (see above and Annex 4).

DROs should be based within all districts in target geographical locations¹⁸⁸ (ideally based within existing district structures such as DDCs). One DRO and one PSC should be allocated to each district, although in cases where former qualified combatant numbers exceed 200, an additional DRO and PSC should be allocated to each subsequent 200 former qualified combatants so that the ratio of former qualified combatants to DRO and PSC is no greater than 200:1. Each DMO should be given responsibility for performing monitoring functions in five districts (in target geographical areas).

These Commissions should co-ordinate the implementation of the transition programmes as well as activities in the implementation phase (see below for details of activities in these different phases). To achieve this, these Commissions should be established as a matter of urgency.

The tenure for these Commissions should be decided by the SC and should be for a substantial and realistic length of time given the extensive time required to ensure

¹⁸⁸ See Section 3.3.1. **Target geographical areas** should include 1) all large urban areas in the Terai and hill regions (such as Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Biratnagar, Birganj, Birtamod, etc), 2) areas where the cantonments are located and combatants have established relationships and friendships in the local community since entering into the cantonment and wish to remain in this area (particularly in the Central, Mid-Western and Far-Western Terai) and 3) areas where the majority of the Maoists originated from and may return to at some point in the future (i.e. Mid-Western and Far-Western Hills including Rolpa, Kalikot, Mugu, Rukum and Bajura), especially if there are employment opportunities. In order to ascertain information on locations of return, data collected during the socioeconomic profiling should be utilised (Section 3.3.8.1).

adequate co-ordination between stakeholders and to implement and monitor both the transition and implementation phase activities effectively. Based on lessons learnt from other contexts, tenures of at least three years should be considered, with room for extension up to a total of five years if required. However, the size and scope of the Commission would reduce incrementally over time in accordance with need; for example, training activities may reduce and be replaced by increased monitoring.

■ **Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)**

As outlined above, comprehensive M&E systems should be established to monitor implementation of integration and rehabilitation processes, and should be based with-in and co-ordinated by the respective Integration and Rehabilitation Commissions. To ensure that adequate importance is placed upon and time allocated to conducting effective M&E, a team should be established within both Commissions and should be dedicated specifically to the role of co-ordinating M&E activities, with dedicated M&E staff at the district-level through DMOs in the case of Rehabilitation Commission only (see above). It is important that staff dedicated to M&E are impartial to the implementation of the programme to ensure neutrality in the collection, analysis and reporting processes, and that they can effectively collaborate with implementation staff to ensure monitoring leads to necessary changes to strengthen programme implementation.

The Rehabilitation and Integration Commissions should be responsible for developing and agreeing M&E frameworks and indicators for measuring success with the support of M&E technical experts. Indicators for measuring the success of both rehabilitation and integration should not only focus on measuring the success of implementing programme objectives and identifying gaps in implementation that need to be addressed, but should also assess the impact of the programme on the broader conflict and security context.

■ **Rehabilitation and integration should be based on informed individual preference**

Rehabilitation and integration should respond to informed individual preference (as well as security sector requirements, socio-economic opportunities and constraints and affordability). Ideally, each current combatant should be consulted regarding their preferences to integrate into security agencies or return to civilian life, and efforts should be made to accommodate these choices within national security requirements. To support current combatants in making an informed decision regarding their future, information should be provided on what employment in security agencies or civilian employment would actually involve – including salaries, roles and responsibilities and working conditions. Group lectures (one-hour long) of 200 participants at a time should be undertaken in each cantonment simultaneously over the period of one week with the aim of disseminating information on this issue and distributing information leaflets. Following the lecture, all participants will be requested to provide an indication of their preference through an anonymous and confidential voting system to inform planning and programme design. These consultations should be undertaken before the preparatory transition and planning phase commences and be co-ordinated by the TC as one of the indicators of likely numbers for integration and rehabilitation respectively.

■ **Cost analysis and fundraising**

While developing integration and rehabilitation processes responsive to the needs, expectations and concerns of current combatants (as well as other key stakeholders including community members and state security agency personnel), it is especially important that plans are responsive to the broader (security and economic) needs of Nepal and, most crucially, are affordable. Consequently, a detailed cost analysis of

integration and rehabilitation plans (by the TC in the absence of the Integration and Rehabilitation Commissions), fundraising (by the international community and domestic authorities, to be co-ordinated by the TC in the absence of the Integration and Rehabilitation Commissions) and expectation management (by all stakeholders) should be key parts of the planning process. Availability of funding and budgetary constraints may impact on planned activities and contingency plans should be developed in advance.

■ **Financing and role of government**

Funding for the rehabilitation and integration processes to take place should be provided by the government where possible and the international community where the government is unable to do so. These funds would need to be adequate and reasonable, in line with international best practices. At the very least, the government should allocate non-financial resources and enable relevant existing government bodies to participate in and support the process. This would include the involvement and support of government healthcare and education services, and VDCs, and job creation. It would also involve the contribution of resources to support training as well as the establishment of SGBV units, trauma counselling and reconciliation units, family units, support mechanisms for dependants and gender-sensitive policies in security agencies through the Integration Commission as appropriate.

Even where the government is unable to provide funds, the government should ensure political buy-in to the process, and government ownership will be achieved through the government co-ordination of the Rehabilitation and Integration Commissions, without compromising the neutrality of the Commissions. The government should also play a role in communicating information about the rehabilitation and integration processes to the broader public and in particular to local government bodies requesting support and collaboration at the local level as appropriate and as agreed by the expert panels within the Commissions. Government ownership of the process (as opposed to politicisation) is critical to the success of the rehabilitation programme and uptake of packages, as illustrated through the challenges faced in the rehabilitation of the discharged combatants (Annex 1).

To ensure a conflict-sensitive approach is maintained and tensions are not exacerbated within the communities as a result of the rehabilitation process, stipends provided to former qualified combatants participating in rehabilitation packages should be adequate for covering living costs but appropriate to the local context in Nepal (i.e. not exceeding local average wage) and in line with international best practice.¹⁸⁹

■ **Expectation management**

As part of initial consultation and awareness-raising projects, current combatants should be informed about factors that may impact integration and rehabilitation packages and their preferences for either, in order to better manage their expectations. These factors would, for example, include affordability, security sector requirements and developments in the economy. This should also extend to receiving communities in target geographical areas.

¹⁸⁹ See Module 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration in UN Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) for guidance: <http://unddr.org/iddrs/04/30.php>

3.2. Integration

Ideally, as a best-case scenario, planning for integration should be informed by the outcomes of an **analysis of national security and defence needs**, and incorporated as part of a NSS which outlines ways to address identified gaps and challenges and strengthen existing and establish new Nepali security apparatuses to reflect this. This, in turn, would lead to the development of a more responsive, effective and efficient security sector and serve as a catalyst for movement beyond the current political impasse and provide the foundations for political and social reconciliation in Nepal. If integration takes place prior to such a review, it will take place within an uncertain context driven by political, rather than security, considerations. This may lead to difficulties in the future. Building upon existing structures, the National Security Council and Secretariat for a National Defence Council should be responsible for co-ordinating this review process, as they were established for this purpose through the Interim Constitution in 2002 (National Security Council) and in 2007 (Secretariat for the National Defence Council) and are responsible for the development of an NSS.

However, integration, as a priority for moving the peace process forward, should not wait for an NSS to be agreed if this will mean delaying the integration process for a number of years (although it should be noted there are numerous negatives to a delay in the development of an NSS, not least the integration issue but also the potential insufficient response to relevant security risks Nepal currently faces). At the very least, integration should be informed by an analysis of security and defence needs and seek to address gaps identified if this can be undertaken in the short term, but should not wait for this to take place in the long term. If a review of security and defence needs is undertaken after integration commences, it can still inform the process. The review of security and defence needs should include an analysis of the existing, and need for changes to, the number of personnel for each security agency (disaggregated by security agency, rank and gender), criteria for allocation of ranks for future employment, infrastructural, logistical, equipment and training needs and surplus, organisational structure and chain of command, arms and armament stockpiles in the country, needs for establishment of new security agencies and the existing and potential future security challenges including internal and external threats.

3.2.1. Preparatory transition and planning phase

■ **Raise public awareness on the technicalities of integration and on the role of women in security agencies**

To raise public awareness on integration and avoid tension arising from misunderstanding, public awareness campaigns at the local and national levels should be implemented before and during the process of integration. In addition, activities to raise public awareness on the equal role of women in the provision of security should be implemented in order to strengthen public demand for gender equality in security agencies. This would, in turn, put pressure on security agencies to take action to ensure that gender sensitivity policies are developed and implemented as part of the integration process.

Awareness-raising activities on both issues should include targeted radio programmes, articles in newspapers, information leaflets, street drama, public seminars and so forth. In particular, public seminars should start in major towns and in areas that have large numbers of troops in barracks nearby. Every endeavour should be made to ensure they involve both men and women equally as well as all ages and ethnic and caste groups, by targeting excluded groups and holding seminars at times and in places where women and others can attend, for instance. They should also be large forums in outside spaces so anyone can participate. Radio programmes should be aired nationally and at the district level (in all districts) in local languages in order to reach those that cannot speak Nepali. These activities should be co-ordinated by the Integration Commission and delivered in conjunction with local authorities and civil society,

including NGOs, community/women's group, media organisations and journalists, and continue into the implementation phase.

Public awareness-raising on integration should focus on the technicalities of integration including key considerations for the process and potential challenges – drawing upon international best practice – and providing an overview of the different components of the integration process agreed for Nepal. Public awareness-raising on the role of women in security agencies should provide information on the importance of gender equality and sensitivity in the security agencies including how this would strengthen the provision of security at the local level especially in terms of addressing SGBV cases, and also provide information on the relevance and accountability of UNSCRs 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889.

■ **Consult current combatants and state security agency personnel**

The specific details regarding integration process and policy should not be agreed in haste (although the planning and implementation of the integration and rehabilitation processes should be expedited and efforts should be made to compromise on sticking points). Current combatants who may be integrated and personnel from security agencies must be consulted during this transition period to ensure that agreements on the technical aspects of integration reflect their individual needs. This is especially important with regards to differing requirements of male and female Maoist Army combatants and/or state security agency personnel, who must be consulted equally in this process. The Integration Commissions should be responsible for co-ordinating these consultations.

■ **Provide separate orientation and sensitisation training on the integration process for Maoist Army combatants due to be integrated and state security agency personnel**

For both security agency personnel and Maoist Army combatants, the training should focus on the current situation as seen from both sides and emphasise both the rights and responsibilities of all citizens of Nepal. It should include relevant information on the peace process and provide human rights and gender sensitivity training. It should also offer practical guidance on potential challenges that may be faced by men and women when integration takes place and how to respond to these challenges sensitively, proactively and through non-violence. In addition, for Maoist Army combatants who may be integrated, the training should provide information on existing security sector acts and policies, roles and responsibilities and the structural framework of the security agencies. Each participant – including security agency personnel from different ranks and different security agencies (where Maoist Army combatants are to be integrated) and all personnel from the Maoist Army due to be integrated – should partake in workshops which should be held separately for security agency personnel and Maoist Army combatants in the preparatory transition and planning phase. These activities need to be properly planned and the number and length of workshops should be decided by the Integration Commission. These activities should be co-ordinated by the Commission, but in the event of sub-contracting to an external organisation, efforts should be made to ensure neutral actors, including technical experts and civil society organisations are used and employ sensitivity, as agreed by all parties.

■ **Develop contingency plans**

In order to allay fears and prepare for new developments or challenges that may arise during the integration process, contingency plans should be developed for all feasible scenarios (which would include the identification of spoilers, the analysis of prospective socio-economic and political developments, and the prioritisation of projects should sufficient funding not be forthcoming). In addition, the impact of integration

upon operational capabilities of each security agency should be considered and any potential adverse impacts mitigated. The development of contingency plans should be co-ordinated by the Integration Commission.

3.2.2. Implementation phase

3.2.2.1. GENERAL

- **Allocate time for discussions, negotiations and reflection on outcomes of consultations at the high policy level.** Once consultations with Maoist Army combatants, communities and security agency personnel have been undertaken, adequate time should be allocated at the end of the transition period to digest findings, consult with relevant government bodies, security agencies and other key decision-makers in order to ensure that the different needs of returning combatants, communities and security agencies are responded to through the integration process. The Integration Commission should co-ordinate these discussions at the high-policy level.
- **Include women, excluded ethnic groups and marginalised castes in the integration process.** Most Maoist Army combatants came from poor backgrounds, regional communities and approximately one-fifth¹⁹⁰ were women. Women and excluded ethnic and caste groups should be included in the integration process in order to strengthen the democratisation, inclusivity, representation and tolerance of such communities throughout the state security sector. This would, in turn, improve these groups' trust and confidence in the security agencies, and also improve the agencies' responsiveness and effectiveness. Consequently, quotas should be used for the integration process, while keeping in mind any animosity that may arise among other groups as well as the desires of the current combatants and needs of the security sector. The Integration Commission should oversee development and implementation of these quotas.
- **Prioritise recruitment of injured/disabled former qualified combatants and security agency personnel for non-combatant roles in the security sector.** There are many non-combatant roles in the state security agencies, including administrative and support functions as well as intelligence, finance, personnel, communication and IT tasks, for example. Recruitment to these positions should prioritise injured/disabled former qualified combatants, in order to support their self-sufficiency and to meet international standards regarding equal opportunities for people who are often discriminated against, marginalised and victimised. To avoid tension arising and promote reconciliation, injured/disabled members and former members of the state security agencies should also be prioritised. The Integration Commission should assist security agencies in identifying how representation of injured/disabled former qualified combatants and former security agency personnel can be meaningfully increased. Thereafter, the Integration Commission should monitor compliance with agreed principles and benchmarks in this regard.
- **Security agencies with technical support and guidance from the Integration Commission should develop internal policies and establish mechanisms for promote reconciliation between state security personnel and integrated former qualified combatants.** An internal reconciliation and dialogue policy should be agreed in each security agency to support existing hierarchies to resolve conflict; develop and co-ordinate the implementation of appropriate policies; organise trust-building recreational activities such as inter-agency sports leagues; respond to and mediate any tensions that arise between (former) Maoist Army combatants and existing security agency personnel; and provide counselling services on a case-by-case/individual basis. Security agency personnel who have received mediation training through their role in the mediation taskforce (see below) would be a natural choice to implement this policy, working in close collaboration with officers in each security agency who are responsible for ensuring organisational cohesion. Additional trauma counselling services should be provided by specialists attached to – but independent of – this unit.

¹⁹⁰ According to internal UN documents and verbal information provided by staff from UNIRP on outcomes of UNMIN Verification Data (undertaken in 2007).

This mechanism in each security agency should be staffed by a small team of counsellors and organisational cohesion officers/social workers and should work closely with officers to increase their conflict resolution capabilities. The Integration Commission should provide security agencies with technical support in developing internal policies and establishing mechanisms in this regard.

- **Consider putting former Maoist Army combatants selected for integration forward for participation in UN peace-keeping missions.** This will help to strengthen their individual professional experience in line with international standards which in turn will strengthen the capacity of the security agencies when they return. Security agency personnel should be considered for this as well as male and female former Maoist Army combatants, to ensure the process is gender- and conflict-sensitive and does not exacerbate the risk of tension arising between security agency personnel and those returning from the peacekeeping missions. In addition, women should be actively targeted and selected for such missions in order to comply with UNSC Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889. The Integration Commission should be responsible for agreeing upon a strategy for taking this forward in consultation with relevant security agencies and individuals being put forward for this option and the entry criteria will be dependent upon United Nations Department for Peace-Keeping Operations (UNDPKO) directives.
- **Strengthen civilian-military relations as well as relations between communities and other security agencies** through:
 - The establishment of **community security dialogue mechanisms** in target geographical areas which bring together community members (including representation from former (qualified, discharged and voluntary left) combatants, all ethnic and caste groups and men and women equally) to identify and prioritise key security concerns faced at the local level. In collaboration with local authorities and security agencies (specifically NP and APF and including representation from integrated former Maoist Army combatants), these mechanisms would identify and implement joint solutions for addressing these security concerns, building upon and linking with existing relevant initiatives, including community-based policing (CBP) initiatives currently being implemented by the NP. This process should be co-ordinated by the NP and APF (as these agencies have direct responsibility for delivery of security at the local level) with technical support from the Integration Commission and in collaboration with civil society actors, local authorities and communities. In addition, these mechanisms should build upon and connect with the Community Rehabilitation Committees established through the social component of the rehabilitation programme (Section 3.3.8.3). This would not only build trust and reconciliation between communities and security agencies (particularly APF and NP), but would also, in so doing, facilitate the development of more responsive and effective security agencies.
 - **Mediation training to district-based security agency personnel (specifically NP and APF)** to minimise potential tensions and strengthen relations between state security agencies and returning former qualified combatants. As a result of the conflict, there is a risk that there will be underlying and unaddressed tensions between former qualified combatants and security agency personnel in some areas. Training should focus on providing an overview of the current situation as seen from all sides, dispelling biases and potential (mis)conceptions and rumours about Maoist Army combatants (particularly women), and building the capacity of security agencies to facilitate trust-building, promote forgiveness and employ a neutral, sensitive and non-violent approach in their response to conflict in the community, particularly involving former (qualified, discharged and voluntary left) combatants. Mediation training sessions should be held in target geographical areas for security agency personnel (particularly officer-level APF and NP personnel who play a direct role in the delivery of security and engage with communities). Participants in such training sessions will form a 'mediation task force' responsible for mediating disputes within

these security agencies that arise as a result of the integration process. These mediation training sessions should be co-ordinated by the Integration Commission and delivered in collaboration with neutral security experts, appropriately skilled civil society actors and local authorities. Such training should continue into the implementation phase and will overlap with the sensitisation and mediation training sessions for security agencies suggested as part of the rehabilitation programme (Sections 3.3.8.3 and 3.3.9.2).

These activities concerning civil-military relations should be implemented as a component of the rehabilitation process and in the same target geographical areas identified for rehabilitation (Section 3.3.1) where former qualified combatants are most likely to return.

3.2.2.2. STRUCTURE

- **Agreement on criteria for recruitment and rank allocation/conversion.** The Integration Commission should agree on recruitment criteria and rank allocation/conversion for those current combatants who may be integrated. To achieve this, all parties must be forthcoming in negotiation and willing to be flexible. Agreement is critical for moving forward with the peace process and implementing integration. The Integration Commission should oversee the implementation of the criteria and rank allocation/conversion in collaboration with security agencies and the Maoist Army once agreed at the political level.
- **Men and women should be treated equally in the process of allocating positions and rank** as per the agreed criteria. It is crucial that women are represented throughout the security agencies – at all ranks and in all fields. In other words, their representation should be meaningful: they should be assigned to high ranks and management positions as well as what may be traditionally seen as ‘men’s roles’, including combatant roles (based on the views of women). The Integration Commission should ensure this takes place in collaboration with security agencies.
- **The optimum organisational structure of security agencies should be determined by** the outcomes of an analysis of security and defence needs. The wishes and capabilities of current combatants should be considered in planning any organisational restructuring or reform, but primary considerations should be Nepal’s security needs and available resources.
- Maoist Army combatants selected for integration and state security agencies should be **mixed within security structures** such as regiments, units, platoons and brigades across all security agencies such as NA, APF, NP and other new security agencies that may be established (depending on political consensus) once the orientation and training phase is completed (see below). This is important as it will engender reconciliation and organisational cohesion. The Integration Commission should oversee the implementation and monitoring of this in collaboration with and with agreement from the security agencies and the (former) Maoist Army.
- **The neutrality of the security sector** should be promoted in order to ensure recognition that employment in a state security agency prevents membership of political parties.
- In terms of the restructuring or reform of the security sector, and in respect of what has been called ‘democratisation training’, **democratic oversight of the security sector** should be promoted to ensure transparency and accountability, including as a means of guarding against political interference. This should involve the strengthening of existing mechanisms for democratic oversight, including the National Security Council and Secretariat for a National Defence Council among other bodies.

3.2.2.3. TRAINING

- **Joint training programmes** should be delivered for both Maoist Army combatants and security agency personnel according to the mandate of the specific security agencies.

After segregated orientation and sensitisation training, all new recruits (including integrated Maoist Army combatants) would participate in joint tactical and advanced training on areas of weakness identified in both the Maoist Army and security agencies to synchronise capacity. Joint training programmes would contribute to reconciliation and confidence-building within security agencies and would, consequently, potentially build a more cohesive, responsive and effective service. In terms of developing professional skills and capabilities, the security agencies should continue to be responsible for determining training requirements. In many post-conflict contexts, neutral security experts are responsible for delivering joint training programmes, at least initially, in order to ensure sensitivity to both sides and promote reconciliation. This should also be considered regarding the delivery of joint trainings in Nepal.

- **Bridging training.**¹⁹¹ Where sensitisation and orientation training, advanced training and previous training leave gaps in the capabilities and skills of former qualified combatants integrated into the security agencies, bridging training should be given. This may include fitness training, weapons handling and formal education. The security agencies in consultation with the Integration Commission should determine the nature of this training and resources required. Neutral security experts should deliver the training to ensure it is conflict-sensitive and promotes reconciliation.
- **Democratisation training** in which participants develop an understanding of the modern military and international standards regarding democratisation. Specifically this should elaborate on the requirement of military structures being brought under the control of democratically elected representatives in addition to human rights, gender and conflict sensitivity and inclusivity. All members of security agencies at all levels should receive this training after the initial merging process. This training should be developed and implemented by the Integration Commission to include external national experts and international speakers/trainers where relevant and additional support is required.

3.2.2.4. GENDER SENSITIVITY

Research highlighted significant gender differences between the Maoist Army and state security agencies (especially the NA). Women comprise a much higher proportion of the Maoist Army than existing security agencies. Security agencies are also criticised by the community and by Maoist Army combatants for discriminating against women both in terms of recruitment and their treatment during service. However, some security agencies (particularly the NP) have begun to take steps to encourage participation of women and to make special provisions for them in service. For example, in the NP, there are different entry criteria for men and women (to encourage participation of women), separate washing and sleeping facilities for women, and women are entitled to two months' maternity cover.

However, in general, the gender sensitivity of all security agencies needs to be substantially strengthened. Gender sensitivity in any new security agencies also needs to be assured. This in turn will support gender-sensitive integration. To achieve this, the following should be undertaken:

- An effective gender-sensitive approach to integration is dependent upon the **commitment and buy-in of both political leaders and senior personnel in security agencies.**
- **A gender policy should be developed and implemented in each state security agency, incorporating the following:**
 - Equal opportunities for training, rank allocation and promotion. Moreover, decisions on these and other personnel-related matters should be transparent and effective appeal mechanisms readily available. Ideally, entry quotas should be set for allocating women one-third of positions in all security agencies across all ranks.

¹⁹¹ See explanation of the use of the term 'bridging training' in definitions section above.

- Approved procedures for addressing reproductive health issues in terms of medical treatment and arrangements for leave, adequate maternity and paternity cover and guarantees of continuation of appropriate duty during and after pregnancy. For example, the policy of not recruiting married women into the NA should be abandoned.
- A code of conduct for each security agency which refers to requirements to adhere to the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination.
- A disciplinary code for each security agency which proscribes discrimination, intimidation and violence against women (and others).
- A mechanism to ensure compliance with these aspects of the disciplinary code.
- A gender equality unit in each security agency headquarters with focal points throughout the agency. The unit should be responsible for developing and co-ordinating the implementation of an action plan to promote gender equality and sensitivity.

The Integration Commission should support the security agencies in developing and implementing these gender-sensitive policies. It should:

- **Provide gender sensitivity training for security agencies** to build their current capacity to promote gender equality, respond to the different needs of men and women and ensure gender equality and sensitivity is mainstreamed at the institutional and operational levels. This will also enhance security agency relations with the community. In particular, the training should focus on:
 - Strengthening education on international human rights standards with a specific focus on ethnic, indigenous and women's rights. Training on human rights is already being given at officer level in all security agencies but this training should be institutionalised and rolled out to staff at all ranks. In addition, follow-up training should be implemented on a regular basis and efforts should be made to apply knowledge generated through this training into practice through strengthening the mainstreaming of human rights in all policy and programmes.
 - Awareness of SGBV and its impact on individuals, families and the community.
 - Sensitisation of the role women play in military and security agencies – both combatant and non-combatant roles – and their importance to effective security provision, particularly in terms of responding sensitively to and addressing the security needs of women (not limited to addressing SGBV cases).
 - The role of modern military and security agencies in aspects such as peace-building, community-based development and security.
 - Accountability of the Nepal Government to UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889.

This training should seek to complement (and not duplicate) existing training on gender sensitivity currently being supported by UN agencies in the NP, APF and NA, through, for example, providing training on institution-wide gender sensitivity (at the policy, programmatic and individual personnel levels) and the broader role women play in security provision outside of responding to SGBV cases and by providing training to personnel based at the district-level, in all ranks and focusing on staff departments not being targeted through current activities, including personnel other than peacekeepers and training staff in the case of the NA.

The Integration Commission should co-ordinate the delivery of this training in collaboration with security agencies. In particular, neutral national and international gender and security experts should be responsible for delivering the training but the training curricula should be designed in collaboration with and agreed by the relevant security agencies and the (former) Maoist Army.

Basic training for all new recruits into Nepali security agencies should encompass similar modules in gender and also in conflict sensitivity and human rights in line with the training implemented throughout the integration process. This will ensure the continued democratisation of security agencies and increase their ability to operate as modern security providers in the longer term (Section 3.2.2.4).

- **Make infrastructural and logistical provisions to reduce the vulnerability of women** and improve the general working environment. The Government should allocate funds specifically for these purposes. Provisions should include:
 - Separate sleeping quarters for men and women.
 - Separate washing and toilet facilities for men and women.
 - Adequate lighting of barracks to reduce instances of SGBV.

The Integration Commission should provide the security agencies with technical support regarding the establishment and strengthening of these provisions.

- **Establish mechanisms for responding to SGBV cases (or 'gender cells') in each security agency.** These internal cells should be established in each regiment in the APF and in each District Police Office in the NP. They should maintain victim anonymity and tackle reported cases of sexual, physical and psychological harassment, rape and other abuse. Provision of medical services, trauma counselling services and legal services for complaint procedures should be made available through these cells. Similar cells have been established in the NP (Women and Children Service Centres) and recently the NA (Women's Cells) and priority should be placed on strengthening the capacity, geographical coverage and decentralisation of these mechanisms. Security agencies should establish these cells with technical support and guidance from the Integration Committee.

- **Provide support to dependants, including:**

- The provision of family unit homes for barracked personnel with families.
- The provision of education services for children in barracks where state schools are not within close proximity or provision of funds to send children to boarding schools such as the Dipendra Police School in Sanga, Birendra Army School and the Gyanendra APF School. The government should allocate more funds for this purpose or seek donor funding.
- The provision of day-care services in barracks (or in communities if not based in barracks) during working hours for young children (that are not yet old enough to attend school).

The government should allocate funds for this purpose or seek donor funding and the Integration Commission should provide the security agencies with technical support regarding the establishment and strengthening of these provisions. To ensure conflict sensitivity, avoid tensions and promote neutrality, these services should be equally available to all personnel within state security agencies as well as former qualified combatants (once integrated) depending on an agreed criteria being met (e.g. single parents, lack of family support with childcare, married personnel and so forth).

- **Draw lessons from international best practice to inform development of a gender-sensitive approach to integration.** A number of current combatants and civil society representatives suggested a review of international best practice on how to successfully mainstream gender sensitivity into the integration proposals and make provisions for women in military/security structures, as many felt that there was insufficient knowledge on this issue currently in Nepal. In particular, best practices could be drawn from South Africa and Northern Ireland that have gone through a similar process of integration and successfully adopted a gender-sensitive approach. In addition, lessons can be drawn from countries that have not gone through a similar process of integration but where structures are in place within security agencies to promote gender equality and gender sensitivity. In addition, lessons can be learnt from these countries in

respect to provisions that have been made to reduce the vulnerability and accommodate the specific needs of both women and men. The Integration Commission should facilitate a process of drawing upon international best practice and bringing international experts to Nepal to share relevant experiences and provide security agencies with technical support and guidance in drawing upon this best practice and translating it into practice as appropriate in the Nepali context.

3.3 Rehabilitation¹⁹²

3.3.1. Focus implementation of rehabilitation recommendations in target geographic areas

Implementation of recommendations on the rehabilitation process (that are applicable at the community and local level) should focus on **particular geographical target areas** where most of the current combatants are most likely to return (based on views expressed by combatants during the research). These include:

- All large urban areas in the Terai and hill regions (such as Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Biratnagar, Birganj, Birtamod, etc).
- Areas where the cantonments are located and combatants have established relationships and friendships in the local community since entering into the cantonment and wish to remain in this area (particularly in the Central, Mid-Western and Far-Western Terai).
- Areas where the majority of the Maoists originated from and may return to at some point in the future (i.e. Mid-Western and Far-Western Hills including Rolpa, Kalikot, Mugu, Rukum and Bajura), especially if there are employment opportunities.

However, these target geographical locations may change based on the outcomes of socio-economic profiling undertaken in the pre-return transition and planning phase which, among other things, will seek to ascertain information on locations of return (Section 3.3.8.1).

3.3.2. Rehabilitation planning and implementation must be holistic in approach

It is fundamental that rehabilitation packages not only address education and training requirements, but also psychosocial, welfare and health needs. Reconciliation between returning former qualified combatants and community members is also a vital consideration.

3.3.3. Be sensitive when hiring contractors to implement different components of the rehabilitation packages

Exactly which organisation or body (governmental, non-governmental or private sector) is contracted to implement different aspects of the rehabilitation programme was a contentious issue raised by many current combatants interviewed, drawing upon the experiences of the discharged combatants (Annex 1). Many felt that the government should fulfil this role and repay them for the sacrifices they made for the country by joining the Maoist Army.

Current demands faced by the government have stretched its capacity, making it difficult for the government to implement all aspects of the rehabilitation packages. It is therefore unavoidable that the private sector and civil society will play a key role in the delivery of the rehabilitation packages, in partnership with the government whose capacity should be strengthened. However, the structure for implementation and exactly who is contracted to play what role in rehabilitation needs careful consideration, ensuring that final decisions are sensitive to the preferences of the returning former qualified combatants and communities.

¹⁹² Recommendations for responding to findings on community security (Section 2.2.3.5) have been incorporated into recommendations for responding to findings on other aspects of rehabilitation including economic rehabilitation (Section 3.3.8.2 and 3.3.9.1) social rehabilitation (Section 3.3.8.3 and 3.3.9.2) and psychosocial/healthcare (Section 3.3.8.4 and 3.3.9.3) and recommendations relevant to all aspects of rehabilitation (Section 3.3).

Ideally, the Rehabilitation Commission should collaborate directly with the service providers for different aspects of the rehabilitation programme instead of handing over management responsibilities to middlemen (private institutions including Alliance Nepal and UCEF formally referred to as ‘principal service providers’) to strengthen effectiveness and tighten co-ordination and communication. The principal service providers contracted to hire service providers and co-ordinate the delivery of services at the local level in the rehabilitation of the discharged combatants were raised as contentious, as they were, in some cases, perceived to be benefiting too much, threatening the effectiveness and sustainability of the service provider’s engagement.

However, if the packages are favourable and accepted by the returning former qualified combatants, the issue of who is contracted to deliver the rehabilitation packages will not be such a contentious issue, so primary importance should be placed on the getting the packages right and acceptable to the returning former qualified combatants.

3.3.4. Transparency in expenditure of budget for rehabilitation

To avoid tensions arising over who exactly is contracted to deliver rehabilitation packages, and perceptions that some are profiting more than others from the process, information on who exactly has been contracted, their responsibilities and the reasons why they have been contracted should be shared with returning former qualified combatants on request. In addition, to avoid misconceptions about the service providers profiting from rehabilitation, information on how the budget for rehabilitation is spent should also be publically available and shared with the returning former qualified combatants and communities on request.

3.3.5. Ensure rehabilitation packages are conflict-sensitive

It is important that rehabilitation packages are designed to balance the need to ensure that the package is attractive enough and the need to avoid creating resentment in the community. In order to avoid resentment and promote social and political reconciliation,¹⁹³ assistance should not economically elevate former qualified combatants above their peers and should also benefit the receiving communities. To ensure a conflict-sensitive approach is adopted, the following should be undertaken:

- **Ensure rehabilitation packages are community-centred and benefit communities as well as the returning former qualified combatants.** In particular, job creation, vocational training, healthcare services, childcare services, psychosocial counselling, education services and support in accessing legal certificates should also benefit the broader community. In **urban areas**, where it is more difficult to specify what comprises a ‘community’ and boundaries between communities are merged, implementation of a community-based rehabilitation programme should depend on the outcomes of consultations with residents on what they perceive their ‘community’ to be. In addition, the poorest areas in the town/city with the cheapest rent rates should be targeted as these are the places where former qualified combatants are more likely to reside (and also the areas where there is greater need).
- **Establish income-generating activities that benefit both former qualified combatants and community members**, such as infrastructural development and construction activities which contribute towards the development of the country. Creating income generation options that provide opportunities for employment and co-operation between returning former qualified combatants and the community would promote a community approach to rehabilitation by addressing unemployment at the same time as promoting reconciliation, trust-building and social cohesion. It would also demonstrate government support for the rehabilitation process.
- **Undertake assessments of the local context in target geographical areas to inform delivery of rehabilitation at the local level.** Rehabilitation programming should be

¹⁹³ See explanation of the use of the term ‘political reconciliation’ in definitions section above.

adapted at the local level to reflect the context and ensure that rehabilitation programming does not exacerbate existing tensions between groups. The assessments should focus on the different causes of tensions and the interests and needs of different actors at the local level.

3.3.6. Support to those who have fallen through the net

The research identified that there are a significant number of former combatants (particularly women) who have run away from the Maoist Army¹⁹⁴ on their own accord as a result of having been rejected because of their inter-caste marriage or stigma associated with having been a member of the Maoist Army or, alternatively, experiencing SGBV or harassment. There are reports that these women, some with children, have run away to India or urban areas within Nepal to find work, possibly in the sex industry. This group of women (and their children) are highly vulnerable as they do not have support networks nor will they receive rehabilitation packages. Efforts should be made to identify and make contact with these women in a sensitive manner. Support should be provided to them in finding employment and accommodation that does not put them at risk, trauma counselling and education for them and their children. Other stakeholders focusing on addressing vulnerability of women and SGBV more generally in Nepal should also seek to target this group of women, especially as they may refuse rehabilitation support.

Efforts should also be made to support those women who left the Maoist Army voluntarily and have already returned to civilian life. Although some have already begun to rebuild their lives, for example through establishing businesses, many are struggling to find work and suffering from rejection from communities and families. It is fundamental that efforts are made to involve these individuals in the rehabilitation process. To do this, specific activities need to be undertaken to identify these individuals and consult with them on a one-to-one basis on the options available in the rehabilitation process. However, as it will be difficult to identify all the individuals that left voluntarily and where they are currently residing, public awareness-raising activities on rehabilitation should also provide information targeted at those that left voluntarily to inform them that they can still qualify for rehabilitation packages and how to take this forward (e.g. channels for contacting rehabilitation commissions, etc). The Rehabilitation Commission should be responsible for developing an approach to include these individuals in the rehabilitation process and co-ordinating its implementation. Support should also be provided to disabled/injured former (qualified, discharged and voluntary left) combatants that have fallen through the nets and have not been able to participate in rehabilitation packages as a result of physical constraints.

3.3.7. Deliver rehabilitation programming at the local level

A key challenge undermining the rehabilitation programming for the discharged combatants to date has been the lack of decentralisation in the delivery of services. The delivery of rehabilitation services from five main regional centres has restricted participation, where for example, certain training programmes are often only offered in particular regions, meaning that people have to leave families, travel long distances to participate and pay higher costs for living (in urban areas). The discharged interviewed felt that these conditions have resulted in the highest drop-out cases (Annex 1).

In line with Section 3.1 regarding the establishment of a national Rehabilitation Commission, to strengthen participation, all aspects of rehabilitation programming should be delivered at the local level. However, the level of implementation will vary for the different components of the rehabilitation package. In particular, recognising the high costs involved in decentralisation and the relatively low case load, vocational and micro-enterprise trainings should be provided in a number of different locations

¹⁹⁴ Before and since the UNMIN verification process (in 2009), including those categorised during the verification process as disqualified (before they were formally discharged in February 2010) and those categorised as qualified combatants.

across the country and closer to prospective participants (at least at the district level in target geographical locations). In terms of education and healthcare, options for participating in these services at the local level (ideally VDC level) in collaboration with local government education and healthcare services should be provided. In terms of trauma counselling, social reconciliation and trust-building activities, which require long-term participation for effective outcomes, it is imperative that these services are available at the local level (at the very least at the VDC level but ideally ward level) where returning former qualified combatants can access these services without disrupting daily life and should be delivered in co-ordination with the Community Rehabilitation Committees (Section 3.3.8.3).

3.3.8. Preparatory transition and planning phase

3.3.8.1. GENERAL

The following activities should be undertaken in this phase:

- **Consult current combatants who intend to return to civilian life on their concerns and needs and undertake socio-economic profiling.** Returning former qualified combatants should be consulted for a second time during this transition period to ensure that packages are designed to respond to their specific (economic/employment, social, reconciliation, psychosocial and healthcare) needs including the different needs of men and women to ensure the process is gender-sensitive. The importance of undertaking a socio-economic profiling exercise to inform the design of gender-sensitive rehabilitation programming is illustrated through the challenges faced in the rehabilitation of the discharged combatants which was designed in the absence of this information (Annex 1). In particular, individual social-economic profiling should continue to be undertaken as part of this process to acquire information on current combatants who may return, including gender, age, ethnic group, marital status, dependants, skills, education, training, experience, health/fitness/psychosocial and other factors which may correspond to security agency recruitment criteria and/or which may be useful in order to scope prospective employment opportunities and/or available training. Profiling/consultation activities should include one-to-one consultations (of 30 minutes each) with all returning combatants in the cantonments simultaneously over a 30-day period. The consultations should be conducted by the Rehabilitation Commission and should be conducted in a timely fashion and be mindful of resource requirements. In addition, consultations with the returning former qualified combatants themselves are critical to ensuring greater uptake of rehabilitation packages. The slow/poor uptake of packages by discharged combatants is, in part, reflective of the fact that consultations and communication with the returning former combatants was limited.
- **Consult with communities** in target geographical areas to identify their different social, economic, political, environment and security needs and views and concerns regarding rehabilitation. This will help to ensure that rehabilitation programming responds to and considers the different needs of communities as well as those of returning former qualified combatants, thus taking a community-centred and conflict-sensitive approach. This is critical to ensuring greater effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes, as illustrated in the lessons learnt from the rehabilitation of discharged combatants (Annex 1). Consultation activities should include group consultations and men and women should be consulted separately, together and equally. The consultations should be co-ordinated by the DROs of the Rehabilitation Commission with support from headquarters and in collaboration with civil society, central government and local authorities to promote government ownership.
- **Allocate time for discussions, negotiations and reflection on outcomes of consultations at the high policy level.** Once consultations with returning former qualified combatants and communities have been undertaken, adequate time should be allocated at the end of the transition period to digest findings, consult with relevant government bodies, employment sectors, private sector and other key decision-makers in order to ensure that the different needs of returning former qualified combatants and communities are

responded to through the rehabilitation packages (e.g. employment guarantees offered in relevant and viable sectors, etc). The Rehabilitation Commission should co-ordinate these discussions at the high policy level.

- **Ensure buy-in and support from UCPN-M.** Research and consultations with discharged combatants, service providers, civil society representatives, leaders from all political parties and security agency personnel has emphasised the importance of securing buy-in from the UCPN-M to ensure the effectiveness and success of the rehabilitation packages. The research highlighted examples of how a lack of buy-in from the UCPN-M can prevent participation in the rehabilitation packages and therefore the effectiveness of the broader rehabilitation process. For example, some discharged combatants and district UCPN-M leaders said that the UCPN-M was restricting them from participating in the packages in the Far-Western Terai. Those tasked with the responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the rehabilitation packages should therefore consult with the UCPN-M at national and district levels in the design phase in ensure buy-in and commitment to the process. In addition, regular consultation should be made with all political parties together at both the national and district levels during implementation to ensure effective communication and collaboration and to reinforce buy-in and commitment.
- **Develop and implement a communication strategy** for providing information to returning former qualified combatants and communities in target geographic locations on the conditions and options available in the rehabilitation packages. The importance of this is emphasised by the challenges experienced in the implementation of rehabilitation packages for discharged combatants (Annex 1). Clear communication in communities regarding the packages is central for strengthening trust between the community and returning former qualified combatants.
 - **Communication with the returning former qualified combatants** should ideally be done through a third series of consultations once rehabilitation package options have been agreed. One-to-one consultations (30 minutes each) with all returning combatants in the cantonments simultaneously over a 30-day period should be undertaken to provide detailed information on the options available in the rehabilitation packages and how to access them. A key challenge undermining the uptake of packages in the rehabilitation of discharged combatants has been that they were only briefed for ten minutes each which was inadequate for providing detailed and adequate exchange of information, although a toll-free number is available for providing former combatants with advice on how to access rehabilitation packages. In addition, information packs should be provided to each combatant during these consultations providing detailed information on the options available and where to go to access these. These activities should be co-ordinated by the Rehabilitation Commission through the DROs.
 - **Communication to communities/broader society** should be undertaken by the Rehabilitation Commission DROs in collaboration with the Community Rehabilitation Committees (Section 3.3.8.3) through targeted radio programmes, articles in newspapers, information leaflets, street drama, public seminars and so forth (as mentioned regarding integration awareness-raising under Section 3.3.1). These activities should also be co-ordinated with civil society including NGOs, community/women's groups, media organisations and journalists and Community Rehabilitation Committees once established (see below and Section 3.3.8.3). These activities should continue in the implementation phase, and will also help in continuing to communicate rehabilitation options to the former qualified combatants once they have returned to civilian life.

3.3.8.2. ECONOMIC REHABILITATION

- **Assess the personal employment needs and constraints of the badly injured/disabled and women as part of the socio-economic profiling assessment** (see Section 3.3.8.1 above). This will assist in identifying suitable types of vocational training and

employment options for injured/disabled combatants to be included in rehabilitation packages and in developing appropriate training programmes which ensure women can engage proactively in economic life should they so wish.

- **Undertake local labour market needs analyses.** These should be undertaken in target geographical areas to identify gaps and opportunities in the local market which vocational training and creation of employment opportunities can be focused on (in line with the types of professions current combatants have highlighted as acceptable to them as well as the needs of women and the injured/disabled). These analyses should be co-ordinated by the government (specifically the MoLTM and the National Planning Commission) with support from the Rehabilitation Commission (particularly district-based representatives), national business community leaders, international agencies (in particular the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other UN agencies), NGOs where relevant and local authorities.
- **Undertake a national-level labour market analysis.** This should also be undertaken to identify gaps in the national labour market and the specific sectors/professions that vocational training should be focused on in order to ensure higher likelihood of former qualified combatants accessing employment as an outcome participating in the rehabilitation packages. This analysis should be co-ordinated by the government (specifically the MoLTM and the National Planning Commission) with support from the Rehabilitation Commission, national business community leaders, international agencies (in particular the ILO and other UN agencies) and NGOs where relevant.
- **Sensitise the private sector to the possibility of creating job opportunities for former qualified combatants.** Consultations should be held with the private sector regarding potential long-term job opportunities for returning former qualified combatants. Although some of the jobs identified by current combatants as professions acceptable to them are government-based (such as health workers, teachers and community mobilisers), a number of other professions identified (including engineers, infra-structural development, private security companies, etc) are more likely to be available within the private sector. Current combatants expressed openness to accessing employment in the private sector if opportunities arose. Research identified the main constraint to the rehabilitation process as the lack of suitable employment within the Nepal labour market. It is therefore critical that the private sector is mobilised to address this constraint through providing employment options in different sectors, thus contributing to a peaceful rehabilitation process. There are, however, concerns within the private sector regarding the employment of former qualified combatants, especially that they may bring their political beliefs to the work place. These concerns need to be addressed. To increase private sector employment of returning former qualified combatants, the following should be undertaken:
 - Sensitisation activities to prepare returning former qualified combatants mentally for working in the public and private sectors and adhering to an employment code of conduct. In particular, one-to-one consultations and group seminars should be undertaken with returning former qualified combatants.
 - Train returning former qualified combatants in skills required for employment in private sector (as well as public sector), through vocational training (see below).
 - Develop incentives for businesses to take on returning former qualified combatants such as on-the-job training in return for labour.
 - Provide training for returning former qualified combatants on establishing their own businesses/co-operatives especially as the private sector has shown interest in contracting and forming business partnerships with these co-operatives. To make this work, it is important that these businesses focus on an industry that the private sector has a demand for at the national and local levels. It is therefore important that these businesses target gaps identified in the local and national labour market analyses.

These activities should be co-ordinated by the Rehabilitation Commission in co-ordination with the National Planning Commission, business community, civil society, technical experts on economic rehabilitation and local authorities.

- **Assess capacities of existing vocational training and capacity-building institutions and facilities.** This should be done in target geographical areas in order to gauge what training institutions and services already exist at the local level (particularly local authorities, NGOs, community groups and government/private training institutes). This will help determine what new services and training facilities need to be established as part of the rehabilitation programme. It will also help in identifying the capacity-building needs to be addressed in the implementation phase. These assessments should be co-ordinated by the Rehabilitation Commission in co-ordination with local authorities, business community and civil society.
- **Provide guidance on minimising the risks involved with seeking/accessing work overseas.** Many current combatants (particularly men) expressed interest in acquiring work overseas once they have received vocational training in skilled labour. Whether or not returning former qualified combatants can go overseas for work as part of the formal rehabilitation process in the implementation phase will depend on government decisions and diplomatic relations with foreign countries. However, as there is a risk that some combatants may go overseas to find work on their own accord once they leave the cantonment (i.e. not through the formal rehabilitation process) and before or after they have received vocational training, support should be provided in the preparatory transition and planning phase to ensure that they are not exploited through the process and to minimise the risks they may face. The Rehabilitation Commission DROs should co-ordinate the implementation of group lectures (two hours each) of a hundred returning former qualified combatants at a time in each cantonment simultaneously over a two-week period (as a fourth phase of consultation activities in the cantonments during the preparatory transition and planning phase). This should be done in collaboration with appropriately skilled NGOs, local authorities, community groups and the Maoist Army – to raise awareness on the risks associated with overseas employment and provide guidance on how to make applications to legitimate companies, minimise risks and claim rights.

3.3.8.3. SOCIAL REHABILITATION

As outlined in the research findings, the rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants represents a key challenge for the peace process and a potential threat to community security if not managed properly. To reduce the prospect of tensions arising in the initial stages of rehabilitation, it is crucial that efforts are made to support community reconciliation, trust-building and social cohesion during the transition period before current combatants return to civilian life. The following activities should be undertaken as part of this process.

- **Establish Community Rehabilitation Committees at the VDC level in each district in target geographic areas** to support dialogue, reconciliation and trust-building within and between communities and returning former qualified combatants to promote community ownership of the rehabilitation process. In particular, the Community Rehabilitation Committees will support DROs and DMOs to implement the social, psychosocial, communication and monitoring aspects of the rehabilitation programme. Committee members should include representatives from the community, former security agency personnel, returning former qualified combatants (including equal numbers of men and women as well as members of different ethnic, caste, religious and age groups proportionally representative of the local context), civil society, traditional/community leaders and local authorities. Community leaders should be encouraged to support rehabilitation at the local level and use their influence to champion the process. Committees should be based within the structure of VDCs in order to build upon existing structures at the local level and encourage ownership of local authorities and government but function independently and be neutral of

political influence. The Committee members will be responsible for outreach at the ward level. The government should provide funds for this purpose or seek donor funding. The responsibilities of the Committees should include:

- Acting as points of contact at the community level with the Rehabilitation Commission through regular co-ordination with the Rehabilitation Commission DROs and DMOs, and playing a key role in reporting on progress and any challenges faced and monitoring implementation. An M&E focal point should be allocated within each Committee.
 - Playing a role in organising trust-building activities between former qualified combatants, former security agency personnel and community members, such as joint sporting or other recreational activities.
 - Playing a mediation role and link with formal security and justice sector actors in resolving civil disputes within and between community members, former security agency personnel and former qualified combatants as they arise. In addition, Committees should also play a role in resolving any domestic disputes within families of returning former qualified combatants. This is important as acceptance within families was identified as a potential challenge, as was the risk of SGBV and alcoholism as a result of depression, unemployment and trauma – particularly among men – if rehabilitation packages were not adequate. In addition, the Committees should collaborate with state security and justice sector structures (such as the police and courts) when mediating cases, including reporting all cases and referring criminal cases to appropriate authorities.
 - Playing a role in promoting dialogue on contentious social issues. The Committees should organise seminars and forums where communities, former security agency personnel and returning former qualified combatants can openly discuss contentious issues, share their views and agree upon ways for jointly overcoming challenges in an appropriate manner. Separate forums should be organised where female community members and returning former qualified combatants can openly discuss contentious issues, including common myths and rumours regarding the ‘promiscuous’ and ‘aggressive’ nature of returning female former qualified combatants, and agree upon ways for overcoming mis(conceptions) and building trust.
- **Start to implement ongoing socialisation and orientation activities in the community in target geographical locations** as a way of sensitising communities to the return of former qualified combatants, reducing fear and maximising the impact of rehabilitation packages. Awareness-raising activities should include targeted radio programmes, articles in newspapers, information leaflets, street drama, public seminars and so forth (as mentioned in respect to the preparatory transition and planning phase as well as integration awareness-raising under Section 3.2.1). Awareness-raising messages should focus on the current situation as seen from both sides, emphasise both the rights and responsibilities of all citizens of Nepal, and dispel rumours, suspicion and distrust towards former qualified combatants, particularly regarding the ‘promiscuous’ and ‘aggressive’ nature of returning women. These activities should be co-ordinated by the DROs representing the Rehabilitation Commission in collaboration with local authorities and appropriately skilled civil society organisations including community groups, NGOs, media organisations and journalists. These activities should continue in the implementation phase, and will also help to promote social rehabilitation in the longer term. Once the Community Rehabilitation Committees have been established, they should play a key role in delivery of these orientation activities in collaboration with the DROs.
 - **Start to implement ongoing socialisation and orientation trainings for all returning former qualified combatants** to help prepare them mentally for return and build their capacity to take a proactive and leading role in promoting social cohesion and gaining acceptance into the community. Similar to such training provided to former qualified combatants integrating into security agencies, training should provide apposite

information on the peace process. Practical guidance should also be provided on how to address potential challenges that may be faced by men and women on returning to communities relating to different cultures, their political beliefs and potential (mis) conceptions of communities towards former qualified combatants in a proactive, sensitive and non-violent way. The Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs) should co-ordinate the implementation of group sensitisation trainings (three hours each) of thirty returning former qualified combatants at a time in each cantonment simultaneously over a four-week period (constituting a fifth round of consultations/trainings with returning former qualified combatants during the preparatory planning and transition phase). The implementation of these trainings should be done in collaboration with appropriately skilled NGOs, local authorities, community groups and the Maoist Army.

- **Start to implement ongoing sensitisation and mediation training for local authorities and security agencies (specifically NP and APF) for dealing with potential tensions between communities and returning former qualified combatants.** In addition to preparing the communities for the return of former qualified combatants, it is important to also prepare the local authorities and security agencies for tensions that may arise within the community as a result of the rehabilitation process. Although it may be more appropriate for Community Rehabilitation Committees to mediate disputes as opposed to security agencies, given likely tensions between returning former qualified combatants in some areas, it is inevitable that security agencies will play a role in responding to disputes in some cases and should therefore receive training to support them in preparing for the types of tensions that may arise and how they can respond to them in a sensitive, non-violent and neutral manner. Mediation training sessions should be held in target geographical areas for security agency personnel who play a direct role in the delivery of security and engage with communities (specifically officer-levels in the APF and NP). The Integration Commission should co-ordinate this training in collaboration with neutral security experts and appropriately skilled civil society actors and local authorities. Such sensitisation and mediation training should continue to be implemented into the implementation phase and will overlap with the mediation training for security agencies suggested as part of the integration programme (Section 3.2.2.1).

3.3.8.4. PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND HEALTHCARE

- **Undertake psychosocial trauma assessments in target geographical communities** prior to the return of former qualified combatants so as to identify the experiences of the community during the conflict, and assess the number and intensity of unaddressed cases of trauma in the community. This will provide an indication of community attitudes and prejudices towards returning former qualified combatants and the level and type of conflict-related trauma management and reconciliation activities that need to be implemented as part of the social rehabilitation component. In addition, this will provide the background information required for the establishment of individual and group counselling services in the implementation phase (see below). The Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs, PSCs and DMOs) should co-ordinate these assessments through group consultations in collaboration with appropriately skilled civil society actors (including NGOs, community groups, etc) and the Community Rehabilitation Committees once established.
- **Sensitise combatants to psychosocial trauma.** Significant effort prior to return needs to be placed on sensitisation and awareness-raising regarding issues of psychosocial trauma in order to increase understanding and reduce the stigma attached to those returning who exhibit symptoms of trauma, particularly among men.¹⁹⁵ This will help

¹⁹⁵ In post-conflict contexts, male former combatants are more likely to suffer from unaddressed psychosocial trauma due to cultural notions of masculinity and expression of emotion. Feelings of humiliation as a result of returning to the community empty-handed as well as 'failing' as men in their culturally-defined gender role as providers and 'breadwinners' will exacerbate such trauma. A failure to address the psychosocial needs of men may result in high levels of SGBV and alcohol and drug abuse, particularly among younger returnees, which would, in turn, undermine community security and family cohesion.

prepare them to participate in individual and group counselling services to be offered as part of the rehabilitation package in the implementation phase. These sensitisation activities should be co-ordinated by the DROs in collaboration with appropriately skilled civil society actors (including NGOs, community groups and psychosocial counselling centres) and the Maoist Army as a component of the socialisation and orientation trainings for former qualified combatants to be undertaken during the preparatory transition and planning phase (see Section 3.3.8.4 above). DROs and PSCs working with former qualified combatants should receive trauma identification training and work closely with the Health and Psychosocial Team in the Rehabilitation Commission to identify and treat trauma.

- **Assess healthcare needs.** An assessment should be undertaken of the unaddressed health concerns of returning former qualified combatants that the rehabilitation packages should address. This can be done through consultations with current combatants and as a component of the socio-economic profiling exercise (see Section 3.3.8.1 above). The Health and Psychosocial Team within the Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs, PSCs and DMOs) should have responsibility for the co-ordination of this assessment in collaboration with the MoH. This should include an assessment of the capacity of local health services in target geographical areas in order to identify gaps in support and areas where the capacity of local health services needs to be strengthened in the implementation phase.

3.3.9. Implementation phase

3.3.9.1. ECONOMIC REHABILITATION

Different options should be provided for economic rehabilitation which reflect the different aspirations of both male and female current combatants identified in the research, as outlined above.

For those wanting to return to employment

- Learning from challenges experienced in the rehabilitation of discharged combatants as a result of **vocational training** being perceived to be offered only in low-status professions (Annex 1), vocational training should be offered in line with opportunities identified through national and local labour market needs assessments undertaken in the preparatory transition and planning phase and where possible in professions acceptable to both male and female current combatants and regarded as higher-status and respectable (concurrently, through the afore-mentioned preparatory transition and planning phase consultations, former qualified combatants should be provided with information on the current economic market and budgetary constraints in order that their expectations are effectively managed). These include skilled labour in engineering, plumbing and electrical work (of particular interest to men), infrastructure development, teaching and healthcare (men and women both interested) and community mobilisation and social work (women particularly interested). In addition, the local market needs assessments, national labour market assessment and transition and planning phase consultations with returning former qualified combatants and communities should help in identifying what specific professions and sectors vocational training should focus on. A monthly stipend should be provided to participants undertaking vocational training programmes to help them to sustain themselves (and their families) during this period when they are not in employment. Learning from challenges faced in the rehabilitation of discharged combatants, an increase in monthly allowance above the current rate of 3,000 NRs per month should be provided (and any less should come with additional allowances for accommodation, subsistence, etc). The Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs) should co-ordinate the delivery of vocational training activities in collaboration with NGOs, local authorities, the business sector and private vocational training institutes.
- **Endeavour to provide guarantees for employment in the longer term.** Ideally, vocational training should be provided with guarantees for subsequent employment in sectors relevant to the aspirations of those returning to avoid risks of unemployment,

depression and recruitment into armed groups once training has been completed. Lessons learnt from the experiences of discharged combatants emphasise the importance of implementing this recommendation while also encouraging an awareness of self-reliance and that the state cannot be there to provide them with everything. Once returning former qualified combatants have completed vocational training, the Rehabilitation Commission should facilitate a process of identifying employment opportunities for them (in the professions identified as acceptable to them as much as possible) based on the outcomes of local and national labour market analyses and in consultation with the private sector and relevant central government ministries/ departments regarding who should provide/create the employment opportunities.

- **Build capacities of service providers where necessary.** Based on the outcomes of the assessment of existing vocational training and capacity-building institutions at the local level in target geographical locations undertaken in the preparatory transition and planning phase, supplementary or booster training and capacity-building for existing training facilities and institutions may be required to provide them with the skills necessary to deliver the vocational training/income generation component of the rehabilitation packages. Where there is an absence of existing vocational training capacities at the local level, new vocational training centres or institutes will need to be established. The Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs) should co-ordinate capacity-building activities for vocational training/capacity-building institutes and/or establish new institutes where required in collaboration with appropriately skilled civil society actors and the private sector.
- A number of current combatants expressed an interest in receiving **training in establishing their own businesses and co-operatives**. Based on the positive experiences of some former combatants (particularly those that left voluntarily) who have already returned to civilian life and been successful in establishing their own co-operatives, this option should be taken forward. Training should be provided on the practical skills required for effectively establishing businesses. Guidance should also be offered on what types of businesses are in demand in the local/national market and what types of industries are in demand by the private sector, as an outcome of the local market needs assessment and national labour analysis undertaken in the preparatory transition and planning phase (Section 3.3.8.2). The Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs) should be responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of training in collaboration with NGOs, local authorities, the business sector and private vocational training institutes.
- **Establish mechanisms to support single women with children or married former qualified combatants in accessing economic rehabilitation options.** Drawing upon the challenges faced regarding the participation of female discharged combatants in the vocational training rehabilitation option where family support services are not provided as part of the package for this option (Annex 1), these facilities should be established to enable women to take a more active role in economic life and should be attached to all options in the rehabilitation packages. Support should be offered to single women with children and married former (qualified and/or discharged) combatants without compromising family stability, and should allow them to participate in training and employment opportunities offered through the rehabilitation packages. As illustrated through the positive uptake of micro-enterprise rehabilitation options by female discharged combatants, where similar support is provided, this could include the establishment of childcare services at the community level for children not old enough to attend school, special baby food for breastfeeding infants, extra (nutritional) support for pregnant and lactating mothers and medical support for them and their children (Annex 1). It is, however, important that these centres also benefit the wider community to avoid resentment and jealousy towards former qualified combatants. Adequate family allowances should be provided for single women with children and married former (qualified and/or discharged) combatants participating in all rehabilitation options to cover accommodation and subsistence

costs for the whole family. Further and adequate allowances for supporting the family to travel long distances to regionally based training centres should also be offered. The Rehabilitation Commission should be responsible for co-ordinating the establishment of these mechanisms in collaboration with civil society actors and local authorities.

- **Provide orientation training for working within the public and private sectors.** Orientation training should be provided to prepare former qualified combatants for employment in the public and private sectors (familiarising individuals with organisational codes of conduct, for instance). The Rehabilitation Commission should oversee this activity in collaboration with appropriately skilled civil society actors, local authorities and the private sector.

For those who do not want vocational training or employment

Although a number of current combatants expressed a preference for receiving a one-time lump sum **cash payment** to help them in establishing their own businesses, find work overseas or beginning political careers, **a recommendation to provide this has not been included in this report.** Evidence from other contexts has shown that lump-sum payments create obstacles to successful reintegration because they are rarely invested by former combatants to provide long-term benefits, tend not to benefit dependants equitably and can lead to attempts to defraud the rehabilitation process. Additionally, cash payments often create divisions and bitterness among receiving communities while also providing a dangerous message to others that participation in violence and crime leads to financial rewards. Consequently, there is a risk that cash payments would threaten the peace process in Nepal. Alternatively, support in accessing vocational training, employment and/or education and to ease the process of social and psychosocial rehabilitation should be provided, as outlined in the recommendations in this section.

For those who are badly injured or disabled

- **Provide long-term pension packages.** As outlined in the report, most of the badly injured or disabled current combatants interviewed requested a lifelong pension as they are unable to access employment. This option should be considered, and eligibility criteria agreed by government, Maoist Army and security agencies. Former security agency personnel should also be eligible for such support in order to avoid tensions arising. The Rehabilitation Commission should co-ordinate the development and implementation of the pension packages through the DROs in collaboration with civil society, relevant government ministries, local authorities, the Maoist Army and state security agencies. The government should provide the funds for the pension packages or seek donor funding.
- **Create employment options for the disabled and badly injured.** Although it will be too physically difficult for some disabled former qualified combatants to undertake employment, for others there will be suitable employment options. It is important to provide employment where possible, not least in order to avoid the risk of depression and feelings of worthlessness among injured and disabled former qualified combatants. Appropriate employment opportunities and vocational training options should be agreed with the combatants concerned on a case-by-case basis at the local level (in line with local labour demand). Employment options should be created in conjunction with disabled in the community (such as co-operatives) as this will help facilitate community cohesion. Consultations should be co-ordinated by DROs in collaboration with appropriately skilled NGOs, community groups, local authorities, business leaders and vocational training institutes.

For those wanting to return to education

Provide options for education classes and undertaking key qualifications. Options for returning to education and gaining qualifications (such as a SLC) should be provided to strengthen access to employment and build the self-esteem of illiterate former

qualified combatants. To counter the apprehension felt by most that returning to formal education will be humiliating, flexible teaching modalities should be provided for returning former qualified combatants, for example, evening classes or former combatant-only classes, in co-ordination with the MoE. Drawing lessons from the provision of education in the rehabilitation packages for discharged combatants which appears to be working well, education classes could be provided from a school of choice (government or private). The Rehabilitation Commission should be responsible for co-ordinating delivery of education classes (through the DROs) in collaboration with local authorities, MoE, NGOs, community groups and government/private education institutes/schools.

For those who require support in accessing birth, citizenship and marriage certificates

- **Establish mechanisms to support all former qualified combatants (as well as the discharged and voluntarily left combatants, ex-security agency personnel and broader society) to apply for birth, citizenship and marriage certificates.** The absence of these certificates was identified by most current and former combatants interviewed as a key restraint in acquiring land/property and accessing employment opportunities. A trained staff member should be allocated to each DDC specifically to support returning former qualified combatants (as well as the discharged and voluntary left combatants, ex-security agency personnel and the broader community) with the process of applying for certificates, including guidance and support in completing application forms. The government should be responsible for funding and creating these posts and establishing these services in DDCs. The Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs and DMOs) should be responsible for supporting local authorities to establish this service in DDCs and monitor implementation in collaboration with appropriately skilled civil society actors.

3.3.9.2. SOCIAL REHABILITATION¹⁹⁶

Community members, current combatants and civil society representatives emphasised the importance that reconciliation efforts are **long term**. The majority suggested it would take at least ten years for effective trust-building and reconciliation efforts between communities and returning former (discharged, voluntary left and qualified) combatants (particularly in areas most affected by Maoist Army combatants during the conflict) to overcome prejudices associated with the conflict. To assist with this process, emphasis must be placed on the following recommendations.

- **Provide orientation and build capacities of Community Rehabilitation Committees to perform reconciliation/trust-building/mediation activities** where necessary, based on the capacity gaps identified in the assessment undertaken in the preparatory transition and planning phase. In particular, all Community Rehabilitation Committee members should participate in orientation training once these Committees have been established. This training should provide information on the purpose of the Committees, how they connect with the broader rehabilitation process and the national and district Rehabilitation Commissions, roles and responsibilities and modes of operation. Three orientation training workshops should be held for each Committee. In addition, all Committee members should be provided with training in mediation practices, trust-building and reconciliation. For this purpose, Committee members should participate in a series of training workshops over a two-month period. All should undergo the same training to bring them up to the same professional standards and ensure consistency in the way they operate. The Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs) should be responsible for co-ordinating these capacity-building and orientation activities in collaboration with appropriately skilled civil society actors and local authorities.
- **Continue to implement socialisation and orientation activities in the community, for returning former qualified combatants and security agencies/local authorities, which**

¹⁹⁶ Recommendations for responding to findings on community security (Section 2.2.3.5) have been incorporated into recommendations for responding to findings on social rehabilitation (Section 2.2.3.3) as a result of overlap.

started during the transition period. In the implementation phase, focus should be placed on addressing particularly contentious issues that have arisen after the return of former qualified combatants. These may include dealing with rejection from community members, building trust and reconciling differences in a sensitive manner. In the implementation phase, responding to these cases should be led by the DROs in collaboration with Community Rehabilitation Committees, local authorities and appropriately skilled civil society actors including community groups, NGOs and media organisations.

- Socialisation training should also be complemented by the **formation of support groups for former qualified combatants within the community**. Separate support groups for men, women and the badly injured/disabled should be established depending on the local context and demand. Support groups would meet regularly and provide a forum for sharing experiences and challenges faced in terms of social rehabilitation, generating mutual support and identifying ways to help each other. These groups would also help in providing psychosocial and emotional support for returning former qualified combatants. The Community Rehabilitation Committees should be responsible for establishing these support groups with support from DROs, NGOs, community groups and local authorities. Initial funds should be allocated for initial meetings to clarify the objectives of the groups, hiring venues, transport and so forth. These groups should be largely self-functioning thereafter. Support groups for women should be organised at a time that does not clash with other family and domestic-related duties to increase participation. The DMOs in collaboration with the Community Rehabilitation Committees should monitor these groups.

3.3.9.3. PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND HEALTHCARE

- **Provide psychosocial trauma counselling groups for communities, former security agency personnel and former qualified combatants**. Individual and group counselling services should be provided at the local level to ensure that they are accessible and participants do not have to travel too far to access services. The psychosocial counselling services offered in the rehabilitation packages for discharged combatants – which require service users to attend one of five regional-based programme offices – has meant that many have not made use of the service. Groups and individual counselling services will be provided by the PSCs based at the district level but responsible for outreach at the ward level. Service users should have the choice of attending counselling sessions in the Committee's premises or the PSCs visiting them at home to minimise feelings of embarrassment or stigma. The counselling services will be monitored by the DMOs in collaboration with local authorities, community groups, NGOs and the Community Rehabilitation Committees.
- **Set-up a toll-free phone line for confidential or anonymous psychosocial trauma counselling** to support those who do not feel comfortable attending counselling sessions in person. This is particularly important in terms of targeting, accessing and providing support to men who are at risk of non-identification of trauma due to cultural notions of masculinity that associate the demonstration of emotion with weakness. The consequences of unaddressed psychosocial issues can lead to destructive individual behaviour at the local level, including increased levels of SGBV, alcohol dependency, domestic violence, crime and an erosion of social capital in an already fragmented and vulnerable environment. The Health and Psychosocial Team within the Rehabilitation Commission should co-ordinate the establishment of this phone line and the recruitment, training and monitoring of PSCs working on the phone line in collaboration with and support from appropriately skilled civil society actors, relevant government ministries (including MoW&C and MoPR) and UN agencies.
- **Continue to implement activities on sensitisation to psychosocial trauma for all returning former qualified combatants, communities and former security agency personnel**. Activities that aim to sensitise returning former qualified combatants and communities to psychosocial trauma, which started during the transition period,

should be continued throughout the implementation phase. The Community Rehabilitation Committees should organise sensitisation seminars and other forms of information sharing, such as street theatre etc, to raise awareness on psychosocial trauma and reduce stigma for community members, returning former qualified combatants and security agency personnel with support from DROs. They should also provide information on where support for dealing with psychosocial trauma can be accessed (i.e. through the counsellors based in the Committees and toll-free confidential phone line). In addition, sensitisation of psychosocial issues can be integrated into awareness-raising activities being undertaken in the implementation phase as part of the communication strategy for sharing information on rehabilitation options to communities and returning former qualified combatants. The DROs and DMOs should co-ordinate and continue to monitor the implementation of these sensitisation activities in collaboration with Community Rehabilitation Committees, local authorities and civil society actors including community groups and NGOs.

- **Strengthen local health services** in target geographical areas during the implementation phase in order to respond to healthcare needs of returning former qualified combatants identified through the socio-economic profiling exercise undertaken in the transition and planning phase (Section 3.3.8.2). Arguably, the key approach to this should be strengthening the capacity of the national health sector to be able to respond to all health concerns experienced at the local level, as opposed to providing special services to former qualified combatants for addressing healthcare concerns as part of the rehabilitation package in the short-term, which could exacerbate tensions and jealousy in the community. However, there are a high number of former (qualified, discharged and voluntary left) combatants, ex-security personnel and community members suffering long-term health concerns as a result of the conflict which need to be addressed as a matter of priority, and cannot wait until the capacity of the health sector to address these concerns and meet demand is strengthened in the longer term. Specialist healthcare services co-ordinated by and supported through the rehabilitation packages should therefore be established within local health structures in target geographical areas for addressing longer-term conflict-related health concerns. The Health and Psychosocial Team within the Rehabilitation Commission should have responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring the establishment of these specialist healthcare services in local health facilities in target geographic areas in collaboration with the MoH, DROs and DMOs.
- **Establish rehabilitation centres for injured/disabled former qualified combatants and former security agency personnel.** These centres should be established in districts where cantonments are located in particular, as well as in target geographical areas more generally, keeping in mind that some injured/disabled combatants may not be able to move far from the cantonment where they are based. The centres should provide accommodation, subsistence, access to healthcare and guidance on accessing suitable employment. The centres should equally benefit injured/disabled former security agency personnel to avoid tensions arising and ensure conflict sensitivity. The Health and Psychosocial Team within the Rehabilitation Commission (through the DROs and PSCs) should co-ordinate the establishment of these centres in collaboration with relevant local authorities, the MoH and relevant civil society actors including NGOs and community groups. The government should provide funds for these centres or seek donor funding. Consideration should also be given to benefitting injured/disabled discharged and voluntary left combatants through these centres.
- **Provide ID cards to badly injured/disabled combatants and former security agency personnel** so that they can qualify for discounts on transport and healthcare facilities. Qualification for these services should be based on a criteria agreed by government, security agencies and the Maoist Army. Provision of the ID cards and monitoring of these services should be co-ordinated by DROs and DMOs in collaboration with central government, local authorities and civil society actors.

4

Conclusion

THIS REPORT IS THE ONLY COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS of the attitudes and perceptions of current and former Maoist Army combatants, community members, civil society, security agencies personnel and political actors regarding the integration and rehabilitation process in Nepal. Crucially, this report offers a nuanced understanding of highly sensitive and complex issues and is therefore of great value in terms of informing the design of these processes at a critical time for the political landscape of Nepal. The findings represent the views of those interviewed and should be seen as such. The findings indicate that there are mixed views regarding appropriate mechanisms for integration and rehabilitation and therefore highlight the needs for effective political stewardship of these processes, something it has been argued can occur only with movement towards political reconciliation.

From the findings of this research the report has developed a series of recommendations that are believed to represent the most effective way in which to design, manage and implement these processes in order to address the concerns raised. Specifically these recommendations seek to introduce a gender- and conflict-sensitive approach to such planning, design and implementation. Given the number of female Maoist Army combatants, and the need to adhere to UNSCRs 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 and the recently developed National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, it is crucial that programme design and execution incorporate these gender- and conflict-sensitive recommendations into the policy landscape. This should seek to address the differing and shared needs, concerns and priorities expressed by male and female combatants (former and current), as well as those of security agency personnel and communities. The recommendations are designed to facilitate this in practice and ensure the integration and rehabilitation processes effectively impact on those intended beneficiaries while simultaneously contributing to the realisation of the peace process and engendering reconciliation at a political and social level. Three key recommendations (the establishment of a politically neutral and government-owned national Integration Commission, a politically neutral and government-owned Rehabilitation Commission – with presence at the district levels – and Community Rehabilitation Committees at the VDC level) are supported by further recommendations that seek to address specific identified needs, concerns or priorities of different key stakeholders while contributing in a positive way to the overall integration and rehabilitation processes.

ANNEX 1

Lessons learnt from rehabilitation of discharged combatants

The United Nations Inter-agency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP) – consisting of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) – was established in February 2010 and tasked with managing the implementation of rehabilitation packages for the discharged combatants. The discharged combatants are required to sign up for packages by 7 February 2011. UNIRP is working in collaboration with local service providers (both for-profit and not-for-profit) including Micro-Enterprise Development Program (MEDEP), Underprivileged Children’s Educational Programs (UCEP), Training Institute for Technical Instruction (TITI) and partners including the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO) and Centre for Victims of Torture, Nepal (CVICT) to implement the education support, vocational training, micro-enterprise start-up, health education and training and psychosocial support components of the packages. UNFPA is leading on the implementation of the health and gender components of the packages, UNICEF on the psychosocial and education components, ILO on capacity-building for the service providers and UNDP on the micro-enterprise and vocational training aspects and general management of the programme.¹⁹⁷

Four education and training rehabilitation packages are available, on a voluntary basis, to all those who were disqualified: Vocational Skills Training, Micro and Small-Enterprise Development, Education Support, and Health Services Training. As of 16 September 2010, the UNIRP has been contacted by a little over half of these discharged combatants (2,154, which equates to approximately 54 percent). Of these, 1,563 have thus far received career counselling and been referred to a service provider, of whom 941 have enrolled in one of the four rehabilitation packages (234 have completed the training, of whom only 20 percent are currently employed)¹⁹⁸.

1. Vocational Skills Training

Referred to service provider: 526 (4% female) 444 minors and 82 late recruits
Enrolled: 336 (2% female) 295 minors and 112 late recruits

2. Micro and Small-Enterprise Development

Referred to service provider: 604 (52% female) 472 minors and 132 late recruits
Enrolled: 379 (56% female) 319 minors and 60 late recruits

3. Education Support

Referred to service provider: 352 (41% female) 306 minors and 46 late recruits
Enrolled: 172 (44% female) 161 minors and 11 late recruits

4. Health Services Training

Referred to service provider: 81 (26% female) 71 minors and 10 late recruits
Enrolled: 54 (26% female) 48 minors and 6 late recruits

¹⁹⁷ Data in this section has been taken from a presentation by UNIRP entitled ‘Progress Status of UN Inter-agency Rehabilitation Programme’ (version as at 16 September 2010) and from the latest UNIRP Weekly Report (#28: 03–09 Sep 2010).

¹⁹⁸ Note that this data does not record numbers of those that have dropped out of the packages.

Through the research, a number of challenges were identified relating to reasons why some of the discharged have not wanted to take up the rehabilitation packages.¹⁹⁹ Although many of these constructive lessons have been developed from analysis of why some discharged combatants have not wanted to take up rehabilitation packages, this should not be seen as criticism of a process that is currently in only an early stage of implementation. It should also be noted that UNIRP is taking ongoing steps to revise the rehabilitation packages to respond to these challenges, and that some of the challenges identified are attributable to constraints within the political context as opposed to characteristics in the design of the packages. Key lessons to date are outlined below.

Inadequate communication

Communities and current/former combatants illustrated signs of having a lack of (and sometimes incorrect or misinterpreted) information about the rehabilitation options available for those former combatants who were discharged. For instance, current combatants and communities criticised the packages for only offering training in agriculture (which is not the case), only providing 22,000 NRs without providing additional support such as vocational training (again, which is not accurate) and for only providing short-term training of three months (most training lasts for between three and nine months). Poor information-sharing arose from the UN's limited direct contact with and problematic access to the discharged combatants prior to and after they returned to civilian life. This led to many discharged combatants who were interviewed deciding not to make contact and access rehabilitation packages. It has also contributed to feelings of frustration towards United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN).

This emphasises the need to strengthen mechanisms communicating available options to the current combatants in the future and discharged in the present. Information also needs to reach other stakeholders including communities, to help dispel rumours, promote reconciliation, reduce stigma and increase community ownership of the rehabilitation process. The experience of the discharged also highlights the difficulties in relying upon the returned former combatants to make first contact to access packages (i.e. through calling the toll-free number contained on a leaflet provided by UNMIN at the discharge ceremony). The fact that many of the discharged combatants have been approaching service providers for information on the packages illustrates the need for stronger communication mechanisms, which could include the establishment of advice bureaus and counselling centres. In addition, awareness-raising through targeted radio programmes, street drama and print media should be considered, in order to reach other former combatants as well as the wider community.

Lack of a transition period

A key challenge undermining the effectiveness of the rehabilitation packages has been the absence of a pre-return transition and planning phase. To support effective social rehabilitation and strengthen the uptake of packages, awareness of communities and returning former combatants about the different rehabilitation options available should have been raised through pre-return orientation and socialisation training and consultations. This would also prepare both parties for challenges that may arise as an outcome of rehabilitation and of ways to address these in a proactive and sensitive manner. In addition, orientation training should have been provided for security agencies during this stage to prepare them for challenges that may arise at the

¹⁹⁹ According to a weekly report from UNIRP on 9/9/2010, 54 percent of the 4,008 individuals discharged, 76 percent of the 2,394 individuals discharged through cantonment ceremonies and 21 percent of the 1,614 individuals not present in cantonment ceremonies (i.e. 'no-shows') have made first contact through the toll-free phone number. Thirty-nine percent of the 4,008 individuals discharged, 56 percent of the 2,394 individuals discharged through cantonment ceremonies and 14 percent of the 1,614 individuals not present in cantonment ceremonies (i.e. 'no-shows') have received career counselling and been referred for training or education. Twenty-three percent of the 4,008 individuals discharged, 33 percent of the 2,394 individuals discharged through cantonment ceremonies and 9 percent of the 1,614 individuals not present in cantonment ceremonies (i.e. 'no-shows') are in or have completed training or education.

community level as an outcome of the rehabilitation process. Ideally, activities in the preparatory transition and planning phase should be implemented over a period of at least six months.

Lack of socio-economic profiling

To ensure the rehabilitation packages meet the priorities and needs of the discharged combatants, and are moulded around a thorough understanding of their existing skills and capacity constraints, an individual socio-economic mapping of combatants should have been undertaken before they were discharged from the cantonments. This would have strengthened the potential effectiveness of the rehabilitation packages, but was blocked at the political level, particularly by the UCPN-M.

Lack of national and local labour market analyses

In order to ensure that the rehabilitation packages focus on building skills in professions where demand exists in the local market, and will therefore more likely lead to employment (and the uptake of packages), a local and national labour market analysis should have been undertaken. The undertaking of these analyses was also blocked at the political level.

Insensitive terminology – stigma attached to term ‘disqualified’

Use of the term ‘disqualified’ was heavily criticised by current and former combatants as well as community members. This term holds extremely negative connotations and there is a lack of awareness as to the reasons why a combatant has been given a disqualified status. Some of the discharged combatants interviewed were aware of the rehabilitation package options on offer but did not want to participate due to fear of the stigma attached to being labelled as ‘disqualified’, and the risk of social isolation that would result from accepting the packages.

To address this issue, UN has recently started using the acronym VMLRs (Verified Minors Late Recruits) instead of ‘disqualified’; however, the term ‘disqualified’ is now deeply embedded and widely used by the majority of the discharged themselves, communities and service providers interviewed during the research, and is therefore difficult to change at this stage in the process.

This emphasises the importance of being sensitive in the early selection of terms to categorise returning former combatants in (as well as elements of) the rehabilitation process, and realising that although these terms may make sense at the policy level they may carry different and derogatory meanings and stigma at the local level.

Perception that UN and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) profit from the rehabilitation process and the discharged gained little

Current and former combatants as well as UCPN-M political leaders have criticised the discharged rehabilitation packages for (as they perceive) benefiting private institutions and NGOs (who are playing the role of principal service providers and service providers) and the UN without benefiting the discharged. This perception has created a lot of anger among discharged combatants.

In addition to the care required in identifying appropriate implementing organisations, this emphasises the importance of being transparent and communicating clearly to the public how rehabilitation funds have been allocated in order to prevent myths arising and tensions mounting.

Challenges with the use of middlemen

Some service providers involved in the delivery of vocational training in the rehabilitation packages for the discharged combatants raised similar concerns about the principal service providers (private institutions including USEP and Alliance Nepal) contracted to hire service providers for rehabilitation activities and co-ordinate their implementation. In particular, concerns were raised about late payments, poor communication and the perception that the principal service providers are overly profiting from the process. In addition, service providers raised concerns that they were not making enough money from the delivery of vocational trainings to cover actual costs as a result of only few discharged combatants taking up the packages in some cases. Ideally, those responsible for co-ordinating implementation of the rehabilitation programme (which may include UN agencies, bilateral donors, a rehabilitation commission etc) should collaborate directly with the service providers for different aspects of the rehabilitation programme, instead of handing over management responsibilities to middlemen, to strengthen effectiveness and tighten co-ordination and communication.

Inadequate stipends provided to support participation in training and transportation

The UN programme provides 3,000 NRs per month and three meals a day for the discharged combatants who are joining vocational and micro-enterprise training. A number of discharged combatants participating in these trainings criticised the packages for failing to provide adequate funds for people in the Mid- and Far-Western Hills to travel to the locations of the training centres in the Terai. In addition, the packages were criticised by the discharged combatants interviewed for not providing adequate funds to cover living costs in urban centres in the Terai where the training is taking place. In particular, they criticised the package for not providing additional support with accommodation costs and emphasised the poor living conditions they are subject to as a result of having to pay for accommodation costs out of the monthly stipend. In addition, the process of accessing stipends if a participant falls ill, or otherwise is unable to attend training, appears to be difficult, not widely known about and heavily criticised by the discharged combatants involved. The UN is however unable to increase the stipend as it has been capped at the political level.

Dissatisfaction with the types and length of vocational training offered

Many of the discharged combatants were aware of the package options on offer but did not want to participate in the vocational training as they perceive it to be in lower-status professions, which would prevent them from gaining respect in society. As the substance of the report highlights, many may consequently join armed groups in order to secure the societal respect they seek. In addition, some discharged combatants (particularly men) criticised the length of training for being too short.

Political blockages, particularly the inability to perform socio-economic profiling, among other obstacles, restricted the number and type of training options available (which have since been expanded). Nonetheless, the success of rehabilitation depends upon the provision of adequate training responsive to the needs and expectations of recipients and the wider community as well as the demands of the economy.

Limited political and government buy-in

A key challenge facing the implementation of the rehabilitation packages is the lack of government buy-in and support for the process, which emphasises the importance of ensuring the government has ownership over the process of rehabilitation for the current combatants.

Some discharged stated that were not willing to receive the rehabilitation packages because they did not feel that the UCPN-M was happy with them. For example, a male discharged combatant stated:

“The state has apparently said something about a certain package about education and I don’t agree with it, primarily because our party has also not agreed to it.”²⁰⁰

Some discharged combatants and district UCPN-M leaders said that the UCPN-M was restricting them from participating in the packages in the Far-Western Terai. This emphasises the importance of ensuring political buy-in of the UCPN-M to the rehabilitation packages offered to the qualified in order to ensure success. Those tasked with the responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the rehabilitation packages should take steps to consult with the UCPN-M at national and district levels in the design phase to ensure buy-in and commitment to the process. In addition, regular consultation should be made with all political parties together at both the national and district levels during implementation to ensure effective communication and collaboration and to reinforce buy-in and commitment.

Inadequate community involvement and ownership of the rehabilitation process

Civil society representatives and some community members criticised the rehabilitation process for not involving community members, and felt that the community could have benefited more from the process and the services provided to the discharged combatants. Some argued that this would have strengthened community ownership and acceptance of the returning discharged combatants and in turn supported effective social reconciliation at the local level. This raises questions about how to better involve the communities, perhaps through establishing new or building upon existing community committees, and at the very least consulting communities in the process.

Additionally, community benefits need to be adequately communicated, as some of the criticism levied is based on a lack of information about the potential benefits available. For example, in the current packages, school infrastructural projects and vulnerable children in the community can also be supported when former combatants are provided with education support.

Lack of understanding and responsiveness to the different needs of men and women

UNIRP is currently in the process of adding a gender component to the rehabilitation process and creating different rehabilitation options for women, based on their particular needs including support for caring for dependants. The absence of a socio-economic profiling exercise (see above) meant it was not possible for UNIRP to do this at an earlier stage and ensure that the different needs and priorities of men and women for the rehabilitation process were taken on board.

Furthermore, the information leaflets provided to discharged combatants during the discharge ceremony do not provide adequate information on the different options and support available for women, including provisions for supporting dependants while participating in training and family allowances. UNIRP has however realised this constraint and attributes this lack of information to the weak participation of women in the rehabilitation process to date. They are currently seeking to revise their strategy to address this issue and strengthen uptake of packages by women.

Discharged combatants (particularly women) felt that most women participating in the rehabilitation packages had chosen the micro-finance option as support facilities for dependants are available in this package and not in others, including vocational

training. This emphasises the importance of providing these support facilities in connection with all rehabilitation options. Current provisions for women with children in the rehabilitation package include a provision for those undertaking the education option and considered to be vulnerable and unable to study in their own communities whereby they receive an extra allocation of 2,200 NRs per month for lodging and food for two years. Those in micro-enterprise receive childcare support, special baby food for breastfeeding infants, extra (nutritional) support for pregnant and lactating mothers and medical support for them and their children. Similar developments in the vocational training option are ongoing.

Discharged female combatants also identified the lack of family allowances as a fundamental reason why many women are unable to participate in the packages, and emphasised the importance of increasing the monthly stipend for single women with children participating in the micro-enterprise and vocational training (and other) options to include adequate costs for travel to the towns where training is being delivered, and accommodation, childcare and subsistence costs for all dependants.

The findings from this research have identified that the concerns and priorities for rehabilitation of men and women, and of current and former combatants, differ. Thus, to ensure that the rehabilitation process is gender-sensitive, it is critical that the rehabilitation packages for the current/qualified combatants respond to and are designed on the basis of an understanding of these different needs and concerns.

Lack of healthcare and psychosocial trauma counselling services

A number of discharged combatants stated that they are still suffering from un-addressed healthcare concerns including reproductive health issues (particularly women) and injuries acquired during the conflict (both men and women). Complaints were made that healthcare services were not available through the rehabilitation packages. For example, a female former combatant (who had left voluntarily) stated:

“There are a lot of disqualified friends who are physically disabled and still have bullets inside their bodies. They face more hardship than us but unfortunately nobody is seriously taking care of this.”²⁰¹

UNIRP has recently added a provision to the rehabilitation packages which entitles the discharged combatants to local health services worth a small sum. However, few of the discharged interviewed are aware of this provision as it is only available on a case-by-case basis and not included in the information leaflets or well communicated to the larger group of discharged combatants. In addition, provisions are not included in the packages for addressing long-term healthcare concerns including injuries received during the conflict. It is therefore critical that the provision of long-term healthcare services is included in rehabilitation packages to ensure that the returning former combatants feel their needs have been met, especially as this affects the uptake of packages. Such healthcare provision should also be made available to the wider community in order to avoid tensions arising and promote reconciliation. Information on these services should be incorporated into and linked to a robust communication strategy (see above).

In addition, it is critical that psychosocial counselling services are included as a key component of the rehabilitation packages for both the discharged and the current combatants, as the discharged combatants showed clear signs of depression and trauma. A psychosocial counselling component has recently been added to the rehabilitation packages (from July 2010) and trauma counselling services are being provided by counsellors based in the regional offices and by service providers who have recently received training to support them in delivering these services.

201 A female former (voluntarily left) combatant, Sindhuli (04/09/20)

Information concerning healthcare and psychosocial components of rehabilitation packages needs to be more effectively communicated. This is evidenced by a lack of knowledge among those interviewed about the late (and limited) addition of these components.

Challenges with provision of the informal education option

The option for undertaking informal education classes has been removed from the rehabilitation packages for the discharged combatants as these classes were being used as a mechanism for undertaking and mobilising others to participate in UCPN-M activities while receiving a monthly stipend. This illustrates the risks involved in informal education options. However, the alternative option of formal education classes in a government school of choice seems to be working well, particularly as a result of the community approach taken to deliver this option (see above).

Limited delivery of rehabilitation packages at local level

The delivery of rehabilitation services from five main regional centres has restricted participation. For example, certain training programmes are often only offered in particular regions, meaning that people have to travel long distances to participate. For example, some discharged combatants interviewed during the research were originally from Mid-Western Nepal (Dailekh) but were participating in training in Eastern Nepal (Biratnagar) as their choice of training was not being provided in the Mid-West. The discharged interviewed felt that these conditions have resulted in the highest drop-out rates. To strengthen participation, training should be provided in more locations across the country and closer to prospective participants (at least at the district level in target geographical locations).

In terms of trauma counselling, which requires long-term participation for effective outcomes, it is key that these services are available at the local level where returning former combatants can access these services without disrupting daily life.

Absence of support to access legal documents

A number of discharged combatants interviewed stated that they are facing difficulties in accessing employment as they do not have essential legal documents including marriage, birth and citizenship certificates. Mechanisms to support returning former combatants to access these documents were not included in the rehabilitation packages offered to the discharged but should be considered and incorporated into the rehabilitation packages for the current combatants and should also benefit the whole community to avoid tensions arising.

Absence of an effective neutral monitoring and evaluation mechanism

A mechanism has been established through the UN Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) group and the UNDP programme M&E team to monitor the uptake of packages, understand reasons why the discharged are/are not accessing the packages and establish where the discharged have gone and what they are doing. However, some civil society and government officials argue that a neutral mechanism should be established for this purpose which is managed by a party other than that responsible for implementing the rehabilitation programme (i.e. not the UN). In addition, M&E should not only focus on measuring the success of implementing programme objectives but also the impact of the programme on the conflict and security context. It should also identify gaps in implementation that need to be addressed. Ideally, the Community Rehabilitation Committees should act as contact points for monitoring the implementation of the programme at the local level and should link up to and inform a national-level neutral M&E mechanism attached to the programme.

Comparisons of experiences of those who left voluntarily²⁰² and those who were discharged

Those who have returned to civilian life and begun to rebuild their lives independently appear to be making the transition more easily. For example, those who left voluntarily seem to be experiencing fewer challenges in terms of social rehabilitation and acceptance into communities (although the challenges they are facing should not be underestimated). Some explained this was due to the absence of stigma associated with the term 'disqualified' and also because some have withheld their identity and association with the Maoist Army from the community. In addition, some have established successful business co-operatives of their own accord. It may be the case that the voluntarily returned are finding the transition easier because they have had more time to adjust and those who were discharged will follow along a similar path once the initial problems are over. It would be beneficial to conduct a more in-depth study on and document the experiences of the voluntarily returned personnel over time, to draw concrete lessons for the rehabilitation of the current and discharged combatants.

²⁰² This includes those who left the cantonments before the verification process and the 'no shows' (the 1,614 of the 4,008 disqualified combatants not present at the discharge ceremony).

ANNEX 2

Analysis of existing laws and policies relevant to rehabilitation and integration and recommendations for strengthening policies

There are various extant laws and policies which are relevant to integration and rehabilitation. Some will have a direct impact on integration and rehabilitation and should be considered when such processes are being developed and implemented. There are also a number of other laws and policies that have varying degrees of influence on the design and implementation of integration and rehabilitation. The following section provides an outline of these policies and laws, highlighting relevant articles and clauses. It also makes recommendations where relevant for how they can be strengthened. Integration and rehabilitation planning should consider the existing legislative framework and identify where legislation may need to be amended or drafted.

■ **Strengthen stipulation on exactly how integration and rehabilitation should take place – building upon the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and Interim Constitution.**

It is recommended that a formalised agreement be signed by all parties which clearly delineates exactly how the integration and rehabilitation process should take place. The CPA and IC, as well as other policies, do not stipulate how these interconnected processes should take place, passing this mandate to the Special Committee for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants (SC). However, by concentrating all policy decisions regarding integration and rehabilitation of former qualified combatants (once integrated) in the remit of the SC (CPA Article 4.4) there is a risk that policy generation could be obstructed without an external mechanism to promote consensus and move things forward.

The democratisation of the Nepal Army (NA) (Article 4.7) represents a crucial step in the integration process. By calling for ‘right-sizing, democratic restructuring reflecting the national and inclusive character and imparting training to the NA on the values of democracy and human rights’, the CPA initiates the integration process for Maoist Army combatants integrating into the NA and other security agencies. Article 4.8 outlines the key roles of the NA within the state which reflect an important consideration of how the future of Nepal security apparatus may look and which bodies are mandated with which roles. Current thinking around the creation of a Border Security Force (BSF) or Industrial Security Force (ISF) would therefore need to consider the CPA and any amendments to be made to it.

Essentially the IC, through Articles 144 and 146, has legislated the compulsory democratisation of the NA and the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist Army combatants. In essence this is necessary as it avoids the overlapping of policies relating to integration and rehabilitation, and any subsequent misunderstanding or manipulation, which hopefully will increase accountability.

■ **Strengthen political consensus on key issues critical to the successful completion of work by the SC and Technical Committee for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants (TC)**

The establishment of the SC and TC (by the SC) represented the most significant steps on moving forward integration and rehabilitation by building on the commitment of the CPA and the IC to engage in the process. The mandate of the SC and TC clearly identifies the need for information feeding into recommendations on integration, as well as the development of appropriate packages for rehabilitation support, to be

carefully managed. While the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the SC clearly outlines its role in driving the integration and rehabilitation process, it is apparent that consensus has not been reached on key issues as political actors and other external forces frequently disrupt the workings of the committee. The ToR for the TC is clearer about how integration and rehabilitation should progress from the ToR of the SC, but again a lack of political consensus on key issues has prevented the completion of work within the timeframe allocated in the ToR of the TC.

■ **Strengthen the Integration and Rehabilitation Work Plan of the government (2010)**

The work plan for integration and rehabilitation developed by the government in January 2010 set a timeframe in place for the successful management of Maoists Army combatants either through their integration into state security agencies or their rehabilitation back into civilian life. Although the plan provides the foundations for integration, it is poorly conceived and provides no process for rehabilitation. For example, the SC and the TC stipulate that appropriate information outlining the variety of rehabilitation projects, including the positives and negatives of each option, should be made available for all returning former qualified combatants. However, the individual is then offered only ten minutes to digest this information and decide which option he/she wants to pursue. Given their context, political beliefs and emotionally vulnerable state of mind, the plan does not appear to translate its commitment to initiating the rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants into long-lasting working practice. The plan should have provided more detail on the training required for those entering the security agencies in relation to the rank they will be assigned. The number of former qualified combatants to be integrated will be known shortly, as will their current levels of training. It is only by measuring these factors that accurate and sustainable training programmes can be developed. It should be noted that the work plan does make an effort at timetabling the process. However, the inadequacies of the work plan only serve to highlight both the lack of understanding and the importance of gaining political consensus to push the process forwards.

■ **Implement the Agreement on Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies (AMMAA, 2006) to support effective integration and rehabilitation process**

The AMMAA, in theory, represents a crucial confidence-building measure that, adding to the CPA, Interim Constitution and preceding peace process-related agreements, would take the peace process forward. It explicitly sets out the commitment of the Government and Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M) to refrain from the use of arms and to engage with a neutral third party in the monitoring of the management of arms and armies until the integration and rehabilitation process is complete. The AMMAA does not have any direct bearing on the integration and rehabilitation process other than determining those Maoist Army combatants who are eligible for possible integration (should they fulfil standard norms and are properly registered at cantonment sites) and those who are ineligible for possible integration who have been discharged. However, it does have an impact on the environments into which the Maoist Army combatants are being integrated and rehabilitated. The confidence-building measure of arms and armies management and monitoring should be implemented as it is crucial to enhancing trust between the NA and Maoist Army combatants prior to integration, as well as between the community and Maoist Army combatants. That said, if compliance is not forthcoming and violations are not sanctioned, then the Agreement could actually have the opposite effect.

Information gathered throughout the reporting, verification and monitoring processes will be invaluable to the design and implementation of the integration process. Interestingly, engagement in permitted activities is likely to facilitate political and

social reconciliation at all levels of society. Either or both the state security agencies (predominantly the NA) and Maoist Army should pursue the activities they are permitted to engage in as per the terms of agreement. This includes de-mining and decommissioning of military hazards, development activities, humanitarian relief, socio-economic activities, supply of non-lethal items to military units and medical evacuation in order to receive greater societal acceptance and popular support for the peace process in general.

■ **Integration and rehabilitation processes accountable to United National Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000)**

The signing of UNSCR 1325 firmly places gender on the conflict and post-conflict reconstruction agenda and makes a number of key points that should affect the design and implementation of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR)-related programmes (including rehabilitation and integration).

For example, point five stipulates the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into peace-keeping operations and urges UN field operations to include a gender component. Point six requests the UN Secretary-General to provide member states with training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all aspects of peace-keeping and peace-building. It also invites Member States to incorporate these elements into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peace-keeping operations receive similar training.

Therefore, points five and six of UNSCR 1325 will have significant legal and symbolic influence on the integration and rehabilitation process. As of April 2010, Nepal was ranked sixth out of 115 countries contributing personnel to UN peace-keeping missions (military and police) with 5,318 people (5,236 males and 82 females) in deployment. UNSCR 1325 will therefore influence the integration process as it states more female military and police personnel should form part of peace-keeping missions, which Nepal now plans to do over the coming months and years. Furthermore, given UNSCR 1325's commitment to professionalising militaries and the police specifically in terms of gender sensitivity, it is also symbolic for the UCPN-M who highlight their military doctrine's support for the empowerment of women and the failure of the state security agencies – particularly the NA – to follow suit. The new integrated state security agencies will therefore be legally bound by UNSCR 1325 to adhere to these principles of gender sensitivity.

In addition, UNSCR 1325 makes two further statements that are particularly important regarding gender and rehabilitation. Point eight calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia: '(a) the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction'. Meanwhile, point 13 'encourages all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male former combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants'. In line with UNSCR 1325, rehabilitation policy and programming should take on a gender-sensitive dimension which, given the high number of female Maoist Army combatants, is vital for the successful rehabilitation of female combatants and the ability of their families to prosper.

UNSCRs 1820, 1888 and 1820 also situate gender and women's rights within post-conflict reconstruction and make a number of key points that should affect the design and implementation of DDR-related programmes, including rehabilitation and integration.

- Integration and rehabilitation processes should also **be accountable to the following acts, laws and legislation and/or plans should identify where legislation needs to be amended or drafted:**

- **The Army Act (2006)**

Any recruit into the military, including Maoist Army combatants who are integrated, is subject to the full extent of the law as articulated in the Army Act. While there are a number of articles that have an impact on the integration process (such as chapters two and three), chapter four is central to the debate surrounding entry criteria. Particularly if group entry of former qualified combatants is agreed to, amendment of this chapter (and other legislation that prescribes the entry criteria for security agencies) will, most likely, be required.

Chapter four also prohibits the involvement of any person falling under the jurisdiction of the Act from '(a) establishing, operating, becoming a member, assisting a union, institution or organisation, or participating in a programme organised by such union, institution or organisation; (b) participating in a meeting, delivering a speech or participating in a demonstration organised for political or similar objectives by any individual or group (c) printing any poster, pamphlet or other similar documents, (Article 19 (1))'. This would require Maoist Army combatants being integrated by law to rescind any involvement in the UCPN-M.

Furthermore, chapter two's commitment to operating as a democratised military is important for the future of integration. The chapter, entitled 'Establishment and Management of Nepal Army' details how the control, use and mobilisation of the army fall under the National Defence Council (NDC) with civilian oversight by way of the Defence Special Committee of the House of Representatives. This chapter also specifies that the NDC is responsible for recommendations on the size and structure of the NA while being approved by the government and will therefore determine the overall setting and shape of any security agency into which the Maoist Army combatants would be integrated.

- **Armed Police Force Act (2001)**

The Armed Police Force Act only contains a small number of articles with particular relevance to the integration of Maoist Army combatants. Article 3.2, subsection 1 places decisions regarding the size of the APF, and therefore the limitations for integration, in the hands of the government.

The act makes a number of provisions for entry procedures and requirements which have a direct impact on integration of Maoist Army combatants into the APF. However, there are no specific criteria for entry as defined by the law and as such this may be open to some degree of negotiation.

Article 27 (1–4) of the act also stipulates a number of offences for which imprisonment may occur, which are particularly pertinent to the integration of Maoist Army combatants. These include membership of any political organisation or party, or participation 'in a demonstration or procession organised for political objectives' (27: 4d). These considerations are particularly important given the political beliefs associated with Maoist Army combatants and any integration into the APF will need to include a commitment of those integrating to cease political membership of UCPN-M or any other political party.

- **Armed Police Force Regulation (2003)**

The APF Regulation, emanating from the APF Act, contains a number of articles that will impact the integration process. Article 5 (1) stipulates that out of the ten ranks available, four permit open competition: open or similar posts (100 percent), Armed Police personnel (100 percent), Assistance Sub-Inspector of Armed Police (25 percent), and Inspector of Armed Police (10 percent). This presents an opportunity for Maoist Army combatants to be integrated into the APF at various levels should there be the need and the criteria for entry are fulfilled.

Article 5 (3) states that in 'order to make the Armed Police service inclusive, 45 percent of the posts shall be allocated out of the posts of open competition, the posts shall be filled by a separate competition from the following candidate's only: women (20 percent); indigenous/Janjati (32 percent); Madhesi (28 percent); Dalit (13 percent)'. This stipulation presents another opportunity for Maoist Army combatants, especially those from the categories mentioned, as well as other minorities, to enter the APF under the reservation quota should they meet the criteria.

As with the NA Act and the APF Act, the APF Regulation contains a number of articles banning any APF personnel from being actively involved in politics. This could become a contentious issue. For example, Article 66 stipulates that the 'Armed Police shall not subscribe to any political institution, participate in politics, give donations as aid to any political institution nor influence in any way, any political institution or movement'. In addition, Article 72 states the 'Armed Police shall not organise demonstrations or participate in strikes which are likely to jeopardise the sovereignty and integrity of the kingdom of Nepal, threaten peace and security, foreign relations and social dignity, or which may be in contempt of court; nor shall he spread hostility among various castes, tribes, religions, races and communities or communal ill-feelings or support any type of crime'. In addition, Article 67 bans APF personnel from political commentary that would criticise the government, regardless of which party was in power.

These articles clearly demarcate the boundaries of acceptable social and political behaviour expected of APF personnel.

□ **Police Act (1966)**

The Police Act may affect the integration of Maoist Army combatants in terms of the entry criteria and the extent to which political beliefs can be expressed. Of particular importance are articles which relate to planning, instigating and/or engaging in, or withholding information relating to, rebellion or mutiny. It must be noted that the Police Act is currently 55 years old and does not adequately reflect the current context of Nepal and therefore should be revised in order to bring it in line with the current situation.

□ **12 Point Understanding (2005)**

Although the 12 Point Understanding has no specific reference to the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist Army combatants, it provided the basis for the peace process and as such is an important policy document. In effect, the document outlines the context in which integration and rehabilitation will take place and therefore needs to be taken into consideration.

□ **Special Security Plan (SSP, 2009)**

The SSP was developed to assist the implementation of the Local Administrative Act (1971) by removing obstructions in the movement and delivery of vital public services, curbing serious crime, improving the security situation in the principal cities of the valley and strengthening the security situation in the Central and Eastern Terai and Mid-Western Hills. Greater levels of security in the community and enhanced trust between communities and security service providers, along with an end to impunity, will create an environment more conducive for the return of former qualified combatants to civilian life. It does not focus on the issue of integration and rehabilitation in any way, but it is a key policy influencing the environment into which former qualified combatants will be rehabilitated and integrated.

ANNEX 3

Methodology

A combination of focus group discussions (FGDs), one-to-one interviews and key informant interviews (KIIs) were undertaken with communities, current and former Maoist Army combatants, Maoist Army commanders, security agency personnel, political party representatives, civil society representatives and business leaders for this research between February and August 2010.

Detailed information on the dates when different research activities were held and information on participants is outlined below:

Strand 1: Consultations with current combatants

FGDs

	Location	Date of discussion	Number of participants	Age group	Position and background
Male FGD	Ilam	19/02/2010	15	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Male FGD	Ilam	19/02/2010	16	26–35	Maoist Army combatants – commander level
Female FGD	Ilam	19/02/2010	15	26–35	Maoist Army combatants
Male FGD	Kailali	16/03/2010	14	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Female FGD	Kailali	16/03/2010	15	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Mixed FGD	Kailali	18/03/2010	17	20–40	Maoist Army combatants
Female FGD	Kailali	18/03/2010	15	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Female FGD	Surkhet	25/03/2010	13	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Male FGD	Surkhet	25/03/2010	14	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Female FGD	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	16	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Male FGD	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	12	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Female FGD	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	15	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Male FGD	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	16	21–30	Maoist Army combatants
Mixed FGD	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	17	21–30	Maoist Army combatants

One-to-one interviews

Interview undertaken	Location	Date of interview	Age group	Information on position and background
Male current combatant	Ilam	19/02/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Male current combatant	Ilam	19/02/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Male current combatant	Ilam	19/02/2010	21–30	Rai community
Female current combatant	Ilam	20/02/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Male current combatant	Ilam	21/02/2010	21–30	Brahmin community, vice platoon commander
Male current combatant	Ilam	25/02/2010	21–30	Madhesi community, section commander
Female current combatant	Ilam	26/02/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Male current combatant	Kailali	09/03/2010	21–35	Magar community, platoon commander
Male current combatant	Kailali	09/03/2010	21–30	Lama community, section commander
Male current combatant	Kailali	10/03/2010	21–30	Platoon commander
Female current combatant	Kailali	10/03/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Female current combatant	Kailali	10/03/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Female current combatant	Kailali	10/03/2010	21–30	Brahmin community
Female current combatant	Kailali	11/03/2010	21–30	Married
Female current combatant	Kailali	11/03/2010	21–30	Married
Male current combatant	Kailali	11/03/2010	21–30	Company vice commander

One-to-one interviews *continued*

Interview undertaken	Location	Date of interview	Age group	Information on position and background
Male current combatant	Kailali	16/03/2010	21–30	Tharu community
Male current combatant	Kailali	16/03/2010	21–30	Chhetri community
Male current combatant	Kailali	16/03/2010	21–30	Chhetri community, account officer within Maoist Army
Male current combatant	Kailali	16/03/2010	21–30	Company commander
Male current combatant	Kailali	16/03/2010	21–30	Vice-brigade commander
Male current combatant	Kailali	16/03/2010	21–30	Chhetri community, vice platoon commander
Male current combatant	Kailali	18/03/2010	26–35	Battalion commander, in charge of health post
Male current combatant	Kailali	18/03/2010	21–30	Tamang community, vice platoon commander
Male current combatant	Kailali	18/03/2010	31–40	Division commander
Female current combatant	Kailali	18/03/2010	26–35	Tharu community, battalion vice commander
Female current combatant	Surkhet	23/03/2010	26–35	Anonymous
Male current combatant	Surkhet	25/03/2010	21–30	Platoon commander
Male current combatant	Surkhet	25/03/2010	21–30	Battalion commander
Female current combatant	Surkhet	25/03/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Female current combatant	Surkhet	25/03/2010	21–30	Health worker
Female current combatant	Surkhet	25/03/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Male current combatant	Surkhet	26/03/2010	26–35	Tamang community, battalion commander, sub-in-charge of Tamsaling State committee
Male current combatant	Surkhet	26/03/2010	21–30	Dalit community, section commander
Female current combatant	Surkhet	26/03/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Female current combatant	Surkhet	26/03/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Female current combatant	Surkhet	26/03/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	08/04/2010	26–35	Chhetri community, platoon commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	26–35	Rai community, company vice commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	26–35	Division vice commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	26–35	Health lab assistant
Female current combatant	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	21–30	Company vice commander
Female current combatant	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	21–30	Platoon vice commander
Female current combatant	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	26–35	Rai community, platoon commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	21–30	Office secretary
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	26–35	Lama community, platoon commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	29–40	Battalion vice commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	21–30	Section commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	26–35	Battalion commander
Male current combatant	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	21–30	Front Guard Line (FGL)
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	31–40	Division commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	31–40	Chhetri community, brigade vice commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	26–35	Brahmin community, platoon vice commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	26–35	Magar community, platoon vice commander
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	26–35	Battalion vice commander
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	26–35	Platoon vice commander
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	21–30	Company vice commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	26–35	Rai community, company vice commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	21–30	Anonymous
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	22/04/2010	21–35	Anonymous
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Platoon vice commander
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	21–30	Dalit community

One-to-one interviews *continued*

Interview undertaken	Location	Date of interview	Age group	Information on position and background
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Company commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	21–30	Chhetri community, section commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	21–30	Dalit community, platoon vice commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	21–30	Magar community, platoon commander
Male current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Tharu community
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Dalit Muslim community
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Tharu community, section vice commander
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Brahmin community, section commander
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Brahmin community, platoon commander
Female current combatant	Nawalparasi	23/04/2010	26–35	Platoon commander
Female current combatant	Rolpa	20/05/2010	21–30	Magar community, FGL
Male current combatant	Rolpa	20/05/2010	21–30	Chhetri community
Male current combatant	Sindhupalchok	09/06/2010	21–30	Dalit community
Male current combatant	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	21–30	Tamang community, platoon vice commander
Male current combatant	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	21–30	Lama community

Strand 2: Consultations with former combatants (disqualified and voluntarily left)**One-to-one interviews**

Interview undertaken	Location	Date	Age group	Voluntary/discharged
Female former combatant	Ilam	17/02/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Ilam	22/02/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Ilam	23/02/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Ilam	25/02/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Ilam	25/02/2010	16–25	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Ilam	25/02/2010	16–25	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Kailali	08/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	08/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	08/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	08/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	09/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Kailali	10/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Kailali	11/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Kailali	11/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Kailali	11/03/2010	16–25	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Kailali	11/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	12/03/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Surkhet	22/03/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Surkhet	23/03/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Surkhet	24/03/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhuli	08/04/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhuli	09/04/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhuli	09/04/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	31–40	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhuli	12/04/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhuli	12/04/2010	21–30	Voluntary

One-to-one interviews *continued*

Interview undertaken	Location	Date	Age group	Voluntary/discharged
Female former combatant	Sindhuli	12/04/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Nawalparasi	20/04/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Nawalparasi	20/04/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Nawalparasi	20/04/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Nawalparasi	21/04/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Nawalparasi	25/04/2010	31–40	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Nawalparasi	25/04/2010	31–40	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Nawalparasi	26/04/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Nawalparasi	27/04/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Nawalparasi	27/04/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Chitwan	28/04/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Dang	13/04/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Dang	16/05/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Dang	16/05/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Rolpa	20/05/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Rolpa	20/05/2010	16–25	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Rolpa	20/05/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Rolpa	20/05/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Rolpa	20/05/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhupalchok	08/06/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhupalchok	08/06/2010	21–30	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Sindhupalchok	08/06/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Sindhupalchok	09/06/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Male former combatant	Sindhupalchok	09/06/2010	36–45	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Makwanpur	14/06/2010	26–35	Voluntary
Female former combatant	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Morang	05/08/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Morang	07/08/2010	16–25	Discharged
Female former combatant	Morang	07/08/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	11/08/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	11/08/2010	16–25	Discharged
Male former combatant	Kailali	11/08/2010	26–35	Discharged
Female former combatant	Kailali	12/08/2010	16–25	Discharged

FGDs

FGDs	Location	Date	Number of participants	Age group	Voluntary/discharged
Male FGD	Dang	15/05/2010	14	21–30	Combatants opting out voluntarily
Mixed FGD	Liwang, Rolpa	19/05/2010	18	21–30	Combatants opting out voluntarily
Male FGD	Nepalgunj, Banke	21/05/2010	17	21–30	Discharged combatants
Male FGD	Nepalgunj, Banke	24/05/2010	16	21–30	Discharged combatants
Mixed FGD	Sindhupalchok	09/06/2010	10	26–35	Combatants opting out voluntarily
Male FGD	Biratnagar, Morang	04/08/2010	9	16–25	Discharged combatants
Male FGD	Lahan, Siraha	05/08/2010	22	16–25	Discharged combatants
Male FGD	Biratnagar, Morang	06/08/2010	9	16–25	Discharged combatants
Male FGD	Mahendranagar, Kailali	12/08/2010	3	16–25	Discharged combatants
Male FGD	Dhangadi, Kailali	12/08/2010	2	16–25	Discharged combatants
Male FGD	Tikapur, Kailali	13/08/2010	2	16–25	Discharged combatants
Male FGD	Bhaktapur	18/08/2010	22	21–30	Discharged combatant
Male FGD	Bhaktapur	18/08/2010	17	21–30	Discharged combatants
Mixed FGD	Kathmandu	19/08/2010	24	16–25	Discharged combatants
Mixed FGD	Kathmandu	19/08/2010	18	16–25	Discharged combatants

Strand 3: Consultations with communities**FGDs with communities in close proximity with cantonments**

FGDs	Location	Date of discussion	Number of participants	Age group	Socio-economic profile
Female FGD	Ilam	18/02/2010	15	26–50	Homemakers, agriculturalists, community health workers, unemployed
Male FGD	Ilam	18/02/2010	16	31–55	Agriculturalists, retired government officials, educators
Female FGD	Ilam	22/02/2010	15	26–50	Homemakers, small micro-enterprise (SME) entrepreneurs, agriculturalists
Male FGD	Ilam	22/02/2010	14	31–55	Agriculturalists, teashop operators, educators, unemployed
Female FGD	Ilam	24/02/2010	15	26–50	Homemakers, agriculturalists, teashop operators, unemployed
Male FGD	Ilam	24/02/2010	16	31–55	Agriculturalists, teashop operators, unemployed
Male FGD	Pahelmanpur VDC, Kailali	08/03/2010	17	31–55	Agriculturalists, labourers, teashop operators, unemployed
Female FGD	Pahelmanpur VDC, Kailali	08/03/2010	15	21–45	Homemakers, agriculturalists, students
Female FGD	Pahelmanpur VDC, Kailali	09/03/2010	15	26–50	Homemakers, agriculturalists, labourers, unemployed
Male FGD	Masuriya VDC, Kailali	09/03/2010	13	26–50	Educators, agriculturalists, local shop holders, unemployed
Female FGD	Masuriya VDC, Kailali	11/03/2010	14	26–50	Homemakers, labourers, teashop operators
Male FGD	Masuriya VDC, Kailali	12/03/2010	15	21–45	Students, educators, local business entrepreneurs
Female FGD	Masuriya VDC, Kailali	12/03/2010	16	26–50	Homemakers, labourers, food stall operators
Female FGD	Surkhet	22/03/2010	13	26–50	Homemakers, unemployed, students
Mixed FGD	Surkhet	23/03/2010	18	26–50	Homemakers, labourers, agriculturalists, unemployed, local shop operators
Male FGD	Dashrathpur VDC, Surkhet	23/03/2010	14	31–55	Agriculturalists, local government officers, educators
Female FGD	Dashrathpur VDC, Surkhet	23/03/2010	14	26–50	Homemakers, unemployed, teashop operators

FGDs with communities in close proximity with cantonments *continued*

FGDs	Location	Date of discussion	Number of participants	Age group	Socio-economic profile
Female FGD	Surkhet	24/03/2010	15	26–50	Homemakers, unemployed
Male FGD	Surkhet	24/03/2010	15	26–50	Agriculturalists, local business operators, unemployed
Female FGD	Sindhuli	09/04/2010	16	26–50	Agriculturalists, homemakers, teashop operators, students
Male FGD	Sindhuli	09/04/2010	15	26–50	Agriculturalists, ex-local government officials, local business operators
Female FGD	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	14	26–50	Female community-based organisation workers, community social activists, homemakers
Male FGD	Sindhuli	11/04/2010	15	26–50	Agriculturalists, unemployed, local business operators
Male FGD	Sindhuli	13/04/2010	15	31–55	Agriculturalists, community forest user group members, teashop operators
Female FGD	Nawalparasi	24/04/2010	13	31–55	Homemakers, small fish-business owners, subsistence farming
Mixed FGD	Nawalparasi	26/04/2010	15	26–50	Educators, school operators
Mixed FGD	Nawalparasi	27/04/2010	17	26–50	Teashop operators, local business operators
Mixed FGD	Nawalparasi	27/04/2010	15	21–45	Educators (school level)

FGDs in other districts

FGDs	Location	Date of discussion	Number of participants	Age group	Socio-economic profiles
Mixed FGD	Dang	14/05/2010	15	26–50	Agriculturalists, labourers, unemployed
Female FGD	Dang	14/05/2010	18	26–50	SME entrepreneurs; saving-credit women's group, homemakers
Female FGD	Dang	14/05/2010	13	26–50	Conflict-affected victims; unemployed, homemakers
Female FGD	Dang	15/05/2010	14	21–45	Conflict-affected victims; unemployed, homemakers
Female FGD	Hapure VDC, Dang	16/05/2010	15	26–50	Local community mediators, community peace activists, homemakers
Female FGD	Sirpha VDC, Rolpa	17/05/2010	18	26–50	Students, women's group members, agriculturalists, homemakers
Female FGD	Sirpha VDC, Rolpa	17/05/2010	13	21–45	Students, women's group members, agriculturalists, homemakers
Mixed FGD	Reugha VDC, Rolpa	19/05/2010	16	31–55	Community forest group users, homemakers, agriculturalists
Mixed FGD	Gajul VDC, Rolpa	20/05/2010	13	36–60	Conflict-affected victims; unemployed, educators, homemakers, agriculturalists
Male FGD	Kotgaon VDC, Rolpa	20/05/2010	15	31–55	Educators, subsistence farmers
Male FGD	Kohalpur VDC, Banke	22/05/2010	20	30–60	Educators, psychosocial worker, teashop operators, SME entrepreneurs
Female FGD	Kohalpur VDC, Banke	22/05/2010	15	36–60	Educator, teashop operators, local business operators
Female FGD	Kohalpur VDC, Banke	22/05/2010	10	26–50	Homemakers, teashop operators, SME entrepreneurs
Female FGD	Gulariya VDC, Bardiya	23/05/2010	15	21–45	Homemakers, students, community forest users, SME entrepreneurs, educators
Male FGD	Gulariya VDC, Bardiya	23/05/2010	15	26–50	Students, local NGO activists, unemployed
Female FGD	Karkigaon VDC, Sindhupalchok	09/06/2010	13	31–55	Homemakers, agriculturalists
Female FGD	Karkigaon, VDC	09/06/2010	17	36–60	Homemakers, agriculturalists
Female FGD	Petku VDC, Sindhupalchok	10/06/2010	15	26–50	Students, homemakers, agriculturalists

FGDs in other districts *continued*

FGDs	Location	Date of discussion	Number of participants	Age group	Socio-economic profiles
Male FGD	Thumpakhar VDC, Sindhupalchok	10/06/2010	15	26–50	Teashop operators, educators, agriculturalists
Female FGD	Hetauda Municipality, Makwanpur	15/06/2010	13	26–50	Homemakers, women paralegal-mediation group members, SME entrepreneurs
Mixed FGD	Hetauda Municipality, Makwanpur	15/06/2010	15	26–50	Community paralegal-mediation group members, agriculturalists, teashop and local shop operators
Male FGD	Hetauda, Makwanpur	17/06/2010	15	31–55	Educators, lawyers, agriculturalists, unemployed
Female FGD	Hetauda, Makwanpur	17/06/2010	17	21–45	Students, women paralegal-mediation group members, homemakers, SME entrepreneurs, subsistence farmers

Group interviews with families of conflict-affected people, Maoist Army combatants and security personnel

Interviews undertaken	Location	Date	Interview details
Female family member	Kailali	16/03/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatant
Female family member	Surkhet	23/03/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatant
Female family member	Surkhet	24/03/2010	Family of Nepal Army personnel
Mixed family members	Nawalparasi	27/04/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatant
Female family member	Dang	13/05/2010	Conflict-affected family
Male family member	Dang	16/05/2010	Conflict-affected family
Mixed family members	Dang	16/05/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatants
Mixed family members	Dang	16/05/2010	Conflict-affected family
Female family member	Rolpa	20/05/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatant
Female family member	Sindhupalchok	10/06/2010	Family of Nepal Army personnel
Mixed family members	Sindhupalchok	10/06/2010	Conflict-affected family
Male family member	Makwanpur	14/06/2010	Conflict-affected family
Female family member	Makwanpur	16/06/2010	Family of Nepal Army personnel
Female family member	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatant
Female family member	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatant
Female family member	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	Family of Maoist Army combatant

Strand 4: Key informant interviews at district level and in Kathmandu with political parties, civil society representatives, security agency personnel, local authorities and private sector

Interview undertaken	Location	Date	Interview details
Male KII	Ilam	16/02/2010	UML-CPN – political party leader
Male KII	Ilam	16/02/2010	UCPN-M – political party leader
Male KII	Ilam	16/02/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Ilam	17/02/2010	NC – political party leader
Male KII	Ilam	17/02/2010	Limbuwan Volunteers – political party leader
Male KII	Ilam	17/02/2010	Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) – business community
Male KII	Ilam	18/02/2010	Dalit Co-ordination Committee – civil society
Female KII	Ilam	21/02/2010	Teacher – civil society
Male KII	Ilam	21/02/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Ilam	21/02/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Ilam	22/02/2010	Sahara – NGO

Interview undertaken	Location	Date	Interview details
Female KII	Ilam	22/02/2010	Community health personnel – civil society
Male KII	Ilam	23/02/2010	YCL leader
Female KII	Ilam	25/02/2010	UCPN-M – political party leader
Female KII	Kathmandu	02/03/2010	CA member – political party leader
Male KII	Kailali	07/03/2010	UML-CPN – political party leader
Male KII	Kailali	08/03/2010	NC – political party leader
Male KII	Kailali	09/03/2010	UCPN(M)/CA member – political party leader
Male KII	Kailali	09/03/2010	Backward Society Education Nepal – NGO
Female KII	Kailali	09/03/2010	Local administrator
Female KII	Kailali	09/03/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Kailali	11/03/2010	Local administrator
Female KII	Kailali	11/03/2010	Civil society
Female KII	Kailali	11/03/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Kailali	11/03/2010	Local administrator
Male KII	Kailali	11/03/2010	National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) – local authorities
Male KII	Kailali	12/03/2010	Autonomous Council (Tharu) – political party leader
Female KII	Kailali	12/03/2010	Civil society
Female KII	Kailali	12/03/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Kailali	15/03/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Kailali	15/03/2010	Business community
Male KII	Kailali	15/03/2010	Journalist – civil society
Male KII	Kailali	16/03/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Surkhet	20/03/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Surkhet	20/03/2010	FNCCI – business community
Male KII	Surkhet	21/03/2010	R Rastriya Prajatantra Party Nepal (RPP(N)) – political party leader
Male KII	Surkhet	22/03/2010	Journalist – civil society
Male KII	Surkhet	22/03/2010	Geography professor – academic
Female KII	Surkhet	22/03/2010	Legal advocate
Male KII	Surkhet	22/03/2010	CDO office – local administration
Male KII	Surkhet	22/03/2010	Amnesty International local adviser – civil society
Female KII	Surkhet	25/03/2010	Teaching Assistant – civil society
Female KII	Surkhet	25/03/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Female KII	Surkhet	25/03/2010	Social worker – civil society
Male KII	Surkhet	26/03/2010	NP – security personnel
Female KII	Surkhet	26/03/2010	Civil society
Female KII	Kathmandu	06/04/2010	Women's rights NGO – civil society
Male KII	Sindhuli	08/04/2010	Human Rights Education and Awareness Centre – civil society
Male KII	Sindhuli	08/04/2010	Community Development Programme – civil society
Male KII	Sindhuli	08/04/2010	NC – political party leader
Male KII	Sindhuli	09/04/2010	Federation of Nepalese Journalist (FNJ) – civil society
Male KII	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	Nepal Red Cross – NGO
Male KII	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	FNCCI – business community
Male KII	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Sindhuli	10/04/2010	UML – political party leader
Male KII	Sindhuli	12/04/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Chitwan	20/04/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Chitwan	20/04/2010	Journalist – civil society

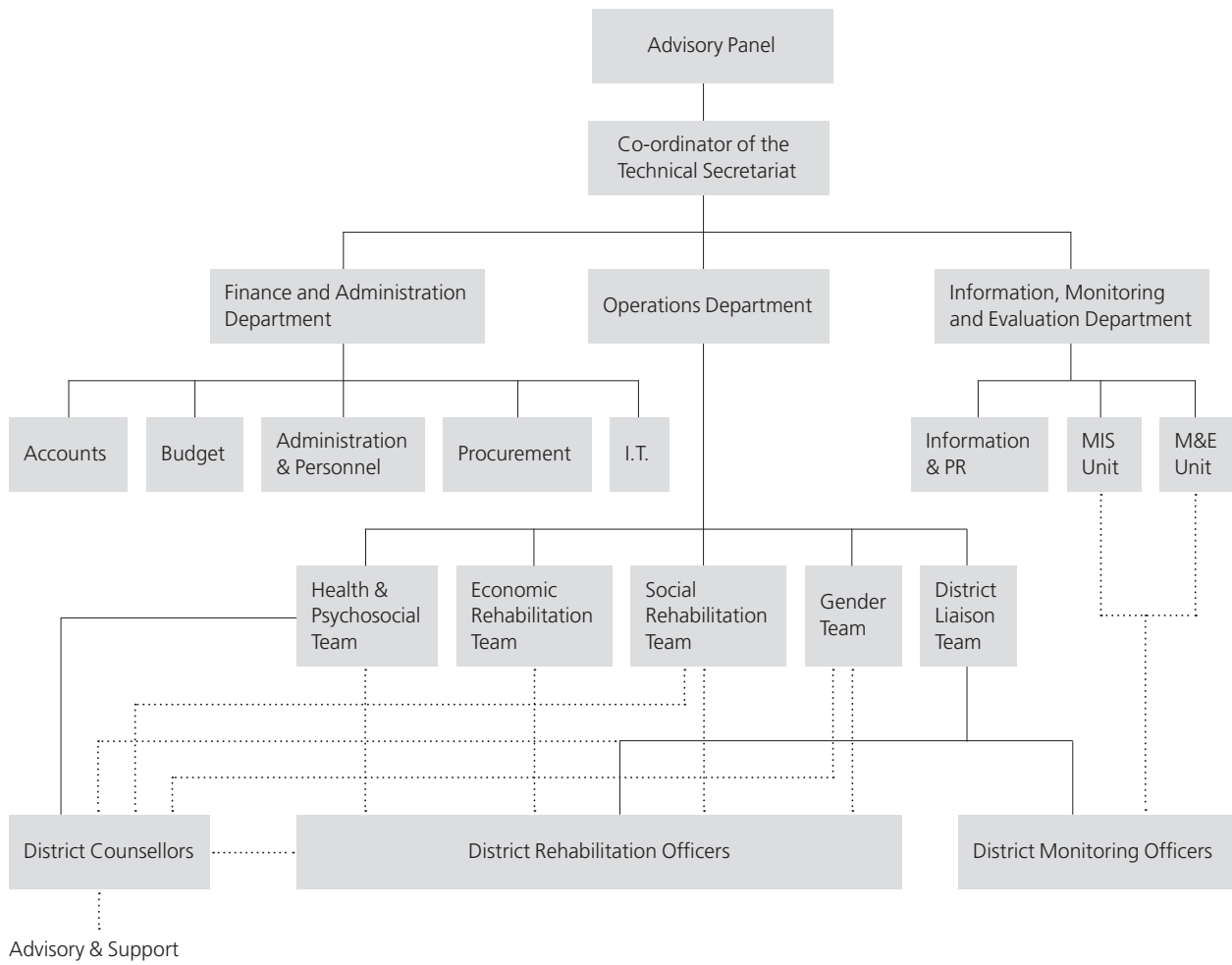
Interview undertaken	Location	Date	Interview details
Male KII	Chitwan	20/04/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Chitwan	21/04/2010	CDO office – local administrator
Male KII	Chitwan	21/04/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Chitwan	21/04/2010	UCPN-M – political party leader
Male KII	Chitwan	21/04/2010	UML – political party leader
Female KII	Chitwan	21/04/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Chitwan	21/04/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Chitwan	23/04/2010	Business leader
Male KII	Nawalparasi	27/04/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Chitwan	28/04/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Kathmandu	13/05/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Dang	13/05/2010	NP – security personnel
Female KII	Dang	13/05/2010	NC – political party leader
Female KII	Dang	13/05/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Female KII	Dang	13/05/2010	Local administrator
Male KII	Dang	13/05/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Kathmandu	14/05/2010	NA – security personnel
Female KII	Dang	16/05/2010	NP – security personnel
Female KII	Dang	16/05/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Rolpa	17/05/2010	NGO – civil society
Female KII	Rolpa	17/05/2010	Local administrator
Male KII	Rolpa	17/05/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Rolpa	18/05/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Rolpa	18/05/2010	Journalist – civil society
Male KII	Rolpa	18/05/2010	NGO Federation – civil society
Male KII	Rolpa	18/05/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Rolpa	19/05/2010	Local administrator
Male KII	Kathmandu	19/05/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	19/05/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Rolpa	19/05/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	20/05/2010	Former Vice-Secretary of UN – civil society
Male KII	Banke	21/05/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Banke	22/05/2010	FNCCI – business community
Male KII	Banke	22/05/2010	Journalist – civil society
Male KII	Banke	23/05/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Bardiya	23/05/2010	MJF(D) – political party leader
Male KII	Bardiya	23/05/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Banke	24/05/2010	MJF(D) – political party leader
Male KII	Banke	25/05/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Banke	25/05/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	02/06/2010	NC – political party leader (and Special Committee member)
Male KII	Kathmandu	02/06/2010	MJF-Nepal, TC member – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	04/06/2010	NC, CA member – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	04/06/2010	UML, TC member – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	06/06/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	07/06/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	07/06/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader

Interview undertaken	Location	Date	Interview details
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	07/06/2010	Journalist from FNJ
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	07/06/2010	UML-CPN – Political party leader
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	07/06/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	08/06/2010	FNCCI – business community
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	08/06/2010	NGO federation – civil society
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	08/06/2010	NC – political party leader
Male KII	Sindhupalchok	09/06/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader (and Special Committee member)
Male KII	Kathmandu	09/06/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	09/06/2010	NA – security personnel
Female KII	Makwanpur	15/06/2010	NC – political party leader
Male KII	Makwanpur	15/06/2010	UML – political party leader
Male KII	Makwanpur	15/06/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Makwanpur	15/06/2010	FNCCI – business community
Male KII	Makwanpur	15/06/2010	NC – political party leader
Male KII	Makwanpur	15/06/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Makwanpur	16/06/2010	NGO federation – civil society
Male KII	Makwanpur	16/06/2010	RPP (N) – political party leader
Female KII	Makwanpur	17/06/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Kathmandu	17/06/2010	Civil society
Male KII	Kathmandu	24/06/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	24/06/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	24/06/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	24/06/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	24/06/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	28/06/2010	Civil society leaders
Male KII	Kathmandu	29/06/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	29/06/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	01/07/2010	APF – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	01/07/2010	NP – security personnel
Female KII	Kathmandu	02/07/2010	Civil society leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	02/07/2010	APF – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	02/07/2010	Madheshi Youth Forum – Nepal – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	04/07/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	04/07/2010	NA – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	04/07/2010	UML-CPN – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	05/07/2010	APF – security personnel
Male KII	Kathmandu	05/07/2010	APF – security personnel
Female KII	Kathmandu	05/07/2010	UML-CPN – political party leader
Male KII	Kathmandu	07/07/2010	Business community
Male KII	Morang	03/08/2010	Service provider
Male KII	Morang	03/08/2010	NP – security personnel
Male KII	Morang	03/08/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Morang	04/08/2010	UCPN(M) – political party leader
Male KII	Morang	04/08/2010	UNIRP associated service provider
Male KII	Siraha	05/08/2010	UNIRP associated service provider
Male KII	Siraha	05/08/2010	UNIRP associated training instructor
Male KII	Siraha	05/08/2010	UNIRP associated training instructor

Interview undertaken	Location	Date	Interview details
Male KII	Siraha	05/08/2010	UNIRP associated training instructor
Male KII	Siraha	05/08/2010	UCPN-M – political party leader
Male KII	Kailali	10/08/2010	UNIRP associated service provider
Male KII	Kailali	10/08/2010	UNIRP associated training instructor
Male KII	Kailali	11/08/2010	UCPN-M – political party leader
Female KII	Kailali	11/08/2010	UNIRP associated training instructor
Male KII	Kailali	12/08/2010	UNIRP associated psychosocial counsellor
Female KII	Kailali	12/08/2010	UNIRP associated raining instructor – TPO Nepal
Male KII	Kailali	12/08/2010	UNIRP associated service provider
Male KII	Kailali	13/08/2010	UNIRP associated service provider
Male KII	Kathmandu	18/08/2010	UNIRP associated principal service provider
Male KII	Kathmandu	18/08/2010	NGO – civil society
Male KII	Kathmandu	19/08/2010	UNIRP associated service provider
Male KII	Kathmandu	30/08/2010	UNIRP representative (UNDP)
Male KII	Kathmandu	30/08/2010	UNIRP Team representative (UNDP)
Male KII	Kathmandu	30/08/2010	UNIRP representative (UNDP)

ANNEX 4

Proposed organisation of the Nepal Rehabilitation Commission



Saferworld works to prevent and reduce violent conflict and promote co-operative approaches to security. We work with governments, international organisations and civil society to encourage and support effective policies and practices through advocacy, research and policy development and through supporting the actions of others.

COVER PHOTO: Maoist Army combatants resting in Rukum district during the conflict in Nepal, April 2004. © AMI VITALE / PANOS PICTURES



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