

2010 PROGRAMMATIC EVALUATION: SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND PROGRAMS IN NEPAL

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) has been working in Nepal since February 2006. The mission is to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial approaches, toward cooperative solutions. SFCG works in 21 countries across five continents engaging in long-term process of incremental transformation.

In Nepal, SFCG has a multi-pronged program to support the peace process, combining media with community peacebuilding work. SFCG has 47 staff with a presence in 16 districts across the country and **works with children and youth, media, and civil society**. Projects include the production of two nationally and 17 locally broadcast radio programs and community-based activities with youth, children and other key actors in the peace process.

The five OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance were used to guide this evaluation: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. In particular, relevance and outcomes/impact were emphasized over the others. The evaluators, gathered information on the basis of literature review of SFCG documents, field observation, existing monitoring database, focused group discussions (FGD), key informant interviews (KII) and case studies. Ultimately, a number of positive components and trends of SFCG programming in Nepal were highlighted.

SFCG ENGAGES YOUTH IN PEACEBUILDING PROCESS

The Youth Leadership and Peacebuilding Trainings (YLPBT) have been able to encourage youth to engage in community peacebuilding work through the youth clubs and networks existing in their communities.

Furthermore, many of the SFCG programs on youth and community peacebuilding have been able to develop a strong leadership base among youth in its working districts and promote their participation in decision making mechanisms at local level. SFCG and its partners have been able to develop the youth participation in their capacity building activities at the community level to transform the skills on peacebuilding/conflict transformation with youth clubs that were traditionally limited to organizing sports activities. Additionally, SFCG has facilitated these groups adopting a common ground approach to their peer groups and other community people, including community elders and leaders.

“Youth activeness has increased because of SFCG’s youth leadership training. Prestige of youth clubs has also increased. As a result, youth are actively participating in community development initiatives ... Their work was also highly acknowledged by community people.”

Nimal Thakur, Training Participant

SFCG PROMOTES PARTICIPATION OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS

SFCG programs, both media programming and the community peacebuilding with youth and local decision makers, have been successful in building and re-strengthening relationship across caste, ethnic, political and geographic lines.

SFCG has also been conscious in promoting the participation of traditionally marginalized groups such as women, youth, Dalits and other ethnic groups into its capacity building programs as well as the programs implemented by its partners in the communities and include their voices in the local decision making processes.

SFCG INCREASES OWNERSHIP AND LOCAL PARTICIPATION IN TRANSITION

SFCG has facilitated the establishment of a local structure that works for conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Its motto “understanding differences, acting on commonalities” is translated well into the radio programs through which the idea that accepting the differences and then acting on commonalities is the basis on which peace and harmony thrive is disseminated.

A “third party” interviewed in Dang district said, “SFCG is recognized as an organization directly working with people in the community level where other NGOs have not yet reached.” Similar opinions were collected in most of the districts where interviews were taken. Along with community youth and media partners, SFCG’s gradual shift in working with Local Decision Makers (LDM) in eastern Terai region indicates its emphasis on increasing ownership over and local participation and having more actors involved in the transition to peace and democracy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are a sample of the recommendations provided within the evaluation:

1. Fundraising strategy training should be imparted to the youth clubs and networks, which hitherto depend on the VDC offices for funding. This can help them develop linkages with other supporting/funding agencies.
2. Considering the immense potentiality of district youth networks to work for conflict transformation and peacebuilding in the respected districts, SFCG should develop an effective strategy to engage them constructively in its broader mission.
3. SFCG has specified in its strategic objectives that it will focus its work for enhancing involvement of traditionally marginalized groups in peacebuilding and democratic process, however no concrete strategies are identified to ensure their involvement in such activities. Thus, SFCG needs to have specific project particularly focusing on traditionally marginalized groups.
4. SFCG needs to be clear on its concept regarding Peace Process and Peace. While building peace can be taken as a way to bolster peace process or vice versa, a comprehensible definition regarding where SFCG actually envisions to contribute is a must.

Source: This document is a summary of, and taken directly from “Programmatic Evaluation of Search for Common Ground Programs in Nepal” by Tulasi R. Nepal, Sagun Basnet, Prakash Bhattarai, Shiva K. Dhungana. A copy of this document can be acquired at <http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/nepal.html>, or by contacting Nick Oatley, Director Institutional Learning at Search for Common Ground at noatley@sfcg.org

John Marks
President
Search for Common Ground
1601 Connecticut Avenue NW | Suite 200
Washington, DC 20009 | USA
Tel: +1 202 777 2222 | jmarks@sfcg.org

Search For Common Ground in Nepal
P.O. Box 24905
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: +977 (1) 4002010
Fax: +977 (1) 4437152
stripathee@sfcg.org



Understanding Differences; Acting on Commonalities (www.sfcg.org)