After-Action Review
an external inquiry grounded
in evaluative thinking

Pathways to Peace Program
Nepal

a program implemented by
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Association of Youth Organizations in Nepal,
Youth Action, and
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The views expressed here are those of program participants and the authors and may not
represent the views of the US Department of State, DRL, SFCG or its partners in Nepal
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The program participants we visited in Kathmandu, Janakpur and Biratnagar gave us valuable time and information. They traveled great distances to meet with us and allowed us to interrupt their busy days to tell us of their involvement in and commitment to peace and democracy at the community, regional and national levels. Constituent Assembly members were cordial and collaborative, sharing with us their views on youth issues and advocacy efforts.
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pathways to Peace program (P2P) sought to structurally transform the way that youth participate in the civic and political arena so that they can make a substantial and positive contribution to the overall peace and democratic processes in Nepal. P2P foresaw its strategic results as: a more politically aware youth; youth inclusion in dialogues on key civic and political issues and youth participation in democratization process from the grassroots to the national level. P2P was conceived in a context where the ethnic division and subsequent political wrangling have sharply divided youth and made them vulnerable to political manipulation.

For the purpose of this after-action review, P2P activities were grouped into major four activity streams a) Civic Leadership School (CLS), b) College Seminar/Civic Education, c) Policy Development and Advocacy and d) Youth Media. These were assessed on the basis of select dimensions of effectiveness, contextual relevance, coherence & coordination, and sustainability. Highlights of findings follow.

**Effectiveness**  
P2P provided youth with the opportunity to gain new knowledge, develop new relationships (primarily with other youth) and organize constituencies around specific topics, such as the drafting of the constitution. The program offered a number of opportunities for broad and inclusive public dialogue but many of these lacked the intergenerational component envisioned originally. Most participants with whom we spoke reported changes in awareness. For CLS participants this was more about changes in self-awareness of their leadership style, rather than political awareness. Non-CLS participants reported changes in knowledge on one or more key topics.

Pathways analysis revealed gaps in the program design between activities and outputs and medium and long-term outcomes. The program did achieve the dependent or outcome variables within the specified program theories of change. However, there may have been additional independent variables at play that were not recognized within the theories – meaning there is still a need to deepen understanding of how things work.

**Relevance**  
The project successfully brought youth from different sectors, geographic locations, gender, ethnicity and professional background into a consolidated advocacy platform. The program was relevant to the context analysis conducted as part of the review that highlighted process and policy considerations. P2P’s success at addressing process concerns would have been more relevant had it succeeded in engaging political youth more fully and had it engaged the senior political party leadership. The program could have been more relevant in terms of policy by expanding the focus to include power and centralization of political leadership. Participants found P2P to be relevant to the context.

**Coherence and Coordination**  
P2P identified categories of strategic participants and, with a few notable exceptions, effectively engaged them in the program. P2P participants were the glue that held the different activity streams together. Participants affiliated with youth organizations tended to apply their learning more effectively than non-affiliated youth, raising questions about the most effective multipliers. Initiatives to promote internal coherence between the different
activity streams focused largely on the “strategic who,” and missed other less important opportunities for integrating the different activity streams. The coordination among partners was adequate in meeting the program’s needs.

**Sustainability** The project has been only partially successful in ensuring the sustainability of project initiatives that address on-going needs. Certain initiatives, such as the Youth Charter, were time-bound activities designed to give input during constitution writing and were not intended to be sustained. Other activities such as the CLS and a few college seminars remained active post-P2P. Only the National Youth Alliance (NYA) holds the promise of becoming an ongoing platform.

P2P was very relevant to the current context in Nepal. P2P was effective in the non-violent mobilization of large numbers of youth to engage in policy development and advocacy. The P2P partners did not fully address the coherence and coordination concerns raised by the donor, but were able to implement the bulk of the program activities. The NYA and the policy documents facilitated by P2P promise to be P2P’s most lasting legacies.

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1 The donor suggested that P2P prepare and maintain a list of “who is who” among strategic and influential youth in Nepal. Each partner kept separate lists, which were at times shared, but there was no central searchable database that included key individuals with whom the partners did not already have relationships.
II. BACKGROUND

A.) Context Description

The years after the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) signed between Government of Nepal and the then Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-Maoist) in October 2006 have seen the locus of violent conflict shift from the Maoist armed conflict, particularly in the hills of Nepal, to a violent conflict in Terai-Madhes. The conflict has exposed an age-old, but latent, conflict in the region. It has already created additional divisions between different ethnic communities, castes and classes, otherwise living in harmony. The ethnic division and subsequent political manipulation have sharply divided the vulnerable youth in the region and there have been multiple and recurring violent incidents between different youth groups in the region.

The driving force of conflict has been the political manipulation of youth, and children, by political parties and armed groups. The eastern and central Terai as well as the eastern hills and far western Terai continue to be the most volatile and vulnerable to violence. The region has been facing growing unrest since January 2007, as the militant groups push their demands for the establishment of an autonomous Madhesi state and greater rights for the Madhesi people, the dominant ethnic population of the Terai2.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (2009) has reported that there are at least 109 armed groups operating in the region and these groups are increasingly luring youth into a culture of violence. Most of the youth are motivated to join such groups as it ensures easy access to four M’s (Muzzle, Money, Motorbike and Mobile)3 through extortion and ransom. Similarly, the Janajati youth in eastern Hills and the Tharu youth in the far western Terai are also being manipulated into violent activities by different ethnicity based interest groups and armed groups in the name of establishing ethnicity-based federal states and reclaiming the rights of their respective ethnicities. Such a trend clearly indicates the high level of vulnerability of the youth groups in Nepal, especially in Terai and eastern hills, as the concentration of conflict has been higher in the region in the recent years.

Conflicts at the community level continue to erupt as groups that have been marginalized for centuries demand their rights and place in the society and its decision-making mechanisms. The conflict in the east is seen to be the most significant threat to the peace process as a whole.

The past year witnessed the fall of the CPN-Maoist from the head of the coalition government followed by the formation of a new government led by the CPN- Unified Marxist and Leninist (CPN-UML). In first week of July 2010, the prime minister resigned amid the pressure to form a national unity government from the opposition and his own party lines. However, after 17 rounds of elections, the Legislative-Parliament has not been able to elect a new Prime Minister as of yet because of political bickering among major political parties. It has been more than five months

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that the caretaker government is running the country in the absence of election of a new executive prime minister.

The lack of executive government at the centre and the local government mechanisms at the local level has further led to intensified impasse in the functions of service providers, from central to local level, despite the caretaker government being able to announce the budget for the fiscal year 2067/2068 (2010/2011) after the prolonged controversy and fight among the political parties regarding the caretaker government’s authority to present the regular budget to the Legislative-Parliament for approval.

At the same time, owing to the recurring disputes among the political parties for a variety of reasons, the constitution making process has suffered considerably. The much awaited constitution of “New Nepal” had been a hope of peace, security and social justice among the lay population ever since it was made the agenda for Federal Republicanism. Nevertheless, the time allocated to draft the new constitution passed with little progress in the draft itself. The time for drafting the constitution has been extended until 14 May 2011. All of this has somewhat diminished the people’s interest and trust in the constitution making process and leaders.

Nevertheless, people still have expectations from the constitution, if not from the constitution making process. Expectations of the dividends that the new constitution would bring are still soaring, especially among the members of traditionally marginalized communities. In conflict-affected areas throughout the country, people still expect that their voices/needs would be included in the new constitution. Young people, in particular, have high expectations that their voices will be included due to the high number of young Constituent Assembly (CA) members (74 out of 601).

The division of communities throughout Nepal along political, caste, ethnic and class lines is leading to increasing clashes, violence and instability. Dozens of armed groups are operating, primarily in the Terai, and are responsible for increased insecurity and a destabilization of the state. Youth, in particular, lack opportunities to have meaningful participation in community decision-making or in the peace process as a whole. Despite their significant role in the decade-long armed conflict launched by CPN-Maoist, the democracy movement of 2006 and the Madhes Movement of 2007, youth are largely marginalized from the current transition, driving many to join the youth wings of the political parties (Young Communist League, Youth Force, Tarun Dasta, Madhesi Youth Forum among others) and various armed groups. To date, the youth wings have largely served as spoilers of the peace process with their involvement in violent clashes across the country. The improved relationship among political parties and their sister organizations reached a low point in the past year especially after bitterness developed among political parties as a result of the fall of the Maoist-led government.

SFCG analysis of the contexts before designing and implementing P2P identified the following contexts to be of priority.4

- The escalating ethnic interest groups in eastern Nepal, central Terai, and mid and far-west Madhes posing challenges to security.

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4 Based on the discussion with SFCG program staff in Kathmandu and the field.
• Heightened levels of inter-ethnic conflict with traditionally marginalized groups clamoring for political, social and cultural space in the new democracy and the much awaited constitution.
• Armed and political opposition groups challenging government authority.
• Soaring expectations from the new government about the dividends that the new constitution will bring, especially among members of traditionally marginalized communities and youth groups.
• Young people's high expectations that their voices will be included in the new constitution.
• Division of communities throughout Nepal along political, caste, ethnic, and class and gender lines leading to ongoing clashes, violence and instability.
• High level of youth manipulation to violent activities by political parties and interest groups across the country and along ethnic lines.

Following the peace process in Nepal, many youth are clamoring to create positive roles for themselves so that they can be engaged in building the new Nepal. Neglecting to respond positively could give rise to disruption of the democratization process, particularly at the local level. Political factions seeking to disrupt the peace process continue to manipulate youth into aggressive behavior.

B.) Program Description

P2P is a multi-pronged program aimed at actively involving Nepalese youth in the peace and democratization process. P2P seeks to bring youth into the mainstream of civic engagement with special emphasis on fostering cooperation among youth from different backgrounds and with varying political affiliations. The short-term goal of P2P is to reduce the manipulation of youth to violence and prevent them from playing a spoiler role in the peace and democratization process. The long-term goal of this project is “to structurally transform the way that youth participate in the civic and political arena so that they make a substantial and positive contribution to the overall peace and democratization processes in Nepal.”

B.1) Civic Leadership Training

The Youth Initiative provided leadership training for participants from civil society, the private sector, political student unions and youth organizations, aimed at strengthening their leadership and non-adversarial advocacy skills, and their capacity to build relationships across dividing lines. The training curriculum, Civil Leadership School (CLS), is an intensive five-day residential experiential learning program for emerging leaders. During the CLS training the participants went through a series of indoor and outdoor activities that challenged their physical and intellectual comfort. They explored the complex challenges that affect their lives and communities, and were introduced to the tools and strategies for leadership and civic

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5 For more information on the Youth Initiative, visit their website. www.youthinitiative.org.np
6 Youth Initiative successfully ran CLS in 2007 with support from The Asia Foundation.
engagement. They developed individual and common visions and action plans, many of which were implemented by the participants in their respective community or profession.

**B.2) College Seminars/Civic Education**

The project organized quarterly seminars held on university campuses with the help of campus-based student organizations, on subjects that are timely and important for youth civic education, such as: democratic institutions, rule of law, constitution development and political affairs. This has proved to be an excellent opportunity for the partner organizations and SFCG to work with student wings of political parties.

A total of 120 college level seminars were held at twenty colleges affiliated with the largest and oldest University, the Tribhuwan University of Nepal. Fifty to sixty participants, who were studying in those respective colleges, attended each seminar. The seminars were publicized and young people who did not have access to higher education, such as girls and youth from marginalized groups such as Madheshi and Dalit were welcomed to attend. Expert speakers were hired locally to speak about the issues concerning youth role in democratization, peacebuilding, human rights and rule of law. The discussions were followed by open discussions among the participants and the expert speakers.

**B.3) Policy Development and Advocacy**

**National Youth Alliance** – The Association of Youth Organizations Nepal (AYON)\(^7\) facilitated the establishment of a National Youth Alliance (NYA) that represents youth wings of political parties, youth-focused civil-society organizations and youth-led groups such as youth clubs. AYON was founded in 2005 and currently has a network of thirty member organizations. By creating an umbrella structure that mobilizes youth organizations and existing networks, P2P sought to make the youth’s voices heard at the central government level and among established civil society. The National Youth Alliance is relatively new and is exploring ways to bring together the various groups together as a platform for youth to express their opinions constructively.

**Youth Constituent Assemblies** – Youth Action (YA)\(^8\) facilitated Youth Constituent Assemblies at the regional and central (national) levels, enabling young leaders from diverse political, caste and ethnic backgrounds to write a youth constitution. This proved to be a common practice for many NGOs and produced a plethora of youth constitutions to be submitted to the Constituent Assembly’s Constitutional Committee. The Youth Constituent Assembly provided a forum for young people to identify the issues that they wish to see incorporated in the constitution and give policy recommendations. This process proceeded despite the delays in the national Constituent Assembly.

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\(^7\) For more information about AYON please visit [www.ayon.org](http://www.ayon.org).

\(^8\) For more information on Youth Action visit [www.youthaction.org.np](http://www.youthaction.org.np).
The Regional Youth Constituent Assemblies were organized in the five different development regions of Nepal. Students and other youth from those particular regions took part in a five-day event, the first two days of which were focused on training related to parliamentary procedures, constitution making process, and so on. The last three days focused on discussions about the new constitution and formulating youth policies and drafting a Youth Constitution. Each of these regional assemblies will have a secretariat team and facilitation team who will help with the overall facilitation and documentation of the proceedings.

**Intergenerational Dialogues** – SFCG organized intergenerational dialogues at the community level to create channels for youth to work with adult policy makers to influence key decisions that are relevant to young people. SFCG’s efforts in this regard opened up channels for productive communication on issues important to the community and SFCG worked with the youth clubs and networks that it has been training and fostering over the past five years, to develop their capacities in working together with elders. These intergenerational dialogues generated local mechanisms to address and prevent generational conflicts and increase understanding. They served as a practical model for inclusive, participatory democracy.

**B.4) Youth Media**

**Common Ground Youth Magazine** – SFCG partnered with Y! Magazine to publish a quarterly youth magazine aimed at providing an outlet for young people's perspectives. Each issue of magazine had a circulation of 4,000 copies. Young leaders and members of youth groups from many sectors of the political spectrum authored many of the articles. The magazine covers development issues, popular culture including the art, travel and sports as well as the democratization process. The magazine was intended to highlight the various other components and activities of P2P. The contents of the publication were in Nepali or English in order to draw the attention of both the rural and urban youths. A few articles appeared in both languages.

**Radio Drama** - SFCG incorporated democracy, governance and peace-building themes into its existing radio program entitled 'NayaBato, NayaPaila' (New Path, New Footprints). SFCG has been co-producing the youth drama series since August 2006 with local media NGO, Antenna Foundation Nepal.9 Three fifteen-minute episodes are broadcast weekly on Radio Nepal and 52 local FM Radio stations.10 The program is formatted as ‘edutainment’ and reaches approximately 3.2 million youth in seventy-five districts.11 The program uses drama to explore the root causes of conflict and equip the listeners with the necessary tools to manage the conflict’s effects on their lives.

**C1. After-Action Review Methodology**

SFCG developed the key review questions independently of the P2P partners and chose to focus on effectiveness, relevance, coherence and sustainability. This excluded strategic alignment,

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9 For more information on the Antenna Foundation Nepal visit their website. www.afn.org.np
10 'Naya Bato, Naya Paila’ is available on state-owned Radio Nepal’s website. www.radionepal.org
11 This is estimated based on the Media Survey carried out by BBC/AC Nielsen in 2007, where the overall listenership rate of NBNP was 27 percent.
implementation, efficiency and impact. SFCG elected not to build on its extensive and labor-intensive baseline data due to the resource constraints. Key questions for the review were prioritized with the understanding that only the top priorities would be addressed.

The after action review employed mixed methods, but was primarily qualitative. Data collection was done through interviews, an electronic surveys administered by SFCG, a partner workshop including a PRA exercise, and limited document review. Two urban areas outside of Kathmandu were selected for the qualitative data collection; one on the basis SFCG’s interest in future programming and the other due to convenience. No control or comparison groups were used. The findings are not generalizable to program areas beyond the sites visited. For a more detailed description of the methodology see the appendices.
III. MAJOR FINDINGS

A.) Effectiveness

In comparing the results reported by partners, program participants and staff with the program’s stated objectives we found considerable achievements and a number of minor shortcomings. In order to determine whether the shortcomings observed were due to the implementation or the design of the program, we examined the program logic by using pathway analysis and by taking stock of the program theories of change. The program has made important strides, despite shortcomings in the program design and minor hiccups in its implementation.

A.1) Planned versus Participant-reported Results

Result 1: “More politically aware youth - increased knowledge on democracy, the rule of law, constitution building and political parties among young people.”

Finding E1: Most participants with whom we spoke reported changes in awareness. For CLS participants this was more about changes in self-awareness of their leadership style, rather than political awareness. Non-CLS participants reported changes in knowledge on one or more key topics.12

Rationale:

“I organized four seminars on behalf of Youth Initiative in Biratnagar. Three of them were on human rights and one on constitution making, rule of law and the role of youth in advancing the constitution making process with the Constituent Assembly members. Before participating in CLS, I was skeptical about politics. However, my participation in CLS gave an opportunity to understand how important politics is for societal change.”

Student

P2P contributed to changes at the individual level among program participants, such as confidence building, changes in thinking and willingness to take risks. The interviews carried out with thirty project participants revealed the different types of individual changes as presented in the table below.

12 The review was unable to methodically test for changes in political awareness and was instructed not to repeat the considerable research conducted in the baseline analysis due to budget constraints.
### Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>CLS Participants</th>
<th>Non-CLS Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase in self-confidence</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in thinking/attitude</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to take risk</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formed new networks</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged in ex-post activities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational development</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other useful learning through the project as mentioned by a few of the participants included effective leadership skills, and the meaning of democracy and its importance in the peace process.

**Implications:** The program sought to achieve breadth through the media and seminars and depth through CLS. The CLS pedagogical approach, duration and content were personally transforming in ways that one-off transfers of knowledge by authorities through seminars, media or lectures will never approximate. Experiential learning however requires considerably more resources and hence there are substantial challenges in reaching the scale achieved through the other less intensive and less personal activity streams.

**Recommendations:** Future P2P initiatives should develop a three-day experiential learning curriculum and train trainers who can disseminate a much larger number of workshops over a greater geographical range reaching larger numbers of youth. The Alternatives to Violence Program is an illustration of a grass roots network that operates internationally on a shoestring budget.

**Result 2:** “Broad, inclusive public dialogue - platforms for intergenerational exchange of ideas and opinions on pressing issues.”

**Finding E2:** The program offered a number of opportunities for broad and inclusive public dialogue but many lacked the intergenerational component envisioned in the original objective. Only the NYA holds the promise of becoming an ongoing platform.

**Rationale:** Participants reported results such as; the replication of activities, the creation of new platforms of engagement, ongoing relationships, and the uptake of policy recommendations, increased collaboration, and expanded voice.

We spoke with five participants who reported organizing community-based intergenerational dialogues. Those who organized such dialogues found that the adult and young people had negative perceptions about each other before participating in the dialogue activities. They reported that these interactions have proven to be an avenue for understanding each other by appreciating each one’s issues and concerns. One of the participants explained.

13 For more information on the Alternatives to Violence Program see: [http://www.avpinternational.org/](http://www.avpinternational.org/)

**Final Report**
Platforms for intergenerational dialogue did not receive the attention given to other activities within the project. There are ample examples of adults being involved in P2P activities as resource people or participants. However, one-off youth/adult encounters are distinct from intergenerational platforms. SFCG staff confirmed that intergenerational engagements, specifically intergenerational dialogue, were not among the top P2P priorities.¹⁴

Finding E3: The frequency of Y! Magazine’s coverage of priority P2P themes has steadily diminished over its four editions.

Rationale: SFCG views Y! Magazine as a platform. A full review of the content and achievements of Y! Magazine exceeded the scope of the review. We did however do a rapid analysis of the frequency of themes in volumes 10-13.

Y! Magazine uses “hip and happening” articles as “hooks” to attract readers who otherwise might not read about civics. There is not always a clear division between the hooks and the primary content. Some of the articles classified by the review as “hooks” or as indirectly relating to P2P were seen differently by Y! Magazine, which saw them as illustrations of youth in leadership roles. This differs somewhat from the original proposal that states that Y! Magazine will focus on, “the success stories of young peacebuilders.” This seems to be been expanded over the course of the program to include human-interest stories where young people have succeeded in their chosen profession, regardless of its connection to civics, governance or peacebuilding.

¹⁴ Intergenerational dialogues were part of SFCG youth and peacebuilding programs and were conducted by SFCG staff and other program partners. 42 intergenerational dialogues were conducted as part of SFCG programs, of which 12 were funded by P2P funding.
On several occasions during the review P2P partners mentioned the problem of youth leaving Nepal in search of employment and other opportunities abroad. The review team was surprised to find one Y! Magazine articles about Nepalese youth running successful enterprises abroad. If an article about civics inspire youth to participate in governance, certainly an article about successful immigrants will encourage youth to leave their country. In a separate volume Y! Magazine also ran a story about how difficult life can be for young students and immigrants overseas. In retrospect it is hard to see how either of these advanced P2P objectives.

The issues most directly linked to P2P included political analysis, youth policy, democracy, youth activism, intergeneration dialogue and the CA process. The issues that were less directly related to P2P include development themes such as forestry, water, fuel-efficient stoves, and human rights. As the following table illustrates Y! Magazine’s coverage of the key or fundamental issues behind P2P has steadily decreased over time. The number of popular interest stories has remained consistent. The number of stories supportive of, but less directly related to, P2P priorities has fluctuated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Popular Interests (Hooks)</th>
<th>Indirectly related to P2P (i.e. development)</th>
<th>P2P Priorities (youth policy, CA, youth activism, etc.)</th>
<th>Total articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume 10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume 11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volume 12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume 13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Media programs are faced with a dilemma; disseminate directly or work through intermediaries. These choices are not always mutually exclusive. A cost-effective way of extending coverage is to seek to have other outlets disseminate one’s materials. We found no evidence of P2P broadening the reach of its print media beyond the magazine and its website by placing articles for reprinting in other magazines, newspapers or blogs.15

Y! Magazine did not prove to be an effective means for announcing upcoming opportunities for engaging in P2P as envisioned in the program proposal. Nor was it realistic to expect it to do so. Most of the partners used local papers with greater local readership and more frequent publications.

**Implications:** Although a number of political processes stalled during the project period, P2P strove to maintain the interest of youth and the momentum of recent gains. Y! Magazine could have done more to contribute to that effort by maintaining a level of intensity consistent with volume 10.

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15 After reviewing a draft of this report Y! Magazine reported that “Reprinting is not practical and no newspapers or magazine will do it practically in the competitive Nepali media market. The market is too small because of the very low functional literacy and they have to compete for the readership and no one wants to print “already circulated materials.”
**Recommendations:** The register of articles appearing in Y! Magazine was prepared by SFCG specifically for this review. Future media initiatives for SFCG in Nepal would benefit from a running log of content, regular monitoring and more restrictive criteria for determining what stories qualify as strategic to the program. Reader testing and feedback, coupled with regular reflection and stronger links to other program partners are important for ensuring the content of the magazine serves the larger program.

**Result 3:** “Youth participation in democratization processes from the grassroots to the national level - strengthened leadership capacity in student unions and other youth organizations and cooperative action among students of various affiliations.”

**Finding E4:** The program provided youth with opportunities to gain new knowledge, develop new relationships (primarily with other youth), learn about how to get involved in various local and regional youth organizations, and organize constituencies around specific topics, such as input into the drafting of the constitution.

**Rationale:** This result is arguably the broadest and most ambitious of the three results envisioned. It encompasses at least four distinct changes; changes in leadership capacity, changes in collaborative action between groups with different affiliations, changes in the degree of youth participation at the grass-roots level and changes in youth participation at the national level. Failure in any one means the overall result was not achieved. Compound results statements, such as result #3, are rarely implemented uniformly or to the same degree. One dimension often receives considerably more attention. P2P was no exception. For SFCG the emphasis was clearly on changes in leadership style and changes in the relationships between the operating partner organizations.

The project contributed to youth participation in constitution-making at the grass roots and the national levels. The program provided opportunities for participants to formulate their concerns for inclusion in the new constitution and make their concerns known to CA members.

Representatives from the regional level workshop finalized the Youth Charter and disseminated it to the CA members and other concerned stakeholders and policy makers at the central level. However, the people who have participated at the regional level workshops and were not present at the central level dissemination program were dubious about subsequent actions. As one youth activist said:

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“The result of NYLF was handed to the organizers and they were supposed to give the Youth Charter to the CA members once it is finalized. I don’t know if they did it. Youth Action has insisted to take the programs to the regional and national levels in Kathmandu. I don’t know if it was done or not. I wanted to share my experience with the cycle rally in these programs but I was not given the opportunity. The issues discussed at the regional and district levels were supposed to be incorporated into another regional program. I heard they did one but do not have details.”

- Student and youth activist
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Given the experience of the Maoists coming to power through violence, P2P sought to promote non-violence among the project participants and to the larger youth community through multiplier youth. The project has been successful in changing participant attitudes towards violence as a legitimate means to bring political change.

This is further supported by the fact that in the CLS post-test 57 percent of the CLS participants discovered after their participation in CLS that they shared certain similar points of views with the people they previously considered to be adversaries or unimportant. In addition 32 percent have made individual contacts with such people or groups after their participation in CLS. Another 32 percent said that they have demonstrated with their community members that the value of collaborating with such groups in building peace in the community instead of avoiding them in the process. Similarly, 36 percent said that their group or community has established working relationship with such (previously considered) adversaries in specific issues in the community level whereas 14 percent said that they have co-sponsored or collaborated with them on various activities or advocacy efforts after participating in P2P activities.

CLS participants report that P2P was effective in changing their leadership style. Some of the improved qualities in leadership styles after their participation in P2P project were: becoming more communicative, improved ability in handling conflict, becoming more inclusive in action, showing higher level of transparency, gaining higher level of trust from other stakeholders and becoming more democratic. Out of thirty participants interviewed during the review, there were three examples of moving across dividing lines of gender, class and reaching out to local governance.

Few student leaders were brought into CLS, and the College Seminars were organized in collaboration with free student unions of respective colleges. However, there were no specific activities implemented to strengthen the leadership skills of student unions and other youth organizations. Except for the few interactions and dialogues among the leaders of students of various affiliations, no specific collaboration took place to promote cooperative actions among them.

**Implications:** Compound result statements comprised of multiple outcomes mask the amount of work involved, link the success of one outcome to another, often independent outcome, and hide the connections and relationship between different outcomes. To better manage these challenges, compound results statements need to be unpacked and addressed individually during detailed implementation planning.

**A.2) Contributions and Challenges**

A number of factors contributed or blocked P2P’s achievements and may merit further inquiry by SFCG and partners. Internal factors include design and implementation, but the external environment may have been more of a determinant. Other factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the program results that are related to implementation are as follows.
### A.3.) Program Logic & Theories of Change

**Finding E4:** The links between several medium-term outcomes in the proposal and the program activities and outputs are at best questionable.

**Rationale:** In order to fully comprehend how the multiple activity streams were to be integrated in a multifaceted program such as P2P, the review team used pathway analysis to map the program logic (see appendices). The analysis revealed a number of medium-term outcomes with no foundational links to program activities. These orphan outcomes include, for example, the medium-term outcome “youth resist manipulation to violence by political leaders”\(^{16}\) is not clearly linked to any of the activities, outputs or short-term outputs. What P2P initiatives specifically enabled youth to resist manipulation to violence? How? How were youth most vulnerable to manipulation, notably political and criminal youth, targeted by P2P? When has it been demonstrated to work for them?

Similar disconnects were true for a number of other medium-term outcomes including: youth exercise a convening role in the democratization process and broad inclusive public dialogue. Orphan outcomes such as these signal a need for more grounded planning.

The review team questions the strength and durability of the link between information transfer (through seminars, lecture and/or media) and awareness, particularly when compared with the experiential learning provided through CLS. In other projects this link would have gone unquestioned. In P2P however, CLS participants routinely expressed their changes in awareness coming from a personal experience where their own fears, biases and assumptions were tested.

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\(^{16}\) See short-term goal, under “Evaluation Plan” on page 13 of the original proposal.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Contributing to Achievement</th>
<th>Blocking Achievement</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Within program’s sphere of influence</strong></td>
<td>• Intentionality in the selection of participants&lt;br&gt;• Complementary programming by partners and externals (i.e. Forum for the Involvement and Development of Youth)&lt;br&gt;• Inclusive approach in bringing diversity into the activities</td>
<td>• Blurring the “strategic what” and the “strategic how.”&lt;br&gt;• Turn-over in staff in SFCG and partners&lt;br&gt;• Weak links to political youth and criminal youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Broader Environment</strong></td>
<td>• Favorable environment – approaching a critical mass of youth programming in Nepal in general&lt;br&gt;• Obvious persistent need - elders maintaining the status quo.</td>
<td>• Persistent, on-going lack of trust of youth in youth&lt;br&gt;• Strikes and on-going local violence&lt;br&gt;• Unmet legitimate grievances of certain stakeholders&lt;br&gt;• Delays in drafting the constitution and loss of momentum and trust in CA process</td>
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They described their P2P experience as transformative. Participants in other activity streams described their P2P experiences as informative.

**Finding E5:** The program did achieve the dependent or outcome variables within the specified program theories of change. However, there may have been additional independent variables at play that were not recognized within the theories.

For the purpose of better understanding the logic behind this project, three key program theories of change were examined. Please refer to appendices for details regarding P2P program theories of change. Since the theories of change were not articulated in the proposal, the review team listed all the results anticipated in the proposal and organized them into a hierarchy of results. The assumptions that link one level of result to the next higher level of result were understood to be the P2P program theories of change. Please refer to appendices for details regarding P2P program theories of change.

*If relationships exist across divides, then groups can collaborate on common policy interests:* Different groups came together in a process with two-way vertical exchanges— particularly in policy development work at the district, regional and national levels. The review was unable to determine how much collaboration stemmed from partners’ convening and facilitative capacities, how much from participants’ relationships established in the course of P2P and what other factors motivated people to work together on policy issues (i.e. simple self-interest).

*If groups can collaborate they can establish common advocacy goals and positions:* Regardless of the factors motivating people to collaborate, position papers were developed relating to a Youth Charter, and National Youth Policy. In case of three implementing partners (AYON, YA and YI), the project motivated them to collaborate and work for a common advocacy goal. Still, the advocacy work lacked the momentum needed to achieve the goal. Once position papers were drafted, there has been little subsequent advocacy work. The advocacy work done is centered on the CA and to a lesser degree on the Ministries and not the political parties. The project has worked with some mid-level individual political leaders and has not been able to work with the political party as an institution. In this case the independent variable – establishing common advocacy goals and positions – is insufficient. A more rigorous result would read, “Joint, multi-faceted advocacy campaign sustained over time.”

*If groups can develop policy papers then they can establish forums for continuing collaboration:* Participants rejected P2P proposals for a National Youth Federation and developed their own national structure during the NYLF called the National Youth Alliance (NYA). The NYA is still in its “storming” stage and risks becoming another organization focused on implementing projects rather than a national advocacy platform able to achieve both high-level access and wide-ranging representativeness. Despite creating the structure, there is uncertainty about how this structure will function as an advocacy platform for youth across Nepal. As the program has demonstrated, there is more to establishing a forum for continuing collaboration than having a common policy position.

17 For more information on advocacy programming options see: Using Composite Logic Model To Articulate an Advocacy Strategy or Theory of Change
http://www.thechangeagency.org/_dbase_upl/CompositeLogicModel.pdf
Implications: Proposals make poor implementation guides, yet they contain or imply program theories of change that have serious implementation consequences. Program theories of change need to be discussed and reflected upon when detailed implementation plans are prepared and at different points in the life of the program – particularly when there are changes in the context.

Recommendations: For similar programming in the future, other tools for laying out the program logic, such as pathway analysis, would help in developing a more coherent program design.

B.) Relevance

The review assessed the relevance of the project to the conflict context, specifically youth involvement in peace and democratization process in Nepal. Developing criteria for assessing the relevance of a program to the context is challenging because of the lack of standards and the uniqueness of every context. One common approach is to identify relevance criteria within the program’s conflict analysis. There was no formal conflict analysis done as part of the design of P2P. Fortuitously, the review coincided with the release of two different conflict assessments that were combined with statements from interlocutors to develop a set of criteria to be used in assessing relevance.\textsuperscript{18}

Although the analyses used here are recent, the dynamics they describe have been in play in Nepal for some time, certainly since before the project. Based on our limited reading of the context, in order for P2P (or any program sharing a similar goal) to be relevant to the context in Nepal at the time of P2P it would need to address and/or reinforce other initiatives working on at least some of the following concerns.

\textit{Process Concerns}

- Find ways to incorporate other youth actors rather than alienate them
- Engage political youth wings
- Engage CA members (young and senior)
- Engage party leadership – and open up space for greater youth participation within the party structures

\textit{Policy Content}

- Promote young people’s understanding of the grievances of other youth
- Find broader, principled issues that more people can agree upon
- Advocate for clarity and compliance in the clear definitions of roles in political leadership
- Advocate for peaceful democratic changes in leadership
- Promote constructive dialogue and reflection on the ramifications of federalism

One of the challenges to this approach is that it introduces criteria that may not have been considered in the original design. Because it considers the overall context it may include needs

\textsuperscript{18} For more information see the appendices: The Program Context – A New Stage for an old Drama
that are well beyond the scope of the program. This is somewhat akin to moving the goal posts. We recognize that these two assessments used set the bar very high. Despite these demanding criteria, P2P was very relevant to the context in Nepal at the time of its implementation.

**B.1) Process Concerns**

**Finding R1:** The program was relevant to the process concerns and would have been more relevant had it succeeded in engaging political youth more fully and had developed an ongoing mechanism for engaging the senior political party leadership.

**Rationale:** P2P addressed the following four principle process concerns to different degrees.

- *Find ways to incorporate other youth actors rather than alienate them:* The project successfully brought youth from different sectors, geographical locations, gender, ethnicity and professional backgrounds into a single consolidated platform through CLS, college seminars and district and regional consultations. This effort ensured the inclusive participation of youth in the developing youth agendas for constitution and National Youth Policy. This helped build the ownership of youth from all corners of the country over the National Youth Policy and the Youth Charter.

- *Engage political youth wings:* The project staff recognized the need to empower and engage political youth wings in order to ensure the voices of youth are raised seriously and powerfully within the party structures. The project partners felt the need of engaging the youth wings of political parties in the process of drafting the Youth Policy and the Youth Charter. There were number of meetings between the youth organizations and youth wings of political parties. The meetings encountered controversies and disagreements too. At times, there were serious conflicts of interest between youth organizations and CPN-UML affiliated Democratic National Youth Federation (DNYF) while discussing the age criterion for defining youth in the policy document. There was long standing confrontation between these two actors and it took quite a while to mend the ties. The partner organizations also worked with Free Student Unions (FSU) of respective campuses while organizing college level seminars that facilitated the institutionalizing the seminars in the colleges as a regular activity of campus administration and the FSU.

- *Engage CA members (young and senior):* The project partners realized that the voices of youth can only reach to the floor of constituent assembly if the CA members take ownership of the youth agendas and carry them to the floors of CA. Thus they decided to engage the CA members in the process of formulating the Youth Charter and the National Youth Policy and organized number of meetings with them. CA members were invited as speakers in different events including the regional consultations and the National Youth Leadership Forum. Such engagements also helped build a feeling among participating CA members that the documents were developed in consultation with them and they advocated in favor of the documents in different forums inside and outside the CA. The
development of the National Youth Charter and Policy through an inclusive process that included youth from a spectrum of backgrounds and geographical areas also enabled youth to better engage with CA members as they could point to and build on a common, representative platform when discussing youth issues with CA members.

There’s a drastic change in the past two years regarding the youth participation in peace and democracy. Today youth organizations are very active. They’ve made and advocated for the Youth Policy and for youth issues to be written into the new constitution. They have prepared Youth Charter to lobby for the inclusion of youth Agendas in New Constitution. As a CA member, they have also provided the Charter to me for comment. I have read the charter and given my inputs to make it more inclusive and holistic. SFCG, Youth Action and other organizations are generating a collective voice to make youth Friendly constitution

Young CA Member.

- Engage party leadership and open up space for meaningful youth participation within the party structures: This criterion of relevance is certainly among the most challenging for any program operating in Nepal at this time. Despite an intention of engaging party leadership in youth issues and convincing them to open up space for meaningful participation of youth in party structures, P2P could not significantly access the party structures or influence them. The activities organized by the project were not powerful enough leverage changes in behaviors of political leadership of major political parties. It also could not engage senior leaders in the process of developing youth related documents. P2P recognized the importance of this criterion but generally held engaging party leadership to be beyond the scope of its work.

B.2) Policy Content

Finding R2: The program could have been more relevant in terms of policy content by expanding the focus to include a greater emphasis on power and centralization of political leadership.

Rationale: The project addressed important policy content as is detailed in the following paragraphs.

- Promote young people’s understanding of the grievances of other youth: Prior to 2008 SFCG was working with youth from rural areas of Nepal, especially from Mid- and Far-western regions. SFCG realized that if it does not connect people from rural areas to urban areas and vice versa, it will not succeed in ensuring holistic youth participation in peace and democratization process. P2P successfully connected rural youth and urban youth and provided them an opportunity to share and learn from each other. This was particularly successful in CLS, where participants from different background came together and shared and learned from each other. Overall P2P engagements appropriately tended to focus more on common interests, i.e. the Youth Charter, than on analyses of grievances.
• **Find broader, principled issues that more people can agree upon:** The P2P project tried to weave youth from all over the country into one string by formulating common youth agenda in the form of Youth Charter and National Youth Policy. This effort helped large sections of Nepalese youth understand that the project is carrying their common agendas. It also brought youth organizations to lobby for a common goal of youth participation in peace and democratization process and include youth agendas into new constitution.

• **Advocate for clarity and compliance in the clear definitions of roles in political leadership**\(^\text{19}\): This criterion of relevance was not fully grounded in the project design and no results were achieved or expected in this regard.

• **Advocate for peaceful democratic changes in leadership:** This criterion of relevance refers to the processes of leadership change, regardless of the leaders at the time. The project promoted and institutionalized peaceful transfer of leadership among partner organizations as demonstrated by peaceful leadership transfer of Youth Initiative (YI) and Association of Youth Organizations in Nepal (AYON) in second half of 2010. Presumably some of the college level seminars also addressed the issue of democratic process involving changes in leadership. However, the project did not organize any significant advocacy activities that penetrated into the political structures and promote processes for future peaceful transfers of power within those structures. SFCG questions whether or not advocating for peaceful political transitions was within the scope of P2P.

• **Promote constructive dialogue and reflection on the ramifications of federalism:** There were no policy dialogues in this regard in any level besides some lectures in college seminars and district/regional consultations about federalism. The small group of youth designated to create the National Youth Alliance debated whether they wanted to be a National Youth Federation. After debating the pros/cons of federalism they chose to become an Alliance instead.

**B.3) Participant Perceptions of Relevance**

SFCG administered an electronic survey monkey designed by the review team to participants in the Civic Leadership School (CLS), college seminars and regional workshop on the constitution building process. The survey monkey was sent to each participant who gave their e-mail address during the course of the program (527 out of a total of 6,891 participants). The response from participants of college seminars and consultation meetings was almost nil. Although all 240 CLS participants were contacted, the 17% CLS response rate was insufficient to draw conclusions with any statistical validity. Consequently the review team excluded this data from the analysis.

\(^{19}\) This is a prime example of the “strategic what” that was missing from the process-oriented results in the program design.
**Overall Implications:** P2P did address an ambitious array of the relevance criteria both in terms of process and content concerns. It is unlikely that any single program would be able to effectively address the many needs of Nepal’s youth. Hence the need for other forms of partnership and integration across programs run by different organizations – particularly those working on governance issues in general, not just those addressing youth needs. Programs that work exclusively through a youth lens, without collaborating with other governance initiatives, are unlikely to be able to influence some of the broader peacebuilding and democratizations issues in Nepal, such as the over-centralization of power.

**Overall Recommendation:** To better address youth needs within the larger contexts of process and content, future initiatives will need to identify and engage with other forms of partnerships across programs run by different organizations that address governance issues in general. Other forms of partnership to be explored could include governance-focused civil society organizations, youth wings of political parties at the regional and national level, and district and regional level government ministries.

### C.) Coherence and Coordination

Coherence refers to the degree to which the program forms part of and is connected with other policies, programs and projects within the same sector. For this review SCFG was particularly interested in P2P internal coherence – how well the activities implemented by each partner complemented those of the other partners.

#### Internal P2P Coherence

- **Finding C1:** Initiatives to promote internal coherence between the different activity streams focused largely on the “strategic who,” and missed other less important opportunities for integrating the different activity streams.

- **Rationale:** Each of the activity streams was implemented as a separate project. This is to some degree desirable as each implementer has its own constituency, geographic coverage and network of relationships. One of the ideas behind multiple activity streams was to achieve the broadest possible reach. Greater internal coherence, or program integration, need not compromise the reach offered by the composite of partners.

In looking at internal coherence we considered how P2P employed six methods of program integration\(^\text{20}\). P2P performed well with the first two and missed opportunities with the remaining four methods.

*Combining different demographic or social groups* – This is where P2P excelled and will be discussed in greater detail in the section on the strategic who.

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\(^{20}\) Rogers, Mark, Aaron Chassy and Tom Bamat. 2010. *Integrating Peacebuilding into Humanitarian and Development Programming*. Catholic Relief Services: Baltimore
**Unintended synergies** – The Youth Charter was not part of the original proposal. It came about in response to a changing environment where a large number of other programs were actively supporting youth input into the creation of the constitution. The Youth Charter complemented the work on the constitution and introduced a new policy domain.

**Mutually reinforcing activities** – The mutually reinforcing activities were primarily within given activity streams rather than across activity streams. CLS graduates joined forces after their workshop to undertake projects, but these were not linked to other activity streams. Some of the advocacy and policy development work involved consultations at different levels, but did not engage the other activity streams. Y! Magazine reported on the accomplishments of different activity streams separately or, to a large degree, as P2P promotional pieces. NYLF is the exception, as participants were selected from across all activity streams and it addressed many of the issues raised during other activities.

**Message-focused** – We found no centralized quality control mechanism for ensuring that key messages disseminated through P2P’s many channels were consistent, accurate and relatively free from political bias. For example, speakers at the college seminars were left to decide for themselves what they would cover without being provided guidelines about key concepts and principles. Nor did we find any mechanism for ensuring the key messages were routinely shared across activity streams. This was left to the discretion of the messenger. We were not able to review the content of different messages disseminated through the different P2P channels. Our observation relates to the monitoring mechanism, not the actual content.

**Organization focused** – Assessing coherence in P2P is made all the more challenging by the fact that the implementing partners are also among the key stakeholders representative of the overall sector. One accomplishment frequently cited by the partners and SFCG was the shift in their relationships with each other from suspicion and competitiveness between them to collaboration. P2P fared less well integrating leadership, civic education and policy within the organizations targeted in the original proposal – youth political wings and student unions.

**Co-location of separate activities** – Sequencing and locating activities across the different streams was a challenge. More might have been done, i.e. college level seminars one-week prior to youth consultations on the constitution or college level seminars immediately prior to CLS recruitment.

**The Strategic Who**

**Finding C2:** P2P identified the strategic who and, with a few notable exceptions, effectively engaged them in the program.

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21 *Process is as important as outcome.* Building cohesion, like development, cannot consist of a series of unrelated activities. Activities or content (“the strategic what”) need to be designed and executed with and by key role-players (“the strategic who”) in unison with a unifying vision and empowering process (“the strategic how”). Source: [http://www.berghofhandbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue5_spies_comm.pdf](http://www.berghofhandbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue5_spies_comm.pdf)
Considerable thought and collaboration went into identifying the people with the influence and relationships needed to bring about the intended changes – in short, the strategic who. The participants were to a large degree the glue that bound together the different activity streams. The working assumption was that the more P2P activities one is exposed to, the greater the impact. Validating that assumption was beyond the scope of the review.

There was a defined process for selecting the participants for P2P activities. Public announcements were made through the local media and disseminated through the partner organizations and their district offices. Potential participants were identified by Pathways to Peace partners’ referrals, head-hunting and the applications submitted by participants. For the CLS, applicants had to demonstrate their leadership in their respective field or they show strong commitment and potential of leadership in Nepalese society in the years to come. A clear criterion for selection was also agreed upon among the partners for making an inclusive and representative selection across the dividing lines.

In practice the partners faced, and to a large degree met, difficult challenges in identifying and reaching the strategic who. They had to establish new relationships outside their given constituencies. P2P successfully brought together diverse groups of stakeholders around common interests (excluding previously mentioned parties). Staff was keenly aware of the challenges involved in representation. In its effort to ensure the inclusion of the broadest range of diversity, little consideration seems to have been given to the participants’ representational legitimacy within their respective affinity groups. This was more important in leadership and policy development than civic education. This challenge is compounded in the Nepali context where youth typically are involved in numerous organizations and roles are often undefined.

In practice, participation for some activities was left open to individuals who although not actively engaged in an organization at the time, had leadership aspirations. To test the assumption that non-affiliated/independent participants would serve as multipliers, we compared post-P2P initiatives led by affiliated participants with those led by non-affiliated participants. We found that participant initiatives subsequent to and independent of P2P were made predominantly by mid-level and executive level activists who were already engaged in one or more organizations. In addition, non-affiliated participants had no built-in audience to whom they could disseminate information gained through their engagement with P2P.

**Implications:** The program relies in no small way on both, the vertical and the horizontal mobility of the program participants within strategic spheres of influence. Although some participants were present as individuals rather than representatives, the intended outcome of the program is to influence groups, organizations, and institutions, relevant to youth and politics in Nepal, not isolated individuals. Non-affiliated participants are not among “the strategic who.”

The P2P experience in strategic recruitment involved the following dilemmas and challenges that were raised by the staff:

- How can the program identify key people when the degrees of affiliation are so numerous and so vague?
• How can the program reach gender targets and open space for young women unaccustomed to speaking at large public gathering?
• How can the program identify key people from other sectors when it has no prior relations with those sectors?
• How does the program ensure that participants at national level forums have sufficient understanding and knowledge of key issues to be able to participate effectively with experienced activists?
• How can the program ensure that participants have a high level of authority/influence within their organization and a low enough level of authority to be able to attend all functions?
• How can staff determine if participants are the critical yeast? Can they access the trim-tab?

Recommendations: The answers are best determined with each recruitment. The important lesson offered by P2P is that identifying and engaging the strategic few is an on-going effort that involves considerable work over time, relationship building and in-depth knowledge of the candidates circumstances, influence, authority and potential. Answering the above questions early in the process will result in better recruitment.

Each partner managed their lists of participants independently. P2P did not have a centralized, accessible data bank of participants in each activity stream. This would have facilitated better monitoring and easier planning for those activities where there were limited slots for participants.

Coordination among Partners

Finding C3: The coordination among partners was adequate in meeting the program needs.

Rationale: All implementing partners including SFCG identified five coordination criteria that they felt were critical to any partnership. Small group discussions revealed differing perceptions over how well P2P met these criteria. The criteria are listed here in order of importance to the partners.

Common goals – This was widely held as being effective for P2P. The goals were known and fit well with those of the participating organizations. The broad framing and use of rhetoric, in the P2P design, makes it easier to see one’s one goals within the P2P goals and key results.

Building trust – Here participants were a little more reserved. Referring participants to another activity streams was seen as an indicator of trust. There has been progress and more may need to be done in future collaborative engagements. Related to trust, we heard concerns about different competencies between different partners. More precisely, resistance to oversight where the implementing partners was considerably more experienced than their SFCG counterpart.

Ethics and Integration – One focus group brought up the importance of having a code of conduct, which they implied existed for P2P. The other focus group raised concerns that certain
issues were “in hiding.” In plenary partners suggested that having a clear code of conduct with expectations and roles defined early in the project would be helpful. Partners also expressed disappointment at not being included in SFCG in-house professional development initiatives such as the work done on consensus building and monitoring and review.

**Responsibility and accountability** – Since the implementation of the different activity streams required minimal coordination with the other partners, most partners felt responsible and accountable for their own initiatives. As one partner explained, “Accountability was born through each program, though Search tried to integrate [matters]. We were accountable to P2P.”

**Shared decision-making and clear communication** – Much of the decision-making relating to planning and scheduling was done by SFCG. The collaborating organizations felt that sometimes SFCG was pushy and that the schedule was a bit tight. There were instances of missed emails. The regular meetings were frequently postponed. One of the participants from one of the districts was unable to attend a key activity due to poor communication.

**Implications:** SFCG in Nepal is relatively new to working through partnerships. Consequently it did not have a wealth of tools and processes with which to add value to partners’ initiatives. SFCG focused more on getting P2P done and less on how to use the experience of P2P to develop partnership systems. Many large development organizations, such as CARE and Plan International, have invested heavily in developing partnerships principles and good practices. Partnerships where one partner holds the purse strings require specific strategies to ensure effective collaboration.

**Recommendations:** SFCG in Nepal would be well served by some research and benchmarking work on partnership. Certain themes will occur in every partnership and merit developing systems and standards. Both of these tasks can be done in collaboration with past, present and potential future partnerships.

In shifting away from direct implementation, SFCG in Nepal needs to determine what value it will bring to future partnerships and how to best go about that. This may involve incorporating some of the learning from the larger organizations. Administering sub-grants tends to put accent financial and management issues over program concerns. This need not be the case. As within all good development practice, much can be learned by listening to the people, or in this case, the partners. Areas to consider include: conflict analysis, systems for monitoring and evaluating progress towards results, case study research, documentation and publication and different types of technical assistance.

**D.) Sustainability**

**Finding S1:** The project has been partially successful in ensuring the sustainability of project initiatives that address on-going needs.

In reaching this finding we looked at six issues relating to sustainability: sustainability strategies, early signs, independent initiatives, institutionalization, capacity building and continuity among implementing organizations. These were concerns raised in the review terms of reference.
D.1) Sustainability Strategies

We did not find documentation of strategies to promote sustainability taken during the project period. There are however, certain sustainability strategies inherent in the program design. The most obvious is the National Youth Federation (NYF), now known as the National Youth Alliance (NYA). By establishing a nationally recognized alliance dedicated to youth interests, people trained by P2P and issues advanced by P2P have an organizational platform for continuity. The original design also assumes that relationships created or strengthened through P2P might contribute to results that extend beyond the life of the program.

D.2) Early Signs of Continuity and Sustainability

The CLS has been a regular activity of the implementing organization that pre-dates P2P and they have incorporated the program into their organizational strategy for the long-run and will continue to be implemented even after P2P ends.

The regional consultations have contributed in preparing the Youth Charter and it has been circulated among the concerned stakeholders including the CA members and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Youth activists reported that the Youth Charter has been a reference document for youth across Nepal and other stakeholders in discussing the youth agenda items that need to be incorporated in the constitution. The regional consultations have also started debates and discussions on how to make a youth friendly constitution and how to lobby for inclusion of youth agendas in the future constitution.

The college level seminars have given some food for thought among young college students to ponder upon the democracy and constitution building. However, the momentum and wave of dialogue and discussion generated by these activities are slowly fading because of the lack of follow up activities with the completion of the project. There are some colleges such as Kailali Multiple College, where the seminars have been regular activities with the full support of the College Administration and the Free Student Union. Some of the youth participants and youth leaders are also part of other projects implemented by partner organizations and they remain connected to each other through different activities.

One Campus Chief said that “College seminars are one of the important ways student learn about the issues of their concern and as a chief of this college I am committed to continue and make it a part of curriculum.” Later, Free Student Union (FSU) and the campus administration have begun their own series of seminars since observing the success of the P2P seminars. They have received basic technical support and resource materials on democracy, rule of law, National Youth Policy and other important resources from Youth Initiative to run these seminars. This discussion series has been very popular among students because of the collaboration between FSU and the campus administration.

There is also a question mark over the sustainability of the Youth Magazine as there is no mechanism developed to date to continue the Magazine once the project comes to an end. Other SFCG programs in the same regions are carrying the intergenerational dialogues forward.
D.3) Independent Initiatives

There are examples of some P2P participants of programs having developed independent initiatives and applied the learning from these activities into practice that promotes cooperation and of good governance in their community.

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**CLS graduates of seventh batch** have been implementing their leadership initiative of waste management in Lalitpur district. They have recently established an organization named "Peers Nepal" and have been advocating for the formation of regulations for waste management in the district. They are organizing awareness campaign among the city dwellers on the importance of segregating the bio-degradable and non-degradable waste and encouraging people to do so. They have also discussed with the Municipal office in institutionalizing the waste management system in the municipality as this is making the city ugly (Youth Initiative).

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**CLS graduates from Kailali, Doti and Achham districts in far western region** organized an interaction program on newly adopted 'National Youth Policy' at Mahendranagar Municipality of Kanchanpur district. At the end of the program they formed a network led by Suresh S K, Manju Mishra and Bijay Rana to advocate for young people’s access to information from the government authorities and public offices. They are regularly organizing monthly discussion forums to get the issue highlighted among youth Kanchanpur and neighboring districts. This initiation has been logistically supported by the Youth Initiative Strategic Location Office in Kailali district. The network hosted discussions and interactions have been a platform for youth in the locality to learn and share from each other and discus the issues that concern all youth in the region (Youth Initiative).

Some of the youth leaders and student organizations have taken cooperative actions prior to taking reactive positions on the issues of conflicting interests. One of the examples of such an initiative is that of the head of Nepal Student Union (NSU), All Nepal National Free Students Union (ANNFSU) and ANNFSU (Revolutionary) have started to communicate with each other before taking any strong position on some issues or reacting on issues of conflicting interest. There are many instances that they have consulted each other to avoid violent reactions. However, it has not been successful every time, despite some successes through such effort. Many respondents during field study revealed that contribution of P2P project is that it has built the “leadership capacity and positively transformed the attitude of youth leaders.”

D.4) Institutionalization

The National Youth Policy and the Youth Charter were formulated based on the number of consultations organized at district level and regional level. The documents are filling the policy vacuum related to youth in Nepal. These initiatives also demonstrated the value of popular consultations— both for civil society and the state.

The NYA is poised to take a leadership role in promoting youth participating in democratization and peace process. However, it is too soon too tell how the NYA will evolve and ensure it remains representative of youth in Nepal. It has yet to determine how it will engage with formal institutions such as the youth-related ministries, the political parties and other Nepali institutions.
D.5) Capacity Building

As a 19-year-old young female and a student activist, I never had an opportunity to understand that I have a say in the constitution building process and can discuss directly with my representatives. I had heard through radio that Constitution Assembly members are coming to their constitution to solicit suggestions to put in the new constitution. I am happy that I got this opportunity and I will definitely meet the CA members and put forth my agendas to be incorporated in the new constitution. College Student

The review was not tasked with a formal assessment of the changes in capacity for P2P participants. Engagement in the policy development and advocacy work certainly provided an opportunity for many youth to expand their capacity as in the case above. However, the only information collected by P2P remotely related to capacity came from the CLS pre- and post-tests.

Knowledge tests\(^{22}\) carried out before and after the CLS training have shown the increased knowledge and shifting attitudes of participants. The test showed that the trust of participants in other people after graduating from CLS has increased from 20 percent in pre-test to 42 percent in the post-test. Similarly, CLS has contributed significantly in improving the knowledge about having clear communication skills among the participants as demonstrated by the pre-and post-test results where there is a increase in percentage of participants (from 26% to 62%) who thought that clear communication skill is very important in a team work.

Among CLS participants 35 percent believed in people’s participation in decision-making processes to be the most important component of democracy before the CLS, which increased to 61 percent afterwards. The tests showed that 29 percent participants believed that the presence of legitimate government is the basic indicator of a rule of law. That increased to 44 percent after the CLS. Similarly, 72 percent participants believed that the sovereign people of Nepal should be the most powerful entity under the constitution of Nepal – up from 62 percent before undergoing CLS.

Without additional information and larger and more rigorous sampling it is not possible to generalize conclusions concerning participants’ actual changes in capacity to build relationships across dividing lines or use non-adversarial advocacy skills – two of the key capacities highlighted in the proposal.

D.6) Prospects for Continuity Among Partners

The three partner organizations have implemented many projects in different districts of the country for the last few years with the help of different donor agencies from within and outside of the country. Some of the activities they are implementing are similar in nature and has the potential to continue in the future days too. Their prospects are best conveyed in their own words.

\(^{22}\) Pre and post tests were carried out by Youth Initiatives in each of the 10 CLS. However, the data provided in this report is based on four sample Pre and Post-tests carried out involving 96 participants during CLS in August and December, 2009 and January and February, 2010.
The biggest success of P2P project is to bring together three big youth organizations, because we worked as competitors in youth issues. Next, I personally feel that there are so many youth organizations giving feedback to the constitution-making process but they work in isolation. The P2P consortium was big enough that the feedback from our activities and the submission process to the CA members has given confidence to CA members also. They see the consortium as having a legitimate source of information gathering and distribution since so many youth from different sectors and geography were consulted. We have a solid process, two years of activities that were interlinked. It’s not like we did all of it alone. It was cross-linked. We all gave feedback to each other.

Pawan Roy, Chairperson, Youth Action Nepal

Pathways to Peace Project started right after the election of Constituent Assembly which was a ripe time for young people to get engaged in dialogue and discussion about civic and political issues. The project created a platform whereby youth of Nepal had an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills and work on shared vision of socially inclusive, participatory and democratic New Nepal. The project was successful in bringing together young people from different caste, color, ethnic group, region, religion and enhancing their potential to encourage them in taking social entrepreneurship. The association of different organizations in the P2P project made it unique as we got to utilize our strength in our particular project and also extend support to other partners in order to make P2P successful focusing on creating social capital.

Anita Thapa, President Youth Initiative

In my opinion, the biggest achievement of P2P is that we have endorsed some issues form the Youth Charter. That is most important because it’s very representative. Second, we have formed the National Youth Alliance. Youth organizations understand that to raise their voice strongly this is very important. Third, we have done youth activities and youth got a change to participate in forums. This is a rare opportunity for youth in Nepal. Somehow this enhances leadership, which is strength for the youth movement

Kabindra Burlakoti, President AYON

Implications: Not all P2P components merit continuation. P2P was a unique project and some of its components were designed for the transition period such as the development of Youth Charter, promoting youth participation in constitution writing process and regional consultations associated with the constitutional building process and the feedback on the formulation of the National Youth Policy. The documents have already been given to the concerned authorities. Other components, such as the capacity building component and national platforms for ongoing advocacy, remain very important.

Recommendation: The NYA needs to stake out a purpose and function that distinguishes it from its host AYON. There is ample room for both a network and an alliance. AYON is an appropriate host. However, the two organizations need to serve different mandates so that their constituents can distinguish and enthusiastically support them both. Some overlap in constituencies may be unavoidable, however a clear difference in mandate is indispensible of they are to remain independent of each other.
III. CONCLUSION

Pathways to Peace was conceptualized and implemented at a time of transition following a decade-long armed insurgency that engulfed the entire country in a wave of violence, socio-economic crisis, a widening gap between rural and urban youth, ongoing political instability and youth manipulation. P2P mobilized youth organizations, otherwise working in isolation, to use a consolidated platform and lobby and advocate for the rights of youth and their involvement in democratization and peacebuilding process. The program interventions were relevant to the context.

The district and regional consultations have played an important role in bringing the voices of youth from many sections of society into the Youth Charter. The involvement of youth from different regions and socio-political arenas and CA members, especially young CA members, leaders of students wings of political parties and young political leaders in discussion and drafting of the Youth Charter has resulted in widespread recognition as well as ownership over the document. The document has been used as a reference document for youth agendas while drafting a new constitution. The district and regional consultations have also started discussions and dialogues among youth in different parts of the country.

After the completion of the consultations, there were rounds of discussions among the members of technical working groups for developing the Youth Charter before finalizing the draft. Once the document was finalized the three implementing organizations came together to organize the National Youth Leadership Forum (NYLF), consisting of more than 250 youth representatives from all section of Nepali society (such as ethnicity, political ideology, geography, social strata, students, professional associations, third gender and others). This forum also brought number of youth leaders including CA members, student leaders, professionals, constitutional experts among others, to discuss about the ongoing peace process and the constitution writing process. The Youth Charter was presented to the representatives during the forum. During the forum, participants organized a 41 member National Youth Alliance (NYA) and a Seven Member Steering Committee to manage the regular affairs of NYA. The NYA is poised to take a leadership role in promoting youth participating in democratization and peace process.

The Civic Leadership School (CLS) has provided knowledge about democracy, human rights and rule of law and helped participants develop leadership skills, communication skills and build trust among youth from different sectors of society. Some of CLS participants are already implementing their action plans drawn up during CLS.

The college level seminars have been successful in starting discussions about democracy, constitution making and rule of law among young college level students and also developed linkages and relationships between the students and the resource persons including the young CA members. The seminars have started a functional relationship between central level youth organizations and local college based Free Students Unions (FSUs). The follow up activities of the college seminars have also facilitated collaboration between FSUs and the college administration, which otherwise have a tense relationship because of their role in college affairs.
The institutionalization of college level seminars in some of the colleges is considered a positive step towards increasing awareness among college level students in the country.

The number of prints and the circulation of Y! Magazine has limited its reach to urban areas. There is no clear strategy on how the magazine will be sustained in the future. The interviews with partner organizations and SFCG indicated that Y! Magazine has no commercial viability and they are not in a position to continue sponsorship of its publication. P2P has no information about the effectiveness of Y! Magazine. Only an in-depth survey among the readers of the magazine can answer this question, which was not within the purview of the review.

The majority of the projects that we were able to discuss with participants were found to promote awareness about democracy, rule of law, constitution making and peacebuilding among youth in Nepal. P2P activities contributed to increased non-violent participation of youth in the civic and political activities at different levels and built relationship between rural and urban youth.

There were, however, also a number of shortcomings. P2P was not successful in working directly with political parties to promote democratic leadership and youth friendly structures. The project was only able to work with individual youth political leaders through CLS, constitutional consultation, NYLF and could not engage the political party leadership in program initiatives. The project activities designed under this project were not robust enough to effectively promote democratic practices in the party structures. This requires larger and continued direct engagement with political party leadership. Even the collaboration with FSUs has become a onetime event as a result of which, the program was replicated in only a handful of colleges without larger effect. There is no specific follow up mechanisms established to support ongoing needs of capacity building and advocacy. Sustainability has remained an unanswered question throughout the program.

Despite these concerns, the program generated a belief among participants that if they work together, they can raise their voices and be heard at the highest levels. The program also contributed in bringing numerous organizations into a single, consolidated platform to work on a common goal of youth participation in the democratic process and peacebuilding in Nepal. This effort legitimatized the voices of participating youth. The attention paid by the CA members on Youth Charter and the recognition given by the Ministry of Youth and Sports to the project consortium led by AYON, while drafting and finalizing the National Youth Policy is a clear indication of this importance P2P’s achievements.
IV. APPENDICES

Appendix I

After-Action Review Methodology

This after-action review was originally intended to be a summative evaluation. Given the resource constraints, insufficient survey responses, and personnel changes within the review team, we were not able to meet the accuracy and feasibility standards set by the Joint Committee on Standards for Evaluation.23 Specifically, the quantitative information did not yield sufficiently dependable information and no alternative survey process was employed. Nonetheless the review was grounded in evaluative thinking and the after-action review still has considerable value.

SFCG developed the key review questions independently of the P2P partners and chose to focus on effectiveness, relevance, coherence and sustainability. This excluded strategic alignment, implementation, efficiency and impact. Like many programs, P2P was operating with very limited evaluation resources and the review boundaries were set accordingly. SFCG elected not to build on its extensive and labor-intensive baseline data due to the resource constraints. The Radio Soap opera was recently evaluated and hence excluded. Key questions for the review were prioritized with the understanding that only the top priorities would be addressed.

The after action review employed mixed methods, but was primarily qualitative. Data collection was done through interviews, an electronic surveys administered by SFCG, a partner workshop including a PRA exercise, and limited document review. Two urban areas outside of Kathmandu were selected for the qualitative data collection; one on the basis SFCG’s interest in future programming and the other due to convenience. No control or comparison groups were used. The findings are not generalizable to program areas beyond the sites visited.

The semi-structured interviews were used to identify different types of results from the different activity streams. This helped test the assumptions relating to non-affiliated participants and provided the information needed to construct the electronic survey instruments. Insufficient replies plagued the validity of the electronic survey.

The risks associated with low responses to the survey monkey were anticipated. Given that the survey monkey could be administered by SFCG without additional expenses for the review, the decision was made to experiment with the process. 527 participants (out of a total of 6891) who had furnished their addresses at one point or another during the program were sent e-mails with the link to the survey monkey. There were 110 undeliverable bounces and a total of 37 responses. Unfortunately there were no additional resources to employ more conventional follow-up methodologies for obtaining additional quantitative data once the shortcomings of the survey monkey were evident.

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Staffing the inquiry was problematic throughout the review. Originally the review involved a national reviewer working with an international advisor – on site at first and subsequently remotely. Unable to find a qualified national who was available, SFCG contracted a newly arrived expatriate residing in Nepal. The reviewer was contracted for 15 days and the advisor for 8 days. Neither the reviewer nor the advisor spoke any of the national languages or had prior experience with youth issues in Nepal. They overlapped in Kathmandu for four days, much of which was spent finalizing the design, testing the interview protocols and trying to obtain and review documents that had not been forwarded in advance. The process was further complicated when the reviewer had to leave the country (for serious family concerns) and turn over the follow-up data collection and analysis and report writing to another reviewer. The alternate reviewer is an experienced Nepali evaluator and was retained for 15 days. This change in personnel resulted in a disconnect between data collection and data analysis.

An evaluability assessment prior to the review might have avoided some of the challenges encountered during the review. Given three SFCG full-time DME staff this would seem plausible. An evaluability assessment would have revealed some of the design issues earlier, prepared program documents such as participant lists and the inventory of Y! Magazine articles, and complete sets of documents from all partners, tested the survey monkey methodology and better articulated the reviewers’ qualifications.

Specific analyses that were performed for each of the key lines of inquiry were as follows.

**Effectiveness**
- Level of results for CLS participant (personal, relational, structural by affiliation with youth organizations (independent, single affiliation and multiple affiliation). Responses were further disaggregated into CLS and other activity streams
- Pathway analysis – how activities are connected (or not) to outputs and outcomes
- Identification and plausibility of program theories of change

**Relevance**
- Participant perceptions of relevance by activity stream - based on electronic survey
- Synthesis of current situational analyses and comparison with program goal and objectives
- Inventory and categorization of program related articles in Y! Magazine by edition, theme and language

**Coherence**
- Comparison of P2P performance with generally recognized methods of program integration
- Comparison of partner generated norms of partnership and with partner perceptions of actual performance

**Sustainability**
- Review of anecdotal evidence relating to sustainability; strategies, early signs, independent initiatives, institutionalization, capacity building and continuity among implementing organizations.
## Theories of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy of Results</th>
<th>Design Program Theory of Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth resist manipulation to violence</td>
<td><strong>GAP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth involved in mainstream civic engagements</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>If youth voices are heard in civil society then youth will be able to engage in mainstream civil affairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth voices heard in civil society</td>
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<tr>
<td>If youth can establish a cross cutting national alliance then their voices will be heard in civil society</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Youth Alliance established</td>
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<tr>
<td>If groups can develop policy papers then they can establish forums for continuing collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishment of youth policy platforms (Youth Policy/Constitution/Youth Charter)</td>
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<tr>
<td>If groups can collaborate they can establish common advocacy goals and positions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative policy work among youth organizations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>If relationships exist across divides groups can collaborate on common policy interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual relations established across divides during CLS</td>
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<tr>
<td>If youth have positive experiences of the other they will form relationships with the other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>New experiences of others acquired</td>
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<tr>
<td>If youth engage in trust building initiatives they will have a positive experience of the other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Leaders strengthen leadership skills and governance knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information can encourage youth to participate in leadership training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information about youth issues circulated</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GAP</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Intergenerational dialogue</td>
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</table>
Appendix III

The Program Context – A New Stage for an old Drama

Few peacebuilding evaluations allocate sufficient time for externals to fully comprehend the dynamical, post-conflict contexts in which programs often operate. Yet to appraise the program’s relevance to the context, some understanding of the situation is required. This limited overview relies overly heavily on two recent analyses to identify potential criteria for assessing the relevance of the Pathways to Peace program.

Recent Developments

Between the 1994 elections and the king’s coup in 2005, thirteen governments, with an average lifespan just over 10 months, were formed and dissolved. From 1996 to 2006 the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) waged a “people’s war”. The armed conflict became more violent in 2001 and peace negotiations broke down in 2001 and again in 2003. King Gyanendra took absolute power in 2005.

In April 2006, seven main political parties and civil society launched a “people’s movement.” Peaceful mass demonstrations brought an end to the King’s rule and created a window of opportunity to end the armed conflict. The CPN (Maoist) and the Government of Nepal signed a Comprehensive Peace Accord in November of 2006.

An analysis done by the Crisis Management Initiative in 2007 raised many of the uncertainties and popular fears at the time P2P was designed, such as:

- The creation of an oligarchy of party leaders rather than popular democracy
- Proposals for federalism that pre-empt meaningful discussion in the CA process
- Political parties unwilling to address internal problems of corruption, patronage and exclusion that fueled support for the Maoists.
- Would the Maoist experience motivate others to utilize violence?

By December 2007 the parliament approved the abolition of the monarchy as part of the peace accord with the CPN (Maoists) who agreed to re-join the government. In April 2008 (when the program began) the Maoists won the largest bloc of seats in the constituent assembly, but were not able to secure a majority (220 out of 601 seats). Candidates under the age of 35 won 55 out of 240 seats. One month after Nepal became a republic, Maoist ministers resigned from the cabinet in a dispute over who would head the state. In July 2008 Ram Baran Yadav became Nepal’s first president. By the end of 2008, nine months after the elections, the CA formed ten thematic committees to lead the process of writing the constitution. Contentious issues including federalism, language and the rights of minorities slowed its progress.

25 SDC, *Annual Plan 2009-2011*
Prime Minister Prachanda resigned in May 2009 in protest over a move by President Yadav to block the removal of the head of the army. Madhav Kumar Nepal became the new prime minister. The May 2010 deadline for drafting the new constitution was extended to May 2011. In June Madhav Kumar Nepal resigned, in the face of prolonged Maoist pressure.

**Perpetual Escalation – the Old and New Status Quo**

Two recent analyses – the Youth Initiative’s *Generational Dialogues* and International Crisis Group’s *Nepal’s Political Rites of Passage* – describe components of what in systems dynamics is called an escalation system. In order to prevail, actors each mount responses to their competitors’ actions, thus preserving their competitive advantage. Taken together these mutually influential dynamics create an escalation system. In Nepal, the state’s “own raison d’être is not serving the citizens so much as servicing the needs of patronage networks and keeping the budget flowing and corruption going.” (ICG Sept 2010) To succeed, the political parties, in this case, must satisfy their own members and mitigate internal threats while remaining competitive with the other parties.

The escalation model reveals one of the ironies of political leadership. In the name of protecting their administration or party, political leaders engage in escalating behaviors to the point where they harm governance institutions and reduce the value of their administration to their constituents. In the case of Nepal, this is true for both the government and those using the *bandas* in protest. ICG describes it this way. “Ironically the success of regular use of the *bandas* has undermined their power and rendered all less

29 Although frequently criticized as simplistic, systems mapping can help identify entry points for programs as well as criteria for looking at relevance. Reflecting on Peace Practice, CDA, has used systems mapping for multi-agency conflict analysis in Burundi and other places.
intrusive forms of public protest ineffective.”

The escalation system is so entrenched in Nepal that it is perceived to be part of a political rite of passage. “New groups try to leapfrog not just the party structures but also the previously accepted steps of escalation.” (ICG Sept.)

In their analysis of youth in politics in Nepal, De Schepper and Poudel identify four key dynamics of political power in Nepal: centralization of power, vagueness, naked power struggles and oppositional thinking. These dynamics play a central role in the escalation system in Nepal.

Centralization of Power - Power has traditionally been centralized in Nepal both geographically and in the executive. “Political parties are centralized around a few figures, almost invariably male and from select high-caste families, and can best be described as oligarchic.” (De Schepper)

Vagueness - To define roles often means to limit access to those roles. Nepal has routinely let roles remain ambiguous. De Schepper and Poudel provide two examples.

- “The 1990 constitution, despite being praised as the best in the world, failed to define a clear division of labor between the monarchy and democratic politics.”
- “Nine months later a new interim constitution was promulgated but, despite its temporary character, underwent no less than six amendments. Even after all these adjustment it still failed to establish a clear division of roles, especially between the prime minister and the president.”

Naked power struggles - De Schepper maintains that, “Power concentrations combined with lack of clear rules or control measures leads us to a third aspect of Nepalese politics, namely the degradation of politics into naked power struggle.” ICG provides the examples.

- “It [the state] has not delivered a linear progression from conflict stability. Instead it has prompted new conflict and reinforced more cyclical patterns of political violence.”
- “The reason the Maoist were – and remain – important is that they represented an existential challenge to the state and the political system. No other movement has presented a systemic and fundamental challenge of this nature.”

Oppositional thinking – According to their analysis, De Schepper and Poudel posit that opposition in Nepal is frequently destructive and often internal.

- “…the remarkable quality of Nepalese politics is the presence of vigorous oppositional thinking and action within political centers….”
- “Opposition in Nepal is commonly marked by agitation and resistance, rather than what is loosely described as responsible opposition.”
**Youth in Nepalese Politics**

Youth seeking greater participation in Nepalese politics must deal with this escalation system. Youth engagement in politics in Nepal has traditionally been party-based and greater in times of transition. The arrangement has been symbiotic – youth acquire status, and an institutional patron, and politicians extend their influence, and at times their muscle.

After 2006, several parties expanded their youth organizations and equipped them with a more militant outlook. YCL and YF are now the most active youth wings... Political violence is not confined to electoral competition; a significant proportion results from conflict over state resources, such as public contracts. In many cases party interests are less obvious. Many clashes between youth wings originate in personal disputes and become institutionalized subsequently. ICG Sept

Political youth are often equated with criminal youth and criminal/political connections pre-date the Nepal conflict (ICG). There are other reasons youth get involved with political parties. “Youth wings not only provide a sense of economic stability in times of transition, but perhaps more importantly, provide a sense of meaning. Many youth members take pride in their role as a policing force and continued against feudal systems or active participants in obtaining equal rights for the community they belong to.” (De Schepper).

ICG sees little likelihood that youth wings will disappear. “The major parties are in the process of renegotiating political space. Some of the related violence is likely to cease once the contestation has settled into new equilibriums. But such settlements will still be based on implicit threats of violence. None of the major parties therefore is likely to go back on building up their youth wings or their involvement in criminal gangs.” ICG September

De Schepper and Poudel conclude that, “All in all, politics in Nepal seems to suffer more from an inability to hand over power in a responsible way than from the exclusion of youth.” Their prognosis goes against common development theory.

If youth really want to bring about change and avoid the mistakes of their predecessors they do not need better education, more jobs, more political consciousness or the right ideology. They need to understand the grievances of other youth and learn that these grievances are very similar to their own aspirations and address them in a way that incorporate other actors instead of alienating them. Instead of the current short-term ‘solutions’, a concerted approach is required. The only way for youth to climb out of the current political quagmire is to genuinely listen to the other youth and cooperate beyond immediate interests. Otherwise this generation will slip into old patterns and become another rusty key [the same as the current power-holders].

**Criteria in Looking at Relevance**

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Although the analyses used here are recent, the dynamics they describe have been in play in Nepal for some time, certainly since before the project. It is unlikely that any single program would be able to effectively address the many needs of Nepal’s youth. Based on this limited reading of the context, in order for P2P to be relevant it would need to address and/or reinforce or supplement other initiatives working on some of the following concerns.

Process Concerns
- Find ways to incorporate other youth actors rather than alienate them
- Engage political youth wings
- Engage CA members (young and senior)
- Engage party leadership – and open up space for greater youth participation within the party structures

Policy Content
- Promote young people’s understanding of the grievances of other youth
- Find broader, principled issues that more people can agree upon
- Advocate for clarity and compliance in the clear definitions of roles in political leadership
- Advocate for peaceful democratic changes in leadership
- Promote constructive dialogue and reflection on the ramifications of federalism
Appendix IV

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Pathway Analysis

P2P Pathway Analysis

Inspiring stories of seminar participants

Announcements of opportunities to get involved

Articles co-authored by young leaders

Increased youth knowledge

Increased awareness of peace and democratization processes

Common vision and actions plans

Youth use non-adversarial advocacy

Cooperative actions among students of various affiliations

Views expressed through youth platforms (Youth Alliance)

Youth in mainstream civic engagements

Youth voices heard in civil society

Youth voices heard at central government

Orphans

Convening role in democratization

Broad inclusive public dialogue

Platforms for inter-generational dialogue

Youth Resist Political Manipulation

Project Activities

External Activities

Outputs

Short-term Outcomes

Medium-term Outcomes

Long-term Outcomes

Final Report