



Department of Political Science
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International NGO Peacebuilding
How INGOs Facilitate Nepal's Transition to Peace

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ABSTRACT

The end of the Cold War altered the international landscape. New insecurities, vast humanitarian crises, extended normative frameworks, and increased funding incited established and new international NGOs to expand their engagement in peace processes. In Nepal a failed democratization process during the 1990s regressed into a decade-long internal armed conflict. Today Nepal is undergoing a transition to peace and democracy. In Nepal many international NGOs are active in these processes to build peace, support development and human rights, and to aid democratization. The aim of this study is to elucidate INGO peacebuilding by exploring INGO peacebuilding practices and discourse in Nepal's transition to peace process. Practitioners from eight international NGOs and one INGO association were interviewed in Kathmandu, Nepal: AED, Asia Foundation, the Carter Center, CEDPA, International Alert, Peace Brigades International, Search for Common Ground, United Mission to Nepal, and the Association of INGOs in Nepal. This study verifies previous research findings that underline NGOs as facilitating actors that are able to bring different perspectives, knowledge and expertise from other conflict contexts, and as flexible actors that seek to communicate and adapt their efforts in accordance with local conditions and needs. INGO peacebuilding is constrained by short-term funding. Many times peace program funders expect short-term evaluations in accordance with development and service delivery frameworks. INGOs are interdependent actors, they are professional organizations and many INGOs compete over funds, and most INGOs are constrained by local and international political realities and conditions. Despite these constraints, this study demonstrates that INGO peacebuilding primarily builds on an inclusion and local needs discourse, and that INGO peacebuilding practices entail facilitating and building formal and informal spaces for trustful interaction and dialogue by bridging multi-track efforts to assist the peace process in Nepal.

Keywords: NGO; INGO; Nepal; Peacebuilding; Conflict Transformation; Civil Society.

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ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AF	The Asia Foundation
AIN	Association of International NGOs in Nepal
CC	The Carter Center
CEDPA	The Centre for Development and Population Activities
CPNM	Communist Party of Nepal, Maoist
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
IA	International Alert
ICRC	The International Committee of the Red Cross
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IPG	International Peace Brigades
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTTP	Nepal Transition To Peace Initiative
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
UMN	United Mission to Nepal
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1 BACKGROUND

National governments are progressively sharing their powers – such as political, social and security roles – with businesses, international organizations, citizen groups, and non-governmental organizations (Mathews, 2003: 204). The latter organizations are variable and heterogeneous actors. NGOs engage in for example advocacy, mobilize public support, conduct legal, scientific, technical analysis, provide services, shape, implement, and monitor national and international commitments, and work to change norms and institutions. During the post-Cold War period NGOs as well became systematically integrated into peace processes. According to peace researcher Oliver Richmond (2003: 3) we therefore need to further explore the contributions and limitations of NGOs in peace processes. To address this matter we can turn to post-conflict Nepal as a relevant case study. Nepal underwent internal armed conflict during 1996-2006, and today many NGOs are actively engaged in Nepal to build peace, support development and human rights, and to aid the democratization process. According to the Association of International NGOs in Nepal more than 30 000 national/local NGOs and 200 international NGOs are active in Nepal (Shrestha, 2008-06-17).

1.1 The Post-Cold War Proliferation of NGOs

The global rise of NGOs has for example been described as the “global associational revolution” and the “NGOization of public space” (Kaldor, 2003: 88, 94). The international NGO sector is estimated to disburse more money than the UN (Keane, 2003: 5), and in some cases large NGOs have even overshadowed UN organizations. For example, International NGO “World Vision International” spent USD 180 million in post-conflict Mozambique during 1993-1994, whilst the UNDP five-year budget in the same country was USD 60 million (Abiew & Keating, 2004: 95).

The expansion of NGOs is widely attributed to the emergence of a new global security reality and extended normative frameworks that promoted the engagement of non-state actors in development and humanitarian work. Following the end of the Cold War more armed conflicts erupted than during any other period since the end of the Second World War, these conflicts were predominantly internal, and the overwhelming victims were civilians (Åkerlund, 2005: 27-28). The state-centric doctrines, institutions, and approaches that developed during the Cold War were reassessed in the wake of escalating intra-state violence and transnational insecurities. The international community transformed the normative framework for international affairs under the UN (Tschirgi, 2003: 2-3). The security concept was horizontally broadened beyond military matters, and vertically extended to include global and regional structures as well as local and individual identities (Thakur, 2006: 72). Due to these global changes several international conferences during the early 1990s

sought to establish a global multi-approach agenda for human security by also including population issues, sustainable development, human rights and equality (Tchigari, 2003: 3-4). Operationally security was extended beyond the state: upwards to include international institutions, downwards to encompass regional or local government, and sideways to include public opinion, NGOs, the media, and markets (Rothschild, 1995: 55). The disintegration of the Cold War order also opened political space for international aid donors that, in times of ideological distrust towards government initiated development, promoted and dramatically increased the funding for NGOs and other humanitarian actors (Goodhand, 2006: 77, 85). New insecurities, vast humanitarian crises, extended and/or new normative frameworks, and increased funding thus incited established and new international NGOs to engage in multilateral peace operations and processes. Due to these post-Cold War developments NGOs increasingly became part of both traditional forms of peacekeeping and long-term peacebuilding efforts (Richmond, 2003: 2).

1.2 Democracy & Peace Transition in Nepal

During the post-Cold War era democratization was also upheld as a normative peacebuilding framework. According to this (liberal peace thesis) formula democratic governments are more peaceful, domestically and internationally, compared to other forms of government (Paris, 2003: 40-41). Historical evidence, however, underlines that since the French Revolution early democratization process phases have recurrently triggered armed conflict (Mansfield & Snyder, 2002: 297-298). For example many constitution-writing processes have regressed into violence (Widner, 2005: 505).

Nepal is a landlocked country between India and China. During the 1990s a failed democratization process transformed into internal armed conflict in Nepal. In 1990, after years of volatile political tensions and rising domestic and international pressure for democratization, a new constitution was adopted in Nepal. While these changes in Nepal can broadly be paralleled to tensions and processes in other parts of the post-Cold War world, every conflict is bound to unique structural tensions, dynamics and actors (Goodhand, 2006: 17). The adoption of a new constitution in 1990 transformed Nepal from an absolutist monarchy system into a constitutional monarchy with multi-party democracy, but the constitutional power-sharing arrangements between the king and parliament did not alleviate tensions or disunity (UCDP, 2008). The inequitable political representation along ethnic, religious, caste, gender, and regional lines was not transformed (Kievelitz & Polzer, 2002: 26). Historically political institutions and structures have functioned as control instruments in Nepal, and excluded the majority of people from the political process (Lawoti, 2005: 110). The root of the conflict has also been tied to the transformation of a feudal authoritarian rule into a modern form of governance (Paffenholz, 2009: 176). In times of vast poverty and a democratization process that did not advance the

inclusion of marginalized people, the Maoist Communist Party of Nepal (CPNM) initiated the so called “People’s war” in February 1996 (UCDP, 2008).

The Maoists occupied districts, ran parallel administrations, installed their own tax systems, and destroyed land-ownership records (UCDP, 2008). These and other changes widely increased the support for the Maoists among many marginalized groups in Nepal. With varied intensity the violent conflict lasted for ten years. More than 15 000 people lost their lives, and over 100 000 people were displaced (Paffenholz, 2009: 172). Poverty and inequality are widely upheld as the main causes and consequences of this conflict, whereby poverty and exclusion also legitimized a discourse of violence (Kievelitz & Polzer, 2002: 26). The conflict weakened communities, the economy, and the infrastructure in one of the poorest countries in the world. Nepal has achieved a peace agreement, a constituent assembly, and elected a new government (UCDP, 2008). The deadline for writing the new constitution is set to May 2010. Today local and international actors and stakeholders are engaged in Nepal to sustain peace, facilitate inclusive democracy and equitable development. The scope of international NGO peacebuilding in these processes is explored in this study.

1.3 Research Aim

The legacies of war do not vanish with a peace agreement (Jarstad, 2008: 19). Transitions to peace are characterized by many difficulties, such as the lack of trust, demolished infrastructure, and a war-torn economy. Nepal constitutes a case where a failed democratization process regressed into a decade long armed conflict. While the armed conflict has ended, and Nepal has become a democratic federal republic, many challenges are still prevalent in the efforts to sustain peace, democratization, and development. The aim of this study therefore is to elucidate and explore INGO peacebuilding in Nepal’s transition to peace. The following research questions guide this study:

- *What characterizes INGO peacebuilding in Nepal’s transition to peace?*

- *How is peacebuilding conceptualized in the professional INGO discourse in Nepal?*

1.4 Delimitations

This study is not primarily about the armed conflict or the peace and democratization processes in Nepal. Focus in this study is rather directed towards INGO peacebuilding approaches, and INGOs as third-party external actors in a transition to peace and democracy country. The Appendix in addition provides a more detailed outline about Nepal and the conflict in Nepal. The aim of this study is also not to offer any evaluations about INGO peacebuilding activities or projects in Nepal. The aim is rather to critically explore and analyze

INGO approaches and discourse in order to offer an integrated insight to INGO peacebuilding. This study includes perspectives from practitioners from eight INGOs and one INGO association, but each organization is not analyzed specifically. The Appendix also provides an outline of the INGO profiles. Each organization by itself deserves the attention of a thesis paper, but, since this is a short study, in-depth organization comparisons are not pursued.

1.5 Disposition

In the following chapter the theoretical foundations of this study are presented. Hereafter the method chapter introduces the research design, material collection and procedures, the analysis method, and ethical considerations. In the subsequent chapter the analysis of the research findings are presented. The final chapter concludes the study with a short critical discussion.

2 THEORY

Peace is widely perceived as the antitheses of war. Peace and conflict however are not antonyms (Åkerlund, 2005: 48). The formal ending of war does not always end violence. Peace researcher and practitioner Johan Galtung (1996: 31) thereby conceptualizes peace in relation to violence: the absence of direct violence and war constitutes “negative peace”, whilst the absence of structural violence – e.g. social injustices – and cultural violence – e.g. prejudice towards minority groups – is classified as “positive peace”. Achieving positive peace hereby entails improving societal conditions that impact the risks and vulnerability of individuals, households and communities by addressing the lack of political participation and rights, limited economic and livelihood opportunities, limited cultural rights, and social factors such as discrimination (Galtung, 1996: 31-32). How we approach and conceptualize peace and conflict, moreover, is conditioned by our ontological and epistemological viewpoints. Ontology refers to the nature and characteristics of reality, and epistemology refers to the constitution and limitations of knowledge (Creswell, 2007: 19). While a social constructivist and structural perspective is favoured in this study, alternative peace and conflict conceptualizations are also introduced in the following chapter section. The theoretical background chapter additionally introduces the characteristics of NGOs and NGO peacebuilding.

2.1 Peace & Conflict Theory

In peace and conflict research typically three main theoretical perspectives are differentiated: conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation. Many times these concepts are used interchangeably (Reimann, 2004: 2), but they can be differentiated with regard to epistemology and ontology. Conflict management perspectives are derived from realist theory traditions, which stress the importance of states as the driving forces of international politics (Wallenstein, 2007: 4-5, 20; Reimann, 2004: 8). Conflicts are conceptualized as inescapable security dilemmas originating from international competition and the ambitions of states to retain or gain power. During the Cold War conflict management served to prevent war between the superpowers. Conflict management thus seeks to secure peace by containing destructive outcomes (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, Hugh, 2005: 29). Conflict resolution perspectives emerged as an alternative non-state centric approach. Conflict resolution perspectives are considered more ambitious than management approaches, because resolution perspectives seek to influence the basic issues (Wallenstein, 2007: 5). Incompatibilities between conflicting parties are here upheld as the root causes of conflict, whereby peace is thus achieved by reaching agreement and resolving core incompatibilities between the conflicting parties (Wallenstein, 2007: 8). This involves recognizing the continued existence

of adversaries and the end to violent methods. Conflict transformation differs ontologically from conflict resolution perspectives, since conflict transformation is directed towards structural conflict conditions (Reimann, 2004: 9; Lederach, 1996: 81-82). Transformation thus entails multi-level approaches, and holistic understandings of conflict relationships (Lederach, 1996: 17). Conflicts are not perceived as controllable or eradicable, but are rather approached as dynamic social relationships that can take destructive as well as constructive routes. Thereby the aim is to transform violent conflict into peaceful conflict (Paffenholz, 2001: 79), and to build spaces for constructive and mutually beneficial changes and outcomes (Lederach, 1996: 19).

In 1992 UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali published “An agenda for Peace”. This influential publication outlines five interconnected UN peace operation roles: peacemaking and peace keeping, which are traditional UN roles, and the extended roles of preventive diplomacy, peace enforcement, and post-conflict peace building (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). Three years later Boutros-Ghali (1995) published the “Supplement to an Agenda for Peace”, which extended the peacebuilding notion. During the 1990s the UN launched several multilateral and multi-approach peacebuilding missions that included aid to refugees, election supervision, democratic development, and the temporary administration of territories (Åkerlund, 2005: 34). This peace agenda reflects the normative extension of the security concept that seeks to prioritize human security over state security. While many practitioners and advocates approach peacebuilding as structural and positive peace that aims to aid inclusion, justice, equity, and other core social and political matters, among scholars peacebuilding however is not conceptualized uniformly (Call & Cousens, 2008: 3). Some researchers regard peacebuilding as a bottom-up conflict resolution approach (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, Hugh, 2005: 216, 229), while others approach peacebuilding as a structural concept which is grounded in Galtung’s positive peace concept and constructivist and transformative peace and conflict perspectives (Knight, 2004: 357). Social constructivist peace researcher and practitioner John Paul Lederach (1997: 20) holds that peacebuilding “encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships”. The aim of peacebuilding thereby is to transform conflicts constructively to enable sustainable peace (Reychler, 2001: 12). Sustainability denotes a proactive process which aims to change the paths of violence and destruction to enable, Lederach (1997: 75) notes, a regenerating spiral of peace and development.

2.2 What are NGOs?

NGOs are typically portrayed as civil society actors. Social and citizen movements, voluntary organizations, churches, and non-profit media are as well civil society actors (Åkerlund, 2005: 38). While civil society concepts have varied since classical antiquity (Edwards, 2004: 6), civil society can broadly be

outlined as an arena of voluntary activities encompassing shared interests, aims, and values (Pouligny, 2005: 497). Theoretically civil society is differentiated from the state, the family, and the market, but, as Pouligny (2005: 497) notes, these boundaries are often complex, imprecise, and negotiated. NGOs as well resist easy definition. The “International Committee of the Red Cross” (ICRC), which was founded to aid wounded and civilian victims of war, is traditionally upheld as the ideal model for NGOs: an international solidarity organization, non-profit, impartial, founded on humanist values, and independent of partisan allegiances (Cohen, 2003: 36). When the UN charter was formed in 1945 civic organizations lobbied to obtain Article 71 (Heins, 2008: 15). In Article 71 the following criteria were demanded by NGOs seeking consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council: NGOs cannot be commercial, not be violent organizations, not deny the UN Charter principles, they need to be international, operate outside their home state, hold substantial financial support from donors, and they cannot be formed through intergovernmental agreements (Cohen, 2003: 38-39). It can be argued that by this codification the UN system both “discovered” NGOs and created NGOs as a specific category of international actors (Heins, 2008: 15).

NGOs are heterogeneous organizations, and they hold variable mandates, aims, and structures (Aall, 2003: 366). NGOs operate within the legal context of international humanitarian law, and their extended proliferation in multiple areas and levels, also link, it is occasionally argued, local and a global civil society (Richmond, 2003: 4-5). Local or national NGOs operate in one country, region or village, whereas international NGOs operate in more than one country and usually hold more resources than locally based NGOs (Aall, 2003: 367). NGOs can moreover be differentiated based on their level of autonomy. In one end of the continuum NGOs are ideally autonomous non-profit private citizen organizations, engaged in social issues, with transnational scope, but as the reliance on government funds increases autonomy is gradually compromised (Richmond, 2003: 3). The ICRC, while it is often upheld as an ideal for NGOs, rather is a “quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization” (QUANGO) (Heins, 2008: 25). Other “hybrid NGOs” includes donor-created NGOs (DONGOS) and government-organized NGOs (GONGOS) (Richmond, 2003: 3). NGO as a distinct concept, however, is distinguished from bureaucracies, firms, and social movements by three ideal characteristics (Heins, 2008: 17). Firstly, NGOs are detached from conventional power struggles within or between states. While NGOs may be political activists they do not adopt traditional political ideology positions. Secondly, NGOs are driven by the interest in well-being of non-members, whom may not even be aware that the NGO exists. From this perspective NGOs work for distant and disadvantaged others, by for example lobbying on their behalf or eliciting sympathy for their struggle (Heins, 2008: 18). Thirdly, NGOs are non-territorial in the sense that they are not bound to localities, but rather seek engagement, contact with people,

information and knowledge, and funding as transnational organizations (Heins, 2008: 19).

2.3 NGO Peacebuilding

NGOs are widely upheld as flexible actors that provide expertise and rapid responses, that find new ways to bridge and facilitate communication across conflict lines, and are regularly committed to local needs (Richmond, 2003: 5; Chigas, 2007: 563). Often NGOs are among the first actors to identify conflict escalations, and they usually commit to working in conflict areas under long periods of time. The NGO scope of influence in peacebuilding is as well subject to several constraints. Unofficial peacebuilding activity in volatile political environments is complicated, and sometimes NGOs can be undermined by the actual political forces that they are trying to influence (Chigas, 2007: 570). Limited funding can as well disturb the maintenance of cross-conflict coalitions and long-term strategies. NGOs have sometimes also been accused of being too preoccupied with their own agendas and neglected how their efforts impact local conditions or how their programs match broader peacebuilding efforts (Chigas, 2007: 571-572).

Peacebuilding includes multiple levels of simultaneous processes. Lederach (2008: 99) illustrates this through three peacebuilding levels in a pyramid. In the uppermost level, top official leadership is accessed by for example state level mediation. This constitutes a top-down approach to building peace. In the mid-level range, leaders, such as humanitarian or intellectual leaders, are approached through for example problem-solving workshops. Local leadership and communities are found at the base of the pyramid. Here bottom-up approaches are applied to build peace – e.g. by way of local peace commissions (Lederach, 2008: 100). NGO peacebuilding can similarly be illustrated through three peacebuilding levels. Peace researcher and practitioner Diana Chigas (2007: 555) outlines a three track typology with three NGO peace work levels. In so called “track 1½” roles NGOs work with official government representatives. This form of diplomacy incorporates direct mediation, whereby unofficial intermediaries strive to settle conflict, and conduct consultation in order to facilitate informal problem-solving dialogue among negotiators (Chigas, 2007: 555-556). In “track 2” roles NGOs work as unofficial intermediaries with nonofficial but influential people from the conflicting sides. This form of consultation aims to improve communication and relationships, and as well to identify new approaches to transform conflict (Chigas, 2007: 558). In “track 3” roles NGOs work with grassroots – i.e. people from all walks of life and sectors of society – in order to find new methods for conflict transformation. These activities aim to build long-term relationships between people from across conflict lines, and to build capacities for peace in local communities (Chigas, 2007: 560).

3 METHOD

This chapter introduces the research design, material collection procedures, the analysis method, and ethical considerations that guided the research process in this study.

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative research approach is applied in this study, because this study seeks to generate a complex understanding and unveil dynamic processes (Creswell, 2007: 39). Peace and conflict are not approached by essentialist frameworks, whereby this study does not seek to engage in theory-testing. The previous theoretical chapter primarily serves to explain central terms and concepts. INGO peacebuilding in Nepal can be regarded as a case or a field of peacebuilding. Case studies entail the study of one or several cases in a particular setting or context, whereby the researcher explores a case as a bounded system (Creswell, 2007: 73). Since this study seeks to elucidate the complexities of peacebuilding as interrelated social phenomena, social constructivism serves as the guiding paradigm. In social constructivism reality is not approached as sets of classifications, but rather as inter-subjective constructs generated by social interaction, cultural norms and shared knowledge – particularly through language and interpretation (Burr, 2003: 4; Adler, 2002: 95). Social constructivist researchers uphold interpretation as an intrinsic part of social science. The epistemology of social constructivism thereby does not primarily entail unfolding how things are, but rather aims to understand how matters became what they are (Adler: 2002: 101). There are different forms of social constructivism, such as entirely relativistic forms that claim that reality is completely socially constructed. There are also “thinner” approaches that do not reject the existence of unobservable material objects, such as electrons, and underline that only social phenomena, such as intelligence or terrorism, are socially constructed (Harnow-Klausen, 2006: 198). The latter approach guided this study.

3.2 Material Collection & Procedure

Social constructivist researchers rely on the study participants’ experiences and perspectives to generate knowledge (Creswell, 2007: 20). In order to explore INGO peacebuilding a field study was pursued in Nepal. Primary research that “transpires” in the field – i.e. outside the controlled settings of libraries and laboratories – is broadly referred to as fieldwork research (McCall, 2006: 3). While it has been attempted to codify fieldwork method, each field study constitutes a unique undertaking (Shaffir, 2005: 22). In the field study literature, method flexibility is traditionally upheld as the primary field study characteristic

(Burgess, 1984: 31). Natural settings are difficult to control, whereby the researcher typically reconsiders sampling procedures, time periods, and study locations.

The primary empirical material collection in this study is interview based. A semi-structured interview guide was developed to allow open questions and facilitate conversation regarding INGO peacebuilding roles, impact and constraints, context considerations, and funding. The interview guide was constructed after a review of recent peace and conflict research. Fourteen practitioners were interviewed in Nepal. Six practitioners were from Nepal, while eight practitioners were expatriates. A digital audio recorder with a microphone was used in order to record the interviews. No objections were raised in this regard. Most interviews lasted about 45 minutes. In some cases topic related conversations continued after the interviews. Additionally, empirical material was collected from multiple complementary sources: documents provided by INGOs on location; seminar participation; documents obtained from INGO web pages; informal research topic related observations and conversations within and outside the field in Nepal.

In qualitative research purposeful sampling strategies are applied. Individuals and sites for research studies are thus purposely selected to communicate an understanding of the research problem and the central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2007: 125). Months before arriving in Nepal interviews were requested and granted with practitioners from the Carter Center, International Alert, Search for Common Ground, and United Mission to Nepal. Requests were sent to these INGOs through E-mail contact. The INGOs were primarily contacted through the INGO head offices in Europe and North America. The INGO head offices then provided contact information to their main local office in Nepal. In the field the interview participants recommended other INGOs in Nepal – i.e. “snowball-sampling” (Cresswell, 2007: 127). Eventually the number of interview participants grew, and came to also include AED, the Asia Foundation, CEDPA, and Peace Brigades International. As a sampling criterion it was requested that the prospective interview participants ought to be experienced practitioners to be able to reflect about INGO peacebuilding. Most interview participants were either INGO program managers or INGO directors, whereby the experience criterion was fulfilled. After the second interview, the interview participant recommended further contact with the Association of INGOs in Nepal. This association provided a list of INGOs that were working in peacebuilding projects. Most of the INGOs on this list had already agreed to participate in this study, whereby the sampling in this way was validated, and thus ensured that practitioners from the central peace work INGOs in Nepal participated in this study. This study does not cover all INGOs that are/were active in the peacebuilding in Nepal, but the central INGOs that have/are working in peacebuilding projects in Nepal are covered in this study. Background information about the INGOs is provided in the second Appendix section.

3.3 Analysis Method

Interpretation in this study is inspired by discourse analysis (DA). Discourse analysis is a highly variable approach, which is employed differently among researchers. Overall, in DA conversations and texts are regarded to be intrinsic to social practices (Potter, 1996: 105). Language is therefore underlined as central in discourse analysis, but DA is not a mere study of social phenomena through language as language is rather perceived as central to how the social world is organized and constituted (Bergström & Boreús, 2005: 305). According to Potter (1996: 107) discourses establish social circumstances and events as “objects” or as “solid”/“factual” versions of the world – so called reifying discourse – through language.

The interview material was transcribed, and complementary material and notes were coded and organized. In the next step a direct interpretation analysis method was applied. This method is process-oriented whereby the researcher pulls the material apart and puts the material together by in more meaningful ways (Creswell, 2007: 163). The aim of this method was to generate inter-textual meaning, and to capture discourse patterns among the identified central phenomena.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Interview participation was requested through voluntary and informed consent. The researcher that conducted the interviews explained the aim of the study, underlined that the interview participants are free to deny participation in the study, and stressed that the interviews will only be applied for the agreed research purpose (Kvale, 1997: 107). Sometimes the interview participants expressed politically sensitive views, whereby confidentiality needs to be underscored. Confidentiality as a research ethics principle needs to be maintained to avoid risks towards the interview participants’ professional and private integrity (Kvale, 1997: 109). The interview participants were therefore provided opportunity to read the study before it was published in the Lund University open access thesis database.

4 ANALYSIS

The analysis is divided into four sections, but these sections are integrated as they interlink an INGO peacebuilding discourse that centers on the term *inclusion*. This chapter addresses how INGOs facilitate inclusion and enable spaces for peacebuilding, the economic dimension of peacebuilding, dilemmas between external intervention and locally driven peace processes, and the consequences of professionalism and evaluation in peace work.

4.1 Facilitating Inclusion & Bridging Spaces for Peace

Inclusion has dual significance in Nepal's transition to peace and democracy. Social, political, and economic exclusion conditions are widely upheld as the root conditions that fueled the intra-state conflict. In Nepal the gap between poor and rich people has widened significantly, and this is part of the tension and conflict (McCaslin, 2008-06-12). The Maoist movement generated support among marginalized people when the Kathmandu power concentration and structures of political exclusion did not change with the democratization process in the 1990s, and Nepal regressed into a decade-long armed conflict (Lawoti, 2005: 65). The Maoists linked poverty, landlessness, social and political exclusion, and corruption among state officials to justify its insurgency (Dhakal & Subedi, 2006: 410). Inclusive peacebuilding in Nepal thus does not only include the relationship between international and local actors, but rather constitutes the primary foundation for sustainable peace. In this regard INGOs have provided support as facilitators in the peace, development, and democratization processes.

The Carter Center, an INGO that is led by former US President Jimmy Carter, provided early support in the background to the Nepali civil society driven peace initiative that facilitated the foundations for a peace process in Nepal. Until 2005 the government of Nepal officially rejected external involvements in the conflict, and did not invite any international organizations to assist in starting a peace process (Dr Thapa, 2008-06-19). In 2003 Dr Duman Thapa, a prominent civil society actor in Nepal, initiated informal contact with the Carter Center through his academic network in the USA. Eventually Dr Thapa gained formal support from the Carter Center, and with this support and legitimacy he approached and eventually generated trust among the political parties and the Maoist leadership in Nepal. The Carter Center provided passive support in the background, and underlined that the CC would not enter Nepal without an invitation from Nepal's leadership (Dr Thapa, 2008-06-19). In this process a coalition of seven leading political parties was formed. Despite ideological differences the parties came together for the sake of peace. The political party actors for example were provided with negotiation training and conflict education in workshops. In 2004 Dr Thapa took this Seven Party Alliance to the CC headquarters in Atlanta, USA, to meet with President Carter. In a round-table meeting President Carter

underlined that he supports the initiative for peace and democracy, but stressed that the process needs to be Nepali driven (Dr Thapa, 2008-06-19). After this meeting the political party alliance stepped up their efforts to initiate a peace process. In 2005, after a most intricate process, Dr Thapa managed to establish communication with the Maoists. During this period the king had seized power through a coup, and arrested the top political leaders. The representatives of the parties sought to establish contact with the Maoists, and eventually Dr Thapa met with the top Maoist leadership. After long talks Dr Thapa connected the Maoists leaders with the Carter Center:

“After talking for six or seven hours, I connected all of these leaders to the Carter Center directly by phone, I was carrying my satellite phone... ..that was the first time, I think, they were talking to any [US] American, America being the biggest enemy of the Maoists, they talked, and from them [Maoists], I gained their trust. Then the Maoists were in our loop”.

In November 2005 the Maoists and the Seven Party Alliance reached a 12-point agreement to end the monarchy rule and establish multi-party democracy. At this stage more external actors became involved in the peace process. In 2005 AED was invited to assist in the peace process. AED is a large INGO. This INGO is organized into many centers that work in specialized areas – e.g. education, health, and environmental issues (Cordes, 2008-07-1). AED also maintains a “Center for Civil Society and Governance” (CCSG). Together with the Government of Nepal and the political parties AED-CCSG formed the “The Nepal Transition to Peace” (NTTP) Initiative, which served as a forum to build a common ground for official stakeholders, to enable inclusive multi-party dialogue, to attend to immediate concerns, and to share knowledge and information (Cordes, 2008-07-1). The NTTP gradually became a vital forum among political party representatives. When AED started working in Nepal there was only limited dialogue between the stakeholders. Lydia Cordes (2008-07-1), AED-CCSG, NTTP Program Manager, explained:

“In 2005 people were really not talking to each other, it took months... ..to create a safe space where they [stakeholders] can come together in an unofficial capacity. Here in Nepal, as soon as it is a government commission or a government committee, it comes with all the political baggage... So we intentionally talked to them about establishing something outside that framework, where they could meet and talk about issues. ...It was months of one on one, and one on two conversations, of trying to get people to think this was a good idea ...a lot of informal work to get to the point where they would meet around the table”.

Building trust is a long-term process. In post-conflict countries trauma affects all levels of society. Peace practitioner Joe Campbell (2008-06-13), whom has worked with peacebuilding in Northern Ireland, Macedonia, Kosovo, and most

recently in Nepal with an INGO called United Mission to Nepal, pointed out that conflict not only traumatizes local communities, but as well national leaders:

“Politicians, especially leaders, are also suffering from trauma. They have had to have protection, they have been threatened, they have been targets of attempt of assassination and bombs, and now we are asking them to work together. ...It’s a huge issue for the country, and my experience from Ireland is: when the conflict ends, trauma rises, because most people that are traumatized during a conflict will keep their heads down and manage somehow, but whenever people begin to raise their heads, their economy begins to pick up, normality begins to slowly return, then the trauma starts rises in people”.

The NTTP forum provided a safe informal space that enabled opportunity for cooperation between political adversaries. Before the peace agreement was signed the forum members held many meetings and discussed issues surrounding the agreement without formal political party positions, drafts were passed around, the participants gave their input, and from this table the draft was taken back to the highest political leadership (Cordes, 2008-07-01). On the track 1½ level INGOs not only have to be impartial and work with all stakeholders to enable dialogue across conflict lines, but to be able to maintain their facilitating capacity they also need to navigate in a politicized international reality. AED implemented the NTTP through funds from the US government’s foreign aid organization – USAID (Cordes, 2008-07-1). The NTTP forum also entailed workshops and study tours to build capacity, however USAID could not fund activities that involved Maoists. To overcome this dilemma, other development organizations stepped in with funds to include the Maoists in the peace forum activities.

“...the Maoists are still on the US-terror list. ...the effect of that is that you can’t spend US-dollars on Maoists... we have Maoists on the NTTP forum, and have done ever since the beginning, but we had to be very careful about what we pay for, and what sort of support we give them directly.in order to remain inclusive, we want to take Maoists on these study tours, we can’t pay for them, so the Swiss can pay for them, so the Swiss will give the money directly to the Maoists in the forum”. Cordes (2008-07-01)

INGOs hold international experience and knowledge from different conflict contexts, and employ their experiences to inform local actors and stakeholders about the non-linear nature of peacebuilding. The NTTP forum served as a space that could cushion set-backs, and provide information and knowledge about peace processes from other countries to get the stakeholders back on track. Regarding the non-linear nature of peace processes, Serena Rix Tripathi (2008-06-25), Country Director, Search for Common Ground, noted:

“...organizations such as Search for Common Ground that have been involved in peace processes around the world are able to bring a different perspective. We can see the

country's challenges, and say: "Just because you have a few problems, doesn't mean the whole thing is failing". If you have seen multiple peace processes you know there are ups and downs, it's just part of the process. For us, because we have been doing a lot of communication strategy, it shapes the key messages that we try to communicate. ...it's expertise, experience, and cross-fertilization of things that have worked in other places, but that are adapted to become Nepali".

To sustain peace achievements on the track 1½ level also includes communicating progress to the local communities and grassroots to avoid undermining long-term stability. Peacebuilding is thereby underlined as a multi-track endeavor to enable sustainability. In Nepal the lack of progress during the previous democratization process led to war, whereby people in Nepal expect inclusion and "peace dividend". While AED-CCSG worked closely with national leaders and their representatives AED also underlined the need to ground progress among track 1 (top political leadership) and track 1½ actors with the local level and grassroots.

"...the peace process can't just exist in the capital, you have to secure that peace on the local level too. ...Operationally for the peace process, the next thing that needs to happen is working on communication: up down, from the track one to the track three, and then also from track three back to track one". Cordes (2008-07-01)

In Nepal the Asia Foundation has worked in multiple roles by facilitating conflict transformation in many communities, democratization, women's rights, and civil-military relations (Thapa, 2008-06-25). This INGO also underlined the need to work with multiple tracks to bridge spaces for peace. Preeti Thapa (2008-06-25), Program Officer, Asia Foundation, explained:

"We work in track three, with the people in the community, but we have the link to track one also. In mediation for example we are working with the community, with the grassroots people, but at the same time we are lobbying with the Ministry of Law and Justice to make a community mediation act".

After its initial background role, the Carter Center actively committed to monitor and observe elections, and to report on political, human rights, and security developments in Nepal. The CC provides both short-term and long-term observers, and through this mission facilitates the peace process and democratization in Nepal. The Center's observers are engaged on local and district levels, and for example interact with district election officers, political party representatives, civil society, such as local human rights NGOs, to assess the local environment in as many places as possible, and to report to the main office in Kathmandu (Levit-Shore, 2008-06-13). From the capital the CC staff issue public statements, and meet with national political party leaders to pass on recommendations from the local level and/or address concerns that were

observed in the districts. Sarah Levit-Shore (2008-06-13), Electoral Project Coordinator from the Carter Center, underlined that the CC is devoted to peace promotion by supporting an inclusive process:

“Essentially what we are trying to promote in Nepal is supporting the peace process, supporting the move towards multi-party democracy, which the Nepalis themselves set out as their goal, and in doing that trying to as much as possible that they are including all of Nepal’s diverse groups, because there is a lot of diversity in this country... ..and to help make sure that those groups are brought along in this process”.

Smaller INGOs also focus on establishing and facilitating safe spaces by engaging multiple levels and actors as a means to build peace. Peace Brigades International has specialized in building peace by providing protection for human rights defenders and community activists, and by providing security training for human rights defenders. This INGO generates protection for local activists by informing local authorities about their presence and objectives, and by underlining that PBI are supported by international institutions and national governments. Mike Bluett (2008-06-19), PBI In-Country Coordinator, explained:

“We have an international support network of political and important figures, and international institutions, governments in Europe and America. ...the organization [PBI] places volunteers in the field, but only on request by a local NGO or organization, and provides protection as they [human rights defenders] are threatened by different armed actors in the conflict because of their human right work. ...We will physically accompany them while they are doing their work to reduce that threat, to stop it happening in the first place. ...not just by being there, we make a relationship with the authorities or the armed actors and tell them that we are there as international support, and if there are any threats or intimidations to the people that we are working with, there will be international consequences for the people making those threats”.

To be able to establish safe spaces for human rights defenders and activists PBI as well builds relationships with the police and armed actors, such as the Maoists, by interacting both upwards and downwards in the command chain (Bluett, 2008-06-19). This strategy is conducted to deter impunity, to make sure that the top leadership is aware of developments on the ground, and to thereby make them accountable. To build peace PBI thus enables safe spaces to empower Nepali civil society actors to transform conflict through their human rights work – such as bringing cases of violations to court.

Search for Common Ground is a peacebuilding INGO that has focused on working with the youth of Nepal. The conflict in Nepal escalated by engaging youths on both sides, and many youths were displaced. Due to the conflict existing schools did not function properly, and youth unemployment escalated (Mulmi, 2008-06-17). To reduce the chances of conflict reemergence SFCG are

working with young people to engage them in the peace process, and to channel them into constructive activities. SFCG for example works with radio program dramas and radio talk shows that deal with conflict related matters and issues. Most youths live in rural areas, whereby SFCG foremost works with radio media in Nepal. Rajendra Mulmi (2008-06-17), SFCG Community Peacebuilding Program Manager, elaborated:

“We are doing a children’s soap: *“lets listen, lets talk”*. It’s about children’s participation in the peace process. It’s a children’s show to stopping children from being manipulated, promoting child rights, and increasing child participation in the whole peace process, so we have trained child journalists in different parts of Nepal, who collect reports, who produce reports, with the help of a senior producer. It’s a completely child driven weekly radio magazine. The other program that we do is radio talk shows, discussions, with a common ground philosophy, trying to bring people together from across dividing lines, using radio to address local conflicts local issues”.

To bring together people from across dividing lines, SFCG works with building trust by engaging local communities and leaders. SFCG for example organized volleyball games that included participants from Nepal’s army, Maoist combatants, and local youth clubs. High level peace process achievements hereby are facilitated long-term as INGOs work to include the second and third track levels:

“Peace agreement takes place at the highest political level, between the leaders, but the success of any peace agreement depends on how the community functions, how the community takes ownership, so globally most of our work is about building community ownership of the peace process, having communities build capacities and analyze root causes of conflict, and take action to address these root causes of conflict, so that the conflict can be transformed in a positive way”. Mulmi (2008-06-17)

The Centre for Development and Population Activities, which is an INGO that works with gender issues and education in developing countries, also worked with including Nepal’s youth in the peace process due to the high number of displaced young people. This INGO worked to set up safe spaces for young people from both sides of the conflict, and initiated a “peace action group”, whereby youths were trained to become district level peace leaders. Dale Davis (2008-06-24), CEDPA Project Director, explained:

“...they [youth] were able to receive counseling and to understand the importance of peace and to stand for peace during conflict. They were able to represent a neutral place in a state of conflict. They went out with placards and collected signatures for ending the conflict. ...They learned and developed negotiation and mediation skills and in a number of cases they were called upon by their host communities to mediate during other local conflicts such as water or caste issues”.

4.2 The Economic Dimension of Peacebuilding

In the professional INGO discourse the ability to build peace is consistently interlinked with the need for development. During the armed conflict businesses were extorted by the Maoists, business activities were severely disrupted, and disincentive and divestment dominated Nepal's business reality (Dhakal & Subedi, 2006: 412-413). The professional INGO practitioners underlined the lack of equitable economic development as a dilemma in peace and democracy transition. In Nepal conflicts are not only related to the Maoist insurgency, but in Nepal many conflicts are engaged over water, land, and wood (Campbell, 2008-06-13). Bishnu Sapkota (2008-07-02), Senior Program Officer, NTPP, AED-CCSG, underlined:

“I think development agenda is key, and linking peace and development I think should be the priority, because if you don't have a good development plan while you have this peace process, the peace process itself may not be sustainable. ...the peace dividend ultimately is development”.

International Alert is a specialized peacebuilding INGO that is also active in several peacebuilding endeavors in Nepal. IA has for example worked with security reform regarding police issues, border matters, and the integration of the Maoist combatants into Nepal's army. IA refers to this as “community security”, and works to communicate that security sector reform on the national level needs to be inclusive and influenced by and informed by local level needs and realities (Crozier, 2008-07-01). In a similar approach IA also works with the economic dimension of peacebuilding by informing the debate at the national level about local level realities, needs and concerns, regarding economic development. Rebecca Crozier (2008-07-01), Program Coordinator, International Alert, explained:

“...in the current context in Nepal there's lots of money pouring in for development purposes. How can the government spend that money in the best possible way, so it leads to an inclusive and equitable development? Because recognizing one of the key reasons for the conflict in Nepal was poverty and economic inequality, major driving factors, trying to ensure that this new economic policy in the new Nepal addresses that as an issue, and ensures that economic development supports equitable economic growth”.

In Nepal International Alert also works with the “National Business Initiative”, which is a Nepali non-profit umbrella initiative that brings together national business organizations and seeks to engage the business community in the peace process. Engaging businesses in the peace process entails more than job creation. It rather comes down to corporate social responsibility, and asks of businesses to act with regard to conflict sensitivity. From this approach businesses are asked to consider how their activities can promote or risk undermine the peace process (Subedi, 2008-06-16). Private sector participation is underlined as vital in the

peace processes if businesses can promote and engage in equitable development practices – for example inclusive recruitment and internship schemes for victims of war (Crozier, 2008-07-01). IA trains and educates business community actors about conflict sensitive business practices and corporate social responsibility. With such knowledge, International Alert argues, the business community can improve its potential to support the overall peacebuilding process (Subedi, 2008-06-16). International Alert notes that the business sector may not gain from this in the short-run, but in the long-run businesses need economic stability and peace. IA also engages business owners in different policy-level dialogues and debates about for example labor law and how the future tax system should be formed. Economic peacebuilding thus also entails multi-track approaches. D.B Subedi (2008-06-16), Senior Project Coordinator, International Alert, stressed the following:

“For a successful peace process economic development is vital ...and the sustainability of economic development, what we call the economic recovery for development process is very important, and what we now call equitable economic recovery, so the economic benefit is distributed or experienced by community people in an equitable manner”.

“For economic stability there needs to be economic equality for peace in Nepal. People need to see economic dividend from the current process, they need to see economic benefit, expectation is huge, businesses can play a massive role in delivering those benefits, and delivering them in an equitable way”. Crozier (2008-07-01)

While peacebuilding INGOs underline the intrinsic link between peace and development, however, they are not pursuing involvement in development work beyond their specialized field and expertise:

“There are so many actors out there, there are so many organizations with a lot of expertise in health, education, livelihood. ...it’s not part of Search’s [SFCG’s] mandate, strategy, to try being a development organization because we are not, it’s not our expertise. Organizations like International Alert have done a lot of work trying to train development organizations in the “do no harm” approach to development. But we see our role as complementing all the development work out there – without peace there is less space for development”. Rix Tripathee (2008-06-25)

4.3 International Support & Local Peace Process Ownership

INGOs are by definition non-territorial actors. While external actors can bring expertise from other contexts, international interventions may as well undermine local needs and peace sustainability. International assistance both impacts and is influenced by the conflict (Anderson, 1999: 37). When many international NGOs cluster in the same country there are for example risks of parallel processes and duplication of projects. The Association of NGOs in Nepal has 80

INGOs as members, and they aim to reduce program duplications. The AIN stresses the need for increased collaboration, coordination, and knowledge between the INGOs regarding their separate programs (Shrestha, 2008-06-17). In Nepal INGOs moreover are legally demanded to implement their programs and activities through local actors (Rix Tripathee, 2008-06-25). The Social Welfare Council in Nepal monitors NGO and INGO activities, and all INGOs need to be registered and have an agreement with this council. The agreement with the Social Welfare Council demonstrates how the INGO is working with a local partner, outlines the budget, and how much money is provided to the local partner (Rix Tripathee, 2008-06-25).

Lederach (1996) argues that peacebuilding approaches need to be contextually adapted, engage bottom-up processes, and be rooted in local cultural knowledge. From this so called elicitive approach peace educators thus function as catalysts of indigenous knowledge in order to facilitate a participatory peace process, rather than to merely transfer prescriptive models across cultures through expert-centered approaches (Lederach, 1996: 48, 56). In Nepal the Asia Foundation works with John Paul Lederach. Together they have developed a model for more inclusive community-mediation that builds on local peace conceptualizations and needs (Thapa, 2008-06-25). For example mediation manuals were reformulated to fit the local context. A common manual term is “neutrality”, but when translated “neutrality” becomes a highly formal term in Nepali, which is rarely used in local communities. By interviewing numerous mediation training participants the AF practitioners instead came up with the phrase “not to take sides”, in order to de-formalize this important concept and to facilitate a shared understanding (Thapa, 2008-06-25).

United Mission to Nepal is a faith-based INGO that has been working in Nepal since 1954, and therefore they are well-established in Nepal (McCaslin, 2008-06-12). Throughout its history UMN has for example built hospitals, schools, hydro power units, and worked with rural and industrial development. Many of Nepal’s officials and one leader of the Maoists went to UMN schools (Campbell, 2008-06-13). Today UMN works with capacity-building by supporting local NGOs, and supervises local initiatives in multiple areas, including conflict transformation. Walton McCaslin (2008-06-12), Development and peace practitioner with twenty five years of experience with the UMN, underlined that external support has to be adapted to Nepal’s local conditions and realities, which also needs to be addressed in regards to democratization:

“The whole concept of democracy, what democracy means in Nepal, how to identify democracy, that essence that makes Nepal, what Nepal is, has not been defined. An election doesn’t make a democratic society. There’s going to need to be some significant change within people’s thinking, and within people’s concept of what democracy is”.

In the professional INGO discourse in Nepal the peace process is without exception referred to as a “Nepali driven process”, and all practitioners in this

study underlined that their INGO was invited to Nepal. Search for Common Ground for example reifies this ideal in its staff recruitment:

“We have 40 staff here [Kathmandu], only two of them are expats. And in all the districts that we work we have a local staff, staff is hired from the district itself, we also believe in “walking the talk”, so we believe in bringing in people together from across dividing lines, so even in the staff recruitment it has to be inclusive and we make sure that we bring people together from across dividing lines, every effort is about making it inclusive in terms of gender, ethnicity, geography, we have a very diverse staff pool”.

Mulmi (2008-06-17)

Joe Campbell (2008-06-13) explained that the UMN works closely with communities to enable local ownership. The UMN follows a model that entails its staff to work and live in the communities to ensure that projects become locally grounded and balanced among the three peacebuilding tracks:

“UMN recruits teams of people to work and live in the local area. Other INGOs will give a NGO money, and make a visit every now and then to supervise it, but UMN will say “we’ll go to this district, we’ll set up an office here, we’ll recruit five-six in some cases ten staff, they will live there together, and then they will go out from there to the local area, and support the programs”, so there is real ownership.

When you go to a district there will be a government official and a government team running that district, and so UMN will work with them, build relationships with them, look at their priorities for the district, and try on the one hand to support the government’s vision and work, as well as the grassroots people”. Campbell (2008-06-13)

Nepal has been an aid recipient for many decades due to poverty and lack of development, but in Nepal, according to the practitioners, often outside models or “blueprints” are received with suspicion. Dr Thapa (2008-06-19) maintains that external peace models many times are not applicable in Nepal. External models often build on experiences from civil wars and ethnic or religious group conflicts, but such conflicts do not necessarily correspond to the Nepali socio-political and structural conflict conditions that fueled the 1996 armed conflict.

“We quite often find here that Nepalis say: “We can’t learn anything from Sri Lanka, or we can’t learn anything from the Philippines, because we are different, our conflict is completely different to anybody else’s conflict”. We can’t kind of say: “We are bringing in these people over from Sri Lanka because we think they have a lot to teach you”. Which in reality is in part what we do, but we have to be really careful in how we phrase it”. Crozier (2008-07-01)

”We are here as support. It’s a Nepali process, they invited us here, by no means have we imported a South African model or a Northern Ireland model... ..there’s a lot of “expert fatigue” and “donor fatigue” [in Nepal]. ...This idea of following the South Africa model

or this model, or “I’m from here and I know”, that will get the door shut in your face”. Cordes (2008-07-01)

Still external experts many times must be brought in from other countries. Nepal is a country without prior peace process experience, whereby it cannot likely hold extensive internal capacity to meet its specific peacebuilding process needs.

“If you only work in one country all the time, as most NGO actors do, you don’t get to see the big picture, you don’t get to see other conflicts, approaches that were tried elsewhere may or many not work here. In terms of the peacebuilding sector a lot of information and ideas have come from other contexts. There have been a lot of South African experts here working directly on the peace agreement. Prior experience brings a rich and different perspective to the negotiation table”. Rix Tripathee (2008-06-25)

“...as an organization what we are bringing to Nepal [is] the peacebuilding expertise, which I don’t think exists locally here enough yet. ..Issues on peacebuilding or community security, which are issues that we work on worldwide, and we bring a lot of international knowledge, and lots of international experience too. They are extremely specialist niche issues that we normally would not expect other NGOs, INGOs, to have any knowledge of or the capacities to work on those issues”. Crozier (2008-07-01)

4.4 Peace Professionalism, Evaluation & Commitment

INGOs are highly professional organizations, and this is underlined in the INGO discourse as a distinction between international and local NGOs. This has been attributed to the professional links that INGOs maintain with states and international organizations (Heins, 2008: 59). Typically INGOs are entrusted by donors over local NGOs or local government organizations, because many INGOs are recognized for their professionalism: INGOs are perceived to be able to deliver results efficiently, with transparency, and within deadlines (Sapkota, 2008-07-02). According to Preeti Thapa (2008-06-25) INGOs are strong in management aspects, and therefore provide efficient program monitoring designs, reassess continuously and improve the quality of programs. While there are many local NGOs in Nepal, some, according to several of the practitioners, are only formed due to the potential to generate personal income. Many such local NGOs have no office, but rather consist of a person that has applied for money to start a NGO, but then only keeps the money for personal gain. These NGOs are referred to as “suit-case NGOs”. Due to the lack of local good governance many times INGOs thereby are prioritized and entrusted for program implementation by donors (Sapkota, 2008-07-02).

“With a local NGO you can be an activist, you can go out in the street with placards and participate in rallies, its professional work but at the same it is activism. ...with INGOs we are not supposed to be that type of activists. ...with NGOs you are professional, but at the

same time you can be a full activist. There are many NGO activists who don't want to join INGOs because they lose their freedom". Sapkota (2008-07-02)

"People who get attracted to the INGO sector sometimes become professionalized, which is in one way a good thing, but on the other hand can mean they lose some of their passion. In local NGOs, many people are working as volunteers or for very low pay, but they are absolutely passionate about it... When you work in an INGO you have to be a bit more distant because you have to work through the local NGO partner. You are not the frontline anymore, so you don't get the same feedback and fuel. Having said that, there are still a lot of very passionate people in INGOs here...". Rix Tripathee (2008-06-25)

According to Heins (2008: 60) NGO professionalization has also increased due to the competition over funds. Some practitioners referred to the INGO sector as a huge industry in Nepal, and in this regard Dr Thapa (2008-06-19) even referred to a "peace market". Large NGOs also tend to dominate in many countries, and while they bring professionalism their dominance often undermines smaller NGOs (Riddell, 2007: 367). Many practitioners moreover underlined that the donors are setting the agenda within their sector, since donors put out calls for proposals and specify what they want. Long-term funding commitments to a particular organization or project among donors is not common, whereby many times donors are asking for long-term evaluations despite only having provided short-term funding (Rix Tripathee, 2008-06-25). Many times donors demand quantifiable short-term evaluations for long-term peacebuilding projects, which the INGO peace practitioners underlined as unrealistic, because such evaluation criteria are based on development work frameworks. When such frameworks are applied the space for peacebuilding is limited, because peace and development are not identical concepts or processes.

"We've seen it in the past three or four years. ...the development-oriented NGOs and INGOs suddenly have peacebuilding components, and different from how we would define peace – more in lines with psycho-social counseling, working with victims of conflict – rather than the preventative work that we are trying to do. That has been a huge implication for organizations like International Alert for funding... ...donors will prefer to fund an Oxfam with a massive peacebuilding component rather than a peacebuilding specialist organization...". Crozier (2008-07-01)

"Some donors are more flexible than others, but the big players, DFID, USAID, the EC, they put out very specific calls for proposals, UNDP, they are really setting the agenda... Many big donors also don't have a habit of refunding, so they pour masses of money into a project, with no commitment ...to make it a long-term project. When they want evaluations they want you to be evaluating long-term impact even though they are giving you two to three years of funding. ... especially with peacebuilding, they [some donors] just apply the same old logical framework model, the same old quantitative evaluation and expectations, not all donors, but some, without understanding that peacebuilding is

something very different to building a bridge. It's very different to water, bricks, and roads, measuring how many people got vaccinated...". Rix Tripathee (2008-06-25)

Previous research shows that humanitarian financing also can lead to disorderly competition and resource duplication (Goodhand, 2006: 184). Among the peacebuilding INGO practitioners, development projects were strictly differentiated from peacebuilding projects, and they also underlined dilemmas between funding cycles and the risks of causing harm. Concerns regarding peacebuilding and conflict transformation measurements are thus not only about limited funding, but come down to how peace is operationalized and reified by donors. According to Goodhand (2006: 185) some major donors both are ambitious and impatient, and there are no ethical frameworks to push donors to act more consistently across cases. INGOs seek to facilitate communities and local actors to gain ownership over the peace process through for example community mediation programs, but if funding abruptly ends before the process is completed this can cause harm and impact communities severely (Thapa, 2008-06-25).

"There's one example of a very good conflict transformation project, run by a network of INGOs during the conflict period. The evaluation was positive about its impacts, and the evaluator said that to discontinue that project now would be more destructive than to continue it, because it involved a lot of people in counseling, huge networks had been built up. The donor decided not to refund it, so what happens to all those people affected by conflict who are accessing the services, but suddenly their counselor is not funded anymore? Donors take a very short-term approach, funding cycles of one year, two years, maximum five years". Rix Tripathee (2008-06-25)

5 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

This study verifies previous research findings that underline NGOs as flexible and facilitating actors that are able to bring knowledge and expertise from other conflict contexts and realities, and as external actors that seek to adapt and communicate their efforts in accordance with local needs and capacities (Chigas, 2007; Goodhand, 2006; Richmond, 2003). In addition, this study demonstrates an INGO discourse in Nepal that is reified through multi-track peacebuilding practices, and peacebuilding is concurrently tied to inclusive processes that seek to impact structural conditions and social injustices. We may be tempted to reify peace achievements by pointing to peace agreements or democratic elections, but without facilitating an inclusive peace process, according to the interview participants, peace cannot be sustainable. Nepal is undergoing transformations from a monarchy to a republic, from a religious Hindu society to a secular society, and from a centralist to a federal government (Campbell, 2008-06-13). Different groups in society have bound their identities to the “old Nepal” and/or have personal gain to retain parts of the old system. While constitution writing processes for such reasons have generated violence in many other countries, Nepal has managed to maintain its peaceful route. The war to peace and democracy transition is Nepali driven, and in these processes INGOs have committed to facilitate Nepal’s transformations by promoting the integration of local needs with national level developments.

The practitioner discourse reveals that the three-level peacebuilding track typology (Chigas, 2007) does not explicitly define INGOs or their practices. Most INGOs, if not all, are either directly involved on multiple levels, or reason and operate in ways that promote multi-level approaches. As D.B. Subedi (2008-06-16) underlined: “You can’t engage peace or transform conflict by only engaging a single track”. Other interview participants underlined that the three-level peacebuilding track typology is a static model that they do not follow. While the Carter Center primarily is a track 1 ½ INGO, the CC also works with multiple tracks. President Carter is able to use his contacts and stature to function on the track 1 ½ level and engage with track 1 level leadership across the world, but the Carter Center as well engages on the grassroots level and promotes and reasons in terms of broad and multi-level inclusive peace. President Carter works primarily with track 1 and track 1½ issues through the CC, because that is where he can be most effective and useful (Levit-Shore, 2008-06-13). While small INGOs primarily work with grassroots and local civil society organizations, they are also part of networks that include national governments and international institutions. For example Peace Brigades International is a small INGO, but it holds vital support from national and international institutions, which PBI applies to protect human rights defenders in local communities while its volunteer staff also builds relationships with local, regional and national leadership to deter impunity. INGOs thus are specialized and serve different purposes and hold different mandates, but the peacebuilding

and development practitioners in this study, at the same time, underscored that conflicts are multi-layered, whereby peace work approaches inherently need to be dynamic and multi-level or multi-track grounded to enable peace sustainability.

Peacebuilding INGOs many times work in the background. While their core skills are to facilitate local capacities by providing contextually adapted expertise and experiences from other countries and localities, their work also entails engaging in informal communication to facilitate both informal and formal dialogue between stakeholders. Due to their diverse roles in the background as unofficial actors that seek to enable local ownership of the peace, democratization, and development processes, INGO roles are not always recognized nor understood by outside observers. Peace is a long-term and non-linear process, and peace projects, such as community mediation programs, need to mature before local ownership can be established. Short-term funding in peacebuilding projects carry high risks of causing harm, as was exemplified by several peace practitioners, and thus does not only tie the hands of peacebuilding INGOs, but as well undermines the core purpose and maneuverability of INGOs that seek to build inclusive and sustainable peace.

While INGOs strive to be impartial and independent to be able to work with actors across conflict lines, their work contexts and realities are always politicized. Here INGOs can, as mentioned above, serve to open vital informal communication channels. This study demonstrates that INGOs can facilitate such spaces – e.g. the NTTP initiative – and alleviate or “depoliticize” an already deeply politicized reality. While AED managed the NTTP forum it for example did not set up any AED or USAID logos in its offices in order to depoliticize its role as much as possible (Cordes, 2008-07-01). Impartiality is a fundamental characteristic to be able to engage with adversaries across conflict lines, and while this ability can constitute a comparative advantage for INGOs, they are however always constrained by local, national, and international political realities. NGOs still hence do not escape the reach of state power and political reality complexities (Goodhand, 2006: 174).

This study provides a small glimpse into the professional INGO discourse and INGO peacebuilding practices in Nepal. In this light, this study is concluded by two propositions for future research. The INGO discourse in Nepal upholds an integrated approach to peace, development, and democratization. While previous research addresses the links between peacebuilding and democratization, the economic dimension of peacebuilding in terms of social corporate responsibility has not been studied extensively. The lack of equitable development and a business community that is unaware or ignores conflict sensitive practices also constitutes a central dilemma in post-conflict realities. Secondly, the misuses of peacebuilding concepts through development frameworks by some donors that demand quantifiable short-term measurements for long-term peace outcomes need to be addressed further by academia. In previous research NGOs have been criticized for many notable reasons. Such

critique includes the lack of coordination and project duplications, the lack of accountability and transparency, intensified competition for funds and contracts, and foremost large NGOs that depend on official funding provision have been criticized for their results-based management models and the risks they run of becoming executive actors for government policy (Goodhand, 2006: 161-162). While NGOs strive to maintain their autonomy they often also are interdependent actors. We thereby need to further explore how donors conceptualize peacebuilding, and to as well address how the different government and non-government peace and aid actors in post-conflict societies work together through horizontal and vertical networks, and when and how they constrain each other. Peace, development, and democratization processes need to be integrated, but these are not identical processes or concepts. These concerns need to be considered further to avoid harm, as this is the last attribute that should be associated with peacebuilding.

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APPENDICIES

I. Nepal and the Conflict in Nepal - Overview

The Shahs, a royal dynasty, ruled Nepal for most of its modern history. During 1959-60 democracy was introduced in Nepal, but it was short-lived. King Mahendra within one year abolished the multi-party democracy. Until the 1990s the royal class ruled Nepal without many constitutional constraints. In 1990 the first pro-democracy movement - Jana Andolan (“People’s Movement”) - managed to reinstate multi-party democracy. The democratization process however became tumultuous, as the traditional political elites only strengthened their control over the political power in Kathmandu. The ruling elite in Kathmandu did not embrace change, nor did they support



opening up the economic and political system. At this time Nepal was undergoing vast poverty. Vague constitutional powers-sharing structures were established between parliament and the king, which did not change Nepal’s royal and elite power concentration. In 1996 the decade long armed conflict was initiated. The Maoists started an insurgency with 13.000 combatants. Initially they attacked Nepali police forces, and eventually they fought the Nepali army. From small local attacks on police forces, the attacks grew to include most of rural Nepal. The Maoists mobilized the grassroots and conducted guerrilla warfare. The marginalized grassroots were promised change through the Maoist ideology that included fundamental goals for social, political and economic transformation by removing the royal class from power and establishing a “People’s Republic”. The Nepali state was confined to the main urban areas, while the Maoists established parallel structures of governance. This for example included legal courts that addressed justice issues that the state had neglected in the districts and the local levels.

More than 15 000 people died in this armed conflict, and at least one hundred thousand people were displaced. Human rights abuses were committed on both sides of the conflict line. During 2002 the King increased the offensive, and received significant foreign aid from the UK, the USA, and India to crack down on the rebel movement. State of emergency was extended twice, which allowed the police and the army extensive powers to suppress civil rights in Nepal. A ceasefire was announced in January 2003, whereby both sides committed to halt the violence, allow free movement within their areas of control, and to release prisoners. Later peace talks were initiated, but they stagnated because the government would not consider changing Nepal’s multi-party constitutional monarchy. Eventually the cease-fire was broken, and the Maoists stepped up their attacks on government forces. The conflict escalated.

In February 2005 the king seized power in Nepal, and arrested the leaders of the democratic parties. In this coup hundreds of political leaders, activists, journalists, and workers were arrested to suppress opposition. India, the USA, and the UK all condemned

this development. The coup led to an escalation in violence. The Maoists eventually declared a unilateral cease-fire, and held talks with the leading political parties. These mainstream political parties, called the “Seven Party Alliance”, negotiated with the Maoists and reached an agreement to pursue common goals and cooperation. The king refused to negotiate with the Maoists until they laid down their arms. The Maoists never agreed to this, and king therefore was not involved in these negotiations.

The ceasefire ended in January 2006, and the armed conflict became active. In April 2006 there were mass demonstrations across Nepal. The king reinstated the parliament, and a new cease-fire was initiated. The Maoists and the new government reached an agreement that included a 25-point code of conduct. Negotiations continued, and eventually this led to the signing of the “Comprehensive Peace Agreement” in November 2006. While fragile, the peace process continued during the following year. The signing of the peace agreement included the commitment to hold elections for a Constituent Assembly. These elections were recalled twice, because the stakeholders could not agree whether Nepal should be declared a republic before the elections. The Maoists joined an interim government in April 2007. The Maoists then withdrew from the government in September due to disagreements with other parties, but later returned during the same year.

During April 2008 elections for the Constituent Assembly were held. International monitors declared the elections free and fair. The Constituent Assembly elections were in general peaceful and well-managed. The election outcome reshaped the political landscape in Nepal. The Maoists – the Communist Party of Nepal - Maoist (CPN-M) – won twice as many seats as their nearest rival, the Nepali Congress. The Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), UML, came third in the elections, followed by the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF). The latter party underlined the emergence of parties representing Madhesi (native) people in the Tarai plains as important political actors. With the first sitting in May 2008, the Constituent Assembly ended the 240-year old monarchy system, and established the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. The deadline for writing the new constitution was set to May 2010.

Country Facts: Nepal

Population: 29.3 million	Area: 147,181 sq km (56,827 sq miles)
Capital: Kathmandu	Major language: Nepali
Major religions: Hinduism, Buddhism	Life expectancy: 66 years (men), 67 years (women)
GNI per capita: US \$400	Main exports: Carpets, clothing, leather goods, jute goods, grain

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II. INGOs & the AIN - Background Summaries

Academy for Educational Development

AED is a nonprofit organization that works globally to improve education, health, civil society, and economic development. In collaboration with local and national partners, AED seeks to foster sustainable results through practical, comprehensive approaches to social and economic challenges. AED implements more than 250 programs serving people in all 50 U.S. states, and more than 150 countries.

Source: <http://www.aed.org/About/index.cfm>

The AED Center for Civil Society and Governance (CCSG) works to support citizens to mobilize effectively, to influence policy, improve lives, and build peace. CCSG believes that the process of connecting individuals and groups to work together for change is both a significant end in itself, and a means to the shared goals of peace, democracy, and development. In programs in conflict-sensitive areas, CCSG integrates a peacebuilding lens with more than 40 years of experience in all forms of traditional development.

Source: <http://www.aed-ccsg.org/index.html>

The Asia Foundation

The Asia Foundation is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that is committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous, just, and open Asia-Pacific region. They support programs in Asia that help to improve governance, law, and civil society; women's empowerment; economic reform and development; and international relations. This INGO holds 50 years of experience in Asia. The Asia Foundation supports efforts to improve peace in sub-national conflicts. The programs support the implementation of peace processes where there are formal peace agreements, such as in Nepal, Mindanao, and Aceh, and peacebuilding efforts in other conflict-affected areas such as southern Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste. These efforts engage governments, civil society, and communities to facilitate dialogues, encourage political reforms, and reduce conflicts through mediation and rapid response to impending crises

Source: <http://asiafoundation.org>

The Association of INGOs in Nepal

The Association of International NGOs was formed in September 1996 by INGOs working in Nepal. AIN promotes mutual understanding, exchanges information and shares experiences and knowledge for more effective collaboration. At present the AIN has more than 80 INGOs as members. These INGOs work on a wide-range of issues and sectors. Recognizing the growing need to work in a country afflicted by endemic conflict, AIN is committed to expand its resources on behalf of all disadvantaged people in Nepal. Over the years INGOs have played a crucial role as key stakeholders and partners in the development of Nepal, and the AIN seeks to continue to engage with the Government, donors, sectors of the civil society, NGOs, and poor and excluded people on these issues.

Source: <http://www.ain.org.np/introduction.php>



www.aed.org

www.aed-ccsg.org



The Asia Foundation

www.asiafoundation.org



www.ain.org.np

The Carter Center

The Carter Center was founded in 1982 by former US President Jimmy Carter and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter. The Carter Center wages peace, fights disease, and builds hope by engaging with those at the highest levels of government and by working side by side with poor and often forgotten people. In this way, the Center has strengthened democracies in Asia, Latin America, and Africa; helped farmers double or triple grain production in 15 African countries; mediated or worked to prevent civil and international conflicts; intervened to prevent unnecessary diseases in Latin America and Africa, including the near eradication of Guinea worm disease; and strived to diminish the stigma against mental illness. As a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization, the Carter Center's work is supported by donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, and countries.

Source: <http://www.cartercenter.org/about/index.html>

THE
CARTER CENTRE



www.cartercenter.org

The Centre for Development and Population Activities

Founded in 1975, the Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) is an internationally recognized non-profit organization that improves the lives of women and girls in developing countries. CEDPA's approach is to work hand-in-hand with women leaders, local partners, and national and international organizations to give women the tools they need to improve their lives, families and communities. CEDPA's programs include: increase educational opportunities for girls and youth; ensure access to lifesaving reproductive health and HIV/AIDS information and services; and strengthen women's ability to become leaders in their communities and nations.

Source: <http://www.cedpa.org/section/aboutus>



www.cedpa.org

International Alert

In 1984 International Alert was founded as an independent peacebuilding organization. International Alert works in over 20 countries and territories around the world. International Alert's dual approach involves working directly with people affected by violent conflict as well as at government, EU and UN levels to shape both policy and practice in building sustainable peace. International Alert's regional work is based in the African Great Lakes, West Africa, the Caucasus, the Andean region of South America, and South Asia. At both regional and international levels, International Alert's thematic work focuses on the role of business, humanitarian aid and development, gender, security and post-conflict reconstruction in the context of building peace.

Source: <http://www.international-alert.org/about/index.php>

International Alert.

www.international-alert.org

Peace Brigades International

PBI is an international NGO that has been promoting nonviolence and protecting human rights since 1981. PBI's work is based on the principles of non-partisanship and non-interference in the internal affairs of the organizations that PBI accompany. PBI believes that lasting transformation of conflicts cannot be imposed from outside, but must be based on the capacity and desires of local people. Therefore PBI's does not take part in the work of the organizations that they accompany. Rather PBI's role is to open political space and provide moral support for local activists to carry out their work without fear of repression.

Source: <http://www.peacebrigades.org/about-pbi>



www.peacebrigades.org

Search for Common Ground

Founded in 1982, Search for Common Ground works to transform the way the world deals with conflict, away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative problem solving. Search for Common Ground works with local partners to find culturally appropriate means to strengthen societies' capacity to deal with conflicts constructively: to understand the differences and act on the commonalities. Search for Common Ground currently has seventeen field programs on four different continents. The two headquarters offices are located in Brussels and Washington DC, and provide logistical, fund-raising and policy work to support to the field while the divisions dispense technical expertise.

Source: http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/sfcg_home.html



www.sfcg.org

United Mission to Nepal

United Mission to Nepal (UMN) is a faith-based international non-governmental organization. UMN strives to address root causes of poverty as it serves the people of Nepal in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ. Established in 1954, UMN is a cooperative effort between the people of Nepal and a large number of Christian organizations from nearly 20 countries on 4 continents. Multicultural teams of Nepali nationals and volunteer expatriate staff work alongside local organizations in less developed areas of the country, building partnerships that lead to healthy, strong and empowered individuals, families, and communities. In order to address the root causes of poverty in Nepal, UMN advocate and support partner organizations in the following areas: Conflict Transformation; Food Sovereignty; Disaster Management; HIV and AIDS; Education; Organizational Development; Enterprise Development; Children at Risk; Health and Gender.

Source: <http://www.umn.org.np/new/index.php>



www.umn.org.np

III. Interview Participants

Mike Bluett. In-Country Coordinator.

Peace Brigades International.

Kathmandu. 19 June, 2008

Joe Campbell. Peace practitioner: twenty years of experience from primarily Northern Ireland, but also from Macedonia, Kosovo, and Nepal.

United Mission to Nepal.

Kathmandu. 13 June, 2008

Lydia Cordes. Program Manager, Nepal Transition to Peace Initiative.

Center for Civil Society and Governance.

Academy for Educational Development.

Kathmandu. 1 July, 2008

Rebecca Crozier. Program Coordinator.

International Alert.

Kathmandu. 1 July, 2008

Dale Davis. Project Director.

The Centre for Development and Population Activities.

Kathmandu. 24 June, 2008

Sarah Levit-Shore. Electoral Project Coordinator.

International Election Observation Mission.

The Carter Center.

Kathmandu. 13 June, 2008

Walton McCaslin. Development & Peace Practitioner. Former Mennonite Central Committee Country Director. Worked with *United Mission to Nepal* during the period 1978-2003.

Kathmandu. 12 June, 2008

Rajendra Mulmi. Program Manager, Community Peacebuilding.

Search for Common Ground.

Kathmandu. 17 June, 2008

Serena Rix Tripathee. Country Director.

Search for Common Ground.

Kathmandu. 25 June, 2008

Bishnu Sapkota. Senior Program Officer, Nepal Transition to Peace Initiative.

Center for Civil Society and Governance.

Academy for Educational Development.

Kathmandu. 2 July, 2008

Reshma Shrestha. Program Coordinator.

Association of International NGOs in Nepal.

Kathmandu. 17 June, 2008

Dambaru Ballav Subedi. Senior Project Coordinator.

International Alert.

Kathmandu. 16 June, 2008

Dr. Duman Thapa. Peace practitioner & adviser to parliament.

Asian Study Center for Peace & Conflict Transformation.

Former Country Representative, *the Carter Center.*

Kathmandu. 19 June, 2008

Preeti Thapa. Program Officer.

The Asia Foundation.

Kathmandu. 25 June, 2008

IV. Interview Guide

<i>History, Organization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Aims/objectives /mission – local & international.- Organizational guiding principles/norms.
<i>Peacebuilding Roles</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Track 1½ Roles.- Track 2 Roles.- Track 3 Roles.- Other Roles?
<i>Peacebuilding Impact/Limits</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Impact as third-party, non-state actor.- Influencing attitudes/behavior.- Influencing conflict conditions.
<i>Peace Work & Context</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local culture/value systems.- Social and political conditions.- Conflict VS Post-conflict conditions.- Identifying central actors.- Security situation.
<i>Funding & Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- How projects/activities are financed.- Level of agenda influence by funders.- How peace work/models are evaluated.
<i>Peace Conceptualizations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Peacebuilding.- Conflict Management.- Conflict Resolution.- Conflict Transformation.