



Mid and Far West Regions Weekly Report

Reporting Period: 5 December- 19 December 2008

The information in this report is consolidated from various sources including Government of Nepal Line Agencies, media, UN, I/NGOs and other aid organizations for the Mid-West Region and Far-West Region (MWR/FWR). The information in this report does not reflect the views and stance of the United Nations.

General Situation Update

- ~ *Road Obstructed by Labour Union:* On 17 December, Nepal Labour Union (NLU) obstructed road at Chinchu along Surkhet-Nepalgunj highway in Surkhet demanding immediate release of the driver taken into custody by the police following the traffic accident that killed a person in November. Later in the day, following the agreement with the Local Authorities and Surkhet Federation Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SFCCI) NLU withdrew the protests.
- ~ *Former Kamaiya Protest:* On 16 December, Former Kamaiyas in Bardiya announced protest against the government for not implementing the 10-point agreement signed between representatives of the former Kamaiya and government on November 23. The program includes obstruction of traffic and sit-in-protest among others from December 23 in Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchapur in Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, and Kanchapur Districts.
- ~ *Protest for Reconstruction of Infrastructure in Bajura:* The Struggle Committee for the Reconstruction (SCR) surrounded the District Administration Office (DAO) in Bajura District on 8 December demanding the reconstruction of the Telecom Tower in Toli that was damaged during the conflict. The SCR had earlier submitted memorandum to DAO.
- ~ *Emergence of Armed Group in Rolpa:* During the week, the District Security Committee (DSC) of Rolpa District mobilised security forces to track down members of an unidentified armed group creating terror in Gam VDC since past couple of weeks. Reportedly the unidentified armed group have sophisticated weapons. Two weeks ago, the armed group opened fire at a police patrol in the area. The Gam VDC is strategically important due to dense forests and difficult hilly terrain. On 18 March 2008 before the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections the unidentified group shot dead two Communist Party of Nepal- Maoists (CPN-M) cadres. In another incident in Rolpa on 15 December, An unidentified armed group opened fire at a shopkeeper and looted two shops at Ghartigaun VDC ward-3.
- ~ *Business men protest in Rajapur:* Rajapur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) of Bardiya District called an indefinite closure of Rajapur from 5 December against the looting in more than a dozen shops by the farmers who were carrying out a rally demanding increase in the price of rice. The local industries and market areas are closed for an indefinite time demanding action against the culprit, compensation of the loot, security guarantee among others.
- ~ *Clashes between Police and Students:* On 6 December, more than 40 people were hurt in violent clashes between police and students in Dadeldhura District, 31 students and 11 policemen were injured in the incident. The clashes broke out after the Undergraduate examinations were cancelled following the manhandling of Campus Chief of Education Campus by Youth Force (YF).
- ~ *Conflict Victim Protest in Dang:* From 16 December onwards, CPN-M Victims are organizing sit-in-protest in front of DAO in Dang demanding unconditional return of the lands captured by CPN-M during the conflict period. The protest is scheduled to go on till 23 December. Since last 35 days CPN-M victims are protesting in Dang District.

Reach of State / Reconstruction

The VDC secretaries in Kalikot District are compelled to function as mobile offices due to lack of reconstruction of buildings that were destroyed during the decade-long conflict. All total 30 VDC Offices were destroyed in the District during the conflict

Health

- *Increased Risk of HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis in MWR/FWR:* The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) have warned of an increased risk of infectious diseases, especially HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, in communities in MWR/ FWR where labour migration is prevalent as an income source for poor, food-insecure families. A report, "Passage to India – Migration as a coping strategy in times of crisis in Nepal,

outlines the health risks of labour migration to workers, their families and the broader community. Because of limited economic opportunities and extreme poverty in rural areas, labour migration has been one of the only options available for families to provide for their basic needs. Migration as a coping mechanism for conflict, poverty, and food insecurity has tripled over the last decade and become a common livelihood strategy for Nepal's poorest

- *Reproductive health problem in Banke:* According to Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN), the problem of reproductive health is increasing among the women due to early marriage. In Banke District more than 40 percent of young men and women married from 15 to 19 years of age, last year around 15,649 women underwent abortion in Banke. Marriage at young age is the main reason for the increasing number of girls undergoing abortion and reproductive health problem is increasing among women due to unsafe abortion.

Development Works and Local Economy

Road Upgrade in Kanchanpur: On December 11 India provided an assistance of NPR 26.47 million to upgrade 11 roads in the Mahendranagar Municipality of Kanchanpur District. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Embassy of India, Kathmandu and the District Development Committee (DDC), Kanchanpur.

Remittances in Rolpa: The flow of remittances increased in recent days in Rolpa District, according to the Money Transfer Agents in the District approximately NPR. 5 million is collected in a day as a remittance in Rolpa. The youths internationally employed in the Gulf and other places send money home through money transfer agents. Migrant workers in India have started sending back money through money transfer agents, but all goes into repaying loans

Protection

- *LPC Formation at the District Level:* The government decision to form LPC at the district level two years ago is yet to take effect in some Districts. The Ministry for Peace and Reconstruction (MOPR) had directed DAOs to form local peace committees. The objective behind forming local peace committees was to restore social harmony, rehabilitate the displaced, forge political understanding among parties and build peace throughout the country. However, dispute among parties over the number of committee representatives and inaction on the part of administrative offices have led to uncertainty regarding committee formation. Over 2000 displaced in the MWR/FWR have not yet returned to their villages citing lack of security and the prevailing atmosphere of threat and intimidation. Meanwhile following the mutual agreement among the political parties on 17 December, Local Peace Committee (LPC) was formed in Dadeldhura District, in past due to disagreement between political parties LPC was not formed. The CPN-M District committee member was unanimously chosen as the coordinator of 22 members LPC. The LPC will identify the conflict victims and initiate for the reparation.
- *Human Right Awareness among former Kamaiya:* On 6 December, Kamaiya Pratha Unmulan Samaj (KPUS) initiated a week long human rights awareness program as a part of Kamaiya Empowerment Program. The program was held in Asthanagar, Bandarkhal, Basanta and Rajikuna free Kamaiya settlement camps of Sadepani VDC and Balchaur free kamaiya camp of Patharaiya-8.
- *Displaced People Plea:* Despite the assurance of the DAO, District Land Revenue Office (DLRO) and Bhalubang City Development Committee (BCDC) 60 families displaced after the establishment of Armed Police Force (APF) Battalion at Bhalubang of Lalmatiya-3 in Dang District have not received land and properties compensation for the last six years. The APF camp was established on 4 April 2002. The displaced families are taking shelter at a public land at Ratodanda in Pulchowk, Lalmatiya-3. The Committee formed for the evaluation of land and property acquired by the APF valued NPR 6.6 million compensation to the displaced people. An all-party meeting held on 31 October 2007 had recommended the local administration to provide compensation for the victims.
- *Kamalari Practice eradication campaign:* The Friends of Needy Children (FNC) is taking initiatives to make a Bardiya Kamalari free District, by campaigning to eradicate Kamalari system, the domestic child labour system where the parents give away their daughters as domestic helps

through middlemen for monthly pay. Often times, Kamlari girls are subjected to sexual abuse, persecution and hard labour by their masters. Many Kamlari have also gone missing since years from the masters' house, according to FNC over 40 Kamlari from Bardiya District are missing over the past few years.

- *Land Capture in MWR/FWR:* According to the human right organizations in the regions, thousands of bighas of land seized by the CPN-M during the conflict has not been returned to their rightful owners despite the commitment of Prime Minister to CA on 11 November to do so by 15 December. The CPN-M had seized 1,800 bighas belonging to 275 persons in Bardiya and 600 bighas from 57 families in Banke. In Kailali, land, houses and properties of over 1,000 civilians in Kailali district during the conflict.
- *Women Participation in Peace Process:* On 5 December, a two day Far Western Regional Conference on Women's Participation and Role in Peace Process was organized by the Net Work of NGOs working for women's right in Dhangadhi.
- *International Human Right Day Celebration:* The 60th International Human Rights Day was celebrated though out the region during the past week. According the reports of Human Rights Network- Banke, 38 persons were killed in MWR by different groups after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). 4,197 persons lost lives in MWR during the armed conflict and 582 persons are still missing .According to INSEC 21,883 persons were displaced during the conflict period in MWR and 2,396 bigahs of land belonging to 339 households captured by CPN-M is yet to be returned.

Upcoming Meetings in the MWR/FWR

Contact Group Meeting, Nepalgunj – 29 December 2008

If you have inputs for the MWR/FWR Weekly Report or questions/comments on the current report, please contact: Prem Awasthi, UN OCHA Nepalgunj on ph. 9858020587. Email: awasthi@un.org. Disclaimer: The information in this report is consolidated from media, Government of Nepal Line Offices, UN, NGO, and other humanitarian partners, subject to availability of data. Although UN OCHA aims to confirm reports independently, occasional factual inaccuracies could occur.