

SUMMARY BASELINE REPORT

MOBILE ARTS FOR PEACE (MAP)

NEPAL



Introduction of MAP Nepal

In Nepal, ensuring protection from various forms of abuse and exploitation is a challenge, especially for young girls and women, who are at risk of gender-based violence and multiple forms of discrimination. During conflicts, young people are often targeted and perceived as instigators, and their role as peacebuilders is not recognised. They are also rarely meaningfully involved in decisions that affect their daily lives. Access to basic services and civic and political participation are therefore essential steps towards securing a better future.



MAP activities in Palpa and Kanchanpur district with child club in January 2021

In this context, the MAP project in Nepal focuses on delivering arts-based activities that highlight and address gender and other social issues to engage children and youth, including key stakeholders, in identifying key challenges to their participation in civic and political life. The MAP project aims to influence curricula and youth policies through local engagement with children in and out of school, with a focus on developing curricula in partnership with local governments and schools, and engaging children and youth through extracurricular activities.

Overview & context of youth in Nepal

In the first phase, the project was implemented in the districts of Kanchanpur (Far West), Palpa (Lumbini), and Makwanpur (Bagmati). In the second phase, the project will be extended to Dhanusha (Madhesh), Surkhet (Karnali), and Lalitpur (Bagmati). The MAP project in Nepal covered five provinces (Far West, Karnali, Lumbini, Madhesh, and Bagmati) and seven districts (Kanchanpur, Palpa, Makwanpur, Dhanusha, Surkhet, Lalitpur, and Kathmandu). Stakeholders of the MAP project in Nepal include young people, educators, school principals, religious leaders, cultural practitioners, government officials from line agencies of the Ministries of Education, Youth, Culture, and Local Government, academics and researchers, NGOs, civil society organisations, cultural organisations, and other projects or organisations focusing on peacebuilding initiatives for marginalised young people and social justice. From Nepal, Bishnu B. Khatri of the Human Rights Film Centre (HRFC) and Rajib Timalsina of Tribhuvan University (TU) are leading the project as co-investigators.

Nepal has one of the youngest populations in the world, with 40% of the population under 18 (Demographic Changes of Nepal: Trends and policy implications, 2017). Children and youth in Nepal face challenges such as poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, and political instability, which can exacerbate existing inequalities and perpetuate violence and conflict (Adhikari et al., 2016). The target group of children and adolescents in Nepal faces a number of challenges related to the post-conflict scenario in the country. Many children and youth have experienced violence and trauma during the conflict and need psychosocial support to heal from these

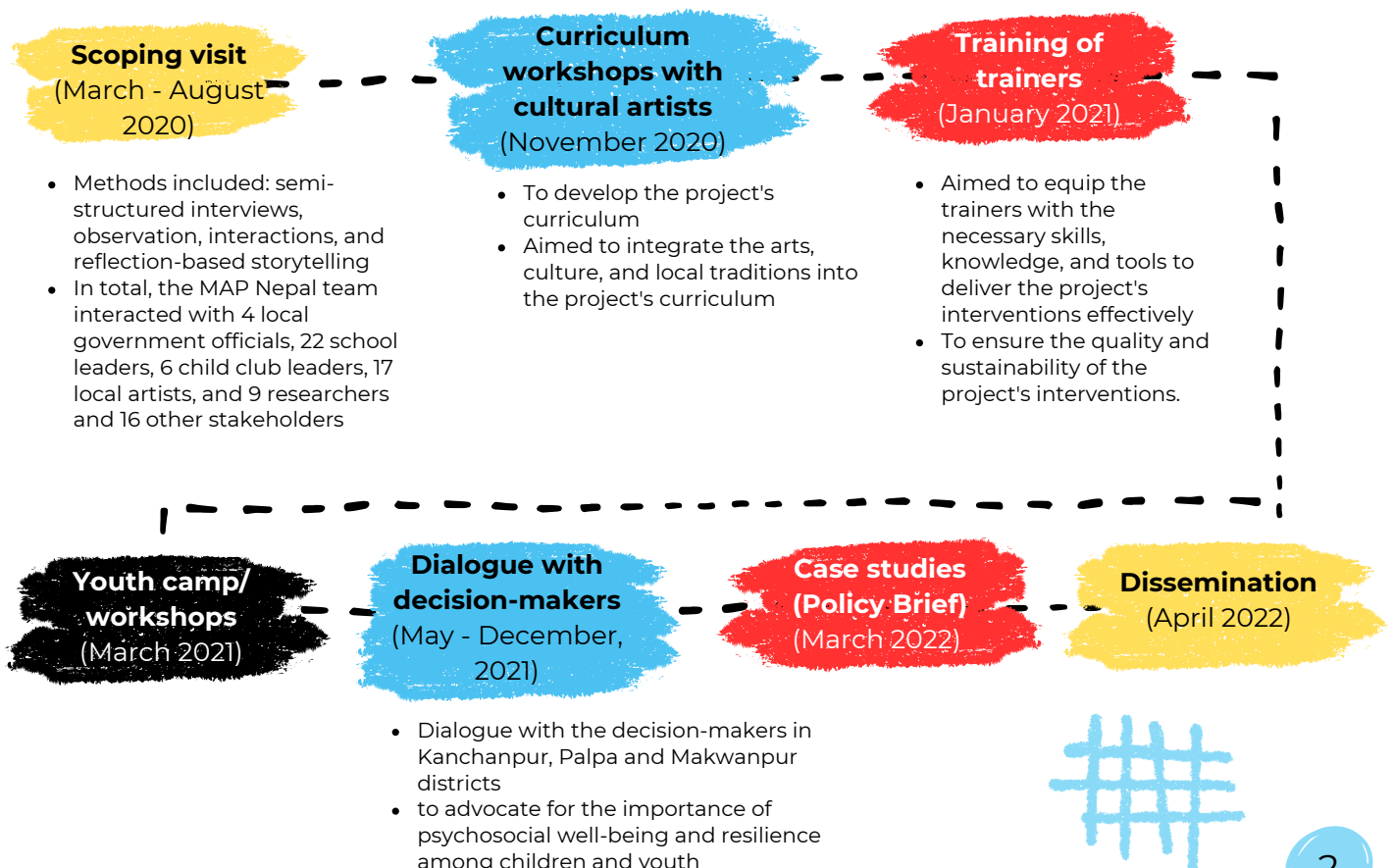
experiences. In addition, the lack of access to education and economic opportunities is a major concern for youth in Nepal, particularly those from marginalised groups. These challenges make it difficult for children and youth to fully participate in the peacebuilding process. The conflict has created significant challenges for young people in Nepal. These challenges include poverty, limited access to education, and inadequate healthcare services. In addition, young people in Nepal face significant social, economic, and political barriers that prevent them from realising their full potential (UNICEF, 2018). According to the Nepal Youth Survey (2019), young people in Nepal face significant challenges in finding meaningful employment, accessing healthcare, and participating in decision-making processes.



Deuda performance against human trafficking by Janajyoti secondary school in February 2022

Project Timeline

The implementation of the project activities included a series of steps that aimed to achieve the project's objectives. These steps included:



Scoping visit methods

The implementation of the project activities included a series of steps that aimed to achieve the project's objectives. These steps included a scoping visit, curriculum workshops with cultural artists, training of trainers, youth camp/workshops, dialogue with decision-makers, case studies, and dissemination.

The scoping visit aimed to identify the context and needs of the project's target audience, which were children and youth in Nepal. The project team visited five districts in Nepal to assess the socio-political, cultural, geographical, and economic contexts, as well as the post-conflict setting of these districts. This visit helped the project team to design appropriate interventions to address the needs of the children and youth in these districts. In Nepal, we conducted the internal scoping visit between 25 March - 30 August 2020. The scoping visit activities include consultations with representatives of local government, teachers and school management, arts base organisations, psychosocial organisations, mapping of possible local partners, preparing a list of target groups, establishing connections with partner schools, child clubs and youth clubs, and conducting cultural artists workshops.

Objectives of Scoping Visit Activities

- Mapping local stakeholders (child clubs, schools, arts-based organisation, research organisation, youth clubs and other potential local partners)
- Identifying existing indigenous arts-based practices
- Collecting local contextual information

Scoping visit methods include semi-structured interviews, observation, interactions and reflection-based storytelling. In total, the MAP Nepal team interacted with 4 local government officials, 22 school leaders, 6 child club leaders, 17 local artists, and 9 researchers and 16 other stakeholders. In the process of scoping visit, the scoping team mostly followed observation and reflection based storytelling.

After the scoping visit, the MAP Nepal project team conducted curriculum workshops with cultural artists to develop the project's curriculum. The workshops aimed to integrate the arts, culture, and local traditions into the project's curriculum. This approach helped to make the project more relevant and engaging for the target audience. During the workshops, the project team also trained the trainers who would deliver the project's interventions to the target audience. The training aimed to equip the trainers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to deliver the project's interventions effectively. This approach ensured the quality and sustainability of the project's interventions.

Finally, the project team disseminated the project's findings, best practices, and lessons learned to a wider audience. As part of the dissemination event, the MAP Nepal project team conducted youth camps and workshops to engage with the target audience, which were children and youth. The youth camps and workshops aimed to promote social and emotional learning, psychosocial well-being, and resilience among the children and youth. These interventions included arts-based activities, such as storytelling, music, dance, and drama. The dissemination aimed to create awareness and promote the importance of psychosocial well-being and resilience among children and youth in Nepal. The project team used various media, such as reports, articles, and social media, to disseminate the project's findings.

Partners

The MAP team collaborated with various organisations, including arts-based organisations, psychosocial organisations, local-level government and researchers, to successfully implement the project. During the project period, MAP Nepal was able to build a partnership with various organisations such as local government (ward, municipality), local arts groups, children's clubs (7 working schools), youth council (national, district), child rights council, civil society (psychology school, Dignity Initiatives, AYON, Emergency Response Centre, Galli Galli) and arts-based organisations (Lok Dohori *Pratisthan*, Playback Theatre Group). The partnership and collaboration with all the stakeholders were progressive during the project. They made valuable contributions to the MAP activities by sharing their experiences, expertise and feedback with the young people. The partnership with different organisations helped to strengthen the voices of young people and gather information. Similarly, partnerships with local government, police and community people supported influence.

Baseline Findings

The baseline findings from the first phase of the MAP project are related to engagement preparation, collaboration, and interaction among young people and adults. The event was attended by hundreds of children and youths who belonged to seven different schools in Makwanpur, Palpa, and Kanchanpur districts. They were participating in various activities related to chart and poster making, drama and theatre practice, and discussing Deuda.

The MAP Nepal team used various art forms (e.g. video, painting, dance) for intergenerational dialogue with stakeholders at different levels (local, regional, and national) and the engagement with the wider public (e.g. through social media).



Video was the most effective tool for communicating with a diverse audience for various purposes (i.e., intergenerational dialogue, awareness-raising, and advocacy).



The audio-visual arts appear to be accessible and understandable to most people.



Social media supports the dissemination across different groups of society.



The local art form such as 'Deuda' is another effective medium for dialogue, awareness-raising, and advocacy. It is particularly popular in Sudurpaschim (Kanchanpur district).



The research was followed by the production of art-based materials, meetings with policymakers, and co-creation with community police. The community police in the region also working in the project area in awareness campaign against drug use among young people. Makwanpur district is one of the districts where most of the drug abuse incidents happens every year. For this, meetings were conducted with different actors to understand their views about social issues which helped to identify the issue and select the issue. Following meetings were conducted: Meeting with Parents (9 members); Meeting with community youth; Meeting with youths who were involved in drug use of drugs; Meeting with School management committee, and head teachers; and Meeting with the social worker.

In particular summary findings:

1

The level of collaboration and teamwork demonstrated by the young people was impressive, especially considering that they were meeting each other for the first time. The fact that they were able to divide work among themselves and provide suggestions to each other speaks to their ability to work collaboratively and effectively towards a shared goal. This is a crucial skill for young people to develop, as it can help them in their future academic and professional pursuits.

2

The conversations that took place between the young people were both personal and task related. This indicates that they were able to build a rapport with each other, which is important for building trust and creating a supportive environment. The fact that they were able to share personal experiences also suggests that they felt comfortable and safe within the group. This is particularly important for young people, who often face challenges related to identity, self-esteem and belonging.

3

The use of creative activities such as drama, dance and music provided a platform for young people to express themselves and share their experiences. This is a crucial aspect of youth development, as it allows young people to explore their creativity and build their confidence. Additionally, the use of drama allowed for the exploration of more complex themes such as violence and abuse. This not only provided a platform for young people to share their experiences but also contributed to raising awareness about important social issues.

4

The involvement of a theatre artist in the drama group highlighted the importance of intergenerational collaboration. The fact that the theatre artist was able to work alongside the young people as a co-creator and mentor helped to bridge the gap between different generations and facilitated the sharing of knowledge and skills. This type of collaboration is particularly important for young people, as it can help to build their confidence, skills, and knowledge.

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This program is a good way to spread public awareness against the existing distortions in the society. Since the message is also useful for the meticulous study of young people who are likely to fall into the trap of addiction, I will continue to support and cooperate with the club in the future.

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(APolice Officer, District police, Makwanpur)

Conclusion & recommendations

the project has successfully engaged with marginalised youth and provided them with a platform to express their views and ideas through creative activities such as music, drama, and storytelling. This has helped to build their confidence and skills and contributed to their social and emotional wellbeing. Secondly, the project has highlighted the importance of using local art forms and cultural practices to promote peacebuilding and community cohesion. By incorporating traditional Nepalese music, dance, and drama into its activities, the MAP project has been able to connect with local communities and promote cultural awareness and appreciation. Lastly, the project has demonstrated the potential of using technology, such as mobile phones and social media, to reach a wider audience and create a more inclusive and interactive platform for peacebuilding.



The first suggestion is to increase focus on policies that support youth structures: We realised in the coming days the MAP project should work closely with local and national policymakers to advocate for policies and programs that support youth structures and empower marginalised youth. This could include initiatives such as youth-led community development programs, youth-led advocacy campaigns, and targeted support for at-risk youth.



The second recommendation is to incorporate more local art forms. While the MAP project has successfully incorporated traditional Nepalese art forms into its activities, there is still scope to explore and integrate more local art forms and cultural practices. This could help to build stronger connections with local communities and promote cultural diversity and understanding.



Third, our team also realised it is very essential to develop effective methods for participatory action research. The MAP project should continue to refine its methods for participatory action research to ensure that the views and perspectives of marginalised youth are effectively captured and incorporated into project planning and implementation.



Finally, we would like to improve the recruitment of the target research groups. The MAP project should explore alternative recruitment methods and strategies to ensure that its target research group is effectively reached and represented. This could include outreach programs in schools, youth centres, and other community-based organisations.

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