

Serving People's Need for Peace:

Infrastructures for Peace, the Peace Sector, and the Case of Nepal

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Introduction

“How can we live together in peace?” is a question in the minds and hearts of many Nepalese people as they try to come to terms with the violence of the past and present while attempting to lay the foundations for a peaceful future.

The question is especially pertinent given that different models for the future design of the state are being discussed as part of the ongoing formal peace process. So far, no one model has been able to elicit support from across the political spectrum. With almost half the population living below the poverty line, a widely felt sense of frustration about the lack of political progress adds uncompromising urgency to the discussion.

The present volume of the Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series explores the potential and boundaries of the concept of “peace infrastructure” or “Infrastructure for Peace (I4P)”. In this and other literature on the topic,¹ Nepal is often cited as an example, typically because of its Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction as well as the local peace committees that have been established by the government in practically every district.

While inspired by the attempts in the Handbook and other publications to define what Infrastructures for Peace (I4Ps) *are*,² our experiences in Nepal have deepened our understanding of what they *do*. The way we see it, the added value of the idea of Infrastructures for Peace (I4Ps) is that it focuses attention on the needs they aim to satisfy. Looking through this lens, those infrastructures that are actually already serving

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1 For example the *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2012: Special Issue on Infrastructures for Peace.

2 Two definitions: (1) “Peace infrastructures consist of diverse domestic, inter-connected forms of engagement between conflict parties and other stakeholders. Their organisational elements can be established at all stages of peace and dialogue processes, at all levels of society, and with varying degrees of inclusion. The objective of peace infrastructure is to assist the parties (e.g. through capacity building or advice), the process (e.g. through mediation between the conflict parties or facilitation of public participation), or the implementation of process results (e.g. through monitoring and coordination of agreement implementation)” (Hopp-Nishanka 2013a, 4); (2) “Infrastructures for Peace are a dynamic network of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values and skills which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peace building in a society” (developed during the Infrastructures for Peace seminar organised by UNDP and civil society in Kenya in 2010, cited in Kumar/de la Haye 2011).

peace in a society become visible. This makes it possible to identify gaps and overlaps in services as well as any lack of policy and coordination in the peace sector.

In this paper, using the case of Nepal, we want to show how a perspective based on people's peace needs (a "user perspective") may help clarify the concept of Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) and its components, as well as their place in society. We will also reflect on practical implications and potential developments in Nepal's peace sector.

Infrastructures for Peace from the Perspective of Peace Needs

The Berghof Handbook, which contains much of the latest thinking regarding the conceptualisation of Infrastructure for Peace (I4P), attests to the fact that the concept is increasingly attracting the attention of policy-makers, academics, and practitioners in the field of peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The International Civil Society Network on Infrastructures for Peace and the UNDP Infrastructures for Peace Portal (both established this year) aim to contribute to advocacy and comparative learning, while the universities of Manchester and Denver have recently initiated research programmes on the topic.

Still, consensus regarding the scope and definition of the term remains to be achieved. Research on how and why Infrastructures for Peace (I4Ps) contribute to peace, and what the roles of and practical implications for different actors might be, is limited. Despite these constraints, advocacy efforts promoting the concept are well underway, including here in Nepal.³

We are currently studying the components of Nepal's Infrastructure for Peace (I4P). Although still work in progress, the perspective we take may help move forward the international discussion. Descriptive rather than normative, it is akin to a market analysis with a focus on the available peace services offered by the components (we call those "infrastructures for peace") and the existing peace needs (demand), while attempting to identify gaps and overlap.

Our starting assumption is that peace is an ideal state of being, dependent on the fulfilment of various peace needs. Examples of peace needs include freedom from violence, social harmony, and inner tranquillity,⁴ while the prevalence of a given peace need varies among people and across societies. The second assumption is that a peace need becomes acute, or direct, when people fail to resolve a conflict constructively on their own and suffer the ensuing violence, for example in the case of individual trauma (intrapersonal conflict), drawn-out marriage disputes (interpersonal conflict), and rising tensions between community members (intragroup conflict) or nation-states (intergroup conflict). The third assumption is that failure to effectively satisfy an acute peace need leads to more violence: the condition of the person with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder worsens; spouses start abusing each other; community members expel others; and war between nation-states is declared. The fourth assumption is that peace services can help address peace needs and thereby prevent violence, and that the appropriate type of peace service depends on the particular peace need. Our final assumption is that peace service delivery is the business of infrastructures for peace.

In the Berghof Handbook, the term "peace infrastructure" is generally used to refer to a totality, an overarching infrastructure. The terms "components", "peace structures", or "elements" are used to

³ Internationally, a UN resolution calling on the UN to support infrastructures for peace in governments was finalised at the Nesting Peace Summit organised by the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace in Geneva, September 2013. The International Civil Society Network on Infrastructures for Peace was launched in early 2013, and several alliances have been set up to promote the concept (the African Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace and the Asia-Pacific Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace). In Nepal, the National Planning Commission has included infrastructures for peace in their 13th Approach Paper 2013-2016 (available in Nepali at: www.npc.gov.np/new/uploadedFiles/allFiles/TYP2070-full.pdf (accessed 29 August 2013)). The director of the Nepal Peace Trust Fund participated in the Nesting Peace Summit mentioned above.

⁴ These are just a few examples of peace needs that can be derived from Galtung's positive and negative peace definitions and his breakdown into cultural, structural, and direct peace, as well as Nepali understandings of the word ("shanti").

indicate the parts of that peace infrastructure.⁵ Our terminology, however, intends to underline the notion that “peace infrastructure” or “Infrastructure for Peace (I4P)”⁶ refers to the sum of its elements as well as describes single parts of that system (Brand-Jacobsen 2013, recognised in Hopp-Nishanka 2013b, 56). Because the single parts tend to be complex units that can function more or less independently of the overall Infrastructure for Peace (I4P), we consider them as infrastructures in their own right. In line with this, and for lack of an adequate alternative, we use the term “infrastructures for peace” (lower-case) to indicate the parts and the term “Infrastructure for Peace (I4P)” (upper-case, with the acronym for purposes of clarity) to indicate their sum. The emphasis of this paper is on the parts.

We define *infrastructures for peace* as the structures, resources, and processes through which peace services are delivered at any level of a society. It is helpful to make a distinction between formal and informal infrastructures for peace. Formal infrastructures for peace have a physical structure, a degree of organisation, stability, mandate, resources, training, and are recognised as such by their beneficiaries, or “users”. Examples include community mediation committees, local peace committees, peace radio stations, peace agreement monitoring mechanisms, religious institutions, and zones of peace. By contrast, informal infrastructures for peace are those that emerge on an ad hoc basis, do not require a physical structure, and operate without funds. Examples include the many traditional dispute resolution mechanisms in Nepal. Together, they make up the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) of a society.

Figure 1 shows a nested picture of where we see the place of infrastructures for peace in the broader peace sector of a country, borrowing from a model long-used in other development fields (e.g. economy, finance, and health).

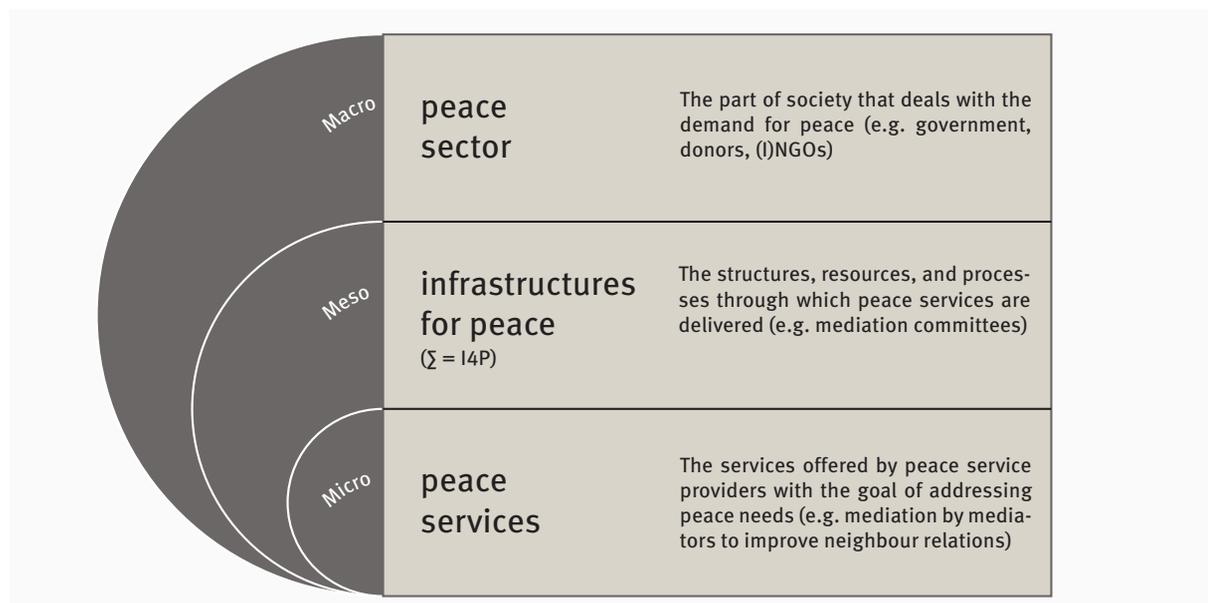


Figure 1: The different levels of the peace sector

The *peace sector* is that part of society that deals with the demand for peace, or peace needs. It encompasses ministries, donors, national and international NGOs as well as the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P), constituted by the infrastructures for peace and the peace service providers. From this point of view, a Ministry of Peace would be part of the peace sector in the possible roles of enabler, planner, regulator, policy-maker, financier, and coordinator, but only be an infrastructure for peace when it actually delivers a peace service. The same applies to donors or NGOs working for peace.

5 Although this distinction is not consistently applied: see for example p. i of the Handbook Dialogue (Unger et al. 2013), where as examples of peace infrastructures are mentioned individual elements like peace committees, a Ministry for Peace and Reconstruction, a Peace Secretariat, and a High Peace Council.

6 As used by Dialogue lead author Hopp-Nishanka and Brand-Jacobsen (2013, 8) respectively.

Peace services are the services offered by peace service providers, working in the infrastructures for peace, with the goal of addressing peace needs. They can include direct services like counselling, dialogue facilitation, and mediation, as well as indirect services such as information provision, education, training, and monitoring.⁷ Although we recognise there is some overlap, one can distinguish between preventative, curative, and palliative peace services.⁸ Preventative peace service providers seek to prevent violence, for example by increasing peace skills and knowledge, contributing to a culture of peace, and establishing a firm Infrastructure for Peace (I4P). Curative peace service providers, like conflict resolution and transformation practitioners, mediators, and psychological trauma counsellors, help people to heal from painful conflict. Palliative peace service providers aim to reduce harm once violence has erupted, for example by managing demilitarised zones or conducting shuttle mediation. A state in transition and recovering from violent conflict, like Nepal, may have more need than a well-functioning democratic state for curative infrastructures for peace: mediation platforms for political actors, truth and reconciliation commissions, or community mediation committees to compensate for the existing judicial vacuum. Well-functioning democratic states may host more preventative infrastructures for peace, such as academic studies in peace and conflict, or think tanks advising the government on a peaceful foreign policy.

Figure 2 suggests several infrastructures for peace, roughly organised by the type of services they provide, that may be available at varying levels of peace in a society. It is beyond the scope of this diagram to segment the infrastructures for peace according to the level at which they function (i.e. the level at which the peace need occurs, for example intrapersonal or intergroup). We suppose that preventative services can be offered on a continuous basis, while the type of curative and palliative services offered at a given point in time would depend on the peace needs of the day.

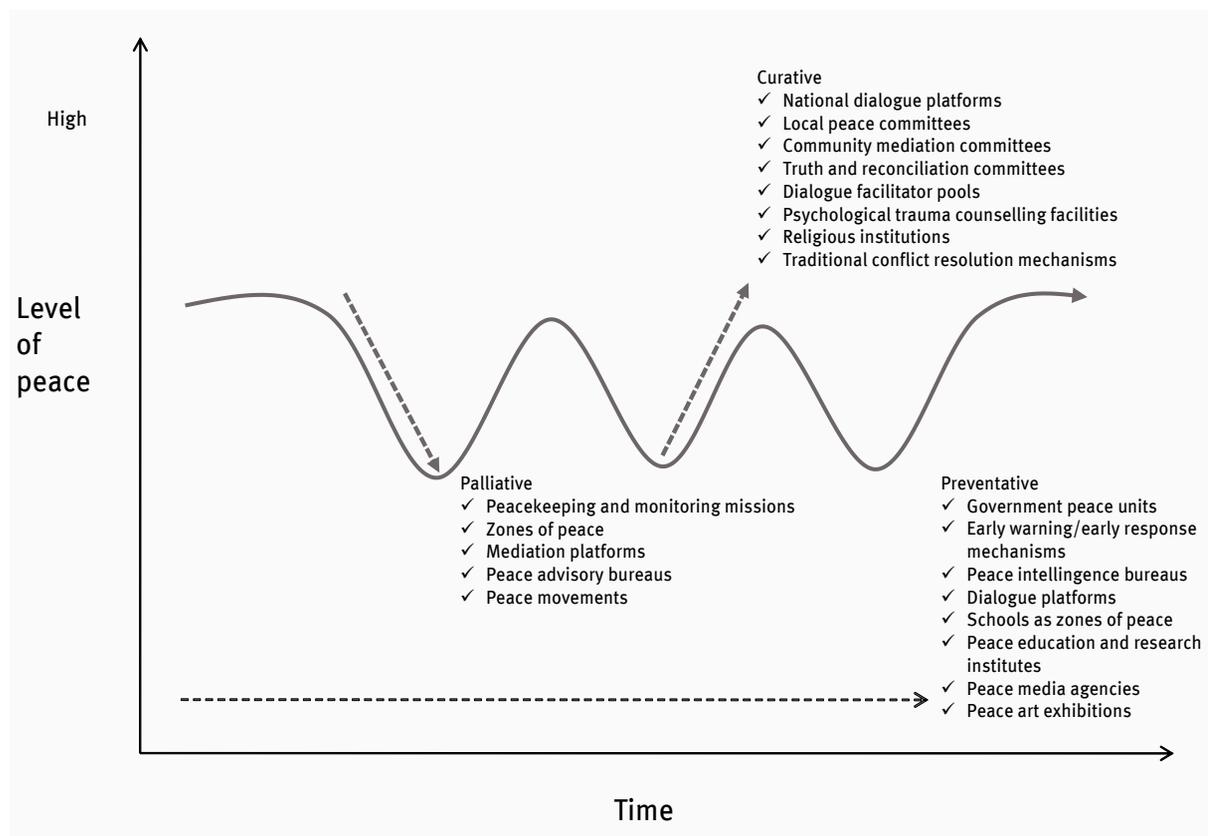


Figure 2: Possible infrastructures for peace and type of services over time

⁷ Much like the services mentioned by Hopp-Nishanka in the Berghof Handbook Dialogue (2013a, 6).

⁸ Extrapolating from Galtung (1996, 1).

The peace needs perspective combines a systems approach (Dress 2005, 1) with a functional approach to peace.⁹ A systems approach to peace focuses on the way individual components (infrastructures for peace) relate to the whole (the goal of peace in a society). Dress argues that this provides an opportunity to address the fragmentation in the conflict prevention and peacebuilding field, by drawing attention to the need to *plan* for peace. A functional approach highlights infrastructures that are actually functioning in the service of peace at all levels of society. This allows for evaluating them on the basis of merit¹⁰ – and possibly for withdrawing their status as infrastructure for peace should they fall short of fulfilling their mandate.

What do we see when we look through this lens at Nepal? After providing a brief background to the political and social situation, the following section gives an overview of the main actors and describes their roles in the peace sector as well as some of the infrastructures for peace. Given the limited scope of this paper, as well as the preliminary stage of our research, we refrain from giving a typology of the country's peace needs.

Actors and Infrastructures for Peace in Nepal's Peace Sector¹¹

Despite the political and social change in recent years, many people in Nepal continue to suffer from violence. Poverty, lack of education, and unequal access to education, employment and political representation fuelled the political violence of the mid-1990s and still contribute to tensions today. Positions in society are still mostly determined by caste, ethnicity, and gender. About 44% of the population lives below the poverty line (República 2013). More than 40% of women and 25% of men are illiterate (Government of Nepal 2012, 4). The justice system is weak and inaccessible to many people due to prohibitive costs, geographical distance, and long waiting periods.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2006 formally ended the violent conflict between the government of Nepal and the then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), but its rather slow implementation is an obstacle to achieving political sustainability and economic growth. While the Maoist People's Liberation Army has by and large been dismantled, fundamental issues relating to state restructuring, transitional justice, inclusion, impunity, and land reform are still unresolved.

At the time of writing, a technocratic interim government was leading the country towards new constituent assembly elections scheduled for 19 November 2013. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (a breakaway faction of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)), headed an alliance of 33 parties that boycotted the elections and obstructed election preparations. Once in place, the new constituent assembly will have to draft the constitution, a task the previous assembly failed to accomplish in its four-year tenure. The new constitution will probably propose a federal structure for the country. Discussions in the past about the possible shape of the future federal state suggest that the country is divided over the subject, making the eventual implementation of any model risky.

Our impression is that many of Nepal's peace needs remain unaddressed because of the limited availability of professional peace services. Among the infrastructures for peace that do exist, most appear to have limited scope and capacity and operate quite independently of each other, missing opportunities to detect and pre-empt tensions before they escalate and failing to provide recourse where there is violence.

Figure 3 offers an overview of the policy-makers, funders, and implementers in Nepal's peace sector, as well as some of the formal infrastructures for peace they have enabled and/or established. It is beyond the scope of this diagram to show which infrastructures for peace have been established by whom, which peace needs they seek to address, and who the peace service providers and the users are.

⁹ Inspired by Kemp and Fry's finding that "[a] peaceful society is a society that has oriented its culture and cultural development toward peacefulness. It has developed ideas, mores, value systems, and cultural institutions that minimize violence and promote peace – a *cultural technology of peace*" (Kemp 2004, 10; original emphasis).

¹⁰ An outcome-level evaluation can be assisted, for example, by the Indicator Module developed by Search for Common Ground, the United States Agency for International Development, and the United States Institute of Peace, 2013. Available at: <http://dmeformpeace.org/learn/training-modules-design-monitoring-and-evaluation-peacebuilding> (accessed 30 August 2013).

¹¹ The Nepali term *Pro Public* has so far been using (and that has been adopted by the NPC) is *shanti kolaagi purbadhar*. In Nepali, *shanti* refers to "peace", "tranquillity", and "calm"; *-kolaagi* means "for"; and *purbadhar* means "infrastructure", which can both refer to "hardware" (buildings, tools, resources) and "software" (skills, attitudes, values).

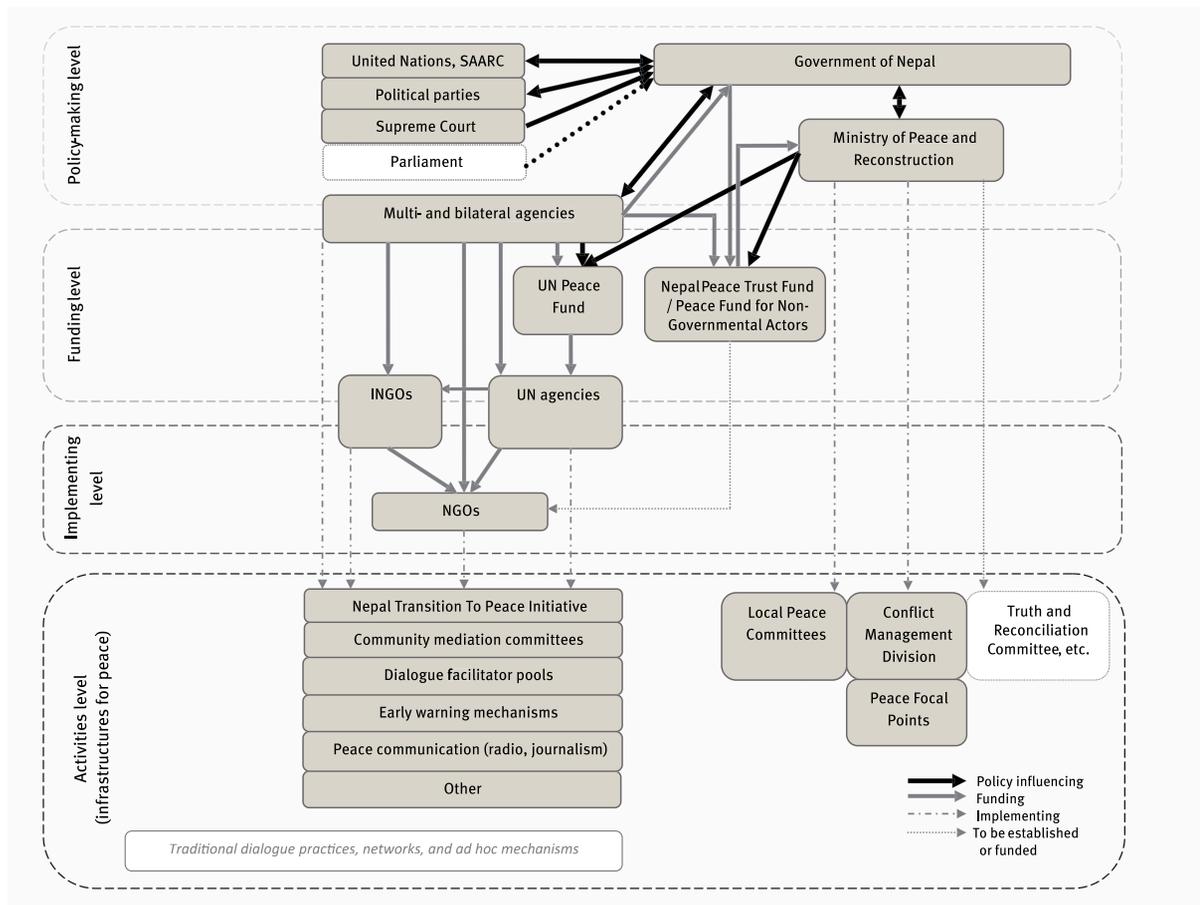


Figure 3: Actors in Nepal's peace sector

Note 1: Pending political agreement, the constituent assembly (to be established after the elections) might double as interim parliament.

Note 2: The Peace Fund for Non-Governmental Actors, administered by the NPTF, is expected to fund peacebuilding projects by NGOs following the elections, some of which would set up new infrastructures for peace.

Note 3: The Conflict Management Division is located within the MoPR, while the Peace Focal Points are located within various ministries.

In the international discussion on Infrastructures for Peace (I4Ps), the MoPR is frequently cited as an example of a component (van Tongeren 2011; Hopp-Nishanka 2013a, 8; Siebert 2013, 34-35). Given the ministry's current functions and broad range of responsibilities, we agree with this view. In addition to the coordination of national peace efforts, including overseeing the implementation of the peace agreement and setting up local peace committees, a peace fund, and transitional justice mechanisms, it also took over some of the functions of the earlier Peace Secretariat. As a result, the ministry also delivers peace services like negotiation support and advice to political parties and the government. The MoPR therefore currently has the double role of being an infrastructure for peace in itself while also being a policy-maker for the peace sector. Most of the peace advisory services are provided by its Conflict Management Division. Through its Peace Focal Points, the ministry advises other ministries on relevant peace and development policies. Some of the issues inhibiting the success of the MoPR (and thus of the peace services it is supposed to deliver) relate to its unclear mission and mandate, inadequate organisational and staff competencies, and limited budgetary resources (Government of Nepal 2010, 7-19). We speculate that actors in the peace sector with a double role, like the MoPR, will be especially likely to encounter conflicts of interest and/or be confronted with the limits of their capacity (compare e.g. a health ministry that would care for patients).

In addition, it has been argued that the MoPR's credibility, legitimacy, and effectiveness have been reduced by a lack of inclusiveness (notably in the consultation processes that led to the creation of the ministry, see Thapa 2007, 60).

The MoPR manages the Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF, chaired by the MoPR minister) and makes up the executive committee of the UN Peace Fund (chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator) together with a donor representative and the chair. Given that NPTF's main task is to fund peace initiatives, we consider it to be an enabler in the peace sector but not an infrastructure for peace.¹²

Local peace committees were set up in almost all of Nepal's 75 districts and are supervised and funded by the MoPR with NPTF funds. The committees are supposed to serve as links between the communities and the national peace process. They are headed by actors with a double role: political party representatives tasked with the delivery of peace services. These services include assisting in the local implementation of the CPA; collecting data on conflict-affected individuals, families and structures; facilitating constructive conflict transformation processes in situations of political or social conflict; and working on reconciliation, healing and trust-building. However, their effectiveness has been hampered by challenges such as political party dominance, a lack of local involvement, miscommunication, an unclear mandate, and a lack of capacity (Carter Center 2011, 7-11).

An ordinance calling for the immediate creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was signed by the president in March 2013, but the Supreme Court suspended it two weeks later, citing problems with the mandate and the structure of the commission (including the possibility of amnesty for human rights violators). Among other committees that still need to be established according to the CPA are the High Level Peace Committee and the Commission of Inquiry into Forced Disappearances.

The Nepal Transition to Peace Initiative, funded by the United States Agency for International Development and Switzerland and managed by The Asia Foundation, provides peace support for political party and other key leaders. It aims to strengthen the ability of the political parties and government to participate effectively in the peace process and to establish informal and confidential dialogue processes to address the concerns of all stakeholders (Siebert 2013, 35; The Asia Foundation 2011, 1).

Community mediation committees have been established in 457 of the almost 4,000 Village Development Committees of Nepal (COMCAP/JICA 2013). Although not initiated by the government, most of them have some form of (local) government participation.¹³ The committees aim to offer villagers mediation services in accordance with human rights norms and to empower individuals in the community by training them as mediators. Donors have either set up mediation committees themselves¹⁴ or through NGOs.¹⁵ Some committees have been criticised for being discriminatory, reinforcing existing hierarchies or being influenced by political parties. Yet more often users report high satisfaction due to the free-of-cost services and fair, efficient, independent, and neutral processes (Suurmond/Sharma 2012, 83).

Dialogue facilitator pools were set up in four communities of Nepal to ease the process of integrating Maoist ex-combatants into host communities by the NGO Pro Public with financial and technical support from GIZ's Supporting Measures to Strengthen the Peace Process. This initiative is expected to be expanded to six additional communities with financial support from the Peace Fund for Non-Governmental Actors once the elections have taken place. Another example is the core group of national- and local-level facilitators that was formed with support of UNDP's Conflict Prevention Programme in order to take forward dialogue processes through national and local ownership.

¹² Although we understand that in practice the NPTF provides informal peace services to political parties on an irregular basis.

¹³ In some cases local government officials are members of an advisory committee for the community mediation committee and/or they provide a physical space for the mediators. In other cases community mediation committees are supervised by the District Development Committees and supported by the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development.

¹⁴ For example, the United Nations Children's Fund, UNDP, Japan International Cooperation Agency's Strengthening Community Mediation Capacity for Peaceful and Harmonious Society Project.

¹⁵ For example, The Asia Foundation, Danish International Development Assistance, and the UK Department for International Development's Enabling State Programme.

Early warning mechanisms include the website nepalmonitor.org, set up by Peace Brigades International Nepal, which gathers information about human rights violations across the country. The Election Commission, in cooperation with security agencies, has ordered the development of a mechanism for the purpose of monitoring election-related violence.

Because they provide the service of peace education and information, we include two examples of radio stations functioning as infrastructures for peace: the Media for Peace project of Radio Nepal, and Radio for Peacebuilding by the INGO Search for Common Ground (SFCG). The first, supported by Japan, aims to promote peacebuilding in the country by providing people with accurate, impartial, and fair information on the peace process as well as with other relevant news.¹⁶ The second project, funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy and implemented by SFCG in partnership with Antenna Foundation Nepal, the Far Western Media Development Center and three local FM stations, was recently concluded. It produced and broadcast two radio programmes covering conflict issues, increasing awareness of the peace process among young people.¹⁷

Informal infrastructures for peace include, apart from the traditional dialogue practices unique to many communities in Nepal, ad hoc mechanisms such as the Accountability Watch Committee and the Community Service Centers (UNRCHCO 2012, 8-9).

Implications and Observations

We conclude our paper by briefly reflecting on the implications of the peace needs perspective on infrastructures for peace and possible future developments in the peace sector in Nepal.

Conflicts are ubiquitous and, according to the perspective outlined in this paper, peace needs are too. As a consequence, formal and/or informal infrastructures for peace (and therefore a more or less coordinated Infrastructure for Peace (I4P)) can probably be found in every society, in war or peace. Infrastructures for peace can be planned or spontaneous; they can be established by the people themselves or by (inter) national agencies and institutions; and they can anticipate or respond to arising peace needs.

If our assumptions bear scrutiny, the added value of the peace needs perspective is that it allows for analysing the formal and informal infrastructures that contribute (or are supposed to contribute) to peace, and thus of the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) as a whole. The same applies to the various actors involved at the macro, meso and micro levels of the sector and to the actual peace needs of the population, making possible the identification of mismatches between offer and demand. The results of such analyses could be used to clarify roles, address gaps in the coordination or allocation of resources, identify the overlap of direct and indirect services, and support demand-driven programme design. This in turn could enhance the coordination of actors in the sector and the quality of services, and make the countrywide management and service delivery more efficient, boosting the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P). Finally, the results can also provide foundation and direction for normatively charged discussions about Infrastructures for Peace (I4Ps).

What is next for the peace sector in Nepal? The National Planning Commission (NPC) has included a programme on Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) in its recent 13th Approach Paper 2013-2016. This might mean that in the near future the NPC will take responsibility for mainstreaming infrastructures for peace across the ministries, with the MoPR assuming the task of designing and implementing a national programme. Both developments will be challenging given that state institutions do not enjoy the broad trust of the public due to the protracted political crisis and their inability to fulfil basic functions. Although various attempts to improve the effectiveness of the MoPR are underway, the current scope of this ministry remains limited.

¹⁶ Media for Peace project [Online]. Available at: http://radionepal.gov.np/about_inner.php?pid=8 (accessed 29 August 2013).

¹⁷ Radio for Peacebuilding [Online]. Available at: www.sfcg.org/programmes/nepal/ (accessed 29 August 2013).

The most critical short-term programmatic priorities appear to be adequate early warning/early response mechanisms to prevent direct violence, curative peace services to help bridge the most acute conflict lines, and services addressing the pervasive structural violence. Their availability is limited, while the country has embarked on a testing path towards elections and is yet to confront some of the most divisive aspects of the peace process.

In the long run, should the MoPR be given a mandate extending beyond the peace process, we imagine that the ministry might outgrow some of its current functions as infrastructure for peace: leaving the delivery of certain peace services to specialists, and intensifying its role as enabler and steward of the peace sector, for example by developing standards and policies and coordinating the efforts of implementers. Whether or not an extended ministry for peace will continue to oversee the local peace committees (whose mandate, too, would have to be renewed) will depend on future analyses of their advantages and drawbacks. One structural caveat remains the double role of political actor and peace service provider played by their leadership. While these committees constitute a nationwide framework in the peace sector and their effectiveness seems to be improving, the question remains whether it is better to try to remedy the existing structure, or start anew.

Given their current level of interest in Nepal's peace sector and the many challenges relating to alignment of practices, we envisage that donors will continue to play an important but ad hoc role in setting up infrastructures for peace. Obviously, the transitory nature of the contribution of most of Nepal's peace sector enablers (MoPR, donors, and international and national NGOs) is an impediment to the sustainability of peace service delivery.

To begin tackling some of the challenges mentioned above, the government of Nepal could draft a national roadmap that would formally establish Nepal's peace sector and Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) and recognise the diverse infrastructures for peace. Such a roadmap would outline strategic priorities for scaling up the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P), the implementation of which the government could facilitate in conjunction with donors and international and national NGOs. It is clear that this would imply a commitment to a change of direction, rather than the comprehensive attainment of all tasks from the start.

"How can we live together in peace?" In Nepal, the concept of Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) is bringing into focus people's peace needs as the starting point for formulating an answer.

Acronyms

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
MoPR	Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPTF	Nepal Peace Trust Fund
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ZFD	Civil Peace Service Program (GIZ)

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Jeannine Suurmond is technical advisor for the Civil Peace Service Program of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (ZFD/GIZ), and supports the peacebuilding and community mediation programmes run by the NGO Pro Public in Kathmandu, Nepal. Together with Pro Public, she advises the National Planning Commission and the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction on Infrastructure for Peace (I4P). Before coming to Nepal, she provided mediation support for track 1 and 2 intrastate peace processes in Asia, Africa and the Pacific as research analyst for Kreddha, the International Peace Council for States, Peoples, and Minorities. Prior to that, she worked as a consultant for the Clingendael Institute and co-founded the Pax Ludens Foundation for Training and Research in Conflict Resolution, both in the Netherlands. She holds an MA in Psychology from the Free University of Amsterdam and various certificates in mediation, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding from institutions including Inmedio, the Transcend Peace University, and the Peace Action Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR).

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