



SAFERWORLD

PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT. BUILDING SAFER LIVES

Community-based approaches to safety and security

Lessons from Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh



March 2013



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Abbreviations

AVR	armed violence reduction	M&E	monitoring and evaluation
BMF	Bosniac Mahala Forum	MEDEP	Micro-Enterprise Development Programme
CA	Constituent Assembly	MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
CBO	community-based organisation	MOHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement	MLGA	Ministry of Local Government Affairs
CSAT	Community Safety Action Team	MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
CSWG	Community Security Working Group	NGO	non-governmental organisation
CTG	Caretaker Government	OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
DV	domestic violence	OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
EU	European Union	PLA	People's Liberation Army
EULEX	European Rule of Law Mission Kosovo	PRP	Police Reform Programme
FIQ	Forum for Civic Initiatives	SALW	small arms and light weapons
GBV	gender-based violence	Tk	Bangladeshi taka
ICITAP	International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program	UN	United Nations
IHIRICON	Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal	UP	<i>union parishad</i>
INGO	international non-governmental organisation	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
IT	information technology	USD	United States dollars
KP	Kosovo Police	UXO	unexploded ordnance
LPSC	Local Public Safety Committee	VAWG	violence against women and girls
MCSC	Municipal Community Safety Council	VDC	village development committee

Executive summary

THIS REPORT IDENTIFIES lessons relevant for donors and implementing agencies seeking to support community-based approaches to security.¹ It is based on Saferworld and partners' community security work in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh in 2010–13.

Although not a formal evaluation, this report suggests that community security programmes produce measurable improvements to communities' own experiences of safety and security. It also identifies a range of results relevant to the provision of capable, accountable and responsive security provision and wider peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts.

The findings also argue for the critical role of civil society in security and justice sector development and point to some of the measures necessary to support such groups effectively. The report reinforces the observation that successful security and justice interventions need to integrate both community-based and institutionally-led reforms. Finally, it provides some practical lessons for donors and agencies seeking to support community-based approaches to safety and security through their work.

Saferworld's community security work in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh

This report does not attempt to provide an exhaustive description of our community security work in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh; rather, it is intended as a representative illustration to ground the lessons we have learned from our work.

In Kosovo, much of Saferworld's community security work has involved promoting public participation in the raft of laws and policies developed after independence. Supporting Kosovo's institutions to actually *implement* security-related laws and policies has also been important. Civil society in Kosovo has been essential, providing a bridge between communities and national or international actors and helping to improve coordination between the multiplicity of organisations and institutions working on security issues in Kosovo. Carefully nurtured relationships and grounded contextual analysis have also enabled progress to be made in establishing community forums in the extremely divided north of Kosovo – the first time in 14 years that Serbian and Albanian communities have discussed such issues together.

¹ This report often makes reference to the term 'community security'. However, the nomenclature is less important than the approach being described, and ensuring conflict sensitivity is key. In some countries the word 'security' is loaded with implications that distract from or even undermine Saferworld's goal of helping communities to articulate and address the things that make them feel unsafe or insecure. In these instances, we simply find another way of describing the work – 'community safety', or 'freedom from fear programming'. The approach to community-level security described here also shares similarities with other programming approaches common in the humanitarian and development spheres, such as 'protection' and 'resilience'.

Nepal's civil war undermined the ability of the police to provide security to communities, and Nepal's security services face high levels of politicisation. Women and girls suffer especially in this context and much of Saferworld's community security work has focused on addressing violence against women and girls – both through empowering women directly and mobilising youth. As in many contexts, Saferworld's community security programme in Nepal has faced the challenge of trying to address the wide variety of 'security' and 'development' problems prioritised by communities and we have begun to explore a range of new partnerships to better incorporate livelihood opportunities into our work.

In Bangladesh, political crisis risks undermining wider development and a large proportion of the country's population lives under or precariously near the national poverty line. Mobilising the youth of a Dhaka slum to address community security concerns helped address youth unemployment as a driver of insecurity while building more trusting relations between the police and community members. Supporting the community to establish a child safety centre helped raise family incomes in the area but has faced sustainability challenges. In rural Kishoreganj, peer-to-peer work raised awareness about sexual harassment while community members created 'crime maps' to help police redirect patrols to problem areas. Working as a group and having the support of local police has also made community members more confident in tackling issues around drug/alcohol abuse and gambling. As part of scaling up community security activities in Bangladesh, Saferworld and BRAC have worked to deepen a shared vision of community security – significant given BRAC's reach across the country.

Lessons learned

From our community security work in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh we have been able to identify a number of lessons that are relevant for donors and implementing agencies in the design and delivery of community-based approaches to security.

Results

The community security work surveyed in this report identifies tangible results in relation to informing national policy development; improving coordination between national and international security actors; enhancing local governance; improving trust between communities and security providers; redistributing resources to meet community needs; increasing civil society capacity to inform the work of security providers; building trust between social groups; empowering women and improving their experience of safety and security; mobilising youth to address security issues; and contributing to increased earning potential for poor and marginalised populations.

One challenge for those designing community-based approaches to security, however, is clearly articulating the results chain sought. It is all too easy to focus on the immediate community-level changes that come about as a result of community security activities – pavements built in a village worried about road traffic accidents, or unexploded ordnance cleared from farmers' fruit orchards, for instance.

Important though they are, results at this level might best be seen as intermediate results within an overall theory of change which seeks to address some of the underlying structural issues driving conflict and insecurity. The ultimate changes sought are a contribution to capable, accountable and responsive security and justice provision, along with empowered citizenry, the development of broader state-society relations and a strengthening of the social contract within societies.

This being the case, it is important that the monitoring and evaluation of such programming should reflect specific changes sought to relationships within and between communities themselves, security providers and relevant authorities, and with international actors who influence the way decisions and policy are made. It is

also important to recognise that there will be no common template for the changes sought, and that the precise mix of results desired should be grounded in a thorough assessment of what is needed, and possible, in each context.

Community security as a building block for peacebuilding and statebuilding

In many contexts, local governance is fundamental to the organisation of social, political and economic life and as such can be considered as the first social contract that people experience. By connecting people with representatives of the state, community-based approaches to security can contribute to improved state-society relationships and increased state legitimacy. Community-based approaches to security and justice also have the potential to help strengthen the links between formal and informal systems.

Helping to improve the confidence of communities, along with their relationship to other communities and authorities, may make a contribution to these communities' resilience to violence. Similarly, supporting the ability and opportunity for civil society to engage in issues around conflict and security builds and reinforces important 'capacities for peace' within conflict-affected or fragile societies.

Selected recommendations

- Theories of change should be used in order to establish an appropriate and meaningful hierarchy of results sought, along with a coherent explanation for how lower-level or intermediate outcomes make a contribution to broader impacts. Programmes should be evaluated both on how well they achieve individual results within this theory of change (delivery) and how relevant the theory of change was for the context (design).
- As the changes that community-based approaches to security seek to bring about concern relationships and behaviour, programme design should make provisions for participatory monitoring and evaluation through case studies, focus groups or other robust qualitative analytical tools.

The importance of civil society

It is not possible to build the kind of trusting relationship with communities needed to identify and address complex and sensitive security issues overnight – this takes time, patience and a high level of community knowledge and cultural awareness. Given this reality, local and national civil society is indispensable for building and maintaining relationships with communities.

Civil society can also play an invaluable role in coordinating between different actors involved in providing or supporting security provision. This coordination may be vertical (between different levels of decision-making, such as village, district and national forums) or horizontal (providing not only a direct connection with communities but also space for different forums from the same level to interact and share information with each other).

Civil society can play a useful role in disseminating and raising awareness of new policies and laws. Such policies and legislation are likely to be stronger if developed through the broad-based consultation that civil society is often able to facilitate, and civil society's ability and appetite for promoting and explaining such reforms will be higher if it is already invested in their development.

In many contexts, civil society has traditionally been denied space to engage on issues of safety or security. Subsequently, civil society's capacity for critical analysis and constructive advocacy in this area may often be limited. Given the important functions of civil society for successful security sector reform, it is important to look at how best to support the development of civil society's capacity in this area. Civil society can also help monitor the implementation of security sector reforms. Such feedback is necessary for the continual refinement and adjustment of reform processes, testing the theory against the reality, and should be seen as a useful contribution to the development of strategies for security provision, not solely as an accountability mechanism.

Exchange visits between civil society groups working in different contexts are an important part of capacity building, as are supporting the development of civil society networks both in-country and internationally. Given that issues related to security can be sensitive or even dangerous for civil society to engage with in conflict-affected and fragile countries, there are also measures that the international community can take to improve the environment for their advocacy and dialogue – for example diplomatic engagement with political and security leaderships and pressing for formal mechanisms to protect civil society.

Selected recommendations

- All community security interventions should make a contribution to building the sustainable capacity of national and local civil society. Donors should ensure the tenders governing the design of all large security sector or rule of law interventions require bidding agencies or consortia to include a significant role for civil society partners in the design, implementation and monitoring of such interventions, as well as a component for building civil society capacities.
- International actors supporting efforts to promote rule of law and improved security and justice provision should ensure they are working at the diplomatic level to support space for civil society to engage in and influence security policy and decision-making.
- Donors should continue the trend towards multi-country community security programmes that contain explicit objectives and budget lines for cross-context learning and support for the continued supplementation of the evidence base for community-based approaches to safety and security.

Community security's role within an integrated approach to security and justice

Security and justice interventions often seem to operate at *either* a predominantly community-based level or a predominantly centralised or institutional level. Saferworld's approach to community security emphasises the importance of working in a coordinated way at both levels.

This requires having strong relationships with government and police representatives at different levels. Such relationships need to be carefully built – although adversarial relationships may have utility for some kinds of work around accountability, here they will not be sufficient. Instead a relationship of trust must be built up where security providers feel that civil society inputs are constructive and useful, allowing civil society organisations to make careful critiques of the way security providers and authorities operate without fear of endangering the overall relationship.

Empowering communities to articulate their security concerns and supporting appropriate security responses is a critical and often overlooked part of promoting security and access to justice. However, just as centralised and institutional-led approaches to security sector reform are inadequate, community-based approaches alone will not ensure the long-term, sustainable transformation of justice and security provision in fragile states. Instead, both types of approach should be combined, building the capacity of security institutions with the involvement of affected communities to ensure the capacity developed is the *right* capacity to meet community needs.

Selected recommendations

- Agencies undertaking community-based security programming should include a thorough actor and power analysis within their design phases and ensure that community-level programming is accompanied by an advocacy strategy for engaging with relevant actors at sub-national and national/international levels.
- International actors supporting security and justice programmes should ensure that the totality of their combined programming is sufficient and coordinated across both

supply and demand sides. Donors (and INGOs) should ensure that their portfolios complement each other's and provide opportunities for community groups and civil society to inform, monitor and critically evaluate institutional-focused security and justice interventions.

Implementing community security programming

There can be no standardised template for community security programmes. Instead, a set of principles and ways of working should be adapted to the specific requirements of the context. Similarly, it is important to understand and build on what already exists – designing and establishing new structures, groups or platforms risks duplication. It is usually far more effective and sustainable to engage with those that already exist and strengthen or support them to build capacities that are deficient or absent.

It is critical to allow enough time to develop a strong shared vision of community security with implementing partners. Such a detailed vision is foundational for ensuring the success of programmes. Similarly, short-term projects do not allow sufficient time for essential trust-building, and reduce the possibility of the community security approach becoming embedded into local-level planning, decision-making and security-provision processes – which in turn undermines the chance for the intervention to be sustainable beyond the project duration.

Community insecurity is often rooted in or linked to economic challenges, and communities frequently identify a wide variety of issues as 'security' concerns. Tangible outputs that relate to livelihoods or public infrastructure may also provide an entry point into thinking about less easily graspable changes in governance, or represent a neutral starting point for community security interventions in contexts where trust between different communities, or between communities and security providers, is very low. Responding to such a range of concerns requires a high degree of strategic and operational flexibility, and so agencies and their donors need to think carefully about the mix of capacities and skills required for community-based approaches to security and reflect this in the range of partnerships they pursue.

Ensuring the participation of women (and other marginalised groups) in community committees is vital, but must be balanced against what can realistically be achieved in any given context. An incremental approach should be taken in contexts where women's participation significantly challenges social and cultural norms. When addressing gender-based violence, promoting immediate protection and support needs to go hand in hand with efforts to address the underlying causes of violence, which often involves working with male community members and should always be based on a grounded theory of change.

Donors funding community security interventions should require implementing agencies to base the design of their programmes on a thorough context analysis and, wherever possible, to build on existing structures rather than create new ones. This should include analysis of gender norms within the community, so that activities can be tailored to be culturally appropriate while also aiming to support women's participation and avoid entrenching unequal gender relations.

Selected recommendations

- Implementing agencies and donors need to allow sufficient time and resources to invest in partners, including developing a strong and nuanced shared vision of overall goals and a theory of change for community security.
- Donors should carefully consider the mix of implementing partners they need for interventions that integrate community-based security and justice with broader development, while implementing agencies could consider integrating a 'security and safety' lens into existing community-driven development work.

- Donors should be flexible with regard to the specific issues that are addressed through community security interventions, as long as progress can be shown towards the overall goals of improved relationships between security providers, local authorities and communities, and more responsive and relevant provision of security services.

1

Introduction

OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS, Saferworld has implemented projects to improve safety and security at the community level in an increasing number of countries, beginning in Kosovo in 2003 and now extending to Bangladesh, the Caucasus, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan, Tajikistan and Yemen – with projects in other countries currently in development.

Between 2010 and 2013 Saferworld conducted community security and small arms and light weapons (SALW) programmes in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh, supported by multiple donors. The report describes in some detail our work in each country and the lessons learned about the most effective approaches to community security programming in fragile contexts.

The relationship between violent conflict, security and development has received growing attention in recent years. It is now widely recognised that these issues are inextricably linked and that countries experiencing widespread conflict and insecurity are often severely hampered in their ability to progress towards sustainable development. However, there is still much debate over the most effective policy and programme responses to these challenges, along with an underdeveloped evidence base for ‘what works and why’. Although it is not an independent evaluation, Saferworld believes that this report makes a contribution to this ongoing debate and offers evidence that illustrates the impact of community-level approaches to safety and security.

Although this report focuses predominantly on lessons from the above-mentioned programmes, it is not a donor report and we have also included other work where it is relevant to understanding either the way we approached our programme in-country or the lessons we have drawn from our experiences. This report does not attempt to provide an exhaustive description of our community security work in each country so much as a representative illustration. Finally, although the next chapter expands on what community security is, the report does not attempt to ‘codify’ Saferworld’s approach to community security – future publications will present a more thorough exploration of the programming approach.

2

Community security

SAFERWORLD'S APPROACH TO COMMUNITY SECURITY² is about helping to make sustainable improvements to people's experiences of safety and security. It is both about the *end state* – where communities feel more safe and secure – and the process by which communities are helped to identify and work with others to address their own security needs.

Community security initiatives can be used to tackle a range of security problems, from gender-based violence and crime to a lack of trust between communities and security providers, inter-ethnic tensions or weapons proliferation. However, people live integrated lives in which security concerns such as crime, violence, intimidation and disorder are often intimately linked to broader 'human security' issues related to people's health, education and livelihoods. Consequently, community security interventions need to seek equally integrated responses to those concerns.

Saferworld's community security initiatives always work through local partners that are able to build and sustain the trusting relationships with communities needed to help people identify and prioritise their safety and security needs and bring them together with police, local authorities and other security and justice providers to address them. For Saferworld, community security is not just concerned with improving security at the local level, nor should it be seen as somehow separate from or parallel to national security provision or traditional concepts of security sector reform. For this reason, it is also important to ensure there are bridges between national and local authorities, security providers (formal and informal), civil society, individuals and communities, so that the policies developed and actions taken at the national level incorporate and address the real concerns and difficulties faced by local communities.

Wherever possible, community security initiatives try to help communities to build on the resources and skills they already have to address their security concerns, rather than seeking to introduce new – and potentially destabilising or unsustainable – resources. Initiatives build durable links between the community and the structures of local government and security providers, and enhance the resilience of communities to pressures that could lead to violent conflict in the future.

² This report often makes reference to the term 'community security'. However, the nomenclature is less important than the approach being described, and ensuring conflict sensitivity is key. In some countries the word 'security' is loaded with implications that distract from or even undermine Saferworld's goal of helping communities to articulate and address the things that make them feel unsafe or insecure. In these instances, we simply find another way of describing the work – 'community safety', or 'freedom from fear programming'. The approach to community-level security described here also shares similarities with other programming approaches common in the humanitarian and development spheres, such as 'protection' and 'resilience'.

Community security activities

Ensuring that interventions are appropriate to the context is essential for community security work. For this reason, Saferworld does not have one particular model or template of community security programming which it applies across all contexts. Instead, Saferworld's approach to community security can be better understood as a set of principles and objectives applied with careful consideration of the differing realities of each context.

However, for readers unfamiliar with Saferworld's community security work, it is possible to describe in general terms a set of activities that are frequently components in community security programming. The following provides a brief summary of the methodology Saferworld and partners used in Nepal.

Phase 1: Developing a vision and agreement on methodology with partners

A methodology workshop was conducted before implementation began. During the workshop, staff members from Saferworld and partners and their district representatives agreed on the overall vision of community security, the approaches and methodology for the project (and how to adapt it to Nepal), the timeframe for implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and budget.

Phase 2: Site selection

During the methodology workshop, a set of criteria was agreed for the selection of communities where the project would take place. Priority was given to locations where perceptions of insecurity were high, where the community, local government and police were all interested in working on the issue, and where there were no other similar projects (to avoid duplication). A more in-depth assessment of the selected sites then provided information to further tailor the project and laid foundations for building trust with communities.

Phase 3: Building trust and confidence with the community and support for the project

Building a trusting relationship with communities, local government and police representatives is a crucial component of any community security project. Safety and security concerns are often sensitive issues for communities to discuss and it is important that community members understand what the project is, and is not, able to deliver.

Although this trust and confidence building is something that extends through the life of the project, a significant up front investment of time and activity is required in this area at the beginning of projects. In Nepal, a series of trust-building programmes involved not only community members, Saferworld and partners, but also police personnel, the village development committee (VDC)³ secretary, local and district governmental staff, representatives from political parties, community-based organisations and members of civil society such as local journalists, school teachers, students and women's groups. For example, an event was organised around the *teej* festival⁴ where stage drama and songs on gender-based violence and domestic violence were performed, and then the project was discussed with the audience afterwards.

Phase 4: Supporting communities to articulate, assess and prioritise their safety and security concerns

As part of the scoping visits conducted in phase two of the project, focus group discussions were held with community members, including separate discussions for groups of youth and women, to identify local security concerns. Key informant interviews were also conducted with individuals from the local authorities, police and civil society groups. Findings were later validated with these same actors.

A Community Safety Working Group (CSWG) was then established within each community as a mechanism for community members, local authorities and police to come together and discuss local security issues. The CSWGs are comprised of a representative selection of community members, including men, women, youth, Dalits and other marginalised community members. In Nepal, the CSWGs decided to involve local police and government officials as advisors, thus establishing a dialogue with these actors from the outset. After a couple of meetings, the CSWGs prioritised the most important security issues based on the findings from the scoping visits and identified potential solutions which became the basis for their action planning.

The CSWGs usually meet around once a month to monitor the implementation of community action plans (see below) and plan future activities.

³ VDCs are the lowest-level government structure under the Ministry of Local Development. They coordinate development activities at the village level.

⁴ *Teej* is one of the biggest festivals for women and girls in Nepal. They gather in groups and share the joy and difficulties of their daily lives through song and dance, and fast for the long life of their husbands.

Phase 5: Action planning

Once the community have agreed on the security concerns they want to prioritise, action planning workshops are held to develop problem statements for each issue along with an action plan for addressing it, including specific objectives, a timeframe, division of responsibilities and indicators for measuring success. Action plans are consulted and agreed with the working group advisers. In Nepal, CSWGs have prepared action plans in consultation with local authorities, and finalised those action plans by incorporating feedback from key district-level stakeholders including the District Police Office.

Phase 6: Implementation of action plans

The next stage sees the implementation of the community action plans, with activities depending on the strategy developed by the community to address their particular issues. In Nepal, key issues addressed by the action plans relate to substance abuse, domestic violence and sexual and gender-based violence. Improving relationships between the police and the community was another priority area for all the community sites in the Nepal programme so they have included activities to increase interactions with local and district-level security agencies and secure material support for police posts. In one event organised by the CSWG of Kachanapur VDC in Banke district, for instance, the District Police Chief made a commitment to provide personnel for a local police post and the community agreed to allocate a building to house the police post.

Phase 7: Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is undertaken through regular meetings of the CSWGs and other key stakeholders to assess progress against indicators outlined in the community action plans. Successes are also identified and celebrated, and learning is fed back into phase four of the cycle to help identify new security issues if appropriate.

3

Kosovo

Joining the dots to promote responsive security and justice provision

Context

AFTER THE CESSATION OF THE 1999 WAR IN KOSOVO, a UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution handed over governance to the United Nations, finally leading to the formation of the Republic of Kosovo in February 2008.

Since its declaration of independence in 2008, Kosovo has been recognised by over half of UN member states, including 22 of 27 EU member states. However, the country is still relatively isolated internationally and after independence there was a pressing need to create the institutions and laws needed for a brand new country.

Institutions, policies and laws

A constitution has been adopted and a raft of policies and legislation have been developed over recent years. Examples include the Kosovo (National) Security Strategy, the 2010 Law on Weapons, a Strategy and Action Plan on Intelligence-led Policing, the Strategic Development Plan of the Kosovo Police, a National Strategy and Action Plan for Community Safety, a Community Policing Strategy and Action Plan, an administrative instruction which established the Municipal Community Safety Councils, and a National Small Arms and Light Weapons Control and Collection Strategy.

In recent years, authorities in Kosovo have demonstrated an increased willingness to allow civil society participation in security policy and decision-making at both central and local levels. However, despite some positive examples, opportunities for partnerships and dialogues between authorities and civil society organisations (CSOs) are still limited. At the same time, civil society organisations themselves often have limited capacity and cooperation between ethnically divided CSOs remains a challenge.

Similarly, although there has been progress in policy development, the institutions responsible for putting them into practice often remain weak or under-capacitated, and poor implementation of these policies remains a serious obstacle to effective security and justice provision.



This map is intended for illustrative purposes only. Saferworld takes no position on whether this representation is legally or politically valid.

North Kosovo

As consequence of continued hostilities and political disagreements between Albanian and Serbian populations, north Kosovo has seen an informal process of partition and the reluctance of local communities to engage with outside actors. Unsuccessful attempts by the Kosovo institutions and international administration to facilitate a process of development in the region have resulted in a deepening of this de facto partition of the Serb-dominated north from the rest of Kosovo and placed the perceived political struggle between Serbs and Albanians at the centre of attention across Kosovo.

For people living in north Kosovo, these unresolved issues and the unclear institutional framework they are governed by mean they continue to experience insecurity and poor rule of law. This situation is compounded by the weak capacity of CSOs in the north of Kosovo and a lack of interaction between CSOs from different ethnic communities or between CSOs and the authorities, especially on security-related issues. In contrast to the north, Kosovo Serb communities south of the Ibër/Ibar river continue to work well with Kosovo institutions, participating in elections, the National Assembly and the government and establishing new municipalities and municipal structures.

A monument celebrating Kosovo's declaration of independence in 2008. Since independence, Kosovo has adopted a constitution and a raft of policies and laws relating to safety and security – though their implementation remains a challenge.

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In a 2011 Saferworld survey 73 per cent of Kosovan Serbs expressed fears that violent conflict would resume, and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica was the region of Kosovo with the highest overall level of fear about the resumption of violence (60 per cent).⁵ Indeed, after Prishtinë/Priština imposed an embargo on Serbian goods in response to Serbia's blocking of Kosovo imports, July 2011 saw violence in north Kosovo which temporarily stalled EU-backed talks between Prishtinë/Priština and Belgrade. These talks have nevertheless resulted in deals being struck on issues such as the mutual recognition of university degrees, exchanging data on civil registries and creating an Integrated Border Management System at crossing points.

Donors begin to draw down their support

Kosovo has not escaped the effects of the wider economic crisis in Europe and globally. Although inward investment to Kosovo is on the rise, complaints about corruption are frequent and many people feel they do not see the benefits.

After the end of the war in 1999, and after independence in 2008, Kosovo was the recipient of a large amount of foreign aid, particularly from the European Union (EULEX, the EU's rule of law programme in Kosovo, is the largest mission of its kind ever launched by the EU). However, although there are considerable funds available to help countries in the Western Balkans meet the criteria for accession to the EU, overall the international community has begun to draw down its financial support to Kosovo – a significant factor given the extent to which Kosovo (with an annual budget of only around \$1.6 billion) is dependent on aid. This is especially true of Kosovo's nascent civil society, which currently lacks many obvious funding alternatives.

At the same time, a lack of visible progress by Kosovo on its path to EU membership and the lack of a unified position on Kosovo within the EU (which has resulted in ambiguities in the mandate of the international presence) all contribute to disappointment and dissatisfaction among people in Kosovo. This sense of isolation is deepened by being the only country in the region outside the EU's visa liberalisation process since Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the visa-free zone in December 2010.

Perceptions of security

Kosovo's coalition government collapsed in late 2010 and parliamentary elections in December of that year were held amid accusations of multiple irregularities and fraud. In February 2011, Kosovo's National Assembly convened to elect a new president and government. However, after protests by some Assembly members, the Constitutional Court ruled the presidential election unconstitutional, stating that the required quorum for the election had not been met.

⁵ Saferworld (2012), 'Still time to act: Rising conflict fears in Kosovo'.

This political crisis in late 2010 and the first half of 2011 had a negative effect on local perceptions of safety and security, attitudes towards small arms and light weapons, and the trust placed in security and justice providers. Neither did people's general attitudes towards safety and security improve over 2011.⁶ Compared to 2010, there was an increase in the number of people believing renewed violent conflict in Kosovo was more likely in the next five years, and 53.8 per cent said they trusted the Government of Kosovo 'not at all' or 'a little' compared with 41.9 per cent in 2010 and 22.8 per cent in 2009. Trust in the judiciary followed the same negative pattern, with 49 per cent of all respondents trusting it 'not at all' or 'a little' compared with 27.7 per cent in 2010 and 22.3 per cent in 2009. Interestingly, despite these generally negative trends, a positive trend was noticed around perceptions towards firearms in 2011, with people's interest in acquiring firearms lower than in 2010 – although still higher than in 2009.

Anti-EULEX graffiti on the streets of Pristina. The EU mission is viewed as critical for strengthening rule of law in Kosovo but in 2011 only 13 per cent of respondents to a Saferworld survey had some trust in the mission.

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Security actors in Kosovo

Within Kosovo there are many international and national actors working on safety and security issues.

Kosovo Police In 2012, the Kosovo Police (KP) adopted a Community Policing Strategy and Action Plan for 2012–2016. However, challenges remain around the lack of a specific budget – while some of the strategy's activities may be implemented through the general KP budget, there is a risk that many will remain unexecuted for want of resources.

EULEX While the EU's rule of law mission in Kosovo (EULEX) is viewed as critical for strengthening the rule of law, including in the north of Kosovo, EULEX is criticised for performing below expectations and people's levels of trust in EULEX are low. Surveys show that perceptions of trust in EULEX – already low in 2010 – further deteriorated in 2011. Just 13 per cent of survey respondents had some trust in the mission and more than half felt it was making no contribution to enhancing the rule of law in Kosovo.⁷ The fact that most strategic decisions on how EULEX operates are made in Brussels, not Pristina, also presents a challenge to making EULEX responsive to community concerns.

OSCE In cooperation with the Kosovo Police and communities, the OSCE has been establishing Local Public Safety Committees (LPSCs) since 2007 that are intended to provide mechanisms for implementing community policing initiatives and improving community safety at a grassroots level. The LPSCs are new structures with similar training and aims to the Community Safety Action Teams created by ICITAP.

ICITAP Since 2003, the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Programme (ICITAP) has been developing Community Safety Action Teams (CSATs) in cooperation with municipal officials, station commanders and communities. CSATs are intended to create community safety partnerships and improve people's livelihoods. As mentioned, OSCE and ICITAP have developed similar structures with overlapping aims (having once worked under the same umbrella).

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

Kosovo's community security architecture

Since 1999, and particularly after independence, the international community was quick to support efforts to establish various institutions in Kosovo. Collectively, some of these constitute an 'architecture' or 'infrastructure' for community safety in Kosovo.

At the national level, a steering group has been meeting monthly to provide overall oversight of the implementation of Kosovo's community safety strategy. The committee is made up of both national and international actors including the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA), the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Kosovo Police (KP), Saferworld, FIQ, ICITAP, OSCE and UNDP.

Below this, 34 Municipal Community Safety Councils⁸ act as inter-agency consultative bodies on security issues and are chaired by the mayor of that municipality. Different MCSCs work better or worse, often depending on how valuable they are considered by each mayor. However, there are no MCSCs in the north of Kosovo.

Also at the municipal level, ICITAP's Community Safety Action Teams are informal mechanisms that bring together volunteers from communities, the police and municipal employees to discuss community safety issues and work together to address them. CSATs are represented on MCSCs but, similarly, cannot currently operate in the north of Kosovo.

At the grassroots level, Local Public Safety Committees (LPSCs) are supported by the police and OSCE and made up of community members who are given training in facilitation, problem solving and action planning. These LPSCs primarily operate at the local level but are meant to have a collaborative relationship with the MCSCs at the municipal level.

The development of this architecture was at times uncoordinated, with different national and international actors occasionally seeming to compete rather than cooperate with each other. This has resulted in parallel sets of structures, unclear relationships and poor communication between the different levels of the infrastructure.

Programme and key achievements

Saferworld's programme in Kosovo focused on a number of priorities in 2010–13, including promoting public participation in the development of Kosovo's community security-related policies and legislation; supporting the capacity of Kosovo's institutions to implement these policies; supporting the capacity of civil society to engage on safety and security issues; bringing communities and security providers together to discuss safety and security issues directly; and, most recently, working with the extremely divided communities of northern Kosovo.

Promoting public participation in the development of Kosovo's community security-related policies and legislation

Saferworld has taken a dual approach to promoting public participation in the development of Kosovo's laws and policies related to security.

Firstly, Saferworld has advocated for, and helped organise, the direct engagement of communities and civil society groups in consultations on policy and strategy development. For instance, Saferworld and partners used the opportunity of coordinating facilitation meetings for national and international actors working on community security (see below) to build ownership among these actors for a broad consultation process to learn from local experience during the drafting of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Community Safety. Having such a broad group of national and international actors cooperating closely in running the consultation process meant that over 200 people from fifteen different municipalities were able to contribute to it.

This exercise not only ensured that the strategy appropriately reflected the real safety and security issues faced by local people, but also served to inform people about the strategy and helped make implementation of the strategy more effective by getting the community itself on board.

⁸ These are made up of the mayor, KP station commander, religious representatives, representatives of ethnic communities, the chairperson of the municipal committee for communities, a representative for gender equality, the chairperson of the educational parents' council, a Kosovo Security Force representative, an LPSC representative, a CSAT representative, a municipal civilian emergency representative, NGO representatives, local media, the business community and a representative of people with disabilities.

Following the success of this process, when a working group at the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) wanted to revise the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Control and Collection of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Republic of Kosovo the revision was open to a consultation process with different social groups, municipal and central institutions, community safety forums, NGOs and the media. Consultations took place during November 2012 and were organised by Saferworld partner FIQ together with local partner CSOs.

Secondly, Saferworld has provided expert input to strategy development based on our experience working directly with local communities and partners in Kosovo. For instance, Saferworld gave expert advice to working groups on the National Strategy and Action Plan for Community Safety, was invited by the MIA to join the working group on Kosovo's SALW collection strategy, and has contributed to numerous other safety and security policies and laws.

Bringing communities and security providers together to discuss safety and security issues

Saferworld has repeatedly brought together communities and institutions to publicly discuss security concerns, public trust in security institutions, SALW control and issues around community security. Doing so has in many cases led to improved relationships and cooperation between communities, municipal authorities and the police.

For instance, following a number of serious incidents in 2010 – including a student shooting and wounding three fellow students – SALW and school violence emerged as a serious concern for some communities in Kosovo.

In response, Saferworld supported local partners to organise lectures, roundtables, radio/TV debates and workshops in many of the major municipalities of Kosovo. These activities were organised around the theme of 'school safety: searching for a long-term sustainable solution'. They included participants from local and central government, the Kosovo Police, the Centre for Work and Social Welfare, Municipal Community Safety Councils, representatives from schools and universities, student and parent councils and civil society groups. Discussions focused on sharing experiences of school safety initiatives, such as cooperation between professors, students and parents and between the Kosovo Police and school authorities.

A number of recommendations were presented to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education, Kosovo Police and municipal governments, such as implementing a school safety strategy to increase cooperation between teachers/school authorities, parents, students and the police. In turn, the activities led to the prioritisation of school violence by the MCSCs in Shtime/Štimlje, Ferizaj/Uroševac and Hani Elezit. In an interview with local media later that year, the headmaster of the Kuvendi Arberit gymnasium (who is also a member of the MCSC in Ferizaj/Uroševac) reported that the situation had significantly improved and there had been fewer incidents between students.

Supporting the capacity of Kosovo's institutions to implement community security policies

Given the multiplicity of actors working on public safety and security in Kosovo, often with very different mandates and lines of accountability, improving coordination between these different actors was an important part of supporting the capacity of institutions to effectively implement community security policies.

For instance, in 2010–2012 Saferworld facilitated co-ordination meetings to improve communication and exchange between key actors working on community safety including the Community Safety Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government Administration, the Kosovo Police, Kosovo Security Force, the OSCE, UNDP, ICITAP and local and national NGOs.

Volunteers lay markings for a pedestrian crossing as part of a school safety project in Ferizaj/Uroševac. The child's t-shirt bears slogans raising awareness of the dangers of SALW, part of the focus of the campaign.

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Perhaps the most important initiative to come out of these joint meetings was the proposal to review the administrative instruction governing the establishment and functioning of the Municipal Community Safety Councils – the municipal-level consultative bodies set up to help raise awareness of and address crime and other sources of insecurity.

An administrative instruction provides the detailed instructions for how a piece of legislation is to be carried out. Although the MCSCs were mandated by law, it was felt that the existing administrative instruction had some serious flaws, meaning that there was no clarity about how MCSCs should report to the MIA, a lack of incentives for MCSC members to take part, few MCSCs developing action plans (apart from those where civil society was engaging to do so), a lack of action to actually address community safety problems, and too many meetings.

The MIA's division for community safety, along with national and international partners, therefore visited some of the existing MCSCs to assess their performance and canvas people's opinions on how the MCSCs could better address community safety and security needs. Subsequently, an amendment to the administrative instruction was agreed at a joint workshop in 2012 involving the MIA, national and international organisations and MCSC members.

The revised instruction contained provisions to, for instance, reduce the number of meetings to 6 meetings per year, specify how notes of the meetings should be kept and shared with respective ministries, and clarify how MCSCs can develop and implement projects for the benefit of communities.

Working with the MCSCs to support community safety and security

Over the last three years, Saferworld has been supporting MCSCs in municipalities such as Shtime/Štimlje, Ferizaj/Uroševac and Hani Elezit. We believe the new administrative instruction has created a more favourable environment for the engagement of MCSCs with CSOs and communities to address safety and security issues.

The municipality of Shtime/Štimlje is located in southern Kosovo and includes Shtime/Štimlje town and 22 villages. The population is around 28,000 with a majority of Kosovo Albanians, a minority of Kosovo Ashkali residing in the villages of Gjurkoc/Djurkovce and Vojnoc/Vojnovce and a very small number of Kosovo Roma residing in Shtime/Štimlje town.

The municipality of Ferizaj/Uroševac is located in south-eastern Kosovo and includes Ferizaj/Uroševac town and 43 villages. The population is around 110,000 with a majority of Kosovo Albanians, around 3,500 Ashkali and smaller minorities of Roma, Gorani, Bosniaks, Serbs, Egyptians and Turks. Prior to the end of the conflict in 1999, the number of Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Roma living in the municipality was much higher.

The municipality of Hani Elezit is located in south-eastern Kosovo and includes the town of Hani Elezit and 10 surrounding villages. The total population is around 9,000 with the vast majority being Kosovo Albanians and a small number of Kosovo Bosniaks living in Hani Elezit town and the village of Paldenicë/Palidenica.

Together with FIQ and (in Shtime/Štimlje) Initiative for Progress, Saferworld supported the MCSC in each municipality to develop an annual action plan, including a consultation process to ensure the needs and concerns of different societal groups were taken into account.

As a result, each MCSC has identified some safety and security priorities and developed project proposals and work plans to address these priorities. For the first time, the municipal government in Shtime/Štimlje has allocated a budget for over 60 per cent of the overall implementation costs (as matching funds to Saferworld's support), while the municipal government in Hani Elezit is contributing 57 per cent.

The MCSC action plans in Shtime/Štimlje and Hani Elezit include projects to improve security in schools, provide better fire protection, build pedestrian pavements and install street lighting, address the danger from stray dogs, provide security in city parks and tackle domestic violence, among others.

We are now working to support communities and local CSOs to monitor and critically evaluate the implementation of these projects.

Saferworld has supported civil society in Kosovo to engage on safety and security issues. Civil society plays an important role as a 'bridge' between communities and national and international actors.

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Supporting the capacity of civil society to engage on safety and security issues

After the end of war in 1999, civil society in Kosovo took an active role in the democratisation process. However, when it came to the process of developing and strengthening security institutions, both national and international institutions provided limited space for civil society to engage. At the same time, Kosovo's civil society lacked the skills and experience needed to contribute to security sector development.

Kosovo's independence marked a new opportunity for civil society organisations to play a role in the development and oversight of security and justice institutions – in particular, the police, security force, intelligence, customs, prosecution and judiciary. However, deficits in civil society capacity remained and so Saferworld has provided tailored trainings for CSOs, encouraged them to lead community dialogue meetings

with a cross-section of civil society, community members, central and local authorities, and other forms of capacity building.

Building the capacity of CSOs to engage on safety and security issues is important to ensure they can act as a bridge between communities and national and international actors and provide advice on how to make security and SALW control policies more participatory, inclusive and transparent. Given the proliferation of national and international actors working on safety and security in Kosovo, civil society also plays a critical role in helping to join up all these initiatives and institutions. In particular, it often helps ensure the transmission of information and adequate interaction between different levels of Kosovo's community security infrastructure.

Forum for Security

In 2010, Saferworld supported FIQ to establish the Forum for Security, a platform for Kosovo civil society organisations to conduct research, analysis and advocacy for the increased transparency, accountability and inclusiveness of security policy. The Forum for Security also serves as a forum for decision-makers, civil society organisations and community representatives to discuss together SALW and security and justice provision in Kosovo.

To date, the Forum for Security has published six policy analyses focusing on important issues concerning safety and security and SALW control (see 'further reading' below). In 2011–12, the Forum for Security expanded its membership with new CSOs and think tanks such as the Kosovo Law Institute, Institute for Development Policy and Institute for Advanced Studies, and has secured its own funding from donors including the Balkan Trust for Democracy, demonstrating its sustainability independent of Saferworld's support.

Saferworld recently supported the development of a similar network in the north of Kosovo, and plans to connect this with the Forum for Security in the future.

"Forum for Security is a platform which brings together a diverse range of perspectives through which you understand fundamentally the security problems and go beyond current problems by anticipating what is coming. Furthermore, it represents a reliable resource of information for policy-makers in Kosovo and beyond."

Adem Gashi, Executive Director of the Kosovo Law Institute

<http://forumipersiguri.org>

Working with divided communities in north Kosovo

Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality lies approximately 40km north of Prishtinë/Priština and contains one town and 49 villages. Since the 1999 war, the town has been divided along the Ibër/Ibar river. In the south of the town, the overall population is estimated at 110,000 people, predominantly Kosovo Albanian. In the north of the town, there are approximately 20,000 inhabitants, roughly 17,000 of whom are Kosovo Serbs, with the remaining 3,000 including Kosovo Albanians, Bosniaks, Turks, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians and a small Gorani community.

Most Kosovo Serbs in north Kosovo reject the idea of integration into the rest of Kosovo. This is a political issue that runs through almost all aspects of everyday life in north Kosovo. The institutions of Kosovo have little or no legitimacy in the north, and different communities look to different institutions as the legitimate providers of services, including security, meaning the Kosovo Police have limited ability to uphold the rule of law. Violent attacks often target vulnerable populations from both Serbian and Albanian communities, seemingly in an effort to encourage greater ethnic segregation.

Despite these challenges, Saferworld's partner, AKTIV, has established relationships with communities in Mahalla e Boshnjakëve/Bošnjačka Mahala (or 'Bosniac Mahala' in English) – an ethnically mixed neighbourhood in the north of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica town – and used these to establish the Bosniac Mahala Forum (BMF), a space to engage with Kosovo Serbian, Kosovo Albanian, Kosovo Bosniak and Kosovo Turk community members in order to identify and begin to address safety and security concerns.

Saferworld and AKTIV's initial assessment showed that security problems were rarely seen as joint challenges, but instead, that each community more usually saw the others

"Even making a telephone call on a mobile can be seen as a political act in north Kosovo – to some people, whether you're using an Albanian or Serbian signal carrier makes a statement about the institutions you support."

AKTIV staff member

as a threat to their own security. Similarly, there was very little trust in local police, who were often seen as corrupt, ineffective or politicised – and as the legal system of Kosovo is not accepted by many people in the north, there is no judicial system for the police to work with anyway.

Facilitating representatives from different ethnic communities in the north to discuss security together is extremely sensitive, potentially divisive, and therefore needed to be approached in cautious increments. However, through sustained dialogue it was possible to identify some joint interests, particularly around generating or supporting economic activities. Using this as an entry point, Saferworld and AKTIV engaged with Serbian and Albanian community leaders very slowly, talking and building up trust in the project.

Now, the BMF has identified illegal arms possession, shooting and the anti-social behaviour of some youth as their main safety and security concerns, and is in the process of designing action plans to try and address these issues with the support of local CSOs. In the fourteen years since the war, this is the first time that CSOs and communities have engaged in addressing such issues in north Mitrovicë/Mitrovica.

Saferworld's partners in Kosovo



Forum for Civic Initiatives, Prishtinë/Priština www.fiq-fci.org

The Forum for Civic Initiatives (FIQ) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) focusing on the rule of law and working to increase citizen participation in decision-making processes for a just, peaceful and developed Balkan region. FIQ was founded in 2000 to address a variety of urgent needs in post-conflict Kosovo and officially registered as an NGO on January 31, 2001. Since then, FIQ has evolved and expanded its focus to include working to increase the transparency and accountability of the government and strengthening the capacity of civil society through debates, training and grant-making support.



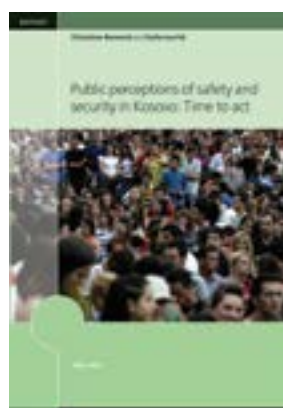
AKTIV, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica North www.ngoaktiv.org

AKTIV is a non-governmental and non-profit organization founded in 2003, based in north Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. AKTIV aims to facilitate and foster processes and activities that contribute to overall socio-economic development and the achievement of a progressive society that nourishes the rights and dignity of each and every woman, child and man, their individuality and their choices.

Further reading



Still time to act: Rising conflict fears in Kosovo (2012)



Time to act: Public perceptions of safety and security in Kosovo (2011)



Creating safer communities: Lessons from South Eastern Europe (2006)

4

Nepal

Addressing violence against women and girls through community security

Context

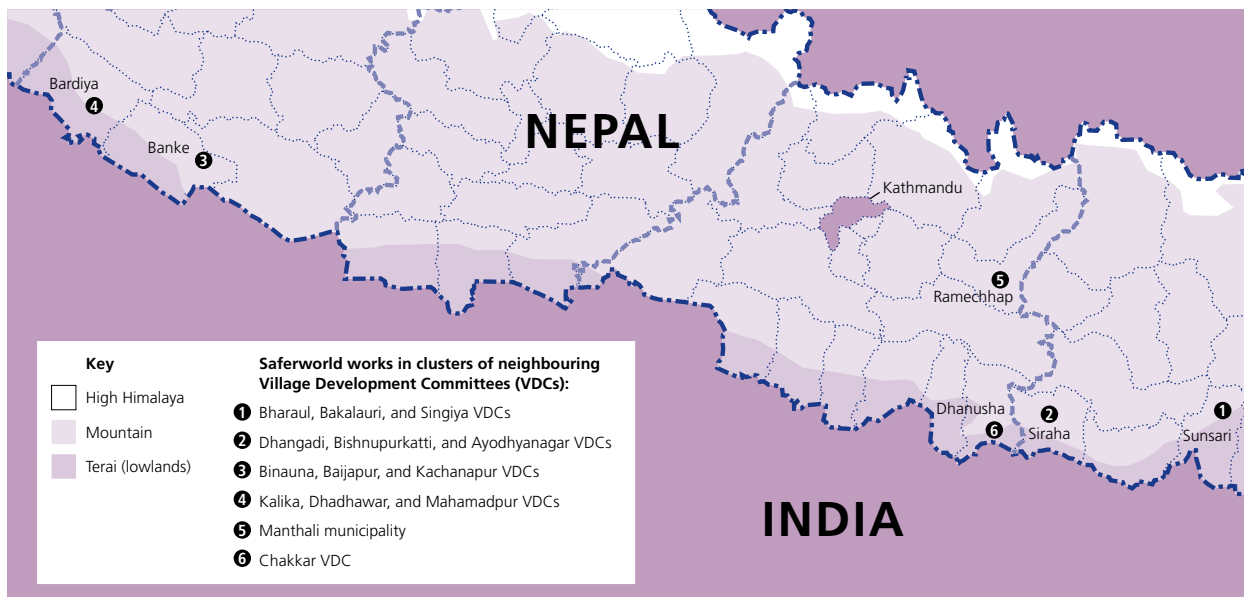
IN 2006 A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE AGREEMENT (CPA) ended a decade-long civil war between Maoists and the government in Nepal and began an ongoing process of political transition. The peace process has achieved much – particularly the discharge, voluntary retirement, and integration of Maoist ex-combatants. However, Nepal hit a major setback in May 2012 when the Constituent Assembly (CA) was dissolved. In early 2013, Nepal's peace process is now at its most fragile stage since the signing of the CPA and people's confidence in political leaders is at its lowest level for some years.

Political deadlock

Although establishing a power-sharing government was a critical component in Nepal's peace agreement, Nepal's national politics have been characterised by frequent government changes and deadlock since 2006. One of the milestones of the peace process, the CA failed to finalise and promulgate a constitution and was dissolved in May 2012, stalling necessary political and economic progress for months.

Several models for establishing a federal system have been presented by the State Restructuring Commission and political parties as part of negotiations around re-drafting Nepal's constitution. These often present conflicting ideas on whether federal states should be demarcated on the basis of territory or ethnicity. Though this issue was a crucial factor leading to the demise of the CA, there has never been a national debate on how these models differ, how they tackle inclusivity or how they would affect people's lives, especially those of marginalised communities. This uncertainty has in turn led to concerns from (and sometimes tensions between) different identity-based groups who fear that a federal system may marginalise them.

There have been no local elections for fifteen years and a multi-party mechanism was put in place to run local development affairs through the District Development Committee. However, the mechanism failed, partly due to corruption and a lack of accountability. Instead, development projects are currently being executed through individual government bureaucrats known as Local Development Officers. Although the formal multi-party mechanism failed, political parties still have strong influence over development work at the district and local level.



This map is intended for illustrative purposes only. Saferworld takes no position on whether this representation is legally or politically valid.

Security challenges

The police were frequently targeted by the Maoist People’s Liberation Army (PLA) during Nepal’s civil war and many police posts were abandoned as a result, especially in remote areas. With donor support, the Nepal Police have been re-establishing some of these posts, but there continues to be an absence of official security providers in many communities.

Political interference in the provision of security and justice services is also widely perceived as high. For example, a high-profile verdict from the Supreme Court which convicted a political party leader on murder charges has not been enforced and the person is still at large at the time of writing. Both community representatives and police complain that political parties frequently use their influence to get supporters who have been arrested released without proper investigation. This has had the effect of both paralysing the police and keeping public perceptions of the rule of law at a low level.

Gender inequality and women's insecurity

Gender inequality and the abuse of women's rights are significant problems in Nepal. Women face greater levels of insecurity than men, especially in terms of gender-based violence (GBV), including domestic violence (DV). However, as women are under-represented in security agencies – and as DV and GBV are often seen as petty cases to be dealt with by the family – it can be very challenging for women to access security and justice services.

At the policy level, Nepal's government has taken a number of measures to improve women's security, including adopting a National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820, passing a Domestic Violence bill, and establishing a Gender-Based Violence Unit within both the Office of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. Gender inequality and gender-based violence have also directly influenced conflict dynamics in Nepal. In a survey of Maoist combatants conducted by Saferworld in Nepal, nearly 20 per cent of female combatants cited the desire to challenge gender inequality and fight for women's rights as their main reason for joining the Maoist rebellion, and nearly 25 per cent joined as a result of sexual abuse and rape by state security forces.⁹

Within the Nepal Police, the Women and Children's Service Centre Directorate has a presence in every district and deals with criminal and civil cases related to women and children, whilst the Women and Children Office, which is under the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, supports women and children to access legal services. However, the implementation of these laws, policies and initiatives is often understaffed and underfunded.

Gender inequality is a significant problem in Nepal and women face greater levels of insecurity than men, including in terms of domestic violence.

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Political sensitivity around NGOs and INGOs working on security

In recent years, some Nepali media and political figures have accused NGOs, INGOs and donors of fuelling identity-based tensions by promoting the inclusion of disadvantaged groups in social, political and economic processes such as decision-making, economic development and education. Such accusations express strong criticism about the involvement of external actors in what are perceived as internal issues and contribute to high levels of sensitivity, especially among central government and senior security actors, around (I)NGOs working on security issues. As a result, the space for civil society, both Nepali and international, to engage on security and justice in Nepal has been reduced, especially at the central level – with a corresponding impact on the strength of recommendations and advocacy possible.

⁹ Saferworld (2010), 'Common ground? Gendered assessment of the needs and concerns of Maoist Army combatants for rehabilitation and integration'.

Female police officers and community members watch a docudrama produced to raise awareness of gender-based violence. Widespread domestic violence in Nepal is compounded by the low number of female police officers, which can make it difficult for women to report crimes.

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Programme and key achievements

Because of the significant security challenges facing women, much of Saferworld's community security programme in Nepal focused on trying to address these issues. However, the approach taken in each of the community security sites in 2010–13 was markedly different – a direct result of lessons learned from past projects and letting the context, and communities themselves, lead the way programming was designed and delivered.

As in Kosovo and Bangladesh, Saferworld's work in Nepal also placed a premium on supporting the development of Nepali civil society groups to address safety and security issues, including around small arms and light weapons.

Saferworld's Nepal programme also grappled with an issue that arises in nearly all of Saferworld's community security programmes around the world: whether and how to integrate economic or livelihoods activities into community security projects.

Finally, as in Bangladesh, Saferworld began the process of scaling up its community security work in Nepal from what were essentially pilot sites towards a larger footprint. Having started with two wards in 2010 – one in Danusha and one in Ramechhap district – Saferworld's Nepal programme is now working in a total of 108 wards across 4 districts in Nepal, covering 3 village development committees (VDCs) in each district.¹⁰

Two approaches to addressing violence against women and girls

Saferworld worked to address gender-based insecurity in both the districts of Ramechhap and Danusha in 2010–12, but communities identified two very different approaches.

Community members in both sites said that security had improved over 2012, though it is hard to ascertain the precise contribution of the community security interventions. In Danusha, for instance, women said that theft and sexual harassment by men had largely stopped. When asked what they thought lay behind this improvement in security they suggested that decreased load-shedding (meaning that there was more electricity and so more lighting in the evening) and a reconstructed police post were likely factors. Men agreed with women that security had improved, saying they had heard of fewer rape cases in the past year and that there were few disputes that could not be resolved through mediation, although further work is needed to verify the details of these claims.

¹⁰ A VDC is a local administrative structure comprising a number of wards.

While it is hard to know how much of this positive change to attribute to the project and how much to other factors – and while we cannot simply suggest that increased female participation in discussions around security has improved women’s security – many female community members said the project had increased their self-confidence and awareness of their rights. As a consequence they said that they would feel more confident in filing a complaint with the police if they felt their rights had been violated.

Mobilising youth to raise awareness about domestic violence in Ramechap

In Manthali VDC in Ramechap district, the central component of the action plan developed by the community involved providing local youth with IT classes to encourage them away from theft and drug-taking. The community was supported to rebuild the roof of a disused community centre to use as a classroom, provide a salary for an IT teacher and purchase 5 computers and an electrical inverter.

Building on the success of these initial activities, members of the community security working group (CSWG) wanted to work with young people to engage them in raising awareness of domestic and gender-based violence and the risks of drug and alcohol abuse among the wider community.

Young people were provided with training on issues around gender and security as well as relevant laws. They were then supported to write, direct and act in street shows that dramatised key messages on issues such as domestic violence, drug abuse, ethnic discrimination and human trafficking. As performances took place on the major market day, they attracted spectators not only from Manthali but from all over Ramechap district. Similarly, an art competition was held in four schools to raise awareness about domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse in a way appropriate for children. Finally, the young people who took part in all these activities were then mobilised to conduct ‘door-to-door’ advocacy – delivering leaflets and talking to over 450 householders.

Empowering women to address their security needs in Danusha

In Chakkar VDC in Danusha, the community’s action plan involved providing toilets so that women would no longer have to relieve themselves outside, where they were frequently victims of harassment and abuse.

The original plan had called for the construction of public toilets. However, after considering the issue further, community members decided that such communal toilets would not address security concerns as they would simply ensure that anyone wanting to harass women would know where they would be going to the toilet.

Project partners therefore agreed to reconfigure the budget and help build toilets in individual households. This was more expensive and so only 150 households would be able to benefit. The CSWG drew up a list of the most vulnerable people in the community who would receive the toilets. In doing so, they ensured that tensions created by choice of recipients were mitigated. While project funds provided the toilet seat and concrete rings, community members agreed to build the housings around the toilets themselves.

The project was welcomed by district-level stakeholders, including the police. However, national political developments prevented district police from continuing to engage with the project, meaning the project’s intention to work with security providers to develop a broader gender-sensitive approach to security provision had to be abandoned.

However, within the community, the project seems to have had a strong impact on the participation of women in community discussions. Whereas in the early stages of the project men and women refused to sit together in the same space, now male and female members of the CSWG sit together and participate openly in discussions about the community’s activity plan. Women participants in focus group discussions say they now feel confident enough to “fight for our rights with authorities”.

Establishing a dialogue mechanism at the community level

One of the key objectives of the project is to improve relationships between government agencies, especially the police, and communities. Local dialogue mechanisms, which the project refers to as CSWGs, are intended to increase this level of interaction. Many strategies have been put in place to try and make these mechanisms as effective and sustainable as possible. These include linking them with local government structures so as to secure their buy-in; ensuring the groups are as inclusive as possible with representation of women, youth, men, and members of marginalised groups; establishing community ownership of the mechanism by ensuring their active participation in the design and implementation of action plans; and promoting a process-based approach rather than organising one-off events.

These local dialogue mechanisms have begun bearing fruit. For instance, in several VDCs the village council has ratified the action plan of the CSWG, including it in its own planning process and providing additional funds to increase the scale of activities the communities plan to implement. The CSWG of Singhiya VDC advocated for appointing female police officers in their local police post to create an environment where women would be more comfortable in approaching the police and eventually contribute to addressing women's security needs, including but not limited to GBV.¹¹ The District Police Office of Sunsari heard their request and appointed two female police officers in the local police post. Similarly, in Kachanpur VDC the CSWG is advocating for the establishment of a police post in their locality. It has been able to allocate land, a building, and basic furniture and other goods for the post in collaboration with the VDC, and also secured an assurance from the District Police Office of Banke that they will provide police personnel for the post.

Supporting the capacity of civil society

In 2010–13 Saferworld supported a network of some 40 NGOs, government agencies, independent researchers and UN agencies working on SALW control and armed violence reduction (AVR) called the Nepal Armed Violence Reduction Group.

In February 2012 the group organised a workshop attended by the media, Ministry of Home Affairs and Armed Police Force to share information on the availability of SALW in Nepal, national legal provisions and the global context for SALW control. Participants also developed plans for reaching out to civil society and government actors in Siraha and Dhangadi districts.

Saferworld also supported the group to conduct a workshop looking at the challenges to the successful implementation of the UN's Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and to produce an analytical report comparing NGO data sets on armed violence in Nepal.

These activities have enabled members of the Working Group to remain actively involved in discussions on SALW control and AVR. For instance, both the group and some individual members have been included as stakeholders in an AVR programme led by UNDP.

To bring security challenges related to gender and security to the attention of district-level and eventually national authorities, Saferworld supported civil society organisations to set up advocacy platforms at the district level, which received capacity building on how to advocate in a strategic way for more gender-responsive security provision. This training has enabled civil society organisations to organise coordinated advocacy activities and to engage constructively with security providers. There is emerging evidence that this is improving access to security providers for cases related to violence against women and girls (VAWG) and GBV.

¹¹ Saferworld recognises that the recruitment of female police officers is not the only thing that is needed to meet women's security needs, and also works to encourage change among male police officers and within the police as an institution. Similarly, Saferworld recognises that the role of female police officers is not limited to meeting women's security needs.

Connecting 'security' with 'development' work

A key plank in Saferworld's approach to community security is supporting communities to articulate the issues that make them feel unsafe or insecure from their own perspective. Often this means that communities identify a complex mix of issues, some of which may be obviously 'security' issues (such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or SALW) whilst others may look like more traditional 'development' issues. Frequently, poor communities identify issues around economic development or natural resource management as 'security' concerns, such as in one VDC in Bardiya district where the community said that they feared elephants attacking their crops and river floods eroding their land.

'Human security' can be a notoriously expansive concept and this can present a challenge to organisations and donors whose focus is improving community-level security – what issues constitute 'security' concerns, and how should an organisation respond to problems that lie outside its expertise? It is important, however, not to dismiss 'developmental' issues that communities identify if they are genuinely problems that make communities feel unsafe: perceptions of insecurity may well be linked to poverty, lack of employment, poor infrastructure or lack of service provision, and empowering communities to articulate their own security concerns is a demand-side contribution to improving the responsiveness of security provision.

In response to this challenge, Saferworld's Nepal programme has begun to develop an approach that more explicitly integrates economic aspects into community security work – for example, identifying service providers that can provide individuals at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violence with income-generation or micro-enterprise opportunities.

Assessments carried out over the course of the project confirmed that women and youth were more vulnerable to insecurities because they lacked income or employment opportunities. Women were also more vulnerable to domestic violence if they were economically dependent on their husband and his family – both because they were seen as an economic burden, and because it was then more difficult for them to leave if they were being abused. Young people, especially young men, who were unemployed and had little vision or hope for their future were at increased risk of drug use and criminal behaviour.

Saferworld has therefore begun to integrate a small micro-enterprise development component into its community safety work, following the Micro-Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP)¹² model and implemented by MEDEP's district-level partners. Unlike poverty-reduction projects, whose beneficiaries are selected based on mainly economic criteria, the selection criteria for participants in the community safety micro-enterprise component are based on security needs, focusing on community members who are most vulnerable to dynamics such as domestic violence or the perpetration of petty crime. A total of 84 people from the 12 community sites will receive support, including motivation and skills training and links to markets and loan opportunities, in order to help them establish micro-enterprises to provide a living.

Working to scale

Building on our experiences from Ramechhap and Danusha, Saferworld and partners have started to implement community security projects on a larger scale, again with a focus on gender and security. Work is currently being implemented in 12 VDCs (each VDC including 9 wards¹³) across Banke, Bardiya, Sunsari and Siraha districts. A clustered approach is being followed so that VDCs adjoin each other. This has proven beneficial, as activities in different VDCs are complementary to each other and key district and local government officials have a bigger interest in actively supporting the project as it reaches more people.

¹² MEDEP is a joint initiative between UNDP and the Government of Nepal and has been in operation for 14 years.

¹³ A ward is an administrative unit corresponding to a community neighbourhood.

In thinking through the selection of these sites, the scoping process focused on finding locations where there were significant safety and security issues, but also enough opportunities for implementing a community security project. These include communities, local government and security providers interested in addressing local security issues, as well as the absence of factors that might be an obstacle to working on local security, such as extreme poverty.¹⁴

Learning from past experience, more time was allocated for the trust-building phase and gaining buy-in and systematic involvement of government stakeholders (such as the Chief Development Officer, District Superintendent of Police, VDC secretary and officer in charge of the local police post) right from the start. As a result, the projects have so far been well received and the police are using the opportunity to reach out to the communities. This trust-building is absolutely key for success, but extremely labour and time-intensive.

Saferworld's partners in Nepal



IHRICON
www.ihricon.org.np

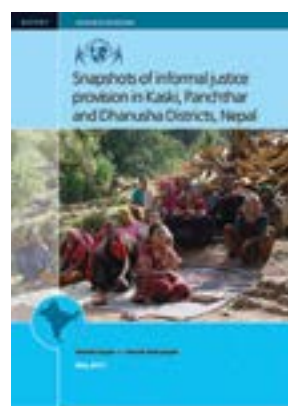
The Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal (IHRICON) is a non-profit, non-political human rights NGO established by a group of media professionals and is actively involved in human rights monitoring, reporting and advocacy. IHRICON conducts in-depth investigations and research along with implementing innovative and high-profile advocacy campaigns that endeavour to bring positive changes to human rights-related issues.



INSEC
www.insec.org.np

Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) was founded in 1988 with the objective of protecting the rights of people engaged in informal sectors. It works for the promotion of policies, institutions and capacity that contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights and democratic freedom. Its core competency areas are organizing campaigns, victims' reparation, reconciliation, awareness raising and education programmes for making people capable of asserting their civil and political rights, and documentation of the human rights situation in the country and its dissemination in national and international arenas. INSEC works with disadvantaged groups such as agricultural labour, conflict victims, underprivileged women, and socially discriminated people, including Dalits and children.

Further reading



Snapshots of informal justice provision in Kaski, Panchthar and Dhanusha Districts, Nepal (2011)



A safer future: Tracking security improvements in an uncertain context (2011)



Women and security in Nepal (docu-drama)
www.saferworld.org.uk/news-and-views/case-study/16

¹⁴ Though working on community security is not impossible in such contexts of extreme poverty, it would require an approach that closely coordinates addressing basic development and humanitarian needs alongside security and safety concerns – something that was felt to be beyond the capacity of this particular programme.

5

Bangladesh

The world's largest NGO takes on community security

Context

BANGLADESH HAS NOT SUFFERED OPEN WARFARE since the country was created in 1971 after a bloody war of independence from Pakistan. Nevertheless, it is a country that has serious societal fault lines and tensions which can result in security threats at many different levels.

Security and economic situation

At the national level, ongoing tensions in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the threat posed by political and religious extremist groups, human trafficking and smuggling of drugs and small arms are all of concern.

It is at the community level, however, that some of the most pervasive threats to human security are apparent. These relate both to freedom from fear and from want, with the two often interlinked. Communities face issues including violent crime, gender-based violence, political violence, insecurity arising from drug and alcohol abuse and, in some areas, a high incidence of child abuse and abduction. High levels of poverty and unemployment are seen as contributing to many of these challenges, while physical insecurities at the community level also have the potential to undermine economic and social development.

Large numbers of unemployed graduates, poor student facilities and the co-option of student politics by national political parties have contributed to university campuses repeatedly becoming centres of violent unrest. They threaten to remain so unless the underlying causes of violence, including poverty and unemployment, closely linked to wider macro-economic issues, as well as student-specific issues such as improved facilities and better security on campuses are addressed.

More widely, the rising cost of living, unemployment and worsening economic conditions could result in dire conditions for the estimated 30 per cent of the population who live below the national poverty line.¹⁵ In addition, those living on or just above the poverty line could be pushed below it for the same reasons.

¹⁵ Most recent World Bank estimate from 2010 (see <http://data.worldbank.org/country/bangladesh>).



These maps are intended for illustrative purposes only. Saferworld takes no position on whether this representation is legally or politically valid.

Key

- ① Saferworld and ChangeMaker pilot site in Kamrangirchar slum, Dhaka
- ② Saferworld and BRAC pilot sites in Rashidabad, Bhatgoan and Hajirgol villages, Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila

Since 2012, Saferworld and BRAC have established community security sites in the following locations:

- ③ Kanaipur Union, Faridpur Sadar Upazila
- ④ Radhaganj and Suagram Unions, Kotalipara Upazila
- ⑤ Jhaudanga and Labsa Unions, Satkhira Sadar Upazila
- ⑥ Keshabpur and Trimohini Unions, Keshabpur Upazila
- ⑦ Kachua and Maghia Unions, Kachua Upazila

Political crisis

At present, Bangladesh is facing a political crisis resulting from the abolition in 2011 of the constitutional provision to establish a non-party caretaker government (CTG) to oversee parliamentary elections. The main opposition party has announced its decision not to participate in the 2014 parliamentary elections in the absence of a CTG.

In the run-up to elections in 2014, this continued political impasse is likely to have a wider impact on the provision of security, with ongoing *hartals* (strikes and other forms of civil disobedience, often violent), armed violence between political rivals including student political bodies, and politically motivated arrests continuing to cause public disorder. In 2013, the sentencing of some accused of war crimes during the war of 1971 has resulted in ongoing tensions and violence across the country, some of which has been religiously motivated.

Local authorities and security providers

In theory, local government structures are separate from national politics. The primary level of local government is the *union parishad* (UP), each of which consists of several wards. Unions are grouped into *upazila* (sub-districts) and then districts, but there are no elected bodies at these purely administrative levels.

However, in practice UP elections and politics reflect the national contest, so that when a new government comes to power, there is often turnover at the UP level. This can mean programmes stuck in limbo, policies reversed, or even acts of violence directed at previous local political leaders.

The primary state security provider at the community level is the Bangladesh Police. Since 2005, within the framework of a national Police Reform Programme (PRP) there have been attempts to develop the police into a modern, consent-based service. However, in 2010 only 13 per cent of respondents to a nationwide survey were aware that police reform was being implemented.¹⁶

One aspect of the PRP is a community policing strategy, which includes setting up community policing forums in model *thanas* (police stations) to help police engage with community concerns.

Programme and key achievements

Saferworld and partners ran community security sites in six locations across Bangladesh, three urban and three rural. With BRAC we worked in the villages of Rashidabad, Bhatgaon and Hajirgol in the Kishoreganj Sadar *upazila* of Kishoreganj district. With ChangeMaker we worked in wards 2, 3 and 5 of the urban Kamrangirchar slum in Dhaka.

Similarly to Nepal, our work in Bangladesh focused heavily on violence against women and girls, especially in rural areas, and young people – both as drivers of insecurity and potential agents of change.

Following the success of these pilots, Saferworld and BRAC have embarked on a significant scale-up of BRAC's community security work.

Engaging youth to address insecurity

In Kamrangirchar slum, Dhaka, undereducated and unemployed youth (particularly young men) can pose a challenge to community-level safety and security, often being involved in criminal or other antisocial behaviour.

Working from the analysis that many young people became involved in these activities because they were frustrated by a lack of economic opportunity, a variety of initiatives

¹⁶ Saferworld (2010), 'Security provision in Bangladesh: A public perceptions survey'.

Two members of the Action Committee supported by Saferworld and ChangeMaker in Kamrangirchar slum. The Action Committee has helped set up day care facilities for children of working parents and a youth-led Community Safety and Security Information Centre.

© SAFERWORLD



“Yes, police are always like police... it’s sometimes difficult to handle them. But if we consider the way it was previously... now, because of this kind of crime reporting, they’re coming to us and we’re going to them. Earlier we were trying to avoid the police and they did not like us – but the relationship has built up and now they’re coming here and taking some information.”

Youth member of the Community Safety and Security Information Centre

were established to provide opportunities, organised through a community youth group set up by the project.

Firstly, ChangeMaker received donations in kind from local businesses in order to set up a small education and employment advice centre, where young people were given access to training in basic information, communication and technology skills, much in demand in the Bangladeshi labour market. Through this centre, information was also provided to young people about locating and applying for job opportunities.

Having such a facility both incentivised young people to engage with the project and also helped to begin reducing the youth unemployment that was one driver of insecurity in Kamrangirchar. However, the project went a step further and, having found a way to encourage young people to participate in the project, also looked to engage young people in helping to directly improve community-level security.

For example, the youth group established and manages a Community Safety and Security Information Centre running a crime monitoring project for the area. Through this, young people speak to victims and record details of local crimes, most of which would never be reported to the police due to the low levels of trust between police and communities. A summary of this information, detailing the types of crime that are most prevalent and where and when they tend to occur, is shared with the police to improve communication and help them target their crime prevention efforts. This project has been well received by local police as helping them better direct their resources. The approach also helps the community take ownership of their own problems by working alongside the police to identify and tackle crime.

Additionally, the Community Safety and Security Information Centre provides information to local people about how to report crimes to the police, and the procedures they need to follow to be able to access the formal justice system – something that local residents often do not know how to do. They also accompany people to the police station to help ensure that community members receive fair treatment. Altogether, these activities have helped increase trust between the police and the community.

Dhaka's Kamrangirchar slum is on an island in the river Buriganga. It is densely populated with over 1 million inhabitants but basic services are lacking.

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Kamrangirchar slum

Kamrangirchar is an island in the river Buriganga, separated by a narrow channel from the old centre of Dhaka. Just 25 years ago, Kamrangirchar was home only to a small farming community growing food for sale in Dhaka's markets. However, it is now extremely densely populated with over 1 million inhabitants.

This huge growth in population has been the result of large numbers of people leaving impoverished rural communities to seek work in Dhaka. As a result there is a significant divide in Kamrangirchar between 'locals' whose families have been here for generations and who own most of the land, and 'outsiders', more recent arrivals, usually poorer, who comprise the roughly 80 per cent of the population who are slum dwellers.

A large proportion of these outsiders are transient – some will eventually move on to a different slum, or make money and move to a better neighbourhood, whilst new arrivals from the countryside fill their spaces. Most residents of Kamrangirchar work in Dhaka itself, although the area is also home to several small factories and workshops.

Basic services are lacking in Kamrangirchar – clean water, sewerage, healthcare and good quality housing are all in extremely short supply. Educational opportunities are also limited; although the area does have several schools, only the one run by BRAC is free, which means that many families cannot afford to educate all their children all of the time.

Police coverage of the area is also minimal. In 2010, only one police station, with just nine beat-level officers, covered 750,000 people. A high proportion of the population in Kamrangirchar are in some way involved in crime or illegal activity (for example many criminals pay more respectable families a small fee to hide their firearms). Criminal syndicates and *mastaan* (musclemen) are powerful and this contributes to sometimes violent local politics.

Improving livelihoods by addressing security concerns

The cost of living is expensive in Dhaka, even in a slum. Many families in Kamrangirchar need the earnings of both parents to survive and the children of these working families are often left alone while their parents are at work. But Kamrangirchar is a dangerous place and these children are at risk of injury, abduction and exploitation. So another issue the community prioritised was the safety of these children.

After developing an action plan with the community, ChangeMaker rented a building in Kamrangirchar and set up a day care centre for children of working parents. Parents pay a small fee of Tk 10 per day for use of the centre. This arrangement was agreed by ChangeMaker and the parents in order to help make the centre more sustainable and increase parents' ownership of the project. However the centre is not entirely self-sufficient and still relies on some donor funding.

In 2010, only one police station, with just nine beat level officers, served 750,000 people in Kamrangirchar slum, Dhaka.

© SAFERWORLD



ChangeMaker carries out the day-to-day management of the centre, with a small staff of local people to care for the children. Strategic direction and key decisions, such as the level of user fees, are the responsibility of the community action committee, who visit the centre regularly to monitor the care provided to children.

The centre keeps local children safe, but also provides some basic education, regular meals and visits from a doctor, who provides regular health checks on a voluntary basis. The centre caters for children aged between one and five years old, and has space for around 45–50 children.

The centre has proved extremely popular in Kamrangirchar with parents reporting both an increase in their income and improvements in the well-being of their children. Unfortunately, Saferworld and ChangeMaker could not find a way to make the centre self-sustaining¹⁷ and with the end of project funding the continuation of the centre is under threat, raising significant questions about how best to ensure sustainability strategies are an explicit part of community security interventions.

Using the Child Safety Centre

The sight of parents riding rickshaws through the streets of Kamrangirchar broadcasting details of missing children through a megaphone is not uncommon. So when 'Sheuli' first came to Kamrangirchar, her new neighbours told her "take special care of children, because they tend to disappear within a blink of an eye."

After one year, Sheuli realised she was pregnant and had to give up her Tk 500 per month (roughly US\$6.50) cleaning job. After their son Shopon was born, Sheuli and her husband desperately needed Sheuli's income but were afraid to leave Shopon alone.

But facing mounting financial pressures, when Shopon was three years old Sheuli went out to look for work. When she returned a couple of hours later she found Shopon missing. A neighbour said he had seen two strangers talking with Shopon and giving him chocolates.

Fortunately Shopon was later found in the Dhanmondi area of Dhaka where he was being used to help beg for money. But the incident made Sheuli abandon the idea of work, a serious financial blow to the family.

In January 2011, Sheuli heard about the ChangeMaker Child Safety Centre from a neighbour, and after an evaluation the centre admitted Shopon. Sheuli now has three household jobs while Shopon has a safe and secure environment to spend the day in. Sheuli's monthly income is now around Tk 2000.

"It is hard to believe how an apparently simple intervention can help the community in such a powerful way."

'Sheuli', parent of child using ChangeMaker Child Safety and Security Centre

(Adapted from ChangeMaker case study 'Coping with Child Insecurity and Livelihood')

¹⁷ Although ChangeMaker approached local authorities, they have extremely limited funds and were already overstretched.

Tackling 'eve teasing'

'Eve teasing'¹⁸ (*jouno hoirani*) is a form of sexual harassment common in many parts of Bangladesh. In Kishoreganj it often takes the form of small groups of young men who wait in isolated spots and harass young women along the routes they walk to and from school or their workplace.

The action committees, youth groups and *polli shomaj* (village-level women's committees) set up by BRAC across Bangladesh carried out public events and small group discussions to raise awareness in their communities of the negative consequences of sexual harassment, as well as gambling and drug abuse. This included highlighting the links to violence, theft and girls dropping out of school, as well as the relevant legal consequences, such as fines and short prison terms.

This awareness raising was supported by intensive training provided by BRAC which helped committee members develop a better understanding of the issues as well as the skills needed to explain these to others. This has also enabled community members to move beyond the original action plan, and begin raising awareness of additional issues, such as dowry-related domestic abuse.

Awareness-raising discussions were sometimes accompanied by performances by BRAC's popular theatre group of local people. These take the form of a short play dramatising key issues, such as domestic violence, and include audience participation at key points. For example, when a character has to make an important decision in the play, they will ask the audience what to do. This helps the community to explore the issues, for example discussing the importance of addressing problems together, rather than personalising the issue. It also provides a forum to discuss sensitive issues in a manner and environment community members are comfortable with.

As well as raising awareness, the action committees, youth groups and *polli shomaj* directly challenged sexual harassment when it occurred. In Hajirgol, for example, the peer-to-peer approach was very effective, with female members of the youth group regularly going *en masse* to speak to men who sexually harass girls, to explain the consequences and persuade them to stop.

As spots where women bathed were also prime targets for harassment, the action committee and *polli shomaj* in Hajirgol worked to mobilise the wider community to set up bathing shelters. People contributed labour and building materials, or food for those carrying out the work. The women of the village identified a total of six locations along the river Narsunda where shelters would be useful. The community built bamboo shelters at all six locations, which are removed during the dry season and replaced during the rains, when the river is used for bathing.

The action committees, youth groups and *polli shomaj* also worked with the police to establish 'crime maps' monitoring and recording the locations where by men would often wait to harass women. In turn, the police have been able to use this information to direct foot patrols and on occasion prevent such harassment from taking place. The communities keep these maps up to date as patterns of harassment change.

Kishoreganj

Kishoreganj district is a predominantly rural area about 150km north-east of Dhaka. Outside the main town, also called Kishoreganj, the district consists of densely packed villages and farmland – rice paddies, orchards, fish ponds and fields of other crops. Most people's livelihoods rely on agriculture.

The population is almost entirely Muslim, with small Hindu and Christian minorities. The level of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy is high. Neither the local government nor NGOs had any history of working on community security issues in Kishoreganj. However, in common with many areas of Bangladesh, the UNDP-backed Police Reform Programme established community

¹⁸ The term 'eve teasing' is controversial because it can appear to trivialise a significant problem. In Bangladesh, this form of sexual harassment often leads to serious consequences such as girls dropping out of school, marrying young or even committing suicide. Saferworld uses the term 'sexual harassment' rather than eve teasing, though we recognise that this term is often used by community members.

policing forums throughout the district in 2008–9. These were intended to help address local safety and security issues. Despite some successes elsewhere, community members in the project sites felt that these forums were not very effective.

Hajirgol is a village of about 8,500 people in ward 2 of Maijkapon union, about 5km from Kishoreganj town. It is relatively poor, and with a literacy rate of 28 per cent, education is below average for the district.

Rashidabad and Bhatgaon are somewhat better off, with good quality roads and agricultural land and higher levels of education and literacy – the large number of girls attending school is particularly notable. Rashidabad has a population of around 8,000 while Bhatgaon is a little smaller at around 5,000. They are neighbouring villages, in wards 6 and 2 of Rashidabad union respectively, situated about 7km from Kishoreganj town.

Challenging gambling, drug and alcohol abuse

Gambling and drug and alcohol use were prevalent in all three communities. In a context of extreme poverty, gambling and drug/alcohol use quickly use up limited income, and domestic violence and theft are often a direct result. The most common drugs are cannabis and illicit locally distilled alcohol. Community members felt that police did not always take strong action against local criminals, and gambling and the drug trade are often protected by members of the local elite or politicians who are profiting from these activities.

In Bhatgaon, the *polli shomaj* approached gamblers and drug dealers to explain to them why they needed to stop those activities. Some of their members had challenged drug dealers in this way in the past and had been threatened with violence. However, working as a group has made them more confident and their interventions more effective. Such efforts are also enabled by the confidence that community members gained from participating in BRAC training sessions.

Communications with the police were established through the UP and *dophadors* (village-based police heads), as well as through BRAC's existing relationship with the local police stations. The police were invited to awareness-raising events to explain the legal consequences of activities such as sexual harassment and send a message that such activities were unacceptable. The police also agreed to conduct more regular inspections of key locations for gambling and drug abuse.

As part of the community security project, all three villages had decided to construct community safety and security centres to facilitate community security work. The centres were intended to provide a place for meetings of the action committee, youth group and *polli shomaj*, as well as gatherings of the wider community. They were also intended to provide a recreational space for young people to provide an alternative to sexual harassment, drug use and gambling.

The openings of these centres also provided an opportunity to help build relationships with the police and reinforce project goals. For instance, in 2009, the District Superintendent of Police attended the inauguration of the Hajirgol community centre. His public expression of support for the community security initiative and promise of police assistance was an important factor in the project's success (see interview with BRAC staff member below) and police still visit the three villages more often than they used to.

A member of the youth action committee in Bhatgaon stands with two community youths previously involved in drug abuse and gambling. Through the community security project they developed livelihoods and now assist the community to address others' drug abuse and gambling.

© SAFERWORLD



Scaling up BRAC's community security interventions

Based on the success of our work in 2010–13, Saferworld and BRAC are now scaling up our community security work to 16 sites across Bangladesh. The uptake of a community approach to security from BRAC is significant for two reasons.

Firstly, although Bangladesh is well served by development interventions and community-level insecurity is recognised as a significant problem across Bangladesh which undermines efforts to combat the country's serious levels of poverty, there are at present very few, if any, NGOs working on security issues.

Secondly, BRAC is an extremely large national NGO, employing over 100,000 people working in around 70,000 villages and reaching around three-quarters of the entire population of Bangladesh.¹⁹ If BRAC adopts a community security approach in its programming, the potential gains to community level security would be significant.

Saferworld and BRAC have recently begun to deepen a joint vision of community security in Bangladesh as part of developing this larger-scale community security work.

Firstly, based on the lessons we have learned, we have recognised the need for a more robust and sophisticated method for understanding and measuring the changes resulting from our community security interventions. Together, we have been developing an approach to monitoring that attempts to understand change from the perspective of community members themselves, and to involve them in the setting and monitoring of relevant indicators. We have also been developing a broader range of methodologies for capturing and communicating these changes.

Reflecting on our experience in 2010–13, we have also recognised the importance of working at different levels of Bangladesh's governance and security structures – for instance, ensuring that local administrators and police officers are empowered to respond to community concerns by higher levels of their organisational hierarchies. Although there was a tacit understanding of this within BRAC already, especially among field and district staff, we have worked to ensure this becomes a more explicit and deliberate component of programme strategy.

Finally, there is more that can be done to develop stronger connections between the field level work and national (and internationally supported) policy or institutional

¹⁹ Figures taken from BRAC website in March 2013.

reform processes. For example, efforts have been made to engage with national level stakeholders such as Ministry of Home Affairs officials and senior level police through go-and-see visits, experience sharing workshops and one-to-one meetings. Nevertheless, more can be done to link the community security initiative with the Police Reform Programme, especially its community policing and gender sensitive policing strands. BRAC and Saferworld will continue to strengthen these linkages and are therefore investigating the best ways to ensure that the evidence and learning generated from future community-level engagements is able to inform national level processes.

Training BRAC field staff in Faridpur to conduct focus group discussions with communities on safety and security.

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"... safety and security, this is actually why the community committee continues to exist and they continue with the work because they have ownership of the issues."

BRAC District Manager

BRAC's experience implementing community security

The BRAC District Manager who managed the community security work in Kishoreganj is now involved in scaling up BRAC's community security work across Bangladesh. Here he reflects on his experience running a community security programme.

It takes time and regular communication to get to know the community ... they see me now not as the employee of BRAC but as 'our' person. But it's very time-intensive – I covered four villages in three wards.

At first we did not get any help from the police. Initially we went to the officer in charge and he told us, regarding bathing problems, "There are beautiful women taking baths outside their home and it is on the roadside so people will see ... what is the problem? Security concerns are not your problem – we are doing that, so why are you here, what are you doing?"

When we failed to get support from the officer in charge, then I communicated with the superintendent of police at the district level. I had one channel, a personal connection, and got an appointment through him. The superintendent had just come back from a mission abroad and he had a very positive attitude when I briefed him on this work.

He asked, "What kind of support do you need?" And I told him about the problems we were having with the officer in charge. The superintendent then called the officer in charge and said, "OK, I'm sending this person so will you please talk to him and see what they're doing?"

When I went back to the officer in charge he was waiting with some chairs and we sat together and discussed and he ordered some sweets, and then he informed his community policing unit and they organised a huge open day in front of the thana and introduced me and the committee publicly and gave us his support.

Afterwards we took him to the local community. Lots of people came to talk to him and in the meeting he gave his telephone number and said, "If you have any problem, please call me." So gradually the community developed a relationship with the officer in charge.

Involving the polli shomaj was important too. Although they're established by BRAC, it is a free organisation – there is no kind of domination by BRAC, they're community-based things. So they have a good relation with the community as well as with BRAC, which is important.

The polli shomaj have legitimacy and can lead and facilitate processes ... they motivate people. There was an example when the community was taking action against gambling and drug use and the people involved in those activities were trying to stop the community security work. The polli shomaj took action to mobilise all of the community members and organised a demonstration to show their support, which gave people confidence.

Even though the funding stopped a year ago, the action committees are still going as this is the community's felt needs. This issue of safety and security, this is actually why the community committee continues to exist and they continue with the work because they have ownership of the issues. But the problem is that the action committees are not working as well as they could because they need motivation ... still, they are there, they're addressing issues, but not at the expected level.

If we did something differently next time ... through community safety and security we are providing some grants – but the grants should be not only BRAC and Saferworld but also the community should contribute something of their own money. This will mean even more ownership.

Saferworld's partners in Bangladesh



ChangeMaker
www.changemaker-bd.org

ChangeMaker is a non-governmental voluntary development organisation which aims to develop the knowledge, capacity and access to services of marginalised people, especially women and children. Founded in 2000, ChangeMaker has expertise in developing markets for small enterprises, enhancing the capacity of NGOs and local government, promoting alternative energy and environmental technologies, empowering women, promoting good governance, environmental conservation, information/communication technology and promoting corporate social responsibility.



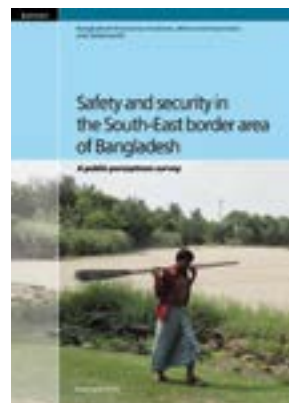
BRAC
www.brac.net

BRAC is a development organisation dedicated to alleviating poverty by empowering the poor to bring about change in their own lives. Founded in Bangladesh in 1972, over the course of its evolution BRAC has become established as a pioneer in recognising and tackling the many different realities of poverty.

BRAC has learned over time to find the poorest of the poor – who are destitute and outside the reach of most NGOs – and help them rebuild their lives from scratch and achieve financial independence.

BRAC works to combat poverty in 70,000 villages and 2,000 slums, reaching three-quarters of the entire population with an integrated package of services for rural and urban communities. BRAC employs more than 100,000 people – microfinance officers, teachers, health staff and enterprise managers – to be on the very doorstep of the poorest families, making services accessible, relevant and adaptable.

Further reading



Safety and security in the South-East border area of Bangladesh: A public perceptions survey (2013)



Safety and security in North Bengal: A youth perception survey (2012)



Creating safer communities in Bangladesh (2011)

6

Lessons learned

LEARNING LESSONS CAN BE A DIFFICULT EXERCISE and it is easy to confuse merely *identifying* lessons with actually *learning* them – doing things differently as a result of what has been done before.

Saferworld recognises the need to ensure we share experiences of community security work across our different regional and thematic teams and work to absorb relevant lessons into future country programming and institutional policies. Responding to this goal, in 2012 Saferworld established an internal learning and practice group to pool cross-organisational knowledge about effective community security approaches and steer efforts to enhance the impact of our programming, policy and advocacy.

Lessons learned as a result of this ongoing drive have since informed our approach to promoting community security in fragile states. Here, we present some of the key lessons we have drawn from three of the countries in which we work – Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh – which we think will be most relevant for others engaged in security and justice provision in conflict-affected areas. Lessons should also operate as a resource for organisations interested in systematically tracking evidence about the implementation and impact of community security approaches to security, a process Saferworld will be seeking to further strengthen in coming years.

The following chapters look at lessons in four key areas: results; the importance of civil society; community security's role within an integrated approach to security and justice; and implementing community security programming.

Results

This report does not claim to be a rigorous evaluation of Saferworld's community security work in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh. However, given the welcome current focus among donors on demonstrating tangible results, it is relevant to begin a chapter on lessons learned by looking at least at the kind of results that community security programming may be expected to produce – if not an assessment of the level of those results achieved – and the implications that stem from these observations.

Delivering tangible, measurable results

From the review of Saferworld and partners' work presented in the previous three chapters, a number of different result areas can be identified, including *inter alia*:

- **Informing national policy development** by ensuring the ground realities of communities affected by insecurity are given due consideration (for instance, the consultative process of developing Kosovo's Safety and Security Strategy).

- **Improving coordination** between various national and international security actors through working with civil society networks (for instance, facilitating coordination meetings in Kosovo which produced a tangible impact on the development of the administrative instruction governing the operation of the Municipal Community Safety Councils across Kosovo).
- **Enhancing local governance** by building the capacity of communities to constructively demand better service provision and supporting all actors to identify and implement solutions to community problems (in Kosovo, engagement with communities has been instrumental in ensuring that policies and commitments are actually implemented at the municipal level).
- **Improving trust and relationships** between communities and security providers as well as local government representatives (for instance, women in project sites in Nepal feel more confident in filing a complaint with the police, and the community and police have become closer in Kishoreganj).
- **Redistributing resources** to meet community needs (for instance, the Bangladesh Police routing foot patrols to areas identified as locations of sexual harassment by community members).
- **Increasing civil society capacity** to inform the work of security providers (for instance, the establishment of the Forum for Security in Kosovo and the Nepal Armed Violence Reduction Group).
- **Building trust between social groups** (for instance the Bosniac Mahala Forum in north Mitrovicë/Mitrovica).
- **Empowering women** in debates around their security needs and decision-making to address those needs (for instance in Ramechap and Danusha in Nepal, and Kishoreganj in Bangladesh).
- **Improving women and girls' experience of safety and security** (for instance, as reported in Ramechap and Danusha in Nepal).
- **Mobilising youth to address security issues** – a 'double dividend' given that unemployed or under-occupied youth may often otherwise be a driver of insecurity (for instance, the youth-led Community Safety and Security Information Centre in Kamrangirchar, Bangladesh).
- **Contributing to increased earning potential** for poor and marginalised populations (for instance, as a result of the Child Safety and Security Centre in Kamrangirchar, Bangladesh).

Of particular note is evidence suggesting that community-based approaches to security provision can yield results even in highly sensitive and difficult environments.

Whilst it may at first seem like a limited result, perhaps even an output, the significance of establishing a forum in northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica where members of ethnic Serbian and ethnic Albanian communities come together to discuss common security challenges should not be underestimated (see page 13). In fourteen years, this is the first time that CSOs and communities have begun to engage in addressing such sensitive issues in northern Kosovo in what is an extremely divided and often hostile environment. While only a step in the right direction, it is nevertheless an important one and something that could not have happened without the intimate knowledge of local political dynamics that comes from working directly at the community level.

Similarly, although the contested national political context in Nepal makes it very difficult to engage on issues around safety and security (for Nepali civil society and even more so for INGOs), Saferworld and partners were able to engage constructively with local security providers and authorities. The resources provided by some VDCs to support the implementation of community security action plans is a good illustration (see page 20). This suggests that taking a community-based approach to security can achieve localised results and tangible benefits to populations, even when opportunities for change at the national level are limited.

Measuring the right things, in the right way

One challenge for those thinking through the design and delivery of community-based approaches to security is retaining a focus on the appropriate hierarchy of results: what is the ultimate impact, or point, of the intervention?

In a programme modality that empowers communities to identify and address their own security needs, it is easy to become focused on the immediate outcomes of the work at the community level – the specific community security problems identified and resolved (for instance, building pavements in a village worried about road traffic accidents, or clearing unexploded ordnance from farmers' fruit orchards). These results are critically important for community-based approaches to security, as they represent the tangible effects of supporting communities to come together with security providers and local authorities to address the concerns *prioritised by the communities themselves*. However, in a wider theory of change for community security which aims to address some of the underlying structural issues driving conflict and insecurity, these sorts of outcomes might better be considered *intermediate* results – a route through which the more substantive impact of the intervention takes place.

The ultimate purpose of community security interventions is to change the relationships and behaviour of key actors – communities and their members themselves, local authorities and security providers. The strategic focus of thinking about the impact of community-based approaches to security, then, must be these relationships and behaviours. Individual impacts at the community level are, of course, critically important but not the end point of the results chain. The overall impact of community-based approaches to security should be a contribution to capable, accountable and responsive security and justice provision, along with empowered citizenry, the development of broader state-society relations and a strengthening of the social contract within societies.

The fact that community-based approaches to security may yield results at various levels suggests that the monitoring and evaluation of such programming should reflect change in relationships within and between communities themselves, security providers and relevant authorities. It is important to recognise that there will be no common template for the changes sought, and that the precise mix of results desired should be grounded in a thorough assessment of what is needed, and possible, in each context.

Community security as a building block for peacebuilding and statebuilding

Although it is an area that needs further investigation, Saferworld's experience in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh suggest that community-based approaches to security can make several important contributions to peacebuilding and statebuilding.

Firstly, it is worth stressing that local-level engagement has a value in itself. People do not experience insecurity at an institutional level but at a personal or local one, and a community-based approach to security aims to improve people's lives by helping them address the immediate security challenges they face. It also recognises that, in many contexts, local governance is fundamental to the organisation of social, political and economic life and as such can be considered as the first social contract that people experience. Addressing dysfunctional relationships and accountability at this level is therefore key to ensuring sustainable ways of addressing many kinds of problems, including insecurity and violence.

By connecting people more constructively with representatives of the state – whether security providers or other authorities – community-based approaches to security can contribute to improved state-society relationships and increased state legitimacy. Saferworld would also like to further investigate the potential for community security programmes to help strengthen the links between formal and informal security and justice systems that are increasingly recognised as an important part of statebuilding.

By focusing on the concerns that communities themselves prioritise, community-based approaches to security can help address both the symptoms and causes of tensions and violence. Helping to improve the confidence of communities, along with their relationship to other communities and authorities, contributes to the resilience of these communities to violence. Similarly, supporting the ability and opportunity for civil society to engage in issues around conflict and security builds and reinforces important 'capacities for peace' within conflict-affected or fragile societies.

Communities

Given that supporting communities to analyse and articulate their own needs and develop solutions is fundamental to the theory of change for community security, this focus on empowerment should also inform the monitoring of such programmes.

At one level, this may mean project partners monitoring how effective community consultation is in helping communities to identify their concerns, along with how effective subsequent community mobilisation is in addressing those problems.

A degree of flexibility is required for such a problem-solving approach, as until the programme has begun working with communities it is impossible to know exactly which issues the community will prioritise for action. Consequently, the 'results offer' in the design of community security programmes should usually be less about addressing specific issues and more about the process of identifying and successfully addressing communities' security concerns.

More significantly, putting communities at the heart of programming also carries implications for the *way* that programmes are monitored. Communities should be supported to monitor the security dynamics that concern them and develop their own indicators based on what is most relevant to them. This should run alongside and enrich the kind of monitoring required to demonstrate accountability of programmes to donors. This is a relatively new area for Saferworld²⁰ which we are now beginning to integrate into the design of several community security programmes, including in Nepal.

Understanding people's changing perceptions of insecurity over time is also important. Understanding such perceptions is both a key area of research which should inform the development of strategies and programmes around security and justice provision (perceptions of insecurity often being as significant as the 'objective' security situation in their relation to conflict dynamics) and a tool for monitoring a key intended impact of community security interventions.

Finally, monitoring changes in behaviour within and between communities is also important. Within communities, consideration should be given to factors such as the ability of marginalised groups (including women, youth, ethnic minorities or lower-income groups) to participate in problem identification and action planning; or to the role of local elites who may often have a stake in maintaining the status quo. Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (page 13) provides a good example of how understanding the political and social dynamics within a community is important for understanding a key dimension of programme impact. Where appropriate, the relationship between communities may also be important – for instance, if engaged in cross-border community security work or in areas where conflict between communities is common-place.

Security providers and local authorities

As well as monitoring changes in behaviour and relationships within and between communities, understanding changes within security providers and local authorities – and crucially, in the relations between these actors and communities – is also fundamental to community-based approaches to security.

While working on the 'demand' side by helping communities and civil society groups to become more confident and able to articulate their concerns is a key aspect of community security work, a community-based approach to security also implies concomitant work *with* security providers and local authorities – the 'supply' side of responsive security and justice provision.

²⁰ Although in the Caucasus, Saferworld has been using a system of text-based community monitoring of security incidents. See for instance, 'Changing perceptions through innovation', 31 October 2012 (www.saferworld.org.uk/news-and-views/case-study/33).

Often security providers may not initially be willing to engage with communities, perhaps not understanding the value such engagement can bring to their own efforts to provide effective security services. Sometimes, security providers may see such an approach as threatening or undermining their role. Similarly, even when the right incentives are in place for security providers to respond to the needs of those they serve (and be held accountable to them), they may require support in order to translate what is demanded of them into appropriate responses.

As communities frequently identify issues that may not fall under the mandate of security providers – particularly issues that are socio-economic in nature – the relationship between communities and local authorities is also important. Similarly, this is often true of politics at local and district levels – for instance, the interaction between local political leaders, government structures and security providers.

All of these potential changes should be considered when thinking about the results anticipated by community security programmes (and the capacities needed to implement them).

National and international actors

Frequently, national policies or reform processes have a strong enabling or disabling effect on the potential for more locally specific action (for instance, in Kosovo the negative impact the old administrative instruction governing the Municipal Community Safety and Security Councils had on the functioning of these bodies throughout Kosovo, and the enabling effect of the new, revised administrative instruction – see page 11).

Community security is a time and staff-intensive modality of programming and it would be difficult to run community security programmes in every part of any country. But by using evidence generated from community-level interventions to constructively influence the approach to security provision adopted and supported by national and international actors, it may be possible to promote a more responsive approach to security provision in areas not directly under the purview of community security programmes. Fostering linkages with national and international security actors also ultimately helps to ensure that local community initiatives contribute to long-term, sustainable and country-wide change.

Lessons learned

When thinking about the results expected from community security interventions, there are a number of lessons for donors and implementing agencies that arise from the above observations:

... Realism is needed about the results that can be achieved in very difficult environments, along with recognition that seemingly small effects may actually represent building blocks for future progress and therefore significant results in the most difficult environments. Expectation of results should be based on a detailed analysis of the context.

... Theories of change should be used in order to establish an appropriate and meaningful hierarchy of results being sought, along with a coherent explanation for how lower-level or intermediate outcomes make a contribution to broader impacts. Programmes should be evaluated against both how well they achieve individual results within this theory of change (delivery) and how relevant the theory of change was for the context (design). The results of such evaluations should continually inform the development of further theories of change that in turn frame future funding opportunities.

... Programme designs and funding frameworks should be flexible enough to exhibit a degree of strategic patience, doing what can be done when contextual constraints do not allow significant progress and then being agile enough to respond rapidly if there is a change in the context that opens an opportunity for more significant change.

... The changes community-based approaches to security seek to bring about are in relationships and behaviour, which can be difficult to measure conventionally. Programme designs should therefore make provisions for participatory monitoring and evaluation, thorough case studies, focus groups or other robust qualitative analytical tools.

... As local partner organisations may often be used to approaching monitoring in terms of outputs rather than wider changes (and yet are often the actors with the most direct access to the information about changes in behaviour and relationships, especially within and between communities), it is particularly important that all partners in community security programmes establish a common understanding of the ultimate results sought and build the capacities needed for robust, qualitative monitoring.

... Based on thorough context analysis and a subsequent strong theory of change, donors and implementing agencies should develop ways of communicating the higher-order results of community security interventions as well as the immediate community-level outcomes that are sometimes easier to identify.

The importance of civil society

Civil society's role in ensuring security sector reforms are effective

National and local civil society has significant roles to play in efforts to promote capable, accountable and responsive security provision. Here we will look at some of those roles and the support that is required for civil society to play them most effectively.

Saferworld's experience over the last three years working in Kosovo, Bangladesh and Nepal suggests civil society has at least four key roles to play in ensuring security sector reforms are effective: engaging with communities; coordinating between different actors; contributing to the development and dissemination of policy and legislation; and supporting the monitoring and accountability of reforms.

Engaging with communities

It is not possible to build the kind of trusting relationship needed to identify and address complex and sensitive issues around security with communities overnight; building this relationship takes time, patience and a high level of community knowledge and cultural awareness.

Given this reality, in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh local and national CSOs have been indispensable for building and maintaining these relationships with communities. In many contexts, not only would it be logistically difficult for international organisations to build these relationships by themselves, but political and cultural/social attitudes may in fact prohibit them from doing so altogether.

As these relationships with communities are the bedrock on which the entire edifice of community security rests, this already suggests a central role for local and national civil society in community-based approaches to security.

Coordinating between different actors

Civil society can also play an invaluable role in coordinating between different actors involved in providing or supporting security provision. This coordination may be vertical (between different levels of decision-making, such as village, district and national forums) or horizontal (providing not only a direct connection with communities but also space for different forums from the same level to interact and share information with each other).

In Kosovo, for instance, it is civil society groups that often provide the common thread running between the national, municipal and grassroots levels of Kosovo's community security architecture. Given the frequent restrictions on mandates or operational constraints faced by many national and international actors, civil society has the potential to provide an acceptably neutral space for the sharing of ideas and coordination of planning, as it has done in Kosovo. Neither the EU's EULEX mission nor US ICITAP

is able to operate in the north of Kosovo, so it is left to civil society to channel information and analysis between these organisations and actors in the north.

International civil society, working alongside national civil society, can also play such a convening or information-sharing role. For example, Saferworld has at times been able to act as a bridge between community and civil society perspectives and EULEX officials in Kosovo as well as EU decision-makers in Brussels.

Contributing to the development and dissemination of policy and legislation

In Kosovo, civil society played a key role in developing policy and legislation related to security provision (see page 12). Civil society involvement helps not only to develop policies and laws that are more relevant to the realities of the people they affect, but also to generate ownership and acceptance of these instruments among civil society and communities.

Following on from this point, it is often recognised that civil society can play a useful role in disseminating and raising awareness of new policies and laws. However, not only are such policies and legislation likely to be stronger if developed through the broad-based consultation that civil society is often able to facilitate, but civil society's ability and appetite for promoting and explaining such reforms will be higher if it is already invested in their development. The consultative process should be seen not only as part of developing new policy and legislation, but also as a first step in raising its profile and generating people's buy-in.

Monitoring and accountability

Civil society also plays a role in monitoring the implementation of security sector reforms by providing one element of public accountability, but also by involving citizens in ongoing monitoring. Such feedback is necessary for the continual refinement and adjustment of reform processes, testing the theory against the reality. This kind of oversight, then, should be seen as a useful contribution to the development of strategies for security provision and not solely as an accountability mechanism.

Supporting civil society

In many contexts civil society has been denied space to engage with issues of safety or security. Subsequently, civil society's capacity for critical analysis and constructive advocacy in this area is often limited. Given the important functions of civil society for successful security sector reform, it is important to look at what lessons there might be for how to support the development of civil society's capacity in this area.

Exchanges and mutual learning

In Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh, Saferworld has found that providing the opportunity for exchange visits, particularly regional exchanges, has been a successful way to support the capacity development of civil society.

In 2011, for instance, Saferworld facilitated a regional conference on 'Community Security in the Western Balkans' bringing together community security actors from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia with Saferworld's partner organisations in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and the Caucasus. Participants shared their experiences of different legal and institutional frameworks and approaches to promoting community-level security. The Kosovo Police presented work they had done to successfully reduce the number of traffic incidents in Kosovo, and partner organisations from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have since utilised these approaches to address the traffic accidents which were causing tensions and incidents of violence in border areas between the two countries.

Such exchange visits can be useful for helping to develop a crucial underpinning vision of community-based approaches to security with partners, enabling them to see first-hand what such an approach looks like and discuss ideas with counterparts working on similar issues in other contexts. Exchange visits between partners from Nepal and Bangladesh, for instance, were successful in helping to deepen each partner's understanding of community security and inspire ways of translating successful approaches from one context to another.

Capacity building requires long-term – and sometimes political – support

It is well recognised that successful capacity building is a long-term process.²¹ This is especially true in relation to building capacity for working on security provision which, as noted above, is often an unfamiliar area for national and especially local civil society groups.

In Kosovo, for instance, long-term engagement has been imperative for strengthening the capacity and expertise of local NGOs on SALW and security-related policies. However, while local NGOs now enjoy increasing influence on national policy development, a major challenge remains influencing international actors in Kosovo and abroad, particularly Brussels. Given the value that civil society can bring in terms of local-level knowledge and modalities of engagement, as donors draw down their involvement in the region, it will be crucial to continue supporting NGOs in Kosovo to a point where they are sufficiently self-sustaining.

Similarly, support for national civil society should also include actively linking local and national NGOs to civil society networks in their region and internationally. This could include providing opportunities for them to participate in various international forums or consultations and supporting them to engage in constructive advocacy and policy dialogue with relevant international institutions.

Given that issues related to security can be sensitive or even dangerous for civil society to engage with in conflict-affected and fragile countries, there are also measures that the international community can take to improve the environment for advocacy and dialogue – for example through diplomatic engagement with political and security leaderships and by pressing for formal mechanisms to protect civil society.

Lessons learned

When thinking about the potential value of national civil society in community security interventions and the support it requires, there are a number of lessons for donors and implementing agencies that arise from the above observations:

... All community security interventions should ensure that they make a contribution to building the sustainable capacity of national and local civil society. More broadly, donors should ensure that tenders governing the design of all large security sector or rule of law interventions firmly require bidding agencies or consortia to include a significant role for civil society partners in the design, implementation and monitoring of such interventions, as well as a component for building relevant civil society capacities.

... International actors supporting efforts to promote the rule of law and improve security and justice provision should ensure they are working at the diplomatic level to support space for civil society to engage in and influence security policy and decision-making.

... Donors should continue the trend towards multi-country community security programmes that contain explicit objectives and budget lines for cross-context learning and support for the continued supplementation of the evidence base for community-based approaches to safety and security.

²¹ It is not suggested here that learning is one-way. Ensuring that the design and implementation of programmes is informed by national partners' knowledge and understanding is as important as helping to build their capacities.

An integrated approach to security and justice

'Community' security doesn't stop at the level of the community

It is often the case that security and justice interventions seem to operate at either a predominantly community-based level or a predominantly centralised and institutional level. Saferworld's approach to community security emphasises the importance of working in a coordinated way at both levels, and those in between.

In Kosovo, it was crucially important to connect together the work Saferworld and partners engaged in at the local level with the reforms and initiatives happening at the national level. For instance, had the administrative instruction governing the Municipal Community Safety Councils not been amended (a result which could plausibly be attributed to Saferworld and partners' programme) this would have undermined the ability of the MCSCs to effectively support community-level improvements to safety and security across Kosovo (see page 11).

Successfully connecting together these different levels of work requires having strong relationships with government and police representatives at different levels. Such relationships need to be carefully built – although adversarial relationships may have utility for some kinds of work around accountability, here they will not be sufficient. Instead a relationship of trust must be built up where security providers feel that civil society inputs are constructive and useful, allowing civil society organisations to make careful critiques of the way security providers and authorities operate without fear of endangering the overall relationship.

In Nepal, involving the police and government agencies right from the beginning, and collecting and responding to their feedback and suggestions, has ensured a high level of buy-in to the programme at the district level. For instance, the expression of support from a Chief District Officer and District Chief of Police in one area laid a crucial foundation for collaborative work in the future.

Concomitantly, not ensuring this level of buy-in and relationship with authorities and security providers at different levels may actually pose risks to community security programmes. Again in Nepal, there is a high level of sensitivity at the central level – especially with the Ministry of Home Affairs and senior police – when it comes to (I)NGOs working on security issues, and it can sometimes be difficult for (I)NGOs to get approval from the government to work directly on security issues.

Community security programming is necessary, but not sufficient

Empowering communities to articulate their security concerns and supporting appropriate security responses is a critical and often overlooked part of promoting security and access to justice. However, just as centralised and institutionally-led approaches to SSR are inadequate, community-based approaches alone will not ensure the long-term, sustainable transformation of justice and security provision in fragile states.

Instead, community-level work needs to be accompanied by wider efforts to build the capacity of security and justice institutions. This is not an 'either-or' issue – the two areas of work need to be complementary and inform each other.

In Kosovo, for instance, the lack of enforcement of the Criminal Code of Kosovo is a major challenge to effective implementation of SALW control legislation. Saferworld's experience suggests that the broken link in the chain of the criminal justice management system is the courts, which are not enforcing SALW-related provisions of the Criminal Code, thus undermining the efforts of the Kosovo Police, civil society organisations and other actors to strengthen the control of SALW.

Similarly, in Nepal, there is a security vacuum because of a lack of police posts after the war. More capacity is undoubtedly a necessary part of the solution here (indeed, there

may be a danger in raising people's expectations without at the same time working to ensure security providers have the capacity to respond to such expectations). However, thinking through how to build such capacity should involve the communities that will be affected to ensure the capacity developed is the *right* capacity to meet community needs – one can think of the community in Nepal, for instance, that wanted additional *female* police officers to meet their security concerns (see page 20).

Lessons learned

Taking an approach to supporting security and justice provision that integrates community-based approaches with more traditional capacity building has a number of implications for both donors and implementing agencies:

... Agencies undertaking community-based security programming should include a thorough actor and power analysis within their design phases and ensure that community-level programming is accompanied by an advocacy strategy for engaging with relevant actors at sub-national and national/international levels. Such an advocacy strategy should be backed by the staff capacity and resources required for implementation (which donors should recognise as being legitimate programme costs).

... Relationship and trust-building with security providers and other authorities should not be limited to an 'advocacy phase', but run right through from the start (design) of the programme. The earlier such actors are brought into community security work, the more likely they are to buy into and support such work.

... International actors supporting security and justice programmes should ensure that the totality of their combined programming is sufficient and coordinated across both supply and demand sides. Donors (and INGOs) should ensure that, as much as possible, their portfolios complement each other's and provide opportunities and forums for various actors – including especially community groups and civil society – to inform, monitor and critically evaluate institution-focused security and justice interventions.

Implementing community security programming

As well as the lessons on the conceptualisation and design of community security interventions discussed above, Saferworld's work over the last three years presents a number of lessons that could inform the way community security interventions are actually implemented.

Taking context as the starting point

As noted previously, there can be no standardised template for community security programmes. Instead, a set of principles and ways of working should be adapted to the specific requirements of the context.

For example, Saferworld's approach to community security usually emphasises the importance of working to build strong relationships between communities and security providers or other relevant local authorities. But in Mitrović/Mitrovica this presented a problem – which authorities to strengthen relationships with when none were accepted as legitimate by the whole community?

Instead, Saferworld and AKTIV took a different approach. Although the members of the BMF worked together to identify shared security concerns, ethnic Serbian and Albanian members were then free to go back to whichever institution they felt could legitimately respond to these shared needs. At the same time, Saferworld and AKTIV took the position of engaging with any actor who could respond to the concerns raised by the BMF, regardless of who they were. In this way we aimed to provide a neutral connection between the BMF and relevant institutions, and support those institutions to respond to people's identified needs.

Similarly, it is important to understand and build on what already exists. Whilst it may be tempting to launch into designing and establishing new structures, groups or platforms, this risks duplication or creating parallel structures. Saferworld has found

that it is usually far more effective and sustainable to engage with those that already exist, and seek to strengthen or support them to build any capacities that are deficient or absent. Such an approach will usually also represent better value for money. Establishing new initiatives should be reserved for when there really are none that are suitable to work with.

Developing a shared vision with partners

Time and again, Saferworld has found that it is critical to allow enough time to develop a strong shared vision of community security with implementing partners. Sharing a detailed vision of what partners are attempting to achieve through community security is foundational for ensuring the success of the programme.

For instance, in some contexts Saferworld has partnered with extremely experienced human rights-based organisations. In their human rights work, such partners have successfully used confrontational, campaign-based approaches to pressurise governments to implement demands. However, a community security approach implies not only being concerned with the *rights* of community members, but also with their responsibilities to help make their community safer, and to acknowledge the challenges security providers are facing. Therefore, building strong and constructive relationships between communities and security providers/authorities needs to be at the heart of the approach.

Similarly, as noted, working on issues of safety and security is often new to civil society and Saferworld has found that partner organisations often feel they would benefit from more time to absorb and contextualise the ideas behind community security. Saferworld has now begun to allocate adequate time and opportunities for this within its programme design – for instance through internal mid-term reviews and involving partners in annual cross-context learning opportunities.

Finally, working with local coordinators from partner organisations on an activity basis is problematic as it reduces their commitment to the programme, increases the risk of them using access to stakeholders and decision-making processes for other purposes (including on occasion furthering their own political aspirations), and contributes to increased staff rotation, which undermines trusting relationships.

Building trust with communities

Building trust with communities (and with security providers and local authorities, and between all these groups) takes time and has no real short cut. However, there are a number of ways in which the careful work required to build trust with communities can easily be undermined.

In Saferworld's experience, short-term projects (that is, no longer than 2 years) do not allow sufficient time for trust-building and several cycles of the community security process to be completed. This reduces the possibility of the community security approach becoming embedded into local-level planning, decision-making and security provision processes, and therefore being sustainable beyond the project duration. For instance, in Bangladesh, while on one hand community members in Hajirgol reported that elders from neighbouring villages had begun to approach them to ask how they might do similar work around safety and security, on the other hand the community security working group had begun to meet less often and lacked the focus or enthusiasm to address ongoing community safety needs after the cessation of project funding. This meant that partner staff drew down their engagement with the community, despite community members continuing to identify unmet safety needs.

The widespread practice of paying participants for their participation in activities or research is also problematic. It can lead to tensions between community members, as everyone wants to participate to get the money, and diverts attention from the project's intended purpose. The practice of paying per diems also puts pressure on organisations

who normally refrain from paying participants. Thus, Saferworld's Nepal programme decided to only reimburse expenses for actual costs, such as transport, rather than providing a flat rate; and only to pay compensation for time in cases where activities a) take a long time and b) extract information from participants but do not give anything back (such as pure research, which is 'extractive' rather than building participants' capacity or contributing to their local safety). However, in any given context it is necessary to assess how this could affect the ability of a diverse range of community members to participate in activities, and make adequate provisions to ensure that no groups are excluded. In Bangladesh, Saferworld and partners have been investigating ways of enabling communities to invest some of their own resources into projects so as to increase their ownership of activities and contribute to sustainability – for instance, charging a very small user fee for the child safety centre in Kamrangirchar (a cost which is more than offset by the increased earning potential such a centre represents for parents).

The relationship between 'security' and 'development' issues

Community-based approaches to security fundamentally involve supporting communities to articulate their own priority concerns, and this can lead to a wide variety of issues being identified as 'security' issues, as discussed in the chapter on Nepal (see page 21). In part, this is because of the simple reality that people do not experience life in neatly delineated sections – one reason Saferworld has long advocated for a broader, integrated definition of 'security' which encompasses the range of issues that make people living in conflict-affected communities feel unsafe or insecure.

We have also found that to win the trust of communities and get their buy-in to community security programmes, they often need to see some kind of tangible output from the project. It can be hard for communities, especially those that have previously understood 'security' as an issue that is off limits to them, to grasp the benefit of 'soft' governance or relational outcomes. More tangible outputs, especially those that relate to livelihoods or public infrastructure, may provide an entry point into thinking about less easily graspable changes (especially as the community begins to work with security providers or local authorities in order to secure such a material change).

At the same time, in contexts where trust between different communities, or between communities and security providers/local authorities, is very low – or relations even hostile – economic or livelihood issues may provide a more neutral starting point for community security programmes than potentially contentious or sensitive security issues. This was true of Saferworld and partners' work in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (see page 13) where very distrustful members of Serbian and Albanian communities were nevertheless able to identify some common economic interests they could work to address. This has led to the working group now taking steps towards discussing and addressing more sensitive issues such as SALW.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have found that insecurity is often rooted in or linked to economic challenges. By piloting an integrated approach to community security in Nepal that involves a component addressing security issues related to economic challenges, we seek to improve security by bridging the gap between security and development-focused programming (see page 21).

These considerations point to the high degree of strategic and operational flexibility required for the successful implementation of community security programmes. In practice, however, implementing agencies (including Saferworld) and their funding streams are usually defined to some degree by organisational mandates, areas of technical expertise or results sought in specific areas (such as health or education). One way of mitigating this may be for agencies and their donors to think strategically about the mix of capacities and skills required for community-based approaches to security and reflect this in the range of partnerships they pursue.

Gender considerations

While we have aimed to achieve equal representation of men and women on action committees, in practice this has not been easy to achieve, particularly where women's participation in public decision-making fora is not the norm. In Bangladesh, while the project aimed to achieve 50 per cent participation of women in the action committees, in practice it was around 25 per cent in most cases. Saferworld's wider experience suggests that increasing female participation is most likely to be achieved incrementally, rather than overnight, particularly in contexts where it significantly challenges social and cultural norms. In these circumstances, it is necessary to identify the barriers to women's participation and to put in place measures to overcome them. For example, if the double burden of paid employment and unpaid childcare/housework means women do not have time to participate in project activities, it may be necessary to find ways to spread the work burden differently across the community in order to allow greater participation of women. Ensuring a balance between meeting this sort of ambition and cultural sensitivity can be challenging and, again, points to the importance of very fine-grained contextual and cultural knowledge.

Even where action committees are representative of the make-up of the local community, some groups may tend to dominate the conversation. In Bangladesh, for example, BRAC identified that delivering gender sensitisation training to action committees at the beginning of future projects may help to promote a more inclusive dialogue.

In relation to addressing gender-based violence, a balance needs to be struck between providing immediate protection and addressing the underlying causes of violence. For example, while building bathing shelters in Bangladesh or indoor lavatories in Nepal helped to reduce incidences of GBV by providing some protection for women, further work is needed to address the reasons why some men perpetrate violence and harassment against them. The case of Kishoreganj in Bangladesh, where groups of women approached harassers and explained to them the impact their behaviour was having on the lives of women and girls, signals that it is possible for community security programmes to make inroads on this (see page 29). In this case, women found that ostracising perpetrators of sexual harassment was ineffective and tended to polarise the community, whereas including them in the community security process and helping them to understand the negative impact of their behaviour was more effective. Again, this highlights the need to have a thorough theory of change for community security work that links individual interventions – such as bathing shelters – to the higher-order results being sought.

Furthermore, measuring the impact of action taken to prevent and reduce gender-based violence can present particular challenges, given the difficulties of measuring the prevalence of GBV. While focus group discussions can help to give a general sense of levels of violence, they do not provide quantitative data which can be compared over time to establish trends. Household surveys can provide figures, but the logistical and ethical difficulties of carrying out household surveys on such sensitive issues can make it extremely challenging to obtain accurate data. While focus group participants have reported perceived decreases in GBV following community security interventions, further work is needed to establish more rigorous methods for measuring this change.

Lessons learned

Saferworld's experience implementing community-based approaches to security in Kosovo, Nepal and Bangladesh suggests a number of 'best practice' lessons for the design and implementation of such programmes.

... Donors funding community security interventions should require implementing agencies to base the design of their programmes on a thorough context analysis and, wherever possible, to build on existing structures rather than create new ones. This should include analysis of gender norms within the community, so that activities can be tailored to be culturally appropriate, while also aiming to support women's participation and avoid entrenching unequal gender relations.

... Both implementing agencies and donors need to allow sufficient time and resources to invest in partners up front, including developing a strong and nuanced shared vision of the overall goals and theory of change for community security programming.

... Implementing agencies should ensure that the local coordinators employed by the programme work full-time on community security, and invest in their capacity to ensure they fully understand and support the approach. Donors should ensure funds are available for this.

... Funding streams for community-based approaches to security should take into account the timeframe required to successfully implement community security interventions.

... Implementing agencies should avoid paying per diems for community participation in programme activities other than research, and instead consider options for communities to invest some of their own resources in community security activities.

... Donors should consider carefully the mix of implementing partners they need for interventions that integrate community-based security and justice with broader development. Implementing agencies could consider integrating a 'security and safety' lens into existing community-driven development work, but should also ensure that, whether through their own capacity development or strategic partnership, their programmes have the ability to engage constructively with local authorities and security providers around the provision of security services.

... Donors should be somewhat flexible with regard to the specific issues that are addressed through community security interventions, as long as progress can be shown towards the overall goals of improved relationships between security providers, local authorities and communities and more responsive and relevant provision of security services.

... Implementing agencies must take care to ensure that efforts to measure the prevalence of gender-based violence do not put survivors at further risk, even where this means accepting a less rigorous standard of evidence, and must take into account the likelihood of under-reporting.

... Donors must also take into account the ethical and logistical challenges of gathering accurate data on the prevalence of gender-based violence, and accept that data may be incomplete, while also being willing to invest in developing more rigorous methods of data collection which also meet ethical standards.

Further reading



The securitisation of aid?
Reclaiming security to meet
poor people's needs (2011)



Understanding and responding
to security needs in conflict-
affected areas: Lessons learnt
from working with
communities in Shida Kartli
(2011)



Community security in Shida
Kartli documentary
[www.saferworld.org.uk/
where/caucasus](http://www.saferworld.org.uk/where/caucasus)

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We work with local people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. We use this evidence and learning to improve local, national and international policies and practices that can help build lasting peace. Our priority is people – we believe that everyone should be able to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from insecurity and violent conflict.

COVER PHOTOS

TOP ROW: Kosovo. **MIDDLE ROW:** Nepal. **BOTTOM ROW:** Bangladesh.
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