

# Rehabilitation Update

July 2013



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.



## UN Interagency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 74% of the VMLRs were under 18 when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in 2006
- 90% had contacted UNIRP through the toll-free number or by visiting one of the offices
- Of all 4,008 VMLR, 38% were female



UNIRP provided 969 VMLR with gender specific support

**"Business life is better than combatant life,"**

23-year-old Pavitra Tamang on UNIRP-supported retail shop and hotel business

This update describes how the present work of United Nations Interagency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP) in helping ex-combatants specifically 'Verified Minors and Late Recruits' (VMLR), make a smooth transition from military to civilian life.

In accordance with the Agreement on Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies (AMMAA), the VMLR were not eligible for inclusion in the Maoist army and were not permitted to remain in the cantonments.

Upon their discharge in June 2010, UNIRP was established to support their rehabilitation through a successful UN inter-agency collaboration. Together with the UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and ILO, UNIRP's main objective was to support their transition by providing them with training and education to access employment and livelihood opportunities. The support work was guided by recognized international standards and best practices, consistent with needs and rights-based humanitarian approaches.

### 2. WHERE THINGS STAND

- Of those enrolled in one of the four options, 80% have graduated
- 73% of graduates are either employed or have established own businesses
- 55% of the VMLRs were provided with psychosocial counseling including family and community interventions

Originally scheduled to end in January 2013, UNIRP was extended to the end of July 2013 in order to provide time for consolidation and exit plan with a time bound handover of responsibilities to the relevant authorities at the national and regional levels.

Now that it is in its final phase out period, UNIRP has provided its participants with crucial follow-up support, such as business mentoring, counseling, facilitation of micro-credit linkages, as well as links to job opportunities. As part of its phase-out strategy, a special priority was placed on linking participants with ongoing services to help them sustain their jobs and businesses.

In addition, UNIRP worked closely with the private sector and employment associations to link programme graduates with potential job and micro-credit opportunities. As a direct result of these efforts, 73% of graduates from training and education have secured employment or established their own businesses (See Table 3).

In consensus with the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, and with the financial support of the Norwegian government through the UN Peace Fund for Nepal, UNIRP will also maintain its support to nearly 90% of the education participants who are still continuing their studies.



Staff gathering in preparation for UNIRP's closure

## 2.1. Key Statistics of the Rehabilitation Programme (As of July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013)



These three tables below present the key data about UNIRP through each stage of the process. Each of the tables includes the percentage of female VMLRs who participated in each respective activity.

**Table 1** shows how many VMLRs contacted the programme, how many were referred to education/training, and how many enrolled in each of the options. Although Table 1 presents this data for three groupings (i.e. the total VMLR population, VMLRs discharged through the cantonment, and VMLRs not working abroad), it is important to highlight that UNIRP targeted the third of these groupings – the 3,040 VMLRs who were present in Nepal and not already working abroad. This target group is presented in Column 3 of Table 1.

**Table 2** provides an overview of the 2,234 VMLRs who enrolled in training or education options, detailing which stage of the process they are at.

**Table 3** shows how many VMLRs who have graduated from the programme are employed or have started own businesses.

**Table 1: Key Numbers**

Steps in Rehabilitation Process	Of the total 4,008 VMLRs		Of the 2,394 VMLRs discharged through cantonment ceremonies		UNIRP Target Population: Of the 3,040 VMLRs who are not working abroad
		Female (% of 4,008 VMLRs)		Female (% of 2,394 VMLRs)	
VMLRs who contacted UNIRP through the toll-free phone number	2,743 (68%)	34%	2,131 (89%)	34%	2,743 (90%)
VMLRs referred for Training / Education	2,477 (62%)	36%	1,954 (82%)	36%	2,477 (81%)
VMLRs enrolled for Training / Education	2,234 (56%)	38%	1,761 (74%)	37%	2,234 (73%)

**Table 2: Breakdown of 2,234 VMLRs who enrolled for Training or Education**

Steps in Rehabilitation Process	Of the total 2,234 VMLRs who enrolled in Training / Education	
		Female
Those still in Training / Education with set graduation date	359 (16%)	45%
Those who dropped out	88 (4%)	7%
Those who graduated from Education	28 (1%)	57%
Those who have graduated to date from Training / Education	1,759 (79%)	37%

**Table 3: Breakdown of 1,759 VMLRs who have graduated to date from Training / Education**

Steps in Rehabilitation Process	Of the total 1,759 VMLRs who graduated from Training / Education	
		Female
Those who are employed or running a business	1,280 (73%)	38%

## 3. WHERE THINGS ARE GOING



UNIRP continued to provide VMLR with support through its individual rehabilitation option packages, as well as crucial follow-up and post-training support services up until July 2013 when operations officially ended. In May 2013, UNIRP gathered for a staff workshop to ensure a smooth, timely hand-over of the programme to the national and regional authorities in Nepal.

To support its phase-out strategy, UNIRP added a "Case Closure" module to the Disarmament Demobilization and Rehabilitation Information Management System (DDR-IMS) to ensure that data of each VMLR is fully entered before the files are closed and handed over to the Ministry of Peace. The module focused on participants enrolled in vocational skills training, micro-enterprise development and health-related training.

UNIRP has also conducted a post-rehabilitation survey with programme participants to gather data and evidence about the quality of the support services they've received from the programme. Since finalizing the survey the first week of June, 104 randomly-selected participants participated in the survey.

## 4. Success Stories

*"Nepal's Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) sets out a peace-building framework for Nepal's development partners through its ambitious, transformational agenda on equity, inclusion, accountability, good governance and a restructuring of the state," [Nepal Peace and Development Strategy, January 2001](#)*

### Rehabilitation programme was 'life-changing'

Having dropped out of school in grade four, 15-year-old Shiva Tharu was living at home when she decided to join the Maoist army. Within a short period of time, her life would drastically change from a life of daily chores, doing work on the farm, to one as a security guard, taking orders from a commander. Living the cantonments also marked a significant personal change as she met her husband and gave birth to a baby girl.

Discharged as a 'Verified Minor,' Shiva was afraid of her future prospects, especially since her husband was a qualified combatant and he remained in the army. Returning back home alone with her child, Shiva felt "very frustrated, stressed, wept a lot," and thought that her "life ended." Her biggest fear was that her spouse's family might reject her because they hadn't told them about their marriage. However, those fears turned out to be unfounded because his family ended up accepting her happily.

Most importantly, she said her life turned around for the better after contacting the toll-free number for UNIRP's rehabilitation program she had heard about during her discharge ceremony. Within a couple of weeks, she had visited the regional office and she was provided with career counseling and psychosocial support, which gave her the moral boost to pursue the Micro Enterprise programme. To assist her with her childcare needs, the programme also provided her with specific gender support, including childcare grant, nutritional diet support, caretaker support, baby food, and other basic health support.

Today, 25-year-old Shiva is running her own tailoring enterprise, situated a five-minute walk from her house in her home village of Duruwa -6, Dhamkapur. Earning about 2 to 300 NRS per day, Shiva offers services, such as stitching shirts, skirts, petticoats, blouses, kurta suruwal, maxmi, and chaubandi cholo. Recently, her husband and her family have constructed a new shed and business office next to the shop, and they have invested NRS 50,000 into buying new items for their retail business, which earns a return of about 500 – 600 per day.

She said joining the rehabilitation program was 'life-changing.' Compared to the past, she says she feels confident and independent, because she is self-employed and making her own money. At another level, she says she also feels empowered because she plays a decisive role in the family and contributes to her family's day-to-day expenses. For everything she has been through in her young life, Shiva says she is very happy – her spouse and her in-laws, just as her circle of friends, family and neighbours, are very supportive of her endeavours.

Compared to how she felt when she first left the cantonments, she says she's pleased with how she's been treated with a level of respect in a way she hadn't felt before.



**Contract Address:**  
UNIRP Office, KSK  
Building, Block-A  
(Opposite UN House),  
Pulchowk, Lalitpur,  
Nepal.  
Phone No.: +977 (1)  
5010319 / 015010135