

# Volunteers for Peace Education

## ToT with Youth Volunteers on Peace, Conflict and Mediation

Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, Nepal  
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All over the world, and specifically in Nepal with its prolonged peace process, peace building requires not only politician's commitment to settle disputes by peaceful means, but also people's, and, most importantly, the youth's moral support to peace. Peace and disarmament education is therefore a crucial instrument to promote a culture of non-violence and conflict prevention in the mindsets of people.

The UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) in collaboration with the Department of Peace, Conflict and Development Studies of Tribhuvan University (DCPDS-TU) and the Nepali NGO DidiBahini, with financial support of UNDP BCPR and UN Volunteers, is implementing a "Volunteers for Peace Education" project aiming to train and empower youth volunteers as facilitators for peace education, and to conduct informal peace education among public school students.

More specifically, a three day training of 14 youth volunteers, designed and facilitated by two peace education experts, and hosted by DCPDS-TU, familiarized the youth volunteers with the concepts of peace, conflict, facilitation, mediation and negotiation. A special focus was put on role plays as a means to apply and experience these concepts in an interactive and participatory way.

Building on the concepts and tools acquired during the training, the youth volunteers then developed a one day workshop for 9<sup>th</sup> grade public school students. During the week of International Peace Day (20 – 25 September), the volunteers held their trainings at six public schools in the districts of Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur, reaching out to almost 200 public school students. In addition to learning about the concepts of peace, conflict and mediation, and implementing role plays, the students participated in a short story or poem writing competition about their personal experiences relating to conflict or mediation.

The project benefitted highly from its multistakeholder approach. While UNRCPD acted as an overall coordinator, DCPDS-TU was strongly involved in the creation of the module and the training of the volunteers, DidiBahini supported the selection of schools and volunteers, and UNDP BCPR and UNV provided financial support and technical advice. Moreover, and particularly in the context of IYV+10, this project showcased the large potential of volunteerism for conducting peace education on a broad scale.

The outcome of the workshops supported the need for conducting peace education and mediation training among youth in the post conflict context of Nepal. Each of the six trainings at the schools encountered high interest, as well as active and enthusiastic participation on behalf of the students. The feedback from schools and all other actors involved has been thoroughly positive. While for the public school students these trainings were an important occasion to better understand peace, conflict and mediation at the national and at the personal level, the most important and fruitful part of the project was the capacity building of the youth volunteers. Through their role as committed trainees and as skillful trainers, they have acted as peace builders, mediators and facilitators, and we hope that they will continue to exercise this role beyond the frame of the project.