



PROGRESS IN 2017-18

TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS:

- We supported critical dialogue between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and between Pakistan and India.
- We set up 27 community groups in three districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, to help communities find ways to access more effective justice and claim their rights.
- We developed guidance manuals for communities in Pakistan to raise understanding on issues around human and minority rights, inclusivity and gender, and on the provision of justice in local government acts.

- We trained leaders in facilitating dialogue and leadership skills in Nepal. They went on to successfully hold 68 district and provincial level political dialogues focused on strengthening services provided by the newly established federal government.

- In south east Myanmar, 24 community groups in ceasefire areas worked with authorities to resolve safety and security issues such as domestic violence, illegal logging, and drug and alcohol abuse. They also helped come up with ideas to improve health and transportation in their villages.

- We produced a video series on gender, which was featured in national media and highlighted various social challenges faced by Nepali women and how they overcame them – providing positive examples for women and marginalised groups across the country.

IN ADDITION:

- A major donor agency in Bangladesh adopted our business for peace model in their upcoming project to address cycles of repeated violence and harness the peacebuilding potential of the private sector.

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Billal Hossain is a young Imam in Bagerhat district, Bangladesh.

HIGHLIGHTS South and South East Asia

AFGHANISTAN

In Afghanistan, war, insecurity and poor governance continued to have a devastating impact on many of the country's citizens. We began a project to support governance reform across the 34 provinces of Afghanistan. We met with communities across the country to find ways to improve governance and ensure that voices, including those of minorities who are often excluded, were heard.

We also supported efforts to improve regional stability and economic ties by strengthening long-running dialogues between Afghanistan and its neighbours, and by bringing together officials to share ideas and develop policies that promote greater cooperation.

BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh, political violence around elections has fuelled insecurity and reversed economic growth. We researched the potential role of businesses to support peace, especially during periods of political turbulence and strikes. Our findings showed that bringing businesses and associations to work with civil society, political institutions and local government can be an effective way to challenge violence. Saferworld's donor, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), adopted the

approach and recommendations from our report in their upcoming project to address cycles of repeated violence.

In response to the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Rakhine State, Myanmar, Saferworld has been developing new programming aimed at integrating conflict sensitivity into the humanitarian response in Bangladesh, both within the camps and between the refugee and host population.

“Everything comes down to politics. All of the major business people are also politicians. If they decide to make positive changes, everything will be in order. But we don't react until we are forced to. Youth entrepreneurs can play a vital role. They should be active in working against violence.”

A businessman from Sylhet district, Bangladesh

NEPAL

In Nepal, a decade after the end of a civil war and during a transition to a new form of federal governance, tensions and discrimination linger on. After years of advocacy from civil society (including Saferworld and our partners) quotas for political representation for women and marginalised caste and ethnic groups (such as Dalits) have been included in the new constitution,

with other provisions to address exclusion and injustice. Our partners worked closely with communities to produce quarterly 'early warning, early response' reports that helped identify potential areas of conflict and analysed trends to help prepare responses. We formed 12 networks of district-level 'champions' with a total of 144 members. These champions are engaging with

sub-national officials to identify, prioritise and address governance and security concerns. We rolled out a manual and handbook that helped equip communities with leadership and dialogue facilitation skills. Given the rapidly evolving political system in Nepal, we advocated for transparent, accountable and open governance that promotes peace and stability.



Consultation meetings are held with semi-formal justice providers in Muzafargarh, Punjab province, Pakistan.

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“ The response from communities has been overwhelming – particularly from the women. They are eager to know more: for example, who are the duty providers? How do they access them? What are the inheritance laws in Pakistan? And how can they cast their votes in elections? ”

Asia Khattak, RAHBAR field officer

MYANMAR

In Myanmar, decades of conflict between different ethnic groups have given way to a fragile peace process and incremental economic reform. We worked with civil society and authorities in the south east to improve safety and security for communities, and we advocated for security and justice systems to be more inclusive and accountable to conflict and gender dynamics. Together with our partners Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG) and Karen Women’s Empowerment Group (KWEG), we supported 24 community groups to identify security issues – including domestic violence, poor transportation, alcoholism, public health and illegal logging – and to collaborate with authorities

to resolve them. As a result, community groups have gained the trust of the wider community, as well as government and ethnic armed organisation authorities, and have grown confident in finding ways to make their villages safer and more secure. Similarly, authorities have increased their engagement with communities, KWEG and KHRG, and have become more responsive to community needs and more willing to work with communities to find solutions. After decades of conflict and authoritarianism – which left relationships between communities and authorities fraught with fear and suspicion, with minimal contact on either side – such cooperation is encouraging.

“ I went to a workshop about land rights and empowerment... My self-confidence to speak in front of people increased because I had to stand and speak to assert my rights and fight. ”

Daw Khin Hta, a resident of a village in Kayin state in south east Myanmar

PAKISTAN

In Pakistan, rapid economic progress has not necessarily led to changes in society or in how people access justice. We work with communities and marginalised groups in partnership with civil society, justice providers and government to come up with solutions for more inclusive justice. Together with our partners, we set up 27 community groups in three districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), providing safe spaces for women, young people and marginalised groups so that they could voice their experiences and challenges of seeking justice and explore potential solutions without fear of repercussions.

These groups have raised awareness on justice provision in local government acts and other related

legal frameworks, especially for low-income people seeking justice. Following Saferworld training on dispute resolution councils (free, semi-formal justice providers recognised by the local government), our partners identified dispute resolution councils in the project area and linked them with the communities. Examples include cases where women have quickly and fairly settled property rights claims or divorce cases – these are notable successes, as it is extremely rare for women in the traditional society of KPK to claim their rights to property or request a divorce. Saferworld also trained partners and community groups in gender, inclusivity, and human and minority rights.

We have also supported critical dialogue between Pakistan and its neighbours Afghanistan and India. These dialogues, known as Beyond Boundaries (Afghanistan-Pakistan) and the Chaopraya Dialogue (India-Pakistan) are well established and cover a range of contentious issues which have contributed to tensions in the South Asia region over a long period of time. Saferworld’s partners in each of the three countries have played a critical role in sustaining dialogue at times of crisis and creating space for policy developments which could over time reduce tensions and establish the potential for greater regional collaboration, connectivity and peace.