A Creation of Children Affected from Armed Conflict.

Path to Reconciliation

Save the Children
Path to Reconciliation

Comic Book Produced by children in the context of Peace Process

Story, Dialogue, Creation, Illustration: 61 children directly affected by Armed Conflict
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The comic book ‘Path to Reconciliation’ is a creation of the children directly affected by the 11 years, armed conflict in Nepal. The children have made immense effort to construct the entire book—stories, drawings and dialogues. This comic book is also a sequel of “Farewell to Firearms” which was published in April, 2005. We facilitated and provided technical support during the process. However, HimRights created a child friendly, nonjudgmental, respectful environment where the children were encouraged for their own creative process. This comic book is the outcome of 13 day long workshop with 61 children directly affected by armed conflict including child soldiers with 22 girls and 39 boys. CWIN, Child Society Nepal (Biratnagar), Saath Saath, Astha, Budhanilkantha School, Concern Nepal and HimRights brought the participants for this process. The participants were from Jhapa, Morang, Udaypur, Bhojpur, Sindhupalchok, Makwanpur, Bara, Kavre, Bhaktapur, Kathmandu, Ramechhap, Rautahat, Salyan, Banke, Jajarkot, Rukum, Bajhang, and Kailali.

Some of the leading contributors from earlier comic book, “Farewell to Firearms” were involved in making of “Path to Reconciliation” too. There were some remarkable aspects of this workshop. The workshop proved to be a significant event not only in preparing this comic book but also brought about positive changes in the participants. In the workshop a boy who lost his father during the conflict period when he introduced him said he will avenge his father’s death. On
the fifth day he said, “If you take revenge it generates cycle of revenge and avenge, thus, have to take the path of forgiveness and reconciliation” many shared their transformation during the workshop; furthermore, would talk to their families to prevent further violence and revenge. They realized revenge is not the solution. This workshop was also a healing experience for them as they were able to share their experiences, generate empathy and compassion, and regain their childhood. By the end of the program they were able to transcend all boundaries to create friendship amongst victims from both sides conflict.

Finally, the 11 years of violent insurgency gave way to peace. The People’s Movement 2006 and Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the political parties set the path for peace. Thus, people have hopes for peace. But in over decade long insurgency, thousands of people lost their lives, thousands are still missing, and more have been displaced. Many children were deprived of their fundamental rights such as basic right to life, education and the right to spend their childhood with their family. Many were recruited in People’s Liberation Army (PLA) where some were forced to carry arms. Due to cases of murders, violence including sexual, abductions, and displacements, people within community feel they need to take revenge. For those who lost family members, victims of violent torture, became disabled, lost their property and/or displaced unless their feelings of revenge is not going to end, realization of sustainable peace is not a possibility. Furthermore, if structural violence which
is one of the major root causes of conflict is not addressed the armed conflict may reoccur. This comic book is prepared with the objectives to facilitate and smoothen reintegration process of the conflict-affected children in their community and set path for reconciliation. We hope their ideas in this comic book will be used as an innovative tool on reconciliation in Nepal’s peace process.

The workshop was divided into three different phases. In the first phase, the children affected by armed conflict were assigned to express their experiences through poems, personal and other stories. Those who could not write or did not want to did it orally. They were also asked to draw anything of their interest. Next facilitators provided training on root causes and impact of conflict, structural violence, revenge cycle, concepts on reconciliation; they were given training on principles of drawing and comic book. In the second phase, the children were assigned to write dialogues and drawings based on their experiences during armed conflict. The facilitators and the participants prepared sequential theme of the story on the basis of their written work and orally expressed feelings. In the third phase, the story, dialogue, drawing of the story was finalized.

In this context, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all participants who created this comic book. We are unable to disclose the names of the children despite their major contribution for this creation as some children felt security threats. We are very grateful
to all the organizations mentioned above who are instrumental to bring all these wonderful and dynamic participant to this workshop. Our heartfelt thanks goes to Watchlist who supported production of both the comic books, Farewell to Firearms and Path to Reconciliation. Similarly we extend our thanks to Save the Children Alliance for their financial support. Likewise, we extend our thanks to Mr. Rajesh Manandhar and Mr. Ramesh Kumar Poudel for their child friendly trainings on artwork and conflict transformation respectively. Similarly, we thank Search for Common Ground for providing resource person Ms. Balika Chaudhary. We would also like thank others who were major part of this process, day and night, namely Mr. Rajan Khadka, facilitator, Ms. Anita Shakya, psychosocial counselor, all staff of HimRights and volunteers- Evelyn Shakya, Nikita Shakya, Ojaswi Pandey, Siddhartha Shakya and all others who helped to make this into a grand success.

Finally, there are various means to reconciliation. We hope this comic book will serve an instrumental role to establish new and peaceful Nepal.

Anjana Shakya
Chairperson
Suntali, Harke and their parents are struggling to survive. Although Suntali and Harke are sibling they are like friends.

We're having difficulty even with food and clothing. We have to buy a sewing machine.

We have to burrow money from village chief, but need to buy it.

School days are really nice is it not?

Yes! It is!!
One day Suntali’s father on his way home from market met their teacher.

In the evening, Suntali’s parents are talking about their children. Her father is sewing a shirt and her mother fixing button on another shirt.

Namaste, Mr. Narayan, How are Suntali and Harke doing in school?

Saila dai, you are very lucky! Both are doing very well in their studies.

Suntali’s mother! I met Mr. Narayan yesterday. He said our children are doing very well.

Oh Really! It’s good news.
Both brother and sister are serious in their studies.

Did you finish all your homework?

Yeah I did and you?

Yeah, I’ve finished them too.

Oh! We’ve almost reached school.
As Suntali and Harke are from lower caste they are mistreated by students from upper caste.

Can you give me water sister?

You, stay away! you’ll touch us.

Wait for a while.

Look at those shameless people!

Hey! stand further away, you’ll touch us

We too are people like others but why do they mistreat us as untouchable pariah and dislike us.
Suntali and Harke are playing in their porch. Their parents are discussing about household matters.

Next morning Suntali is on her way to the temple.

Com’ on!
Let’s skip

Nope I am going to play with my car.

Ok but go early in the morning.

Mom, can I go to temple tomorrow morning?
As Suntali comes close to the temple, the priest screams at her to return back.

Curse you!! First thing in the morning I have to see your face. If you go in the temple will be impure.

When she returns home, she narrates how the priest mistreated and screamed at her on her way to temple.

Mom! Mom! The priest didn’t let me enter the temple again. For no good reason, why does he scream at us. Why can’t we get in?

Dad, Why don’t they let us in?

What can we do? This is our Karma. Go and worship in our own worshipping place.
Suntali cries and murmurs to herself from the pain she was not allowed to enter the village temple.

Why can't I worship in the temple? Am I not a human being?

Suntali gets angry with the Priest and the so called upper caste people who looked down upon her. The incident raised lots of questions in her mind.

Why do the people of this village look down upon us and let us not touch water?
While lots of questions are being raised in their minds. A college student from same village returns home for holidays. He decides to visit Suntali and Harke as their home is on his way.

He calls Suntali and Harke from the road as he approaches their home.

Hmmm...!! Suntali and Harke may be in their home! Let me find out how they are doing?

Hey, Suntali! hey Harke! hey Saila dai! Nobody seems to be home.
Harke and Suntali welcomes him.

Oh! When did you come? Please sit
Suntali, Harke! How’s your studies?

It’s going on well. But we feel very hurt because people in village and school discriminate us as from low caste.

why do we have to face all these??
Oh really! How can we do so?

To be united, a party has been formed called CPN Maoist. If we get involved we can abolish it.

This is an oppressive tradition initiated by exploitative feudalists. United we can abolish the system.

So how can we get in this party?

Oh really! How can we do so?
Maoist has formed People’s Liberation Army to free Dalits too. You can join them and take revenge on those who oppressed you.

But we are still young and going to school. Would they admit us?
Oh! It's getting late. I'm leaving.

Of course, you can. There are many of your age in People Liberation Army. They are carrying guns to fight against oppressors.

Ok, see you again.
After the discussion with the college student, Suntali and Harke want to join PLA.

We should join Maoists party and take revenge on those who oppressed us.

Yeah, I want to join the party and take revenge on Laxman sahu (elite) for his insults.

Is it not time to sleep?

yes, let’s do!

After they discussed to join the Maoists, they do their homework through late hours.
One morning a platoon of Maoists PLA had come to their schools for recruitment. After long walk they reached the school just before the morning assembly bell rang. Comrades, we should enroll more students in PLA. Hurry up, comrades! Else the students will go to their classes. Yes, if we can recruit these students we can increase number in short period. If we reach during the assembly we can put our views to all the students.
the students are ready for pray as usual.

As the pray is over, the Peoples Liberation Army platoon enters the school premises.

Shriman Gambhir Nepali …

We salute to our friends from Peoples Liberation Army!!
In the school premises the Maoist commander appeals students to join Peoples Liberation Army. 6/7 students show interest to join them.

Along with the interested students including Suntali and Harke PLA leaves for their camp.

Friends!! You are the agents of change. If you want to end injustice, inequality and discrimination existing in our country, We appeal you to join Peoples Liberation Army.

Who amongst you wants to join Peoples Liberation Army?

Comrade !! Where is the camp? What are we going to do there?

We want to

It takes a day’s walk to the camp. You have to take training to fight against feudalists and exploiters.
Suntali and Harke participate in military training. They find it very difficult when they had to go through tough trainings.

Uuff! Training… its damn difficult!! My hands are very tired running with gun.

Harke, my palm is getting raw from climbing these poles.

My ear drum seems to burst while firing.
After dinner Saroj, Suntali, Pukuli and Mohammad Khan gather in their camps. They share their past sad experiences.

Saroj tell me! Why did you join the Maoist Army?

When I was sick my father mortgaged our house to get some loan from a land lord. They said we could not pay back and seized the property; I joined PLA to take revenge against him.
My father died before he could make his citizenship that’s why I couldn’t get it either and thus unable to go for foreign employment. To get my rights I joined Maoists.

My parents left me with my father’s brother and went to my mother’s brother but on the way they were shot by royal army in the suspicion of Maoists. However my father’s brother tried to forcefully get me married at the age of 16. That’s why I am forced to join PLA.

Mohammad what about you?

Pukuli why did you join?
In combat dress after completion of the training, Suntali, Harke and their friends return home to take revenge against those who have insulted them. On the way home, they discussed about ways to take revenge.

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We have to ask for more donations from landlords

when I remember the priest it makes me mad. I’ll straighten him with this gun.

I still remember vividly how that priest used to insult us.

We will flog him

The priest must be punished, he stopped my sister from entering the temple.
Suntali and Harke arrive in their village. They demand Rs. 50,000 from Laxman Sahu who oppressed them.

You saved your life by giving the amount we demanded but if you inform the police, result is not going to be nice.

Ayaa!! Please spare me.

Suntali, please forgive me. I didn't know.

Comrade, flog him 15-20 times.

They reached the temple to thrash the priest in their zeal to take revenge.
Maoists commander calls its cadres for preparation to attack Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) Barrack.

Suntali, Harke and others move to attack RNA barrack. Their heart races as this was their first attack.

Comrades! We have orders to attack RNA barrack. Get prepared for it.

Oh! my goodness!! How will be the war!!
They both seem very terrified.

On the way, the commander trains them on attack skills.

May be I’ll be arrested !! or whatever

First time in the war, may be I will be killed !!!

Comrades! we have to attack from all directions
RNA armies are in alert position in barrack.
Once the Maoists platoon reaches the barrack the commander orders to attack.

Harke gets terrorized seeing the destruction of the barrack, burning vehicles, armies falling from gunshots and cries of injured.
The clash goes on for a long time. Commanders from both sides shouts provocative commands to encourage their platoon and discourage their enemy.

Shoot! Shoot the Maoist terrorists!!

Shoot the royal bastards!!

Attack!! Attack!!
no terrorists should escape

Attack!! Attack!!
Suntali and Harke are captured by RNA from different fronts. Both were blind folded and separately taken to the barrack. They both had no idea about each other’s situation.

Hold her tight! She might escape!! Take her straight to the barrack!!!

Please don’t do anything to me, I will walk myself!!

Please don’t do anything to me

Shut up! Walk ahead!!
Blind folded Suntali and Harke turned black and blue with fear.

May be, they will kill me!
I will not be able to meet my parents. What must have happened to Harke?

Oh! my god! they will kill me. May be Suntali got shot? Our parents must be searching for us.
RNA takes captured Suntali and Harke in different vans to the barrack

I don’t know anything.

Where are your friends?

Where're they taking me and to what extent torture me?
When they reach the barrack Harke is tortured. In the army custody Suntali gets raped.

Tell us what's the plan for next attack?

Help! Help! Leave me alone

Ah! I'm dying! I don't know anything?

You aren't going to tell us, than get more of this.

Damn you! you scream for help, you have no problem going with 10 terrorists now you pretend to have problem.
Suntali has not been able to move from rape and torture but still she is blind folded, chained, both hands and legs, and her mouth taped. She silently promised to take revenge against the army who tortured her.

As soon as I am released I will take revenge on RNA for the rape and torture.

I am not going leave the demons who tortured and electrocuted me.
In the army custody Suntali and Harke feels very home sick.

Poor Harke, is he dead or alive? Probably, I won’t meet him again.

My Poor Sister! is she alive or killed in the clash or disabled?

My parents must have searched for us a lot. What they must be doing?

Oh! they must have cried a lot for us? When will I be free?
Distressed displaced people from armed conflict are found everywhere. Daily shut-downs and strikes have destroyed education system.

The country situation is developing differently. The Maoist insurgency has spread throughout the nation. As a result, internally displaced people became a huge problem.

I had to leave my village because of Maoist accusation as a spy. I’ll join the royal army to straighten them.

How would I survive?

Where'll I go?

Father, where are we going?

When will the schools reopen?
Suppressed by Maoists or government, displaced people moved to district headquarters and to other safe places.

Many innocent people become disabled from armed conflict.

Even when I said we can't afford to pay the demanded donations I was forced to leave the village.

I had to lose my leg in the clash. How will I survive now?

Father which school do I join?
The news of killing and violence sometimes made the governments happy at other times the Maoists.

In Dang clash, ten terrorists have been killed.

Wow! 30 RNA armies have been killed.
People are fed up with daily clash news, of killing, murder and destruction in radio, TV and other media sources.

Explosion in Thwang, Ropla this morning, has killed five children.

Oh! Again three people have been killed in mine explosion in Darchula Bazaar.

Clashes occur daily. Is there no means to stop this war.

Friend! How do you think the armed conflict will end in this country?

I guess dialogue is the only way to solve this problem.
The armed conflict is all over the country. Peace talks begin amongst the political parties to end the conflict peacefully.

Look! How long are we going to fight in this manner, we should talk.

We soon need to finalize date for Constitution Assembly (CA) election

First, we should have peaceful people’s movement

Yes, first we should have united people’s movement and then CA

All the political parties should make consensus on the future direction of the country.
The international communities put pressure on political parties too for peaceful solution of the armed conflict and establish democracy in the country.

For peaceful resolution of the armed conflict in Nepal, there should be dialogue amongst rebels, government and other political parties.

There is no other alternative.

That’s right.

There should be roundtable discussion and dialogue for peace process.
Discussion starts between heads of major political parties.

Without untied people’s movement there is no possibility to end the autocratic government. Thus we need to initiate as soon as possible.

You’re right! We have to start the movement right now!

Let’s find out what are peoples’ thought on this.
The major political parties fighting for democracy agree for united people’s movement.

All the active political parties need to unite to end the autocratic rule

We have to be united to create a stromy movement

Hon’ble public, together, we need to start movement against autocratic rule

Yes we are in too, in the movement against the Autocratic rule.
The people’s movement quickly spread all over the country after the consensus between CPN(Maoists) and other parties fighting for democracy.
The movement also heats up in Terai ‘Madhesh’
The nationwide peaceful movement for 19 days forced the despotic ruler to kneel down.

As of now I give power to the people.

After the despotic ruler gave up, sense of joy was amongst all political parties.

Finally the peaceful movement forced power onto people

For sure peace is going to come.
Long Live
Long Live
Long Live
Long Live
Long Live our Martyrs!
Long Live !
Democracy
Long Live Democracy
people's unity
Long Live people's unity
Everyone in the country celebrates the victory of Jana Andolan, April 06, in Himalaya, Hills and Terai.

United, we have achieved this movement. Himalaya, Hill, Terai no one is excluded.

Probably the demands of the Madhesh will be fulfilled too.
Maoists militia celebrate the news of end of autocratic rule.

Comrades! People succeeded in fighting the tyrannical rule.

Yes comrade! This victory is for all of us.
One morning the security guards inform Suntali and her friends of their release.

Friends! I never thought I’ll be ever set free.

In the other side of the same barrack the security guard informs Harke and his friends of their release.

Wow! as soon as I'm free I’ll go directly to my home.

Wow! I’ll be able to go home after a long time.

Do u know?
Today you all are going to be released!
Both Suntali and Harke have grown older in their respective imprisonments in the same barrack.

How are my parents doing? May be they won’t recognize me? Where is Harke? All are to be released!
On the day of release two army personnel brought Suntali and Harke from their respective custody to the lawn in front of the barrack.

Today, all of them are going to be freed.

Yes sir! we got orders from higher authorities.

Suddenly when both brother and sister saw each other couldn't recongize

Oh! Aren’t you Harke!

Wow! Suntali, sis! You too were here!

Once they recognized, they hugged each other.

Sister we’ll never separate again

Yes brother
International Red Cross Committee (ICRC) and human rights activists came to receive and handover of prisoners.

The government is releasing all the Maoists prisoners in the presence of ICRC and human rights organizations.

Congratulations! now you are all free!

Representatives from ICRC takes the responsibility of released, Suntali, Harke and others to take them homes.

Come with us, we’ll make arrangements to take you home.

In this happy occasion, Smile!!
Look! Mom is washing pots! father is spinning rope

Oh! What a beautiful moment! I never thought this day will ever come!

I’m dying to reach home

They reach their home Thawang, Rolpa with human rights defenders and ICRC.

Suntali and Harke drives to Rolpa with ICRC.
The representatives of ICRC hands over Suntali and Harke to their parents

Namaste, here are your children.
Three years after disappearance, their parents have lost hope of ever seeing them again. They were happily surprised and hugged them.

Their parents were surprised and happy to find their kids back. They too were very happy to see them.

My goodness! Suntali and Harke! We cried for you, day and night.

Suntali’s mother! you could see beard, moustache line on Harke and Suntali too has grown up.

Yes dear! I don’t know yet, whether this is dream or reality

Sis! we’ll never leave our parents, again, Ok?
Certainly she must have stayed with armies.

You know! Suntali was in army barrack for three years!!

Do you think she is still virgin after three years?

it’s embarrassing for our village!

Certainly she must have stayed with armies.
The back biting against Suntali continues in the water place and in the neighborhood.

Look at that shameless girl! She feels no shame.

Yeah!! I agree.

How can we think of her as human being with no same

She should not be allowed to live in the village.
Suntali gets furious and frustrated of what was being said about her.

Finally I got to return to my village but people backbite against me for no good reason.

Harke is admitted to his old school, on the way he talks to himself.

After so many years I am going to school. Which grade must Shankare and Pema be?

Even his old friends treat him as an outcast.

Look!! that boy, isn’t that Harke??

He had joined Maoists. He is back in school again.
Internally displaced people returned to their village after the peace agreement. To improve relationship between victims and perpetrators, human rights organizations, journalists, and civil society start programs on identification of truth, facts, and forgiveness.

Our party plans to return the seized properties and provide compensation to create a positive environment and peace in the village.

so, are we really going to get back our home, land, and properties?
In Truth, Restitution and Forgiveness Program facilitated by mediators, discussion starts between people displaced because of seized property and Maoists, Thawang, Rolpa.

Based on our party instructions we announce to return the seized land and property of Dambere.

We apologize for the difficulties that has occurred from capturing his land.
After the Maoists announced to return the seized property the mediator asked Damber Pun to share his views.

After Maoists captured all my property I had to sustain my livelihood for three years as wage laborer.

Although you are going to return my home, land and property, you have to give me some money as compensation and promise that you will never threaten me in anyway.
the local Maoist leader asks for forgiveness for their behavior and hardships Damber and his family had to go through after their property had been seized.

Mr. Pun, we ask for forgiveness for the hardships you and your family had to go through. We assure you we’ll never threaten you or seize your property. We reassure you of this.

Now you will surely forgive us, won’t you, Mr. Pun?

Whatever has happened in the past I got my property back and some compensation. Moreover you have regretted your past activities that’s why I forgive you from bottom of my heart.
The Madhesis started the movement after the people’s movement II as the government did not address their rights.

Federal government is a must!

Ensure our rights to citizenship.

long live Democracy!

Guarantee, the rights of Madhesis

We need to raise arms for the rights of Madhesis

In the name to ensure ethnic demands armed groups surfaces

Various ethnic groups started their movement to ensure their demands.

Hold Proportionate election

Ensure our rights to citizenship.

We need to raise arms for the rights of Madhesis

Mass Meeting
Ramabati Chaudhary from Bardiya was left in limbo, lost all her family members and home during Maoist insurgency. Ramabati thinks of parents, brothers and sisters.

Oh! my god! How am I going to live all by myself?

Last night I saw my parents, brother and sister in my dream.
As in Thawang, Rolpa truth and reconciliation programs are organized in Ramabati Chaudhary’s village.

Today, You have the opportunity to talk about all your sufferings.

I thought of it too.
As soon as the program started she was given time to talk.

My parents, my brothers and sister got killed by the royal army during conflict when they surrounded and attacked my village in the suspicion of hiding Maoists militants.

My house got totally destroyed. Luckily I lived but orphaned. Where to live, what to eat, who will help me?
During the program, the mediator asks Chief District Officer (CDO) to speak on behalf of the government.

I take the responsibility of incident of killing of Ramabati’s family during armed conflict. Furthermore, I would like to arrange for orphaned Ramabatis’ food and shelter.

As a compensation I commit to transfer Rs. 500,000 in her name in the bank. Through this program I would like to inform it if she wants to go school or vocational trainings it will be arranged. Thank you.
After the commitment made by CDO for Ramabati, the mediator again asks her to speak.

Nothing could fulfill the void created by loss of my family members but the government provided compensation; arranged for food and shelter.

As the CDO promised for my education or training, through this program I would like to forgive the government and I hope such incidence will never occur again. Thank you.
Similar program on truth, identification of facts and forgiveness is organized in Suntali and Harke’s village. Suntali and Harke along with others go to participate in the program.
The program organizer asks Suntali to talk about her suffering. In the program Priests, Laxman Sahu and others are present too.

One day I was going to the temple and the priest would not let me worship because I am untouchable.

Additionally we were discriminated by so called upper caste people, to avenge the insults I joined the Maoists army.

Thus the priests and Laxman Sahu has to apologize. Thank you.
After Suntali it was priests turn to speak.

It’s been our tradition not to allow dalits to enter temples. That’s why I stopped her from entering. I have screamed and insulted other dalits too. I apologise to Suntali, Harke and others. God belongs to everyone. That’s why as of today I will not stop anyone from entering the temple.
It was hard for Suntali and Harke to accept that the priest has realized his mistake and asked for forgiveness from his heart in front of all in the people.
After the priest publicly apologized, Laxman Sahu felt he needs to repent for his mistakes in the past in front of everybody. At the same time the mediator calls him to speak.

Due to existing traditional belief in the past I have mistreated and oppressed dalits.

Today I have realized that I have made a mistake. I too would like to ask forgiveness for my past behaviors.
When the villagers saw priests and Laxman Sahu realize their mistakes and asked for forgiveness they felt rays of hope for future.

Now we see the trend to end oppressive practices in our village.

There is possibility of our village to be role model in the country.
We are sorry for our past activities of hurting people and taking revenge against the priest, Laxman Sahu and others. We would like to ask for forgiveness from them as they have accepted their mistakes we have no anger towards them.
We did the right thing by accepting our mistakes. How long can we live with enmity and terror. But Laxman babu in this context people are going to raise the issue of the loan interest. Be flexible about it or you might get in trouble.
Another member of mediation team informs the discussions will be on the issue of Suntali’s character and her detention in army barrack and village gossips. She asks Suntali to speak on the issue.

During Maoist insurgency, I was captured by then RNA. I have heard Dadaghare Ba backbiting and questioning my character.

Moreover, all the women in the village followed the futile backbiting of Dadaghare Ba. It has really hurt my feelings.
After she completes what she had to say she raises a question to Dadaghare Ba.

As Dadaghare ba the was one who started rumor about my character I would like to question him in front of the village. Was it my fault to get arrested during armed conflict?

Do you suspect the character of all the women who had to be in detention. Based on suspicion you can’t say whatever you want.
The mediator asks Dadaghare ba to speak his version.

Now I would like to request Dadaghare ba to speak on this issue.

Dadaghare ba puts his views...

In our village the women folk even if they have to stay for a night they take companion with them. But you have been in custody for 3 years. That’s why I got suspicious.
On the other hand to be in army custody during that time was a reality. During the armed conflict, in army and other custodies, grave crime against humanity like rape was forced on women for revenge and to demoralize women. Thus, even if they had been supposedly tortured it will be unfair to question their character?

For positive reconciliatory environment one of the mediators shares her views.

I would like to take your permission to say something in front of you before you raise the issue of Suntali’s character. In our society, if a son stays away from home for any number of days, nobody suspects but if a daughter stays away even for a night people talk against her. This happens because of the prevalence of discrimination between sons and daughters.

On the other hand to be in army custody during that time was a reality. During the armed conflict, in army and other custodies, grave crime against humanity like rape was forced on women for revenge and to demoralize women. Thus, even if they had been supposedly tortured it will be unfair to question their character?
Suntali gets very mad for being personally attacked about her character. She directly questions Dadaghare ba.

Did you ever come to see my condition in the barrack? Otherwise what evidence do you have for your accusation?

The mediator intervenes before the discussion becomes too personal and Dandaghare ba answers Suntali’s question.

Suntali, please calm down! We are looking at ways for solution. This happened due to discriminatory practice between son and daughter in society. It takes time to change old ways.
Based on the earlier discussions and what mediator has said I realized there should not be discrimination between daughters and sons. Suntali I suspected you for no good reason. I ask for forgiveness.

Dadangahre ba apologized for his mistakes. This is like medicine to the wound in my heart. Thus I have no feelings of enmity towards you.
The discussion program ends.

I’d like to thank Suntali, Harke, Priest, Laxman Sahu and others for their participation in the program. I think this program has given opportunity to clarify with each other. Today’s program has come to an end.
Suntali and Harke in cheerful mood after the reconciliation
After the truth and reconciliation program is conducted, people felt hopeful there will be peace if this type of program is conducted all over the country.
Himalayan Human Rights Monitors (HimRights) is a non-governmental, non-partisan, non-profit organization committed to defending the rights of poor, marginalized and socially excluded communities and individuals, with special focus on women, children and youth. HimRights works in affiliation with all major human rights institutions based in Nepal and abroad to monitor, report, document and respond to human rights violation. HimRights informally formed in the early 1990s hosted INHURED International and Beyond Beijing Commitee (BBC) was officially registered in 1999. The current HimRights team consists of seven board members, 30 staff and 17 surveillance team members, including lawyers, teachers, journalists, anthropologists, conflict and development specialists, social workers and human rights activist. Together they bring decades of individual and collective professional experience to HimRights lending to strong organizational credential and a national and international reputation in the areas of human rights, trafficking, good governance, conflict mitigation and peace building. HimRights focus on Minorities (indigenous Janajati and Dalit) uprooted, displaced, specially-abled, marginalized with special focus on women, children and youth, who transcend all categories. Its vision is to realize international solidarity towards human rights promotion where social, cultural, economic, civil and political justice prevail and people live with respect and dignity. The mission is strive to promote justice, equity and inclusion to ensure the human rights of marginalized people and our goal will lead to greater social justice and recognition of human rights instruments, gender equity and social inclusion. Our work will be contribution towards enhancing true participation in democratic processes at all levels.

**Strategic Direction**

- To monitor and document rights, peace, justice and development findings to better advocate and lobby for structural and policy changes to align with human rights instruments.
- To coordinate observation, monitoring, training and research on all human rights conventions, to establish and strengthen national, regional and international mechanisms and linkages for enhanced realizations of human rights, rescue and support.
- To advocate against human trafficking at community, national and international levels, to reduce the incidence of human trafficking and unsafe migration within and outside of Nepal.
- To uphold the right of self-determination and respect for diverse and marginalized groups to ensure they are allowed to live dignified lives.
- To protect uprooted and displaced persons’ right to migrate as well as return to their place of origin, discourage their discrimination.
- To protect life and facilitate mediation between conflicting parties for enhanced conflict transformation and sustained peace building at local and national levels.