



FEDERAL NEPAL: THE PROVINCES

SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILES
OF THE SEVEN PROVINCES

Governance
 Facility

SEPTEMBER 2018

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Federal Nepal: Socio-Cultural Profiles of the Seven Provinces is the second report in the series on federalism produced by the Governance Facility dedicated to exploring the challenges and opportunities of federalism in relation to good governance, values of accountability, responsiveness, and inclusion. This report is one of the several outputs of the Governance Facility produced through collaboration with experts, institutions, and organisations in Nepal.

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About the Governance Facility

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FEDERAL SERIES:

- 1) Federal Nepal: The Provinces
Comparative Analysis of Economic and
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- 2) Federal Nepal: The Provinces
Socio-Cultural Profiles of the Seven Provinces. (2018)

FOREWORD

This report is the second in a series designed to support Nepal's federal restructuring process. Its focus is socio-cultural information about each of the seven provinces, organized around the following themes: socio-cultural diversity; human capabilities; migration; political representation; and socio-political dynamics.

As with the first report in the series, the data and analysis are intended to support policy-makers and implementers with access to reliable data as an important input into their policy dialogue. Provincial policy-makers in particular may find this a useful tool when considering the diversity in their provinces and while designing appropriate policies to respond to the challenges this poses. Without common empirical reference points, any policy dialogue can easily break down amidst uncertainties, speculations, and ungrounded position-taking.

This report, as with the previous one and those that will follow in the series, is intended to reduce such uncertainties, speculations, and ungrounded position-taking. It was prepared by experts with intensive, long-standing, and comprehensive knowledge of the issues. It was peer-reviewed by experts from across a wide spectrum. Its intention is to supply comparative provincial data. There is no intention to be prescriptive about how to use the data. This is up to Nepal's policy-makers and the citizens affected by those decisions.

The Governance Facility's approach in general is to support local knowledge production that can serve as a reference point for policy dialogues and equitable public decision-making. This report is in keeping with this practice.

On behalf of the Governance Facility's donors, we are pleased to share this as widely as possible and to receive feedback that can strengthen future reports.



Caroline Vandenabeele
Head, Governance Facility

CONTENTS

Foreword	6
List of abbreviations	11
CHAPTER I: RATIONALE FOR PROVINCIAL PROFILES	12
1.1 Background	13
1.2 Objective	13
1.3 Methodology	13
1.4 Limitations	14
CHAPTER II: PROVINCIAL PROFILES	16
2.1 Province One	19
2.2 Province Two	27
2.3 Province Three	35
2.4 Gandaki Province	42
2.5 Province Five	50
2.6 Karnali Province	58
2.7 Province Seven	66
CHAPTER III: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SEVEN PROVINCES	74
3.1 Basic structural data	76
3.2 Socio-cultural diversity by provinces	78
3.3 Human capability	79
3.4 Migration	80
3.5 Political representation	81
3.6 Socio-political dynamics	81
3.7 Conclusion	82

LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province One	21
Table 2.2	Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province One	22
Table 2.3	Election results of the three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province One (In number)	24
Table 2.4	HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province Two	30
Table 2.5	Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Two	31
Table 2.6	Election results of the three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Two (In number)	32
Table 2.7	HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province Three	38
Table 2.8	Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Three	39
Table 2.9	Election results of three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Three (In number)	40
Table 2.10	HDI and its constituent values by districts in Gandaki Province	45
Table 2.11	Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Gandaki Province	46
Table 2.12	Election results of three sphere of governments by major social groups in Gandaki Province (In number)	47

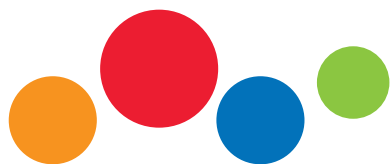
Table 2.13	HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province Five	53
Table 2.14	Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Five	54
Table 2.15	Election results of three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Five (In number)	55
Table 2.16	HDI and its constituent values by districts in Karnali Province	61
Table 2.17	Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Karnali Province	62
Table 2.18	Election results of three sphere of governments by major social groups in Karnali Province (In number)	63
Table 2.19	HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province Seven	69
Table 2.20	Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Seven	70
Table 2.21	Election results of three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Seven (In number)	71
Table 3.1	Geographic area by province	76
Table 3.2	Number of local government constituencies by province	77
Table 3.3	Number of provincial and federal constituencies	77
Table 3.4	Population distribution by age and sex by province	78
Table 3.5	Population by caste and ethnicity by province	79
Table 3.6	Human development index values by province	79
Table 3.7	Top and low 15 districts for migration by province	80

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Geographic map of Province One	19
Figure 2.2	Population by major social groups in Province One	20
Figure 2.3	Population by key language and religious groups in Province One	21
Figure 2.4	Geographic map of Province Two	27
Figure 2.5	Population by major social groups in Province Two	29
Figure 2.6	Population by key language and religious groups in Province Two	29
Figure 2.7	Geographic map of Province Three	35
Figure 2.8	Population by major social groups in Province Three	37
Figure 2.9	Population by key language and religious groups in Province Three	37
Figure 2.10	Geographic map of Gandaki Province	42
Figure 2.11	Population by major social groups in Gandaki Province	44
Figure 2.12	Population by key language and religious groups in Gandaki Province	44
Figure 2.13	Geographic map of Province Five	50
Figure 2.14	Population by major social groups in Province Five	52
Figure 2.15	Population by key language and religious groups in Province Five	52
Figure 2.16	Geographic map of Karnali Province	58
Figure 2.17	Population by major social groups in Karnali Province	60
Figure 2.18	Population by key language and religious groups in Karnali Province	60
Figure 2.19	Geographic map of Province Seven	66
Figure 2.20	Population by major social groups in Province Seven	68
Figure 2.21	Population by key language and religious groups in Province Seven	68
Figure 3.1	Geographic map of Nepal	75

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Constituent Assembly
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
DoFE	Department of Foreign Employment
ECN	Election Commission, Nepal
FEDO	Feminist Dalit Organization
FP	Federal Parliament
FPTP	First Past the Post
FWDR	Far-Western Development Region
GF	Governance Facility
GoN	Government of Nepal
HDI	Human Development Index
HoR	House of Representatives
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICG	International Crisis Group
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre
KIRDARC	Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre
LG	Local Government
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MWDR	Mid-Western Development Region
MWWS	Muslim Women Welfare Society
NEFIN	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
NFCC	National Fertility Care Center
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NLRF	National Land Rights Forum
NSAC	Nepal South Asia Center
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights in Nepal
PA	Provincial Assembly
SAWF	South Asian Women's Fund
SRPC	Shadow Report Preparation Committee
TAF	The Asia Foundation
UNCTN	United Nations Country Team in Nepal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
WCSD	Women and Children Service Directorate
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Centre



CHAPTER I

The Rationale for Provincial Profiles

1.1. Background

In the preamble of the Constitution of Nepal 2015 (“the Constitution” hereafter), Nepal is recognised as “a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural, and regionally diverse country”. In the same paragraph of the preamble, the Constitution expresses the commitment “to build an egalitarian society founded on the proportional [sic] inclusive and participatory principles in order to ensure economic equality, prosperity and social justice, by eliminating discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion and gender and all forms of caste-based untouchability”.

The Constitution also recalls Nepal’s history of democratic movements, especially noting the “historic people’s movement and armed conflict”, to promote progressive change and democratic inclusive representation. The Constitution acknowledges that issues of social diversity and inequality in representation on the basis of caste, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, and geographical remoteness have been central themes in Nepal’s history of political struggle. The explicit recognition by the Constitution of the discrimination against women, Dalits, Janajatis, Tharus, Muslims, Madhesis, sexual minorities, and other identities was, thus, a major milestone in Nepal’s political history.

Nepal has now entered into a three-sphere federal governance system. The elections of all three spheres of government were successfully held in 2017 as per the Constitution. The elections of the local governments (LGs) were first held in May, June, and September 2017. The elections of the provincial assemblies (PA) and the federal parliament (FP) were held together in November and December 2017. The elections have confirmed the establishment of the provincial governments as the new structure for political and administrative operations.

As highlighted in the preamble and reiterated in the directive principles, the restructuring of the country into the federal system has created a path to building an egalitarian society by eliminating discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion, gender, and sexual minorities among other identity markers. The restructuring of the country is especially geared towards upholding gender equality, social justice, and the principle of proportional participation in governance. To support these goals of inclusive democracy and federal restructuring, this publication seeks to provide relevant facts and figures related to socio-cultural and political aspects of the seven provinces.

1.2. Objective

In line with the commitments of the Constitution, the overall objective of the publication is to further support the constitutional provisions of inclusion and good governance in economic, social, cultural, and political spheres. The following up-to-date quantitative and qualitative information on socio-cultural and political aspects, accompanied by descriptive analyses of relevant patterns and trends, will be useful to planners and policy-makers of concerned institutions and stakeholders. By shedding light on some of the key socio-cultural and political aspects, as well as identifying gaps and opportunities, the publication seeks to facilitate an inclusive planning and design of policies and development interventions in the federal context.

1.3. Methodology

The publication came out of a collaborative effort between well-recognised scholars with extensive knowledge and hands-on experience on state restructuring, former member of the

State Restructuring Commission, and staff of the Governance Facility (GF). The publication was reviewed by Nepali academics and thematic experts for validation of facts and information.

The key socio-cultural and political issues for facilitating inclusive governance and development in the new federal structure were identified through a roundtable discussion with the following national thematic experts: Prof. Dr. Krishna Hachhethu, Mr. Madhu Raman Acharya, Dr. Khim Lal Devkota, Adv. Raju Chapagain, Mr. Sudeep Pokhrel, Mr. Aalok Pokhrel, and the GF's Senior Policy and Political Advisors Dr. Dinesh Pant and Mr. Ajay Das as well as the GF's Senior Management Team. The experts recognise that socio-cultural and political issues are vast and complex and vary according to the provincial contexts. In view of the scope of the study, the key issues have been narrowed down to five factors: 1) socio-cultural diversity, 2) human capabilities, 3) migration, 4) political representation, and 5) socio-political dynamics. All these factors interact with each other and have far-reaching social, political, and economic implications for enabling inclusive governance and development. Despite the prominence given to these five factors, the experts fully acknowledge that there are many other factors that need to be taken into account during planning and policy formulation. A detailed justification for the selection of these five factors is provided in chapter two.

During the roundtable discussion, the thematic experts discussed the sources of data and their usefulness in establishing and strengthening the provincial structures. The authors abstracted most data from the Census of 2011 and other censuses of the Government of Nepal (GoN). Disaggregation of Nepal's population by caste, ethnicity, language, religion, sex, and age were carried out as per the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) standard and with the support of CBS staff. The authors

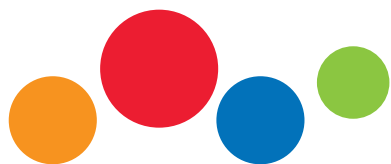
have rearranged those data by provinces. Similarly, the data related to migration were taken from various publications of CBS and the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE). Election results were obtained from the Election Commission, Nepal (ECN). The disaggregation of the election results by caste, ethnicity, and gender of the three spheres of government—federal, provincial, and local—were carried out by the authors in line with the caste and ethnic disaggregation by CBS and ECN. When the authors were uncertain about the caste and ethnicity of the elected representatives, they directly reached out to the representatives to confirm their caste and ethnicity. In cases where data was not available, the authors have cited the work of nationally recognised authors. These include renowned historians, sociologists, and economists, such as Mahesh Chandra Regmi, Dor Bahadur Bista, Chaitanya Mishra, Prayag Raj Sharma, Seira Tamang, and Janak Lal Sharma. Finally, the authors have also brought their own experiences and expertises to the range of issues covered in the publication. This presentation has been validated through interaction with various stakeholders.

1.4. Limitations

The authors recognise the immense challenge one confronts while capturing an all-round perspective on socio-cultural and political issues that are vast, complex, and at times contested. First, as the provincial structures are in the early phase of establishment, a diagnostic analysis is not the scope of this publication. This publication primarily aims to provide symptomatic and descriptive information that can indicate the direction the provincial structures are taking. The second challenge that this study had to contend with is the methodological difficulty of disaggregating elected representatives by caste and ethnicity, which is a complex endeavour in Nepal's

socio-political context. Although caste and ethnic identities are typically markers of recognition, the lines between caste and ethnicity can also get blurred due to various factors, including changing marriage relations. Increasingly, inter-caste marriages have also affected caste and ethnic identities. In the case of some elected women, it was unclear whether they had assumed the surnames of their spouses or were using their own birth surnames. Due to these reasons, there were uncertainties regarding caste or ethnic identification of some elected representatives. When information about the parents of certain elected representatives (especially those who

are married) was available, like in the case of PR results for House of Representatives (HoR) and Provincial Assembly (PA), the caste/ethnicity of elected members was identified through their surnames obtained by birth. This was done in order to generate consistent data as well as to recognise that policies of positive discriminations are designed to address the historical marginalisation based on the birth. Although the primary source of election results was the ECN, the results were also verified through data prepared by the Democratic Resource Center Nepal. While comparing the disaggregated data of election results with data generated by the latter report, the deviations were minimal.



CHAPTER II

Provincial Profiles

This chapter includes province-specific data and information along with relevant observations made by the authors. These profiles are intended to provide decision makers, key stakeholders, and development practitioners with key data and information on socio-cultural and political issues of the seven provinces. The five key areas included in the profiles are: 1) socio-cultural diversity, 2) human capabilities, 3) migration, 4) political representation, and 5) socio-political dynamics. As a diagnostic analysis is not the scope of this study, the chapter is intended to be indicative and symptomatic of the issues included in the profiles.

Socio-cultural diversity covers data on major caste and ethnic groups as well as their language and culture with a brief interpretive note. Equitable distribution of power and resources based on caste and ethnicity has been central to major political struggles in the past two decades. In line with this, the Constitution guarantees fundamental rights to equality and has provisions to address systemic exclusions faced by historically marginalised groups. To that end, an enabling environment for equitable representation and inclusive development in the new federal system is crucial. Information on the linguistic structure includes data on population distribution by mother tongue as per the National Population and Housing Census of 2011. The nature and dynamics of cultural practices in Nepal, as elsewhere, are rooted in specific geographical, economic, and political histories and structures (Nepal South Asia Center [NSAC], 1998). The key features of particular cultural identities, as they define the parameters of the provinces, have been highlighted under the section on cultural structure. For the purpose of the publication, we define “culture” as a sum of practised religions, customs, rituals, and festivals. Effort has been made to introduce the major cultures of each province under this section. Religion is also taken into account as a major factor in shaping culture.

As Hinduism is the largest religion of Nepal and spread throughout the country, a brief account of Hinduism is provided here in order to not repeat the same description for each province. Local manifestations of Hinduism will, however, be presented under the province-specific section. As per the Census 2011, Hindus make up 81.3% of the total population of the country (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2012). Hinduism has a strong influence on the complex social structures of Nepal. Until Nepal was declared a secular nation by the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007, it was referred to as a Hindu Kingdom. The concept of Sanātana Dharma (eternal tradition) as well as the synthesis of various regional customs practised in South Asia together define Hinduism as a religion (Zimmer, 1952). In Nepal, the religious observation of Dashain festival and Kul Puja (worshipping of ancestors) are the most prevalent practices of Hinduism. Dashain is celebrated by Hindus as a major festival by worshipping the Goddess Durga and receiving blessing from elders. Kul Puja takes different forms according to clan and caste (Mishra, 2011). The hierarchical caste system, which divides Hindus into four broad categories of caste as outlined in the Hindu scripture Manusmriti, is another key feature of Hinduism that many argue has laid the ideological and historical foundation for caste-based discrimination (Ahuti, 2010; Ambedkar, 2016; Sharma, 1983). The other major religions in Nepal according to the Census of 2011 are Buddhism (9.0%), Islam (4.4%), Kirantism (3.0%), Christianity (1.4%), Sikhism (0.2%), and Jainism (0.1%), while 0.6% follow other or no religions (CBS, 2012).

The second area under human capabilities looks at provincial indicators from the capabilities approach, that is, measures of objective conditions and opportunities available to people for achieving well-being (Nussbaum, 2001). The capacity and freedom to choose and to act are key aspects of this approach (Sen, 1997), but what constitutes the set of capabilities is complex since determining

which functionings and capabilities are important, and which are trivial are dependent on context. In this publication, we have used health, education, and income as proxies to measure capabilities due to the availability of data on these indices.

Migration has been an important socio-economic feature of Nepal. Nepal's economic and administrative reform projects have direct implication for the movement of populations. These projects have also impacted how different cultures interact as people from different socio-cultural backgrounds come together through the process of migration. Therefore, close attention needs to be paid to these processes for an inclusive and holistic development of federal Nepal. We cover the latest trend of migration from rural to urban areas and migration for foreign employment. The section on internal migration also covers the percentage of in- and out-migrant population in the districts. In terms of migration from Nepal to foreign countries for employment, we present data related to the number of people who have received labour permits for foreign employment.

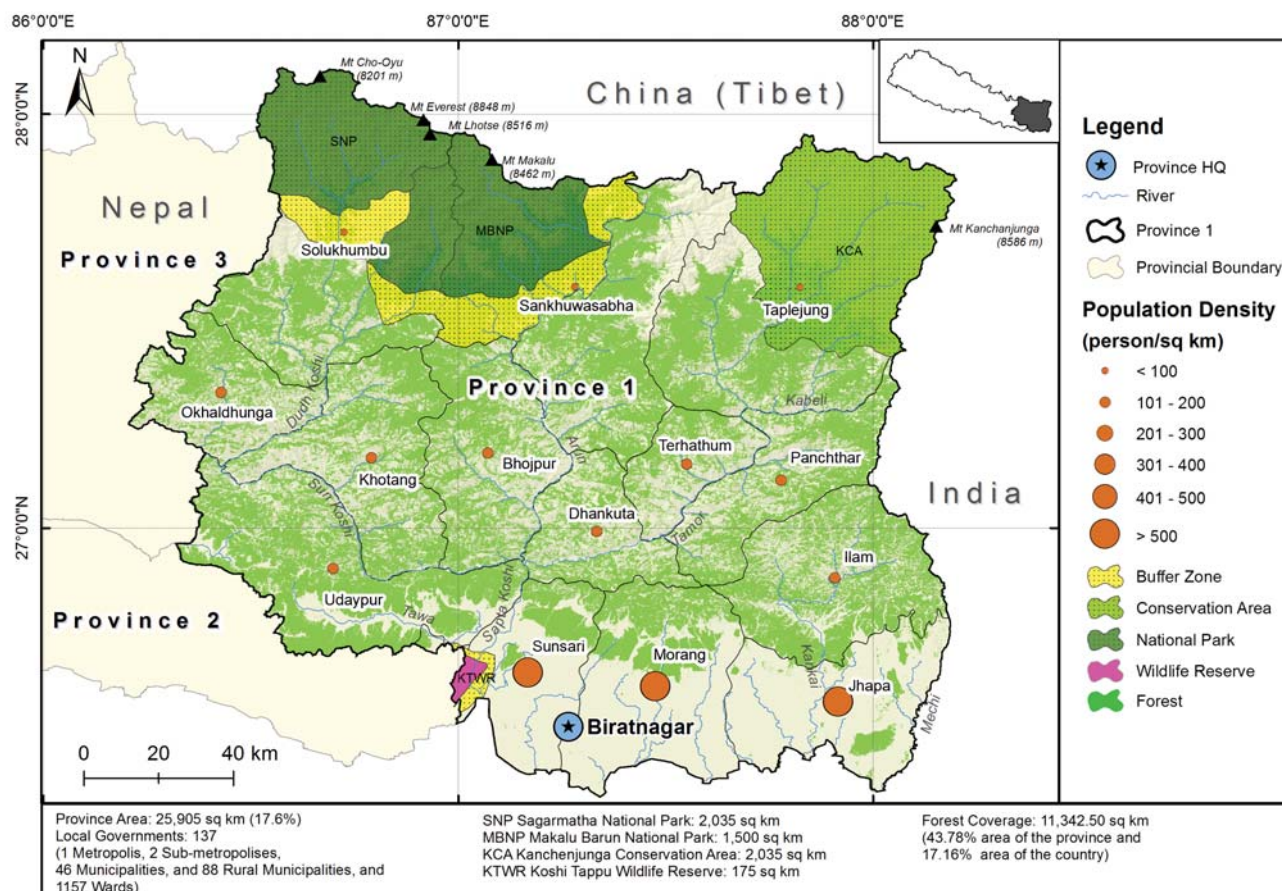
The factors related to political representation cover the analysis of election results in all the three spheres of government in view of the principle of proportional inclusion in the Constitution as well as the election laws. The level of representation in terms of caste/ethnic groups and gender is useful in understanding the effectiveness and degree of implementation of provisions related to proportional representation. The results under analysis include the election of the HoR through the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral representation system, the PA through both

the FPTP and PR, and heads of the Local Governments (LGs). The PR results for the HoR is not presented in the provincial profile because they are not based on the number of electoral constituencies in the provinces. For the PR election, the entire country is taken as one constituency and the number of seats a political party secures is determined based on total votes collected by each political party.

The final factor the publication considers is socio-political dynamics. Provinces are diverse in terms of socio-political issues raised and the mobilisation of socially marginalised groups. Information on major demands and mobilisation made by various social groups can help planners and policy-makers to be cognisant of social discords that may intensify if they are not addressed in a timely manner (Anderson, 1999). This section takes into consideration the socio-political mobilisation of women, Dalit, Janajati, Madhesi, and other marginalised groups wherever possible. Mobilisation of these social groups by political parties is, however, beyond the scope of this publication. Similarly, there has not been any systematic documentation of the various social movements across the country, and the information in this section has been compiled from disparate sources. We also recognise that the space that women's social movements have been given in this publication is relatively inadequate, and this is partly due to the limitations of the methodology applied to this publication. The reliance on mainstream publications and reports for the coverage of the women's movement can "reinforce the premise that the representation of the Nepali Woman is a single overarching category" (Tamang, 2009, pp. 66). Finally, the authors have used their years of field observation to qualify and fine tune the information presented in this section.

2.1. Province One

Figure 2.1. Geographic map of Province One



2.1.1. Socio-cultural diversity

Province One is socio-culturally and linguistically diverse. Khas Arya, Janajati, Dalit, Madhesi, and Muslim are the major caste and ethnic groups. According to the Census of 2011, Janajatis—including Tarai Janajati—make up the largest group in Province One, comprising 50% of the total population (CBS, 2012). The Janajati population is not a homogenous group and it includes culturally diverse ethnic groups. Of the various Janajati ethnic groups, Rai and Limbu communities are predominant in the province, with 11.3% and 8% of the total population respectively. Other major hill Janajati communities of the province are Tamangs,

Magars, and Newars. The Khas Aryas make up the second largest group (27.8%), followed by Madhesis (7.5%), Hill Dalits (6.1%), Tharus (4.2%), Madhesi Dalits (3.2%), Muslims (3.6%), and others (0.7%).

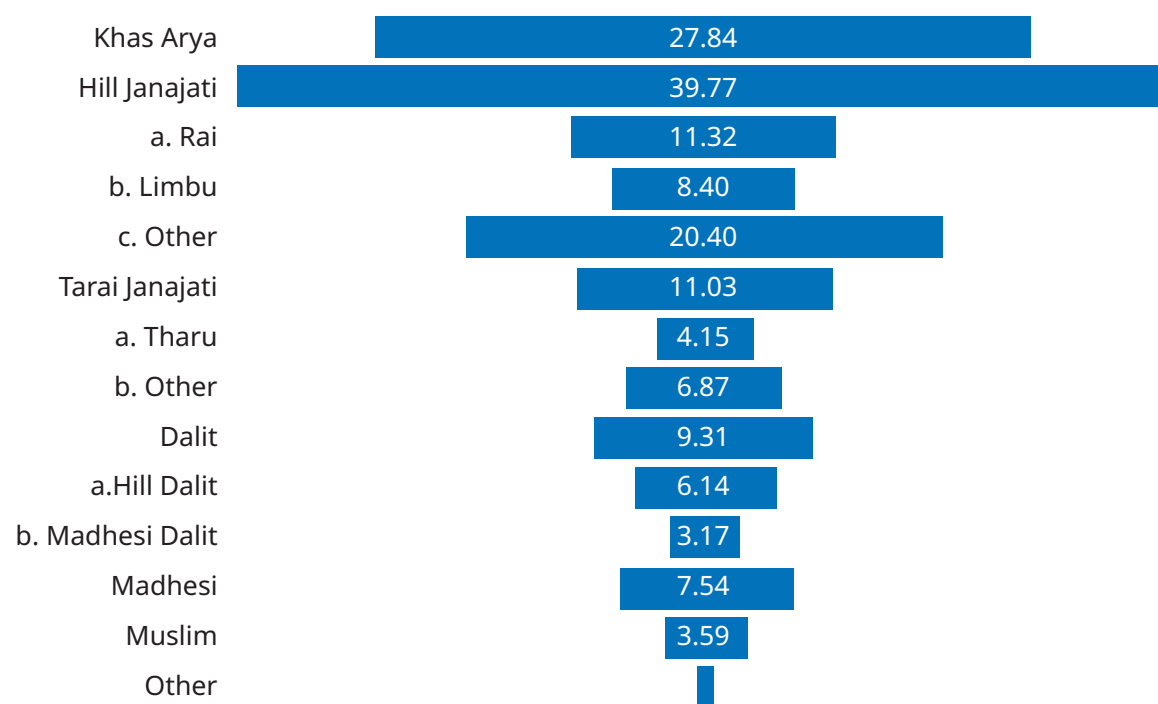
The Census of 2011 notes that Khas Nepali is spoken as mother tongue by 43.1% of the total population, making it the largest linguistic group in the province. Maithili (11.2%), followed by Limbu (7.3%), Tharu (3.9%), Urdu (2.8%), Rai (2.7) and Rajbanshi (2.7%). The remaining 26.4% speak other languages as their mother tongue. The percentage of Limbu speakers

are nearly equal to their respective ethnic populations in the province. However, the population size of the speakers of other Janajati languages as mother tongue is lower than the population of the Janajati groups who are linked to the languages. Tarai Janajatis speak their own mother tongues. Those who speak Khas Nepali and other hill-origin languages as mother tongue in the three Tarai districts constitute 43% in Sunsari, 51% in Morang, and 69% in Jhapa (Serchan, 2016).

The dominant cultural practices in the province are shaped by Hinduism, Kiratism, and Buddhism. Hindus make the largest religious group with 66.6% of the total population in the province. Kirat (17.1%) is the second largest group, followed by Buddhists (9.2%) and others (CBS, 2012). Kirat religion was recorded in the Census only from 1991. It is largely practised by hill indigenous groups such as Rai, Limbu, Sunuwar, and Yakkha (Dahal, 2003). Kirat religion and culture include

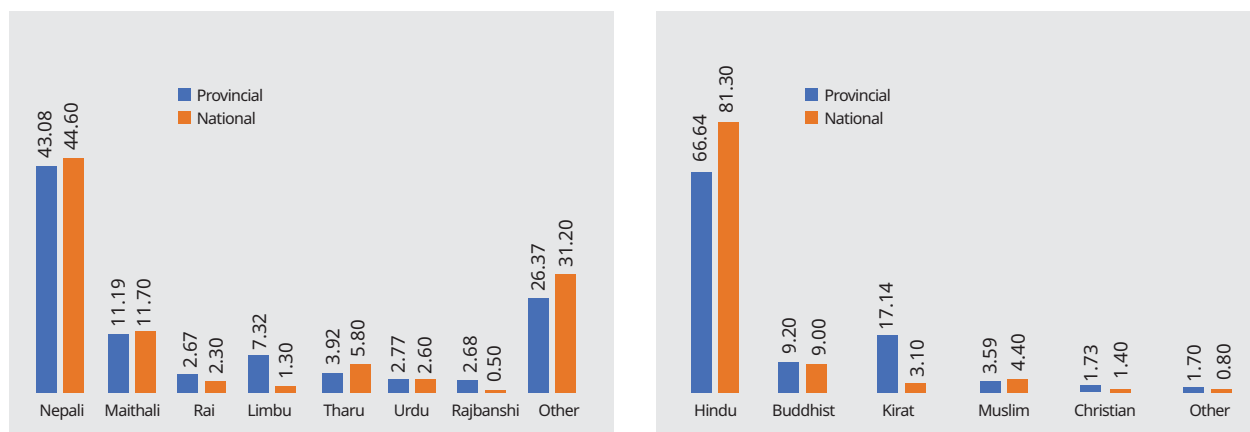
elements of animism, shamanism, and worship of nature and ancestors. They also practised customary governance system, which is headed, for example, by hereditary *Subba* among Limbu, Rai among Rais, and Deonia among Dhimals. Since the 1960s, however, these traditions have rapidly been declining as people and territories are integrated through modernisation, i.e., construction of highways, education through the integrated medium of the Khas Nepali language, expansion of administrative offices, promulgation of the Land Reform Act 1964, and introduction of elected village panchayats (Suwal, 2014). Khas Arya, Madhesi, and Dalit communities traditionally practise forms of Hinduism. Notably, the number of people practising any religion does not directly correspond with their caste and ethnic designation, and this indicates that the diverse cultural groups of the region have come under a process of assimilation within the larger framework of unification of Nepal led by Hindu rulers (Allen, 1997).

Figure 2.2. Population by major social groups in Province One (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Figure 2.3. Population by key language and religious groups in Province One (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

2.1.2. Human capabilities

Table 2.1. HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province One

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
Taplejung	0.494	65.83	65.72	3.89	1313
Panchthar	0.498	68.12	66.91	4.21	1082
Illam	0.526	67.95	73.46	4.74	1260
Jhapa	0.518	67.29	69.92	4.77	1226
Morang	0.513	69.05	64.91	4.39	1251
Sunsari	0.496	68.33	62.88	4.21	1104
Dhankuta	0.517	69.04	68.59	4.36	1257
Terhathum	0.527	68.05	69.36	4.56	1419
Sankhuwasabha	0.488	68.42	63.16	3.60	1193
Bhojpur	0.479	68.33	63.09	3.72	999
Solukhumbu	0.502	68.83	57.51	3.30	1841
Okhaldhunga	0.468	70.56	56.14	3.43	957
Khotang	0.494	70.24	61.98	3.78	1132
Udaypur	0.475	69.29	60.70	3.81	920
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.9	1160

Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

Province One is among the top three provinces where most districts have human development index (HDI) values higher than the national average. Eleven of the fourteen districts have HDI values that are equivalent to or higher than the national average. Province One is notable for its low variation on each of the key HDI indicator, and for the fact that, compared to national average, its districts are as high or higher. The only notable variance is in per capita income figures, where the district with the highest per capita income makes double the income of the district with the lowest per capita income. The mountain districts, namely Taplejung and Solukhumbu, are among the top three districts on per capita income, although this value is not consistent with other indicators such as life expectancy, adult literacy, and mean years of schooling. Jhapa and Ilam

rank high on education, while Khotang and Okhaldhunga top the health indicators. This shows that opportunities of health, education, and employment facilities are unequally distributed across the three ecological zones. The unequal distribution of these opportunities corresponds to dominant patterns of caste and ethnic hierarchies. For example, Solukhumbu and Taplejung have higher populations of Rai, Limbu, and Sherpa communities. Jhapa and Ilam have higher populations of Khas Arya communities, who also inhabit Khotang and Okhaldhunga in fair number (CBS, 2012).

The movement of people from the western to the eastern hills, which transcended the national boundary, took place in the 18th century along with the unification of Nepal. After the annexation of Limbuwan,

2.1.3. Migration

Table 2.2. Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province One

District	Out- migration	In- migration	District
Jhapa	9.2	2.4	Khotang
Sunsari	7.8	3.0	Okhaldhunga
Morang	8.6	3.3	Taplejung
Udayapur	13.2	3.9	Solukhumbu
Ilam	18.4	4.0	Bhojpur
Solukhumbu	29.4	4.2	Sankhuwasabha
Dhankuta	33.2	4.9	Panchthar
Sankhuwasabha	34.1	8.7	Terhathum
Panchthar	40.4	8.7	Ilam
Okhaldhunga	42.4	9.9	Dhankuta
Khotang	53.2	17.1	Udayapur
Taplejung	56.2	21.6	Sunsari
Terhathum	56.8	21.8	Morang
Bhojpur	57.5	24.4	Jhapa

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Khambuwan, and Kochila into the unified Nepal, the deployment of state agents in the newly extended territories and distribution of newly acquired land to soldiers for their salary in lieu of cash accelerated the first wave of migration (Regmi, 1976; Stiller, 1993). This had long-term implications for the political economy of the region as the migrant population eventually outnumbered the indigenous populations of Rais and Limbus.

In the 1950s, people began to migrate from the northern hill districts to the southern Tarai districts with increasing livelihood opportunities in the plain areas. Major factors contributing to the north-south migration include eradication of malaria; enactment of the Land Reform Act 1964; introduction of the resettlement projects in the Tarai; and construction of the East-West and the North-South highways (Gaige, 1975). In Province One, the three Tarai districts of Jhapa, Morang, and Sunsari are the recipient of the highest percent of domestic migrant population as of 2011. As a result, the population has increased in the Tarai districts and these districts alone make up 56.04% of the province's total population. As the north-south migration continues, the Census of 2011 records negative rate of population growth in the hill and mountain districts of the province, except in Ilam (Pathak & Lamichhane, 2014). The out-migrant population in the hill districts of Bhojpur, Terhathum, Taplejung, and Khotang make up over half of the total population. As a result, the eight hill districts—namely Panchthar, Ilam, Bhojpur, Udayapur, Terhathum, Dhankuta, Khotang, and Okhaldhunga—comprise 35.31% of total population of the province. The three mountain districts of Taplejung, Sankhuwasabha, and Solukhumbu fall in the category of the districts with high out-migration population. These districts have only 8.65% of the total population of Province One. The population distribution is uneven across the three ecological zones, with

the highest population in Tarai and the lowest in the mountain region. Migrants-receiving districts Jhapa, Morang, and Sunsari of Province One are listed in districts with higher HDI values. North-South migration pushed the native population of Jhapa, Morang, and Sunsari further south out of the respective districts to less developed areas. Development in Nepal is mainly concentrated in districts headquarters and highway areas settled by migrant populations in overwhelming numbers. Besides, the north-south migration in Province One has political implications, as evident by the fact that, of the fifteen persons elected to the Federal Parliament in November-December 2017 general elections from these three Tarai districts, as many as ten are of hill origin.

Province One also records higher number of inhabitants departing for foreign migrations. Of the 484,603 labour permits issued by the DoFE in the year 2014/15, the province had a share of 114,783 labour permits (MoLE, 2016).¹ The highest number of recipients of labour permits in 2014/2015 in the province were from Jhapa and Morang, while the lowest were from Solukhumbu and Terhathum districts. According to the Census of 2011, the absentee population of Province One is 3,57,647 (CBS, 2012). Jhapa, Morang, and Sunsari have the highest numbers and Solukhumbu and Terhathum have the lowest numbers of absentee population. The movement of people from mountain and hill districts to the Tarai and to other countries follows the uneven distribution of health, education, and employment facilities across the districts. As presented in the section under human capabilities, the Tarai districts record better facilities of health and education. However, the Tarai districts do not provide sufficient employment opportunities, and the majority of out-migrants from the mountain and hill districts eventually move out of the country to seek employment.

¹Labour permits do not include migration to India or for Nepali workers who migrated to the Republic of Korea for foreign employment through the government-to-government Employment Permit System.

2.1.4. Political representation

Table 2.3. Election results of the three-sphere governments by major social groups in Province One (In number)

Social Groups	HoR, FPTP			Head of LGs, FPTP			PA, FPTP		PA, PR		PA, Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Khas Arya	11	1	12	40	1	41	22	1	2	8	33
Hill Janajati	10	1	11	76	-	76	23	2	3	15	43
Rai	5	-	5	35	-	35	8	-	-	-	8
Limbu	5	-	5	25	-	25	7	1	1	6	15
Other	1	-	1	16	-	16	8	1	2	9	20
Tarai Janajati	2	-	2	9	-	9	3	-	1	2	6
Madhesi	3	-	3	8	-	8	4	-	-	2	6
Hill Dalit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Madhesi Dalit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Muslim	-	-	-	3	-	3	1	-	-	1	2
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	26	2	28	136	1	137	53	3	6	31	93

Source: Election results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b; ECN, 2018c)

The distribution of political representation across caste and ethnic groups is uneven and in line with the unequal cultural and power relations among them. Khas Aryas and Hill Janajatis together have disproportionately higher number of seats at all levels. In the HoR, Khas Aryas have a much higher representation than their proportion of population in the province. Khas Aryas, who have a population share of 27.8%, represent 42.9% of the total HoR constituencies in the province. Tharu and Madhesi communities also have higher representation than their population at 7% and 11% respectively. Hill Janajati representation in the HoR seats are more or less proportionate to their population. Dalits and Muslims have no representation in the HoR from the province through the FPTP electoral system despite making up 9.3% and 3.6% of the total population respectively. Out of the 28

representatives from the province in HoR, only two women were elected through the FPTP electoral representation system, constituting 7.1% representation.

Among the 93-member PA, Hill Janajatis and Khas Aryas have a disproportionately higher representation, and they together take up 82% of the seats. Madhesi, Tarai Janajati, Dalit, and Muslim groups have lower representation than their population proportion. Women make up 36.6% of the PA seats, which is slightly above the number of seats allocated for women by the electoral law. In the LGs, too, Khas Aryas and Hill Janajatis have secured higher representation, comprising 29.9% and 55.47% of the 137 head of the LGs respectively. Only one woman won a seat in the LG election. Muslims won three seats, while Dalits won none.

2.1.5. Socio-political dynamics

Province One has witnessed social movements by women and various other social groups to address historical inequality and marginalisation. Various forms of discrimination and violence against women have been documented in Province One, including domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, dowry-related violence, human trafficking, accusation of witchcraft, child marriage, and harmful traditional practices (Ministry of Health, Nepal [MoHN], New Era, & ICF, 2017; Crime Investigation Department [CID], 2018; Informal Sector Service Centre [INSEC], 2018; Women's Rehabilitation Centre [WOREC], 2017; Shadow Report Preparation Committee [SRPC], 2016). Various development organisations have been mobilising communities in the districts of Province One through networks, women's groups, campaigns, demonstration, and dialogues in order to carry out advocacy against gender-based discrimination and violence (Sahavagi, Didi Bahini, & Feminist Dalit Organization [FEDO], 2015; South Asian Women's Fund [SAWF], 2012; Saathi, The Asia Foundation [TAF] & Department for International Development [DFID], 2010). Challenges related to reporting and documentation of violence against women continue to persist due to limited research, inconsistent data produced by different service providers, and lack of nationwide research on various forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) based on geographic location, caste/ethnicity, and other factors of marginalisation (Sahavagi, Didi Bahini, & FEDO, 2015; SRPC, 2016).

Dalits have also been mobilised around the issues of caste-based discrimination and inequality in the province. In 1948, Dalit leader Jadubir Biswakarma organised Dalits of Sunsari district under Nepal Samaj Sudhar Sangh (Nepal Social Reform Organisation) (Kisan, 2005). After the promulgation of the New Civil Code by

King Mahendra in 1963 that abolished caste-based discrimination, Dalits in Bhojpur led the Siddhakali Temple entry movement (Sundas, 2013). Hira Lal Bishwakarma, T.R. Bishwakarma, and Ganesh Rasaili organised *sahabhaj*—inter-dining programmes of breaking the prohibition against Dalits and non-Dalits sharing food and water—in Terhathum, Sunsari, and Morang districts as an effort to fight untouchability (Bishwakarma et al, 2006). In more recent times, civil society organisations have carried out advocacy and mobilisation against various forms of caste-based discrimination in the province. These movements within the territory of the current province have been followed by several locally initiated movements, which have been organised as part of the broader national Dalit movement.

Province One comprises the territories of medieval Nepal that were once recognised as Pallo Kirat (the far-eastern hill/mountain districts), Wallo Kirat and Majh Kirat (the central and mid-eastern hill/mountain districts), and Kochila (the far-eastern plain districts) before the unification of the then principalities (Regmi, 1965). Rais and Limbus have struggled for the recognition of their distinct identity and ethnic rights from the time of conquest of Gorkhali rulers in the eighteenth century. They were granted internal autonomy through the Kipat system to their community by Shah king Prithvi Narayan Shah as these territories were annexed through the treaty of 1774 between the King of Gorkha and the Limbu rulers (Caplan, 1970; Regmi, 1995). The Kirati Kipat was tax-free and included domination over all cultivated land, forests, streams, and rivers within its bounds (Bista 2000, pp. 37-38). Through this system, they enjoyed communal rights and autonomy, but the Kipat system met its end following the enactment of the Land Reform Act 1964. Falgunanda, a Limbu ascetic and reformer, struggled to protect Limbu script

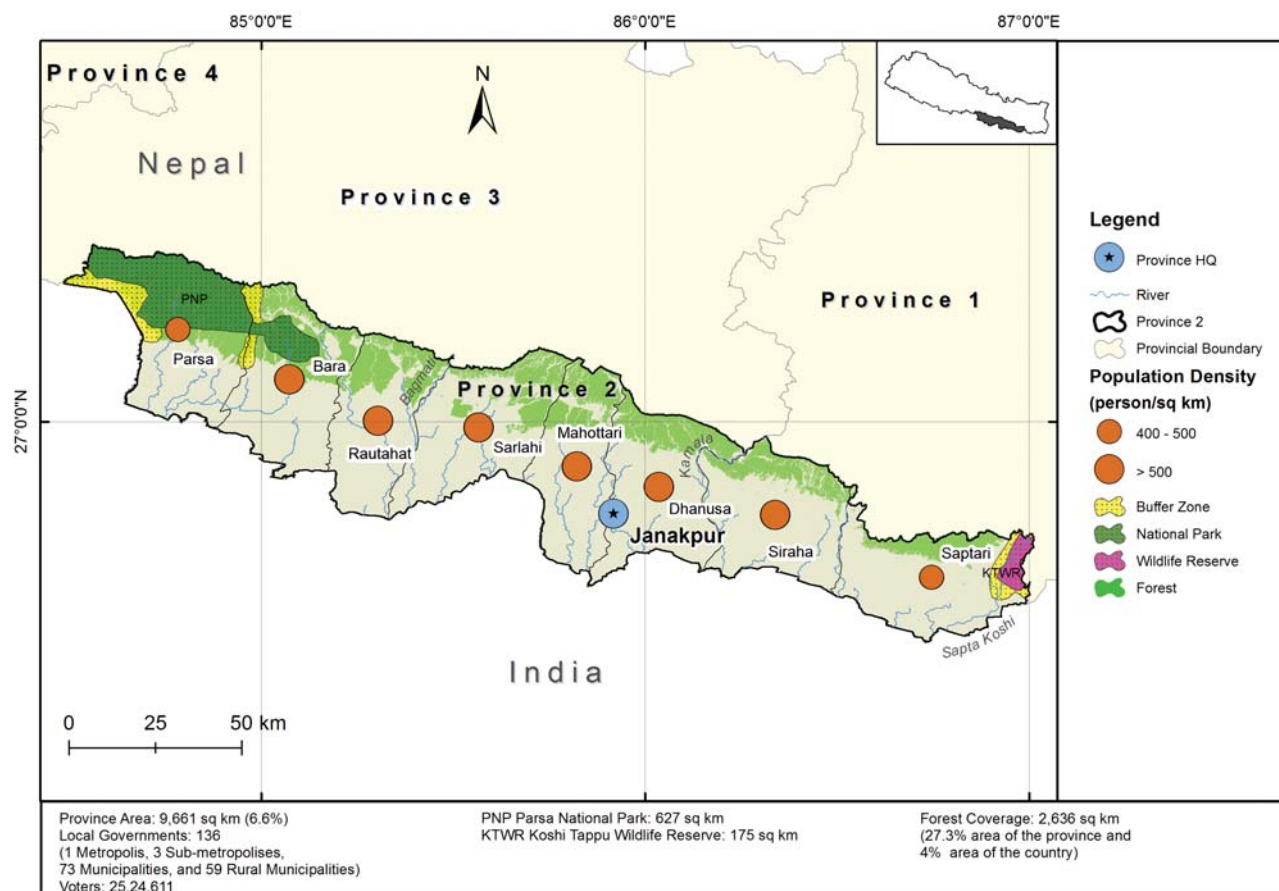
and culture, introducing social reform agendas to the community in the first half of the twentieth century (Gaenszle, 2009). The Satya Hangama mobilisation led by Falgunanda in the 1930s is known as the first modern-day social mobilisation by Limbus to claim their rights over their ancestral territory (Caplan, 2000; Gaenszle, 2009; Lawoti, 2013). The Limbus struggled against Khas Aryas during the regime change in 1951. They established Limbu organisations in the 1980s, such as Kirat Religion and Literature Development Association and Kirat Yakthung Chumlung and revived the Satya Hangma reformist movement of Falgunanda (Lawoti, 2013). In the post-2006 period, different articulations of the Limbuwan movement have taken hold in the eastern hill districts, though all argued for the establishment of identity-based federalism (Lawoti, 2013). In 2008, the Federal Limbuwan State Council, one of the major political groups demanding Limbuwan province, and the GoN had struck a five-point agreement that promised an autonomous Limbuwan state (United

Nations Resident Coordinator's Office [UN RCO], 2011). The territories demanded by the Limbuwan movement as a separate Limbuwan province included Sankhuwasabha, Panchthar, Taplejung, Tehrathum, Ilam, Sunsari, Morang, Jhapa, and Dhankuta (UN RCO, 2012a). Limbus protested against the seven-province model adopted by the Constitution of 2015, and they continue to make demands for an autonomous region (Lawoti, 2016).

The one-fourth of the province's population that are of Tarai origin (namely, Tharus, Madhesis, Madhesi Dalits) predominantly live in the three Tarai districts Jhapa, Morang, and Sunsari. The Madhes movement, which peaked around 2007-08, demanded the inclusion of these three districts in the proposed Madhes Province along with most of the districts of Province Two. During the same time, the Limbuwan and Tharuwan-Kochila identity-based movements had also staked claims over these three districts (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2007; UN RCO, 2012a).

2.2. Province Two

Figure 2.4. Geographic map of Province Two



2.2.1. Socio-cultural diversity

Province Two is diverse by both caste and ethnicity. Madhesis constitute the largest ethnic group at 67.2% of the total population with the inclusion of Madhesi Dalits (15.4%). However, the Madhesi identity is not a homogenous category, as it can be further differentiated along caste lines and religious practice (Dastider, 2013). The Madhesi “high” caste group mostly includes Madhesi Brahmins (with surnames such as Jha) and Bhumihars (with surnames such as Mishra). This group

makes up 2.9% of the total population. Yadav caste makes up nearly a third of all Madhesis in the province. Those belonging to other caste groups, not including Madhesi Dalits, make up 34.1% of the total population. Madhesi Dalits separately make up 15.4% of the total population in the province. The development of Madhesi Dalit identity is distinct from other “high” caste Madhesi groups and therefore need to be addressed separately (Jha, 2017).

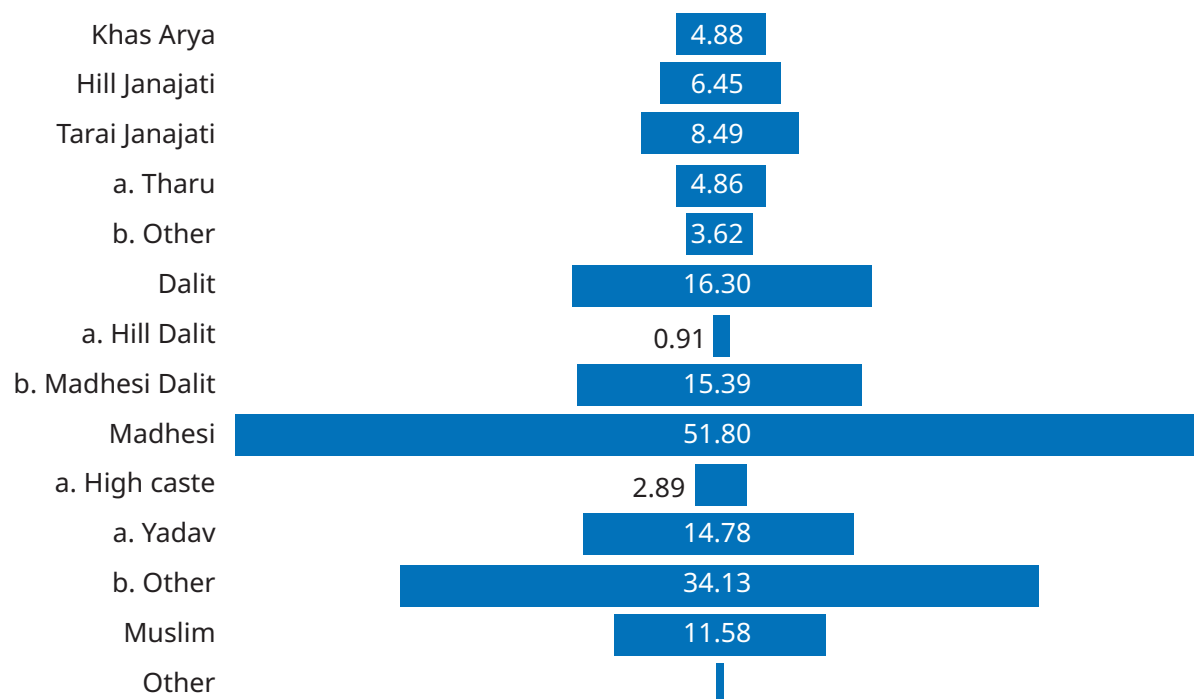
Muslims, constituting a major religious minority group in Province Two, make up 11.6% of the total population and their identification with the Madhesi category is somewhat ambivalent (Dastider, 2013). Other ethnic groups of Province Two include Khas Arya, Tharu and Hill Janajati, who together make up less than one-fourth of the total population. Similar to Province One, unevenness in cultural and power relations continues to persist among different ethnic, caste, and religious groups of Province Two.

The province is also diverse in terms of language. Maithili² is spoken as mother tongue by 45.3% of the total population, making it the most widely spoken language in Province Two. Bhojpuri is spoken as mother tongue by 19% of the total population, followed by Bajjika (15%), Urdu (6%), and Tharu (4%). Khas Nepali, the dominant national language and the only language that is recognised by the Constitution for official use in all the provinces is spoken as mother tongue by only 6.7% of the total population in Province Two.

The dominant cultural practices in Province Two are shaped by Hinduism and Islam. Eighty-five per cent of the total population in the province follow Hindu religion. The practices of Hinduism in the Tarai are slightly different from the ways the religion is practised in the hill regions (Bista, 1967). For example, Madhesi Hindus of Tarai celebrate Chhath, which is not typically celebrated by the hill Hindus. Madhesi Hindus also celebrate the Holi festival the day after it is celebrated in the hill districts. The second largest religious group in Province Two are the Muslims, and they speak Urdu as their mother tongue. At the national level, Muslims are the third largest religious group in Nepal, making up almost 4.3% of the total population. Ninety-six per cent of Muslims live in the Tarai districts with nearly 60% of them concentrated in ten Tarai districts. The high degree of Muslim concentration in a few districts make them particularly visible in those districts, and they are also marked by relative cultural isolation along with economic and educational deprivation (UN RCO, 2012d).

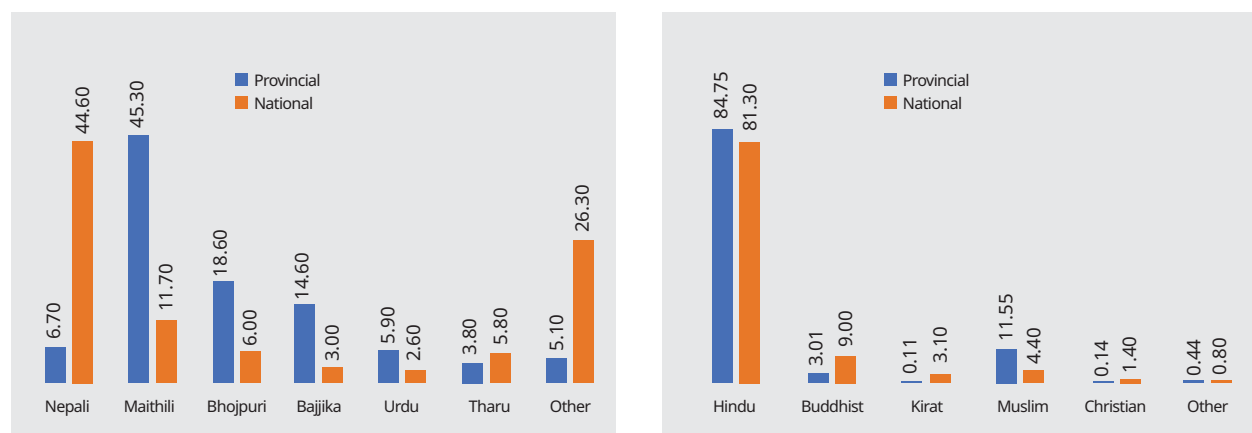
²According to Article 6 of the Constitution, all mother tongues spoken in Nepal are recognised as national languages of Nepal.

Figure 2.5. Population by major social groups in Province Two (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Figure 2.6. Population by key language and religious groups in Province Two (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

2.2.2. Human capabilities

Table 2.4. HDI and its constituent values by district in Province Two

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
Saptari	0.437	71.34	45.44	3.21	801
Siraha	0.408	71.29	39.96	2.82	689
Dhanusa	0.431	69.53	41.89	2.97	938
Mahottari	0.388	69.47	37.04	2.46	681
Sarlahi	0.402	70.06	38.00	2.42	809
Rautahat	0.386	70.99	33.89	2.19	757
Bara	0.457	70.50	43.25	2.72	1480
Parsa	0.464	70.25	48.69	3.09	1223
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.9	1160

Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

Province Two is among the three provinces that have low HDI values and all the districts have HDI values lower than the national average of 0.490. However, among the parameters that are used for the calculation of HDI, all the districts have higher life expectancy than the national average. Province Two can also be noted for its low variation on each of the key HDI indicators. All the districts of the province lag behind in education compared to the national average as measured by adult literacy rate and mean years of schooling. Except for Bara and Parsa that have industrial

corridors and are connected to Nepal's main custom point, all other districts also lag behind the national average on per capita income. The United Nations Country Team in Nepal (UNCTN) has listed six of the eight districts in Province Two as among the least developed in the country using the following indicators: rate of poverty; lack of alternative income and livelihood opportunities; landlessness, marginal landholding, and insecure property ownership; prevalence of caste and ethnic discrimination; socio-economic status; and rate of education and literacy (UNCTN, 2011).

2.2.3. Migration

Table 2.5. Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Two

District	Out- migration	In- migration	District
Rautahat	5.6	2.5	Saptari
Parsa	5.9	3.0	Siraha
Bara	5.9	4.0	Dhanusa
Mahotari	6.2	4.1	Rautahat
Siraha	6.3	4.8	Parsa
Sarlahi	6.9	5.0	Mahotari
Dhanusa	7.5	6.7	Sarlahi
Saptari	7.8	7.4	Bara

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Most districts of the province record higher rate of out-migration in comparison to in-migration. As per the Census of 2011, the figure of lifetime migration of Province Two puts out-migration at 7% and in-migration at 2% of the total population (Suwal, 2014, p. 278). Some of the reasons for this are political. In the post-2006 context of political upheavals in the region, the Madhes movement intensified its demands for the recognition of the region's cultural and political autonomy (Jha, 2017). The rise of underground activities by armed outfits were also observed. This reportedly contributed a great extent to the out-migration of inhabitants of ethnic hill communities (UNRCO, 2012c). For instance, the UN field bulletin notes that nearly 80% of the ethnic hill people with permanent residence in Janakpur had moved out in the period after 2007 (Ibid.).

Province Two sends the highest number of migrant workers in the country for foreign employment; seven out of the top fifteen districts with the greatest number of recipients of labour permits are from Province Two. A total of 119,281 labour permits issued by the Department of Labour and Employment in the year 2014/15 were for individuals from Province Two. Within the province, Siraha and Mahottari recorded the highest number of recipients of labour permits in 2014/2015, while Bara and Parsa had the lowest (MoLE, 2016). The migration patterns closely correlate with the HDI indicators of the province. For example, Bara and Parsa, where per capita incomes and other HDI indicators are better, have also recorded lower numbers of migrant workers leaving for foreign employment. People seem less likely to migrate if they have better health, education, and employment opportunities.

2.2.4. Political representation

Table 2.6. Election results of the three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Two (In number)

Social Groups	HoR, FPTP			Head of LGs, FPTP			PA, FPTP		PA, PR		PA, Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Khas Arya	4	-	4	12	-	12	2	1	-	-	3
Hill Janajati	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	3	5
Tarai Janajati	2	-	2	9	-	9	2	-	1	3	6
Madhesi	23	-	23	102	1	103	48	3	7	19	77
High Caste	5	-	5	12	-	12	5	1	2	3	11
Yadav	10	-	10	48	-	48	18	-	3	6	27
Other	8	-	8	42	1	43	25	2	2	10	39
Hill Dalit	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Madhesi Dalit	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	1	5	6
Muslim	2	-	2	9	-	9	5	-	2	2	9
Total	32	-	32	135	1	136	59	5	11	32	107

Source: Election results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b; ECN, 2018d)

Province Two is an outlier among the provinces for the representation of Madhesi population. Madhesi population have almost proportionate representation in the constituencies of the three governments that have been allocated for Province Two. Madhesi won 23 seats (71.9%) of the 32 constituencies for the HoR through the FPTP electoral representation system in the 2017 elections. They won 72% of the 107 seats in the PA through both the FPTP and the PR electoral representation systems. Khas Aryas have got proportionately higher representation in relation to their population in HoR and PA.

Dalits, including Hill (0.9%) and Madhesi Dalits (15.9%), comprise 16.7% of the total population in Province Two, but Dalit representation in elected bodies of all three spheres of governments in Province Two are disproportionately low. No Dalit candidates were elected to the HoR, and one Hill Dalit was elected to the PA through the FPTP electoral

system. Out of the 107 PA members, Dalit representatives constitute only 7%, and most of them were elected through the PR system. As per the constitutional provision, the PR seats are to be distributed in proportion to the population size of ethnic groups, including Dalit. In the elections for the heads of LGs, Dalit representation secured merely 1% out of the total 136 seats.

In the recent elections, no women candidates from Province Two won a seat in the HoR through the FPTP electoral representation system. One woman candidate was elected as head of the LGs out of 136 seats. Only 8% of the PA elected through the FPTP electoral system are women. However, women have 35% representation out of 107 members in the PA due to the mandatory constitutional provision of 33% representation for women. Most of these women were elected through the PR electoral representation system.

2.2.5. Socio-political dynamics

Madhesis from the province have long protested against the longstanding history of discrimination and exclusion by the hill-dominated Nepali state. Historically, Tarai districts of Province Two were less connected to Kathmandu during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a result of the “specific policies followed by the rulers of Nepal” (Regmi, 1984). For instance, there were policies for collecting customs and other revenue by regulating the movement of people from these districts to Kathmandu. Appropriating resources from Tarai districts of Province Two without considering it as a constituent element of Nepali state continued into Shah regime (Panchayat system) after the regime change in 1951. More recently, the roots of the current Madhesi identity-based movement can be traced to the anti-Rana revolt of the 1940s. An identity-based political party, Nepal Tarai Congress, was established in 1951 to forward Madhesi demand of greater representation in public life (Sijapati, 2013). The charter of demands of Nepal Tarai Congress included establishment of autonomous Tarai state; recognition of Hindi as a national language; and adequate employment to Madhesi in the Nepali civil service (Joshi & Rose, 1966). Another actor in the Madhesi movement is Nepal Sadbhavana Party, which was established in 1983 and became a full political party in 1990. It served as the only Madhesi party until Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum emerged in 2007 (Sijapati, 2013). Since the 1990s, political mobilisations by Madhesis on the grounds of identity, cultural autonomy, rights to equal participation, rights to citizenship, and self-determination have been on the upswing. Most recently, Madhesis have expressed grievances against the state because of the issue of citizenship, exclusion in state machineries including security force, and

low investment in economic development in the Tarai districts (Jha, 2017).

The districts of Province Two witnessed three key Madhes uprisings in the post-2006 political context of Nepal (Jha, 2017). The first Madhes movement of 2007 was a 21-day long uprising that was successful in institutionalising federalism in the 2007 Interim Constitution (ICG, 2007, p.12). The second uprising in 2008 was organised by a coalition of a number of Madhes-based parties in response to the interim government’s non-compliance with the 2007 agreement (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2015, p. 10). This second movement ended with the signing of an eight-point agreement between the protesting groups and the government that upheld three key agendas—federalism, proportional representation, and delineation of population-based election constituencies. The third Madhes movement of 2015 was triggered by the promulgation of the new Constitution of Nepal 2015, leaving 57 dead and resulting in a 135-day long border blockade that paralysed the nation. The key reservation of the Madhesi communities regarding the Constitution are related to demarcation of provincial boundaries, electoral representation, affirmative action, constituency delineation, and citizenship-related clauses (ICG, 2016).

The dynamics of gender relations in Province Two has been receiving a lot of national attention. Women in Province Two have carried out various types of campaigns and advocacies against traditional, gender-based malpractices and violence against women with support from different development organisation (Sahavagi, Didi Bahini, & FEDO, 2015; SAWF, 2012; Saathi, TAF & DFID, 2010). Some of the major forms of discriminatory practices and

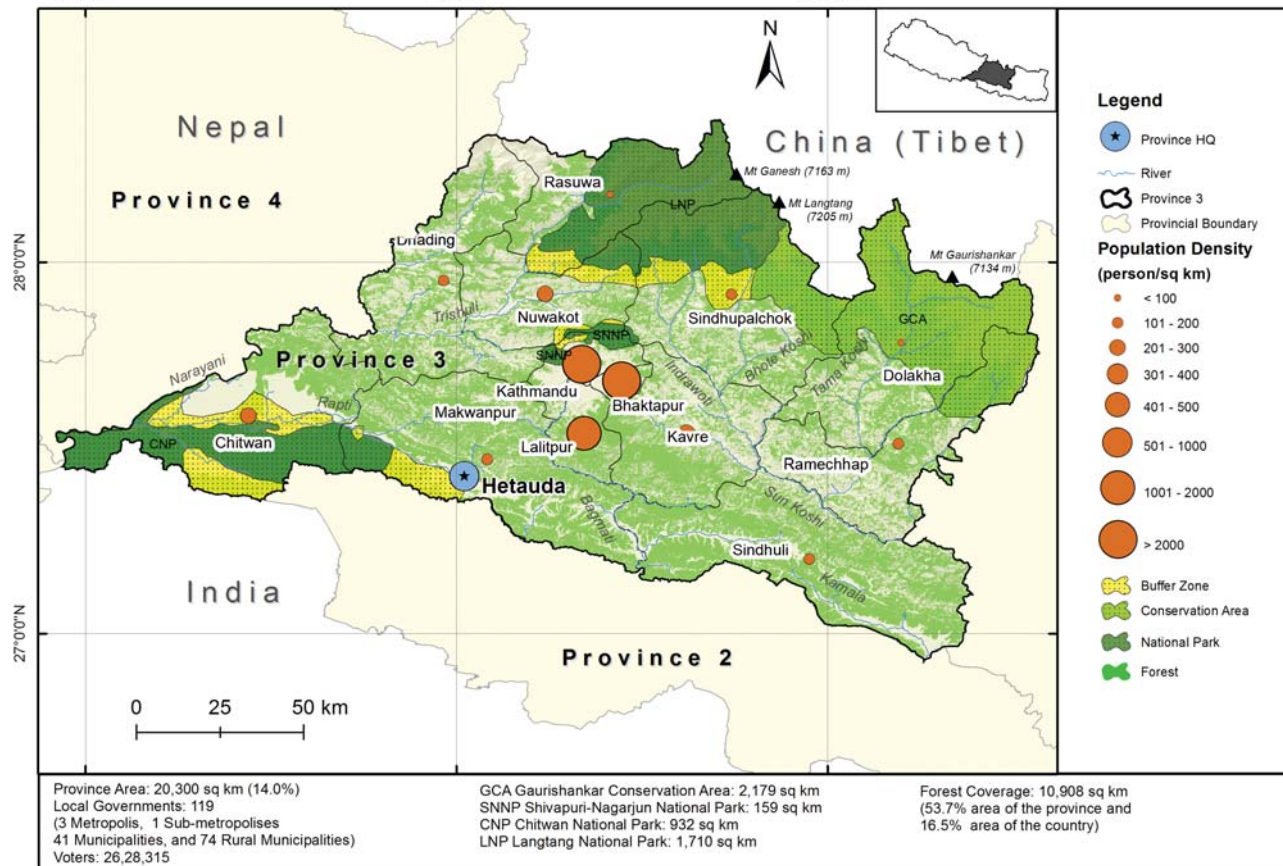
violence against women reported in Province Two include domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, dowry-related violence, child marriage, and accusation of witchcraft (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2017, WCSD, 2018; INSEC, 2018; WOREC, 2017; SPRC 2016). According to the 2016 Health and Demographic Survey, districts of Province Two has the highest percentage of women who reported to have experienced physical violence, violence during pregnancy, and marital control (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2017). Madhesi women have also been facing distinct forms of discrimination over their citizenship status (Jha, 2018). Madhesi women participated heavily in all the major political movements of Nepal and registered the most active participation in the 2015 Madhes movement (Sah, 2017).

Around one-fifth of the population of Province Two is Madhesi Dalit and they are the poorest and most excluded population along with Muslims in the province. Chamars, a Madhesi Dalit group, successfully launched a notable movement in 2000 by refusing to dispose carcasses of dead cattle, a task traditionally imposed on them as part of their obligation to “higher” castes (Paswan, 2013, pp. 31-32). This was considered a historic step towards social

justice for Dalits in Nepal. The movement had strong support from various non-governmental organisations, lawyer groups, and media. Dalits have also protested the prohibition to enter Hindu temples in the Tarai. In the 2000s, Dalits of Saptari broke the tradition by forcefully entering the Chhinnamasta Temple. For this, they faced backlash in the form of physical violence and socio-economic boycott by non-Dalit communities (Bishwakarma et al, 2006). Madhesi Dalit activists have expressed their grievances about facing caste-based discrimination and exclusion on various occasions. The most recent one was the protest against the Province Police Bill 2018 that, according to activists, failed to secure a provision of proportionate reservation in the provincial police. Bal Dev Ram from Saptari, who spearheaded the historic anti-carcass movement around 1999, also launched the land rights movement for landless people and became the founding chairperson of the National Land Rights Forum (NLRF) and Haruwa Charuwa Rights Forum. Since its establishment in 2004, NLRF has been a major platform for organising and mobilising landless people in 54 districts with 98,275 members to advocate for land rights (“Rastriya Bhumi”, n.d.).

2.3. Province Three

Figure 2.7. Geographic map of Province Three



2.3.1. Socio-cultural diversity

Due to the recent trend of migration to the central hill districts—particularly Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur—from all over the country. Province Three has been rapidly transforming and its socio-cultural and linguistic diversity deepening. Hill Janajatis constitute a majority with 53% of the total population in the province. However, when Hill Janajatis are further disaggregated into three key groups, viz Tamang (20.4%), Newar (16.9%), and other Janajatis (Sherpa, Chepang, Thami, Jirel, Hyolmo, Pahari, and others at 15.4%), each

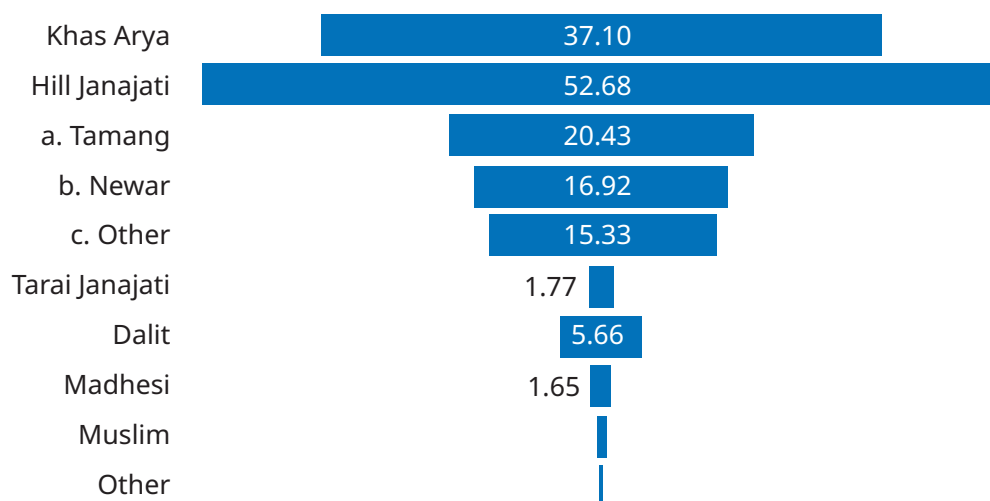
of the Hill Janajati group becomes a minority in the province. Disaggregation of the Janajati category is necessary because Tamangs, Newars, and other Janajatis are heterogeneous in terms of their culture, religion, and language. Khas Aryas (37.1%), therefore, turns out to be the largest group comprising over one-third of the total population in the province. Tamangs and Newars, who are indigenous peoples of the province, form the first and second largest groups respectively among the three Hill Janajati groups. Tamangs and Newars predominantly

inhabit the three districts of the Kathmandu valley and its peripheral districts. The Khas Aryas and other Janajati groups migrated into the region at various points in history, most notably during and after the ascendancy of Hindu Gorkhali kings in Kathmandu (Regmi, 1972; Bista, 1991). While other groups such as Muslim have nominal presence in the province, Dalits make up a sizeable portion of the province's total population at 6%.

The major languages spoken in the province are Khas Nepali, Tamang, and Newari. The population of Khas Nepali speakers is 57.4%, Tamang 18.3%, and Newari 12.3%. While the population of Khas Nepalis speakers is much higher than the population of the hill castes (including hill Dalits), the populations of Tamang and Newari speakers are smaller than the populations of Tamang and Newar communities. This shows that the province has a higher influence of Khas Nepali language. The Census of 2011 puts the population of the Khas Nepali speakers, including hill Dalits, at 57%, much higher than the size of Khas Arya population at 37.1%. Tamang and Newari speakers are 2% and 5% lower than the population share of Tamang and Newar ethnic groups respectively. Most of the migrant Janajatis also speak Khas Nepali instead of their native language. Both Tamang and Newari languages, rooted in Tibeto-Burman tradition, have demonstrated growing influence of Sanskrit (Bista, 1967). While Tamang uses the Tibetan script, Newar now uses Devanagari script.

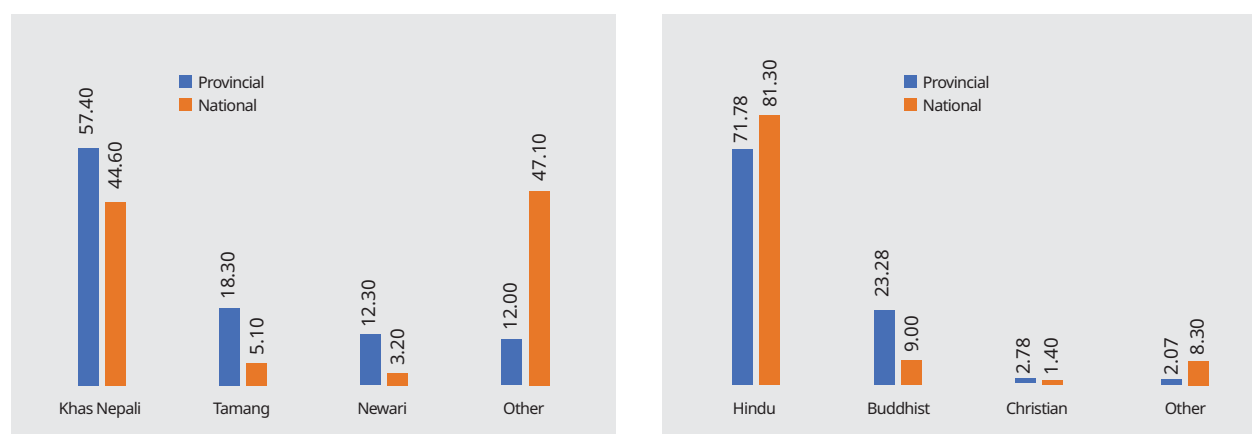
The major cultures practised in this province are Newari, Tamang, and hill Hindu, which are primarily shaped by either Hindu or Buddhist religions or a syncretic form of the two. The hill Hindu castes, hill Dalits, and Madhesi caste that are the historical followers of Hinduism and live in the province constitute 45% of the total population, but the Census of 2011 puts Hindus as 71% of the total population. This suggests that a significant number of Newars and other ethnic groups also follow the Hindu religion. Tamangs traditionally practise Buddhism, although some of them have been following Hindu customs (Bista, 1967). Shamanic practices are also prevalent among Tamangs (Ibid.). The Buddhist temples in Tamang villages are called ghyangs. Village religious paintings in the temples are all in Tibetan scripts (Bista, 1967; Sharma, 1983). The festivals and the ritual ceremonies in the ghyangs take place in the proper Buddhist fashion. The Lamas of the Tamang community are trained in these Buddhist ritual procedures and perform different kinds of ceremonies and rituals as official priests (Bista, 1967). Newars typically follow either Hinduism or Buddhism, or even both in some cases, and they have sub-groups ranked in order by the rules of the hierarchical Hindu caste system (Bista, 1967). Hindu Newars form more than half of the total population of Newars and Buddhist Newars are a definite minority (Bista, 1967). However, Hindu and Buddhist Newars cannot be strictly divided into one or another category as far as religious practices are concerned. All Newars tend to worship both Hindu and Buddhist deities (ibid.).

Figure 2.8. Population by major social groups in Province Three (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Figure 2.9. Population by key language and religious groups in Province Three (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

2.3.2. Human capabilities

Table 2.7. HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province Three

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
Sindhuli	0.440	70.04	51.08	3.08	822
Ramechhap	0.468	72.90	52.10	3.37	951
Dolakha	0.459	70.85	53.60	3.26	922
Sindhupalchok	0.455	69.57	49.51	3.02	1110
Kavrepalanchok	0.520	70.86	62.77	4.18	1399
Lalitpur	0.601	70.30	79.68	6.47	1894
Bhaktapur	0.573	70.48	78.13	6.19	1379
Kathmandu	0.632	68.55	84.04	7.05	2764
Nuwakot	0.466	70.81	50.59	3.26	1086
Rasuwa	0.461	70.91	41.32	2.88	1520
Dhading	0.461	70.86	53.26	3.20	982
Makwanpur	0.497	68.08	61.79	3.63	1410
Chitwan	0.551	69.78	72.23	5.01	1537
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.9	1160

Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

Province Three is notable for the highest variation on each of the key HDI indicators and for the fact that the difference between the largest and smallest HDI values is 0.19. Sindhuli, Dolakha, Dhading, Rasuwa, and Sindhupalchowk are the five districts that have the lowest HDI values in Province Three, and the Tamang communities that populate these districts are among the most marginalised Janajati groups according to the Nepal Federal of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) (Gellner, 2007). Despite the proximity to the capital, the Tamang communities of this region have

faced marginalisation due to historical neglect, exploitation at the hands of the ruling elites, and other forms of discrimination (Campbell, 2008; Holmberg & March, 1999). In four of these five districts, Tamangs have the highest population, and in the fifth district, Tamangs are the second largest group (CBS, 2012). The districts with the highest HDI values not only in the Province but also in the country are Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur. Khas Arya and Newar ethnic groups make up the majority in these districts, and they also have the highest HDI values by social groups (UNDP, 2014).

2.3.3. Migration pattern

Table 2.8. Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Three

District	Out- migration	In- migration	District
Kathmandu	4.1	2.7	Nuwakot
Lalitpur	7.0	3.0	Sindhupalchok
Chitwan	9.4	3.3	Ramechhap
Bhaktapur	10.4	3.4	Dolkha
Makwanpur	16.3	4.7	Dhading
Rasuwa	19.8	5.8	Rasuwa
Sindhuli	20.5	6.8	Kavrepalanchow
Sindhupalchok	26.6	7.6	Sindhuli
Dhading	26.9	13.4	Makwanpur
Nuwakot	28.7	30.7	Bhaktapur
Dolkha	29.3	32.1	Chitwan
Kavrepalanchow	31.2	32.7	Lalitpur
Ramechhap	39.8	47.9	Kathmandu

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

In the post-1950s period, a stream of migration took place that set the trend of people leaving the hills to settle in lower valleys and inner Terai of Chitwan and Sindhuli. Malaria eradication and development of road infrastructure helped in this migration as described in the Introduction. This migrant population soon outnumbered the indigenous Tharu population living in those lower valleys and inner Terai. In the same period, people also moved from less developed regions to comparatively more developed regions to take advantage of modern services, education opportunities, or to get non-farm jobs (Adhikari, 2008). This especially led to the heavy migration from other areas of the country to Kathmandu Valley. The migrant population arriving into Kathmandu Valley and its peripheries also eventually outnumbered the indigenous Newar and Tamang people (Suwal,

2014). As per Table 2.8, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, and Chitwan have higher rates of in-migration than out-migration, and the remaining nine districts of Province Three have higher rates of out-migration. The destination of migrants from these nine districts, like that of many migrants from other parts of the country, is typically the Kathmandu Valley. Consequently, Kathmandu district records the highest in-migration in the whole country at 47.9%, followed by Lalitpur (32.7%), Chitwan (32.1%), and Bhaktapur (30.7%).

Province Three also recorded a total of 82,109 labour permits issued by the DoFE in the year 2014/15 (MoLE, 2016). This number ranks the province in the fourth position in sending migrant workers for foreign employment. Chitwan and Makawanpur are the two top

districts for the numbers of migrant workers leaving for foreign employment, whereas, Rasuwa and Bhaktapur have the lowest numbers of migrant workers leaving for foreign employment. In both the cases of migration within province and migration out

of the country, the migration pattern positively correlates with the availabilities of education, health, and employment opportunities, as can be seen from comparing data on migration patterns and HDI values.

2.3.4. Political representation

Table 2.9. Election results of three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Three

Social Groups	HoR, FPTP			Head of LGs, FPTP			PA, FPTP		PA, PR		PA, Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Khas Arya	19	1	20	57	4	61	39	-	4	11	54
Hill Janajati	13	-	13	56	1	57	21	5	8	19	53
Newar	8	-	8	18	-	18	13	1	4	10	28
Tamang	3	-	3	31	-	31	6	1	1	4	12
Other	2	-	2	7	1	8	2	3	3	5	13
Tarai Janajati	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Madhesi	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Hill Dalit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Total	32	1	33	114	5	119	61	5	12	32	110

Source: Election results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b; ECN, 2018e)

The political representation of Khas Aryas in all elected bodies at all sphere of the government is uniformly higher than their population proportion. They received 51.3% out of 119 heads of LGs in the province, 49.1% of the PA, and 61% of the HoR elected through the FPTP electoral representation system. Among Janajatis, Newar has the highest representation in the upper rungs of elected bodies, also disproportionate with their population share. Within the framework of the FPTP electoral representation system, 24.2% in the HoR and 25.4% in the PA went to Newars, compared to their population of 16.9% in the province. However, the representation of Newars in the posts of heads of LGs is 15.1%, less than their population share. The case of the Tamang community is exactly the reverse. In comparison to their population share of 20%, Tamangs have a higher representation as heads of LGs in this province at 26.1%, but they have lower

representation in both the HoR (9%) and the PA (10.6%) within the FPTP electoral system.

Women and Dalits of the province remain the most excluded groups in terms of representation in elected bodies. Women's representation through the FPTP electoral system is merely 4.2% among the 119 heads of LGs from the province, 3% among those elected to the HoR, and 7.6 % in the PA through the FPTP electoral representation system. Due to the mandatory constitutional provision, women from the province have received 33.6% representation in the 110 PA seats. The position of Dalits in terms of political representation is by far the worst receiving only 2% of the PA seats as part of the PR electoral system and none among both the heads of LGs and HoR through the FPTP electoral system. Dalit representation is the lowest when compared to their population share of 6% in the province.

2.3.5. Socio-political dynamics

Given that the capital of Nepal, which has historically been the power centre, is in Province Three, it has witnessed a large number of socio-political movements. However, when focussing on province-specific socio-political movements only, the ones that stand out are the demands for Tamsaling and Newa provinces led by Tamangs and Newars respectively. The movements for Tamsaling Province and Newa Province have not been as strong compared to movements for Limbuwan Province and Madhes Province. While the Newar community have been able to benefit from the previously existing power structures to some extent and get accommodated into the mainstream, Tamangs have remained marginalised (Gellner, 2007; NEFIN, 2004). They also have not been able to fully assert their political demand for representation. Nevertheless, Tamang and Newar activists continue to assert their demand for Tamsaling Province and Newa Province respectively.

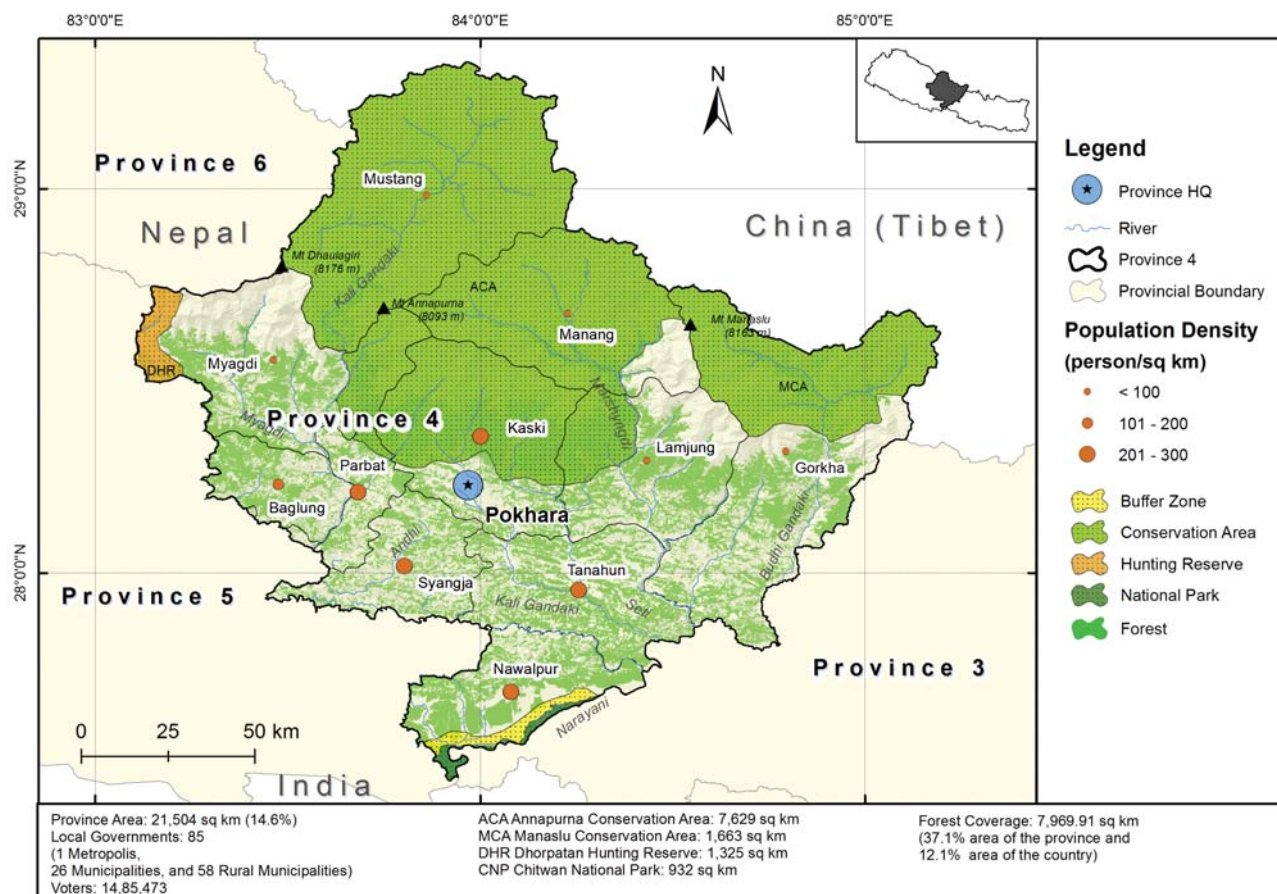
Newars are also a stratified ethnic group with Newar Dalits at the bottom of the Newar caste hierarchy. Newar Dalits have shaped the broader Dalit social movement in protesting against caste-based discrimination. The most important example is the Pashupatinath Temple entry movement of 1953 led by Sahashranath Kapali, which was one of the pioneer movements in which around 700 people were believed to have been arrested by the state (Kisan, 2002; Kisan, 2005; Biswokarma, 2013). Rupal Bishwakarma, one of the first generation of Dalit political leaders to have their position in the central committee of Nepal's political parties, established a political party called Nepal Dalit Shramik Morcha in Chitwan district in 1996 to fight caste-based discrimination. His party captured some land and redistributed them to the Dalit and other marginalised communities in Chitwan (Bishwakarma et al, 2006). In 1994, Dalits of Sindhupalchowk protested the prohibition placed on them from using public water and mobilised the support of national-level Dalit

leaders. This protest against the prohibition of using public water and other caste-based discriminations also extended to Kavrepalanchowk district in spite of the resistance from the local non-Dalit community (ibid.). In Province Three, both hill and Newar Dalits have participated in socio-political movements protesting caste-based discrimination and demanding their inclusion in public life. However, in contemporary times, many Newar Dalit communities do not espouse the Dalit identity and distance themselves from Dalit politics, instead of seeking their assimilation into the Janajati category. Newar activists and some Newar Dalit groups made a petition to the National Dalit Commission in 2003 to exclude their names from the Dalit category, asserting that Newars were an indigenous group (Kharel, 2010).

Various forms of violence and discrimination against women are prevalent and have been documented in Province Three. These include domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, human trafficking, accusation of witchcraft, child marriage, and other forms of harmful traditional practices (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2017; WCSO, 2018; INSEC, 2018; WOREC, 2017; SRPC, 2016). The 2016 Health and Demographic Survey notes Province Three among other provinces with high reporting of violence against women (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2017). Kavrepalanchowk, Sindhupalchowk, Makwanpur, Nuwakot, Dhading, and Chitwan districts of Province Three are considered most prone to international trafficking of women and are listed among the 29 most affected districts in Nepal (Sijapati, Limbu, & Khadka, 2011, p. 8). This data is also consistent with the findings of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) report on trafficking, which indicates that the highest proportion of trafficked cases (34%) is from the former central region that includes all the districts of Province Three (NHRC, 2017, p. 11). Advocacy and campaign against trafficking and other forms of violence against women have been carried out in Province Three with support from various development organisations (Sahavagi, Didi Bahini, & FEDO, 2015; SAWF, 2012; Saathi, TAF, & DFID, 2010).

2.4. Gandaki Province³

Figure 2.10. Geographic map of Gandaki Province



2.4.1. Socio-cultural diversity

Khas Aryas, Magars, Gurungs, and hill Dalits are the main social groups that make up Gandaki Province. Hill Janajatis constitute the majority in the province at 39.3% of the total population. However, Magars and Gurungs are distinct ethnic groups within hill Janajati, and they make up 17.4% and 11.3% respectively. Therefore, Khas Aryas with 36.1% of the province's total population turns out to be the largest ethnic group. Other hill Janajatis,

which make up 10.5%, are Thakalis, Bhujels, Darais, Chhantals, Duras, Barams, and others. Hill Dalits are almost one-fifth of the total population at 17.6%. Gandaki Province ranks second in terms of the population of Dalit. As in the other parts of the country, relations among these different socio-cultural groups is defined by unequal power sharing and discrimination on the basis of caste, ethnicity, and gender.

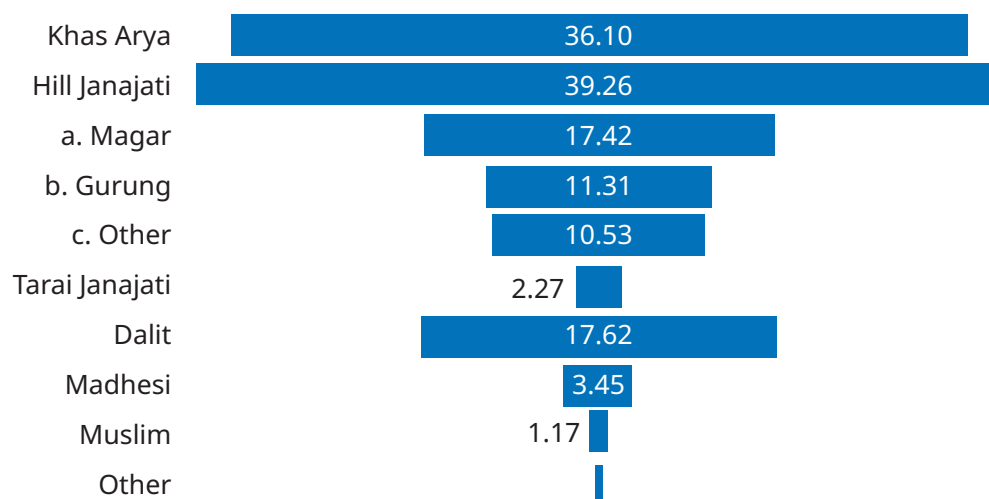
³This province was named 'Gandaki' by the PA on 6 July 2018

As per the Census of 2011, the major languages spoken as mother tongue in the province are Khas Nepali, Magar, Gurung, and Bhojपुरी (CBS, 2012). Gurung language has Tibeto-Burmese influence. Dalits and Khas Aryas, who are the original speakers of the Khas Nepali, make up 53.7% of the population. But 71% of the province speak Khas Nepali as native language. On the other hand, speakers of Magar as mother tongue make up 8.6% against the Magar population of 17.4%, and speakers of Gurung as mother tongue make up 8.5% against the Gurung population of 11.3%. The distribution of population by language groups demonstrates the linguistic assimilation of Magar and Gurung language users into the Khas Nepali language group.

The cultures practised in the province are shaped by Hinduism and Buddhism. Major hill Janajati communities of the province, Gurung and Magar, though they are not originally Hindus, follow either Hinduism or Buddhism, or both religions in some cases. As those who practise Buddhism constitute 13%, it can be inferred that more than half of all Janajatis either follow Hinduism, shamanic customs, or syncretic forms of religion. Although Magars and Gurungs practise both Hinduism and Buddhism in some cases, they also have their own cultural forms known as Tamu and Magar cultures. Gurungs were traditionally divided into two tribe groups—the first made up of four clans, or, *char-jaat*, and second of sixteen clans, or *sorha-jaat* (Bista, 1967; Sharma, 1983).

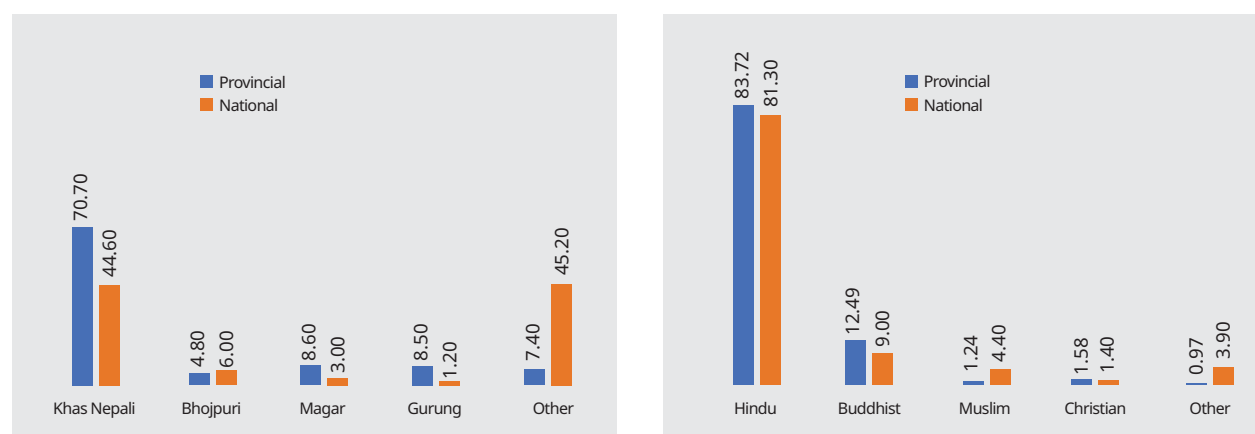
Hierarchical rules of kinship and marriage ties used to hold the Gurung communities together, but these debates over finer clan memberships have waned in recent times. In the Gurung villages, there are administrative headmen who collected revenue for the government. Villagers also formed ad hoc councils for settling local problems. Another Tamu socio-cultural institution is *Rodi*, a place for youths to share information and socialise among themselves (Bhattachan, 2002). Likewise, *Bheja* is a multi-purpose (religious, cultural, and economic) organisation of Magars (ibid.). Magars have long been in close contact with Khas and Brahmins, and the majority of Magars are Hindu. They have Brahmin priests to perform their rituals (Bista, 1967). There are Buddhist Magars too, but most Magars worship Hindu gods and goddesses and celebrate Dashain. The Hindu population in the province is 83.6%. In addition to Khas Aryas and Dalits, hill Janajatis and Madhesis of the province also follow Hinduism. As the rivers are considered sacred by Hindus, the Gandaki river basins that lie in the province are considered a symbol of sacred place. The Muktinath Temple of Mustang district is popular for pilgrimage among Hindus of all over Nepal and India. Hindu pilgrims also visit Kagbeni, which is a place on the bank of the Kaligandaki River, to pay homage to their deceased parents and ancestors. Other hill Janajatis such as Thakalis practise the Bara Gaunle *Mukhiya* System and Bhote Gurungs of upper Mustang practise their own governance system known also as *Mukhiya*.

Figure 2.11. Population by major social groups in Gandaki Province (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Figure 2.12. Population by key language and religious groups Gandaki Province (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

2.4.2. Human capabilities

The districts in Gandaki Province rank second after the districts in Province Three in terms of HDI values as per the Human Development Report of 2014. The province has moderately higher variations on each of the key HDI indicators and HDI values. HDI values for two of its districts, Lamjung and Tanahun, have not been recorded. Two districts record lower HDI values than the national average, and seven have equal or above average values. The mountain districts of Gorkha and Mustang lag behind in the indicators of education, such as adult literacy rate and mean years of schooling. But this is not consistent with income and health indicators. Two mountain districts,

Manang and Mustang, and one urban district, Kaski, have recorded high per capita income, which correlates with high rates of tourism in the districts. As per the Census of 2011, Manang and Mustang have a total population of 6,538 and 13,452 respectively, of which, Janajati make up around 80% of the population (CBS, 2012). Gurungs are the majority in both districts. Districts like Syangja and Kaski where Khas Aryas constitute the majority rank better on HDI values than the districts where Janajatis are in the majority. Baglung and Parbat have relatively higher populations, and they rank the least in per capita income and average on health and education indicators.

Table 2.10. HDI and its constituent values by districts in Gandaki Province

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
Gorkha	0.481	71.70	58.17	3.47	1039
Syangja	0.527	69.68	70.37	4.73	1215
Kaski	0.576	70.51	78.57	5.76	1561
Manang	0.568	65.04	70.82	4.79	3166
Mustang	0.508	65.04	61.35	3.86	1922
Myagdi	0.490	70.05	65.16	3.75	1028
Parbat	0.510	70.55	67.57	4.56	1013
Baglung	0.478	68.83	65.54	3.91	868
Nawalparasi (East)	0.493	67.81	63.75	3.97	1157
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.9	1160

Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

2.4.3. Migration

Table 2.11. Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Gandaki Province

District	Out- migration	In- migration	District
Nawalparasi (East)	5.5	4.2	Baglung
Kaski	9.9	4.5	Gorkha
Tanahu	21.0	4.7	Myagdi
Myagdi	25.1	5.9	Syangja
Baglung	29.2	7.1	Lamjung
Gorkha	32.2	10.1	Parbat
Mustang	33.3	10.7	Tanahu
Lamjung	34.0	16.8	Mustang
Syangja	43.7	19.3	Nawalparasi (East)
Manang	43.8	21.1	Manang
Parbat	46.8	25.4	Kaski

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

As per the Census of 2011, Kaski and Nawalparasi have the highest rate of in-migration. All remaining nine districts have higher rates of out-migration and record negative rates of population growth (Pathak & Lamichhane, 2014). Kaski district, which has its centre in Nepal's most famous tourist city Pokhara, is among the top ten districts in terms of in-migration and ranks at the sixth position among the districts receiving migrants. Nawalparasi is also one of the top districts receiving migrants. The migration into Nawalparasi, especially in the eastern part of the district, can be explained through the same process of north-south migration that affects other provinces and described in the introduction. On the other hand, Syangja,

Parbat, Manang, and Gorkha are among the top ten districts in terms of out-migration (Suwal, 2014). Gandaki Province is among the three provinces that have low percentage of migrant workers receiving labour permits to exit the country. A total of 62,327 labour permits were issued by the DoFE in the year 2014/15 in Gandaki Province (MoLE, 2016). The highest number of recipients of labour permits in 2014/2015 in the province were from Tanahun, Syangja, and Parbat, and the lowest were from Mustang and Manang districts. The migration patterns of Gandaki Province, both in terms of domestic movement and international movement, also demonstrate that people move for better services and opportunities.

Table 2.12. Election results of the three sphere of governments by major social groups in Gandaki Province (In number)

Social Groups	HoR, FPTP			Head of LGs, FPTP			PA, FPTP		PA, PR		PA, Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Khas Arya	11	1	12	47	2	49	19	1	3	7	30
Hill Janajati	5	-	5	31	4	35	15	1	2	9	27
Gurung	2	-	2	13	1	14	6	-	-	6	12
Magar	1	-	1	11	3	14	5	1	-	1	7
Other	2	-	2	7	-	7	4	-	2	2	8
Hill Dalit	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	2	3
Madhesi Dalit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	17	1	18	79	6	85	34	2	6	18	60

Source: Election results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b; ECN, 2018f)

In the recent elections of the three spheres of government in the province, Khas Aryas won a higher number of seats in the province than their population share. They won 67% of the seats in the HoR from the province through the FPTP electoral representation system, 50% of the 60 seats in the PA through both the FPTP and the PR electoral representation systems, and 57.6% of 85 heads of the LGs. The representation of hill Janajatis in the PA is proportionate to their population both through the FPTP and PR election systems, but they are under-represented in the HoR. Hill Janajatis won 27.8% of the seats in the HoR through the FPTP electoral representation system even though they comprise 39.3% of the province's population. Representation of Gurungs in the HoR through FPTP electoral representation system and among heads of the LGs is closely proportionate to their population. But at 20%, their representation in the PA is higher compared to their population share in the province. Magars have disproportionately low representation in both the HoR and PA. Despite

their population of 17.4% of the province's total population as per the Census of 2011, Magars won only 6% of the total seats in the HoR from the province through the FPTP electoral representation system and 12% in the PA through both the FPTP and the PR electoral representation systems.

Women and Dalits are the most under-represented groups in the province. Women's share is 6% each in the HoR and the PA through the FPTP electoral representation system. Due to the mandatory provision in the Constitution, however, women have 33% representation in the PA. Only 7% of the 85 heads of the LGs are women. Hill Dalits, who make up 18% of the province's population, won 6% seats in the HoR through the FPTP electoral representation system, none in the PA through the PR electoral system, and only one of the 85 heads of the LGs. Tarai Janajatis and Madhesi live as minorities in their respective settlements in Nawalparasi district, but none of them got elected at any level of government in the province.

2.4.5. Socio-political dynamics

As identified in the socio-cultural diversity section above, the major socio-cultural groups in Gandaki Province are Khas Arya, Gurung, Magar, and Dalit. While Gurung and Magar communities have struggled for their recognition and proportionate share of political power, Dalits have focussed on fighting against caste-based discrimination. The traditional homelands of Gurungs and Magars lie in Gandaki Province (Bista, 1967). Based on their historical ties, Gurungs and Magars launched separate movements demanding Tamuwan Province and Magarat Province respectively for the recognition of their identity in the districts of current Province Five and Gandaki Province. Magarat Province, as imagined by Magar activists, encompassed Palpa, Rolpa, Rukum, Baglung, Myagdi, Arghakhanchi, Pyuthan, Gulmi, and Salyan. Tamuwan of the Gurungs included most districts of the existing Gandaki Province, such as Lamjung, Gorkha, Tanahun, Manang, Mustang, Parbat, Kaski, and Syangja (UN RCO, 2012a). Their movements for the demand of Tamuwan and Magarat provinces reached its climax during the first CA between

2008 and 2012. Khas Aryas of Gandaki Province, however, protested the demand of identity-based federalism, which led to confrontation between the supporters of Tamuwan and Khas Arya groups (Dhakal, 2013; UN RCO, 2012a). Gurungs are a small ethnic group with 2% of the total population in the country and 11% of the total population in the province as per the Census of 2011. But they are well-represented in Nepal's major political parties. Yet they were unable to mobilise support from their respective political parties for the demand of Tamuwan Province. The split of the traditional Magar area into three different provinces—Gandaki Province, Province Five, and Karnali Province—has diminished the prospect of Magarat Province. The Magar activists, as reported in various discussions with the authors, have not totally dropped the idea of a separate Magarat Province. The Gurung and Magar leaders, who are at the forefront of provincial politics in Gandaki Province, Province Five, and Province Six, were once chief advocates of identity-based federalism.

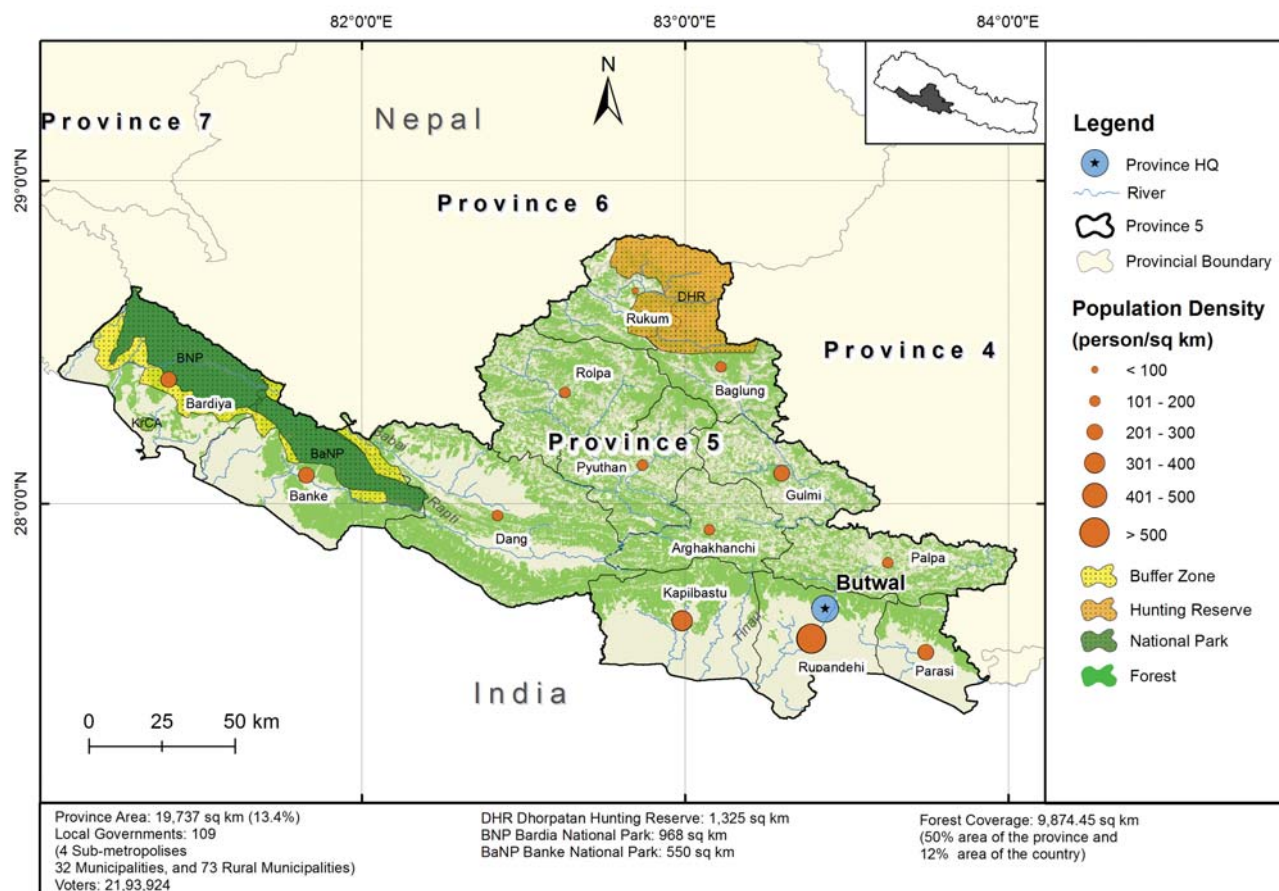
Gandaki Province ranks second in terms of the distribution of Dalit population across the provinces, and some of the earliest initiatives towards the founding of the Dalit social movement in the country occurred here. Viswa Sarvajana Sangh (Association for the Peoples of the World) was founded in 1947 in Baglung district (Kharel, 2010). In the post-1990s democratic Nepal, major demonstrations by local Dalits began to take place with the help of human rights organisations, such as the widespread and successful movement in Syangja to end caste-based discrimination in the buying and selling of dairy by collectors. Mobilisations to demand the rights of Dalits to enter public temples also occurred in Syangja district in 1994 and in Myagdi district in 1998. Likewise, Dalits of Gorkha protested their prohibition to enter the Gorakhkali Temple in 1994 (Bishwakarma & Pariyar, 2013). As recently as 2005, temple entry programmes were being organised by Dalits in Parbat and Baglung districts (Bishwakarma et al., 2006). Much of

Dalit social activism had to do with demanding the end of caste-based discriminations in public spaces, such as prohibitions to enter temples, fetch water from public ponds, and dine together in social occasions.

Various forms of discrimination and violence against women prevalent and reported in Gandaki Province are domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, human trafficking, and child marriage, among others (MoHN, New Era, & ICF 2017; INSEC, 2018; WOREC, 2017; CID, 2017). Although compared to other provinces reporting of sexual violence is low in Gandaki Province (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2017), women of Gandaki Province have been mobilised against gender-based violence for many decades. Various development organisations have been mobilising communities in various districts of Gandaki Province to carry out advocacy against gender-based discrimination and violence (Sahavagi, Didi Bahini, & Feminist Dalit Organisation, 2015; SAWF, 2012; Saathi, TAF, & DFID 2010).

2.5. Province Five

Figure 2.13. Geographic map of Province Five



2.5.1. Socio-cultural diversity

Province Five is a socio-culturally diverse province, which comprises Khas Aryas, Magars, Tarai Janajatis (mostly Tharus), Dalits, Madhesi, and Muslims. The largest social group in terms of population in the province is Khas Arya, which makes up 30% of the total population. Magar, which makes up 15.7% of the total population in the province, is the second largest group. Other hill Janajati groups together make up only 3.9% and Tarai Janajati,

which mostly comprises Tharus, is 14.8%. Hill Dalits are 9.9% and Madhesi Dalits are 4.2%, making up 14.1% of the total population in the province, which is proportionate to the national population of Dalits. Madhesi also make up a relatively large group in the province at 13.3%, while the population of Muslims is at 6.6%. As in other provinces, relations among these groups are characterised by hierarchical and unequal power sharing.

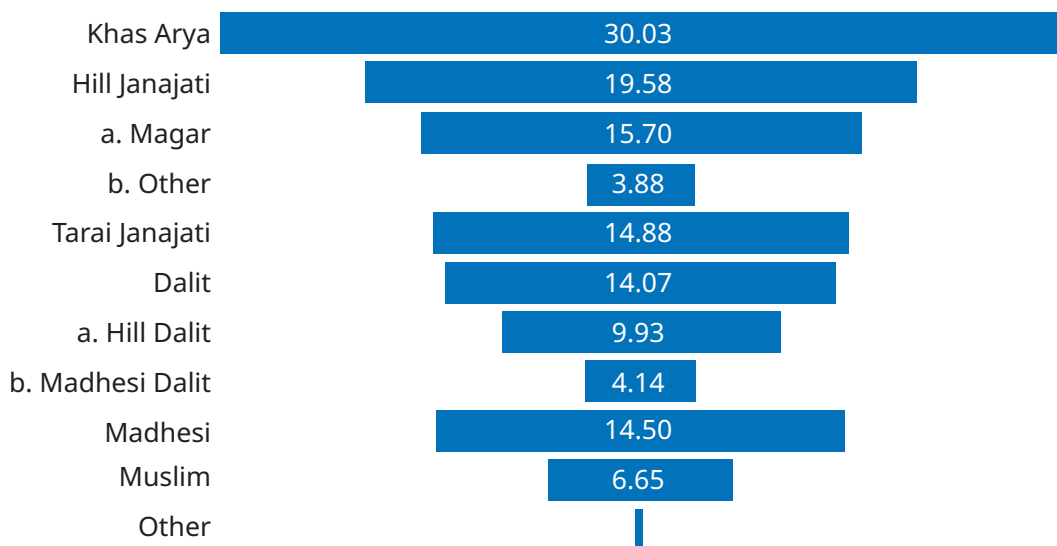
The province is also linguistically diverse. There are at least five languages, each spoken by more than 5% of the total population as their mother tongue in the province. At 53%, those who speak Khas Nepali as their mother tongue make up the majority of the total population in the province. The Khas Nepali language is the mother tongue of Khas Aryas and hill Dalits, who together make up 40% of the population. But as with other provinces, it is evident that the influence of the Khas Nepali language over other ethnic communities is substantial in Province Five as well. Magars constitute 15.7% of the total population in the province, but speakers of Magar as mother tongue make up only 5%. Inconsistency between the sizes of population and speakers of mother tongue can be the result of assimilation and integration of minority groups into mainstream socio-cultural group. People of Tarai origin, however, have by and large maintained their mother tongues. Thirty-eight per cent of the province's population speak various Tarai languages associated with specific ethnic groups: Tharu (13%), Awadhi (11%), Bhojpuri (9%), and Urdu (5%).

Cultural practices of the province are mostly shaped by Hinduism and Islam. Hindus make up 89% of the total population in the province and is a common religion of people from both hill and Tarai districts. However, the local forms the religion takes in the hills and the plains are varied. For example, hill Hindus celebrate the festival Dashain with much focus on accepting Tika and blessing from elders, whereas in the Tarai the festival is centred around the worship of Goddess Durga Puja, which is a tiny part

of the festival for hill Hindus. However, the hierarchical caste system is practised among both hill and Tarai Hindus. This system of caste hierarchy is also practised by hill Janajatis as a result of their assimilation into Hinduism. The population of Buddhists in the province is only 3.2%. Buddhism in the province is followed mainly by Magars, although most Magars practise Hinduism (Bista, 1967; Sharma, 1983). Efforts by the GoN are now underway to promote Lumbini, which lies in Province Five, as the birth-place of Buddhist civilisation. Magars have also retained their shamanic or oracular religion to a great extent. The censuses have not been able to convey this, but these practices that shape Magar culture are often projected as "the negative side of high-caste Hindu values" (Sales, 2003, pp. 47).

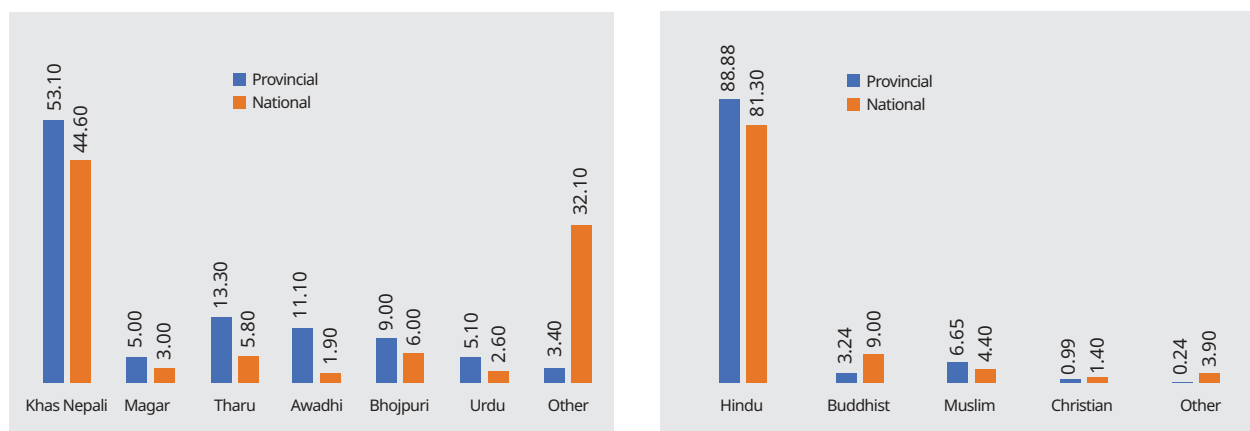
Customary laws and traditional institutions of Tharu communities have weakened over time, and their cultural practices have adopted Hindu customs in many ways. The *Barghar* system, which is the governance institution of Tharu communities in the Tarai with a traditional head and staff, is still prevalent. This village leadership is selected during the Tharu Maghi (or New Year) festival in Magh (mid-January) when the festival calendar is decided, and development priorities are agreed. The traditional Tharu leader, called a *Barghar*, is either selected by consensus or elected by villagers for the tenure of a year. Muslims make up 6.6% of the province, which is higher than the national average by 2%. Muslim populations are the highest in the three Tarai districts Rupandehi, Kapilvastu, and Banke.

Figure 2.14. Population by major social groups in Province Five (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Figure 2.15. Population by key language and religious groups in Province Five (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

2.5.2. Human capabilities

The province's records on human capabilities are lower than the national average. Only the rates of adult literacy and mean years of schooling in four districts Gulmi, Arghakhanchi, Rupandehi and Palpa show a variance with values higher than the national average. The hill Brahmins (one of the higher Khas Arya castes) form the majority in these districts, except in Palpa where they are the second largest group (CBS, 2012). Rolpa, Rukum, Pyuthan, Kapilvastu, and Bardiya were the districts that were most

affected by the Maoist armed conflict and they lag behind in all the HDI indicators. These are also the districts with higher populations of historically marginalised ethnic groups like Magar and Tharu or religious minority Muslims as per the disaggregation of population by the Census of 2011 (CBS, 2012). The patterns of HDI values across the districts reveal an uneven distribution across the province's geography and social groups.

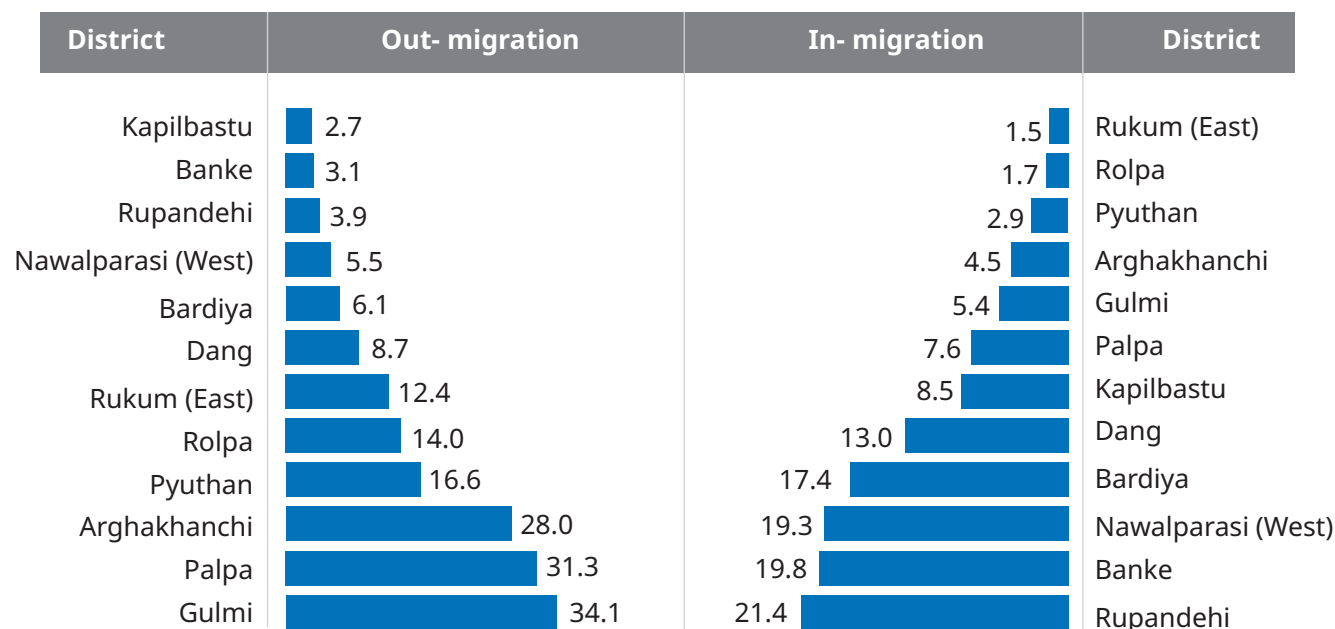
Table 2.13. HDI and its constituent values by districts in Province Five

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
Gulmi	0.464	68.09	65.58	3.92	752
Palpa	0.500	68.27	70.82	4.35	985
Rupandehi	0.498	68.29	64.39	4.20	1123
Kapilbastu	0.432	67.56	47.10	2.83	990
Arghakhanchi	0.482	68.56	65.57	4.01	909
Pyuthan	0.413	64.33	58.01	2.91	681
Rolpa	0.395	66.28	50.74	2.44	643
Rukum (East)	0.431	68.39	50.81	3.06	782
Dang	0.485	67.33	62.41	3.83	1127
Baanke	0.475	68.35	56.31	3.59	1133
Bardiya	0.466	67.26	56.54	3.46	1086
Nawalparasi (West)	0.493	67.81	63.75	3.97	1157
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.9	1160

Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

2.5.3. Migration

Table 2.14. Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Five



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

A wave of migration emerged in the post-1950s period in this province that also had the same north-south orientation as other regions of the country. The increased north-south migration led to an uneven population distribution between hill and Tarai districts. As per the Census of 2011, Tarai districts have 71% and hill districts have 29% of the total population in the province. The population of Tarai districts has increased rapidly. For example, in Rupandehi district, the population of hill language speakers, including Khas Nepali, constituted only 4% in 1952/54, but the population of Khas Nepali speakers alone had jumped to 45% by 2011 (Serchan, 2016). The data of lifetime migration also show that the accumulative figure of in-migration of the six hill districts is only 0.3%, but out-migration is above 1.5% of

the province's total population as per the Census of 2011. In contrast, the Tarai districts account for 0.8% out-migration and 3.3% in-migration. Rupandehi tops as the district receiving the majority (21%) of the migrants from the western hills (CBS, 2012). The two fastest growing cities in the province, Bhairahawa and the temporary provincial capital Butwal, have been absorbing the bulk of the hill migrant population. Province Five is also among the top three provinces for the number of migrant workers departing for foreign employment. A total of 86,406 labour permits were issued by the DoFE in the year 2014/15 in Province Five (MoLE, 2016). The highest number of recipients of labour permits in 2014/2015 in the province were from Rupandehi and Dang, while the lowest were from Rukum and Pyuthan.

2.5.4. Political representation

Table 2.15. Election results of the three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Five (In number)

Social Groups	HoR, FPTP			Head of LGs, FPTP			PA, FPTP		PA, PR		PA, Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Khas Arya	13	1	14	61	1	62	31	2	-	14	47
Hill Janajati	2	1	3	16	-	16	6	-	2	1	9
Tarai Janajati	2	-	2	12	-	12	6	-	1	6	13
Madhesi	4	-	4	15	-	15	5	-	-	3	8
Hill Dalit	2	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	6	6
Madhesi Dalit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Muslim	1	-	1	3	-	3	2	-	1	1	4
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	24	2	26	108	1	109	50	2	4	31	87

Source: Election results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b; ECN, 2018g)

The unequal distribution of political representation of different social groups is conspicuous in Province Five. Khas Aryas are over-represented in all three spheres of government. While their population share is 30%, Khas Aryas won 54% of 87 seats in the PA through the FPTP and the PR electoral representation system, 53.9% of 26 seats in the HoR, and 56.9% of 109 heads of the LGs. Tarai Janajatis and Madhesi are proportionately represented in the PA of the province. Tarai Janajatis won 14.9% of the seats in the PA through both the FPTP and PR electoral representation system, which is commensurate with their population of 14.8%. Hill Janajatis, however, are underrepresented both in the HoR and the PA. Hill Janajatis were elected in 11.5% of the 26 seats in the HoR through the FPTP electoral representation system and 10.3% in the PA through both the FPTP and PR, which is much lower than their population share of 20%. Madhesi won a slightly higher (15.4%) share of seats in the HoR compared to their population of 14.5%.

The lack of representation of women and Dalits in the electoral body is conspicuous in the province. Women constitute a mere 1% of the 109 heads of the LGs in the province. Women have 4% representation in the PA and 7% in the HoR through the FPTP electoral representation system. Of the 26 constituencies, Two Dalits won a seat in the HoR through the FPTP electoral representation system, which is only 7.7% against their population of 14% in Province Five. No Dalit was elected in the PA through the FPTP electoral representation system in the province. Dalits make 1% of 109 heads of the LGs. In the PA comprising 87 members, Dalit representation is only at 7%. The case of Tarai Dalits is worse as they have no representation in any of the three spheres of government. The constitutional provision of ensuring 33% representation for women, however, has enabled women to secure 37.9% of seats in the PA.

2.5.5. Socio-political dynamics

The major social groups of the Province are Khas Aryas, hill Dalits, Magars, Tharus, and Madhesis (which include Madhesi Dalits and Muslims). Despite being indigenous to Province Five, Magars and Tharus have had only limited political representation and access to power until recently since the formation of Nepal as a nation-state in the late eighteenth century (Sales, 2003). Since the mid-1990s, with the backing of the Maoist insurgents, these indigenous and minority communities have been demanding recognition of their identities. In the post-2006 political transformation period, Magarat and Tharuwan movements intensified in these territories with demands for Magarat and Tharuwan/Tharuhat provinces. As claimed by the Magars, the Magarat Province included the districts from both current Province Five and Gandaki Province, such as Palpa, Gulmi, Arghakhanchi, Baglung, Myagdi, Pyuthan, Rolpa, Salyan, and Rukum (UN RCO, 2012a). Khas Aryas (represented by the Brahmin Samaj and the Chhetri Samaj Nepal) opposed the demand forwarded by the Magars. This led to tensions with the Magar Sangh activists as well as Janajati activists in Tansen (Palpa) in 2012. Tharuwan/Tharuhat provinces included the Tarai districts of Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, and Kanchanpur, which now lie in Province Five and Province Seven. Likewise, the Madhesis of the province participated in demanding an autonomous Madhes Province comprising all the Tarai districts between the Narayani River and Mahakali River (ibid.). These districts now lie in Province Five and Province Seven. The 'Undivided Mid-West' Struggle Committee (UMWSC) intensified protest during the first CA opposing both the demands for a Madhesi Province and a Tharuwan/Tharuhat Province. The UMWSC launched their protests in Bardiya, Banke, and Surkhet opposing the demands of what they termed 'ethnic federalism' and advocated for a 'Mid-Western Province' comprising Bheri, Karnali, and Seti zones (UNRCO, 2012a). Muslims of Province Five have

often articulated the need for being recognised as a community distinct from Hindu Madhesis. But there are also instances where Muslims have cast their lot with the broader Madhesi identity. For instance, the Banke and Kapilvastu riots of 2006 and 2007 saw the Muslims of Tarai and Hindu Madhesis come together during their clash with the hill communities (Dastider, 2013).

A historic movement for social justice that was largely concentrated in parts of Province Five and Province Seven was the Kamaiya Liberation Movement. The Kamaiya system was a traditional system of bonded labour in southern Nepal, and it was widespread in the western parts of Nepal, particularly Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, and Kanchanpur districts. The majority of Kamaiyas belonged to the Tharu community. Due to the success of the movement carried out by Kamaiyas with advocacy support from various civil society organisations, the government declared the emancipation of up to 200,000 bonded labourers in Western Nepal in 2000 (Tatsuro, 2001). Subsequently, the Kamaiya system was formally abolished through the Kamaiya Labour Prohibition Act 2002. However, the rehabilitation of former Kamaiyas and distribution of land remain a major issue in the region. The movement has also slowed down since the formal emancipation of the bonded labourers (Adhikari, 2008).

Another prominent movement in the province is led by the National Land Rights Forum Nepal (NLRN), a national association of poor farmers deprived of land rights. The movement has united marginalised farmers such as bonded labourers, tenant farmers, the landless, the semi landless, haruwa, charuwa, and trust land farmers. One of the common problems in three districts Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, and Kapilvastu is what is called ukhada land, where the tillers have no formal contract with the

owners and are likely to be expelled at any point of time if discovered. Five thousand families cultivating ukhada land in these three districts have waged protests against this (Sapkota, 2016). Province Five has also witnessed various Dalit-led social movements against caste-based discrimination and inequality. One of the notable movements against caste-based discrimination was led by Riplal Bishwakarma in Palpa in 1947 (Bishwakarma et al., 2006). Like in other provinces, Thamkot Temple entry movement was organised in Arghakhanchi district in 2004. Cases of inter-caste marriage involving Dalit and non-Dalit castes have occasionally flared up into public contestations in this region. In one such incident from 2004 in Banke, the relatives of the “high” caste bride held three members of the Dalit groom’s family captive, following which more than 1,000 Dalits protested the capture and demanded punishment to the perpetrators (ibid.).

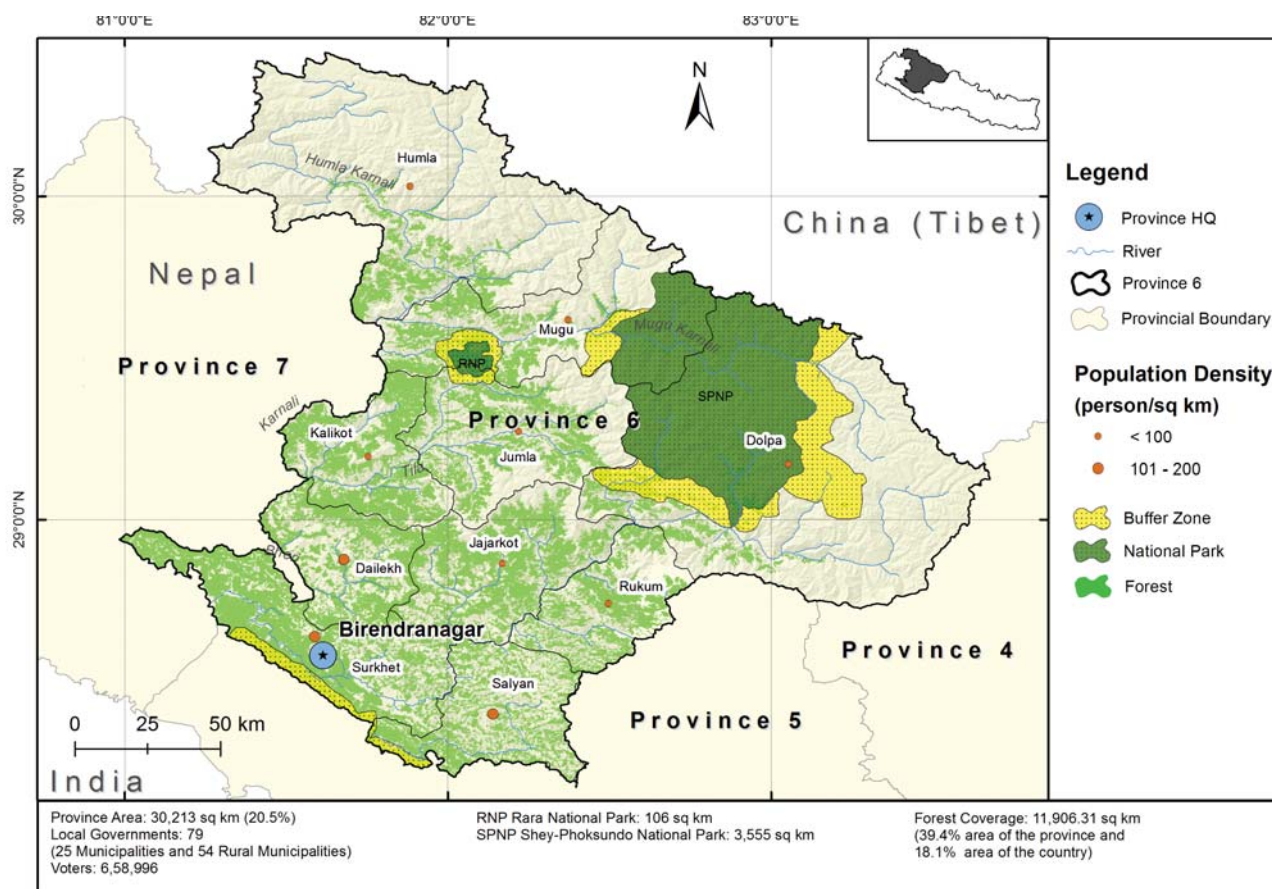
Various forms of discrimination and violence against women are prevalent and have been reported in Province Five. These include domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, human trafficking, and child marriage, among others (MoHN, New Era, & ICF 2016; INSEC, 2018; WOREC, 2017; CID, 2017). The 2016 Health and Demographic Survey ranks Province Five among the top three provinces in terms of rates of violence against women (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2016). Women’s land ownership and property rights are also key issues that women in the province have fought for. Women also participated in the peasant movement in Nawalparasi and Rupandehi in the 1950s. Women participated to a great extent in the Karjahi Peasant Movement in 1980, which was mobilised to fight against the abuses the Tharu tenants were having to face from the landowners of Karjahi (Pandey, 2002). Among the various movements in the province against discrimination and violence faced by women, the Badi movement is a significant one. Badi caste is one of the most marginalised, even among Dalits, and are mainly settled in the former mid-western and far-western regions

of Nepal (now in Provinces Five, Six and Seven). The Badi community, particularly Badi women, face social stigma and discrimination mainly because of the historical association of a small section of the Badi community with sex work. The Badi movement was triggered by a delay in the implementation of the landmark decision of the Supreme Court made in 2005 to grant birth registration and citizenship to Badi children, provide employment, and economic support to Badi families (UN RCO, 2012b). Following a series of protests, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Badi community and the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction on 16 October 2007 (Office of the High commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal (OHCHR), 2007, p. 19). The Badi movement led the government to address issues related to citizenship, various discriminatory practices against Badi, landlessness, alternative employment, and rehabilitation (UN RCO, 2012b). Although the government addressed some of the demands of the Badi community, many of its agreements are yet to be properly implemented (“Devoid of aid”, 2017).

Muslim women experience distinct forms of discrimination and violence against women related to the practice of talaq, an oral form of divorce in which marriage can be broken by the husband by pronouncing the word *talaq* three times (Forum for Women, Law & Development [FWLD], 2011). In 2008 a two-day demonstration against the widespread practice of talaq was organised in Nepalgunj in which 465 divorced Muslim women, along with human rights activists, and Muslim men, demanded compensation and alimony from their former spouses (Parajuli, 2008). In all the provinces, including in Province Five, Muslim and Dalit women lag behind other women in all social, political, and economic spheres of life (Sahavagi, Didi Bahini, & FEDO, 2015). Various Muslim women’s organisations such as Fatima Foundation-Nepal and Muslim Women Welfare Society (MWWS) are actively carrying out advocacy and development work to address the multiple forms of challenges faced by Muslim women (Acharya, 2010).

2.6. Karnali Province⁴

Figure 2.16. Geographic map of Karnali Province



2.6.1. Socio-cultural diversity

Karnali Province is relatively homogeneous in terms of social and ethnic diversity. As per the Census of 2011, Khas Aryas constitute 60.1% of the total population, making it the largest social group in the province. Hill Dalits are the second largest social group with 22.9% of the total population, which also makes the Karnali Province the highest in terms of the population share of Dalits. Hill Janajatis comprise 14.2%

of the total population. The majority of the hill Janajatis in the province are Magar (11.4%), followed by other Janajati (3.4%) such as Bhote, Dolpo, and Mugali, who inhabit their traditional territories in the upper Karnali. The mountain districts (Mugu, Dolpo, and Kalikot) of the province were integrated into the Nepali economy only in the post-2006 period after the construction of Karnali Highway. Hinduism

⁴This province was named 'Karnali' by the PA on 24 February 2018

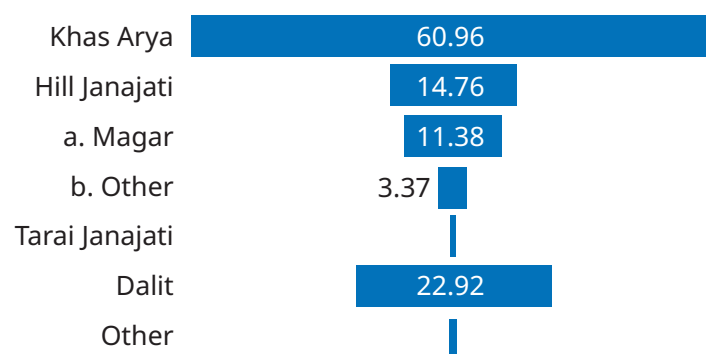
has less influence over these communities, who were economically and culturally more connected to the Tibetan region in China. These hill Janajati groups have maintained their own distinct cultural traditions. The relations between these different social groups of Karnali Province are defined by hierarchical and unequal power relations, and as in other parts, Dalits are placed at the bottom of the caste hierarchy.

Khas Nepali is the dominant language of the province. According to the Census of 2011, speakers of Khas Nepali as the mother tongue make up 95% of the total population in the province. This can be credited to the origins of the Khas Nepali language in the Sinja Valley of Jumla district (Sharma, 1983). The earliest examples of Devanagari script from the thirteenth century were found on the cliffs in Dullu of Dailekh (Bista, 1991; Sharma, 1983). However, the Khas Nepali currently prevalent in the Karnali Province is now considered a dialect of the official Khas Nepali language. The speakers of Magar language make up 2.5% of the total population in the province.

Another language spoken as mother tongue in the province is Dolpo, which makes up a tiny portion of the total population in the province.

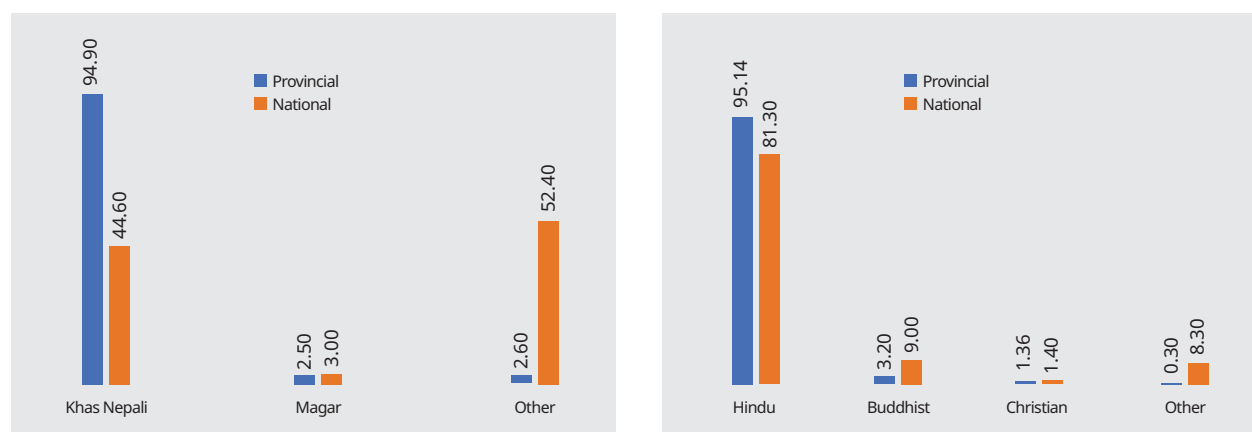
In the province, cultural practices have been shaped by the two major religions Hinduism and Buddhism. Hindus make up 95% of the total population in the province. With this, the province has the highest population percentage of Hindus among other provinces. Khas people of the province additionally worship Mastos, an animistic religion (Mishra, 2011). Khas Aryas and Dalits, who practise Hinduism, together make up 83.9% of the total population. This shows that a part of hill Janajatis, especially Magars, also follow Hinduism in the province. Buddhists constitute 3% of the total population in the province. The tiny minorities of hill Janajatis based especially in Mugu and Dolpo follow Buddhism. The Tibetan cultural practices have influence on them in their food habits, dresses, and customs. Living in isolated remote areas, their day-to-day life is governed by their customary laws and traditional institutions, including resolution of local disputes (Bista, 1967).

Figure 2.17. Population of major social groups in Karnali Province (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Figure 2.18. Population by key language and religious groups in Karnali Province (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

2.6.2. Human capabilities

Karnali Province is among the three provinces where all the districts register lower HDI values than the national average. Five out of its ten districts are among the fifteen least developed districts. The province is also notable for consistently low variations on the indicators of the HDI values across the districts. The only variation is Surkhet where it stands slightly above the average with regards to the rate of adult literacy. The United Nations Country Team in Nepal has listed eight of the ten districts in the Karnali Province as among the least developed in the country using the following indicators: rate of poverty; lack of alternative income and livelihood opportunities; landlessness,

marginal landholding, and insecure property ownership; prevalence of caste and ethnic discrimination; socio-economic status; and rate of education and literacy (UNCTN, 2011). Karnali province demonstrates that its patterns of under-development correlates with geographical remoteness as well as with the population size of its most marginalised communities such as Dalits. Even the Chhetris, who are consistently in higher numbers in most districts of the province, can be termed marginalised when their representation is analysed by disaggregating within the category of Khas Arya (Simkhada, 2017).

Table 2.16. HDI and its constituent values by district in Karnali Province

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
Salyan	0.441	68.80	55.50	3.17	786
Surkhet	0.476	67.28	67.00	3.88	911
Dailekh	0.422	68.03	52.30	3.06	684
Jajarkot	0.393	66.45	46.92	2.70	611
Dolpa	0.401	61.20	44.22	2.53	1040
Jumla	0.409	63.14	44.43	2.62	1007
Kalikot	0.374	63.64	45.30	2.54	578
Mugu	0.397	65.57	39.25	2.50	866
Humla	0.376	64.15	37.22	2.22	794
Rukum (West)	0.431	68.39	50.81	3.06	782
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.9	1160

Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

2.6.3. Migration

Table 2.17. Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Karnali Province

District	Out- migration	In- migration	District
Dolpa	5.3	1.2	Jajarkot
Humla	5.9	1.5	Rukum (West)
Mugu	8.4	1.6	Dailekh
Surkhet	11.8	2.1	Mugu
Jajarkot	11.9	2.3	Salyan
Kalikot	12.3	2.6	Kalikot
Rukum (West)	12.4	3.0	Jumla
Jumla	12.7	3.2	Humla
Salyan	18.4	3.6	Dolpa
Dailekh	21.0	14.9	Surkhet

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Karnali Province is notable for out-migration as per the Census of 2011. A significant number of people from the province migrate from its northern regions down south to the Tarai districts, the most immediate destinations being Dang, Banke, and Bardiya. The process of out-migration from the districts of Karnali Province has accelerated after the political shifts starting in 1990. In Karnali Province, the ratio of lifetime out-migration (0.6%) is double than that of in-migration (0.3%) as per the Census of 2011 (Suwal, 2014, pp. 277-78). In the province, Dailekh, Salyan, Jumla, Rukum (West) and Kalikot witnessed higher rates of out-migration in descending order in 2011, and Surkhet is the only migrant recipient district. A total of 19,007 labour permits were issued by the DoFE in the year 2014/15 in Karnali Province (MoLE, 2016). The highest number of recipients

of labour permits in 2014/2015 in the province were from Salyan and Surkhet, while the lowest were from Dolpa and Humla districts. However, there is also a long tradition of migration to India from this province. People from this region, mainly men between 15-60 years, migrate to India for work and use this income to buy deficit food (Adhikari, 2008). Almost every household in this province has one or more members working in India. Migration to India is typically seasonal during off-season from farm work or temporary for a few years. Some also stay in India for longer periods. The tendency to migrate to Malaysia and the Gulf States is relatively low in this province. But this practice is also picking up here. The higher rate of migration from the province to the districts of other provinces can be correlated to lower values of development indicators.

2.6.4. Political representation

Table 2.18. Election results of the three sphere of governments by major social groups in Karnali Province (In number)

Social Groups	HoR, FPTP			Head of LGs, FPTP			PA, FPTP		PA, PR		PA, Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Khas Arya	10	-	10	61	1	62	21	-	-	12	33
Hill Janajati	2	-	2	15	1	16	1	-	-	1	2
Tarai Janajati	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hill Dalit	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	3	5
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	12	-	12	77	2	79	24	-	-	16	40

Source: Election results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b; ECN, 2018h)

In the province, Khas Aryas are over-represented in all the spheres of elected government bodies. Khas Aryas won 83.3% of the total seats in the HoR from the province through the FPTP electoral system. They also won 82.5% of the total seats in the PA through both the FPTP and the PR electoral representation system. Khas Aryas won 87.5% of the 24 seats in the PA through the FPTP electoral representation system. They also won 78% of the 79 heads of the LGs. The representation of Khas Aryas across the board is much higher than their population share of 61% in the province.

Dalits are highly under-represented in the province. Dalits did not have representation in the HoR from the province and won only 8% of the total seats in the PA through the FPTP electoral representation system. Within the

framework of the PR electoral representation, Dalits had only 12.5% of the total seats in the PA, which is nearly half of their population share of 22.9% in the province. Dalits also won only one of 79 heads of the LGs. Janajatis won 4.1% of the total seats in PA through the FPTP electoral representation system and 5% of the total seats in the PA through both the FPTP and the PR electoral representation system as compared to their population share of 14.8%. However, at 20.3%, hill Janajatis have a disproportionately higher representation among the heads of the LGs. Women from the province also did not find representation in the HoR as well as in the PA through the FPTP electoral representation system. Women make up 3% of 79 heads of the LGs. However, women have secured representation of 40% in the PA due to the mandatory constitutional provision.

2.6.5. Socio-political dynamics

Karnali Province largely includes the districts of the former Mid-Western Development Region (MWDR) (Ramsbothan & Thapa, 2017). The province has the lowest values in eight multiple indices (food security, education, child labour, sanitation coverage, budget redistribution, health) of human development (UNCTN, 2011). Karnali Province was one of the most affected areas by the ten-year armed conflict of Nepal (Hatlebakk, 2009). The province is additionally notable for the dominant presence of Khas Aryas and Dalits. Khas Aryas advocated for the retention of the existing five development regions as five provinces with the same names (Hachhethu, 2014). In 2015, this was the demand of the “Undivided Mid-Western” activists who mostly represented Khas Aryas and Dalits. The protests were sparked by the agreement of the major political parties on the six-province model in August 2015. In response to the demand, the parties decided to form the current Karnali Province, comprising mostly the hills districts of the former MWDR, and making a seven-province model on 21 August 2015 (Ramsbothan & Thapa, 2017). Other

struggles that followed after the decision are as follows. The Karnali Civil Struggle Committee demanded “an autonomous Karnali state with special rights”. The Undivided Rukum Struggle Committee demanded that Rukum district be kept intact in Province Five and not be divided between two provinces. Ethnic minorities of the province have also struggled for their rights. In the upper Karnali region, people historically have closer affinity with Tibet Province of China and they demanded a separate province for the Upper Karnali during the first Constituent Assembly (2008-2012). They were, however, numerically too small and politically not influential enough to sustain their demand.

Dalits have also been organising in Karnali Province to fight caste-based discrimination and untouchability. Ratna Bahadur BK of Dailekh was a political activist, who initiated a movement against discriminatory Hindu practices in Dailekh district, including the Narayan Temple entry movement on 17 August 2004 (Bishwakarma et al., 2006). There have been two prominent murder cases related to

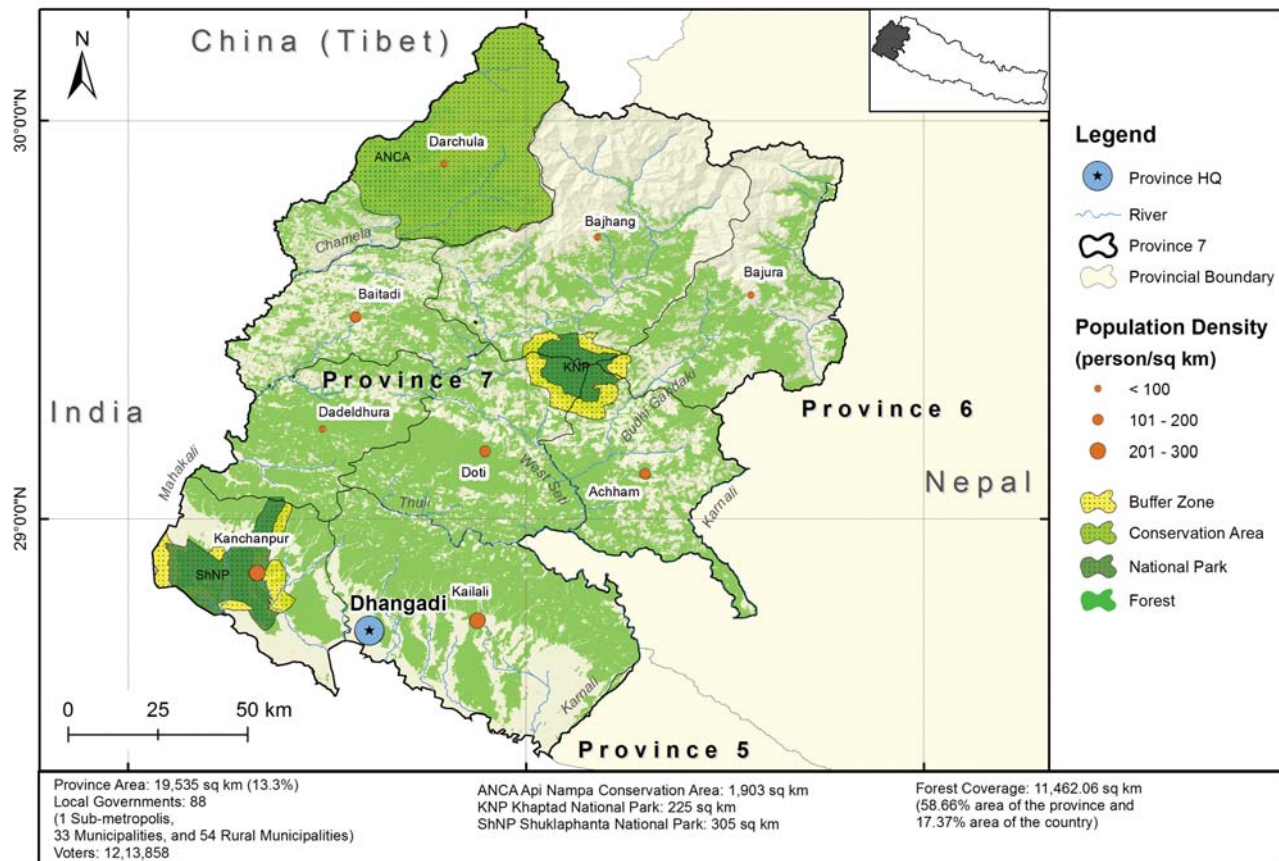
caste-based discrimination in the province. One was the case of Manbir Sunar, who was allegedly murdered by a non-Dalit person on 10 December 2011 for touching the kitchen in a hotel owned by and for use of non-Dalits ("Manbir Sunar Hatya", 2012). In another incident, when a Brahmin girl in Dailekh took a Dalit Santa Damai as her husband, her relatives took offense to this inter-caste marriage, attacked, and allegedly murdered Santa's father Sete Damai on 13 August 2012 (Sundas et al., 2014). Following the murder, Dalits in Kalikot and Dailekh organised protests demanding justice for the victim and punishment for the perpetrators. Various civil society organisations, and Dalit NGOs are active in the province for their struggle against the caste- and gender-based discrimination.

Women, too, face various forms of violence and discrimination in Karnali Province, such as chhaupadi, domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, child marriage, among others (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2017; INSEC, 2018; WOREC, 2017; CID, 2017). Chhaupadi, a prevalent custom in the mid-western and

far-western regions, banishes women from their homes and forces them to live in sheds outside during menstruation and childbirth. Women are routinely subjected to inhumane treatment and are rendered vulnerable to sexual abuse, not to mention snake bites and attacks by wild animals. According to a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted in 2010 by the GoN, up to 58% of women in mid- and far-western regions reported having to live in sheds during menstruation (NFCC, 2015, p. 4). Civil society organisations have been organising campaigns and advocacy against the practice of chhaupadi (NFCC, 2015). Finally, the Criminal Procedure Code 2017 criminalises the practice of chhaupadi, even though the effectiveness of the law remains to be seen in the years to come. NGOs continue to pressure the government to provide justice to victims through targeted campaigns. The NGOs and civil society organisations have also carried out activities in the province for the empowerment and mobilisation of women of the province against violence and discrimination against women.

2.7. Province Seven

Figure 2.19. Geographic map of Province Seven



2.7.1. Socio-cultural diversity

Province Seven is also a socio-culturally diverse province. Khas Aryas make up the largest social group in the province with 60% population share, followed by Tarai Janajatis including Tharus at 17.2%. Hill Dalits make up 12.9% of the province's total population. Khas Arya and hill Dalit groups together make up 72.9% of the total population. Other minor social groups are hill Janajati (3.5%) and Madhesi (1.6%). In total, the population of hill origin makes up 76% against 19% of population of Tarai origin.

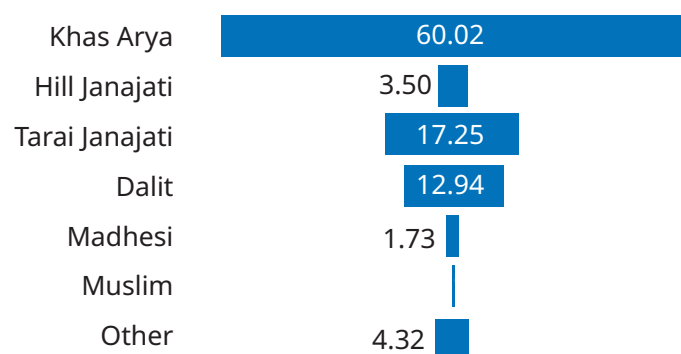
Although Tharu indigenous people are the first settlers in the two Tarai districts, these districts are now densely populated by people of hill origin (Khas Aryas, Dalits, and hill Janajatis) who followed the north-south migration pattern. The relationships among these different social groups are dictated by hierarchical caste system patriarchy, and unequal power-relations. Dalits and women have been recorded to face the worst forms of discrimination in the province.

Major languages spoken as mother tongue in the province are Khas Nepali, Doteli, Tharu, Baitadi, Achhami, and Bajhang. Doteli, Baitadi, Achhami, and Bajhang are also locally known as Khas Kura and they are closely related to the linguistic evolution of Khas Nepali. Khas Nepali speakers make up 30.2% of the total population as per the Census of 2011. Speakers of Khas Nepali language and its dialects (when enumerated together from Doteli, Baitadi, Achhami, and Bajhang in the last census) together constitute 79% of the total population. Doteli (30.5%), Baitadi (10.6%), Achhami (5.6%), and Bajhang (2.6%) speakers together make up 50.3% of the total population. Most of these languages are spoken by people of hill origin in the province. Tharu speakers make up 17% of the total population, which is proportionate to the size of their population in the province. Tharu language has been greatly influenced by various north Indian languages such as Urdu, Hindi, and others.

Province Seven is highly homogenous in terms of religion, although diverse in cultural forms. Hindus make up 97.2% of the total population in the province. This could have resulted because Tharus have registered themselves as Hindu in the Census of 2011, although many Tharus claim themselves to be the direct descendants

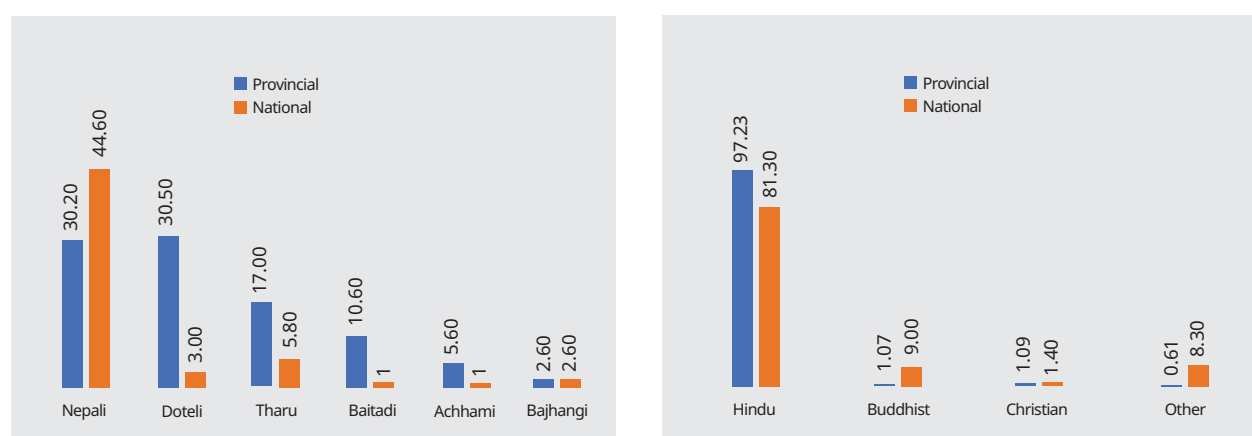
of Lord Buddha. They also practise their tribal religion, which consists of worshipping a number of spirits and some local Hindu deities. Those who practise their traditional tribal religion have their guruva. Tharus also have their *kul devtas* (ancestral deity) that they keep in their family house, which is either Kali Bhagavati, Mainya, Parvatiya, or Goraiya (Bista, 1967). Tharu communities are not governed by hierarchical caste system of Hinduism although they register themselves as Hindu in the censuses. Their major festival is Maghi, which is celebrated by them as New Year. It is a week-long festival celebrated by getting together with family and friends, attending community assemblies or mela, dressing up in the traditional Tharu wear, eating, drinking, and making merry. In Kailali and Kanchanpur, Tharu practise their customary law/governance through *bhalmansa*, which is a variation of the *Barghar* system explained in detail in the profile of Province Five. Within the framework of this system, a community head is democratically selected each year and the community head has the decision-making authority over the community within the defined territory. The head also mobilises people for collective benefit and adjudicates disputes within the community.

Figure 2.20. Population of major social groups in Province Seven (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

Figure 2.21: Population by key languages and religious groups in Province Seven (In %)



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

2.7.2. Human capabilities

Table 2.19. HDI and its constituent values by district in Province Seven

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
Bajura	0.364	63.92	44.52	2.46	523
Bajhang	0.365	65.22	45.03	2.53	487
Accham	0.378	67.14	45.08	2.52	536
Doti	0.407	66.74	47.68	2.53	774
Kailali	0.460	66.46	58.86	3.62	942
Kanchanpur	0.475	67.08	63.04	3.97	938
Dadeldhura	0.442	67.90	57.26	3.34	764
Baitadi	0.416	68.88	54.85	3.13	573
Darchula	0.436	69.05	58.20	3.48	627
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.9	1160

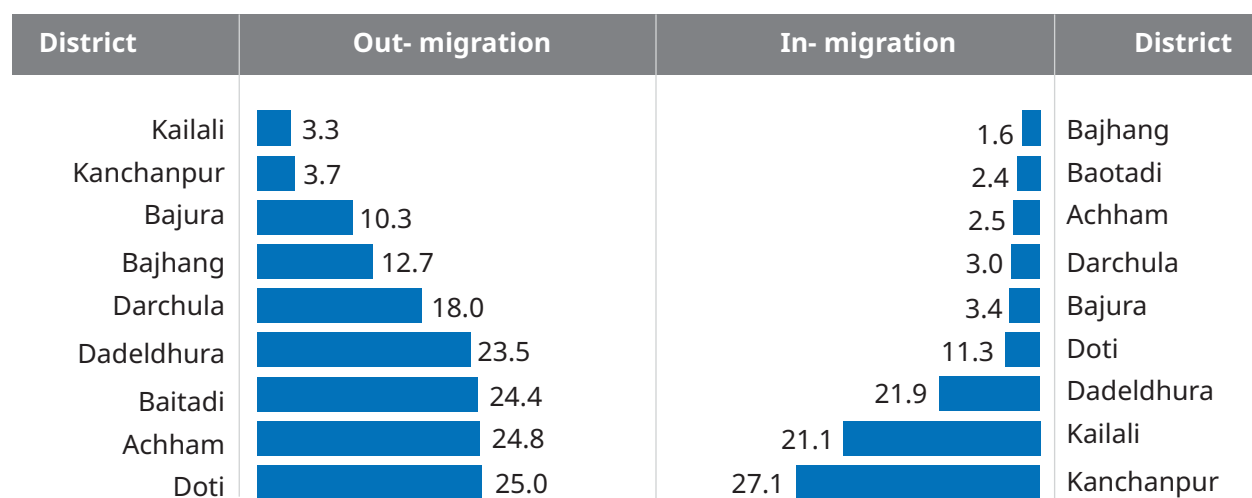
Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

All districts from Province Seven have HDI values less than the national average of 0.49%. Yet the province demonstrates a high variation on HDI indicators between the hill districts and Tarai districts. Bajura, a hill district, has the lowest HDI of 0.36 as compared to 0.48 of Kanchanpur, which is a Tarai district. Kanchanpur district is among the Tarai districts that are connected by the East-West highway and shares a border with India. Kanchanpur is the only district in the province that has values comparable to the national average in some of the HDI indicators. The better performance of Kanchanpur also correlates with the pattern also seen in other provinces of the link between the values of

human capabilities and the population share of Khas Aryas. For instance, Kailali is also a Tarai district like Kanchanpur and well connected by both road and air network. But it is a district with the highest population of the marginalised Tharu communities, and it performs much worse than the national average on HDI indicators. Most hill districts lag behind in education, health, and income. Five out of the nine hill districts of the province are among the ten least developed in eight independent indicators (poverty rate, food security, land ownership, education, child labour, sanitation coverage, budget redistribution, and health) of human development (UNCTN, 2011).

2.7.3. Migration

Table 2.20. Migrant population as percentage of total population in the districts of Province Seven



Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

As per the Census of 2011, Province Seven is among the provinces that have witnessed higher rates of out-migration. Only three districts—Kanchanpur, Kailali, and Dadeldhura—have a net population of people migrating in, and the rest of the districts have a population of people moving out. Out-migration rates are higher in hill districts, namely Dadeldhura, Baitadi, Achham, and Doti, as per the Census of 2011 (CBS, 2012). These migration patterns are supported by the seasonal migration from hill districts to Tarai for work and availability of better health, education, and employment opportunities (Adhikari, 2008). Other reasons for migration from the hill districts to Tarai districts have already been addressed in the introduction of this chapter. The economic development and administrative reform launched by late king Mahendra in the second half of the twentieth century created a

favourable environment in the Tarai districts, which were otherwise not friendly to people who lived in the hill and mountain districts (Suwal, 2014). The migration into the Tarai districts, namely Kailali and Kanchanpur, follows the north-south pattern (ibid.). Province Seven is among the provinces with lower numbers of migrant workers departing for foreign employment. A total of 15,707 labour permits were issued by the DoFE in the year 2014/15 for workers from Province Seven (MoLE, 2016). The highest number of recipients of labour permits in 2014/2015 in the province were from Kailali and Kanchanpur, while the lowest were from Bajura and Doti districts. Lower numbers of migration for foreign employment, however, is related to the seasonal migration for work to India, which is not recorded as foreign labour migration.

2.7.4. Political representation

Table 2.21. Election results of the three sphere of governments by major social groups in Province Seven (In number)

Social Groups	HoR, FPTP			Head of LGs, FPTP			PA, FPTP		PA, PR		PA, Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Khas Arya	11	-	11	75	2	77	25	1	2	9	37
Hill Janajati	2	1	3	7	-	7	1	-	-	1	2
Tarai Janajati	2	-	2	2	-	2	4	-	1	3	8
Hill Dalit	-	-	-	2	-	2	1	-	1	4	6
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	15	1	16	86	2	88	31	1	4	17	53

Source: Election results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b; ECN, 2018i)

Political representation in the province is not much different from the other provinces. Khas Aryas have the highest representation in the province, followed by Tharus and Dalits respectively. Among the three social constituencies, Khas Aryas won more seats than their proportional share of the total population in the province. Khas Aryas won 70% of the 16 seats in the HoR within the framework of the FPTP electoral representation system. Likewise, the Khas Aryas won 81% of the total seats in the PA through the FPTP electoral system. They also took 88% of 88 heads of the LGs. Tharus (Tarai Janajati) won 13% of the total seats in the HoR from the province and 13% of the total seats in the PA through the FPTP electoral representation system. The representation of Tharus in both the HoR and the PA as a part of the FPTP electoral system is disproportionately lower than their population share in the province. Tharus make only 2% of the 88 heads of the LGs. Hill Janajati, however, are proportionately represented in all spheres of government.

Women and Dalit are under-represented in all spheres of government. Women won 6% of the total seats in the HoR from the province and 3% of the total seats in the PA through the FPTP electoral system. Likewise, women make only 2% of the 88 heads of the LGs in the province. However, women make 34% of the PA due to the mandatory constitutional provision of 33% reserved representation for women in the HoR and the PA. Most of the women have, thus, been elected through the PR electoral system. Dalits did not win any seats in the HoR from the province through the FPTP electoral representation system. They won 3% of the total seats in the PA through the FPTP electoral system. In total, they have 11% representation in the PA, which is less than their share of 13% of the total population in the province. Dalits make 2% of the 88 heads of the LGs, which is highly disproportionate to their population share.

2.7.5. Socio-political dynamics

Province Seven lags behind in many socio-economic and political areas as discussed in the sections above. Different social groups have led social movements based on demands for equality and justice. The traditional territory of the Tharus is known as Tharuwan or Tharuhat as they historically inhabited the territories of Kailali and Kanchanpur districts (Bista, 1967). In the 1990s, Tharus of Province Seven (Kailali and Kanchanpur), along with the Tharus of Dang, Banke, and Bardiya of Province Five, were mobilised against the Kamaiya system. Kamaiya was a form of bonded labour system, where mostly Tharu men were kept in servitude by landlords for ancestral loans (Adhikari, 2008; Maelanny, 2012). The daughters of bonded Tharus would also become bonded labourers to the landowners to work without pay, which is known as the *Kamhlari* system in Nepal. The GoN outlawed the Kamaiya system through the Bonded Labour Prohibition Act in 2002 (Maelanny, 2012).

A movement of ex-Kamaiyas and ex-Kamhlaris had demanded an autonomous province named Tharuhat or Tharuwan in their traditional territory which would comprise the Tarai districts of the administrative structures previously known as Mid-West Development Region (MWDR) and Far-West Development Region (FWDR). When the seven-province model was proposed in 2015, the territory demanded by Tharus was split into two provinces—Province Five and Province Seven. The leaders of the Tharu movement saw separating Kailali and Kanchanpur districts from Tarai of the

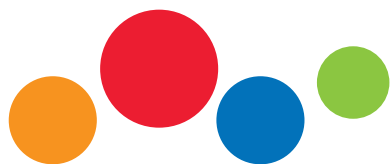
former MWDR as a way of undermining their recognition and representation. The “Undivided Far-West” activists, comprising people of hill origin, demanded that all nine districts of the Far-Western region be kept intact in a single Province (Dahal, 2015). After the promulgation of the Constitution in September 2015, violent protests erupted in Tikapur of Kailali district demanding a Tharu-only province. The demand of the “Undivided Far West” materialised as Province Seven retained all territory of the erstwhile FWDR intact.

Province Seven has one of the worst records in terms of prevalence and severity of discrimination against Dalits. As in other provinces, the various forms of caste-based discrimination are prohibition to enter temples, denial from sharing food, restriction from public places, as well as the immensely exploitative *Haliya* system (in which Dalits work as bonded labourers for non-Dalits in return for in-kind services). Dalit of Province Seven have been mobilising since the 1950s against caste-based discrimination and untouchability. Their first movement was the organisation of *sahaboj* in the community, collective feasts organised for Dalit and non-Dalit with the goal of intermingling and eating food cooked by Dalits in public. It was followed by various attempts to open the gates of prominent temples in Doti and other districts (Bishwakarma et al., 2006). Despite strong resistance from non-Dalits, several attempts have been made to enter the Saileshwari Temple in Doti since 1960s (Ibid.). Dalit leader

Tikaram Parki first entered into the temple in 1960 and Assistant Education Minister Hiralal Bishwakarma entered the temple in 1967. Yet Dalits in general were not allowed to enter the temple. Therefore, in 1992, Nepal Utpidit Dalit Jatiya Mukti Samaj mobilised Dalits to enter the temple en masse, which faced strong resistance from the non-Dalit community. Another effort in 2006 to enter the temple by Dalits was resisted by non-Dalits with their demonstration in the district headquarters. Dalits of Province Seven also waged protest to demand their right to fetch water from public ponds and taps. Dan Bahadur BK and Jogi Kami led the campaign of capturing the land of local landowners in Kailali district in 1991 (Ibid.). Similarly, Dalits organised movements against the *Khaliya* and *Haliya* tradition and started capturing the lands of local landlords in 1992 (Ibid.). The *Haliya* Jagaran Samiti and Regional Dalit Network organised movements against the *Haliya* tradition in the far western regions starting in 2003 (Ibid.). As a result of a long movement by civil society actors and *haliyas* themselves, the GoN abolished the *Haliya* system on 6 September 2008. Despite the abolition, however, Dalits still found themselves caught in situations that pushed them towards indebtedness and unpaid labour. Therefore, the *haliyas* and other civil society actors had to continue advocating for proper rehabilitation of ex-*haliyas*.

Chhaupadi, Kamhlari, and Deuki, along with issues specific to Badi women, are some

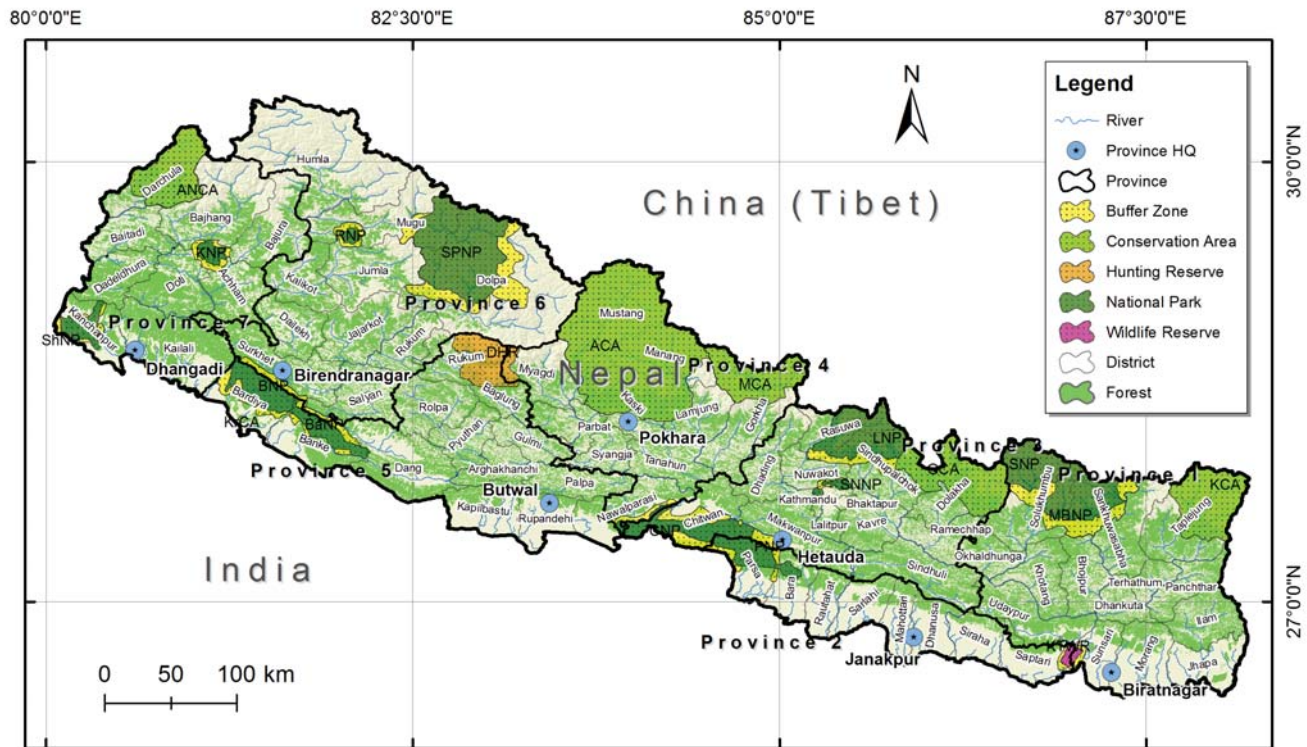
distinct forms that gender-based discrimination takes in Province Seven (Sahavagi, Didi Bahini, & FEDO, 2015; Dhungana, 2018, February 23). Deuki, a traditional practice of offering young girls to temples for religious purpose, continues even now to some extent despite legal abolition (SRPC, 2016, p.12). Other forms of discrimination and violence against women reported in Province Seven by various sources are domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, polygamy, human trafficking, and child marriage, among others (MoHN, New Era, & ICF, 2017; INSEC, 2018; WOREC, 2017). Various campaigns and movements have been organised in Province Seven against these forms of gender-based violence and discriminations. The *Kamhlari* movement is one of the most significant movements of Province Five and Province Seven. As a result of the wave of protests and demonstrations led by freed *Kamhlaris* in Kathmandu and across southern Nepal against the exploitation faced by *Kamhlari*—particularly by the United Committee for the Elimination of *Kamhlari* Practice, the government declared the liberation of all *kamhlaris* and daughters of *kamaiyas* on 27 June 2013 (Pattison, 2013). Despite the abolition of the *Kamhlari* system and various other measures taken by the government and non-government organisations to free and rehabilitate ex-*kamhlaris*, rehabilitation and resettlement remain a major challenge in the province.



CHAPTER III

Comprative Analysis of the Seven Provinces

Figure 3.1. Geographic map of Nepal



A comparative analysis of the seven provinces shows that the provinces have common issues, while also having distinct characters in terms of their socio-political parameters. There are certain agendas on which all seven provinces will need to collaborate to promote inclusive federalism, but the provinces will also have to be specific in terms of developing policies to manage issues that are relevant

to their provinces. The necessity to design and to implement province-specific policies and programmes justified the restructuring of the country into the federal system. The provinces that maintain their own geographic, demographic, linguistic, and socio-political characteristics now have the platform to make their own diagnoses and develop their own solutions.

3.1. Basic structural data

The provinces are distinct in their geography, and population distribution, and delimitation of administrative boundaries. Karnali Province is the largest in geographic area, whereas Province Three is the largest by population. Province Two is the most densely populated province with a density of 559 people per square kilometre against the national population density of 180 per square kilometre. Province Five has the second highest population density of 247 people per square kilometre. Province Three also has the highest number of working-

age population at 62.9%, whereas Karnali Province has the highest population of below the working age at 41.5%. Gandaki Province has the highest number of people above working-age population, which is at 10.6%. Karnali Province has the lowest number of working-age population at 52.3%, whereas Province Three has the lowest number of people under the working-age population at 28.9%. The low number of below the working-age population can be attributed to lower birth rate and higher migration rate of the working-age population.

Table 3.1: Geographic area by province

Province	Area (sq. km)	Area (%)	Forest Area (sq. km.)	Forest Area of Provincial Area (%)	Forest Area of Country's Area (%)
One	25,905	17.60	11,342.50	43.78	17.16
Two	9,661	6.56	2,636.30	27.29	3.97
Three	20,300	13.79	10,908.77	53.74	16.50
Gandaki	21,504	14.61	7,969.91	37.06	12.06
Five	19,737	13.41	9,874.45	50.03	14.94
Karnali	30,213	20.53	11,906.31	39.41	18.01
Seven	19,539	13.28	11,461.06	58.63	17.34
Nepal	147,181	100	66,099.30	44.91	100

Source: Geographic area (ANI, 2017)

Table 3.2: Number of local government constituencies by province

Province	Metropolis	Sub-metropolis	Municipality	Rural Municipality	Ward
One	1	2	46	88	1,157
Two	1	3	73	59	1,271
Three	3	1	41	74	1,121
Gandaki	1	-	26	58	759
Five		4	32	73	983
Karnali			25	54	718
Seven	-	1	33	54	734
Nepal	6	11	276	460	6,743

Source: Number of local government units (MoFAGA, 2017; ANI, 2017)

Table 3.3: Number of provincial and federal constituencies

Province	Number of provincial assembly members			HoR constituencies
	FPTP	PR	Total	
One	56	37	93	28
Two	64	43	107	32
Three	66	44	110	33
Gandaki	36	24	60	18
Five	52	35	87	26
Karnali	24	16	40	12
Seven	32	21	53	16
Total	330	220	550	165

Source: Election Results (ECN, 2018a; ECN, 2018b)

Table 3.4: Population distribution by age and sex by province

Province	Population	Population (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Aged 00 - 14 (%)	Aged 15 - 59 (%)	Aged 60 + (%)
One	4,534,943	17.12	47.77	52.20	32.88	58.45	8.67
Two	5,404,145	20.40	50.29	49.70	38.56	53.94	7.51
Three	5,529,452	20.87	49.70	50.30	28.88	62.88	8.25
Gandaki	2,413,907	9.11	45.37	54.62	32.52	56.90	10.59
Five	4,891,025	18.46	47.57	52.42	36.38	55.75	7.87
Karnali	1,168,515	4.41	48.89	51.10	41.54	52.25	6.21
Seven	2,552,517	9.63	47.71	52.29	39.52	52.92	7.55
Nepal	26,494,504	100	48.49	51.50	34.91	36.96	8.13

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

3.2. Socio-cultural diversity by provinces

Nepal is a socio-culturally and linguistically diverse country and so are the provinces. One of the questions of the state restructuring discourse in Nepal included whether Nepal should be federalised based on identity (Hachhethu, 2014). However, as shown in Table 3.5, the population disaggregation of the provinces shows that identity-based federalism was not considered by the Constituent Assembly II. Janajati and Madhesi activists consider the seven province essentially an adjustment and retention of the five regional administrative model, which they protested when the Constitution was promulgated in 2015. As a result, most provinces are highly socio-culturally diverse, except in the case of Province Seven, Karnali Province, and Province Two. Province Seven has 60% population of Khas Aryas, Karnali Province has 61% population of Khas Aryas, and Province Two has 51.8% population of Madhesi.

Karnali Province has the highest concentrations of Khas Aryas (61.5%) and hill Dalits (22.9%). Karnali Province is also relatively homogeneous on the basis of the language spoken 94.9% of the population speaking Khas Nepali as mother

tongue. Province Seven is also ethnically less diverse with Khas Aryas constituting 60% of the population. Tarai Janajatis are the province's second largest group with 17.2% and Dalits the third largest group with 12.9%. Province Two has 51.8% Madhesi population and 15.8% Madhesi (Tarai) Dalit population. Province One, Province Three, and Province Five are, on the contrary, relatively heterogeneous provinces. The population is distributed among Khas Aryas, hill Janajatis, Tarai Janajatis, and Dalits in almost equal numbers. Province One, Province Two, and Province Seven are also heterogeneous provinces based on the number of languages spoken as mother tongue. Of all the provinces, the population that identifies as Hindu (97.2%) is highest in Province Seven, whereas the highest population of Buddhists (23.28%) is in Province Three. Population following Islam is highest in Province two (11.55%). Province One has the highest population of Kirat (17.1%). Population following other religions, such as Sikh, Jain, Bahai, Bon, and Prakriti (Animism), are in minority and spread across different parts of the country. However, in all seven provinces, the majority of people are Hindus.

Table 3.5: Population by caste and ethnicity by province

Province	Khas Arya	Hill Janajati	Tarai Janajati	Dalit	Madhesi	Muslim	Other
One	27.84	39.77	11.03	9.31	7.54	3.59	0.92
Two	4.88	6.45	8.49	16.30	51.80	11.58	0.51
Three	37.10	52.68	1.77	5.66	1.65	0.67	0.45
Gandaki	36.10	39.26	2.27	17.62	3.45	1.17	0.14
Five	30.03	19.58	14.88	14.07	14.50	6.65	0.29
Karnali	60.96	14.76	0.51	22.92	0.00	0.00	0.85
Seven	60.02	3.50	17.25	12.94	1.73	0.23	4.32
Nepal	31.25	27.28	7.70	12.94	15.37	4.39	1.07

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011 (CBS, 2012)

3.3. Human capabilities

Table 3.6: Human development index values by province

Districts	HDI	Life Expectancy	Adult literacy	Mean years of schooling	Per capita income (PPP \$)
One	0.504	68.45	65.33	4.25	1184
Two	0.421	70.41	40.88	2.73	922
Three	0.548	69.70	69.30	5.14	1767
Gandaki	0.516	69.79	61.24	4.50	1206
Five	0.467	67.65	59.18	3.61	1013
Karnali	0.426	66.57	52.30	3.09	784
Seven	0.431	66.89	54.95	3.26	767
Nepal	0.49	68.80	59.57	3.90	1160

Source: Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014)

As HDI values by province do not exist, this provincial level aggregation is taken by calculating weighted average of the district level data. While the accuracy of any data set can be questioned, the average values can give us an overview about the level of human development in each province. As per this comparison, Karnali Province, Province Seven, and Province Two are the three provinces that have HDI values lower than the national average. Karnali Province has 5 of the 12 districts with the lowest HDI values, and Province Seven and Province Two each have 3 districts with the lowest HDI values. Province One, Province Three, and Gandaki Province are

the three provinces with the highest HDI values. Province Three has 5 out of 10 districts with the highest HDI values. It is hard to generalise what makes some of these provinces to lag behind and some other provinces to excel, but factors such as caste, ethnicity, gender, and geographic remoteness may play a role in generating this unevenness. For example, Province One, Province Three, and Gandaki Province that are well connected to the capital of Nepal are much ahead in human development. At the same time, Province Two that is also well-connected to Kathmandu via air and road networks is one of the least developed three provinces.

3.4. Migration

Table 3.7: Top and low 15 districts for migration by province

Province	Of top 15 districts for out-migration	Of top 15 districts for in-migration	Of top 15 districts for labour permits	Of top 15 districts for labour permits
One	9	3	3	0
Two	0	0	7	0
Three	0	4	2	2
Gandaki	5	2	0	2
Five	1	4	3	0
Karnali	0	0	0	5
Seven	0	2	0	6

Source: Number of local government units (MoFAGA, 2017)

Domestic migration has been driven by various administrative reforms and development projects (Suwal, 2014). It can be seen from Table 3.7 that people have moved out from difficult geographic areas to the emerging cities and to districts that contain major highways. All provinces have witnessed migration from hill districts to Tarai districts or to districts that have

been rapidly urbanising. All top 15 districts that have the highest rates of out-migration are hill districts, whereas 11 out of 15 districts with the highest rates of in-migration are Tarai districts and the remaining are districts with emerging cities. Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Kathmandu, and Kaski are the fastest urbanising districts, and they are among the top 15 districts with

high rates of in-migration. Notably, Province Two and Karnali Province do not have any district among the top 15 with high rates of in-migration. Karnali Province contain difficult geographical terrain. The districts in Province Two, which have higher proportion of people of Madhesi origin, are well connected by the East-West highway and airports but are not among the top destination for domestic migrants. This analysis shows that cultural factors, availability of services, administrative reforms, infrastructure development, and geographical remoteness all affect people's choices of movement and settlement.

3.5. Political representation

Nepal has made significant progress in devolution of administrative and political powers and inclusion of marginalised and under-represented groups. Dalit representation in the current HoR is 7.27% compared to 0.48% in 1991. Female representation, which was roughly over 2% in 1991, has consistently been over 33% since 2008. Madhesi and Janajatis have made significant gains in the first ever provincial elections held in 2017, winning seats above or almost in par with their national population shares. However, significant concerns remain over inadequacy of legal provisions and a lack of political willingness in accepting principles of inclusion beyond mandatory proportional numbers.

Khas Arya group is consistently over-represented across the provinces, except in Province Two. In Province Two, Madhesi are over-represented in the elections of federal, provincial, and local governments held in 2017. Hill Janajatis are over-represented slightly in Province One and Gandaki Province. While they have proportionate representation in Province Three, they are under-represented in Province Five and Karnali Province. The representation of women and Dalits through the FPTP

electoral system is consistently low. Dalits have disproportionately low representation across all provinces.

Although proportional electoral representation system has ensured better figures of Dalit and women representation compared to past elections, the underwhelming numbers of directly elected Dalit and women members is indicative of the lack of confidence shown by all political parties in Dalit and women candidates. It is also indicative of limited political and financial influence these groups have in political party structures and organisation. Some argue that this situation will remain unchanged unless the political party structure themselves become inclusive. Only 7.39% of total candidates in both phases of provincial and parliamentary elections were women. When parties required ensuring 50% representation of women while filing candidacy for local unit chief and deputy chief, women were mostly fielded as deputies. As a result, over 90% local unit chiefs are men and over 90% women in provincial assemblies are filled through the proportional representation system. Similarly, Dalits are severely under-represented across provincial assemblies, and over 80% are represented through the proportional representation system.

3.6. Socio-political dynamics

Nepal's seven provinces have both common and distinct characters in terms of different socio-political parameters. The uniqueness of these provinces emanates from different factors such as the socio-cultural makeup of the province, status in the socio-economic development, and political representation. Rais and Limbus are dominant Janajati group in Province One and they were highly mobilised for their demand of a Limbuwan Province. Similarly, Province Two is dominated by people of Tarai origin (Madhesi, Muslim, and Madhesi Dalit), and

they were a highly politically mobilised ethnic group. They demanded a Madhesi Province with optimum autonomy. Likewise, while Tharus of Province Seven and Province Five were mobilised for their demand of Tharuwan province, Khas Aryas and Dalits of Province Seven protested the possibility of Tharuwan and demanded undivided Far-Western Region. Karnali Province, Province Five, Gandaki Province, and Province Three can be considered the provinces with comparatively moderate mobilisation of ethnic groups. For example, Khas Aryas of Karnali Province mobilised late to demand UMWR. Magars and Madhesis in Province Five, Gurungs and Magars in Gandaki Province, and Newars and Tamangs in Province Three supported creating their own separate provinces. However, these mobilisations were less successful compared to the mobilisations of Madhesis in Province Two, Rais and Limbus in Province One, and Tharus and Khas Aryas in Province Seven. Above all, all the seven provinces have witnessed the mobilisations of ethnic groups for and against identity-based federalism.

In addition, all seven provinces have experienced the mobilisation of women, Dalits, landless, and other marginalised groups. Hierarchical caste- and gender-based discrimination are widespread across the country, and for that matter, Dalits and women have mobilised movements against caste- and gender-based discrimination. These discriminations often take province-specific manifestations. For example, *Haliya* is a local manifestation of caste-based discrimination in Province Seven. Landlessness and Haruwa-Charuwa is the local manifestation in Province Two. Both these provinces have witnessed social movements against these local forms of caste-based discrimination. *Kamhlari*, Badi issues, and chhaupadi are the local manifestations of both gender- and caste-based discrimination in some parts of Province Five, Karnali Province,

and Province Seven. Women of Province Seven and Karnali Province have participated in demanding the end of chhaupadi. Kamhlaris and Badis of Province Seven and Province Five have protested against their own specific forms of gender-based discriminations.

Landlessness is an issue across the Tarai districts that lie in Province One, Province Two, Province Five, and Province Seven. As a result, landless and squatters of all these provinces have organised under the umbrella of NLR. Haruwa Charuwa Rights Forum is another social organisation that has been able to mobilise the landless, particularly Dalits. However, these are not the only social movements that these seven provinces have witnessed. While this publication has limited scope of study due to the reliance on secondary information, there are many different forms of province-specific local movements. For example, Chepangs of Province Three, Muslims of Province Two and Province Five, and mountain Janajatis known as Dolpo of Karnali Province have all made demands for autonomous regions. These need to be further explored with national level survey of social movements across the country to gauge the impact of these local contentions and address them before they get worse.

3.7. Conclusion

The aim of restructuring the country into the federal system is to address unequal distribution of power among different social groups and geographic areas. Although the seven-province model adopted by the Constitution remains contested, its effective and honest implementation should be able to achieve the stated goal of federal restructuring. The PA election results demonstrate that the Madhesi and most Janajati groups have received proportional or, in some provinces where they are dominant, more than their proportional

share of political representation. In other cases, they have adequate presence in the provincial assembly to be able to advocate for rights, dignity, and fundamental issues of their communities. The representation of certain other historically marginalised groups, such as women and Dalit, needs further consideration in implementing a truly inclusive federal government system. The provinces would benefit from factoring the following challenges and opportunities into their provincial policies.

Although most of the provincial capitals are temporary, they have been set up in locations that have substantially higher rates of immigration. This can be expected to widen the uneven distribution of population across the ecological zones, namely mountain, hill, and Tarai. Similarly, this can widen the gap between rural and urban areas. Therefore, socio-economic policies must be developed to address the issue of uneven population distribution in order to maintain and manage demographic shifts. Even distribution of population is important for the equitable development of all ecological areas as a roadmap to economic prosperity of the entire nation.

Most provinces are inhabited by different language speakers. Janajati communities in different provinces have valued the recognition of their language and culture. In a few cases, native language speakers constitute a smaller community than their actual population size. For example, Magar of the Province Five make up 15% of their population while the Magar speakers are only 5%. Therefore, the implementation of the Article 7 of the Constitution, which is related to provincial language, should be taken seriously to develop a multi-lingual policy.

Progressive constitutional and legal provisions intending greater inclusion of all sections of the society is a positive step. The effects

of these policies are directly reflected in the fact that current election results show better representation across the board than in the past elections. However, there is still room for improvement. For example, Dalits and women continue to be under-represented in the elections of the three spheres of government held in the recent past. Reluctant implementation of the proportional representation in the elections of provincial assemblies has cost Dalits and women in securing equal representation. Therefore, implementation of the proportional electoral representation system must be strictly done. At the same time, the unequal representation of Dalits and women can be compensated by creating an enabling environment for them to form caucuses at all levels of the elected state organs.

Also, there needs to be clearer policies regarding the definition of marginalised and under-represented groups to determine who needs proportional representation and on what basis in each province. Political parties should send a strong message about their acceptance of the principles of inclusion by enabling candidates from under-represented groups in the FPTP system and by restructuring their internal organisations. The Constitution in principle envisions proportional representation of all groups in the state institutions. However, this is severely undermined by the election laws which limit this principle to proportional election system; and the preference of political parties towards male and Khas Arya members can still be seen clearly.

Above all, socio-political issues that remained unresolved may resurface in the country. The federal, provincial, and local governments must keep an eye on these issues so that policies aimed at redressing historical grievances are addressed in a timely and careful manner as a way to build a peaceful and economically prosperous nation.

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