STATE OF INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE
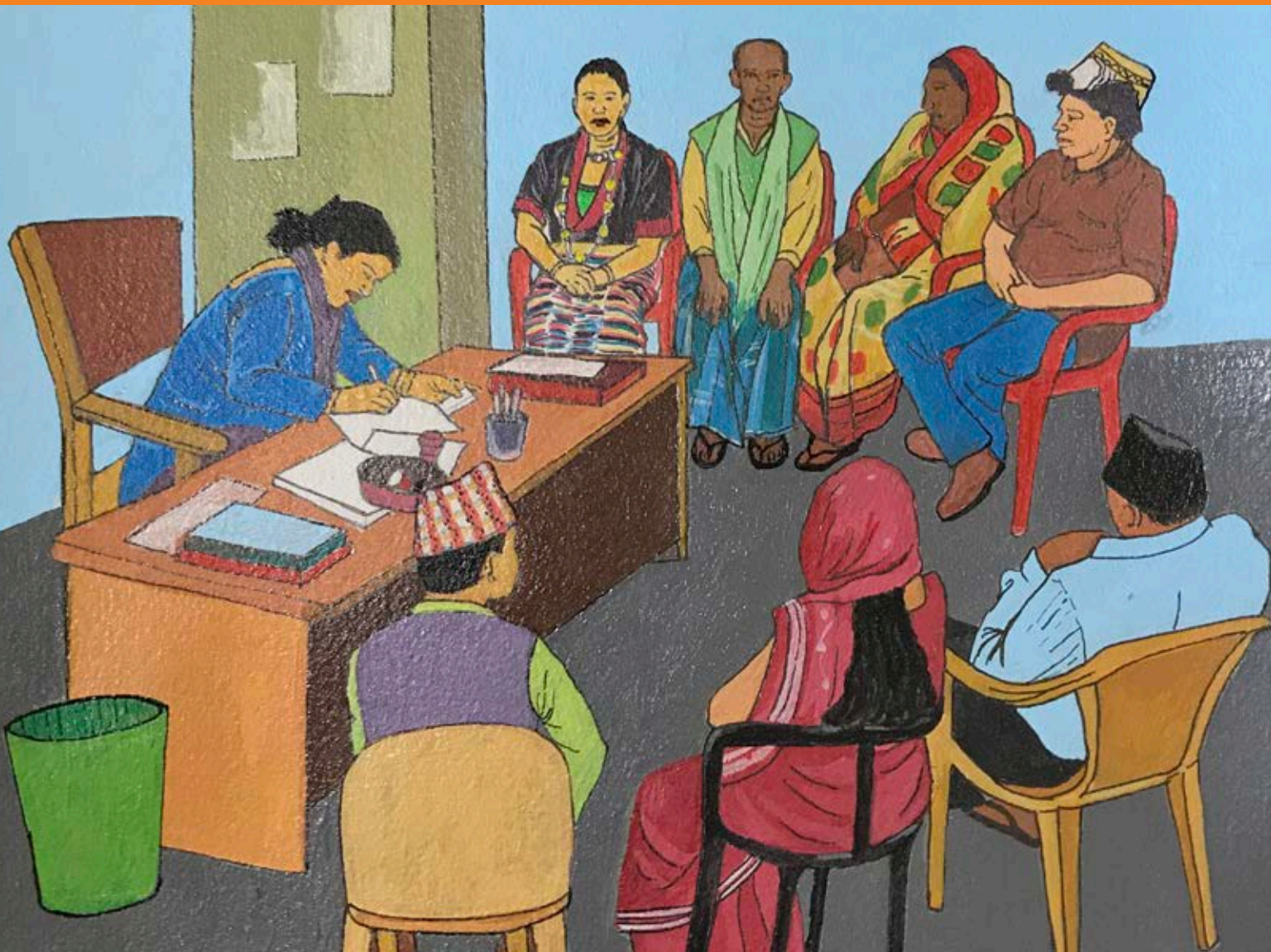
A Study on Participation and Representation after Federalization in Nepal

Central Department of Anthropology
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Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

STATE OF INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

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Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this report of the study on the "State of Social Inclusion in Nepal (SOSIN)," which is a result of collective endeavors of our academics, professional experts, associates and students at Tribhuvan University.

Tribhuvan University is the first national institution of higher education in Nepal and has a history of commitment to academic inquiry geared to the needs and expectations of the Nepalese people and international partners. One of the main objectives of the University is to be involved in the production and dissemination of empirical research and knowledge in the fields of arts, science and technology.

In this context, we promote systematic research on various themes. The SOSIN study, carried out by the Central Department of Anthropology at Tribhuvan University, aims to foster scientific understanding of the issue of social inclusion in Nepal. Social inclusion is a national agenda for Nepal and is also a key part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many policymakers and scholars have cited the lack of empirical data on the subject of social inclusion in Nepal. This research addresses this lacuna by providing scientific and comprehensive data on the gender and social inclusion at the national level and insights on inclusive governance and disaster resilience.

I hope that this contribution will generate vibrant scholarly debate, furthering the cause of intellectual discovery and the tradition of independent analysis. I also hope that it will assist policymakers to find solutions to the complex problems of exclusion and inequality in Nepal.

I would like to thank the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Nepal for providing valuable support for this research. This was a unique opportunity to synchronize research, teaching and policy application. I express gratitude to the National Planning Commission, Nepal for supporting the research and for the Commission's commitment to institutionalizing data use in planning processes. I would also like to congratulate the Central Department of Anthropology for making such a valuable and timely contribution to the field of social science research in Nepal.

Prof. Dr. Dharma Kant Baskota
Vice Chancellor
Tribhuvan University

Foreword

Since 1961, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has partnered with the people and Government of Nepal. Our partnership has contributed to some of Nepal's most dramatic and remarkable development successes, including: laying Nepal's first roads; installing its first telephone exchange; supporting the elimination of malaria from the Terai region; enabling agriculture to flourish across the country; increasing literacy rates; drastically reducing child mortality; and facilitating peace and democracy in the later decades. Today, USAID is building on these successes and continues to support Nepal's efforts to become more prosperous, democratic, and healthier.

Nepal's constitution envisions a nation that is inclusive, without any forms of inequality or discrimination. Inclusive development is also at the core of everything that USAID does and it is a hallmark of our work in Nepal. We believe in a future where all people, irrespective of caste, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, area of origin, language, or disabilities, can exercise full and meaningful participation in their social, economic, cultural, and political lives; enjoy the benefits and opportunities of development; and contribute to their society. Our activities in Nepal are thus guided by the principles of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and achieving the sustainable development goal of Leaving no one behind.

USAID, therefore, partnered with the Central Department of Anthropology of Tribhuvan University to generate comprehensive knowledge and evidence on the social inclusion status of 88 caste and ethnic groups. The information was disaggregated by sex in various dimensions of social, economic, cultural and political lives, including electoral processes and civil service. The State of Social Inclusion in Nepal (SOSIN) study has consequently produced a wealth of empirical data and analysis on the current state of social inclusion in Nepal that can be used to measure progress in ending gender inequality and caste and ethnicity-based exclusion, as well as the remaining challenges. The data is also useful for designing new policies and interventions that help to achieve sustainable GESI outcomes, and to track progress in Nepal's graduation from least developed country to middle-income country status.

We hope that the research will help everyone understand the extent to which inequalities remain pervasive and deep-rooted in Nepali society and identify practical ways to Reach the furthest behind first. It is USAID's goal that the study drives evidence-based monitoring of social inclusion, and that this in turn promotes not only understanding of social inclusion, but also advances equity and opportunity for Nepalis who have been excluded for far too long.

Sepideh Keyvanshad
Mission Director
USAID/Nepal

Preface

Over the last decade, Nepal has witnessed a major political transformation. The country moved from a centralized monarchical system to a federal republic. The new constitution promulgated in 2015 envisions equality and social inclusion as major goals for creating a democratic and just society. Yet deeply-rooted social, economic, and political inequalities based on gender, caste and ethnicity remain major challenges.

With this background, the Central Department of Anthropology (CDA) at Tribhuvan University undertook this study on the "State of Social Inclusion in Nepal (SOSIN)." The study aims to produce a nuanced understanding of the situation and dynamics of social inclusion and gender equality. Using both quantitative surveys and qualitative assessments, this research generates empirical data about the current state of equality and social inclusion in Nepal and allows for the tracking of progress. This research is a sequel to the research project "Social Inclusion Atlas and Ethnographic Profile (SIA-EP)" implemented by the then joint Department of Sociology/Anthropology at TU in 2012-2014 with support from the Norwegian Embassy in Nepal. The SIA-EP established a comprehensive national database disaggregated by gender, caste and ethnicity, built a Multidimensional Social Inclusion Index through re-analysis of major national surveys, and produced profiles of 42 highly marginalized caste/ethnic groups to understand the micro-dynamics of exclusion.

SOSIN, carried out in 2018-2019, builds on the previous work and engages with emerging issues related to the theme. The SOSIN research has four major components, all of which use a common lens of social inclusion to understand Nepal's democratic institutions and development progress.

The first component of SOSIN is the Nepal Social Inclusion Survey (NSIS), which collected detailed data from 17,600 sample households across the country. The report "Nepal Social Inclusion Survey (NSIS) 2018" contains analysis covering a wide range of topics related to social inclusion, including household assets, health and social security, work and livelihood, language and education, social, cultural and gender relations, inclusive governance and women's empowerment and reproductive health. This study is unique in the sense that its results are disaggregated by sex, eleven main social groups and by 88 distinct caste/ethnic groups. The findings also provide evidence for tracking changes on a number of key indicators between 2012 and 2018.

The second SOSIN component is a socially disaggregated analysis of Nepal's progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The report "Who Are Left Behind? Tracking Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in Nepal" presents sex-, caste- and ethnicity-disaggregated

data from NSIS 2018 on selected SDG indicators. Data for a total of 40 indicators are presented, including 36 indicators from the National Planning Commission's SDG framework and four additional indicators proposed based on their relevance to rights and social justice. This report will be valuable for institutionalizing planning and targeting left-behind gender and social groups in order to achieve the SDGs, in line with the spirit of "leaving no one behind."

The third component of SOSIN is an analysis of the state of inclusive governance in Nepal in the new, post-federalization political context. The report "State of Inclusive Governance in Nepal" examines how inclusive governance policies have been translated into practice. Based on the NSIS 2018 survey data, ethnographic field work and secondary data, this report examines the representation of different castes, ethnicities and genders in the bureaucracy, elected local bodies and various committees related to education, health services and community-level development works. t presents perceptions, awareness and practices regarding inclusion within five key 'pillars' of governance, namely: the rule of law; participation; representation; transparency; and accountability. The report analyzes disparities between different caste, ethnic, religious and minority groups, as well as gender differences across these groups and examines possible hindrances to inclusion.

The fourth SOSIN component is a study on community disaster resilience. The report "Community Resilience Capacity: A Study on Nepal's 2015 Earthquakes and Aftermath," provides empirical data on disaster effects, recovery and resilience in the 14 most-affected districts. The study pays particular attention to disproportionate impacts, differential resilience capacities and social inclusion. As global climate change makes Nepal increasingly prone to multiple types of disasters, the results of this study help to enhance understanding of resilience capacity, improve on-going recovery tasks and strengthen disaster risk reduction and management planning.

Exclusion of certain groups of people from meaningful participation in the social, political and economic life of the nation can contribute to inequality and instability. Exclusion is a costly impediment to economic growth, perpetuating poverty and powerlessness among the marginalized. Disparities based on gender and social identity have persisted and may continue to widen, especially when compounded by disasters like the earthquakes and the ongoing economic downturn due to COVID-19. This study is expected to help policy-makers plan, promote and monitor progress on social inclusion as both a desired outcome and a required strategy for sustainable growth and inclusive democracy. As an academic enquiry, this study will also be helpful for researchers, teachers and students interested in the theoretical contemplations and practical applications for the betterment of human conditions.

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Acknowledgements

With a commitment to integrating social research with teaching and combining academic analysis with policy application, the Central Department of Anthropology (CDA) at Tribhuvan University has been involved in systematic research on pertinent themes such as social inclusion in Nepali society over the last 15 years. The set of studies under the title "The State of Social Inclusion in Nepal (SOSIN)" is the most recent addition to the series and constitutes the flagship of the CDA's research program.

The successful completion of the SOSIN research was made possible with the generous support of various institutions and the efforts of around 200 individuals. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all for their valuable contributions.

More than 38,000 men and women from different social backgrounds across the country shared their information, experiences and insights for this research. We express our deep gratitude to the respondents for their time and contributions in building the foundation for this research and analysis.

We express our special thanks to Prof. Sudha Tripathi, former Rector of Tribhuvan University, for giving permission to undertake this research project. Mr. Dilli Ram Uprety, the former Registrar, Prof. Dr. Shiva Lal Bhusal, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Prof. Neelam Kumar Sharma, the ex-Executive Director of the Center of Research, Tribhuvan University deserve special thanks for their continuous support from conception to completion of the research. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Prof. Umesh Mandal, current Executive Director, Center of Research, for his passion and support.

We extend our sincere thanks to Prof. Pushpa Raj Kandel, Vice-Chairperson, National Planning Commission (NPC) for his guidance on the SOSIN research. We are deeply thankful to Mr. Min Bahadur Shahi, Member of NPC for his invaluable support to the research and his expressed commitment to utilization of the data in national planning and monitoring systems. We are grateful to the SOSIN Advisory Committee members: Ms. Mohna Ansari, National Human Rights Commission; Dr. Teertha Dhakal, Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers; Mr. Dilli Raj Joshi, Deputy Director General, Central Bureau of Statistics; Dr. Surendra Labh, Member, Policy Research Institute; Dr. Bimala Rai Poudyal, Member of Parliament; Mr. Rudra Singh Tamang, Secretary, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development; and Dr. Ganesh Yonjan, social development expert and former Nepal Ambassador to Japan. These advisors provided guidance and support throughout the entire process of this study.

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Acronyms

B/C	Brahmin/Chhetri
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
CPN-UML	Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist)
DDC	District Development Committee
DoCPR	Department of Civil Personnel Records
ECN	Election Commission, Nepal
EFR	Ethnographic Field Researcher
EOC	Election Observation Committee
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPTP	First-Past-The-Post
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GoN	Government of Nepal
IG	Inclusive Governance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NCP	Nepal Communist Party
NSIS	Nepal Social Inclusion Survey
OC	Other Castes
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGM	Sexual and Gender Minorities
SOSIN	State of Social Inclusion in Nepal
TAR	Tibetan Autonomous Region
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economics and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee

Executive Summary

This study examines the current state of social inclusion in Nepal and how inclusive governance policies are translated into practice. It investigates perceptions, knowledge, awareness and practices of inclusive governance, particularly from the perspective of five pillars of governance – the rule of law, participation, representation, transparency and accountability.

This study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from the Nepal Social Inclusion Survey (NSIS) 2018 with ethnographic fieldwork in seven different sites across the country, to understand people's perceptions and experiences. Secondary data sources were also used to determine the representation of various groups in the bureaucracy and government bodies.

The following are this study's key findings:

Representation in the Bureaucracy and Elected Positions

The Constitution of Nepal, the Civil Service Act (2013) and the Local Government Operation Act (2017) include provisions for representation of historically excluded and marginalized groups, including women, in political bodies and the bureaucracy. However, data provided by the Department of Civil Personnel Records (DoCPR) and the Election Commission Nepal (ECN) indicate that while these mandates are written into law, they are not consistently implemented. Minimum requirements for inclusion in the bureaucracy and political positions have been met, but the most marginalized groups remain excluded from powerful decision-making positions. This suggests that norms and practices within major political parties – and powerful elites within society at large – remain recalcitrant to change.

- **In the civil service,** only 25 percent of staff are women and more than 61 percent come from the Hill Brahmin and Hill Chhetri groups – which make up only 30 percent of the national population. Among higher-level officers, 48 percent are Hill Brahmin, while Madhesi Dalits and Muslims each make up less than one percent of the bureaucracy.

- **In the 2017 local elections,** most political parties fielded male candidates for Mayor/ Chairperson positions, relegating female candidates to the Deputy Mayor/Vice-Chairperson contests since by law, at least one of the two candidates had to be female. As a result, over 97 percent of Chairpersons/Mayors are men, while 92 percent of Vice-Chairpersons and 94 percent of Deputy Mayors are women. Less than one percent of Ward Chairpersons are women, while over 44 percent come from the Hill Brahmin or Hill Chhetri groups.

- **In the Federal House of Representatives,** over 96 percent of members elected through the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system are male, and over 51 percent are Hill Brahmin or Hill

Chhetri. No Madhesi Dalit was elected through the FPTP system, and only one Madhesi Dalit was selected through the proportional representation system.

- **In the seven Provincial Assemblies,** the vast majority of members elected through the FPTP system are men (95 percent) and over 51 percent are Hill Brahmin or Hill Chhetri. No Madhesi Dalit was elected in the Provincial Assemblies through the FPTP system.

- **Female political representation** has significantly advanced in the 2017 local elections because of affirmative action; women hold almost 41 percent of elected local seats. However, this does not indicate that societal norms and political parties' mindsets towards power-sharing with women and marginalized groups have changed. Women and members of marginalized groups who hold positions through the proportional representation systems at various levels of government were often chosen because of their long contribution within their political parties or, in many cases, because of kinship relations with senior male leaders.

- **Traditional, patriarchal and patrilineal gender norms** continue to influence the larger population and are reflected strongly in political parties' norms and practices as seen in their fielding of candidates. The bureaucracy and elected bodies continue to reflect socio-economic and political marginalization of specific caste/ethnic groups (e.g. the Hill/Tarai Dalits, Madhesi Other Castes and Muslims).

- **Electoral constituency delimitations and party apportionment (candidate nomination) rules and practices** undermine inclusion. The majoritarian electoral system has marginalized Dalits and Muslims the most, depriving them of representation in the assemblies at different levels and limiting their access to development opportunities and financial resources.

Knowledge, Awareness and Practices in Relation to the Rule of Law

This study collected data on several indicators related to the first pillar of good governance, 'rule of law.' These indicators include the following: knowledge about quotas/reservations and subsidies designed to promote inclusion; knowledge about civil and political rights; knowledge and experiences related to accessing justice; knowledge of local governments' activities and functions; and perceptions regarding the rule of law in various sectors. There has clearly been some progress in improving social inclusion under the rule of law, yet much remains to be done in order to hold government bodies accountable to laws that have already been promulgated.

- **Many people remain uninformed about existing affirmative action provisions** in the education, health and government job sectors. Almost 18 percent of women, 32 percent of Madhesi Dalits, 30 percent of Muslims, and a high proportion of other marginalized caste/ethnic groups have no knowledge about such affirmative action provisions.

- **Women and marginalized caste/ethnic groups have far less knowledge about their fundamental civil and political rights** than other groups. Participants indicated that politicians, political parties, and gender and caste-based discrimination are all barriers to accessing political rights. Ethnographic accounts also show that 'source-force' (powerful networks) and personal relations/affiliations influence the implementation of civil and political rights in local governments and other institutions. Often, officials follow the letter but not the spirit of laws designed to promote inclusion.

- In relation to **access to justice,** 92 percent of women are unaware about where to lodge complaints and only 28 percent believe that justice is easily accessible to all citizens.

- Women, particularly Muslim and Madhesi Dalit women, remain under-informed about a wide range of **local government functions.** Amid the ongoing transition to federalism, local governments face challenges stemming from a lack of laws and procedures, limited local institutional capacities and inadequate cooperation between political representatives and bureaucrats, as well as long-standing societal discriminatory practices.

- On a positive note, a great majority of Nepalis believe that the **law and order situation** has improved in their communities, although crimes, especially those in which women are the victims, persist and there is often a lack of accountability for ensuring perpetrators are brought to justice.

Participation in Local Governance Mechanisms and Activities

For the purposes of this study, 'participation' refers to the interaction between social groups, the state and non-state entities so that those who are affected by decisions have opportunities to engage in decision-making processes. Participation is considered to be a basic right and is fundamental for inclusive governance. This study examines the level of public participation and the role of different social groups in decision-making in local government and non-government activities, including in planning and implementation processes, social and public audits, development activities, conflict resolution and gender-based violence prevention programs. Policy changes have opened up opportunities for traditionally excluded populations to participate in government and community-level governance processes.

- **Gender dynamics in participation:** In many of the community-level meetings (Ward Citizen Forums, ward settlement meetings, village assemblies, and other political gatherings), women demonstrate higher attendance (76 percent) than men (48 percent). However, more men (76 percent) than women (69 percent) reported participating by speaking at these types of events. Similarly, in local user groups that manage resources such as drinking water, electricity supply, irrigation, etc., women's participation (82 percent) is higher than men's (56 percent), but women's roles are often limited by traditional gender norms. More women (32 percent) than men (20 percent) reported that they feel they have no role in user groups. Ethnographic findings indicate that meaningful participation in user groups is often hindered by the existence of patron-client relationships between executive leaders and committee members. Individuals who do not have access to political patronage feel left out from user groups and related trainings.

  Gender disparities are also evident in local committees formed for development and construction works. Men outnumber women as chairpersons and in other executive positions in these types of groups, and many more women than men said that they never contribute their opinions in committee meetings. There is also a caste/ethnic dimension to the gender differences: the poorest participation was found among Marwadi, Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri, Newar and Madhesi Dalit women.

  Ethnographic data confirm that mere attendance at decision-making forums does not guarantee meaningful participation. Many respondents described frustration with meetings in

which they felt like their role was to be seen, not heard. Ethnographic researchers also found that in general, participation of women and marginalized groups was relatively better in the hill/mountain regions and among hill-based ethnic/caste groups than in the Tarai and among Madhesi groups. Location, caste/ethnicity, social and gender norms play a decisive role in the level of people's participation in decision-making processes.

- **Electoral participation:** Overall, the rate of participation of men in at least one of the three elections in 2017 was only six percentage points higher than women (88 percent for men and 82 percent for women). However, there were wide variations between caste/ethnic groups; men and women from marginalized caste/ethnic groups participated less. Non-participation in the elections was most common among Marwadi women (40 percent), Madhesi Dalit women (35 percent) and Muslim women (33.5 percent), and among Marwadi men (22.8 percent), Madhesi Dalit men (16.5 percent), Muslim men (14.1 percent) and Hill Dalit men (14 percent).

- **Agency and empowerment:** It is encouraging that a majority of the respondents felt that they are able to raise their voices for their rights and concerns, take action to achieve valued goals, and freely make choices about influential decisions that affect them. However, more women (65 percent) and men (55 percent) felt that they are powerless, resourceless, and without rights to take action and change their circumstances. The study found that feelings of lack of agency and disempowerment are most common among Madhesi Dalit and Muslim women.

'Meaningful participation' in inclusive governance entails awareness of one's rights (including information about affirmative action), ability to participate in different forums that influence one's life, and feeling one has the agency to make decisions and take action. Women across all caste/ethnic groups fall short on all accounts, except for their levels of participation in local organizations.

People's Knowledge about Provisions for Representation

Inclusive representation is one of the key features of the Constitution. However, public knowledge about the provisions designed to promote inclusion is very low, especially among women and other marginalized groups.

- **Reservations within political parties** are one of the least known provisions of inclusion. Only nine percent of women and 23 percent of men reported having good knowledge about inclusion provisions within political parties.

- **Inclusive reservation provisions in all state entities** are, surprisingly, not known very well-known either. Only 25 percent of men and 12 percent of women are aware about the reservation of one-third of seats for women in all state entities. Even fewer (21 percent of men and nine percent of women) are aware of the inclusion provisions for Dalits, minorities and persons with disabilities in elected bodies. Less than seven percent of women and 17 percent of men have good knowledge about provisions for the representation of all social groups in the proportional representation seats in the federal House of Representatives and Provincial Parliaments. Women from marginalized caste/ethnic groups, particularly those from the Tarai, have the least knowledge about the various inclusion provisions from which they would stand to benefit. Almost three-fourths of Madhesi Dalit women (74 percent) have no knowledge about any of these provisions.

Ethnographic accounts illustrate how people from marginalized communities lack organized leadership and are often unaware about policies for inclusive representation. Only very few individuals from the marginalized communities seem to be politically active and informed. Generally, people are organized along political party lines rather than caste/ethnic ones, limiting the reach of ethnicity-based advocacy. Thus, representation does not always lead to more political power for marginalized groups. Representatives are often unable to represent their own constituencies because they feel compelled to hold their own party line. In federal and provincial parliaments, the Party Whip often determines decisions; similar dynamics are at play at the local level too.

- **Lack of information** about inclusive policies and reservations is a critical barrier to inclusion in political processes, and as expected, women across all caste/ethnic groups suffer more from this barrier than men. Effective leaders must be able to identify and address critical issues faced by their constituents and participate meaningfully in decision-making processes. However, women across all of the 11 main social groups still have a long way to go in terms of achieving effective leadership. Some women – especially Muslims, Hill and Madhesi Dalits and Madhesi Other Castes (MOCs) – experience more exclusion than other groups.

Accountability of Service Providers and Institutions

Accountability is an important pillar of inclusive governance. Respondents were asked about their level of trust in a variety of people and institutions of government, ranging from newly elected local government representatives to political party leaders, security forces and non-government organizations (NGOs). They were also asked about problems they face in accessing government services, including interactions with government officials.

- **Levels of trust in local representatives:** It is encouraging that public faith in local representatives is high. Eighty-one percent of men and 76 percent of women have relatively high trust in their Ward Chairpersons. This is in stark contrast to people's faith in political party leaders; less than half of men and women (45 and 41 percent respectively) reported faith in those public figures. However, marginalized groups such as Muslims and Madhesi Dalit women exhibited the least trust in local representatives. Ethnographic findings also indicate that public trust in local-level leaders is high, although problems with the limited number of staff, new representatives' lack of experience and frequent disputes between elected leaders and local bureaucrats are common.

- **Trust in various institutions:** Respondents reported the most faith in banks and financial institutions (93 percent of men and 92 percent of women), followed by rural/municipality offices (86 percent of men and 83 percent of women), caste/ethnic/indigenous religious organizations (80 percent of men and 78 percent of women) and state security forces (78 percent of men and 77 percent of women). People have relatively less faith in Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), NGOs and rights-based organizations (69 percent of men and women), courts (65 percent of men and 60 percent of women) and – least of all – political parties (45 percent of women and 48 percent of men). Significantly, Muslim and Madhesi Dalit women have the least trust in the various institutions, while Hill Brahmin and Hill Chhetri men and women and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri men reported the most trust in all institutions.

- **Challenges in accessing government services:** The most common hurdle to accessing government services is lack of proper information (reported by 22 percent of men and women), followed by rights holders' lack of technical knowledge, capacity and skills (13 percent of men and 14 percent of women), ill-intentions of government staff (16 percent of men and 11 percent of women), and limited office staff, as well as their lack of skills and capacities (12 percent of men and 9 percent of women). Across all caste/ethnic groups, a higher percentage of women than men report facing such hurdles, potentially reflecting discrimination and traditional gender norms.

  Interestingly, only around three percent of men and women reported that language and caste/ethnic prejudices are barriers to accessing services at government offices, although the ethnographic study found that language is in fact a significant barrier, especially in the Tarai. Multiple studies, including this one, have highlighted the importance of speaking Nepali in order to access government services and participate actively in local and national governance. The groups that experience the most hurdles are Madhesi Dalits, Madhesi Other Castes and Muslim women.

- **Accountability and responsiveness in government service delivery:** Overall, people have poor opinions about government service delivery, with only 34 percent of men and 37 percent of women viewing service delivery as 'fair.' Interestingly, across all caste/ethnic groups, men reported the least satisfaction with service delivery, perhaps reflecting their higher expectations and knowledge about their rights.

  Almost all social groups reported experiences of 'discriminatory and prejudiced' service delivery as the most common experience of service delivery. This was reported by a little over half of Hill Dalit men and women and close to 50 percent of Hill Brahmin women and Tarai Janajati men and women. Caste and language discrimination may partly explain these findings, although it is unclear why Hill Brahmin women also feel service delivery is discriminatory and prejudiced so commonly.

  Between 32 and 39 percent of Tarai-based social groups (Madhesi Dalits, Madhesi Other Castes and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris) reported that they need "money to get services in time" when accessing government offices. Ethnographic data from a hill study site suggest that the prevalence of petty corruption may be decreasing.

  Less than one-fourth of men and women across all caste/ethnic groups reported that service providers are accountable to their duty, and even fewer people – less than 17 percent of men and women – reported that government offices are responsive to their needs. Ethnographic findings revealed public frustration with local service providers' inability to respond to their needs on time. However, it is encouraging to note that some local governments are taking innovative approaches to tackle problems related to service delivery. These efforts at increasing accountability are also likely reasons why the public demonstrates a relatively high level of trust in local governments compared to other public and private institutions.

Transparency of Information and Procedures

Transparency describes an environment where governments and public officials engage in the clear disclosure of rules, plans, processes and actions in a form that is readily accessible to all.

Transparency promotes accountability by providing the public with information about what the government is doing (USAID, 2013). NSIS 2018 examined transparency by asking respondents a variety of questions about their interactions with government offices and other local institutions.

- **Access to information:** Despite constitutional provisions for transparency and the right to information, most respondents (68 percent of men and 64 percent of women), reported that they have only partial access to information from government offices, while 21 percent of women and 16 percent of men indicated that they do not have easy access to information from government offices. Ethnographic findings corroborated these survey results; government information remains inaccessible for many people, with detrimental impacts especially for women and marginalized populations.

- **Transparent government procedures:** Only 10 percent of men and women reported they are fully aware about how government offices make and implement decisions. A much larger proportion (43 percent of women and 37 percent of men) said they are not at all aware. This lack of awareness can leave people vulnerable to exploitation and create an environment conducive to corruption.

  Overall, 61 percent of women and 55 percent of men reported that government offices do not make their budgets or expenditures available to the public at all. Across all social groups, more women than men reported that such information is not at all available, showing a clear gender-based disparity. Over two-thirds of Madhesi Other Caste men and women and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri women reported that such information is not at all available to them.

  Ethnographic data substantiated survey data related to people's concerns that authorities do not adequately publicize budgets and expenditures. There were complaints that municipal offices are not forthcoming regarding budgets and expenditures, and that tools designed to increase transparency, such as social/public audits, are ineffective. Many interviewees expressed special concern about the lack of transparency of user groups and committees, such as those involved in construction work, health posts and schools. They often indicated more concern about these groups than about municipal or other offices. Some interviewees complained that user groups' budget planning meetings are not widely publicized, limiting attendance to a few well-informed and well-connected individuals.

- **Financial transparency in government institutions:** Receiving a formal receipt for payment of services is an important mechanism for maintaining transparency and being accountable. Experiences of not receiving a receipt, or receiving one covering only part of the payment, was reported in Police Offices more than any other type of government office. Though only eight percent of men and 20 percent of women reported that they did not receive receipts from the Police Office, there were wide variations between caste/ethnic groups, with the Madhesi Other Castes, Hill Dalits, Madhesi Dalits and Muslims reporting the highest discrepancies.

Ethnographic findings also suggest there is a significant gap in transparency between communities in the Tarai and those in the Hills. In the Hill regions, citizens have relatively more confidence to question government officials, whereas in the Tarai, only a few elites feel empowered to do so. Dalits and women of the Tarai reported having neither the knowledge of ongoing activities nor the confidence to question officials.

Overall, the participation of women and marginalized groups in governance processes is improving; legislation changes have been very important, but much remains to be achieved. Greater participation of marginalized groups has yet to evolve into greater power for these groups; entrenched practices favoring the privileged remain all too common. Governance in multiple spheres and at multiple levels (formal and informal institutions, the bureaucracy, civil society, the private sector, the community, etc.) continues to be marked by gender discrimination, limited access and agency, and limited power and authority.

Many groups in Nepal face "intersecting inequalities," where gender, economic disadvantage, socially and culturally defined identities, locational disadvantage and lack of political representation combine and interact, leading to multiple levels of oppression and discrimination (the double and triple discrimination faced by groups of individuals such as 'poor Tarai Dalit women' for example). Women generally lack access to financial resources and have limited education and networks, a high work burden, and limited skills and experiences, negatively affecting their ability to participate in governance processes at the local as well as national levels. Therefore, it is necessary to continue ensuring the representation of women and marginalized groups in decision-making positions at all levels of government and in non-government institutions, and that they are able to build a critical mass. They are now more than entitled to long overdue investments in a context that changes, an enabling environment that helps them build their knowledge, skills and confidence in order to make changes to the "rules of the game" of the formal and informal institutional settings to make meaningful contributions in governance processes.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Constitution of Nepal envisions an inclusive state, an inclusive democracy, and an inclusive society, aspiring for lasting, broad-based prosperity (GoN 2015). The new constitution has paved the way for federalism and inclusive governance at the local, provincial and federal levels, and guarantees thirty-one different fundamental rights for citizens, including economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the right to inclusion and participation in state structures for all communities. Furthermore, the Constitution expresses the state's determination to build an equitable society through proportional inclusion and participation, ensuring economic equality, prosperity and social justice for all.

This study examines the current state of social inclusion in Nepal and how inclusion policies are translated into practice. It investigates perceptions, awareness and practices related to the five pillars of inclusive governance: the rule of law, participation, representation, transparency and accountability. The study focuses on disparities between different caste, ethnic, religious and minority groups, as well as gender differences across and within these groups. It establishes a baseline measurement of the perceptions, knowledge, awareness and experiences of different groups of people regarding the new constitutional provisions, with special focus on selected laws, plans, policies and rights. The study also examines the impact of laws and policies on different groups' participation and sense of agency[1].

1.1 Theoretical Underpinnings for the Study

Concepts and principles of 'governance', 'good governance' and 'inclusive governance' have evolved over time. This section briefly discusses these concepts and then presents the framework that guides this study.

Governance: "Governance" is a broad concept that includes the systems, cultures and processes of governments and other institutions, like civil society associations and private sector organizations. There is no universally accepted definition of governance or its constituent elements, although most agree that governance is concerned with state-citizen relationships, the legitimate acquisition of power and its efficient exercise (Weber 1946, Gupta 2012). Studies of governance often focus on the bureaucracy because it is central to the performance of citizen-centered rule, development processes, and everyday government functions (Pepinsky et al., 2017).

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[1] This study is one of the components of the national-level research project State of Social Inclusion in Nepal (SOSIN), conducted by the Central Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, with support from USAID Nepal.

Anthropologists have defined governance as the administration of access to, and provision of, rights, services and goods; they pay special attention to explicit and implicit forms of inclusion and entitlement in government practices (Eckert et al., 2007). Additionally, the state-citizen relationship and the domain of representation are also becoming important elements of the study of governance (Thelen et al. 2017).

Governance has also been defined in the 2017 World Development Report as "the process through which state and non-state actors interact to design and implement policies, within a given set of formal and informal rules that shape and are shaped by power" (World Bank, 2017). Thus, the emphasis is on how things are done (i.e. how decisions are made and policies are implemented) rather than solely on what is done.

Good Governance: In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, donors and academics turned their attention to the question, "How can governance be made good?" The focus on good governance is a response to disappointing development performance in developing countries over previous decades, often attributed to 'bad governance.' Good governance was put forward as the antidote; it is now seen as central to successful development.

Different development actors have used different definitions of the term 'good governance,' ranging from a narrow focus on sound fiscal management to a broader liberation of politics and the reduction of social inequality (UNRISED 2005, in Panda, 2008). UNDP's approach to good governance focuses on making rules, institutions and practices more participatory, transparent and accountable. It argues that this is necessary to attain sustainable human development, eliminate poverty, support livelihoods, protect the environment and promote the advancement of women (UNDP 1997, 2007).[2]

USAID (2013) focuses on democracy, rights and governance (the "DRG strategy") as key elements of development, with special attention to participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability as core elements of good governance. It provides a framework to support the establishment and consolidation of inclusive and accountable democracies to advance freedom, dignity, and development (USAID, 2013).

Good governance also requires ensuring that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad social consensus, with poor and marginalized sections of the population – including women – helping to make decisions about allocation and use of development resources (Panda, 2008).

Inclusive Governance: 'Inclusion' has become an integral part of ongoing debates on governance and development (OECD, 2020). It is a core value of democratic governance involving equal participation, equal treatment and equal rights before the law. Inclusive processes are essential for positive development outcomes. All people – including the poor, women, ethnic and religious

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[2] Additionally, for the World Bank, good governance entails: predictable, open, and transparent policy making; a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs, with all these actors behaving under the rule of law (World Bank 1994). Recently, the World Bank has emphasized inclusion and growth as aspects of good governance. The European Union argues that good governance involves making policy through non-hierarchical networks of both public and private actors located across multiple levels (Christiansen, 2012 p. 107).

minorities, indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups – have the right to participate meaningfully in governance processes and influence decisions that affect them. 'Inclusion' also means that governance institutions and policies are accessible, accountable and responsive to marginalized and vulnerable groups, protecting their interests and providing diverse populations with equal access to public services such as justice, health and education (Dias & Sudarshan, 2007). Studies of inclusive governance focus on how socially marginalized people assert and enjoy their citizenry rights, and how they address challenges faced while exercising those rights.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) conceptualizes inclusive governance in terms of fairness, equality, justice and social cohesion. Inclusive governance has important intrinsic value that is rooted in enabling people to exercise their voice and influence the processes that concern them. It can also provide the basis for forging shared identity and common values and in this way, it can galvanize social cohesion. With the advent of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), building inclusive states and societies has become widely understood as a central concern for international development. History has shown that inclusive states and societies are more prosperous, effective and resilient (OECD, 2020).

Inclusion, in terms of both process (how decisions are made and who is included in that process) and outcomes (how wealth and prosperity are distributed and shared across a population), is a leading priority in international development, with the SDGs as perhaps the most ambitious articulation of this aim (OECD, 2020).

Gender Dynamics in Governance: Gender discrimination and inequalities in levels of access, agency, power and authority influence governance in multiple spheres and at multiple levels, including in formal and informal institutions like the bureaucracy, civil society, the private sector, and community organizations. Women's lives are deeply and systematically conditioned by social norms and expectations.[3] Traditionally, women were relegated to roles in the private sphere (i.e. the realm of family and domestic life) whereas men dominated the public sphere (military affairs, government and administration) (Nussbaum et al., 2003: p.1). However, greater understanding of how societies' political, social and administrative structures affect citizens' access to basic opportunities and capabilities has transformed public thought on gender roles. Women's participation is now seen as an essential element of good governance. This includes participation in formal state institutions (including legislative, legal, and administrative bodies) as well as informal groups, movements, and civil society organizations (ibid, p.4).

The political gains made by Nepali women since 2006[4] have culminated in a dramatic increase in female political representation. Currently, women hold 33.5 percent of seats in the Federal Parliament, 34 percent in the Provincial Assemblies and 41 percent in local councils and ward

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[3] It is important to acknowledge that sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) also face discrimination and oppression in all spheres of life due to their non-heteronormative identities, despite being legally recognized in Nepal. NSIS 2018 asked the main respondents (heads of households) about the gender (male, female or other) of all household members living in the same house. None of the respondents identified themselves as a sexual or gender minority, nor did they identify any of their household members as such; therefore this study focuses only on men and women.

[4] The 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that brought an end to the Maoist conflict (1996-2006), the two Constituent Assemblies, and the 2015 Constitution of Nepal all culminated in legislative changes that increased women's political participation.

[5] For an insightful and in-depth analysis of the "gender dynamics that are informing and informed by new and old formal and informal institutions," refer to Tamang (2018).

committees (IFES Nepal, 2018 in Tamang, 2018). However, as Tamang (2018) has documented, legislative and formal institutional changes alone are insufficient to enable elected female representatives to exercise their power in decision-making processes. Informal rules and norms that are embedded in formal institutions continue to constrain female representatives' ability to voice their opinions and make decisions.[5]

It is essential to recognize that many social groups in Nepal face "intersecting inequalities," where economic disadvantage, socially and culturally defined identities, locational disadvantage and lack of political representation combine and interact (Kabeer 2010). This creates multiple levels of discrimination and oppression. For example, poor Madhesi Dalit women may face double or even triple discrimination – as poor people, as Madhesi Dalits, and as women. Women generally lack access to financial resources and have limited education and networks, a high work burden and limited skills and experiences, negatively affecting their ability to participate in governance processes at the local as well as national levels.

Study Objectives

The key objective of this study is *to assess the state of inclusive governance at different levels of government and civil society in Nepal today*. More specifically, it examines the representation of different castes, ethnicities and genders in various state bodies; assesses people's knowledge and awareness of provisions for inclusive governance, participation, representation, transparency and accountability in local governments and civil society organizations; and measures perceptions about legal identity and citizens' sense of agency in the political life of the country.

This study focuses on five pillars of inclusive governance namely: **rule of law, participation, representation, accountability and transparency.**[6] The study examines inclusiveness from the perspective of *citizens*, seeking to understand how they view the current situation of state-citizen relationships (i.e. the response of the duty bearers) in different spheres of life.

Rule of Law: There is no single definition of the 'rule of law,' but the term usually refers to a state in which citizens, corporations and the state itself obey the law, and the laws are derived from a democratic consensus. Characteristics of the rule of law include adherence to the principles of supremacy of the law, equality before the law, fairness in application, separation of powers, participation in decision making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness, and procedural and legal transparency (USAID, 2010).[7] Law and order, property rights, contract enforcement, protection of human rights and the power of the executive are generally included in definitions of the rule of law. This study measures inclusion in the rule of law by asking respondents questions about their awareness, knowledge and experience regarding existing laws, bylaws, directives, plans, policies and the current security situation.

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[6] Different organizations in Nepal and globally have characterized governance differently, citing four to nine different "pillars." For example, the UN recognizes eight pillars of good governance, arguing that it is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and based on the rule of law.

[7] USAID's 2010 Rule of Law Strategic Framework (ROL Framework) delineates ROL promotion across five interrelated "essential elements": (1) Order and Security; (2) Legitimate Constitutions, Laws and Legal Institutions; (3) Strengthened Checks and Balances; (4) Fairness and Human Rights; and (5) Effective Application of the Law.

[8] A three-step decision-making process ensures participation: sharing information with citizens; consulting with them and soliciting their opinions on an issue; and dialogue (UNESCAP, 2013).

Participation: People's participation in governance can be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives. The involvement of citizens enables governance institutions and processes to gain greater acceptance and tackle new issues. The degree of a group's participation in an institution or process can be measured, in a crude form, through attendance at meetings and by asking members of the group about whether they have the self-confidence to express themselves openly in public forums. The quality of participation (i.e. the ability to express opinions and to take initiatives) is often denoted by the proportion and increase of representation of individuals/groups in a particular space (CARE, 2011). The highest level of participation is interactive, meaning that citizens have a voice and influence group decisions, and that they hold positions as officer bearers (Agrawal, 2010 p. 172)[8]. This study defines and assesses participation as meaningful and informed engagement of individuals in various settings.

Representation: Participation and representation operate on the same continuum. Participation is something that all citizens can do, whereas representation refers to the holding of elected positions in government or the bureaucracy. Participation does not guarantee representation. Representation is essential for disadvantaged groups to influence decision-making processes and institutions. In Nepal, the legislature is conceptualized as a "mirror of the nation," meaning that to some degree it should reflect the population as a whole; it should include men and women, young and old, wealthy and poor and all religious, linguistic, and ethnic groups (Renolds et al., 2008 p. 9).

Transparency and Accountability: Transparency and accountability are keys to good governance. Accountability is not merely responsiveness; it involves institutionalized (i.e. regular, established, accepted) relationships between different actors whereby one set of people/organizations hold another set of people/ organizations to account. As Fox (2010) notes, accountability requires the capacity or the right to demand answers and the capacity to sanction (p. 247). Transparency means that decisions are taken and enforced in a manner that follows rules and regulations and that information is freely available and directly accessible to those affected by decisions and their enforcement. It requires that information is provided in easily understandable forms (UNESCAP, 2013). Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law.

1.2 Historical Overview of Governance in Nepal

Nepal was a unitary state from the time of unification in the late 18th century until 2015.[9] This section briefly reviews the historical evolution of governance in Nepal, focusing mainly on the changes since 1990.

Although historical documents do not offer many insights about the nature of the caste system in ancient Nepal, the modern Malla and Shah nation-states were predicated upon caste hierarchy, molding politics and the bureaucracy in such a way that ensured the dominance of some castes

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[9] Prior to 1950, when multi-party democracy was first introduced to Nepal, state affairs were mostly limited to maintaining law and order and extracting taxes and labor from subjects. Administrative divisions were determined by military needs and tax collection (Regmi, 1988 p. 19). The large size of most of these administrative divisions, particularly in the far east and far west, precluded close control from Kathmandu (ibid p. 20). Subjects paid taxes without the expectation of direct return or benefits. Those from certain marginalized ethnic groups were required to provide corvée labor on an ad hoc basis. In addition to taxes/labor owed to the state, various other payments were appropriated by land-owning elites and local functionaries under their jurisdiction. Nonetheless, the ruling Rana regime did carry out some public works and social reforms prior to 1950, including the abolition of slavery and the sati custom, the construction of roads and bridges, and the establishment of a limited number of schools and factories (Thapa, 1999, p.2).

(in particular, Brahmin, Chhetri/Thakuri and certain Newar groups) over others. King Jayasthiti Malla tactically aided the creation of a hierarchical society on the basis of caste in Nepal (Thapa 2001). Following that, in the 18th century King Prithivi Narayan Shah gave priority to so-called higher castes, despite his seemingly egalitarian rhetoric that "Nepal is a garden of four castes and thirty-six sub-castes" (Regmi 1983). This has continued to affect the political and bureaucratic structure of the country, as can be seen in disparities in the representation of different groups in politics and public administration (Lawoti 2005). Caste, kin and gender have always defined one's social and political possibilities under the Nepali state and access to state resources such as education, entry into the bureaucracy, and leadership in political parties. Dalits, Janajati (indigenous population), women, and other groups were categorically excluded from holding any central bureaucratic positions during most of the Shah-Rana era (1768-1950). These forms of exclusion persisted throughout the Panchayat era (1960-1990) and into the contemporary democratic era as well.

After the democratic changes of 1951, reforms were introduced to professionalize Nepal's bureaucracy, but these did little to promote inclusion of marginalized ethnic/caste groups or women. Following recommendations made by the M. N. Buch Commission in 1951, the government divided the country into 35 administrative districts and 150 blocks to provide services in the rural parts of the country. However, the Commission did not make suggestions regarding social inclusion in the civil service (Gurung, 2007). In 1955/56 the Public Administration Re-structuring and Planning Commission was formed under Prime Minister Tanka Prasad Acharya, which began the process of national planned development and also prepared the Public Service Act, which was introduced in 1956, requiring public employees to be selected on the basis of merit (Bhatta, 2011). Despite the creation of several commissions for the sake of improving the government system, the issue of inclusion was constantly ignored from 1960 to 1990 (Bhatta, 2011; Lawoti, 2005).

The 1990 Constitution highlighted the necessity of bringing socially and financially marginalized castes and ethnic groups into the realm of politics and public service. Subsequently, plans were made to support social, cultural, linguistic and geographical diversity. However, most plans went unimplemented (Bhatta 2011). For example, in response to the rising voices of women, indigenous peoples (Adivasi Janajati), Dalits and Madhesis, in 1990 a high-level commission was formed under the leadership of the Finance Minister, which suggested that 35 percent of seats be reserved for women, marginalized groups and Dalits in the bureaucracy. However, the suggestion was never implemented. Issues of exclusion became more prominent in the mid-1990s and by the turn of the century, the government was forced to respond, which it did in a limited manner in the 9th (1997-2002) and 10th (2002-2007) Five-Year Periodic Plans. By the early 21st century, the armed conflict made diversity and social inclusion central to the national agenda.

After the *Jana Andolan II* (Second People's Movement) against the monarchy in 2006, diversity and inclusion gained widespread political acceptance, at least rhetorically. The Interim Constitution of 2007 introduced provisions for inclusion in the elected Constituent Assembly.

The revival of multiparty democracy in 1990 marked a fresh start in the exercise of local governance and decentralization. For the first time, the Constitution in 1990 enshrined local governance and decentralization, although the foundations for local government institutions were created through subsequent legislation passed by parliament (Shrestha, 1999). Under the Constitution,

the District Development Committee (DDC) played a much stronger role, with an expanded functional jurisdiction and greater roles in local development through policy making and program implementation (ibid). Local bodies were empowered to implement development activities through regular budgets, and the "Build Our Village Ourselves"[10] program was a notable milestone for local development and governance. The Nepali Congress government that came to power in 1991 emphasized decentralization in the Eighth Five-Year Plan, and created new local bodies through the Village Development Committees (VDC), DDC and Municipality Acts (1992) and their associated Working Management Rules (1993, 1994). Local elections were held, leading to the installation of elected bodies at the village, town and district levels (ibid, p. 22).

In 1996, amendments were made to the local bodies and local elections through the Local Self-Governance Act and its associated regulations. However, the central government continued to be the dominant partner in the central-local relationship, hindering the ability of local bodies to act as truly effective and autonomous local governments (Sangroula, 1999 p. 59). Policy ambiguity, complete subjugation in the mobilization of financial resources and bureaucratic control over local bodies were major shortcomings of the DDC, Municipality and VDC Acts. Using examples from municipalities, Tamang and Malena (2011) show that there was duplication and ambiguity in the division of responsibilities between local bodies and the central government. The Maoist armed conflict, which began in 1996, prevented the full implementation of the Local Self-Governance Act, and after local elections were cancelled in 2002, they could not be held for another 15 years. Extortion by Maoists and corruption within the government were rampant; public accountability plummeted.

The current Constitution of Nepal (2015) restructures the country under three layers of federalism. It delineates seven federal provinces and 753 local governments, and it grants certain legislative, judicial, and executive powers to the provincial and local governments. Powers of each tier of government, including concurrent/shared powers have been set out in schedules in the annex of the Constitution.

The preamble of the Constitution (2015) embraces a vision of Nepal as a multi-caste, multi-lingual, and multi-cultural country, and commits to end discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion, sex, and gender identity. Articles 38 (4) and 40 (1) mention that women and Dalits shall have the right to access and participate in all state structures and bodies on the basis of the principle of proportional inclusion. Likewise, Article 42 (1) bestows the right to "participation in the state bodies on the basis of the principle of inclusion" to "socially backward women, Dalits, Adibasi Janajati, Madhesi, Tharu, minorities, persons with disability, marginalized, Muslim, backward classes, gender and sexual minorities, youths, peasants, workers, oppressed or citizens from backward regions, and economically poor Khas Arya."

Implementing the Constitution is a long-term process and the government has taken some important steps toward inclusive governance. For example, constitutional provisions for gender inclusion were enforced through the Local Level Election Act of 2017, which reserves two seats for women

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[10] The Build Our Village Ourselves program, introduced in 1996 by the CPN-UML-led government, gave the VDCs an annual budget of NRs. 300,000 for development – a marked increase from the less than NRs. 20,000 per annum they had previously received.

– one for any woman and one for a Dalit woman – in each five-member Ward Committee, which is the most local unit of government. In 2017, elections were held for 753 local bodies, including 460 Rural Municipalities (*Gaunpalikas*), 276 Municipalities (*Nagarpalikas*), 11 sub-metropolitan cities and 6 metropolitan cities as well as their 6,742 constituent wards. A total of 35,043 locally elected representatives entered office from different parties. Of these, 293 were women Mayors/Deputy Mayors in municipalities, 460 were women Chairpersons/Vice-Chairpersons in rural municipalities and 13,310 were women Ward Committee Members, including 6,567 Dalit women (one in each ward) throughout the country (ECN, 2017). However, the 'autonomous areas', 'protected areas', and 'special areas' outlined in the Constitution, which are meant to promote the inclusion and empowerment of highly marginalized groups, have not yet been demarcated or formally instituted.

Research Methods

This report is one component of the "Study on the State of Social Inclusion in Nepal" (SOSIN) conducted by the Central Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University. It supplements SOSIN's larger study, the Nepal Social Inclusion Survey (NSIS), which covers 88 caste and ethnic groups. This study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from NSIS 2018 with ethnographic fieldwork to understand people's experiences and views. Secondary data sources were used to determine the representation of various groups in the bureaucracy and government bodies. For a more detailed description of NSIS 2018's study methodology, please refer to the NSIS 2018 final report (Gurung, et al., 2020).

2.1 Survey Data Collection

Sample Design: NSIS 2018, similar to NSIS 2012, adopted a disproportionate design in which each caste/ethnic group was treated as a separate estimation and tabulation group, sometimes referred to as a "domain of study" (Gurung et al., 2014). This disproportionate approach is generally recommended when separate statistics are to be produced for different domains of the study (Kish, 1995: 77; Turner, 2003: 10). It allows for an equal level of sampling efficiency for each caste/ethnic group and is considered better for inter-group comparisons.

Two hundred households were sampled from each of the 88 caste/ethnic groups, for a total of 17,600 sample households. For each caste/ethnic group, ten Municipalities were selected as the primary sampling units (PSUs) using probability proportional to size. Within each PSU, the Ward or settlement with the highest number of households from the caste/ethnic group of interest was selected as the cluster (i.e., one cluster was selected per PSU). Finally, 20 households were selected in each cluster using a systematic random sampling technique. The selection process was repeated for all 88 domain groups.

NSIS 2018 interviewed two respondents – one man and one woman – from each of the 200 selected households. Male respondents were, in general, the household head. Female respondents were selected based on marital status (only those currently married were selected), age (between 15 and 49 years), and ability to answer the questions – particularly those related to gender relations, empowerment and reproductive health. Thus, out of the total 35,200 interviews planned, the enumerators were able to conduct 34,723 interviews with 17,247 males and 17,476 females; the response rate was 98 percent for males and 99 percent for females. Refer to Figure 2.1 for the map of the NSIS survey areas.

Sampling Weight and Sampling Error: Two hundred households were sampled from each caste/ethnicity, regardless of the overall size of the group. When calculating national-level averages, data for different caste/ ethnic groups were combined after weighting them to account for each group's size relative to the national population. Finally, sampling errors were computed to calculate confidence intervals, design effect and relative error for some selected key variables of the survey, separately for each caste/ethnic group.

Survey Instrument: The survey utilized a set of structured questions with some revisions from NSIS 2012. Major revisions were made for the section on governance, with questions reframed in terms of the five pillars of inclusive governance: rule of law, participation, representation, accountability and transparency. The questionnaire was organized into nine sections: identification of location; household roster; household information; health services and social security; work and livelihoods; education and language; socio-cultural and gender relations; inclusive governance and women's empowerment; and reproductive health.

2.2 Ethnographic Data Collection

Ethnographic data were collected to complement the survey data by providing context and greater explanation for quantitative trends. Data were collected in the form of people's voices, statements, narratives and life histories, which were directly or indirectly related to the five pillars of inclusive governance.

Ethnographic Study Sites: Seven fieldwork sites, each in a different district of a different province, were selected for the ethnographic studies (Table 2.1). The sites were chosen in order to represent a diversity of caste/ethnic groups and geographic zones. Refer to Annex 1 for a brief description of the ethnographic study sites. Research in the different locales focused on different areas of governance such as local government, health, education and civil society. Refer to Map 2 for the ethnographic study areas.

TABLE 2.1. Description of ethnographic study sites

S.N	Districts	Rural Municipality/ Municipality	Area of Inquiry	Predominant Caste/ Ethnicity	Geographic Location
1	Achham	Sanphebagar Nagarpalika	Local governance	Brahmin/Chhetri/ Dalit	Hill
2	Humla	Simikot Gaunpalika	Education governance	Bhote	Mountain
3	Kapilvastu	Shivaraj Nagarpalika	Local governance	Muslim, Tharu	Tarai
4	Manang	Ngisyang Gaunpalika	Local governance	Lama	Mountain
5	Morang	Belbari Nagarpalika	Civil society	Hill &Tarai Indigenous	Tarai
6	Nuwakot	Kakani Gaunpalika	Local government	Tamang	Hill
7	Rautahat	Durgabhagawati Gaunpalika	Health governance	Madhesi Caste Groups	Tarai

Ethnographic Research Process: Seven ethnographic field researchers (EFRs) – one woman and six men, all of whom have a Master's degree or MPhil degree in Anthropology – were deployed for the ethnographic study (see Annex 1). Checklists and guidelines for the ethnographic research were prepared by the Senior Anthropologists, which covered: steps for identifying ethnographic field research locations and initial tasks; general/contextual information of ethnographic base locations; notes on the collection of secondary information from district/ethnographic locations; media content analysis; informed consent; and guidelines for writing field notes and recording methods. An additional checklist was prepared to help the EFRs probe deeper into the issue of gender-based violence. A separate guideline was prepared to help them understand the entire context of the SOSIN Research.

Training for the EFRs included theoretical and practical components focusing on inclusive governance, gender equality and social inclusion, research methods and ethical practices. Training on photography and audio-video recording was also provided. The ethnographic checklist was pre-tested and revised based on feedback from the pre-test.

The EFRs conducted fieldwork for four months in 2018. During this time, they collected data through formal and informal interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), life histories, and participant and non-participant observation. Senior researchers also provided assistance as and when needed. The EFRs submitted daily field notes to their respective team leaders. All interviews and FGDs were recorded on electronic devices with consent from the informants. Each researcher conducted and transcribed at least 30 interviews.

A vast amount of data was collected through the open-ended interviews with local elected representatives, bureaucrats, members of local organizations, and members of political parties. In addition, informal interviews with citizens helped achieve greater understanding of local-level governance in terms of the rule of law, participation, representation, transparency and accountability. EFRs observed various public meetings, such as those held by local governments, school management committees, health posts and cooperatives. They also observed daily interactions between local people and members of the bureaucracy.

As reported by the EFRs, the use of different data collection methods enabled them to triangulate findings and capture different dimensions of inclusive governance. However, they faced challenges such as reticence on the part of some research participants. Politicians and bureaucrats were cautious, indeed suspicious, when questioned about transparency and accountability. EFRs also found that sometimes, the same event or process was described differently by different individuals.

2.3 Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

Survey data analysis was carried out by categorizing the 88 caste/ethnic groups into 11 broad social groups – Hill Brahmin, Hill Chhetri, Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri, Madhesi Other Castes, Hill Dalit, Madhesi Dalit, Newar, Mountain/ Hill Janajati, Tarai Janajati, Muslim, and "Others" (refer to Gurung, et al., 2020). Each social group was further disaggregated by gender. Data were summarized primarily in terms of bivariate descriptive statistics such as percentages and means.

Ethnographic data analysis was conducted by focusing on findings that complemented or contrasted with the key findings from the survey data. All interview transcriptions were coded and classified into the major themes (the five pillars) of inclusive governance. While the full extent of the ethnographic data is not used in the current report, it contains valuable data for future analysis.

Ethical Considerations: All SOSIN research received ethical clearance from the Ethical Review Board of the Nepal Health Research Council in order to ensure the respect and protection of participants' rights, dignity and privacy, as well as to prevent physical and/ or psychological harm against human subjects. Respondents were informed that there would be no monetary benefits from participation, that they had the right to not participate, and that their anonymity would be maintained based on the Nepal Statistical Act 2015 and Tribhuvan University Regulations 2072 (B.S.).

2.4 Demography of the NSIS Respondents

This section presents an overview of the NSIS survey respondents. Data are presented for 11 main social groups and disaggregated by sex, where possible. More details on the demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Annex 2 and extensive analysis of the NSIS 2018 is presented in another SOSIN study, "The State of Social Inclusion in Nepal: Caste, Ethnicity and Gender" (Gurung et al., 2020).

Sex and Caste/Ethnic Distribution: A total of 17,600 households were selected for NSIS 2018. The sample households comprised 92,566 individuals, including 47,416 women (51.2 percent) and 45,150 men (48.8 percent). Their caste/ethnic makeup is presented in Table 2.2 (using the weighted number of households and population). All social groups had greater populations of women than men, except for the Madhesi Other Caste, Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri and Marwadi groups. The highest female-to-male ratio was found among the Mountain/Hill Janajati groups.

TABLE 2.2. Distribution of sample households & individuals by social groups (weighted), NSIS 2018

Social Groups	Household		Population			
	N	Column (%)	Male (Row %)	Female (Row %)	Total	Column (%)
Hill Brahmin	2,539	14.4	48.4	51.6	10,133	10.9
Hill Chhetri	3,570	20.3	48.5	51.5	17,277	18.7
Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri	143	0.8	50.6	49.4	835	0.9
Madhesi Other Caste	2,013	11.4	50.7	49.3	14,952	16.2
Hill Dalit	1,488	8.5	48.7	51.3	6,896	7.4
Madhesi Dalit	694	3.9	49.8	50.2	4,531	4.9
Newar	968	5.5	48.9	51.1	3,717	4.0
Mt/Hill Janajati	4,159	23.6	47.5	52.5	18,718	20.2
Tarai Janajati	1,406	8.0	48.2	51.8	8,513	9.2
Muslim	588	3.3	49.0	51.0	6,842	7.4
Others	32	0.2	52.5	47.5	152	0.2
All Groups	**17,600**	**100.0**	**48.8**	**51.2**	**92,566**	**100.0**

Household Size: The average household size was 5.1 persons in 2018, with Muslims having the largest average household size (7 members), followed by Madhesi Other Castes (6.1 members) and Madhesi Dalits (5.7 members). Household size was smallest among Newars and Hill Brahmins (4.5 each).

Language: NSIS 2018 recorded 61 mother tongue languages within the sample. Seventy-two percent of sample households spoke an Indo-European language, whereas 23 percent spoke a Sino-Tibetan language. Astro-Asiatic (Santhal) and Dravidian languages (Jhangad) each were spoken by 1.1 percent of households. The Indo-European category includes 19 major languages spoken in Nepal, such as Nepali, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Awadhi, Bajika, etc. The Sino-Tibetan category includes 40 languages that are spoken by Mountain/ Hill Janajatis.

Main Occupation: NSIS 2018 found that 52.6 percent of households were engaged in agriculture, 34.4 percent in non-agriculture activities, and 13 percent in casual labor.[11]

Ownership of Assets: Overall, 85.9% of land (including khet, or irrigated land; bari, or unirrigated land; and *ghaderi*, or residential land) was owned by men, 21.4 percent by women, and 6.3 percent was jointly owned. Ownership among men was highest among Hill Dalits (90.4 percent) and lowest among Marwadi households (69.1 percent). Land ownership among men was also relatively low among the Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri (77.7 percent) and Muslim households (78 percent). Conversely, these groups had relatively high rates of female land ownership.

Overall, 15 percent of houses were owned by women, 81 percent by men and 4 percent were jointly owned. Female house ownership was highest among Muslims (24.8 percent), followed by Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris (23.5 percent) and Madhesi Dalits (20.4 percent). It was lowest among Hill Dalits (9.7 percent) and Madhesi Other Castes (13.5 percent).

Educational Attainment: NSIS 2018 tested for functional literacy and found that the overall literacy rate was 71.6 percent – 81.4 percent for men and 62.4 percent for women.

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[11] In the NSIS 2018, 'non agriculture' activities cover cottage industry, industry, trade and business, service, foreign employment, pension and other benefits, indigenous/traditional occupations and others; casual labor involves labor in agriculture and non-agricultural activities.

MAP 1. Map of NSIS 2018 Survey Area
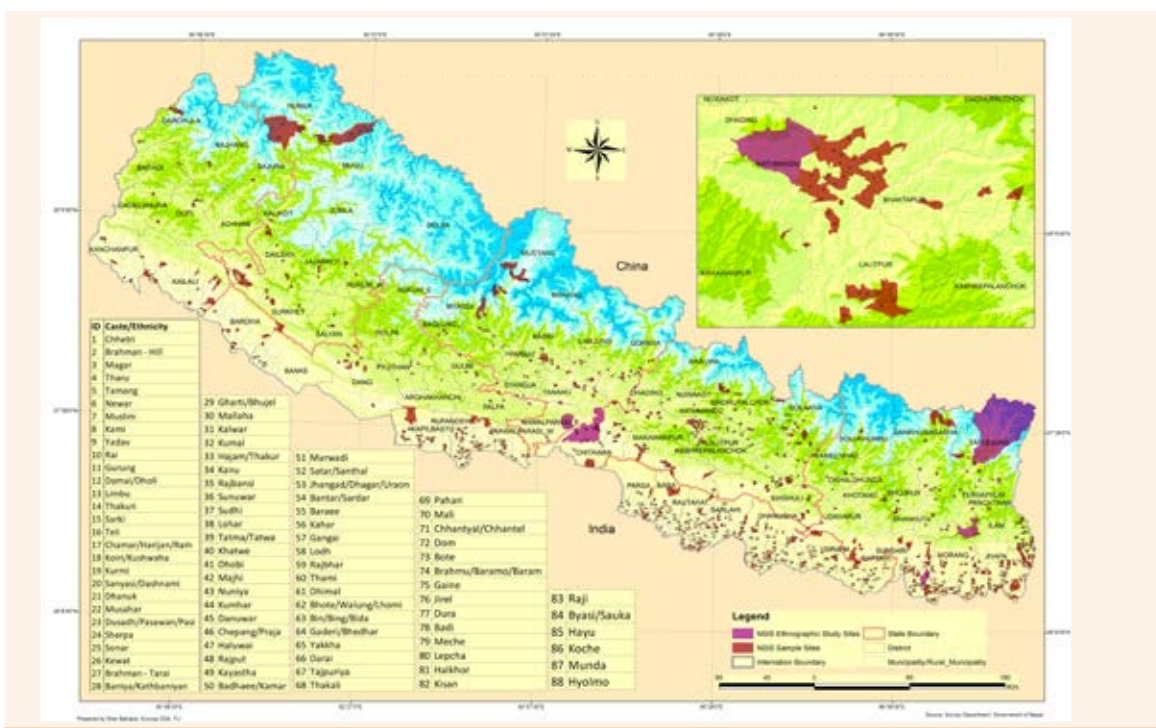
MAP 2. Map of Ethnographic Study Sites
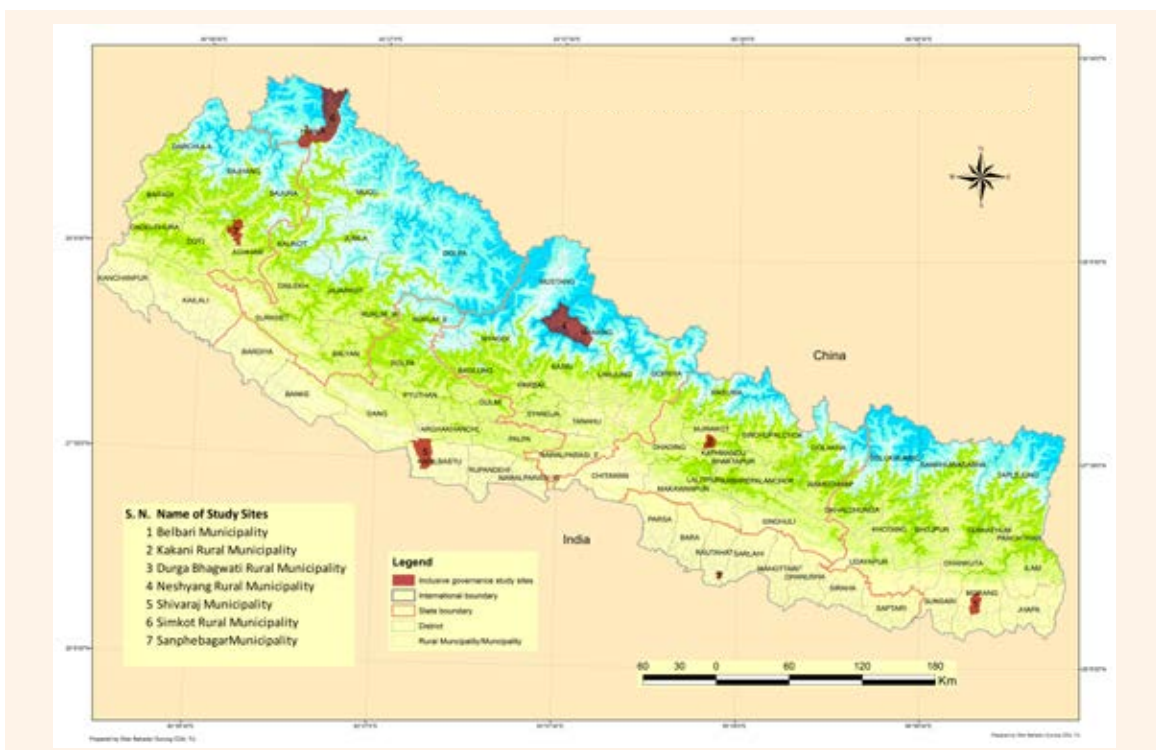
Representation in the Bureaucracy and Elected Positions

The Constitution of Nepal includes provisions for inclusion and representation of historically marginalized groups, including women, in political bodies and decision-making positions at the local, provincial and federal levels. Similarly, reservations for marginalized groups in the bureaucracy have been in place since 2007.

3.1 Diversity in Representation in the Bureaucracy

This study uses 2019 data from the Department of Civil Personnel Records (DoCPR) to analyze the current diversity in representation (sex and caste/ethnicity) within the civil service. Civil service employees are broadly grouped into three categories, i.e. gazetted (Officer/Executive Levels),[12] non-gazetted (Non-Officer/Clerical Level) and unclassified staff. Gazetted staff are further classified as special, first-class, second-class and third-class officers. Similarly, non-gazetted employees are classified as first-class, second-class, third-class, fourth-class and class-less. According to the DoCPR, as of 2019 there are 87,608 government employees in Nepal, of whom only 25.09 percent are women. However, this is a significant improvement from the time of the Civil Service Act's second amendment in 2007, when women made up about eight percent of the civil service, and from 2014, when they made up 15.3 percent (Bajracharya & Grace 2014). Disaggregating the data by caste/ethnicity shows that more than 61 percent of people in the civil service are from the Hill Brahmin and Chhetri groups. Madhesi Dalits and Muslims each make up less than one percent of the bureaucracy (Figure 3.1)

FIGURE 3.1. Percent of employees in the Nepali bureaucracy by sex and social groups, 2019
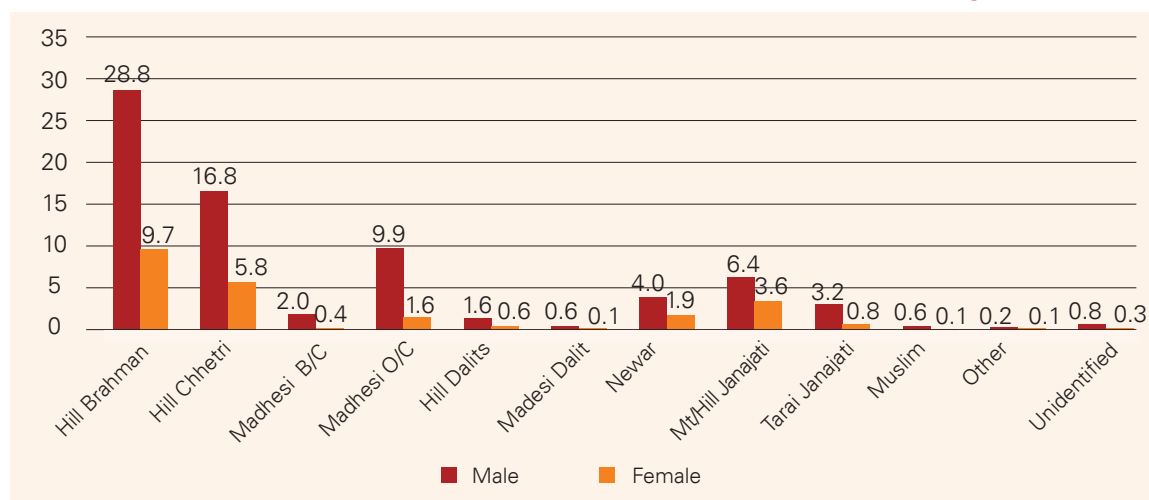
_____
[12] Gazetted Officers are executive/managerial-level public servants in Nepal, while Non-Gazetted Officers are of lower rank and have less authority. The specifications of gazetted positions are announced or published in the official gazette.

Gazetted Staff (Executive and Managerial): Women make up only 18 percent of the 24,399 gazetted staff in the civil service. Likewise, 48 percent of gazetted staff are Hill Brahmin, despite the fact that this group comprises only 12.2 percent of the national population. Reservation policies have helped marginalized groups gain positions as gazetted officers, but their numbers are still small and almost nil for Madhesi Dalits and Muslims (Figure 3.2).

FIGURE 3.2. Percent of gazetted officers in the bureaucracy by sex and social groups, 2019
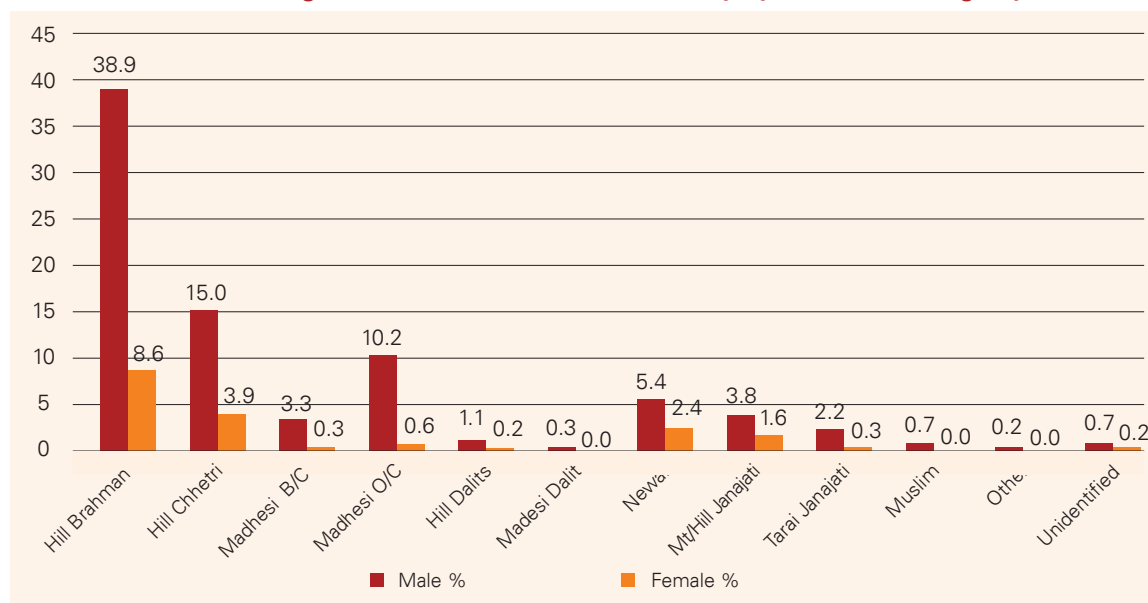
Source: DoCPR, 2019

FIGURE 3.3. Percent of non-gazetted officers in the bureaucracy by sex and social groups, 2019
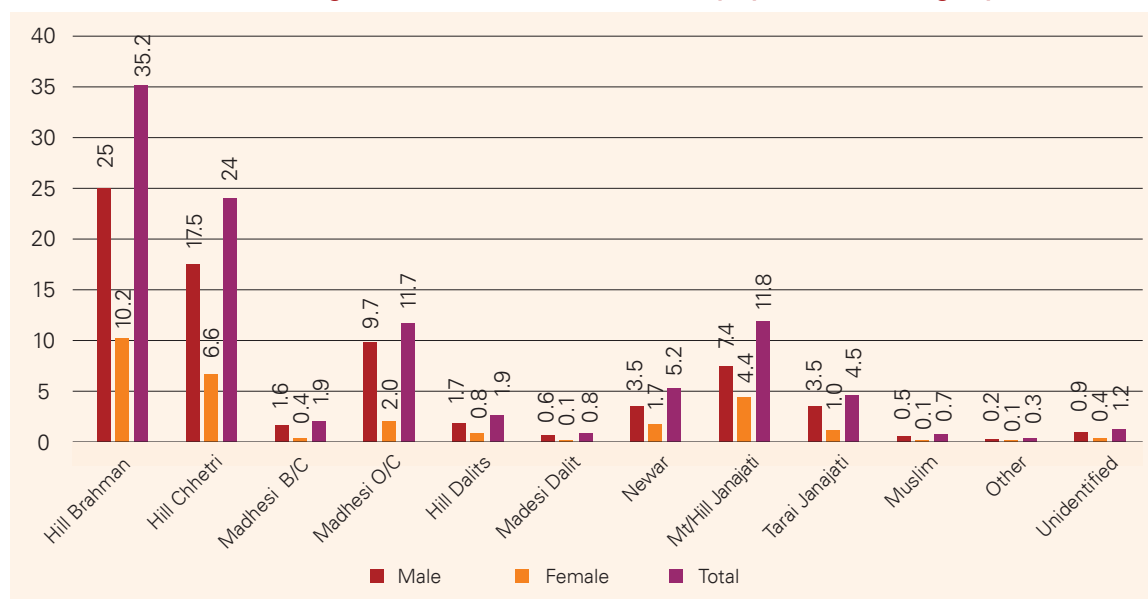
Source: DoCPR, 2019

Non-Gazetted (Clerical and Administrative) Staff: Non-gazetted staff make up the bulk of the civil service and in 2019, 63,209 employees fell under this category. Of this total, nearly 28 percent are women. As with gazetted staff, the Hill Brahmin, Hill Chhetri and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri groups are over-represented in comparison to their share of the national population (Figure 3.3). Hill Janajatis, Tarai Janajatis, Madhesi Other Castes, Muslims, Hill Dalits and Madhesi Dalits are highly under-represented compared to their share of the total population.

The DoCPR data show that the number of applications received for civil service jobs increased between 2018 and 2019. The data indicate that the proportions of Brahmin and Chhetri applicants for civil service jobs are declining, whereas the proportions of applicants from other caste/ethnic groups are increasing.[13] This recent year-on-year trend suggests that the inclusion provisions may be attracting some youth from marginalized groups to attempt the Public Service Exams.

Overall, however, relatively few applicants come from the marginalized groups that are eligible for quotas. Between 2007 and 2012, about 1.5 million applicants submitted applications for the civil service (Paudel, 2016). Among them, 56 percent were men and 44 percent were women. In terms of caste/ethnicity, 41 percent were Brahmins, 19 percent were Chhetri, 10 percent were Madhesi, three percent were Dalits and 17 percent came from other ethnic groups (ibid). Today, most applicants still come from castes, ethnic groups and economic classes that are relatively well off. Over the past ten years, the most applications have come from the Hill Brahmin and Chhetri groups, followed by Magars, Tharus, Yadavs, Newars, Rais, Tamangs and Gurungs. Some applicants from the Kami, Koiri, Madhesi Brahmin, Damai/Doli, Sarki, Kayastha and Dhanuka groups were also seen. However, groups such as the Madhesi Dalit castes Kurmi, Sudi, Chamar, Harijan and Ram, as well as the Mountain Hill Janajati groups Sherpa and Thakali, submitted very few applications.

Many individuals from marginalized groups do not have the minimum qualifications required to compete for public service commission positions. They lack the educational levels, Nepali language proficiency, or relevant networks that provide information and knowledge to access such opportunities.[14] Other groups are thought to contribute few applicants for other reasons. For example, the Sherpa and Thakali tend to be better off and successful in business, and therefore are reportedly less interested in the civil service (PSC, 2019).[15]

The Constitution and the Civil Service Act of 2007 have provided a legal and policy framework for inclusion. However, not all groups that are eligible within the inclusion provisions have been included in the civil service. For instance, more women from Brahmin/Chhetri backgrounds were recruited into the civil service compared to other groups, and representation of groups such as the Chepang, Badi, Gaine and Tarai Dalits is negligible (PSC, 2019). This clearly indicates that inclusive legal provisions are necessary but not sufficient on their own to guarantee inclusion.

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[13] Based on personal communications with Public Service Commission staff and the PSC Annual Report 2019.

[14] NSIS 2018 found that the Musahar have a 27 percent literacy rate – the lowest in the country, up only marginally from 20 percent in NSIS 2012. Nine other groups also report less than 50% literacy. Among them, six are Madhesi Dalits (Chamar/Harijan, Dusadh/Paswan, Tatma, Khatwe, Halkhor and Dom) and three are Madhesi Other Castes (Nuniya, Mallah and Bing/Binda) (Gurung, et al., 2020).

[15] Paudel (2016) states that despite the increase in quotas under the Civil Service Act, recruitment trends have not changed much. He points out that the selected civil servants belong to the same kinds of families as before. The only difference is their gender. Earlier, males were selected, whereas now, females – the sisters, wives or daughters-in-law of the same elite families – are selected. Among ethnic minorities, dominant families have seized opportunities provided by quotas, rather than the target groups who are politically, economically and socially marginalized (p 37).

3.2 Representation in Local, Provincial and Federal-Level Elected Bodies

In contrast to inclusion provisions in the civil service, which are coming into effect gradually as vacancies open up, the Constitution of Nepal (2015) mandates that seats be reserved for women and marginalized groups in local, provincial and national bodies whenever elections are held. This section examines the representation of marginalized groups in elected bodies under these new provisions, disaggregated by sex and caste/ethnicity.

3.2.1 Representation in Local Governments

At the local level, the Constitution states that parties must field at least one female candidate for the Mayor/Chairperson or the Deputy Mayor/Vice-Chairperson position in each rural municipality or municipality where they contest elections. Additionally, two out of four Ward Committee Member seats are reserved for women, one of whom must be from the Dalit community. Yet despite these provisions, clear gender disparities in key leadership positions are apparent in the results of the 2017 local elections.

Leadership in Rural Municipalities and Municipalities

Of the total 753 Chairpersons and Mayors elected in 2017, only 18 are female (2.39 percent) (Figures 3.4 and 3.5). Most Rural Municipality Chairpersons are Hill Chhetris or Mountain/Hill Janajatis (30.2 percent each), followed by Hill Brahmins (16.3 percent), Madhesi Other Castes (12.6 percent), Tarai Janajatis (4.3 percent) and Newars (2.8 percent). Only 0.2 percent come from the Hill Dalit group. Not a single Madhesi Dalit was elected as a Chairperson at this level. Similarly, in urban Municipalities, most Mayors are Hill Chhetris (26.26 percent), followed by Hill Brahmins (23.6 percent), Madhesi Other Castes (18.8 percent) and Mountain/Hill Janajatis (11.6 percent). Only one percent of Mayors are Hill Dalit and only 0.7 percent are Madhesi Dalit. Clearly, there is a lack of representation of women and other traditionally marginalized social groups in the highest ranks of local governments.

FIGURE 3.4. Percent of Chairpersons of Rural Municipalities (*Gaunpalikas*) by sex and social groups, 2017
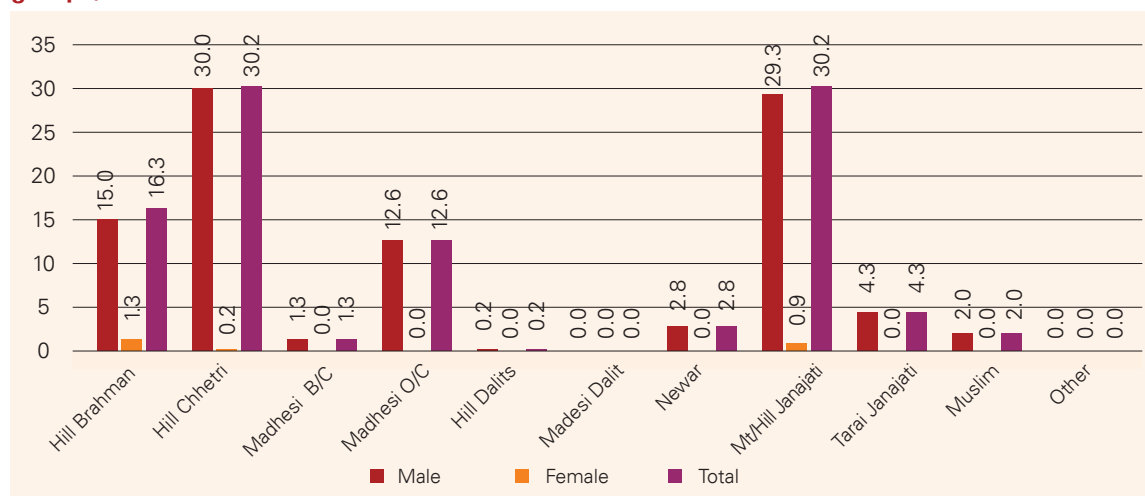
Source: ECN, 2017

Since the parties chose to field male candidates as Mayors (in Municipalities) and Chairpersons (in Rural Municipalities), they were required to field female candidates as Deputy Mayors and Vice-Chairpersons. As a result, more than 92 percent of Vice-Chairpersons are women. The most well represented caste/ethnic group among Vice-Chairpersons is Mountain/Hill Janajati (31.7 percent), followed by Hill Chhetri (23.9 percent), Hill Brahmin (19.3 percent) and Madhesi Other Castes (12.8 percent). Only three Madhesi Dalit women were elected as Vice-Chairpersons (0.3 percent). Similarly, more than 94 percent of Deputy Mayors, the second-most senior position in urban municipalities, are women. The most well represented caste/ethnicity among Deputy Mayors is Hill Brahmin (30.7 percent) followed by Hill Chhetri (19.1 percent), Madhesi Other Castes (12.9 percent) and Tarai Janajati (7.9 percent). Only six Hill Dalit women and two Madhesi Dalit women were elected as Deputy Mayors.

FIGURE 3.5. Percent of Mayors of Municipalities (*Nagarpalikas*) by sex and social groups, 2017
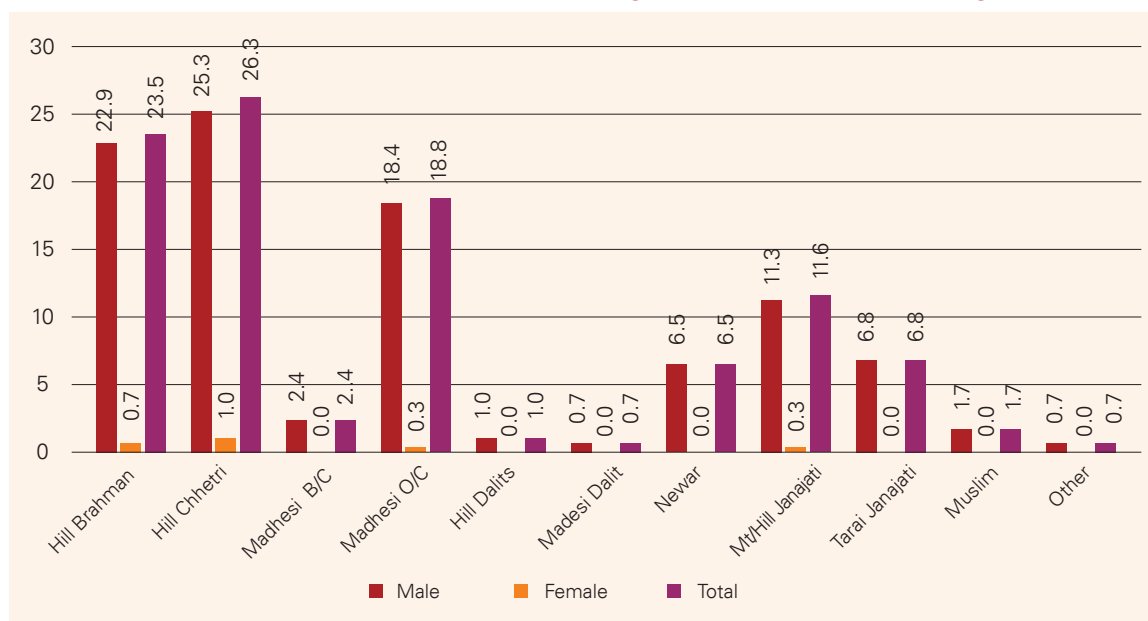
Source: ECN, 2017

Leadership at the Ward Level

After the Chairperson/Mayor and Vice-Chairperson/Deputy Mayor, the Ward Chairperson is the next senior-most executive position in local governments. This position plays a decisive role for project planning and selection, and also chairs village assembly meetings. Unlike the Chairperson/Mayor and Vice-Chairperson/Deputy Mayor, candidates of any gender or caste/ethnicity can contest the Ward Chairperson position.

In a total of 6,743 wards across the country, less than one percent of Ward Chairpersons are women (Figure 3.6). Among the main social groups, the most represented are the Hill Chhetri (25.6 percent) followed by Mountain/Hill Janajati (25 percent), Hill Brahmin (18.8 percent) and Madhesi Other Castes (14 percent). Hill Dalit, Madhesi Dalit and Muslim representation is far lower than

their proportion of the population.[16] Dalit women hold 19.2 percent of seats at the local level, mainly through the reserved seats for Dalit women ward members. Outside of this quota, Dalit representation is only 3.3 percent (Paswan 2017).

FIGURE 3.6. Percent of Ward Chairpersons in Nepal by sex and social groups, 2017
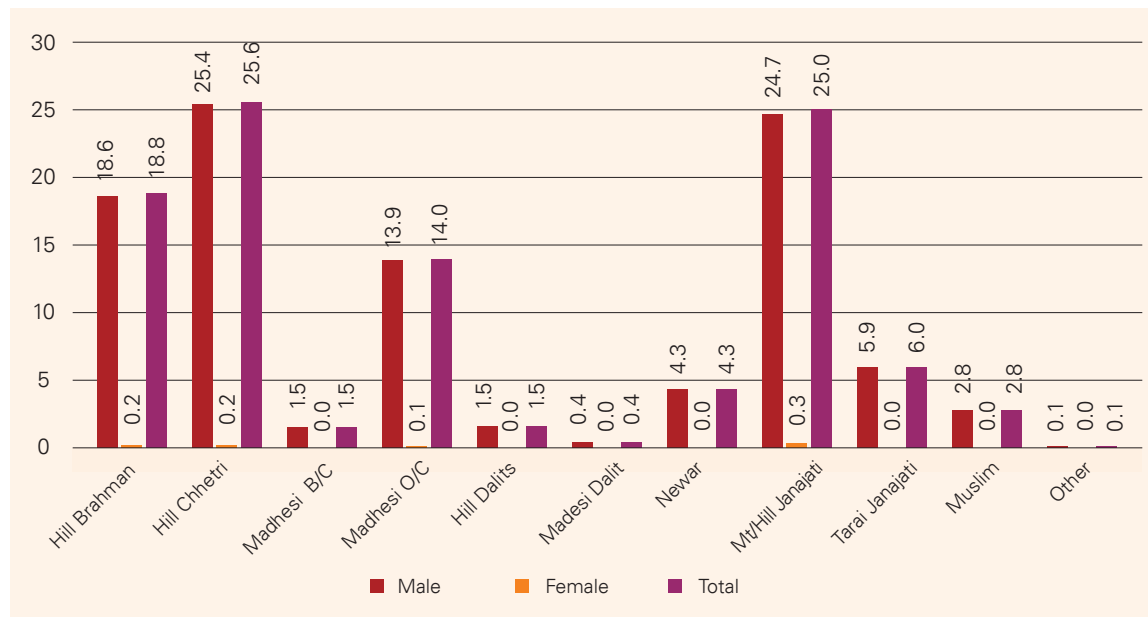
Source: ECN, 2017

3.2.2 Representation in the Provincial Assemblies

Similar to the Federal House of Representatives, 60 percent of members of the Provincial Assemblies (Pradesh Sabha) are elected through the First-Past-The Post (FPTP)[17] system and 40 percent are elected through the proportional representation system.

Members of Provincial Assemblies: First-Past-The Post and Proportional Representation

There are seven Provincial Assemblies in the country, with a total of 550 seats, of which 330 are elected through the FPTP system. Despite the fact that parties were constitutionally required to field 33 percent women candidates for these seats, the vast majority of the directly elected members are men (94.8 percent). This is because most political parties limited their female candidates to constituencies where chances of winning were slim. Here too, the most well-represented groups are the Hill Brahmins and Hill Chhetris, followed by Hill/Mountain Janajatis (Figure 3.7). Not a single representative from the Madhesi Dalit community was elected through the FPTP system for any of the Provincial Assemblies.

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[16] Social Inclusion Atlas of Nepal: Ethnic and Caste Groups, Vol. 1. 2014

[17] According to the Constitution, candidates for each constituency are chosen by the political parties or stand as independents. Each constituency elects one MP under the FPTP system of elections. Since Nepal uses a parallel voting system, voters cast another ballot to elect MPs through the party-list proportional representation system. The constitution specifies that 165 MPs are elected from the FPTP and 110 MPs are elected through the party-list proportional representation system. Women should account for one-third of total members elected from each party. If one-third are not elected through the FPTP system, the party must meet the requirement through the party-list proportional representation (GoN, 2015).

The over-representation of Hill Brahmins and Hill Chhetris, under-representation of Janajatis and women (with the exceptions of Province 1 and Bagmati Province), and near-absence of Dalits in the Provincial Assemblies reflect not only unequal power relations across caste/ethnic groups, but also the impact of electoral constituency delimitations and party apportionment (candidate nomination) rules and practices. The majoritarian electoral system has marginalized Dalits and Muslims the most, depriving them of representation in the Provincial Assemblies and limiting their access to development opportunities and financial resources.

FIGURE 3.7. **Percent of members of the Provincial Assemblies (FPTP) by sex and social groups, 2017**
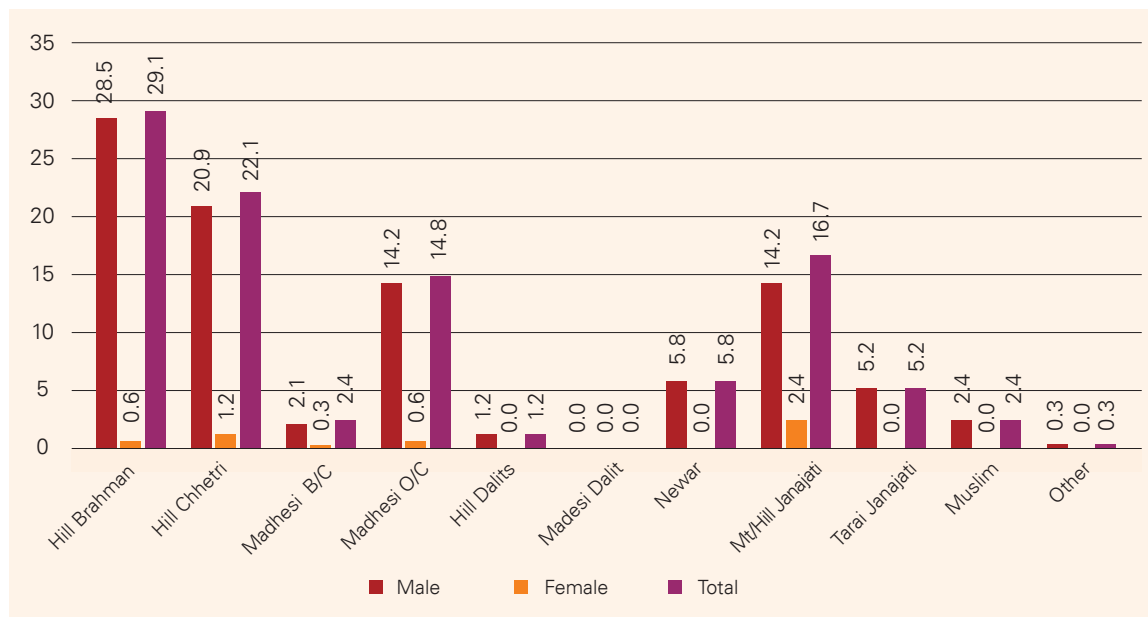
Source: ECN, 2017

FIGURE 3.8. **Percent of members of Provincial Assemblies (Proportional Representation) by sex and social groups, 2017**
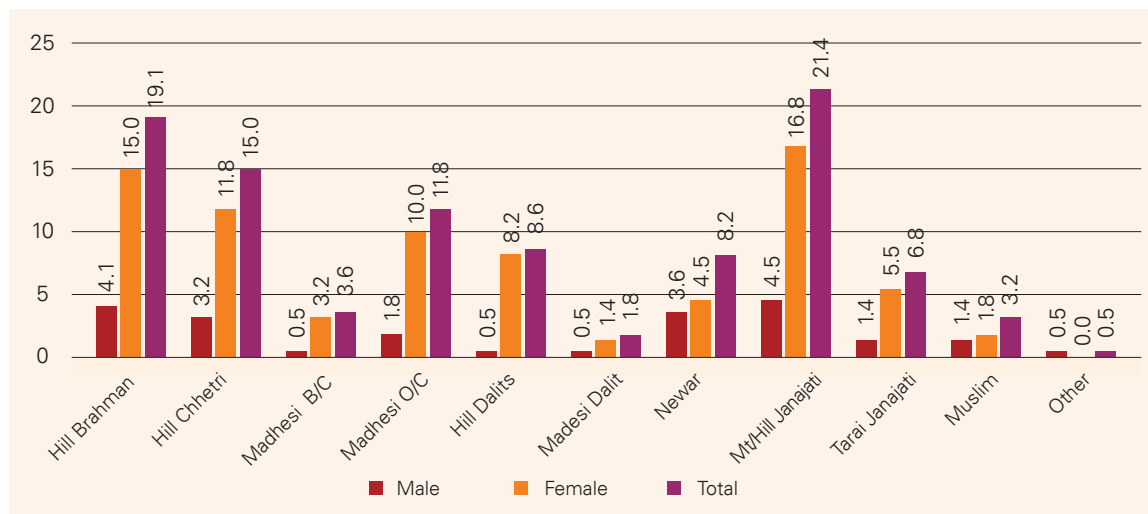
Source: ECN, 2017

In addition to the 330 directly elected members of the Provincial Assemblies, 220 members are elected through the proportional representation system. Among them, 79 percent are women. This high proportion of women reflects the constitutional requirement that at least 33 percent of Assembly Members must be females; political parties compensated for male over-representation in the FPTP system by choosing female representatives in the proportional system. The most well-represented groups are the Mountain/Hill Janajatis followed by Hill Brahmins and Hill Chhetris (Figure 3.8).

3.2.3 Representation in the Federal Parliament

At the federal level, Parliament is made up of the House of Representatives and the National Assembly. The House of Representatives comprises 275 members, of whom 165 are directly elected through the FPTP system and 110 are elected through the proportional representation system. The National Assembly comprises 59 indirectly elected members. Thus, in total there are 334 Members of Parliament at the Federal level.

The National Assembly

Of the 59 members of the National Assembly, 56 are elected by the House of Representatives, Provincial Assemblies, Mayors, Deputy Mayors, Rural Municipality Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons, while three are nominated by the President. After the elections in 2017, the composition of the National Assembly was 62.5 percent men and 37.5 percent women (Figure 3.9). Overall, 37.5 percent came from the Hill Brahmin group, followed by Hill Chhetri (21.4 percent), Mountain/Hill Janajati (16.1 percent and Hill Dalit (5.9 percent). Two members came from the Madhesi Dalit community (3.4 percent). The makeup of the National Assembly reflects the outcomes of provincial boundary delimitation and their population composition on the one hand, and apportionment rules of the major political parties on the other.

Of the three members nominated by the President, two are men and one is a woman. Experts or non-political actors are to be appointed under this quota, according to the 'spirit of the constitution.'[18]

FIGURE 3.9. Percent of members of the National Assembly (Rastriya Sabha) by sex and social groups, 2017
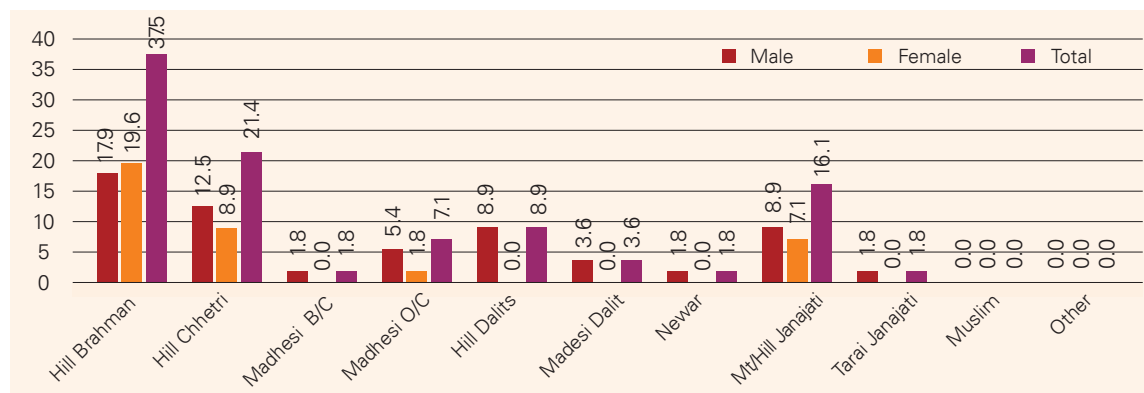
Source: ECN, 2017. Note: Members nominated by the President are not included in the figure.

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[18] https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/presidential-quota-in-upper-house-meant-for-experts-not-politicians/

Members of the House of Representatives: First-Past-The-Post (FPTP)

Directly elected members of the House of Representatives are seen as the most influential Members of Parliament because they earned their seats by contesting direct elections as individual candidates. Of the 165 directly elected members of the House of Representatives, only six are women (3.6 percent). The most well-represented caste/ethnic group is Hill Brahmin (29.1 percent) followed by Hill Chhetri (22.4 percent), Mountain/Hill Janajati (15.8 percent) and Madhesi Other Caste groups (14 percent). No Madhesi Dalit was elected in the FPTP system (Figure 3.10). The current caste/ethnic representation in the House of the Representatives is similar to after the elections of 1991, 1994 and 1999, and undermines the spirit of the constitutional provisions for proportional inclusion.

Such patterns are mainly attributed to gerrymandering in the delimitation of electoral districts/ constituencies, major political parties' apportionment rules for the nomination of candidates and the increased legal threshold to gain seats in parliament, which has barred access for minority ethno-regional parties.[19] Additionally, the volume of election campaign financing has increased, making it difficult for poorer groups to attain elected office.[20] In the ethnographic study sites (Humla, Achham and Rautahat) it was reported that a candidate for the position of Ward Chairperson needed NRs. 10 to 20 lakhs for the election campaign. A respondent in Achham shared how even though he was encouraged to run for the Ward Chairperson seat, he had to decline because of the expense. He said, "I have no money to contest for the position; if you do not have the money you cannot win the election." The FPTP system has led to especially poor outcomes for Muslims and Dalits. These facts suggest that democracy and periodic elections have not fundamentally altered the exclusionary structures of core state institutions.

FIGURE 3.10. **Percent of members of the House of Representatives (Pratinidhi Sabha) by sex and social groups, 2017**
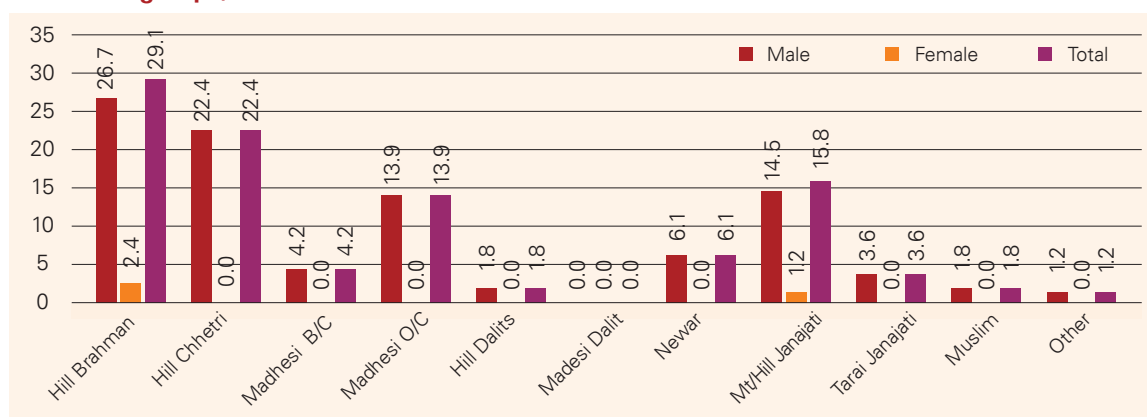
Source: ECN, 2017.

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[19] To garner proportional seats in the House of Representatives, a party must obtain three percent of total valid votes, with at least one directly elected member. Many regional and ethnic parties could not gain seats because of this threshold.

[20] A 2017 study by the Election Observation Committee (EOC) estimated that a total of Rs. 13,163 crores was spent on the three levels of elections. Candidates and their supporters spent Rs. 9,691 crores while the Government spent Rs. 3,472 crores (EOC Nepal, 2017). The high spending on elections has a negative influence on the electoral integrity in Nepal. EOC study shows that electoral integrity is called into question because of unequal access to funds among candidates, high influence of financers, lack of transparency of financial accounts and lack of accountability in the election cycle (ibid).

Members of the House of Representatives - Proportional Representation System

Members of Parliament who were nominated through the proportional representation system are widely seen as less influential than the directly elected representatives because in effect, they owe their seats to their party's leadership. In total, women hold 76.4 percent of proportional representation seats in the House of Representatives. As with the proportional seats in Provincial Assemblies, the high proportion of females reflects political parties' strategy of nominating women through proportional representation in order to make up for a lack of women elected through the FPTP system, thus fulfilling the requirement that 33 percent of members of the House of Representatives be female.[21] The most well-represented caste/ethnic group among the proportional seats is Hill Brahmin (20 percent), followed by Mountain/Hill Janajati (17.3 percent), Hill Chhetri (14.5 percent), Hill Dalit (11.8 percent) and Madhesi Other Castes (10.9 percent) (Figure 3.11). Only one representative comes from the Madhesi Dalit group.

Marginalized groups are better represented through the proportional system compared to the FPTP system. Political parties tend to nominate candidates from Hill Brahmin and Chhetri castes and well-off groups for FPTP races. If a candidate from any caste/ethnic group does not have adequate social and economic capital or kinship networks, particularly in the higher echelons of their party, then they have a slim chance of getting nominated for an FPTP race, even if they have a long history of contributing to their party. The nomination system is directly controlled by party leaders who manipulate the process to serve their own interests. Thus, disadvantaged groups primarily rely on the proportional representation system and the constitutional mandate for inclusion to ensure their participation in Parliament.

FIGURE 3.11. **Percent of members of the Federal House of Representatives elected through the proportional representation system by sex and social group, 2017**
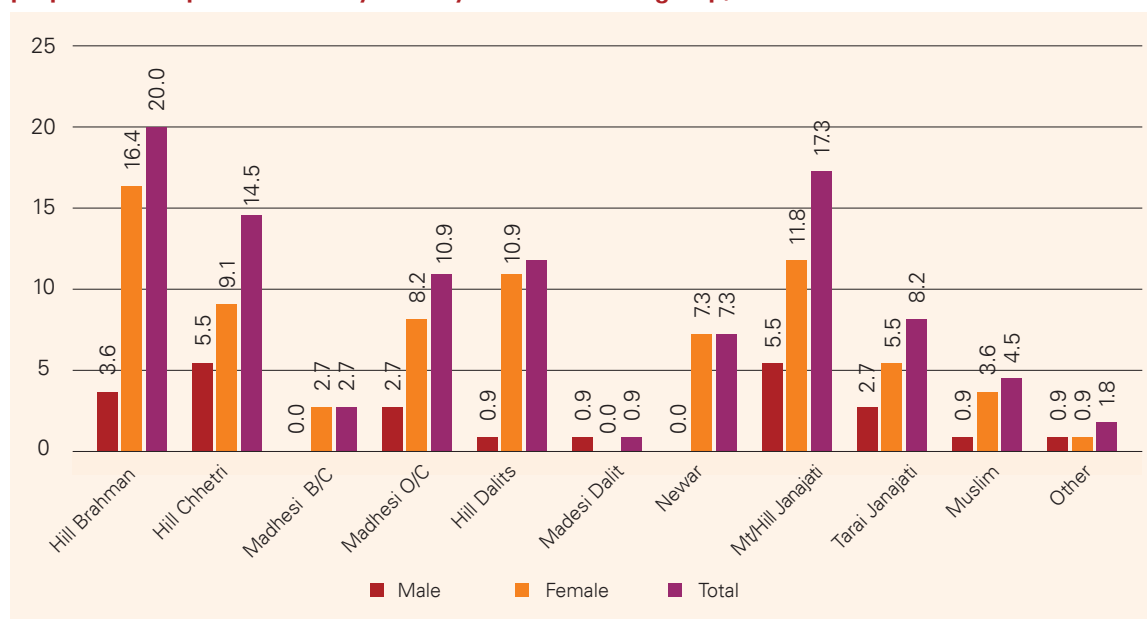
Source: ECN, 2017.

[21] To Women hold 90 out of 275 directly elected and proportional seats in the House of Representatives, or 32.7 percent of the total.

Summary – Representation in the Bureaucracy and Elected Positions

The Constitution of Nepal and the Civil Service Act (2013) include provisions for the inclusion and representation of historically excluded and marginalized groups, including women, in political bodies and the bureaucracy. However, data provided by the DoCPR (2019) and the ECN indicate that while these laws have been followed in the letter, they have not been followed in the spirit. Minimum requirements for inclusion have been met, but the most marginalized groups remain excluded from powerful decision-making positions.

- **In the civil service,** only 25 percent of staff are women and more than 61 percent come from the Hill Brahmin and Hill Chhetri groups, even though Brahmins and Hill Chhetris make up only 30 percent of the population. Among gazetted staff, 48 percent of employees are Hill Brahmin, while Madhesi Dalits and Muslims each make up less than one percent of the bureaucracy. However, inclusion provisions for the civil service apply only to new vacancies; with legislative changes it has become much more inclusive over the past decade.

- **In the 2017 local elections,** most political parties fielded male candidates for Mayor/Chairperson positions, relegating female candidates to the Deputy Mayor/Vice-Chairperson contests since at least one of the two candidates had to be female, by law. As a result, over 97 percent of Chairpersons and Mayors are men, while 92 percent of Vice-Chairpersons and 94 percent of Deputy Mayors are women. Hill Chhetris and Hill Brahmins make up more than 46 percent of Mayors/Chairpersons and more than 49 percent of Deputy Mayors. Likewise, less than one percent of Ward Chairpersons are women, while over 44 percent come from the Hill Brahmin or Hill Chhetri groups. Patterns of local representation reflect the fact that Dalits, women, Muslims and several marginalized Adivasi Janajatis face multiple historical and continuing forms of exclusion.

- **In the Federal House of Representatives,** over 96 percent of directly elected members are male, and over 51 percent are Hill Brahmin or Hill Chhetri. No Madhesi Dalit was elected through this system, and only one Madhesi Dalit was selected through the proportional representation system. The dynamics of power distribution in parliament continue to remain largely unchanged and exclusionary.

- **In the seven Provincial Assemblies,** the vast majority of the directly elected members are men (95 percent) and over 51 percent are Hill Brahmin or Hill Chhetri. No representative of the Madhesi Dalit community was directly elected in the Provincial Assemblies (through FPTP). Thus, just as at the national level, provincial-level representation and leadership patterns continue to reflect historical forms of exclusion.

- **Female political representation** has significantly advanced in the 2017 local elections due to constitutional changes. For example, the ECN mandated that at least 40 percent of total nominees be female, including a rule mandating that the Chief and Deputy Chief nominations put forth by each political party in each local unit be gender-even, i.e. the two positions had to be filled by one male and one female candidate. Such affirmative action has led to almost 41 percent of elected local seats being held by women.

- **Traditional, patriarchal and patrilineal gender norms** continue to influence the larger population and are reflected strongly in the norms and practices of political parties as well. Similarly, the socio-economic and political marginalization of specific caste/ethnic groups (such as the Hill and Tarai Dalits, Madhesi Other Castes and Muslims) continues to be reflected in the bureaucracy and elected bodies. The affirmative action policies and reservations need to be backed up by improvements in education, access to information, political knowledge and practices, especially for these groups.

Inclusive Governance: Knowledge, Perceptions and Practices

This chapter presents the NSIS 2018 survey's findings about people's experiences, knowledge and perceptions regarding existing rights, laws, policies and the functions of local governments. The gender- and caste/ethnicity-disaggregated data present a picture of how different groups understand and experience governance processes and institutions differently; ethnographic data provide additional insights. The value of the NSIS 2018 data is that they are disaggregated by sex and 88 different caste/ethnic groups. The analysis in this chapter is focused on disaggregation by gender and the 11 main social groups, while details of the 88 individual caste/ethnic groups are presented in Annex 3.

4.1 Rule of Law

"I have no knowledge about health as a right, and rules and regulations regarding health, but I know that there is a provision of delivery of free health services to Dalits, women, backward communities and the poor."

- 40-year-old Madhesi male, Rautahat

This study assesses several indicators related to the 'rule of law,' namely: knowledge about quotas/ reservations and affirmative action provisions designed to promote inclusion; knowledge about civil and political rights; knowledge and experiences related to accessing justice; knowledge of local governments' activities and functions; and perceptions regarding the rule of law in various sectors.

4.1.1 Knowledge about Affirmative Action Provisions

This section presents the findings about different groups' knowledge and awareness of existing laws and policies designed to promote inclusion in education, health care and government employment. Historically marginalized communities (e.g. Hill and Madhesi Dalits, women, people with disabilities, etc.) are eligible for special opportunities in higher education, such as reserved seats in the study of medicine, engineering and other technical subjects. There are also several subsidies, incentives and free services available to all citizens at public health institutions. In government employment (including the security forces, civil service and teaching positions), 45 percent of all job vacancies are reserved for marginalized groups including women and different

caste/ethnic groups. Respondents were asked for a self-assessment of their own level of knowledge regarding: i) quotas/reservations for educational opportunities (e.g. scholarships and admission quotas in higher technical education) for Dalits, endangered communities, women and people with disabilities; ii) free health care provisions (e.g. pregnancy related incentives; free treatment[22]); and iii) reservations in government jobs for women, Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis and for populations from remote areas.[23]

The survey results show that in all three areas, less than one-fourth of men and women have 'good' knowledge about such provisions. Women's knowledge about reservations in government jobs is the poorest, with only 11 percent claiming 'good knowledge' and over 50 percent having 'no knowledge at all.'

Ethnographic interviews from Achham show that many Dalits are aware that if anyone discriminates against them based on their caste, they can legally fight for justice. They are also aware about quotas for educated Dalits in the civil service and in government teaching positions. An informant from Rautahat shared, "I came to know through the news that there is a provision of free treatment of patients from Dalit and marginalized communities, but I have not seen it in practice." This suggests that knowledge about government services is mostly limited to educated and politically active individuals; meanwhile, marginalized target groups have little knowledge about these services.

FIGURE 4.1: Composite Index for no knowledge of affirmative action provisions in education, health care and government employment by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
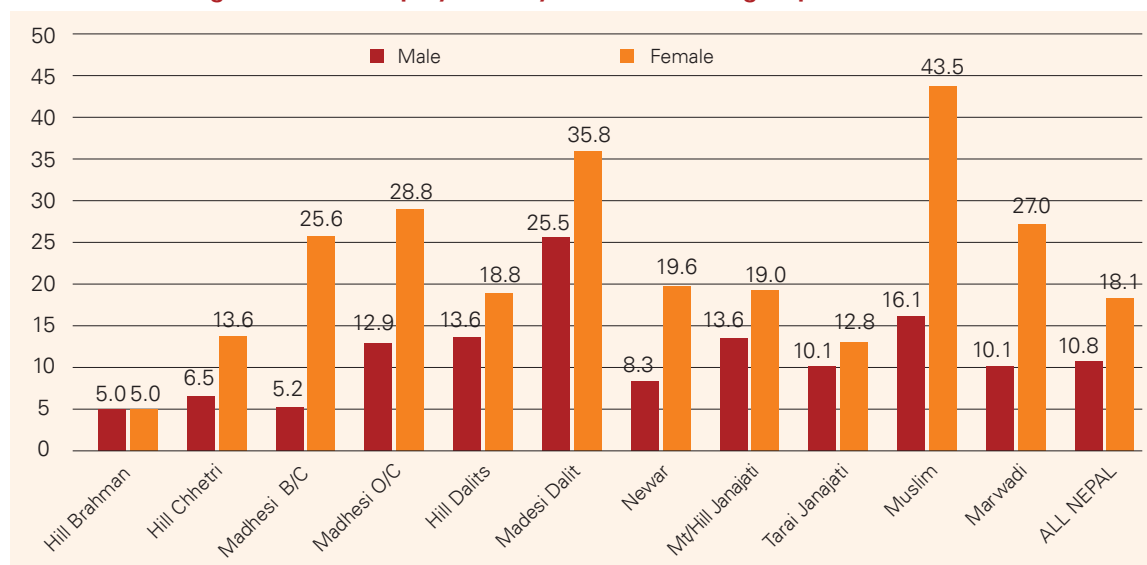
A composite index was created to show the extent of a lack of knowledge about opportunities in the three areas – education, health and government jobs – disaggregated by gender and 11 broad caste/ethnic groups (Figure 4.1). Muslims, Madhesi Dalits and Madhesi Other Castes have lower

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levels of knowledge about the opportunities and reservations compared to other social groups. Overall, across all caste/ethnic groups, 18.1 percent of women and 10.8 percent of men have no knowledge about reservations in the three sectors. Within each caste/ ethnic group, men have more knowledge about reservations than women, except for the Hill Brahmin group, in which the two genders' levels of knowledge is equally high. The gender-based knowledge disparity is highest among Muslims (with a 43.5 percent gap), followed by Madhesi Dalits, Madhesi Brahmin/ Chhetris, and Madhesi Other Castes (see Annex 3 for detailed data disaggregated by 88 caste/ ethnic groups).

Ethnographic data provide additional insights about people's knowledge and access to education, health care and government jobs. On the one hand, some interviewees pointed to signs of progress. A Tamang female school teacher in Nuwakot observed that while many people still lack knowledge about their fundamental rights, others have become conscious of services and facilities provided by their local governments, in part because of social media and campaigns by FM radio stations. The Health Coordinator (a Chhetri man) in Achham claimed that Dalits and other marginalized and vulnerable communities have been able to access government assistance for the treatment of chronic diseases (kidney, heart disease and high blood pressure) and that many of them are aware of the free distribution of 72 types of medicines in government health centers. However, the list of the 72 types of essential medicines was not publicly posted in the health institutions of the research sites.

Several respondents indicated that inequalities persist between different social groups in access to education, health care and government employment. A former VDC Chairperson (Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri man) in Rautahat said that the quota/reservation system has only benefited a few well-educated women and Dalits, but most others lack the knowledge to take advantage of the opportunities available. A Madhesi Dalit man in the same locality added, "Health services are monopolized by high-class people; Dalits and the poor have not received such services equally." Similarly, a Ward Secretary (a Tamang man) in Nuwakot said: "No significant cases of getting privileges based on reservations have been seen in this area. Very rarely, individuals from ethnic groups (particularly Tamangs) come to take a certificate of being a Tamang."[24]

Importantly, the ethnographic interviews also revealed that even when people have good knowledge of their rights, the authorities often do not implement the legal provisions. For example, in Shivaraj Municipality in Kapilvastu, government authorities knew about provisions for educational scholarships for disadvantaged groups but they did not enforce the provisions. Similarly, a Dalit representative in Achham said that despite the government's guarantee of free education up to secondary level, a lack of teachers in the school compelled some communities to appoint teachers locally and provide them salaries by charging fees to the students. In Kapilvastu, the Chairperson of a disability rehabilitation center pointed out that the local government has not made services and facilities available for people with disabilities, such as concessional rates for bus fares. In Durgabhagawati, Rautahat and Sanphebagar, Achham, interviewees described a lack of availability

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24 Such certificates are required for claiming educational scholarships and to apply for government jobs or other facilities where reservation policies are applicable; they can be obtained from local or other relevant government offices.

of government-mandated free medicines at the local government health posts and hospitals. In Nuwakot a female ward member said: "Despite the provision for 33 percent women's participation in user groups and construction committees in the village, I have not found people of this ward and its surrounding areas who enjoyed the provisions of job reservations in the government sector."

4.1.2 Knowledge of Inclusive Civil and Political Rights

NSIS 2018 examined respondents' levels of knowledge about their fundamental civil and political rights, especially the seven freedoms protected by the 2015 Constitution and laws, namely the freedoms to: (i) express ideas and opinions freely; (ii) peaceful assembly; (iii) affiliate with political parties or organizations of one's choice; (iv) form political parties; (v) travel and live anywhere within the country; (vi) be involved in any profession or occupation within the country; and (vii) cast one's vote according to one's own free will.

In five out of the seven different areas of knowledge about civil and political rights, a little over two-thirds of men responded that they have 'good' or 'fair knowledge.' Across all caste/ethnic groups, fewer women than men said they have 'good' or 'fair knowledge' (see Annex 3). Only 32 percent of men and 19 percent women reported awareness about the right of each citizen to form political parties. The low level of knowledge about this right is surprising, given that it is a fundamental characteristic distinguishing the modern democratic era from the Panchayat and Rana periods, when political parties were banned. However, a higher proportion of respondents (51 percent of men and 39 percent of women) reported 'good' or 'fair knowledge' about the political right to cast one's vote according to one's own free will.

FIGURE 4.2: Composite Index for no knowledge of civil and political rights (the seven areas of freedom) by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
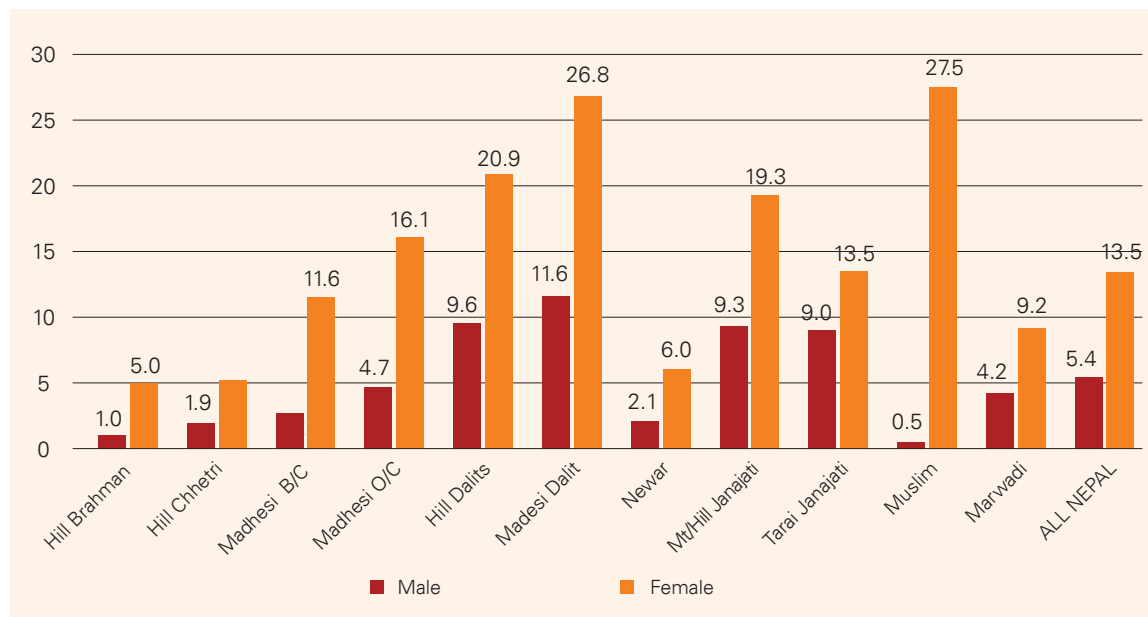
Figure 4.2 presents data on the composite level of lack of knowledge on the seven areas of civil and political rights. Gender disparities in knowledge about these rights are evident across all 11 caste/ ethnic groups. Some groups have small differences, while others have substantial ones. The starkest contrast is between Muslim women (27.5 percent of whom reported 'No Knowledge') and Muslim men (only 0.5 percent). Women from the Madhesi Dalit, Hill Dalit and Mountain/Hill Janajati groups also reported high levels of 'No Knowledge' about civil and political rights. Many men from these caste/ethnic groups also lack knowledge about civil and political rights, though they tend to be far better informed than women (see Annex 3).

Ethnographic data provide additional insights about the level of public knowledge and barriers to accessing political and civil rights. Some informants indicated that public knowledge about fundamental rights has improved in recent years. A Ward Chairperson in Kakani (a Tamang), Nuwakot, said, "Now, the women come to us claiming their rights, although some are limited by domestic works." A former Social Mobilizer in the same area pointed out, "The consciousness in people that you see today emerged solely with the formation of groups at the local level. The Social Mobilizers significantly contributed in the past for the creation of a conducive environment for empowering people at the grassroots."

However, others complained that public knowledge about civil and political rights is still severely lacking. A Nepali Congress party member in Nuwakot said, "Provisions have been made in the Constitution in the name of 'fundamental rights.' But at the local level, neither the people nor the representatives have identified them, nor are they aware about them. The local government is not in a position where it can provide fundamental rights; the people are not aware enough to demand their rights."[25]

An informant in Rautahat said, "Ordinary people are not getting adequate information about the health services available in the Primary Health Center. If anyone knows or has a close relationship with the service provider, it becomes easy to get any services. As the people lack health education, they don't know the procedures. [They don't know] what sort of irregularity cases should be reported, and where and how to report them. Some cases of irregularities get disclosed only a few years later."

FGD Participants indicated that politicians and political parties themselves are sometimes a barrier to accessing rights. For example, a social worker in Sanphebagar, Achham said, "The policies of the state regarding rights and privileges seem good, but at the local level, the dominance of elected political parties can be seen. Members of particular political parties cannot criticize even those party leaders who commit mistakes. People do not have the ability to point out wrong for wrong."

Other informants argued that caste-based discrimination is a barrier to exercising political and civil rights. A Dalit man in Achham said, "There should be equality of voices of all Nepali citizens, but your voice and my voice [voice of Dalits] are not heard equally; voices are heard on the basis of pahunch (access) and power."

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[25] Even newly elected representatives are not all aware of the fundamental rights of the people. The functions of local governments are guided by the "Local Government Operation Act 2074 (2017)." The constitution has granted 22 rights to local governments. To materialize these rights, they have to make 44 Acts at the local level. However, to date, not a single one has been made. In all ethnographic sites, local governments were focused more on infrastructure development (roads, drainage, water supply).

4.1.3 Knowledge and Experiences Related to Accessing Justice

The ability of any citizen to access a smooth-functioning and impartial justice system is a critical element of good governance. NSIS 2018 collected data from respondents to assess their knowledge of the justice system and their experiences accessing it.

Judicial Committees have been formed in each of the 753 local governments, in line with the provisions of the constitution. They are headed by the Deputy Mayor in the municipalities and by the Vice-Chairperson in the rural municipalities, and deliver justice on specific disputes. Two of the members on each three-member Judicial Committee are nominated from and elected by the Village/Municipal Assembly. The Local Government Operation Act, 2017 provides each Judicial Committee the right to settle disputes through mediation – that is, guided by civilian laws and private rights. Most disputes are related to land, crop damage by animals and conflicts between spouses and neighbors. Criminal activities such as burglary, robbery, murder, etc. are under the jurisdiction of the police. After a petition is registered, the judicial committee reviews the nature of the dispute and decides on a course of action. The Judicial Committee settles minor disputes through mediation within the municipality office in the presence of the two parties, using dialogue. Complex disputes such as those related to land boundaries and conflicts between landlords and tenants may require multiple rounds of mediation by the Judicial Committee until an agreement is reached. If an agreement is not reached through this method, then the disputing parties may register their case in the courts.

Respondents were asked about their knowledge of the proper channels for filing complaints. According to the Local Government Operation Act, 2017, civil complaints are registered in the municipality/rural municipality offices, while criminal complaints are lodged in police stations. The survey results revealed that more than 97 percent of men and 92 percent of women are aware about where to lodge a complaint, such as those related to property, gender-based violence, land boundary disputes, money lending and borrowing, etc.

FIGURE 4.3: Percent of citizens who have registered complaints with government offices, the police, NGOs, or CBOs by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
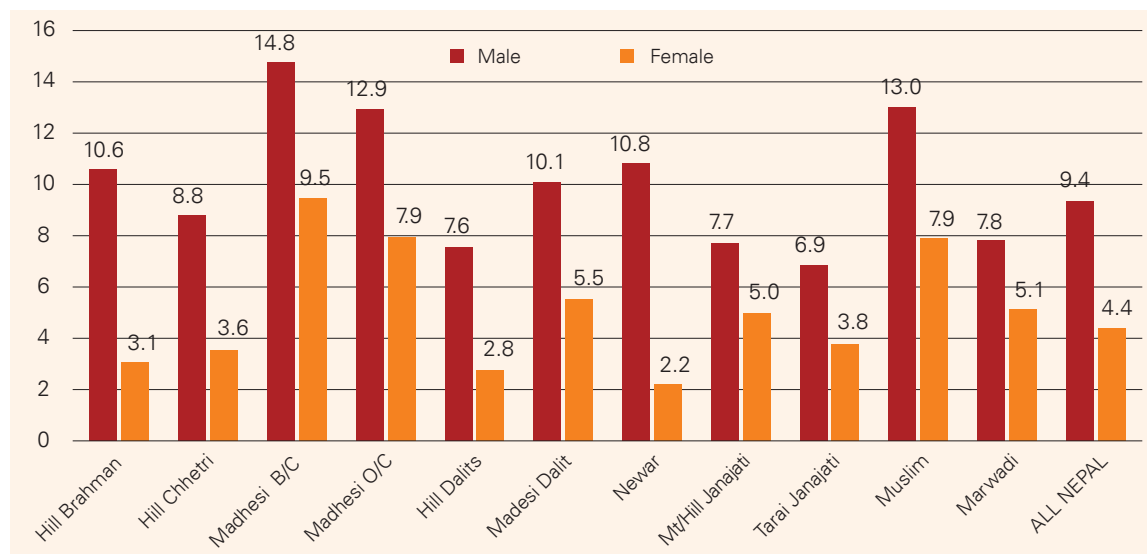
In terms of actual lived experiences, fewer than 10 percent of men and less than five percent of women have ever registered a complaint with authorities such as the Chief District Office, police, NGOs, CBOs, etc. (Figure 4.3). Among men, Madhesi groups such as Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris (15 percent), followed by Muslims (13 percent) and Madhesi Other Castes (12.9 percent) reported the highest levels of complaint registration. Ethnographic observations indicate that most complaints are related to land, damage of crops by neighbors' cattle, robbery, theft, and inter-household disputes. Less than three percent of Newar and Hill Dalit women have ever registered complaints, even though both these groups have relatively good knowledge about where to lodge grievances. This suggests that either these groups need to register complaints only infrequently, or that their knowledge of how to do so does not always translate into practice. Gender differences are also very clear; across all caste/ethnic groups, fewer women than men have registered complaints themselves.

A significantly low proportion of respondents (24.5 percent of men and 27.6 percent of women) across all 11 social groups said they believe that justice is "easily accessible to all" (Figure 4.4). Interestingly, in eight out of the 11 groups, more women than men believe this to be true. But in most of the groups, 30 to 45 percent of respondents indicated agreement with the statement, "Justice is inaccessible to those who have no money, kinship resources, cultural affinity or power resources/political patrons." This indicates an overwhelming perception that informal institutional practices govern access to justice more strongly than the rule of law (Figure 4.5). This response was most common among Hill Brahmin, Madhesi Dalit, Tarai Janajati, Madhesi Other Caste, Hill Dalit and Muslim men and women.

FIGURE 4.4: Percent of level of agreement with the statement, "Justice is easily accessible to all" by sex social groups, NSIS 2018
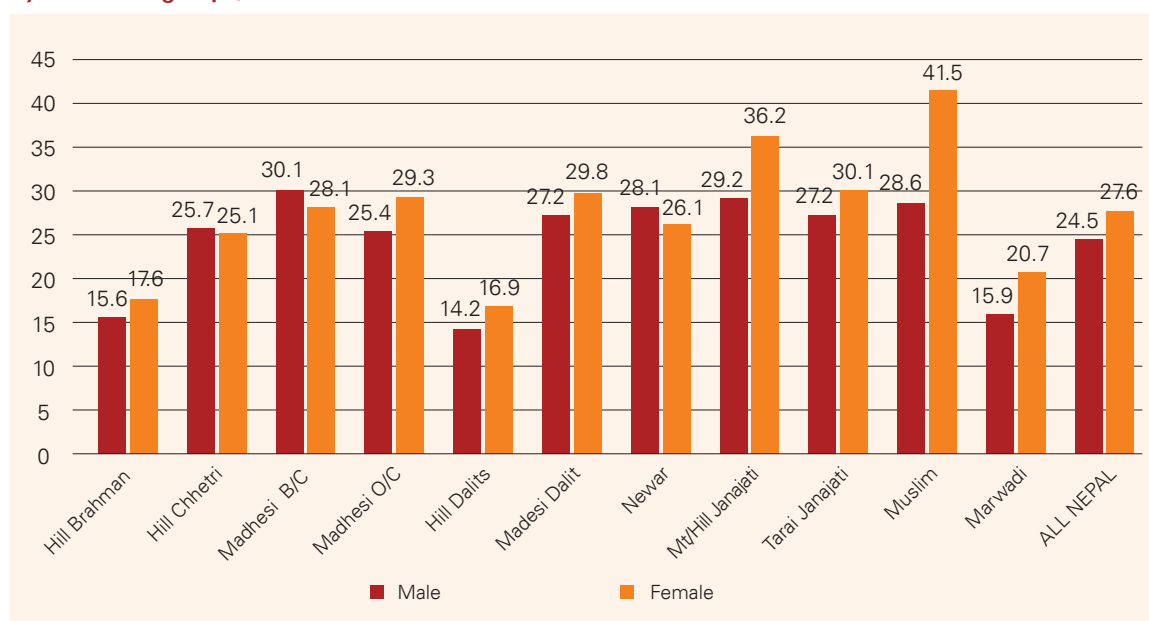
Ethnographic data reveal that at the local level, some female ward members have taken an active role in Judicial Committees to settle disputes and undertake mediation processes. A female Ward Member in Kakani, Nuwakot said that she had mediated dialogue and negotiations for disputes related to land ownership, boundary demarcation, road construction and domestic issues.

However, some participants indicated that women face barriers to accessing justice because of gender norms. A female Executive Committee Member of the Judicial Committee in Sanphebagar Municipality, Achham said, "The Judicial Committee has been formed under the leadership of the Deputy Mayor, but not all women can reach there to express their grievances because they think that if they make their grievances public, their problems will further increase. They think that they will be left by their husbands and family ties will be broken."

FIGURE 4.5: Percent of level of agreement with the statement, "Justice is inaccessible to those who have no money, kinship resources, cultural affinity or power resources" by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
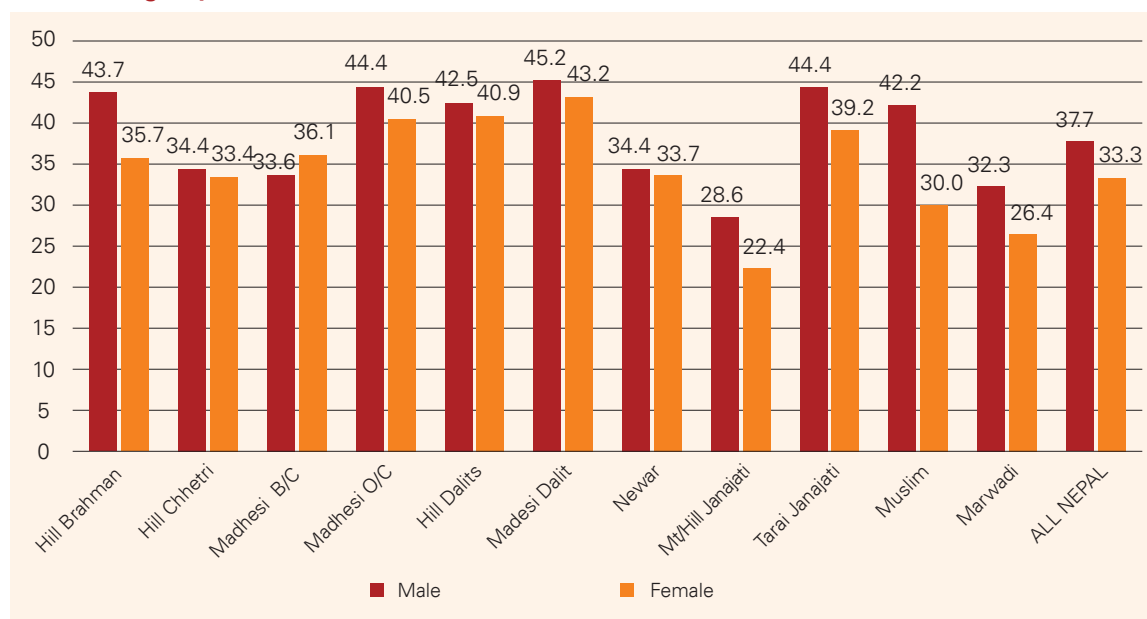
4.1.4 Knowledge of Functions of Local Governments

The Constitution emphasizes locally self-directed development by broadening the roles of local bodies. Local governments are now responsible for formulating and approving local development plans and promulgating local laws and regulations on health, education facilities, infrastructure development and fiscal resources.

NSIS 2018 asked respondents how well informed they are about the activities of their local government related to following nine subject areas: i) local tax collection (property, house and land taxes); ii) income tax collection; iii) the annual development plan process (for wards, rural municipalities, municipalities, etc.); iv) distribution of allowances for the elderly, persons with disabilities, single women and marginalized groups; v) tax discounts for land registration under

women's names; vi) local budget distribution processes and procedures; vii) vital events registration (e.g. for births, marriages, migration and deaths); viii) judicial work; and ix) budget allocation for the empowerment of marginalized groups, i.e. women, Dalits, persons with disabilities and minorities. For each subject area, respondents were asked whether they are: a) informed about local government activities and understand them; b) informed but do not understand; or c) not informed.

TABLE 4.1. Percent of levels of knowledge of local government functions by sex, NSIS 2018

S.N	Selected Local Government Activities	Informed and understand		Informed but don't understand		Not informed	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1.	Annual development planning process (for wards, rural municipalities, municipalities)	22.0	9.0	37.0	29.0	41.0	63.0
2.	Local budget distribution processes and procedures	19.3	10.2	37.3	27.7	43.4	62.1
3.	Social security allowances (for the elderly, persons with disabilities, single women and marginalized groups)	61.4	51.3	35.9	42.5	2.7	6.2
4.	Policy for tax discounts for land registration under women's names	31	21	36	31	33	48
5.	Judicial work of local governments	21.3	12.2	41.6	32.4	37.1	55.4

Annual Planning and Budget Distribution Processes: Government planning processes are crucial avenues for citizens' participation. However, 63 percent of women and 41 percent of men reported that they are not informed about the annual planning processes of local governments (Table 4.1). This shows that local development planning remains beyond the reach of a large section of the population, even though local-level consultations are a key step in the planning process. Similarly, a large percentage of women (73 percent) and men (54 percent) reported that they are not informed about the local budget distribution process and procedures. Only a very small percentage of men (19.3 percent) and even fewer women (10.2 percent) said they are informed about and understand the budget distribution process, indicating very low public engagement.

The Constitution and other legislation mandate that local governments allocate a certain portion of their budgets to social groups designated as "marginalized."[26] However, only 19 percent of

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[26] The Local Government Operation Act, 2017 (and its predecessor, the Local Self-Government Act, 1999) have provisions for budget allocations to marginalized communities including elderly citizens, people with disabilities, the third gender, women, Dalits, Muslims and highly marginalized communities.

men and a paltry 10.2 percent of women said they are informed about and understand this legal provision (data not shown in the table). A large proportion of women (62 percent) and men (43.4 percent) are not informed about this provision at all. This lack of knowledge is likely to hamper marginalized groups' ability to access and use the designated budgets.

Social Security Allowances: Knowledge about social security allowances for the elderly, people with disabilities, single women, and marginalized populations is more widespread. Over 61 percent of men and 51 percent of women are aware about the social security allowances provided by the state (Table 5.1). NSIS 2018 reveals that 86.6 percent of the eligible populations are receiving their allowances (Gurung et al., 2020).

Tax Discounts: In order to increase women's economic access, the government has instituted a policy of tax discounts for land registered in women's names. However, the survey revealed that a large percentage of women (48 percent) and men (33 percent) are not aware about this provision (Table 5.1). Only 31 percent of men and 21 percent of women are aware of and understand this policy.

Vital Events Registration (for births, marriages, migration and deaths) is very important for acquiring citizenship certificates, school admission, access to parental property, filing for divorce, and other purposes. The survey revealed that 63 percent of men and 53 percent of women are informed and understand local governments' procedures for registering vital events. Only a small percentage of men (3.3%) and women (6.4%) are not informed about vital events registration.

Judicial Responsibilities: As discussed earlier, the 2015 Constitution allocates important judicial responsibilities to local governments. However, only around 21 percent of men and 12 percent of women are informed and understand this new legal provision (Table 4.1). Interestingly, ethnographic data reveal that women who know about the Judicial Committees often have faith in the Committees because they are led by Vice-Chairpersons/Deputy Mayors, a large majority of whom are women. According to the head of the Judicial Committee in Kakani, Nuwakot, most disputes are resolved through direct discussions and mutual reconciliation between the disputants. She said that many of the registered cases are related to land boundaries, family separations, divorces and accusations of witchcraft.

Additionally, local governments have the power to levy property, house and land taxes. A total of 43.1 percent of men and 47.4 percent of women reported that they are informed about these activities though they do not understand them. However, almost 50 percent of women reported that they are not aware about local governments' income tax collection functions (data not shown in the table or figures).

FIGURE 4.6: Composite index for no knowledge about the functions of local governments by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
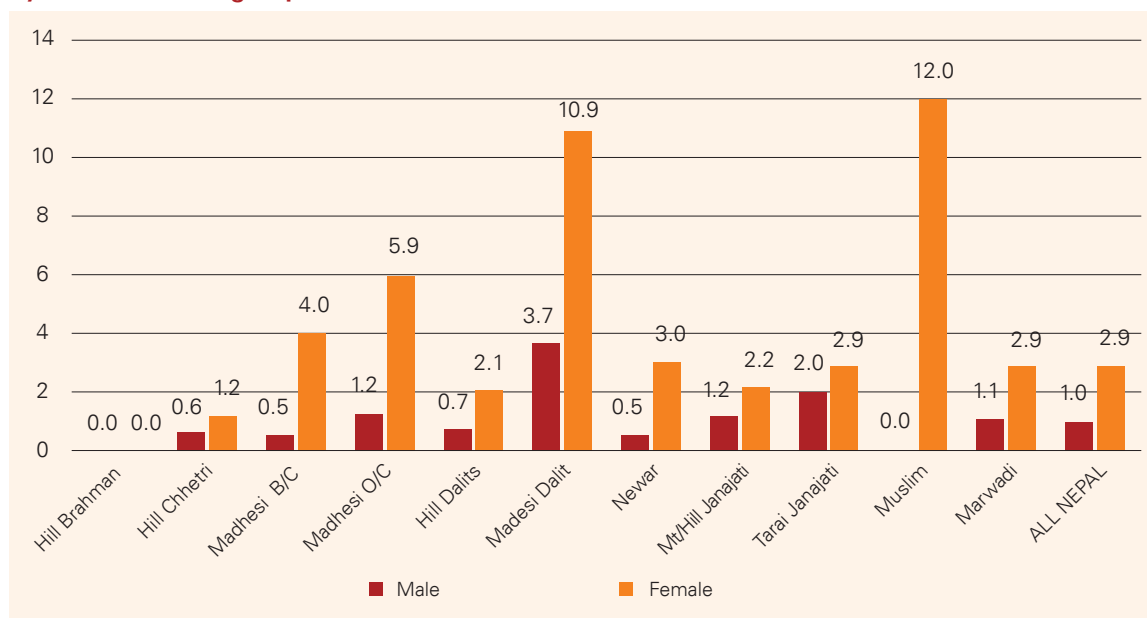
A composite indicator showing lack of knowledge about the nine different activities of local governments, disaggregated by gender and the 11 main caste/ethnic groups, is presented in Figure 4.6. It is encouraging to see that only three percent of women report not knowing about any local government functions, but there are wide variations across the social groups. Except for Hill Brahmins, women across all caste/ethnic groups were more poorly informed than men about local government functions. Muslim women, 12 percent of whom report no knowledge about any local government functions, are the most un-informed group. They are followed by three other groups from the Tarai: Madhesi Dalit women, Madhesi Other Caste women and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri women.

The ethnographic data help illustrate problems in how local governments execute their new constitutional powers. A Ward Chairperson from a study site said, "In the course of any work, for example in allocating budgets for development, we can't see independence. A handful of people who have access and control have been running development plans/projects in all seven provinces; those who lack access and control are unable to exercise their rights."

In Kakani, Nuwakot, the Vice-Chairperson and head of the Judicial Committee said, "There is confusion about the scope of the judicial work at the Rural Municipality level. Because of lack of clarity and preciseness about which domains come under the jurisdiction of federal, provincial and local governments, we have been facing problems in drafting some acts. In the absence of laws, [local elected officials] have been working by making guidelines."

In some communities, traditional indigenous practices of dispute resolution are still valued more than the formal legal system. In Humla and Manang, informants reported that people make offerings of Chhyang qua (local liquor) and seek intervention from traditional leaders known as Mithewa rather than adjudicate disputes through the Judicial Committee of the rural municipality.

Problems related to the Functioning of Local Governments

The ethnographic study revealed some problems related to local governance under Nepal's new federal setup, some of which are related to the transition to federalism, while others are due to long-standing societal discriminatory practices.

Lack of appropriate laws and procedures in place: Some government informants complained that ever since the provincial and local governments were created in 2017, the federal government has imposed sanctions on them, preventing them from fully exercising their powers determined by the Constitution. The federal government has not passed all the acts, rules and regulations pertaining to local governments, preventing them from fully exercising their power. Field observations also show that local representatives have encountered problems due to lack of physical infrastructure, office space and human resources.

Interviewees described confusion in the transition to federalism arising from a lack of local-level laws and procedures. A Vice-Chairperson in Nuwakot said that at first, the lack of laws prevented the local government from working systematically, but conditions have since improved. A female editor of a weekly newspaper in Kapilvastu said that representatives are still confused about their authority and duties. A Ward Chairperson from Nuwakot reported, "Because we need to wait for the provincial laws, we have been carrying out some of our work under confusion. Our intent is not to let people feel the problems. So, anyhow we are doing the work."

Limited experience of elected representatives: Some elected representatives said they face challenges due to being new and inexperienced. The Chairperson of Manang Ngisyang Rural Municipality said, "I don't think all the representatives and officials have read or gained complete knowledge on the rules and regulations. If we have any confusion, we ask south (to Manang, Pokhara or Kathmandu). Compared to us, the representatives there are very advanced; we are naïve in many aspects."

Lack of cooperation between people's representatives and members of the bureaucracy: A Chief Government Officer in Manang said the relationship between bureaucrats and political parties is frayed at the federal, provincial and local levels. It was observed that politicians often formulate policies without sufficiently consulting bureaucrats for advice, thus undermining them. At the same time, bureaucrats are accused of abusing their authority for personal gains and getting involved in politics.

Inequality and discrimination: There is also a perception that local governments do not treat all citizens equally. There is a widespread tendency of officers providing recommendation letters to individuals (e.g. to get citizenship certificates or to verify caste/ethnicity, or proof of migration) based on kinship, other relations, or party affiliations.

Discrimination faced by women representatives is another problem. The Vice-Chairperson of Manang Ngisyang said, "Because I am a woman, nobody follows what I say. None of the staff, including the Chief Administrative Officer, take my opinions seriously. They do not respond to me in a timely manner. I do not feel pride as I enter my office." This is indicative of how traditional, discriminatory gender norms continue to influence institutions, even as structures for the new formal institutions have become more inclusive.

4.1.5 Perceptions Regarding the Rule of Law

The rule of law is a prerequisite for inclusive governance because it ensures non-discrimination, participation and accountability. This subsection examines people's perceptions about changes to the status of the rule of law in their communities in 11 different areas, with special focus on development initiatives, access to services and the security situation (Box 4.1). The survey asked respondents a series of questions related to their perceptions of the status of the rule of law, and whether or not they had seen improvements in the current year compared to past years.

BOX 4.1. Perceptions regarding the Rule of Law: "Do you think the current situation of the rule of law in your community has improved compared to past years?"	
1. Initiated infrastructure development	7. Gender based violence decreased
2. One can walk alone without fear	8. Increased services for victims of gender based violence
3. Fairness in justice once complaint is filed	9. Crime incidences decreased
4. Getting security as it is needed	10. Discrimination and untouchability decreased
5. Respect to different ideologies and faiths	11. Increased access to health services
6. Reduction in workplace discrimination	

A composite indicator showing the proportion of respondents who said that the local rule of law situation has not improved is presented in Figure 4.7. Relatively few respondents believed that the situation has not improved. In fact, none of the Newar men and women and no Hill Chhetri men believed there has been no improvement. However, Muslim and Madhesi Dalit respondents had a less positive view regarding the rule-of-law trend than other groups. Overall, the results show that the vast majority of Nepalis believe the rule-of-law situation is improving in their community.
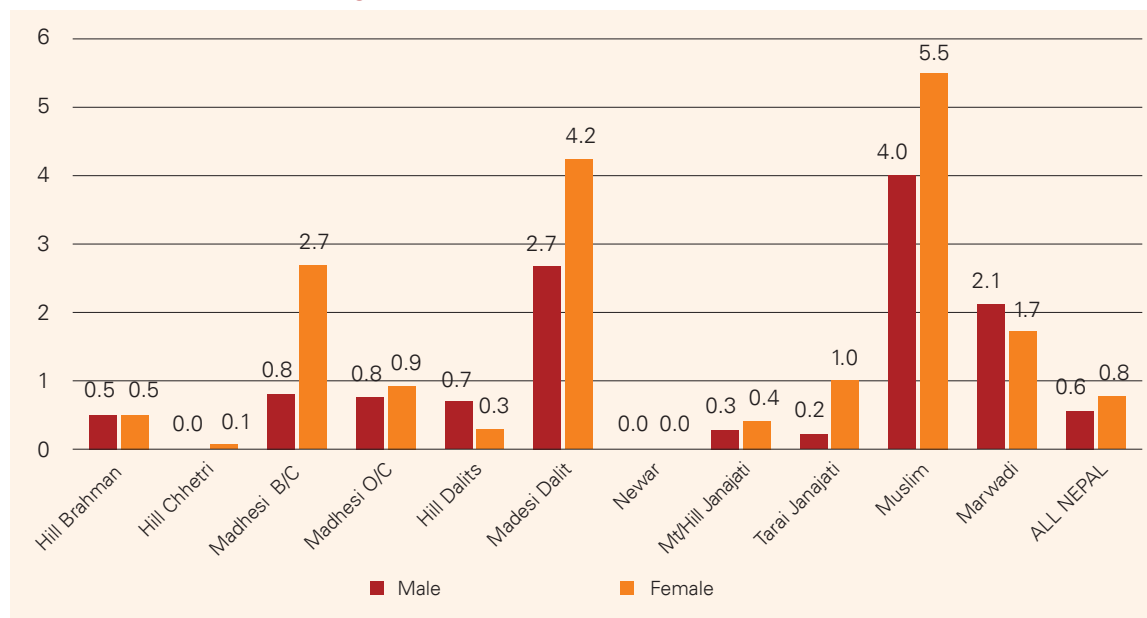
The ethnographic data suggest that perceived improvements in the rule of law are partly a result of the end of the dire situation during the Maoist conflict from 1996-2006; the restoration of normalcy over the past decade-plus is perceived as an improvement. As a female Ward Member in Sanphebagar, Achham said, "During the Maoist insurgency and emergency, there was insecurity and uncertainty; infrastructure, including the airport, was destroyed. Education was hampered, money was looted. But now there is no insecurity to that extent." However, she also indicated that problems related to the rule of law persist, especially affecting women. She said that rules on child marriage are "limited to paper; they are not implemented in practice." Similarly, polygamy remains common because women fear retaliation from their husbands if they report them for taking a second wife. "People who have access to power and money remain out of the grip of the laws," she said.

The President of Nagar Yuwa Sanjal, a community-based organization in Sanphebagar, said that the practice of chhaupadi (forcing menstruating women to sleep outside the home) continues and is common, despite activism to end it and a 2017 Chhaupadi Law aimed at stopping the practice.

The ethnographic data also suggest that instances of violence against women and Dalits remain commonplace. A Dalit man in Achham said, "In hotels and restaurants, there is no direct discrimination of Dalits. But in accessing temples, some Dalits experienced physical violence. Dalits are still prohibited from entering some temples. At the individual level or household level, Dalits witness direct or indirect discrimination and misconduct, and continue to be labeled as untouchables."

Summary: Knowledge, Awareness and Practices in Relation to the Rule of Law

The NSIS survey and ethnographic data show that there has been some progress in improving social inclusion in relation to the adherence to the rule of law, yet much more remains to be done in order for government bodies to be held accountable to laws that have already been enacted.

- There are new laws meant to ensure reservations in the education, health and government job sectors, yet many people remain uninformed about these provisions. Close to one-fifth of women and a high proportion of Madhesi Dalits, Muslims, and other marginalized caste/ethnic groups have no knowledge about such affirmative action provisions.

- Women and marginalized caste/ethnic groups have far less knowledge than others about their fundamental civil and political rights. Respondents indicated that politicians, political parties, and gender and caste-based discrimination are barriers to accessing political rights. Ethnographic accounts also show that in local governments and other institutions, the implementation of civil and political rights is influenced by "source-force" (powerful networks) and personal relations/affiliations. Laws are translated into practice differently depending on the locality. Often, officials follow the letter but not the spirit of laws designed to promote inclusion.

- In relation to access to justice, a large majority of women (92 percent) are not unaware about where to lodge complaints and only a minority (28 percent) believe that justice is easily accessible to all citizens.

- Women, particularly Muslim and Madhesi Dalit women, remain under-informed about a wide range of local government functions. Local governments continue to face challenges due to the ongoing transition to federalism, a lack of laws and procedures, representatives' limited capacities, limited cooperation between representatives and bureaucrats, and long-standing societal discriminatory practices.

- On a positive note, a great majority of respondents believe that the law and order situation has improved in their communities, although crimes, especially those in which women are the victims, persist and there is often a lack of accountability for ensuring perpetrators are brought to justice.

4.2 Participation

"Dalits and the poor do not participate… Ordinary people do not speak, as they do not possess power; they remain silent, not because they have nothing to share, but because they think that nothing will be achieved if they share their problems."

- 39-year-old man from Durgabhagawati, Rautahat

This section examines the level of public participation and the role of different social groups in decision-making in local government and non-government activities, considering the capacity for participation and quality of participation. These include planning processes, transparency activities, development activities, conflict resolution, and gender-based violence prevention programs.

4.2.1 Participation in Local Development Processes, Public Audits and Hearings

Participation in local development processes: Citizens in Nepal have the right to participate in annual planning processes at the local level through Ward Citizen Forums, ward settlement meetings, village assemblies and other political gatherings.[27] NSIS respondents were asked whether they had ever attended 13 different kinds of assemblies, discussions, meetings etc. related to development work or social problems in the past year.[28] For each type of event, the respondents were asked if they were aware that such meetings were held, if they had been invited, whether they participated or not, what their role was and whether they felt that their voices were heard or not.

Interestingly, more women (76.3 percent) reported participating in at least one of the community-level meetings than men (47.6 percent) (Figure 4.8). Male out-migration in recent years and quotas for women's membership in committees (usually at least 33%) could explain the higher percentage of women's participation. However, a high percentage of both men (67.6 percent) and women (62.7 percent) reported that they play a "neither decisive nor passive" role in the meetings, while more women (26.6 percent) than men (22 percent) reported having no role in the decision making process at all. Unsurprisingly, given a culture of male dominance, more men (76.3 percent) than women (68.8 percent) reported that their voices are heard when they participate in these types of events.

Ethnographic data also suggest that women's participation in local-level planning processes has increased in recent years. A Deputy Chairperson in Nuwakot said, "Earlier, very few women used to participate in public programs. But now, women participate strongly in all sorts of programs; their self-confidence has increased. They have been involved in user group committees and cooperatives. User groups in which only women are involved have been more effective than those where men are involved." A combination of many years of pro-women development efforts, policy changes that mandate female representation, and high levels of male out-migration for wage

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[27] Ward Citizen Forums were community-based groups that were active prior to the local election of 2017, and played a role in local development activities in the absence of local governments. However, village and ward meetings and political gatherings continue to take place even after the local elections and the formation of local governments.

[28] The 13 different events: (1) Annual planning processes in one's village; (2) Ward Citizen Forum meetings; (3) Ward/settlement-level meetings; (4) Village assemblies; (5) Public audits; (6) Social audits; (7) Planning, construction, repair and preservation of drinking water/electricity/telephone/canals/roads/rivers/forests/grazing land/bridges/schools/ temples/ mosque/etc.; (8) Conflict resolution related to canals/roads/rivers/forests/grazing land/bridges/schools/colleges/temple/ mosque/etc.; (9) Conflict resolution between neighbours; (10) Political gatherings; (11) Security forces; (12) Public hearings for development projects; and (13) Discussions related to gender-based violence.

labor have contributed to women's increased participation in village-level assemblies and other community-based organizations.

FIGURE 4.8: Percent of participation in different types of local annual planning processes by sex, NSIS 2018
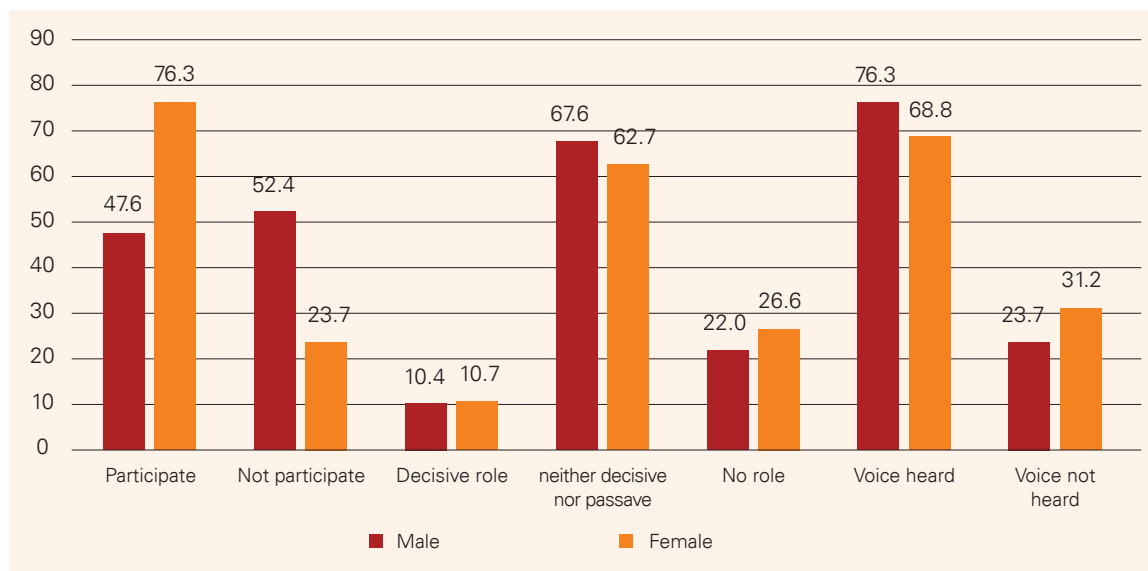
In addition to gender norms, geographical location also affects participation in decision-making processes. People who live close to municipality centers participate more in trainings and other programs than those who live far away. A male Dalit Member of the Executive Committee in Achham also pointed out that, "Due to the lack of means of transportation, people from remote areas participate less in trainings and other programs conducted by the municipality."

FIGURE 4.9: Percent of participation in public audits, social audits and public hearings by sex, NSIS 2018
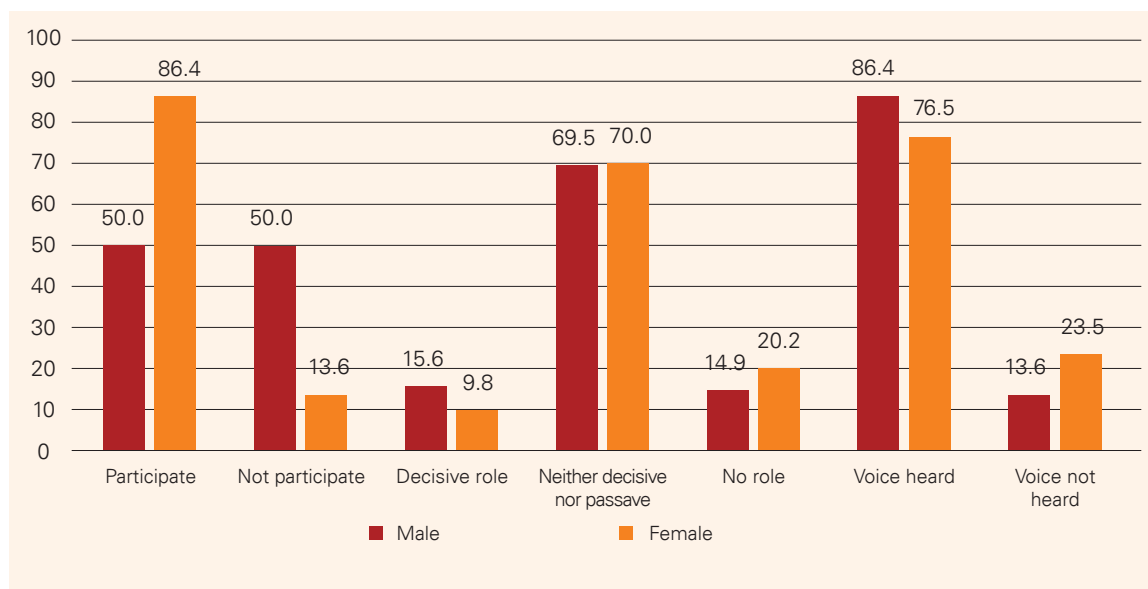
Participation in monitoring processes: Social audits, public audits and public hearings are important processes to maintain transparency and accountability in development projects. It is mandatory for all government and non-government offices to present their annual programs, including budgets and expenditures, in public assemblies. Similar to the other meetings described earlier, women reported higher participation (86.4 percent) than men (50 percent) (Figure 4.9). However, fewer women (76.5 percent) than men (86.4 percent) reported that their voices are heard at such events. Once again, it appears that changes in institutional structures (e.g. quotas for women and marginalized groups) can help to increase representation and participation, but informal institutions continue to create obstacles for meaningful participation to influence decision-making.

Some ethnographic findings suggest that there have been positive changes. A male Dalit informant in Manang Ngisyang pointed out that participation of Dalits has been made compulsory in local consultation meetings, including different kinds of audits. "We get a chance to know what is happening and how, and we can raise questions. Earlier, everything was controlled by the mithewa (traditional village leader) and we could not get information about the budgets or projects. But now… we know every matter related to our locality."

However, other ethnographic findings indicate that often, mere attendance at decision-making forums does not guarantee meaningful participation. For example, a former teacher in Durgabhagawati, Rautahat said that people from different communities participate in community-level programs if they are informed, but sometimes they do not understand the intent of the program. Often, women and people from marginalized communities attend after being persuaded by local leaders and NGO workers eager to meet diversity requirements for the events, but they are not encouraged to speak. A Planning Officer in Manang Ngisyang Rural Municipality observed that even though women, Dalits and elderly people have begun to speak up at such events, their concerns often go unaddressed. An official in Achham said, "In the context of our province, particularly in the context of our municipality, public hearings seem to be just for the sake of formality. There is minimal participation. Participants express their dissatisfaction while authorities claim credit for the ongoing activities. Public hearings are not result-oriented or effective."

Participation in local development organizations: Many Nepali citizens participate in local 'user groups' that manage drinking water, electricity supply, irrigation, roads, forests, pastures, bridges, schools, temples and mosques.[29] Such user groups, which engage in planning, construction, repair and preservation activities, are essential forums for local governance in Nepal. NSIS 2018 found that women's participation in user groups (82 percent) was higher than men's (56 percent) (Figure 4.10). As with other types of local organizations, this can be explained by high male out-migration and quotas for women's membership. However, more women (31.5 percent) than men (19.7 percent) reported that they have "no role" in the user groups. Likewise, nearly 82 percent of men but less than 75 percent of women say their voices are heard in these forums.

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[29] User groups are typically formed to carry out development works or to manage certain resources. They are made up of the consumers of the goods or services managed. In the 1980s, user groups began to proliferate in Nepal. They manage forests, irrigation water, drinking water supply, rural roads, local health posts, schools, saving and credit groups, agricultural resources and pasture land. In theory, these groups are supposed to engage in planning, decision-making, implementation and benefit sharing in an equitable manner. Beyond the development-related user groups, this study also examines participation in political parties and caste/ethnic/religious/cultural associations.

FIGURE 4.10: Percent of participation in local development organizations by sex, NSIS 2018
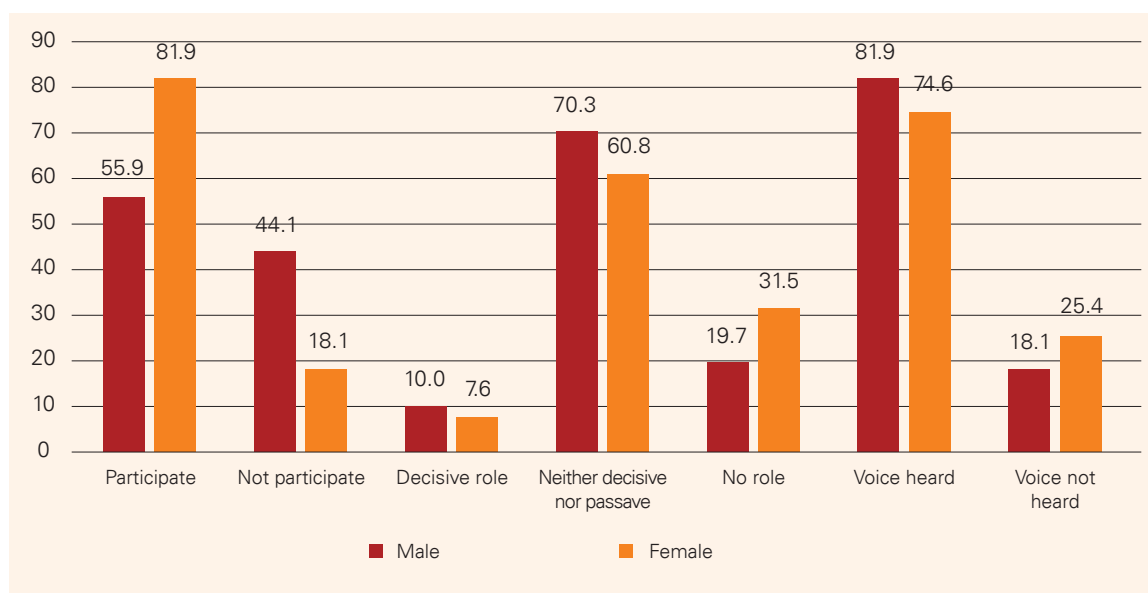
'Meaningful' participation means that members of a group are able to influence discussions and decision-making processes. It also means that they have the capacity to act in their own interests and those of their networks to achieve and sustain change (Agrawal, 2010).[30] Ethnographic findings indicate that meaningful participation in user groups is often hindered by the existence of patron-client relationships between executive leaders and committee members. A Ward Secretary in Rautahat shared his experience that, "In the Health Facility Operation and Management Committee, the Chairperson only nominates members who favor him. Women and Dalits never raise questions or go against the main leader. Participation is just to show that due process has been followed." The lack of access to political patronage also affects opportunities for people to participate. A woman in Manang Ngisyang said: "Following the formation of the rural municipality, I have not been informed about any training; I don't know if training is provided for selected individuals internally. The local authorities conduct in-house meetings… we do not get information."

The ethnographic study also found that in some cases, "user groups" have been co-opted by construction contractors.[31] An informant in Sanphebagar, Achham said that user group members do not contribute their own labor or money towards projects; instead, they are mostly political appointees who pursue the politics of bhagbanda (sharing of benefits) and facilitate corruption. Similarly, a former Social Mobilizer in Kakani, Nuwakot said that user groups' raison d'etre had not been fulfilled: "There has not been real and active participation of people in the entire process of development. People submit their demands for a project to local authorities, but do not follow up… People do not seek to know how the programs or projects are running, who are involved in them, how much money was invested, etc."

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[30] Agrawal (2010) lays out several levels of participation, with the upper level being interactive (empowering) participation. In this level, participants have voice and influence in the group's decisions (p. 171).

[31] The local government carries out development activities through 'user groups' if the budget ceiling is below NRs. 10 million. However, some of the user groups sub-contract such assignments to local contractors for a lower rate and the difference or the 'savings' is used for additional activities of the user groups.

FIGURE 4.11: Percent of participation in discussions and events related to gender-based violence by sex, NSIS 2018
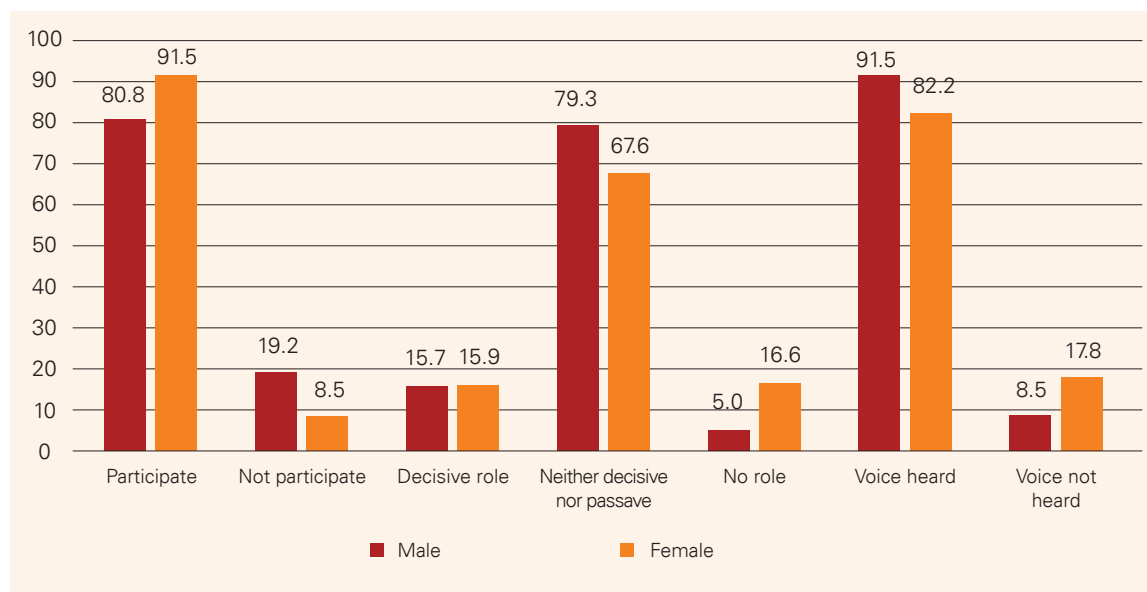
Participation in events related to gender based violence: Public discussions and events related to cases of gender-based violence are most often organized by NGOs, civil society and mothers'/ women's groups. NSIS findings show that more than 91 percent of women have participated in such events and 82.2 percent said their voice is heard; only 80.5 percent of men have attended such meetings but a higher percentage (91.5 percent) reported that they feel their voices are heard (Figure 4.11). Such high levels of participation and feelings of meaningful engagement among both men and women in events related to gender-based violence is encouraging.

However, ethnographic findings suggest that patriarchal norms continue to impede the implementation of laws designed to protect women's wellbeing. A ward member of Sanphebagar Municipality said that in her own ward, "16-17 individuals have married before reaching the legal age of marriage, despite our campaign against early marriage…Early married couples come to the ward office to register their marriage, to register the birth of their child – it is surprising! Even some educated men have practiced polygamy. Not all women can file a case against their husband's polygamous marriage; they tolerate it because of fear and future uncertainty…Women do not want to engage in court procedures."

4.2.2 Participation in Committees Related to Local Development Work

NSIS 2018 asked respondents whether they were associated with 13 different kinds of local committees for development work and construction, including user groups, in their locality (Box 4.2). Respondents who were associated with committees were asked to indicate their position, how often they contributed their views in meetings, and how often they felt their voices were respectfully heard.

BOX 4.2. Types of local development, construction committees and user groups	
1. Development/ construction-related consumer committees (like drinking water, bridges, roads, canals)	7. Microfinance institution committees
	8. Women's groups/ mothers' group committees
2. Agriculture and/or livestock group committees	9. Gender-based violence watch group committees
3. Health Facility Operation and Management Committees	10. Youth group committees
4. School Management Committees	11. Political party committees
5. Community forest/pastureland user group committees	12. Ethnic organization (including Dalit) committees
6. Cooperatives/ local saving and credit group committees	13. Rights-based advocacy organization committees

Leadership Roles: Across different groups – including cooperative, local savings and credit, micro-finance, and rights-based organizations – NSIS 2018 found that fewer women than men occupy chairperson and executive member positions, though women often outnumber men as general members. Women primarily hold leadership positions in mothers'/women's groups and gender-based violence watchdog groups. No women were found to be chairing local political party committees, although the proportions of men and women as executive members are roughly equal.

FIGURE 4.12: Percent of respondents who reported not contributing their views in various types of local committee meetings by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
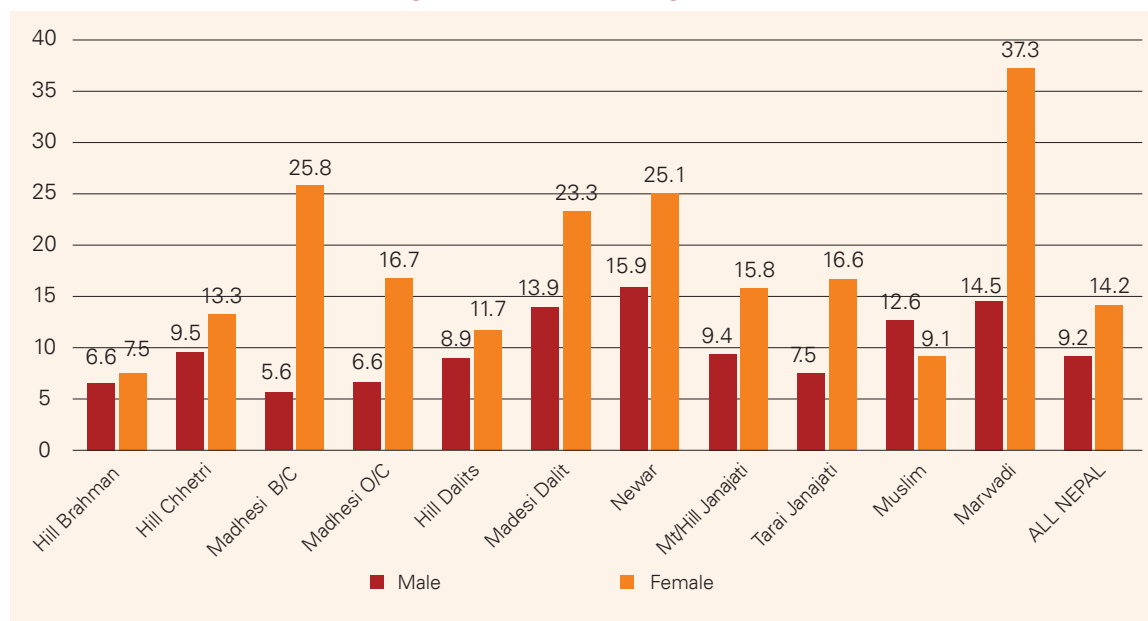
Ethnographic findings suggest that people's participation in local committees is sometimes merely rhetorical. A respondent in Kakani, Nuwakot said that whichever group is numerically dominant tends to take over the leadership positions and does not listen to the opposition. A member of a cooperative in Sanphebagar, Achham said, "Only some individuals or households participate, but the general saying is that there is massive participation…Participation of politically active people and a few educated people (mostly local teachers) is taken to be equivalent to the participation of all other people, which is problematic."

Having a Voice and Being Heard Respectfully: Predictably, men reported contributing their opinions in all types of committee meetings more frequently than women – a pattern that holds true across all caste/ethnic groups.[32] As can be seen in Figure 4.12, many more women than men, across all the main caste/ethnic groups, reported that they never contribute their opinions.

These survey results were supported by ethnographic findings. A female coordinator of the Reconciliation Committee (Ward Stariya Melmilap Samiti) in Shivaraj Municipality, Kapilvastu said, "Ordinary Madhesi women do not contribute opinions even if they attend the programs; they become mere listeners." Similarly, another informant from Durgabhagawati, Rautahat, also shared her experience that, "Dalits and the poor do not participate… Ordinary people do not speak, as they do not possess power; they remain silent not because they have nothing to share but because they think that nothing will be achieved if they share their problems."

A journalist in Achham pointed out that strong public attendance at committee meetings gives the committees a sense of legitimacy, even if most people do not speak up, letting local-level party members do most of the talking. A local resident in the same municipality stated, "In meetings related to education, participation of the guardians is poor. Even when they do participate, only the voices of janne-sunne (knowledgeable/informed/educated persons) count."

The issue of 'whose voices are counted and whose voices are not' is determined by the context, the issues being discussed and the social composition of the development and construction committees. Most men and women reported feeling that their voices are "sometimes" or "always" respectfully heard. However, more men than women feel they are "always heard respectfully" in all types of committee meetings except for the meetings of political parties (where 32.2 percent of men and 35.1 percent of women indicated their voices are always heard respectfully).

Ethnographic findings from Achham show that participation of women is most often sought as a formality. A Dalit respondent point out, "Women from marginalized groups and Dalits, are invited to participate in community meetings, but leadership roles are given to the people who have access (power); marginalized communities' participation seems to be just for attendance and to put their signature; they are not allowed to make critical comments."

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[32] To the measure how often respondents contributed their opinions in development or construction-related meetings, they were asked to answer "always," "sometimes," "rarely" or "not at all."

4.2.3 Participation in the Electoral Process

After the promulgation of the new federal constitution in 2015, elections took place in 2017 for local, provincial and federal levels of government. These were the first national-level elections since the 2013 Constituent Assembly elections; in the case of local governments, elections had not been held since the VDCs/Municipalities were dissolved in 2002. NSIS 2018 gauged the level of participation of men and women across all ethnic/caste groups by asking respondents if they had voted in any of the three levels of elections. The results show that participation was high for both men and women across most of the 11 main social groups. Overall, nearly 88 percent of men and over 82 percent of women cast ballots in at least one of the three elections in 2017. Newars appear to be the most politically active group, with over 92 percent of men and women voting in at least one election.

FIGURE 4.13: Percent of respondents who said they did not vote by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
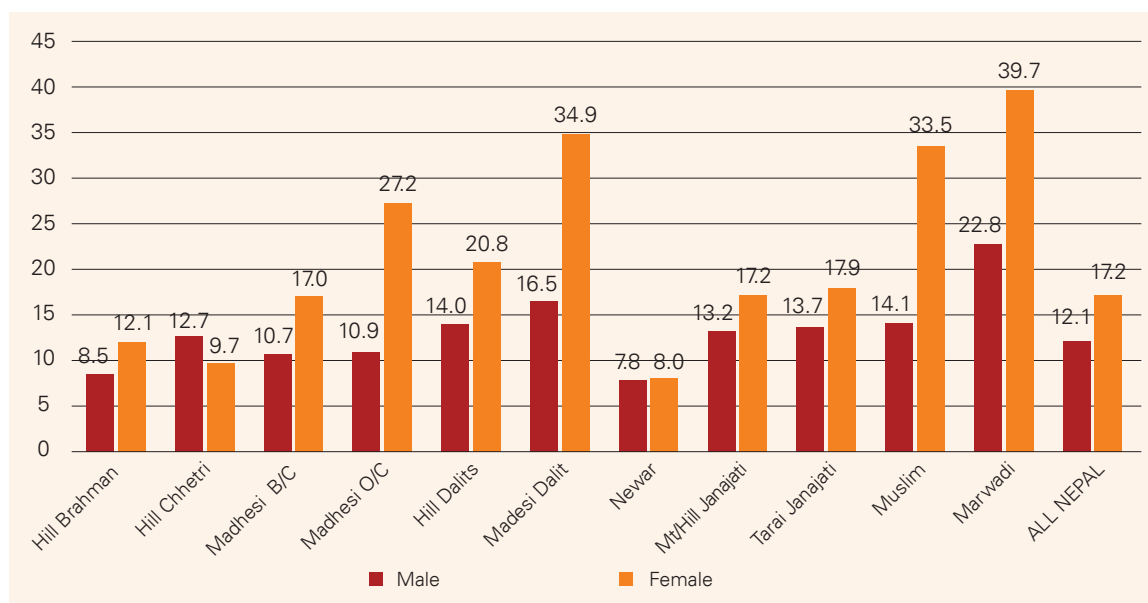
However, across all social groups, 17 percent of women and 12 percent of men – or almost 15 percent of the total population – did not vote at all (Figure 4.13). Marwadi women had the poorest electoral participation followed by Madhesi Dalit and Muslim women. Compared to hill and mountain groups, the proportion of non-voters was higher among the Tarai-based groups. People's participation in local-level elections was higher than in the national and provincial-level elections.

4.2.4 Perceptions of Agency and Empowerment

NSIS 2018 sought to understand how people assessed their own agency and empowerment – in other words, their ability to exercise their rights as Nepali citizens in their day-to-day lives. Five statements were read aloud and respondents were requested to report whether they felt the statements were true, partly true or not true in their own case (Table 4.2).

TABLE 4.2. Perceptions of agency and empowerment among men and women, NSIS 2018

S.N	Questions Related to Perceptions of Agency and Empowerment	True/Partly True	
		Women	Men
1.	I am able to raise my voice for my rights and concerns.	93.4	97.5
2.	I am able to take action to achieve goals that I value most.	92.6	97.4
3.	I am able to freely make choices about influential decisions that affect me.	59.0	76.0
4.	I feel empowered to change my circumstances.	43.0	58.0
5.	I feel powerless, resourceless, and without rights to take action and change my circumstances.	28.3	22.6

A majority of respondents reported that they are able to raise their voices for their rights and concerns, take action to achieve valued goals and freely make choices about influential decisions that affect them. However, there is a significant gender gap. For example, 76 percent of men reported that they are "able to freely make choices about influential decisions" but only 59 percent of women did so. Only 43 percent women reported feeling empowered to change their circumstances, while 58 percent of men did so. Likewise, 28.3 percent of women and 22.6 percent of men answered 'true' or 'partly true' for the statement "I feel powerless, resourceless, and without rights to take action and change my circumstances."

Ethnographic data also reveal that feelings of disempowerment and lack of agency are widespread. For example, a respondent from Shivaraj, Kapilvastu said that although budgets for Dalits, children and women were allocated in the past, there are currently no plans for projects that benefit such groups. She believed that there is a tendency to select projects without adequate discussions about who will benefit. She said that nepotism is all too common in determining the allocation of resources.

Summary – Participation in Local Government Mechanisms and Activities

Policy changes have opened up opportunities for traditionally excluded populations to participate in civic life at the government and community levels. While marginalized populations are well represented in many of the state and community-level interactions, they often do not actively participate in the forums and feel that their voices are ignored.

- **Gender dynamics in participation:** In many of the community-level meetings (Ward Citizen Forums, ward settlement meetings, village assemblies, and other political gatherings), women demonstrate higher attendance (76 percent) than men (48 percent). However, more men (76 percent) than women (69 percent) reported participating by speaking at these types of events. Similarly, in local user groups that manage resources such as drinking water, electricity supply, irrigation, etc., women's participation (82 percent) is higher than men's (56 percent), but women's roles are often limited by traditional gender norms. More women (32 percent) than men (20 percent) reported that they feel they have no role in user groups. Ethnographic

findings indicate that meaningful participation in user groups is often hindered by the existence of patron-client relationships between executive leaders and committee members. Individuals who do not have access to political patronage feel left out from user groups and related trainings.

Gender disparities are also evident in local committees formed for development and construction works. Men outnumber women as chairpersons and in other executive positions in these types of groups, and many more women than men said that they never contribute their opinions in committee meetings. There is also a caste/ethnic dimension to the gender differences: the poorest participation was found among Marwadi, Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri, Newar and Madhesi Dalit women.

Ethnographic data confirm that mere attendance at decision-making forums does not guarantee meaningful participation. Many respondents described frustration with meetings in which they felt like their role was to be seen, not heard. Ethnographic researchers also found that in general, participation of women and marginalized groups was relatively better in the hill/mountain regions and among hill-based ethnic/caste groups than in the Tarai and among Madhesi groups. Location, caste/ethnicity, social and gender norms play a decisive role in the level of people's participation in decision-making processes.

- **Electoral participation:** Overall, the rate of participation of men in at least one of the three elections in 2017 was only six percentage points higher than women (88 percent for men and 82 percent for women). However, there were wide variations between caste/ethnic groups; men and women from marginalized caste/ethnic groups participated less. Non-participation in the elections was most common among Marwadi women (40 percent), Madhesi Dalit women (35 percent) and Muslim women (33.5 percent), and among Marwadi men (22.8 percent), Madhesi Dalit men (16.5 percent), Muslim men (14.1 percent) and Hill Dalit men (14 percent).

- **Agency and Empowerment:** It is encouraging that a majority of the respondents felt that they are able to raise their voices for their rights and concerns, take action to achieve valued goals, and freely make choices about influential decisions that affect them. However, more women (65 percent) and men (55 percent) felt that they are powerless, resourceless, and without rights to take action and change their circumstances. The study found that feelings of lack of agency and disempowerment are most common among Madhesi Dalit and Muslim women.

'Meaningful participation' in inclusive governance entails awareness of one's rights (including information about affirmative action), ability to participate in different forums that influence one's life, and feeling one has the agency to make decisions and take action. Women across all caste/ethnic groups fall short on all accounts, except for their levels of participation in local organizations.

4.3 Representation

"Policies have been made for the promotion of marginalized communities, but what is happening is that marginalized people still don't have leadership positions, and the most marginalized individuals within the marginalized communities are not aware about the policies."

- 36-year-old Dalit man, Achham

Inclusive representation is one of the major features of the 2015 Constitution of Nepal. Article 42(1) reserves *"the right to participation and representation in the state bodies on the basis of the principle of inclusion"* for certain groups, namely *"...* socially backward women, Dalits, Adibasi Janajati, Madhesi, Tharu, minorities, persons with disabilities, marginalized, Muslim, backward classes, gender and sexual minorities, youths, peasants, workers, oppressed or citizens from backward regions, and economically poor Khas Arya".

This section examines the level of public knowledge about reservations: i) for women, Dalits, marginalized communities and persons with disabilities within political parties; ii) of 33 percent of seats for women in the House of Representatives and Provincial Parliaments; iii) for Dalits, minorities and people with disabilities in all elected bodies; and iv) for all caste/ethnic groups in the House of Representatives and Provincial Parliaments.[33]

4.3.1 Knowledge about Reservations within Political Parties and within Federal and Provincial Parliaments

Exclusion in political parties: The Constitution mandates proportional representation for women, Dalits, marginalized communities and people with disabilities within the executive committees of political parties. However, NSIS 2018 revealed that 49 percent of women and 28 percent of men have no knowledge about this constitutional provision. Only nine percent of women and 23 percent of men have good knowledge on this provision, showing a significant gender gap.

The ethnographic findings suggest that the lack of knowledge about inclusion provisions within political parties is one of the factors hindering marginalized groups' ability to influence political decisions. Political parties have not implemented the provisions for 33 percent women's participation effectively; ward- and community-level political party organizations often lack 33 percent female membership. A Dalit activist in Achham said that the least educated and poorest within marginalized caste/ethnic groups are not aware about the reservations, and thus do not take advantage of them. Thus, participation and representation in local party organizations is limited and selective. A local resident from Sanphebagar said, "People other than political cadres or supporters of the leading representatives have not been given a proper place [in local affairs]. It seems like "jasko shakti usko bhakti (one who has power has everything)!" Similar perceptions were also recorded in Kakani, Nuwakot and Shivaraj, Kapilvastu.

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[33] Respondents were asked whether they have "good," "fair" or "no knowledge" about each set of provisions.

According to informants, women and marginalized groups who are elected to reserved seats at the local level are often more accountable to their respective political parties than to their constituents. An Executive of Durgabhagawati Rural Municipality, Rautahat, said, "Three Dalit women have been elected as members in this ward, but their election seems meaningless; nothing can be achieved by them; they can neither speak representing the people's voice, nor do anything on their own. They can only blindly support the Chairperson." Because political parties nominate cadres based on their loyalty to the party and party leadership, representatives are less accountable to their own caste/ethnic groups.

Reservations for women: The Constitution of Nepal mandates 33 percent of seats in all state entities be reserved for women. However, a significant proportion of men (30 percent) and women (50 percent) said that they have no knowledge of this provision (Figure 4.14).

In ethnographic interviews, informants were generally supportive of the provisions for Dalits, minorities and people with disabilities. For example, a key informant in Sanphebagar, Achham said, "The policy is good and effective; a large number of women and Dalits are now represented at the local, provincial and national levels, representing a significant change from the past." However, other informants expressed frustration about the lack of implementation of inclusion provisions. A Dalit activist from the same municipality critically observed, "Policies have been made for the promotion of marginalized communities, but what is happening is that marginalized people still don't have leadership positions, and the most marginalized individuals within the marginalized communities are not aware about the policies."

FIGURE 4.14: Percent of respondents' self-reported level of knowledge about reservations for women in local, provincial and national entities by sex, NSIS 2018
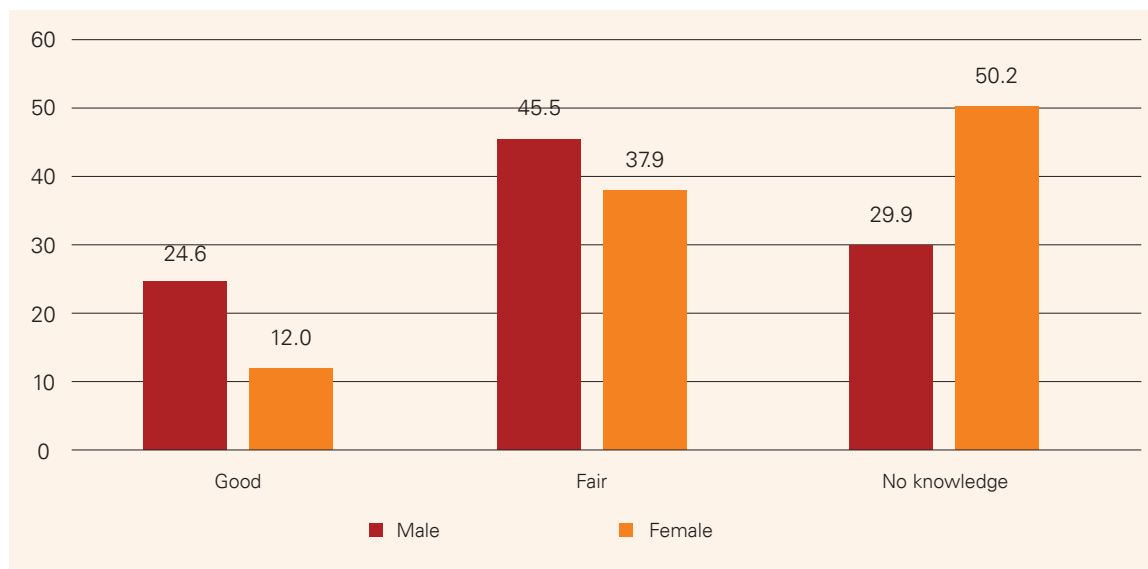
FIGURE 4.15: Percent of respondents' self-reported level of knowledge about reservations for caste/ethnic groups in the federal house of representatives and provincial parliaments by sex, NSIS 2018
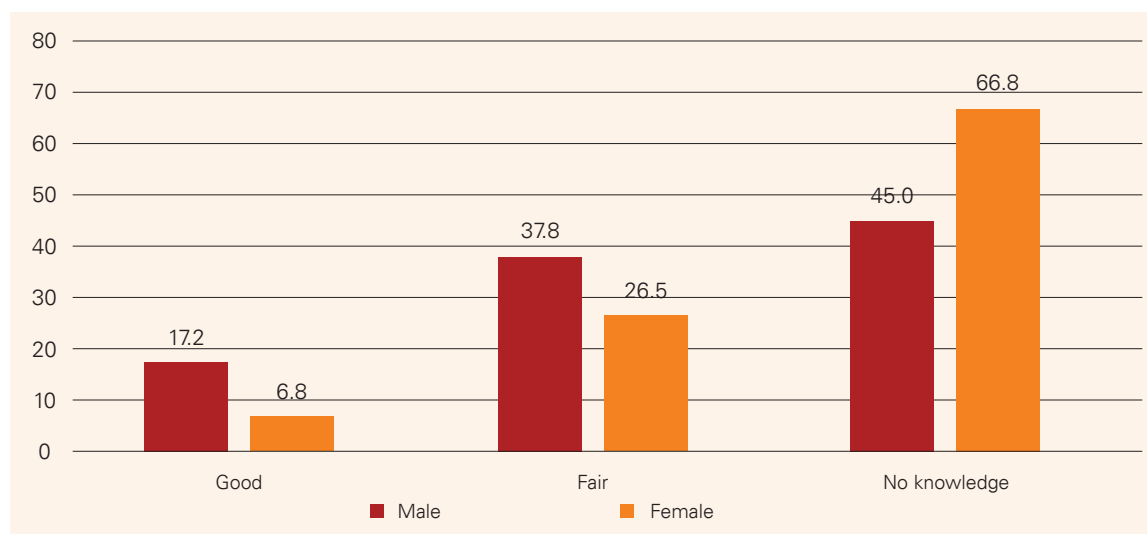
Reservations for marginalized caste/ethnic groups: The Constitution guarantees the representation of Nepal's 125 caste/ethnic groups according to their population size within the 40 percent proportional representation seats in the House of Representatives and Provincial Parliaments. NSIS 2018 found that nearly 67 percent of women and 45 percent of men have no knowledge of these provisions (Figure 4.15). Only a small proportion – less than seven percent of women and 17 percent of men – reported that they have good knowledge about these provisions. Despite high levels of public participation in the 2017 elections, a majority of respondents said they are not aware of the inclusive representation provisions in the three levels of government. It appears that knowledge about representation provisions is limited to some educated and elite groups, mostly men, and is lacking among marginalized communities. Lack of information is a critical barrier to inclusion in political processes, and as expected, women suffer more from this compared to men across all caste/ethnic groups.

A composite index was constructed to show the proportion of respondents who reported "no knowledge" regarding all four types of reservation provisions: within political parties; for women in the national and provincial parliaments; for Dalits, minorities and people with disabilities in all elected bodies; and for all caste/ethnic groups in the national and provincial parliaments. Overall, 40 percent of women compared to only 21 percent of men reported having no knowledge about any of these constitutional provisions; the gender disparity in knowledge cut across all of the 11 main social groups. The group with the least knowledge of inclusion provisions is Madhesi Dalit women, 74 percent of whom have no knowledge about any of these provisions, followed by Muslim women (69 percent) and Madhesi Other Caste women (64 percent). These results indicate that marginalized groups and women, who have the most to gain from the reservation provisions, often have the least knowledge about them.

FIGURE 4.16: Percent of respondents who reported no knowledge about inclusion and proportional representation provisions for women, Dalit, Janjati, Madhesi and endangered communities by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
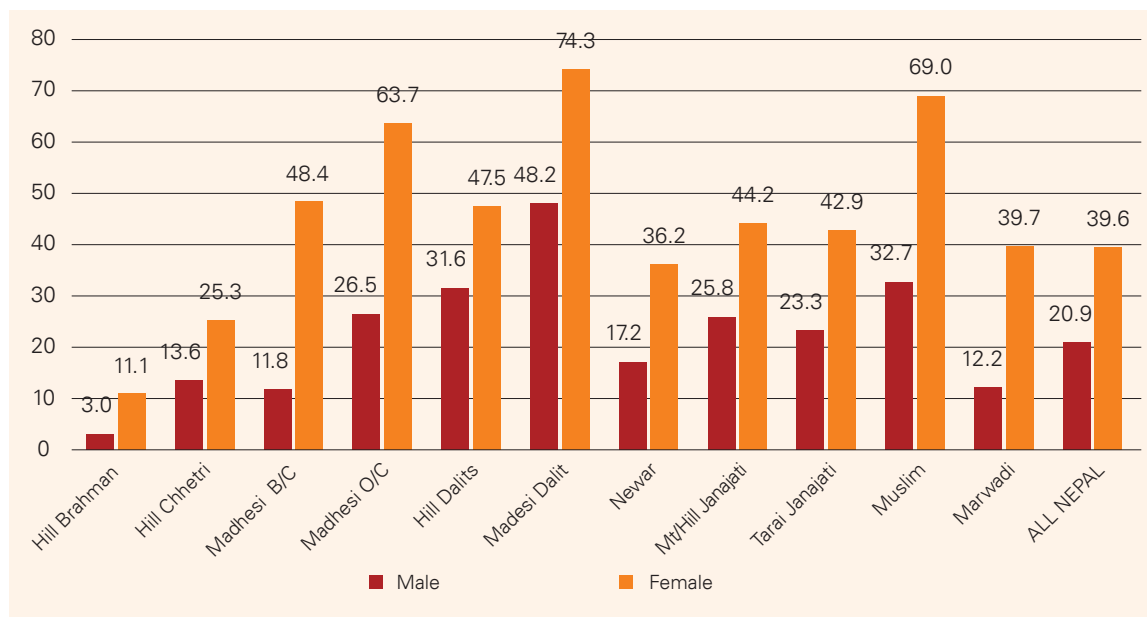
Ethnographic informants corroborated the finding that knowledge regarding reservation provisions is severely limited. A Ward Member in Kakani Rural Municipality, Nuwakot said, "Not everyone is aware or conscious about the provisions of representation. Despite being close to Kathmandu, most people in Kakani are unaware of such constitutional provisions, perhaps due to low levels of education." However, some other informants held more optimistic views. A female Executive Member of Manang Ngisyang Rural Municipality, Manang pointed out that four members of her Executive Committee are women – more than is required by law. "We participate in meetings and discussions. Earlier, our participation was not taken seriously. But as we raise our voices about women's rights, women have begun to be given some positions. The situation has changed."

Summary – People's Knowledge about Provisions for Representation

Inclusive representation is one of the key features of the 2015 Constitution, yet public knowledge about proportional representation provisions is very low, especially among women and other marginalized groups.

- Reservations within political parties are one of the least known provisions of inclusion. Only nine percent of women and 23 percent of men reported having good knowledge about inclusion provisions within political parties.

- Inclusive reservation provisions in all state entities are, surprisingly, not known very well-known either. Only 25 percent of men and 12 percent of women are aware about the reservation of one-third of seats for women in all state entities. Even fewer (21 percent of men and nine

percent of women) are aware of the inclusion provisions for Dalits, minorities and persons with disabilities in elected bodies. Less than seven percent of women and 17 percent of men have good knowledge about provisions for the representation of all social groups in the proportional representation seats in the federal House of Representatives and Provincial Parliaments. Women from marginalized caste/ethnic groups, particularly those from the Tarai, have the least knowledge about the various inclusion provisions from which they would stand to benefit. Almost three-fourths of Madhesi Dalit women (74 percent) have no knowledge about any of these provisions.

- Ethnographic accounts illustrate how people from marginalized communities lack organized leadership and are often unaware about policies for inclusive representation. Only very few individuals from the marginalized communities seem to be politically active and informed. Generally, people are organized along political party lines rather than caste/ethnic ones, limiting the reach of ethnicity-based advocacy. Thus, representation does not always lead to more political power for marginalized groups. Representatives are often unable to represent their own constituencies because they feel compelled to hold their own party line. In federal and provincial parliaments, the Party Whip often determines decisions; similar dynamics are at play at the local level too.

- Lack of information about inclusive policies and reservations is a critical barrier to inclusion in political processes, and as expected, women across all caste/ethnic groups suffer more from this barrier than men. Effective leaders must be able to identify and address critical issues faced by their constituents and participate meaningfully in decision-making processes. However, women across all of the 11 main social groups still have a long way to go in terms of achieving effective leadership. Some women – especially Muslims, Hill and Madhesi Dalits and Madhesi Other Castes (OCs) – experience more exclusion than other groups.

4.4 Accountability

"Because of geographical remoteness and lack of sufficient officials, we have been facing several hardships in delivering services."

- 34-year-old Dalit Ward Member, Sanphebagar

The Government of Nepal has put in place various plans, policies, and institutional mechanisms to make duty bearers[34] accountable for their actions and performance, and to make the delivery of services by government bodies more effective (Paudel and Gupta 2019). The Good Governance Act of 2064 BS and the Right to Information Act of 2064 BS provide legal mechanisms on good governance and the right to information. Similarly, there are institutional mechanisms in place such as the National Vigilance Center (NVC), the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG). At the same time, civil society organizations and other civic mechanisms aim to enhance people's participation and social accountability (Khadka & Bhattarai, 2012).

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[34] Duty-bearers refer to both state and non-state actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to preform certain duties. Depending on the context, user committees, forest user groups, construction committee, local organizations and private companies are also duty bearers.

NSIS 2018 measured accountability in governance through several sets of questions. The first set asked respondents about their level of trust in the following: i) newly elected local government leaders; ii) courts; iii) political parties; iv) political party leaders; v) caste/ethnic and religious organizations; vi) municipality/rural municipality offices; vii) government officials; viii) security forces; ix) CBOs, NGOs and rights-based organizations; and x) banks and financial institutions. Additional questions investigated whether or not respondents faced problems in government offices and their experiences of government service delivery, including interactions with staff.

4.4.1 Trust in Newly Elected Local Government Leaders

NSIS 2018 asked respondents about their level of trust in their rural municipality or municipality Chairperson/Mayor and Vice-Chairperson/Deputy Mayor.[35] Encouragingly, a large proportion of the respondents reported having very much/some trust in their rural/municipality leaders (over 70 percent for both men and women), as well as in their Ward Chairpersons (81 percent of men and 76 percent of women).

Wards (the smallest unit of governance) are represented by four ward members, led by a Ward Chairperson. By law, one member must be a woman, and another must be a Dalit woman. Over 73 percent of men and 69 percent of women report that they have very much/some trust in their Female Ward Member (Table 4.3). In a socio-cultural and political setting where women are very new to these positions and responsibilities, it is encouraging to see this level of trust.

Respondents – 71 percent of men and 67 percent of women – also reported similar levels of trust in their Female Dalit Ward Members (Table 4.3). Given that Dalits are historically, traditionally, socio-culturally, economically and politically marginalized, this level of trust – roughly equivalent to the level of trust in municipal leaders – is also encouraging. It is interesting to note, however, that a slightly lower proportion of women than men have a high level of trust in these female representatives.

TABLE 4.3. **Levels of trust in locally elected female representatives by sex, NSIS 2018**

	Local Government Representatives	Very Much/ Somewhat (%)		Very Little		Not at all and No Knowledge (%)	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1.	Female Ward Representatives	73.1	69.0	14.7	14.1	12.2	16.9
2.	Dalit Women Ward Representatives	71.0	66.9	14.9	14.7	14.1	18.4

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[35] Respondents were asked to characterize their level of trust as "very much," "some," "very little," "no trust" or "I do not know."

A composite index showing the proportion of respondents who reported 'no trust' or 'no knowledge' regarding all types of local leaders (Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Female Ward Member, Dalit Member and Other Members) indicates that less than 11 percent of women and 7 percent of men have no trust in any of the local leaders (Figure 4.17). Again, it is interesting to note that women across all caste/ethnic groups have less trust in their local leaders compared to men. Marwadi, Muslim, and Madhesi Dalit women exhibit the least trust.

The survey findings on public trust in local-level leaders are supported by the ethnographic data. Several informants indicated that since local representatives live in their communities, people have better access to get information from them and share their own feedback. A local resident in Kakani, Nuwakot spoke favorably about the new local government representatives in comparison to the VDC Secretaries under the previous political system, who were often aloof and inaccessible. The elected representatives are in direct touch with their constituents and are more familiar with local challenges.

Some of the mistrust of local representatives is a result of their lack of experience in dealing with their new responsibilities. Basic services such as health, education, water supply and agriculture, which were once centrally managed, are now under the mandate of local governments. Informants from the bureaucracy said that challenges arise because local leaders are not familiar with, or pay insufficient attention to, certain sectors. A respondent from Shivaraj, Kapilvastu talked about the immaturity, lack of experience and limited education of some of the representatives as reasons why she lacked confidence in her local leaders.

Disputes among elected leaders themselves have also contributed to some public mistrust. A female informant shared that the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Ward Chairpersons in her Rural Municipality did not have respect for the role of other Executive Committee members. A former Chairperson in Kakani, Nuwakot commented, "The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Ward Chairpersons are not clear about their specific duties. Sometimes, they each act to consolidate their own control, creating conflicts about who has what responsibilities."

Conflicts between the elected officials and members of the bureaucracy – who have been deputed to serve under them – are also common, given that they have different priorities. A Health Coordinator in Durgabhagawati, Rautahat said that the elected officials had not allocated a sufficient budget for health, paying too much attention to infrastructure development instead. Conflicts also seem to arise from a bit of egotism; elected representatives consider themselves superior because they won an election, whereas bureaucratic officials consider themselves more capable, knowledgeable and experienced, according to a source from Kakani, Nuwakot.

Corrupt practices are also a source of mistrust in local elected leaders. Some informants accused local leaders of misusing budgets by allocating resources for the kin of politicians, party members, friends and family, although no one had registered any official complaints.[36] An informant in Achham shared his opinion that by increasing the number of elected offices, federalism had turned political service into a salaried job. "Representatives get allowances, salary, luxurious goods, etc. but the condition of the people is the same as it was in the past."

4.4.2 Public Trust in Government and Non-Government Organizations

NSIS 2018 asked respondents about their level of trust in a number of government and non-government institutions such as courts, political parties, leaders of political parties, caste/ethnic/indigenous/religious organizations, municipality offices, government officials, security forces, CBOs, NGOs, rights-based organizations, and banks and financial institutions. The findings are briefly presented as follows:

■ Around 40-48 percent of men and women reported high levels of trust in political parties and political leaders, while close to one-third reported no trust/don't know, demonstrating far less trust than in local elected officials, as described earlier.

■ Sixty-five percent of men and 60 percent of women reported very much/some trust in the decisions and verdicts of courts. The relatively low level of trust in courts is worrying, perhaps indicating doubts about their integrity and impartiality. It perhaps also reflects respondents' common perception that "justice is inaccessible to those who have no money, kinship resources, cultural affinity or power resources/political patrons," as reported earlier.

■ CBOs, NGOs and rights-based organizations also do not enjoy high levels of trust. Only 69 percent of men and women have very much/some trust in them, while approximately 17 percent of men and 19 percent of women reported having no trust/do not know.

■ Security Forces – i.e. the Nepal Police, Armed Police Force and the Nepal Army – enjoy relatively higher levels of public trust (78 percent of men and 77 percent of women), with less than 10 percent reporting having no trust/do not know.

■ Eighty percent of male respondents and 78 percent of females reported relatively high levels of trust in caste/ethnic/indigenous/religious organizations.

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[36] In many places, informants complained about misappropriation of resources in the development budget. However, no formal complaints were registered against the officials because of lack of evidence and because of social, kinship and political relations between the accused and the complainants.

- Seventy-eight percent of men and 79 percent of women reported relatively high levels of trust in the bureaucratic officials who work at the rural municipality and municipality offices.

- Rural municipality and municipality offices also enjoyed high levels of trust from 86 percent of men and 83 percent of women. Only a small proportion of men (4 percent) and women (7 percent) reported having no trust in these local government institutions.

- Among all the different organizations/institutions, respondents expressed the highest levels of trust in banks and financial institutions. Around 93 percent of men and 92 percent of women reported that they have very much/some trust in these institutions.

4.4.3 Challenges in Accessing Government Services

An indicator of a working governance system is the ease with which citizens, no matter what their background, can access government services. NSIS respondents shared the challenges that they experience in accessing government services, specifically those related to: linguistic, ethnic and caste prejudices; their own lack of technical knowledge, capacity and skills; duty bearers' lack of technical capacity, skills, or their absence from government offices; inaccessibility of proper information; and ill-intentions of office staff.

Findings show that the most common hurdle to accessing government services, which was reported by 22 percent of both men and women, was the lack of proper information. The next most significant barriers were:

- Rights holders' lack of technical knowledge, capacity and skills (reported by 13 percent of men and 14 percent of women);

- Ill-intentions of government staff (16 percent of men and 11 percent of women);

- Duty bearers' lack of technical capacity, skills, or their absence from government offices (12 percent of men and nine percent of women).

FIGURE 4.18: Percent of respondents who reported not facing any problems/hurdles during visits to government offices by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
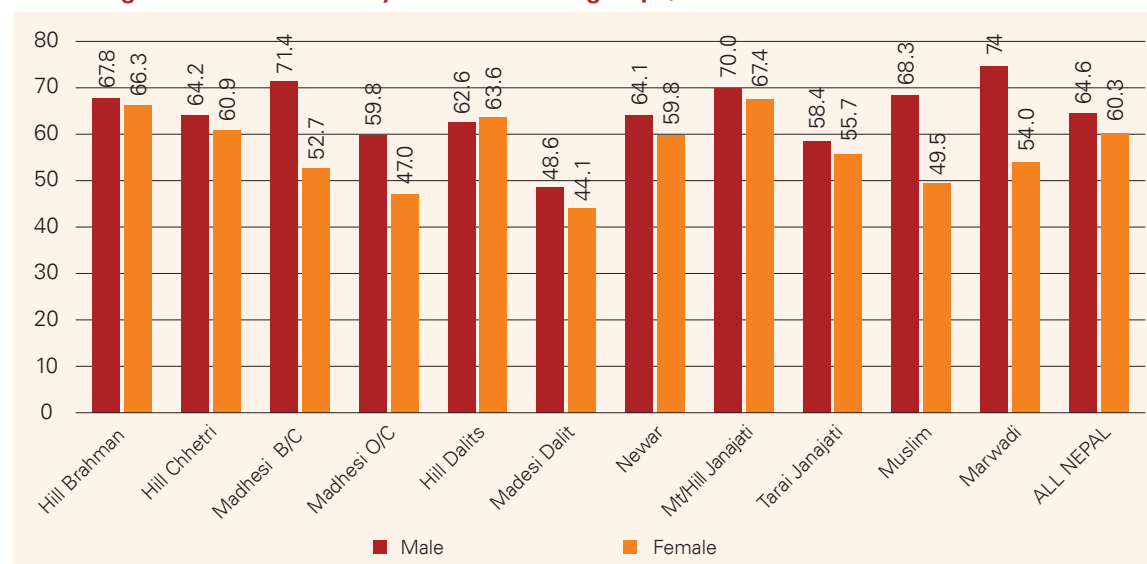
A composite index of all the responses regarding challenges in accessing government services shows that overall, 64.5 percent of men and 60.3 percent of women do not face any problems accessing services at government offices (Figure 4.18). Muslim men (74.6 percent), Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri men (71.4 percent) and Mountain/Hill Janajati men (70 percent) reported 'no problems' most frequently. However, women from all social groups reported facing hurdles while visiting government offices at rates higher than men, with one exception: roughly equal proportions of Hill Dalit men and women experienced hurdles.

Interestingly, only around three percent of men and women reported that language, ethnic or caste prejudices are barriers to accessing services at government offices. The survey shows that communities who do not use Nepali as their primary language face educational barriers, which in turn are likely to affect formal interactions in government offices (Gurung et al., 2020). However, the ethnographic data show that language is in fact a significant barrier to accessing government services, especially in the Tarai. For example, a Ward Chairperson in Shivaraj Municipality, Kapilvastu reported, "In this area, there is no official who understands Awadhi language. Villagers request me to go with them if they have any official work because they do not understand or speak Nepali, and officials do not speak or understand Awadhi." Other studies have also highlighted the importance of speaking Nepali in order to access government services (Tamang 2018, p. 331).

The ethnographic study also found that lack of staff is a pronounced problem in all rural municipalities/municipalities. A Ward Chairperson in Simikot, Humla said that a shortage of officials meant that one Ward Secretary has to look after three wards in his area – a problem exacerbated by his lack of authority to appoint officials on a contract basis. An Executive Member of Kakani, Nuwakot shared how the limited number of technical staff has severely hindered his rural municipality's ability to estimate budgets, do field surveys, and monitor infrastructure tasks. The Mayor of Shivaraj Municipality, Kapilvastu said, "Quite large responsibilities and authorities have been given to local governments but…we don't have the resources or means to provide the services people are expecting."

Similar to the survey results, ethnographic study informants also highlighted what they perceived to be the ill intentions of duty bearers. In Kakani, Nuwakot, a user committee member complained about the "arrogant" behavior of bureaucratic officials, such as delays in filing paperwork and refusal by government engineers to provide adequate time. Similarly, in a case widely publicized by the local media in Durgabhagawati, Rautahat, a Dalit woman filed a complaint against hospital personnel for refusing to provide government-mandated free services, making her pay for them instead. The case was not seen as an example of caste/ethnic prejudice because the Madhesi male official was from the same community, yet the intersection of caste and gender likely played a role in this case of discrimination.

Ethnographic data also highlighted geographical remoteness as a barrier to accessing services. Local people and government officials in Humla and Achham frequently reported this as an important barrier. A Ward Chairperson in Simikot said, "Because of geographical remoteness and lack of sufficient officials, we have been facing several hardships in delivering services."

On the other hand, some local governments are taking innovative approaches to tackle problems related to service delivery. For example, in order to spread proper information about services, Sanphebagar Municipality, Achham has established a Center for Information Technology and posts updates about services and activities on its website. Similarly, Kakani Rural Municipality in Nuwakot introduced an electronic attendance system for staff in order to ensure their presence at the office during business hours, although this has received some pushback from employees.

4.4.4 Experiences of Government Service Delivery

NSIS 2018 asked respondents to characterize overall government service delivery.[37] The results show that only 34 percent of men and 37 percent of women view government service delivery as 'fair.' A larger proportion – 42 percent of men and 41 percent of women – view it as 'discriminatory and prejudicial,' and a little over one-fifth of men and women reported having to pay money (i.e. bribes) to get services on time (Table 4.4). Muslim women report 'fair' service delivery most frequently (48 percent), followed by Mountain/Hill Janajati women and men (46.6 and 40.4 percent respectively), and Marwadi women (40.8 percent). The groups that report fair service delivery least frequently are primarily male (from the Madhesi Other Caste, Hill and Madhesi Dalit, Marwadi, and Tarai Janajati groups), perhaps a reflection of men's higher expectations.

Almost all social groups reported experiences of 'discriminatory and prejudiced' service delivery as the most common experience of service delivery. Hill Dalit men and women (52.6 and 51 percent respectively), Hill Brahmin women (49.8 percent), and Tarai Janajati men and women (49.5 and 47.5 percent respectively) reported discriminatory and prejudiced service delivery most frequently (Table 4.4). It is not clear what the key factors are that lead to such experiences, apart from caste discrimination (experienced by Hill Dalits) and perhaps language barriers (experienced by the Tarai-based groups and the Mountain/Hill Janajatis). This requires further investigation.

TABLE 4.4. Percent of respondents sharing their experiences of government services delivery by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018

Social Groups	Fair		Discriminatory and prejudicial		Need to pay money to get services on time		Bad	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Hill Brahmin	35.2	36.7	45.7	49.8	17.1	13.1	2.0	0.5
Hill Chhetri	35.2	36.5	44.7	41.2	18.6	20.5	1.5	1.9
Madhesi B/C	36.9	32.2	30.0	28.9	31.8	35.2	1.3	3.7
Madhesi OC	26.4	30.1	34.3	30.9	38.0	37.7	1.4	1.4
Hill Dalit	24.6	29.0	52.6	51.0	20.6	18.8	2.3	1.1
Madhesi Dalit	26.5	29.0	32.8	32.7	39.3	36.6	1.5	1.7
Newar	38.5	34.2	33.9	39.7	22.9	22.6	4.7	3.5
Mt/Hill Janajati	40.4	46.6	40.9	37.6	15.9	14.2	2.8	1.6
Tarai Janajati	29.0	33.9	49.5	47.5	20.2	17.7	1.3	0.9
Muslim	32.7	48.0	35.7	23.5	31.7	27.0	0.0	1.5
Marwadi	28.0	40.8	47.1	43.7	23.8	14.9	1.1	0.6
All Nepal	**33.7**	**37.3**	**42.3**	**40.6**	**21.9**	**20.6**	**2.0**	**1.5**

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[37] "Fair" (i.e. in accordance with rules and standards), "discriminatory and prejudicial," "need money to get services in time," or "bad."

The proportion of respondents reporting they 'need money to get services in time' was highest among the Tarai-based groups. Madhesi Dalit men and women (39.3 and 36.6 percent, respectively) reported this experience most frequently, followed by Madhesi Other Caste men and women (38 and 37.7 percent) and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri women (35.2 percent) (Table 4.4).

Some ethnographic informants reported a decline in the need to give money to get services on time. An informant in Kakani, Nuwakot said, "The give-and-take of money at the offices has declined significantly because of the activism of the media (such as TV). Publication of videos via TV and social media showing people being caught red-handed engaging in bribery has been contributing to the control of petty corruption."

4.4.5 Accountability and Responsiveness of Government Service Providers

Service providers' degree of accountability and responsiveness are indicators of the status of good governance. NSIS first asked respondents to indicate whether service providers are "accountable to their duty," "partially accountable to their duty," or "not accountable to their duty." Secondly, they were asked to indicate whether service providers are "responsive to their needs," "reasonably responsive" or "not responsive at all."

Around one-fourth of men and women reported that service providers are accountable to their duty (Figure 4.19). Tarai-based groups gave this response most frequently, including Muslim women and men (40 and 31.2 percent respectively) followed by Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri men (34.2 percent), Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri women (30.9 percent) and Tarai Janajati men and women (30.4 percent for both). However, many of the same groups also reported that they 'need money to get services in time' (Table 4.4). The groups that felt service providers are least accountable were Newar men and women (14.6 and 15.6 percent), Hill Dalit men (17.1 percent), and Hill Chhetri women and men (18.4 and 19.2 percent).

FIGURE 4.19: Percent of respondents who reported that 'service providers are accountable to their duty' by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
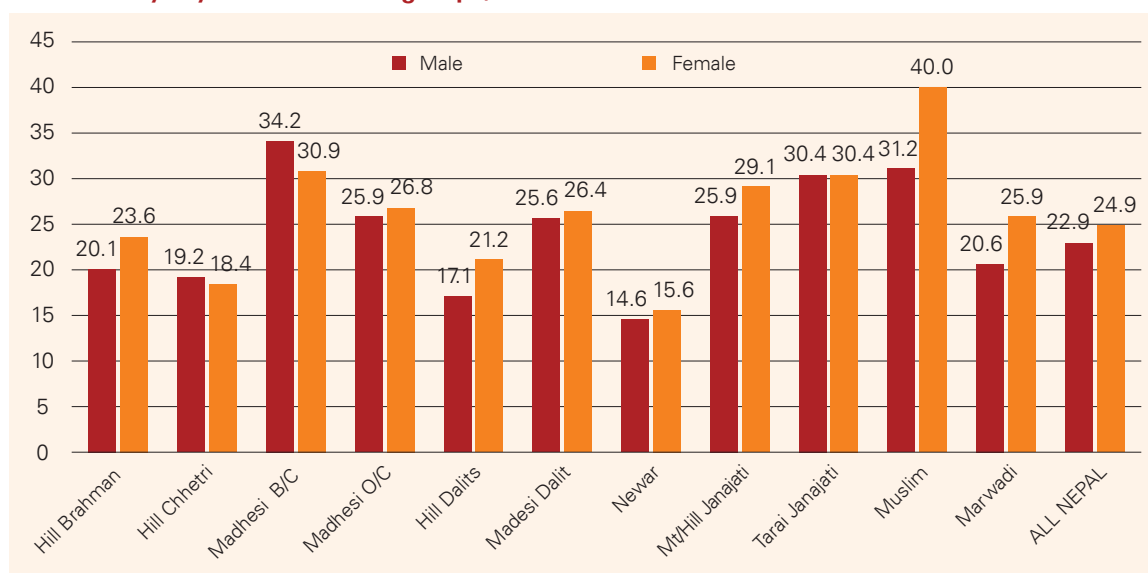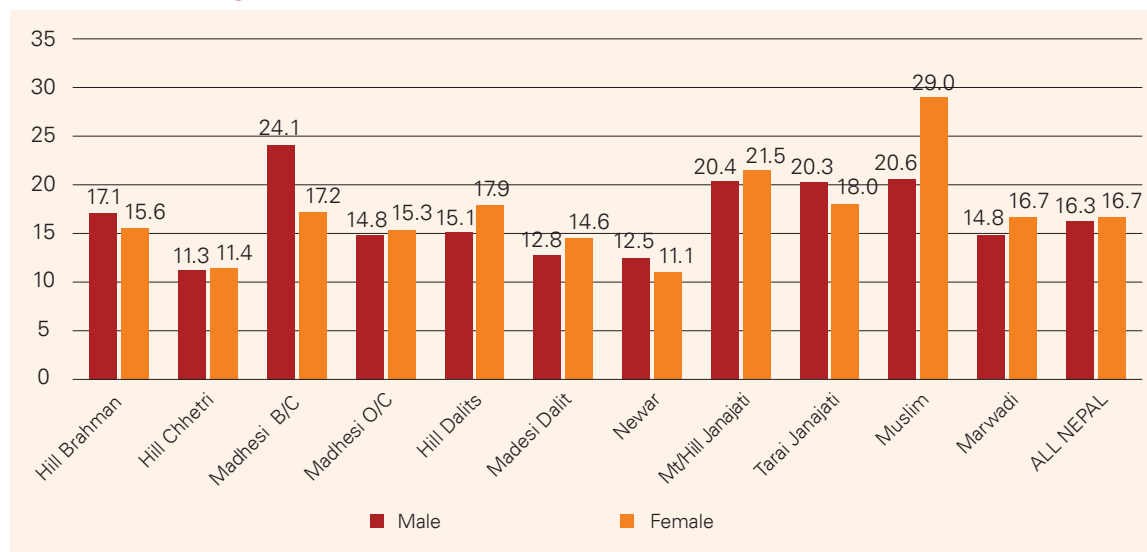
Even fewer people felt that government offices are responsive to their needs. Only 16.3 percent of men and 16.7 percent of women reported that government offices are responsive to their needs (Figure 4.20). There were some variations across caste/ethnic groups, but with the exception of two groups (Muslims and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris), gender differences were low.

In ethnographic interviews, respondents described frequent frustration regarding the accountability and service provisioning of government offices. A female member of the Road Construction User Group in Belbari Municipality, Morang said she had to go 'begging' to government engineers time and again to get their help for a road project. In other areas, respondents described favoritism among government engineers when helping earthquake victims to get technical approval for reimbursement for their rebuilt houses.

Local representatives indicated that bureaucratic delays in decision making contribute to a perceived lack of responsiveness and accountability. An Executive Member of Kakani, Nuwakot said, "The decision-making process creates problems. The expectations of the representatives and the [civil service] officials often do not match. We favor an easy process of delivering services and facilities but the officials' inclinations are towards bureaucratic procedures, which sometimes results in dissatisfaction among the people."

In some of the ethnographic study areas, local elected representatives have adopted innovations to hold staff more accountable to their duties. In Kakani, an electronic attendance system for teachers has been placed in one school, and there are plans to extend it to other schools as well. In Simikot, Humla the School Management Committee has created a box for collecting complaints from students, guardians or any concerned persons, and is beginning to deliver important information on FM radio stations, in addition to sending letters to guardians.

Summary – Accountability of Service Providers and Institutions

The survey and ethnographic study findings reveal areas where the general public are relatively satisfied with levels of accountability in local government representatives and institutions. However, much work remains to be done to improve accountability and in particular, to reduce social disparities.

- Levels of trust in local representatives: It is encouraging that public faith in local representatives is high. Eighty-one percent of men and 76 percent of women have relatively high trust in their Ward Chairpersons. This is in stark contrast to people's faith in political party leaders; less than half of men and women (45 and 41 percent respectively) reported faith in those public figures. However, marginalized groups such as Muslims and Madhesi Dalit women exhibited the least trust in local representatives. Ethnographic findings also indicate that public trust in local-level leaders is high, although problems with the limited number of staff, new representatives' lack of experience and frequent disputes between elected leaders and local bureaucrats are common.

- Trust in various institutions: Respondents reported the most faith in banks and financial institutions (93 percent of men and 92 percent of women), followed by rural/municipality offices (86 percent of men and 83 percent of women), caste/ethnic/indigenous religious organizations (80 percent of men and 78 percent of women) and state security forces (78 percent of men and 77 percent of women). People have relatively less faith in CBOs, NGOs and rights-based organizations (69 percent of men and women), courts (65 percent of men and 60 percent of women) and – least of all – political parties (45 percent of women and 48 percent of men). Significantly, Muslim and Madhesi Dalit women have the least trust in the various institutions, while Hill Brahmin and Hill Chhetri men and women and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri men reported the most trust in all institutions.

- Challenges in accessing government services: The most common hurdle to accessing government services is lack of proper information (reported by 22 percent of men and women), followed by rights holders' lack of technical knowledge, capacity and skills (13 percent of men and 14 percent of women), ill-intentions of government staff (16 percent of men and 11 percent of women), and limited office staff, as well as their lack of skills and capacities (12 percent of men and 9 percent of women). Across all caste/ethnic groups, a higher percentage of women than men report facing such hurdles, potentially reflecting discrimination and traditional gender norms.

  Interestingly, only around three percent of men and women reported that language and caste/ethnic prejudices are barriers to accessing services at government offices, although the ethnographic study found that language is in fact a significant barrier, especially in the Tarai. Multiple studies, including this one, have highlighted the importance of speaking Nepali in order to access government services and participate actively in local and national governance. The groups that experience the most hurdles are Madhesi Dalits, Madhesi Other Castes and Muslim women.

- Accountability and responsiveness in government service delivery: Overall, people have poor opinions about government service delivery, with only 34 percent of men and 37 percent of

women viewing service delivery as 'fair.' Interestingly, across all caste/ethnic groups, men reported the least satisfaction with service delivery, perhaps reflecting their higher expectations and knowledge about their rights.

Almost all social groups reported experiences of 'discriminatory and prejudiced' service delivery as the most common experience of service delivery. This was reported by a little over half of Hill Dalit men and women and close to 50 percent of Hill Brahmin women and Tarai Janajati men and women. Caste and language discrimination may partly explain these findings, while the high proportion of Hill Brahmin women reporting discrimination could like be a reflection of their experiences of gender discrimination.

Between 32 and 39 percent of Tarai-based social groups (Madhesi Dalits, Madhesi Other Castes and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris) reported that they need "money to get services in time" when accessing government offices.

Less than one-fourth of men and women across all caste/ethnic groups reported that service providers are accountable to their duty, and even fewer people – less than 17 percent of men and women – reported that government offices are responsive to their needs. Ethnographic findings revealed public frustration with local service providers' inability to respond to their needs on time. However, it is encouraging to note that some local governments are taking innovative approaches to tackle problems related to service delivery. These efforts at increasing accountability are also likely reasons why the public demonstrates a relatively high level of trust in local governments compared to other public and private institutions.

4.5 Transparency

Transparency means that decisions are made and carried out in a manner that follows rules and regulations, and that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who are affected by such decisions. This requires that information is provided in easily understandable

"I have not seen any programs disclosing the financial activities of the Rural Municipality… Other mandatory programs such as public hearings, public audits and social audits have not been done properly in practice, even though they may have been recorded on paper."

- Social Mobilizer, Kakani, Nuwakot (33-year-old man)

forms (UNESCAP, 2013). NSIS 2018 examined transparency within service-providing government institutions in Nepal in terms of access to information (including government budgets and expenditures) and knowledge about government decision-making processes. As with the other sections of the survey, the results are presented disaggregated by gender and 11 main caste/ethnic groups, while details for all 88 individual caste/ethnic groups are in Annex 3.

4.5.1 Access to Information and Public Knowledge about Decision-Making Processes in Government Offices

Access to information enables people to exercise their voice, to effectively monitor and hold government to account, and to enter into informed dialogue about decisions that affect their lives.[38] While this is important for empowering all citizens, it is especially vital for marginalized and excluded people. Many women and people from marginalized social groups continue to be disadvantaged because of their limited knowledge about government services and affirmative action provisions.

NSIS 2018 asked respondents whether they have easy access to necessary information from government offices and whether they know about the processes by which government offices make decisions and implement them.[39] Overall, most respondents – 68 percent of men and 64 percent of women – indicated that they had only 'partial access' to information from government offices, while 21 percent of women and 16 percent of men indicated that they did not have easy access to such information (Figure 4.21). The responses show a consistent gender gap, with women generally reporting more difficulty in accessing information. Marwadi women and women from the Madhesi groups (Brahmin/Chhetri, Dalit, Other Castes) reported the most difficulties in access to information from government offices. The gender gap among Tarai-based groups reflects the government's shortcomings in reaching out to women as well as women's own mobility constraints, lack of proficiency in Nepali language and gender norms that sometimes proscribe their participation in government activities (or any other business outside the domestic sphere).

FIGURE 4.21: Percent of respondents who did not have easy access to information from government offices by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018
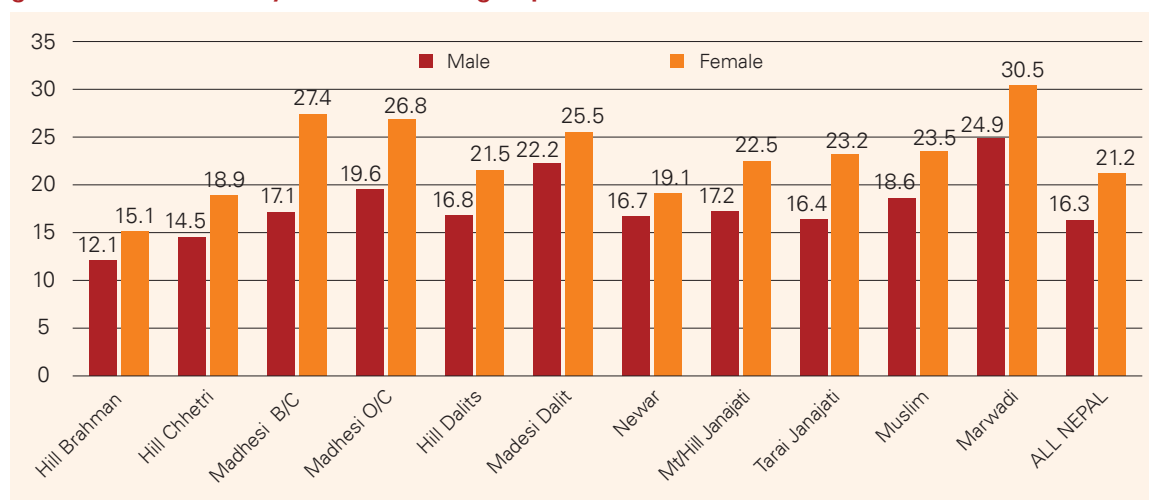
Ethnographic findings confirm that government information remains inaccessible for many people. A male lawyer in Durgabhagawati, Rautahat shared his experience of registering an application to get information about the quantities and types of medicines available at the local hospital, and those that were freely available. However, even as a lawyer, he was not successful in getting the information. Another informant in Shivaraj, Kapilvastu remarked, "Though the state has guaranteed the right to information, only journalists and media workers have been using it."

A large proportion of people lack awareness about the way government offices make and implement decisions. Over 43 percent of women and 37 percent of men reported that they are not at all aware of how these processes work. Many respondents (53.7 percent of men and 46.9 percent of women) said they are partially aware, while only a small proportion of men and women – less than 10 percent – said they are 'fully aware.' Lack of awareness about how government

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[38] https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/communication-and-governance/access-to-information-and-its-constraints/

[39] Possible answers for access to information included 'easy access,' 'partial access' or 'no access at all.' In terms of knowledge about government processes, the answer options were: 'full knowledge,' 'partial knowledge,' or 'no knowledge.'

decisions are made and implemented is most widespread among the Tarai-based groups: Madhesi Dalit women and men (56.2 and 55.3 percent, respectively), Madhesi Other Caste women (52.7 percent) and Muslim women (51.5 percent) (Figure 4.22). Less than one-quarter of Hill Brahmin men are unaware of such processes.

In ethnographic interviews, people frequently expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of transparency in their local municipal offices. A social worker in Sanphebagar, Achham said that Ward Members and the Ward Chairperson often select projects without sufficient discussion among stakeholders. In other locations, interviewees said that transparency exercises like public audits were not properly conducted, while budget planning meetings were not widely publicized, limiting attendance to a few well-informed and well-connected individuals. A respondent in Kakani, Nuwakot complained, "I have not seen any programs for disclosing the financial activities of the Rural Municipality. Other mandatory programs such as public hearings, public audits and social audits have not been done properly in practice, even though they may have been recorded on paper."

FIGURE 4.22: **Percent of respondents who were not aware of the processes by which government offices make and implement decisions by sex and social groups, NSIS 2018**
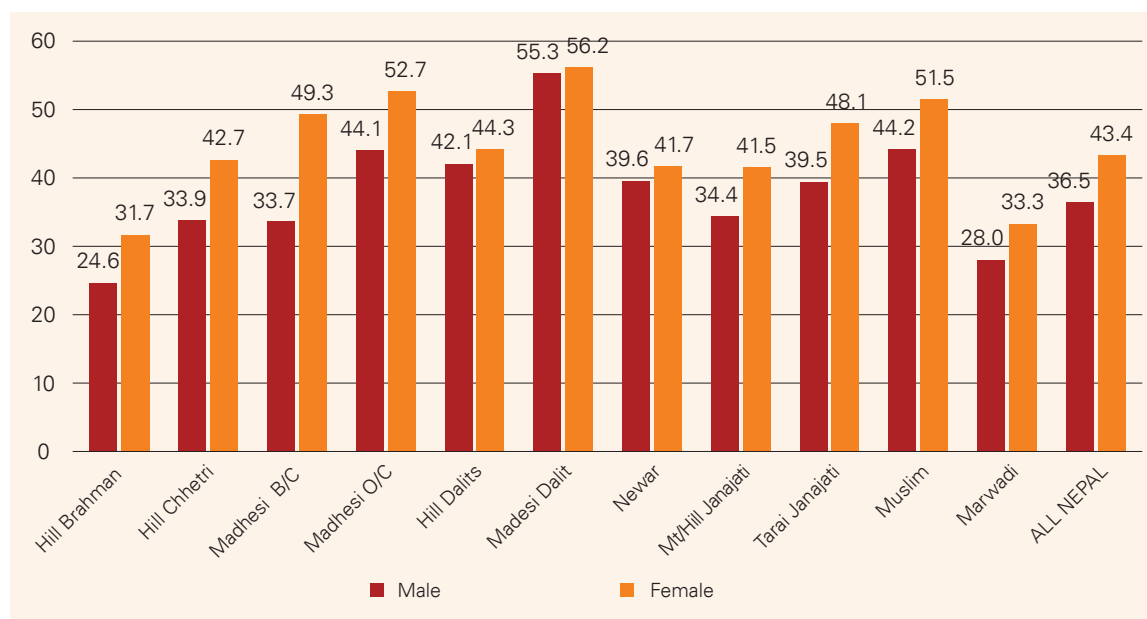
Some interviewees said that local elected authorities and bureaucrats treat information-seekers differently based on their political connections, wealth and caste, and sometimes harass them or otherwise obstruct their search for information. Some believed political leaders, schoolteachers, and rich people are treated courteously whereas requests for information by the poor and Dalits are not taken seriously. Respondents in Rautahat said they feel threatened for seeking information, and so they are reluctant to speak even when something wrong happens right in front of them.

Informants also questioned the transparency of user groups and committees formed by the rural municipalities/ municipalities. A school principal in Sanphebagar, Achham said, "Members of user group committees try to conceal the information regarding the project. Sometimes, if an individual

raises their voice against misuse of money or any irregularities, revenge is taken against him or her."

Other interviewees alleged that NGOs also lack transparency; this is could be one reason for the only moderate level of public trust in NGOs, as mentioned earlier. There were complaints that NGOs had received large sums of money in recent years without making their budgets or expenditures publicly available. As a result, there is a feeling that some organizations have done little to directly improve people's daily lives.

Elected representatives, on the other hand, contested the complaints about the transparency of their offices. They claimed that they are doing their best to inform their constituents, who have become bolder in seeking information about decision-making processes. An Executive Member in Kakani, Nuwakot remarked, "Now the people have become cleverer than the leaders. Representatives are under the surveillance of the people; people are watching each of our activities."

Representatives also pointed to the existence of specific processes and institutions that help ensure transparency. For example, a Ward Secretary in Kakani, Nuwakot said, "Now, there are minimal chances for misuse of funds in local projects. There has been involvement of concerned people at different levels and stages." Similarly, another respondent said, "Earlier, less than 25 percent of the budget used to be properly utilized, with 75 percent being misused. But now, more than 75 percent of the budget has been properly utilized. Still, the culture of 'khane' (appropriation) or misusing funds has not been swept away completely."

4.5.2 Transparency in Government Budget and Expenditures

All citizens have a right to participate in the local development planning process, including by accessing information about the budget and expenditures. In the NSIS 2018 survey, 61.2 percent of women and 54.6 percent of men reported that government offices do not make their budgets or expenditures available to the public at all (Table 4.4). Across all social groups, women reported that such information is 'not available at all' more frequently than men, showing a clear gender-based disparity in access to information. Over 66 percent of Madhesi Other Caste women and nearly the same proportion of Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri women reported that such information is 'not available at all.' Unexpectedly, 18 percent of Muslim women reported that government budgets and expenditures are available – the highest of any group. Overall, however, the data clearly indicate that government budgets and expenditures are not effectively made public through social and public audits.

TABLE 4.5. Percent of respondents who reported that government offices make their budget and expenditure fully, partially or not available by sex, NSIS 2018

Social Groups	Men			Women		
	Available	Partially available	Not available at all	Available	Partially available	Not available at all
Hill Brahmin	7.54	40.70	51.76	5.03	38.19	56.78
Hill Chhetri	6.46	47.91	45.63	7.40	36.96	55.65
Madhesi B/C	9.96	36.35	53.69	6.70	27.31	65.99
Madhesi O/C	7.96	32.43	59.61	7.24	26.18	66.58
Hill Dalit	5.26	36.02	58.71	7.12	30.63	62.24
Madhesi Dalit	5.60	31.08	63.32	6.53	29.09	64.37
Newar	3.12	33.33	63.54	5.03	30.65	64.32
Mt/Hill Janajati	7.03	34.85	58.12	7.47	27.37	65.16
Tarai Janajati	11.70	39.50	48.80	8.20	34.80	57.00
Muslim	13.57	28.64	57.79	18.00	18.00	64.00
Marwadi	5.82	42.33	51.85	4.60	36.78	58.62
Total	**7.30**	**38.11**	**54.59**	**7.28**	**31.56**	**61.16**

In ethnographic interviews as well, informants expressed concerns that authorities do not adequately publicize budgets and expenditures. One respondent in Durgabhagawati, Rautahat, said that the Rural Municipality office rarely makes financial records public, and whenever anyone questions how decisions are made, they are bought off to keep silent. In Kakani, another respondent expressed similar sentiments, complaining, "The law demands paper evidence but not field reality. So, it becomes easy to misuse the budget."

Although public hearings and social/public audits are designed to increase transparency, many interviewees complained that these tools are ineffective. In Sanphebagar, Achham, a Social Worker said, "In the recently held public hearing of the ward, only four or five people raised questions after the Ward Chairperson read out the plans. In some projects, manipulation by (elected) political parties can be seen." Others remarked that social audits have become "like a ritualistic act." In the Tarai, informants said that information about social/public audits is not disseminated among the general public, and so the meetings are only attended by party followers and political leaders who do not object to whatever is presented. Compared to the Tarai areas, in hill and mountain areas, informants expressed more interest in attending transparency-related meetings, particularly for schools and road projects.

Men expressed more concerns about local government budget allocations than women in Humla, Achham and Nuwakot. Generally, women said they learn about budgets through male family members and counterparts, in part because men visit government offices more frequently than women.

The management of local projects through 'user groups' was crafted as a key strategy to give local people a lead in the design, implementation and monitoring of projects, and to bolster financial transparency. However, interviewees raised concerns that user groups are engaged in corruption, often singling out road construction user groups for this criticism. In Kakani, Nuwakot a respondent said that she had complained to the Ward Chairperson about embezzlement of funds by a road construction user committee, after which the Ward Chairperson intervened and put a stop to the embezzlement. School Management Committees in some study sites were also criticized for lacking transparency. In Rautahat, there was a complaint that a school Headmaster and the Chairperson of the School Management Committee had colluded to inflate the number of enrolled students in order to become eligible for more grants. Similarly, in Simikot, Humla, the Assistant Headmaster of a secondary school said that despite social audits, "No one, including teachers, raise their voice against [improper] economic transactions. There is over-staffing in the school but unfortunately, most of the management committee members are not dutiful; they show a tendency to pass the buck." Many interviewees felt that although some changes have been seen, budget transparency has not improved much compared to the past and it continues to hinder the development process.

However, some elected officials contested these claims. The Mayor of Sanphebagar, Achham claimed that his municipality followed all working procedures for the formation, mobilization and management of user group committees, helping ensure budget transparency. "Unless user groups follow a series of steps while implementing projects, we do not reimburse their budget. While allocating budgets for new projects, we also take into consideration how earlier projects were handled," he said.

4.5.3 Financial Transparency in Government Offices

NSIS 2018 assessed the financial transparency in government offices by asking respondents about their experiences in the following offices: Police Office, Ward Office, Rural Municipality/ Municipality Office, Health Post, Inland Revenue Office (IRO), District Administration Office (DAO), Land Measurement Office (LMO), Electricity Authority, Drinking Water Supply (DWS), Telephone Office, and banks and financial institutions (both government and private). The respondents were asked if they had received services in each of those offices, and if they had, whether they had received a receipt. Possible answers included, 'a receipt that covered full payment,' 'a receipt that covered only part of the payment,' 'no receipt for the payment,' or 'the service was provided free of charge.' Failure to provide full-amount receipts for payments is taken as an indicator of lack of transparency.

TABLE 4.6. Percent of respondents who had not received a receipt or received one covering only part of the payment made by type of office, sex and social groups, NSIS 2018

Social Groups	Police		Ward Office		Rural/ Municipality		Health Post		Inland Revenue Office	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Hill Brahmin	6.7	0.0	1.0	0.0	2.3	0.0	1.0	0.0	6.9	0.0
Hill Chhetri	2.1	44.0	0.7	4.5	5.7	8.3	1.1	1.0	3.0	0.3
Madhesi B/C	8.5	40.6	6.1	5.0	6.3	0.0	1.6	1.8	9.2	5.5
Madhesi OC	15.0	47.3	4.5	4.8	6.0	8.5	2.7	1.5	6.2	8.2
Hill Dalit	19.0	47.1	7.5	7.3	7.8	5.8	2.3	1.0	14.4	0.0
Madhesi Dalit	15.4	27.1	6.6	4.8	7.9	10.4	2.5	2.9	4.9	2.6
Newar	0.0	0.0	5.1	5.5	4.2	5.1	2.8	0.0	9.8	6.3
Mt/H Janajati	4.0	13.1	4.3	4.8	4.4	3.2	2.5	3.2	4.8	2.0
Tarai Janajati	7.6	0.1	0.6	1.9	0.1	1.0	2.9	1.7	3.1	0.4
Muslim	30.4	50.0	7.6	5.9	6.1	9.1	2.1	0.0	10.0	0.0
Marwadi	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0
All Nepal	**8.4**	**20.2**	**3.2**	**4.0**	**4.3**	**3.9**	**2.0**	**1.4**	**5.8**	**1.4**

The results are presented in Table 4.6, disaggregated by gender and 11 main social groups. Experiences of not receiving a receipt, or receiving one covering only part of the payment, were most commonly reported in Police Offices. Overall, eight percent of men and 20 percent of women reported that they did not receive receipts from Police Offices, but there were wide variations between the caste/ethnic groups. Madhesi Other Castes, Hill Dalits, Madhesi Dalits and Muslims reported not receiving bills, or receiving only partial bills, most commonly. A much larger proportion of women from these groups reported such experiences.

The data show that overall, around 10 or 11 percent of people do not receive a receipt, or receive only a partial one, from the Drinking Water Supply and Telephone Offices. Again, however, there are wide disparities between the caste/ethnic groups and genders. Over 40% of women from the Madhesi OC, Hill and Madhesi Dalit groups reported such experiences.

TABLE 4.7. Percent of respondents who had not received a receipt or received one covering only part of the payment made by type of office, sex and social groups, NSIS 2018

Social Groups	Dist. Admin. Office		Land Measurement		Electricity Authority		Drinking Water Supply		Telephone Office		Banks, Financial Orgs.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Hill Brahmin	3.7	0.0	5.0	8.3	0.6	0.0	1.2	0.0	8.7	5.4	0.0	1.8
Hill Chhetri	0.5	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.7	1.0	15.4	15.7	0.3	0.0	3.5	2.1
Madhesi B/C	4.7	8.4	22.1	22.1	0.6	2.1	3.3	2.2	6.0	9.7	1.8	1.5
Madhesi OC	5.9	7.9	11.4	24.7	0.7	1.0	3.6	2.1	37.9	45.3	1.0	1.3
Hill Dalit	5.2	0.1	30.9	6.9	0.9	1.0	39.7	46.6	14.8	40.5	0.6	0.0
Madhesi Dalit	5.7	5.2	11.5	7.4	1.8	1.2	29.2	32.7	42.9	43.0	2.7	1.1
Newar	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.8
Mt/H Janajati	6.6	6.7	8.8	1.0	2.0	2.5	8.2	9.9	3.0	1.3	0.1	1.1
Tarai Janajati	1.0	5.0	10.9	2.0	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.1	30.0	33.4	3.0	0.5
Muslim	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.4	66.7	2.8	2.4
Marwadi	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	2.8	2.2	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.7	0.0
All Nepal	**3.3**	**2.5**	**7.1**	**4.2**	**1.0**	**1.1**	**9.3**	**10.4**	**11.1**	**10.7**	**1.3**	**1.4**

Summary – Transparency of Information and Procedures

NSIS 2018 examined transparency by asking respondents a variety of questions about their interactions and experiences with government offices and other local institutions.

- **Access to information:** Despite constitutional provisions for transparency and the right to information, most respondents (68 percent of men and 64 percent of women), reported that they have only partial access to information from government offices, while 21 percent of women and 16 percent of men indicated that they do not have easy access to information from government offices. Ethnographic findings corroborated these survey results; government information remains inaccessible for many people, with detrimental impacts especially for women and marginalized populations.

- **Transparent government procedures:** Only 10 percent of men and women reported they are fully aware about how government offices make and implement decisions. A much larger proportion (43 percent of women and 37 percent of men) said they are not at all aware. This lack of awareness can leave people vulnerable to exploitation and create an environment conducive to corruption.

  Overall, 61 percent of women and 55 percent of men reported that government offices do not make their budgets or expenditures available to the public at all. Across all social groups, more women than men reported that such information is not at all available, showing a clear gender-based disparity. Over two-thirds of Madhesi Other Caste men and women and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri women reported that such information is not at all available to them.

Ethnographic data substantiated survey data related to people's concerns that authorities do not adequately publicize budgets and expenditures. There were complaints that municipal offices are not forthcoming regarding budgets and expenditures, and that tools designed to increase transparency, such as social/public audits, are ineffective. Many interviewees expressed special concern about the lack of transparency of user groups and committees, such as those involved in construction work, health posts and schools. They often indicated more concern about these groups than about municipal or other offices. Some interviewees complained that user groups' budget planning meetings are not widely publicized, limiting attendance to a few well-informed and well-connected individuals.

- **Financial transparency in government institutions:** Receiving a formal receipt for payment of services is an important mechanism for maintaining transparency and being accountable. Experiences of not receiving a receipt, or receiving one covering only part of the payment, was reported in Police Offices more than any other type of government office. Though only eight percent of men and 20 percent of women reported that they did not receive receipts from the Police Office, there were wide variations between caste/ethnic groups, with the Madhesi Other Castes, Hill Dalits, Madhesi Dalits and Muslims reporting the highest discrepancies.

Ethnographic findings also suggest there is a significant gap in transparency between communities in the Tarai and those in the Hills. In the Hill regions, citizens have relatively more confidence to question government officials, whereas in the Tarai, only a few elites feel empowered to do so. Dalits and women of the Tarai reported having neither the knowledge of ongoing activities nor the confidence to question officials.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

The "The word 'independence' or 'freedom' has its own value and importance, but in our country, in our district, it has not been realized in the true sense. In the course of any work, for example in allocating budgets for development, we cannot see independence. A handful of people who have access and control have been running development plans and projects; those who lack access and control are underprivileged in terms of rights. If independence is viewed as a right of survival of human beings, it is taking place in a suppressed form in our context."

- A political representative in Sanphebagar, Achham

The Constitution of Nepal has a number of constitutional and legal provisions that ensure the right to inclusion and participation of members of all communities in the governance processes at all three levels of the federal system. Provisions for affirmative action for historically marginalized and discriminated groups such as women, Dalits, indigenous people and minorities have also been incorporated (Article 42). Thus, formal state structures and civil society institutions have been seeking to operationalize the concept of inclusive governance in Nepal.

However, barriers to good governance and inclusion remain in the form of deeply entrenched structural discrimination and continuing informal institutional norms and practices. Citizens' perceptions and knowledge of their rights have been shaped by the historical, social, political, economic, cultural and legal conditions of their respective communities. Although affirmative action policies have increased diversity in the bureaucracy and in elected offices at all three tiers of government, these policies have not transformed power relations – a necessary precursor for institutionalizing inclusive governance. Additionally, political parties disregard inclusion provisions with impunity, due to a lack of accountability and transparency. Sociocultural norms are also important barriers to the inclusion of women and marginalized caste/ethnic groups. Attempts to reform formal institutions have not adequately accounted for the role of norms, values and attitudes in creating a more conducive environment for women and marginalized groups to exercise their rights and become effective change agents.

This study presents a snapshot of the levels of knowledge, access to information and experiences related to governance among men and women across 88 different caste/ethnic groups and 11 broad social groups. The data help establish a baseline to measure changes in the knowledge, perceptions and experiences of different population groups regarding inclusive governance, as Nepal's new political structures continue to evolve.

Increased Diversity in the Bureaucracy

The basic premises of federalism include making the government more efficient and receptive to the demands of the Nepali people. One of its main pillars is the strengthening of public administration in the form of institutions that deliver basic services to citizens, maintain law and order, manage the economy and create an enabling environment for business. The quality of public services depends in large measure on the skills and motivation of the public employees who provide these services and oversee their delivery. An efficient civil service management system is needed to improve motivation and effectiveness for better services to the public, private businesses, and the poor in particular (Bajracharya & Grace, 2014 p. 1).

There has been encouraging transformation in the composition of the bureaucracy after affirmative action and reservation policies were adopted in 2008. Such inclusive provisions are leading towards a more heterogeneous composition, at least among those entering the civil service in the last decade. However, highly marginalized groups such as Madhesi Dalits, Muslims, some Mountain/ Hill Janajati ethnic groups, and women from all caste/ethnic groups remain under-represented. Applicants for the Public Service Commission now include more Janajati, Madhesi and women candidates, but certain groups still dominate the bureaucracy in disproportion to their total population in the country, due to their traditional socio-economic privileges. More than 61 percent of staff come from the Hill Brahmin and Hill Chhetri groups, even though Hill Brahmins and Hill Chhetris make up only 30 percent of the population. Among the officer and managerial level staff (Gazetted), 48 percent of employees are Hill Brahmins, while Madhesi Dalits (0.63 percent) and Muslims (0.65 percent) each make up less than one percent of the bureaucracy.

Overall, only 25 percent of civil service staff are women, and they too follow a similar pattern in terms of caste/ethnic representation. Of a total of 21,977 women employees, 62 percent are Hill Brahmin/Chhetris; less than four percent are Mountain/Hill Janajatis and Newars, while less than 0.5 percent are Madhesi Dalits and Muslims, signaling the continuing marginalization of these groups despite inclusive legislative provisions. Though we see increasing representation of women in the civil service, the majority of these women come from the traditionally privileged Brahmin and Newar groups.

The civil service has become more inclusive over the past decade because of reservation policies, yet there is a clear need to create a more conducive environment for marginalized groups to join and succeed within the bureaucracy. Inclusion provisions need to be implemented in a way that is sensitive to the intersections of gender, education level, Nepali language proficiency, and economic status. Men and women from marginalized groups must be informed about reservations

and should receive support to strengthen their eligibility for civil service positions. Furthermore, working environments in the bureaucracy should be made more supportive and respectful towards officials from marginalized backgrounds.

The Continuing Influence of Deeply Rooted Social Norms and Cultural Practices in the Political System

It is also clear that the implementation of the new Constitution is influenced by everyday political practices. Groundbreaking changes have been made in terms of representation of women and marginalized groups in different levels of government. However, this is not an indication that society as a whole – or the major political parties – have changed with regard to how they view and treat women and marginalized groups. Over 96 percent of members of the federal House of Representatives elected through the FPTP system are men. No Madhesi Dalit was elected in the FPTP system, and only one Madhesi Dalit was selected through the proportional representation system. Only six women candidates (3.64 percent) were elected through the FPTP in the federal House of Representatives, of whom four are Hill Brahmins and two are Mountain/Hill Janajatis. The situation is similar in the seven Provincial Assemblies, where the vast majority of members elected through the FPTP system are men (95 percent) and over 51 percent are Hill Brahmin or Hill Chhetri. No Madhesi Dalit was elected in the Provincial Assemblies through the FPTP system. Only 17 of 330 members (5.15 percent) elected through FPTP are women; among them, eight (47 percent) are Mt/Hill Janajatis, four are Hill Chhetris, two each are Hill Brahmin and Madhesi Other Caste groups, and one is Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri. Thus, women and other marginalized groups remain under-represented in directly elected positions, despite the new inclusive constitutional mandates.

At the local level, very few women or marginalized groups were elected as Mayors/ Chairpersons or Ward Chairpersons. Only seven women were elected as Mayors of Metropolitan Cities, Sub-metropolitan Cities or Municipalities (out of 293 total), and only 11 women were elected as Chairpersons of Rural Municipalities (out of 460). Less than one percent of women were elected as Ward Chairpersons, and none are from Hill or Madhesi Dalit groups. Not a single Madhesi Dalit was elected as a Chairperson of any Rural Municipality.

The over-representation of Hill Brahmins and Hill Chhetris, under-representation of Janajatis and women, and near-absence of Dalits in elected bodies at the three tiers of the federal system reflects not only unequal power relations across caste/ethnic groups, but also the impact of electoral constituency delimitations and party apportionment (candidate nomination) rules and practices. The majoritarian electoral system has marginalized Dalits and Muslims the most, depriving them of representation in the assemblies at different levels and limiting their access to development opportunities and financial resources.

Women and members of marginalized groups who hold positions through the proportional representation systems at various levels of government were often chosen because of their long contribution within their political parties or, in many cases, because of kinship relations with senior male leaders. Thus, traditional, patriarchal and patrilineal gender norms continue to dominate

within political parties. Candidate selection processes also reflect the political marginalization of specific caste/ethnic groups such as the Hill/Tarai Dalits, Madhesi Other Castes and Muslims. Ethnographic data show that internal party hierarchies prevent even those women and individuals from marginalized groups who accede to elected office from ensuring better service delivery for their constituencies.

Additional evidence from this study shows that a majority of people (67 percent of women and 45 percent of men) have no knowledge about the inclusive provisions for women, Dalits, minorities and people with disabilities in political parties and all elected bodies. Thus, there is clearly a need for additional efforts to spread the information about these new provisions to the general public and special interest and advocacy groups, and to create mechanisms for accountability related to inclusion within political parties.

Local Governments Impeded by Lack of Laws Defining their Roles

The newly instituted local governments still lack sufficient laws, rules and regulations to function properly. The Local Government Operation Act 2017 was promulgated to address the immediate needs of local governments, but local government executives have not yet been able to establish and define all their roles in the changing context. In many of the ethnographic study sites, municipalities have not been able to draft local government acts as envisioned by the constitution. Many interviewees described conflict between Chairpersons/Mayors and Vice-Chairpersons/Deputy Mayors regarding the exercise of power, especially due to differences in political ideologies. Such conflicts are more common and explicit in the Tarai compared to the Mountain/Hill areas. Despite their inclusion in local bodies, women, Dalits and marginalized groups are not always able to bring their diverse perspectives into decision-making processes or fully represent the needs of their constituents, since political parties and the bureaucracy have yet to fully internalize the spirit of inclusion. Conflict and misunderstanding between bureaucratic staff and elected representatives is rife in many places. Public trust in newly elected local bodies is also determined by political affiliation, gender and caste/ethnic background.

The Local Government Operation Act 2017 ensures access to justice by empowering Vice-Chairpersons of Rural Municipalities and Deputy Mayors of Municipalities to lead local-level justice committees. Women occupy many of these positions (92 percent in the Rural Municipalities and 94 percent in Municipalities), and the judicial committees have been engaged in mediating a variety of domestic disputes and inter-household disagreements. Although not all judicial committees are fully functional yet, their progress so far has been encouraging, especially for women and marginalized groups.

This study has also documented numerous examples of women and marginalized groups' representatives in state bodies who are guided more by their affiliation to political parties than the priorities of their own constituencies. This is a reminder that representation alone does not guarantee meaningful participation or that all citizens are able to avail themselves of their rights.

The Rule of Law in Practice: The Need for Stronger Enforcement of Legal Provisions

There has been some progress in securing the rights of women and marginalized groups through the passage of inclusive laws, policies and regulations, yet much remains to be done. Many members of marginalized groups are still unaware about inclusion provisions from which they stand to benefit, especially those related to reservations in higher education, free/subsidized health care and government jobs. Overall, more women (40 percent) than men (21 percent) reported having no knowledge about any of these constitutional provisions; the gender disparity in knowledge cuts across all of the 11 main social groups. The women with the least knowledge of such provisions are Madhesi Dalits (74 percent), Muslims (69 percent) and Madhesi Other Castes (64 percent). While the survey data indicate insufficient public knowledge about legal provisions for inclusion, ethnographic data reveal that local authorities often do not enforce the provisions.

The survey data also show that 13.5 percent of women and five percent of men have no knowledge of seven civil and fundamental rights protected by the Constitution, namely the rights to: express ideas and opinions freely, peacefully assemble, affiliate with political parties or organizations of one's choice, form political parties, travel and live anywhere within the country, be involved in any profession or occupation within the country, and cast one's vote according to one's own free will. The data show wide variations between women of difference caste/ethnic groups. Women who are Muslim (27.5 percent), Madhesi Dalit (26.8 percent), Hill Dalit (21 percent), Hill Janajati (19 percent) and Madhesi Other Caste (16 percent) have less knowledge about these fundamental rights than Hill Brahmin, Chhetri and Newar women.

Respondents identified politicians, political parties and gender- and caste-based discrimination as barriers to accessing their political rights. Despite the political slogan, 'Ghar ghar ma Singha Durbar' ('Singha Durbar, the central seat of power, in each home'), Muslim and Madhesi Dalit women remain under-informed about local government functions. It is clear that in order to be effective, formal inclusive provisions must be widely known, beneficiaries must be supported to take up the opportunities, and state authorities must be held accountable to ensure the provisions' implementation. Implementation should be carried out in an equitable manner, keeping in mind that women and marginalized groups most often experience intersecting inequalities. This will require political will, commitment and accountability.

On a positive note, a majority of people believe that the law and order situation has improved in their communities, although crimes – especially those in which women are the victims – persist and often go unreported or unpunished.

Entrenched Gender Norms and Stereotypes Impede Meaningful Participation

History has shown that constitutional and legal directives have successfully increased the representation of women and marginalized groups beyond the bureaucracy and elected positions, to community-level organizations, user groups and various local-level committees. Women in particular have been encouraged to participate in the development process since the late 1980s, which has led to their increased participation in village-level gatherings. Lately, labor migration of adult men

has also accelerated women's membership in local institutions. All kinds of governmental and non-governmental development organizations seek out the participation of women and marginalized groups in order to meet legal and procedural norms, and to give a semblance of legitimacy.

It is encouraging to note that in many community-level meetings (Ward Citizen Forums, ward settlement meetings, village assemblies, and other political gatherings) and in local resource-management user groups, women demonstrate higher attendance than men (76 percent of women compared to 48 percent of men in the former, and 82 percent of women versus 56 percent of men in the latter). However, many women and members of marginalized groups either do not participate actively in such forums, or if they do, their voices are ignored or disrespected. More men (76 percent) than women (69 percent) reported participating by speaking at these types of events. Often, Muslim women (26 percent), Newar women (21 percent), Madhesi Other Caste women (18 percent) and Madhesi Dalit women (17 percent) reported that their voices are not respectfully heard. Ethnographic findings indicate that meaningful participation in user groups is often hindered by the existence of patron-client relationships between executive leaders and committee members.

Women's participation is often tokenistic; their role neither effective nor meaningful. Entrenched gender norms and informal institutions still influence women's opportunities for leadership roles; their participation is low in infrastructure development projects (which have relatively larger budgets) and very few women are in executive positions of user groups. Stereotypes about women not being able to handle large budgets or mobilize human resources influence these opportunities.

Overall, the rate of participation of men in at least one of the three elections in 2017 was only six percentage points higher than women (88 percent for men and 82 percent for women). However, there were wide variations between caste/ethnic groups; men and women from marginalized caste/ethnic groups participated less. Contrary to the spirit of constitutional and legal provisions, women and marginalized groups in local-level elected office are often unable to voice concerns for their own groups or constituencies. Rather, they are compelled to toe the lines of their political parties. Interviewees described instances of women representatives being sidelined by their spouses, who played the leadership roles and made all the decisions in the wards and Municipalities. The lives of women continue to be deeply and systematically conditioned by a host of traditional, discriminatory social norms and expectations, which affect their meaningful participation.

A majority of the respondents felt that they are able to raise their voices for their rights and concerns, take action to achieve valued goals, and freely make choices about influential decisions that affect them. However, more women (65 percent) and men (55 percent) felt that they are powerless, resourceless, and without rights to take action and change their circumstances. Such feelings of lack of agency and disempowerment were most common among Madhesi Dalit and Muslim women. Combined with multiple intersecting inequalities and discrimination, women across all caste/ethnic groups and especially Madhesi Dalit and Muslim women continue to have a difficult time exercising their voices and agency for empowerment.

Inclusive Policies for Representation are yet to Change the Political Order and Promote Effective Leadership

Inclusion of women and marginalized groups in state entities at all levels is one of the key features of the Constitution. The political gains made by Nepali women since 2006 have culminated in a dramatic increase in female political representation, where women now hold 33.5 percent of seats in the Federal Parliament, 34 percent in the Provincial Assemblies and 41 percent in local councils and ward committees. However, the inclusive provisions have not yet changed the political order. Public knowledge about the provisions for proportional representation is very low, especially among women across all caste/ethnic groups, and among other historically marginalized groups. Marginalized communities do not have organized leadership and often lack awareness about the policies.

Affiliation with political parties is a major factor for representation in state and non-state entities. If one is not affiliated with a political party, then one has only a slim chance of acceding to elected office, even in the smallest of local-level organizations or committees. Although legal provisions require reservations within political parties, these are some of the least-known inclusion provisions. Only nine percent of women and 23 percent of men reported having good knowledge about inclusion provisions within political parties. This limited knowledge and awareness among the general public helps political parties to maintain the status quo. The parties are still far from achieving equitable and inclusive representation of women and marginalized groups in leadership positions, in blatant disregard of the constitutional mandate.

Inclusive reservation provisions in all state entities are, surprisingly, not known very well-known either. Only 25 percent of men and 12 percent of women are aware about the reservation of one-third of seats for women in all state entities. Even fewer (21 percent of men and nine percent of women) are aware of the inclusion provisions for Dalits, minorities and persons with disabilities in elected bodies. Almost three-fourths of Madhesi Dalit women (74 percent) have no knowledge about various inclusion provisions from which they would stand to benefit.

Gender-related attitudes, norms and behaviors constrain the participation of women at all levels, and this has changed only a little over the years. NSIS 2018 data show only minor differences between women and men in their attitudes towards egalitarianism and gender equality; variations in such attitudes are more pronounced between different caste/ethnic groups (Gurung et al,. 2020).

Lack of information about inclusive policies and reservations is a critical barrier to inclusion in political processes, and as expected, women across all caste/ethnic groups suffer more from this barrier than men. Effective leaders must be able to identify and address critical issues faced by their constituents and participate meaningfully in decision-making processes. However, elected representatives from marginalized groups are often unable to represent their own constituencies because they feel compelled to hold their own party line.

Bureaucratic Hurdles Impede Accountability towards Women and Marginalized Groups

Trust is dependent on how particular institutions work and their level of transparency. Citizens have the most trust in ward representatives and ward offices, which, under the Local Government Operation Act 2017, perform a large number of legal and official duties. Many survey respondents expressed confidence in their ability to question their Ward Chairpersons in relation to their rights. While citizens have less trust in political parties, political leaders and the judiciary, their trust in financial and banking institutions is strong.

Service delivery provided by the municipalities and wards is generally seen as having improved since the local elections in 2017. However, in the municipalities that were restructured by incorporating two or three wards of the former VDCs, people have to walk farther to access services than before. Respondents in hill and mountain areas reported easier access to services from the Ward Offices than respondents in the Tarai, due to the availability of staff. However, in some mountain and hill areas, Ward Secretaries have been assigned duties for two or even three wards, hindering their ability to effectively deliver services.

The most common hurdle to accessing government services is a lack of proper information (reported by 22 percent of men and women), followed by the lack of technical knowledge, capacity and skills of rights-holders (13 percent of men and 14 percent of women), ill-intentions of government staff (16 percent of men and 11 percent of women), and limited office staff, as well as duty-bearers' lack of skills and capacities (12 percent of men and 9 percent of women). Respondents in the Tarai reported facing problems accessing services due to language barriers, caste/ethnic prejudices and an overall lack of information. Across all caste/ethnic groups, a higher proportion of women than men report facing such hurdles, potentially due to discrimination and traditional gender norms. 'Citizen's charters' and petition boxes have been placed in front of most government office buildings, but such measures do not necessarily help citizens better understand the processes for receiving the services they need.[40]

Most citizens have trust in their rural municipalities/municipalities. People's representatives are widely seen as responsive and accountable to their constituencies, even though they still face challenges in fulfilling citizens' demands. In contrast, civil servants are seen as overly pedantic regarding legal procedures and less helpful towards citizens. Madhesi Dalit respondents reported less trust in the work of ward offices compared to other groups, likely reflecting the socio-cultural discrimination they face. A little over half of Hill Dalit men and women and close to 50 percent of Hill Brahmin women and Tarai Janajati men and women reported 'discriminatory and prejudiced' service delivery as the most common experience of service delivery. These findings point to continued caste, language and gender-based discrimination in government service delivery.

There is a high level of public frustration with local service providers' inability to respond to the needs of the general public. Less than one-fourth of men and women across all caste/ethnic groups

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[40] Such charters are often in formal Nepali language and are placed high up on walls, making them difficult to read.

reported that service providers and government offices are accountable to their duty. There have been a few examples of local governments taking innovative approaches to tackle problems related to service delivery, but clearly, more effective measures are needed to ensure accountability for public and private service providers.

Limited Awareness About the Right to Information and Conflicts of Interest Hamper Efforts to Uphold Transparency

Transparency can be maintained only when service providers and rights-holders are aware about their roles and responsibilities, and government and non-governmental offices maintain transparency best when it is a legally binding requirement. For example, social and public audits are mandatory tools designed to increase the transparency of procedures and financial transactions, yet citizens are rarely informed about them on time, and the events are rarely conducted in a manner accessible for all citizens. In mountain and hill areas, local governments cover a large geographical area with dispersed settlements. As a result, people living near the municipality offices or market centers can easily attend transparency-related programs, but not citizens who live farther away. Men tend to be more concerned about local governments' budget allocations than women, and they are often dismissive of women's needs and concerns.

Information about government activities and processes remains inaccessible for 21 percent of women and 16 percent of men. Overall, 61 percent of women and 55 percent of men reported that government offices do not make their budgets or expenditures available to the public at all. Across all social groups, more women than men reported that such information is not at all available, showing a clear gender-based disparity. Over two-thirds of Madhesi Other Caste men and women and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri women reported that such information is not at all available to them. Additionally, 43 percent of women and 37 percent of men said they are not at all aware about how government offices make and implement decisions. This lack of awareness can leave people vulnerable to exploitation and create an environment conducive to corruption.

Public schools are the loci of politics in much of Nepal. Chairpersons of School Management Committees and Headmasters often share information with one another, but teachers and students remain uninformed about exercises such as social and public audits as well as public hearings. Ethnographic data also revealed public concern about the lack of transparency of user groups and development committees, particularly in relation to budget planning meetings, which are often poorly publicized, limiting attendance to a few well-informed and well-connected individuals.

This study's ethnographic observations reveal that citizens are frequently dissatisfied with the lack of transparency within their rural municipalities/municipalities. They complain that decision-making is not clear, budgets and expenditures are not made public, planning meetings are not widely publicized, and attendance is limited to a few well-connected individuals such as political leaders, schoolteachers and social activists. Awareness about the right to information is lacking, and thus, local elected authorities and bureaucrats treat information seekers poorly.

Despite the fact that NGOs claim to maintain better transparency, most respondents reported relatively low trust in them and said that they are unaware about NGOs' decision-making processes. People also complained that user groups and construction committees are especially opaque; conflicts of interest are common, and at times the members are the contractors too, creating conflicts of interest. Corruption in user groups is often related to construction, where big budgets are involved. Rights-holders in the Tarai reported frequent corruption in service delivery at government offices.

Overall, the NSIS survey and ethnographic data show that women and marginalized groups are participating to some extent in governance processes, but much remains to be achieved in order to ensure equitable benefits and empower the disadvantaged. Greater participation of marginalized groups (especially Madhesi Dalits, Muslims, and Hill Dalits) and women across all social groups has yet to translate into greater power for these groups; entrenched practices favoring the privileged are all too common, while accountability mechanisms remain weak. Government mechanisms and rights holders must hold duty bearers accountable in order to end impunity.

Governance in multiple spheres and at multiple levels (formal and informal institutions, the bureaucracy, civil society, the private sector, the community, etc.) continues to be marked by gender discrimination, limited access and agency, and limited power and authority. Many groups in Nepal face "intersecting inequalities," where gender, economic disadvantage, socially and culturally defined identities, locational disadvantage and lack of political representation combine and interact, leading to multiple levels of oppression and discrimination (the double and triple discrimination faced by groups of individuals such as 'poor Tarai Dalit women' for example). Women generally lack access to financial resources and have limited education and networks, a high work burden, and limited skills and experiences, negatively affecting their ability to participate in governance processes at the local as well as national levels. Therefore, it is necessary to continue ensuring the representation of women and marginalized groups in decision-making positions at all levels of government and in non-government institutions, and that they are able to build a critical mass. They are now more than entitled to long overdue investments in a context that changes, an enabling environment that helps them build their knowledge, skills and confidence in order to make changes to the "rules of the game" of the formal and informal institutional settings to make meaningful contributions in governance processes.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Namelist of Ethnographic Field Researchers

1.1 Namelist of Ethnographic Field Researchers

S. N.	Name	District	Rural municipality/ Municipality	Geographical Location
1.	Mr. DB Angbung	Humla	Simikot Gaunpalika	Mountain
2.	Mr. Dipendra Lama	Manang	Ngisyang Gaunpalika	Mountain
3.	Mr. Gayatri Prasad Bhattarai	Morang	Belbari Nagarpalika	Tarai
4.	Mr. Nirodh Pandey	Nuwakot	Kakani Gaunpalika	Hill
5.	Ms. Pabitra Shahi	Kapilvastu	Shivaraj Nagarpalika	Tarai
6.	Mr. Rudra Prasad Aryral	Achham	Sanphebagar Nagarpalika	Hill
7	Mr. Shyam Sundar Yadav	Rautahat	Durgabhagawati Gaunpalika	Tarai

1.2 Context of Ethnographic Study Areas

1. Kakani Rural Municipality, Nuwakot

Kakani Rural Municipality lies in Nuwakot district, Bagmati Province, and is divided into eight wards, with its headquarters in the small town of Ranipauwa, located 25 km northwest from Kathmandu valley, towards the Chinese border along the Pasang Lhamu Highway. Ranipauwa hosts some formal financial organizations such as banks, micro-finance organizations and cooperatives, as well as a health center and two secondary schools, including a private school. There are several informal women's/mothers' groups that provide savings and credit services to members. Kakani Community Development Center, located in Ward 5 near Ranipauwa, is the most active community-based organization in the rural municipality, engaging in multiple local development programs. According to the 2011 Census, the population of Kakani is 26,509, including 13,284 females and 13,225 males.

The ethnographic research was conducted in Ward 4, where Ranipauwa is located. This area is predominantly inhabited by Tamang people (about 90 percent of the population), with small proportions of Newar and Brahmin people, most of whom are employed in business and trade. Most Tamangs communicate in their mother tongue at the household and community level and are Buddhist, although Hindu cultural influences are apparent.

A majority of representatives in Kakani, including the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are members of the former Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center), which is now part of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP). Reflecting the local demographics, Tamangs predominate in the elected positions; in Ward 4, all Ward Representatives except for the Chairperson are Tamang women. A Tamang woman married to a Dalit individual has been elected as the Ward's Dalit Woman Representative.

Ranipauwa and its surroundings were once famous for production of maize and radish, but in recent years, cultivation of these crops has declined precipitously. Some residents are now involved in commercial trout and strawberry farming. However, most Tamang households appear to depend on off-farm activities for their livelihoods – primarily wage labor within the village and beyond, including in foreign countries.

2. Durgabhagawati Rural Municipality, Rautahat

Durgabhagawati is located in Rautahat district, in Province Two. It is connected by all-weather roads to Gaur, the district headquarters, and to the East-West Highway. According to the 2011 Census, its population is 22,699 with 10,807 women and 11,892 men.

The rural municipality is home to one higher secondary school (which includes a bachelors-level program), one Sanskrit high school, one lower secondary and one primary school in each of the five wards. Durgabhagawati hosts the Rautahat District Ayurvedic Center, one Primary Health Center, and a resource center for basic and primary education planning. Each of the five wards has its own health post. Water supply, private banking organizations and private boarding schools are also found in the study area. However, government offices and institutions offer sporadic and poor-quality services, and they lack appropriate infrastructure. UNICEF, UK Aid, Search for Common Ground, World Food Program and Australian Aid are all running projects in Durgabhagawati in collaboration with local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

Islam and Hinduism are the major religions practiced in the rural municipality. Hindus form the majority of the population. The major Hindu castes are Bhumihar, Brahmin, Dalit, Kalwar, Sahani (Mallah), Teli and Yadav. The major languages spoken are Bajika, Maithili and Urdu. Bajika is commonly used for communication between social groups, whereas Maithili is spoken within Madhesi Brahmin and Bhumihar families. Muslims speak Bajika in interactions with non-Muslim groups but speak Urdu within their family. Bajika uses the Urdu alphabet and is recognized as the local language of Muslims. Caste-based discrimination is common among the different caste groups.

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of Durgabhagawati are members of the Nepali Congress party. Similarly, the Chairpersons of four out of the five wards were elected from the Nepali Congress; one was a member of the erstwhile CPN (Maoist Center), now NCP. At the ward level, there are ten female representatives, including the Durgabhagawati Vice-Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson belongs to the Madhesi Brahmin caste group, whereas seven of the female representatives come from Dalit groups, including the Tatma, Baitha (Dhobi), Chamar and Dushad castes. Other female ward representatives come from the Kanu, Sonar, Sudhi, and Teli castes.

Agriculture, wage labor, business and foreign labor migration are major sources of livelihoods in this area. Most Dalit groups are involved in wage labor and cultivate fields on a sharecropping basis. Paddy, wheat, maize and different vegetables are grown here.

3. Shivaraj Municipality, Kapilvastu

Shivaraj Municipality is located in Kapilvastu district in Province Five, and its headquarters is in Chandrauta. It is located in southern Kapilvastu and was formed in 2014 through the merger of five former Village Development Committees (VDCs), Birpur, Chanai, Bishunpur, Jawabhari and Shivapur. The East-West Highway passes through Shivaraj. This municipality has a population of 67,162 – including 33,479 men and 33,683 women (CBS, 2011).

The demographic makeup varies between the north and the south of the municipality. Nepali-speaking groups such as Brahmins, Chhetris, Magar and Hill Dalits reside in significant numbers in the north, whereas the southern belt is dominated by Awadhi-, Hindi- and Urdu-speaking groups of Madhesi people, both Muslims and Hindus. Madhesi communities include the Kohar, Kebat, Chamar, Yadav and Chaudhary (Tharu). Most Madhesi men in the area have a good command of the Nepali language, but many women only speak Awadhi. Many Muslim parents enroll their children in the Madrassa education system, where the language of instruction is Urdu and the focus is on religious studies.

The major political parties in this area are the Nepali Congress, NCP, Rastriya Janamorcha, Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum, and Forum Democratic.[1] Shivaraj Municipality is home to Rotary Clubs, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce Chandrauta Chapter, a local chapter of the Reporters' Club, and Lions Clubs, which work in the social welfare sector. Non-government organizations (NGOs) such as Sahaj Nepal, Sunshine Social Development Center, Kapilvastu Integrated Development Services and Kalika Bikash Kendra work in the fields of health and education.

Similar to other research sites, agriculture is the main source of livelihood followed by wage labor, business, service and foreign labor migration.

4. Sanphebagar Municipality, Achham

Sanphebagar Municipality is the headquarters of Achham district, in Sudurpaschim Province, along both banks of the Budhiganga River. It is also the gateway to another remote mountain district, Bajura, which lies to its north. The municipality is divided into 14 wards and has a population of 38,341 (19,874 men and 18, 467 women), with 6,647 households.

Chhetri is the largest caste/ethnic group in the study area, followed by Dalit and Brahmin. Smaller numbers of Janajati work as seasonal labor migrants in the area. Hinduism is the predominant religion. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor come from the Chhetri group, as do all Ward Chairpersons except for one Brahmin and one Dalit. There are no female Ward Chairpersons in the municipality. The Nepali Congress, the Nepal Communist Party and the Rastriya Prajatantra Party are the major political parties in the area.

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[1] The Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum was renamed "Federal Socialist Forum of Nepal" (FSFN) with the merger of small parties. Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum Democratic merged with Nepali Congress after the 2017 elections.

The ethnographic study concentrated on Ward 4, which – along with Ward 3 – forms the municipality's main market center and is linked to the rest of the country by a road as well as an airport. Many retail and wholesale stores, hotels, lodges, banks, cooperatives and bookshops can be found in the study area. Government offices such as the Nepal Electricity Authority, a police station, government banks and the recently established Sudurpaschim Provincial Infrastructure Development Office are also in this ward. Twenty NGOs work in the area with projects focusing on women, children, Chhaupadi (the expulsion of women from the home during menstruation), untouchability, health and empowerment. The district's renowned Bayalpata Hospital, highly regarded for its quality service, is located here. Additionally, six private health clinics are operating in Sanphebagar Municipality, along with two university campuses (Janta Multiple Campus and Tripura Sundari Campus), six radio stations and four newspapers.

Agriculture, business, wage labor and seasonal labor migration to India are the major sources of livelihoods. Migrants and poor laborers, most of whom are women, work along the banks of the Chhipe Khola river, where they crush boulders and collect sand. Female workers have formed the Mahila Sramik Sangathan, a women's labor organization.

5. Manang Ngisyang Rural Municipality, Manang

Manang Ngisyang Rural Municipality is one of the largest administrative units in terms of geography among the observed municipalities. It is located in Manang district of Gandaki Province. It was formed by consolidating seven former VDCs: Pisang, Ghyaru, Ngawal, Bhraka, Manang, Tanki Manang and Khangsar. The rural municipality lies along the world-famous Annapurna Circuit trekking route and it contains Tilicho Lake, located at 4,919 meters. The Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) of China borders it to the north. Manang Ngisyang is situated at 2,700 to 5,416 meters above sea level

The Rural Municipality Office is situated in Humde Village, Ward 4, near the geographic center, at 3,280 meters elevation. The area lies along the Besisahar-Khangsar road. The airport is also located here, though it was not in operation during the field visit. Due to the poor quality of the road, it takes eight hours to drive the 70 km from Besisahar of Lamjung district to Manang Ngisyang. The rural municipality only has a population of 2,222 (1,017 women and 1,205 men).

People in this area are known as Ngisyang-ba, or "the people of Ngisyang Valley." They speak the Ngisyang language, which is part of the Tibeto-Burman language family and is very close to the Gurung and Tamang languages. Most locals use the surnames Gurung, Ghale, or Lama. A few Dalits (Bishwakarmas) and Sherpas also live in the area.

The local economy relies heavily on tourism, with many people employed in hotels, restaurants, local inns, small grocery stores, and souvenir shops. Other sources of livelihood include agriculture, collection of high-value herbs and funguses (such as *yarsagumba, kutki, panchaule* and wild garlic), animal husbandry (yak, sheep, and goats) and trade. The major crops are barley and buckwheat, which are grown as a single crop per year, as well as vegetables such as spinach, cabbage, potatoes, carrot, cauliflower, onion and garlic. Recently, some farmers have begun to use greenhouses for commercial vegetable production.

The Annapurna Conservation Area Project Office lies within the rural municipality in Manang village. Manang also hosts a high-altitude health office established by an American doctor, hotels for trekkers, horse riding facilities, restaurants, department stores, health posts, schools, a post office and internet, telephone and mobile communication facilities.

Most local officials come from the erstwhile CPN-UML party (now part of the NCP); only one Ward Chairperson was elected as an independent candidate. The rural municipality's Vice-Chairperson is a woman, but in general women and Dalits are under-represented in elected positions.

6. Belbari Municipality, Morang

Belbari Municipality is located in Morang district, Province One, and is made up of the former VDCs Dangihat and Bahuni. The East-West highway passes through Belbari Municipality. Its total population is 65,892 (35,781 women and 30,111 men). The major groups of people are Tarai and Hill Janajati (including the Dhimal, Rajbansi, Rai, Limbu, Magar, Tamang and Gurung), Brahmin/Chhetri, Hill Dalit, and Madhesi Other Castes. The Dhimal ethnic group is indigenous to the area.

All of the 11 wards in Belbari are connected by paved roads. Private tube wells are the main source of drinking water; piped water is available only in the market area. Most households have electricity from the national grid system. The municipality has 32 community schools, 32 institutional schools, 64 child development centers and one university campus. One FM radio station and six local newspapers operate in the municipality. Government offices include an Inland Revenue Office, a Post Office and a Police Check Post. Locally active NGOs include Betana Simsar Samrachhan Samiti, Nepal Adibasi Janajati Mahasangh, Pichhada Barga Samaj, Nari Bikas Sangh, Jestha Nagarik Samaj, Mangol National Organization, and Nepal Netrahin Sangh. Nari Bikas Sangh has helped to establish a number of women's cooperatives.

The NCP and Nepali Congress are the two major parties in the area. The erstwhile CPN-UML (now part of the NCP) won five out of 11 Ward Chairperson seats, as well as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor positions in 2017. Nepali Congress won four Ward Chairperson seats and the erstwhile CPN (Maoist Center) (also now part of the NCP) won two.

Agriculture, business, services and wage labor are the major sources of livelihood in the study area.

7. Simikot Rural Municipality, Humla

Simikot Rural Municipality lies in the remote mountain district of Humla, the only district in Nepal that is not yet connected to the national road network. According to the 2011 Census, the rural municipality's total population is 11,557 (with 5968 men and 5589 women), with a population density of just 15 people per km^2 (38 per mi^2). Simikot Bazar is the headquarters of the rural municipality and the district. It hosts a number of the government's district-level offices and NGOs such as Gramin Jana Utthan Vikas Karyakram, Snowland Ekikrit Vikas Kendra, Sip Nepal, HEAD Nepal, Sahara Nepal, Gramin Vikas Karyakram, Mahila Kalyan Sewa, Rural Reconstruction Nepal, Karnali Ekikrit Vikas Kendra, RIDS Nepal and Adhar Nepal. Local-level organizations such as Khas Arya Samaj, Thakuri and Dashnami Samaj, Lama Sanskritik Manch, Bon Cultural Society and Byasi Samaj are also active in this study area.

Simikot is the gateway to Kailash Mansarovar, a major pilgrimage site for Hindus and Buddhists in the TAR/China. Every year, thousands of tourists from India and other countries travel to Kailash Mansarovar through Simikot. The Hilsa-Simikot road in the northern part of Humla District is under construction. However, Simikot Airport provides daily flights to Nepalgunj and helicopter flights connect Simikot with Hilsa, a Tibetan border town.

The major caste/ethnic groups residing in the area are Chhetri, Bhote Lama, Thakuri, Dalit, Brahmin and Tamang Lama. Thakuri, Chhetri, Brahmin and Dalit groups follow the Hindu religion and caste ideology, whereas the other groups follow Buddhism or Bon culture and religion. The Bon Cultural Society recently established a monastery for the promotion of Bon culture. Polyandry was once common among the Bhote Lama (also called the Nyinba) in Simikot Rural Municipality, but it has declined due to increased interaction with other social groups.

Two FM radio stations and one daily newspaper, *The Karnali Sarokar,* are operational in Simikot. In addition to 139 primary and secondary schools, Simikot Rural Municipality hosts government offices for youth and sports, forestry, land registration, local-level development projects, communication and information technology, transportation, science and technology, tax collection and primary health care.

Major local sources of livelihood include agriculture, business, handicrafts and animal husbandry. Trade in high-value herbs and apple horticulture are also important occupations. Local crops include paddy, maize, potato, wheat, barley and beans.

The Nepali Congress and the NCP are the most active political parties in Simikot Rural Municipality. The Chairperson comes from the Nepali Congress and the Vice-Chairperson was elected as an independent candidate. Three of the eight Ward Chairpersons were elected from the erstwhile CPN (Maoist Center, now part of the NCP), two from the Nepali Congress, two from independent backgrounds and one from the erstwhile CPN-UML (now part of the NCP).

Selected Demographic Features of the NSIS 2018 Respondents

2. Introduction

This section presents the socio-cultural and economic context of the survey households. Thisincludes language, family structure, household economy, main occupation, land ownership and education attainment.

2.1 Language

Nepal is linguistically diverse, with 123 languages recorded in the 2011 Census (Yadav 2014). NSIS 2018, however, recorded only 61 mother tongue languages within the sample. Seventy-two percent of sample households spoke an Indo-European language, whereas 23% spoke a Sino-Tibetan language (Figure 1). Astro-Asiatic (Santhal) and Dravidian languages (Jhangad) were each spoken by 1.1% of households. The Indo-European category includes 19 major languages spoken in Nepal, such as Nepali, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Awadhi, Bajjika, etc. The Sino-Tibetan category includes 40 languages that are spoken by Mountain/ Hill Janajatis.

FIGURE 1: Percentage of households by broader category of languages spoken, NSIS, 2018
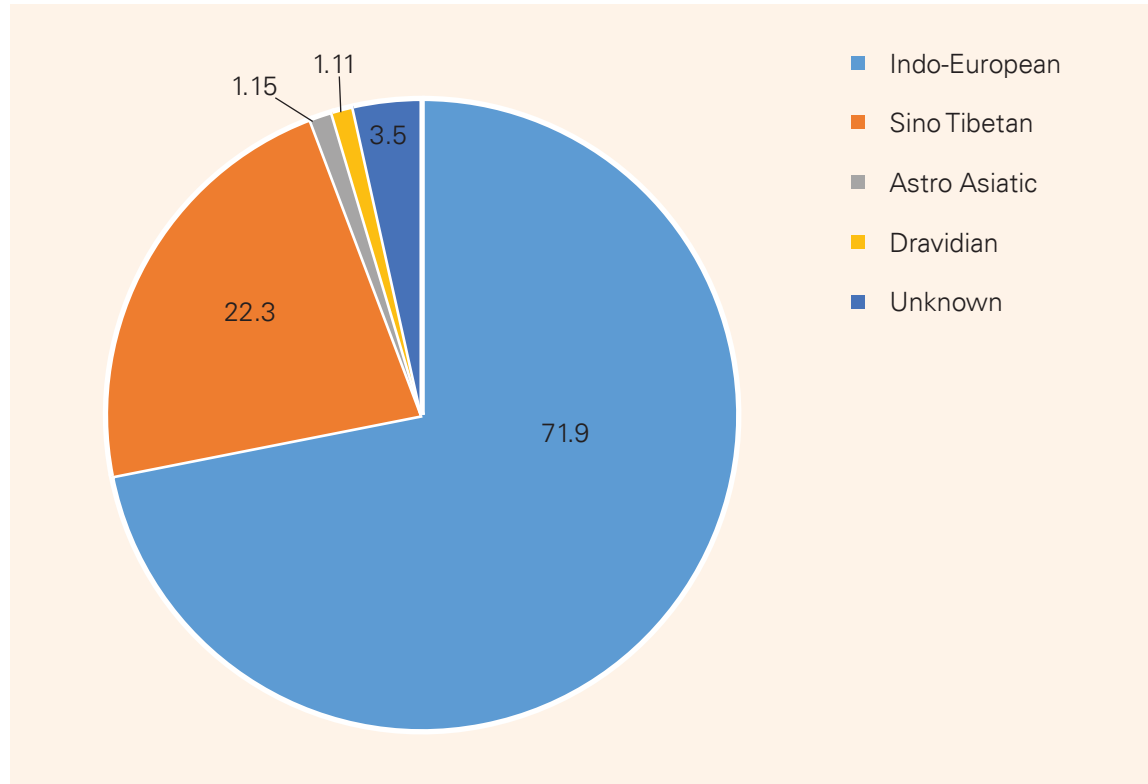
2.2 Household Size and Family Structure

The terms "household" and "family" are often used interchangeably. By and large in Nepal, one household contains one family, although in urban areas multiple families sometimes live in one house. This study utilizes the definition adopted by the Population Census of Nepal, defining a household as a family where one or more members share a common kitchen and in which members are mostly related by blood and marriage. Some families may also have a member who is not related but shares the same kitchen, such as a domestic helper.

Household size is related to the level of fertility and thereby to population growth, which has been gradually decreasing over the years in Nepal. The average household size was 5.6 in 1991 but decreased to 4.9 in 2011, according to census data (Gurung et al. 2014). In the NSIS sample, the average household size was 6 in 2012, decreasing to 5.1 in 2018. Muslims were found to have the largest average household size (7 members), followed by Madhesi Other Castes (6.1 members) and Madhesi Dalits (5.7 members), while household size was smallest among Newars and Hill Brahmins (4.5 each, Table 1). Among the 88 disaggregated caste and ethnic groups, only eight – all belonging to the Mountain/Hill Janajati or Hill Dalit categories – had a household size smaller than 4.5, with the Thakali group having the smallest household size. All Madhesi groups in the sample had average household sizes larger than five.

TABLE: 1 Household size and type of family by social groups, NSIS 2018

Social Groups	Household Size (Average)	Type of Family (%)	
		Nuclear	Joint/Extended
Hill Brahmin	4.5	43.0	57.0
Hill Chhetri	4.9	37.0	63.0
Madhesi Brahmin/ Chhetri	5.3	37.9	62.1
Madhesi Other Caste	6.1	28.7	71.3
Hill Dalit	4.9	33.7	66.3
Madhesi Dalit	5.7	25.8	74.2
Newar	4.5	39.0	61.0
Mountain/Hill Janajati	4.8	34.9	65.1
Tarai Janajati	5.4	32.1	67.9
Muslim	7.0	19.5	80.5
Marwadi	4.9	41.5	58.5
All Nepal	**5.1**	**34.9**	**65.2**

Most of households in the sample consisted of extended families (65.2%), whereas a little over one third were composed of nuclear families (Table 3.3). The nuclear family household setup was most common among Hill Brahmins and Marwadis, while it was least common among Muslims and Madhesi Dalits. Among the 88 disaggregated castes/ ethnicities, only eight groups – all of them Janajati except Kayastha (46%) – were found to have a high percentage of nuclear family-

based households. Among them, the Thakali had the highest proportion (49%) followed by Jirel, Baramu, Dura, Tajpuriya, and Gangai (See the NSIS 2020 Report). Madhesi groups like Tatma, Kewat, Muslim, and Bhediyar had the lowest percentage of nuclear family-based households.

2.3 Household Economic Indicators

2.3.1 House Ownership

Figure 2 illustrates house ownership by women. Overall, 15% of houses are owned by women, 81% by men and 4% jointly, by both men and women. Female house ownership is highest among Muslims (24.8%), followed by Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris (23.5%) and Madhesi Dalits (20.4%). It is lowest among Hill Dalits (9.7%) and Madhesi Other Castes (13.5%).

Overall, the proportion of houses owned by women has increased slightly over the last six years. Strikingly, Muslim women's house ownership has increased by almost 2.5 times, from 10.3% in NSIS 2012 to 24.8% in NSIS 2018. Much smaller increments were observed among Madhesi Dalits, Hill Brahmins, and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris. Decreases in women's house ownership were observed among Hill Dalits, Newars, and Mt/Hill Janajatis.

FIGURE 2: Percentage of houses owned by women by social group, NSIS 2012 & 2018
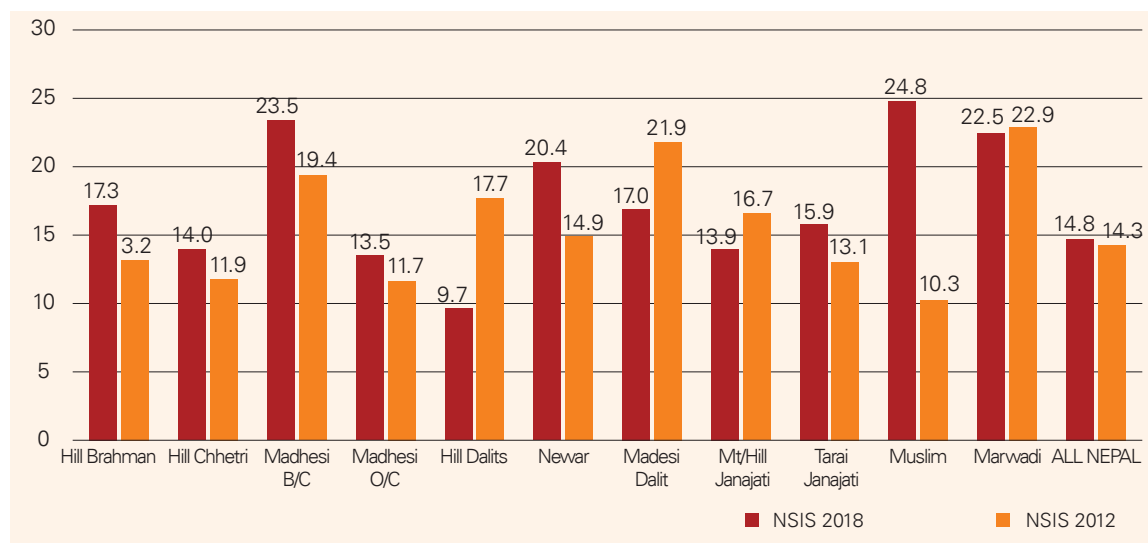
2.3.2 Main Occupation

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the majority of Nepal's population. It contributes 27.6% to GDP (CBS 2019)[2] and it accounts for about 52% of total employment (MoH, New Era and ICF 2017).[3] However, there is an ongoing shift towards non-agricultural employment, indicating an expansion of opportunities for better income for households (Gurung et al. 2014).

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[2] https://cbs.gov.np/national-accounts-of-nepal-2018-19/.
[3] The figure is an average of males (70%) and females (33%).

This report considers "occupation" as a general term for how households are engaged for most of the time in the year. Occupations are classed by sector: agriculture (farming one's own land), non-agriculture (cottage industry, industry, trade and business, services, foreign employment, pension and other benefits, indigenous/ traditional occupations and others) and casual labor (casual labor in agriculture and non-agriculture). Casual labor is categorized separately because it indicates exclusion from regular employment opportunities.

The NSIS 2012 found that 63.2% were engaged in agriculture, 26.4% in non-agriculture and 10.3% in casual labor. By contrast, NSIS 2018 found that 52.6% of households were engaged in agriculture, 34.4% in non-agriculture and 13% in casual labor. This demonstrates a shift away from agriculture to non-agricultural work and casual labor. The shift towards non-agriculture is a progressive change, whereas the shift to casual labor is not, as casual labor is usually less desirable than salaried jobs in the non-agricultural sector.

The share of households engaged in agriculture in NSIS 2018 was highest among Hill Chhetris (66.1%) followed by Mountain/ Hill Janajatis (65.7%). Relatively few Muslim households (17.5%) were engaged in agriculture. Non-agriculture sector occupations were most common among Marwadi households (100%), Hill Brahmins (63%), and Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris (57.9%). Many Newars and Muslims were also engaged in non-agricultural work. Casual labor occupations were most common among Madhesi Dalits (59%) followed by Muslims (36%).

2.3.3 Land Ownership

For the NSIS survey, households were asked about land ownership according to land type: *khet,* or irrigated land; *bari,* or unirrigated land; and *ghaderi*, or residential land. They were also asked to indicate the gender of the family member in whose name each type of plot was owned. Figure 6 illustrates land ownership by gender (among households that own land). Overall 85.9% of land is owned by males, 21.4% by females and 6.3% jointly by males and females. Male ownership is highest among Hill Dalits (90.4%) and lowest among Marwadi households (69.1%). Male land ownership is also relatively low among Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri (77.7%) and Muslim households (78%). Conversely, these groups have relatively high rates of female land ownership.

Among the disaggregated 88 caste and ethnic groups, female land ownership was found to be highest among the Badi (40.2%) and Kayastha groups (39.1%) and lowest among the Byasi (4%), Yholmo (4.6%) and Baramu (4.7%).

FIGURE 3: Male, female, and joint male-female land ownership by social group, NSIS 2018

Social Group	Male	Female	Joint
Hill Brahman	80.1	25.0	10.2
Hill Chhetri	88.9	23.2	6.6
Madhesi B/C	77.9	32.6	12.2
Madhesi O/C	86.5	20.2	10.9
Hill Dalits	90.4	12.4	2.1
Newar	82.7	24.8	3.0
Madesi Dalit	86.7	19.9	3.1
Mt/Hill Janajati	87.0	19.4	3.7
Tarai Janajati	84.9	21.6	6.1
Muslim	78.0	30.5	5.6
Marwadi	69.1	24.5	7.9
All Nepal	85.9	21.4	6.3
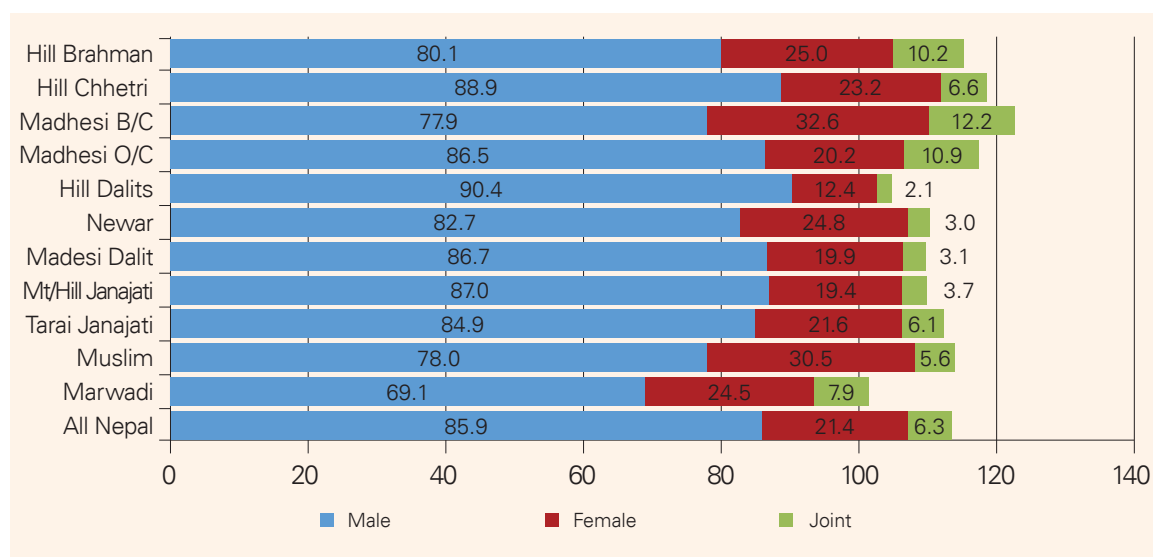
2.3.4 Educational Attainment

The NSIS 2018 found that the overall literacy rate is 71.6% -- 81.4% for males and 62.4% for females (Figure 4). As expected, this is slightly lower than NSIS 2012 (which found the overall literacy as 77% with 87% for males and 67% for females) because the NSIS 2012 collected data based on reporting rather than testing for functional literacy.

FIGURE 4: Literacy rate among population aged 6+ years and Gender Parity Index by social groups, NSIS 2018

Social Group	Both sexes	GPI
Hill Brahman	85.8	0.82
Hill Chhetri	76.8	0.74
Madhesi B/C	85.9	0.83
Madhesi O/C	60.6	0.67
Hill Dalits	67.8	0.81
Newar	42.8	0.64
Madesi Dalit	78.7	0.80
Mt/Hill Janajati	75.8	0.79
Tarai Janajati	70.0	0.74
Muslim	65.5	0.84
Marwadi	96.5	0.95
ALL NEPAL	71.6	0.77
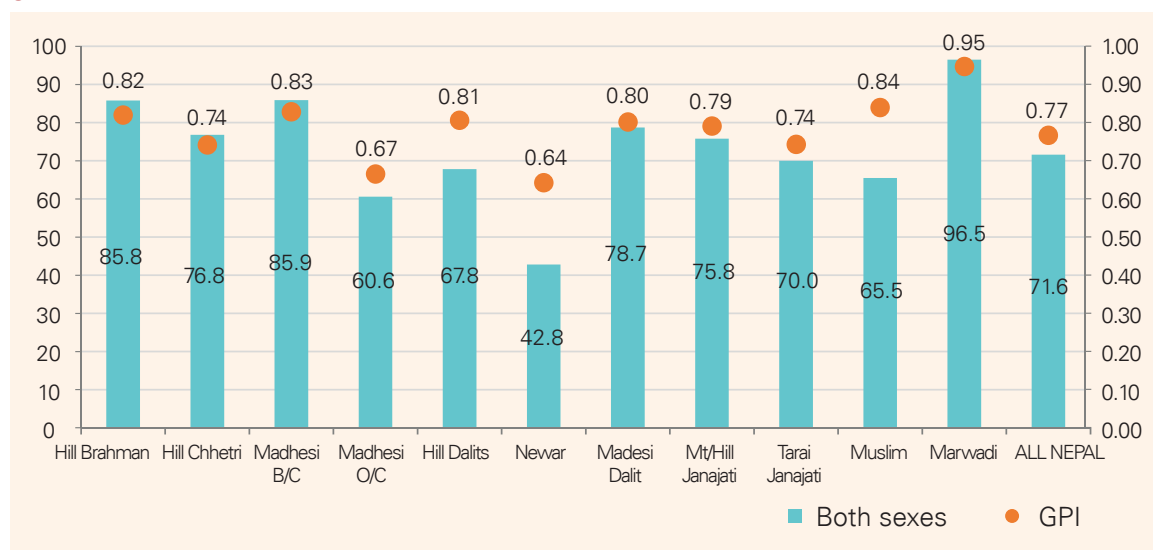
The literacy rate is highest among Marwadis, followed by Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetris and Hill Brahmins, and lowest among Madhesi Dalits followed by Madhesi Other Castes. The pattern was similar in NSIS 2012. Muslim, Tarai Janajati and Hill Dalit are also among those who have literacy rates below the national average. The Gender Parity Index, which examines the degree of gender disparity in any particular indicator, shows that the literacy rate consistently favors males among all social groups. The index is lowest among Madhesi Dalits (0.64), followed by Madhesi Other Castes (0.67). The index is close to one among Marwadis (0.95), which means gender variation in literacy is minimal within this group.

This chapter presents only selected demographic indicators of the respondents of the NSIS 2018. Gender, caste/ethnicity, literacy and language, and economic conditions of individuals and households are some of the key factors that influence access to knowledge about rights, reservations, entitlements and service provisions that are available to the population. For more details on further demographic details please refer to the full report of the NSIS 2018.

Annex 3

Sex-and Caste/Ethnicity disaggregated data for all the IG findings

TABLE 3.1: Percent of respondents who have no knowledge of affirmative action provisions for historically excluded groups in education, health care and government employment by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	33.2	43.0	38.1	1.30
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	25.6	48.5	37.1	1.89
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	26.4	46.2	36.4	1.75
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	29.2	41.2	35.3	1.41
Madhesi OC	Kewat	22.0	46.0	34.0	2.09
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	33.5	32.5	33.0	0.97
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	25.5	38.0	31.8	1.49
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	23.1	38.0	30.6	1.65
Muslim	Muslim	16.1	43.5	29.8	2.70
Madhesi OC	Kahar	17.1	42.5	29.8	2.49
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	17.7	41.5	29.6	2.34
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	23.5	35.4	29.4	1.51
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	19.0	39.5	29.3	2.08
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	20.7	36.4	28.8	1.76
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	17.8	39.5	28.7	2.22
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	23.1	34.0	28.6	1.47
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	23.0	33.5	28.3	1.46
	Subtotal	**23.3**	**39.9**	**31.6**	**1.72**
Madhesi OC	Lohar	20.0	34.5	27.3	1.73
Madhesi OC	Mallah	17.2	36.7	27.2	2.13
Madhesi OC	Mali	14.7	39.5	27.2	2.69
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	15.0	39.1	27.0	2.61
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	22.0	30.5	26.3	1.39
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	21.8	28.8	25.5	1.32
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	14.5	36.5	25.5	2.52
Madhesi OC	Teli	15.1	35.0	25.1	2.32
Madhesi OC	Barae	13.4	34.7	24.2	2.59
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	19.6	28.1	23.9	1.43
Madhesi OC	Baniya	13.6	33.5	23.6	2.46

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	14.5	30.5	22.5	2.10
Madhesi OC	Lodha	11.5	33.5	22.5	2.91
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	11.0	33.5	22.3	3.05
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	20.0	21.1	20.6	1.06
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	17.2	23.2	20.3	1.35
Hill Dalit	Kami	17.5	22.0	19.8	1.26
	Subtotal	**16.4**	**31.8**	**24.2**	**1.94**
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	7.7	31.2	19.5	4.05
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	13.9	24.6	19.3	1.77
Madhesi OC	Sonar	16.5	22.0	19.3	1.33
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	12.7	24.6	18.8	1.94
Madhesi OC	Kanu	13.0	23.5	18.3	1.81
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	16.2	20.5	18.3	1.27
Marwadi	Marwadi	10.1	27.0	18.2	2.67
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	8.5	26.5	17.5	3.12
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	12.6	21.8	17.5	1.73
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	16.5	17.0	16.8	1.03
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	15.5	18.0	16.8	1.16
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	13.9	19.3	16.7	1.39
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	5.7	27.0	16.5	4.74
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	12.5	20.5	16.5	1.64
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	8.5	24.2	16.4	2.85
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	12.1	20.0	16.0	1.65
Madhesi OC	Yadav	8.5	22.5	15.5	2.65
Madhesi OC	Koiri	11.5	19.5	15.5	1.70
	Subtotal	**12.0**	**22.8**	**17.4**	**1.90**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	9.8	20.1	15.1	2.05
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	14.7	15.5	15.1	1.05
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	9.0	21.0	15.0	2.33
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	12.0	18.0	15.0	1.50
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	9.5	20.0	14.8	2.11
Tarai Janajati	Koche	9.1	20.1	14.8	2.21
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	8.3	19.6	14.1	2.36
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	12.2	15.6	13.9	1.28
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	9.7	18.0	13.9	1.86
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	7.0	20.5	13.8	2.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	9.2	17.5	13.4	1.90
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	7.0	18.0	12.5	2.57

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	10.3	14.0	12.2	1.36
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	8.1	16.0	12.1	1.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	9.0	14.0	11.5	1.56
Hill Dalit	Sarki	8.2	13.1	10.7	1.60
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	10.4	11.0	10.7	1.06
	Subtotal	**9.6**	**17.2**	**13.4**	**1.79**
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	10.0	11.0	10.5	1.10
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	8.0	13.0	10.5	1.63
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	11.6	9.1	10.3	0.78
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	8.5	12.0	10.3	1.41
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	8.8	11.2	10.0	1.27
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	6.2	13.1	9.6	2.11
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	5.0	14.1	9.5	2.82
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	6.0	13.0	9.5	2.17
Hill Dalit	Badi	9.3	9.1	9.2	0.98
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	5.5	12.5	9.0	2.27
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	1.5	16.0	8.8	10.67
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	3.9	12.9	8.2	3.31
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	4.5	11.0	7.8	2.44
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	5.6	9.0	7.3	1.61
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	7.0	6.0	6.5	0.86
Tarai Janajati	Meche	5.5	7.0	6.3	1.27
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.00
Hill Dalit	Gaine	3.1	6.5	4.8	2.10
	Subtotal	**6.4**	**10.6**	**8.5**	**1.67**

TABLE 3.2: Percent of respondents who have no knowledge of affirmative action provisions in the political sphere by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Lodha	61.5	93.0	77.3	1.51
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	59.0	77.5	68.3	1.31
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	47.5	84.0	65.8	1.77
Madhesi OC	Kahar	47.7	83.5	65.7	1.75
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	47.5	75.0	61.3	1.58
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	46.0	76.0	61.0	1.65
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	46.2	74.0	60.2	1.60
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	44.2	74.0	59.1	1.67
Madhesi OC	Kewat	39.5	78.5	59.0	1.99
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	41.4	74.5	58.0	1.80
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	44.0	71.0	57.5	1.61
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	44.7	68.5	56.6	1.53
Madhesi OC	Mallah	40.9	71.4	56.5	1.75
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	44.1	66.2	56.0	1.50
Madhesi OC	Lohar	42.5	68.5	55.5	1.61
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	42.3	68.0	55.3	1.61
	Subtotal	**46.3**	**75.0**	**60.8**	**1.62**
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	39.7	67.7	53.9	1.71
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	31.5	76.0	53.8	2.41
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	33.0	73.5	53.3	2.23
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	35.0	70.0	52.6	2.00
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	36.0	69.0	52.5	1.92
Madhesi OC	Barae	32.0	71.9	52.2	2.25
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	33.8	70.0	52.0	2.07
Muslim	Muslim	32.7	69.0	50.9	2.11
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	41.2	60.0	50.6	1.46
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	31.7	69.0	50.4	2.18
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	33.5	65.8	49.9	1.96
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	37.0	61.0	49.0	1.65
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	40.8	55.3	48.1	1.36
Madhesi OC	Mali	24.9	70.0	47.6	2.81
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	34.0	60.0	47.3	1.76
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	35.0	59.0	47.0	1.69

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	26.5	64.0	45.1	2.42
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	33.5	56.5	45.0	1.69
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	35.7	54.4	45.0	1.52
	Subtotal	**34.1**	**65.4**	**49.8**	**1.92**
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	33.3	55.5	44.6	1.67
Madhesi OC	Yadav	23.0	66.0	44.5	2.87
Tarai Janajati	Koche	31.2	56.8	44.4	1.82
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	24.0	64.5	44.3	2.69
Madhesi OC	Teli	24.1	63.0	43.6	2.61
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	31.0	54.3	42.7	1.75
Hill Dalit	Sarki	30.8	54.3	42.6	1.76
Hill Dalit	Kami	36.0	48.5	42.3	1.35
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	25.1	59.0	42.1	2.35
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	31.3	52.0	41.8	1.66
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	31.0	50.5	40.8	1.63
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	28.6	52.5	40.7	1.84
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	26.4	54.3	40.6	2.06
Madhesi OC	Kanu	24.5	56.5	40.5	2.31
Madhesi OC	Sonar	26.5	54.0	40.3	2.04
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	26.9	51.8	40.1	1.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	32.3	47.7	40.1	1.48
	Subtotal	**28.6**	**55.4**	**42.1**	**1.94**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	33.5	44.2	38.8	1.32
Madhesi OC	Baniya	23.2	52.0	37.7	2.24
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	15.3	58.3	37.0	3.81
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	18.0	54.0	36.0	3.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	27.5	43.7	35.6	1.59
Madhesi OC	Koiri	17.5	52.5	35.0	3.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	24.5	44.4	34.8	1.81
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	19.0	49.5	34.5	2.61
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	20.9	45.7	33.6	2.19
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	25.5	41.5	33.5	1.63
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	13.5	51.0	32.6	3.78
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	24.5	40.5	32.6	1.65

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	20.6	42.4	31.5	2.06
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	21.7	41.0	31.4	1.89
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	22.0	39.0	30.5	1.77
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	17.0	44.0	30.5	2.59
Hill Dalit	Gaine	18.0	40.7	29.5	2.26
	Subtotal	**21.3**	**46.1**	**33.8**	**2.17**
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	18.0	40.0	29.0	2.22
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	15.6	42.0	28.8	2.69
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	14.6	40.0	27.3	2.74
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	17.2	36.2	26.9	2.10
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	17.0	36.5	26.8	2.15
Tarai Janajati	Meche	20.0	33.5	26.8	1.68
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	18.3	33.0	25.7	1.80
Marwadi	Marwadi	12.2	39.7	25.3	3.25
Hill Dalit	Badi	20.4	28.9	25.1	1.42
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	14.5	32.0	23.3	2.21
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	15.6	29.5	22.6	1.89
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	11.5	29.5	20.5	2.57
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	12.5	26.6	19.5	2.13
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	13.3	24.1	18.8	1.81
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	9.8	25.5	17.7	2.60
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	3.5	31.0	17.3	8.86
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	4.5	27.0	15.2	6.00
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	3.0	11.1	7.0	3.70
	Subtotal	**13.4**	**31.5**	**22.4**	**2.34**

TABLE 3.3: Percent of respondents who have no knowledge of seven freedoms, by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	27.0	44.6	35.9	1.7
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	24.2	40.5	32.4	1.7
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	20.6	43.0	32.0	2.1
Madhesi OC	Kahar	13.1	50.0	31.6	3.8
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	18.5	41.0	29.8	2.2
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	17.9	38.7	28.4	2.2
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	14.5	41.0	27.8	2.8
Madhesi OC	Lodha	10.0	37.5	23.8	3.8
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	13.0	33.0	23.0	2.5
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	12.0	32.0	22.0	2.7
Hill Dalit	Sarki	16.4	26.6	21.6	1.6
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	18.1	23.2	20.7	1.3
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	9.0	32.0	20.6	3.6
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	14.1	26.1	20.1	1.9
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	11.6	27.3	19.6	2.4
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	11.6	27.5	19.5	2.4
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	14.9	22.8	19.1	1.5
	Subtotal	**15.7**	**34.5**	**25.2**	**2.20**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	11.5	24.5	18.2	2.1
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	13.5	22.6	18.0	1.7
Madhesi OC	Kanu	10.5	24.5	17.5	2.3
Madhesi OC	Lohar	11.5	23.5	17.5	2.0
Madhesi OC	Kewat	6.5	27.5	17.0	4.2
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	10.7	22.5	16.7	2.1
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	11.6	21.5	16.5	1.9
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	7.5	24.4	16.1	3.3
Hill Dalit	Kami	9.0	23.0	16.0	2.6
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	6.1	24.5	15.4	4.0
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	8.5	22.0	15.3	2.6
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	10.7	19.5	15.1	1.8
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	9.0	20.5	14.8	2.3
Madhesi OC	Barae	6.2	22.6	14.5	3.6
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	10.7	18.1	14.4	1.7

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	4.0	24.5	14.3	6.1
Muslim	Muslim	0.5	27.5	14.0	55.0
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	11.5	16.5	14.0	1.4
	Subtotal	**8.9**	**22.8**	**15.9**	**2.57**
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	12.0	13.5	12.8	1.1
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	7.7	17.6	12.7	2.3
Hill Dalit	Gaine	6.7	18.6	12.7	2.8
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	5.5	19.5	12.5	3.5
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	7.5	17.5	12.5	2.3
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	8.8	15.7	12.5	1.8
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	9.5	15.0	12.3	1.6
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	6.2	18.1	12.2	2.9
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	7.5	16.6	12.0	2.2
Madhesi OC	Mallah	4.3	19.4	12.0	4.5
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	4.0	19.5	11.8	4.9
Tarai Janajati	Meche	9.5	14.0	11.8	1.5
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	4.5	18.5	11.5	4.1
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	6.1	16.6	11.4	2.7
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	7.6	15.1	11.4	2.0
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	9.5	13.0	11.3	1.4
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	4.6	17.0	10.9	3.7
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	8.8	12.8	10.8	1.5
	Subtotal	**7.2**	**16.6**	**12.0**	**2.29**
Madhesi OC	Baniya	5.6	15.0	10.3	2.7
Madhesi OC	Mali	3.0	17.5	10.3	5.8
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	4.0	16.0	10.0	4.0
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	6.5	13.5	10.0	2.1
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	6.1	12.0	9.0	2.0
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	6.5	11.1	8.9	1.7
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	4.1	13.3	8.7	3.2
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	5.5	11.5	8.5	2.1
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	6.5	10.5	8.5	1.6
Madhesi OC	Teli	5.5	11.0	8.3	2.0
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	5.5	11.0	8.3	2.0

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	5.2	11.1	8.2	2.1
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	2.5	13.7	8.1	5.5
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	4.0	12.0	8.0	3.0
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	0.0	14.7	7.0	
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	2.1	11.5	6.9	5.5
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	1.0	12.5	6.8	12.5
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	3.5	10.0	6.8	2.9
	Subtotal	**4.3**	**12.7**	**8.5**	**2.96**
Marwadi	Marwadi	4.2	9.2	6.6	2.2
Madhesi OC	Yadav	2.0	11.0	6.5	5.5
Madhesi OC	Koiri	3.5	9.5	6.5	2.7
Madhesi OC	Sonar	3.0	10.0	6.5	3.3
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	2.0	11.1	6.5	5.6
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	2.0	9.0	5.5	4.5
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	1.5	7.0	4.3	4.7
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	2.0	6.5	4.3	3.3
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	2.1	6.0	4.1	2.9
Hill Dalit	Badi	3.7	4.1	3.9	1.1
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	1.0	6.0	3.5	6.0
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	2.0	5.0	3.5	2.5
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	2.1	4.5	3.3	2.1
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	1.0	5.0	3.0	5.0
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	0.5	4.5	2.5	9.0
Tarai Janajati	Koche	0.0	3.0	1.6	
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.5
	Subtotal	**2.0**	**6.6**	**4.3**	**3.33**

TABLE 3.4: Percent of respondents who have no knowledge of function of local government by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	6.2	18.1	12.2	2.92
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	7.0	16.5	11.8	2.36
Madhesi OC	Kahar	5.0	15.5	10.3	3.10
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	3.5	13.5	8.5	3.86
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	3.0	13.5	8.3	4.50
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	4.0	12.0	8.0	3.00
Madhesi OC	Mali	2.0	12.0	7.1	6.00
Madhesi OC	Lohar	3.5	10.5	7.0	3.00
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	2.0	11.5	6.8	5.75
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	4.0	9.5	6.8	2.38
Madhesi OC	Barae	1.5	11.6	6.6	7.73
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	3.0	10.0	6.5	3.33
Madhesi OC	Kanu	5.5	7.5	6.5	1.36
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	3.0	9.5	6.3	3.17
Muslim	Muslim	0.0	12.0	6.0	
Madhesi OC	Teli	2.0	9.0	5.5	4.50
Madhesi OC	Kewat	2.0	9.0	5.5	4.50
Madhesi OC	Mallah	2.7	8.2	5.5	3.04
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	2.5	8.5	5.5	3.40
	Subtotal	**3.3**	**11.5**	**7.4**	**3.49**
Madhesi OC	Baniya	2.0	7.5	4.8	3.75
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	1.5	8.0	4.8	5.33
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	3.0	6.0	4.5	2.00
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	1.5	7.5	4.5	5.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	2.7	5.1	3.9	1.89
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	1.0	6.5	3.8	6.50
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	0.5	6.5	3.5	13.00
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	0.0	7.1	3.5	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	1.5	5.5	3.5	3.67
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	2.6	4.1	3.4	1.58
Madhesi OC	Sonar	1.0	5.5	3.3	5.50
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	1.0	5.0	3.1	5.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	1.6	4.5	3.1	2.81

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	0.5	5.5	3.0	11.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	2.5	3.5	3.0	1.40
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	1.0	5.0	3.0	5.00
	Subtotal	**1.5**	**5.8**	**3.7**	**3.88**
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	2.5	3.0	2.8	1.20
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	1.5	4.0	2.8	2.67
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	0.5	5.0	2.8	10.00
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	1.5	3.5	2.5	2.33
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	3.1	2.0	2.5	0.65
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	1.5	3.0	2.3	2.00
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	1.0	3.5	2.3	3.50
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	1.0	3.5	2.3	3.50
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	1.6	2.5	2.1	1.56
Hill Dalit	Kami	1.0	3.0	2.0	3.00
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	0.0	4.0	2.0	
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	1.5	2.5	2.0	1.67
Marwadi	Marwadi	1.1	2.9	1.9	2.64
Hill Dalit	Badi	3.1	1.0	1.9	0.32
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	0.5	3.0	1.8	6.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	0.5	3.0	1.8	6.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	1.0	2.5	1.8	2.50
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	1.1	2.6	1.8	2.36
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	0.5	3.1	1.8	6.20
	Subtotal	**1.3**	**3.0**	**2.2**	**2.35**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	1.6	1.0	1.3	0.63
Madhesi OC	Yadav	0.0	2.5	1.3	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	1.0	1.5	1.3	1.50
Madhesi OC	Koiri	0.0	2.5	1.3	
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	0.5	2.0	1.3	4.00
Madhesi OC	Lodha	0.0	2.5	1.3	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	1.5	0.5	1.0	0.33
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	0.0	2.0	1.0	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	0.0	2.0	1.0	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	0.5	1.5	1.0	3.00

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	0.5	1.5	1.0	3.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	0.0	2.0	1.0	
Tarai Janajati	Koche	0.0	2.0	1.0	
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	0.5	1.0	0.8	2.00
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	0.5	1.0	0.8	2.00
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	0.0	1.5	0.8	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	0.0	1.5	0.8	
Hill Dalit	Gaine	0.0	1.5	0.8	
	Subtotal	**0.4**	**1.7**	**1.0**	**4.55**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.00
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	0.0	1.0	0.5	
Hill Dalit	Sarki	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.00
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	1.0	0.0	0.5	0.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.00
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.00
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	0.0	0.5	0.3	
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	0.0	0.5	0.3	
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	0.0	0.5	0.3	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	0.0	0.5	0.3	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	0.0	0.5	0.3	
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	0.0	0.5	0.3	
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	0.0	0.5	0.3	
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Tarai Janajati	Meche	0.0	0.0	0.0	
	Subtotal	**0.2**	**0.4**	**0.3**	**1.83**

TABLE 3.5: Birth registration among children under 5 years by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	27.8	39.1	33.3	1.41
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	38.2	31.9	35.0	0.84
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	32.9	46.5	39.5	1.41
Madhesi OC	Kewat	39.8	45.8	42.7	1.15
Madhesi OC	Sonar	48.4	43.3	45.8	0.89
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	54.3	36.9	45.9	0.68
Madhesi OC	Yadav	50.7	40.9	46.0	0.81
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	54.0	40.3	47.8	0.75
Madhesi OC	Lodha	47.8	48.5	48.1	1.01
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	56.8	44.4	50.0	0.78
Madhesi OC	Mali	50.0	52.0	50.9	1.04
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	47.5	57.6	51.1	1.21
Madhesi OC	Kahar	52.3	50.0	51.2	0.96
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	58.3	44.6	51.5	0.77
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	48.7	54.2	51.7	1.11
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	53.3	54.1	53.6	1.02
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	61.2	45.8	53.6	0.75
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	51.7	56.4	54.0	1.09
	Subtotal	**48.5**	**46.2**	**47.3**	**0.95**
Muslim	Muslim	59.8	52.2	56.0	0.87
Madhesi OC	Teli	58.8	52.1	56.0	0.89
Madhesi OC	Mallah	59.4	52.7	56.3	0.89
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	61.5	50.7	56.3	0.82
Madhesi OC	Koiri	51.4	64.7	56.8	1.26
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	66.2	47.0	56.9	0.71
Madhesi OC	Barae	51.5	66.7	58.5	1.30
Madhesi OC	Baniya	63.6	52.0	58.6	0.82
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	61.0	56.9	58.7	0.93
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	58.5	59.0	58.8	1.01
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	50.7	68.3	59.1	1.35
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	61.3	56.9	59.2	0.93
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	58.9	60.6	59.7	1.03
Madhesi OC	Lohar	62.0	57.6	59.9	0.93

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	60.0	60.5	60.3	1.01
Madhesi OC	Kanu	67.1	54.7	60.6	0.82
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	60.0	66.0	62.7	1.10
	Subtotal	**59.5**	**57.6**	**58.5**	**0.97**
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	65.8	58.7	63.0	0.89
Tarai Janajati	Koche	71.7	54.3	63.0	0.76
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	68.3	58.8	64.0	0.86
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	59.1	67.9	64.0	1.15
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	61.4	70.6	64.8	1.15
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	67.4	63.6	65.3	0.94
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	70.0	61.2	66.0	0.87
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	73.3	61.3	67.2	0.84
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	79.5	55.8	67.8	0.70
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	72.4	64.5	68.3	0.89
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	76.3	61.8	69.4	0.81
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	70.3	69.6	70.0	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	74.4	64.7	70.1	0.87
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	65.6	77.1	70.5	1.18
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	71.7	70.8	71.2	0.99
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	69.8	74.4	71.7	1.07
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	78.2	66.0	72.5	0.84
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	70.8	74.1	72.5	1.05
	Subtotal	**70.3**	**65.3**	**67.9**	**0.93**
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	75.6	70.3	73.2	0.93
Hill Dalit	Badi	75.0	73.8	74.3	0.98
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	75.4	73.3	74.5	0.97
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	78.1	69.4	74.6	0.89
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	72.7	76.7	74.7	1.06
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	75.6	75.6	75.6	1.00
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	75.9	76.7	76.2	1.01
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	80.0	73.1	76.3	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	85.2	70.3	76.6	0.83
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	76.9	77.3	77.1	1.01
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	71.4	82.1	77.1	1.15

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	86.5	72.5	78.4	0.84
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	77.5	79.7	78.5	1.03
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	82.5	74.2	78.9	0.90
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	74.4	86.2	79.4	1.16
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	85.4	71.9	79.5	0.84
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	78.0	81.8	79.6	1.05
	Subtotal	**78.0**	**75.6**	**76.7**	**0.97**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	86.7	74.3	80.0	0.86
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	73.0	90.7	80.2	1.24
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	79.5	83.3	81.0	1.05
Marwadi	Marwadi	82.8	78.9	81.3	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	89.5	69.2	81.3	0.77
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	77.5	84.8	81.4	1.09
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	81.6	81.4	81.5	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	81.8	85.0	83.3	1.04
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	82.5	91.7	86.8	1.11
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	89.6	85.0	87.5	0.95
Hill Dalit	Kami	95.9	81.3	88.7	0.85
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	85.3	94.5	90.1	1.11
Hill Dalit	Sarki	92.2	89.1	90.7	0.97
Hill Dalit	Gaine	89.7	94.1	91.8	1.05
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	87.8	95.5	91.8	1.09
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	96.5	96.7	96.6	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	97.9	98.3	98.1	1.00
Tarai Janajati	Meche	97.3	100.0	98.9	1.03
	Subtotal	**87.1**	**87.4**	**87.3**	**1.00**

TABLE 3.6: Citizenship certificate among population aged 16 years and above by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	77.2	59.3	68.1	0.77
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	81.4	59.9	70.4	0.74
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	82.3	64.5	73.1	0.78
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	83.0	62.8	73.1	0.76
Madhesi OC	Lodha	84.6	66.3	75.7	0.78
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	83.7	68.5	76.0	0.82
Madhesi OC	Mallah	83.6	69.2	76.5	0.83
Marwadi	Marwadi	79.7	74.0	76.9	0.93
Madhesi OC	Kahar	86.8	67.6	77.3	0.78
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	87.4	69.1	78.1	0.79
Tarai Janajati	Koche	85.4	72.5	78.6	0.85
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	90.3	68.1	79.1	0.75
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	90.5	68.5	79.5	0.76
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	87.9	72.4	79.5	0.82
Madhesi OC	Sonar	88.0	70.5	79.7	0.80
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	87.2	72.2	79.7	0.83
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	89.6	71.1	80.3	0.79
Madhesi OC	Kewat	89.2	72.7	80.6	0.82
	Subtotal	**85.4**	**68.3**	**76.8**	**0.80**
Madhesi OC	Lohar	89.8	72.1	81.0	0.80
Muslim	Muslim	90.2	72.2	81.1	0.80
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	91.0	72.6	81.6	0.80
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	91.9	72.8	82.1	0.79
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	88.7	75.6	82.2	0.85
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	92.5	72.8	82.3	0.79
Madhesi OC	Yadav	90.2	74.9	82.6	0.83
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	91.1	74.3	82.6	0.82
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	91.3	73.9	82.7	0.81
Madhesi OC	Barae	90.5	74.3	82.7	0.82
Madhesi OC	Kanu	89.7	75.9	82.9	0.85
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	93.2	73.8	83.1	0.79
Madhesi OC	Baniya	90.4	76.4	83.3	0.85
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	90.5	75.7	83.3	0.84

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Hill Dalit	Badi	88.7	79.7	83.4	0.90
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	89.5	78.0	83.5	0.87
Madhesi OC	Mali	92.2	73.9	83.5	0.80
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	87.4	79.8	83.5	0.91
	Subtotal	**90.5**	**74.9**	**82.6**	**0.83**
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	90.5	77.8	83.7	0.86
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	89.9	78.4	84.1	0.87
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	91.2	78.3	84.4	0.86
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	91.0	79.9	85.3	0.88
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	89.6	81.6	85.4	0.91
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	93.3	78.7	85.5	0.84
Madhesi OC	Teli	93.0	80.3	86.7	0.86
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	91.4	83.3	87.5	0.91
Madhesi OC	Koiri	94.7	80.7	87.8	0.85
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	91.8	84.3	87.8	0.92
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	92.5	83.8	87.8	0.91
Hill Dalit	Kami	89.9	86.6	88.2	0.96
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	94.4	81.9	88.2	0.87
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	91.8	84.5	88.3	0.92
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	88.9	87.7	88.3	0.99
Hill Dalit	Sarki	93.1	84.9	88.6	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	89.7	87.6	88.6	0.98
	Subtotal	**91.6**	**82.4**	**86.8**	**0.90**
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	91.8	86.1	88.9	0.94
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	92.1	86.3	89.3	0.94
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	92.0	86.9	89.4	0.94
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	93.2	86.6	89.6	0.93
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	93.8	85.8	89.7	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	90.3	89.3	89.8	0.99
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	94.6	84.5	89.8	0.89
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	94.1	86.0	90.0	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	91.6	88.4	90.0	0.97
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	90.2	89.8	90.0	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	91.6	88.9	90.2	0.97

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Hill Dalit	Gaine	94.9	86.2	90.3	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	93.1	88.2	90.5	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	95.5	87.1	90.8	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	94.8	87.0	90.9	0.92
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	91.2	91.3	91.3	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	95.0	88.0	91.3	0.93
	Subtotal	**92.9**	**87.4**	**90.1**	**0.94**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	92.9	90.2	91.4	0.97
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	91.1	91.8	91.5	1.01
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	92.6	90.8	91.7	0.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	92.8	91.0	91.9	0.98
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	94.0	90.0	92.0	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	93.7	91.1	92.3	0.97
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	94.2	91.3	92.7	0.97
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	92.6	93.4	93.0	1.01
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	93.9	92.5	93.1	0.99
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	95.4	91.4	93.3	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	94.8	92.6	93.6	0.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	94.5	93.1	93.8	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	96.4	92.2	94.2	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	96.8	92.9	94.9	0.96
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	97.2	94.6	95.9	0.97
Tarai Janajati	Meche	98.4	94.3	96.1	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	95.4	97.9	96.7	1.03
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	96.9	96.9	96.9	1.00
	Subtotal	**94.6**	**92.7**	**93.6**	**0.98**

TABLE 3.7: Percent of respondents who participated in the community development activities by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Marwadi	Marwadi	12.2	2.3	7.4	0.19
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	14.0	1.0	7.5	0.07
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	17.6	2.0	9.8	0.11
Madhesi OC	Lohar	18.0	3.0	10.5	0.17
Tarai Janajati	Koche	20.4	5.5	12.7	0.27
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	24.0	3.0	13.5	0.13
Madhesi OC	Sonar	27.0	0.5	13.8	0.02
Madhesi OC	Kanu	23.5	5.0	14.3	0.21
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	24.6	4.0	14.3	0.16
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	22.1	7.0	14.6	0.32
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	26.9	3.5	15.1	0.13
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	29.1	2.0	15.5	0.07
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	25.5	6.5	16.0	0.25
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	28.5	5.0	16.8	0.18
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	30.8	3.5	17.1	0.11
Madhesi OC	Mali	29.4	5.5	17.4	0.19
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	29.0	6.0	17.5	0.21
	Subtotal	**23.7**	**3.8**	**13.8**	**0.16**
Muslim	Muslim	33.2	2.5	17.8	0.08
Madhesi OC	Teli	34.7	1.0	17.8	0.03
Madhesi OC	Lodha	33.0	3.0	18.0	0.09
Madhesi OC	Barae	33.0	3.5	18.1	0.11
Madhesi OC	Mallah	30.1	7.7	18.6	0.26
Madhesi OC	Kahar	33.2	4.5	18.8	0.14
Madhesi OC	Kewat	36.5	1.5	19.0	0.04
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	29.0	10.0	19.5	0.34
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	35.2	4.5	19.6	0.13
Madhesi OC	Baniya	30.8	8.5	19.6	0.28
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	36.9	2.5	19.6	0.07
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	29.5	10.5	20.0	0.36
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	33.2	7.0	20.1	0.21
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	35.5	5.5	20.5	0.15
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	38.0	3.0	20.7	0.08

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	35.6	6.5	20.9	0.18
Madhesi OC	Koiri	37.0	5.0	21.0	0.14
	Subtotal	**33.8**	**5.1**	**19.4**	**0.15**
Madhesi OC	Yadav	38.5	4.5	21.5	0.12
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	32.7	10.5	21.6	0.32
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	34.0	9.5	21.8	0.28
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	41.3	3.0	22.0	0.07
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	29.2	15.5	22.2	0.53
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	37.0	7.5	22.3	0.20
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	31.7	18.5	25.1	0.58
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	36.9	17.5	27.1	0.47
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	49.0	9.0	29.0	0.18
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	41.7	16.2	29.0	0.39
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	40.5	18.0	29.3	0.44
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	48.0	12.0	30.0	0.25
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	43.5	17.5	30.5	0.40
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	42.0	21.5	31.8	0.51
Tarai Janajati	Meche	43.5	20.5	32.0	0.47
Hill Dalit	Kami	43.0	25.0	34.0	0.58
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	53.3	15.1	34.0	0.28
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	41.8	26.7	34.1	0.64
	Subtotal	**40.4**	**14.9**	**27.6**	**0.37**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	43.0	27.5	35.3	0.64
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	54.7	18.1	36.1	0.33
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	48.5	25.0	36.5	0.52
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	58.3	23.1	40.7	0.40
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	62.5	19.5	41.0	0.31
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	54.0	28.6	41.4	0.53
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	61.8	22.0	41.4	0.36
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	65.1	20.3	41.4	0.31
Hill Dalit	Sarki	53.8	34.2	43.9	0.64
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	60.1	28.0	44.0	0.47
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	76.5	16.2	44.0	0.21
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	62.8	25.6	44.1	0.41

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	58.5	30.7	44.4	0.52
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	60.5	28.5	44.5	0.47
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	64.0	26.0	45.0	0.41
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	63.3	27.0	45.1	0.43
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	61.7	29.5	45.5	0.48
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	60.3	29.4	45.6	0.49
	Subtotal	**59.4**	**25.5**	**42.2**	**0.43**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	58.8	34.0	46.1	0.58
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	57.3	35.4	46.2	0.62
Hill Dalit	Gaine	60.8	33.2	46.8	0.55
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	71.1	25.1	48.0	0.35
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	59.5	37.2	48.2	0.63
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	62.0	38.2	50.1	0.62
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	56.1	44.1	50.1	0.79
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	67.0	35.5	51.1	0.53
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	61.5	48.0	54.8	0.78
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	75.5	36.4	55.2	0.48
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	73.5	40.7	57.1	0.55
Hill Dalit	Badi	59.3	55.3	57.1	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	75.1	42.8	58.7	0.57
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	75.0	44.5	59.6	0.59
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	78.9	41.8	60.3	0.53
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	68.8	54.5	61.7	0.79
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	80.5	49.0	64.8	0.61
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	82.9	57.0	69.9	0.69
	Subtotal	**68.0**	**41.8**	**54.8**	**0.62**

TABLE 3.8: Percent of respondents whose voice heard while participating in the community development activities by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	53.6	32.3	46.0	0.60
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	70.9	42.3	59.5	0.60
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	63.8	54.0	60.4	0.85
Tarai Janajati	Koche	71.1	27.3	61.2	0.38
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	69.1	48.6	62.1	0.70
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	65.3	57.9	62.5	0.89
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	71.2	45.7	63.0	0.64
Madhesi OC	Kahar	60.6	88.9	64.0	1.47
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	69.4	37.5	64.9	0.54
Tarai Janajati	Meche	77.0	43.9	66.4	0.57
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	67.8	66.7	67.5	0.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	69.5	63.6	67.9	0.92
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	71.3	60.0	68.0	0.84
Madhesi OC	Lodha	68.2	66.7	68.1	0.98
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	75.0	55.8	68.5	0.74
Hill Dalit	Sarki	74.3	60.3	68.8	0.81
Madhesi OC	Lohar	72.2	50.0	69.0	0.69
	Subtotal	**68.8**	**53.0**	**64.0**	**0.77**
Madhesi OC	Koiri	74.3	40.0	70.2	0.54
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	72.3	66.1	70.3	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	74.8	62.9	70.3	0.84
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	74.1	60.0	70.5	0.81
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	77.1	52.0	70.5	0.67
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	78.5	54.4	70.8	0.69
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	83.1	33.3	70.9	0.40
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	77.9	46.7	70.9	0.60
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	75.0	58.3	71.7	0.78
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	77.2	60.8	72.4	0.79
Hill Dalit	Kami	73.3	72.0	72.8	0.98
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	75.0	50.0	73.3	0.67
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	80.2	58.3	73.5	0.73
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	74.4	72.7	73.8	0.98
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	81.0	62.2	74.0	0.77

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	73.0	80.0	74.2	1.10
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	77.6	64.1	74.4	0.83
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	76.2	70.4	74.4	0.92
	Subtotal	**76.4**	**59.1**	**72.2**	**0.77**
Madhesi OC	Mallah	76.8	66.7	74.6	0.87
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	78.9	67.3	75.6	0.85
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	75.2	77.8	75.9	1.03
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	81.8	66.2	76.4	0.81
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	78.3	69.2	76.8	0.88
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	78.9	50.0	76.8	0.63
Madhesi OC	Baniya	82.0	58.8	76.9	0.72
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	77.8	66.7	77.0	0.86
Hill Dalit	Badi	83.3	71.6	77.1	0.86
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	75.9	100.0	77.4	1.32
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	80.7	72.4	77.6	0.90
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	79.1	75.7	77.8	0.96
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	80.4	69.2	78.1	0.86
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	75.9	91.7	78.6	1.21
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	83.3	57.1	78.8	0.69
Madhesi OC	Kewat	80.8	33.3	78.9	0.41
Madhesi OC	Barae	79.7	71.4	78.9	0.90
	Subtotal	**79.3**	**68.5**	**77.2**	**0.86**
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	85.5	62.5	79.1	0.73
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	80.7	75.0	79.2	0.93
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	77.1	100.0	79.5	1.30
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	79.2	83.3	79.6	1.05
Madhesi OC	Sonar	81.5	0.0	80.0	0.00
Muslim	Muslim	80.3	80.0	80.3	1.00
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	82.4	73.7	80.5	0.89
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	85.5	74.6	81.0	0.87
Hill Dalit	Gaine	83.9	75.8	81.0	0.90
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	81.5	80.7	81.2	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	86.7	72.1	81.6	0.83
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	81.7	81.8	81.7	1.00

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	86.8	42.9	81.7	0.49
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	87.8	55.6	82.8	0.63
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	79.5	92.9	82.8	1.17
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	87.6	72.9	82.8	0.83
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	86.2	71.9	83.3	0.83
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	89.1	74.6	83.6	0.84
	Subtotal	**83.5**	**70.6**	**81.2**	**0.85**
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	83.6	84.8	84.0	1.01
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	89.4	74.7	84.0	0.84
Madhesi OC	Kanu	85.1	80.0	84.2	0.94
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	83.8	88.9	84.4	1.06
Madhesi OC	Teli	84.1	100.0	84.5	1.19
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	85.4	83.3	84.5	0.98
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	84.9	80.0	84.6	0.94
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	86.3	82.9	85.1	0.96
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	86.0	80.0	85.1	0.93
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	91.4	77.0	85.8	0.84
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	89.1	82.6	86.2	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	87.8	85.2	86.8	0.97
Madhesi OC	Yadav	92.2	55.6	88.4	0.60
Marwadi	Marwadi	91.3	75.0	88.9	0.82
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	93.4	71.4	91.2	0.76
Madhesi OC	Mali	93.1	90.9	92.8	0.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	94.4	89.6	92.9	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	97.3	87.2	92.9	0.90
	Subtotal	**88.8**	**81.6**	**87.0**	**0.92**

TABLE 3.9: **Percent of respondents who were represented in local organizations by sex and caste/ethnicity**

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	6.5	16.1	11.3	2.48
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	13.5	9.0	11.3	0.67
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	13.6	17.5	15.5	1.29
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	10.1	24.0	17.0	2.38
Madhesi OC	Lohar	11.0	23.5	17.3	2.14
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	7.5	29.0	18.3	3.87
Madhesi OC	Mallah	14.5	22.4	18.6	1.54
Madhesi OC	Teli	28.1	10.0	19.0	0.36
Madhesi OC	Sonar	15.5	23.5	19.5	1.52
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	25.1	14.0	19.5	0.56
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	13.1	26.5	19.8	2.02
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	30.6	10.6	20.5	0.35
Muslim	Muslim	28.1	14.0	21.1	0.50
Madhesi OC	Barae	21.6	21.1	21.4	0.98
Madhesi OC	Kanu	18.0	25.0	21.5	1.39
Madhesi OC	Lodha	23.5	20.0	21.8	0.85
Tarai Janajati	Koche	15.1	28.6	22.1	1.89
	Subtotal	**17.4**	**19.7**	**18.6**	**1.13**
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	19.8	24.5	22.2	1.24
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	24.0	22.5	23.3	0.94
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	16.0	31.0	23.5	1.94
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	32.1	18.5	25.2	0.58
Madhesi OC	Yadav	27.5	23.0	25.3	0.84
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	13.0	38.5	25.8	2.96
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	27.5	25.0	26.3	0.91
Madhesi OC	Mali	32.5	20.5	26.4	0.63
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	26.5	27.0	26.8	1.02
Madhesi OC	Kahar	32.7	22.5	27.6	0.69
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	20.6	36.0	28.3	1.75
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	29.5	27.5	28.5	0.93
Madhesi OC	Koiri	27.0	31.0	29.0	1.15
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	30.4	27.6	29.0	0.91
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	36.5	21.3	29.0	0.58

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	37.4	21.0	29.1	0.56
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	20.5	39.0	29.8	1.90
	Subtotal	**26.7**	**26.8**	**26.8**	**1.01**
Madhesi OC	Kewat	31.5	30.5	31.0	0.97
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	27.0	37.5	32.3	1.39
Madhesi OC	Baniya	40.9	26.0	33.4	0.64
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	24.6	43.0	33.8	1.75
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	28.5	43.0	35.8	1.51
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	32.5	41.5	37.0	1.28
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	28.8	47.0	37.9	1.63
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	34.5	43.5	39.0	1.26
Marwadi	Marwadi	54.0	25.3	40.2	0.47
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	53.0	28.0	40.5	0.53
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	34.5	48.0	41.3	1.39
Tarai Janajati	Meche	37.5	52.0	44.8	1.39
Hill Dalit	Badi	30.2	58.4	45.7	1.93
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	43.4	52.8	48.2	1.22
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	45.2	53.5	49.4	1.18
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	37.5	65.5	51.8	1.75
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	52.0	55.5	53.8	1.07
	Subtotal	**37.4**	**44.2**	**40.9**	**1.18**
Hill Dalit	Kami	47.5	63.5	55.5	1.34
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	53.5	58.5	56.0	1.09
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	49.5	69.0	59.3	1.39
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	59.8	61.5	60.7	1.03
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	56.2	66.0	61.2	1.17
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	64.8	62.8	63.8	0.97
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	60.1	68.5	64.3	1.14
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	65.8	68.0	66.9	1.03
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	64.8	71.4	68.1	1.10
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	70.1	66.3	68.2	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	67.0	69.3	68.2	1.03
Hill Dalit	Sarki	59.5	76.9	68.3	1.29
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	65.6	71.2	68.5	1.09

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	70.5	68.0	69.3	0.96
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	63.1	77.4	70.3	1.23
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	69.2	71.9	70.6	1.04
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	68.9	73.8	71.4	1.07
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	74.0	69.8	71.9	0.94
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	67.0	77.5	72.3	1.16
	Subtotal	**63.0**	**69.0**	**66.0**	**1.10**
Hill Dalit	Gaine	74.7	76.9	75.8	1.03
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	73.4	79.4	76.5	1.08
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	71.5	81.9	76.7	1.15
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	74.3	79.2	76.8	1.07
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	80.0	74.0	77.0	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	75.5	80.4	78.0	1.06
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	75.3	81.3	78.5	1.08
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	78.3	78.9	78.6	1.01
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	73.1	84.3	79.0	1.15
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	84.8	74.7	79.6	0.88
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	81.6	79.5	80.6	0.97
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	77.2	86.0	81.6	1.11
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	81.9	82.5	82.2	1.01
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	79.6	85.0	82.4	1.07
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	86.3	79.9	83.1	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	84.9	87.1	86.0	1.03
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	84.9	88.0	86.5	1.04
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	87.0	86.5	86.8	0.99
	Subtotal	**79.1**	**81.4**	**80.3**	**1.03**

TABLE 3.10: Percent of respondents whose views were respectfully heard while participating in development processes by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	68.6	60.4	64.4	0.88
Madhesi OC	Kahar	66.7	68.3	67.3	1.02
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	68.0	70.7	69.4	1.04
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	74.3	69.2	71.0	0.93
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	77.4	70.6	73.6	0.91
Madhesi OC	Barae	80.5	69.4	75.3	0.86
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	79.7	72.0	75.4	0.90
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	81.1	72.6	75.8	0.90
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	80.0	70.0	76.0	0.88
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	78.1	74.2	76.1	0.95
Hill Dalit	Kami	76.7	76.0	76.3	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	79.8	74.1	76.6	0.93
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	81.3	72.1	76.9	0.89
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	78.7	77.8	78.2	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	83.0	74.2	78.9	0.89
Madhesi OC	Kewat	79.7	78.4	79.1	0.98
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	76.5	81.5	79.4	1.07
	Subtotal	**77.1**	**72.4**	**74.7**	**0.94**
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	81.6	77.8	79.5	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	84.7	74.1	79.7	0.87
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	68.4	85.7	80.3	1.25
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	81.5	79.4	80.3	0.97
Tarai Janajati	Meche	81.0	79.7	80.3	0.98
Hill Dalit	Sarki	79.4	81.3	80.5	1.02
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	82.8	79.9	81.3	0.96
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	84.8	77.6	81.4	0.92
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	80.5	82.2	81.4	1.02
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	80.6	82.4	81.5	1.02
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	75.0	86.4	82.4	1.15
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	85.1	80.5	82.8	0.95
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	84.9	81.3	83.0	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	83.1	83.3	83.2	1.00
Hill Dalit	Gaine	86.2	81.5	83.9	0.95

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	80.8	86.0	84.1	1.06
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	86.6	81.9	84.2	0.95
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	78.2	89.7	85.0	1.15
	Subtotal	**81.4**	**81.7**	**81.9**	**1.00**
Madhesi OC	Teli	84.0	88.2	85.1	1.05
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	90.3	80.6	85.3	0.89
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	87.0	84.2	85.4	0.97
Madhesi OC	Yadav	90.9	78.9	86.0	0.87
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	75.0	88.9	86.0	1.19
Madhesi OC	Koiri	84.3	88.2	86.3	1.05
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	87.1	84.8	86.3	0.97
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	85.7	87.5	86.5	1.02
Madhesi OC	Sonar	93.3	81.1	86.6	0.87
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	91.3	80.0	86.8	0.88
Madhesi OC	Lodha	83.3	93.5	87.7	1.12
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	93.5	82.9	87.7	0.89
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	95.8	84.5	87.8	0.88
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	85.4	89.7	88.1	1.05
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	85.5	90.7	88.2	1.06
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	86.6	89.7	88.2	1.04
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	92.6	73.3	88.4	0.79
	Subtotal	**87.7**	**85.1**	**86.8**	**0.97**
Madhesi OC	Mallah	84.0	91.9	88.7	1.09
Muslim	Muslim	87.2	92.0	88.9	1.06
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	90.2	87.6	89.0	0.97
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	91.4	86.9	89.2	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	90.4	88.2	89.4	0.98
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	89.8	89.1	89.5	0.99
Madhesi OC	Baniya	92.3	86.5	90.2	0.94
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	95.4	87.0	90.2	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	92.3	89.2	90.7	0.97
Tarai Janajati	Koche	95.2	88.9	90.9	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	96.6	85.4	90.9	0.88
Madhesi OC	Kanu	94.3	88.6	91.1	0.94

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	92.0	90.7	91.2	0.99
Madhesi OC	Mali	91.1	91.4	91.2	1.00
Hill Dalit	Badi	94.9	89.9	91.3	0.95
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	92.7	90.3	91.4	0.97
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	94.0	88.4	91.4	0.94
	Subtotal	**92.0**	**88.9**	**90.3**	**0.97**
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	87.0	95.8	91.5	1.10
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	92.3	90.7	91.5	0.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	93.2	89.7	91.6	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	93.8	90.8	92.2	0.97
Madhesi OC	Lohar	90.9	93.0	92.3	1.02
Marwadi	Marwadi	94.4	86.2	92.4	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	93.8	91.3	92.6	0.97
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	92.6	94.2	93.5	1.02
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	94.6	92.7	93.6	0.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	97.1	90.3	93.8	0.93
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	94.8	91.7	93.9	0.97
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	94.0	93.5	93.9	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	93.8	96.0	94.9	1.02
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	95.1	96.4	95.7	1.01
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	95.7	95.7	95.7	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	97.0	94.2	95.7	0.97
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	96.7	95.4	96.1	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	95.0	97.8	96.3	1.03
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	96.1	98.0	96.7	1.02
	Subtotal	**94.1**	**93.3**	**93.9**	**0.99**

TABLE 3.11: Percent of respondents who voted in the last elections (local/provincial federal) by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	71.4	51.3	61.3	0.72
Hill Dalit	Badi	69.8	63.5	66.3	0.91
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	79.0	55.0	67.0	0.70
Marwadi	Marwadi	77.2	60.3	69.1	0.78
Madhesi OC	Lodha	82.5	56.0	69.3	0.68
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	85.5	55.0	70.3	0.64
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	75.9	69.0	72.4	0.91
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	84.5	61.0	72.8	0.72
Madhesi OC	Kewat	80.5	65.0	72.8	0.81
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	84.0	63.0	73.5	0.75
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	77.8	69.7	73.7	0.90
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	84.4	63.5	73.9	0.75
Madhesi OC	Mallah	86.0	62.8	74.1	0.73
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	82.5	67.0	74.8	0.81
Madhesi OC	Kahar	88.4	61.5	74.9	0.70
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	84.9	65.0	74.9	0.77
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	80.4	70.0	75.1	0.87
	Subtotal	**80.9**	**62.3**	**71.5**	**0.77**
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	86.0	64.5	75.3	0.75
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	78.8	72.5	75.6	0.92
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	86.3	66.0	76.1	0.76
Tarai Janajati	Koche	81.2	71.4	76.1	0.88
Muslim	Muslim	85.9	66.5	76.2	0.77
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	87.0	65.5	76.3	0.75
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	86.0	67.0	76.5	0.78
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	89.2	64.8	76.8	0.73
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	83.8	71.0	77.4	0.85
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	83.9	71.5	77.6	0.85
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	88.5	67.0	77.8	0.76
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	91.0	65.5	78.3	0.72
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	89.9	67.0	78.4	0.75
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	85.4	71.5	78.4	0.84
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	84.4	71.8	78.4	0.85

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	78.0	79.4	78.7	1.02
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	85.0	73.0	79.0	0.86
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	84.2	74.4	79.2	0.88
	Subtotal	**85.3**	**69.5**	**77.3**	**0.81**
Madhesi OC	Barae	84.5	75.4	79.9	0.89
Madhesi OC	Lohar	94.5	66.5	80.5	0.70
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	86.0	75.5	80.8	0.88
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	80.1	81.5	80.8	1.02
Madhesi OC	Teli	91.0	72.0	81.5	0.79
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	82.9	80.0	81.5	0.97
Madhesi OC	Mali	89.3	74.5	81.9	0.83
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	86.0	78.5	82.3	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	85.5	79.4	82.4	0.93
Madhesi OC	Sonar	93.0	72.0	82.5	0.77
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	82.2	82.9	82.6	1.01
Hill Dalit	Gaine	86.1	79.4	82.7	0.92
Madhesi OC	Yadav	89.5	76.0	82.8	0.85
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	84.7	80.9	82.8	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	87.0	79.0	83.0	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	85.1	81.1	83.1	0.95
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	90.0	76.5	83.3	0.85
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	89.9	77.0	83.4	0.86
	Subtotal	**87.1**	**77.1**	**82.1**	**0.89**
Hill Dalit	Sarki	86.7	80.4	83.5	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	84.0	83.2	83.6	0.99
Madhesi OC	Koiri	91.5	76.0	83.8	0.83
Madhesi OC	Kanu	91.5	76.0	83.8	0.83
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	86.2	81.4	83.8	0.94
Madhesi OC	Baniya	88.9	79.0	83.9	0.89
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	83.4	85.9	84.6	1.03
Hill Dalit	Kami	87.0	82.5	84.8	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	85.0	84.8	84.9	1.00
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	92.5	78.2	85.4	0.85
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	91.7	79.3	85.4	0.86

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	86.0	85.5	85.8	0.99
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	89.0	82.5	85.8	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	89.8	82.0	85.9	0.91
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	85.4	86.5	85.9	1.01
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	86.5	85.5	86.0	0.99
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	90.5	82.0	86.2	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	91.5	81.0	86.2	0.89
	Subtotal	**88.2**	**81.8**	**85.0**	**0.93**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	90.5	83.9	87.2	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	92.4	83.3	87.5	0.90
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	89.5	86.0	87.8	0.96
Tarai Janajati	Meche	91.0	84.5	87.8	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	86.8	89.0	87.9	1.03
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	92.2	84.5	88.3	0.92
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	90.5	86.4	88.5	0.95
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	96.9	80.4	88.6	0.83
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	89.3	88.0	88.6	0.99
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	92.3	85.6	89.0	0.93
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	87.2	91.0	89.1	1.04
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	89.4	89.5	89.5	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	93.5	85.5	89.5	0.91
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	91.5	87.9	89.7	0.96
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	90.8	88.9	89.8	0.98
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	94.5	87.5	91.0	0.93
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	92.2	92.0	92.1	1.00
	Subtotal	**91.2**	**86.7**	**88.9**	**0.95**

TABLE 3.12: Percent of respondents who reported positively about their agency and capacity as rights holders by caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Lodha	31.0	3.5	17.3	0.11
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	25.5	12.1	18.8	0.47
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	28.1	18.0	23.1	0.64
Hill Dalit	Badi	36.4	15.2	24.8	0.42
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	42.0	10.5	26.3	0.25
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	33.5	24.5	29.0	0.73
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	34.2	25.0	29.5	0.73
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	34.5	27.1	30.8	0.79
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	38.0	24.0	31.0	0.63
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	37.7	24.5	31.1	0.65
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	31.5	31.3	31.4	0.99
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	39.7	24.0	31.8	0.60
Madhesi OC	Sonar	42.0	22.5	32.3	0.54
Madhesi OC	Kahar	45.7	22.0	33.8	0.48
Madhesi OC	Mallah	41.9	26.5	34.0	0.63
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	38.7	29.6	34.1	0.76
Hill Dalit	Kami	41.5	27.5	34.5	0.66
	Subtotal	**36.6**	**21.6**	**29.0**	**0.59**
Madhesi OC	Lohar	41.0	28.5	34.8	0.70
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	44.0	26.5	35.3	0.60
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	43.0	28.0	35.5	0.65
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	40.9	32.0	36.4	0.78
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	47.7	25.6	36.7	0.54
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	45.0	30.5	37.8	0.68
Madhesi OC	Kanu	47.0	28.5	37.8	0.61
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	48.0	28.1	38.1	0.59
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	45.7	32.0	38.8	0.70
Hill Dalit	Sarki	47.7	30.7	39.1	0.64
Madhesi OC	Kewat	49.5	29.0	39.3	0.59
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	55.9	23.1	39.3	0.41
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	50.0	29.0	39.5	0.58
Muslim	Muslim	50.8	30.0	40.4	0.59
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	48.7	33.5	41.1	0.69

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Mali	52.8	30.0	41.3	0.57
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	47.5	36.0	41.8	0.76
	Subtotal	**47.4**	**29.5**	**38.4**	**0.6**
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	52.1	32.5	42.1	0.62
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	53.0	31.5	42.3	0.59
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	51.5	33.0	42.3	0.64
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	49.5	35.5	42.5	0.72
Madhesi OC	Barae	58.2	27.6	42.7	0.47
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	50.0	37.5	43.8	0.75
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	48.5	40.0	44.2	0.82
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	52.0	36.5	44.3	0.70
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	56.5	33.0	44.8	0.58
Tarai Janajati	Koche	51.1	39.2	44.9	0.77
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	59.0	31.0	45.0	0.53
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	56.5	34.5	45.5	0.61
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	54.8	36.5	45.6	0.67
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	51.8	40.2	45.9	0.78
Madhesi OC	Baniya	55.6	37.0	46.2	0.67
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	55.2	37.5	46.2	0.68
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	49.0	43.5	46.3	0.89
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	51.5	41.2	46.4	0.80
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	55.5	39.5	47.5	0.71
	Subtotal	**53.2**	**36.2**	**44.7**	**0.68**
Madhesi OC	Yadav	60.5	35.5	48.0	0.59
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	57.1	39.2	48.1	0.69
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	54.3	42.0	48.1	0.77
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	63.4	35.0	48.8	0.55
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	64.3	34.0	49.1	0.53
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	67.6	33.3	49.2	0.49
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	54.6	44.0	49.2	0.81
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	56.3	42.7	49.4	0.76
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	56.6	43.1	49.7	0.76
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	55.7	46.0	50.8	0.83
Madhesi OC	Teli	64.8	37.0	50.9	0.57

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi OC	Koiri	62.0	40.5	51.3	0.65
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	62.9	40.2	51.4	0.64
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	62.3	40.5	51.4	0.65
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	59.0	44.0	51.5	0.75
Marwadi	Marwadi	63.0	41.4	52.6	0.66
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	62.0	45.0	53.5	0.73
Hill Dalit	Gaine	69.1	39.2	53.9	0.57
	Subtotal	**60.9**	**40.1**	**50.4**	**0.66**
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	62.9	45.5	54.2	0.72
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	65.8	43.5	54.6	0.66
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	64.2	45.7	54.8	0.71
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	67.4	43.7	54.8	0.65
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	65.8	44.7	54.9	0.68
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	64.8	46.2	55.4	0.71
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	62.1	49.5	55.8	0.80
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	68.2	45.5	56.8	0.67
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	67.2	48.0	57.5	0.71
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	68.0	49.0	58.5	0.72
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	68.5	55.3	62.0	0.81
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	79.9	46.9	63.2	0.59
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	71.4	55.6	63.5	0.78
Tarai Janajati	Meche	71.0	56.0	63.5	0.79
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	69.8	59.3	64.6	0.85
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	79.8	51.5	65.4	0.65
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	83.2	74.2	78.9	0.89
	Subtotal	**69.4**	**50.6**	**59.9**	**0.73**

TABLE 3.13: Percent of respondents who feel powerless, resourceless, and without rights to take action and change their circumstances by sex and caste/ethnicity

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Tarai Janajati	Munda/Mudiyari	49.0	64.0	56.6	1.31
Madhesi Dalit	Dom	51.8	59.3	55.5	1.14
Tarai Janajati	Jhangad	55.6	50.5	53.0	0.91
Mt/Hill Janajati	Lepcha	53.0	53.0	53.0	1.00
Tarai Janajati	Kisan	43.4	52.8	48.2	1.22
Mt/Hill Janajati	Byasi	43.1	50.8	47.0	1.18
Madhesi OC	Rajbhar	41.0	48.0	44.5	1.17
Madhesi Dalit	Bantar	43.0	43.5	43.3	1.01
Madhesi Dalit	Halkhor	40.0	43.0	41.5	1.08
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sherpa	36.4	46.0	41.4	1.26
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yakha	40.2	42.5	41.4	1.06
Madhesi Dalit	Dusadh/Paswan/Pasi	40.5	41.5	41.0	1.02
Tarai Janajati	Koche	43.0	39.2	41.0	0.91
Madhesi OC	Nuniya	34.0	47.0	40.6	1.38
Mt/Hill Janajati	Rai	38.7	41.8	40.3	1.08
Tarai Janajati	Santhal	35.0	45.5	40.3	1.30
Madhesi OC	Bing/Binda	36.2	41.5	38.8	1.15
Madhesi OC	Sonar	32.5	43.0	37.8	1.32
	Subtotal	**42.0**	**47.4**	**44.7**	**1.13**
Tarai Janajati	Gangai	33.0	41.5	37.3	1.26
Tarai Janajati	Dhanuk	33.5	40.2	36.9	1.20
Madhesi OC	Badhae/Kamar	33.2	40.5	36.8	1.22
Madhesi OC	Mallah	31.2	41.3	36.4	1.32
Madhesi OC	Hajam/Thakur	31.5	41.0	36.3	1.30
Madhesi OC	Kumhar	33.7	39.0	36.3	1.16
Mt/Hill Janajati	Baramu	39.4	33.3	36.1	0.85
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bhote/Walung	34.0	37.7	35.9	1.11
Madhesi Dalit	Tatma	33.0	38.5	35.8	1.17
Hill Dalit	Kami	32.5	38.5	35.5	1.18
Mt/Hill Janajati	Tamang	33.2	36.7	34.9	1.11
Hill Dalit	Sarki	34.4	35.2	34.8	1.02
Mt/Hill Janajati	Bote	32.0	37.5	34.8	1.17
Mt/Hill Janajati	Limbu	31.5	37.2	34.3	1.18

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Madhesi Dalit	Khatwe	33.2	35.0	34.1	1.05
Tarai Janajati	Dhimal	34.7	33.3	34.0	0.96
Madhesi B/C	Rajput	29.6	38.2	33.9	1.29
Madhesi Dalit	Musahar	33.0	34.5	33.8	1.05
	Subtotal	33.1	37.7	35.4	1.14
Mt/Hill Janajati	Majhi	29.0	36.5	32.8	1.26
Madhesi OC	Haluwai	30.0	35.0	32.5	1.17
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chepang	30.2	34.0	32.1	1.13
Madhesi OC	Mali	30.5	32.5	31.5	1.07
Mt/Hill Janajati	Danuwar	27.5	34.5	31.0	1.25
Mt/Hill Janajati	Sunuwar	24.5	37.0	30.8	1.51
Madhesi B/C	Brahmin - Tarai	27.5	33.5	30.5	1.22
Muslim	Muslim	24.6	36.0	30.3	1.46
Madhesi OC	Lohar	25.5	35.0	30.3	1.37
Madhesi OC	Teli	23.1	37.0	30.1	1.60
Mt/Hill Janajati	Hayu	26.5	33.5	30.1	1.26
Madhesi Dalit	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	30.0	30.0	30.0	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Darai	27.2	32.5	29.9	1.19
Tarai Janajati	Rajbansi	25.0	34.5	29.8	1.38
Madhesi OC	Kewat	28.0	31.0	29.5	1.11
Hill Chhetri	Thakuri	25.0	33.5	29.3	1.34
Madhesi OC	Koiri	23.0	35.5	29.3	1.54
	Subtotal	**26.9**	**34.2**	**30.6**	**1.27**
Madhesi B/C	Kayastha	25.3	32.5	28.9	1.28
Mt/Hill Janajati	Kumal	25.5	31.7	28.6	1.24
Madhesi Dalit	Dhobi	23.0	33.5	28.3	1.46
Mt/Hill Janajati	Yholmo	26.5	29.2	27.9	1.10
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thami	20.6	34.5	27.6	1.67
Mt/Hill Janajati	Magar	23.5	30.7	27.1	1.31
Madhesi OC	Kahar	22.6	30.5	26.6	1.35
Madhesi OC	Barae	24.2	28.1	26.2	1.16
Madhesi OC	Kurmi	20.5	31.5	26.0	1.54
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gurung	24.6	26.9	25.8	1.09
Mt/Hill Janajati	Dura	21.7	29.4	25.8	1.35
Mt/Hill Janajati	Pahari	20.8	30.3	25.6	1.46
Mt/Hill Janajati	Newar	22.4	28.1	25.3	1.25

Social Group	Caste/ethnicity	Male	Female	Both sex	GPI
Tarai Janajati	Meche	24.5	26.0	25.3	1.06
Madhesi OC	Baniya	24.7	25.0	24.9	1.01
Madhesi OC	Sudhi	22.2	27.5	24.9	1.24
Madhesi OC	Bhediyar/Gaderi	22.0	27.5	24.8	1.25
Madhesi OC	Kanu	21.0	28.0	24.5	1.33
	Subtotal	**23.1**	**29.5**	**26.3**	**1.28**
Madhesi OC	Kalwar	18.6	30.0	24.3	1.61
Tarai Janajati	Tajpuriya	20.6	28.0	24.3	1.36
Madhesi OC	Yadav	18.0	30.0	24.0	1.67
Mt/Hill Janajati	Raji	21.0	25.6	23.3	1.22
Hill Dalit	Damai/Dholi	21.2	24.5	22.9	1.16
Tarai Janajati	Tharu	18.5	22.5	20.5	1.22
Mt/Hill Janajati	Gharti/Bhujel	16.2	24.0	20.2	1.48
Hill Chhetri	Chhetri	15.4	24.1	19.8	1.56
Marwadi	Marwadi	16.4	21.3	18.7	1.30
Hill Chhetri	Sanyasi	13.5	23.5	18.5	1.74
Mt/Hill Janajati	Chhantyal	18.0	18.6	18.3	1.03
Mt/Hill Janajati	Jirel	12.5	20.0	16.3	1.60
Hill Dalit	Badi	14.2	15.7	15.0	1.11
Madhesi OC	Lodha	3.0	26.5	14.8	8.83
Hill Dalit	Gaine	12.4	15.6	14.0	1.26
Hill Brahmin	Brahmin - Hill	13.6	13.6	13.6	1.00
Mt/Hill Janajati	Thakali	14.0	12.9	13.5	0.92
	Subtotal	**15.7**	**22.1**	**18.9**	**1.41**

ABOUT SOSIN RESEARCH

This volume represents one part of a research project on the "State of Social Inclusion in Nepal (SOSIN)," undertaken by the Central Department of Anthropology at Tribhuvan University in 2018-2019. The SOSIN research is a sequel to research on "Social Inclusion Atlas and Ethnographic Profile" that the then Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology carried out in 2012-2014. The SOSIN research has four major thematic components and associated reports.

The first is a report on the "Nepal Social Inclusion Survey (NSIS) 2018," a national sample survey, that presents data and analysis disaggregated by sex, 11 broad social groups, and 88 distinct caste and ethnic groups. The NSIS provides data for tracking changes in a number of key indicators between 2012 and 2018. The second is a report on "Who Are Left Behind?" which presents sex, caste and ethnicity disaggregated data from the NSIS 2018 on selected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators. This will be helpful in monitoring the SDGs across gender and social groups, in line with the spirit of "leaving no one behind." The third report is on the "State of Inclusive Governance in Nepal" that examines the current state of governance policies, practices and hindrances to inclusion. This report presents current representation of the people in bureaucracy, elected local bodies and other institutions, and analyzes disparities by gender, and caste, ethnic, religious and minority groups. The fourth report on "Community Resilience Capacity," a study on Nepal's 2015 earthquakes and its aftermath, provides empirical data on disaster effects, recovery, and resilience in the 14 worst-affected districts. It analyzes disproportionate impact, differential resilience capacity and social inclusion. The results of this study can be useful for better understanding resilience capacity, for improving on-going recovery efforts, and for strengthening disaster risk reduction and management planning. The lens of social inclusion weaves through all the four studies as a common thread.

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