A Survey of the Nepali People

in 2017

The Asia Foundation

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A SURVEY OF THE NEPALI PEOPLE IN 2017

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PREFACE

The troubled decade that followed the end of the civil war in Nepal in 2006 was marked by political instability, demands for greater inclusion, attempts to generate consensus around a new constitution, and the tragedy of the 2015 earthquakes. The promulgation of the 2015 constitution was a big step forward, yet it also immediately led to violent protests and a five-month economic blockade along the Nepal-India border. Consequently, the devastating effects of earthquakes earlier in the year were magnified by further delays in recovery and reconstruction. Over the next several months, the changes in government leadership continued and did little to ease public anxiety and hardship for Nepalis.

Last year, as the first major steps toward constitutional implementation were being taken, it felt like Nepal might finally be on the right track to address some of the long-standing grievances that have so far prevented democratic consolidation and stability. That which most Nepalis have yearned for—better governance and prosperity through stable government and economic opportunity—appeared more likely than ever before. It is unsurprising, therefore, that expectations are high following successful nationwide elections in 2017 for local, provincial, and federal government.

So far, the struggle to assert power and define roles within the new political system has been energetic but peaceful. The leadership transition across all key positions in government has been relatively smooth and collaboratively achieved. These are huge achievements for a country that has been through the tragedy of civil war, the suffering of natural disaster, and the chaos of politics.

Nonetheless, these achievements may prove short-lived if the support of government, development partners, and the public for continued progress falters during the next few critical years of transition. The initial stages of implementation of federalism have been difficult, with almost everyone struggling to redefine roles and responsibilities for a longer-term development process while coping with huge gaps in physical and human-resources infrastructure. Most importantly, as new, constitutionally mandated institutions more fully take on their functions, major efforts need to be expended in ensuring that the focus remains on strengthening the core institutions and practices of democratic governance while overcoming challenges to economic and social progress.

For local governments, the transition presents opportunities to better engage local communities in governance after an absence of almost two decades. Newly elected officials in local government are keenly aware that they are positioned at the most critical location for state performance—where real needs and actual priorities intersect with electoral promises and politics. However, lack of adequate legal frameworks and policies that align with the constitution and provide clarity to local leaders on the functions of local institutions and their respective roles and responsibilities are causing confusion, anxiety, and dispute. Despite this, local leaders must show ability to navigate the transition, and demonstrate capacity to effectively govern in the public interest.

The same is true for provincial leadership, where fealty to Kathmandu-based political patrons must be reconciled with the legitimate demands of raucous interest groups within the provinces. Together, the performance of these two types of subnational government—local and provincial—will provide the publicly verifiable evidence in coming years of federalism's worth to Nepal.

Linked to the challenge of strengthening the legitimacy and credibility of the newly elected governments across Nepal is the broadening and deepening of political participation by nonstate actors. While this has been a challenge over the years, it is now more important than ever that Nepali civil society and other nonstate actors participate in and assist the processes of federalization and governance reform through better understanding of their and citizens' roles in "public" policy processes between elections. A public policy process in democratic politics assumes some level of accurate, common understanding, involving both state and nonstate actors, of the condition of the state. In the absence of that understanding, even usual or accepted information asymmetries between the two can be exacerbated and contribute to costly political battles during this fragile period of transition. Public perceptions of the condition of the Nepali state are therefore of great importance to a wide cross-section of individuals and institutions in public administration, politics, development, academia, and commerce.

Thus, although elections and leadership transitions were completed in a credible and peaceful manner with the broad participation of Nepalis, it is critically important to continuously gauge the public's views to be able to govern in

the public interest. In this context, 2017 was the ideal year to undertake the first of an annual series of nationwide surveys documenting the views, concerns, and aspirations of the Nepali people from this important milestone in the country's modern history onwards.

A Survey of the Nepali People in 2017 intends to provide significant, policy-relevant data for measuring public perceptions on subjects such as federalism and democratic governance, social and economic development, public institutions, the place of ethnicity and language in the evolving polity, gender, and so on. In September and October, 7,202 Nepalis, randomly selected from 599 wards across all seven provinces, were asked about the country's direction, the situation of their household, and the condition of the area where they live. The survey also asked their views on security; identity and social relations; governance, constitutional implementation, and public-service delivery; elections, politics, and political participation; economic outlook, debt, and remittances; and access to information. The survey was designed so that the findings presented in this report are representative of the Nepali population at the national and provincial levels (see appendix A, "Methodology").

This annual, multiyear effort to gather first-hand opinion on a variety of contemporary, governance- and development-related issues is intended to be useful for policymakers and opinion shapers in government, the international community, and the broader Nepali public. Every effort has been made to ensure that the questions asked and the information collected on public opinion are actionable, and that, with each passing year, these surveys will become more accepted and widely used, both as a valid and reliable barometer of public opinion in Nepal and as a public-policy tool.

The Asia Foundation has supported nationwide surveys in Nepal since the early 2000s, primarily with longstanding partner Interdisciplinary Analysts (IDA). Five nationwide surveys, in 2004–2008 and in 2012, on contemporary political and social issues have been published and are in the public domain. Together with this new series, a valuable longitudinal dataset from 2004 onwards will become available to track Nepali public opinion.

The survey uses a standard questionnaire for comparability, which combines questions on Nepal that are relevant to policymakers, social researchers, and aid organizations with tried and tested questions that have been used in other countries across the world in well-known surveys like the *East* and *South Asia Barometer*s and the *Latin Pop Survey*s as well as other Asia Foundation surveys. The questionnaire was prepared in house in collaboration with IDA. Acknowledging the intense focus on subnational governance and the tensions around the implementation of federalism, relevant questions in these subject areas were added. We expect that each year some questions will be added to cover new areas of interest and other, less significant or less salient questions will be removed. Feedback is welcome and will be used to further fine-tune the survey instruments.

A summary of the major findings of the survey is provided in the Introduction, with the findings in full thereafter. It will be well evident to the reader that Nepali sensibilities around their government, society, and community are sensitive but forward looking, critical but enlightened, and forthright but accommodating.

The Foundation will release a companion analytical volume that reflects on the 2017 findings of Nepali public opinion. The companion volume will add expert thought to the survey findings, discuss salient issues in a comparative light with other contexts and other data sources, and draw policy-relevant conclusions.

A Survey of the Nepali People in 2017 was implemented with support from the Australian Government–The Asia Foundation Partnership on Subnational Governance in Nepal. The Partnership is profoundly grateful to the people of Nepal who took the time to participate in the survey

George Varughese
Country Representative, Nepal
The Asia Foundation
(May 2009 to March 16, 2018)

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Initial analysis and write-up was provided by Anup Phayal and Pawan Kumar Sen with assistance from IDA. The Foundation's Adrian Morel and Lena Michaels completed the analysis and write-up of the final version of the survey report, with inputs from James Sharrock, George Varughese, and Bishnu Adhikari. The manuscript was edited by John Rieger. Srijana Nepal provided research support and inputs throughout. Deddeaw Laosinchai designed the publication.

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PHOTO BY Conor Ashleigh

chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

A Survey of the Nepali People in 2017 is based on a nationally representative sample of 7,202 Nepalis, randomly selected from 599 wards across all seven provinces. It was designed so that the findings presented in this report are representative of the Nepali population at the national and provincial levels.[1] Respondents were asked to share their views about the following seven topics:

National mood. Views of the Nepali people on the general direction of the country, the conditions in the area where they live and the situation of their household; what has improved and what problems remain.

Security and dispute resolution. Nepalis' sense of safety and experience of crime and violence, views on the legitimate use of violence, preferred avenues of dispute resolution, and level of confidence in those institutions to deliver justice.

Identity and social relations. Relations between castes, ethnic groups, and religious groups; relations between women and men; views on patterns of discrimination; and social values.

Governance. Views on constitutional implementation, federalism, and local-level restructuring; trust in institutions; quality of public-service delivery (education, health care, and roads); and taxation and bribery.

Politics and political participation. Participation in the 2017 local elections;[2] satisfaction with the outcome of elections, and views on elected officials.

Economic outlook. Views on economic conditions, household income and debt, and migration and remittances.

Access to information. Mobile phone ownership; internet use; preferred sources of information.

Each of the topics above is discussed in a separate chapter. Each chapter begins with a summary of key analytical findings. The following is a general overview of the survey results.

What does the survey tell us about the views of the Nepali people?

First, the overall sentiment is one of guarded optimism. In this period of transition, a majority of Nepalis (52.9%) feel that the country is headed in the right direction. Most of them feel safe (93.8%). Large proportions of the public think that the 2015 constitution is a step forward (45.6%), that federal reform will lead to tangible improvements in their lives (44.4%), and that they are better represented after the reintroduction of local elections (43.8%). Some 89.7% of Nepalis are satisfied with the results of the elections, and 82.2% trust the newly elected municipal councils to have their best interests at heart. Most Nepalis are happy with the quality of public education (82.1%) and health-care services (76.6%) available in their locality. While one-half of Nepalis (50.2%) consider the current level of taxation too high, 77.6% say they would be willing to pay more taxes if it resulted in better public services.

However, large minorities of Nepalis express either skepticism or greater caution in their assessment of the changes happening in the country. Over one-third of Nepalis (34.3%) think the country is headed the wrong way. And while very few of them regard the constitution, the transition to federalism, or local-level restructuring as negative developments, large shares of people remain unsure what to think about these changes or feel that it is too soon to tell (24.6% say it is too soon to tell if federalism will lead to improvements; 26.7% feel the same way about local-level restructuring).

[1] The margin of error at the national level is ± 1.2% at a 95% confidence level; at the provincial level it is ± 3% at a 95% confidence level. For more information, refer to Appendix A. Methodology.

[2] Because the survey was carried out in September and October 2017, before the provincial and national elections were held, only views on local-level elections were captured and discussed in this report.

PHOTO BY Interdisciplinary Analysts

Enthusiasm for change is more limited in the Terai region, and in the Kathmandu valley. Province 2, in eastern Terai, and Province 3, where the capital, Kathmandu, is located, are the only two provinces where more respondents think that the country is headed in the wrong direction than the other way around (Province 2: "wrong direction," 48.3%, "right direction" 38.4%; Province 3: "wrong direction," 53.9%, "right direction," 32.4%). Terai residents are generally more reserved than the average in their views on constitutional change, federal reform, or the impact of local elections on political representation: they are less likely to give positive responses, and more likely to express uncertainty. This is consistent with a less positive assessment of the capacity of government to deliver services, particularly in Province 2. There, people are more likely to report difficulty obtaining administrative documents such as a citizenship card; they are more likely to express dissatisfaction with the quality of public education and health care; and they are more likely to turn to traditional mechanisms than to government institutions to resolve disputes. It is, after all, unsurprising that people from the Terai prefer to judge the ongoing reforms by their results rather than their intentions. The results from Province 3 are somewhat more unexpected. There, people tend to exhibit high levels of pessimism toward constitutional implementation (27.6% think federalism will "make things worse," and 31.1% feel less well represented as a result of local elections); they also tend to express more negative views than the average about government effectiveness. Part of the explanation might be that residents of the capital city—better-informed urban citizens closer to the center of power—are more inclined to be critical of the government's performance or to feel that they stand to lose more than others from the devolution of power to the provincial and local governments. But the Kathmandu Valley also includes a large number of households affected by the 2015 earthquake, households that have suffered from the slowness and inadequacy of initial reconstruction efforts. In contrast to the relative pessimism of the Terai and the Kathmandu Valley, residents of the mountains—Province 6 in particular—tend to express much more optimistic views than others about the country's direction and ongoing reforms.

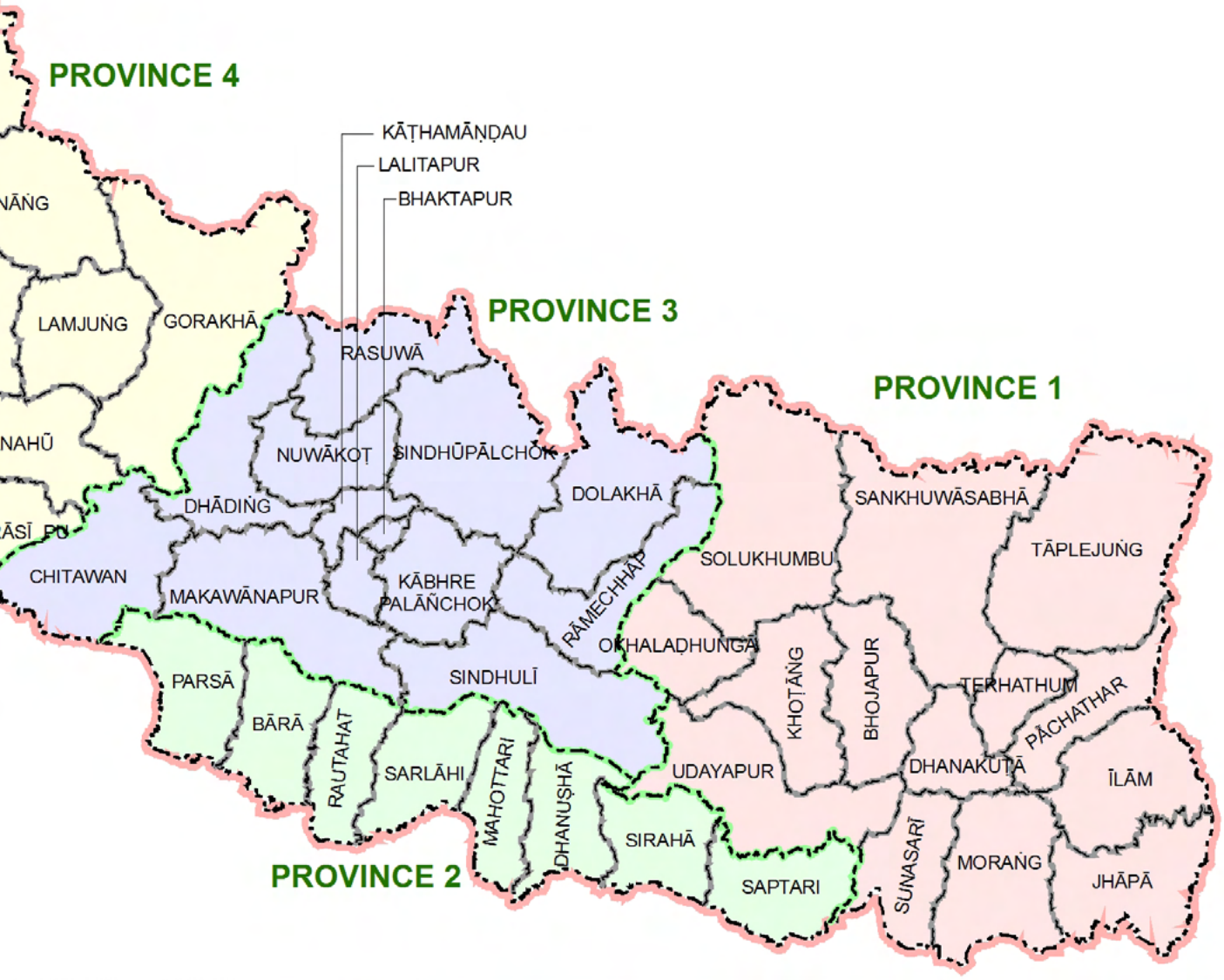
The survey points to persistant issues of geographic imbalances in development. Roads, water, and electricity rank high on the list of things that Nepalis feel have improved, but they also rank high on their list of problems. This apparent contradiction reflects large variation in development across geographic areas. While 37.3% of Nepalis admit that the quality of roads has improved in the past year, almost half (47.4%) remain dissatisfied with their current condition. Dissatisfaction is higher in the mountains (59%), where people are also more likely to report issues with access to water and electricity.

The economic outlook of Nepalis presents a mixed picture of present hardship and hope for the future. Some 55.8% report that the financial situation of their household has neither improved or worsened in the past year; 57.6% feel the same way about broader economic conditions in the area where they live. Around half of Nepali households (47.3%) are in debt, most of them owing between NPR 30,000 and 300,000. Some 24.9% are partly dependent on remittances from relatives working abroad. Yet, 84.1% of Nepalis feel confident that their economic situation will improve in the next five years.

While most people report improvements in social relations, patterns of discrimination against so-called "lower" castes, minorities, and women remain entrenched. Almost two-thirds of Nepalis (58.7%) think that relations between castes, ethnic groups, and religious communities are improving. A very large majority (90.6%) supports the principle of equal rights for all castes and ethnic groups. However, a quarter of them (26.1%) would still be reluctant to marry their own child outside of their community. Dalits tend to feel less safe than other citizens. Dalits, Muslims, and Christians are substantially more likely to feel disadvantaged by their caste, ethnicity, or religion in everyday situations such as the workplace (12.9% of hill Dalits, 24.5% of Madhesi Dalits, and 15.4% of Christians) or when applying for a citizenship card (20.7% of Madhesi Dalits and 15.4% of Muslims). Similar findings apply to gender relations. Most Nepalis express support to greater equality between men and women: 89.5% agree women should be encouraged to work outside of the home, and 79.9% think it is suitable for women to engage in politics. Yet, around one Nepali woman in eight takes precautions to avoid harassment or assault when going outside of her home, and one in ten does not feel entirely safe in her own home.

NEPAL'S SEVEN PROVINCES

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY, GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL


PROVINCE 4
KĀṬHAMĀṆḌAU
LALITAPUR
BHAKTAPUR
NĀṄG
LAMJUṄG
GORAKHĀ
PROVINCE 3
RASUWĀ
PROVINCE 1
NAHŪ
NUWĀKOṬ
SINDHŪPĀLCHOK
DOLAKHĀ
SANKHUWĀSABHĀ
DHĀDIṄG
TĀPLEJUṄG
SOLUKHUMBU
CHITAWAN
MAKAWĀNAPUR
KĀBHRE PALĀÑCHOK
RĀMECHHAP
OKHALAḌHUṄGĀ
PARSĀ
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BHOJAPUR
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RAUTAHAT
SARLĀHI
MAHOTTARI
DHANUṢHĀ
UDAYAPUR
DHANAKUṬĀ
ĪLĀM
SIRAHĀ
SUNASARĪ
MORAṄG
JHĀPĀ
SAPTARI
PROVINCE 2

PHOTO BY Interdisciplinary Analysts

chapter 2

NATIONAL MOOD

Nepalis express mixed views about the direction of their country and the evolution of the situation in the area where they live. A majority of people feel optimistic about Nepal and acknowledge improvements in local conditions. On the other hand, one-third of Nepalis think the country is headed the wrong way, or that conditions have deteriorated in their area. Asked about their household specifically, two-thirds feel that it is doing neither better nor worse than one year ago.

People from the Terai region and the Kathmandu Valley tend to be more pessimistic than others about conditions nationally and locally. Provinces 2 and 3 stand out as the only provinces where negative opinions outweigh positive ones on both counts.

Optimistic Nepalis mention better roads, local elections,[3] constitutional reform, and administrative restructuring as key positive changes at the national level. Economic hardship, natural disasters, and bad roads top the list of problems.

The survey results highlight dramatic imbalances in the condition of roads and supplies of water and electricity across the country. Roads, water, and electricity rank high on the list of improvements, but also on the list of major problems, identified by Nepalis in the area where they live. This apparent contradiction reflects large variations across geographic areas. Residents of mountain areas are far more likely to report issues with road conditions and access to water and electricity. Roads and water supply are also flagged as major problems in the Kathmandu Valley. Province 6 registers the highest levels of dissatisfaction with electricity and water supplies.

Poor Nepalis are more likely to report their living conditions worsened in the past year. Nepalis in the lower income brackets (earning less than NPR 10,000 per month) are substantially more likely than average to report that their household's financial situation has gotten worse during the past year, that their house is in worse condition, or that their access to electricity is more limited.

2.1 NATIONAL MOOD

DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

A majority of Nepalis are optimistic about their country, but a large minority think it is headed in the wrong direction. Asked whether their country is going in the right or wrong direction, a slim majority of Nepalis (52.9%) express optimism. Just over one-third think Nepal is headed the wrong way, while 12.6% do not have an opinion on the matter (figure 2.1).

People from the Terai and from districts affected by the 2015 earthquake tend to be less optimistic. The confidence of Nepalis in their country's direction varies significantly across provinces. In Provinces 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7, at least two-thirds of people are optimistic. However, two provinces show a different pattern, with pessimism more common than optimism. These are Province 3, which includes the Kathmandu Valley, heavily affected by the 2015 earthquake, and Province 2, in the Terai region,[4] which has historically seen high levels of contestation (figure 2.2).

[3] This survey was conducted in September and October 2017, before provincial and federal elections were held in November and December. Therefore, only views of and reactions to local elections, held in May and June 2017, are discussed here. Because of the timing of the survey, the third round of local elections in Province 2, held in September 2017, had not yet taken place before most respondents from that province were interviewed. Direct questions on elections only take into account answers from respondents from other provinces and exclude data from Province 2.

[4] In this report, results for the Terai region include results for all residents of the region regardless of their caste or ethnicity.

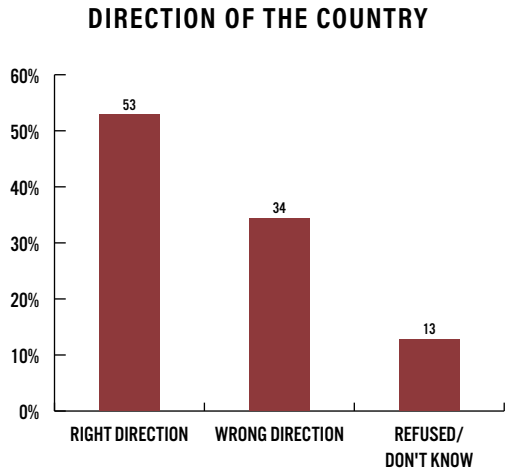

Figure 2.1: Q-B1. *Overall, do you think things in Nepal today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?* (*N* = 7,202)

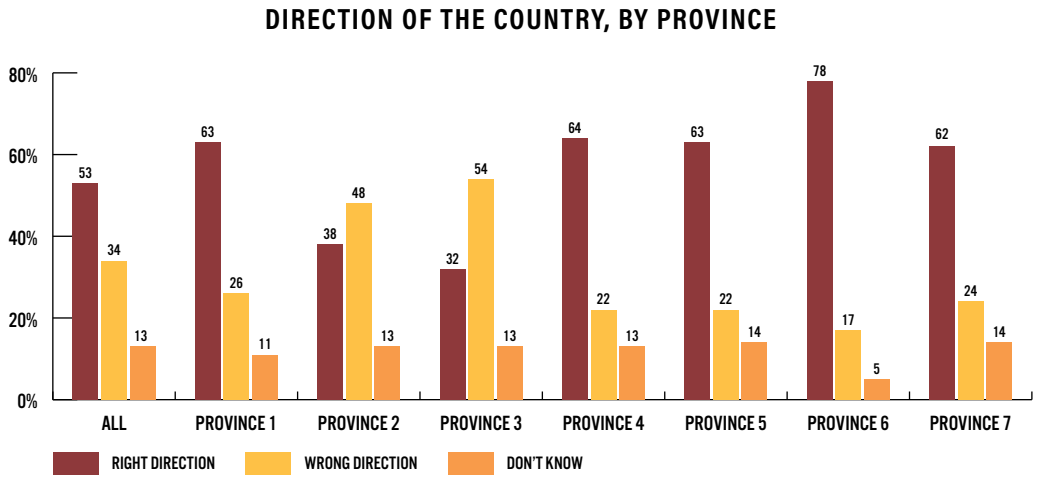

Figure 2.2: Q-B1. *Overall, do you think things in Nepal today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?* (*N* = 7,202)

People in urban areas and in the higher income brackets tend to be more pessimistic than others. Fifty-two percent of those earning over NPR 40,000 per month think the country is going in the wrong direction (table 2.1). Age also matters, with 57.5% of people aged 18–34 showing confidence in the country's direction, compared to only 46.0% of people over 50 years old. Other variables such as gender, religion, or education do not seem to influence responses as much.

DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	RIGHT DIRECTION %	WRONG DIRECTION %	REFUSED %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***52.9***	***34.3***	***0.2***	***12.6***
URBAN VS. RURAL				
Rural municipality	58.0	28.2	0.2	13.5
Urban Municipality	49.9	37.9	0.2	12.0
REGION				
Mountains	65.8	19.8	0.0	14.4
Hills	54.3	34.4	0.3	11.0
Terai	50.2	36.1	0.1	13.6
EDUCATION				
Illiterate	43.9	29.8	0.0	26.3
Nonformal education	48.0	33.7	0.0	18.3
Primary	61.5	25.6	0.1	12.9
Lower secondary	61.7	29.5	0.3	8.6
Secondary	56.5	34.7	0.6	8.2
School Leaving Certificate	52.8	42.1	0.2	4.9
Intermediate (grades 11–12)	51.9	42.8	0.2	5.1
Bachelor's degree & above	48.3	48.3	0.3	3.1
CASTE/ETHNICITY				
Hill high castes	56.0	35.8	0.2	7.9
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	52.7	32.9	0.3	14.1
Hill Dalits	61.3	24.8	0.0	13.9
Madhesi high castes	51.5	38.5	0.0	10.0
Madhesi intermediate castes	42.2	44.8	0.1	12.9
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	55.0	27.2	0.0	17.8
Madhesi Dalits	44.6	33.8	0.0	21.6
Muslims	53.5	29.7	0.6	16.2
AGE				
18–24	59.9	28.5	0.2	11.4
25–34	55.2	33.4	0.2	11.2
35–49	51.8	35.5	0.3	12.4
50 & above	46.0	38.9	0.2	14.9
GENDER				
Women	53.0	29.0	0.0	18.0
Men	52.8	40.0	0.4	6.7
INCOME				
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	55.1	22.0	0.0	23.0
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	54.6	27.5	0.0	17.9

	RIGHT DIRECTION %	WRONG DIRECTION %	REFUSED %	DON'T KNOW %
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	54.8	32.4	0.1	12.6
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	52.4	39.8	0.4	7.3
NPR 40,000 per month or more	43.2	52.2	0.5	4.1

Table 2.1: Q-B1. *Overall, do you think things in Nepal today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?* (*N* = 7,202)

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM

General progress, better roads, and governance reform are the leading causes for optimism. Optimistic Nepalis were asked why they feel the country is going in the right direction.[5] A plurality (16.2%) mention a sense of overall progress (figure 2.3). The next-most common causes for optimism are infrastructure development such as better roads, and governance reforms such as the promulgation of the 2015 constitution, local-level administrative restructuring, and the holding of local elections in 2017 for the first time in 20 years. An improving economy is cited by 11.8% as a key reason for optimism. One respondent in 10 cites the absence of civil war, just 11 years after the signing of the 2006 peace accord, and 7.5% mention an improvement in the situation of women (cited by 11.7% of female respondents but just 3.0% of men).

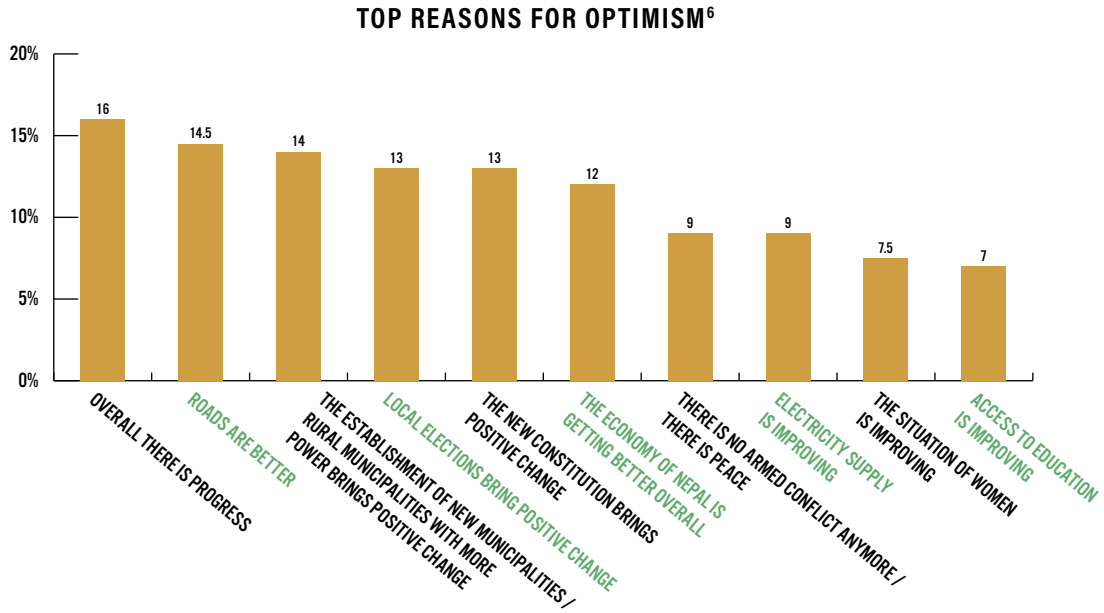

Figure 2.3: Q-B2. *Why do you think that Nepal is going in the right direction?* (*n* = 3,812; asked only of respondents who answered "Nepal is going in the right direction" to Q-B1)

[5] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.
[6] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

There is substantial variation across provinces in the reasons why people feel optimistic about Nepal. Better roads and an improving economy are among the top responses in Provinces 3, 6, and 7. Province 2 is the only province where the establishment of new municipalities is the most often cited reason for optimism; this is possibly related to local aspirations for more devolution of power from the center to the local level. The 2017 local elections score high in Province 3. Improvements in education services are cited among the six leading reasons in Provinces 2 and 6. In Provinces 3 and 4, respondents report better electricity supply, likely as a result of reduced "load-shedding."[7]

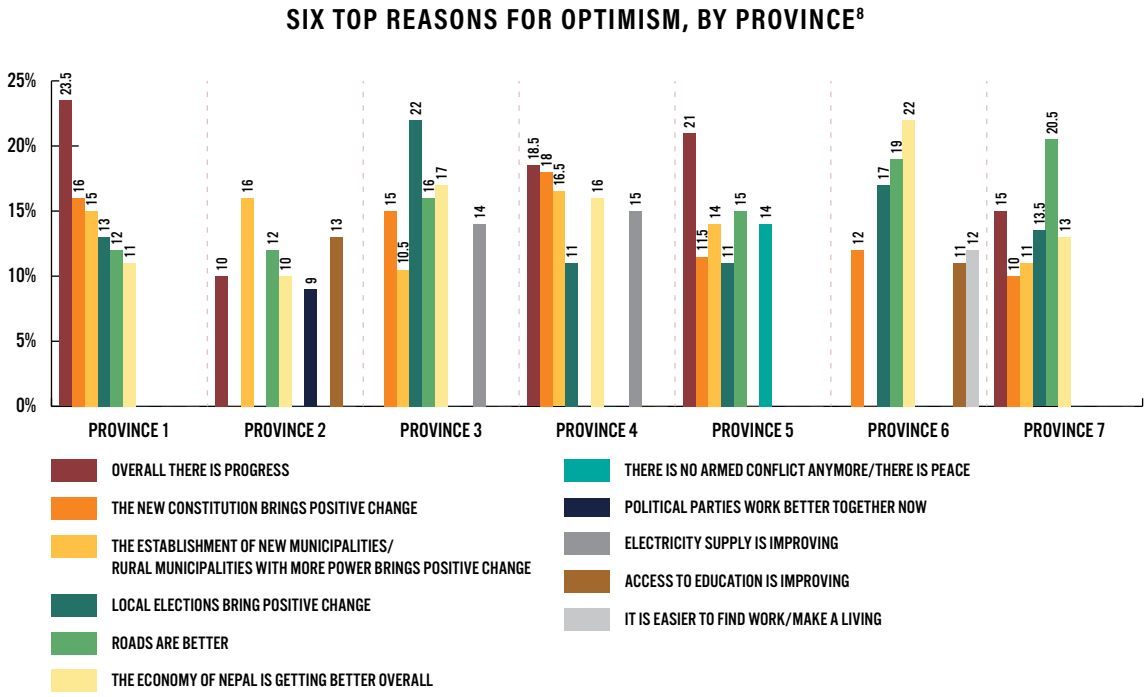

Figure 2.4: Q-B2. ***Why do you think that Nepal is going in the right direction?***
(*n* = 3,812; asked only of respondents who answered "Nepal is going in the right direction" to Q-B1)

Nepalis in the mountains are more likely to mention improvements in the economy. Among Nepalis living in the mountains, 26.8% cite the economy doing better as a cause for optimism, whereas respondents from the hills and Terai are more likely to focus on constitutional change or local-level administrative restructuring.

Local elections in 2017 are the leading reason for optimism among the better educated. People who did not graduate from high school or university tend to mention overall progress when asked why they feel that the country is going in the right direction. Among those with a bachelor's or postgraduate degree, the most often cited cause for optimism is the holding of local elections (20.9% of respondents).

[7] Prolonged electricity shortages, or "load-shedding," began across Nepal in 2006. These were reportedly a result of industries bribing officials in the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) to receive a constant supply of electricity at the expense of ordinary households. Changes in the NEA's management in late 2016, combined with the government's intervention to reduce electricity shortages in the latter half of 2017, ended most power cuts for households in Kathmandu and most of Nepal.

[8] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

There is variation in responses across castes and ethnic groups. Most castes and ethnic groups highlight overall progress, local elections, constitutional change, the establishment of new municipalities, and better roads among the causes for optimism, although in varying order of priority (figure 2.5). The absence of armed conflict is the leading response among high-caste[9] Madhesis and a cause for optimism cited by most Madhesi groups. This may be related to the decline in violent activity in the Terai region since 2010.[10] Dalits and Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis cite improvements in relations between castes and ethnic groups among their top answers. Interestingly, 16.3% of high-caste Madhesis cite the end of monarchy as cause for optimism, and they are the only group to give it such importance.

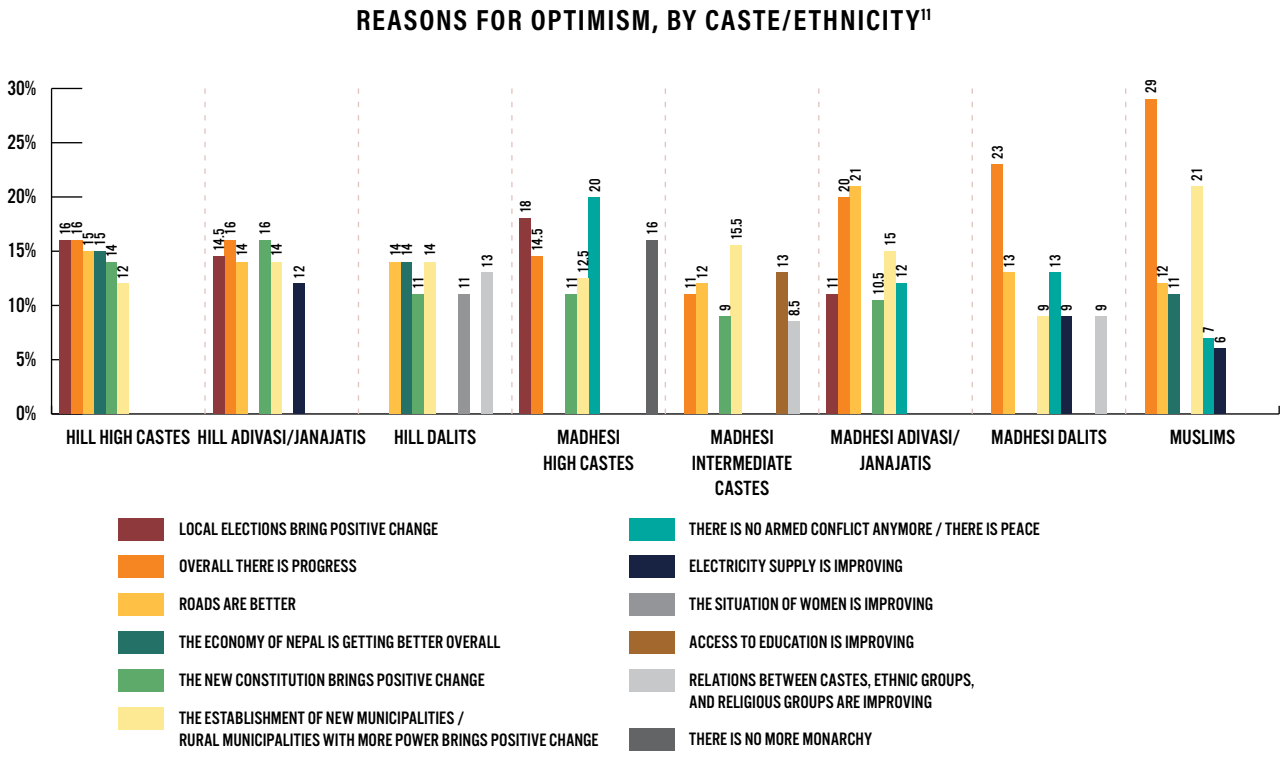

Figure 2.5: Q-B2. ***Why do you think that Nepal is going in the right direction?***
(*n* = 3,812; asked only of respondents who answered "Nepal is going in the right direction" to Q-B1)

[9] The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

[10] See, for example, Small Arms Survey, "At War's End: Armed Violence in Nepal," *Small Arms Survey Research Notes* 29 (May 2013), http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-29.pdf.

[11] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

The economy, natural disasters, and bad roads top the list of problems. All respondents were asked to name the two biggest problems that Nepal continues to struggle with.[12] At the top of the list is the difficulty of finding work and earning a living (cited by one-third of people), followed by natural disasters (22.6%) and bad roads (17.3%). Overall, economic factors dominate the list: the next two most common answers are a worsening economy and inflation (figure 2.6).

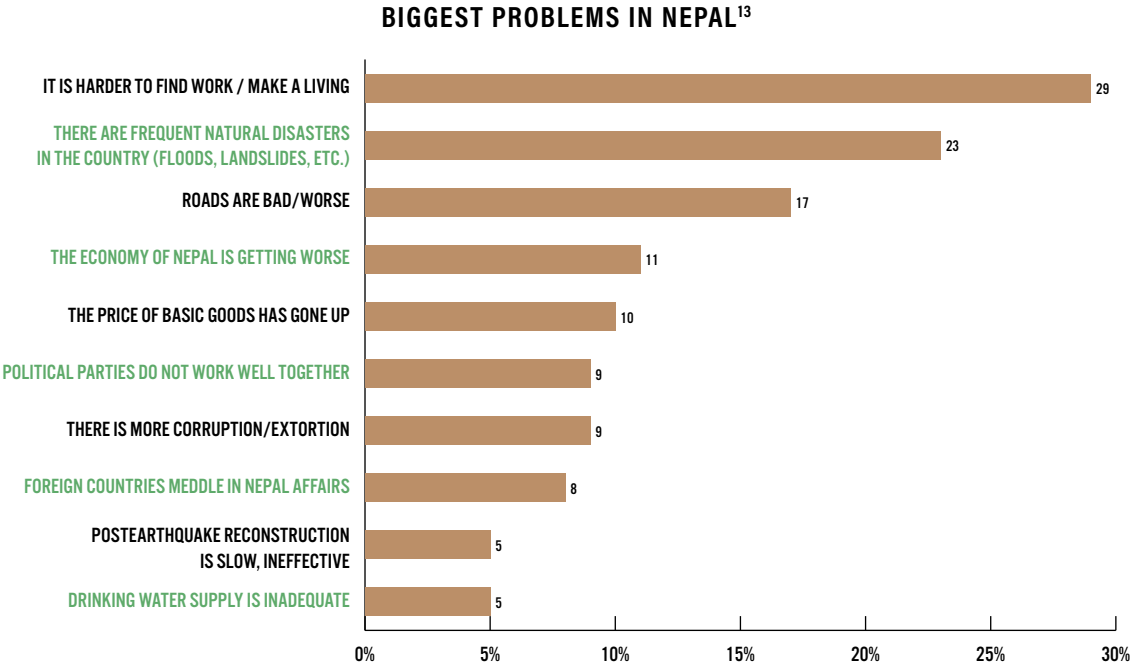

Figure 2.6: Q-B3. *In your view, what are the two biggest problems facing Nepal as a whole?* (*N* = 7,202)

Findings are fairly consistent across provinces. The share of people picking natural disasters as a key issue is particularly high in Province 1 (32.7%). Economic hardship is the top answer in all other provinces, with higher scores in Province 5 and Province 7, where 38.4% and 39.8% of respondents, respectively, cite this as an issue. In Province 6, 20.8% of respondents cite inflation. Unsurprisingly, 15.1% of those surveyed in Province 3, where many of the districts most affected by the 2015 earthquakes are located, mention ineffective postearthquake reconstruction. There is no substantial variation across other geographic or demographic groups.

[12] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.

[13] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

2.2 LOCAL CONDITIONS

GENERAL SITUATION IN THE AREA WHERE PEOPLE LIVE

Asked about the situation at the local level, most Nepalis, once again, feel that things have improved, but one-third think conditions have become worse. In addition to their opinion about the general direction of the country, Nepalis were also asked about conditions at the local level, defined as "the area where you live and work most of the time." Again, a small majority express the opinion that things are improving in the area where they live, while one-third feel that conditions are worsening (figure 2.7). Results are by and large very similar to people's views on the general direction of the country, which may reflect how the opinion of Nepalis about conditions at the national level is deeply influenced by the progress or challenges they see in their daily environment. Indeed, the data shows a strong correlation of positive and negative views at the national and local levels, meaning that people who feel the country is going in the right direction are significantly more likely to think that local conditions are improving, and conversely (table 2.2).

LOCAL CONDITIONS

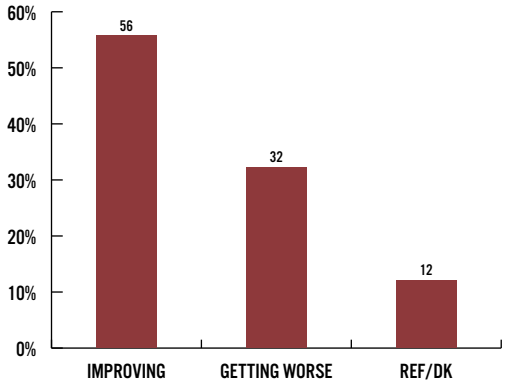

Figure 2.7: Q-B4. *Now I would like you to think about the area where you live and work most of the time. Do you think things in your area are improving, or do you think they are getting worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

RELATION BETWEEN VIEWS ON LOCAL CONDITIONS AND NATIONAL MOOD

	NEPAL IS GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION %	NEPAL IS GOING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION %	REFUSED/DK %
Respondents who report local conditions are improving	69.9	21.8	8.2
Respondents who report local conditions are getting worse	27.3	60.0	12.7

Table 2.2: Q-B1. *Overall, do you think things in Nepal today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?* **Q-B4.** *Now I would like you to think about the area where you live and work most of the time. Do you think things in your area are improving, or do you think they are getting worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

Respondents from Provinces 2 and 3, Madhesis, older citizens, and wealthier citizens are more likely to be pessimistic. In line with public outlook at the national level, Provinces 2 and 3 stand out as provinces where pessimism prevails (figure 2.8). Madhesi intermediate castes and Madhesi Dalits are the caste groups who are most pessimistic about local conditions: for both groups, the share of negative views exceeds the share of positive ones (table 2.3). Older citizens and those in the higher income groups tend to hold comparatively less positive views than the young and poor.

LOCAL CONDITIONS, BY PROVINCE

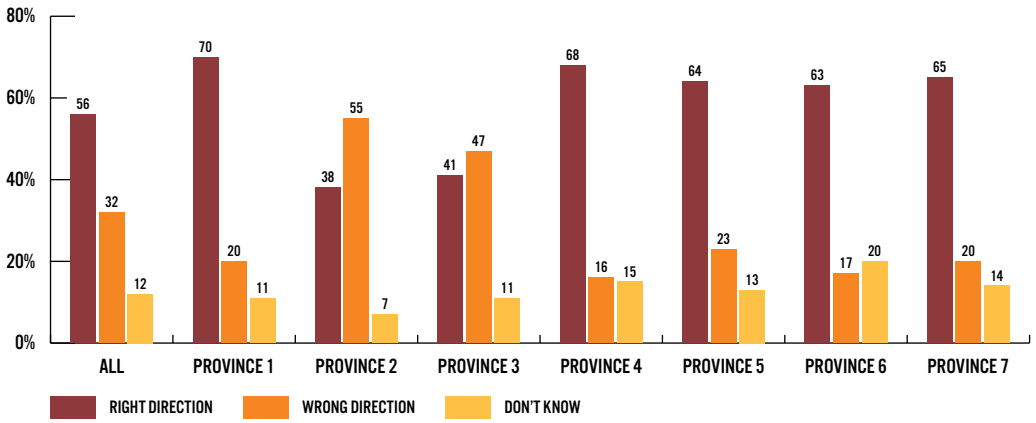

Figure 2.8: Q-B4. *Now I would like you to think about the area where you live and work most of the time. Do you think things in your area are improving, or do you think they are getting worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

LOCAL CONDITIONS, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	IMPROVING %	GETTING WORSE %	REFUSED/ DON'T KNOW %
All	***55.7***	***32.2***	***12.1***
URBAN VS. RURAL			
Rural municipality	55.7	30.2	14.0
Urban Municipality	55.8	33.4	10.9
REGION			
Mountains	55.6	19.7	24.6
Hills	57.2	30.7	12.0
Terai	54.6	35.0	10.5
GENDER			
Women	56.4	30.4	13.3
Men	55.1	34.2	10.7
EDUCATION			
Illiterate	45.1	37.8	17.0
Nonformal education	50.3	33.4	16.3
Primary	59.4	28.5	12.1

	IMPROVING %	GETTING WORSE %	REFUSED/ DON'T KNOW %
Lower secondary	61.1	27.9	11.0
Secondary	59.8	30.3	9.9
School Leaving Certificate	59.5	31.1	9.5
Intermediate (grades 11–12)	60.3	31.2	8.5
Bachelor's degree & above	56.0	37.3	6.7
INCOME			
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	63.4	19.8	16.8
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	53.6	31.0	15.3
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	56.1	32.0	12.0
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	57.2	33.8	9.0
NPR 40,000 per month or more	54.0	39.7	6.3
CASTE/ETHNICITY			
Hill high castes	60.7	26.5	12.8
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	58.6	29.2	12.3
Hill Dalits	60.8	23.5	15.7
Madhesi high castes	51.0	42.9	6.1
Madhesi intermediate castes	40.7	50.2	9.1
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	59.6	27.5	12.9
Madhesi Dalits	41.3	50.4	8.3
Muslims	48.0	40.6	11.4
AGE			
18–24	59.9	28.9	11.2
25–34	59.1	30.8	10.2
35–49	53.9	33.8	12.4
50 & above	51.1	34.7	14.2

Table 2.3: Q-B4. *Now I would like you to think about the area where you live and work most of the time. Do you think things in your area are improving, or do you think they are getting worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

WHAT HAS IMPROVED

Improvements in the quality of roads and access to power and water are the main causes for optimism at the local level. Respondents who feel things are improving were asked to name what has changed for the better in the area where they live.[14] Their answers partially differ from those they offered as reasons for optimism at the national level, with comparatively less emphasis on constitutional change and governance reform, and more on improvements in the delivery of basic services such as roads (cited as an improvement by 40.2% of optimistic Nepalis), electricity supply (17.2%), and water (10.7%). These results are fairly consistent across provinces and demographic groups, although people living in the Terai are more likely to mention improved roads (46.1%) than those living in the mountains (24.1%) or the hills (35.7%).

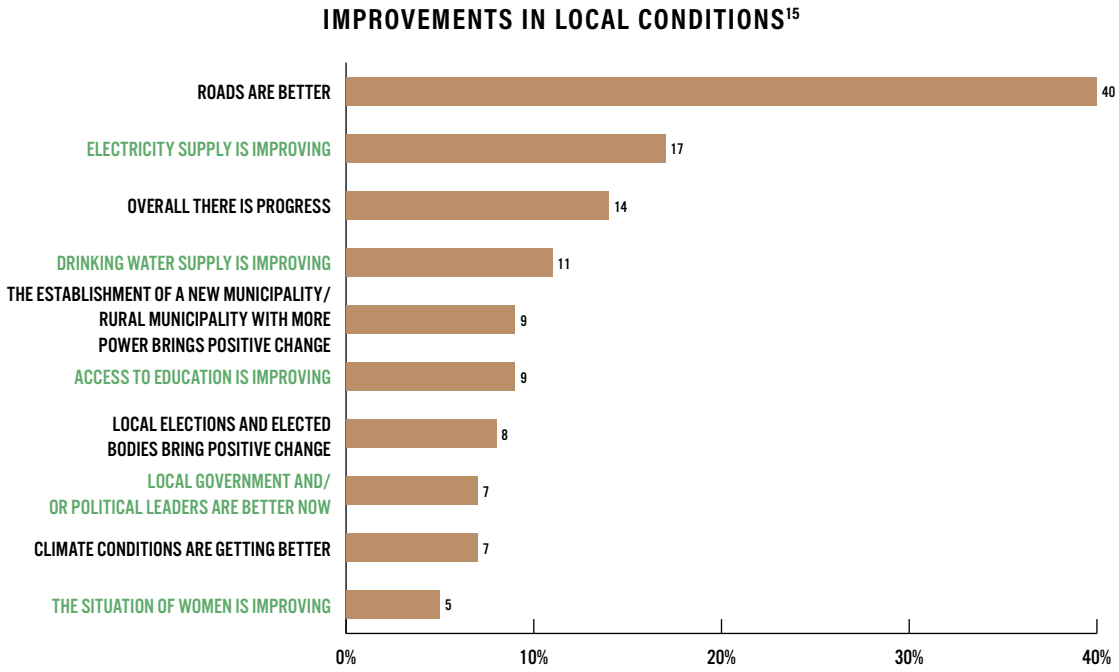

Figure 2.9: Q-B5. ***In your view, what has improved in your area during the past year?***
(*n* = 4,015; asked only of respondents who answered "conditions in my area are improving" to Q-B4)

[14] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.

[15] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Roads, electricity supply, and water supply are also among the biggest problems identified at the local level. Whereas roads and the availability of electricity and water rank high on the list of things that have improved locally, they are also cited among the biggest problems (figure 2.10).[16]

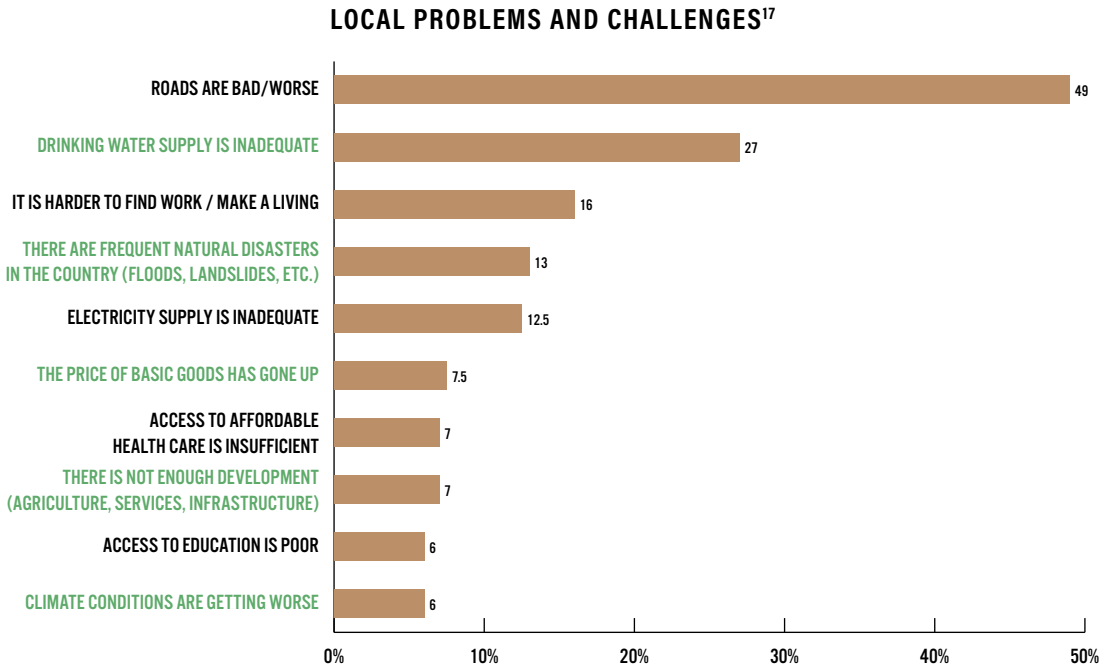

Figure 2.10: Q-B6. ***In your view, what are the biggest problems in the area where you live and work most of the time?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

This likely reflects the uneven distribution of infrastructure and service improvements across the country, with some regions lagging behind while others are making progress. Bad roads are more likely to be cited as a problem in mountain areas (55.7% of respondents) and Province 3 (57.8%). There is also great geographic variation in the degree of satisfaction with water and electricity supplies. Thirty-seven percent of respondents living in the mountains and 40.9% of those in the hills cite inadequate water supply as a major problem, compared to just 13.8% in the Terai. Power supply is more likely to be flagged as an issue in rural areas (17.3%) than in cities (9.7%), and in the mountains (21.1%) than in the Terai (9.0%). Province 6 records levels of dissatisfaction with water and electricity supply far above the national average, with 48.1% of respondents citing inadequate water supply as a major problem, and 42.6% citing insufficient electricity supply (figure 2.11).[18]

[16] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.

[17] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

[18] Province 3 also has a share of people citing water supply as a problem that is much higher than the national average, at 44.0%.

ROADS, WATER, AND ELECTRICITY AS MAJOR PROBLEMS, BY PROVINCE AND REGIONAL GROUP[19]

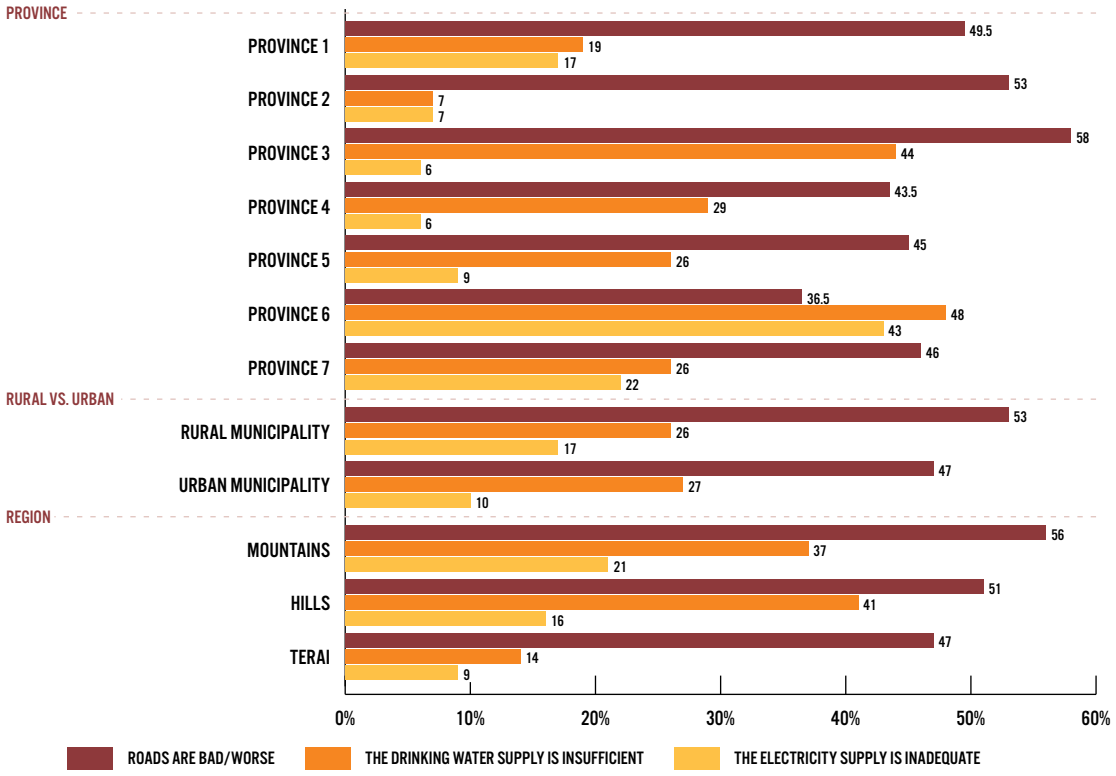

Figure 2.11: Q-B6. *In your view, what are the biggest problems in the area where you live and work most of the time?* (*N* = 7,202)

Economic issues and natural disasters are also among the most commonly cited problems at the local level, as they are at the national level.

2.3 SITUATION OF THE HOUSEHOLD

A majority of Nepalis feel their household is faring neither better nor worse than a year ago, but one-third have improved their financial situation, relations with others in their community, and access to electricity. People were asked about the evolution of seven aspects of the situation of their household over the past year: finances, the physical condition of their house, the health of family members, relations with others in their community, relations with government and authorities, access to electricity, and access to drinking water (figure 2.12). In each of these aspects, a majority of respondents—two-thirds on average—feel their situation has not changed significantly. However, on the positive side, a third of Nepalis state that their financial situation has improved, that relations with others in the community have improved, or that they benefit from better access to electricity. One-fifth of Nepalis report a decline in their access to drinking water, a higher share than those reporting an improvement.

[19] Multiple answers were allowed. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

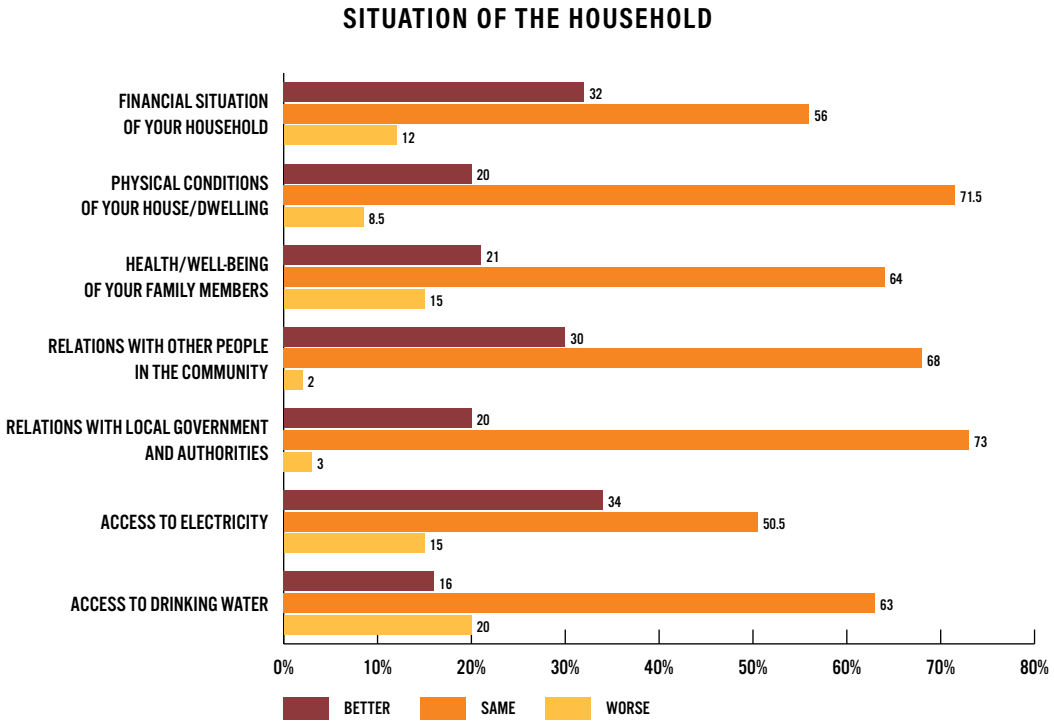

Figure 2.12: Q-B7a–g. *Compared to last year, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following?* (*N* = 7,202)

Respondents in the lower income brackets (below NPR 10,000 per month) are more likely than average to have become poorer. They are more likely to report that their house is in worse condition or that accessing electricity has become more difficult, and their access to drinking water is also more likely to have declined (figures 2.13, 2.14, 2.18, and 2.19). The poorest Nepalis—those with a monthly income below NPR 2,500—are twice as likely as average to have become poorer or to report that the condition of their house and their access to electricity are worse than one year ago.

Young and higher-income respondents are more likely to report that their financial situation is better compared to one year ago. More than a third of Nepalis (37.4%) between 18 and 34 years old, and 38.4% of those with a monthly income of NPR 20,000 or above, say that their household finances have improved (figure 2.13). A similar share of Province 5 residents and Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis also report doing better. Muslims, Province 2 respondents, and residents of the Terai region more generally are more likely than average to report that their financial situation has changed, for better or worse.

A third of Nepalis feel their relations with others in the community have improved, while just 1.9% think they have become worse. Nearly half of respondents from Province 6 feel their household's relations with others in the community have improved (46.0%, compared to 30.0% nationwide). Province 7 residents, Muslims, and respondents in the top income bracket are also more likely to report improvements. On the other hand, Province 2 residents and high-caste Madhesis are more likely than average to think their relations with others have deteriorated (figure 2.16).

Some 20.2% of Nepalis feel that their relations with the government have improved. Only 2.7% feel that they have deteriorated. But Madhesis of all castes and ethnic groups, except Madhesi Adivasis and Janajatis, are less likely than others to report improvements and more likely to report that relations have worsened (figure 2.17).

Household-level results once again reflect dramatic imbalances in access to drinking water and electricity across the country. Consistent with results discussed in section 2.4, above, people residing in the mountains and in Province 6 are substantially more likely than others to report that their access to water or electricity is worse than one year ago (figures 2.18 and 2.19). Access to water is more likely to have deteriorated in Province 3, but also in Province 5, among the poor, and among hill Dalits. On the other hand, 34.1% of Nepalis report better access to electricity than one year

ago. As discussed earlier, this is likely due to reduced load-shedding. Groups more likely to report improvements in electricity supply include residents of Provinces 3 and 4, high school and college graduates, people with a monthly income above NPR 20,000, and Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis.

The household situation of respondents is a fairly good determinant of their opinion about the country and their appreciation of conditions in the area where they live. Nepalis whose financial situation has improved, who have a better house now than one year ago, or who report better relationships with authorities, are significantly more likely to be optimistic about the direction of the country or to say conditions have improved where they live. In contrast, those whose situation has deteriorated in the same aspects are more likely to express negative views about the country and their locality. An improvement or decline in relations with other groups only seems to affect outlooks at the local level, not opinions about the country. Interestingly, 43.3% of those whose financial situation has deteriorated during the past year still express positive views about the direction of Nepal, and 39.6% say conditions have improved in the area where they live.

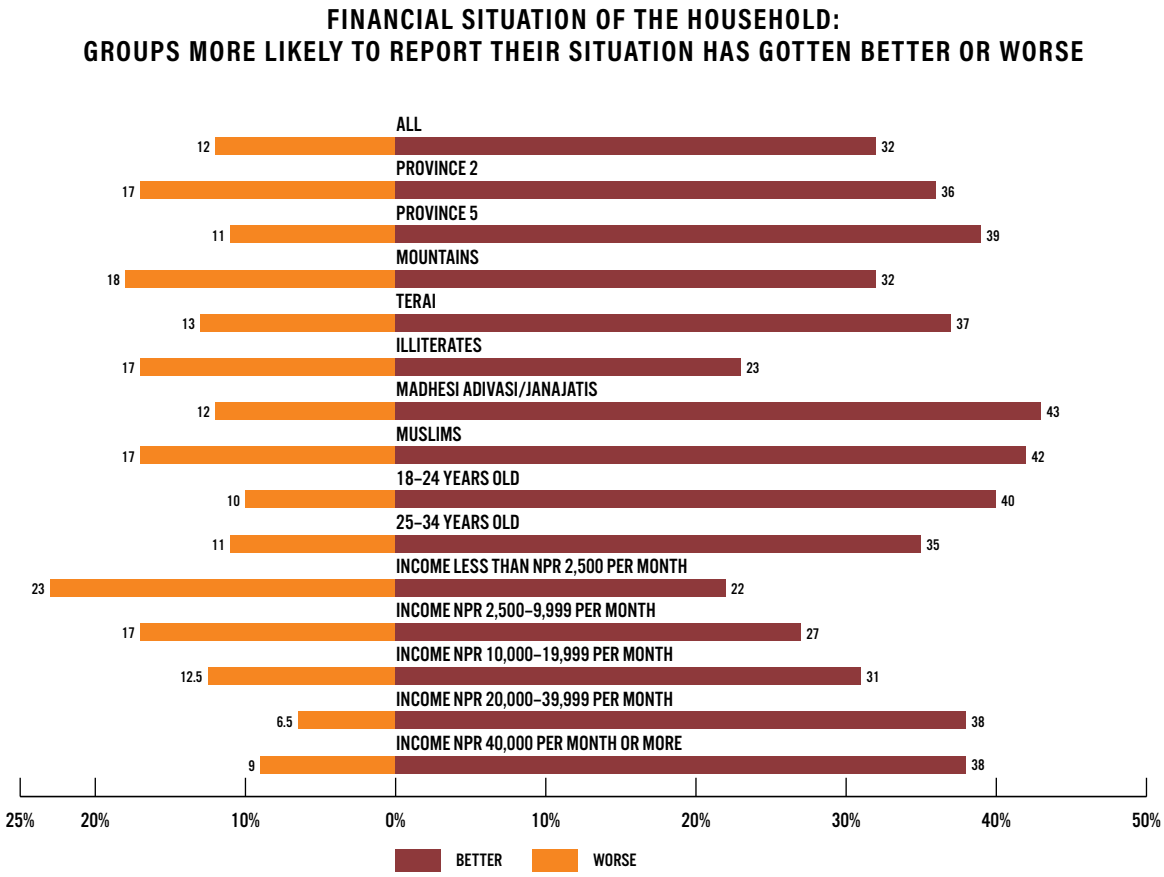

Figure 2.13: Q-B7a. *Compared to last year, would you say that the financial situation for your household has improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE HOUSE:
GROUPS MORE LIKELY TO REPORT THEIR DWELLING HAS DETERIORATED

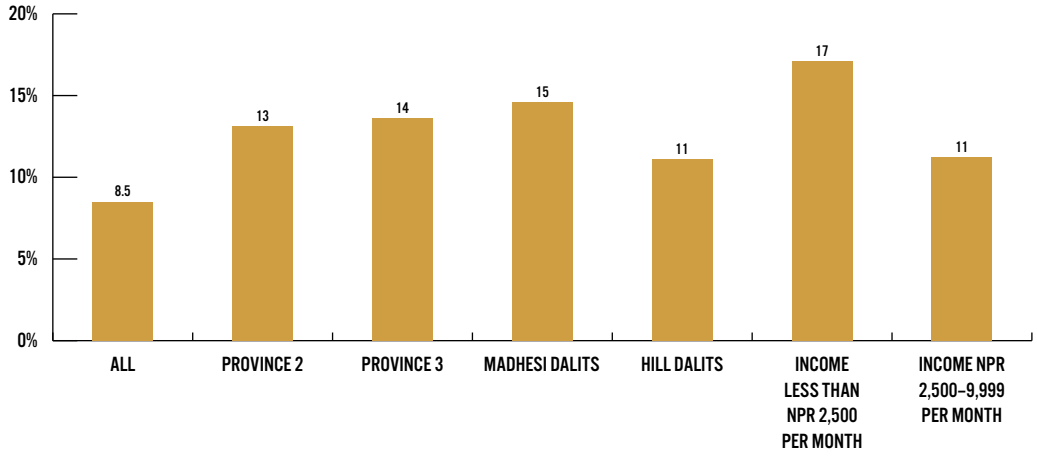

Figure 2.14: Q-B7b. *Compared to last year, would you say that the physical condition of your house has improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

HOUSEHOLD HEALTH:
GROUPS MORE LIKELY TO REPORT THE HEALTH OF THEIR FAMILY HAS DETERIORATED

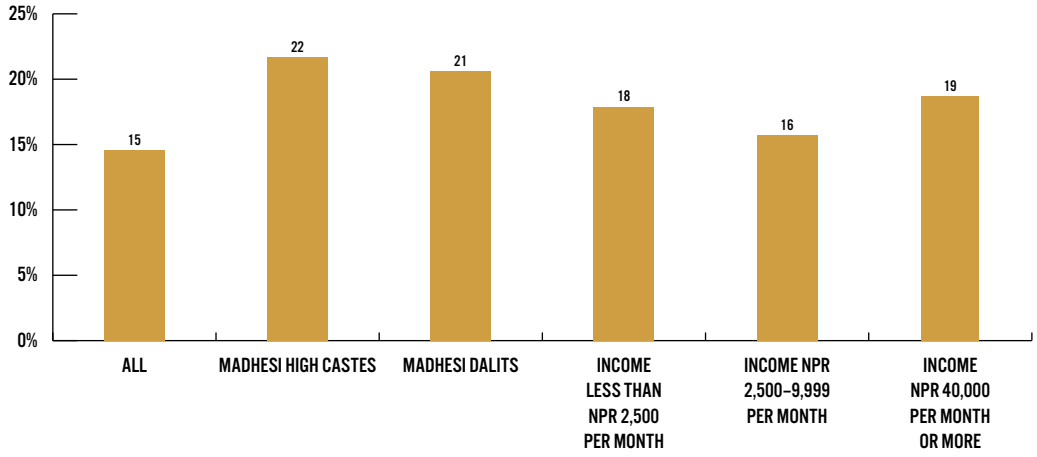

Figure 2.15: Q-B7c. *Compared to last year, would you say that the condition of your family members' health has improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

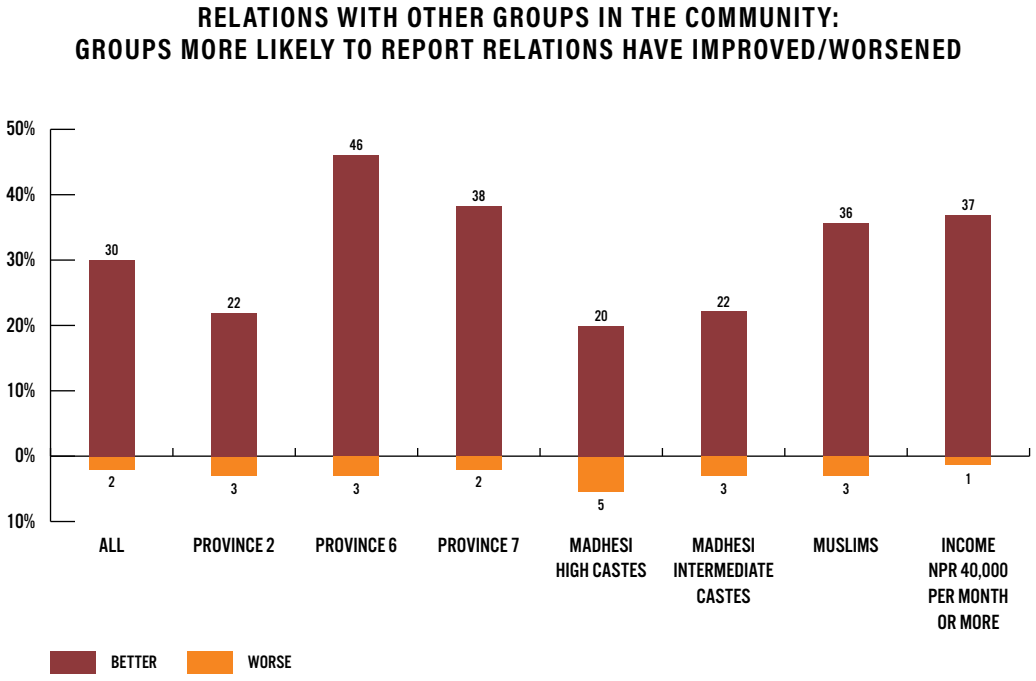

Figure 2.16: Q-B7d. *Compared to last year, would you say that the relations of your household with other groups in the community have improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

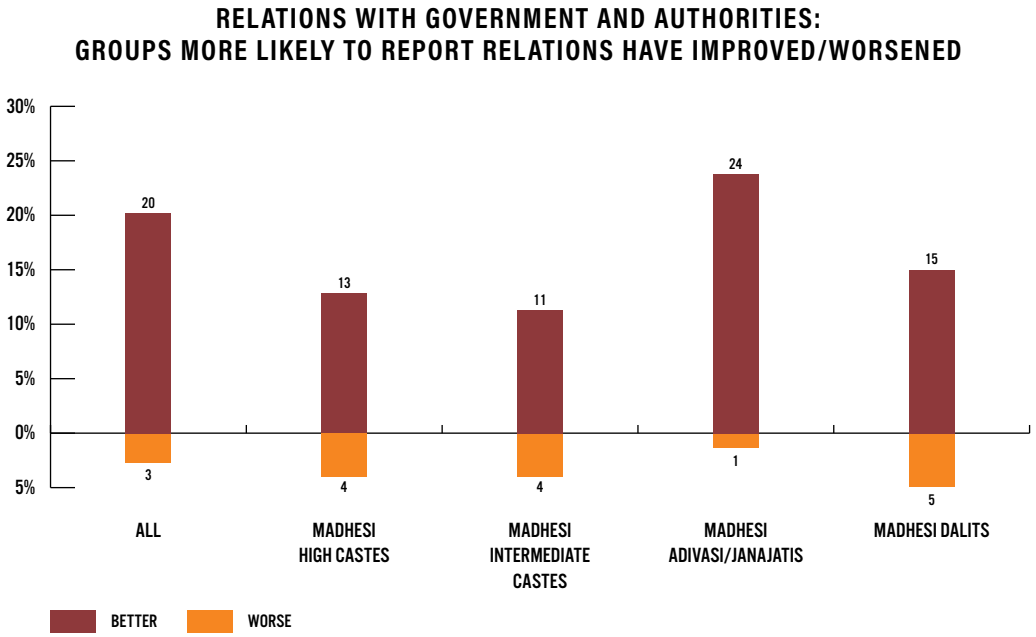

Figure 2.17: Q-B7e. *Compared to last year, would you say that the relations of your household with the government and authorities have improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY:
GROUPS MORE LIKELY TO REPORT THEIR ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY HAS IMPROVED/WORSENED

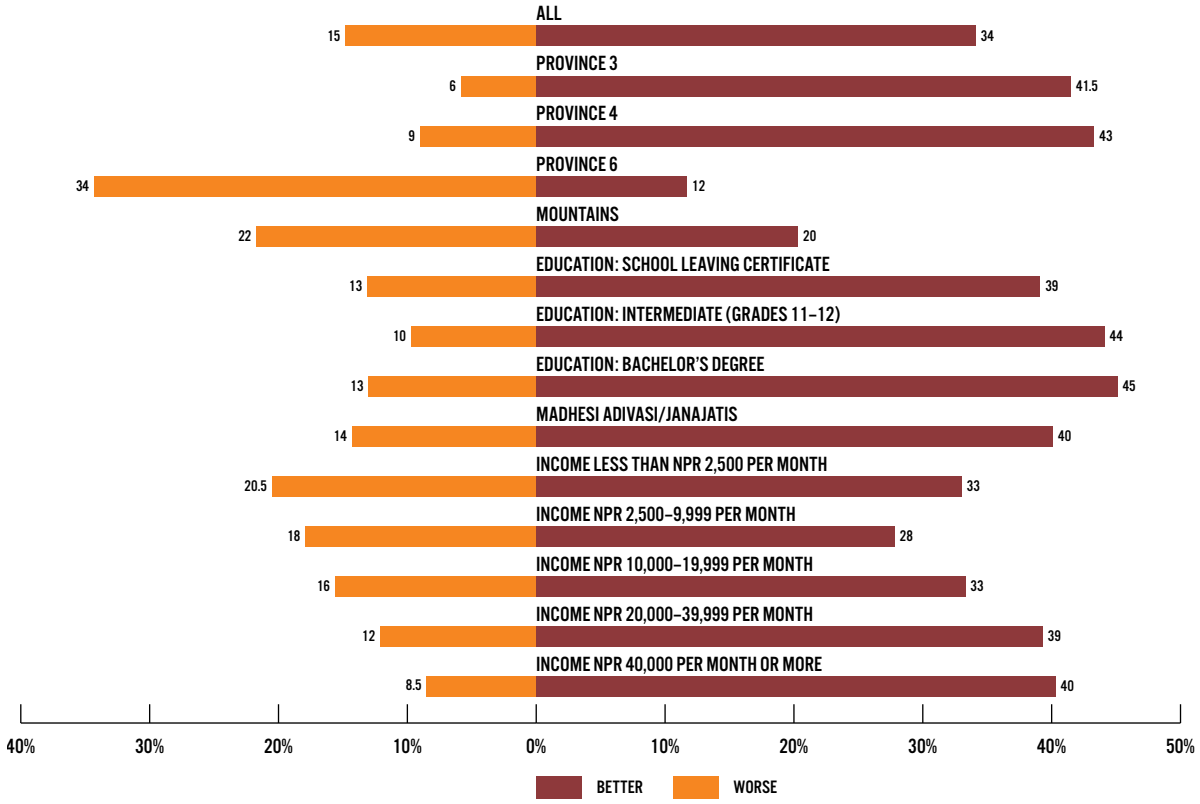

Figure 2.18: Q-B7f. *Compared to last year, would you say that your access to electricity has improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER:
GROUPS MORE LIKELY TO REPORT THEIR ACCESS TO WATER HAS DETERIORATED

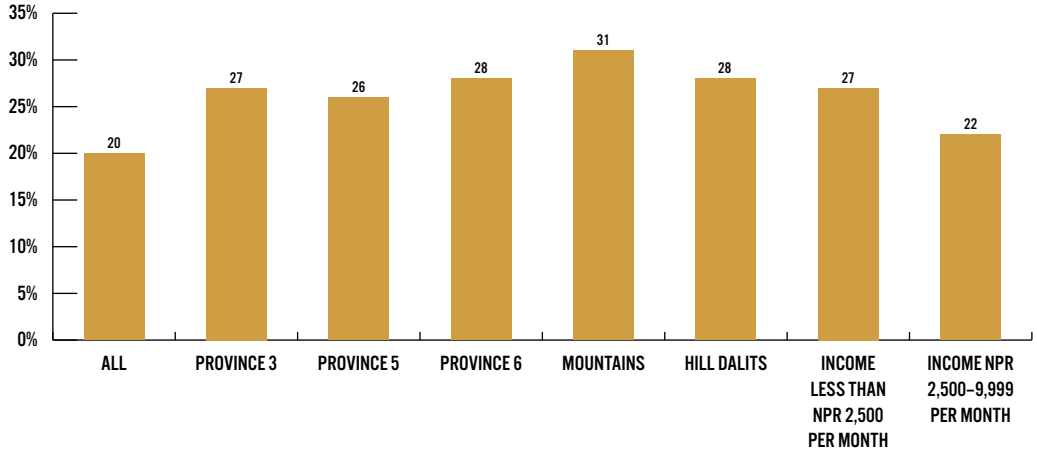

Figure 2.19: Q-B7g. *Compared to last year, would you say that your access to drinking water has improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

chapter 3

SECURITY AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Most Nepalis feel safe. Just under half (43.6%) think there is no security threat in the area where they live, and 93.8% feel their household is either reasonably safe or very safe. However, 6.1% feel somewhat or very unsafe, and this share is slightly higher among Dalits (6.9% for Madhesi Dalits and 8.4% for hill Dalits).

The most commonly cited security threats are alcohol abuse and natural disasters. These are followed by crime, corruption, and weak rule of law.

The crimes Nepalis report being most exposed to are theft, physical assault, and extortion. Some 3.9% of households experienced theft in the past year, 1.4% experienced assault, and 1.5% extortion. One in 500 Nepalis reported that they or a relative were exposed to sexual violence in the past year.

Around one Nepali woman in eight takes precautions when going out of her home, and one in ten does not feel safe at home. Violence against women is seen as a security threat in their area by 5.7% of women. Some 12.1% sometimes or often avoid going out without an escort; 12.3% sometimes or often avoid taking certain streets; and 10.8% sometimes or often avoid being around certain people, for fear of assault. At home, 6.6% say they sometimes feel unsafe, and 3.4% feel that way most of the time.

The majority of Nepalis do not condone the use of violence to pursue even worthwhile political goals, yet a third think violence is legitimate to secure equal rights for all citizens. While most Madhesis and other Terai residents do not condone violence under any circumstances, the proportion of people from these groups who consider violence to be a legitimate means to achieve greater equality is larger than average.

Nepalis prefer requesting the help of the police, traditional justice mechanisms, and friends and relatives to resolve disputes. The police are the first resort in cases of debt, domestic abuse, or crime. Most people prefer to use traditional channels for dispute resolution in land-dispute cases. Traditional justice mechanisms are generally held in high regard and often preferred over other avenues of redress by Terai residents, rural Nepalis, and Nepalis living in mountainous areas. Nine in ten Nepalis are confident in their ability to obtain justice, with little variation among regions or demographic groups.

3.1 SECURITY

SECURITY THREATS

Just under half of Nepalis think security is not an issue in the area where they live. Asked to name the main threats to security in the area where they live and work most of the time, 43.6% of all people respond that there are no threats at all.[20] Alcohol abuse is cited by 20.8%, 20.6% mention natural disasters, and 13.7% mention crime. Fewer than 10% mention governance issues such as corruption or weak rule of law as security threats. Domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence are cited by 5.7% of women, but just 3.1% of men.[21] Only 1.7% cite ethnic, religious, or caste-based tensions (figure 3.1).

[20] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during the analysis.

[21] It is important to bear in mind that people were not asked if they consider domestic violence or gender-based violence specifically to be threats to their security. They were asked an open question about security threats in general. Therefore, answers to this question cannot be regarded as an accurate indicator of the frequency or prevalence of gender-based violence in Nepal. More direct questions about gender-based violence were asked in this survey, and results are discussed later in this section.

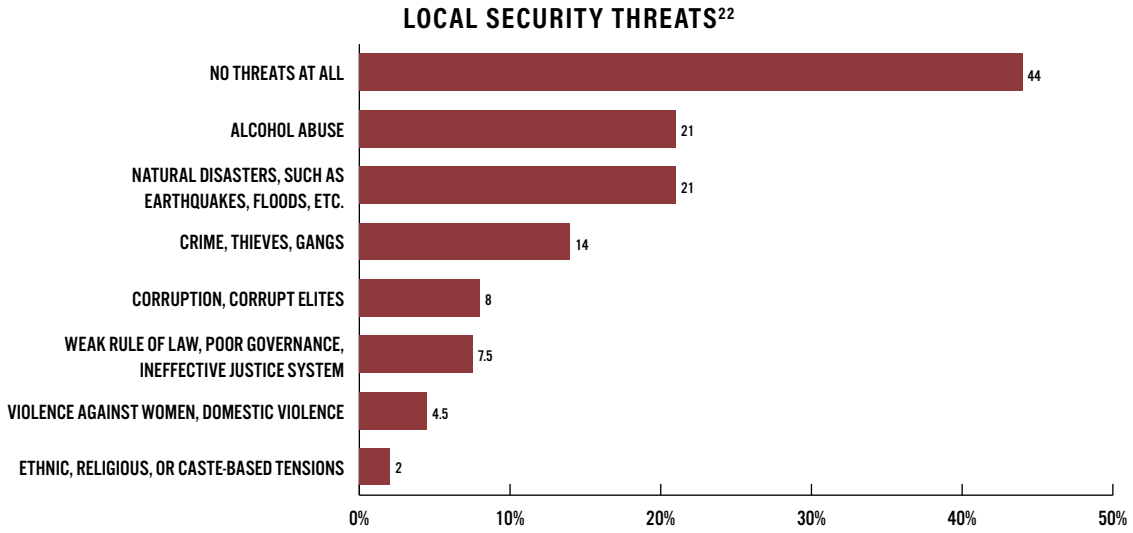

Figure 3.1: Q-C1. *In your opinion, what are the main threats to security for most people in the area where you live and work most of the time?* (*N* = 7,202)

Province 2 residents are more likely to name natural disasters or corruption as security threats. Some 31.3% cite natural disasters, probably as a result of the massive floods that affected the Terai, and in particular Province 2, in mid-August 2017 as this survey was under way. Province 2 respondents also cite corruption at a much higher rate, 18.2%, than any other province.

Crime is a greater concern in urban areas, while rural Nepalis are more worried about natural disasters. Urban residents are nearly twice as likely as rural residents to identify crime as a threat (16.7% vs. 8.5%, respectively). Crime and gangs are mentioned as a threat by more people in Province 1 (21.3%), Province 7 (20.4%), and Province 3 (16.6%). Rural Nepalis feel more threatened than urban Nepalis by natural disasters (26.1% vs. 17.3%, respectively).

Concerns about alcohol abuse appear to be more prevalent in the mountains. A third of Nepalis living in the mountains (31.9%) cite alcohol abuse as a security threat, compared to 21.7% in the hills and 18.6% in the Terai.[23] It should also be noted that the share of people citing violence against women as an important threat is highest in the mountains (6.0% of respondents, compared to 3.6% in the hills and 5.0% in the Terai).

There is no substantial variation in the security threats identified by Nepalis of different castes or education levels. Madhesis[24] are more likely to cite natural disasters, a likely consequence of the August 2017 floods (see above). Lower-income Nepalis are less likely to respond that there are no threats at all (33%, compared to 44% of all respondents).

PERSONAL SAFETY

A large majority of Nepalis feel safe. Asked to rate their own safety and that of their families, 93.8% feel safe, including 71.2% who feel "reasonably safe" and 22.6% "very safe." Some 5.7% of respondents feel "somewhat unsafe," and 0.4% feel "very unsafe."

[22] Multiple answers were allowed. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

[23] In this report, results for the Terai region include results for all residents of the region regardless of their caste or ethnicity.

[24] In this report, "Madhesi" refers to any respondent who self-identified as a member of the following communities: Madhesi so-called "high" castes (Brahman-Tarai, Rajput, Kayastha, etc.), Madhesi "intermediate" castes (Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, Dhanuk, etc.), Madhesi Dalits (Chamar, Musahar, Dusadh, etc.), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (Tharu, Rajbanshi, etc.), Muslims, or other Madhesi cultural groups. Results for the Madhesi group include responses from all Madhesi respondents, regardless of where they live. For a full list of caste/ethnicity categories used in this report, please refer to appendix B, "Sample Demographics." The use of adjectives such as "high,", "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

Figure 3.2: Q-C2. *How safe would you say you and your family are? Would you say you are very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe?* (*N* = 7,202)

A larger proportion of people feel "very safe" in Province 4 (39.9%), Province 5 (30.1%), Province 6 (28.8%), and Province 7 (41.3%). Province 7 has a larger share of respondents who feel "very unsafe" (1.9%, compared to 0.4% nationwide). In Province 3, 93.7% feel safe to some degree, but only 9.9% feel "very safe," compared to 22.6% nationwide (figure 3.3).

Dalits tend to feel less safe than others. The proportion of Dalits who feel "somewhat unsafe" is slightly higher than the national average (7.7% among hill Dalits and 6.9% among Madhesi Dalits). There is no substantial variation across other variables.

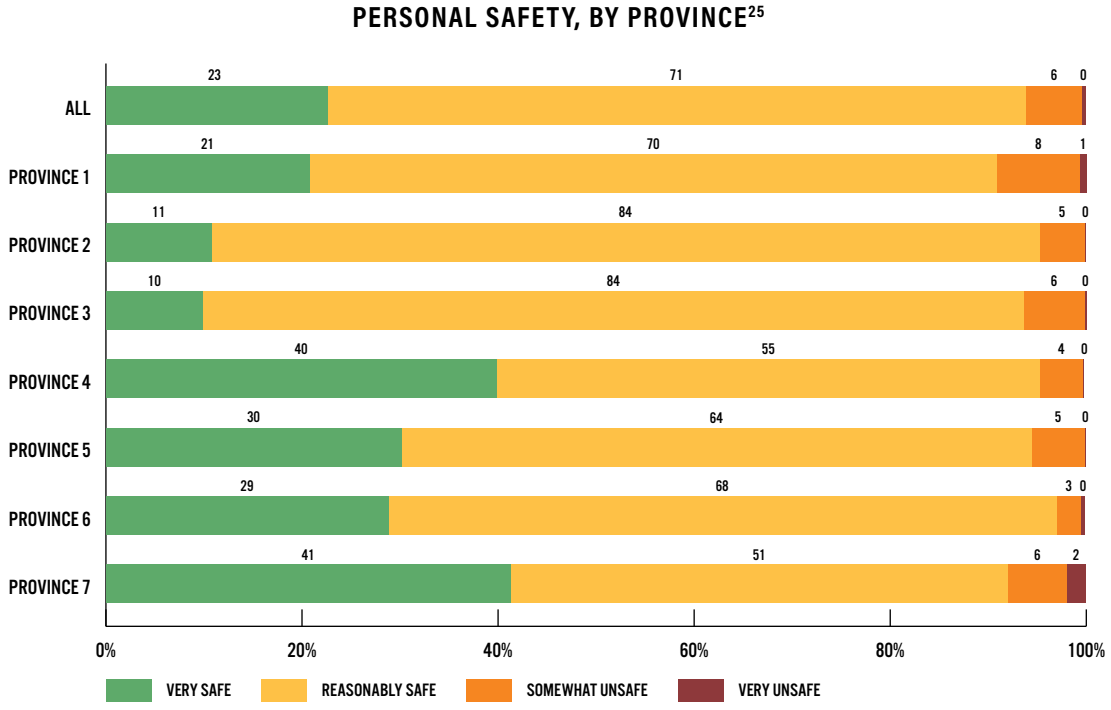

Figure 3.3: Q-C2. *How safe would you say you and your family are? Would you say you are very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe?"* (*N* = 7,202)

[25] Because percentages in figures are rounded up to the nearest whole number, bars in stacked bar charts do not always add up to 100%

EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE AND CRIME

Theft, assault, and extortion are the crimes Nepalis report being most exposed to. Nepalis were asked to report if they or anyone in their household had been the victim of a range of crimes and violent acts during the past year (see table 3.1 for the entire list). Some 3.9% report that they or someone in their household experienced theft, 1.4% report physical assaults, and 1.5% extortion. The share of people reporting other forms of crime and abuse is below 1.0%. One in 200 people (0.5%) report experiencing violence during a political protest. One in 500 (0.2%) report sexual violence.[26] Larger proportions of respondents report thefts in urban municipalities and in the Terai (4.6% each) than in rural areas and the mountains (2.7% and 2.8%, respectively). There is otherwise no significant variation across provinces, regions, or demographic groups.

EXPERIENCE OF CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN THE PAST YEAR

	YES %	NO %	REF/DK %
a. Theft	3.9	96.0	0.1
b. Physical assault/beating	1.4	98.6	0.0
c. Assault with a weapon	0.3	99.6	0.1
d. Racketeering/extortion	1.5	98.5	0.0
e. Burglary/breaking and entering/looting	0.4	99.5	0.1
f. Motor vehicle theft/property taken from vehicle or vehicle parts stolen	0.8	98.9	0.3
g. Livestock theft	0.9	99.1	0.0
h. Any form of violence experienced during a political rally, protest, or bandh	0.5	99.4	0.1
i. Kidnapping	0.2	99.8	0.0
j. Murder/attempted murder	0.2	99.7	0.1
k. Sexual violence	0.2	99.6	0.2
l. Human trafficking	0.1	99.6	0.3

Table 3.1: Q-C3a–l. *Have you or has anyone in your household been the victim of the following types of violence or criminal acts in the past year?* (*N* = 7,202)

SENSE OF SAFETY OF NEPALI WOMEN

The survey found that 5.7% percent of Nepali women cite violence against women as a major security threat in the area where they live. (Only 3.1% of men feel that way.) One in 500 respondents across genders report that they or their relatives were the victim of sexual violence in the past year.[27] The survey also attempted to evaluate the sense of safety of Nepali women, by asking female respondents about a list of precautions they might take out of fear of being assaulted. These include not going out of their house without an escort; avoiding certain streets, roads, or neighborhoods; and avoiding being around certain people. They were also asked if they feel safe in their own home.

[26] However, this figure in particular should be taken with caution. Given the sensitivity of the topic, a survey is typically not the best instrument to accurately capture incidents and rates of sexual violence. The UNFPA reports that 15% of Nepali women have experienced sexual violence at least once in their life. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) website, "Gender-Based Violence (GBV)," accessed February 8, 2018, http://nepal.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Factsheet%20GBV.pdf.

[27] Note that we advise caution, as survey results typically underreport sexual violence.

PHOTO BY Skanda Gautam

Most Nepali women feel safe, yet around 12% take precautions when going out of their house, and 10% do not feel safe at home. Between 85.9% and 87.6% of women never take the three listed types of precaution (figure 3.4), and 87.8% say they never feel unsafe in their own home. However, nearly one in ten women say they sometimes avoid going out on their own or avoid taking the wrong street, and 6.9% percent sometimes avoid being around certain people. Just under 4% say they often have to take these precautions. Some 6.6% feel sometimes unsafe in their home, and 3.4% admit they often do. These figures should not be taken lightly, given the probable underreporting of the actual proportion of women feeling unsafe outside or inside their home. Survey respondents often lack the confidence or trust to answer this type of question truthfully.

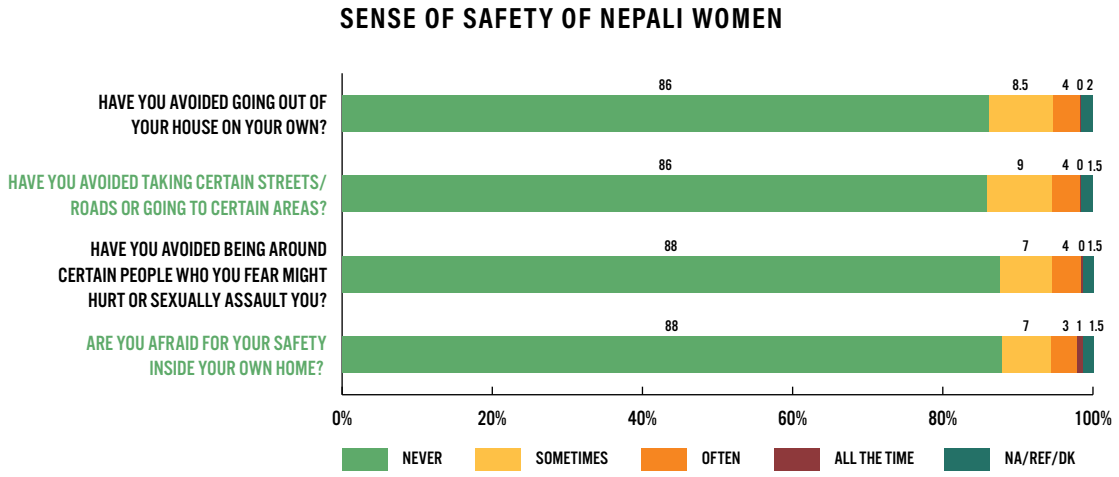

Figure 3.4: Q-C7a–d. *In the past twelve months, have you taken any of the following precautions for fear of being physically hurt or sexually assaulted?* (*n* = 3,731; asked only of women)

3.2 LEGITIMACY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

A large majority of Nepalis are opposed to the use of violence to pursue even worthwhile political goals, but nearly a third find violence legitimate to secure equal rights for all. People were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with three statements about the legitimacy of political violence. They were asked if violence is legitimate (a) to achieve high-minded political goals such as ending tyranny, (b) to secure equal rights for all Nepali citizens, or (c) to win elections. In all three cases, the vast majority of people do not condone the use of violence, even when pursuing worthwhile goals: 82.2% disagree with using violence to fight tyranny; 88.0% percent disapprove of using violence to win elections (figure 3.5). However, over a quarter of Nepalis (28.1%) approve of violence if the goal is to secure equal rights for all citizens. This likely indicates frustration with persistent intergroup inequality and a lack of inclusion despite political changes.

While most Terai residents and Madhesis do not approve of violence, these groups have a higher share of respondents who regard violence as legitimate under certain circumstances. In Province 5, the place of origin of the Maoist movement, a markedly higher-than-average share of people somewhat or strongly agree that violence is legitimate in all three hypothetical situations (figure 3.6). In Province 7, this applies only when ending tyranny or fighting for equal rights. In Province 2, it applies to equal rights and winning elections. Province 3, which includes Kathmandu, and Province 6 stand out as provinces where much lower shares of people find violence acceptable in all three cases. Terai residents, most Madhesi groups (except high castes),[28] and, in particular, Madhesi Dalits and Muslims have larger minorities of people who somewhat or strongly agree that political violence is legitimate in all three situations. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the history of contestation and perceived or real discrimination that these groups have faced. It should also be noted that for all these groups, a large majority does not support violence even in pursuit of worthwhile goals.

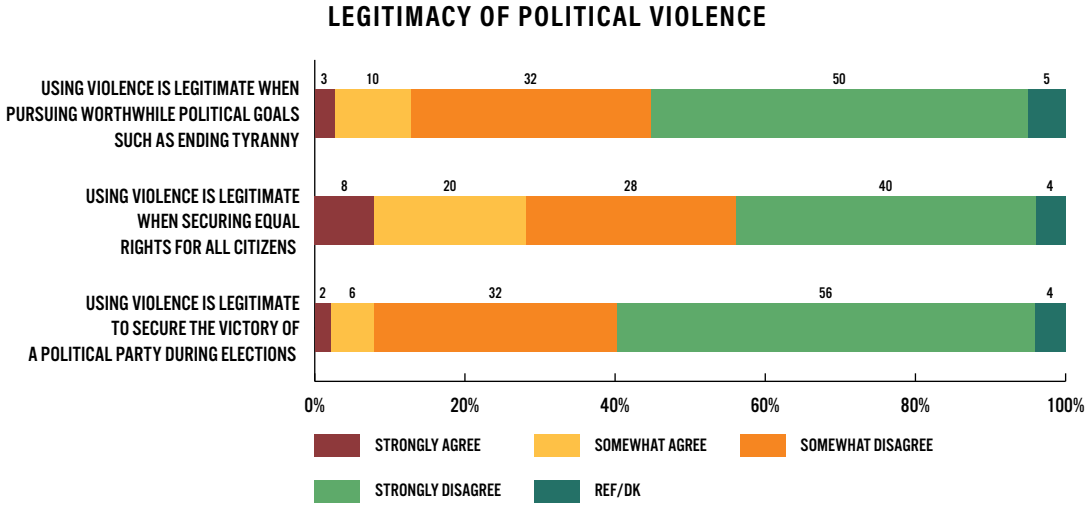

Figure 3.5: Q-C4a-c. *Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: using violence is legitimate when pursuing worthwhile political goals such as ending tyranny; using violence is legitimate when securing equal rights for all citizens; using violence is legitimate to secure the victory of a political party during elections.* (*N* = 7,202)

[28] The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

LEGITIMACY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

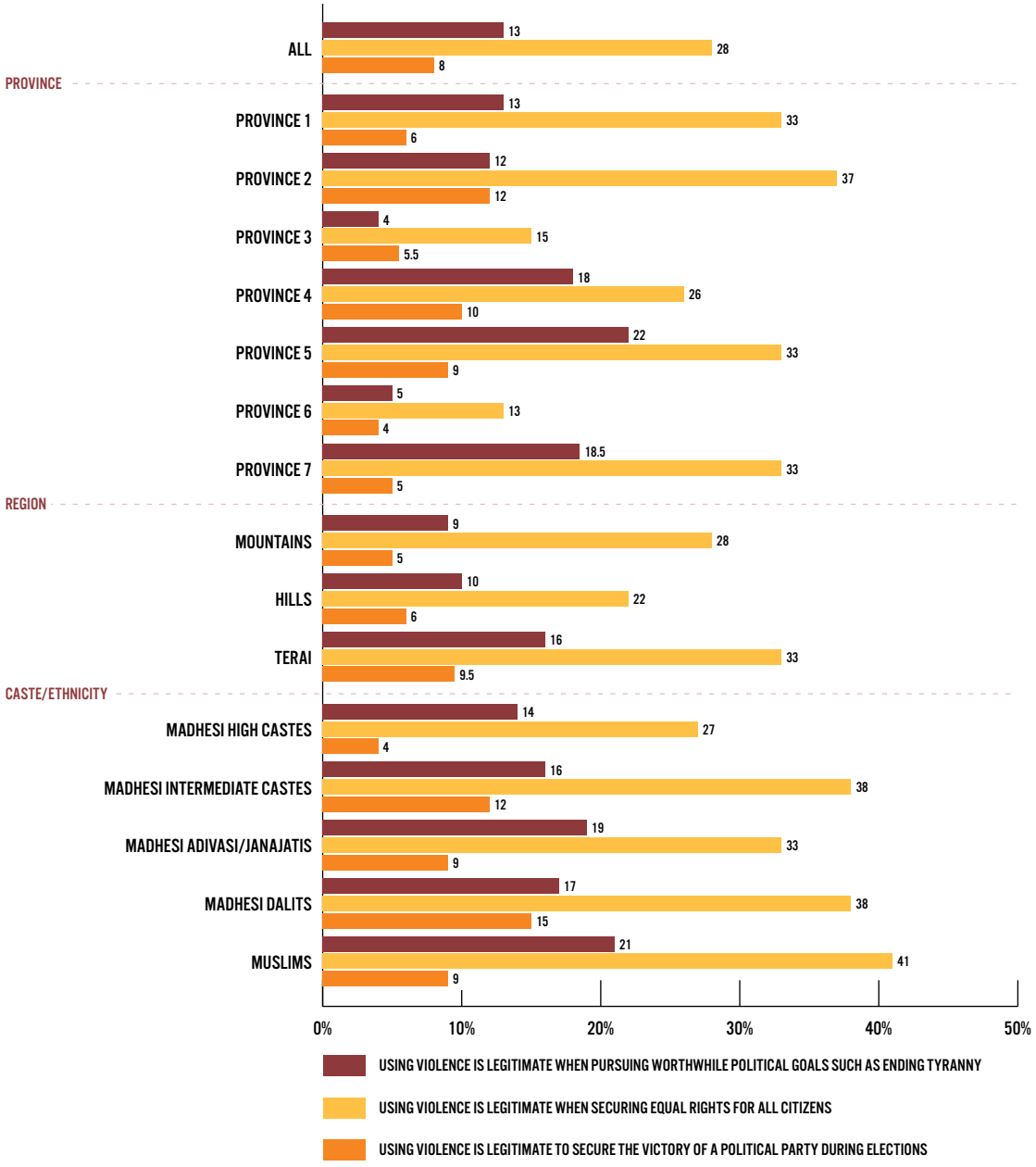

Figure 3.6: Q-C4a–c. *Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: using violence is legitimate when pursuing worthwhile political goals such as ending tyranny; using violence is legitimate when securing equal rights for all citizens; using violence is legitimate to secure the victory of a political party during elections.* (*N* = 7,202)

3.3 DISPUTE-RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

PREFERRED AVENUES FOR THE RESOLUTION OF LAND AND DEBT DISPUTES, DOMESTIC ABUSE, AND CRIME

The police, traditional justice mechanisms, and friends and relatives are the most common avenues for dispute resolution. Nepalis were asked where they would go to find help when facing four types of situations: a land dispute, a conflict over debt, domestic violence (in Nepali, *gharelu himsha*), and crime (theft or physical assault). The police are the first resort for most people in cases of crime (68.0% of respondents), domestic violence (33.3%), or debt (24.0%). To solve a land dispute, the largest share of people (21.8%) favor traditional justice mechanisms, more than the Land Revenue Office or the police (table 3.2). Traditional dispute-resolution avenues, such as courts of elders, an unofficial *panchayat*, or religious groups, appear to be held in high regard by a significant share of people: besides being preferred by most Nepalis in cases of land disputes, traditional justice is also the second-most common answer in all three other situations. Between 10% and 14% of people would turn to friends and family, except in cases of crime. Overall, the police, traditional justice institutions, and friends and relatives appear to be more trusted than options such as local government or the courts. Sadly, 14.6% of Nepalis say they could only rely on themselves in a case of domestic violence. (There is no significant variation across genders for this particular question.)

PREFERRED AVENUES FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION, BY DISPUTE TYPE

	LAND	DEBT	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	CRIME
Traditional justice (unofficial panchayat, religious groups, etc.)	21.8	23.3	17.4	11.4
Land Revenue Office	14.5	0.2	0.0	0.0
Police	12.4	24.0	33.3	68.0
Friends and family	10.1	14.1	11.0	3.9
Ward chairperson/former VDC secretary	8.4	7.2	4.1	3.2
Mayor/rural municipality chair	6.2	4.4	3.3	2.3
Community mediator/social mobilizer	5.7	7.4	4.7	2.6
Village or municipal council	5.2	5.6	3.7	3.3
Civil servants in village or municipal office	4.7	3.1	1.8	1.0
District court	2.3	1.0	0.3	0.2
I can only rely on myself	2.2	4.3	14.6	0.7
Local court	1.9	0.9	0.3	0.3
Women's group	0.2	0.5	2.4	0.2
Other	1.1	3.1	2.4	2.3
Don't know	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.6

Table 3.2: Q-C5a-d. *If your household were involved in a dispute over land, debt, or domestic violence, or if it were the victim of a crime, from whom would you ask for help to resolve it?* (*N* = 7,202)

Terai residents and Madhesis, as well as people in rural and mountain areas, are more likely to prefer traditional dispute resolution to other mechanisms. In particular, the share of Province 2 residents whose first resort is traditional justice in cases of land disputes or debt, but also domestic violence or crime, is roughly twice as high as the national average in all four situations. About half of Province 2 respondents would bring land and debt disputes to traditional institutions; a third of them would prefer traditional justice in domestic-violence cases; and, while two thirds would

report a crime to the police, almost one in four would prefer traditional mechanisms (table 3.3).Terai residents and Madhesis in general, but also people in rural and mountainous areas, generally show a greater inclination toward traditional justice mechanisms than people in the hills. On land disputes, the most popular response among hill residents is to bring their grievances to the Land Revenue Office.[29] Nepalis with an education level above School Leaving Certificate (SLC) are more likely to pick the Land Revenue Office, while those with no formal education are more likely to prefer traditional mediation.

PREFERRED DISPUTE RESOLUTION AVENUES, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	LAND		DEBT		DOMESTIC VIOLENCE		CRIME	
	LAND REVENUE OFFICE	TRADITIONAL JUSTICE	POLICE	TRADITIONAL JUSTICE	POLICE	TRADITIONAL JUSTICE	POLICE	TRADITIONAL JUSTICE
All	***14.5***	***21.8***	***24.0***	***23.3***	***33.3***	***17.4***	***68.0***	***11.4***
Province 2	5.6	50.6	15.2	53.9	19.6	34.9	66.3	22.7
REGION								
Mountains	12.2	29.1	28.4	27.7	28.1	23.8	51.7	19.8
Hills	25.0	12.4	25.2	14.0	39.5	12.2	72.7	6.7
Terai	6.4	28.4	22.5	30.2	29.0	20.8	66.3	14.1
URBAN VS. RURAL								
Urban municipality	16.9	19.1	24.8	20.4	37.1	14.0	71.2	9.6
Rural municipality	10.4	26.4	22.6	28.2	26.8	23.2	62.6	14.5

Table 3.3: Q-C5a–d. *If your household were involved in a dispute over land, debt, or domestic violence, or if it were the victim of a crime, from whom would you ask for help to resolve it?* (*N* = 7,202)

CONFIDENCE IN JUSTICE

Nepalis appear confident about the capacity of their chosen dispute-resolution mechanism to deliver justice. Asked whether they would be confident of receiving justice in the four aforementioned situations, the vast majority of Nepalis—consistently around 88–89% across the four categories—say they are reasonably or very confident of getting justice (figure 3.7). Only one in ten express doubt or pessimism. There is no major variation across geographic or demographic groups.

Confidence is stronger among those who favor traditional dispute resolution. Between 22.7% and 25.8% of those who favor traditional justice say they are "very confident" that they would receive justice, depending on the type of situation. This share is higher than for those who preferred other avenues of redress (figure 3.8). One notable exception is domestic violence: the highest share of "very confident" answers (30.3%) is found among the 14.6% of Nepalis who say they could only rely on themselves to solve the problem.

[29] Thirty-three percent of Province 3 respondents say they would seek resolution from the Land Revenue Office for a land dispute. Oddly, the most common answer in Province 1 is friends and family (21%).

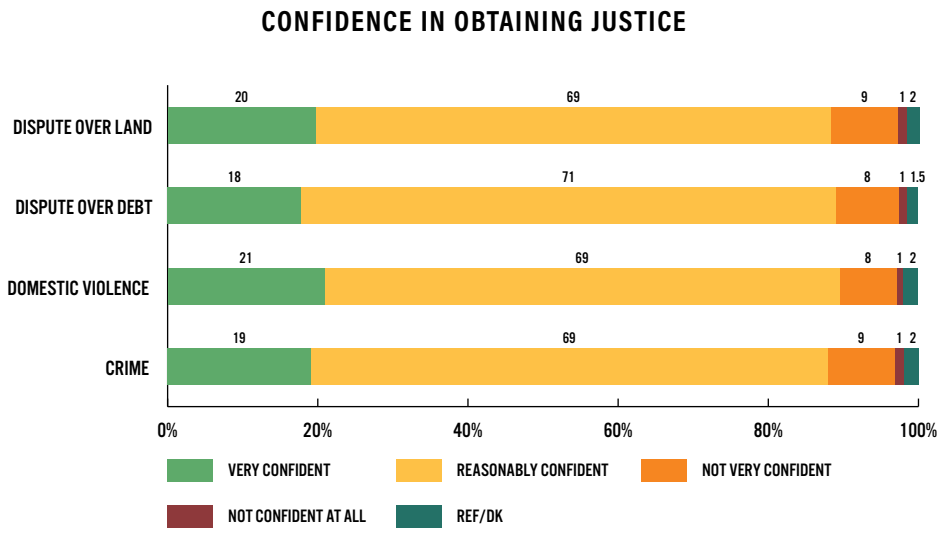

Figure 3.7: Q-C6a-d. *In each case, how confident would you be that you would eventually receive justice?* (*N* = 7,202)

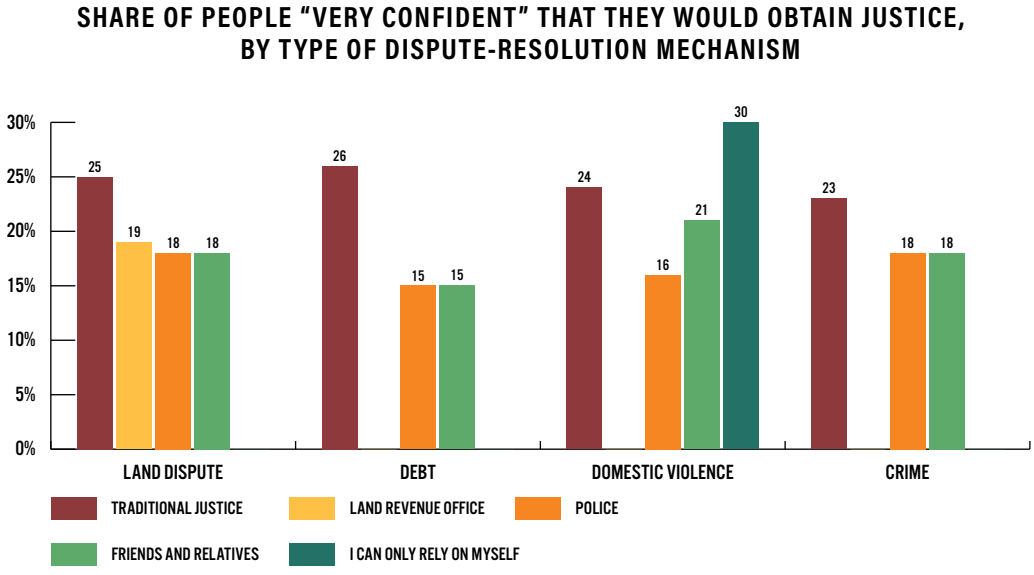

Figure 3.8: Q-C6a-d. *In each case, how confident would you be that you would eventually receive justice?* (*N* = 7,202)

chapter 4

IDENTITY AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

Just slightly more than one-half of Nepalis consider Nepali to be their mother tongue. In the Terai, Nepali is a second language for two persons out of three, and for up to 89.5% of people in Province 2. Between a quarter and a third of those who do not consider Nepali their maternal language feel disadvantaged by it in the workplace, when studying, when applying for a citizenship card, or in their interactions with the police and health-care providers.

A minority of Nepalis feel disadvantaged by their caste, ethnicity, or religion in the workplace (7.4%), when applying for a citizenship card (5.8%), when studying (4.1%), or in their interactions with the police (4.8%) and health-care providers (5.1%). This proportion is higher among Terai residents, Madhesis, Dalits, Muslims, and Christians. Women, the poor, and the less educated are also more likely to regard their caste, ethnicity, religion, or mother tongue (when it is not Nepali) as a disadvantage.

A minority of women regard their gender as a disadvantage in the same five situations. Some 8.2% feel disadvantaged by their gender in the workplace, 5.3% when reporting a problem to the police, 6.6% when applying for a citizenship card, 5.1% when accessing health services, and 3.7% during their studies. These proportions are higher among Madhesi women, Madhesi Dalits, Muslims, and women residing in mountainous regions.

Almost two-thirds of Nepalis think that intergroup relations are improving. Muslims and Christians are more likely than others to think so. The most commonly offered explanations are that people pay less attention to caste and ethnoreligious differences nowadays, that civil rights are better recognized and protected by authorities, and that the Nepali state has transitioned from a Hindu state to a secular one. The 12.3% of Nepalis who feel that intergroup relations are getting worse think it is because people pay more attention to communal divides, or they blame it on the transition to secularism or on identity politics.

A very large majority of Nepalis support equal rights for people of different castes and ethnic groups, but 26.1% would still refuse to marry their own children to someone from another caste or ethnicity. Support for equal rights across groups is not as strong among Madhesis and Muslims. The most eager supporters of intergroup equality are hill Dalits.

Most Nepalis support greater gender equality. Some 85.7% of respondents disagree that it is preferable to have a son than a daughter, and 89.7% disagree that a higher education is more important for a son. At the same time, 89.5% agree women should be encouraged to work outside of the home, and 79.9% think it is suitable for women to engage in politics. Support for equality across groups, for intercaste or interethnic marriage, and for gender equality are strongly correlated.

4.1 IDENTITY AND PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION: MOTHER TONGUE, CASTE, ETHNICITY, RELIGION, AND GENDER

MOTHER TONGUE

Nationwide, 55.6% of Nepalis, but only a minority of those living in the Terai plains, consider Nepali to be their mother tongue. In the Terai,[30] two-thirds of people (62.2%) do not consider Nepali to be their mother tongue.[31] In Province 2, located in the Terai, people whose mother tongue is not Nepali outnumber others more than eight to one

[30] In this report, results for the Terai region include results for all residents of the region regardless of their caste or ethnicity.
[31] In this survey, "mother tongue" was defined as the first language respondents learned while growing up.

(figure 4.1). These differences reflect variation in the ethnoreligious mix of the population: 89.5% of Madhesis[32] and 86.1% of Muslims, most of whom live in the Terai region,[33] say Nepali is not their mother tongue.[34] In the mountains, 80.7% regard Nepali as their mother tongue, as do 73.6% in the hills.

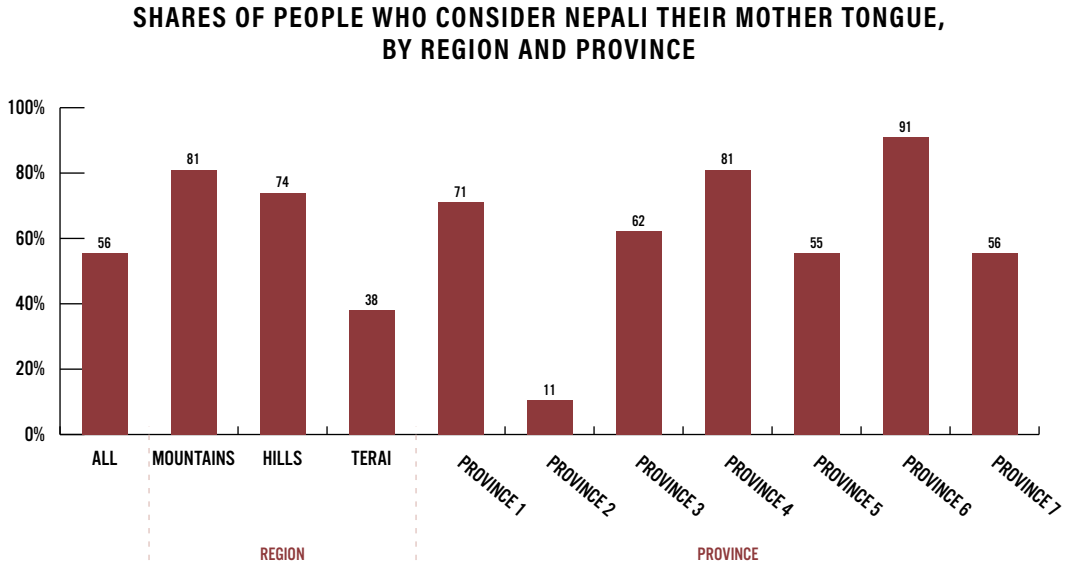

Figure 4.1: Q-D1. ***Is Nepali your mother tongue?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

A sizable minority of those whose mother tongue is not Nepali feel disadvantaged by it. The 44.4% of respondents whose mother tongue is not Nepali were asked if they typically feel at a disadvantage because of not being able to use their mother tongue in a range of situations: in the workplace, when reporting a problem to the police, when applying for a citizenship card, when going to the health post or hospital for treatment, and when studying at school or the university (figure 4.2). In each scenario, while a majority of respondents do not feel disadvantaged, between a quarter and a third say otherwise: 32.2% feel disadvantaged by language when interacting with other people in the workplace; 21.6% and 25.5%, respectively, feel a disadvantage in their interactions with the police and health workers; 27.4% feel disadvantaged when filing for a citizenship card; and almost one in five (18.6%) think that not being able to use their mother tongue is a disadvantage in the education system.

The share of people feeling disadvantaged by their mother tongue is higher in the Terai and among Madhesis. In particular, Province 2 and Province 5 residents, Muslims, and Madhesi Dalits are considerably more likely to feel disadvantaged (table 4.1). More than half of Madhesi Dalits feel disadvantaged in the workplace; between a third and a half feel disadvantaged in the other four situations. Some Terai districts have particularly high proportions of people who feel disadvantaged: for example, in Saptari, a Province 2 district, around two-thirds of people feel disadvantaged in the first four situations, and 46.2% think their mother tongue is a disadvantage when studying.

[32] In this report, "Madhesi" refers to any respondent who self-identified as a member of the following communities: Madhesi so-called "high" castes (Brahman-Tarai, Rajput, Kayastha, etc.), Madhesi "intermediate" castes (Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, Dhanuk, etc.), Madhesi Dalits (Chamar, Musahar, Dusadh, etc.), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (Tharu, Rajbanshi, etc.), Muslims, or other Madhesi cultural groups. Results for the Madhesi group include responses from all Madhesi respondents, regardless of where they live. For a full list of caste/ethnicity categories used in this report, please refer to appendix B, "Sample Demographics." The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

[33] Of survey respondents who are Madhesi, 97.9% live in the Terai (1.2% live in the hills, and 0.9% in the mountains). In the Terai region, Madhesis represent 60.1% of our sample of respondents. Some 98.7% of Muslim respondents live in the Terai, where they represent 8.3% of the sample.

[34] There is variation within the Madhesi group, although a majority of respondents in all castes do not recognize Nepali as their mother tongue. Some 75.6% of high-caste Madhesis do not consider Nepali their mother tongue; the proportion is higher among Madhesis of intermediate castes (92.6%), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (84.5%), and Madhesi Dalits (95.1%).

Women, the poor, and the less educated are more likely to feel disadvantaged by their mother tongue. Among those who do not consider Nepali to be their mother tongue, women, people in rural areas, illiterates, those without formal education, and those in lower income brackets (below NPR 20,000 per month) are also more likely to perceive their mother tongue as a disadvantage (table 4.1).

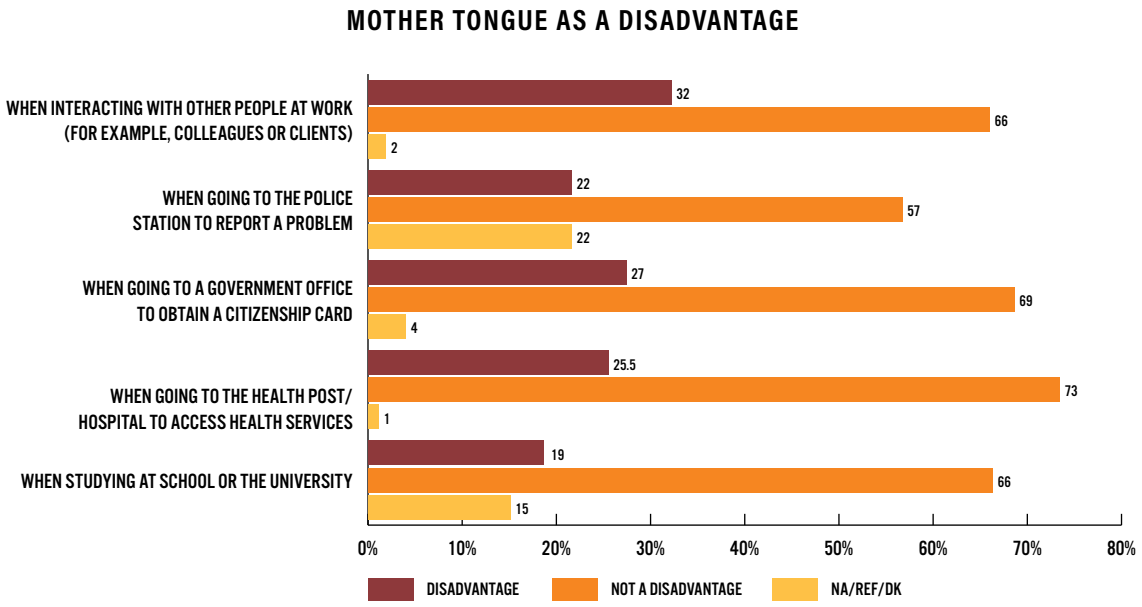

Figure 4.2: Q-D2a–e. *Do you feel disadvantaged because you cannot use your mother tongue, instead of Nepali, in the following situations?* (*n* = 3,199; asked only of respondents who answered "no, Nepali is not my mother tongue" to Q-D1)

SHARES OF PEOPLE WHO FEEL DISADVANTAGED BECAUSE OF THEIR MOTHER TONGUE, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	WHEN INTERACTING WITH OTHER PEOPLE AT WORK %	WHEN GOING TO THE POLICE STATION TO REPORT A PROBLEM %	WHEN GOING TO A GOVERNMENT OFFICE TO OBTAIN A CITIZENSHIP CARD %	WHEN GOING TO THE HEALTH POST/ HOSPITAL TO ACCESS HEALTH SERVICES %	WHEN STUDYING AT SCHOOL OR THE UNIVERSITY %
All	***32.2***	***21.6***	***27.4***	***25.5***	***18.6***
PROVINCE					
Province 1	22.7	17.5	20.8	18.9	14.9
Province 2	45.4	34.3	38.4	37.3	28.1
Province 3	20.0	14.5	16.6	14.8	11.9
Province 4	5.9	3.5	9.8	7.9	1.8
Province 5	35.7	17.4	30.3	26.3	18.1
Province 6	3.0	3.8	1.7	1.7	0.0
Province 7	22.3	7.8	17.8	16.3	8.7

	WHEN INTERACTING WITH OTHER PEOPLE AT WORK %	WHEN GOING TO THE POLICE STATION TO REPORT A PROBLEM %	WHEN GOING TO A GOVERNMENT OFFICE TO OBTAIN A CITIZENSHIP CARD %	WHEN GOING TO THE HEALTH POST/ HOSPITAL TO ACCESS HEALTH SERVICES %	WHEN STUDYING AT SCHOOL OR THE UNIVERSITY %
RURAL VS. URBAN					
Rural municipality	35.3	24.5	32.6	29.0	20.5
Urban Municipality	30.3	19.8	24.2	23.4	17.5
REGION					
Mountains	0.0	2.2	2.2	1.3	0.0
Hills	17.3	10.9	14.0	12.7	9.6
Terai	38.6	26.1	33.0	30.8	22.5
GENDER					
Women	40.9	26.6	34.6	33.8	23.5
Men	23.3	16.6	20.0	17.1	13.6
EDUCATION					
Illiterate	52.3	36.7	47.7	44.9	26.2
Nonformal education	41.5	28.6	35.1	33.2	23.1
Primary	27.7	16.4	23.6	21.4	17.8
Lower secondary	28.5	20.3	21.8	22.1	18.2
Secondary	24.2	17.0	19.2	16.8	15.2
School Leaving Certificate	15.9	9.3	11.8	12.1	12.1
Intermediate (grades 11–12)	16.9	10.1	12.4	10.8	11.8
Bachelor's degree & above	10.0	5.4	8.3	5.7	7.3
CASTE/ETHNICITY					
Hill high castes	15.2	7.3	11.3	12.7	6.9
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	15.4	10.7	13.1	12.2	9.4
Hill Dalits	24.2	11.7	22.7	15.2	7.2
Madhesi high castes	20.3	15.7	16.4	15.7	14.4
Madhesi intermediate castes	42.2	31.4	36.2	34.5	26.5
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	32.2	15.7	26.9	24.8	17.4
Madhesi Dalits	52.2	39.3	45.5	44.4	32.3
Muslims	46.4	28.1	39.6	31.6	19.6
INCOME					
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	33.5	19.6	27.9	28.0	22.6
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	39.1	26.2	33.5	30.5	21.4
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	33.0	23.6	30.5	28.0	21.1
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	24.6	15.5	19.0	18.0	12.3
NPR 40,000 per month or more	26.9	16.7	17.1	18.6	15.9

Table 4.1: Q-D2a–e. *Do you feel disadvantaged because you cannot use your mother tongue, instead of Nepali, in the following situations?* (*n* = 3,199; asked only of respondents who answered "no, Nepali is not my mother tongue" to Q-D1)

PERCEPTIONS OF DISADVANTAGE DUE TO CASTE, ETHNICITY, OR RELIGION

A minority of Nepalis feels disadvantaged by their caste, ethnicity, or religion in the workplace, when studying, when applying for a citizenship card, or in their interactions with the police and health-care providers. All respondents were asked if they consider their caste, ethnicity, or religion to be a hindrance in the same five previously mentioned situations. Some 7.4% of all Nepalis consider their caste, ethnicity, or religion a disadvantage in the workplace. Fewer regard it as a problem when applying for a citizenship card (5.8%), when going to the health post or hospital (5.1%), when reporting a problem to the police (4.8%), or when studying at school or the university (4.1%).

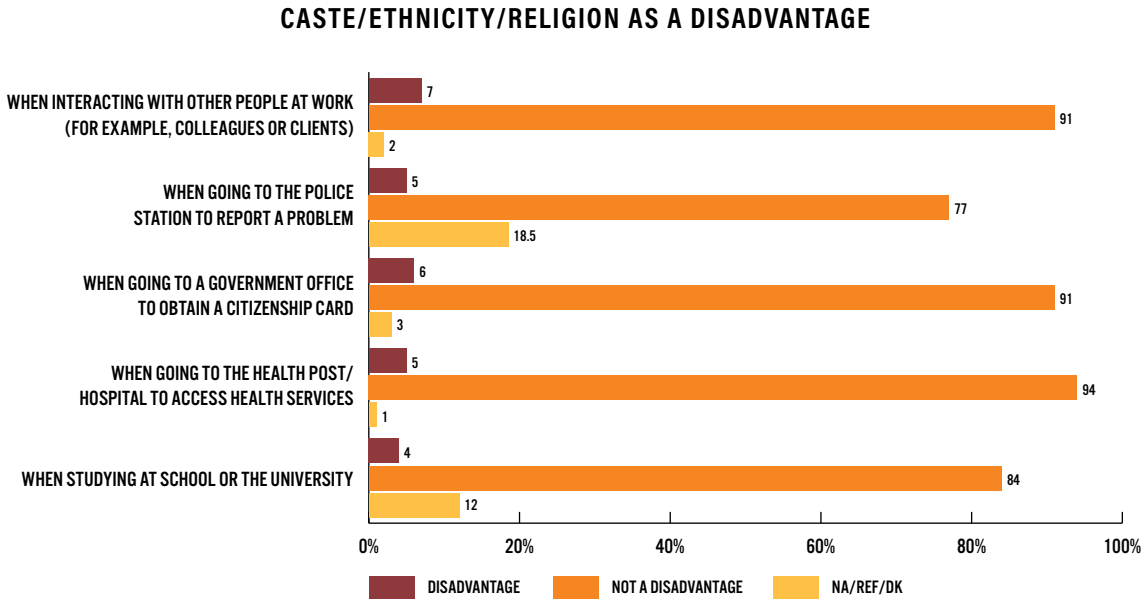

Figure 4.3: Q-D3a–e. *Do you feel that your caste, ethnicity, or religion is a disadvantage in the following situations?* (*N* = 7,202)

Again, Terai residents, Madhesis, and Muslims are more likely to feel disadvantaged; so are all Dalits and Christians. Province 5 and Province 2 have above-average shares of residents who feel disadvantaged (table 4.2). All Madhesis are also more likely to feel disadvantaged. This is particularly the case among Madhesi Dalits: 24.5% report feeling disadvantaged in the workplace, 13.1% in education, and about one in five in the three other situations. Although we have seen that hill Dalits are not more likely than average to consider their mother tongue a disadvantage (when it is not Nepali), they are more likely to consider their caste a hindrance. Muslims and Christians are between two and three times more likely to feel disadvantaged because of their religion in all situations.

The poor, the less educated, people in rural areas, and women feel more disadvantaged by caste, ethnicity, and religion. Nepalis from lower income brackets (less than NPR 20,000 a month), the illiterate, those without formal education, and rural residents are once again more likely to report feeling disadvantaged. Women are also more likely than men to feel disadvantaged by their cast, ethnicity, or religion, but the gap, roughly 1 percentage point, is much smaller than the 10- to 18-point gap between men and women on the mother-tongue issue (table 4.1).

SHARES OF PEOPLE WHO FEEL DISADVANTAGED BY THEIR CASTE/ETHNICITY/RELIGION, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	WHEN INTERACTING WITH OTHER PEOPLE AT WORK %	WHEN GOING TO THE POLICE STATION TO REPORT A PROBLEM %	WHEN GOING TO A GOVERNMENT OFFICE TO OBTAIN A CITIZENSHIP CARD %	WHEN GOING TO THE HEALTH POST/ HOSPITAL TO ACCESS HEALTH SERVICES %	WHEN STUDYING AT SCHOOL OR THE UNIVERSITY %
All	***7.4***	***4.8***	***5.8***	***5.1***	***4.1***
PROVINCE					
Province 1	6.8	5.0	6.0	5.1	4.9
Province 2	9.5	5.9	7.4	6.2	3.7
Province 3	4.5	2.8	3.3	2.5	2.3
Province 4	4.5	2.0	3.9	3.4	2.2
Province 5	11.9	7.9	9.1	9.0	8.0
Province 6	6.6	5.9	5.9	3.6	2.9
Province 7	5.6	2.8	3.5	3.6	2.7
RURAL VS. URBAN					
Rural municipality	8.4	5.3	6.5	5.4	4.3
Urban Municipality	6.8	4.4	5.4	4.8	4.0
REGION					
Mountains	4.5	4.8	5.4	2.9	3.4
Hills	4.0	1.8	2.4	2.1	1.6
Terai	10.4	7.2	8.6	7.7	6.2
GENDER					
Women	8.0	4.6	6.2	5.3	4.4
Men	6.7	4.9	5.4	4.8	3.7
EDUCATION					
Illiterate	11.1	7.7	9.1	8.1	4.6
Nonformal education	8.6	5.8	7.0	6.1	4.2
Primary	7.0	4.2	5.5	4.7	4.2
Lower secondary	6.9	4.2	5.2	3.7	3.0
Secondary	5.7	3.6	4.4	4.2	4.0
School Leaving Certificate	6.0	4.0	4.9	3.6	4.3
Intermediate (grades 1–12)	6.4	3.7	4.0	4.6	4.4
Bachelor's degree or above	4.1	2.8	3.7	2.1	2.6
CASTE/ETHNICITY					
Hill high castes	4.1	2.7	3.2	3.0	2.5
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	3.1	2.1	2.4	1.9	1.7
Hill Dalits	12.9	4.4	6.7	5.4	4.9
Madhesi high castes	8.7	6.9	7.0	6.0	6.0

	WHEN INTERACTING WITH OTHER PEOPLE AT WORK %	WHEN GOING TO THE POLICE STATION TO REPORT A PROBLEM %	WHEN GOING TO A GOVERNMENT OFFICE TO OBTAIN A CITIZENSHIP CARD %	WHEN GOING TO THE HEALTH POST/ HOSPITAL TO ACCESS HEALTH SERVICES %	WHEN STUDYING AT SCHOOL OR THE UNIVERSITY %
Madhesi intermediate castes	10.6	6.8	7.8	7.0	5.4
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	10.7	7.3	10.1	9.7	7.8
Madhesi Dalits	24.5	19.3	20.7	18.2	13.1
Muslims	13.1	10.8	15.4	11.1	8.2
RELIGION					
Hindu	7.4	4.6	5.6	5.0	4.1
Buddhist	2.0	1.5	2.2	0.7	1.3
Muslim	13.1	10.8	15.4	11.1	8.2
Christian	15.4	13.0	11.5	11.4	5.7
INCOME					
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	8.9	6.9	7.7	6.0	4.4
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	9.7	6.3	7.5	6.5	5.0
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	7.6	5.0	5.8	5.2	4.4
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	5.4	3.8	5.0	4.1	3.1
NPR 40,000 per month or more	4.4	1.9	2.9	2.7	3.1

Table 4.2: Q-D3a–e. *Do you feel that your caste, ethnicity, or religion is a disadvantage in the following situations?* (*N* = 7,202)

PERCEPTIONS OF DISADVANTAGE DUE TO GENDER

A minority of Nepali women consider their gender to be a disadvantage in certain situations. We found that women are more likely than men to feel disadvantaged by their caste, ethnicity, religion, or mother tongue (when it is not Nepali). The survey also asked female respondents whether they feel their gender is a hindrance in the same five hypothetical situations (figure 4.4). Some 8.2% do think being a woman is a disadvantage in the workplace; fewer say it is a disadvantage when applying for a citizenship card (6.6%), when interacting with the police or health-care providers (5.3% and 5.1%, respectively) or when studying (3.7%). It should be noted that these results are very close to the shares of women who feel disadvantaged by their caste, ethnicity, or religion in the same situations (table 4.2, above).

Madhesis, Madhesi Dalits, and Muslim women are more likely to feel disadvantaged by their gender, as are women from the mountains and Province 6. Looking into variation across geographic and demographic groups, some familiar patterns emerge: the share of women who consider their gender a disadvantage in the previously mentioned situations is higher among Madhesis—in particular, Madhesi Dalits (who are between two and three times more likely than average to consider their gender a disadvantage) and Muslim women. Illiterates and women without a formal education are also more likely to feel disadvantaged. Women residing in the mountainous regions are more likely than others to feel disadvantaged because of their gender. Province 6 women are about twice as likely as the average to feel disadvantaged in all five situations.

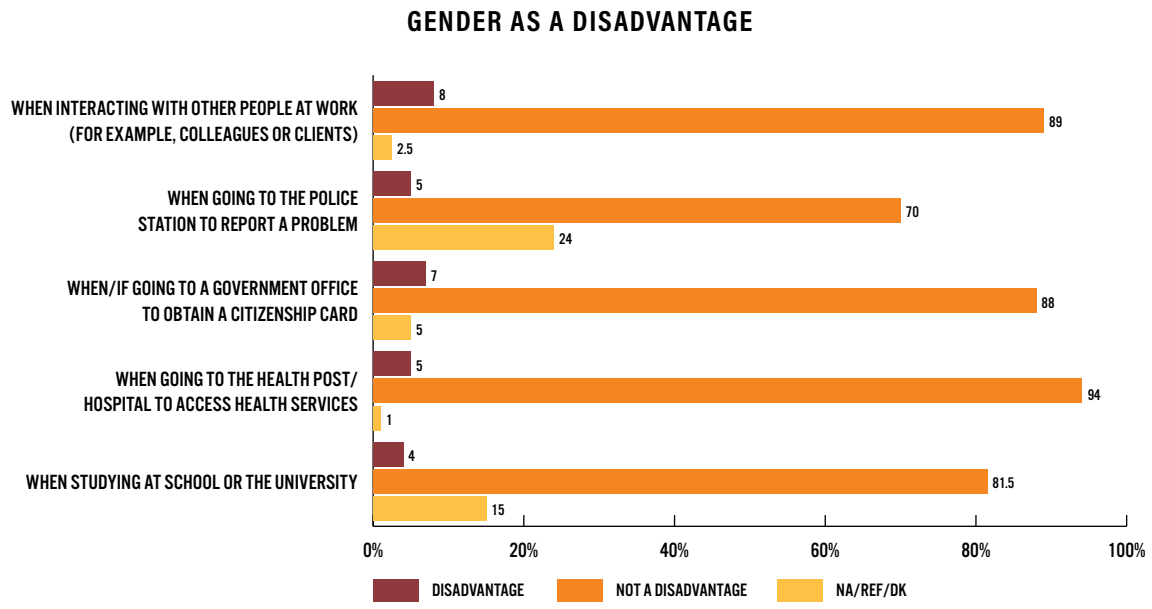

Figure 4.4: Q-D4a–e. *Do you feel that your gender is a disadvantage in the following situations?* (*n* = 3,731; asked only of female respondents)

PHOTO BY Conor Ashleigh

4.2 VIEWS ON INTERGROUP RELATIONS

RELATIONS BETWEEN CASTES, ETHNICITIES, AND RELIGIONS

Almost two-thirds of Nepalis (58.7%) think relations between people of different castes, ethnicities, and religions are improving in Nepal, while 12.3% think they are getting worse. Some 26.1% of people think they have neither improved nor worsened (figure 4.5).

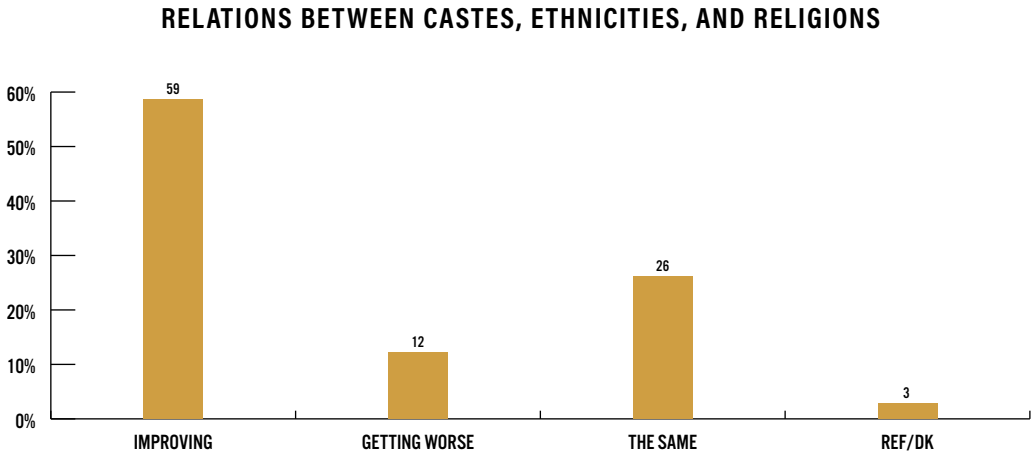

Figure 4.5: Q-5. *Overall, do you think relations between people of different ethnicity, religion, or caste are improving, getting worse, or staying more or less the same in Nepal?* (*N* = 7,202)

Muslim and Christian Nepalis are more likely to think relations are improving. Both groups are substantially more likely to say relations with other groups are better (66.6% of Christians and 70.3% of Muslims, compared to 58.7% of all Nepalis); they are also less likely to think they are becoming worse (figure 4.6). There is no other major variation across castes or other demographic groups. There is some variation across provinces (figure 4.7): a larger-than-average share of respondents from Province 5 and Province 6 (74.4% and 73.1%, respectively) say relations are improving. On the other hand, a larger minority of Province 2 and Province 3 people feel relations are getting worse (15.0% and 17.2%, respectively).

SHARES OF PEOPLE WHO THINK RELATIONS BETWEEN CASTES, ETHNICITIES, AND RELIGIONS ARE IMPROVING/GETTING WORSE, BY RELIGION

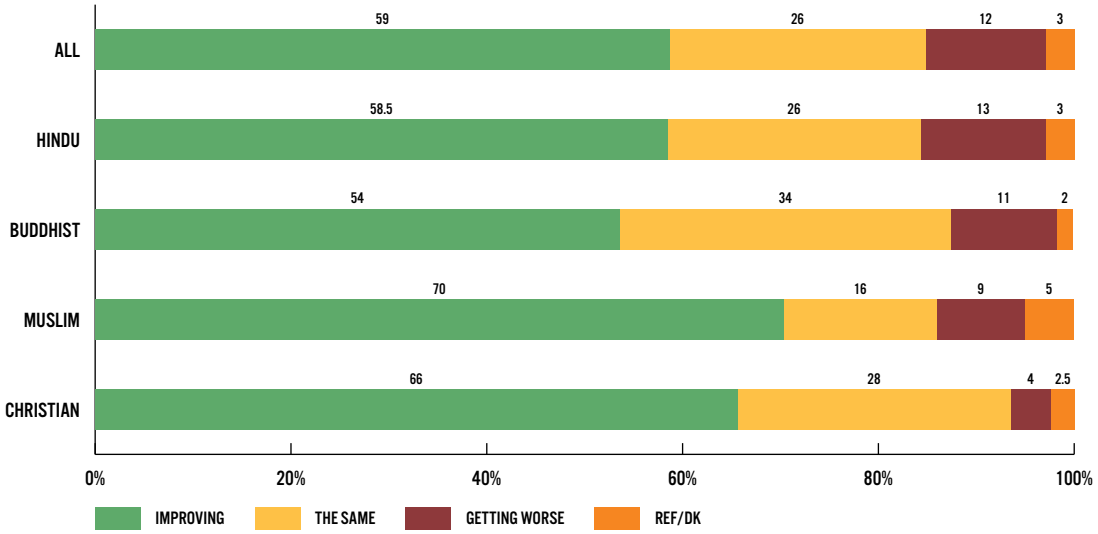

Figure 4.6: Q-D5. *Overall, do you think relations between people of different ethnicity, religion, or caste are improving, getting worse, or staying more or less the same in Nepal?* (*N* = 7,202)

SHARES OF PEOPLE WHO THINK RELATIONS BETWEEN CASTES, ETHNICITIES, AND RELIGIONS ARE IMPROVING/GETTING WORSE, BY PROVINCE

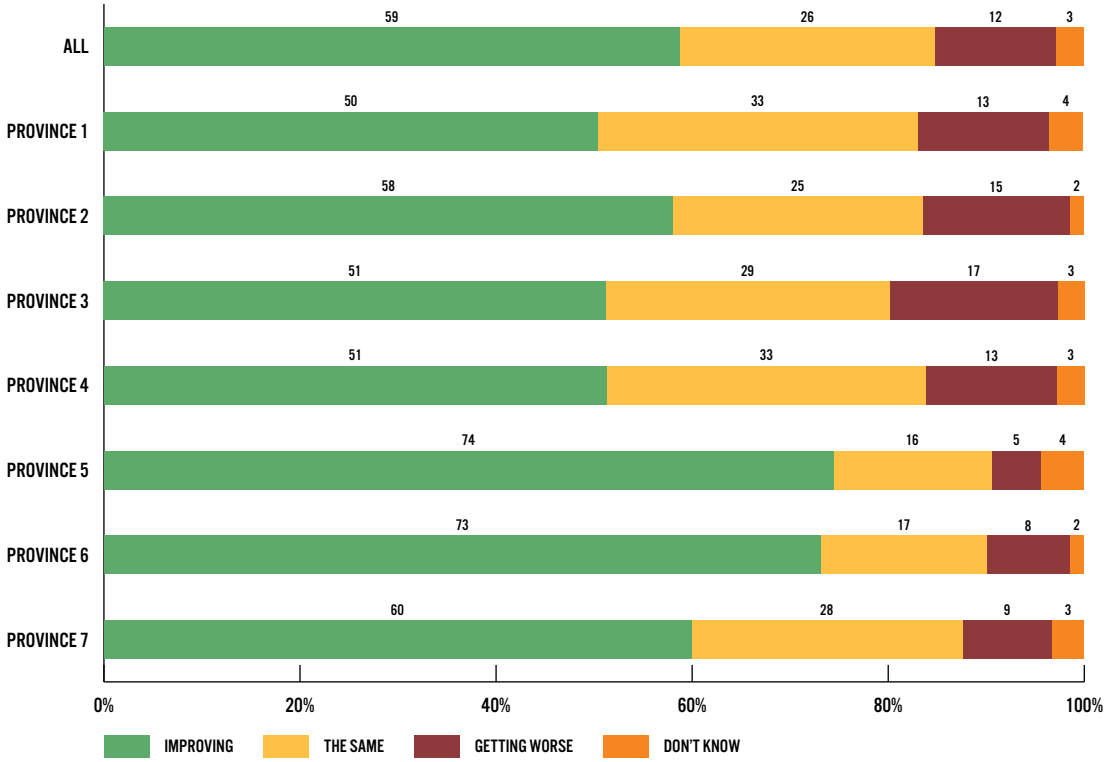

Figure 4.7: Q-D5. *Overall, do you think relations between people of different ethnicity, religion, or caste are improving, getting worse, or staying more or less the same in Nepal?* (*N* = 7,202)

REASONS WHY INTERGROUP RELATIONS ARE IMPROVING

The main reason Nepalis give for the improving relations between castes, ethnicities, and religions is the diminishing importance of these differences in today's Nepal. The 58.7% of Nepalis who feel intergroup relations are improving were asked why this is the case.[35] The vast majority (just under 78.3%) argue that people pay less attention to caste, ethnic, and religious differences nowadays (figure 4.8). The second-most common answer (proposed by about 38.1% of respondents) is the greater recognition and protection of civil rights by Nepal authorities. Some 17.2% mention that Nepal is now no longer a Hindu state and is a secular state under the 2015 constitution. However, 16.9% feel relations are improving because people know their place better and are less tempted to question the traditional order. Just under 10% cite greater diversity in political representation. There is no significant variation in answers across geographic or demographic groups.

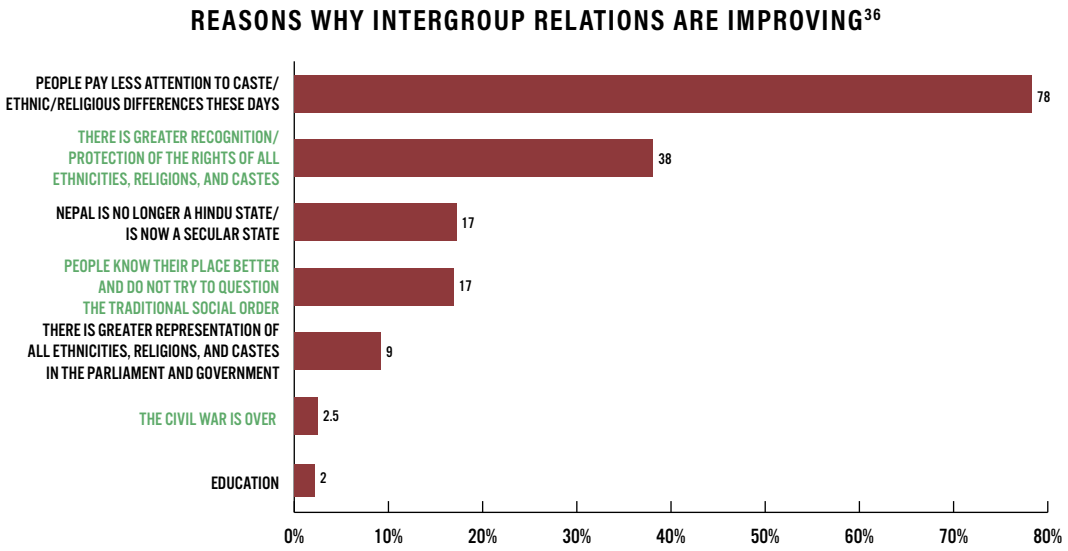

Figure 4.8: Q-D6. ***Why do you think that relations between people of different ethnicity, religion, or caste are improving in Nepal?*** **(*n* = 4,229; asked only of respondents who answered "relations are improving" to Q-D5)**

REASONS WHY INTERGROUP RELATIONS ARE BECOMING WORSE

Nepalis who feel intergroup relations are deteriorating blame it on greater attention to caste, ethnicity, and religion; the change to a secular state; and identity politics. The 12% of Nepalis who think relations are getting worse were asked why they think this is happening.[37] In contrast with the vast majority of optimistic respondents, one-half of the pessimists feel that people give more importance, not less, to identity-based differences in today's Nepal (figure 4.9). Their second- and third-most common explanations—each mentioned by about one-third of respondents—are the change to a secular state and the manipulation of identity cleavages by political parties. One in five pessimistic respondents feel that people question the traditional order too much, creating tensions. About one in 10 argue that minority rights receive too much attention.

[35] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.
[36] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.
[37] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.

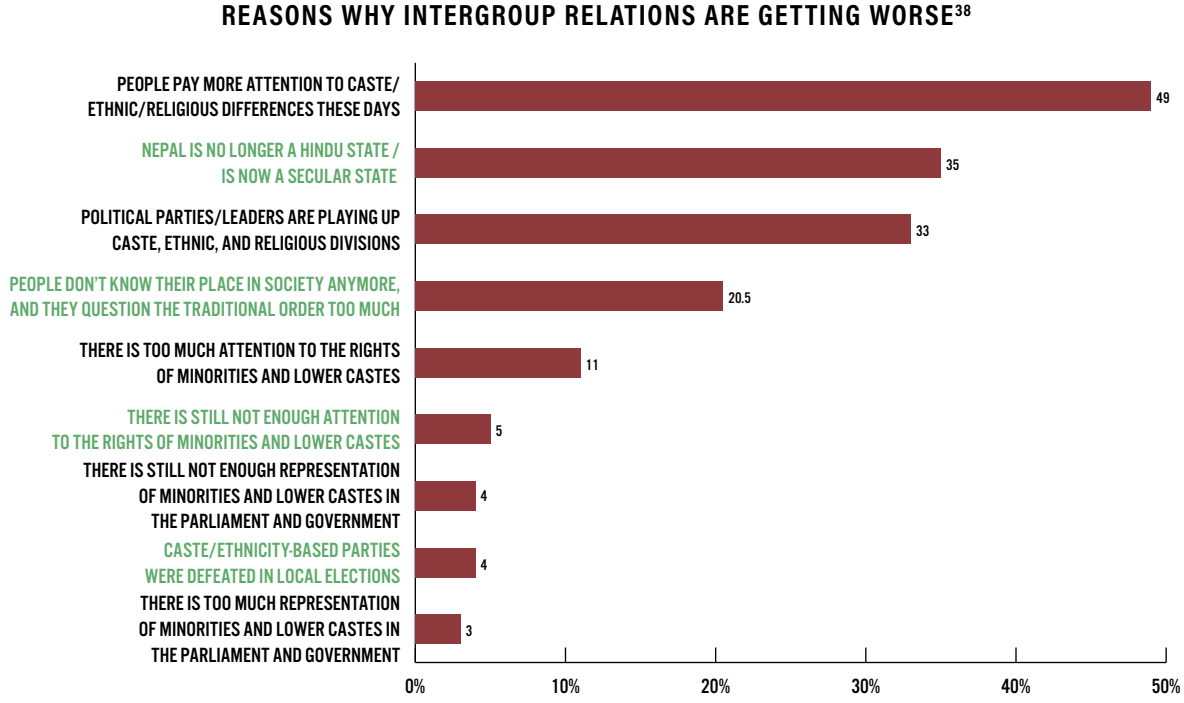

Figure 4.9: Q-D7. ***Why do you think that relations between people of different ethnicity, religion, or caste are getting worse in Nepal?*** **(*n* = 883; asked only of respondents who answered "relations are getting worse" to Q-D5)**

Muslims who think intergroup relations are worsening tend to blame it on identity politics. Hill high castes and hill Adivasi/Janajatis are more likely to blame Nepal's change to a secular state. Among the 12.3% of Nepalis who are pessimistic, about half of Muslim respondents (45.3%) feel the main cause for deteriorating relations is the manipulation of communal tensions by politicians. This is also the lead answer for residents of Provinces 4 (60.0%) and 5 (46.7%). Hill castes give greater attention to the shift to secularism than do other groups: 44.6% of respondents from hill high[39] castes and 43.9% of hill Adivasi/Janajatis blame worsening relations on this change. This is also the dominant answer in Province 3 (62.3%). There is no other remarkable variation across castes, ethnoreligious groups, or other demographic and geographic groups.

[38] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

[39] The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

4.3 SOCIAL VALUES

CASTE AND ETHNICITY

A very large majority of Nepalis support the principle of equal rights for all castes and ethnic groups. In order to evaluate the views of Nepalis on the caste system and equality of rights for all citizens, people were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with three statements: (1) that people should be content with the position assigned to their caste or ethnic group in society, (2) that all Nepali citizens should benefit from the same rights, and (3) that it is normal for people from the lower castes to drink from the same water sources and frequent the same temples as the higher castes (something that has been condemned in Nepal). Nine in 10 Nepalis say they support equal civil rights for all castes and ethnic groups and equal access to water sources and places of worship; two-thirds "strongly agree" with both statements (figure 4.10). A somewhat lower proportion (71.6%) disagree that people should be content with the role traditionally assigned to their caste or ethnic group; just 26.2% agree that they should be content. To a certain extent, this indicates the ambivalent relationship of Nepalis to caste and ethnicity: on one hand, very strong support for equal rights, but on the other hand, some continued respect for traditions and the social order they underpin.

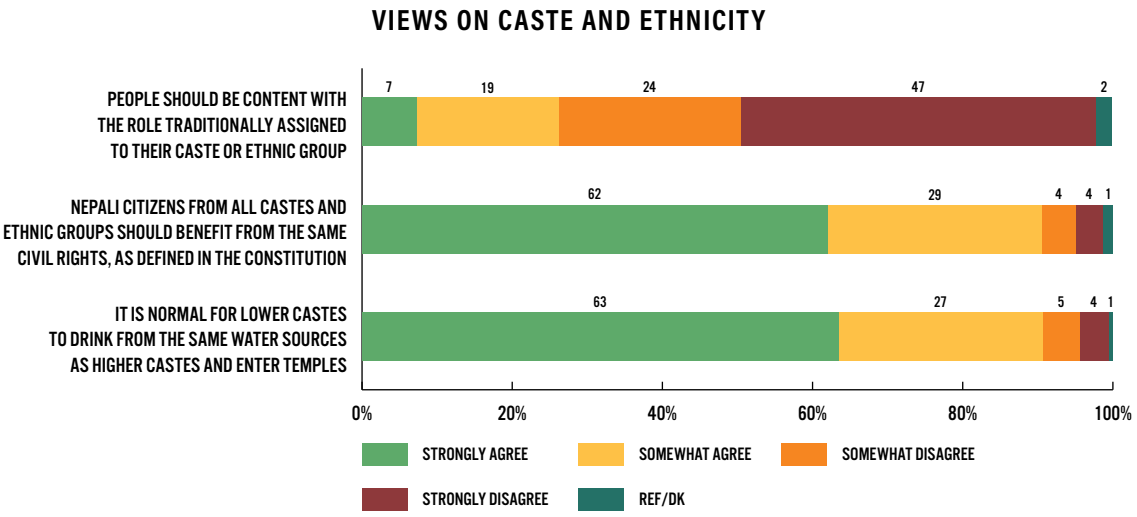

Figure 4.10: Q-D8a–c. *Would you please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with these statements?* (*N* = 7,202)

Madhesis and Muslims express more conservative views on caste and ethnicity roles. More than one-fifth of respondents from Madhesi high castes (22.4%) "strongly agree" that people should be content with the role assigned to their caste or ethnic group (compared to a national average of 7.2%). However, the pattern applies to all other Madhesi groups as well, with the notable exception of Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis. Madhesis and Muslims also show more tepid support for equal rights and equal access to water sources and temples: while a majority of these respondents are in favor, significantly more "somewhat agree," and fewer "strongly agree" (figures 4.12 and 4.13). Once again, Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis are a notable exception to this pattern.

Hill castes, in particular hill Dalits, are stronger supporters of equality. Hill Dalits in particular express the highest levels of support for equality of civil rights (70.4% "strongly agree") and equality of access to water sources and places of worship (77.5% "strongly agree").

SHARES WHO AGREE/DISAGREE THAT PEOPLE SHOULD BE CONTENT WITH THE ROLE ASSIGNED TO THEIR CASTE OR ETHNIC GROUP, BY CASTE/ETHNICITY

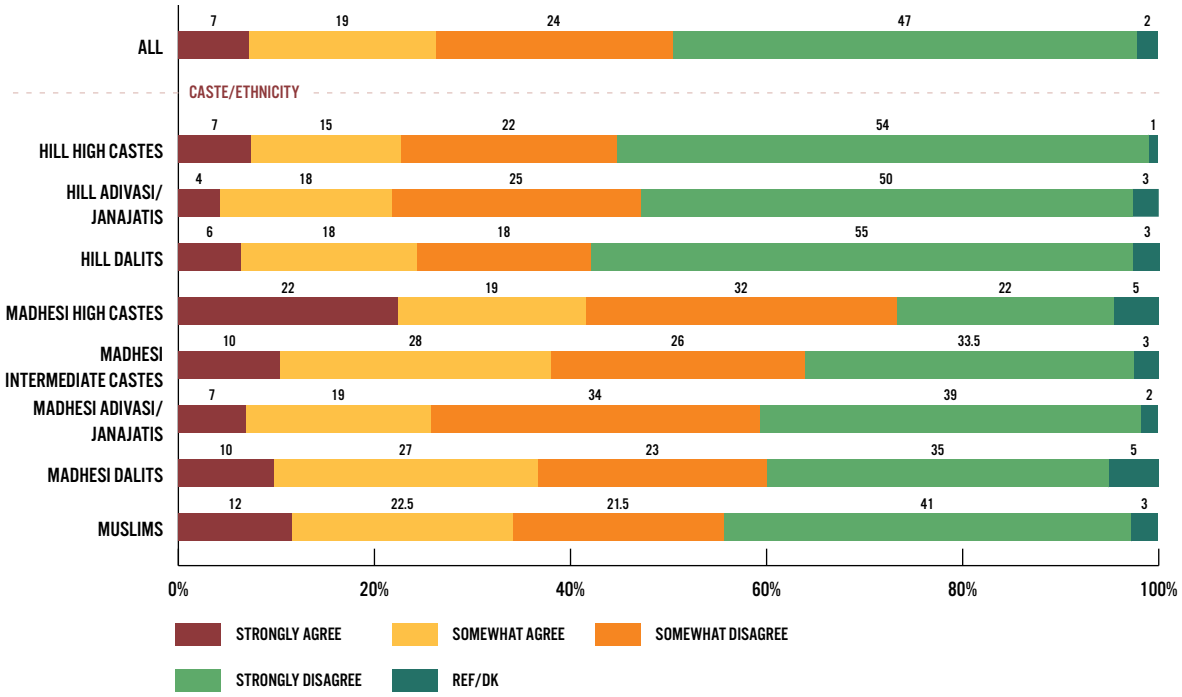

Figure 4.11: Q-D8a. *Would you please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: people should be content with the role traditionally assigned to their caste/ethnicity, and not try to secure a position that is the privilege of others?* (*N* = 7,202)

SHARES WHO AGREE/DISAGREE THAT ALL NEPALI CITIZENS SHOULD BENEFIT FROM THE SAME CIVIL RIGHTS, BY CASTE AND ETHNIC GROUP

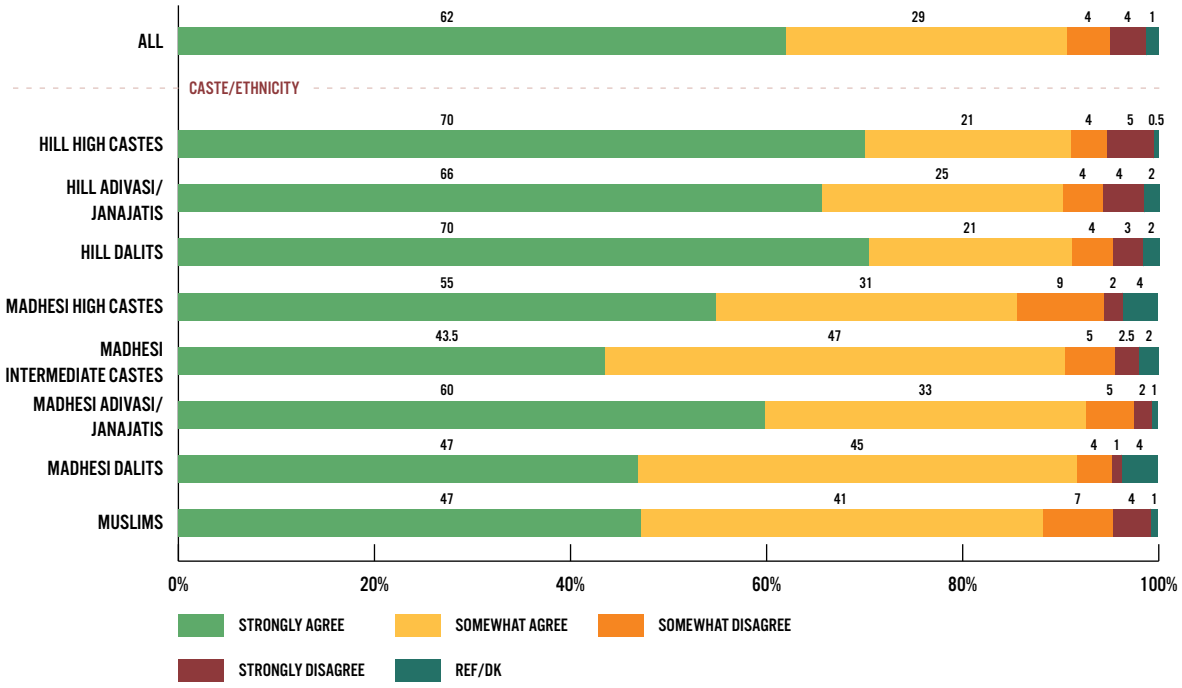

Figure 4.12: Q-D8b. *Would you please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Nepali citizens from all castes should benefit from the same civil rights, as defined in the constitution?* (*N* = 7,202)

SHARES WHO AGREE/DISAGREE THAT IT IS NORMAL FOR LOWER CASTES TO DRINK FROM THE SAME WATER SOURCES AS HIGHER CASTES AND ENTER TEMPLES, BY CASTE AND ETHNIC GROUP

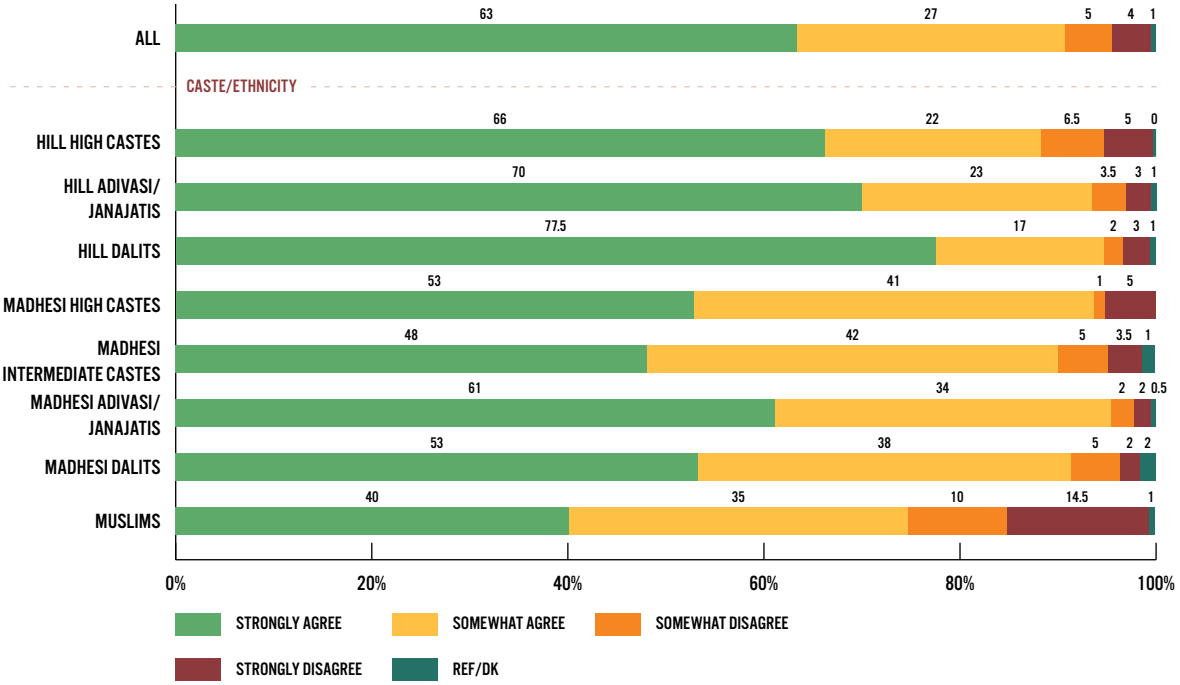

Figure 4.13: Q-D8c. *Would you please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: it is normal for lower castes to drink from the same water sources as higher castes and enter temples?* (*N* = 7,202)

MARRIAGE BETWEEN CASTES AND ETHNIC GROUPS

A quarter of Nepalis would not accept marriage of their son or daughter to someone of another caste or ethnicity. The results cast a shadow on the rather progressive views expressed in the previous set of questions: 71.7% of Nepalis would accept their children marrying outside of their own caste or ethnic group, but 26.1% would not accept it.

APPROVAL OF MARRIAGE BETWEEN CASTES/ETHNICITIES

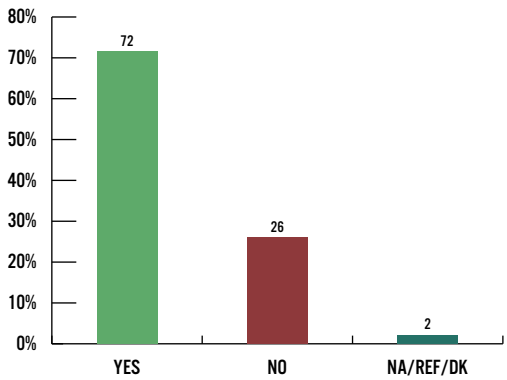

Figure 4.14: Q-D9. *Would you accept your son or daughter marrying someone from a different caste or ethnic group?* (*N* = 7,202)

Province 2 residents, Muslims, and Madhesis are more likely to oppose intercaste or interethnic marriage. Some 40.5% of all Madhesis would not marry their children outside of their own caste or ethnic group. Opposition to intercaste and interethnic marriage is strongest among Madhesis from intermediate castes (49.7%), Madhesi Dalits (47.6%), and Muslims (47.8%). Province 2 stands out as the only province where a majority of people—albeit a thin one at 50.8%—oppose intercaste and interethnic marriage (47.5% approve of it).

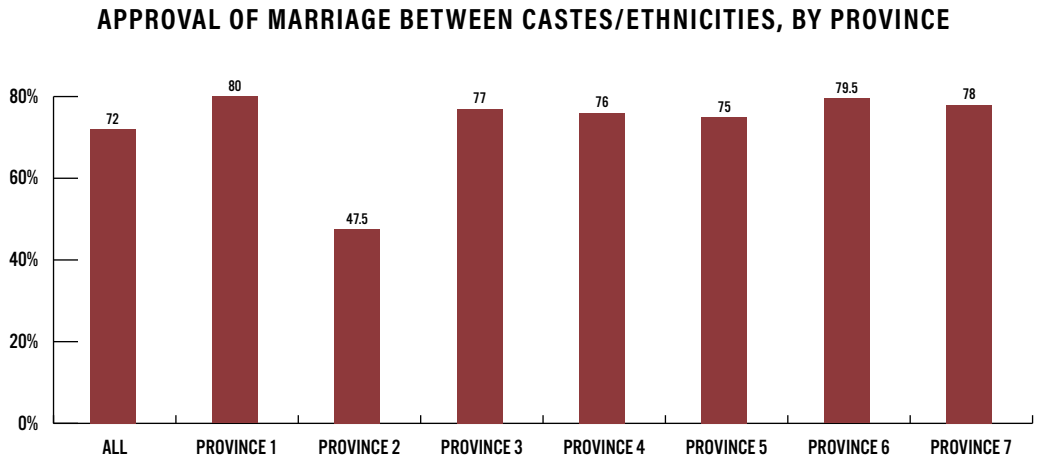

Figure 4.15: Q-D9. *Would you accept your son or daughter marrying someone from a different caste or ethnic group?* (*N* = 7,202)

Tolerance for intercaste or interethnic marriage correlates with education level. Better-educated Nepalis tend to be more accepting of intercaste or interethnic marriage for their own children (figure 4.16). Members of the younger generation are also more open to it: 76.0% of Nepalis aged 18–34 say they would marry their own children to someone from a different caste or ethnicity, compared to 65.7% of those aged 50 or older.

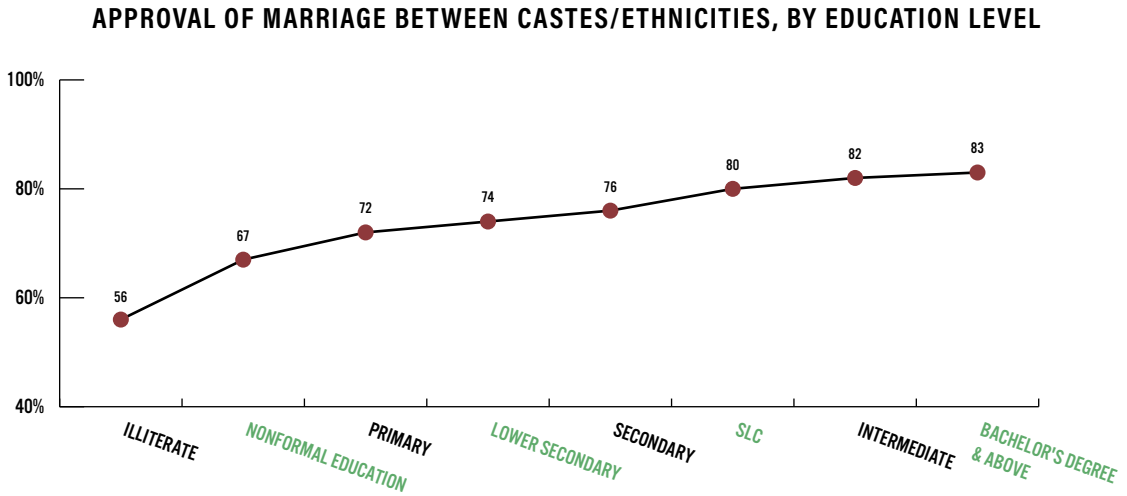

Figure 4.16: Q-D9. *Would you accept your son or daughter marrying someone from a different caste or ethnic group?* (*N* = 7,202)

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Nepalis express progressive views on the role of women in society. All respondents were asked to say whether they agree or disagree with four statements pertaining to the role of women in Nepali society: (1) that a son is preferable to a daughter, (2) that a higher education is more important for a son, (3) that women should be encouraged to work outside of their home, and (4) that it is not suitable for women to engage in politics. Across all four questions, between 80% and 90% of respondents gave answers supportive of gender equality (figure 4.17). Interestingly, there is no remarkable variation in response across genders. More-educated Nepalis tend to express more progressive views.

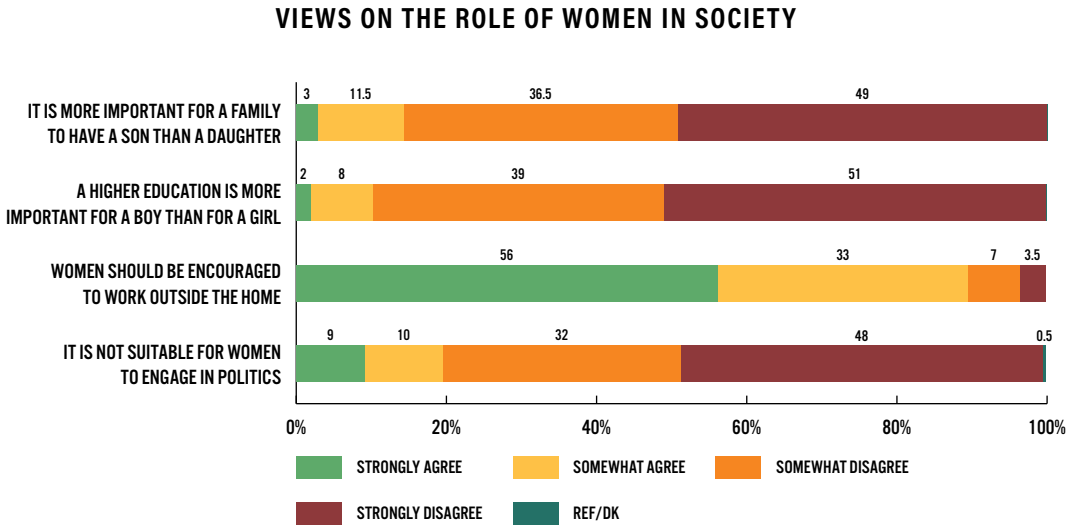

Figure 4.17: Q-D10a-d. *Would you please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with these statements?* (*N* = 7,202)

Province 2 residents more commonly hold conservative views. They are more likely to agree that it is more important to have a son than a daughter (18.8%) and that a higher education is more important for men (15.0%). They are also more likely to disagree that women should be encouraged to work outside their home (22.4%). This also applies to a lesser extent to Provinces 6 and 7.

Opposition to women's engagement in politics is stronger in the mountains. Nearly a third of residents from mountain regions of Nepal (31.0%) say it is not suitable for women to pursue political ambitions. This compares to 15.8% in the hills and 21.1% in the Terai.

Support for intergroup equality, intercaste marriage, and gender equality are strongly correlated. Survey results show that respondents who express support for greater equality between castes and ethnoreligious groups are also likely to support intercaste marriage and a more equal position for women in Nepali society. The correlation is strong in every direction among the three dimensions.

chapter 5

GOVERNANCE

Nearly half of Nepalis (45.6%) feel that the 2015 constitution is a step forward, but over a third of them either think that it is too soon to tell or are uncertain what to think about it. A quarter of Nepalis (25.7%) are unable to cite a single change introduced by the constitution.

A similar share of Nepalis (44.4%) trust that Nepal's transition to greater federalism will lead to improvements for themselves and their families. Large percentages of people are either uncertain about the merits of federalism (15.3%) or think that it is too soon to tell (24.6%).

Some 43.8% of Nepalis feel better represented after the reintroduction of elections for local councils, while 20.4% feel less well represented, and 16.4% think it is too soon to tell.

Just over one-third of Nepalis (34.8%) think that local-level restructuring is improving the capacity of local government to deliver public services, while 26.7% say it is too soon to tell. About one-quarter of people are dissatisfied with the borders of their new municipalities/rural municipalities or with the location of their new administrative centers. Contrary to initial concerns, local-level restructuring does not seem to have moved public services away from the people in a dramatic way: 41.9% of Nepalis say the distance they must travel to obtain public services (for example, to get a land title or a birth certificate) remains unchanged, and 35.7% report the distance has decreased.

Terai residents are generally more guarded than other Nepalis in their views about constitutional change, federal reform, local-level restructuring, and the impact of local elections on political representation. Across all questions, they register comparatively lower levels of positive responses, and greater uncertainty. In contrast, hill and mountain residents, and Province 6 respondents in particular, are much more optimistic than others about these reforms.

Residents of Province 3 tend to exhibit high levels of negative views on constitutional change, federal reform, local-level restructuring, and the impact of local elections on political representation. Province 3 includes the capital city and the highly urbanized Kathmandu Valley. A large number of earthquake-affected districts are located in that province.

Some 82.2% of Nepalis say they trust the new municipal councils to have their best interests at heart. Nepalis trust local-level institutions more than they trust the national government and the national parliament.

The media, community-based organizations, the courts, and security forces elicit high levels of trust. Some 92.2% of Nepalis trust the media, 92.0% trust community-based organizations, and 82.7% say that they trust the courts. People also show very high levels of trust in the security forces: 87.9% trust the Nepal Army, 86.5% the police, and 85.8% the Armed Police Force.

Some 85.9% of Nepalis with school-age children live within one hour of their school. One in 10 say their child must travel between one and two hours to get to school. This proportion is higher in the mountains. Among Nepalis with children in public school, 82.1% are satisfied with the quality of education at their school.

Nearly three-quarters of Nepalis (73.6%) live within one hour of the nearest public health post or hospital. One in five (19.2%) must travel between one and two hours to access public health care, and 5.9% have to travel more than two hours. Again, residents of the mountains typically have to travel farther. The quality of public health care in their locality is rated "good" or "very good" by 76.6% of Nepalis. Terai residents are more likely to express dissatisfaction with the quality of both public education and health-care services.

A slim majority of Nepalis (52.2%) rate the quality of local roads in their municipality as "good" or "very good." People living in the mountains, and rural Nepalis, are less likely than others to be satisfied with road quality.

Most people consider the local (municipal) government to be primarily responsible for local education, health care, and roads. Some 82.9% think local government holds responsibility for the quality of their children's education;

79.2% think it is responsible for local, public health care; 88.7% think it is responsible for building and maintaining local roads. Between 5.7% and 12.0% think the national government is primarily responsible for those services.

Half of Nepalis think they pay too much in taxes, but most of them (77.6%) would be willing to pay more taxes if it resulted in improvements in the quality of roads, education, and health care. Some 21.1% percent of all Nepalis report that they do not pay taxes at all.

5.1 VIEWS ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Nepal adopted a new constitution on September 20, 2015. The new constitution signaled a shift toward a more federal governance structure, with three governments: local, provincial, and federal (national). It paved the way for a restructuring of local governance units, with the merging of existing municipalities and former village development councils (VDCs) into a smaller number of urban municipalities and rural municipalities, and it provided for local, provincial, and national elections in 2017.[40]

AWARENESS OF THE 2015 CONSTITUTION

A quarter of Nepalis (25.7%) are unable to cite a single change introduced by the 2015 constitution. The share of respondents who are unaware of these changes is particularly high among Illiterates (39.8%) and people lacking formal education (37.9%), within lower income brackets, and among women (31.8%, vs. 19.5% of men) (table 5.1). This highlights issues with public awareness of a major development in Nepali politics and governance.

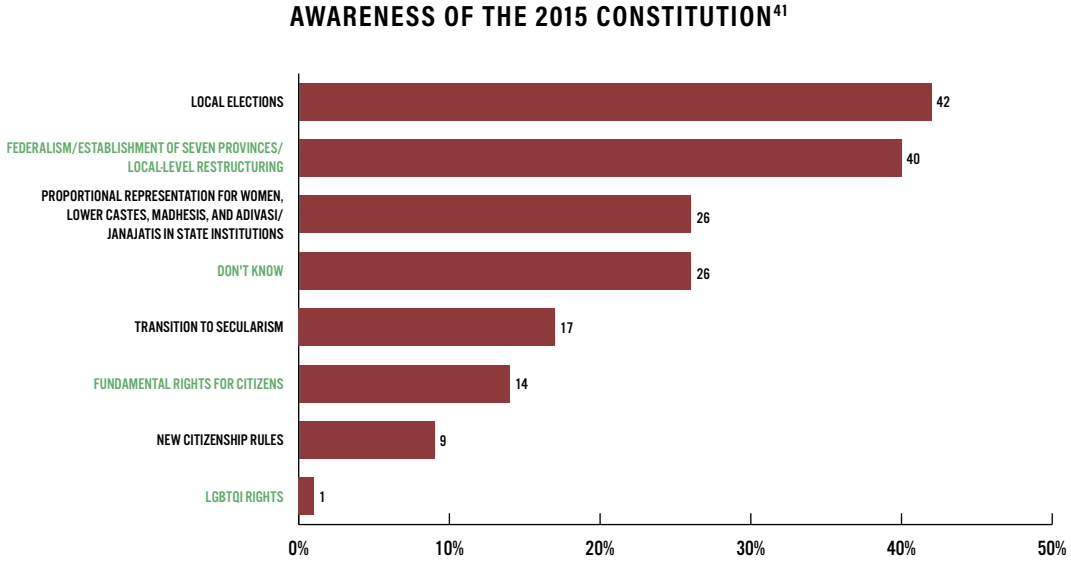

Figure 5.1: Q-E2. *The 2015 constitution changed a lot of things about the way Nepal is governed and about the rights of Nepali people. Could you please name some of those changes?* (*N* = 7,202)

[40] Article 296 (1) of The Constitution of Nepal, 2015.

[41] This was an open question. Results were aggregated into categories during analysis. Multiple answers were allowed; therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top three answers.

AWARENESS OF THE 2015 CONSTITUTION, BY PROVINCE AND REGION[42]

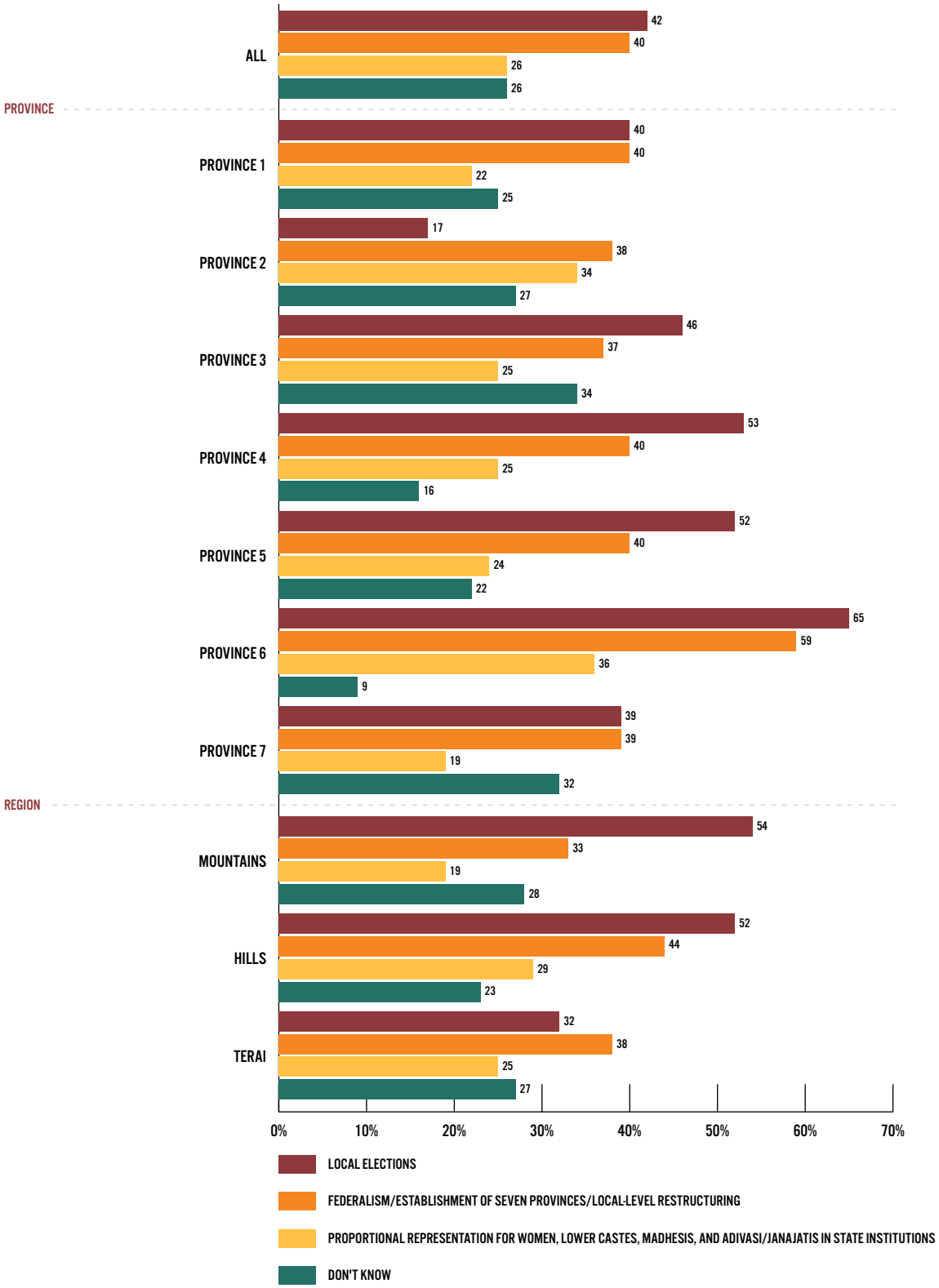

Figure 5.2: Q-E2. ***This constitution changed a lot of things about the way Nepal is governed, and about the rights of Nepali people. Could you please name some of those changes?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

[42] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top three answers.

Most Nepalis who are able to cite changes introduced by the constitution mention local elections and federal reform. Some 41.8% of Nepalis cite local elections, and 40.2% mention changes related to Nepal's transition toward a federal structure—establishment of new provinces, local-level restructuring, etc. Twenty-six percent of Nepalis mention proportional representation for women, lower castes, Madhesis,[43] and Adivasi/Janajatis in state institutions. Large minorities mention Nepal's transition to secularism (16.7%), the introduction of fundamental rights for citizens (13.9%), and new citizenship rules (9.4%). Only 1.1% cite provisions related to LGBTQI rights (figure 5.1).

Local elections are the most often cited change introduced by the constitution in all provinces except Province 2. The largest share of Province 2 residents (37.7%) cite federalism, the establishment of seven new provinces, and local-level restructuring (figure 5.2).

AWARENESS OF THE 2015 CONSTITUTION, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP[44]

	TRANSITION TO SECULARISM %	NEW CITIZENSHIP RULES %	FEDERALISM/ ESTABLISHMENT OF SEVEN PROVINCES/ LOCAL-LEVEL RESTRUCTURING %	PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR WOMEN, LOWER CASTES, MADHESIS, AND ADIVASI/ JANAJATIS IN STATE INSTITUTIONS %	LOCAL ELECTIONS %	FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS FOR CITIZENS %	LGBTQI RIGHTS %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***16.7***	***9.4***	***40.2***	***26.0***	***41.8***	***13.9***	***1.1***	***25.7***
GENDER								
Women	14.4	9.3	33.9	23.8	37.0	11.6	0.8	31.8
Men	19.5	9.7	47.8	28.5	47.8	16.6	1.4	19.5
AGE								
18–24	17.9	12.4	42.0	22.6	42.1	12.8	0.9	24.2
25–34	17.3	9.3	41.7	28.9	42.9	14.5	1.0	24.1
35–49	15.5	9.5	39.2	27.7	42.3	14.8	1.4	26.9
50 & above	17.0	7.3	39.7	24.8	41.4	13.8	1.2	28.1
EDUCATION								
Illiterate	11.9	6.9	26.7	20.9	30.5	7.8	1.1	39.8
Nonformal education	12.9	7.2	29.2	22.0	33.0	10.0	0.1	37.9
Primary	17.3	9.2	37.0	26.1	46.3	13.2	0.9	26.3
Lower secondary	19.0	10.5	43.3	23.9	46.4	14.0	1.5	22.4
Secondary	19.5	8.5	44.8	27.2	44.9	14.2	1.0	21.2
School Leaving Certificate	17.6	14.2	49.0	31.3	47.5	17.8	0.8	16.8
Intermediate	16.5	11.5	53.3	28.7	48.0	19.0	1.3	16.7
Bachelor's degree or above	27.5	12.6	62.9	35.2	52.7	27.0	3.9	8.8

[43] In this report, "Madhesi" refers to any respondent who self-identified as a member of the following communities: Madhesi so-called "high" castes (Brahman-Tarai, Rajput, Kayastha, etc.), Madhesi "intermediate" castes (Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, Dhanuk, etc.), Madhesi Dalits (Chamar, Musahar, Dusadh, etc.), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (Tharu, Rajbanshi, etc.), Muslims, or other Madhesi cultural groups. Results for the Madhesi group include responses from all Madhesi respondents, regardless of where they live. For a full list of caste/ethnicity categories used in this report, please refer to appendix B, "Sample Demographics." The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

[44] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, the results cited here do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top three answers.

	TRANSITION TO SECULARISM %	NEW CITIZENSHIP RULES %	FEDERALISM/ ESTABLISHMENT OF SEVEN PROVINCES/ LOCAL-LEVEL RESTRUCTURING %	PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR WOMEN, LOWER CASTES, MADHESIS, AND ADIVASI/ JANAJATIS IN STATE INSTITUTIONS %	LOCAL ELECTIONS %	FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS FOR CITIZENS %	LGBTQI RIGHTS %	DON'T KNOW %
CASTE/ETHNICITY								
Hill high castes	19.5	10.4	46.8	25.1	50.6	17.6	1.1	20.6
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	18.9	8.0	41.8	25.2	47.4	13.2	1.0	26.7
Hill Dalits	17.6	9.2	33.7	35.2	44.3	13.1	0.9	29.1
Madhesi high castes	25.6	20.4	48.6	30.3	30.7	13.7	0.9	18.1
Madhesi intermediate castes	11.9	8.9	36.7	30.3	24.4	12.7	1.7	28.9
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	8.8	10.3	34.2	17.6	35.5	7.5	0.9	32.2
Madhesi Dalits	11.1	11.4	30.8	26.4	25.2	10.9	1.7	31.2
Muslims	15.9	9.2	30.7	22.4	33.9	13.1	0.4	30.0
INCOME								
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	23.7	11.7	24.8	23.2	39.4	11.4	0.7	33.3
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	14.4	9.0	30.4	19.7	39.1	11.1	1.1	35.2
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	16.6	9.0	42.4	25.3	42.2	12.8	0.9	25.7
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	16.8	9.7	49.3	31.4	44.8	17.9	1.0	17.4
NPR 40,000 per month or more	20.5	10.5	48.5	34.9	48.3	18.9	2.4	18.0

Table 5.1: Q-E2. *This constitution changed a lot of things about the way Nepal is governed, and about the rights of Nepali people. Could you please name some of those changes?* (*N* = 7,202)

IS THE NEW CONSTITUTION A STEP FORWARD?

Nearly half of Nepalis (45.6%) feel that the 2015 constitution is a step forward, but more than one-third either think that it is too soon to tell (17.5%) or are uncertain whether it is a step forward or backward (18.7%). One in 10 Nepalis (9.1%) believe that the constitution is a step backward, and a similar share (9.2%) say it is at the same time a step forward and a step backward (figure 5.3).

Province 6 has the highest proportion of optimistic respondents. Nearly three-quarters of Province 6 residents (72.5%) think the constitution is a positive development, a considerably higher percentage than the national average. On the other hand, Provinces 2 and 3 have the lowest share of positive views (respectively 39.2% and 33.0%). These two provinces also have the largest proportions of people who think that the new constitution is a step backward (20.2% in Province 2 and 15.6% in Province 3).

Although the largest share of Madhesis (39.0%) think the constitution is a step forward, relatively high proportions of respondents from among Madhesi high castes (20.4%), Madhesi intermediate castes (17.9%), and Madhesi Dalits (12.2%) think that it is a step backward. Large shares of Muslims (31%), Madhesi Dalits (28.9%), and Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (28.1%) say they do not know what to think about the constitution (table 5.2).[45]

[45] The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

VIEWS ON THE 2015 CONSTITUTION, BY PROVINCE AND REGION

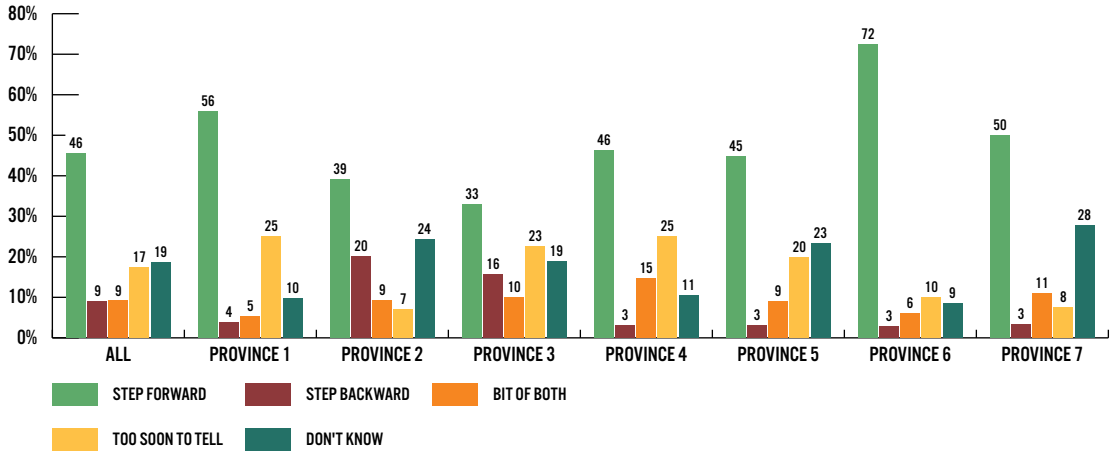

Figure 5.3: Q-E1. *Since 2015, Nepal has a new constitution. Would you say that this new constitution is a step forward, a step backward, or a bit of both?* (*N* = 7,202)

Stronger and more positive views on the constitution are associated with higher educational attainment. The likelihood that Nepalis think the constitution is a step forward increases steadily with education levels: over half of those with at least a secondary education express positive views, compared to just 31.1% of illiterates and 38.3% of those without a formal education. Better-educated people generally are more confident in their opinions (only 3.3% of Nepalis with a bachelor's degree or above say they don't know what to answer), which also means they are more likely than others to say the constitution is a step backward (the correlation, however, is less strong).

Women and Nepalis in the lower income groups tend to express greater uncertainty. A quarter of women (26.2%) say they do not know whether the constitution is a step forward or not, compared to 10.6% of men. People in the lower income brackets are more likely than better-off Nepalis to admit that they do not have a strong opinion on the matter. Older Nepalis tend to be more skeptical: the share of people who believe the constitution is a step forward declines with age.

VIEWS ON THE 2015 CONSTITUTION, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	STEP FORWARD %	STEP BACKWARD %	BIT OF BOTH %	TOO SOON TO TELL %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***45.6***	***9.1***	***9.2***	***17.5***	***18.7***
RURAL VS. URBAN					
Rural municipality	46.2	6.5	9.8	15.3	22.2
Urban Municipality	45.3	10.5	8.8	18.8	16.6
REGION					
Mountains	51.2	2.9	12.6	12.2	21.1
Hills	47.4	8.0	8.6	20.8	15.2
Terai	43.5	10.7	9.2	15.5	21.2

	STEP FORWARD %	STEP BACKWARD %	BIT OF BOTH %	TOO SOON TO TELL %	DON'T KNOW %
GENDER					
Women	42.0	6.4	8.6	16.9	26.2
Men	49.5	11.9	9.8	18.2	10.6
AGE					
18–24	49.6	6.8	10.5	14.5	18.6
25–34	46.7	10.0	8.4	17.5	17.4
35–49	45.1	8.9	9.4	18.5	18.1
50 & above	41.8	10.3	8.4	19.0	20.5
EDUCATION					
Illiterate	31.1	8.2	7.4	15.2	38.2
Nonformal education	38.3	5.8	10.5	18.1	27.3
Primary	46.5	7.2	8.6	19.0	18.6
Lower secondary	48.2	8.4	10.3	18.4	14.7
Secondary	52.4	9.1	8.8	17.9	11.7
School Leaving Certificate	51.8	12.1	9.1	17.0	10.0
Intermediate	53.2	10.7	11.3	17.5	7.3
Bachelor's degree or above	54.2	15.5	9.3	17.7	3.3
CASTE/ETHNICITY					
Hill high castes	51.4	8.0	10.0	18.3	12.4
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	45.6	8.1	8.6	21.5	16.2
Hill Dalits	48.5	4.2	6.7	18.3	22.3
Madhesi high castes	49.5	20.4	10.9	7.8	11.4
Madhesi intermediate castes	37.1	17.9	10.5	10.6	24.0
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	42.5	5.2	9.1	15.2	28.1
Madhesi Dalits	37.6	12.2	7.7	13.6	28.9
Muslims	36.9	5.8	8.3	18.1	31.0
INCOME					
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	47.0	4.9	8.6	14.1	25.4
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	41.2	6.6	9.0	17.1	26.1
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	47.8	8.0	8.5	15.9	19.7
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	48.1	12.0	10.4	18.3	11.2
NPR 40,000 per month or more	43.6	15.3	8.7	24.6	7.9

Table 5.2: Q-E1. *Since 2015, Nepal has a new constitution. Would you say that this new constitution is a step forward, a step backward, or a bit of both?* (*N* = 7,202)

VIEWS ON FEDERAL REFORM

The 2015 constitution mandated the establishment of seven federal provinces (or states), with greater devolution of power from the national government to the provinces.[46] Numbered 1 to 7,[47] each province is to have its own executive and assembly. Provincial elections took place in November and December 2017, after the completion of fieldwork for this survey.

Less than half of Nepalis (44.4%) think that Nepal's transition to a more federal structure will lead to improvements for themselves and their families. A combined 39.9% either say that it is too soon to tell (24.6%), or that they do not know whether federalism will lead to improvements or not (15.3%), possibly indicating that knowledge about how federalism will work in practice remains limited. Some 11.9% of respondents feel that federalism will make things worse (figure 5.4).

In the mountains, far from the center of power in Kathmandu, people are more optimistic about federalism. Province 6, a mountainous region in Nepal's far west, has by far the highest share of survey respondents (65.9%) who feel that federalism will lead to improvements for them and their families. In general, residents of the mountains tend to express more positive views about federal reform. In contrast, Province 3, where Kathmandu is located, has the highest share of people (27.6%) who express negative views about federal reform.

In line with patterns observed in views on the constitution, women, the less educated, and poorer Nepalis tend to express greater uncertainty about the effects of federal reform. Older Nepalis are more skeptical than the young (table 5.3).

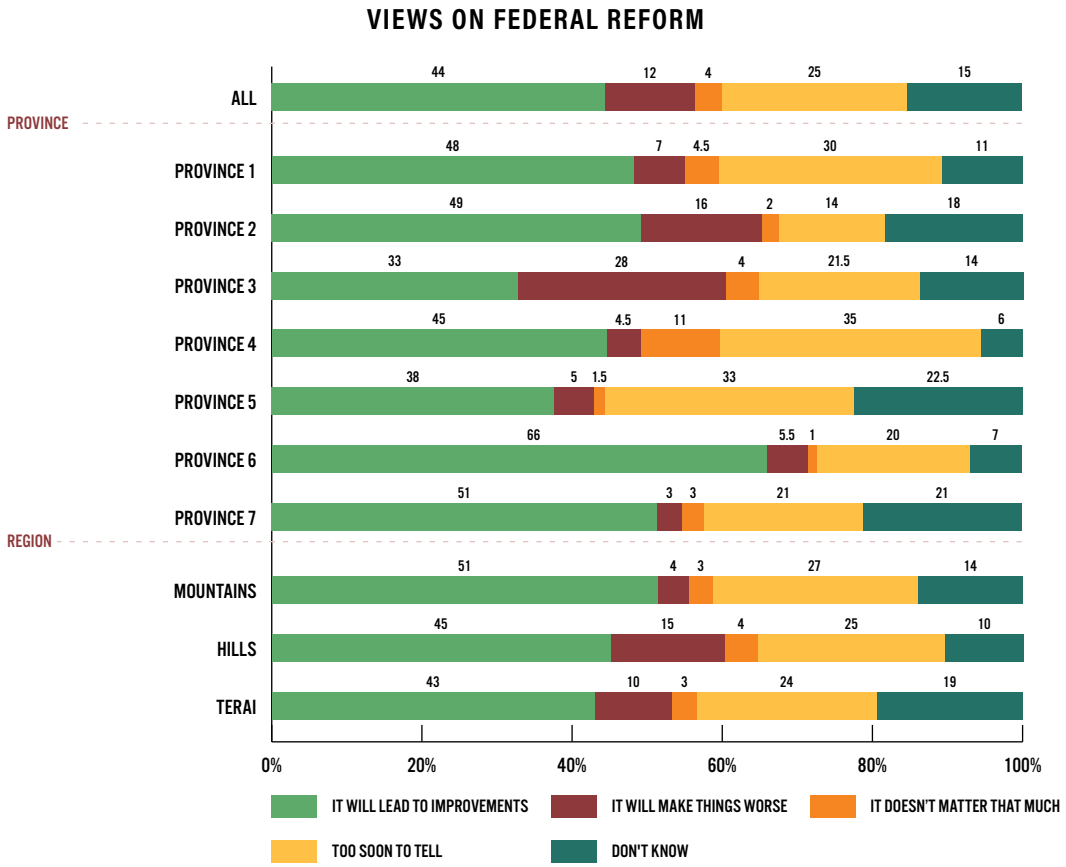

Figure 5.4: Q-E3. *With the 2015 constitution, Nepal became a federal state. Do you think this will lead to improvements for you and your family, or make things worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

[46] Schedule 4, relating to clause (3) of Article 56, The Constitution of Nepal, 2015.
[47] Province names are to be decided by a majority vote of the provincial legislature after the formation of provincial governments.

VIEWS ON FEDERAL REFORM, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	IT WILL LEAD TO IMPROVEMENTS %	IT WILL MAKE THINGS WORSE %	IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT MUCH %	TOO SOON TO TELL %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***44.4***	***11.9***	***3.7***	***24.6***	***15.3***
GENDER					
Women	40.8	9.4	4.0	24.6	21.2
Men	48.3	14.7	3.4	24.7	8.9
AGE					
18–24	50.8	7.4	2.3	25.0	14.6
25–34	48.2	11.0	4.0	22.9	14.0
35–49	42.5	14.0	3.6	24.9	14.9
50 & above	37.5	14.6	4.7	25.7	17.6
EDUCATION					
Illiterate	31.0	9.4	5.0	22.8	31.8
Nonformal education	37.1	10.4	3.3	27.3	21.8
Primary	45.2	8.2	3.7	26.8	16.1
Lower secondary	48.6	11.9	3.7	24.8	11.0
Secondary	48.2	12.8	3.7	25.1	10.2
School Leaving Certificate	48.6	16.3	2.4	24.8	8.0
Intermediate	57.4	14.3	3.3	21.7	3.3
Bachelor's degree or above	51.2	18.5	4.0	22.1	4.3
CASTE/ETHNICITY					
Hill high castes	48.5	13.1	3.7	25.8	8.9
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	40.8	13.9	5.0	28.0	12.3
Hill Dalits	44.9	6.6	3.2	26.9	18.4
Madhesi high castes	48.6	15.4	1.0	22.4	12.6
Madhesi intermediate castes	46.9	13.7	2.1	17.2	20.2
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	38.9	7.4	4.4	21.6	27.5
Madhesi Dalits	43.9	8.7	2.3	19.2	25.9
Muslims	38.6	6.2	1.7	26.1	27.4
INCOME					
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	46.5	5.0	3.0	21.9	23.5
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	36.8	8.1	3.3	29.0	22.8
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	45.7	11.2	4.0	23.7	15.4
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	50.0	14.6	3.9	22.8	8.7
NPR 40,000 per month or more	46.3	21.5	3.6	23.8	4.7

Table 5.3: Q-E3. *With the 2015 constitution, Nepal became a federal state. Do you think this will lead to improvements for you and your family, or make things worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

IMPACT OF LOCAL ELECTIONS ON PERCEPTIONS OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Some 43.8% of Nepalis feel better represented after the reintroduction of elections for municipal councils. In 2017, local elections were held in Nepal to elect members of urban municipality and rural-municipality councils (they are to be elected every five years). Some 43.8% of Nepalis feel better represented following this reform, while 20.4% feel less well represented, 9.6% report no real change, and 16.4% feel it is too soon to tell. Nearly one-tenth of respondents (9.6%) say they do not know (figure 5.5).

Views on the impact of local elections on political representation are more reserved in the Terai. Only 39.1% of Terai residents[48] feel better represented with the introduction of local elections, compared to 43.8% of mountain residents and 47.4% in the hills. Terai residents are also twice as likely to say it is too soon to tell.

IMPACT OF LOCAL ELECTIONS ON POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, BY REGION AND PROVINCE[49]

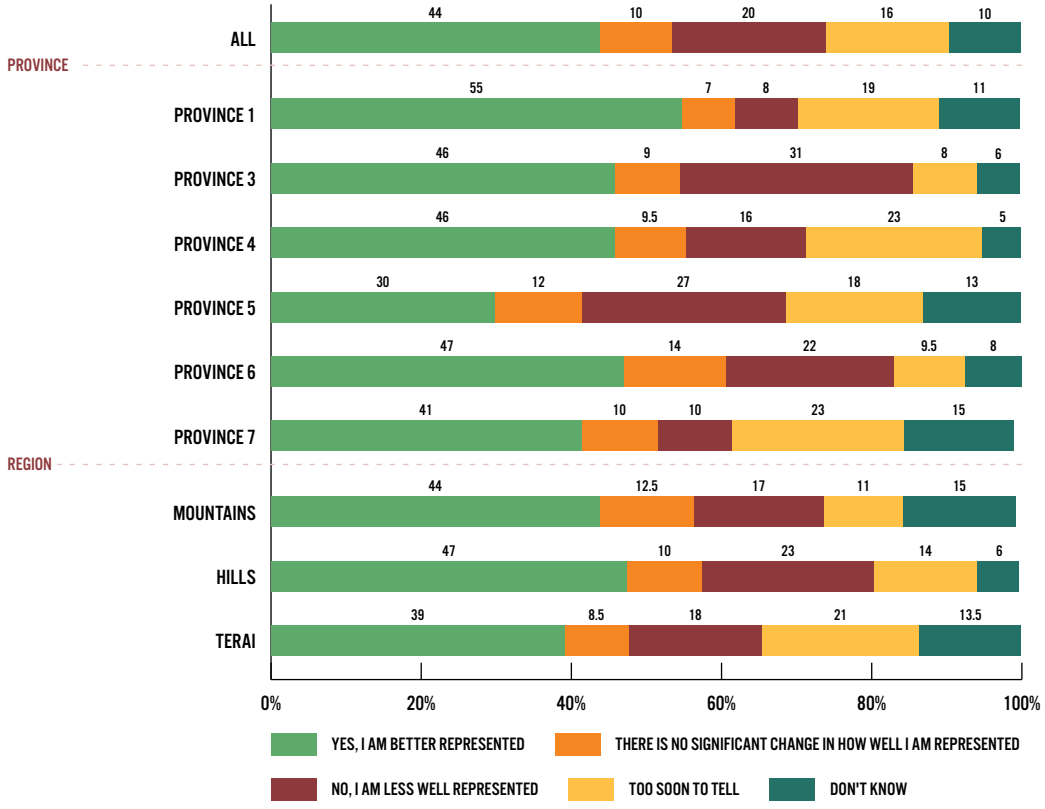

Figure 5.5: Q-E6. *With the establishment of elected municipal councils this year, do you feel you are now better represented in political decisions that affect you and your community?* (*n* = 5,847; asked of all respondents except those in Province 2)

[48] This excludes Province 2, where elections had not yet taken place at the time of the fieldwork of the survey.
[49] Percentages exclude results for Province 2, where local elections had not yet taken place at the time the survey was implemented.

RELATION BETWEEN THE OUTCOME OF LOCAL ELECTIONS AND VIEWS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND FEDERAL REFORM

Nepalis who are satisfied with the results of local elections tend to be more optimistic about the constitution and federalism. The 37.4% of Nepalis who report being very happy with the outcome of the 2017 local elections[50] are over 20 percentage points more likely than those who are not to say that the new constitution is a step forward. Conversely, those who are dissatisfied with election results are substantially more likely to say that the constitution is a step back (table 5.4). A similar pattern is observed in the relation between satisfaction with election results and views on federalism (table 5.5).

VIEWS ON THE NEW CONSTITUTION, BY SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOME OF LOCAL ELECTIONS

		THE 2015 CONSTITUTION IS A STEP FORWARD %	THE 2015 CONSTITUTION IS A STEP BACK %	IT IS A BIT OF BOTH %	TOO SOON TO TELL %	DON'T KNOW %
Are you happy with the results of the elections?	Yes, very happy (37.4% of all respondents, excluding those in Province 2)	61.5	4.2	7.0	14.8	12.5
	Yes, moderately happy (52.3%)	39.3	7.1	10.5	23.6	19.5
	No, not happy (5.0%)	37.2	13.9	12.2	19.5	17.2
	No, not happy at all (1.1%)	39.2	18.3	10.3	19.3	12.9
	It doesn't matter (2.2%)	24.5	8.7	7.8	23.2	35.8
	Don't know (1.9%)	37.1	0.0	1.2	14.4	47.3

Table 5.4: Q-E1. *Since 2015, Nepal has a new constitution. Would you say that this new constitution is a step forward, a step backward, or a bit of both?* **Q-F4.** *Are you happy with the results of the elections?* (*n* = 5,847; all respondents except those in Province 2)

[50] See chapter 6, "Politics and Political Participation."

VIEWS ON FEDERAL REFORM, BY SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOME OF LOCAL ELECTIONS

		FEDERAL REFORM WILL LEAD TO IMPROVEMENTS %	FEDERAL REFORM WILL MAKE THINGS WORSE %	IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT MUCH %	TOO SOON TO TELL %	DON'T KNOW %
Are you happy with the results of the elections?	Yes, very happy (37.4% of all respondents, excluding those in Province 2)	56.5	7.8	3.3	21.6	10.8
	Yes, moderately happy (52.3%)	36.1	12.0	4.3	31.5	16.1
	No, not happy (5.0%)	36.6	21.1	6.1	23.3	12.9
	No, not happy at all (1.1%)	35.4	21.6	3.3	29.2	10.5
	It doesn't matter (1.9%)	26.6	12.8	7.0	25.6	28.0
	Don't know (1.9%)	17.6	5.7	2.7	14.3	59.7

Table 5.5: Q-E3. *With the 2015 constitution, Nepal became a federal state. Do you think this will lead to improvements for you and your family, or make things worse?* **Q-F4.** *Are you happy with the results of the elections?* (*n* = 5,847; all respondents except those in Province 2)

5.2 LOCAL-LEVEL RESTRUCTURING

One of the major provisions of the 2015 constitution is the restructuring of subnational government and administrative units. The previous structure consisted of 75 districts, divided into 3,334 village development committees (VDCs) and 217 municipalities, themselves subdivided into wards. This is replaced by a new, three-tier structure composed of seven provinces, 753 urban municipalities and rural municipalities, and wards. The total number of local government units at the VDC/municipality level is reduced by 75%.[51] The reduced number of local administrative units, the demarcation of their borders, and the location of their administrative centers have at times caused tensions and protests as public services were perceived to be moving away from the people.

IS LOCAL-LEVEL RESTRUCTURING IMPROVING OR HURTING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE DELIVERY?

Just over one-third of Nepalis (34.8%) believe that the recent restructuring of local bodies has improved public-service delivery. This is a rather optimistic finding, given initial concerns about the effects of the restructuring process and the fact that the changes were implemented barely half a year before the survey was rolled out in the field. A quarter of Nepalis (26.7%) think that it is too soon to tell whether local-level restructuring will improve service delivery, and 12.8% say that they do not know. Only 5.8% of people think that it has made public-service delivery worse (figure 5.6).

[51] In the 2017 local elections, voters elected five ward-level representatives (one ward chair, one female ward member, one female Dalit member, and two open ward members), one local-unit chief (mayor or chairperson), and one deputy (deputy mayor or vice-chairperson) to form the local assembly. The newly elected local-unit chiefs (mayors or chairpersons) head the local-unit assemblies and local-unit executive bodies. See Democracy Resource Center Nepal (DRC-Nepal), *Nepal's Local Elections 2017: Final Observation Report* (DRC-Nepal, November 2017), 9–12, http://democracyresource.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/DRCN_Local-Election-Final-Observation-Report_Eng.pdf.

Consistent with views on the constitution and federal reform, residents of Nepal's mountains—and Province 6 in particular—express greater optimism that local-level restructuring is leading to improvements in public-service delivery. Terai residents are more reserved. Province 6 has by far the highest proportion of respondents (57.7%) who express positive views about the impact of local-level restructuring. Province 5 has the lowest share of optimistic respondents (26.5%) and a high share of people who feel that it is too soon to tell (37.8%). Provinces 2 and 3 have higher-than-average shares of people saying that local-level restructuring has made service delivery worse (11.5% and 11.4%, respectively).

The young, the better educated, and wealthier Nepalis are more likely to express optimism about the impacts of local-level restructuring. Some 37.6% of Nepalis aged 18–24, and 38.9% of those aged 25–34, think that local-level restructuring improves the capacity of local government to deliver services, compared to only 29.4% of people aged 50 or older. The share of people who believe that local-level restructuring improves service delivery also rises with education and income (table 5.6).

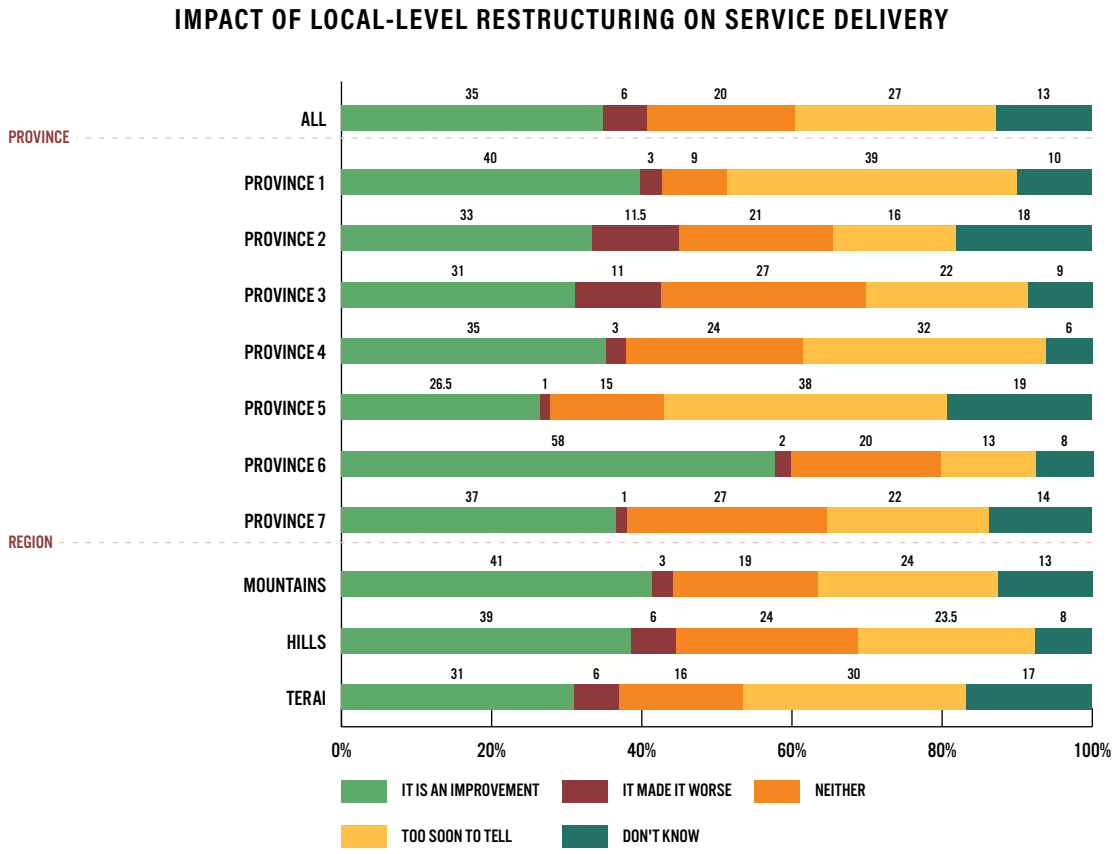

Figure 5.6: Q-E4. *Now I would like to ask you about the recent restructuring of local administrative bodies that happened in Nepal. Do you feel this has improved the capacity of local government to deliver services to people, or made it worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

IMPACT OF LOCAL-LEVEL RESTRUCTURING ON SERVICE DELIVERY, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	IT IS AN IMPROVEMENT %	IT MADE IT WORSE %	NEITHER %	TOO SOON TO TELL %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***34.8***	***5.8***	***19.8***	***26.7***	***12.8***
GENDER					
Women	33.0	4.3	19.8	24.8	18.0
Men	36.7	7.4	19.9	28.8	7.2
AGE					
18–24	37.6	3.6	18.8	27.2	12.8
25–34	38.9	4.3	19.2	26.2	11.4
35–49	34.0	7.2	20.3	25.9	12.6
50 & above	29.4	7.7	20.8	27.8	14.3
EDUCATION					
Illiterate	25.2	6.5	19.3	22.4	26.6
Nonformal education	26.8	4.2	25.3	27.2	16.4
Primary	35.8	4.1	16.9	30.8	12.3
Lower secondary	36.5	5.3	19.3	29.0	9.9
Secondary	38.4	5.8	20.2	27.0	8.6
School Leaving Certificate	38.9	6.7	19.3	27.7	7.4
Intermediate	44.3	6.4	18.9	25.9	4.5
Bachelor's degree or above	40.4	9.5	20.4	24.4	5.3
CASTE/ETHNICITY					
Hill high castes	40.2	5.5	19.4	27.9	6.9
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	34.7	5.5	22.6	27.4	9.7
Hill Dalits	35.1	2.3	17.8	31.3	13.4
Madhesi high castes	30.6	12.2	15.6	24.7	16.9
Madhesi intermediate castes	31.7	9.0	19.1	20.6	19.6
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	28.3	4.9	16.7	28.3	21.8
Madhesi Dalits	28.6	9.1	17.7	19.9	24.8
Muslims	23.2	3.1	19.9	29.8	23.9
INCOME					
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	37.4	5.2	13.0	23.3	21.1
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	27.4	3.8	21.2	28.3	19.3
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	36.4	6.0	19.4	25.8	12.4
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	38.4	6.9	19.0	27.9	7.8
NPR 40,000 per month or more	40.3	7.9	22.7	26.5	2.6

Table 5.6: Q-E4. *Now I would like to ask you about the recent restructuring of local administrative bodies that happened in Nepal. Do you feel this has improved the capacity of local government to deliver services to people, or made it worse?* (*N* = 7,202)

ISSUES WITH THE BORDERS OF NEW URBAN MUNICIPALITIES/ RURAL MUNICIPALITIES AND THE LOCATION OF NEW ADMINISTRATIVE CENTERS

Nearly one in four Nepalis are dissatisfied with the borders of their new urban municipality or rural municipality, and with the location of new administrative centers.[52] As discussed above, demarcating the borders of the new administrative units and choosing the location of their administrative centers were contentious processes. Some 23.1% of Nepalis express dissatisfaction with either the borders of their urban municipality/rural municipality or the location of its administrative center or both. Around one-half of Nepalis (52.6%) are satisfied (figure 5.7).

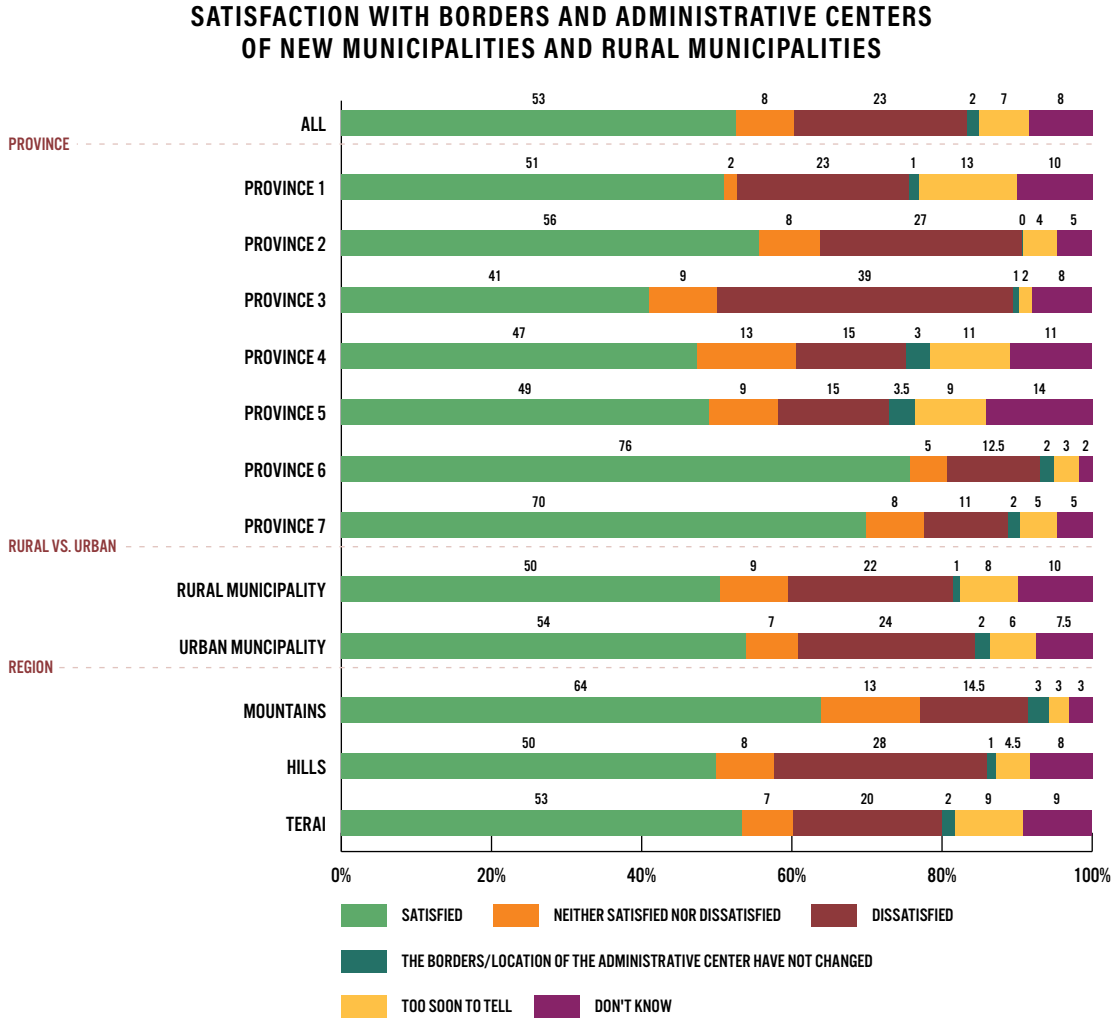

Figure 5.7: Q-E5. *Some people have been critical of the process of creating the borders of the new municipalities/ rural municipalities and of the location of the new administrative centers. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the borders of your new urban municipality/rural municipality and the location of the administrative center?* (*N* = 7,202)

[52] Here, we refer to the administrative centers of new municipalities and rural municipalities. New provinces were also established, and their number, their borders, and the location of their government headquarters were also sources of contention, but this section focuses on changes at the municipal level.

Satisfaction with new local administrative units and the location of administrative centers varies across provinces and regions. A large majority of people in Provinces 6 and 7 are satisfied with the borders and the location of the administrative centers of their urban municipality or rural municipality (respectively 75.7% and 69.9%). We have seen in previous sections that Province 6 residents in particular are generally more optimistic than others about federal reform and local-level restructuring. Of all provinces, Province 3 has the lowest level of satisfaction (41.0% of respondents) and the highest share of respondents expressing dissatisfaction (39.4%). Province 2 also has a relatively high share of dissatisfied people (26.9%). We saw that the residents of Provinces 2 and 3 also tend to be more reserved about the benefits of constitutional change, federalism, and local-level restructuring. In terms of broader geographic regions, residents of the hills are comparatively less likely to express satisfaction with municipal borders and government centers (49.9%), and more likely to express frustration (28.4%), than in the mountains or Terai (figure 5.7).

Dissatisfaction with borders and centers of new administrative units rises with educational attainment. The proportion of people who are dissatisfied tends to rise with education levels, but never exceeds the share of respondents who express satisfaction (figure 5.8). There is no substantial variation for other variables.

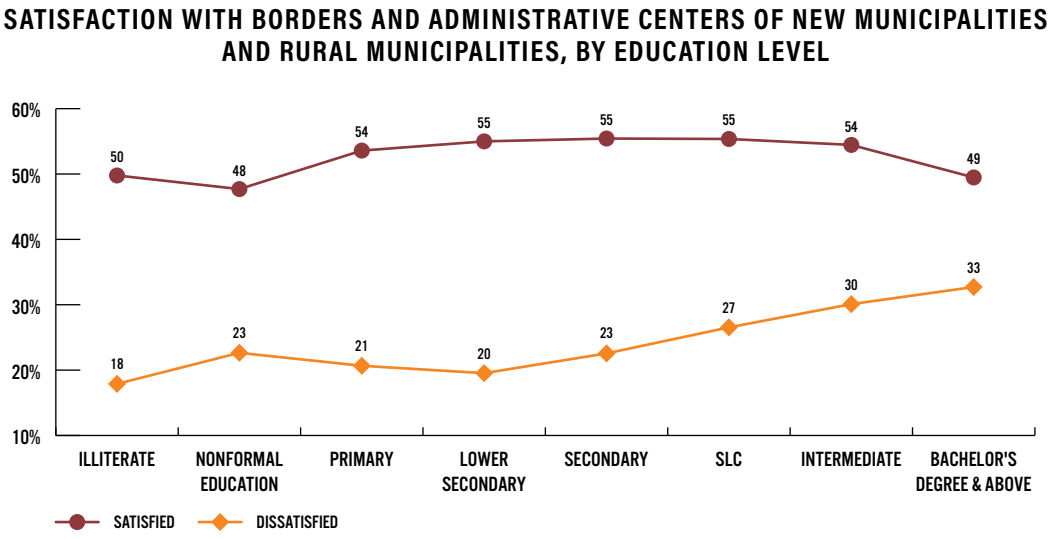

Figure 5.8: Q-E5. *Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the borders of your new urban municipality/ rural municipality and the location of the administrative center?* (*N* = 7,202)

DISTANCE PEOPLE HAVE TO TRAVEL TO ACCESS ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Most people say they have to travel the same or a shorter distance to access administrative services, but one in five (21.4%) say they have to travel a longer distance. One concern with local-level restructuring and the consolidation of former VDCs into a much smaller number of local government units was that it would increase the distance between the people and public services. In that regard, the survey findings are rather reassuring. For 41.9% of Nepalis, the distance they need to travel to access administrative services—such as obtaining a land title, a business license, or a marriage/citizenship/birth certificate—remains the same as it used to be. For over a third of them (35.7%), the distance is now shorter. However, 21.4% of Nepalis say the distance has increased (figure 5.9).

The share of people who say they have to travel a longer distance is highest in Province 2. In general, more people in the Terai region report having to travel longer distances (24.9%, compared to 20.1% in the mountains and 17.2% in the hills).

People in rural areas are more likely to have to travel longer distances to access administrative services. The rural population is naturally more affected by the changes. Some 26.8% of rural Nepalis report having to travel a longer

distance to access administrative services, compared to only 18.3% of urban respondents. However, 41.1% of rural Nepalis say the distance will now be shorter. For nearly half of urban residents (48.3%), the distance remains unchanged.

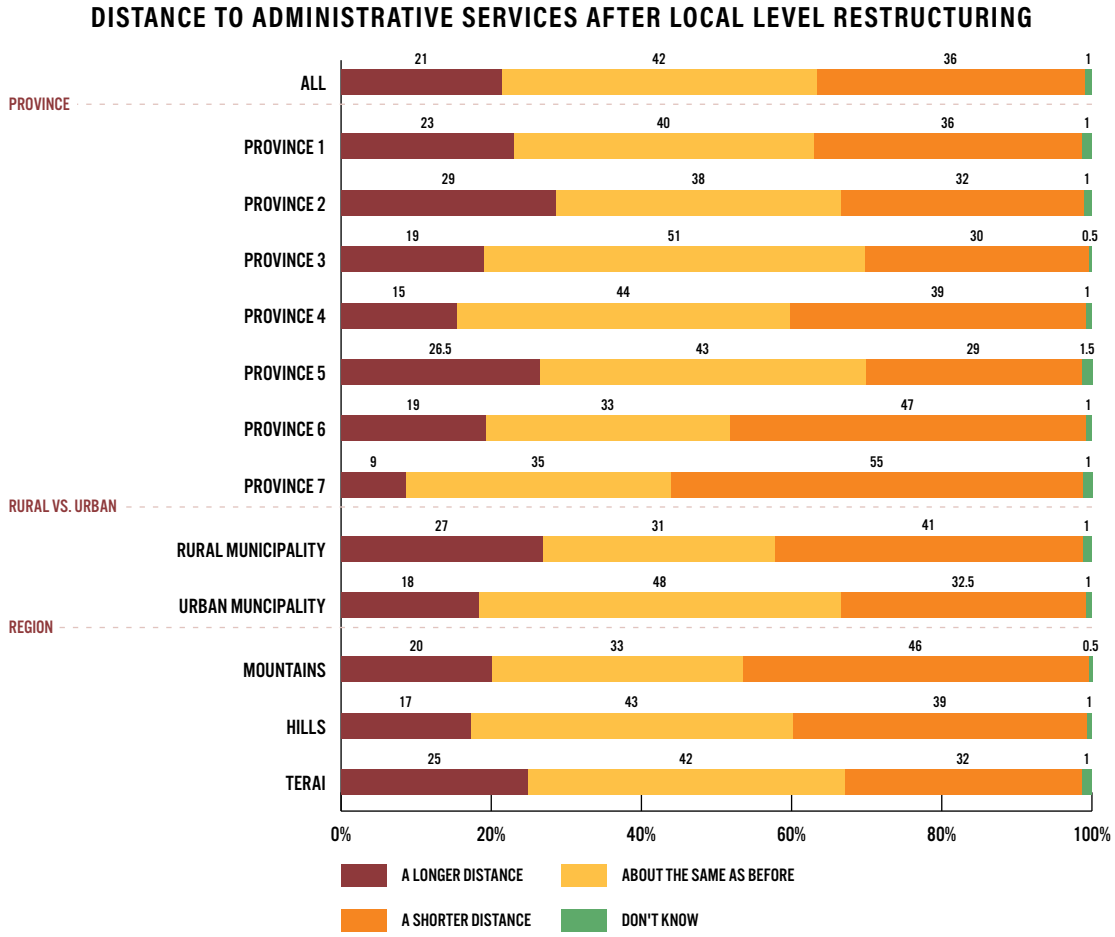

Figure 5.9: Q-E7. *In your new urban municipality/rural municipality, do you have to travel a longer or a shorter distance to access public services, or does it remain the same (for example, to obtain a land title, business license, or marriage, citizenship, or birth certificate)?* (*N* = 7,202)

5.3 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

Nepalis tend to trust new urban/rural municipality councils more than they trust the national government. People were asked how much they trust a range of institutions, including the national government and parliament, former VDC and municipality councils, newly elected urban municipality and rural municipality councils, political parties, courts of justice, security forces, the media, etc. A large majority of Nepalis (82.2%) say that they either fully trust (16.2%) or moderately trust (66.0%) their newly elected urban municipality/rural municipality councils (table 5.7). This is a higher level of trust than for most other representative bodies and government entities, including the former VDC and municipal councils. The national government, parliament, and political parties elicit the lowest levels of trust of the entire list: a third of Nepalis either do not quite trust, or do not at all trust, these institutions (national government, 28.7%; national parliament, 30.2%; political parties, 33.9%).[53] These patterns remain similar across

[53] These findings align well with responses to a similar question, asked only of the local elected councils and the national parliament, in chapter 6, "Politics and Political Participation."

regions and demographic groups, with some variation across provinces. Province 2 residents tend to express relatively less trust in the new, elected urban/rural municipality councils (66.9%), whereas Provinces 7 and 4 register the highest levels of trust in these institutions (92.7% and 90.2%, respectively). Residents of Provinces 7 and 6 also display relatively high levels of trust in the national government (respectively 74.3% and 71.6%). In contrast, comparatively few residents of Province 3, where the capital, Kathmandu, is located, trust the national government (53.7%), while a high share of respondents report that they do not trust it (40.6%). High levels of distrust in the national government are also found in earthquake-affected districts (40.9%, compared to 26.5% in nonaffected districts).

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

	TRUST			NO TRUST		
	TRUST (TOTAL)	FULLY TRUST	MODERATELY TRUST	DON'T TRUST (TOTAL)	DON'T QUITE TRUST	DON'T TRUST AT ALL
	%	%	%	%	%	%
The national government	63.7	7.1	56.6	28.7	20.0	8.7
The national parliament	58.7	4.8	53.9	30.2	21.1	9.1
Your former district development committee	71.1	6.3	64.8	22.4	17.1	5.3
Your former municipality or VDC council	79.4	9.9	69.5	17.9	14.1	3.8
Your new urban municipality/rural municipality council	82.2	16.2	66.0	11.5	8.7	2.8
Former local development officer/VDC secretary	77.9	10.7	67.2	19.2	14.4	4.8
Your new mayor/rural municipality chair	69.6	18.2	51.4	10.0	7.4	2.6
Your new ward chairperson	72.9	21.0	51.9	8.3	6.2	2.1
The ward citizens forum	68.7	10.6	58.1	15.4	12.8	2.6
Local political leaders	70.5	9.5	61.0	26.8	19	7.8
Political parties	64.3	7.3	57.0	33.9	23.5	10.4
Justice courts	82.7	23.7	59.0	11.9	9.2	2.7
Police	86.5	24.6	61.9	12.2	9.6	2.6
Armed Police Force	85.8	23.8	62.0	11.5	8.7	2.8
Nepal Army	87.9	28.8	59.1	9.5	7.0	2.5
The media (television, radio, newspapers)	92.2	29.6	62.6	6.5	5.5	1.0
NGOs/human rights defenders	78.9	12.6	66.3	12.8	10.5	2.3
Religious/caste-based organizations	76.8	13.6	63.2	16.3	12.6	3.7
CBOs (women's group, savings and credit group)	92.0	26.5	65.5	5.8	4.9	0.9

Table 5.7: Q-E9. *Now I am going to ask you about certain people and institutions in Nepal. For each of them, I would like you to tell me if you fully trust them, moderately trust them, don't quite trust them, or don't trust them at all to have the best interest of Nepalis at heart.* (*N* = 7,202)

The media and community-based organizations elicit the highest levels of trust of all listed institutions. Some 92.2% of Nepalis trust the media, and 92.0% trust community-based organizations. Some 78.9% say they trust NGOs and human rights defenders, while 76.8% of people say that they trust religious or caste-based organizations.

PHOTO BY Skanda Gautam

Trust in the courts and security forces is also very high. A large majority of Nepalis (82.7%) say that they trust the courts. They also show very high levels of trust in the security forces: 87.9% trust the Nepal Army, 86.5% trust the police, and 85.8% trust the Armed Police Force.

5.4 PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

EASE OF ACCESSING PUBLIC SERVICES

Most Nepalis find it easy to access basic public services. People were asked to rate the ease of obtaining a number of specific public services in their urban municipality or rural municipality. These services included obtaining a citizenship card or another identity document, securing a place in a public primary school for their child, obtaining medical treatment at the nearby health post or hospital, getting help from the police, and accessing social security benefits.[54] Across all questions, most respondents who tried at one time or another to access these services found it easy or very easy: 95.3% of those who tried consider it easy to obtain a place in school for their child; 90.9% of those who tried found it easy to get medical treatment; 89.1% of those who tried found it easy to get help from the police; 83.3% of those who tried found it easy to access social security benefits (these percentages were calculated after excluding the share of respondents who had not tried to access those services). Securing an identity document appears to be somewhat less easy, with 13.7% of those who tried reporting that it was difficult or very difficult, likely because the process to obtain an identity document is comparatively more complicated and lengthy than for the other services (figure 5.10). The share of people who report difficulty obtaining a citizenship card or other identity document is substantially higher among residents of Province 2 (figure 5.11).

[54] This list of questions is borrowed from AsiaBarometer, to allow comparability with survey data from other countries in South and Southeast Asia.

EASE OF ACCESS TO SERVICES IN THE URBAN MUNICIPALITY/RURAL MUNICIPALITY

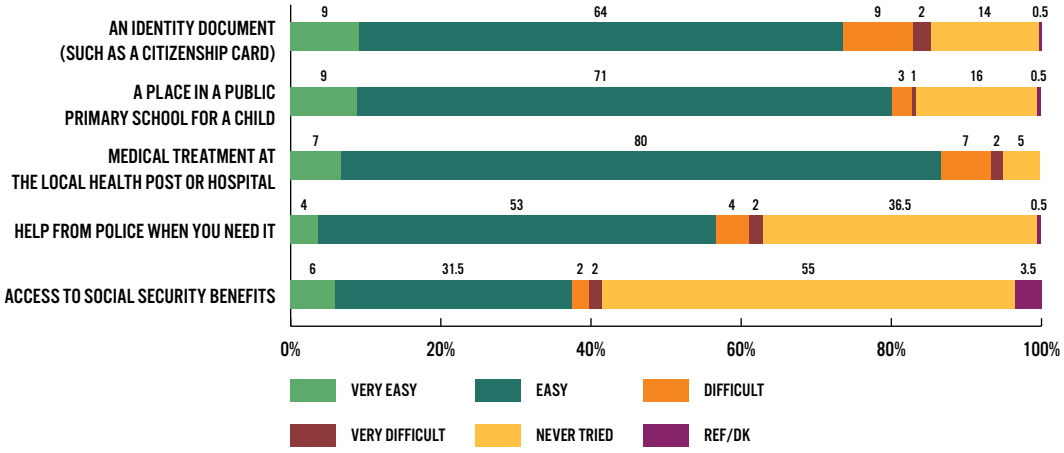

Figure 5.10: Q-E10. *Now I would like to ask you about your experience in accessing certain public services in your urban municipality/rural municipality. Based on your experience, how easy or difficult is it to obtain the following services?* (*N* = 7,202)

EASE OF OBTAINING AN IDENTITY DOCUMENT, BY PROVINCE[55]

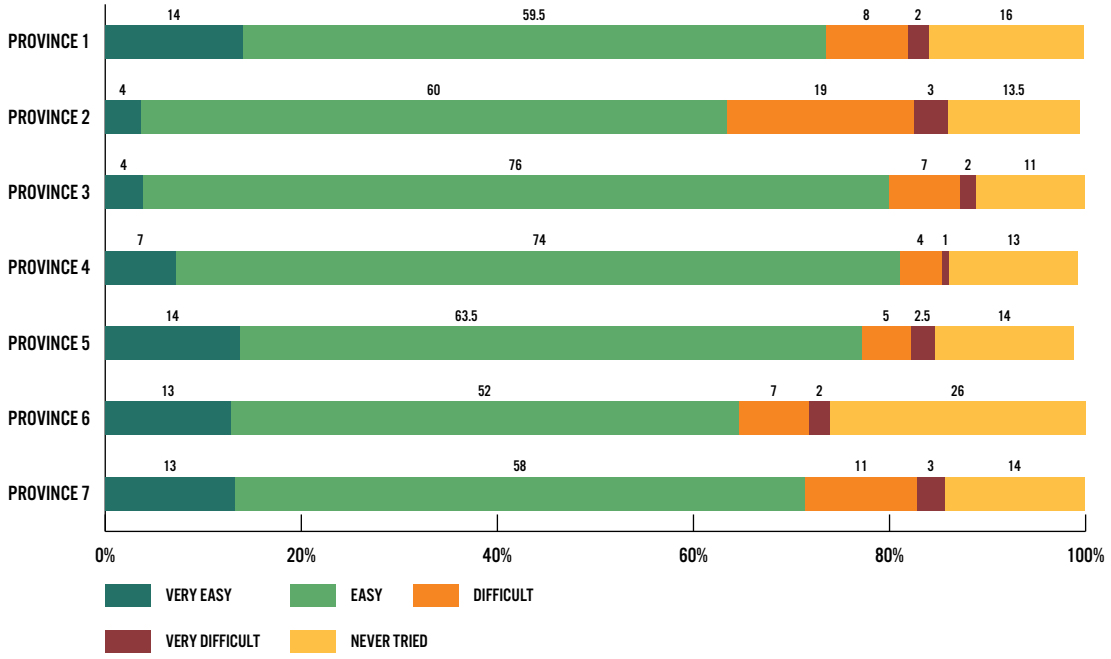

Figure 5.11: Q-E10a. *Based on your experience, how easy or difficult is it to obtain [an identity document]?* (*N* = 7,202)

[55] Because percentages in figures are rounded up to the nearest whole number, bars in stacked bar charts do not always add up to 100%

VIEWS ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

To understand the views of the Nepali people on the quality of public education services, we asked respondents with school-age children a series of questions. Some 37.4% of all survey respondents (2,691 people) reported having a child or children enrolled in public school (a government-run school).

Of Nepalis with school-age children, 85.9% live within one hour of their school, while one in 10 say that their child must travel between one and two hours to school. Nepalis with children enrolled in public school were first asked how long it takes their eldest child to travel to his or her school. Almost nine out of 10 respondents report it takes their child under one hour to get to school from home (figure 5.12). Another 11.1% say that it takes their child one to two hours, and 3.0% say it takes their child more than two hours.

The proportion of Nepalis whose children must travel more than one hour to school is, predictably, higher in the mountains and the hills. There is variation across regions and provinces. The share of respondents whose children must travel more than one hour to reach school is higher in the hills (22.6%) and the mountains (18.5%); in the Terai, it is 5.7%. Almost one in 10 mountain residents (9.4%) and 4.5% of hill residents say it takes their child more than two hours. Consistent with the variation across geological regions, people in Provinces 2, 5, and 7 report comparatively faster commutes from home to school than in Provinces 1, 3, 4, and 6. In Provinces 3 and 6, around one in four people with children report it takes their eldest child more than one hour to go to school (24.4% in Province 3 and 25.5% in Province 6). There is no substantial variation across other variables.

Of Nepalis with children in public school, 82.1% are satisfied with the quality of education at the school. Sixty-nine percent rate the quality of education at their eldest child's school as "good," and 13.1% say it is "very good," while 15.8% are dissatisfied, including 2.7% who rate the quality of education at their child's school as "not good at all" (figure 5.13).

Dissatisfaction with the quality of public education is greater in the Terai. One-fifth of Terai respondents (20.8%) are dissatisfied, compared to 14.2% in the mountains and 10.1% in the hills. Province 2 has a particularly high share of dissatisfied respondents, at 35.1%. There is no substantial variation across other geographic or demographic groups.

Half of Nepalis with school-age children (49.3%) think the quality of public education has improved in the past year. Some 36.7% say it has stayed the same, and 9.6% say it has deteriorated (figure 5.14). Again, dissatisfaction is highest in Province 2, where 24.9% of people feel that the quality of public education became worse in the past year. People in urban areas are 6.6 percentage points more likely than residents of rural municipalities to think there were improvements in public education (52.5% vs. 45.9%, respectively).

People who report improvements in the quality of education in the past year most often cite better management (34.8% of responses), better school facilities or location (21.8%), or better quality of teaching (19.9%). The 9.6% of Nepalis who feel the quality went down mainly report staff or teacher absenteeism (32.0% of responses) or a decline in the quality of teaching (28.8%) or management (27.4%). In Province 2, a plurality cites teacher absenteeism and staff shortages as the main reasons why the quality of education went down (39.5%). This is also the most common response in the Terai in general (38.1%), while those in the hills more frequently say that the quality of teaching has gone down (40.2%). In the mountains, the largest share of those reporting a decline in the quality of education say that the quality of school management has gone down (50.6%).

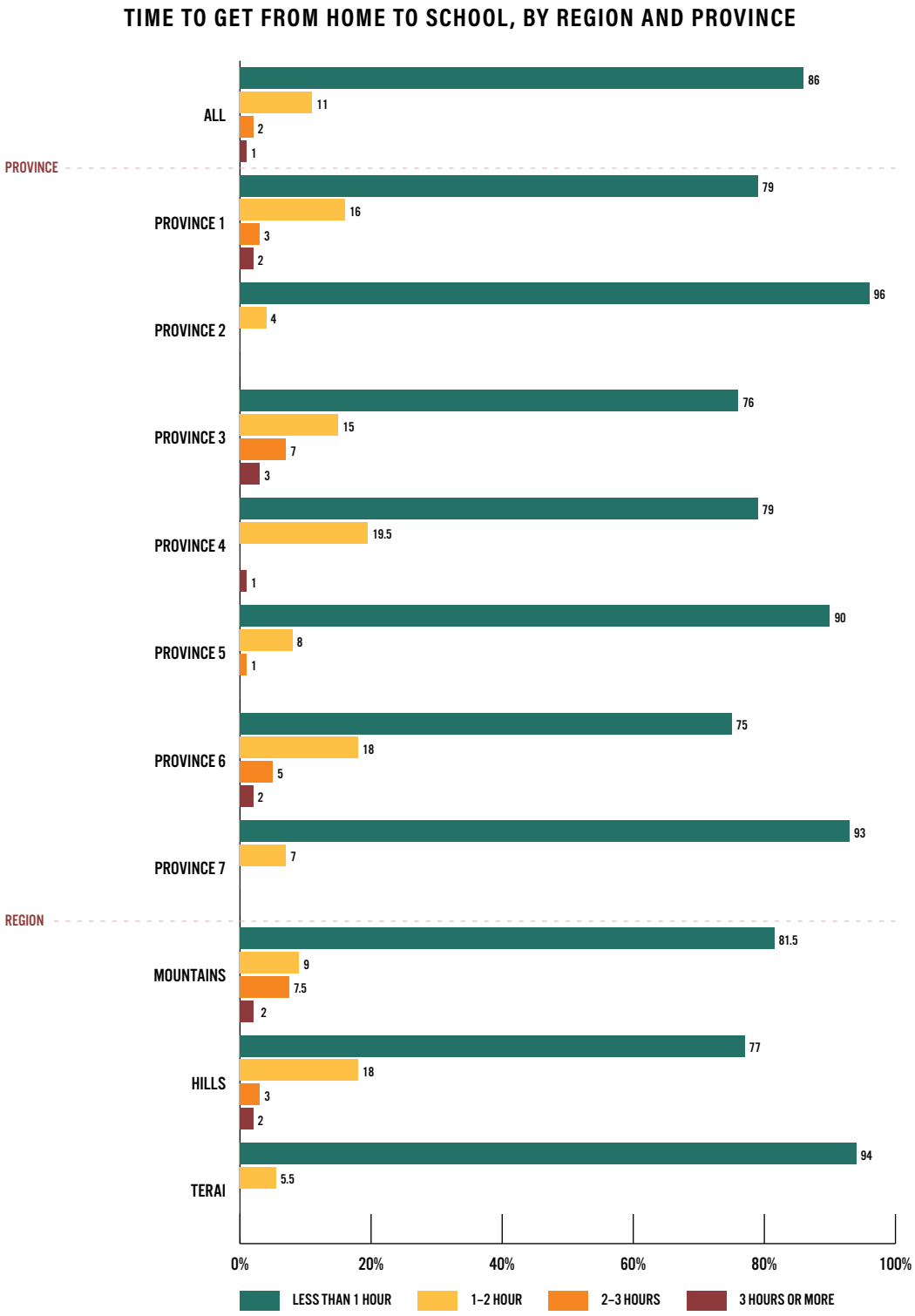

Figure 5.12: Q-E11a. *How much time does it take your (eldest) child to go from home to his/her school?* (*n* = 2,691; asked only of respondents with school-age children)

VIEWS ON THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, BY PROVINCE AND REGION

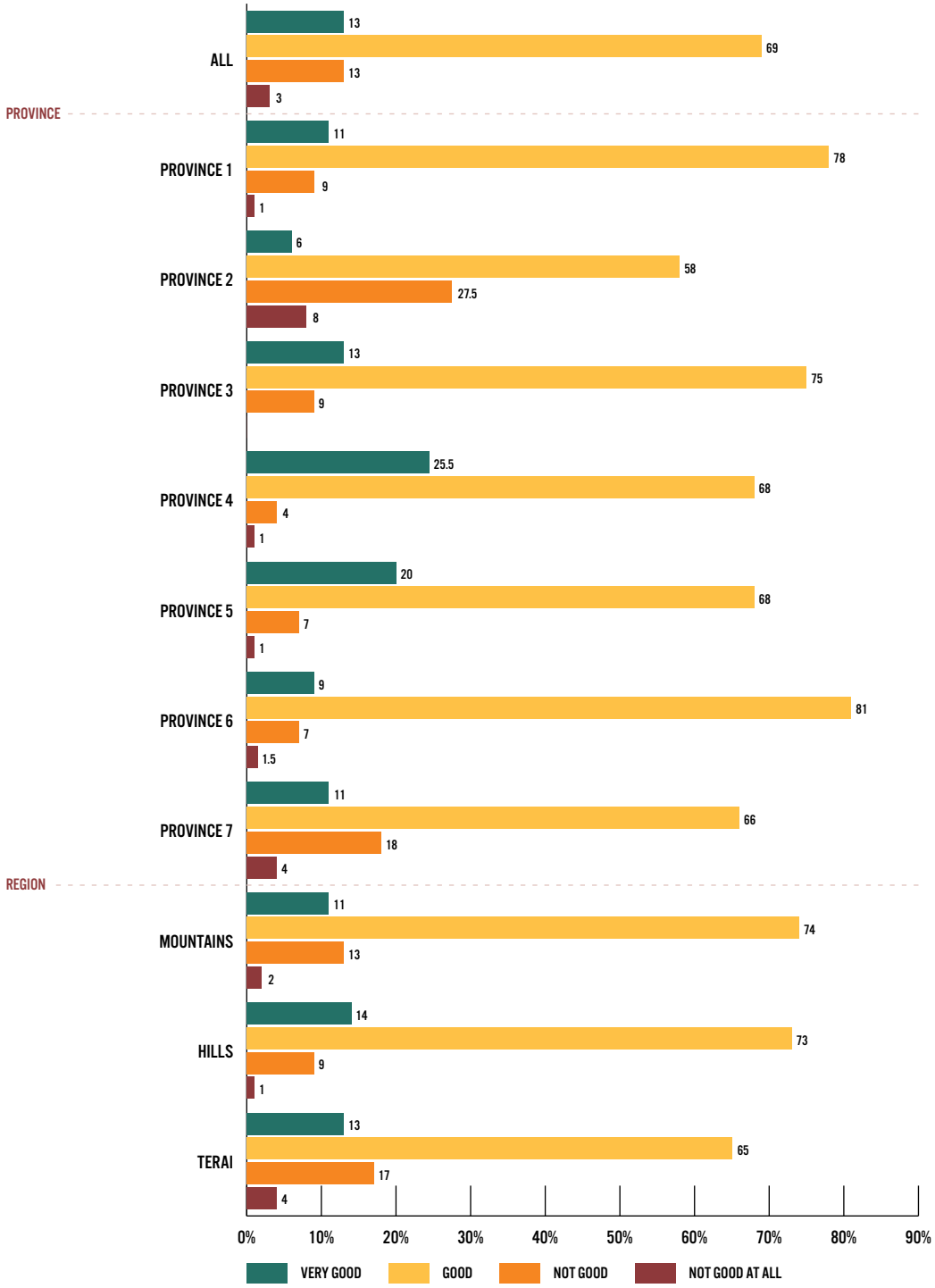

Figure 5.13: Q-E11b. *How would you rate the quality of the education at that school?"*
(*n* = 2,691; asked only of respondents with school-age children)

CHANGES IN THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN THE URBAN MUNICIPALITY/ RURAL MUNICIPALITY DURING THE PAST YEAR, BY PROVINCE AND REGION

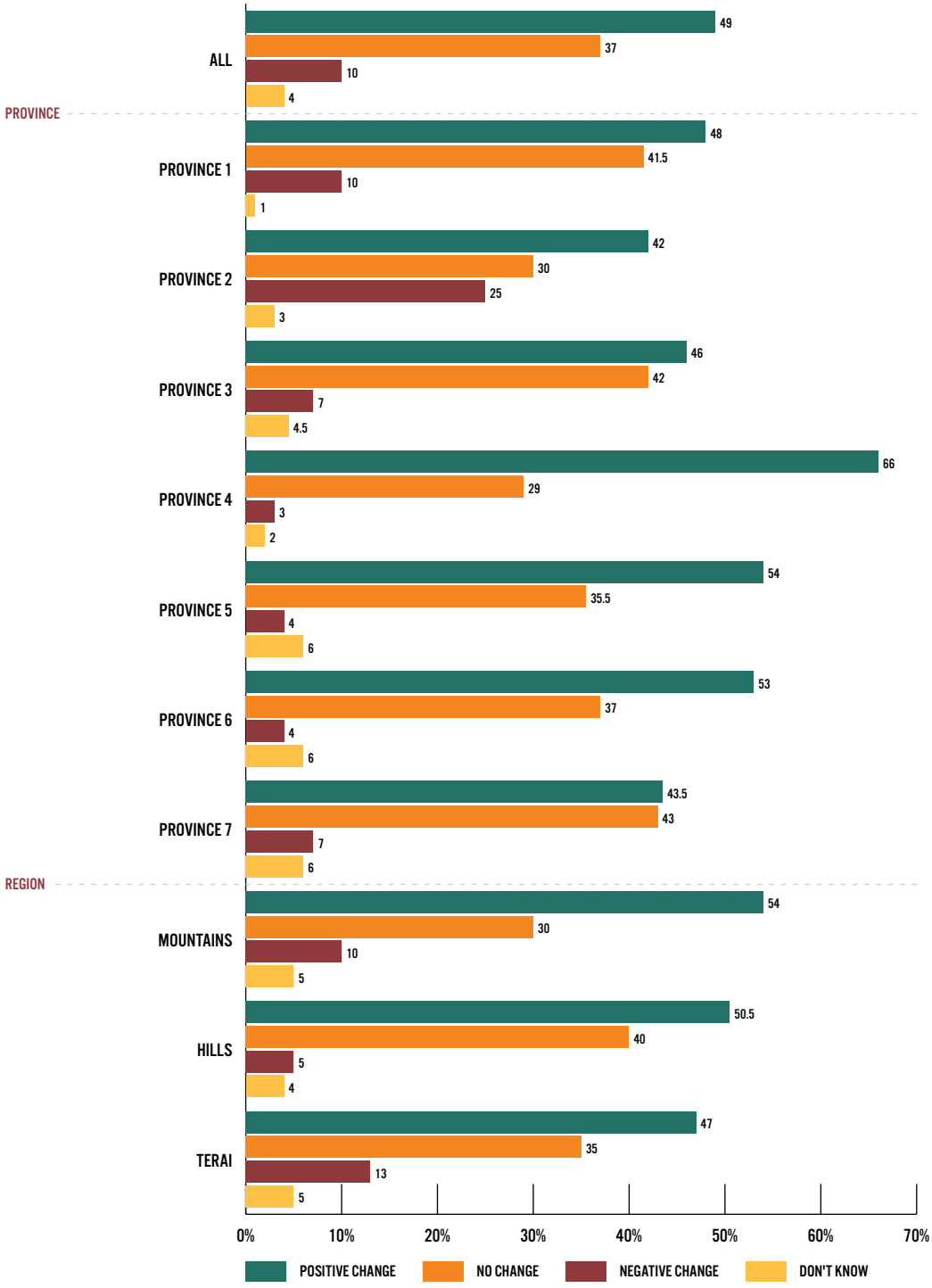

Figure 5.14: Q-E11d. *Have there been any positive or negative changes in the quality of public education in your urban municipality/rural municipality during the past year?* (*n* = 2,691; asked only of respondents with school-age children)

VIEWS ON PUBLIC HEALTH CARE

Nearly three-quarters of Nepalis (73.6%) live within one hour of the nearest public health post or hospital. One in five (19.2%) must travel between one and two hours to access public health care, while 5.9% have to travel more than two hours (figure 5.15).

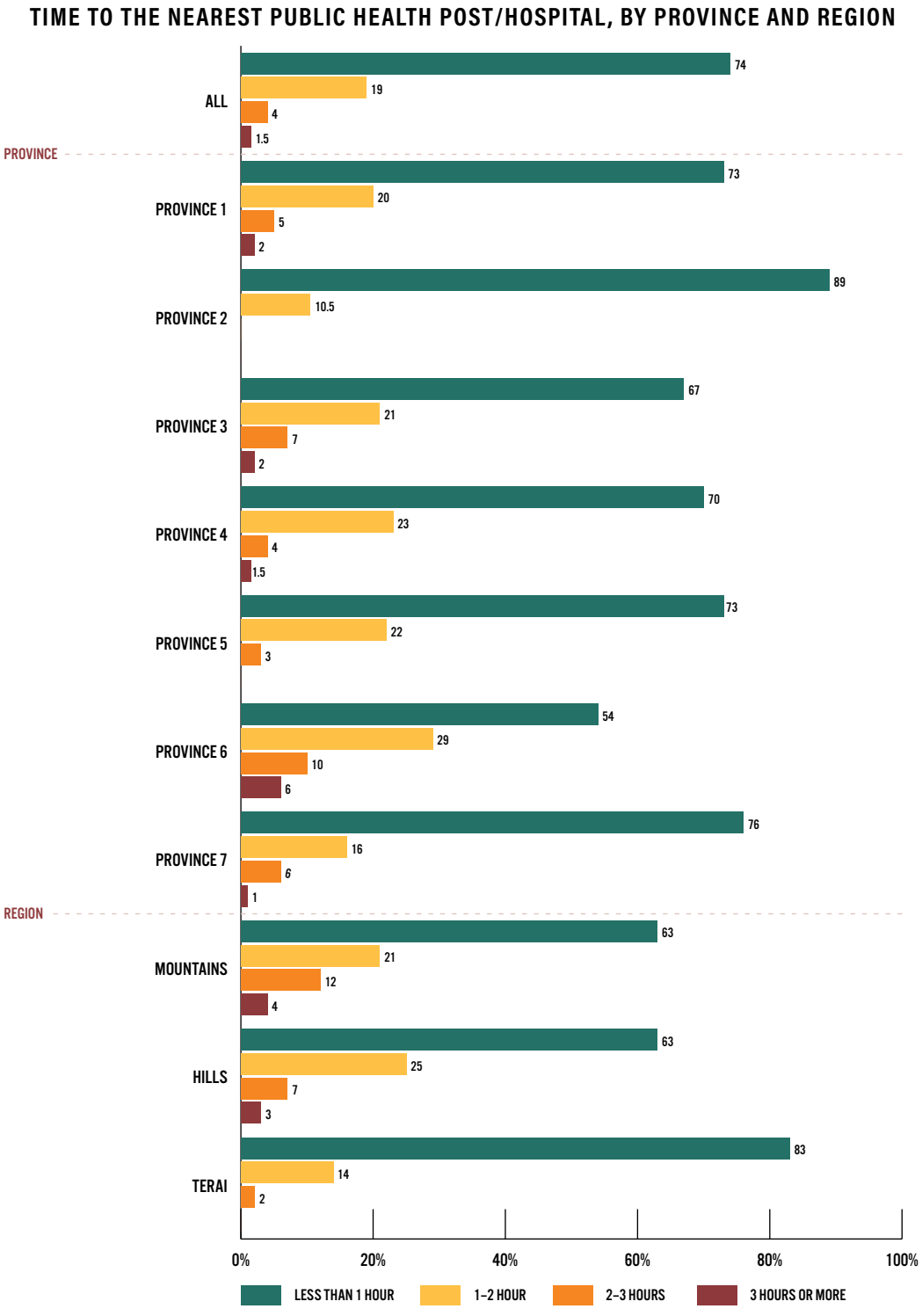

Figure 5.15: Q-E12a. *How much time would it take you to go from home to the nearest public health post/hospital?* (*N* = 7,202)

A larger share of hill and mountain residents have to travel longer to access public health care. Some 83.4% of Terai residents (and 89.1% in Province 2) can reach the nearest public health-care facility in less than one hour. In contrast, 34.9% of hill residents, 37.3% of mountain residents, and 45.5% in Province 6 must travel more than one hour, and 16.3% of mountain residents must travel more than two hours (figure 5.15). There is no substantial variation across other categories.

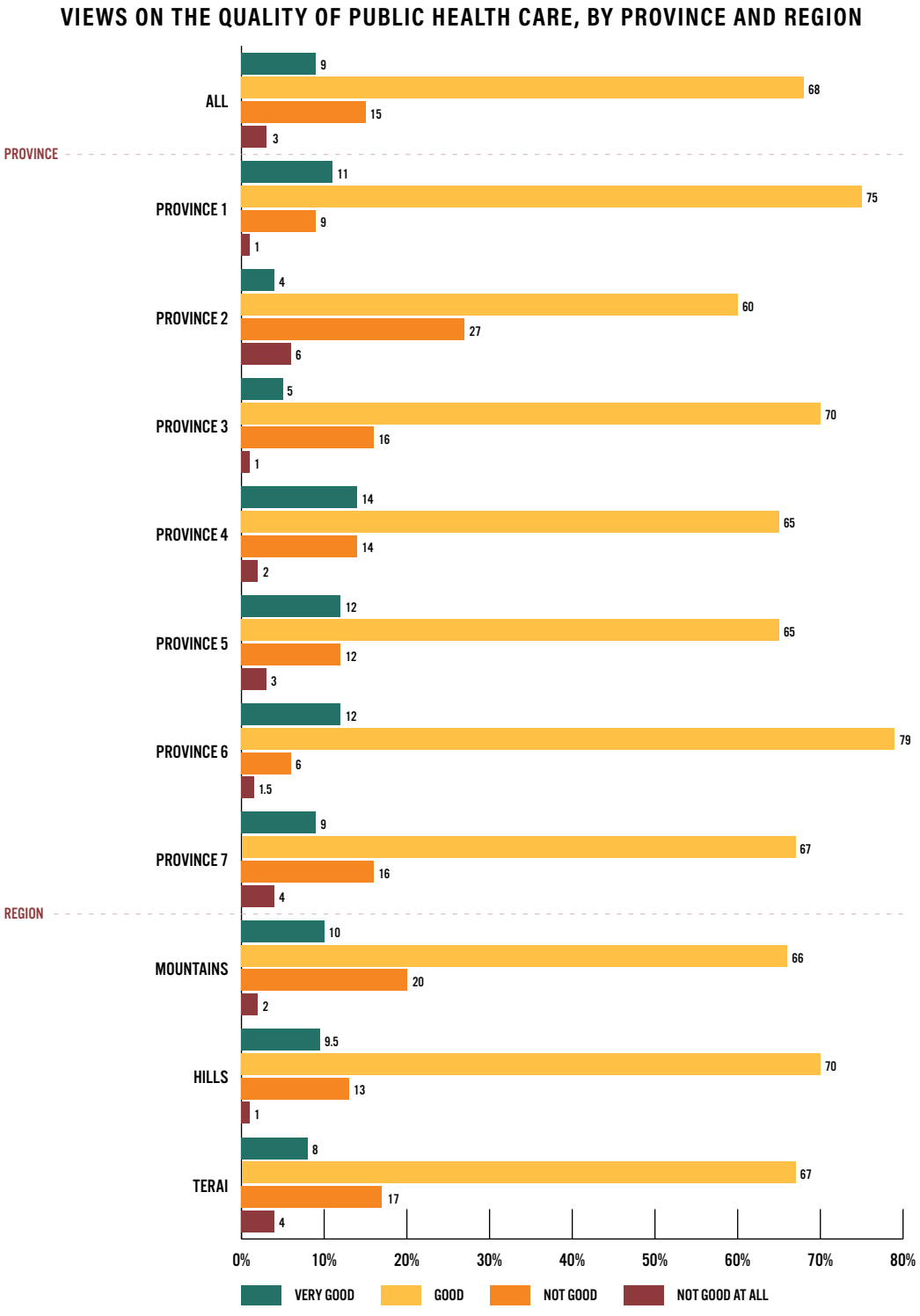

Figure 5.16: Q-E12b. *How would you rate the quality of public health care in your urban municipality/rural municipality?* (*N* = 7,202)

Some 76.6% of Nepalis rate the quality of public health care in their locality as "good" or "very good." Conversely, 17.9% think it is "not good" or "not good at all." One-third of Province 2 residents (32.9%) are disappointed in the quality of health care (figure 5.16). The variation in satisfaction with health care between the Terai region and the hills and mountains is less pronounced than for education. As in the case of education, Madhesis are more likely to be dissatisfied with the quality of local health care: 24.8% rate it as either "not good" or "not good at all," compared to 14.8% of other Nepalis.

Nearly one-half of respondents overall (43.1%) report no change in the quality of local, public health care in the past year, while 41.5% report it has improved and 8.7% say it has deteriorated (figure 5.17). In Province 2, one in five respondents (19.9%) report a decline in the quality of public health care. Province 6 has the highest share of people reporting improvements (64.4%). Province 3 has the highest percentage of people reporting no change (49.8%).

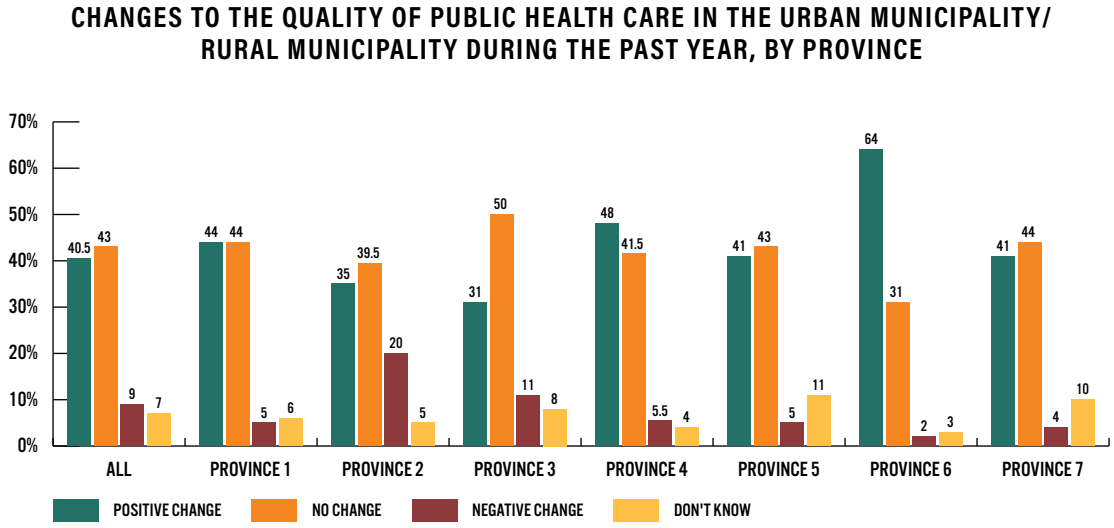

Figure 5.17: Q-E12d. *Have there been any positive or negative changes in the quality of public health services in your urban municipality/rural municipality during the past year?* (*N* = 7,202)

Nepalis who report improvements mainly cite better service at the local, public health-care facility (43.8% of responses), better maintenance (21.5%), or improved access (15.6%). The 9% of respondents who report a drop in the quality of health care attribute it to absenteeism (37.6%), poorer service (32.1%), or poorer maintenance (23.1%).

Roads

As discussed in chapter 2, "National Mood," roads are an important consideration in people's assessment of progress and development at the national and local levels.[56] We asked Nepalis about the quality of road infrastructure in their urban municipality or rural municipality.[57]

A slim majority of Nepalis (52.2%) rate the quality of local roads in their municipality as "good" or "very good." The other half (47.4%) are dissatisfied, with 15.4% reporting the roads are "not good at all." As observed earlier in this report, satisfaction with road infrastructure varies considerably across regions and provinces. In Provinces 1, 4, 5, and 6, a majority of people rate local roads as "good" or "very good." In Provinces 2, 3, and 7, on the other hand, more

[56] Large shares of people mentioned roads as a reason why they think there has been progress and development at the national and local level, or, conversely, as a reason why national and local conditions have not improved.

[57] People were asked about views on the quality of roads in their locality without distinguishing between roads built and maintained by the government and roads built and maintained privately or by the local community.

than half are dissatisfied with them. People living in the mountains are less likely than other regions to be satisfied with road quality (41.4%, compared to 55.4% in the Terai and 50.0% in the hills), as are rural Nepalis (43.9%, compared to 57.1% in urban municipalities) (figure 5.18).

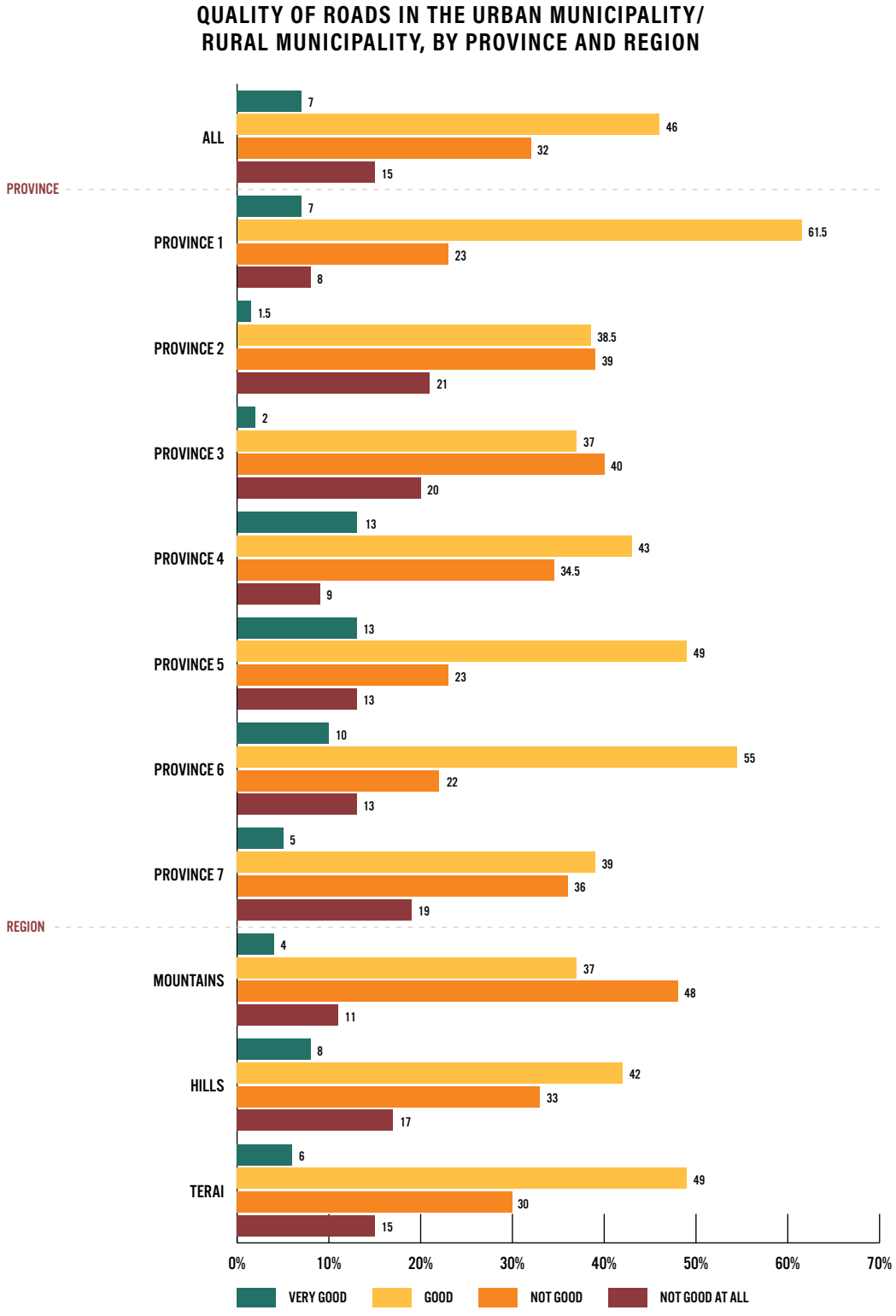

Figure 5.18: Q-E13a. *How would you rate the quality of roads in your urban municipality/rural municipality?* (*N* = 7,202)

CHANGES TO THE QUALITY OF ROADS IN THE URBAN MUNICIPALITY/RURAL MUNICIPALITY DURING THE PAST YEAR, BY PROVINCE AND REGION

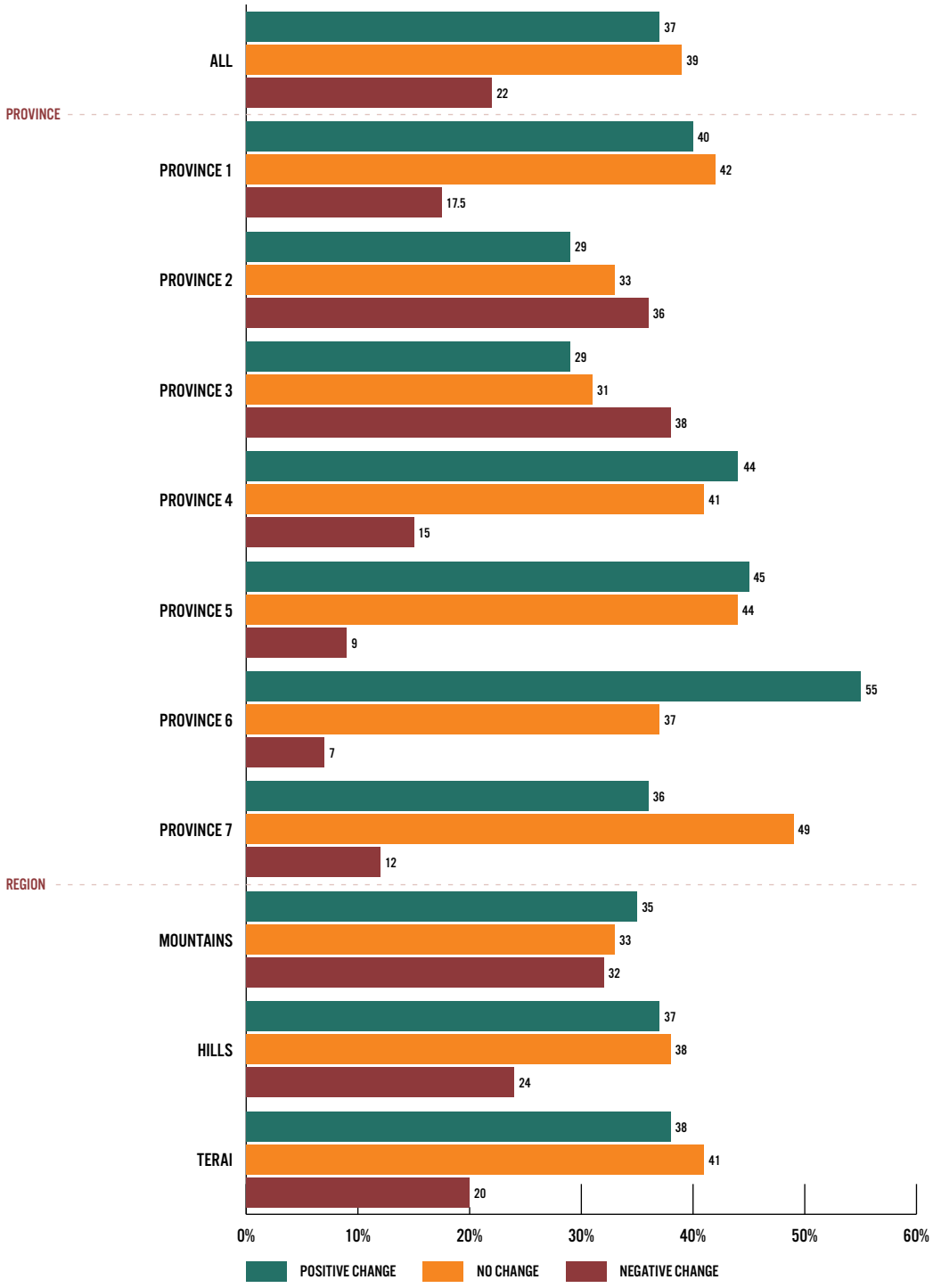

Figure 5.19: Q-E13c. *Have there been any positive or negative changes in the quality of roads in your urban municipality/rural municipality during the past year?* (*N* = 7,202)

More than one-third of Nepalis (37.3%) think that road quality improved during the past year. However, 22.4% say it got worse, and 38.8% think it remained the same. There is substantial variation across regions and provinces. A larger share of mountain residents report that the quality of roads is worse than it was one year ago (31.8%, compared to 23.9% in the hills and 20.0% in the Terai). This may be due to the negative impact of the annual monsoon on

mountain roads in particular—the survey took place immediately after the 2017 monsoon. The proportion of respondents reporting better roads is higher in Province 4 (43.7%), Province 5 (45.2%) and Province 6 (54.7%). Provinces 2 and 3 are the only provinces where the people who report that the roads have deteriorated outnumber those who report improvements in roads (figure 5.19). People living in urban areas are more likely than rural residents to report road improvements (40.5% vs. 31.9%, respectively).

Most Nepalis who report improvements in road quality mention that roads in poor condition were repaired (56.6%). In Provinces 4, 5, 6, and 7, between a quarter and a third of respondents also mention that more roads were built. Of the 22.4% of Nepalis who report negative change, the vast majority cite the deterioration of existing roads (70.9%).

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION, PUBLIC HEALTH CARE, AND ROADS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL?

Most people consider that the local (municipal) government is primarily responsible for local education, health care, and roads. Respondents were asked which level of government—national, provincial, or municipal—is primarily responsible for the quality of education, health care, and roads in their urban municipality or rural municipality. Some 82.9% think local government holds responsibility for the quality of the education provided to their children; 79.2% think it is responsible for local, public health care; 88.7% think it is responsible for building and maintaining local roads. Between 5.7% and 12.0% think the national government is primarily responsible for those services.

PRESENCE/ABSENCE OF NEWLY ELECTED LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

Nearly half of Nepalis report that newly elected municipal officials have been present at their offices (46.3%), while 16.4% say they are absent most of the time.[58] Higher shares of people from Province 1 (56.5%), Province 3 (58.5%), and Province 4 (64.2%) say that newly elected officials are present most of the time. A higher proportion of people living in the mountains report that their elected representatives have not been present (25.0%) or say they don't know about it (29.8%).

PRESENCE OF NEWLY ELECTED URBAN MUNICIPALITY/RURAL MUNICIPALITY OFFICIALS (EXCLUDING PROVINCE 2)[59]

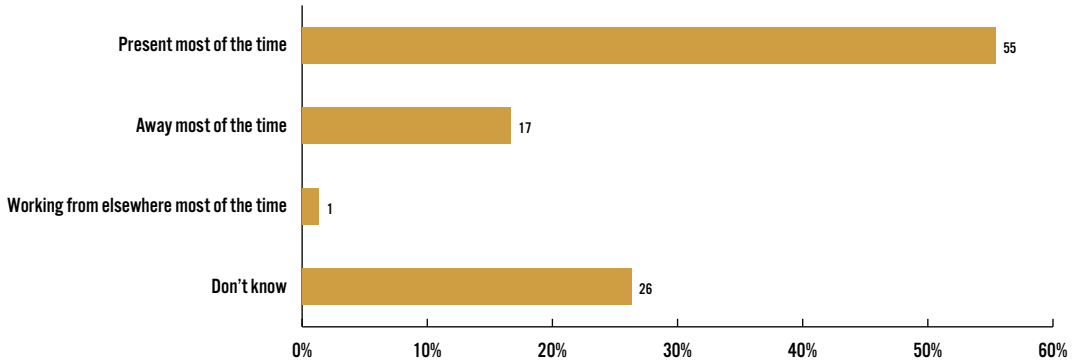

Figure 5.20: Q-E14. *Now I would like to ask you about the presence and availability of urban municipality/rural municipality officials. Since they have been elected, are they present at their office most of the time, away most of the time, or working from elsewhere most of the time?* (*n* = 5,847; asked of all respondents except Province 2)

[58] In Nepal, absenteeism of local officials from the location of their posting was high during the conflict period, when many started doing their work from the district headquarters or elsewhere for security reasons or due to damage to government buildings. Since the end of the conflict, absenteeism has continued to be common, with many VDC secretaries, especially in remote regions, continuing to work mainly in the district headquarters until the most recent local elections.

[59] Province 2 results were not taken into account, as elections there were only held in September 2017.

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5.5 TAXATION

Half of Nepalis consider that they pay too much in taxes. People were asked whether they feel the current level of taxation is appropriate. While 16.3% think it is, 50.2% of Nepalis consider that taxes are too high. Provinces 3 and 5 have the highest shares of people who believe that they pay too much in taxes. On the other hand, one-fifth of all Nepalis (21.1%) report that they do not pay taxes. The proportion of people who report not paying taxes is particularly high in Province 6 (40.4%) and Province 7 (32.9%) (figure 5.21).

Residents of urban areas, the hills, and the Terai are more likely to find taxes too high.[60] Some 57.6% of people living in urban municipalities think they pay too much in taxes, compared to 37.7% in rural areas. Half of respondents in the hills and the Terai (53.8% and 50.5%, respectively) find the level of taxation too high, compared to just 26.1% in the mountains. Mountain residents, however, are also much less likely to pay taxes at all: 41.7% say they do not.

Views on taxation are correlated with educational attainment and income. Better-educated people are more likely to believe they pay too much in taxes, while those with less education are more likely not to pay taxes (figure 5.22). A similar correlation can be observed with income levels (figure 5.23). Women are less likely to say taxes are too high (44.6%, compared to 56.3% of men) but they are also more likely not to pay taxes (23.0%, compared to 19.1% of men) or to say they do not have an opinion on this matter (16.4%, compared to 6.1% of men).

Most Nepalis (77.6%) would be willing to pay more in taxes if it resulted in improvements in the quality of roads, education, and health care. Seventeen percent say they are not willing to pay more taxes, regardless of effects on public-service delivery. The better educated and people in the higher income brackets are more likely to accept higher taxes in exchange for service improvements.

[60] The survey question refers to taxation in general and does not break down the information by types of taxes.

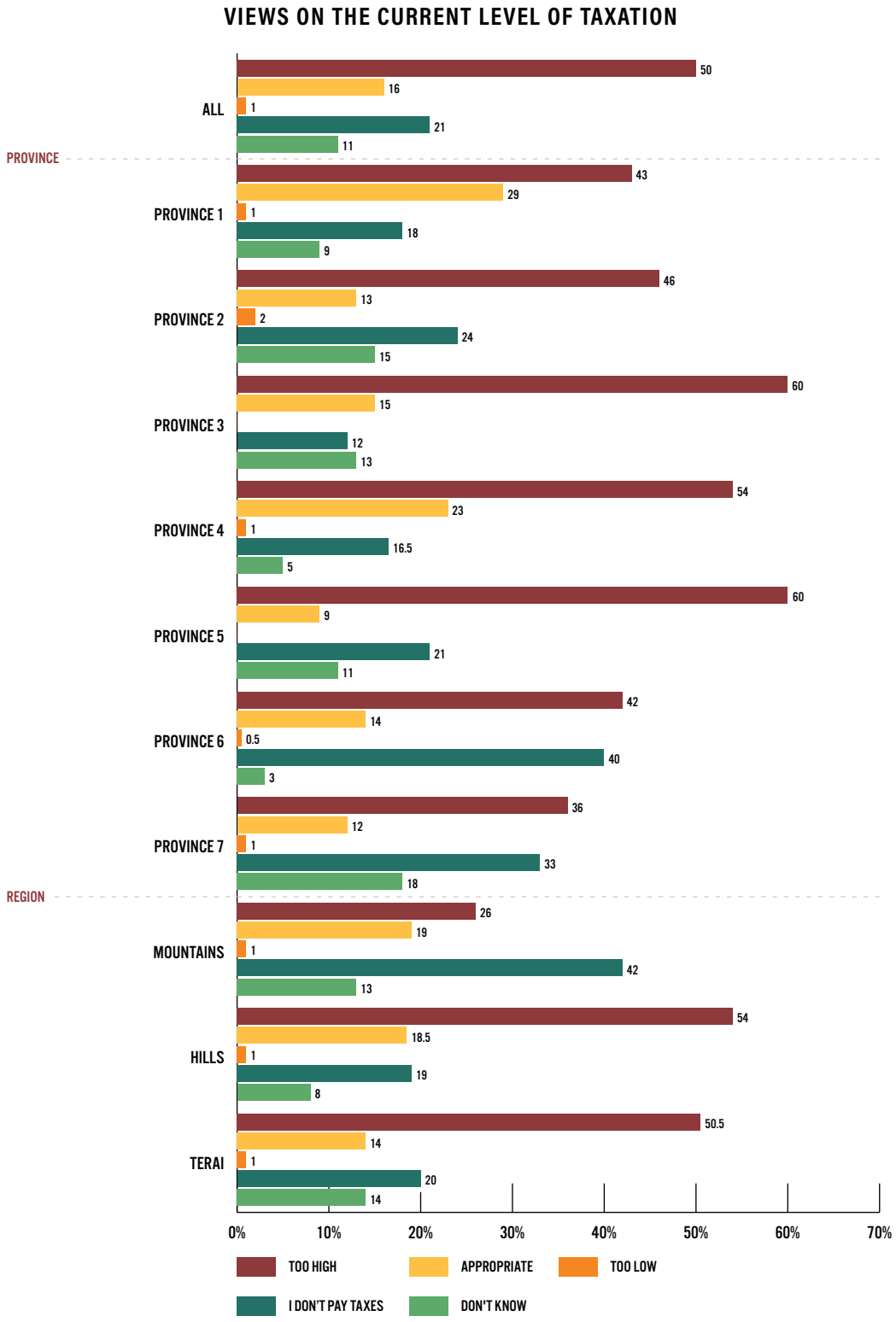


Figure 5.21: Q-E15. *Now I would like to ask you about taxes. Do you think the current level of taxation is appropriate?* (*N* = 7,202)

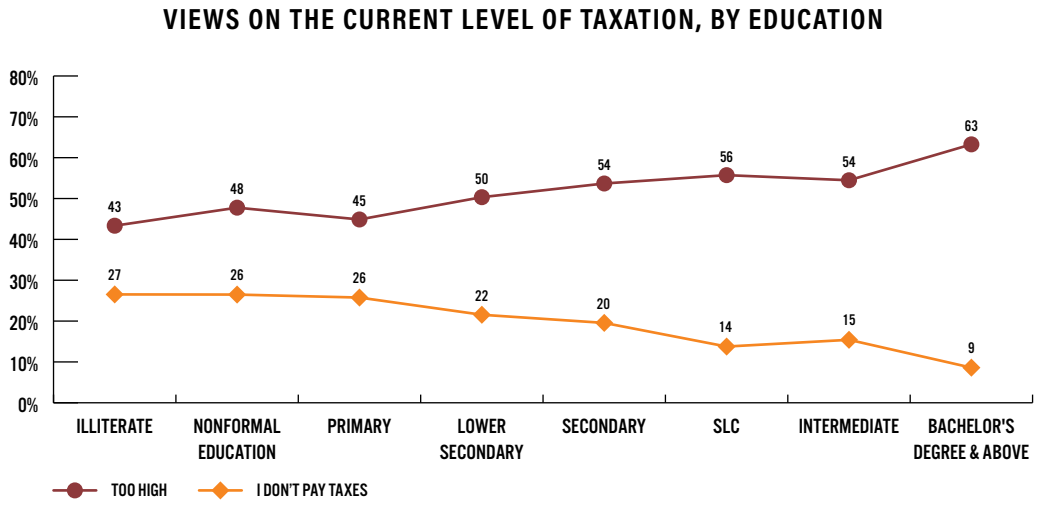


Figure 5.22: Q-E15. *Now I would like to ask you about taxes. Do you think the current level of taxation is appropriate?* (*N* = 7,202)

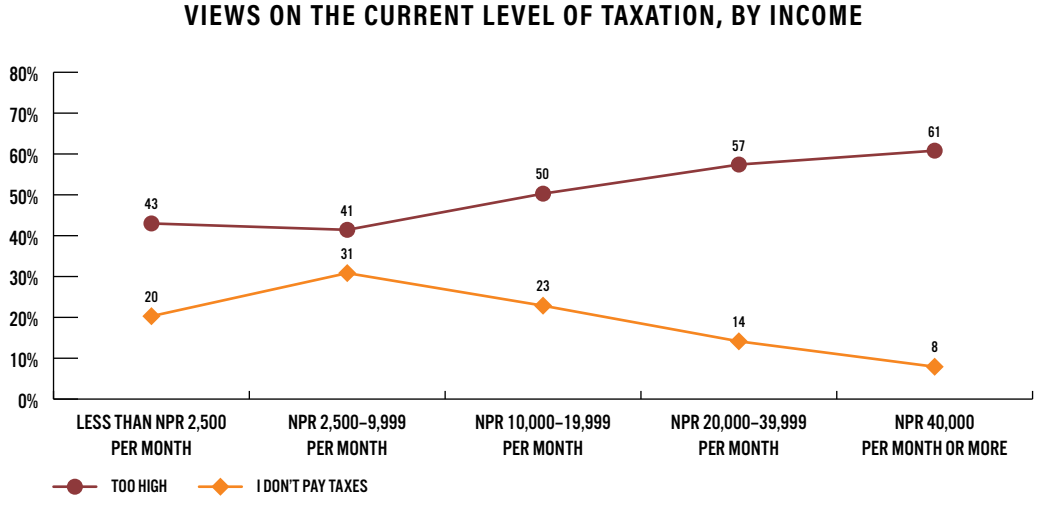


Figure 5.23: Q-E15. *Now I would like to ask you about taxes. Do you think the current level of taxation is appropriate?* (*N* = 7,202)

5.6 CORRUPTION

People were asked to report if, in the past year, they had to bribe officials—with money, gifts, or favors—in the following situations: when trying to obtain official documentation, such as a citizenship card or a birth certificate; when trying to obtain a copy of a land title or other services related to land arbitration; when seeking services from the police; when seeking services from a court of justice; when applying for a job; when accessing public health-care services; when registering for admission at a school or university.

One in 10 Nepalis (10.7%) say that they had to bribe officials in the past year to obtain official documentation or services related to land arbitration. Excluding respondents who did not need the service in question, 10.6% of respondents paid a bribe in the past year to obtain some kind of personal documentation, as did 14.5% to obtain documentation or services related to the arbitration of land issues, 6.9% to obtain services from the police, 5.5% to obtain the services of a court of justice, and 5.2% of those who applied for a job in the private or public sector (table 5.8). By comparison, education and health-care services appear to be a fairly free of corruption: less than 2% of respondents who sought these services reported paying a bribe.

BRIBES IN EXCHANGE FOR SERVICES IN THE PAST YEAR

SITUATION	YES, I HAD TO PAY A BRIBE AT LEAST ONCE TO OBTAIN THIS TYPE OF SERVICE %	I NEVER NEEDED TO PAY A BRIBE TO OBTAIN THIS TYPE OF SERVICE DURING THE PAST YEAR %	I NEVER NEEDED THIS TYPE OF SERVICE DURING THE PAST YEAR %	PERCENTAGE WHO PAID A BRIBE, AFTER EXCLUDING THOSE WHO DID NOT NEED THIS TYPE OF SERVICE DURING THE PAST YEAR %
Obtain official documentation, such as a citizenship card, birth certificate, or wedding certificate	8.5	71.0	19.8	10.6
Obtain a land title or other services related to the arbitration of land issues	10.7	62.1	26.2	14.5
Obtain services from the police	4.0	52.9	42.1	6.9
Obtain services from a court of justice	2.9	48.1	47.7	5.5
When applying for a job	3.0	52.3	43.0	5.2
When accessing public health-care services	1.6	87.0	10.9	1.8
When registering for admission at a school or university	1.4	76.6	20.8	1.7

Table 5.8: Q-E17. *Next, I am going to list situations in which people have said they had to pay bribes in the past. During the past year, please tell me if you ever had to give money or a gift or perform a favor to obtain services from officials in these situations?* (*N* = 7,202)

chapter 6

POLITICS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Voter turnout in the local elections was high. Some 79.6% of survey respondents say they voted in the 2017 local elections (excluding Province 2, where local elections had not been completed at the time of this survey). Reported participation is higher among men and rises with age.

Nine out of 10 Nepalis think that local elections were free and fair and are happy with the elections results. Dissatisfaction with election results is higher than average in Province 3 and Province 6.

Just over one-half of the population (53.5%) are optimistic that local elections will have a positive impact on their quality of life. Yet, a large minority (28.1%) think that the elections will not change anything. Men and better-educated Nepalis are more positive about the impact of local elections. People in urban districts are more likely to think that their lives will remain unaffected by the elections.

More accountable leaders, better public-service delivery, and the increased likelihood that local leaders will address the community's concerns are the top reasons why people feel that local elections will improve their quality of life.

Nepalis express more confidence in their local elected officials than in the national parliament. People are significantly more likely to feel that their local representatives care about them if they regularly see them in the office.

One Nepali in five declares having contacted his or her newly elected local representative for help with personal or community matters since the elections. The vast majority (86.0%) of those who did are satisfied with the outcome.

6.1 LOCAL ELECTIONS

PARTICIPATION

Some 79.6% percent of Nepalis report that they voted in the 2017 local elections. In 2017, local elections were held for the first time in two decades to elect ward-level representatives, local-unit chiefs (mayor or chairperson) and local-unit deputies (deputy mayors or vice-chairpersons) to form local assemblies.[61] The elections were conducted in three phases, on May 14 (Provinces 3, 4, and 6), June 28 (Provinces 1, 5, and 7) and September 18, 2017 (Province 2).[62] As this survey was rolled out, elections had been completed in all provinces, bar Province 2, where the largest share of interviews was conducted before the vote.[63] For this reason, analysis of electoral participation and voting patterns in this section excludes data from Province 2. According to this survey, voter participation (excluding Province 2) was 79.6% (figure 6.1).[64] This is slightly higher than the official turnout figure of 74.5% across all three phases.[65] Participation was particularly high in Province 4, where 87.9% of respondents say they voted.

[61] For more details on the legal framework for local elections see Democracy Resource Center Nepal (DRC-Nepal), *Nepal's Local Elections 2017: Final Observation Report* (DRC-Nepal, November 2017), 11–15, http://democracyresource.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/DRCN_Local-Election-Final-Observation-Report_Eng.pdf.

[62] Provincial and national legislative elections also took place in 2017, but after the completion of this survey.

[63] Deployment for this survey began on September 1. In Province 2, most interviews were conducted before the local elections on September 18, 2017: only 20.9% of respondents were interviewed after they had a chance to vote.

[64] All survey respondents were above 18 years old and therefore eligible to vote if they had the necessary documents to register (citizenship certificate).

[65] According to official press releases of the Election Commission of Nepal, the average voter turnout was 74.5% (73% in the first phase, 73.7% in the second phase, and 77% in the third phase). See DRC-Nepal, *Nepal's Local Elections 2017*, 21 (see n. 62). Voter turnout in the 2013 Constituent Assembly elections was around 78%, while it was lower in the 2008 Constituent Assembly elections (around 62%) and the 2007 parliamentary and provincial elections (just under 70%). For voter turnout in the 2013 Constituent Assembly elections, see *The Carter Center, Observing Nepal's 2013 Constituent Assembly Election*, (Atlanta: Carter Center, 2013), https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/election_reports/nepal-2013-final.pdf. For turnout in the 2008 Constituent Assembly elections, see The Carter Center, *Observing the 2008 Nepal Constituent Assembly Election*, (Atlanta: Carter Center, 2009), https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/election_reports/finalreportnepal2008.pdf. For turnout in the 2017 parliamentary and provincial elections, see "Turnout revised up to 69.58pc," *Kathmandu Post*, December 9, 2017, http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2017-12-09/turnout-revised-up-to-6958pc.html

PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL ELECTIONS, BY PROVINCE (EXCLUDING PROVINCE 2)

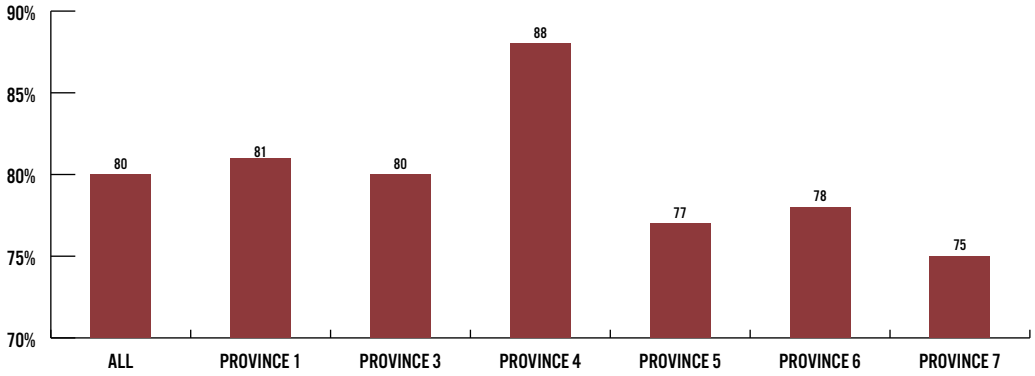


Figure 6.1: Q-F2. ***Did you vote in the local elections this year?***
(*n* = 5,847; all respondents except Province 2)

Participation in local elections was noticeably higher among men and older Nepalis than among women and youth. Men were 9 percentage points more likely to vote than women (figure 6.2). Voter participation also strongly correlates with age: the share of voters rises for each age group, from 51.4% among those aged 18–24, to 94.6% among those aged 50 or above.

Voter turnout varied across castes and ethnic groups. People from the hill high castes,[66] Madhesi intermediate castes, and hill Adivasi/Janajatis were most likely to vote. Madhesi high castes had the lowest voter turnout (60.8%). Madhesi Dalits and Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis were less likely to vote than hill Dalits and hill Adivasi/Janajatis, respectively. However, it is important to note once again that this analysis does not include data from Province 2, which has a high Madhesi population and had a comparatively high official voter turnout in the local elections (77% according to the Election Commission of Nepal, higher than the official turnout for the two previous rounds of local elections in other provinces). Income and educational attainment do not appear to have substantially influenced voter turnout.

VOTE AND CITIZENSHIP

Possession of a citizenship certificate determines whether Nepalis can register to vote. While other forms of identification were accepted as IDs at polling centers on Election Day, a citizenship certificate was necessary to register and be included on the voter rolls. This survey asked respondents whether or not they are in possession of a certificate: 92.9% declare that they own a certificate, while 7.1% declare they don't. Of those without a certificate, 80.9% are women and 75.8% are aged 18–24. People from the Terai and the mountains are more likely not to have a certificate (8.9% and 8.0%, respectively, compared to 4.7% in the hills).

In all provinces but Province 2 (where elections had not yet taken place at the time of the survey), 84.3% of those who declare that they have a certificate say they voted. Of those who did not vote, 28.3% do not have a citizenship certificate. Of the 376 respondents in those provinces who say they do not have a citizenship certificate, 38 claim they still voted. Possible explanations for this could be that people misreported not having a certificate, that they lost their certificate after registering to vote, or that other family members have their certificate.

[66] The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

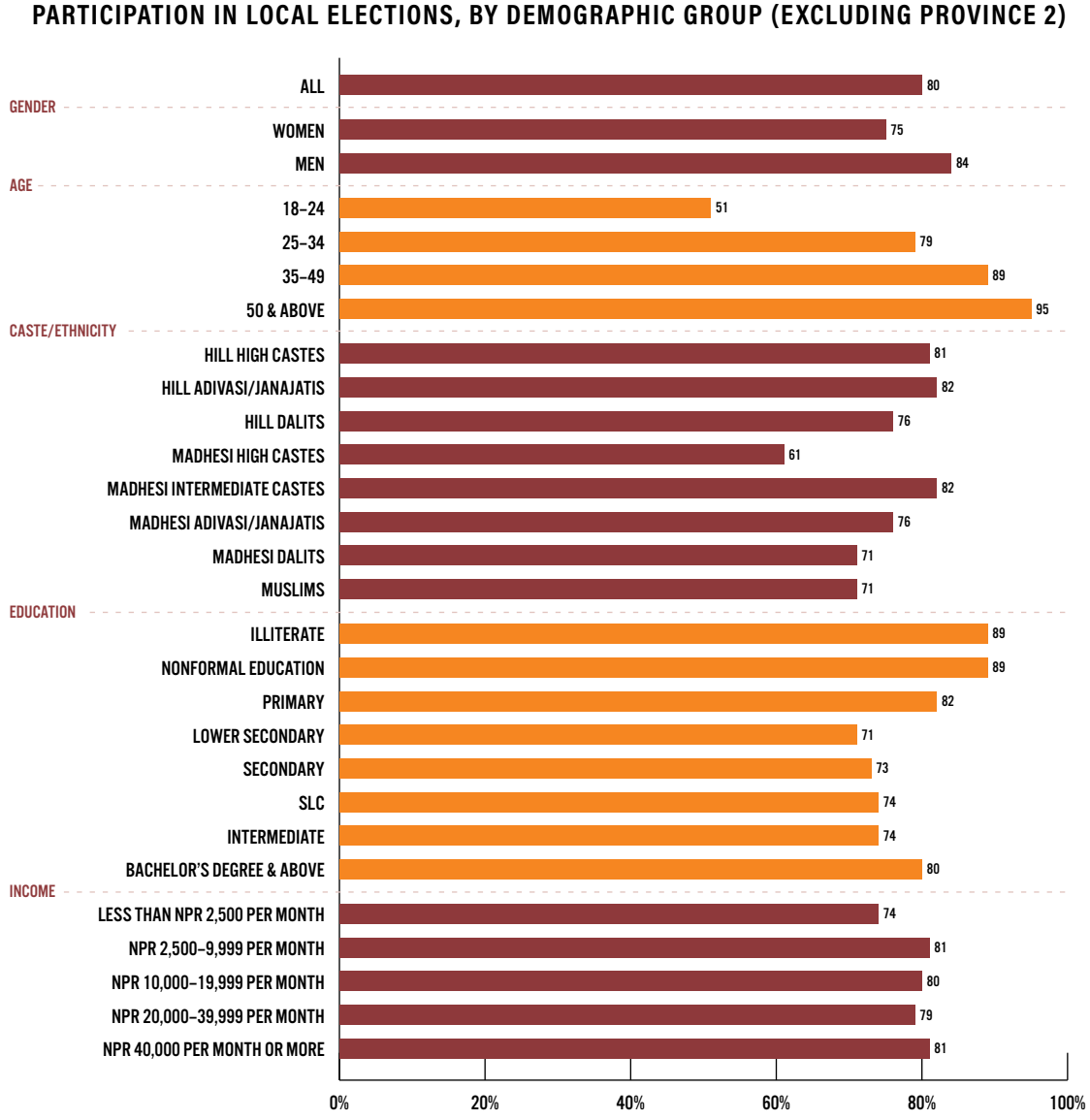


Figure 6.2: Q-F2. ***Did you vote in the local elections this year?***
(*n* = 5,847; all respondents except Province 2)

SATISFACTION WITH LOCAL ELECTIONS AND THEIR OUTCOME

Nine out of 10 Nepalis think that the local elections were free and fair. All Nepalis who had the opportunity to vote in local elections[67] were asked if they think the elections were free and fair and if they are satisfied with the outcome. Some 92.2% think the elections were free and fair; only 1.2% say they were not (table 6.1). Problems were reported by 2.3%, and 1.1% mentioned violence, while at the same time judging the elections as by and large free and fair. Province 3 has higher shares of people who report problems (4.6%) or violence (1.9%), possibly due to a number of incidents involving improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in the Kathmandu Valley during the later stages of campaigning. Provinces 4 and 6 have a slightly higher share of people who feel the elections were not free and fair (both 2.6%). In contrast to popular perceptions of the Terai[68] as a region more prone to political violence, Terai

[67] This includes Nepalis who had voted by the time this survey was implemented, and those who could have voted but chose not to. This also includes the minority of Province 2 respondents (20.9%) who were interviewed after the third round of local elections, in that province, had taken place.
[68] In this report, results for the Terai region include results for all residents of the region regardless of their caste or ethnicity.

respondents were less likely to report violence during the elections than respondents from the hills and mountains.[69] Madhesis[70] are also more likely than others to think the elections were fair. However, as previously noted, most Province 2 respondents (79.1%) did not have the chance to answer this question, and this may influence results. There is no substantial difference in results for other variables.

WERE ELECTIONS FREE AND FAIR? BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	YES, THEY WERE FREE AND FAIR	YES, THEY WERE FREE AND FAIR, BUT THERE WAS VIOLENCE	YES, THEY WERE FREE AND FAIR, BUT THERE WERE SOME PROBLEMS	NO, THEY WERE NOT FREE AND FAIR	DON'T KNOW
	%	%	%	%	%
All	***92.2***	***1.1***	***2.3***	***1.2***	***3.2***
PROVINCE					
Province 1	93.8	1.1	1.6	1.0	2.4
Province 2*	94.4	0.2	0.7	0.5	4.1
Province 3	89.6	1.9	4.6	1.2	2.6
Province 4	89.3	1.0	2.4	2.6	4.7
Province 5	95.8	0.3	0.6	0.3	3.0
Province 6	86.8	1.4	2.5	2.6	6.7
Province 7	93.5	1.1	1.9	1.5	2.2
RURAL VS. URBAN					
Rural municipality	91.6	1.4	2.1	1.5	3.4
Urban Municipality	92.6	1.0	2.4	1.1	3.0
REGION					
Mountains	88.8	2.3	2.8	2.4	3.7
Hills	91.4	1.4	2.7	1.5	3.0
Terai	93.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	3.2

**Only 20.1% of Province 2 respondents had a chance to vote before they were interviewed for this survey.*

Table 6.1: Q-F3. ***Were the local elections free and fair?*** **(*n* = 6,124; asked only of respondents who answered "yes, I voted" or "no, there was an election but I did not vote" to Q-F2)**

[69] With support from The Asia Foundation and The Carter Center, Democracy Resource Center Nepal and NepalMonitor.org collaborated to monitor political violence during the 2017 elections. Their jointly released analysis updates, nos. 1–18, can be accessed at the Democracy Resource Center website, http://democracyresource.org/political-violence-monitoring/. More analysis, with greater emphasis on quantitative data, can be found on the *NepalMonitor.org Blog*, https://www.nepalmonitor.org/blog/. NepalMonitor.org's quarterly reports highlight that, while the Terai saw many protests following the announcement of the local elections in February 2017, political violence during elections in the region was limited. It was lower during elections in Province 2 than in the other provinces. "Third Quarter Report—Trends of Violence and Contestation in Nepal, July to September 2017," *NepalMonitor.org Blog,* November 14, 2017, https://www.nepalmonitor.org/blog/2017/11/14/third-quarterly-report-trends-of-violence-and-contestation-in-nepal-july-to-september-2017/.

[70] In this report, "Madhesi" refers to any respondent who self-identified as a member of the following communities: Madhesi so-called "high" castes (Brahman-Tarai, Rajput, Kayastha, etc.), Madhesi "intermediate" castes (Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, Dhanuk, etc.), Madhesi Dalits (Chamar, Musahar, Dusadh, etc.), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (Tharu, Rajbanshi, etc.), Muslims, or other Madhesi cultural groups. Results for the Madhesi group include responses from all Madhesi respondents, regardless of where they live. For a full list of caste/ethnicity categories used in this report, please refer to appendix B, "Sample Demographics." The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

Most people who had a chance to vote are happy with the election results. Altogether, 89.7% of people report that they are either very happy (37.4%) or moderately happy (52.3%) with the election's outcome (table 6.2). Only 6.1% say they are not happy, while 2.2% think the results do not matter. Dissatisfaction with election results is higher than average in Province 6 (10.2%) and Province 3 (8.3%). There is no substantial difference in results across age, gender, caste and ethnicity, or other demographic variables.

SATISFACTION WITH ELECTION RESULTS, BY PROVINCE AND REGION

	YES, VERY HAPPY %	YES, MODERATELY HAPPY %	NO, NOT HAPPY %	NO, NOT HAPPY AT ALL %	IT DOESN'T MATTER %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***37.4***	***52.3***	***5.0***	***1.1***	***2.2***	***1.9***
PROVINCE						
Province 1	47.3	46.8	2.9	0.8	0.3	1.9
Province 2*	39.7	35.8	1.0	0.0	0.6	22.6
Province 3	25.1	63.4	7.4	0.9	2.6	0.6
Province 4	33.5	55.2	5.0	1.1	4.6	0.5
Province 5	36.7	54.4	4.1	1.2	3.0	0.6
Province 6	52.5	34.3	8.2	2.0	1.8	1.3
Province 7	40.3	50.2	5.2	1.5	2.3	0.5
RURAL VS. URBAN						
Rural municipality	39.0	51.0	5.1	1.1	2.5	1.2
Urban Municipality	36.5	53.0	5.0	1.0	2.1	2.3
REGION						
Mountains	45.7	43.1	6.2	1.4	2.5	1.0
Hills	37.7	52.1	5.6	1.0	2.9	0.6
Terai	35.6	54.1	4.2	1.2	1.4	3.5

**Only 20.1% of Province 2 respondents had a chance to vote before they were interviewed for this survey*

Table 6.2: Q-F4. ***Are you happy with the results of the elections?*** **(*n* = 6,124; asked only of respondents who answered "yes, I voted" or "no, there was an election but I did not vote" to Q-F2)**

IMPACT OF LOCAL ELECTIONS ON PEOPLE'S LIVES

Half of all Nepalis are optimistic that local elections will have a positive impact on people's lives; almost one-third think they will have no impact. All survey respondents, including those who had not yet had a chance to vote before they were interviewed, were asked about the impact that local elections will have on people's lives. Some 53.5% of them feel the elections will improve the quality of life in Nepal (table 6.3); 28.1% think the local elections will have no impact on their life; and just 1.0% fear local elections will have negative effects.

Residents of Province 3 are more likely to think that their lives will remain unaffected by the local elections. Province 1 (68.1%), Province 4 (63.8%) and Province 6 (67.5%) have higher shares of people who believe that local elections will improve the quality of life. In contrast, Province 3 (39.7%) has the lowest share of people who think so.

IMPACTS OF LOCAL ELECTIONS ON PEOPLE'S LIVES, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	WILL LIKELY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE %	WILL LIKELY HAVE NO IMPACT %	WILL LIKELY DECREASE THE QUALITY OF LIFE %	REFUSED/DON'T KNOW %
All	***53.5***	***28.1***	***1.0***	***17.2***
PROVINCE				
Province 1	68.1	21.2	0.4	10.1
Province 2	49.9	21.1	2.0	26.8
Province 3	39.7	49.1	1.2	9.9
Province 4	63.8	20.5	1.0	14.7
Province 5	50.0	28.0	0.7	21.1
Province 6	67.5	18.5	0.4	13.1
Province 7	52.6	22.1	0.3	24.9
URBAN VS. RURAL				
Rural municipality	53.8	26.2	1.0	18.7
Urban Municipality	53.4	29.1	0.9	16.3
GENDER				
Women	48.0	29.9	0.7	21.2
Men	59.5	26.1	1.3	12.9
AGE				
18–24	54.3	26.2	0.5	18.5
25–34	53.7	30.0	1.1	15.1
35–49	54.0	27.3	1.1	17.5
50 & above	52.3	28.6	1.1	17.7
EDUCATION				
Illiterate	41.5	28.7	1.2	28.3
Nonformal education	47.3	29.9	1.1	21.7
Primary	53.5	27.3	0.9	18.2
Lower secondary	52.3	32.6	0.8	14.3
Secondary	58.8	26.3	1.2	13.5
School Leaving Certificate	61.3	26.4	0.2	11.2
Intermediate	60.9	26.5	0.4	12.2
Bachelor's degree & above	62.1	30.0	1.8	5.5
CASTE/ETHNICITY				
Hill high castes	58.2	28.3	0.6	12.6
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	53.0	33.4	1.0	12.3
Hill Dalits	52.3	28.1	0.5	18.7
Madhesi high castes	57.0	19.0	2.0	20.5
Madhesi intermediate castes	48.3	23.1	1.8	26.6

	WILL LIKELY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE %	WILL LIKELY HAVE NO IMPACT %	WILL LIKELY DECREASE THE QUALITY OF LIFE %	REFUSED/DON'T KNOW %
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	47.5	25.4	0.7	26.3
Madhesi Dalits	49.8	21.8	1.4	26.8
Muslims	54.9	21.5	0.9	22.7

Table 6.3: Q-F5. *What impacts do you think the local elections will have on people's lives in Nepal?* (*N* = 7,202)

Nepalis from high castes are more optimistic about the impacts of local elections. High castes have the highest proportions of Nepalis who are optimistic about the impact of the elections (58.2% for hill high castes, 57.0% for Madhesi high castes). Lower proportions of Madhesi intermediate castes (48.3%), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (47.5%), and Madhesi Dalits (49.8%) share that enthusiasm. These groups are also more likely to say that they do not know what impact the elections will have.

Men and better-educated Nepalis are more likely to believe that local elections will improve people's lives. Men are 11 percentage points more likely than women to think that elections will lead to improvements in the quality of life in Nepal. Women, on the other hand, are 4 percentage points more likely than men to say that elections will not have any impact on people's lives, and 8 percentage points more likely to say that they do not know what impact the elections may have. Optimism about the impact of the elections correlates positively with levels of education (figure 6.3). People with a secondary or higher education are around 20 percentage points more likely than illiterates to feel that local elections will improve their lives. On the other hand, the less educated are more likely to say they do not know how the elections may impact their lives. There is no strong correlation between income levels and views on the impacts of the local elections.

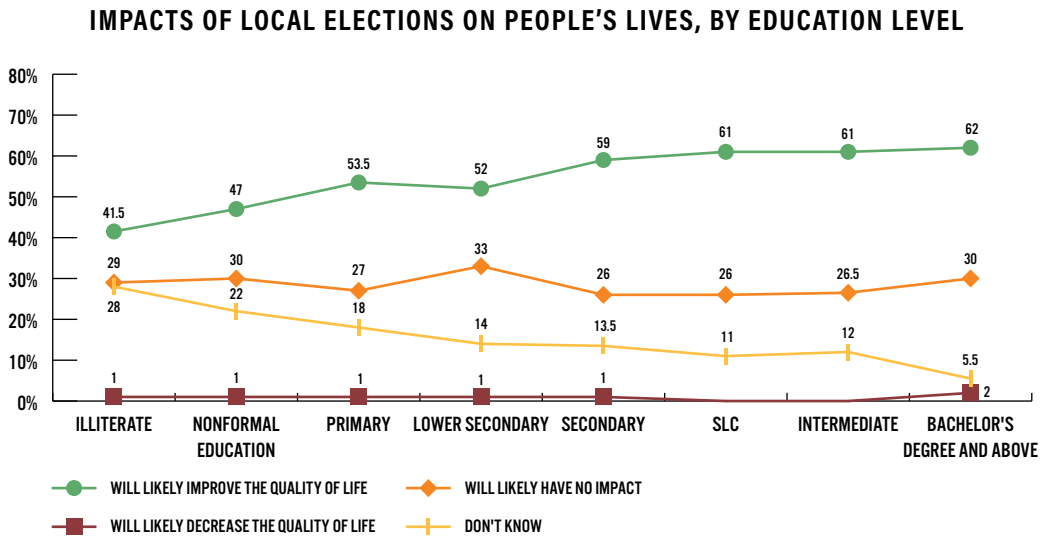


Figure 6.3: Q-F5. *What impacts do you think the local elections will have on people's lives in Nepal?* (*N* = 7,202)

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE ELECTIONS

The most often cited reasons why people feel that local elections will improve people's lives are more accountable leaders, improved public-service delivery, and the increased likelihood that local leaders will address community concerns. The 53.5% of Nepalis who say that local elections will improve the quality of life in Nepal were asked why they think so: 41.9% feel that people will be able to better hold their leaders accountable, 34.3% think that public-service delivery will improve, and 29.8% say that local-level officials are more likely to address the needs and concerns of their communities (figure 6.4).

REASONS WHY LOCAL ELECTIONS WILL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN NEPAL[71]

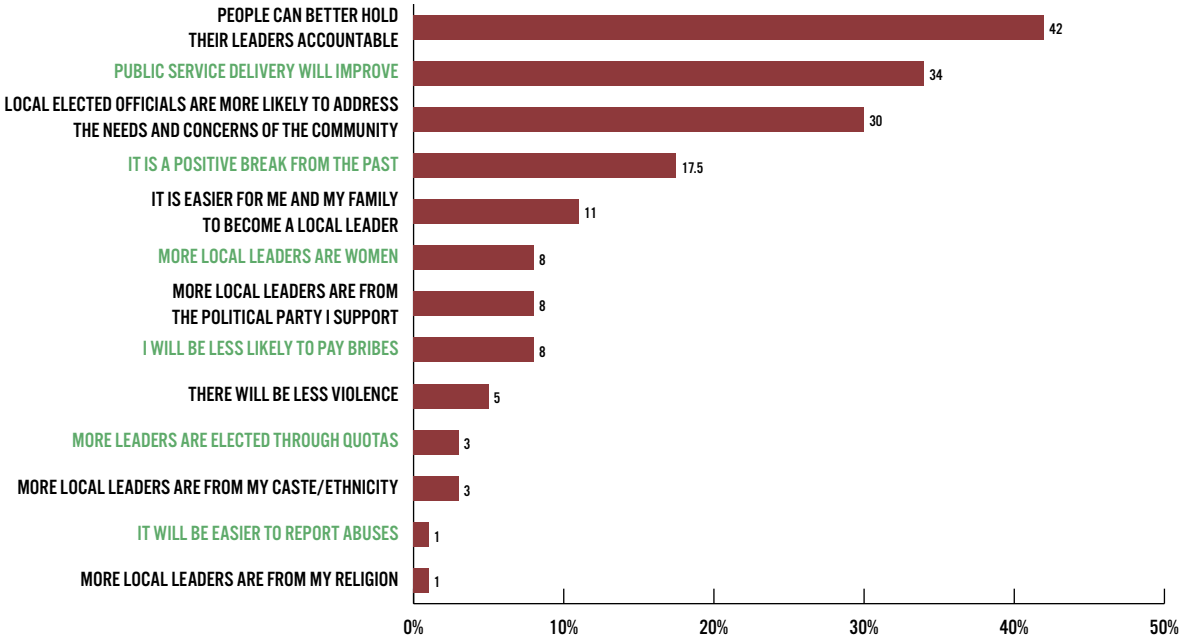


Figure 6.4: Q-F6. ***Why do you think that local elections will improve the quality of life?***
(*n* = 3,857; asked only of respondents who answered "elections will likely improve the quality of life" to Q-F5)

6.2 VIEWS ON ELECTED OFFICIALS

Nepalis have greater confidence in their local representatives than in the national parliament. People were asked how much they think their municipal council or rural municipality council representatives care about them. They were asked the same question about their representatives in the national parliament. A majority of Nepalis do think elected officials care about them (figure 6.5), but local representatives inspire confidence in a greater share of respondents (76.4%) than national parliamentarians (61.5%). Nearly one-third of Nepalis (29.8%) believe that national parliament representatives do not care much about them, or do not care at all, whereas only 16.8% feel that way about urban or rural municipal council representatives.

[71] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, percentages do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

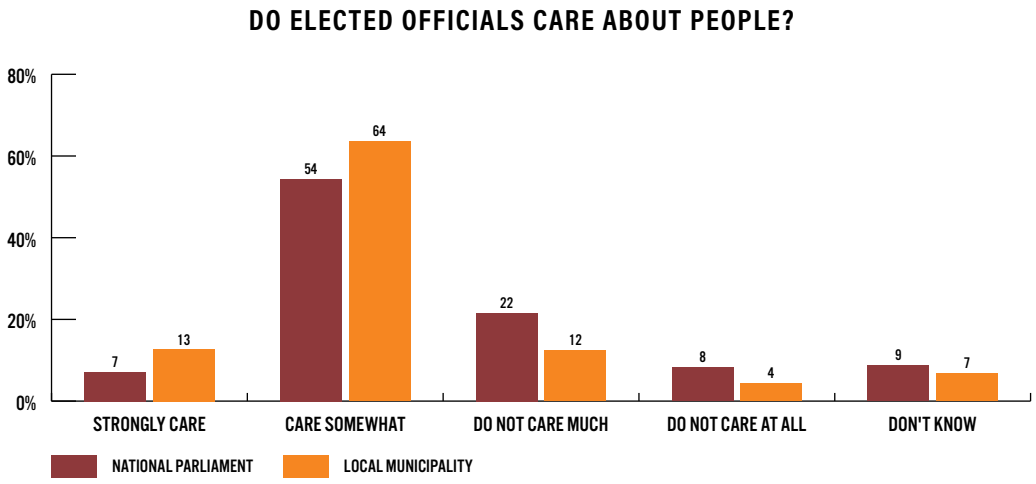


Figure 6.5: Q-F1a–b. *If you think about the people elected to the [national parliament or municipal council/ rural municipality council], do you think they care about people like you?* (*N* = 7,202)

Residents of Province 3 are more likely to feel that elected officials (local councils and national parliament) do not care about them. Province 3 has the lowest share of people who think elected officials care about people (local officials, 68.4%; national parliament, 47.1%). Some 41.7% in Province 3 say that national parliament representatives either do not care much or do not care at all, and 24.1% feel that way about local officials (figures 6.6 and 6.7).

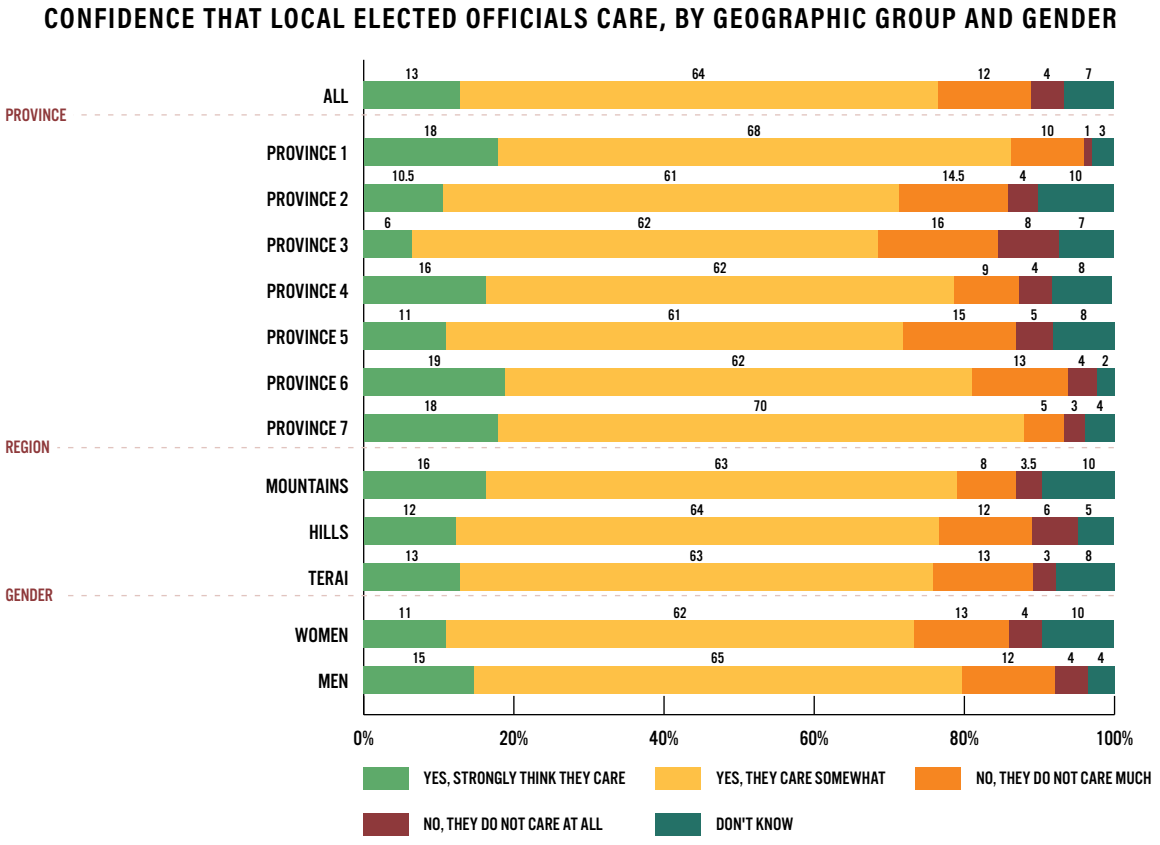


Figure 6.6: Q-F1a. *If you think about the people elected to the municipal council or rural municipality council, do you think they care about people like you?* (*N* = 7,202)

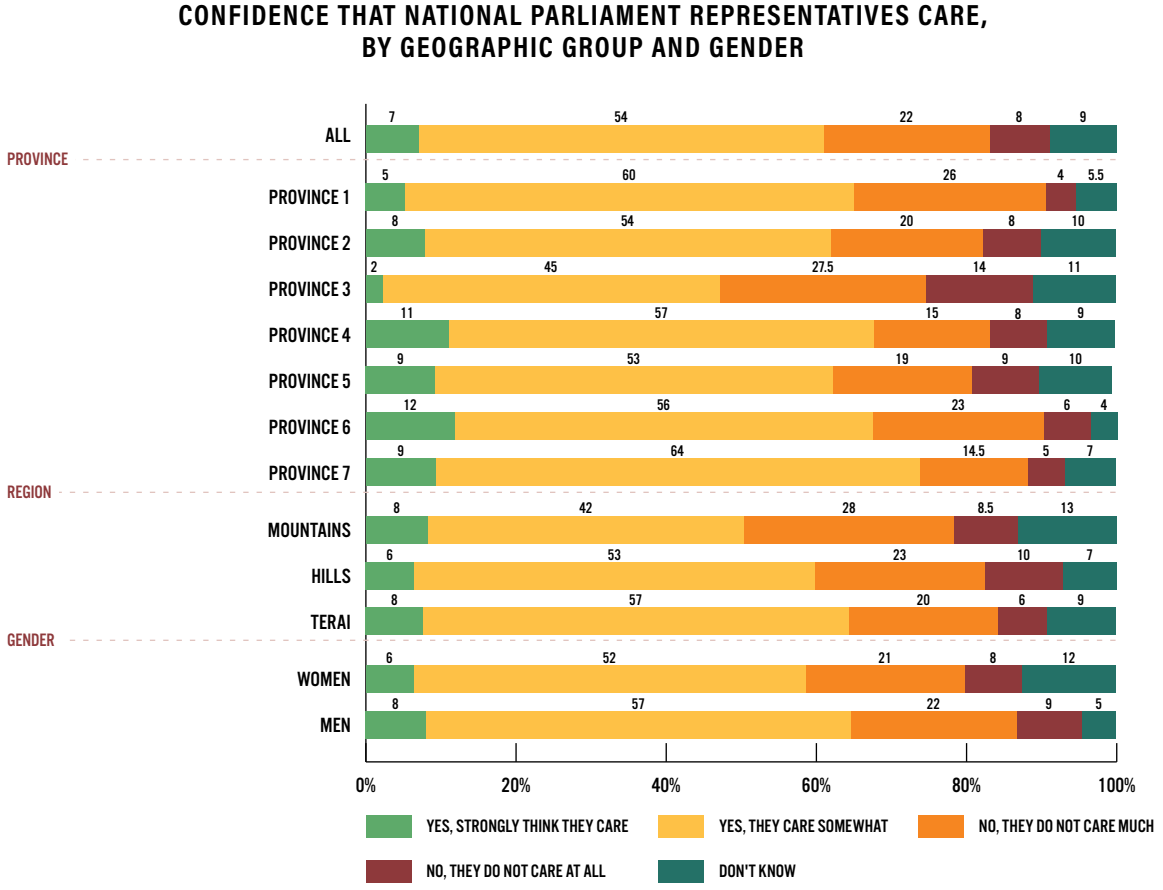


Figure 6.7: Q-F1a. *If you think about the people elected to the national parliament, do you think they care about people like you?* (*N* = 7,202)

Nepalis living in the mountains are more likely than others to trust that local officials care about them, and less likely to trust the national parliament. Some 79.0% think local elected officials care about people, a share slightly higher than in other regions. The difference is greater for the national parliament: only 50.4% of Nepalis living in the mountains think members of parliament care about them, compared to 59.8% in the hills and 64.3% in the Terai.

Men are more likely than women to feel that elected officials care about them. Some 79.6% of men think that local representatives care, while only 73.3% of women feel that way. There is a similar difference of around 6 percentage points between men and women in their confidence in the national parliament: 64.6% of men think members of parliament care, compared to 58.6% of women. Disaggregation by other variables does not yield clear patterns.

Nepalis are markedly more likely to feel that their local representatives care about them when they regularly see them in the office. Of the people who report that newly elected local officials are often present at their office (see chapter 5, "Governance"), 84.6% also express the opinion that local officials care about their constituents (table 6.4). They are 24.6 percentage points more likely to feel so than those who report that local officials are away most of the time. Conversely, people who report that newly elected local officials are often absent or work from somewhere else are three times as likely to feel these officials do not care much or do not care at all. This indicates how much the presence, visibility, and availability of local officials shape citizens' perceptions of them.

PHOTO BY Skanda Gautam

RELATION BETWEEN THE PRESENCE OF LOCAL OFFICIALS AT THEIR OFFICE AND THEIR IMAGE AMONG CITIZENS

	YES, STRONGLY THINK THEY CARE %	YES, THEY CARE SOMEWHAT %	NO, THEY DO NOT CARE MUCH %	NO, THEY DO NOT CARE AT ALL %	DON'T KNOW %
Respondents reporting that local officials are present most of the time	16.7	69.7	7.9	2.9	2.7
Respondents reporting that local officials are away most of the time	7.6	54.2	24.6	8.3	5.3
Respondents reporting that local officials are working from elsewhere most of the time	7.6	61.6	22.6	5.0	3.1

Table 6.4: Q-F1a. *If you think about the people elected to the municipal council or rural municipality council, do you think they care about people like you?* **Q-E14.** *Since they [municipality/rural municipality officials] have been elected, are they present at their office most of the time, away most of the time, or working from elsewhere most of the time?* (*N* = 7,202)

6.3 CONTACT WITH ELECTED LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

Just under one in five Nepalis have contacted their new local representatives since the election. Respondents were asked if they have made contact with elected local officials for help in solving personal or community problems. Excluding Province 2, where elections took place too late in the year for this question to be relevant, almost one-fifth of Nepalis (17.6%) declare having done so (figure 6.8). Province 1 residents are the most likely to have contacted local officials (24.6%), while Province 6 residents are the least likely (11.2%). Terai residents are more likely than others to have contacted their representative (19.7%).

Men and older, wealthier, and better-educated Nepalis are more likely to have contacted their elected local representatives. Men are more than twice as likely as women to have done so (24.3% vs. 11.3%, respectively). The likelihood that a respondent has contacted local representatives also increases with age, educational attainment, and income.

Most of those who did contact their local representatives for help with personal or community problems are satisfied with the results of this contact. Of the 17.6% of Nepalis who did contact their representatives, more than three-quarters say that they are either very satisfied (34.7%) or somewhat satisfied (51.3%), while just 13.7% are dissatisfied (table 6.5).

Hill Dalits and Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis are more likely to express dissatisfaction with the outcome of their contact with elected local officials. Some 25.4% of hill Dalits say they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the results of their contacts with local representatives, a higher share than for any other caste or ethnic group. A significant proportion of Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis also express dissatisfaction (18.7%). On the other hand, more than 90% of Madhesi high or intermediate castes who contacted their local representatives, and 93.0% of Muslims, say they are satisfied with the outcome.

CONTACT WITH NEWLY ELECTED LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES, BY GEOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

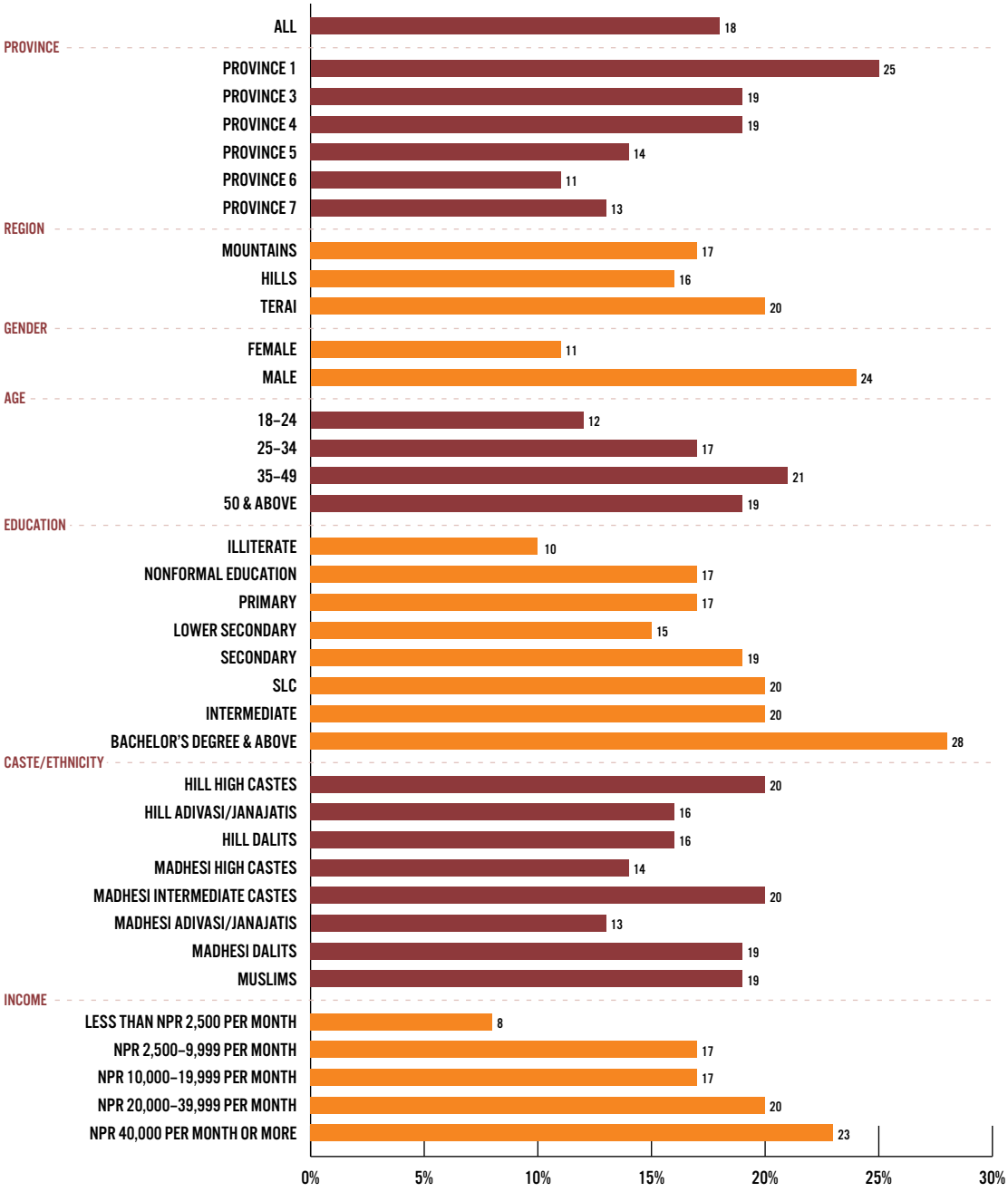


Figure 6.8: Q-F8. *Have you personally tried to contact one of your elected local representatives for help in solving any of your personal or community problems?* (*n* = 5,847; all respondents except Province 2)

SATISFACTION WITH CONTACTS WITH LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	VERY SATISFIED %	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED %	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED %	VERY DISSATISFIED %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***34.7***	***51.3***	***8.9***	***4.8***	***0.4***
PROVINCE					
Province 1	42.0	45.3	9.8	2.1	0.7
Province 2	19.4	77.2	0.0	2.4	1.0
Province 3	24.1	59.6	12.9	3.4	0.0
Province 4	46.5	36.7	8.7	8.1	0.0
Province 5	47.5	38.7	4.3	9.0	0.5
Province 6	26.8	60.2	8.9	3.5	0.7
Province 7	17.2	67.6	7.2	8.0	0.0
CASTE/ETHNICITY					
Hill high castes	33.7	53.3	8.9	4.1	0.1
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	34.5	52.1	9.1	4.1	0.3
Hill Dalits	33.6	40.9	13.5	11.9	0.0
Madhesi high castes	24.5	67.2	0.0	0.0	8.3
Madhesi intermediate castes	48.3	44.3	2.0	5.4	0.0
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	24.1	53.9	12.5	6.2	3.2
Madhesi Dalits	51.4	34.5	14.1	0.0	0.0
Muslims	31.8	61.2	2.3	4.7	0.0

Table 6.5: Q-F9. *If you have personally tried to contact a local elected representative, how satisfied were you with the result of this contact?* (n = 1,079; asked only of respondents who answered "yes, I tried to contact one of my local representatives" to Q-F8)

chapter 7

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

A majority of Nepalis believe that economic conditions in their urban municipality/rural municipality remain unchanged, while 17.9% think they are improving. Those who say the local economy is getting better mention better infrastructure and increased investment as reasons for the improvement. Only 1.8% of Nepalis think economic conditions are growing worse, and they cite corruption, bribery, and the difficulty of finding work as the main problems.

The vast majority of Nepalis (83.0%) report monthly household incomes between NPR 2,500 and 40,000. One-third of households (35.5%) earn between NPR 10,000 and 20,000 per month, while more than one-fourth earn less than NPR 10,000 per month. About one-half of Nepalis say their income has remained the same over the past year. One-third say it has increased, with wealthier Nepalis more likely to say so. Some 84.1% of Nepalis are optimistic that the economic welfare of their household will improve in the next five years.

Just under half of Nepali households (47.3%) are in debt. The amount of debt is typically between NPR 30,000 and 300,000. One-third of people (32.7%) report borrowing money in the past year. Savings and credit groups, moneylenders, and banks are the most common lending sources. Moneylenders and other informal lending sources charge higher interest rates than banks.

One-quarter of Nepali households (24.9%) are receiving remittances from outside the country. Nepalis in the higher income brackets are more likely to receive remittances, which points to the substantial contribution of remittances to household income. Rural Nepalis, hill Dalits, and residents of Provinces 1 and 7 are more likely than average to report receiving remittances from relatives working abroad.

7.1 PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

ARE LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IMPROVING?

Most Nepalis report that economic conditions in their urban municipality/rural municipality are neither improving nor getting worse; a sizeable minority think they are improving. Some 57.6% think local economic conditions are staying the same, while 17.9% believe the local economy is doing better than before, and just 1.8% report worsening economic conditions. A large share of respondents (22.6%) are unsure what to think about the local economy (table 7.1).

Provinces 5 and 6 have the highest proportions of people who report that local economic conditions are improving, while Province 2 residents are the least optimistic. Twenty-six percent of residents from Province 5, and 30.9% from Province 6, think the local economy is getting better, possibly because development donors are more focused on those regions. In contrast, only 10.2% of those living in Province 2 report improvements, while 5.6% say the economy is getting worse (compared to just 1.8% nationally). As in other provinces, however, the majority of Province 2 respondents (72.2%) simply think economic conditions are unchanged.

People in urban areas and in the mountains are slightly more optimistic about local economic conditions. Some 19.4% of urban Nepalis report improving local economic conditions, compared to 15.3% in rural municipalities. Nepalis residing in the mountains are also slightly more likely than others to report improving conditions (20.0%, compared to 18.0% in the Terai[72] and 17.4% in the hills).

[72] In this report, results for the Terai region include results for all residents of the region regardless of their caste or ethnicity.

VIEWS ON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN THE URBAN MUNICIPALITY/RURAL MUNICIPALITY, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	YES, LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE IMPROVING %	ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE STAYING THE SAME %	NO, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE GETTING WORSE %	DON'T KNOW %
All	***17.9***	***57.6***	***1.8***	***22.6***
PROVINCE				
Province 1	20.7	58.9	1.2	19.2
Province 2	10.2	72.2	5.6	11.8
Province 3	14.3	63.2	1.0	21.5
Province 4	16.0	52.1	3.2	28.5
Province 5	26.0	37.2	0.0	36.7
Province 6	30.9	50.0	0.3	18.8
Province 7	14.2	61.8	0.5	23.5
URBAN VS. RURAL				
Rural municipalities	15.3	57.9	2.2	24.6
Municipalities	19.4	57.5	1.6	21.4
REGION				
Mountains	20.0	51.4	1.5	27.2
Hills	17.4	59.9	1.3	21.3
Terai	18.0	56.6	2.3	23.1
GENDER				
Women	14.5	55.1	1.8	29.1
Men	21.5	60.4	2.5	15.6
AGE				
18–24	20.3	51.9	1.3	26.2
25–34	18.0	60.3	2.2	19.5
35–49	17.2	59.5	1.9	21.3
50 & above	16.2	58.2	1.9	23.7
EDUCATION				
Illiterate	9.0	56.7	1.7	32.4
Nonformal education	11.2	62.9	0.9	24.9
Primary	18.1	54.8	2.1	24.9
Lower secondary	21.3	55.9	1.2	21.6
Secondary	21.0	57.5	1.8	19.8
School Leaving Certificate	23.4	56.1	2.5	18.1
Intermediate	22.8	59.0	2.8	15.4
Bachelor's degree & above	25.9	60.3	1.5	12.3

	YES, LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE IMPROVING %	ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE STAYING THE SAME %	NO, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE GETTING WORSE %	DON'T KNOW %
INCOME				
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	23.5	40.5	1.9	34.1
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	15.3	54.3	1.6	28.7
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	17.3	58.8	1.6	22.2
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	20.4	60.8	1.9	16.8
NPR 40,000 per month or more	18.8	66.7	3.4	11.0
CASTE/ETHNICITY				
Hill high castes	21.6	57.6	1.0	19.7
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	17.2	58.0	1.5	23.3
Hill Dalits	19.3	51.1	1.5	27.8
Madhesi high castes	22.2	53.7	4.5	19.7
Madhesi intermediate castes	14.2	64.6	4.4	16.7
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	15.4	54.9	0.5	29.2
Madhesi Dalits	15.6	57.7	4.1	22.1
Muslims	9.0	52.4	1.4	37.3

Table 7.1: Q-G1. *Do you think economic conditions in your urban municipality/rural municipality are improving?* (*N* = 7,202)

High-caste Nepalis are more likely to think the local economy is improving. Hill and Madhesi high castes[73] are more likely than other castes and ethnic groups to feel optimistic about local economic conditions (21.6% and 22.2%, respectively). Muslims are the least likely to be optimistic (9.0%), and a third of them (37.3%) are unsure what to think of the economy.

Positive views of the local economy correlate with educational attainment. As illustrated in figure 7.1, the share of respondents who feel the local economy is improving increases with education levels. Better-educated Nepalis are also more confident in their opinion about the condition of the economy: the proportion who say they do not know decreases as education levels rise.

Nepalis aged 18–24 and those earning less than NPR 2,500 per month are more likely than average to express positive views about the local economy. However, both groups are also more likely than other age and income groups to say they do not know what to think about the economy (table 7.1). A third of women (29.1%) say they do not know.

[73] The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

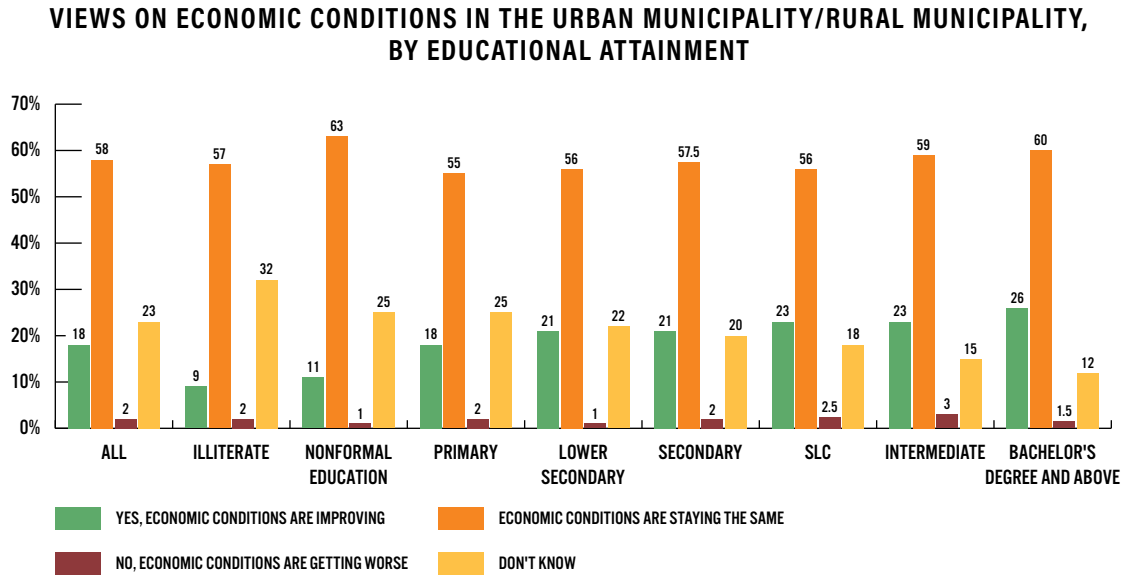


Figure 7.1: Q-G1. ***Do you think economic conditions in your urban municipality/rural municipality are improving?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

REASONS FOR IMPROVING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Better infrastructure is the most cited reason why people think local economic conditions are improving. Among the 17.9% of Nepalis who feel that their local economy is improving, a plurality (31.3%) cite better infrastructure (figure 7.2).[74] One in five (20.9%) cite overall economic progress without specifying a particular reason; 17.9% say there is more investment; 13.0% mention better work opportunities; and 12.5% cite better water supply (presumably for irrigation).

The reasons Nepalis give for improving local economic conditions vary across provinces and regions. In Provinces 2, 4, 5, and 6, a plurality cite better infrastructure as the main reason why local economic conditions are better (figure 7.3). In Province 3, which encompasses the Kathmandu Valley, 36.6% cite more investment, a much higher share than in other provinces. Provinces 6 and 7 have noticeably higher shares of people who report that it is easier to find work (24.4% and 35.4%, respectively). People from rural areas and the mountains are more likely than urban Nepalis and those from the hills and the Terai to cite better employment opportunities (figure 7.4).[75]

[74] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.

[75] Provinces 6 and 7 are located in the far west of Nepal and include large mountainous areas. Poverty is more widespread in the far west, in the mountains, and in rural areas in general compared to other parts of the country. Historically lower employment opportunities and a higher incidence of poverty might explain why people in these areas are more likely to report more employment opportunities recently. The Asian Development Bank, in a 2013 poverty analysis of Nepal, states: "In FY2011, the far western development region had the highest rates of poverty and the region's poor were most unlikely to escape out of poverty.…In FY2011, squared poverty index of the mountains was 3.54, compared to a lower index at 2.09 of the hills and 1.31 of the tarai [*sic*].…Although rural poverty is declining at a faster pace than urban poverty, poverty incidence is still predominantly a rural phenomenon. Amongst the five development regions, poverty is highest and rising in the far-western development region, and in the mountains." Asian Development Bank (ADB), "Country Poverty Analysis (Detailed)," linked document no. 19 in *Country Partnership Strategy: Nepal 2013–2017* (ADB, October 2013), https://www.adb.org/documents/nepal-country-partnership-strategy-2013-2017.

REASONS WHY LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE IMPROVING[76]

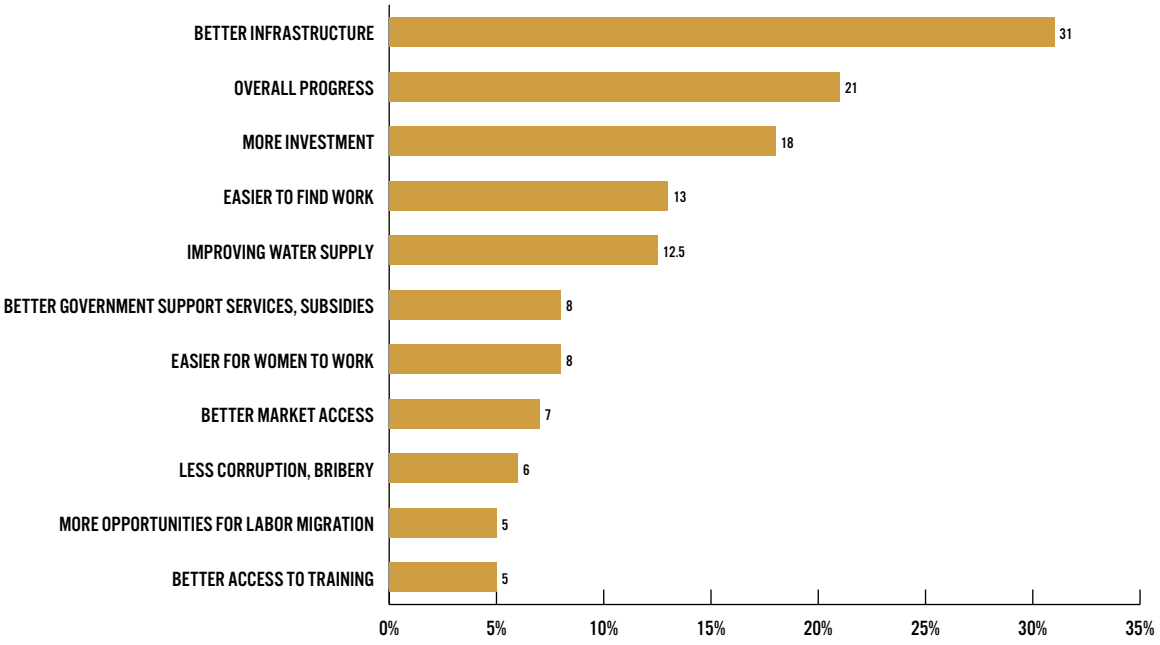


Figure 7.2: Q-G2. *Why do you think that economic conditions are improving in your urban municipality/rural municipality?* (*n* = 1,286; asked only of respondents who answered "yes, economic conditions are improving" to Q-G1)

REASONS WHY LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE IMPROVING, BY PROVINCE[77]

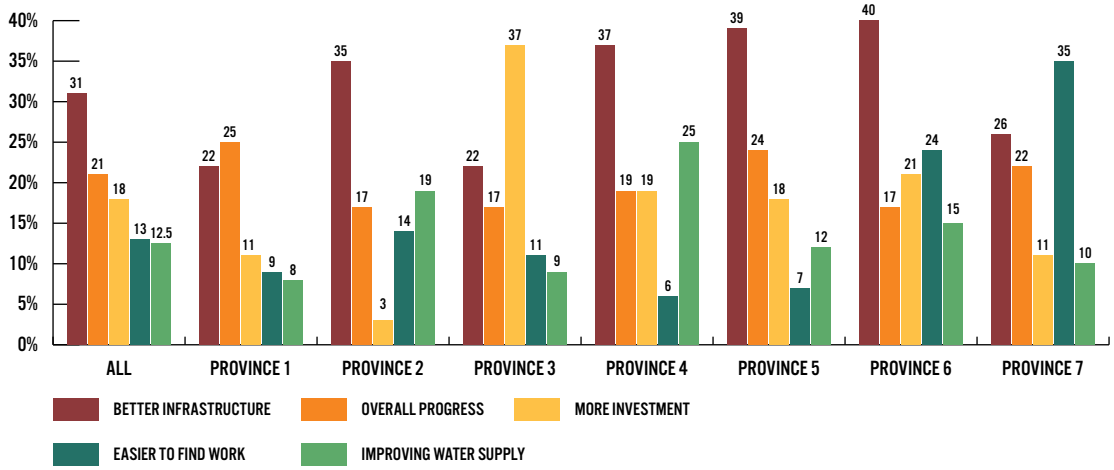


Figure 7.3: Q-G2. *Why do you think that economic conditions are improving in your urban municipality/rural municipality?* (*n* = 1,286; asked only of respondents who answered "yes, economic conditions are improving" to Q-G1)

[76] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, percentages do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

[77] Multiple answers were allowed. Therefore, percentages do not add up to 100.0%. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

REASONS WHY LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE IMPROVING, BY REGION[78]

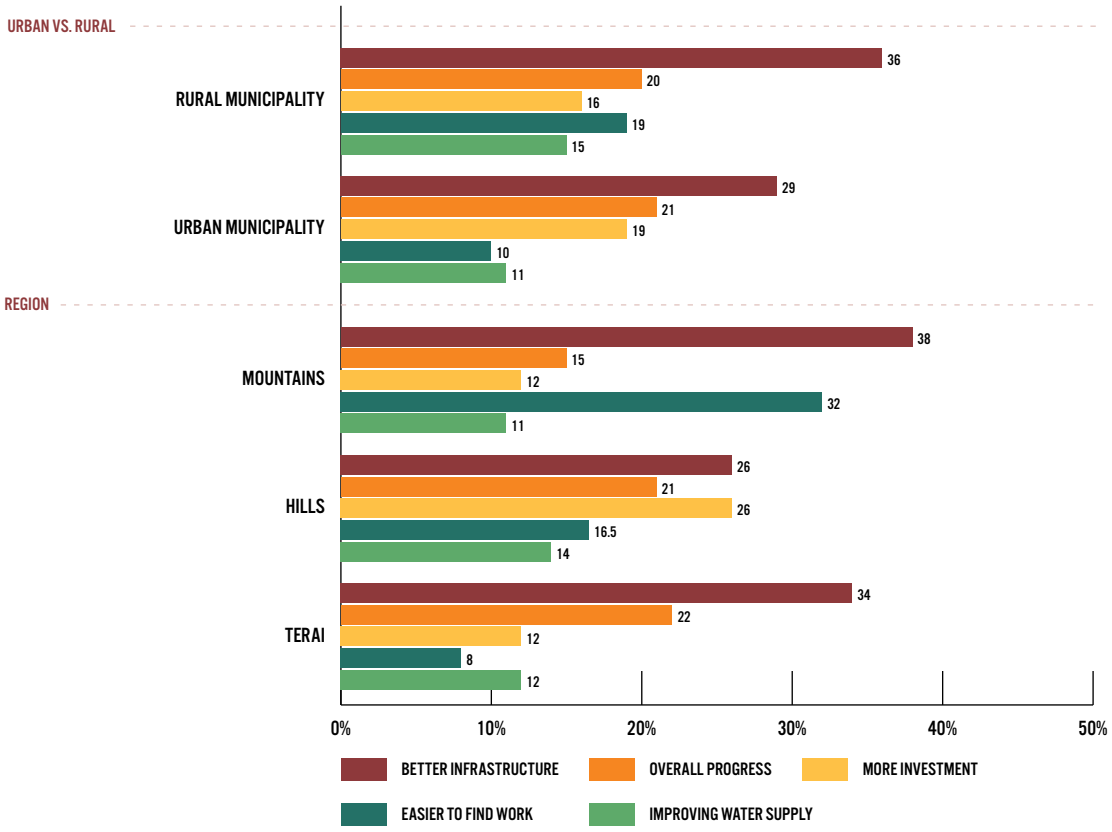


Figure 7.4: Q-G2. *Why do you think that economic conditions are improving in your urban municipality/rural municipality?* (*n* = 1,286; asked only of respondents who answered "yes, economic conditions are improving" to Q-G1)

[78] Multiple answers were allowed. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

REASONS FOR WORSENING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The minority of Nepalis who think local economic conditions are deteriorating cite corruption and few jobs. Only 1.8% of Nepalis report that local economic conditions are getting worse. Asked why this is the case, they mention primarily corruption and bribery (31.1%), followed by difficulties finding employment (29.3%).[79] Some 17.5% mention fewer opportunities for labor migration. Other reasons include poor infrastructure, less investment, and low wages (figure 7.5).[80]

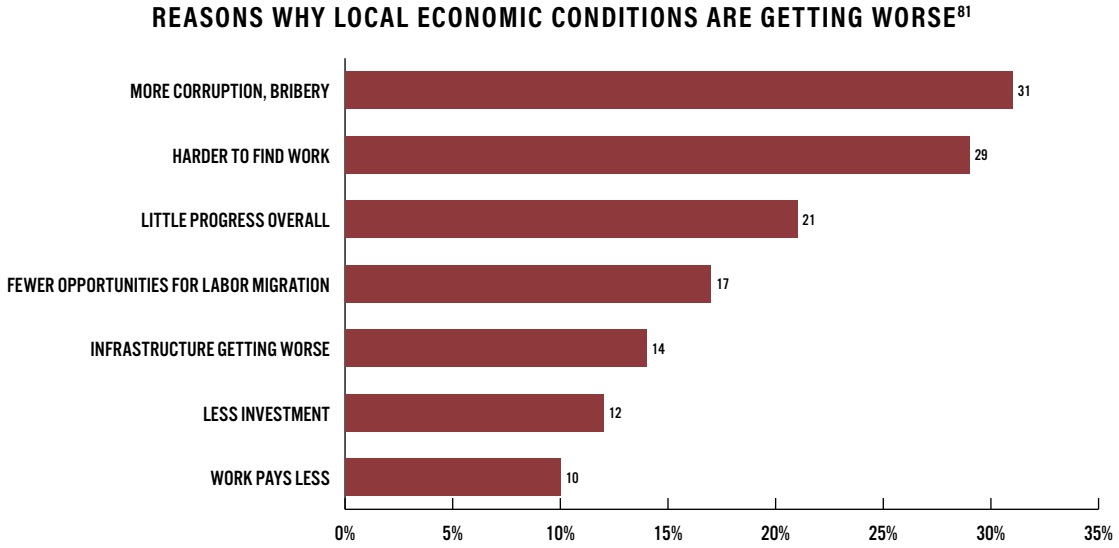


Figure 7.5: Q-G3. ***Why do you think that economic conditions are getting worse in your urban municipality/rural municipality?*** **(*n* = 132; asked only of respondents who answered "economic conditions are getting worse" to Q-G1)**

7.2 HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Household income

The vast majority of Nepali households (83.0%) earn between NPR 2,500 and 40,000 per month; just over a third (35.5%) earn between NPR 10,000 and 20,000. Almost a third of Nepali households (29.5%) earn NPR 10,000 or less monthly, including 4.8% who earn less than NPR 2,500. Only 10.3% report a monthly household income in excess of NPR 40,000 (figure 7.6).[82]

[79] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis.

[80] Because of the sample size—132 respondents—these findings lack statistical significance, and they are reported here only as an indication of the type of problems Nepalis associate with the economy.

[81] Multiple answers were allowed. The percentages in the figure indicate the share of respondents who cited the corresponding answer as one of their top two answers.

[82] According to the most recent household budget survey by the Nepal Rastra Bank (Nepal's central bank), the average monthly household income as of 2014–2015 was NPR 30,121 (around USD 300)—NPR 27,511 in rural areas and NPR 32,336 in urban areas—while the average per capita income was NPR 6,727 (around USD 60). Nepal Rastra Bank, *Fifth Household Budget Survey, 2014/15* (Kathmandu: Nepal Rastra Bank, 2016), https://www.nrb.org.np/red/publications/study_reports/Study_Reports--Fifth_Household_Budget_Survey_2014-2015.pdf. In 2016, the average annual income in Nepal per person (GNI per capita) was USD 730—around USD 60 per month per head. World Bank website, "Data: Nepal," accessed February 17, 2018, https://data.worldbank.org/country/nepal.

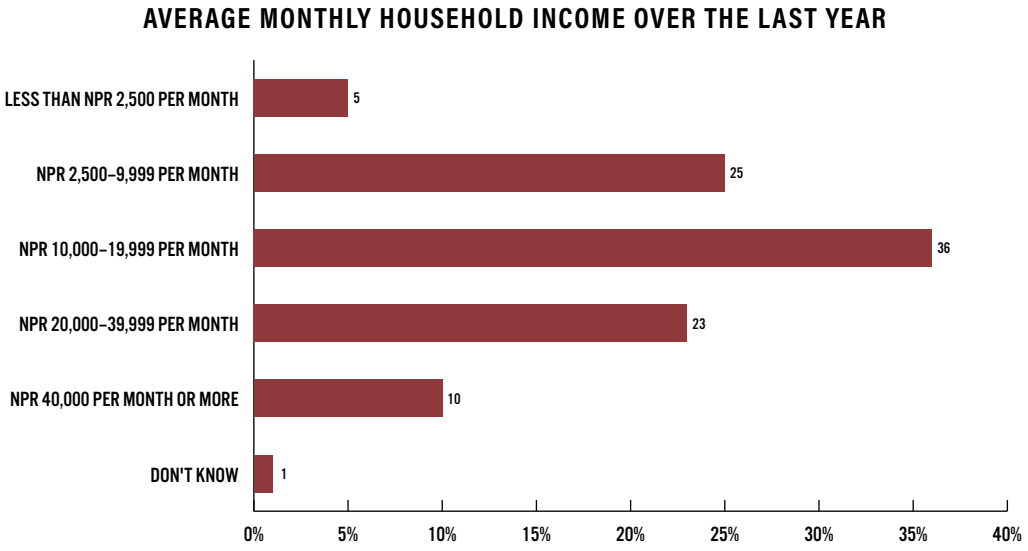


Figure 7.6: Q-G4. *Approximately how much was your household income per month in the last year?* (*N* = 7,202)

People in Provinces 3 and 4 are substantially more likely than others to report a monthly household income over NPR 40,000. More Nepalis situate themselves in the higher income bracket in central Nepal: 21.6% of Province 3 respondents and 16.7% of Province 4 respondents report a monthly household income of NPR 40,000 or above, compared to a national average of 10.3%. These two provinces also have the lowest shares of households earning below NPR 10,000. Province 3 includes the capital city, Kathmandu, and the Kathmandu Valley. Province 4 is where Pokhara, one of Nepal's major tourism destinations, is located. In contrast, over a third of Province 1, Province 5, Province 6, and Province 7 households report a monthly income below NPR 10,000 (figure 7.7).

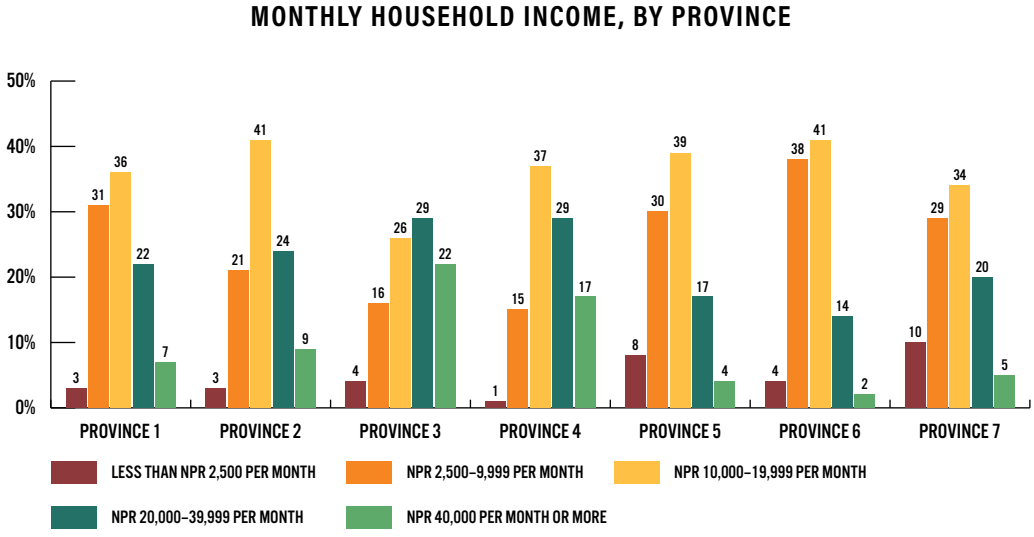


Figure 7.7: Q-G4. *Approximately how much was your household income per month in the last year?* (*N* = 7,202)

Rural Nepalis and those living in the mountains are more likely to earn less. Individuals in rural municipalities are nearly twice as likely to report monthly household incomes below NPR 10,000 (38.8%, compared to 23.9% of residents of urban municipalities). Urban households are more likely to earn over NPR 20,000 monthly. In the

mountains, more than half of all households (51.1%) earn less than NPR 10,000 per month, compared to 26.1% in the hills and 29.4% in the Terai (figure 7.8).

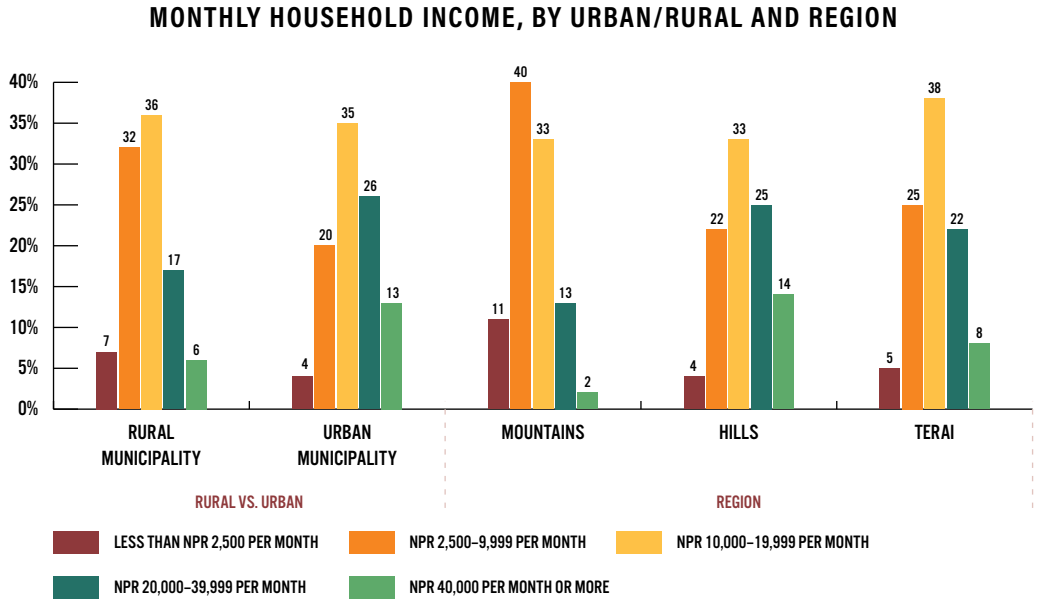


Figure 7.8: Q-G4. *Approximately how much was your household income per month in the last year?* (*N* = 7,202)

Monthly household income correlates with educational attainment. Unsurprisingly, the household income reported by Nepalis rises with their level of education (figure 7.9). The share of those earning less than NPR 10,000 per month decreases steadily with better education, while the shares of those earning between NPR 20,000 and 40,000, and those earning more than NPR 40,000, increase in proportion. Some 37.1% of respondents with a bachelor's degree or above earn between NPR 20,000 and 40,000; 31.9% earn more than NPR 40,000. In contrast, a third of those without a formal education or with only a primary education earn less than NPR 10,000 monthly.

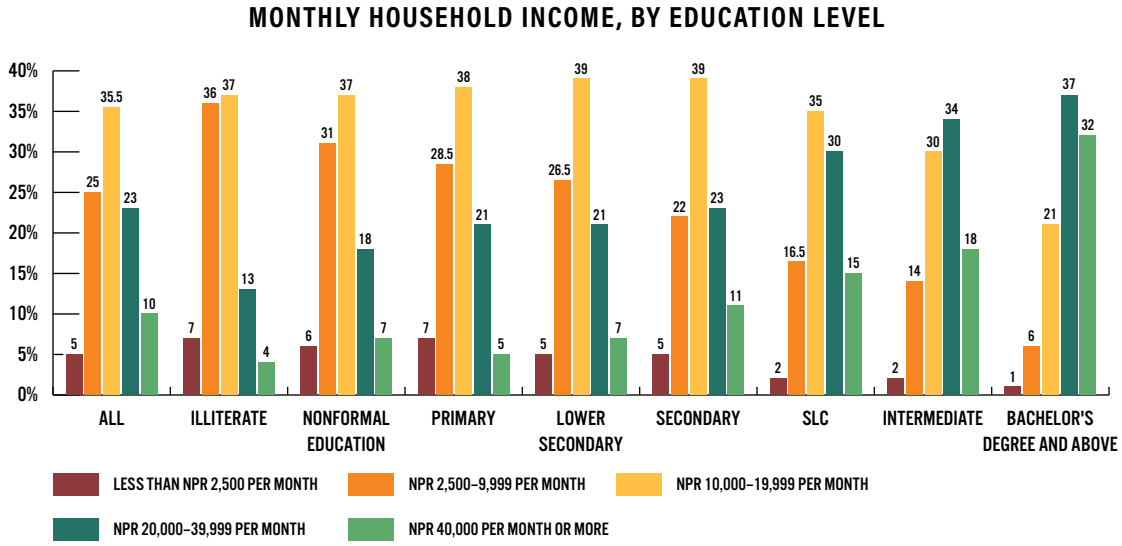


Figure 7.9: Q-G4. *Approximately how much was your household income per month in the last year?* (*N* = 7,202)

Nepalis with public-sector jobs or nonagricultural private-sector jobs and business owners are more likely to earn above NPR 20,000 monthly. Farmers, laborers, and small traders are more likely to earn below NPR 10,000, or between NPR 10,000 and 20,000, than other groups. Two-thirds of households relying primarily on remittances receive between NPR 10,000 and 20,000 per month (table 7.2).

MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY OCCUPATION

	LESS THAN NPR 2,500 PER MONTH %	NPR 2,500–9,999 PER MONTH %	NPR 10,000–19,999 PER MONTH %	NPR 20,000–39,999 PER MONTH %	NPR 40,000 PER MONTH OR MORE %	REFUSED %	DON'T KNOW %
What is your main occupation?							
Agriculture	6.0	33.3	37.5	17.0	5.0	0.2	1.1
Social security transfers	10.4	15.1	32.8	23.6	14.6	0.0	3.5
Casual labor (nonagricultural)	3.1	27.2	48.1	16.8	4.0	0.3	0.5
Casual labor (agricultural)	7.0	43.9	37.5	7.7	3.2	0.0	0.6
Business owner	1.3	9.8	31.1	36.5	19.8	0.9	0.6
Small trade	3.6	53.3	33.6	9.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Private-sector job (nonagricultural)	4.4	11.8	27.9	30.7	21.8	3.0	0.4
Public-sector job	0.9	5.0	19.9	48.6	24.9	0.6	0.0
Migration (remittances)	0.0	6.7	68.3	11.3	13.6	0.0	0.0
Private-sector job (agricultural)	15.7	18.6	31.5	25.5	0.0	8.7	0.0
Household work	3.4	18.0	36.1	24.9	15.0	0.3	2.3
Student	5.4	17.8	28.8	30.2	12.4	0.9	4.6
Unemployed	7.9	17.5	38.2	17.4	15.3	0.9	2.9
Retired	0.0	2.7	18.1	44.8	34.4	0.0	0.0

Table 7.2: Q-G4. ***Approximately how much was your household income per month in the last year?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

Higher castes earn higher income. Both hill and Madhesi high-caste households are likely to earn a higher monthly income than other castes or ethnic groups: 57.4% of respondents from Madhesi high castes report a monthly household income above NPR 20,000 (this is 41.7% for hill high castes). Those most likely to report household incomes below NPR 20,000 are Madhesi Dalits (83.0%), hill Dalits (79.0%), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (73.2%), and Muslims (68.9%). Madhesis in general[83] tend to report lower incomes than other Nepalis (table 7.3).

[83] In this report, "Madhesi" refers to any respondent who self-identified as a member of the following communities: Madhesi so-called "high" castes (Brahman-Tarai, Rajput, Kayastha, etc.), Madhesi "intermediate" castes (Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, Dhanuk, etc.), Madhesi Dalits (Chamar, Musahar, Dusadh, etc.), Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis (Tharu, Rajbanshi, etc.), Muslims, or other Madhesi cultural groups. Results for the Madhesi group include responses from all Madhesi respondents, regardless of where they live. For a full list of caste/ethnicity categories used in this report, please refer to appendix B, "Sample Demographics." The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to castes and ethnic groups does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, The Asia Foundation, or its donors about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY CASTE/ETHNICITY

	LESS THAN NPR 2,500 PER MONTH %	NPR 2,500–9,999 PER MONTH %	NPR 10,000–19,999 PER MONTH %	NPR 20,000–39,999 PER MONTH %	NPR 40,000 PER MONTH OR MORE %	REFUSED %	DON'T KNOW %
CASTE/ETHNICITY							
Hill high castes	3.9	19.4	35.0	26.0	13.8	0.6	1.3
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	3.7	26.2	30.9	24.2	12.7	0.7	1.4
Hill Dalits	8.2	33.1	37.7	15.0	5.4	0.1	0.5
Madhesi high castes	5.3	10.5	26.8	31.9	21.9	0.0	3.6
Madhesi intermediate castes	3.8	24.4	41.2	21.4	7.3	0.2	1.7
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	6.7	25.9	40.6	20.9	3.6	0.6	1.6
Madhesi Dalits	9.3	31.9	41.8	12.8	2.8	0.3	1.0
Muslims	6.1	31.5	31.3	23.1	6.2	0.6	1.2

Table 7.3: Q-G4. *Approximately how much was your household income per month in the last year?* (*N* = 7,202)

HOW HAVE INCOMES CHANGED OVER THE PAST YEAR?

While most Nepalis report that their monthly household income has remained the same over the past year, one-third say it has increased. Some 31.5% report that the income of their household has increased over the past year, while 13.4% report a decrease. Over half of Nepalis (54.3%) say that their household income remained the same (figure 7.10). While it can be seen as positive that most people's incomes are staying the same or increasing, the fact that the largest share of the population report stagnating or declining incomes (67.7%) also points to potential hardship for large numbers of people, given annual inflation rates of around 8.0%.[84]

Wealthier and better-educated Nepalis are more likely to report that their household income increased in the past year. The likelihood that Nepalis report an increase in income rises with each income bracket (figure 7.10). Some 41.1% of households with a monthly income between NPR 20,000 and 40,000, and 43.5% of those earning more than NPR 40,000, report earning more than a year ago. On the other hand, those earning less than NPR 10,000 are more likely than others to report that their income stayed the same or decreased. The likelihood of an increasing household income also rises with education level. This is hardly surprising, given the correlation discussed above between income and educational attainment.

Madhesis are more likely to report a change, for better or worse, in their household income. Madhesi high castes and Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis are the groups most likely to report an increase in income (40.0% and 43.8%, respectively).

[84] Between 2011 and 2016, the average inflation rate was 8.8%, while the average annual economic growth rate for the same period was 3.4%, according to Nepal Rastra Bank data. Nepal Rastra Bank Research Department, "Optimal Inflation Rate for Nepal" *NRB Economic Review* 29, no. 1 (2017), https://nrb.org.np/ecorev/index.php?vol=29-1.

CHANGE IN HOUSEHOLD INCOME OVER THE LAST YEAR, BY INCOME LEVEL

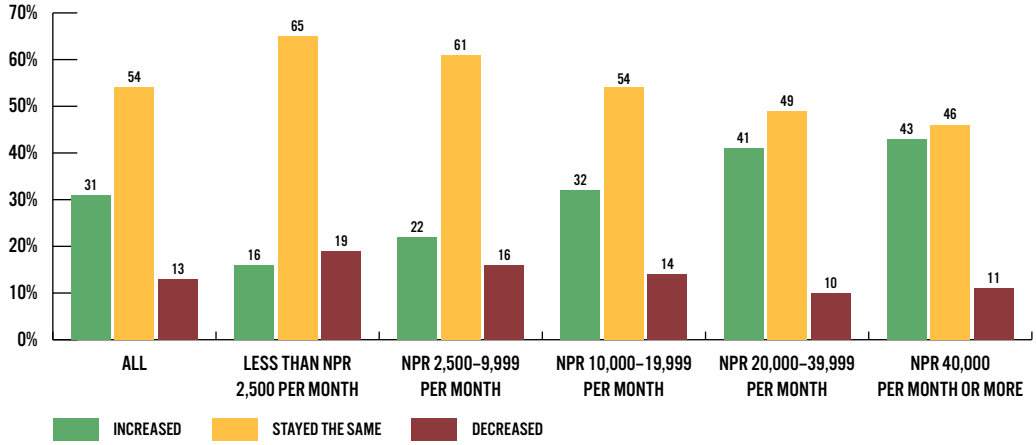


Figure 7.10: Q-G5. *How has your household income changed in the last year?* (*N* = 7,202)

CHANGE IN HOUSEHOLD INCOME OVER THE LAST YEAR, BY CASTE/ETHNICITY

	INCREASED %	STAYED THE SAME %	DECREASED %	DON'T KNOW %
CASTE/ETHNICITY				
Hill high castes	29.4	59.1	11.0	0.4
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	28.4	59.0	11.6	0.7
Hill Dalits	26.7	57.6	15.3	0.3
Madhesi high castes	40.0	33.8	22.5	3.6
Madhesi intermediate castes	38.1	45.2	15.5	1.2
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	43.8	41.4	14.0	0.7
Madhesi Dalits	34.9	46.0	18.7	0.4
Muslims	27.4	48.6	22.2	1.8

Table 7.4: Q-G5. *How has your household income changed in the last year?* (*N* = 7,202)

PHOTO BY Craig Ferguson

ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Most Nepalis are optimistic that the economic welfare of their household will improve in the medium term. When people were asked how they feel about their household's economic prospects over the next five years, 84.1% said either that they are very confident (19.1%) or confident (65.0%) that their economic situation will improve. Only 1.7% believe that it will get worse, whereas 10.8% think that it will stay the same.

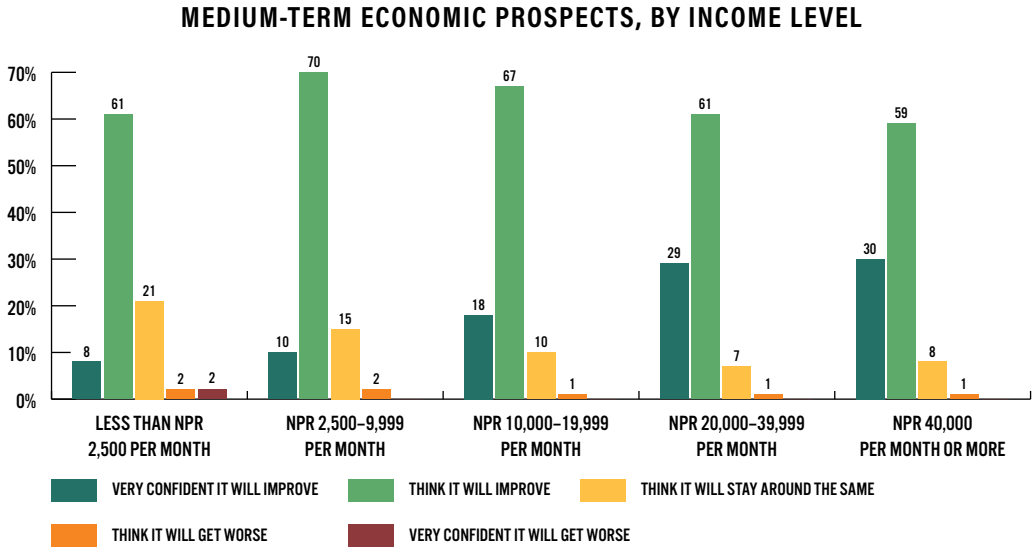


Figure 7.11: Q-G6. *Do you expect your household's economic welfare to improve in the next five years?* (*N* = 7,202)

People with higher incomes are more confident about future welfare improvements. Since we have seen that higher-income respondents are more likely to report an increase in income in the past year, this is hardly surprising. Figure 7.11 shows that the share of respondents who are "very confident" that their household's situation will improve in the next five years increases drastically with income bracket. Consistent with previous findings, the same pattern applies to education levels.

7.3 DEBT

HOUSEHOLD DEBT

Around half of Nepali households are in debt. Nearly half of the people interviewed say their household has debts (47.3%), while the other half (49.7%) say they do not (figure 7.12).[85]

The amount of debt of most households is within the NPR 30,000–300,000 range. Among those Nepalis who report that their household has debts, 27.9% (12.7% of all Nepalis) estimate the debt to be between NPR 30,000 and 100,000; 26.9% (13.2% of all Nepalis) say it is between NPR 100,000 and 300,000. Far fewer have borrowed more than NPR 300,000 or less than NPR 30,000.

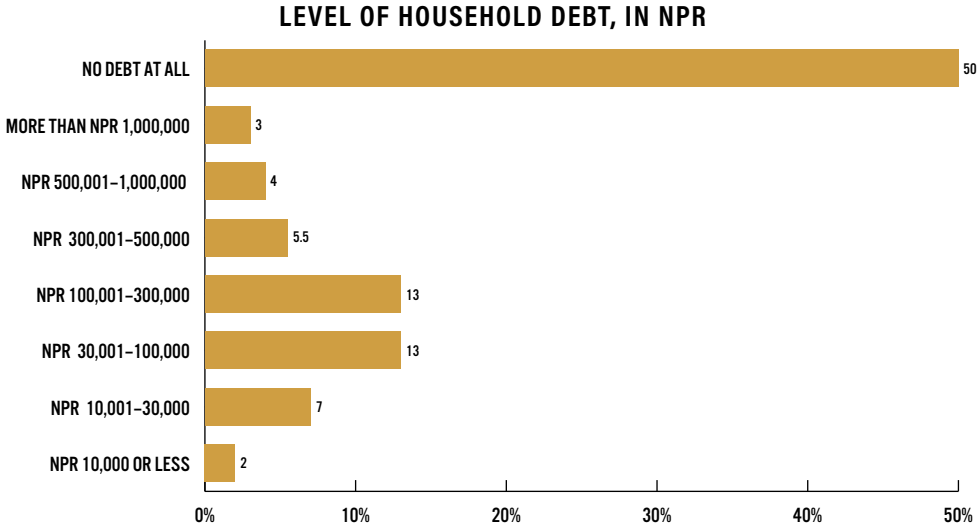


Figure 7.12: Q-G11. ***What is your household's overall debt?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

BORROWING PATTERNS

One-third of Nepalis report having borrowed money in the past year. Some 32.7% of Nepalis say they borrowed money in the past year, while 66.4% say they did not (figure 7.13).

Poorer Nepalis are more likely to have borrowed money. People in the lower income brackets are more likely to say they have borrowed money: of those earning less than NPR 10,000, 36.7% have taken a loan in the past year, compared to 25.8% of those earning more than NPR 40,000 per month (figure 7.13). Consistently, people with lower levels of education are more likely to report borrowing money in the past year, although illiterates are less likely than average to have done so. Nepalis aged 25–49 years are more likely than younger or older Nepalis to have acquired debt. Men are slightly more likely than women to have borrowed money. Among castes and ethnic groups, Dalits are the most likely to have taken a loan (hill Dalits, 39.4%; Madhesi Dalits, 40.1%).

Debt is less common in Provinces 3 and 4, where incomes are higher; it is more common in rural areas and mountains. The only two provinces where people are less likely than the national average to have borrowed money in the past year are Provinces 3 and 4 (30.0% and 23.4%, respectively, compared to 32.7% nationwide). People in rural areas are more likely to have taken a loan in the past year than residents of urban municipalities; those living in the mountains are more likely to have done so than other Nepalis (figure 7.14).

[85] The remaining 3.0% did not know or refused to answer the question.

SHARE WHO BORROWED MONEY IN THE PAST YEAR, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

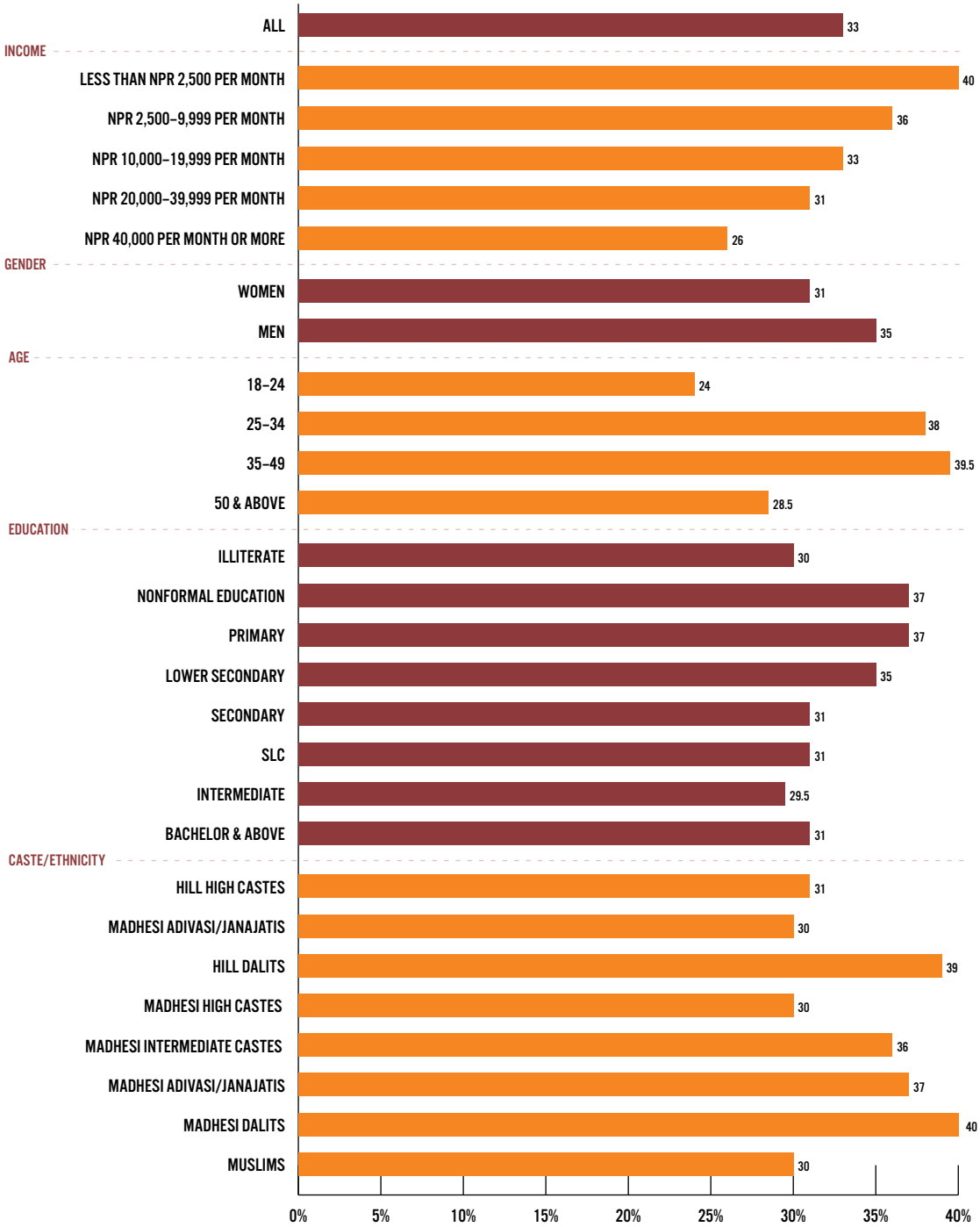


Figure 7.13: Q-G7. *Have you borrowed money from anyone in the past year?* (*N* = 7,202)

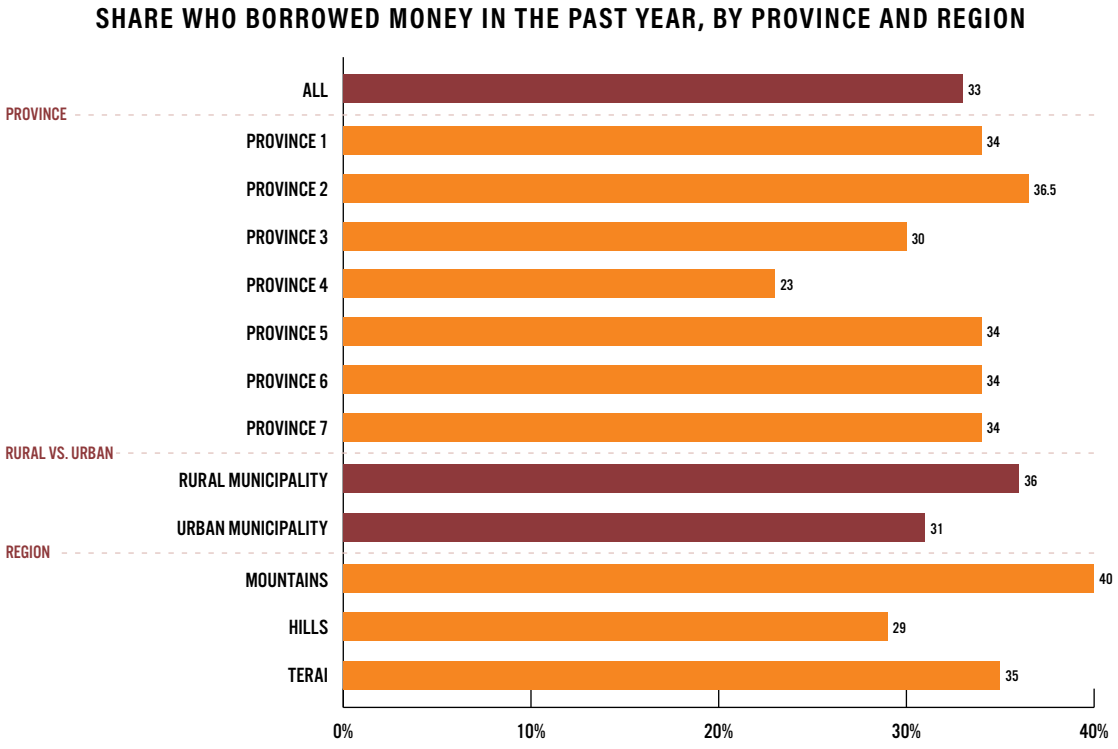


Figure 7.14: Q-G7. ***Have you borrowed money from anyone in the past year?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

Lending sources and interest rates

Savings and credit groups, moneylenders, and banks are the main sources of loans. Of the Nepalis who borrowed money in the past year, most borrowed from savings and credit groups (27.2%), moneylenders (25.4%), and banks (21.1%). However, a combined 26.2% borrowed from friends, relatives, or neighbors (table 7.5).

The poorer and the less educated are more likely to borrow from moneylenders, and less likely to borrow from formal sources. Illiterates (35.7%), people with only a primary education (30.7%), and those earning less than NPR 10,000 per month (31.8%) are more likely to borrow from moneylenders than the national average (25.4%). Moneylenders are most popular in Province 2, where 48.0% of respondents who borrowed money in the past year borrowed from them.

Urban and higher-income Nepalis are more likely to borrow from banks. People in urban areas are more likely to go to banks to obtain credit (25.7%, compared to 14.3% in rural areas); so are Nepalis in the higher income brackets.

Women are more likely to borrow from savings and credit groups than men. Some 32.6% of women, compared to 22.1% of men, borrowed from savings and credit groups in the last year. Many of these groups were established with development assistance and are run and managed by women. Women are also slightly more likely to borrow from relatives, while men are more likely to borrow from moneylenders or banks.

The average loan size varies, depending on the lending source. Banks provide the largest loans by far (average loan: NPR 693,664; median loan: NPR 300,000),[86] followed by moneylenders (average loan: NPR 263,641; median loan: NPR 120,000). People borrow larger sums from friends and relatives than from savings and credit groups (table 7.6).

Moneylenders and other informal lending sources charge the highest interest rates. People are paying higher interest rates to informal sources of lending than to formal sources (table 7.6). The mean value of the monthly interest rate

[86] Mean (average) values can be skewed by outliers. The median value is the value separating the higher half of the data sample from the lower half.

charged by moneylenders is 2.8%. Relatives, friends, neighbors, and other individual lenders also charge higher interest than banks (1.5%), cooperatives (1.6%), savings and credit groups (1.7%), or other financial institutions (1.5%).

LENDING SOURCES, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP[87]

	SAVINGS AND CREDIT GROUP %	MONEY LENDER %	BANK %	COOPERATIVE %	RELATIVE %	FRIEND %	NEIGHBOR %	OTHER INDIVIDUAL %	OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTION %
All	***27.2***	***25.4***	***21.1***	***14.1***	***10.5***	***9.10***	***6.6***	***0.7***	***0.7***
PROVINCE									
Province 1	22.8	23.7	28.5	11.8	7.8	8.2	4.9	0.2	0.9
Province 2	16.8	48.0	22.9	4.1	3.4	6.2	8.9	1.5	0.2
Province 3	38.6	12.8	18.5	23.9	10.4	10.1	2.1	0.3	0.6
Province 4	20.1	21.1	20.7	13.3	12.3	17.2	4.7	0.4	0.8
Province 5	32.8	14.8	22.0	17.2	14.6	9.0	7.0	0.4	0.7
Province 6	25.9	33.7	11.3	9.7	12.7	8.2	9.9	0.5	1.3
Province 7	30.0	21.4	14.3	17.8	19.5	10.9	10.9	1.4	1.1
URBAN VS. RURAL									
Rural municipality	25.5	29.6	14.3	13.9	11.2	10.3	8.1	1.2	0.8
Urban Municipality	28.3	22.5	25.7	14.2	10.0	8.4	5.5	0.3	0.7
REGION									
Mountains	23.7	27.2	6.6	26.0	15.5	11.4	10.9	1.6	1.7
Hills	25.8	25.5	18.1	13.8	13.5	11.1	5.6	0.4	1.1
Terai	28.6	25.0	25.2	12.5	7.7	7.5	6.6	0.7	0.3
GENDER									
Women	32.6	20.9	18.9	14.0	12.6	7.3	7.0	0.9	0.7
Men	22.1	29.6	23.1	14.1	8.5	10.9	6.1	0.5	0.8
EDUCATION									
Illiterate	26.7	35.7	13.0	6.2	9.2	4.3	10.7	1.4	0.5
Nonformal education	29.5	22.4	19.4	16.3	13.8	10.5	9.2	1.0	0.7
Primary	26.8	30.7	15.3	11.5	11.3	10.6	5.7	0.7	1.1
Lower secondary	28.9	24.1	20.1	17.8	10.4	6.6	9.3	0.7	0.6
Secondary	27.8	21.9	22.9	18.2	9.8	8.6	5.3	0.2	0.5
School Leaving Certificate	27.6	18.6	29.8	13.7	8.7	10.8	2.3	0.0	1.0
Intermediate	32.0	15.3	28.5	15.7	7.9	13.0	3.7	0.4	1.1
Bachelor's degree or above	11.6	25.9	35.4	21.4	12.7	10.8	3.6	0.9	0.0
INCOME									
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	28.0	37.8	11.9	15.7	12.1	5.8	10.8	1.5	1.2

[87] Percentages do not add up to 100.0% because some respondents reported borrowing from multiple sources.

	SAVINGS AND CREDIT GROUP %	MONEY LENDER %	BANK %	COOPERATIVE %	RELATIVE %	FRIEND %	NEIGHBOR %	OTHER INDIVIDUAL %	OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTION %
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	27.5	30.7	14.6	12.0	12.1	8.7	8.3	0.8	0.6
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	28.2	24.3	20.4	14.3	10.4	7.8	7.4	0.7	0.7
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	25.9	19.9	28.5	15.1	6.9	12.4	3.3	0.6	0.9
More than NPR 40,000 per month	24.1	17.7	33.3	17.2	15.0	9.0	2.8	0.0	0.3

Table 7.5: Q-G8. ***Who did you borrow money from?*** **(*n* = 2,358; asked only of those who answered "yes, I borrowed money in the past year" to Q-G7)**

AVERAGE LOAN SIZE IN NPR AND INTEREST RATE, BY LENDING SOURCE

	SHARE OF RESPONDENTS WHO BORROWED FROM THE LENDING SOURCE* (%)	BORROWED AMOUNT (NPR)		MONTHLY INTEREST RATE (%)
		MEAN	MEDIAN	MEAN
Savings and credit group	27.2	170,571	50,000	1.7
Moneylender	25.4	263,641	120,000	2.8
Bank	21.1	693,664	300,000	1.5
Cooperative	14.1	241,612	100,000	1.6
Relative	10.5	264,285	100,000	2.4
Friend	9.1	216,671	100,000	2.4
Neighbor	6.6	134,479	60,000	2.7
Other individual in the ward	0.7	123,516	50,000	3.5
Other financial institution	0.7	69,679	37,735	1.5

**Percentages do not add up to 100.0%, because some respondents reported borrowing from multiple sources.*

Table 7.6: Q-G8. ***Who did you borrow money from?*** **Q-G9.** ***How much have you borrowed from that source?*** **Q-G10.** ***What is the monthly interest rate that is charged on the money you borrowed?*** **(*n* = 2,358; asked only of those who answered "yes, I borrowed money in the past year" to Q-G7)**

7.4 MIGRATION AND REMITTANCES

RELATIVES WORKING IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY

Over a quarter of Nepalis have a relative working abroad. Some 28.3% of the population say that someone in their family works in a foreign country (figure 7.15). According to the Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility, 7.3% of Nepal's working population live and work abroad, and the remittances they send home represent about a third of Nepal's gross domestic product (GDP).[88]

[88] Bandita Sijapati et al., *Labour Migration and the Remittance Economy: The Socio-Political Impact* (Kathmandu: Centre for the Study of Labour Mobility, March 2017), https://www.ceslam.org/index.php?pageName=publication&pid=55. According to the International Labour Organization

Rural Nepalis and hill Dalits are more likely to report having relatives working abroad. A third of people living in rural municipalities (31.2%) have a relative currently working in a foreign country, compared to 26.6% of those living in urban areas. People from the mountains are less likely than those from other regions to have relatives abroad (23.3%). More than a third of hill Dalits (35.6%) have relatives working abroad. Province 7 (37.4%) and Province 1 (33.2%) have higher shares of respondents with relatives abroad, while Province 3 (21.7%), Province 6 (24.2%), and Province 5 (26.7%) have lower shares than the national average.

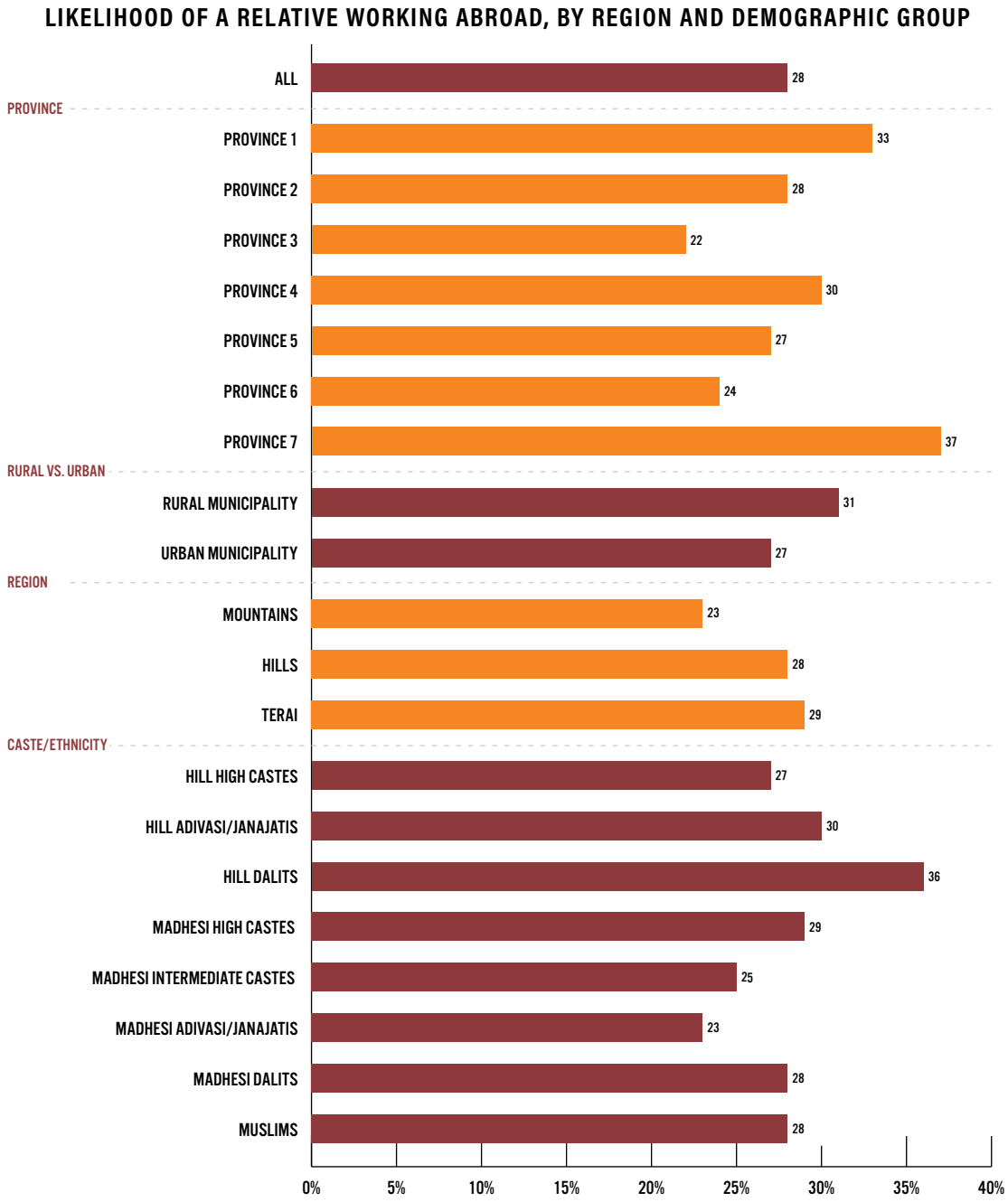


Figure 7.15: G12. ***Is anyone in your family currently in a foreign country for work?*** **(*N* = 7,202)**

(ILO), remittances flowing into Nepal, as a share of GDP, doubled from 14.9% in 2005–06 to 32.1% in 2015–16. Close to 50% of Nepalis rely on financial help from relatives abroad. The top five destinations for Nepali migrant workers are Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait. ILO website, "Nepal Labour Market Update," January 2017, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-kathmandu/documents/publication/wcms_543497.pdf.

Household income correlates with the likelihood that a family member works abroad. The share of people who report that a family member is working abroad increases with income bracket. Some 40.4% of people earning NPR 40,000 per month or more report that someone in their family is currently working abroad, compared to just a quarter of those earning less than NPR 20,000 monthly (figure 7.16). This likely indicates that remittances make a substantial difference in household welfare.

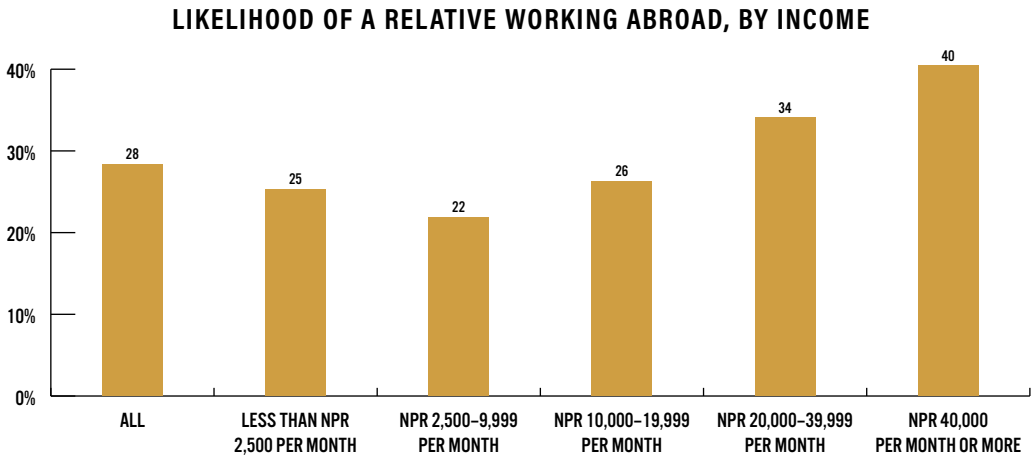


Figure 7.16: G12. *Is anyone in your family currently in a foreign country for work?* (*N* = 7,202)

Remittances

Over one-quarter of Nepali households have received remittances from inside or outside the country. Some 24.9% report having received remittances from outside the country. Some 5.3% report receiving remittances from inside Nepal, and 1.4% from both inside and outside Nepal. Fully 68.3% of Nepalis say their family has never received any remittance (figure 7.17).

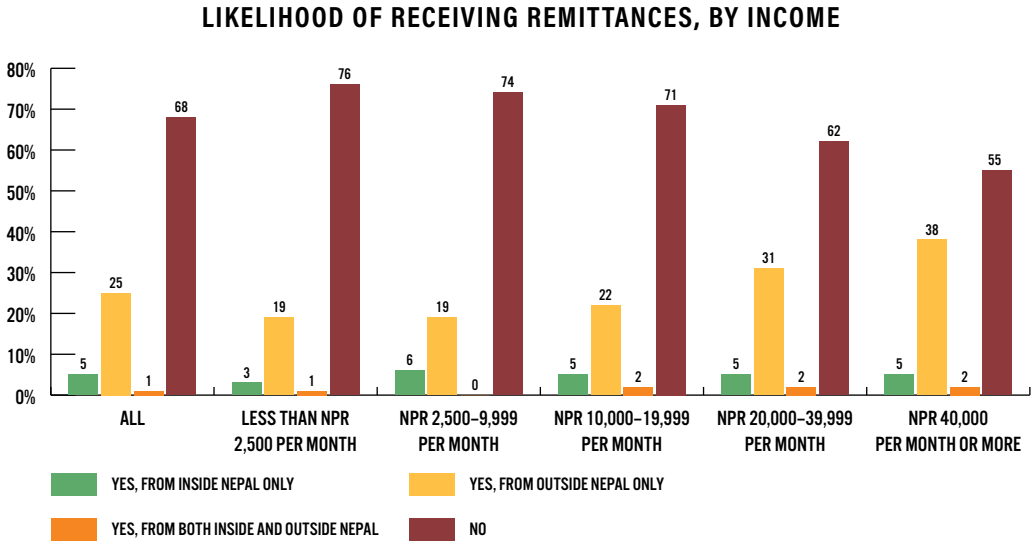


Figure 7.17: G13. *Have you or your family members ever received remittance from inside or outside the country?* (*N* = 7,202)

Households receiving remittances tend to have higher incomes. The proportion of people who report having received remittances increases with the household's income bracket (figure 7.17). Households earning NPR 40,000 per month or more are almost twice as likely to have received remittances as households earning less than NPR 20,000. Again, this points to the crucial role of remittances in the welfare of households that receive them.

Remittances from abroad tend to go to those usually left behind: women, youth, and the elderly. Women are more likely than men, and Nepalis aged 18–24 and those over 50 are more likely than other age groups, to declare receiving remittances (table 7.7). Despite increasing numbers of women leaving Nepal to work abroad, most migrants who send remittances to support their family at home are men.[89] Disaggregation by other variables yields familiar patterns: rural Nepalis, hill Dalits, and residents of Provinces 1 and 7 are more likely to receive remittances from abroad. Residents of mountain areas are less likely to receive remittances.

LIKELIHOOD OF RECEIVING REMITTANCES, BY REGION AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	YES, FROM INSIDE NEPAL ONLY %	YES, FROM OUTSIDE NEPAL ONLY %	YES, FROM BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE NEPAL %	NO %
All	***5.3***	***24.9***	***1.4***	***68.3***
PROVINCE				
Province 1	1.5	30.8	0.5	67.1
Province 2	3.7	27.3	0.8	67.7
Province 3	2.8	19.8	0.6	76.6
Province 4	7.6	25.7	3.8	62.8
Province 5	11.8	22.3	2.4	63.4
Province 6	3.1	18.2	0.5	77.8
Province 7	7.4	28.2	2.3	61.8
URBAN VS. RURAL				
Rural municipality	4.8	28.2	1.3	65.4
Urban Municipality	5.5	22.9	1.4	70.0
REGION				
Mountains	3.6	19.0	0.1	77.4
Hills	4.9	24.1	1.6	69.2
Terai	5.7	26.2	1.4	66.4
GENDER				
Women	5.2	29.1	1.4	64.0
Men	5.3	20.3	1.4	72.8
AGE				
18-24	5.7	29.3	0.9	63.8
25-34	4.6	23.6	1.2	70.6

[89] Bandita Sijapati, Ashim Bhattarai, and Dinesh Pathak, *Analysis of Labour Market and Migration Trends in Nepal* (Kathmandu: International Labour Organization and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, September 2015). http://www.ilo.org/kathmandu/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_407963/lang--en/index.htm.

	YES, FROM INSIDE NEPAL ONLY %	YES, FROM OUTSIDE NEPAL ONLY %	YES, FROM BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE NEPAL %	NO %
35–49	4.6	19.9	1.3	74.0
50 & above	6.0	27.4	2.1	64.1
CASTE/ETHNICITY				
Hill high castes	6.0	22.9	1.7	69.3
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	4.0	27.0	1.6	67.2
Hill Dalits	4.0	30.7	1.5	63.5
Madhesi high castes	6.6	28.0	0.8	64.5
Madhesi intermediate castes	5.4	23.1	1.1	69.9
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	9.0	19.9	1.1	69.8
Madhesi Dalits	5.4	24.4	0.2	69.4
Muslims	1.5	30.8	0.4	67.3

Table 7.7: G13. *Have you or your family members ever received remittance from inside or outside the country?* (*N* = 7,202)

Most Nepalis do not report any increase or decrease in the remittances they received in the past year, but one in five report an increase. The majority of Nepalis who acknowledge receiving remittances (67.2%) say there was no change in the amount they received in the past year compared to previous years. Some 19.9% received a larger amount than previously, and 11.5% received less.[90] Again, this correlates with household income: households earning over NPR 40,000 monthly are twice as likely as households earning less than NPR 20,000 to report remittances have increased (32.1% versus 14.0%).

[90] The Nepal Rastra Bank reported that the growth of remittances slowed in the 2016–2017 fiscal year compared to the growth rate the previous year. "Remitance growth retards," *Himalayan Times*, June 11, 2017, https://thehimalayantimes.com/business/remittance-growth-retards/. Further, in the first four months of the 2016–2017 fiscal year, the volume of remittances received by Nepal decreased 1.4% compared with the corresponding period the previous year. "Remittance slump," *Nepali Times*, January 5–11, 2018, http://nepalitimes.com/article/from-nepali-press/Remittance,4123.

chapter 8

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Eight out of ten Nepalis own a mobile phone. Mobile phone ownership, in particular ownership of smart phones, correlates strongly with education, income, and age. Women, Madhesis, and Dalits are less likely to own mobile phones.

Two-thirds of people never use the Internet. Internet use is more prevalent in Provinces 3 and 4, and in the hills and towns, than in the mountains, the Terai, and rural areas. Younger, better-educated, and wealthier Nepalis are substantially more likely to connect. The vast majority of Internet users connect daily.

Family, neighbors and friends, television, and community radio are the most common sources of information cited by Nepalis. Better-educated and wealthier Nepalis are more likely to cite television, the Internet, and newspapers.

MOBILE-PHONE OWNERSHIP

Roughly 80% of Nepalis (79.9%) own some type of mobile phone. Some 28.6% own a smart phone only, 43.4% own a simple phone only, and 8% own both (figure 8.1). There is some variation across provinces, with a higher proportion of residents of Province 3 (84.2%) and Province 4 (91.1%) reporting they own some type of mobile phone. In contrast, more than one-quarter of respondents in Province 2 (27.3%) and Province 7 (26.9%) say they do not own a mobile phone (figure 8.2).

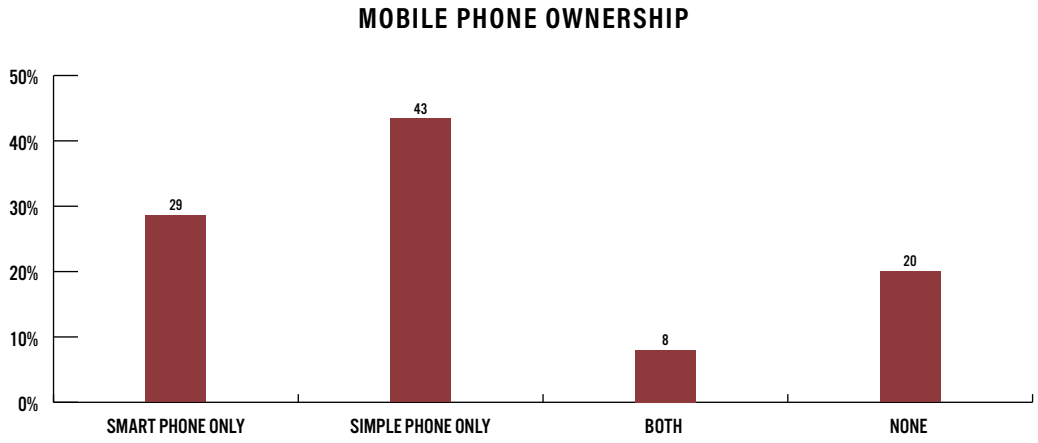


Figure 8.1: Q-H1. *Which of the following types of mobile phones do you own (simple mobile phone/smart phone)?* (*N* = 7,202)

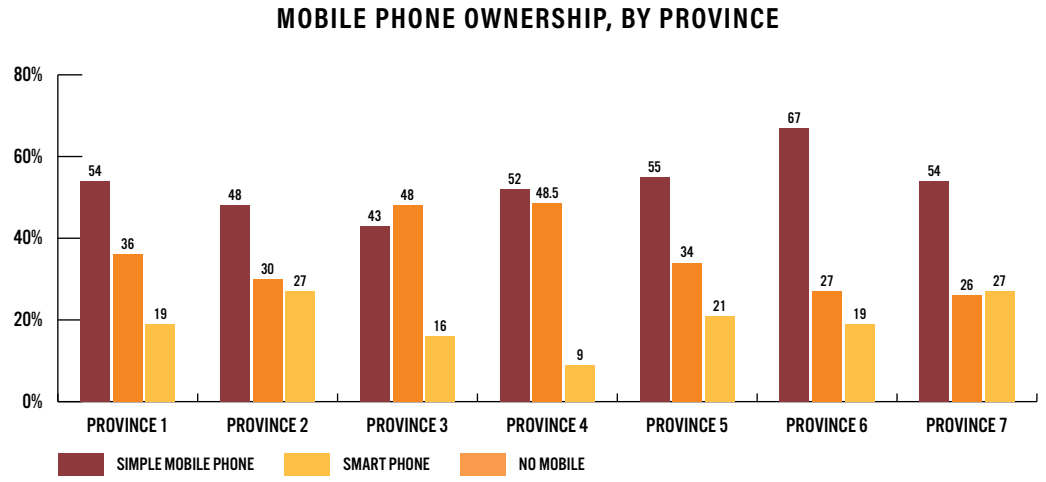


Figure 8.2: Q-H1. *Which of the following types of mobile phones do you own (simple mobile phone/smart phone)?* (*N* = 7,202)

Mobile-phone ownership, in particular ownership of smart phones, correlates strongly with education and income levels. The proportion of Nepalis who own any type of mobile phone, and smart phones in particular, increases steadily with educational attainment and income. The decrease in ownership of simple mobile phones in the higher education and income groups is simply due to the greater likelihood of smart-phone ownership (figures 8.3 and 8.4).

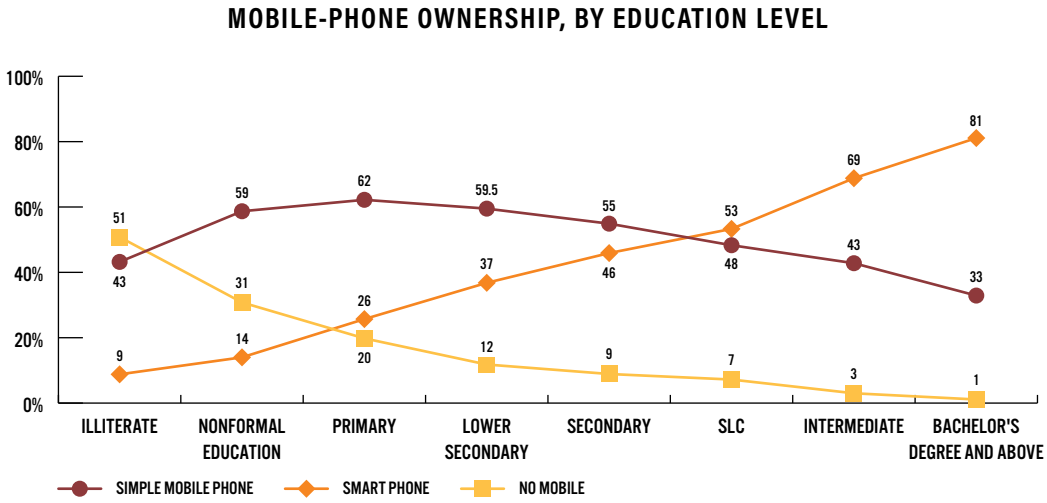


Figure 8.3: Q-H1. *Which of the following types of mobile phones do you own (simple mobile phone/smart phone)?* (*N* = 7,202)

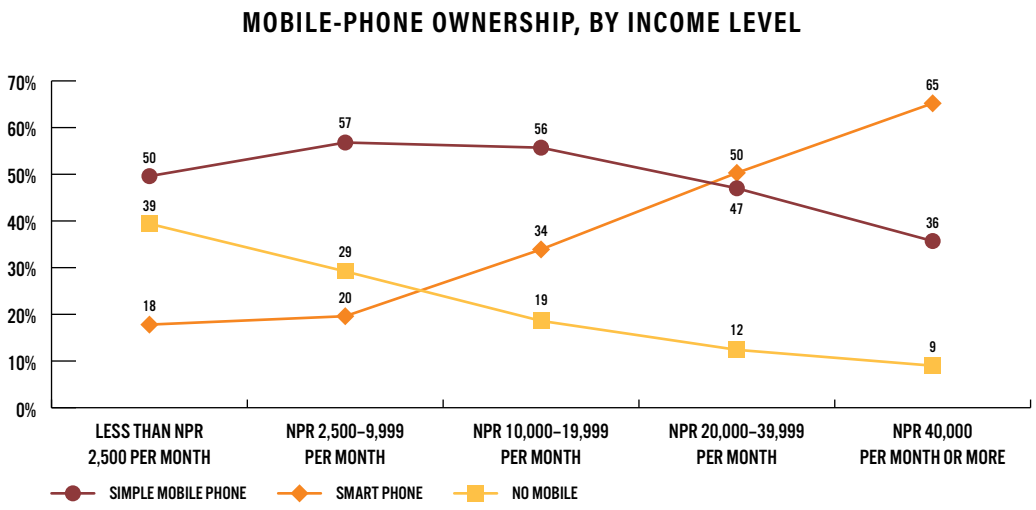


Figure 8.4: Q-H1. *Which of the following types of mobile phones do you own (simple mobile phone/smart phone)?* (*N* = 7,202)

Young Nepalis are more likely to own a mobile phone; women are less likely than men to own one. Some 89.2% of Nepalis aged 18–24 (79.6% of Madhesis aged 18–24) own a mobile phone, compared to just 66.3% of those over 50 years old. Nearly a quarter of women do not own a mobile phone of any type (23.4%, compared to just 16.5% of men).

INTERNET

Two-thirds of Nepalis do not use the Internet. Some 69.4% say they never use the Internet, while 29.0% say they do. Some variation is evident across provinces and regions, likely as a result of connectivity. Internet use is substantially more prevalent in Province 3 (41.1%) and Province 4 (40.6%) than in other provinces. It is lower than average in Provinces 2, 5, 6, and 7 (figure 8.5). It is more prevalent in the hills (33.7%) and towns (33.1%) than in the mountains (22.0%), the Terai[91] (26.1%), or rural municipalities (21.9%).

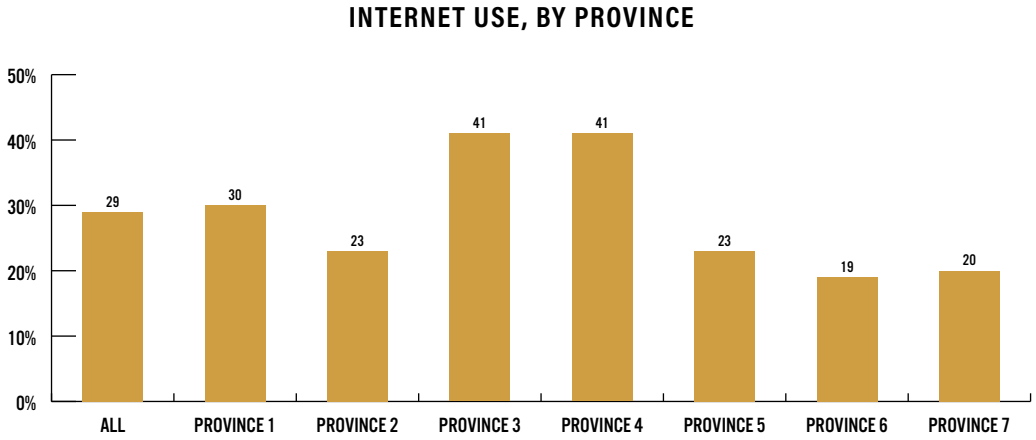


Figure 8.5: Q-H2. *Do you ever use the Internet?* (*N* = 7,202)

[91] In this report, results for the Terai region include results for all residents of the region regardless of their caste or ethnicity.

Like mobile-phone ownership, Internet use is strongly correlated with education, income, and age. The proportion of Nepalis who use the Internet increases steadily with educational attainment and income (figures 8.6 and 8.7). Young Nepalis are more likely to connect to the Internet: 50.7% of those aged 18–24 do connect, compared to only 9.8% of those aged 50 or above.

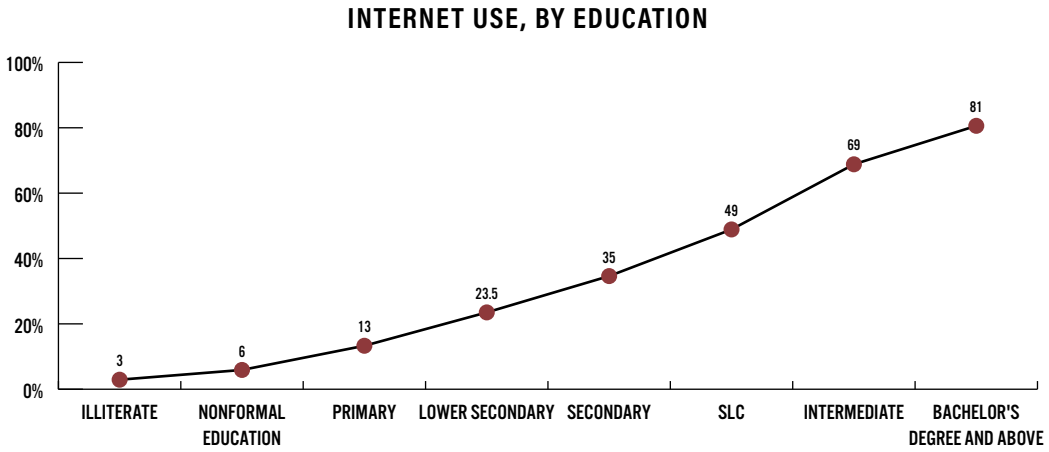


Figure 8.6: Q-H2. *Do you ever use the Internet?* (*N* = 7,202)

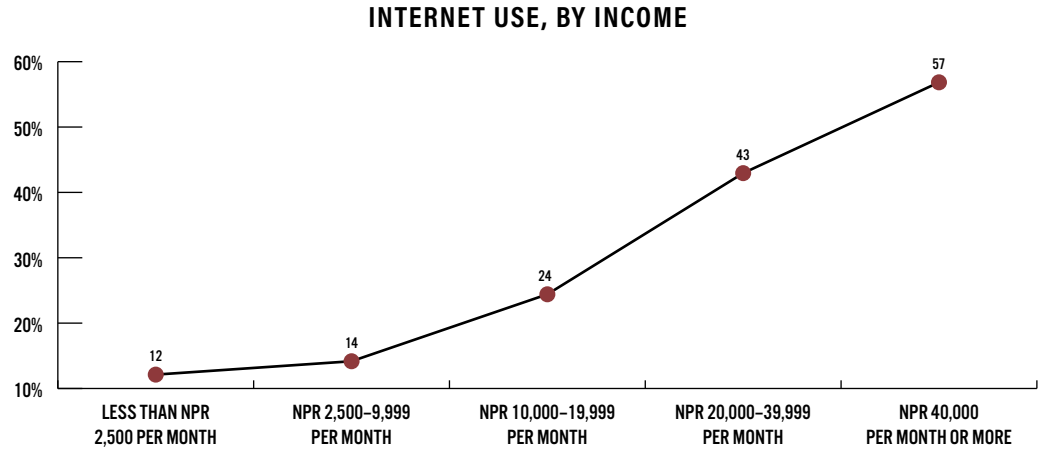


Figure 8.7: Q-H2. *Do you ever use the Internet?* (*N* = 7,202)

Most Nepalis who use the Internet use it daily. Of the 29.0% of Nepalis who report using the Internet, 23.5% say they use it at least once a day, 38.0% use it for half an hour to one hour per day, and 22.3% use it for several hours each day (figure 8.8).

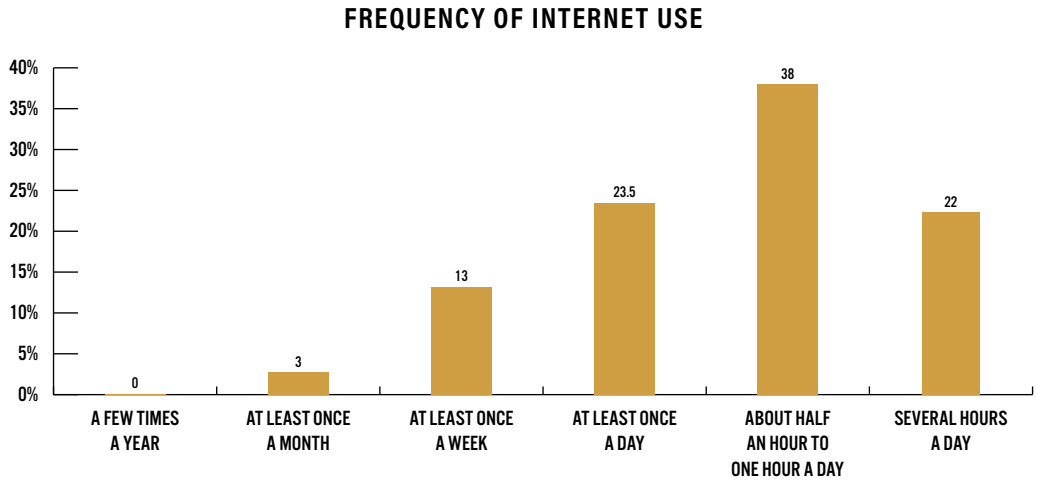


Figure 8.8: Q-H3. *How often do you use the Internet: several hours a day, about half an hour to one hour a day, at least once a day, at least once a week, at least once a month, or a few times a year?* (*n* = 2,088; asked only of respondents who answered "yes, I use Internet" to Q-H2)

INFORMATION SOURCES

Family, neighbors and friends, television, and community radio are the most common sources of information. Asked how they normally get information, half of Nepalis (48.5%) cite family, friends, and neighbors; 46.8% mention television; and 35.0% mention community radio. These are followed by Radio Nepal (14.6%), Facebook (11.7%), and the Internet (9.4%). Only 4.1% of respondents cite national newspapers, and 1.9% cite local papers.

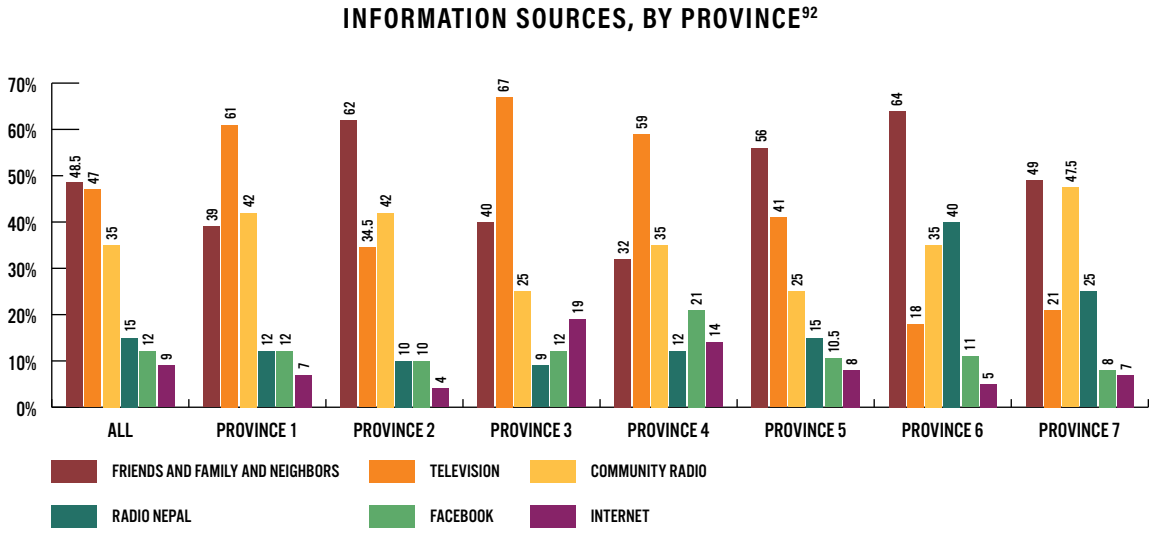


Figure 8.9: Q-H4. *How do you normally get information about what is happening in the country or in the area where you live?* (*N* = 7,202)

[92] This was asked as an open question. Responses were aggregated into categories during analysis. Because multiple answers were allowed, percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

Sources of information vary across provinces and regions. A higher proportion of people rely on family, friends, and neighbors as their main source of information in Province 2 (61.9% of respondents), Province 5 (55.8%), and Province 6 (63.6%), whereas television dominates in Province 1 (61.2%), Province 3 (67.4%), and Province 4 (59.3%) (figure 8.9). Television is more often cited in the hills (48.7%) and Terai (46.5%) than in the mountains (37.0%). In the mountains, community radio is the most commonly cited source of information (46.4%).

Better-educated and wealthier Nepalis are more likely to cite television, the Internet, and newspapers. Poorer and less educated people rely on friends and family more (figures 8.10 and 8.11).

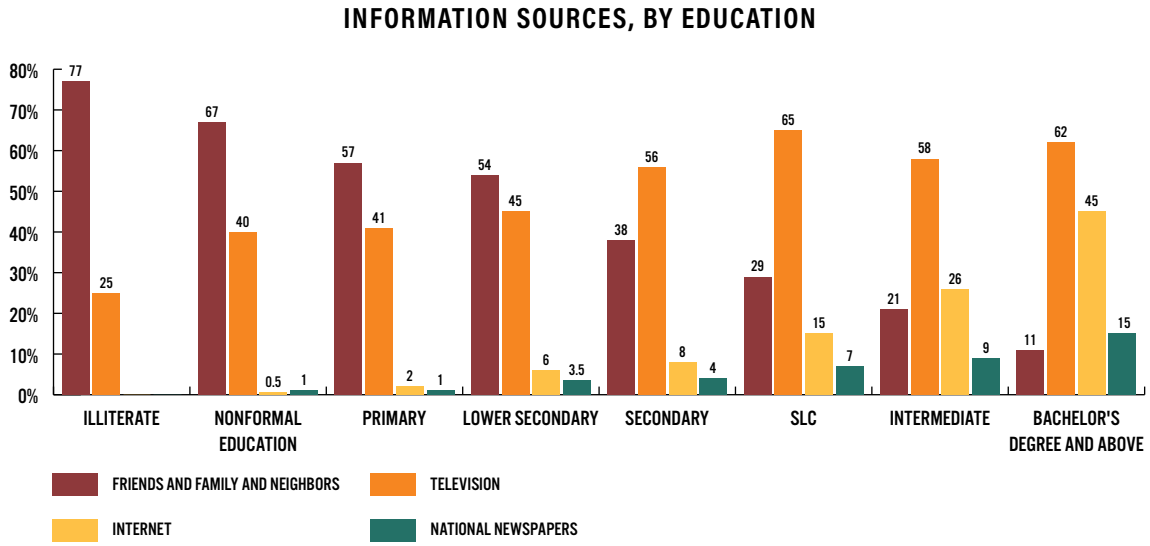


Figure 8.10: Q-H4. *How do you normally get information about what is happening in the country or in the area where you live?* (*N* = 7,202)

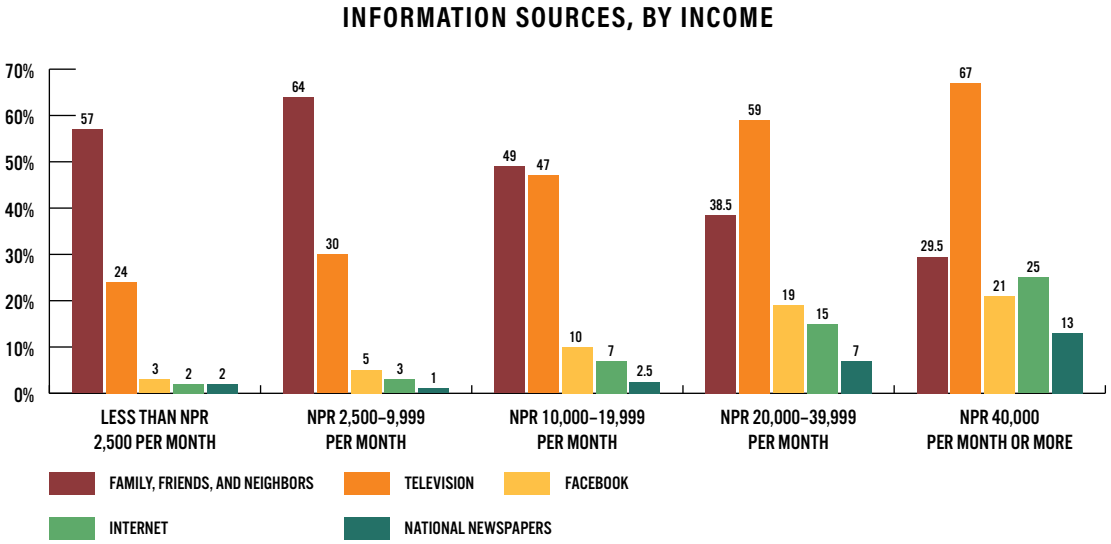


Figure 8.11: Q-H4. *How do you normally get information about what is happening in the country or in the area where you live?* (*N* = 7,202)

PHOTO BY Interdisciplinary Analysts

appendix A

METHODOLOGY

The *Survey of the Nepali People* is based on a nationally representative sample of 7,202 respondents from 599 wards across the country's seven provinces. It was implemented in September and October 2017. Respondents are individuals aged 18 or older, equally distributed across genders, who were household members or had been living in the household for at least six months at the time of the interview. A three-stage sampling procedure was adopted to select one respondent for each of 12 randomly selected households in each of 599 randomly selected wards. Findings are representative of the Nepali population at both the national and provincial levels. The margin of error at the national level is ± 1.2% at a 95% confidence level; at the provincial level it is ± 3% at a 95% confidence level.

SAMPLE FRAME

The sample frame for this survey was obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) of the Government of Nepal. The frame consists of provinces, districts, rural municipalities, urban municipalities, and their wards, with population size as per the 2011 National Population and Housing Census.

SELECTION OF WARDS WITHIN PROVINCES

The sample frame was stratified by the seven provinces of Nepal established under the 2015 constitution and the new federal structure of Nepal. In each province, an equal sample size was allocated for the purpose of comparing the findings across the provinces with consistent error margins and confidence levels. Within each province, wards were selected using probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling. Five hundred ninety-nine wards were sampled across the seven provinces. Because wards were randomly selected, the sample is representative of the full population, including remote areas.

SELECTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WITHIN WARDS

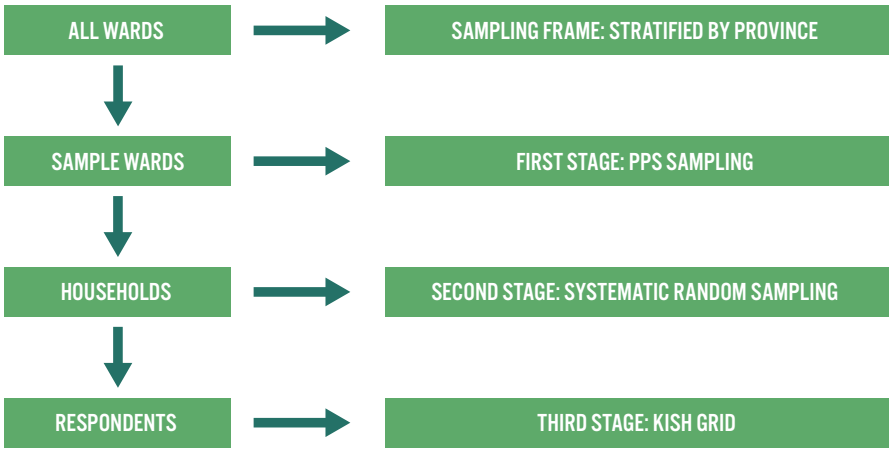
In the second stage of the sampling process, 12 households were selected from each ward, using systematic random sampling from a listing of all households in the ward.

SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS WITHIN HOUSEHOLDS

In the third and final stage of the sampling process, one respondent was selected randomly in each household, using the Kish grid method: all household members aged 18 and above were listed and one of them randomly selected. The names and mobile numbers of respondents were collected, allowing for their inclusion in a household panel in the future.

The three-tiered sample design is illustrated below.

SAMPLING DESIGN



WEIGHTING DATA

When generating survey findings, weighting was done as per the 2011 census. The database was weighted using four parameters: province, gender, age, and caste/ethnicity. The ratio of census findings to sample findings for each parameter was used to calculate the composite weight applied during analysis. The composite weight helps in addressing potential overrepresentation or underrepresentation of certain groups in the survey sample.

appendix B

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

This section details the composition of our sample of 7,202 respondents in terms of geographic area, gender, age, education, profession, income, land ownership, caste/ethnicity, religion, and whether or not they suffer from disability or own a citizenship card. When possible, corresponding data from the 2011 National Population and Housing Census is provided for comparison.

PROVINCE

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Province 1	17.1	17.3
Province 2	20.4	18.8
Province 3	20.9	20.9
Province 4	9.1	8.7
Province 5	18.5	17.5
Province 6	4.4	6.3
Province 7	9.6	10.5

REGION

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Mountains	6.7	6.7
Hills	43.0	41.5
Terai	50.3	51.8

URBAN VS. RURAL

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Rural municipality	37.0
Urban municipality	63.0

GENDER

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Women	51.5	51.8
Men	48.5	48.2

AGE

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
18–24	22.5
25–34	24.3
35–49	26.8
50 & above	26.4

EDUCATION

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Illiterate	18.3
Nonformal education	12.4
Primary	16.6
Lower secondary	7.1
Secondary	17.7
School Leaving Certificate (SLC)	10.8
Intermediate	10.9
Bachelor's degree & above	6.1

PROFESSION/INCOME SOURCE

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Agriculture	50.4
Social security transfers	0.8
Casual labor (nonagricultural)	3.9
Casual labor (agricultural)	1.5
Owns business	13.6
Selling goods/small trade	0.2

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Private sector (nonagricultural)	3.6
Private sector (agricultural)	0.5
Public sector	2.9
Migration/remittances	0.4
Household work	12.9
Student	5.8
Unemployed	3.3
Retired	0.3

INCOME

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Less than NPR 2,500 per month	4.8
NPR 2,500–9,999 per month	24.7
NPR 10,000–19,999 per month	35.5
NPR 20,000–39,999 per month	22.8
NPR 40,000 per month or more	10.3
Refused	0.5
Don't know	1.4

LAND OWNERSHIP

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Yes, we own the land where our house is built, but the land does not otherwise generate income.	4.8
Yes, we own land, some of which generates income.	24.7
Yes, we own the land where our house is built, and we also own land that generates income.	35.5
No, we do not own land.	22.8

CITIZENSHIP CARD

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Yes, I own a citizenship card	92.9
No, I do not own a citizenship card	7.1

DISABILITY (POOR EYESIGHT, POOR HEARING, LIMITED MOBILITY, ETC.)

	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Disability	10.0
No disability	89.9
Don't know	0.1

RELIGION

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Hindu	81.3	86.0
Buddhist	9.0	6.3
Islam	4.4	4.3
Christian	1.4	1.7
Kirat	3.0	1.2
Sikh	0.0	0.0
Bon	0.0	0.2
Prakriti	0.5	0.1
Undefined	0.2	0.1

CASTE/ETHNICITY (ALL)

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Chhetri	16.6	16.1
Brahman-hill	12.2	13.6
Magar	7.1	7.6
Tharu	6.6	6.5
Tamang	5.8	4.6
Newar	5.0	6.6
Musalman	4.4	4.3
Kami	4.8	3.5
Yadav	4.0	3.7
Rai	2.3	2.1
Gurung	2.0	2.6
Damai/Dholi	1.8	2.5
Limbu	1.5	1.2

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Thakuri	1.6	1.5
Sarki	1.4	1.5
Teli	1.4	1.4
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	1.3	1.1
Koiri/Kushwaha	1.2	2.0
Kurmi	0.9	0.5
Sanyasi/Dashnami	0.9	0.9
Dhanuk	0.8	1.3
Musahar	0.9	0.8
Dusadh/Pasawan/Pasi	0.8	0.8
Sherpa	0.4	0.1
Sonar	0.2	0.6
Kewat	0.6	0.5

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Brahman-Terai	0.5	0.7
Kathbaniyan	0.5	0.1
Gharti/Bhujel	0.4	0.2
Mallaha	0.7	0.5
Kalwar	0.5	0.6
Kumal	0.5	0.6
Hajam/Thakur	0.4	0.4
Kanu	0.5	0.4
Rajbansi	0.4	0.3
Sunuwar	0.2	0.8
Sudhi	0.4	0.2
Lohar	0.4	0.4
Tatma/Tatwa	0.4	0.4
Khatwe	0.4	0.2
Dhobi	0.4	0.2
Majhi	0.3	0.3
Nuniya	0.3	0.2
Kumhar	0.2	0.1
Danuwar	0.3	0.4
Haluwai	0.3	0.1
Rajput	0.2	0.1
Kayastha	0.2	0.1
Badhaee	0.1	0.2
Marwadi	0.2	0.1
Satar/Santhal	0.2	0.1
Jhangad/Dhagar	0.1	0.1
Bantar/Sardar	0.2	0.2
Baraee	0.3	0.2
Kahar	0.2	0.1
Gangai	0.1	0.2
Lodh	0.1	0.1

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Rajbhar	0.0	0.1
Dhimal	0.1	0.0
Bhote	0.1	0.0
Bin	0.3	0.1
Tajpuriya	0.1	0.1
Thakali	0.0	0.0
Chidimar	0.0	0.0
Pahari	0.1	0.1
Mali	0.1	0.0
Dom	0.1	0.0
Jirel	0.0	0.1
Badi	0.1	0.0
Meche	0.0	0.0
Punjabi/Shikh	0.0	0.0
Kisan	0.0	0.0
Raji	0.0	0.1
Dhankar/Kharikar	0.0	0.0
Kulung	0.1	0.0
Khawas	0.1	0.2
Rajdhob	0.1	0.1
Kori	0.0	0.0
Sarbaria	0.0	0.0
Bantaba	0.0	0.0
Amat	0.0	0.1
Bahing	0.0	0.0
Samgpang	0.0	0.0
Dalit other	0.6	0.7
Janajati other	0.0	0.4
Terai other	0.4	0.6
Undefined other	0.1	0.0
Don't know	0.0	0.0
Not reported	1.4	0.2

For ease of analysis, the above castes and ethnic groups were aggregated into nine broader categories, as follows:

- **Hill high castes**, such as Chhetri, Brahman-hill, Thakuri, and Sanyasi
- **Hill Adivasi/Janajatis,** such as Magar, Newar, Tamang, Rai, Gurung, Limbu, and Sherpa
- **Hill Dalits**, such as Kami, Sarki, and Damai
- **Madhesi high castes**, such as Brahman-Terai, Rajput, and Kayastha
- **Madhesi intermediate castes**, such as Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, and Dhanuk
- **Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis**, such as Tharu and Rajbanshi
- **Madhesi Dalits**, such as Chamar, Musahar, and Dusadh
- **Muslims**

The use of adjectives such as "high," "intermediate," or "low" to refer to caste categories does not reflect any judgment by the authors of this report, or by The Asia Foundation or its donors, about their relative importance or position in Nepali society.

CASTE/ETHNICITY (BROADER CATEGORIES)

	2011 POPULATION CENSUS %	SURVEY SAMPLE (*N* = 7,202) %
Hill high castes	31.2	32.1
Hill Adivasi/Janajatis	27.2	27.8
Hill Dalits	8.1	8.3
Madhesi high castes	0.8	0.8
Madhesi intermediate castes	14.5	14.1
Madhesi Adivasi/Janajatis	7.6	7.8
Madhesi Dalits	4.5	4.4
Muslims	4.3	4.3
Other	0.3	0.3

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