

A Study on  
Advancing Justice Sector Reform to  
Address Discrimination and Violence against  
Women in Four Selected Districts of Nepal

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**A Study on**  
**Advancing Justice Sector Reform to Address**  
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**Four Selected Districts of Nepal**



This study on Advancing Justice Sector Reform to Address Discrimination and Violence against Women in Four Selected Districts of Nepal was designed and implemented under the guidance of Advisory Committee representing members from Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare Council, and the Central Bureau of Statistics. The study was carried out by the Centre for Research on Environment, Health and Population Activities (CREHPA) with the technical and financial support of International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) Nepal. The opinion expressed in the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MSCSW) and ICJ.

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CREHPA



## PREFACE

Across the world—in rich and poor countries alike—women are being beaten, trafficked, raped and killed. These human rights abuses not only inflict great harm and suffering on women—they tear at the fabric of entire societies. The world is responding to stop violence against women and the momentum has begun in Nepal too.

The Government of Nepal strongly believes that elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls is critical to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Nepal has made strong normative and legal commitments to ending gender-based violence and inequality. It has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), thereby legally binding itself to bring the CEDAW provisions into practice. The Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007 has envisioned the right to equality of all individuals, ensuring social justice for women and girls. A Domestic Violence Act and a 5-year National Strategy and Action Plan for ending gender-based violence have been put in place. Several legislations have been enacted to ensure speedy mechanism for the women victims of violence and concerned stakeholders have been effectively implementing those provisions to ensure access to justice for women. The government is committed to invest in gender equality and women's empowerment to tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls, including improving their access to justice, strengthening the rule of law, ensuring an effective security and legal response, and reforming justice sector.

In spite of the significant progress made to minimize violence against women and girls, challenges still remain in ensuring justice for the victims, primarily due to the gap in trust between justice seekers and justice providers as the study shows.

The Ministry is pleased to present this research report intended to test the perception and determine baseline indicators for the level of trust of women and men in the justice system to provide an effective and adequate remedy in response to incidents of discrimination and violence against women. This study is first in its kind to undertake the perception test of women and men on the justice system in Nepal.

The research was carried out in four districts of Nepal—Mahottari, Siraha, Dhading and Bardiya with 2000 women and equal number of men over the period of one year. The research assesses the knowledge of men and women on the constitution and laws of VAW; their perception on gender roles, discrimination and violence; district level stakeholders' attitudes towards laws, policies and services towards ending violence against women. The report also provides information on women's experience of violence, its consequences and support seeking behavior. It presents recommendations to provide empirical support for a range of remedial measures, many of which have been proposed numerous times by government and civil society, and some of which relate to existing Supreme Court jurisprudence. The concluding recommendations suggest the need to build public trust in the justice system by bridging the gap between justice seekers and justice providers, recommending a focus on the role of judicial leadership.

The Ministry is confident that the report will be shared across with concern stakeholders, which will be a useful and analytical tool for policy and institutional reform. The report will also serve as a valuable source of information for researchers and those working in area of advancing women access to justice.

The Ministry would like to offer sincere thanks to all those involved in this study, especially the Centre for Research on Environment, Health and Population Activities (CREHPA) and its research team for conducting this thorough scientific research. The Ministry would like to extend deep gratitude to the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) Nepal and its team of Justice Sector Reform Project for initiating and designing the concept of the study along with providing financial assistance to carry out this research.

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**- The Study Team**

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CDO	Chief District Officer
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
DAW	Discrimination Against Women
DAO	District Administration Office
DDC	District Development Committee
DK	Don't Know
DVAW	Discrimination and Violence Against Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIR	First Information Report
FWLD	Forum for Women, Law and Development
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GBVIMS	Gender-based Violence Information Management System
GRR	Gender Role and Rights
HMIS	Health Management Information System
ICJ	International Commission of Jurists
IDI	In-depth Interview
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NAC	National Advisory Committee
NDHS	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
OPMCM	Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Minister
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
SD	Standard Deviation
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SSI	Semi-structured Interview
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee
WCDO	Women and Children Development Office
WHO	World Health Organization
WHRD	Woman Human Rights Defender
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Center

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the study was to determine baseline indicators for the level of trust of women victims of discrimination and violence against women (DVAW) and of men in the justice system to provide an effective remedy in response to incidents of DVAW. In the quantitative component, a structured population-based household survey was conducted with 2000 women aged 16-59 and 2000 men aged 16-54 using a stratified two-staged cluster sampling technique. This survey was conducted in four ICJ pilot project districts of Nepal– Mahottari, Siraha, Dhading and Bardiya. A total of 32 in-depth interviews were conducted: 22 with female victims of violence against women and 10 with males perpetrators. In-depth interview participants were selected purposively from the survey respondents. Additionally, 25 FGDs were conducted with both men and women (12 with females and 13 with males) to gain a more detailed reflection of community-held perceptions on existing law and policy towards DVAW, as well as perceptions on the roles of formal justice sector actors in responding to DVAW. We also conducted 35 semi-structured interviews with district-level stakeholders.

A total of 34 interviewers and 12 supervisors were involved in the data collection. Data collection was carried out in three phases between 22 September 2012 and 8 January 2013.

### KEY FINDINGS

#### **Socio-demographic profile of female study population**

- **The mean age at marriage is low**

The mean age at marriage is 16 years. A significant proportion of women have arranged marriages and over 56% have three or more children. The median age of female participants is 30 and almost all are currently married.

- **Significant differences in socio-economic status is found across study districts**

In Mahottari and Siraha, disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups (52-61%) and Dalits/religious minorities (28-35%) disproportionately represent the majority. In Bardiya and Dhading, disadvantaged indigenous groups (41-50%) and upper caste groups (24-28%) represent the majority. Overall, 43.6% of women are illiterate and only 5.6% have a School Leaving Certificate (10 years of schooling) or higher levels of education. Overall, 68.1% of women are in non-remunerated occupations, with the highest proportions from Bardiya, Mahottari and Siraha (78-84%) and Dhading (32%) with the lowest proportion. The main source of family income in both Dhading and Bardiya is agriculture (57-58%) in comparison to Mahottari and Siraha, where the role of remittance (18-19%) is important. Over half the women (54%) in both Mahottari and Siraha note that the practices of giving dowry and paying bride prices are prevalent.

- **Exposure to mass media is moderate and is strongly associated with age, education, socio-economic status, wealth quintile, and district of residence**

Sixty-three percent of women have exposure to at least one type of media, with television viewership being the highest (48%). More than a third of women (37%) listen to the radio at least once a week. Exposure to the print media is relatively lower, as only 7% of women report they read a newspaper or magazine at least once a week. Among women with no exposure to media, 54.8% are illiterate, belong to Dalit/religious minorities, 71.4% are in the lowest wealth quintile and over 40% are from Mahottari



and Siraha. Almost 60% of women with 6 years of education or more have exposure to either radio or TV once a week.

- **Husbands are older and better educated than their wives**

Overall, 60% of husbands are 35 or older with 36 being the median age. Overall, 27.4% of husbands are illiterate (43.6% for wives) and 57% of husbands have more education than their wives.

- **Women have limited access to their natal family's support network**

Thirty-nine percent of women live close to their natal family members (i.e. within an hour travelling distance). In Mahottari and Siraha, over 60% of women report that their natal family homes are further than an hour's distance. Overall, 70% of women report that they depend on their natal families for support.

- **Membership in community organizations is limited and highly oriented towards savings and credit groups**

Only 28% of women are members of community organizations. Among women who are members of community organizations, 72% belong to savings and credit groups.

- **Women's mobility is severely restricted**

About two-thirds of women (64.6%) have low autonomy in terms of (visiting friends and families, health centers and involvement in any community organisation), with the least restriction in Bardiyā (33.8%) and the highest restrictions in Siraha (77.8%).

- **Women's household decision-making power is limited and often relegated to husbands or male family members**

Over 70% of women report no involvement even in the case of small-scale purchases (buying food, clothing). Furthermore, 77.3% women indicate no involvement regarding large-scale purchases (buying a land, house, car, motorbike etc).

- **Women's restricted access to citizenship**

About 27% of women report they do not possess Nepali citizenship. There is no major variation by districts.

### **Attitudes towards gender roles, rights and DVAW**

- **Conventional attitude towards gender roles and rights is predominant**

Women tend to affirm conservative gender roles. For example, an overwhelming majority of women across all districts (84% to 89%) agree with the statement that "once a woman gets married, she belongs to her husband's family and should obey her in-laws". Similarly, over 80% of women believe that "a woman's obligation is to serve her husband and family in the home". The index for women's gender role and rights-related (GRR) attitudes indicates that over two-thirds of women (68.9%) moderately affirm women's equality. However, one in every 11 women (8.8%) only weakly affirms equality with men. Attitudes are more conservative in Siraha (15.0%) and relatively less conservative in Mahottari (5.8%).

- **Socio-economic factors determine attitudes towards gender roles and rights**

Weak affirmation of women's equality persists to a larger extent among women aged 50-59 (19.4%) in comparison to women aged between 16 and 24 years (6.1%). Women from Dalit/religious minority

groups, those who are non-Hindu, have no education, are widowed/separated, or who represent the lowest wealth quintile, are more likely to weakly affirm women's equality than their counterparts.

- **Hitting and abuse of a wife is acceptable in certain situations**

Women condone hitting and abuse of wives several circumstances. The most widely accepted reason for hitting and abusing a wife is “*disobeying husband*”. One in six women (15.6%) believe that wives can be abused and 7.9% believe that hitting a wife is justified if a wife disobeys her husband. Women who are from disadvantaged indigenous ethnic groups, Dalit/religious minorities, non-Hindu, with minimal education, widowed/separated, belong to lowest wealth quintile, with low media exposure, low mobility, or from urban areas, are more likely than their counterparts to justify these actions. Women from Dhading and Mahottari are more likely to justify hitting and abuse of a wife in comparison to other districts.

- **Strong aspirations for gender equality, while discrimination against women widely prevalent**

An overwhelming majority of women (99.3%) from all the survey districts agree that women deserve the same rights and opportunities as men. At the same time, over half (53.1%) reported suffering from unfair treatment or feeling less valued than men. Reports of negative experience related to gender are highest in Bardiya (63%), followed by Dhading (56%), Mahottari (56%) and Siraha (37%), respectively. Findings reveal that factors such as caste/ethnicity, religion, education, marital status, place of residence, women's mobility index and media exposure are significantly associated with lifetime experience of gender inequality.

- **Traditional socio-cultural practices and illiteracy perpetuate discrimination**

Socio-cultural practices (62.3%) and illiteracy (43.1%) are the most commonly perceived reasons for gender discrimination.

- **Education is the most important factor for personal and community wellbeing**

Overall, women consider education the most important factor for personal wellbeing (41.3%), followed by health (25.6%) and employment (18.1%). Nearly one-quarter (23.1%) of women prioritize VAW among the top three concerns that affect their personal wellbeing. Furthermore, 98.0% of women perceive VAW as an “important” or “very important” concern that affects community well-being.

## **Women's awareness and attitudes towards laws and constitutional provisions related to DVAW**

- **Awareness of DVAW-related laws is moderate**

Overall, 4 in 10 women (39%) are not aware of the existence of any law that addresses DVAW in the country. Knowledge about laws varies widely by district. For example, 80% of women in Bardiya have heard of at least one law related to DVAW in comparison to only 48% in Siraha. Among those who have heard about DVAW-related laws, rape (46.9%), child marriage (41.3%) and trafficking (40.9%) are commonly mentioned laws. Less known laws relate to violence and threats in public places (15.1%), property rights for women (24.7%) and birth/citizenship/death registration (25.9%). Qualitative results are consistent with findings from the quantitative survey. Among those who are aware of any DVAW-related laws, very few are able to articulate any content.

- **Socio-economic factors, such as education, wealth quintile, membership in community organizations, are found to be significant predictors of awareness of DVAW-related laws and services**

Logistic regression indicates that women who hold SLC or more are 5 times more likely to know about laws and services than illiterate women. Women who belong to a higher wealth quintile are 2.86

times more likely to know about laws than those in the lowest quintile. Similarly, women who are not members of community organizations are less likely to know about DVAW-related laws and policies. Upper caste groups are 38% more likely to know about laws than the disadvantaged indigenous caste groups. Women from Bardiya are 1.96 times more likely to hear about DVAW-related laws than women from Mahottari.

- **Knowledge of services available to DVAW victims is high**

About three-quarters of women (74%) report that they know about DVAW-related services. There is no major variation by district. Regarding the places they could visit, “police” is the most commonly cited place (91%), followed court/judge (31%), village leaders (16.7%) and VDC office (12.2%) respectively. Few report any knowledge about the Women’s Police Cell, National Women’s Commission, Lawyers/Bar Association, Paralegal Committees or Mediation Center.

In related findings, 96% of women indicate that knowledge of relevant laws, policies and services is a prerequisite to seeking legal protection against DVAW. A vast majority (80-97%) of women believe that service providers need to focus more on effective implementation of different policies and programmes, as well as on strict enforcement of laws.

- **Women perceive that formal authorities are ineffective in enforcing laws**

Overall, women perceive that formal authorities are ineffective in enforcing DVAW-related laws. For example, an overwhelming majority (80%-98%) of women agree that formal authorities “should be more willing to register/file a case against the perpetrator/s”, “should be more willing to take action against the perpetrator”, “should treat people of different ethnicities and/or castes equally as having the same value”, “should treat rich people and poor people equally as having the same value”.

- **Trust in the justice system is relatively low**

Among women who know about formal service providers, their level of trust in the actors varies by type of provider. For example, more than half of the women (55.3%) trust the police and VDC/Municipality ‘a little’. Similarly, a third of the women (34.7%) trust the court ‘a little’. A similar pattern is noted in the case of the public prosecutor and the CDO. Comparatively, women have more trust in VDCs/Municipality. However, women also think that the police can be bribed (75.4%) or politically influenced (67.6%). Similarly, 37.9% of women think that judges can be bribed or politically influenced (38.8%).

- **Perceived discrimination by service providers is high**

Overall, 76.8% of women report that justice or security officials discriminate on the basis of gender, ethnicity/caste and economic status. Discrimination is more acutely perceived in Mahottari and Siraha than in Dhading and Bardiya. Across the districts, women indicate that economic status is the primary driver of discrimination (71.8%) whereas religion is the least important (25.9%).

- **Cheaper and simpler services will increase access to the formal justice system**

Despite their negative attitudes and lack of trust in the police, more than three-quarters of women believe that the presence of police and VDC/Municipality office in their communities has/will increase their security. Overall, most women (86.2%) believe that the presence of formal actors in their communities will increase their individual security and wellbeing. The vast majority (97.3%) of women agree that cheaper and simpler services will increase their access to the formal justice system to seek remedies and protection.

- **Women’s propensity to seek support from formal service providers is low**

The vast majority of survey participants (70.4%) report that they have never sought any help/support for any reason from any type of formal authority. Of those who sought help, 69% did so more than a year ago. Startlingly, district-wise analysis indicates that an overwhelming majority of women from Mahottari (91.2%) and Siraha (86.6%) had not visited any formal service providers for any reason. Out of the 592 women who have reported seeking support for any reason, an overwhelming majority (81.9%) visited the VDC or Municipality Office. This is followed by the CDO (35.3%), police (17%) and court (9.1%), respectively. Very few women ever visited the DDC, WCDO and Paralegal Committee members.

- **Barriers to seeking support of any kind from formal service providers**

The most commonly identified barriers include long distances to access services (44.9%), followed by lack of awareness about formal procedures and types of service providers (32.5%), fear of re-victimization (16.8%), lengthy process (16.6%), and economic costs (16%). Moreover, qualitative findings reveal that fear of retaliation, fear of social consequences such as shame to family, discrimination, and stigmatisation, are significant deterrents to victims seeking support.

- **Perceptions on the legitimacy and authority of the formal justice system**

Most women (81%) believe that people respect the decisions and outcomes of the formal justice system. About one in six women (17.7%) report that they do not respect such decisions. This figure is highest in Siraha (22.8%) and lowest in Dhading (9.4%).

## **Experiences of violence, its consequences and support seeking behaviour**

- **Violence against women is common**

Overall, more than half of women (50.7%) report they have ever experienced violence in their lifetimes. The most common types of violence include physical violence (42.1%), emotional violence (35.6%) and sexual violence (18%), respectively. Economic violence is least common (15%) among surveyed women. About 31% of women report experiencing violence in the past 12 months. Life time prevalence of violence is highest in Siraha (62.2%) followed by Bardiya (53.4%), Mahottari (53.2%), and Dhading (34%), respectively.

- **Perpetrators of violence are familiar to victims**

Among women who have experienced violence, 68.6% of perpetrators are intimate partners followed by family members (62.2%). Teachers (5.8%) and neighbours (13%) are also mentioned.

- **Violence also occurs during childhood**

About a quarter of women (24%) report experiencing of violence before age 16. The most common form of violence during childhood is physical violence. Family members are usually the main perpetrators.

- **Negative consequences of violence against women are common**

Women report experiencing of a range of psychological, physical, sexual and reproductive health problems as a result of violence suffered. About two-thirds of women (72%) report they have at least one problem due to violence suffered. Psychological problems are the most commonly reported problem (72%). Among women who suffer from psychological problems, fear, tension and depression are mentioned most frequently.

- **Help is not often sought**

A majority of women who experienced violence (67.7%) did not seek help. Women who are physically or sexually assaulted are least likely to seek help, while women who are economically deprived are most likely (50.5%) to seek support. Women who suffer violence from teachers or intimate partners are less likely to seek help than women who face violence from neighbours or relatives. When women seek help, it is mainly from family members or friends. An extremely low percentage of women (3.9%) seek legal support.

- **Shame and re-victimization are the main barriers to seeking care**

Shame (41.7%) and fear of re-victimization (33.4%) are identified as the two main hurdles that women face in seeking and receiving assistance from service providers.

- **Women report risk of violence is persistent**

Over a quarter of women (26.2%) feel they are at risk of violence. The percentage of women who report being at risk of violence is highest in Siraha (37%), followed by Mahottari (26.8%), Bardiya (26.8%), and Dhading (14.4%). Women in the 25-34 age group, members of disadvantaged Terai, Dalit or religious minority groups, in lowest wealth quintiles and with low exposure to mass media perceive themselves to be at greater risk of violence than their counterparts.

## **Men's awareness and perceptions on discrimination, violence, laws, policies**

- **Men subscribe to conservative gender roles**

An overwhelming majority of men (82-98%) agree that “once a woman gets married she belongs to her husband’s family and should obey her in-laws”. Over 80% of men note that men and women have equal value, but have different roles and obligations. Thirty five percent of men believe that “a woman shames and angers her husband if she does not produce a son for him and his family”.

Overall, a majority of men (61%) moderately affirm gender equality. Men who are illiterate, divorced, with low media exposure, daily wage labourers, belong to a joint family, have more children, belong to the lowest wealth quintile and from Mahottari are more likely to weakly affirm gender equality than their counterparts.

- **Men condone hitting and abuse of wife in many circumstances**

More than one-third (36%) of men justify either wife abuse (36%) or hitting their wives (13%) if she “disobeys him”. Other frequently cited reasons justifying abuse and hitting of wives are “not completing household work to husband’s satisfaction” (23% justifying abuse and 6% justifying hitting) and “husband suspects wife is unfaithful” (19% justifying abuse and 11% justifying hitting).

- **Men do not perceive DVAW-related issues to be a salient concern**

Overall, only 14.7% of men place VAW among the top three concerns that affect their personal wellbeing. However, 88% of men overall perceive VAW as an important concern that affects community wellbeing, with the lowest proportion from Dhading (67%) and the highest from Bardiya (97.4%). Instead, men cite education, health, and employment as the most important concerns for personal and community wellbeing.

- **Men acknowledge that men and women should be valued equally, but recognise that disparities exist to a large extent in different spheres**

On the whole, almost all men (99.2%) believe that men and women should be valued equally, but also generally acknowledge that women suffer unfair treatment in society in practice. Commonly



cite examples of discrimination against women include inheritance of property (85.8%), property ownership, and independent decision-making about its use (83.2%). Other issues of concern include women's education, restricted mobility, choice of life partner, and fertility decisions.

- **Social/traditional practices and illiteracy perpetuate DVAW**

Men perceive that social/traditional practices (63%) and illiteracy (53%) to be the main causes of discrimination against women. Other drivers include poverty (29%), patriarchal society (9%) and religion (8%). Results from FGDs support quantitative findings.

- **Moderate levels of knowledge about DVAW-related laws**

A quarter of male participants (26%) have not heard about any laws related to DVAW. Awareness about such laws is lowest in Dhading (64%) and highest in Mahottari (85%). Among those aware of DVAW-related laws, few are aware of specific laws and provisions. Nevertheless, 98.8% recognize that awareness of access to remedies and knowledge about legal protection are important for seeking support.

- **Socio-economic and demographic characteristics are significant factors of men's awareness of DVAW-related laws and constitutional provisions**

Men who are younger, upper caste, hindu, more educated, urban, never married, in higher wealth quintiles, or with greater exposure to mass media, are more likely to be aware of DVAW-related laws than their counterparts.

- **Men not convinced of effectiveness of DVAW-related laws**

Among men who have heard of DVAW-related laws, about a third (35.1%) think they are "okay" (*thikai*) when asked about their effectiveness. About a quarter (24%) consider the laws "only a little effective", and only one in seven (15%) perceive that they are "very effective". One in five (20%) observe that laws related to some issues are effective while others not.

- **Men's perceptions of women's access to justice under DVAW-related laws**

Overall, 99.2% of men state that formal justice system orders for the protection of victims of DVAW must be complied with. However, over 94% of men agree that "it is too dangerous for women to make use of these (DVAW-related) laws", and that they "need more protection" and "more economic resources" before women can rely on the laws. Almost 70% of men agree that "the laws don't punish the perpetrators enough and will have no impact".

- **Most men trust formal justice sector actors 'a little', with wide variation by type of actor**

Among men who are aware of formal service providers, their level of trust in the actors varies by type of provider. For example, more than two-thirds of the men (66% to 71.6%) trust the CDO, VDC/Municipality, the police and DDC 'a little'. Similarly, more than half of men (57%) trust the court, public prosecutor 'a little'. Men trust the police the least. Most men state that the police can be bribed (81.1%) or politically influenced (89.8%). Along the same lines, more than half of men think that judges can be bribed (54.9%) or politically influenced (62.8%).

- **Men perceive discrimination by formal authorities**

Over a quarter of men (29.8%) believe that there are high levels of discrimination by formal authorities who have a role in addressing cases of DVAW.

- **Men agree that administrative reforms can improve women’s access to justice, but point to cultural barriers not addressed by these measures**

Men overwhelmingly (99.6%) agree that cheaper, simpler and more prompt procedures, as well as better-trained officials, will increase women’s access to the formal system. At the same time, a series of findings describe other barriers that such reforms do not address: the percentage of men (45.9% - 52.4%) who affirm that a woman brings shame to her husband, family and community if she turns to the formal justice system for help; the low proportion of men who think that women should be able to seek physical protection (2.8%), to seek help in response gender-based violence (15.1%), or to seek justice (6.9%); and the small but significant proportion of men (13.9%) who view VAW as a private matter not for public authorities.

- **Men see a role for themselves in relation to addressing DVAW**

Overall, about half of the men see “an important role” and about another half see “some role” for themselves in addressing DVAW.

### **District level stakeholders’ knowledge and attitudes towards laws, polices and services addressing DVAW**

- **Most stakeholders perceive that DVAW is widespread**

Almost all stakeholders (31 out of 35) believe DVAW is common and reveal that women are at high risk of suffering from discrimination and violence.

- **Stakeholders acknowledge women’s vulnerability to violence**

Most stakeholders believe that “just being a woman results in vulnerability to violence throughout her lifetime”. Stakeholders are divided regarding whether a Dalit woman faces more barriers while seeking support from the formal justice system than a non-Dalit woman.

- **Root causes of DVAW**

According to stakeholders, the main causes of DVAW are lack of education and traditional social attitudes towards women. Other noted causes include poverty and patriarchy.

- **Stakeholders affirm women’s equality but indicate that the police are not doing enough**

Stakeholders generally affirmed women’s equality. However, more than half of stakeholders agree that “when police do not properly investigate complaints of violence against women it is usually due to lack of familiarity with the law and ways to enforce the law”.

- **Almost all stakeholders are aware of the existence of laws and policies to address DVAW but express mixed opinions about enforcement**

Almost all stakeholders perceive there are laws and policies to address DVAW in the country. However, they note that existing DVAW-related laws are not adequately enforced and lack strong mechanisms to ensure accountability. In addition, factors such as political interference, corruption and bribery along with traditional socio-cultural norms and practices prevent existing laws and provisions from being implemented.

- **Barriers to women accessing care**

Stakeholders identify a series of barriers to women’s access to justice: lack of knowledge about legal rights and availability of services; fear of bringing ‘shame’ on family and negative reactions from the

family and community; fear of retribution; negative outcomes associated with DVAW; lack of trust in service providers; lack of personal safety; and political interference.

Stakeholders also identified other institutional barriers such as constraints posed by lack of resources, political interference, concerns about the futility of providing care in an unsupportive environment, lengthy and costly legal procedures, and lack of security.

- **Stakeholders have mixed views regarding the effectiveness of formal actors to address DVAW**

Most stakeholders believe that the courts, judges and CDOs are effective in tackling DVAW related cases within their districts. More than half of the stakeholders mention that police, WCDO and VDC are ineffective.

- **All stakeholders stress need for further training**

The majority of stakeholders (63%) report that their personnel have received some form of DVAW-related training but that it is not comprehensive. All stakeholders expressed an urgent need for training for themselves and their colleagues to improve care and services for DVAW survivors.

- **Various efforts are being made to address DVAW at the central level but little is done at the village level**

Stakeholders report that efforts to establish shelters homes and resource centers at the district level are underway, while little is done at the village level. Similarly, awareness campaigns and training schemes are in place in some districts, either through the government or NGOs, but more work is needed on the ground. Stakeholders put emphasis on community awareness campaigns to enhance the public's knowledge of DVAW-related laws, policies and programs. Furthermore, stakeholders stress the need to allocate a separate budget to combat with DVAW and more investment in human resources. The need to step up efforts to foster greater collaboration and cooperation between various agencies is also recognized.



## Key indicators: Women and Men

Key indicators: Women	Bardiya	Dhading	Mahottari	Siraha	Total
1. Prevalence of VAW (lifetime)	53.4	34.0	53.2	62.2	50.7
1a. Prevalence of VAW in last 12 months	33.6	18.6	32.8	37.6	30.7
2. Percentage of women who feel at risk of VAW	26.8	14.4	26.8	36.6	26.2
3a. Percentage of women who place VAW among the top 3 concerns that affect their personal wellbeing	34.4	14.6	24.4	19.0	23.1
3b. Percentage of women who perceive VAW as an “important” or “very important” concern that affects community wellbeing	97.0	98.4	97.6	99.0	98.0
4. Percentage of women who are aware of how to access the formal justice system in response to incidents of DVAW	69.8	71.4	74.2	78.4	73.5
5. Percentage of men and women who are aware of constitutional and legal provisions preventing, protecting against, and criminalizing DVAW	80.4	57.6	56.2	48.0	60.6
6. Percentage of men and women who believe that awareness of access to remedies and knowledge about legal protection are important for seeking support/ assistance in relation to incidents of DVAW	98.0	92.0	98.8	95.4	96.1
7. Percentage of women who are willing to seek help or support from formal authorities, if needed in future	87.0	91.8	92.2	85.4	89.1
8. Percentage of recent victims of DVAW who have sought support from the formal justice system	1.9	3.5	3.4	6.4	3.9
9. Percentage of victims of DVAW who have sought support from the formal justice system and believe that remedies provided by the formal justice system should meet with compliance	1.3	2.2	1.4	5.0	2.6
10. Percentage of women who believe that men and women should be valued equally	98.8	99.6	99.4	99.2	99.3
11. Percentage of women who believe that the presence of formal justice system actors (police, court officials, etc.) in their communities increases their sense of individual security and well being	87.0	93.4	88.4	76.0	86.2
12. Percentage of women who believe that cheaper and simpler procedures will increase their access to the formal justice system for remedies and protection	98.4	96.0	100.0	94.8	97.3

13. Percentage of women who believe that police, prosecutors, judicial and/ or quasi-judicial officials (CDO, LDOs, etc.) can be bribed and/ or influenced by political pressure	86.6	68.2	92.4	80.4	81.9
14. Percentage of women who believe that justice and/or security officials discriminate on the basis of gender, cultural identity, caste, race, religion, or economic status	73.0	62.2	91.8	80.2	76.8
15. Percentage of women who believe that outcomes and decisions of the formal justice system are worthy of respect	91.0	75.2	82.8	74.4	80.9
16. Percentage of women who feel that the formal justice system is effective and responsive in addressing their needs	66.8	47.4	27.0	22.2	40.9
17. Percentage of women who feel that they have a voice in improving the quality of the formal justice system	17.6	16.8	24.0	15.2	18.4

<b>Key indicators: Men</b>	<b>Bardiya</b>	<b>Dhading</b>	<b>Mahottari</b>	<b>Siraha</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Percentage of men who place VAW among the top 3 concerns that affect their personal wellbeing	17.0	13.8	12.4	15.2	14.7
2. Percentage of men who perceive VAW as an “important” or “very important” concern that affects community wellbeing	97.4	67.0	91.0	96.4	88.0
3. Percentage of men who are aware of constitutional and legal provisions preventing, protecting against and criminalizing DVAW	80.6	64.2	85.2	67.2	74.3
4. Percentage of men who believe that awareness of access to remedies and knowledge about legal protection are important for seeking support/ assistance in relation to incidents of DVAW	99.0	99.8	100.0	96.2	98.8
5. Percentage of men who believe that victims of DVAW should be able to seek support from the formal justice system in response to incidents of DVAW	99.6	99.2	99.8	99.0	99.4
6. Percentage of men who expect the State to protect women facing threats, to investigate, and where appropriate, to prosecute DVAW	98.6	99.0	91.2	95.2	96.0
7. Percentage of men who believe that orders of the formal justice system for the protection of victims of DVAW should meet with compliance	99.2	99.0	99.4	99.0	99.2
8. Percentage of men who see a role for themselves in relation to reducing the problem of DVAW	98.0	96.2	96.0	95.6	96.5
9. Percentage/level of men who believe that men and women should be valued equally (including distinctions between public and private life)	99.8	100.0	98.2	98.6	99.2
10. Percentage of men who believe that the presence of formal justice system actors (police, court officials, etc.) in their communities increase their sense of individual security and well being	97.6	97.4	96.6	94.4	96.5
11. Percentage of men who believe that cheaper and simpler procedures will increase their access to the formal justice system for remedies and protection	99.4	99.4	100.0	99.6	99.6
12. Percentage of men police, prosecutors, judicial and/ or quasi-judicial officials (CDO, LDOs, etc.) can be bribed and/ or influenced by political pressure	93.8	90.2	99.0	95.6	94.7
13. Percentage of men who believe that justice and/or security officials discriminate on the basis of gender, cultural identity, caste, race, religion, or economic status	72.2	64.0	90.4	79.8	76.6
14. Percentage of men who believe that outcomes and decisions of the formal justice system are worthy of respect	95.8	91.2	99.0	96.4	95.6
15. Percentage of men who feel that the formal justice system is effective and responsive in addressing their needs	69.6	43.0	54.4	75.8	60.7
16. Percentage of men who feel that they have a voice in improving the quality of the formal justice system	14.4	22.6	11.0	5.2	13.3

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The responsibility to ensure a remedy for violence and discrimination documented in the research is shared across the legislative, executive and judicial branches. The justice gap described above is a measure of the challenge and obligation to ensure that life, security, physical and psychological integrity, and equality are protected. These are obligations at the level of constitutional and international law. The baseline findings provide empirical support for a range of remedial measures, many of which have been proposed numerous times by government and civil society, and some of which relate to existing Supreme Court jurisprudence.

The challenge facing progressive law, jurisprudence, and previous recommendations, is to initiate and strengthen collaborative action. It is critical that these actions are accompanied by rigorous and robust empirical monitoring of impact on the lives of women, their families, and their communities. This baseline study is a contribution to such efforts.

The concluding observations and recommendations below are offered as a basis for further law and policy dialogue. They give priority to the need to build public trust in the justice system. This implies a long-term, sustained effort to ensure a shared understanding across justice sector actors about relevant values, principles, laws, and methods of enforcement and monitoring. Three kinds of recommendations follow: (i) measures applicable to specific institutions; (ii) measures to concretely link justice sector actors and communities in dialogue about justice policy; (iii) measures to increase awareness and build trust between women and justice sector actors.

### **i) Specific institutions**

#### **Supreme Court**

The legal and social barriers described in the report represent a significant challenge for the administration of justice, and highlight the importance of the Supreme Court's Five-Year Strategic Plan and its focus on delivering justice to the most vulnerable and with least access. This leadership role is important for identifying court-led measures that can in the short and longer term increase women's access to justice. Specific policy instruments that have been proposed and discussed already include:

- Ensure effective legal aid as well as specific and timely measures for effective and speedy justice delivery.
- Adopt specific measures for the effective implementation of judicial decisions, including dialogue in the Justice Sector Coordination Committee (JSCC) to discuss these measures and reach agreement with all relevant actors in the justice chain.
- Monitor the role played by justice sector actors engaged formally or informally in mediation, to ensure protection of fundamental rights.
- Establish a gender desk in each district court, beginning with pilot districts, and include among its duties the implementation of expedited case management procedures that are friendly to women victims of violence.
- In coordination with other justice sector actors, take timely and specific steps to reach out to the public in order to explain the function of the courts and the existence of mechanisms for policy dialogue with civil society.

## **Ministry of Law, Ministry of Home Affairs, Attorney General Office**

Any solution to the justice gap affecting women victims of violence will involve the Home Ministry, particularly the Nepal Police Women's Cell and the CDO. Many women and men are concerned that the police still tend not to view violence against women as a serious matter of public concern. Combined with concerns over the influence of corruption and political interference, strong institutional leadership is required to ensure that violence against women is perceived merely as a “women’s issue”. Fear of retribution and shame inhibit support-seeking behaviour, in addition to perceptions of discriminatory behaviour by justice sector actors. In collaboration with other stakeholders, the Nepal Police can play an important role in addressing these issues, including undertaking measures to ensure confidentiality, overcome systemic problems in the registration of FIRs, and ensure effective fast-tracking of cases where appropriate and feasible. The accountability of the Nepal Police to other justice sector actors and to women and communities will also strengthen public trust.

- Collaborate fully with the Supreme Court and other justice sector actors, including civil society, to ensure that a mechanism is created at the district level to ensure regularly consideration of justice priorities, the development and monitoring of justice policy, and the mutual accountability of all actors, in order to ensure access to justice.
- Ensure effective, transparent and participatory monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the 2009 Violence Against Women Act and other related legislation and regulations.
- Continue to strengthen and expand the Women’s Police Cell, ensuring regular inputs from local community members and organizations as a measure of improvement and responsiveness. The JSCC can support this function.
- Led by the CDO at the district level, carry out specific outreach to communities in relation to DVAW, in collaboration with the Nepal Police Women’s Cell, community organizations, the WDO, the NWC and other relevant actors.
- Ensure the collection, monitoring and evaluation of data on violence against women and the response of the justice system. This information should be regularly disseminated at the district and national level.
- Ensure effective coordination of stakeholders by mapping their activities strength referral mechanism

## **National Women Commission and National Human Rights Commission**

The research results show that these agencies are, to date, relatively less known to women victims of violence or their families. Further support to their programming and efforts is warranted, particularly in raising awareness and promoting sound justice sector policies in response to DVAW. For example, one of the challenges affecting the response to women victims of violence is the lack of a standardized definition of DVAW that is used by all relevant agencies to deal with individual cases and to accumulate data that accurately reflects the nature and scope of the problem. The NWC and WCDO are poised to play a leadership role in this regard.

The NHRC has a critical monitoring role in all areas of justice delivery to ensure that Nepal's rights obligations are fulfilled. In the context of a concerted and collaborative set of policy actions by justice sector actors with shared benchmarks, the NHRC could work closely with the NWC and WCDO in monitoring and reporting on progress. One of the early, critical areas of monitoring and support relates to the research findings regarding high levels of fear of retribution and the lack of economic support that obstruct women's access to justice.

It is recommended that these institutions assume a greater leadership role in light of this independence; in particular, they should seek to strengthen or add the following activities:

- Collaborate with all justice sector actors to develop coordinated policy research, advocacy, litigation, awareness-raising and other programming.
- Support an evidence-based approach to law and policy reform through the use of this and other reliable and accurate research data.
- Monitor, evaluate, and report on implementation of the 2009 Domestic Violence Act and other relevant legislation.
- Promote transparency and accountability of justice sector institutions in relation to their responsibilities to address violence against women, including through the JSCC.
- Develop specific, coordinated and effective community outreach programmes in order to raise awareness among communities regarding violence against women, promote women's autonomy, and develop opportunities for men to participate in combating discrimination and violence against women.

### **Political parties**

Political parties have a key responsibility and leadership role to play in combating discrimination and violence against women, particularly in the context of weak governance institutions and the reporting of widespread political interference in the judicial process. Political party leaders at district and national level should strengthen or add to their agendas the following activities:

- Support legislative action to address longstanding issues of discrimination and violence against women.
- Support and promote the role of the Inter-Party Women's Caucus to make full use of research findings to promote transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the implementation of law and judicial decisions.
- Develop a shared understanding and agreed indicators to measure success and fulfilment of stated political commitments in combating violence against women.
- Develop a policy of non-intervention in cases of VAW, including this and other measures in a shared code of conduct for political parties, particularly in anticipation of elections.

### **Development partners**

Development partners have major role to support the initiatives of government and civil society actors. Development partners focusing work on women access to justice in Nepal should:

- Strengthen coordination to avoid duplication, incoherent and contradictory strategies and activities, and to optimize collaboration
- Focus on supporting local groups to work with justice sector in setting benchmarks, monitoring and evaluating progress
- Link all development activity for vulnerable communities to empowerment of women in relation to VAW
- Fully fund rigorous monitoring and evaluation of program implementation.

- Ensure governance and rule of law programmes adopt overall strategy in consultation with civil society and community-based organizations
- Recommend pilot approach to districts where measurable improvement in wellbeing can be linked to improved justice delivery; learn lessons for application in other districts

## **Civil Society and Community-Based Organizations**

Civil society and Community based organisations are the key body to bridge gap between community and justice sector actors who regularly monitors the work of actors and act as a watchdog.

- Increase women’s awareness of (a) their rights to a life free from violence; (b) the formal support mechanisms available to them; (c) their rights in terms of service expectations. Programmes that aimed to raise legal literacy among both men and women; including message of where to seek further support should be implemented.
- Coordination among the organisation working on GBV is must. Development of a coordination strategy for engaging with the government would enable NGOs to play a more active lobbying role.
- Strengthened national networks would enable them to increase their impact throughout the country and would contribute to a more coherent response to GBV in the communities.
- Legal and counselling services should be intensified and made more accessible and affordable for rural women in particular.
- Play a role of watchdog on cases of VAW and discourage mediation on cases of VAW.
- Strength coordination to avoid duplication and strength referral mechanism.

### **(ii) Enable justice sector dialogue mechanisms at the district level as a support to policy design, implementation and monitoring**

Bridging the social and legal barriers described in empirical detail in this report requires the development of a shared understanding among all relevant actors of (i) the justice issues from the perspectives of women, men, and communities;(ii) related roles and responsibilities that include close coordination among all state actors in the justice chain; and (iii) a course of action in which those responsible for implementing public policy regularly can share information on a policy level and be accountable to citizens.

The core recommendation flowing from these observations is to support existing efforts by the Supreme Court and others to strengthen justice sector coordination, including participation by representatives of local communities and civil society. A mechanism such as the existing Justice Sector Coordination Committees or other modality might serve to ensure shared understanding and trust, effective policies, and more adequate coordination and mutual accountability between justice sector actors.

Political parties nationally and at the district level need to play a leadership role in prioritizing attention to the justice gap faced by women victims of violence. In addition to addressing the specific issue of political interference in the administration of justice, political parties can help to change attitudes, promoting an understanding of violence against women as a matter of public concern.

### **(iii) Develop awareness-raising strategies that include the participation of men**

Women generally have a low level of knowledge about their rights and about DVAW-related laws, including specific provisions, which increases their vulnerability. It is necessary to increase women’s

awareness of (a) their rights to a life free from violence; (b) the formal support mechanisms available to them; (c) their rights in terms of service expectations. Programmes that aim to raise legal literacy among both men and women, including messages of where to seek further support, should be implemented.

Family and community support is vital for women to be able to seek and receive services to both respond to and prevent DVAW without fear of subsequent shame or discrimination. Men and boys need to be included as part of the “solution”. Therefore, it is important to promote a gender transformative approach towards addressing DVAW. Such an approach should focus on promoting men’s roles and responsibilities towards ensuring women and girls live a life free of violence.





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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The strategic objective of the ICJ is to contribute demonstrably to the development of a justice system worthy of public trust. The ICJ has begun with a focus on women's access to justice, with the intention of expanding to other issues such as caste discrimination in subsequent years. No prior research has systematically examined women's and men's knowledge of, and attitudes towards the formal justice system, the role of various actors, and the procedures for seeking support in response to DVAW. This present study was designed to collect baseline indicators for the specific issue of women's access to justice, bearing in mind that it is part of a broader effort to strengthen access to justice and to encourage more responsive justice delivery in Nepal.

### 1.1 Background

Discrimination and violence against women not only violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of women's human rights but it also infringes upon their fundamental freedoms. In all societies, to a greater or lesser extent, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuses that cut across lines of income, class and culture. DVAW goes beyond physical and psychological violence against women as it includes other social and economic harms, including threats of such violence, as well as other differential, exclusionary or restrictive treatment that is directed against a person on the basis of her sex. It encompasses a wide range of human rights violations, including sexual abuse of children, rape, domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking in women and girls and several harmful traditional practices such as the dowry system, *chhaupadi*, witch-hunting, and denial of property and citizenship rights. Any of these abuses and violations can leave deep psychological scars, damage the health of women and girls in general, including their reproductive and sexual health, and in some instances, result in death. Thus, the impact of DVAW is far-reaching both for the victim, and for society at large. Although there are significant efforts at national and international level to curb DVAW, in practice, patriarchal values and societal attitudes more broadly remain major obstacles.

Despite constituting half of the total population and contributing to social, cultural and economic life at the level of the family, the community, and the nation, women's contributions are undervalued and often invisible. At the same time, women are victims of discriminatory practices, abuses and other forms of violence. Existing patriarchal values and norms rooted in society are major factors that intensify DVAW. In addition, other factors such as low literacy rates of girls and women, a lack of gender sensitive policies and inadequate laws including gender discriminatory laws, as well as poverty, also contribute to fostering DVAW. Lack of access to courts and other grievance-handling mechanisms has further aggravated the situation.

This situation is exacerbated by the decade-long protracted armed conflict between the armed opposition group and the State in Nepal which led to an estimated 13,000 deaths, displacement of thousands of civilians, and resulted in gross and systematic violations of human rights. Thousands were forcibly disappeared, abducted, and killed. Many families still do not know the fate or whereabouts of their loved ones. The impact of armed conflict on women and girls was intense and widespread, including physical, mental, sexual and economic harm, the extent of which is still the subject of on-going research. Victims of such violence during the conflict and in the post-conflict period are still waiting for justice. Perpetrators are yet to be held accountable.

Everyone has a right to a remedy whenever his or her human rights are violated. The State has an obligation to investigate any alleged violations and, when required by law, to prosecute and punish perpetrators for crimes committed. The constitution of Nepal guarantees that all citizens are equal before the law and that no person shall be denied equal protection of the law. The State cannot discriminate among citizens on grounds of religion, race, sex, caste, tribe, or ideological conviction and any contravention of this Constitutional protection is punishable by law. However many individuals and communities do not enjoy this right because the State lacks capacity, resources or political will to carry out these functions. The people who suffer most from this situation are those who have been historically marginalized and excluded due to poverty or to their gender, caste, or cultural identities (including ethnicity).

On 2 May 2005, a Supreme Court of Nepal verdict abolished all discrimination against women (Onslow, 2010). In 2006 the Comprehensive Peace Agreement included a provision endorsing the principle of non-discrimination and equality of women and girls. It is a responsibility of the Government of Nepal to combat DVAW as it is State party to several UN human rights instruments and declarations that relate to DVAW.

While significant statutory reforms have been passed in the last decade, leading to positive recognition from the CEDAW committee, more work remains to be done. A 2009 FWLD report references 96 discriminatory provisions in various statutes as well as the Constitution (FWLD, 2009). Main areas of gendered discrimination relate to property, trafficking and sexual abuse, education, employment, health including reproductive-health rights, marriage and family, and legal procedure and court proceedings. A new bill to review gender-discriminatory provisions within existing polices was drafted in 2011, but it has not yet been introduced in the Parliament.

An even greater challenge at this point in Nepal's efforts to combat gender discrimination, is the failure to implement reforms at the level of policy, regulations, and institutional practice. This challenge includes the complex relationship between the State and its formal justice system, and local communities, where patriarchal traditions conflict in significant ways with constitutional and statutory norms of substantive equality. Meeting this challenge requires strengthening institutions with personnel, resources, and rules that are capable of fulfilling institutional mandates, accountably managed and used, and sustainable to the point that institutional norms are followed routinely and predictably.

There have been some significant advances. Girls now have significantly better access to education. Gender-inclusive/friendly policies and national plans of action have been framed to increase women's access to political, economic and social spheres, and to reduce vulnerability to GBV. Legal reforms have been introduced and institutional mechanisms have been established and strengthened in order to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. As a result of these, and other, activities, the gender empowerment measurement has improved significantly from 0.391 in 2001 to 0.496 in 2006 (UNFPA, 2007).

## **1.2 Regulatory approach of Government of Nepal**

In May 2009, the *Domestic Violence and Punishment Act* was passed. It defines physical, mental, sexual, financial and behavioural violence within the home as domestic violence. This Act emphasizes respect for the right of every person to live in a secure and dignified manner, prevention and control of violence occurring within the family or outside, making such violence punishable, and providing protection to survivors of violence. Further, it allows individuals to file complaints, provides for legal remedies (including interim protection orders and compensation), and creates service centres for counselling and rehabilitation, as well as defines penalties for perpetrators.

Other measures by the Government of Nepal include:

- Endorsement of the Standard Operating Procedures for the prevention of and response to GBV

- Setting up a national “Gender-based Violence Information Management System” database under the National Women’s Commission
- Enactment of the *Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act 2007*, which incorporates new dimensions on trafficking, defines the duties and obligations of the State and other stakeholders, and makes provision for a victims’ trust fund
- Prioritising gender and social inclusion, gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment, including gender-based budgeting since the Government’s Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)
- Implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPA) against Trafficking of Children and Women for Sexual and Labour Exploitation in 1998, the NPA on CEDAW in 2003, the NPA on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in 2004, and the NPA against Gender Violence in 2010
- Marking 2010 as the ‘Year against Gender Violence’ and introduced a hospital-based one-stop crisis centre for survivors of GBV in 15 selected districts

Despite the foregoing, there are still inadequate empirical data on the context, frequency, precipitating factors and effectiveness of response mechanisms to DVAW in Nepal. One of the reasons why these efforts have not been more effective is because they have not sufficiently taken into account barriers to the effective administration of justice at the local level. Instead, many efforts have focused on internal institutional needs, assuming that this would ensure an effective response to justice demands locally. The justice gap has remained.

### 1.3 Rationale of the study

It is important to recognize the range of concerns about access to the legal system for DVAW victims, including specific barriers to access that individuals and groups face. Although there are several instruments that have been adopted at the national and international level to end DVAW and to ensure access to justice for victims, survivors of DVAW have not been able to receive adequate and appropriate remedies due to weak justice delivery.

There are several reasons for this. First, cases of DVAW are under-reported due to the victims’ fear of retaliation, stigmatization and/or further victimization. Second, the authorities are often reluctant to pursue investigations in cases of DVAW or even accept First Information Reports (FIRs) due to political pressure and other factors. Third, victims and their families are often not treated with sensitivity and respect when attempting to access legal and judicial remedies. Fourth, actors involved in the justice sector – such as police, judges, lawyers and public prosecutors –do not have the capacity to deal with such complex issues. Fifth, legal and judicial processes are too lengthy and complex for victims and their families to navigate. As a result, cases of DVAW rarely reach the formal justice sector and perpetrators often escape prosecutions and convictions, thereby entrenching impunity for such violations and crimes.

To ensure that formal justice actors and remedies adequately address the issue of DVAW, there needs to be an understanding of how victims of DVAW perceive the formal justice system and its constituent actors and institutions. In measuring DVAW victims’ “trust” of the justice system, the ICJ commissioned a largely perception-based survey. This survey captured at least five aspects of “access to justice”: geographic (distances in time required), economic (cost of travel to court, fees, etc.), lack of awareness combined with procedural barriers (technically complex processes), political influence and corruption, and discrimination. All of these aspects impact on “justice” in terms of perceptions of access, fairness, equality, and respect.

The concept of public ‘trust’ is central to the ICJ Justice Sector Reform Programme and to this study. This trust refers to the relationship at the individual and community level between citizens and the justice

system. The justice values and principles are both shared and contested across the population, particularly regarding the substantive equality rights of women in relation to traditional patriarchal values. Public trust in the justice system may depend upon the extent to which citizens see their justice values and principles reflected and upheld in public institutions. At a third 'meta' level (beyond the individual and community), it is also important to note that the level public trust or mistrust in the justice system reflects and affects the legitimacy of public institutions more broadly. In particular, the justice system provides the foundation for confidence in the transparency, fairness, and accountability of public administration. The study provides important empirical data useful for justice policy deliberations that are affected by all three levels of trust.

## **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study was to determine baseline indicators for the level of trust of women (victims of DVAW in particular) and men in the justice system to provide an effective and adequate remedy in response to incidents of DVAW. More specifically, this study aimed to:

- Estimate reported prevalence of violence against women, including, *inter alia*, inter-personal violence (physical, sexual and emotional), community-based violence and structural violence; and examine factors associated with DVAW
- Assess women's and men's knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the formal justice system, the role of various actors and the procedures for seeking support in response to DVAW
- Examine support-seeking behaviour of women towards the formal justice system, including the identification of reasons for not seeking such support
- Examine men's and women's perceptions on the role of men with regard to women's access to justice in response to DVAW, including formal and informal mechanisms
- Examine men's and women's perceptions on the meaning of gender equality
- Assess knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the law, policy and services addressing DVAW among district-level justice sector stakeholders

## **1.5 Study design and methodology**

This study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to study the three categories of respondents: women, men and district level stakeholders. The quantitative component consisted of a structured, population-based sample survey. In the qualitative component, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and semi-structured interviews were carried out.

### ***1.5.1 Study population and area***

The study population included women aged 16-59 years, men aged 16-64 years, and district level stakeholders. This survey was conducted in four ICJ pilot project districts of Mahottari, Siraha, Dhading and Bardiya.

### ***1.5.2 Sample size and sampling procedures***

The CREHPA research team surveyed 2000 women and 2000 men (500 women and 500 men in each district) in the four pilot districts. A stratified, two-staged cluster sampling approach was used for the selection of 500 women (16-59 years) and 500 men (16-64 years) in each district for the interviews. The primary sampling unit (PSU) was a village ward or combination of wards of a village development committee (rural area) and municipal sub-wards in an urban area (urban municipality), having approximately 100



households. According to the Population Census 2001, the average number of households per ward for the rural areas ranges from 60 to 200; and in urban areas it is much larger<sup>1</sup>.

In the first stage, district-wise VDCs/municipalities were listed in alphabetical order, separately for rural and urban areas, with their corresponding ward and their population. Altogether, 40 PSUs (20 PSUs for female investigations and 20 PSUs for male investigations) in each district were selected. Given the sensitivity of the topic and fear that awareness of survey contexts among men and women could precipitate or exacerbate violence against women, totally separate PSUs for male and female investigations were selected using the same approach. This means that 20 PSUs (14 in rural areas and 6 in urban areas) for men and an equal number of PSUs for women in each district were selected using the ‘Probability Proportion to Population Size’ (PPS) technique.

In a second stage, an updated household list for the selected PSUs was prepared with the help community leaders and key informants of the selected PSU. A systematic random sampling technique was applied to the list in order to select 25 households per PSU. After selecting a household, a short screening household questionnaire was administered to the most knowledgeable member of the household to identify the availability of eligible respondents in the selected household. Individual interviews were then conducted with the eligible respondent in the household, if available. If not available, interviews were terminated after completing the short screening questionnaire.

In households with more than one eligible respondent, a single respondent was selected using the KISH Table for interviews in order to avoid a household clustering of responses in addition to safety reasons. This selection method also ensured the random nature of the selection of respondent from the household and clear to the household members about selection procedure. When the respondent selected was not available, the interviewer made an appointment to return to conduct the interview. At least two additional visits were made before the respondent was considered not available for interview. In the case of non-availability of selected eligible respondents in any of the sampled households, additional households were sampled from the same list until the team completed 25 individual interviews in a PSU.

Individual interviews were conducted in private settings. Respondents were asked for their preferred time and place for the interviews. Privacy was ensured. Interviewers were instructed to skip sections or change the subject of conversation if an interview was interrupted by anyone or if privacy could not be ensured. Interviews were terminated if it was impossible to guarantee privacy. Table 1.1 summarises the survey activities in each district.

**Table 1.1 District-wise sample size by survey tools**

Districts	Household survey		Focus group discussions		In-depth interviews		Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Mahottari	500	500	3	4	7	3	9
Siraha	500	500	3	4	5	1	8
Dhading	500	500	2	2	5	2	7
Bardiya	500	500	4	3	5	4	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>35</b>

<sup>1</sup> Wards-wise data of the Population Census 2011 was not available at the time of design of this study.



### ***1.5.3 Qualitative study***

In the qualitative study, in-depth case interviews (IDI), semi-structured interviews (SSI) and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted. The main objectives of the qualitative components of this study were:

- To assess the perceptions of district level stakeholders (judicial and quasi-judicial officials) on access to justice by women, particularly in response to DVAW
- To identify training needs of justice sector officials in relation to women's access to justice, including in response to DVAW
- To document the number of victims of DVAW who have sought the support from the formal justice sector (police, prosecutors, CDOs, court, etc.) within the past year
- Obtain in-depth information, as well as community perceptions, on issues relating to DVAW
- Identify the social and cultural context and individual experiences of accessing DVAW-related support services

A total of 32 in-depth interviews (22 with females and 10 with males) were conducted with males and females who have experienced or perpetrated VAW. In-depth interview participants were recruited purposively from the survey respondents.

Additionally, 25 FGDs were conducted with both men and women (12 with female and 13 with male) to gain a more detailed reflection of community-held perceptions on existing law and policy towards DVAW, as well as perceptions on the roles of formal justice sector actors in responding to DVAW. The FGD participants were recruited with the help of community leaders. Community leaders were requested to convene a meeting in a convenient location in the village, introduce the study, and invite participation. Researchers then randomly selected 8-10 participants for each group discussion. FGDs for both men and women were conducted in the sampled clusters (or adjoining) for the household survey. Those men and women who had participated in the structured individual interviews were not allowed to participate in the FGDs.

In addition, 35 semi-structured interviews with district-level stakeholders were conducted. Selection of participants for this interview was purposive. District level stakeholders interviewed included police officers, lawyers, chief district officers, prosecutors, registrars of district courts, women development officers, focal persons at the district development offices, representatives of NGOs and civil society working in the area of DVAW.

## **1.6 Survey instruments**

The following six sets of study instruments were designed and used in the study.

- Screening questionnaire for heads of the households
- Structured individual interviews questionnaire for women
- Structured individual interviews questionnaire for men
- In-depth interview guidelines for women and men
- Topic guideline for FGD with men and women
- Semi-structured questionnaire for stakeholders

All the research instruments were developed in English and translated into Nepali and *Maithali* language. English questionnaire were designed in close consultation with ICJ, advisory committee members and its local partners. Pre-testing of the questionnaires were carried out in *Maithali* and Nepali speaking

communities to check the meaning of the language used, clarity, the ability for recall with regard to study indicators and the sequence and structure of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were revised based on the results of the pre-test.

### **1.7 Data collection and quality control**

A team of 34 interviewers (16 female and 18 male) and 12 supervisors (6 males and 6 females) were involved in the data collection. The members who are university graduates and experienced for collecting information on sensitive issues and speaking the local language of study districts were hired and trained. Altogether, 12 teams (4 teams covering one district), comprised one field supervisor and three enumerators were formed. In each district, 4 teams (two teams for male interviews and two teams for female interviews) were mobilised to cover 10 PSUs by each team.

In-depth interviews and FGDs were audio-recorded with informed consent of the participants and conducted in the language in which study participants felt most comfortable. Semi-structured interviews with district level stakeholders were carried out by one of the core study team members.

The field researchers were closely supervised by the core team members in order to ensure the quality of their work. During data collection, the core team members visited the field teams and conducted random and spot checking of randomly selected interviews. During the fieldwork, regular communications over phones were scheduled. Two advisory committee members monitored data collection activities in one of the study districts (Dhading).

### **1.8 Data management and analysis**

All completed questionnaires were manually edited and coded before being entered into the computer. A coding manual was developed for this purpose. A number of quality check mechanisms such as range and consistency checks were carried by developing computer programming. A Data Management Officer closely monitored the work of data entry assistants and randomly checked entered data every day. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) or STATA computer software. A central focus of the analysis was to provide 22 baseline indicators regarding knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of men and women related to DVAW. Both bi-variate (Chi-square test) and multivariate analyses were carried out. Further details are provided in each chapter.

With regard to qualitative data, all audio tapes and field notes of in-depth interviews and FGDs were expanded and transcribed word by word. A thematic analysis approach was used. In view of the time and resources, the textual data were analyzed manually. After carefully reading the transcripts, the findings were summarised in grid tables according to key themes. Interpretative analysis was then carried out. Data collected from semi-structured interviews was manually coded and entered into the computer for further analysis.

### **1.9 Ethical considerations**

The study proposal obtained ethical approval from Institutional Review Committee of CREHPA. An ethical guideline developed by the World Health Organisation on studying the domestic violence was maintained throughout the study.

### **1.10 National advisory committee**

A National Advisory Committee (NAC) comprised of five members was formed before initiation of the study. This committee was chaired by the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Children and

Social Welfare (MWCSW). Other members of the committee were from the Central Bureau of Statistics, (MWCSW), ICJ and CREHPA. The NAC provided suggestions to the study methods, tools, monitored the fieldwork and reviewed the draft report.

### **1.11 Challenges and limitations**

Fieldwork coincided with the peak monsoon season, which limited physical access to target populations. Team members had to walk to most of the villages, resulting in extra time spent travelling to villages. Data collection also had to be conducted in two phases due to festival periods during data collection. Scheduling appointments with district level stakeholders was a major challenge. Some of the district level stakeholders, and in particular, judges at the district courts, were reluctant to participate in the study.

As with any research, there are limitations both to data collection and interpretation. We have grouped these into three main areas: First, the cross-sectional nature of the data limits the ability to establish temporality or causality in many of the observed relationships. Second, due to the purposive selection of study districts, findings may not be generalised to a wider population. Third, although efforts have been made to ensure the reliability and validity of responses, the possibility of under-reporting of DVAW can not entirely be ruled out given the patterns of shame and fear of retribution associated with DVAW.

### **1.12 Report structure**

This baseline study report is divided into eight chapters. This first chapter introduces the study and its methodology. Characteristics of the female study population are described in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 assesses women's attitudes towards gender roles, rights and DVAW. In Chapter 4, women's awareness and attitudes towards laws and constitutional provisions related to DVAW are examined. Women's experiences of violence and its consequence are discussed in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 discusses men's awareness and perceptions on discrimination, gender roles and rights, violence, laws and policies related to DVAW. Chapter 7 examines the district level stakeholders' knowledge and attitudes towards laws, polices and services addressing DVAW. Finally, summary conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter 8.

## CHAPTER 2

# SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF FEMALE STUDY POPULATION

This chapter describes the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the female study population included in the household surveys, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews. It also describes women's social support networks, level of social capital, decision-making power, and other aspects of autonomy.

### 2.1 Demographic characteristics

At total of 2000 women across the four ICJ pilot districts were interviewed. The median age of the study participants was 30, with between 24.2% and 34.4% less than 25 years-old. The median age of the study participants was slightly lower in Bardiya (29 years) in comparison to other survey districts (between 30 and 31 years) (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1 Demographic characteristics**

Characteristics	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Age ( in years)</b>					
16-24	24.2	25.8	30.4	33.8	28.6
25-34	34.2	38.6	28.6	29.8	32.8
35-49	35.0	29.4	28.4	26.8	29.9
50-64	6.6	6.2	12.6	9.6	8.8
<b>Median age</b>	<i>31.0</i>	<i>30.0</i>	<i>30.0</i>	<i>29.0</i>	<i>30.0</i>
<b>Marital status</b>					
Never married	6.4	8.8	12.0	17.0	11.1
Currently married	90.4	88.6	83.8	79.8	85.7
Widow/Divorced/Separated	3.2	2.6	4.2	3.2	3.3
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Age at marriage ( in years)</b>					
Less than18	86.1	76.9	59.3	63.1	71.8
18-20	12.8	19.3	29.1	28.0	22.0
Over than 20	1.1	3.7	11.6	8.9	6.2
<b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>15.3 (2.17)</b>	<b>15.9 (2.77)</b>	<b>17.1 (3.25)</b>	<b>16.9 (2.79)</b>	<b>16.3 (2.86)</b>
<b>Types of marriage</b>					
Chose each other (love)	2.1	6.4	34.1	32.3	18.2
Arranged by parents	43.2	46.7	59.8	66.5	53.6
Negotiated with elder and they had to agree	54.7	46.9	6.1	1.2	28.2
<b>Number of living children</b>					
0	6.4	6.8	6.6	7.5	6.8
1	8.1	10.7	16.1	17.1	12.9
2	19.4	22.1	20.5	27.2	22.2
3 and more	66.0	60.3	56.8	48.2	58.1
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>1779</b>

An overwhelming majority of sampled women were married at the time of the interview. Comparatively, a higher percentage of interviewed women in Bardiya were never married. The mean age of marriage was 16 years, two years below Nepal's legal age of marriage with parental consent. Among the survey districts, the mean age at marriage was lowest in Mahottari (15.3 years) followed by Siraha (15.9 years), Bardiya (16.9 years) and Dhading (17.1 years) respectively.

Over half of the interviewed women (53.6%) had entered marriages arranged by their parents. About a third of surveyed women in Bardiya and Dhading reported 'love marriages'. Among women married at least once, more than half (58.1%) had three or more children. Comparatively, a lower percentage of women in Bardiya reported having more than three children at the time of interviews (Table 2.1).

## 2.2 Socio-economic characteristics

Ethnicity and caste are categorized according to the Health Management Information System (HMIS) of the Ministry of Health and Population. According to HMIS, caste/ethnicity is grouped into six categories: (i) upper caste groups, (ii) relatively advantaged indigenous groups (Janajatis), (iii) disadvantaged indigenous groups (Janajatis), (iv) disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups; (v) Dalit groups and (vi) religious minorities (MoHP, 2007). Because of the small number in the sample, Dalit and religious minorities are combined into one group, reducing the number of caste/ethnicity groups to five. Details of the HMIS categorization of caste/ethnicity is presented in Annex 1. About a third (32%) of the study participants belong to disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups, followed by disadvantaged indigenous groups (Janajatis) (25.3%). Approximately one fifth of the women are from Dalit groups and religious minorities (21.2%) and 16.2% belong to upper caste groups.

There is a notable difference between districts in the composition of ethnicity/caste. More than half of the women in Bardiya and 41.4% in Dhading belong to the disadvantaged indigenous groups (Janajati), whereas disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups dominate the sampled respondents from Mahottari and Siraha. Comparatively, a higher proportion of women belong to Dalit or religious minority groups in Mahottari and Siraha than in Dhading and Bardiya (Table 2.2). More than 85.5% of study participants self-identify as hindu.

About 56% of the study participants are literate, which conforms to the national female literacy rate (57%). The illiteracy rate is higher in Siraha (57.6%) and Mahottari (55.0%) than in Dhading (30%) and Bardiya (31.8%). Among literate women, only about 6% possess a School Leaving Certificate (10 years of schooling) or higher levels of education (Table 2.2)

Over two-thirds (68.1%) of women are in non-remunerated jobs (i.e. housewives or students). One in five women work in agriculture and animal husbandry. Very few women work in the public or non-governmental sector (2.2%) or in small business (4.1%). Comparatively, a very high proportion of women in Dhading work in agriculture and animal husbandry (62%) in comparison to the other three districts. The main sources of family income that respondents mentioned are agriculture (45.4%) followed by labour (19.8%). Remittances from foreign employment are the main source of support for 14.3% of respondents, with higher figures in Mahottari and Siraha (Table 2.2).

The highest percentage of respondents in the lowest wealth quintile are from Dhading (23.6%), followed by Mahottari (22.6%), and Siraha (21.2%). Bardiya has the largest proportion of respondents in the highest wealth quintile (27.6%)<sup>2</sup>.

Approximately 2.7% of women report having at least one type of self defined disability.

<sup>2</sup> The wealth quintile employed in this survey is the measure used in many demographic and health surveys and other country level surveys including Nepal to indicate inequalities in household characteristics, in the use of health and other services, and in health outcomes (NDHS, 2011). Principal component analysis (PCA) is employed to generate a wealth quintile using data on household assets (Manley, 1994; Gwatkin et al., 2000).

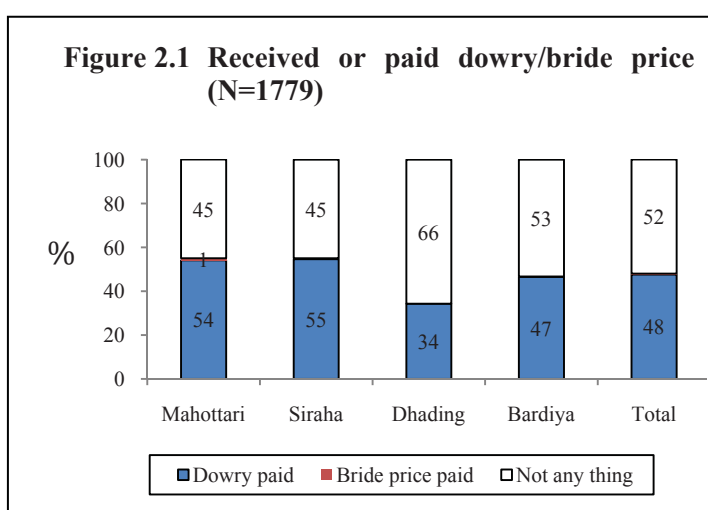
**Table 2.2 Socio-economic characteristics**

Socio-economic characteristics	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Caste/ethnicity</b>					
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups	51.8	60.8	1.8	11.6	31.5
Disadvantaged indigenous groups ( <i>janajatis</i> )	3.6	5.8	41.4	50.2	25.3
Dalit/religious minorities	35.0	28.4	9.6	11.6	21.2
Upper caste groups	9.4	3.0	28.2	24.2	16.2
Relatively advantaged indigenous groups ( <i>Janajatis</i> )	0.2	2.0	19.0	2.4	5.9
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	90.2	89.6	69.8	92.4	85.5
Muslim	9.8	7.6	0.0	3.4	5.2
Christian	0.0	0.6	4.6	3.2	2.1
Buddhist	0.0	2.2	24.2	0.8	6.8
No religion	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.2	0.4
<b>Level of education</b>					
Illiterate	55.0	57.6	30.0	31.8	43.6
Up to primary/non-formal education	23.4	16.4	45.2	31.8	29.2
Six to 10 years of schooling	15.8	21.6	18.8	29.4	21.4
School leaving certificate or more	5.8	4.4	6.0	7.0	5.8
<b>Main occupation</b>					
Non-remunerated - House wife or student	84.0	78.6	31.6	78.2	68.1
Agriculture and livestock	2.4	6.0	62.0	10.6	20.3
Daily wage labourer	7.2	10.8	0.4	3.2	5.4
Professional	2.6	1.0	1.6	3.6	2.2
Business/Petty business	3.8	3.6	4.4	4.4	4.1
<b>Main source of family income</b>					
Agriculture	25.4	40.4	58.0	57.6	45.4
Labourer	29.4	21.2	11.8	16.6	19.8
Service/Pension	12.0	7.6	11.2	9.8	10.2
Business/Petty business	15.2	11.4	6.8	8.6	10.5
Remittance	18.0	19.4	12.2	7.4	14.3
<b>Wealth quintile</b>					
Lowest	22.6	21.2	23.6	10.8	19.6
Second	19.4	15.0	30.6	15.0	20.0
Middle	15.8	19.2	23.6	22.2	20.2
Fourth	20.0	22.0	14.0	24.4	20.1
Highest	22.2	22.6	8.2	27.6	20.2
<b>Any self defined disability</b>					
Yes	2.0	2.6	2.4	3.6	2.7
No	98.0	97.4	97.6	96.4	97.4
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>

**Table 2.3 Other socio-demographic characteristics**

Socio-economic characteristics	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Sex of the household head</b>					
Male	90.4	90.6	72.0	81.2	83.6
Female	9.6	9.4	28.0	18.8	16.5
<b>Family structure</b>					
Nuclear	50.6	43.4	54.0	50.4	49.6
Joint	49.4	56.6	46.0	49.6	50.4
<b>Place of residence</b>					
Urban	30.0	30.0	0.0	30.0	22.5
Rural	70.0	70.0	100.0	70.0	77.5
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

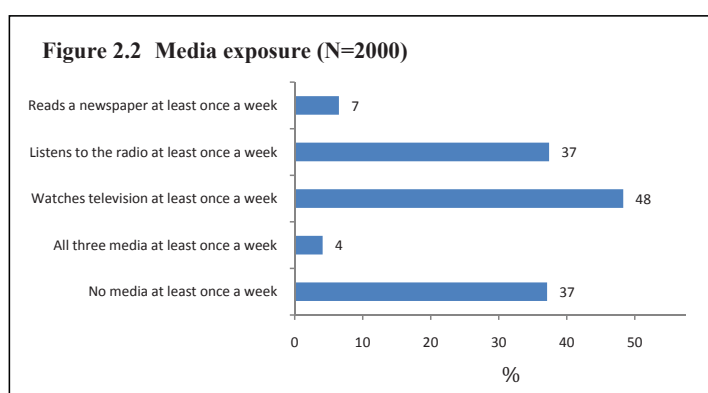
About 84% of women report that the head of the household is a male. Comparatively, a higher proportion of women in Dhading report a woman as the head of the household (28%). Almost half of study participants live in a joint family structure (Table 2.3). More than half of the women in Mahottari (54%) and Siraha (55%) report the provision dowry during their marriages. Comparatively, the practice of dowry is lower in Dhading (34%) than the three other study districts (Figure 2.1).



### 2.3 Mass media exposure

The study includes an examination of the women’s exposure to media (radio, television, newspapers or magazines). About two-thirds of women (63%) have exposure to at least one type of media once a week. Television viewership is the highest (48%). More than a third of women (37%) listen to the radio at least once a week. Exposure to print media is relatively lower (7%). Only 4% of women have exposure to all three types of media once a week (Figure 2.2).

Women under 25 years of age are more likely to have exposure to mass media. Exposure to media is also associated with education level, wealth quintile, ethnicity and district. Exposure to media is highest among women with a secondary or higher level of education, and those falling in the highest wealth quintile. Media exposure is lowest among Dalit/religious minority groups and highest among upper caste/ethnic groups. Exposure to mass media is highest in Dhading and lowest in Mahottari (Table 2.4).





**Table 2.4 Exposure to specific media by selected background characteristics**

Background characteristics	Reads a newspaper at least once a week	Listens to the radio at least once a week	Watches television at least once a week	All three media at least once a week	No media at least once a week	N
<b>Age</b>						
16-24	11.6	47.8	56.4	7.0	26.8	571
25-34	6.4	34.8	51.2	4.0	35.4	656
35-49	3.3	29.1	40.6	2.2	46.8	598
50-59	1.1	41.1	37.1	1.1	44.0	175
<b>Education</b>						
Illiterate	0.0	20.9	35.3	0.0	54.8	872
Up to primary/NFE	1.7	40.9	44.7	0.9	33.7	584
6 to 10 years of schooling	17.3	58.2	71.7	9.8	13.3	428
SLC or more	39.7	66.4	77.6	29.3	8.6	116
<b>Caste/Ethnicity</b>						
Upper caste groups	21.3	65.4	65.1	14.8	14.8	324
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	6.8	61.9	55.9	4.2	19.5	118
Disadvantaged indigenous group	4.6	42.8	36.6	2.6	40.2	505
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	3.3	26.0	52.1	1.6	40.5	630
Dalit/religious minorities	2.1	19.4	41.6	1.2	50.4	423
<b>Wealth quintile</b>						
Lowest	1.0	17.9	15.6	0.0	71.4	391
Second	1.3	34.3	24.8	0.8	52.3	400
Middle	4.0	38.4	47.8	2.2	33.2	404
Fourth	5.7	41.8	67.9	3.0	20.1	402
Highest	20.3	53.8	84.4	14.1	9.7	403
<b>District</b>						
Mahottari	3.6	22.8	50.2	2.6	43.8	500
Siraha	2.4	24.6	52.4	1.4	41.8	500
Dhading	6.6	62.4	39.0	4.8	27.4	500
Bardiya	13.4	39.6	51.6	7.4	35.4	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>37.4</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 2.4 Profile of husbands

Among currently married women, about 43.3% have husbands who are 5 to 10 years older. More than half of the women from Mahottari and Siraha report that their husbands are 5 to 10 years older than them. Only 4% of women have a younger husband. About a third of women (30%) report that their husbands are not currently living with them.

The education level of husbands is generally higher than that of their wives. Slightly more than a quarter of women (27.4%) report that their husbands are illiterate. Illiteracy among husbands is highest in Mahottari (36.5%) followed by Siraha (33.4%).



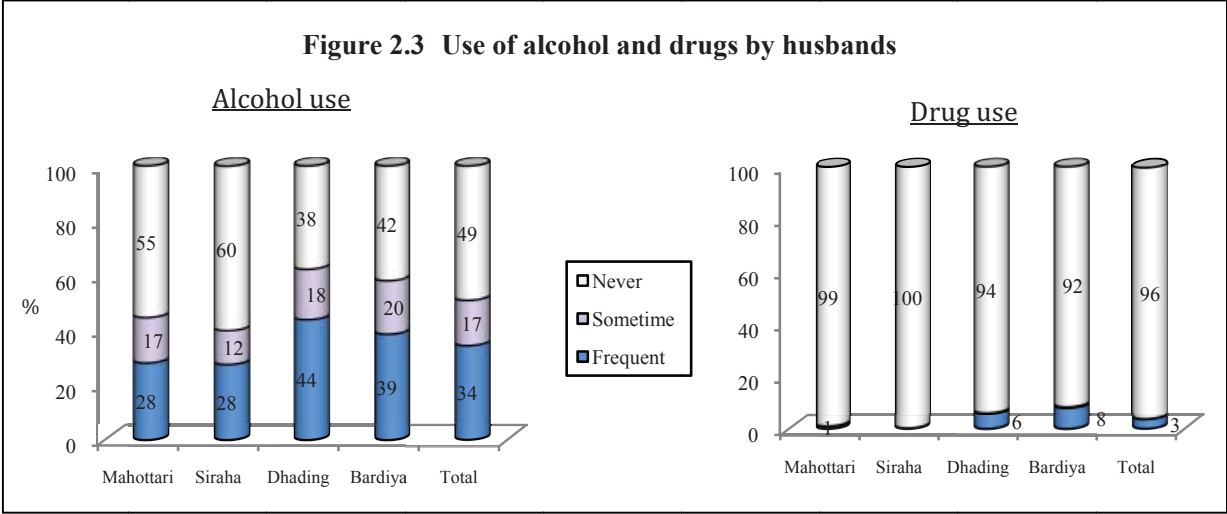
About a third of women report that their husbands work in agriculture and animal husbandry, and another quarter report that their husbands work in foreign employment. Comparatively, a higher percentage of women in Siraha and Mahottari report their husbands work in foreign employment.

**Table 2.5 Percentage distribution of currently married women according to selected characteristics of their husbands**

Characteristics	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Husband's age (in years)</b>					
17-24	3.8	5.0	9.3	10.3	6.9
25-34	31.9	33.6	35.3	33.3	33.5
35 and over	64.4	61.4	55.4	56.4	59.5
<b>Median age</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Age difference between husband and wife</b>					
Husband is younger than wife	1.1	0.9	8.4	6.0	4.0
Same age	1.3	2.9	11.0	7.3	5.5
Wife is 1-4 years younger than husband	34.7	37.2	40.6	42.9	38.7
Wife is 5-10 years younger than husband	54.2	50.3	32.2	34.6	43.3
Wife is more than 10 years younger than husband	8.6	8.6	7.9	9.3	8.6
<b>Whether or not currently living with husband/partner</b>					
Yes	64.8	68.4	68.3	78.2	69.7
No	35.2	31.6	31.7	21.8	30.3
<b>Husband's level of education</b>					
Illiterate	36.5	33.4	14.1	24.6	27.4
Up to primary/NFE	19.9	16.7	48.0	30.6	28.4
Six to 10 years of schooling	33.4	39.1	31.7	33.3	34.4
SLC or more	10.2	10.8	6.2	11.5	9.7
<b>Educational difference between husband and wife</b>					
He is more educated	51.8	55.1	64.7	56.9	57.0
Same	38.7	35.9	22.2	29.6	31.8
I am more educated	9.5	9.0	13.1	13.5	11.2
<b>Husband's occupation</b>					
Agriculture/Animal husbandry	16.2	24.8	44.6	38.6	30.6
Daily wage labourer	24.3	19.2	14.8	18.8	19.4
Business	12.6	13.3	6.7	8.0	10.3
Foreign employment	32.7	29.3	19.1	15.3	24.5
Unemployed-student	4.4	2.3	3.1	6.0	3.9
Services	7.7	9.9	10.0	12.0	9.9
Others	2.0	1.1	1.7	1.3	1.5
<b>Whether or not husband had another wife</b>					
Yes	8.4	12.9	9.8	11.8	10.7
No	91.6	87.1	90.2	88.2	89.3
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>1713</b>

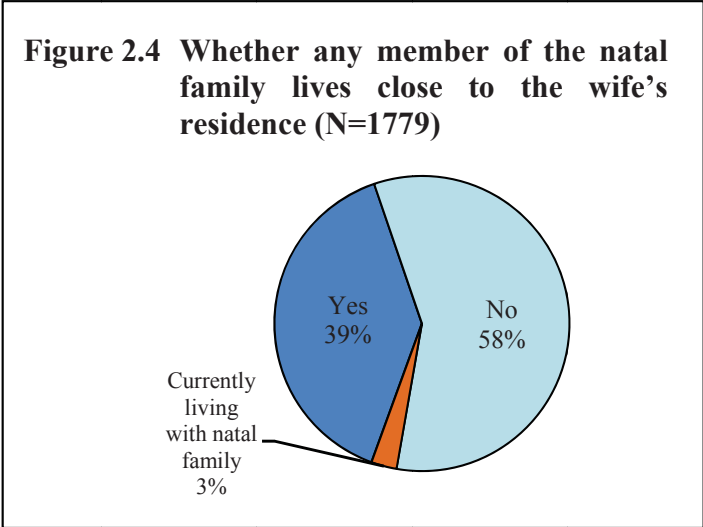
Number may be different between indicators.

One in ten women (11%) reported being in a polygamous marriage at some point in their married lives. A third of women (34%) report that their husbands drink alcohol frequently, and 3% report drug use by their husbands (Figure 2.3)



**2.5 Perceived support from natal family**

Among women ever married, 39.2% live close to their natal family members (i.e. within an hour’s travelling distance). Of those women who were ever married and currently not living with their natal families, only 26.5% see their natal family members or talk with them at least once in a month. About three-quarters of women (72%) report that they are able to get support from their natal families if needed. Roughly two-thirds of women report that they have close friends on whom they can rely on for support when in need or with whom to share their problems (Table 2.6).

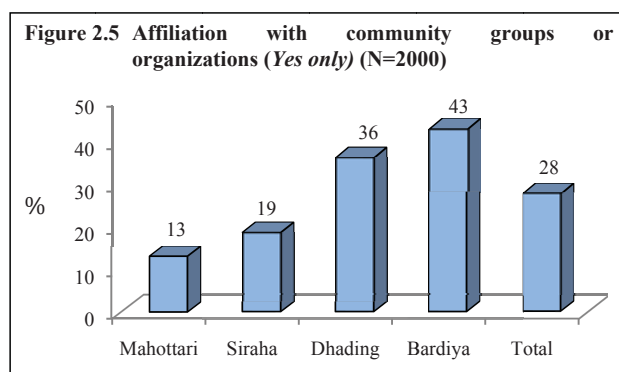


**Table 2.6 Percentage distribution of women according to access to natal family support**

Whether any member of the natal family member lives close to woman's residence (within an hour's travelling distance)	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Yes	36.3	31.1	43.2	47.2	39.2
No	62.0	66.7	52.5	49.6	58.0
Currently living with natal family	1.7	2.2	4.3	3.1	2.8
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>1779</b>
<b>Frequency of meeting or talking with natal family member</b>					
Daily	2.6	4.0	17.6	15.2	9.5
At least once a week	5.4	4.5	17.6	11.2	9.5
Once a month	27.6	20.4	31.1	27.1	26.5
Once a year	47.0	51.3	27.3	34.3	40.4
Once in more than one year	14.3	16.1	5.0	11.2	11.8
Never	3.0	3.6	1.4	1.0	2.3
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>1729</b>
<b>Whether count for natal family when needed help or support</b>					
Yes	72.2	69.7	69.4	77.6	72.1
No	26.7	28.5	29.0	20.9	26.4
Don't know	1.1	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.5
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>1729</b>
<b>Whether have any close friends to rely on when needed help or have problem</b>					
Yes	64.4	62.8	61.4	65.8	63.6
No/ Don't know	35.6	37.2	38.6	34.2	36.4
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 2.6 Membership in the community groups or organisations

In general, women's membership in community groups and organisations is low. About 28% of women report that they are members of any type of community group or organisation, with comparatively higher figures in Bardiya (43%), followed by Dhading (36%), Siraha (19%) and Mahottari (13%). Savings and credit groups account for 72.3% of organizations in which women are members, followed by social organisations (women's organisations or mothers' groups). Very few women are members of any political party or NGO (Table 2.7).



**Table 2.7 Affiliation to community groups and organizations**

Names of groups/organization	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Economic/ savings and credit group	70.3	94.6	55.2	77.7	72.3
Women's organization/ Association	21.9	2.2	23.2	13.5	15.7
Mother's group	3.1	1.1	28.2	5.1	11.8
NGO	0.0	0.0	6.1	0.9	2.4
Specific associations ( <i>Madhesi, Dalit, Janajati</i> )	1.6	0.0	1.1	1.4	1.1
Local political party	1.6	2.2	0.6	0.5	0.9
Paralegal committee /advocacy group	1.6	1.1	0.0	0.5	0.5
Mediation committees	1.6	1.1	0.0	0.5	0.5
Others	9.5	4.4	3.4	6.5	5.6
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>552</b>

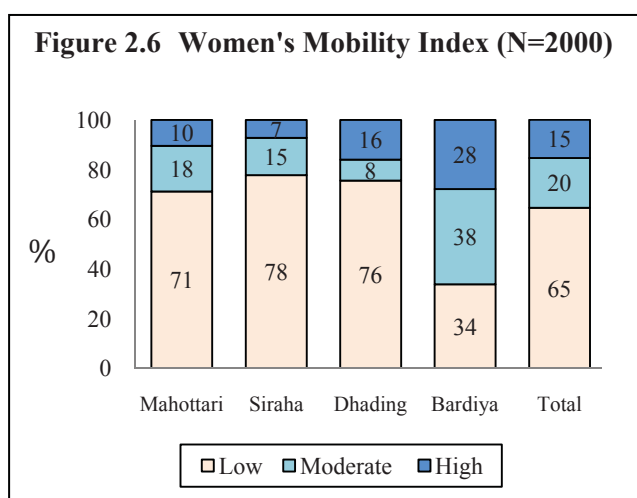
## 2.7 Women’s mobility

Women generally require their husbands or in-laws’ consent to go outside the home. Eighty to 85% of women in Siraha, Mahottari, and Dhading report that they need the permission of their husbands or family members to visit friends or close relatives. Comparatively, women from Bardiya report more freedom to visit their relatives than women in Siraha, Mahottari and Dhading. Similar findings emerge regarding women’s autonomy to visit a health center or to attend any organization or community meetings (Table2.8).

We developed a ‘Women’s Mobility Index’ to represent women who have freedom to move without restriction of family members or partners. This composite index was created based on the following three questions:

- Are you able to visit friends or close relative without permission of your husband or other family members?
- Are you able to visit health centre or hospital without permission of your husband or other family members?
- Are you able to visit any association/ organization or attend any community meetings without permission of your husband or other family members?

The responses were trichotomized and categorized as “low” if women reported that they cannot visit relatives, family members, and health centres without permission of partners or family members; “moderate” if they were allowed to visit any two of these without permission; and “high” if no permission was required for all three persons/places. Relative restrictions on mobility are highest among women in Siraha (78%), followed by Dhading (76%) and Mahottari (71%). Over a quarter of the women in Bardiya (28%) have relatively high autonomy in mobility (Figure 2.6).



**Table 2.8 Women's mobility**

Women's mobility without consent	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Able to visit friends or close relative without permission of husband or other family members	18.2	15.0	20.0	48.4	25.4
Able to visit health centre or hospital without permission of husband or other family members	27.0	21.2	20.4	48.8	29.4
Able to visit any association/ organization or attend any community meetings without permission of husband or other family members	12.2	8.8	19.8	36.0	19.2
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 2.8 Household decision-making

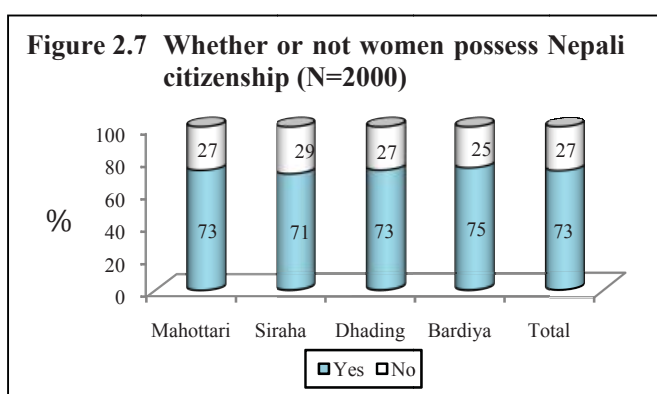
Over 60% of women report no involvement in decisions about household spending, even in the case of small-scale items (food, clothing, etc), while over three-quarters of women (77.3%) report that they have low decision making power regarding major household purchases (land, house, car, motorbike, etc.). No major differences emerge in women's decision-making power across the four districts (Table 2.9).

**Table 2.9 Household decision-making power**

	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Person who has the final say about decisions on food and clothing</b>					
Myself	31.8	33.0	29.2	26.4	30.1
Spouse	36.6	30.4	32.8	30.8	32.6
Both equally	2.6	5.4	10.4	7.4	6.5
Other family members	29.0	31.2	27.6	35.4	30.8
<b>Person who has the final say about decisions on large investments</b>					
Myself	7.0	6.4	8.4	9.0	7.7
Spouse	50.4	39.6	47.4	43.8	45.3
Both equally	13.2	20.9	15.6	10.6	15.1
Other family members	29.4	33.1	28.6	36.6	31.9
<b>Decision making power (over major household purchases)</b>					
High	7.0	6.4	8.4	9.0	7.7
Moderate	13.2	20.8	15.6	10.6	15.1
Low	79.8	72.8	76.0	80.4	77.3
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 2.9 Nepali citizenship

About 27% of women reported that they do not possess Nepali citizenship. There is no major difference in this figure across the four study districts (Figure 2.7).



## CHAPTER 3

# ATTITUDES TOWARDS GENDER ROLES, RIGHTS AND DVAW

Gender refers to the widely shared expectations and norms within a society about appropriate male and female roles, responsibilities and behaviours, and the ways in which women and men interact with each other (Gupta, 2000). Gender therefore encompasses masculinities and femininities, power relations between women and men, and structural contexts that reinforce and create these power relations.

This chapter examines women's perceptions towards gender roles and equality. It also discusses women's attitudes towards discrimination, abuse, violence and its causes, as well as factors affecting personal and community wellbeing. Gender discrimination takes place when disadvantages are suffered on the basis of sex.<sup>3</sup> 'Wellbeing' refers broadly to human flourishing at the individual and collective (or community) level, alternatively described as the realization of human capabilities and related freedoms, which is the objective of human development.<sup>4</sup>

Views are described as 'conservative' in this section if they tend to affirm a traditionally patriarchal family structure, in which men and women not only occupy different roles, but in which women are also viewed as less important and less valuable.

### 3.1 Attitudes on gender roles and rights

Women were asked to report their opinions on several statements that aimed to measure attitudes towards women's roles and relative equality with men. Women's opinions on the given statements were recorded in a four-point Likert scale of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. The responses for 'strongly agree' and 'agree' are combined for the purposes of simplifying the analysis. The results are presented in Table 3.1.

Overall, the results show that women tend to affirm conservative gender roles. For example, an overwhelming majority of women from all of the districts (84.4% to 88.6%) agree with the statement that "once a woman gets married, she belongs to her husband's family and should obey her in-laws". Similarly, over 80% of women believe that "a woman's obligation is to serve her husband and family in the home". On the other hand, 90% of women agree with the statements that "men and women have equal value, but not the same obligations and roles" and "men and women are equal have equal value, women are always treated as less valuable". This may be understood as a description of reality that fails to conform to the ideal of equality.

Relatively fewer female respondents in Dhading (35.4%) and Bardiya (35%) believe that "a woman should not get involved in matters outside the home because this is man's responsibility". This indicates

3 Article 1 of CEDAW states: "For the purposes of the present Convention, the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." CEDAW, U.N. Doc. GA Resolution 34/180 (18 December 1979) at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>

4 See, for example, the UNDP's 2013 *Human Development Report*, p 36 (Box 1.7), at <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/HDR/2013GlobalHDR/English/HDR2013%20Report%20English.pdf>

that, compared to Mahottari and Siraha, the female respondents from both Dhading and Bardiya tend less to affirm conservative values (Table 3.1).

Comparatively, women from Bardiya (90.8%) and Mahottari (84.2%) express greater support for the notion of women’s property rights (independently of her husband) than women from Siraha (68.4%).

An overwhelming proportion of women from all the districts believe that polygamy (97.5%) and the dowry practice (96.3%) are major causes of VAW. Similar high figures are reported in Dhading (90.8%), a hill district where the dowry practice is less prevalent than in the other three study districts.

Most women (90.3%) agree that “it is wrong to accuse any woman of witchcraft”. This was noted in all the districts. About a third of women from Siraha (32.6%) and Bardiya (29.6%), however, believe that “women sometimes use witchcraft to harm others”. This perception was lower in Mahottari (22.8%) and much lower in Dhading (12.6%).

**Table 3.1 Attitudes towards gender roles and rights (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Gender roles</b>					
Once a woman gets married, she belongs to her husband's family and should obey her in-laws.	85.6	84.6	88.6	84.4	85.8
A woman's obligation is to serve her husband and family in the home.	82.8	83.4	81.8	78.0	81.5
Men and women have equal value, but not the same obligations and roles.	95.0	96.4	86.4	92.6	92.6
Men and women have equal value, but women are always treated as less valuable.	92.6	94.8	87.8	91.8	91.8
A woman should not get involved in matters outside the home because this is a man's responsibility.	39.0	47.2	35.4	35.0	39.2
<b>Factors related to violence</b>					
It is wrong to accuse any woman of witchcraft.	95.0	96.0	85.4	84.6	90.3
A woman sometimes uses witchcraft to harm others.	22.8	32.6	12.6	29.6	24.4
Polygamy is one of the major causes of violence against woman.	98.0	99.4	94.2	98.2	97.5
Dowry is one of the major causes of VAW in Nepal.	98.4	99.2	90.8	96.8	96.3
Wives are blamed by their husbands and in-laws for everything that goes wrong in the family.	83.0	91.2	82.4	87.0	85.9
<b>Reproductive and property rights</b>					
A woman can decide the number of children she wants to have.	77.6	60.0	71.4	81.4	72.6
A woman can terminate her pregnancy if it could harm her health.	90.2	82.6	78.2	88.8	85.0
Women should not be married before the age of 18.	97.6	92.8	97.2	98.2	96.5
A woman has right to own property independently of her husband.	84.2	68.4	79.0	90.8	80.6
<b>Masculinity</b>					
Many men feel that a woman fails her husband if she does not produce a son for him, but this is not fair to women.	73.4	91.2	80.4	88.4	83.4
A woman shames and angers her husband if she does not produce a son for him and his family.	52.8	67.6	38.6	48.6	51.9
Men say and do things to control the activities of their wives because this is their obligation as husbands.	52.0	58.8	40.6	43.8	48.8
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>



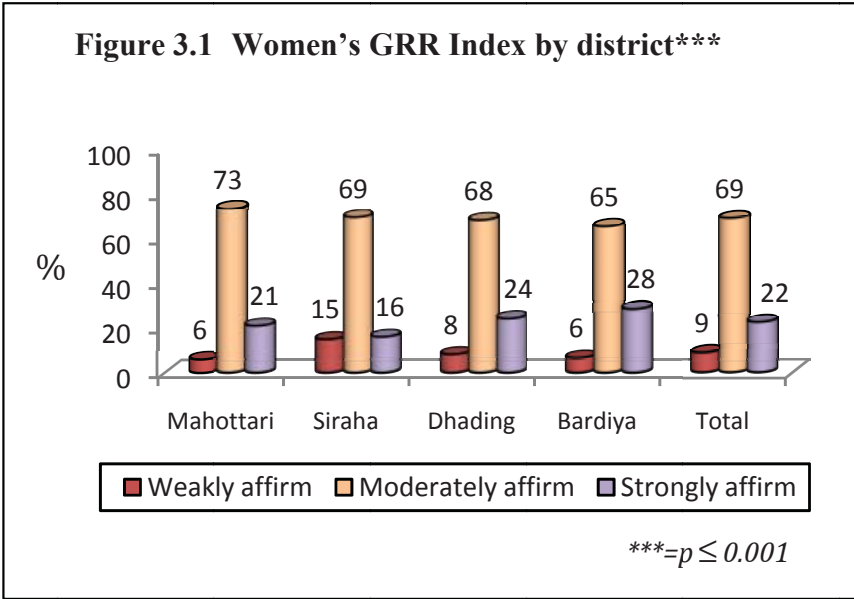
In terms of women’s reproductive rights, most women agree that “a woman can decide the number of children she wants to have” (72.6%), that “women should not be married before the age of 18” (96.5%), and that “a woman has right to own property independently of her husband” (80.6%).

The survey also examined women’s attitudes towards masculinity. The results suggest that women in these districts tend to affirm masculine attitudes. For instance, between 40.6% and 58.8% of women agree that “men say and do things to control the activities of their wives because this is their obligation as husbands”. Furthermore, over half of the women (51.9%) feel that “a woman shames and angers her husband if she does not produce a son for him and his family”. On this issue, however, there is variability across districts. The proportion of women who agree with the statement is lowest in Dhading (38.6%) and highest in Siraha (67.6%). Simultaneously, however, more than three-quarters of women (83.4%) agree that “many men feel that a woman fails her husband if she does not produce a son for him, but this is not fair to women”.

A composite index was created to capture women’s perceptions of gender roles and rights. Results were categorised on a scale from weak to strong affirmation of women’s equality with men (Women’s GRR Index). The GRR Index includes 11 statements regarding different dimensions of women’s gender roles and rights-related attitudes, which were selected from the 15 statements listed in Table 3.1. A composite variable was constructed using factor analysis and after assessing for reliability (Cronbach Alpha score was 0.66).

Figure 3.1 shows that over two-thirds of women (69%) moderately affirm women’s equality. An average of 9% of women weakly affirm their value relative to men (Siraha 15%; Dhading 8%; Bardiya 6%; and Mahottari 6%).

Merely weak affirmation of women’s equality is most prominent among women aged 50-59 (19.4%), in comparison with women aged 16-24 (6.1%). Weak affirmation is also associated more strongly with relatively advantaged indigenous groups and Dalit/religious minority groups, non-Hindu communities, among women with no education, those widowed or separated, and those in lowest wealth quintile. Similarly, women with low exposure to mass media, low mobility, and no membership in community organizations, are more predisposed to weakly affirm their value and equality relative to men (Table 3.2).



**Table 3.2 Women's GRR Index by selected background characteristics**

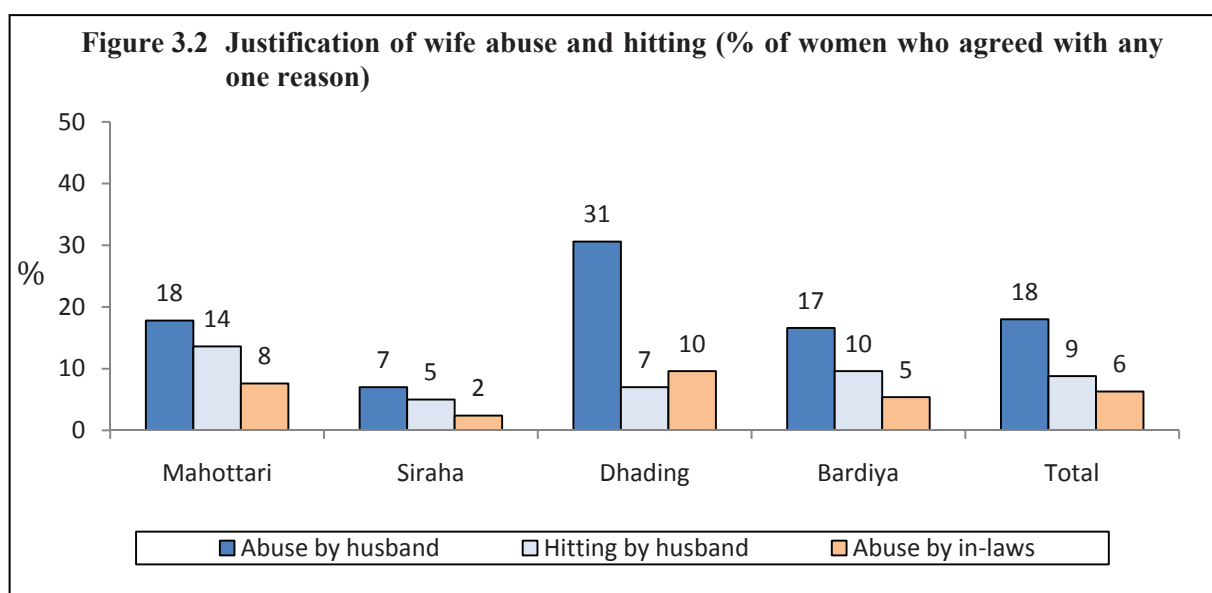
	Weakly Affirm		Moderately Affirm		Strongly Affirm		Total	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N
<b>Age***</b>								
16-24	6.1	35	61.3	350	32.6	186	100.0	571
25-34	8.5	56	72.1	473	19.4	127	100.0	656
35-49	8.5	51	72.2	432	19.2	115	100.0	598
50-59	19.4	34	70.3	123	10.3	18	100.0	175
<b>Caste/ethnicity***</b>								
Upper caste groups	4.3	14	56.5	183	39.2	127	100.0	324
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	11.9	14	65.3	77	22.9	27	100.0	118
Disadvantaged indigenous group	7.3	37	74.3	375	18.4	93	100.0	505
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	9.7	61	69.4	437	21.0	132	100.0	630
Dalit/ religious minorities	11.8	50	72.3	306	15.8	67	100.0	423
<b>Religion***</b>								
Hindu	7.8	134	68.5	1171	23.7	405	100.0	1710
Non Hindu	14.5	42	71.4	207	14.1	41	100.0	290
<b>Level of education***</b>								
Illiterate	12.6	110	77.5	676	9.9	86	100.0	872
Non-formal education/ up to primary	7.4	43	73.1	427	19.5	114	100.0	584
Six years of schooling and above	4.2	23	50.6	275	45.2	246	100.0	544
<b>Marital status***</b>								
Never married	4.5	10	45.7	101	49.8	110	100.0	221
Currently married	9.2	158	71.8	1230	19.0	325	100.0	1713
Widow/ divorced/ separated	12.1	8	71.2	47	16.7	11	100.0	66
<b>Women's Occupation<sup>ns</sup></b>								
Non-remunerated house wife or students	8.7	119	68.6	935	22.6	308	100.0	1362
Agriculture	9.4	38	72.6	294	18.0	73	100.0	405
Other	8.2	19	63.9	149	27.9	65	100.0	233
<b>Wealth Quintile***</b>								
Lowest	12.8	50	77.0	301	10.2	40	100.0	391
Second	9.3	37	74.0	296	16.8	67	100.0	400
Middle	7.7	31	70.5	285	21.8	88	100.0	404
Fourth	10.4	42	66.4	267	23.1	93	100.0	402
Highest	4.0	16	56.8	229	39.2	158	100.0	403
<b>Media exposure***</b>								
Low	12.2	119	74.8	729	13.0	127	100.0	975
Moderate	7.5	51	70.7	481	21.8	148	100.0	680
High	1.7	6	48.7	168	49.6	171	100.0	345
<b>Women's mobility index***</b>								
Low	10.7	138	70.0	905	19.3	249	100.0	1292
Moderate	4.7	19	67.6	271	27.7	111	100.0	401
High	6.2	19	65.8	202	28.0	86	100.0	307
<b>Membership of any community group or organization***</b>								
Yes	7.1	39	61.8	342	31.1	172	100.0	553
No	9.5	137	71.6	1036	18.9	274	100.0	1447
<b>Place of residence<sup>ns</sup></b>								
Urban	7.3	33	69.1	311	23.6	106	100.0	450
Rural	9.2	143	68.8	1067	21.9	340	100.0	1550
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>68.9</b>	<b>1378</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2000</b>

Chi-square test, significant at \*\*\*= $p \leq 0.001$ , ns=not significant

### 3.2 Attitudes towards hitting and abuse of wives

Women were asked whether it is justified for a husband to abuse (*durbebahar*) or hit (*pittnu*) his wife in ten different circumstances listed in Table 3.3.<sup>5</sup> Overall, a significant proportion of women condone hitting and other abuse in many circumstances. The most widely accepted reason for wife hitting and other abuse is “*disobeying husband*”: one in six women (15.6%) believe that a wife can be abused and 7.9% believe that wife-hitting is justified if she disobeys her husband. Although there is significant variation across the districts, this statement is ranked highest by respondents across all districts as justification for a husband to hit or abuse his wife. In Dhading, more than a quarter of the women (25.2%) feel it was acceptable for the husband to abuse his wife if she disobeys him. In Mahottari, 12.8% of women feel it is acceptable for the husband to hit his wife for the same justification.

Some other more frequently cited reasons justifying abuse and hitting of wives are “not completing household work to husband’s satisfaction” (between 3% and 17.6% justify ‘abuse’, with a lower range for ‘hitting’); “wife returning home late” (between 2.2% and 10.0% justify ‘abuse’, with a lower range for ‘hitting’). Other possible justifications for wife abuse or hitting are less common among sampled women respondents: less than one percent of women feel that being abused (0.1%) and hit (0.2%) is justified if she does not bring enough dowry to her husband’s family (Table 3.3).



<sup>5</sup> As in the parallel survey question asked of men (see Section 6.7), the Nepali word for abuse is *durbebahar* and for hitting, *pittnu*. In general, *pittnu* is understood as more severe than other acts encompassed semantically by *durbebahar*.

**Table 3.3 Attitudes towards ‘abusing’ and ‘hitting’ wife (% of women who agree with the statements)**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>It is okay for a husband to abuse (<i>durbabhar</i>) his wife if:</b>					
She does not complete her household work to his satisfaction	10.6	3.0	17.6	8.8	10.0
She disobeys him	16.8	6.2	25.2	14.0	15.6
She refuses to have sexual relations with him	2.4	0.6	3.2	1.4	1.9
She asks whether he has other girlfriends	1.2	0.2	3.2	1.4	1.5
He suspects that she is unfaithful	2.4	0.4	4.0	2.4	2.3
She returns home late	5.6	2.2	10.0	3.8	5.4
She is infertile	0.6	0.0	1.0	0.2	0.5
She does not give birth to a son	0.6	0.0	0.8	0.2	0.4
She has frequent miscarriages	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.2
She does not bring enough dowry	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1
<b>Agree with any one reason</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>18.0</b>
<b>It is okay for a husband to hit (<i>pitnu</i>) his wife if:</b>					
She does not complete her household work to his satisfaction	7.2	1.4	3.8	4.8	4.3
She disobeys him	12.8	5.0	5.2	8.4	7.9
She refuses to have sexual relations with him	1.8	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.9
She asks whether he has other girlfriends	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.5
He suspects that she is unfaithful	1.8	0.2	0.8	1.0	1.0
She returns home late	4.6	1.6	2.8	2.6	2.9
She is infertile	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.3
She does not give birth to a son	0.6	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.4
She has frequent miscarriages	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2
She does not bring enough dowry	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2
<b>Agree with any one reason</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>8.8</b>
<b>It is okay or not for in-laws to abuse (<i>durbabhar</i>) their in-laws (female) if:</b>					
She does not complete her household work to her satisfaction	2.2	0.2	5.6	2.6	2.7
She disobeys them	7.2	1.8	8.0	5.2	5.6
She returns home late	1.4	1.4	5.4	2.0	2.6
She is infertile	0.2	0.2	1.0	0.4	0.5
She does not give birth to a son	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.4	0.4
She has frequent miscarriage	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3
She does not bring enough dowry	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.4
<b>Agree with any one reason</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>6.3</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

A composite index was developed to further assess perceptions by women of ‘abuse’ for any of the reasons listed in Table 3.4. As shown in Table 3.4, there is an association between this index and other variables, including membership in disadvantaged indigenous ethnic groups, identifying as being non-Hindu, and having a primary level of education or less. Women with low media exposure and moderate mobility are more likely than others to believe that it is acceptable for a husband to abuse his wife. Among the surveyed districts, women from Dhading are more likely to justify wife abuse for one or more reasons compared to other districts (Table 3.4).

**Table 3.4 Percentage of women who believe that it is acceptable for a husband to abuse his wife for any reason by selected background characteristics**

Background characteristics	Acceptable for one or more reasons	Not acceptable (%)	Total	
	%	%	N	%
<b>Current age ( in years)<sup>ns</sup></b>				
16-24	16.6	83.4	571	100.0
25-34	16.8	83.2	656	100.0
35-49	20.1	79.9	598	100.0
50-59	20.0	80.0	175	100.0
<b>Caste/ethnicity<sup>***</sup></b>				
Upper caste groups	15.4	84.6	324	100.0
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	19.5	80.5	118	100.0
Disadvantaged indigenous group	25.9	74.1	505	100.0
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	11.1	88.9	630	100.0
Dalit/ religious minorities	20.3	79.7	423	100.0
<b>Religion<sup>***</sup></b>				
Hindu	15.3	84.7	1710	100.0
Non Hindu	33.8	66.2	290	100.0
<b>Level of education<sup>***</sup></b>				
Illiterate	18.0	82.0	872	100.0
Non-formal education/ up to primary	22.4	77.6	584	100.0
Six years of schooling and above	13.2	86.8	544	100.0
<b>Marital status<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Never married	14.0	86.0	221	100.0
Currently married	18.6	81.4	1713	100.0
Widow/ divorced/ separated	15.2	84.8	66	100.0
<b>Wealth Quintile<sup>***</sup></b>				
Lowest	27.6	72.4	391	100.0
Second	21.0	79.0	400	100.0
Middle	16.3	83.7	404	100.0
Fourth	14.9	85.1	402	100.0
Highest	10.4	89.6	403	100.0
<b>Media exposure<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Low	19.4	80.6	975	100.0
Moderate	16.5	83.5	680	100.0
High	17.1	82.9	345	100.0
<b>Women's Mobility Index<sup>*</sup></b>				
Low	17.0	83.0	1292	100.0
Moderate	22.7	77.3	401	100.0
High	16.0	84.0	307	100.0
<b>Membership in any community groups or organizations<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Yes	17.5	82.5	553	100.0
No	18.2	81.8	1447	100.0
<b>Place of residence<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Urban	17.6	82.4	450	100.0
Rural	18.1	81.9	1550	100.0
<b>District<sup>***</sup></b>				
Mahottari	17.8	82.2	500	100.0
Siraha	7.0	93.0	500	100.0
Dhading	30.6	69.4	500	100.0
Bardiya	16.6	83.4	500	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1000.0</b>

Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ ,  $ns=$ not significant

Table 3.5 presents the percentage of women who believe that it is acceptable for a husband to hit his wife for any one of the listed reasons by selected background characteristics. Again, similar patterns emerge as in Table 3.4. Results show that women belonging to Dalit/religious minority ethnic groups, those who are non-Hindu, those with no education, and those who are widowed or separated, are more likely than others to justify ‘hitting’. Similarly, women belonging to the lowest wealth quintile, having low media exposure, and living in urban areas are more likely than their counterpart women to believe that it is acceptable for a husband to hit his wife. Women from Mahottari are more likely to justify hitting for any one reason compared to women from other districts (Table 3.5).

**Table 3.5 Percentage of women who believe that it is acceptable for a husband to hit his wife for any reason by selected background characteristics**

Background characteristics	Acceptable for one or more reasons	Not acceptable	Total	
	%	%	N	%
<b>Current age ( in years)<sup>ns</sup></b>				
16-24	6.5	93.5	571	100.0
25-34	9.0	91.0	656	100.0
35-49	10.2	89.8	598	100.0
50-59	10.9	89.1	175	100.0
<b>Caste/ethnicity***</b>				
Upper caste groups	2.5	97.5	324	100.0
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	2.5	97.5	118	100.0
Disadvantaged indigenous group	10.9	89.1	505	100.0
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	9.0	91.0	630	100.0
Dalit/ religious minorities	12.5	87.5	423	100.0
<b>Religion***</b>				
Hindu	7.8	92.2	1710	100.0
Non Hindu	14.5	85.5	290	100.0
<b>Level of education***</b>				
Illiterate	11.0	89.0	872	100.0
Non-formal education/ up to primary	9.4	90.6	584	100.0
Six years of schooling and above	4.6	95.4	544	100.0
<b>Marital status*</b>				
Never married	4.5	95.5	221	100.0
Currently married	9.2	90.8	1713	100.0
Widow/ divorced/ separated	13.6	86.4	66	100.0
<b>Wealth Quintile***</b>				
Lowest	15.6	84.4	391	100.0
Second	9.8	90.3	400	100.0

Middle	5.9	94.1	404	100.0
Fourth	7.5	92.5	402	100.0
Highest	5.5	94.5	403	100.0
<b>Media exposure***</b>				
Low	12.9	87.1	975	100.0
Moderate	5.4	94.6	680	100.0
High	3.8	96.2	345	100.0
<b>Women's Mobility Index**</b>				
Low	7.4	92.6	1292	100.0
Moderate	13.2	86.8	401	100.0
High	8.8	91.2	307	100.0
<b>Membership in any community group or organizations<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Yes	8.0	92.0	553	100.0
No	9.1	90.9	1447	100.0
<b>Place of residence***</b>				
Urban	13.8	86.2	450	100.0
Rural	7.4	92.6	1550	100.0
<b>District***</b>				
Mahottari	13.6	86.4	500	100.0
Siraha	5.0	95.0	500	100.0
Dhading	7.0	93.0	500	100.0
Bardiya	9.6	90.4	500	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>91.2</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ ,  $ns$ =not significant

### 3.3 Attitudes towards abuse by in-laws

Table 3.6 presents the percentage of women who believe that it is acceptable for in-laws to abuse their daughter or sister-in-law for any reason by selected background characteristics. One in 17 women (6.3%) believe that it is acceptable for in-laws to abuse their daughter or sister-in-law. Associations with background characteristics of women show the same patterns found in the case of hitting of wives by husbands (see associated variables, above, Table 3.5)



**Table 3.6 Percentage of women who believe that it is acceptable for in-laws to abuse their daughter or sister-in-law for any reason by selected background characteristics**

Background characteristics	Acceptable for one or more reasons	Not acceptable	Total	
	%	%	N	%
<b>Current age ( in years)<sup>ns</sup></b>				
16-24	4.9	95.1	571	100.0
25-34	6.7	93.3	656	100.0
35-49	6.5	93.5	598	100.0
50-59	8.0	92.0	175	100.0
<b>Caste/ethnicity<sup>***</sup></b>				
Upper caste groups	4.0	96.0	324	100.0
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	6.8	93.2	118	100.0
Disadvantaged indigenous group	8.9	91.1	505	100.0
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	3.7	96.3	630	100.0
Dalit/ religious minorities	8.5	91.5	423	100.0
<b>Religion<sup>***</sup></b>				
Hindu	5.0	95.0	1710	100.0
Non-Hindu	13.4	86.6	290	100.0
<b>Level of education<sup>***</sup></b>				
Illiterate	5.6	94.4	872	100.0
Non-formal education/ up to primary	9.8	90.2	584	100.0
Six years of schooling and above	3.5	96.5	544	100.0
<b>Marital status<sup>*</sup></b>				
Never married	4.1	95.9	221	100.0
Currently married	6.5	93.5	1713	100.0
Widow/ divorced/ separated	6.1	93.9	66	100.0
<b>Wealth Quintile<sup>***</sup></b>				
Lowest	10.2	89.8	391	100.0
Second	6.8	93.3	400	100.0
Middle	5.2	94.8	404	100.0
Fourth	6.0	94.0	402	100.0
Highest	3.2	96.8	403	100.0
<b>Media exposure<sup>*</sup></b>				
Low	7.5	92.5	975	100.0
Moderate	5.9	94.1	680	100.0
High	3.5	96.5	345	100.0
<b>Women's Mobility Index<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Low	6.6	93.4	1292	100.0
Moderate	5.2	94.8	401	100.0
High	6.2	93.8	307	100.0
<b>Membership in any community group or organizations<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Yes	6.3	93.7	553	100.0
No	6.2	93.8	1447	100.0
<b>Place of residence<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Urban	7.3	92.7	450	100.0
Rural	5.9	94.1	1550	100.0
<b>District<sup>***</sup></b>				
Mahottari	7.6	92.4	500	100.0
Siraha	2.4	97.6	500	100.0
Dhading	9.6	90.4	500	100.0
Bardiya	5.4	94.6	500	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>93.7</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ ,  $ns$ =not significant

### 3.4 Perceptions of discrimination

The study examined women's perceptions of gender discrimination by asking their opinions on 15 different topics ranging from basic needs to the use of local resources. An overwhelming majority of women from all of the survey districts agree that women deserve the same rights and opportunities as men regarding all of the queried topics. No major differences in attitudes towards gender discrimination are observed across districts (Table 3.7).

**Table 3.7 Percentage of women who agree that women deserve the same rights and opportunities as men (% 'strongly agree' and 'agree')**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Agree women deserve same rights/opportunities as men regarding:</b>					
Basic needs (food/ clothing/ shelter)	96.8	98.6	98.4	97.6	97.9
To get an education	99.0	99.2	99.0	98.6	99.0
Inheritance rights to property	92.6	97.2	94.4	93.8	94.5
To own and make decisions about property	95.0	98.2	96.4	94.8	96.1
To claim legal rights, including citizenship, birth and death registration	98.8	98.2	97.6	97.2	98.0
To get a job or run a business	99.0	99.2	98.4	98.2	98.7
To hold membership in any institution	98.2	97.0	97.8	97.0	97.5
To visit health care services/ health care organizations/ providers	99.2	97.8	99.0	98.4	98.6
Expenditures on self	98.8	99.0	98.6	98.6	98.8
How many children to have	98.0	98.8	97.6	96.8	97.8
Speaking publicly	96.0	99.2	96.4	97.2	97.2
Using/ Selecting contraceptives	97.6	96.6	96.0	96.8	96.8
Choosing a partner/ life partner	88.4	95.0	98.0	96.0	94.4
To go wherever she wants to	85.0	91.6	96.4	96.6	92.4
Use of resources in the community	96.8	97.0	93.4	94.8	95.5
<b>Total % of women who believe men and women should be valued equally</b>	<b>99.4</b>	<b>99.2</b>	<b>99.6</b>	<b>98.8</b>	<b>99.3</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Women were asked whether they are valued less than men and suffer unfair treatment in society because they are women. In contrast to their affirmation of equal rights and opportunities with men in principle (see above, Table 3.7), in reality women state that they are less valued than men and suffer unfair treatment. The area of discrimination most noted is the distribution and exercise of property rights, including issues related to inheritance (95.9%), property ownership, and decision-making about the use of property (95.3%). The majority of respondents express similar views on a range of issues such as obtaining an education, fertility decisions, choosing a life partner, and freedom of mobility.

Women's perceptions of discrimination vary across the districts. Reports of discrimination, in the range of 80% to 90% of respondents, are relatively consistent across all districts in relation to education, legal rights, employment, as well as fertility decisions such as contraceptive use (Table 3.8). A lower percentage of Dhading respondents report discrimination on several issues compared to the other three districts, particularly health care (47.8%).

**Table 3.8 Percentage of women who agree that women are less valued than men and suffer unfair treatment in society (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

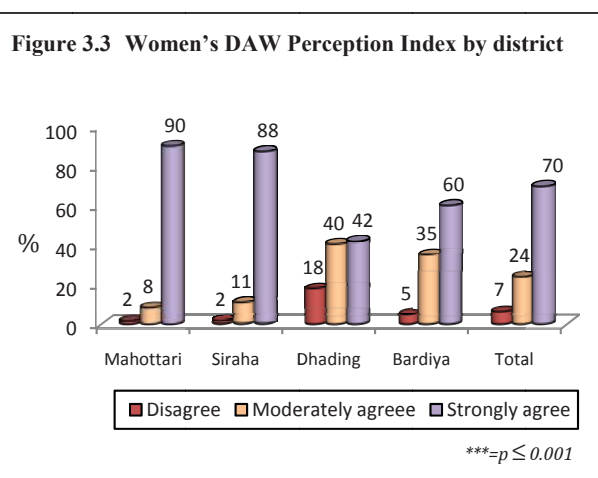
Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Perceive discrimination against women in relation to:</b>					
Basic needs (food/clothing/ shelter)	96.4	93.8	61.6	82.6	83.6
To get an education	94.8	93.6	66.0	85.6	85.0
Inheritance right to property	97.2	97.4	93.8	95.2	95.9
To own and make decisions about property	98.4	97.4	93.4	92.0	95.3
To claim legal rights, including citizenship, birth and death registration	91.4	91.2	65.8	74.0	80.6
To get a job or run a business	98.0	95.4	75.6	86.4	88.9
To hold membership in any institution	96.0	89.4	71.2	84.8	85.4
To visit health care services/ health care organizations/ providers	93.2	89.0	47.8	64.6	73.7
Expenditures on self	98.0	97.4	74.0	89.8	89.8
How many children to have	93.6	91.8	73.0	86.4	86.2
Speaking publicly	97.0	96.8	73.2	89.6	89.2
Using/ Selecting contraceptives	88.4	81.2	63.2	84.4	79.3
Choosing a partner/ life partner	92.8	95.0	74.4	88.4	87.7
To go wherever she wants to	96.0	94.8	84.2	96.0	92.8
Use of resources in the community	96.8	95.4	74.2	85.2	87.9
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

### 3.5 Factors affecting women’s perception of discrimination against women

A composite index was developed to measure women’s perception of discrimination against women (Women’s DAW Perception Index). The Women’s DAW Perception Index encompasses 14 statements in relation to a range of reported attitudes towards discrimination against women, selected from the 15 statements in Table 3.8. A composite variable was constructed using factor analysis and after assessing for reliability (Cronbach Alpha score was 0.91). These scaled results were trichomitted by their total scores and categorized as ‘Disagree’, ‘Moderately Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ that women are less valued and face discrimination.

On average, about 70% of women state that they are less valued than men on several issues. As shown in Figure 3.3, the perceptions of women in Mahottari and Siraha contrast with those in Dhading and, to a lesser extent, Bardiya, in terms of the overwhelming percentage of women who strongly agree that discrimination exists. A very small percentage of women (7%) disagreed that women are less valued than men (Figure 3.3).

Bivariate analysis presented in Table 3.9 shows that caste/ethnicity, religion, education, occupation, and place of residence are significantly associated with the Women’s DAW Perception Index. Illiterate women, those belonging to disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups, and those living in urban areas, tend to strongly agree that women suffer unfair treatment and are less valued than men. Women with low exposure to mass media, low autonomy of mobility, and with no involvement in community organizations, are more likely than their counterparts to state that women suffer unfair treatment and are less valued than men (Table 3.9).

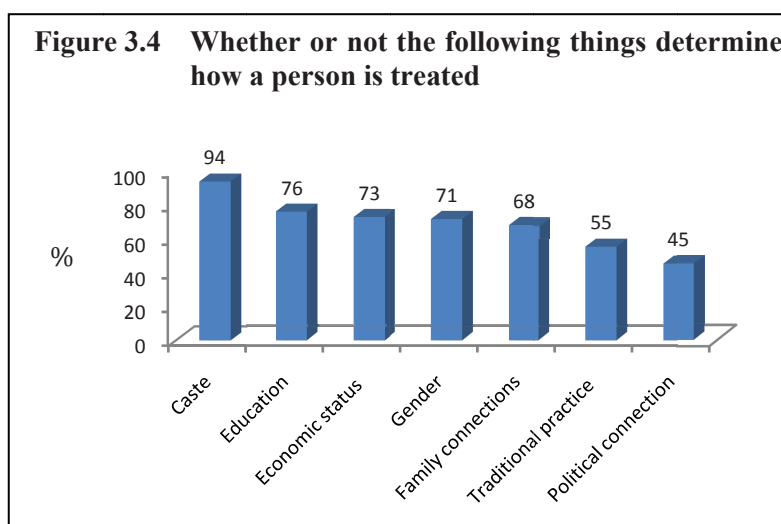


**Table 3.9 Women’s DAW Perception Index by selected background characteristics**

Characteristics	Disagree		Moderately agree		Strongly agree		Total	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N
<b>Age<sup>ns</sup></b>								
16-24	7.4	42	25.0	143	67.6	386	100.0	571
25-34	4.9	32	23.0	151	72.1	473	100.0	656
35-49	7.0	42	21.7	130	71.2	426	100.0	598
50-59	7.4	13	28.0	49	64.6	113	100.0	175
<b>Caste/ethnicity***</b>								
Upper caste groups	14.8	48	30.6	99	54.6	177	100.0	324
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	9.3	11	38.1	45	52.5	62	100.0	118
Disadvantaged indigenous group	10.7	54	41.0	207	48.3	244	100.0	505
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	1.4	9	9.8	62	88.7	559	100.0	630
Dalit/ religious minorities	1.7	7	14.2	60	84.2	356	100.0	423
<b>Religion***</b>								
Hindu	5.9	101	21.8	373	72.3	1236	100.0	1710
Non Hindu	9.7	28	34.5	100	55.9	162	100.0	290
<b>Level of education***</b>								
Illiterate	4.4	38	17.1	149	78.6	685	100.0	872
Non-formal education/ up to primary	8.2	48	30.0	175	61.8	361	100.0	584
Six years of schooling and above	7.9	43	27.4	149	64.7	352	100.0	544
<b>Marital Status<sup>ns</sup></b>								
Never married	6.8	15	25.8	57	67.4	149	100.0	221
Currently married	6.2	107	23.2	397	70.6	1209	100.0	1713
Widow/ divorced/ separated	10.6	7	28.8	19	60.6	40	100.0	66
<b>Women’s occupation***</b>								
Non-remunerated house wife or students	4.3	58	18.8	256	76.9	1048	100.0	1362
Agriculture	13.3	54	42.0	170	44.7	181	100.0	405
Other	7.3	17	20.2	47	72.5	169	100.0	233
<b>Wealth Quintile<sup>ns</sup></b>								
Lowest	5.9	23	22.0	86	72.1	282	100.0	391
Second	8.0	32	24.0	96	68.0	272	100.0	400
Middle	4.2	17	26.7	108	69.1	279	100.0	404
Fourth	6.5	26	24.1	97	69.4	279	100.0	402
Highest	7.7	31	21.3	86	71.0	286	100.0	403
<b>Media exposure***</b>								
Low	3.2	31	17.6	172	79.2	772	100.0	975
Moderate	8.5	58	28.4	193	63.1	429	100.0	680
High	11.6	40	31.3	108	57.1	197	100.0	345
<b>Women's Mobility Index***</b>								
Low	6.4	83	20.6	266	73.0	943	100.0	1292
Moderate	3.5	14	28.9	116	67.6	271	100.0	401
High	10.4	32	29.6	91	59.9	184	100.0	307
<b>Membership of any community group or organization***</b>								
Yes	9.4	52	31.6	175	59.0	326	100.0	553
No	5.3	77	20.6	298	74.1	1072	100.0	1447
<b>Place of residence***</b>								
Urban	2.0	9	21.1	95	76.9	346	100.0	450
Rural	7.7	120	24.4	378	67.9	1052	100.0	1550
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>69.9</b>	<b>1398</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2000</b>

Chi-square test, significant at \*\*\*= $p \leq 0.001$ , ns=not significant

Figure 3.4 shows overall factors that women view as important in determining how a person is treated in society. All women from Mahottari, Dhading, and Bardiya, and 74.6% of women from Siraha, view caste as a key determinant. Other factors include education level (75.6%), economic status (72.5%), and gender (71.1%). About 45% of all women believe that a person's political connections affect how one is treated (Table 3.10).

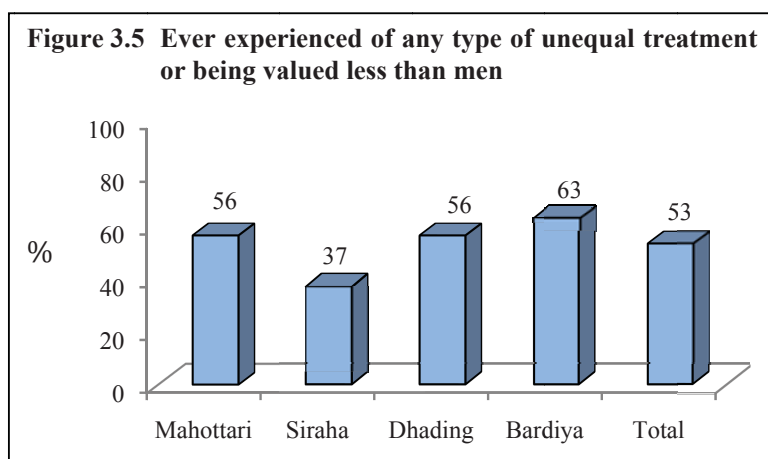


**Table 3.10 Whether or not the following factors determine how a person is treated (% 'strongly agree' and 'agree')**

Factors	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Caste	100.0	74.6	100.0	100.0	93.7
Education	91.4	88.4	63.2	59.2	75.6
Economic status	88.6	84.2	61.8	55.2	72.5
Gender	93.6	84.8	52.0	54.0	71.1
Family connections	74.4	64.6	59.0	72.4	67.6
Traditional practice	58.0	46.6	56.8	58.8	55.1
Political connection	56.8	44.8	37.4	41.8	45.2
N	500	500	500	500	2000

### 3.6 Experiences of unequal treatment

As shown in Figure 3.5, half of all surveyed women (53%) report feeling unfairly treated or experienced situations in which they were less valued than men. Experiences of such events is highest in Bardiya (63%) followed by Dhading (56%), Mahottari (56%) and Siraha (37%)(Figure 3.5). Women report unfair treatment particularly regarding responsibility for domestic chores (such as cooking, dish washing, cleaning, fetching drinking water, etc.), after child-birth and during menstruation, and while attending social gatherings or functions (Table 3.11). There is a notable difference between Mahottari (43.4%) and Siraha (13.0%) in the percentage of women who feel unfairly treated as a woman in relation to domestic labour. Smaller but still significant differences exist between Mahottari and Siraha with regard to unfair treatment during menstruation (9.2% versus 2.2%), during postpartum (25.0% versus 14.0%), and regarding exclusion from religious activities (17.0% versus 9.4%). These two districts otherwise tend to mirror one another in the quantitative results.



**Table 3.11 Any experience of unequal treatment or being less valued than male family members**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Been prevented from attending social gatherings or activities because you are a woman (e.g. weddings, parties, gatherings, etc.)	20.6	25.6	14.4	21.0	20.4
Been treated unfairly during menstruation	9.2	2.2	36.2	31.0	19.7
Been treated unfairly during postpartum	25.0	14.0	33.6	34.2	26.7
Been excluded from religious activities or places of worship because you are a woman (e.g. from <i>puja</i> , funeral activities, etc.)	17.0	9.4	7.8	17.2	12.9
Been dismissed, suspended or prevented from attending an educational institution because you are a woman (same as that of your male siblings or relatives)	7.2	6.6	13.4	23.8	12.8
Been denied health services because you are a woman	14.6	8.8	4.6	6.0	8.5
Been treated unfairly in family activities because you are a woman? (E.g. cooking, dish washing, cleaning, fetching, drinking water, etc.)	43.4	13.0	22.8	45.2	31.1
Been deprived of nutritious food	12.2	5.6	3.4	14.6	9.0
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Bivariate analysis of the data shows a positive association between reported lifetime experience of discrimination and a range of variables including caste/ethnicity, level of education, marital status, women's mobility and district of residence (Table 3.12). Relatively advantage indigenous groups report relatively less, but still significant unequal treatment (36.4%) compared to other categories, all between 50% and 60%. Widows and divorced or separated women and those belonging to the lowest wealth quintile, are more likely than other women to report feeling less valued and being victims of unfair treatment due to their status as women (Table 3.12).

**Table 3.12 Experience of feeling less valued than men over lifetime by selected background characteristics**

Background characteristics	Ever experienced any unequal treatment or felt less valued than men		Total	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	N	%
<b>Current age ( in years)<sup>ns</sup></b>				
16-24	51.1	48.9	571	100.0
25-34	55.3	44.7	656	100.0
35-49	52.3	47.7	598	100.0
50-59	53.1	46.9	175	100.0
<b>Caste/ethnicity***</b>				
Upper caste groups	58.6	41.4	324	100.0
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	36.4	63.6	118	100.0
Disadvantaged indigenous group	56.4	43.6	505	100.0
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai Caste Group	49.2	50.8	630	100.0
Dalit/ religious minorities	55.1	44.9	423	100.0

<b>Religion<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Hindu	53.5	46.5	1710	100.0
Non Hindu	50.3	49.7	290	100.0
<b>Level of education<sup>**</sup></b>				
Illiterate	51.8	48.2	872	100.0
Non-formal education/ up to primary	58.7	41.3	584	100.0
Six years of schooling and above	48.9	51.1	544	100.0
<b>Marital status<sup>*</sup></b>				
Never married	47.1	52.9	221	100.0
Currently married	53.4	46.6	1713	100.0
Widow/ divorced/ separated	65.2	34.8	66	100.0
<b>Wealth Quintile<sup>***</sup></b>				
Lowest	59.8	40.2	391	100.0
Second	56.3	43.8	400	100.0
Middle	55.9	44.1	404	100.0
Fourth	49.0	51.0	402	100.0
Highest	44.4	55.6	403	100.0
<b>Media Exposure<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Low	52.9	47.1	975	100.0
Moderate	53.4	46.6	680	100.0
High	52.8	47.2	345	100.0
<b>Women's mobility index<sup>*</sup></b>				
Low	52.2	47.8	1292	100.0
Moderate	59.1	40.9	401	100.0
High	48.9	51.1	307	100.0
<b>Membership in any community group or organizations <sup>ns</sup></b>				
Yes	58.0	42.0	553	100.0
No	51.1	48.9	1447	100.0
<b>Place of Residence<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Urban	50.4	49.6	450	100.0
Rural	53.8	46.2	1550	100.0
<b>District<sup>***</sup></b>				
Mahottari	56.0	44.0	500	100.0
Siraha	37.0	63.0	500	100.0
Dhading	56.2	43.8	500	100.0
Bardiya	63.0	37.0	500	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ ,  $ns$ =not significant



### 3.7 Perceived reasons for experiences of discrimination

Traditional/social practices (62.3%) and illiteracy (43.1%) are the most commonly perceived reasons for discrimination in society. The other less commonly perceived reasons are poverty (33.8%), patriarchal society (28.4%), the misfortune of being born as a girl (27.0%) or giving birth to a daughter (13.4%), and religion (13.1%). The perceived reasons for discrimination do not vary much by district. While ‘social/traditional practices’ is the most commonly perceived reason for discrimination against women in Dhading (76.9%) and Bardiya (71.7%), the most commonly noted cause in Mahottari is illiteracy (54.3%), and, in Siraha, poverty (66.5%) (Table 3.13).

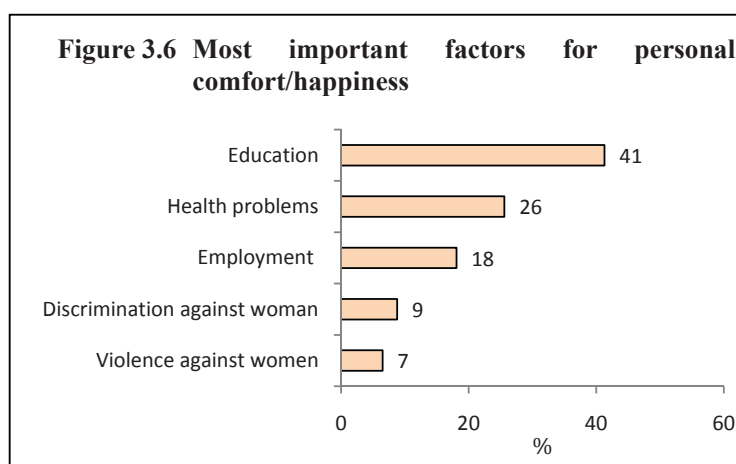
**Table 3.13 Perceived reasons for experiences of discrimination**

Perceived reasons	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Social/ traditional practices	49.3	43.8	76.9	71.7	62.3
Illiteracy	54.3	48.1	36.3	36.2	43.1
Poverty	47.5	66.5	8.9	24.8	33.8
Patriarchal society	22.5	28.6	17.1	43.5	28.4
Was wrong to be born as a girl	40.4	22.2	23.1	21.6	27.0
Religion	22.9	4.9	15.7	7.0	13.1
For giving birth to a daughter	18.9	17.3	7.1	11.7	13.4
For belonging to untouchable group	5.0	8.1	2.1	2.9	4.1
Unemployment	3.2	13.5	1.1	5.7	5.2
For being disabled	1.8	1.1	0.0	1.0	0.9
For being widowed	5.0	5.4	0.0	0.6	2.5
As she did not bring any dowry	0.0	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.5
Due to low self-esteem in women	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.6	0.4
As she is infertile	0.7	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.4
As she is a woman left by her husband	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
As her husband got married to another woman	0.4	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.4
As she is/was in an inter-caste marriage	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.1
Don't know	0.0	1.1	5.7	3.5	2.7
<b>N</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>1061</b>

*Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses*

### 3.8 Most important aspirations for personal and community wellbeing

The survey also examined factors affecting personal and community wellbeing. Five options generally associated with personal wellbeing were listed for respondents, and they were asked to identify and rank the three most important. On the whole, women consider education to be the most important factor for personal wellbeing (41.3%), followed by health (25.6%), and employment (18.1%) (Figure 3.6). Relative importance varied by district. While health is the second most important concern for women in Dhading (30.4%), Mahottari (24%) and Bardiya (30.4%), employment is the second major concern for respondents from Siraha (27.8%). Very few women



consider discrimination against women (8.8%) and violence against women (6.5%) as primary concerns for personal comfort and wellbeing. About a quarter of respondents (23.1%) consider violence against women among the top three concerns that affect their personal wellbeing.

**Table 3.14 Factors contributing to personal comfort/happiness and community wellbeing (*bhalai/hitt*)**

	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Factors relevant to personal comfort and happiness</b>					
Health	24.0	24.8	30.4	23.2	25.6
Discrimination against woman	8.0	8.4	4.6	14.2	8.8
Violence against women	5.8	5.2	4.4	10.6	6.5
Employment	22.0	27.8	8.6	13.8	18.1
Education	40.6	34.0	52.0	38.6	41.3
<i>% of women who place VAW among the top 3 concerns for personal comfort</i>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>23.1</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Factors relevant to community wellbeing ('very important' and 'important')</b>					
Corruption of officials	98.4	96.6	93.0	95.8	96.0
Interference by political parties	87.6	95.0	91.0	93.8	91.9
Lack of health facilities	98.6	99.6	100.0	98.8	99.3
Lack of education facilities	99.0	98.2	99.8	97.6	98.7
Unfair or threatening treatment because of caste and ethnicity	74.6	76.6	93.2	88.6	83.3
Violence against women	97.6	99.0	98.4	97.0	98.0
Crime	92.0	93.0	98.6	95.8	94.9
Political situation in the country	86.2	93.0	91.0	95.4	91.4
Lack of employment opportunities	98.6	99.8	99.2	98.8	99.1
Poor infrastructure (including electricity, water, roads, etc.)	95.6	93.0	99.4	98.0	96.5
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Women were then asked about matters relevant to community wellbeing, without requiring them to rank their answers. Ten different options were listed and responses classified along a four-point scale from 'very important' to 'not important at all'. Results show that community wellbeing is affected by diverse set of factors including lack of health facilities (99.3%), lack of education facilities (98.7%), lack of employment opportunities (99.1%), violence against women (98.0%), crime (94.9%), corruption among officials (96%), political interference (91.9%), and poor infrastructure (96.5%). It is important to note that the percentage of women who place violence against women as an important concern for community well-being is higher than those who mention it as a concern for their personal comfort (98.0% versus 23.1%)(Table 3.14).

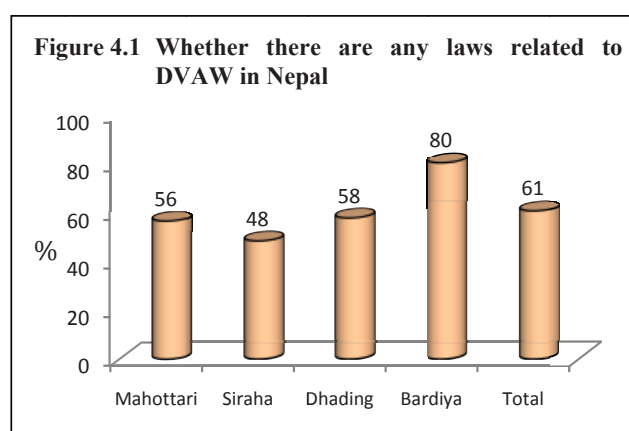
## CHAPTER 4

# AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS LAWS AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS RELATED TO DVAW

This chapter reports on women's awareness and attitudes towards existing laws and constitutional provisions related to DVAW. It also examines women's awareness of institutional sources of support following incidents of DVAW, as well as their levels of trust in the formal justice system.

### 4.1 Awareness of DVAW-related laws

Respondents were asked whether they thought there were any laws in Nepal that related to discrimination and violence against women (*Hamro deshma mahila mathi hune bhedbhav तथा हिंसा सम्बन्धी कुनै कानून छन?*). On average, 61% of women think that such laws exist. Awareness of such laws varies widely by district. For example, 80% of women in Bardiya think that laws related to DVAW exist compared to only 48% in Siraha (Figure 4.1).



In addition to the general question of whether DVAW-related laws exist, respondents were asked whether they were aware of laws related to specific kinds of discrimination and violence (*tapaile... (subject of law) ...sambandhi kanun ko barema sunnu bhayako chha?*). In reply, women mention awareness of laws about rape (46.9%), child marriage (41.3%) and trafficking (40.9%). Lesser-known legislation relates violence and threats in public places (15.1%), property rights for women (24.7%), and laws related to birth, citizenship, and death registration (25.6%)(Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 Awareness of DVAW-related laws**

Laws related to:	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Domestic violence	39.4	22.2	34.6	45.8	35.5
Rape	38.6	32.2	45.6	71.0	46.9
Violence and threats in public places	8.2	6.6	21.2	24.4	15.1
Witchcraft allegations	16.8	15.0	42.6	57.8	33.3
Dowry-related violence	33.0	26.6	35.6	48.8	36.0
Trafficking	25.8	19.8	44.2	70.6	40.9
Birth / citizenship / death registration	16.4	18.2	25.8	43.0	25.9
Child marriage	34.4	34.0	37.4	57.4	41.3
Polygamy	28.0	29.4	38.6	60.0	39.0
Women's property rights	14.8	17.2	25.0	41.6	24.7
<b>Percentage of women who think that laws related to DVAW exist in Nepal</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>60.6</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Consistent with quantitative results, in both FGDs and IDIs, most women majority (13 out of 24 women in IDIs) expressed awareness that DVAW-related laws exist, but they lacked awareness about any specific provisions. Some interviewees mentioned statutes related to domestic violence, rape and witchcraft accusation. A smaller number made reference to laws against child marriage, polygamy, and dowry. Most participants expressed vague or superficial knowledge of specific legal provisions, but expressed greater understanding regarding the consequences and repercussions for perpetrators and victims. Typical comments from these meetings include the following:

*"I have not heard anything about this. How could an illiterate person like me know about the law?"*

*- 50 year-old illiterate Newar woman from Dhading*

*"I don't know what's in the law but I believe that such violence or abuse should be reconciled among the family members.*

*- 25 year-old illiterate Koiri woman from Siraha*

*"I've heard that to claim property rights we need to go to court but I don't know more about it."*

*- 27 year-old literate Chhetri woman from Bardiya*

*"I only know that nowadays children can get their citizenship in the name of their mother even if she is separated from her husband. She can claim property from her husband and also has the right to get property from her father".*

*- Young women's group from rural Bardiya*

*"Yes, I have heard of laws on untouchability. One has to pay Rs. 500 as a penalty and they are imprisoned for a year. This is what I have heard".*

*- Young women's group from rural Bardiya*

*"In the case of polygamy, if the individual registers the case within 90 days, both the husband and the second wife receive a prison sentence".*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

*"If a husband does it [sexual relations] forcefully, it's treated as marital rape and we can file a case to criminalize such acts".*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

Participants had mixed reactions about the content and enforcement of laws. While some participants expressed optimism, others were apathetic, hesitant or suspicious regarding the role of law in addressing DVAW. Most participants explained that lack of awareness of laws and rights deter women from seeking options and support. The following comment from a young woman reflected an attitude shared by many participants:

*"Women don't know where they can seek justice when they become victims of violence. Often, only after violence do they learn about the law and their rights, as well as different types of support and service providers available. Awareness is severely lacking."*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

## 4.2 Association between legal awareness and respondent profiles

Bivariate analysis reveals associations between women's level of awareness of DVAW-related laws and their demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Relevant variables include age, number of living children, caste/ethnicity, religion, level of education, marital status, occupation, wealth quintile, media exposure, place of residence, mobility and membership in community organizations.

Younger, higher caste, and self-identified Hindu women report greater awareness of laws related to DVAW. The percentage of women who are aware of such laws increases from 43.9% among the non-educated to 90.5% among those with an SLC or higher levels of education. Married or formerly married women are less likely to report awareness of DVAW-related laws than women who were never married. Awareness increases with exposure to mass media, greater economic resources, urban versus rural residence, and membership in any community organization. This pattern largely holds true with regard to all five frequently mentioned laws (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2 Association between legal awareness and respondent profiles**

Characteristics	Domestic violence	Trafficking	Rape	Child marriage	Witchcraft allegations	Any laws	N
<b>Current age (in years)</b>	**	***	***	***	***	**	
16-24	41.5	52.4	55.8	49.9	41.5	66.5	571
25-34	33.4	38.7	46.2	41.5	30.9	60.3	656
35-49	34.2	33.8	42.5	35.5	28.9	56.3	598
50-64	28.0	35.4	34.8	32.5	30.2	56.0	175
<b>Number of living children</b>	**	***	***	***	***	***	
No living children	38.8	44.6	50.4	48.7	40.5	61.2	121
1	41.0	48.9	55.0	48.5	42.8	67.2	229
2	37.2	43.5	50.6	43.2	36.5	65.5	395
3 and more	30.4	31.9	39.1	33.8	25.2	53.5	1034
<b>Education</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Illiterate	23.2	19.6	29.0	22.5	16.3	43.9	872
Up to Primary/non-formal education	33.7	46.9	49.6	41.9	38.5	63.3	584
Six to 10 years of schooling	53.9	65.4	71.2	66.8	53.0	82.5	428
SLC or more	68.1	79.3	76.7	85.3	61.2	90.5	116
<b>Caste/ethnicity</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Upper caste groups	57.7	65.4	67.3	64.1	59.6	81.5	324
Relatively advantaged indigenous	43.2	61.8	64.4	50.8	46.6	73.7	118
Disadvantaged indigenous group	31.5	49.7	49.3	40.8	42.1	60.0	505
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai Caste	30.0	27.0	37.7	36.0	19.2	53.2	630
Dalit religious minorities	29.3	26.2	36.8	29.5	19.8	52.5	423

<b>Occupation</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Non-remunerated/ House wife/ student	36	39.6	47.9	41.9	31.6	62.5	1362
Daily wage labourer	22.4	15.8	25.2	25.2	10.2	40.7	108
Agriculture and livestock	30.6	44.4	43.4	36.8	39.7	54.1	405
Business/Petty business	45.6	51.8	56.7	48.1	37	91.1	44
Professional	77.2	84	77.2	84	72.7	70.4	81
<b>Marital Status</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Never married	48.8	66.3	64.9	60	50.9	77.4	221
Currently married	33.7	37.5	44.7	38.8	30.8	58.5	1713
Widow/Divorced/ Separated	36.3	45.5	45.5	44.3	39.2	57.6	66
<b>Residence</b>	***	ns	***	Ns	*	***	
Rural	33.2	42.6	44.4	41.4	34.7	58.5	1550
Urban	43.3	40.3	55.3	40.8	28.8	67.7	450
<b>Wealth quintile</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Lowest	16.1	18.4	21.7	17.4	12.5	33.7	391
Second	27.0	34.3	39.5	35.3	29.0	53.5	400
Middle	38.1	47.0	52.4	43.3	39.8	66.8	404
Fourth	39.3	43.0	52	45.3	36.8	67.4	402
Highest	56.3	60.7	67.7	64.5	47.6	80.4	403
<b>Women's mobility index</b>	*	***	***	***	***	***	
Low	32.9	33.2	40.1	35.5	27.8	55.2	1292
Medium	38.4	55.3	61.1	52.6	42.6	72.1	401
High	42.6	54	56.3	50.8	43.9	68.1	307
<b>Media exposure</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Low	25.6	22.9	32.8	26.9	18.1	48.7	975
Medium	63.1	47.9	50.4	44.6	39.2	63.5	680
High	39.4	77.7	79.4	75.4	64.6	88.1	345
<b>Religion</b>	***	**	***	***	***	***	
Hindu	62.7	42.3	48.7	43.1	34.7	62.4	1710
Religious minorities	70.1	25.9	39.4	29.8	16.3	59.6	104
Others	39.4	35.5	34.4	30.6	30.1	44.1	186
<b>Membership in community organization</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Yes	48.5	59.5	62.2	58.2	51.9	75.8	553
No	30.5	33.7	41.0	34.8	26.2	54.7	1447
<b>Districts</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Mahottari	39.4	25.8	38.6	34.4	16.8	56.2	500
Siraha	22.2	18.8	32.2	34.0	15.0	48.0	500
Dhading	34.6	47.2	45.6	37.4	43.6	57.6	500
Bardiya	45.8	70.6	71.0	59.4	57.8	80.4	500

\*\*\* Chi square test significant at  $P \leq 0.001$ , \*\*significant at  $P \leq 0.01$ , \*significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  and ns=not significant

Women’s awareness of one or more laws related to DVAW was further assessed by using binary logistic regression to ascertain the factors affecting their awareness (adjusting the effects of potential confounders in the relationship observed in bivariate analysis). The results are presented in Annex 2. Nine out of 13 variables included in the model are statistically significant in the logistic regression. The major findings that emerge from the regression model are as follow:

- In comparison with illiterate women, those with SLC or more are 5.3 times more likely to know about any law related to DVAW.
- Upper caste women are 38% more likely to know about DVAW-related laws than those from disadvantaged indigenous caste groups.
- Women who belong to the highest wealth quintile are 2.86 times more likely to know about DVAW-related laws than those in the lowest wealth quintile.
- Women who have high media exposure in comparison to those with less exposure are 1.8 times more likely to be aware about DVAW-related laws.
- Women who are not self-identified as Hindu are 35% less likely to know about DVAW-related laws.
- Women who are not members of any community organization are 50% less likely to hear about DVAW-related laws than those who are members of any organization.
- Women from Bardiya are 1.9 times more likely to hear about DVAW-related laws than women from Mahottari.
- Bivariate analysis show that women’s age, number of living children, marital status and place of living (urban or rural) are associated with awareness of DVAW-related laws (Table 4.2). However, in multivariate analysis (when the effect of possible confounders are controlled for) these factors are not statistically significant. In other words, knowledge about DVAW-related laws among women does not vary by their age, number of living children, marital status and place of living.

### **4.3 Perceptions on the functions of DVAW-related laws**

Respondents who reported awareness of DVAW-related laws were further asked about their functions, with a focus on three different issues: whether the law protects women from violence, whether the law is effective in penalizing culprits, and whether the law supports victims of DVAW. The respondents were not asked to evaluate these laws in terms of their function, but rather to share their views on what these functions might be. Note that the baseline number of respondents in the following sections is confined to those who expressed some awareness of DVAW-related laws.

#### ***4.3.1 Perceptions on whether laws prevent/protect against DVAW***

Respondents were asked “Do you think this law... (*mention subject of law*) prevent/protect (*rokhtham/bachau*) women against .....(*mention type of DVAW*)”. As shown in Table 4.3, between 72% and 83% of women from all four districts believe that DVAW-related laws prevent and protect against various types of DVAW, including domestic violence, rape, trafficking, witchcraft allegation and violence in public places. There is some variation by district, indicating significant uncertainty about the function of the law in some cases (see Table 4.3, below).



**Table 4.3 Perceptions on whether laws prevent/protect against DVAW (% who affirm ‘yes’)**

Laws related to:	Mahottari		Siraha		Dhading		Bardiya Bardiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic violence	197	79.2	111	71.2	173	74.6	229	81.2	710	77.5
Rape	193	69.9	161	82.6	228	72.3	355	83.0	937	77.7
Trafficking	129	65.1	99	74.7	236	82.6	353	90.9	302	82.5
Polygamy	140	50.7	142	46.9	193	63.2	300	74.6	666	62.3
Child marriage	172	65.7	170	60.0	187	76.4	297	71.0	720	68.9
Witchcraft allegations	84	60.7	75	62.6	218	68.8	289	80.9	817	72.4
Dowry-related violence	165	46.0	133	39.0	178	73.6	244	76.6	517	61.9
Birth /citizenship / death registration	82	95.1	91	95.6	129	85.2	215	82.7	826	87.6
Women’s property rights	74	78.3	86	73.2	125	68.8	208	69.7	780	71.4
Related to violence and threats in public places	41	82.9	33	78.7	106	73.6	122	82.0	493	78.8

#### 4.3.2 Perceptions on whether DVAW-laws punish perpetrators

Women were also asked “Do you think this law ..(mention subject of law) punish (Sajaya)those who commit.. (mention type of DVAW)”. Results show that more than two-thirds of the women (67.5% to 91.0%) believe that existing laws are intended to punish perpetrators for acts of DVAW. More than 90% of the respondents perceive that existing legislation relating to rape and trafficking provide measures to punish perpetrators for such crimes. A comparatively lower proportion of women believe that existing legislation punish perpetrators for dowry-related violence (59.4% in Mahottari and 39.8% in Siraha) and polygamy (53.0% in Siraha) (Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4 Perceptions on whether laws punish the perpetratorsof DVAW (% who affirm ‘yes’)**

Laws related to:	Mahottari		Siraha		Dhading		Bardiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic violence	197	84.7	111	73.9	173	76.9	229	87.8	710	82.1
Rape	193	90.1	161	86.9	228	87.7	355	95.5	937	91.0
Related to violence and threats in public places	41	82.9	33	81.8	106	81.1	122	86	302	83.4
Witchcraft allegations	84	73.8	75	60.0	218	80.2	289	87.8	666	80.5
Dowry-related violence	165	59.4	133	39.8	178	78.6	244	79.9	720	67.5
Trafficking	129	84.5	99	81.8	236	88.5	353	95.5	817	90.1
Birth/citizenship/ death registration	82	90.2	91	94.5	129	67.4	215	82.3	517	82.0
Child marriage	172	77.3	170	60.6	187	73.3	297	70.4	826	70.5
Polygamy	140	67.1	142	53.0	193	69.9	300	84.3	780	71.8
Women’s property rights	74	75.6	86	74.4	125	62.4	208	72.1	493	70.6

In contrast with the quantitative survey results, the majority of participants in FGDs and IDIs expressed doubts regarding the perceived functions of DVAW-related laws, particularly in relation to punishing perpetrators. The general view was that laws are not enforced in practice and fail to mete out penalties for crimes. Participants were skeptical and expressed misgivings regarding implementation of the law. Additionally, participants stressed factors such as lack of law enforcement, a culture of impunity, and lax prison terms as main obstacles to the delivery of justice.

*“I’ve heard on the radio about the law on witchcraft accusations. In one case the victim was forced to eat stool and urine, battered severely or killed but I never heard about the punishment of the culprit.”*

*- 50 year-old illiterate Newar woman from Dhading*

*“One woman in our community was left by her husband. He married another woman. She was forced to leave because her mother-in-law often assaulted her physically. She filed a case with the police but she got no support.”*

*-Elderly women's group from urban Bardiya*

*“Even in our village, if a husband kills his wife, he would only spend a day in prison and get released if he spends money.”*

*- Young women's group from urban Bardiya*

*“Men who do these things are walking freely on the streets, yet somehow, they are considered to be respected members of the community.”*

*-Young women's group from rural Dhading*

*“In Nepal, laws are ratified, but they’re not implemented as they’re supposed to be”.*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

*“We can file a report in the police station, but we need to be assured that the perpetrators are strictly punished and that there is no corruption to release the culprit easily.”*

*-24 year-old, non-formally educated Muslim woman from Mahottari*

Simultaneously, however, and in line with the quantitative findings, a few participants mentioned that the rule of law does prevail in some cases. This idea in turn ties in with the features such as high rate of corruption and bribery which participants cite as detrimental for the justice system.

*“We can’t say that there is no justice. Victims are counselled and perpetrators punished based on the individual case; but, sometimes, they also cannot do anything due to the nature of the case.”*

*- Young women's group from urban Bardiya*

### **4.3.3 Perceptions on whether law help victims**

Women who have heard about the laws were further asked “Do you think this law ...(*mention subject of law*)help (*Sahayoung*) victims?”. Results are presented in Table 4.5. Over two-thirds of women (66.5% to 88.6%) believe that DVAW-related laws are intended to help women victims (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5 Perceptions on whether laws help victims (% who affirm ‘yes’)**

Laws related to:	Mahottari		Siraha		Dhading		Bardiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic violence	197	84.3	111	72.1	173	74.6	229	83.0	710	79.5
Rape	193	86.0	161	84.5	228	80.3	355	89.0	937	85.5
Trafficking	129	83.7	99	80.8	236	87.3	353	93.5	817	88.6
Polygamy	140	64.3	142	54.9	193	61.6	300	79.0	780	67.2
Child marriage	172	75.0	170	60.0	187	65.7	297	68.3	826	67.4
Witchcraft allegations	84	72.6	75	60.0	218	78.0	289	83.7	666	77.7
Dowry-related violence	165	60.0	133	40.6	178	75.8	244	78.3	720	66.5
Birth /citizenship / death registration	82	90.2	91	94.5	129	67.4	215	81.4	517	81.6
Women’s property rights	74	75.7	86	74.4	125	64.8	208	71.2	493	70.8
Related to violence and threats in public places	41	80.5	33	81.8	106	74.5	122	83.6	302	79.8

Contrary to the quantitative results, the majority of IDI and FGD participants stated that laws fail to provide adequate support for victims. Participants frequently shared negative experiences with the police while seeking support or help from them. Issues such as unprofessional conduct, negligence as well as lack of accountability and transparency with regard to the actions of formal justice sector actors and institutions are put forward as the main reasons that lead victims to question the notion that DVAW-related laws are intended to help them.

*“I’ve approached the police several times, first when my husband broke my hand, but they did nothing. A second time, when my husband’s first wife caused an injury to my head, I asked for help from the police again and this time instead of helping out, they scolded me saying that it was my fault for getting married. I can’t believe there is something in the law that can protect women”.*

*- 33 year-old Tharu woman with primary-level education from Bardiya*

*“One woman in our community was left by her husband who married another woman. She was then forced to leave home as her mother-in-law often assaulted her physically. She filed a case with the police but she did not receive any support.”*

*- Elderly women's group from urban Bardiya*

*“My friend’s husband has gone abroad and since then she started to live separately from her husband’s family. During Dashain, her family members took her daughter and we went to file a complaint with the police, but, they neglected us.”*

*- Elderly women’s group from rural Dhading*

*“My neighbour hit me in front of a crowd, but no one helped me. Even the police did nothing. I asked for help from the Public Prosecutor, Chief District Office, political party offices and Women’s Police Cell, but, they all did nothing.”*

*- 35 year-old Bhumihar woman with lower secondary-level education from Mahottari*

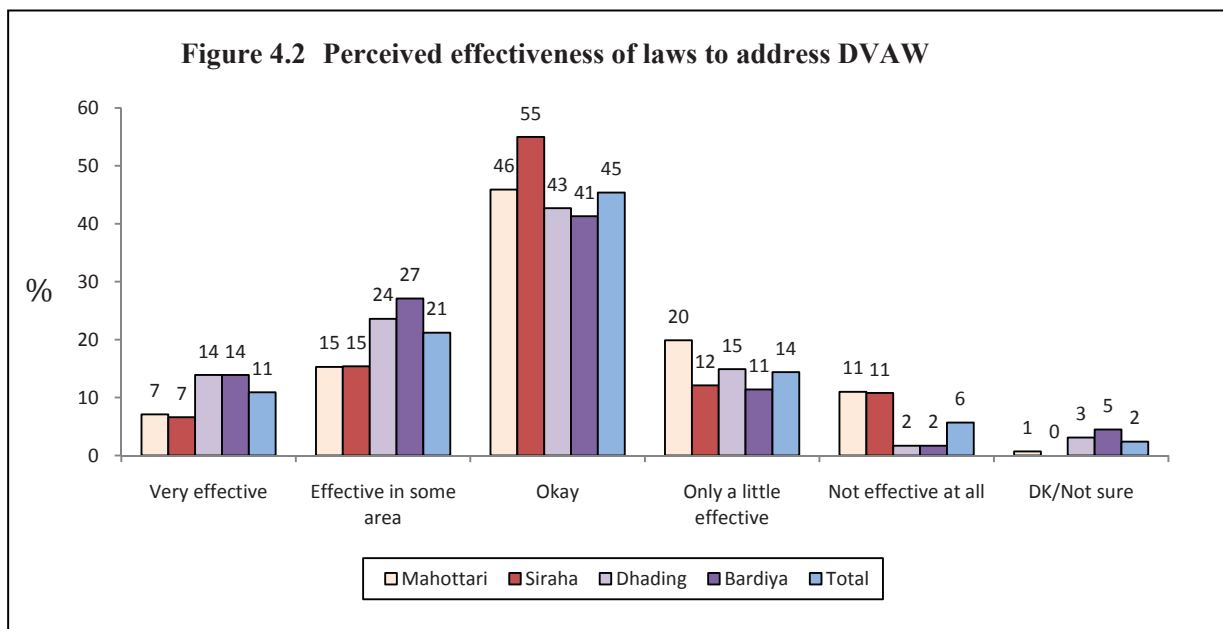
*“It is difficult to say whether or not to have trust in the formal authorities. Sometimes, we do not get the service and sometimes, they solve the problem.”*

*- Young women's group from urban Bardiya*

#### 4.4 Perceived overall effectiveness of laws to address DVAW

In addition to specific questions about the prevention/protection, punishment, and assistance functions of DVAW-related laws, respondents were asked, “In relation to the laws above that you mention exist, to what extent do you think they are effective (*katikoprabhabkari*) in addressing DVAW in general”. Responses were categorised along a six-point Likert scale – ‘very effective’ (*dherai prabhabkari*), ‘effective in some areas’ (*kehi matrama/bishayama*), ‘okay’ (*thikai*<sup>6</sup>), ‘only little effective’ (*thorai matra prabhabkari*), ‘not effective at all’ (*prabhabkari navayako*), ‘don’t know/not sure’.

Among those women who are aware of the existence of any DVAW-related laws, 45% categorize them as ‘okay’ (*thikai*), 11% as ‘very effective’, and 20% either ‘only a little effective’ or ‘not effective at all’. The proportion reporting ‘very effective’ vary by survey districts: Siraha and Mahottari (7%); and Bardiya and Dhading(14%)(Figure 4.2).



#### 4.5 Women’s perception of the relevance of law for DVAW

The previous series of questions on women’s awareness of DVAW-related laws and their general functions (Tables 4.1 to 4.5, above) was followed by elicited reactions to strong statements about the specific impact and relevance of DVAW laws. The responses to these 11 evaluative statements (expressing contradictory opinions), reflect ambivalence, uncertainty, and caution (see Table 4.6).

Critically important for the issue of women’s access to justice, is the overwhelming agreement of women (93.6%) that “it is too dangerous for women to make use of these laws [on DVAW] – they need more protection before they can do that”. Equally important, two-thirds (65.8%) of respondents agree that “it is too dangerous for women to make use of these laws – they need more economic resources before they can do that”.

Regarding the punitive aspect of DVAW-related laws, there are contradictory signals that reflect ambivalence and uncertainty. For example, 55.0% agree that the laws punish perpetrators too much. Similarly, about half of the respondents (50.6%) find the law too blunt an instrument, agreeing that “the

<sup>6</sup> *Thikai*, the word used in the Nepali survey, approaches the meaning of ‘satisfactory’ or ‘okay’ in English, but with more of a hesitant sense of neutrality tending toward lack of satisfaction.

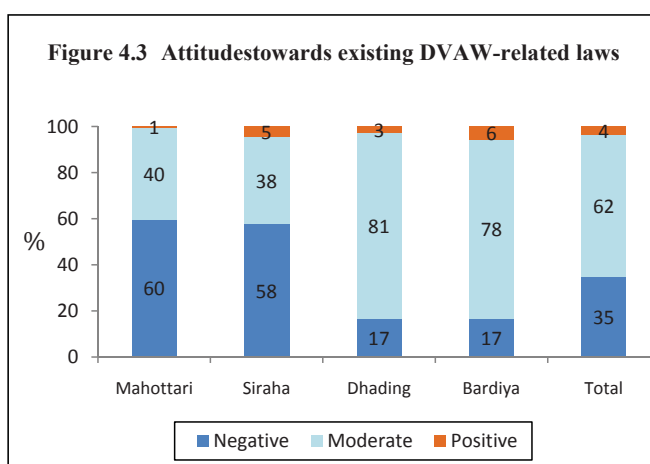
laws punish men too much and cause more problems for women”. In a similar sense, 24.0% agree that “laws could be abused by women trying to cause problems”.

At the same time, reflecting ambivalence and a range of contrasting opinions among women respondents, a high percentage (59.6%) agree that “the laws do not sufficiently punish the perpetrators”. Almost half (47.8%) agree that “men will do whatever they want. The laws don’t make a difference”. Between 46.6% and 85.8% of women agree that “the police will never enforce laws to protect women against violence that happens inside the family.” An even higher average (69.7%, ranging from 50.9% to 90.1%) agree that “the laws don’t punish perpetrators enough and will have no impact”.

**Table 4.6 Perceptions regarding the relevance of DVAW related laws (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
The laws punish perpetrators too much	57.6	65.4	44.8	54.4	55.0
The laws do not provide sufficient protection for victims of violence	75.1	65.4	56.9	66.1	65.8
The laws could be abused by women trying to cause problems	39.1	18.3	11.4	25.7	24.0
The laws do not sufficiently punish the perpetrators	68.0	56.3	54.8	59.1	59.6
Men will do whatever they want. The laws do not make a difference.	61.6	57.9	41.3	36.9	47.8
The police will never enforce laws to protect women against violence that happens inside the family.	83.6	85.8	51.7	46.6	64.2
The laws punish men too much and cause more problems for women.	56.2	48.8	37.5	56.6	50.6
The laws don’t punish the perpetrators enough and will have no impact.	91.1	87.9	59.7	50.9	69.7
It is too dangerous for women to make use of these laws – they need more protection before they can do that.	97.8	94.1	94.4	89.8	93.6
It is too dangerous for women to make use of these laws – they need more economic resources before they can do that.	75.1	65.4	56.9	66.1	65.8
<b>N</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>1210</b>

A composite index was created using 8 of the 11 statements in Table 4.6 above.<sup>7</sup> The responses were scaled as ‘negative’, ‘moderate’ and ‘positive’. Results are presented in Figure 4.3. Results show that 35% of women have negative attitudes towards DVAW-related laws, with high variation by district. For example, over half of the women from Mahottari (60%) and Siraha (58%) view the laws negatively, whereas the proportion is significantly lower in both Dhading and Bardiya (17%).



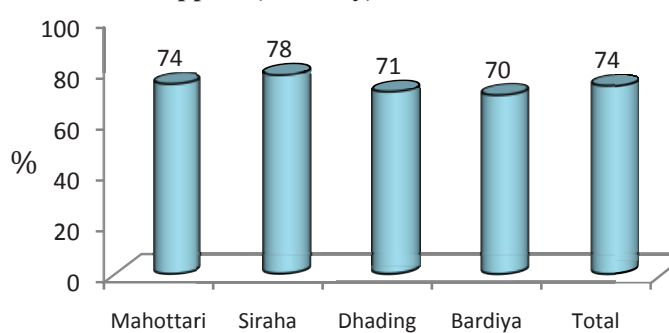
<sup>7</sup> The procedure included factor analysis and a reliability test (Cronbach Alpha score of 0.82).

## 4.6 Awareness of services/support for survivors of violence

The next set of questions explored women's awareness of public services for victims of violence. About three-quarters of women (74%) report that they know about services or help available to women who face violence. There is no major variation by district.

Further inquiry regarding specific sources of support familiar to women shows that the police are most commonly (91%) mentioned, followed by court/judge (31%), village leaders (16.7%) and the VDC office (12.2%). Knowledge about the Women's Police Cell, Lawyers/Bar Association, Paralegal Committees, or Mediation Centers, is very poor (each less than 1%). None of the women from Siraha identified the Women's Police Cell (note that there is a Women Police Cell in Siraha), National Women' Commission, Ward Office and Lawyers/Bar Association. Similarly, none of the respondents from Dhading identified the Paralegal Committees and Mediation Centres (Table 4.7).

**Figure 4.4 Knowledge about the places for help/support (Yes only)**



**Table 4.7 Awareness of services/support for survivors of violence**

Knowledge about places to seek help or support	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Police	96.2	91.1	86.8	89.7	91.0
Women's Police Cell	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.3
Court/ judge	27.2	19.1	31.4	47.9	31.0
National Women's Commission	1.1	0.0	2.2	1.7	1.2
DDC office	2.2	0.3	2.2	3.2	1.9
CDO office	5.1	1.5	3.1	8.3	4.4
WCDO	3.2	0.5	1.4	2.9	2.0
Municipality office	8.1	2.3	0.0	2.6	3.3
VDC	12.1	9.2	19.3	8.3	12.2
Ward office	0.3	0.0	0.8	0.3	0.3
Lawyers/ Bar association	1.3	0.0	0.3	1.4	0.7
Paralegal committee	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.3	0.4
Mediation Centers/committees	0.3	0.5	0.0	1.4	0.5
Family members	8.6	6.6	11.2	6.9	8.3
Health post	1.3	1.3	2.2	1.7	1.6
Political leaders	0.5	1.5	1.1	1.1	1.1
Mothers' group	0.5	0.5	17.4	11.5	7.2
NGOs	0.5	1.0	8.1	15.2	6.0
Village heads/ leaders	6.2	21.9	11.8	27.2	16.7
Maternal/ natal home	1.9	3.1	0.3	4.6	2.5
Others (Friends, community tole, woman group, Human rights)	2.4	2.5	3.6	4.3	3.1
<b>Percentage of women who are aware of where to access the formal justice system in response to incidents of DVAW</b>	<b>74.2</b>	<b>71.4</b>	<b>69.8</b>	<b>78.4</b>	<b>73.5</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>1469</b>

Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses



## 4.7 Factors associated with awareness of services

Factors associated with awareness of public services were determined using binary logistic regression. The results are presented in Annex 3. Five out of 13 variables included in the model are statistically significant in the logistic regression. The major findings that emerge from the regression model are as follow:

- Women with secondary or higher levels of schooling are 5.3 times more likely to know about services compared to illiterate women.
- Disadvantaged indigenous groups are 58% less likely than upper caste groups to know about services.
- Women who are not members of any community organization are 47% less likely to hear about available services than those who are members of any organization.
- There is no significant association between knowledge of services and woman’s age, number of living children, marital status, place of residence, occupation, wealth quintile, media exposure, and religion.

## 4.8 Awareness of types of services available

Women have a general understanding of the types of services and support provided by different actors, including the police, courts, judges, VDCs and NGOs (Table 4.8). For example, among those who identify police as service providers, half of them stated that “they register cases against perpetrators and file cases against the crime” and that the police “investigate the situation”. Out of the 455 women who identify the court as an available service, 84.6% say that “they punish the perpetrators”. With regard to services that village leaders offer, respondents stated that they “help the two parties reach agreement” and “send cases to the relevant authorities”.

**Table 4.8 Awareness of types of services available (for the top 5 most frequently identified actors)**

Types of services/support	Places/persons for help/support				
	Police	Court	Village leaders	VDC	NGOs
Registers cases against perpetrators/ Helps register cases with the police/file cases of crimes	49.4	2.6	0.0	74.3	0.0
Takes perpetrators in front of a judge	12.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Investigates the situation	56.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Helps write applications	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	0.0
Helps two parties to reach agreement	0.0	0.0	80.5	0.0	0.0
Punishes perpetrators/imprisons perpetrators	23.3	84.6	15.9	0.0	0.0
Makes perpetrators compensate/takes action against culprits	1.2	0.0	0.0	9.5	36.4
Provides counseling/information about legal procedures	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.6	0.0
Provides compensation to victims/helps victims	0.0	30.3	0.0	0.0	11.4
Mediates between victims and perpetrators	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.6
Sends cases to related authorities	0.0	0.0	30.1	0.0	19.3
Take decisions based on truth	0.0	15.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rescues victims/provides shelter	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.7
<b>N</b>	<b>1337</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>88</b>

*\*Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses*



Table 4.9 presents women’s evaluation of services offered. The findings are not presented district-wise due to insufficient data. The majority of the women (51.6%-94.9%) are not aware of the services provided by the NGOs, WCDO, National Women’s Commission, Mediation Centre, Paralegal Committee and Women’s Police Cell. Among women who are aware of the existence of services, more than a quarter are unable to provide an opinion on the services of the court (26.7%), DDC (27.2%), Municipality office (28.9%), lawyers and bar associations (28.7%). About half of women consider that the services provided by the police, VDC, and health centers are “okay” (*thikai*), while some women (20% to 36%) state that the services provided by these institutions are very good. With the exception of the responses regarding the Nepal Police, a negligible number of women describe the various services as either ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’. The assessment given to the Nepal Police by 8.6% of respondents (‘bad’) is far higher than for any other negative evaluations of other service providers.

**Table 4.9 Opinions of service provided by the types of providers**

Service Providers (N=2000)	Very good ( <i>Dherai nai ramro</i> )	Okay ( <i>Thikai</i> )	Bad ( <i>Khasai ramro lagdaina</i> )	Very bad ( <i>Ekdam naramro</i> )	Not aware	Don’t Know
Police	20.6	58.6	8.6	1.5	1.3	9.5
Women cell	0.3	0.7	0.2	0.1	94.9	4.0
Court/judge	14.1	36.0	2.2	0.4	20.8	26.7
National Women’s Commission	2.1	5.9	0.2	0.1	80.3	11.5
DDC	4.9	23.7	2.7	0.6	41.0	27.2
CDO	8.5	31.7	2.5	0.3	34.3	22.9
WCDO	3.6	9.4	0.7	0.2	66.8	19.4
VDC	20.4	53.8	4.4	0.6	5.0	16.0
Municipality office	9.9	30.5	2.2	0.7	28.0	28.9
Lawyers/Bar Association	6.5	28.7	2.4	0.6	33.2	28.7
Paralegal Committee	0.2	1.2	0.1	0.1	94.1	4.5
Mediation Centers/committees	2.5	4.3	0.3	0.1	86.2	6.8
Health centers	36.0	49.6	6.0	1.5	3.1	3.9
Mothers group	11.6	30.4	3.0	0.6	38.9	15.7
NGOs	4.2	23.9	2.5	1.0	51.6	17.0

#### 4.9 Perceptions of actors in the formal justice system

The views expressed by respondents on the role of formal justice sector actors is far more critical when their responses are elicited through statements rather than general questions. This mirrors the pattern noted in Section 4.5 regarding women’s views on the effectiveness of DVAW-related laws.

Most women (80% to 98%) agree that formal authorities “should be more willing to register/file a case against the perpetrator/s” (93.7%), “should be more willing to take action against the perpetrator” (93.2%), “should address the problem of bribery” (94.1%), “should treat people of different ethnicities and/or castes equally as having the same value” (97.5%), “should treat rich people and poor people equally as having the same value” (97.7%) and “should treat men and women equally as having the same value” (97.2%). Similarly, women agree that formal authorities “should stop releasing so many perpetrators of violence on bail” (89.6%), “must find ways to reduce interference by political parties” (86.0%), and “should reduce pressure on victims to withdraw their claims against perpetrators” (88.4%) (Table 4.10).

**Table 4.10 Perceptions of actors in the formal justice system (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
They should be more willing to register/file a case against the perpetrator/s	98.2	90.4	89.2	97.0	93.7
They should be more willing to take action against the perpetrator	98.0	88.0	89.8	97.0	93.2
They need to address the problem of bribery	98.2	91.2	89.0	97.8	94.1
They need to implement the law more effectively	98.8	88.2	86.0	94.6	92.2
They should treat men and women equally as having the same value	99.8	94.6	95.2	99.2	97.2
They should treat people of different ethnicities and/or castes equally as having the same value	100.0	95.2	96.0	99.0	97.5
They should treat rich people and poor people equally as having the same value	100.0	95.4	96.2	99.2	97.7
They should stop releasing so many perpetrators of violence on bail	97.2	85.6	82.2	93.6	89.6
They must find ways to reduce the interference by political parties	95.6	80.6	80.0	87.8	86.0
They should reduce the pressure on victims to withdraw their claims against perpetrators	95.6	85.4	83.8	88.8	88.4
They should have a better understanding of new laws	99.0	90.4	89.6	95.8	93.7
Public information about services should be made more available to people	99.0	91.0	92.2	94.6	94.2
Some of the individuals providing services may be perpetrators too.	90.0	83.6	61.2	85.2	80.0
Due to male service providers women are reluctant to visit	90.6	83.4	79.8	87.8	85.4
Justice can be bought or influenced if the defendant is someone richer or more powerful	96.2	83.2	65.0	89.0	83.3
There is very little chance to get protection and find justice for violence against women	97.6	84.6	62.6	75.6	80.1
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

#### 4.10 Trust in actors in the formal justice system

Women were asked “to what extent do you trust (*biswas*) the following... (name of service provider)”. Their responses were measured on a scale of ‘*trust very much*’, ‘*trust a little*’, ‘*don’t trust very much*’, ‘*never trust*’ and ‘*don’t know/not sure*’. Results are presented in Table 4.11. Generally women lack knowledge about service providers. For women who know about various services, their levels of trust vary by type of provider. For example, more than half of women trust the police (55.3%) and VDC/Municipality (52.7%) ‘a little’. Similarly, a third of the women (34.7%) trust the court ‘a little’. Similar patterns are noted in the case of the public prosecutor and the CDO.

**Table 4.11 Trust in actors in the formal justice system**

Types of providers	Trust very much ( <i>Dheraibiswas</i> )	Trust a little ( <i>Thorai/thikai biswas</i> )	Don't trust very much( <i>Khasi biswas nagarne</i> )	Never trust( <i>Kahilai biswas nagarne</i> )	Don't know
Police	21.7	55.3	11.0	1.9	10.2
Women's police cell	0.2	0.9	0.0	0.2	98.8
Court	17.1	34.7	2.6	0.8	44.9
Public prosecutor	8.3	34.2	3.9	1.2	52.6
National Women's Commission	3.1	5.5	0.6	0.2	90.7
DDC	5.6	24.0	3.4	0.4	66.7
CDO	9.1	32.6	2.2	0.6	55.7
WCDO	4.0	8.9	0.6	0.5	86.2
VDC/Municipality	26.5	52.7	5.5	0.7	14.8
Paralegal committee	0.3	1.2	0.1	0.1	98.4

Table 4.12 presents findings related to women's perception of whether the same actors listed in Table 4.11 can be bribed or politically influenced. Together, the results of the two tables problematize the notion of trust, suggesting ambivalence as well differences between perceptions of general versus more specific institutional relationships. For example, a majority of the women state that police can be bribed (75.4%) or politically influenced (67.6%), but only 12.8% consider the police untrustworthy (Table 4.11). Similarly, while a significant percentage of women think that judges can be bribed (37.9%) or politically influenced (38.8%), only 3.4% consider courts untrustworthy (Table 4.11). Overall, more than three-quarters of women (81.9%) believe that justice sector officials can be bribed and politically influenced (Table 4.12).

**Table 4.12 Whether listed actors who have a role in the formal justice system can be bribed and politically influenced**

Whether the following actors can be bribed (N=2000)	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Police	88.2	77.4	55.0	80.8	75.4
Judge	41.2	22.8	27.0	60.4	37.9
National Women's Commission	2.8	1.0	2.4	22.4	7.2
DDC	32.2	15.0	11.8	50.6	27.4
CDO	44.4	18.4	18.8	59.4	35.3
WCDO	9.0	6.2	3.8	22.8	10.5
VDC/Municipality	41.6	62.8	38.0	71.4	63.5
Paralegal committee	1.6	0.4	0.2	11.0	3.3
Whether the following actors can be politically influenced (N=2000)					
Police	84.4	59.2	48.6	78.2	67.6
Judge	41.4	23.6	26.2	64.0	38.8
National Women's Commission	3.8	1.0	3.6	29.4	9.5
DDC	30.4	14.6	13.8	58.0	29.2
CDO	44.0	17.8	19.8	62.8	36.1
WCDO	8.6	8.0	3.8	29.2	12.4
VDC/Municipality	80.6	51.2	43.4	73.4	62.2
Para Legal Committee	1.8	1.0	0.4	12.0	3.8
<i>% of women who believe service providers can be bribed and politically influenced</i>	<b>92.4</b>	<b>86.6</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>68.2</b>	<b>81.9</b>

Consistent with the quantitative findings presented in Table 4.12, FGDs and in-depth interviews confirm a perception that formal authorities do not take action until they receive bribes. Women also expressed the view that perpetrators are released from prison before completing jail terms due to political interference. In focus group discussions, it was common to hear anecdotes of corruption and bribery of the police, courts and CDOs. In-depth interviews with women also revealed a lack of trust in officials who have a role in the justice system. Women reported that officials are corrupt, lack professionalism, do not listen to women's concerns, and that they discriminate on the basis of socio-economic status.

*"There is a lot of political interference. Even if the law attempts to punish the perpetrator, individuals with political power are able to sway the decision-making process and release the perpetrator easily."*

*- Young women's group from urban Bardiya*

*"Those who are victims and often the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable groups are neglected. On the other hand, the individuals with the ability to spend money are acknowledged and rewarded by the system."*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

*"Whenever we report a case against violence, officials only try to reconcile (melmilap) the victims and perpetrators in exchange for wine or beer."*

*-Elderly women's group from rural Siraha*

*"Those who have money or belong to a rich family are bailed out easily while those belong to the lower economic status receive punishment."*

*-Young women's group from rural Bardiya*

*"All the bureaucrats are seeds in the same field; none of them work if we don't bribe them. Every time we try to seek their help they intentionally delay the procedure and finally we have to give them the amount that they want."*

*- 22 year-old Terai Brahmin woman with higher secondary-level education from Mahottari*

*"If I go to the CDO office to make my citizenship and I don't have money in my pocket then they will delay the process up to 2 months; sometimes they say the father's name is incorrect, sometimes something else".*

*- Elderly women's group from urban Bardiya*

At the same time, it was common to hear during FGDs that women have no choice other than visiting these providers despite significant levels of mistrust. Women have no alternative support systems other than visiting these providers, whenever help is needed. Women acknowledged that their predicament is very precarious as they have limited options available to them in terms to signaling for help from formal authorities.

*"It is reasonable that we go to seek care and service from the formal providers, as it is the only option available."*

*- Young women's group from urban Bardiya*

*"It is very difficult for a woman to realize justice from the moment she sets foot outside her home to the moment the case is brought forward in front of a court and a verdict is reached."*

*- Young women's group from rural Dhading*

## 4.11 Perceptions of discrimination by formal authorities

Women were asked whether justice or security officials discriminate on the basis of gender, caste, place of origin, religion and economic status. As indicated in Table 4.13, 61.1% to 71.8% of women report that they face discrimination from justice sector officials on the basis of their gender and economic status. Higher proportions of women report gender and economic-based discrimination in Mahottari and Siraha than in Dhading and Bardiya.

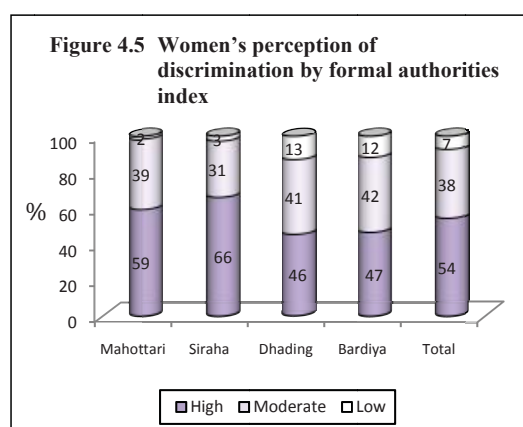
**Table 4.13 Women’s perception of discrimination by justice/security authorities (% who affirm 'yes')**

Believe that there is discrimination on the basis of:	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Gender	85.4	63.0	39.6	56.4	61.1
Ethnicity/caste	55.2	40.6	38.4	51.6	46.4
Place of origin (Mountains, Hills, Terai)	33.0	10.8	32.0	38.4	28.6
Religion	32.2	9.8	23.0	38.6	25.9
Economic status	89.6	75.0	54.8	68.0	71.8
<b>Percentage of women who believe formal authorities discriminate on the basis of several components</b>	<b>91.8</b>	<b>80.2</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>76.8</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

To examine women’s perceptions of discrimination by formal authorities who have a role in addressing DVAW, a composite index was developed based on the following questions:<sup>8</sup>

- *To what extent do you agree with the following things in general that determine how well a person is treated: caste, gender, education, wealth/asset, family connections, political connections*
- *To what extent do you agree with the following statements about formal authorities who have a role in enforcing laws related to violence against women: they should treat men and women equally as having the same value*
- *To what extent do you agree with the following statements about formal authorities who have a role in enforcing laws related to violence against women:*
  - *They should treat people of different ethnicities and/or castes equally as having the same value*
  - *They should treat rich people and poor people equally as having the same value*
- *In your opinion, does the justice and/ or security officials discriminate you on the basis of your: gender; caste; place of origin; religion; economic status.*

Figure 4.5 shows that over half of the respondents (54%) believe that there is a high level of discrimination by formal authorities who have a role in enforcing laws related to violence against women. Perceived discrimination is highest in Siraha (66%), followed by Mahottari (59%), Bardiya (47%) and Dhading (46%).



<sup>8</sup> Responses were scaled between 1 to 0, representing statements of discriminatory versus non-discriminatory behaviour. The scores were summed and tricotomized into women’s reporting of ‘low’, ‘moderate’ and ‘high’ levels of discrimination.

## 4.12 Opinions on improving women’s access to justice

Respondents were then asked about the impact of the mere geographical presence of security sector officials and institutions. Results were recorded in terms of whether women ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ that their individual security and wellbeing would increase with the presence of each actor. As shown in Table 4.14, more than three-quarters of women believe that the presence of the police and VDC/Municipality officials in their community has or will increase their security and wellbeing. A lower proportion of respondents, about half, believe the same in relation to the court.

**Table 4.14 Whether individual security and wellbeing has/will increase/d with the presence of selected actors in the community (% strongly agree and agree)**

Service providers	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Police	84.4	76.8	81.2	78.4	79.0
Women’sPolice Cell	0.6	0.4	0.4	3.6	1.6
Court	48.0	22.8	54.4	66.6	47.9
National Women’s Commission	22.0	0.4	6.2	24.2	8.3
DDC	28.6	6.8	25.6	54.2	28.8
CDO	44.4	10.8	40.4	63.4	39.7
WCDO	9.6	5.4	9.4	25.0	12.4
VDC/Municipality	76.4	56.0	89.2	82.8	76.1
Para legal committee	0.8	1.2	0.6	3.2	1.5
<i>Percentage of women who believe that presence of formal actors in their communities has/will increase their individual security and well-being</i>	<b>88.4</b>	<b>87.0</b>	<b>76.0</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>86.2</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Opinions were sought from respondents on a series of the most standard institutional approaches to improving access to justice: low-cost, simple and efficient procedures, the use of accessible, local languages, protection for women victims, adequate training and sufficient availability of officials. As expected, virtually no women disagree with these standard criteria for improving access to justice (Table 4.15)

**Table 4.15 Factors that will increase access to the formal justice system (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

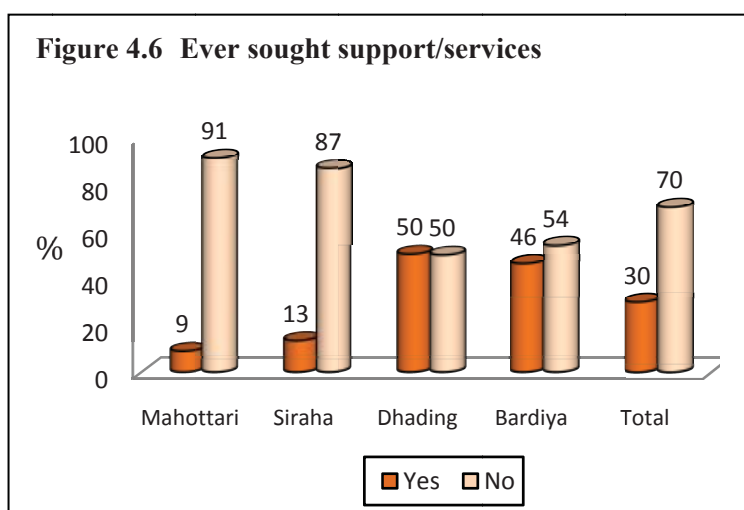
Factors	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Cheap procedures	99.8	93.2	92.8	97.6	95.9
Simpler procedures	99.6	90.8	91.8	96.0	94.6
Prompt procedures	100.0	92.6	92.4	96.8	95.5
Services available at nearby places	100.0	93.2	95.4	97.4	96.5
More physical protection for women who want to report violence	99.2	91.2	91.2	95.0	94.1
More economic resources to support women who want to report violence.	99.6	90.8	91.0	96.4	94.5
More women officials involved	98.6	88.8	89.8	92.0	92.3
Use of simple and local language	99.8	91.2	91.8	95.8	94.7
Positive response from officials (i.e. more sympathetic to/empathy with victims when they are bringing complaints)	96.8	88.6	90.6	92.6	92.1
More trained professionals	94.0	86.8	84.4	94.0	89.8
Having a one-stop centre where women can more easily access different kinds of support	99.2	90.6	42.0	61.8	73.4
<i>Percentage of women who believe that cheaper and simpler procedures will increase access to formal justice system</i>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>94.8</b>	<b>96.0</b>	<b>97.3</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>



### 4.13 Support-seeking behavior

The survey then turned to actual supporting-seeking behaviour by women. As illustrated in Figure 4.6, the majority of women (70%) have never sought any help or support from any formal authority for any reason. Of the 30% of women (592 women) who have sought help, 69% did so more than a year ago. District-wise analysis shows that an overwhelming majority of women from Mahottari (91%) and Siraha (87%) have never visited any formal service provider for any reason.

Trends in support-seeking behaviour vary across the four ICJ pilot districts. The results presented in Table 4.16 are confined to those 592 women who reported having sought support of any kind from public officials. Among the women in Dhading (251 women) and Bardiya (230 women) who have sought support, 85.3% and 93.0%, respectively went to the VDC or Municipality Office; whereas 36.3% and 41.7%, respectively, approached the CDO. No women from Siraha reported attending the CDO office, while



half of the women in Mahottari (22 out of 44 women) sought assistance from the CDO. Police were visited by 47.7% of women in Siraha (32 out of 67 women) and 40.9% of women in Mahottari (18 out of 44 women), while much smaller percentages are reported in Dhading (8.0%) and Bardiya (13.5%). A similar pattern exists across the districts regarding engagement with the courts: Mahottari (25.0%), Siraha (47.7%), Dhading (8.0%) and Bardiya (13.5%).

**Table 4.16 Types of actors approached/accessed by women**

Place of visit	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Police	40.9	47.7	8.0	13.5	17.0
Women's police cell	6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
Court	25.0	16.4	5.2	8.3	9.1
National Women's Commission	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7
DDC	6.8	1.5	6.4	3.5	4.7
CDO	50.0	0.0	36.3	41.7	35.3
WCDO	13.6	1.5	1.2	1.8	2.4
VDC/Municipality	43.2	56.7	85.3	93.0	81.9
Para legal committee	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.2
<b>N</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>592</b>

Total percentage may not add up to 100 due to multiple responses. %

The survey also examined the reasons for seeking support. The most common motivations include seeking citizenship certificates (30.4%), reporting violence (16.6%), registering marriages (11.9%) and claiming property rights (3.2%). Comparatively, a higher percentage of women from Mahottari (54.5%) and Siraha (39%) visited service providers for violence-related issues (Table 4.17). Women who cite 'violence related problems' as their reasons for seeking support are married (77.2%), illiterate (41.8%), belonging to disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups and not engaged in income-generating activities (57.1%). No major variation by district is observed (Table not shown due to small numbers).



**Table 4.17 Reasons for seeking support**

Reasons	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
To register citizenship	31.8	0.0	33.1	36.1	30.4
Violence related problems	54.5	38.8	9.2	10.9	16.6
To register marriage	2.3	9.0	17.9	8.3	11.9
To register death	2.3	0.0	1.6	1.3	1.4
Relating to cases of land/property inheritance	4.5	9.0	2.0	2.6	3.2
To file against child marriage	2.3	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.3
To make passport	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.4	0.5
Regarding to disputes (with neighbours, younger brother-in-laws)	0.0	6.0	2.8	3.9	3.4
To register birth of child/obtain birth registration	9.1	19.4	24.3	17.4	19.9
To pay land revenue/ to make documents	0.0	0.0	3.2	11.7	5.9
To take old age incentives	0.0	3.0	1.2	1.3	1.4
Others	0.0	13.8	7.6	8.1	5.6
<b>N</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>592</b>

Total percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.

Women who report visiting formal authorities for services were asked to evaluate their experiences. Of the women who visited the police, about three-quarters (74.3%) report that they helped in solving their problems, while 19.8% report that the police showed no concern for their problems and fail to provide any help. Bribe-taking by police is reported by 5.9% of respondents, and by the court, 3.7%. Of those who visited the court, 37.0% report prompt service and 33.3% report obtaining a just outcome (Table 4.18).

**Table 4.18 Client satisfaction while seeking help or support**

Response	Types of providers (%)					
	Police	Court	DDC	CDO	WCDO	VDC/ Municipality
Helped in solving the problem	74.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Provided justice	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Gave clear advice	0.0	0.0	69.6	0.0	0.0	24.5
Provided prompt service	0.0	37.0	0.0	74.6	0.0	13.2
Good behavior	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	64.3	49.7
Remained unconcerned/ did not help	19.8	0.0	30.4	0.0	0.0	10.0
Took/asked bribe	5.9	3.7	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0
Did not take any action	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	28.6	0.0
Did not get justice	0.0	25.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Took a lot of time	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.0	0.0	0.0
Don't remember	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	7.14	2.8
<b>N</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>485</b>

Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.

#### 4.14 Willingness to seek support when required

Women were asked whether they will seek help from justice sector actors when in need on a scale of 'very likely', 'likely', 'maybe' and 'not likely'. Note that the need for assistance was not specified as violence but rather left unspecified. The proportion of negative responses, i.e. 'not likely', is presented in Table 4.19. Most women (89.1%) are willing to seek support from formal service providers if needed; or,

conversely, about 10% are not willing to seek assistance (Table 4.19). Those “unlikely” to seek support from particular justice sector actors is consistently above 10%, however, as outlined below.

Results show similar response levels for the police and VDC/Municipality Offices, and for the court and the CDO. While most women are prepared to approach the police and VDC/Municipality Office when needed, a majority would be less likely to approach the court and CDO (with the exception of Bardiya).

With the exception of Mahottari, women are equally ‘unlikely’ to seek help from the police (22.0%) as from the VDC/Municipality (20.4%), if needed. There is important variation within this average. The unlikelihood of visiting police versus VDC/Municipality Office in Bardiya (20.2% versus 16.8%) and Dhading (20.2% versus 14.4%) contrasts with Siraha (34.8% versus 30.2%) and Mahottari (12.6% versus 20.4%).

On average, women in all districts are more ‘unlikely’ to seek assistance from the CDO (60.1%) than the courts (51.8%); again, with notable district-wise variation: Dhading (66.6% versus 50.2%); Bardiya (33.5% versus 29.2%); Siraha (82.6% versus 75.2%); and Mahottari (57.6% versus 52.6%).

More than three-quarters of the women (78%-96%) reported they would not turn to the Women’s Police Cell, Paralegal Committees, WCDO, DDC and the National Women’s Commission for support.

**Table 4.19 Willingness to seek support when required (% ‘not likely’)**

Actors	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Police	12.6	34.8	20.2	20.2	22.0
Women’s police cell	99.2	99.8	99.2	86.6	96.2
Court	52.6	75.2	50.2	29.2	51.8
National Women’s Commission	98.0	98.8	94.6	73.0	91.4
DDC	84.2	95.4	80.6	51.2	77.8
CDO	57.6	82.6	66.6	33.6	60.1
WCDO	93.0	95.2	92.0	74.2	88.6
VDC/Municipality Office	20.4	30.2	14.4	16.8	20.4
Paralegal Committee	99.4	97.8	100.0	88.6	96.4
<i>Percentage of women who are willing to seek help or support from formal authorities, if needed in future</i>	<b>92.2</b>	<b>87.0</b>	<b>85.4</b>	<b>91.8</b>	<b>89.1</b>
N	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Qualitative results from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews further illuminated these patterns. Factors affecting women’s support-seeking behaviour included the desire to maintain privacy, concern for family honour and reputation, fear of social isolation, and social condemnation, including from family members and friends. The following comments reflected these views.

*“A seven-year-old girl was raped by her own maternal uncle and when we were about to take the perpetrator to the police, the family members termed it a family matter and hid it... . There was nothing like a just punishment; that uncle only gave 500 rupees to the victim and that was it’.*

*- Elderly women’s group from rural Bardiya*

*"It's not easy for a woman to seek justice; women have to overcome discrimination and mistreatment from many segments of society."*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

*"If a woman wants to seek justice, she must leave her home."*

*- Young women's group from urban Bardiya*

*"What happens is that when women seek justice, some organizations come to the house and talk to the victim and perpetrators and mediate disputes between them. Afterwards, she has to face angry reactions over her actions and the problem becomes more complicated."*

*- Young women's group from Bardiya*

Focus group discussion participants described a lack of trust in the justice system, as well as a lack of knowledge about where to go and whom to contact. Additionally, women also described how factors such as shame, fear of discrimination, stigmatization and re-victimization affected decisions about seeking support.

*"There is discrimination on the basis of caste. When someone in a lower socioeconomic status seeks justice, they ask "Tu kaun jaat ka hai?" (Which caste do you belong to?)*

*- Young women's group from urban Bardiya*

*"Laws are effective for a select few and higher caste women, but still not effective overall."*

*- Young women's group from rural Bardiya*

The social burden and constraints on women's mobility are a burden in seeking support.

*"Women fear being humiliated if they seek support from outsiders. They are frightened by the consequences of their actions, such as the reactions of her family members and having to cope with social discrimination, stigma, and ill treatment from community members as well as the shame, anger and outrage of her husband and family members."*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

*"Women are barely allowed to go outside and they carry a heavy emotional burden of fear and guilt from family members. They don't dare to speak against them. Their emotional attachment with their children also pushes them back. Even if someone takes a risk and goes outside then they have to face bullying from community members. At service sites, formal authorities ask up front "How much money have you got?"; and if you don't have it, they won't give you a second look."*

*- 22 year-old Terai Brahmin woman with higher secondary-level education from Mahottari*

In-depth interviews with women similarly emphasized cultural sensitivities, underscoring the commonly held belief that violence within the family is a private family matter and that women should not seek support outside the home. Moreover, among women who had sought support, factors such as political interference, corruption, bribery, economic influence of perpetrators and interventions staged by the community are identified as barriers hindering formal service providers.

*“I’ve got a small child. To seek support against the family means facing their threat. It is very hard. Even if I manage to go for help, the officials don’t care about matters related to women”.*

*- 22 year-old Terai Brahmin woman with higher secondary-level education from Mahottari*

*“I don’t know what’s in the law, but I believe such violence or abuse should be dealt with by family members”.*

*-25 year-old illiterate Koiri woman from Siraha*

In addition, women frequently explained that lack of awareness features prominently as a key barrier to seeking support. Moreover, participants convey the sense of powerlessness they feel due to factors such as the prevalence of female dependency on men including right to livelihood and risks to personal safety.

*"After all, what it comes down to is that a woman has to return to her family, since she often has no other options for livelihood and security, so, she is compelled not to take any action against her perpetrator."*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

#### **4.15 Women's attitudes towards seeking support**

The survey also assessed women’s support-seeking behaviour in response to violence by eliciting responses to a series of statements presented in Table 4.20. Between 80.9% and 91.2% of women, on average, affirm at least three elements necessary to enable them to seek support from the justice system in response to violence against women: knowledge of the law, protection from violence, and economic support (Table 4.20).

In Mahottari, from two-thirds to 81% of women agree with a range of statements that describe inefficacy of the law in the face of social norms that bring shame on a woman who appeals to the justice system, and which inhibit any response by the justice system. This shame is experienced at the level of the community (81.4%), the family (65.8%), and in the eyes of her husband (65.4%).

Siraha and Bardiya follow similar patterns, with the exception that 41.2% of women in Siraha, and 28.8% of women in Bardiya (versus 64.8% in Mahottari) view violence against women as a “private matter” that ought not leave the home.

Bardiya is also distinguishable from Siraha and Mahottari in that a lower percentage of women view legal protection as futile in the face of either lack of willingness by authorities (34%, versus 66% in both Mahottari and Siraha) or because money and power prevail over law (52.6%, versus 74.6% and 69.4% in Mahottari and Siraha, respectively).

In Dhading, social norms, money, power, and the willingness of authorities, are viewed less as obstacles compared to the other districts, with the exception that a similarly high percentage (64.0%, comparable to 81.4%, 75.6%, and 73.0% in Mahottari, Siraha, and Bardiya, respectively) view shame before the community as a barrier to seeking justice system support.

**Table 4.20 Attitudes towards seeking support from the formal justice system for VAW (% strongly agree and agree)**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
If a woman is not aware of the law, she will not know enough to seek help from authorities.	95.8	89.2	87.0	92.8	91.2
If a woman does not have some guarantee of protection, she will not report violence against her.	92.4	83.8	80.2	87.8	86.1
If a woman does not have economic support, she will not be able to sustain herself after filing a claim and so she will agree to make a compromise and withdraw her claim.	92.0	79.8	69.6	82.2	80.9
Knowledge of the law is not important because it is not enforced anyway. Those with money and power decide.	74.6	69.4	35.2	52.6	57.9
Knowledge of the law is not important because the authorities will not be able/willing to help anyway	66.6	66.0	21.6	34.0	47.1
A woman will bring shame on her husband if she seeks outside/external support in response to violence against her	65.4	68.0	44.8	60.8	59.7
A woman will bring shame on the family if she seeks outside/external support in response to violence against her	65.8	67.4	45.8	60.0	59.7
A woman who seeks outside/external support in response to violence will only make the community/society view her badly	81.4	75.6	64.0	73.0	73.5
Knowledge of the law and support services available are not important, because violence against a woman is a private family matter	64.8	41.2	25.2	28.8	45.0
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

#### 4.16 Barriers to seeking support

The survey also queried all women about likely barriers that women face while seeking support from formal justice system service providers for any reason. It should be emphasized that, in contrast to data reported in Chapter 5 (see Table 5.11), which is based on responses from actual victims of violence, the results in this section are based on responses from all 2000 women in the survey, regardless of their experiences of violence. The most commonly identified barriers include: the long distance they must travel to obtain the service (45%), the lack of knowledge about where to report (32.5%), fear of re-victimization (16.8%), lengthy processes (16.6%), high costs (16%) and lack of resources to travel to the service providers (15.8%). Some women also highlighted that the reactions of their families (“bring shame to the family” and “will get into trouble with family”), concerns about unsupportive environments and the futility of such efforts, as barriers to seeking support. For women in Mahottari, Bardiya, and Dhading, the main barrier identified related to distance of service centers, whereas for women in Siraha, it is lack of knowledge about where to report.

**Table 4.21 Barriers to seeking support**

Barriers	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Too far away	47.0	35.4	58.0	39.0	44.9
Does not provide all types of services at the same place	24.8	10.2	7.6	6.2	12.2
Process is too lengthy	14.0	16.8	8.2	27.4	16.6
Does not know the place to report	30.0	48.8	29.0	22.0	32.5
More violence from the perpetrator/s if they find out	16.6	22.2	7.0	21.4	16.8
Nothing will happen even if reported	26.4	14.4	5.8	12.2	14.7
Too expensive	18.6	12.8	10.0	22.4	16.0
Too complicated	7.6	6.2	2.0	9.8	6.4
No money for travel to the service providers	15.8	14.2	22.4	10.6	15.8
Will get into trouble with family	7.6	2.8	11.2	11.8	8.4
Nobody will clean and cook and look after the children	4.2	3.2	17.8	7.8	8.3
Bring shame to the family	21.8	15.8	6.8	9.0	13.4
A woman cannot go alone	1.0	3.8	3.0	1.2	2.3
Language problem	0.0	0.2	1.4	0.4	0.5
They will not listened to as they are poor	0.4	0.4	0.2	1.4	0.6
Their work won't be done until the service providers are bribed	0.0	0.4	1.0	1.4	0.7
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Total percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.

Overall, qualitative findings corroborate the quantitative results. Most of the FGD and IDI participants perceived that the long distance to services providers, the cost of services, lack of awareness about where to access services, fear of re-victimization and shame to the family, lack of money for travel, and a perception that formal providers are unsupportive, are the major reasons for women not seeking help from formal authorities.

*“We can’t go to seek justice from them (i.e. service providers) and if we dare we have to spend our whole life suffering the assault from our family and they even won’t let us go home.”*

*- Elderly women's group from rural Siraha*

*“We have to walk a whole day to get the service and return back.”*

*- Elderly women's group from rural Dhading*

*“I don’t know where the court is, what ‘kagazpatra’ (documents) are required to report the police complaint; I am an illiterate woman and how I am going to know all these things?”*

*- 50 year-old illiterate, Newar woman from Dhading*

*“Their (women) attempts to seek justice from formal authorities angered their family members, who kicked them out of the house and cut off all ties with them.”*

*- Elderly women's group from rural Dhading*

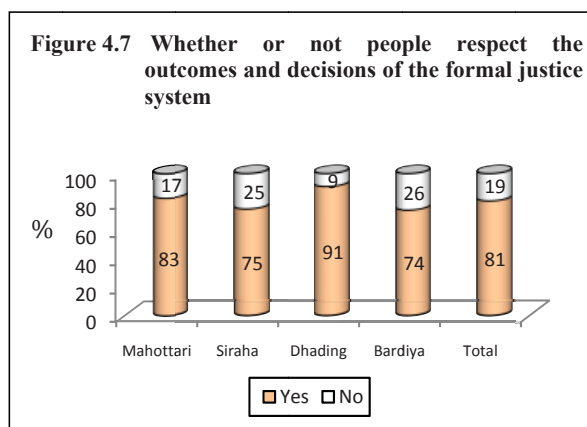
*“It’s hard for a woman to seek justice because not only her family but also her community members will accuse her of bringing shame and damaging the family's reputation. There is no strong social network she can count on.”*

*- Elderly women's group from urban Bardiya*



#### 4.17 Perceptions on the legitimacy and authority of the formal justice system

Women were then asked “Do people respect the outcomes and decisions of the formal justice system” (*Manishharule opacharik nyaya pranali le diyako nirnaya tatha natija manchhan*). Results show that most women (81%, or between 75% and 91%) believe that people respect the decisions and outcomes of the formal justice system. For those who think that people do not respect the decisions and outcomes of the formal justice system, 61% are unable to provide any reason as to why they think so. Among those who do have reasons, the most frequently mentioned reason (19.6%) is due to perceived corruption that protects the perpetrators (Table 4.22).

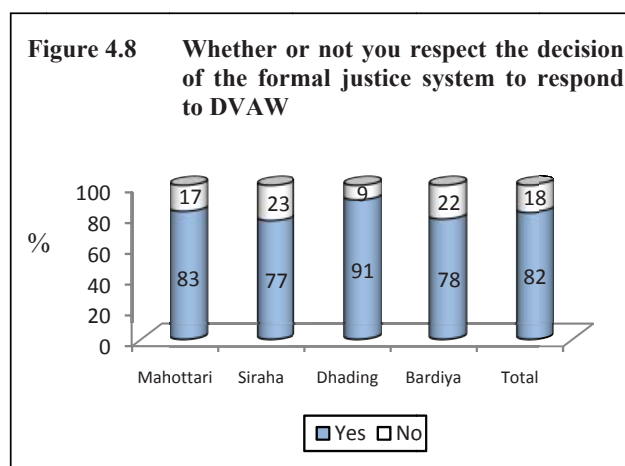


**Table 4.22 Reasons for not respecting decisions and outcomes**

Reasons for not respecting decisions and outcomes	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Lack of respect for the authorities	2.3	0.8	2.4	4.4	2.1
Perceived lack of competence of the authorities	17.4	6.3	4.8	0.0	7.6
Perceived lack of willingness of authorities to enforce law	10.5	0.0	4.0	2.2	3.9
Perceived corruption that protects perpetrators	26.7	26.6	11.3	8.9	19.6
Perception that political actors protect perpetrators	8.1	9.4	8.1	2.2	7.8
Reaction of family or in-laws	7.0	1.6	0.8	2.2	2.6
Fear of causing more harm to the victim (revictimisation)	18.6	12.5	2.4	6.7	9.9
Fear of social stigma	9.3	9.4	4.0	6.7	7.3
Family prestige	5.8	10.2	0.0	8.9	5.7
As the justice system does not take right decisions	14.0	11.7	0.8	0.0	7.3
Don't know	37.2	55.5	78.2	77.8	61.4
N	86	128	124	45	383

Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses

Respondents were also directly asked “Do you respect the decisions of the formal justice system to respond to DVAW” (*Tapaila opacharik nyaya pranali le mahila biruda hune bhedhab tatha hinsa sambandhi diyako nirnaya manuhunchha*). About one in six women (17.7%) reported that they do not respect such decisions. This figure is highest in Siraha (22.8%) and lowest in Dhading (9.4%) (Figure 4.8).





## Chapter 5

# EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE, ITS CONSEQUENCES AND SUPPORT-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

This chapter reports on women's experiences of violence, including the types of violence, categories of perpetrators, the consequences for survivors, their support-seeking behaviour, and barriers to accessing care and support services. Quantitative findings are supplemented by the findings of qualitative data from 22 in-depth interviews with women.

### 5.1 Prevalence of violence

Women were asked a series of questions to assess the prevalence of violence against them by any type of perpetrator. The questions covered acts of *emotional* violence (four questions), *physical* violence (seven questions), *sexual* violence (three questions) and *economic* violence (three questions). The responses to each item were combined to create four composite indexes, one for each category of violence.

Respondents were initially asked whether they suffered any type of violence during childhood (before the age of 16 years). Thereafter, women who currently have a husband or male partner were asked whether the latter had ever committed acts of violence against them, including physical, emotional, economic and sexual violence. The term, 'violence', was not used in the interview; instead, a series of more detailed questions were asked about actions amounting to violence. The specific questions for the four categories of violence are as follows:

#### *Emotional violence*

- Insulted or deliberately made her feel bad about herself
- Belittled or humiliated her in front of other people
- Threatened to hurt her or someone she cares about
- Threatened to hurt her children

#### *Physical violence*

- Slapped her or threw something at her that could hurt her
- Pushed or shoved her in anger
- Hit her with a fist or with something else that could hurt her
- Kicked, dragged, beaten, choked, or burned her intentionally
- Threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife, or other weapon against her
- Twisted her arm or pulled her hair

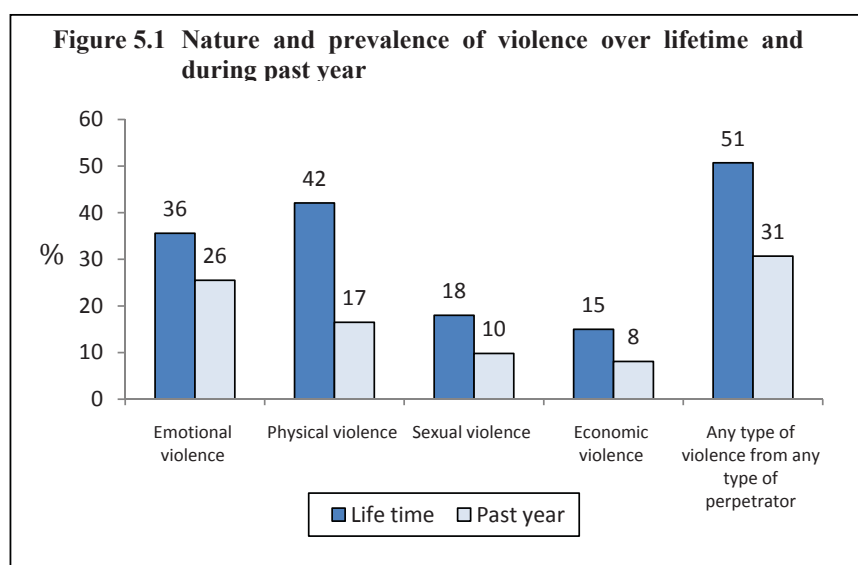
#### *Economic abuse*

- Prohibited her from getting a job, going to work, trading or earning money
- Took her earnings against her will
- Threw a wife or partner out of the house

### *Sexual violence*

- Had sex with her against her will
- Forced her to perform sexual acts against her will
- Compelled her to engage in sex in order to receive cash or in exchange for food, clothing, or other goods

For analytical purposes, a report of any of these acts placed the respondent in the category of lifetime victim of violence. Those who experienced any such acts within the last 12 months formed an important sub-category of recent victims. In the case of violence which occurred during the past 12 months, follow up questions were asked about the frequency of the violence: once, a few times, or more than a few times.



Half of all women (51%) have experienced physical, sexual, emotional and/or economic violence at some point in their lives. The most common form of violence is physical violence (42%), followed by emotional violence (36%), and sexual violence (18%). Economic violence is the least commonly reported violence (15%) among study participants (Figure 5.1).

About one-third (30.7%) of women report experiencing acts of violence during the last 12 months. Among these respondents, emotional violence is the most common form of violence (25.5%), followed by physical (16.5%), and sexual (9.8%) violence.

The prevalence of violence against women found in this survey is higher than the Nepal DHS, 2011 (in the Nepal DHS 2011, 26% of women currently or previously married reported experience of physical, sexual and/or emotional violence from their husband). The results are similar to other surveys that reported prevalence of between 48% and 51% (WOREC, 2002; Lamichhane et. al., 2011; Puri et. al., 2010; OPMCM, 2012).

Among the four study districts, lifetime prevalence of violence is highest in Siraha (62.2%) followed by Bardiya (53.4%), Mahottari (53.2%), and Dhading (34%). A similar geographical pattern is observed among women who reported any type of violence in the past 12 months (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1 Nature and prevalence of violence**

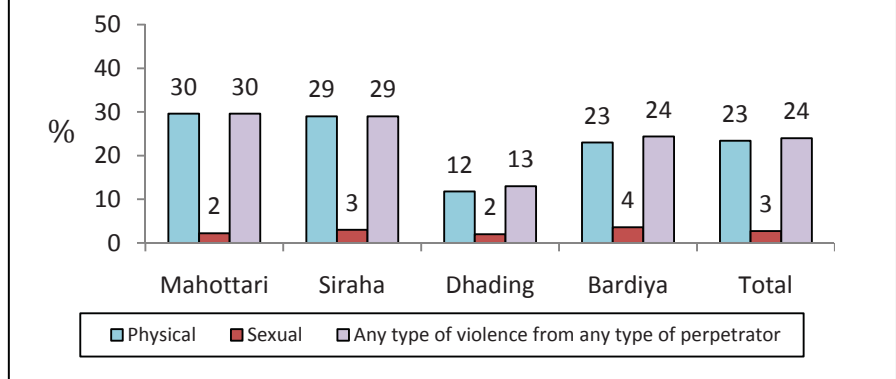
Types of violence	Lifetime					Past year				
	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b><i>Emotional violence (any type)</i></b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>25.5</b>
Insulted you or deliberately made you feel bad about yourself	32.8	43.4	21.0	34.6	33.0	25.2	32.2	13.2	22.8	23.4
Belittled or humiliated you in front of other people	14.6	13.4	6.6	20.8	13.9	11.6	7.4	2.4	12.4	8.5
Threatened to hurt someone you care about	22.2	29.0	19.4	35.6	26.6	17.6	20.8	10.8	24.2	18.4
Threatened to hurt your children if you did not obeys his wishes	8.2	5.0	2.2	6.2	5.4	5.8	3.4	1.0	3.6	3.5
<b><i>Physical violence (any type)</i></b>	<b>46.6</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>42.1</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>16.5</b>
Slapped you	43.8	47.6	20.2	41.2	38.2	16.4	16.8	5.4	13.6	13.1
Pushed you or shake you or throw something at you	30.6	32.4	17.0	30.0	27.5	10.4	10.4	6.6	12.2	9.9
Punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you?	25.8	31.2	9.2	21.4	21.9	9.4	9.0	3.4	8.2	7.5
Kicked you, dragged you or beaten you up	14.6	16.2	9.8	17.2	14.5	7.0	5.8	2.6	8.2	5.9
Choked or burnt you on purpose	2.0	2.6	.8	3.4	2.2	1.0	.2	.2	1.8	.8
Threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against you	5.8	4.8	2.2	3.8	4.2	2.8	2.4	.6	1.8	1.9
Twist your arm or pull your hair?	16.0	20.4	7.8	15.8	15.0	10.4	8.6	2.2	8.2	7.4
<b><i>Sexual violence (any type)</i></b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>9.8</b>
Physically force you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to	19.2	25.2	8.4	15.8	17.2	10.6	13.6	4.0	9.8	9.5
Force you to do something sexual that you found degrading or humiliating	7.4	9.2	2.2	3.0	5.5	4.0	5.0	1.2	2.0	3.1
Compelled to engage in sex in order to receive cash or something such as food, clothes etc	5.2	3.6	.6	2.0	2.9	3.0	1.2	-	.4	1.2
<b><i>Economic violence (any type)</i></b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>8.1</b>
Prohibited from you getting a job, going to work, trading or earning money	11.8	7.8	4.8	9.4	8.5	6.4	4.6	2.2	4.6	4.5
Taken your earnings/property against your will	6.6	7.6	3.6	7.4	6.3	4.8	5.6	1.0	4.6	4.0
Ever thrown you out of the house	7.8	9.0	5.4	9.4	7.9	3.0	2.8	1.6	4.2	2.9
<b><i>Any type of violence from any type of perpetrator</i></b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>30.7</b>
N	500	500	500	500	2000	500	500	500	500	500

## 5.2 Violence during childhood

Many studies globally show that early childhood experiences of violence shape views and behaviour in later life (WHO, 2005; Heise, 1998). In this study, all female respondents were asked a series of questions about physical and sexual violence during their childhood (before the age of 16 years). About a quarter of women (24%) report at least a single experience of violence before age 16. The most common form of violence is

physical violence, which in most cases, is viewed and experienced as a form of corporal punishment. About one in 30 women report experiences of sexual violence during childhood. Childhood experiences of violence are highest in Mahottari (30%) followed by Siraha (29%), Bardiya (24%), and Dhading (13%) (Figure 5.2).

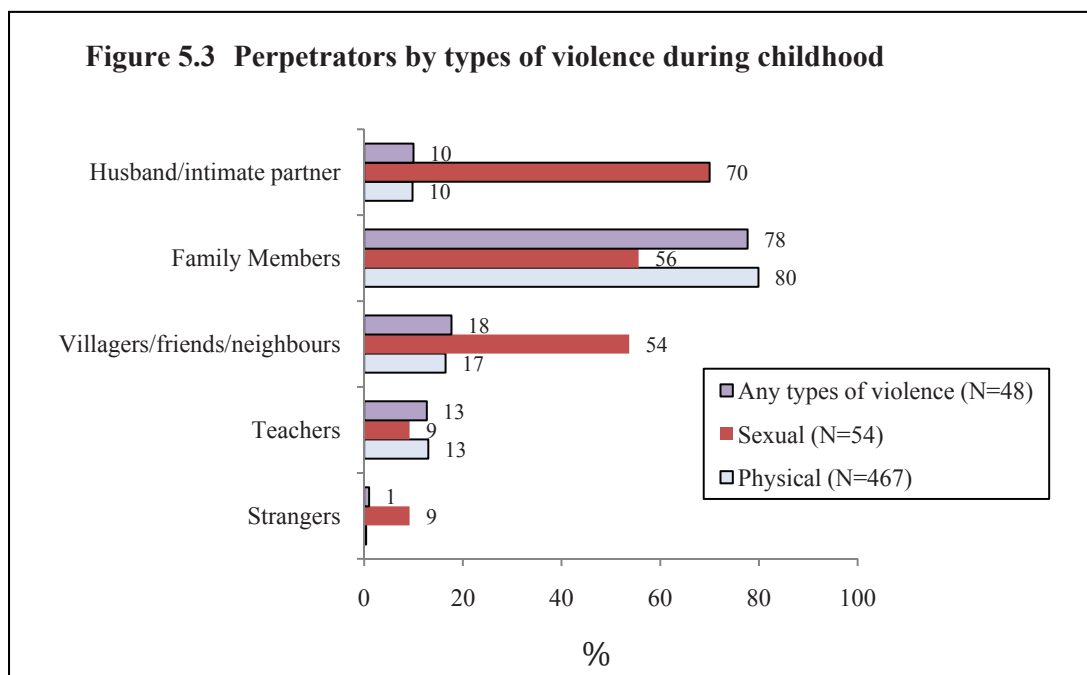
**Figure 5.2 Prevalence and forms of violence during childhood (before 16 years)**



Among women who face violence during childhood, more than three-quarters (78%) of the perpetrators are family members. Other perpetrators include friends, villagers, neighbours (18%), and teachers (13%). One in ten women also report violence during childhood from their intimate partners and husbands (few women reported getting married before the age of 16 years). As expected, intimate partners are the main perpetrators of sexual violence, while family members are likely to inflict physical violence during childhood. One in ten women report that teachers are the main perpetrators of sexual violence during childhood (Figure 5.3).

### 5.3 Nature of violence from any type of perpetrator

**Figure 5.3 Perpetrators by types of violence during childhood**



#### 5.3.1 Emotional violence

The most common type of lifetime emotional violence reported is being insulted (33%) and being threatened with harm against themselves or loved ones (26.6%). One in seven women (13.9%) is humiliated in the presence of others.

More than half of the 22 women interviewed in-depth reported emotional violence (11 out of 22 interviewees). This relates to experiences of humiliation, threat of abandonment, and threats to personal safety and security. In five of these cases, women's husbands threatened to obtain a second wife (*sauta*) (Table 5.1). The following excerpt from transcripts reflect the fear, uncertainty and sense of vulnerability faced by women.

*"He hits me often when he is drunk and scolds me regularly. When he's not drunk, he hits me less, but still scolds me...I am humiliated at home and in my father's home...I am stuck in the middle. I have spent a lot of time crying. Even when I'm sick, he says I will never get better. He says 'I should kill and throw you away and light you on fire'. I have cried a lot in my heart."*

*-22 year-old Tamang woman with Grade 1-level education from Dhading*

*"I was not allowed to eat and dress properly. Forget talking and laughing at home; not even in my dreams. My husband does not speak in front of my daughter. She (her daughter) probably does not recognize who he is. I told her that he was her father. What kind of situation is this? Whenever I think of my family, life is not worth living. If I didn't have a child, I would have already committed suicide."*

*- 25 year-old illiterate Koiri woman from Siraha*

### **5.3.2 Physical violence**

Among women who report physical violence, 38.2% describe being slapped or having something thrown at them, followed by being pushed or shoved (27.5%), or punched or hit with a fist or other objects (21.9%). One in six women (14.5%) report being kicked, dragged or beaten. Relatively fewer women (2.2%) report being choked or burned deliberately (Table 5.1).

In-depth interviews revealed similar stories. Most women interviewed in-depth (16 out of 22) report being slapped, kicked or choked. Participants reported a range of traumatic incidents, including being tied up and thrown into a river, being burned, and facing allegations of practicing witchcraft. In-depth interviews and FGDs reveal that traditional cultural norms, lack of family and legal support, male abuse of alcohol, and women's economic dependence on men, as the major underlying causes of violence against women. Qualitative data also indicates that a nexus between poverty, lack of education, and patriarchy, which drives female insecurity and the subordination of women. Continued subordination and exclusion of women undermines their capacities both to protect themselves from violence and to gain access to support services.

*"My husband used to hit me and threaten to kill me by grabbing me violently late at night, holding a sickle (Hasiya), and pulling my hair. When I was ill, he threw me into the river."*

*- 27 year-old non-formally educated Chhetri woman from Bardiya*

*"He took all my clothes, bed sheet, mattress, bed, food, cooking pots, without my permission and lit them all on fire. When I got there, I tried to stop him but I was unsuccessful. Instead, he started to hit me and screamed at me. I cried for help but no one was there to help me. He threatened to set me on fire if I did not leave home. That night, I escaped and went to spend the night at a local villager's home."*

*- 34 year-old illiterate Brahmin woman from Dhading*

*“Five days after delivery, my husband battered me and I had severe bleeding for which I had to visit the health facility for treatment. My husband and my sister-in-law often physically assault me and always ask me to leave the home as he wants to marry another woman but I had no option rather to tolerate and stay there. Even my mother suggested the same.”*

*-18 year-old Tharu woman with Grade 4-level education from Bardiya*

### **5.3.3 Sexual violence**

Non-consensual sex is the most prevalent (17.2%) form of sexual violence experienced by a woman over her lifetime. A relatively small but significant percentage of respondents also reported being forced to carry out humiliating or degrading acts (5.5%) (Table 5.1).

Consistent with the quantitative data, about one-third of the in-depth interviews revealed experiences of sexual violence, with husbands reported as the usual, though not exclusive, perpetrators. Women reported that sexual violence often entails being forced to have sex against her will, pressure to have oral or anal sex, and physical punishment for refusal through the insertion of an object (usually a ‘stick’) into the vagina. Women report these acts occur on a frequent basis and without their consent. They explain that sex is forced upon them either physically or through threats of a second marriage. Most of the women explain that they keep these experiences to themselves due to fear that any attempts to seek outside help would only makes things worse. Some women chose to share these problems with their friends, who in turn also tend to suggest that they keep quiet.

*“Once I escaped to my aunt’s home. Even there he tried to sleep with me. He would say, ‘If you don’t obey me I will hit you’ and then he would threaten to force a stick into my vagina and he would actually do that.”*

*- 22 year-old Tharu woman with lower secondary-level education from Bardiya*

*“He would arrive drunk and even if I did not consent, he would force me to have sex with him and hit me. Even when I was sick, he would force me to have sex. He never listened to me. He would try to do it [sex] 4 or 5 times a day. It really hurts and burns in my private parts. He is very forceful.”*

*- 22 year-old Tamang woman with Grade 1-level education from Dhading*

*“When I was pregnant, my husband forced me to have sex. When I told him that I would not have sex due to fear that it would harm the child, he would hit me, scold me, and fight with me.”*

*-32 year-old illiterate Tharu woman from Mahottari*

### **5.3.4 Economic violence**

Almost one in ten women (8.5%) report being prohibited by their husbands from securing employment at one point or more in their lifetime. A similar proportion report being thrown out of the house and 6.3% report that their earnings have been taken away without their consent (Table 5.1).

During in-depth interviews, women shared experiences including the denial of basic needs, use of property, or money, by their husbands. Few women (3 out of 22 women) reported that their earnings or property were taken away against their will. One woman reported being thrown out of the house.

*“Whenever I went to my maternal home, he would demand that I give him NPR 2000 to 3000 that I had brought for myself and force me to give the money to him. If I refused to give him the money, he would take it without my permission from my hiding place.”*

*-33 year-old Brahmin woman with lower secondary-level education from Bardiya*



## 5.4 Factors associated with reported violence

Tables 5.2 and 5.3 show the results of bivariate analysis that assesses the relationship between lifetime and past year experiences of violence, and a range of selected socio-demographic and attitudinal factors. As shown in Table 5.2, middle-aged women (25-34 years) are significantly more likely to report experiencing violence in their lifetimes than older (50-59 years) or younger women (16-24 years). Married women are more likely to report violence than women who had never married.

**Table 5.2 Association of violence with selected demographic characteristics**

	Lifetime	Past year	N
<b>Current age ( in years)</b>	***	***	
16-24	46.4	23.6	571
25-34	57.9	38.3	656
35-49	49.0	30.8	598
50-59	43.4	24.6	175
<b>Marital status</b>	***	***	
Never married	35.7	6.3	221
Currently married	52.7	33.9	1713
Widow/ divorced/ separated	50.0	28.8	66
<b>Number of living children (N=1779)</b>	Ns	ns	
No living children	49.6	32.2	121
1	55.0	36.7	229
2	53.7	33.4	395
3 and more	51.9	33.3	1034

Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ ,  $ns=$ not significant

Table 5.3 presents further statistical analysis designed to examine any association between experiences of violence and a series of other factors. The data shows that women with no education are more likely to report violence over their lifetime than women with more than secondary-level education. With similar confidence, the analysis shows an association between levels of violence and women from disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai and Dalit/religious minority groups compared to relatively advantaged indigenous or upper caste groups. Similarly, the percentage of women reporting violence in their lifetime is negatively associated with wealth quintile and exposure to mass media. Women who justify ‘hitting’ by husbands for any reason are significantly more likely to report violence in their lifetime than women who do not. Women with high mobility are less likely to report violence. Women who disagree with the practice of discrimination against women are significantly less likely to report violence in their lifetime than women who do not reject violence against women (Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3 Association of violence with selected socio-economic and attitudinal factors**

Selected socio-economic and attitudinal characteristics	Lifetime	Past year	N
<b>Level of education</b>	***	***	
Illiterate	53.0	34.3	872
Non-formal education/ up to primary	52.4	32.4	584
Six to 10 years of schooling	50.2	25.9	428
School leaving certificate or more	26.7	12.1	116
<b>Occupation</b>	**	**	
Non-remunerated house wives or students	51.5	30.5	1362
Agriculture	44.0	26.2	405
Other	57.9	39.1	233
<b>Caste/ethnicity</b>	***	***	
Upper caste groups	38.6	21.3	324
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	36.4	20.3	118



Disadvantaged indigenous group	45.9	27.7	505
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	59.2	36.5	630
Dalit/ religious minorities	57.0	35.5	423
<b>Religion</b>	ns	*	
Hindu	50.8	30.9	1710
Religious minority	57.7	37.5	104
Other	45.7	24.2	186
<b>Family structure</b>	ns	Ns	
Nuclear	51.2	30.4	992
Joint	50.2	30.9	1008
<b>Wealth quintile</b>	***	***	
Lowest	58.1	39.9	391
Second	51.3	33.3	400
Middle	56.7	31.4	404
Fourth	47.0	28.1	402
Highest	40.7	20.8	403
<b>Media exposure</b>	***	***	
Low	57.9	38.1	975
Moderate	45.9	25.7	680
High	39.7	19.4	345
<b>Place of residence</b>	ns	Ns	
Urban	52.2	30.9	450
Rural	50.3	30.6	1550
<b>Whether obtained a Nepali citizenship</b>	ns	Ns	
Yes	56.6	35.8	53
No	50.5	30.8	1947
<b>Whether has any type of disability</b>	ns	Ns	
Yes	50.5	31.1	1464
No	51.1	29.5	536
<b>Member of any community group or organization</b>	ns	*	
Yes	53.5	34.2	553
No	49.6	29.3	1447
<b>Decision making power on major household purchase</b>	ns	**	
Own decision	55.2	38.3	154
Joint decision with partner	51.2	24.9	301
Not involved in decision-making	50.2	31.0	1545
<b>Women who think it is okay for a husband to hit his wife for any one reason</b>	***	***	
None	48.7	29.1	1824
Any one	71.0	46.6	176
<b>Women's Mobility Index</b>	**	Ns	
Low	49.5	30.4	1292
Moderate	58.1	34.4	401
High	45.9	26.7	307
<b>Women's GRR Index</b>	ns	*	
Weakly affirm	56.8	36.9	176
Moderately affirm	49.9	31.3	1378
Strongly affirm	50.7	26.0	446
<b>Women's DAW Perception Index</b>	***	***	
Disagree	25.6	12.4	129
Moderately Agree	50.7	28.1	473
Strongly Agree	53.0	33.2	1398
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>2000</b>

Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ , ns=not significant

Bivariate analysis also shows that women’s experiences of violence over their lifetimes are associated with their husbands’ profiles. Women whose husbands have no education are significantly more likely to report violence in their lifetimes. Women whose husbands find employment as daily wage labourers or who are engaged in foreign employment are more likely to report violence than women whose husbands are involved in other types of work. Women whose husbands drink alcohol frequently were more likely to report violence in their life times than those women whose husbands never drink alcohol (Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4 Association of violence with husband’s profile**

Selected husband’s characteristics	Lifetime	Past year	N
<b>Husband's age (N=1713)</b>	ns	ns	
17-24	63.0	42.9	119
25-34	52.1	34.0	574
35+	51.8	32.7	1020
<b>Husband's level of education (N=1713)</b>	***	***	
Illiterate	58.5	41.1	470
Non-formal education/ up to primary	52.4	32.6	487
Six to 10 years of schooling	51.5	31.4	590
School leaving certificate or more	41.0	25.9	166
<b>Husband's occupation (N=1713)</b>	***	***	
Unemployed-student	52.2	32.8	67
Daily wages labourer	63.9	49.4	332
Agriculture/ farmer	44.5	28.2	524
Service	46.7	28.4	169
Business	50.0	30.7	176
Foreign employment	57.3	31.7	419
Others	57.7	42.3	26
<b>Husband's alcohol use (N=1713)</b>	***	***	
Frequent	63.5	46.3	587
Sometime	45.3	26.3	285
Never	47.6	27.7	841
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>2000</b>

*Chi-square test, significant at \*\*\*= $p \leq 0.001$ , ns=not significant*

As in the case of lifetime experiences of violence, similar bivariate analysis was used to examine the relationship between violence in the past 12 months and selected background characteristics. Results are presented in Table 5.2 and Table 5.3.

Overall, the same pattern of association between experiences of violence over a lifetime and in the past 12 month is observed. However, a series of variables are associated with 12 month experiences that are not significant for lifetime reporting of violence: a woman’s religion, decision-making power on major household purchases, membership in any community group or organisation, and attitudes towards gender roles and rights. Women who belong to religious minority groups are slightly more likely to report experiences of violence in the past 12 months than those belonging to Hindu or other religions. Women with some level of decision-making power over major household purchases are also more likely to report violence than those who did not have such power. Similarly, women with membership in any community group or organisation are more likely to report violence in the past 12 months than women who do not have involvement in such community organisations. Women with a weak score on the Women’s Gender Role and Rights-related Attitudes Index (GRR) are significantly more likely to report violence in the past 12 months than women who had a strong score (Table 5.2 and Table 5.3).

Given that these results arise from a cross-sectional survey, there is a possibility that confounding factors may have an impact on bivariate analysis. Therefore, relationships observed in bivariate analysis were reassessed using binary logistic regression to identify statistically significant factors and to adjust for possible confounder effects. Two different models – one for identifying the determinants of reported lifetime experiences of violence and another for recent experiences (in the last 12 months) were used in the analysis. In Model 1, the dependent variable was whether or not the individual woman reported any experience of violence in her lifetime. In Model 2, the dependent variable is whether or not the individual woman reported any experience of violence in the 12 months preceding the interview.

Altogether 20 independent variables that are either identified as risk factors in previous studies or otherwise hypothesized as important variables were included in the model. Variables included in both regression models are women's age, marital status, number of living children, level of education, occupation, caste/ethnicity, religion, family structure, wealth quintile, media exposure, place of residence, membership in any community group or organisation, decision-making power on major household purchases, perception of intimate partner use of physical force, autonomy of mobility, perception on gender roles and rights, attitude towards discrimination against women, possession of Nepali citizenship, disability status, and district of residence. Results are presented in Annex 4. *Multivariate analysis* shows a number of statistically significant variables associated with increased lifetime risk of reported violence. The main findings are summarised as follows:

#### **Lifetime risk of violence (Model 1)**

- Currently married women are 2 times more likely to face violence over their lifetimes compared to women never married.
- Women belonging to lower wealth quintiles are at a higher risk of violence over their lifetimes compared to women in higher wealth quintiles.
- Women who did not belong to any community organization are 39% less likely to report violence than non-members.
- Women who justify their husband's or intimate partner's use of physical violence are 2.6 times more likely to report violence compared to women who do not accept violence for any reason.
- Women who agree that they are treated as less valuable than men and are discriminated against are 1.9 times more likely to report violence than those women who disagree that women face discrimination.
- Women who have high mobility are 31% more likely to report violence than those women with low reported mobility.
- In terms of district-level variation:
  - Women in Siraha are 1.58 times more likely to report violence than women from Mahottari;
  - Women in Dhading are 65% less likely to report violence than women from Mahottari
- A higher level of education and greater decision-making power over major household purchases does not lower a woman's risk of violence over a lifetime.
- A woman's age, caste, ethnicity, family structure, occupation, exposure to media, place of residence, attitude regarding gender roles and rights, and possession of Nepali citizenship are not statistically significant in the multivariate analysis. In other words, these factors are not associated with the violence after controlling the effect of potential confounders.

### **Risk of violence in within the past 12 months (Model 2)**

- Overall, results show similar patterns as observed in lifetime experiences of violence. For example, a higher risk of violence is associated with marriage, women from the lowest wealth quintile, membership in any community organisation, low freedom of mobility, and women who agree that women are treated as less valuable and discriminated against (Annex 4).

## **5.5 Perpetrators**

Women are most vulnerable to violence from people who are close to them. Among women who experience violence, more than two-thirds (68.6%) of women mention intimate partners as the most common perpetrators. Similarly, over 62.2% of women who suffer violence report that family members are the perpetrators. Other perpetrators women mention are teachers and neighbours (Table 5.5).

As expected, types of violence committed vary according to type of perpetrator. Intimate partners are most likely to perpetrate sexual violence, while family members most often inflict physical and emotional violence (Table 5.5).

**Table 5.5 Perpetrators by types of violence**

<b>Perpetrators</b>	<b>Any (N=1014)</b>	<b>Emotional (N=711)</b>	<b>Physical (N=841)</b>	<b>Sexual (N=359)</b>	<b>Economic (N=299)</b>
Intimate partner	68.6	69.3	63.3	94.4	67.9
Family members	62.2	53.7	58.6	2.5	46.8
Teacher	5.8	0.1	7.0	0.6	0.0
Neighbours/Local <i>Dada</i>	13.0	9.4	10.9	3.6	2.0
Others (colleagues, Stranger, unknown persons etc.)	2.1	0.3	0.5	4.5	0.0

*Percentage total may not add up to 100 due to multiple responses.*

In line with quantitative findings, in-depth interviews reveal that intimate partners were the most common perpetrators (17 out of 22). Of these 16 reported domestic violence while 8 women face sexual violence. Additionally, 16 (out of 22) women reported experiences of physical or emotional violence from close relatives or other family members.

*“My mother-in-law would tug on my hair forcefully. My father-in-law used to grab whatever objects in front of him and hit me with them. He would also use dirty words when talking to me. My brother-in-law hits me wherever he likes.”*

*- 24 year-old non-formally educated Muslim woman from Mahottari*

## **5.6 Prevalence and types of violence by intimate partners**

Of the women who have an intimate partner, 39.7% have experienced some form of violence from their intimate partners during their lifetimes, and 26.4% have suffered violence from their intimate partners in the past 12 months. Lifetime experience of physical violence by intimate partner is most commonly reported (30.4%) followed by emotional violence (28.6%), sexual violence (19.5%) and economic violence (11.8%). In contrast to lifetime experiences, emotional violence from an intimate partner is most commonly reported (19.1%) in the past 12 months, followed by physical violence (14.9%), sexual violence (11.3%), and economic violence (6.7%) (Table 5.6).

**Table 5.6 Types of violence from intimate partners**

Types of violence	Lifetime					Past year				
	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<i>Any type of violence from intimate partner</i>	39.4	49.2	23.2	46.9	39.7	25.4	30.2	15.9	34.2	26.4
Emotional	23.9	34.5	18.0	38.1	28.6	15.5	23.0	10.9	27.1	19.1
Physical	31.4	37.0	16.1	36.7	30.4	16.4	16.5	7.8	19.1	14.9
Sexual	21.2	28.2	9.0	18.8	19.5	12.2	15.6	4.7	12.5	11.3
Economic	13.3	12.2	7.3	14.2	11.8	8.2	6.3	3.8	8.6	6.7
<b>N</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>1726</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>1726</b>

### 5.7 Consequences of violence

Women reported a wide range of psychological, physical, sexual and reproductive health problems as results of violence. About two-thirds of women (72.4%) report that they have at least one problem as a consequence of violence. Psychological problems are the most common (72.0%). Among women who suffered from psychological problems, fear, tension and depression are the most common symptoms of the toll that violence takes on an individual's mental health (Table 5.7).

**Table 5.7 Percentage of women who report different health problems as a result of violence**

	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Any type of problems (psychological, physical and sexual and reproductive health problems)</b>					
Yes	70.8	74.8	59.2	78.1	72.4
No	29.2	25.2	40.8	21.9	27.6
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>686</b>
<b>Psychological problems</b>					
Yes	70.2	74.8	59.2	77.1	72.0
No	29.8	25.2	40.8	22.9	28.0
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>686</b>
<b>Types of psychological problems</b>					
Fear	84.0	89.0	55.2	80.4	81.2
Tension	60.0	65.0	55.2	64.2	62.3
Depression	35.2	50.9	29.3	48.6	43.7
Suicidal feelings	9.6	11.7	13.8	31.8	17.4
Tried to take own life	0.0	1.8	3.4	6.8	3.0
Wanted to leave home	1.6	3.7	0.0	6.8	3.6
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>494</b>
<b>Physical problems</b>					
Yes	12.9	12.4	13.3	22.9	15.6
No	87.1	87.6	86.7	77.1	84.4
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>686</b>

<b>Types of physical problems</b>					
Cut	56.5	48.1	38.5	45.5	47.7
Sprain	21.7	22.2	76.9	20.5	28.0
Burn	8.7	3.7	0.0	0.0	2.8
Broken bone	8.7	7.4	7.7	9.1	8.4
Broken teeth	8.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9
Bruises in the body	8.7	11.1	7.7	27.3	16.8
Head injuries	13.0	18.5	7.7	2.3	9.3
Injuries in eye	0.0	18.5	0.0	4.5	6.5
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Health problems</b>					
Yes	11.8	11.0	15.3	18.2	13.8
No	88.2	89.0	84.7	81.8	86.2
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>686</b>
<b>Types of health problems</b>					
Pregnancy loss	23.8	20.8	40.0	11.4	21.1
Heavy bleeding	33.3	12.5	53.3	34.3	31.6
Severe abdominal pain	52.4	62.5	46.7	62.9	57.9
Uterine prolapsed	14.3	12.5	0.0	2.9	7.4
Could not hear properly	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	1.1
Had injury in my uterus	0.0	8.3	0.0	0.0	2.1
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>95</b>

One in seven women (15.6%) state that they suffer from physical problems as a result of violence. Women commonly report cuts (47.7%), sprains (28%) and bruises (16.8%). Similarly, about 13.8% of women explain they suffer from reproductive and sexual health problems in the aftermath of violence. The most evident physical symptoms include severe abdominal pain, heavy bleeding and miscarriage (Table 5.7).

In line with quantitative findings, in-depth interviews revealed experiences of psychological, physical, and other health problems following violence. Almost all women (21 out of 22) reported psychological problems following violence, including reports of fear and attempted suicide. Most women also cited physical and reproductive health consequences which support the quantitative findings.

*"In our caste (Jha-Brahmin), there is a lot of importance placed on sons. For women who only give birth to daughters, they do not let them even drink water from their hands. After I got pregnant with my first child, my mother-in-law asked me to have an X-ray to find out if it was a boy or a girl, in which case, I was advised to abort the baby if it was a girl. But I did not feel good after hearing this so I went to stay in my maternal home. I stayed for 3 months over there after the birth of my daughter, and then only I returned. Since I gave birth to a daughter, I was mistreated by my mother-in-law. My husband tried to sexually abuse me only 6 months after I had given birth. I got pregnant again. My mother-in-law took me to do a X-ray. Once we found out it was a girl, she forced me to have an abortion and paid NPR 10,000. I had to have an abortion 2 times against my will because I failed to give birth to a son."*

*-22 year-old Terai-Brahmin woman with higher secondary-level education from Mahottari*

*"My husband hit my stomach with a sickle (hasiya). After he hit me on my breasts, I fell unconscious and I was only aware he hit me 2 times. I only gained consciousness 2 days later and found out that I had been taken to the hospital by ambulance."*

- 22 year-old Tharu woman with lower secondary-level education from Bardiya

*"I was 2 months pregnant. My mother-in-law hit me with a broom (kuchho) on my back. Due to this reason, I had miscarriage ..... I was like a mad woman and I felt like dying."*

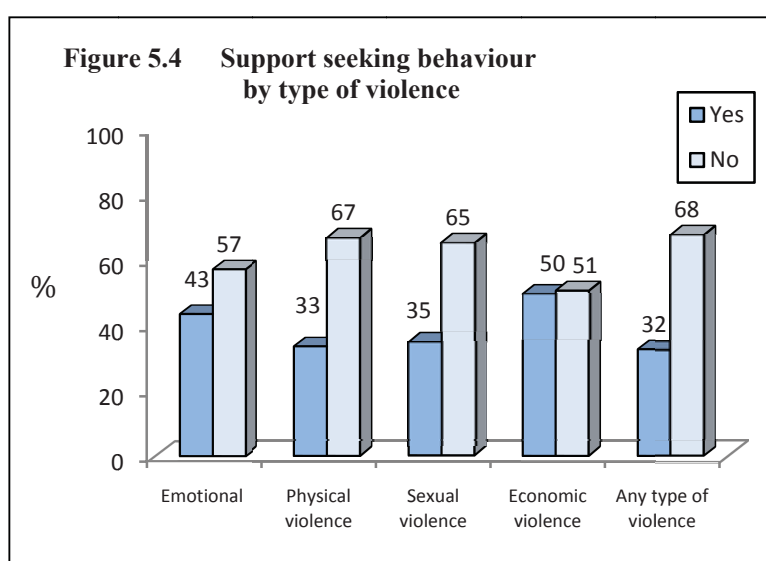
- 24 year old non-formally educated Muslim woman from Mahottari

## 5.8 Support-seeking behaviour

Women who reported violence at any time in their lives were asked whether they ever sought help from anyone (whether formal service providers or family, relative, or friends).

Results show that over two-thirds of the women (68%) do not seek any support from anyone following incidents of violence. Women who experience physical or sexual assaults are least likely to seek help (33%) while women who suffered economic violence are the most likely to seek support (50%) (Figure 5.4).

Support-seeking behaviour also varies by type of perpetrator. Women who suffer violence from teachers or intimate partners are comparatively less likely to share their experiences or to seek help from anyone than women who face violence from neighbours or relatives.



More generally, with regard to any kind of violence suffered, only one in 25 women (40 of 1014 women) ever seek help/support from formal legal service providers (3.9%). Discouragingly, only 2.6% of women who seek support from legal services feel that remedies are adequate in relation to justice, equality and fairness for victims.

**Table 5.8 Support seeking behavior by type of perpetrator**

Types of perpetrator	Shared/discussed experience of violence	Ever sought help	Sought <sup>9</sup> legal help	N
Intimate partner	38.1	33.9	3.3	696
Family members /relatives	44.1	40.7	4.4	631
Teachers	15.3	13.6	1.7	59
Neighbours	53.8	49.2	10.6	132
Others	33.3	33.3	4.8	21
<b>Any perpetrator</b>	<b>35.9</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>1014</b>

<sup>9</sup> Those who sought help, the following two questions were asked: Results are based on the response on these two questions.  
 "When you experienced violence from other than intimate partner last time, did you seek legal support?"  
 "When you faced violence from your husband/partner, did you seek legal support?"



Further assessment of the data indicates that there is some variation in seeking legal help by women according to their profile. Older women, widowed/divorced/separated women, those engaged in professional work, and those having relatively high mobility, are more likely to seek legal help (Table 5.9)

**Table 5.9 Profile of women who sought legal help when faced violence**

Characteristics	Sought legal support		Total	
	No (%)	Yes (%)	%	N
<b>Current age (in years)</b>				
16-24	98.5	1.5	100.0	265
25-34	95.5	4.5	100.0	380
35-49	95.6	4.4	100.0	293
50-59	92.1	7.9	100.0	76
<b>Marital status</b>				
Never married	98.7	1.3	100.0	79
Currently married	96.0	4.0	100.0	902
Widow/divorced/separated	90.9	9.1	100.0	33
<b>Caste/ethnicity</b>				
Upper caste groups	95.2	4.8	100.0	125
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	97.7	2.3	100.0	43
Disadvantaged indigenous group	98.3	1.7	100.0	232
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	95.3	4.7	100.0	429
Dalit/ religious minorities	95.1	4.9	100.0	185
<b>Level of education</b>				
Illiterate	95.0	5.0	100.0	462
Non-formal education/up to primary	97.7	2.3	100.0	306
Six to 10 years of schooling	95.8	4.2	100.0	215
School leaving certificate or more	96.8	3.2	100.0	31
<b>Occupation</b>				
Non-remunerated-housewife or students	96.3	3.7	100.0	701
Daily wage laborer	95.2	4.8	100.0	84
Agriculture	95.5	4.5	100.0	178
Professional	90.9	9.1	100.0	11
Business/Petty business	97.5	2.5	100.0	40
<b>Women's mobility index</b>				
Low	96.9	3.1	100.0	640
Moderate	96.1	3.9	100.0	233
High	92.2	7.8	100.0	141
<b>District</b>				
Mahottari	96.6	3.4	100.0	266
Siraha	93.6	6.4	100.0	311
Dhading	96.5	3.5	100.0	170
Bardiya	98.1	1.9	100.0	267
<b>Life time experience of emotional violence</b>				
No	99.7	0.3	100.0	303
Yes	94.5	5.5	100.0	711
<b>Life time experience of physical violence</b>				
No	98.3	1.7	100.0	173
Yes	95.6	4.4	100.0	841
<b>Life time experience of sexual violence</b>				
No	96.3	3.7	100.0	655
Yes	95.5	4.5	100.0	359
<b>Life time experience of economic violence</b>				
No	97.2	2.8	100.0	715
Yes	93.3	6.7	100.0	299
<b>Total</b>	<b>96.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1014</b>

Among women who seek support following incidents of violence, most turn to their informal support network – namely, family members or friends. Very few women (only 3.1%) seek help from formal state authorities, i.e. police and court/judge (Table 5.10).

**Table 5.10 Types of persons/service providers women turn to for support when experiencing violence**

Actors/services	N	%
No where	686	67.7
<b>Support from informal actors/services</b>		
Family/relatives	229	22.6
Friends	129	12.7
Others	24	2.4
<b>Support from formal actors/ services</b>		
VDC/Municipality office	45	4.4
Police	26	2.6
NGO/Social worker	6	0.6
Court/Judge	5	0.5
Health service provider	2	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1014</b>	<b>**</b>

Percentage total may not add up to 100 due to multiple responses.

In line with quantitative findings, in-depth case histories with women revealed that most turned to their natal families (11 out of 22) for support when facing violence. Eight of 22 women turned to friends or community leaders for help. Only 7 of 22 women seek help from police (5 out of 22) or district administration office (2 out of 22). Fewer women still make use of legal services such as the courts (only 3 out of 22), lawyers (only 1 out of 22), and health care providers (only 3 out of 22). Further compounding the fact that there is a dearth of women who turn to formal services in the first place, women who did seek support report negative experiences and unsupportive behaviour from service providers.

## 5.9 Barriers to accessing care

Results reveal that *laaj* (or shame) (41.7%) and fear of re-victimisation (33.4%) as the two main reasons women chose not to seek help when facing violence. Other reasons include: women consider violence against them as general and a private issue. They maintain an attitude that nothing can be done. One in ten women do not seek help because they are not aware of what types of services are available and where to turn to for support when they experience violence (Table 5.11).

**Table 5.11 Perceived barriers that hinder women from reporting violence**

	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Embarrassment ( <i>laaj</i> )	41.7	52.9	34.7	32.6	41.7
Fear of re-victimisation	38.0	42.0	23.7	24.3	33.4
Consider it as general problem	19.4	7.0	28.8	29.6	19.7
Did not know where to go	9.3	13.6	12.7	9.6	11.2
Considered as private issue so nothing can be done	13.9	5.8	8.5	12.2	10.1
Thought that it was her mistake	9.3	5.8	9.3	11.7	8.9
Other	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.3	0.5
<b>N</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>821</b>

Percentage total may not add up to 100 due to multiple responses.

Focus group discussions and in-depth case histories with women also reveal that women face various challenges when seeking support. Lack of awareness about how to access support, fear of retaliation by the perpetrator, fear of losing their livelihoods, social stigma, traditional cultural expectations and social norms are key factors that hold women responsible for preserving the honour of their families. Thus, women often believe violence against them is a private issue.

*"I don't know anything ... I don't have any knowledge about where to go. How can I know? I don't know anything."*

*- 22 year-old Tamang woman with Grade 1-level education from Dhading*

*"Where shall I go? I could not go to other places because I am alone. Even if I go... I don't know where to report and I don't know how to write it (formal process of filing a report)."*

*-22 year-old Gurung woman with primary level education from Dhading*

*"Seeking the service is the next thing, firstly we should know about violence, available services for it and the process of getting it; only after all these things we are able to seek support."*

*- Young women's group from rural Mahottari*

*"We can't go to seek justice from formal service providers and if we dare we've to spend our whole life suffering the assault from our family and they even won't let us stay at home."*

*- Elderly women's group from rural Siraha*

*"It is always in her mind that if she filed a case against her husband then whatever be the decision they have to live together anyhow and such legal action will further deteriorate her condition; with this fear woman hardly seek for legal support."*

*- Elderly women's group from urban Bardiya*

*"It's not good to share family issues with the public because they will feel happy about it and it will insult our family's reputation. Other women choose to seek help but its their personal decision, but, I choose not to go. Instead, I choose to endure my husband's physical abusive behavior. Even if I have to suffer from the physical violence, I still hope to win over my husband's love and affection. Even if he hits me now, I hope there is a chance he might love me in the future. We have this kind of hope in this area."*

*- 25 year-old illiterate Koiri woman from Siraha*

*"I did not go to court and the police station because community members looked at me in a negative way and spoke badly about me (backbiting)."*

*-35 year-old Bhumihar woman with lower secondary-level education from Mahottari*

Communication problems due to differences in language, particularly in Dhading (Tamang) and in Mahottari and Siraha (Maithili) are identified as additional barriers to seeking help. Moreover, women note that the high service fees, corruption, political interference, and the presence and behaviour of male service providers also hinder women's access to support. The majority of the FGD participants allege that service providers including the police, court and CDO are corrupt, discriminate against women, and even sexually assault women when they are alone. Additionally, women state that even in cases when they do report violence to formal authorities, it often does not lead to any action being taken. As a consequence, there is a huge deficit of trust in the formal authorities responsible for addressing violence among women.

*“Victims of violence have often fear of social exclusion, financial burden and sometimes they also have the fear of reprisal from the perpetrator to seek the legal action.”*

*- Young men's group from rural Bardiya*

*“Whenever we report a case against the violence, officials only reconcile the victims and the culprits in exchange for wine or beer.”*

*- Elderly women's group from rural Siraha*

*“Her husband committed suicide and then her maternal family took her back against her will. At that time she was pregnant. Her father and brother forced her to abort her baby and arranged the next marriage for her. When she tried to get help from the police, her father and brother bribed the police authorities and took her back.”*

*- Elderly women's group from rural Siraha*

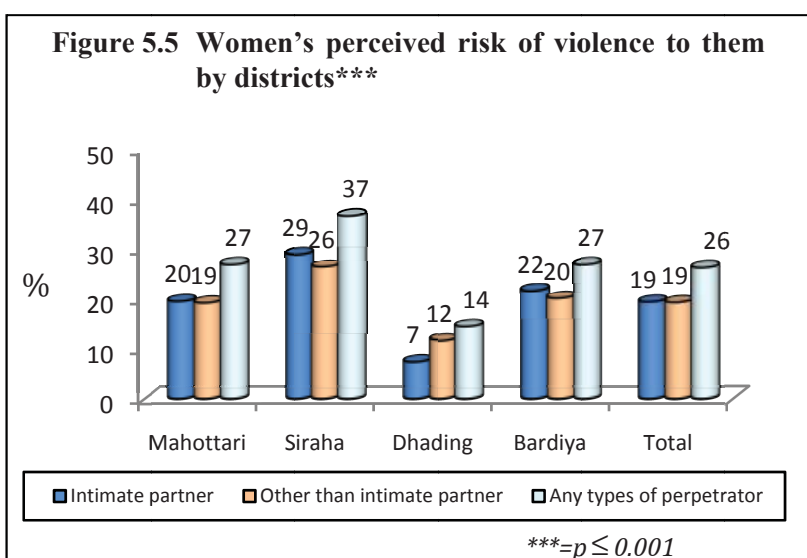
*“The law does not provide safety and security for women. They just counsel us and send us back home. I went to the police station many times, but, nothing happened. Instead, my husband broke my hand because I went to file a report against him. My husband’s other wife hit me on my head and caused me great physical harm. When I went to complain to the police, they told me I [was in the wrong] and sent me back home. They didn’t take any action against my husband or against his other wife.”*

*-33 year-old Tharu woman with primary-level education from Bardiya*

## 5.10 Perceived risk of violence

In general, women perceived that they are not free from the risk of violence. Overall, across at survey districts, slightly over than a quarter (26.2%) of women feel at risk of violence. Surprisingly, women’s perceptions regarding the likely perpetrators of violence are very similar across all districts. For example, one in every four women think that they are at risk of violence from intimate partners, as well as others (Table 5.12).

Bivariate analysis indicates that the percentage of women who report that they are at risk of violence is highest in Siraha, followed by Mahottari (27%), Bardiya (27%), and Dhading (14%) (Figure 5.5). Women who belong to the 25-34 age bracket, disadvantaged Terai and Dalit or religious minority groups, those from the lowest wealth quintile and those with low exposure to mass media, perceive themselves to be at greater risk of violence than their counterparts. In line with expectations, women whose husbands frequently consume alcohol perceive themselves to be at greater risk of violence than women who indicate that their husbands never or sometimes consume alcohol (Table 5.12)



**Table 5.12 Women’s perception of risk of violence by selected background characteristics**

	Intimate partner		Other than intimate partner		Any types of perpetrator	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
<b>Age</b>	***		***		***	
16-24	19.5	364	18.2	571	22.1	571
25-34	23.5	642	24.4	656	33.8	656
35-49	17.7	565	16.7	598	24.4	598
50-59	8.4	155	12.6	175	16.6	175
<b>Caste/ethnicity</b>	***		***		***	
Upper caste groups	7.9	267	16.4	324	18.8	324
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	9.9	91	11.9	118	16.1	118
Disadvantaged indigenous group	16.3	430	14.7	505	20.8	505
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Tarai caste group	23.2	561	25.7	630	32.5	630
Dalit/ religious minorities	27.9	377	19.6	423	31.4	423
<b>Level of education</b>	***		ns		***	
Illiterate	22.9	816	21.1	872	29.5	872
Non-formal education/ up to primary	18.3	530	18.5	584	26.4	584
Six years of schooling and above	13.4	380	17.3	544	20.6	544
<b>Marital status</b>	na		**		***	
Never married	6.7	15	10.9	221	10.9	221
Currently married	19.5	1711	20.1	1713	28.1	1713
Widow/ divorced/ separated	-	-	25.8	66	25.8	66
<b>Occupation</b>	***		**		***	
Non-remunerated house wife or students	20.4	1155	19.4	1362	26.9	1362
Agriculture	12.2	362	15.6	405	19.3	405
Other	26.3	209	25.3	233	33.5	233
<b>Wealth quintile</b>	***		**		***	
Lowest	26.1	345	24.8	391	34.5	391
Second	20.9	350	19.5	400	26.0	400
Middle	22.2	347	20.3	404	28.7	404
Fourth	16.2	339	16.9	402	22.4	402
Highest	11.6	345	15.1	403	19.4	403
<b>Husband's alcohol use (N=1711)</b>	***		**		***	
Frequent	29.4	586	24.2	587	37.3	587
Sometime	13.0	285	16.8	285	21.4	285
Never	14.9	840	18.4	841	24.0	841
<b>Whether or not obtained a Nepali citizenship</b>	ns		*		Ns	
Yes	18.6	1342	18.2	1464	25.8	1464
No	22.1	384	22.4	536	27.1	536
<b>Media exposure</b>	***		***		***	
Low	25.7	884	23.7	975	32.8	975
Moderate	12.9	604	14.9	680	20.1	680
High	12.6	238	15.7	345	19.1	345
<b>Women's Mobility Index</b>	*		ns		*	
Low	19.7	1125	19.3	1292	26.8	1292
Moderate	22.6	345	21.4	401	28.4	401
High	13.7	256	16.3	307	20.5	307
<b>Total</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>1726</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>2000</b>

Chi-square test, significant at \*=p ≤ 0.05, \*\*=p ≤ 0.01, , ns=not significant, na=not applicable due to cell counts <5

Almost all women (96.1%) feel that it is important to be aware of remedies and legal protection for seeking support with regard to incidents of DVAW. On the other hand, however, only 40.9% of women feel that the formal justice system is effective and responsive with regard to addressing their needs. Discouragingly, only 18.4% of women feel that they have a voice in improving the quality of the formal justice system (Table 5.13).

**Table 5.13 Perceptions of women towards the formal justice system**

	<b>Mahottari</b>	<b>Siraha</b>	<b>Dhading</b>	<b>Bardiya</b>	<b>Total</b>
Percentage of women who believe that awareness of access to remedies and knowledge about legal protection are important for seeking support/ assistance in relation to incidents of DVAW	98.8	95.4	92.0	98.0	96.1
Percentage of women who feel that the formal justice system is effective and responsive in addressing their needs	27.2	22.2	47.4	66.8	40.9
Percentage of women who feel that they have a voice in improving the quality of the formal justice system	24.0	15.2	16.8	17.6	18.4
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## CHAPTER 6

# MEN'S AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS ON DISCRIMINATION, VIOLENCE, LAWS AND POLICIES

This chapter examines men's attitudes towards gender roles and rights, as well as their attitudes towards discrimination and violence against women. It also describes men's awareness and attitudes towards existing laws and constitutional provisions related to DVAW.

As set out in Chapter 1, a total of 2000 men aged 16-64 years (500 from each of the four sampled districts) were interviewed. In addition, 13 FGDs and 10 in-depth interviews with men who perpetrated VAW were also carried out.

### 6.1 Demographic characteristics

Interviews were carried out with men aged between 16 and 64, with a median age of 38. More than 80% of the surveyed men across all survey districts were married at the time of the interview. Ninety-four percent of all men belong to households headed by males, though this varies slightly by district: the figure is highest in Mahottari at 97.6% and lowest in Bardiya at 89.8%. Interviewed men are divided equally as belonging to joint and nuclear families.

Marriages arranged by parents or elders are the most common practice in Siraha (97.1%) Mahottari (96.1%) and Siraha (97.1%), both Terai districts of eastern Nepal. Marriage by one's own choice is more prevalent in Dhading (34.5%) and Bardiya (28.0%). The mean age at marriage is just above 20 years with little variation across districts, and with 57% married before that age. Between half and two-thirds of male respondents have three children or more 3.5% reported having more than one wife at any one time.

**Table 6.1 Demographic characteristics**

Characteristics	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Current age (in years)</b>					
16-24	15.0	21.4	19.8	22.6	19.7
25-34	20.6	20.4	23.4	24.6	22.3
35-49	34.2	31.2	31.6	33.0	32.5
50-64	30.2	27.0	25.2	19.8	25.6
<i>Median age</i>	<i>40.0</i>	<i>38.5</i>	<i>37.0</i>	<i>36.0</i>	<i>38.0</i>
<b>Marital status</b>					
Never married	12.4	15.4	17.2	16.4	15.4
Currently married	84.6	81.0	80.4	81.4	81.9
Widow/ divorced/ separated	3.0	3.6	2.4	2.2	2.8
<b>Sex of the head of household</b>					
Male	97.6	95.0	93.8	89.8	94.1
Female	2.4	5.0	6.2	10.2	6.0
<b>Family structure</b>					
Nuclear	48.0	42.8	56.0	51.2	49.5
Joint	52.0	57.2	44.0	48.8	50.5



<b>Place of residence</b>					
Urban	30.0	30.0	0.0	30.0	22.5
Rural	70.0	70.0	100.0	70.0	77.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Type of marriage</b>					
Chose each other (love)	3.9	2.8	34.5	28.0	17.1
Was arranged	37.0	14.4	59.9	62.9	43.4
Negotiated with elder and we (I/ or she) had to agree	59.1	82.7	5.6	9.1	39.6
<b>Received/ offered dowry/ bride price during marriage</b>					
Yes	13.9	18.2	11.6	32.1	18.9
No	86.1	81.8	88.4	67.9	81.1
<b>Age at marriage (years)</b>					
Less than 18	25.3	28.4	15.7	27.5	24.3
18-20	31.3	30.0	36.2	33.7	32.8
20 years and above	39.7	36.2	46.9	35.4	39.5
Don't know	3.7	5.4	1.2	3.3	3.4
<i>Mean age at marriage (SD)</i>	<i>20.3 (4.26)</i>	<i>20.0 (5.01)</i>	<i>20.6 (3.56)</i>	<i>19.9 (4.46)</i>	<i>20.2 (4.34)</i>
<b>Number of living children</b>					
No living children	6.8	7.3	4.6	6.9	6.4
1	9.6	11.6	8.0	11.2	10.1
2	18.5	17.3	22.2	26.1	21.0
3+	65.1	63.8	65.2	55.7	62.5
<b>Ever had more than one wife at the same time</b>					
Yes	3.9	3.1	4.1	3.1	3.5
No	96.1	96.9	95.9	96.9	96.5
<b>Any disabilities</b>					
Yes	2.0	1.8	4.4	4.2	3.1
No	98.0	98.2	95.6	95.8	96.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>1693</b>

Men were asked if they had received or been offered dowry during marriage. Overall, more than 80% stated that they had not received a dowry, although the figure is much lower in Bardiya (67.9%), with about a third of the respondents indicating that they had received or been offered dowry during marriage (Table 6.1).

## 6.2 Socio-economic characteristics

In Mahottari and Siraha, 65.2% and 58.8% of the surveyed men, respectively, identified as belonging to non-Dalit Terai caste groups. Disadvantaged indigenous *Janajatis* constituted 50.2% of the respondents in Bardiya and 41% of those in Dhading. These two districts also had the highest proportion of upper caste groups (28%). About one in five men from Dhading identified as being relatively advantaged indigenous Janajati.

More than 90% of the respondents identified as Hindu in all districts except in Dhading (76%), where 19.8% self-identified as Buddhist. Representation of Muslim and Christian men across all districts was minimal.

Overall, one in five surveyed men (20.1%) is illiterate: the highest proportion is in Mahottari (31%), followed by Siraha (21.4%), Dhading (17.2%), and Bardiya (10.4%). Agriculture is still a major source of employment among respondents in all four districts (48.7%), with Dhading having the highest proportion (60.8%). Thirteen percent of the respondents are engaged in business, with significant variation across the districts: about one in five men in Mahottari compared to only about one in 10 in Siraha. Across all survey districts, non-remunerated individuals and students constituted 14.9 percent of the respondents; and approximately one in every 10 men are daily wage earners.

In terms of income sources, 55.4% overall reported agriculture (the figure is highest in Dhading at 69.4%), followed by (petty) business (12.1%), and daily wage labour (12.1%). Foreign employment is the main source of income for 10.7% of men, with the highest proportion in Siraha (17.4%) (Table 6.2).

Two-thirds of respondents are the main breadwinners for their families overall (66.3%), followed by the parents (18.1%).

The lowest two wealth quintiles account for between 31.6% and 32.8% of the respondents in Mahottari and Siraha, 37.8% of the respondents in Bardiya, and a higher percentage (54.8%) in Dhading (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2 Socio-economic characteristics**

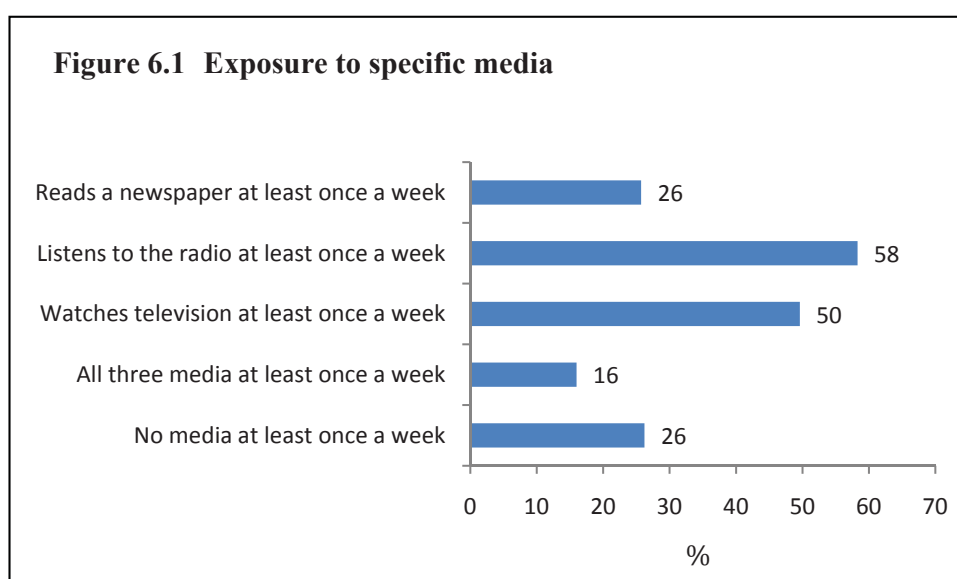
Socio-economic characteristics	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Caste/ ethnicity</b>					
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups	65.2	58.8	0.8	3.4	32.1
Disadvantaged indigenous groups ( <i>Janajatis</i> )	5.4	15.6	41.0	50.2	28.1
Dalit/ religious minorities	12.6	21.0	10.2	16.6	15.1
Upper caste groups	16.4	4.2	28.4	27.2	19.1
Relatively advantaged indigenous group ( <i>Janajatis</i> )	0.4	0.4	19.6	2.6	5.8
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	92.2	94.0	76.0	93.6	89.0
Muslim	6.8	2.6	0.2	1.8	2.9
Christian	0.6	0.0	3.2	2.2	1.5
Buddhist	0.4	3.4	19.8	2.0	6.4
No religion	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.4	0.3
<b>Level of education</b>					
Illiterate	31.2	21.4	17.2	10.4	20.1
Up to primary/ Non-formal education	18.2	22.2	41.0	37.6	29.8
Six to 10 years of schooling	34.6	39.6	29.8	39.0	35.8
School leaving certificate or more	16.0	16.8	12.0	13.0	14.5
<b>Occupation</b>					
Non-remunerated or students	14.0	16.8	14.0	14.8	14.9
Daily wage labourer	16.0	13.2	7.0	9.4	11.4
Foreign employment (India or other countries)	3.4	6.6	3.0	6.0	4.8
Agriculture	37.2	46.2	60.8	50.6	48.7
Professional	9.6	8.2	5.4	8.0	7.8
Business/ Petty business	19.8	9.0	9.8	11.2	12.5
<b>Main source of income for the family</b>					
Agriculture	40.6	51.0	69.4	60.6	55.4
Business/ Petty business	19.4	9.4	10.4	9.2	12.1
Labourer	16.8	12.0	6.8	12.6	12.1

Foreign employment	11.0	17.4	6.6	7.6	10.7
Services/ pension	12.2	10.2	6.8	10.0	9.8
<b>Main earner of the family</b>					
Self	71.6	62.0	68.4	63.2	66.3
Spouse	0.2	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.6
Both equally	0.4	0.2	5.2	6.2	3.0
Parents	16.8	20.2	17.0	18.4	18.1
Son/ daughter	7.4	10.8	4.4	6.8	7.4
Elder/ younger brother/ sister	3.0	5.6	4.2	4.6	4.4
Others (uncle/ grandfather)	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.3
<b>Wealth quintile</b>					
Lowest	18.6	16.0	25.0	18.4	19.5
Second	13.0	16.8	29.8	19.4	19.8
Middle	17.8	21.2	18.8	22.8	20.2
Fourth	22.0	24.2	14.2	19.6	20.0
Highest	28.6	21.8	12.2	19.8	20.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

### 6.3 Mass media exposure

About three-quarters of the men (74%) are exposed to at least one type of media at least once a week, with exposure to the radio being the highest (58%). About half of the men (50%) watch television at least once a week. Exposure to print media at least once a week is relatively lower at 26%. Only 16% of men are exposed to all three media at least once a week (Figure 6.1).

Young men under 25 years of age are more likely to be exposed to various forms of mass media. Exposure to media is also correlated with level of education, caste/ethnicity, and district of residence. Exposure to media is highest among men with a secondary or higher level of education. Media exposure is lowest among Dalit/religious minority groups and highest among upper caste groups and relatively advantaged indigenous groups. Exposure to mass media is highest in Dhading and lowest in Mahottari (Table 6.3).

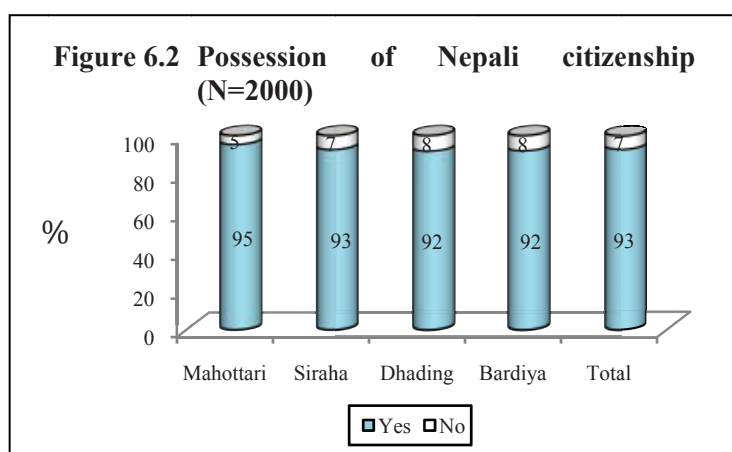


**Table 6.3 Exposure to specific media by selected background characteristics**

	Reads a newspaper at least once a week	Listens to the radio at least once a week	Watches television at least once a week	All three media at least once a week	No media at least once a week	N	Total
<b>Age</b>							
16-24	39.8	72.3	60.2	26.4	13.2	394	100.0
25-34	33.3	63.6	58.9	20.4	18.2	445	100.0
35-49	21.4	56.6	47.2	12.9	27.4	650	100.0
50-64	13.5	45.0	36.4	8.0	41.7	511	100.0
<b>Level of education</b>							
Illiterate	0.0	25.7	20.7	0.0	61.8	401	100.0
Up to primary/ Non-formal education	5.7	54.3	40.7	2.2	31.1	595	100.0
6 to 10 years of schooling	36.2	71.6	63.5	23.5	11.5	715	100.0
SLC or more	76.1	78.9	73.7	48.1	3.1	289	100.0
<b>Caste/ ethnicity</b>							
Upper caste groups	40.4	71.7	66.9	24.7	11.0	381	100.0
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	21.7	75.7	53.0	14.8	12.2	115	100.0
Disadvantaged indigenous group	18.7	57.8	37.4	11.4	29.9	561	100.0
Disadvantaged non-Dalit/Terai caste group	27.1	52.3	52.3	17.6	30.6	641	100.0
Dalit/ religious minorities	18.2	48.7	43.4	10.6	34.4	302	100.0
<b>District</b>							
Mahottari	29.6	52.8	53.0	19.6	30.8	500	100.0
Siraha	30.2	56.0	57.2	21.6	26.6	500	100.0
Dhading	17.6	71.2	42.4	9.8	18.8	500	100.0
Bardiya	25.2	53.2	45.8	13.0	28.6	500	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>58.3</b>	<b>49.6</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 6.4 Nepali citizenship

About 7% of men reported that they do not possess Nepali citizenship. There was no major variation in this figure across the four study districts (Figure 6.2).



## 6.5 Attitudes towards women’s roles and relative value

Male respondents reported their opinions on several statements that aimed to measure attitudes towards women’s roles and relative equality with men. A four-point Likert Scale was used to compare responses: ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’. The responses for ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ were combined to simplify the analysis. The results are presented in Table 6.4.

Male respondents almost uniformly affirmed conventionally defined conservative gender roles for women. Overwhelming proportions of men from all districts (82% to 98%) agree with the statement that “once a woman gets married, she belongs to her husband’s family and should obey her in-laws”. Overall, about three quarters of the respondents agree that “a woman's obligation is to serve her husband and family in the home” though there is quite significant variation by district: this view was most strongly held by men in Mahottari and Siraha (82.8%) in comparison to those in Dhading (66.4%) and Bardiya (65.0%).

Almost 90% of men also believe that “men and women have equal value, but not the same obligations and roles”. A large majority of respondents (71.0%) also agree that “men and women have equal value, but women are always treated as less valuable”.

Compared to Mohattari (65.6%) and Siraha (69.4%), relatively fewer male respondents in Dhading (27.8%) and Bardiya (34.6%) believe that “a woman should not get involved in matters outside the home because this is a man's responsibility”. In comparison to Mahottari and Siraha, male respondents from Dhading and Bardiya are less conservative.

Significant proportions of men from all four districts believe that polygamy (88%) and the dowry practice (94%) are major causes of VAW. It is interesting to note such observations by male respondents in Dhading, a Hill district where the dowry practice is traditionally less prevalent.

Almost all respondents (86.6%) agree that “it is wrong to accuse any woman of witchcraft”. This was noted in all survey districts. A majority of the respondents from Mahottari (55.4%) and Siraha (60.4%), both Terai districts of eastern Nepal, however, agreed that “a woman sometimes use witchcraft to harm others”. The figure for those sharing this opinion is considerably lower in Bardiya (20.2%) and even more so in Dhading (11.0%).

Male respondents were also asked a series of questions to elicit the male view of a woman’s reproductive rights. Between 79.6% and 96.5% of respondents agree with all four statements indicating that they favour women exercising their reproductive rights, though there is some variability across districts on certain issues. For example, 92.2% of men in Bardiya agree that “a woman can terminate her pregnancy if it could harm her health” whereas in Mahottari the figure is 72%. With regard to age of marriage, there is a very high level of unanimity across districts (96.5%) that “women should not be married before the age of 18”.

**Table 6.4 Perceptions on gender roles and equality (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Gender roles</b>					
Once a woman gets married, she belongs to her husband's family and should obey her in-laws	98.0	96.2	81.8	93.2	92.3
A woman's obligation is to serve her husband and family in the home	82.8	82.8	66.4	65.0	74.3
Men and women have equal value, but not the same obligations and roles	91.6	88.4	86.0	87.4	88.4
Men & women have equal value, but women are always treated as less valuable	71.2	72.4	70.4	69.8	71.0

A woman should not get involved in matters outside the home because this is a man's responsibility	65.6	69.4	27.8	34.6	49.4
<b>Violence</b>					
It is wrong to accuse any woman of witchcraft	83.2	82.0	91.8	89.4	86.6
A woman sometimes use witchcraft to harm others	55.4	60.4	11.0	20.2	36.8
Polygamy is one of the major causes of violence against woman	86.0	80.2	90.2	95.4	88.0
Dowry is one of the major cause of VAW in Nepal	96.4	91.6	93.2	94.8	94.0
Wives are blamed by their husbands and in-laws for everything that goes wrong in the family	49.4	53.4	21.8	29.8	38.6
<b>Reproductive rights</b>					
A woman can decide the number of children she wants to have	74.4	79.8	86.6	77.6	79.6
A woman can terminate her pregnancy if it could harm her health	72.0	87.0	91.4	92.2	85.7
Women should not be married before the age of 18	97.4	97.8	96.2	94.4	96.5
A woman has right to own property independently of her husband	85.0	83.6	82.2	83.8	83.7
<b>Masculinity</b>					
A woman shames and angers her husband if she does not produce a son for him and his family	42.8	55.6	16.8	23.0	34.6
Men say and do things to control the activities of their wives because this is their obligation as husbands	75.4	74.8	36.8	52.8	60.0
Many men feel that a woman fails her husband if she does not produce a son for him, but this is not fair to women	78.0	81.0	55.2	74.8	72.3
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

The survey also examined men's attitudes on masculinity. Over one-third of the men (34.6%) feel that "a woman shames and angers her husband if she does not produce a son for him and his family" (Table 6.4). On this issue, however, there is variability across districts. The proportion agreeing with the statement is lowest in Dhading (17%) and highest in Siraha, where more agreed with this statement. On the other hand, about three-quarters of men (72.3%) also feel that "many men feel that a woman fails her husband if she does not produce a son for him, *but this is not fair to women*".

Three-quarters of men (75%) from Mahottari and Siraha agree with the statement that "men say and do things to control the activities of their wives because this is their obligation as husbands", compared to a lower but still significant level in Dhading (36.8%) (Table 6.4).

## 6.6 Correlation of views on women's roles and relative value

As in Chapter 3 (findings related to female respondents), a composite index was developed to measure men's attitudes towards gender roles and rights (Men's GRR Index). The Men's GRR Index was created consisting 11 statements about different dimensions of men's attitudes, which were selected from the 15 statements listed in Table 6.4. A composite variable was constructed using factor analysis and after assessing for reliability (Cronbach Alpha score was 0.74). These scaled results were trichomitted by

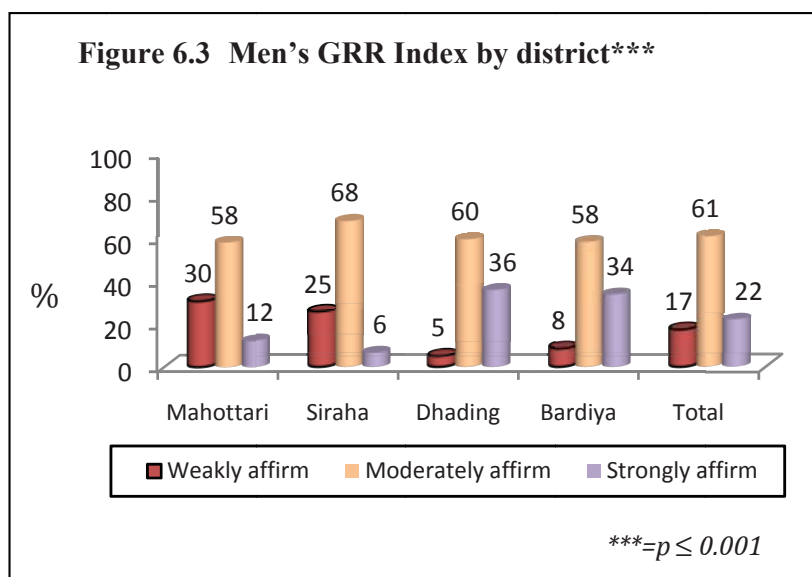
their total scores and categorized as ‘weakly affirm,’ ‘moderately affirm’ and ‘strongly affirm’ women’s equality.

Overall, one in every six men (17%) weakly affirmed women’s equality. A majority (61%) moderately affirmed women’s equality. Negative attitudes towards women’s equality was highest in Mahottari (30), followed by Siraha (25%), Bardiya (8%) and Dhading (5%) (Figure 6.3).

The proportion of male respondents weakly affirming women’s equality is low (11.2%) among the young cohort (16-24 years), and there is a tendency for such attitudes

to increase along with the rise in age group. Negative attitudes are strongest among the oldest age group (50-64 years) (26.2%). Conversely, 30.5% of the young cohort of 16-24 years strongly affirmed women’s equality.

Except for caste/ethnicity, religion, marital status and alcohol use, all other 11 background characteristics are significantly associated with men’s attitude towards women’s roles and relative value at varying levels of significance. Men who are illiterate, Muslim, divorced/widowed/separated, have poor media exposure, work as daily wage labourers or engaged in foreign employment, belong to joint families, have a relatively higher number of living children, belong to the lowest wealth quintile, identify as belonging to disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups, and are residing in Mahottari, tend to only weakly affirm women’s equality (Table 6.5).



**Table 6.5 Men’s GRR Index by selected background characteristics**

Men’s characteristics	Weakly af- firm	Moderately affirm	Strongly affirm	Total	
				%	N
<b>Current age (in years) ***</b>					
16-24	11.2	58.4	30.5	100.0	394
25-34	13.9	59.6	26.5	100.0	445
35-49	16.2	62.5	21.4	100.0	650
50-64	26.2	61.8	11.9	100.0	511
<b>Caste/ ethnicity <sup>na</sup></b>					
Upper caste groups	4.7	53.5	41.7	100.0	381
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	1.7	55.7	42.6	100.0	115
Disadvantaged indigenous group	10.2	64.5	25.3	100.0	561
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	29.8	62.4	7.8	100.0	641
Dalit/ Religious minorities	25.5	61.9	12.6	100.0	302
<b>Religion <sup>na</sup></b>					
Hindu	17.4	59.9	22.7	100.0	1779
Muslim	29.8	70.2	0.0	100.0	57
Other	11.0	67.7	21.3	100.0	164



<b>Sex of the household head **</b>					
Male	17.7	61.0	21.3	100.0	1881
Female	10.1	58.0	31.9	100.0	119
<b>Family structure ***</b>					
Nuclear	13.3	63.8	22.8	100.0	990
Joint	21.1	57.9	21.0	100.0	1010
<b>Level of education ***</b>					
Illiterate	38.2	58.9	3.0	100.0	401
Non-formal education/Up to primary	16.8	63.2	20.0	100.0	595
Six to 10 years of schooling	11.0	62.7	26.3	100.0	715
School leaving certificate or more	4.5	54.3	41.2	100.0	289
<b>Marital status <sup>na</sup></b>					
Never married	11.4	53.7	34.9	100.0	307
Currently married	17.9	62.1	20.0	100.0	1637
Widow/ divorced/ separated	30.4	64.3	5.4	100.0	56
<b>Number of living children (N=1693) ***</b>					
None	15.6	60.6	23.9	100.0	109
1	11.1	62.6	26.3	100.0	171
2	13.8	60.0	26.2	100.0	355
3 and more	21.3	62.9	15.8	100.0	1058
<b>Occupation ***</b>					
Non-remunerated or students	13.1	56.0	30.9	100.0	298
Daily wage labourer	24.1	66.2	9.6	100.0	228
Foreign employment (India or other country)	24.2	54.7	21.1	100.0	95
Agriculture	17.7	63.6	18.8	100.0	974
Professional	7.1	55.8	37.2	100.0	156
Business/ Petty business	18.1	56.6	25.3	100.0	249
<b>Wealth quintile ***</b>					
Lowest	24.4	67.9	7.7	100.0	390
Second	21.3	58.7	20.0	100.0	395
Middle	17.1	58.1	24.8	100.0	403
Fourth	14.5	62.3	23.3	100.0	400
Highest	9.5	57.5	33.0	100.0	412
<b>Alcohol use <sup>ns</sup></b>					
Everyday	15.1	64.8	20.1	100.0	219
Occasionally	13.9	62.6	23.5	100.0	548
Never	19.1	59.4	21.5	100.0	1233
<b>Media exposure ***</b>					
Low	36.8	55.2	8.0	100.0	424
Moderate	19.7	65.0	15.3	100.0	589
High	7.4	60.8	31.8	100.0	987
<b>Decision making power on major household items purchase ***</b>					
Own decision	20.5	62.0	17.4	100.0	1233
Joint decision with partner	5.3	60.9	33.7	100.0	169
Not involved in decision-making	13.9	58.4	27.8	100.0	598
<b>Place of residence **</b>					
Urban	20.0	64.0	16.0	100.0	450
Rural	16.5	59.9	23.6	100.0	1550
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>60.9</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2000</b>

Chi-square test, significant at \*=p 0.05, \*\*=p 0.01, \*\*\*=p 0.001, ns=not significant

## 6.7 Attitudes regarding hitting and abuse of a wife

Men were asked whether it is justified for a husband to abuse (*durbebahar*) or hit (*pittnu*) his wife in ten different circumstances listed in Table 6.6<sup>10</sup>. ‘Abuse’ (35.6%) and ‘hitting’ (13%) is justified by some men if a wife disobeys her husband (Table 6.6). There is significant variation: in Bardiya, 42% of respondents feel it is acceptable for a man to ‘abuse’ his wife for her disobedience compared to 25.6% of respondents in Mahottari. In Siraha, 21.2% of men justify ‘hitting’ for the same reason in contrast to 5% of men in Dhading. Disobedience of in-laws is similarly seen as justification for abuse by 13.8% of men.

Other frequently cited reasons justifying hitting and abusing wives include “not completing household work to husband’s satisfaction” (22.6% justifying abuse and 6.1% justifying hitting overall) and “husband suspects wife is unfaithful” (19.3% justifying abuse and 10.5% justifying hitting overall).

Other justifications are less common. Virtually no men think that a poor dowry is justification for abuse. Though statistically negligible, a number of respondents offer other reasons based on infertility, lack of a male child by the wife, or repeated miscarriages.

**Table 6.6 Attitudes towards ‘abusing’ and ‘hitting’ wife (% of men who agree with the statements)**

	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>It is okay for a husband to abuse (<i>durbebahar</i>) his wife if:</b>					
She does not complete her household work to his satisfaction	13.4	25.8	23.6	27.4	22.6
She disobeys him	25.6	39.0	35.6	42.0	35.6
She refuses to have sexual relations with him	1.6	1.8	4.6	13.4	5.4
She asks whether he has other girlfriends	4.6	4.6	9.0	10.8	7.3
He suspects that she is unfaithful	12.4	14.0	29.4	21.4	19.3
She returns home late	6.0	4.2	5.4	7.2	5.7
She is infertile	0.2	0.4	1.4	0.8	0.7
She does not give birth to a son	0.0	0.8	0.8	1.6	0.8
She has frequent miscarriages	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.2	0.5
She does not bring enough dowry	0.4	1.2	0.4	0.4	0.6
<b>It is okay for a husband to hit (<i>pittnu</i>) his wife if:</b>					
She does not complete her household work to his satisfaction	5.6	10.2	2.0	6.6	6.1
She disobeys him	13.4	21.2	5.0	12.4	13.0
She refuses to have sexual relations with him	1.0	1.0	1.2	4.2	1.9
She asks whether he has other girlfriends	4.2	2.4	1.4	3.0	2.8
He suspects that she is unfaithful	11.6	12.8	8.8	8.6	10.5
She returns home late	3.2	2.0	0.4	2.0	1.9
She is infertile	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.2
She does not give birth to a son	0.0	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.4
She has frequent miscarriages	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2
She does not bring enough dowry	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.2
<b>It is okay for in-laws to abuse(<i>durbebahar</i>) their daughter or sister-in-law (female) if:</b>					
She does not complete her household work to his satisfaction	6.0	14.6	13.6	10.4	11.2
She disobeys him	11.8	15.0	13.4	14.8	13.8
She returns home late	3.4	2.8	2.6	5.2	3.5
She is infertile	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.5
She does not give birth to a son	0.0	1.6	0.8	1.0	0.9
She has frequent miscarriages	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3
She does not bring enough dowry	0.2	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.6
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

<sup>10</sup> As in the parallel survey question asked of women (see Section 3.2), the Nepali word for abuse is *durbebahar* and for hitting, *pittnu*. In general, *pittnu* is understood as more severe than other acts encompassed semantically by *durbebahar*.

## 6.8 Perceptions of discrimination against women

Men's perceptions of gender discrimination were explored by soliciting their reactions to strong statements on 15 different topics ranging from basic needs to use of local resources. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements that were read out to them. Respondents overwhelmingly affirmed women's equality in all of the queried topics, and there is no major difference in attitudes towards gender discrimination across districts. On the whole, almost all the men (99.2%) believe that men and women should be valued equally (Table 6.7).

**Table 6.7 Percentage of men who agree that women deserve the same rights and opportunities as men (% 'strongly agree' and 'agree')**

Agree that women deserve the same rights/opportunities as men regarding:	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Basic needs (food/ clothing/ shelter)	97.8	98.2	99.8	98.8	98.7
To get an education	97.8	98.4	100.0	98.8	98.8
Inheritance rights to property	87.8	83.2	88.6	87.4	86.8
To own and make decisions about property	84.6	82.6	91.6	91.0	87.5
To claim legal rights, including citizenship, birth and death registration	96.6	97.0	98.6	98.0	97.6
To get a job or run a business	94.8	97.8	99.6	99.0	97.8
To hold membership in any institution	92.4	97.0	99.8	98.6	97.0
To visit health care services/ health care organizations/ providers	97.8	98.0	100.0	99.0	98.7
Expenditures on self	92.0	96.2	99.6	97.8	96.4
How many children to have	90.2	91.8	98.4	96.6	94.3
Speaking publicly	93.2	96.2	99.8	98.2	96.9
Using/ Selecting contraceptives	86.4	83.8	98.0	97.6	91.5
Choosing a partner/ life partner	74.8	72.8	98.4	96.6	85.7
To go wherever she wants to	80.0	84.0	88.8	91.2	86.0
Use of resources in the community	95.8	95.0	100.0	99.0	97.5
<i>Percentage of men who believe men and women should be valued equally</i>	<b>98.2</b>	<b>99.8</b>	<b>98.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>99.2</b>
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

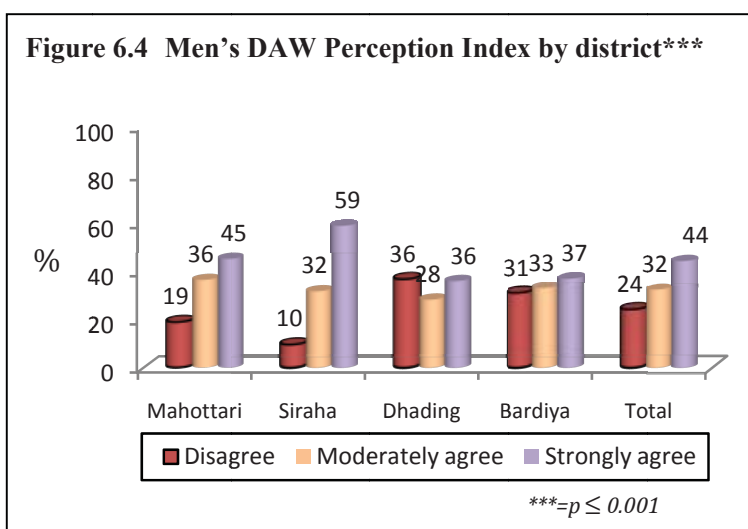
Table 6.8, below, documents male perceptions of women's experiences of gender discrimination. Four out of five men agree that women are unfairly treated with respect to property inheritance (85.8%) and property ownership, including making decisions about property use (83.2%). Three quarters of the respondents also agree that women are unfairly treated in relation to freedom of mobility. Between half and two-thirds of men express similar views regarding choosing a life partner (68.7%), family planning decisions (63.6%), employment/running a business (60.9%), education (60.1%), use of community resources (58.8%), participation in public life (speaking publicly (62.2%), and membership in public institutions (57.4%), basic needs (including food, clothing and shelter) (55.9%), and making legal claims (50.3%). Some variation is observed between four study districts. For example, 71.4% of men in Siraha state that women are discriminated against on the use of local resources as compared to 45% of men in Bardiya. Among those who report discrimination in relation to speaking publicly, the figure is 82.2% in Siraha as against 49.6% in Dhading (Table 6.8).

**Table 6.8 Percentage of men who agree that women are less valued than men and suffer unfair treatment (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Basic needs (food/ clothing/ shelter)	61.0	54.4	45.6	62.4	55.9
To get an education	69.6	65.6	48.6	56.4	60.1
Inheritance rights to property	85.0	89.8	83.2	85.2	85.8
To own and make decisions about property	77.8	88.6	81.4	84.8	83.2
To claim legal rights, including citizenship, birth and death registration	48.8	62.2	42.8	47.2	50.3
To get a job or run a business	63.6	67.6	56.4	55.8	60.9
To hold membership in any institution	63.0	71.2	48.8	46.6	57.4
To visit health care services/ health care organizations/ providers	44.4	56.2	36.4	34.0	42.8
Expenditures on self	70.6	75.8	56.2	59.8	65.6
How many children to have	55.4	76.4	59.8	62.6	63.6
Speaking publicly	66.4	82.2	49.6	50.4	62.2
Using/ selecting contraceptives	59.0	71.0	50.0	47.6	56.9
Choosing a partner/ life partner	77.0	86.6	54.8	56.4	68.7
To go wherever she wants to	76.4	88.0	68.0	65.4	74.5
Use of resources in the community	64.6	71.4	53.0	45.0	58.5
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Using the same approach as with the Men’s GRR Index, a composite index was developed to measure men’s perception towards discrimination against women (Men’s DAW Perception Index). The Men’s DAW Perception Index was created consisting 13 statements about different attitudes towards discrimination against women, which were selected from the 15 statements listed in Table 6.8. A composite variable was constructed using factor analysis and after assessing for reliability (Cronbach Alpha score was 0.95). These scaled results were trichomitted by their total scores and categorized as ‘Disagree’, ‘Moderately Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’ that women are less valued and discriminated against due to gender.

Overall, approximately three quarters of male respondents agree that women are generally less valued than men in society and are discriminated against (moderate plus strong views). The proportion of men who strongly agree is highest in Siraha (59%), followed by Mahottari (45%), Bardiya (37%), and Dhading (36%) (Figure 6.4). About a quarter of men (24%) disagree that women are less valued than men and that they are discriminated against.



Bivariate results analysis shows that caste/ethnicity, religion, education, occupation, and place of residence are significantly associated with these perceptions. Illiterate men, Dalit/religious minorities, men belonging to religious minority groups, those living in Siraha, with place of residence in an urban setting, are more likely than others to agree that women are less valued and suffer unfair treatment (Table 6.9).

**Table 6.9 Men’s DAW Perception Index by selected background characteristics**

Men’s characteristics	Disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree	Total	
				%	N
<b>Current age (in years)*</b>	%	%	%	%	N
16-24	24.4	36.3	39.3	100.0	394
25-34	22.7	29.4	47.9	100.0	445
35-49	25.7	28.3	46.0	100.0	650
50-64	22.1	36.0	41.9	100.0	511
<b>Caste/ ethnicity ***</b>					
Upper caste groups	34.6	28.1	37.3	100.0	381
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	33.0	32.2	34.8	100.0	115
Disadvantaged indigenous group	31.7	28.3	39.9	100.0	561
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	12.5	37.8	49.8	100.0	641
Dalit/ Religious minorities	16.2	32.1	51.7	100.0	302
<b>Religion ***</b>					
Hindu	23.3	31.9	44.7	100.0	1779
Religious minorities	8.8	38.6	52.6	100.0	57
Other	34.8	31.7	33.5	100.0	164
<b>Family structure *</b>					
Nuclear	24.5	29.2	46.3	100.0	990
Joint	23.2	35.0	41.9	100.0	1010
<b>Level of education ***</b>					
Illiterate	16.7	34.4	48.9	100.0	401
Non-formal education/Up to primary	24.4	31.9	43.7	100.0	595
Six to 10 years of schooling	28.5	31.5	40.0	100.0	715
School leaving certificate or more	21.1	30.8	48.1	100.0	289
<b>Marital status <sup>ns</sup></b>					
Never married	24.4	35.8	39.7	100.0	307
Currently married	24.1	31.1	44.8	100.0	1637
Widow/ divorced/ separated	12.5	41.1	46.4	100.0	56
<b>Number of living children (N=1693) <sup>ns</sup></b>					
None	22.0	38.5	39.4	100.0	109
1	26.9	29.2	43.9	100.0	171
2	25.4	30.4	44.2	100.0	355
3 and more	22.9	31.4	45.7	100.0	1058
<b>Occupation **</b>					
Non-remunerated or students	24.2	36.6	39.3	100.0	298
Daily wage labourer	16.7	28.5	54.8	100.0	228
Foreign employment (India or other country)	27.4	31.6	41.1	100.0	95
Agriculture	25.3	30.8	43.9	100.0	974
Professional	23.1	28.2	48.7	100.0	156
Business/ Petty business	23.7	37.8	38.6	100.0	249
<b>Wealth quintile <sup>ns</sup></b>					
Lowest	20.8	34.1	45.1	100.0	390
Second	25.8	33.7	40.5	100.0	395
Middle	24.8	29.0	46.2	100.0	403
Fourth	26.3	30.3	43.5	100.0	400
Highest	21.6	33.5	44.9	100.0	412
<b>Alcohol use <sup>ns</sup></b>					
Everyday	27.4	26.5	46.1	100.0	219
Occasionally	26.1	32.7	41.2	100.0	548
Never	22.2	32.8	44.9	100.0	1233

<b>Media exposure *</b>					
Low	24.5	36.3	39.2	100.0	424
Moderate	21.2	33.6	45.2	100.0	589
High	25.1	29.4	45.5	100.0	987
<b>Decision making power on major household items purchases <sup>ns</sup></b>					
Own decision	23.5	30.6	45.9	100.0	1233
Joint decision with partner	28.4	34.9	36.7	100.0	169
Not involved in decision-making	23.2	34.4	42.3	100.0	598
<b>Place of residence ***</b>					
Urban	15.1	35.8	49.1	100.0	450
Rural	26.4	31.0	42.6	100.0	1550
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>44.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2000</b>

Chi-square test, significant at \*=p 0.05, \*\*=p 0.01, \*\*\*=p 0.001, ns=not significant

## 6.9 Witnessed discrimination against women

This study also examined whether men witnessed female members of their families experience unfair or unequal treatment in a number of circumstances and situations. Respondents identify discrimination of women during menstruation, post partum, religious activities, social gatherings and family activities. The proportion of men reporting unfair or unequal treatment is consistently higher in Bardiya than in other districts: 48.8% during post partum (compared to 10.4% in Dhading); 34.6% during menstruation (compared to 1.6% in Mahottari); 29.4% during religious activities or at places of worship (compared to 1.4% in Siraha); although 40.4% of respondents in Siraha witnessed female family members being unfairly treated during family activities (Table 6.10).

**Table 6.10 Witnessed discrimination against women**

<b>Whether female family members/relatives had ever:</b>	<b>Mahottari</b>	<b>Siraha</b>	<b>Dhading</b>	<b>Bardiya</b>	<b>Total</b>
Been prevented from attending social gatherings or activities because they are women (e.g. weddings, parties, gatherings, etc.)	7.8	3.8	2.0	11.0	6.2
Been treated unfairly during menstruation	1.6	2.6	14.6	34.6	13.4
Been treated unfairly during postpartum	11.4	10.6	10.4	48.8	20.3
Been excluded from religious activities or places of worship because they are women (e.g. from <i>puja</i> , funeral activities, etc.)	2.8	1.4	2.2	29.4	9.0
Been dismissed, suspended or prevented from attending an educational institution because they are women (same as that of your male siblings or relatives)	2.2	0.6	0.0	1.8	1.2
Been denied health services because they are women	0.4	0.6	0.2	0.6	.5
Been treated unfairly in family activities because they are women? (E.g. cooking, dish washing, cleaning, fetching, drinking water, etc.)	11.8	40.4	3.8	34.8	22.7
Been deprived of nutritious food	2.4	0.8	0.0	4.0	1.8
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Further analysis of the data shows that overall, more than one-third of men (37%) report witnessing female family members being unequally or unfairly treated, with a figure of 63% in Bardiya. When correlated with respondent profiles, it appears that caste/ethnicity, religion, family structure, occupation, media exposure and district locations are all significantly associated with witnesses' reports of gender discrimination. Dalit/religious minorities, Hindu men, members of joint families, those engaged in foreign employment, and men with poor media exposure are more likely to witness unequal treatment of their female family members. This indicates that men who fall within certain categories live in situations that are more discriminatory towards women (Table 6.11).



**Table 6.11 Percentage of men reporting ever witnessing of discrimination by their selected background characteristics**

Men's characteristics	Ever witnessed female family members experience unequal or unfair treatment		Total	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	%	N
<b>Current age (in years)<sup>ns</sup></b>				
16-24	38.1	61.9	100.0	394
25-34	35.1	64.9	100.0	445
35-49	36.5	63.5	100.0	650
50-64	39.9	60.1	100.0	511
<b>Caste/ ethnicity **</b>				
Upper caste groups	38.1	61.9	100.0	381
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	20.0	80.0	100.0	115
Disadvantaged indigenous group	38.0	62.0	100.0	561
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	38.5	61.5	100.0	641
Dalit/ Religious minorities	39.4	60.6	100.0	302
<b>Religion ***</b>				
Hindu	38.8	61.2	100.0	1779
Religious minorities	29.8	70.2	100.0	57
Other	23.8	76.2	100.0	164
<b>Sex of the household head<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Male	37.3	62.7	100.0	1881
Female	37.8	62.2	100.0	119
<b>Family structure ***</b>				
Nuclear	33.8	66.2	100.0	990
Joint	40.8	59.2	100.0	1010
<b>Level of education<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Illiterate	42.1	57.9	100.0	401
Non-formal education/Up to primary	37.3	62.7	100.0	595
Six to 10 years of schooling	35.9	64.1	100.0	715
School leaving certificate or more	34.3	65.7	100.0	289
<b>Marital status<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Never married	38.1	61.9	100.0	307
Currently married	36.9	63.1	100.0	1637
Widow/ divorced/ separated	46.4	53.6	100.0	56
<b>Number of living children (N=1693)<sup>ns</sup></b>				
None	39.4	60.6	100.0	109
1	31.0	69.0	100.0	171
2	39.7	60.3	100.0	355
3 and above	37.1	62.9	100.0	1058
<b>Polygamy (N=1693)<sup>ns</sup></b>				
No co-wife at any point of time	37.2	62.8	100.0	1633
Co-wife at any point of time	36.7	63.3	100.0	60
<b>Occupation ***</b>				
Non-remunerated or students	40.9	59.1	100.0	298
Daily wage labourer	30.3	69.7	100.0	228
Foreign employment (India or other country)	55.8	44.2	100.0	95
Agriculture	38.0	62.0	100.0	974



Professional	35.9	64.1	100.0	156
Business/ Petty business	30.9	69.1	100.0	249
<b>Wealth quintile<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Lowest	40.5	59.5	100.0	390
Second	38.2	61.8	100.0	395
Middle	38.0	62.0	100.0	403
Fourth	36.3	63.8	100.0	400
Highest	34.0	66.0	100.0	412
<b>Alcohol use<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Everyday	37.9	62.1	100.0	219
Occasionally	34.9	65.1	100.0	548
Never	38.4	61.6	100.0	1233
<b>Media exposure<sup>***</sup></b>				
Low	47.2	52.8	100.0	424
Moderate	31.6	68.4	100.0	589
High	36.6	63.4	100.0	987
<b>Decision making power on major household purchases<sup>*</sup></b>				
Own decision	35.6	64.4	100.0	1233
Joint decision with partner	44.4	55.6	100.0	169
Not involved in decision-making	39.0	61.0	100.0	598
<b>Place of residence<sup>ns</sup></b>				
Urban	38.0	62.0	100.0	450
Rural	37.2	62.8	100.0	1550
<b>District<sup>***</sup></b>				
Mahottari	21.8	78.2	100.0	500
Siraha	44.4	55.6	100.0	500
Dhading	20.2	79.8	100.0	500
Bardiya	63.0	37.0	100.0	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.4</b>	<b>62.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2000</b>

Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ ,  $ns$ =not significant

In FGDs, some men commented that society is changing, including the lives of women. There is an improvement in their conditions as more and more women are getting education, entering the labor market, and gaining access to health care facilities. However, discrimination and violence against women is still very common in their societies. FGD participants highlighted that dowry practice, witchcraft accusations, rape, girl trafficking, polygamy and child marriage, are major forms of violence that continue to exist in their communities. A relative small number of men in the FGDs thought that women themselves are responsible for experiencing such discrimination and violence.

*“Earlier daughters were not allowed to go outside for further education and jobs, but parents are now sending them [daughters] outside to pursue better opportunities....”*

*- Young men's group from rural Siraha*

*“Most women still suffer from dowry related violence and fewer from witchcraft accusations.”*

*- Young men's group from rural Siraha*

*“We [men] do not want to discriminate against women but their fate is bad. Housewives have to suffer hardships. They are discriminated in even minor, minor things.”*

*- Young men's group from rural Dhading*

*“Discrimination is related to traditional and new practices. They are very much interrelated. Like a husband can bring another wife but that wife cannot marry another man. This is a practice that has been going on since ages. One often hears that a man has married another woman although he already has a wife, but we do not hear that a married woman has gone on to marry a second man. Isn’t it? This is a traditional socio-cultural practice and people still choose to follow it.”*

*- Young men's group from rural Dhading*

## 6.10 Perceived reasons for women’s experiences of discrimination

When asked to identify the causes of discrimination against women, respondents identified traditional social practices (62.6%) and illiteracy (53%) most commonly. Other reasons included poverty (29.2%), patriarchal society (8.9%), and religion (8.3%). Perceived reasons for experiences of discrimination do not vary much by district. While the category of ‘traditional social practices’ was the most commonly perceived reason for women’s experiences of discrimination by respondents in Bardiya (77.8%) and Dhading (67.6%), respondents in Mahottari (61.2%) and Siraha (56.4%) identified illiteracy (Table 6.12)

**Table 6.12 Perceived reasons for women’s experiences of discrimination**

Perceived reasons for women’s experiences of discrimination	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Social/ traditional practices	56.6	48.4	67.6	77.8	62.6
Religion	7.6	2.2	4.8	18.6	8.3
Poverty	41.6	45.2	18.4	11.4	29.2
Illiteracy	61.2	56.4	55.0	39.2	53.0
Was wrong to be born as a girl	7.4	12.0	2.0	1.6	5.8
Patriarchal society	7.4	4.4	12.0	11.6	8.9
For giving birth to a daughter	2.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	1.3
For being disabled	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.2
For being widowed	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2
For belonging to untouchable group	4.4	1.4	0.6	0.6	1.8
Unemployment	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Others	0.8	0.0	1.2	0.4	0.7
Do not know	2.0	1.4	4.4	2.8	2.7
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

*Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.*

The qualitative findings on causes of DVAW echoed quantitative results. Overall, men pointed to traditional social practices and beliefs, including the patriarchal structure of society and stereotyped gender roles. Men also highlighted low levels of literacy, unemployment and lack of knowledge about women’s rights as triggering factors for DVAW. Men from the Terai districts frequently mentioned the lack of citizenship of women as one of the reasons for DVAW in their areas.

Men cited that traditional social beliefs and practices, as well as stereotyped gender roles, restrict choices available to girls and women. Discrimination in terms of education, employment opportunities, family and social expectations regarding women’s marriage, decisions on family planning, reproductive choices, pressure to bear a son, as well as duty to perform household chores such as cooking and cleaning, all severely constrain their mobility and welfare.

*“Men hold all the top positions in a range of fields and in different sectors. It is very hard for women as they have to face many challenges and surpass all the barriers to be able to access the opportunities they strive for. ...Thinking is still very rigid and traditional.”*

*- Young men's group from rural Dhading*

*“Parents keep their sons in school because they will stay with them while daughters are meant to be sent-off after their marriages. Thus, daughters are prevented from getting education... Violence against women also occurs due to traditional values. It's still happening. Some women are victimized because they did not have any children while some were victimized because they could not give birth to a son”*

*- Young men's group from rural Siraha*

Men thought that the disparities among women in terms of ethnicity/caste, socio-economic status and level of education also explain why some women, such as those who belong to the *Madhesi* community, were more at risk of discrimination than others. Men noted that male domination and influence is extensive in a patriarchal society and for this reason women's role in society appears to be neglected as an afterthought.

*“The main reason for discrimination is lack of education. Other than this are the traditional values and socio-cultural beliefs and practices due to which a woman from the ‘Madhesi’ community has limitations in her mobility unless she gives birth to one or two children after she becomes bride (‘dulhan’) or after getting married. She can only come out after having children. This is a social malpractice. Also, women do not get a chance to pursue education, they lack knowledge, they are not aware of things and she does not get chance to learn or be aware about things and because of this, she is dominated. Likewise, our country is a patriarchal one, that is why even though women are educated, they are looked down upon. Even when a woman tries to do some big things, then she is accused of trying to show-off. Also, being a patriarchal country, most men are the house owners and breadwinners; due to this, any kind of decision, may it be good or bad, they are making decisions. There is no role of women at all.”*

*-Young men's group from rural Mahottari*

In the two Terai districts, men frequently mentioned that women's lack of citizenship is a primary example of DVAW in their areas. A man fears that his wife will make a claim on his property in the future if she has citizenship.

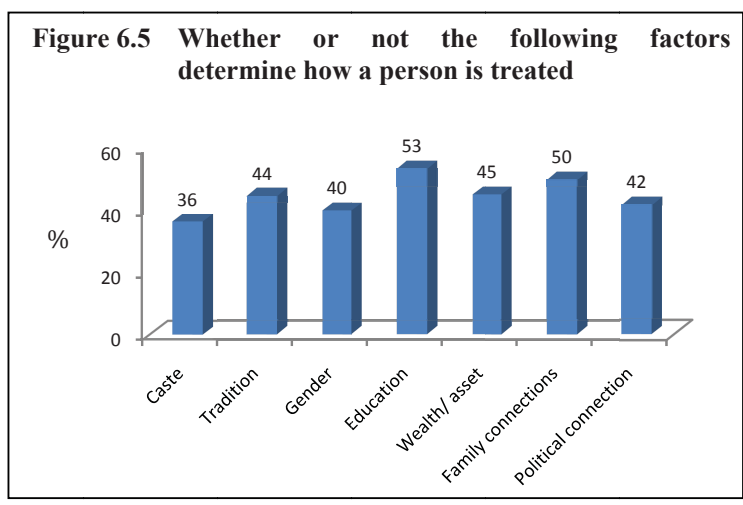
*“Women are prevented from getting citizenship. Yes, it is more prevalent in our community because people have a different mentality. Men used to think, ‘You are a woman (‘aamai’), what do you need citizenship for? Why do you need to register marriage? I am there for you. Why do you need such things when I am still here? I have given you food to eat, clothes to wear, given you shelter and freedom to move around but why do you need citizenship?’ From this point onwards, women starts to face difficulties and it becomes even more complicated.”*

*- Young men's group from urban Mahottari*

*“There is discrimination in providing citizenship. Like, if a husband does not like his wife, then he does not allow or help her to get citizenship in his name. He will not even make the marriage registration card. He believes that if he allows his wife to get citizenship in his name, then later on, his property might be reduced just because of his wife's decision to get citizenship.”*

*-Young men's group from rural Mahottari*

The study also explored more generally men's opinions on factors that determine how people are treated. Responses point to education (53%) as a key factor, followed by family connections (50%) and wealth/assets (50%) (Figure 6.5). The perceived reasons however, differ by districts. While about three-fifths (58.8%) of the respondents from Mahottari agree that family connections determine how well one is treated, a similar proportion from Siraha (58.4%) pointed to wealth (Table 6.13).

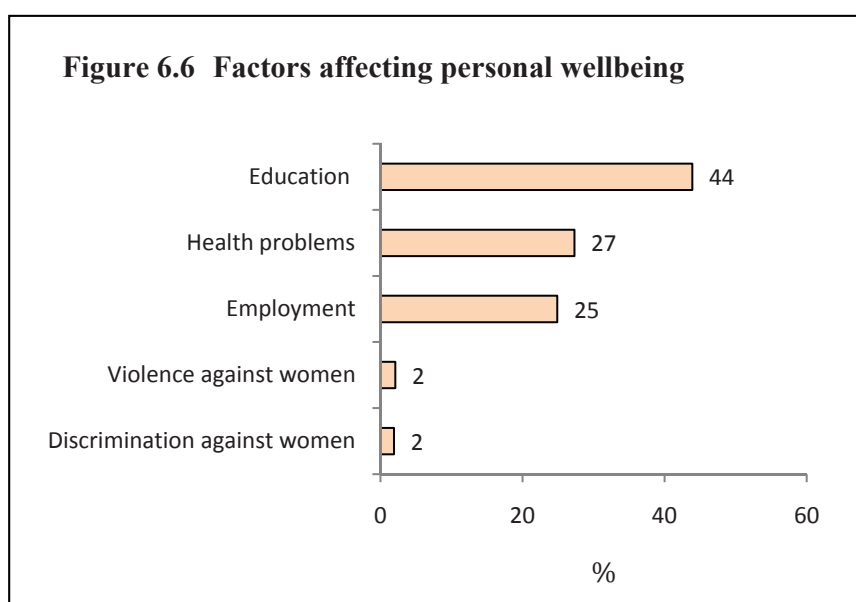


**Table 6.13 Whether or not the following factors determine how a person is treated (*byabhaar garincha*)(% 'agree' and 'strongly agree')**

Factors	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Caste	38.6	48.8	34.2	21.8	35.9
Tradition	53.2	50.8	34.6	38.8	44.4
Gender	50.6	51.0	30.0	27.0	39.7
Education	63.2	60.4	51.2	37.8	53.2
Wealth/ asset	48.0	58.4	46.2	27.0	44.9
Family connections	58.8	60.2	43.0	36.6	49.7
Political connection	46.0	51.4	40.4	28.4	41.6
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

### 6.11 Factors affecting personal and community wellbeing

As with women respondents, the men's survey invited their views on factors important for their personal and community wellbeing. Five options generally associated with personal wellbeing were listed for respondents, and they were asked to identify and rank the three most important. On the whole, men considered education to be the most important factor for personal wellbeing (44%), followed by health problems (27%), and employment (25%)



(Figure 6.6). While health is considered second most important for respondents in Dhading and Bardiya, employment is the second major concern for the respondents in Mahottari and Siraha. A negligible proportion of men (2.1%) considered discrimination (not violence) against women a primary factor affecting their personal wellbeing. Remarkably, more than one-tenth of men (14.7%) placed violence against women among the top three concerns affecting their personal wellbeing (Table 6.14).

Regarding community wellbeing, ten different options were listed and assessed against a four-point scale of 'very important', 'important', 'not so important' and 'not important at all'. Results clearly show that social wellbeing is affected by a diverse set of factors ranging from political instability at the national level to corruption to poor infrastructure within the community to limited employment opportunities and to violence against women (Table 6.13). Respondents appeared to rank all ten factors as equally relevant for community wellbeing. Caste and ethnicity, violence against women, and crime are viewed as relatively less important in Dhading (Table 6.14).

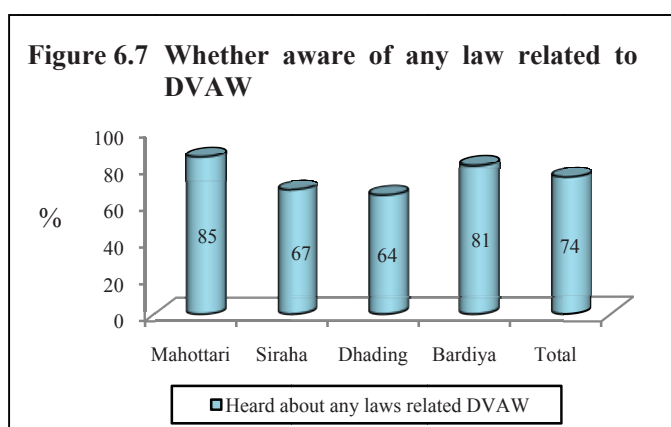
**Table 6.14 Factors affecting personal and community wellbeing (bhalai/hitt)**

	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
<b>Factors affecting personal wellbeing</b>					
Education	46.6	37.8	45.8	45.2	43.9
Health problems	21.2	24.0	32.2	31.6	27.3
Employment	28.8	36.8	16.0	18.0	24.9
Discrimination against women	1.4	0.8	3.2	2.2	1.9
Violence against women	2.0	0.6	2.8	3.0	2.1
<i>Percentage of men who place VAW among top 3 concerns that affect their personal comfort</i>	<i>12.4</i>	<i>17.0</i>	<i>15.2</i>	<i>13.8</i>	<i>14.7</i>
<b>Factors affecting community wellbeing ('very important' and 'important')</b>					
Corruption of officials	98.6	99.0	93.0	97.8	97.1
Interference by political parties	96.0	97.8	91.0	95.2	95.0
Lack of health facilities	98.4	99.4	93.0	99.4	97.6
Lack of education facilities	98.6	98.8	92.4	99.4	97.3
Unfair treatment because of caste and ethnicity	88.8	97.0	64.4	96.8	86.8
Violence against women	91.0	96.4	67.0	97.4	88.0
Crime	94.2	98.0	76.8	99.2	92.1
Political situation in the country	96.0	96.8	93.4	97.6	96.0
Lack of job opportunities	98.6	99.8	97.8	99.4	98.9
Poor infrastructure (including electricity, water, roads, etc.)	97.8	99.6	97.0	99.8	98.6
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 6.12 Awareness of DVAW-related laws

Respondents were asked whether they thought there were any laws in Nepal that related to DVAW. Overall, one quarter of the respondents (26%) state that they are not aware of the existence of any laws related to DVAW. Awareness of such laws is lowest in Dhading (64%) and highest in Mahottari (85%) (Figure 6.7).

Men were also asked whether they were aware of laws that relate to specific kinds of violence and discrimination. Relevant laws



that are identified by more than half the men included rape (66.8%), trafficking (62.2%), child marriage (56.4%) and laws related to birth, citizenship and death registration (55.2%). Among the least known legislated subject matters include violence and threats in public places, domestic violence, and women's property rights.

Awareness of DVAW-related laws varies by district. While awareness of domestic violence-related laws is lowest in Dhading (27.2%), the proportion is almost double in Bardiya (52.2%). Likewise, awareness of laws related to polygamy is lowest in Siraha (32.6%), and much higher in Bardiya (64.4%). With respect to laws related to birth, citizenship and death registration, respondents from Dhading (48.4%) and Siraha (41.4%) have lower levels of awareness as compared to those from Mahottari (63.2%) and Bardiya (67.8%).

**Table 6.15 Awareness of DVAW-related laws**

Laws related to:	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Rape	76.2	62.6	54.6	73.8	66.8
Trafficking	63.4	54.0	57.8	73.4	62.2
Child marriage	57.4	46.8	50.6	70.8	56.4
Birth/ citizenship/ death registration	63.2	41.4	48.4	67.8	55.2
Dowry-related violence	54.4	41.2	43.6	56.2	48.9
Polygamy	41.6	32.6	48.6	64.4	46.8
Witchcraft allegations	48.8	29.4	51.8	56.2	46.6
Women's property rights	54.0	35.4	35.8	55.8	45.3
Domestic violence	48.8	33.8	27.2	52.2	40.5
Violence and threats in public places	41.2	24.2	27.6	47.0	35.0
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Qualitative data shows that although the majority of participants report being aware of the existence of laws related to DVAW, many of them were not aware of the names and provisions of the Acts.

*“There might be laws and policies but we don’t know how it is written; also there is no policy of government to raise awareness about the existence of such laws to the public. Only law students know about it.”*

*- Elderly men's group from rural Bardiya*

During FGDs, a few men also stated that the laws are discriminatory against men and more supportive towards women. One of the male participants said:

*“Law listens to a woman whatever she says but it does not listen to the man and how hard he tries.”*

*- Young men's group from urban Mahottari*

### 6.13 Association between legal awareness and respondent profiles

Table 6.16 presents a bivariate analysis of the levels of awareness of men in different demographic and socio-economic categories. Awareness of the laws is associated with age, caste/ethnicity, religion, level of education, marital status, number of living children, occupation, wealth quintile, media exposure, and place of residence. Younger, upper caste groups, and Hindu men are more likely to be aware about those laws than other men. The proportion of men who are aware of these laws increases from 50.6% among those with no education to 95.5% among those with SLC or higher levels of education. Married or formerly married men are less likely to be aware of DVAW laws than never married men. Men who



have less exposure to mass media or belong to lower wealth quintiles are less likely to be aware of the laws. Similarly, men who live in rural areas are less likely to be aware of DVAW-related laws than those living in urban areas. This pattern largely holds true with regard to all five frequently mentioned laws (Table 6.16).

**Table 6.16 Men’s legal awareness by their selected background characteristics**

Characteristics	Rape	Trafficking	Birth/citizenship/ death registration	Dowry	Witchcraft allegations	Any one law	N
<b>Current age (in years)</b>	***	***	**	***	*	***	
16-24	71.8	70.3	56.3	53.6	48.7	78.7	394
25-34	69.7	65.6	59.3	56.2	51.2	77.8	445
35-49	66.9	61.8	56.6	47.4	45.8	74.8	650
50-64	60.3	53.2	48.9	40.7	41.7	67.3	511
<b>Caste/ ethnicity</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Upper caste groups	76.9	79.3	69.8	62.5	66.7	84.0	381
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	63.5	62.6	54.8	51.3	62.6	73.9	115
Disadvantaged indigenous group	59.0	57.2	50.8	39.0	40.8	66.8	561
Disadvantaged non-DalitTerai caste group	69.9	60.4	52.1	49.3	39.0	76.6	641
Dalit/ religious minorities	63.2	53.3	51.7	48.0	41.7	71.2	302
<b>Religion</b>	**	***	***	***	ns	***	
Hindu	68.0	63.8	57.1	50.4	47.1	75.7	1779
Religious minority	63.2	43.9	49.1	57.9	47.4	75.4	57
Other	54.9	50.6	37.2	29.3	40.2	58.5	164
<b>Level of education</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Illiterate	42.6	32.7	29.2	27.2	24.7	50.6	401
Up to primary/non-formal education	59.7	55.0	51.1	40.3	40.3	68.9	595
Six to 10 years of schooling	75.4	72.9	63.4	57.1	52.9	83.5	715
School leaving certificate or more	93.8	91.3	79.6	76.1	74.0	95.5	289
<b>Marital status</b>	**	***	ns	**	**	**	
Never married	73.9	73.0	58.3	54.4	51.1	80.8	307
Currently married	65.9	60.5	54.7	48.4	46.2	73.5	1637
Widow/ divorced/ separated	55.4	50.0	53.6	30.4	30.4	62.5	56
<b>Number of living children (N=1693)</b>	***	***	ns	***	***	***	
No living children	79.8	73.4	58.7	59.6	56.0	85.3	109
1	68.4	64.3	57.3	57.9	55.6	78.4	171
2	70.4	68.5	58.0	55.2	51.8	77.5	355
3 and more	61.9	55.4	52.6	42.5	41.0	69.6	1058
<b>Occupation</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Non-remunerated or students	75.5	74.2	58.4	52.0	52.0	82.6	298
Daily wage laborer	57.9	44.3	39.9	35.5	33.8	65.4	228
Foreign employment (India or other country)	57.9	51.6	46.3	38.9	37.9	61.1	95



Agriculture	60.5	56.2	50.4	43.8	41.4	68.9	974
Professional	90.4	91.7	82.7	85.9	83.3	94.2	156
Business/ Petty business	77.9	73.1	70.3	57.4	52.2	86.3	249
<b>Wealth quintile</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Lowest	49.7	38.2	33.1	31.8	30.3	56.4	390
Second	52.9	50.9	40.8	38.7	37.0	61.8	395
Middle	67.7	65.5	56.8	45.9	43.9	75.4	403
Fourth	77.0	73.3	68.8	61.3	55.5	86.5	400
Highest	85.4	81.6	75.2	65.5	65.0	90.3	412
<b>Media exposure</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Low	49.5	40.1	41.3	31.4	32.3	59.9	424
Moderate	55.0	50.4	45.3	37.5	34.0	64.2	589
High	81.3	78.6	67.1	63.1	60.2	86.5	987
<b>Whether possess Nepali citizenship</b>	ns	ns	*	ns	ns	ns	
Yes	67.1	62.0	55.9	49.1	47.1	74.3	1862
No	63.0	64.5	45.7	44.9	39.1	74.6	138
<b>Place of residence</b>	***	ns	***	***	ns	***	
Urban	75.8	66.0	63.3	56.7	50.4	83.6	450
Rural	64.2	61.0	52.8	46.6	45.4	71.6	1550
<b>District</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	
Mahottari	76.2	63.4	63.2	54.4	48.8	85.2	500
Siraha	62.6	54.0	41.4	41.2	29.4	67.2	500
Dhading	54.6	57.8	48.4	43.6	51.8	64.2	500
Bardiya	73.8	73.4	67.8	56.2	56.2	80.6	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.8</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>55.2</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>46.6</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>2000</b>

*Chi-square test, significant at  $*=p \leq 0.05$ ,  $**=p \leq 0.01$ ,  $***=p \leq 0.001$ , ns=not significant*

Further analysis of men's awareness of DVAW-related laws through binary logistic regression (model) established likelihood of linking six areas of legal awareness with respondent profiles. The first five models include five different DVAW-related laws, and the sixth model relates to awareness of any one of the DVAW-related laws listed in Annex 5. The detail results of each model are presented in Annex 5. Main findings of the logistic regression models are as follow:

- Education and district of residence are significant predictors of awareness in all six models. Men in Mahottari are more likely to be aware of rape-related laws than men from the other three districts.
- Education, high media exposure, number of living children, and marital status are statistically significant for model one (relating to rape-related laws).
- Men who are highly exposed to the media are 2 times more likely to be aware about the laws compared to those who have poor exposure (odds ratio of 2.06).
- Wealth quintile as a predictor is significant in all the models except for models one and four.

#### **6.14 Perceptions on the functions of DVAW-related laws**

Men who reported awareness of DVAW-related laws were further asked about their functions, with a focus on three different issues: whether the law is intended to prevent or protect women from violence and discrimination; whether the law is intended to punish perpetrators; and whether the law is intended to

support victims of DVAW. These questions were not intended to elicit evaluations of the effectiveness of the laws, but awareness of their functions.

### 6.14.1 Perceptions on whether laws prevent/protect against DVAW

Men were asked “Do you think this law ... (mention subject of law) prevent/protects (*roktham/bachau*) women against .....(mention type of DVAW)”. Results shows that overall, more than half the respondents think that DVAW-related laws prevent/protect against all queried categories of DVAW. A large majority (77.3% to 94.1%) perceive that these laws prevent/protect against various forms of violence and discrimination, including trafficking, rape, violence and threats in public places, and domestic violence. An overwhelmingly large proportion (94.1%) of men across all survey districts perceived that registration laws protects against or prevents discrimination against women (Table 6.17).

District-wise results vary in certain instances. For example, very few respondents in Siraha (18.9%) think that legislation related to dowry practice prevents or protects against dowry-related violence, in contrast to 76.9% respondents in Bardiya.

**Table 6.17 Perceptions on whether laws prevent/protect against DVAW (% who affirm ‘yes’)**

Laws related to	Mahottari		Siraha		Dhading		Bardiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic violence	244	73.8	169	71.0	136	86.0	261	80.1	810	77.3
Rape	381	80.3	313	75.7	273	80.2	369	82.1	1336	79.7
Violence and threats in public places	206	76.2	121	62.0	138	89.9	235	80.0	700	77.7
Witchcraft allegations	244	75.8	147	51.7	259	75.3	281	82.6	931	73.9
Dowry-related violence	272	44.1	206	18.9	218	75.7	281	76.9	977	55.3
Trafficking	317	83.3	270	79.6	289	84.1	367	84.7	1243	83.1
Birth/ citizenship/ death registration	316	94.6	207	90.8	242	96.7	339	93.8	1104	94.1
Child marriage	287	69.0	234	58.5	253	79.4	354	79.7	1128	72.5
Polygamy	208	66.3	163	52.1	243	74.5	322	73.9	936	68.6
Women's property rights	270	77.4	177	75.7	179	82.7	279	83.5	905	80.0

### 6.14.2 Perceptions on whether DVAW-related laws punish perpetrators

Men were also asked “Do you think this law... (mention subject of law) punish (*Sajaya*) those who commit.. (mention type of DVAW)”. Table 6.18 shows that, on the whole, more than half the respondents think that existing laws punish perpetrators for all queried categories of DVAW, with variation by the subject matter of law (55% to 89%). Four out of every five men perceive that existing legislation relating to trafficking (84.1%) and rape (82%) punishes perpetrators for such crimes. A relatively lower proportion of respondents think the same regarding child marriage, polygamy, dowry-related violence and witchcraft allegations. There is some variation across districts. A significantly lower proportion of men in Siraha believe that existing legislation punished perpetrators for dowry-related violence (16.5% in Siraha and 80.1% in Bardiya), child marriage (38% in Siraha and 79.4% in Dhading), and violence and threats in public places (44.6% in Siraha and 92.8% in Dhading) in contrast to respondents from the other survey districts.

**Table 6.18 Perceptions on whether laws punish the perpetrators of DVAW (% who affirm ‘yes’)**

Laws related to	Mahottari		Siraha		Dhading		Bardiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic violence	244	73.4	169	68.0	136	86.8	261	82.8	810	77.5
Rape	381	82.4	313	74.1	273	82.4	369	88.1	1336	82.0
Violence and threats in public places	206	77.7	121	44.6	138	92.8	235	84.3	700	77.1
Witchcraft allegations	244	70.9	147	35.4	259	77.6	281	81.9	931	70.5
Dowry-related violence	272	41.2	206	16.5	218	77.1	281	80.1	977	55.2
Trafficking	317	84.2	270	76.7	289	85.1	367	88.6	1243	84.1
Birth/ citizenship/ death registration	316	95.6	207	68.6	242	96.3	339	90.6	1104	89.1
Child marriage	287	64.1	234	38.0	253	79.4	354	79.1	1128	66.8
Polygamy	208	65.9	163	39.3	243	75.3	322	73.9	936	66.5
Women's property rights	270	76.3	177	44.1	179	84.4	279	81.0	905	73.0

### 6.14.3 Perceptions on whether DVAW-related laws help victims

Men who have heard about the laws were further asked “Do you think this laws ...(*mention subject of law*) help (*Sahayoung*) victims?”. A relatively large number of respondents from all four districts believe that these laws help the victims of DVAW, though this is least so regarding dowry-related violence. These results are consistent with the previous results on perceptions relating to punishment and protection/prevention functions of DVAW-related laws (Table 6.19).

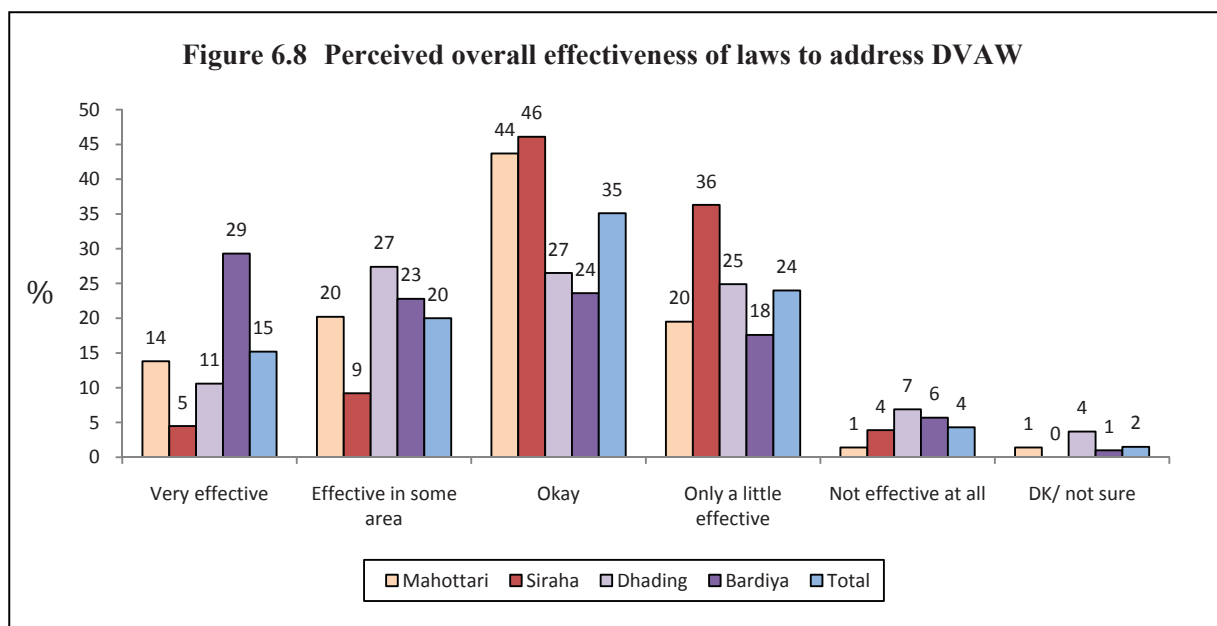
**Table 6.19 Perceptions on whether DVAW-related laws help victims (% who affirm ‘yes’)**

Laws related to	Mahottari		Siraha		Dhading		Bardiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic violence	244	75.0	169	68.6	136	86.0	261	83.1	810	78.1
Rape	381	80.3	313	72.8	273	80.2	369	83.7	1336	79.5
Violence and threats in public places	206	77.7	121	43.8	138	92.0	235	83.8	700	76.7
Witchcraft allegations	244	72.5	147	34.7	259	77.6	281	82.2	931	70.9
Dowry-related violence	272	40.8	206	16.5	218	78.0	281	82.9	977	56.1
Trafficking	317	84.2	270	75.6	289	83.7	367	86.9	1243	83.0
Birth/ citizenship/ death registration	316	94.3	207	68.1	242	95.0	339	92.9	1104	89.1
Child marriage	287	65.2	234	38.0	253	79.8	354	77.4	1128	66.7
Polygamy	208	65.9	163	39.3	243	74.9	322	75.8	936	67.0
Women's property rights	270	76.7	177	45.2	179	82.1	279	83.5	905	73.7

## 6.15 Perceived overall effectiveness of laws to address DVAW

In addition to specific questions about the prevention/protection, punishment, and assistance functions of DVAW-related laws, respondents were given an opportunity to comment more generally on their

perceptions of the overall ‘effectiveness’ of such legislation. There are mixed findings regarding the overall effectiveness of laws: among those who have heard about DVAW-related laws, about a third (35%) think they are ‘okay’ (*thikai*). About a quarter (24%) consider the laws ‘only a little effective’, and only one in seven (15%) perceive that they are ‘very effective’. The proportion of respondents who feel that the laws are ‘very effective’ vary by survey district, with Siraha reporting lowest confidence (5%) and Bardiya highest (29%). It should be noted that men do not feel that all laws are equally effective. One in five (20%) observe that laws related to some issues are effective while others not (Figure 6.8).



## 6.16 Men’s evaluation of DVAW-related laws

With a view towards better understanding how respondents perceive the effectiveness of DVAW-related legislation, men’s opinions were sought on 11 different statements that invited more specific evaluation of the law to address discrimination and violence against women. In comparison to the overall neutral view of the justice system elicited through general questions, the response of participants when confronted with strong opinions on the effectiveness of DVAW-related laws reflect ambivalence, uncertainty, and differences of opinion among respondents.

An overwhelming proportion of men (94.8%) agree that it is too dangerous for women to seek implementation of existing laws and provisions, and that they need more protection before they are able to make use such legislation. An almost identical proportion (94.4%) also believe that it is too dangerous for women to seek implementation of existing laws and provisions, and that women needed more economic resources before they are able to make use of DVAW-related legislation.

Around 71% of respondents considered that the laws do not sufficiently punish perpetrators, and that they will have no impact. A degree of variation in perceptions also exists across districts: for example only 6.5% of respondents in Dhading agree that “men will do whatever they want; the laws don’t make a difference” whereas 44.4% of respondents in Mahottari share the same sentiment.

**Table 6.20 Men’s evaluation of DVAW-related laws**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
The laws punish the perpetrators too much	63.4	37.8	53.3	49.1	51.5
The laws do not provide sufficient protection for victims of violence	71.6	61.9	66.0	65.3	66.5
The laws could be abused by women trying to cause problems	62.4	42.0	43.6	51.4	50.7
The laws do not sufficiently punish the perpetrators	73.0	75.3	63.2	73.0	71.4
Men will do whatever they want. The laws don't make a difference	44.4	47.3	6.5	15.6	29.1
The police will never enforce laws to protect women against violence that happens inside the family	75.1	68.5	48.9	57.8	63.3
The laws punish men too much and cause more problems for women	63.6	57.7	33.0	45.7	50.8
The laws don't punish the perpetrators enough and will have no impact	81.5	83.0	52.6	56.8	68.9
It is too dangerous for women to make use of these laws - they need more protection before they can do that	95.5	97.9	93.1	92.8	94.8
It is too dangerous for women to make use of these laws - they need more economic resources before they can do that	96.2	96.7	92.5	92.1	94.4
<b>N</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>1486</b>

Similar findings emerged in the qualitative research. The majority of FGD participants perceived that existing laws related to DVAW are neither effective nor strict enough to address the issues. FGD participants stated that the existing laws are weak at protecting victims and punishing perpetrators.

Men cited that the effectiveness of laws is jeopardized due to factors such as political interference, rampant corruption, practice of giving bribes to formal authorities in exchange for a favourable decision, and lack of respect for due process across all aspects of the decision-making process within the formal justice system. A few anecdotes shared by men in the FGDs are given below.

*“There was an incident of rape in Ramgopalpur and the victim reached the police administration for help. When police arrested the culprit they immediately had to release him due to the pressure from the higher administration.”*

*- Young men's group from rural Mahottari*

*“The decisions of the formal justice system are influenced by money. Perpetrators offer money and decisions are made in their favour and this leads to no punishment of the perpetrators. In such cases, if the victims do not have any money, they will be victimized even more because money buys everything, even decisions.”*

*- Elderly men's group from rural Mahottari*

*“If a perpetrator is about to be punished then the higher authorities claim that person is somebody they know and put pressure to release the culprit.”*

*- Young men's group from urban Mahottari*

*“No, the victim does not get any kind of support nor does the law deter violence because everyone makes decisions on the basis of money. When money is received from perpetrators’ side, decisions are accepted from the other side. A victim is not able to get anything in the name of support.”*

*- Elderly men's group from urban Siraha*

Men highlighted that the public perception of the effectiveness of the law is negatively affected by a series of factors, including a lack of adequate punishment for perpetrators and the lack of protection and assistance for victims, such as formal economic support. Overall, men described a gap between provisions in laws and actual implementation.

*“The laws do not protect the victim because victims always remain a victim. Suppose a perpetrator commits a crime, he is caught by the police and the case goes through the legal process but due to monetary influences or political plays the perpetrator is able to get out from the prison. The victim does not even get any economic support. How can she be protected? The provision in the laws has at least showed a pathway to reach to that point, in theory!”*

- Young men's group from rural Bardiya

A recurring issue raised by men is the lack of credibility in the law as is evident in the comment below in which a participant articulates that the laws are a waste of resources.

*“Yes, there are many laws and policies... The constitution and laws are written and piled up in organizations... But laws are a waste of time without the capacity to implement it. There is no mechanism to apply these laws but still many laws are made. Likewise, there are so many laws made for women but none are enforced. It is a serious waste of resources... These laws have not punished the perpetrators. If they were punished, violence against women would not persist.”*

- Young men's group from urban Mahottari

### 6.17 Trust in the actors in the formal justice system

As with the women’s survey, men were also asked “to what extent do you trust (*biswas*) the following... (name of service provider)” and their responses were measured on a scale of ‘*trust very much*’, ‘*trust a little*’, ‘*don’t trust very much*’, ‘*never trust*’ and ‘*don’t know/not sure*’. Results are presented in Table 6.21. Overall, men lack knowledge about formal service providers, particularly about Women’s Police Cell, National Women’s Commission, and WCDO. For men who know about the providers, their opinions on the level of trust vary by type of providers. For example, more than two thirds of the men (66.1% to 71.6%) trust the CDO, VDC/Municipality office, the police and DDC ‘a little’. Similarly, more than half of men (57.3%) trust court, public prosecutor ‘a little’. The proportion of men who cite they either ‘don’t trust very much’ or ‘never trust’ is highest for the police relative to other actors in the formal justice system.

**Table 6.21 Trust in actors in the formal justice system**

Types of providers	Trust very much ( <i>Dherai biswas</i> )	Trust a little ( <i>Thorai/thikai biswas</i> )	Don’t trust very much ( <i>Khasi biswas nagarne</i> )	Never trust ( <i>Kahilai biswas nagarne</i> )	Don’t know
Police	11.1	66.1	16.3	5.7	0.9
Women’s police cell	1.4	3.8	0.2	0.1	94.6
Court	23.5	57.3	6.7	1.0	11.6
Public prosecutor	10.9	57.7	11.7	2.4	17.5
National Women Commission	6.6	34.5	1.6	0.6	56.9
DDC	9.2	66.2	8.8	1.9	14.0
CDO	16.3	72.5	6.6	0.9	3.8
WCDO	6.2	36.3	2.1	0.6	54.9
VDC/Municipality	14.5	71.6	9.1	3.6	1.3
Paralegal committee	0.5	2.6	0.2	0.0	96.9



Table 6.22 presents findings related to men’s perception of whether the same actors listed in Table 6.21 can be bribed or politically influenced. Together, the results of the two tables problematize the notion of trust. For example, most of men state that police can be bribed (81.1%) or politically influenced (89.8%), but only 22% consider the police untrustworthy (Table 6.21). Similarly, while more than half of men think that judges can be bribed (54.9%) or politically influenced (62.8%), only 7.7% consider courts untrustworthy (Table 6.21). About 95% of men believe that formal service providers can be bribed and politically influenced (Table 6.22).

**Table 6.22 Whether listed actors who have a role in the formal justice system can be bribed and politically influenced**

Whether the following actors can be bribed (N=2000)	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Police	84.8	88.2	73.4	77.8	81.1
Judge	49.6	56.0	52.0	58.2	54.0
National Women’s Commission	34.6	24.4	31.2	23.6	28.5
DDC	74.6	66.2	64.0	58.4	65.8
CDO	79.2	80.2	60.0	65.6	71.3
WCDO	35.2	24.8	37.2	20.8	29.5
VDC/Municipality	83.0	83.2	67.0	61.0	73.6
Paralegal committee	3.2	1.2	3.6	2.4	2.6
<b>Whether the following actors can be politically influenced (N=2000)</b>					
Police	96.8	89.8	84.8	87.8	89.8
Judge	57.6	61.6	64.6	67.2	62.8
National Women’s Commission	39.6	32.6	45.6	37.8	38.9
DDC	86.0	73.4	80.2	75.8	78.9
CDO	88.2	85.0	79.0	80.6	83.2
WCDO	41.2	32.0	53.6	34.0	40.2
VDC/Municipality	95.0	88.8	84.2	83.8	88.0
Para legal committee	8.0	6.6	6.8	4.4	6.5
<i>% of women who believe service providers can be bribed and politically influenced</i>	<b>99.0</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>93.8</b>	<b>94.7</b>

## 6.18 Perceptions of discrimination by formal authorities

Men were asked whether justice or security officials discriminate on the basis of gender, caste, place of origin, religion and economic status, and the results are summarized in Table 6.23. Results show that men commonly perceived that they face discrimination by justice or security officials. Between 44.2% and 69.1% of men think that people face discrimination on the basis of their gender, ethnicity/caste and economic status. Two-thirds of men point to economic status as the source of discrimination (69.1%), followed by caste (51.5%), place of origin (46%), gender (44.2%), and religion (30.8%). Men from Mahottari (83.8%) most frequently point to economic status, followed by Siraha (69.8%), Bardiya (65.4%) and Dhading (57.4%). Comparatively, men from Mahottari and Siraha are more likely to identify caste and place of origin than men from Dhading or Bardiya. A significant proportion of men (44.2%) state that justice officials discriminate on the basis of gender, ranging from 37.6% (Dhading) to 50.6% (Bardiya).



**Table 6.23 Men’s perception of discrimination by justice/security authorities (% who affirm 'yes')**

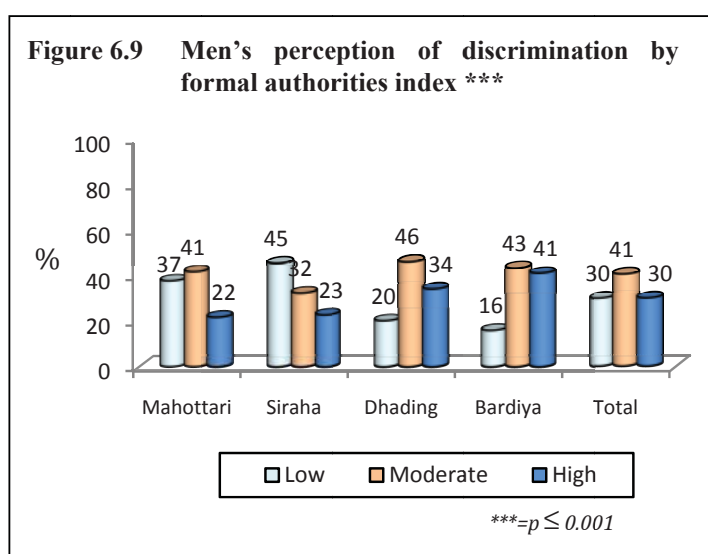
Believe that there is discrimination on the basis of:	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Gender	48.8	39.8	37.6	50.6	44.2
Caste	59.8	60.8	41.2	44.2	51.5
Place of origin (Mountain, Hill, Terai)	61.2	50.8	32.6	39.2	46.0
Religion	42.2	27.2	23.6	30.2	30.8
Economic status	83.8	69.8	57.4	65.4	69.1
N	500	500	500	500	2000

To examine men’s perception of discrimination by formal authorities who have role in addressing DVAW, a composite index was developed based on the following questions.

- *To what extent do you agree with the following things in general that determine how well a person is treated: caste, gender, education, wealth/asset, family connections, political connections*
- *To what extent do you agree with the following statements about formal authorities who have a role in enforcing laws related to violence against women: they should treat men and women equally as having the same value*
- *To what extent do you agree with the following statements about formal authorities who have a role in enforcing laws related to violence against women:*
  - *They should treat people of different ethnicities and/or castes equally as having the same value*
  - *They should treat rich people and poor people equally as having the same value*
- *To what extent do you agree with the following statements about formal authorities who have a role in enforcing laws related to violence against women:*
  - *They should treat people of different ethnicities and/or castes equally as having the same value*
  - *They should treat rich people and poor people equally as having the same value*
- *In your opinion, does the justice and/ or security officials discriminate you on the basis of your: gender; caste; place of origin; religion; economic status.*

These items were dichotomized between 1 to 0, representing statements of discriminatory versus non-discriminatory behaviour. The scores were summed and tricotomized into women’s reporting of ‘low’, ‘moderate’ and ‘high’ levels of discrimination.

The results are presented in Figure 6.9. Results show that 29.8% of the respondents believe that there are high levels of discrimination by formal authorities who have a role in addressing cases of DVAW. Perceived discrimination is highest in Bardiya (41%), followed by Dhading (34%), Siraha (23%) and Mahottari (22%).

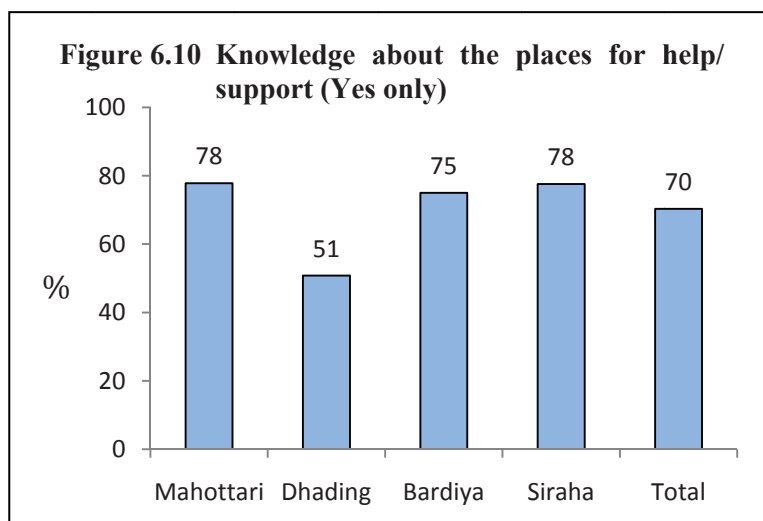


## 6.19 Awareness of services/support for violence survivors

On the whole, men's knowledge of services available for women seeking help is fairly high. Most (70%) respondents reported that they know about services or help available to women who face violence (Figure 6.10). Three-quarters or more of the respondents in Mahottari, Bardiya and Siraha are aware of services available to women who face violence, in comparison to only 50% of the respondents in Dhading.

Regarding places where women are able to seek assistance, the police is most commonly cited (91%). This is followed by the court/judge (38.4%), village head (33.4%), and the CDO office (20.3%). Knowledge about the Women's Police Cell (2.8%), the National Women's Commission (8.4%), and the WCDO (5.8%) is

low. None of the respondents from the three survey districts and only 2 respondents from Mahottari (0.5%) knew about the GBV unit at the OPMCM (Table 6.24). Likewise knowledge about Paralegal Committees (0.4%) and the Bar Association (0.6%) is statistically negligible.



**Table 6.24 Awareness of services/support for survivors of violence**

Places/ persons for help/ support	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Police	93.1	92.0	85.4	91.5	91.0
Women's police cell	6.9	0.3	2.0	1.9	2.8
Court/ judge	45.8	36.3	25.2	41.9	38.4
National Women's Commission	12.6	7.5	7.1	5.9	8.4
DDC office	3.3	0.8	2.0	1.3	1.8
CDO office	34.4	15.2	11.0	17.3	20.3
WCDO	7.5	1.5	8.7	6.4	5.8
Municipality/ VDC/ Ward office/ Local Development committee	17.5	7.0	34.3	21.6	18.7
GBV unit at OPMCM	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Lawyers/ Bar association	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.6
Paralegal committee	1.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.4
Mediation center/ committees	0.8	0.0	0.8	4.3	1.5
Family members	0.3	0.0	0.4	4.3	1.3
Health post	2.1	1.3	0.8	4.3	2.2
Political leaders	1.8	1.0	0.0	1.3	1.1
Mother's group	2.1	1.0	18.1	12.5	7.5
NGOs	9.3	4.4	11.0	13.9	9.5
Village head	32.1	50.5	3.5	37.1	33.4
Other (Human Rights Commission, Maternal family)	2.1	0.0	0.4	2.9	1.4
<b>N</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>1406</b>

Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses

## 6.20 Factors associated with awareness of available services for survivors of violence

Binary logistic regression was used to ascertain factors associated with awareness of services for survivors of violence. The results are presented in Annex 6. Men’s age, religion, educational attainment, wealth quintile, and district of residence are found to be statistically significant predictors of awareness of available services for survivors of violence. Respondents within the age group 35-49 are more likely to be aware of services for violence victims as compared to the reference category of 16-24 age group. As compared to Hindus, Muslim respondents are less likely to be aware of the location of available services (odds ratio of 0.48). Higher education increases awareness: respondents with SLC and above levels of education are 10 times more likely to be aware as compared to illiterate respondents (odds ratio 10.99). Respondents in higher wealth quintiles also tend to be more aware as compared to those falling into the lower wealth quintiles.

## 6.21 Awareness of types of services available

We assessed whether respondents are aware of and understand the types of services or support offered by different actors. Generally, male respondents are aware of the kinds of services available to victims from the CDO office, police, court/judge, and the National Women’s Commission (Table 6.25). Out of the 118 respondents who identified the Women’s Commission as an available source of assistance, more than three quarters (75.4%) stated that the Commission “writes up the case/problem” and little over half (51.7%) stated that “it registers the case against perpetrator or helps register a case with the police”.

In relation to mothers’ groups, respondents stated that they “help the two parties reach an agreement/solving the problem after discussion”, “punish the perpetrators”, “suggest the victim” and “pressurize the higher authority to make decisions” (Table 6.25).

**Table 6.25 Perceived types of services/support provided (for top 7 most frequently mentioned actors)**

Types of services/support	Police	Court/ judge	CDO office	VDC	NGOs	Women Commission	Mothers group
Registers case against perpetrator/ Helps register a case with the police	60.1	0.0	87.8	80.3	-	51.7	4.8
Investigates the situation/ Gives legal counselling	65.8	0.0	14.3	13.1	66.2	5.9	0.0
Takes perpetrator in front of a judge	24.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	0.0
Refers victim to other support mechanisms	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.7	0.0
Helps the two parties to reach an agreement/solving the problem after discussion	1.1	0.0	0.0	12.6	0.0	0.0	42.9
Punishes the perpetrators	2.7	86.1	8.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.6
Provides compensation to the victim/helps the victim	0.0	57.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Writes up the case/problem	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.4	0.0

Provides judgment on the case after it is filed	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Prepares against the case	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pressurizes the higher authority to make decisions	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.3
Recommends for what to do next	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Provides economic support	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.3	0.0	0.0
Provide suggestion to the victim	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Make women aware	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	0.0
Gives vocational training	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	0.0	0.0
Provides security	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>N</b>	<b>1279</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>105</b>

Respondents were asked to evaluate the services provided by a wide range of actors on a scale of 'very good', 'okay', 'bad', 'very bad' and 'not sure/don't know'. The proportion of negative reviews, i.e. 'bad' or 'very bad', are provided in Table 6.26. Men from all survey districts thought that the available services are adequate. Only a small proportion describe the services as being 'bad' or 'very bad' (Table 6.26).

**Table 6.26 Evaluation of services provided by actors (% 'bad' or 'very bad')**

Service providers	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Women's police cell	23.8	26.4	10.2	17.6	19.5
Police	1.0	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.4
Court/ judge	4.6	12.6	5.4	6.0	7.2
National Women's Commission	1.6	1.6	2.2	1.8	1.8
DDC office	17.6	13.8	6.0	8.0	11.4
CDO office	9.6	14.6	4.8	8.6	9.4
WCDO office	4.2	2.6	2.4	2.8	3.0
VDC office	18.8	14.8	2.6	6.6	10.7
Municipality office	10.4	9.4	0.0	6.2	6.5
Lawyers/ Bar association	9.8	15.2	8.0	22.0	13.8
Paralegal committees	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2
Mediation centers/ committees	1.6	0.8	1.2	2.4	1.5
Health centers	7.2	8.6	1.8	7.8	6.4
Mothers group	1.4	0.8	3.0	3.0	2.1
NGOs	5.8	3.4	8.6	7.4	6.3
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 6.22 Opinions on improving women's access to justice

Men's opinions were sought on a series of the most standard institutional approaches to improving women's access to justice: low-cost, simple and efficient procedures, the use of accessible, local languages, protection for women victims, adequate training and sufficient availability of officials. Respondents were asked to rank their opinions on a four-point scale of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. The combined responses for 'strongly agree' and 'agree' are presented in Table 6.27.

**Table 6.27 Factors that will increase women’s access to the formal justice system (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

	<b>Mahottari</b>	<b>Siraha</b>	<b>Dhading</b>	<b>Bardiya</b>	<b>Total</b>
Cheap procedures	99.4	99.6	98.8	98.0	99.0
Simpler procedures	99.6	99.6	99.2	99.0	99.4
Prompt procedures	99.8	99.6	99.6	99.2	99.6
Services available at nearby places	99.2	99.6	99.8	99.4	99.5
More physical protection for women who want to report violence	99.0	98.6	99.0	97.0	98.4
More economic resources to support women who want to report violence.	98.4	98.6	97.0	97.0	97.8
More women officials involved	98.0	96.6	95.0	96.6	96.6
Use of simple and local language	98.2	97.4	98.4	98.0	98.0
Positive response from officials (i.e. more sympathetic to/ empathy with victims when they are bringing complaints)	98.6	97.8	98.6	97.2	98.1
More trained professionals	98.2	95.6	98.0	96.6	97.1
Having a one-stop centre where women can more easily access different kinds of support	55.6	30.4	65.6	42.6	48.6
<b><i>Percentage of men who believe that cheaper and simpler procedures will increase women’s access to formal justice system</i></b>	<b><i>100</i></b>	<b><i>997.4</i></b>	<b><i>99.6</i></b>	<b><i>99.4</i></b>	<b><i>99.6</i></b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Almost all men from surveyed districts agree on the suggested ways to increase women’s access to justice. About half of the respondents agree with the suggestion of a one-stop center where women can more easily access different kinds of support. Almost all men (99.6%) believed that cheaper and simpler procedures will increase women’s access to the formal justice system for remedies and protection (Table 6.27).

### **6.23 Opinions on barriers to women accessing support**

Men were also asked about the barriers that women face while seeking support or help from formal service providers. The most commonly identified barriers include: the lack of awareness about where to report (34.2%) and the long distance (32.6%), followed by the fear of shame to the family (19.0%), cost (15.2%), fear of getting into trouble with the family (14.2%), and fear of reprisals from perpetrators (13.9%). A higher proportion of men in Mahottari compared to the other districts express family related concerns: bringing shame to the family (33.6%) and causing trouble with the family (30.0%).

**Table 6.28 Perceptions of men on barriers to women in accessing services**

Barriers in accessing services	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Too far away	35.6	26.6	39.0	29.0	32.6
Does not provide all types of services at the same place	6.4	1.8	10.2	5.6	6.0
Process is too lengthy	8.4	5.4	18.2	11.8	11.0
Does not know the place to report	19.0	38.0	37.2	42.6	34.2
More violence from the perpetrator/s if they find out	12.8	18.8	9.8	14.0	13.9
Nothing will happen even if reported	2.2	4.8	9.6	7.4	6.0
Too expensive	20.4	14.4	11.0	14.8	15.2
Too complicated	8.8	4.4	12.0	5.4	7.7
No money for travel to the service providers	14.8	7.2	3.2	19.0	11.1
Will get into trouble with family	30.0	15.8	2.4	8.6	14.2
Nobody will clean and cook and look after the children	11.0	10.8	2.4	10.4	8.7
Bring shame to the family	33.6	16.0	5.2	21.0	19.0
Employees ask for money, they do not listen to what we say	0.4	0.2	1.2	3.0	1.2
Cannot talk about things openly	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.4	0.6
Lack of transportation services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1
Difficulty for a woman to go alone	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.8	0.5
As they do not get help from family	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.2
As they do not understand language	0.4	0.4	2.0	1.0	1.0
Pressure from political parties	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Are discriminated just because they are women	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.8	0.5
Don't know	0.6	5.4	12.2	1.8	5.0
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.

## 6.24 Attitudes towards women seeking support

Men's attitudes towards women seeking support from the formal justice system in response to VAW were assessed through a series of questions presented in Table 6.29. Not unlike women respondents, large majorities of men (between 88.9% and 97.3% of respondents overall) affirm at least three elements necessary for women to seek support from the formal justice system in response to violence: knowledge of the law, protection from violence, and economic support.

Consistent with qualitative responses in relation to men's evaluation of DVAW-related laws (see: Section 6.17 above), as well as men's opinion on whether actors in the formal justice system are susceptible to bribery and political influence, more than half the men (56.7%) agree that money and power prevail over enforcement of the law.

Moreover, about half the men (between 45.9% to 52.4%) overall agree with a range of statements that describe inefficacy of the law in a social context where women are perceived to bring shame upon herself, her husband, and her family should she appeal to the justice system for help. Such attitudes are most prevalent among respondents from Mahottari.

**Table 6.29 Attitudes of men towards women seeking support from the formal justice system in response to VAW (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

Statements	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
If a woman is not aware of the law, she will not know enough to seek help from authorities	99.6	95.0	97.4	97.2	97.3
If a woman does not have some guarantee of protection, she will not report violence against her	96.8	89.6	86.6	92.2	91.3
If a woman does not have economic support, she will not be able to sustain herself after filing a claim and so she will agree to make a compromise and withdraw her claim	96.6	86.0	85.4	87.4	88.9
Knowledge of the law is not important because it is not enforced anyway. Those with money and power decide	64.6	69.8	49.0	43.4	56.7
Knowledge of the law is not important because the authorities will not be able/willing to help anyway	58.6	70.0	33.4	30.4	48.1
A woman will bring shame on her husband if she seeks outside/external support in response to violence against her	67.6	54.6	29.4	32.2	46.0
A woman will bring shame on the family if she seeks outside/external support in response to violence against her	67.6	54.2	28.8	33.0	45.9
A woman who seeks outside/external support in response to violence will only make the community/society view her badly	76.8	68.2	31.6	33.0	52.4
Knowledge of the law and support services available are not important, because violence against a woman is a private family matter	48.6	56.4	16.6	23.4	36.3
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

Respondents were also asked the direct question, “Do you think women who suffer from violence should be able to get help when they want to?” Overall, almost all men (99.4%) agree (Table 6.30). There is no variation across the districts.

Men who affirmed that women should be able to access support when needed were further asked as to why they thought so. Nearly three quarters (73.8%) of men believe women are entitled to get help when they need it, and a quarter (25.1%) emphasize that perpetrators must face punishment.

About one in 10 men affirm that women should be able to access support because “women should not be abused because of their gender” (15.1%), and because “it is against the law to commit such violence” (10.3%). Much smaller proportions of respondents acknowledge “justice” (6.9%) and victims’ physical protection (2.8%) as reasons for why women should be able to seek support.



**Table 6.30 Men's perceptions on whether women who suffer from violence should be able to get help when they want to**

Whether women who suffer from violence should be able to get help when they want to	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Yes	98.8	99.2	98.8	99.2	99.0
No	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4
Don't know	0.4	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.7
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>
<i>Percentage of men who believe that victims of DVAW should be able to seek support from formal justice system in response to incidents of DVAW</i>	<i>99.8</i>	<i>99.0</i>	<i>99.2</i>	<i>99.6</i>	<i>99.4</i>
<b>If yes, reasons</b>					
Women victims should be able to get the help they need	65.2	91.7	67.8	70.6	73.8
Women should not be abused because of their gender	27.9	6.5	7.9	17.9	15.1
Perpetrators must face punishment	33.2	17.1	25.5	24.6	25.1
It is against the law to commit such violence	15.4	3.4	10.3	12.1	10.3
For rights/ to get justice	8.5	0.0	7.7	11.3	6.9
For physical protection	1.6	1.2	7.3	1.2	2.8
To prevent from violence/ to stop criminal activities	0.6	0.0	2.8	0.6	1.0
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>1980</b>

Men were further asked to report their opinions on several statements that aimed at dissecting the notion of shame, particularly with respect to victims of DVAW seeking support. Respondents were asked, “To what extent do you believe that a woman should not do anything if they face violence because ... (*read statement*)”, and their opinions on the given statements were recorded in a four-point scale of ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘disagree’, and ‘strongly disagree’.

The statements as a whole elicit a general sense that violence against women is a private matter not suitable for public authorities. These include the direct statement that “it is a private/family matter” (7.4% to 20.8%), to the view that violence is an expression of the husband’s “social superiority” (7.4% to 19.2%), that “it is necessary to maintain family prestige” (8.4% to 23.8%), that it is necessary to maintain family (8.6% to 21.6%) or societal (5.0% to 16.6%) harmony. Such views that VAW are private matters are consistently more prevalent in Mahottari, where about one in five men agree, compared to the other survey districts.

**Table 6.31 Men’s perceptions for reasons that women should not do anything in the face of violence (% ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

Reasons for women to “not do anything” in the face of violence:	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
The husband/ family has such right/s (as a husband)	21.2	14.6	8.4	12.6	14.2
The women deserve it	4.8	1.4	1.4	4.8	3.1
It is necessary to maintain societal harmony	16.6	9.0	5.0	9.8	10.1
It is necessary to maintain family harmony	21.6	12.6	8.6	11.8	13.7
It is necessary to maintain family prestige	23.8	15.8	8.4	12.4	15.1
It is necessary for the husband's social superiority	19.2	10.6	7.4	12.6	12.5
It is a private/ family matter	20.8	12.2	7.4	15.2	13.9
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

The proportion of male respondents (between 45.9% to 52.4%) who ascribe the shame that women bear – and in turn inflict upon their husbands, families, and communities – when they appeal to the formal justice system for help in response to violence suffered (Table 6.29); the low proportion of men who acknowledge that women should be able to access support for their own physical protection, for not being subject to gender-based violence, and for justice (Table 6.30); as well as the small but significant proportion of men who view VAW as a private matter not for public authorities (Table 6.31), altogether highlight the profound barriers that need to be overcome in order for the formal justice system to satisfy victims of DVAW right to a remedy.

## **6.25 Perceptions on the legitimacy and authority of the formal justice system**

Overall, the vast majority of men (95.6%) respond that people tend to respect the outcomes and decisions of the formal justice system (Table 6.32). This opinion is in Mahottari (99%) and lowest in Dhading (91.2%).

A small minority (3.7%) of respondents indicated that they do not respect the outcomes and decisions of the formal justice system. The most cited reasons include lack of respect for authorities (19.3%), perceived lack of competence of authorities (20.5%), perceived corruption (21.6%), and political interference (19.3%). Other less common reasons include fear of family members’ reactions (2.3%), lack of implementation of laws (3.4%), fragile laws (5.7%), and illiteracy (1.1%). Interestingly, among the 88 men who stated that they do not respect the outcomes and decisions of the formal justice system, 15 of them were not able to specify a reason.

More specifically in relation to the formal justice system’s response to DVAW, almost all men (99.2%) across all districts professed to respect the formal justice system’s decisions and outcomes (Table 6.32). Moreover, almost all men (99.2%) specify that orders from the formal justice system for the protection of DVAW victims must meet with compliance. These figures do not vary by survey district.

**Table 6.32 Perceptions on the legitimacy and authority of the formal justice system**

Whether respect for outcomes/ decisions of the formal justice system	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Yes	99.0	96.4	91.2	95.8	95.6
No	1.0	1.8	7.6	4.2	3.7
Don't know	0.0	1.8	1.2	0.0	0.8
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Whether respect the decisions of the formal justice system to respond to DVAW</b>					
Yes	99.4	99.0	99.0	99.2	99.2
No/ Don't know	0.6	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.9
<i>Percentage of men who believe that remedies by, and outcomes from, the formal justice system for the protection of victims of DVAW must be complied with</i>	<i>99.4</i>	<i>99.0</i>	<i>99.0</i>	<i>99.2</i>	<i>99.2</i>
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 6.26 Perceptions on the quality of the formal justice system

Respondents were also asked whether they feel the formal justice system is effective and responsive in addressing their needs, and whether they feel they have a voice in improving the quality of the system.

More than a third of men (39.3%) do not feel that the formal justice system is effective and responsive in addressing their needs (Table 6.33). Men from Dhading (57%) and Siraha (45.6%) are significantly more likely to express doubts regarding the effectiveness and responsiveness of the formal justice system than men from Bardiya (30.4%) and Mahottari (24.2%).

Only 13.3% of men across the survey districts feel that they have a voice in improving the quality of the formal justice system (Table 6.33).

**Table 6.33 Men's perception of discrimination by justice/security authorities (% affirm)**

Whether men feel the formal justice system is effective and responsive in addressing their needs	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Yes	75.8	54.4	43.0	69.6	60.7
No	24.2	45.6	57.0	30.4	39.3
<b>Whether men feel that they have a voice in improving the quality of the formal justice system</b>					
Yes	11.0	5.2	22.6	14.4	13.3
No	89.0	94.8	77.4	85.6	86.7
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

## 6.27 Opinions on the role of the State in addressing DVAW

Overall, the vast majority of men indicate that the State should protect in all cases women who are threatened with violence (93.3%), that the State should investigate cases of DVAW (94.9%), and that the State should prosecute perpetrators of VAW (94.8%) (Table 6.34).

For all of these questions, an insignificant proportion suggested only limited ('in some cases') prosecutions, investigations, or protective action.

**Table 6.34 Perceptions of the role of State in addressing DVAW**

<b>Whether you think the state should protect women who are threatened with violence</b>	<b>Mahottari</b>	<b>Siraha</b>	<b>Dhading</b>	<b>Bardiya</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes, in all cases	82.8	94.0	98.6	97.8	93.3
Only in some cases (specify which)	9.0	1.0	0.4	1.0	2.9
Only in very few cases (specify which)	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1
No	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1
Don't know	8.0	4.8	1.0	1.0	3.7
<b>Whether you think the state should investigate cases of DVAW</b>					
Yes, in all cases	88.0	94.4	98.8	98.4	94.9
Only in some cases (specify which)	3.0	0.8	0.2	0.4	1.1
Only in very few cases (specify which)	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Don't know	8.6	4.8	1.0	1.0	3.9
<b>Whether you think the state should prosecute perpetrators of VAW</b>					
Yes, in all cases	87.8	94.4	99.0	98.0	94.8
Only in some cases (specify which)	3.6	0.8	0.0	1.2	1.4
No	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Don't know	8.4	4.8	1.0	0.8	3.8
<b>Percentage of men who expect the State to protect women facing threats, to investigate, and where appropriate, to prosecute DVAW</b>	<b>98.6</b>	<b>95.2</b>	<b>99.0</b>	<b>91.2</b>	<b>96.0</b>
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>

The composite weighted index shows that 96.0% of men across all survey districts agree that it is the responsibility of the State to protect women, to investigate cases of DVAW, and to prosecute perpetrators of DVAW (Table 6.34). This percentage is highest in Dhading (99%), followed by Mahottari (98.6%), Siraha (95.2%), and Bardiya (91.2%).

## 6.28 Opinions on men's role in addressing DVAW

Overall, there is an even split between men who believe that they have an important role in preventing DVAW (45.6%) and those who believe that they have some role (49.2%). A very small proportion of men indicate their roles as being "not so much" (1.6%), "not at all" (0.4%) and "do not know" (3.3%) with respect to preventing DVAW.

Among men who perceive they have an "important role", the highest percentage are from Bardiya (59.4%), followed by Siraha (51%), Mahottari (46.6%), and Dhading (25.2%). Among men who responded "not so much" or "not at all", further inquiry into the reasons reveal that over a half (55%) believe they are "too busy/do not have the time" to assume such a role. Other reasons include being a member of a marginalized group (22.5%), lack of education (10%), view issue as responsibility of the government/NGOs (2.5%), political instability (2.5%) and "do not know" (7.5%). Interestingly, respondents from Mahottari (69.2%)

and Siraha (85.7%) are most likely to mention they are “too busy”, while those in Bardiya (50%) they state that they belong to a marginalized group and cannot speak.

In relation to protecting women who suffer from DVAW, there is also an even split between those who see an important role for themselves (46.1%) and those who perceive “some role” (49%). Men from Bardiya (58.2%) and Siraha (54.4%) are most likely to assert an important role for themselves in comparison to men from Mahottari (47.8%) and Dhading (24%). In contrast, a higher proportion of men from Dhading (71.2%) see themselves as playing some role. The most commonly mentioned reason for not taking up such a role is that the men are “busy doing own work” (54.3%). Comparatively, higher proportions of men from Siraha (80%), Mahottari (63.6%) and Bardiya (60%) predominantly cite this reason, whereas a higher proportion of men from Bardiya cite “lack of education/ignorance” (35.7%) and “do not know” (28.6%).

Regarding men’s role in assisting the prosecution of DVAW perpetrators, 50% of respondents believe they have an “important role”, while 44.8% accept that they have “some role”. Men from Mahottari (54%), Siraha (61.6%) and Bardiya (57.2%) are more likely to agree that they have an important role while men from Dhading are significantly less likely to express this view (27%). Among men who do not accept this responsibility, the three most common reasons are: “lack of familiarity” (37.2), “lack of knowledge” (23.3%), and “lack of time” (20.9%).

On the whole, the total percentage of men who see a role for themselves in relation to addressing the issue of DVAW is very high (96.5%) across all districts (Table 6.35). There is very little variation across the survey districts.

**Table 6.35 Men’s perceptions of their role in addressing DVAW**

<b>Whether you think you have role to play in preventing DVAW</b>	<b>Mahottari</b>	<b>Siraha</b>	<b>Dhading</b>	<b>Bardiya</b>	<b>Total</b>
An important role	46.6	51.0	25.2	59.4	45.6
Some role	47.0	43.0	69.2	37.4	49.2
Not so much	1.6	1.2	3.4	0.2	1.6
Not at all	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4
Don't know	3.8	4.6	2.0	2.8	3.3
<b>Whether you think you have role to play in protecting women who suffer from DVAW</b>					
An important role	47.8	54.4	24.0	58.2	46.1
Some role	46.4	40.4	71.2	38.0	49.0
Not so much	1.6	0.4	2.8	0.6	1.4
Not at all	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.4	0.4
Don't know	3.6	4.2	2.0	2.8	3.2
<b>Whether you think you have a role to play in assisting the prosecution of perpetrators of DVAW</b>					
An important role	54.0	61.6	27.0	57.2	50.0
Some role	41.6	32.8	67.8	37.0	44.8
Not so much	0.6	1.0	3.0	1.8	1.6
Not at all	0.0	0.4	0.4	1.4	0.6
Don't know	3.8	4.2	1.8	2.6	3.1
<b>Total Percentage of men who see a role for themselves in relation to addressing the issue of DVAW</b>	<b>96.0</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>96.2</b>	<b>98.0</b>	<b>96.5</b>
<b>Total percent</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>



## CHAPTER 7

# DISTRICT LEVEL STAKHOLDERS' KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS LAWS, POLICIES AND SERVICES ADDRESSING DVAW

This chapter presents findings from semi-structured interviews with 35 district-level stakeholders (20 men and 15 women) who were selected purposively from the four study districts. As described Chapter 1, participants for semi-structured interviews were selected from a wide range of service providers from the legal/justice, security, health, social welfare, and other government sectors. These stakeholders were asked about their perceptions on the extent and causes of DVAW, and regarding their knowledge and attitudes towards laws, policies and strategies that address DVAW in Nepal. In addition, information was collected on the number of DVAW survivors who received support from these institutions over the past year and their views on the training needs of justice sector officials.

### 7.1 Perceptions on the extent and types of DVAW

Almost all stakeholders (31 out of 35) stated that discrimination and violence against women prevail in their districts. Participants identified several types of DVAW including domestic violence, polygamy, rape, witchcraft accusation, dowry-related violence, human trafficking, sexual violence, child marriage, and denial of citizenship registration (Table 7.1).

Stakeholders perceived that denial of citizenship, prevention of girls from attending school, control of women's mobility, and preference for male children, are the most common examples of discrimination against women.

**Table 7.1 Stakeholders' perceptions on different forms of discrimination and violence against women**

Perceived forms of violence against women (N=35)	Number of respondents
Domestic violence	32
Polygamy	15
Rape	14
Witchcraft accusations	13
Dowry-related violence	8
Women/ girls trafficking	8
Child Marriage	7
Sexual Violence	6
<b>Perceived forms of discrimination against women (N=35)</b>	
Denial of citizenship	13
Preventing girls from attending school	7
Control of and mobility	7
Son preference	6
Dowry practice	4
Lack of property ownership rights	2
Voices are not heard/ ignored	2
Stigmatization of single women	1



Stakeholders, particularly from Terai districts, stated that women from Dalit and Madhesi communities, rather than those from other ethnic groups, are at greater risk of discrimination and violence. In addition, stakeholders from Mahottari highlighted the issue of women’s property rights, while stakeholders from Siraha described kidnappings and how married women are tricked into sex work when their husbands absent.

*“Most women are deprived of citizenship. ... It is very difficult for a woman to get citizenship even after marriage”.*

*- Senior staff of the Dhading District Court*

*“People prevent their daughters from attending school thinking that she is supposed to go somewhere else after her marriage, but they don’t know that daughters love their fathers more than a son does.”*

*- Program Co-coordinator of an NGO from Bardiya*

*“Daughters-in-law are forced to do bad things; meaning sex work, especially those women whose husbands have gone abroad. Some of them are even thrown out of the house if they fail to obey the orders of in-laws.”*

*- Lawyer in private practice from Siraha*

## 7.2 Root causes of DVAW

Stakeholders identified a number of causes that contribute to high levels of DVAW in Nepal. These range from poverty through to underlying, and often culturally-influenced, gender inequalities that perpetuate the low status of women. Most of the stakeholders believe that men’s dominant position in society, women’s lack of educational and employment opportunities, poor knowledge of protective laws, use and abuse of alcohol and socio-cultural practices such as dowry, child marriage and polygamy, are all risk factors which enable DVAW in Nepal. Some participants also cite the current political instability, the open border with India, and non-consensual use of sexual images as reasons that pose a higher risk to women’s vulnerability.

**Table 7.2 Perceptions on factors which enable discrimination against women**

Contributing factors towards discrimination against women	Number of respondents (N=35)
Lack of education	22
Traditional and social attitudes towards women	17
Poverty	10
Patriarchy	9
Unemployment	4
Alcohol or drug use	2
Lack of awareness about VAW laws	2
Lack enforcement of law	2
Religion	1

*“Women still have to stay behind the curtains (“ghumto or parda”), especially in the Madhesi community, and they can’t protest against violence that they face. It’s all due to social and traditional values.”*

*- Staff at the WCDO office in Siraha*

*“Women accept violence simply because they are afraid that their husbands might leave them. It is also because they are illiterate, economically dependent on men and are not empowered.”*

*-Staff at safe house in Bardiya*

*“It’s very easy to run to India after committing a crime. One commits a crime and hides in India. The open boarder to India has assisted wrongdoers to hide there and created difficulty for taking action against them.”*

*- Government staff at DPHO in Bardiya*

*“People are watching adult videos in their mobile phones.... This is leading to sexual violence.”*

*- WHRD from Dhading*

### 7.3 Vulnerability of women

Stakeholder views were elicited regarding the vulnerability of women. Most respondents (28 of 35) agree that women regularly face gendered barriers to support from the formal justice system. Most respondents (25 of 35) also believe that a woman is vulnerable to gender-based violence throughout her lifetime, and that she faces sexual violence if she does not give consent to sexual relations. Study participants were divided regarding whether a Dalit woman faces more barriers while seeking support from the formal justice system than a non-Dalit woman. For example, about half of the participants (17 out of 35) disagree with the statement “a Dalit woman faces many more barriers within the justice system when she seeks assistance than a non-Dalit woman” while as almost same number (16 out of 35) disagree with this statement (Table 7.3). No difference is seen on the perception of women’s vulnerability by the sex of stakeholders (Annex 7).

**Table 7.3 Perceptions of women’s vulnerability**

Statements (N=35)	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Just being a woman results in vulnerability to violence through her lifetime	25	3	7
Sexual violence against a woman begins with moment that she does not clearly consent to sexual relations	26	4	5
Women regularly face barriers within the justice system when they seek assistance due to their identity as women	28	2	5
A Dalit woman faces many more barriers within the justice system when she seeks assistance than a non-Dalit woman	16	2	17

Stakeholders acknowledged that discrimination still prevails on the basis of caste and gender. They think that such discrimination exists in relation to access to services, quality of care and responsiveness towards victims. Participants perceive that the behaviour within their communities is inherently discriminatory towards minorities, especially Dalits.

*“Caste based discrimination also prevails in our district. They way people view and act towards Dalits is very discriminatory.”*

*- Senior Government staff at DAO in Siraha*

*“You can see caste based discrimination in Siraha. There are two forms of such discrimination here. One is apparent between Dalit and non-Dalit like discrimination done between a Chamar and a Brahmin. The other one is horizontal discrimination, where a Dalit discriminates against another Dalit.”*

*- Staff at the DDC in Siraha*

## 7.4 Attitudes towards women’s rights and the justice system

As shown in Table 7.4, when stakeholders were asked for their spontaneous opinions on a wide range of statements, they affirmed women’s rights and were critical of the formal justice system. All participants agreed with the statement that “women and men have an equal right to share their views publicly”, and most (29 out of 35) agree that “women and men have equal right to buy and sell and inherit property” and that “a woman and her children have full access to citizenship even if there is no consent or cooperation from husbands and other relatives”.

Almost all of the participants (34 of 35) agree that women who are victims of violence fear negative reactions from her family and community members, and that this reduces the percentage who report to the formal justice system. More than half of the respondents agree that women do not trust the police, resulting in under-reporting. Stakeholders also agree that it is the duty of the state promptly to investigate any complaints filed by victims of violence without taking into consideration the views of victims’ husbands and other men in the community. Importantly, more than half the interviewees agreed that lack of familiarity with the law and law enforcement mechanisms limit police investigation of complaints registered by victims of violence. Stakeholders also tend to agree that the police fail to investigate complaints due to pressure from victims’ families and community members (Table 7.4).

More than half the participants reject the idea that the police should avoid cases of violence against women (including rape) because they are matters for the family and community. Stakeholders have mixed views on a range of related issues, however, including whether the police fail to investigate due to traditional views (Table 7.4).

**Table 7.4 Attitudes towards women’s rights and the justice system**

Statements	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Women and men have equal right to buy and sell and inherit property	29	2	4
A woman and her children have full access to citizenship even if there is no consent or cooperation from husbands and other relatives	29	3	3
Women and men have an equal right to share their views publicly	35	-	-
Violence against women is a serious issue but police involvement should be avoided because it is a matter best left to the family and the community	3	6	26
Rape is a serious issue but police involvement should be avoided because it is a matter best left to the family and the community	1	5	29
Women victims of violence lack trust in police and this reduces reporting.	22	6	7
Women victims of violence don’t know how the justice system can serve them and this reduces reporting.	35	-	-
Women victims of violence fear the negative reaction of family and community members and this reduces reporting to police and other authorities.	34	-	1
The State has a duty to promptly investigate any complaint by victims of violence against women regardless of the view of the husband and other male members of the community	26	4	4
When police do not properly investigate complaints of violence against women it is usually due to lack of familiarity with the law and ways to enforce the law	23	8	3
When police decide not to investigate complaints of violence against women it is usually because they believe it is better to refer these matters to the woman’s husband and male authorities in the community	10	10	14
When police decide not to investigate complaints of violence against women it is usually because of pressure from family and community members	17	13	4
Most complaints of violence against women are not investigated by police	15	10	9

## 7.5 Knowledge of and attitudes towards DVAW-related laws

Almost all (34 of 35) stakeholders interviewed were aware of the existence of laws and policies to combat DVAW. The most commonly known laws are the *Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act* (27 out of 34), the *Human Trafficking and Control Act* (10 out of 34), as well as legislation related to untouchability, witchcraft accusation, polygamy, and child marriage.

Stakeholders expressed mix opinions on laws and policies. For example, of those aware of domestic violence laws and policies, the majority stated that current provisions do not provide enough protection (22 out of 34) nor compensation to survivors (29 out of 34). Of those stakeholders who were aware of laws or constitutional provisions related to rape, witchcraft allegation, trafficking, marital rape and untouchability, most viewed them as inadequate to compensate or protect victims. Likewise, most stakeholders across the four study districts (21 out of 34) also agreed that laws do not sufficiently punish perpetrators of violence against women.

The majority of participants (29 out of 34) agreed that laws addressing DVAW fail to provide sufficient protection and economic support to victims. More than half the stakeholders also agreed that penalties are not sufficiently severe. In contrast, 12 respondents thought that the laws punish too severely (Table 7.5).

**Table 7.5 Attitudes towards laws and constitutional provisions**

Statements (N=35)	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
They punish perpetrators too much	9	13	12
They are not harsh enough	21	7	6
They do not provide enough protection for the victim of violence	24	5	5
They do not provide enough economic support to victims of violence who still depend on their husbands and family	29	4	1

Despite the existence of laws and polices related to DVAW, implementation and mechanisms for accountability were considered weak. Lack of resources was cited as a primary reason for gaps in implementation at both the VDC and DHQ levels. Specifically, inadequate human resources as evidenced by shortage of staff, limited opportunities for formal training, outdated facilities, and a shortfall in the number of female staff were mentioned as examples. A stakeholder observed that health service providers at both the village and district levels faced the same constraints with regard to the availability, use and allocation of resources to tackle cases of VAW such as rape.

*“For example, it is very difficult for victims of domestic violence to seek justice. Though it is said that women can report the unfairness anywhere, it is difficult for women to reach district level organizations which are located at the district headquarters ... It is also said that a woman can file a report at Village Development Committee but the problem is that officials are absent... Similarly, with the Municipality Office... we can't concerned officials area absent. If a victim has to be taken for health treatment, then there won't be any medical professionals for the treatment and it is very difficult. Again for example, in case of a rape, it is difficult to take the victim from the village to the district hospital. There is always a risk that the evidence might get lost as it takes long to reach the district hospital.”*

*- Lawyer at the Bar Association in Mahottari*

*“Law is not a big thing in itself. No matter if it is made. Existing laws are more than enough but implementation is very weak.... I would say this is a weakness on the part of the government.”*

*- Government staff at DPHO in Bardiya*

Participants also noted that political interference, corruption within the system, and bribery, together with traditional social norms and practices, prevent the effective enforcement of existing laws and provisions.

*“Difficulties arise in enforcing laws when the political environment is not supportive. Likewise, individuals are prevented from reporting cases due to socio-cultural practices and traditional beliefs. Some of them turn hostile and withdraw their cases; this also prevents the enforcement of laws.”*

*- Senior Government staff at DAO in Mahottari*

Stakeholders were of the opinion that such social constraints as fear of discrimination and stigmatisation perpetuate further victimization, discourage victims from reporting their cases with formal authorities, and prompt victims to withdraw their cases. Participants also thought that low reporting of cases of DVAW in turn led to lack of punishment for perpetrators. The vicious cycle is further exacerbated by female dependency on men as the primary breadwinners and a lack of opportunities among women to realize self-agency.

*“On the one hand, women are afraid to register their cases in order to seek justice as she is afraid that she will bring bad name to her family. People try to solve problems within the walls of their home. Women are not aware about laws. Women do not want to report injustice because women are not independent and especially victims of domestic violence are compelled to return back to the same house where she is at higher risk of being re-victimized. On the other hand, perpetrators are not getting any punishment due to frequent political interference.”*

*- Staff at the WCDO office in Mahottari*

*“It’s a bit difficult for laws to address issues related to domestic violence. Once the victim comes to seek support against her family members, it will be hard for her to continue. Not only that, it will be hard for her to find support for protection or other needs in future. The victim will be further victimized before laws are enforced against the perpetrators.”*

*- Public Prosecutor in Bardiya*

As a consequence, interviews with stakeholders revealed that legal matters are often settled outside the purview of the formal justice system. This phenomenon of ‘compromise’ highlights the tensions that exist between the function of the law and traditional values of society. Stakeholders convey a diverse range of opinions on the juxtaposition and tension between the legal mandate and authority of the justice system versus traditional beliefs and practices.

*“Though it is said that a woman can report violence at Village Development Committee, Police or Women’s Commission within 35 days, police are mediating many of the cases. This had led to dissatisfaction amongst the victims. Even in cases where a wife tries to report that her husband abused her sexually, officials often mediate. For such cases, perpetrators should be imprisoned and appropriate steps should be taken. The cases which are supposed to be taken to court should not be settled through mediation.”*

*- Lawyer at the Bar Association in Dhading*

*“What can I say when people have already mediated or are forced to mediate and come to an agreement though their cases are registered to us. We can do nothing when both parties have come to an agreement though we have already started with the legal procedures. Isn’t it?”*

*- Police officer in Bardiya*

Additional challenges faced by victims of DVAW that were raised by stakeholders included lack of protection and integrated assistance (encompassing physical, psychological and economic support) for victims.



*“There is no place to stay when a victim goes outside her home to report a case. The government agencies such as CDO and WCDO, who are supposed to provide security to victims, are always busy in trainings. Even if the victim submits an application to seek justice, her case ends through mediation at the Women’s Police Cell. A victim becomes re-victimized at home and has to suffer more once if she reports against her family members. I would also say that political interference is high.”*

*- Director, working at an NGO in Mahottari*

Some stakeholders were of the opinion that there are prominent gaps in the laws themselves, and that inconsistencies and loopholes within existing legislation must be clarified and closed.

*“Cases of murder are registered easily whereas cases of domestic violence are not registered at all and are settled through mediation. Likewise, there is discrimination even in punishment and compensation in these laws. People are not paying an equal amount of compensation. These laws do not fix amounts for compensation. That’s why perpetrators are randomly paying money and are coming out on bail. The amount should be fixed for everyone.”*

*- Acting Chairperson working at an NGO in Dhading*

*“In the case of rape, it becomes the responsibility of the victims instead to find out about the properties of the perpetrator like land, house and money so that he can compensate. If the perpetrator is rich, then only the victim can get money. If not, victim will not get anything which is unfair to her. Similarly, in the Domestic Violence Act, it is said that perpetrator should compensate from NRs 3,000 to 25,000. The perpetrator can easily come out on bail if he pays certain amount of money as per his economic status. In such cases, I think it would be better to have fixed amount as compensation, and that amount should moreover be increased. In addition, perpetrators should be given more punishment.”*

*- WHRD from Dhading*

Furthermore, stakeholders stated that changes need to be made to expedite lengthy and complex legal procedures, and that actors within the legal system and the general public need to be educated on how to best utilize legal resources and services.

*“The legal procedures are really lengthy and chaotic. No one can get justice within one or two days. It’s impossible. One has to wait for a long time. That’s why the laws need to be amended. For those who seek justice, it also feels like injustice due to the lengthy procedures.”*

*- Senior staff of the court in Dhading*

*“The laws to address discrimination and violence against women not only have lengthy legal procedures, but also they are old versions and not updated yet. Thus, the justice system has loopholes. As its consequence, errors can be seen in implementation phase.”*

*- Staff at the DDC in Siraha*

*“The government has not taught people like police, lawyers, judges and such on how to deal and behave with victims of violence, maybe that’s why they are not able to provide justice to victims. Also, victims themselves are ignorant on where to go to seek support and get justice. I think these are the key barriers to the enforcement of laws.”*

*- Senior Government staff at DAO in Dhading*

On the other hand, a few stakeholders thought that there are no or few gaps in the laws. Instead, they stress priority should be given to the enforcement of laws and to awareness raising.

*“No, no gaps in laws at all. Just the theory needs to be practiced.”*

*-Police Officer from Dhading*

*“There are not many gaps in laws and policies but enforcement is weak, that’s why it is very necessary to make people aware of such laws. Educating a woman and making her self-reliant is also a must. It is also important to generate awareness of laws at the village development committee level.”*

*- Staff at WCDO office in Mahottari*

*“Whatever is written in the laws, they are sufficient. But in certain situations, it is very difficult for us to calculate the mental sufferings and loss of the victim.”*

*- Senior Government staff at DAO from Mahottari*

## 7.6 Perceptions on access to services

### 7.6.1 Extent of utilization of services

All participants reported that DVAW survivors visit them for various problems. The most common problems include domestic violence (25 out of 35), followed by rape (12 out of 35), non-consensual sex, polygamy, property rights, witchcraft accusations, child marriage, and citizenship registration. Half of the stakeholders noted (18 out of 35) that they provide DVAW-related services often. Only a few stated that it is rare for survivors to approach them at their institutions.

The study team also attempted to compile written data on service delivery to victims of violence. The practice of recording of data by various actors (police and court) vary considerably both in terms of the definitions of violence and in case registration methods. Nonetheless, a brief review of the data from each study district confirms the significance of DVAW as a key issue.

Over the past 12 months, official records of the police indicate 152 cases involving violence against women in all four districts. Registration of cases of violence against women (*mahila hinsa ka ghatanaharu*) is highest in Mahottari and lowest in Siraha. The most common types of violence include domestic violence (psychological, physical, sexual and economic), followed by polygamy, and trafficking (Table 7.6). Similarly, data from district courts for 2011/12 reveal that 253 cases of violence against women were registered in total, most of which involved physical violence, followed by sexual violence, trafficking and polygamy (Table 7.7).

**Table 7.6 Number of DVAW cases reported at district police offices in 2011/12**

Types of DVAW	2068/69 (2011/12)				Total
	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	
Psychological	32	3	1	0	36
Physical	0	20	8	9	37
Sexual	6	3	3	20	32
Economic	18	1	3	0	22
Polygamy	5	1	5	3	14
Trafficking	2	0	0	3	5
Child marriage	1	0	0	0	1
Dowry related violence	0	1	0	0	1
Other types violence	2	0	2	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>152</b>

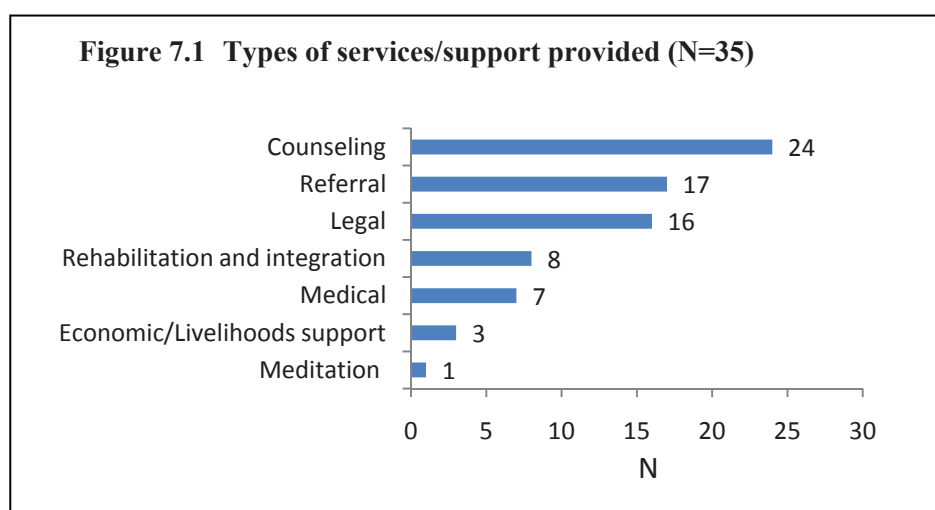


**Table 7.7 Number of DVAW cases registered at district courts in 2011/12**

Types of DVAW	2068/69(2011/12)				Total
	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	
Physical	0	131	0	22	153
Sexual	13	11	10	16	50
Psychological	0	0	3	0	3
Trafficking	0	23	2	1	26
Polygamy	4	6	5	3	18
Child marriage	0	0	1	0	1
Other types violence	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>253</b>

Stakeholders reported that their institutions provide a range of services, including counselling, legal assistance, referrals, rehabilitation and reintegration. However, stakeholders' opinions on the accessibility of these services vary widely. For example, a majority of respondents believed that it is either difficult or very difficult for women to access legal (19 out of 35), rehabilitation/

reintegration (25 out of 35) and counselling services (15 out of 35). Even access to medical care is characterized as difficult by 13 of 35 respondents (Table 7.8).



**Table 7.8 Perceived accessibility of services/support**

Types of services (N=35)	Very difficult	Difficult	Neutral	Not very difficult	Very easy	Do Not Know
Legal support	8	11	6	8	2	0
Counselling	5	10	7	10	1	2
Medical	4	9	5	12	1	4
Rehabilitation/integration	15	10	2	1	0	7
Referral	5	7	11	7	0	5

### 7.6.2 Barriers to service delivery

Stakeholders identified a number of barriers which relate to the victims themselves. These include: women's lack of resources, weak awareness of their legal rights and of available services, fear that accessing formal care will bring 'shame' on her family and result in negative reactions from the community, and fear of retribution. Additional barriers include fear of negative outcomes for DVAW cases and lack of trust in the formal service providers. Lack of safety and political interference also deter women from receiving care and services (Table 7.9).

*“The victims do not have any money for food, lodging or for transportation. In such cases we give them money from our own pockets mostly. This is also a problem for us. We want to help the victims not only because it is our duty but we want to. But for how long can we support them by spending our own money? Also, there are no safe houses in our district. The victim lacks security as well in such condition and again we are forced to keep the victims in our house.”*

*- Staff at WCDO office in Siraha*

Stakeholders also identified constraints within the support services themselves as barriers to care. These constraints range from perceptions about the lack of resources, political interference, poor quality of care that women might receive, and concerns about the futility of seeking care in an unsupportive environment. Moreover, stakeholders frequently criticized the lengthy and costly legal process and lack of protection in the formal system (Table 7.9).

**Table 7.9 Barriers to women in accessing care/support**

<b>Stakeholders’ perceptions of barriers faced by victims in seeking care/support (N=35)</b>	<b>N</b>
Lack of money	14
Bring bad name to family	13
Fear of further threats and/or violence	12
Lack of awareness/ don’t know where to go	11
Lack of confidence	7
Fear of losing job/s from the workplace	6
Embarrassed/ashamed	4
Fear of rejection from family and friends	5
Service centre far away	3
Do not trust anyone	3
Violence is perceived as normal	2
Nothing is done even if reported	1
Political pressure	1
<b>Stakeholders’ perceptions of institutional level barriers women have to overcome following decision to seek care (N=35)</b>	
Lack of required resources	15
Political interferences	12
Lack of security and protection for the institution	8
Life-threatening/kidnapping threats from the perpetrator	8
Providing shelter/economic support	8
The legal procedures are lengthy by nature	6
Infrastructural barriers	2
Victims themselves turn hostile	3
People tend to take help from local/community	2
Lack of women friendly environment	1

In response to the question, “How confident are you or your organization/department in providing the following services to women who experienced violence and discrimination”, most of the stakeholders were relatively confident in providing basic services to DVAW survivors (Table 7.10).

**Table 7.10 Levels of confidence in providing services to victims of DVAW**

<b>Level of confidence of organization/department in providing the following services to women who experience violence and discrimination*</b>	<b>Very Much</b>	<b>Quite</b>	<b>Not so much</b>	<b>Not at all</b>
Screening/identification for violence	10	21	0	0
Providing psycho-social counselling services	5	22	0	0
Providing legal services	13	9	0	0
Providing medical services	2	5	0	0
Providing referral	8	24	0	0
Investigating and documenting violence and other discrimination related cases	13	10	2	0
Maintaining privacy and confidentiality of victim/s	23	12	0	0
Understanding of polices/legal right of violence survivors	8	18	2	0
Providing shelters or other similar supports	3	8	3	1
Punishing the perpetrators	11	4	0	0
Providing remedies and reparation	3	12	0	0

\* Number of respondents varies between different responses because they do not provide such services.

Slightly over three quarters of the (27 out of 35) stakeholders stated that establishing police posts closer to beneficiaries, ensuring more women police officers, reducing corruption in the police force, addressing political interference, and making legal procedures more simple, efficient and confidential, would encourage women to seek care/support from the formal justice system (Table 7.11).

**Table 7.11 Factors that encourage women to seek care/support from the formal justice system**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>May be</b>	<b>Do not Know</b>
Making legal procedures simpler	35	0	0	0
Making legal procedures more efficient	35	0	0	0
Making legal procedures more confidential	35	0	0	0
Enforcing court decisions	35	0	0	0
Ensuring that police are better trained	34	0	1	0
Providing shelter to violence survivors	34	0	0	0
Providing free support (legal, medical etc) to survivors	33	0	0	0
Ensuring economic support to victims	33	0	1	1
Ensuring more women police officers	33	0	2	0
Reducing police corruption	33	0	1	0
Reducing political interference in police	31	0	3	0
Establishing police post nearby	27	6	2	0

### **7.6.3 Documentation of DVAW cases and legal support**

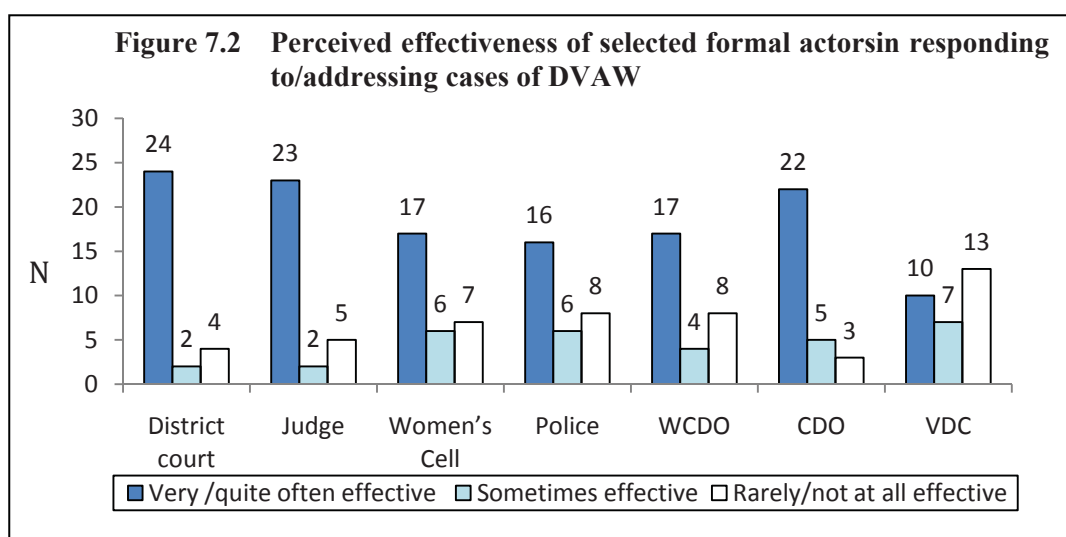
There is a general perception (33 out of 35) that the Women's Police Cell, WCDO, DAO, and NGOs are responsible for recording incidents of violence. Similarly, many stated that the Court, Police, Public Prosecutor and Bar Association are the main responsible agencies for providing legal and judicial assistance to DVAW survivors. Other interviewees perceive that international organizations, the National Human Rights Commission, the National Women's Commission, Women's Human Rights Defenders, and representatives of local bodies, should assume primary responsibility (Table 7.12).

**Table 7.12 Perceptions of agencies responsible for dealing with/providing support for legal help to DVAW survivors**

Responsible organization(s) in dealing with/providing support for legal help	N
District court	19
Police/Women Cell	18
Public prosecutor	11
Bar association	9
WCDO	5
Mediation centers/committees	4
NGOs	4
Paralegal committees	3
DDC	3
District judges	2
VDC	2
CDO	3
National Women’s Commission	2
Dalit commission/private firms	3

**7.6.4 Perceived effectiveness of service providers**

The majority of stakeholders considered that courts (24 out of 30), judges (23 out of 30) and CDO’s (22 out of 30) are effective in dealing with DVAW cases in their districts. In contrast, more than a quarter of the stakeholders state that the Nepal Police (8 out of 30), WCDO (8 out of 30) and VDC (13 out of 30) are not effective in responding to DVAW cases (Figure 7.2).



According to stakeholders, increasing accountability and capacity are the two main aspects that would bolster institutional effectiveness (Table 7.13).

**Table 7.13 Opinions on increasing effectiveness of formal actors in responding to/addressing DVAW**

Aspects of importance for making institutions more effective in responding to/addressing DVAW)	1 <sup>st</sup> rank (3)	2nd rank (2)	3rd rank (1)	Overall score
Capacity (to do the work, requiring training, good hiring practices, etc.)	12	15	8	74
Resources (offices, vehicles, equipment, etc.)	6	15	14	62
Their accountability to the public (more transparency in what they do, complaints mechanisms when they make mistakes, punishment if they commit crimes, etc)	17	5	13	94

### 7.6.5 Perceptions on training needs

A majority of the stakeholders (22 out of 35) reported that their staff received some type of training in dealing with survivors of DVAW. However, very few (6 out of 35) considered their training sufficient. Half believed that district judges, lawyers and WCDOs have adequate training in dealing with cases of DVAW. In addition, only a third of the stakeholders believed that the police, court officials, CDOs, DDCs, health services providers, VDCs and Paralegal Committee members have adequate training (Table 7.14).

**Table 7.14 Training Needs**

Whether staff ever received training to deal with/provide support to DVAW survivors	Mahottari	Siraha	Dhading	Bardiya	Total
Yes	6	4	6	6	22
No	1	4	3	4	12
Don't know	0	0	0	1	1
N	7	8	9	11	35
<b>Whether the training was comprehensive</b>					
Yes, comprehensive training	1	2	1	2	6
Yes, but only partial training	5	2	4	4	14
N	6	4	5	6	22
<b>Whether the following personnel in the district have adequate training in dealing with cases of DVAW</b>					
<b>District Judge</b>					
Yes	4	4	6	5	19
No/Don't know	3	4	3	6	16
<b>Court Officials</b>					
Yes	3	4	2	4	13
No/Don't know	4	4	7	7	22
<b>Lawyers</b>					
Yes	4	4	5	5	18
No/Don't know	3	4	4	6	17
<b>Public Prosecutor</b>					
Yes	3	4	2	4	13
No/Don't know	4	4	7	7	22

<b>Police</b>					
Yes	3	4	2	5	14
No/Don't know	4	4	7	6	21
<b>Women's Police Cell</b>					
Yes	2	4	1	6	13
No/Don't know	5	4	8	5	22
<b>CDO</b>					
Yes	2	4	4	4	14
No/Don't know	5	4	5	7	21
<b>DDC (GBV handling desk staff)</b>					
Yes	2	4	3	4	13
No/Don't know	6	4	6	7	22
<b>WCDO</b>					
Yes	2	5	4	7	18
No/Don't know	5	3	5	4	17
<b>Health service providers</b>					
Yes	2	3	1	5	11
No/Don't know	5	5	8	6	24
<b>VDC</b>					
Yes	2	4	1	5	12
No/Don't know	5	4	8	6	23
<b>Paralegal Committees</b>					
Yes	4	4	0	5	13
No/Don't know	3	4	9	6	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>35</b>

All 35 respondents expressed an urgent need for training for themselves and their colleagues to improve care and services to DVAW survivors. Interviewees suggested that trainings should focus on legal provisions, ensuring safety and confidentiality, and best practices for providing care and support to survivors. All stakeholders also stressed the lack of resources as a major concern.

*“We need an orientation on violence against women and current laws that address issues of violence in the country. Also people like us who are from health sector are not aware of exact words used in legal procedures. I can give you an example, in case of rape, we have to fill up a form ... There are words that are difficult to understand by a medical person.... what I am trying to say is that we should be made aware of such legal terminologies because we are also handling cases of violence against women.”*

*- A senior government staff working at the hospital in Siraha*

*“When the violence survivors come to us support, they are very emotional, hurt brutally and sometimes have physical injuries. In such circumstances, we do not know how to deal with the survivors... We want trainings where we can learn ways best to respond the need of survivors when they come to us to seek support.”*

*- Staff at the WCDO office in Siraha*

## 7.7 Efforts to address DVAW at the district level

There are few examples of effective, systematic or sustainable efforts to address DVAW at the district level. While there have been efforts to establish shelter homes and resource centers at the district level, little is happening at the village level, where stakeholders consider that more effort is needed. Awareness-raising activities and training programs are underway in some districts, either through government or NGO channels, but more work is necessary at the ground level.

*“Awareness programs have been underway. Similarly, problems that are raised at the village level are discussed with district level stakeholders and sometimes they are pressurized to solve the problems if concern is not shown by them.”*

*- Chairperson of an NGO from Dhading*

Only one out of the four districts (Bardiya) included in this study has a service center (‘one-stop crisis center’) and a shelter, one run by the WCDO and another by an NGO. The shelter and service center provide legal services, psychological counselling, food, shelter, clothing, and skills development trainings and referrals to other services. Demand for services currently outstrips available supply at these two locations. Women are not able to stay for longer than two weeks, and subsequent referrals to other places for services are common place.

*“We provide referral, counseling and legal services. For those who come to seek support from here are offered food, shelter, general medical services and clothing if they do not have any clothes to wear or are wearing old clothes. Not only that, we offer them skill development trainings like sewing, making candles, pickles, bags and such so that the survivors do not have to be dependent on their husbands or family. We give them skill development trainings through which they can have earnings of their own; economically they will be self-dependent.... But the main problem lies where the survivors are not being able to stay here for more than 2 weeks and are referred to other NGOs like (Awaj-a non-for profit organisation) and neighboring districts as per need. Although it has been said that the survivors can stay at the shelter for up to 3 months (on need basis), it is not yet implemented in practice. This has consequently raised difficulties among the survivors. Two weeks is not enough in any way. Those two weeks just fly by either while gathering the parties for negotiation or attending the formal justice system... It makes it difficult to deal with the cases.”*

*-Staff at safe house from Bardiya*

## 7.8 Suggestions for improving policy and programming

Stakeholders’ opinions were sought on how to improve policy and programming to address DVAW issues and support victims more effectively. The results are summarized below.

- **Raise community awareness**

Respondents emphasized the need to raise community awareness and enhance knowledge about laws, policies and programs pertinent to DVAW. In addition, there is need to conduct awareness campaigns on types of services available, as well as on how and where to seek such support from formal authorities. Moreover, stakeholders also noted the need to allocate a sufficient budget to invest in human resources.



*“People should be educated about the formal justice system and related services through various organizations. The legal procedures should be enforced. The laws should be implemented in practice rather than having them in papers only. The victims should be well-treated. Voice of unspoken and unheard should be heard and provided with services. Yes, their voices must be heard.”*

*- Programme Co-coordinator at Mediation Center in Bardiya*

*“The Village Development Committee should have its own programs address and prevent discrimination and violence against women. For this, they should be able to have a separate budget and human resources of their own. Importantly, they need to coordinate with other organizations that are also working on issues of discrimination and violence against women.”*

*- Public prosecutor in Bardiya*

- **Increase collaboration and cooperation**

Stakeholders acknowledged the multitude and diverse nature of institutions and organizations that are working to address DVAW in both the public and private sectors. Promotion of collaboration and cooperation between these actors is seen as key to a strong and sustained response to DVAW.

- **Address gaps in laws, policies and enforcement**

The majority of stakeholders perceived there are important gaps in existing laws, policies and implementation strategies addressing DVAW. They suggest a thorough revision and enforcement of these provisions.

*“Laws should be enforced adequately. The decisions taken should be implemented in action. I would also say that the lengthy and hectic legal procedures should be simplified and shortened. Not only that, there should be special provision to have free legal aid at court”*

*- Lawyer at the Bar Association in Mahottari*

*“There is a child help desk but it has become a show-piece. The provision is not implemented yet. We need to increase number of female staff so they can understand and hear the voice of other women.”*

*- Police officer in Bardiya*

## Chapter 8

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Violence against women – emotional, physical, sexual, economic – affected 30.7% women over the past year, and up to half (50.7%) of all women over their lifetimes. Nearly one in every five women (19.4%) fear future violence from intimate partners and 26.2% fear violence in general. Despite the alarming prevalence of violence and high levels of insecurity perceived by women, only 3.9% of women victims of violence currently seek formal legal support in response to violence by any perpetrator, and only 3.3% seek support when victimized by intimate partners. Shame and fear of re-victimization are the main barriers for women. This serious justice problem is largely invisible to the administration of justice. Women suffer the injustice of gender-based violence followed by the independent injustice of impunity and the denial of a remedy.

This Chapter summarizes the key findings from the report (Section 8.1) and then offers a series of recommendations (Section 8.2) aimed at improving justice delivery.

### 8.1. Key Findings

This Section begins by describing the key justice problem – the high prevalence of violence against women – and then relates it to three social and three legal dimensions that are explored in the survey. This is not an exhaustive analysis but aims to assist in drawing some initial and concrete conclusions from the findings and recommends remedial action. The duty to ensure a remedy for violence against women falls on the State, meaning that this analysis is relevant for law and policy deliberations within and between each of the three branches.

The three social dimensions relate to: (i) high levels of acceptance by women of their duty of obedience and service to their husbands and in-laws, and similar affirmation of conservative gender roles by men; (ii) the shared affirmation by men and women of gender equality; and, in contrast to the second dimension, (iii) the existence of gender discrimination in almost every area of life, including gender-based violence.

The three legal dimensions describe a justice gap that is similarly reported by both men and women, characterized by (i) a significant level of trust in the justice system when asked about this in general terms, combined with moderate to high levels of awareness of relevant laws; (ii) criticism of the effectiveness of the justice system when asked about it in more specific terms; and (iii) specific recognition of the two most important reasons why women are unable to access the justice system although faced with high levels of violence: fear and shame.

#### ***8.1.1 The Justice Problem: There is a high prevalence of violence against women***

Half of all women (50.7%) have experienced some form of violence (physical, sexual, emotional, economic) over their lifetimes, and almost one-third (30.7%) over the last 12 months. The most prevalent forms of violence experienced over women's life times are physical (42%) and sexual violence (18%). The most commonly identified perpetrators are intimate partners (68.6%), followed by family members (62.0%). The experience of violence is associated with age, marital status, occupation, education, caste/ethnicity, wealth, mobility, media exposure, the extent to which women justify one or another form of domestic violence, the extent to which women affirm their equality with men and recognize the existence of gender discrimination. A husband's education level, occupation, and level of alcohol use, are also associated with the extent to which women suffer violence. Importantly, almost three-quarters of

women (72%) report suffering some consequence of violence, whether psychological or physical.

### **8.1.2 Social dimensions (I): Women and men equally affirm a duty of obedience and service of wives to husbands and in-laws**

Very high proportions of women (85.8%) and men (92.3%) affirm that “once a woman gets married, she belongs to her husband’s family and should obey her in-laws”. Similarly, 81.5% of women and a lower percentage of men (74.3%) agree that “a woman's obligation is to serve her husband and family in the home”. Almost half of women (48.8%) and 60.0% of men agree with the statement: “Men say and do things to control the activities of their wives because this is their obligation as husbands”. A smaller percentage of women (39.2%) and higher percentage of men (49.4%) affirm, “a woman should not get involved in matters outside the home because this is a man's responsibility”. Only 19.2% to 29.4% of women are able, without requiring permission from a husband or family member, to visit friends, relatives, a health centre, or to participate in a community organization.

With regard to reproductive rights, 51.9% of women and a much smaller but still significant percentage of men (34.6%) agree with the description that “a woman shames and angers her husband if she does not produce a son for him and his family”.

A significant number of women accept ‘hitting’ (between 5.0% and 12.8%) and ‘abuse’ (between 6.2% and 25.2%) as justifiable responses by husbands to a wife’s ‘disobedience’ of her spouse. A higher percentage of men (35.6% justify ‘abuse’ and 13.0% justify ‘hitting’) agree with this statement. Failure to complete household duties is also accepted by many women as a justification for hitting (4.3%) and abuse (10.0%). Again, a much higher percentage of men (22.6% justify ‘abuse’ and 6.1% justify ‘hitting’) agree with this justification.

Variation in these responses by women is associated with caste/ethnicity, religion, education, wealth, mobility, district of residence and, for questions related to hitting, there are further associations with marital status and media exposure.

A majority of women (85.9%), but only a minority of men (38.6%) agree with the statement that “wives are blamed by their husbands and in-laws for everything that goes wrong in the family”. Between 2.4% (Siraha) and 9.6% (Dhading) of women consider abuse from in-laws acceptable in one or more circumstances. A significant and higher number of men agreed that in-laws may abuse their daughters or sisters-in-law for disobedience of a husband (13.8%) or failure to complete household tasks (11.2%).

When asked about the top three determinants of personal wellbeing, both men and women identify education, health, and employment. Significantly, while violence affects half of women over their lifetimes, and 30.7% over the last 12 months, only 23.1% of women identify violence among their top three concerns for personal wellbeing (compare to 14.7% for men). When not compelled to rank the determinants of community wellbeing, however, almost all women (98.0%) include violence against women. A similarly high percentage of men (88.0%) consider violence against women an important issue related to community wellbeing.

### **8.1.3 Social dimensions (II): Women and men equally affirm women’s equality with men and women’s right to reproductive decisions**

Almost all women (between 98.8% and 99.6%) believe that they deserve the same rights and opportunities as men in relation to basic needs, expenditures on self, education, property, registration rights, employment, healthcare, membership in an organization, speaking publicly, choice of a partner, reproductive rights, mobility, and the use of resources in the community. Over 90% of women (92.6%) affirm that they have equal value with men but “not the same obligations and roles”. A similar proportion of men agree with

these various statements and, on average, 99.2% of men believe that women deserve the same rights and opportunities as men.

A high percentage of women (83.4%) and men (72.3%) agree with the statement: “Many men feel that a woman fails her husband if she does not produce a son for him, but this is not fair to women”. Both men and women strongly affirm women’s right to exercise reproductive rights. Men strongly affirm (96.5%) that marriage should not occur before a woman reaches 18 years of age, that a woman can decide on the number of children she wants to have (79.6%), that she can terminate her pregnancy if it is health-threatening (85.7%), and that she can own property independently of her husband (83.7%). As noted, the mean age of marriage among women respondents was 16.

A composite index was created based on women’s attitudes towards gender roles, reproductive and property rights, violence, and masculinity. The index measures the relative affirmation of women’s equality with men over a range of issues. This index shows that women’s equality is affirmed moderately by over two-thirds of women (68.9%), and strongly by 15.8% to 28.4% of the population. The extent to which a woman affirms her equality with men varies according to a woman’s age, caste/ethnicity, religion, education level, marital status, wealth, media exposure, mobility, membership in a community organization, and district of residence.

#### ***8.1.4 Social dimensions (III): Both women and men report significant discrimination against women***

There is a significant gap between the ideals of equality expressed by men and women and the reported experience of discrimination and violence, as well as the perception of men of actual discrimination suffered by women. Stakeholders similarly confirm the high prevalence of violence and discrimination against women. Over 90% of women (91.8%) and 71.0% of men affirm that “men and women have equal value, but women are always treated as less valuable”. Depending on the specific issue from basic needs to mobility and choice of partner, between 73.7% and 95.9% of women stated the women are less valued than men and suffer unfair treatment. Between 42.5% and 85.8% of men expressed similar views on the same range of issues. Men also reported, although in small numbers, witnessing discrimination against women, particularly regarding family activities (22.7%), during postpartum (20.3%) and menstruation (13.4%). More than half of women (53.1%) report experiencing unfair treatment due to their status as women. The aspect of discrimination that is most highlighted by both men and women involves restrictions to property inheritance (men: 85.8%; women: 95.9%), as well as ownership and limits to decision-making regarding property use (men: 83.2%; women: 95.3%). Smaller proportions of men also agree that women face discrimination in relation to access to education (60.1%), restricted mobility (74.5%), choice of life partner (68.7%), and family-planning decisions (63.6%).

About two-thirds of women (64.6%) have low autonomy in terms of movement (visiting friends and families, health centres and involvement in any community organisation), with the least restriction in Bardiya (33.8%) and the highest restrictions in Siraha (77.8%). Over 70% of women report no involvement in household decision-making even in the case of purchasing small-scale items (such as food and clothing) and 77.2% have no involvement regarding large investments (buying land, house, car, motorbike, etc).

When asked about unequal treatment in general in society, women identify the determining factors as caste (93.7%), education (75.6%), economic status (72.5%), gender (71.1%), and family connections (67.6%). Less prominent but significant factors are traditional practices (55.1%) and political connections (45.2%). When asked specifically about the causes of discriminatory behaviour against women, respondents overall identify socio-cultural practices (women: 62.3%; men: 62.6%) and illiteracy (women: 43.1%; men: 53.0%) as the two main causes. Women mostly identify traditional practices as the cause of discrimination against women in Dhading (76.9%) and Bardiya (71.7%), while illiteracy is more commonly identified in

Mahottari (54.3%), and poverty, in Siraha (66.5%) (Table 3.13). Polygamy (97.5%) and dowry (96.3%) are affirmed by women as “major causes of violence against women” (Table 3.1).

### **8.1.5 The justice gap (I): Women and men are generally supportive of the role of police and courts while also recognizing the influence of political interference and corruption**

On the whole, a majority of women and men report some awareness of laws (60.6% and 74.0% respectively) and public services (73.5% and 70.0% respectively) that address discrimination and violence against women.

When asked about levels of trust (*biswas*) in various justice sector actors, two-thirds of women and men, respectively, respond that they trust the Nepal Police either "a little" (*thorai/thikaibiswas*) (55.3% / 66.1%) or "don't trust very much" (*khasibiswasnagarne*) (11.0% / 16.3%); while 21.7% (11.1% for men) say that they trust police "very much" (*dheraibiswas*).

On the other hand, women and men, respectively, express either "a little" (34.7% / 57.3%) or 'not very much' (2.6% / 6.7%) trust in the Court, while 17.1% (23.5% for men) trust the Court "very much". The figures for the CDO approximately match women's levels of levels with respect to the Court, while men are less inclined, in comparison to the Court, to trust the CDO "very much" (16.3%), and more likely to "trust a little" (72.5%).

The relative proportion of women and men, respectively, choosing not to express any opinion about trust ("don't know") varies considerably by institution and between men and women: Nepal Police (10.2% / 0.9%), Court (44.9% / 11.6%), CDO (55.7% / 3.8%). Men are clearly more inclined to express an opinion about these institutions.

Women and men view the presence of police (79.0% and 87.2%, respectively) and courts (47.9% and 84.4%, respectively) as a source of increased individual security and wellbeing (Tables 4.14 and 6.41). Almost all men (96.0%) expect the State to protect women facing threats, to investigate and where appropriate prosecute acts of discrimination and violence against women (Table 6.39) and 70.3% of men consider laws to be either 'ok', 'effective in some areas' or 'very effective' in addressing DVAW.

While both men and women express non-negligible levels of trust in key justice sector actors, and express a desire for their presence, at the same time, they recognize that these actors are vulnerable to corruption and political interference. A significant majority of women report that bribery and political influence affect the police (75.4% and 67.6%, respectively) and courts (37.9% and 38.8%, respectively). Over half of men also believe that judges can be bribed (54.0%) and politically influenced (62.8%) while a much higher percentage think that the police can be bribed (81.1%) and politically influenced (89.8%).

### **8.1.6 The justice gap (II): Women, men, and justice stakeholders consider laws and institutions ineffective in addressing violence against women**

Between 48.0% and 80.4% of women (and between 64.2% and 85.2% of men) express some awareness of DVAW-related laws, while between 15.1% and 46.9% of women (and between 35.0% and 66.8% of men) express awareness of specific areas of DVAW that they believe are addressed by law. The majority of women and men perceive the functions of the laws to be the prevention and punishment of perpetrators of violence and the provision of assistance for women victims. A higher percentage of women (73.5% on average) than men (70.3% on average) are aware of one or more sources of institutional support in response to violence against women, with most citing police (women: 91.0%; men: 91.0%) and the Court (women: 31.0%; men: 38.4%). Awareness of more targeted public services for women is negligible.



Qualitative results strongly emphasize lack of awareness of legal protections, a sense of vulnerability to violence, and lack of accessibility of legal protections. Regarding the punitive aspect of DVAW-related laws, there are contradictory signals that reflect ambivalence, uncertainty, and differences of opinion that are consistent with dynamic and changing local contexts. For example, 59.6% of women and 71.4% of men believe that the laws do not sufficiently punish perpetrators. At the same time, about half of the respondents (women: 50.6% and men: 50.8%) found the law too blunt an instrument, agreeing that “the laws punish men too much and cause more problems for women”. In a similar sense, 24.0% of women and 50.7% of men agreed that “laws could be abused by women trying to cause problems”.

Almost half of the women (47.8%) agreed that “men will do whatever they want”. The laws don’t make a difference”. Similarly, 64.2% (ranging from 46.6% to 85.8%) of women and 63.3% (ranging from 48.9% to 75.1%) of men agreed that “the police will never enforce laws to protect women against violence that happens inside the family”. An even higher overall proportion of women and men (women: 69.7%, ranging from 50.9% to 91.1%; men: 68.9%, ranging from 52.6% to 81.5%) agreed that “the laws don’t punish the perpetrators enough and will have no impact”.

Most women (on average 93.7%, ranging between 89.2% to 98.2%) agreed that formal authorities “should be more willing to register/file a case against the perpetrator/s”, “should be more willing to take action against the perpetrator” (93.2%), “should address the problem of bribery” (94.1%), “should treat people of different ethnicities and/or castes equally as having the same value” (97.5%), “should treat rich people and poor people equally as having the same value” (97.7%) and “should treat men and women equally as having the same value” (97.2%). Similarly, women agreed that formal authorities “should stop releasing so many perpetrators of violence on bail” (89.6%), “must find ways to reduce interference by political parties” (86.0%), and “should reduce pressure on victims to withdraw their claims against perpetrators” (88.4%).

Public authorities also recognize widespread discrimination and violence against women, and identify some of the same causes reported by both men and women: traditional social practices, poverty, and lack of education. Stakeholders in general expressed a lack of confidence in the responsible institutions to deliver justice for women victims of discrimination and violence. Police, WDOs, and VDCs are seen as particularly weak compared to courts and CDOs. Importantly, stakeholders identified political interference, corruption, and lack of awareness, as the key problems limiting justice delivery.

### ***8.1.7 The justice gap (III): Violence against women is almost entirely invisible to the formal justice system for reasons related primarily to fear and shame***

Two-thirds of women victims of violence (67.7%) do not seek any kind of assistance. Victims of intimate partner violence are less likely to seek assistance from public authorities than women concerned with economic issues. Intimate partners are less likely to come to the attention of authorities than neighbours or relatives accused of violence. Of those victims of lifetime violence who sought help, most turned to family and friends, and only 3.9% sought legal assistance from any public authority. Yet, more than a quarter (26.2%) report feeling at risk of future violence.

More generally with regard to public services, only 8.8% of women from Mahottari and 13.4% from Siraha have ever accessed public services of any kind, and only 32% of these have sought this access within the past year. Of the 592 women in the survey who had accessed any public service in their lifetime, VDC or Municipality services accounted for 81.9% of these cases, followed in terms of importance by the CDO (35.3%), police (17.0%) and courts (9.1%).

When women are asked to identify the reasons that support from public authorities is not sought when faced with violence, the most common reported factors are shame (41.7%) and a fear of re-victimization (31.4%). Similarly with respect to men, a significant percentage (between 45.9% to 52.4%) affirm that a woman brings shame to her husband, family and community if she turns to the formal justice system

for help; a small but significant proportion view violence against women as a private matter not for public authorities; and a very low proportion think that women should therefore be able to seek physical protection (2.8%), to seek help in response to gender-based violence (15.1%), or to seek justice (6.9%) in the face of violence.

Stakeholders are also aware of the risks faced by women who report violence, both in terms of potential reprisals and their economic dependency. In relation to this, almost all women (93.6%) and men (94.8%) agree that “It is too dangerous for women to make use of these laws – they need more protection before they can do that.” Similarly, 65.8% of women and, significantly, 94% of men, agree that it is “too dangerous for women to make use of these laws – they need more economic resources before they can do that”. Between 77% and 86% of women across the pilot districts believe that justice and security officials discriminate against individuals on the basis of gender, caste, ethnicity, and economic status. About one-third of men also agree that discrimination by public authority exists and interferes with efforts to curb discrimination and violence against women.

Further indicators of the gendered gap and tension between the law, institutions and local communities include:

- the views of between 48.9% and 75.1% of men and a nearly identical range of women (46.6% to 85.8%) that “the police will never enforce laws to protect women against violence that happens inside the family”;
- the views of between 6.5% and 47.3% of men and a much higher percentage of women (between 36.9% and 61.6%) that “men will do whatever they want; the laws don't make a difference”; and
- the views of men and women (reported separately in brackets) on average that “the laws punish men too much and cause more problems for women” (50.8% and 50.6%, respectively); “the laws could be abused by women trying to cause problems” (50.7% and 24.0% respectively); “the laws punish the perpetrators too much” (51.5% and 55.0% respectively).

## 8.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

The responsibility to ensure a remedy for violence and discrimination documented in the research is shared across the legislative, executive and judicial branches. The justice gap described above is a measure of the challenge and obligation to ensure that life, security, physical and psychological integrity, and equality are protected. These are obligations at the level of constitutional and international law. The baseline findings provide empirical support for a range of remedial measures, many of which have been proposed numerous times by government and civil society, and some of which relate to existing Supreme Court jurisprudence.

The challenge facing progressive law, jurisprudence, and previous recommendations, is to initiate and strengthen collaborative action. It is critical that these actions are accompanied by rigorous and robust empirical monitoring of impact on the lives of women, their families, and their communities. This baseline study is a contribution to such efforts.

The concluding observations and recommendations below are offered as a basis for further law and policy dialogue. They give priority to the need to build public trust in the justice system. This implies a long-term, sustained effort to ensure a shared understanding across justice sector actors about relevant values, principles, laws, and methods of enforcement and monitoring. Three kinds of recommendations follow: (i) measures applicable to specific institutions; (ii) measures to concretely link justice sector actors and communities in dialogue about justice policy; (iii) measures to increase awareness and build trust between women and justice sector actors.



## **(i) Specific institutions**

### **Supreme Court**

The legal and social barriers described in the report represent a significant challenge for the administration of justice, and highlight the importance of the Supreme Court's Five-Year Strategic Plan and its focus on delivering justice to the most vulnerable and with least access. This leadership role is important for identifying Court-led measures that can in the short and longer term increase women's access to justice. Specific policy instruments that have been proposed and discussed already include:

- Ensure effective legal aid as well as specific and timely measures for effective and speedy justice delivery.
- Adopt specific measures for the effective implementation of judicial decisions, including dialogue in the JSCC to discuss these measures and reach agreement with all relevant actors in the justice chain.
- Monitor the role played by justice sector actors engaged formally or informally in mediation, to ensure protection of fundamental rights.
- Establish a gender desk in each district court, beginning with pilot districts, and include among its duties the implementation of expedited case management procedures that are friendly to women victims of violence.
- In coordination with other justice sector actors, take timely and specific steps to reach out to the public in order to explain the function of the courts and the existence of mechanisms for policy dialogue with civil society.

### **Ministry of Law, Ministry of Home Affairs, Attorney General Office**

Any solution to the justice gap affecting women victims of violence will involve the Home Ministry, particularly the Nepal Police Women's Cell and the CDO. Many women and men are concerned that the police still tend not to view violence against women as a serious matter of public concern. Combined with concerns over the influence of corruption and political interference, strong institutional leadership is required to ensure that violence against women is perceived merely as a “women’s issue”. Fear of retribution and shame inhibit support-seeking behaviour, in addition to perceptions of discriminatory behaviour by justice sector actors. In collaboration with other stakeholders, the Nepal Police can play an important role in addressing these issues, including undertaking measures to ensure confidentiality, overcome systemic problems in the registration of FIRs, and ensure effective fast-tracking of cases where appropriate and feasible. The accountability of the Nepal Police to other justice sector actors and to women and communities will also strengthen public trust.

- Collaborate fully with the Supreme Court and other justice sector actors, including civil society, to ensure that a mechanism is created at the district level to ensure regularly consideration of justice priorities, the development and monitoring of justice policy, and the mutual accountability of all actors, in order to ensure access to justice.
- Ensure effective, transparent and participatory monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the 2009 Domestic Violence Act and other related legislation and regulations.
- Continue to strengthen and expand the Women’s Police Cell, ensuring regular inputs from local community members and organizations as a measure of improvement and responsiveness. The JSCC can support this function.
- Led by the CDO at the district level, carry out specific outreach to communities in relation to DVAW, in collaboration with the Nepal Police Women’s Cell, community organizations, the WDO, the NWC and other relevant actors.

- Ensure the collection, monitoring and evaluation of data on violence against women and the response of the justice system. This information should be regularly disseminated at the district and national level.
- Ensure effective coordination of stakeholders by mapping their activities strength referral mechanism

### **National Women Commission and National Human Rights Commission**

The research results show that these agencies are, to date, relatively less known to women victims of violence or their families. Further support to their programming and efforts is warranted, particularly in raising awareness and promoting sound justice sector policies in response to DVAW. For example, one of the challenges affecting the response to women victims of violence is the lack of a standardized definition of DVAW that is used by all relevant agencies to deal with individual cases and to accumulate data that accurately reflects the nature and scope of the problem. The NWC and WCDO are poised to play a leadership role in this regard.

The NHRC has a critical monitoring role in all areas of justice delivery to ensure that Nepal's rights obligations are fulfilled. In the context of a concerted and collaborative set of policy actions by justice sector actors with shared benchmarks, the NHRC could work closely with the NWC and WCDO in monitoring and reporting on progress. One of the early, critical areas of monitoring and support relates to the research findings regarding high levels of fear of retribution and the lack of economic support that obstruct women's access to justice.

It is recommended that these institutions assume a greater leadership role in light of this independence; in particular, they should seek to strengthen or add the following activities:

- Collaborate with all justice sector actors to develop coordinated policy research, advocacy, litigation, awareness-raising and other programming.
- Support an evidence-based approach to law and policy reform through the use of this and other reliable and accurate research data.
- Monitor, evaluate, and report on implementation of the 2009 Domestic Violence Act and other relevant legislation.
- Promote transparency and accountability of justice sector institutions in relation to their responsibilities to address violence against women, including through the JSCC.
- Develop specific, coordinated and effective community outreach programmes in order to raise awareness among communities regarding violence against women, promote women's autonomy, and develop opportunities for men to participate in combatting discrimination and violence against women.

### **Political parties**

Political parties have a key responsibility and leadership role to play in combating discrimination and violence against women, particularly in the context of weak governance institutions and the reporting of widespread political interference in the judicial process. Political party leaders at district and national level should strengthen or add to their agendas the following activities:

- Support legislative action to address longstanding issues of discrimination and violence against women.
- Support and promote the role of the Inter-Party Women's Caucus to make full use of research findings to promote transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the implementation of law and judicial decisions.

- Develop a shared understanding and agreed indicators to measure success and fulfilment of stated political commitments in combating violence against women.
- Develop a policy of non-intervention in cases of VAW, including this and other measures in a shared code of conduct for political parties, particularly in anticipation of elections.

### **Development partners**

Development partners have major role to support the initiatives of government and civil society actors. Development partners focusing work on women access to justice in Nepal should:

- Strengthen coordination to avoid duplication, incoherent and contradictory strategies and activities, and to optimize collaboration.
- Focus on supporting local groups to work with justice sector in setting benchmarks, monitoring and evaluating progress.
- Link all development activity for vulnerable communities to empowerment of women in relation to VAW.
- Fully fund rigorous monitoring and evaluation of program implementation.
- Ensure governance and rule of law programmes adopt overall strategy in consultation with civil society and community-based organizations.
- Recommend pilot approach to districts where measurable improvement in wellbeing can be linked to improved justice delivery; learn lessons for application in other districts.

### **Civil Society and Community-Based Organizations**

Civil society and Community based organisations are the key bodies to bridge gap between community and justice sector actors who regularly monitor the work of actors and act as a watchdog. They should:

- Increase women's awareness of (a) their rights to a life free from violence; (b) the formal support mechanisms available to them; (c) their rights in terms of service expectations. Programmes that aimed to raise legal literacy among both men and women; including message of where to seek further support should be implemented.
- Coordination among the organisation working on GBV is must. Development of a coordination strategy for engaging with the government would enable NGOs to play a more active lobbying role.
- Strengthened national networks would enable them to increase their impact throughout the country and would contribute to a more coherent response to GBV in the communities.
- Legal and counseling services should be intensified and made more accessible and affordable for rural women in particular
- Play a role of watchdog on cases of VAW and discourage mediation on cases of VAW.
- Strength coordination to avoid duplication and strength referral mechanism

#### **(ii) Enable justice sector dialogue mechanisms at the district level as a support to policy design, implementation and monitoring**

Bridging the social and legal barriers described in empirical detail in this report requires the development of a shared understanding among all relevant actors of (i) the justice issues from the perspectives of women, men, and communities;(ii) related roles and responsibilities that include close coordination among all state actors in the justice chain; and (iii) a course of action in which those responsible for

implementing public policy regularly can share information on a policy level and be accountable to citizens.

The core recommendation flowing from these observations is to support existing efforts by the Supreme Court and others to strengthen justice sector coordination, including participation by representatives of local communities and civil society. A mechanism such as the existing Justice Sector Coordination Committees or other modality might serve to ensure shared understanding and trust, effective policies, and more adequate coordination and mutual accountability between justice sector actors.

Political parties nationally and at the district level need to play a leadership role in prioritizing attention to the justice gap faced by women victims of violence. In addition to addressing the specific issue of political interference in the administration of justice, political parties can help to change attitudes, promoting an understanding of violence against women as a matter of public concern.

### **(iii) Develop awareness-raising strategies that include the participation of men**

Women generally have a low level of knowledge about their rights and about DVAW-related laws, including specific provisions, which increases their vulnerability. It is necessary to increase women's awareness of (a) their rights to a life free from violence; (b) the formal support mechanisms available to them; (c) their rights in terms of service expectations. Programmes that aim to raise legal literacy among both men and women, including messages of where to seek further support, should be implemented.

Family and community support is vital for women to be able to seek and receive services to both respond to and prevent DVAW without fear of subsequent shame or discrimination. Men and boys need to be included as part of the "solution". Therefore, it is important to promote a gender transformative approach towards addressing DVAW. Such an approach should focus on promoting men's roles and responsibilities towards ensuring women and girls live a life free of violence.

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# Annex





## Annex 1

### Categories of Ethnicity/Caste in Health Management and Information System (HMIS) of Ministry of Health and Population, Nepal

#### 1. Dalit

Hill : Kami, Damai, Sarki, Gaine, Badi

Terai : Chamar, Mushar, Dhusah/Paswan, Tamta, Khatway, Bantar, Dom, Chidimar, Dhobi, Halkhor

#### 2. Disadvantaged Janajatis

Hill : Magar, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa, Bhote, Walung, Byansi, Hyolomo, Garti/Bhujel, Kumal, Sunsar, Baramu, Pahari, Yakkah, Chhantal, Jirel, Darai, Dura, Majhi, Danuwar, Thami, Lepcha, Chepang, Bote, Raji, Hayu, Raute, Kusunda

Terai : Tharu, Dhanuk, Rajbansi, Tajpuriya, Gangai, Dhimal, Meche, Kisan, Munda, Santhal/Satar, Dhangad/Jhangad, Koche, Pattarkatta/Kusbadiay

#### 3. Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups

Yadav, Teli, Kalwar, Sudhi, Sonar, Lohar, Koiri, Kurmi, Kanu, Haluwai, Hajam/Thakur, Badhe, Bahae, Rajba, Kewat, Mallah, Nuniya, Kumhar, Kahar, Lodhar, Bing/Banda, Bhediyar, Mali, Kumar, Dhunia

#### 4. Religious Minorities: Muslims, Churoute

#### 5. Relatively advantaged Janajatis :Newar, Thakali, Gurung

#### 6. Upper caste groups: Brahman (Hill), Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi, Brahman (Terai), Rajput, Kayastha, Baniya, Marwadi, Jaine, Nuraang, Bengali

## Annex 2

### Odds ratios (and 95% confidence interval) from binary logistic regression for determinants of awareness of DVAW-related laws

Characteristics	OR	95% CI
<b>Current age (in years)</b>		
16-24 (ref.)	1.00	-
25-34	1.4	0.97-2.02
35-49	1.39	0.93-2.08
50-59	1.60	0.96-2.65
<b>Marital status</b>		
Never married (ref.)	1.00	-
Currently married	0.58	0.33-1.01
Widow/Divorced/Separated	0.62	0.28-1.38
<b>Number of living children</b>		
0 (ref.)	1.00	-
1	1.59	0.92-2.73
2	1.38	0.80-2.35
3 and more	1.22	0.72-2.10
<b>Education</b>		
Illiterate (ref.)	1.00	-
Up to Primary/non-formal education	1.68***	1.29-2.20
Six to 10 years of schooling	3.37***	2.26-5.01
SLC or more	5.30***	2.39-11.73
<b>Caste/ethnicity</b>		
Upper caste groups (ref.)	1.00	-
Relatively advantaged indigenous	1.20	0.68-2.10
Disadvantaged indigenous group	0.62*	0.41-0.95
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai Caste	0.70	0.45-1.07
Dalit religious minorities	0.80	0.51-1.28
<b>Women's occupation</b>		
Non-remunerated/ House wife/ student (ref.)	1.00	-
Daily wage labourer	1.07	0.66-1.73
Agriculture and livestock	0.83	0.6-1.17
Business/Petty business	0.94	0.3-2.96
Professional	1.35	0.77-2.37
<b>Residence</b>		
Urban (ref.)	1.00	-
Rural	0.85	0.64-1.11
<b>Wealth quintile</b>		
Lowest (ref.)	1.00	-
Second	1.84***	1.33-2.53
Middle	2.83***	2.02-3.95
Fourth	2.39***	1.68-3.42
Highest	2.86***	1.86-4.40

<b>Media exposure</b>		
Low (ref.)	1.00	-
Medium	1.05	0.82-1.36
High	1.83*	1.14-2.93
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu (ref.)	1.00	-
Religious minorities	1.35	0.82-2.23
Others	0.65*	0.42-0.98
<b>Membership in community organization</b>		
Yes (ref.)	1.00	-
No	0.50***	0.39-0.66
<b>Women's mobility index</b>		
Low (ref.)	1.00	-
Medium	1.50**	1.50-2.01
High	1.08	0.77- 1.50
<b>District</b>		
Mahottari (ref.)	1.00	-
Siraha	0.66**	0.49-0.87
Dhading	0.96	0.61-1.52
Bardiya	1.96***	1.33-2.87
-2 Log likelihood	2175.590a	
Cox & Snell R Square	0.224	
Nagelkerke R Square	0.303	
Constant	1.065	

\*\*\*significant at  $P \leq 0.001$ , \*\*significant at  $P \leq 0.01$ , \*significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  and NS=not significant

### Annex 3

## Odds ratios (and 95% confidence interval) from binary logistic regression for determinants of awareness of services for survivors of violence

Characteristics	OR	95% CI
<b>Current age (in years)</b>		
16-24 (ref.)	1.00	-
25-34	1.283	0.875-1.88
35-49	1.226	0.757-1.86
50-59	1.658	0.981-2.80
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Never married (ref.)	1.00	-
Currently married	0.93	0.52-1.66
Widow/Divorced/Separated	0.85	0.38-1.91
<b>Number of living children</b>		
0 (ref.)	1.00	-
1	1.20	0.69-2.10
2	1.48	0.85-2.60
3 and more	1.24	0.71-2.16
<b>Education</b>		
Illiterate (ref.)	1.00	-
Non-formal education/ up to primary	1.38*	1.05-1.82
Six to 10 years of schooling	1.95**	1.27-3.011
School leaving certificate or more	5.29***	1.98-14.11
<b>Caste/Ethnicity</b>		
Upper caste groups (ref.)	1.00	-
Relatively advantaged indigenous	0.66	0.36-1.18
Disadvantaged indigenous group	0.42***	0.27-0.64
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai Caste	0.87	0.54-1.4
Dalit religious minorities	0.97	0.59-1.62
<b>Women's occupation</b>		
Non-remunerated/ House wife/ student (ref.)	1.00	-
Daily wage labourer	0.89	0.55-1.45
Agriculture and livestock	0.93	0.65-1.32
Business/Petty business	1.48	0.32-6.85
Professional	1.35	0.73-2.51
<b>Residence</b>		
Urban (ref.)	1.00	-
Rural	1.04	0.77-1.38
<b>Wealth Quintile</b>		
Lowest (ref.)	1.00	-
Second	1.62	1.17-2.23
Middle	2.10	1.49-2.96

Fourth	1.82	1.27-2.6
Highest	1.88	1.2-2.95
<b>Media exposure</b>		
Low (ref.)	1.00	-
Medium	1.61	1.22-2.10
High	2.92	1.76-4.86
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu (ref.)	1.00	-
Religious minorities	0.74	0.44-1.24
Others	1.04	0.69-1.58
<b>Membership in community organization</b>		
Yes (ref.)	1.00	-
No	0.53***	0.4-0.70
<b>Women's mobility index</b>		
Low (ref.)	1.00	-
Medium	2.57	1.84-3.58
High	1.14	0.81-1.60
<b>Districts</b>		
Mahottari (ref.)	1.00	-
Siraha	1.29	0.94-1.76
Dhading	0.82	0.50-1.34
Bardiya	0.48***	0.32-0.70
-2 Log likelihood	2016.496a	
Cox & Snell R Square	0.139	
Nagelkerke R Square	0.202	
Constant	1.56	

\*\*\*significant at  $P \leq 0.001$ , \*\*significant at  $P \leq 0.01$ , \*significant at  $P \leq 0.05$

## Annex 4

### Odds ratios (and 95% confidence interval) from logistic regression for identifying risk factors for violence

Risk Factors	Model 1 (Lifetime)		Model 2 (Past year)	
	OR	95 % CI	OR	95 % CI
<b>Current age ( in years)</b>				
16-24 (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
25-34	1.15	0.82-1.62	1.23	0.86-1.77
35-49	0.84	0.58-1.23	0.91	0.61-1.37
50-59	0.83	0.51-1.36	0.73	0.43-1.25
<b>Marital status</b>				
Never married (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Currently married	2.02**	1.22-3.34	8.43***	4.18-16.98
Widow/ divorced/ separated	1.80	0.84-3.88	5.63***	2.22-14.26
<b>Number of living children</b>				
None (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
1	1.26	0.78-2.05	1.29	0.78-2.13
2	1.04	0.64-1.71	0.95	0.56-1.59
3 and more	1.04	0.64-1.71	1.02	0.60-1.72
<b>Level of education</b>				
Illiterate (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Non-formal education/ up to primary	1.44**	1.12-1.86	1.38*	1.05-1.81
Six to 10 years of schooling	1.48*	1.04-2.11	1.44	0.98-2.13
School leaving certificate or more	0.68	0.38-1.23	0.78	0.37-1.62
<b>Occupation</b>				
Non-remunerated house wife or students (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Agriculture	1.32	0.96-1.83	1.32	0.92-1.88
Other	1.35	0.97-1.88	1.50*	1.07-2.12
<b>Caste/ethnicity</b>				
Upper caste groups (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	0.92	0.56-1.50	1.03	0.57-1.84
Disadvantaged indigenous group	0.81	0.57-1.15	0.90	0.60-1.36
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Tarai caste group	1.31	0.90-1.91	1.24	0.81-1.90
Dalit/ religious minorities	1.03	0.69-1.56	0.91	0.58-1.44
<b>Religion</b>				
Hindu (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Religious minority group	1.22	0.75-1.98	1.45	0.87-2.41
Other	1.57*	1.06-2.32	1.12	0.71-1.75
<b>Family structure</b>				
Nuclear (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Joint	0.98	0.79-1.20	1.02	0.82-1.28
<b>Wealth quintile</b>				
Lowest (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Second	0.84	0.61-1.15	0.82	0.59-1.14
Middle	0.94	0.68-1.29	0.67*	0.48-0.94



Fourth	0.56***	0.40-0.79	0.53***	0.37-0.76
Highest	0.40***	0.27-0.59	0.34***	0.22-0.52
<b>Media exposure</b>				
Low (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Moderate	0.88	0.69-1.11	0.78	0.60-1.01
High	0.96	0.65-1.41	0.88	0.56-1.37
<b>Place of residence</b>				
Urban (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Rural	1.23	0.96-1.59	1.19	0.91-1.57
<b>Member of any community group or organization</b>				
Yes (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
No	0.71**	0.56-0.91	0.67**	0.52-0.87
<b>Decision making power over major household purchases</b>				
Own decision (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Joint decision with partner	0.61*	0.38-0.96	0.35***	0.21-0.57
Not involved in decision-making	0.76	0.50-1.16	0.67	0.44-1.02
<b>Women who think it is okay for a husband to hit his wife for any one reason</b>				
None (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Any one	2.58***	1.78-3.74	1.93***	1.35-2.75
<b>Women's mobility index</b>				
Low (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Moderate	1.21	0.93-1.58	1.05	0.79-1.40
High	0.69*	0.50-0.94	0.64**	0.45-0.90
<b>Attitudes towards gender roles and rights</b>				
Negative (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Moderate	0.92	0.65-1.31	0.91	0.63-1.31
Positive	1.34	0.89-2.02	1.03	0.66-1.59
<b>Women's DAW Perception Index</b>				
Negative (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Moderate	2.25***	1.40-3.60	2.16**	1.19-3.92
Positive	1.96***	1.23-3.11	2.34**	1.30-4.21
<b>Whether possess Nepali citizenship</b>				
Yes (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
No	1.03	0.79-1.34	1.11	0.84-1.47
<b>Disability status</b>				
Yes (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
No	0.81	0.44-1.50	0.79	0.41-1.53
<b>District</b>				
Mahottari (ref.)	1.00	-	1.00	-
Siraha	1.58***	1.20-2.08	1.37*	1.03-1.83
Dhading	0.35***	0.23-0.55	0.44***	0.27-0.73
Bardiya	1.24	0.88-1.75	1.49*	1.03-2.16
Constant	0.53		0.08***	
-2 Log likelihood	2487.87		2169.81	
Cox & Snell R Square	0.13		0.14	
Nagelkerke R Square	0.18		0.19	

\*\*\*significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\* significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  and at  $p \leq 0.05$

## Annex 5

### Odds ratios (and 95% confidence interval) from binary logistic regression for determinants of awareness of DVAW-related laws

	Model I (Rape)	Model II (Trafficking)	Model III (Birth/ citizenship/ death registration)	Model IV (Dowry)	Model V (Witch al- legations)	Model VI (Any law)
	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)
<b>Age</b>						
16-24 (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
25-34	1.10 (0.68-1.77)	1.00 (0.63-1.58)	1.01 (0.65-1.56)	1.06 (0.69-1.61)	1.24 (0.81-1.91)	1.31* (0.78-2.22)
35-49	1.59 (0.95-2.66)	1.43 (0.86-2.37)	1.18 (0.73-1.91)	1.04 (0.66-1.67)	1.56 (0.97-2.51)	1.93 (1.10-3.40)
50-64	1.58 (0.91-2.72)	1.31 (0.77-2.23)	1.00 (0.60-1.67)	1.01 (0.62-1.67)	1.73* (1.04-2.88)	1.71 (0.94-3.10)
<b>Caste/ ethnicity</b>						
Upper caste groups (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	1.08 (0.65-1.80)	0.69 (0.41-1.16)	0.96 (0.59-1.55)	1.05 (0.65-1.69)	1.13 (0.69-1.83)	1.16 (0.66-2.05)
Disadvantaged indigenous group	0.72 (0.51-1.02)	0.58** (0.41-0.82)	0.84 (0.61-1.17)	0.60*** (0.44-0.82)	0.55*** (0.40-0.75)	0.72 (0.49-1.05)
Disadvantaged non-dalit/religious caste group	1.04 (0.69-1.58)	0.95 (0.64-1.41)	0.89 (0.61-1.29)	1.14 (0.80-1.63)	0.78 (0.54-1.12)	1.01 (0.63-1.62)
Dalit/ Religious minorities	1.18 (0.77-1.82)	0.90 (0.59-1.38)	1.33 (0.88-1.99)	1.20 (0.81-1.76)	0.89 (0.60-1.31)	1.22 (0.76-1.97)
<b>Religion</b>						
Hindu (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Muslim	0.70 (0.36-1.37)	0.57 (0.30-1.11)	0.56 (0.29-1.07)	1.60 (0.85-3.04)	1.44 (0.76-2.72)	0.74 (0.35-1.57)
Other	1.08 (0.72-1.61)	0.85 (0.57-1.27)	0.60** (0.41-0.89)	0.55** (0.36-0.82)	0.82 (0.56-1.21)	0.75 (0.50-1.13)
<b>Level of education</b>						
Illiterate (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Non-formal education/Up to primary	2.05*** (1.51-2.78)	1.81*** (1.33-2.45)	2.23*** (1.63-3.05)	1.48** (1.08-2.03)	1.46* (1.06-2.01)	2.45*** (1.78-3.37)
Six to 10 years of schooling	3.25*** (2.20-4.81)	2.97*** (2.02-4.34)	3.53*** (2.40-5.19)	2.19*** (1.50-3.19)	2.13*** (1.45-3.14)	4.44*** (2.88-6.85)
School leaving certificate or more	12.55*** (6.41-24.59)	7.98*** (4.36-14.60)	6.18*** (3.64-10.50)	3.59*** (2.16-5.96)	3.50*** (2.10-5.83)	14.06*** (6.49-30.46)
<b>Marital status</b>						
Never married (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Currently married	2.05* (1.03-4.06)	1.97* (1.02-3.80)	1.16 (0.65-2.07)	1.45 (0.82-2.56)	1.72 (0.96-3.06)	2.21* (1.01-4.82)
Widow/ divorced/ separated	1.91 (0.78-4.68)	2.28 (0.95-5.50)	2.17 (0.95-4.97)	0.94 (0.41-2.16)	1.15 (0.49-2.67)	1.95 (0.73-5.26)
<b>Number of living children</b>						
0	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
1	0.45** (0.24-0.85)	0.54* (0.30-0.99)	0.87 (0.50-1.51)	0.84 (0.48-1.44)	0.86 (0.50-1.49)	0.52 (0.25-1.07)

2	0.61 (0.33-1.10)	0.76 (0.43-1.35)	1.02 (0.61-1.72)	0.90 (0.54-1.49)	0.70 (0.42-1.18)	0.56 (0.29-1.11)
3+	0.53* (0.30-0.95)	0.60 (0.35-1.05)	1.21 (0.73-2.02)	0.69 (0.42-1.13)	0.57* (0.35-0.95)	0.49* (0.25-0.95)
<b>Occupation</b>						
Non-remunerated or students (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Daily wage laborer	1.00 (0.59-1.69)	0.71 (0.42-1.18)	0.90 (0.55-1.47)	1.10 (0.67-1.79)	0.87* (0.53-1.44)	0.89 (0.50-1.57)
Foreign employment (India or other country)	0.56 (0.30-1.03)	0.45** (0.24-0.82)	0.69 (0.39-1.25)	0.67 (0.37-1.19)	0.54 (0.30-0.98)	0.37** (0.19-0.71)
Agriculture	0.89 (0.56-1.41)	0.72 (0.46-1.13)	0.97 (0.63-1.48)	1.31 (0.86-1.98)	0.75 (0.49-1.14)	0.85 (0.51-1.41)
Professional	1.03 (0.50-2.11)	1.63 (0.78-3.37)	1.58 (0.88-2.83)	3.83*** (2.10-6.97)	2.31** (1.29-4.15)	1.04 (0.44-2.45)
Business/ Petty business	1.01 (0.58-1.73)	0.88 (0.52-1.48)	1.19 (0.73-1.94)	1.21 (0.76-1.93)	0.70 (0.44-1.13)	1.01 (0.54-1.88)
<b>Wealth quintile</b>						
Lowest (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Second	0.93 (0.68-1.27)	1.30 (0.95-1.78)	1.17 (0.85-1.61)	1.01 (0.73-1.39)	1.05 (0.76-1.46)	1.00 (0.73-1.38)
Middle	1.20 (0.86-1.69)	1.74*** (1.24-2.45)	1.94*** (1.39-2.72)	0.99 (0.71-1.39)	1.16 (0.82-1.64)	1.38 (0.97-1.98)
Fourth	1.32 (0.91-1.93)	1.88*** (1.29-2.72)	2.71*** (1.87-3.91)	1.42 (0.99-2.03)	1.54* (1.07-2.23)	2.03*** (1.33-3.09)
Highest	1.40 (0.90-2.17)	1.99** (1.30-3.05)	2.70*** (1.79-4.06)	1.16 (0.78-1.73)	1.60* (1.07-2.41)	1.71* (1.05-2.79)
<b>Media exposure</b>						
Low (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Moderate	1.16 (0.88-1.53)	1.30 (0.99-1.72)	0.97 (0.73-1.29)	1.19 (0.89-1.58)	0.98 (0.73-1.30)	1.06 (0.79-1.42)
High	2.06*** (1.46-2.93)	2.06*** (1.47-2.89)	1.02 (0.73-1.44)	1.91*** (1.37-2.66)	1.70** (1.21-2.37)	1.57* (1.07-2.31)
<b>Whether obtained Nepali citizenship</b>						
Yes (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
No	0.83 (0.50-1.36)	1.05 (0.64-1.73)	0.76 (0.48-1.22)	0.93 (0.59-1.47)	0.75 (0.47-1.19)	1.12 (0.65-1.94)
<b>Place of residence</b>						
Urban (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Rural	0.85 (0.64-1.14)	1.14 (0.86-1.51)	0.92 (0.70-1.20)	0.91 (0.70-1.18)	0.96 (0.74-1.25)	0.70* (0.50-0.97)
<b>District</b>						
Mahottari (R)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Siraha	0.40*** (0.29-0.55)	0.56*** (0.41-0.76)	0.32*** (0.24-0.43)	0.52*** (0.39-0.70)	0.38*** (0.28-0.51)	0.24*** (0.17-0.35)
Dhading	0.39*** (0.26-0.60)	1.08 (0.72-1.62)	0.66* (0.45-0.97)	1.02 (0.70-1.49)	1.59* (1.09-2.33)	0.34*** (0.22-0.55)
Bardiya	0.86 (0.58-1.29)	1.95*** (1.33-2.87)	1.16 (0.81-1.68)	1.40 (0.99-1.98)	1.66** (1.16-2.36)	0.64 (0.40-1.02)
Constant	0.78	0.32**	0.36**	0.31***	0.33***	1.47
-2 Log likelihood	2128.29	2171.33	2316.59	2396.55	2336.98	1847.40
Cox & Snell R Square	0.19	0.21	0.20	0.17	0.19	0.19
Nagelkerke R Square	0.26	0.29	0.26	0.23	0.26	0.29

significant at \*= $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*= $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*= $p \leq 0.001$

## Annex 6

### Odds ratios (and 95% confidence interval) from binary logistic regression for determinants of awareness of available services for women who experience violence

Characteristics	OR	95% CI
<b>Current age (in years)</b>		
16-24 (R)	1.00	
25-34	1.07	0.66-1.74
35-49	1.70*	1.00-2.88
50-64	1.31	0.75-2.28
<b>Caste/ ethnicity</b>		
Upper caste groups (R)	1.00	-
Relatively advantaged indigenous group	0.66	0.40-1.08
Disadvantaged indigenous group	0.77	0.54-1.10
Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste group	0.65	0.42-1.01
Dalit/ Religious minorities	0.85	0.55-1.31
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu (R)	1.00	-
Muslim	0.48*	0.25-0.93
Other	0.76	0.51-1.13
<b>Level of education</b>		
Illiterate (R)	1.00	-
Non-formal education/Up to primary	2.21***	1.62-3.02
Six to 10 years of schooling	4.23***	2.81-6.38
School leaving certificate or more	10.99***	5.70-21.17
<b>Marital status</b>		
Never married (R)	1.00	-
Currently married	0.82	0.42-1.59
Widow/ divorced/ separated	0.54	0.23-1.29
<b>Number of living children</b>		
0	1.00	-
1	1.09	0.59-2.00
2	1.01	0.58-1.76
3 and more	0.97	0.56-1.67
<b>Occupation</b>		
Non-remunerated or students (R)	1.00	-
Daily wage labourer	0.91	0.53-1.56
Foreign employment (India or other country)	0.57	0.31-1.07
Agriculture	0.92	0.57-1.49
Professional	1.17	0.57-2.41
Business/ Petty business	0.99	0.57-1.73
<b>Wealth quintile</b>		
Lowest (R)	1.00	-

Second	1.06	0.78-1.46
Middle	1.56**	1.10-2.22
Fourth	1.29	0.88-1.88
Highest	1.64*	1.05-2.57
<b>Media exposure</b>		
Low (R)	1.00	-
Moderate	0.90	0.67-1.19
High	0.91	0.64-1.31
<b>Whether obtained Nepali citizenship</b>		
Yes (R)	1.00	-
No	0.83	0.49-1.40
<b>Place of residence</b>		
Urban (R)	1.00	-
Rural	1.32	0.98-1.77
<b>District</b>		
Mahottari (R)	1.00	-
Siraha	0.86	0.61-1.20
Dhading	0.21***	0.14-0.33
Bardiya	0.60*	0.39-0.91
<i>Constant</i>	<i>1.59</i>	
<i>-2 Log likelihood</i>	<i>2055.02</i>	
<i>Cox &amp; Snell R Square</i>	<i>0.17</i>	
<i>Nagelkerke R Square</i>	<i>0.25</i>	

## Annex 7

### Perceptions of women’s vulnerability according to sex of stakeholders

Statements (N=35)	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Just being a woman results in vulnerability to violence through her lifetime	14	11	2	1	4	3	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
Sexual violence against a woman begins with moment that she does not clearly consent to sexual relations	15	11	2	2	3	2	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
Women regularly face barriers within the justice system when they seek assistance due to their identity as women	14	14	2	0	4	1	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
A Dalit woman faces many more barriers within the justice system when she seeks assistance than a non-Dalit woman	9	7	2	0	9	8	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>

## Annex 8

### Core persons involved in the study

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