

Child & Family Tracker

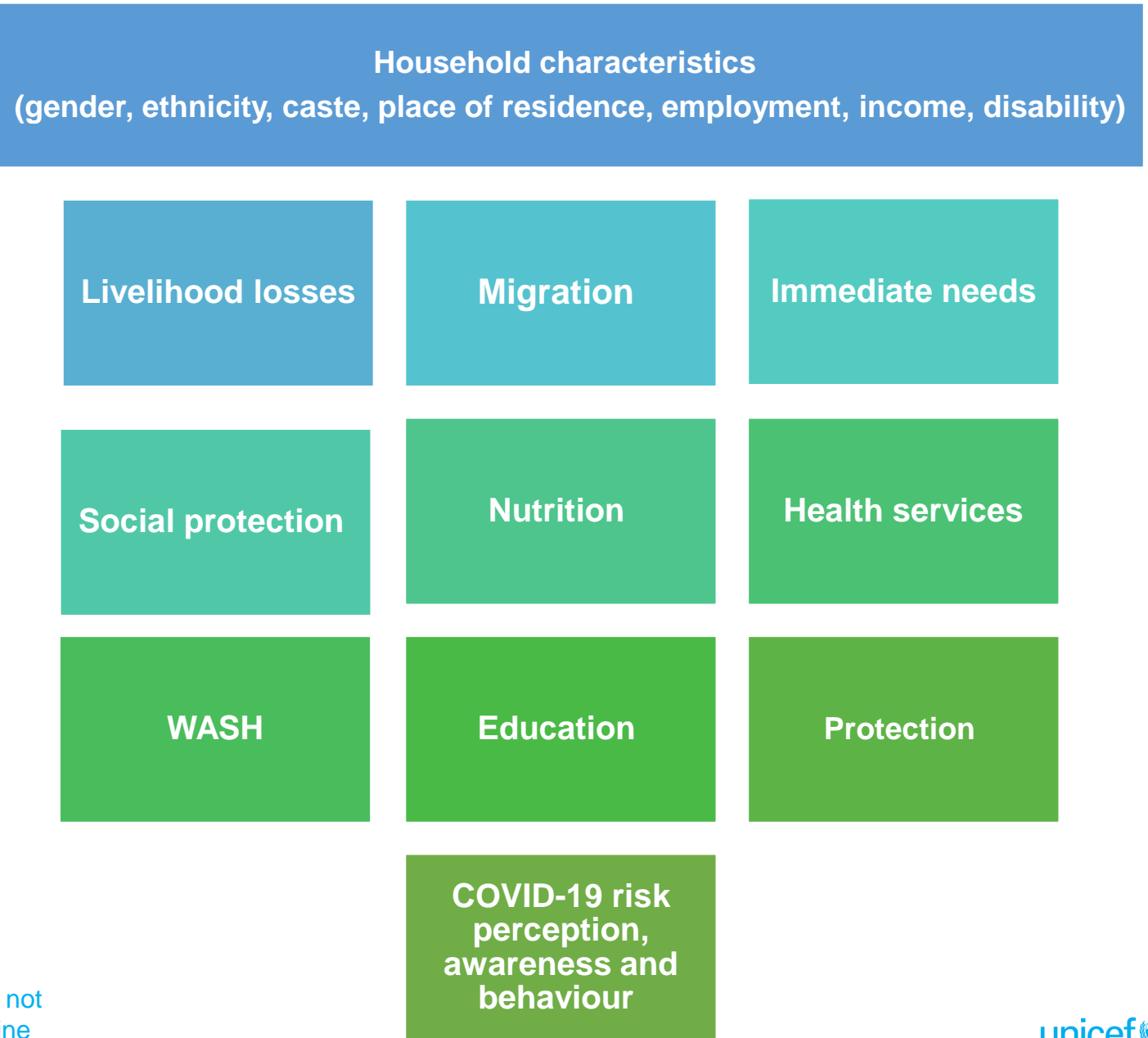
Tracking the Socio-Economic Impact
of COVID-19 on Children and
Families in Nepal

3rd Monthly Household Survey
August 2020 Findings



Content

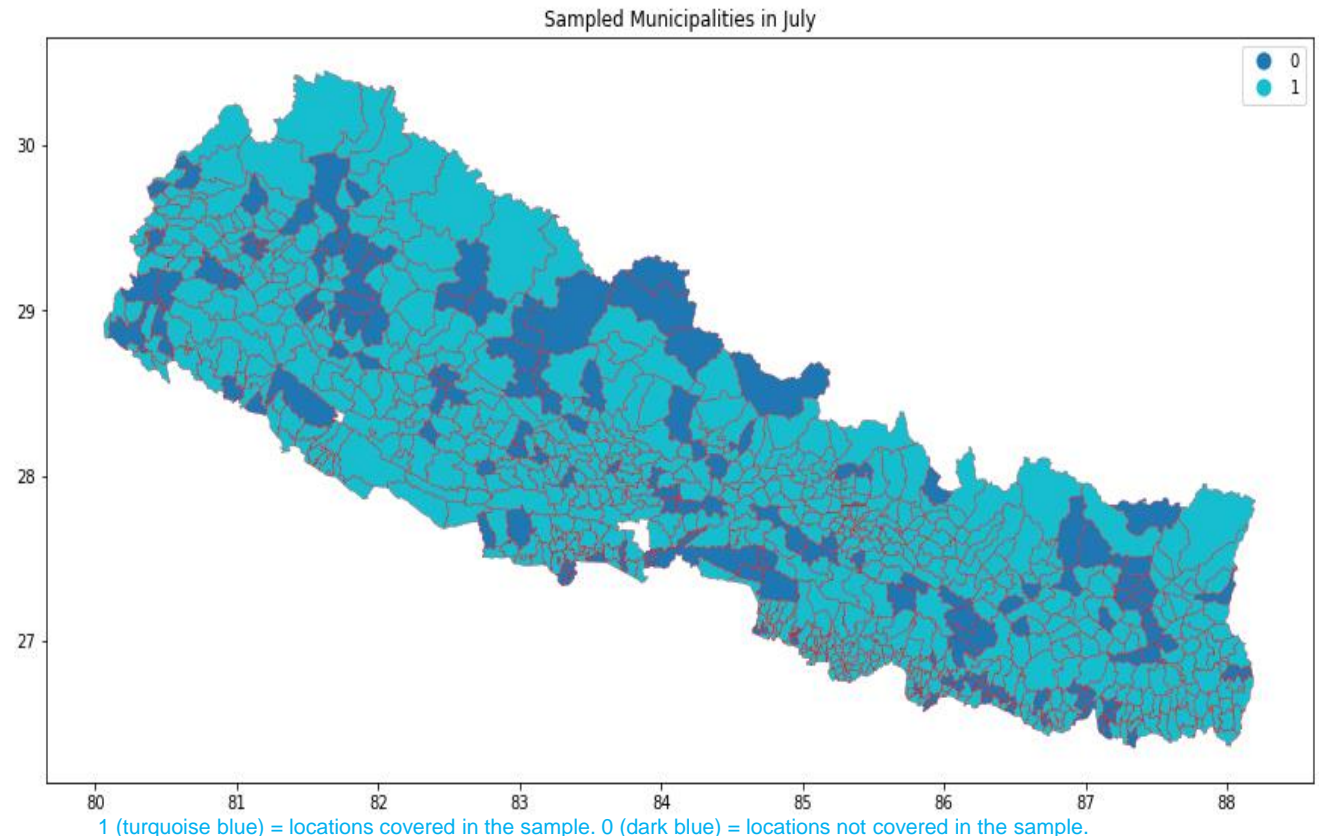
- This is the **third** in a series of monthly household surveys to track the socio-economic multi-sectoral impact of COVID-19 on children and families in Nepal.
- Where available, the monthly household survey data is **supplemented by relevant child-related data** from other sources.



* Baseline of 7,655 respondents. 6,128 respondents in all three rounds. 587 respondents dropped out since May. 547 respondents in baseline did not participate in July but did again in August. 393 respondents were in baseline and July survey but not in August. Hence total August sample = 6,675

Survey Design

- **Telephonic survey and interactive voice responses** with follow up questions.
- Sample size: **6,675 households** with children below the age of 18. Households are selected through random and purposive sampling.
- The sample covers **80+% of municipalities** (624). Strong geospatial representation to allow interpolation to non-observed areas.
- Sample remains **nationally and provincially representative** of households with children.
- Interviewed **caregivers**: 49% female and 51% male.



Highlights in Findings

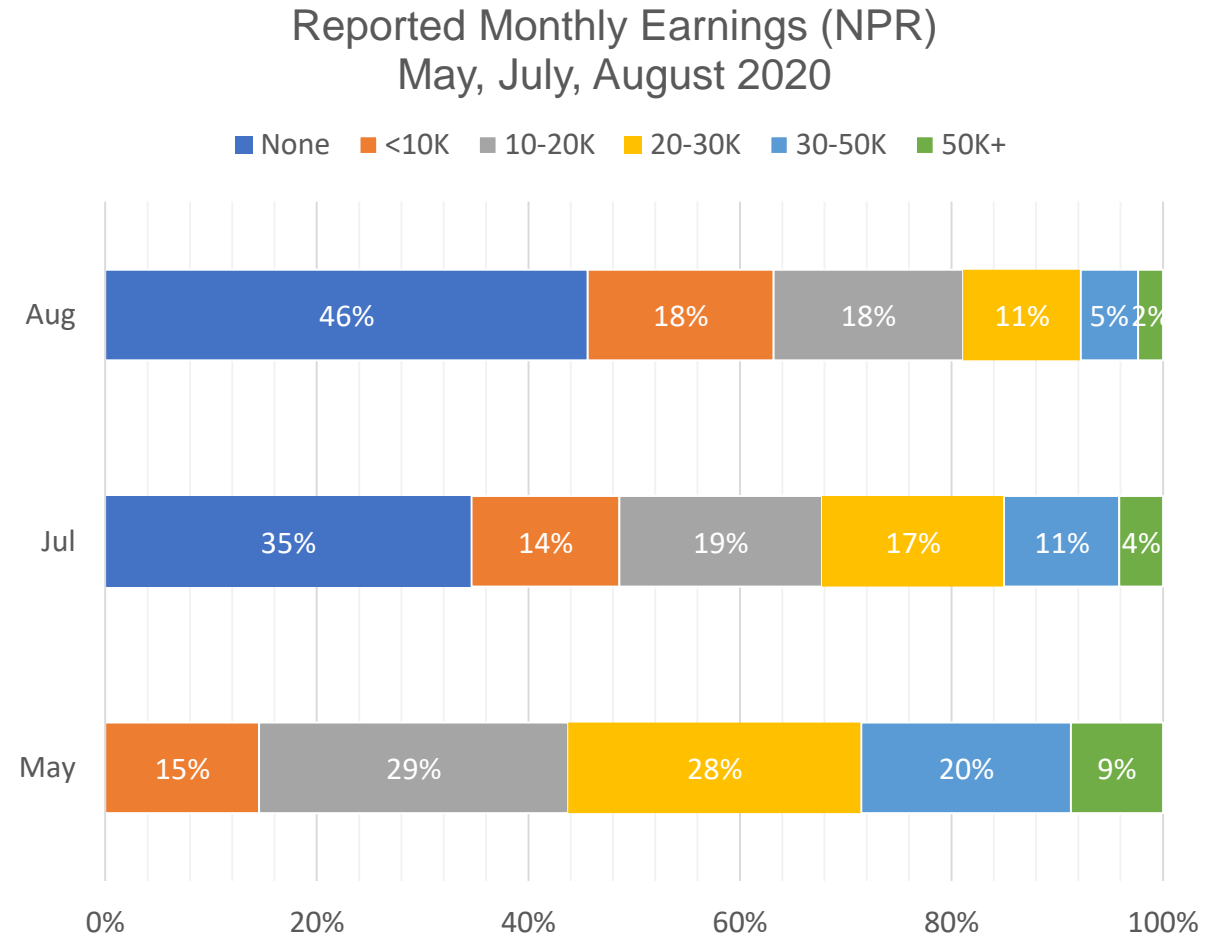
- Poverty has deepened and expanded. In August 45% of the families sampled had **no earnings during the past month**, with the number of families below the poverty line marked by 10,000 NPR having increased from an estimated 11-14% in May to 59-65% in August.
- **Families are struggling to meet basic needs** (food, medicine, fuel, hygiene), with almost double the number of households reporting shortages of essential supplies, from an estimated 36% in May to 74% in August.
- Approximately **1 in 5 households are struggling to meet key dietary requirements**, mostly due to a lack of purchasing power (cash). More families have now reduced food intake for children in August (26%) compared to July (21%). By August, 10% of respondents (with children under 2 years old) reported that their children were not eating their usual diet compared to 3-4% in July.
- Critical knowledge gaps identified. Approximately 6 in 10 respondents **know that the disease can be passed** through close contact with an infected person.
- Worrying gaps in practice identified: 55% of respondents wash their hands all the time. **Only 4 out of 10 are wearing masks all the time**. A minority of **2 in 10** are observing the two metres **physical distancing guidance**.
- 26% of respondents with children having a fever experienced **challenges in getting treatment**. Majority from lower-income groups with higher numbers in Gandaki, Karnali & Province 5.
- 22% of respondents, drawn largely from lower-income groups, reported that **students are not studying** (either home school, online or private classes) compared to 17% in July.

Income Losses Continue

46% of respondents had no earnings since July 2020 – an increase of 11%.

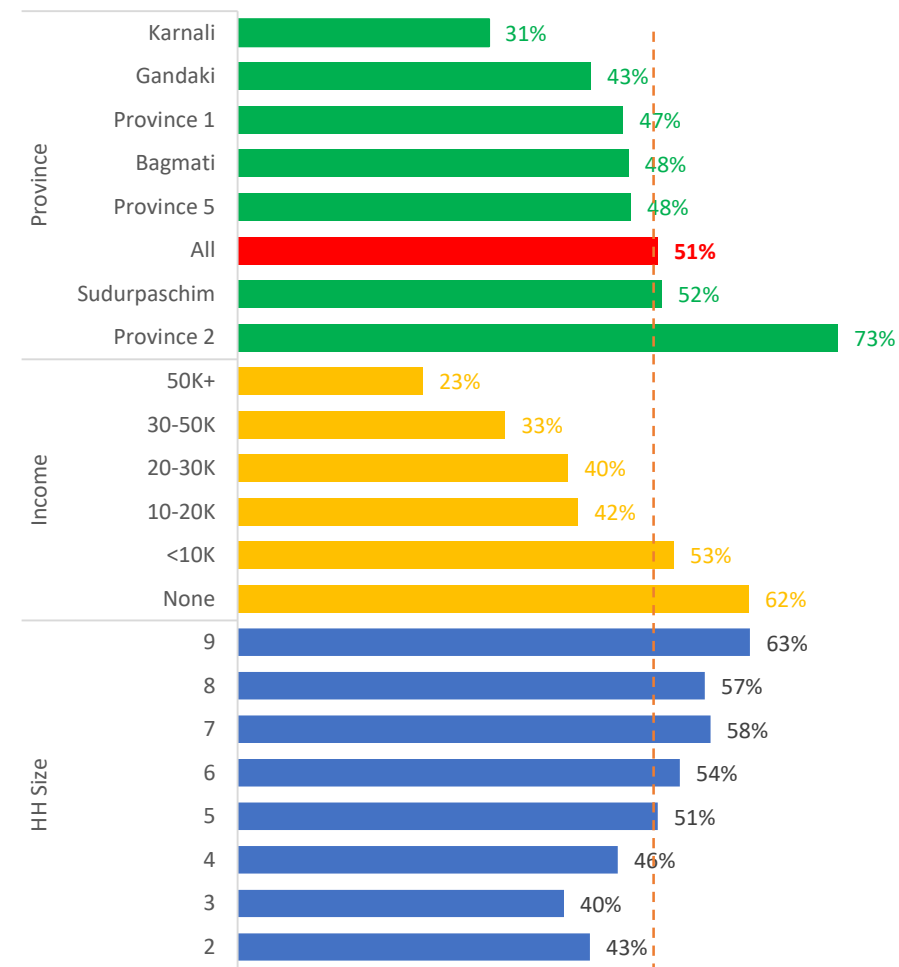
The distribution of income shifted downwards **signaling increased risk of poverty.**

- Continued drop in the share of respondents belonging to the top quintile. Hence, since the beginning of the first lockdown, the income distribution has shifted downward significantly.
- An increase in the percentage of low-income households since May 2020 - suggests that higher-income households might be moving downward to this group.
- 48% of respondents in the bottom quintile reported having no earnings in July, which increased to 46% in August.
- Most respondents from low-income families are more likely to borrow funds while middle- and high-income families choose to use their savings to cope with financial difficulties. Family and friends continue to provide financial support.



Tight Labour Market Conditions: Earnings/Livelihood Losses Continue

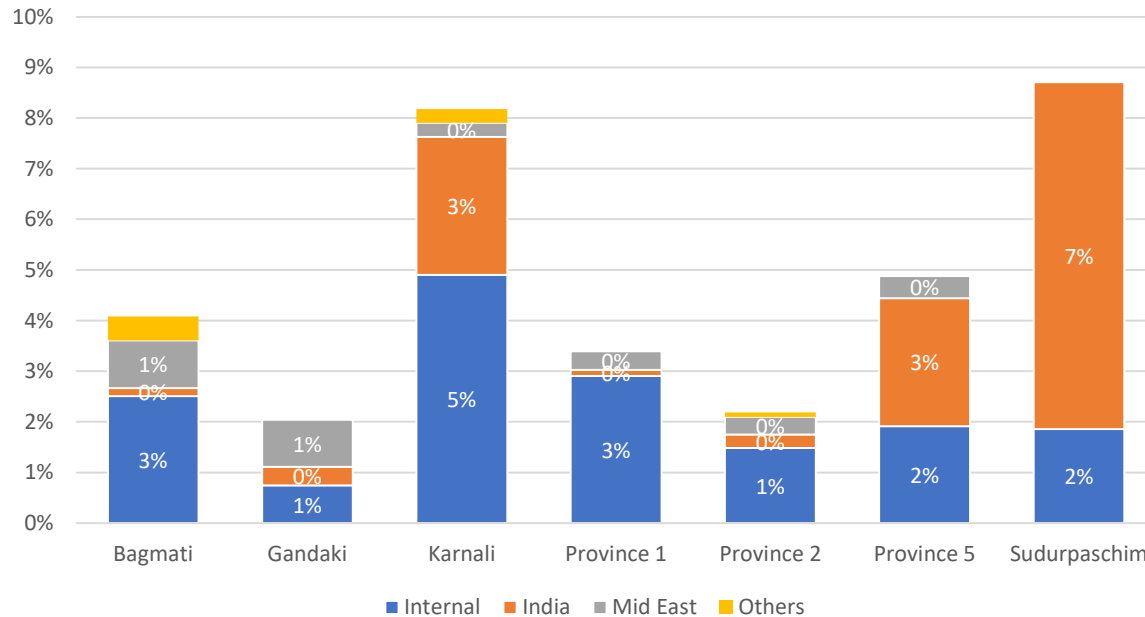
- In August, 51% of households reported a loss of livelihood and earnings a decrease of 14% since July. This could be explained by easing of lockdown during July and August when some respondents were able to recover their livelihood and return to their jobs.
- Only 2% of respondents who were unemployed were able to find jobs in August, yet 64% remain unemployed.
- 68% of male heads of households lost their employment compared to 9% of female heads of households.
- Moreover, 1.5% of children in the interviewed households reportedly lost jobs. This suggests that the percentage of working children during lockdown could be higher if they had not lost their employment.



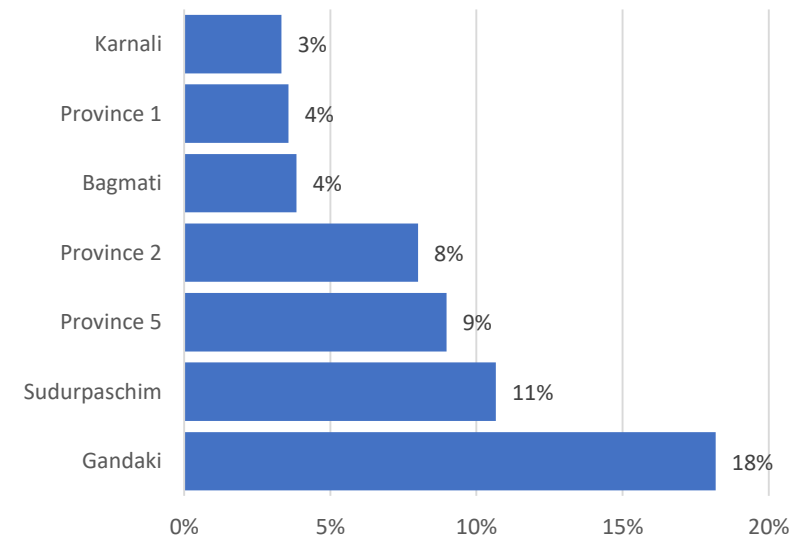
Percentage of respondents who lost earnings and livelihood by province, income and household size

Migration: Largely Unchanged Except for Middle East Returnees

Percentage of respondents reporting returnees by province and place of origin



Percentage of returnees experiencing stigma

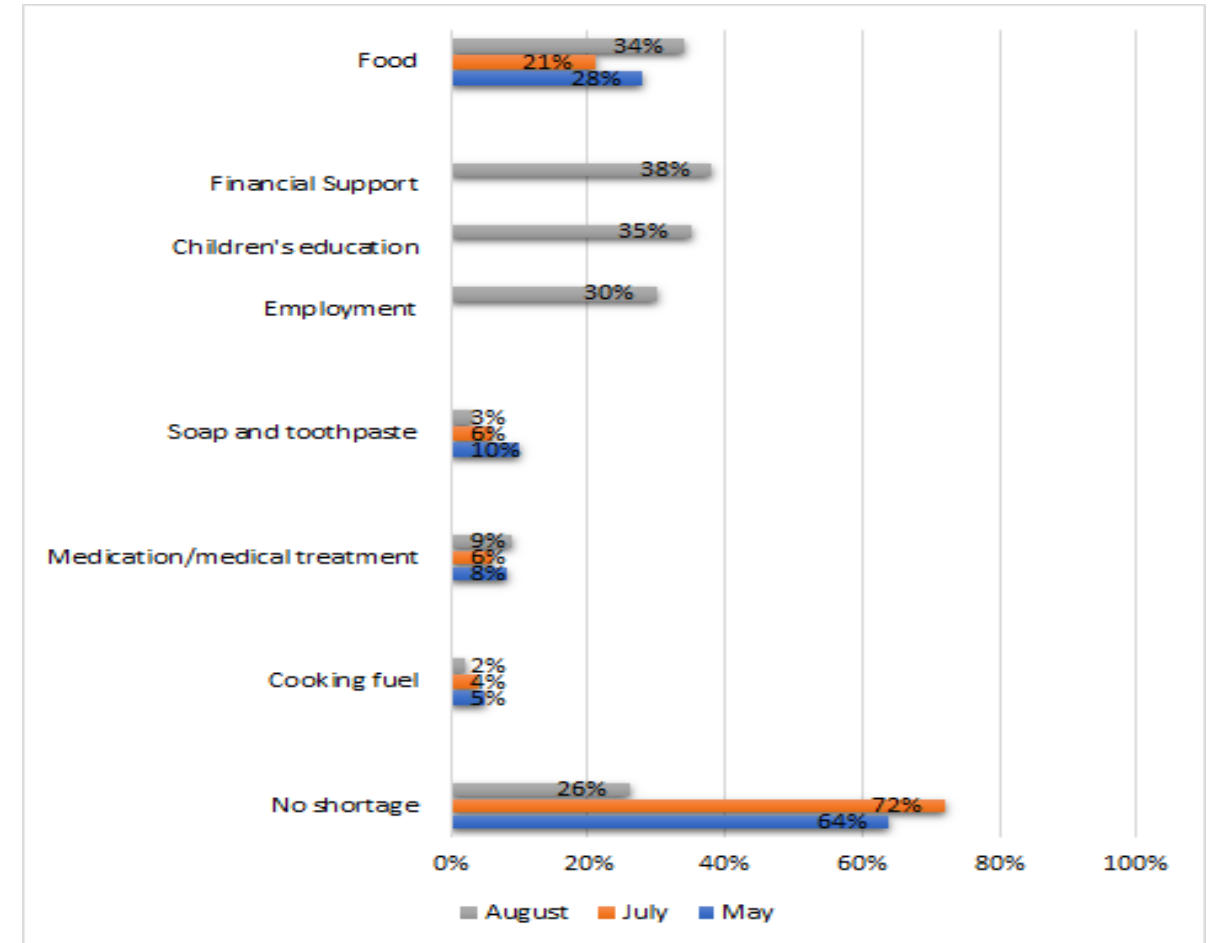


- Since April 2020, family members of 4.5% of surveyed households returned home from other provinces in Nepal, India, the Middle East and other countries.
- 47% of returnees came from different locations in Nepal, 39% from India and 10% from the Middle East.
- Sudurpaschim and Karnali had the highest percentage of returnees.
- Of 300 returnees in the survey, 8% reported experiencing stigma on their return. Returnees from Sudurpaschim and Gandaki are more likely to experience stigma. In household surveys, given the sensitivity to report, stigmatization tends to be under reported.

Immediate Needs of Respondents' Households

- The percentage of households reporting food as an immediate need increased from 21% in July to 34% in August.
- Medication/medical treatment, soap and toothpaste remain among the top immediate needs of households. The percentage of those needing medication/medical treatment increased in August.
- The greatest immediate needs of families overall were employment, children's education and financial support. These are new categories that were added to the August survey.
- Children's education, food, financial support and employment, also evident from the response rate on the need for cash, are most likely to be the immediate needs of low-income households with children.

Percentage of households with immediate needs (May–August 2020)



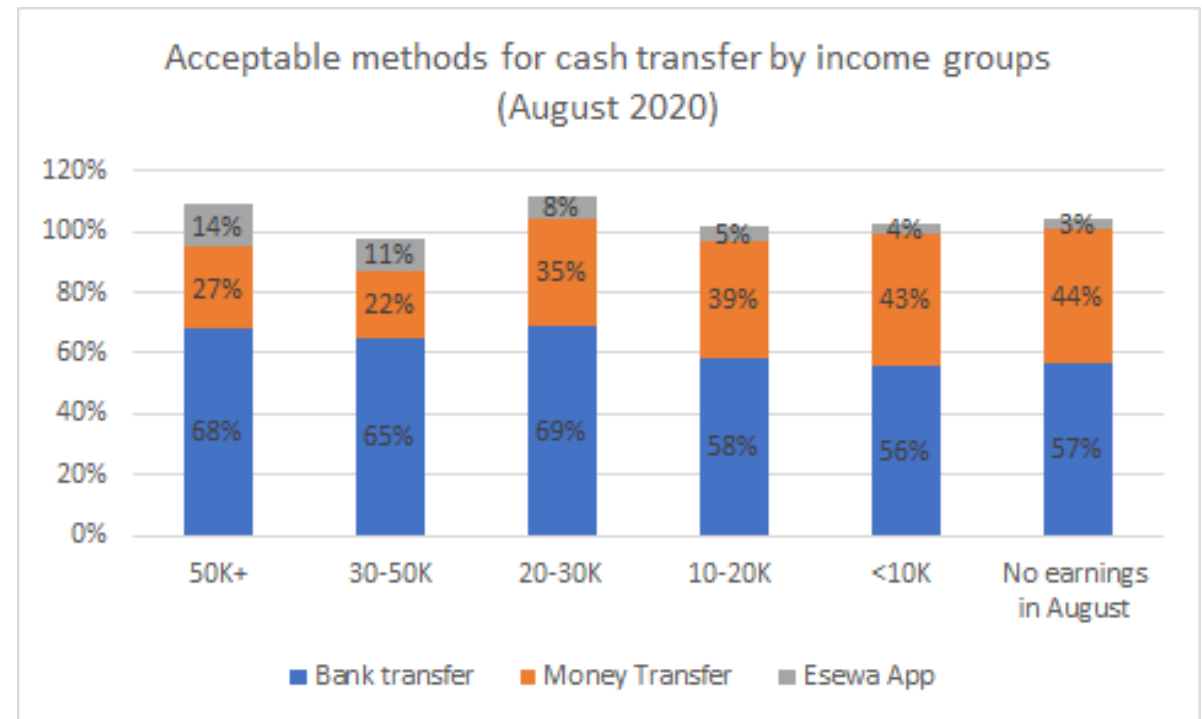
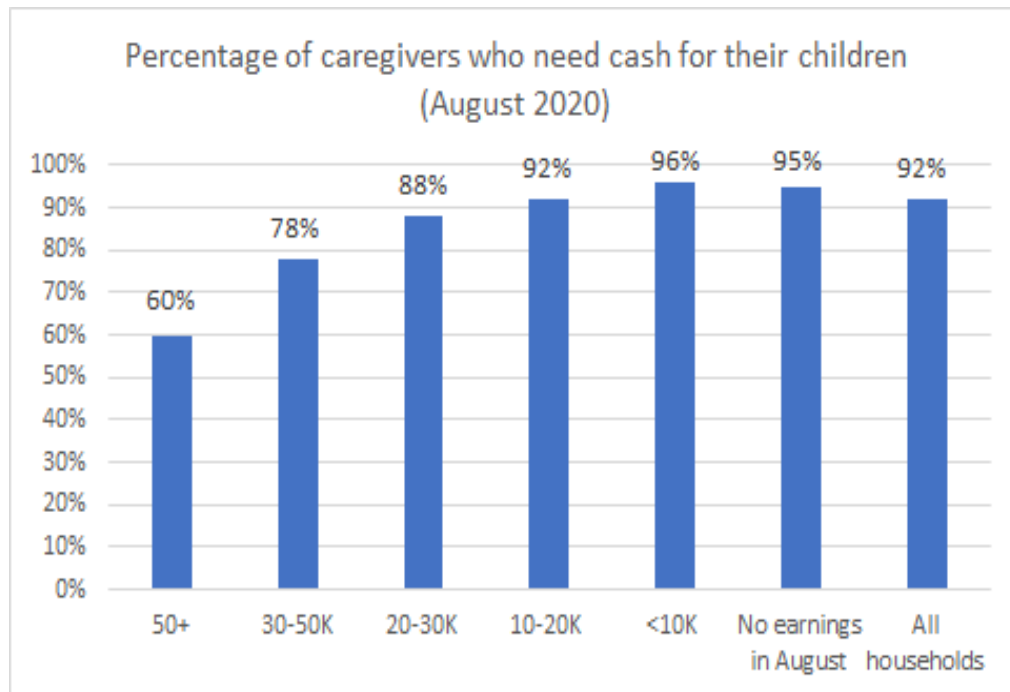
*question was modified in the August survey with added possible answers.

*the percentage of households needing menstrual hygiene products and water for handwashing decreased from 2% in May to below 1% in August. 1% of households continue reporting water among the top immediate needs from May to August.

Social Protection

92% of respondents need additional cash to support their children

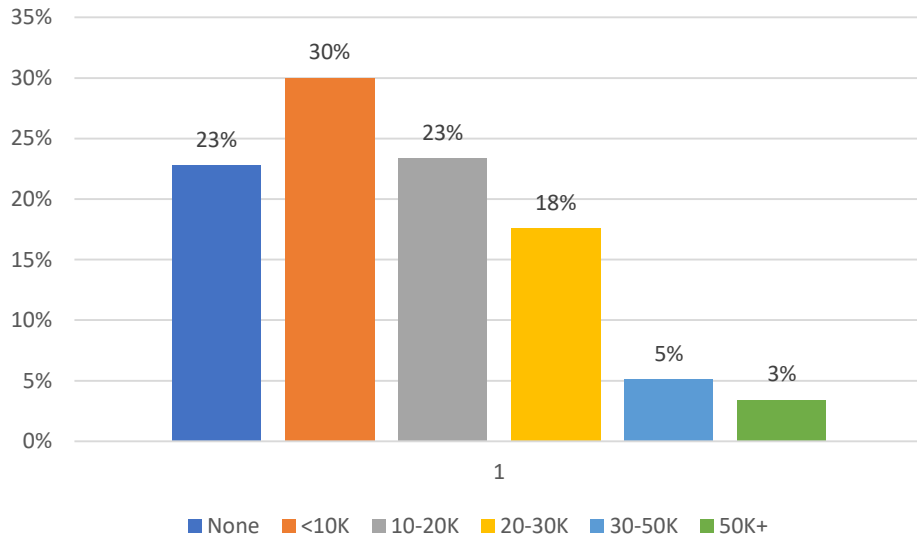
- Over 90% of surveyed families reported need for additional cash to support their children. Over 90% of households in the lowest income groups, including those who had no earnings, emphasized this need.
- 60% of highest-income households also reported needing additional cash for their children. Most of them could be among those who lost employment and had no earnings during lockdown.
- Bank transfer is more popular than services such as Esewa and other money transfer mechanisms. This is especially important to know for planning cash-based interventions and risk mitigation measures as not all services might be available during emergencies.



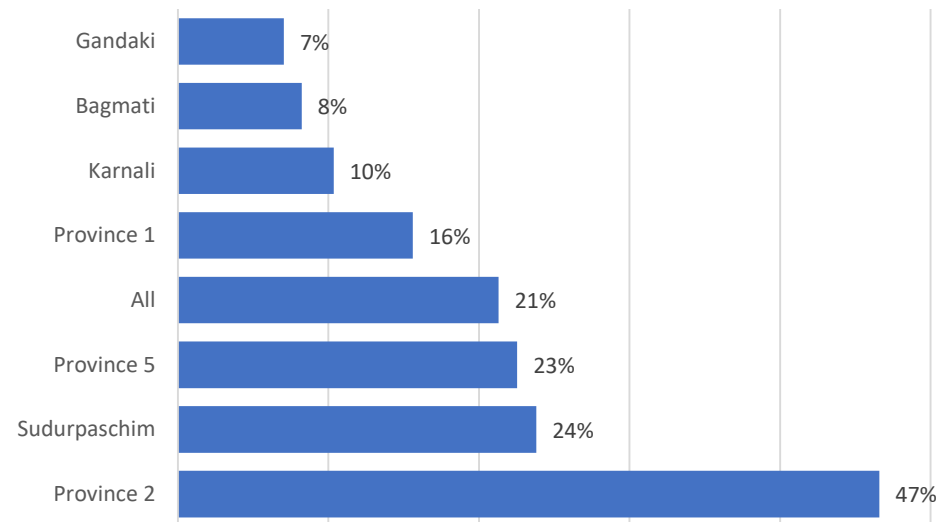
Social Protection

21% of households with children received financial/material assistance from the government since lockdown

Percentage of households receiving financial/material assistance
– by income



Percentage of households receiving financial/material assistance
- by province

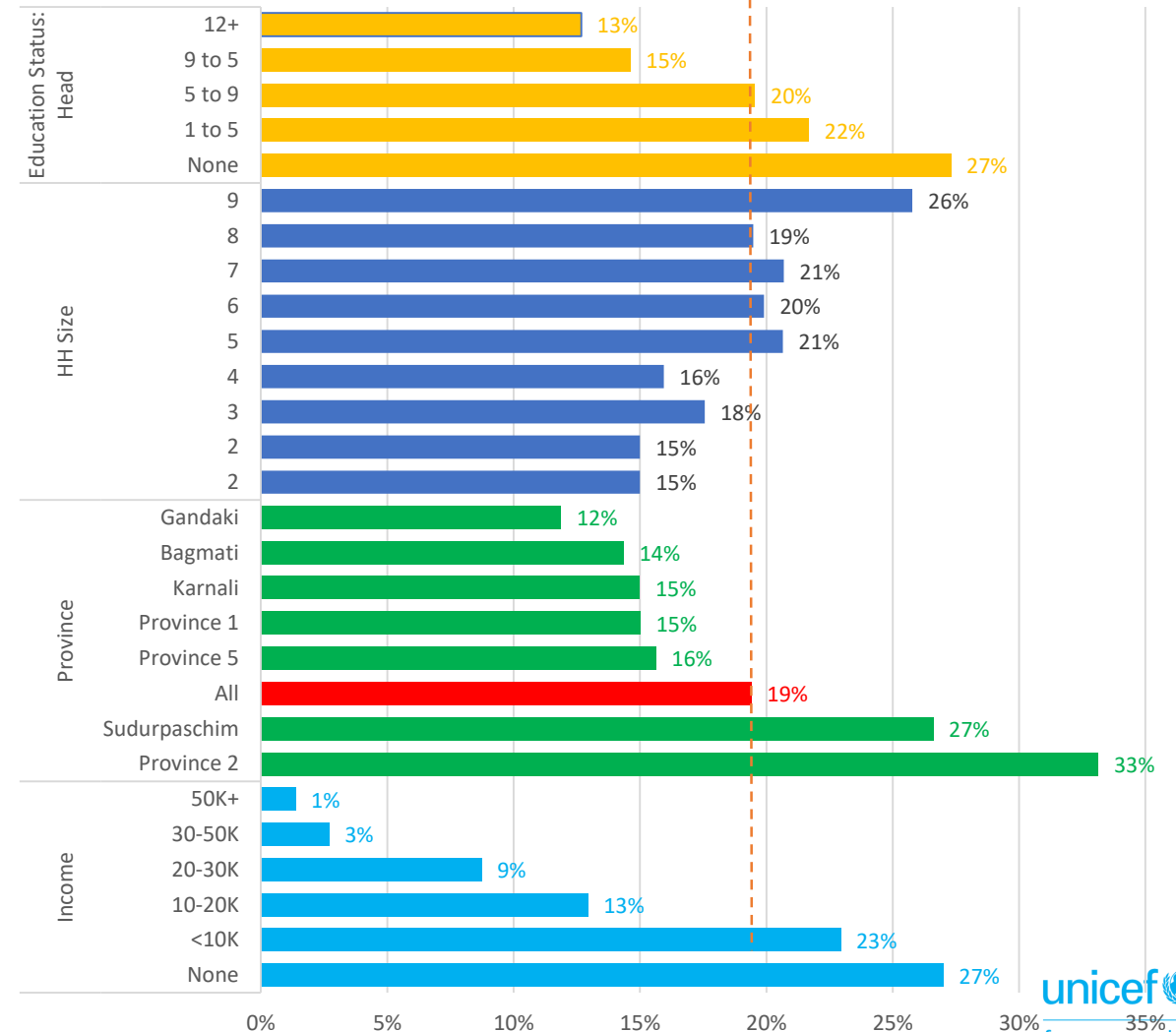


- 21% of households received financial/material assistance from the government after the first lockdown was imposed.
- More low-income families compared to higher-income groups receive government financial/material assistance.
- Province 2 has the highest percentage of households receiving government financial/material assistance.

Nutrition – Challenges to Provide Food Daily

- The percentage of households struggling to provide food on a daily basis decreased from 28% in July to 19% in August.
- Households in the lowest income group and in Province 2 are more likely to struggle to provide food on a daily basis.
- The top three reasons for caregivers reporting not being able to provide food are the absence of money, increased food prices and unavailability of essential food items at shops. A small percentage of caregivers are also experiencing fear of going out to buy food.
- 40% of households reporting food as an immediate need also reported struggling to provide food daily. This explains why the percentage reporting food as an immediate need is likely to be higher than indicated.

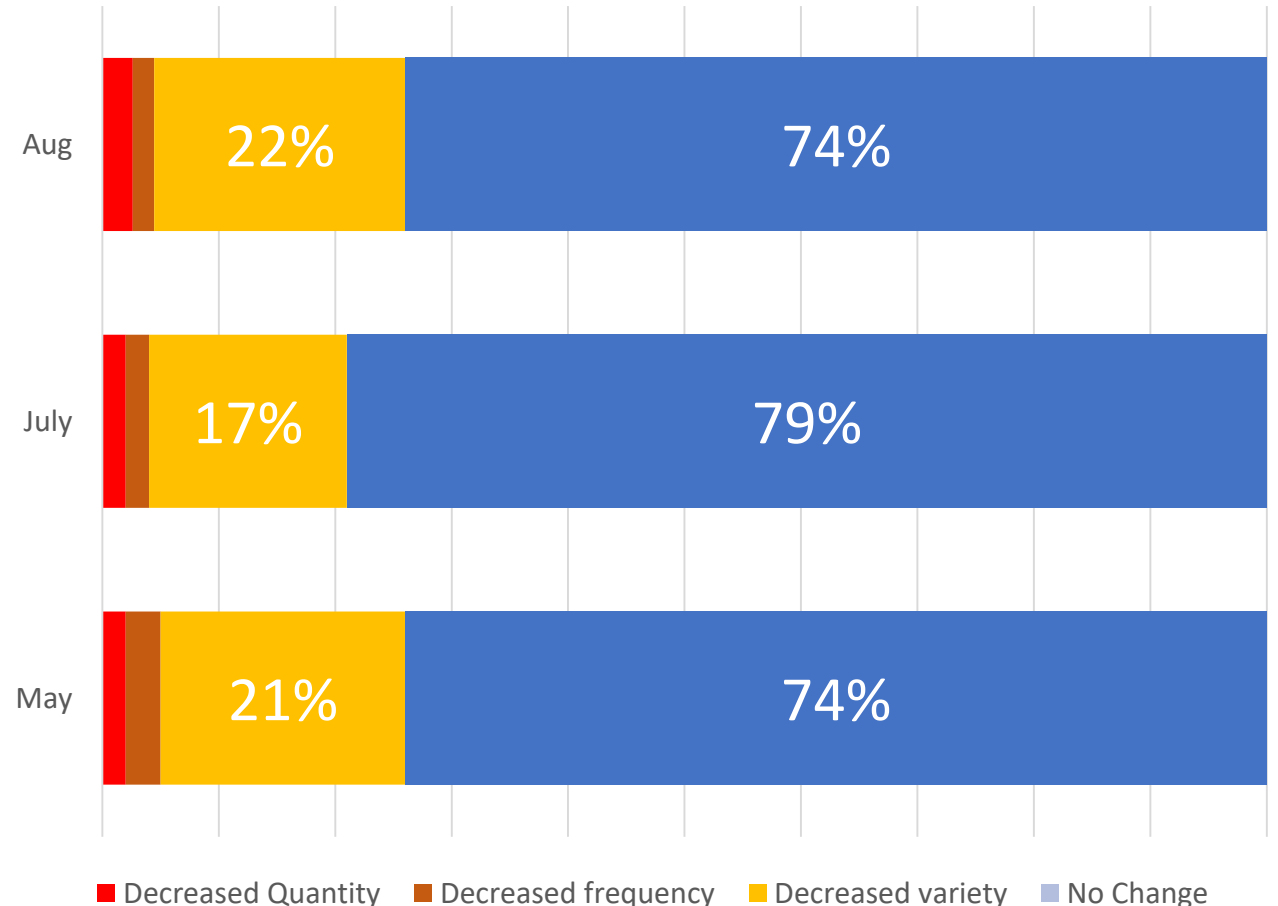
Variation in % struggling for food by income, province, household size and education status of head of household



Nutrition: Children's Diet

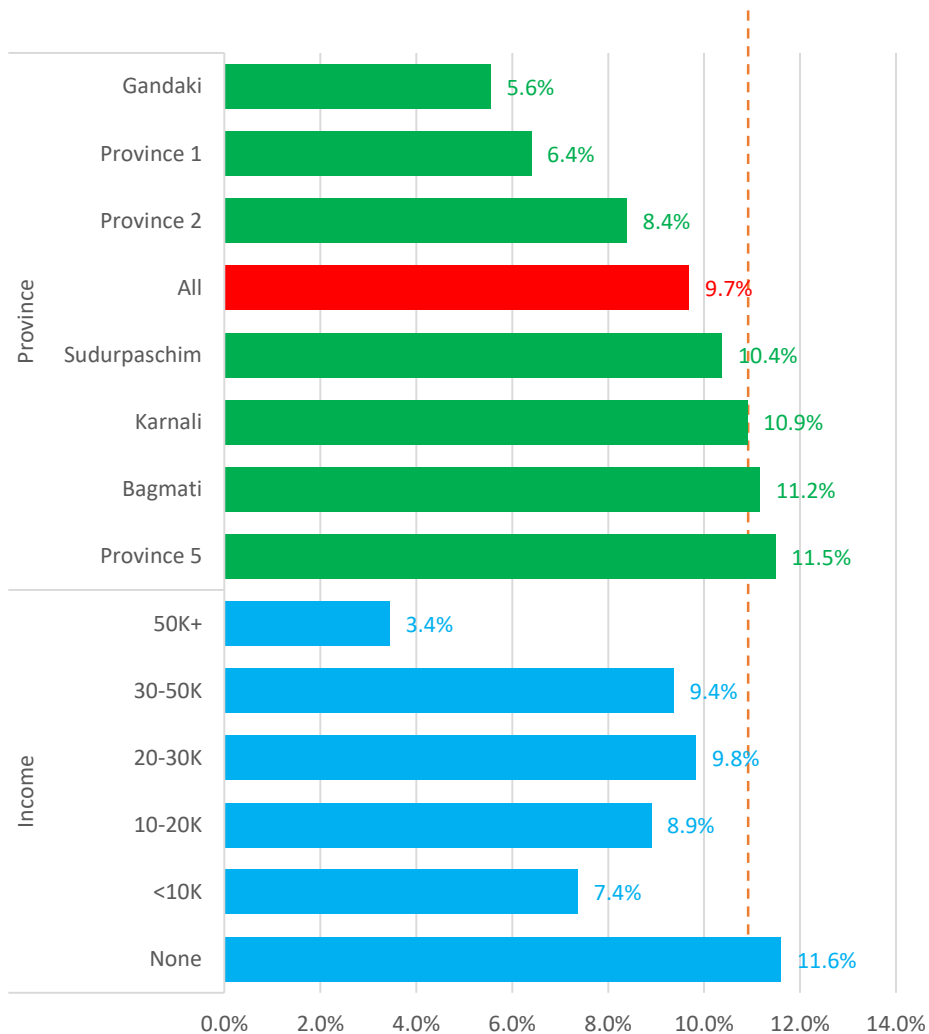
Percentage of households with children who experienced dietary changes increased by 5% since July.

- In August, 26% of children below the age of 18 experienced changes in their dietary intake, in comparison to 21% in July.
- There has been a slight increase in the percentage of children eating less often per day and eating less at mealtimes.
- More children are eating a reduced variety of foods in August compared to July.
- Low-income families and those without any earnings are those with the highest percentage of children who had to compromise with their diet.



Percentage of respondents reporting changes to children's dietary intake

Nutrition: Changes in Diet of Children Under Two Years Old

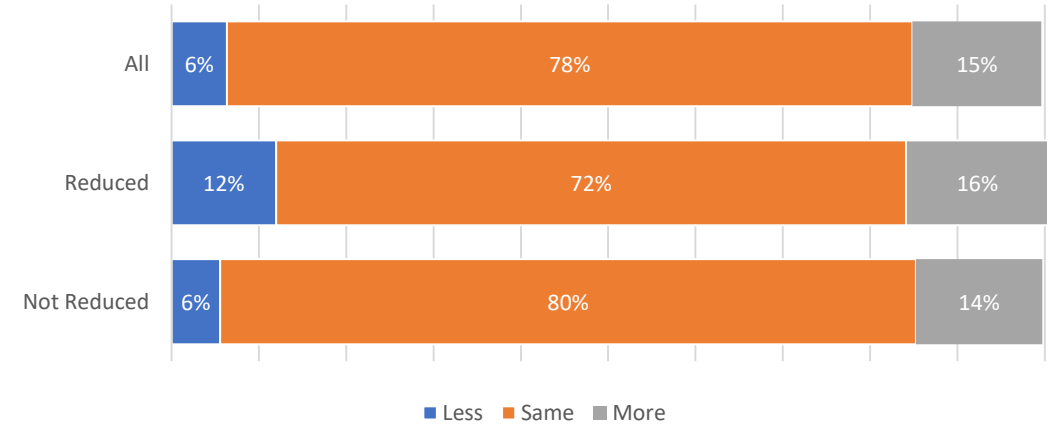


- Children under 2 years old in 10% of households were reportedly not eating their usual diet in August. The percentage of such households increased by 3-4% since July. Children in households without any earnings are more likely to experience changes in their diets.
- Province 5, Bagmati & Karnali Provinces have the highest percentage of children under 2 years old who are not eating their usual diet.

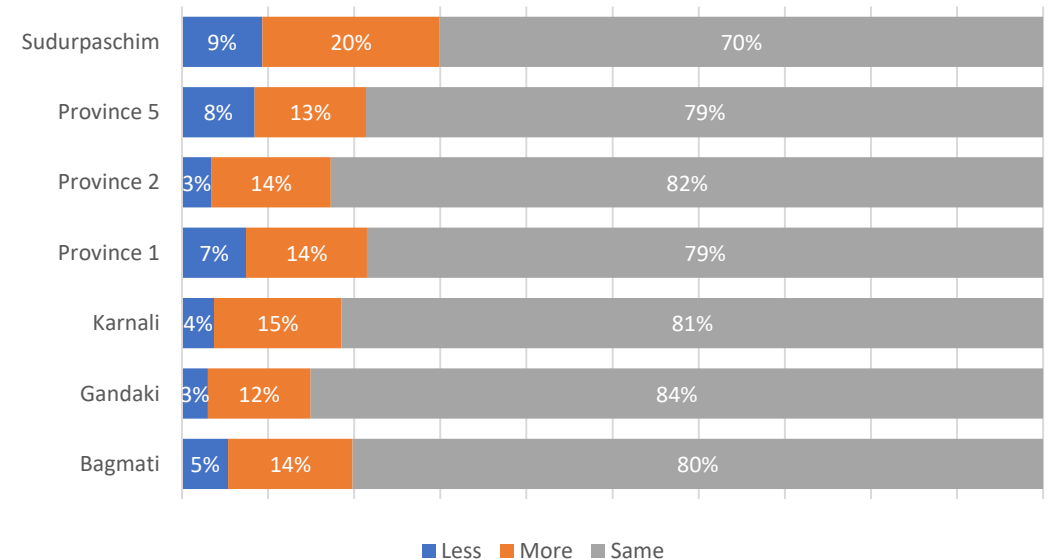
Percentage of households where children under 2 years old eat less

Nutrition: Breastfeeding of Children

- 96% of children under 2 years old are breastfed. The rate is slightly less than the national rate of children who have ever been breastfed – 99% in 2019 and 97% in 2014 (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey).
- 16% of mothers reported reducing the number of meals per day in August (same as July). Mothers who do not reduce their meals are more likely to provide the same frequency of breastfeeding to their children.
- More mothers in Sudurpaschim Province reported an increase in breastfeeding frequency than in other provinces.



Breastfeeding frequency - by mother reducing the number of meals per day and frequency of breastfeeding

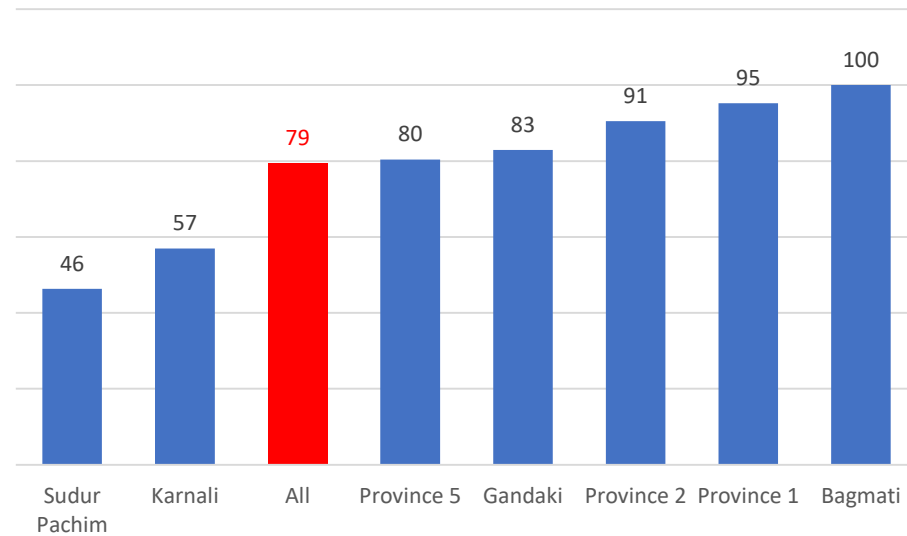


Breastfeeding frequency - by province

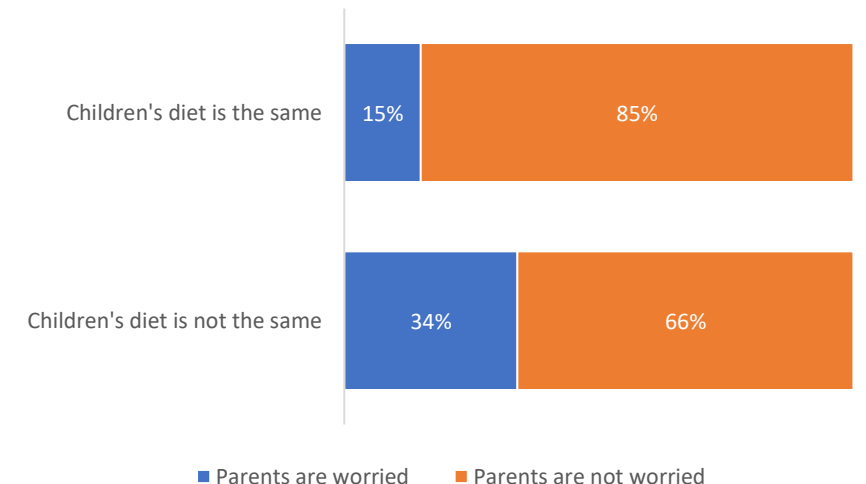
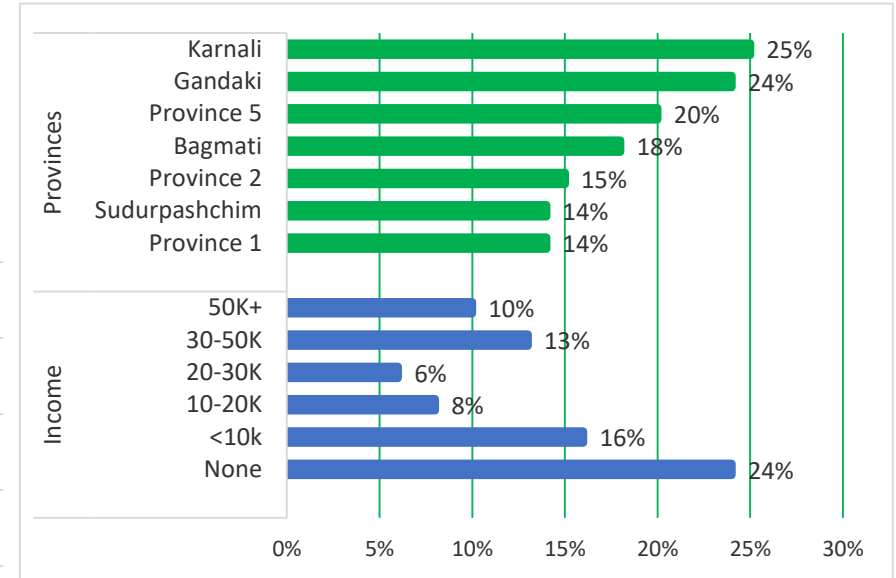
- 17% of caregivers in August in comparison to 15% in July stated that their children were becoming too thin.
- Respondents in Karnali, Gandaki and Province 5, including those from low-income families were more likely to report that their children were becoming too thin.
- Respondents who reported that their children's diets changed were most likely to be worried about their children becoming too thin.
- COVID-19 has affected the capacity to actively screen for wasting with fewer admissions of severely wasted children 6-59 months to the Outpatient Therapeutic Centre (OTC) in August 2020 compared to August 2019.

Nutrition: Children Under Two Years Old

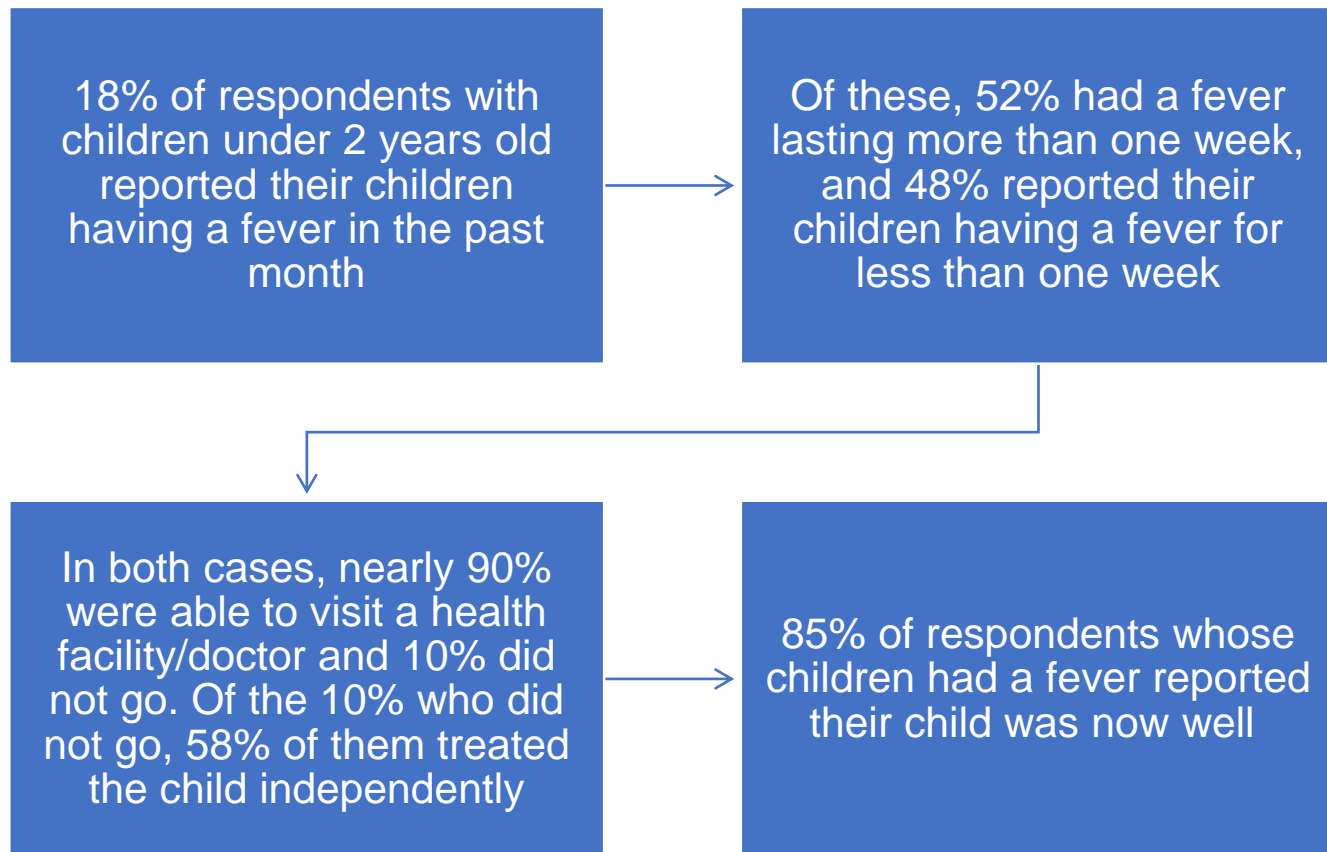
Percentage reduction in August admissions to OTCs for severe wasting among children 6-59 months.



Percentage reduction in admissions to OTCs ranges from 100 in Bagmati to 46 in Sudurpaschim Province.

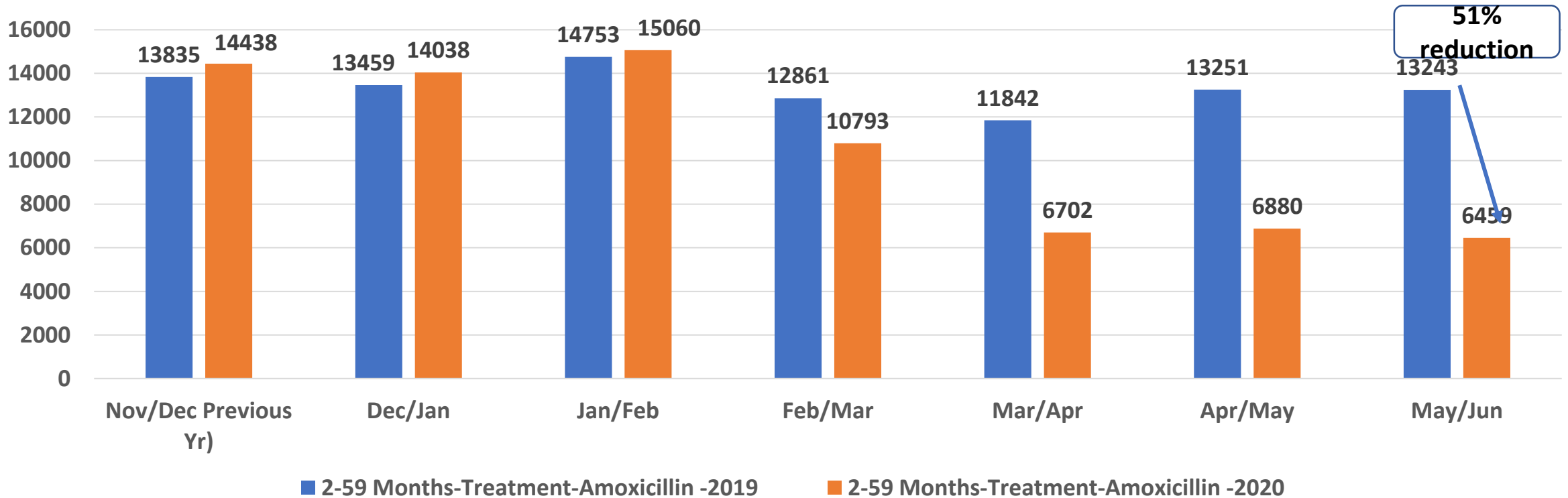


Health: Fever and Treatment of Children Under Two Years Old



- In July, 11% of households reported that their children under 2 years old became ill or had a fever. In August, 18% of children were ill or had a fever - a significant increase in one month.
- 26% of respondents with children having a fever experienced challenges in getting treatment. The majority of respondents are from lower income groups.
- Despite the challenges, 90% of respondents with children under 2 years old reported their children having a fever visited health facilities for treatment, an increase compared to 81% in July.
- Gandaki, Karnali and Province 5 have a significantly higher percentage of children having a fever than the average.

Children Treated with Amoxicillin

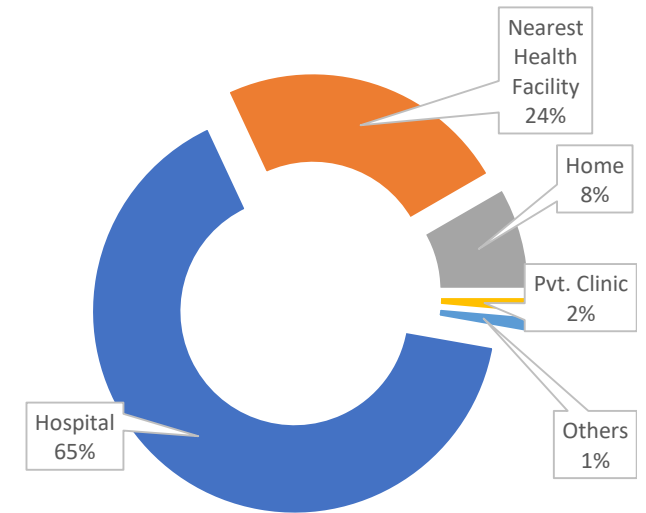
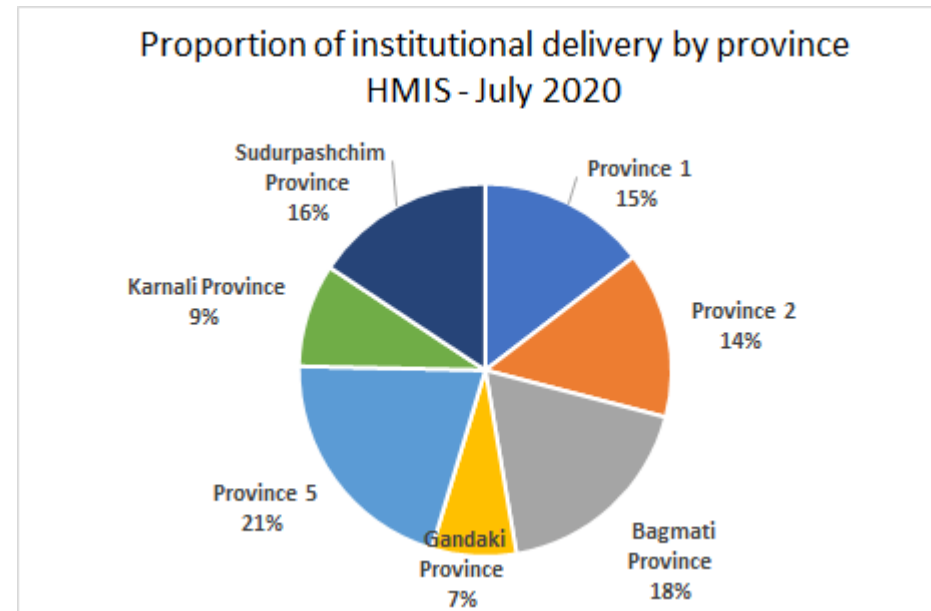
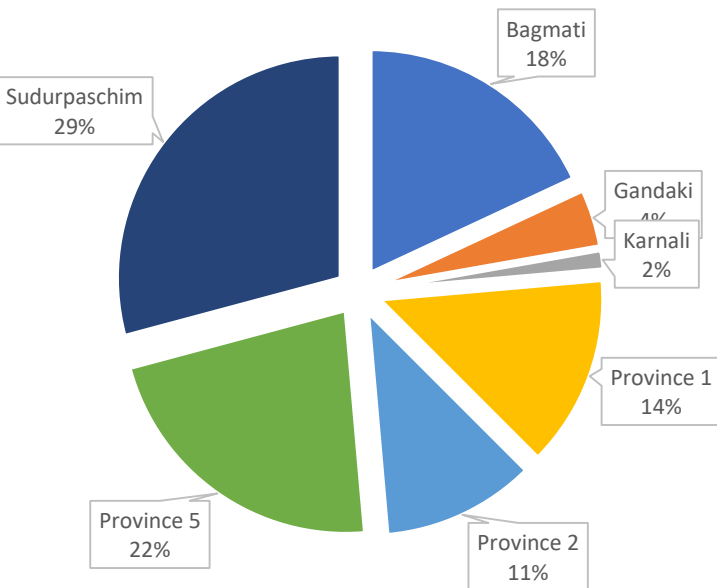


Source: HMIS, August 2020

- Fever among children can be used as a proxy symptom for an acute respiratory infection (ARI). Recent HMIS data suggested major decreases in ARI cases treated with Amoxicillin since March/April compared to the previous year. Lower utilization of treatment of children for ARI was most likely due to lockdown measures and challenges faced by parents seeking care (see previous slide).

Health: Births and Institutional Delivery

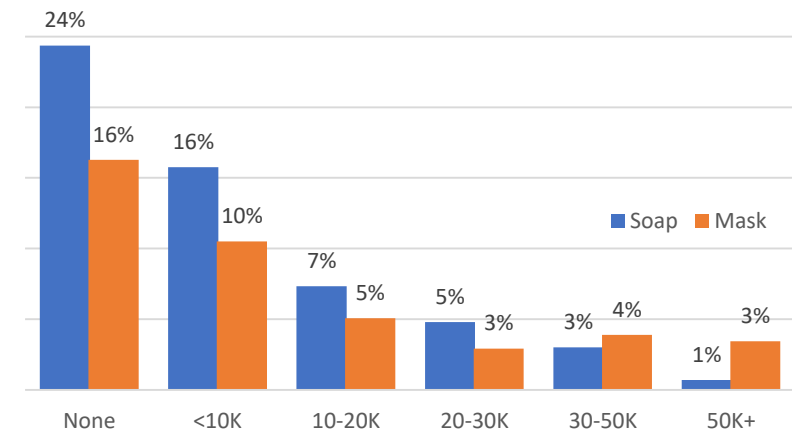
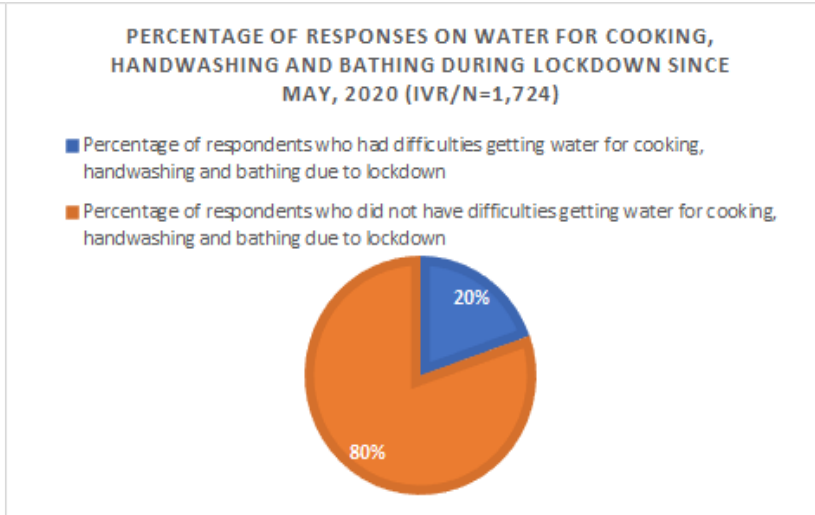
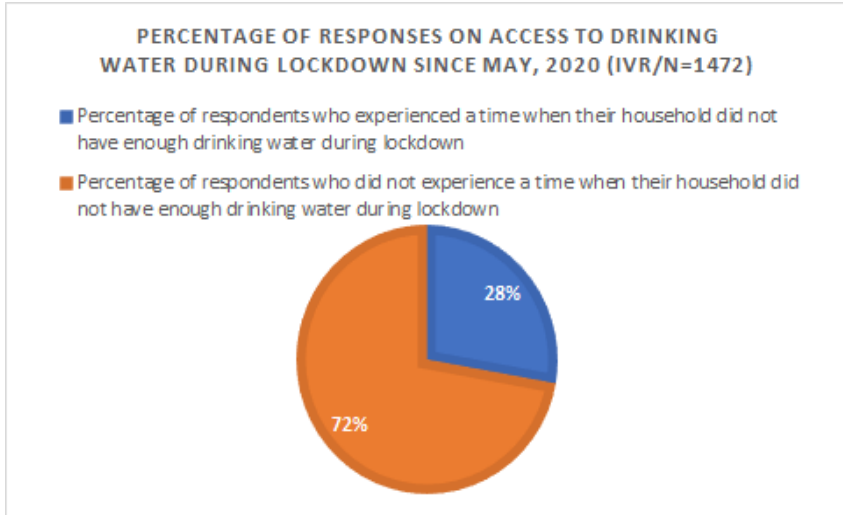
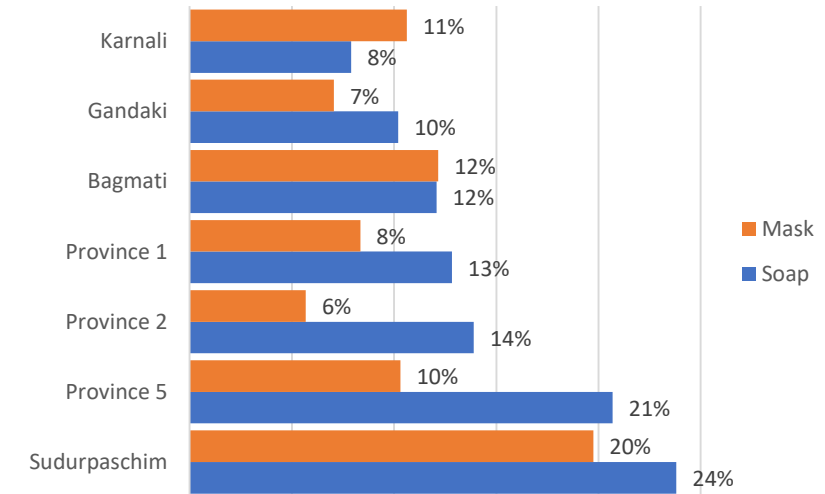
72 babies born in the last month (1.1% of households had a newborn)



- 69% of respondents reporting the delivery of a baby in the past month were from Sudurpaschim, Province 5 and Bagmati.
- This is slightly different to HMIS data in July 2020 where most institutional deliveries were recorded in Province 5 (21%), Bagmati (18%) and Sudurpaschim Provinces (16%).
- 91% were born in: a hospital (65%), nearby health facility (24%), and private clinic (2%).
- 48% of respondents reporting the delivery of a baby did not earn any income in the past month.
- 73% of babies were born to respondents in the bottom three income groups.

Wash: Access to Soap and Masks

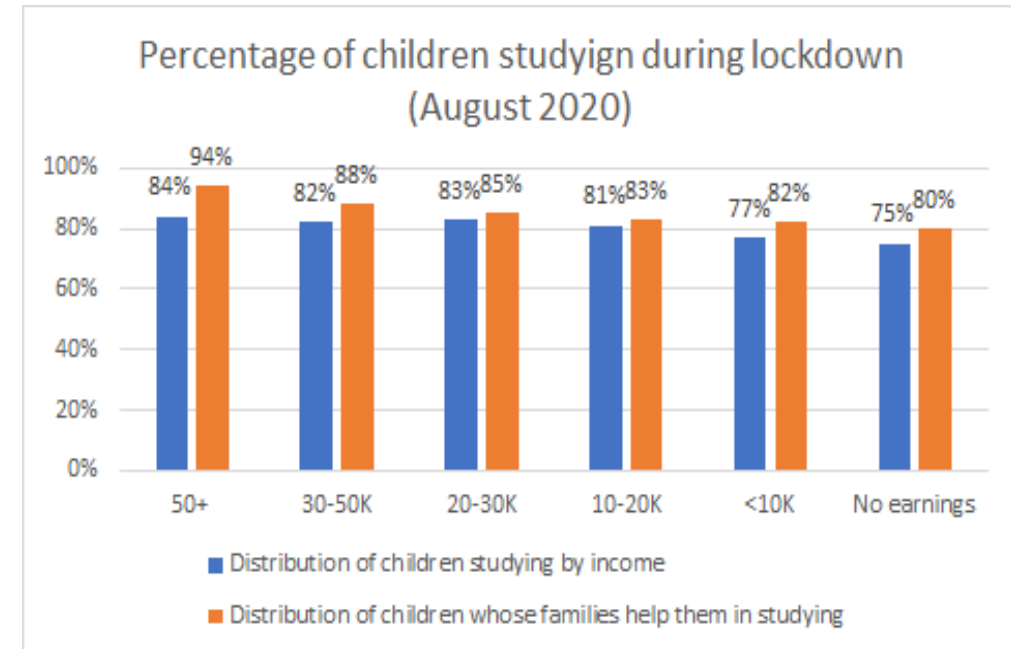
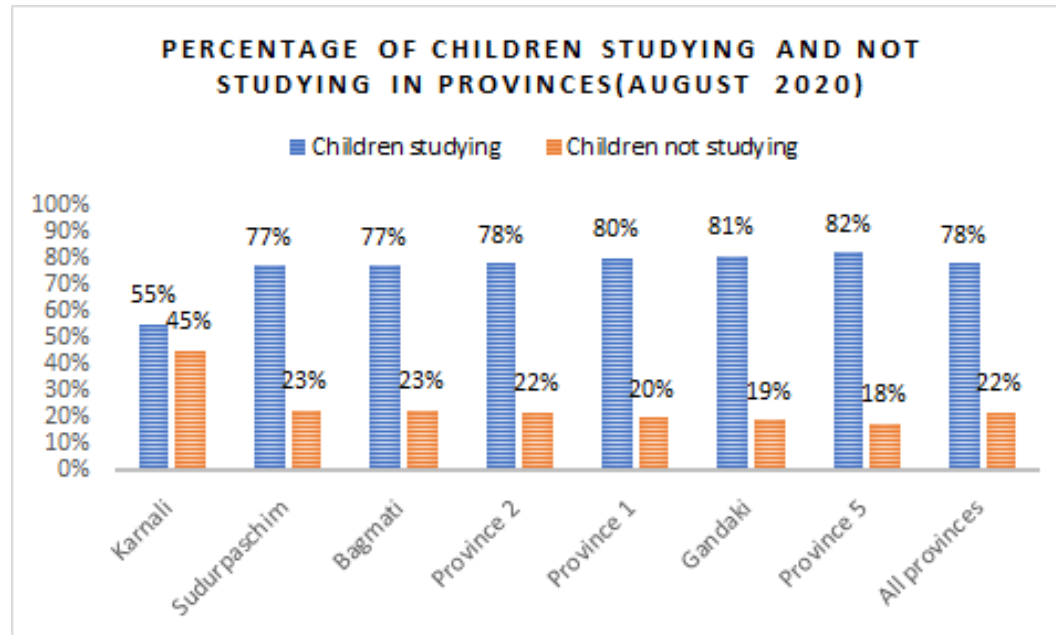
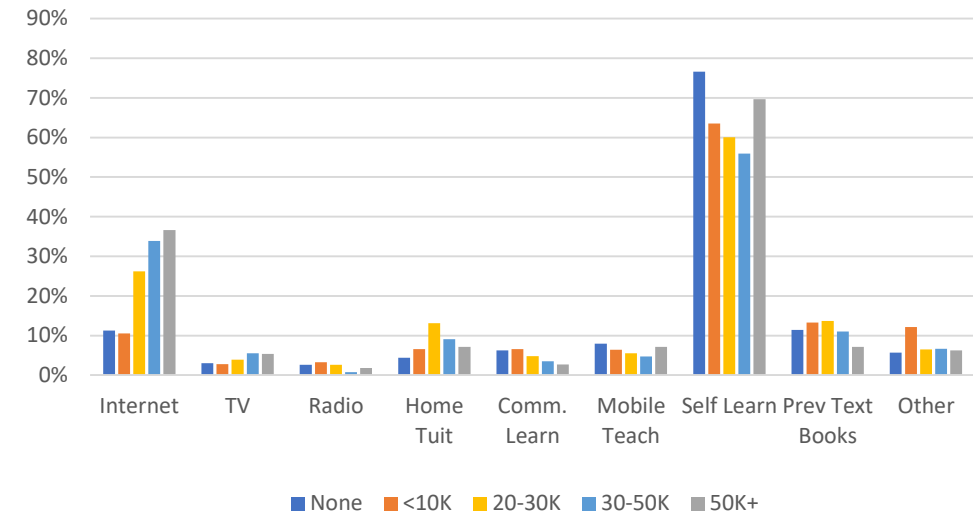
- Most respondents had no difficulty buying soap and masks: only 16% had difficulty buying soap, 11% could not buy a mask, and 6% of households could not buy both a mask and soap in August. Most of these households live in Sudurpaschim and Province 5 and belong to low-income groups.
- Major reasons for difficulties in buying soap and masks include increased prices and unavailability of the items in shops.
- Overall, access to water during the last three months does not seem to be a major issue, especially as over 70% of households had at some time previously experienced a drinking water shortage. Also, 80% of households had sufficient water for cooking, handwashing and bathing during lockdown.



Education

- Most children study using self-learning materials, regardless of the family's income. Fewer children use the internet, which is more often used in higher-income households.
- The proportions of children studying and receiving help with their education are broadly similar across all income groups and in every province except Karnali.
- 80% of nearly 300 U-report participants feel that studying has been a challenge, and 28% are worried about taking exams.

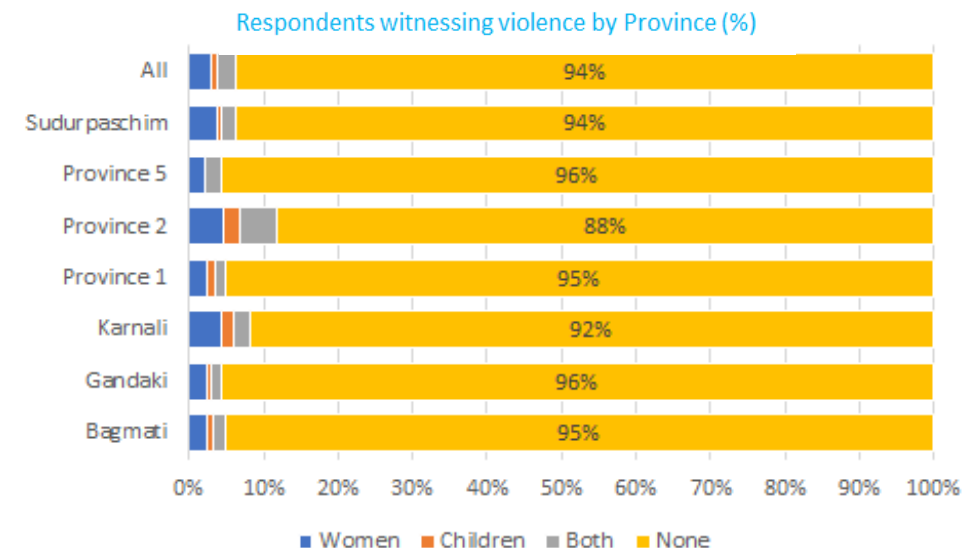
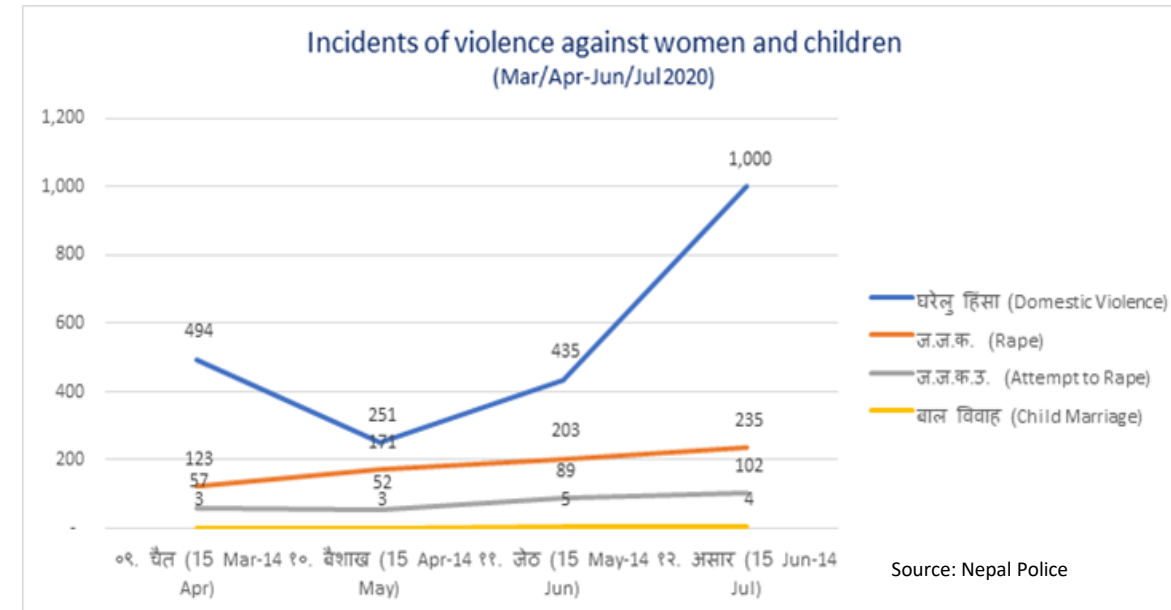
Distribution of materials used for studying - by income



Protection: Gender-Based Violence & Violence against Children

Low number of reports of violence by respondents apart from Province 2 (12%). The findings are to be read together with available from police, psychosocial, and women and child helplines' data that highlights continued concerns over family and gender-based violence.

- Under-reporting of violence in household surveys is in sharp contrast to reports from providers of protection services.
- Data from police records and women and child helplines show continued concerns over family and gender-based violence.
- The number of reported incidents of domestic violence increased from 494 in March-April to 1,000 in June-July. The numbers of reported rapes and attempted rapes have also been increasing since March according to police data.
- GBV cases represent 54% of incidents reported in Karnali and Sudurpaschim through the Incident Report system (20% child marriage). However only 44% of incidents reported had been addressed.

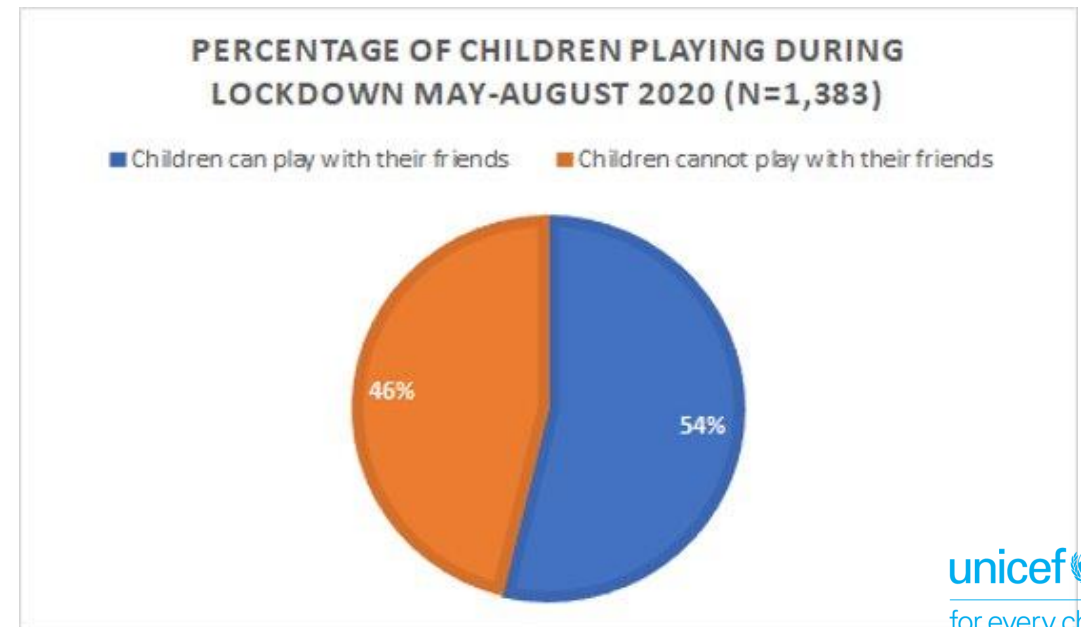
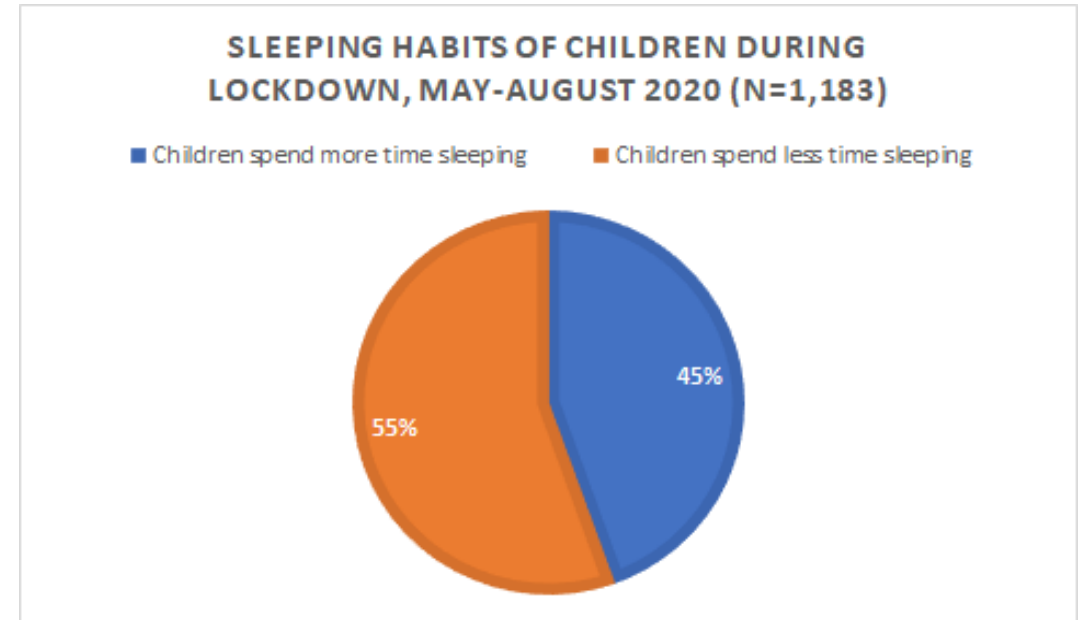
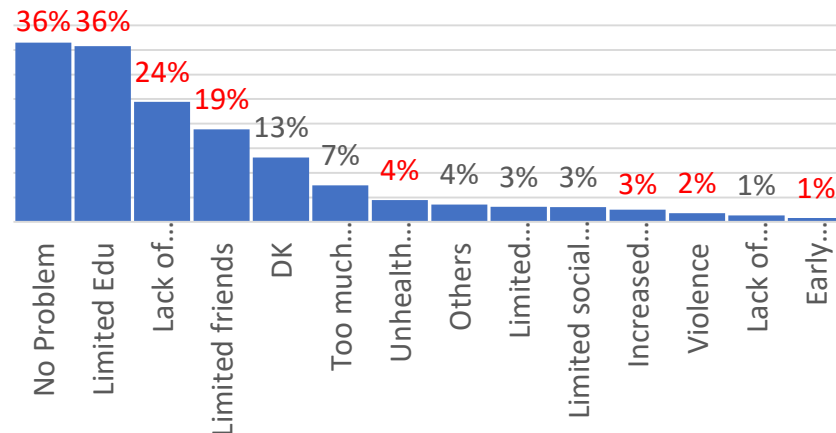


Note: the protection monitoring system is being extended to other provinces.

Protection: Children & Adolescent Well-being

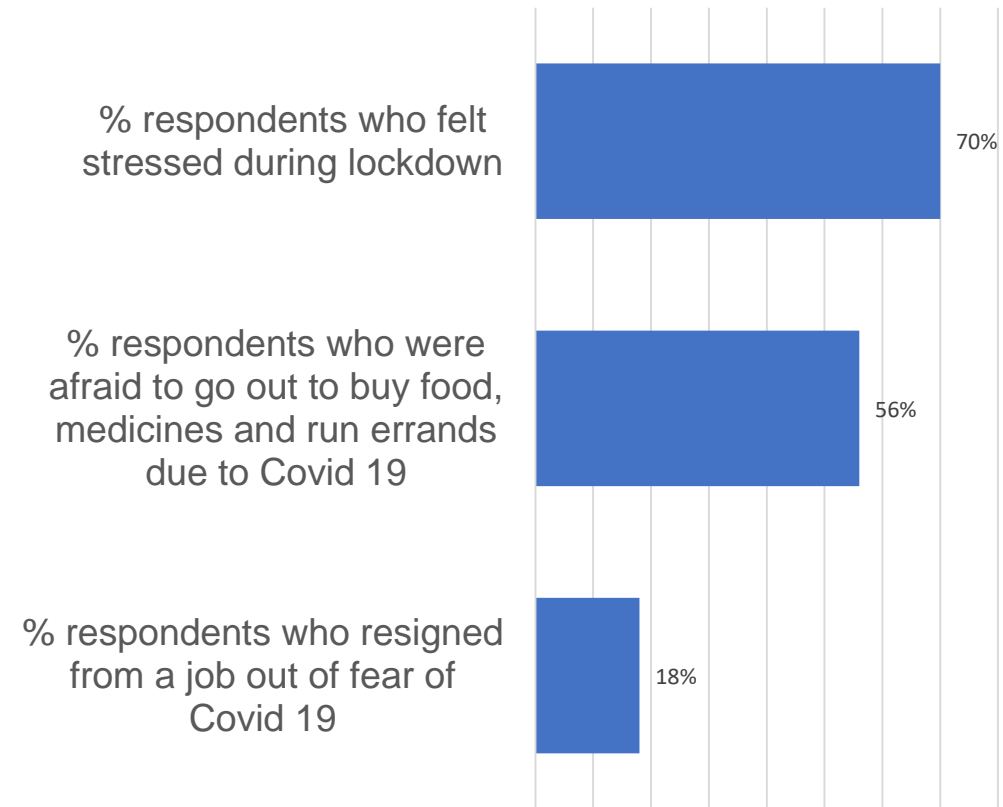
- Children in 55% of 1,183 households are reportedly sleeping less during lockdown.
- 46% of children report a loss of interactions with peers.
- According to 36% of respondents, limited education of adolescents is one of the main problems today. 24% of them also stated that adolescents had a lack of interest in education.
- Provincial level data also suggests changes in children's behaviour including regressive behaviour, social withdrawal, upsurge in anxiety and aggressivity.

(Protection monitoring data from Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces)



Psychological Impact: Household Experiences of Anxiety, Fear and Stress

- Since May 2020, 56% of 1,343 respondents reported feeling afraid of going out to buy food or medication or run errands due to fear of catching COVID-19.
- 70% of 1,413 respondents reported feeling stressed due to lockdown. According to the latest U-Report results, 42% of respondents felt stressed, 31% felt indifferent, 19% felt sad, 7% felt happy, and 1% angry.
- 18% of 1,349 respondents resigned from their jobs due to fear of catching COVID-19.
- The biggest fear for 74% of respondents (U-Report) is getting infected by COVID-19.

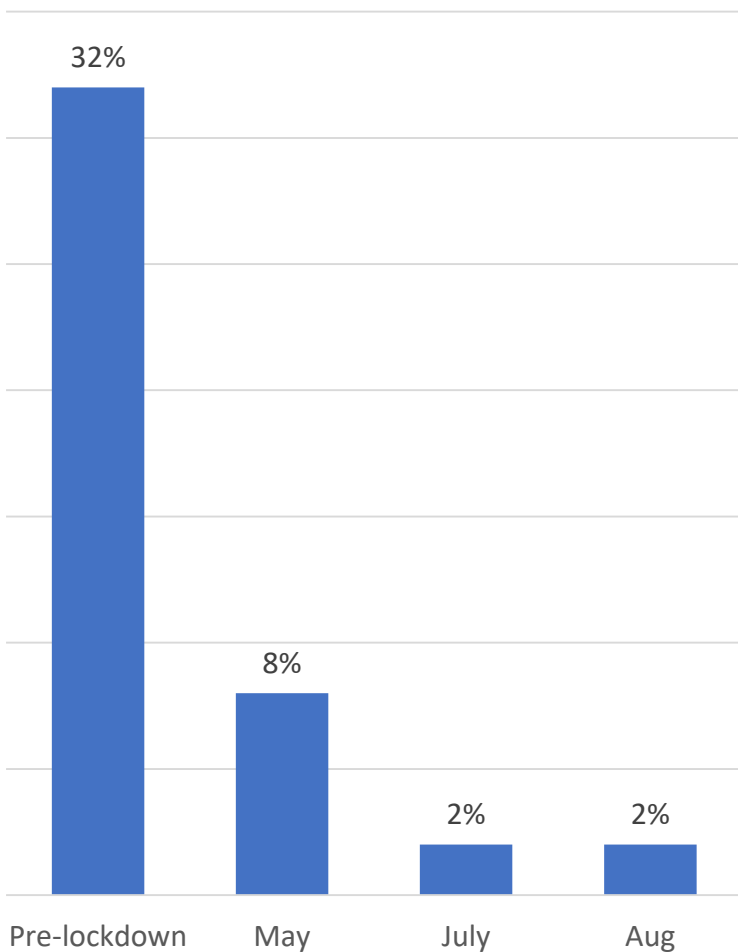


Percentage of respondents:

- reporting resigning from their jobs out of fear of COVID-19
- afraid to go out because of COVID-19
- feeling stressed since lockdown.

Protection: Child Labour & Family Separation

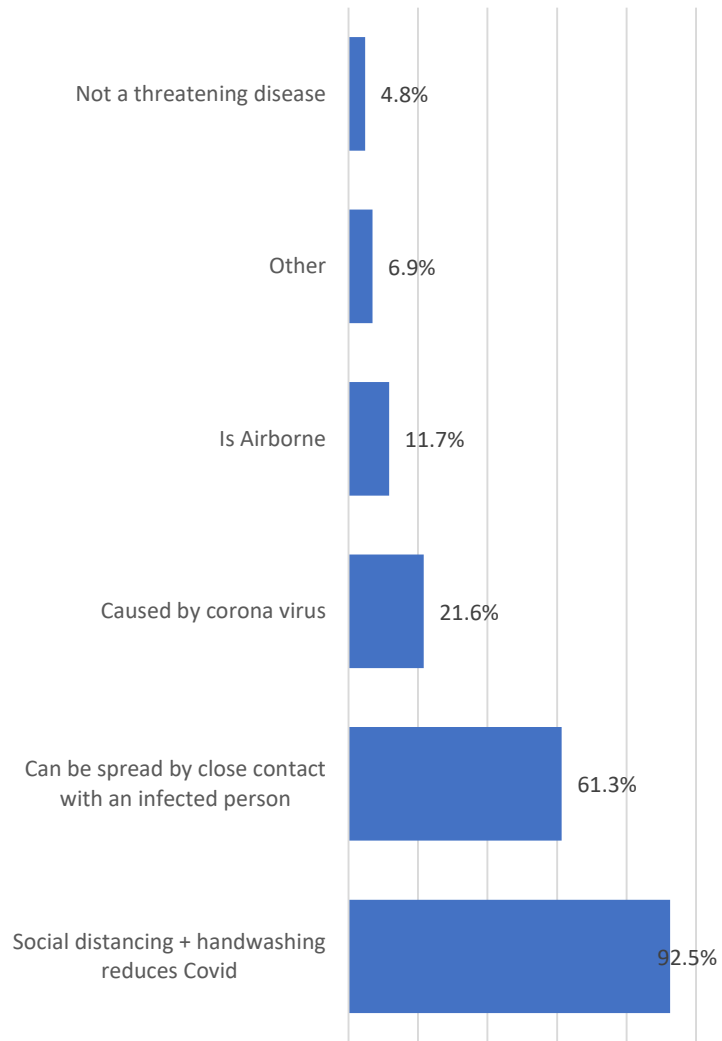
Respondents reporting children working



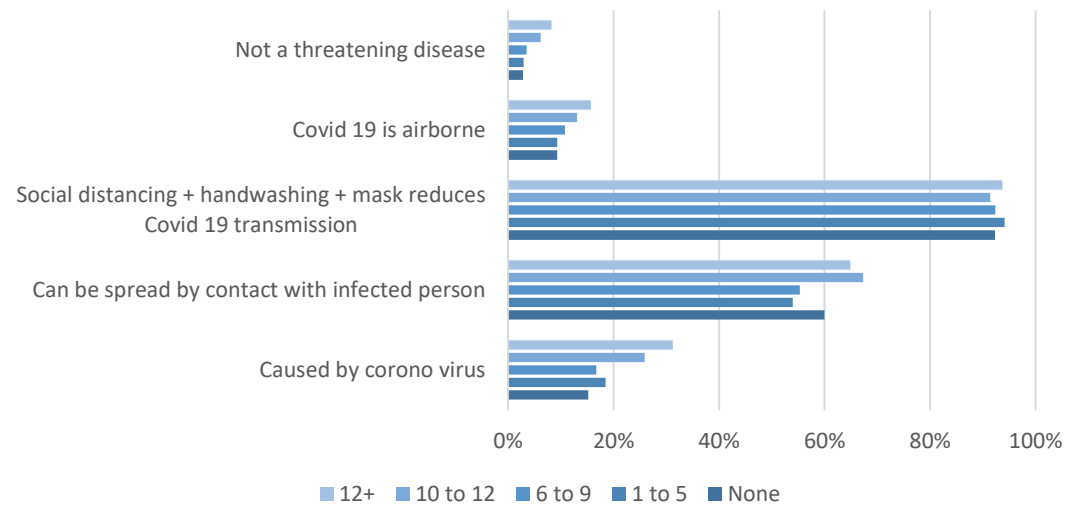
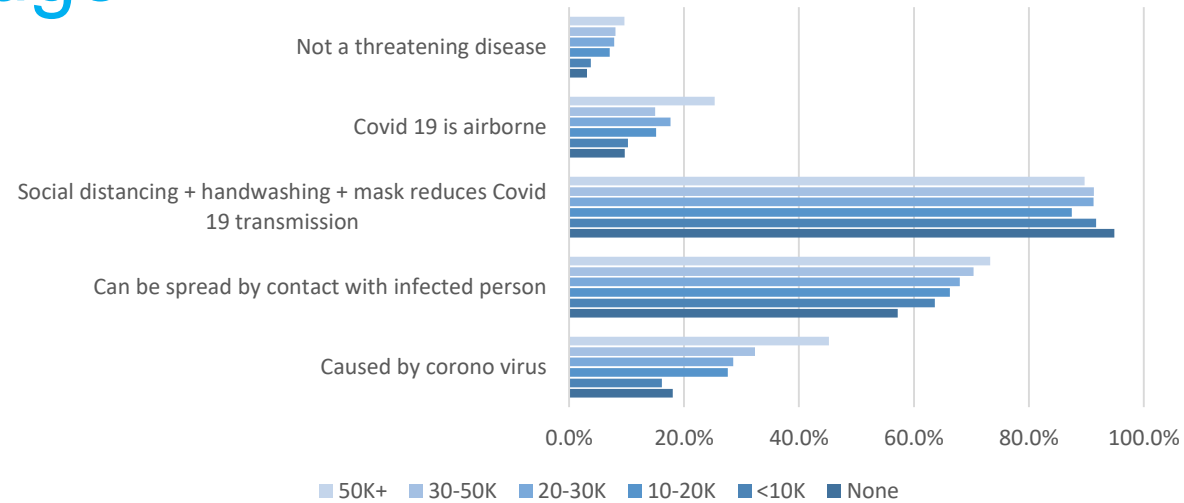
Respondents reporting children working - by income group, province and education of head of household

- Reports of child labour by respondents remain low and largely unchanged from July 2020.
- The education status of heads of households has an important bearing.
- Even upper-income groups report child labour.
- Respondents from Bagmati and Province 2 are more likely to report children earning.
- Family separation is emerging as an issue to monitor – 3.5% of respondents are separated from their children: 52% with relatives, 19% at another place of work, and 5% in boarding schools.

COVID-19 Knowledge



Knowledge about COVID-19

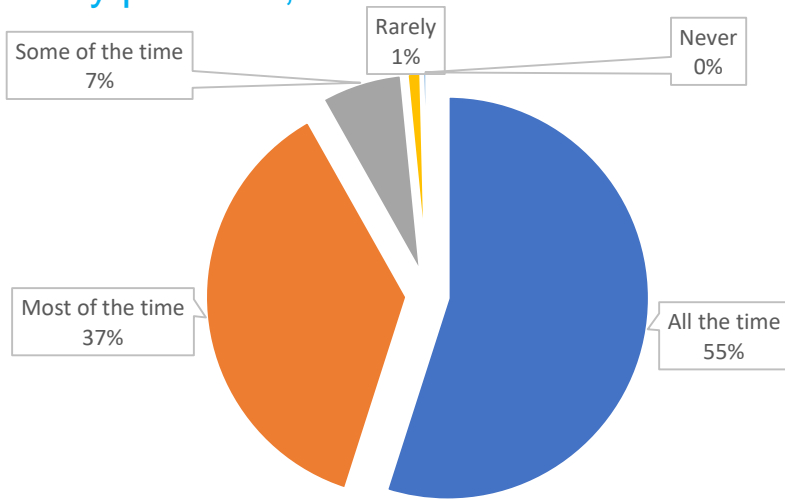


Knowledge about COVID-19
- by income and education of head of household

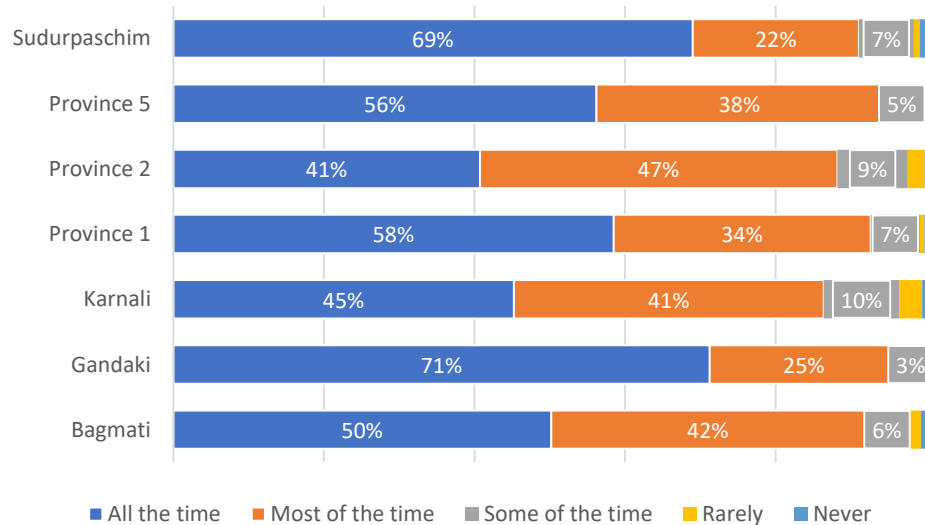
- Critical knowledge gaps identified.
- Varies by income level and education level of the head of household.

Handwashing with Soap

In August, 55% of respondents reported that they wash their hands for 20 seconds all the time. Handwashing behaviour varies by province, income level and education status of the head of household.

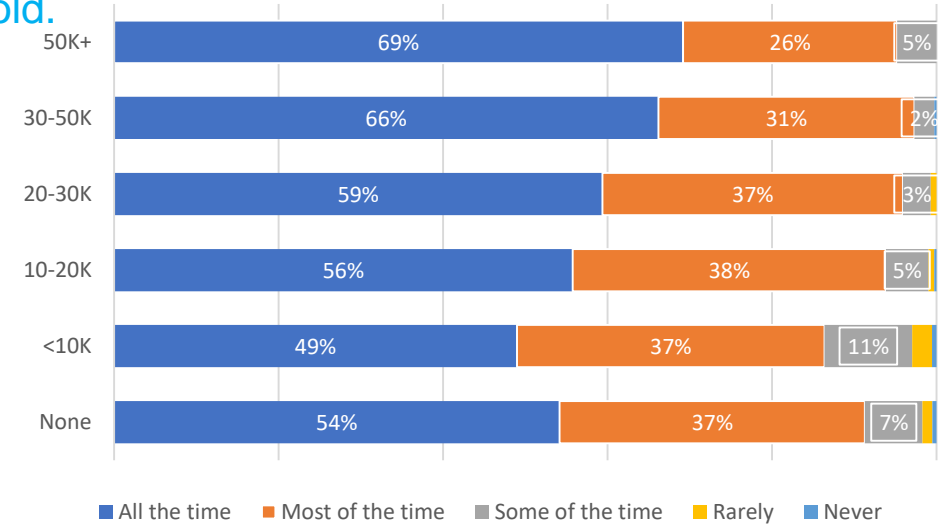


Handwashing behaviour

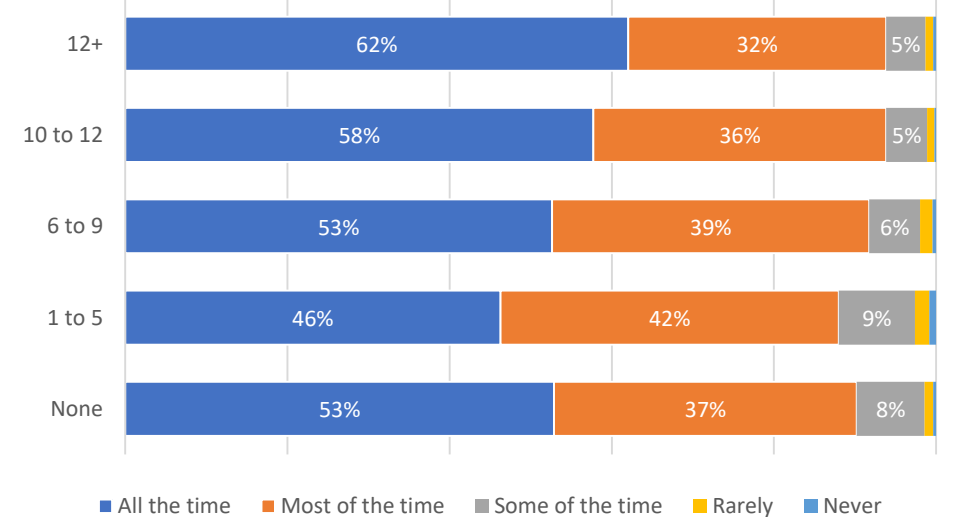


Variation in handwashing behaviour - by province

- Overall, most respondents stated that they wash their hands for 20 seconds all the time or most of the time.
- Karnali & Province 2 respondents are least likely to regularly wash their hands for 20 seconds.
- Respondents in upper-income groups are more likely to wash their hands for 20 second regularly.
- Respondents who live in households with a higher educational level are more likely to wash their hands for 20 seconds regularly.



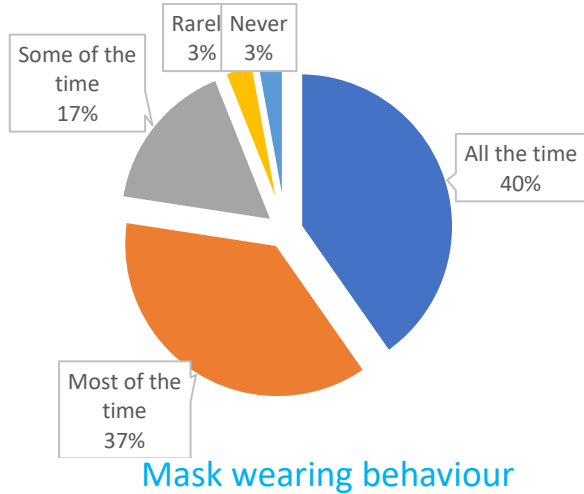
Variation in handwashing behaviour by HH Income



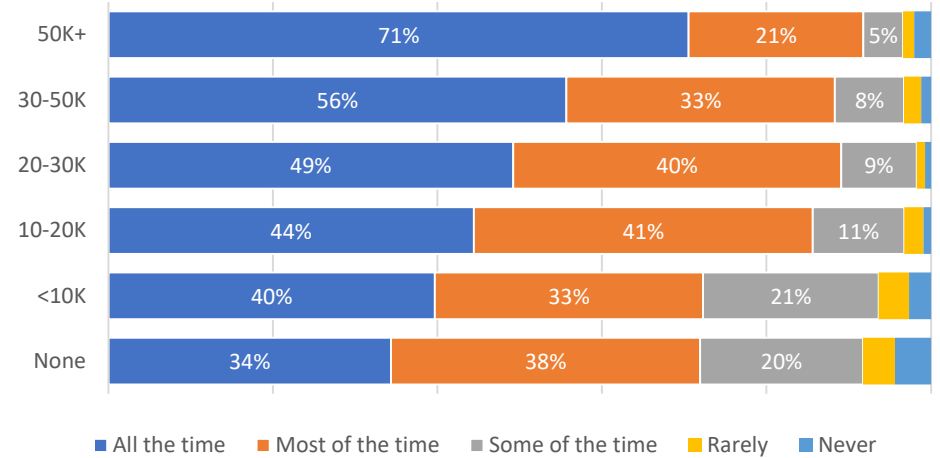
Variation in handwashing behaviour - by education status

Use of Masks

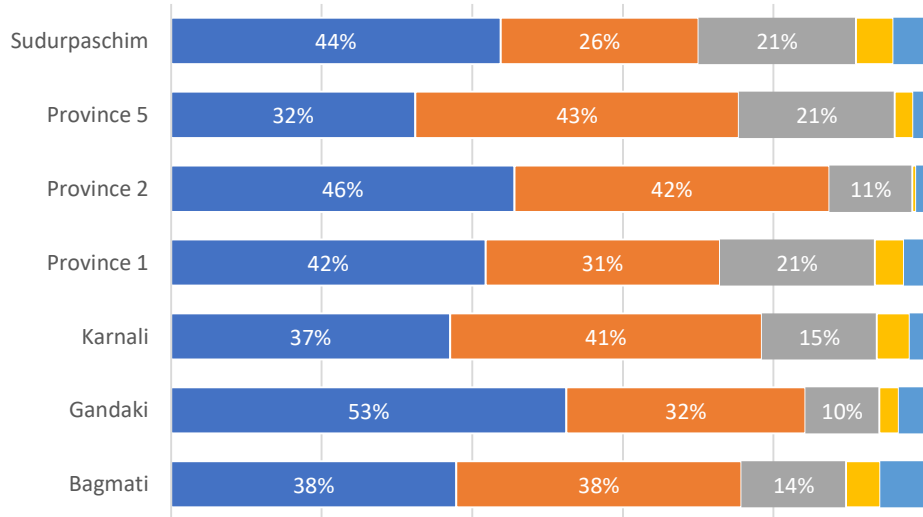
71% of respondents in high-income families wear masks all the time compared to 34-40% of respondents who had no earnings in August. However, educational attainment does not have a significant influence on person's decision or ability to wear a mask for protection from COVID-19.



- 23% of respondents do not wear a mask all or most of the time.
- Karnali & Bagmati respondents are least likely to wear a mask all of the time.

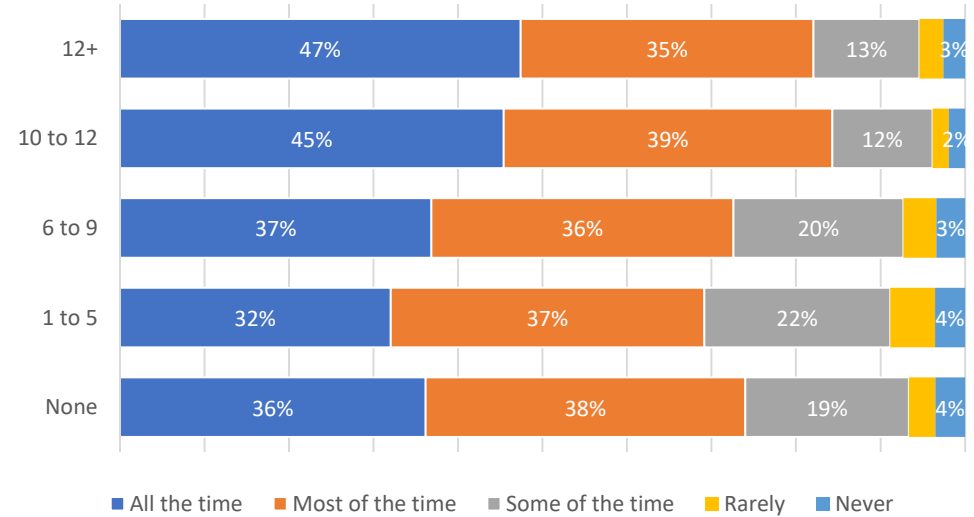


Variation in mask wearing behaviour by Income



Variation in mask wearing behaviour - by province

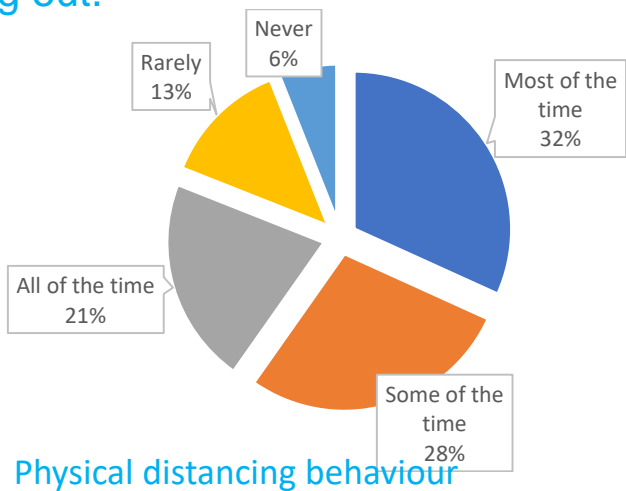
- Upper-income groups are most likely to report wearing masks all of the time.
- Those from households where heads have 12+ education are more likely to wear a mask.



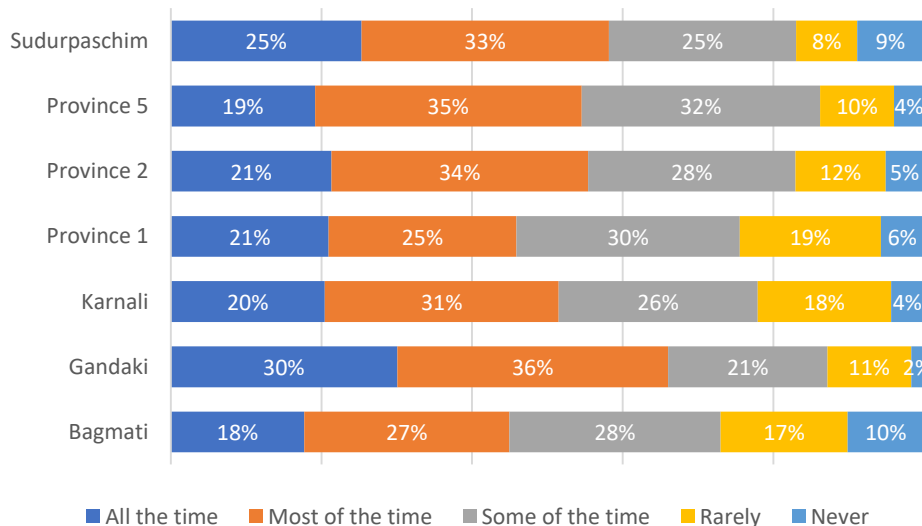
Variation in mask wearing behaviour - by education status

Maintaining Two Meters Physical Distance

Maintaining two meters physical distance is becoming a challenge in the context of increased mobility. 1 in 5 households rarely or never practice physical distancing when going out.



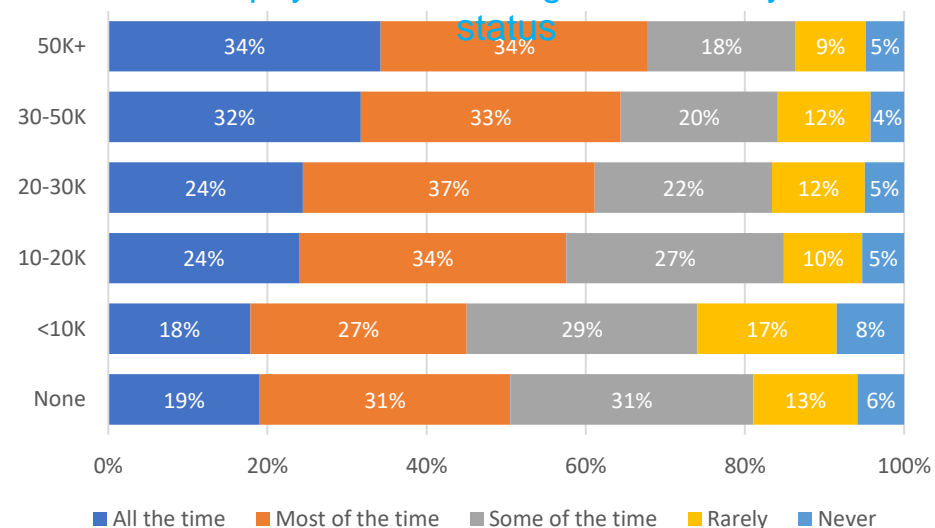
Physical distancing behaviour



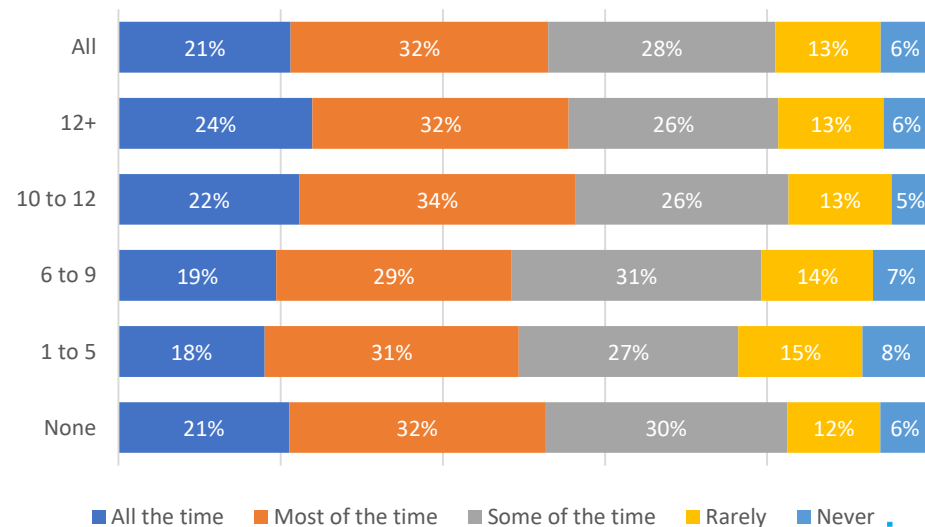
Variation in physical distancing behaviour - by province

- Only 53% of respondents practice physical distancing most or all the time. 19% of respondents rarely or never practice social distancing.
- Lowest percentage of respondents who practiced physical distancing were from Bagmati Province.
- Lower-income groups are less likely to practice physical distancing all or most of the time. This could be because they live in high density or crowded areas anyway.
- There is little variation according to education status of the head of household.

Variation in physical distancing behaviour by education

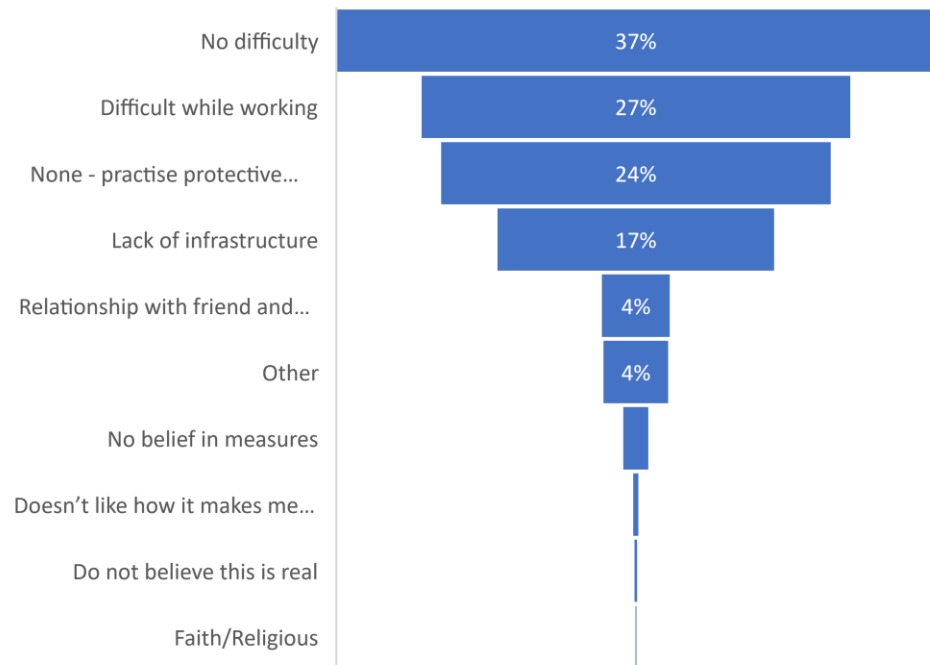


Variation in physical distancing behaviour by Income

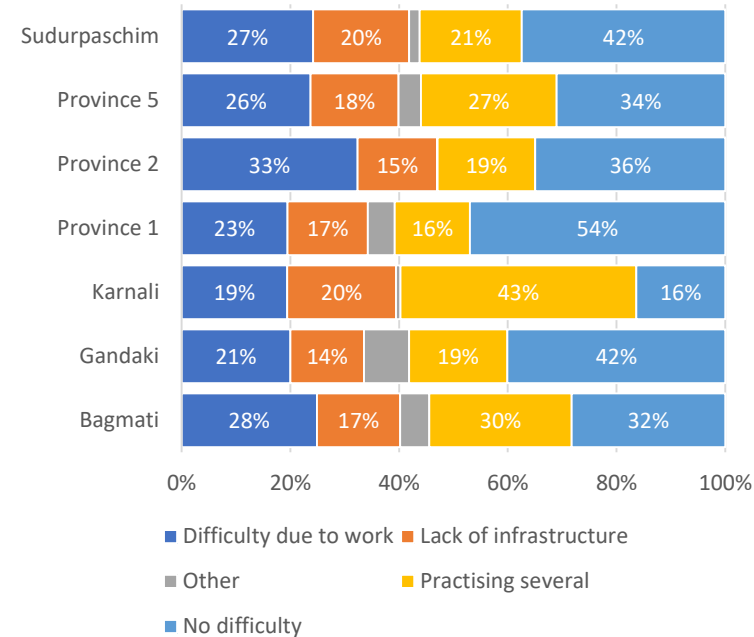


Key Reasons Preventing Use of Protective Measures

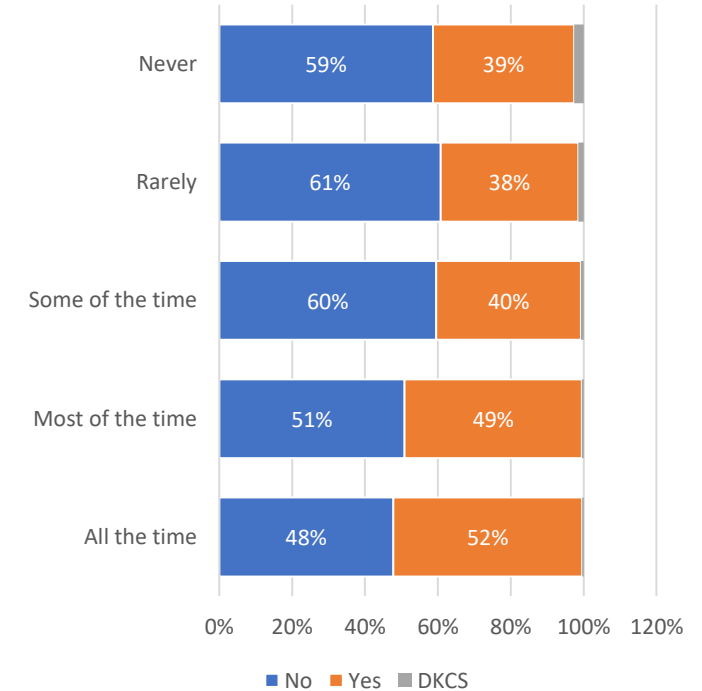
Major reasons preventing use of protective measures



Variation in reasons by Province



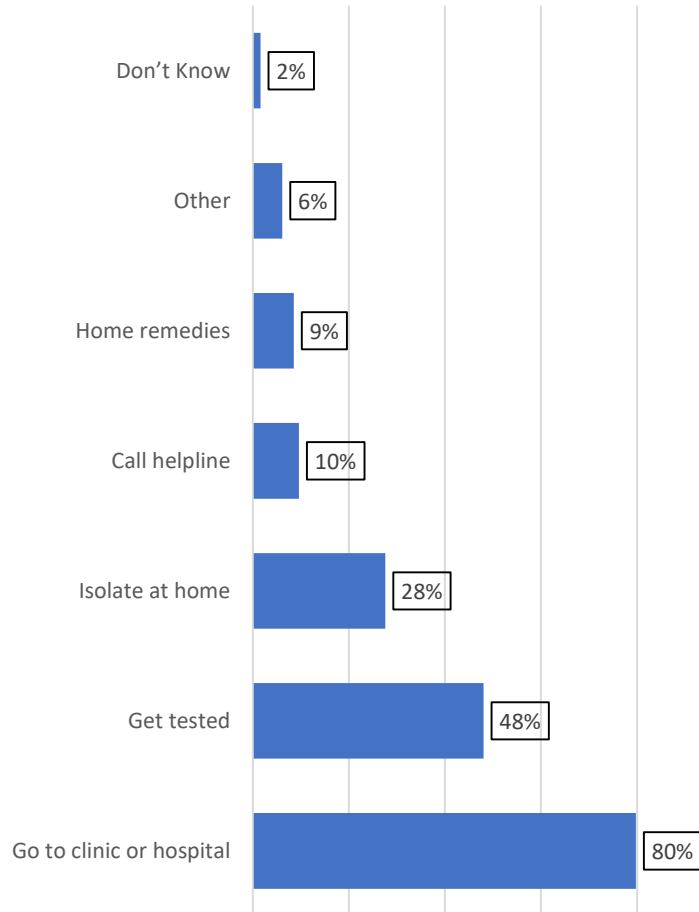
Wearing a mask versus risk perception



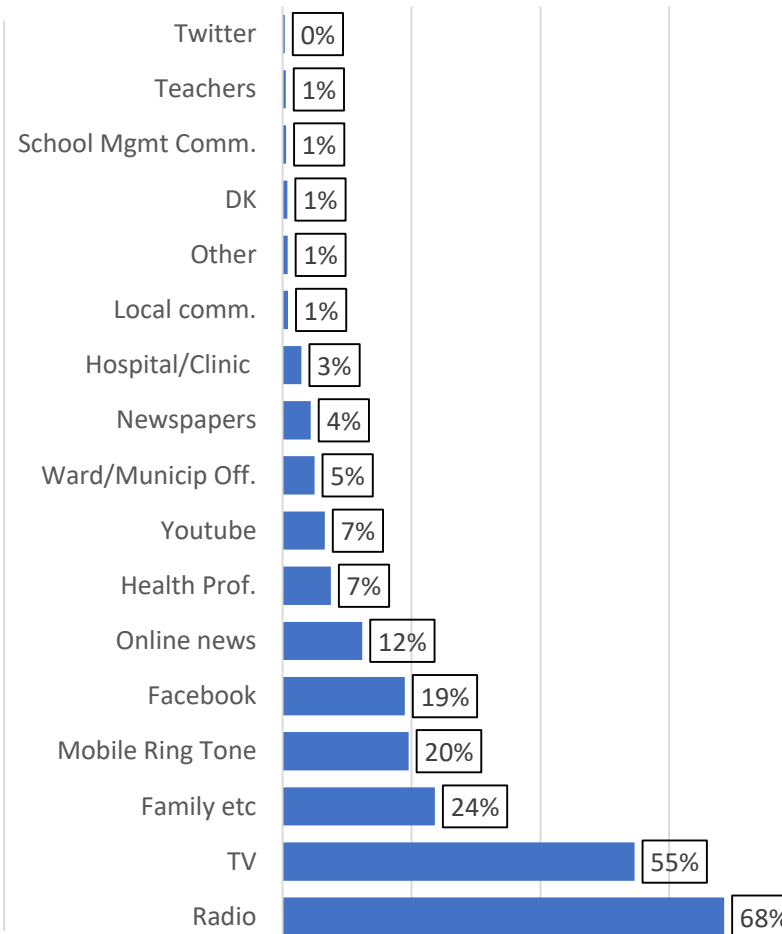
- Difficulty practicing protective measures at work.
- Difficulty practicing protective measures due to a lack of infrastructure.
- Variation by province – with Province 2 respondents likely to cite ‘work’ as a reason.
- Behaviour is also linked to the perception of risk – for example, wearing a mask versus the perception of the risk of infection.

Response and Sources of Information

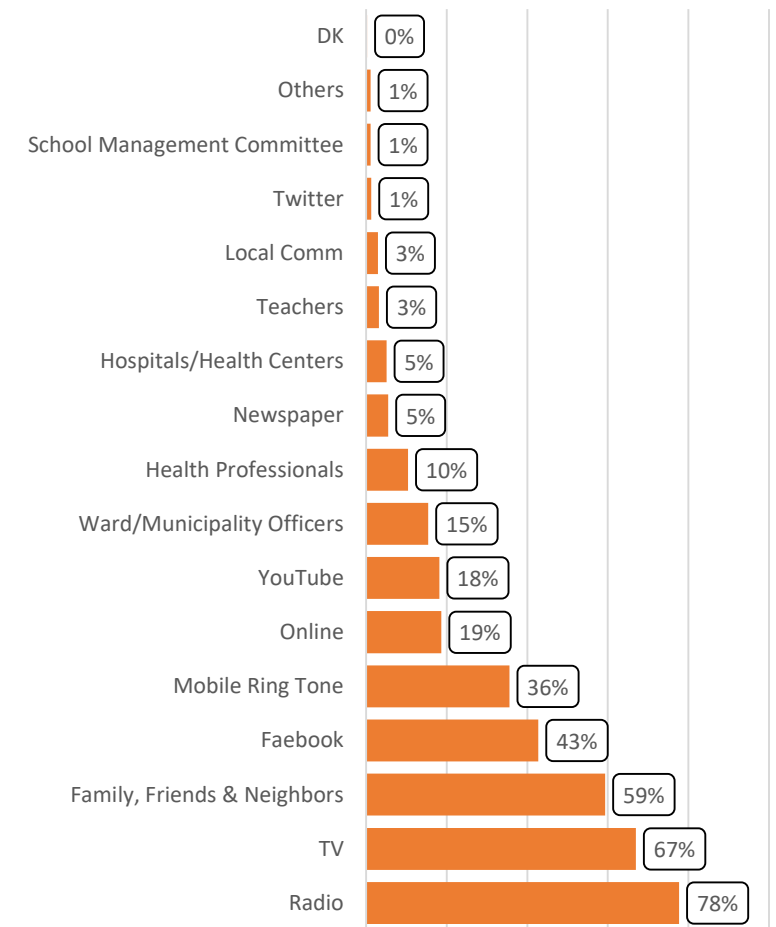
If respondent felt they had COVID-19



Trusted sources of information (August 2020)



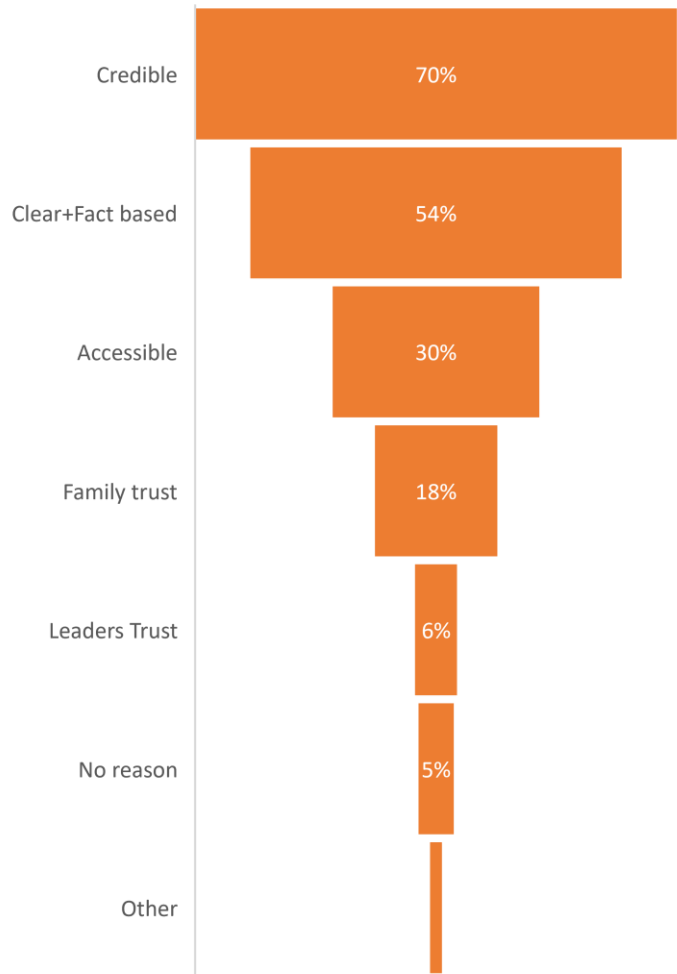
Trusted sources of information (July 2020)



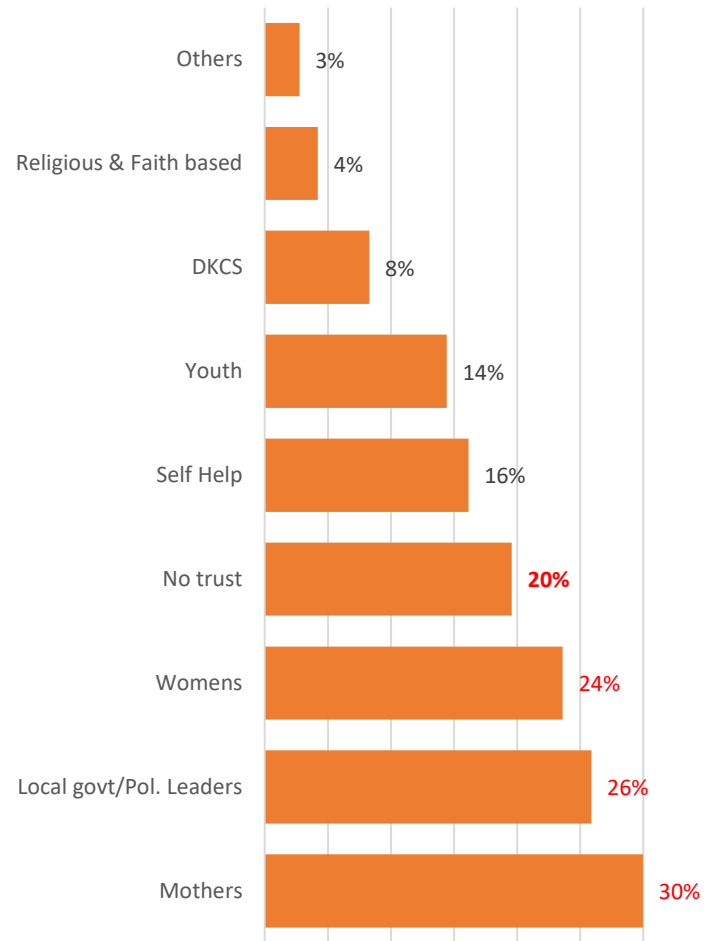
- Top three responses in case where respondent THOUGHT that he/she had COVID-19: clinic/hospital, testing and isolation.
- Top three trusted source of information: radio, TV and family.
- Largely the same order has been observed over the three rounds of the survey – but Facebook, Twitter and YouTube move down the rankings. Mobile ring tones moved up.

Credibility and Trust of Information

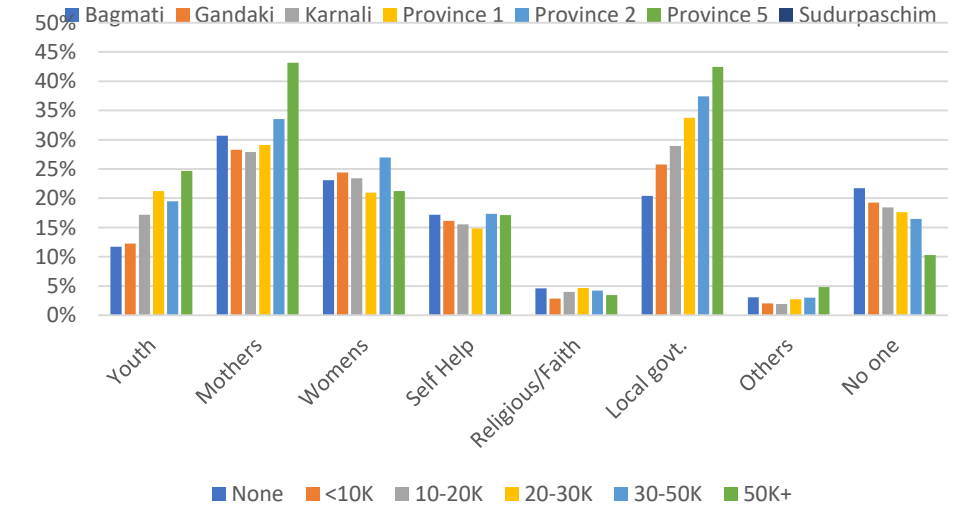
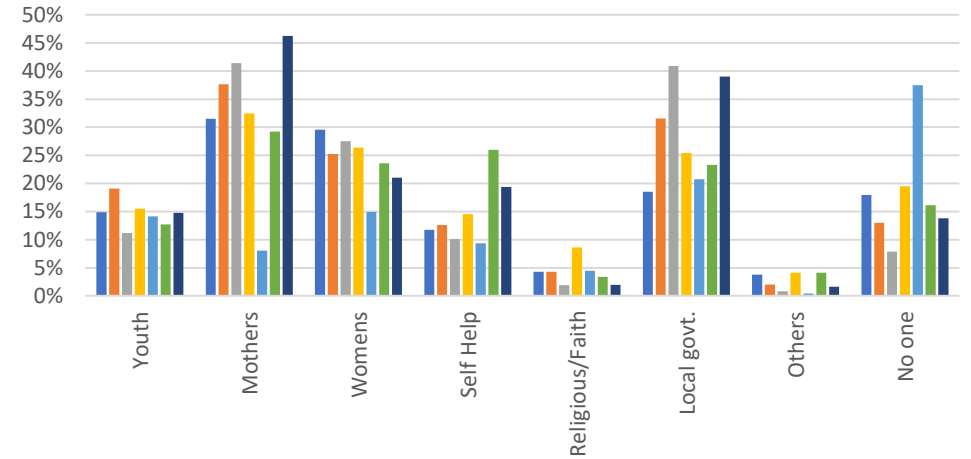
Majority of respondents preferred credible and fact-based information sources. Mother's groups most likely to be trusted for community action followed by local leaders and women's groups. 20% also reported not trusting any groups. Note variation by province and income level, and that respondents from Province 2 were most likely to not trust any groups. Lower-income groups also more likely not to trust any groups.



Reasons for trusting information source



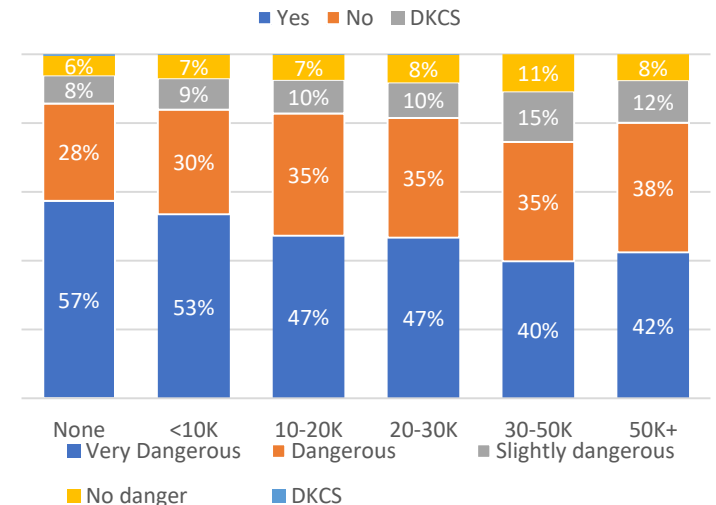
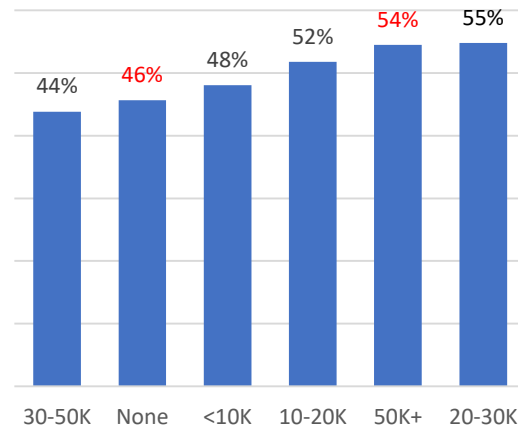
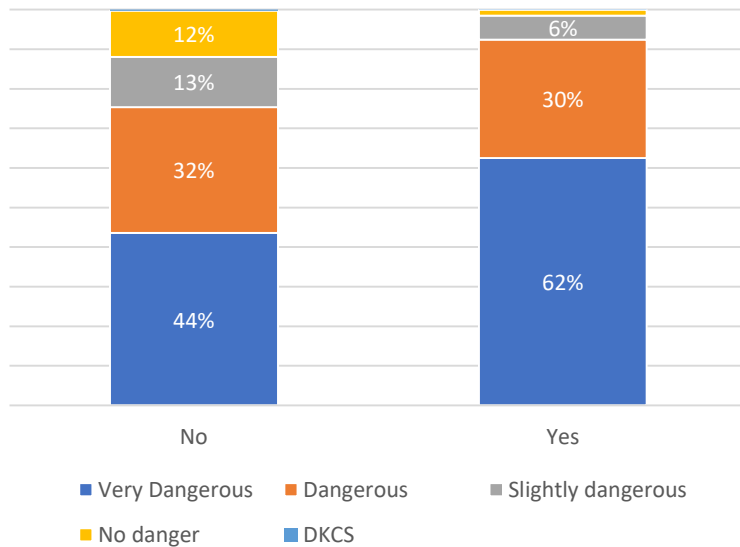
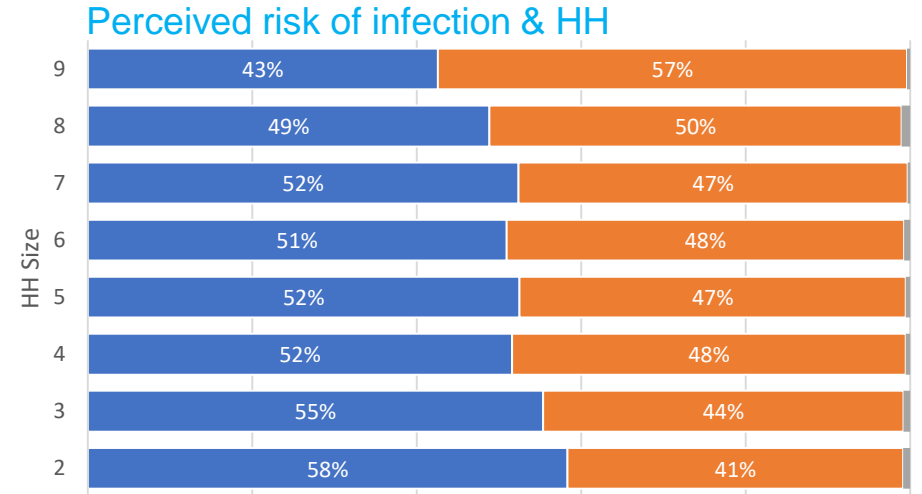
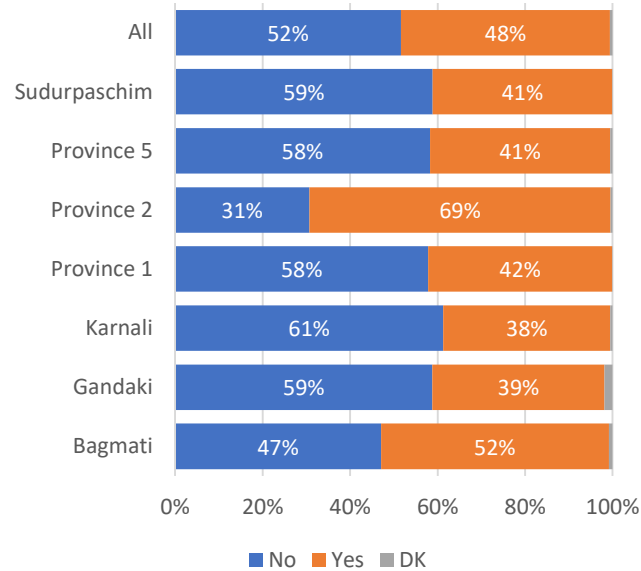
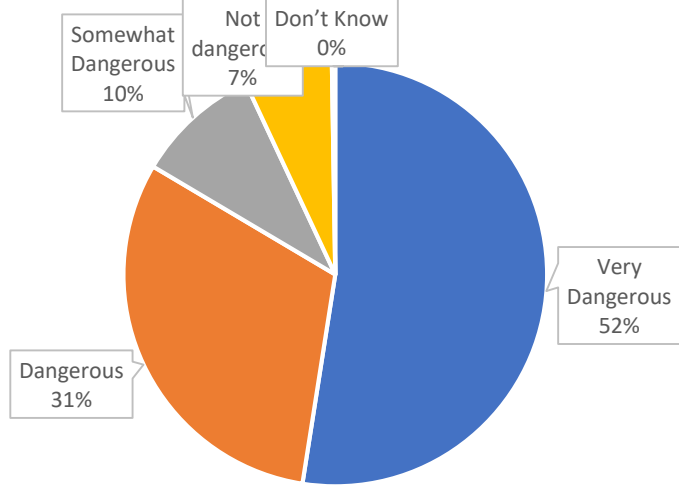
Groups trusted most for community action



Groups most trusted - by province and income

Perceptions on Risk and Dangers of Infection

48% of respondents felt they were at risk of infection – with respondents from Province 2 and Bagmati feeling more at risk. 84% felt that infection would be dangerous for their families. Income also has an effect, with upper-income groups more likely to perceive infection as posing danger to their families. The perceived risk of infection tends to increase with family size.



Perceptions of risk of infection and dangers posed to family

Percentage feeling at risk of infection - by province and income group

Perception of danger posed to family - by income group

Overview of Key Findings

Livelihood/Job Losses

Context of tight labour markets. Only 2% of respondents could find jobs. 51% of families reported earnings or livelihood losses.

Migration

4.5% of households reported returnees, mostly from Sudurpaschim & Karnali.

8% of returnees experienced 'stigma'.

Additional Cash Transfers

92% of respondents would like to receive an additional 450 NPR cash, with bank or money transfers the preferred payment method.

Immediate Household Needs

Top four needs: financial support, children's education, food, employment.

Nutrition

19% struggling to feed daily. 26% of children experienced changes in dietary intake. 10% reported children under 2 years old eating less.

Nutrition

96% of children under 2 years old are breastfed. 16% of mothers reduced the number of meals. 78% are breastfeeding with same frequency. 17% felt child is becoming too thin.

COVID-19 Infection response

Top 3 intended actions: Hospital/Clinic (80%), Testing (48%), Isolation (28%).

Health

18% of respondents reported children under 2 years old with a fever. 25% had difficulty in accessing treatment.

WASH

16% had difficulty buying soap. 11% could not buy masks. Income and supply constraints.

Education

22% of students are not studying (+5% since July). Self-learning packages were most used materials for study then the internet and last year's textbooks.

Education

82% of children receive help while studying. Average minutes per day studying = 130.

Protection

6% of respondents witnessed violence against children and/or women (3% W, 1% C, 2% B). 2% reported child labour. 3.5% are separated from their children.

Protection

Top three problems faced by adolescents: limited access to education, lack of interest in education, lack of access to friends.

COVID-19 Knowledge

93% of respondents know that physical distancing can prevent transmission. 61% know that it can spread through contact with an infected person.

Health

72 babies were born since July (1.1% of households): 91% delivered in health facility, clinic or hospital. Six delivered at home.

COVID-19 Risk of Infection & Sources

48% of respondents felt at risk of infection. Over 80% felt that their infection would pose a danger to their household.

Behaviour

Physical distancing hardest to follow (21%). Handwashing practiced by 55% and wearing a mask by 40%.

