

Baseline Evaluation for Empowered Women Prosperous Nepal (EWPN) Programme

Final Report

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List of abbreviations/ Acronyms

ANTUF	All Nepal Trade Union Federation
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
EA	Enumeration Areas
EWPN	Empowered Women Prosperous Nepal
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNCCI	Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FPTP	First-Past-the-Post
FWEAN	Federation of Women Entrepreneurs' Associations of Nepal
GBV	Gender-based violence
GEFONT	General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions
GEWE	Gender Equality Women Empowerment
ILO	International Labour Organization/ Office
JP	Joint Programme
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGOA	Local Government Operations Act
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFAGA	Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MoWCSC	Ministry of Women Children and Senior Citizens
NDHS	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NLFS	Nepal Labour Force Survey
NTUC	Nepal Trade Union Congress
OCCMC	One Stop Crisis Management Centre
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
PSM	Propensity Score Matching
PSU	Primary Sampling Units
PUNO	Participating UN Organizations
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
SGI	Small Group Interview
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Nepal stands at a pivotal moment in its development trajectory, making significant strides towards stability and growth. The constitution of Nepal guarantees gender equality and seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on class, region, language, religion, gender, and caste-based untouchability. The “Social Inclusion Policy for Local Levels (2022)” aims to end harmful traditional practices including polygamy, child marriage, Chhaupadi, and gender-based violence (GBV).

Despite progressive policies and legal frameworks, women and girls in Nepal continue to face challenges in accessing equal opportunities and exercising their human rights free from violence, discrimination and coercion. These gender disparities persist, as highlighted by Nepal’s position in the 2024 Global Gender Gap Index, where it ranks 117th out of 146 countries with a parity score of 0.664. This represents a significant decline compared to 2022, when Nepal ranked 96th. While the country has demonstrated its commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as reflected in key policy documents, including the 16th National Periodic Plan, substantial challenges remain in ensuring gender equality.

Patriarchal norms and harmful traditional practices continue to undermine efforts to strengthen women’s leadership at all levels, empower them economically, and reduce the prevalence of GBV in Nepal. Addressing these issues requires not only targeted interventions but also the active engagement of men, boys, families and communities in challenging and transforming these social norms.

In this context, the European Union (EU)-United Nations (UN) Joint Program (hereafter referred to as the JP) *Empowered Women Prosperous Nepal (Shashakta Mahila, Sambridhha Nepal)*, was launched for the period 2023-2026. Implemented by the Government of Nepal in partnership with key UN agencies - United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), International Labour Organization (ILO), and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women) – the programme is financially supported by the EU (USD 15.5 million) and the UN agencies (USD 4 million). It aligns with Nepal’s national vision of a “Prosperous and Happy Nepali”.

The JP seeks to address the underlying drivers of gender inequality. Based on the Gender at Work (G@W) conceptual framework, it is structured around three interconnected specific objectives aimed at achieving the full realisation of the human rights of Nepalese women and girls.

The intervention logic for this JP is ***if*** women/girls in all their diversity, are safe, valued and have increased voice, choice and control to challenge/transform harmful social norms; ***if*** women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights; ***if*** institutions deliver gender equality outcomes in all spheres, in line with international and national normative frameworks; ***then***, better enjoyment of human rights by all Nepali women and girls will be achieved ***because*** an enabling environment for inclusive governance, non-discrimination, economic autonomy, decent work, shock responsive social protection and a violence-free society will have been created through profound changes in institutional capacities and practices, social norms, laws, policies and direct improvements in women’s and girls’ economic, social and political influence, across the conflict-development-humanitarian continuum, while promoting environmental sustainability and increasing resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

This will be achieved through strategic actions addressing the structural and societal barriers hampering women and girls' participation, access to and control over productive labour and resources, safe access to gender-responsive services and decision-making platforms, and protection against the continued risks of violence, exclusion and discrimination.

Despite notable progress in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), challenges remain in achieving substantive equality in various spheres of life - at home, in workplaces, and within communities. The JP will be implemented across 32 local levels in the Madhesh, Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces. The programme adopts an integrated, gender transformative approach with three key outcomes:

Outcome 1: Men and boys, families and communities demonstrate more gender-equitable behaviours and support for positive social and gender norms that promote GEWE, while women and girls have increased agency and voice.

Outcome 2: Women, men, girls, and boys, in all their diversity, access opportunities to exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights.

Outcome 3: Institutions deliver gender equality outcomes in all spheres, in line with international and national normative frameworks.

The EU-UN-funded JP is a flagship programme demanding both quality and timely delivery. The primary purpose of this baseline study is to establish benchmarks against which progress can be measured throughout the programme's lifecycle, in line with the key indicators articulated in its logical framework. The baseline evaluation was conducted to collect data on these key indicators, assess the current situation of target populations in programme sites, and provide evidence-based recommendations to inform the programme's implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.

The baseline evaluation is anchored in the JP's Theory of Change (ToC), elaborated in section 2 of this report. A quasi-experimental study design with a mixed-method approach was adopted to meet the evaluation's objectives. Unlike experimental designs that rely on random assignment, quasi-experimental designs form groups based on pre-existing characteristics.

The evaluation involved collecting primary data from a sample of programme local governments in the Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpashchim Provinces, complemented by a review of secondary data to validate the findings. A structured questionnaire was used, aligned with the EWPN's metadata, ensuring compliance with the indicators required by each participating UN organizations (PUNO). This baseline evaluation will serve as a critical reference point for achieving the JP's overall objective: "To contribute to the full realisation of Nepali women's and girls' human rights and agency."

Quantitative data was gathered through a household survey covering 1,280 households – 640 each from intervention and comparison groups – comprising 460 men and 820 women respondents. The survey population was distributed across the provinces as follows: Madhesh (35.4%), Karnali (29.6%), and Sudurpashchim (35%). Urban populations accounted for (64.5%), while rural populations made up (35.5%).

The caste/ethnic composition showed Brahman/Chhetri respondents at 34.8%, Dalits at 29.4%, Madheshi at 18.5%, Janajati at 13.2% and Muslims at 4.0 %. Most of the surveyed population (88.5%) reported no disabilities, while 11.6% indicated some form of disability, including 0.8% with severe disability.

The respondents, aged 18 and above, included 35.9% men and 64.1% women. Specific modules were tailored to men and women aged 15-49. The women's module was completed

in all 1,280 households, while the men's module was completed in 918 households, as some households did not meet the eligibility criteria for male respondents.

An adolescent survey was also conducted with 138 participants, comprising 120 school-going and 18 out-of-school adolescents. Additionally, an online survey was completed by 18 Civil Society Organizations working at federal, provincial and local levels.

Qualitative data was collected through 30 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) at federal, provincial and local levels, 12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community members, and 6 Short Group Interviews (SGIs) conducted at provincial and local levels.

Summary of the Findings

The baseline study provides a comprehensive analysis of gender equality, women's empowerment, and gender-based violence (GBV) across key impact and outcome areas, covering intervention and comparison groups. It draws data from 1,280 household and women's module questionnaires, and 918 men's module questionnaires, supplemented by adolescent's survey, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. The findings reveal entrenched gender inequalities across social norms, economic opportunities, and governance, underscoring the critical need for targeted interventions.

Outcome 1: Mindsets: Social norms change and gender-based violence prevention.

This outcome focused on promoting gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours, particularly referring to men, boys, families, and communities.

Outcome 1.1: Attitude Toward Unpaid Care Work

Among men respondents, 47.6% (Intervention: 48.8%; Comparison: 46.6%) believed that unpaid care work should be shared equally between men and women, while 44.8% of women respondents (Intervention: 44.7%; Comparison: 45.0%) shared this view. However, 51.2% believed that women should be primarily responsible for unpaid care work, a perspective influenced by traditional gender norms and the effects of male migration. Women reported spending an average of 7.3 hours daily on unpaid care work (Intervention: 7.0; Comparison: 7.5), nearly twice the time spent by men, who reported an average of 3.8 hours per day (Intervention: 3.3; Comparison: 4.2). Among adolescents, only 23.2% recognised an equitable division of household chores, with boys (29.0%) being more likely to agree than girls (18.4%). The lower agreement among girls maybe attributed to prevailing socio-cultural norms in the study sites, where domestic tasks are predominantly considered a women's responsibility.

Outcome 1.2: Justification for Domestic Violence

Alarmingly, 23.8% of women (Intervention: 23.8%; Comparison: 23.8%) and 21.3% of men (Intervention: 22.7%; Comparison: 20.1%) aged 15-49 years believed that domestic violence can be justified under certain circumstances, such as if a wife leaves the house without informing her husband, burns food, neglects child, or refuses sexual intercourse. These findings highlight the entrenched cultural acceptance of violence. It suggests that abuse is often seen as a husband's right—an attitude shared by the abuser, the survivor, and the broader community. Such perspectives are particularly pronounced among families in Madesh Province, Muslim communities, and rural populations.

Outcome 1.3: Capacity of Women's Rights Organizations

Women's rights organizations and human right defenders have largely been able to work undeterred, however, they have encountered several barriers that hinder their full

effectiveness. These includes difficulties in registering complaints related to GBV and untouchability, as well as inadequate local-level policies that fail to address these issues effectively. There are also barriers in mobilising local government support and securing their commitment to implementing gender policies, which undermines the protection of vulnerable and marginalized population. Additionally, socio-cultural constraints often perpetuate gender inequality. Furthermore, there is lack of shared, comprehensive understanding of GBV among key stakeholders, which hinder efforts towards GEWE agenda. Despite these challenges, their capacity to address these issues is reflected in a moderate score of 25 out of 40, which indicates that these obstacles while notable, do not impede their organizations efforts.

Outcome 2: Opportunities: Women's Socio-Economic Empowerment and GBV Response

This outcome evaluates whether individuals across diverse groups have equal access to economic, labour and social rights.

Outcome 2.1: Income of Economically Active Population

The economically active population aged 15 years and over reported an average annual income of NPR 134,395 (Intervention: NPR 155,727; Comparison: 116,071), excluding remittances and social security allowances. Overall, male-headed households earned significantly more than female-headed households (NPR 147,304 vs., NPR 101,481). Urban residents reported higher incomes (NPR 140,683) compared to rural residents (NPR 122,267). Education was a key determinant, with individuals holding post-secondary qualifications earning an average of NPR 311,663 annually. Regionally, Sudurpashchim province recorded the highest income (NPR 161,323), followed by Karnali (NPR 121,693), and Madhesh Province (NPR 117,820).

Outcome 2.2: Economic Activity

A total of 130 individuals (Intervention: 64; Comparison: 66) from 70 households initiated or expanded economic units. Among them, 56 (43%) were women (Intervention: 29; Comparison: 27) and 74 were men (Intervention: 35; Comparison: 39). The study indicated that while local men and women are interested in investing and expanding their businesses, wealthier households are more likely to do so compared to the poorer ones, highlighting the broader issue of income inequality.³⁰ Expansion depends on factors like individual capacity, access to loans, business knowledge, skills and market opportunities.

Outcome 2.3: Access to GBV services and Social Protection

Among surveyed women, 26.5% (Intervention: 29.3%; Comparison: 24.2%) reported experiencing physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner in the past 12 months. Alarmingly, three in four abused women did not seek any form of support. Only 6.5% (Intervention: 4.9%; Comparison: 8.2%) accessed formal GBV services, such as medical care or legal assistance, with most relying on informal support due to perceived lack of access to services, fear of social stigma, and insufficient information about existing policies and service providers. Data from 9 One-Stop Crisis Management Centres (OCMCs) showed that, over the past 12 months, women comprised 72.7% of new service users (2,770 individuals), followed by men (15.2%) and sexually marginalised persons (12.2%). There was a total (new and repeated cases) of 3,975 individuals.

Outcome 3: Institutions/Governance: Inclusive Gender responsive policies, laws, and programmes

This outcome assesses the effectiveness of institutions in delivering gender equality outcomes in line with national and international frameworks.

Outcome 3.1: Legal and Policy Reforms

The policies mapped in this study were assessed based on key informant interviews with relevant government and implementing partner stakeholders, as well as through provincial and local level government websites. Progress varied across provinces: Madhesh has approved and implemented seven out of eight GEWE-related laws, and Karnali eight out of ten. In contrast, Sudurpashchim lags, with only one out of seven proposed laws approved. At the local level, the 14 local governments selected for the study have approved an average of three GEWE-related laws each. Policy implementation was identified as a more effective measure of these indicators. As highlighted in outcome 1.3 of this report, policy implementation remains a significant challenge and should be prioritised. Major international policies addressed include CEDAW, ILO 169, and the Beijing Platform Action Plan, among others.

Outcome 3.2: Influence of Women's Rights Organizations

To assess the influence of Women's Rights Organizations on legislative processes, we conducted an online survey. Half of the surveyed organizations (50%) reported influencing an average of four new or existing laws and policies, reflecting a moderate level of legislative influence at both national and subnational levels. While many organizations submitted recommendations for law formulations, the suggestions were rarely acted upon. Furthermore, organizations reported being excluded from critical processes such as annual work plans and budgets.

Impact indicators

Impact 1: Violence Against Women and Girls

In the past year, 34.5% (Intervention: 37.3%; Comparison: 32.2%) of women aged 15-49 years experienced intimate partner violence (IPV), encompassing physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse. This issue is particularly prevalent in Madhesh province 54.4% (Intervention: 49.7%; Comparison: 59.2%), followed by Sudurpashchim 26.4% (Intervention: 30.2%; Comparison: 23.0%), and lowest in Karnali province 22.7% (Intervention: 29.3%; Comparison: 19.0%). Socio-economic factors such as lack of education, unemployment, poverty, and societal pressures contribute significantly to the prevalence of IPV. The high prevalence in Madhesh province is directly linked to women's socio-economic vulnerabilities.

Impact 2: Employment and Labour Force Participation

Among the working population aged 15 and older, 48.8% were employed (Intervention: 48.7%; Comparison: 48.9%). Men constituted the majority 62.1% (Intervention: 64.3%; Comparison: 60.2%), while women comprised 39.5% (Intervention: 37.5%; Comparison: 41.1%). The overall unemployment rate was 5.1% (Intervention: 5.2%; Comparison: 5.1%). Gender-wise, the unemployed rate for men was 6.1% (Intervention: 4.8%; Comparison: 7.1%) and for women, it was 4.5% (Intervention: 5.5%; Comparison: 3.6%). Additionally, 46.0% of the population did not participate in the labour force, with men at 31.8% (Intervention: 30.8%; Comparison: 32.7%) and women at 56.1% (Intervention: 57.0%; Comparison: 55.3%).

Employment is influenced by factors such as gender, place of residence, education, and disability status.

Impact 3: Social Protection Coverage

Approximately 23.3% of the population (Intervention: 24.8%; Comparison: 22.0%) were covered by social protection programmes. Of these, 13.2% (Intervention: 12.1%; Comparison: 14.2%) benefitted from non-contributory schemes (e.g., single women's allowances: 95.8%, senior citizen allowances: 93.6%, disability allowances: 85.1%, child grants: 62.6%), and 11.9% (Intervention: 15.0%; Comparison: 9.4%) from contribution-based schemes. Child grants had the lowest uptake, primarily due to delays in issuing or renewing beneficiary cards. These findings highlight administrative challenges and need for streamlined processes and improved outreach to enhance equitable access to social protection benefits.

Impact 4: Women Representation in Decision Making

In Nepal's 2022 local elections, 35,097 representatives were elected, 41.2% of whom were women. This marked a significant milestone driven by mandatory provisions for female and female Dalit ward members. At the provincial level, women held 36.4% (out of 550 seats) of the assembly, while at the federal level, they occupied 33.8% (out of 334 seats) of the legislature. These figures were largely achieved through proportional representation as mandated by the 2015 Constitution. However, women's representation under the First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) system remains limited due to factors such as fewer nominations, lack of confidence, and limited geopolitical knowledge.

In the civil service, women represent 28.2% out of the 85,540 positions, while in the judiciary, they hold only 8.0% of positions. Barriers to greater participation include restricted access to legal education, challenges in completing studies after marriage, and difficulties in passing competitive exams despite quotas¹. These disparities highlight the urgent need for strategies to enhance women's participation in decision-making and leadership roles across various sectors.

Conclusion

The baseline findings highlight persistent gender disparities in Nepal, requiring strategic interventions in three key areas: mindsets, opportunities, and institutions/governance.

Mindsets: Deeply ingrained social norms perpetuate gender inequality and normalise gender-based violence (GBV). A significant proportion of both men and women justifying domestic violence under specific circumstances. Adolescents demonstrate a comparatively progressive outlook, signalling opportunities for generational change. To transform harmful mindsets, programmes should prioritise gender-equitable social norms, reduce women's unpaid care burden, and actively engage men, boys, families, and communities.

Opportunities: Economic and educational inequalities disproportionately affect women and rural households. Female-headed households earn significantly less, limited access to education further restricts women's economic empowerment. High prevalence of GBV, coupled with survivors limited access to support services due to stigma and low awareness,

¹ According to the Civil Service Act of 1993, 45% of all advertised vacancies must be reserved for marginalized groups. Within this quota, 33% are reserved for women, 27% for Indigenous Janajati, 22% for Madhesi, 9% for Dalit, 5% for persons with disabilities, and 4% for those from backward communities.

underscores the need for targeted action. Policy recommendations include promoting women's labour force participation, increasing access to vocational training and skills development, and providing economic reintegration support for GBV survivors. Strengthening service delivery frameworks and raising awareness of available support services will further enhance survivors' resilience.

Institutions/Governance: While local governments have made strides in adopting gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) policies, weak enforcement and limited collaboration with Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) hinder progress.

While progress has been made in adopting gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) laws and policies, significant challenges remain in their implementation. Local governments have enacted several GEWE-related laws, but effective enforcement is still lacking. Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have played a crucial role in influencing policy, yet they face barriers in collaborating with elected representatives and being included in policy-making processes. The programme must enhance collaboration between WROs, CSOs, and government officials to ensure that these organizations are actively involved in policy formulation and implementation. Strengthening the capacity of local governments to implement GEWE laws and policies is essential for achieving sustainable change.

In summary, a holistic approach that includes shifting social norms, empowering women economically, and strengthening institutional frameworks is vital for achieving lasting gender equality in Nepal. The findings underscore the importance of collaborative efforts to transform attitudes, support survivors of GBV, and ensure effective implementation of gender-responsive policies and laws.

Recommendations

Based on the baseline findings, the following recommendations are proposed to ensure the effective implementation of the EWPN programme across the three major provinces:

Mindsets

- **Promote Gender-Equitable Attitudes:** Engage men and women in addressing entrenched harmful gender norms. This includes promoting a more equitable distribution of household and external work to alleviate women's time poverty.
- **Strengthen Community Engagement:** Foster meaningful participation and support from families, communities, and institutions to understand, challenge, and transform harmful gender norms and GBV.
- **Support Women's Rights Organizations:** Build the capacity of WROs and CSOs to advocate for gender equality and provide effective support to GBV survivors.

Opportunities

- **Economic Empowerment Initiatives:** Increase women's participation in the labour force by leveraging existing women's groups and supporting local government initiatives focused on women's economic empowerment.
 - **Support GBV Survivors:** Offer income generation opportunities and link survivors with skills development and business support. Promote social integration and support women-led businesses within market value chains.
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- **Enhance Access to Services:** Increase awareness and promote access to gender-and age-sensitive services, including tailored support for child GBV survivors. Strengthen the capacity of service providers such as One-Stop Crisis Management Centres (OCMCs) and safe houses.

Institutions/Governance

- **Strengthen Policy Implementation:** Support provincial and local governments in implementing their GESI strategies and policies. Enhance institutional structure to ensure gender-responsive at all levels of government.
 - **Promote Gender-Responsive Budgeting:** Advocate for the adoption of gender-responsive budgeting at provincial and local levels in line with the model guidelines developed by the Ministry of Finance (MoF).
 - **Foster Women's Leadership:** Encourage women's leadership and evidence-based decision-making. Promote civic engagement, particularly among women and youth, at all levels of government.
 - **Support National Frameworks:** Assist the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC), and national human rights institutions in implementing international and national normative commitments. Promote the ratification and enforcement of relevant ILO Conventions.
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1 Introduction

Despite progressive and strong policy and legal frameworks, women and girls in Nepal continue to face challenges in accessing equal opportunities and exercising their human rights free from violence, discrimination and coercion. Gender disparities persist across various development outcomes, as illustrated by the Global Gender Gap Index (2024)² where Nepal ranks 117 out of 146 countries having a parity score of 0.664. This represents a decline from 2022 when Nepal was ranked 96th. Several factors contribute to this decline. Economic participation remains a significant challenge, with women facing barriers in the labour market, wage disparities, and limited access to finance.

Nepal has demonstrated its commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in key policy documents, including the 16th Plan. This is guided by the SDG Status and Roadmap: 2016-2030, which aims to support the localization of SDG indicators with baselines and targets for 2030. Responding to CEDAW, CRC, ILO Convention on non-discrimination, BPfA and SDG goals for just and equal society through empowerment of women and girls, Nepal has made significant progress by formulating several legal provisions and policies; amending gender discriminatory laws; and implementing programmatic interventions to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.³ The Constitution of Nepal guarantees that 33 per cent of seats in the federal and provincial parliaments are reserved for women; ensures the rights of women and girls, including equal property rights and reproductive health rights, through appropriate legal provisions, policies and programmes. Additionally, various reforms are considered necessary to strengthen these protections.

The government's 16th Plan (2024/25-2028/29) has incorporated the SDGs⁴ and committed to graduate from the LDC category by 2026. Nepal has made significant progress towards SDG 1. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) reduced from 30.1 per cent in 2014 to 17.4 per cent in 2019. However, significant disparities between rural and urban, between age groups as well as among provinces remain a matter of concern.⁵ On the other hand, 33.4 percent of the population lives below the poverty line of \$3.2 a day⁶, and 4.9 million people are still multidimensionally poor – of which 44 per cent are children. There has been a progress on SDG 5, gender empowerment measures showing improvement, while wage inequality continues – women still earn Rs. 0.70 for every rupee that a man earns for the same work. Women's labour force participation rate also remains much lower than their male counterparts. The disproportionate distribution of unpaid care work among women continues to hinder their social, economic and political participation in society. Little progress has been reported in reducing violence against women and children, and no decline is noted in ending child marriage.

UNICEF 2020 Gender Action Plan report indicates that there are visible gender gaps across development outcomes⁷. GBV against women, girls, LGBTIQ+ persons and other vulnerable and excluded groups remains a common occurrence in their homes, communities, workplaces and learning environments. One in five women in Nepal aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence since the age of 15, and at least one in four (26%) ever married women have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence – with husbands accounting for 84 percent of the perpetrators⁸.

² Global Gender Gap Insight Report, 2022 and 2024, The World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland.

³ "25 years of BPfA: Nepal's Achievements and Challenges" (The Permanent mission of Nepal to the United Nations) Conference date: 12 March, 2020.

<https://www.un.int/nepal/event/25-years-bpfa-nepal%E2%80%99s-achievements-and-challenges>

⁴ NPC. 2017. Sustainable Development Goals Status and Roadmap: 2016-2030

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The Sustainable Development Report 2021. The Decade of Action for Sustainable Development Goals.

⁷ UNICEF. 2020. Gender Action Plan Report. Unpublished.

⁸ GoN, 2017. Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2016.

Prevailing gender inequality is reflected in barriers women and girls face in accessing to education, decent work, and income opportunities. Women's labour force participation is about half (26.3%) of men's (53.3%); and most women and girls are engaged in unpaid household or care work⁹. Economic exclusion starts early with compounding barriers to gaining marketable skills and accessing opportunities to be gainfully employed. Between ages 15 and 24, twice as many girls/women as boys/men are left out of learning and economic opportunities¹⁰. A large portion of men migrate from rural areas for jobs in larger cities and abroad, resulting in more women engaged in agriculture and forestry activities than men¹¹. Despite their critical role in these sectors, which have solid green job growth potential¹² in line with the EU's MIP priority 1, women continue to face severe barriers in accessing land, productive resources, credit, technology and markets. Currently, social protection, a key lever for advancing gender equality, reaches approximately 30 percent of women, leaving most women and girls without income security, while only about 17 per cent of the total population have access to any social protection¹³. Further barriers, such as decision-making power in the household societal impacts of COVID19, and barriers to participation in governance limit women and girls' potential to realize their rights and contribute fully to society.

It is evident that despite the many advances in GEWE, Nepal still faces many challenges to guarantee equality in communities, workplaces, and homes, and in the protection of women and girls. In this context, the EU-UN Joint Programme (hereafter referred to as the JP) will address the drivers of gender inequality in Nepal through an integrated gender transformative approach – with a focus on (1) ensuring that women and girls are safe, valued and have increased voice to challenge and transform harmful social norms, (2) ensuring that women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, increasingly enjoy their equal economic, labour and social rights by strengthening women and girls safe, dignified and sustainable access to decent work, life skills education, age and gender-relevant social protection, quality multi-sectoral services and social infrastructure to mitigate the multi-faceted impact of gender-based inequalities and (3) supporting institutions and social actors to deliver gender equality outcomes in all spheres, in line with international and national normative frameworks, through addressing implementation and accountability gaps in the policy and legal frameworks in order to strengthen duty-bearers' capacity to uphold substantive equality and right holders' interest and capacities to demand it.

⁹ GoN and ILO.2019. National Labour Force Survey 2017/18.

¹⁰ GoN and ILO. 2019. National Labour Force Survey 2017/18.

¹¹ These two sectors engage 21.5% of Nepal's employed population, with one out every three employed women (33 percent) and 61.3 percent of women working on the production of goods for their own final use engaged in these two sectors. Source: GoN and ILO.2019. National Labour Force Survey 2017/18.

¹² ILO.2019. Nepal Employment and Environmental Sustainability Factsheet 2017.

¹³ ILO. 2020. World Social Protection Data Dashboard – Nepal Country Profile. Available at: <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/WSPDB.action?id=13>

2 Objective of Baseline Evaluation

2.1 The Scale and Complexity of the Study

This section presents the background and scope of the baseline study for the EWPN programme. EWPN is being implemented in Nepal as a JP by UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO and UN Women to support the Government of Nepal (GoN). The programme aims to support Nepal in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment by addressing challenges and barriers to the implementation of key outcomes, ultimately delivering long-term impacts.

This baseline study was commissioned to establish key project indicators values, which will enable a comparison with the endline study and help assess the effectiveness of EWPN programme upon completion. According to the project document, the JP is aligned with Nepal's goal of graduating from Least Developed Country (LDC) status by 2030 and emerging as an inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and prosperous middle-income nation. This vision is enshrined in the Constitution (2015)¹⁴ which calls for the elimination of all forms of discrimination and the creation of an egalitarian society.

The programme document review highlighted that while Nepal has made significant progress in gender equality and women's empowerment, including government commitments to good governance, democracy, social justice and gender equality, and women's empowerment, substantial gaps remain to achieving national, regional, and local objectives. The socio-cultural constraints such as patriarchal norms harmful traditional practices and GBV continue to undermine women's economic empowerment and efforts to reduce GBV in Nepal.

The EWPN JP, financed by the EU and implemented by PUNO, is aligned with Nepal's national vision of a prosperous and inclusive society. Each of the participating UN organizations plays a distinct role: the EU provides financial support, UNICEF leads coordination, and other partners contribute the project execution, capacity building, policy making, and monitoring and evaluation. The JP envisions bolstering women's rights and ensuring equal opportunities for women in Nepal, involving not only women but also men, boys, families, communities, CSOs and Community-based Organizations (CBOs), private sector actors, and all levels of government.

In addition to addressing the structural barriers to gender equality, the JP focuses on strengthening the local and provincial government capacity for gender-responsive governance. This is a key pillar of Nepal's Constitution. The concept of intersectionality, a term coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989, highlights how multiple axes of social differentiation, such as gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, intersect and result in unique vulnerabilities. For instance, the data from 2022 NDHS shows that 3% of Muslim women report experiencing sexual abuse by someone other than their husbands or intimate partners, compared to 1.4% for indigenous and Brahman/Chettri women and 1.9% for Dalit and Madhesi women. These disparities are driven by socio-cultural norms and values that restrict access to education, economic opportunities, and participation in public-life. Muslim women especially in the Madhesh province, are the most effected due to deep-rooted gender biases restricting mobility, decision making, and participation.

The JP also aims to build the capacity of government institutions, human rights bodies, elected female representatives, and women- and youth-led CSOs and private sector to promote gender-responsive governance and deliver better development outcomes for women and girls in line with national and international normative frameworks.

The EWPN JP will be implemented over four years (from January 2023 to December 2026) in 32 local levels across the Madhesh, Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces. This baseline evaluation was

¹⁴ Constitution of Nepal 2015.

commissioned to OPM and conducted between January to September 2024, financed by the EU (USD 15.5 million) and UN's contribution of USD 4 million, amounting to USD 19.5 million.

The baseline evaluation was linked to the JP programme's Theory of Change (ToC) and logical framework, focusing on outcome and impact level indicators. It involved primary data collection from target provinces, and a review of secondary data to corroborate the findings. Stakeholders from diverse groups, including women, men, families, adolescents, their parents and caregivers, persons with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, and service providers contributed to the data collection, ensuring comprehensive insights into factors affecting project success.

2.2 The Logical Model and the Expected Result Chain

This section outlines the logical model, and the expected result chain based on design of the JP and the extensive consultation process with government institutions, CSOs and other stakeholders at federal, provincial and local levels. The programme seeks to strengthen equal rights and opportunities for women and men by engaging with communities, families, adolescents and men and boys to promote gender-equitable attitudes, norms and behaviours. These form the foundation for increasing the agency and voice of women and girls. As such, the logical model and expected result chain were developed with a focus on addressing the underlying drivers of gender inequality.

The baseline evaluation team was tasked with examining this framework to understand the transformative aims of the programme. The ToC, drawing on the G@W conceptual framework, articulated three interlinked objectives aiming at realising the human rights of Nepalese women and girls. The intervention was clear:

- If: women and girls in all their diversity, are safe, valued and have increased voice, choice and comparisons to challenge/transform harmful social norms;
- If: women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights;
- If: institutions deliver gender equality outcomes in all spheres, in line with international and national normative frameworks; Then: improved enjoyment of human rights by all Nepali women and girls will be achieved.

This transformation is driven by creating an enabling environment for inclusive governance, non-discrimination, economic autonomy, decent work, shock responsive social protection, and a violence-free society. This will result in profound changes in institutional capacities and practices, social norms, laws, policies and direct improvements in women's and girls' economic, social and political influence, across the conflict-development-humanitarian continuum, while promoting environmental sustainability and increasing resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

This JP seeks to achieve its objectives through transformative approaches. These approaches address structural and societal barriers that hamper women and girls' participation in productive labour, access to resources, safe access to gender-responsive services and decision-making platforms, while protecting them from violence, exclusion and discrimination in the home, family and workplace. The evaluation methodology was designed to assess the programme's ToC and logical framework presented in Figure 1 and Table 1.

Figure 1 illustrates how changing mindsets to address social norms and prevent GBV can create opportunities for women's socioeconomic empowerment and a future reduction in GBV. To achieve these outcomes, the evaluation addresses policy gaps and the capacity of local-level institutions to ensure inclusive plans and governance structures that promote accountability and reduce socio-cultural discrimination.

Figure 1: JP setting its ToC based changing the mindsets, seek for opportunities and capacitate local and regional governments

THE HEADLINES



Mindsets
Social norms change
and gender-based
violence prevention

- Men and boy become change maker for Gender Equality
- Unpaid care and domestic work valued and equally shared
- Women and girls have stronger collective voice



Opportunities
Women's Socio-Economic
Empowerment and
gender-based violence
response

- Women have greater access to decent work and gender responsive social protection
- Women-led enterprises are supported and formalized
- Quality multisectoral GBV services accessible for all, including children



Institutions/ Governance
Inclusive Gender
responsive policies, laws
and programmes

- Government institutions advance Gender Equality and women's rights
- Government and social partner officials implement inclusive and gender-responsive policies, laws, and programmes
- Civil society and private sector advocate for accountable decision making on gender equality

This baseline evaluation contributes to achieving the programme's Overall Objective (Impact) which is to **contribute to the full realisation of the human rights and agency of Nepalese women and girls**". The JP aims to **unlock the potential of Nepali Women and Girls' potential** by targeting the underlying drivers of gender inequality and investing in gender equality accelerators. The programme addresses structural gender gaps that hinder Nepal's development trajectory, while also tackling the intersecting vulnerabilities that perpetuate cycles of deprivation, exclusion and discrimination. It capitalises on the opportunities brought by the Nepal's new federal system, which has seen an unprecedented number of women in elected governmental positions.

Table 1: EWPN’s impact and outcome level indicators to be focused on baseline study/evaluation

Level	Desired Result	Indicator
Impact	Women and girls in targeted project locations increasingly enjoy their human rights and realize their full potential free from violence and discrimination	Indicator 1 - Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months
		Indicator 2 - Proportion of the working population in employment
		Indicator 3 - Proportion of population covered by social protection systems
		Indicator 4 - Proportion of positions held by women in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures (federal, provincial and local) and (b) judiciary c) civil service
Outcome	Outcome 1 - Men and boys, families and communities demonstrate more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours and support social and gender norms that promote GEWE, and women and girls have increased agency and voice	Indicator 1.1 - Percentage of men and women reporting that unpaid care and domestic work are shared in their household
		Indicator 1.2 - Percentage of men and women aged 15-49 who agree that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for specific reasons
		Indicator 1.3 - Extent to which women’s and girls’ rights organizations, and women human rights defenders can work undeterred
	Outcome 2 - Women, men, girls and boys in all their diversity access opportunities to exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights	Indicator 2.1 - Average income of economically active population supported
		Indicator 2.2 - Number of individuals that have started and/or developed their economic units
		Indicator 2.3 – Number of individuals who benefit from essential services, including multi-sectoral GBV services and social protection measures
	Outcome 3 - Institutions deliver gender equality outcomes in all spheres, in line with national and international normative frameworks	Indicator 3.1 - Number of laws and policies that were adopted or amended to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment
		Indicator 3.2 - Number of laws and policies where recommendations made by Women Rights Organizations (WROs)/youth organizations/ LGBTIQ+ have been taken on board by government bodies at all levels during the drafting or revision process

Source: JP ToR for Evaluation Study, 2023.

This baseline evaluation collected data based on the logical framework outlined in ToR (see Annex 1). The JP targets women and girls, men and boys, non-gender conforming individuals, persons with disabilities, families, community leaders, networks and CBOs, and government and non-government institutions. This includes, government institutions at federal, provincial and local levels, elected representatives and government officials, formal market institutions, trade unions, farmer producer organizations, employers’ organizations, forest users’ groups, cooperatives, women’s organizations, youth-led organizations, associations and networks of socially excluded groups (sexual and gender minorities, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups), interfaith networks, schools, and the media outlets.

The JP ensures that target groups are not passive recipients but active participants and empowered agents of change. It emphasises the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities and aims

to enhance understanding of how gender and disability intersect, contributing to the social, economic, and political exclusion of women and girls with disabilities.

2.3 The Context

The Constitution's guarantees gender equality and seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on class, region, language, religion and gender as well as caste-based untouchability. Article 34 ensures fair labour practices, social security and equal remuneration for same work (Article 18). The "Social Inclusion Policy for Local Levels" (2022), formulated by the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA), aims to end harmful traditional practices such as polygamy, child marriage, Chhaupadi, and gender-based violence (GBV).

Nepal aspires to graduate from its Least Developed Country (LDC) status and emerge as an inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and prosperous middle-income country by 2030. This vision is enshrined in the Constitution (2015)¹⁵ which commits to eliminating all forms of discrimination and fostering an egalitarian society". The Constitution guarantees rights and protection for marginalised groups, including women (Article 38), Dalits (Article 40), sexual and gender minorities, youth, and persons with disabilities (Articles 3 and 42). Additionally, the Constitution brought significant governance reform, devolving powers to provincial and local governments, and restructuring the country into seven provinces and 753 local levels with elected representatives. A broad reform agenda underway to align the Nepal's legal framework with the Constitution while addressing the country's financial fragility¹⁶. Some important policies, acts and plans for gender equality and empowerment are listed in Table 2:

Table 2: Recent policies, acts and plans on GEWE in Nepal

Title	Year of adoption	Brief account
National Civil Code	2017	Prohibits discrimination on any ground in the public places, services and utilities; forbids gender-based discrimination in wages and social security; equal inheritance rights for daughters and sons, and equal spousal rights to property
National Penal Code	2017	Criminalizes gender-based violence acts and wilful discrimination and harmful social practices including rape, incest, paedophilia, polygamy, forced marriage, non-consensual marriage, child marriage, Chhaupadi trafficking of women, sexual harassment at workplace
The Labor Act	2017	Equal pay for work of equal value for both men and women; provision of paid maternity leave
Contribution Based Social Security Act	2017	Equal benefits to men and women engaged in formal work sector to social security benefits
Right to Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act	2018	Provision of paid maternity leave, safe abortion
Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention) Act	2015	Provides legal frameworks for all to ensure safe working environment
Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act	2009	Recognizes domestic violence as criminal offence; provision of closed-door hearing; provision of medical treatment to victim
Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act	2007	Criminalizes trafficking in persons for prostitution, organ extraction and engaging women and girls in prostitution or sexual exploitation

¹⁵ Constitution of Nepal 2015.

¹⁶ These fiscal reforms include establishing a budgeting and accounting processes, across the three tiers of government, successful transparent fiscal transfers, and adoption of legislation with a framework for transparent resource allocation and better accountability of government operations. For details see. World Bank. 2019. International Development Association Program Document for a Proposed Development Policy Credit in the Amount of SDR 72.2 Million (US\$100 Million Equivalent) to Nepal for the Second Programmatic Fiscal and Public Financial Management Development Policy Credit.

Title	Year of adoption	Brief account
Act Relating to Children	2018	Defines the violence against children that includes physical or mental punishment, undignified behaviour, child marriage, and sexual abuse. The law prohibits children from making pornographic content, distributing it, exposing them to it, and threatening them for sexual activities. The Act also emphasises to provide support to the children in special protection needs.
National Children Policy	2023	The policy emphasises legal reforms to protect gender and sexual minority children, enforcing child protection standards in various settings, and integrating child rights issues into political commitments. Prioritises expanding services for missing children, establishing a child budget code, and implementing a child protection case management system.
National Gender Equality Policy	2021	Prioritize women's economic empowerment across all three tiers of government; focused on institutionalizing gender responsive governance system and on elimination of GBV and harmful practices against women through socio-cultural transformation
National Employment Policy (NEP)	2015	Places women, youth, indigenous groups, Dalits, Madhesi and other marginalized communities as groups of special attention; establishes the goals of ending gender-based discrimination in the labour market
15th Developmental Plan	2019/20 – 2023/24	Plan prioritizes gender equality and women's empowerment, accelerating access to quality education, and development of a discrimination-free, child-friendly society
National Integrated Social Protection Framework (NISPF)	2022	Proposes pathways for an inclusive, rights-based and shock-sensitive social protection
National Action Plan Against Gender-based Violence	2010	establish hospital-based one-stop crisis management centres (OCMCs) to provide integrated services to GBV survivors
National framework for Leave No One Behind	2022	In line with the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, stipulates equal opportunities for all to benefit from socio-economic and political development, have their human rights respected,

Source: Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizen (MoWCSC)¹⁷

Despite these reforms, Nepal remains politically fragile and vulnerable to natural disasters. Political instability at the federal level often trickles down to local governments, disrupting capacity strengthening and implementing efforts. To mitigate such risks, the JP will deploy diverse partnership and implementation modalities, working with government entities as well as private and non-government organizations.

Significant progress has been made in areas such as female literacy, which increased from 57.4% in 2011 to 69.4% in 2021, and women's land and/or house ownership, which increased to 23.9% in 2021¹⁸ compared to 19.7% in 2011. The maternal mortality ratio significantly dropped from 239 to 151 per 100,000 live births between 2016 and 2021. Additionally, initiatives like the Micro-Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP) have promoted women's entrepreneurship.

However, GBV and discrimination against women, persons with disabilities, and sexual and gender minorities remain prevalent. According to the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2022¹⁹, 27% of women have ever experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from a husband or

¹⁷ MoWCSC. 2020. A Progressive Journey To Gender Equality And Women's Empowerment – Achievement of Nepal

¹⁸ National Population and Housing Census 2021, National Statistics Office, Thapathali, Kathmandu

¹⁹ Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2022, Ministry of Health and Population, Singha Durbar.

<https://mohp.gov.np/uploads/Resources/Nepal%20Demographic%20and%20Health%20Survey%202022%20Key%20Indicators%20Report.pdf>

intimate partner, with most cases going unreported due to stigma, shame, fear of retaliation, and limited trust in services. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019²⁰ found that around one third of women (29.5%) and men (29.4%) aged 15-49 years justified wife beating under certain circumstances, reflecting deeply entrenched gender norms.

Child marriages continue to pose a significant challenge, with over one third (32.8%) of young women aged 20-24 years reporting marriage by age of 18, despite the legal age of 20. This practice limits educational and economic opportunities for women and increases the risk of domestic violence.

While Nepal's Constitution mandates gender inclusion across all sectors, women remain underrepresented in key areas. In 2017, only 2% of judges and 6% of police officers were women. Media representation of women remains low, with only 20% of media personnel being female. Survivors of GBV face significant barriers in accessing justice, as indicated by the NDHS 2022 data, with only 7% of survivors seeking police assistance.

Efforts to address GBV have been supported by various Development Partners (DPs) and through the hospital-based OCMCs across 94 hospitals, offering a range of services for GBV survivors. These services include medical treatment, psychosocial counselling, forensic services, legal aid, educational empowerment, livelihood support through seed money, protection and rehabilitation and reintegration support. Yet, fragmented approaches and limited collaboration among organizations undermine the overall effectiveness of interventions.

In terms of economic participation, the Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) 2017²¹ reported that women's labour force participation (26.3%) remains significantly lower than that of men (53.3%). Cultural norms and household responsibilities restrict women's availability for wage employment, despite their increasing educational attainment. Moreover, job creation in higher productivity sectors like manufacturing and finance has disproportionately benefitted men. Nepal's legal framework provides for gender parity in employment and remuneration, yet challenge persist in the implementation and enforcement of these laws at local levels. Gender-based inequalities, wage discrimination, and limited economic opportunities for women were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, further entrenching existing disparities.

Additional barriers such as low decision-making power within households, limited access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, and gaps in political participation and leadership constrain women's and girls' ability to fully enjoy their human rights and contribute to society. According to the Global Gender Gap report 2024, Nepal ranks 51st in political empowerment with a score of 0.2888, but significantly lower in economic participation and opportunity, ranking 137th with a score of 0.475. Despite an increase in women's representatives at local government levels, meaningful participation in governance processes remains a challenge to realise GEWE in Nepal.

Transformative and Feministic approaches have been addressed today by many UN and development partners and based on gender results effectiveness scale (GRES). These approaches aim to ensure inclusivity in governance and equitable access to natural resources, with women in leadership roles. However, effectiveness remains limited across various development sectors. The Gender Equality Strategy aims to progress from gender-sensitive to a gender-responsive intervention to a gender transformative approach, which addresses the root causes of gender inequality. This transformative approach seeks to dismantle structural barriers, increase women's empowerment, and proactively eliminate inequalities, thereby reshaping power dynamics in decision making processes within development sectors.

Despite over decade of progress, there has been little effort to update and map the GEWE issues or track leadership changes among women that could influence power dynamics and gender roles. In response, the GoN, the EU Delegation in Nepal and the UN launched the EWPN JP. The EWPN,

²⁰ Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS),2020. Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019, Survey Findings Report. Kathmandu, Nepal: Central Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF Nepal.

²¹ The Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) 2017

also known as Shashakta Mahila, Samriddha Nepal, aims to advance gender equality and empower all women and girls, in line with Nepal's national vision for a prosperous and happy country by 2030.

2.4 The Key Stakeholders Involved

This baseline evaluation reviewed the stakeholders' engagement approaches based on the project document and during the evaluation period stakeholder consultation were carried out to map the targeted beneficiaries in the given municipalities. Therefore, the JP has envisioned building on existing partnerships within the UN system while also modelling inter-agency partnerships from the design to implementation phase. It will also outline to leveraging partnerships, including ongoing programmes by the participating UN Agencies (PUNOs) and explore collaboration with other relevant UN agencies drawing on their comparative advantage to specific areas of the programme.

So far, this evaluation showed that stakeholders have been engaged in different stages of project implementation based on the needs to address the outcomes and contribute to achieving the impacts. In case of the government system, all three tiers of government from federal to local level, INGOs, NGOs, CBOs, and CSOs were consulted throughout the lifecycle of the project intervention as per the logical framework and ToC. The baseline evaluation conducted consultations via online with respective stakeholders, which will help in elevating GEWE as a critical accelerator for Nepal's development. Its multisectoral approach is supported by the EU and UN capacity to link programming with broader development agendas and leverage both institutions' political capital. For leveraging funds and programmes, the PUNOs will leverage their broader cross thematic partnerships with bilateral and multilateral organizations in Nepal. The EU's political leadership and large development platform will represent an asset for this JP, enabling better coordination with other actors as well as building synergies between existing investments, including bilateral partnerships with the UN.

The JP intends to collaborate with relevant government institutions at federal, provincial and local levels. At the federal level, the programme will engage with the following line ministries, oversight bodies and accountability mechanisms: Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC); Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS); MoF; Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP); Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA); Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA); Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA); National Human Rights Commission; National Planning Commission (NPC); and National Women's Commission (NWC). At the provincial level, the programme will work closely with the ministries of social development, other relevant line ministries and departments, and the provincial planning commissions. At the local level, the programme will jointly implement activities with local authorities, such as mayors, deputy mayors, chief administrative officers and ward officials. Under the framework of the JP, support will be provided to service providers at provincial and local levels (district, municipality and ward), including OCMCs and shelters.

According to the project document, this JP's overall implementation will be guided at the strategic level by a Steering Committee, led jointly by the GoN, the EU, and UN. The Steering Committee will include key line ministries and public institutions (such as the NWC, NPC, MoWCSC, MoLESS, MoF, MoFAGA, MoLJ, and other relevant institutions) and private sector and civil society representatives (Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, JTUCC, National Cooperative Federation of Nepal, the wider gender machinery in Nepal, including the GBV Network, universities and faculty of gender studies, and others) and implementing partners, as relevant.

As per the project document existing GBV prevention and response programming across agencies including on service delivery will be collaborated with UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women. For system strengthening, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WHO's expertise will be used. For access to justice UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women's expertise will be mobilised and for ensuring social accountability, UN Women and UNICEF will take the lead. For the programme on labour and market issues, labour and market-focused interventions will be built on existing interagency partnerships between ILO and UNICEF on child labour and economic exploitation, while leveraging ILO's and UN Women expertise

and partnerships to inform advocacy and programming on workplace harassment and discrimination, as well on the care economy.

3 Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

3.1 The Purpose of the Evaluation

This baseline evaluation is the first stage in the evaluation series to fulfil the JP requirement to provide information about the pre-project situation to meet the baseline targets as outlined in the logical framework. This evaluation focused on examining the present situation of the activities proposed in the three provinces, namely Madhesh, Karnali and Sudurpashchim. The overall evaluation series aims to answer the evaluation questions of all the impact and outcome level indicators specified in the meta data as the evaluation criteria listed in the Terms of Reference (ToR). Each of the indicators were further elaborated to revise the evaluation questions, data sources and add areas of inquiry and methods of triangulation during midterm and end-line evaluations.

This EWPN JP is an EU flagship programme that requires both quality and timely delivery. The objective of the baseline evaluation is to ensure accountability for the performance and results of the programme based on the logical framework outlined in the ToR (**Annex I**).

This baseline evaluation also assessed the baseline indicators to determine whether the programme is designed to meet its stated goal, objectives and assumptions in alignment with the results framework (RF).

According to the global gender gap index 2022²², among other regions of the world, South Asia ranks the lowest in improving its gender gap. In the South Asia region, Nepal and Bangladesh lead with nearly 69% and 71% of respective gender gaps fill.

This baseline evaluation will determine the reasons why certain results occurred or not, draw lessons, derive good practices, and provide pointers for learning by JP initiatives. They will provide evidence-based findings to inform operational and strategic decision-making. That is, it will help in providing learnings on how EU Development Goals and their main priority agenda for Nepal guided by the national priorities, its fundamental values, adherence to the universal principles of human rights, transparency and accountability has been addressed. Likewise, ILO, UNICEF, UNWOMEN and UNFPA will ensure that national policies and plans on GBV and SDG targets (SDG goal 8- SDG 5, SDG 3) are well accounted for and that transformative change has been observed in course of JP interventions. The government also lacks certain data, which will be captured based on the JP impact and outcome indicators as outlined in the ToR and implementation plan.

Thus, the primary purpose of the baseline study/evaluation is to provide a benchmark against which progress can be measured throughout the programme lifecycle according to key indicators articulated in the programme's logical framework as shown in Table 1 above. At the end of the JP, this study will be replicated to establish endline data against which the baseline data will be compared to evaluate the effectiveness of the JP.

The baseline evaluation has the following objectives:

- To collect data on key indicators defined in the programme's logical framework, as well as other essential factors that may affect the achievement of the programme's intended results.
- To establish baseline values for key indicators in the programme's logical framework and support the definition of realistic indicator targets for the programme's lifetime.
- To assess the current situation of target populations in the programme sites, including similarities and differences that may affect the implementation of the programme and the achievement of results.

²² Global Gender Gap Index Progress Report for Nepal, 2022.

-
- To provide a set of evidence-based recommendations to inform programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The main audience and intended users of the baseline study are the decision-makers and programme managers of the JP, the staff of implementing partners delivering the programme, government stakeholders at federal, provincial, and local levels, and the EU Delegation to Nepal. The results of the baseline study will be disseminated as appropriate, using traditional and digital communication channels. Beyond the JP, the expected user of this report also includes implementing partners, development partners working in GBV, entrepreneurship, Gender Equality and Empowerment, social security, labour management, social safeguard, and social justice.

3.2 Evaluation Scope

Design-wise, the baseline was focused on setting up a quasi-experimental design so that outcomes and impact can be attributed to the programme at the endline. This included the identification of an appropriate comparison group that ideally has not benefited from the programme and can serve as a counterfactual to the intervention group. This meant finding a group that is statistically identical to the intervention groups, except for their exposure to the programme. The geographic scope of this evaluation focused on conducting household survey, adolescent survey, FGD and KII in the intervention sites of Karnali, Sudurpashchim and Madhesh provinces. In total, 14 local levels and corresponding 14 comparison groups were selected as detailed in Annex 3. The study was conducted from January 2024 to September 2024.

4 Baseline Evaluation Methodology

4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Since this is a baseline study, efforts were made to ensure that the findings are fit to be used as benchmarks, standards, or factors against which conformance, performance, and suitability of technical capability, activity, product, or plan can be measured in midline and endline evaluations. The baseline was designed to support consistent, high-quality endline evaluation within a common evaluation criteria framework. The criteria provide a normative framework against which programme interventions can be assessed. This evaluation criteria can also be used in processes beyond evaluation, including defining frameworks and indicators for monitoring and results management, funding approval, strategic planning, and intervention design, particularly to improve future interventions by JP or individual organization. The criteria set up in this baseline provides a consistent language across the development field, providing standardisation and allowing for comparison and learning across interventions.

The OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact will be assessed at the endline to answer the evaluation questions on whether the EWPN programme goals and design are aligned with the beneficiary and stakeholder's needs along with GoN's SDG targets and whether the EWPN programme was able to meet its objectives. Further the baseline gathered information so that the effectiveness criteria can be measured at the end to understand how the interventions supported to achieving the overall objectives of the programme. This includes measurement of the intended impacts and the difference this JP will make in addressing GEWE issues and reducing or responding to GBV and labour issues. It will also help measure the extent to which the programme was designed to sustain the benefits generated and provide the desired impact. The baseline survey was conducted using the disaggregation as per the criteria mentioned in the meta data developed by the programme. Additional disaggregation by, ethnicity, gender, disability was done where relevant. The findings of this study are expected to provide the important context necessary for the midterm and end-line evaluations to assess the programme's performance against the OECD DAC criteria. In this regard, the baseline assessed if the activity of the JP is coherent with government plans and priority programmes, and other programmes implemented by development partners in those areas and assessed the relevance and sustainability aspects of the programme.

Given that the programme has a gender-specific output, the baseline evaluation ensured that GEWE and equity are mainstreamed throughout the evaluation as appropriate. The evaluation team assessed the extent to which GEWE objectives were mainstreamed during the intervention design and conducted a detailed gender analysis to assess the extent to which different voices, vulnerabilities, capacities, and priorities of women, men, girls, and boys are reflected in the programme design and how these distinct groups might benefit from the programme. The team ensured that the data collection process included the active participation of women, men, girls, and boys to inform a better understanding of the programme from their distinct perspectives at individual and institutional levels. This information was gathered through interviews and discussions with representatives from government stakeholders, provincial municipal and ward leaders, OCMC, school children, teachers, and women groups and other key stakeholders. The questions and indicators were developed as per the EWPN meta data indicators, which were identified and agreed on the questionnaire by PUNOs to collect the required information using the prescribed tools and data sources for mainstreaming GEWE in the baseline evaluation. The findings on girls/women, boys/men, and on different ethnicities have been reported to the extent possible based on the availability of the data.

4.2 Evaluation Framework

The baseline evaluation developed frameworks focusing on GBV, policy advocacy, social security, labour management, and economic empowerment to establish a systematic approach to evaluate these areas, helping to address some of the challenges mentioned above.

This evaluation framework was developed to assess multiple stakeholders to gain a shared understanding of the programme and evaluation process and help to identify and agree upon appropriate objectives and methods. In this way, it facilitated a more comprehensive evaluation and improved the fit between researcher-led and practitioner-led evaluation approaches.

4.3 Evaluation Design and Methods

This baseline study/evaluation followed a quasi-experimental study design with a mixed method approach to fulfil the objectives. Unlike experimental designs, which use random assignment to compare intervention and comparison groups, quasi-experimental designs do not randomise participants. Instead, groups are formed based on pre-existing characteristics.

Finding a perfect comparison group was difficult in practice due to selection bias. Selection bias occurs when there are systematic differences between the intervention and comparison groups, besides their exposure to the programme, which can influence the outcomes. For example, if the programme is more likely to attract participants with higher education levels, and higher education is also correlated with lower rates of GBV, then the programme might appear less effective than it truly is due to this pre-existing difference between the groups.

To mitigate selection bias, the team carefully considered the following criteria when selecting the comparison group:

- **Comparability on baseline characteristics:** The intervention and comparison groups were made similar on average across characteristics that might influence experiences of gender-based violence, gender equality and women's empowerment apart from exposure to the program.
- **Similar reaction to the program:** Both groups were made to react similarly to external factors that could influence violence rates and empowerment of women.
- **No exposure to other interventions:** Selection of comparison groups having no prior exposure to other similar interventions that could affect the outcome.
- **No contamination between groups:** Selection of intervention and comparison groups having no influence on each other's experiences.
- **Post-intervention outcome changes:** Ensuring that changes in the outcome variable (gender-based violence experiences and overall empowerment of women) occur after the intervention for the intervention group, and not before.

By carefully considering these criteria, the evaluation team attempted to increase the confidence that any observed differences in gender-based violence experiences and women's empowerment between the interventions and comparison groups will be the result of the intervention itself, and not due to pre-existing group differences.

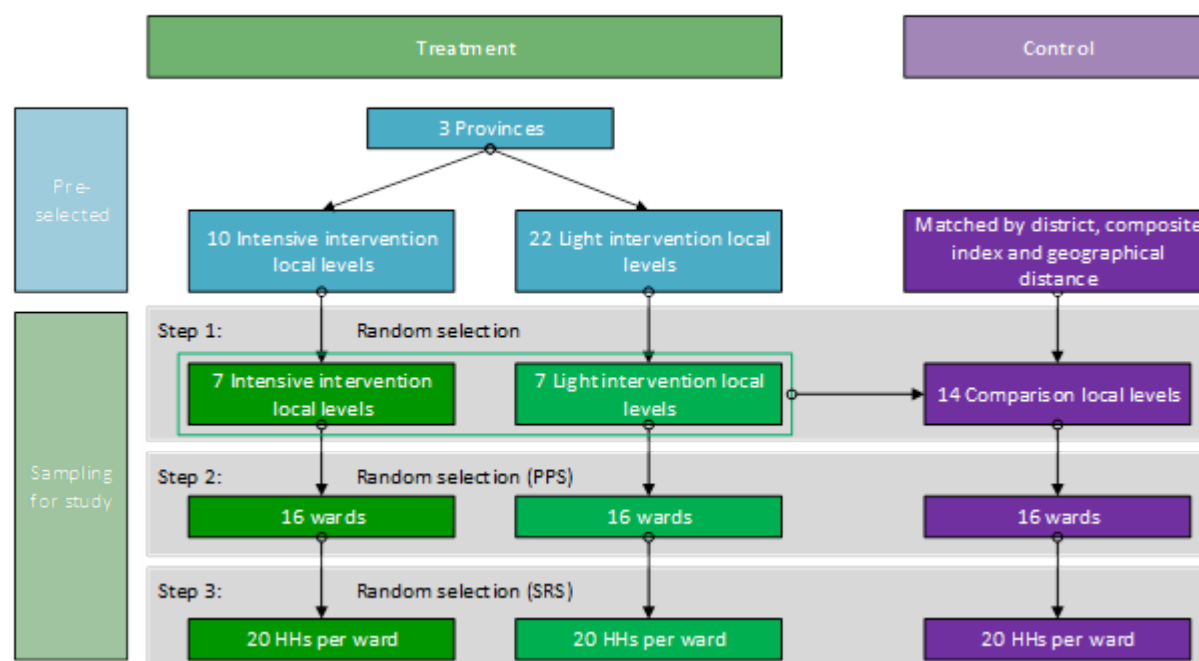
The EWPN programme intervention provinces and local levels were purposively selected by the programme implementors based on local level composite weighted index. The selection criteria for local levels were: (a) population growth rate of women, (b) percentage of married women at age 18, (c) percent of economically active women in agriculture, forestry, and fishery, (d) equity index, (e) elected leadership of local levels, (f) Local Government Institutional Capacity Self-Assessment (LISA) indicators, and (g) presence of Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs) at the local level.

As per the ToR, the comparison group was selected based on criteria such as geographical and demographic comparability at baseline, national statistics on key gender indicators, and absence of exposure to other interventions. The EWP programme selected intervention provinces based on criteria including population growth, economic activity, and local governance. Within these provinces, 32 local levels were chosen for the intervention: 10 for "intensive" and 22 for "light" interventions. Propensity Score Matching (PSM) was used to match intervention and comparison households with similar propensity scores. PSM helps to reduce the selection bias and allows for a more accurate estimation of the intervention effect.

4.4 Sampling Methods

To select a representative sample, the sampling frame included three levels: local levels, wards, and households. This study used the 2021 National Population and Housing Census as the master sampling frame, consisting of Enumeration Areas (EAs) as Primary Sampling Units (PSUs). PSUs were formed based on ward household sizes, with cluster sizes set around 200 households (ranging from 150 to 250). EAs were grouped or split as needed, following a survey protocol to ensure consistency. Altogether, 1,280 households were selected to gather information, comprising 640 households each from intervention and comparison groups from household survey from 28 municipalities and 64 wards (32 intervention groups and 32 comparison groups). KOBO toolbox was used to collect the household survey datasets.

Figure 2: Sampling strategy



Quantitative Study

- Household/individual survey:** a detailed questionnaire was developed, the major components of the household questionnaire were: (a) household module: respondent and household characteristics, individual characteristics such as age, sex, caste/ethnicity, religion, current marital status, educational attainment, disability status, employment status, and involvement in contributory and non-contributory social protection systems, (b) men module: comprise perceptions on whether husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife, perceptions on taking the major responsibilities of household chores, and time spent on unpaid care and domestic work, (c) women module: comprise intimate partner violence, perceptions on

whether husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife, perceptions on taking the major responsibilities of household chores. Gender-based violence (GBV) index is estimated to assess the difference in GBV index across the intervention and the comparison groups. The GBV index was estimated using the responses from the Domestic Violence Module. Each of the 'YES' responses were added and averaged.

The household survey was conducted among 1,280 households, based on sampling design. A total of 26 field staff, composed of six teams including 6 supervisors and 20 enumerators, were deployed in the field. This evaluation required interviewing men and women household heads as much as possible, and separate questions were asked to men and women only. The evaluation team was able to gather information mostly from 1,280 women respondents, but only 918 men were involved in responding to household survey. The main reason for this was that majority of the men migrated for work outside their town or abroad. The survey was conducted over the duration of 40 days, with each enumerator completing an average of 4 households per day. On average, it took 48 minutes to conduct the survey in each household.

- 2. Adolescent survey:** This was conducted with a sample size of 138 adolescents, including both boys and girls. This comprised 20 students (10 girls and 10 boys) from each selected school and 18 out-of-school adolescents who were tracked in their households. Six schools, two for each province, were selected for this survey. To make the selection random and ensure representation of diverse groups, a sampling frame of students was prepared first in coordination with school administration and different strata based on caste/ethnicity and disability status were prepared. From each stratum, students in the 15-18 years' age-group were selected randomly from the sampling framework using systematic random sampling approach. In case of school drop-out adolescents, the samples were selected based on availability during the household survey. The adolescent survey tool assessed the knowledge and perception of adolescents on gender roles, their rights, women's empowerment and GBV, and reasons for leaving schools in case of school dropouts. Household survey and adolescents survey are separate surveys. Adolescents surveyed do not necessarily belong the households surveyed. Therefore, adolescents and households cannot be matched.

The same field team conducted an adolescent survey in selected schools. The survey was completed in a day at each school. On average, each enumerator surveyed 5 adolescents per day, with each survey taking approximately 35 minutes to complete.

- 3. Online survey with CSOs** at the federal, provincial and local levels: A short online survey was conducted with CSOs working at the federal, provincial and local level towards gender equality and women's empowerment. This survey was conducted to study the key challenges they face in working towards GEWE as well as the level of influence they have in the governance processes. Participants for this online survey were identified in consultation with the JP partners.

Qualitative study

A thorough review of programme documents, literature on GEWE in Nepal, national surveys including Census 2021, and relevant laws and policies has been conducted. Primary qualitative data was collected using Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Small Group Interviews (SGIs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and observation (see Table 3). FGDs explored experiences, beliefs, and attitudes regarding Gender Based Violence (GBV), GEWE, gender roles, and social norms with 6-10 participants per group, guided by a semi-structured guide. The qualitative study was done only in the intervention cohort. To accommodate language differences, tools were translated into Nepali, Maithili, and Bhojपुरi. KIIs collected individual perspectives and insights on the study's objectives, using semi-structured guides and open-ended interviews to explore new themes and gather in-depth information. The responses were recorded using a voice recorder and physical notes were also taken.

Table 3: Details of qualitative informants

Type	Respondent	Number	Municipality based on intervention
Key Informant Interview (KII)	GBV survivor residing in OCMC/safe house (also psychosocial counsellors and child helpline staff)	6 (all female)	Intensive + Light
	OCMC focal person/ Safe house in charge	6 (all female)	Intensive + Light
	Mahila Adhikrit/ local government - Mayor/deputy mayor	3 (all female)	Intensive
	Police	3 (2 female and 1 male)	Intensive
	Private Sector – Employers (Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry-FNCCI, Federation of women entrepreneur’s association of Nepal-FWEAN), worker organizations – federal level (All Nepal Trade Union Federation-ANTUF/General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions- GEFONT/ Nepal Trade Union Congress-NTUC/ Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre-JTUCC)	5 (2 female and 3 male)	Federal
	Provincial Government – Ministry of Social Development (MoSD)	3 (all female)	Intensive
	Federal Government – MoWCSC, Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security-MoLESS, Ministry of Health and Population-MoHP, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Governance Administration-MoFAGA	3 (2 female and 1 male)	Federal
Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	Women community members including Mahila/Ama Samuha	6 (all female)	Intensive + Light
	Men community members including Kisan Samuha, men cooperatives etc.	6 (all male)	Intensive + Light
Small Group Interview (SGI)	Private Sector – worker organizations (province)	3 (3 female and 8 male)	Intensive
	Local partners/Civil Society Organizations-CSOs/Women Rights Organizations-WROs	3 (8 female and 9 male)	Intensive

Data Analysis

PSM was applied at the household level across all impact areas of interest and across time use to assess balance of the sample. The evaluation team matched using household-level indicators because, at endline, the survey will cover a panel of households but not necessarily a panel of household members. In impact area (GBV and women empowerment as measured by household income), matching algorithms were run using a headline indicator as well as a second indicator as a robustness check. Each intervention unit was matched with the closest comparison unit based on the propensity score. The indicators used in the robustness check include respondent age, family size, household head education, highest education of women, respondent's sex, ethnicity, respondent's education, and time spent on unpaid care and domestic work (section 14 questionnaire).

The matching procedure based on PSM achieved positive results. The bell curve in PSM matching is a visual tool used to assess how well the matching process has balanced the covariates (socioeconomic variables) between the intervention and comparison groups. A close overlap of the bell curves after matching indicates that the intervention and comparison groups are more comparable, improving the reliability of the estimated treatment effect. The sample is balanced across characteristics of interest in the intervention and comparison groups and across impact areas (GBV index and household income) and indicators. This shows that the intervention and comparison groups at baseline evaluation were matched based on their socioeconomic characteristics. This allowed us to reduce the biases by matching intervention and comparison units with similar propensity scores. Thus, it allowed us to make an accurate comparison between intervention and comparison groups. Any remaining imbalance in some of the outcome indicators can be successfully dealt with at endline with the adoption of a Difference-in-Difference analysis. The quasi-experimental design underpinning the impact estimation was thus confirmed to be valid.

The reduction in GBV is one of the main outcome indicators of the project. Similarly, one of the indicators for Outcome 2 is the support provided to the average income of the economically active population. Therefore, we chose the GBV index and average household income as the main impact areas of the project to include in the PSM strategy. Figure 3 shows the matching of intervention and comparison groups using the full sample, intensive sample, and light sample based on the GBV index. In contrast, Figure 4 presents the balance diagnostics for average household income across the full sample (1,280 households), intensive group (640 households), and light group (640).

Figure 3: Gender based violence index balance diagnostics

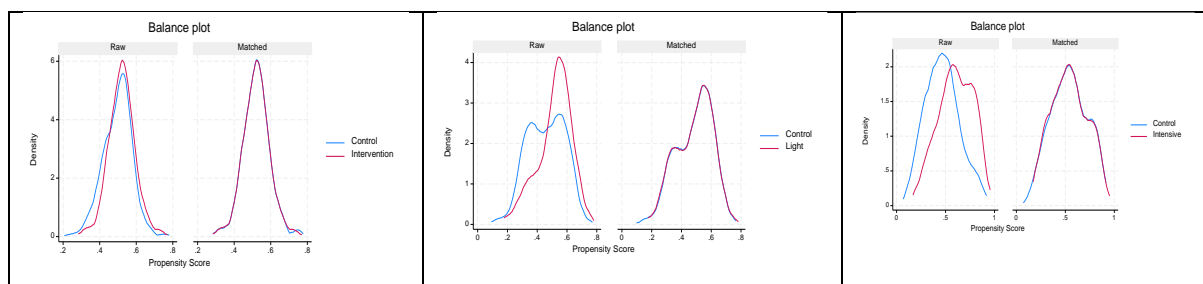
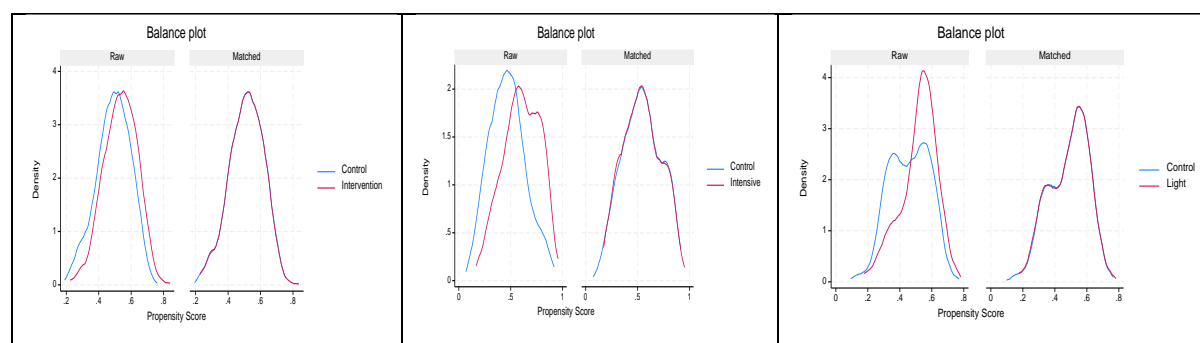


Figure 4: Household income-Balance diagnostics



The results of the average intervention effect across intervention and comparison households' groups at baseline data is presented in Table 4 below. Our expectation of the results is no significant difference in outcomes variables (gender-based violence and total household income) at baseline.

Across all intervention types, the intervention effects on the GBV Index were not statistically significant, as evidenced by the high p-values and low Z-statistics. This suggests that neither the intervention nor comparison household's groups had a meaningful difference in GBV (see Table 4).

The results also indicated no significant changes in household income across all intervention types, as evidenced by the high p-values and low Z-statistics. This implies that neither the intervention nor comparison household groups had a meaningful difference on income (see Table 4).

Table 4: Average intervention effect at baseline data

Outcome of interest	Coefficient	AI robust std. err.	Z	P
Gender based violence index				
Full sample (intensive and light intervention)	.0023638	.0175285	0.13	0.893
Intensive intervention	.0102186	.0269489	0.38	0.705
Light intervention	.0377673	.0303866	1.24	0.214
Household income				
Full sample (intensive and light intervention)	.0131189	.097234	0.13	0.893
Intensive intervention	.0761613	.1203476	0.63	0.527
Light intervention	-.2501766	.1438603	-1.74	0.082

After the data were received, quantitative data analysis was performed using statistical package Stata 18.

All FGDs and KIIs were transcribed in English. Thematic analysis was performed based on indicators and an analysis framework was prepared for qualitative data analysis in Microsoft Excel. All transcripts of FGDs and KIIs were reviewed, and emerging themes were noted, which were used to finalize the analysis framework.

4.5 Ethical Issues and Considerations

This baseline evaluation strictly adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis²³, the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System²⁴, the United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse²⁵, the WHO Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women²⁶, and the United Nations Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics²⁷. Participants were provided with detailed information about the study and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. All data were handled with strict confidentiality to protect participants' privacy and safety. The study emphasized transparency and accountability by clearly documenting the methodology and openly acknowledging any limitations.

The following ethical considerations guided the baseline study, from design to data collection and analysis, reporting and dissemination as per the ToR:

- **Informed consent. Participants were** provided with clear information about the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of the study. Written consent was obtained to ensure informed choice to participate in the baseline study, and their consent was voluntarily, without any coercion or undue influence. For the adolescent survey, consents were taken from the guardians.
- **Voluntary participation and withdrawal.** Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without facing any negative consequences. The data collectors informed participants of their right to withdraw when obtaining informed consent.
- **Confidentiality and privacy.** Respecting the confidentiality and privacy of participants is crucial. All data collected were treated with strict confidentiality and stored securely. Personally Identifiable Information was anonymised to protect participants' identities. Only authorised individuals involved in the study had access to the data.
- **Do no harm.** The study prioritised the well-being and safety of participants. Measures were taken to minimize any potential harm or distress to participants. Sensitivity to gender equality, social inclusion and the cultural contexts were maintained throughout the study.
- **Non-discrimination.** The study upheld the principles of non-discrimination and treated all participants equally and fairly, regardless of their gender, age, caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic. Data collectors strived to create a safe and inclusive environment that respects the diversity and intersectionality of participants' identities and experiences.
- **Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).** Participants/respondents were not exploited or subjected to sexual abuse, harassment, or any forms of abuse by individuals engaged in the study, including enumerators, supervisors, or other staff/personnel. In line with the UN's Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, measures to prevent, investigate and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) were put in place.
- **Transparency and accountability.** The study maintained the highest degree of transparency. The study methodology was documented transparently to allow stakeholders assess the rigor and validity of the study. The limitations were

²³ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>

²⁴ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

²⁵ https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org.preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/un_protocol_on_sea_allegations_involving_implementing_partners_en.pdf

²⁶ https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/65893/WHO_FCH_GWH_01.1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

²⁷ https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesy/seriesy_10e.pdf

acknowledged transparently to ensure that stakeholders have a realistic understanding of the study's credibility and utility. As far as possible and ethically appropriate, open access to de-identified data was provided to allow stakeholders to scrutinize the findings.

Ethical considerations were integrated at every stage, from design to data collection, analysis, reporting, and dissemination, with a focus on inclusivity, fairness, and sensitivity to diverse cultural and social contexts. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC) under approval number **157-2024 (Annex 2: Approval Letter)**. Supervisors and enumerators were thoroughly trained on research ethics and a survivor-centric approach, adhering to a 'do no harm' principle during interactions with participants. The identities of participants were kept strictly confidential and anonymised, with written consent obtained from each interviewee and verbal group consent obtained during KIIs, SGIs, and FGDs.

4.6 Data Privacy and Sharing

OPM addressed respondent's privacy concerns by ensuring that the need for any information and data was clearly justified, restricting access to their data, and informing them about their rights and obligations regarding data provision. Furthermore, OPM developed a system that contains whole range of documentation, reports, and meta-data. The internal survey archive available to the survey team, comprises all the raw data, all documentation, and all copies of syntax files, etc. OPM ensured compliance with all survey and data protocols and the confidentiality of data. As per the ToR, the evaluation team strictly adhered to the criteria mentioned, such as ensuring enumerators understood the project objectives and data collection methodology and tools, conducting pre-testing prior to the final data collection, regular supervision and monitoring by experts, and maintaining confidentiality.

4.7 Limitation

The evaluation was conducted during an extremely hot season, requiring the timing of information collection to be adjusted based on the respondents' convenience. Consequently, the enumerators had to adjust their schedules and spend more time in travelling. The evaluation phases faced a few challenges. KIIs with OCMC and other service providers could not be conducted on schedule, and the respondents were not comfortable answering the questions posed by the enumerators. The enumerators had to visit the OCMC more than once to collect the information, and some information collected was not relevant. Therefore, exact constraints on service providers and information on survivors and their status could not be gathered. A key limitation was the unavailability of school records on adolescents who left school and their reasons, as well as the difficulty in identifying out-of-school children. In the hilly regions, enumerators had to walk longer distances for the household survey, which limited the amount of data they could collect each day.

5 Baseline findings

5.1 Demographic Information

5.1.1 Housing and Population Characteristics

This data provides a comprehensive overview of the survey conducted from 1,280 households across three provinces, Madhesh, Karnali and Sudurpashchim. This section provides an overview of the housing and population characteristics of the respondents. There were three modules in the household survey: the household module, the women's module and the men's module. In both intervention and comparison areas, the majority of respondents of household modules are women. The women's module was administrated in all the households, one woman per household and men's module was administrated among 918 households, as 362 households did not have eligible male respondents (see Table 5).

There was significant variation among household module respondents based on their different background characteristics. The Majority (56.1%) were employed, with employment rates higher among men (71.2%) compared to women (48.1%). Those outside the labour force accounted for 36.3% (women: 45.6%; men 19.8%), while 7.2% were unemployed (female: 6.3%; men: 9.0%). Among employed respondents, 48.1% worked in agriculture (women: 68.1%; men: 24.0%) followed by 15.6% in sales and services (women: 12.8%; men: 18.9%). Brahman/Chhetri constituted the largest caste/ethnic group 37.1% followed by Dalits 29.4%. Almost all the respondents are currently married and follow the Hindu religion (see Table 5).

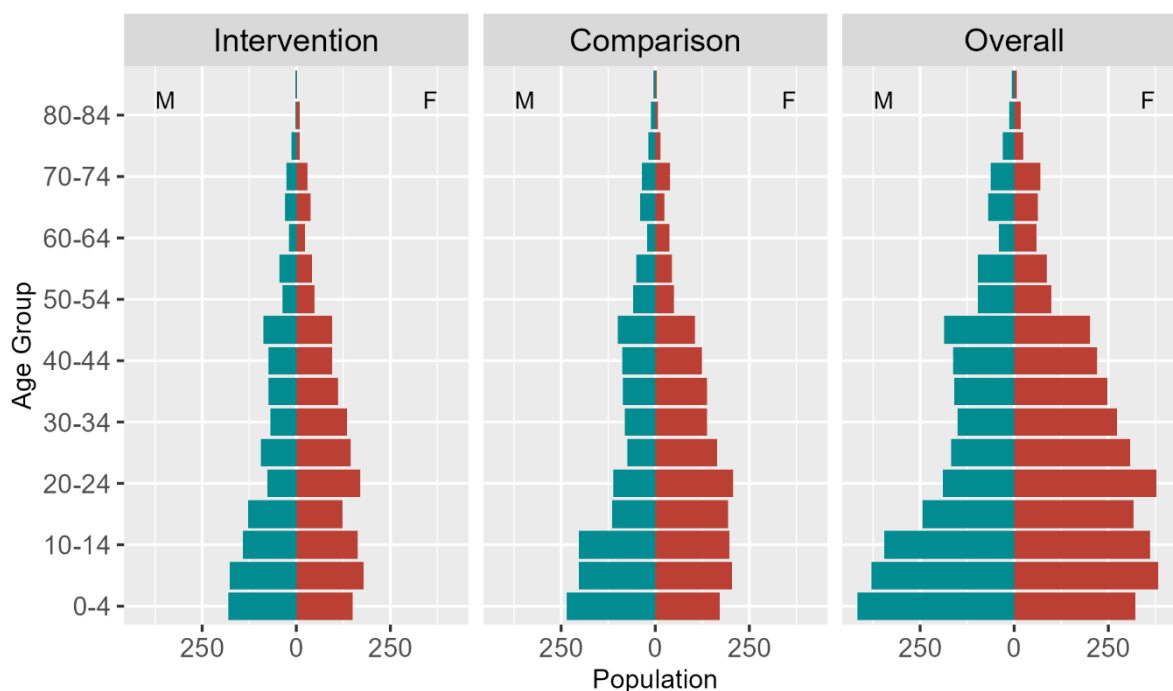
Table 5: Respondent's Characteristics

Characteristics	Household Module					Men Module		Women Module	
	Men		Women		Total	Number	%	Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%					
Age group									
15-19	8.2	1.8	14	1.7	22	97	10.6	30	2.4
20-24	38.9	8.5	134	16.3	173	119	13.0	213	16.6
25-29	54.9	11.9	151	18.4	206	136	14.8	255	20.0
30-39	128.3	27.9	283	34.5	412	280	30.5	468	36.6
40-49	159.7	34.7	198	24.2	358	285	31.1	313	24.5
50-59	47.5	10.3	29	3.6	77				
60-69	16.4	3.6	10	1.2	26				
70 +	5.9	1.3	2	0.2	8				
Ethnic group									
Brahman/Chhetri	175.5	38.2	300	36.6	475	346	37.7	481	37.6
Janjati	59.0	12.8	113	13.8	172	129	14.0	173	13.5
Madheshi	79.6	17.3	134	16.4	214	157	17.1	210	16.4
Dalit	133.4	29.0	243	29.6	376	259	28.2	374	29.2
Muslim	12.4	2.7	30	3.7	43	27	2.9	42	3.3
Religion									
Hindu	442.5	96.2	772	94.2	1215	878	95.6	1218	95.1
Buddhist	0.8	0.2	2	0.2	3	2	0.2	3	0.2

Islam	12.4	2.7	30	3.7	43	27	2.9	42	3.3
Christian	4.2	0.9	16	1.9	20	12	1.3	17	1.3
Place of Residence									
Urban	563.9	122.6	835	101.8	1399	587	64.0	840	65.6
Rural	256.3	55.7	445	54.2	701	331	36.0	440	34.4
Province									
Madhesh	152.0	33.1	272	33.2	424	301	32.8	422	33.0
Karnali	121.7	26.5	288	35.1	409	268	29.2	387	30.3
Sudurpashchim	186.1	40.5	260	31.7	446	349	38.0	470	36.7
Type of Intervention									
Intervention	201.6	43.8	381	46.5	583	437	47.6	575	44.9
Comparison	258.2	56.2	439	53.5	697	481	52.4	705	55.1
Current marital status									
Never married	15.2	3.3	13	1.5	28	134	14.6	8	0.6
Currently married	442.5	96.2	781	95.2	1223	784	85.4	1257	98.2
Formerly married	2.1	0.5	27	3.3	29	0	0.0	15	1.2
Literacy status									
Literate	386.1	84.0	500	61.0	886	812	88.4	813	63.5
Illiterate	73.8	16.0	320	39.0	394	106	11.6	467	36.5
Education									
No education	85.6	18.6	350	42.7	436	112	12.2	515	40.2
Basic (1-8)	189.4	41.2	220	26.8	409	361	39.3	342	26.8
Secondary (9-12)	157.0	34.1	237	28.9	394	371	40.4	391	30.6
Post secondary	27.9	6.1	13	1.6	41	75	8.1	31	2.4
Employment									
Employed	327.5	71.2	395	48.1	722	666	72.6	563	44.0
Unemployed	41.2	9.0	51	6.3	93	64	6.9	73	5.7
Not in Labour Force	91.1	19.8	374	45.6	465	188	20.5	644	50.3
Disability status									
None	388.5	84.5	736	89.8	1125	821	89.4	1165	91.0
Mild	48.6	10.6	67	8.1	115	66	7.2	92	7.2
Moderate	19.2	4.2	13	1.6	33	23	2.5	18	1.4
Severe	3.6	0.8	4	0.5	7	9	0.9	4	0.3
Income quintiles									
Lowest	109.4	23.8	143	17.4	252	194	21.1	248	19.4
Second	100.4	21.8	169	20.6	270	190	20.7	270	21.1
Middle	76.3	16.6	170	20.8	247	165	18.0	247	19.3
Fourth	78.5	17.1	170	20.7	249	181	19.7	250	19.6
Highest	95.2	20.7	168	20.5	263	188	20.5	264	20.6
Total	460	100	820	100	1280	918	100	1,280	100

The total survey population was 6,242 from the household survey of 1,280 households. The survey population was nearly evenly split between intervention and comparison groups. Fifty-five percent of the population were women and 45% were men, yielding a sex ratio (number of males per 100 females) of 82 (see Figure 5 and Table 6 below).

Figure 5: Population pyramid (distribution of the household population)



Overall, the survey population predominantly consisted of individuals aged 0-14 years, accounting for 35.3% of the total. This was followed by the 15-24 age group (18.0%), the 25-34 age group (14.4%), the 35-44 age group (12.6%), those aged 65 years (5.8%), and the 45-54 age group (4.5%).

In terms ethnic composition, Brahman/Chhetri represented the largest demographic group (34.8%), followed by Dalit (29.4%), Madhesi (18.5%), Janajati (13.2%), and Muslim (4.0%).

The geographic distribution of the survey population is relatively balanced across the provinces, with 35.4% residing in Madhesh, 29.6% in Karnali, and 35.0% in Sudurpashchim. Urban residents had a higher percentage (64.5%) compared to rural residents (35.5%).

The majority (70.7%) of the population was literate (Women: 63.1%; Men: 80.5%), with 39.8% having completed basic education, 24.9% secondary education, and only 2.5% have completed post-secondary education. Among those aged 10 years and above, 43.3% were employed (women: 35.9%; men: 53.4%), 52.2% were not in the labour force (women: 60.2%; men: 41.4%), and 4.4% were unemployed (women: 3.9%; men 5.2%). A majority of residents (65.7%) were currently married. Additionally, 88.5% reported no disability, while 11.6% reported varying degrees of disability, including 0.8% with severe disabilities (see Table 6).

Table 6: Household population by background characteristics

Characteristics	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Age group						
0-14	1139	40.5	1065	31.0	2204	35.3
15-24	433	15.4	692	20.2	1125	18.0
25-34	318	11.3	581	16.9	899	14.4
35-44	322	11.5	468	13.6	790	12.6
45-54	282	10.0	299	8.7	581	9.3
55-64	136	4.8	146	4.3	282	4.5
65+	181	6.4	180	5.3	361	5.8
Caste/Ethnicity						
Brahman/Chhetri	964	34.3	1211	35.3	2175	34.8
Janjati	379	13.5	447	13.0	826	13.2
Madheshi	546	19.4	608	17.7	1154	18.5
Dalit	821	29.2	1014	29.6	1835	29.4
Muslim	101	3.6	151	4.4	252	4.0
Place of Residenc						
Urban	1796	63.9	2230	65.0	4026	64.5
Rural	1015	36.1	1201	35.0	2216	35.5
Province						
Madhesh	1014	36.1	1194	34.8	2208	35.4
Karnali	826	29.4	1025	29.9	1851	29.6
Sudurpashchim	972	34.6	1211	35.3	2183	35.0
Literacy Status (≥ 5 years of age)						
Literate	1927	80.5	1964	63.1	3891	70.7
Illiterate	468	19.5	1146	36.9	1615	29.3
Education (≥ 5 years)						
No education	552	23.0	1,258	40.5	1,810	32.9
Basic (1-8)	1,137	47.5	1,054	33.9	2,191	39.8
Secondary (9-12)	618	25.8	751	24.2	1,369	24.9
Post-secondary	89	3.7	47	1.5	136	2.5
Employment (≥ 10 years of age)						
Employed	1078	53.4	978	35.9	2056	43.3
Unemployed	104	5.2	107	3.9	211	4.4
Not in Labour Force	836	41.4	1642	60.2	2477	52.2
Type of Intervention						
Intervention	1275	45.4	1567	45.7	2843	45.5
Comparison	1536	54.6	1863	54.3	3399	54.5
Disability Indicator (≥ 5 years of age)						
None	2104	87.8	2766	88.9	4870	88.5
Mild	186	7.7	265	8.5	451	8.2
Moderate	80	3.3	63	2.0	142	2.6
Severe	27	1.1	16	0.5	42	0.8

Sample size (N)	2811	100	3431	100	6242	100
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5.1.2 Housing Characteristics

Mud-bonded bricks or stones and cement-bonded bricks or stones were the most common types of house foundations, In Karnali province, 81.5% of houses used mud-bonded brick or stone foundations, compared to 15.1% in Madhesh province. Firewood was the primary source of cooking fuel, while electricity was the most commonly used source of lighting. Most households relied on tube wells, boring pumps, or hand pumps for drinking water (51.7%), with tap or piped water being the second most common source (36.6%) (see Table 7). Flush toilets connected to septic tanks were the most widespread type of facility, especially among higher-income households (59.7%) and in Karnali province (61.5%). In contrast, pit toilets were more prevalent in rural areas (47.2%).

Table 7: Housing Characteristics (in percentages)

Characteristics	Type of Intervention		Provinces			Total
	Intervention	Comparison	Madhesh	Karnali	Sudurpashchim	
Foundation of the house						
Mud bonded bricks/ stone	40.2	46.2	15.1	81.5	35.5	43.5
Cement bonded bricks/ stone	35.2	30.4	39.3	13.2	44	32.6
Cement Concrete with Pillars	10.7	11.5	18.8	5.3	9.2	11.1
Wooden Pillars	13.9	11.9	26.8	-	11.3	12.8
Source of cooking fuel						
Wood/ Firewood	70.5	75.9	68.1	86.6	66.6	73.5
Liquefied Petroleum Gas	23	15.4	20.1	13.4	22.6	18.9
Electricity	3	4.4			10.8	3.8
Bio-Gas	3	3	9	-	-	3
Hay/grass	0.5	1.3	2.8	-	-	0.9
Source of lighting						
Electricity	89.3	87	99.7	70.9	92.7	88
Solar	10	12.5	-	27.9	6.9	11.3
Kerosene	0.8	0.5	0.3	1.3	0.4	0.6
Source of drinking water						
Tap/ Piped Water	34.4	38.5	0.4	75.8	35.2	36.6
Tubewell/ Handpump	53.6	50.1	99.2	1.2	52.8	51.7
Well/spout water/stream, etc.	12	11.4	0.4	23	12.1	11.7
Type of toilet facilities						
Flush Toilet	49.6	48.0	57.5	64.5	25.8	48.7
Pit Toilet	44.4	45.3	26.4	34.1	72.4	44.9
Public Toilet	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.9	0.6	0.6
Without Toilet Facility	5.1	6.4	15.8	0.5	1.2	5.8
N	583	697	424	409	446	1,280

Almost all households in the highest income quintile owned smartphones (98.1%) compared to 85.6% of households in the lowest income quintile. Other common household possessions included electric fans, televisions, bicycles, and internet access. Around half of the households had both men and women members with access to bank account (44.2%). A slightly higher percent of households had a bank account solely in the name of men household member (22.3%) compared to women member (18.2%). In the majority of households (84.7%), at least one household member had a bank account (see Table 8).

Table 8: Household possession and access to bank account (in percentage)

Characteristics	Type of Intervention		Provinces			Income quintile					Total
	Intervention	Comparison	Madhesh	Karnali	Sudurpashchim	Lowest	Second	Middle	Fourth	Highest	
Household possession											
Radio	9.5	12.6	5.2	12.4	15.8	12.3	9.5	8.5	13	12.6	11.2
Television	41.1	30.9	42.4	24.8	39	20.4	29.1	33.4	39.6	54.8	35.5
Smart mobile	92.7	92.5	92	89.8	95.7	85.6	86.3	95.9	97.4	98.1	92.6
Computer/laptop	8.5	5.6	9	5.1	6.6	2.1	1.5	5.6	5.3	19.7	6.9
Internet	35.3	26.9	37.2	27.7	27.4	14.4	21.5	26.4	34.1	56.6	30.7
Electric fan	70.5	64.9	95.7	32.4	72.7	42.5	69.5	71.6	75.1	78.1	67.4
Refrigerator	21.5	19.2	21.8	12.1	26.1	7.6	8.7	15.7	24.3	44.5	20.2
Bicycle	49.7	35.6	73.8	2.7	47.7	21.6	49.5	46	47	45.3	42
Motorcycle	27.6	21.9	37.2	11.1	24.7	12.2	16	16.2	31.6	46	24.5
Vehicle	5.2	3.2	3.9	2.3	6	2.3	2.9	1	5.2	9.2	4.1
Access to bank account											
Men	22.1	22.4	27.2	19.2	20.4	25.6	20.4	21.4	20.5	23.5	22.3
Women	18.9	17.7	21.2	15.4	18	18.4	20.9	18.1	17.9	15.9	18.2
Both	44.7	43.7	30.8	53.4	48.4	33.5	36.4	41.1	52.2	57.7	44.2
None	14.3	16.1	20.8	11.9	13.1	22.5	22.3	19.5	9.3	2.9	15.3
N	583	697	424	409	446	252	270	247	249	263	1,280

Adolescent Survey

The adolescent survey, covering 138 respondents, included a nearly equal gender and provincial distribution across Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpashchim. A large proportion of respondents were aged 15 (56.5%). Dalit respondents comprised the largest proportion (38.4%), followed by Brahman/Chhetri (26.1%). Most adolescents reported no disabilities (91.3%), with 7.2% reporting mild disabilities and 1.4% reporting moderate disabilities. None of the respondents reported severe disabilities. The majority of adolescents reported high school attendance (87.0%), though girls showed lower attendance compared to boys (see Table 9).

Table 9: Background characteristics of adolescent survey

Characteristics	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Province						
Madhesh	21	33.9	34	44.7	55	39.9
Karnali	20	32.3	20	26.3	40	29
Sudurpashchim	21	33.9	22	28.9	43	31.2
Age						
15	31	50	47	61.8	78	56.5
16	23	37.1	17	22.4	40	29
17	8	12.9	8	10.5	16	11.6
18	-	-	4	5.3	4	2.9
Caste/Ethnicity						
Brahman/Chhetri	14	22.6	22	28.9	36	26.1
Janjati	12	19.4	6	7.9	18	13
Madheshi	12	19.4	16	21.1	28	20.3
Dalit	23	37.1	30	39.5	53	38.4
Muslim	1	1.6	2	2.6	3	2.2
Religion						
Hindu	58	93.5	71	93.4	129	93.5
Islam	1	1.6	2	2.6	3	2.2
Christian	3	4.8	3	3.9	6	4.3
Disability Indicator						
None	57	91.9	69	90.8	126	91.3
Mild	5	8.1	5	6.6	10	7.2
Moderate	-	-	2	2.6	2	1.4
Currently attending school						
Yes	59	95.2	61	80.3	120	87
No	3	4.8	15	19.7	18	13
Currently attending working in parallel to attending?						
Yes	7	11.9	2	3.3	9	7.5
No	52	88.1	59	96.7	111	92.5
Total	62	100	76	100	138	100

Regarding employment, 13.2% of adolescents in Madhesh were working alongside schooling, with lower rates in Karnali and Sudurpashchim. Gender disparities were evident, with boys being 11.9% more likely to work while studying compared to girls (3.3%). The working status varied across caste/ethnicity, with Dalit adolescents more likely to work (11.9%). The reasons for Dalit adolescents working included dropping out of school and their traditional trend of working. The nature of work predominantly involved agriculture and household tasks, including mixed crop and livestock farm labourers and shop sales assistants (see Table 10).

Table 10: Currently working status of school going adolescents

Characteristics	Currently working status					
	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Province						
Madhesh	3	7.1	39	92.9	42	100
Karnali	5	13.2	33	86.8	38	100
Sudurpashchim	1	2.5	39	97.5	40	100

Gender						
Male	7	11.9	52	88.1	59	100
Female	2	3.3	59	96.7	61	100
Age						
15	5	6.9	67	93.1	72	100
16	3	8.6	32	91.4	35	100
17	1	9.1	10	90.9	11	100
18	0	0.0	2	100.0	2	100
Caste/Ethnicity						
Arya	2	5.9	32	94.1	34	100
Janjati	0	0.0	17	100.0	17	100
Madheshi	2	8.3	22	91.7	24	100
Dalit	5	11.9	37	88.1	42	100
Muslim	0	0.0	3	100.0	3	100
Religion						
Hindu	8	7.1	104	92.9	112	100
Islam	0	0.0	3	100.0	3	100
Christian	1	20.0	4	80.0	5	100
Disability Severity Indicator						
None	7	6.5	101	93.5	108	100
Mild	2	20.0	8	80.0	10	100
Moderate	0	0.0	2	100.0	2	100
Total	9	7.5	111	92.5	120	100

The data on educational aspirations showed variations based on province, gender, age, caste/ethnicity, disability, and school attendance. Adolescents in Madhesh province showed a strong focus on secondary education, while adolescents in Sudurpashchim showed a higher inclination towards master's level education. Girls had higher aspirations towards advanced studies, with a notable 9.2% considering master's degrees, compared to 4.8% of boys. Younger individuals (15-year-olds) showed the highest ambition, with 11.5% considering master's level education, while interest dropped significantly by age 18 (see Table 11).

Table 11: Level of education currently considering pursuing

Characteristics	Secondary education		Higher secondary education		Bachelors		Master's and above		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Province										
Madhesh	10	18.2	29	52.7	14	25.5	2	3.6	55	100
Karnali	1	2.5	18	45	19	47.5	2	5.0	40	100
Sudurpashchim	1	2.3	18	41.9	18	41.9	6	14.0	43	100
Gender										
Boys	1	1.6	28	45.2	30	48.4	3	4.8	62	100
Girls	11	14.5	37	48.7	21	27.6	7	9.2	76	100

Age										
15	1	1.3	35	44.9	33	42.3	9	11.5	78	100
16	3	7.5	21	52.5	16	40	-	-	40	100
17	5	31.2	8	50	2	12.5	1	6.2	16	100
18	3	75	1	25	-	-	-	-	4	100
Caste/Ethnicity										
Brahman/Chhetri	-	-	15	41.7	19	52.8	2	5.6	36	100
Janjati	-	-	7	38.9	10	55.6	1	5.6	18	100
Madheshi	5	17.9	16	57.1	5	17.9	2	7.1	28	100
Dalit	7	13.2	27	50.9	14	26.4	5	9.4	53	100
Muslim	-	-	-	-	3	100	-	-	3	100
Religion										
Hindu	11	8.5	63	48.8	45	34.9	10	7.8	129	100
Islam	-	-	-	-	3	100	-	-	3	100
Christian	1	16.7	2	33.3	3	50	-	-	6	100
Disability Severity Indicator										
None	12	9.5	60	47.6	46	36.5	8	6.3	126	100
Mild	-	-	5	50	3	30	2	20	10	100
Moderate	-	-	-	-	2	100	-	-	2	100
Are you currently school going?										
Yes	3	2.5	58	48.3	49	40.8	10	8.3	120	100
No	9	50	7	38.9	2	11.1	-	-	18	100
Are you currently working in parallel to studying?										
Yes	-	-	4	44.4	5	55.6	-	-	9	100
No	3	2.7	54	48.6	44	39.6	10	9	111	100
Out-of-school	9	50	7	38.9	2	11.1	-	-	18	100
Total	12	8.7	65	47.1	51	37	10	7.2	138	100

The data reflected varying degrees of agreement with several GEWE statements among adolescents. Ethnicity and religion played a role in shaping attitudes toward gender equality. Brahman/Chhetri and Janajati groups generally showed higher support for women's rights compared to the Madheshi and Dalit groups. For instance, 94.4% of Brahman/Chhetri adolescents agreed that women can decide on marriage, compared to 57.1% of Madheshi adolescents. Working adolescents reported higher levels of agreement with statements supporting women's empowerment compared to their non-working peers. For example, 100% of working adolescents agreed that women can decide if they want to get married in contrast to 80.2% non-working adolescents. School attendance also influenced attitudes; those out of school showed lower agreement with women's rights compared to those currently attending school (see Table 12).

Table 12: Agreement and disagreement of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) statements by adolescents

Characteristic	Girls should stay home and not attend school during menstruation	Girls/Women can decide if they want to get married	Girls/Women can decide their age of marriage	Women can decide whether they want to have children	A girl/woman should never be blamed in any way for sexual harassment/assault	Women and men should share responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic work	The father should have more authority than the mother when it comes to household	It is more important that a boy go to school than a girl	Parents should maintain stricter control over their daughters than their sons	N
Gender										
Boys	22.6	75.8	80.7	79.0	90.3	98.4	38.7	12.9	33.9	62
Girls	9.2	72.4	73.7	63.2	82.9	97.4	32.9	5.3	18.4	76
Province										
Madhesh	16.4	50.9	52.7	45.5	78.2	96.4	45.5	9.1	18.2	55
Karnali	15.0	92.5	97.5	92.5	90.0	97.5	32.5	10.0	37.5	40
Sudurpashchim	13.9	86.1	88.4	81.4	93.0	100.0	25.6	7.0	23.3	43
Ethnic group										
Brahman/Chhetri	13.9	94.4	94.4	91.7	91.7	100.0	30.6	13.9	27.8	36
Janjati	11.1	83.3	77.8	83.3	94.4	100.0	33.3	0.0	16.7	18
Madheshi	25.0	57.1	53.6	42.9	85.7	96.4	53.6	10.7	25.0	28
Dalit	13.2	64.2	75.5	66.0	81.1	96.2	30.2	7.6	26.4	53
Muslim	0.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	66.7	100.0	33.3	0.0	33.3	3
Working status										
Working	22.2	100.0	88.9	77.8	77.8	100.0	33.3	22.2	55.6	9
Not-working	13.5	80.2	83.8	76.6	88.3	98.2	31.5	5.4	21.6	111
Out-of-school	22.2	22.2	27.8	27.8	77.8	94.4	61.1	22.2	33.3	18
Currently attending school										
Yes	14.2	81.7	84.2	76.7	87.5	98.3	31.7	6.7	24.2	120
No	22.2	22.2	27.8	27.8	77.8	94.4	61.1	22.2	33.3	18
Disability Indicator										
None	15.1	73.8	76.2	68.3	85.7	97.6	35.7	8.7	26.2	126
Mild	20.0	80.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	100.0	40.0	10.0	20.0	10
Moderate	0.0	50.0	50.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2
Total	15.2	73.9	76.8	70.3	86.2	97.8	35.5	8.7	25.4	138

Adolescents with mild disabilities showed stronger support for gender equality statements compared to those with no disabilities or moderate disabilities. For example, 90% of those with mild disabilities agreed that women can decide on having children, compared to 68.3% among those without disabilities. Attitudes toward gender equality also varied across provinces. Adolescents from Madhesh showed lower agreement with statements on women's decision-making power compared to those from Karnali and Sudurpashchim. Adolescents from Karnali province exhibited higher agreement with most statements.

5.2 Findings Based on Outcome Indicators

Outcome 1 - Men and boys, families and communities demonstrate more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours and support social and gender norms that promote GEWE, and women and girls have increased agency and voice.

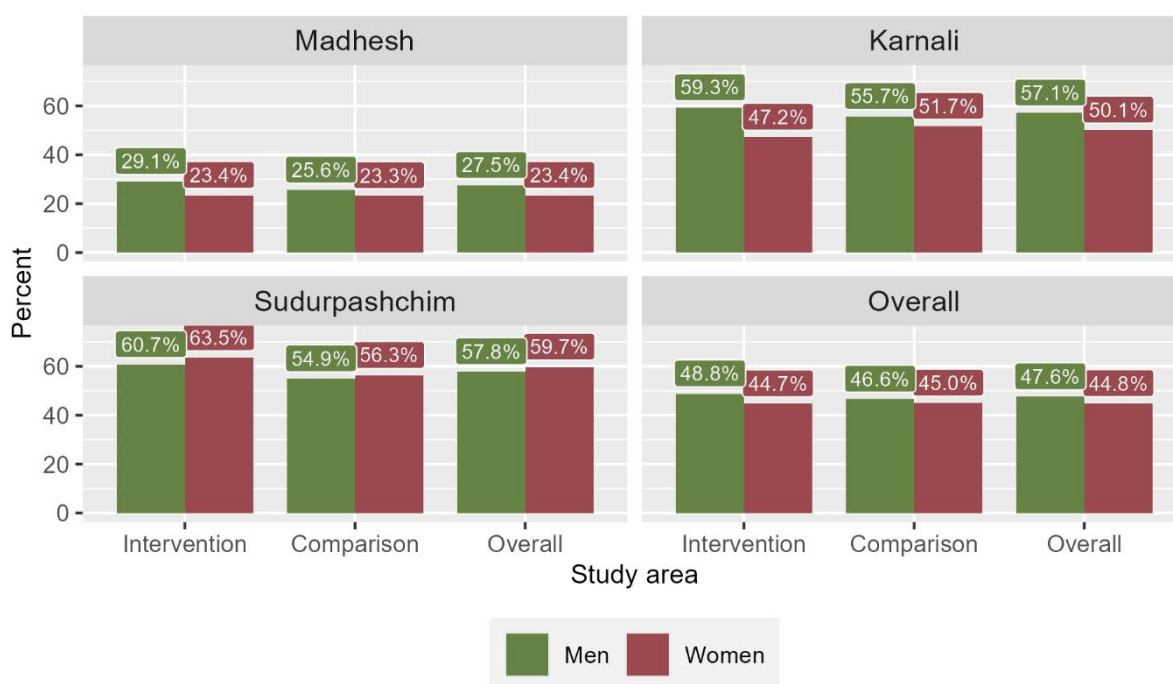
The baseline value indicated that, from the intervention group, 48.8% (Overall: 47.6%; Comparison: 46.6%) of men and 44.7% (Overall: 44.8%; Comparison: 45.0%) of women believed that unpaid care and domestic work should be shared within the household. The baseline findings highlighted the existing traditional social and gender norms that placed the burden of unpaid domestic and care work solely on women. Despite working outside the home, men still expected women to manage all domestic household responsibilities. At the time of baseline, 22.7% (Overall: 21.3%; Comparison: 20.1%) of men and 23.8% (Overall: 23.8%; Comparison: 23.8%) of women agreed that hitting or beating for specific reasons was acceptable. This suggests that the project intervention needs to focus on reducing or removing such attitudes and behaviours from society. These beliefs were more common among specific ethnic and religious groups, particularly in rural areas, especially in Madhesh Province. Women spent nearly twice as much time on unpaid household chores compared to their male counterparts. The adolescent survey also revealed significant variation in perceptions about sharing chores across different provinces. Compared to girls, more boys agreed that girls and boys of their age performed the same kind of household chores.

Outcome Indicator 1.1 - Percentage of men and women reporting that unpaid care and domestic work are shared in their household

There was a prevailing traditional gender norm within households, where a significant proportion of both men and women upheld the idea that unpaid domestic work should predominantly be managed by women. As shown in Table 13 and 14, 47.6% of the 918 men respondents believed that the responsibility for the unpaid domestic and care work should be shared between both men and women in the household. Similarly, 44.8% of the 1,280 women respondents believed that unpaid household chores should be shared by both men and women.

In the intervention group, 48.8% out of 640 men and 44.7% of the 640 women agreed that unpaid domestic and care work should be shared between men and women in the household. In the comparison group, 46.6% of the 640 men and 45.0% of the 640 women held the same view. Overall, a slightly lower proportion of women (44.8%) believed that unpaid household chores should be shared by both men and women (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Proportion of respondents who reported that unpaid household chores should be shared between men and women



This perception of sharing responsibilities between men and women was more prevalent among men respondents from Sudurpashchim. Overall, 60.7% (Overall: 57.8%; Comparison: 54.9%) men in Sudurpashchim believed that unpaid household and care work should be shared between both men and women, compared to only 29.1% (Overall: 27.5%; Comparison: 25.6%) men from Madhesh Province who held the same view (see Table 14). When it comes to age of the respondents, women aged 15 to 49 mentioned that they should be responsible for household chores, with proportion ranging from 47.4% (Overall: 45.5%; Comparison: 35.9%) to 68.3% (Overall: 69.2%; Comparison: 70.3%) (see Table 13).

Table 13: Women's opinion on taking major responsibility of household chores

Background Characteristic	Intervention				Comparison				Overall			
	Men	Women	Both	N	Men	Women	Both	N	Men	Women	Both	N
Age group												
15-19	4.3	68.3	27.4	19	6	70.3	23.7	16	5.1	69.2	25.7	35
20-24	4.9	47.7	47.4	109	3	57.5	39.4	117	3.8	53.2	42.9	226
25-29	2.6	56.7	40.8	126	2.5	35.9	61.5	125	2.5	45.5	51.9	251
30-39	4.3	47.4	48.3	245	6.2	53.4	40.4	227	5.3	50.6	44.1	472
40-49	1.8	56	42.2	141	4	52	44	155	3.1	53.7	43.3	296
Ethnic group												
Brahman/Chhetri	4.8	36.3	58.8	232	6.2	40.1	53.7	252	5.7	38.8	55.5	484
Janjati	0	38.2	61.8	87	7.7	33	59.3	57	2.8	36.3	60.9	144
Madheshi	1.2	69.7	29.2	145	0	77.1	22.9	120	0.6	73	26.3	265
Dalit	5.5	64.1	30.3	153	3	58.1	38.9	182	4.1	60.7	35.3	335
Muslim	6.8	58.5	34.7	23	0	66.4	33.6	29	3.6	62.2	34.2	52

Place of Residence												
Urban	4.1	47.9	48	340	3.6	52.2	44.2	320	3.8	50.2	46	660
Rural	1.9	60.9	37.2	300	5.7	48.1	46.2	320	4.2	53.3	42.6	620
Province												
Madhesh	1.9	74.7	23.4	240	0	76.7	23.3	240	1	75.7	23.4	480
Karnali	11.5	41.3	47.2	200	10.6	37.7	51.7	200	10.9	39	50.1	400
Sudurpashchim	0	36.5	63.5	200	1.7	42	56.3	200	0.9	39.4	59.7	400
Education												
No education	2.9	67	30.1	263	3	61.4	35.5	279	3	63.8	33.2	542
Basic (1-8)	4.3	47.8	47.9	158	6.6	44.6	48.9	169	5.6	46	48.4	327
Secondary (9-12)	3.4	36.4	60.1	202	4.5	44.2	51.3	181	4	40.6	55.5	383
Post secondary	3.2	56.7	40	17	0	12.3	87.7	11	1.6	34	64.4	28
Employment												
Employed	4.3	47.1	48.6	294	5.8	44.8	49.4	300	5.2	45.8	49	594
Unemployed	2.3	70.6	27.1	39	0	72.2	27.8	29	1.3	71.3	27.4	68
Not in Labour Force	2.9	53.2	43.9	307	3.4	54.1	42.5	311	3.2	53.7	43.1	618
Total	3.5	51.9	44.7	640	4.4	50.7	45	640	3.9	51.2	44.8	1,280

A similar trend was observed among the women respondents: 59.7% of the 400 women surveyed in Sudurpashchim agreed with this perspective, while only 23.4% women in Madhesh shared this opinion as shown in Table 13 and 14. Interestingly, the majority of women respondents from Madhesh (75.7%) believed that the primary responsibility for unpaid household chores should fall on women, compared to around 40% of women in Sudur Paschim and Karnali Provinces. The main reason for this response could be the social and cultural norms that strongly persist in the study areas as mentioned in the FGD as well.

Table 14: Men's opinion on taking major responsibility of household chores

Background Characteristics	Intervention				Comparison				Overall			
	Men	Women	Both	N	Men	Women	Both	N	Men	Women	Both	N
Age group												
15-19	2.6	52.6	44.8	50	0	48.8	51.2	40	1.5	50.9	47.7	90
20-24	10.1	38.5	51.4	57	3.9	52.1	44	74	6.3	46.8	46.9	131
25-29	4.8	37.3	57.9	78	4.3	60.6	35.1	53	4.6	47.1	48.3	131
30-39	9	40.6	50.3	144	3.8	41.6	54.6	140	6.2	41.2	52.7	284
40-49	17.8	39.6	42.6	136	6.4	50.8	42.8	146	11.6	45.7	42.7	282
Ethnic group												
Brahman/Chhetri	10.1	19.6	70.4	171	7.1	38.5	54.4	185	8.2	31.5	60.3	356
Janjati	4.6	34.9	60.6	65	2.6	39.7	57.7	40	3.9	36.4	59.7	105
Madheshi	7.3	59.7	33	105	0	71.9	28.1	83	4.2	64.9	30.9	188
Dalit	15.6	54.5	29.9	109	3.2	54.9	41.9	129	8.7	54.7	36.6	238
Muslim	19.9	43.7	36.5	15	0	75.7	24.3	16	11.1	57.7	31.1	31
Place of Residence												
Urban	12.2	38.3	49.5	240	3	55.9	41.2	208	7.8	46.7	45.5	448

Rural	5.5	47.3	47.2	225	6.3	39.6	54.1	245	6	42.6	51.4	470
Province												
Madhesh	8.6	62.4	29.1	170	0.7	73.7	25.6	161	4.9	67.7	27.5	331
Karnali	18.4	22.3	59.3	140	10.4	33.9	55.7	136	13.4	29.5	57.1	276
Sudurpashchim	7	32.3	60.7	155	1.6	43.5	54.9	156	4.3	37.9	57.8	311
Education												
No education	17.3	60.6	22	58	5.8	63.5	30.7	50	12.4	61.9	25.7	108
Basic (1-8)	12.8	50.2	37	172	3.7	54.4	41.9	183	7.9	52.4	39.6	355
Secondary (9-12)	5.8	29.6	64.6	192	4.5	44	51.5	188	5.1	37.5	57.4	380
Post-secondary	6.1	18.3	75.6	43	5.4	29.5	65.1	32	5.8	23.6	70.6	75
Employment												
Employed	11.2	39.3	49.4	353	4.8	48.7	46.5	341	8	44.1	47.9	694
Unemployed	5.7	47.9	46.4	28	8.2	51.1	40.7	33	7.4	50	42.6	61
Not in Labour Force	7.5	45.2	47.3	84	1.1	49.4	49.4	79	4.2	47.4	48.4	163
Total	10.2	41	48.8	465	4.4	49.1	46.6	453	7.1	45.2	47.6	918

"I spend most of my day cooking, cleaning, and caring for my children. It leaves little time for anything else." "My husband expects me to handle all household chores despite my other works." – FGD, Women, Saptari

"Since women don't go outside to work, they have to take care of the household work" - FGD, Women, Saptari

The above quote highlights the deep-rooted belief system that assigns domestic chores solely to women. This unequal division of labour creates a significant time burden for women and limits their opportunities for education, employment, and personal growth. However, it is notable that significant proportion of both men and women respondents i.e., 47.6% and 44.8% respectively, reported that the household chores should be shared by both members.

Amount of time spent by men and women in unpaid household and care work

Respondents in both the men's and women's survey modules were asked about their perceptions and practices regarding the sharing of unpaid domestic and care work. Following these questions, they were also asked to estimate the number of hours they spent on a typical day and on weekends performing various types of unpaid domestic and care tasks. The time spent on unpaid domestic and care work was then calculated as the average time spent on such activities over the course of one week.

Figure 7: Time spent in unpaid care work

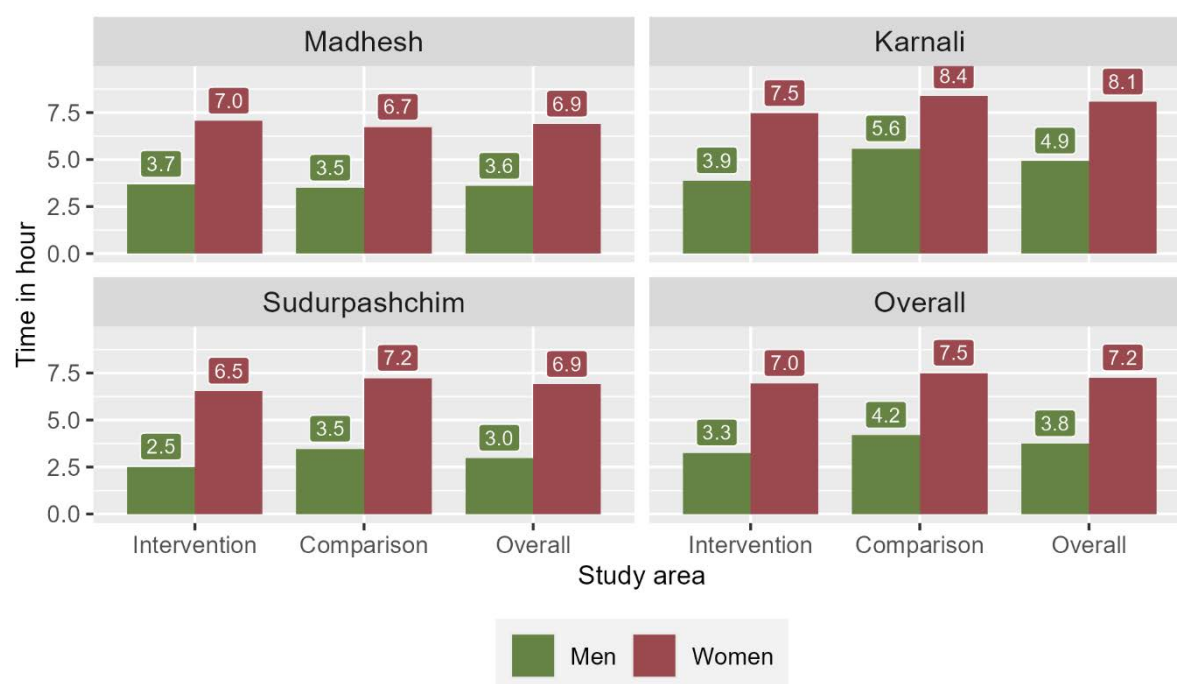


Figure 7 above illustrates the average time spent in hours per day by men and women on unpaid household and care work. Overall, in a day, men spent an average 3.8 hours per day on unpaid work, while women spent 7.2 hours. In the comparison group, both men and women household members spend slightly more time on unpaid work than those in the intervention group. In both the intervention and comparison groups, women household members spent nearly twice as much time on unpaid household chores as their men counterparts. For details see Table 15.

Table 15: Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work

Characteristics	Intervention		Comparison		Overall	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Age group						
15-19	6.61	2.66	7.5	3.33	7.01	2.97
20-24	7.17	3.66	7.96	4.31	7.62	4.06
25-29	7.43	3.72	7.57	5.15	7.5	4.32
30-39	6.94	3.12	7.41	4.1	7.19	3.65
40-49	6.41	3.21	7.27	4.14	6.92	3.72
Ethnic group						
Brahman/Chhetri	6.93	3.56	7.81	4.4	7.5	4.09
Janjati	6.45	2.15	7.58	3.42	6.86	2.55
Madheshi	6.85	3.91	6.64	3.47	6.75	3.72
Dalit	7.41	3.29	7.53	4.51	7.48	3.97
Muslim	6.79	3.02	6.21	3.58	6.52	3.27

Place of Residence						
Urban	6.78	2.77	7.22	3.63	7.01	3.18
Rural	7.33	4.41	7.96	4.99	7.71	4.76
Province						
Madhesh	7.05	3.69	6.73	3.49	6.89	3.59
Karnali	7.46	3.88	8.39	5.58	8.07	4.93
Sudurpashchim	6.54	2.51	7.23	3.46	6.9	2.98
Current marital status						
Never married	7.75	2.54	7.27	3.06	7.45	2.78
Currently married	6.93	3.4	7.48	4.37	7.23	3.92
Formerly married	8.56		9.02		8.85	
Education						
No education	6.85	3.42	7.06	4.91	6.97	4.06
Basic (1-8)	6.83	2.63	7.41	3.97	7.16	3.35
Secondary (9-12)	7.14	3.74	8.21	4.21	7.71	4
Post secondary	7.17	3.6	7.33	4.42	7.25	3.99
Employment						
Employed	6.92	3.11	7.26	3.88	7.12	3.51
Unemployed	7.62	3.86	7.36	6.11	7.5	5.37
Not in Labour Force	6.88	3.63	7.73	4.48	7.34	4.07
Disability status						
None	6.98	3.24	7.44	4.22	7.24	3.76
Mild	6.69	3.48	7.87	4.38	7.27	3.93
Moderate	6.65	4.11	9.48	4.09	8.15	4.1
Severe	6.33	1.51	8	0	6.71	1.04
Total	6.95	3.26	7.50	4.20	7.25	3.75

Perception of adolescents

As shown in Table 16 below, the adolescent survey indicated that perceptions regarding the sharing of chores varied significantly by province, with adolescents in Madhesh Province demonstrating a low level of agreement (10.9%) that boys and girls should perform the same chores. Notable gender differences were observed, with more boys (29.0%) than girls (43.8%) reporting the idea of equality in terms of performing similar work. Age also influenced these perceptions, as younger individuals (15-year-olds) were more likely to believe in work equality (71.9%) compared to older age groups.

Table 16: Perception on boys and girls of do the same kind of household chores

Characteristics	Yes		No		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Province						
Madhesh	6	10.9	49	89.1	55	100.0
Karnali	19	47.5	21	52.5	40	100.0
Sudurpashchim	7	16.3	36	83.7	43	100.0

Gender						
Male	18	29.0	44	71.0	62	100.0
Female	14	18.4	62	81.6	76	100.0
Age						
15	23	29.5	55	70.5	78	100.0
16	5	12.5	35	87.5	40	100.0
17	3	18.8	13	81.2	16	100.0
18	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Caste/Ethnicity						
Brahman/Chhetri	14	38.9	22	61.1	36	100.0
Janjati	2	11.1	16	88.9	18	100.0
Madheshi	4	14.3	24	85.7	28	100.0
Dalit	11	20.8	42	79.2	53	100.0
Muslim	1	33.3	2	66.7	3	100.0
Disability Indicator						
None	29	23.0	97	77.0	126	100.0
Mild	2	20.0	8	80.0	10	100.0
Moderate	1	50.0	1	50.0	2	100.0

The baseline survey findings revealed notable regional differences in perceptions of gender equality. Adolescents in Madhesh province exhibited the highest level of perceived inequality at 89.1%, followed by Sudurpashchim at 83.7%, while Karnali demonstrated more balanced views. Generally, boys recognised barriers to achieving equality. One factor could be the migration of men for work, which leaves women to manage household chores alone. Additionally, religious factors in Madhesh and Sudurpashchim provinces may also play a role in perpetuating gender inequality. Caste/ethnicity and disability status significantly influenced these perceptions. The data also indicated that education, access to property, and adherence to traditional gender roles contribute to gender inequality.

Outcome Indicator 1.2 - Percentage of men and women aged 15-49 who agree that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for specific reasons

Both men and women respondents mentioned that certain behaviours justify beating a wife, with significant proportions of respondents also observing such incidents. The study revealed 23.8% (Overall: 23.8%; Comparison: 23.8%) of women and 22.7% (Intervention: 21.3%; Comparison: 20.1%) of men aged 15-49 years believed that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances. The findings showed significant variation in intervention areas: Madhesh reported the highest levels of agreement, with 36.7% of women and 30.1% of men endorsing these beliefs. In Karnali, 20.7% of women and 14.1% of men agreed, while Sudurpashchim recorded the lowest agreement among women (13.3%), though men's agreement in this region was somewhat higher (20.8%). These findings highlight marked regional disparities in attitudes toward domestic violence, with Madhesh demonstrating the most entrenched patriarchal norms. The data underscores the need for targeted interventions to address and reduce acceptance of such harmful beliefs, particularly in areas with higher endorsement rates (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Opinion on husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife by provinces

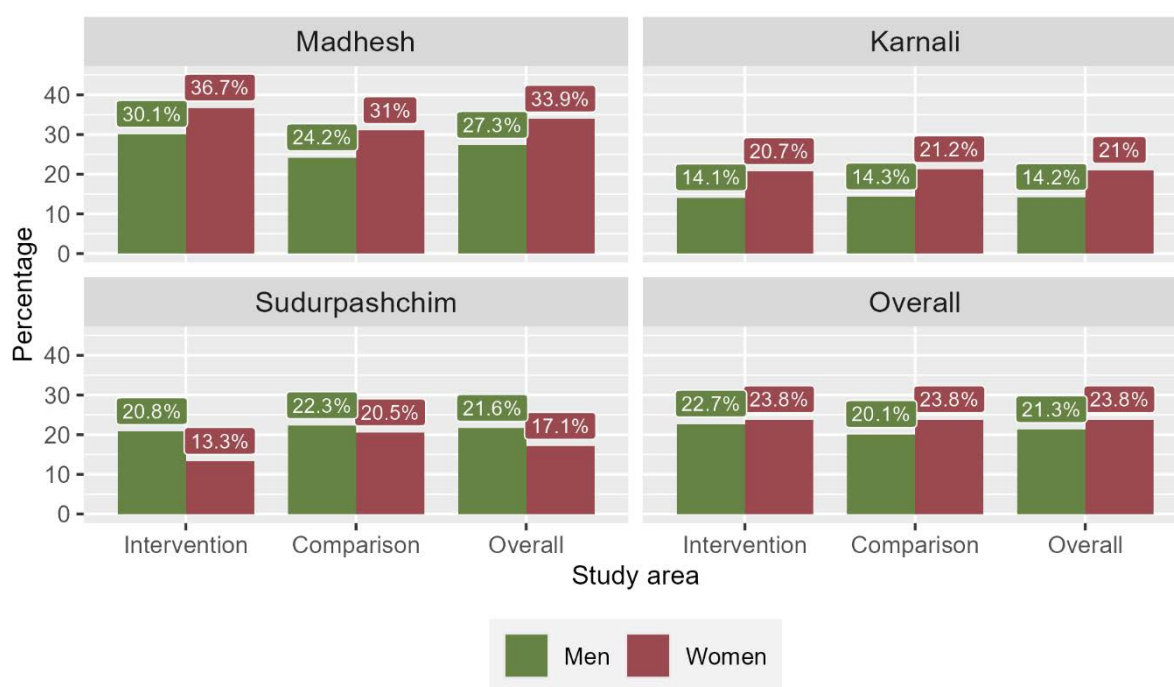


Table 17 below shows the opinions of men justifying or agreeing with hitting or beating their wife by various background characteristics.

Table 17: Opinion on husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife

Characteristics	Intervention		Comparison		Overall	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Age group						
15-19	30.9	16.7	20.6	8.7	26.3	13.1
20-24	24.7	28.6	31.8	20.4	28.7	23.6
25-29	19.2	29.6	20.5	22.6	19.9	26.7
30-39	23.8	19.5	22.5	17.4	23.1	18.3
40-49	26.3	21.9	23.3	24.9	24.5	23.5
Ethnic group						
Brahman/Chhetri	16.2	12.9	20.6	19.5	19.1	17
Janjati	14.7	16	17.3	18.8	15.7	16.9
Madheshi	35	30.7	25.4	17.8	30.6	25.2
Dalit	28.8	31.2	28.6	23.2	28.7	26.8
Muslim	32.9	32	36.3	9.9	34.5	22.3
Place of Residence						
Urban	22.4	20.7	23.7	20.2	23.1	20.5
Rural	26.8	27.2	24.1	19.9	25.2	22.8
Province						
Madhesh	36.7	30.1	31	24.2	33.9	27.3

Karnali	20.7	14.1	21.2	14.3	21	14.2
Sudurpashchim	13.3	20.8	20.5	22.3	17.1	21.6
Current marital status						
Never married	51.6	14.7	0	11.5	19.1	13.3
Currently married	23.6	24.2	24.3	21.3	24	22.7
Formerly married	24.5		5		12.2	
Literacy status						
Literate	19.2	20.6	18.9	17.5	19	18.9
Illiterate	32	35.2	32.2	46	32.1	39.7
Education						
No education	30	34.3	29.6	42.1	29.8	37.6
Basic (1-8)	21.3	23.4	17.8	25.3	19.4	24.4
Secondary (9-12)	19.8	20.6	21.3	13.1	20.6	16.5
Post secondary	4.3	9.1	24	1.8	14.4	5.7
Employment						
Employed	19.8	21.1	21.1	19.6	20.5	20.4
Unemployed	34.8	33.7	34.5	29.7	34.7	31
Not in Labour Force	25.5	25.5	25.4	17.5	25.4	21.3
Disability status						
None	23.3	21.6	23.4	19.6	23.4	20.6
Mild	28.3	26.1	27.7	21.5	28	23.8
Moderate	20	51.1	37.7	36.1	29.4	42.9
Severe	37.1	21.1	0	0	28.6	14.5
Total	23.8	22.7	23.8	20.1	23.8	21.3
N	640	465	640	453	1280	918

The argument based on agreeing with hitting and beating a wife from the above table is summarised below, The findings from Table 18 show that both men and women respondents believed that the community thinks it is justified to beat a wife under certain circumstances: if she argues with her husband (42.4% of women and 38.2% of men), if she goes out without telling him (40.8% of women and 33.2% of men), if she neglects the children (36.7% of women and 31.5% of men), if she burns the food (8.2% of women and 7.7% of men), and if she refuses to have sexual intercourse (10.8% of women and 5.2% of men).

Table 18: Perceived reasons that husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife

Reasons	% Men		% Women	
	Self	Community	Self	Community
Burning food	2.9	7.7	2.3	8.2
Argues with him	11.7	38.2	11.2	42.4
Goes out without telling him	14.7	33.2	17.4	40.8
Neglects the children	15.8	31.5	17.7	36.7
Refuse to have sexual intercourse with him	3.4	5.2	5	10.8
Who agree with at least one specified reason	21.3	46.4	23.8	56
Total	918	918	1280	1280

A notable proportion of women respondents believed that a husband is justified in beating his wife in certain condition for example if she goes out without informing him (17.4%), if she neglects the children (17.7%), if she argues with him (11.2%), if she refuses to have sexual intercourse (5%), and if she burns food (2.3%). The findings were similar among men respondents.

"My husband insisted that he had the right to mistreat me as his wife." – GBV-K

The belief that a husband has the right to abuse his wife reflects entrenched patriarchal values. This perspective is not only held by the abuser but is often supported by the survivor themselves and the broader community. The survivor also mentioned that her husband felt entitled to mistreat her without any consequence.

"In our village, survivors of GBV are blamed and shamed. People say that if we had good character, we wouldn't be abused. The community looks down on us, falsely linking our names with other men and accusing us of things we haven't done. This treatment is very hurtful and isolating. Men are rarely held accountable for their abusive actions, and their behaviour is sometimes even glorified. Here, survivors of GBV are not considered human. We are heavily dominated and blamed, with accusations that if we had good character, we wouldn't have suffered abuse from our husbands and in-laws." – GBV-D

The above statement reflects a lack of consequences for men who commit acts of violence. It also highlights the shame and survivor-blaming that occur in the community. Survivors are not only subjected to violence but also to social stigma and condemnation.

A significant proportion of both women and men respondents have witnessed these incidents. More than half of both groups have seen a wife being beaten for arguing with her husband. Almost 30% of respondents have witnessed a wife being beaten for going out without telling her husband and for neglecting her children. Additionally, 14.3% of women respondents have witnessed a wife being beaten for refusing sexual intercourse, and nearly 10% of both groups have witnessed a wife being beaten for burning food. This is notably higher among specific population characteristics, including Madhesi, Muslim, rural residents, those from Madhesh Province, intervention areas, currently married, illiterate, and unemployed individuals.

"There is a tradition that we shouldn't raise our voice against our husbands even if they abuse us, which gives more power to the husband to dominate us. The main cause of this is the Patriarchal mind-set of the people that values sons more than daughters." - GBV-S

The acceptance of GBV within certain cultures or communities is often rooted in deeply ingrained beliefs and traditions, which is dominantly seen among families residing in Madhesh Province, in the Muslim communities and those residing in rural areas. These norms dictate that women should not speak out against or act against abusive behaviour from their husbands. This cultural acceptance can make it difficult for women to seek help or report abuse, as doing so may be seen as violating cultural norms or bringing shame upon the family. This has resulted in the shame attached in speaking out for oneself, coupled with the fear of consequences of the actions taken or further violence. This has isolated the survivors and prevented them from accessing support services or legal recourse.

GBV significantly impacts women's daily lives, including their ability to perform unpaid domestic work. The abuse not only limits their physical capabilities but also their psychological readiness to engage in daily activities.

"I felt suffocated and had nowhere to go. I was unable to seek medical attention due to these terrible conditions." – GBV-BH

These statements illustrate the difficulties faced by GBV survivors. Not only are they burdened with the entirety of household duties despite having external jobs, but they also endure the psychological and physical constraints imposed by their abusers.

Outcome Indicator 1.3 - Extent to which women's and girls' rights organizations, and women human rights defenders are able to work undeterred

This baseline evaluation indicated that it is challenging for human rights organizations and defenders to effectively address the GBV and to facilitate the changes in social norms, attitudes, and behaviours within community and workplaces. The findings suggested that these organization encounter difficulties in addressing rights-based issues and providing services smoothly, despite the existing laws, policies and institutional frameworks designed to combat GBV.

To assess the organizations' ability to operate without obstruction, an online survey was conducted among selected CSOs. The survey, created using Google Forms, was shared to a list of CSOs provided by PUNOs, and responses were collected from 18 organizations. Most of these CSOs are currently working at both provincial and local levels, with two working exclusively at the provincial level and another two at the local level. Half of the responding CSOs are located within Kathmandu valley, three in Karnali province, four in Sudurpashchim and two in Madhesh province. The majority, 14 out of the 18 CSOs, reported that their primary areas of work include GBV, socioeconomic empowerment of women, and gender equality and social inclusion.

The survey results revealed that half of the organizations (9 out of 18) can operate without significant obstacles, although some reported facing challenges to a varying degree. To assess the level of difficulty, responses were assigned weights: 40 for "very difficult," 30 for "difficult to some degree" 20 for "easy to some degree" and 10 for "very easy," with the total weight summing to 100. This weighted score was categorised into four ranks (a) no extent (10-17), (b) limited extent (18-24), (c) greater extent (25-31), and (d) significant extent (32-40). The calculated weighted average of all 18 responses was 25, indicating that these organizations can operate undeterred to a greater extent but are nearing the threshold of limited extent, where they still face moderate difficulties.

Table 19: Stakeholders who were difficult to work with

Stakeholders	Number
Policy maker	7
Judicial Committee	4
Para-legal service provider	2
Health service provider	2
Police	2
Community	1
Total	18

Table 19 above displays the groups that CSOs reported as difficult to work with. The groups identified include policymakers, judicial committees, health service providers, police, para-

legal service providers, and community. The most frequently cited challenging group is policymakers, followed by judicial committees.

Key issues that the CSOs constantly face include:

- Difficulty in registering complaints related to GBV and untouchability
 - Challenges in mobilising local governments and securing their commitment to policy implementation.
-

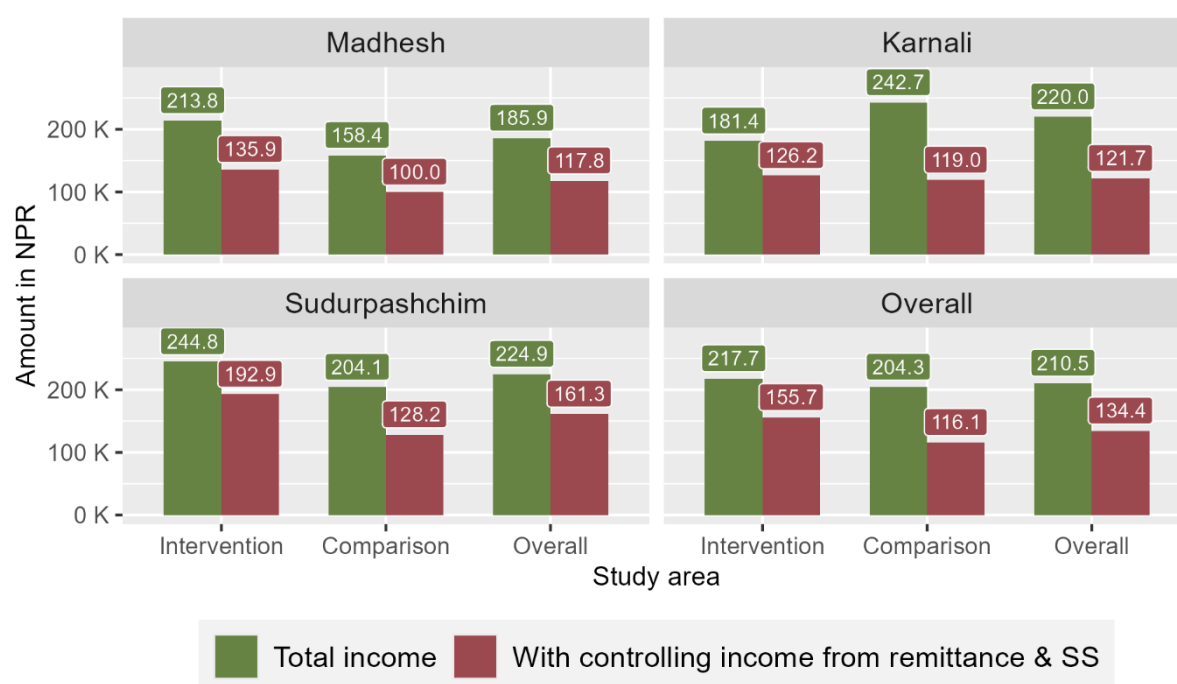
Outcome 2 - Women, men, girls and boys in all their diversity access opportunities to exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights

The baseline evaluation indicated that, while controlling the social security allowance and remittance, the average annual per capita income of economically active population was NPR 155,727 (Overall: NPR 134,395; Comparison: NPR 116,071). The project aimed to increase these figures through targeted interventions. The findings revealed significant disparities in access to economic, labour, and social rights, with urban and higher-income households generally having better access compared to rural and lower-income counterparts. Education was found to significantly enhance earning potential, yet economic opportunities remained scarce, with few households engaging in economic activities due to barriers such as limited financial resources that hindered women's empowerment. GBV emerged as a critical issue, with high rates of controlling behaviour and violence, particularly among younger, less educated, and marginalized groups. Disclosure of GBV was often constrained by fear and social norms, leading survivors to seek support from family rather than formal services. Awareness of social protection measures varied, with some groups demonstrating greater knowledge of specific allowances.

Outcome Indicator 2.1 - Average income of economically active population

There exist significant disparities in income. The average annual per capita income of the economically active population for both intervention and comparison groups was NPR 210,480 (Intervention: NPR 217,726; Comparison: NPR 204,255), but this figure dropped to NPR 134,395 (Intervention: NPR 155,727; Comparison: NPR 116,071) (see Table 20 and Figure 9) when excluding remittances and social security allowances, underscoring the substantial role these sources play in household finances. Notably, Male-headed households reported an annual per capita income of NPR 171,912 (Overall: 147304; Comparison: 126299), and urban residents reported NPR 170,820 (Overall: NPR 140,683; Comparison: NPR 112,715). Similarly, among women-headed households, the annual per capita income of economically active population reported was NPR 114,951 (Overall: NPR101,481; Comparison: NPR 89,725). Among different education groups, individuals with post-secondary education earned NPR 370,587 (Overall: NPR 311,663; Comparison: NPR 225,553) per annum.

Figure 9: Average annual per capita income of economically active population by provinces



Among provinces, Sudurpashchim had the highest average income at NPR 192,894 (Overall: NPR 161,323; Comparison: NPR 128,200), while Karnali lagged with an average per capita income of around NPR 126,228 (Overall: NPR 121,693; Comparison: NPR 119,033) among the intervention groups. Education played a crucial role, with incomes increasing significantly at higher education levels, particularly post-secondary. Brahman/Chhetri households had higher average incomes, showing a marked difference from Dalit households, which earned the least. Men-headed households and urban households consistently reported higher incomes than women-headed and rural households. The data highlighted significant income inequality, with a clear upward trend in income as one moves up the income quintiles.

Table 20: Average annual per capita income of economically active population

Characteristics	With Controlling Remittance and Social Security Income			Without Controlling Remittance and Social Security Income		
	Intervention	Comparison	Total	Intervention	Comparison	Total
Sex of household head						
Men	171,912	126,299	147,304	211,266	197,323	203,744
Women	114,951	89,725	101,481	234,003	222,110	227,652
Place of Residence						
Urban	170,820	112,715	140,683	227,285	200,945	213,624
Rural	122,752	121,908	122,267	196,840	210,011	204,415
Province						
Madhesh	135,877	99,969	117,820	213,847	158,351	185,941
Karnali	126,228	119,033	121,693	181,395	242,718	220,049
Sudurpaschim	192,894	128,200	161,323	244,774	204,069	224,910

Education						
No education	119,356	95,360	106,174	183,217	201,093	193,037
Basic (1-8)	150,798	118,160	132,624	207,644	212,937	210,591
Secondary (9-12)	164,070	126,667	144,566	234,185	191,670	212,015
Post secondary	370,587	225,553	311,663	403,131	263,161	346,264
Ethnic group						
Brahman/Chhetri	193,746	126,393	151,834	249,586	223,016	233,052
Janjati	144,061	119,180	134,799	200,974	214,075	205,850
Madheshi	150,831	114,926	133,961	216,957	184,496	201,705
Dalit	131,066	100,983	114,362	191,482	185,538	188,181
Muslim	114,593	116,058	115,351	258,089	187,375	221,502
Income quintiles						
Lowest	25,427	29,505	28,093	36,667	42,885	40,732
Second	73,160	62,148	67,642	95,019	89,354	92,180
Middle	110,648	97,303	103,669	151,816	144,938	148,219
Fourth	171,436	147,987	159,050	240,838	246,630	243,897
Highest	323,195	235,685	279,103	459,172	478,505	468,913
Total	155,727	116,071	134,395	217,726	204,255	210,480

The Figure 10 below illustrates the income quintiles, showing that the highest quintile's average annual per capita income was NPR 323,195, while the lowest quintile's earnings were NPR 25,427 for the intervention groups. The income for the comparisons groups varied slightly. It was also noted that the lowest quintile's income may have been higher in Karnali Province compared to other provinces.

Figure 10: Average annual per capita income of economically active population by income quintile (controlled remittances and social security income)

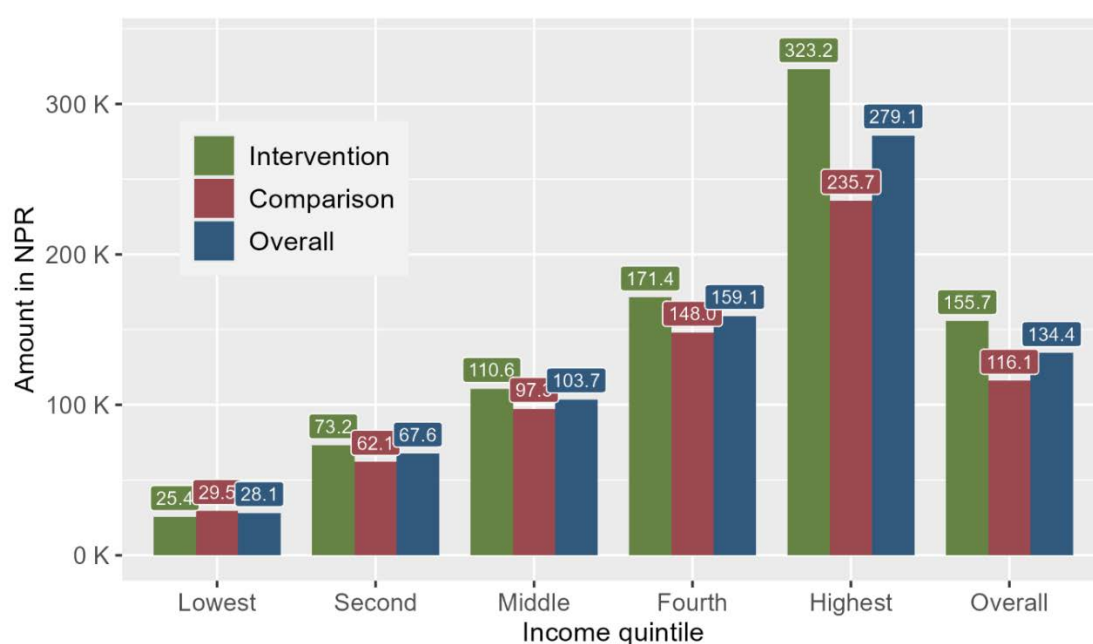
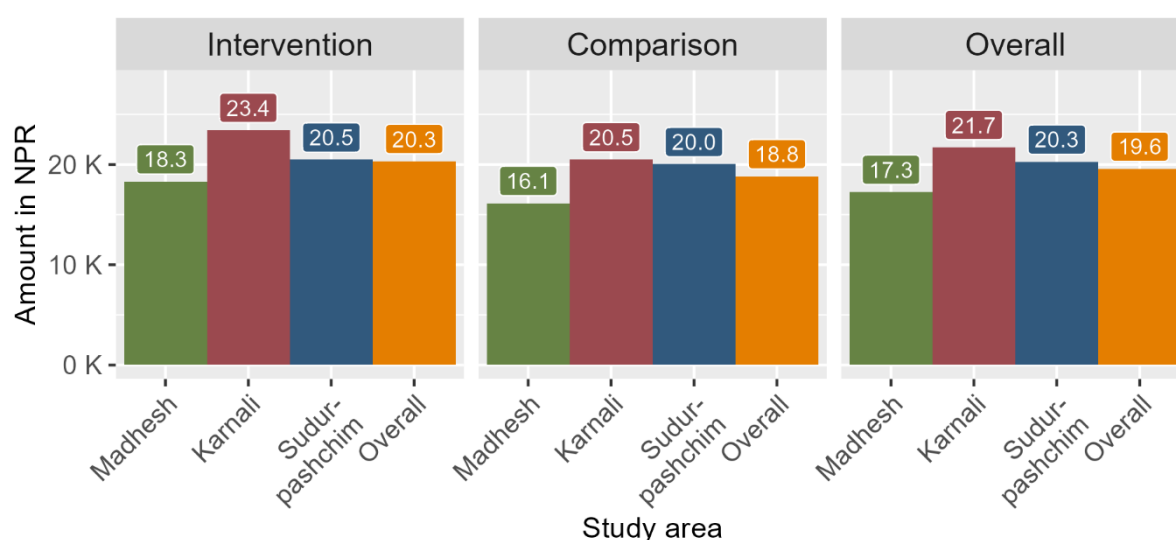


Figure 11 presents the average monthly income of employees engaged in wage-earning economic activities among surveyed individuals aged 15 and above. The data reveals monthly wage income variations across provinces, with Karnali province reporting the highest average monthly income at NPR 23,444 (Overall: NPR 21,730; Comparison: NPR 20,517), followed by Sudurpashchim at NPR 20,485 (Overall: NPR 20,278; Comparison: NPR 20,035), and Madhesh Province with the lowest income at NPR 18,307 (Overall: NPR 17,266; Comparison: NPR 16,145). Higher incomes in Karnali may reflect the prevalence of agriculture, horticulture and livestock compared to other provinces.

A sector-wise comparison indicates that the population employed in the professional/technical/managerial sector earned the highest average monthly income at NPR 25,944 (Overall: NPR 24,092; Comparison: NPR 21,822), followed by Agriculture at NPR 25,430 (Overall: NPR 20,195; Comparison: NPR 15,401). In contrast, employees in sales and services roles earned the lowest income, averaging NPR 16,711 (Overall: NPR 18,427; Comparison: NPR 20,133).

Figure 11: Average monthly income of salaried employees



Overall, there is no significant difference between the intervention and comparison groups. The findings also revealed a gender income gap, with men earning an average of 21,155 per month, compared to less than 14,593 for women. Urban residents tended to have higher monthly incomes than those in rural areas. Education had a significant impact on income, as individuals without education earned around 15,245 per month, while those with post-secondary education earned over 27,183 per month (see Table 21).

Table 21: Average monthly earnings of employees in the main job by occupation and gender

Characteristics	Intervention	Comparison	Total
Gender			
Men	21,813	20,507	21,155
Women	15,718	13,453	14,593
Place of Residence			
Urban	21,080	19,084	20,163
Rural	18,495	18,435	18,460

Province			
Madhesh	18,307	16,145	17,266
Karnali	23,444	20,517	21,730
Sudurpashchim	20,485	20,035	20,278
Education			
No education	16,022	14,545	15,245
Basic (1-8)	19,909	19,790	19,849
Secondary (9-12)	21,633	19,787	20,718
Post secondary	29,050	24,997	27,183
Occupation			
Professional/technical/managerial	25,944	21,822	24,092
Clerical	23,291	17,710	20,192
Sales and Services	16,711	20,133	18,427
Skilled Manual	20,705	23,062	21,788
Unskilled Manual	19,031	17,508	18,244
Agriculture	25,430	15,401	20,195
Income quintiles			
Lowest	14,526	19,088	17,323
Second	15,010	15,605	15,311
Middle	17,893	15,981	16,907
Fourth	19,038	20,013	19,490
Highest	29,363	22,927	26,275
Total	20,326	18,822	19,571

Economic dependency and GBV

Findings from qualitative study indicated a strong association between economic dependency and GBV. Women who rely on men for financial support are at heightened risk of abuse, as this dependency often limits their ability to escape abusive environments. The disproportionate burden of unpaid domestic work further exacerbates this vulnerability, making it difficult for women to achieve financial independence and security. These findings highlight the urgent need for economic empowerment programmes that foster financial independence and promote a more equitable distribution of domestic responsibilities.

“Limited employment opportunities lead to poverty, making women dependent on men for basic needs. This dependence invites disrespect and harassment” – GBV-POD (Police Officer)

“Mostly, women who are dependent on others, especially housewives, are at higher risk of gender-based violence” – GBV-SI (OCMC)

The fear of financial instability or homelessness can be a significant barrier that prevents these women from escaping abusive environments. As a result, their dependence on their abusers exacerbates their vulnerability and increases the likelihood of enduring prolonged periods of violence.

The traditional model, where the husband is the primary breadwinner, can create an environment of financial control and dependency. While this arrangement may work for some families, it can be detrimental in situations where there is abuse.

“Women here handle the money at home, but they don't have many chances to earn outside. “Women have less access to employment opportunities and more mandatory household tasks...” – FGD-Men

Women are burdened with more household tasks, which are often unpaid. This increased responsibility can limit their ability to pursue employment and seek income generating activities. Many women who attempt to engage in employment outside their household responsibilities still face GBV.

“I used to work on construction sites in India and now work cleaning interiors. My husband and in-laws have been able to dominate and abuse me because I have no one else to turn to” – GBV-D

GBV can have physical and psychological effects that impair one's ability to perform such labour-intensive work, thereby limiting job opportunities and increasing economic dependency. Additionally, the women are not only limited to physical and mental abuses and burdens due to this, but also their hard-earned money are all been taken away by their alcoholic husbands at many times. If by any chance the survivor tries to defend herself, in return she is tormented even more with several kinds of abuses. Without independent access to funds, these survivors are trapped in a cycle of dependency and vulnerability, unable to address the abuse or improve their situation.

“I had to quit my job because of the injuries from his beatings. He controls all finances, leaving me with no money for essentials” – FGD -Women

Outcome Indicator 2.2 - Number of individuals that have started and/or developed their economic units

The findings indicated that a small number of individuals 64 (Overall: 130; Comparison: 66) have initiated or expanded economic units, including vegetable farming, small shops or tea shops, or skill-based enterprises and cottage industries. This low participation underscores limited engagement in economic opportunities, with wealthier households more likely to expand their economic units²⁸ compared to poorer ones, highlighting income inequality within the community. Expansion depends on factors like individual capacity, access to loans, business knowledge, skills and market opportunities, which are more limited in hilly regions than the Madhesh province.

Within intervention areas, a slightly lower number of individuals (35 men and 29 women) started or expanded their economic units over the past 12 months. Men-headed households (47 individuals) were more active in these activities than women-headed households (17 individuals). Urban residents showed a significantly higher likelihood for starting or expanding economic units compared to rural residents. Education also played a key role, with higher education levels correlating with increased economic units. Janajati households had the highest percentage of starting or expanding business, while Madheshi households had the lowest. Overall, intervention areas demonstrated a similar tendency for individuals to start or expand their economic units compared to comparison areas (see Table 22).

²⁸ Economic unit in the context means the production unit of an industrial, agricultural, livestock or service enterprise, comprising all the movable and immovable tangible assets required for production purposes could be initiated by a firm, household individuals or the government.

Table 22: Number of individuals that have started and/or developed their economic units

Characteristics	Comparison			Intervention			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Sex of household head									
Male	34	17	52	32	15	47	66	32	98
Female	5	10	14	3	14	17	8	23	32
Place of Residence									
Urban	33	21	53	22	19	41	55	39	94
Rural	6	6	13	13	10	23	19	17	36
Province									
Madhesh	11	3	13	13	9	23	24	12	36
Karnali	12	18	29	11	14	25	22	32	54
Sudurpashchim	17	7	24	11	6	17	28	12	40
Education									
No education	7	5	12	6	10	16	13	14	28
Basic (1-8)	11	2	13	11	9	20	22	11	33
Secondary (9-12)	20	20	40	12	8	19	32	28	60
Post secondary	1	-	1	6	2	9	7	2	10
Caste/Ethnicity									
Brahman/Chhetri	22	17	39	9	10	19	32	27	59
Janjati	4	3	7	14	6	20	18	9	27
Madheshi	8	1	9	5	3	8	12	4	16
Dalit	4	6	10	6	9	15	10	15	25
Muslim	1	-	1	2	0	2	2	0	3
Income quintiles									
Lowest	3	8	11	1	4	5	4	11	15
Second	2	-	2	3	4	7	5	4	9
Middle	4	2	5	6	5	11	10	7	17
Fourth	7	2	9	9	5	15	17	7	24
Highest	23	16	39	16	11	26	39	26	65
Total	39	27	66	35	29	64	74	56	130

Women empowerment through economic opportunities

Providing skill development and economic opportunities is crucial for empowering women and mitigating the risk of GBV. Initiatives that focus on vocational training, such as tailoring, entrepreneurship, and other income-generating activities, play a vital role in this empowerment process. According to FNCCI, women are involved in tailoring, pickle making, beauty parlours, vegetable production, and agriculture. This shows women's entrepreneurial drive. The importance of such initiatives is emphasised by the high expectations of many survivors who seek support.

“Many survivors come here with high expectations, like asking for skills like tailoring and equipment to start their own businesses and become financially independent”. – OCMC

There is a critical demand for targeted interventions in empowering survivors of GBV through economic independence. A GBV survivor mentioned the desire for employment opportunities and assistance to start their own businesses in order to become economically independent.

“I truly hope that survivors like me can also receive support in terms of employment opportunities or assistance to start their own businesses. We need people who can train us to earn the livelihood and be independent so that we can walk out and take care of ourselves and the children” – GBV-D

Many survivors of GBV have received training from the government, INGOs and NGOs working towards mitigating GBV and providing training in the sectors of cattle rearing, mushroom cultivation, and snack preparation, working in groups to build their skills. These skills were chosen based on market demand, local resources, and the interests and capabilities of the survivors. Training often occurs in group settings which fosters a supportive environment and encourages collaboration.

There are also initiatives to support women in starting and expanding their economic activities by provincial and local governments, for example, the Prime Ministers Employment Programme, WOREC, and other NGOs. Such interventions cover a wide range of skills, including technical and vocational training, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. There are successful and upscaled practices by FAO, UNWOMEN and EU working for economic empowerment under the Rural Women Economic Empowerment (RWEE) and Rupantaran skill development programmes that will be implemented in this project sites as well. These projects and programmes will be integrated by JP, and they will implement activities to increase women's economic participation.

Challenges faced by women for initiating and expanding economic units

FWEAN (Federation of Women Entrepreneurs' Associations of Nepal) has established branches in 67 districts and plans to expand to all 77 districts. FEWAN focuses on building the capacity of women entrepreneurs. However, women face several barriers in accessing financial resources despite receiving training. Many women are not fully informed about financial opportunities and mechanisms. Financial institutions often require collateral to secure loans, and even when women own land or property, they may struggle to use it due to restrictive social norms or the need for family consent.

“There is a lot of struggles for the women to access the finance as they aren't much aware about it. To access finance, there is need for collateral, even if they have the land in their name, it's difficult for them. Women have to take the consent and legal approval from the family members for that.” – FEWAN

Women in Nepal face significant barriers when initiating and expanding economic units, despite programmes designed to support skills and business opportunities. Limited access to capital, training, and networking is compounded by restrictive social norms, gender biases, and a political structure that does not adequately prioritise women's economic initiatives. Cultural expectations around household roles further constrain women's time in business, reinforcing economic dependency and limiting their economic potential.

Even when resources are available, business growth is often hindered by poor service quality and a mismatch between business support services and women’s actual needs. Many programmes lack tailored support, such as mentorship, market access, and advanced training, as well as follow-up support critical to sustaining growth. Addressing these issues requires promoting gender-equitable employment practices, enhancing access to education and skills training for women, and implementing policies that support women's economic empowerment.

Outcome Indicator 2.3

Number of individuals who benefit from essential services, including multi-sectoral GBV services and social protection measures

The baseline evaluation of the EWPN programme assessed nine hospital-based OCMCs across the study area. These OCMCs were in Siraha, Dhanusa, Parsa, Surkhet, Kalikot, Dailekh, Bajura, Doti, and Kanchanpur. Data was collected from May 15, 2023, to April 13, 2024. Table 23 summarises the number of service users at programme-supported OCMCs. The majority of service users were women (77.8%), followed by sexually marginalized individuals (8.9%). Over the past year, 69.7% of women who sought services at OCMCs were new users.

Table 23: Number of individuals who got GBV services from OCMC

Survivor type	Men	Women	Sexually marginalized	Total	%
Madhesh	398	1197	354	1949	100
New	365	1101	337	1803	92.5
Follow up	33	96	17	146	7.5
Karnali	108	1178	-	1286	100
New	35	492	-	527	41.0
Follow up	73	686	-	759	59.0
Sudurpashchim	22	718	-	740	100
New	20	420	-	440	59.5
Follow up	2	298	-	300	40.5
Total	528	3093	354	3975	100
New	420	2013	337	2770	69.7
Follow up	108	1080	17	1205	30.3

Source: Health Management Information System (HMIS), Department of Health Services

Table 24 indicates that a significant portion of GBV survivors accessing services at OCMCs received comprehensive support. Of those surveyed, 34.7% underwent psychological counselling, while 16.4% underwent physical examinations. Additionally, 9.5% received pregnancy check-ups, and 1.2% were provided with safe abortion services.

Table 24: Number of individuals who receive GBV service from OCMC by type of service

GBV Service type	Number	%
Physical examination	1,084	16.4
Psychological counselling	2,291	34.7
Injury	669	10.1
HTC	634	9.6
Pregnancy test	628	9.5
Medico-legal	575	8.7
Treatment of mental illness	287	4.3
STI treatment	214	3.2
Emergency Contraceptive	149	2.3
Safe abortion	78	1.2
Total	6,609	100

Source: Health Management Information System (HMIS), Department of Health Services

Similarly, the household survey uncovered an alarming prevalence of GBV among women. Of the 1,280 women surveyed, 339 reported experiencing physical or sexual violence from their intimate partners in the past year. While 85 of these women shared their experiences with others, a striking 254 did not seek any form of support. Among those who did, only 22 accessed formal GBV services such as medical care, psychosocial counselling, safe homes, legal assistance, or rehabilitation. The remaining 63 women turned to informal support from family members and their communities, underscoring the critical need to expand access to comprehensive, formal GBV services (see Table 25).

Table 25: Percentage of women who benefit from GBV services from formal and informal means

Particulars	Intervention		Comparison		Overall	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total women surveyed	575		705		1,280	
Experienced either physical or sexual violence	168	29.3	171	24.2	339	26.5
Did not share/open up to anyone who experienced physical or sexual violence	135	80.2	119	69.9	254	75.0
Shared with someone to stop violence	33	19.8	51	30.1	85	25.0
Benefited GBV service from formal institutions	8	4.9	14	8.2	22	6.5
Informal service from household or community members	25	14.9	38	22.0	63	18.5

Patterns of disclosing and seeking GBV services among survivors of violence and adolescents

A notable proportion of individuals who had experienced physical or sexual violence chose not to disclose their experiences. This hesitancy to share varied across different demographic and socio-economic groups. For instance, Muslims, individuals with lower literacy levels, and those with severe disabilities were more likely to keep their experiences private. Younger

individuals and those living in urban areas were relatively more open about their experiences compared to older and rural residents (see Table 26).

Table 26: Percentage of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence and shared it with someone (Multiple Response)

Type of violence/ Characteristics	Parents	Siblings	Mother's group	In-laws	Police	Judicial Committee of local level	Neighbour/friends	Children	Stranger	Number of women
Type of violence experienced										
Physical only	75.5	46.8	-	24.6	7.4	-	3.2	5.5	-	35
Sexual only	65.1	18.3	-	34.0	20.0	-	20.7	-	-	10
Both physical and sexual	83.0	38.9	3.4	17.8	8.3	7.6	6.3	2.4	1.5	40
Age										
15-19	100.0	36.3	-	50.0	-	-	-	-	-	3
20-24	77.5	24.5	-	8.6	-	-	8.1	-	-	13
25-29	85.2	27.5	7.0	22.4	21.5	6.4	3.5	-	3.0	20
30-39	71.8	53.6	-	24.8	10.3	-	3.0	4.5	-	31
40-49	76.8	41.1	-	23.9	2.8	9.9	16.4	8.3	-	18
Ethnic group										
Brahman/Chhetri	81.3	43.1	-	11.6	22.9	11.6	6.8	3.6	3.8	16
Janjati	43.7	56.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Madheshi	81.5	39.2	-	30.8	5.7	-	16.6	-	-	17
Dalit	76.6	37.0	2.9	23.9	7.0	2.6	3.6	4.9	-	48
Muslim	82.6	64.3	-	21.7	-	-	-	-	-	2
Place of Residence										
Urban	79.0	41.4	2.5	25.6	10.3	5.5	6.4	4.2	-	55
Rural	75.7	36.7	-	16.7	7.4	-	7.2	1.9	2.0	29
Province										
Madhesh	86.4	34.6	-	30.1	1.8	2.3	5.2	1.8	-	55
Karnali	51.2	51.3	6.6	3.4	33.2	-	10.1	9.3	2.9	21
Sudurpashchim	87.4	44.5	-	20.0	-	20.0	7.5	-	-	9
Type of Intervention										
Intervention	73.0	42.8	-	20.1	9.2	-	1.3	1.7	1.8	33
Control	81.0	37.8	2.7	24.0	9.4	5.9	10.2	4.5	-	51
Education										
No education	82.3	40.2	-	31.5	4.5	3.9	5.3	3.3	-	46
Basic (1-8)	75.8	40.1	7.4	17.5	16.0	6.8	5.7	7.4	-	18
Secondary (9-12)	68.7	39.7	-	6.7	14.5	-	10.9	-	3.0	20

Post secondary	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Employment										
Employed	74.6	52.0	3.8	20.0	11.6	4.9	4.2	5.3	1.6	37
Unemployed	80.3	40.7	-	30.0	4.4	-	-	8.9	-	11
Not in Labour Force	80.3	27.5	-	22.7	8.5	3.3	11.0	-	-	37
Disability status										
None	76.1	39.3	1.8	23.6	7.2	3.9	7.2	3.7	0.8	78
Mild	100	36.7	-	9.0	25.5	-	-	-	-	5
Moderate	100	100	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	1
Income quintile										
Lowest	87.6	36.6	-	25.3	15.1	-	5.7	-	-	18
Second	82.7	41.2	-	26.3	2.4	9.2	8.4	-	-	20
Middle	78.0	39.1	5.6	20.0	12.1	5.1	1.7	-	-	25
Fourth	88.4	36.2	-	32.8	8.4	-	11.2	-	-	13
Highest	32.0	49.7	-	-	6.6	-	11.6	32.0	6.6	9
Total	77.9	39.8	1.6	22.5	9.3	3.6	6.7	3.4	0.7	85

Factors such as marital status, fear of one's partner, and the partner's drinking habits significantly influenced disclosure patterns. Individuals who fear their partner or whose partner frequently drank were more likely not to share their experiences. Regional variations also existed, with those in Madhesh showing a higher possibility of not sharing their experience. The data indicates that both socio-economic factors and personal circumstances played a crucial role in whether individuals felt able to share about their experiences of violence.

The data revealed that a significant percentage of women who experienced physical or sexual violence chose to share their experiences with their parents (77.9%), with siblings being the next most common confidants (39.8%). Sharing with other support systems like neighbours, friends, or formal authorities (e.g., police and judicial committees) was much less frequent, reflecting a possible lack of trust or accessibility to these resources (see Table 26).

Women experiencing physical violence only tended to disclose their experiences primarily to parents and siblings, whereas those facing sexual violence alone were more likely to share with in-laws and police. The tendency to share varied by age, ethnicity, and geographic location, with younger women and those in certain regions tend to comparatively share more. Factors such as literacy, marital status, and the partner's drinking habits also influenced the likelihood of sharing experiences.

Patterns of seeking services among adolescents

Most adolescents in Madhesh (89.1%), Karnali (92.5%), and Sudurpashchim (86.0%) provinces were informed about how to report harassment. Boys (93.5%) showed slightly higher awareness compared to girls (85.5%), and younger adolescents, particularly 15 and 16-year-olds, were more aware of reporting mechanisms than older groups (see Table 27).

Table 27: Adolescents awareness about reporting mechanisms in place for addressing instances of harassment

Characteristics	Yes		No		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
Province					
Madhesh	49	89.1	6	10.9	55
Karnali	37	92.5	3	7.5	40
Sudurpashchim	37	86.0	6	14.0	43
Gender					
Boys	58	93.5	4	6.5	62
Girls	65	85.5	11	14.5	76
Age					
15	70	89.7	8	10.3	78
16	38	95.0	2	5.0	40
17	13	81.3	3	18.8	16
18	2	50.0	2	50.0	4
Caste/Ethnicity					
Brahman/Chhetri	33	91.7	3	8.3	36
Janjati	14	77.8	4	22.2	18
Madheshi	25	89.3	3	10.7	28
Dalit	48	90.6	5	9.4	53
Muslim	3	100.0	-	-	3
Disability Severity Indicator					
None	113	89.7	13	10.3	126
Mild	9	90.0	1	10.0	10
Moderate	1	50.0	1	50.0	2
Currently attending school					
Yes	109	90.8	11	9.2	120
No	14	77.8	4	22.2	18
Currently working					
Yes	9	100.0	-	-	9
No	100	90.1	11	9.9	111
Out-of-school	14	77.8	4	22.2	18
Total	123	89.1	15	10.9	138

Adolescent awareness on reporting mechanisms

In terms of reporting mechanisms, police (91.9%) and parents (56.1%) were the most commonly used channels. Boys tended to report more to the police, while girls were more likely to seek support from parents. Different age groups and ethnicities showed varied reporting preferences, with Dalits favouring both parents and police and Muslims showing less reliance on these mechanisms (see Table 28).

Table 28: Reporting mechanisms for addressing instances of harassment in the home, school, workplace or community

Characteristics	Parents	School teachers	Local Judicial Committee	OCCM	Police	Community based orgs. / mothers' group	Ward representative/ community	Others ²⁹	Number of adolescents
Gender									
Boys	51.7	36.2	22.4	0.0	93.1	6.9	1.7	5.2	58
Girls	60.0	32.3	23.1	1.5	90.8	6.2	6.2	4.6	65
Province									
Madhesh	67.3	30.6	18.4	0.0	91.8	2.0	0.0	4.1	49
Karnali	64.9	40.5	35.1	2.7	91.9	13.5	8.1	5.4	37
Sudurpashchim	32.4	32.4	16.2	0.0	91.9	5.4	5.4	5.4	37
Age									
15	60.0	37.1	28.6	0.0	91.4	5.7	7.1	5.7	70
16	57.9	34.2	15.8	2.6	92.1	7.9	0.0	2.6	38
17	30.8	23.1	15.4	0.0	92.3	0.0	0.0	7.7	13
18	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	2
Ethnic group									
Brahman / Chhetri	39.4	21.2	27.3	0.0	90.9	12.1	6.1	3.0	33
Janjati	57.1	64.3	28.6	0.0	100.0	0.0	7.1	7.1	14
Madheshi	52.0	32.0	8.0	0.0	92.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	25
Dalit	70.8	37.5	27.1	2.1	91.7	6.3	4.2	6.3	48
Muslim	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	33.3	3
Working status									
Working	55.6	33.3	44.4	0.0	88.9	22.2	0.0	0.0	9
Not-working	53.0	38.0	23.0	1.0	92.0	5.0	5.0	6.0	100
Out-of-school	78.6	7.1	7.1	0.0	92.9	7.1	0.0	0.0	14
School attending									
Yes	53.2	37.6	24.8	0.9	91.7	6.4	4.6	5.5	109
No	78.6	7.1	7.1	0.0	92.9	7.1	0.0	0.0	14
Disability status									
None	54.9	34.5	22.1	0.9	91.2	5.3	3.5	5.3	113
Mild	77.8	33.3	33.3	0.0	100.0	22.2	11.1	0.0	9
Moderate	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1
Total	56.1	34.2	22.8	0.8	91.9	6.5	4.1	4.9	123

Participation in GBV prevention activities varied by province, sex, age, caste, and other factors, with Madhesh showing notable engagement. Confidence in handling harassment was generally higher among respondents from Madhesh and Karnali provinces, girls, younger individuals, Dalits, Hindus, those without disabilities, and school going adolescents.

²⁹ Others include National Human Rights Commission, Hotline numbers and Court

GBV services and social protection measures

Qualitative findings suggests that there were several services and social protection measures for survivors of GBV. The essential services and social protection measures promoted by the EU-GAP III programmes were fundamental in creating a supportive environment where survivors of GBV could recover and thrive, while also working towards a more equitable and just society.

Safe houses for GBV survivors provided refuge and aid to individuals who had experienced violence or abuse. These interventions aimed to protect survivors from further harm while offering a stable foundation from which they can rebuild their lives.

“Surviving seven years of abuse left me shattered, with lasting physical and emotional scars. My husband's constant accusations eroded my self-worth. Family and societal blame only deepened my isolation. After several failed escape attempts and a desperate suicide attempt, I found refuge in a safe house. There, I finally received the support I needed and realised the abuse wasn't my fault. Slowly, I began to heal and rebuild my life.”
– GBV Survivor

The services provided by the safe house were instrumental in offering immediate relief and protection to survivors. The safe house played an immediate role in providing a secure environment following a report of violence. According to GBV survivor, safe house provides a comprehensive care, ensuring that survivors' basic needs are met with dignity and compassion.

“The safe house wasn't just a place to stay, it helped me heal. They patched me up good, the cuts and bruises, but also helped with the bad feelings inside from all those years. Took a long time, but with them and the other women there, I started to feel like myself again. Like little pieces of me were coming back together, one by one.” – GBV Survivor

Furthermore, few survivors also benefitted from the comprehensive support provided by the organizations like Nabajyoti and AAWAAZ Nepal. These organizations offered a multifaceted approach to assisting GBV survivors, which was instrumental in ensuring their safety and well-being, including legal assistance, safe housing, and medical care.

“I received support from Nabajyoti organization...offering me a safe house with accommodation, food, and medication.” – GBV Survivor

Recognizing the immediate danger faced by GBV survivors, Nabajyoti provided survivors with safe house, food, and medical attention.

The Police Force is also implemented the following interventions to support survivors of GBV.

- Awareness Programmes: Around 200 programmes reaching over 100,000 people to educate the public about GBV and its impact.
 - Safe Houses: Offering free food, accommodation, clothing, and medicine.
 - Survivor Rehabilitation: Helping with job placements (e.g., Rs 18,000 salary) and business start-ups (e.g., Rs 30,000 for a tailoring business),
 - Transportation Assistance: Rs 3,000 provided for safe travel to and from OCMC and the police department.
-

-
- Child helpline (1098) provides required information, early detection of vulnerable children, psychosocial support, rescue, temporary shelter, family tracing, reintegration. They establish appropriate links and referrals with various sectors such as justice, law enforcement, health, education, psychosocial counselling, and social protection for co-ordinated support to children including those suffering from various forms of GBV.

The OCMC also offers a range of critical services to survivors of GBV including free services, referral, and transportation costs.

"In our OCMC, we provide free services to the survivors of GBV. If there are cases where the survivors need to be referred to another place, we make sure to cover their costs" – OCMC

CSOs also provides essential legal counselling and services to support survivors of GBV. These organizations played a critical role in helping survivors of GBV navigate the legal system.

"They encouraged me to draft an application, assuring me that all services would be provided free of charge." – GBV-BI

According to the Deputy Mayor, organizations often bring in expertise, resources, and additional support networks that are critical in addressing the needs of GBV survivors. The survivors are also further supported with long term GBV services and employment opportunities.

Gaps in service provision through OCMC

In an interview with OCMC, they emphasized the necessity for ongoing improvement and expansion of their services, including legal and protection services. OCMC highlighted following gaps in their provision of services.

- Lack of 24/7 medical staff: Crucial for the immediate and continuous care of survivors.
 - Geographical constraints: Making it difficult for some survivors to reach the centre, where establishing a proper channel to facilitate transportation from their homes to OCMC is crucial.
 - Need for social reintegration support: For women who are often rejected by their families and community's post-treatment.
 - Skill-based training: Seen as a vital step in helping these women achieve economic independence and social acceptance.
 - Continuous support even after initial treatment: OCMC facilitates post-treatment phases, helping survivors reintegrate into society, find employment, or access long-term psychological support. However, there is a gap in current post-treatment services, which are not adequate for all admitted survivors.
-

Challenges for GBV survivors in seeking GBV services and social protection measures

“In seeking help, I have faced numerous challenges. It was very difficult for me to access essential services such as safe houses, counselling, and legal aid. Whenever I called the police during episodes of abuse by my husband, they often dismissed my complaints, saying that our issues were repetitive and that I should consider divorce instead of seeking their help repeatedly. This lack of serious response from the police was disheartening and left me feeling helpless.” – (GBV Survivor)

The survivors often hesitated to take action as they faced trouble with cases not being resolved in a timely manner. This suggested systemic issues within the judicial or support systems. Delays in case resolution undermined the effectiveness of legal and support services, hindering survivors' ability to seek justice and receive necessary care promptly. In addition, fear of further violence was a significant barrier for survivors seeking help.

“Many women know that if they complain to the police, they will have to return to the same house and depend on their abuser for basic needs, which discourages them from reporting abuse.” – OCMC

Survivors often hesitated to report abuse due to the fear of retaliation and the practical challenges of leaving their abuser, more specifically in terms of economic dependence.

There is a lack of adequate facilities and services for survivors of GBV, and cases often circulate between different departments. This inadequacy leads to survivors experiencing a fragmented system where their cases often get bounced between different departments without resolution.

As mentioned above, the government has implemented various GBV services and social protection schemes. However, the effectiveness of these schemes is often hindered by issues such as capacity gaps, inconsistent implementation, and inadequate funding.

Awareness on human rights

The adolescent survey showed that there was high awareness of rights like education and proper care, with 91.3% of adolescents aware about these rights. However, awareness of rights like protection against recruitment into the army or police was extremely low (0.7%), and only 15.2% were aware of protection against any form of physical or mental torture. Boys tended to be more aware of several rights compared to girls, while girls were more likely to have awareness related to child marriage and illegal transportation (see Table 29).

Table 29: Awareness of adolescent towards their rights in constitution

Characteristics	Right to name and birth registration	Right to education, health, sports, proper care, entertainment, maintenance and overall	Right to elementary child development and child participation	Right to not engage in any factory, mine or similar hazardous	Right to be not subjected to child marriage, transacted illegally	Right to not be recruited in army police	Right to be not subjected to physical, mental or any other form of torture in home	Right to not be subjected to any form of abuse including physical, mental, sexual or	Right to child friendly justice	Right to special protection and facilities to those children who are	Number of adolescents
Gender	13.8	91.3	17.4	24.6	49.3	0.7	15.2	6.5	8.7	5.8	138
Boys	12.9	95.2	16.1	32.3	41.9	1.6	14.5	6.4	6.4	4.8	62
Girls	14.5	88.2	18.4	18.4	55.3	0.0	15.8	6.6	10.5	6.6	76
Age	13.8	91.3	17.4	24.6	49.3	0.7	15.2	6.5	8.7	5.8	138
15	18.0	92.3	18.0	30.8	47.4	1.3	18.0	9.0	7.7	9.0	78
16	5.0	92.5	15.0	10.0	57.5	0.0	15.0	5.0	10.0	2.5	40
17	12.5	87.5	12.5	25.0	43.8	0.0	6.3	0.0	6.3	0.0	16
18	25.0	75.0	50.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	4
Ethnic group											
Brahman/Chhetri	0.0	86.1	8.3	27.8	41.7	0.0	22.2	5.6	2.8	2.8	36
Janjati	27.8	94.4	5.6	33.3	50.0	5.6	5.6	11.1	0.0	0.0	18
Madheshi	17.9	85.7	21.4	7.1	67.9	0.0	10.7	7.1	14.3	7.1	28
Dalit	17.0	96.2	24.5	30.2	43.4	0.0	17.0	5.7	11.3	9.4	53
Muslim	0.0	100.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	3
Working status											
Working	22.2	88.9	33.3	22.2	55.6	0.0	11.1	11.1	0.0	11.1	9
Not-working	10.8	95.5	16.2	24.3	48.7	0.9	16.2	7.2	10.8	6.3	111
Out-of-school	27.8	66.7	16.7	27.8	50.0	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	18
Currently attending school											
Yes	11.7	95.0	17.5	24.2	49.2	0.8	15.8	7.5	10.0	6.7	120
No	27.8	66.7	16.7	27.8	50.0	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	18
Disability Indicator											
None	14.3	92.1	15.9	26.2	50.0	0.8	15.9	6.3	7.1	4.8	126
Mild	10.0	90.0	40.0	10.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	20.0	10
Moderate	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	2
Province											
Madhesh	23.6	90.9	21.8	16.4	63.6	0.0	10.9	7.3	12.7	7.3	55
Karnali	2.5	90.0	22.5	27.5	40.0	0.0	22.5	2.5	10.0	5.0	40
Sudurpashchim	11.6	93.0	7.0	32.6	39.5	2.3	13.9	9.3	2.3	4.7	43
Total	13.8	91.3	17.4	24.6	49.3	0.7	15.2	6.5	8.7	5.8	138

Age, school going status, and province significantly impacted awareness levels. Younger adolescents were generally more informed, school-going children were found to be better informed about their rights compared to those out of school. Disability status also affected awareness, with children with mild disabilities showing higher awareness in some areas. Adolescents from Madhesh and Karnali showed higher awareness in education and child protection rights, while Sudurpashchim showed stronger awareness of rights against hazardous work and torture.

Awareness on punishment for violating rights

The analysis of awareness regarding punishments for violations of child rights in Nepal revealed notable demographic disparities (see Table 30). Regional variations were significant,

with Madhesh having the highest awareness at 76.4% and Sudurpashchim the lowest at 41.9%. Awareness also varied between genders, with girls generally more informed (72.4%) compared to boys (56.5%). Age impacted awareness significantly; 15-year-olds showed the highest awareness (75.4%), while younger age groups exhibited lower levels of knowledge. Caste and ethnicity also played a role, with Madheshi showing the highest awareness (75.0%).

Table 30: Aware of Punishments for addressing violation of child rights in the constitution of Nepal

Characteristics	Yes		No		Number of adolescents
	Number	%	Number	%	
Province					
Madhesh	42	76.4	13	23.6	55
Karnali	30	75.0	10	25.0	40
Sudurpashchim	18	41.9	25	58.1	43
Gender					
Boys	35	56.5	27	43.5	62
Girls	55	72.4	21	27.6	76
Age					
15	49	62.8	29	37.2	78
16	28	70.0	12	30.0	40
17	10	62.5	6	37.5	16
18	3	75.0	1	25.0	4
Caste/Ethnicity					
Brahman/Chhetri	18	50.0	18	50.0	36
Janjati	11	61.1	7	38.9	18
Madheshi	21	75.0	7	25.0	28
Dalit	38	71.7	15	28.3	53
Muslim	2	66.7	1	33.3	3
Currently attending school					
Yes	77	64.2	43	35.8	120
No	13	72.2	5	27.8	18
Total	56.1	61.1	22.8	24.8	92

Outcome 3 - Institutions deliver gender equality outcomes in all spheres, in line with national and international normative frameworks

Advancement towards GEWE is marked by both progresses and challenges. Although foundational legal frameworks like the Constitution and the Local Government Operation Act (LGOA) establish a basis, they lack specific mandates for gender-responsive planning and budgeting. Recent efforts at the provincial level show some success, with Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpashchim provinces implementing a range of laws aimed at promoting GEWE. However, the impact of these laws is still emerging due to their recent development and early stages of implementation.

Challenges include political instability, resource allocation issues, and inadequate coordination among three tiers of government. Women's rights organizations and other

advocacy groups struggle to influence policy decisions due to exclusion from planning processes and limited incorporation of their recommendations in legal and regulatory framework.

Outcome Indicator 3.1 Number of laws and policies that were adopted or amended to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment

The Constitution of Nepal and Local government operation act (LGOA) are the two main legal frameworks that include necessary provisions for operation of provincial and local governments to institutionalise the legislative, executive, and judicial practices. The provincial and local governments are thus primarily guided by the key legal provisions in these two legal frameworks.

The LGOA, which directs general local level development planning, does not make GEWE integration mandatory in sectoral development or service delivery or for the LGs to maintain strategic inclusive planning. The LGOA does not specify what percentage of the decision-making, or resource (budget) allocation should be gender responsive and provides nothing about gender-responsive budgeting. There are national-level legal frameworks such as the National Gender Equality Policy 2020 and GESI Strategy 2021-2023. MoFAGA acts as a harbinger for gender equality, but it faces issues and challenges like a lack of adequate information on the progress or status of the implementation of the national gender equality policy.

The Responsibility for institutionalising gender equality rests upon local and provincial governments. There is no clear linkage between local, provincial, and federal governments in matters relating to tracking progress on gender equality. MoWCSC does not have a role to engage with local and provincial governments for promoting GEWE. In terms of advancing GEWE through the adoption and amendment of laws and policies, the provinces of Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpashchim have made efforts, although challenges remain (see Table 31).

Table 31: Number of GEWE related laws approved and implemented by provincial and local GoN

GoN Level	Law- (Laws, policy, guideline, strategy, procedure etc.)	Approved	Implemented
Madhesh	8	8	7
Karnali	10	8	8
Sudurpashchim	7	1	-
Local Government (Average)	15	12	11

Madhesh Province approved and implemented 7 out of 8 laws aimed at promoting GEWE. Key legal frameworks included the Provincial Ten-Year Strategy for Ending Child Marriage, the Provincial GESI Policy, and procedures related to child participation, youth entrepreneurship, and livelihood programmes for marginalized communities. These laws were implemented in the fiscal years ranging from 2019/20 to 2023/24.

Karnali Province has approved and is implementing 8 out of 10 laws. Notable policies include the GESI Policy. These initiatives began as early as FY 2018/19 and are part of a broader effort to enhance women's entrepreneurship and child rights within the province.

Sudurpashchim Province approved 1 out of 7 laws, with none of them currently being implemented. This province developed frameworks like the GESI Audit, although political

instability hindered the full approval and implementation of some policies. The Sudurpashchim Province Dalit Empowerment Bill and other GESI-related policies were still not approved and were undergoing revisions due to cabinet dismissals and other political challenges. The list of approved and other policies relevant to these provinces are given below (see Table 32).

Table 32: Status of GEWE related acts and policies by Province

Province	Laws and Policies	Status	Approved	Implemented
Madhesh Province				
1	Provincial ten-year strategy for ending child marriage	Approved and implemented since 2022/23	1	1
2	Provincial GESI Policy	Approved and implemented since 2022/23	1	1
3	Procedure related to child participation in Province	Approved and implemented since 2022/23	1	1
4	Procedure related to identification and encouragement of new youth entrepreneurs	Approved and implemented since 2022/23	1	1
5	Livelihood and Income Generation Program Operational Procedure for Endangered and Marginalized Communities	Approved and implemented since 2023/24	1	1
6	Indigent Citizens Health Insurance and Health Treatment Assistance Procedure	Approved and implemented since 2023/24	1	1
7	Integrated scholarship distribution and management procedures	Approved and implemented since 2023/24	1	1
8	Procedure for the operation of "Bank Khata Chhoriko Surakshya Jeevan Bhariko" program	Approved in 2019; revised in 2020	1	
9	Labour and employment policy	Approved and implemented		
Karnali Province				
1	Provincial Health Act	Approved and implemented since 2022	1	1
2	GESI Policy	Approved and implemented since 2021/22	1	1
3	Child Marriage Reduction Procedure	Drafted in 2022/23		
4	Early Childhood Development Strategy	Approved and implemented since 2022	1	1
5	Strategy to include citizens not having access to health services	Approved and implemented since 2021	1	1
6	Labour and Employment Promotion Policy	Approved and implemented since 2018/19	1	1
7	Children's club Ordinance (Sample)	Drafted in 2023/24		
8	Procedure for the formation, operation and management of Provincial child right committee	Approved and implemented since 2023/24	1	1
9	Women's Entrepreneurship development, financial access, support capital and technology support program operation procedure	Federal procedure implemented since 2021/22	1	1
10	Karnali Pradesh GESI Test Procedure	Approved and implemented since 2023/24	1	1
Sudurpashchim Province				
1	GESI Audit	Approved in 2023	1	
2	GESI Policy	Drafted in 2024 but not approved as Cabinet got dismissed		

3	Safe motherhood and reproductive health strategy	Drafted in 2024 but not approved as Cabinet got dismissed		
4	Disability Policy	Drafted in 2022 but not approved		
5	Child Policy (ending child marriage)	Drafted in 2023 and undergoing revision		
6	Youth Policy	Drafted in 2024 and undergoing revision		
7	Workplace harassment (prevention) Act	Recommended by organizations but not formulated		

At the local government level within these provinces, there are on an average 15 laws, with 12 approved and 11 being implemented. These efforts mirror provincial initiatives but face similar challenges in implementation. Key informants revealed critical issues in the enforcement and implementation of GEWE laws. Survivors of GBV often face challenges due to weak law enforcement and inadequate police support. One survivor expressed frustration, stating, "Even serious offenders were released on bail, making the laws feel like a joke." This highlights the gap between legal protections and their real-world application.

Community involvement is crucial in supporting GBV survivors, with initiatives like "Aama Samuha" (Mother's Groups) playing a vital role in raising awareness and providing grassroots support. However, there is a need to expand such programmes to prevent violence and support affected individuals at the village level. The gap between policy and practice is evident, with factors such as limited budgets, lack of awareness, and poor coordination hindering effective implementation. For example, while policies may mandate livelihood support for GBV victims, the absence of clear procedures often prevents these initiatives from reaching those in need.

Local governments struggle with budget constraints and societal stigma, which impede comprehensive support for GEWE initiatives. As one local official noted, "We struggle to provide comprehensive support due to insufficient funding and unclear guidelines." The findings underscore the need for continuous evaluation and revision of legal frameworks to ensure they effectively promote gender equality. This includes strengthening gender-responsive budgeting and ensuring robust enforcement of policies like the Labor Act of 2074.

Qualitative findings further highlighted that the economic empowerment challenges faced by women in Nepal. Stakeholders such as the All Nepal Federation of Trade Unions (ANTUF), Federation of Woman Entrepreneurs' Associations of Nepal (FWEAN), General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT), and Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce & Industries (FNCCI) expressed concerns about the limited or lack of women-friendly employment opportunities. The Labor Act, 2074 mandates policies for fair wages, inclusiveness, care economy, and childcare, formed through discussions between the private sector, government, and other stakeholders. Despite these policies, there was a significant gap between the law and its implementation, especially in informal sectors.

Women's participation in the private sector has increased recently due to men seeking opportunities abroad. However, many industries and factories remain reluctant to hire women, and women's representation in management and decision-making positions is very low. The social security programme entitles women to 90 days of maternity leave, with 60 days paid, but gender-responsive policy planning remains underdeveloped. Formal sector companies have anti-sexual harassment policies, but their implementation is hindered by the low number of women in policy-making roles and persistent gender biases.

Women workers in the informal sector face significant risks, including unsafe and non-women-friendly workplaces. The law ensures equal pay for equal work, protection from gender harassment, and safe personal spaces, but these provisions are often not implemented effectively. Female representation in policymaking and implementing committees is essential to address these issues. Additionally, there is a lack of inter-agency coordination on policy implementation, with many institutional representatives unaware of national policies like the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy, 2021.

Trade unions, such as ANTUF, have conducted training sessions to retain women's rights and coordinate with various departments and employees through committees discussing women's issues. However, these efforts are limited to the formal sector, with no social dialogues in informal sectors. Stakeholders expect projects like 'Empowered Women, Prosperous Nepal' to unite marginalised women and raise awareness of their rights and opportunities.

Based on the information provided by the programme team, EWPN will provide intensive support for the adoption, amendment, implementation of at least 117 policies across the three tiers of government. The detailed laws and policies along with the baseline status are shown in Table 33.

Table 33: List of laws and policies

Laws and Policies	Baseline Status (Categories: policy not in place, adopted, amended, implemented)	Level
GESI Policy 2021 Federal	Implemented	Federal
GESI Policy Madhesh	Implemented	Provincial
GESI policy Karnali	Implemented	Province
GESI policy Sudurpashchim	Drafted	Province
GESI Policy at all Palika	GESI strategy adopted in 22; Not in place in 10	Local
GBV Umbrella Law	Not in Place	Federal
Election Act	Drafted	Federal
Transitional Justice	Adopted	Federal
Citizenship Act	Adopted	Federal
Second National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security	Implemented	Federal
Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Policy	Drafted	Federal
Citizen's engagement Policy developed and adopted by LG	Policy not in place	LG
LGs produced Citizen's budget	Policy not in place	LG
National Children Policy 2023	Adopted (and National Plan of Action to implement this policy has been initiated)	Federal
Girl Protection Bill and Girl Child Act Madhesh	Adopted	Provincial
Labour Act	Implemented	Federal
Trade Unions Act	Implemented (requires amendment)	Federal

Contribution Based Social Security Act	Implemented (partially)	Federal
Social Security Act	Implemented (partially)	Federal
Formalization Action Plan	Implemented	Federal
Care Act	Not in place	Federal
TOTAL		117

The recent nature of these legal frameworks and their early implementation stages suggests that while there has been progress, the full impact on GEWE is yet to be realised. The baseline findings indicated the prevalence of GBV and other barriers to women’s empowerment. This raises concerns about the implementation and effectiveness of these frameworks.

The recent implementation of GEWE policies in Nepal, combined with the country's new experience with federalism, presents several challenges. Political instability, as seen in Sudurpashchim, can delay the approval and implementation of these policies, while resource allocation issues may hinder effective implementation at the provincial and local levels.

Coordination across different government levels remains a significant challenge, potentially leading to fragmented efforts and reduced effectiveness. Cultural and social barriers may impede progress. The evolving legal and institutional frameworks require comprehensive and enforceable measures aligned with international standards. Addressing these challenges requires strengthening institutional capacity, promoting political stability, enhancing coordination, fostering community engagement, developing robust monitoring and evaluation systems, and ensuring adequate funding.

Outcome Indicator 3.2- Number of laws and policies where recommendations made by Women Rights Organizations (WROs)/youth organizations/ LGBTIQ+ have been taken on board by government bodies at all levels during the drafting or revision process

The baseline evaluation revealed mixed opinions regarding the influence of WROs and CSOs on laws and policy formulation. The online survey was conducted with 18 organizations working to reduce or minimize GBV and support survivors.

Nine of these organizations had actively contributed to the formulation and implementation of GESI policies and guidelines at provincial and local levels. Their contributions included guidelines against Chaupadi and input in the Sudurpashchim Province Dalit Empowerment Bill. Notably, JuRI Nepal developed GESI policies which was adopted by six local governments, and they also reviewed the Dalit Empowerment Bill from a feminist perspective.

Despite these achievements, organizations faced significant challenges in collaborating with elected representatives and influencing policy decisions. They are frequently excluded from the annual workplan and budget process, limiting their ability to provide input during the drafting and revision of policies. Although many of these organizations made recommendations for law formulation, these suggestions were rarely implemented. For example, in Sudurpashchim Province, recommendations to develop an act to prevent workplace harassment were not acted upon. While elected representatives initially expressed willingness to incorporate GEWE principles into their plans, this was often not followed by adequate activities, budget allocations, or effective institutional mechanisms. On average, four laws and policies were influenced by CSOs working at the local and provincial levels (see Table 34).

Table 34: Number of laws and policies recommended by CSOs and taken on board by Provincial and Local levels

SN	Number of laws/ policies influence	# of CSOs
1	1	2
2	2	1
3	3	2
4	4	1
5	5	1
6	6	1
7	8	1
Total	29	9
Weighted Average		3.7

5.3 Findings Based on Impact Indicators

Women and girls in targeted project locations increasingly enjoy their human rights and realise their full potential free from violence and discrimination

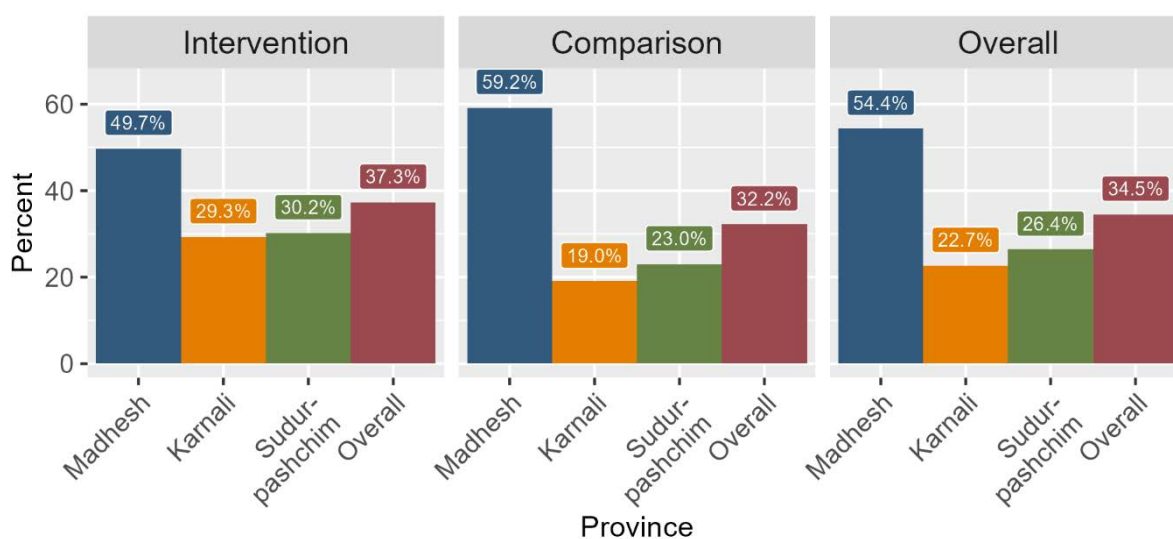
In the targeted project locations, significant challenges persisted in addressing women's rights and enabling them to reach their full potential. Nearly 37.3% (Overall: 34.5%; Comparison: 32.2%) of ever-partnered women and girls reported experiencing Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in the past year, including physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse. A concerning proportion of both women (23.8%) and men (22.7%) believed that domestic violence was justifiable under certain circumstances, with these attitudes influenced by factors such as ethnicity and literacy levels. While nearly 49.0% of the working-age population was employed, disparities continued to affect women, individuals with disabilities, and lower-income groups.

Although the coverage of social protection schemes was relatively high, 24.8% (Overall: 23.3%; Comparison: 22.0%) of eligible individuals do not receive the benefits, primarily due to administrative challenges. Additionally, there remained a notable gap in political and institutional representation. While women held a significant number of local government positions, their presence in higher levels of government and the judiciary was limited. Despite the existence of quotas and supportive legal frameworks, effective representation was hindered by a lack of adequate support and knowledge.

Impact indicator 1 - Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months

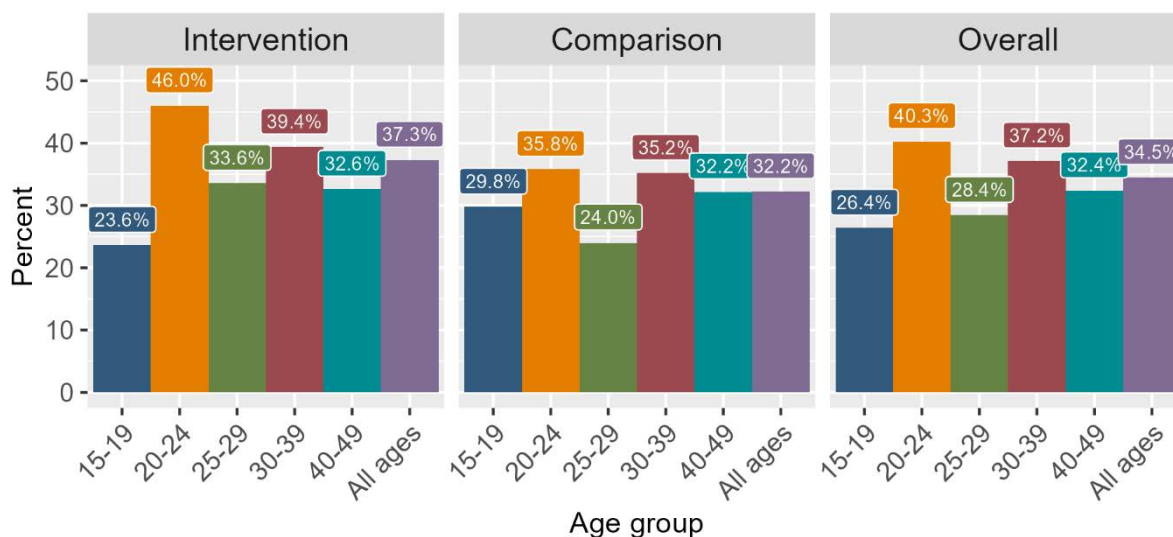
There was a notable prevalence of IPV among ever-partnered women and girls aged 15-49 years in the past 12 months. 37.3% (Overall: 34.5%; Comparison: 32.2%) of the 1280 respondents reported experiencing at least one form of physical, sexual or emotional violence from their intimate partner during the past 12 months. Notably, women from Madhesh were nearly twice as likely to experience IPV compared to those women from Sudurpashchim and Karnali provinces. In Madhesh, a nearly half of the women in intimate relationships were found to be vulnerable to IPV. Additionally, a slightly higher proportion of women and girls in the intervention group in Madhesh experienced IPV compared to those in the comparison group. In contrast, in Karnali and Sudurpashchim, women in the intervention group were more likely to experience IPV than their counterparts in the comparison group (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Prevalence of IPV among the women and girls aged 15 years and above in last 12 months



The data revealed significant disparities in intimate partner violence among women and girls aged 15-49 years. Women in age group 20-24 reported the highest prevalence of IPV at 40.3% followed by the 32.4% in the age group 40-49.

Figure 13: Prevalence of GBV among women of different age groups



Ethnicity played a crucial role, with nearly half of women from Madheshi and Dalit groups experiencing IPV, compared to lower rates among Brahman/Chhetri and Janajati groups. Employment and literacy were strong indicators of vulnerability, with formerly married and illiterate women reporting the highest levels of IPV. Education level also influenced IPV prevalence, with those with no education and the unemployed experiencing the highest rates across all categories (see Table 35).

Table 35: Percentage of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months

Characteristic	Intervention		Comparison		Overall	
	Prevalence	N	Prevalence	N	Prevalence	N
Age						
15-19	23.6	17	29.8	14	26.4	30
20-24	46.0	93	35.8	120	40.3	213
25-29	33.6	118	24.0	137	28.4	255
30-39	39.4	218	35.2	250	37.2	468
40-49	32.6	129	32.2	184	32.4	313
Ethnic group						
Brahman/Chhetri	16.5	169	18.1	312	17.5	481
Janjati	39.6	110	21.2	63	32.9	173
Madheshi	45.2	114	51.9	95	48.2	210
Dalit	52.4	159	46.0	215	48.7	374
Muslim	35.4	22	46.6	20	40.7	42
Place of Residence						
Urban	35.3	397	37.1	443	36.2	840
Rural	41.8	178	24.0	262	31.2	440
Province						
Madhesh	49.7	215	59.2	208	54.4	422
Karnali	29.3	137	19.0	251	22.7	387
Sudurpashchim	30.2	224	23.0	246	26.4	470
Education						
No education	46.2	225	43.2	290	44.5	515
Basic (1-8)	37.9	150	32.3	192	34.8	342
Secondary (9-12)	27.1	184	19.2	207	22.9	391
Post secondary	23.8	15	-	16	11.7	31
Employment						
Employed	37.0	238	31.8	325	34.0	563
Unemployed	40.9	40	65.5	32	51.8	73
Not in Labour Force	37.0	297	29.6	348	33.0	644
Disability status						
None	36.0	516	32.3	649	33.9	1,165
Mild	48.1	47	35.3	46	41.8	92
Moderate	54.6	9	13.2	10	32.7	18
Severe	47.5	3	-	1	36.6	4
Income quintile						
Lowest	33.1	85	28.4	163	30.0	248
Second	44.5	127	37.5	143	40.8	270
Middle	37.2	121	33.5	127	35.3	247

Fourth	39.5	116	38.6	134	39.0	250
Highest	30.8	126	24.0	138	27.3	264
Total	37.3	575	32.2	705	34.5	1,280

The prevalence of violence is directly connected to women's socio-economic conditions. The major predisposing factors of GBV includes lack of education, unemployment, poverty, financial insecurities, dependency, no citizenship card, no marriage certificate, and societal pressure. The story of GBV survivor showed how severe GBV can be, especially when women depend financially on their husbands and face pressure to have a son. It highlights the dire need for better legal protection, support from society, and helping women become financially independent to protect themselves from such violence.

“My life has been marked by violence since I was a child. Married at just 15 throughout my 18-year marriage, I faced a constant barrage of abuse from my husband. He beat me, threatened me with weapons, and hurled insults. He controlled our finances, leaving me with no way out. Even the money I earned went towards his alcohol habit, while I struggled to feed my children. The lack of education and societal pressures kept me silent for years. But the abuse wasn't just verbal or emotional. My husband even tried to kill me on one occasion.” GBV survivor Surkhet

“My husband used to drink and then physically and verbally abuse me and even our children. This violence intensified after the birth of our daughters, influenced by societal pressure to have a son. If women can earn and be independent, they have a better chance of protecting themselves. I have struggled because I depend on my husband financially.” GBV Survivor Siraha

Table 36: Types of violences experienced by women in past 12 months

Type of violence	Ever experienced	Experienced in the last 12 months	Frequency in the last 12 months	
			Often	Sometimes
Physical violence	34.2	18.9	3.6	15.3
Sexual violence	20.4	15	1.7	13.3
Emotional violence	29.7	25.2	5.1	20.1

More than 30% of respondents experienced physical violence over their lifetime. Among these, 32% were slapped, 20.5% were pushed, shaken, or had objects thrown at them, 14.4% were kicked, dragged, or beaten, 11% were punched, 4.2% were choked or burned, and 1.6% were attacked with a knife, gun, or other deadly weapon. Almost 19% of respondents reported experiencing physical violence in past 12 months, with common acts including slapping (16.7%), pushing, shaking, or throwing objects (12.2%), and more severe actions such as choking or burning (2.3%) and attacks with knives or other weapons (0.9%) (see Table 37).

Sexual violence was faced by 20.4% of respondents in their lifetime, with 15% experiencing it in the last 12 months. Within these figures, 20.3% and 14.8%, respectively, were physically forced into sexual intercourse by their partners (see Table 37).

Emotional violence impacted 29.7% of respondents over their lifetime, with 25.2% experiencing it in the last 12 months, and approximately 20% of these respondents were insulted or made to feel bad about themselves (see Table 37).

More than 15% of respondents suffered both physical and sexual violence throughout their lives, with 7.4% experiencing it in the last 12 months. Additionally, 12.2% faced a combination of physical, sexual, and emotional violence over their lifetime, with 6.3% encountering it in the last 12 months (see Table 37).

Table 37: Form of controlling behaviour and intimate partner violence

Type of violence experienced	Ever experienced	Experienced in the last 12 months	Frequency in the last 12 months	
			Often	Sometimes
Any controlling behaviour	44.1	18.9	3.6	15.3
Is jealous or angry if she talks to other men	30.5	26.5	5.6	20.9
Wrongly accuses her of being unfaithful	13.1	10.9	2.5	8.4
Does not permit her to meet her Women friends	11.1	9.4	1.6	7.8
Tries to limit her contact with her family	8.3	7.1	1.6	5.5
Insists on knowing where she is at all times	29.2	26.6	7.9	18.7
Any physical violence	34.2	18.9	3.6	15.3
Pushed her, shook her, or threw something at her	20.5	12.2	1.9	10.3
Slapped her	32.0	16.7	2.9	13.8
Twisted her arm or pulled her hair	15.9	9.4	1.8	7.6
Punched her with his fist or with something that could hurt her	11.0	6.2	1.4	4.8
Kicked her, dragged her, or beat her up	14.4	9.0	1.8	7.2
Tried to choke her or burn her on purpose	4.2	2.3	0.8	1.5
Attacked her with a knife, gun, or other weapon	1.6	0.9	0.3	0.6
Any sexual violence	20.4	15.0	1.7	13.3
Physically forced her to have sexual intercourse with him when she did not want to	20.3	14.8	1.7	13.1
Physically forced her to perform any other sexual acts she did not want to	5.3	3.7	0.4	3.3
Forced her with threats or in any other way to perform sexual acts she did not want to	3.8	3.0	0.4	2.6
Any emotional violence	29.7	25.2	5.1	20.1
Said or did something to humiliate her in front of others	19.1	15.6	2.7	12.9
Threatened to hurt or harm her or someone she cared about	10.7	8.0	1.4	6.6
Insulted her or made her feel bad about herself	24.7	20.8	4.2	16.6
Physical and sexual violence	15.5	7.4	2.2	5.2
Physical and sexual and emotional violence	12.2	6.3	2.8	3.5
Physical or sexual violence	39.1	26.5	4.3	22.2
Physical or sexual or emotional violence	43.8	34.5	6.6	27.9
Physical violence by any current/previous partner	34.7	18.8	0	18.8
Sexual violence by any current/previous partner	21.1	15.0	0	15
Emotional violence by any current/previous partner	30.2	25.2	0	25.2
Physical and sexual violence by any current/previous partner	16.1	7.4	0	7.4
Physical and sexual and emotional violence by any current/previous partner	12.8	6.3	0	6.3
Physical and sexual and emotional violence by any current/previous partner	39.8	26.5	0	26.5
Physical or sexual or emotional violence by any current/previous partner	44.3	34.5	0	34.5
Number of ever-married or never-married Women who ever had an intimate partner	1,280	1,280	1,280	1,280

Forms of controlling behaviour

The descriptive analysis highlights significant disparities in the experience of controlling behaviour across different population characteristics. The data shows the influence of factors such as age, ethnicity, education, employment, disability status, income, partner's alcohol consumption, and wife's fear on the likelihood of experiencing such behaviour.

Overall, 44.0% of respondents have faced some form of controlling behaviour in their lifetime, with 18.9% encountering it in the past 12 months. Common forms of control include jealousy or anger when speaking to other men, constant monitoring of whereabouts, and wrongful accusations (see Table 38).

Women-headed households report higher levels of controlling behaviour (50.1%) than men-headed households (41.1%). Controlling behaviour is most prevalent among younger respondents, with the highest proportion (64.6%) seen in the 15-19 age group. The incidence declines with age, reaching the lowest proportion (37.8%) among those aged 40-49. Madheshi (63.3%) and Muslim (62.1%) respondents experience the highest levels of controlling behaviours, whereas Brahman/Chhetri respondents report the lowest (25.5%) (see Table 38).

Urban residents (44.5%) experience slightly more controlling behaviour compared to rural residents (43.1%). The highest incidence of controlling behaviour is observed in Madhesh (70.6%), while Sudurpashchim reports the lowest (25.0%). Individuals in intervention areas (47.3%) face higher levels of controlling behaviour compared to those in comparison areas (41.4%) (see Table 38).

Illiterate respondents (51.0%) face more controlling behaviour compared to literate ones (40.1%). Individuals with no education (48.4%) or basic education (46.7%) report higher proportion, while those with post-secondary education experience the least (24.7%) (see Table 38).

Unemployed individuals (59.5%) face more controlling behaviour compared to employed individuals (45.7%) and those not in the labour force (40.8%). The highest proportion are among those in unskilled manual work (51.2%) and agriculture (47.8%), with clerical positions experiencing the lowest (23.5%) (see Table 38).

Respondents with severe disabilities face an extremely high level of controlling behaviour (92.0%), compared to those with no disabilities (43.6%). The second income quintile reports the highest level of controlling behaviour (48.7%), while the highest income quintile reports the lowest (39.2%). Those whose partners are often drunk experience the highest levels of controlling behaviour (79.6%), while those whose partners do not drink alcohol report the lowest (31.3%). Women who are sometimes afraid (62.3%) or afraid most of the time (19.9%) report high levels of controlling behaviour, while those who are never afraid experience the lowest (90.4%) (see Table 38).

Lowest	42.2	28.0	15.5	10.4	7.3	27.9	57.8	248
Second	48.7	33.4	17.0	11.4	8.7	32.4	51.3	270
Middle	47.5	33.1	13.1	11.4	8.4	32.4	52.5	247
Fourth	42.4	29.5	9.4	12.6	10.0	27.0	57.6	250
Highest	39.2	28.5	10.1	9.7	7.5	26.6	60.8	264
Total	44.0	30.5	13.0	11.1	8.4	29.3	56.0	1280

Adolescents' ability to identify different types of violence and the patterns of witnessing violence among them

The majority of adolescents (69.6%) reported being able to recognise physical violence, with higher ability to identify among girls (71.1%), Janajati adolescents (83.3%). Only 29% of adolescents reported being able to identify sexual violence, with this ability more common among girls, 18-year-olds, Dalit adolescents, and those from Sudurpashchim province. Notably, a mere 10.1% of adolescents reported being able to recognise psychological harassment (see **Table 39**).

Table 39: Identification of different types of violence/harassment in home/school/workplace/social settings

Characteristics	Physical violence	Economic violence	Emotional violence	Sexual violence	Psychological harassment	Online bullying	Bullying	Stalking	Ev-teasing	N
Gender	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138
Boys	67.7	30.6	37.1	21.0	9.7	12.9	35.5	19	45.2	62
Girls	71.1	26.3	38.2	35.5	10.5	7.9	25.0	25	51.3	76
Age	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138
15	66.7	33.3	38.5	26.9	10.3	9.0	30.8	23	46.2	78
16	72.5	25.0	32.5	35.0	12.5	15.0	32.5	23	57.5	40
17	68.8	18.8	43.8	18.8	6.3	6.3	12.5	13	43.8	16
18	100.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50	25.0	4
Ethnic group	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138
Brahman/Chhetri	61.1	16.7	36.1	25.0	5.6	11.1	16.7	11	41.7	36
Janjati	83.3	33.3	38.9	27.8	11.1	5.6	27.8	11	38.9	18
Madheshi	53.6	39.3	28.6	25.0	7.1	17.9	42.9	32	64.3	28
Dalit	79.3	30.2	43.4	35.8	15.1	7.6	34.0	30	49.1	53
Muslim	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	33.3	3
Religion	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138
Hindu	69.0	28.7	37.2	29.5	10.1	10.1	30.2	23	48.8	129
Islam	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	33.3	3
Christian	83.3	33.3	50.0	33.3	16.7	16.7	33.3	17	50.0	6
Working status	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138
Working	77.8	44.4	44.4	11.1	11.1	22.2	33.3	22	44.4	9
Not-working	69.4	28.8	39.6	27.0	9.9	10.8	30.6	19	50.5	111
Out-of-school	66.7	16.7	22.2	50.0	11.1	0.0	22.2	44	38.9	18
Currently attending school	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138
Yes	70.0	30.0	40.0	25.8	10.0	11.7	30.8	19	50.0	120
No	66.7	16.7	22.2	50.0	11.1	0.0	22.2	44	38.9	18
Disability Indicator	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138
None	69.8	27.8	37.3	29.4	10.3	10.3	27.0	22	50.0	126
Mild	80.0	40.0	50.0	20.0	10.0	10.0	60.0	10	30.0	10
Moderate	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	100	50.0	2
Province	69.6	28.3	37.7	29.0	10.1	10.1	29.7	22	48.5	138

Madhesh	63.6	40.0	32.7	32.7	7.3	9.1	49.1	40	56.4	55
Karnali	67.5	20.0	42.5	17.5	22.5	12.5	22.5	15	40.0	40
Sudurpashchim	79.1	20.9	39.5	34.9	2.3	9.3	11.6	7	46.5	43

Perpetrators of violence are often friends (41.5%) and strangers (39.4%), with gender differences; boys face more violence from neighbours and strangers, while girls face more from partners and family members. The data shows a notable presence of women perpetrators (58.5%) compared to boys (41.5%), with variations across provinces, age groups, and other population characteristics (see Table 40).

Strangers (58.7%) and neighbours (51.5%) were viewed as the most likely abusers. Boys primarily saw friends and strangers as threats, while girls were more worried about strangers and neighbours. Adolescents in Madhesh province identified strangers and neighbours as primary threats. Regarding types of violence, 59.4% of adolescents experience harassment, 60.1% faced physical abuse, 28.3% encounter sexual abuse, 34.8% suffer psychological abuse, and 37.7% are involved in child labour. Boys were more affected by harassment and child labour, while girls experienced higher rates of physical and sexual abuse (see Table 40).

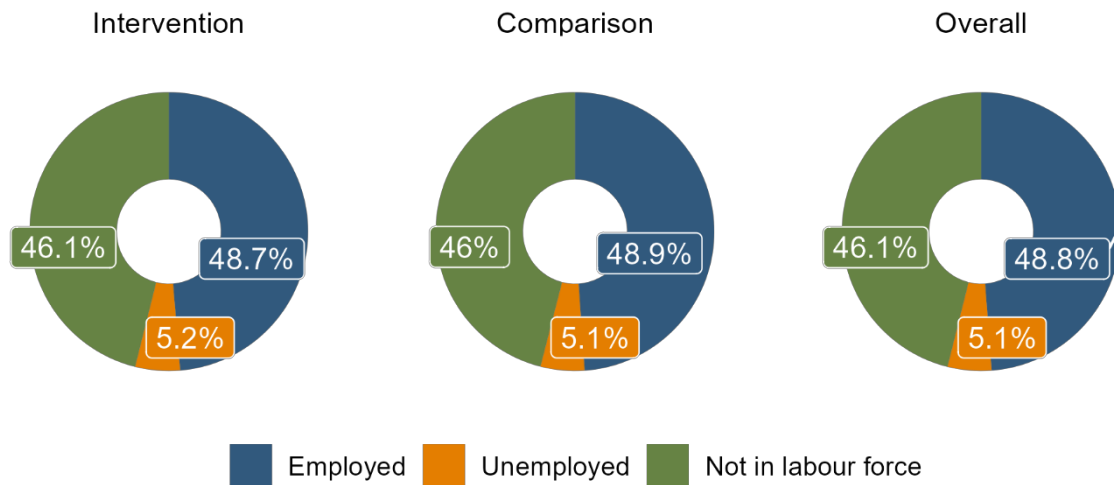
Table 40: Perpetrators of violence

Characteristics	Intimate Partners	Other family members	Teacher	Friends	Seniors	Juniors	Neighbour	Employer	Colleague	Stranger	N
Gender	35.1	10.6	9.6	41.5	11.7	2.1	54.3	1.1	6.4	39.4	94
Boys	33.3	5.1	10.3	46.2	10.3	2.6	53.8	0.0	5.1	33.3	39
Girls	36.4	14.6	9.1	38.2	12.7	1.8	54.5	1.8	7.3	43.6	55
Age	35.1	10.6	9.6	41.5	11.7	2.1	54.3	1.1	6.4	39.4	94
15	37.5	10.4	10.4	37.5	14.6	2.1	50.0	2.1	6.3	45.8	48
16	32.3	5.9	8.8	41.2	8.8	2.9	61.8	0.0	5.9	32.3	34
17	25.0	25.0	12.5	50.0	12.5	0.0	37.5	0.0	12.5	37.5	8
18	50.0	25.0	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	4
Ethnic group	35.1	10.6	9.6	41.5	11.7	2.1	54.3	1.1	6.4	39.4	94
Brahman/Chhetri	36.8	5.3	5.3	31.6	10.5	0.0	31.6	0.0	5.3	31.6	19
Janjati	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.3	14.3	14.3	71.4	0.0	0.0	42.9	7
Madheshi	27.3	22.7	9.1	45.5	13.6	0.0	59.1	0.0	9.1	45.5	22
Dalit	45.5	9.1	13.6	50.0	11.4	2.3	59.1	2.3	6.8	38.6	44
Muslim	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	2
Province	35.1	10.6	9.6	41.5	11.7	2.1	54.3	1.1	6.4	39.4	94
Madhesh	38.3	17.0	14.9	46.8	6.4	0.0	63.8	2.1	10.6	46.8	47
Karnali	17.4	8.7	4.3	47.8	13.0	4.3	65.2	0.0	4.3	43.5	23
Sudurpashchim	45.8	0.0	4.2	25.0	20.8	4.2	25.0	0.0	0.0	20.8	24

Impact indicator 2 - Proportion of the working age population in employment

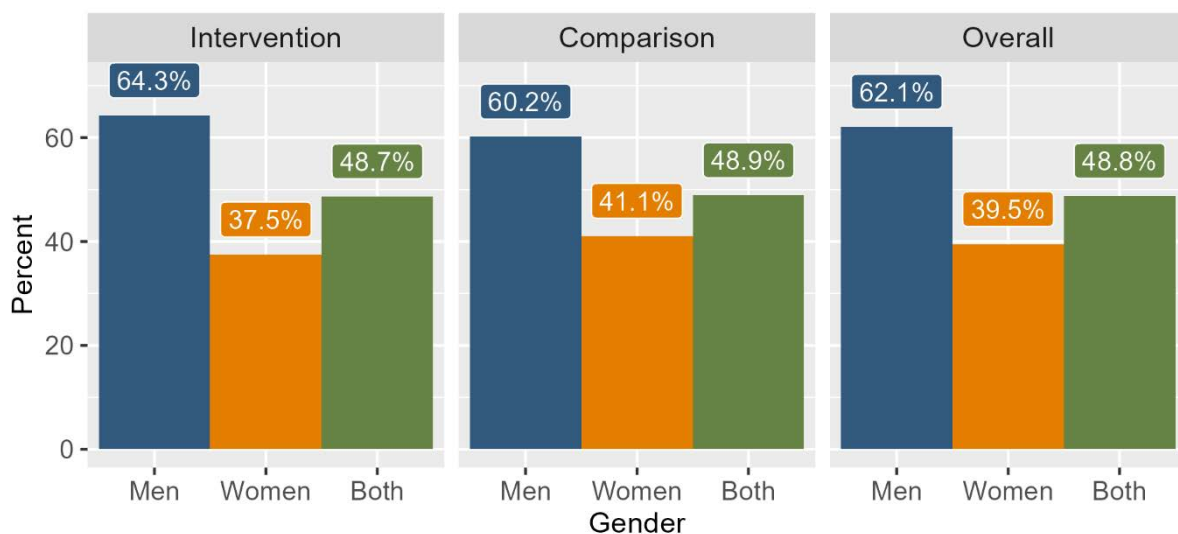
In the targeted programme locations, 48.7% (Overall: 48.8%; Comparison: 48.9%) of the working-age population was currently employed. Meanwhile, 5.2% (Overall: 5.1%; Comparison: 5.1%) of the working-age 1,969 (Total: 3,965; Comparison: 1,996) individuals were unemployed, and 46.0% were not in the labour force. Various factors significantly influenced employment status, including sex, age group, marital status, literacy status, level of education, type of occupation, disability, and income quintile (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Distribution of working age population



Proportion of those employed was lower among women 37.5% (Overall: 39.5%; Comparison: 41.1%) compared to 64.3% (Overall: 62.1%; Comparison: 60.2%) men (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Distribution of currently employed men and women by intervention type



Employment was notably higher among individuals aged 35-44 years, with 65.3% in this age group being employed. Marital status also played a role, with currently married individuals showing a higher employment proportion (53.7%). Literacy and education levels further influenced likelihood of getting employed, as literate individuals had a higher employment proportion at 52.1%, and those with post-secondary education exhibited an even higher proportion (75.6%) (see Table 41).

Table 41: Proportion of the working age population in employment

Characteristics	Intervention			Comparison			Overall		
	Employed (%)	Unemployed (%)	N	Employed (%)	Unemployed (%)	N	Employed (%)	Unemployed (%)	N
Gender									
Men	64.3	4.8	821	60.2	7.1	827	62	6.1	1,648
Women	37.5	5.5	1,148	41.1	3.6	1,169	40	4.5	2,317
Age Group									
15-24	33.1	7.2	533	34.9	3.6	578	34	5.2	1,111
25-34	51.9	7.0	474	54.0	7.4	409	53	7.2	883
35-44	67.1	3.9	375	63.9	6.0	402	65	5.0	777
45-54	59.6	4.2	279	60.1	6.4	289	60	5.4	568
55-64	56.1	3.5	143	52.2	3.0	130	54	3.2	273
65 +	24.0	-	165	28.6	1.6	188	27	0.9	353
Ethnicity									
Brahman/Chhetri	53.0	4.4	687	48.7	5.1	810	50	4.8	1,497
Janjati	52.2	3.9	276	59.7	3.2	189	55	3.7	465
Madheshi	48.4	3.0	473	53.9	2.6	393	51	2.8	866
Dalit	44.7	9.2	461	43.0	7.6	519	44	8.3	980
Muslim	30.1	3.0	72	48.1	-	85	38	1.6	157
Place of Residence									
Urban	45.8	4.9	1,079	52.5	4.5	970	49	4.7	2,049
Rural	55.9	5.9	890	43.3	6.0	1,026	48	6.0	1,916
Province									
Madhesh	49.5	4.3	775	52.5	4.9	731	51	4.6	1,506
Karnali	55.6	7.1	544	47.2	6.2	592	50	6.5	1,136
Sudurpashchim	44.2	5.1	650	47.4	4.1	673	46	4.6	1,323
Marital status									
Never married	32.0	6.2	319	33.3	4.1	321	33	5.1	640
Currently married	53.6	4.8	1,539	53.8	5.5	1,548	54	5.2	3,087
Formerly married	33.9	7.2	111	30.0	2.6	127	32	4.6	238
Education									
No education	42.8	4.7	717	42.1	5.7	752	42	5.2	1,469
Basic (1-8)	52.7	5.6	540	57.6	4.9	548	55	5.2	1,088
Secondary (9-12)	48.6	5.3	639	46.9	4.3	639	48	4.7	1,278
Post secondary	79.5	6.8	73	71.6	7.8	57	76	7.3	130
Disability Indicator									
None	50.9	5.6	1,670	50.2	5.0	1,730	51	5.3	3,400
Mild	41.4	2.0	223	43.4	5.7	192	42	3.8	415
Moderate	30.3	4.3	53	36.2	5.0	62	34	4.7	115
Severe	14.3	8.8	23	22.1	-	12	17	5.7	35

Income quintiles									
Lowest	32.2	10.4	316	35.3	6.3	381	34	7.7	697
Second	47.2	5.5	353	41.3	8.9	375	44	7.3	728
Middle	44.5	8.0	380	53.8	5.3	367	49	6.6	747
Fourth	50.1	3.4	428	53.2	3.1	420	52	3.2	848
Highest	60.2	1.9	492	60.7	2.2	453	61	2.0	945
Total	48.7	5.2	1,969	48.9	5.1	1,996	49	5.1	3,965

Certain groups were more likely to be employed. Those with no disability (50.5%) and those in the highest income quintile (60.5%) were more likely to get employed. These findings showed the significant disparities in employment based on various factors (see Table 41).

Table 42: Number of employees by duration of employment contract (temporary)

Contract duration	Men		Women		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
Daily	7	87.5	1	12.5	8
Less than 6 months	9	81.8	2	18.2	11
6-12 month	27	69.2	12	30.8	39
12 months & above	58	63.7	33	36.3	91
Total	100	67.6	48	32.4	148

The table above indicated that a relatively higher proportion of men are employed under temporary employment contracts. Over 60% of men were working with contract durations of 12 months or more, compared to only 36.3% of women.

Table 43: Percent of people enjoying paid leave

Province	Intervention		Comparison		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Madhesh	34	62.9	16	63.9	50	63.2
Karnali	26	80.9	28	61.1	54	68.5
Sudurpashchim	52	35.7	30	69.7	82	48.9
Total	112	51.5	74	65.4	186	57.5

Out of total 186 employees who worked for a registered organization under written contract and received wage and salaries, 57.5% benefited from paid leave. More employees in Karnali benefitted from paid leave, followed by those in Madhesh. Additionally, a higher percentage of employees in the comparison group (65.4%) enjoyed paid leave compared to the intervention group (51.5%).

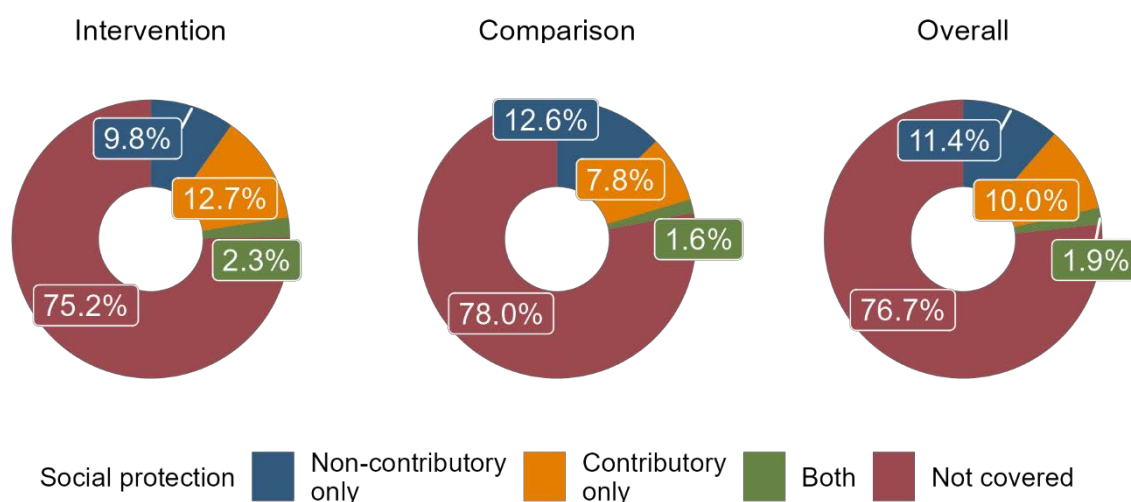
Impact indicator 3

Proportion of population covered by social protection system

Nepal's social protection system encompasses both contributory and non-contributory schemes to provide financial support to vulnerable populations and promote equitable access to essential services. However, this study revealed significant gaps in coverage. Despite the eligibility of the entire survey population for at least one social protection scheme (See Method of computation), only 24.8% (Overall: 23.3%; Comparison: 22.0%) were covered.

Among those covered, 9.8% (Overall: 11.4%; Comparison: 12.6%) were covered from non-contributory schemes, such as GoN's regular social security allowances, while those covered from contributory schemes, including pensions, employee provident funds, social security funds, citizen investment trusts, health insurance, and other insurance schemes, constituted 12.7% (Overall: 10.0%; Comparison: 7.8%). A small proportion 2.3% (Overall: 1.9%; Comparison: 1.6%), benefitted both types of schemes (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: Coverage of social security schemes by types



Coverage by demographics

Overall, the contribution-based social protection schemes were more common among individuals aged 6–59 (11.6%). The likelihood of benefitting from these schemes was strongly associated with occupation type, education level, and household income. Individuals in managerial or technical professional roles had the highest coverage rate (47.3%), while those in unskilled manual labour (8.9%) and agriculture (11.9%) had significantly lower rates. Similarly, individuals with post-secondary education had a higher coverage rate (33.7%) compared to those with no education (5.8%) (see Table 44).

In contrast, non-contributory schemes were most commonly accessed by individuals aged 60 and above (71.9%) and children under five (43.4%). Among the caste/ethnic groups, Dalit had the highest coverage rate (17.7%). Other groups with significant coverage included residents of Karnali province (16.7%), formerly married individuals (82.5%), illiterate individuals (24.7%), those not in labour force (12.3%), and individuals with severe disabilities (60.0%) (see Table 44).

Table 44: Proportion of population covered by social protection systems

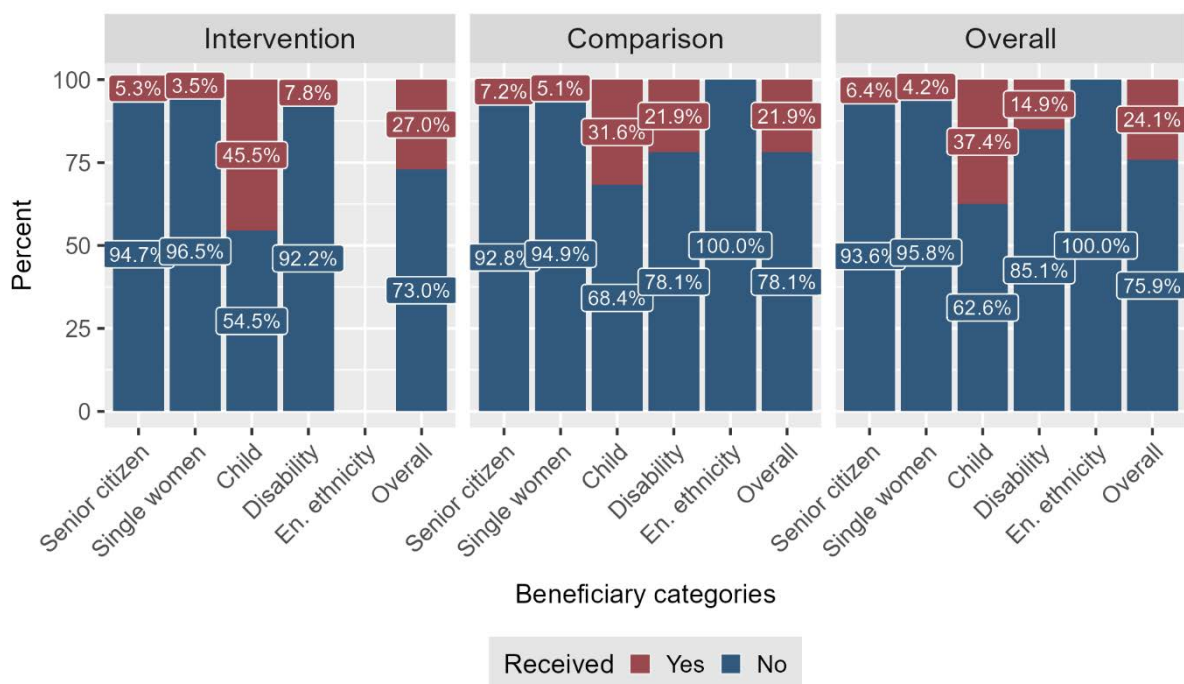
Characteristics	Intervention					Comparison					Overall				
	Non-contri- butory	Contri- butory	Both	Not covered	N	Non-contri- butory	Contri- butory	Both	Not covered	N	Non-contri- butory	Contri- butory	Both	Not covered	N
Gender															
Male	9.7	16.1	2.5	71.7	1,401	14.7	9.5	1.6	74.3	1,431	12.4	12.5	2.0	73.1	2,832
Female	9.9	9.9	2.2	78.0	1,700	10.9	6.4	1.6	81.1	1,710	10.4	8.0	1.8	79.7	3,410
Age															
0-5	28.7	4.1	6.7	60.5	433	46.7	3.8	3.1	46.4	466	38.7	3.9	4.7	52.7	899
6-59	2.1	14.9	0.4	82.6	2,450	1.7	8.7	0.3	89.3	2,437	1.8	11.6	0.4	86.2	4,887
60 +	58.4	5.0	15.0	21.6	218	59.5	6.1	11.2	23.2	238	59.0	5.6	12.9	22.5	456
Ethnicity															
Brahman/Chhetri	10.5	15.5	2.9	71.0	1,031	12.4	9.6	1.6	76.4	1,193	11.7	11.7	2.1	74.5	2,224
Janjati	7.3	13.2	2.8	76.7	398	13.0	8.9	2.3	75.8	273	9.4	11.6	2.6	76.4	671
Madheshi	10.0	9.0	1.1	79.9	768	10.3	10.9	2.4	76.4	650	10.1	9.9	1.7	78.2	1,418
Dalit	11.4	12.7	2.5	73.5	768	14.5	3.8	1.0	80.8	874	13.1	7.7	1.6	77.6	1,642
Muslim	5.7	11.7	1.8	80.8	136	8.9	3.9	-	87.1	151	7.1	8.3	1.0	83.5	287
Place of Residence															
Urban	9.7	13.2	2.0	75.2	1,675	11.0	8.9	1.2	78.9	1,507	10.4	11.0	1.6	77.1	3,182
Rural	10.1	11.6	3.2	75.1	1,426	15.1	6.1	2.2	76.7	1,634	13.1	8.2	2.6	76.1	3,060
Province															
Madhesh	9.3	8.0	1.3	81.4	1,268	12.2	8.1	1.7	78.0	1,215	10.7	8.1	1.5	79.7	2,483
Karnali	10.2	23.1	5.2	61.5	854	15.4	8.3	2.1	74.2	929	13.6	13.5	3.1	69.8	1,783
Sudurpashchim	10.1	11.3	1.7	76.8	979	10.0	7.0	0.9	82.2	997	10.0	9.1	1.3	79.5	1,976
Education															
No education	21.9	6.4	5.0	66.8	1,273	27.9	5.3	3.2	63.6	1,318	25.1	5.8	4.0	65.1	2,591
Basic (1-8)	2.0	13.7	0.6	83.8	1,097	2.7	8.4	0.4	88.5	1,108	2.4	10.8	0.5	86.4	2,205
Secondary (9-12)	0.5	19.8	0.4	79.3	658	1.7	10.0	0.4	87.9	658	1.2	14.4	0.4	84.1	1,316
Post secondary	-	43.6	0.7	55.8	73	-	23.6	1.6	74.8	57	-	33.7	1.1	65.2	130
Employment Status															
Employed	3.8	22.4	1.4	72.4	1,087	5.3	11.8	1.0	81.9	1,080	4.6	16.7	1.2	77.6	2,167
Unemployed	7.3	7.0	-	85.7	104	6.4	5.8	-	87.8	96	6.8	6.4	-	86.8	200
Not in Labour Force	11.0	8.2	2.3	78.5	1,150	9.6	6.1	2.0	82.3	1,200	10.2	7.1	2.1	80.6	2,350
Disability Indicator															
None	4.8	14.4	0.8	80.1	2,411	5.5	8.5	0.5	85.5	2,461	5.2	11.2	0.6	83.0	4,872
Mild	23.4	8.9	5.4	62.2	247	26.0	9.9	8.2	55.8	213	24.7	9.4	6.8	59.1	460
Moderate	37.8	14.7	13.8	33.7	63	32.0	1.3	4.6	62.0	75	34.4	6.7	8.4	50.5	138
Severe	39.5	-	17.0	43.6	25	51.3	3.1	15.6	29.9	12	43.5	1.1	16.5	38.9	37
Income quintiles															
Lowest	10.3	9.6	3.2	77.0	525	13.6	4.5	1.0	80.9	640	12.5	6.2	1.8	79.6	1,165
Second	9.3	10.4	1.7	78.6	590	11.4	5.0	1.6	82.0	620	10.4	7.5	1.6	80.4	1,210
Middle	9.0	9.1	1.4	80.5	616	15.1	7.7	2.8	74.4	575	12.1	8.4	2.1	77.4	1,191

Fourth	10.5	16.4	2.4	70.8	654	13.7	5.6	1.3	79.4	654	12.2	10.7	1.8	75.4	1,308
Highest	10.1	16.2	3.1	70.6	716	9.6	16.1	1.3	72.9	652	9.9	16.2	2.2	71.8	1,368
Total	9.8	12.7	2.3	75.2	3,101	12.6	7.8	1.6	78.0	3,141	11.3	10.0	1.9	76.7	6,242

Coverage of GoN social security allowances

The figure 17 shows the proportion of eligible individuals receiving various GoN social security allowances in both the intervention and comparison groups. Senior citizen and single women allowances were the most widely received benefits in both groups. While a higher proportion of children in the comparison group (68.4%) received the child grant compared to the intervention group (54.5%), a larger percentage of individuals with disabilities in the intervention group (92.2%) were receiving disability allowances than in the compared group (78.1%). No eligible individuals were identified for the Endangered Ethnicity allowance in the intervention group, conversely, all 4 eligible individuals in the comparison group were receiving this allowance.

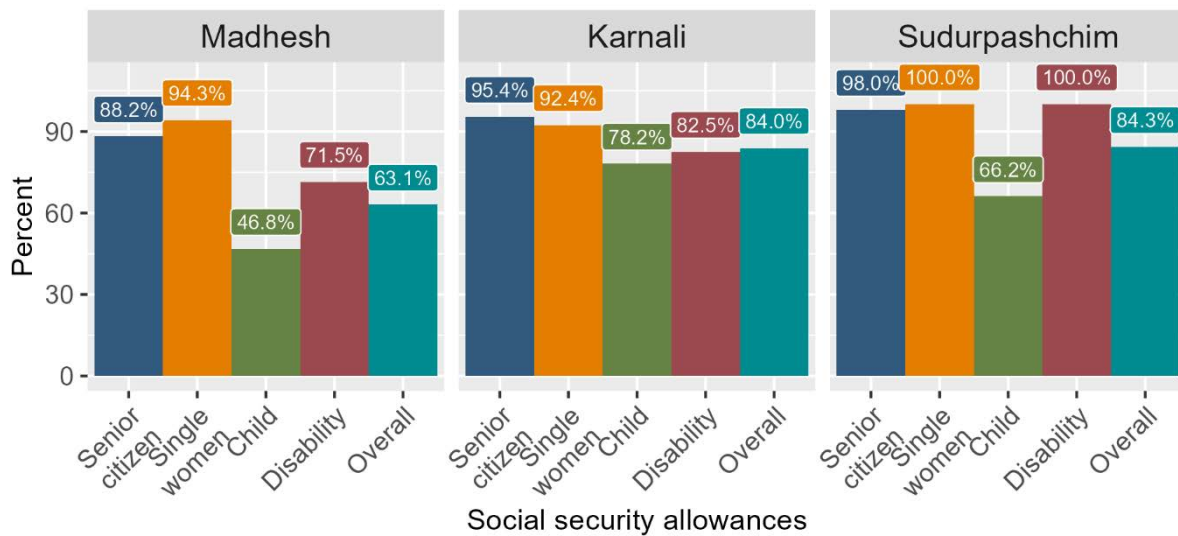
Figure 17: Population covered by different GoN social security allowances



Coverage of GoN social security allowances by province

Figure 18 illustrates the proportion of eligible individuals receiving allowances by province. Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces exhibited the highest coverage of child grants (78.2% and 66.2%, respectively) compared to Madhesh province (46.8%). Disability allowances were also more widely accessed in Karnali (82.5%) and Sudurpashchim (100%) than in Madhesh (71.5%).

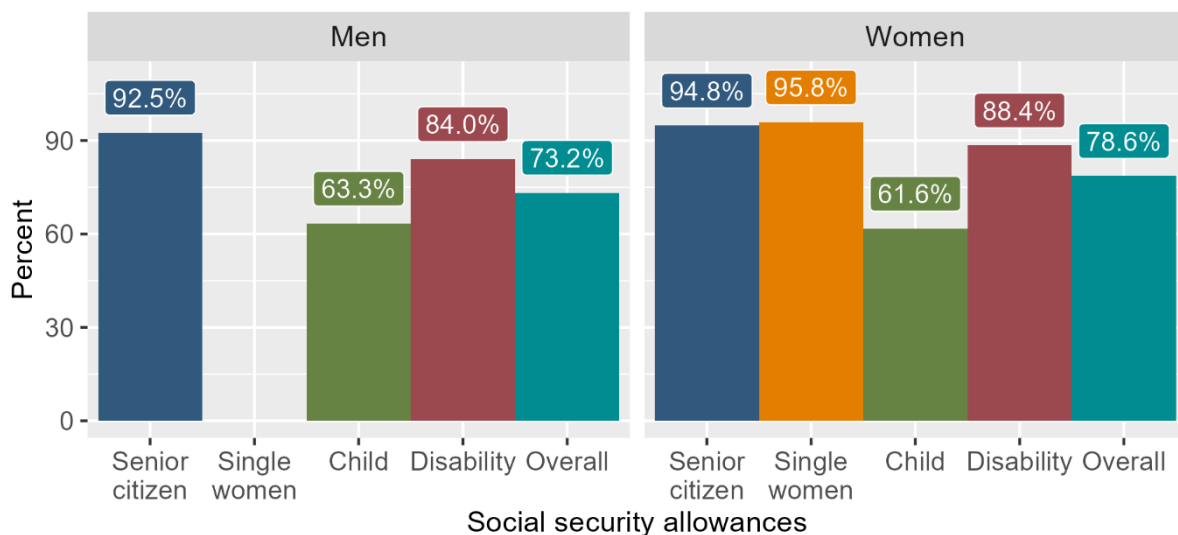
Figure 18: Proportion receiving SSAs by provinces



Coverage of GoN Social Security Allowances by gender

Senior citizen allowances covered 92.5% of eligible men and 94.8% of women. Single women allowances had the highest coverage (95.8%). While child grants were received by nearly equal proportions (see Figure 19).

Figure 19: Proportion of population receiving SSAs by gender



Gaps in Access to Regular GoN Social Security Allowances (SSAs)

Out of 1,079 eligible individuals, 24% were not receiving their allowances. The proportion was higher in target programme areas (27%) compared to comparison areas (21.9%). Coverage gaps were influenced by age, caste/ethnicity, and province. Children under five (37.3%), individuals from the Madhesi ethnic group (32.8%), and residents of Madhesh province (36.9%) were least likely to receive their allowances (see Table 45).

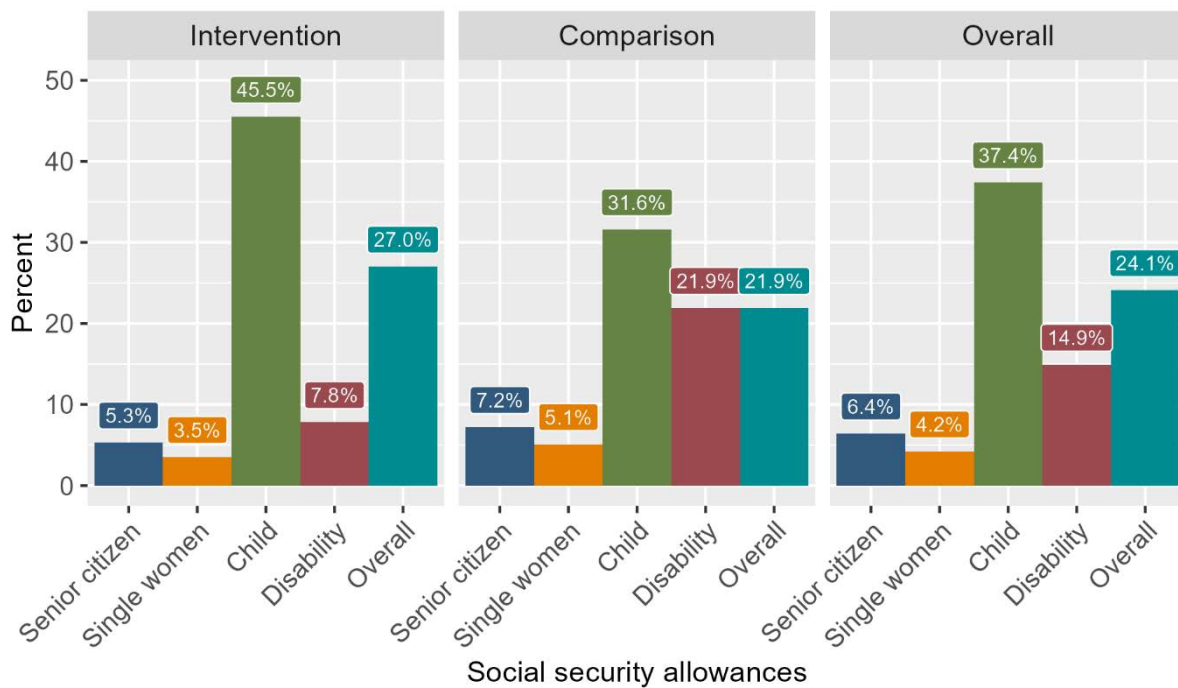
Table 45: Proportion of population covered by GON social protection allowances

Characteristics	Social Protection			Eligible People		
	Covered	Not Covered	Sample size	Not Receiving SSA	Receiving SSA	Sample size
Gender						
Male	85.6	14.4	2,832	26.8	73.2	533
Female	87.7	12.3	3,410	21.4	78.6	546
Age						
0-5	56.6	43.4	899	37.3	62.7	629
6-59	97.8	2.2	4,887	7	93	101
60 +	28.1	71.9	456	7	93	349
Caste/Ethnicity						
Brahman/Chhetri	86.2	13.8	2,224	12.6	87.4	342
Janjati	88	12	671	8.6	91.4	90
Madheshi	88.1	11.9	1,418	32.8	67.2	237
Dalit	85.3	14.7	1,642	32.6	67.4	365
Muslim	91.9	8.1	287	37.5	62.5	45
Place of Residence						
Urban	88.1	11.9	3,182	26.1	73.9	553
Rural	84.3	15.7	3,060	21.2	78.8	526
Province						
Madhesh	87.8	12.2	2,483	36.9	63.1	465
Karnali	83.3	16.7	1,783	16	84	357
Sudurpashchim	88.7	11.3	1,976	15.7	84.3	257
Type of Intervention						
Comparison	85.8	14.2	3,141	21.9	78.1	567
Intervention	87.9	12.1	3,101	27	73	512
Marital status						
Never married	98.3	1.7	1,384	0	100	17
Currently married	93.3	6.7	3,095	10	90	226
Formerly married	17.5	82.5	238	4.6	95.4	206
Total	90.8	9.2	4,717	7	93	449
Literacy Status						
Literate	97.1	2.9	3,842	13.2	86.8	118
Illiterate	75.3	24.7	1,665	11.7	88.3	447
Total	90.7	9.3	5,507	12	88	565
Education						
No education	70.8	29.2	2,591	25.2	74.8	988
Basic (1-8)	97.1	2.9	2,205	16.5	83.5	70
Secondary (9-12)	98.5	1.5	1,316	4.8	95.2	19
Post secondary	98.9	1.1	130	0	100	2
Employment Status						

Employed	94.2	5.8	2,167	10.7	89.3	134
Unemployed	93.2	6.8	200	4.2	95.8	13
Not in Labour Force	87.6	12.4	2,350	5.6	94.4	302
Total	90.8	9.2	4,717	7	93	449
Occupation						
Professional/technical/managerial	96.9	3.1	126	0	100	4
Clerical	97.9	2.1	70	0	100	2
Sales and Services	93.9	6.1	258	7.1	92.9	14
Skilled Manual	97.1	2.9	337	14.8	85.2	10
Unskilled Manual	97	3	254	17.1	82.9	9
Agriculture	92.1	7.9	1,122	10.9	89.1	95
Total	94.2	5.8	2,167	10.7	89.3	134
Disability Indicator						
None	94.2	5.8	4,872	13.4	86.6	327
Mild	68.5	31.5	460	7.7	92.3	150
Moderate	57.3	42.7	138	16.3	83.7	63
Severe	40	60	37	8.8	91.2	25
Total	90.7	9.3	5,507	12	88	565
Income quintiles						
Lowest	85.8	14.2	1,165	24.7	75.3	222
Second	87.9	12.1	1,210	29.2	70.8	204
Middle	85.8	14.2	1,191	21.8	78.2	211
Fourth	86	14	1,308	19.7	80.3	223
Highest	87.9	12.1	1,368	25.4	74.6	219
Total	86.7	13.3	6,242	24.1	75.9	1,079

Overall, the study revealed that child grants had the highest non-receipt rate (37.4%), followed by disability allowances (14.9%) and senior citizen allowances (6.4%). Single women allowances had the lowest non-receipt rate, at 4.2% (see Figure 20).

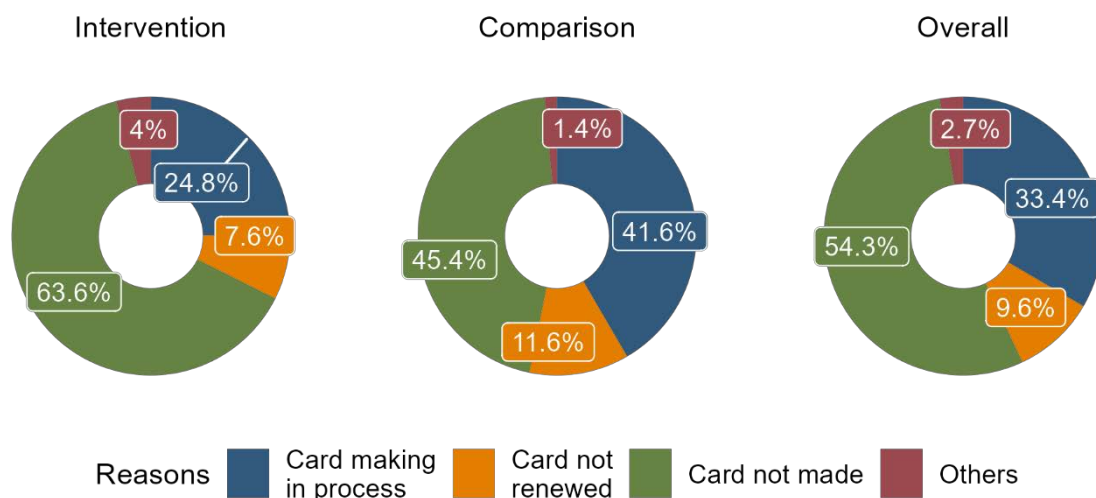
Figure 20: Proportion of population not receiving SSA in intervention and comparison groups



Barriers to access GoN social security allowances

Several barriers hindered eligible individuals from accessing social security allowances. The most significant obstacle was delays in card issuance, affecting (54.2%) of those not receiving allowances. Other issues included ongoing card processing (33.4%), card non-renewal (9.6%), and lack of a citizenship certificate (0.9%). These administrative hurdles highlight the urgent need for expedited and streamlined processes to ensure timely access to social security allowances.

Figure 21: Reasons for not receiving social security allowances



It is noteworthy that individuals eligible for disability allowances (63.6%) and senior citizen's allowances (81.8%) were more likely to experience delays due to the card-making process. Conversely, those eligible for single women's allowances (64.4%) and child grants (27%) were more often affected by issues related to card issuance (See Table 46).

Table 46: Reasons for not receiving SSA

	Card making in process	Card not renewed	Card not made	Unwillingness to make card	No citizenship card	Total	Sample size
Gender							
Male	32.9	9.2	55.5	2	0	100	151
Female	34.2	10.2	52.7	1.5	2	100	130
Total	33.4	9.6	54.2	1.8	1	100	281
Age							
0-5	27.5	11	59.1	1.3	1	100	253
6-59	42	0	58	0	-	100	9
60 +	85.4	0	7.8	6.8	-	100	19
Total	33.4	9.6	54.2	1.8	1	100	281
Eligible for regular GoN SSA							
Senior Citizen's Allowance	81.8	0	9.7	8.5	-	100	16
Single Women Allowance	64.4	0	35.6	0	-	100	3
Child grant	27.5	11	59.1	1.3	1	100	253
Disability Allowance	63.6	0	36.4	0	-	100	9
Caste/Ethnicity							
Brahman/Chhetri	42.8	7.1	46	4.1	-	100	52
Janjati	71.4	8.3	20.2	0	-	100	9
Madheshi	40.6	19.1	37.8	2.5	-	100	80
Dalit	24.4	5.2	67.6	1	2	100	121
Muslim	29	15.4	55.7	0	-	100	19
Total	33.4	9.6	54.2	1.8	1	100	281
Place of Residence							
Urban	30.8	9.2	57.2	1.8	1	100	169
Rural	38.2	10.4	48.9	1.8	1	100	112
Province							
Madhesh	34.4	11.3	52.4	1.9	-	100	170
Karnali	41	9.5	49.5	0	-	100	62
Sudurpashchim	20.4	4	66.7	3.8	5	100	49
Type of Intervention							
Comparison	41.6	11.6	45.4	0.9	1	100	136
Intervention	24.8	7.6	63.6	2.7	1	100	145
Total	33.4	9.6	54.2	1.8	1	100	281
Marital status							
Currently married	75.6	0	17	7.4	-	100	21
Formerly married	72.7	0	27.3	0	-	100	7

Literacy Status							
Literate	44.4	25.9	29.7	0	-	100	19
Illiterate	33.5	36.8	26.5	3.2	-	100	57
Education							
No education	32.2	9.2	55.8	1.9	1	100	266
Basic (1-8)	52.5	19.5	28.1	0	-	100	14
Secondary (9-12)	100	0	0	0	-	100	1
Employment Status							
Employed	66.4	0	21.7	11.9	-	100	12
Unemployed	100	0	0	0	-	100	1
Not in Labour Force	80.4	0	19.6	0	-	100	15
Income quintiles							
Lowest	39.3	7.4	53.3	0	-	100	61
Second	40.4	8.5	49.1	2.1	-	100	60
Middle	30	11.3	53.5	0	5	100	54
Fourth	18.9	14.6	66.5	0	-	100	51
Highest	34.3	7.8	51.9	6	-	100	55
Total	33.4	9.6	54.2	1.8	1	100	281

Coverage of Social Protection for the Under-18 Population

Table 47 shows the coverage of various social protection programme targeted to children under 18. The mid-day meal programme was most prevalent in Sudurpashchim and Karnali provinces, benefiting 23.0% and 20.1% of children, respectively. A higher proportion of children in Karnali (12.4%) received scholarships, followed by Madhesh (4.1%). The Beti Bachau Beti Padhau programme was exclusively implemented in Madhesh province, covering 0.7% of eligible girls under five. Bank Khata Chhoriko Surakshya Jeevan Bhariko programme was available only in Karnali, with a coverage of 11.6%.

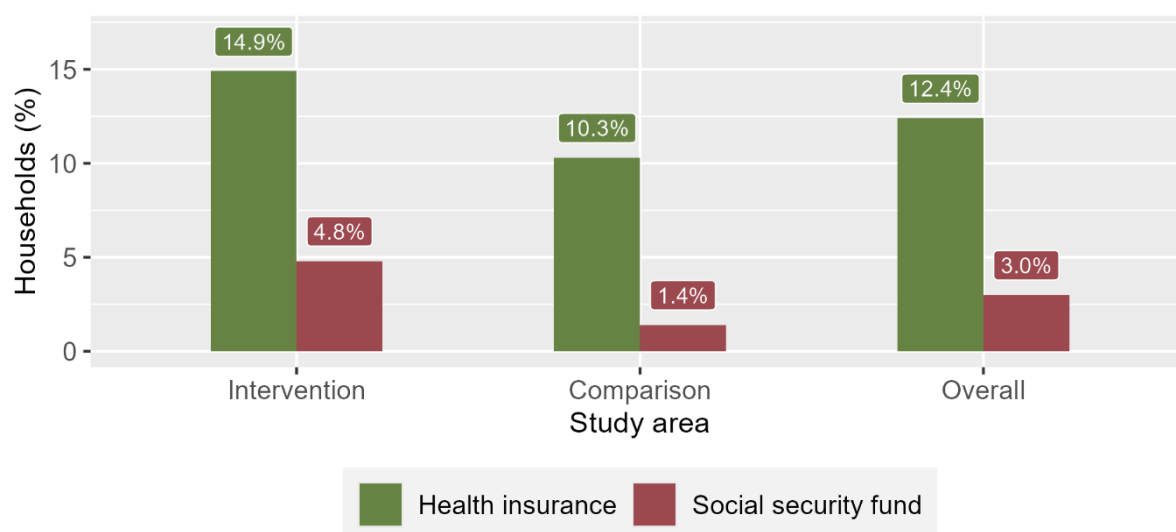
Table 47: Proportion of under 18 population covered by social protection systems

Background Characteristics	Madhesh	Karnali	Sudurpashchim	Total
Number of children (3-17 years)	774	657	701	2,132
Scholarship (%)	4.1	12.4	3.4	6.4
Mid-day meal (%)	18.7	20.1	23.0	20.5
Number of children (0-5 years)	366	283	244	893
Beti Bachau-Beti Padhau (%)	0.7	-	-	0.3
Bank Khata Chhoriko Surakshya Jeevan Bhariko (%)	-	11.6	-	3.7

Coverage of Contributory Social Protection Schemes: Health Insurance and Social Security Fund

Out of 1,280 households, more than four times as many were covered by a health insurance programme compared to the social security fund. In the intervention area, a slightly higher proportion of households were covered by both health insurance and the social security fund compared to those in the comparison area.

Figure 22: Percentage of households covered by health insurance and social security fund



Coverage of Contributory Social Protection Schemes: Prime Minister's Employment Programme

Out of 3,159 people who are not regular employee, only 2.8% are benefitted from the PMEP. In comparison area, slightly higher people who are not regular employee received employment opportunities from PMEP.

Table 48: Percentage of people aged 18-59 years who are not regular employee benefitted by PM Employment program

Type of Intervention	Total persons who are not regular employee	Benefitted from PMEP	Percentage of people benefitted from PMEP
Comparison	1,708	71	4.2
Intervention	1,450	16	1.1
Total	3,159	87	2.8

The majority of people received employment opportunities lasting up to one to two months followed by those lasting up to one month. Very few people received employment opportunities of more than two months.

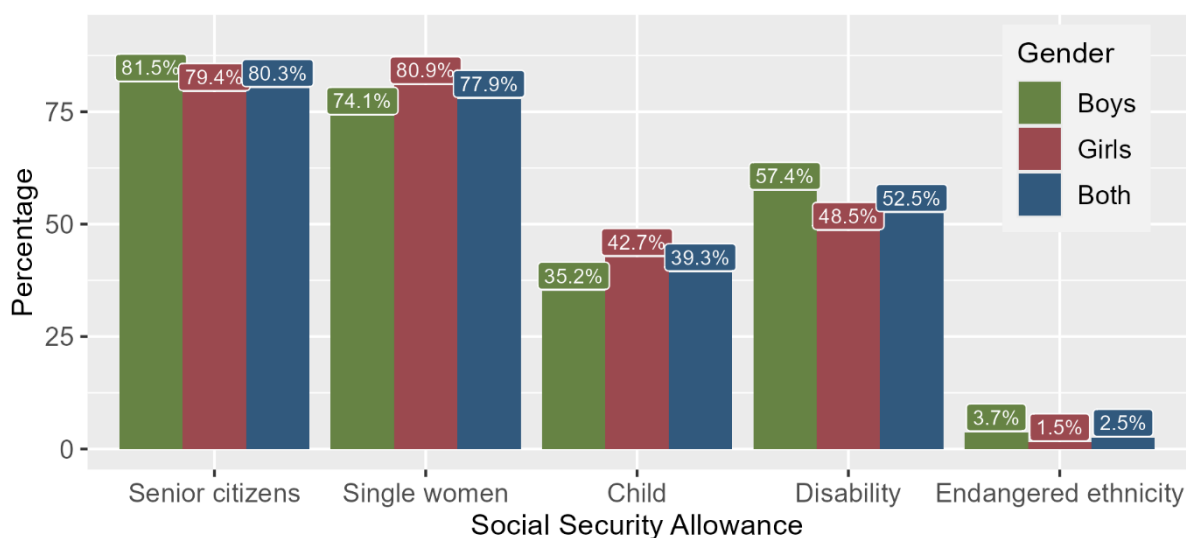
Table 49: Percentage of people benefitted by PM Employment program

Number of months	Number of persons	
	Comparison	Intervention
Total	71	16
<1 month	21	1
1-2 months	41	8
2-3 months	3	2
≥ 3 months	6	6

Awareness of adolescents on social protection measures among adolescents

The adolescent survey shows variation on awareness of social protection measures across different demographic groups. Overall, awareness was highest for the Senior Citizen's Allowance (80.3%) and lowest for the Endangered Ethnicity Allowance (2.5%). Awareness tended to be higher among girls, younger age groups, and those without disabilities.

Figure 23: Adolescent's Knowledge on GoN social security allowance



Adolescents from Madhesh province showed the highest awareness for several schemes, including the Senior Citizen's Allowance and the Single Women Allowance. Conversely, Karnali had the lowest awareness levels overall. Janajati adolescents had higher awareness compared to other ethnic and religious groups. School attendance significantly impacted knowledge, with school-going adolescents showing higher awareness across most schemes, while those working while studying often had lower awareness.

Impact indicator 4

Proportion of positions held by women in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures (federal, provincial, and local), and (b) judiciary, (c) civil service

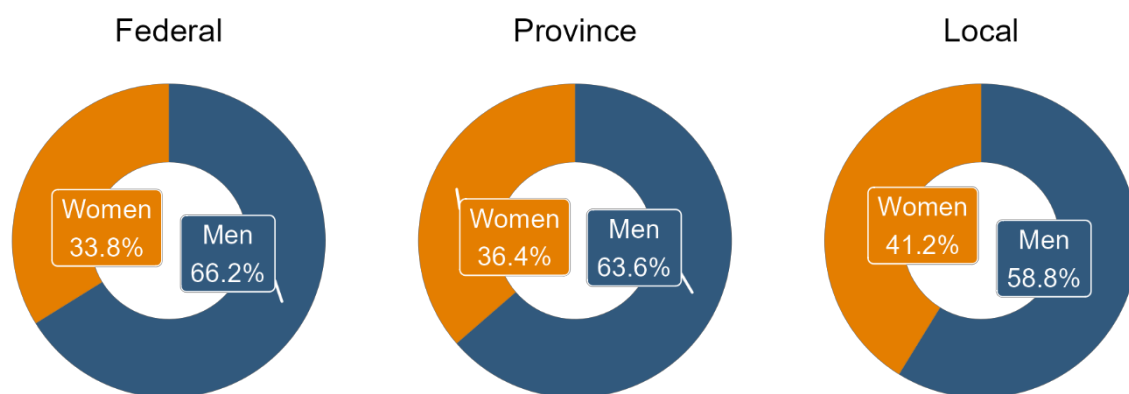
The current levels of women representation across legislatures, civil service, and the judiciary reflect progress but also highlight challenges. While women hold a significant proportion of local legislative positions and show better representation in certain sectors of the civil service, their representation decreases at higher levels of government and in the judiciary. The impact on GEWE is twofold: although there are advances in some areas, the gaps in higher decision-making bodies and key sectors limit the potential for achieving GEWE.

It is crucial to address these representation gaps by promoting more inclusive policies, ensuring equitable opportunities across all sectors, and improving the support and capacity-building for women representatives and employees. Ensuring that women are not only present but also influential and effective in their roles will be key to driving meaningful progress in GEWE.

Proportion of positions held by women in the legislatures

Women hold 33.8% of the 334 seats in the national legislature. Representation decreases slightly at the provincial level, where women hold 36.4% of the 550 seats in provincial assemblies. At the local level, women hold 41.2% of the 35,097 elected positions, demonstrating stronger representation at the grassroots level. (see Figure 25 and Table 53).

Figure 24: Proportion of women representation at local level



Federal level legislature

At the federal level, women held 33.8% of the 334 seats in the national legislature. This included 5.5% of seats under the FPTP system and 74.5% under the proportional representation system. In the National Assembly, women occupied 37.3% of seats. These figures highlight a significant reliance on the proportional representation system to ensure women's participation in the federal legislature. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 mandates that at least one-third of the members elected from each political party in federal and provincial parliaments must be women, which has been instrumental in increasing women's representation. However, the lower representation in the FPTP system indicates ongoing challenges in achieving gender parity through direct elections (see Table 50).

Table 50: Proportion of positions held by women in the Federal Level, 2022

Federal level	Position held in the legislature				
	Men	%	Women	%	Total
First past the post	156	94.5	9	5.5	165
Proportional system	28	25.5	82	74.5	110
National Assembly	37	62.7	22	37.3	59
Total	221	66.2	113	33.8	334

Source: House of Representatives and National Assembly Election 2022, Election Commission, Nepal

Provincial Assemblies

In the provincial assemblies, women held 36.4% of the 550 seats. Representation varied by province, with the highest in Lumbini (37.9%) and Madhesh (37.4%). Women were significantly more represented through the proportional representation system (84.5%) compared to the FPTP system (4.2%). For instance, in Lumbini, women held 91.4% of the

proportional representation seats but only 1.9% of the FPTP seats. This disparity underscores the importance of proportional representation in enhancing women's political participation at the provincial level. Despite these gains, the overall lower representation in the FPTP system highlights the need for continued efforts to support women candidates in direct elections (see Table 51).

Table 51: Proportion of positions held by women in the Provincial Assembly, 2022

Level	Position held in the legislature				
	Men	%	Women	%	Total
Koshi	60	64.5	33	35.5	93
First past the post	54	96.4	2	3.6	56
Proportional	6	16.2	31	83.8	37
Madhesh	67	62.6	40	37.4	107
First past the post	60	93.8	4	6.3	64
Proportional	7	16.3	36	83.7	43
Bagmati	70	63.6	40	36.4	110
First past the post	61	92.4	5	7.6	66
Proportional	9	20.5	35	79.5	44
Gandaki	39	65.0	21	35.0	60
First past the post	34	94.4	2	5.6	36
Proportional	5	20.8	19	79.2	24
Lumbini	54	62.1	33	37.9	87
First past the post	51	98.1	1	1.9	52
Proportional	3	8.6	32	91.4	35
Karnali	25	62.5	15	37.5	40
First past the post	24	100.0	-	-	24
Proportional	1	6.3	15	93.8	16
Sudurpashchim	35	66.0	18	34.0	53
First past the post	32	100.0	-	-	32
Proportional	3	14.3	18	85.7	21
Total	350	63.6	200	36.4	550
First past the post	316	95.8	14	4.2	330
Proportional	34	15.5	186	84.5	220

Source: Provincial Assembly Election 2022, Election Commission, Nepal

Local level

In the 2022 local elections, 35,097 representatives were elected across Nepal, filling nearly all of the 35,221 available positions. However, 124 positions remained vacant, including 123 designated for Dalit women members and one for a female ward member.

Women held 41.2% of the 35,097 elected positions. Representation was relatively consistent across provinces, ranging from 40.9% in Koshi to 41.1% in Karnali. This significant grassroots representation is largely due to mandatory provisions for female ward members and female Dalit ward members in each ward, which account for 38.3% of total positions. The strong presence of women is a positive indicator of progress towards gender equality in governance.

However, ensuring that these women are not only present but also influential and effective in their roles remains a critical challenge. Continued support and capacity-building for women representatives are essential to drive meaningful progress in GEWE at all levels of government.

Table 52: Proportion of positions held by women in the Local Level, 2022

Province	# Local levels	Position held in the Local Level				
		Men	%	Women	%	Total
Koshi	137	3,575	59.1	2,478	40.9	6,053
Madhesh	136	3,851	58.2	2,770	41.8	6,621
Bagmati	119	3,450	59.4	2,356	40.6	5,806
Gandaki	85	2,314	58.8	1,623	41.2	3,937
Lumbini	109	3,002	58.5	2,131	41.5	5,133
Karnali	79	2,184	58.9	1,527	41.1	3,711
Sudurpashchim	88	2,256	58.8	1,580	41.2	3,836
Total	753	20,632	58.8	14,465	41.2	35,097

Source: Local Level Election 2022, Election Commission, Nepal

Proportion of positions held by women in civil service

Women were underrepresented in the civil service, holding only 28.2% of the 85,540 positions. Their representation was particularly low in certain sectors: 7.9% in constitutional services, 12.9% in forestry, 14.2% in economic planning and statistics, 15.8% in engineering, 17.6% in general administration, and 19.3% in auditing. However, the health service sector showed near gender parity, with women making up 49.6% of the workforce. (see Figure 25)

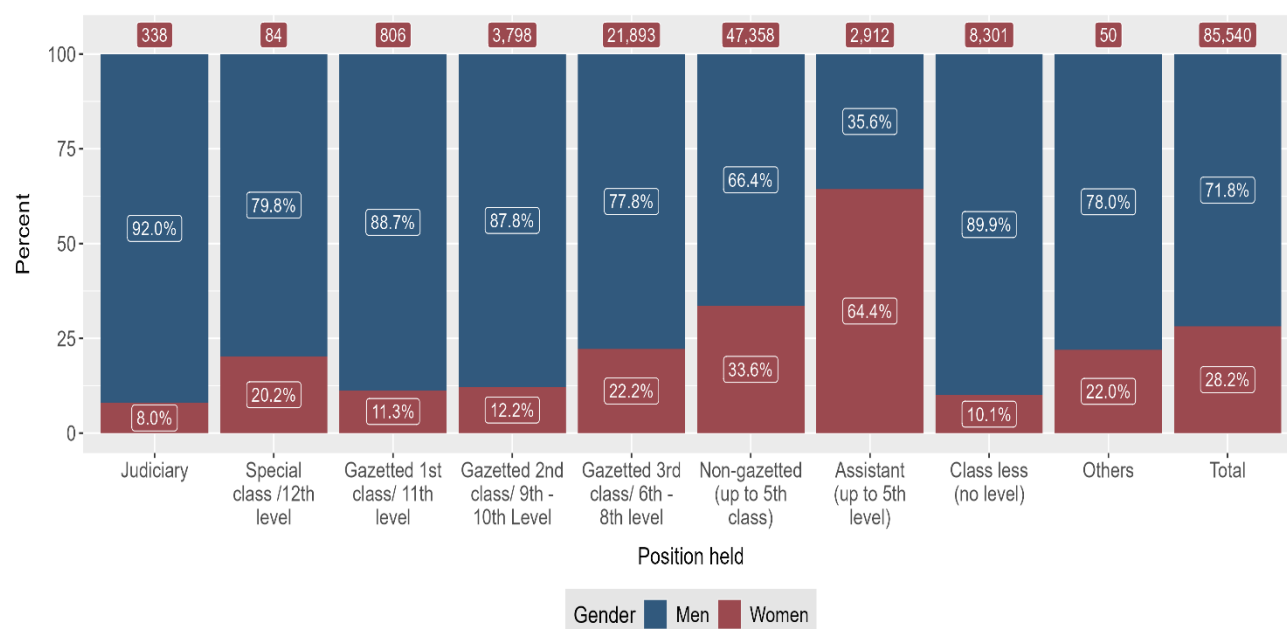


Figure 25: Proportion of positions held by women in the civil service, 2022/23

Source: Annual Report, FY 2022/23, Rastriya Kitabkhana, MOFAGA

Proportion of positions held by women in judiciary

Women held only 8.0%% of the 338 positions in the judiciary. This included just two women at the Supreme Court, none at the appeal court, 18 at the high court, seven at the district court, and no representation at the registrar level.

Even though legal frameworks have dedicated separate quotas for women in decision making roles, their meaningful representation remains uncertain. For example, while women were included as members in user committees within a local government, none of these committees were led by women, and decision-making was predominantly influenced by men members. Effective representation is often hindered by a lack of understanding of their roles, duties, and functions. Observers noted that women elected representatives frequently lacked knowledge about their responsibilities and exhibited limited participation.

Table 53: Proportion of positions held by women in the Judiciary, 2022/23

Court	Position in the Judiciary				
	Men	%	Female	%	Total
Judge, Supreme Court	18	90.0	2	10.0	20
Additional Judge, Appellate Court	1	100.0	-	-	1
Judge, Appellate Court	5	100.0	-	-	5
Judge, High Court	68	79.1	18	20.9	86
Judge, District Court	219	96.9	7	3.1	226
Total	311	92.0	27	8.0	338

Source: Annual Report, FY 2022/23, Rastriya Kitabkhana, MOFAGA

6 Conclusion

The programme focuses on promoting equal rights and opportunities for both women and men by engaging government, private sector, communities, families, adolescents, and men and boys to foster gender-equitable attitudes, norms, and behaviours. The programme's Theory of Change emphasizes three interconnected objectives to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in Nepal:

1. Women and girls, in all their diversity, are safe, valued, and empowered to challenge harmful social norms.
2. Women, men, girls, and boys fully enjoy and exercise equal economic, labour, and social rights.
3. Institutions deliver gender equality outcomes in line with international and national frameworks.

These objectives aim to transform the underlying drivers of gender inequality and promote the human rights of all Nepali women and girls.

The baseline evaluation for the programme has established key benchmark indicators aligned with the programme's logical framework. These indicators will serve as reference points for the endline evaluation, enabling a robust assessment of the programme's impact on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Data collection involved household surveys engaging 1,280 households from both intervention and comparison groups, an adolescent survey, a CSO survey, FGDs, KIIs and secondary data from the government and service providers. The evaluation found no significant differences between the intervention and comparison groups at this stage, thus baseline values have been clearly defined for 12 key indicators. These values, based on both programme targets and government benchmarks, will allow future comparison and analysis of progress made.

This study also highlighted similarities and differences within the target populations that could influence the programme's outcomes. While some baseline values differed from government targets and the 16th development plan, these findings will provide valuable insight for future monitoring, ensuring the programme's effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, and sustainability. The evidence gathered will be instrumental for provincial and local governments in measuring change and guiding the programme's continued implementation.

The baseline evaluation of household and demographic features revealed significant disparities in housing conditions, energy use, water access, and sanitation. Urban and higher-income households generally experience better conditions compared to their rural and lower-income counterparts. Data collection was conducted using both men's and women's module across 1,280 households, capturing gender perspectives separately.

Outcome 1.1 indicators aimed to measure shifts in gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours among men, boys, families, and communities, as well as support for social and gender norms that promote GEWE. Additionally, they assessed the level of agency and voice among women and girls. Findings revealed a difference in perception between men and women regarding responsibility for unpaid care and household chores. While both genders largely agreed that

women should bear the responsibility for these tasks, adolescents believed that both boys and girls should share the work equally. A complementary 24-hour activity module showed that in comparison to men, women spent over 7.3 hours per day doing unpaid and household chores (Intervention: 7.0 hour; Comparison: 7.5 hour). This highlights the strong influence of traditional social and gender norms on the division of domestic responsibilities and highlights the disproportionate burden to women. To address this imbalance, the programme should focus on reducing the workload for women and girls by positively shifting mindsets across genders and ages, encouraging women to engage more in activities outside of domestic and care work, and advocating for gender and care policies that support the desired change.

For Outcome 1.2, the data revealed that 21.3% of men (Intervention: 22.7%; Comparison: 20.1%) and 23.8% (same figure for intervention and comparison) of women accepted physical violence under specific circumstances, such as when a wife leaves the house without informing her husband, burns food, neglects childcare, or refuses sexual intercourse. While the adolescent did not condone wife beating, they acknowledged its occurrence in their community. The belief that a husband has the right to abuse his wife reflects deeply rooted patriarchal values, a view upheld not only by the abuser but also by the survivor and the broader community. As this mindset is strongly seen among families residing in Madesh Province, Muslim communities and the ones who are residing in rural areas, the programme should particularly focus on these groups.

Outcome 1.3 assessed the extent to which women's and girls' right organizations can operate undeterred. Data from online survey among the CSOs indicted that these organizations and rights defenders can largely operate freely to a greater extent to drive changes within communities and influence government policy. However, some reported facing challenges to a varying degree, especially around GBV issues, including difficulties in registering GBV and untouchability complaints, and mobilising local government support, and securing their commitment to implementing gender policies.

Outcome 2.1 revealed significant income disparities, with an average annual income of NPR 210,480 dropping to NPR 134,395 (Intervention: 155,727; Comparison: 116,071) when excluding remittances and social security allowances, underscoring the critical role these sources play in household finances and the prevalence of low income from wages, salaries, and rents within the community. Men-headed and urban households reported higher incomes than women-headed and rural households, with education level strongly correlated with income, especially beyond secondary education. To address these disparities, the programme should focus on economic initiatives that boost income for women and rural households by promoting equitable opportunities, improving access to education and skills training, and encouraging sustainable income generation to lessen reliance on remittances and allowances.

Outcome 2.2 indicators showed that a total of 130 individuals (Intervention: 64; Comparison: 66) from 70 households out of 1280 households were either starting or expanding their economic units such as vegetable farming, small shops, horticulture farming, or cottage industries. The key barriers to greater involvement in initiating and expanding economic units were limited awareness and access to financial services. The majority of the individuals were self-employed. The programme should concentrate on enhancing these areas to facilitate a holistic approach that addresses these critical factors to support sustainable economic startup or expansion for women.

Outcome 2.3 focused on individuals benefiting from essential services, including multi-sectoral GBV services and social protection measures. Among the 1,280 women surveyed, 339 reported experiencing physical or sexual violence from intimate partners in the past year. However, only 22 survivors accessed formal GBV services, such as medical care,

psychosocial counselling, safe homes, legal assistance, or rehabilitation. The remaining 63 women sought informal support from family and community members, highlighting a critical need to expand access to comprehensive formal GBV services. This situation suggests that survivors and their communities may either be unaware of available support or fearful of reporting incidents. For this indicator, OCMC services were used as a proxy for essential services. According to OCMC records from the nine centres supported by the program, there have been a total of 2,770 new service usages. To increase the service uptake of GBV survivors, the program should focus on collaborating with families and communities to provide comprehensive support to survivors. Additionally, work alongside essential service providers like OCMC, Safe House, Child Helplines, to improve the quality of their services by equipping staff, enhancing their capacity, and ensuring geographical accessibility.

Outcome 3.1 mapped the GEWE laws and policies at the local, provincial, and federal levels. Provinces such as Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpashchim have made efforts to advance GEWE through the adoption and amendment of laws and policies, although challenges still persist. On average, local governments in these provinces have enacted 15 laws, with 12 approved and 11 currently being implemented. These frameworks reflect provincial initiatives and show a similar trend of recent developments and early implementation stages. EWPN plans to provide intensive support for the adoption, amendment, and implementation of at least 117 policies across all three tiers of government. The recent establishment of these legal frameworks and their initial implementation stages indicate that while progress has been made, the full impact on GEWE has yet to be realised. Therefore, the programme must assist all levels of government in amending and effectively implementing the relevant laws and policies.

Outcome 3.2 assessed the level and quality of influence of Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on the formulation of laws and policies at all three levels of the government. Fifty percent of surveyed CSOs reported that they have actively contributed to the formulation and implementation of GESI policies and guidelines. However, despite these efforts, organizations encountered significant challenges in collaborating with elected representatives and influencing policy decisions. They are often excluded from the annual work plan and budget processes, which restricts their ability to provide input during the drafting and revision of policies. Although many organizations submitted recommendations for law formulation, these suggestions were rarely acted upon. Therefore, the program needs to enhance collaboration between WROs, CSOs, and elected officials, ensuring that these organizations are included in policy-making processes and that their recommendations are taken seriously to strengthen the impact of GESI initiatives.

Impact indicators

Data collection for impact indicators was done to measure whether women and girls in the targeted project locations would enjoy their human rights and potentially free themselves from violence and discrimination. The baseline findings show that nearly 19% of ever-partnered women and girls in targeted project locations have experienced Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in the past year, with substantial occurrences of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Women and men in targeted project locations still believe that domestic violence can be justified under certain circumstances, reflecting deeply ingrained social attitudes influenced by ethnicity and literacy levels.

Regarding employment, disparities persist, particularly affecting women, those with disabilities, and lower-income groups. In the targeted programme locations, 48.8% (Intervention: 48.7%; Comparison: 48.9%) of the working-age population is currently employed but the proportion of those employed is lower among women at 39.5% (Intervention:

37.5%; Comparison: 41.1%) compared to 62.1% (Intervention: 64.3%; Comparison: 60.2%) for men.

Social protection coverage is relatively high, with 2.0 percent of individuals participating in both contributory and non-contributory schemes. However, only 13.2% (Intervention: 12.1%; Comparison: 14.2%) of the 6,242 individuals eligible for non-contributory social protection are covered. Most recipients receive senior citizen and single women's allowances, while 62.6% (Intervention: 54.5%; Comparison: 68.3%) of children receive child grants, and a significant 92.2% of people with disabilities receive disability allowances. Among those not receiving their eligible allowances, common reasons include not initiated application/card, ongoing card processing, unexpired cards, unwillingness to obtain a card, and lack of a citizenship certificate. Notably, delays in the card-making process affect 14.9% (Intervention: 7.8%; Comparison: 21.9%) of individuals eligible for disability allowances and 6.4% of those eligible for senior citizen allowances (Intervention: 5.3%; Comparison: 7.2%), while issues related to card issuance impact 4.2% of single women's allowance recipients (Intervention: 3.5%; Comparison: 5.1%) and 37.4% of child grant recipients (Intervention: 45.5%; Comparison: 31.6%). For non-contributory social protection, the extent of coverage is significantly influenced by factors such as age, marital status, literacy status, education level, employment status, occupation, and disability status. Whereas for contributory social protection, 1.2% (Intervention: 2.0%; Comparison: 0.6%) of individuals were currently enrolled in SSF, whereas 7.7% (Intervention: 10.1%; Comparison: 5.7%) of individuals were currently enrolled in a health insurance scheme. The data indicates that occupation type, education level, and household income quintile are strongly linked to the likelihood of benefiting from contribution-based social protection.

The current levels of women's representation across legislatures (federal 33.8%, provincial 36.4% and local 41.2%), judiciary (8.0%) and civil services (28.2%) reflect progress. While women hold a significant proportion of local legislative positions and show better representation in certain sectors of the civil service, their representation decreases at higher levels of government and in the judiciary. The impact on GEWE is twofold: although there are advances in some areas, the gaps in higher decision-making bodies and key sectors limit the potential for achieving GEWE.

It is crucial to address these representation gaps by promoting more inclusive policies, ensuring equitable opportunities across all sectors, and improving the support and capacity-building for women representatives and employees. Ensuring that women are not only present but also influential and effective in their roles will be key to driving meaningful progress in GEWE.

The overall conclusion drawn from the study underscores the urgent need to empower women and girls, men and boys, families, communities, and local institutions—including CSOs, WROs, and community-based change agents—to drive collaborative efforts for gender-transformative change. This empowerment is essential for fostering an environment that challenges and alters existing gender norms and biases.

The study emphasizes the importance of enabling women to achieve economic independence through access to decent job opportunities and social protection provided by the government. Economic empowerment not only enhances women's financial stability but also contributes to their overall well-being and ability to participate fully in society. Alongside this, it is crucial to provide essential services and economic support for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), ensuring they have the resources and assistance needed to rebuild their lives and regain their autonomy.

Furthermore, there is a critical need for capacity building at the sub-national government level to improve readiness for effective implementation of laws and policies. This involves training local government officials and stakeholders in the nuances of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) laws and policies. Advocacy for the amendment and implementation of these laws is equally important, as it creates a supportive framework that enables sustainable change.

In summary, a holistic approach that includes awareness, empowerment, economic support, quality services, capacities and GEWE laws and policies is essential for achieving lasting gender equality and transforming change.

7 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been proposed for the smooth implementation of this JP in three major Provinces within the specified areas. These recommendations are based on the findings of outcome and impact indicators from the intervention area and have outline who should be responsible to carry out the interventions.

Outcome 1

Key findings	Recommendations	Programme heading
<p>Women carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid household chores and care work compared to men.</p> <p>Time spent on unpaid domestic and care work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men: 3.3 hours Women: 7.0 hours <p>Gender-equitable behaviours and positive social norms vary significantly across the regions where JP is implemented.</p>	<p>Responsible: UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>	Programme design
	<p>1.1. Inter-agency collaboration and coordination to be done in provincial and local levels.</p> <p>1.2. Engage with both men/boys and women/girls in addressing entrenched harmful gender norms, promoting a more balanced distribution of household and external work, as more women than men perceive these tasks as solely their responsibility. Ultimately working to reduce time poverty for women.</p>	
	<p>1.3. Establish and promote care policies and services to address women's unpaid care work.</p>	
<p>The justification of women being hit or beaten is deemed accepted by all, even more by women, and GBV was found to be prevalent in intervention areas, particularly concerning in Madhesh Province</p> <p>Perception on husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for specific reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men: 22.7% Women: 23.8% 	<p>Responsible: UNICEF, UNFPA</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Institutional coordination and collaboration</p> <p>Program design</p> <p>Institutional coordination and collaboration</p>
	<p>2.1. Ensure meaningful participation and support of family, community, and institution, such as schools and women and girls' networks, not only in understanding harmful gender norms and GBV but also in challenging and transforming these norms at home, community and at policy levels.</p> <p>2.2. Create GBV prevention champions to advocate against gender discrimination and injustice in the home, community spaces, and workplace.</p>	
	<p>2.3. Support the LG in developing and implementing mechanisms at local and provincial levels to raise awareness of funding programmes for survivors, enhancing information dissemination, and improving access to GBV services.</p>	
	<p>Responsible: UN WOMEN</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	

Key findings	Recommendations	Programme heading
<p>CSOs/CBOs/WROs/Women's Human Right Defenders face significant challenges in working on GBV and gender issues.</p> <p>Degree to which CSOs/ women human rights defenders can operate without deterrence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weighted score: 25 (to a greater extent) 	<p>3.1. Support the CSOs/CBOs/WROs and Women Human Right Defenders in developing skills and capacities related to programme, implementation, advocacy, budgeting, monitoring and reporting on local policies and acts related to GBV, enabling them to provide effective support to survivors.</p>	<p>Institutional coordination and collaboration</p>

Outcome 2

Key findings	Recommendations	Programme heading
<p>Women tend to depend financially on their husbands and face limited opportunities for income generation.</p> <p>Employment to population ratio (EPR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men: 64.3% • Female: 37.5% 	<p>Responsible: ILO and UN WOMEN</p>	
	<p>Priority- High</p>	
	<p>4.1. Encourage and increase women's participation in the labour force</p>	<p>Programme design</p>
	<p>4.2. Strengthen labour administration system and promote social dialogue across all tiers of government to promote decent work, gender equality, and human rights, aligned with the principles of leaving no one behind.</p>	<p>Institutional coordination and collaboration</p>
	<p>4.3. Promote women friendly workplace and community environment</p>	<p>Programme design</p>
	<p>4.4. Enhance capacity of market-based organizations (trade unions, chambers of commerce, cooperatives, producer groups) as well as local and provincial governments.</p>	<p>Institutional coordination and collaboration</p>
<p>GBV survivors are unable to expand or start new economic ventures due to a lack of financial or skill support.</p>	<p>Responsible: ILO, UN WOMEN and ILO</p>	
	<p>Priority- High</p>	
	<p>5.1. Support women across the market value chain as per identified needs and opportunities for growth</p>	<p>Programme design</p>
<p>Individuals and GBV survivors lack knowledge about and access to essential services, including multi sectoral GBV services and social protection for GBV survivors.</p>	<p>5.2. Support GBV survivors and Out of School adolescent girls on income generation opportunities.</p>	<p>Programme design</p>
	<p>Responsible: UNFPA</p>	
	<p>Priority- High</p>	
<p>6.1. Support the government to strengthen gender sensitive social protection measures, including contributory based.</p>	<p>6.1. Support the government to strengthen gender sensitive social protection measures, including contributory based.</p>	<p>Institutional coordination and collaboration</p>
	<p>6.2. Increase awareness and promote access to essential services that are gender and age sensitive.</p>	<p>6.2. Increase awareness and promote access to essential services that are gender and age sensitive.</p>

Key findings	Recommendations	Programme heading
% of GBV survivors in the last 12 months and benefited from institutional GBV service providers: 4.8%		
GBV service providers needs system strengthening	7.1. Train service providers to ensure availability of comprehensive and high-quality services for GBV case management	Programme design
	7.2. Work with the LGs to address GBV cases at the municipality and ward levels	Institutional coordination and collaboration
Low Social Protection coverage. Child grant has a significantly lower uptake rate of 62.6%.	7.3. Focus on advocating for child grants at the community level to increase awareness and uptake, while also collaborating with relevant government agencies to minimize delays in the processing and issuance of grant cards.	Programme design

Outcome 3

Key findings	Recommendations	Programme heading
Despite the presence of national and international policies and frameworks, GBV mitigation and implementation were found to be weak or inadequate at the national and subnational levels.	Responsible: UNICEF, UNFPA, UN WOMEN, ILO	
	Priority- High	
	8.1. Support PG and LGs in implementing their GESI strategy/ policy and strengthen institutional gender responsive structure at three levels of government.	Institutional coordination and collaboration
	8.2. Support the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, National Human Rights Commissions, Provincial and other sectoral ministries in implementing international and national normative commitments.	Institutional coordination and collaboration
	8.3. Support and raise gender-responsive budget (GRB) implementation at provincial and local level government	Institutional coordination and collaboration
	8.4. Promote women's leadership and access to informed and evidence-based decision-making (elected women representatives) to strengthen gender-responsive governance.	Programme design
	8.5. Promote civic engagement especially of women and youth, at all levels of government.	Programme design

Key findings	Recommendations	Programme heading
	8.6. Promote the ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions and recommendations with the support of MoLESS.	Institutional coordination and collaboration
	8.7. Support all levels of the government to institutionalise the Child Protection Information System and to develop National Plan of action to implement the National Children Policy.	Institutional coordination and collaboration
	8.8. Prioritise gender-responsive economic policies to integrate women into the labour market and support women-led enterprises.	Institutional coordination and collaboration
All the outcomes of this project intervention led to achieving GE policy strategies 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 goals.	Responsible: UNICEF, UNFPA, UN WOMEN, ILO	Institutional coordination and collaboration
	Priority- High	
	9.1. Ensure that institutional collaboration and partnership are well coordinated not only to show the impacts but to fulfil the objectives of GE policy strategies.	
	9.2. Ensure that budget and programming are aligned with provincial and local level plans and targets, also aligned with SDG targets.	Programme design
9.3. Provide support to provinces and local levels that are lagging in drafting and implementing GEWE-related policies.		

8 Annexes

Annex 1: ToR

Annex 2: Ethical Approval from Nepal Health Research Council

Annex 3: Study Site and Team Assignment

Annex 4: Household Questionnaire

Annex 5: Adolescent Questionnaire

Annex 6: Online Survey Questionnaire for Civil Society Organizations

Annex 7: Qualitative Tools

Annex 8: Baseline Tables

Annex 9: Code Book

Annex 10: Meta Data

Annex 11: Raw Data

Annex 12: PowerPoint Presentation

Annex 13: Inception Report
