Report

Understanding intimate partner violence in Nepal

Prevalence, drivers and challenges

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A short version of this report, Understanding intimate partner violence in Nepal through a male lens, is available on the ODI website at: odi.org/vawg-southasia along with other outputs from this research project.

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List of abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DDC	District development committee
FGD	Focus group discussion
GBV	Gender-based violence
ICT	Information and communications technology
IDI	In-depth interview
IGD	Intergenerational duo
IGT	Intergenerational trio
IPV	Intimate partner violence
KII	Key informant interview
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NGO	Non-government organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VDC	Village development committee
WCDD	Women and Children Development Department
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive summary

Introduction

A relatively supportive policy and legal environment has driven progress on gender equality in Nepal in recent decades. This has contributed to a relaxation of some discriminatory gender norms, although other norms remain 'sticky', reinforcing unjust practices towards women and girls. Gender-based violence (GBV) – including physical and sexual abuse, forced eviction from the marital home, polygamy and marital rape – is an area where recent socioeconomic changes and changing social norms have had mixed results. GBV remains prevalent and ingrained in much of Nepali life, and intimate partner violence (IPV) as a subset of GBV remains little understood or explored. Indeed, the gender roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women make it difficult to conceptualise IPV as a problem.

Despite efforts by government and non-government programmes to engage men and boys in addressing GBV, there is widespread reluctance to discuss issues deemed to be 'women's' problems. Although younger boys may believe that GBV is wrong, this does not necessarily mean they will refrain from inflicting violence when they reach adolescence and adulthood. And while people generally (and women in particular) are now more aware of their rights and are taking actions against GBV, reporting rates remain very low.

This report describes findings from a research study in two districts (Kapilvastu and Rupandehi) in the Western Development Region of Nepal in 2016. It explores the incidence and forms of IPV and the role of social norms in driving IPV. It also assesses the effects of two programmes that focus on changing men and boys' attitudes towards IPV and GBV: one government-run programme and one implemented by an international non-government organisation (NGO) in partnership with local organisations.

Aims of the study

The study aimed to:

- understand the role of social norms in driving male perpetration of IPV
- find out how broader political economy dynamics shape attitudes and behaviours on IPV and service provision
- find out what kind of policy and programming exists to tackle IPV.

Our conceptual framework builds on an integrated ecological model, emphasising the interaction of factors at each level – the individual, the family, the community, and broader society – and the ways in which they contribute to IPV. We also focus on the role of meso-level institutions, the vital intermediaries through which national-level resources and priorities for addressing IPV are refracted.

The study sites: Kapilvastu and Rupandehi districts

The two districts were selected for study because: (1) they both have programmes addressing GBV and include components that focus on men and boys; (2) they are among the few districts with GBV programmes run by the government and an NGO; (3) they are among the districts with the highest levels of GBV (according to national police records); and (4) they have good representation of people from different ethnic groups.

The research looked at two interventions that included activities (in this case, training) targeting men on GBV issues: CARE Nepal's Tipping Point programme (*Aba Mero Palo*), a three-year pilot programme that began in 2014, which focuses on child marriage and promoting girls' formal education but also includes training for men and adolescent boys to raise awareness about GBV and gender-based discrimination; and the government programme *Laingik Hinsha Nibaranma Purus Sahakarmi Prabardan Talim* (Training on Promotion of Male Co-workers in Elimination of Gender Based Violence), implemented by the Women and Children Development Department of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare.

Methodology

We conducted two rounds of qualitative research using key informant interviews (KIIs), in-depth interviews (IDIs), focus group discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, case studies with IPV survivors, and intergenerational trios (IGTs) and duos (IGDs). We also analysed national police records spanning five years (2011/12 to 2015/16).

National context

Existing policies and laws on GBV and IPV

Despite recent changes to legislation, key informants suggested that laws often contained loopholes or did not address the underlying gender norms and values that drive GBV and/or IPV.

In Nepal, GBV and IPV are addressed within the broader national framework of gender empowerment and human rights, and most policies and programmes (whether government or donors) are aligned to this framework. The Gender Equality Act (2006) and the Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act (2006) represent important steps forward (the latter recognising, for the first time, that domestic violence is a crime punishable by law).

The government's approach is to tackle GBV through a three-pronged strategy: prevention, protection, and prosecution. However, there is no specific definition of IPV in national laws and policies, which are framed to focus on forms of abuse rather than perpetrators.

Response mechanisms

There are two ministries at the apex of Nepal's strategic plans and policies to combat GBV and IPV: the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW). The justice sector and the police also play a key role in dealing with women who have experienced GBV and/or IPV.

Numerous local civil society groups are also engaged in monitoring GBV and IPV, including the Citizen Forum, *Mahila Sanjal* (Women's Network), *Nagarik Sachetana Kendra* (Civic Awareness Centre) and GBV monitoring committees, which were formed by the government and comprise local people from the respective wards and Village Development Committees (VDCs). These committees report to the Women and Children Development Department, which provides quarterly reports to the MoWCSW detailing the number of reported cases and their status.

Key findings

Prevalence and manifestations of IPV

Common forms of IPV in the study sites include wife-beating, polygamy, extramarital affairs, neglect, emotional violence and verbal abuse. Reflecting the national trend, in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, domestic violence is the main form of violence women face, followed by rape and polygamy. Key informants believed that sexual violence, including marital rape, may be occurring on a significant scale but going largely unreported. They cited reasons such as the high levels of stigma associated with talking about sex and the perception (on the part of both spouses) that being raped by one's husband does not constitute violence.

Respondents' perceptions about the prevalence of violence varied according to their age group, exposure to information and communications technology (ICT), and their perception of what counts as violence. Some traditional forms of IPV (such as wife-beating) appear to be decreasing while new forms are emerging. Wife-beating, while decreasing is still the most common form of IPV and is more prevalent among older men and those from Madhesi and Muslim ethnic groups. Extramarital affairs, polygamy, sexual coercion, exertion of control in mobility and social interactions and crimes such as acid attacks due to suspicion and jealousy, and victimisation using phones and social media were mentioned as upcoming forms of violence among adolescents and young men in both districts. Emotional violence such as suspicion of infidelity seems to be prevalent as well and particularly among working middle class women but does not get reported.

Characteristics of IPV perpetrators and victims

Our research suggests that certain groups of men are more likely to behave violently towards their partner: uneducated and/or alcoholic men; older men who have grown up witnessing IPV in the house; unemployed or underemployed men; physically disabled men; men who are not aware that GBV is wrong; adolescent boys with girlfriends; and male migrants. The findings also suggest that as men grow older, participate in programmes to combat GBV, or have a stable job and/or earn well, they tend to be less violent. Men belonging to certain castes were also found to be more likely to behave violently towards their partner – typically those castes adhering to more rigid gender norms, such as Madhesi, Muslims, Brahmins, Chhetris and Dalits.

Understanding low reporting rates

Social stigma is one of the biggest barriers to reporting IPV. Unmarried girls in particular are not likely to report IPV because of the stigma associated with having a partner before marriage. There is also stigma around defaming the family name by bringing such an issue into the public domain. We found that women from high-caste hilly groups and ethnic groups from the plains were less likely to report IPV because they adhere to strict social norms (around mobility and socialisation) and deeply rooted patriarchal values (e.g. the high value placed on protecting the household/family name). On the other hand, among the hilly indigenous groups, gender norms are more flexible and patriarchal values and notions of protecting the family name do not supersede individual justice and personal freedom. This makes these women more confident to express and voice their concerns compared to their counterparts from other ethnic groups

Understanding the links between social norms and IPV

In Nepal, social norms around masculinity, femininity, male guardianship of women and polygamy strongly shape men and women's behaviour and choices, and have a strong bearing on IPV. Men are accorded a superior social status and women's inferior status is largely unquestioned. Domestic violence is also generally accepted as a means of controlling women and/or correcting a wife or girlfriend's behaviour.

In Kapilvastu and Rupandehi, it is accepted that wives are inferior to their husbands. **Men are expected to control their wife**, and the wife is expected to submit to the wishes of her husband and his family. If she does not, or behaves

in a way the husband judges to be wrong, the husband is perceived as justified in beating her (reasons typically include the wife going out of the house alone without permission, or not having dinner ready when her husband returns home). Adolescent boys (irrespective of whether they were programme beneficiaries or not) also reported exercising this kind of control over their girlfriends – restricting their mobility and monitoring their social interactions (including checking the girls' phones). **Women are also expected to show absolute respect for the husband** (although this is not a reciprocal expectation). Finally, there are strong norms around **men being expected to protect and provide for their family**, rooted in the notion of male guardianship. Study respondents explained that these social norms are rooted in religious beliefs and customs (Hindu and Muslim) that assign men (whether fathers, husbands or brothers) to the role of protectors or guardians of women (wives, mothers, daughters or sisters). This notion of guardianship (*abhivakwatwa*) reinforces men's superior position in society, while women are expected to stay under the name, protection and support of men all their lives, thus reinforcing their superior social standing.

Risk factors for IPV

In line with the conceptual framework for the study, we examined risk factors at the individual, family and community levels.

At the *individual level*, risk factors include:

- **Exposure to adversity during childhood and/or witnessing IPV**: Children generally accept their parents or teachers beating them as a corrective measure (though corporal punishment is illegal it remains widely practised). Boys and girls carry this acceptance of violence into adulthood, such that a husband beating his wife is deemed acceptable and even expected behaviour.
- **Boys' negative attitudes towards their female peers**: Adolescent boys often talked about girls being 'spoilt', not obeying their parents and keeping things hidden from them. Boys and men also expressed resentment at women and girls' perceived greed in wanting to be taken out and given gifts, and seeking to enter into relationships with boys or men in better-paid jobs.

At the *family level*, risk factors include:

- **Polygamy:** Though we found no hard evidence on this, our study suggests that fathers having multiple wives could be another trigger for IPV, in that boys whose father had another wife appeared to be more concerned and protective of their mothers than boys whose father did not have multiple wives. This could have a bearing on their future relationship with their wife; as young men typically assume that a wife's duty is to serve and obey her in-laws, they often listen to their mother or sisters' complaints without verifying these with the wife, which can lead to beatings.
- **Early and arranged marriage:** A common practice particularly among Muslim and Tharu communities, this often results in incompatibility between spouses, which can contribute to tensions and result in the husband beating his wife or having extramarital affairs. There was a pattern emerging whereby boys continue their education after marriage and become more exposed to modernity, while their wives drop out of school and become secluded in the home, which can reinforce incompatibility.
- **Women's socioeconomic dependence on their husband and his family:** This was reported to be one of, if not the main risk factor at this level driving IPV, and spans all castes and ethnic groups. Women's lack of economic independence means that the difficulties they are likely to face if they no longer had a husband's financial support outweigh the violence they may be subject to. Fear of them and their children being thrown out of the house with no means to survive was another strong factor preventing women from reporting IPV.

At the *community level*, risk factors include customs such as:

- **The *Gauna* marriage system (common among Tharu communities)**: Children enter into arranged marriages at a very young age (8-14) but the girl is only sent to the boy's house to live some years later (at age 17 or 18), when the '*Gauna*' ceremony takes place. But as soon as the marriage is agreed, the girl drops out of education to start learning how to run a household. Respondents reported that during this long intervening period, boys often take girlfriends. Since the boy's family can be fined if they do not complete the marriage, they bring the wife to their house but many men continue relationships with the girlfriend. Some girls said they knew of these affairs and question their husbands, which led to fights and often physical or emotional abuse.
- **Marrying the wife of a deceased brother**: Among Tharu communities it is common practice that when a man's brother dies, another brother (usually a younger one) is allowed to marry the deceased brother's wife (especially if the deceased brother had children). Even if there is no formal marriage, it is accepted that the younger brother has a sexual relationship with the widow. Key informants felt this sometimes led to beatings, verbal abuse, denial of food and money, and even forced eviction of the younger brother's first wife. If she had no children at the time of her husband's death, she is even more vulnerable.
- **Staying in the natal home during pregnancy** and for some time after childbirth (customary among Muslim communities), with the wife only returning to her husband's house if he comes to fetch her. Key informants reported that if the wife stays away too long, the husband can fall in love with another girl and will not come to take her back, and may even end up marrying the other girl.

Challenges in responding to IPV

Lack of coordination and resources

The three main national bodies that deal directly with GBV (the MoWCSW, the justice sector and the police) face common challenges that hinder them from delivering services efficiently, principally lack of coordination and lack of resources. Each body has its own separate strategy to address IPV; there is no coordination between them, or between them and other government bodies as well as NGOs (national and international) working in the sector. There are various sections within different ministries funded by international donors working to achieve similar aims. For example, the MoWCSW has several sections (including the gender violence control section and gender mainstreaming section) that devise gender empowerment strategies, but similar strategies are also devised by a gender mainstreaming section within the Prime Minister's Office. And although all ministries have a designated gender focal point, these staff do not communicate or coordinate with each other.

Lack of resources is another problem, with key informants commenting that nationally, IPV receives limited funding because it is regarded as a 'women's issue'. This lack of funding translates into patchy implementation, with short-term and irregular activities that also undermines attempts to coordinate with other actors in the sector.

An additional challenge is the different approaches of various bodies to tackling IPV. Reflecting the government's approach, the MoWCSW maintains that promoting women's economic empowerment is the best way to address the root causes of violence, while donors tend to focus on awareness-raising and training. The other serious challenge within the government sector is the lack of a gendered perspective in ministries.

Inaccessible legal and bureaucratic systems

In irreconcilable cases of IPV, responses centre on providing property rights to the woman concerned and filing for divorce – both of which entail lengthy procedures in court and with relevant government departments. Our study found that it is very difficult for women to comply with these procedures, largely because all the brokers who manage negotiations and transactions around property are men. If the woman has a supportive brother or father, they can assist, but women who do not have supportive male family members are most disadvantaged and distressed. In all cases of survivors who reported IPV to the police or pursued their case through court, they were able to do so because of help received from male members of their family or from men outside the family, such as neighbours.

Conclusion

One of the biggest barriers to addressing IPV in Nepal is the lack of understanding of IPV as a separate issue from domestic violence. The notion of maintaining stability and respect for the family and the family name is so deeply internalised that it is never questioned. Unless people are willing to accept different notions of family welfare and to reconsider the gendered roles assigned to men and women, separating the relationship between spouses from relationships between the couple and the rest of the family, it will be extremely difficult to address IPV, particularly at the local level.

Recommendations

For the government:

- **Improve coordination between gender focal points in each ministry,** establishing formal and regular communication channels between these focal points, the police and courts. One way to achieve better sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination would be to assign a single ministry for coordination.
- **Successes and challenges in implementing existing strategies should be more closely monitored** and evaluated before developing new strategies, to ensure that new directions are informed by lessons emerging from past or ongoing programmes.
- **Employ more women in the judicial sector:** The judiciary and quasi-judicial bodies (such as the land revenue and land administration department) should recruit more women and establish processes specifically to help women seeking redress.
- **Prioritise retaining qualified staff and spreading institutional learning,** perhaps by providing incentives for legal advisors and other cadres who currently work on a voluntary basis. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of gender-related service outcomes should be strengthened; officials at local and national levels who perform well in achieving those outcomes should be rewarded and recognised. Moreover, to avoid losing institutional knowledge when civil servants are transferred to different departments, focal points in the MoWCSW should set up robust knowledge management systems and ensure appropriate handover to successors.
- **Improve design and targeting of economic empowerment programmes:** While such activities can address the root causes of IPV, in their present form women's economic empowerment programmes limit participants to gendered activities that do not yield much income. Skills and training for such programmes should be designed based on a study of market needs and should not reinforce women's limited opportunities for income-earning activities.
- **Provide sufficient resources:** Programmes need to be sufficiently resourced and response mechanisms adequately staffed to ensure wider coverage and to

maximise positive outcomes for women who experience GBV or IPV. Existing ICT could be utilised to enable legal advisors and other service providers to obtain or submit necessary documents online, rather than having to physically accompany women to various government offices to do so.

Donors and NGOs (national and international) should:

- **Avoid creating parallel structures:** Better coordination should also ensure better outreach and coverage. Rather than create parallel structures, donors should consult local government and build on existing structures when devising new programmes.
- **Ensure exit strategies that promote sustainability**: Similarly, as programmes tend to phase out after a short period of time due to limited availability of funding, there should be inbuilt sustainability plans to ensure that communities can continue activities on their own when the programme ends. This also applies to government programs but is more of a challenge for NGOs and donors.
- **Weave a gender perspective into all programmes**: While GBV-focused programmes often explicitly aim to change social norms, other programmes such as those on livelihoods and infrastructure lack a gender perspective. Efforts should be made to weave a gender perspective into other programmes.
- **Engage men as 'champions' in combating IPV**: Engaged senior officials and local leaders should be targeted to become 'champions' for tackling IPV. While this model has been used extensively to address gender discriminatory norms, it has not been used directly to address IPV, and men are still not actively engaging in efforts to address IPV.
- **Work with all stakeholders and service providers:** As well as working directly with men (young boys through to adolescent boys and older men), programmes should continue to work with men and women as couples, with in-laws (fathers, mothers and brothers-in-law), with community and religious leaders, with members of the media, and with officials of the courts and police service.

Local civil society groups and organisations should:

- **Encourage men and women to take part in activities and discussions together:** Rather than always divide beneficiaries into same-sex groups, programmes should promote the message that IPV is an issue that needs to be addressed not just by women but by men and all institutions in society, and find ways to engage men meaningfully in issues that affect women.
- **Target unmarried young people as well as married couples:** Awareness-raising activities in schools and other community spaces target married couples only. However, since having a girlfriend/boyfriend is becoming more common, GBV and IPV programmes should also target unmarried young people, particularly as girls find themselves becoming exposed to new forms of violence such as sexual coercion and social media-related abuse.
- **Ensure that women know how to report IPV**: Greater efforts are needed at community level to ensure that women know how to report IPV and the support services that are available to them.

1. Introduction

Nepal has made impressive progress on gender equality after the political changes of the past two decades. Among other things, current national discourse has been dominated by demands for greater rights for marginalised groups, including women and young girls, and greater representation. While some social norms remain 'sticky', others are changing for the better, giving women a respite from discrimination and unjust practices. The lives of younger adolescent girls today are much better in comparison to their elder female siblings and mothers. In rural areas, for instance, girls are often the first females in their family to go for secondary education, to access formal health services, to escape early marriage and to be allowed to go out of the community for higher education or work. This exposure also means that young girls' aspirations are changing. As Nepal is experiencing rapid urbanisation, an increasing number of women and girls who have been able to overcome barriers to mobility are moving to urban centres or abroad in the pursuit of non-agricultural work or education. Similarly, as male out-migration has increased considerably, women's roles and responsibilities both at home and in the wider community are shifting.

All the above-mentioned factors have had mixed impacts on the overall wellbeing of women. One of the main factors influencing their wellbeing is gender-based violence (GBV). GBV – including physical abuse, forced eviction from the marital home, polygamy and marital rape – is an area where the changes in context and in social norms have had mixed results. While people generally (and women in particular) are now more aware of GBV and their rights and are taking actions against GBV, rates of reporting remain low. Besides this, modernisation and exposure to information and communications technology (ICT) has induced new forms of violence in society, such as cyber-bullying, stalking, blackmailing and pornographic exploitation, which have negative ramifications for men and women alike.

Despite gender equality being incorporated in policy since the 1970s in Nepal, it is only since 1991, after the country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), that there has been a systematic approach to ending GBV. Since then, several policies and multi-sectoral plans have been developed (discussed in section 4.2). Despite this progress, however, GBV remains prevalent and ingrained in much of Nepali life, and national as well as international actors are struggling to address GBV at its core. Similarly, while several measures have been put in place to address GBV in Nepal, intimate partner violence (IPV) as a subset of GBV remains little understood and explored and, in fact, IPV is often treated as domestic violence under the law. Thus despite an overall enabling environment for gender equity and justice, discriminatory social norms which work to empower men and masculinity and disempower women continue to make IPV highly prevalent in Nepali society.

This research is part of a multi-country study in South Asia (other countries include Bangladesh and Pakistan) led by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) with a number of in-country and international partners. The present study explores the role of social norms in driving IPV in Nepal while also looking at the scope and nature of IPV, including the effects of programmes that focus largely on men and boys on attitudes towards IPV and GBV.

1.1 Relevance of the research

For the purposes of our study, we have used the definition of IPV given by the World Health Organization (WHO) (2012), which includes the following behaviours: physical aggression (slapping, hitting, kicking and beating); psychological abuse (insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation, threats of harm, threats to take away children); sexual violence (forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion); and other controlling behaviours (isolating a person from family and friends; monitoring or restricting their movements; and restricting access to financial resources, employment, education or medical care). Unlike other forms of GBV, in the case of IPV, exposure to the perpetrator is very frequent, leading to regular incidences of violence and hence multiple negative impacts on the lives of the victim. IPV impacts on women's physical health (inflicting physical injury, sometimes resulting in death), mental health (post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, suicidal inclination for victims) and sexual and reproductive health. It also has an economic impact, since women who are subjected to violence may be unable to work (Gupta and Samuels, forthcoming).

Our hypothesis is that social norms play an important role not only in the perpetration of IPV, but also in negatively influencing justice seeking behaviour and access to justice by women who face IPV. While Nepali studies on GBV and domestic violence have touched on issues of IPV, it remains relatively unexplored, as does the role of social norms in perpetuating IPV. The current study sets out to fill this gap.

1.2 Research objectives and questions

The main research objectives included the following:

- To understand the role of social norms in driving male perpetration of IPV in Nepal;
- To find out how broader political economy dynamics shape attitudes, behaviours and service provision on IPV in Nepal;
- To find out what kind of policy and programming exists to tackle male perpetration of IPV in Nepal.

The main research questions included:

- To what extent do social norms drive male perpetration of IPV in Nepal?
- In what ways do broader political economy dynamics shape attitudes, behaviours and service provision on IPV in Nepal?
- What entry points are there for policy and programming to tackle male perpetration of IPV in Nepal?

1.3 Structure of the report

Having defined IPV and explained the objectives of the research and the research questions, the second section of the report outlines our conceptual framework. The third section describes the research methodology used and the process for selecting the districts as well as our two case study programmes. The fourth section of the report explores the national context, specifically the prevalence of GBV, different forms GBV takes and the nature of victims and perpetrators. This section also describes the existing laws and policies on GBV and domestic violence, and the institutional response mechanisms currently in place. Section 5 presents our findings about the prevalence and manifestations of IPV in the two study sites, while section 6 explores the linkages between social norms and IPV. Section 7 investigates the main factors influencing IPV at three levels (reflecting the conceptual framework): the individual, the family and the community. Section 8 summarises the responses to IPV and the pathways available to survivors to seek justice, highlighting the main ongoing challenges in addressing the issue. Finally, section 9 presents our conclusions and recommendations based on the research evidence, addressed to the government, donors and NGOs, and civil society groups.

2. Conceptual framework of the study

This section describes the conceptual framework used by the study (see Figure 1) to analyse drivers of male perpetuation of IPV in Nepal and possible factors that can work against such perpetration of violence. It outlines the full spectrum of drivers of IPV, starting from the individual and moving on to the household, community and the meso-level institutions that might impact perpetration of IPV. It then explores these drivers in relation to other factors such as policies and programmes for women's empowerment, which represent one approach to tackling GBV.

The starting point of our conceptual framework builds on an integrated ecological model (see e.g. Heise, 1998, 2011; Fulu and Miedema, 2015), which emphasises the interaction of factors at each level of the social ecology – individual, family/relationship, community, society/culture – and the ways in which they contribute to perpetuation of IPV.[1]

In order to better understand the drivers of male perpetration of IPV, our framework starts with adolescent boys and young men at the centre. We disaggregate the factors that shape boys/young men's individual wellbeing. These include: their coping strategies (both negative and positive and which could, therefore, also include substance abuse); childhood legacy effects (e.g. witnessing gender conflict between parents); relationships with parents; peer relationships; relationships with a partner (including the extent to which this is gendered in terms of division of labour, conforming to social norms, sharing/caring); their current psychosocial status; and purposeful choice or agency (e.g. the ability to resist dominant gendered social norms).

Following the ecological framing, these individuals are then located in **households**, whose characteristics are likely to shape adolescent boys' behaviours, attitudes and early adulthood trajectories. These characteristics include the economic status of the household, level of education of adults within it, the level of social capital the family enjoys, and parental and sibling role models (positive or negative). We also consider the importance of intra-household dynamics, especially gendered interactions between parents, between parents and children and between siblings; these interactions can occur across a number of dimensions, including income-generation activities and the gendered division of labour (domestic chores and the care economy).

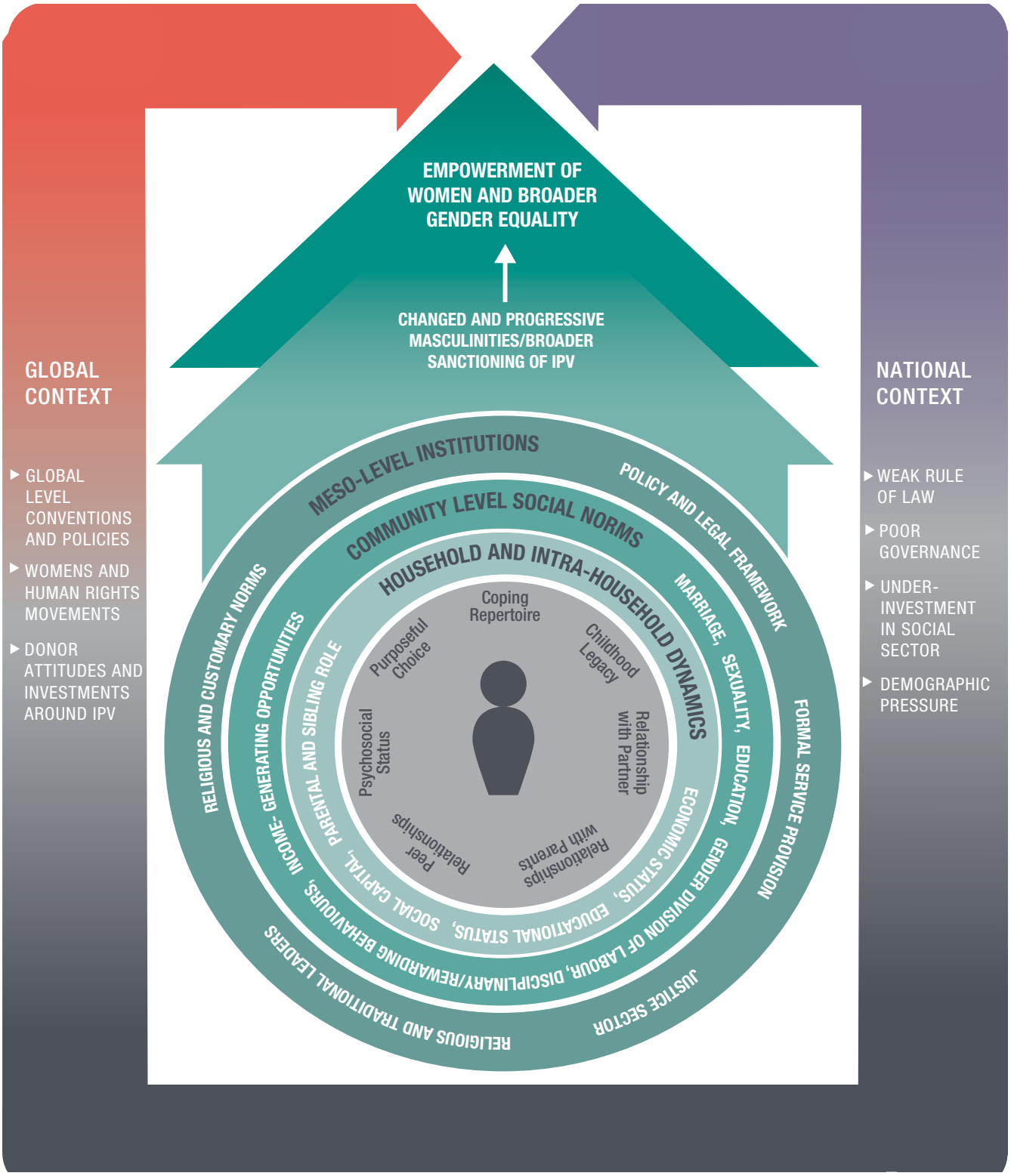
Beyond the household we emphasise the role played by **community** social norms (including norms around marriage, sexuality, education, the gendered division of labour, the acceptability of disciplinary/rewarding behaviours, and income-generating opportunities for men and women) in shaping adolescent boys/ young men's experiences (e.g. Marcus and Harper, 2014; Mackie et al., 2012; Bicchieri, 2015).

Less well conceptualised in the literature, and where this project aims to make a significant contribution, is in understanding the role of **meso-level institutions** as vital intermediary routes through which national-level resources and priorities for addressing IPV are refracted (Roberts and Waylen, 1998; True, 2012; Denny and Domingo, 2013). These institutions span formal and customary institutions. At the formal end of the spectrum are policy and legal frameworks (including family law, divorce, child custody, property inheritance, sanctions relating to IPV and GBV) and formal service provision, which can include services provided by government, non-government organisations (NGOs) and women's rights groups (e.g. shelters, counselling centres, and various forms of social assistance). This incorporates the justice sector, which consists of both formal and customary institutions (including laws and policies applied by police and the courts, as well as legal aid, legal protection and family mediation). At the customary end of the spectrum, it is also important to consider the role of religious and customary norms and their relative strength in the community, as well as religious and traditional leaders, who are often the first port of call for resolving local conflicts.

These ecological domains are in turn situated within broader national and global contexts (represented by the two side arrows in Figure 1). On the right-hand side, we have the **national context** which consists of factors such as weak rule of law, poor governance, under-investment in the social sector, and under-resourced responses (Hickey et al., 2015). On the left-hand side, we factor in the **global context,** which consists of both global-level conventions

1 'Theories used to explain male violence against women partners and ex-partners', Scottish Government website, www.gov.scot/resource/doc/925/0063072.pdf

Figure 1: Conceptual framework - seeing IPV through an ecological and institutional lens in fragile-state contexts



Source: ODI, 2016

and policies as well as women's and human rights movements championing action vis-à-vis GBV and IPV which may be domesticated to varying degrees at national level (True, 2012; Roberts and Waylen, 1998). Donor attitudes and investment in tackling GBV and IPV also play a role in highlighting these issues.

The broad arrows at the top of the diagram represent the changes that are envisaged through efforts to address the inter-related risk dimensions in the ecological model, **leading to changed and progressive masculinities and broader sanctioning against IPV.**

3. Research methodology

This section starts with a description of the study sites and the rationale for their selection. It then moves on to describe the case study programmes that respondents participated in, and the data collection and analysis process. The last section outlines the ethical criteria followed by the study and presents study limitations.

3.1 Description of study sites

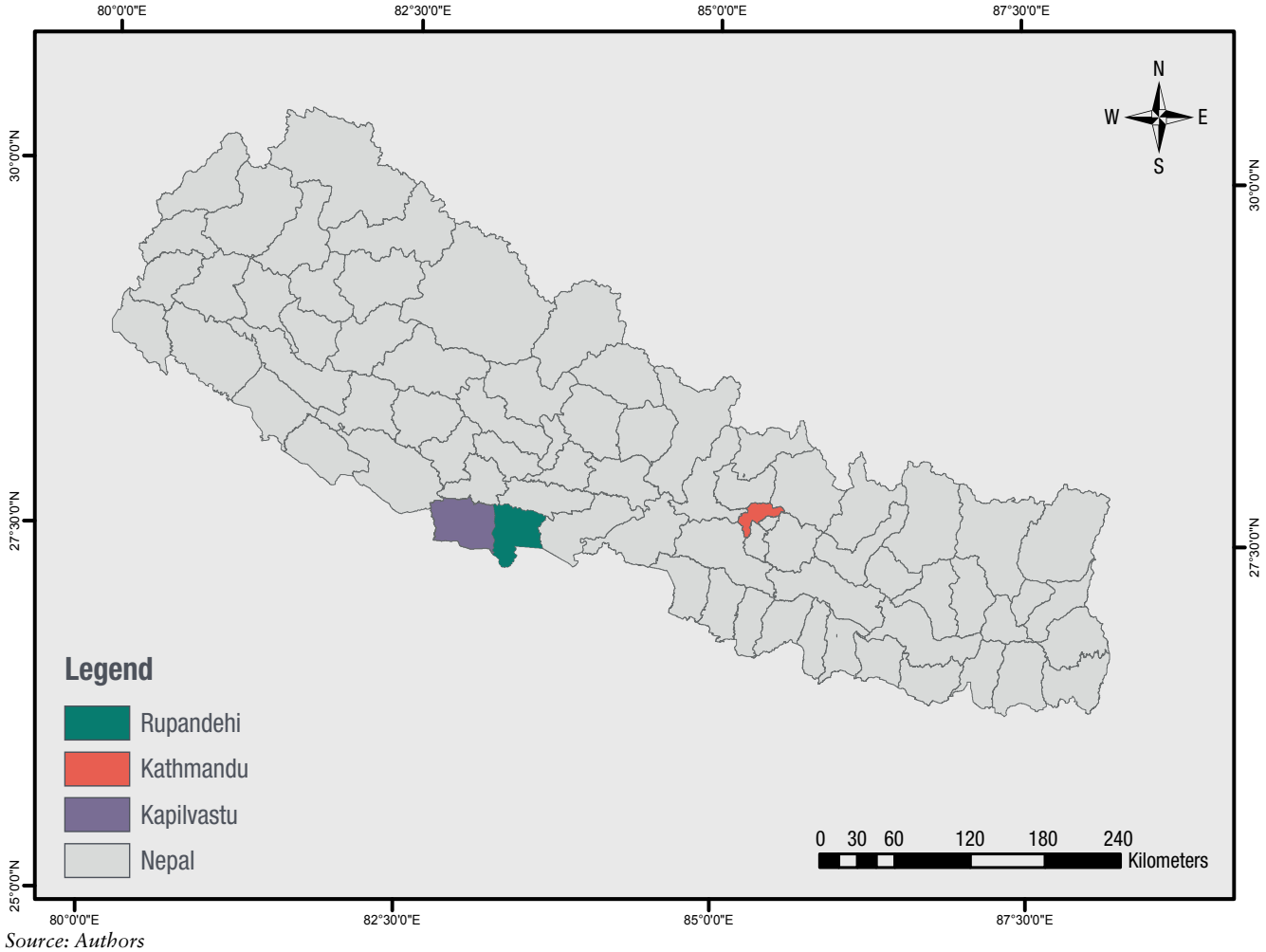
Fieldwork was carried out in two districts in the Western Development Region of Nepal: Rupandehi and Kapilvastu (see Figure 2). Two case studies and key informant interviews (KIIs) were also conducted in Kathmandu to understand more about IPV in urban areas.

We selected Rupandehi and Kapilvastu districts for the following reasons:

1. Both districts have programmes with components that focus on men and address issues of GBV and IPV.
2. They are among the few districts where there are programmes run by both the government and an NGO (CARE) focusing on men, adolescent boys and girls.
3. They are among the districts with the highest levels of GBV according to national police records.
4. They have good representation of people from different ethnic groups.

Case studies in Kathmandu were undertaken to understand about IPV in urban areas. Below we describe the two district and sites in detail.

Figure 2: Map of Nepal showing study sites



Source: Authors

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the two study sites

Geographical area	Feature	1981 census	1991 census	2001 census	2011 census
Kapilvastu	Total population	270,045	371,778	481,976	571,936
	Male population	143,400	191,444	227,875	285,599
	Female population	126,645	180,334	234,101	286,337
	Sex ratio	113	106	97	99.7
	Literacy rate (%)	13.2	30.8	41.46	54.9
Rupandehi	Total population	379,096	522,150	708419	880196
	Male population	196,783	264,607	360,733	432,193
	Female population	182,383	257,543	347,646	448,003
	Sex ratio	108	103	104	96.5
	Literacy rate (%)	27.5	40.2	65.95	69.8

Rupandehi district

Rupandehi district lies in the western region of the country and covers an area of 1360 sq. km (CBS and NPCS, 2012). According to recent (2011) national census data (Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS), 2012), Rupandehi district has a population of 880,196, 50.9% of whom are women (Table 1). Its population growth rate (2001-2011) of 2.22 is significantly higher than the national population growth rate (1.35). Almost a quarter of the district population (24.8%) are adolescents (aged 10-19), 51.08% of whom are male and 48.92% female (CBS and NPCS, 2012). The district falls in the Terai (plains) ecological belt but its population include people of hilly origin too. The main religious groups of Rupandehi are Hindu 86.24%, Buddhists 4.61% and Muslim 8.23%. The majority of the population speak Nepali and Bhojpuri languages, with Awadhi and Urdu also common.[2] In Rupandehi, the main caste we interacted with were high castes of hilly origin such as Chhetris, Brahmins, indigenous groups of plains origin such as the Tharu, indigenous groups of hilly origin such as Rai, Limbu, Gurung and Magar, and Dalits of plains origin such as Muslims, Harizan, Teli, Paswan and Kushwaha.

Rupandehi district falls under Lumbini administrative zone and has its headquarters in Butwal. The district has a total of 69 village development committees (VDCs), 2 municipalities and 7 electoral constituencies (CBS and NPCS, 2012). Women in the district lag far behind men both in literacy levels and employment. The district's literacy rate (69.8%) is slightly higher than the national literacy rate (65.9%) (CBS and NPCS, 2012). However, of the total literate population, only 44.59% of women are literate compared to 55.40% of men.[3]As shown in Table 2 the district has an economically active population (10 years of age and above) of 332,951, of which 60.2% are male and only 39.8% are female.

Early marriage among women and polygamy among men are prevalent in Rupandehi. According to national data (MPRC, 2013), 0.72% of men are married by age of 10, increasing to 2.78% of women; similarly, 77.41% of women are married by the age of 19 (50.63% of men); 1.72% of men have more than one wife.

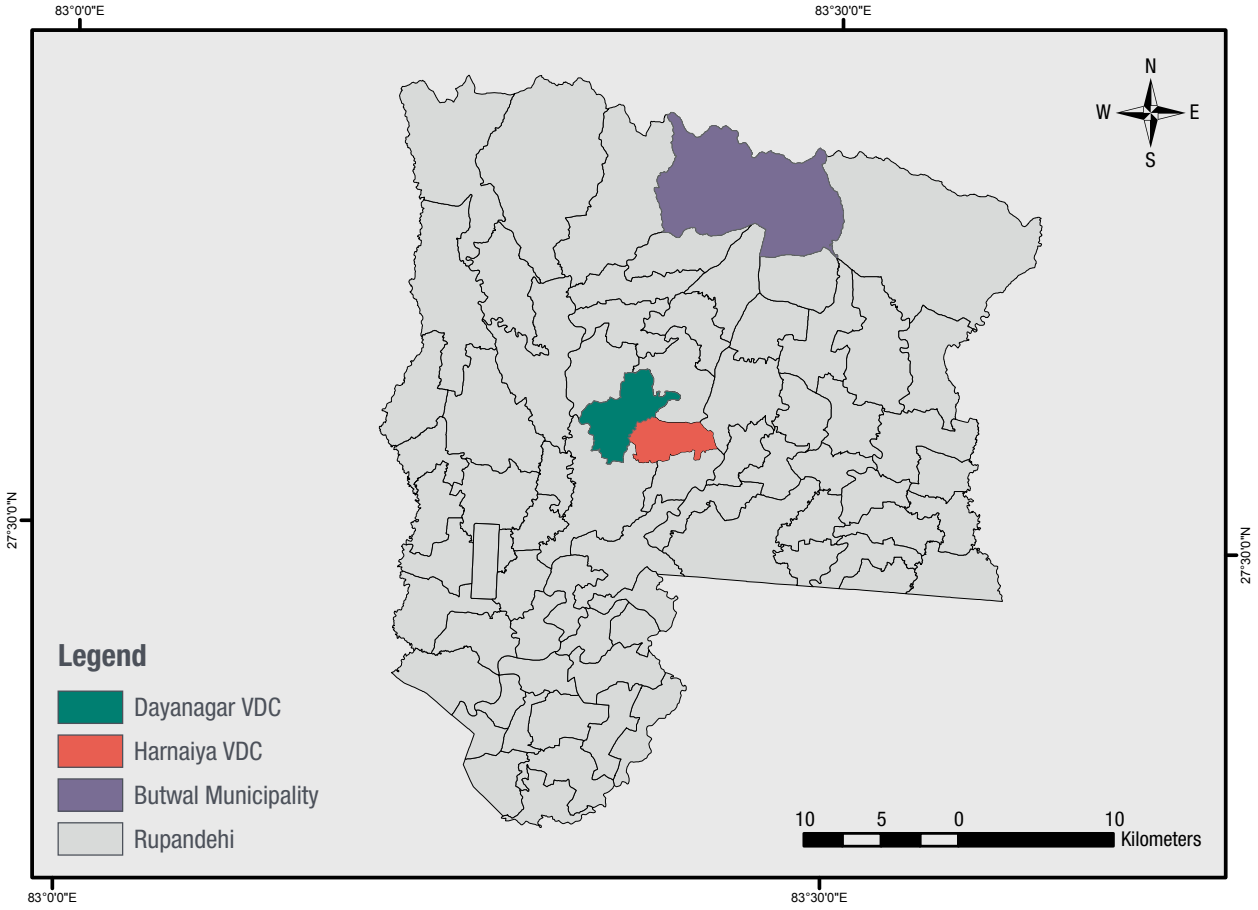
In Rupandehi district we conducted fieldwork in Harnaiya and Dayanagar VDCs and Butwal municipality (see Figure 3). The two VDCs were selected based on information from key informants, who told us that we would find men there who had participated in a seven-day GBV training programme run by the Women Development Office of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW). Not all the VDCs were covered by the training, and men from other VDCs who had undergone the training earlier were in India at the time of the fieldwork. Beside this, the two VDCs had high incidence of IPV according to our key informants.

Interviews were conducted in Butwal municipality with key informants and adolescent boys who had taken part in the training on GBV given by CARE Nepal (separately from that of the above mentioned MoWCSW). Interviewees came from different VDCs of Rupandehi and did not belong to the municipality itself.

2 Awadhi is spoken by Dalits and Urdu is spoken by Muslims living in Rupandehi.

3 Literacy rate of 0.01% of population remains unstated.

Figure 3: Map of Rupandehi district



Source: Authors

Kapilvastu district

The second study site, Kapilvastu district, also falls in the Western region of the country and covers an area of 1738 sq. km (CBS and NPCS, 2012). This district also falls under Lumbini administrative zone, with its headquarters in Taulihawa. The district's population (571,936) is split almost equally between women (50.1%) and men (49.1%) (see Table 1). The population growth rate is fairly high (2001-2011), at 1.73, compared to the national rate of 1.35. The adolescent population of 139,817 (24.45%) is also fairly evenly split between boys (50.9%) and girls (49.91%) (CBS and NPCS, 2012).

Kapilvastu also lies in the Terai (plain) ecological belt and has a mix of hilly origin people and Terai origin people. The district's ethnic composition is as follows: 17% indigenous groups, 13% Dalits, 11% Brahmins, and 4% Chhetris, among other groups. The main religious groups are Hindu (80.62%), Muslim (18.16%) and Buddhist (0.87%).

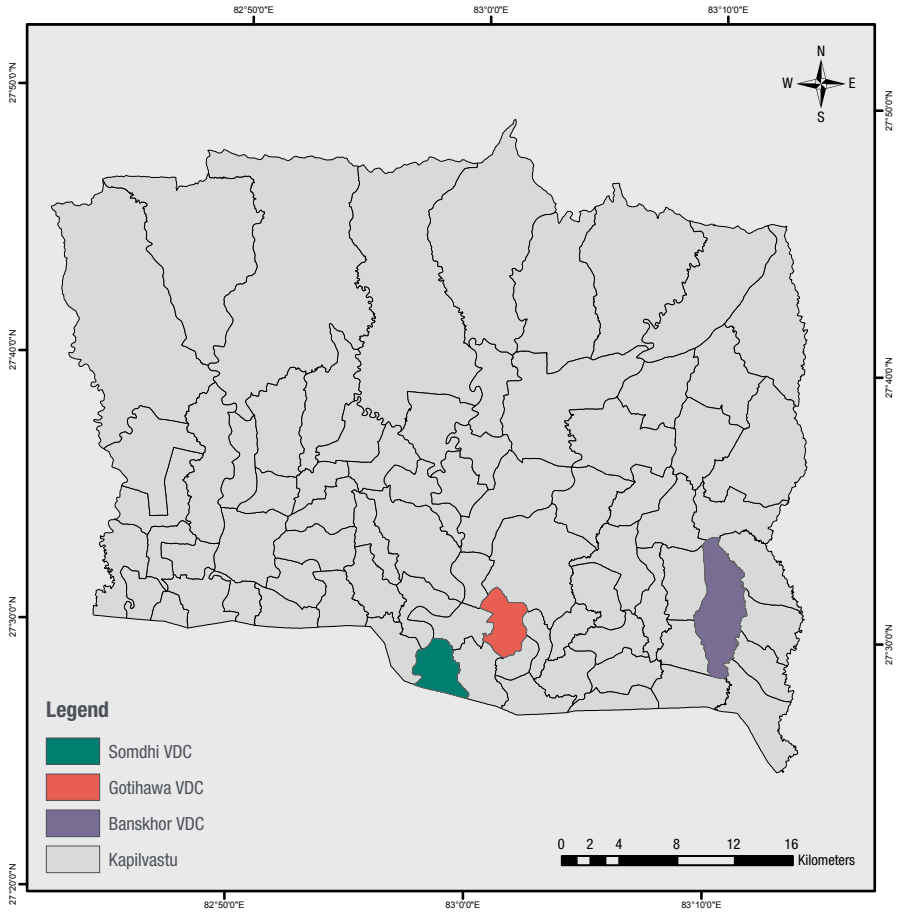
There is a large gap in the status of women compared to men in Kapilvastu (see Table 3). The district's literacy rate (54.9%) is much lower than the national rate (65.9%) (CBS and NPCS, 2012). Only 44.96% of women are literate while only 31.78% of women are economically active compared to 63.62 of men (Table 2). Early marriage

Table 2: Economically active population

Geographical area	Total population 10 yrs and above that are economically active	Economically active					
		Usually active				Not usually active	
		Employed		Unemployed			
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Kapilvastu	203682	129575 (63.62%)	64741 (31.78%)	2778 (1.36%)	557 (0.27%)	4617 (2.266%)	15954 (7.83%)
Rupandehi	332951	190003(57.066%)	108508 (32.59%)	4542 (1.36%)	1433 (0.43%)	5789 (1.73%)	22676 (6.81%)

Source: Adapted from CBS and NPCS, 2012

Figure 4: Map of Kapilvastu district



Source: Authors

is prevalent: 0.75% of girls are married before they reach the age of 10 while 79.8% are married by the age of 19.

In Kapilvastu, we conducted fieldwork in Somdhi and Gotihawa VDCs in the first year and Banskhor VDC in the second year (see Figure 4). These VDCs were selected because married couples (in Banskhor) and adolescent boys (in Somdhi and Gotihawa) had participated in training sessions organised by CARE Nepal on GBV. Besides this, as with Rupandehi, key informants also suggested that these districts had mixed populations and had high rates of IPV.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihoods for people in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi. Due to lack of infrastructure, agriculture remains un-mechanised. Most men migrate to India or further afield to the Gulf countries for work to meet their family needs.

Table 3: Education status

Geographical area	Literacy status (5 years and above) Primary level Secondary level Higher secondary level						Number of schools		
	Can read and write		Can read only		Can't read and write				
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
Nepal	8,666,282 (75.1%)	7,111,504 (57.4%)	283,708 (2.46%)	319,069 (2.57%)	2,575,935 (22.33%)	4,948,492 (39.93%)	33,881	21189	3596
Kapilvastu	164,431 (64.93%)	114,788 (44.965%)	9120 (3.6%)	9325 (3.65%)	79443 (31.37%)	130,856 (51.25%)	509	262	43
Rupandehi	309,480 (79.22%)	249,086 (60.78%)	8,722 (2.23%)	9,611 (2.345%)	72,134 (18.46%)	150,502 (36.73%)	587	583	89

Source: Adapted from CBS and NPCS, 2012

3.2 Description of case study programmes

The research looked at two interventions in the study areas that included activities (in this case, training) targeting men and women on GBV issues: CARE Nepal's Tipping Point programme (*Aba Mero Palo*); and the government programme *Laingik Hinsha Nibaranma Purus Sahakarmi Prabardan Talim* (Training on Promotion of Male Co-workers in Elimination of Gender Based Violence).

The programmes are described in more detail below. It is worth noting here, however, that whenever our findings refer to 'beneficiaries', we mean all those who took part in both programmes; when we refer to 'adolescent boys' as a specific beneficiary group, this is referring to the CARE Tipping Point programme only (because participants in the government programme were all adults).

3.2.1 CARE Nepal: *Aba Mero Palo* (Tipping Point)

This five-year programme (May 2013 to April 2017), funded by CARE Nepal, addresses the underlying causes and drivers of child marriage in Nepal. It operates in both our study districts and is implemented in partnership with two local NGOs: Dalit Social Development Centre (Kapilvastu) and Siddhartha Samudhyak Sansthan (Rupandehi). In the first year (the inception phase), research was carried out to understand the context. Implementation began in May 2014, as a three-year pilot programme (aiming to expand to other districts with high prevalence of child marriage at the end of the pilot). *Aba Mero Palo* focuses on child marriage and promoting girls' formal education but also includes training for men and adolescent boys to raise awareness about GBV and gender-based discrimination so that they can play their part in combating these problems.

After a preliminary phase of evidence gathering to identify the factors that hinder adolescents' wellbeing, alongside a stakeholder and community engagement process, the training package was rolled out in selected communities within each district. Trainings are targeted to girls but also to boys (same course) and parents (different short course) in order to create an enabling environment for girls. Groups of 12-18 boys and girls from disadvantaged households are selected by social mobilisers of the implementing agency to form a trainee group. They are trained separately as this was more socially acceptable, particularly for older adolescent girls and boys. As of February 2016, there were groups in eight VDCs altogether. In Kapilvastu district there were two groups of adolescent girls and one group of boys in each of the eight VDCs.

Once group members had been identified, social mobilisers asked team members to volunteer for the role of peer educator for his or her group. In the case of adolescent girls, it was important to select a girl whose parents would allow her to go outside their community in order to conduct training sessions. The plan was to have male peer educators for adolescent boys' groups and female peer educators for girls' groups. Once selected, these individuals were given a seven-day Training of Trainers (TOT) course to equip them with the skills they need to conduct sessions. After the training, they receive ongoing support from CARE's social mobilisers.

The groups meet regularly in community or public spaces, and can decide on the days and number of hours they want to meet as long as they complete the module. The social mobilisers support the peer educators, who are responsible for conducting the meetings and delivering the courses. The groups do coursework on the first day and make an observation visit around the community on the second, discussing the issues that arise during these activities on the third day. The groups receive training based on a module developed by UNICEF, which is different for the peer educator and the adolescents taking part – the Rupantaran programme (see Box 1).

According to key informants, a parents' committee (parents of those adolescents taking part) is established to support the adolescent groups in each VDC. Each parents' committee has 13 members (8 men and 5 women), selected by the implementing partners. The plan is for the adolescent groups to meet with the parents' committee every 15 days to update them on activities and the topics they will discuss in forthcoming sessions. These meetings are facilitated by CARE's social mobilisers.

In both districts, the Tipping Point programme is coordinated with other structures and institutions such as the village child protection committee (a government structure), the VDC, the district development committee (DDC), Women's Network, civic awareness centre and schools. The programme gives classes on child marriage in school, as well as encouraging schools to be more girl-friendly.

3.2.2 The Government of Nepal's programme, *Laingik Hinsha Nibaranma Purus Sahakarmi Prabardan Talim* (Training on Promotion of Male Co-workers in Elimination of Gender-Based Violence)

The government's national programme *Laingik Hinsha Nibaranma Purus Sahakarmi Prabardan Talim* (PSP hereafter), implemented by the Women and Children Development Department (WCDD), started in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu in 1995 in one ward of one VDC but has expanded gradually and now covers all VDCs in both districts (though not all wards). Of those wards involved, each has received training once. The programme is implemented intermittently, depending on national budget allocations (for example, there was no programme activity in 2013 or in 2016, although there was activity in 2014/15). In 2010, a similar programme was implemented with funding from UNICEF in nine additional VDCs (this came under UNICEF's Unified Development Program for Ending GBV). Since 1995, the PSP has provided training for around 400 men and women. When the programme is running, it trains one to three groups per year. Each group has 15 couples. In the fiscal year 2014/15, the programme trained two groups.

Box 1: The Rupantaran programme

'Rupantaran', meaning transformation, is a 15-module training package developed by the Government of Nepal, Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, with support from UNICEF. It is based on the National Action Plan for Holistic Development of Adolescents, developed by the National Planning Commission (NPC) of the Government of Nepal with support from UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Each module is designed to use peer-to-peer teaching methods. It has a range of participatory and interactive tools to strengthen adolescents' knowledge on a range of issues, from civic engagement, rights and responsibilities and livelihoods, to GBV and small enterprise development. The sequencing of the programme was designed based on consultation with adolescents and other experts, but it can be altered to suit local needs. In both of our study districts, the adolescents' groups are following the established sequence. The modules are designed for mixed groups of adolescents but include some parts where the group is separated by gender. However, as mentioned already, in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi girls and boys are taught in separate groups.

Each module consists of one participant exercise book, one introductory document, and a trainer's manual for the peer educator, which contains additional reference materials that s/he can study for broader knowledge and information. Each module is divided into several sessions, with activities designed to give information and help participants reflects on the topics in an interactive and practical manner. GBV is covered in module 14, which talks about definitions and forms of GBV, as well as available support systems. Other modules (module 4 on Sexuality and Social inclusion) also touch on the topic of GBV.

Adolescent girls in Nepal participate in a Rupantaran training session © NISER 2016

The training programme runs for three days (see Table 4) and takes place in the participants' village. It uses interactive methods such as drama and role play, group discussions and group work to raise awareness about GBV and discrimination. Depending on the subject matter, various individuals are hired as trainers, including supervisors from the WCDD, members of local health services, the VDC secretary and lawyers. They might not necessarily have had the TOT training but have expertise in the topic they teach due to their work experience.

In addition to the PSP, another programme run by the MoWCSW, Gender-Based Violence Alleviation, which began in 2004, also explored the issue of IPV and conducted training for men in Rupandehi. Based on the national framework of addressing GBV through a three-pronged strategy of protection, prosecution and prevention, the programme aimed to increase men's knowledge about these three components. The programme consisted of training courses for men, an awareness-raising component for the community, and establishing local structures for addressing GBV that include men.

Table 4: PSP course content

Schedule	Content	Content	Content
Day 1	Gender and gender vocabulary	Identification of gendered roles (group work on expected gendered roles)	Changes in gender roles (showing flip charts and analysing)
Day 2	Analysis of time-use by men and women (what, when, where, how and who)	Access and control of men and women over resource, opportunities and benefits	Equity for prosperity ('*Bataki Bahini*' – a storybook on gender empowerment)
Day 3	Types, reasons and alleviation of violence against women and girls (group work)	Reproductive health disorders	Role of men in women empowerment (group work)

3.3 Research questions and data collection

As explained earlier (section 1.3), we established three broad research questions (see also Table 5):

- To what extent do social norms drive male perpetration of IPV in Nepal?
- In what ways do broader political economy dynamics shape attitudes, behaviours and service provision regarding IPV in Nepal?
- What entry points are there for policy and programming to tackle male perpetration of IPV in Nepal?

We subsequently subdivided these broader questions into further lower-level research questions. We then brainstormed around the themes and sub-themes that would be necessary to find answers to those sub-questions of interest. This was followed by developing the methodological framework, and identifying entry points, tools and methods to get at the issue.

The VDCs and participants were selected based on consultation with the national and district-level officers of CARE and WCDD and their social mobilisers. Once the VDC and the programme beneficiaries had been identified, purposive sampling was used to select individual respondents, taking care to include diverse categories of beneficiaries based on age, social and educational status as well other factors that might influence IPV behaviour (e.g. whether they had a history of large amounts of alcohol consumption, whether they may be migrants and whether they may be in polygamous unions). The type of tool, purpose and participant type used for each is given in Table 6.

The study team consisted of people with experience of doing qualitative and gender-based research. A two-day refresher was held for the data collection team to practice and orient themselves to the tools and questions in Nepali language and in the local context of Rupandehi and Kapilvastu. Piloting was done in Kavrepalanchowk[4], (a rural district adjoining the capital Kathmandu) and a government school[5] in Kathmandu where adolescents from rural districts akin to Kapilvastu and Rupandehi study. Two rounds of fieldwork were conducted, the first in 2015 and the second in 2016. This allowed us to explore some issues in further depth and also to fill in gaps in information. Table 7 gives the number of respondents interviewed using each tool and in each district.

Besides the primary data from Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, we also collected data from the National Police Repository in Kathmandu on the number of cases of IPV and GBV that are filed nationally as well as in the two study districts. These data were analysed to get an insight into the prevalence of IPV and GBV nationally and in the case study districts, as well as understanding the forms of IPV and characteristics of victims and perpetrators.

3.4 Data analysis

Most of the interviews were recorded digitally (excepting eight key informants and two case studies who did not wish to be recorded) and transcribed and translated. For those interviewees that did not consent to recording, detailed notes were taken instead. Data analysis was done using MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software by team members trained in its use. For the purpose of data analysis,

4 For case studies

5 For IDIs and FGDs

Table 5: Methodological framework

Research questions	Sub-themes	Research instruments
Macro question 1: To what extent do social norms drive male perpetration of IPV in Nepal?		
What combination of individual, household and community factors shape male perpetration of IPV?	Questions for individual men and adolescent boys – personality traits, challenges in household, violent precedents/ witnessing violence, poverty and education levels of parents/ family members, religion and caste/ethnicity, secular school vs. madrasas; history of families – have they faced violence/ trauma? Employment	In-depth interviews (IDIs) Survivors case study Focus group discussions (FGDs)
How important are community gendered norms compared to household and individual attitudes and behaviours in driving IPV?	What about the norms around good men/husbands vs good women/ wives? Who are the main upholders/reinforcers of these norms? What are the sanctions for non-conformity? What are the forces for change vis-à-vis these norms? What are the dominant gender social norms driving IPV?	IDIs Survivors case study FGDs
Macro question 2: In what ways do broader political economy dynamics shape attitudes, behaviours and service provision re IPV?		
What are the key legal and policy provisions shaping IPV behaviours and sanctions?	What legal frameworks exist? Who implements them? What sectors are involved – justice, education, gender/social affairs, health? Where are the factors that disconnect between policy and implementation – including at central vs decentralised? Who are the champions of change – e.g. donors, NGOs, religious leaders, community groups, government agencies?	KIIs district and local KIIs national
What are the other particular challenges of understanding and addressing male perpetration of IPV in fragile contexts?	Media content Extent to which men or fathers have been involved in combat and normalisation of conflict/violence in this way – both at household and community levels To what extent do broader national priorities effectively silence or trivialise family-based violence? Have lives changed over time/ over generations as a result of the fragile state context – education, employment, government resourcing, mobility, etc.? Mapping of environment with community groups – checkpoints, curfews, fear after dark? And of service points – drop-in centres, proximity of justice officials, health extension, and education services.	KIIs national
Macro question 3: What entry points are there for policy and programming to tackle male perpetration of IPV?		
Are there critical junctures including adolescence at which IPV interventions could be more effective and have multiplier effects?	Do the life experiences of male perpetrators suggest that there are particular points in the life cycle where early intervention could have prevented IPV? What might some of these entry points be? E.g. psychosocial support, educational interventions, health clinic screenings	IDIs with young men Intergenerational trios KIIs with service providers
What kind of programming exists to tackle the social norm change pathways identified through our research programme as underpinning IPV?	To what extent are social norms explicitly targeted in the programming approach? Adolescent focus? Gender focus? Awareness focused or bundled interventions? How central is violence to the programme, if bundled?	KIIs national KIIs district
What kind of programming exists to tackle the social norm change pathways identified through our research programme as underpinning IPV?	To what extent are social norms explicitly targeted in the programming approach? Adolescent focus? Gender focus? Awareness focused or bundled interventions? How central is violence to the programme, if bundled?	KIIs national KIIs district

a general uniform coding structure (to be used by all study countries) was developed from a few transcripts based on emergent findings. This structure was taken as the basis to start the coding while giving country data analysis teams the flexibility to add or merge codes as necessary. Skype meetings with data analysts from other country teams were held to help the team keep abreast of changes in codes in each country and discuss the emergent trends from the data.

3.5 Ethical issues

All standard ethical protocols were duly followed. Respondents were asked for verbal consent before data collection started. They were provided with full information regarding the purpose of the study and the nature of the information required. They were also assured that confidentiality would be maintained and that they were free not to respond or to discontinue the interview at any time. All names and places have been anonymised and no real names or initials have been used throughout the report.

3.6 Study limitations

A key aspect of the study was to compare the views and attitudes of programme beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. A number of limitations were faced in this regard. First, and specifically with regard to the PSP programme, which targeted older men only, there were no long-term and intensive programme activities focusing on IPV; these men had, in fact, only taken part in a one-off training session. Even training that was designed to be a three-day course had only been delivered to some men and women for a day or a few hours. Hence, it was difficult to map out what changes the training courses had led to given that they were so short. Second, most of these men were seasonal migrants to India and hence only a few who had taken part in the courses were available in the villages. This made it difficult to have a wide range of participants to select from.

It was only possible, therefore, to get information about how IPV-related attitudes and behaviours may have changed for adolescent boys and girls from the Tipping Point programme, where there was a long-term and regular course being provided. However, only one module in the Tipping Point programme explicitly covered GBV, though there were aspects of gender discrimination woven into the other modules. However, the problem with interviewing only adolescent boys who were unmarried was that we could only get a sense of their attitudes and not understand if the training would influence their practice. This is because the programme beneficiaries were not in regular contact with their girlfriends (if indeed they had one). It is stigmatised and hence difficult for young adolescents to have a girlfriend or boyfriend and hence most boys did not have a girlfriend. For those who shared that they were in a relationship, it was not possible to be seen together in public due to social stigma; opportunities for interaction were thus limited to school hours where they were either busy with the classes or under the teacher's surveillance. As such, in this case as well as for older men, it proved difficult to really tease out the effects of the training programmes.

Initially, a second round of data collection was planned to follow young men as they progressed through the programme (having been interviewed in the first round) in order to see the possible effects the programme may have had on their attitudes and behaviours. But the relatively short timeframe (the overall study was 18 months), delays in the process, and the intermittent nature of programme implementation meant that it was not possible to identify changes within such a short period. Instead, we decided that the second round of data collection would go into more depth in areas where there were gaps in information.

Table 6: Data collection tools: purpose and use with different types of participants

Tools	Purpose	Participant
In-depth interview (IDI)	To understand individual perception about gender roles and rights, about gender violence, about child marriages	CARE beneficiary (couples and men only) PSP programme beneficiary (couples and men only) Government child club programme beneficiary Non-beneficiaries
Focus group discussion (FGD)	To explore the general community-level definition of gender roles and rights, to explore community views and experiences about adolescent issues such as child marriage	Adolescent boys and girls (rural and urban) Adult men and women Young married men
Key informant interview (KII)	To find out about the status of women and girls, challenges, opportunities, empowerment factors and changes over time	
Case studies	To deeper understand IPV and how it affects women	With IPV survivors and key persons (such as their guardians, social mobilisers, lawyers) involved in helping them get justice

Table 7: Tools and number of respondents

Type of instrument	Numbers interviewed	
	Rupandehi	Kapilvastu
KIIs	11	11
with male	1	3
with female	10	8
KIIs national level	7 (1 male, 6 females)	
FGDs	7	6
with young married men	1	-
with adolescent girls	1 rural/1 urban	1 rural/1 urban
with adolescent boys	1 (rural/ 1 urban area)	1 (rural area) 1 (urban area)
with adult men	-	1
with adult women	1	1
with beneficiary women	1 (rural area)	
IDIs	15	20
with beneficiary CARE	5	14 [i](4 with couples)
with beneficiary Government of Nepal	5	1 child club, government
Non-beneficiary	5	5
Case studies with IPV survivors[ii]	4 (all female)	3(all female)
Intergenerational trios and duo	4 sets (1 male duo, 1 male trio, 1 female duo, 1 female trio)	4 sets (1 male duo, 1 male trio, 1 female duo, 1 female trio)

i The interview with 4 couples and 2 case studies in Kathmandu was done in round 2 in 2016.

ii Two additional case studies were carried out in Kathmandu.

Conducting field research with adolescent girls in Nepal. © NISER 2016

4. The national context

4.1 Prevalence and manifestations of GBV and IPV in Nepal

Broadly speaking, key informants were unable to say whether the incidence of GBV is rising or declining. The same applies for IPV, which is often conflated with GBV and domestic violence in Nepal. Key informants felt that the lack of clarity over incidence, and the conflating of GBV, domestic violence and IPV was due to the fact that IPV is largely accepted as normal; combined with a lack of awareness among victims about what constitutes IPV, this results in IPV being severely under-reported. For example, a recent survey by the Government of Nepal (2012) showed that only 9% of respondents were aware that rape within marriage is illegal. According to study respondents, women are less likely to report IPV due to a range of reasons, including fear of loss of social and economic support and tarnishing the family name. However, key informants at national level agreed that while IPV is still largely under-reported, there is a rise in reporting of such violence. They attribute this change to long-standing and focused awareness-raising programmes in villages, the formation of local women's structures where they can report abuse more easily, wider media coverage (which supports awareness-raising activities) as well as financial support in getting access to justice in cases of GBV.

> *Well, the media nowadays with its ever-broadening coverage reach are the major source of information and have helped with regards to generating awareness regarding GBV even in our village. As a result, some women [victims of GBV] are becoming aware about the fact that their husband is abusing them. They have also now started to speak about it saying, "My husband is acting contrary to my wishes".*
>
> *(KII with social activist, Kathmandu)*

Nevertheless, key informants at national and local levels felt that reporting is still very low compared to the actual prevalence. This is confirmed by data from other studies. For example, a majority of women surveyed by the government (2012) were unaware of any Nepali laws that address GBV, and only 13% were aware of a specific law against domestic violence. Similarly, only about a quarter of women (24.8%) were aware of services available to survivors of GBV. This was also evident in the analysis of our case study of survivors. The following quote represents this typical lack of awareness.

> *But then some don't even realise that they are suffering. There are instances where a couple has five daughters but they still want a son. When we ask the women, "Who is pressuring you? Why do you still want to have more children when you already have five? Why don't you use family planning?", they say that their husband can't accept the fact that he has no son so, he desperately wants to have a son.*
>
> *(KII with INGO representative, Kathmandu)*

Despite these limited levels of reporting, it is still interesting to explore some data collected through the police and other secondary sources on IPV. This helps us to get a sense of the forms and trends of IPV through shedding light on the general characteristics of perpetrators and victims, and it also helps to triangulate findings from our primary data collection. For this, we analysed the previous five years of data (2011/12 to 2015/16) from national police records on IPV. The data are presented in Table 8 and also in the Appendix. They are based on cases reported to police offices in all 75 districts of the country and collated centrally. Additionally, apart from analysing these national data, we have also compared them with other relevant national surveys and studies, but reference these separately. We should caution readers that while these data indicate trends at the national level, they do not represent actual figures on IPV because, as noted earlier, these are reported cases only.

4.1.1 IPV and the nature of victims and perpetrators

National-level data derived from various sources show that GBV and IPV are a latent problem in Nepal. According to the *Nepal Demographic and Health Survey* (DHS) 2011, 22% of women had experienced violence since they were 15 years of age and among them 12% had experienced sexual violence (Government of Nepal, 2012b). Similarly, Lammichhane et al. (2011) conducted a cross-sectional study in 2009 among 1,296 young married women in four major ethnic groups and found that more than half (51.9%) reported having ever experienced some type of violence from their husband.. As for the prevalence of different types of violence in Nepali society, studies show that emotional violence (40.4%) is most common,

Table 8: Prevalence of GBV and IPV from 2011 to 2016 (see also Appendix)

Cases	Year/District				
	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016 [i]
Rape/ Attempt to rape	711/N[ii]	677/ 245	912/ 414	981/ 562	108/ 59
Domestic Violence	2271	1800	6835	8268	843
Polygamy	249	350	421	518	56
Grand total	**3244**	**3100**	**8600**	**10346**	**1071**

i The data for the year 2016 is only for the first six months
ii The number of attempted rapes was not specified

followed by physical violence (26.8%), sexual violence (15.3%) and economic abuse/violence (8%) (Government of Nepal, 2012a). Similar trends were also reported by the civil society organisation Saathi (2009), which found that 93% of women had been exposed to mental and emotional torture, 82% had been beaten, and 64% reported polygamy.

However, analysis of the national police records (Table 8) shows that the most commonly reported cases of violence are physical and related to domestic violence. While 2,271 people experienced domestic violence in 2011/12, the number had increased more than threefold (8,268) in 2014/15. This difference from the national data from the DHS 2011, which mentions emotional violence as more prevalent, may be because it is derived from household surveys where emotional and sexual violence are likely to get reported, which is not the case with police reports possibly due to difficulties in presenting evidence of emotional and sexual violence.

Domestic violence data (as shown in Table 9) derived from recorded data for one month (January 2016) obtained from the female police desk in Kathmandu (this body is referred to locally as the 'female police cell', so we will use this term throughout the report) shows that it includes beating, physical and mental torture, forced eviction and deprivation of food and shelter, and accusations of witchcraft. Besides this, with the changing nature of personal relationships driven by migration and globalisation, new forms of IPV seem to be on the rise. Key informants based in Kathmandu shared that they have come across a growing number of cases where unmarried girls – largely returnee migrants who do not want to go back to their origin villages or girls who enter the city to work – are lured into living together as a couple by men who have wives back in the villages. After staying together for a few months as couples, these men rob the girl of her money and inflict physical and mental torture on her if she resists.

Regarding perpetrators, several studies (e.g. Saathi, 2009; Atteraya et al., 2015; Tuladhar et al., 2013) show that it is usually intimate partners that perpetuate domestic violence. For example, data from the DHS 2011 show that 84% of perpetrators in cases of domestic violence are the husband. The same report also shows that overall, one-third of married women in Nepal experience domestic violence from their spouse. Other data from the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (2012) on rural districts found that estimates of IPV ranged from 30% to 81% depending on the district and type of IPV assessed (Government of Nepal, 2012a).

An analysis of domestic violence data derived from national police data (Table 10) shows that a large majority of victims in earlier years were female. This also resonates with views of key informants and information from existing studies (.e.g. Government of Nepal, 2012a), which show that women are commonly the victims; moreover, those that are most likely to face IPV are illiterate, single

Table 9: Types of violence registered in January 2016 by Kathmandu police cell

Type of domestic violence	Numbers
Abuse by mother-in-law	62
Physical assault by others	25
Physical assault by husband	19
Physical assault by other family members	5
Citizenship or marriage certificate denial	9
Forced separation of inter-caste couples	7
Attempted murder	6
Rape	1
Polygamy	20
Total	**288**

Table 10: Reported cases of domestic violence and characteristics of victims and perpetrators

Cases	Particulars		2011/12[i]	2012/13	2013/14
Domestic Violence	Victim	Male	4	32	761
		Female	2247	1768	6074
		Total	**2251**	**1800**	**6835**
	Perpertrators	Male	2068	1316	6719
		Female	431	30	1023
		Total	**2499**	**1346**	**7742**
	Age group of victim	0-16	41	7	37
		17-18	93	31	191
		19-25	676	702	2282
		26-35	726	607	2839
		36-45	476	374	884
		46 and above	139	79	602
		Total	**2251**	**1800**	**6835**
	Age group of perpetrators	10-16	8	2	13
		17-25	578	393	1497
		26-35	727	476	3253
		36-45	701	302	1969
		46 and above	475	173	1010
		Total	**2499**	**1376**	**7742**
	Relationship between victim and perpetrators	Parents-in-law	162	99	553
		Sisters-in-law	38	38	29
		Elder brother-in-law/elder sister-in-law	30	34	119
		Husband/his second wife	192	22	45
		Sons/daughters (children)	13	29	105
		Father/mother	11	4	56
		Step mother/father	4	4	9
		Husband/wife	1809	1116	5603
		Wife's parents	NA	NA	31
		Neighbours	NA	NA	237
		Siblings	NA	NA	39
		Sister-in-law/ sister's husband	NA	NA	9
		Total	**2251**	**1346** [ii]	**6835**
	Types of domestic violence experienced by the victim	Beating	1301	698	1284
		Stopped access to food and clothing	720	389	720
		Verbal abuse	211	239	3552
		False accusations	19	46	115
		In-fighting/ quarrels	NA	331	837
		Thrown out of their home	NA	97	125
		Others	NA	NA	49
		Total	**2251**	**1800**	**6835**

[i] The police use the Nepali calendar and the year given in the table is based on the conversion of the Nepali system of enumeration to the AD system.

[ii] The relationship of the remaining 454 was unknown

Source: Compiled by authors from records from the National Police Headquarters

women (which includes those who are never married, widowed or divorced), women migrants, women with physical or mental disabilities, refugees, child brides, tribal women, and women belonging to minorities, untouchable lower castes and those who are ignorant of laws and policies. However, these women are also most unlikely to report violence or access justice because they lack the knowledge as well as the social and economic capital to do so. This said, key informants also pointed out that they have seen an increase in the number of men registering as victims of domestic violence in recent years, which is also observed in the data from the national police records (Table 10). While men comprised 0.18% of victims in 2011/12, they comprised 11.4% of total victims in 2013/14, the latest year for which data are available.

A majority of victims and perpetrators are aged between 19 and 35. This shows that domestic violence is more likely to get reported if it occurs to adolescents and young people than to older people. The data also show that since 2011, a large majority of perpetrators of domestic violence are spouses and second wives (e.g. 81.07% in 2013/14), followed by parents-in law perpetrating violence to the first wife (8%). These data also align closely with the percentage given by the DHS 2011, which reported that a large majority (82.5%) of perpetrators are spouses. Similarly, the data show that the majority of perpetrators are literate (i.e. can read and write) but have not passed formal primary education. One reason for high perpetration of IPV among this group may be that because of having less education, they are likely to get only menial jobs and hence mete out IPV out of frustration.

4.1.2 Rape and the nature of victims and perpetrators

Rape (and attempted rape) is the second most common form of GBV in Nepal (see Table 8 and the Appendix). The data show that reporting of rape has increased steeply in recent years[6]: 711 complaints were lodged in 2011/12, increasing to 1,543 in 2014/15. A majority of key informants held the opinion that while they are not sure whether rape cases are on the increase, rape reporting is definitely increasing.

It is difficult to ascertain whether married or unmarried women are more likely to be victims of rape. While police reporting data from earlier years (see Appendix) showed that victims were more likely to be married women, in the past two years, registered victims have largely been unmarried women. One reason for this may be because while previously, families would not report rape of unmarried girls due to fear that the girl would not be accepted for marriage, now, with increasing awareness, people are increasingly viewing rape as a violation of a woman's rights and hence are more willing to report rape. Key informants are of the opinion that families now tend to marry off girls who have been raped far from their village of origin, where the community does not know what has happened to the girl. However, in the case of rape/attempted rape, it is not possible to ascertain whether the perpetrator was an intimate partner. However, key informants are of the opinion that a married woman would never directly report marital rape but come to seek divorce citing they do not want to stay with the husband and it takes several rounds of counselling for the women to share that they are seeking divorce due to marital rape.

While police records do not disaggregate data by age in cases of rape/attempted rape, they do record data on gender, marital status, occupation, educational status and caste – of perpetrators and victims (Table 11).

These data show that women are the most common victims of rape and that the incidence of rape is highest among those working in agriculture, followed by those going to school and housewives. While we could not ascertain reasons for this, we speculate that for students and housewives, this could be because the nature of their work and/or travel (in case of those who are still studying) means they are generally likely to be unaccompanied/isolated, and thus vulnerable. In case of those women working in agriculture, an additional reason might be that most perpetrators are also involved in agriculture. There is no substantial difference in incidence according to victims' marital status; in terms of educational status, illiterate and less-educated girls (up to secondary education) are more likely to report being raped. In terms of ethnicity, women from indigenous groups (Janajati) are more likely to be victims, followed by Chhetris. This might be because, similarly to the case of agriculture, the highest number of perpetrators belong to indigenous groups, which means that they move in the same social circles and are most likely to be physically more proximate and interact frequently for employment, during festivals and other general circumstances of daily life; girls' greater physical exposure to perpetrators thus increases the likelihood of violence. This also explains why most rapists are not strangers to the victims and are likely to be their boyfriends and hence intimate partners.

6 Figures for year 2015/16 is only for the first quarter of that year.

Table 11: Perpetrators and victims (rape/attempted rape)

Perpetrators of rape/attempted rape						
Cases	**Particulars**		**2011/2012**[i]	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**
Rape/Attempted rape	Gender	Male	811	1005	939 / 427	1093 / 593
		Female	3	0	0 / 0	0 / 0
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
	Marital status	Married	463	617	557 / 268	610 / 410
		Unmarried	348	388	382 / 159	483 / 183
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
	Occupation	Agriculture	477	633	481 / 226	638 / 280
		Service sector	4	16	50 / 49	49 / 35
		Business	0	0	72 / 35	67 / 56
		Labour	124	110	226 / 77	213 / 88
		Still studying	209	246	110 / 40	126 / 134
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
	Educational status	Illiterate	258	281	49 / 44	87 / 23
		Literate	266	348	693 / 261	735 / 442
		Class 6-10	202	329	112 / 57	187 / 78
		SLC	17	23	47 / 42	38 / 19
		Intermediate Level	13	19	29 / 14	34 / 20
		Bachelor Level	4	5	9 / 9	12 / 11
		Total	**81***	**1005***	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
	Caste	Brahmin	180	163	98 / 55	119 / 87
		Chhetri	233	333	154 / 91	230 / 111
		Janajati (indigenous groups)	234	290	328 / 127	426 / 204
		Dalit	109	120	179 / 75	168 / 72
		Madhesi	58	99	180 / 79	150 / 120
		Total	**814***	**1005 ***	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
Victims of rape						
Cases	Particulars		**2011/2012**	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**
	Gender	Male	15	9	1 / 0	0 / 0
		Female	705	928	934 / 422	981 / 562
		Total	**720**	**937**	**935/ 422**	**981 / 562**
	Marital status	Married	371	550	257 / 140	292 / 242
		Unmarried	349	387	678 / 282	689 / 320
		Total	**720**	**937**	**935 / 422**	**981 / 562**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	311	507	391 / 167	394 / 243
		Service sector	0	0	3 / 26	7 / 3
		Business	0	0	17 / 28	24 / 52
		Labour	89	52	48 / 77	53 / 52
		Still studying	320	379	457 / 124	887 / 195
		Housewife	-	-	19 / NS	57 / 17
		Total	**720***	**938***	**925/ 422**	**981 / 562**

Perpetrators of rape/attempted rape					
Education status	Illiterate	184	266	100 / 57	66 / 33
	Literate	328	313	558 / 226	632 / 384
	Class 6-10	190	328	231 / 100	243 / 115
	SLC	9	23	31 / 24	18 / 14
	Intermediate Level	9	5	13 / 8	18 / 13
	Bachelor Level	0	2	2 / 7	4 / 3
	Total	**720**	**937**	**935 /422**	**981 / 562**
Caste status	Brahmin	210	NA	109 / 42	112 / 49
	Chhetri	228	NA	165 / 66	197 / 128
	Janajati (indigenous groups)	154	NA	342 / 186	404 / 293
	Dalit	82	NA	181 / 76	158 / 85
	Madhesi	46	NA	138 / 52	110 / 77
	Total	**720**	**NA**	**935 / 422**	**981 / 562**

[i] *Until 2012/13 data are not disaggregated by rape and attempt to rape*

* *The number of attempted rape cases was not specified separately*

Source: National Police Headquarters, 2016

4.1.3 Polygamy

Polygamy was reported by key informants at national level as another common form of violence. Table 12 gives the number of victims and perpetrators and their age groups.[7] While it seems to be an increasing trend, as in earlier cases, it is difficult to ascertain whether this is due to an actual increase in incidence of polygamy or to an increase in reporting. According to key informants, polygamy used to be more socially accepted but in the past two generations and with a strict law against polygamy, this trend appeared to have declined but now seems to be rising again. This is also reflected in the national data from police records (Table 12), which show that most of those men reported to be marrying twice were aged 19-35. Essentially, this suggests that while in their father's generation polygamy appeared to have stopped, sons who have grown up in a monogamous tradition have started to practise polygamy. Besides this, many study respondents reported growing incidence of young men conducting extramarital affairs (unlike in previous generations, when a man would marry the second woman and bring her into the household); respondents reported that such affairs were leading to outcomes similar to those of traditional polygamy (such as deprivation of economic support and neglect of the first wife) and could actually be described as 'polygamy in a new form'. Increasing incidence of polygamy among the young generation has also been observed in other studies such as Ghimire and Samuels (2014).

4.2 Existing laws and policies to address IPV

In Nepal, issues of GBV and IPV are addressed under the broader national framework of gender empowerment and human rights. Most of the policies and programmes of government bodies as well as donors are aligned to this framework. Several laws and policies address GBV, including the Gender Equality Act (2006), which includes clauses that specifically address the previous gaps in laws pertaining to GBV and IPV. For instance, it made it compulsory for the perpetrator of rape to compensate the victim for mental as well as physical harm. Similarly, the Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act 2012 for the first time recognises domestic violence as a crime punishable by law. Nepal is also a signatory to 23 treaties and international human rights instruments that deal with or mention GBV.

However, there is still a long way to go to address GBV since according to key informants, these laws often provide cursory remedies, contain loopholes or, most importantly, do not address the underlying social norms and values that drive GBV and/or IPV. Additionally, as already discussed, there is no specific definition of IPV in national laws and policies, which are framed to focus on forms of abuse rather than perpetrators in a given situation. This means that the government and other stakeholders have not had the data to see the scope of IPV separately and hence to realise the extent of the problem. Additionally, key informants pointed out that, in Nepali society, where people typically still live in a joint family or are influenced

7 In this table, perpetrators are female when the person who filed the case accuses the second wife as also being a part of polygamy. However, whether to file a case against the second wife or not is totally up to the person filing the case; they may or may not accuse the second wife.

Table 12: National data on polygamy (2011/12 to 2013/14)

Cases	Particulars		2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Polygamy					
	Victim	Male	0	0	0
		Female	249	270	421
		Total	**249**	**270**	**421**
	Perpetrators	Male	240	NA[i]	421
		Female	240	NA	346
		Total	**480**	**270**	**767**
	Age group of victim	0-16	0	0	1
		17-18	6	3	10
		19-25	61	75	144
		26-35	114	120	197
		36-45	52	66	51
		46 and above	16	6	18
		Total	**249**	**270**	**421**
	Age group of perpetrators	13-16	0	NA	7
		17-18	35	NA	22
		19-25	145	NA	276
		26-35	152	NA	348
		36-45	96	NA	90
		46 and above	57	NA	24
		Total	**480**	**270**	**767**

[i] *N/A means data not available*

by parents in their daily relationships with their spouse, there are potentially multiple perpetrators of IPV within the household. This makes it difficult to ascertain whether an act of abuse constitutes IPV or domestic violence unless there is detailed attention/investigation of what took place, as illustrated by this quote:

> *The families also get involved indirectly. The reason why a husband beats his wife could be because his mother complained about her to him every day saying she is unable to do the household work properly or she doesn't work hard enough. Usually the man is out of the house the whole day to earn, he comes back from work tired and then at home he hears his mother ranting about his wife every day. When the man hears it every day, he believes his mother is speaking the truth and in anger beats the wife. So now tell me, in such cases, are the husbands the only perpetrator?*
>
> *(KII with member of GBV committee, Kapilvastu)*

However, there are separate national laws on domestic violence and other forms of GBV such as witchcraft, and violence in the workplace, which touch on issues of IPV. Table 13 details existing Nepali laws and policies that address IPV.

For details of the special features of these policies and others on gender empowerment, see Ghimire and Samuels, 2014.

In relation to redress and justice, key informants pointed out that several structures have been designed to translate these recent laws into action. At the apex of the response mechanism, there are two main ministries that make the country's strategic plans and policies on GBV issues: the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW). All other ministries have a gender focal point in their department, which is supposed to liaise with the leading ministries to address issues of GBV. Similarly, the justice and security sector, including the courts and police, also have gender focal points/sections. These are independent in operation but are aligned to the national framework in their overall objectives. Detailed information about these structures is given in the next subsection (4.3).

Table 13: Legal provisions that touch on IPV

Categories of national laws against gender violence	Effort undertaken to address gender violence over the years
Constitutional provisions	Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2053 B.S*
Legal provisions	Police act, 2012 B.S Libel and Slander Act, 2033 Country Code, 2020 B.S Crime and Punishment, Act, 2027 B.S Social Practices (Reform) Act, 2033 B.S Children Act, 2048 B.S Labor Act, 2048 B.S Local Self Governance Act, 2055 B.S National Women Commission Act, 2063 National Women commission Rules, 2063 B.S
Special laws	Human Trafficking and Transportation (control) Act, 2064 Human Trafficking and Transportation (control) Regulation, 2065 B.S Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2066 Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act, 2067 Gender Violence Elimination Fund (Operation) Rules, 2067 B.S Gender Equality Act, 2006
Procedural provisions	Various provisions of the Country Code, 2020 B.S Appellate Court Regulation, 2048 B.S State Cases Act, 2049 B.S Supreme Court Regulation, 2049 B.S District Court Regulation, 2052 B.S The Procedural Guidelines for Protecting the Privacy of the Parties in the Proceedings of Special Types of Cases, 2064 B.S

** Refers to the Nepal calendar, i.e. the Bikram Samvat calendar*
Source: Compiled by authors from different sources, 2016

The Gender Empowerment Coordination Unit and a Council of Ministers that is housed in the Prime Minister's Office oversee and coordinate the government's efforts to address gender-related challenges. This was established in 2010, when the government declared 'Zero tolerance against GBV' and celebrated 2010 as the 'Year against gender-based violence'. Addressing GBV as a form of women's empowerment is one of the chief targets. The government's National Strategy and Plan of Action on Gender Empowerment and Ending GBV (2012-2017) is a key policy instrument currently being implemented through the MoWCSW.

For monitoring and evaluation (M&E) purposes, the ministry conducts activities at both national and local levels through committees made up of members from the above-mentioned line agencies who report to the MoWCSW. According to key informants, this M&E activity forms the basis for devising new programmes, laws

Table 14: Action plan to eliminate GBV

Theme	Actions	Involvement/lead
Prevention	Prepare plans and policies	Directly involved
Protection	Provide facilitation if funds are needed for operation of protection activities (e.g. help establish and run shelter homes/provide training to men and women)	Coordinates with the Ministry of Finance as the main focal point but also works with Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) as well as national and international NGOs
Prosecution	Provide legal support to survivors	Direct involvement of MoWCSW through district, coordination with legal bodies such as court, police and MoHA, with the MoWCSW as lead

Source: Gender violence control section, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare

and policies. For example, the violence control section under the MoWCSW is currently preparing indicators for declaring 'gender violence free' zones.

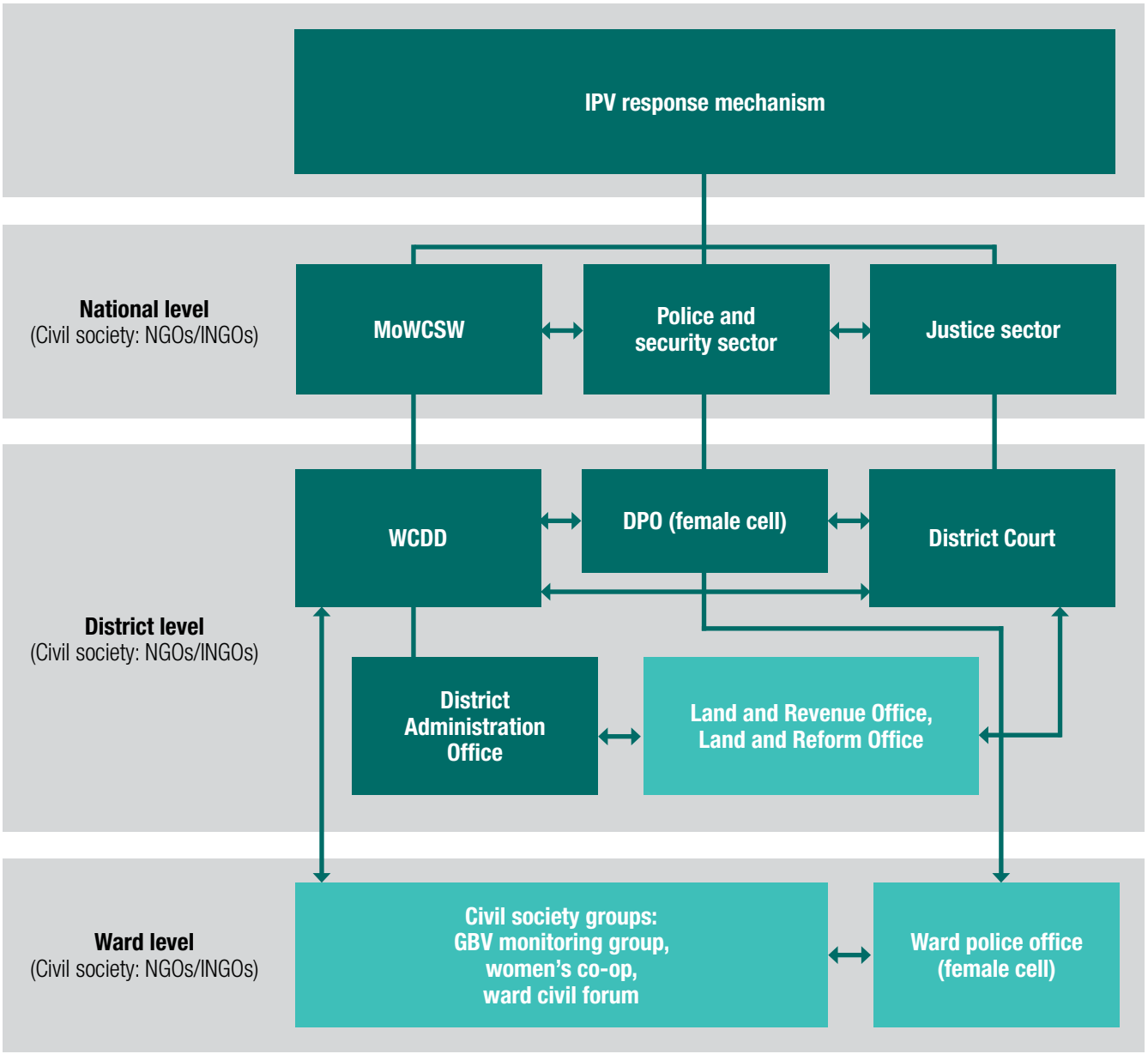
The national approach to GBV is to tackle the problem from three aspects: prevention, protection and prosecution. Details of the action plan for eliminating GBV are given in Table 14.

In addition to the government body that monitors the implementation of GBV-related policies and laws, local civic committees also conduct monitoring, including the Citizen Forum, *Mahila Sanjal* (Women's Network) *nagarik sachetana kendra* (civic awareness centre) and the GBV monitoring committee, formed by the government and comprising local people of the respective wards and VDCs (These committees report to the WCDD, the district line agency of the MoWCSW, which in turn reports to the MoWCSW on a quarterly basis. Monitoring is facilitated by the social mobilisers of WCDD office. The reporting format includes sections to report on number and status of the cases filed.

4.3 Institutional mechanisms to respond to IPV

In this subsection, we describe the response mechanisms in place for IPV based on key informant interviews but also from our analysis of case studies and interviews with local-level respondents. For the sake of clarity, we divide these mechanisms into three levels: national, district and ward-level (see Figure 5), while also showing how they are interlinked.

Figure 5: IPV response mechanisms



Source: Fieldwork, 2016

4.3.1 The national level

As already noted, in Nepal, IPV largely falls under GBV and is usually categorised as domestic violence. Three main institutional bodies deal with GBV: the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW), the justice sector and the police (through branch offices at district and ward levels).

According to stakeholders from the justice sector, IPV falls under their work of addressing GBV and they aim to make it easier for women to access justice. To support this, there are special laws and provisions such as free legal services for women who do not have resources to undertake court procedures. At the national level, staff in the justice sector coordinate with civil society groups and organisations as well as donors, national and international NGOs, to make it easier for women who have experienced GBV to access justice.

According to stakeholders from the police, they provide services to women as part of providing security to all citizens and maintaining the rule of law. Women mostly present to police with cases of domestic violence, which includes violence from their intimate partners. The police have special provisions for women, such as women's police cell at district and ward levels, to take up the issue of GBV.

Civil society and international organisations – including CARE, which supports one of our case study programmes (see section 3.2) – tend to focus on GBV prevention, conducting training and awareness sessions with men and women at community level. Others such as the United Nations bodies UNICEF and UNFPA do not work directly with IPV victims but work indirectly by funding local NGOs to address underlying discriminatory norms and GBV, also through awareness and training sessions but engaging 'gatekeepers' – men and religious leaders – to tackle GBV within the community. Many of these organisations also work to end child marriage and the dowry system, educating girls and women by incentivising their families and providing literacy training for adult women.

4.3.2 The district level

At district level, the police, justice sector and the MoWCSW have their own line agencies. Within the ministry, the WCDD is the main body tackling IPV. The police have established women's cells in each of the country's 75 districts. These have trained female police officers and assistants and have separate rooms/buildings and procedures to help women and girls who come to lodge complaints related to GBV and domestic violence. Female officers hear complaints and take action as appropriate (e.g. counselling, mediation, or referral). The justice sector works through district courts for prosecution of cases. It provides free legal services through government-hired licensed lawyers ('legal advisors') in each district as well as additional lawyers in the Supreme Court in Kathmandu. When a woman presents with a complaint of GBV, the legal advisor begins the necessary procedures (such as filing the case in court, prosecuting on behalf of the victim and carrying out the necessary court procedures). This includes ensuring that any court verdict is acted on by other quasi-judicial bodies – for example, registering land on the victim's behalf at land revenue and land reform offices if the victim is allocated a share of property as part of the verdict.

According to key informants, there is also financial support (of up to $500) available to victims from the government's 'Alleviation fund for victims of gender based violence', for women who do not want to go to a shelter home (perhaps because they have children whom they cannot/do not want to take with them) or because of the stigma of living outside their home. This fund operates at the district level, at a level of up to $120, and in Kathmandu, of up to $500 as approved by a special

Box 2: Gender violence control section within the MoWCSW

The MoWCSW has a 'gender violence control' section that develops plans, policies and programmes on GBV, which are approved by the ministry and the cabinet and implemented by the relevant government agencies at district and village levels, principally the courts, police, land reform and land revenue offices, district administration offices, WCDD offices, VDCs and village-level civic committees. Key informants felt that feedback from these agencies was incorporated into the gender violence control section's processes for drawing up plans, policies and programmes.

Box 3: Practical support: short-stay shelter homes

The MoWCSW has recently set up shelters for victims of GBV, one in the centre of Kathmandu, which was due to open in 2016, and others in 17 districts, of which 16 are funded by the government but operated by NGOs or other community groups. There are also other shelter homes funded by NGOs that are either run independently or in collaboration with the government. These homes provide short-term accommodation (up to 45 days) and related support such as life skills training, education, medical and legal support, and seed money to start small business activities – needs that have been identified as priorities by survivors. In addition, NGOs (national and international) also work at district level through their implementing partners or their branch offices where they work on prevention but also run shelter homes and help victims in case of court procedures.

committee designed for this purpose. According to key informants, in addition to this, when the perpetrator is not able to compensate the victim (e.g. due to poverty), as per the law or the verdict of the court, the government can compensate the victim for up to 100,000 NPR ($1,000) if she places an appeal to the court. In this case, depending upon the severity of the case, the national court decides the amount of compensation.

As cases of IPV often involve the need to present evidence, verifying and obtaining documents such as citizenship and marriage certificates typically requires all three bodies (police, justice and WCDD) to liaise closely with each other but also with the district administration office (the district-level representative of MoHA, which issues documents such as citizenship certificates) and with other quasi-judicial bodies at district level such as the land revenue and land reform offices.

Many civic bodies are active at the district level, comprising men and women. In Kapilvastu and Rupandehi, the civic awareness centre, *nagarik sachetana kendra*, is very active. Some of them leverage their position of being nearer to the courts and Women's Development Office to help victims by giving space and services such as accompanying them to these offices.

4.3.3 The ward level

At ward level, the lowest tier of Nepal's administrative system (and often covering just a few households), there is a police office, and a female police cell. The ward office represents the justice sector and processes any referral documents required by the court. The WCDD works chiefly through ward-level GBV monitoring committee, which is formed of 6 women (including a WCDD social mobiliser) selected (by women) from the respective wards. These monitoring committees are present in all wards in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi districts. The other group members receive training from WCDD on GBV issues. The members work on a voluntary basis, usually using their own resources to run the committee. They receive refresher training on an ad-hoc basis if and when the WCDD gets funds through from the ministry. When a case of violence is witnessed or reported to a committee member, they meet in one of their homes to discuss the case and take any action necessary. At other times, they meet regularly once a month. In both study sites, the ward police office and the GBV monitoring committee are the main bodies women come to if they wish to seek help in dealing with IPV, although the Women's Networks, *Mahila Sanjal*, also play a role (see Box 4).

Box 4: The role of Women's Networks

Mahila Sanjal (Women's Networks) are also active at ward level. Each consists of around 35 women and is formed by the WCDD. These groups do not just deal with GBV but are part of a larger women's co-operative established by the WCDD to empower women and build their voice and agency, encouraging them to participate in discussion fora among other things.

Mahila Sanjal addresses the issues of GBV and IPV by implementing awareness raising activities as part of the protection strategy. They have monthly meetings to discuss social issues affecting women and, as a group, try and work out solutions for common problems. For example, finding that a lot of women face physical abuse (including rape) when they defecate openly, the Women's Network in Kapilvastu has asked for a budget from the VDC to instal a toilet in each house. Women were actively involved in the whole process. The network also raises women's awareness of the importance of documents such as the citizenship certificate, marriage certificate and childbirth registration, and helps them obtain these documents. They also work with other village-level groups to try to resolve cases of GBV.

5. IPV in the study sites – understanding, prevalence and manifestations

5.1 Understanding of IPV in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi

As with national-level stakeholders, at the local community level, men and women (programme beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike) do not have an explicit concept of IPV. While there is no specific local term for IPV, the local term for GBV is '*mahila hinsa*'; the term for domestic violence is '*gharelu hinsa*', although the two are used interchangeably and people also refer to various forms of IPV (such as beatings, polygamy, extramarital affairs, neglect, emotional violence and verbal abuse) in association with the first two terms. But generally people do not perceive these actions as IPV and are not aware that GBV and domestic violence can be further categorised as IPV. This may be for several reasons. First, it is only recently that people have overcome their reluctance to discuss domestic violence in public, and second, due to the joint family system and gender norms around responsibility of the son to the parents, IPV and domestic violence are always strongly linked with other family members, which is a strong factor for men to mete out IPV. As this section will show, in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi, GBV and domestic violence are still generally accepted as normal behaviour and are not perceived as an injustice or violence but rather a way of showing the 'correct path'. Moreover, this kind of behaviour is considered to be a private affair for the family or household and not to be discussed beyond this. This was also found to be the case among programme beneficiaries:

> *In-laws are elders and have better knowledge about life. Hence, if they beat us to show the right path when we do not listen to them, what is wrong with that?*
>
> *(IDI with adolescent beneficiary, Kapilvastu)*

5.2 Prevalence and manifestations of IPV in the study sites

Table 15 shows reported incidence of different forms of GBV in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu districts in the past five years and how it compares to national figures. While there are no data available on domestic violence for 2013/14, we can see that reporting has increased significantly since then. For example, while only 2 cases of domestic violence were reported in 2011/12, the number increased to 234 and 145 for Rupandehi and Kapilvastu respectively in 2014/15. The table also indicates that in the study districts and nationally, domestic violence is the main form of violence women face (apart from rape, where the data are not disaggregated according to whether the perpetrator was a family member or an outsider). The data also show that rape and polygamy in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, similarly to the national trend, are the second most severe form of violence women face.

As with the national-level figures, figures for Kapilvastu and Rupandehi indicate a rise in the number of reports being lodged since 2014. This also reverberates with the information from key informants in both districts. When asked about the trend of IPV, respondents outlined that their difficulty in assessing IPV was due to the fact that while some forms of IPV (such as wife-beating and polygamy) are explicit and hence easier to record and count, others (such as feelings of suspicion by husbands, which particularly affect women from middle-class families and working women) do not get reported and are more difficult to identify. This is either because women do not discuss what has happened to them in order to keep the family and family honour intact, or because it is difficult for them to show the negative impact. They may fear being ridiculed for raising what is considered a relatively unimportant issue compared with physical forms of violence that other women face, which may have more grave consequences.

In both study sites, respondents' perceptions about the prevalence of violence were mixed depending on whether

Table 15: GBV in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu compared with national figures

Cases	Year/District														
	2011/2012			2012/2013			2013/2014			2014/2015			20 15/2016		
	Total (country)	Rupandehi	Kapilvastu	Total (country)	Rupandehi	Kapilvastu	Total (Country)	Rupandehi	Kapilvastu	Total (country)	Rupandehi	Kapilvastu	Total (country)	Rupandehi	Kapilvastu
Rape/ Attempt to rape	711/ NS[i]	19	14	677/ 245	32	11	912/ 414	NA	NA	981/ 562	24/ 25	17/ 20	108/ 59	NA	NA
Domestic Violence	2271	2	0	1800	0	0	6835	NA	NA	8268	234	145	843	NA	NA
Polygamy	249	NA[ii]	NA	350	7	6	421	19	2	518	23	9	56	NA	NA
Grand total	324/4	29	16	3100	39	17	8600	19	5	10346	306	191	1071	NA	NA

[i]*NS means not specified into rape and attempt to rape*
[ii]*NA means not available*
Source: National Police Headquarters (adapted by authors), 2016

they belonged to the older or younger generation, their exposure to ICT and their perception of what counts as violence. Some traditional forms of IPV (such as wife-beating) appear to be decreasing while new forms are emerging that appear to be on the rise, which made it difficult for younger respondents to say whether there is an overall decrease or not. According to adolescent boys and young married men, wife-beating is the most common form of IPV and, in both districts, is more prevalent among older men and those from Madhesi and Muslim ethnic groups; however, they reported that IPV was decreasing among younger men of other ethnic groups. Their reasons for this decrease include literate youths now considering it shameful to beat a wife. Respondents reported that the most prevalent forms of IPV among younger men were extramarital affairs and polygamy, while sexual coercion, crimes such as acid attacks due to suspicion and jealousy, and victimisation using phones and social media were mentioned by adolescents as upcoming forms of violence used by adolescents in both districts.

Respondents felt that with exposure to ICT and migration, migrant men in particular have become more 'modern in their views around sex and physical relationships' while their wives who stay at home are not compatible with their husbands. This leads to the wife being unable to fulfil the physical demands of the husband, which encourages the husband to conduct extramarital affairs. This came up very strongly from female respondents in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi but also equally strongly from young married men who expressed their frustration that their wives were 'not compatible with them' or 'did not understand them', alongside their desire to make their wives 'more modern'.

In both districts, younger unmarried adolescent girls who participated in the study felt that unmarried girls are more vulnerable to IPV than married women. They felt that cases of IPV among married women have decreased in the past three to four years due to substantial exposure to awareness programmes on domestic violence. Similarly, they believed that the widespread awareness raising activities in schools as well as in the community (through street dramas, for instance) only target married couples, which means that only married men and women are more aware about IPV. However, since having a boyfriend is now becoming more common, but at the same time is not officially accepted or spoken about openly, and there are no programmes that discuss IPV among unmarried partners (including the potential dangers associated with relationships), girls find themselves becoming exposed to new forms of violence such as coercion to begin a sexual relationship. Adolescent girls in Rupandehi estimated that between 80% and 90% of boys their age had a girlfriend, with more than 20% having more than one girlfriend. They also shared that more than 50% of the girls in such relationships are forced to meet boys in unsafe places and are coerced into having a sexual relationship with the boy.

Interviewer: How many of your friends have girlfriends just for fun or to have a physical relationship?

Respondent: 7 out of 10… Boys usually buy clothes for their girlfriend or pay her mobile bills to impress her…

(IDI with male non-beneficiary, Rupandehi)

Young adolescent boys in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi who said they have a girlfriend also agreed that they pressured the girl to meet in secluded places with the motive of engaging in a sexual relationship. They also confirmed that if the girl did not agree to meet at such a place, some had beaten them or used emotional blackmail such as not speaking or threatening to break the relationship off and make the affair public to tarnish the girl's name.

Boys usually pressure the girls to have a physical relation… They usually say (to their girlfriends), " If you truly love me, you need to have physical relation with me…" and girls are forced into that to prove their love. In most of the cases, girls don't know that they are forced into it and it is violence.

(IDI with adolescent boy, non-beneficiary, Rupandehi)

Older male respondents in both districts who participated either as key informants or part of an intergenerational trio (IGT) had a different view altogether. They tried to strongly assert that there were never major cases of violence in the community. However, we have to understand that they do not consider wife-beating, marital rape and other forms of emotional violence such as verbal abuse as constituting violence. Their typical attitude towards IPV and trends in IPV is illustrated by this quote:

In our community, husbands do not commit violence on their wives. There are smaller cases like beating the wife, but nothing big. In earlier years, there used to be cases of violence but now it is decreasing.

(IGT with grandfather, Rupandehi)

On the other hand, older female respondents who participated in intergenerational trios were unaware of the new forms of IPV emerging, and felt that wife-beating is decreasing because women are more empowered to speak up and have more freedom today compared to women of their generation. They also felt similarly about polygamy:

Women of nowadays are different. They will not tolerate and stay quiet. They go to different trainings and know what to do and where to go (in case of violence) if they need help. So, if the husband brings another wife, they will not keep quiet. They will report to the police. In our generation, we didn't do any such things. We just kept quiet and tolerated in the name of compromise and stayed in the same house.

(IGT with grandmother, Rupandehi)

Different forms of IPV are also found to be deeply intertwined, which means that victims often face multiple forms of violence or abuse. For example, polygamy and extramarital affairs among married men were often found to lead to forced eviction of the first wife or depriving her of food and women who face sexual violence from other male family members cannot talk about it due to fear of further violence such as being thrown out of the house by husbands.

5.2.1 Forms of IPV

As outlined in section 1, IPV includes: all acts of physical violence, such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating; sexual violence, including forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion; emotional (psychological) abuse such as insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation (e.g. destroying things), threats of harm, and threats to take away children; and controlling behaviours, including isolating a person from family and friends, monitoring their movements, and restricting access to financial resources, employment, education or medical care. As discussed in section 4, polygamy, extramarital affairs and beating by husbands (fuelled by alcohol consumption or migration according to study respondents) are the most common forms of IPV experienced by women. Extramarital affairs and polygamy were also reported to be common forms of IPV in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi districts. Negligence by husbands, or the husband not providing for his dependent wife and children, was also mentioned by many respondents as a common form of IPV.

Key informants were of the opinion that sexual violence, including marital rape, may be occurring on a significant scale but going largely unreported, citing reasons such as the high levels of stigma associated with talking about sex and the perception (on the part of both spouses) that being raped by one's husband does not constitute violence. A key informant summed up the notion of marital rape as follows:

Yes, the women aren't able to expose such cases. Where would a female go to file a complaint if her husband raped her? Even we who are educated and more aware women of the society can't bring out such incident in front of the society. How would a female from a remote village be able to talk about that? The husband might say to his wife that, "I have brought you just for that". But, I think very recently there have been some cases of marital rape that have been filed.

(KII with government representative, Kapilvastu)

Having said that, open discussion about marital rape in the PSP training sessions seemed to be having an impact

on some beneficiaries, and particularly according to study respondents, ex-Gurkhas:

We had ex-Gurkha army men participating in the training. They said "Sister, you gave this training a little late to us. We used to just force our wives to have sex, we never thought about their desire. We thought they were just being shy. But now we know we were committing crime.

(KII with member of WCDD, Rupandehi)

However, there was limited evidence that this was happening with other men. They largely thought that if a wife does not agree to have sex when the husband wants to, it might mean that she is having affairs with other men.

Why would a wife not want to have sex with the husband. If that is the case, she must be having affairs with other men

(IDI with beneficiary man, Kapilvastu).

Besides physical violence, other common forms of violence were reported to include forcing women to have more children (often to get more sons), disputes over use of contraceptives, and suspicions that the wife was having extramarital affairs.

With regards to the issue of family planning, the husbands put pressure on their wives to have more babies. The wife, though, doesn't want to have a big family but she has to do what her husband says. This is also a form of violence which they suffer in silence.

(KII with government representative, Rupandehi)

According to study respondents, while the first two kinds of IPV are common among less-educated people, suspicions about wives having extramarital affairs are more common among husbands married to educated women. The reason might be because educated women are more likely to leave the household to go to their place of work.

5.2.2 Characteristics of IPV perpetrators and victims

According to our study findings, certain groups of men are more likely to behave violently towards their partner: uneducated and/or alcoholic men; older men who have grown up witnessing IPV in the house; unemployed or underemployed men; physically disabled men; men who are not aware that GBV is wrong; adolescent boys with girlfriends; and male migrants. Also, our study shows that as men grow older, participate in programmes to combat GBV, or have a stable job and/or earn well, they tend to be less violent. This was confirmed by women who were beaten previously as well as by adolescent boys who shared that their fathers used to beat their mothers but have stopped doing so now. Apart from the groups mentioned, men belonging to certain castes were also found to be more likely to behave violently towards their partner – typically those castes adhering to more rigid gender norms, such as Madhesi, Muslims, Brahmins, Chhetris and Dalits; men from these castes were more likely to perpetrate IPV compared to men from indigenous groups of hilly origin, where inequalities between men and women tended to be narrower.

Respondent: The incidences of violence occur more in the Chhetris and the Brahmins caste group. In the indigenous communities women are usually the head of a household and have the authority to make decisions. However, in the Brahmins and Chhetris, the tradition dictates that women must obey their men and that the men are the figure of authority.

Hence, it is more in Chhetris and Brahmins.

Interviewer: What about in the Dalits?

Respondent: It occurs in the Dalits as well because their tradition is similar to that of Chhetris and Brahmins with regards to gender relations.

(KII with female social mobiliser, Kapilvastu)

There were mixed reports about the behaviour of migrant husbands towards their wives. On the one hand, migrant husbands were found to come back with more liberal views about women's mobility outside the house and their participation in income-generating activities, allowing them to become members of such groups and supporting them in carrying out entrepreneurial activities. Women also said migrant husbands are more likely to stop beating their wives after their return as they come back with a realisation that the wife's work is very hard.

Those who have been abroad are a bit more educated and they read papers and magazines and are of the view that these restrictions on women is not the correct way. They want their women to be able to participate in various programmes and in the process become smarter. They always tell us, "Our women are lagging far behind, you must help them to earn money and become independent, show them how to earn money, help them with bank loans and credit".

(KII with government representative, Kathmandu)

However, we also found that not all men adopt more positive views about women's role when they go abroad; respondents reported that some men tend to be even more controlling and suspicious of their wives back home, accusing them of infidelity, controlling them over the phone

and sending the in-laws to observe the wife and inflict violence. These men also beat up their wives upon their return. This might be because men who are controlling over their wives might fear that they have lost control over her when they are not physically near her. Besides this, and as discussed in section 5.2, key informants suggested that returnee migrant men were also more likely to carry out marital rape. This was attributed to the fact that migrant men become exposed to different, more liberal cultures and attitudes towards sex and female sexuality, but also because they (men) get more exposure to pornography:

Yes, they go out and watch foreign movies, and they also get to see/meet foreign women and culture when they go outside the country to work. So now, when they return back home, they want their wife to be like these foreign women that they saw. The wife has remained in the village her entire life and is alien to these modern ways of life. The husband then becomes angry and frustrated with the wife. He starts seeing other girls who are more modern. Such types of incidents are happening a lot here.

(KII with male social mobiliser, Kapilvastu)

There are mixed views about which age group is most likely to perpetuate violence. Unlike the national data, which show that most perpetrators are in the 25-36 age group, some key respondents in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu believed that IPV is carried out mostly by men in their fifties. They suggested the main reason for this was older men's rigid belief in maintaining the superiority of the male in the husband-wife relationship. However, other informants suggested that young men are more likely to carry out extramarital affairs, and adolescent boys who take several girlfriends are more likely to engage in sexual coercion, while older men (who used to beat up their wives) are no longer doing so because of the impact of awareness programmes.

Interestingly, we did not find any difference in attitudes towards wife-beating between married programme beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Respondents from both groups agreed that 'small beatings' were justified if the wife did not obey her in-laws or husband. In the case of adolescent boys (of whom all respondents were unmarried), whether programme beneficiaries or non-beneficiaries, they were more likely to sexually coerce their girlfriends and use emotional violence to make the girl abide by their controlling behaviour. According to our study respondents, they would not beat the girl, as older men might do.

Regarding the characteristics of victims of IPV in our two study districts, women from the Madhesi and Muslim communities, as well as those from upper-class urban families, were more likely to experience physical violence from their intimate partners while women from the Tharu community, Brahmin and Chhetri and hilly indigenous groups were less likely to face physical violence in both Kapilvastu and Rupandehi. Respondents described certain groups of women as being more likely to face violence: those who do not have sons, are not beautiful to look at, are illiterate, or in relationships where they are considered to be inferior to their husband (e.g. when a less-educated woman marries a better-educated man).

… Women who only have daughters, women who are not beautiful to look at… their husband taunt over her lack of beauty and bring another wife, illiterate women, women from poor family who cannot bring dowry, women who are not very exposed… They are more likely to face violence from husbands.

(Respondent in an FGD with adolescent girls, Rupandehi)

We also found that girls who married early were much more likely to experience beatings from their husbands and in-laws. These women were mostly very young (average age 17-21) Madhesi daughters-in-law, and were not allowed to go out of the household or interact with the neighbours even some years after marriage. While they did not share that they were beaten by the husbands, other informants reported that husbands would beat their wives severely for not obeying their mothers, who often complained to the son that the wife was lazy and not doing household work properly.

6. Exploring linkages between social norms and IPV in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi

As described in the conceptual framework (section 2), social norms play an important role in understanding male perpetration of IPV. As complex as social norms are, the study finds that linkages between social norms and IPV are even more complex. While it is clear that social norms and values do play a significant role in the extent to which IPV occurs, there is no one single norm that can explain this; instead, various norms and beliefs intermingle with each other to perpetuate the different forms of IPV perpetrated by men and young boys (married or unmarried). These complex linkages lie behind IPV, its justification and acceptance, as well as how informal response mechanisms are shaped. In this section we describe the main social norms and beliefs that are related to IPV.

6.1 Social norms on masculinity

There are several social norms and traditional practices in the study sites that can be seen to justify and act as a foundation for the perpetration of violence against women. These include women's inferior status and their acceptance of violence as a means of control and behaviour correction by men.

Norms around men's role and IPV are linked in several ways. We found that in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi, it is accepted and expected that wives are inferior to husbands and a wife should **be controlled** by her husband. A wife is expected to be submissive to the husband and his family; a woman who speaks out is seen as being out of her husband's control, while the husband is regarded as not 'manly' enough to control his wife. This gives leeway for violence as a means of control when the wife does something the husband perceives as wrong. Male control over women's mobility was very strong and cited as one of the main reasons why husbands beat their partners:

> *There are husbands who do not let their wives go out of the house and the wife has to listen to whatever he says. So the wife's tell to her husband, "Can we go out to the market?" To which the husband then replies saying he does not want to go. After hearing this reply, the wife then gets angry and goes out alone or without asking and when she returns in the evening, her husband beats her.*
>
> *(IDI with beneficiary woman, Kapilvastu)*

Adolescent boys, irrespective of whether they were programme beneficiaries or not, were also found to exercise control over their girlfriends, including their mobility. This included imposing their desires on the girlfriends, forcing the girls to meet them, restricting their mobility, and generally monitoring their social interactions (including checking the girls' phones).

Another strong aspect of masculinity in Nepal is a **deep need for respect**. It is expected, by men and women alike, that a wife should always respect her husband, even though the opposite is not the case. This was also found to be true for adolescent boys, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike, who expected their girlfriends to show them respect, such as by obeying them and heeding their advice on any personal or family matters. Case studies of women who have experienced IPV show that men felt disrespected over small things such as a wife not having food ready when the husband comes home, not bringing water for her husband to wash, or not having the bed ready when the husband wants to sleep. Husbands do not help with this work as they believe it is the wife's duty to do household work. According to study respondents, these kinds of occurrences were typically the main cause of older men beating their wives.

He says, "I am your husband. You should make the food ready and stand with a pot of water to wash my hands when I come home from work." If the food is not ready or if I am busy and not able to stand with water to wash his hand, that becomes a reason for getting beaten up by him. When he wants to sleep, the bed should be made beforehand. Otherwise he will say, "Why the bed is not ready?" and will again beat me.

(Case study with IPV survivor, Kapilvastu)

This was further confirmed by female police officers dealing with cases of domestic violence in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi as well as in Kathmandu. When men were asked why they were angry with their wife, not having the food ready when he comes home from work was one of the main triggers of violence.

This need for respect is highly evident in the Madhesi community, but less obvious among the hilly high-caste groups. Younger married women shared that their husbands do take notice that they are busy with children or other household tasks. Perhaps one of the most notable changes resulting from the two case study programmes was the change in attitudes of men towards women's work and in beginning to respect women, with beneficiaries saying they now understand how hard the wife works so they help her with household work and taking care of the children. This was also confirmed by wives, who found the husband helping them with household work – something they had not done previously. However, this in no way meant there was a change in attitudes towards the need for wives respecting their husband. Adolescent boys (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) also reported that they have now learnt that husbands should help their wives with household chores when possible. So it appears less likely these young men would use this as a reason to beat their wives.

However, a backlash was also evident, in that young men who, after taking part in the training programmes, tried to help their wives with household work (particularly cooking) were ridiculed by others in their community. There is a derogatory word, '*bhandari*', meaning 'cook' among the Madhesi community, which was used to ridicule men who help their wife with cooking and kitchen work. Hence, men who took part in the training would instead sit with their wives in the kitchen and talk or help her take care of the children rather than cook. Similarly, men who speak up in support of gender equality are called '*meheru*', meaning 'the servant of the wife'. This also makes it difficult for men to talk about gender equality and to combat IPV.

Another justification for IPV by husbands in both Rupandehi and Kapilvastu is for **corrective action**. On asking if they have ever beaten their girlfriends for any reason, a few of those young adolescent boys who were not part of the programme and who claimed to have girlfriends shared that they had beaten their girlfriends when they did not obey them. Others felt that a boy should explain things for corrective action but never beat a girl. Adult men (programme beneficiaries) shared that they used to beat their wives for disobedience after getting drunk, but now, after taking part in the training, they never beat their wives. When asked if wife-beating is ever justified, some men (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) from both districts shared that if the wife does not obey the husband or the in-laws, even when he explains things to her several times, he can beat her and 'it's for her own good'. On the other hand, adolescent boys (programme beneficiaries) believed that beating and violence towards the wife is never justified. Young women and adolescent girls from both districts as well as men from the hilly community think that a husband should never beat his wife and things should be resolved by discussion. Older women from Madhesi, Tharu and Muslim communities (in both districts) find it acceptable for the husband to beat the wife if she has made any kind of mistake.

Yes, if the wife does something wrong – for example, if she has extramarital affairs with another man – a husband can beat his wife.

(Case study with IPV survivor, Kapilvastu)

6.2 Social norms around protection of women and the need for male guardianship

In Nepal, notions of women being vulnerable and men being strong, and women needing to be protected by men, are rooted in Hindu as well as Muslim beliefs. Men (whether husbands, fathers or brothers) are thus important guardians of women at different stages of life. The study found that this superior position afforded to men comes from the understanding and interpretation of the notion of 'guardianship' (*abhivakwatwa*), whereby, according to Hindu philosophy, women must stay under the name, protection and support of men all their lives, while men are responsible for providing this protection and support to women. Until a girl marries, this guardianship is to be provided by her father and/or brothers. Once married, the role is taken on by her husband or, in his absence, male members of his family. Should her husband die, the guardianship is provided by her son. Hence, despite the law promoting gender equality, social norms around guardianship contradict this, maintaining men as protectors and women as the protected and making violence by the husband acceptable. This notion of guardianship consists of three dimensions: knowledge and wisdom, economics and social dimensions, which are discussed in more detail in Box 5.

Box 5: The three dimensions of guardianship

Knowledge and wisdom

Our study found widespread beliefs that men know best about what is right or wrong for their wife or girlfriend and this has not changed as a result of any training on GBV that men have taken part in. Thus, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike believe that a man's word must be heeded and a woman should not speak against him or defy him because he knows what is best for her. The local saying, *pothi baseko ramrod haina* (a hen crowing is not good) conveys this norm. There was also widespread acceptance among male respondents that if a wife disobeys, the husband can perpetrate minor beatings in order to bring her back to the 'correct path':

Respondent: Yes, when she does not obey to what I say, I think it is ok to mete out small violence.
Interviewer: Can you give some examples?
Respondent: Like, if I tell her not to go to the fields and if she still leaves, then I shout at her.

(IDI with male beneficiary, Kapilvastu)

We also found that boyfriends, despite having benefited from awareness training on GBV, use this interpretation of guardianship to call girls to meet them in isolated places, and feel able to perpetuate IPV if the girl does not obey.

Yes, I get angry especially when I call her to meet somewhere and then she does not come to meet me there. So then I shout at her and I once hit her for that.

(IDI with male beneficiary, Rupandehi)

Economic dimension

Unequal access to and control over family and community resources paves the way for men to assume the economic aspect of guardianship. A woman has no access to property, either in her natal family or when she joins her husband's family, so remains economically dependent throughout her life. Once married, her husband is her main link to the resources needed for the basics of survival. Women therefore have no choice but to submit to this economic dimension of guardianship, which is reinforced by inheritance laws and local practices that deny women equal inheritance rights.

The study also found that among men, not being able to provide well enough for a wife was a source of great distress. While beneficiary men and boys are more open towards helping women in her household work (chiefly around taking care of babies), their perceptions of their role as providers for the family have not changed as a result of the case study programmes. When asked about the characteristics of an ideal man, all male respondents – irrespective of ethnicity, age or beneficiary/non-beneficiary status – referred to this economic aspect of guardianship (i.e. the ideal male is someone who provides well for his wife and children). Fulfilling his family's economic needs and having a well-paying job were important to male respondents; unmarried adolescent boys reported buying recharge cards and gifts for their girlfriends.

Social dimension

In Nepal's patriarchal system, a woman needs her husband to access a range of services such as banking, social protection schemes and school enrolment for children, as these require documents such as marriage and citizenship certificates that can only be obtained when a man puts his name to them. While one of the most important impacts of the training is that beneficiary women are now more aware about the need to acquire these documents early on in their marriage, and beneficiary men are now less reluctant to support acquiring the documents than previously when they feared that doing so might result in the wives running away with the property, the attitude still prevails among non-beneficiary men and women. Besides this, as a woman generally is not mobile, so she needs a male guardian to navigate the bureaucracy involved in getting legal documents. For example, apart from female police cells and relatively recent women's groups in villages where women can lodge complaints, court officials and lawyers are typically male. In cases where there are no women's groups, dispute cases are still solved by a male social leader. Given that among all caste, class and ethnic groups, there are strong norms dictating that women abstain from any form of social interaction with outsider males, this makes it difficult for women to approach any kinds of service where they will have to deal with men. Case studies of IPV survivors show that women fully depend on their brothers or male figures in the natal home when a case goes to court.

In addition, in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, having a husband confers certain protections on women; widows or unmarried/divorced women are most likely to encounter GBV and be accused of witchcraft, or for enticing men, for example. Hence, women prefer to live with the husband even if they face IPV.

6.3 Social norms around polygamy

In both study districts, other forms of violence such as polygamy are generally accepted as normal by many people and particularly among older women (over 40) and men. A grandmother (part of an intergenerational trio) described how it was readily accepted that a husband took another wife because, according to the first wife, his second wife (the first wife's sister) was more compatible with her husband, as they were both educated:

> *Interviewer: So, you have never faced violence from your husband so far?*
>
> *Respondent: No. Never.*
>
> *Interviewer: Who is that woman (pointing to another woman)?*
>
> *Respondent: Oh, she is his second wife. We were married early and my husband has completed higher education but I never went to school. So there was a difference between us. My sister was educated and my husband started liking her. So he married her as a second wife. I also thought instead of bringing another woman as a second wife, it is good that he brings my own sister.*
>
> *(IGT with grandmother, Rupandehi)*

However, younger women (aged 17-23) regard polygamy and extramarital affairs (real or suspected) as one of the most significant forms of violence against wives. Women shared that when they question their husband about his spending time and money on other women, the discussion is usually resolved by the husband hitting the wife.

Key informants from women's groups in Kapilvastu reported that women in their community would prefer polygamy to extramarital affairs if they had to choose. This is because extramarital affairs tend to lead to economic problems; men engaged in affairs tend to spend all the money outside the household leaving the wife and children to suffer. This came out very strongly in interviews with female respondents in both study sites and more prominently within the Tharu and Madhesi communities, where it seems extramarital affairs are becoming increasingly common. While we could not ascertain the reasons for this, we speculate that certain customs (see section 7) along with the wider exposure of men to modernity may have contributed to men becoming frustrated with their partners who are more traditional in their disposition and as such seek out extramarital affairs. With polygamy, although the husband takes a second wife, all his money remains invested in the household; as such, the first wife and her children will continue to benefit from it and there is more likely to be money available for the first wife for any emergency needs.

6.4 Social norms around femininity

In contrast to norms around masculinity, norms on femininity prescribe that women be submissive to their husband and his household. However, evidence from other studies (Ghimire and Samuels, 2014) suggests that such norms are beginning to change, and this is strongly reinforced by the findings of our study.

6.4.1 Evidence of relaxation of some strict gender norms

Interviews with female respondents show that social norms around what it is to be female have changed gradually. The grandmothers' generation, interviewed as part of the intergenerational trios, reported living in constant fear of going against social norms and values or being suspected of immoral behaviour; they were not exposed to ideas of human rights and, more broadly, did not have broad horizons that might lead them to question discrimination. Thus, for these older women, it was accepted that their brothers went to school or work while they did the housework; as girls and women, their duty was to support male family members in their role.

Similarly, according to the older women who participated in the intergenerational trios, they were expected to be married early (at the age of 6 or 7) and never complain about the husband or his family, to bear any difficulties that may arise in their husband's family as their *'own ill fate or their sins from the past life'*, and never to seek help from the natal family for resolving problems in their married life. These older women also said that in their generation, unmarried girls were not allowed to go out of the village due to fear that they would elope; when married, a woman was supposed to wear a sari, not to talk to other men, obey in-laws without question, love and respect the brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, eat only after feeding the whole family, and spend their leisure time making mats and other items for the house.

The older women also shared that they faced much stronger pressure to abide by norms than girls do today. Some older respondents reported having lived in constant fear of neighbours and relatives who were suspicious they would break social norms and for 'poisoning the ear' of their father and brothers, who in turn punished them. Due to such strict controls placed on women by their family and society, they would not dare to interact freely, especially with an outsider male, and for Brahmin women there was a very strict need to keep away from men of lower caste. When any outsider male helped a girl, it was assumed they were in love and this would defame the girl and her family's name:

> *At that time we didn't know anything, we stayed under the fear of parents, our teenage years were spent in fear, we used to fear talking with someone. Once, when I was 5 or 6 years of age, I went to grind oil with my sister. A driver helped us to finish the work quickly and we*

came back home. But one of our aunts had already told all the villagers that we were flirting with the driver [of low caste] and we were in love with that driver and he was helping us due to that reason. There was such a big hue and cry in the village over that. We did not have any previous relationship with the driver. He just helped us like any neighbourly sister.

(IGT with older female, Rupandehi)

6.4.2 Other gendered social norms remain 'sticky'

Despite older female respondents seeing positive changes in the lives of girls today, such as more flexible norms around mobility, dress, social interaction and opportunities for education and work, we did not find that this applied equally to all girls. While it might be true that girls of hilly region origin have those opportunities, girls in Kapilvastu (primarily from the Madhesi community) were still very much under the control of parents and male siblings (not necessarily older siblings) who decided where they went, how long they studied, and when and to whom they married. There was substantial gender discrimination in such families, with girls only allowed out of the house to study in nearby schools, having to get married without consenting to it, and do household chores all by themselves. Once girls reached mid-adolescence, their mothers no longer did the household chores, thus leaving the entire work burden on the girls, which left little time for school work. We did not find any girls in either district who had continued education after having a child. Once married, young women were very much restricted from moving around in the community; even some men who were programme beneficiaries did not allow their young wives to go out of the house or socialise with neighbours. The following proved to be a typical answer from a young beneficiary woman about their possibilities for social interaction:

I have never been out of the house or talked to the neighbours. The only time I talk to anyone except the people in my own house is when I meet the daughter-in law of that house (her next door neighbour) while going to fetch water in the nearby pump. But I can't talk or spend much time with her there as my mother-in-law will scold me. (She had been married for three years and had never gone around the village.)

(IDI with married female, Kapilvastu)

However, a notable impact of the training programme on the elderly men, as shared by their wives and the key informants, was that they now allowed their wife to participate in training programmes.

In other high-caste groups, social surveillance of girls was equally strong, with women themselves expressing concerns that girls today have too much freedom, and that access to mobile phones has given girls a great deal of freedom to interact with the opposite sex as well as with outsiders.

Nowadays they can wear short clothes, gossip on their mobile phones, send messages and talk whatever they like, they will make plans on mobiles, girls from over there come here and sit below that tree behind my home and then gossip with boys freely. The time has changed, at our time there was only fear.

(IGT with grandmother, Rupandehi)

These second generation women in the intergenerational trios also feel that education trends are becoming more favourable to girls, who can sometimes continue their education after marriage if the family can afford the educational expenses.

However, as a result of this perceived increase in freedom, adolescent girls and boys, as well as other key informants, shared that girls are increasingly vulnerable. They pointed to a rise in the number of girls getting pregnant out of wedlock and boys not taking responsibility once the girls get pregnant. This results in girls being left defamed and without support at a young age, with some even resorting to suicide. Adolescent boys and girls also reported that suicide among girls for this reason was becoming more common:

Yes, it [suicide] is growing here. What happens is that the girls fall in love and get pregnant. Boys like to have girlfriends, but when it comes to marrying, they do not marry the girls who fall in love before marriage because they are likely to have sex before marriage. So they do not marry their girlfriend because they think if she is fine with having a boyfriend and having sex before marriage then she is a spoilt girl. They marry someone their parents have chosen. Now this pregnant girl has no other way than to commit suicide.

(FGD with adolescent girls, Rupandehi)

In other cases, when the girl becomes pregnant, the parents abort the child and get the girl married quickly as far away as possible, fearing that no one in the village would want to marry her:

When the girls do not commit suicide and if the parents find out they are pregnant, they take the girl to a faraway place, abort the child and get her married to someone in a place far away from where they live as soon as possible.

(FGD with adolescent girls, Rupandehi)

6.4.3 Caught between mothers and wives

More generally, our findings show that society is still judgemental towards women and this often forms the basis for the violence that continues to be inflicted on them. Adolescent girls shared that they face very strict scrutiny of their interactions with outsider men and boys. We found that adolescent boys readily pass moral judgement on women – particularly girls in the community and sisters-in-law or daughters-in-law of their household. Boys often see daughters-in-law and their brothers' wives as someone 'spoiling the family' or disrupting it. When their brothers separate away from the family, buy land in the name of their wife and send remittances in the wife's name, they blame this on the sister-in-law, claiming she exerted influence on their brother who, before he married, was very responsible to the family. Similarly, boys seem to hold the attitude that girls are selfish and when they come as daughters-in-law after marriage, they divide the household by influencing the husbands to be selfish and not take responsibility for their parents and siblings. Hence, there is a widespread belief that if a man listens to his wife, he will end up causing ruptures in the household. Adolescent boy respondents (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) stated that an ideal boy should 'never' listen to the wife:

It is really a very bad thing. I would never do that in my life [listen to my wife]. If someone did that in our village, then I would go and try to convince them not to do that.

(IDI with male adolescent beneficiary, Kapilvastu)

However, although they did not say so explicitly, there is an underlying assumption that mothers are good and trustworthy. Adolescent boys look up to their mothers and ask for their help when taking important decisions. As already noted, in several cases, a man would beat his wife if his mother or sisters complained about her. Key informants from the GBV monitoring committee in Kapilvastu shared that parents-in-law and sisters-in-law are one of the main drivers of IPV as it is they who complain to their sons/brothers constantly that his wife is lazy, disobedient, not bringing enough dowry, and so on. Given that young men assume that their wife's main duty is to serve the in-laws and make their life comfortable, they often listen to their mother or sisters' complaints without verifying what they say with the wife and then beat her up. A key informant described the relationship between marriage and violence using fingers as a metaphor:

She doesn't, He does: A Nepali boy gets ready for school while his sister learns to make baskets to prepare herself for marriage © NISER 2016

A married son is like the middle finger. There is an index finger, his mother on one side and the ring finger, his wife on the other side. There is a constant conflict between the index finger and the ring finger to have the man listen to them. If the middle finger leans towards the index finger, i.e. if he listens to the mother, he will perpetuate IPV on the wife. If the middle finger leans towards the ring finger, i.e. if he listens to the wife, he will perpetuate violence on the mother.

(KII with government representative, Kapilvastu)

7. Factors influencing IPV

In this section, we discuss various risk factors (triggers) that influence IPV. For the sake of clarity, and in line with our conceptual framework, we divide these into three levels: individual, family, and community. These factors and levels are strongly interlinked though – for instance, a man's childhood history and exposure to violence are likely to shape his own values and beliefs and may influence whether he inflicts IPV as an adult. We begin by analysing the individual risk factors influencing IPV in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, then move on to discuss the meso-level (family) and macro-level (community) factors.

7.1 Risk factors at the individual level

Echoing the findings of other studies such as (Adhikari and Tamang, 2010; UNDP, 2014), findings from our primary data collection show that men's consumption of alcohol, age and education are all individual risk factors to some extent. While our hypothesis (also drawing on secondary literature) was that the challenges faced during childhood may have links to gender discriminatory attitudes and IPV, we did not find it to hold true in our study sites. Rather, individual risk factors that influence IPV in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi were related to exposure to corporal punishment in childhood, attitudes towards female peers, lack of awareness that IPV is wrong and of the penalties around IPV.

7.1.1 Exposure to adversity in childhood

While global literature notes that adversity in childhood can play an important role in men's perpetration of IPV in adulthood (Gupta and Samuels, 2016), we did not find that this held true for our respondents in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu.

While respondents noted that being beating was common for all boys, they also reflected that it was deserved, resulting from bad behaviour such as running away from schools or fighting with friends, so they were punished in order to protect them and for their own good. It is only recently that corporal punishment has been declared illegal in Nepal, but many schools continue to practice it, and it is normal for parents to beat their children too. Thus, the study found that in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi, children generally accept their parents or teachers beating them as a corrective measure. The following sentiment was common when adolescent boys reflected about being beaten during childhood.

Interviewer: Have you ever experienced beating from your parents while growing up?

Respondent: Yes, they used to beat me when I was growing up.

Interviewer: Why did your parents beat you?

Respondent: We used to fight with our friends and when our parents knew about that fight, they used to beat us. I personally feel that parents have the right to beat their children if they are involved in any wrong doing.

(IDI with male beneficiary, Kapilvastu)

Other than boys whose fathers had polygamous relationships, respondents generally did not perceive themselves to have received unjust or unfair treatment when growing up, and similarly did not feel that they experienced lack of love or care during childhood. This was true for respondents in both districts. Boys only referred to difficulties in fulfilling their education due to the household struggling financially; they did not hold a grudge against their parents for this but were instead quite understanding. A typical answer about deficits in childhood was as follows:

Yes… She [mother] was always with me. I personally think that I did not have a good childhood as my wishes [for material goods] were not fulfilled… We were from middle-class family and so she [mother] couldn't give me all the things that I wanted. But I am satisfied with her.

(IDI with male beneficiary, Rupandehi)

7.1.2 Attitudes towards female peers

Apart from acceptance of punishment as a corrective action influencing IPV, another strong influence appears to be boys' perceptions of girls and of love affairs. Adolescent boys often talked about the girls being 'spoilt'. Though they could not be specific about what this involved, they often compared their own behaviour of consulting and obeying elders to girls' behaviour, expressing the view that girls today do not obey their parents and keep many things hidden from them, while boys would hide nothing from their parents and always obey them. The following quote illustrates this point:

No, the girls of nowadays are a spoilt bunch. I want to become a right person; I haven't walked in the wrong way up till now. I ask my mother while taking important decisions. She will help me to know what is right and what is wrong and I act after that. Girls do not do that. They don't obey their parents, in fact, they hide things from them.

(IDI with adolescent boy beneficiary, Rupandehi)

Adolescent male respondents perceived that the economic dimension of guardianship (see section 6.2) plays a strong role in girls falling in love. Boys who claimed not to have girlfriends strongly believe that girls are impressed when boys have money to spend on them. They claimed that girls would not accept poorer boys as boyfriends, which was one reason they did not propose to girls:

Girls, they are attracted to boys who have money and to boys who show off. I think I don't have a girlfriend because my family is poor. Girls are not attracted to poor boys.

(IDI with adolescent boy non-beneficiary, Rupandehi)

Even boys who had girlfriends (or would like to have one) perceived girls to be untrustworthy. In interviews, many men stated that girls were after economic resources and tended to be fickle. Boys thought that once in a relationship, girls would demand to be taken out, be given gifts and in general 'prefer men having motorbikes'. Also, those who had girlfriends believed that girls would ask for economic favours in exchange for a physical relationship. Due to this, adolescent boys in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi felt under pressure to earn (and buy motorcycles) to prove themselves capable to girls.

Girls don't get impressed with us if we don't have a motorcycle.

(FGD with young men, Rupandehi)

This perception was strong both among boys in relationships and those who had no girlfriend. Though we did not have enough evidence to prove this as a reason for IPV in their relationship, it is perhaps a strong marker of why men think girls need to be controlled. The impression young boys have as they grow up is very likely to shape their IPV behaviour once married. Thus, we suggest that boys possibly start to feel that this behaviour of girlfriends is one reason why boys behave violently towards their girlfriends.

Besides the factors already mentioned, other factors – notably men's reluctance to share problems or worries with their wife, and a lack of role models – were very striking, although we were unable to ascertain whether they had any direct influence on men's perpetration of IPV. Young men listened to and helped their partners when they were worried and anxious over problems in their family or personal life, but did not share their own worries or fears with their female partners. Instead, they talked to their mother or male friends. In terms of role models, there is no concept of this among men and, on repeated probing, most male respondents aspired to be like someone rich or educated (in a few cases) but do not relate this to violence or aspirations about the quality of their relationship with their wife.

7.2 Risk factors at the family level

Our findings suggest that at the family level, polygamy, arranged and early marriage, and the socioeconomic situation of women are the main risk factors influencing IPV. These factors are discussed in more detail below.

7.2.1 Polygamy

Though we found no direct evidence on this, our study suggests that fathers having multiple wives could be a family-level factor that triggers IPV perpetrated by men. Boys whose father had another wife appeared to be more concerned and protective of their mothers than boys whose father did not have multiple wives. In such cases, boys shared that since their mother had endured so much hardship to bring them up single-handedly, they felt that upon reaching adulthood, it was their responsibility to fill a gap and to keep the mother happy. Among other things, these boys were found to have negative attitudes towards girls of their age and saw them as 'not wanting to do household chores", or 'lacking family values of caring" and hence did not want to have girlfriends. Their strong desire to make their mother happy was not compatible with having a girlfriend, as this would mean dividing their attention and resources. While this negative attitude of boys towards girls might not have any relevance while they are not in a relationship, it might influence their behaviour when they are. As already noted (section 6.4.3), there are tensions between a wife and her mother-in-law over having the husband/son listen to them and mothers are often dissatisfied with the daughter-in-law; in such cases, where boys already hold negative attitudes towards girls, they may be more likely to take the side of the mother and perpetuate violence on their wife if the mother complained about her.

7.2.2 Arranged and early marriage

The study found that arranged and early marriage was another family-level risk factor. Such marriages often created a gap between spouses that encouraged incompatibility, with a pattern emerging of boys continuing their education and becoming exposed to modernity after marriage, while their wives cease their education and become more or less secluded in the household. These tensions can build and lead to the husband beating the wife and/or having extramarital affairs. This was found to be a

common problem among Muslim and Tharu communities, where early and arranged marriage (of girls and boys as young as 12 despite the legal age of marriage being 18) was common and where both the age at marriage and the girl a boy will marry are decided by the father:

No [talking of his marriage]. It was arranged… When I was married at a small age, I didn't know the meaning of marriage though I was enjoying the ceremonies. My father had forced me to marry his friend's daughter at a very early age though I was not willing to do so. He had threatened me that he couldn't pay my school fees if I didn't marry her and so I had no option left…

(IDI with adolescent beneficiary boy, Rupandehi)

Interviewer: You married very early and according to your custom, you kept your wife at her own parents' house and brought her to your home two years ago… Did you have any girlfriend between those periods?

Respondent: Yes, I liked one girl... But since I was already married, I could never propose to her… Our culture never encouraged us to fall in love even after marriage. So, I never dared to propose her. Even though I am not happy with my marriage, I couldn't ask her to marry me...

(IDI with boy non-beneficiary, Rupandehi)

While boys did not suggest that forced early marriage and the fact that they did not choose their partners could lead them to inflict beatings, they did talk about being frustrated in their current relationships. Key informants also commented that such factors (early marriage and having no say in choice of partner) were a strong trigger of extramarital affairs or verbal abuse and wife-beating. This was also triangulated by information from young married girls, who shared that their husbands complained that they were not beautiful, showed dissatisfaction and did not love them, or had told them outright that they had a girlfriend (see Box 6).

In some instances, boys were married early as a result of family needs. For example, when a mother dies young there is a need for a woman to take care of the house, so the son would marry early. According to study respondents, this has sometimes led to boys being frustrated in their marital relationships when they become adults and expressing their frustration by meting out violence to partners, including polygamy and extramarital affairs.

7.2.3 Women's lack of socioeconomic independence

Our findings confirm that women's socioeconomic dependence on their husband and his family is one of the main family-level risk factors driving IPV (most key informants described this as the root cause of IPV). This applies to women of all castes and ethnic groups. As described in detail in section 6.2, women's lack of economic independence means that the difficulties they might face if they no longer had a husband's financial support outweigh the violence they may experience from their husbands. As such, wives rarely report cases of IPV. Women's situation was very aptly described by one of our key (male) respondents:

We have our gender roles influencing such violence. Females are not economically empowered also because we are deprived of education. If one is economically empowered, she would never tolerate violence because it does not become necessary for her to do so. But in a typical situation, women are the ones who work for the whole day – like, if there is a buffalo, she would bring fodder and take care of the shed and all. She would milk it but the husband would go to sell the milk and take the money. With the money he drinks alcohol, and in the evening, he comes home drunk and starts beating his wife. It is the wife who suffers from all the sides.

(KII with government representative, Kathmandu)

We found this to be more common among young married women, where the parents of the boy hold all the family resources, including the son's earnings. These girls are not allowed to take up a job after marriage and depend on their in-laws not only for their basic needs but also for other small needs such as recharge cards to call their parents. Hence such girls are very unlikely to be able to leave their husband should he behave violently towards them. A typical situation of such girls is shown below from an interview with a husband:

See, I am a male, and I do a certain type of work such as working in the field or any other work because I have to take care of my wife. A wife, on the other hand, doesn't have to earn money and her only job is to stay at home and take care of household work such as cooking, washing dishes, cleaning, etc. This is what people think here.

(IDI with male non-beneficiary, Rupandehi)

7.3 Risk factors at the community level

Key informants observed that traditional gender roles, which make women economically and social dependent on their husband, are a critical influence on IPV in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi as elsewhere in Nepal. There is a large gender differential in education and income in these communities; women have few opportunities to take up well-paid jobs and so remain dependent on men. In addition, gender norms that assign women the role of family caretaker mean that women are not able to take

up full-time careers. Men's ownership of the family's productive assets and decision-making power within the family mean that women lack economic capital so would have no means of surviving should they choose to end the relationship with the husband due to IPV. In these circumstances, women tolerate violence from their husbands because they have little other choice.

There are a few traditions and practices in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi that were found to be important community risk factors in perpetuating IPV. They include the *Gauna* system, a husband marrying his sister-in-law, spouses sleeping separately (among the Tharu) and long-term absence of wives during pregnancy (among Muslims). These are described in detail below, alongside the role of religion and urban life in influencing IPV.

Box 6: The Gauna system and IPV

Shiva* is 19 and came to live with her husband three years ago when she was 16. She had only seen him once before, during the marriage ceremony when she was 12. The marriage was arranged by her father, who was friends with her father-in-law. When she came to the house she felt that her husband did not love her; he would not talk to her, would not take her to markets or fairs like other newly married couples. She was sad about his lack of interest in her but did not have anything concrete to complain about. Her mother-in-law and sister-in-law loved her very much.

As the time passed, her friend's sister told her about her husband's affair with another girl in school. She questioned her husband who at first denied it. But she started to grow suspicious and questioned him more. This led to fights between them and one day he told her it was true, he had done the *Gauna* with her but was in love with another girl, and it was only due to fear of being fined that he had brought her to the house. He told her he was not interested in her and not to expect that he would fulfil his duty as a husband to her.

There were regular fights and verbal abuse. A year ago the husband went to Saudi Arabia. Now he keeps calling the girlfriend but not Shiva. He only talks to his mother and does not even ask about Shiva's whereabouts. Her mother-in-law and sister-in-law still love her and have asked her to wait till the girlfriend gets married to another boy, which is going to happen in a few months. Shiva has seen a ray of hope but is not sure if her husband will love her even after that.

*All names have been changed to protect privacy

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

7.3.1 The Gauna marriage system

Among Tharu communities, one of the factors that triggers IPV (according to study respondents) is the *Gauna* system of marriage (see Box 6). According to this custom, Tharu children are married very young, between the ages of 8 and 14 (in their parents' generation it was between the ages of 4 and 8). Family members of the boy and girl decide on the marriage. However, the bride is not sent to the groom's house immediately, only after she reaches the age of 17 or 18, when the girl undergoes the '*Gauna*' ceremony and is sent to the husband's house to live. However, as soon as they are married (before the girl is sent to her husband's house), girls stop education to start learning household works and other skills such as weaving to make traditional baskets and goods that would be useful for married life.

However, study respondents reported that between the period of betrothal and the actual marriage taking place, before the girl moves to live with her in-laws, boys often have girlfriends they meet in school. Since boys are fined (up to NRS 200,000, or $200) if they do not complete the marriage process, they bring the wife to their house but many also continue to have girlfriends. Some girls shared that they come to know of these affairs and question their husbands. This leads to fights and usually the girls end up being abused physically or emotionally.

7.3.2 Marrying the wife of a deceased brother

Key informants believed that the system of marrying the wife of a deceased brother – another common practice among the Tharu – was another factor responsible for IPV in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi. In this system, when a brother dies, another brother (usually a younger one) is allowed to marry the deceased brother's wife. If the older brother who died had children, this arrangement is particularly supported and encouraged by his parents so that the children and wife are still provided for. Even if there is no formal marriage, it is accepted that the younger brother has a physical relationship with the widow of his brother. Key informants believed this practice can lead to beatings, verbal abuse, denial of food and money, and even forced eviction of the younger brother's first wife; if she does not yet have children, she is even more vulnerable to being thrown out of the house as in-laws prioritise taking care of the heir of the deceased son:

> *We find that the system of marrying a brother's widow is another reason for Tharu women facing violence. A younger brother is encouraged to marry the widow of the elder brother even if he already has a wife. The idea behind it is to keep the household property from being given to the widow. And this leads to the first wife having to face violence from the in-laws and the husband.*
>
> *(KII with female NGO representative, Kapilvastu)*

7.3.3 Custom of sleeping with children

Another factor that came up in several key informant interviews as a cause of IPV (particularly wife-beating but also a reason for men having extramarital affairs) was the tradition among Tharu women to sleep with their children instead of the husband. (A normal Tharu household has a large bedroom or veranda outside where the whole family sleeps.) Since there is no privacy, a woman refuses to have a sexual relationship with her husband; he, however, takes this as an insult and, according to study respondents, beats his wife and/or establishes extramarital relationships to take vengeance on the wife. This was particularly common among women who had grown-up children in Rupandehi:

> *One reason for violence in case of older Tharu women is because their husband's sexual needs are not met and they feel insulted. Their women sleep with children. They have one big bedroom and the man sleeps outside in the verandah. A woman does not want to sleep with the man both in the bedroom, in front of the children, or outside, publicly. He wants to sleep with her during the day but as there are many children around, she denies him. This makes the man feel rejected and angry. He understands that the wife does not want him enough and takes it as an insult. To take revenge, he either beats the wife or has affairs with other women. Either way, the women suffer.*
>
> *(KII with female NGO representative, Rupandehi)*

7.3.4 Staying in the natal home during childbirth

Among Muslim communities in both Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, there is a custom that a woman gives birth to her children in her paternal home. Hence, after a few months of pregnancy, they return to live with their parents and stay there until the child is born and for some time afterwards (around six months). The reason for this long stay might be to ensure that the woman and the newborn child get enough rest and are sufficiently well cared for, which may be more likely with her maternal family. However, according to custom, the woman can only return to her husband's house if the husband comes to fetch her. Key informants reported that if the wife stays away too long (i.e. more than a year), the husband may fall in love with another girl and will not come to take her back. When the wife tries to come back, she is not accepted back by the husband and his family, and he usually ends up marrying the other girl.

Key respondents from the police and WCDD office in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi believed that such practices have made Muslim women vulnerable and that such cases are on the increase (see Box 7). They also saw cases where, after the woman had struggled for some years to try to return to her husband's home, her parents ended up suggesting she seek a divorce. However, divorce is not generally accepted in Nepali society, and in the case of poor families, the woman and her children become an additional burden on the maternal family, and hence divorce is highly discouraged. Because of this, women keep going back to the husband's house by themselves (also defying the custom that he should come to fetch her) and end up facing violence from family members. They often do not report this situation until they are thrown out of the house and in need of assistance largely to take care of the children. Even in the event that a woman begins the divorce process, she often does not have citizenship and marriage registration certificates, which makes it very

Box 7: Childbirth customs and IPV among Muslim communities in the study sites

Sabin married a man from a rich family in Kapilvastu, who fell in love with her upon seeing her at a cousin's marriage. He pursued her very eagerly and they married within a few months of meeting each other. Soon after the marriage, her mother-in-law started taunting her about coming from a poor family and not having a proper upbringing to suit their high status.

At first Sabin's husband supported her but after she gave birth to her first child, the husband changed. He left Sabin in her parents' house for the delivery and started sleeping with other women. He did not come to take her back until the religious leaders and elders in the community instructed him to. When he did take her back to his parents' home, he fought with her, blaming her for disrupting the family. He denied her any food, forced her to have sex when she was sick and pregnant, and continued sleeping with other women. In the meantime, Sabin became pregnant for the second time and he left her with her parents again. He ignored her, did not give money for her daily needs, and avoided her calls. Sabin eventually returned to his house with the two children and faced even more violence.

After enduring this situation for eight years her case was presented (by her father) to the village religious committee, where it was decided that Sabin could file for divorce. But as she had no citizenship or marriage certificate, the legal process was very difficult. The Chief District Officer had to put the husband behind bars to force him to give her the rightful share of documents, including her citizenship certificate, the children's birth certificates and her marriage certificate. Sabin finally won the case after a hard legal battle. She has learnt that the husband is marrying another woman soon.

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

difficult for her and her children to get their legal share of property even if the divorce is granted.

7.3.5 Religion

While key informants at both national and district levels commented that religion affords women lower status than men and is therefore an underlying cause of violence, male respondents did not agree. Men felt that religion teaches them to respect women rather than inflict violence:

> *Religious beliefs rather encourage us to respect the elders and discourage gender-based violence.*
>
> *(FGD with young married men, Rupandehi)*

Our study found that religion – both Hinduism and Islam – plays a somewhat minor role in potentially controlling or limiting IPV. Respondents expressed the view that religion is never presented as a way of resolving IPV. Additionally, in a few cases when it was brought up, it did not work; indeed, those who brought the subject up tended to be ridiculed by others, as the following narrative shows:

> *"Look, he is here to preach about religion... What? You are going to take us to heaven? You can go there alone" – this is what they say when someone gives account of religion when a husband is beating his wife.*
>
> *(FGD with adolescent girls, Rupandehi)*

Key informants were of the opinion that, theoretically, none of the religions practised in Nepal promote IPV and are rather protective towards women. However, according to study respondents, people misinterpret religious teachings and end up awarding men a higher status and position than women, who are taught to accept any injustices they face as part of their fate or 'karma':

> *Our religion teaches us that a husband is a God for his wife. I don't know who taught that, but it was explained in that manner. So, that is pushing towards violence in one way or the other.*
>
> *(KII with government representative, Kathmandu)*

The bumper sticker on this Nepali van reads: 'Good wife is someone whom the husband likes' © NISER, 2016

8. Pathways to justice and challenges

After having described the prevalence of IPV and risk factors in the previous section, we describe the pathways that victims generally use to access justice once IPV has been meted out to them and the challenges that exist in responding to IPV.

8.1 Pathways to justice

This subsection explores the pathways to justice followed by the survivors of IPV in Rupandehi and Kapilvastu. As Figure 6 illustrates, the first step usually starts with sharing what happened with someone the survivor trusts, and it is through them that the incident gets reported to one or other of the structures described in section 4.3. In Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, women usually report the incident to a member of the GBV monitoring committee, the Women's Network or other local group, who might be a friend or neighbour of the survivor. However, if the survivor is thrown out of the house, it is the male members of the natal family who present to services to seek redressal. Figure 6 shows what typically happens after the initial contact.

Previously, most cases came via the GBV monitoring committee, but since people have been exposed to training and awareness activities through the CARE and government PSP programmes, people have started to approach the female police cell of the ward police cell directly. If cases come to village-level committees, a mediation process takes place involving members of the committee and other members of the local community, including men. The perpetrator is asked to share his version of the story and, based on a group decision, a verdict is reached. According to our key informants, this process of working with the perpetrator aims to make him aware that IPV is illegal and to apprise him of the legal penalties involved. If the case comes to the police cell, depending on the nature of the violence, the police counsel the man (if there is no physical violence) or detain him (for serious violence) until the case is resolved. If the man in question does not stop inflicting violence on his partner, the village-level committee would also take the case to the local police cell. From here, unresolved cases are taken to the district police station where (depending on the nature of the case and the victim's wishes) the police either mediate and try to reconcile the victim and perpetrator or forward the case to court for necessary action if the victim wants to pursue legal recourse.

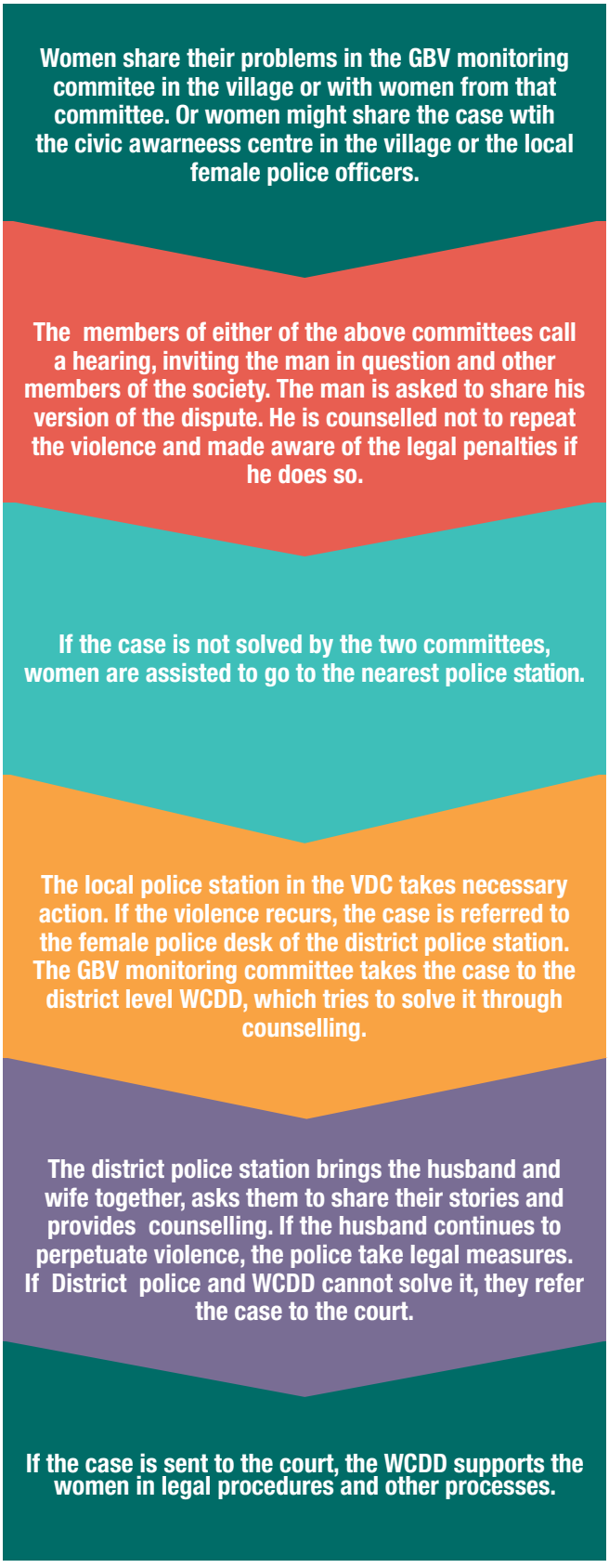
Where the victim needs financial support and/or psychosocial counselling, the local-level committee refers the case to the WCDD. In such cases, the counsellor (trained by the WCDD) invites the victim and perpetrator separately for counselling sessions. If the case is not resolved or if the victim wishes to proceed to court, they refer the case to the government legal advisor who then takes up the case in court. There are several mediation efforts in the courts conducted by government-appointed mediators and offered free to the victim; if these fail, then the process of giving a share of property or divorce is carried out as per the victim's wishes. The WCDD and the legal advisor support the victim until the verdict is implemented (in the case of divorce).

In Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, our study found that, in extreme cases of IPV and domestic violence, the local court tended to decide that the wife should 'stay separately' from the husband, who would have to provide a regular, fixed amount of money to fulfil her needs and those of any children she had. This was mostly in relation to cases of polygamy, if the first wife faced violence (physical or emotional) from her in-laws. In such cases, community members counselled women to 'stay separately'. However, they never used the word 'divorce', and we found that they did not want the wife to disconnect herself from the husband's name and family completely (as in the case of divorce). We found that in such cases, a woman would either stay in her natal home or live separately but often inside the property of the husband's family and still carry his name as her family name. It is only when a woman is thrown out of the house and the man stops providing for her and her children's daily needs that women tend to opt for the divorce process.

8.2. Challenges

Our study found a number of challenges in responding to IPV, both from the perspective of IPV survivors and service providers (government and non-government). The factors are described in more detail below, with section 8.2.1 describing challenges faced by victims and section 8.2.2 describing challenges faced by those tasked with responding to IPV.

Figure 6: Trajectory to justice for survivors of intimate partner violence



Source: Fieldwork, 2016.

8.2.1 Challenges faced by victims

Deeply entrenched gender discriminatory norms and the gender roles ascribed to women and men make it very challenging for people to conceptualise IPV as a problem (or a problem that men need to address) and to discuss it openly. Second, under-reporting is a substantial challenge.

Family structures and values

The family structures evident in our two study districts and underlying economic and non-economic relationships make it very challenging for people to conceptualise GBV or IPV. The social learning that takes place in childhood around family values is strong, placing the family needs rather than individuals' needs at the centre. Children are brought up and taught to override personal interests in favour of family interests and family welfare. This pressure comes both from the family as well as wider society. There are also considerable pressures on men, both in terms of their responsibility to their wife and children but also an equally strong (if not stronger) responsibility to their parents and any unmarried siblings. Even if a married man and his wife live separately from his parents and unmarried siblings, he would still be expected to contribute (economically and in other ways) to his parents' household. (For example, a married man may be working out of the district so that he can remit money back home for his father to save for a dowry for his female sibling who is of marriageable age.) Hence, for married men, the needs of the broader family play a strong part in their intimate relationship with their wife.

However, things are different for unmarried people, including adolescents. They do not understand the phenomenon as 'IPV' but the concept is easier for them to understand; violence between girlfriends/boyfriends is clearly very different from domestic violence, as it does not include family members.

Under-reporting of IPV

None of the formal structures that are in place to provide services to victims of IPV can do anything until victims come to report incidents of violence. All our key informants felt that there is severe under-reporting of IPV, which is a huge challenge nationally and locally. According to the study, women only present to the police, local civic structures or other services when IPV becomes severe.

Having said that, when we compare the trend of reporting between Rupandehi and Kapilvastu, the data (Table 14 in Section 4.2) show that there is higher incidence of reporting of GBV in Rupandehi than in Kapilvastu. One of the reasons for this may be differences in the literacy rates and ethnic composition of the two districts, with Rupandehi having a larger indigenous population from the hilly areas (Table 1 in Section 3.1). Key informants also felt there was a higher incidence of reporting among the hilly indigenous groups (e.g. the Gurungs, Rai, Limbus) and a lesser incidence among high-caste groups (such as Brahmins and Chhetris) and ethnic

groups in the plains (e.g. the Tharu, Muslims, and Awadhi population).

According to our analysis, high-caste hilly groups and ethnic groups from the plains are less likely to report IPV because they adhere to strict social norms (such as around mobility and socialisation) and deeply rooted patriarchal values (e.g. the high value placed on protecting the household /family name). This not only makes women in these communities more likely to accept violence without question but also inhibits them from having the self-confidence to share and discuss their problems with others. On the other hand, among the hilly indigenous groups, gender norms are more flexible and patriarchal values and notions of protecting the family name do not supersede individual justice and personal freedom, thus giving women greater leverage for mobility and interaction with the world outside their village. This makes them more self-confident to express and voice their issues compared to their counterparts from other ethnic groups. As Kapilvastu has a larger composition of Terai ethnic populations (such as Muslims, Bhojpuri and Awadhi) compared to Rupandehi, this might explain the reasons for lower levels of reporting. Even when programmes extensively targeted these ethnic populations, we found that they were less forthcoming to discuss incidences of IPV.

While key informants believed that with the availability of local structures (mentioned in section 4.3), reporting of violence has been increasing, we found there were several bottlenecks on the demand side as well as the supply side that hinder women from accessing justice, most notably social stigma and fear.

According to respondents, **social stigma** is one of the biggest barriers to reporting IPV. In particular, unmarried girls will never report IPV because of the stigma associated with having a partner before marriage, which means they would be shunned by society, as the following narrative explains:

> *No, even if their boyfriends do something to them, the girls cannot share it with anyone. If they tell their mother and father, they will throw them out of the house or marry them off with another man. They are also unable to share it with their friends because if they do, the friends will talk badly about them behind their back and vilify them. So, they just keep it within themselves. Some girls even commit suicide when things become intolerable.*
>
> *(FGD with adolescent girls, Rupandehi)*

There is also stigma around defaming the family name by bringing such an issue into the public domain. Hence, and especially when children are involved, women do not report IPV for the sake of keeping the good family name for their children. The study found that older women in particular do not want to report violence because they feel that things that happen between husbands and wives should not be reported to the police. Some also fear that their husbands might be beaten by the police:

> *I know [that I have the right to complain to the police]. But he is my husband and I feel bad for him when the police beat him up. So, I haven't filed a complaint against him to the police.*
>
> *(Case study with survivor, Kapilvastu)*

Among those older women who said they reported incidences of violence, they did so when the beating became intolerable, rather than seeing it as a violation of their rights and thus seeking justice. It was almost a snap decision, not one that they took after many days of thinking about it rationally:

> *Oh, that was when water went above the head, you know. When things are too much, we just don't think about what happens later. It was 12 o'clock at night and it was raining heavily. I don't know what happened, I just bolted out of the house and went straight to the police station all alone. I said to the police, "look, my husband beats me every day and he almost killed me today". I had never been to the police station before. No one had told me I should go to the police station to report. I just went.*
>
> *(FGD with married women, Rupandehi)*

Key informants believed that while women from higher socioeconomic classes and castes in the two districts (e.g. Madhesi Brahmin families) do face physical and emotional violence, they do not report it mainly because of **fear** of the social and political power of their husbands. They fear their husbands could either kill them and frame their death as an accident or influence institutions such as courts and the police to frame the case as baseless, showing that it was the woman's mistake, or make false evidence that she was 'characterless'. Key informants noted that in such cases, IPV meted out to the wife only becomes public knowledge when the victim is killed and there is a police investigation:

> *We have not got a single complaint from rich families so far. We know about incidences of IPV in such families only when the woman dies – like when they are killed. Otherwise it does not come out in the open.*
>
> *(KII with government representative, Kapilvastu)*

The extent to which family power can influence women's access to justice in cases of IPV is highlighted in the case study (Box 8).

We also found that fear of being thrown out of the house with **no means of survival for themselves and their**

Box 8: Family name and access to justice

Sangi is 26 years old and is fighting a case against her husband and his family. She was falsely accused by her in-laws of having an affair with one of her relatives from another village, and they threw her out of the house when she was pregnant. The husband is a policeman and comes home occasionally. The family members 'poisoned his ears'; he believes his parents and does not listen to Sangi. She also thinks her in-laws want her husband to marry his deceased brother's wife and that her husband is in love with this woman. She was already suspicious of this relationship when she was married into the house and thinks that her husband is the father of the widow's second child.

Sangi went back to the house several times but each time they threw her out. Sangi's husband beat her up badly the last time. Despite this, Sangi loves her husband and wants to stay with him. When she asked for a meeting with the husband to discuss the matter, he replied that he would do exactly what his elder brother says and never go against the wish of his family even if he thinks Sangi has done nothing wrong.

Sangi's brother-in-law (her husband's brother) is a reputed lawyer in the district. So, when her own brother went to file the case against the husband's family, none of the lawyers would take up her case, saying they did not want to go against such a powerful lawyer. After being refused by many lawyers, Sangi's brother approached a social mobiliser from his village who helped him register the case through the WCDD office.

While this time the government legal advisor took her case and Sangi stayed in a shelter home to make it easier for her to travel to the court, her husband's brother influenced the owner of the shelter home and got her to sign a false document saying she wanted to abort the baby and divorce her husband. When the judge read the paper to her at one of the hearings, Sangi was shocked. Now, they are working hard to fight against the false accusation, but both Sangi and her brother are very unsure if their lawyer will be able to withstand the pressure from her husband's brother.

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

children was another strong factor preventing women from reporting incidence of IPV (see Box 9).

Lack of knowledge and social support is another factor that hinders young women, especially from the Madhesi community, from reporting IPV. As shown in section 5.2, social norms around mobility and social interaction among the Madhesi are more stringent than among the hilly communities. As such, not only do young women in these communities have limited opportunities to develop trustworthy relationships to be confident enough to share problems, but since they are rarely allowed to attend training, they do not have information about the support structures that are in place. It is only after they have had several children and when IPV gets severe that they may feel able to report the violence.

Inaccessible legal and bureaucratic systems

With irreconcilable cases of IPV, responses focus around providing property rights to the woman concerned and filing for divorce, both of which entail lengthy procedures in court and with relevant government departments. Our study found that it is very difficult for women who would otherwise never come into contact with government institutions to carry out the necessary procedures. Hence, when women come to seek help, they are already very distressed because they are new to the system and have no idea about what steps are entailed in the process of divorce, which government offices they need to go, where the offices are and what documents are needed. Thus they invariably need male support to navigate this process; if the woman has a supportive brother or father, they can assist, but women who do not have supportive male family members are most disadvantaged and distressed. In all cases of survivors who reported IPV to the police or pursued their case through court, they were able to do so because of help received from male members of their family or from men outside the family, such as neighbours. Besides this, they fear that the society will backbite them if they are seen interacting with outsider men.

Even where court cases rule that women are entitled to a share of their husband's property, this does not always amount to justice and may still be insufficient for the woman and her children to meet their basic needs (see Box 10).

8.3 Challenges in service delivery for victims of IPV

Challenges in service delivery relate to structural and procedural weaknesses that affect service providers tasked with meeting survivors' needs. This starts from the national level and continues to the local level. Below we describe the challenges faced at each level in detail.

8.3.1 The national level

The three main national bodies that deal directly with GBV (the MoWCSW, the justice sector and the police) face common challenges that hinder them from delivering services efficiently. First, each has its own separate strategy on how to address IPV, and there is no coordination between the strategies. In the government's national

Box 9: Fear of loss of social and economic support

Sita is a 17-year-old girl from Kapilvastu. Her mother had a dispute with Sita's father and left to stay at her natal home. There was no one in the house and Sita was alone with her father. The father raped her. Sita was at first very afraid to tell anyone else about what happened. But as she had to live with the father while the mother was away, she could not tolerate the violence.

Sita knew about the shelter home and that she could report cases of abuse there and stay safely there. So she reported what had happened to staff at the shelter home. They took her in, but after a few days, her mother came to the shelter home and filed a complaint, saying that Sita had not been raped by the father and that she was mentally unwell. The staff at the shelter home knew that Sita had no mental health problems and that she had been raped, but they could not do anything as the mother wanted to take her back home. So Sita was taken home and the staff have not heard from her since.

The managers of the shelter home think that such cases are quite typical. They understand that the mother has to side with the father even when he has raped the daughter because of the mother's social and economic dependency on the husband. '*That is the condition in our society. We have our social restrictions and norms that bind us from telling the truth. The mother should have supported her daughter instead of her husband, but as she has to live with that husband her whole life, she was compelled to be on his side.*'

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

strategy, GBV is considered under the broader umbrella of women's empowerment and IPV is considered under domestic violence. Government stakeholders maintain that the main reason why women continue to face domestic violence/IPV is their social and economic dependency on their husband and his family. Hence, they argue that women's economic empowerment is one of the chief national strategies to address violence.

Our study found that there is a **lack of coordination** between these national bodies, and between them and other government bodies as well as NGOs (national and international) working in the sector. Key informants noted that there are various sections within different ministries funded by international donors working towards similar strategies and aims. For example, the MoWCSW has several sections (including the gender violence control section and gender mainstreaming section) that devise gender empowerment strategies, but similar strategies are also devised by a gender mainstreaming section within the Prime Minister's Office. In addition, as gender is a cross-cutting issue for all ministries, each has a gender focal point (a staff member). However, these focal points do not communicate or coordinate with each other so in practice, each ministry pursues its own gender mainstreaming work on an ad-hoc basis without adhering to the overall national strategy. Additionally, and as already noted, we also found very weak linkages at national level between ministries (principally the MoWCSW) and the police and justice sectors, which are the other two main structures addressing IPV.

Lack of resources is another problem facing ministries in implementing programmes. Key informants commented that at the national level, IPV – regarded as a 'women's issue' – receives limited funding, as do other gender programmes. This lack of funding means that programmes at district level are patchy, irregular and short term, lacking sufficient human and physical resources to implement planned activities effectively or coordinate activities with other ministries and civil society groups.

An additional challenge is the different approaches of various bodies to tackling IPV. While there has been coordination between the government and donors such

Box 10: A battle won, a battle lost

Kabita had a long and onerous legal battle with her husband. After all kinds of physical and mental torture, the husband and his family threw Kabita out of the house, along with her two children. Several efforts to make the husband take her back failed, so her family and community leaders suggested she file for divorce and claim her share of the property so that she could take care of herself and the children.

The husband owned several acres of land and had savings along with some factories. But when the time came to give her the rightful share of property, he made a false document claiming he was in debt of 20 million rupees ($182,882) and that Kabita should pay her share of debt if she wants to get the property. Even her lawyer knew that the document was false but had no way to prove it.

After much negotiation, the court managed to get Kabita and her daughters a small share of land, divided into three portions. According to her lawyer the land is the 'size of a table' and no more. Furthermore, the portions are in three different areas, all in the middle of the husband's own land, so that Kabita does not have any road to access the land by. She is appalled by the outcome. She thought she had at least got a share of land and could get by on this, but realises this is not going to be the case.

Fieldwork, 2015

as UNICEF, DFID and UNFPA for funding, both at national and district levels, there is no consensus on how best to tackle domestic violence. As noted, the MoWCSW maintains that promoting women's economic empowerment is the best way to address the root causes of violence, while donors tend to focus on awareness-raising as more important than economic empowerment issues. This lack of consensus often means that programmes take longer to get started and to be completed.

The other serious challenge within the government sector is the lack of a gendered perspective in ministries. Key informants felt that programmes targeting women are perceived as women's programmes only, and there is a lack of interest and participation by male officials and staff. This lack of ownership by male bureaucrats and politicians makes it difficult for issues affecting women, such as IPV, to be heard:

> *More often than not, women are assigned as gender focal persons and women are always sent to participate if there is any programme related on gender. If there are gender-based programmes organised, then people think that the programme is only for women. Likewise, even for the position of gender focal person, only women are nominated. The ministries try to ignore responsibility in this way and such types of scenario are a regular occurrence here.*
>
> *(KII with government representative, Kathmandu)*

8.3.2 The district level

Previously, the WCDD used to be the place where women came to resolve issues of GBV or domestic violence. However, in the past few years, with the establishment of female police cells to take up cases of GBV in each ward and women being informed about this special service provision, women experiencing domestic violence or IPV in Kapilvastu and Rupandehi have begun to approach the police in case of domestic violence or IPV. Female respondents who were also programme beneficiaries were very forthcoming in stating that if the husband perpetrates violence, 'one should go to the police office' and that it is common for women from their village to go there in such cases. Hence, while previously, cases would go to the district police through the WCDD, now they go directly from the local police office to the women's cell at the district-level police.

While coordination between the various bodies dealing with GBV at national level is weak, the study found fairly strong coordination between the police, WCDD and legal advisors of the court at district level. The main challenge at this level is lack of resources (financial and human), which often prevents services functioning efficiently and giving adequate support to women, particularly those who are very poor and require financial help to pursue their case. Similarly, while legal services are free, some amount of money is required for travel, bringing witnesses, getting copies of documents and so on, and women typically have difficulty in arranging money for this. Moreover, as many women are uneducated, they need help filling out the necessary documents and navigating the various bureaucratic structures so that they go to the right place to get documents registered or to acquire additional documents. Lack of funding also limits what district-level programmes can achieve; for example, key informants explained that the WCDD could only train 15 couples per year, which was a drop in the ocean when considering the prevalence of GBV and IPV in the two districts. Most of these bodies only have a few staff and find it difficult to cater for the needs of the growing number of women who come to seek their help.

Another issue that came up in our interviews was that in some cases, officials who may not support gender equality laws or practices can make it difficult to implement rulings and follow-up actions:

> *Sometimes the officials have a bias attitude towards women who are filing complaints against their husbands. They themselves have issues related to IPV in their personal lives or are not very satisfied with the present laws or practices on gender-equitable justice. In such case when decisions are to be made by them based on their personal judgement, hearing of the cases gets affected negatively.*
>
> *(KII with male government official, Rupandehi)*

The inability to retain senior and experienced people in the post of legal advisor is another problem at district level, though this is critical in order to provide free legal services to IPV survivors. Due to the relatively low salaries attached to the legal advisor role, experienced people tend to want to stay working in urban areas where they can take extra work and earn more. In rural areas, there is less work and less income, which demotivates them to stay there after they qualify:

> *… these legal advisors are licensed lawyers but the salary they get paid is very low, so an experienced legal advisor would never go to the districts on that limited salary. So it's those beginners in their professional career that go there but they too, after accumulating the work experience of one or two years, leave the job.*
>
> *(KII with government representative, Kathmandu)*

Key informants from government offices were aware that IPV victims find the bureaucratic processes involved onerous and challenging, but also stated that they are bound to keep these checks in place to ensure that they are compensating genuine victims and not those making false claims. They shared stories where, upon knowing about the financial compensation available, a husband and wife make a fake

case to claim compensation. In such cases, the government officers can be charged and have to bear the penalty:

> *Talking about the law, we have a time-consuming process for providing relief amount to the victims. Without fulfilling all the process, we cannot provide relief to the victims because there might be misuse. There was a case very recently that a couple came complaining that they had a fight. They completed all the procedures for getting the relief and when they got the money, they went back happily together. It was a fake fight that they created to get the money. That might happen when all the process of verification is not fulfilled. But to carry out the whole process, it takes time. So, if all the formalities of processing are not fulfilled, then the truth cannot be verified and if it is not done completely, then the real victim will suffer more.*
>
> *(KII with government representative, Kathmandu)*

8.3.2 The ward level

We found that the most active bodies tackling domestic violence at ward level were the GBV monitoring committees (linked to the WCDD) in Rupandehi and the Women's Network in Kapilvastu. The local police departments were also quite active on the issue. Regarding coordination, we found good links between groups comprising all women members, and it was often the same women who were members of different bodies and local civil society groups or NGOs.

However, apart from bodies like the civic awareness centre, which works exclusively on GBV issues, where groups that include men are required to coordinate with women-only groups, men tend to become uninterested and leave it to the women, saying they are now empowered enough to handle such cases. This happens in cases of domestic violence as men do not want to get involved with the Women's Network or the GBV monitoring committee to discuss the issue:

> *When we have to take cases of dispute between husband and wife, we also call the men. They say, "oh this is a women's issue – you people can do it. There is no need to involve us." Only three to four men come while the rest don't even show up for the meetings.*
>
> *(KII with member of GBV monitoring committee, Rupandehi)*

Another power struggle at village level is between the traditional village headman or wealthy landowners who used to be heavily involved in resolving cases of IPV. While these traditional leaders are still active in other ways in the community, they feel their roles are being challenged by the local women's groups such as the GBV monitoring group and Women's Network (*Mahila Sanjal*) that women report incidences of IPV to. For this reason, according to our study respondents, they often try to hinder the smooth working of women's groups by being un-cooperative and sometimes even threatening them or pressurising a husband to make his wife stop being involved in the group or committee. Furthermore, as already discussed, in rural areas of Kapilvastu and Rupandehi in particular, domestic violence and IPV is still seen as a very private matter; women's groups are therefore often accused of interfering in household matters and inciting wives to revolt against their husbands, thus disrupting family peace.

9. Conclusion and recommendations

Gender norms are important factors in driving male perpetration of IPV. While social norms are themselves underlying causes of IPV, they also tend to suppress discussion and reporting of IPV, which is regarded as a private matter. This then becomes a strong hindrance for any efforts to address IPV. The study found that discriminatory gender norms in the two study districts, as well as norms and practices particular to some ethnic or religious groups, foster IPV. Several of these norms are intertwined and act in multidirectional ways; some directly perpetuate IPV while others perpetuate IPV indirectly by disempowering women and denying them their rights to education and mobility.

In Kapilvastu and Rupandehi, there are several norms around masculinity and femininity that perpetuate IPV and there is strong social pressure to abide by these norms. Men are required to have control over their wife (or wives) under the notion of guardianship. Punishment by the husband as a corrective behaviour if the wife does not abide by social norms is accepted and expected. Similarly, while a wife is expected to respect her husband, the opposite does not apply. This is deeply entrenched across all generations, young and old, adolescents and adults. This need for respect is often a cause of violence, with men feeling disrespected by any number of things, such as the wife not having food ready when he comes from work. There are also other family-level factors that are related to social norms which drive IPV. While the intervention programmes described above have components that aim to challenge such norms, they have only had a cursory effect in practice and have not been able to address the underlying discriminatory attitudes and values. A wife is expected to take care of the husband's family without any complaints and to comply with certain norms – e.g. eating only after all other family members have eaten, serving the in-laws and not answering back, and obeying all their commands without question. A man who is not able to make his wife do these things for his family is regarded as a failed man. A man who speaks up for his wife is taken as '*meheru*' (the wife's servant). Interestingly, adolescent boys grow up with a deeply entrenched notion that they will not listen to their wife. Women who come to the family after marriage are regarded with suspicion, often perceived as disobeying the husband's family and thus influencing the husband to go against his parents and siblings. These expectations have not changed as a result of the training and awareness-raising programmes.

As noted, IPV is expected and accepted in many communities, and some forms of violence such as marital rape are not even acknowledged as IPV. In both Kapilvastu and Rupandehi, there are communities where IPV is so prevalent that it is considered normal. Besides this, common practices among certain ethnic groups drive IPV, such as the *Gauna* system among the Tharu and early marriage, which tends to create incompatibility between husband and wife, leading to IPV.

The study finds that there is also significant violence between unmarried partners, especially among adolescents, as the trend of having a boyfriend/girlfriend is rapidly increasing. The heavy stigma attached to having any kind of sexual or emotional relationship before marriage means that such relationships remain secret. As a result, service providers, despite knowing that such problems are on the increase, have not been able to respond.

Men who advocate changes, such as helping their wives, used to be ridiculed but this is becoming less so. However, they are still very much a minority and have not been able to bring significant change in their community. Moreover, as most men from the two districts end up migrating to India for seasonal labour, there is not much they can do about people's attitudes towards IPV back in their home villages. However, we also found that migrants return with high expectations from their wives and when the wives are unable to fulfil those expectations, they usually meet with physical and emotional harm.

Among the study communities, more visible forms of IPV such as beating are now beginning to be reported, but others such as marital rape, abuse caused by suspicions of infidelity, and extramarital affairs, though prevalent, are still rarely reported. Similarly, there are caste and class-related barriers to reporting IPV. Strong restrictions on women's mobility outside the home, pressure to maintain the family name, and fear of retaliation and shame are all important reasons why IPV tends to go unreported.

The government maintains that economic empowerment is one of the most powerful routes for women to build their confidence to achieve their potential and advance their rights, including reporting IPV and seeking justice. Accordingly, it has adopted a two-pronged approach, providing direct support to target GBV and devising

programmes to help women access productive assets, resources and other opportunities. Targeted efforts address domestic violence through a three-pronged approach: protection, prevention and redressal. Local-level structures have been set up in line with this national framework.

Due to large-scale awareness-raising efforts, service sectors are becoming more responsive to GBV. The police now have a women's police cell in each district to help women victims of GBV come forward to report their experiences. The WCDD (part of the MoWCSW) has women's cooperatives and other women-only groups that report and monitor GBV at village level. However, there is still no such provision in the courts to enable easy access to information in women's local language; moreover, women typically have to depend on a male guardian to navigate the lengthy and complex bureaucratic processes that have to be gone through to obtain justice. Due to lack of documents such as marriage or citizenship certificates, which are often in the possession of the perpetrator, women are frequently unable to access appropriate services.

Experience of programming around discriminatory social norms has found that it is vital to engage men in addressing IPV. Both the programmes studied in this research included aspects of engagement and awareness-raising for men, which is largely why they were selected for study. Both programmes have led to some positive changes in reporting of IPV, and IPV perpetrated by older men seems to be decreasing. However, the programmes have not been able to make a considerable impact due to a range of challenges, such as lack of coordination, lack of resources, and men's unwillingness to engage with programmes or activities regarded as 'women's issues', which in itself constitutes another form of discrimination against women.

9.1 Recommendations for programmes

This section outlines recommendations for programming, both for the programmes described in this study as well as programming more broadly. The recommendations are addressed to the government, donors, and civil society, though some of them cross over different categories of stakeholders.

9.1.1 The government

Improving coordination between gender focal points: Given that all ministries have gender focal points, it is critical to establish formal and regular communication channels between them and with sectors such as the police, given that they are directly involved in service delivery to survivors of IPV at the national level. Besides this, as quasi-judicial bodies are directly linked with addressing GBV, they should work in strong coordination with the MoWCSW, police and courts that work directly on GBV and IPV issues. At present, coordination is only on an ad-hoc basis but should be formalised and monitored. One way to achieve better sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination is to assign a single ministry for coordination. The smooth functioning of gender focal points in each ministry would not only ensure that gender issues are addressed in each programme of the ministry but would also help in mainstreaming gender within ministries that are male dominated. This would also ensure that efforts to address GBV are better resourced.

There is also a need to focus on the implementation of existing strategies before developing new strategies, to ensure that new directions are informed by evaluations and lessons learnt from completed programmes. This does not seem to be happening currently.

Ensuring the presence of more women in the judicial sector: The judiciary and other quasi-judicial bodies such as the land revenue and land administration department should recruit and train women as well as establish processes aimed specifically at helping women. At present, it seems that the number of women in senior positions, including those working as legal advisors, is very limited.

Retaining qualified staff and institutional learning: As retaining qualified and experienced legal staff is a big issue, there should be provisions for incentives for legal advisors and other cadres who currently work on a voluntary basis. Similarly, there should be better monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of gender-related outcomes in services and officials at local and national levels who perform well in achieving those outcomes should be rewarded and recognised. This would not only encourage providers to improve their services to women but also make men more enthusiastic to participate in helping women victims of IPV. Moreover, as transfers of civil servants are inevitable, the focal points in the MoWCSW should have provisions for institutionalising knowledge through robust knowledge management systems and ensuring appropriate handover to successors. Key informants from government offices also mentioned facing a dilemma in giving compensation to IPV survivors, especially at national level. In its present form, it is a time-consuming process in which survivors do not receive immediate relief. Hence, such offices should be better resourced.

Improve design and targeting of economic empowerment programmes – whether run by the government or NGOs: While economic and social empowerment activities seems to be an appropriate way of addressing the root causes of IPV, in their present form women's economic empowerment programmes are themselves gendered (promoting activities such as tailoring) and do not yield much income for participants. Skills and training for economic empowerment should be designed based on a study of market needs rather than on an ad-hoc basis and should not reinforce women's limited opportunities for income-earning activities. Such programmes should also target young married women in communities where gender norms are most stringent and where child marriage is prevalent.

Avoid duplication of effort: Duplication (by government and non-government actors) seems to be another problem

at the central level. Better coordination should help avoid duplication and ensure that all stakeholders are working towards common goals and visions for ending IPV. This will also ensure better outreach and coverage. This effort needs to be led by the government, and there also needs to be a champion within a particular ministry and department.

Provide sufficient resources: Programmes, especially those run by government, need to be sufficiently resourced and response mechanisms adequately staffed to ensure wider coverage and to maximise positive outcomes for women who experience GBV or IPV. One way of addressing these resource limitations is to improve use of existing ICT; for example, instead of service providers such as legal advisors or social mobilisers accompanying victims to each of the different offices in person to submit or get the necessary documents, an online linkages between the government offices should be established so that staff of each office can submit/retrieve necessary documents online for the victim.

9.1.2 Donors and NGOs (national and international)

Avoid creating parallel structures: Instead of creating parallel structures and duplicating programmes, donors should consult the local government and build on existing structures when devising new programmes. The study found that while coordination between government structures and donors is happening at national level, the same is lacking at the district level. Donors and NGOs should work in collaboration with each other and the government to achieve wider outreach. So, for example, if the government is focusing on one ward of a VDC, NGO programmes should focus on other wards or another VDC.

Ensure exit strategies that promote sustainability: As programmes tend to phase out after a short period of time due to limited availability of funding, there should be in-built sustainability plans to ensure that communities can continue activities on their own when the programme ends. This also applies to government programmes but is more of a challenge for NGOs and donors; government funds tend to be more long-lasting but, as already noted, are very thinly spread and unpredictable.

Strengthen M&E, particularly at local level: Strengthening M&E processes and improving the capacity of local stakeholders to carry out monitoring would be another way of overcoming bottlenecks in terms of programme outcomes.

Weave a gender perspective into all programmes: While GBV-focused programmes often explicitly aim to change social norms, other programmes such as those on livelihoods and infrastructure do not have a gender perspective woven into them. Efforts should be made to weave a gender perspective into other programmes, as addressing gender-related issues in a comprehensive manner will reinforce efforts to address IPV.

Engage men as 'champions' in combating IPV: Some programme activities should target senior officials and local leaders so that they can be engaged as champions for tackling IPV. While this model has been used extensively to address gender discriminatory norms, it has not been used directly to address IPV, and men are still not actively engaged in addressing IPV and championing efforts to eliminate or at least reduce it. Hence, the present trend of involving men in addressing discriminatory gender norms should be extended to tackle IPV directly. Also, given that there is a lack of role models for adolescent boys and young men, men who champion IPV can be role models and should also be encouraged to engage men and boys to share their worries and concerns with their intimate partners. This would help in forming stronger emotional bonds between partners and hence might lead to a reduction of frustration among men, which often results in them meting out IPV to their partners.

As well as working directly with men (young boys through to adolescent boys and older men), programmes should work with men and women as couples, with in-laws (fathers, mothers and brothers-in-law), with community and religious leaders, with members of the media, and with officials of the courts and police service – especially lower-level cadres, since they are often the first port of call for many women reporting IPV and GBV.

9.1.3 Local civil society

Encourage men and women to take part in activities and discussions together: Some programmes at local level divide beneficiaries into groups according to their sex (men's groups and women's groups). However, men are generally not interested to be involved in issues they think concern only women, such as IPV. Civil society groups and organisations should promote the message that IPV is an issue that needs to be addressed not just by women but by the whole society, and find ways to engage men meaningfully in issues that affect women. Changing social norms that restrict women's interaction with the outside world also means encouraging women to participate in local grass-roots organisations, which are usually led by men, as well as other programmes that again tend to be dominated by men. Due to a high level of acceptance, civil society organisations are best placed to push for such change. Hence, such organisations should be encouraged to make programmes more gender-inclusive, through, for instance, requiring men and women to participate in activities and discussions together, beginning with areas that are not sensitive, such as general livelihoods and local infrastructures. This approach could, in the long run, pave the way for more open interactions between men and women on more sensitive issues such as GBV and IPV.

Target unmarried young people as well as married couples: Awareness-raising activities in schools and other community spaces (for instance, through street dramas by government and I/NGOS) target married couples only. However, since having a girlfriend/boyfriend is becoming more common, despite being stigmatised and not spoken about openly, there are no programmes giving information on IPV to unmarried

partners. Girls find themselves becoming exposed to new forms of violence such as sexual coercion. At local level, programmes should therefore also target unmarried young people with activities on GBV and IPV.

Ensure that women know how to report IPV: It is important that women know how to report incidents of violence by their husband or another male family member. Additional efforts should be put into awareness-raising within communities of how to report IPV and the support services available to women experiencing IPV.

More broadly, one of the biggest challenges to addressing IPV is lack of understanding of IPV as a separate issue from domestic violence. We found that the concept of maintaining stability and respect for the family and the family name is so deeply internalised in Nepal that it is never questioned or reflected on in daily life. Hence, it is difficult for people to conceptualise intimate relationships between husband and wife as a distinct area without linking it to the larger family. This is why domestic violence is interchangeable with IPV in Nepal. So, it seems that unless people unlearn this notion of family welfare and the gendered roles assigned to men and women, and learn instead to separate the relationship between spouses from relationships between the couple and the rest of the family, the notion of IPV will continue to be difficult to conceptualise and therefore to address, particularly at the local level. Similarly, because the reason for continued male perpetration of IPV is so deeply intertwined with family expectations around behaviours of wives and husbands, until all of this is untangled and these dynamics are addressed head-on, real progress and change on perpetration of IPV is likely to be negligible in contexts such as Nepal.

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Appendix 1

Table A1 and A2 show the different types of GBV alongside details of the victims and perpetrators recorded in the national police repository from 2011-2015.

Table A1: GBV in the past five years

Cases	Particulars		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Abortion	Abortion Case					
	Gender	Male	10	14	17	NA
		Female	4	26	16	NA
		Total	**14**	**40**	**33**	**NA**
	Marital status	Married	14	22	25	NA
		Unmarried	0	18	8	NA
		Total	**14**	**40**	**33**	**NA**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	10	15	26	NA
		Service sector	0	12	3	NA
		Business	0	0	3	NA
		Labour	4	13	1	NA
		Still studying	0	0	0	NA
		Total	**14**	**40**	**33**	**NA**
	Education status	Illiterate	2	8	0	NA
		Literate	12	17	30	NA
		Class 6-10	0	9	0	NA
		SLC	0	2	2	NA
		Intermediate level	0	NA	0	NA
		Bachelor level	0	NA	1	NA
		Total	14	36 [1]	33	NA
	Caste status	Brahmin	4	3	6	NA
		Chhetri	6	18	3	NA
		Janajati	1	14	10	NA
		Dalit	0	5	8	NA
		Madhesi	3	0	7	NA
		Total	**14**	**40**	**33**	**NA**
Rape/attempted rape[1a]	Rape/attempted rape					
	Gender	Male	811	1005	939 / 427	1093/ 593
		Female	3	0	0 / 0	0 / 0
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
	Marital status	Married	463	617	557 / 268	610 / 410
		Unmarried	348	388	382 / 159	483 / 183
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	477	633	481 / 226	638 / 280
		Service sector	4	16	50 / 49	49 / 35
		Business	0	0	72 / 35	67 / 56
		Labour	124	110	226 / 77	213 / 88
		Still studying	209	246	110 / 40	126 / 134
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**

1a The education status of the remaining 4 was unknown)

1 The data for 2011/12 and 2012/13 was not disaggregated into rape and attempt to rape.

Rape/attempted rape (continued)	Education status	Illiterate	258	281	49 / 44	87 / 23
		Literate	266	348	693 / 261	735 / 442
		Class 6-10	202	329	112 / 57	187 / 78
		SLC	17	23	47 / 42	38 / 19
		Intermediate level	13	19	29 / 14	34 / 20
		Bachelor level	4	5	9 / 9	12 / 11
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
	Caste status	Brahmin	180	163	98 / 55	119 / 87
		Chhetri	233	333	154 / 91	230 / 111
		Janajati	234	290	328 / 127	426 / 204
		Dalit	109	120	179 / 75	168 / 72
		Madhesi	58	99	180 / 79	150 / 120
		Total	**814**	**1005**	**939 / 427**	**1093 / 593**
Domestic violence[2]	**Domestic violence**					
	Gender	Male	2069	1316	6719	NA
		Female	431	30	1023	NA
		Total	**2499**	**1346**	**7742**	**NA**
	Marital status	Married	NA	NA	NA	NA
		Unmarried	NA	NA	NA	NA
		Total	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	1089	1186	4519	NA
		Service sector	708	82	381	NA
		Business	140	8	517	NA
		Labour	467	69	2210	NA
		Still studying	95	1	102	NA
		Housewife	NA	NA	13	NA
		Total	**2499**	**1346**	**7742**	**NA**
	Education status	Illiterate	463	NA	242	NA
		Literate	876	1280	6120	NA
		Class 6-10	284	19	641	NA
		SLC	518	17	373	NA
		Intermediate level	358	23	271	NA
		Bachelor level	95	6	95	NA
		Total	**2499**	**1346**	**7742**	**NA**
	Religion	Hindu	1969	1215	7129	NA
		Buddhist	187	76	398	NA
		Muslim	343	55	215	NA
		Others	-	-	-	NA
		Total	**2499**	**1346**	**7742**	**NA**
Polygamy	**Polygamy**					
	Gender	Male	240	NA	421	NA
		Female	240	NA	346	NA
		Total	480	NA	767	NA

2 There is no data on perpetrators of domestic violence disaggregated by caste groups as in other cases of GBV.

Polygamy (continued)	Occupation status	Agriculture	391	NA	455	NA
		Service sector	23	NA	57	NA
		Business	13	NA	44	NA
		Labour	33	NA	155	NA
		Still studying	3	NA	15	NA
		Housewife	17	NA	41	NA
		Total	**480**	**NA**	**767**	**NA**
	Education status	Illiterate	18	NA	13	NA
		Literate	390	NA	613	NA
		Class 6-10	31	NA	18	NA
		SLC	17	NA	69	NA
		Intermediate level	15	NA	39	NA
		Bachelor level	9	NA	15	NA
		Total	**480**	**NA**	**767**	**NA**
	Caste status	Brahmin	52	NA	65	NA
		Chhetri	60	NA	124	NA
		Janajati	257	NA	268	NA
		Dalit	58	NA	104	NA
		Madhesi	53	NA	77	NA
		Muslim	NA	NA	29	NA
		Total	**480**	**270**	**421**[2a]	**NA**
Child marriage	Child marriage					
	Gender	Male	15	14	29	33
		Female	2	7	6	6
		Total	**17**	**21**	**35**	**39**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	12	10	35	18
		Service sector	0	6	0	NA
		Business	0	0	0	NA
		Labour	5	5	0	
		Still studying	0	2	0	NA
		Total	**17**	**21**	**35**	**NA**
	Education status[3]	Illiterate	4	1	0	
		Literate	7	14	34	39
		Class 6-10	5	7	0	NA
		SLC	1	0	1	NA
		Intermediate level	0	0	0	NA
		Bachelor level	0	0	0	NA
		Total	**17**	**21**	**35**	**NA**
	Religion	Hindu	13	18	35	38
		Buddhist	3	1	0	0
		Muslim	0	0	0	1
		Others	1	2	0	0
		Total	**17**	**21**	**35**	**39**

2a The caste status of the remaining 346 was unknown

3 Data is not disaggregated by caste status in case of perpetrators of child marriage.

Table A2: Characteristics of victims from the national level data

Cases	Particulars		2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Abortion	Marital status	Married	13	8	9	NA
		Unmarried	0	20	0	NA
		Total	**10**	**28**	**9**	**NA**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	10	9	9	NA
		Service sector	0	6	0	NA
		Business	0	0	0	NA
		Labor	3	6	0	NA
		Still studying	0	7	0	NA
		Total	**13**	**28**	**9**	**NA**
	Education status	Illiterate	3	10	0	NA
		Literate	8	10	9	NA
		Class 6-10	2	6	0	NA
		SLC	0	2	0	NA
		Intermediate Level	0	0	0	NA
		Bachelor Level	0	0	0	NA
		Total	**13**	**28**	**9**	**NA**
	Caste status	Brahmin	0	1	1	NA
		Chettri	9	10	1	NA
		Janajati	3	13	4	NA
		Dalit	0	4	0	NA
		Madhesi	1	0	2	NA
		Total	**13**	**28**	**8**[i]	**NA**

i The caste status of the remaining 1 was unknown

Table A2: Characteristics of victims from the national level data (continued)

Cases	Particulars		2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Rape/ Attempt to Rape[ii]	Gender	Male	15	9	1 / 0	0 / 0
		Female	705	928	934 / 422	981 / 562
		Total	**720**	**937**	**935/ 422**	**981 / 562**
	Marital status	Married	371	550	257 / 140	292 / 242
		Unmarried	349	387	678 / 282	689 / 320
		Total	**720**	**937**	**935 / 422**	**981 / 562**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	311	507	391 / 167	394 / 243
		Service sector	0	0	3 / 26	7 / 3
		Business	0	0	17 / 28	24 / 52
		Labor	89	52	48 / 77	53 / 52
		Still studying	320	379	457 / 124	887 / 195
		Housewife	0	NS / NS	19 / NS	57 / 17
		Total	**720**	**938**	**925/ 422**	**981 / 562**
	Education status	Illiterate	184	266	100 / 57	66 / 33
		Literate	328	313	558 / 226	632 / 384
		Class 6-10	190	328	231 / 100	243 / 115
		SLC	9	23	31 / 24	18 / 14
		Intermediate Level	9	5	13 / 8	18 / 13
		Bachelor Level	0	2	2 / 7	4 / 3
		Total	**720**	**937**	**935 /422**	**981 / 562**
	Caste status	Brahmin	210	NA	109 / 42	112 / 49
		Chettri	228	NA	165 / 66	197 / 128
		Janajati	154	NA	342 / 186	404 / 293
		Dalit	82	NA	181 / 76	158 / 85
		Madhesi	46	NA	138 / 52	110 / 77
		Total	**720**	**NA**	**935 / 422**	**981 / 562**

ii Data was not disaggregated by rape or attempt to rape in 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Table A2: Characteristics of victims from the national level data (continued)

Cases	Particulars		2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Domestic Violence	Gender	Male	4	32	761	NS
		Female	2247	1768	6074	NS
		Total	**2251**	**1800**	**6835**	**NS**
	Marital status	Married	2217	1334	6293	NS
		Unmarried	17	12	272	NS
		Widow	17	50	53	NS
		Divorce	NS	72	217	NS
		Total	**2251**	**1468**[iii]	**6835**	**NS**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	1445	1404	3845	NS
		Service sector	188	21	117	NS
		Business	116	9	198	NS
		Labor	347	10	559	NS
		Still studying	155	2	44	NS
		Housewife	NS	NS	2072	NS
		Total	**2251**	**1800**	**6835**	**NS**
	Education status	Illiterate	494	110	400	NS
		Literate	1162	1493	5502	NS
		Class 6-10	413	165	422	NS
		SLC	144	12	263	NS
		Intermediate Level	27	17	197	NS
		Bachelor Level	11	3	51	NS
		Total	**2251**	**1800**	**6835**	**NS**
	Caste status	Brahmin	391	158	704	NS
		Chettri	449	486	1318	NS
		Janajati	632	544	1758	NS
		Dalit	430	332	846	NS
		Madhesi	345	233	2209	NS
		Muslim	4	47	NS	NS
		Total	**2251**	**1800**	**6835**	**NS**

iii Marital status of the remaining 332 were unknown)

Table A2: Characteristics of victims from the national level data (continued)

Cases	Particulars		2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Polygamy	Gender	Male	0	0	0	NS
		Female	249	270	421	NS
		Total	**249**	**270**	**421**	**NS**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	194	184	235	NS
		Service sector	5	3	15	NS
		Business	3	3	14	NS
		Labor	19	33	18	NS
		Still studying	1	0	12	NS
		Housewife	27	37	127	NS
		Total	**249**	**270**	**421**	**NS**
	Education status	Illiterate	7	39	24	NS
		Literate	225	166	356	NS
		Class 6-10	5	36	0	NS
		SLC	6	22	24	NS
		Intermediate Level	4	7	12	NS
		Bachelor Level	2	0	5	NS
		Total	**249**	**270**	**421**	**NS**
	Caste status	Brahmin	20	20	41	NS
		Chettri	27	89	117	NS
		Janajati	147	97	146	NS
		Dalit	23	33	58	NS
		Madhesi	32	41	50	NS
		Others	NS	NS	9	NS
		Total	**249**	**270**	**421**	**NS**

Table A2: Characteristics of victims from the national level data (continued)

Cases	Particulars		2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Child Marriage	Gender	Male	0	0	0	0
		Female	12	19	15	23
		Total	**12**	**19**	**15**	**23**
	Occupation status	Agriculture	3	5	8	7
		Service sector	4	0	0	0
		Business	0	0	0	0
		Labor	0	3	0	0
		Still studying	5	11	7	16
		Total	**12**	**19**	**15**	**23**
	Education status	Illiterate	2	5	2	2
		Literate	7	5	7	21
		Class 6-10	3	9	6	0
		SLC	0	0	0	0
		Intermediate Level	0	0	0	0
		Bachelor Level	0	0	0	23
		Total	**12**	**19**	**15**	
	Caste status	Brahmin	2	1	3	1
		Chettri	5	3	2	6
		Janajati	1	6	6	2
		Dalit	2	2	4	9
		Madhesi	2	4	0	5
		Total	**12**	**16**[iv]	**15**	**23**

iv The caste status of the remaining 3 was unknown

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