



Change and continuity in social norms and practices around marriage and education in Nepal

Anita Ghimire and Fiona Samuels

Key messages

- Child marriage is still prevalent, and although the average age of marriage has increased, gendered social norms around marriage remain sticky
- Positive changes in higher education enrolment, coupled with the increasing age of marriage, have led to positive impacts in girls' access to education. Despite this, dropout rates for girls remain high, and there is evidence of son bias in household expenditure on education
- Long-term interventions such as government or NGO programmes and policies to increase gender discrimination have proven to be the most important external drivers of change
- Strong female role models are critical, usually women who work in development, education or health sectors. Adolescent girls look to these women as agents of change

Acknowledgements

The team is very grateful to all the local people, adolescent girls, young women and men of Wayal and Salena Village Development Committees (VDCs), in the Doti district of Nepal, who shared their insights and experiences patiently with us. To make this possible, several people and institutions played a key role. We express our gratitude to the District Administration Office in Doti as well as to CARE Nepal, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Education, Save the Children, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Kathmandu. In addition, we would like to give special thanks to: Mr Man Bahadur Kathayat, Principal of Soojung School, Doti; Mr Min Rana, Principal of Shree Saraswoti Boarding School, Doti; Mr Udaya Pandit, Headmaster of Shree Jhime Secondary School; Mr Jagat Bahadur Balayar, Principal of Shree Bhumi Raj Mabi and Mrs Bharati Bohora, teacher Shree Bhumi Raj Mabi for their support during the field work. We are also very thankful to the Ward Police office family and Jhime school family for their support and interest in our work.

We would also like to mention special thanks to Mr Narendra Balayar and Mr Ramesh Balayer and their family members for hosting us and for their enthusiasm and support during the fieldwork. We also thank Mr Siddhi Manandhar and Ms Apsara K.C. and Mr. Amit Maharjan of the Nepal Center for Contemporary Research (NCCR) for taking care of logistics throughout the project, and Ms. Gitta Shrestha, NCCR Gender Expert, and Mrs. Rewati Gurung for her help with the fieldwork.

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Abbreviations	v
Executive summary	vi
Report overview and aims	vi
Key findings	vii
Policy implications	x
1 Introduction	1
2 Conceptual framework: understanding social norm change	3
3 Methodology	8
3.1 Study design and process	8
3.2 Description of the study sites	10
4 Nepal country context: Trends in adolescent marriage and education	17
4.1 The adolescent population in Nepal	17
4.2 Education	18
4.3 Early marriage in Nepal	19
4.4 Key laws and policies affecting adolescents	20
5 Marriage and education: Roles, expectations and change	22
5.1 How adolescent girls experience marriage and education	22
5.2 Social norms around marriage and education: what has changed?	35
6 Drivers and inhibitors of norm change	43
6.1 Drivers of change	43
6.2 Why do norms remain sticky?	49
7 Effects on girls' capability development	51
7.1 How have some girls walked the fine line between overcoming discriminatory norms and still being 'good'?	52
8 Conclusion and policy recommendations	53
8.1 Policy recommendations	54
References	57
Annex 1: Research instrument	60
Annex 2: Community timeline / conceptual mapping / historical mapping	66
Annex 3: Marriage network case study	77
Annex 4: Inter-generational trio	81

Annex 5: Outlier case studies	84
--------------------------------------	-----------

Annex 6: Respondent list	90
---------------------------------	-----------

Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual framework	4
Figure 2: Ecological zone map of Nepal showing research site	11
Figure 3: Map of Doti District with study site	11
Figure 4: Percentage of out-of-school adolescent girls (urban and rural areas)	18

Tables

Table 1: Nepal: changes in people's wellbeing, 1990-2013	1
Table 2: Conditions in which gender norms are most likely to change	7
Table 3: The study process	8
Table 4: Data collection tools and techniques	8
Table 5: Participants type and size	10
Table 6: Chronology of development of Salena	12
Table 7: Chronology of development of Wayal	14
Table 8: Adolescent population in Nepal	17
Table 9: Reason for dropout from school, by gender (%)	19
Table 10: Married population aged 10 years and above by age at first marriage	19
Table 11: Existing laws	20
Table 12: Findings on social norms around marriage (Year 1 research)	22
Table 13: Perceptions of an ideal daughter/wife/girl	25
Table 14: Ideal son/husband/boy	26
Table 15: Findings from first year in education	33
Table 16: Aspirations, hindrances and programs that helps	55

Boxes

Box 1: Pressure to bear a son	32
Box 2: Girls vs boys and the seeds of inferiority complex	35
Box 3: Girls having a say on their prospective husband: the role of peers	37
Box 4: Support of in-laws and husband in continuing education	42
Box 5: The positive consequences of a supportive family	45
Box 6: Poverty, lack of family support, and early marriage	47
Box 7: Criticism for sending daughter for higher education	50

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
DDC	District Development Committee
HQ	Headquarters
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VDC	Village Development Committee

Executive summary

Report overview and aims

Nepal has made impressive progress in recent years in terms of human development, human rights and gender parity, paving the way for the country to graduate out of the ranks of the world's least developed countries by 2022. Among its achievements, there are now fewer poor people and more people who are literate compared with the 1990s; more people have access to improved drinking water, health facilities and sanitation; and fewer infants die in the first five years of life, while fewer women die during childbirth. There has also been an increase in the number of employed people as well as in the share of women in non-agricultural wage work, tertiary education, in the bureaucracy and security sector, and in the national Parliament. However, this improved level of wellbeing is experienced unequally, and adolescent girls and young women continue to face highly discriminatory social structures that greatly hinder their capabilities and overall wellbeing. Though gendered social norms are gradually changing and having a more positive impact on girls' lives, they still remain stringent for girls (Ghimire et al., 2013), and women and girls are recognised as one of the most vulnerable groups in the country (United Nations Country Team, 2011).

This study is part of a broader multi-country, multi-year initiative (also covering Ethiopia, Uganda and Viet Nam), funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) on gender justice for adolescent girls. Findings from the year 1 research, which focused on how and where social norms fit into girls' lives and how they affect their capabilities, showed that while certain social norms are changing (and some rapidly so), others remain unchanged or 'sticky' (resistant to change). Of particular interest was the continuing prevalence of early marriage¹ and its pivotal role in affecting other aspects of adolescent girls' lives, particularly education.

Nepal has one of the highest rates of early marriage, at 51% (UNICEF, 2011), with girls four times more likely to get married when they are children than boys (Amin et al., 2014). Most often, early marriage is linked both to normative and structural factors such as poverty, lack of education, and social and religious norms and traditions (ibid.). Furthermore, because early marriage typically means that girls no longer continue their education, it leads to a range of other capability deprivations, including lack of employment opportunities and inability to access individual rights (Ghimire et al., 2013).

Given this context, the year 2 research focused in depth on social norms around early marriage and how it is linked to other norms, particularly around girls' education. The research team returned to Doti, one of the districts in the Far Western region of the country where the year 1 research was conducted. In year 1, Doti was selected due to its least developed status, high levels of gender disparities, and the presence of large numbers of government and non-government interventions dating back many years, among other criteria.² It was decided to return there for the year 2 fieldwork because of the continuing prevalence of early marriage. However, to avoid saturation, two new study sites were selected. So, for year 2, the research was conducted in Bhumirajmadau (Salena) village development committee (VDC) (chosen to represent a rural context) and Durgamadau (Wyal) VDC (chosen to represent a semi-rural context to capture a complete picture). In each site, researchers used a set of qualitative data collection tools, including in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, intergenerational discussions, and marriage network case studies.

¹ Early marriage means a marriage where one or both spouses is under 18 (ICRW and Plan, 2011).

² For further details of earlier site selection, see Ghimire et al., 2013.

Key findings

Changes in marriage practices

The year 2 study shows that while child marriage is still prevalent, the age of marriage has increased, from an average of between 5 and 6 years in their grandmothers' generation and 10 and 12 in their mothers' generation, to between 14 and 18 years (the legal minimum age for marriage) for today's adolescent girls. Similarly, in comparison to their mothers' generation, the age gap between spouses has also decreased, from an average of 18 years then to between 3 and 7 years now.

The research found that there is also more decision-making space opening up for girls on the subject of marriage: while their mothers and grandmothers were not informed about their prospective groom, today's parents now generally talk to their daughters about the groom they have chosen and his family. However, despite this, girls do not have a final say in their marriage (whether in terms of the age they marry at or whether they accept the proposal). Again, generally speaking, there is still no system whereby girls and boys can meet each other before marriage; however, there were a few cases where girls and boys had seen each other and were in contact via cell phone before their marriage. This usually happened when there were common friends involved.

Along with changes in the processes of arranged marriage, its popularity as a form of marriage is decreasing, while elopement is becoming more common (particularly over the past three to four years). Arguably, an elopement is not a love marriage (which can be defined as one where the girl and boy decide to get married and their parents give consent). Rather, it is somewhere in between, as the couples who decide to marry after having a love affair have to elope because the girl's parents would not give consent. Much of the relationship between elopers takes place via mobile phones; in some cases, the boy and girl do not even meet each other face to face before deciding to run away together. Elopement usually occurs without the knowledge of the parents, who only hear about it once their children have already eloped. While parents blame access to mobile phones for this emerging trend, the year 1 findings suggested that though access to mobile phones has made it easier for boys and girls to communicate with each other, it is the lack of mentorship and hence inability to manage changing adolescent relationships that contributes to elopement. As a large majority of elopers are young – between 13 and 17 years of age – this can contribute to an increase in the rate of early marriages.

Unsurprisingly, we find that expectations around norms and behaviours, within the household and beyond, start being developed very early on in a child's life. Thus even within the same family, girls and boys are brought up according to different norms and values. These expectations are guided by local norms around what makes an 'ideal' boy/girl/man/woman, which, while changing, remain founded on 'good' girls being restricted in their movement outside the house, submissive, and not interacting with males outside of the family. Apart from being inculcated at a very early age, these norms are also reinforced when girls are married into another family; an ideal wife is almost exclusively defined in terms of hard work for the husband's household, submissiveness to the in-laws and husband, no interaction with outsider males, less mobility, being good to neighbours, and being modestly dressed (i.e. wearing traditional clothing). Only in some cases, and in particularly amongst young boys in Wayal, the ideals are changing more rapidly. In other cases, social norms are not changing at the same pace as infrastructural and economic development.

Whereas previously, polygamy did not appear to be prevalent in Doti, in the past four to five years, polygamous unions appear to be on the rise, particularly in Wayal VDC and particularly among youths. In such cases, the first wife becomes extremely vulnerable: she loses her social standing, respect and identity, and she is unable to re-marry or go back to her maternal home as she would be a source of embarrassment to her family. The second wife and husband claim to provide well for the first wife and her children; this is reinforced by the husband's parents, who also say that they give the earnings from the land to the first wife, thus generally reassuring outsiders that this first wife is well supported. There is not usually much of an age difference between the two wives but the first wife tends to be illiterate while the second wife can read and write enough to run the husband's business. When asked why they decided to marry twice, men echoed one husband's reply: 'It just happened' – that they fell in love and there was peer pressure to marry and save the girl's honour once it became known that they were in love. Besides this, the men concerned felt that if they could earn enough to keep both wives well, it was good to save the other girl's honour by marrying her in such circumstances. The second wives we spoke to were also of the opinion that, once the man has fallen in love, it is right to marry a second woman if he can provide for both. The first wife, who

usually lived on the outskirts of the town in the man's parental home, generally did not know about her husband's extramarital affairs until he took a second wife.

Finally, although there have been significant changes in the system of bride price, it is still practised by a few households, whereby the groom's parents give money to the bride's parents in return for taking her as a bride. The level of bride price used to be US\$3 in their grandmothers' time, when it was a common custom; it rose to US\$10 in their mothers' time, when it became less common; and today, families generally pay US\$255 for the daughter-in-law. However, the practice is shunned by society, and those still engaged in it tend to deny that they are.

Changes in education

The research found that there have been some positive changes in terms of higher enrolment rates in education. Participants from both Salena and Wayal believed that school enrolment had increased over the past five to six years, for boys and girls alike. Whereas previously, girls were sometimes not sent to school at all, now (in some cases) girls are even being sent to tuition classes after school and their domestic workload is taken on by the mother. Children are also enrolling in school at a younger age. Previously, because there were no schools nearby and one had to walk a long distance and sometimes through forest and rivers, children were generally enrolled between the ages of six and eight, when they were able to get to school by themselves. Now, there are schools in the neighbourhood and hence children can go to school as young as four (the rule in government schools) and even younger in private boarding schools.

This change, combined with the increase in the average age at marriage, has had a positive impact on girls' access to higher education. Previously, girls were considered to be at a marriageable age (by local standards) when they were studying in grade 8-9 and so had to drop out when they married. Now, as they are enrolled at a younger age and the age of marriage has increased (to 16-18 years), most girls can study up to grade 10. There is also a relatively recent trend of parents sending their daughter-in-law to school (in the past two to three years).

However, a large number of girls still drop out of secondary education either due to marriage, restrictions on their movement (which make it difficult to attend high schools and colleges far from their homes), being overburdened with household work, or, in some cases, poverty. There is also son bias in household expenditure on education, with boys often going to English-medium private schools that are perceived to provide a better-quality education, and girls going to Nepali-medium government schools, where education is perceived to be of a lower quality.

Drivers of change

Drivers of change include government policies and programmes designed to promote gender equality, as well as development programmes implemented by non-government agencies (NGOs). For analytical purpose these drivers have been classified as external drivers as these originate outside the community. Besides these, the presence of female role models in the community, the family, schools, media and communications technology, and supportive male relatives and community leaders are other drivers. These have been classified as internal drivers owing to the fact that they come from within the community. However both these external and internal drivers function in close relationship and build on and draw from each other.

External drivers

Long-term interventions such as government or NGO programmes and policies to increase gender discrimination have proven to be the most important external drivers of change. Among other things, these have been able to mobilise local youths, also providing them with information and exposing them to new ways of doing things. These have been very effective in creating awareness and influencing other, local-level mediators such as women's groups, men, schools and family members to accept new ways of doing things or perceiving social norms around gender. One example that stands out is the national-level School Sector Reform Programme implemented in 2009, the government mobilised local teachers and community members, mothers' groups and representatives of other local groups to persuade the community to send all their children to school, including daughters. They also introduced several material incentives to persuade parents to send girls to school. Due to this incentive, a large number of girls who would otherwise be at home doing household work have had the opportunity to go to school.

Internal drivers

Turning to internal drivers of change in social norms, we found that for girls in both Wayal and Salena, strong female role models are critical, and are usually women who work in the development, education or health sectors. Some of these women, especially teachers, have helped adolescent girls while others are actively engaged in efforts to end discrimination against girls and to stop gender-based violence and harmful social practices, including *chaupadi*. Thus, role models (who may be teachers but also elder brothers or sisters) are people whom adolescents look up to as agents for change. They can introduce adolescents to new ways of thinking and doing things, and are involved in challenging and changing discriminatory practices in the society. When young people were able to take up positions as local leaders, heads of peer groups, government representatives or local teachers, they also became important agents for change and opened people's minds towards change.

Although peers may not be regarded as role models per se, they can help each other to cope whenever a social backlash occurs (particularly if it is in response to a transgression of existing social norms). For adolescents, these may range from situations regarding love affairs and marriage to issues around clothing styles and fashion. Peers are, therefore, an important part of an individual's support systems: they can act as buffers, protecting each other, but also helping to motivate each other to stand up against discriminatory norms.

The family is another important institution, which, if supportive, can enhance girls' capabilities. Given that social norms are unwritten and are forever in a state of flux, they can provide space for families to manoeuvre around them in order to give opportunities for a girl's development. As there are no organised groups in society working to resist small changes, families end up having considerable flexibility in how they decide to deal with a daughter or, indeed, a son who may transgress certain social norms. Thus, if the family is supportive, it can act as a safety net for adolescent girls and can assist them in developing their capabilities even if the girls go against expected behaviours. Apart from the fact that some families who were well off economically sent their daughters and daughters-in-law for higher education, there was no clear evidence both from Salena and Wayal that families who were better off economically or in political status were the ones that challenged or resisted discriminatory social norms.

Communications technology, mainly local radio, was found to be another important driver that sensitised people to potentially harmful consequences of existing practices and introduced new ways of thinking. Local programmes run by FM radio stations are informative and raise people's awareness about harmful practices through discussion programmes or interviews.

Mobile phones have undoubtedly made it more convenient for adolescents to communicate. They have helped girls to organise and keep their social network intact and share their difficulties with close friends, and have helped wives improve communication with husbands who are mostly in India. Mobile phones were frequently cited as being used by girls and boys to conduct love affairs. This has provided some impetus for coping with or fighting discriminatory norms and has opened the way for small changes, with some girls having a say in the decision about marriage and seeing the prospective husband when their parents organise their marriage. However, there is also some evidence that easier communication via mobile phones has had negative consequences for girls – thus, for instance, they have, on occasions, facilitated young girls' elopement and early marriage which has in turn put girls in a position which restricts development of their other capabilities.

Finally, technology and services such as grinding mills and availability of water supply was also seen to improve girls' lives. While in Ranagoan in the first round of fieldwork, adolescent girls had to spend a lot of their time and energy in grinding wheat in grinding stones and carrying water from resources far away from their house, this was not the case for Wayal and Salena. In both the places people used the local grinding mill for the purpose and had water supply in the houses and as such saved a lot of the girls' time; though the extent to which this time saved was used for studying is hard to say.

Though it does not always play a direct role in fighting discriminatory norms, school is another important mediating institution. Schools provide girls with extra-curricular information and life skills on managing sexual and reproductive health and the importance of hygiene during menstruation.³ Local teachers, seniors and peers are important sources of knowledge and support, and school provides a platform for their interaction. Moreover, for boys and girls alike, schools are a critical space for broadening their horizons, aspirations and outlook towards life

3 Traditional local norms prevent girls from having bath and combing hair during the first four days of menstruation.

and careers. Some male respondents spoke about how education had helped them rethink established gender roles in their community and to have an appreciation of girls' rights, and how social norms restrict what girls can achieve.

Finally, our positive outlier case studies revealed that where girls have been able to achieve beyond local expectations, male relatives (whether fathers, fathers-in-law or husbands) have been an important source of support. In addition, successful women have also usually had the support of local political leaders and government organisations at some time in their lives.

Inhibitors to change

Generally, our year 2 findings from Wayal and Salena show that gendered social norms around marriage and education remain sticky for various reasons. These include economic pressures, ignorance and limited exposure to other ways of doing things, people's experiences of the negative impact of changes and fear of a social backlash.

While there was a reasonable assumption that migration may have had a positive impact on gendered social norms in the two study sites (as migrants would return with new ideas, approaches and behaviours), this was not the case.⁴ This could perhaps be explained by the fact that most men who migrated to India worked in menial jobs (e.g. in hotels or as guards in private houses and factories) and as such had little scope for acquiring new knowledge. Also, migration is seasonal; therefore their exposure to different ways of doing things is short-lived before coming back to the same conditions in their villages. Thus the few migrant youths we talked to appeared to conform to existing norms even more so than local young men who had not migrated: they were less keen on girls being educated and their marriages (to very young girls) were usually arranged by their parents. Non-migrants, on the other hand, tended to study up to higher grades and were more likely to challenge existing social norms around arranged marriage. Neither adolescent boys nor adolescent girls mentioned migrants who went to India as role models, instead mentioning local youths who had done well in their education as having inspired them.

Finally, there was also a sense during the research that people conform to certain norms or follow expected behaviours because of past negative experiences of what happened when people subverted these. Such people tend to hold strong religious beliefs and generally can be said to fear the consequences of modernity. Hence, when negative consequences arise from trying out new things (e.g. girls going on to higher education and aspiring for a career) they become fearful and want to return to the old or expected ways of doing things. The research found some progressive families and young men and women who would like to do things differently and thereby challenge local norms. Nevertheless, they face strong criticism from within their community for doing so. When other families hear about this criticism, they too fear the same social backlash and hence stick to established norms. What comes out from the study is that understandings about adolescent girls and their overall family environment is much more complex and perhaps less conclusive than one would expect. Additionally, findings point to the fact that activities or programs at the community level focused on ending gender discrimination for adolescent girls should be targeted at both men and women.

Policy implications

As part of the year 2 research, we asked adolescents about their aspirations around marriage and education and what they think would hinder them from achieving those aspirations. We also asked stakeholders at local level to suggest recommendations that would help to address discriminatory norms related to early marriage and school dropout, as well as to end practices that had a negative impact on the development of adolescent girls' capabilities. Their responses have guided our recommendations.

For school-going adolescent girls, it is vital to create an environment in which they have time for study, as well as opportunities and guidance for higher education and jobs. Parents need to be less focused on arranging early marriage for their daughters and instead take a more nurturing approach, seeing girls as individuals with the right to have aspirations for the future. This includes generating different attitudes (among parents, men and women in the wider community, and young people themselves) about what makes an 'ideal' girl/woman/daughter/daughter-in-law/wife.

⁴ Girls do not migrate, but it is common for young men to migrate to India.

For out-of-school adolescent girls, their wellbeing would be considerably increased through the promotion of income-generating activities and help in tackling gender-based injustices such as polygamy, domestic violence and alcoholism. In terms of local income-generating opportunities, given the rich natural resources of Wayal and Salena, small cottage industries were thought to be feasible.

Existing interventions (both large scale and long term) in the form of policies, laws and programmes (by government or NGOs) such as the School Sector Reform Program, have been successful in addressing issues of gender discriminatory social norms. Such long-term and focused interventions need to continue and be extended.

Men as well as women are governed by social norms and both sexes can be an important source of change, but there need to be greater efforts to raise awareness of discriminatory attitudes towards girls and women and to collectively take practical steps to overcome them. In particular, men's role in addressing discriminatory social norms should be encouraged. Given the pivotal role that men can play, both within and outside the household, they need to be engaged in discussions and awareness-raising at family and community level so that they can become important agents for positive change and help women and girls address social injustices.

1 Introduction

Despite the rapid rise in socio-economic and political wellbeing in South Asia over the past two decades, as evidenced by improvements across a range of human development indicators, many countries are still underdeveloped and are lagging behind in terms of economic growth and social and political development (UNDP, 2013). Women and girls in this region face many forms of discrimination and inequality, including limited access to education and economic opportunities, and early marriage, often due to stringent cultural norms (OECD, 2012). This has resulted in women lagging behind on different measures of wellbeing. For example, South Asia is the third lowest ranking region in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI); it has the lowest rate of female labour force participation (at 36%) and the highest maternal mortality rates in the world (ibid). Among the South Asian nations, Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world. As the 2013 Human Development Report illustrates, people in Nepal are better off only when compared to those living in Afghanistan and Pakistan, both of which are fragile states suffering from conflict (UNDP, 2013).

However, Nepal has also seen notable improvements in the wellbeing of its people over time, and has already achieved some of its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets. As Table 1 shows, there are fewer poor people and more people who are literate compared with the 1990s. More people have access to improved drinking water, health facilities and sanitation, and fewer infants and women giving birth are dying. There has been an increase in the number of people in employment, as well as in the share of women in non-agricultural wage work, tertiary education, the state bureaucracy and security sector, and in the national Parliament.

Table 1: Nepal: changes in people's wellbeing, 1990-2013

Serial Number	Indicators	1990	2000	2010	2013
1.	Percentage of population below US\$1 per day (ppp value)	33.54	n/a	19.7	16.4*
2.	Percentage of population below national poverty line	42	38	25.4	23.82*
3.	Poverty gap ratio at US\$1 per day (%)	n/a	11.75	6.1	5.60
4.	Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	49	47	22.5	15.7**
5.	Literacy rate among 15–24-year-olds	49.6	70.1	86.5	88.6
6.	Gender parity index	n/a	n/a	0.99	0.99
7.	Ratio of girls to boys in primary education	0.56	0.79	1.0	1.02**
8.	Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education	0.43	0.70	0.93	0.99*
9.	Ratio of women to men in tertiary education	0.32	0.28	0.63	0.71
10.	Ratio of literate women aged 15-24 years to literate men aged 15-24 years	0.48	n/a	0.83	0.85
11.	Share of women in wage employment in the non-agriculture sector (%)	18.9	17.7	19.9	44.8
12.	Proportion of seats held by women in the national Parliament	3.4	5.8	32.8	n/a
13.	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	108	64	n/a	46
14.	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	850	415	229	170**
15.	Proportion of births attended by skilled birth attendant (%)	7	11	36	50
16.	Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source	46	73	80.4	85**
17.	Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility	6	30	43	62
18.	Growth rate of GDP per person employed	n/a	n/a	1.59	n/a
19.	Employment to population ratio	n/a	n/a	81.73	82.20

Source: NPC and UNDP, 2013 * MDG target close to being achieved **MDG target already achieved

However, much remains to be done. Despite the country's efforts to graduate out of the rank of least developed countries by 2022, its ranking in the Human Development Index in 2014 was very low, at 0.540, leaving it 145th out of a total of 158 countries. Among the biggest challenges, 2.7 million people still live below the poverty line of US \$ 1 a day and there is a long way to go to achieve gender parity in education after grade 5 (NPC and UNDP, 2013). The adult literacy rate (15-24 years), at 88.6%, is still low when compared to the global attainment for the same age group, and there are significant challenges in terms of retention rates and students needing to repeat years. The government identifies the main challenges facing the country today as low productivity, high rates of poverty, huge trade deficits, and a deteriorated industrial environment (NPC, 2014). Besides this, recent development gains have not been distributed equally, and women are still marginalised in many areas of life. Though gender norms are becoming more flexible they still remain stringent and constraining for girls (Ghimire et al., 2013) and women and girls are recognised as one of the most vulnerable groups in terms of social exclusion (UN Country Team, 2011).

With this context in mind, this report presents findings from the second year of a multi-year, multi-country study (also covering Ethiopia, Uganda and Viet Nam) on adolescent girls and social norms.⁵ Year 1 of the study focused on obtaining an overview of adolescent girls' lives today in order to capture the interplay between different capability domains that shape their wellbeing. Based also on a Nepal-specific literature review, the field research explored how and where social norms fit into girls' lives and how they affect girls' capabilities. These were analysed alongside a range of other drivers at the individual, meso and macro levels. In doing so, we found that social norms were pivotal in shaping the capabilities of adolescent girls and young women; however, while some social norms are dynamic and changing rapidly, others remain unchanged and 'sticky' (that is, resistant to change). These opposing trends emerged strongly from our fieldwork, and compelled us to investigate further as to why and how some social norms change rapidly while others remain sticky.

The continuing prevalence of early marriage⁶ and its pivotal role in affecting girls' other capability domains, particularly education, emerged as a key theme in the year 1 research. As such, the second year of research focused on these issues, exploring them in further depth. The year 1 findings had showed that in most cases, early marriages are forced marriages and take place without the consent of the participants. The literature reveals that Nepal has one of the highest rates of early marriage, at 51% (UNICEF, 2011) with girls four times more likely than boys to get married when they are children (Amin et al., 2014). Early marriage is also one of the most prominent problems in South Asian societies (Hervish and Feldman-Jacobs, 2011). Most often, the persistence of early marriage is linked both to normative and structural factors such as poverty, lack of education, and social and religious norms and traditions (ibid). Furthermore, because of its impact on education, early marriage leads to other capability deprivations for women and girls, including lack of employment opportunities, lack of information regarding reproductive health, and inability to access individual rights (Ghimire et al., 2013).

Participants in year 1 of the study agreed that education is a major driver of change and development in their communities. Education has been strongly associated with a decline in incidence of early marriage – that is, there appears to be a correlation between an increase in the level of education and an increase in age at marriage. Participants also regarded education as allowing individuals the freedom to choose from a range of opportunities available for wellbeing and to gain access to opportunities in various other change dimensions, such as being able to read and write, work, be politically active or enjoy a healthy state of mind (Ghimire et al., 2013). This is also supported by Hervish and Feldman-Jacobs' study (2011) of girls in South Asia, and by a recent (2013) UNICEF study in Nepal.

The report is structured as follows: Section 2 sets out the conceptual framework developed for this second year of fieldwork, while Section 3 describes the methodology and the study sites chosen. Section 4 presents an overview of the Nepal context in terms of early marriage and education. Section 5 and 6 present the findings from the year 2 fieldwork, interspersed with key findings from year 1. A broader discussion of how this all potentially impacts girls' capabilities is provided in section 7. Finally, we present conclusions and policy recommendations in section 8.

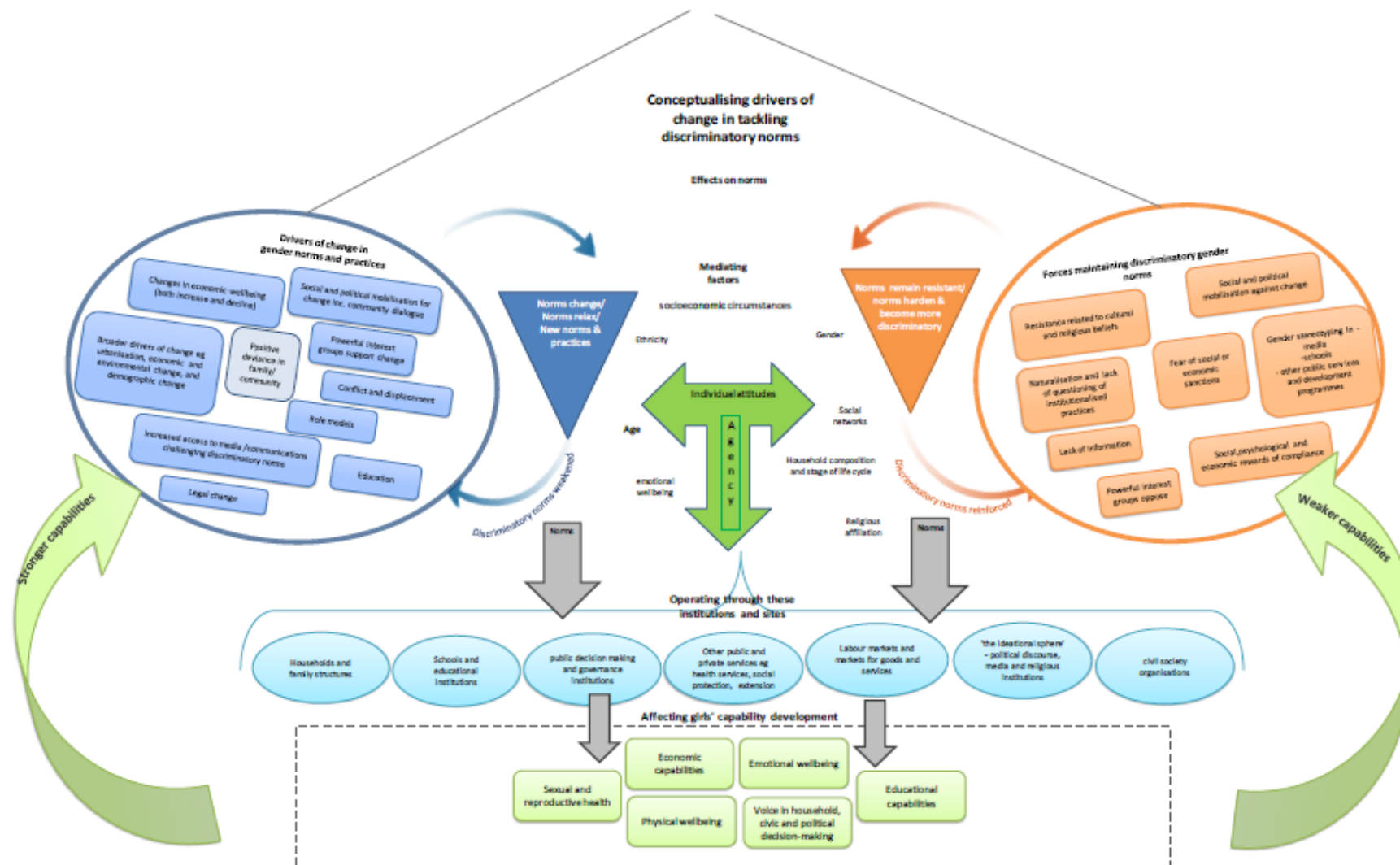
⁵ This multi-year study is aimed at gender justice for adolescent girls. The programme examines four countries: Ethiopia, Nepal, Uganda and Viet Nam. ODI, in partnership with national researchers, is exploring the key capabilities that shape girls' current wellbeing and future potential. Focusing on economic, educational, physical, psycho-emotional and civic participation capabilities, it aims to explore discriminatory social norms, make visible the often hidden experiences of adolescent girls, and identify how policy and programme actors can better respond to adolescent girls' needs and priorities.

⁶ Early marriage is defined as a marriage where one or both spouses is under 18 (ICRW and Plan, 2011).

2 Conceptual framework: understanding social norm change

The conceptual framework for year 1 research was informed by the capabilities approach to development, underpinned by current thinking around gender justice and entitlements. As reflections on the findings of year 1 research have progressed, the conceptual framework has also evolved. The current framework (see Figure 1) illustrates how both the drivers of positive change in social norms and forces maintaining discriminatory gender norms may be mediated by a variety of factors, operating through a variety of institutions and sites, to affect adolescent girls' capability domains.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: Marcus (2014)

The figure above illustrates some of the main forces that contribute to positive change in gender norms (the blue sphere, on the left) as well as those that help maintain discriminatory gender norms (the orange sphere, on the right). Some forces – such as education or the media – can either promote change or help maintain discriminatory norms, and they thus appear in both clusters of forces. This is important for the overall conceptualisation of change and persistence in gendered social norms, as our research findings strongly suggest that change processes are neither uni-directional nor uni-causal, and that the same factors and mediating institutions can affect outcomes in different ways. In Figure 1, the interests of powerful groups appear in both the blue and orange spheres – either as drivers of positive change or forces resisting norm change. The blue and orange spheres illustrate both structural drivers of change in gender norms and more contingent or social psychological factors that may promote or impede change. Neither the forces promoting change nor those maintaining norms are determinant – they are in constant interaction with each other.

Social norms – and processes of change or stasis – affect agency and what individuals actually do. Agency is also affected by a myriad of other factors, which mediate the effects of gender norms on behaviour; selected influences are shown in the figure in grey. Both norms and adolescent girls' agency operate through a range of institutional sites (illustrated by the turquoise ovals) and affect the ultimate outcomes – adolescent girls' capabilities (indicated in green). Feedback arrows indicate that these are not one-way processes – girls' capabilities affect their agency and thus their capacity to challenge discriminatory norms.

The following are some of the key messages and issues identified from a literature review on social norms and norm change (Marcus, 2014) that have particular relevance for our study:

- No one theoretical perspective on norm maintenance and change fully captures the processes and range of factors that hold gender norms in place or underpin change in particular situations. It is productive to combine insights from analysis of structural processes that facilitate norm change, studies of social convention and conformity, and analysis of agency and resistance.
- Social norms are part of the way in which gendered power inequalities are maintained. Analysis of these power inequalities is thus vital for understanding different groups' capacity to challenge norms.
- Processes of norm change can be rapid and abrupt or incremental and unnoticed, or somewhere in between. Such processes are often complex, messy and non-linear.
- Because gender norms are often held in place by several factors simultaneously, challenging discriminatory norms frequently requires coordinated action on more than one factor.
- While the key drivers of change are specific to particular socio-cultural contexts and gender norms, an emerging consensus indicates that the increase in girls' access to and level of education and the growth in economic opportunities for young women have played a particularly important role in changing gender relations, and frequently in changing social norms.
- Social mobilisation and campaigning by feminists has played a critical role in shifting public policy and social norms, with impacts on gender relations. There is also some evidence that large-scale activity to promote gender equality, such as communication campaigns and subsidies for girls' education, have contributed to norm change.
- Legal change – either as a response to changing social norms and to activist pressure, or as a response to leadership by an elite group – can also drive changes in gender norms and wellbeing outcomes for women and girls. . Enforcing gender equality laws can stimulate and reinforce compliance with expected behaviour that underpins and feeds into norm change at the local level.
- The vast majority of the world's population live in contexts affected by large-scale structural changes such as globalisation, increasing access to education, and the rapid spread of communications technology – all of which can have a profound effect on gender norms. While in the main, these changes are leading to more egalitarian gender norms, they can also give rise to resistance movements asserting discriminatory gender norms.

- The role of the multiple potential drivers of social norm change is mediated in any given context by numerous factors: the broader cultural and ideational (including religious) context from which social norms governing gendered behaviour derive; the strength with which norms are held in any particular reference group; individual views (which do not necessarily accord with social norms); and socioeconomic factors that facilitate or limit individuals' and households' room for manoeuvre. Thus, even in a supportive context of expansion of affordable secondary education, structural change in the economy, and new normative and empirical expectations concerning sending daughters to secondary school, an individual household may be unable to comply with norms because of poverty, or because, in the absence of others to undertake care work, the eldest daughter is needed to look after a sick relative.
- Since gender norms reflect deeply entrenched social structures, it is rarely only social conventions that hold discriminatory norms in place; gender norms also reflect moral codes, religious codes and cultural values, and the social and economic interests of specific groups, encapsulated in specific gender ideologies. Where there is more than one set of factors holding a norm in place, change in one area only (e.g. social convention) is likely to be insufficient, and it may be necessary to address all determining factors.
- Just as social norms are held in place by a number of factors simultaneously, change may also be driven by multiple factors occurring at the same time, which may be operating on different levels. Thus, for example, structural forces of change or stasis set the context in which psychological processes promoting or undermining change take place. Analytically and practically, it is vital to disentangle the different processes that are taking place simultaneously.
- Role models have been identified as critical to catalysing norm change processes, both in the empirical analysis of processes of norm change in particular contexts, and in the theoretical literature. Role models may persuade people to adopt new norms; they also influence norms where less powerful or lower-status people are inclined to imitate. Role models may be community leaders, religious figures or celebrities such as music or sports stars, but they may also be other girls or adults who challenge particular norms in their community, or who have done so in the past and can be seen as living proof that new norms can lead to positive outcomes.
- It is increasingly recognised that adolescent girls, just like adult women, do not all accept the gender status quo. As interest in girls' empowerment has grown, so has understanding of the ways in which girls already influence decisions about their own futures, those of their younger siblings and, in the case of married girls and young women, the areas in which they have decision-making power in relation to their children. Although not all girls experience prevailing gender norms as constraining, and although not all those who do are able to challenge patriarchal patterns of power and authority within households, there are increasing examples of girls directly challenging discriminatory gender norms. These processes have been particularly well documented in relation to early marriage and girls' right to secondary education.

Table 2 summarises the factors that either contribute to or detract from the likelihood of change in social norms.

Table 2: Conditions in which gender norms are most likely to change

<i>More likely to change when...</i>	<i>Less likely to change when...</i>
No parties have strong economic interests at stake (e.g. stand to lose from change, or to gain from continuation of old norms) or parties have a strong economic interest in changing	There are strong economic interests in continuation of a practice
No one's power is directly threatened by change	Certain groups perceive their power and status to be directly undermined by change
One key factor underpins a norm	A norm is underpinned by multiple causal factors ('overdetermined')
There are no religious injunctions to continue a certain practice	There are religious injunctions in favour of a particular practice
A critical mass of others have already changed their practices	Very few others have changed practice
Role models and opinion leaders (including religious leaders) promote changed norms	Role models and opinion leaders (including religious leaders) promote the <i>status quo</i> or more in egalitarian norms
A changing institutional or political context provides opportunities for changed practices	The institutional or political environment is resistant to change
Norm change communications are paired with opportunities for action	It is unclear to people how they would implement new norm

Source: Marcus, 2014

Changing gender norms and relations can give rise to hidden or overt resistance, sometimes involving political mobilisation against gender equality. Resistance to more egalitarian gender norms may be motivated by perceived challenges to the power, status or economic interests of an individual or group, by ideational factors such as a perception that traditional values or religious traditions are under attack, or by both factors simultaneously. 'Injunctive' gender norms (views about what people *should* do in a given society) are often different from 'descriptive' norms (what most people are actually *doing*), and may change at a different pace or in a different direction; reference groups holding these norms may differ, depending on the norm. Some norms have been identified as particularly 'sticky' and resistant to change – typically those where powerful vested interests uphold them or where a multiplicity of factors contribute to their persistence.

3 Methodology

3.1 Study design and process

The study process (see Table 3) consisted of two main components: a literature review, which built on the literature review for the first year of fieldwork, updating it with new national reports and focusing on education, school dropouts and early marriage; and the fieldwork, which consisted of key informant interviews at national level and then fieldwork in the study sites. Fieldwork was carried out in the district of Doti (Seti zone), which was the same location as year 1 research, but two new study sites were chosen: Bhumirajmadau (Salena) VDC⁷, representing a peri-urban context, and Durgamadau (Wayal) VDC, representing a rural context, to give a more complete picture.

Table 3: The study process

Time	Activities
January 2014 onwards	A review of the literature on the country context was conducted.
April-May 2014	Key informant interviews were carried out at national level once the main fieldwork had started. Data collection was carried out from 5-12 April 2014 in Durgamadau VDC, Doti district, and from 8-17 May 2014 in Bhumirajmadau VDC, also in Doti district
April-June 2014	Data transcription and translation
May- July 2014	Data coding and analysis (coding was done simultaneously with transcription and translation)
July-August 2014	Writing of first draft of report
September 2014	External review and final report

3.1.1 Data collection tools and techniques

A range of qualitative and participatory research tools were used in the study. Table 4 describes the type of tools, its purpose, and with whom it was used (which groups of participants).

Table 4: Data collection tools and techniques

Tools	Purpose	Participants
In-depth interview (IDIs)	To understand individual perceptions of adolescent boys of social norms for women and girls, their perception of what makes an ideal man, woman, boy, girl, husband, wife, etc, so as to be able to understand gendered social norms in the community.	Unmarried older adolescent boys (aged 15-19).
Focus group discussion	To explore general community-level definitions, views, and experiences of early marriage and girls' education.	Unmarried girls in school, unmarried girls out of school, married girls out of school, unmarried boys in school,

⁷ The Village Development Committee is the lowest tier of government.

	To explore adolescents' perspectives on social norms and the reference groups who monitor these.	father and mother of adolescent girls
Inter-generational trio	To explore key moments in girls' lives and generational differences in adolescent experiences of marriage and education, comparing girls' lives today with the lives of their mothers and grandmothers. Similarly, to explore change in marriage and education trends for men and compare these between the lives of sons and their fathers.	Unmarried older adolescent girls (aged 14-18), their mothers and grandmothers. Older men and their sons.
Marriage network case study	To explore marriage dynamics, networks and support structures and power relations between a married adolescent girl, her husband and her in-laws.	Husband, wife and their parents (both sets of parents).
Community timeline	To gain information about social norms around marriage and girls' education. To understand shifts in social norms over time and their possible drivers, and to contextualise findings.	Older group (community leaders, teachers, parents and grandparents of adolescents, government employees). We focused on ' marriage ' with this group, however, not totally disregarding trends in girls' education. Younger group (youth leaders, NGO workers, young teachers, etc) with a focus on ' Girls' education ', however, not totally disregarding marriage.
Outlier case studies	To gain an understanding of positive and negative experiences in life stages, formal and informal support systems and patterns of interactions, life quality, future aspirations and visions.	Girls and young women aged 16-25.
Key informant interviews	To find out about the status of adolescent girls, challenges, opportunities, empowerment factors and changes over time.	Key national actors and service providers, community leaders and development partners.

3.1.2 Study population, sampling strategy and size

The research covered a range of participants, with selection criteria including gender, age group (15-19), marital status, education status, presence of siblings, and caste (Dalit⁸ and non-Dalit, Brahmin and indigenous). Participants were purposively selected within these predefined criteria with the help of local key informants. Researchers contacted district-based government authorities, non-governmental organisation (NGO) representatives, media personnel, school principals and teachers, and youth leaders before starting to collect data. These contacts acted as entry points to the Village Development Committees (VDCs), linking the research team directly to the local community; working with the VDCs, the rest of the study respondents were recruited.

⁸ Dalits are taken to be low caste groups and Brahmins and Chhetris as high-caste groups.

Table 5: Participants type and size

S N	Method Used	Number of Participants		
		Wayal	Salena	Total
1	In-depth Interviews(IDIs)			
	Unmarried Older adolescent boys(14-19) In-School	3	3	6
	Unmarried Older adolescent boys(14-19) Out- of-School	3	3	6
2	Focus group discussion(FGDs)			
	Unmarried Girls-in school	1 (5 participants)	1 (6 participants)	2
	Unmarried Girls out-of-school	1 (5 participants)	1(5participatns)	2
	Married Girls out of School	1 (5 participants)	1 (5 participants)	2
	Unmarried boys-in school	1 (6 participants)	1(6 participants)	1
	Mother of Adolescent Girls	1(5 participants)	1(5 participants)	1
	Father of Adolescent Girls	1(5 participants)	1(5participants)	1
3	Inter-generational Trio	4	4	8
4	Marriage Network Case Study	3	3	6
5	Community Timeline	2	2	4
6	Outlier Case Studies	6	6	12
7	KII	3	3	10 (4 national level KII in Kathmandu)
8	Total Interactions	55	56	115

3.1.3 Data management and analysis

Most of the interviews were recorded, but where respondents did not consent to this, detailed notes were taken instead. All the data were transcribed and translated from Nepali to English, except a few national-level key informant interviews, conducted in English. All the notes and the transcribed and translated data were coded according to themes that emerged during analysis.

3.1.4 Ethical considerations

Participants were required to give verbal consent prior to conducting an interview. All participants were briefed about the purpose of the study and the nature of information required. They were free to discontinue the interview or to choose not to answer certain questions. They were also assured that confidentiality would be maintained.

3.2 Description of the study sites

3.2.1 District profile

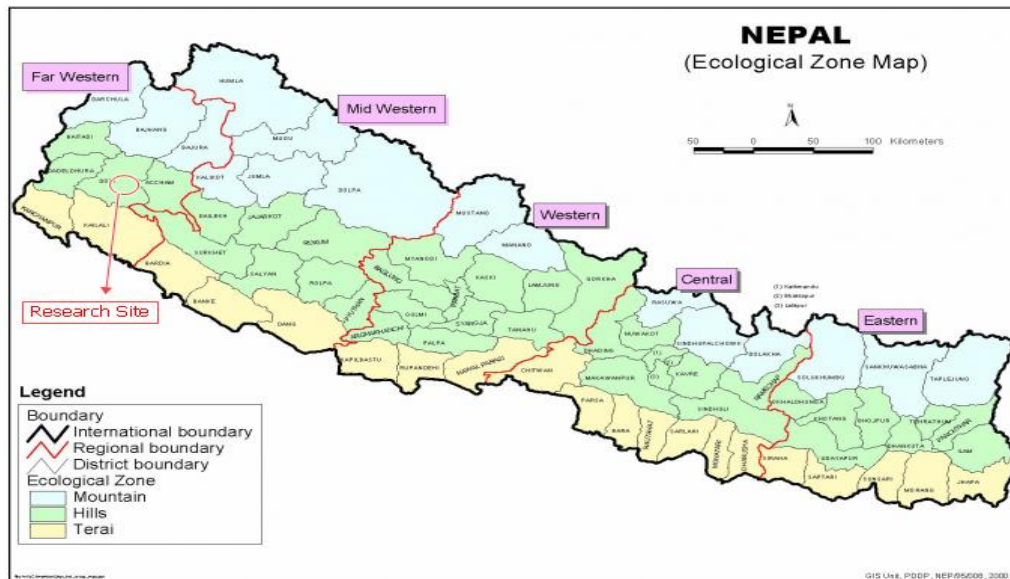
As already mentioned, the district of Doti was the location for fieldwork in the first year of the study. It was selected then mainly because of its least developed status, high gender disparities, and the large number of government and non-government programmes dating back many years.⁹ It was decided to return there for the second year of fieldwork due to the continuing prevalence of early marriage. However, two new study sites were chosen in order to firstly, avoid saturation and secondly, to explore more remote areas, given our possible hypothesis that norms may become more stringent the remoter the area.

Doti is in the Far-Western region of Nepal, in Seti zone (see Figure 2). Administratively, it covers 50 VDCs and 1 municipality. It is an immigration hub for people from other, more remote districts, who come to Doti for study or work. Therefore there is a large amount of intermixing of different cultures, traditions and customs that are particular to the western part of Nepal. Doti also has a very high rate of male migration for work to India. Although one of the country's least developed districts, it is also one of the most accessible compared with other districts, with a good road network (although 30 of Doti's 50 VDCs are connected with dirt roads and therefore not usable during the monsoon (June to September)).

⁹ For further details on the reason why Doti district was chosen for the Year 1 research, see Ghimire et al., 2013.

Of its total population of 211,746, almost a quarter (24.18%) are adolescents. Hindu is the main religion (98.09%). In terms of caste and ethnicity, over half of the population (57%) are Chhetri, 10% Brahmin, and 13% Dalits, thus there is less heterogeneity in terms of ethnicity given that all these are Hindu castes. However, in Wayal there were 15 Magar households but they too followed the customs of the other groups present in Wayal. Nepali is the most commonly spoken language in the district (by 95% of the population), though Magar, Tamang and Doteli and other languages are also used.

Figure 2: Ecological zone map of Nepal showing research site



Source: National Planning Commission, GIS Unit, 2012

Figure 3: Map of Doti District with study site



Source: Adapted by authors

There are significant gender disparities across the district – for example, there is a large gap in literacy rates (61.7% for men compared with 16% for women). As already mentioned, there is a strong programme presence in Doti, which has the second highest number of government and NGO (international and national) interventions (with around 70 UN programmes alone). During site selection discussions for the year 1 research, key informants felt that Doti would be a good site to study gender justice owing to the prevalence of discriminatory practices such as polygamy, early dropout and elopement, early marriage and early childbearing, as well as high prevalence of HIV.

Doti was chosen as the district for the second year of research because while gendered social norms appear to have undergone a profound (and largely positive) change in recent decades, strengthening girls' capabilities

around education, early marriage appeared to persist. Year 2 fieldwork enabled a more in-depth investigation of the intersection of these norms as well as the drivers of change and the forces supporting stasis, which ultimately affect the capabilities of girls and young women in achieving gender justice.

3.2.2 Study sites

Two neighbouring study sites were chosen within Doti district: Bhumirajmadau (Salena) VDC, representing a rural context, and Durgamadau (Wayal) VDC, representing a semi-rural context. Even though Durgamadau is farther away from the main centre of Doti, it has a small upcoming market area, is economically more vibrant, and has a regular transport system and services such as police posts. However even though Salena is nearer to the headquarter, it is relatively rural in the sense that there is no regular transport system and no market. Using a combination of primary data (community mapping, key informant interviews, informal talks and observations) and secondary data (e.g. from the district administration and local development offices, health office, and census data), we briefly describe the two study sites below.

A. Bhumirajmadau (Salena) VDC

According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and National Planning Commission (NPC) (NPCS and CBS, 2011), Bhumirajmadau (known locally as Salena) has a total of 911 households and a total population of 4,857 (2,245 male and 2,612 females), of which adolescents comprise 24.23%. Over half of the population (53.83%) is Chhetri. Besides this, there are Brahmin-Hill (22.66%), Dalits (9.77%) and others (13.74%) (ibid). The vast majority of people (99.69%) speak Doteli. The VDC has a literacy rate of 53.46%, but there is a wide gender gap (male literacy is 70.02% compared with female literacy at 39.65%), highlighting a major gap in girls' educational achievement.

The VDC has eight schools, four primary level and four secondary. Of these, seven are government-run Nepali language schools, while one is a private English language school (known locally as 'boarding school'), which is regarded as having better infrastructure and facilities, and a better learning environment, than government schools. However the government schools provide free education while the boarding schools charge monthly fees and charge for other facilities on regular basis. In 2009, the government introduced the School Sector Reform Programme, which paid a stipend to households that sent their daughters to school and provided free lunch for all students. Key informants including school teachers felt that this has resulted in increased enrolment in school, particularly among girls.

The VDC only has one health post which is quite accessible to the local people.

Most households in Salena derive their livelihoods from subsistence agriculture and are heavily reliant on remittances from male migrants. There is no female migration for employment. Unlike in many other parts of Doti, Selena has an abundant supply of water and people grow seasonal vegetables in addition to cereal crops. For the past 50 years or so, it has been common for men to migrate to India for work. But in the past three or four years, people have also begun to migrate to other countries, including Malaysia, Qatar and Dubai. However the majority of male migration is still to India.

Table 6 presents a chronology of Selena highlighting, according to study respondents (i.e. the community mapping and KIIs), some of the most important incidents that have contributed to development in the VDC since the late 1950s.

Table 6: Chronology of development of Salena

Year	Important events
Before 1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Gurukul education"¹⁰ an informal education system existed in the VDC
1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Mahendra visited Doti district and people of Salena asked for a school with the king's delegation and it was granted.

¹⁰ Gurukul education is an informal system of education where a learned man, 'Guru', stays together with the students in a secluded place ('Ashram') and teaches them basic education. It has its roots in the Hindu religion and hence, beyond basic literacy, the teachings are mostly about Hindu religion.

1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first primary level school (Chattreswori) was established in the VDC
1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A second primary school (Bhumiraj) was established in the VDC
1963	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start of active migration to India
1971	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government introduced a “new education plan“ due to which informal institutions such as the above mentioned “Gurukul system” were brought under formal education system
1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flooding occurred in the VDC, killing 5 people and causing damage of property Government provided rehabilitation package Chattreswori school was upgraded from grade 3 to grade 5
1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A third primary level government school (Chandeswari) was established in the VDC “Bal Sikshya” child education program for pre-school children funded by government was introduced
1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult education program was introduced by the government. Chattreswori school was upgraded from grade 5 to grade 8.
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGO's/INGO's presence started increasing BSLD(Basic Skills for Local Development)- a program giving life skills for the community was implemented by the government in the VDC.
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VDC started getting its own budget
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women development office was established in the VDC Government run Kindergarten under “Children Education” program was established in the VDC
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fourth primary level school(Kalika) was established in the VDC Vegetable farming training program initiated by the government in the VDC. Nutrition program in school and scholarship programme for girls was introduced by the government Girls enrolment in school increased
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The feeder road connecting VDC with neighbouring VDC and Dipayal (regional headquarter) was constructed by the locals
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid Nepal, a local NGO, initiated formation of saving groups in the VDC. The programme lasted for three years
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chattreswori school was upgraded from grade 8 to grade 10
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People from the VDC started joining the Army CLC (Community Learning Centre) established in the VDC.
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A private boarding school was established in the VDC. Sewak Nepal (a national level NGO) established savings groups
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government introduced continuous assessment system
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Sector Reform Programme was introduced nationally with an aim to achieve easily available, quality education for all as well as community participation in education. Stipends to families who sent their girl children to school. Girl's enrolment in school increased.
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The feeder road was broadened and improved following the peace and reconstruction ministry's plan to link several districts in the west Girls started attending schools even after marriage
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-alcohol committee established
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECDC (Early Childhood Development Centre) was established in the VDC. It is a government run centre for pre-school children and for children who never attended schools.

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

The VDC is located at a distance of approximately 20 km from the regional headquarter Dipayal (also the main market for the VDC) and around 25 km from the district headquarter Silgadi which is the administrative hub for the district. It is connected with the district headquarter by dirt road. It usually takes an hour and a half

to quarter to reach the VDC from Dipayal and around 2 hours to reach Silgadi. There is no regular transportation system to the VDC.

The main road between Salena VDC and the district headquarters, at Silgadi (25 km away), has been critical to Salena's development. The feeder road was constructed by local people in 1997, considerably increasing the movement of people and goods. The road was broadened and improved in 2010 following the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction's plan to link several districts in the west. As a result of these improvements, the movement of vehicles began, though is still quite minimal.

In 1980, Nepal was divided into five development regions, with Dipayal becoming the regional headquarters for the Far-Western region, an event which people recall as having had a big impact on their lives. For example, respondents stated that it was only after the establishment of the regional headquarters that people started approaching government institutions for different service, experienced the state more closely, and had some exposure to the outside world.

Regarding development interventions as shown in Table 6, vegetable farming program was the first program run by the government in Salena (Bhumirajmandu) in 1994-1998 to help in building capacity in commercial vegetable farming methods. This was followed in 1999 for short time by a GIZ-funded program(INGO) on agriculture to help develop radish seeds in the area. Programs on education have also been introduced in the VDC over the years as shown in Table 6 above. The first child education program "Bal Sikshya" which focused on primary education for out of school children was introduced by the government in 1984. In 1985 the government established adult education program for out of school adults and another child education program for pre-school children. It ended in 1990. After that, the child learning centre (CLC)—a day care program for small children which focused on informal education for them was established within the school premises in 2006. This program provided kindergarten facilities for small children. Teachers are of the opinion that due to this program older students who did not come to school because they had to look after their younger siblings were encouraged to come to school. However, the mothers started leaving their children in this kindergarten and went for collecting fodder and returned very late to pick their children. Due to lack of resources the program closed a few years later. The same program has been re-opened since 2012 as Early Childhood Development Program. However, due to lack of space and enough budget, no work has been done so far. In 2009 the School Sector reform program was introduced. The households who sent their girl child to school were given stipends and there was free lunch for all students in school. Our key informants are of the opinion that this increased enrolment in school and particularly that of girls.

B. Durgamadau (Wayal) VDC

Durgamadau is located at a distance of approximately 30 km from the regional headquarters -Dipayal. The VDC is connected with the district headquarter by a fair weather road. It usually takes two to three hours to reach the VDC from Dipayal and around 9 hours from Dhangadhi by bus.

Durgamadau VDC, which is located close to the regional headquarters of Dipayal, is comprised of 858 households and has a population of 3,942, 23.51% of which are adolescents (CBS and NPC, 2011). The majority of its residents (40.51%) are Chhetri, followed by Brahmin-Hill (23.51%), Kami (18.72%), Dalit (6.26%) and others (11%) (ibid). Again, Doteli is the most commonly spoken language, but Nepali, Magar and other languages are also spoken (ibid). The VDC has a literacy rate of 51.33%, but male literacy (71.78%) is much higher than female literacy (37.12%). There are six schools, four at primary level and one higher secondary.

Table 7: Chronology of development of Wayal

Year	Important events
1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King Mahendra comes on a royal visit and the locals write an appeal letter for the school The first school- a primary level (up to class 3) government school gets established in the VDC.
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school got upgraded to grade 7 Student who wished to study further than grade 7 went to Silgadhi
1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school got upgraded to grade 10

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first and the only girl appeared in SLC exam from the VDC • The country was divided in to five development region and Dipayal became the regional headquarters for the Far Western development region • A market was established in the VDC
1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood killed 78 people and displaced many persons and caused a massive loss of property • Mobility of people in and out of the VDC started increasing • People started migrating to India for work • Adult education program (program for non- school going adults) was introduced by “Seti project”- a local initiative by the government
1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local development ministry distributed seeds for fruit plants and livestock as a part of income-generating activities for locals
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A second school (primary level) was established in the VDC
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political parties started their programs to make people aware about their rights • Involvement of women in politics started • Coming in of international and national NGOs in the VDC
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A third school (primary level) was established in the VDC • BSLD (Basic Skills for Local Development) a program giving life skills for the community was carried by the government in the VDC.
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition program in school and scholarship program for girls was introduced by the government • Girls’ enrolment in school increased
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maoist started abducting students • Dropout s increased due to fear of abduction • Young boys started migrating to India to avoid abduction • Early marriage of girls to other VDC avoid recruitment by Maoist started occurring
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VDC got its first private boarding school • Road connecting VDC to neighbouring VDC and Dipayal started to be constructed • Police deserted their station in the VDC due to fear of the Maoist
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace accord was signed ending the civil war in the country • Child Learning Centre- Children day care centre was established • Government introduced continuous assessment system which meant primary level student were upgraded on the basis of their performance in class and not only in exams hence could be promoted to higher grades irrespective of the result of their final exam • Activities of political parties increased. • Rehabilitation of Police station in the VDC • Return of Migrants • Activities of NGOs and INGOs started to increase
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-opening of boarding school which was shut down for few years due to Maoist conflict
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VDC had its first female teacher • School Sector Reform Programme introduced nationally with an aim to achieve easily available, quality education for all as well as community participation in education. • Stipends to families who sent their girl children to school • Girl's enrolment in school increased
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Cell phones in VDC • Change in policy at national level allowed VDC to allocate its budget by the decision of the people of VDC themselves.
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jhime secondary school got upgraded to a higher secondary level making it first of its kinds in the VDC • The school also started providing technical and like vocational education to the interested students

The flood of 1983 was a major event in the history of the VDC that people recall when linking with start of awareness in education. A total of 75 people lost their lives while many more were displaced. The flood victims were forced to make temporary settlement in Dhangadhi where they got exposed to the outside world. They mainly became aware about the importance of education and thus after returning back home some months later started sending their children to school.

When the country was divided into five development regions in 1982, with Dipayal the regional headquarters for the Far-West, the people of Wayal began to get access to government departments and develop awareness of their rights. The political movement of 1990 increased this momentum as various political parties became active in the area. The VDC was also affected by the Maoist conflict during which adolescent boys were forced to migrate to India and girls were forced to marry at an early age, which meant dropping out of school.

In terms of education, as shown in Table 7, Wayal VDC got its first primary school (up to grade 3) in 1957. In 1975, the school was upgraded to grade 7, and five years later, to grade 10 (Table 7). As shown by the fact that already in 1975 people were travelling to Dipayal for higher education, people in Wayal started being aware about education before people in Salena. A reason for this may be because Wayal already in earlier days was a hinterland that connected Doti with other districts and also had roads that link different VDCs within Doti. Also as early as 1980 there was a girl who appeared in the Grade 10 examination, however, she was the only girl going to school. In 1983 the government introduced the adult education program '*praud sikshya*', a literacy programme for adults who never went to school. Several primary schools were established by the government in Wayal over the years from 1986 to 1990 as shown in Table 7 above. In 2001 a private English medium school was established by a local youth leader. Due to fear of abduction by Maoist, boys dropped out of school to migrate to the plains or to go to India and girls got married to other safer VDCs from 1998. After the peace accord was signed in 2006, a child day care centre was established under the community learning program by the government. Children who never attended the school or dropped out of school were given literary classes in this programme.

As with their counterparts in Salena VDC, school-age boys and girls in Wayal also benefited from the government's School Sector Reform Programme, introduced in 2009. And in 2013, Jhime Ma Bi – the only secondary school in the area – was upgraded to class 12, which means that girls and boys who might not otherwise have been able to enter higher education (for social or economic reasons) are now able to continue their studies in their own neighbourhood.

4 Nepal country context: Trends in adolescent marriage and education

Before presenting our findings, we provide a brief national-level overview of the issues facing adolescent girls in Nepal, focusing on social norms surrounding education and early marriage.

4.1 The adolescent population in Nepal

Adolescence is a crucial phase in the lives of young girls and boys. During adolescence,¹¹ individuals start to experience various physical, social and emotional changes that influence their future opportunities and outcomes. It is also a time when young people (particularly girls) start to face increased restrictions and risks, all of which can affect and hinder their pathways to the kinds of economic and social assets necessary for a successful adulthood (ICRW and Plan, 2013 Ministry of Health and Population, 2012; Ghimire et al., 2013).

According to the 2011 Population and Housing Census (NPCS and CBS, 2011), adolescents comprise 24.19% of the total population of Nepal, with the proportion of adolescent males (24.96%) slightly higher than that of females (23.45%). The adolescent population has also been rising steadily except between 1981-91 (Table 8), highlighting the need to address the concerns of this large population group.

Table 8: Adolescent population in Nepal

Year	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent of total population	Number	Percent of total male population	Number	Percent of total female population
2011	6407404	24.19	3207821	24.96	3199583	23.45
2001	5370934	23.62	2719632	23.94	2651302	23.30
1991	4119813	22.28	2087838	22.64	2031975	21.92
1981	3897467	29.99	1615036	26.46	1420386	25.40
1971	2344674	20.29	1250516	21.50	1094158	19.07

Source: Population Census 1971,1981,1991,2001, 2011

Regarding their geographical distribution, the latest census report (NPCS and CBS, 2011) shows that more than 80% of the adolescent population are concentrated in rural areas. In urban areas, there is a higher proportion of male adolescents (8.43%) than female (7.62%); however, in rural areas, the percentage is almost equal.

As mentioned above, adolescence is also the time during which the social norms that regulate behaviour start to become more stringent, particularly for girls, which increases their vulnerability. Given the patriarchal structure of Nepali society, it is usually girls who are negatively affected by these norms, which strongly influence their life chances and outcomes – for example, girls are more likely to marry early, drop out of school, and have poor sexual and reproductive health compared with boys (Amin et al., 2014). Education has

¹¹ Like the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) in Nepal takes adolescents to be those aged between 10 and 19 years (MoHP, 2012).

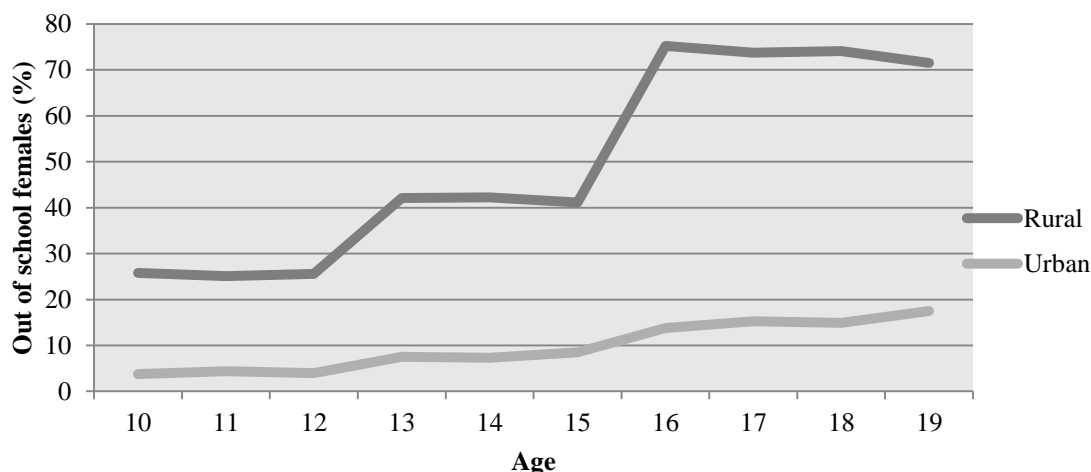
been identified as one of the most important tools to enhance the capabilities of adolescent girls. The next section explores some of the social norms that shape girls' access to education in Nepal.

4.2 Education

Although there has been an improvement in the overall literacy rate of girls in the last few years due to increased primary enrolment, significant gender differences persist. For example, girls are much more likely to drop out of primary education than boys, while the ratio of girls and boys in higher secondary education is 0.71 (NPC, 2013). Our earlier study (Ghimire et al., 2013) showed that there are structural as well as normative barriers that deny girls the freedom to attain higher education. Some of the most prominent factors include son bias, early marriage, restrictions on girls' freedom of movement outside the home, and the unequal distribution of household labour (ibid.; Hatlebakk, 2012).

According to the government's Flash I Report (Ministry of Education, 2011), the net enrolment rate (NER) for lower secondary level (6-8 class) is 69.5% for girls and 70.5% for boys. The data reveal that almost 30% of adolescent girls aged 10-12 are not been enrolled in school. Likewise, almost 48% of adolescent girls aged 14-15 have not been enrolled in secondary school, and more than 90% of those aged 16-17 have not been enrolled (ibid). This indicates that a large proportion of adolescent girls do not have access to education in Nepal.

Figure 4: Percentage of out-of-school adolescent girls (urban and rural areas)



Source: Adapted from NPSC and CBS, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2011

Combining the Flash Report data and census data, we see that the percentage of out-of-school adolescent girls increases with age. The percentage is much higher in rural areas than urban areas: more than 70% of adolescent girls aged 16-19 are out of school in rural areas, while the figure is 10-20% in urban areas (see Figure 4).

There are many reasons why adolescent girls and boys drop out of school (see Table 9). They include: economic difficulties at home and/or lack of money to pay school expenses, having to help out with household chores or for boys taking up paid jobs, lack of interest, poor performance, low value placed on education by parents, early marriage, distance to school, and quality of teaching (Ministry of Health and Population, 2012). A very high percentage of girls dropout due to marriage and due to failure in exams as compared to boys (Table 9). Similarly, family conditions such as having to look after the household work when the mother is sick, leads girls to dropout of schools.

Table 9: Reason for dropout from school, by gender (%)

Age group	Economic problem	Family condition	Health condition	Marriage	Fail in exam	School too far	Parents not willing	No interest	Work	Other	Don't know	Total
10-14 male	40.73	29.55	3.40	0.00	7.73	1.45	1.05	14.02	1.02	1.05	0.00	100
10-14 female	31.45	33.01	1.20	2.19	6.33	2.47	2.24	13.68	7.44	0.00	0.00	100
15-19 male	33.17	25.25	2.01	2.41	3.59	0.76	0.24	17.00	5.11	0.48	0.00	100
15-19 female	13.95	25.17	1.71	26.64	13.94	0.91	2.18	12.88	2.12	0.00	0.49	100

Source: Ministry of Health and Population, 2012

Other studies exploring the linkages between marriage and education in Nepal found that once an adolescent girl drops out of school, she has a greater chance of getting married and being pregnant, rather than pregnancy and early marriage being the cause of dropout (Lloyd and Young, 2009). The same study also noted that education systems were not able to cater for the needs of adolescents: schools follow a fixed curriculum without considering the age of the students and their changing developmental and other needs as they progress from early into later adolescence. Thus, when the learning sequence does not match these changing developmental needs, school dropout, particularly for adolescent girls, can result. Similar findings were revealed in our year 1 study of adolescent girls in Doti and Ilam (Ghimire et al., 2013) which showed that girls felt the education they receive is not useful for employment. Hence they chose to drop out of school to do odd jobs such as brewing alcohol or running small shops where they can earn a small cash income.

4.3 Early marriage in Nepal

A study by UNFPA (2012) shows that Nepal has one of the highest child marriage rates in the world: out of every five girls, two are likely to be married before the age of 18. According to the Population and Housing Census (NPCS and CBS, 2011), more than 40% of women who were ever married in Nepal had married before the age of 19, compared with 19% for adolescent males (Table 10). The minimum legal age for marriage, as set by the Civil Code of 1963 (11th amendment), is 18 years (with parental consent) and 20 years (without parental consent).

Table 10: Married population aged 10 years and above by age at first marriage

Age of first marriage	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total	Percent
Below 19 years	2460881	18.45	5557532	41.67	8018413	60.11
20 to 29 years	3126861	23.44	1817869	13.63	4944730	37.07
Above 30 years	296645	2.22	78708	0.59	375353	2.81
Total	5884387	44.12	7454109	55.88	13338496	100.00

Source: NPCS and CBS, 2011

More than 70% of the total married female population is located in rural areas. Similarly, women from rural areas aged 20-24 are 1.6 times more likely to be married compared to women of the same age group in urban areas (UNFPA, 2012). Similar to the Year 1 findings (Ghimire et al., 2013), Hervish and Feldman-Jacobs (2011) and ICRW and Plan (2013) show that, for rural adolescent girls, there is a strong correlation between early marriage and school dropout; though sending girls to school did not necessarily prevent early marriage, girls were more likely to get married early if they dropped out of school. According to a recent report on child marriage in Nepal (Plan Nepal, 2012), early marriage is more prevalent in illiterate households, and in more than 50% of the sampled cases it was the parents who decided on the marriage.

Regarding the social norms surrounding marriage, it is the parent's responsibility to protect a girl's virginity until she is married. This responsibility is easier to fulfil when a girl is very young but after a certain age it becomes more difficult; hence, many parents prefer to marry their daughter early. In many communities in the Terai region of Nepal, where dowry is practised, parents give a smaller dowry when the child is married young

(PLAN, 2012). Child marriage is also prevalent because education costs are high and parents with limited resources tend to prioritise their sons' education (ibid.). Other reasons for early marriage include: creating economic alliances with better-off families, securing children's future through marriage, parents wanting to see their children settled before they themselves are old, maintaining social esteem, or avoiding the fear of girls being unmarriageable in later years (Pathfinder International, 2006). The Plan Nepal study (2012) shows that the major drivers of child marriage in Nepal were family pressure (32.1%), children's own desire (32.1%), and the need for support in carrying out household activities (14.2%).

While in many cases parents decide on child marriage, self-initiated marriage where girls and boys fall in love and still marry early is found to be increasingly common (Ghimire et al., 2013). Similarly, the Plan Nepal study on child marriage (2012) shows that in districts such as Kailali and Udaypur, parents were forced to agree to their children's choice of marriage partner, as they threatened to elope if they did not.

4.4 Key laws and policies affecting adolescents

Despite evidence of progress towards mainstreaming gender into national policies for example giving women rights to property and the right to decide on abortion, specific policies addressing the needs of adolescents are lacking. Table 11 shows some of the existing laws that affect the lives of adolescent girls and young women.

Table 11: Existing laws

Constitution/laws/ policies/ strategies/acts	Year of implementation	Key focus and some special provisions
First five-year plan	1956	Promotes welfare approach to women
Muluki Ain (General Code)	1963	Gives condition in which the husband can arrange second marriage Declares polygamy is illegal except on certain condition States provisions under which divorce can occur Provisions for co-wives to have share in husband's property
Local self-governance act	1999	Included provision for the mandatory election of one woman member in each ward of each Village Development Committee and municipality.
Tenth five-year plan (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper)	2002	Identifies social exclusion and lack of political representation as major reasons for deprivation experienced by women Identifies social exclusion as one of the major reasons of Maoist Insurgency
11th amendment of the Muluki Ain	2002	Repeals several discriminatory provisions of the civil codes along with other acts and entitles women to significant rights. The major achievements of this amendment are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's right to property: The new law establishes a wife's equal right to her husband's property immediately after marriage • Women's right to divorce: Gave women the right to seek divorce from their husband • Increased penalty for polygamy: The fine amount of RS1,000 to 2,000 and jail term of 1-3 months (or both) was increased to a RS5,000 to 25,000 fine and jail term of 1-3 years (or both) • Women's right to abortion: The new law legalised abortion but with some conditions • Stern action against persons involved in rape.
Gender Equality Act	2006	Ensures equal inheritance to property rights for daughters and sons
Nepal Citizenship Act	2006	Gives provision for acquiring citizenship in mother's name

Constituent Assembly Member Election Act	2007	Allocates 240 electoral seats to women, Dalit, ethnic groups, Madhesis and differently abled persons
Amendment to Civil Service Act	2007	Reserves 45% of vacant civil service posts for excluded groups, and 33% for women
Women's rights incorporated in the interim Constitution	2007	Women's rights were constitutionally guaranteed in separate headings under fundamental rights
Gender budget audit guideline	2008	Started gender mainstreaming in sectoral-level planning and programming cycle
Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act 2008, Nepal	2009	To prevent and control violence occurring within the family, punishment in form of monetary fine, prison sentence or both could be given for violation of the act
National youth policy	2009	To engage youth in the holistic development of the nation by enhancing their capacity to engage in social and economic entrepreneurship and by empowering young people to assume leadership roles in national development activities
National Plan for Overall Development of Adolescents (2070/71-2074/75)	2013	Action plan to improve girls' health (including sexual and reproductive health), enabling and protective environment, education and skills, financial empowerment and livelihoods, civic engagement and participation, and gender and social inclusion

Source: Extracted by authors from various sources

The National Plan for Overall Development of Adolescents (2014/15- 2016/17) is the first comprehensive plan specifically designed for adolescents. It acknowledges that although various programmes have components focusing on adolescents, there are still discrepancies around the definition of adolescents. The document also points to the need to enact adolescent-friendly laws. At present, adolescents' issues are coordinated by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare. Women and Children's offices located in each district also coordinate district-level programmes related to adolescents. District Children's Committees evaluate and implement various programmes and projects related to adolescents and children.

5 Marriage and education: Roles, expectations and change

5.1 How adolescent girls experience marriage and education

Table 12: Findings on social norms around marriage (Year 1 research)

Girls in Ilam ...	Girls in Doti ...
Mean age for marriage for girls is 21.72 years and boys 24.82 years	The mean age for marriage for girls is 17.72 years (boys 21.43 years)
The perception about right age for marriage differs according to economic status and age of the guardians; parents who can afford to educate their children would like to marry their children at the later end of the marriageable age and grandparents want to marry them as early as possible. However, this does not mean more than the local marriageable age – for example, as above case a Brahmin would marry the daughter at 22 years of age and not later.	Unless the girls are staying outside the village or Doti for education (which is very rare- we found only one case) the perception for right age for marriage is same between 16-19 years <i>‘Age at marriage has not decreased... When we try to intervene before marriage, the girls will have already been told to say they have married according to her will. They (parents) accuse us of interference without understanding the household situation.’</i> (Female youth leader in Doti)
Age difference between spouses is decreasing	Age difference between spouses is decreasing
Average age of childbearing has increased from 13 to 19 years, and the time-gap between first and second child has increased from 1.5 years to 4.5 years. There was also no evidence of social pressure on young women to have more children whether it is a son or not. <i>‘Even if they have two daughters they are satisfied. They say if a son can do anything, daughters can also do it.’</i> (In-depth interview with older women, Ilam)	Average age of childbearing has increased from 13 to 19. The time-gap between two children has increased from 1.5 years to 4.5 years. However, the number of children a girl is expected to have depends on if she can give birth to a son or not.
Parents take the final decision but the girls are given space to have a say. <i>‘Yes, I feel that my parents should ask us when they choose a groom for me. It is better, if they ask me. And also if the groom considers my interests.’</i> (Adolescent girl in Ilam)	Parental arrangement in marriage was expected and accepted, and girls are not generally consulted about marriage. <i>‘I think I would not have married so early. I would have stood on my own two feet, to be able to earn for myself and then marry. I would have completed my studies and been mature enough to deal with various problems that come in life, been able to take decisions and chosen someone to marry by myself.’</i> (Married adolescent in Doti)
For some girls, marriage is a way to continue their education and escape poverty if their parents cannot afford for them to keep going to school	Marriage into a family with a house in Dhangadi – the neighbouring more developed/urban district – means increased chances of continuing education

Marriage does not hamper education if the girl wants to study	Girls can continue education after marriage only if the school/college is in the same community and there is a prior negotiation between the parents
Sharing burden of household responsibility and sending a daughter-in-law to school/college is not a stigma in Ilam	It is a stigma in Doti <i>'It is very different in your parents' house and once you are married. To a married woman, people will say, "This is a daughter-in-law and only studying – she is not doing household work." I was afraid that people would start talking about me, backbiting me.'</i> (Married girl in Doti)
Women are opting more and more for medical care during pregnancy and childbirth; access to and use of formal health services is also increasing	Women are opting more and more for medical care during pregnancy and childbirth; access to and use of formal health services is also increasing

This section describes how girls experience gendered social norms around marriage and education.

Marriage is an integral part of a girl's life and is related to her identity and status in society. It brings a major shift in roles and responsibilities for a girl. Norms around marriage are highly gendered and linked to expectations and ideals of how a good girl and a good wife should behave.

Drawing on findings from the year 2 fieldwork, we now describe the gendered norms around education and marriage in the two study sites, exploring how they affect adolescent girls, and how some social norms are changing while others remain resistant to change. It is important to say at the outset that in both the sites people follow Hinduism and hence it is Hindu religion that guides and underlies the norms and practices that we describe below. While there was an indigenous community in Wayal, we found that they too followed the social norms of the Hindus. Also while we illustrate differences when they occur, we did not find much differences between the two sites.

5.1.1 Sons and daughters: different duties, different expectations

Unsurprisingly, we found that expectations around social norms and behaviours start being developed very early on in a child's life. Thus, even within the same household, norms, values and expectations are very different for girls and boys. There was no difference between the two sites with regard to discriminatory social norms and practices. While boys are brought up with the expectation that they will look after their parents and households, girls are brought up with expectations that they will keep the family honour by being an 'ideal' daughter-in-law – that is, hardworking, serving their in-laws, and not interacting with outsider males (see the excerpt below for perceptions about what qualities make an 'ideal' wife). These expectations guide how parents bring up their daughters and sons, and these differences are inculcated in children at a very young age.

Q: In your case, what do your parents expect from you and what did they expect from your sister?

R They expect their sons to look after them. If they are sick, they expect that we provide medicine to them. That's it.

Q: What do they expect from their daughters?

R: They expect very little from their daughters. They think that their daughters will leave their home, so have no expectation as such. They also pay no attention to their daughters' education.

(In-depth interview with school-going adolescent boy, aged 16, in Salena, Doti)

Similarly, there are differences in what parents are expected to do for their daughters and sons, with the most notable differences being around marriage, linked also to local religious beliefs. Such beliefs are centred around parents' responsibilities being to nurture daughters, inculcating 'good' values such as modesty, shyness, safeguarding the girl's virginity, searching for an able groom, marrying her off, and taking financial responsibility for the marriage. Mothers and fathers, however, have different levels of responsibility. Thus, our study finds that from a religious point of view, even when in practice the father does not interact much with

the daughter, having a daughter makes it possible for him to earn virtue in the eyes of religion and society. By giving a virgin daughter as a gift, it is believed he earns 'punya' (virtue) and secures his place in heaven. The mother, however, is seen as just a supporter of the father, though as will be discussed below, the mother is a crucial support structure for the daughter while she is growing up.

The relationship between fathers and daughters can also help explain attitudes towards elopement. Our findings show that while there is great fear that daughters may elope, there is much less fear that sons will do so. This can be explained by the fact that not only are parents accused of bringing up their daughter loosely if she elopes, it also means the father cannot fulfil his responsibility and earn virtue or respect despite having invested in bringing up his daughter. All these differences in expectation shape discrimination between sons and daughters within the family, and eventually shape the capabilities that a girl and boy can acquire in their lives.

In case of daughters, all the marriage expenses (for the feast and other costs) are borne by the parents, while for sons, it is expected that the son will use his own earnings for the marriage or, if debt is to be taken, he will share responsibility for repayments.

5.1.2 Marriage arrangements and space for decision-making

Marriage arrangements and space for decision-making were similar in both sites in the case of high caste Chhetris, Brahmins and the Dalit community – that is, there is less decision-making space for girls and increased flexibility for boys. However, in Wayal, within the very small Magar community, decision-making around marriage was equally flexible for girls and boys where girls can decide whom they want to marry (following the tradition of higher caste Hindus). This may be because indigenous groups (as also found in our year 1 research) appear to exhibit lower levels of gender discrimination because they do not strictly follow the mainstream Hindu religion.

There are clear gender differences in decision-making processes around marriage. In both study sites, an arranged marriage first requires a proposal from the groom. If a daughter does not receive a proposal by the mid to late adolescent phase, it is a matter of great concern for her parents, as it may be believed that the girl has some faults. Most often we found that the parents agreed to marry their daughter on the first proposal – also because it is believed that if one rejects the first proposal, the girl may not get a good proposal later. The proposal usually comes as a result of information obtained from extended family members; it is often the father's sister who plays a crucial role in bringing a marriage proposal from the community where she was married into.

The girl's father is responsible for acquiring information about a potential proposal, and takes the final decision about the marriage. The following was a common response when mothers were asked about their daughter's arranged marriage:

*Q: Who inquired about the son-in-law, did you or was it your husband who asked
about the son-in-law?*

R: Yes, it was my husband who asked about the son-in-law.

(Marriage network case study with 54-year-old mother of an adolescent girl, Wayal, Doti)

Though parents say that they seek their daughters' consent to marriage, this was rarely found to be the case. We also found cases where parents arrange for their daughter to become engaged when the girl is still very young without her knowledge, and the marriage happens later. In such cases, girls felt obliged to obey the parents' decision as a matter of family honour. The majority of girls had never even seen the boy before marriage. For example, in the case of Sushmita who lives in Wayal, her father fixed her marriage with a boy when she was six years old. She had never seen the boy. Her father died when she was 15. When she was 16, her mother told her to marry the boy as her father had given their word to his parents. So she married the boy without ever seeing him or knowing about him.

While the fathers of the bride and the groom interact with each other during and after the marriage, there is little interaction between the mothers of the bride and groom, either before or after the marriage. This also reinforces our findings that decisions about arranged marriage are mostly made by fathers. In addition to choosing the spouse, parents have to make financial and social arrangements for their daughter's marriage.

Financially, there is a system of dowry but it is not compulsory, and parents give what they can without the fear of being criticised for giving less. While the issue of gender violence related to dowry is a big issue in South Asia as well as in other parts of Nepal (e.g. the Terai), it is not a big issue in Doti. This was also evident from our first year findings. In both study sites, dowry usually consists of utensils, clothes, basic furniture, and sometimes cows and electronic gadgets.

5.1.3 Ideals of femininity and masculinity: good wives and good husbands

Below we describe perceptions of ideals of femininity and masculinity at different stages of life, in the local context.

A. Good girls/ wives /women

Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with boys and girls showed that while there are some common ideals about good girls/women in both Salena and Wayal, such as those around work and interaction in society, other ideals are different according to gender and generations, thus reflecting changes in ideals over time. Table 13 lists some of the most commonly cited desirable qualities for girls (by order of importance) as perceived by different groups – parents and in-laws, boys and men, and girls themselves.

Table 13: Perceptions of an ideal daughter/wife/girl

Indicator	Good daughter-in-law	Good wife	Norms for good girls (girls' own perceptions)
Household work	Should be an expert and able in household work, hardworking	Should be willing to do all kinds of household work	Should stay in the house and do household work
Relation with in-laws and neighbours	Should serve in-laws and is submissive and supportive to in-laws Should live in joint family with the in-laws Should treat neighbours well and keeps honour of the house in front of them – e.g. does not complain about in-laws to neighbours	Should adjust with all members of the households, does not quarrel	Be obedient to husband and take care of in-laws when married
Mobility	Should not go out of the house except for household work	Should not go out of house except for household work	Should not go to market and shops for no reason
Interaction with the opposite sex	N/A	Should not talk/ interact with male outsiders	Should not talk with boys
Fashion	N/A	Should fashion that is acceptable in society, e.g. wears traditional clothes	Should not be fashionable (wear short clothes, showing legs, etc), not cut hair, wear traditional clothes, not wear trousers

The in-laws who participated in the marriage network case studies represented the older generation and their opinions were similar to that of the parents of girls who participated in the focus group discussion. What parents teach girls before marriage and how to behave during marriage conveys the same meaning, though worded differently – i.e. ‘respect the elders’, ‘don’t talk back’, ‘obey them’, ‘they are your parents from now on so serve them and look after them’.

While boys in both Wayal and Salena said that people did not like girls who were popular for their fashion or outspoken behaviour, there were differences in opinion about other characteristics. In Salena, boys’ opinions were similar to those of the older generations. However, boys in Wayal had more progressive views and had different opinions about girls’ freedom of movement, choice of spouse and education. They believed that girls should be allowed to travel, have a say in choice of spouse, and be allowed to study as much as they wish. This difference may reflect the fact that Wayal is a hinterland that connects Doti to other districts and is in a sense more urban than Salena, so there is much more exposure to and interaction with different world views.

While young boys in Salena and Wayal have different opinions about what constitutes an ideal girl/woman, there is no difference in opinion among girls. Girls and women in both study sites felt that there are strict norms around fashion, interaction with boys, and their freedom of movement outside the home.

Girls in both sites are well aware about potential criticism from within their community and guard themselves strictly, as the following quote from one adolescent girl illustrates:

R Yes, I go out of my home conscious of not conversing with a stranger and just carry on with my own work

Q: Why do the people of this village make a big deal about a girl speaking with a boy?

R: It's because everyone looks at it in a way that we are flirting with the boys rather than just having a normal conversation with them.

(Outlier case study with school-going girl, aged 15, Salena, Doti)

Some girls feel that if they speak to a boy, they will be deemed to be flirting, and there is always a suspicion that the girl will elope or lose her honour, a fear that is based on some examples of this occurring.

B. Good boys/husbands

While there are differences of opinion among different generations about what makes an 'ideal' girl, there is more unanimity, across generations and in both study sides, about what makes a 'good' boy, husband or son-in-law (see Table 14).

Table 14: Ideal son/husband/boy

Indicator	Good son-in-law	Good husband	Good husband (boys' own perceptions)
Alcohol and abuse	Does not drink alcohol	Does not drink alcohol and beat the wife Does not play cards	N/A
Support to the family	The house is economically well off to provide a square meal	N/A	Can fulfil the wife's wishes Takes care of parents Can provide well for the wife and children
Job	Earns and hence can provide for the daughter's needs	Has a job	Has a job
Education	More educated than the daughter	More educated than the wife	Is good in studies

When parents were asked about the qualities of an ideal son-in-law, certain characteristics were prioritised. These include not drinking alcohol, someone who can provide for (feed) their daughter and any children well, who has a job, whose family has enough resources to feed the household, and a similar level of education between bride and groom. The following excerpt from an interview with a father about how he chose his daughter's marriage partner shows the kind of qualities parents look for in a son-in-law.

We knew the son-in-law does not drink alcohol and is genuinely a good guy, and that he would not give sorrows to my daughter... Beyond that I did not ask anything else. The house was good and the family was economically sound.

(Marriage network case study with 65-year-old father of a married adolescent, Wayal, Doti)

Girls in both study sites (Wayal and Salena), representing the younger generation, hold similar opinions about what makes an ideal boy or husband – that he should not drink alcohol, smoke or play cards, but should earn money. According to respondents, drinking alcohol is related to domestic abuse and possible economic instability: when they spoke about physical abuse, it tended to be linked to the husband drinking alcohol and spending money on this rather than providing for his wife.

Regarding boys' perceptions, boys in both study sites are of the opinion that a good boy is someone who is good in education (someone who is top in the class), who does not swear, who helps his parents and counsels others to do good

things. Boys in both sites thought the ability to provide for a wife and children (in terms of food, clothing, and education) was the most important quality of an ideal husband, as shown by the excerpt below.

Yes, husbands must take care of their wives and provide for them after the marriage and to do that they need to work and earn money... Before marriage a girl is taken care of by her parents but once she is married the responsibility falls on her husband's shoulder. There are other people like father and mother-in-law who too now bear some responsibility, but once a guy marries a girl and makes her his wife he needs to stand up and be responsible for taking care of her.

(Marriage network case study with 22-year-old husband of adolescent girl, Wayal, Doti)

An important underlying message that can be derived from these opinions around the ideal boy/husband, girl/wife is that the social norms around responsibility of boys and girls- persist strongly in both younger and older generation. Boys are expected to earn money to provide for the family, while girls are expected to look after the household and care for children and elderly in the households.

C. Freedom of movement outside the home, and the ideal woman/girl

As with the year 1 findings, year 2 findings in both study sites reinforced the point that norms related to freedom of movement outside the home are highly gendered. While leaving the house independently is seen as a natural part of growing up and is expected for boys, girls do not have the same freedom. International migration to India and other countries was very common among boys in all households interviewed in both sites, except for one family. However, we did not find any female household members who had travelled abroad for employment. A common answer in community mapping and key informant interviews regarding women's migration was that '*our society does not like our daughters to go for foreign employment*'.

We also found no evidence of girls and women migrating internally but out-of-district to find employment. We found only two girls in Wayal who had gone to Kathmandu for higher education, while there were none in Salena. Similarly, among the study participants, only one girl in Salena and one in Wayal were confident that their family would send them outside the district for higher education. However, both said they would be living with their relatives if they come to Kathmandu. Key informants, including school principals from both Salena and Wayal, were of the opinion that there were only a handful of girls who were likely to get permission to go out of the village for further education. Young girls who had been in employment before marriage and married into a family in the village had sought a transfer so that they could stay in employment. For example, the Auxiliary Nursing Midwives (ANM) of the hospital who was working and studying in Dhangadi had been married into Salena; she stopped her education but sought a transfer into the health post in Salena.

Within their village, girls have to seek permission from their parents to go out of the home, while boys do not have to ask. Older respondents, both in Salena and Wayal, thought an ideal daughter-in-law was a girl who would not go out of the household without a specific purpose. The parents of adolescent girls were also against girls going around the neighbourhood to public places such as markets and playgrounds within the village or out of the village, except to fetch firewood and fodder and to attend the nearby school. It is assumed that if a girl goes out, she may come into contact with boys, have a physical relationship or fall in love, and lose her honour, and hence may not be a desirable 'bride' for a good family.

Q: Why in villages are girls not playing outside? Do they play? If they don't, why don't they tend to play outside?

A: Yes, mostly we don't see girls playing outside village because parents fear they would get spoiled. Secondly, they also fear that they may flirt with boys, and thirdly, we need to study and also have got work at our household which boys don't have to do.

(Outlier case study with a school-going girl, aged 15, Salena, Doti)

However, the adolescent boys who participated in our research in Wayal believed that girls should be allowed to socialise, to play and to go out of the village for education and employment. This can again be explained by the fact that people in Wayal are more exposed to different worldviews, as explained earlier.

It is interesting to note that girls did not oppose these strong restrictions on their mobility and behaviours, even though when reflecting on them they often thought that such qualities were difficult to achieve and unnecessary to prove one's goodness. They guarded themselves closely against breaking these norms and were proud of role models who did follow social norms,

For boys, however, there is no such restriction on travel and mobility within the villages for any purpose. While girls think that boys always hang out in the market place or in the playground, as long as the boys help with household chores, parents do not oppose them roaming around. Similarly, none of the respondents pointed to mobility as an undesirable quality for boys and men. In fact, girls who were uneducated preferred to marry boys who were working in India.

D. Education and the ideal woman

Despite education being seen as a good quality in a girl, it is not a quality strong enough to make a desirable or 'good' wife. Thus, parents do not tend to invest in their daughters' higher education or refrain from taking girls out of school. Similarly, while girls felt that a boy being educated was an important criterion for an eligible groom, it was not the most important for boys to marry an educated girl. For girls, a combination of obedience and meekness – expressed by the local term '*sanskar*', meaning cultured – and the status of the family in terms of *sanskar*, were considered more important than education.

Here, sometimes an educated boy prefers a girl who follows culture even if she is not well educated. It depends on their way of behaving with others and her work. People also see other qualities like family culture. Due to this, even if a girl is not educated, boys accept them.

(Key informant interview with head of village, aged 67, Salena)

Parents with daughters also face another dilemma: according to older members of the community who participated in the community timeline, educated girls look for boys with a similar level of education, which is hard to find locally; at the same time, however, boys who are educated and have good jobs want a wife who is slightly less educated than them. We found only two cases (one in each study site) where the wife was more educated than the husband. In all other cases, husbands were more educated than the wife, or the husbands were educated and the wives were not.

Uneducated boys do not want to marry educated girls, as they feel it is not a proper match. People gave examples of girls who are educated and beyond marriageable age (by local standards) that have not been able to marry because of this mismatch. This is another reason why parents tend to marry their daughters off at a younger age rather than sending them for higher education and risk not being able to find a marriage partner later. Additionally, it also diminishes the parents' economic burden to marry the girl off rather than send her to school. This is not so much of a problem with primary education, but is more of an issue in secondary education, where the costs associated with school attendance are higher.

Besides this, according to local social norms, parents are not supposed 'to use' any money earned by their daughters (though this does not apply to a daughter-in-law) for household expenses. Hence there is no incentive for parents to send their daughters for higher education in order that they can find a better job. Many parents feel that their daughters should start a career after they are married, from the husband's home, while there are very different views about sons.

There is no system of using a daughter's earning for household expenses. We would rather marry her and she can take employment from her husband's home. So parents do not think that "my daughter will earn and I will get economic help".

(Community timeline, Salena)

In both study sites, girls who were educated preferred a marriage partner who was more educated than themselves and in a white collar job; girls who were uneducated preferred literate boys who are working in good jobs such as the army or police, or those who have migrated to India for work.

Interestingly, a few fathers were supporting their daughter-in-law's higher education and thought education was an important characteristic in a wife. However, we found differences in opinion between men and women;

women tended not to be as concerned as men about their daughter-in-law's education (see excerpts below). The reasons may be that most male heads of household were migrants, or if not, they were not much involved in running the household. However, women tended to be overburdened with household as well as agricultural work, hence their preference to have a daughter-in-law that would help them.

A man, talking of desirable qualities of a daughter-in-law

R: I prefer someone who is educated and can take up jobs.

(Marriage network case study with father-in-law, aged 62, Salena)

The above respondent's wife, giving her views of the same

R: Nowadays, I am thinking to have the daughter-in-law who is well educated.

Q: What other things you will look for besides well educated? Is there anything else?

R: Besides well educated, she should know how to do the household works, willing to work in field and so on. What else other could be? She has to look after the old people. We also looked after elder members well. But if our daughter-in-laws do not show good behaviour with us, we will not appreciate such activities even if she is well educated.

(Marriage network case study, mother-in-law, aged 56, Salena)

Importantly, when men, women and boys who participated in the research talked about wanting an educated girl as a daughter-in-law/wife, they never talked about education as a means to opening up new avenues or widening the possibilities for the girl's career. Rather, there is an expectation that educated girls may be more considerate than illiterate members of the family and help the family well, again as a part of *sanskar* (culture).

5.1.4 Support systems: guidance about marriage beforehand and support after marriage

A. Support systems before marriage

While parents said that they advised their daughters to take care of their in-laws properly, do household work, and respect elders in the in-laws' house, most adolescent girls and boys said they do not get any advice about marriage from any source, and if they did it would be from peers rather than parents. A few mothers in the marriage network case studies said that in practice, the mother generally teaches her daughter to be patient, to serve the in-laws well, to respect elders and love younger members, and not to speak back. However, this teaching is not very common; there is no formal process for it and most of the time mothers and daughters did not feel comfortable to talk about the daughter's prospective marriage.

However, while not perhaps referring directly to marriage, mothers are nevertheless the main providers of support for adolescent girls, including reminding them about expected norms and values and guarding them against any potential misdemeanour or misunderstanding. The dominant role of the mothers may, in many cases, be reinforced because the father is away from the home for long periods to find work. Adolescents tend to listen to their mother more than their father because they do not interact closely with the father, even if he is around.

Apart from mothers, adolescent girls could potentially get support from elder brothers and sisters, and uncles and aunts on their paternal side. The elder brothers, if they are employed, can and do provide financial support for younger siblings' education, and can also convince parents about the value of keeping girls in school. However, in Salena, a few girls felt that their elder brothers were more restrictive than their parents, with parents listening more to the brothers' views than their own views. Similarly, elder sisters who were educated were able to help them with their studies and any problems at school.

In some cases, the Phupu (father's sister) and Kaki (aunt or wife of uncle from father's family) were important sources of support for adolescent girls, providing someone to turn to if they had problems with their parents such as a drunken father, or mother not giving pocket money, or restricting the girl's participation in school programmes. Phupus and Kakis often acted as mediators when allowing girls to visit places with their friends

but also listening to their problems with friends at school and giving them advice. However, while girls felt that these extended family members were often more understanding than their parents, girls were still not found to approach them for information regarding marriage. Perhaps, as with their mothers, girls felt uncomfortable asking about marriage since to show an interest in her own marriage remains highly taboo.

Besides family members, peers are the most important support systems for adolescent girls and boys. They share problems, listen to each other and motivate each other in many areas of daily life, including study, work, relationships with the opposite sex, and with teachers and parents. Adolescent girls who were attending school said that while they had not faced any sexual violence, if they ever did, they would talk about it and seek solutions with their friends first rather than their parents. Girls also talk about boys with their friends but never with family members. Similarly, out-of-school girls share their problems with friends while they do household work tasks together (such as collecting fodder and firewood, or going to market).

B. Support systems after marriage

As explained by a Hindu religious leader, the Upanishads which teach about the rules for life, prescribe that women should remain under three guardians: the father until she is married, the husband after marriage, and the son when she is old. This is one reason why parents cannot be a strong support system after marriage and girls cannot come back to the house if the marriage fails; the responsibility of taking care of her has shifted to the groom after marriage and hence no one at the maternal home is obliged to be responsible for her once she is married. Practically also the house and other assets belongs to the son and his wife and hence the daughter has little to receive from the household after marriage.

Our respondents shared that during the process of marriage, when the father washes the feet of the bride and groom and puts the hand of his daughter in the hand of the groom, that act signifies the end of his responsibility for the girl and the beginning of the husband's responsibility for her. There is a local saying that when giving his daughter's hand to the groom, the father says '*pale punya, mare paap*', meaning that 'if you take care of her you will earn merit and if you kill her you will earn sin', which signals that it is up to the husband to treat his wife in whatever way he likes. Thus there is already an expectation that parents have less space for intervention should the girl be mistreated by her husband after marriage. As people in both study sites were predominantly Hindu, such beliefs and practices were equally evident.

Thus, upon marriage, girls lose connection with the support system of their maternal home. They also visit less frequently, as they have a lot of work to do, which does not leave much time. Though girls nowadays have more interaction with the maternal home after marriage because of the introduction of mobile phones, respondents commented that it is not sufficient to act as a form of support system. The majority of the married women we interviewed also said that after marriage, they do not share their problems with their mother, also because they do not want to worry them or make them feel uncomfortable.

Girls' interaction with friends, who were an important support system before marriage, also reduces after marriage as they too get married, move to other villages, and become immersed in their in-laws' world. Similarly, after marriage, girls also have less contact with their other informal support system, *phupus* and *kakis*.

In their in-laws' homes, girls are often afraid of their father-in-law and mother-in-law and thus do not tend to turn to them for support. There is a belief that daughters-in-law are expected to work hard and are regarded critically by their in-laws.

Respondent 1: If we do not complete our works then they start complaining, that we didn't do this and that, they keep quarrelling with us all the time. But if we do all the works then they are okay with us. Father- and mother-in-law are not like our own mother and father, they get angrier if we do not work.

Q: And is it like this in other houses as well?

Respondent 2: Yes, it's the same in every family.

(Focus group discussion with married adolescents and young women in Wayal, Doti)

Sisters-in-law in the household into which she marries become the girl's most important support system, providing someone to share problems and fears with about relationships with the husband and in-laws. This is easy because in Wayal as well as Salena, people either live in joint households or near to each other. They are often together – for example, when working in the fields, going to the forests to collect fodder and firewood, or to the market - and also help each other, for instance when one needs to go to the doctor. They seek mutual support on issues related to health (e.g. information about using contraceptives), their fears about polygamy, when they are not able to have children or only have daughters, and can ask each other for loans for personal use.

Additionally, if there is a younger brother-in-law who remains in the house when the husband is away, for instance, and especially if he is educated, he can be an important source of support if he is in favour of the girl. We found that in a few cases, married adolescent girls turned to their younger brother-in-law, who was of a similar age, when they were faced with difficulties in the absence of the husband. According to these girls, they did not feel shy to speak to the brother-in-law because he was younger; they thought he could mediate as the parents-in-law listened to him more than to other girls in the family; and if the boy was educated, he was likely to hold more progressive views than the parents and could speak in favour of the girl if she experienced problems – such as when the household work became too burdensome or when the parents-in-law were complaining about the girl.

A woman's relationship with her husband is complex. While the husband is the most important support system for his wife, as she becomes his responsibility according to the local norms, many girls are too shy to talk to their husbands and therefore do not share problems with them. While the husband can ask about his wife's general health and girls can discuss the behaviour of her in-laws with the husband if there is a problem, girls do not share their fears with their husband as they do with their sisters-in-law. For example, while one adolescent girl from Wayal spoke of her fears that her husband would take another wife as she could not bear a child, she never talked about it with her husband. However, this was her main worry in the interview and she talked about it constantly with her sisters-in-law.

Similarly, if husbands were working away from home, all our study respondents reported that they sent money to their mother or father and asked the wife to take it from the mother, rather than sending it directly to his wife; this confirmed that financial dealings are not directly between the husband and the wife, but between the son and the head of the family. So while boys think that an ideal husband is someone who fulfils his wife's wishes (Table 13), girls do not feel able to speak about their wishes or needs with their husband. Interestingly, none of the girls mentioned 'ability to fulfil wife's wishes' as a quality of a good husband, while boys thought that the main responsibility of a good husband was being able to fulfil his wife's wishes. This shows that while husbands work hard to fulfil their responsibility, the lack of communication between them and their wives results in them not being the person the girl turns to when in need. This is best illustrated by the following quote from a husband.

Q: What do you think she might have expected from you? She may have told you, like, "If I had this it would be good". What does she say?

A: She does not say anything... She never says what she needs... She does not expect anything... I ask her if she wants something but she would not tell me. All she says is that she does not need anything.

(Marriage network case study with husband, aged 22, in Wayal, Doti)

Despite the limited communication between spouses, when compared to their mothers' and grandmothers' generation, there have been some changes. Whereas girls' mothers and grandmothers seldom talked with their husbands until their children were old, and when they did talk it was in the confines of their room, nowadays there is more direct communication between spouses mostly because of the widespread use of mobile phones. However, girls still do not initiate communication. When the husband is in India (as they are in most cases), the interaction takes place only when the husband calls; girls do not call their husbands, either because they do not have money to buy recharge cards or are too shy to talk with them.

Q: Do you feel shy to talk with your husband as well?

R: It has been eight years since our marriage and up till now I have never initiated a conversation with him. I only talk with him when he initiates it.

Q: So you have never initiated the talk?

R: If he initiates the talking, then I would talk to him, and if he does not, then that's the end of it.

(Outlier case study with a married woman, aged 22, Salena, Doti)

However, when girls do not have their own mobile phones, there is a difficulty in communication. Girls generally do not talk with their husbands in front of their in-laws and husbands do not expect them to. A few of our respondents shared that their husbands and in-laws did not allow them to own mobile phones as they thought the girls would elope with another person.

Q: And do you have a mobile phone?

A: Do you mean now? They have not given me a mobile phone here... But I did have a mobile phone back in my maternal home. They have not given me a mobile phone here as they say that I may call here and there and that I may get ruined, which is why they do not let me bring my old mobile phone.

Q: They do not let you bring your mobile phone here?

A: Yes, I have three mobile phones in my maternal home but here I do not have even one.

(Marriage network case study with wife, aged 16, Wayal, Doti)

5.1.5 Marriage, fertility and reproductive health

Information about sexual and reproductive health is given separately to boys and girls in Wayal and Salena by local health professionals such as the ANMs and female teachers. The local health office also keeps information booklets in public rooms in the health posts so that adolescents can come and take/read the books freely. Although these materials are readily available, we found that adolescents rarely attend health posts to seek this information; it is too public and, according to many respondents, given the contents they may have they would feel ashamed to do so.

Girls face considerable pressure to bear a child (and particularly a son – see box 1) from the first year after marriage to prove their fertility. Thus, if the girl is not pregnant a few years after marriage, there is speculation that she may be infertile and hence there is a greater risk that the husband will take another wife. Expectations of childbearing in the first year after marriage come from both sets of parents, the girl's own parents taking the view that having a child early on makes their daughter's future secure. Hence they put pressure on the girls to produce children early. While the law accepts polygamy only if there are no children born within 10 years of marriage, this is often not adhered to. Since one of the main purposes of marriage is to produce an heir to continue the lineage, girls have to prove they are able to do so as soon as possible after marriage. However, confirming the findings of the Year 1 research, it is always women who are regarded as infertile and not men. This local situation also reflects the national law, whereby the same circumstances (not having a child within 10 years of marriage) does not give women grounds to remarry.

'The middle one has not been able to conceive till now and we will have to get her checked up next year... It has been three years since their marriage, but till now nothing has happened. She needs be checked up.'

(Marriage network case study with father-in-law, aged 55, Wayal, Doti)

Box 1: Pressure to bear a son

Kunta is 20 years old and has two daughters. She experienced complications during her second pregnancy and had to stay in a hospital in India for six months before finally giving birth.

She does not want to have any more children. But she is pregnant again as her parents-in-law want her to have a son. She is confused but thinks it is also the wish of her husband.

Source: Outlier case study with married woman, aged 20, Wayal

Table 15: Findings from first year in education

Girls in Ilam ...	Girls in Doti ...
Emphasis on educating girls much before than in Dot- Higher literacy level among older generation in Ilam, e.g. mothers of adolescent girls are generally literate	Emphasis on educating girls in the last 15 years. Lower literacy level among older generation, e.g. mothers of adolescent girls not literate
Can continue education without having to drop out owing to marriage.	Fear having to discontinue education owing to marriage. <i>'Our number one worry is whether we can continue education or if our parents will force us to marry.'</i> (Focus group discussion, older adolescent girls, Doti)
Childbirth will likely continue to stop girls continuing their education	Childbirth will likely continue to stop girls continuing their education
They can go to college, which requires them to leave their house and stay in urban areas, either renting or with local guardians	Cannot go to college or for higher education as it requires them to leave their house or stay elsewhere. Hence distance remains a barrier for higher education
Think they can earn while studying and many of them do so. So they do not necessarily have to depend on their parents for pocket money or to fulfill their needs for educational materials like paper and pens	Do not have the concept of earning while studying, so have to depend on parents for everything. Hence they drop out when parents can no longer afford their education.
Even when they are older adolescents, they have less household work as it is shared between sons and daughters and hence more leisure and time for study	Older adolescent girls have more household work (e.g. care and management inside household) and very less time for study. <i>'According to the custom here, girls have more work than boys. So, girls get less time for study. They also pay less attention to studies. I like to study – but where is there the time for study?'</i> (Adolescent girl in Doti)
For those whose mothers could not do the household work for any reasons the eldest daughter dropped out of education to take care of the household. <i>'My mother is not healthy. I am the eldest and the only grown-up child at home, so I could help in the household work. So I left my studies'</i> (In-depth interview, adolescent girl, Ilam)	For those whose mothers could not do the household work for any reasons the eldest daughter dropped out of education to take care of the household
More girls going to private schools where quality of education is perceived to be better and cost is higher	Few girls going to private schools where quality of education is perceived to be better and cost is higher
Age-related stigma and failure in class also causes girls to drop outs. <i>'I am old now, how can I go to the school? I have to go back and sit in the lower class with children who are much below my age. My parents told me to re-enter school, I didn't go.'</i> Adolescent girl in Ilam	Age-related stigma and failure in class leads to girl dropouts
They can continue going to school when menstruating as there is no restriction in going through sacred spaces and schools have fairly good toilet facilities	Girls may not go to school during menstruation due to cultural beliefs and lack of proper toilets in school. <i>'Some girls who have houses far away leave their classes in the middle when they have menses because there is no water in the school toilet and they have to go back to their houses to use the toilet.'</i> (In-depth interview with mother of adolescent girl in Doti)

5.1.6 Gender and investment in education: English medium for boys and Nepali medium for girls

The gender gap in investment in education persists in both Salena and Wayal: where higher costs for education are involved, parents prefer to invest in their sons' education over their daughters'. In the local government (both primary and secondary) schools in both sites there are more girls than boys. However in private fee-paying English medium (secondary) school in the same neighbourhood in Salena, there are more boys; out of 400 students only 40 are girls, and parents of those 40 girls tended to be better off economically and more educated.

As part of our outlier case studies, we interviewed a girl enrolled in boarding school and found that her parents had paid for all their children (one son and two daughters) to attend the school. However, as the first daughter was not making good progress with her studies, they switched her to a government school. The father was an educated man (had completed class 10) and they owned a transportation business. The year 2 findings confirmed year 1 findings from Ranagaon, another area in Doti, that parents tend to send their sons to private fee-paying schools but send daughters to Nepali medium government schools, where educational costs are lower.

Our school is a secondary school from 1st to 10th grade. In each class we can only find two boys, all the other students are girls. I do not know whose fault it is, either it is the fault of the parents or the school management committee, or the staff of the school. This thing must be understood by the parents. What can we do about that, see we have only four boy students in class 10 and rest of the students are all girls, because the people lovingly send their sons to the boarding schools thinking that boarding are better and the girls they send to the government saying "We do not care if you study or not" or even they do not send to school.

(Community timeline (education focus) in Salena, Doti)

5.1.7 School dropouts

While enrolment rates in primary education are improving in both study sites – similar to the national trend (Ministry of Health and Population, 2012) – the dropout rate also mirrors national figures, with 20% of boys and girls dropping out once they reach grade 7 and 8, usually between the ages of 15 and 16. While previously girls used to drop out from around class 5 (i.e. primary) onwards, nowadays they usually drop out between grades 7 and 10, or at lower secondary level. This is because parents are more aware of the need to send girls to primary school, but also, because they are relatively young at that time, there is not much work they can do at home. For boys, if they continue beyond grade 7, they usually drop out between grades 8 and 10. This is partly explained by the fact that once boys reach grade 8 they also become eligible to apply for a job in the armed forces. Many of them stop once they have reached this education level. It is also the age when they are likely to migrate to India to start earning an income. This resonates with the year 1 findings in Ranagaon, where boys were leaving school to work in India as soon as they reached secondary school age.

The main reasons for dropout in education for girls in both Wayal and Salena are household workload, failing exams, application for jobs, influence of peers, economic reasons, and marriage. Teachers and community leaders in both sites felt that students fail because the exam they are required to sit in grade 8, which is administered by the government board, is tough. Those who fail feel ashamed and demotivated to continue their education. Some are also influenced by their peers – when their best friends stop attending school, some girls also stop. For boys, friends and cousins influence them to drop out of education and go to India for work instead.

Among the main factors pulling adolescents away from education are household workload (for girls) and the lure of earning an income (for boys). While the year 1 research found that having to look after siblings was the main reason why girls drop out of school, the year 2 research revealed further insights into the nature of girls' household workload and the extent to which it affects their education. Teachers and key informants as well as adolescent girls who participated in the research in both sites felt that as girls get older, their ability to continue education becomes more difficult. The principal of one school described the nature of work girls have to do at home (Box 5). In both sites, teachers talked about how this heavy work schedule leaves girls with limited time to study, and whatever time they do have is at night, when they are exhausted from doing their household tasks. This in turn affects their results, with girls often performing below average in class. This is in contrast to boys, who do not have such heavy work burdens at home and are able to find time to study, which means they tend to get higher exam grades, as the following quote from a teacher illustrates.

The boys just sit and spend their time in the market areas or go for fishing while the girls have to cut grass, fetch firewood and fodder, and do household chores as well. In the evening they are exhausted. When will they read? Boys are mostly good in studies and girls fail.

(Key informant interview with female teacher in secondary school, Salena, Doti)

While the year 1 findings showed that the stigma that follows exam failure means girls are more likely to choose to drop out, year 2 research revealed that as well as stigma, girls also feel a sense of hopelessness in this situation. Given their burden of household work, there remains very little time for study, so even if they took the same class the following year, they felt they would still fail. Hence many decide to end their studies altogether.

Box 2: Girls vs boys and the seeds of inferiority complex...

In one of the schools visited, girls came to school at 6 am. Around 9 am, they had a lunch break. During this break, their mother who was in the field would send them a message on their cell phone that the grass had been cut and was ready to be taken home. The girls take the bundle to their homes, which are far away, and only then return to classes. But since the school closes at 12 noon it is hardly worth their returning. As well as taking the grass their mother has cut, they have to cut more grass on their way back home when they return after school closes. Once they get home they have to do many household chores. This does not apply to boys. In such circumstances, a girl cannot give much time to her studies and therefore she is usually behind in class. This creates a feeling of inferiority and hopelessness, and if they do not choose to marry, they become inactive in class.

Boys and girls in government schools only come to school regularly during the last quarter of the year, when the plantation and harvesting of rice and wheat is complete. Teachers say that they often have to wait for students to turn up so that they can conduct the classes. However, this is not the case with private boarding schools. Teachers felt that those parents who have invested in educating their children at private boarding schools are more supportive of their children's education and more likely to ensure that they attend.

Source: Fieldwork, Salena, Doti, 2014

Girls' household work burden also hampers informal education initiatives, even though they may have been tailored to suit the needs of working out-of-school adolescents, as this excerpt shows:

Q: Have you taken any adult literacy classes (praud siksha)?

R: I did go to an adult literacy class last April but I learnt nothing. I was not able to concentrate because my mind was preoccupied with household work. I didn't even learn Ka, Kha so it's not worth saying I went to adult literacy class.

Q: For how many days you went there? Or you didn't go at all?

R: Four to five days.

Q: You went there for four, five days?

R: Yes, but I couldn't focus my mind in study, my mind was preoccupied.

(Outlier case study with married woman, aged 23, Wayal, Doti)

5.2 Social norms around marriage and education: what has changed?

While the previous section described the gendered social norms related to marriage and education and how girls experience them, this section describes how some norms have undergone significant changes over time.

5.2.1 Changing norms around marriage

A. Change in age at marriage

There have been two notable changes here in recent years: the first is the average age at marriage and the second is the age difference between spouses when they marry. Taking the first, in both sites, we found a similar marriageable age among high-caste Chhetris, Brahmins and the Dalit community, all practising child marriage. However, year 2 findings from the Magar community in Wayal confirmed year 1 findings that the average age at marriage is higher for adolescents from indigenous groups: though they mostly follow the traditions of the high-caste Hindus, they considered that the right age for a girl to marry was between 22 and 25. This may be because social norms are not as strict for these communities as for the high-caste Hindus. According to Hindu philosophy, the higher the caste, the more people are expected to refrain from five kinds of sin: greed, sexual appetite, anger, passion, and pride. These rules do not apply as stringently to indigenous groups who, on the one hand, do not adhere strictly to Hinduism and, on the other, are permitted to be flexible. For example, they are allowed to drink alcohol and eat meat, while higher-caste Brahmins are not.

However, when marriages are formed based on love, which is increasingly common (discussed in more detail below), girls generally elope between the ages of 13 and 15. One interesting aspect about age at marriage is that girls and their in-laws often hide the girl's real age (if it is a child marriage) and give the legally correct age instead. For example, Krishna, who eloped a few days before the research team visited, is 13 years of age and her husband is 17; however, when we asked her, she said she was 18. As part of the case study we later talked to her mother-in-law, who is a community leader. At first, she was reluctant to discuss it because she feared we were from a government organisation working against child marriage. When we explained our purpose and inquired about Krishna's age, she confessed that the girl was 13 but that she had told both Krishna and her husband to say they were both 18. Thus there is a fear of punitive consequences and awareness about the law about marriage. However we did not find any incidents where people were fined for early marriages.

The year 1 findings revealed that age at marriage for today's adolescent girls had increased (reporting an average age of 17.72), compared with an average age of 5-6 in their grandmothers' generation and 10-12 in their mothers' generation. However, the year 2 research found that early marriage was more common than we had realised during year 1. Thus, among the 21 adolescents and young women we interviewed using different tools, 14 were married by the age of 15, with two being married when they were 14. This difference may be due to our deliberate focus on more remote areas of Doti in the second round of fieldwork.

Based on our findings from year 1 – that marriages were mostly arranged by parents – this year, we probed parent's perceptions of 'marriageable age' for their daughters. We found that uneducated, poorer parents think that girls can be married as early as 13 years, while those who are educated and better off think that provided there is a suitable proposal, girls can be married between 16 and 18. However, the idea that the daughter is approaching marriageable age begins to arise once she reaches the age of 12 or 13, and arranged marriages were largely found to take place between the ages of 16 and 18. This perhaps explains why social norms for girls become more stringent when they reach the age of 15 or 16. Also, and again confirming findings from year 1, parents are concerned that if their daughters are not married early, they may elope for a 'love marriage', as illustrated by the following excerpt from a father of an adolescent girl.

Q: But her age is only 16 and in no way is that an age of marriage, so why did you marry her so early? Do people here marry their daughter at the age of 16?

R: The girls themselves are eager to get married early. Some girls even elope and get married at the age of 12-13. If we don't marry her, she may elope.

(Marriage network case study with 63 years -old father of adolescent girl, Salena, Doti)

For boys, parents perceive the marriageable age as around 20, and all study participants more or less agreed that this is the ideal age for boys to marry. Similarly, a majority of male respondents felt that it starts getting late for a young man to marry when he is 26.

The second major change, revealed in the year 1 research and confirmed during marriage network and intergenerational trio discussions in year 2, is a narrowing of difference in age between spouses. In their grandmothers' generation, the difference in age between spouses was as much as 30 years. In their mothers' generation, the typical age gap was 3-8 years (although the largest gap found was 18 years). For today's adolescent girls, the fieldwork found the age difference between spouses is between 3 and 7 years, and in most cases it is less than 5 years.

B. The changing rationale for marriage

In previous generations, marriages were formed primarily with the household in mind – i.e. it was a means of obtaining care for ageing parents and the wider family. It was also accepted that it was the responsibility of the parents to get one's children married, boys as well as girls. Hence relationships and interactions after marriage were also firmly shaped by this expectation – that the first priority was managing the joint family. Women were supposed to look after the whole household and men to earn for everyone in the household. Interaction purely between husband and wife was not much expected and hence interactions were gendered – i.e. women interacted with other women and men with other men. According to study respondents, this practice lasted until the fathers' generation; all fathers we interviewed in the marriage network case studies had practised this process in their marriage. But this has changed in recent years and affects today's adolescents as they enter into marriage.

Older men and women feel that their sons are now marrying for themselves and not for the whole family. Previously, sons brought a wife to work for the family, whereas now the son brings a wife to have a life partner. Similarly, while previous generations did not have much control about who their parents chose as their marriage partner, nowadays other factors influence a boy's choice (such as a girl's attractiveness).

While these changes are evident, there are remnants of past behaviours and expectations, especially if a son is behaving as a 'good son/husband'. Thus, even if a son marries a girl that is suitable for him, they still have to take into account family concerns in this decision. Thus, marrying because the mother is too weak to do the household work and/or when sisters get married off was one of the main reasons given for marriage by married adolescent boys. Similarly, boys still want girls who will do household work, help the parents, and generally live in harmony with the joint family (see Table 13). None of the boys or young men we interviewed said they would like a wife they could share problems with and who could help with personal matters. Rather, the emphasis was always on qualities which show that she could live in harmony with his family (one of the qualities of an 'ideal' girl/wife, as shown in Table 13). Hence for boys and girls alike, their responsibility to the boys' parents continues to be more of a priority than the husband-wife relationship, illustrated by the following quote from the husband of a young girl who had eloped a few days previously.

No, I am not taking her (wife) with me (to India). My mother is old. She needs help.

(In-depth interview with 22-year-old husband of adolescent girl in marriage network case study, Wayal, Doti)

C. Girls gaining more say in decision-making spaces on marriage

The changing rationale for marriage noted above means that boys have greater leverage in marriage decisions. While there has not been much change in the rationale for marriage for girls, decision-making spaces for girls are slowly transforming too. While all the mothers and grandmothers who participated in the intergenerational trios felt that, in their day, it was a matter of shame to show willingness to see the husband-to-be (or to be around when, as per the custom, the father-in-law came to ask their father for their hand in marriage), young girls in the intergenerational trio as well as respondents from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions said they should be allowed to see and decide on the young man in question. Most of the married women and some mothers of adolescent girls who participated in the focus groups thought that a husband would love his wife more if theirs was a love marriage. This shows that concepts of decision-making around choice of spouse are being internalised differently by adolescent girls and some mothers, compared with the marriage experiences of most mothers and grandmothers.

Regarding what they consult their daughters about, most parent participants said they had talked to their daughter about the prospective husband, specifically his character and the socioeconomic status of his family. Married girls who participated in the focus groups also said that their father had told them about the proposal. Besides this, a few girls had also inquired about the boy from their friends and relatives and some had even met the boy, particularly if there was a mutual interest and a common friend.

Box 3: Girls having a say on their prospective husband: the role of peers

Manashi was born in Salena and is married into Wayal. She stopped going to school when she was six years old. A proposal came when she was 15. The boy's *Phupu* [father's sister] married into Manashi's village and had informed the boy's family about Manashi. The father came with the proposal to Manashi's house and Manashi's father thought it was a suitable proposal. He told Manashi about the boy and wanted her to marry

him.

However, Manashi wanted to see the boy and decide for herself. But she was afraid to say so. Instead, she told her best friend. Her friend managed to get the phone number of the boy from her boyfriend who was also from Salena. She arranged that they could see each other at the village fair in Wayal. They did see each other, from a distance. Both of them liked each other and started to talk over the phone. A few months later they got married.

Source: Fieldwork, Doti, 2014

According to study participants, the primary reason for this change is education, as the following quote illustrates.

... in our days people were not educated, we knew nothing. In those days, the father of the future groom was the one who used to see the future bride. He used to decide everything. The girl would not get the chance to meet or see the boy. Later on, the girls became educated. They started to demand that they get to see their soon-to-be-husband and check if they limp, are deaf or dumb.

(Community timeline (marriage focus) with mixed older group in Wayal, Doti)

D. Change in forms of marriage: love marriage and elopement

Alongside changes in the processes of arranged marriages and girls' say in decision-making, elopement for love marriage is becoming more common. Among year 2 respondents, we found 14 cases who had eloped (eight in Wayal and six in Salena). Most of them were aged 13 to 17. Arguably, elopement is not a love marriage (which can be defined as one where the girl and boy decide to get married and their parents give consent). Rather, it is somewhere in between an arranged marriage and a love marriage, as couples who decide to marry after having a love affair have to elope because the girl's parents would not give consent.

An interesting set of characteristics can be found among those who elope. The girls and boys are usually very young (13-15), they are often related through marriage of their brothers or sisters or are neighbours of the maternal grandparents, so would not be from the same village nor would have attended the same school. They would usually have met or seen each other (mostly the boy sees the girl) when visiting married relatives or their grandparents' house, or when attending marriage ceremonies in the villages. According to study respondents, this type of marriage has come about largely because of the introduction of mobile phones in the area. Much of the relationship takes place by phone, and in some cases the boy and girl do not even meet each other face to face before deciding to run away together. This usually occurs without the knowledge of the parents, who only hear about it once their children have eloped. While parents blame access to mobile phones as the cause of such marriages, the year 1 findings suggest that though mobile phones have made connections between boys and girls easier, it is the lack of mentorship and hence inability to manage changing adolescent relationships that contributes to this type of marriage becoming more common (Ghimire et al., 2013).

In order to understand how the final decision to elope is made, given that some love affairs last only a short time, we held informal discussions with some boys and girls about their love affairs and marriage. Boys mostly decided to marry in this way because they felt responsible for saving the girl from being dishonoured if the love affair becomes public. According to local values, when an unmarried girl's name is attached to a boy, the girl's name is tarnished and the boy takes it as his fault; therefore, in order to safeguard the girl's honour, he brings her to his parents' house as his bride.

Depending on the caste of the boy and girl who elope, there are situations when they are accepted back into the household. Thus if a boy has run away with a girl of similar or higher caste, he either takes the girl straight away or within a few days to his parents' home. The parents then accept the marriage and try to retrieve the situation by carrying out all the necessary rituals that they would have done in an arranged marriage. However, for boys who elope with a girl from so called "untouchable" caste the parents will not accept them back. Parents of girls who elope are reluctant to accept the couple in both the above mentioned cases and typically sever ties with their daughter until her first child is born, after which she is generally accepted back, as the following quote shows.

Q: So your mother and father got angry?

A: Yes. They scolded me a lot and I did not return home for two, three years after I eloped. But later, when I had a baby, only then I went back.

(Marriage network case study with wife, aged 21, Wayal, Doti)

Participants in the community timeline exercise in Salena said that there are also cases where parents themselves have encouraged their children to elope because no costs are incurred in such processes, whereas arranged marriages are costly. They were of the opinion that if the daughter is of a marriageable age and her parents cannot marry her off, they would encourage her to elope. Hence, especially for poorer households, this is a way of escaping the burden of paying for both a dowry and a marriage ceremony. However, this does not seem to be a common occurrence; we did not find any cases where parents had encouraged their children to elope for economic reasons, in either site.

However, when asked why they would not elope, although girls liked the idea of being able to choose their spouse, they often chose arranged marriages rather than eloping due to two fears: first, the social backlash that both the girl and her parents would face if she eloped; and second, expectations of the support they would receive from parents if the marriage failed. These can be seen from the following excerpts:

R: Yes (meaning she would like to marry) from the consensus of my mother and father. I feel good about marrying this way, by calling all the relatives and other members, but if I go through with the love marriage, then lots of sorrow would be there in the future.

Q: So you think that the girl would have to face sorrow in the future if she does a love marriage?

R: Yes.

Q: What kinds of sorrows do you think the girl would have to face?

R: Like, if the girl does a love marriage then she has to listen to various bad things from her own family members, like “she has done marriage like this”, in the in-laws house they say you came here by yourself doing love and eloping with this guy and other bad things. People say these things, which is why I did an arranged marriage.

(Outlier case study with married adolescent girl, aged 16, Salena, Doti)

Once again we find that norms around honour and responsibility are the main drivers of marriage through elopement. This has several potentially negative ramifications: first, given that girls tend to elope at an early age (they can be as young as 12, with boys only a few years older), it can contribute to increasing rates of early marriages. Second, due to this trend gaining momentum, parents are becoming perhaps even more cautious and want to marry off their daughters as soon as they look physically able which equates to between 13 and 15 years old, depending on the health of the girl. Again, this can increase the incidence of child marriage and its associated risks, including early pregnancy. Third, girls are scrutinised very severely and there is a lot of social pressure on girls to show they are not the 'eloping' type. This in turn can restrict their confidence and not allow them to develop their capabilities to their full potential. Hence all the progress made towards reducing early marriage may potentially be lost with this emerging trend of marriage through elopement.

The prevailing social norms leave no space for girls and boys to be adolescents. In both Wayal and Salena, the physical changes that come with adolescence also lead to stigmatising attitudes towards girls. Such changes are expressed by a local expression, 'mast hunu',—which means being physically sturdy and also implies a negative connotation of being ready for sex. So it is taboo to talk about these physical and emotional changes during adolescence. Furthermore, after marriage, these young girls and boys have to take on the responsibility of adults and hence jump into adulthood without necessarily being physically and psychologically prepared for the pressures involved. This is evident in Doti, where both girls and boys move directly from being children to being adults, rapidly becoming exposed to restrictive gendered behaviours (particularly governing interactions with the opposite sex), with no space to reflect on their changing physical and emotional feelings or other aspects of life. Arguably, however, this has always been the case in Doti and other societies.

E. Polygamy, 'social divorce' and women

Respondents reported that while polygamy was common in their grandfathers' generation, it was less so in their fathers' generation. They attributed this to the introduction of the new legal order in Nepal (the Civil Code) in 1962, which banned polygamy except under certain conditions such as if the wife had severe mental health problems or not able to bear children. Later, in 2002, an amendment to the code made the law stricter by increasing the punishment for polygamy. However, the government reports that while polygamy decreased from 6% to 5.4% between 1996 and 2001, there has been little change in its prevalence during the past 10 years (Ministry of Health and Population, 2012).

While previously in Doti, polygamy did not appear to be so prevalent, in the past four to five years, particularly in Durgamadau (Wayal) VDC, polygamous unions have been increasing, particularly among young people. We found five instances of polygamous marriages among the younger generation in the market area of Wayal, which consists of around 30 households. There were a number of common characteristics among those involved in polygamous relationships: (1) all five young men were businessmen in the local market, usually owning a shop; (2) their first marriage was arranged by their parents; (3) all of them have children, including sons, from their earlier marriage; (4) they are between the ages of 26 and 40; (5) they have had the second marriage for about three or four years and all have children (including sons) from this second marriage. In all cases, the first wife lives in the husband's ancestral home with his parents near the market and takes care of farming. The second wife lived with the husband in the market area, and helped to run the shop or had another job. The second wife and the husband claimed to be providing well for the first wife and her children; this was reinforced by the man's parents, who also say they give earnings from the land to the first wife, thus generally reassuring outsiders that this first wife is well supported. Since the parents are also economically supported by their sons, they cannot go against his wishes. There is not much age difference between the first and second wives but the first wife tends to be illiterate, whereas the second wife can read and write sufficiently to run the business, even if not highly literate. The man's parents and his first wife either have different kitchens or live in separate houses near to each other.

The men involved met their second wife either during a marriage function or during the course of their business – for instance, having adjacent shops. Their affairs lasted around a year, usually ending up with the second wife eloping with the man, with no traditional marriage ceremony, as was the case with his first marriage.

When asked why they married twice, the men said: '*It just happened*', that they fell in love. When their friends and peers learnt about the relationship, they started to tease them, so to protect the girl's honour, and given that he was earning enough to keep both wives well, he married her. According to one woman we interviewed who was a second wife, she could not help falling in love and she thought getting married made sense – even if it meant being in a polygamous union – since the man could afford to look after both wives. Another woman, who was a first wife interviewed for a case study, said that she had nothing to say as the husband did not tell her about the affair or that he was taking a second wife.

Inability to produce children, particularly a son, also results in polygamy, but unlike the above reason it is accepted by society. According to the prevailing law, and as mentioned above, if after 10 years the woman does not bear a child, a man can take another wife but in both sites the second marriage happens much earlier. Wives also, to a large extent, accept polygamy if they cannot bear children or do not have a son, and although they may be fearful of it, they are resigned to the fact that it will happen eventually with the consensus of the whole family and they cannot stop it. In some cases, they even support their husband in finding another wife as they are aware that a son is needed to continue the household name and to look after them when they are old.

As is to be expected, it is the first wife who bears the brunt of polygamous unions. Even if the husband and parents-in-law speak about her still receiving support, and being treated equally to the second wife, she loses her social standing, respect and identity; furthermore, she cannot return to her maternal home because local norms maintain that she is under the care of the husband and his family after marriage. The woman we talked to who was a first wife in a polygamous marriage said that their lives are like that of widows and it is only in the children that they find solace. Divorce appears to be out of the question in Doti, as women feel they need to be associated with a man, his name and household, even if he has a second wife. They felt that this was still preferable to not having any name at all. Additionally, as already mentioned, women are economically dependent on the husband's family for their daily lives and upbringing of children.

F. Bride price

We found that there have been many changes in the system of bride price – a custom that had not been evident during the year 1 research. Up until their grandfathers' generation, it appeared to be common practice, but it has reduced gradually and, according to study respondents, is now almost non-existent. We found only two cases of bride price in our marriage network case studies, but participants in the community mapping both in Wayal and Salena agreed that there could be other families where bride price is paid. The price used to be US\$3 in their grandmothers' time, when it was a common custom, increasing to around US\$10 in their mothers' generation, when it became less common; the two families in today's generation had paid US\$255 for the daughter-in-law. However, the practice is shunned by the community and the mothers' group in Salena have made a rule that if a girl's family accept bride price, they would not let the family members wash her feet – hence the family may not get the desired virtue of doing the '*kanyadaan*' (virgin gift), which is according to the local custom the most important reward for the family for rearing the girl child. In fact, in both cases where bride price appeared to have been paid, the groom's father insisted that he had given a loan for arranging the wedding feast and it was not bride price as such.

5.2.2 Changing norms around education

A. Increase in enrolment (for boys and girls) and in daughters-in-law going to school

Participants from both Salena and Wayal were of the opinion that over the past five to six years, enrolment in school has increased for boys and girls. Previously, whereas some girls were not sent to school at all, now, some girls are even being sent to tuition classes after school and their domestic workload is taken up by the mother. Also, children are now being enrolled in school at a younger age; previously, due to unavailability of schools nearby, and because they had to walk through forests and river to reach the schools, children were enrolled between the ages of six and eight, when they were able to go by themselves. Now, there are more schools in the neighbourhood and hence children can begin attending as early as four years old (in government schools) and even younger in boarding schools. This, combined with the increase in people's perceptions of the right marriageable age, has had a positive impact on girls' access to higher education. Previously, girls were deemed to be of marriageable age earlier when they were in grade 7-9, and had to drop out to marry. Now, girls are enrolled in school at an earlier age and the marriageable age has increased to 16-18 years, which means most girls can continue their studies up to grade 10.

People attribute increased enrolment, particularly of girls, to increased awareness of the value of education as a result of the government's Nepal School Sector Reform Programme. Some people have also begun to acknowledge the need to treat the 'girl child' equally to boys and those parents that can afford to, have even started sending their daughters to private boarding schools. Similarly, educated boys and young men increasingly prefer an educated spouse, and this also raises awareness among parents of the need to educate their daughters, as the following excerpt illustrates.

Nowadays, when the society has developed, it is difficult to give our daughter to anyone for marriage if the girl is not educated. People seek educated wives, so it is one of the compulsion for us to send our daughters to school.

(Community timeline (education focus) in Salena, Doti)

The trend of sending daughters-in-law to school has also emerged over the past four to five years. According to respondents, this is also due to exposure and awareness brought by development programmes as well as learning from positive experience from others. However, while this was common in the year 1 findings in Ranagaon, Doti, it was not found to be so common in Wayal and Salena, though there is evidence of some families allowing daughters-in-law to continue education. The fact that it is more evident in Ranagaon may be because it is nearer to the regional headquarters, is also nearer to different kinds of schools, such as Christian missionary boarding schools and the technical schools. Also, the high school in Ranagaon is a community school, where local parents are involved in the administration of the school; therefore when they encourage other people to send girls to school, they must themselves lead the way by sending their daughters and daughters-in-law to school. In year 2 of the study, we found only four respondents in Wayal and Salena who sent their daughters-in-law to school. In all four cases, the girls were married when they were still attending the school and the boys' families had assured them they would be able to continue their education. Married adolescent girls can study up to class 12 if/when those grades are available in the schools in their vicinity. However, once they have children, we found only one case where the girl went to school. Similarly, girls do

not go to school during pregnancy due to shyness. However, there are some cases where, with family support, girls have continued their education outside of the village, despite having children (see Box 4).

Box 4: Support of in-laws and husband in continuing education

Radhika lives in Salena and was married when she was studying in grade 10. Her husband is educated and is in the police. Her parents did not negotiate with his parents about continuing her education after marriage. So after they married, she did not go to take her exam and was just sitting in her husband's house.

However, her father-in-law very much wanted her to study. He had a shop on the way to school and used to see children going to school. Upon knowing that it was exam time and that Radhika was not taking her exams, he cried in front of the children. When Radhika heard this she was deeply moved and she took the exam. She failed twice and again thought of quitting her studies. But her husband informed the father-in-law and asked him to fill the forms so that she could appear in the next exam. She failed again. The father-in-law counselled her to continue education and she did.

After the birth of her first child, she again wanted to quit. But her mother-in-law took charge of the household work and the child. Today she has two children, aged 9 and 4. She is doing her graduate degree from a college in Silgadi and works on various projects in the community.

Source: Fieldwork, Salena, 2014

6 Drivers and inhibitors of norm change

6.1 Drivers of change

For marriage as well as for education, the main drivers of change are government policies and programmes designed to promote gender equality, as well as development programmes implemented by non-government agencies (NGOs). These are drivers that come from outside the community but work with the community members and are classified here as external drivers. Besides this, there are drivers such as female role models in the community, the family, schools, media and communications technology, and supportive male relatives and community leaders who are within the community. These have been classified as internal drivers. Both kinds of drivers often work together, drawing and building on each other.

6.1.1 External drivers: Awareness of programmes and policies

The year 2 research finds that long-term external interventions, in the form of programmes and policies from government and non-government organisations (NGOs) alike, can be important drivers of change. Among other things, they are able to mobilise local youths, providing them with information and exposing them to new ways of doing things. Government and NGO initiatives have been very effective in Nepal in creating awareness and influencing other local-level actors such as women's groups, men, schools and family members to accept new ways of doing things or perceiving social norms around gender. Two successful examples stand out: the ending of *chaupadi* (whereby during her menstrual period, a girl had to stay in a shed for four days and was not permitted to enter the house), and enrolment of children in primary education. In both cases, the changes observed in Wayal and Salena can be seen as a trickle-down effect of large-scale, national-level interventions. To end the practice of *chaupadi*, the government created several women's and adolescent groups in the village under the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and mobilised them, alongside local health workers, to banish the practice. Now, girls no longer have to stay in the shed when they are menstruating but are allowed to stay in the house and go to school.

Similarly, under the national-level School Sector Reform Programme, the government mobilised local teachers and community members, mothers' groups and other community groups to persuade families to send all their children (including girls) to school. They also introduced several material incentives (as shown in Tables 6 and 7) to persuade parents to send their daughters to school. Because of this, a large number of girls who would otherwise be at home doing household work have had the opportunity to go to school.

Going back to the programmes and policies in the local sites, in the case of Wayal (Durgamadau) VDC, the first programmes came under the Ministry of Local Development in 1986 and focused on enhancing economic capabilities through income-generating activities. They provided training in vegetable gardening, poultry farming and cattle rearing to local villagers so as to improve their economic condition. From the 1990s onwards a range of development organisations (e.g. GIZ, RAP, Practical Action, HELVETAS, SAHYOG Nepal) had been working in the area, pulling out during the Maoist conflict but returning after 2006 when the peace accord was signed, addressing social and economic issues and supporting and encouraging individuals to fight discriminatory social practices. Respondents in the community timeline were of the opinion that such programmes led to increased awareness about the importance of education and of ending discrimination against girls and women.

One such initiative in Wayal is the Chhaupadi Kishori Sanjaal group, which was established to address the issues of *chaupadi* in the VDC. The group, which has 25 members, consists of adolescent girls between the ages of 11 and 18 who come from each of the VDC's wards. These girls, with the support of the local representative from the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and local Mother's group, run

awareness programmes for parents about the negative consequences of maintaining *chaupadi*, and also educate their peers. As a result of their activity, the VDC has recently been declared a *chaupadi*-free zone.

Similarly, Save the Children runs an education programme-MEAL, along with the government, in which school teachers, board members and local people work together to raise awareness about the importance of sending children to school. For example, each year before the academic session starts, they hold rallies and door-to-door visits to motivate parents to keep their children in schools. As polygamy is on the rise, Mother's group in Wayal runs a discussion programme about polygamy on the local radio and mobilises mothers' groups to raise their voices against husbands who practice polygamy. However, for them, the main challenge lies in the fact that the first wife does not come forward to lodge a complaint, so they cannot take any legal steps against the man.

In Salena, too, there are several groups working for positive change in the community. Most of them work on livelihoods, health, education and gender issues. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare has also been involved in setting up different groups and committees through which it decides about the distribution of funds allocated to the VDC by the government. These include children's committees, women's committees, ward citizen forums and citizen awareness centres. The women's committee, for instance, is present in each ward and in Salena is actively tackling alcoholism and *chaupadi*. The Madira Samiti (alcohol {prohibition} committee) established in 2011 aims to stop alcohol distribution and consumption in the VDC by instituting fines for both selling (Rs10,000) and buying (Rs5,000) alcohol. There is also a committee to tackle domestic violence, which works with the local police to give justice to women who face domestic violence. Each ward also has a shelter house for women who have been abused: they provide shelter, medical treatment and local counselling to the husband and wife in case of domestic violence. If the case is severe and they cannot solve the problem in the village, they can refer women to the district office of the Ministry of Women. Apart from this, representatives from the women's committee also participate in the budget dissemination meeting of the VDC. The ward citizen council is made up of representatives from each ward of the village and they participate in making local development programs for each ward in order for them to apply for VDC funds on an annual basis. The citizen awareness centre is made up of representative members of the several groups present in the community and works with local villagers to make development program and participates in the programs made by different groups.

In both study sites, when the programmes are focused on specific issues, are long term in nature and are carried out as partnerships between the government, non-government sector and local villagers, the programmes have been able to support social change. They have had positive outcomes for women and adolescent girls, including greater community awareness of the benefits of marrying girls at a later age, keeping them in school, reducing the incidence of domestic violence, and gradual ending of discrimination against women and girls.

6.1.2 Internal drivers

As said earlier in the section, internal drivers are those that are found within the community but may work together and draw on external drivers. These include role models, schools, family and peers all of which are local to the community.

A. Role models and agents for change

We found that in both Wayal and Salena, role models for girls are usually women who are working in the development, education and health sectors (the sectors in which most of the educated women locally tend to find employment). Some of these women, especially teachers, have helped adolescent girls and are actively engaged as internal motivators leading efforts to end discrimination against girls, including gender-based violence and harmful social practices such as *chaupadi*.

While older members of the community, such as parents and community leaders, tend to maintain discriminatory social norms, adolescents look to teachers, elder brothers/sisters and positive role models as agents for change. Adolescents feel that these role models are people who make them feel better, introduce them to new ways of thinking and doing things, and are involved in changing traditional practices in society. Thus, for example, while a mother and father may think that going to India for work is a marker of success, brothers or sisters and teachers are likely to tell adolescents that they should continue their studies and work in Nepal. When young people took up positions as local leaders, heads of peer groups, government representatives and local teachers in the village, they also became important agents for change. Thus there is a strong age dimension to those who act as agents for change: while younger people in the community

introduced adolescents to change and opened their minds, older people often ‘policed’ these changes and intervened only to keep them away from doing wrong things such as fighting (see quote below).

Q: The elders of the village, don't they say anything to you? What do they say?

A: Yes. They do say.

Q: In what context?

A: When we do something bad.

Q: Bad such as?

A: If there is a fight. They say you shouldn't beat and fight.

(In-depth interview with school-going adolescent boy aged 16 in Salena, Doti)

Although peers may not be role models for other adolescents per se, they can help each other to cope with any family or community backlash when existing social norms are transgressed. These may include situations regarding love affairs and marriage, to issues around clothing styles and fashion. Peers are, therefore, an important part of an individual's support systems: they can act as a buffer, protecting each other, but also helping to motivate each other to stand up against discriminatory norms.

In our study sites, and as is likely to be the case elsewhere, we found that men are very often important role models for adolescents and influence them to think differently and open pathways for change. However, as there are social restrictions on interactions with opposite sex for girls, and girls are often cautious not to transgress these boundaries, they are often unable to learn and interact with men who influence or support changes. Thus while the role models for adolescent girls were successful women of the locality, for boys it was men. The female role models were mostly active in issues of physical protection against violence and reproductive health. Even when they were female teachers in secondary schools (which is very rare for the district, and there are only two female secondary teachers in the whole district), interactions with them were mostly about sexual health issues and not about careers and migration which were issues that were discussed with boys. While these are important issues, girls obtain limited guidance on how to improve their future careers and education. Similarly, there is no platform where girls can discuss concern about their studies and careers. The male agents for change are also well aware about the challenges facing girls, the need for them to remain within the framework of expected behaviours and values, and the fact that as men they cannot intervene very much. Male teachers who responded as key informants shared that often girls are interactive with them when they are in the lower classes but after they become adolescents this relationship changes and girls suddenly become shy, quiet and less interactive.

B. Family

The family is another important foundational institution, which, if supportive, can enhance the capability of adolescent girls. Given that social norms are unwritten and are forever changing, there is some space for families to manoeuvre around them in order to create opportunities for a girl's development. As there are no organised groups in society to resist small changes, families end up having a large amount of flexibility in how they decide to deal with a daughter or indeed a son who may transgress certain social norms. Thus, if the family is supportive, they act as a safety net for adolescents girls and can assist them in developing their capabilities even if the girls go against expected social behaviours. The case study below about Sita, a girl from Salena (Box 5), illustrates how family support can help a girl to bypass the strict rules around mobility outside the home and allow her to access education, ultimately making her life better than that of her peers. However, in other cases, families were found to act as maintainers of ‘sticky’ norms, as in the case of Kalpana (Box 6).

Box 5: The positive consequences of a supportive family

Sita¹² is an 18-year-old married girl from Salena (Durgamadau) VDC, Doti district. She is currently pursuing her bachelor's-level education from a college in Silgadhi with English as her major subject. She was born in the neighbouring VDC of Dhirkamandau from where she completed her primary and secondary school education, after which time she migrated to Attaria in Kailali district with her father. Her mother and her

12 Names have been changed to protect identities

siblings still live in Dhirkamandau VDC. In Attaria, Sita joined a local college to continue her high school education. It was in the middle of her grade 12 classes that she agreed to get married and did so on 14 April, just 16 days before her grade 12 finals.

It was an arranged marriage and the family she married into is the family her elder sister had already married into. She knew her husband and his family before they got married and in fact it was because of this pre-existing relationship that her husband's family proposed her for marriage.

Though she got married when she was 17, she was repeatedly being proposed for marriage from the same family long before that. Even her husband had profusely declared his interest in her and had proposed to her on more than one occasion. She finally agreed to his proposal because she thought that since everyone from both sides of the family were so eager for her marriage, she shouldn't stand in the way. Regarding the proposal, her father didn't directly ask her if she wanted to get married or not but it was a silent approval from her side.

The reason why her husband and his family were so eager to marry her was because of her educational qualifications. None of her in-laws had studied beyond grade 6 and so they wanted to bring an educated girl into the family. The result of this was that the in-laws easily agreed to let her pursue her education further even after her marriage, which is also why she was allowed to return to her maternal home a week after marriage so that she could sit for her grade 12 exams.

Interestingly, Sita's parents had not initially planned to let her study so much as they had no expectations for her. Things started to change when she landed a scholarship in grade 2 as a Dalit student.¹³ The scholarship meant that her family were now receiving money to send her to school and because she was very good at study, the scholarship never stopped.

Sita's husband is in the army. He is four years older than her and has only studied up to grade 8. He usually visits her when he comes home twice a year but since he is about to be posted to Jomsom in Mustang district, in the western mountain region of the country, he would not be able to visit her very often. She is not too worried, however, as they can remain in contact via cell phones. He is a very supportive husband and encourages her to continue her education and is also covering her college education costs. Sita believes he does not feel demeaned by his wife's level of education, but rather, feels proud of her achievement. He even pushed her to get a job as a school teacher in a local school so that she can earn her own income as well. Her in-laws too are supportive, especially her mother-in-law, who allows her to continue with her education and work as a school teacher by giving her leeway from household duties. Her sister, who is also now her sister-in-law, does most of the household chores for her but she is not completely free of it and does help her sister-in-law when she can.

Sita's husband is very happy with his married life, but Sita is not. It is not that she is unhappy with her husband or her in-laws, but is unhappy about being unable to fulfil her dream of becoming a singer and spreading social messages through her songs, a desire that has strengthened with each passing year. Her father had discouraged her as he felt that singing is something that is not for a daughter to pursue, feeling that society would not accept such behaviour. She has also subtly expressed her wishes with her in-laws but they too are not supportive of the idea. She has not talked openly about it with her husband but is confident that she can convince him if she can earn enough money to cover the cost of recording music. She is adamant that she will fulfil this dream even if it means she has to go against her family.

Sita and her husband have no immediate plans to have children and want to wait a few more years so that they can be economically stable; but her mother-in-law wants them to have one as soon as possible. Sita wants to have at least one child and her family have no preference whether the child is a son or daughter. She wants her child to be highly educated and to fulfil whatever dreams they may have. She says she would not pressurise them to get married and would also let them decide when and with whom they wanted to marry.

She is now a role model for her family on both sides (maternal and in-laws) and because of her educational accomplishments her younger brother and sister too are studying and aiming to follow her path. Sita says she never fought with her parents to let her study, they were always willing. Similarly, had her parents not been so understanding, none of what she has achieved would have been possible.

¹³ The government has a special policy to give a stipend to people of Dalit and other marginalised groups.

However, the family can also act as a gatekeeper of change in social norms. The story of Kalpana (Box 10), a girl from the same village as Sita, shows how girls can be forced into marriage against their wishes and end up living a very difficult life.

Box 6: Poverty, lack of family support, and early marriage

Kalpana is a 21-year-old girl from Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti district. She is originally from [Mudabhara](#) VDC, in Doti, coming to Salena VDC after marriage. She has never been to school and was married at the age of 14. Both of her parents are dead; her father had died before her marriage. She has seven siblings: six sisters and one elder brother, all of whom are already married.

After the untimely death of her father, the family suffered emotionally and financially. There was no one to earn money, thus making it impossible for her mother to send the children to school. After her father's death, her brother migrated to India for work and Kalpana got married. At the time of her marriage, she had no idea about what marriage involved. She felt sick when she heard that her mother had arranged her marriage and was really scared, but when she confronted her mother about it, her mother simply said she had to be married because of the family's dire financial situation.

Kalpana married a young man she had seen only on the day of her marriage. After just three days, her husband left for India in order to earn money to pay debts that was incurred during his marriage. It has now been eight years since her marriage but she still has not talked with her husband properly.

She gave birth to her first and only child (a son) after five years of marriage. The reason for this delay was less to do with family planning services and more to do with her husband's being away in India. In fact, when her son was born, her husband was not with her and only got the news after a few days. Nonetheless, they are happy with their only child and do not plan to have more, though her father-in-law and mother-in-law want them to have one more.

Kalpana had a tough time initially adjusting to her new life after marriage. Though she used to do her share of work at her maternal home, once she got married she had to do a lot more. She coped with it over the years but still thinks that had she been educated, she might not have had to go through such an ordeal. However, she does not want to pursue her education now and also does not want to attend the adult education classes being conducted in her village. She says she felt shy to carry books and go to these classes and also thinks that it is not possible to do studying and household duties simultaneously.

Her younger brother-in-law is her support system in the family. She can talk with him without feeling afraid or shy and is reluctant to express herself in front of her other in-laws, as well as her husband. Her husband still works in India and comes home once a year (for two months) and she still struggles to express her feelings with him. She leaves every decision with her husband and agrees with whatever he says. She even has no strong feelings about her own son's future, leaving it up to her husband to decide whether he studies or not.

C. Media, communications and technology

Technology, mainly local radio, was found to be another important driver that sensitised people to potentially harmful consequences of existing norms and practices and introduced new ways of thinking. This was more for the community and reference groups rather than for the girls themselves as girls were not found to listen to radio much. Local programmes run by FM radio stations make people aware about harmful practices and local problems through discussion programmes or interviews. For example, in Wayal, guest speakers (often local representatives of the government, development agencies and social workers) are invited to discuss harmful practices such as domestic violence and polygamy. Similarly, radio and other media introduce people to new perceptions and different ways of doing things, thus helping to end ignorance and open pathways for change. For example, radio broadcasts include information about how boys can avoid being cheated by brokers during international migration, and how girls can avoid falling prey to traffickers.

Mobile phones have made it much easier for adolescents to communicate with each other directly. They have helped girls to organise and keep their social network intact and share their difficulties with close friends. As noted above, when compared with their mothers' and grandmothers' generations, when husbands and wives rarely spoke to each other, communication between husband and wife is more frequent now, allowing the husband to support his wife if he wishes. Mobile phones are also frequently used when people conduct love affairs. They have contributed to an impetus for coping with or fighting discriminatory norms, opening the

way for small changes such as having a say about the chosen marriage partner and seeing the proposed person before marriage.

However, there is also some evidence of the negative consequences of mobile phones; thus, for instance, they have on some occasions led to young girls eloping early.

Finally, technology – in the form of grinding mills and availability of services such as water supply in the house – was also seen to improve girls' lives. While in Ranagoan, in year 1 fieldwork, the lack of a grinding mill and water nearby meant that adolescent girls had to spend a lot of their time and energy grinding wheat and removing husks from rice and carrying water, this was not the case for Wayal and Salena, the study sites in year 2. In both places, people used the local grinding mill and there was water supply in households, which saved adolescent girls a lot of time. However, it was hard to say if the time was used by the girls for study at all.

D. Schools

Though it does not always play a direct role in fighting discriminatory norms, school is another important mediating institution. Schools in both study sites, in addition to providing the mainstream curriculum, provided extra skills on managing sexual and reproductive health, including making and using sanitary pads and the importance of hygiene during menstruation. Schools also provide girls and boys with opportunities for building social support networks, which are important for their broader wellbeing. For example, local teachers, seniors and peers are important sources of knowledge and support in schools. Girls and boys can turn to them when there are issues they cannot talk about with the parents. Besides this, for boys and girls alike, schools are a critical space for broadening their horizons, aspirations and outlook. According to study respondents, schools have helped adolescent boys to rethink established gender roles, and helped girls to realise their rights. One means of seeing the effect of the schools (and indeed other mediating institutions) is the fact that boys are acknowledging that their female counterparts have unjust work burdens at home and as such try to help them in their studies. Therefore, as a result of the way in which gender relations are being shaped in the learning environment of the school, we found evidence that young boys are becoming more open to adapting and changing discriminatory gender norms – evidenced by the marked difference in their ideals about mobility, higher education and social interactions for girls.

E. Encouraging men to play a positive role in the wellbeing of girls and women

Our study shows that in Wayal as in Salena, there are certain domains which are clearly defined as belonging to women. In such cases, all the roles are taken exclusively by women even though they may also concern men. However, as the social system is patriarchal, men in the community can play a strong role in changing discriminatory roles assigned to adolescent girls and young women, including in relation to issues that would normally be dealt with by women, such as domestic violence and alcoholism. For example, a senior police official said that although they would like to help mothers' groups in cases of domestic violence, the group only comes to them when the husband is violent and to ask for their support in accessing counselling. Similarly, they felt that there are many girls whose husband may be involved in polygamy or extramarital affairs, but as these are regarded as women's domain, the case never comes to the police.

As the cases studies presented in this report have shown, there are certain men (brothers, fathers, uncles or husbands) who play a central role as agents for change within the family. However, their power to influence change depends on their age, status, and level of education. When it comes to gendered social norms, men (especially brothers) can either support change or help maintain stasis: in some cases, elder brothers were found to be active agents for change if they believed the norms were discriminatory and they wanted change for unmarried girls; in others, they could make discriminatory norms more rigid if they chose to. Additionally, while brothers may not be proposing radical norm change (since they have also been brought up in the same social structure as their sister and hence will likely have also internalised similar norms), they tend to be more flexible than their fathers, who grew up in a time when social norms were more rigid. This is very evident when considering the themes of mobility and education, with boys today advocating for girls to have greater mobility and higher levels of education.

For married women, even though they may have limited interaction with their husband, his role is crucial, influencing issues such as whether she continues school after marriage, reducing her work burden, and allowing her to attend health facilities. In all except a few cases, when married adolescent girls were allowed to continue their schooling, it was the husband who supported them and encouraged them to do so.

Additionally, a husband with a good salary could push his parents to send his wife to school since he is the breadwinner of the family. Elderly respondents in our research commented that when the husband takes a certain stance in relation to his wife, other family members do not go against it. Moreover, as boys now usually take the final decision about arranged marriages, they can bring a significant change in dowry systems and reduce the cost of marriages if they wish to.

Adolescent girls who were strongly supported by their father-in-law and brother-in-law were also continuing their schooling and were able to travel for work and training purposes, as shown in the case studies in Box 3.

6.2 Why do norms remain sticky?

The year 2 research in Wayal and Salena showed that norms remain sticky for a number of reasons, including economic pressures, limited exposure to different ways of doing things, fear of potential negative impacts of change, and the fear of a backlash from the society. We explore these reasons in more detail below.

6.2.1 The role of economics and migration in maintaining discriminatory social norms

While there is growing evidence in the literature (such as Gartaula, 2009) that migration can bring positive change in social norms, this was not found to be the case in Wayal or Salena. People who participated in drawing up the community timeline were of the opinion that community awareness about the importance of education began to be raised when local people began travelling to Doti and Dhangadi. However, they do not refer to men's migration to India as a driver of positive change, either in the past or more recently. Based on respondents' observations and our own observations, we suggest the following reasons why migration has not been seen as bringing positive change to Wayal and Salena.

First, both sites are rural and semi-rural areas, and the economy depends on subsistence agriculture and remittances from India. Although the area is rich in natural resources, both locations are economically stagnant due to lack of infrastructure. Hence men move away to find jobs and women are left behind. Because women become so burdened with daily work, there is neither the space nor the economic resources to allow them to think about new ways of doing things. Besides this, they have very few opportunities for acquiring new knowledge and perspectives and trying out alternative ways of doing things.

At the same time, perhaps because the men who migrate to India work mostly in menial jobs (e.g. in hotels or as guards in private houses and factories), there is little scope for them to acquire new knowledge that they could bring home on their return. Also, migration is seasonal, therefore they have only short periods of exposure before coming back to the same conditions of their own village. Thus we did not find any migrants who came back to their homes with new knowledge and skills. Instead, a few migrant youths we talked to were found to conform to existing norms even more so than those who had not migrated. Thus, for example, for those who have been to India before marriage, they are less keen on their wives being educated, and marriages are usually arranged by their parents with very young girls. On the other hand, boys and young men who have not migrated tend to study up to higher grades and are more typically the ones who are challenging existing norms around arranged marriages. Also, neither adolescent boys nor adolescent girls mentioned migrants who went to India as role models; instead, they mentioned local youths who did well in their education and inspired them. However, we also found one case where the father had migrated to Qatar and is supportive of delaying his daughter's marriage to let her continue her education.

6.2.2 Fear of negative outcomes and a social backlash

In addition to lack of economic and knowledge resources, we found a sense that people conform to certain norms or behaviours because of negative experiences of what happened previously when people subverted norms. Such people tend to hold stronger religious beliefs than the role models who are agents of change and generally can be said to fear the consequences of modernity. Hence when even minor or temporary negative consequences arise from trying out new things, they become fearful and quickly return to the old or expected ways of doing things. Thus, for example, although some parents became convinced that early marriages were bad and sending girls to school was a better option, when some girls started to elope, they quickly returned to the past belief that ultimately marriage was better for girls than education. In this case, they associated education with girls running away – and, unfortunately, this fear is not unfounded. One local story that happened 3 years ago has become almost like a parable: out of 16 boys and girls who came from nearby villages to take the school-leaving exam in Wayal, all but one eloped without sitting the exam. The narrative

goes that this was an opportunity for them to leave their village, meet their boyfriend/girlfriend, and elope. Such instances are bound to raise fear among the older generations about the risks of sending girls to school and giving them more freedom of movement. As result, they resort to enforcing the old norms and thus become maintainers of stasis.

Besides this, when people hold on to such beliefs strongly agents of change as mentioned above, find it hard to create awareness among people. A teacher shares about his efforts to trying to stop parents from marrying a girl studying in grade 8:

" Q: Do the teachers not intervene and stop the marriage from happening and convince the parent to let her continue her education?"

R: There is no chance of doing that here in village; they say "she is my daughter, I haven't planned your daughter's marriage," these sorts of things happens, no one can stop it."

(Group discussion with school going adolescent boys of age 16-19 in Salena, Doti)

Despite immediate negative outcomes, some families and individual young men and women do want to do things differently and are not afraid to challenge local norms. Nevertheless, as shown in Box 7, they face strong criticism from members of their community.

Box 7: Criticism for sending daughter for higher education

Mr Malla, a local leader in Wayal, sent his daughter for higher education in Silgadi. When she completed her Bachelor's degree from there, she wanted to do a Master's in Kathmandu. Because his daughter was doing well, and although there was much criticism from his friends, he sent her to Kathmandu. The young woman, who is now 30, has completed her Master's degree but is unmarried. The community now criticises him and holds him responsible for her remaining unmarried.

In the community mapping where Mr Malla also participated, there were people who gave his case as an example of the drawbacks of sending girls for higher education. The father said that though he is happy with his daughter's achievement, he does not show it, because others in the community criticise him for it.

Source: Fieldwork, Wayal, 2014

Similarly, participants in the community mapping both in Salena and Wayal shared that when the mother-in-law takes on more of the household work so that the daughter-in-law can go to school, the family is often criticised, saying: *'buhari lai padayera pani hudo ho ta'*, meaning 'what is the use of educating a daughter-in-law?' Similarly, when we talked to mothers in Ranagaon during year 1 fieldwork about the practice of *chaupadi*, they knew that it was not good to keep girls out of one's house and prevent them from eating nutritious food; but they feared being criticised by other members of their community and hence continued with the practice of keeping menstruating girls separate from the house. Also this year we found that though girls did not have to live in *chaupadi* sheds in both the study sites, they were still not given milk and milk products during menstruation because mothers feared of being criticised by neighbours. Informal discussions with elderly people in Wayal and Salena showed that while there are families who hold more progressive views, these did not always translate into practice.

7 Effects on girls' capability development

Based on adolescent girls' experiences of marriage and education, we find that existing social norms – especially around marriage, mobility, chastity and family honour – play a detrimental role in the development of adolescent girls' capabilities. All these norms have their roots in the Hindu religion. While religious leaders expound that the Hindu philosophy does not show gender bias, the daily practices that are rooted in these philosophies are highly discriminatory towards women and girls. It was not clear, however, whether it is during the translation of these philosophies and beliefs into norms that gender bias emerges or whether it is the content of the philosophies themselves. Among these norms, ideals of feminine chastity and purity are cross-cutting and shape issues of mobility, education and marriage for women. Again, norms around marriage, mobility and education are also intertwined with each other.

Norms around chastity and marriage hamper girls' education directly. Preference for child marriage means that girls are taken out of school from an early age, which denies them the chance to develop their educational capabilities. This in turn prevents them accessing other opportunities such as employment, economic independence and in general a better standard of living. Girls themselves are even opting for early marriage by elopement due to restrictive norms governing socialisation with members of the opposite sex. In many cases, girls in arranged marriages do not know about their rights, experience domestic violence, and have no option but to stay in harmful relationships such as polygamous unions. Moreover, largely because of economic dependence, women typically choose to remain bound to their first husband and to stay with their in-laws in cases where the husband takes a second wife. Such women cannot go back to their maternal home because the parental property belongs to the son and there are very limited possibilities for remarriage because of issues around virginity.

Our interviews with girls and women as well as teachers confirm that girls largely drop out of education after marriage for various reasons. And even for the few who continue studying it is only for a few grades more. Most often girls voluntarily drop out because of shame and hopelessness that they cannot do well in class given their household work burdens. For many, household responsibility around caring and managing households gives them no time for study. This is especially the case when their mother has to work outside the house in agriculture or daily labour or when she is sick and cannot take care of households and as such the responsibility comes to the eldest daughters. Moreover because there are no able men in the villages who can help with the agricultural work due to extensive migration, it is left largely to the women to look after agriculture and the farm. In such a context, women take care of the fields and girls take care of household and animals. This leaves them no time for studies.

If a girl is married she is also likely to drop out of school. Pregnant girls do not go to school and there is pressure for girls to bear a child within the first few years of her marriage to prove her fertility. For girls with out-of-marriage pregnancy, going to school is out of the question and often such girls are thrown out of the villages. Participants in the community mapping both in Wayal and Salena outrightly denied any possibilities of such girls going to school, saying '*there is no question of such girls going to school. She is not even allowed to stay in the village.*'

Except when the girls are teased for being too big to study in smaller class, adolescent girls do not find difference in treatment by teachers or peers and there is also no gender discrimination in learning experience. However, as said earlier, girls tend to become shy in interactive learning, as soon as they reach higher classes. Some teachers put them in mixed groups to foster interactions in higher classes where the problem is acute but, according to the teachers, this strategy was still not effective and the girls did not interact at all. Due to this shyness they also do not take up leadership positions voluntarily in, for instance, games and extra

curricular activities at school and the teachers have to make active arrangements to bring them into such leadership positions.

This behaviour can be explained by the constant pressure faced by girls to keep interaction with members of the opposite sex to a minimum, so that they are not shunned for being of 'loose character'. Additionally the feeling of shyness amongst girls may also come from an inferiority complex: when they reach higher classes boys are often more advanced in education as they have more time for studying; girls, on the other, as well as needing to invest more time in education as it becomes more challenging, are also faced with increasing expectations of household work. Thus girls fall behind boys and feelings of inferiority may follow. Similarly, while girls are shunned for any desire to want social interaction, boys are expected to interact socially and take up leadership positions. These expected behaviours serve to make girls anxious about what people would say about them, which makes them lack confidence. In a sense it is easier for boys to prove that they are following expected behaviour, for instance it is usually evident when they are not drinking alcohol. For girls, however, it is more difficult to prove that they are being 'good girls' – i.e. it is often a matter of individual perception and opinion whether, for instance, a girl is serving her in-laws appropriately or is not an 'eloping type'.

Despite some changes, it is still the case that girls' behaviour is much more closely scrutinised by their families and their communities than boys. This can affect girls' self-confidence and ability to question the patriarchal institutions that determine their wellbeing. We found that girls are under constant pressure not to question things and to guard their honour, for the sake of their own and their family's name. Boys, on the other hand, are brought up with the expectation that they will question existing structures and be outspoken when it comes to their own wellbeing. As such, they are always more confident to raise their voice against norms that may hamper their capabilities and future aspirations. Generally, these struggles of girls and boys take place in a social setting where gender discriminatory norms prevail and women are required to adhere to these social norms to safeguard the wellbeing and honour of the men and older people in their house. This provides girls with a very unfavourable starting point.

7.1 How have some girls walked the fine line between overcoming discriminatory norms and still being 'good'?

Our positive outlier cases suggest that those young girls who have become successful, for instance, those who have been to continue in higher education, take up jobs and travel for jobs in later life, have not achieved their status by challenging existing norms directly but by treading carefully to prove that they can remain within social norms and uphold shared values. This is a daunting task, as qualities like mobility and social interactions with the opposite sex – which are shunned by society – are inevitable when a girl pursues higher education or employment. However, we found that, as successful young women very much abided by the norms and rules when they were younger, they were able to gain respect from society and in turn were able to influence other young people.

One common theme in the successful outlier cases was that at a young age, girls somehow managed to juggle their heavy burden of household work with sufficient time to study and excel at school. However, at a later stage, when they had to go outside of their community, a strong support structure helped, whether in the form of supportive social or political activists, governmental and non-government programmes. For instance, when interviewing women who were active in their community (e.g., as social mobilisers or local women's association leaders), we found that they were either relatives of local political leaders or came from the same community as them, or had benefited from stipends or other programme support. This was true in both Wayal and Salena. Thus, women and girls who had managed to be successful at the local level, in addition to having found ways to manage their domestic and school workloads when young, mostly have a strong support network that consists of fathers or brothers encouraging them to follow their own course and go against what society tells them is their place. Their family may also have political links, be of relatively high socioeconomic status and/or have privileges accorded to them by development programmes and policies, in some cases because they belong to underprivileged groups.

8 Conclusion and policy recommendations

Our year 2 study found that some aspects of gendered social norms around early marriage and education in Nepal are changing while others remain sticky. These norms are rooted in deeply held beliefs about the qualities that are desirable in an 'ideal' girl/wife; strong initiatives will be needed to change these norms and beliefs so that they are less harmful to girls and enable them to develop their full capabilities across the domains (economic, educational, physical, psycho-emotional and civic participation capabilities).

In terms of marriage, there have been progressive changes in norms around choice of spouse, marriageable age, processes in the marriage, the system of bride wealth, and relationships between husband and wife. There have also been positive changes in social norms and practices around how girls are treated during menstruation. There is evidence that there is less domestic violence than what was meted to their mothers and grandmothers (in terms of physical violence towards women by their husbands and in-laws). Girls are generally informed about their prospective husband before the marriage takes place. Similarly, the rationale for choice of marriage partner has changed, with men also thinking about their own needs as well as those of their household. This also means that wives have greater space in the lives of husbands than was the case in previous generations, which potentially leads to closer husband–wife relationships. All these changes have helped improve the wellbeing of women and girls.

In terms of education, more girls are now enrolled in school and fewer girls drop out specifically for the purpose of an arranged marriage. Some parents no longer discriminate between sons and daughters and send both sexes to school, and even to private English-medium schools when resources permit. In some cases, the girl's father negotiates with her prospective in-laws prior to the marriage to ensure that she can continue her education after marriage. A few girls had succeeded at school and were enrolled in higher education courses outside the district. Learning environments are more gender equitable than they used to be, with girls given special support in issues around sexual and reproductive health and leadership.

However, there are some norms that have proved 'sticky' and resistant to positive change over time. These include restrictions on girls' freedom of movement outside the home, the importance of marriage over education and careers for girls, norms around the ideal girl and wife, pressure to prove one's fertility and give birth to sons, women's vulnerability in polygamous relationships, lack of opportunity for economic independence for young girls and women, lack of decision-making power over household resources, and lack of agency outside the household.

In terms of sticky norms around marriage, though girls in arranged marriages are marrying at a less early age, elopement is emerging as a new trend affecting girls as young as 12. While the girls are formally taken into the husband's family and hence have some social and legal protection, they are not in a position to use these provisions to negotiate their rights in case there is injustice after marriage (such as in polygamous relationship or domestic violence); even though they get formally married by the boy's parents, they lack the confidence and power to negotiate their rights. This also applies to girls who did not elope. Thus, as encapsulated by the saying '*mare paap pale punya (if you kill her it is sin, if you take care of her it is virtue)*', girls are at the mercy of their husband and in-laws after marriage. And in most cases, elopement means they leave their education and become pregnant at a very early age. Boys are also very young (16-17 years of average age) when they marry and generally leave for India to work soon after marriage. In the context of the increasing prevalence of polygamy among young people, it is yet to be seen how early marriage of boys relates to polygamy. Given the early marriage and elopement trend, it is possible that polygamous relationships are becoming more common because married adolescent boys, when they mature physically and develop their career, will want a wife with a more 'modern' outlook, which their first wife may not necessarily have. Thus the boys who are marrying early may bring another wife later.

In terms of education, the ‘sticky’ norm of girls’ low educational attainment is due to girls having a disproportionately large burden of household work and hence time poverty and fatigue, as well as restrictions on their freedom of movement and social interaction outside the home. Female dropout from secondary education is very common, with the main reasons being poverty, lack of time for study, early marriage and childbearing, and restrictions on free movement outside the home. Discrimination persists in terms of the quality of education girls have access to, the financial resources spent on daughters’ education, and the level of education girls are allowed to complete. While the government implements programmes for informal education for out-of-school children, we did not find these popular in our research sites. Hence dropouts who would have benefited from such interventions are not doing so.

The stickiness of certain social norms is shaped by the institution of marriage, while education and awareness are the main drivers of changing norms. Thus marriage and education are deeply intertwined in terms of girls’ and young women’s capabilities. Besides education, the main drivers of change are ‘external’ motivations in the form of policies and programmes brought about by the government and international actors, and ‘internal’ motivations from local youths and role models including teachers, health workers and social workers. Having supportive family members, particularly male relatives, was also seen as important for achieving positive change. Finally, exposure to modernity and the outside world, and particularly the influence of new communications technology, has helped reshape some discriminatory norms. The most effective changes have been brought about by long-term programmes that are targeted towards specific causes and which involve and train local people.

Stasis in social norms appears to be maintained by numerous factors, including fear of a social backlash, ignorance, negative experiences when new practices have been introduced, lack of knowledge, and lack of economic resources to try new practices. Given the high rate of male migration in both study sites, we expected that social remittances in the form of knowledge and awareness may help bring positive social norm change. However, we found that migration actually had a negative influence in this respect. For example, migrants tended to adhere to traditional norms and practices more so than local youths when it came to marriage and education.

Based on our observations, we can conclude that understandings about adolescent girls and their overall family environment is much more complex and perhaps less conclusive than we might expect. Wellbeing of adolescent girls and young women is increasing in general and is much better in comparison to their mothers and grandmothers and between the eldest and the youngest sister in the same family is outstanding. However gender discrimination persists heavily. There is a large gap between brothers and sisters (in household work, mobility, voice and opinion) in the same family suggesting that discriminatory social norms have not necessarily transformed on a par with economic/infrastructural development.

The process of norm change is complex with various norms being intertwined, influencing and affecting each other based on a range and combination of factors, as outlined in the sections above. Some of these factors, such as legal changes, act more forcefully while others, such as influence of role models, are more subtle. When norms have changed however, the change can be seen to act in a dialectical relationship with practices and agency, with new practices influencing existing agency which in turn influences new practices. These changes in practices also influence people to question their long held beliefs thus making way for change in social norms. This leads to a perpetual process of change over time. Thus interventions that build agency of people to act against discriminatory practices are important to bring social change.

8.1 Policy recommendations

As part of our year 2 research, we asked adolescents about their aspirations around marriage and education and what they think would hinder them from achieving those aspirations. We also asked stakeholders at the local level to suggest recommendations that would help address discriminatory norms related to early marriage and school dropout, as well as to end practices that negatively affect the development of adolescent girls’ capabilities. Table 14 below summarises the five most widely cited aspirations, hindrances and possible interventions for girls in school as well as those out of school.

Table 16: Aspirations, hindrances and programs that helps

Five most widely cited aspirations/wishes for school-going adolescent girls	Five most widely cited hindrances to achieving aspirations/wishes	Five most widely cited programmes that would help married out-of-school adolescents	Five most widely cited programs that would help school-going adolescents
Time-related – would like more time and help with studies and greater parental awareness about the importance of higher education	Parents being unaware of importance of education for girls’ wellbeing, now and in future	Vocational training (tailoring)	Awareness-raising with parents to end early marriage and allow girls to go to other places for higher education
Higher education-related (to do a bachelor’s or master’s) - where to do it and how to know about the process	Resources – no schools, college and information centres nearby for higher education	Life skills (literacy classes)	Mentors who can help them address their problems
Socialisation-related - not to be criticised for engaging in social interaction and extracurricular activities	Social norms – not allowed to go to other places for education, forced into early marriage, criticised for studying	Employment-related – establishment of small industries	Clubs to form groups and socialise
Career-related – to be a teacher, doctor or nurse	Financial – parents not able to pay for them	Gender-based violence related – programmes that help to reduce alcoholism and polygamy	Training and classes to get government jobs
Travel-related – to be able to go to Dhangadi and Dipayal for higher education	Awareness – no knowledge about how to move forward in education and career	Social cause-related – run a class in school and educate men and women about how to make society better	Opportunities and information about higher education

For school-going adolescent girls, it is vital to create an environment in which they have time for study, and opportunities and guidance for higher education and jobs. Parents need to be less focused on their daughters’ marriage and instead have a more nurturing approach, seeing their daughters as individuals with the right to have aspirations for an education and career as well as a family. This includes generating changes in people’s (and specifically parents’) perceptions about what makes an ‘ideal’ daughter/daughter-in-law, woman or girl.

For out-of-school adolescents, their main concerns were access to income-generating activities and help in addressing gender-based injustices such as polygamy, domestic violence and alcoholism. In relation to income-generating activities, given the rich natural resources available in both study sites (Wayal and Salena), support for small cottage industries was thought to be feasible.

Besides the policy recommendations that came directly out of the interviews, we find that the following measures could be important steps to address discriminatory gender norms and help in increasing girl’s capabilities.

- Programs should take into account the gendered nature of interaction between girls and drivers of change and encourage girls and communities to accept more interactions between girls and male role models, teachers and other members who could advice girls in their education and careers.
- Encourage the role of men and give them space to support the ending of discriminatory norms and gender violence.
- Support families in ending discriminatory social norms.
- Support long term and focused interventions to change existing practices and include active participation of the local people and encourage them to be drivers of change

- Involve parents in activities of the formal educational system of children so that they are aware of the discrimination and its harmful consequences for girls, e.g. through parents and teachers associations (PTAs)
- At community level, men and women, young girls and young boys should receive awareness raising and information around discriminatory attitudes and social norms and their impacts on girls' lives, identifying collective, practical steps that can be taken to overcome these discriminatory norms.

References

- ActionAid (2002) *Global Education Review*. London: ActionAid, International Education Unit.
- Amin, S., Bajracharya, A., Chau, M. and Puri, M. (2014) *Highlights from the UNICEF Adolescent Development and Participation Baseline Study*. New York: Population Council.
- Amin, S., Austrian, A., Chau, M., Glazer, K., Green, E., Stewart, D. and Stoner, M. (2013) *Adolescent Girls Vulnerability Index: Guiding Strategic Investment in Uganda*. New York: Population Council.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2010) *Overview of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Nepal*. Philippines: Asian Development Bank.
- Barker, G. (2000) 'Gender equitable boys in a gender inequitable world: reflections from qualitative research and program development with young men in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil', *Sexual and Relationship Therapy* 15(3): 263-282.
- Cooper, L.B. and Fletcher, E.K. (2013) *Reducing Societal Discrimination Against Adolescent Girls: Using Social Norms to Promote Behavior Change*. Paper Commissioned by Girl Hub, a strategic partnership between Nike Foundation and the UK Department for International Development .
- Dahl, G.B. (2010) 'Early Teen Marriage and Future Poverty', *Demography* 47(3).
- Department for International Development (DFID) (2011) *Helpdesk Report: The Impact of Girls' Education on Early Marriage*. Department for International Development.
- Gartaula, H.N. (2009) 'International migration and local development in Nepal', *Contribution to Nepalese Studies* (January) 208-225.
- Ghimire, A., Samuels, F. and Wagle, S. (2013) *Understanding Key Capability Domains of Adolescent Girls and Gender Justice: Findings from Nepal* . London: Overseas Development Institute.
- Hatlebakk, M. (2012) *Son-Preference, Number of Children, Education and Occupational Choice in Rural Nepal*. CMI Working Paper.
- Hervish, A. and Feldman-Jacobs, C. (2011) *'Who Speaks for Me? Ending Child Marriage*. Washington DC: Population Reference Bureau.
- His Majesty's Government of Nepal (1963) *The Muluki Ain (General Code)*. His Majesty's Government of Nepal.
- International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) (2005) *A Second Look at the Role Education Plays in Women's Empowerment*. Washington DC: ICRW.
- ICRW (International Center for Research on Women) and Plan South Asia (2013). *Asia Child Marriage initiative: Summary of Research in Bangladesh, India and Nepal*. New Delhi: Plan South Asia.
- Lloyd, C.B. and Young, J. (2009) *New Lessons: The Power of Educating Adolescent Girls*. A Girls Count Report on Adolescent Girls. New York: Population Council.
- Lundgren, R., Beckman, M., Chaurasiya, S.P., Subhedi, B. and Kerner, B. (2013) 'Whose turn to do the dishes? Transforming gender attitudes and behaviours among very young adolescents in Nepal', *Gender & Development* 21(1): 127-145.

- Marcus, R. (2014) *Gender Justice for Adolescent Girls: Understanding Processes of Change in Gender Norms. Towards a conceptual framework for Phase 2*. London: Overseas Development Institute.
- Ministry of Education (2011) *Flash I Report 2068 (2011-012)*. Bhaktapur: Government of Nepal.
- Ministry of Health and Population (2012) *Nepal Adolescents and Youth Survey*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Health and Population.
- Murphy, R. (2008) 'The Impact of Socio-Cultural Norms on Women's Experiences of Migration and the Implications for Development'. SSRN Migration & Development Conference (pp 2-23). New York: Social Science Research Council.
- National Planning Commission (NPC) (2014) *Draft for Comments: An Approach to the Graduation from the Least Developed Country by 2022*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission.
- NPC and UNDP (2013) *Nepal Millennium Development Goals Progress Report 2013*. Kathmandu: National Planning Commission and United Nations Country Team.
- National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS) and Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) (2011) *National Population and Housing Census: Village Development Committee/Municipality*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- NPCS and CBS (2003) *Population Monograph of Nepal*. Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics.
- NPCS and CBS (1987) *Population Monograph of Nepal*. Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics.
- NPCS and CBS (1985) *Population Monograph of Nepal* (Revised/Expanded ed.). Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2012) *2012 SIGI Social Institutions and Gender Index: Understanding the Drivers of Gender Inequality*. Paris: OECD.
- Pathfinder International (2006) *Pathfinder International Annual Report 2006*. Watertown, MA: Pathfinder International.
- Plan Nepal (2012) *Child Marriage in Nepal: Research Report*. Pulchowk: Plan Nepal, Save the Children and World Vision International, Nepal.
- Robeyns, I. (2011) *The Capability Approach: The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. ([www.stanford.edu: http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/capability-approach](http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/capability-approach)).
- Robeyns, I. (2003) 'Sen's capability approach and gender inequality: selecting relevant capabilities', *Feminist Economics* 9(2-3): 61-92.
- Sattaur, O. (1996) *Nepal: New Horizons?* Oxford: Oxfam.
- Sen, A. (2000) *Development as Freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- UNICEF (2011) *The State of the World's Children 2011. Adolescence: An Opportunity*. New York: UNICEF.
- United Nations Country Team (2011) *Nepal: A Country Analysis with a Human Face 2011*. Kathmandu: UN Country Team.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2013) *Human Development Report, The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*. New York: UNDP.
- UNFPA (2012) *UNFPA Child Marriage Country Profile: Nepal*. (www.devinfo.info/mdg5b/profiles/files/profiles/4/Child_Marriage_Country_Profile_ASINPL_Nepal.pdf).
- Upadhyaya, S. (1996) *Literature Review: The Status of Women in Nepal – 15 Years On*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point.

World Bank data (2014) *Secondary school starting age* (years).
(<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.AGES>).

Annex 1: Research instrument

A. Introduction when starting any exercise/ interview [tweak as appropriate]

'We are exploring how people in this community think about marriage and education of girls and boys. We are talking with boys and girls and their parents to understand how you and others feel about these ideas/customs and whether you think there has been any change over time and why. We think your views are very important and should inform discussions around policies and programmes that aim to improve adolescents' wellbeing. We'll be writing a report – there won't be any immediate effects but longer term we would hope that your views will be included.'

B. Basic information to ask in every individual interview

• ID [to be decided per country]	•
• Age	•
• Gender	•
• Marital status	•
• Place of birth	•
• Place of residence	•
• Occupation	•
• Education level – own	•
• Education level – siblings	•
• Education level – parents	•
• Parents' occupations	•
• Marital status (includes polygamy) of parents	•
• Residence/living arrangements	•
• Migration status of respondent and family	•
• Ethnicity/ caste	•
• Religion	•

C. Information to collect at the beginning of every group meeting

- Background information:
- Numbers of participants (at beginning): (at end):
- Location:
- Kind of participants (men, women, beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, etc.):
- Age (average):
- Date:
- Time start: Time end:
- Facilitator(s):

- Note taker:
- **How was the process?** Was it participatory; did everyone take part in the discussion; did anyone dominate? did anyone walk out, why: was it difficult / easy to manage, why; were people comfortable / uncomfortable, why?; etc.

D. Daily report format

Please fill out these forms every evening as part of your daily debriefing process.

Date

1. Tools / interviews used today:
2. Key findings – surprising, interesting – to start also grouping/clustering together
3. Key areas to probe further / follow-up
4. Key challenges / limitations (related to questions, tools, context, etc.) (includes any need for clarification)
5. Most expressive / interesting/illuminating expressions/quotes
6. Keep track/note interesting issues arising out of informal conversations (in a queue, bar, taxi, etc.) and observations
7. Names of key contacts and additional / follow-up interviews

E. Transcript labelling

Labelling of transcripts and translated interviews is very important but everyone has room for improvement!
This information needs to be shared with transcribers/ translators too.

1. Label each word file as follows:

- Instrument type
- Date
- Gender
- Age
- Location – district

e.g. “IDI Sept 26 2013 Girl 15 Meo Vac”; e.g. “FGD Sept 13 2013 Boys 14-19 Doti”

2. Ensure that each type of instrument is saved in a zip folder labelled appropriately

e.g. “IDIs with girls in Meo Vac” e.g. Marital Network Case Studies in Doti”

3. Include information at top of word document for all translated/transcribed interviews as follows:

- Type of instrument
- Location [village, district, country]

- Place where interview took place [e.g. village square; respondent's home; school classroom]
- Date
- Age
- Gender
- Respondent initials
- Interviewer
- Interview duration
- Comments on interview dynamics [e.g. relaxed, lots of interruptions, suspect respondent wasn't as forthcoming as might have been etc.]

4. Summary table of total number of interviews by type and district/village

See example below for District X

Type of instrument	Number implemented	Number of people participated
SGDs	12	67
FGDs with caregivers	2	14
IDIs	10	10
Observations	2	2
Caregiver interviews	5	1
KIIs	11	15
TOTALS	41	115

IDIs with unmarried boys (15-19 yrs) who have adolescent sisters

1. Basic information to ask in every individual interview

• ID	•
• Age	•
• Gender	•
• Marital status	•
• Place of birth	•
• Place of residence	•
• Occupation	•
• Education level – own	•
• Education level – siblings	•
• Education level – parents	•
• Parents' occupations	•
• Marital status (includes polygamy) of parents	•
• Residence/living arrangements	•
• Migration status of respondent and family	•
• Ethnicity/ caste	•
• Religion	•

2.1 Aim is to have a mix of in-school and out-of-school boys

2.2 Warm up: we'd like to start by drawing the members of your family and then talking about their main roles and responsibilities within the household.

- Similarities and differences with siblings

- Roles of parents
- Have these always been so or are they changing? If changing, in what ways? Why?

Now we'd like to sketch your community and ask you to identify places where boys and girls go – either jointly or separately.

- What do you do in these different spaces?
- If there are differences between girls and boys, why?
- Have these always been so or are they changing? If changing, why?

2.3 Ideals of masculinity and femininity

- What are the characteristics of an ideal boy in your community? Of an ideal man? Are there any common sayings or proverbs that people use around here?
 - Do you think many boys obtain this ideal?
 - What do you think about this in your own case? Is it important to you? If it is, is it difficult to achieve?
 - Do you feel under pressure to live up to that ideal? If yes, where do you think the pressure comes from? What do you gain by living up to this ideal and what happens if you don't?
 - Do some people/individuals have different ideals?
 - Peers
 - Older brothers
 - Adults

2.4 His view on girls

- What are the characteristics of an ideal girl in your community? Of an ideal woman? Are there any sayings or proverbs that are used around here?
 - Do you think many girls obtain this ideal?
 - What do you think about this in your own case (about girls)? Is it important to you? If it is, is it difficult to achieve?
 - Do you feel girls are under pressure to live up to that ideal? If yes, where do you think the pressure comes from? What do girls gain by living up to this ideal and what happens if they don't?
 - Do some people/individuals have different ideals?
 - Peers
 - Adults

2.5 His views on marriage

- What would you look for in a girl you would like to marry? What sort of girl would you want to avoid?

- When you are married, what do you think will make you a good husband? Do you envisage any obstacles in becoming a good husband [probe on the below:]
 - Employment prospects
 - Housing arrangements
 - Assets
 - Land
 - Affordability of marriage
 - Meeting parents' expectations for a marriage partner
- What sort of boys do you think girls seek to avoid?
- What do you think your father's view is in terms of ideal wife/ ideal husband? If different, in what ways? What accounts for this difference?
- What do you think is the best /most appropriate age for a girl to marry? For a boy to marry? Why? What is the expected age in this community? Has this changed over time?
- Who if anyone provides you with information or guidance on marriage and sexuality? What sorts of things do you get information/guidance on? Is it helpful? What are the gaps? What else would you like to know more about? What about girls – who helps them?
- Do you or your parents have to prepare in any way for you to get married? [economic contributions, rituals, sharing of information on what to expect) If so how? What about your sister? What are your views on these customs? Have they been changing over time and why?
- Do boys chose their wives here? What about you – what do you want? What is likely to happen to you in reality? And has this custom been changing over time – if so how? Why?
- Do girls get to choose their husbands? Why/why not? Are there particular groups of girls who have greater agency/flexibility in the process? What about the case of your sister or close relative?
- Do you expect to have multiple wives? What are your views on this?>

2.6 Views on education

- Do most children go to school here and until what age? Are there any differences between boys and girls?
- What about in your family? What are the expectations for sons vs. daughters – if there are differences why?
- Are the experiences of boys and girls similar or different in school? If different, why?
 - Treatment by teachers – favouritism, discipline, abuse
 - By peers
 - Language
 - Teaching /learning experience

- School environment –safety/sanitation
 - Leadership/participation in schools
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - Sports
 - Discipline/subjects
 - Performance
 - Retention/dropouts
- What has your school experience been like? Are you learning important and useful things? Do you think it is preparing you well for your future?
 - What about your future plans about school? Beyond school? What thinking informs these plans? Are there barriers for you to achieve those plans?
 - If you have children, what would be the ideal school trajectory for your children?

2.7 Intersections between marriage and education for girls

- Should an 18-yr-old girl be in school or married? What are advantages/ disadvantages? What is most common here, and are things changing over time?
- Is it common for girls to be withdrawn from school for marriage? At what age? What do you think about this? Has it been changing?
- What do you think about married girls and schooling? Are you aware of any laws on this? What is the general tradition/informal practices? Do you have any classmates or relatives who have had any experience of this?
- What about unwed girls with children and schooling? Are you aware of any laws on this? Do you have any friends or relatives who have had any experience of this?
- Do you think more educated girls have more problems finding husbands than less educated girls? If so why/why not? Is this changing?
- Does education have any influence in the marriage payments? For the girl? For the boy?
- Do you think being more educated makes girls better wives, mothers, and daughters-in-law? Or do you think this may create problems? [For example....]
- Do you think education makes boys/men better husbands/son-in-laws/brothers/fathers?

Annex 2: Community timeline / conceptual mapping / historical mapping

5.1 Instructions

Per research site, undertake one timeline with older people and one with younger people. Plan to take at least 2 hours. For the first timeline in the village, start with education; then with the second group start with marriage in case things get more rushed towards the end.

First do a general timeline of economic/social and political changes in the community and underneath do a specific timeline for changes with focus in marriage practices in one community and education for girls in another community.

Older group would be 40+ and mixed gender, involving community leaders and respected persons who feel free to talk

Younger group would be 18+ to 30 yrs and mixed gender, involving youth leaders, NGOs workers, ok if they are from outside the community as they might have an interesting perspective (e.g. young teachers or government employees).

Use policy response questions- ask for policy/programming options and make them rank their five preferred options

Thematic focus

- What sorts of norms are there in this community around early marriage? Around girls' schooling?
- Have these norms shifted over time? If so how and why?
- What sorts of interventions if any exist or have existed to change these norms?

5.2 Marriage

- We would like to talk about marriage in this community. Can you please describe the most common forms of marriage and marriage processes/ practices here?
 - Monogamy
 - Polygamy
 - Residence
 - Arranged vs. by choice
 - Formal ceremony
 - Co-habitation
 - Bride wealth
 - Dowry

- Are these types of marriages/ practices common throughout this district?
- Have these practices changed over time? Since when? Why/why not/ causes? What are your views/feelings on these changes? Who do you think influences this?

Evolving marriage practices

- We used to think X about marriage but now we think Y
- We used to do X but now we do Y re marriage

[Give hypothetical examples that illustrate both change or stasis or partial change – to avoid leading them in a particular direction]

Ask group participants to provide 2 statements following the same pattern following reality in their communities. Next brainstorm about the following:

1. about changes or lack thereof around early marriage norms and practices in their community and their views on these changes /non-changes – positive/ negative and why
 2. about changes or lack thereof around education marriage norms and practices in their community and their views on these changes /non-changes – positive/ negative and why
- What do most people think is the appropriate age for girls to marry in this community and why?
 - Is it different for boys and why?
 - Do some girls marry later or not at all? Who/ which girls? [individuals or groups] Why? And how do people here think about this?
 - Have these attitudes evolved over time and if so how and why? Are you able to link any of these changes to events in your timeline?
 - Are there some ideas/ customs/ attitudes that promote or discourage girls' marriage at early or late age [separate when you ask people so as not to get muddled!]? Have these ideas/attitudes etc. changed over time? Why? In what ways?
 - Are there specific people/groups who actively work to maintain girls marrying at age X? [fill in early expected age of marriage] Who are these people? Why does their opinion carry weight? / Why are they influential?
 - Are there specific groups working to move the desirable age of marriage for girls? Who are they? [If national level actors] How are their views communicated/ conveyed at local level? Does their opinion carry weight here? Why? Who are the opinion leaders? Conservative/pro-tradition? Progressive/change-oriented?

Draw a timeline on a large sheet of paper or the ground to map these shifts at community level against the backdrop of major events in the country (e.g. governmental change, introduction of technology e.g. mobile phones, economic boom/ crisis, advent of schools in community etc.)

- Economic pressures
- Policies
- Laws
- NGOs
- Availability of schools/services

- Availability of information/ awareness/ communication
- Shifts in government...
- Role models
- Girls' resistance
- Absence of appropriate marriageable partners
- Are these types of changes affecting other communities in this district too or are they unique to here?

Incentives:

- Why would parents want to marry their girl at age X and not later?
- Why would girls want to get married at age X and not later?
- Why would parents want to marry their girl after age X?
- What would a girl want to get married after age X?
- For each of the scenarios above – probe as follows:
 - Are the gains economic?
 - Social?
 - Legal?
 - Mixed?

Sanctions:

- If a girl's parents wants her to get married early and she refuses, what happens?
- If a family is not willing to marry their daughter off early, what happens?
- If the expected age of marriage here differs from the legal age, how do people decide what to do? What motivates this decision-making process? What happens?
- If a girl gets married or cohabits early without informing her family what happens?
- For each of the scenarios above – probe as follows:
 - Are the consequences only economic?
 - Social?
 - Legal?
 - Mixed?

5.3 Education

- Services – what is available [range of providers; higher education]
- Differences between girls and boys

- Value of girls' education
- Sanctions
- Incentives
- We would like to talk about education services in this community. Can you please describe what exists here? [this is supposed to be a quick answer]
 - Primary
 - Secondary
 - Tertiary
 - Alternative
 - Skills training
 - Religious
 - Informal education
- Since when have these services been available? [add to timeline started in early marriage section above].
- What do you think about these services?
 - Accessibility
 - Quality
 - Value
- [Then transition into the value of education for girls and boys as follows]:

“Education is important for boys. Why?”

“Education is important for girls. Why?”

- Until what age or grade do you think it is appropriate for girls to get an education and why?
- Is it different for boys and why?
- Do some girls not go to school? What influences this? Are there any particular groups of girls who are less likely to go to school and why? Is it different for boys? Why?
- Are there some ideas/ customs/ attitudes that promote or discourage girls' education? Do these changes with the age of the girl? Have these ideas/attitudes etc. changed over time? Why? In what ways?
- Are there specific people/groups who actively work to resist girls' school attendance beyond primary level? Who are these people? Why does their opinion carry weight? / Why are they influential?
- Are there specific groups working to promote girls' education beyond primary level? Who are they? [If national level actors] How are their views communicated/ conveyed at local level? Does their opinion carry weight here? Why?

Incentives:

- Why would parents want their girls to leave school after SLC? [The emphasis here is on what they hope to gain...]
- Why would girls want to leave school after their primary education?
- Why would parents want their girls to continue in school?
- What would a girl want to continue in school?
- For each of the scenarios above – probe as follows:
 - Are the gains economic?
 - Social?
 - Legal?
 - Mixed?

Sanctions:

- If a family wants their daughter to continue in school beyond what most girls do, what happens?
- If the expected level of education for girls here differs from the legal level of compulsory education, how do people decide what to do? What motivates this decision-making process? What happens?
- If a girl tries to stay in school beyond what her parents want, what happens?
- If the parents want the girl to continue her schooling, and she refused what happens?
- For each of the scenarios above – probe as follows:
 - Are the consequences economic?
 - Social?
 - Legal?
 - Mixed?

5.4 Intersection of early marriage/ girls' education norms (ASK TO BOTH GROUPS)

- How does marriage affect a girls' education trajectory?
- How do people feel about this?
 - Parents
 - Parents-in-law
 - Community members
 - Teachers
 - Local authorities
 - Religious authorities
 - Husbands

- Are these feelings/attitudes and practices/consequences different for particular groups of girls (probe for social class, ethnicity, caste, religion etc.)?
- Does this change if the married girl has a child? If so how and why?
- What about having a child out of wedlock - how does this affect a girls' education trajectory?
- How do people feel about this?
 - Parents
 - Parents-in-law
 - Community members
 - Teachers
 - Local authorities
 - Religious authorities
 - Husbands
- How does later education [education beyond primary education/ expected norm] for girls affect marriage practices and prospects?
 - Girls' individual outcomes
 - Family outcomes

Annex 3:

Group discussions

- Background information:
- Numbers of participants (at beginning): (at end):
- Location:
- Kind of participants (men, women, beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, etc.):
- Age (average):
- Date:
- Time start: Time end:
- Facilitator(s):
- Note taker:
- **How was the process?** Was it participatory; did everyone take part in the discussion; did anyone dominate? Did anyone walk out, why: was it difficult / easy to manage, why; were people comfortable / uncomfortable, why? Etc.

1.1 Respondent types

Total of four groups (approx... 5-6 participants per group):

Girls and boys – 14/15-19 years. In and out of school (*or potentially never having gone to school*). Married and non-married.

- Unmarried girls– in-school
- Unmarried girls – out-of-school
- Married girls– out-of-school
- Unmarried boys - in-school

1.2 Warm-up exercise:

Ideals of femininity / masculinity - start with drawings of girl / women and boy/ men – then use post-its to brainstorm on characteristics of ideal boy/girl/ man/woman]

What are girls expected to do and how are they expected to behave? What about boys?

What types of things are girls told that they shouldn't do? [e.g. girls are not supposed to do....]

After drawing, move on to more in-depth conversation starting with 1.3.

1.3 Ideals of masculinity and femininity

- Do you think many girls are able to meet those expectations? [referring back to the drawings]
- Are they difficult to achieve?
- Do girls feel under pressure to live up to those expectations? If yes, where do you think the pressure comes from? What do you gain by living up to this ideal and what happens if you don't?
- Do some people/individuals have different expectations for girls and women?
 - Peers

- Adults
 - Religion/caste/ethnicity
 - Socio-economic status
 - Occupational status
- Do you think many boys are able to meet the expectations? [referring back to the drawings]
 - Are they difficult to achieve?
 - Do you think boys feel under pressure to live up to those expectations? If yes, where do you think the pressure comes from? What do boys gain by living up to this ideal and what happens if they don't?
 - Do some people/individuals have different expectations for boys and men?
 - Peers
 - Adults
 - Religion/caste/ethnicity
 - Socio-economic status
 - Occupational status

1.4 Marriage

Age

- What do you think is a good age for girls to be married? How about for boys? Do adults feel the same?
- What is the usual age in this community?
 - Has it changed? Since when and what drove that change?
- What are some of the advantages for girls to marry early? Marry later? [What do you mean by later if not already mentioned – use the specific age that they have already given...] Not marry at all?
 - For parents
 - For girls
 - Other family members [e.g. brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins]
 - Practical/ economic
 - Social
- What are some of the disadvantages of marrying at an early age? Marrying later? Remaining single?
 - For parents
 - For girls
 - Other family members [e.g. brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins]
 - Practical/ economic

- Social

Qualities of a marriage partner

[Get the group to fill in the blanks... ask for quick responses]

- A good wife is/does _____?
- A good husband is/does _____?
- A bad wife is/does _____?
- A bad husband is/does _____?

Probe: reasons for these, change over time, similarities and differences with their parents, vary according to different types of girls/boys (se status, religion, caste, ethnicity etc.)?

Rationale for marriage

- Do most girls want to get married in this locality? If so why/why not?
- What are your expectations from marriage – positive and negative? [Including probes around kids, family honour, economic security, emotional wellbeing etc.]
- What if a girl in this locality doesn't get married? What are the advantages and disadvantages? What are her alternative options?
- Do most boys want to get married in this locality? If so why/why not?
- What are their expectations from marriage – positive and negative? [Including probes around kids, family honour, economic security, emotional wellbeing, fear of GBV, concerns about care work burden etc.]
- What if a boy in this locality doesn't get married? What are the advantages and disadvantages? What are his alternative options?

Choice of marriage partner

- Do girls get to choose their husbands? Why/why not? Are there particular groups of girls who have greater agency/flexibility in the process?
- What are your feelings about arranged marriages? What happens if girls don't follow arranged marriages?
- Do boys chose their wives here? And has this custom been changing over time – if so how? Why?
- How do girls think about polygamous relationships? [Nepal can ask about girls' views of boy's views]

Fertility

- What is the usual size of the family here? How many children would you want?
- What about the gender of the child? Does it make any difference to you, your husband, your parents/ parents-in-law?
- What if you can't have a child?
- What if you have a child out of wedlock?
- How are these views/expectations different between you and your parents/ grandparents? Now/long ago?

Access to services

- Do adolescent girls have access to reproductive health services in this community? (Contraception, safe abortion)?
- What are some of the obstacles to service uptake? (e.g. awareness, language, attitudes of service providers, perceptions of quality/confidentiality, distance, costs)
- Do you have to be married to have access to these services?
- Is there sufficient information about Sexual and Reproductive Health accessible to girls in this community?
- In the case of domestic/ GBV who can girls turn to for help? Are there specific services? What about legal aid?
- If a girl is divorced/abandoned/ widowed how is she supported (e.g. do families take them back in)? Is there legal protection? If there is, do the courts treat girls equitably?

1.5 Views on education

- Do most children go to school here and until what age? Are there any differences between boys and girls?
- What are the expectations for sons vs. daughters – if there are differences why?
- Are the experiences of boys and girls similar or different in school? If different, why?
 - Treatment by teachers – favouritism, discipline, abuse
 - By peers
 - Language
 - Teaching /learning experience
 - School environment –safety/sanitation
 - Leadership/participation in schools
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - Sports
 - Discipline/subjects
 - Performance
 - Retention/dropouts
- What has your school experience been like? Are you learning important and useful things? Do you think it is preparing you well for your future?
- What about your future plans about school? Beyond school? What thinking informs these plans? Are there barriers for you to achieve those plans?
- If you have children, what would be the ideal school trajectory for your children?

1.6 Intersections between marriage and education for girls *[ensure to probe re change over time...]*

- Should an 18-yr-old girl be in school or married? What are advantages/ disadvantages? What is most common here, and are things changing over time?
- Is it common for girls to be withdrawn from school for marriage? At what age? What do you think about this? Has it been changing?
- What do you think about married girls and schooling? Are you aware of any laws on this? Do you have any friends or relatives who have had any experience of this?
- What about unwed girls with children and schooling? Are you aware of any laws on this? Do you have any friends or relatives who have had any experience of this?
- Do you think more educated girls have more problems finding husbands than less educated girls? If so why/why not? Is this changing?
- Does education have any influence in the marriage payments? For the girl? For the boy?
- Do you think being more educated makes you a better wife, mother, and daughter-in-law? Or do you think this may create problems? [For example....]
- Do you think education makes boys/men better husbands/son-in-laws/brothers/fathers?

Annex 3: Marriage network case study

3.1 Instructions

Start with girl and husband as the centre of analysis

Then talk to their respective parents [if women struggle with time/years – then start with father]

3.2 Background information [for girl and husband]

- When married?
- Residence patterns/ extended/ Nuclear family/ male/ female household head etc
- Schooling? If left when and why? What were your feelings at the time?
- What level of education do your siblings have? If dropped out did your brothers leave school at the same age/grade? What about sisters? If different, why?
- Would you have liked to have continued in school? Why/why not?
- Do you have children? If so how many? What ages?
- What is your occupation (subsistence, income etc.)?
- Religion?

3.3 Views on marriage and childbearing

- What type of marriage did you have? [Customary/religious/civil; monogamy/polygamy]. How did you feel about this and why? Were the views the same as your parents? If no, how was this difference resolved?
- Was your marriage arranged or did you choose your partner? What are your feelings about this? Was your opinion sought? Is this the same as or different from your parents?
- What did you or family have to prepare for your marriage – e.g. dowry/bride-wealth/goods? How did this make you feel? Is there any change in this practice from your parent's time?
- Did any one provide advice to you before marriage? If so, what sort of advice? Was it helpful? Gaps?
- How is life different for you now vs. unmarried peers or relatives? How do you feel about these differences?
- What did you expect from married life? What has really happened?
- How many children are you expected to have? How many would you like to have?
- Does it matter girl or boy?
 - To you?

- To your husband?
- To your parents?
- To your in-laws?
- In eyes of society
- Do you have access to SRH services? Do you use them now/before marriage? Why/why not? What does your husband or in-laws think about this?
- If you have a child, did you (your wife) give birth in hospital or home?
- What are your hopes and worries currently and for the future?
- Has marriage fulfilled your aspirations or not? How/why?
- On marriage and children, whose views do you respect and why? Who influences your thinking – peers, elders, media, family members, teachers, etc.?

3.4 Intra-household power relations/decision-making

- Could you tell us about the family you married into? [if girl] or your family [if boy]?
 - Economics / occupation
 - Caste/ethnicity
 - Religion
 - Family size
 - Education levels
 - Community standing/prestige
 - Relationships among members by gender, generation
 - Extended vs. nuclear family
 - Monogamous and polygamous
- How would you characterise your experience as a daughter-in-law? (To the husband- you think your wife experiences herself as a daughter in law of your house?
 - What is expected of you?
 - By mother in law?
 - Father in law?
 - Husband?

To the husband: What do you think is expected from your wife?

- By your mother
- Your father
- Other members of the in-law family

- What happens if you (your wife) don't meet these expectations?
- Do you think your experience is common around here? Why/why not?

3.5 Sources of support (to the girl)

- On a scale of 1-10 with 1 very unhappy and 10 very happy, where would you put yourself and why?
- What is your main source of psycho-emotional support?
- In many households there are tensions/ differences between household members at different times. Does this happen here and if so between whom? How are the tensions manifested – does this ever result in violence? If so how do you deal with this situation? Do you feel you have adequate support?
- What if any links do you have with your natal family? If so, with whom, how, how frequently? Would you like more or less contact or ok with the status quo?
- What if any links do you have with your childhood friends/ friends from natal residence? If so, with whom, how, how frequently? Would you like more or less contact or ok with the status quo?

3.5 Themes to focus on with parents and parents-in-laws

- Hopes for their children's marriage
- How the partner was selected – and what criteria led to the choice or acceptance of the choice?
- Did you and your child see eye to eye on this?
- Would the decision have been different if it were a son/daughter?
- Did you and your spouse agree? Why /why not?
- What preparations [economic, information, guidance, skills training] were entailed in the marriage transaction? What did you think about this? Did it go as expected? How is this similar or different to your day?
- What are your views and expectations about the spouse? Are they being realised?
- Were there trade-offs with the daughter's schooling? What were your feelings about that? Satisfied/regrets?
- What are your expectations of your daughter/ daughter-in-law / son/ son-in-law?
 - Economic support
 - Care work
 - Psycho-emotional support
 - Reproduction – children
 - Community standing
 - Social capital
- Grandchildren
 - Grandsons vs. granddaughters?

- How many?
 - Care expectations?
 - What happens if the couple doesn't have any?
- Problems in the marriage/ tensions
 - What kinds?
 - What do you do?
 - What do your counsel your children to do?
 - Are there support structures?
- Frequency of interaction between parents and married daughter?

Annex 4: Inter-generational trio

4.1 Instructions

- Start by interviewing the grandparent generation in order to have a baseline to compare with...
- Ask the following questions to the grandparents and parents
- For males, ask the same questions – so questions about themselves as well as about girls
- For adolescents, adapt tense – present and future... so need to look forward and back...
- **Sample size:**
 - 2 with in-school girls; 2 with out-of-school girls; all unmarried.
 - Likely due to girls marrying and moving away that would be working with younger girls – 13-15 yr olds? [*Key is the three generations – even if a younger girl would be ok...*]

4.2 Marriage

- When you were a child, what were the ideas and customs/beliefs as to when a girl should get married?
- And what age did they usually get married?
- What were the ideas/customs/beliefs as to why a girl should get married at a particular age? [e.g. honour, fertility, virginity].
- What was the type of marriage that was typical (religious/customary/civil) and what type did you have?
- What was the process for getting married when you got married? [Economic preparation [bride wealth, dowry, rituals...]. What were your views about this then? What are your views about it now?
- Did you choose your partner? Why/why not? How did you feel about that at that time? How do you feel about it now?
- Who told you what to expect during the marriage process and after marriage? What did they say? What was your experience?
- Who if anyone provided you with information or guidance on marriage and sexuality? What sorts of things did you get information/guidance on? Is it helpful? What were the gaps? What else would you have liked to have known more about? What about girls today – who helps them?
- What were the reasons for you to get married at the age you did? [e.g. filial piety, obedience, resistance, reluctant agreement, willingness]
 - Were your reasons for getting married at the age you did in line with common attitudes and customs? Why/why not?

- If they were in line with typical attitudes/customs, what were the positive gains that you expected from following the attitudes/customs? And were these gains realised?
- If it wasn't in line with typical attitudes/customs, what were the expected consequences from resisting the typical attitudes/customs? And what happened in practice [to you or to others]?
- Did your family support your approach or not? If so why/why not?
 - If they didn't support you, was there ever any threat or practice of violence? Would violence have made a difference to your views/ practice?
- Before you got married how did you view marriage? What did you think it would bring you? Did you have any concerns?
 - After you got married, did your views stay the same or change? Why?
- Do you think that ideas/attitudes/customs around girls' age and form/type of marriage have changed since your day? If so, how and why? What were the drivers of change? Who are the opinion leaders? What do you think about these changes? Who do you listen to and why?
- What were your expectations in terms of marriage age for your daughter? And for your granddaughter? Have they been met? Why/why not?
- What about ideal family size?

4.3 Education for girls

- Did you go to school?
- If not, why not?
- If yes, tell us about your schooling experience.
 - Where?
 - When?
 - For how long?
 - Did you change schools? Why?
 - Why did you stop? How did you react? Would you have liked to have continued?
 - What was positive?
 - What was challenging?
- Did school experiences vary for boys or girls? If so, how and why?
 - Attitudes / treatment by teachers
 - Attitudes of parents
 - Length of schooling
 - Time for homework
 - School environment/ facilities

- Getting to school – distance/transport
- Have you been influenced by any particular role models? E.g. teachers, older sisters, successful business women, community leaders.
 - How?
 - In what way?
 - How did this change your perspective as to what you could be?
 - Relationships with others etc...
- Did going to school / not having gone to school have an influence on your later life?
 - Material (economic, employment related skills)
 - Psycho-emotional (non-tangible such as confidence, empowerment)
 - Tangible knowledge about life skills(e.g. awareness about health issues, protection, rights)
 - Intellectual/ career wise
 - Social capital (friends out of community, in community out of siblings etc)
- Do you think that ideas/attitudes/customs around girls' education have changed since your day? If so, how and why? What were the drivers of change? What do you think about these changes?
- What were your expectations in terms of education for your daughter? And for your granddaughter? Have they been met? Are they the same or different vis-à-vis your expectations for your sons/grandsons?

4.4 Intersections between marriage and education for girls [ensure to probe perceptions of change over time...]

In your day...

- Would an 18-yr-old girl have been in school or married? What were the advantages/ disadvantages? Have things been changing over time and if so how?
- Was it common for girls to be withdrawn from school for marriage? At what age? What did you think about this? Has it been changing?
- What did you think about married girls and schooling? Were you aware of any laws on this? Did you have any friends or relatives who have had any experience of this?
- What about unwed girls with children and schooling? Were you aware of any laws on this? Did you have any friends or relatives who had any experience of this?
- Do you think more educated girls had more problems finding husbands than less educated girls in your day? If so why/why not? Is this changing nowadays?
- Did education have any influence in the marriage payments? For the girl? For the boy?
- Do you think that being more educated made you a better wife, mother, daughter-in-law? Or did you think this may create problems? [For example....]
- Do you think education made boys/men better husbands/son-in-laws/brothers/fathers?

Annex 5: Outlier case studies

6 per site

With whom - Girls/ young women aged 16-25 years.

Basic information to ask in every individual interview

• ID [to be decided per country]	•
• Age	•
• Gender	•
• Marital status	•
• Place of birth	•
• Place of residence	•
• Occupation	•
• Education level – own	•
• Education level – siblings	•
• Education level – parents	•
• Parents' occupations	•
• Marital status (includes polygamy) of parents	•
• Residence/living arrangements	•
• Migration status of respondent and family	•
• Ethnicity/ caste	•
• Religion	•

The below are examples rather than exhaustive...

Apparently positive

- Girls with tertiary education – e.g. from the community but could be residing elsewhere now such as capital cities
- Girls who are married but continued with their education
- Girls who have a child but continued with their education
- Girls with a successful business /income-generating opportunity
- Girls who proactively escaped early marriage

- Girls who entered into love marriages /relationships
- Married girls who live in a nuclear household (away from in-laws)

Apparently negative

- Girls who were married early [and willingly] and have very constrained life opportunities
- Girls who had a child early and have very constrained life opportunities
- Girls who dropped out of school early or who never had an education
- Girls who were married early but unwillingly but gave in due to social norms
- Girls who were trafficked or ostracized by society
- Girls who were married at a young age as a second/third etc wife into polygamous households

Start by drawing a timeline of their life until now – divided by positive and negative experiences/key events and ask them to talk about their life history and how they evaluate it.

Themes to cover include [but as appropriate depending on girl in question]:

Life stages including positive and negative experiences

- a) Education
- b) Adolescent transition (e.g. menstruation, sexuality etc.)
- c) Marriage
- d) Child rearing
- e) Family relationships and fortune/misfortunes
- f) Occupational/income-earning history
- g) Care work – within their natal home, marital home
- h) Health history
- i) Migration history

Informal and formal support

- j) Support people e.g. peers, friends/ networks/ organizations
- k) Access to services (e.g. health, school, justice, credit/economic assets, legal aid)
- l) Access to media, technology, phones, internet and the role this has played in their life and wellbeing
- m) Sources of information –teachers, media (if so which media), school, clubs, sisters, relatives, peers others.

Assessing life quality – past, present and future

- n) Assessment of their life trajectory compared to siblings and/or others and drivers thereof

- o) Views on role that community and family attitudes/values/practices/beliefs have played in shaping or constraining their trajectories
- p) Aspirations and how they have evolved over the course of adolescence
- q) Aspirations for their own children/future offspring

Areas of inquiry

Use these themes as a background checklist, especially during training of the research teams to make sure important issues are captured. It doesn't have to be exhaustive but do try to get a rich complex picture of key concerns etc.

Broader context

Ideological dimensions/ context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion • Political ideologies • Ethnic identity • Socio-economic system • Social/community prestige [community pressure] • Patriarchy
------------------------------------	--

Marriage

Sub-themes	
Family codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family codes – formal (national laws) and informal • Inheritance laws and practices [including for widows] • Divorce – ease of / views about / consequences / conceptualisation thereof • Polygamy, monogamy • Civil, religious, customary • Cohabitation • Son preferences • Age of marriage [includes definitions of adolescence] / readiness for marriage
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to family planning (practical and social) • Access to justice [child support, divorce, abandonment]
GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage by abduction • Partner age gaps
Sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virginity • Value of fertility • Knowledge brokers / aunties/ schools/ peers /media • Honour/shame/chastity • Taboos about menstruation before marriage
Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bride price • Dowry • Hope chests/preparation of goods... • Inheritance • Co-modification of girls' labour

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration • Son preference • Economic security
Care economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender division of labour • Expected roles of husband and wife – ideal vs. reality • Ritual privileging
Kinship and affinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residence patterns • Choice of spouse (parents vs. girls; identifying partner and related processes) • Inheritance • Lineage/ name
Psycho-emotional wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affection vs. indifference • Love vs. hatred • Companionship vs. loneliness/ lack of communication • Protection /security vs. fear • Happiness vs. sadness/ depression • Respect vs. lack of respect • Identity vs. alienation • Belonging /inclusion/ vs. isolation • Social acceptance vs. stigma • [Positive deviance....]

Education	Supply		Demand	
	Access to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance • Boarding schools/ extra out of school tuition facilities and not • Safety/security/en route 	Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct • Indirect [school donations, uniforms etc • Opportunity costs – foregone child labour • Extra-tuition
			Girls' mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistical • Normative
	Educational content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of curriculum • SRH curriculum • Textbooks – gender stereotypes • Ideologies – embedded in curricula [moral/ etiquette/ natural laws of femininity] • Life-skills • Gendered disciplines 	Gender division of labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time poverty • Son preference • Household chores
	Teacher/learning processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination of girls • Discrimination of minority/socially excluded children • Female teachers; senior women teachers • Language of instruction • Class size • Performance/ assessment 	Household conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of light for study

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher favouritism • Teacher use of girls' vs. boys' labour in classroom 		
	Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets /sanitation / menstruation facilities [access to pads/ napkins etc.] • School meals 	Family/peer support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic investment • Parental encouragement • Friends • Role models • mentors
	Safety and security in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher violence / abuse • Student violence/bullying • Physical punishment 	Outcomes of education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material • Perceived economic value • Opportunities post-education • Psycho-social • Aspirational • Status attached to education • Perceived psycho-emotional value – confidence, wellbeing, self-esteem, new horizons • Curiosity, questioning, understanding • Raised expectations • Intellectual ability • Higher capabilities • New knowledge • New information
	Extra-curricular activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School clubs • Sports • Mentors • Career guidance • Participation in school governance 	Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical/ body • Early pregnancy • Menstruation • Sexuality • Body image / physical appearance • Psychosocial • Stigma re overage in school • Lack of sense of belonging in school environment • Mixed aged classes • Fears of scaring of prospective male partners... • Peer pressure • Son preference
	National policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsory free education • Re-entry policies 	Informal education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outside of school environment

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social protection related to education (stipends, cash, in-kind transfers) • Mixed age 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other sources of information • Learning family traditions/ skills etc.
	Alternative education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-formal education • Religious education • Vocational education /training 		

Annex 6: Respondent list

1. Respondent 1: Key informant interview with VDC secretary in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2) Doti
2. Respondent 2: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-school going-unmarried in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2) Doti
3. Respondent 3: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-school going-unmarried in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2) Doti
4. Respondent 4: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-school going-unmarried in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2) Doti
5. Respondent 5: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-out of school-unmarried in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2) Doti
6. Respondent 6: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-out of school-unmarried in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2) Doti
7. Respondent 7: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-out of school-unmarried in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2) Doti
- Respondent 8: Small group discussion with the students of government school In Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2), Doti
8. Respondent 9: Informal talk-negative outlier with married women in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2), Doti
9. Respondent 10: Negative Outlier with married women in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2), Doti
10. Respondent 11: Positive outlier with married in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC 1(2), Doti
11. Respondent 12: Key informant interview with women political leader in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
12. Respondent 13: Community timeline (marriage focus) with mixed age group people In Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
13. Respondent 14: Community timeline (education focus) with mixed age group people In Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti
14. Respondent 15: Informal talk with father of adolescent girl
15. Respondent 16: Marriage network case study with wife in Durgamadau (Wayal) Doti-case two
16. Respondent17: Marriage network case study with wife in Durgamadau(Wayal) Doti-case one

17. Respondent 18: Marriage network case study with husband in Durgamadau (Wayal) Doti-case two
18. Respondent 19: Marriage network case study with mother of M (Durgamadau), Doti-case two
19. Respondent 20: Marriage network case study with father In law in Durgamadau, Doti-case two
20. Respondent 21: Marriage network case study with mother In law in Durgamadau-case two
21. Respondent 22: Inter-generational trio with daughter out of school in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti-(case 2)
22. Respondent 23: Inter-generational trio with mother in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti-(case 2)
23. Respondent 24: Negative outlier case studies with N B.K in Wayal (Durgamadau),Doti
24. Respondent 25: Negative outlier case studies with K Dulal in Wayal, Doti
25. Respondent 26: Negative outlier case studies with A. Pariyar in Wayal, Doti
26. Respondent 27: Key Informant interview with political leader in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti
27. Respondent 28: Key informant interview with N Joshi (Social Mobilizer) in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti
28. Respondent 29: Marriage Network case study with mother-in law in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti
29. Respondent 30: Key informant interview with N Balayar (founder of boarding school) in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
30. Respondent 31: Positive outlier with a girl in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
31. Respondent 32: Positive outlier with a women (economically active) in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
32. Respondent 33: Focused group discussion with father of adolescent boys and girls in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC
33. Respondent 34: Group discussion with unmarried school going adolescent boys(16-19 yrs) in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
34. Respondent 35: Inter-generational trio with father in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
35. Respondent 36: In-depth interview with Older adolescent boy-School going-Unmarried in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
36. Respondent 37: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-out of school -unmarried in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
37. Respondent 38: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy-out of school -unmarried in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
38. Respondent 39: Community timeline(marriage focus) with mixed older Group(40 years and above) in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
39. Respondent 40: Outlier case studies with girl (D Sahi) in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti

40. Respondent 41: Outlier case studies with girl (T Sharma) in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
41. Respondent 42: Group discussion with adolescent girl (15-16 years) school going in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
42. Respondent 43: Group discussion with older women school going in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
43. Respondent 44: Group discussion with adolescent girl (15-16 years) out of school in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
44. Respondent 45: Group discussion with older women in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
45. Respondent 46: Group discussion with adolescent boys (15-19 years) in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
46. Respondent 47: Group discussion with father of adolescent girl in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
47. Respondent 48: Group discussion with married Women in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
48. Respondent 49: Outlier case study with married girl (J) in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
49. Respondent 50: In-depth Interview with older adolescent boy- school going -unmarried in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
50. Respondent 51: Outlier case study with married women(G Bhatta) in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
51. Respondent 52: Key informant Interview with B Subedi in Kathmandu
52. Respondent 53: Inter-generational trio(case1) with daughter in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
53. Respondent 54: Inter-generational trio(case 1) with grandmother in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
54. Respondent 55: Inter-generational trio(case1) with mother in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
55. Respondent 56: Inter-generational trio(case 2) with daughter in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
56. Respondent 57: Inter-generational trio(case 2) with grandmother in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
57. Respondent 58: In-depth interview with older adolescent boy- school going -unmarried in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
58. Respondent 59: Key informant interview in school principal in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti
59. Respondent 60: Community timeline (education focus) in Wayal (Durgamadau), Doti
60. Respondent 61: Marriage network case study with mother in law in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti (Case 2)
61. Respondent 62: Marriage network case study with father in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti (Case 2)
62. Respondent 63: Marriage network case study with father in law in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti (Case 2)

63. Respondent 64: Marriage network case study with Father in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti (Case 1)
64. Respondent 65: Marriage network case study with mother in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti(Case 2)
65. Respondent 66: Inter-generational trio(case 1) with girl in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
66. Respondent 67: Inter-generational trio(case 1) with girl in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
67. Respondent 68: Inter-generational trio(case 2) with girl in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
68. Respondent 69: Inter-generational trio(case 2) with grandmother in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
69. Respondent 70: Focused group discussion with mother of adolescent girls in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
70. Respondent 71: Group discussion with girls-in school in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
71. Respondent 72: Marriage network case study with son in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti(case1)
72. Respondent 73: Marriage network case study with father in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti (case 1)
73. Respondent 74: Marriage network case study with son in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti (case 1)
74. Respondent 75: Marriage network case study with mother in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti (case 1)
75. Respondent 76: Key Informant Interview in secondary school teacher in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC Doti
76. Respondent 77: Outlier case study with N balayar in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti
77. Respondent 78: Outlier case study with married women (polygamy) in Salena (Bhumirajmadau) VDC, Doti



ODI is the UK's leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues.

Our mission is to inspire and inform policy and practice which lead to the reduction of poverty, the alleviation of suffering and the achievement of sustainable livelihoods.

We do this by locking together high-quality applied research, practical policy advice and policy-focused dissemination and debate.

We work with partners in the public and private sectors, in both developing and developed countries.

Readers are encouraged to reproduce material from ODI Reports for their own publications, as long as they are not being sold commercially. As copyright holder, ODI requests due acknowledgement and a copy of the publication. For online use, we ask readers to link to the original resource on the ODI website. The views presented in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of ODI.

© Overseas Development Institute 2014. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial Licence (CC BY-NC 3.0).

ISSN: 2052-7209

Overseas Development Institute
203 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NJ
Tel +44 (0)20 7922 0300
Fax +44 (0)20 7922 0399