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Baseline Survey Results Report

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SAJHEDARI BIKAAS

Baseline Survey Results Report

February 2014

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Sajhedari Bikaas

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS iii

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY iv

1. INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Sajhedari Bikaas 1

1.1.1 Project Objectives 1

1.1.2 Expected Outcomes and Impact of Sajhedari Bikaas 3

1.2 Monitoring for Sajhedari 4

1.2.1 Phase-wise implementation and monitoring 4

1.3 Baseline survey 5

1.3.1 Components of the Baseline Survey 5

1.3.2 Overview of the Baseline Survey Implementation 6

2. **METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURES** 7

2.1 Selection of intervention and control VDCs 7

2.2 Sampling procedures for wards and households 7

2.2.1 Proportionate Population Sampling to select wards 8

2.2.2 Household survey sampling 8

2.3 DAT information collection and KAP 9

2.4 Development of questionnaires 10

2.5 Selection of Mobenzi mobile platform 10

2.6 Advantages of Mobenzi platform and Lessons Learnt 11

2.6.1 Lessons Learnt in the use of Mobenzi and mobile phones 11

2.7 Pretest and Training of supervisors and enumerators 12

2.8 Conducting the fieldwork 13

2.8.1 Risks and challenges encountered in the field implementation 13

3. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS 14

3.1 Overview of Demographics and Variables 14

3.1.1 Program phase or control group and performance ranking 14

3.1.2 Disaggregation of household survey respondents 14

3.2 DAT Survey 17

3.2 Knowledge Attitude Practice Survey 17
3.3 WCF and CAC surveys 19
3.4 Household Survey 20
3.4.1 Youth survey 20
3.4.2 Women survey 20
3.4.3 Men survey 20
3.5 Findings and analysis of questions relevant to Sajhedari 21
3.5.1 Participation in the Planning Process 21
3.5.2 VDC Service Delivery: 23
3.5.3 Engagement of youth, women, and marginalized groups 23
3.5.4 Perception on Community Development and Community Engagement 23
3.5.5 Local Conflict/Dispute Management 25
3.5.6 Trust in Local Institutions 26
3.5.7 People's perception on gender roles 27
3.5.8 Responses to Media questions 27
3.6 Numeric Values for Indicators 28
4. CONCLUSIONS 29

ACRONYMS

CAC	Citizen Awareness Center
CMC	Community Mediation Center
DAT	Data Abstraction Tool
DDC	District Development Committee
DNH	Do No Harm
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GIS	Geographic Information System
GON	Government of Nepal
GPS	Geographic Positioning System
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IDA	Inter Disciplinary Analysts
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IPC	Integrated Planning Committee
KAP	Knowledge Attitudes Practice
LGCDP	Local Governance Community Development Program
LDO	Local Development Officer
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
SEDC	Safe and Effective Development in Conflict
SOW	Statement of Work
SSMK	Sathi Sanga Maanko Kurra (radio program)
TOR	Terms of Reference
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
WCF	Ward Citizen Forum
WDO	Women Development Office

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This baseline survey was commissioned by USAID/Nepal's Democracy, Governance and Peace Support (DG/PS) team in order to obtain a baseline and guide program development of a new local governance project, Sajhedari Bikaas, for five years from 2012 to 2017. Pact Inc. implements the project in six districts - Dang, Banke, Bardiya, and Surkhet (Mid-West), and Kailali and Kanchanpur (in the Far West) -- covering 50% (115) of the Village Development Committees (VDCs) in the districts.

Overall, the baseline survey revealed a large amount of optimism and willingness to participate among respondents, if only they are given a chance to participate. The findings show a lack of engagement of all respondents in community affairs, with women being the most active. This creates an opening for Sajhedari and its partners to bridge the gap between attitudes and practice in the VDCs. The survey also confirms a connection between attitudes about domestic relationships and gender-based violence.

IMPLEMENTATION OF BASELINE SURVEY

The overall baseline survey included a VDC data abstraction (DAT) survey, Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) survey of VDC secretaries and community leaders, Ward Citizen Forum member survey, Citizen Awareness Center member survey, and household surveys of men, youth, and women. The Baseline Survey covered three main groups of VDCs for Sajhedari implementation: Phase I, Phase II, and a Control. The VDC data includes coding for high, medium, and low-performing VDCs.

The DAT and KAP surveys were conducted August – September by nine field supervisors hired by IDA. The supervisors visited 181 VDCs to compile the DAT data. While in the VDCs, they conducted the KAP survey in hardcopy with the VDC secretaries and up to three community leaders in each VDC. The larger household survey was conducted from November 22 (after the national election) until December 19, 2013 with a substantial sample of 7,539 individuals.

Mobile phone technology was used, with a South African company, Mobenzi, selected due to its superior translation capacity. The technology allowed for updating of the questionnaire after pretesting, and observation of real-time results. The baseline survey field staff consisted of 76 individuals, including 38 women. One of the biggest challenges faced in the field was finding sufficient respondents, especially youth and men. Despite some reservations with the consent forms at the start of the interviews, over 99% of respondents said that they would agree to being re-interviewed in a couple of years' time.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE BASELINE SURVEY

The findings of the baseline survey generally show a high level of optimism among the respondents with 94% willing to attend community meetings and 80% thinking that their community is heading in the right direction. However, only 7% are involved in the VDC planning process. The level of education does not appear to be a significant factor in determining the level of participation, which creates an opening for Sajhedari to work with school groups.

Program phase or control group and performance ranking: A preliminary observation of the summary tables suggests that the variations between the groups of VDCs – whether Phase I, Phase II, or Control – is minimal. As well, the findings for the variable ranking VDCs as high, average, and low performing does not suggest significant differences between the three ranks of VDCs.

Disaggregation of household survey respondents: The three types of respondents – men, women, and youth – are each about one-third of the sample. About 56% of the respondents replied that they are the head of their household. About 54% of respondents are female and 46% are male, with 46% of women being the heads of their households. About 40% of all respondents have not been to school. Among the youth category respondents, only 11% have not been to school and 53% of them had completed high school. Similarly, 64% of youth respondents are female, of whom 16% responded that they are the household head. The level of education was that 40% of all respondents and 72% of women respondents had never been to school, however, they may or may not be literate at a basic level.

DAT Survey: The DAT survey compiled the secondary data of 181 baseline survey and Sajhedari program VDCs. It should be noted that not all of the VDCs had all of the information available. The caste or ethnicity of the 181 VDC secretaries was 80% Hill Brahmin/Chhetri and gender was 98% male. Saving and credit groups are the most common registered organizations, followed by forest user groups. About 66% of VDC offices did not have a record of the registered youth groups in the VDC. Each VDC had a Citizen Awareness Center. Each of the 179 VDCs providing this information, had an average of 29 projects approved in the past fiscal year.

Knowledge Attitude Practice Survey: The majority of KAP respondents understand conflict sensitive and inclusive concepts and practices. However, the results of the household survey showing that only about 1% of respondents are involved in the VDC planning process, suggest that the implementation of these concepts and practices is weak. However, this does present an entry point for Sajhedari's work.

WCF and CAC survey: The majority of WCF members (54%) revealed they did not participate in the VDC planning process, with 46% of these respondents saying that they did not know about the planning process and 40% saying that they were not informed about the meeting. Almost 64% of CAC members had not participated in VDC planning. Of those who had attended the meetings, about 81% had asked questions or made suggestions and 60% felt that they had been listened to.

Youth survey: Ten percent of youth respondents are members of a youth group. Only 15% of youth group members said that their group had participated in VDC planning. About 73% of youth respondents are not a member of any group. Only 13% of youth respondents said that they are involved in any economic activity, however this phrasing of the question may have been misunderstood by the respondents. Of the 64% of youth respondents who are female, only 6% are members of a youth group, 9% are members of mother's/women's groups, 66% are not currently enrolled in school or college, and 91% are not engaged in economic activities.

Women survey: Of women respondents, over 38% belong to a mother's/women's group, 10% are a member of a women's agriculture group, 18% are members of a community forest users group (CFUG), but 53% said they are not a member of any group. With 31% belonging to a group that does savings and credit, several of the above groups must do microfinance as an activity. Only 1% of women respondents said that they are a member of a WCF. Of the total women respondents, only 4% are an executive committee member for any groups.

Men survey: The average age was 46 years compared to 40 for women. Over 88% are a household head and 35% had had no school. Regarding membership in groups, 69% said that they are not a member of any group, 16% are members of a user group, 2.6% are members of WCFs, and 2.4% of VDC councils. Six percent of men are members of a political party and 5% are members of local NGOs.

Participation in the Planning Process: Only 7% of household respondents had participated in the VDC planning process in the last year, with youth participation only 4%, women 5%, and men 12%. Almost 51% of those who did not participate said that they did not know that there was a planning process, regardless of their educational level. However, 62% of all respondents said the VDC was somewhat effective and 13% said it was very effective in encouraging development.

Knowledge of VDC projects and funds: While 62% of respondents felt VDC development programs are designed as per the needs of local people, only 23% knew of two projects approved in their VDCs. Nineteen percent of total respondents feel the use of VDC funds is transparent, 48% said it was not transparent, and 34% do not know. Only 2% could respond about the VDC budget allocations.

VDC Service Delivery: Of the 40% of respondents who received services from their VDC offices in the last one year, 19% are highly satisfied and 72% are satisfied with the services. In terms of effectiveness of VDC services, 60% feel that the services are either very effective or effective, and 83% said that they had not had to pay extra fees for timely service in the past year. Of the total respondents, 65% said that the VDC secretary is the major decision maker for local development in the VDC, and 85% said that they mostly or somewhat trust the VDC secretaries.

Perception on Community Development and Community Engagement: 79% of respondents think that their communities are heading in the right direction. About 57% of the women respondents said that they have tried to solve problems in their communities, but only 26% of men respondents. Of all respondents, 65% said that they are not a member of any group. More women are members of a community group because 38.5% of women are members of Mothers'/Women's groups, which had the highest rate of involvement of any kind of group. About 34% of the men respondents have attended meetings of a political party, while only 8% of women.

Local Conflict/Dispute Management: Only 7% of the total respondents reported conflicts/disputes within their households over the last year, the majority of which (37%) are related to marriage or domestic disagreements or to (45%) are disputes related to land, forest, water, and property issues. However, an important point related to gender-based violence is that of the conflicts that led to violence, 47% are marriage or domestic disagreements. An irony was that over 89% of respondents said that they mostly or somewhat trust Community Mediation Centres (CMCs), but few cases are brought to the CMCs and only 22% are related to marriage or domestic disagreements.

People's perception on gender roles: The findings on the perception of gender roles reveal views on income, decision-making, and gender-based violence. Over 80% of respondents agreed that a woman's income should be given to her husband but 77% agreed that under no circumstances should a man beat his wife. The general perception was that a wife needs her husband's permission to do paid work, should give her income to her husband, but should not be beaten or blamed for GBV.

Responses to Media questions: 44% of respondents said that they listen to FM radio as their main source of information on local governance, democracy, federalism, and inclusion. However, only 3% of the total respondents name NGOs/CBOs as their main source. About 52% of respondents said 'no' when asked if they listen to SSMK and 21% said 'don't know'. Of those who do listen, 31% of youth respondents said they listened to SSMK. For Naya Nepal, 59% did not listen and 22% did not know.

Conclusion: The baseline survey points to a huge opportunity for Sajhedari Bikaas to fulfill the hope and optimism of the majority of respondents by filling in the gaps between positive attitudes and the lack of engagement in local governance by the communities of its six working districts.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sajhedari Bikaas

USAID Nepal is supporting a new local governance project, Sajhedari Bikaas, for five years from 2012 to 2017. Pact Inc. will implement the project in six districts - Dang, Banke, Bardiya, and Surkhet (Mid-West), and Kailali and Kanchanpur (in the Far West) -- covering 50% (115) of the VDCs in each district.

Pact/Sajhedari program will contribute to improve both demand and supply side of local governance and development at the local level. It aims to strengthen the ability of target communities; especially women, youth, and disadvantaged groups; to guide the allocation of resources, address tensions, and play an active role in decision-making, planning, and conflict mediation.

In order to achieve this goal, Pact/Sajhedari and its partners support the target communities to gain the knowledge, skills and abilities to plan, fund and manage local development activities the communities have identified in an inclusive and participatory manner. The project will also provide access to appropriate community stabilization initiatives, which address the drivers of conflict and establish an enabling environment for community development by supporting local governance groups.

1.1.1 Project Objectives

Sajhedari's approach combines strategic interventions with four key objectives:

Objective A: An Enabling Environment for Community Development is established

Objective B: Communities will Access Resources for Development

Objective C: Communities will Implement Inclusive Development Projects Effectively

Objective D: New Local Government Units will Function More Effectively

Four key principles guide the project: 1) Social inclusion, inclusive governance, and inclusive local development; 2) Flexibility in program approaches to address the changing socio-political dynamics; 3) Community based participation; and 4) Promoting local accountability. Under these guiding principles, the program implements the following strategic interventions and approaches including:

1. Sustainability through building on existing resources
2. People-to-people peace building
3. Capacity building and skill transfer
4. Focus on women, youth, and marginalized groups.
5. Utilization of media, especially local radio stations.

Pact/Sajhedari works in partnership with two national partners (Youth Initiative and CeLRRd), a media partner (Equal Access), two local NGOs (LNGO) per district for governance, and one LNGO per two districts for women's economic empowerment. Through capacity building, the LNGOs implement

activities and promote long-term sustainability by ensuring that their communities can access resources for future development; engage women, youth, and other marginalized groups effectively in the community's work, and assume the responsibility to build a positive future.

Nepal context

Nepal is one of ten countries in the world making swift gains in health and education since 1970, but it continues to stand at 138 of 177 countries according to the UN Human Development Index (HDI) for 2009. Much of the population lives in rural areas and continues to struggle with food insecurity and poverty with the per capita income at just US $ 642 (MoF 2011). With population growth from 8.5 million in 1954 to 26.6 million in 2011, Nepal has changed from being a net exporter of rice to being an importer of this main food commodity.

There are few opportunities for employment especially in rural areas, so the past fifteen years have seen growing numbers of younger men and some women migrating for labor overseas. Remittances have now contributed to 25% of the Gross Domestic Product and to reducing the numbers of people living below the poverty line from 42% to 25% (Nepal Living Standards Survey III 2012). This economic activity has positioned Nepal at the 108th position in terms of GDP.

However, the discrepancy between the human and economic development standing arises from the geographic, socio-economic, and political isolation of many communities. Nepal's inhabitants include people of different castes and of dozens of ethnic groups, some marginalized minorities, each with their own distinct culture and mother tongues.

Sajhedari Bikaas is being implemented as Nepal transitions from being a monarchy to a republic. Previously, all decisions and development came from the central level. In 1990, multi-party democracy brought the Local Self Governance Act with endeavors that were beginning to have effect when the decade of armed conflict started. Into this complex situation, came the movement of Terai-based people in 2007 and various ethnic and regional movements since. However, the issues raised have contributed to growing awareness of the need for more inclusion and equity in the society and political spheres.

In 2002, the elected local government bodies were dissolved after their tenure ended and new local elections have not taken place. 'Local government' currently consists of government staff posted to the district or Village Development Committee (VDC). However, the VDC staff are often in the district headquarters for administrative and security reasons, so, their interaction with the inhabitants of their designated VDC is often minimal.

In 2007, the Government of Nepal and several multi and bilateral donors began implementation of the ***'Local Governance and Community Development Program' (***LGCDP) to improve governance at the district and VDC levels. LGCDP was to implement provisions for the formation of Ward Citizen Forums (WCFs) as a venue for the voices of citizens in remote wards and especially of women and disadvantaged people, and for Citizen Awareness Centers (CACs), using literacy as a means of raising the voices of the most disadvantaged women.

1.1.2 Expected Outcomes and Impact of Sajhedari Bikaas

The Pact/Sajhedari Bikaas team has developed a detailed Results Framework showing the expected intermediate results and outcomes under each of the four project objectives. A brief summary of these results and outcomes is presented below and the full Results Framework and Performance Management Plan (PMP) in the Annex 20. The indicators in the PMP are at both outcome and output levels with a variety of sources for their calculation. The following is a summary of the outcomes under the objectives:

Objective A. Enabling Environment for Community Development Established, Outcomes:

- Communities apply peaceful and socially productive skills to prevent disputes from escalating into longer term conflict, institutionalize peaceful and socially productive response mechanisms to conflict, and resolve local disputes through the consistent use of dispute resolution mechanisms.
- Communities reinforce stability through local development activities by having youth, women, and marginalized groups increasingly occupying key decision-making positions in community processes and activities and receiving new and increased economic opportunities and resources.

Objective B. Communities Access Resources for Development, Outcomes:

- Communities adopt inclusive participation practices and local planning mechanisms that include marginalized community members in decision-making positions
- Community members are better skilled and routinely engage to facilitate planning
- Communities institutionalize inclusive local planning mechanisms and apply strategic planning principles to create, review, and update long term village development plans, which are characterized by equitable distribution of local development priorities.
- Communities raise funds and resources locally and receive resources from local government and non-government sources for community development activities.
- CBOs strengthen links to national associations and representatives.

Objective C. Communities Implement Inclusive Development Projects Effectively, Outcomes:

- Civil society and community based organizations (CBOs) manage financial resources transparently and community members monitor the administration of funds.
- Community management units, which make development decisions, are inclusive and representative of the diversity of the community.
- Communities identify strategies and institutionalize systems for sustainable local development

Objective D. Existing and New Local Government units function effectively, Outcomes:

- Local government officials more effectively manage their roles and responsibilities by engaging with communities to improve service delivery
- Local government, communities and civil society organizations have more transparent and productive working relationships with local government(s) adopting more transparent methods for establishing priorities
- Local citizens and local government officials collaborate equitably in local governance mechanisms to that local government budget and planning processes reflect community priorities.

1.2 Monitoring for Sajhedari

Sajhedari works in six districts, where it will have implemented activities in 50% of the VDCs by the end of the five year project. In early 2013, Pact conducted a rapid assessment of eight districts to collect information on their governance, community infrastructure, and conflict. From this information, Sajhedari categorized the VDCs as high performing, average performing, and low performing VDCs, to select the six districts and 115 project VDCs, prioritizing low performing VDCs for the working areas.

Besides the Baseline Survey, the Sajhedari monitoring unit will conduct GIS/SMS reporting for conflict assessments, annual perception surveys on service delivery, ongoing monitoring of field-level activities, quarterly M&E workshops, community-based participatory monitoring, a harmonization workshop on M&E efforts on governance, joint-monitoring visits with government stakeholders, and qualitative studies. It will also revise the PMP, and establish Minimum Program Quality Standards, a Performance Based Management System (PBMS) system database, and routine data quality assurance measures.

1.2.1 Phase-wise implementation and monitoring

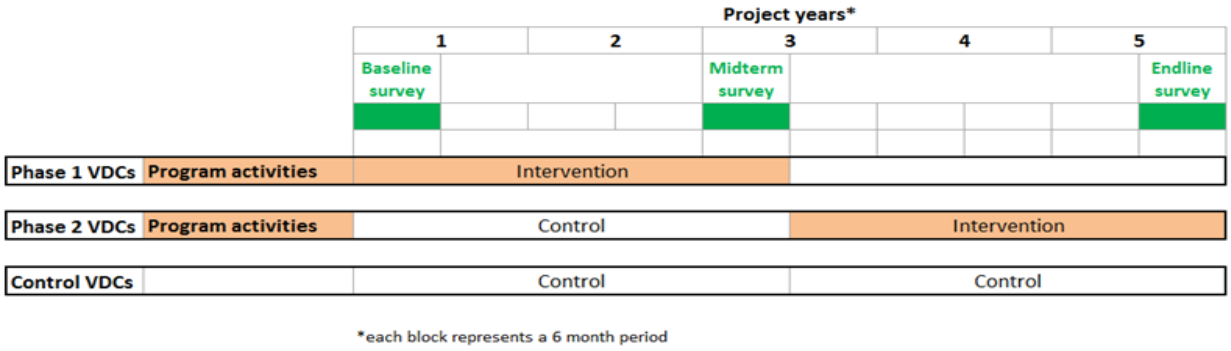
The project is implementing activities in half its working VDCs (25% of the total VDCs in the six districts) in the first phase of 2.5 years, and in year 3, will move the same activities to the other half of the working VDCs (25% of total VDCs) for the second 2.5-year phase of the project. While deciding on Phase 1 and Phase 2 VDCs, the team allocated a higher proportion of low performing VDCs to the second phase.

Table 1: selected VDCs for Phase 1 and Phase 2 according to performance in the rapid assessment.

Performance	Phase 1 VDCs		Phase 2 VDCs	
High performing VDCs	16	28%	10	18%
Average performing VDCs	20	34%	11	20%
Low performing VDCs	22	38%	35	63%
VDCs not analyzed	0		1	
Total working VDCs	**58**		**57**	

By implementing its activities in phases, Sajhedari is using a controlled trial study at the population level to determine the impact of the project. The project or USAID will conduct surveys of the three study groups (Phase I, Phase II, Control) at the baseline, mid-term in year 3, and endline at the end of year 5. With this design, Sajhedari anticipates that the three groups will provide controls for external factors or for changes over time in the political or socio-economic climate. (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Evaluation diagram, showing the three study groups, and the timing of the baseline, midterm and endline surveys.



1.3 Baseline survey

USAID commissioned the baseline survey from Pact, as part of its Sajhedari project implementation, in June 2013. Pact then commissioned a Nepali social survey company, Inter Disciplinary Analysts (IDA), to conduct the survey, and a consultant to support the process. The overall objective of the survey was to establish a baseline for Sajhedari Bikaas Project that informs the project about the current situation relative to the expected outcomes and impact, and support the mid-term and end-line evaluations in the future. The findings of the Baseline Survey provide information to guide ongoing program development, determine the targets of the Performance Management Plan (PMP), and set a foundation that can be adapted by independent contractors appointed by USAID for the midterm and endline evaluation surveys.

The following report covers the baseline survey and its preliminary findings. The data obtained through the survey offers a wealth of information, which can be analyzed and reviewed through many different determinants and disaggregations in the years to come. This report is just the beginning of this process.

1.3.1 Components of the Baseline Survey

The Baseline Survey had several components to collect information from the relevant target groups on both the demand and supply sides of governance in the working districts.

Data Abstraction Tool (DAT): To gain an overview of VDC activities, a DAT form was developed to compile secondary data from the offices of 181 VDCs in eight districts and the LGCDP. The topics covered VDC demographics, general information, citizen awareness center members, VDC planning processes and budgets, project implementation and user committees, community mediation centers, staff, village development plans, the Integrated planning committees and VDC councils, Ward Citizen Forum (WCF) members, and ward priorities. Some of this information on VDC projects and budgets was used in the household questionnaires to query respondents' knowledge of VDC projects and budgets. Other data from this component serves in determining numeric values for PMP indicators.

Knowledge Attitudes Practice (KAP) survey: To gain information mostly on the supply side of VDC governance, the KAP survey targeted a total of 543 VDC secretaries, community leaders, representatives of local groups, LGCDP facilitators, and DDC representatives. It covered aspects of inclusive planning and conflict sensitivity training.

Ward Citizen Forum (WCF) survey: A separate survey examined the knowledge and participation of three randomly selected WCF members in each of the sample wards selected for the household survey. It was assumed that WCFs have been formed in each ward of every VDC through the government LGCDP activities. The name lists of the WCFs were obtained during the DAT survey. The WCF survey interviewed 1,044 individuals at their homes.

Community Awareness Center (CAC) member survey: Another activity of LGCDP has been the establishment one CAC in each VDC. This survey interviewed one randomly selected CAC member in each of the sample VDCs. It was assumed that CACs had been formed in all VDCs of the study area. The sample size was 174 CAC members.

Household survey: The main questionnaire of the baseline survey targeted randomly selected members of the general public with queries on a broad range of topics including, but not limited to, personal community involvement, VDC planning, trust of local institutions, media usage, conflict resolution, and

gender-based violence. The survey had specific sections of questions for youth and women as 'detours' off the main sets of questions. Youth could be either male or female between the ages of 16 – 26. Women and men are over the age of 26. As described in Section 2.3, this survey covered 7,539 respondents, over half of whom (54%) are women, in 354 wards of 174 VDCs in six districts.

1.3.2 Overview of the Baseline Survey Implementation

The Baseline Survey covered three main groups of VDCs: Phase I, Phase II, and a Control, which is described in detail in Section 2 of this report. The VDC data includes coding for high, medium, and low-performing VDCs.

The VDC data abstraction survey and the KAP survey were conducted from August 25 until September 18, 2013 by nine field supervisors hired by IDA. The supervisors visited 181 VDCs to compile the DAT data. While in the VDCs, they conducted the KAP survey in hardcopy with the VDC secretaries and up to three community leaders in each VDC.

The larger household survey was conducted from November 22 (after the national election) until December 19, 2013. Mobile phone technology was used for the purpose. The nineteen teams trained and hired by IDA each consisted of one supervisor and three enumerators. There were at least two women on each team to ensure that a woman interviewed women respondents.

The staff totalled 76 individuals of whom 31 were women. They visited 354 wards in 174 VDCs of eight districts to interview 7,539 respondents, who were divided about one-third each into the men, women, and youth categories for the questionnaires. The supervisors administered separate questionnaires to about three WCF members in each VDC for a total of 1044 respondents and to one CAC member in each VDC for a total of 174 respondents.

Table 2: Overview of Implementation of the Sajhedari Baseline Survey.

TEAM	COMPOSITION	TOOLS	RESPONDENTS COVERED
VDC Data Abstraction survey Aug 25 to Sept 18	**9 supervisors**	DAT KAP	181 VDCs data KAP: 181 VDC secretaries, plus 3 Community leaders per VDC = 543 respondents
Interview Teams (19 teams with 76 staff) Nov 22 to Dec 19	**1 supervisor (19 total)** **3 enumerators, including two woman per team** **(76 total, including at least 31 women)**	Household (men) Women Youth WCF CAC	354 wards in 174 VDCs of 8 districts = 7,539 respondents with about one-third each of men, women, and youth 1,044 WCF members 174 CAC members

2. METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURES

The Baseline Survey used a quantitative approach that included a household survey and structured data abstraction from VDCs. The various surveys and DAT described in Chapter I have been designed to make their replication possible for the mid-term and final evaluations.

2.1 Selection of intervention and control VDCs

Before the commencement of the Baseline using the rapid assessment tools, Pact/Sajhedari had selected the Phase I group, 58 VDCs for program activities in the first 2.5 years of the project, and the Phase 2 group of 57 VDCs. The Baseline Survey used Pact/Sajhedari's existing framework of phase I and phase II VDCs. To accommodate USAID's request for control groups, Pact/Sajhedari randomly selected 50 comparable control VDCs in VDCs where the program would not be implemented for Phase I from the remaining VDCs in the districts, ensuring that the selected controls had a similar performance distribution (high, average, low) as the intervention VDCs.

Pact/Sajhedari had already selected a higher proportion of low performing VDCs as working VDCs in Phase II, the Baseline Survey had to select 16 control VDCs from two adjacent districts (Salyan and Rolpa) in order to ensure a similar distribution for a comparable sample to detect differences between Phase II and control VDCs.

Table 3 shows the district-wise distribution of Phase I, Phase II, and Control VDCs for the baseline survey. It also shows the total number of districts and provides a breakdown of the phase I, phase II and control VDCs for each of the district.

Table 3: District distribution of Phase I, Phase II, and Control VDCs for baseline survey.

District	Sajhedari VDCs			***Control VDCs***	**Total baseline survey VDCs**
	Total	Phase 1 VDCs	Phase 2 VDCs		
Kanchanpur	***10***	5	5	***4***	**14**
Kailali	***21***	11	10	***12***	**33**
Dang	***20***	10	10	***7***	**27**
Bardiya	***16***	8	8	***8***	**24**
Banke	***23***	12	11	***10***	**33**
Surkhet	***25***	12	13	***9***	**34**
Salyan	-	-	-	***7***	**7**
Rolpa	-	-	-	***9***	**9**
Total	***115***	**58**	**57**	***66***	**181**

2.2 Sampling procedures for wards and households

Once the Phase I, Phase II, and Control VDCs had been determined, a multistage cluster sampling approach was used for the random selection of wards and households. For the household survey within each of the three groups, the primary sampling unit (PSU) was the ward, and not the VDC.

2.2.1 Proportionate Population Sampling to select wards

IDA used Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) sampling design to select randomly 120 clusters in each of the three groups – Phase I, Phase II, and Control. The source of data it relied on was the 2011 national census. Since the PPS method is based on the size of wards, more than one cluster was selected in some wards with a large population. The actual sampling process led to the selection of clusters in 56 VDCs from Phase I; 55 VDCs from Phase II, and 63 VDCs from control group. Therefore, due to use of PPS sampling, the actual number of VDCs in the household survey sample went down from the proposed 58 + 57 + 66 = 181 VDCs, to the actually surveyed 56 + 55 + 63 = 174 VDCs. While the Baseline Survey had planned to cover 360 wards, due to the PPS sampling method, 354 wards were covered[1].

The size of the household survey was planned to be 7,560. In actual practice, 7,539 respondents were covered: 2,534 men, 2,515 women, and 2,490 youth. The actual number of CAC interviews was 174. While 1,062 WCF interviews were planned, the actual number of WCF interviews underway was 1,044. See Chapter 3 for details of the demographics of the 8,757 total respondents.

2.2.2 Household survey sampling

Below the wards are the settlements and then the households. Once the team reached the sampled ward, the team would do transects in three different directions (one for men, another for women and a third for youth), count the number of houses in the area, and randomly select a house using a table of random numbers[2]. If it was not possible to walk in three separate directions, they would divide the length of the path into thirds and each would undertake the survey along one third of the lane. Then the enumerators used the Right Hand Rule Method to select respondents. This method entailed taking the households on the right[3]. From each cluster, an enumerator had to select seven respondents. For instance, an enumerator responsible for interviewing the men would interview seven male respondents in one cluster; the same held true for enumerators responsible for youth or women[4] respondents.

The earlier envisaged plan that from each household, a man, a woman and a youth would be interviewed had to be revised after the pretest on September 23, when it proved that in practice it was very difficult to get three interviews (man, woman, youth) within one household. As well, the question of asking the GBV questions of men and women in one household suggested that one interview per household would be a more appropriate approach so as not to make woman respondents vulnerable.

At each selected household, the enumerators selected one person for the interview using the Kish Method (listing all men, women, or youth household members, ranking them according to age - old to young - and then selecting one using the standard Kish tables) depending on whether they were doing a

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[1] PPS method led to wards with large population size to be selected two times, thus leading to reduction in the total number of wards

[2] It was not possible to adopt this method in the hill districts of Rolpa, Salyan, and Surkhet due to the sparse density of households in those districts.

[3] The actual number of houses to be skipped would depend on the number of houses in the cluster. If the cluster had 21 houses, the enumerator would select every third house, since the number of respondents he or she needed from that cluster was seven.

[4] In the hilly districts, due to the unavailability of men, one enumerator would have to go up to 30 households to find the seven male respondents from that cluster.

transect for men, women, or youth respondents. If no eligible respondents were available, the household was replaced by another one. The household survey criteria for respondents was: age for adults above 26 years, for youth survey 16-26; and that the participant gave informed consent.

2.3 DAT information collection and KAP

The structured data abstraction tool (DAT) was employed to obtain relevant data as a secondary source of information from various local district offices. The DAT data forms a database that can be assessed, analyzed and compared to the data received from primary sources in the household and KAP surveys. Pact needs this information to provide a rational ground to guide the programming in the future.

The DAT-KAP interviewers were experienced supervisors hired by IDA to visit various offices (VDC, DDC, LGCDP, and other local government offices) to obtain the required data from documents and interactions with the local/district level officers. These nine staff also conducted 543 interviews for KAP surveys, which was three individuals in each of the 181 VDCs. The training for these staff was for four days beginning from August 19, followed by two days of pretesting and feedback on the DAT tool. The fieldwork commenced on August 24 and was completed on October 4, 2013. The coding and data entry of DAT and KAP was done from Sept 11 to Oct 10. Data cleaning took much longer time than envisaged and it was December before all the cleaned data was available in Excel and SPSS formats. The cleaned DAT data was re-converted to MS Access format on January 10.

There were a total of 543 KAP interviews (three interviews in each of the 181 sampled VDCs). Respondents of KAP were community leaders such as representatives of local women's groups, representatives of CBOs/ civil society, political party representatives, teachers, social workers and local government officials such as VDC secretaries and other official assistants. VDC secretaries/ officials constitute about 33% of the sample followed by social mobilizers of LGCDP (22%), political party representatives (18%), teachers (9%) and representatives of CBOs/ civil society (7%).

Regarding DAT, the supervisors coordinated with DDC officials, office peons, and social mobilizers to contact the VDC secretaries who are responsible for all VDC activities, but rarely at the VDC offices. Some VDC secretaries were in charge of two VDCs and others were new due to frequent transfers of government staff. Many of the VDC secretaries suggested that they should have been informed in advance about the DAT. The DAT and KAP work entailed first visiting the district headquarters to meet DDC officials, other relevant line agencies, and most of the VDC secretaries. The travel to the specific VDCs was mostly to interview the individuals for the KAP.

Challenges and limitations with the DAT and KAP surveys included:

1. Systematic/unsystematic storage of the required data in the VDCs, and WCF forms and documents that had not been retained or stored
2. Difficulties and challenges to complete the questionnaire, for instance, some questions required fetching data from distant VDC offices or caste and age information on which data was not available.
3. Logistical and transportation problems with VDC officials and social mobilizers in different locations, and numerous government holidays that delayed the work
4. Conducting the KAP survey with three people, who were often spread in distant locations.
5. The DAT data may have limitations because it is secondary data and some low performing VDCs did not have up to date information available for collection.

2.4 Development of questionnaires

The team working on the baseline survey provided inputs to preparing the DAT collection form, KAP questionnaire, and household, WCF, CAC surveys based on the outcome and Performance Management Plan (PMP) indicators for Sajhedari, its activities, and information required for disaggregation of the final data in accordance with strategies such as the GESI strategy.

Once the draft survey questionnaire (i.e., questionnaire for men, women, youth, WCF and CAC) was prepared, it was commented upon by USAID, which also suggested additional questions intended to help inform Pact for future programming decisions. The team first prepared the questionnaires in English and then translated them into the Nepali versions after USAID approval. The survey questionnaires were translated back into English to check for accuracy. The Nepali version of the questionnaire was administered in the field.

A pilot test on hardcopy was done near Nepalgunj in two villages with similar characteristics to the sample clusters. The questionnaires were then amended based on the feedback received from the pilot test. Problems included skip patterns, typing in codes and numeric answers, and uneducated people having a hard time with rating scales from 1 - 10, the staff suggested that 1 - 5 would have been easier for them to understand.

The surveys consisted of a similar series of questions with automatic diversions at question 18, to respective sets of questions relevant to women (mothers' groups, agricultural groups, CFUGs, executive memberships) or youth (education, youth group membership, employment, or migration). Three questions at the end of the survey asked if the respondent was willing to be interviewed again in 2.5 or five years.

Topics covered in the household surveys included: perceptions of community governance and participation, media and information, VDC Planning and project, VDC budget and governance perceptions, gender based violence, conflict and mediation, conflict resolved by violence, and trust towards local institutions in resolving conflict. Topics and numbers of questions covered in the WCF – CAC member surveys included: VDC Planning and Projects, VDC budget and governance perceptions, Ward Citizen Forum, and Citizen Awareness Center.

Lesson learnt: Some of the commonly occurring mistakes were the result of confusion in the code system. Instead of entering numeric values in the participant ID when designing the questionnaire, it would be easier for enumerators to choose from options, such as which district or VDC, in the form.

2.5 Selection of Mobenzi mobile platform

The team used a mobile data collection platform for all household-level survey questionnaires: men, women, youth, WCF, and CAC. This system allowed the field enumerators to administer the questionnaires electronically on Android mobile phones. The enumerators asked the questions verbally and the responses were recorded by touching the appropriate box on the screen. The system also recorded the geographic coordinates of all the sample households' location.

The Pact team selected the Mobenzi mobile research platform from a company based in South Africa, with which it has an account. Pact has used the Mobenzi platform in other countries, where it was simple and easy to use. The advantages of Mobenzi over two other potential platforms were that it offers complete support to set up the survey and works on an easy survey interface on a relatively large

number of phones. The billing is based on usage only with the cost covering the use of the web-based console for an unlimited number of users and installation of the mobile application on an unlimited number of handsets. See Annex 20.4 for the review of three mobile platforms.

One of the most important factors in the selection of Mobenzi was that the translation service is easy to use with an Excel sheet import and export function. The limitation of the function was that the only Nepali font that it recognized was Unicode. The other potential mobile platforms would have had more complicated translation processes where the application would have had to be translated.

2.6 Advantages of Mobenzi platform and Lessons Learnt

Updating of questionnaires: After Mobenzi programmed the questionnaires, the platform had the advantage that the Pact team could update the questionnaires after the pretests had shown the need for some corrections.

Real time results: When the field teams had completed interviews, they uploaded the results daily, or when they had access to the internet. The Mobenzi platform showed the real time results for the GPS locations, numbers of interviews completed daily and cumulatively, the time taken for each survey, and the aggregated responses to the questions or disaggregated when filters were applied.

Use of the phones in the field: The field supervisors said that they like using the phones because after having the respondent sign the consent form, there was no more paper to be handled. This made the respondents more at ease so the survey was more easy-going because recording the responses on the phone was less conspicuous than using paper. The programmed survey also meant that the field staff had to think about filters and skip pattern while conducting interviews. This further meant that the field personnel did not have to carry a lot of questionnaire with them in the field or to worry about sending the filled-up questionnaire through the courier.

2.6.1 Lessons Learnt in the use of Mobenzi and mobile phones

Fonts: Extra time was required to work on the fonts for the Nepali translation because Mobenzi only takes the Unicode font. Time was lost since the early translations were done using the Preeti font. Hence, it is important to ensure that all Nepali translations are entered from the start in Unicode.

Codes: A commonly occurring mistake was the result of confusion in the code system. Instead of entering numeric values in the participant ID when designing the questionnaire, it would be easier for enumerators to choose options in the form. For instance, instead of entering code '53001' as the district code and VDC code, it would be simpler for a data collector to choose 'Rolpa' as the district and 'Aresh' as the VDC in the Participant ID question.

Review and correction of completed surveys: The field supervisors said that they could not review the surveys completed each day, as they do with paper surveys, to check for mistakes. They suggested that instead of sending an interview right after it is completed, it would help if the software had a feature to store the interviews in a separate folder, so the supervisor could recheck the interviews before sending them to the server. An option for future work would be to provide the field supervisors with access to the Mobenzi web console for surveys done by their teams, especially if the software had a function to edit uploaded surveys. Another solution would be to have the enumerators do the surveys on hard copy for the first day then sit with the supervisors to enter the answers on the phone. In this way, the supervisors could make corrections before enumerators use the android phone. IDA recommended that

if mobile technology is used again, the team size needs to be smaller and allotted time longer so that fewer, more experienced staff can be used. As well, they would devote more time to training the team.

GPS coordinates: Obtaining the GPS coordinates was sometimes problematic, such that they are in 71% of the findings for CAC–WCF surveys, and 89% for households. It is essential that all field staff have a thorough orientation on how to use the GPS because at the start about 40% of the received surveys did not have GPS coordinates. This was especially an issue when the weather was cloudy or foggy and in the hill districts where the terrain blocked the direct lines to the satellite. In some case, one GPS coordinate was used for multiple interviews due to proximity of houses or WCF interviews done in the same place.

Phones and network: Some enumerators had not used smart phones and were confused handling the android system. There were also problems at times in remote areas to charge the phones, so sometimes the teams used tractor batteries or solar systems. However, charging four mobiles at once occasionally drained the solar batteries, creating tension with the house owner (where the team was spending the night). The teams did have paper copies of the survey which they sometimes had to use and enter the responses on the phones later. There were sometimes problems with network access to send data, especially in hilly districts, hence sometimes 2-3 days of completed surveys were sent at once.

2.7 Pretest and Training of supervisors and enumerators

IDA did a hard copy pretest of the HH questionnaire on September 23 (See Annex for details) and found that the assumption that the enumerators would be able to interview three people per HH was not viable. The staff visited 26 HHs in this pretest, but in most HHs, they only found one respondent. In only two HHs was the team able to find at least two respondents.

A second set of training and pretesting with the questionnaire on the mobile phones was conducted November 7 to 10 for nineteen supervisors, nine of whom had already worked on the DAT-KAP survey. After the first day, the training schedule for was revised to focus more on the questionnaire content before the training proceeded with the mobile phones. The training also reviewed Sajhedari Bikaas context, use of mobile phones, and implementation of the household and WCF-CAC questionnaires on the mobile phones. The particular day of the pretesting happened to coincide with two political rallies in the visited VDCs, so most of the youth had gone to the rallies. The team decided on a solution to allow the enumerators to visit more households in each cluster for the required number of respondents.

The main orientation training for the field personnel i.e., training of the 76 staff members was done Nov 11 – 15, during the ten-day strike called before the election. On Nov 14, the enumerators did a pretest of the survey in VDCs that were located at walking distance from Nepalgunj. There were a few days gap between the completion of the training and the commencement of the fieldwork. This was because of the elections for constituent assembly, which took place on November 19. After the election, a refresher training was done on Nov 21 before the field work commenced on Nov 22. For the training of field enumerators, IDA developed Standard Operating Procedures including methods and protocols for conducting the survey and the coded numbering system for each household, cluster, or VDC. There was also more time needed for training in basic use of android phones, using the wireless connection, and checking the balances remaining.

2.8 Conducting the fieldwork

Staff: IDA selected the 76 field staff, of nineteen field supervisors and 56 enumerators, from over 300 CVs to find individuals with sufficient experience to be employed for the fieldwork. Each of the nineteen team had one supervisor and three interviewers. While two of the team members were women, another two were men. Most of the field supervisors came from a large, existing pool who have worked with IDA in an intermittent basis over the past several years. One constraint to the hiring process was the delay from July to November, due to which some people initially hired for this survey had left for other assignments. About 25 of the field staff from the local Tharu communities and a few of the other staff were conversant in local languages. Half of the staff (38) were women.

Consent of respondents: Every participant was informed about the survey, the Sajhedari Bikaas program, and asked for written informed consent. The interviews were conducted privately, and participants were told that they had the right to not answer certain questions, or to stop the interview at any time. The staff explained that there was no potential individual benefit for participants, but that the information could be used to implement more effectively programs for community development and stability to their region. However, there were problems with the informed consent in that the way these statements were formulated and read out, leading to unwanted apprehension among the respondents. Due to the administration of informed consent, the team is of the opinion that among 25% of the respondents there was a degree of apprehension when responding to the survey questions (though these people did not reject being interviewed out of courtesy).

2.8.1 Risks and challenges encountered in the field implementation

Finding sufficient respondents: In hill districts, the teams often had to visit 20 – 25 houses to find sufficient (7) youth and men respondents. In Terai districts, it was difficult to find women willing to be interviewed. Some women became apprehensive when asked for their mobile phone numbers. For the WCF-CAC survey, the supervisors often had to search or return to clusters on following days to find respondents on the WCF and CAC lists in the DAT data. The team did longer lists of WCF members than initially planned for the random sampling, but this was still a very time consuming task for the supervisors. As well, some respondents did not know that their names were on the WCF lists.

Security: The baseline survey was conducted in the politically unsettled weeks before and after the national election for a second Constituent Assembly. A coalition of parties had called '*Bandhas'* for the ten days before the election, which was one of the few blocks of time available for the staff training. As well, the VDC staff in Rolpa had been on strike when the DAT survey was being conducted in September. In some border areas adjacent to India in Banke district, the teams were not sure if they could return safely, and there was one VDC where the team was advised not to send women enumerators, who would have to do transects alone, so the male staff had to interview women in this VDC.

Prior information for DAT collection: Having made an appointment to meet VDC staff, the supervisors would sometimes arrive to be told that the concerned people were not available. In the future, more information about the nature of the work, and the various documents required for the DAT should be given to the concerned personnel before deploying the supervisors in the field.

Weather and travel: A challenge faced was travelling and working in the climatic conditions. Due to monsoon rains during the DAT-KAP survey, the roads, especially in the hill districts, were often blocked, and transportation facilities were almost nonexistent. By the time the main survey was begun in late November, the foggy winter mornings made obtaining GPS coordinates difficult.

3. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the demographics and main findings of DAT, KAP, Household Survey and WCF and CAC surveys. With the findings, it includes a preliminary analysis and discussion of the findings. The summary of the findings are in the Annex and the data tables that have been submitted with this report.

3.1 Overview of Demographics and Variables

This section presents a brief overview of the demographics of the over 9,400 respondents and their responses to the questionnaires. It also presents a brief overview of the comparative data for some key disaggregations relevant to the work of the Sajhedari program. The baseline survey has provided a wealth of data for the monitoring and evaluation of Sajhedari, not all of which can be analyzed and disaggregated in this preliminary report.

3.1.1 Program phase or control group and performance ranking

As described in the methodology chapter, the sample VDCs were selected first as Phase I or Phase II program VDCs and then for the baseline, another group of Control VDCs were selected. The variable for group of VDCs is included in the database. However, a preliminary observation of the summary tables suggests that the variations between the groups of VDCs – whether Phase I, Phase II, or Control – is minimal. As well, the findings for the variable ranking VDCs as high, average, and low performing does not suggest significant differences between the three ranks of VDCs. The lack of significant differences between the three ranks could provide a great opportunity for Sajhedari Bikaas for comparative studies among these groups in the mid-term and end-line. Since the baseline survey used standard codes for districts, VDCs, and wards, the findings can be disaggregated up to the ward-level for future analysis.

3.1.2 Disaggregation of household survey respondents

Figure 2 shows some of the disaggregated information about the household survey respondents. As planned in the baseline survey protocol, the three types of respondents – men, women, and youth – are each about one-third of the sample. The age distribution of respondents is also about one-third between 16 – 26; one-third 26 - 40, and a third above 40. About 56% of the respondents replied that they are the head of their household. Given that 54% of respondents were female and 46% were male, significant numbers of women must be the heads of their households.

The question on education reveals that about 40% of the overall respondents have not been to school. The general level of education is important for the Sajhedari program while planning its activities, communications, and survey questionnaires.

Among the youth category respondents, 64% were female, 49% of them had completed high school, and 16% of female youth responded that they are the household head.

Figure 3 shows the disaggregation of the caste-ethnicity of all respondents, including the KAP survey of VDC secretaries (33%) and community leaders. Within the household surveys, Terai / Madheshi Janajatis were 35% of the total and one particular ethnic group that is very populous in the six districts, the Tharus, were 33% of total respondents. Within the religious minorities, Muslims were 2% of the total sample. In the CAC survey, Hill Dalits were 33% of the sample because the selection of CAC members

targets marginalized and disadvantaged people. Hill Brahmins/Chhetris were 35% of the sample. It should be noted that the relative sample sizes of each survey varied from 7,539 for the household survey to 174 for the CAC. The KAP survey was of 543 individuals.

Figure 2: Overview of household survey respondents by age, gender, education

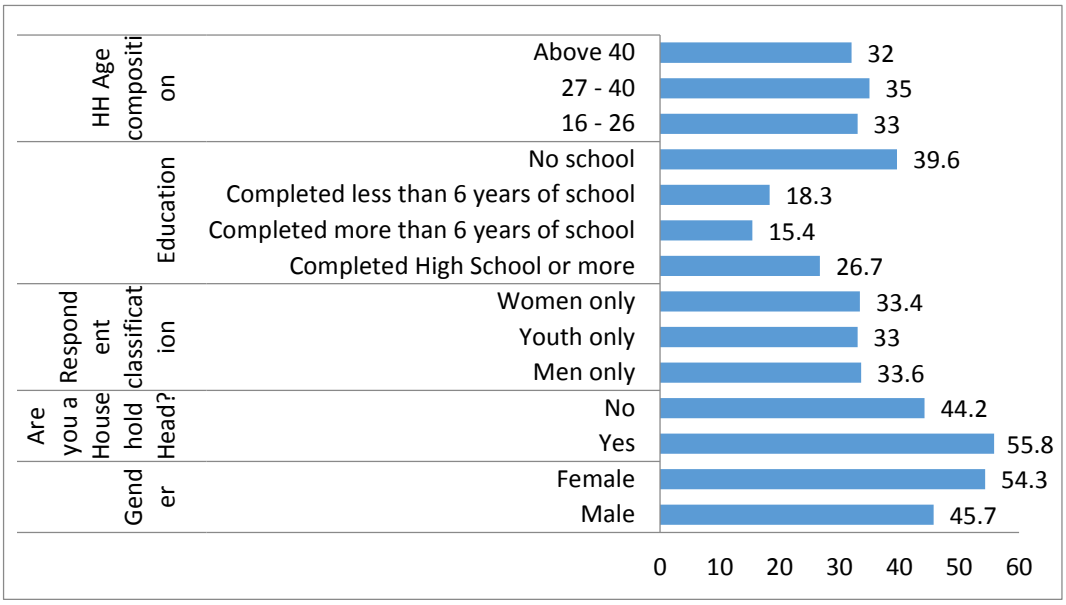


Figure 3: Disaggregation by caste-ethnicity of respondents for each component of baseline survey

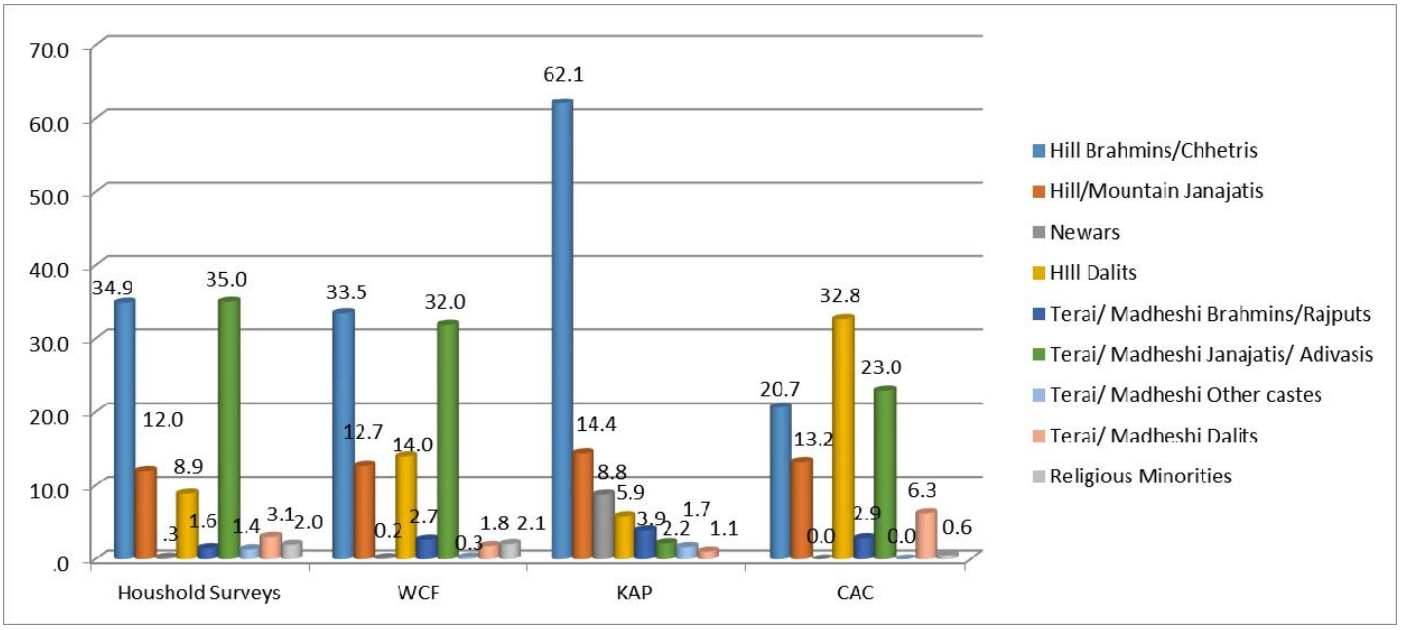


Figure 4a: Disaggregation by caste-ethnicity of respondents in household survey

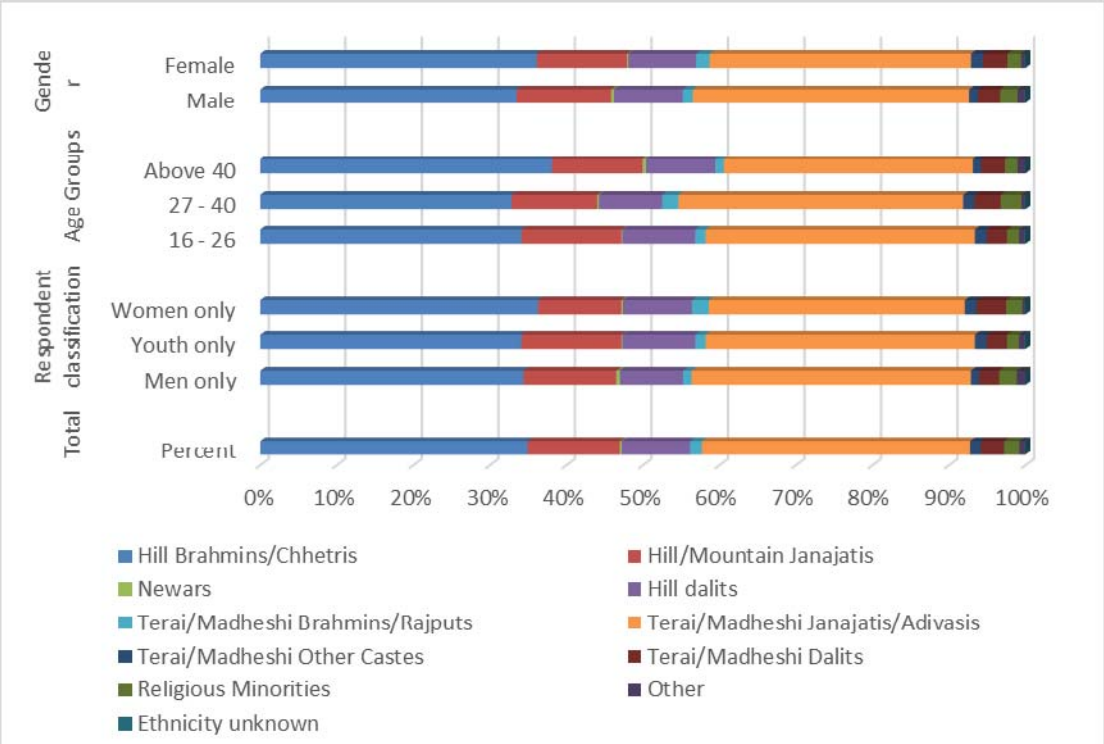
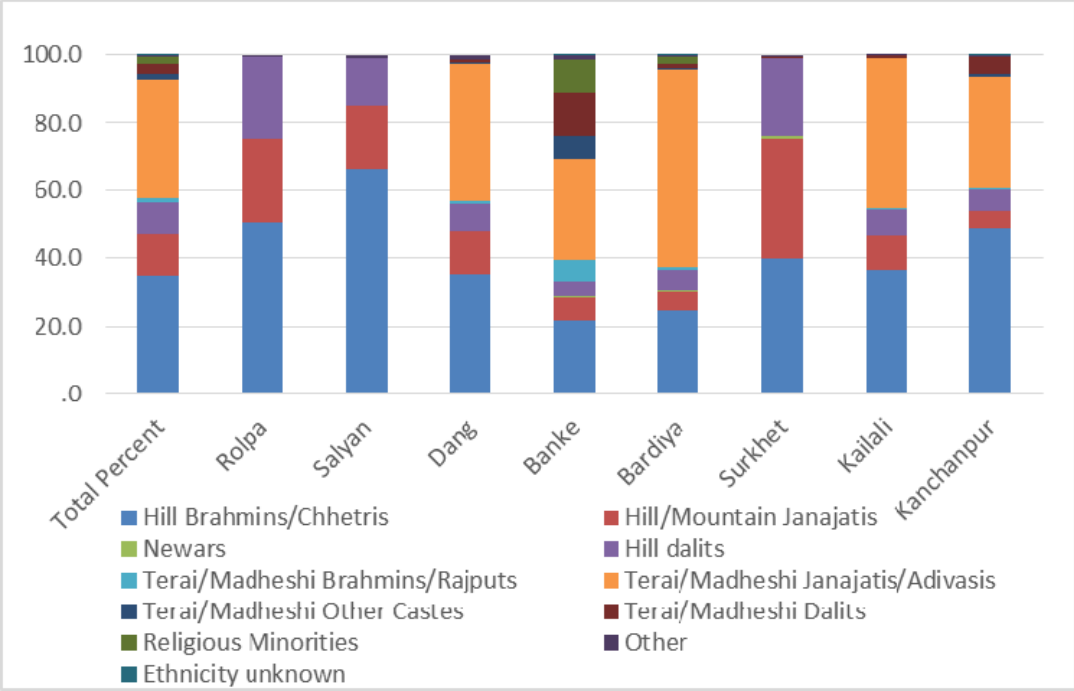


Figure 4b: Disaggregation by district and caste-ethnicity of respondents in household survey



3.2 DAT Survey

The DAT survey compiled the secondary data of 181 baseline survey and Sajhedari program VDCs. It should be noted that not all of the VDCs had all of the information available. The findings are as follows.

VDC secretaries: The key personnel in the VDCs are the secretaries, who are government employees assigned to the particular one or occasionally two VDCs. The caste or ethnicity of the 181 VDC secretaries was 80% Hill Brahmin/Chhetri and gender was 98% male.

Registered organizations: The DAT documented the numbers of registered organizations provided by each sample VDC office, not all of which could provide the information requested. The average numbers in each VDC with this data are shown in Figure 5. They indicate that savings and credit groups are the most common organizations, followed by forest user groups. However, it should be noted that although not all VDCs provided information on all groups, the information may exist but just could not be accessed. About 66% of VDC offices did not have a record of all registered youth groups in the VDC. Each VDC had a Citizen Awareness Center.

Table 4: Numbers of VDCs providing information on groups, average number of groups, VDCs without information on groups

	VDCs with info on groups	Mean in VDCs with groups info	VDCs without info on specific groups
Registered/renewed youth groups in CDO offices	**90**	3 mean in 90 VDCs	91
CMCs in the VDCs	**54**	1 mean in 54 VDCs	127
Social Mobilizers (under LGCDP) in the VDCs	**176**	1 mean in 176 VDCs	5
Forest user groups in the VDCs	**165**	9 mean in 165 VDCs	16
Saving and credit groups in the VDCs	**115**	29 mean in 115 VDCs	66
Women-run saving and credit groups in VDCs	**110**	22 mean in 110 VDCs	71
Cooperatives in the VDCs	**167**	6 mean in 167 VDCs	14
Women-run cooperatives in the VDCs	**96**	1 mean in 96 VDCs	85

VDC Planning Process: Each of 179 VDCs had an average of 29 projects approved in the fiscal year, with an average of 1 project for youth, 3 projects for women, 4 projects for children, 5 projects for marginalized groups, and 3 projects for agriculture. Most VDCs (83%) had an office; Citizen Charters were on display in 58% of VDCs. VDC profiles were done in 80% of VDCs, and annual plans in 96% and periodic plans in 30% of VDCs. The annual plans were of varying quality with 90% having community needs mapping but only 7.2% having resource outreach plans.

3.2 Knowledge Attitude Practice Survey

The KAP survey was done in 181 VDCs of the Phase-1 VDCs, phase-2 VDCs, and control VDCs in eight districts. Three interviews were conducted in every sample VDC leading to 543 interviews (i.e. 181 by 3). VDC secretaries/ officials were about 33% of the sample, followed by social mobilizers of LGCDP (22%), political party representatives (18%), teachers (9%) and representatives of CBOs/ civil society (7%). Hill Brahmins and Chhetris were 62% of the total respondents. See Figure 3 for the caste-ethnicity of respondents in the household survey. An overwhelming majority of KAP respondents (96%) have participated in the VDC planning process.

Indicator 10 (conflict sensitivity understanding): The findings of the KAP survey for VDC officials and community leaders can be used as a proxy for Indicator 10: Proportion of community leaders and local government officials with a good understanding of inclusive participatory planning, including "Do No Harm" and "Safe Effective Development in Conflict" principles. There is no significant difference in this regard by group or performance of VDCs with 51% in the phase-1 VDCs, 51% in the phase-2 VDCs, and 53% in the control VDCs.

The majority of VDC secretaries/ officials and social mobilizers have taken conflict sensitivity training as part of their jobs, while majority of others have not. However, the responses to the subsequent questions about conflict sensitivity suggest that many more of the KAP respondents understand these concepts and practices. Almost all of the local community leaders and VDC officials (99%) think that WCFs should be consulted to select their priority development projects before the projects are approved by VDC council. They also almost all agreed that it is important to seek the perceptions of 'junior' people and ensure that they have time to speak during meetings. There was no significant difference by group of VDCs and designation of respondents. Other indications of the KAP respondents understanding of conflict sensitively or SEDC were that the majority of KAP respondents (83%) do not think that an irrigation system that benefits only the large fields of landowners can be a 'connector.'

An overwhelming majority of the local community leaders and VDC officials (98%) replied that they should ensure that members of a user committee are actively involved in awarding contracts for transparent resource transfers: 92% replied that they do not think that they should listen only to 'senior' people and politicians in the community to avoid conflict. As well, 85% think that holding a community meeting at the home of a senior local political leader can divide the village because the village because the home is not a neutral place. Those who disagreed with this statement were significantly higher among representatives of CBOs/ civil society and social mobilizers in phase-1 and phase-2 VDCs. This apparent lack of understanding among CBOs and social mobilizers suggests a need for more training of these key personnel in local development activities.

Women's involvement and Budget allocations: In the KAP survey, 57% think that 33% of the representatives on local bodies (WCF, UG, CAC, IPC, and VDC council) should be women. Another 31% think that it should be 50% while 7% think that it should be between 34% and 49%. **:** About 49% strongly disagree with the statement that exclusive allocation of VDC budget to marginalized groups, women and children is <u>not</u> essential because the overall community projects directly benefit them. In their point of view, it is essential. Another 33% disagree with it.

Involvement of WCFs: Almost 99% of KAP survey respondents think that WCFs should be consulted to select their priority development projects before the projects are approved by VDC council. There is no significant difference in this regard across VDC groups. As well, slightly less than half of the people (46%) think that 30% to 39% of the total VDC development budget should be allocated to targeted groups (women, children, disabled, marginalized groups and senior citizens). Another 21% think that it should be between 50% and 59% while 15% think that it should be between 10% and 19%.

Discussion: There is apparently a high level of knowledge of conflict sensitivity, inclusion, and SEDC by local government staff and community leaders. However, as seen in the following sections only 7% of respondents in the household survey said that they have been involved in VDC planning. This would suggest that the implementation of this knowledge is lacking. The realization of the actual involvement could provide a possible opportunity for the work of Sajhedari.

3.3 WCF and CAC surveys

Ward Citizens Forums (WCF) and Citizens Awareness Centers (CAC) supported by LGCDP, aim to include disadvantaged people especially women and marginalized groups in the local decision making process. As a part of the baseline survey, 1,044 WCF members and 174 CAC members from 174 VDCs in eight districts of Nepal were interviewed about their participation in the VDC planning process. On average, each VDC comprises of 21 members, of which 9 members are women. However, among the WCF respondents: women were 45% and men 55%; 16% aged 16-26, 44% aged 27-40, and 40% above 40.

Participation in VDC planning process: The majority (54%) revealed they did not participate and 36% said that they did participate in the process. Of the 55% who did not participate in the planning process, 46% responded that they did not know about the planning process and 40% said that they were not informed about the meeting. Of those who had attended the meetings, 81% had asked questions or made suggestions and 60% felt that they had been listened to. However, 64% said that the VDC secretary was the major decision maker for local development in their VDC.

WCF meetings: The WCF members said that their WCF organized an average of 42 meetings in the past year, but the members in the survey said that they attended an average of four meetings. The main reasons for not attending were 'there are no WCF meetings' - 7.2%, I don't have time - 16.5%, and I am never informed about the meeting - 56.7%. Only about 27% of WCF members said that WCF suggestions are considered by VDC bodies and 52% of those said that it was because of the political parties. About 43% to the total WCF and CAC respondents said that the VDC budgets are used transparently, while 36% said that they are not.

Sources of information: Respondents said that 59% obtained information on budget expenditure in the VDC meeting. Moreover, 27% and 23% of the respondents established that they are acquainted about the budget expenditure in WCF meetings and via their own interest respectively. Only 13% said that they got the information about VDC expenditure in public meetings. From the rest of the respondents, 8% conceded that they don't know where they got the information while 6% of the respondents revealed other sources of information.

GESI Strategy: As Indicator 8 for Sajhedari was the proportion of WCFs with a GESI (Gender Equality and Social Inclusion) strategy, WCF members are asked if their forum had this strategy. About 55% of WCF respondents did not know if their WCF has a GESI strategy, while 23% of respondents knew the WCF had the strategy, and 22% knew that the WCF does not have this strategy. Of the 23% who have a GESI strategy in place, 61% said they have the copy of GESI strategy whereas 29% of the respondents said that they do not have the copy of the strategy. The implementation of GESI concepts would appear to be effective with an average of 43% women on the WCFs surveyed.

CAC responses: About 45% of the 174 CAC respondents said that they or another member of their CAC is also a member of the WCF, 22% for the IPC, 25% for the VDC, and 28% also a member of a User Committee. At least 49% of them knew the member of the WCF for their ward. On average, the respondents had attended 79% of the meetings of the CACs. If they had not attended, 33% said that it was because they had not been informed of the meetings.

3.4 Household Survey

The household surveys had a substantial sample of 7,539 individuals. Despite some reservations with the consent forms at the start of the interviews, over 99% of respondents said that they would agree to being re-interviewed in two years' time.

3.4.1 Youth survey

The educational level of youth respondents was the highest with 53% of youth having completed high school or more, and only 11% having had no school. However, among female youth respondents, 16% had never been to school and 15% had less than six years of school. However, the questionnaire did not investigate whether or not the respondent was literate.

About 10% of respondents in the youth category are members of a youth group. Only 15% of the youth group members said that their group participated in VDC planning. Of those not involved, 68% said that their youth group was not informed about the process or not invited. Only 13% said that they are involved in any economic activity and 85% of the youth interviewed are not involved in any sort of 'economic activities'; however, only 28% youth consider going outside of their village for employment. The data showing that 85% of youth are not involved in economic activities could be the result of the respondents not understanding the term 'economic activity' or that they did not consider agricultural production as an economic activity.

Female youth respondents: However, it is important to consider the findings of the youth survey in the context that 64% of youth respondents are female. Of female youth respondents, only 6% are members of a youth group, 9% are members of mother's/women's groups, 71% are not a member of any group, 66% are not currently enrolled in school or college, 91% said that they are not engaged in economic activities, and 81% said that they did not plan to migrate for employment. This information on the gender of youth respondents may have affected some findings in the youth survey, such as membership in a youth group. The gender of 'youth' and life situation of young women is an important consideration for the Sajhedari program while planning its activities, communications, and survey questionnaires.

3.4.2 Women survey

Among women survey respondents, 56% are under the age of 40, 35% are aged 40 – 60, and 9% are over the age of 60. About 66% of women responded that they are the household head. Of women respondents, 72% have not had any school and 12% have had less than six years of school.

Over 38% of women belonged to a mother's/women's group, but 52% said that they are not a member of any group. Since 31% of women said that they are a member of a savings and credit group, their mother's/women's groups must undertake this activity. At least 67% of women said that they are not a member of a savings and credit group. Just 10% of women are a member of a women's agriculture group and 18% are members of a community forest users group (CFUG). Only 1% of women respondents said that they are a member of a WCF. Of the total women respondents, only 4% are an executive committee member for any of the groups.

3.4.3 Men survey

The average age of respondents in the men survey was 46 years as compared to 40 for women. Over 88% of them said that they are the household head. Over 35% had had no school, 28% had less than six years of school, 18% had completed more than six years of school and 18% had completed high school.

In response the question on membership in groups, 69% said that they are not a member of any group, 16% are members of a user group, 2% are members of WCFs, and almost 2% of VDCs. Six percent of men are members of a political party.

3.5 Findings and analysis of questions relevant to Sajhedari

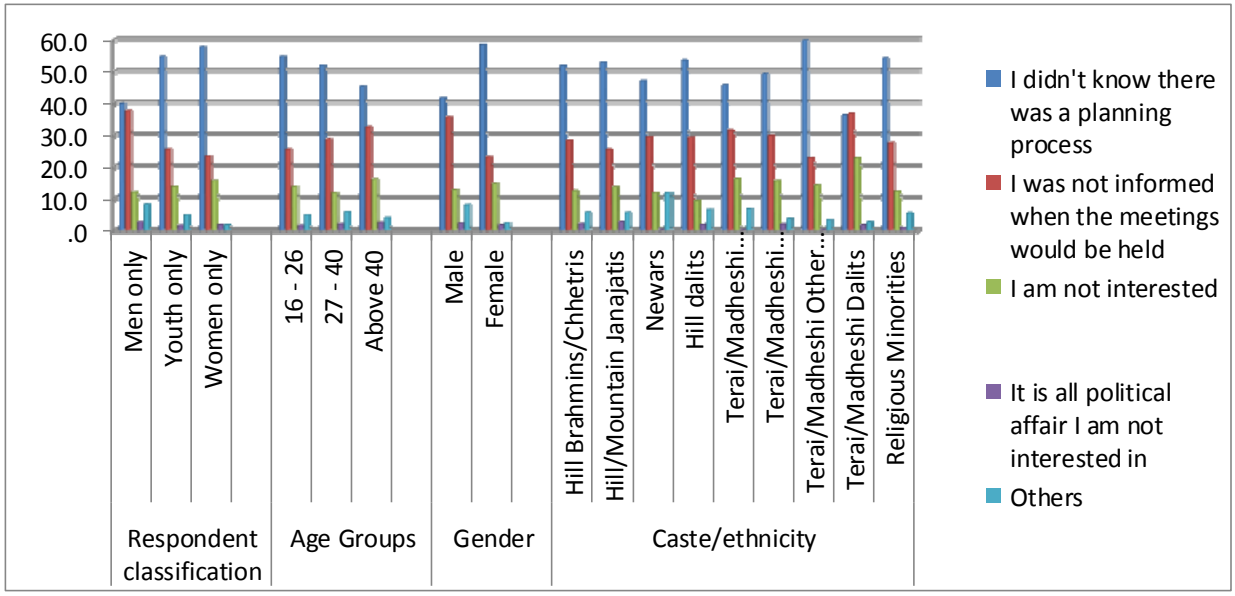
This section presents findings on these key questions that will inform the Sajhedari programming. However, first, two questions requested by USAID showed interesting results that present an opening for Sajhedari: 79% of respondents in the household survey felt that their community is heading in the right direction and 75% described their VDC as very or somewhat effective. While only 34% had ever attended a community improvement committee meeting, 94% said that they would attend community meetings if they had a chance.

3.5.1 Participation in the Planning Process

Only 7% of the household respondents replied that they had participated in the VDC planning process in the last year and over 85% of respondents had not. Youth participation in the planning process was recorded as only 4%, women as 5%, and men as 12%. However, 80% said the VDC was at least somewhat effective in encouraging development. The apparent contradiction –people are not involved in VDC planning, but they have a certain amount of trust in the process and institutions, presents opportunity for SB to build their capacity to engage in the planning process.

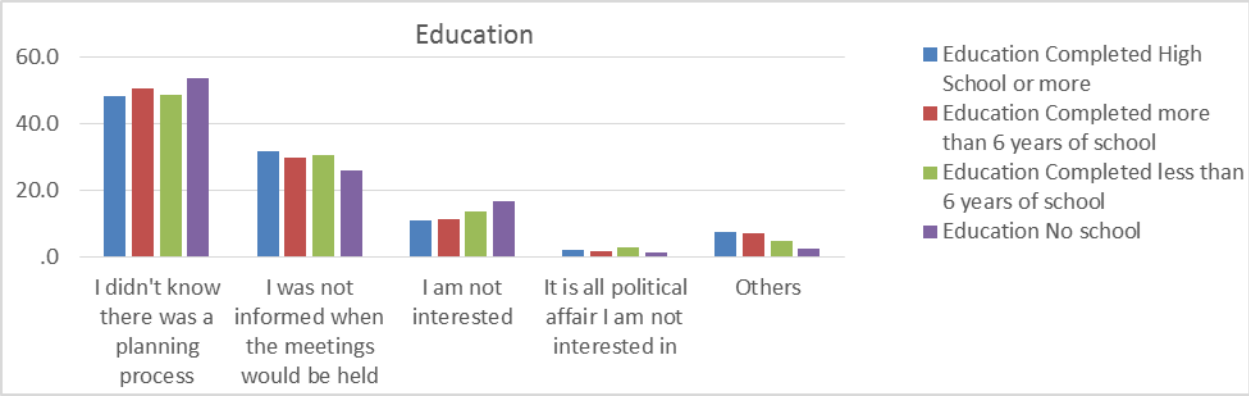
With only 7.3% of respondents having participated in the VDC planning process in the past year, the reasons for not participating are of particular interest to Sajhedari because almost 51% of those who did not participate said that they did not know that there was a planning process, with youth and women being in greater proportions, and up to 60% of Terai/Madheshi other castes giving this response. The exception was Terai/Madheshi Dalits who responded almost equally 'did not know there was a planning process' and 'not informed about the meetings'.

Figure 5: Reasons for not attending VDC planning meetings



When considering the responses to why individuals had not participated in the planning process, it is interesting to note that education did not matter. Similar proportions at each level of education gave the responses as shown in Figure 6. These results would suggest that schools and school groups could be a means of promoting knowledge about governance.

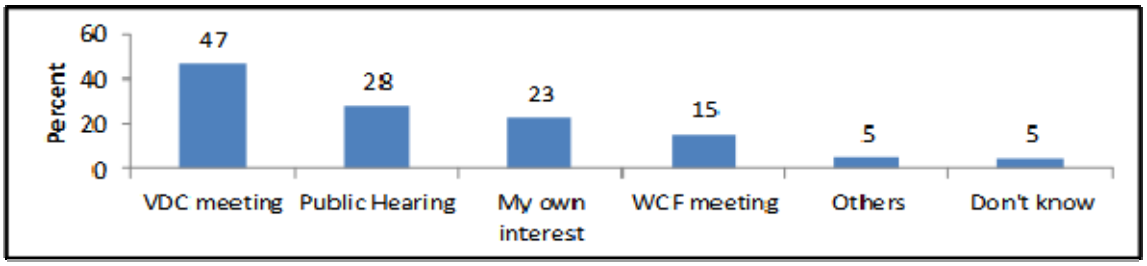
Figure 6: Reasons for not participating in the planning process do not depend on education



While 62% of the respondents felt that the development programs in the VDCs are designed as per the needs of local people, only 22% of the respondents knew about the VDC-approved projects in their wards. Of those who knew these projects, 61% had, or knew someone who had, helped implement or manage the project (Newars are 100%), 42% claimed that these projects are transparently managed, 29% said that the completed projects are of poor quality, and 28% perceived that there was corruption involved in the implementation of the projects. Of those who knew about the projects, 85% agreed that the project responded to a need in the community but 50% said that the project was never finished.

At the VDC level, only 19% of total respondents feel that the use of VDC funds in their community is transparent, 48% said the VDC budget was not transparent, and 34% said they do not know. For the question about the VDC budget allocated to the people in the community, of 7,539 respondents, 169 (2%) responded to the question regarding VDC budget allocation. The respondents said that an average of Rs. 2,245,818 was allocated for VDC in the fiscal year 2068-2069 (2012-13). On average, the budget distributed for women was Rs 142,476; children Rs 256,809; agriculture Rs 152,500; youth Rs 70,100; and marginalized groups Rs 144,038[5]. Of the respondents who knew about VDC expenditure, 47% got information at VDC meetings, 28% at public hearings, and only 15% at WCF meetings.

Figure 7: Sources of information about VDC expenditures for 2% of respondents who could answer question

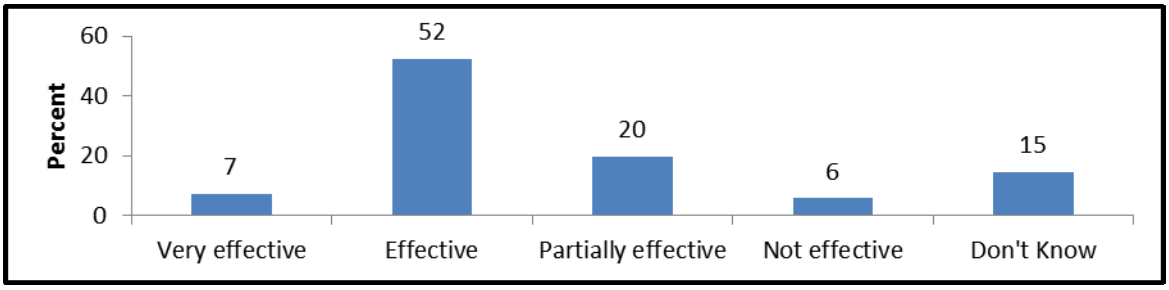


[5] The average amount reported for these headings is lower than the average amount as stated in DAT.

3.5.2 VDC Service Delivery:

Of the 40% of respondents who received services from their VDC offices in the last one year, 19% are highly satisfied and 73% are satisfied with the services. In terms of effectiveness of VDC services, 60% feel that the services are either very effective or effective, and 83% said that they had not had to pay 'extra fees' for timely service in the past year. However, this question may not have been explicit enough or too indirect for the respondents to understand.

Figure 8: Responses regarding effectiveness of VDC services for total respondents



Of the total respondents, 65% said that the VDC secretary is the major decision maker for local development in the VDC, and 85% said that they mostly or somewhat trust the VDC secretaries. In terms of presence of VDC secretaries at the VDC office, 2% of total respondents said they are never available, 29% said they are rarely available, 18% said they are often available, and 18% said they are always available. However, more than 35% of youth and women did not know about the availability of the VDC secretaries in their VDC offices, as compared to only 21% for men.

3.5.3 Engagement of youth, women, and marginalized groups

Of the total youth respondents, 89% are not involved in a youth group. Of those who are involved in youth groups, 70% had not participated in the planning process. As mentioned in the above section on the youth survey, 64% of the youth respondents are female and of them 94% are not a member of a youth group, 71% are not a member of any group, and 9% of female youth are members of mother's/women's groups.

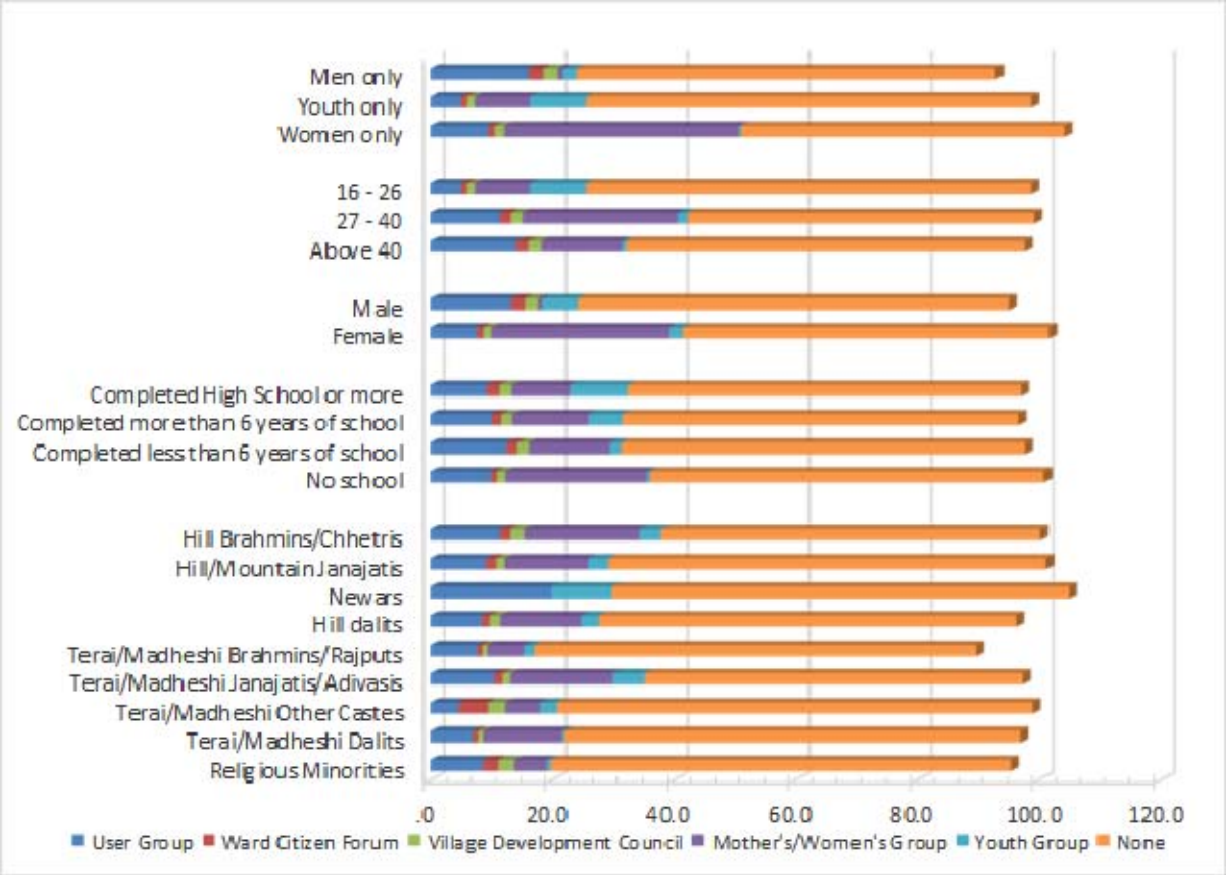
Of the total women interviewed, 31% of women interviewed are members of savings and credit groups and 67% are not. As well, only 12% are members of agriculture groups, while only 20% are members of community forest and user groups. Of the total women respondents, only 4% are the executive committee members for any groups. Of the women, those who had completed more than six years of school (including high school) are almost twice as likely to be executive members, and when disaggregated for caste and ethnicity, 20% of Newar women are executive members, while only 1.9% of religious minorities are. The other groups varied from 5.5% to 2.6%.

3.5.4 Perception on Community Development and Community Engagement

Despite their lack of membership in community groups, 79% of respondents think that their communities are heading in the right direction—with women being the most positive (82%) and men being more negative (74%). Regardless of disaggregations for any of the variables, the response was at least 74% positive. Respondents are also positive about VDCs encouraging development with 13% of the total saying that their VDCs are very effective in encouraging development in their communities, and 61% saying somewhat effective. Of all respondents, youth are most positive towards VDCs with 17%

considering VDCs being most effective in encouraging local development. However, only 50% of the men respondents have attended community improvement committee meetings, while 74% of youth and women have attended these meetings. Similarly, 57% of the women respondents said that they have tried to solve problems in their communities, but only 26% of men respondents.

Figure 9: Involvement in community groups (percentages total more than 100% due to multiple responses)



Involvement in community groups: When asked about their role in the community (Q 2.16), 65% of all respondents said that they are not a member of any group -- men at 69%, youth at 73%, and women with 53%. More women are members of a community group because 38.5% of women are members of Mothers'/Women's groups, which had the highest rate of involvement of any kind of group. Education was an interesting variable for Mother's groups with 23% of those who had no school being members and only 9.5% who had completed high school being members. When disaggregated ethnically, Terai Brahmins are least likely to be involved in community groups.

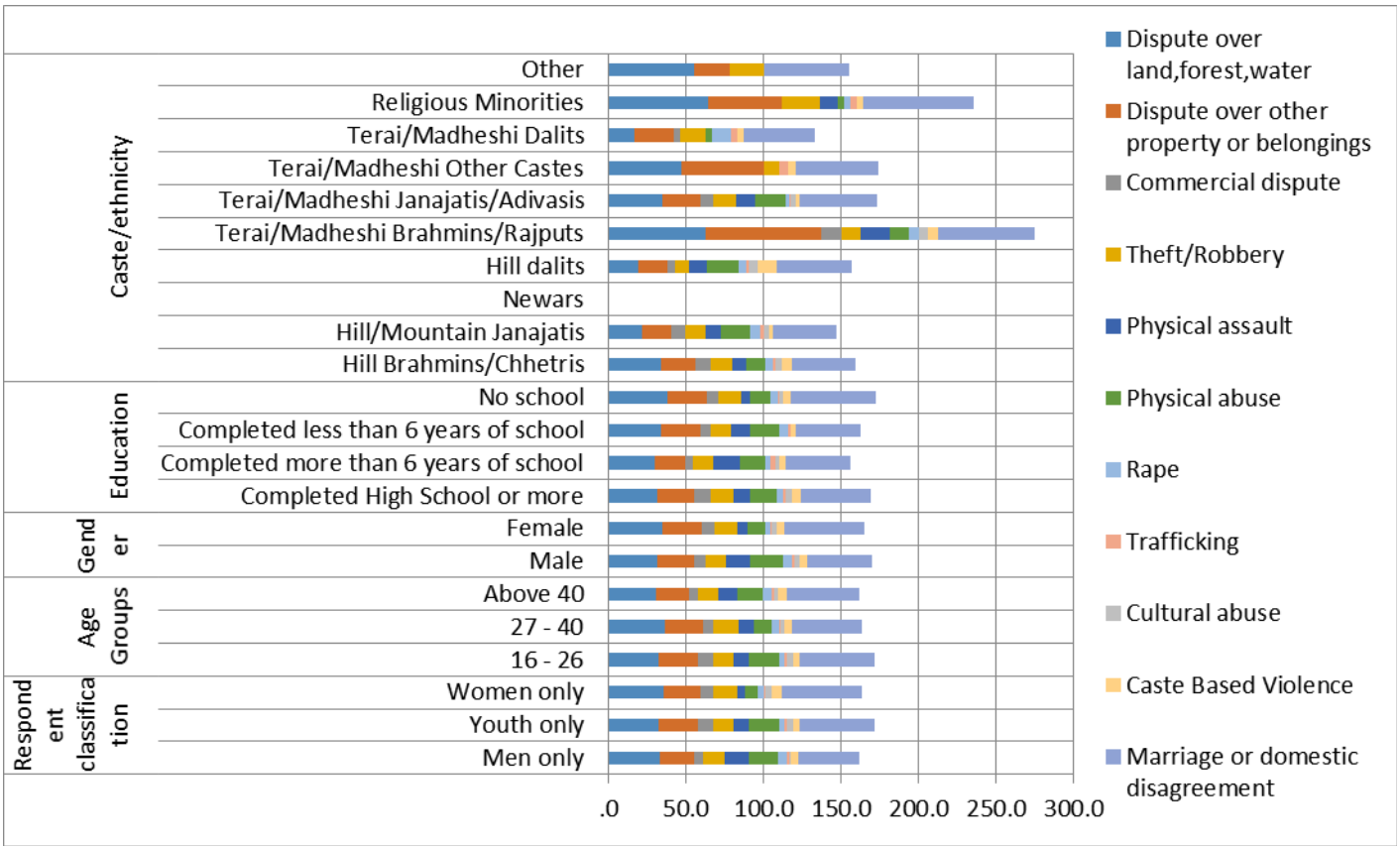
Youth group membership: Only 9% of youth respondents said they are members of youth groups, and 9.5% of those who had completed high school belong to a youth group. Ten percent of Newars are members of youth groups, but no Newars are in the youth category (16-26 years). Of the youth group members, 17.5% are male and 5.7% are female. Nine percent of youth respondents belong to mothers'/women's groups because the majority of youth respondents (64%) are female.

Political parties: Membership in political parties was greatest among religious minorities (6%), men (5.3% compared to 0.6% for women), and aged over 40 (4%). About 34% of the men respondents have attended meetings of a political party or political organizations, while only 8% of women.

3.5.5 Local Conflict/Dispute Management

An objective of Sajhedari is to reduce the situations that lead to instability in the communities. Seven percent of the total respondents reported about 680 conflicts/disputes within their households over the last year. As seen in Figure 10, the majority of disputes (37%) are related to marriage or domestic disagreements or to (45%) are disputes related to land, forest, water, and property issues. However, an important point related to gender-based violence is that of the conflicts that led to violence, 47% are marriage or domestic disagreements.

Figure 11: Types of disputes/conflicts disaggregated by variables (the question could have multiple answers)



The respondents had managed the disputes through a variety of means:

- 42% of conflict/disputes are managed by the conflicting parties on their own with a satisfaction level of 87% on the outcomes
- 12% of conflicts are managed through locally important persons/community leaders with a satisfaction level of 91%
- 6% went to the police with a 56%satisfaction level over the outcome
- 1% went to a CMC with a satisfaction level of 55%with the outcome
- 24% did nothing to manage the conflict.

Community Mediation Centers: Despite the fact that over 89% of respondents said that they mostly or somewhat trust Community Mediation Centres (CMCs), few cases are brought to CMCs. Of cases brought to CMCs, 66% relate to land, forest, water, and property issues; and 22% relate to marriage or domestic disagreements, a low rate given that 37% of all disputes relate to marriage or domestic situations. The low number brought to CMCs could relate to responses to question 9.10 on whether it is okay for a wife to seek community mediation. About 50% of respondents agreed that it is okay for a woman to seek community mediation if she has a problem in the house, with 57% of hill Dalits agreeing but only 36% of Terai Dalits and 34% of religious minorities agreeing. Interestingly, education is not a factor in whether or not people think community mediation is okay for a domestic dispute.

3.5.6 Trust in Local Institutions

Almost 80% of respondents mostly or somewhat trust local organizations and 85% trust their VDC secretaries. Similarly, 60% trust their secretaries to some extent in resolving conflict. The lowest level of trust is for political parties, followed by religious leaders. Figure 13 shows the relative levels of trust disaggregated among the different variables of respondents. Relevant to the work of Sajhedari is the fact that Terai/Madheshi groups have lower levels of trust of local organizations and CMCs than others.

Figure 12: Trust in local institutions

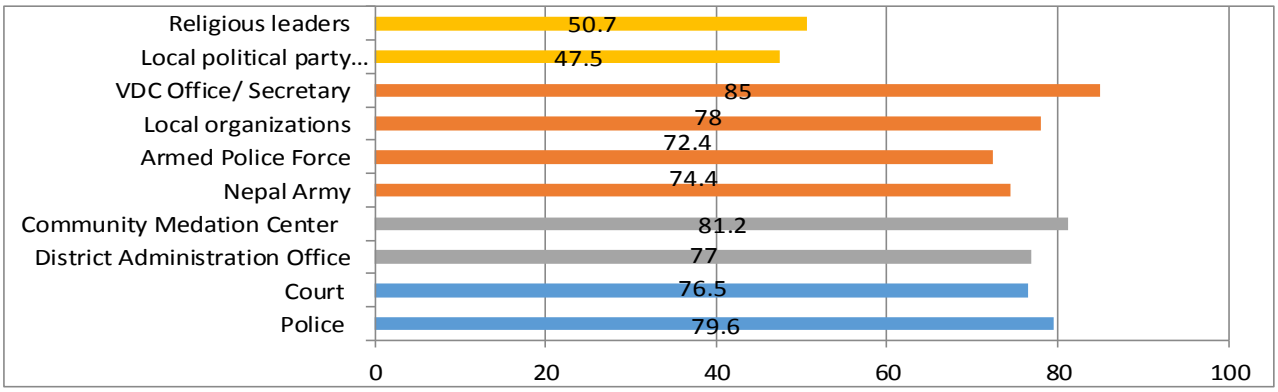
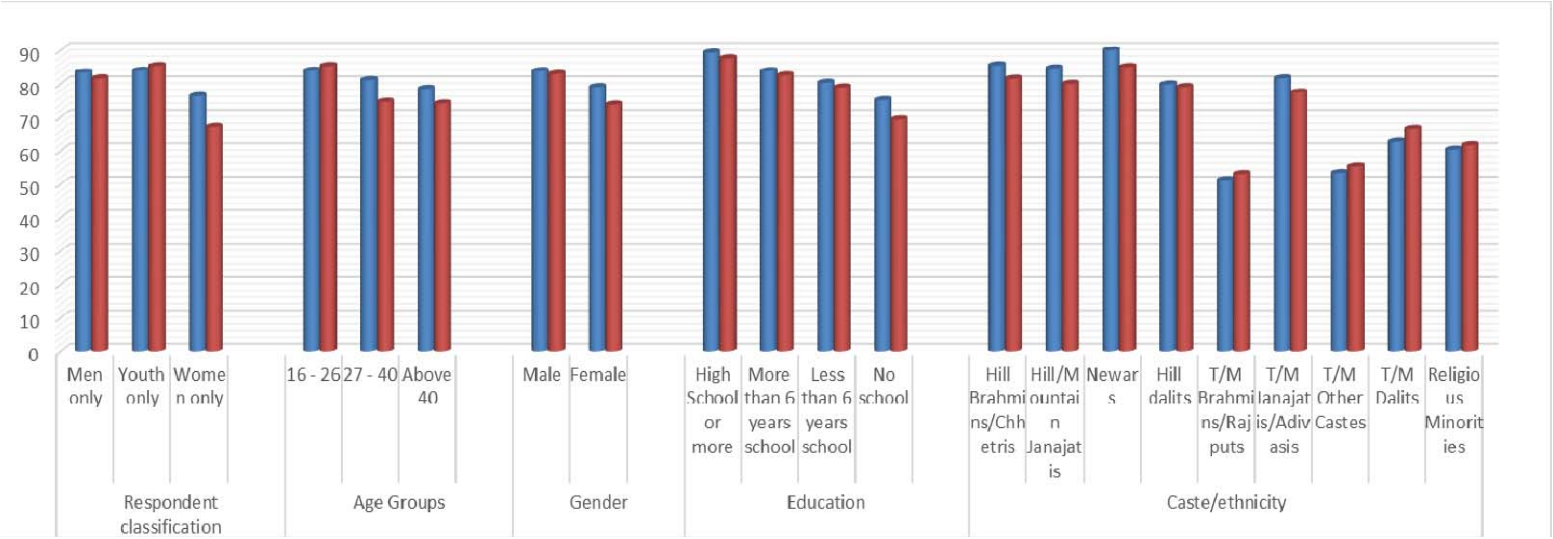


Figure 13: Disaggregated trust in local organizations and Community Mediation Centers



3.5.7 People's perception on gender roles

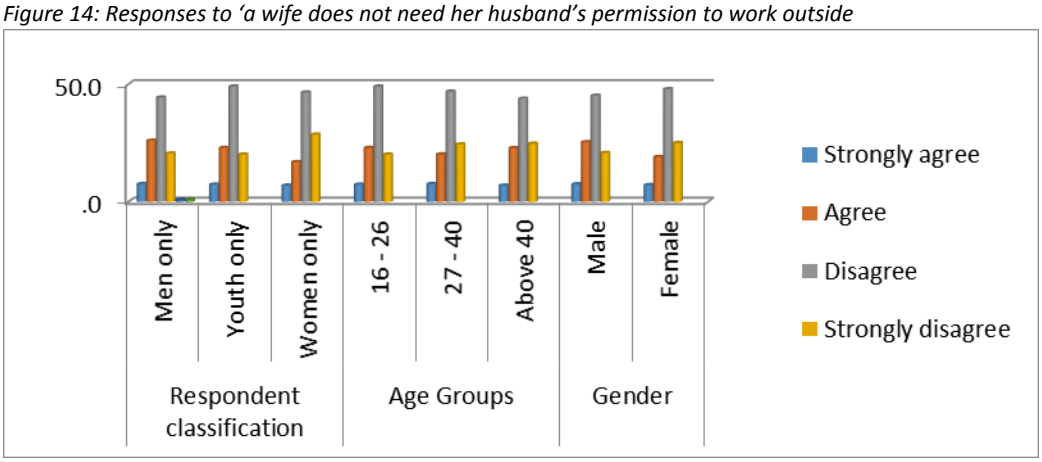
The findings on the perception of gender roles reveal inconsistent views on income, decision-making, and gender-based violence. Over 80% of respondents agreed that a woman's income should be given to her husband and almost 60% agreed that 'If a wife does not obey her husband, he has the right to punish her.' On the other hand, there was 77% agreement that under no circumstances should a man beat his wife and 80% disagreement with the statement 'when a woman is raped she is to blame'. The general perception was that a wife needs her husband's permission to do paid work, should give her income to her husband, but should not be beaten or blamed for GBV.

Decision-making: While a 70% of respondents disagreed with the statement that 'a woman does not need her husband's permission to do paid work', that is, that a woman does need permission; there was 98% agreement that women and men should decide together about important decisions that affect their family.

Gender-based violence: When examining the conflict questions from the GBV perspective, 37% of household disputes are related to marriage or domestic disagreements while of the conflicts that led to violence, 47% are marriage or domestic disagreements. This could suggest a greater tendency for marriage or domestic disputes to become violent.

When disaggregated for women of religious minorities (95% Muslim), the responses are 94% disagree with the statement that a woman is to blame when she is raped and 87% agreed that under no circumstances should a man beat his wife. However, 96% of respondents agreed that a woman should give her income to her husband and needs her husband's permission to do outside work. The results are similar but less extreme for Brahmin/Chettri and Tharu respondents.

Figure 14: Responses to 'a wife does not need her husband's permission to work outside



3.5.8 Responses to Media questions

FM radio: About 44% of total respondents said that they listen to radio as their main source of information on local governance, democracy, federalism, and inclusion.

Sources of information: For information on topics related to local governance, democracy, federalism and inclusion, 44% of the total respondents cite radio as their main source, 29% get information from their peers, 25% from television, 11% from newspapers, and only 3% from NGOs/CBOs.

Quality of governance coverage: The respondents said that their local FM stations broadcast information related to local governance, democracy, federalism, and inclusion on a daily (18.9%) or weekly (9.2%) basis. Of these, 44.7% rated the coverage as fair, 41.7% as good, and only 5.4% as excellent. Respondents rated the quality of coverage of issues related to youth, women, or marginalized groups by local radio stations: 30% of respondents said fair, 25.6% good, and only 4% excellent.

SSMK and Naya Nepal: About 52% of respondents said 'no' when asked if they listen to SSMK and 21% said 'don't know'. For Naya Nepal, about 59% did not listen and 22% did not know. Looking a bit further at the SSMK data, 31% of youth respondents said they listened to the program.

3.6 Numeric Values for Indicators

Numeric values for the indicators outlined in the PMP have been derived from the findings in the baseline survey including primary sources with the responses to questions and secondary sources with the data collected in the DAT survey. These values, the sources of data, and the equations used to derive the numeric values are presented in Annexes 3 and 15.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the baseline survey for USAID-funded Sajhedari Bikaas program generally show a high level of optimism among the respondents with 94% willing to attend community meetings, but a gap in their engagement in community affairs with only 7% being involved in their local governance, the VDC planning process. The level of education does not appear to be a significant factor in determining the level of participation, which does create an opening for the work of Sajhedari with schools and school groups. There is a large gap between the 94% of KAP respondents who have participated in the planning process and the 7% of household survey respondents.

The level of education of respondents does offer Sajhedari some guidance for the kinds of information and communications with 40% of all respondents and 72% of women respondents having never been to school. It is recommended that this be considered in the drafting of all media and even the questions for surveys.

The gender of youth respondents requires particular attention with an unexpected 64% being female. The situation of many of these young women would place them more as adult women, many without having had opportunities for education, and already members of mother's/women's groups. Hence, the participation in youth groups was overall low at just 10% with very few female youth participants.

VDC secretaries are generally trusted and perceived to be the main decision-makers for their VDCs and responded in a way indicating positive attitudes towards inclusion and conflict sensitivity, however, the implementation of these attitudes has not yet materialized with only 36% of WCF members participating in the VDC planning process and 1% of women respondents participating in the process.

To achieve its objective of community stabilization, Sajhedari works in conflict mediation. The level of trust of local institutions was highest for VDC secretaries and lowest for political parties. There was a high level of trust for Community Mediation Centers, but a low level of usage, perhaps driven by the fact that a high majority of respondents replied that a woman should not go to community mediation to solve domestic disputes, which are 37% of household disputes, but 47% of the disputes that led to violence.

Similarly, only about 30% of respondents listened to SSMK or Naya Nepal, which gives the Sajhedari program an opening to build awareness of these programs.

In conclusion, the baseline survey points to a huge opportunity for Sajhedari Bikaas to fulfill the hope and optimism of the majority of respondents by filling in the gaps between positive attitudes and practice in the communities and homes of its six working districts.