Community Perceptions of Safety and Security in Dhanusha District

(Findings from Community Safety and Security Research 2013)
All the opinions expressed in this document are the findings of a research carried out by Search for Common Ground Nepal and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of ESP and Nepal Police or any other organization or individual involved in this research.
Contents

Abbreviation ......................................................................................................................... 1
Executive Summary .................................................................................................................. 1

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION ............................................................. 5
1.1 Background and Objective ............................................................................................... 5
1.2 Research Methodology .................................................................................................... 5
1.3 Demographic Information of Respondents ...................................................................... 6

SECTION TWO: ACTORS INVOLVED IN SAFETY AND SECURITY ........................................ 7
2.1 Stakeholder Power, Interests, and Legitimacy .................................................................. 7
2.2 Trust Among the Actors ................................................................................................... 8

SECTION THREE: PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF SAFETY AND SECURITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL 10
3.1 What Makes Communities Feel Safe and Secure ............................................................. 10
3.2 Organisations or Agencies Responsible for Controlling Criminal Activities .................. 11
3.3 Community Mediation Centres and Paralegal Committees ........................................... 11
3.4 Factors Responsible for Enabling Peace and Security .................................................... 12

SECTION FOUR: LOCAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES RELATED TO SAFETY AND SECURITY 14
4.1 Feelings of Safety in the Community .............................................................................. 14
4.2 Security Problems that the Community Faces .................................................................. 14
4.3 Criminal Activities that Have Disrupted Peace and Security in the Last Six Months ......... 15
4.4 Nature of the Violence Suffered by the Respondent or Respondent’s Family .................. 15
4.5 Prejudice or Discrimination that Leave Respondents Feeling Insecure ........................... 17
4.6 Factors Affecting the Well-being of the Respondents’ Community ................................. 17

SECTION FIVE: THE COMMUNITY’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE, DOMAIN AND LIMITATIONS OF THE POLICE 18
5.1 Knowledge About the Nearest police Post ...................................................................... 18
5.2 Perceptions of the Role of the Police ............................................................................. 18
5.3 Expectations from the Police .......................................................................................... 19
5.4 Perceptions of Logistical, Numerical, and Infrastructural Factors on Police Effectiveness 19
5.5 Perceptions of Laws, Legal Punishments, and Violence Against Women ....................... 20
5.6 Perceptions of the Work of Police in the Community ...................................................... 20

SECTION SIX: THE COMMUNITY’S EXPERIENCE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THE POLICE 21
6.1 Personal Relations and Comfort in Interactions with Police Officers: ............................. 21
6.2 Response to Police Investigations of the Community ...................................................... 21
6.3 Perceptions of Comfort at the Police Office .................................................................... 22
6.4 Perceptions of Language Difficulties .............................................................................. 22
6.5 Reporting to the Police When the Respondent Is a Victim ............................................ 22
6.6 Reasons for Not Going to the Police .............................................................................. 23
6.7 Cases or Requests that the Police Receives from the Community ................................... 24
6.8 Police Initiatives to Improve Peace and Security ............................................................ 24
6.9 Activities the Police Should Prioritise ............................................................................. 24
6.10 Contacting Political Parties When There Are Problems Related to Peace and Security ............... 25
6.11 Using Mediators During Reporting .................................................................................................. 26
6.12 General Perceptions About the Police ............................................................................................... 27
6.13 Perceptions About Police Behaviour and the Nature of Their Work .............................................. 28
6.14 Thanking the Police ......................................................................................................................... 29

SECTION SEVEN: THE COMMUNITY’S OPINION ON THE POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP ......................... 30
7.1 Rating the Relationship Between the Police and the Community ...................................................... 30
7.2 Importance of a Close Relationship Between the Police and the Community ..................................... 30
7.3 Increasing Trust in the Police ............................................................................................................. 31
7.4 Cooperating with the Police .............................................................................................................. 32

8. CONCLUSION ......................................................................................................................................... 33
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAO</td>
<td>District Administration Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGDs</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPC</td>
<td>Local Peace Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Nepal Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIL</td>
<td>Power, Interest, and Legitimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC</td>
<td>Paralegal Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFCG</td>
<td>Search for Common Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAW</td>
<td>Violence against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>Village Development Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary

Nepal’s security forces face increasing law enforcement challenges amid the current political environment of corruption and instability. Part of that challenge lies in building public confidence in police forces. While national political parties are engaged in negotiations to come to agreement on numerous unsettled issues, persisting crime and a general sense of insecurity have started to rise in the aftermath of the decade-long armed struggle.

The overall objective of this study is to shed light on community perceptions of safety and security in Nepal. A clearer understanding of local community experiences and relations with police will further enable appropriate ESP/DFID project design. This study focuses on the Dhanusha District in particular, aiming to represent and examine the status of police engagement and collaboration with local communities in the area. Although the study is broadly quantitative in nature, it also pulls from a variety of research methods such as literature review, individual interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). A total of six Village Development Committees (VDCs) from Dhanusha District were selected to ensure a representation of different social identities based on geographical location, sociocultural identities, and minority status. The study employed a two stage stratified cluster sampling strategy; 798 total households were randomly selected from the sampled districts.

Highlights from the perception survey findings include:

Actors Involved in Safety and Security

- The Nepal Police (NP) has a mandate to enhance safety and security in the community. They are regarded as a “dominant actor” based on power, interest and legitimacy analysis. However, local community members did not show considerable trust towards the police or their work.
- Civil society is regarded as an “influential actor” with positive interest in managing local level conflict/disputes.
- VDCs—responsible for local development—are viewed as “dormant actors” that hold power but do not actively participate in decision-making processes regarding community safety and security.
- The media was deemed as not adequately supporting safety and security issues as expected by members of the local community.

Public Understanding of Safety and Security at the Local Level

- Survey results show that the majority of communities feel safe and secure in the presence of police, as well as when there is a sense of discipline and unity among community people to end criminal activities.
- Despite the presence of locally based organisations that provide protection to community members, not all groups are aware of such organisations.
- A significant percentage of respondents across all categories mentioned that the community itself controlled crime and maintained peace and security.
- Most people (81%) either did not know whether community mediation centres existed in their community or thought that they were not present. Larger percentages (98%) did not know of the existence of a paralegal committee in their community.
- Prohibiting alcohol use was identified as a key factor to enabling peace and security.

---

1Two-stage cluster sampling, a simple case of multistage sampling, is obtained by selecting cluster samples in the first stage and then selecting sample of elements from every sampled cluster.

2Bengadabar, Dhanushadham, Khajuri Chanaha, Phulgama, and Mauwa
• Lack of educational and employment opportunities were also identified as factors leading to insecurity.

Local Problems and Issues Related to Safety and Security
• People who felt unsafe mostly (53%) agreed that it was the presence of criminal activities in their neighbourhood that made them feel unsafe.
• Of the people from the Dalit and Muslim minority communities, however, 57% reported feeling most unsafe when police would come to their communities but would not help them. This sentiment was echoed by 33% of the surveyed Muslim community and 27% of the non-Muslim/non-Dalit community.
• Violence due to arms and bombs, armed group activities, abduction, murder, and extortions/forced donations decreased compared to previous years.
• 84% of surveyed Dalits reported that they had experienced violence as a result of “misbehaviour and the use of obscene language.”
• Across different levels of educational attainment, those who identified as illiterate responded having faced violence as a result of “misbehaviour and use of obscene language” more than any other group (82%), 67% of those with primary education reported likewise. In the survey, most respondents stated that they feel the use of foul language (and misbehaviour) makes them insecure. This was especially true of more vulnerable groups like those who are illiterate, Dalits, and women, particularly as these groups may be more sensitive to the usage of such language if they feel it is directed against them.
• 40% Dalits reported being victims of sexual violence: a clear cause for concern. On the other hand, Muslims and women of other groups did not report a single case of sexual violence, raising suspicions of underreporting.
• These results coincide with some of the FGD feedback in which poverty was seen as the main factor for discrimination among people in the community.
• Violence due to armed groups, bombs, and abductions seem to have declined but violence against women (VAW) and personal disputes seem to have increased compared to the previous years.
• Compared to other ethnicities, Dalit communities reported feeling the most discriminated due to poverty.

The Community’s Understanding of the Role, Domain, and Limitations of the Police
• 95% of respondents did not know the phone number of the nearest police station.
• On average, about half of all respondents stated that there were no female police officers working in their village/role.
• People are generally aware about the role and responsibilities of the police. 76% of the respondents were able to say that the role of the police was crime control, while 50% said its role was maintaining law and order to preserve security. 37% of respondents believed it to be crime investigation.
• More than half of the non-Dalit or non-Muslim community agreed with that the role of the police was enforcement of law and order. Only 39% of the Dalit community and 46% of the Muslim community held this view. Of the two marginalised ethnic communities—Dalits and Muslims—the former appear to have a poorer understanding of the role of the police.
• 60% of respondents did not agree with the statement that police ineffectiveness was due to infrastructural problems or lack of personnel.
• 60% of respondents stated that the police did not do any significant work in their community.
• Respondents believe in strong action against perpetrators of VAW and believe that the police take appropriate action against such people. However, many respondents seem to understand
the complexities of VAW crimes, including why they may be underreported. There appears to be a general fear of putting the reporter and the female victims at risk of retribution by the perpetrator if legal action is taken against him.

The Community’s Experience and Relationship with the Police

- 47% of male respondents had met with or discussed matters with a police officer whereas only 19% of female respondents had done the same.
- Dalits and especially Muslims appear to have less contact or interaction with the police compared to other ethnic groups. A member of the Muslim community is three times more likely to deny any involvement in a case than a member of the non-Dalit or non-Muslim community.
- 39% of survey respondents reported that they have gone to a police station. Of those who reported having visited the police station, about 70% reported feeling comfortable in the presence of police officers. Only 3% felt scared and 13% hoped never to talk to police again due to their behaviour.
- 5% of respondents declared being a victim of criminal activity. Among these respondents, 51% reported that they or their family went to the police to report the case. Of those who reported to police, 35% stated that their claims were registered but no action was taken. 38% of women reported this to be the case as opposed to 33% of men reporting the same. 33% of women, but only 14% of men reported that they did not file a case with the police because they thought the perpetrator would create problems for them in the future. 17% of Dalits did not file a case with the police because they did not know what the process involved and believed the village Panchayat usually resolved such cases.
- The survey found that women face challenges in reporting to the police. 33% of women believe that the police take bribes; they do not know the proper legal processes, and that reporting a case to the police could create problems for them in future. None of the men surveyed held these views.
- More Muslims (25%) than non-Muslim/non-Dalit (13%) or Dalits (6%) reported police taking action on crimes like VAW. This study indicates that Muslims have comparatively greater awareness of the Nepal Police’s role and are more likely to call the police when crimes occur. 50% of men and 67% of women within the Muslim community reported that the police have taken action on VAW.
- Women had significantly fewer political contacts and used them less frequently than men. Dalits similarly had fewer contacts and used them less often than other groups. However, the margin between Dalits and other groups was not the same as that between men and women. Respondents with intermediate level education had the most contacts and used them more often than other groups.
- Of the 441 people that went with the help of other people to report cases to the police (44% of respondents), 85% stated that the mediators were influential people of the village. 56% of respondents stated that they took political party leaders as mediators.
- Women, Dalits, Muslims, and the illiterate seem to think that the police have generally provided them with help, given them information, or encouraged them to file cases.
- More members of the non-Dalit and non-Muslim community stated that they have received police help. However, many of them also stated that the police were unfair and unprofessional, and that those wishing to report a case had to repeat the process many times. Significantly more Muslims and Dalits stated that the police did not help them or that it was difficult to submit queries.
- Language barriers did not appear to be a problem in interactions with the police, although small minorities of women (9%), Dalits (10%), and the illiterate (3%) reported facing some difficulties.
• 35% of respondents reported that their cases were registered without actions taken, including 50% of the Muslims identifying as victims of crime.
• 47% of Muslims, 29% of non-Muslim and non-Dalit, and 28% Dalits stated that police did not provide enough encouragement to file cases at the nearest police post. 52% of Muslims, 37% of Dalits, and 36% of non-Muslim/non-Dalits stated that only "important" people could approach the police.

The Community’s Opinion on the Relationship Between the Community and the Police

• 27% of respondents answered that police-community relations were good or quite effective. 57% agreed that it was "necessary to build relations because it is only with this support that peace can be built."
• 64% of respondents stated increased patrolling would allow communities to have more trust in the police. 23% stated that awareness of law enforcement needed to be improved for greater trust, while 25% believed increased police-community interactions would enable greater trust.
**SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Background and Objective

Nepal’s security forces face increasing law enforcement challenges amid the current political environment of corruption and instability. Part of that challenge lies in rebuilding general public confidence in the police. Studies show that public perceptions of the Nepal Police (NP) can be negative; some associate the NP with poor quality of services, corruption, and irresponsibility. These perceptions in turn demoralize and demotivate police personnel. But misperceptions of the police begin in childhood in many Nepali homes. Parents playfully scare children into obedience by citing the police as dispensers of punishment. This practice has over time contributed to the negative perception people have of police. Children are not systematically taught, at home or at school, of the police’s actual role in guarding the security and safety of the community.

The project contributes to the overall expected impact of ESP/DFID to make state institutions “effective, inclusive and accountable contributing to peace and security in Nepal.” One police initiative currently underway is changing the negative perceptions of security forces in Nepal. NP are committed to building a more positive image of its work by making the police more accessible to the public, respecting the views of community members, responding quickly to calls, and treating people in a fair, equitable, and professional manner.

The overall objective of the study is gather representative information on Nepali perceptions of the police. This information can then be applied to the design and evaluation of future ESP/DFID security and justice programmes. The research captures the current nature of police-community engagement and collaboration, as well as the perception of communities towards police work in the Dhanusha District. Furthermore, this study depicts the Dhanusha public’s understanding and opinion of security and safety issues.

1.2 Research Methodology

Although the study is broadly quantitative in nature, it employs various mixed methods such as a literature review, individual interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The survey thus complements quantitative analysis with qualitative methods to gain insight into how the general public perceives security and safety issues.

The survey consisted of three separate survey instruments: (i) a household questionnaire; (ii) FGDs with police personnel (APO), non-Dalits/non-Muslims, Dalits, and Muslims; and (iii) Social Analysis Tools to describe key stakeholders characteristics and relations as well as to access the network of trust between stakeholders.

A total of five VDCs\(^2\) and the Janakpur municipality from Dhanusha district were selected to ensure a diverse demographic representation based on geographical location, socio-cultural identities, and minority status. The study employed a two stage stratified cluster sampling strategy. First, 2-3 wards from each VDC were selected randomly. Second, households were also selected randomly from the selected wards. The sample size was based on a formula\(^3\) to estimate and reflect the proportions of different groups in the population. Due to the unknown variability, \(p = 0.5\) (maximum variability) was assumed and the sample size was calculated based on a 95% confidence level. Due to clustering in the two stage sampling design, the calculated sample size was doubled to allow for a design effect. Although a total of 768 households should have been sufficient to represent the districts, this figure was rounded up to 800 households as a buffer against non-response (see Annex 3 for details).

---

\(^2\) Bengadabar, Dhanushadham, Khajuri Chanaha, Phulgama, and Mauwa

\(^3\) \(n=(Z*Z)pq/(e*e) = 1.96*1.96*0.5*0.5/(0.05*0.05) = 384.16\)
Community Perceptions of Safety and Security in Dhanusha District

Sampled VDCs and Municipality

Khajuri Chanaha is a VDC in the Dhanusha District; it is situated about 10km east from the municipality’s centre. No DFID-funded projects are underway in Khajuri Chanaha. It has a total population of 5,974 across 1,063 households.

Phulgama VDC lies 6km south from the municipality. DFID currently funds Community Mediation work in Phulgama as implemented by the Janakpur-based HUSODAN. Meanwhile, a new NPTF-funded police post is under construction. Its total population is 12,143 across 2,193 households. More women (6,104) live in Phulgama than men (6,039).

Janakpur falls in the municipality area and is home to the ADB/JFPR-funded Women and Children Service Centre in NP DPO. The total population of the Janakpur Municipality is 97,776 across 19,183 households. More men (51,838) live in Janakpur than women (45,938).

Mauwa falls approximately 9km out on the eastern side of the municipality. There are no DFID-funded projects in the area. The total population of the Mauwa VDC is 5,782 across 1,056 households, where men (2,880) are fewer in number than women (2,902).

Bengadawar lies 28km out on the northern stretch of the municipality. The Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN) is currently implementing a DFID-funded Community Support Project in this VDC. Bengadawar’s total population is 12,125 across 2,281 households. The population male population (6,253) is higher than the female population (5,872).

Dhanushadham is a VDC that lies 15km northeast of the municipality where the RRN is implementing a DFID-funded Community Support Project. Its total population is 8,662 across 1,636 households; 4,004 men and 4,658 women comprise the population.

1.3 Demographic Information of Respondents

There were a total of 798 respondents (99.75% response rate), of which 70% were men and 30% were women. There are significantly fewer female respondents in the survey as many women did not feel comfortable responding to questions in the presence of men, even if the interviewer was female. 2% of respondents were below the age of 16; 40% were between the ages of 16-29. 33% of respondents were 30-45 years of age while 25% were 45 and above. The majority of respondents were married (73%), 24% unmarried, 3% widowed, and 1% divorced.

90% of respondents were from the Madhesi community while the remaining 10% were from the Pahade community. In terms of caste disaggregation, the majority of respondents were Brahmin/Chhetri/Other (31%), followed by Dalit (28%), Muslim (24%), and Janajati (23%).

32% of respondents were illiterate while 18% had primary level education. 16% had obtained the School Leaving Certificate (SLC), 13% had passed the Secondary level, and 10% had Informal education of some kind. Approximately 9% had an intermediate or plus two degree, 2% had a bachelor’s degree, and 1% had a master’s degree. In terms of occupation, 8% were unemployed,
12% were students, 28% were farmers or involved in agriculture, 12% were housewives, 16% were involved in business, 10% were labourers, 3% worked in the private sector, 2% worked in a government office and 2 respondents, (0%) worked in an NGO.

**SECTION TWO: ACTORS INVOLVED IN SAFETY AND SECURITY**

2.1. Stakeholder Power, Interests, and Legitimacy

Social analysis tools\(^4\) were employed throughout the survey to construct a list of major actors involved in maintaining community safety and security. A participatory discussion was held among 17 community members to create profiles of the parties involved in a core problem or action based on four factors (i) power, (ii) interests, (iii) legitimacy, and (iv) existing relations of collaboration and conflict. The objective was to describe concretely key stakeholder characteristics and relations and to explore ways to resolve social problems (e.g. building trust or empowering marginalized communities).

During the discussions, participants said that Nepal Police (NP) has a responsibility to enhance safety and security in the community. This categorized NP as “dominant actors”\(^5\) in security with regards to their power, interests, and legitimacy. Although community members agreed that police presence is necessary to enhance safety and security at the local level, they lacked significant trust in the police (reasons for which are examined in subsequent sections of this report). Elsewhere, mediators/Para-Legal Committees (PLCs) are being mobilised in the community to facilitate conflict resolution. These actors have been categorized as “vulnerable” insofar as their weak claims on legitimacy do not allow them to work effectively.

![Table (1): Analysis of Actors/Stakeholders](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Interest (+ve &amp; -ve)</th>
<th>Legitimacy</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stakes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Leader</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediators/PLC</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+/-)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Community</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Peace Committee</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police/Police Beat</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward Committee</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+/-)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite/Influencing Person</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>(+/-)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^5\) Stakeholders that possess their power, legitimacy and interest and those who have great influence in the affairs of a stakeholder system. Since they have strong legal or social authority, community need to pay close attention to the claims of the dominant actors, even though these claims are not urgent or a priority. The claims made by such actor are generally thought to be preferable. Additionally, the desires of stakeholders are often included in formal planning.

\(^6\) **Actors that may influence the action or situation.** Power is the ability to influence others and use the resources that stakeholders control to achieve a goal. These resources include political authority, economic wealth, ability to use force or threats of force, access to information, and the means to communicate.

\(^7\) **Actors that may be affected (winning or losing) by the action or situation.** Interests are the gains and losses that stakeholders experience based on the results of existing or proposed action.

\(^8\) **Actors that have recognized rights, responsibilities, and resolve.** Legitimacy is when other parties recognize by law.
During the discussion, community members examined the positive contributions of community mediators. It was suggested in these talks that conflict resolution would be better facilitated if mediators had enough authority. Elsewhere, civil society was categorized as “forceful actors” who have influence over community members and a positive interest in managing local level disputes. VDCs—responsible for local development—are viewed as “dormant actors” that hold power but do not actively participate in decision-making processes regarding community safety and security.

Discussion participants stated that media/elite persons were viewed as “forceful actors” and political leaders seen as “influencing actors” who have the ability to shape community perceptions. However, these actors had reportedly created some of the violence and conflict in the community.

The local community and ward committee were categorized as “marginalised actors” while local peace committees that have a certain level of legitimacy and authority were regarded as “respected actors.” Concerns remain that these actors are only collecting data on conflict-affected people and not paying enough attention to decision-making and resolving conflicts effectively at the local level. After rating each stakeholder in terms of power, interests, and legitimacy, results indicate that Nepal Police have more stake to the realm of safety and security while political leaders can play a major role in creating awareness of these issues among local communities. VDCs need to be paid more attention and better integrated in decision-making processes. Forceful actors (civil society, media, and elite persons) should be more cognizant of the future impacts of their decisions.

### 2.2 Trust Among the Actors

A network dynamics analysis was also conducted among 17 community members to gain insights on the network of trust between stakeholders involved in core issues of community safety and security. A network of trust is a set of connections where people show confidence in other parties

---

9 Network dynamics, is one of the tool of Social Analysis System, used to assess an existing network using “the extent to which each stakeholder trusts other stakeholder”. During this survey the tool was used to assess the trust between different stakeholders involved in community safety and security.
and rely on them to provide support, to behave in appropriate ways, and to do what they are expected to do.

During the rating process, people answer the questions: “To what extent does [name of row stakeholder] trust [name of column stakeholder]?” The rating scale ranges from 0 (no trust) and 10 (high trust). The resulting matrix below is an index for trust in others (vertical axis) and an index for trust by others (horizontal axis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nepal Police</th>
<th>Local community</th>
<th>VDC</th>
<th>Mediators</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Elite</th>
<th>Political Leaders</th>
<th>LPC</th>
<th>Trusts others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nepal Police</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local community</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediators</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Leaders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusted by others</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Civil society and community mediators were key stakeholders that had the greatest trust in other groups and enjoyed the greatest trust by others. Although political leaders, elites, and VDCs are highly trusted highly by others, they themselves exhibit lower trust in other groups. Conversely, the Nepal Police and local community were found to be poorly trusted by others but exhibited high levels of trust for others. The media were deemed not to be adequately supporting the community in safety and security issues. Although the VDC is the institution with overall responsibility for local development, it does not trust others equally well. Due to the bridging role that political leaders and civil society play between the community and police, VDCs may believe they are isolated from local community and are only trusted by political leaders.
SECTION THREE: PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF SAFETY AND SECURITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

3.1 What Makes Communities Feel Safe and Secure

The survey results show that majority of the communities feel safe and secure when (multiple response question):

- there is police presence in the communities (65%),
- there is a sense of discipline and unity among community people (61%), and
- there is an end to criminal activities (37%)

In addition, protection by political parties (8%) and protection provided by various organisations (4%) also make the communities feel safe and secure. From 798 total respondents, 68% of the men and 58% of the women felt that police presence in the community made them feel secure. 61% of men and 60% of women also claimed that a sense of discipline and unity among the community people contributed to safety and security. 40% of men and 30% of women believed that the end of criminal activity in the community made them feel safe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/Can’t say</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The end of criminal activities</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of police in the community</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection provided by various organisations in the community</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection by political parties</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline and unity among the community people</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even when disaggregated by ethnicity, the majority of respondents felt that police presence in the community made them feel secure (68% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 65% of Muslims, and 60% of Dalits). 65% of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community felt that discipline and unity among community people contributed to peace and security, with 58% of Muslims and 56% of Dalits expressing the same opinion. 44% of Muslims, 41% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, and 24% of Dalits believed that the end of criminal activity would contribute to community security. (See Table 3.2 in Annex 2)

Police presence was indeed seen as an important factor in making communities feel safe and secure. When asked who controlled criminal activities and maintained peace and security, 75% of respondents said the Nepal Police. Even when disaggregated by ethnic groups, discipline and unity among the people of the community was the second most popularly chosen factor driving safety and security. This indicates that respondents value community integration and realise a need for unity among community members. Some respondents also felt that protection provided by various organisations in the community was a contributing factor to the general sense of safety and security. Although the percentage of such respondents was lower than for other factors, there may yet be room for intervention from such organisations. The survey responses also point to the need to reach
out to more groups of people in the communities because many may not yet be aware of the organisations that offer such protections.

3.2 Organisations or Agencies Responsible for Controlling Criminal Activities

75% of survey respondents believed that Nepal Police (NP) is responsible for controlling crime and maintaining peace and security. 46% attributed this role to civil society, 37% to elites/influential people, 33% to communities, and 18% to political party leaders. Other agencies respondents named include: VDCs (8%), armed police (6%), District Administration Office (DAO) (5%), and Nepal Army (1%).

The recognition of agencies responsible for controlling crime and maintaining peace and security is not uniform among men, women, and marginalised communities. While 41% of Dalits and 44% of Muslims mentioned elites/influential people as having this role, 56% of people from other caste/religious groups mentioned civil society.

33% of respondents across all categories mentioned that the community itself controlled crime/maintained peace and security. By contrast, a smaller percentage of respondents (18%) thought that politicians/party leaders played this role. Between 0-2% of respondents thought that Local Peace Committees, NGOs and local clubs controlled crime/maintained peace and security. (See Table 3.3 in Annex 2). When asked about conceptualisations of peace and security during the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), many people mentioned harmonious relations between community members, lack of conflicts, and an ability to do things with relative freedom. There was no notable difference between the disaggregated groups regarding conceptualisations and understandings of security.

3.3 Community Mediation Centres and Paralegal Committees

30% of respondents did not know whether community mediation centres existed in their community while 51% believed they were not present. This was true for all groups surveyed, regardless of how they were disaggregated. Of the people who replied “Yes” (19%) to the question “Is there a community mediation centre in your community, 29% respondent reported that a lot of work has been done and that conflicts are mediated (See Table 3.4.1 in Annex 2).

98% did not know of or believed there were no paralegal committees in their community. When those who reported knowing about paralegal committees (2%) were asked about their effectiveness, answers were somewhat inconsistent. Of those who reported knowing of such institutions, 34% of women, 73% of men, 34% of Dalits, 100% of Muslims, and 63% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims thought that paralegal committees had done some or a lot of good work compared to community mediation
centres (83%). Of the three Muslims (out of 190) who knew of a paralegal committee in their community, all thought that paralegal committees had done some good work. None of the three thought that paralegal committees had done a lot of good work or mediated conflicts. On the other hand, 42% of Muslims thought that community mediation centres had done a lot of good work or mediated conflicts, in addition to 50% of Muslims who thought that mediation centres had done ‘some’ good work. Compared to community mediation centres, paralegal committees seem to be both less well known and less trusted as reliable conflict mediators. (See Table 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 in Annex 2)

During the FGDs, many participants mentioned the important role that community mediation played in resolving disputes – especially for local or small disputes. Women, Muslims, Dalits, and members of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim communities mentioned that they often sought mediators first to resolve conflicts; they resorted to the police only when resolution could not happen at the village/community level. Many respondents stated that the police often did not resolve the conflict themselves but provided disputants the space to do so. Yet, there are two types of mediators: mediators from the community and ‘outside’ mediators. Certain communities, such as predominantly Muslim groups, may not rely on outside mediators but take the matter directly to the police if their own mediators fail to resolve the issue.

### 3.4 Factors Responsible for Enabling Peace and Security

When asked about the most important factors that enable peace and security (multiple responses possible), 43% of women and 39% of men identified prohibiting alcohol use. Similar percentages of people (ranging from 37% to 45%) in the non-Dalit/non-Muslim, Muslim, and Dalit communities agreed. 44% of students who had studied up to an intermediate level or above and 46% of respondents who identified as ‘illiterate’ also made the claim that prohibiting alcohol use would enable peace and security in the community. Other factors that were identified were ‘access to education,’ ‘end unemployment,’ and ‘prevent discrimination.’ The largest proportions of people who thought that education (53%) and employment (43%) were related to peace and security were found among the most advanced students. 44% of Muslims thought that access to education led to peace, whereas 40% believed it was employment.

More men (41%) than women (28%) thought that access to education would improve peace and security. Likewise, by a similarly large difference (14 percentage points), men thought that
unemployment created peace and security problems. 26% of women, compared to 21% of men, said that ‘strict rules’ were important to maintaining security. Other differences between male and female respondents were not significant. (See Table 3.6 in Annex 2)

During the FGDs, alcoholism was identified quite often as a factor leading to conflict. In many cases, men stated that minor fights resulting from drunkenness were not unique to their communities but prevalent everywhere. More women, however, seemed to think that such behaviours led to the lack of peace, security, and harmony in the community.
SECTION FOUR: LOCAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES RELATED TO SAFETY AND SECURITY

4.1 Feelings of Safety in the Community

89% of respondents said they felt safe in their village/town ‘most of the time’ or ‘always.’ The percentage was largest for Muslims and smallest for respondents with higher level education. 95% of Muslims said they felt safe at least ‘most of the time’, whereas only 78% of advanced students reported feeling the same. When respondents were asked what caused them to feel safe (multiple response question), 67% of those who had answered that they felt safe ‘most of the time’ or ‘always’ agreed that it was because they were protected by civil society organisations. 58% replied it was because there were fewer or no criminal activities in their communities. 39% replied that it was due to police presence and 48% replied that it was because the police were not only present, but also working hard to protect their community.

On average, 77% of respondents agreed they felt most safe due to protection by civil society organisations. When disaggregated by caste, comparatively fewer Dalits agreed with this claim (68%), while 79% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims agreed. Of those people who felt unsafe (11%), 53% said that it was the presence of criminal activities in their neighbourhood that made them feel unsafe. 39% of these respondents explained that the police would arrive on the scene but not help while another 36% said police abused their power. 52% of males and 54% of females responded that ‘many criminal activities in their community’ made them feel most unsafe. But of people from the Dalit community, 57% reported that it was the fact that police came to their communities but did not help them that made them feel most unsafe. Only 33% of surveyed Muslims and 27% of surveyed non-Muslims/non-Dalits held this view. What made Muslims feel most unsafe (100%) was abuse of powers by police; 47% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, as well as 7% of Dalits concurred. (See Table 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 in Annex 2)

The perception that the community is safe because it is protected by ‘civil society organisations’ seems somewhat out of place with respondents’ general feelings about the role of the NP, which, in Section Three was identified as the primary reason respondents felt safe. The NP was also identified as the most important agency controlling crime and violence by non-Dalit/non-Muslim communities.

4.2 Security Problems that the Community Faces

Consumption of alcohol was again identified by the largest percentage (78%) of all respondents as a security problem that the community faced. ‘Personal disputes’ was identified as the second largest factor of security problems. Respondents were asked whether certain incidents that could impact peace and security increased or decreased compared to previous years. Violence due to arms and bombs, activities by armed groups, abduction, murder, and extortion/forced donations had all decreased since 2012.
Alcohol consumption, drug usage, and political disputes remained at about the same levels, whereas VAW and personal disputes had shown a slight increase. Variations across gender, ethnicity, and level of education were small. (See Table 4.2 in Annex 2)

The decrease in violence perpetrated by armed groups, bombs, arms, extortion/ forced donations, and abduction shows that levels of insecurity are not as high as in 2012. However, the causes of insecurity might have shifted back to crimes of a more ordinary nature. Respondents believed that VAW had increased; it is still unclear whether there was an actual increase in VAW incidents or if communities had simply become more sensitive to it. The answer is beyond the scope of this study, but could serve as a point of entry for later research (See Table 4.3 in Annex 2)

4.3 Criminal Activities that Have Disrupted Peace and Security in the Last Six Months

85% of respondents stated that there had been no activities that disrupted their communities’ peace and security in the past six months. Only 6% of respondents reported that they had come across criminal activities in the past 6 months. 20% of respondents with higher level education reported having come across such activities (the highest percentage for any group). Most respondents who reported exposure to such activities, however, stated that they were of a ‘normal nature.’ Women, people from non-Dalit/non-Muslim communities, respondents with higher level education, and Dalits stated that a larger number of such ‘normal’ (non-serious) peace-disrupting incidents occurred than did other groups. Respondents with higher level education reported in the greatest proportions that they or their families experienced such incidents. Among those who had come across criminal activities in the past six months, each household faced more than two incidents on average (2.11/per household) where family members were directly involved, and more than one incident (1.36) where family members were indirectly involved. 24% of incidents with direct family involvement were deemed serious in nature while the remaining 76% were seen as “normal nature.” 43% of incidents with indirect family involvement were viewed as “serious” while 57% of them were viewed as “normal.” (See Tables 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 in Annex 2)

4.4 Nature of the Violence Suffered by the Respondent or Respondent’s Family

Of the 6% of respondents subject to violence and peace-disrupting criminal activities, 65% responded that they had faced ‘misbehaviour and use of obscene language.’ Approximately 50% of men and 83% of women agreed. 39% of women and 54% of men reported having faced violence because of ‘limiting women to household work.’ 84% of Dalits also reported that they had faced violence as a result of ‘misbehaviour and the use of obscene language.’ On the other hand, a similarly high percentage of Muslims (82%) reported that they had faced violence as a result of ‘limiting women to household work.’ 64% of Muslims also responded that they faced violence as a result of ‘dowry based torture.’
Of the 6% of respondents that self-identified as victims of criminal activities, more Dalits (42%) than any other group reported being victims of sexual violence. No Muslims or women (0%) reported being victims of sexual violence, though 32% of male respondents reported that their family member have been victims of sexual violence. More Dalits (32%) also reported being victims of ‘untouchability based torture’ than any other group, followed by women (26%). More women respondents (48%) compared to men (21%) reported being victims of physical violence, whereas comparable proportions of men (29%) and women (30%) reported that they or their family had been victims of ‘child marriage.’ Across ethnic groups, more Muslims (45%) reported being victims of child marriage than Dalits (26%) or members of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community (24%). However, only 9% of Muslims reported being victims of physical torture, much lower than either Dalits (42%) or non-Dalits/non-Muslims (38%). Across levels of educational attainment, 82% of those who identified as ‘illiterate’ claimed having faced violence as a result of ‘misbehaviour and use of obscene language,’ more than any other group. 67% of those with a primary education also responded similarly. A much larger percentage of ‘illiterates’ (73%) also stated that they were victims of physical torture than any other group disaggregated by educational levels. However, relatively small percentages of ‘illiterates’ reported facing insecurity as a result of ‘limiting women to household work’ (27%) and ‘dowry based torture’ (0%). (See Tables 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 in Annex 2)

During the FGDs, a Dalit group accused the Pahade community of using obscene words towards them. The Muslim group interviewed in the FGD also stated that they felt very insecure after the police used foul language at them during their community visits. However, members of Pahade communities also accused Dalits of sometimes using foul language. In the survey, most respondents stated that they feel the use of foul language (and misbehaviour) makes them insecure. This was especially true of more vulnerable groups like the illiterate, Dalits, and women who may be more sensitive to the usage of such language if they feel it is directed against them. Although the use of obscene language is hard to control, the police may explore ways to do this. While patrolling in the areas where there are Dalits or women, police can minimize their own use of such language during
the investigation. 42% of all Dalits reported being victims of sexual violence, which is clearly a cause for concern. On the other hand, Muslims and women did not report a single case of sexual violence. This may indicate that such crimes go widely underreported. However, significant percentages of both groups reported being victims of other crimes such as child marriage or ‘dowry based torture.’ This suggests that significant percentage of such groups have begun to realise that societal norms are not always right.

4.5 Prejudice or Discrimination that Leave Respondents Feeling Insecure

On average, 64% of respondents across all groups stated that they had not experienced prejudice or discrimination. The largest percentage of groups that stated that they did not experience discrimination/prejudice were non-Dalits/non-Muslims (71%) and respondents with higher level education (69%). Most respondents gave ‘poor economic condition’ as the primary reason for their discrimination (19% on average). More Dalits (26%) claimed to be discriminated as a result of poverty than any other group. (See Table 4.6 in Annex 2)

These results correspond well with FGD results in which ‘poverty’ was seen as the main factor for discrimination. Dalits in Bengadawar VDC stated that they were discriminated against and threatened mainly because they were landless and without adequate resources.

4.6 Factors Affecting the Well-being of the Respondents’ Community

65% of respondents noted that drunkenness damaged the well-being of their community. Other factors seen as detrimental to the well-being of the community were – 'corruption by officials' (identified by 42% of respondents) and 'interference by political parties' (identified by 36% of respondents). Caste problems, ethnicity problems, gender problems, and VAW were identified by smaller percentages of respondents as factors that damaged the well-being of communities ‘a lot.’ However, 23% of the respondents (22% male and 25% female) felt that VAW was ‘somewhat’ the reason for damage of the well-being of the communities while 37% of the respondents (38% male and 36% female) felt that it was not the reason at all.

Slightly higher percentages of women than men stated that both VAW and 'unfair or threatening treatment' because of gender, caste, or ethnicity damaged the community's well-being (See Table 4.7.2 in Annex 2). The difference in percentages disaggregated by ethnicities that held these views was also slight (Table 4.7.3). When disaggregated by education levels, differences in perceptions for most factors was slight. However, advanced level students stated that drug use damaged the community's well-being in greater proportions than other groups. (See Table 4.7 in Annex 2). Drunkenness was identified by most respondents as the most significant factor affecting community well-being. However, young people (below age 19) also identified drug addiction as an important factor. There was also a perception that VAW was damaging to the community’s well-being.
SECTION FIVE: THE COMMUNITY’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE, DOMAIN AND LIMITATIONS OF THE POLICE

The questions in this section examine the community’s familiarity with the police – ranging from knowledge about the infrastructure of the nearest police station to the general role of the police. Questions in this section also explore how well the community associates the infrastructure and facilities available with the police with their responsiveness and effectiveness.

5.1 Knowledge About the Nearest police Post

On average, 95% of respondents did not know the phone number of the nearest police station, with little variation across different groups. 59% of all respondents did not know the numbers of police personnel working in the nearest police stations. There was some variation across the groups on this front, however. Only 46% of advanced students and 47% of Muslims did not know or could not say, compared to 76% of women, 70% of Dalits, and 77% of respondents identifying as illiterate.

29% of respondents did not know if policewomen worked in their village. 49% of the respondents claimed no policewomen worked in their village. Higher percentages of women (42%), Dalits (41%), and self-identified illiterate populations (43%) did not know about policewomen working near their village/tole compared to men (24%), Muslims (24%), or members of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community (25%). On average, about half of all respondents stated that there were no policewomen working in their village/tole. 36% of respondents stated that their nearest police post had at least one vehicle for patrol. (See Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 in Annex 2)

Communities often expect much from the police. However, policing is a two-way street. If communities do not have adequate knowledge of the police, they may find it difficult to approach the police when necessary.

5.2 Perceptions of the Role of the Police

In an earlier section, it was noted that the largest percentage of respondents identified the Nepal Police as the main institution maintaining peace and security in their communities. Most also identified the presence of the police as the single most important factor in keeping their communities safe and secure. But how do communities perceive the role of the police? The most popular responses to this multiple answer question were ‘crime control’ (76%), ‘maintaining law and order to preserve security’ (50%), and ‘criminal investigation’ (37%). For the three most popular responses, a larger percentage of men than women agreed with the statements by a margin of about 10 percentage points in all three cases.
88% of Muslims, 76% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, and 65% of Dalits agreed with ‘crime control’ as a primary police role. 47% of Muslims, 37% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, and 27% of Dalits agreed with ‘criminal investigation’ as a primary police role. More than half of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community viewed ‘enforcement of law and order’ as the role of the Nepal Police, while only 39% of the Dalit community and 46% of the Muslim community expressed similar sentiments. 68% of intermediate students viewed ‘enforcement of law and order’ as the role of the NP, while 36% of the surveyed illiterate group held this opinion. 82% of the intermediate students and 68% of the illiterate saw ‘crime control’ as the role of the NP.

The majority of respondents did seem to understand the primary roles of the police – combating crime and maintaining law and order. However, of the two marginalised ethnic communities—Dalits and Muslims—the former seem to have a poorer understanding of the role of the police. It is telling that the same percentage of Dalits and self-identified illiterate people viewed the police to be primarily responsible for ‘crime control’. On the other hand, Muslims appear to have a better understanding of the role of the police than even the non-Dalit/non-Muslim communities and intermediate students. Future intervention strategies for these two marginalised communities have to take into account these very different baseline figures. (See Table 5.5 in Annex 2)

5.3 Expectations from the Police

The most frequently selected expectations of police were ‘patrolling/presence in the community,’ ‘usage of civil language and behaviour,’ and ‘knowledge about legal procedures related to peace and security.’ Variations around the average were not significant. 2% of respondents stated that they expect ‘good relations with the police.’ A significantly higher percentage of Muslims (27%) expected the usage of ‘civil language and behaviour’ from the police compared to the general average (18%). (See Table 5.6 in Annex 2)

During the FGD in Janakpur, the Muslim community stated that its members had been harassed, falsely accused, kept in detention for long periods of time, and often subject to foul language. If this is a common experience for Muslims, it would not be surprising to note that they would expect police to use civil language and behaviour.

5.4 Perceptions of Logistical, Numerical, and Infrastructural Factors on Police Effectiveness

Large percentages of respondents did not agree with statements that related police ineffectiveness to either infrastructural problems or numerical problems. This was true for all groups, irrespective of how they were disaggregated. The differences in percentage between those who agreed and disagreed about these statements were often quite large. For example, 15% of respondents in total agreed that ‘weak physical infrastructure led to difficulties’ whereas 64% disagreed – a percentage point difference of 49%. People disagreed by an even wider margin (58 percentage points) that police did not have good accommodation facilities, with only 14% agreeing with the statement. (See Table 5.7 in Annex 2)
People appear to be rejecting the argument that infrastructure and numbers were responsible for ineffectiveness and lack of response. This is a serious allegation that the police should consider. The two FGDs conducted with a total of 13 police participants showed that the police were satisfied with the infrastructure and vehicles they were provided. Yet, one reason the police appeared to be satisfied was that more infrastructure and better vehicles came with more responsibilities they often could not meet. For example, larger vehicles take up more fuel, which is often in short supply. Similarly increasing ‘hard’ infrastructure such as computers without providing them with the necessary ‘soft’ infrastructure—skills to manage the equipment—could result in problems and the police shirking their responsibilities.

### 5.5 Perceptions of Laws, Legal Punishments, and Violence Against Women

85% of respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that police should take strict action against perpetrators of VAW. All groups surveyed held this opinion. 45% of people agreed that police have thus far effectively taken action on perpetrators of VAW. 38% of respondents agreed that legal action on VAW could put women at risk and 51% of respondents stated that women do not report cases of VAW fearing that they could be vulnerable in the future. 41% thought that ‘current laws relating to peace and security were enough to control crime’ whereas 47% thought ‘existing legal punishments for criminals were enough.’ Differences in perception across all groups were not very noteworthy. *(See Table 5.8 in Annex 2)*

### 5.6 Perceptions of the Work of Police in the Community

When asked about the most important work done by police in their community, 60% of respondents stated that there was nothing. 29% of respondents did not know and only 11% of respondents stated that the police did something that was significant. This appears to contrast sharply with the fact that large majorities agreed that it is the police that guard law and order and prevent crime. While there seem to be fairly good understanding of the role of the police among the communities, their level of satisfaction of the work of police is low. There is a need for the police to once again publicise its true role in maintaining peace and security, as well as in preventing crime. Communities often did not have important information about their nearest police station, including phone numbers or the names and gender of police personnel Muslims, non-Dalits/non-Muslims, and students were often more knowledgeable than Dalits and women. *(Table 5.10 in Annex 2)*
Section Six: The Community’s Experience and Relationship with the Police

6.1 Personal Relations and Comfort in Interactions with Police Officers:

47% of male respondents had met or discussed matters with a police officer whereas only 19% of women had done the same. 43% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 32% of Dalits, and 36% of Muslims had done the same. More than half of the students with an advanced education had met with/interacted with police officers whereas only 26% of those who identified as illiterate had done the same. Of the people who reported having interacted with the police, 92% said that it was the Nepal Police and not the Armed Police Force. This was true across all groups regardless of how they were disaggregated.

Of the 306 people who had interacted with police, 18% stated that the NP had asked them ‘anything related to any event about their community’s security.’ This was true for all groups, except for students with an advanced education (35% were asked) and those who identified as illiterate (13% were asked). Interactions between the police, Dalits, women, Muslims, and illiterate populations remain infrequent, indicating a need to facilitate relations between these groups and the police. Indeed, 68% of Dalits, 64% of Muslims, 74% of the illiterate, and 81% of women reported not having interacted with the police. (See Tables 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 in Annex 2)

6.2 Response to Police Investigations of the Community

18% of respondents stated that the NP has asked them about incidents when they occurred in their community. Of those who replied ‘Yes’, 63% stated that having given ‘true and correct information’ to police during the criminal investigation. On the average, 15% said they had no knowledge of the incident since they were not involved. 72% of non-Dalit/non-Muslim community members stated that they gave true and correct information to the police concerning the incident. 50% of Muslims and 52% of Dalits gave the same answer. 10% of non-Dalit/non-Muslim community members told police they did not know about the incident because they were not involved, while 27% of Muslims and 18% of Dalits said the same.

85% of advanced level students claimed to give the true information to the police regarding the incident; this was the highest percentage among all the groups. 62% of the illiterate said that they gave police correct information. 45% of surveyed men and 24% of surveyed women had ever gone
to the police office. 47% of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community had gone to the police office, while 34% of the Dalit community and 28% of the Muslim community had done the same. Over half of those with advanced degrees had gone to the police office whereas only 29% of the illiterate had done the same.

During the criminal investigation, Dalits and Muslims appear to be less responsive to the police than other groups. Muslims are three times more likely to deny involvement (as a witness) in the incident than a member of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community. While equal percentages of men and women reported giving the police correct information, only half as many women as men went to the police station. This suggests that women are just as willing as men to cooperate with the police in assisting an investigation, but that social or economic pressures may not allow them to do so. (See Tables 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 in Annex 2)

6.3 Perceptions of Comfort at the Police Office
39% reported that they have gone to police office (45% male and 24% female). Of those who had gone to the police office, about 70% reported feeling comfortable in the presence of police personnel. 3% felt scared and 13% hoped never to talk to police again due to their behaviour. Those who felt comfortable reported being so in the presence of a policeman they knew. The variations around both of these averages were not very prominent. (See Tables 6.4.1 and 6.4.2 in Annex 2)

6.4 Perceptions of Language Difficulties
Of the 309 who have been to the police station (39% of total respondents), only 6% on average reported that it was difficult to make the police understand the issues because of a language problem. 45% reported that although conversations take place in Nepali and not Maithili, the local language, it is easy to make the police understand. Over half the members of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community held this view, compared to 35% of Muslims and 32% of Dalits. 28% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 38% of Dalits, and 50% of Muslims stated that conversations take place in Maithili.

A significantly larger percentage of women (54%) than men (43%) reported that although the conversations take place in Nepali, it is easy to understand. On the other hand, a much larger percentage of men (37%) reported that conversations take place in Maithili. 31% of the illiterate reported that conversations with police take place in Nepali and that it is easy to make them understand the problem. 42% of those with a primary education, 53% of those with secondary educations, and 55% of those with advanced educations reported similarly. 53% of the illiterate reported that conversations take place mostly in Maithili, compared to 33% of those with a primary education, 27% of those with secondary, and 24% of those with advanced educations held this view. (See Table 6.4.3 in Annex 2)

6.5 Reporting to the Police When the Respondent Is a Victim
93% of respondents reported that they were not victims of criminal activities or other incidents that left them insecure. 2% opted not to say. 7% of Dalits, 5% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 9% of those with advanced education, and 5% of the illiterate reported that they had been victims of either criminal activities or other incidents that left them feeling insecure. (See Table 6.5.1 in Annex 2)

Of the 39 (5% of total respondents) that were victims of criminal activities, 54% reported that they had experienced such incidents in the last year. 48% of men reported that they had been victims in the past year, compared to 67% of women. 50% of Muslims and non-Dalits/non-Muslims reported that they had been victims of such incidents in the past year, compared to 60% of Dalits. 89% of
students with advanced educations reported experiencing such incidents, compared to 46% of all those who identify as illiterate.

Of the 39 that were victims of criminal activities, 51% reported that they or their families went to the police station to report the case. 23% opted not to say as they did not want to disclose the nature of the case. 26% said that they or their families had not reported the case to the police. 30% of men opted not to say, compared to only 8% of women. 44% of men reported that they or their families had reported the case to the police, whereas 67% of women reported the same thing. 35% of non-Dalit/non-Muslim respondents and 25% of Muslim respondents did not want to answer the question, whereas only 7% of Dalit respondents did not want to answer the question. 53% of Dalits, 50% of Muslims, and 50% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims stated that they had reported the case to the police. 15% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 25% of Muslims, and 40% of Dalits reported that they had not. 78% of students with advanced educations, 57% of those with a primary education and 46% of the surveyed illiterate stated that they had reported the case to the police. (See Tables 6.5.2 and 6.5.3 in Annex 2)

Of the 20 respondents who have been victims, 35% stated that their reports were registered but that no action was taken. 38% of women in this pool reported this to be the case as opposed to 33% of men reporting the same. 55% reported that their cases were registered and that action was taken (50% of men, 62% of women). 40% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 25% of Dalits, and 50% of Muslims reported that their cases were registered but that no action was taken. 62% of Dalits and 60% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims reported that their cases were registered and action was taken. Four Muslims (2%) stated that they had been victims of criminal activity or other incidents leading them to feel insecure. Of these, two (50%) stated that they went to report a case. One of said that the case was registered but that no action was taken while the other opted not to specify. 83% of the surveyed illiterate reported that their case was registered and that action was taken as a result, while 57% of students with advanced educational levels reported the same thing. (See Table 6.5.4 in Annex 2)

Extrapolations from the survey point to a need for more immediate action to be taken on registered cases in order to build the public’s confidence in the police.

### 6.6 Reasons for Not Going to the Police

Of the 10 respondents that had been victims but did not report the case, 30% opted not to discuss the matter any further. 43% of the men did and no women chose not to specify. Conversely, 33% of women but no men stated that they did not report the case to the police because it would involve bribing them. 33% of women and no men did not report because they did not know the process involved in reporting a case. 33% of women and 14% of men said that they did not file a case with the police because they thought the perpetrator would create problems for them in the future. 14% of the men and no women reported not filing cases with the police because they believed that the village panchayat would resolve the issue. 29% of men and no women had ‘other’ reasons for not reporting cases to the police.

33% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims and 17% of Dalits reported not filing a case with the police because they thought the perpetrator could create problems in the future. 17% of Dalits and no members of other communities each stated not filing a case with the police both because they did not know the process involved and because the village Panchayat usually resolved such cases. 33% of non-

---

10 Panchayat is the informal gathering of the community elders/leaders who are influential and are accepted by the community as leaders to solve community problems.
Dalits/non-Muslims and 17% of Dalits gave ‘other’ as a reason for not reporting a case to the police. (See Table 6.5.5 in Annex 2)

Women faced challenges if they wanted to report a case. Women, much more than men, believe that the police take bribes, do not know the process, and think that reporting a case to the police could create problems for them in future. More Dalits also did not register because they either thought that the village panchayat would resolve such issues or because they did not know the process. This implies that Dalits have a substantial knowledge gap with regard to police and security matters and that they prefer to leave things to ‘higher ups.’

6.7 Cases or Requests that the Police Receives from the Community

Of the 798 respondents who were asked what kind of cases or requests the police in the community received, 84% stated personal disputes, 69% stated ‘consumption of alcohol,’ and 45% stated ‘violence against women.’ The differences in the percentages of men and women who stated the above were not very prominent. However, the most popular reason, given by 86% of men, compared with 79% of women, was ‘personal disputes.’ 84% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 81% of Dalits, and 88% of Muslims gave ‘personal disputes’ as cases in which the police were. However, of the 190 Muslims who were asked the question, 102 (54%) noted that police in the community received cases concerning VAW. Of the 226 Dalits and 382 non-Dalits/non-Muslims asked the same question, less than half of both communities (44% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims and 38% of Dalits) reported VAW cases as a reason the police were involved in the community.

There exists a clear correlation between level of education attained and the percentage of people who stated that VAW cases brought police to the community. While 60% of respondents with advanced educational levels reported this to be the case, only 37% of respondents who identified as illiterate did so. Since ‘personal disputes’ are common, mediation may be key to addressing the issue. Indeed, in many cases, the police merely facilitate mediation at the police station. A significantly greater proportion of Muslims compared to other groups reported VAW as an issue that has brought the police into their community: either there are more VAW crimes in Muslim communities or there is more awareness of this crime. (See Table 6.6 in Annex 2)

6.8 Police Initiatives to Improve Peace and Security

When asked to identify the problems for which the police had taken initiatives, the most popular answers were: personal disputes (75%), consumption of alcohol (63%), VAW (42%), and theft and burglary (38%). Across genders (male 558, female 220), variations in responses were not very prominent. Across ethnicities, there were notable variations in the response ‘violence against women’: 36% of Dalits, 40% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, and 53% of Muslims cited VAW as a problem for which the police had taken initiative. Significantly more Muslims than Dalits also agreed that the police had taken initiatives on ‘political disputes’ and ‘personal disputes’ (margins of 11 and 16 percentage points respectively). The same general trend was observed across education levels without too much variation between the groups represented. (See Table 6.7 in Annex 2)

Proportionally more Muslims than Dalits reported that police took action on crimes like VAW, ‘personal disputes,’ and ‘political disputes’. Combined with the greater exhibited awareness that Muslims have of the police’s role than even the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community, it would seem that Muslims indeed have more of a tendency to call the police when these crimes do occur.

6.9 Activities the Police Should Prioritise

When asked which areas the police ought to prioritize in the future, the most popular answers to the multiple response question were: consumption of alcohol (73%), personal disputes (70%), VAW
(50%), and theft and burglary (36%). Variations existed across genders. More women agreed that police should prioritise consumption of alcohol (by 8 percentage points) and personal disputes (by 9 percentage points). However, more men agreed that the police should prioritise theft and burglary (by 8 percentage points).

Substantial variations existed across ethnicities in the attitude towards VAW. More Muslims (65%) than Dalits (38%) or non-Dalits/non-Muslims (49%) thought that the police should prioritise VAW. Within the Muslim community, more female (73%) than male (63%) mentioned VAW as a priority area for police. More Muslims (78%) and Dalits (75%) also wanted the police to prioritise action against consumption of alcohol than did members of the non-Dalits/non-Muslims (69%). Across education levels (97 respondents with advanced education, 225 with secondary, 224 with primary, 252 illiterate), the same general trend held with some variation. The most prominent was the attitude towards VAW. On average, half of respondents agreed that police should prioritise VAW, while 67% of students with advanced education levels agreed that this should be the case. Only 38% of the illiterate agreed. Half each of secondary (53%) and primary (52%) level students agreed that police should prioritise VAW. Roughly the same proportion of Muslims and intermediate plus students (the most advanced students in the study) stated that police should prioritise VAW crimes. This was much higher than the average percentage. (See Table 6.8 in Annex 2)

6.10 Contacting Political Parties When There Are Problems Related to Peace and Security

When asked whether they contacted political parties/leaders in the face of problems or challenges related to safety and security, 47% of respondents stated that they had no contacts with political parties. 18% stated that although they had contacts, they did not communicate with them. 29% stated that they did contact them.

A clear variation across genders was observed. More women (65%) reported having no contacts than men (39%). 13% of women reported that they did have contacts but did not use them when faced
with a problem. 10% of women who knew political leaders did contact them when there were problems. 319 men reported having contacts. Of these, 37% reported having contacted politicians when the need arose. 21% reported that they did not contact them when the need arose.

Across ethnicities, more Dalits reported having no contacts (62%) than Muslims (40%) or non-Dalits/non-Muslims (41%). In the non-Dalit/non-Muslim and Muslim communities, roughly 60% of people who reported having contacts with political parties reported using them when problems arose. Only 16% of Dalits said they used political contacts when problems arose, while 14% did not use their contacts. There was a clear positive correlation between education level and number of respondents who had political contacts. Respondents identifying as illiterate reported having the fewest such contacts (58% reported having no political contacts). 44% of primary students, 40% of SLC holders, and 38% of advanced level students had no contacts. Of those who reported having political contacts, more advanced level students reported contacting them (72%) than members of other groups. Similar percentages among all the other groups (approximately 60%) contacted politicians when problems arose.

Women had significantly fewer political contacts (10%) compared to male (37%) and also used them less when the need arose. Similarly, Dalits had fewer contacts (16%) compared to non-Muslim/non-Dalit community (33%) and Muslim community (35%) and used them less often than other groups. Respondents with intermediate level education had the most contacts and used them more often than other groups. (See Table 6.9 in Annex 2)

### 6.11 Using Mediators During Reporting

Respondents were asked whether they also took the mediation support of informal, non-Community Mediator parties when they or members of their community went to report cases to the police. 23% said they did not know or could not say. 55% stated that informal mediators went along, whereas 18% stated that they were ‘capable of reporting without the help of mediators.’ 3% reported that they had asked for mediator help but were not supported. There was very little variation around this percentage across any category.

Breaking down results by gender, 19% of men and 32% of women stated that they either didn’t know or couldn’t say, whereas 60% of men and 44% of women stated that mediators did go along. 18% of men and women stated that they were capable of reporting without the help of mediators. Disaggregating by ethnicity, 26% of respondents belonging to the non-Dalit/non-Muslim community and 14% of Muslims stated either that they didn’t know or couldn’t say. About half of all non-Dalit/non-Muslim (51%) and Dalit (54%) respondents said that mediators went along. 65% of Muslims stated that informal mediators went along. (See Table 6.10.1 in Annex 2)

Of the 441 respondents who took informal mediators with them to report cases to the police (55% of total sample), 85% stated that the mediators were influential people of the village. 56% stated that they took with them political party leaders as mediators. 84% of men and 90% of women stated
that they took influential people of the village as mediators whereas 60% of men and 42% of women stated that they took with them political party leaders.

81% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims and Muslims stated that they took influential people (political leaders, teachers, VDC secretary, Government staff, etc.) from their village, whereas 94% of Dalits did the same. About equal percentages of all communities (between 54% to 58%) stated that they took political leaders with them as mediators. 89% of the illiterate and 84% of respondents with more advanced education relied on influential people of the village to act as mediators. 66% of advanced level students and about half each of students with less advanced levels of education (55% SLC/secondary level and 54% primary/informal education) relied on political party leaders to act as mediators.

Communities hold ‘influential people’ in high regard and often use them as mediators. To a lesser degree, political leaders also are used for this purpose. Out of the 441 respondents who used mediators at all (55% of the total number of respondents), Dalits (94%), women (90%), and the illiterate (89%)—three of the most underprivileged and knowledge-deficit groups—used influential people as mediators. This is the highest proportion of all groups.

The data suggests that it would be beneficial to both the police and the community if police worked in coordination with such ‘influential people’ even for the short-term. However, giving too much importance to ‘influential people’ can be counterproductive in the long-run: if precautions are not taken, the community may become more passive overly reliant on these figures. 20% of intermediate students compared to 9% of the illiterate stated that they do not need any mediator. This shows that education is one way in which the power of ‘influential people’ can be reduced over time. (See Table 6.10.2 in Annex 2)

6.12 General Perceptions About the Police

Of those who had spoken with police before, most reported that they felt safer having had discussions or relations with the police (49% agreeing and only 7% disagreeing). Most respondents also agreed that the police launch effective searches and investigations into events (49% agreeing, 11% disagreeing) and that women do not find it easy to file allegations because of the lack of women working at the police post (42% agreeing, 10% disagreeing). 41% agreed that the police do not force victims to take back cases or allegations while approximately 40% disagreed.
Significantly fewer women (mean value 2.45\textsuperscript{11}) agreed that the police do not force victims to take back cases or allegations and that if they needed to go to the police station, police personnel assisted them.

Compared to non-Dalits/non-Muslims (mean value 2.71), significantly fewer Dalits (mean value 2.32) and Muslims (mean value 2.28) reported that the police had provided them enough information about peace and security. Significantly fewer Dalits (mean value 2.28) and Muslims (mean value 2.47) agreed that nearby policemen encouraged them when they had to go to the police station for any reason. Fewer Dalits (mean value 2.65) than in other groups stated that they felt safer in the community as a result of having had discussions or relations with the police. However, women, Dalits, Muslims, and the illiterate generally seem to think that the police has provided them help; given them information; or encouraged them to file cases. (See Table 6.11 in Annex 2)

### 6.13 Perceptions About Police Behaviour and the Nature of Their Work

Of respondents asked how easy it was to put queries to the police, 31% answered that it was easy and the police helped, 22% answered that it was very difficult, 12% answered that the police were not fair or professional, 13% said that they had to explain the situation to the police many times over, while 8% said that although it was tedious, they did get help. 15% stated that they didn’t know or chose not to answer. 25% of women, compared to 10% of men, answered that they didn’t know or chose not to answer.

\textsuperscript{11} Respondents were asked to choose answers from a range of 1 to 6: 1- Don’t know/Don’t want to say, 2- Strongly disagree, 3- Disagree, 4- Neither disagree nor agree, 5- Agree, 6- Strongly agree.
40% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims (of a total of 382 respondents), 43% of Dalits (of a total of 226 respondents) and only 17% of Muslims (of a total of 190 respondents) reported that they didn’t know or chose not to answer. 35% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 22% of Dalits, and 43% of Muslims answered that it was very difficult to put their queries/concerns in front of the police. 60% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 17% of Dalits, and 23% of Muslims reported that the police were not fair or professional. 43% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims but only 29% of Dalits and 28% of Muslims reported that they had to put forth their queries/concerns to the police many times. 52% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 29% of Dalits, but only 18% of Muslims said that reporting cases to the police was tedious but that they did get help. 57% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, but only 30% of Dalits and 13% of Muslims reported that it was easy and that the police helped. Across levels of education, 7% of advanced students, 28% of people with SLC/secondary attainment, and 32% of people with primary/informal educations stated that it was very difficult.

57% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims stated that they did get help, though 60% also stated that the police were unfair/unprofessional. 43% said they had to repeat the process many times. When asked how easy it was to put their queries or concerns in front of the police, significantly more Muslims and Dalits stated that the police did not help them or that it was difficult to register claims. It is therefore necessary to understand why Dalits and Muslims feel it is so hard for the police to address their questions, despite the fact that these groups are less likely to believe that the police is unfair or that they have to put questions to the police repeatedly. Language was ruled out as a significant barrier from earlier survey questions. (See Table 6.12 in Annex 2)

### 6.14 Thanking the Police

Of respondents asked what they would thank the police for (single answer) if they could thank them for any one reason, 25% either didn’t know or chose not to answer, 12% said ‘professionalism,’ 14% said ‘understanding and integrity,’ 7% said ‘expressing commitment to support,’ 13% said ‘reassuring

---

**Perceptions About Police Behaviour and the Nature of Their Work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Don't know/can't say</th>
<th>It is bad</th>
<th>It is not effective</th>
<th>So-So</th>
<th>Good, quite effective</th>
<th>It is very good/effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rescue and humanitarian support</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence in the crime scene</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village/Tole vigilance</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate the criminal</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How they listen to community's</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language spoken</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims (of a total of 382 respondents), 43% of Dalits (of a total of 226 respondents) and only 17% of Muslims (of a total of 190 respondents) reported that they didn’t know or chose not to answer. 35% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 22% of Dalits, and 43% of Muslims answered that it was very difficult to put their queries/concerns in front of the police. 60% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 17% of Dalits, and 23% of Muslims reported that the police were not fair or professional. 43% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims but only 29% of Dalits and 28% of Muslims reported that they had to put forth their queries/concerns to the police many times. 52% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 29% of Dalits, but only 18% of Muslims said that reporting cases to the police was tedious but that they did get help. 57% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, but only 30% of Dalits and 13% of Muslims reported that it was easy and that the police helped. Across levels of education, 7% of advanced students, 28% of people with SLC/secondary attainment, and 32% of people with primary/informal educations stated that it was very difficult.

57% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims stated that they did get help, though 60% also stated that the police were unfair/unprofessional. 43% said they had to repeat the process many times. When asked how easy it was to put their queries or concerns in front of the police, significantly more Muslims and Dalits stated that the police did not help them or that it was difficult to register claims. It is therefore necessary to understand why Dalits and Muslims feel it is so hard for the police to address their questions, despite the fact that these groups are less likely to believe that the police is unfair or that they have to put questions to the police repeatedly. Language was ruled out as a significant barrier from earlier survey questions. (See Table 6.12 in Annex 2)
respondents of their security.’ 17% answered that they would thank them for ‘respectful treatment.’ There was not much variation across genders. However, 20% of women, compared to only 11% of men, answered that they would thank the police for ‘understanding and integrity.’ 19% of men, compared to 14% of women, answered that they would thank the police for ‘respectful treatment.’ (See Table 6.13 in Annex 2)

SECTION SEVEN: THE COMMUNITY’S OPINION ON THE POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP

7.1 Rating the Relationship Between the Police and the Community

Of respondents who were asked to rate the relationship between the police and the community, 10% answered that it was not good, 52% said it was ‘so-so,’ and 27% said it was good or quite effective. The percentages for the other options were negligible. Only 4% of males, compared to 11% of women, chose not to answer or reported that they did not know.

Less than 5% of both non-Dalits/non-Muslims and Muslims—but 12% of Dalits—either did not know or chose not to answer. 5% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 7% of Dalits, and over 21% of Muslims answered that overall relations were not good. 34% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 23% of Dalits, and 18% of Muslims answered that relations were good or quite effective. Fewer Muslims and Dalits than non-Dalits/non-Muslims stated that relations with the police were not good. (See Table 7.1 in Annex 2)

7.2 Importance of a Close Relationship Between the Police and the Community

Of the respondents asked how important a close relationship was between the police and the community, 57% stated that it was ‘necessary to build relations because it is only with this support that peace can be built.’ 22% stated that it would not matter and 7% stated that it was not necessary to improve relations. Only 2% stated that improved relations could create trouble in the future. Across genders, the only variation was around the statement ‘it will not matter’ with 24% of men but only 17% of women agreeing.

19% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, but 24% of Dalits and Muslims stated that it would not matter whether relations between the police and the community were improved. 62% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 58% of Muslims, and 50% of Dalits stated that it was necessary to improve relations with the police.
While the proportion of Dalits and Muslims stating that improving relations with the police does not matter was the same, a slightly larger fraction of Muslims than Dalits agreed that it was important to build relations. (See Table 7.2 in Annex 2)

### 7.3 Increasing Trust in the Police

Respondents were given questions with multiple answer options to find out what needs to happen for them to have more trust in the police. Of these, 64% pointed to increased patrolling (Nepal Police). 23% stated that awareness of law enforcement needed to be improved, while 25% said that interactions with the community needed to be increased. 18% said that criminal investigations should be increased, 21% said that there needs to be an increase in community patrolling (by community themselves), 15% pointed to an increase in public awareness of safety and security, and another 15% said there should be riot management.

Variations were observed across genders. Almost 70% of men but only 53% of women stated that patrolling should be increased in communities. 27% of men, but only 12% of women, stated that awareness of law enforcement should be increased. 28% of men and 18% of women stated that interactions with the community should be increased. 10% of men and 16% of women stated that action should be taken against the transportation of narcotics and that there should be an improvement in riot management.

70% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 67% of Muslims, and 50% of Dalits stated that patrolling and police presence should be increased in communities. 24% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, 28% of Muslims, and 16% of Dalits stated that there should be an increase in law enforcement. 24% of Muslims, 19% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims, and 12% of Dalits stated that there should be an increase in criminal investigation. 18% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims but only 13% each of Dalits and Muslims stated that
there should be an increase in public awareness of safety and security. 19% of Muslims, but only 15% of Dalits and 13% of non-Dalits/non-Muslims stated that there should be an increase in riot management.

Muslim and non-Dalit/non-Muslim community feelings were quite close for many statements, implying that the two communities share many of the same concerns or have similar levels of awareness. The most significant agreement was with patrolling and police presence. Similar percentages of Muslims and non-Dalit/non-Muslim community members (significantly larger than the percentage of Dalits) believed that patrolling should be increased. *(See Table 7.3 in Annex 2)*

### 7.4 Cooperating with the Police

Respondents were asked questions about police cooperation (refer to Table 7.4). Most 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that it was their responsibility to tell the police of any incidents because police-community cooperation was the only way that the police could apprehend criminals. Respondents also agreed that they should have the contact numbers of the police and that because the police were society’s guardians, the community should work with them to improve security. Respondents said that they informed the police immediately whenever a criminal activity or destabilizing situation occurred. There were few variations, but it was found that more non-Dalits/non-Muslims, Muslims, and intermediate students agreed with the above statements. Intermediate students were most in agreement with these statements than members of any other group.

Half the respondent surveyed stated that relations with the police were ‘so-so.’ More Muslims thought that relations were not good. Although equal percentages of Dalits and Muslims stated that it did not matter whether relations with the police improved, significantly more Muslims thought that it was necessary to improve relations. A larger fraction of men than women stated that patrolling, awareness of law, and interactions with the community should be increased. A larger fraction of Muslims and non-Dalits/non-Muslims than Dalits wanted patrolling to be increased in their communities. Smaller fractions of less advanced students than more advanced (intermediate or above) students believed that patrolling/police presence, law enforcement, and criminal investigation should be increased. More members of the non-Dalit/non-Muslim and Muslim communities, as well as intermediate students agreed that more cooperation with the police was necessary in apprehending criminals and in maintaining peace and security. *(See Table 7.4 in Annex 2)*
8. Conclusion

The Nepal Police (NP) has commendably carried out its role as the guardian of society’s peace and security. However, there is room for improvement.

In particular, the NP has to increase its awareness of, and interactions with, members of society’s more vulnerable groups, including Muslims, Dalits, women, and the illiterate. Members of these less powerful sections of society are often hesitant to contact the police due to lack of trust, poor past interactions with police, the belief that police are not responsive towards their needs, or lack of awareness on how the police function. However, significant percentages of these groups do believe that NP is a force that can help their communities in establishing peace and security.

The NP should step up its presence in communities. It should make a deliberate attempt not to use obscene language in the presence of marginalised communities, as this will reinforce the unequal relationship between the police and such relatively disempowered groups. Police should also take seriously the cases that all members of the community register.

The NP should greatly increase the recruitment of women and ensure that there are women’s cells in as many police posts as is possible. A reason that fewer women report going to the police may be because there are no women there. In sensitive cases such as sex crimes, it appears to be very hard for women to talk to men. There is awareness even among the police that more women are needed but this needs to be done more urgently.

This research recommends that NP increase its awareness of and interactions with members of society’s more vulnerable groups, such as Muslims, Dalits, women and the illiterate. This will enable NP to foster stronger relations with the communities they serve, thereby making them more effective guardians of peace and security. Elsewhere, educated people are more likely to know of their rights and of the obligations of the police, thus making them less likely to be threatened by police power.

It is possible that underreporting of crimes is widespread. The reported incidence of violence figure for the Muslim community certainly does not reflect the average. However, it is also possible that perceptions of the nature of violence itself vary according to the communities and across different education levels. Intermediate students have reported experiencing a very large number (5.67) of non-serious events in the past six months. It is possible that they are more aware of the different kinds of violence than others. It could also mean that they have fewer reservations about admitting levels of violence.

If mediation and arbitration facilities were improved to the point that the community had more faith in them and used them as often as police stations, it would provide opportunity to the police to perform more effectively its specialized roles.