



# DFID-Nepal Rural Access Programme 3 (RAP-3) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Component

## RAP Beneficiaries' Feedback Report

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Results in development

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## Abbreviations

DDC	District Development Committee
DFID	UK Department for International Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoN	Government of Nepal
HH	Household
KEP	Karnali Employment Programme
kg	kilogram
LRN	Local Roads Network
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Component of RAP3
NPR	Nepali Rupee (currency of Nepal)
PM	RAP3 Programme Manager
RAP3	Rural Access Programme 3
RBG	Road Building Group
RMG	Road Maintenance Group
SC	Supervision Consultant (sub-contracted by RAP3)
SED	RAP3 Social and Economic Development Component
TOC	Theory of Change

## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the 2017 Beneficiary Feedback process conducted by the Independent Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) component of RAP3. This process set out to capture feedback from the direct and indirect beneficiaries of RAP. The majority of the feedback comes from the direct beneficiaries of RAP – the members of the Road Building Groups (RBGs) and Road Maintenance Groups (RMGs) who receive cash for working and participating in the roads work implemented by the project. This feedback comes from a mixture of surveys and shorter case studies. Feedback also comes from the indirect beneficiaries of RAP – these are the users of the roads in the maintenance districts (as roads are not yet complete in the build districts).

The findings from the direct beneficiaries (RBGs and RMGs) suggest largely positive outcomes. There is a high level of trust and appreciation for the programme. Of the many positives, it is the regularity of cash income that is most noticeable in terms of the positive feedback. Nearly 90% of female beneficiaries are getting paid for work for the first time ever, which provides them with the opportunity to spend money where they would like (i.e. improvements in women's economic empowerment).

However, to some extent, it appears that the involvement by women in paid work on RAP means that their working day has become far longer because their unpaid household care work has not reduced to offset their time spent working on RAP. Additionally there is a mixed picture regarding savings as some beneficiaries state that they receive enough cash from RAP to save, whilst others do not feel it is sufficient. Nearly all beneficiaries understand the usefulness and utility of the equipment they are provided with to carry out their work on RAP. RAP work is generally safe in that there are very few reported injuries, and when injuries do arise, they are normally relatively minor. However people still understand that there is a high risk of injury associated with the work. RAP has well-established protocols and the Safety Knot component of RAP is well placed to look into the risk of injuries side of work which it is currently doing.

The indirect beneficiaries (users of the roads) recognise the importance of road works and the in-depth feedback provides strong indication that there is marked improvement in the use and usability of the roads that are maintained by RMGs. This bodes well for the longer term outcomes and impact of RAP, which is to stimulate economic activity along the road corridors. However, there is as yet insufficient evidence to fully test this hypothesis as the effects of improved access will likely be much longer term.

## Recommendations

The findings from this study, taken together with other available studies by MEL and others, should be jointly looked at in order to inform future RAP programming. There are a number of assumptions in the RAP theory of change about expected benefits to beneficiaries and especially direct female beneficiaries. It is recognised that there are a number of issues that cannot be dealt with directly by the programme as it has no control over these (e.g. the general context of the Mid and Far West of Nepal).

In providing recommendations, the following are directed more broadly at the stakeholders of RAP in thinking through not only issues that could possibly be addressed within the lifetime of the project (if at all) but also how the learning could be used by or inform other programmes.

- Both men and women working on RAP appear to have less time for other unpaid work that they are normally involved with (e.g. farming, etc.) as a result of their working commitments on the programme. For many female beneficiaries, working on RAP represents the first time they are being paid for work and receiving regular cash income. There is a trade-off for female beneficiaries between paid work as a means of economic empowerment versus the increased burden of unpaid care work. Most women involved in RAP are happy that the regularity of cash income provides

increased spending choice for themselves and for their household. However, they are also disproportionately burdened with performing other unpaid work under prevailing social norms.

This is an issue that is difficult to resolve. However stakeholders should take on board the learning that the immediate benefits of paid work do not mean that there are no negative consequences (i.e. increased burden for women). This issue should be looked into further to inform how beneficiaries, particularly women, can be better supported to participate in projects like RAP with minimal disruption or additional burdens outside of this.

- There is a mixed picture regarding savings – RBG members are able to save partly because savings are made mandatory by the programme; RMGs on the other hand are less likely to save. The use or investment of savings appears to be ad hoc - beneficiaries tend to purchase small assets with this money. Where mandatory savings (i.e. with RBGs) exist, there is a question of how sustainable savings groups will be beyond the purview of the project. There is an assumption that the current lending practices within groups will continue beyond the project. Stakeholders of RAP could explore further support for direct beneficiaries regarding savings (e.g. planning) and assess the relative risks of savings (income that belongs to the RBGs) potentially being captured by elites once project personnel withdraw from the working sites.
- It is clear that most RAP beneficiaries do not wear their safety gear all of the time and much of this is for practical reasons (i.e. not comfortable to wear in the heat, etc.). The number of reported injuries is fairly low. However, this may be due to how beneficiaries perceive what an injury means. As Safety Knot (a component of RAP) has noted, it may be the case that only major injuries are deemed injuries. From the feedback, it is clear that the majority of beneficiaries feel that the work is risky and that certain types of work (e.g. rock drilling) are more dangerous than others. Stakeholders should assess the suitability of the safety gear used; it may be worth assessing whether safety equipment that is adapted for the local context may be more appropriate than generic safety gear.

## A. Introduction

The objective of the Rural Access Programme 3 (RAP3) is to reduce poverty in Western Nepal. The programme aims to deliver economic benefits to the poor through rural road access and increased connectivity. Sustainable access to rural roads is expected to stimulate the local economy along and around the road network, whilst direct employment of poor and vulnerable groups in road construction and maintenance will also reduce poverty. RAP3 is a labour-intensive infrastructure project that targets the poor and vulnerable for inclusion on road works and maintenance. The emphasis of targeting the poor and vulnerable for work is to accrue maximum poverty-reducing benefits for people of the Mid and Far West of Nepal.

To date, there have been several studies conducted by the independent Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) component of RAP3, some of which have included feedback from direct beneficiaries. MEL has now instituted a more regular (annual) process of beneficiary feedback to find out the experiences of poor and vulnerable people targeted and employed by RAP to carry out road works - the intended 'direct beneficiaries' of RAP. This was first conducted by MEL in 2016. This year MEL has also sought feedback from the 'indirect' beneficiaries of RAP – those who use the roads that are being maintained by the project.

The purpose of gaining feedback from the direct and indirect beneficiaries of RAP is to gain an understanding of how people in these communities have fared in the 2-3 years that the project has now been in operation. The ways in which RAP's interventions do or do not change social and community characteristics and dynamics are not well understood by stakeholders, as such changes take a long time to become apparent. The beneficiaries' feedback is designed to shed further light on this. Crucially, MEL has endeavoured to take a more **gender-nuanced approach** – by disaggregating and comparing trends between male and female beneficiaries across a number of dimensions looked at.

**This report is divided into four main sections. Section B** provides a summary of the methodology used for the data collection as well as the sampling sizes. **Section C** looks at the feedback from the direct beneficiaries of RAP (the RBGs and RMGs) based on the survey results and the case studies. **Section D** looks at the feedback from the indirect beneficiaries of RAP (the road users) based on in-depth interviews with passengers and drivers. There is also a short part within this section looking at prices of goods that people purchase based on semi-structured interviews with shop keepers. **Section E** concludes with a summary of progress against the RAP theory of change.

## B. Methodology

This section provides an overview of the methodology used for the RAP Beneficiaries Feedback process. It covers the study process, sample size calculation, sampling method, survey tools and details of the feedback processes. The RAP MEL beneficiary feedback activity followed a number of processes to collect ‘voices’ of people in the Mid and Far West of Nepal where RAP operates. The process was not intended to be wholly representative of all eight core districts, and was simply meant to provide a basis for learning by offering a platform for people to share their views and opinions.

### The Process

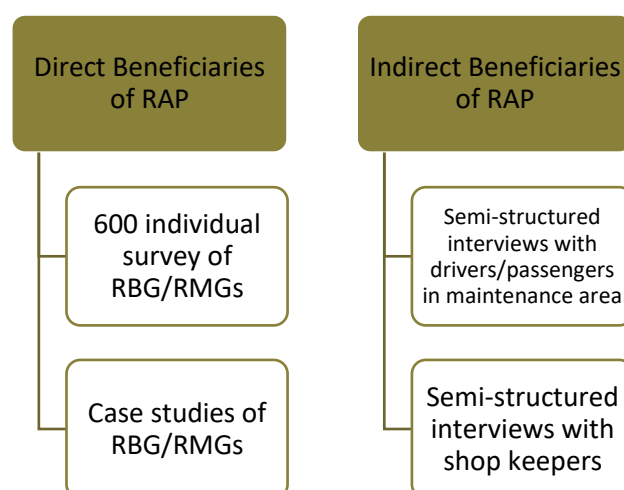
The process builds on and refines the 2016 Beneficiary Feedback approach. There are two types of beneficiaries that the process focused on: direct and indirect beneficiaries. For each type of beneficiary, the process utilised a number of tools to capture feedback from these groups.

1. **Direct Beneficiaries:** This focused on members of RAP’s Road Building Groups (RBGs) and Road Maintenance Groups (RMGs).
2. **Indirect Beneficiaries:** This focused on road users. This part of the beneficiary feedback was not intended to be expansive, but gathered voices of those who use the roads in the maintenance districts.

The direct beneficiaries’ survey focused on questions around participation in RAP works to elicit feedback on programmatic topics such as health and safety. The questions have been revised since 2016, with less of an ‘audit’ function (i.e. assessing whether beneficiaries have boots and equipment) and towards a ‘learning’ function to uncover what beneficiaries like or do not like about the programme – e.g. *why* do people not wear boots and helmets if this is the case?

Figure 1 highlights the approximate division of data collection between direct and indirect beneficiaries of RAP. The main instrument for collecting feedback from the RAP direct beneficiaries was through the individual surveys with tailored questions on working on RAP. Additional detailed case studies through in-depth interviews were collected to shed light on the quantitative data. Feedback from the indirect beneficiaries came from in-depth interviews with users of the RAP roads within the maintenance districts (as roads in the new construction area are not yet complete or entirely useable). Table 1 shows the plan for capturing data against each type of beneficiary.

**Figure 1: Beneficiaries and tools for data capture**



**Table 1: Plan for data capture**

Type of Beneficiary	Description	Tools for Data
Direct (RBG/RMG)	Individual survey (using ODK-enabled smartphones). This is intended to provide a level of representation of views across the RBGs/RMGs, though not necessarily to dig deep into issues.	Minimum 400 individual surveys / <b>Actual: 609</b>
Direct (RBG/RMG)	In-depth case studies with RBG/RMG members. The case studies will illuminate stories of those involved in RAP, to provide a richer picture of the experiences of peoples' lives and their participation on RAP. The case studies will focus on a number of issues (e.g. how do people prioritize spending decisions from additional RAP cash income, daily routines and how RAP plays a part in this, etc.)	Case studies
Indirect (Road Users)	Semi-structured interviews with up to 4 drivers (and their passengers) of boleros/mini-vans who regularly use the RAP-maintained roads. The semi-structured interviews will focus on these users' experience of the roads and their views on the maintenance works, RMGs, and thoughts on how maintenance has or has not improved their experience	Interviews
Indirect (Shop keepers)	Semi-structured interviews with shop keepers in the maintenance and build districts. These studies will not be detailed, but will gather prices of goods at shops at the district and village level, as well as some thoughts from shop keepers on the use of roads for hauling goods to villages.	Semi-structured Interviews



## Sampling

This short section provides the reader with a breakdown of the beneficiaries sampled for this year's (2017) Beneficiary Feedback – in order to ensure that the male and female subsets were representative. As table 2 shows, there is an almost even split in male and females beneficiaries interviewed for this year's process.

We interviewed beneficiaries who have been engaged with RAP for a substantial period of time (i.e. around 2 years' of participation). In the sample, 84% of all survey respondents have been working as a member of a RBG or RMG for *over* two years. Another 10% have been working between one to two years. Therefore the sample includes very few new recruits. The experience in participating in RAP for over two years is a sufficient length of time to reflect from the time spent working on RAP as a beneficiary.

As the table indicates, the MEL team have been able to survey more than 600 individuals for the survey, against the planned 400 sample category. This was possible due to the realignment of original field survey plan with the one that was eventually used.

*Table 2: Beneficiary sample breakdown*

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Bajura (RBG)</b>	<b>Kalikot (RBG)</b>	<b>Achham (RMG)</b>	<b>Dailekh (RMG)</b>	<b>Total</b>	
	n	n	n	n	n	%
<b>Male</b>	140	120	47	31	338	56
<b>Female</b>	112	94	33	32	271	44
	<b>252</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>609</b>	

## C. Findings – Direct Beneficiaries

### Part 1: Daily Work Routine

This section focuses on what daily work routines are like for members of RBGs and RMGs and for men and women within either of these groups. The purpose of this section is to understand how and to what extent, if any, daily routines have changed for RAP beneficiaries as a result of their employment over the last few years. RBG members tend to work more days in a month than RMG members, hence any significant difference may be attributable to different working schedules. Any significant difference between male and female beneficiaries are presented to explore any gender-related differences.

#### Summary

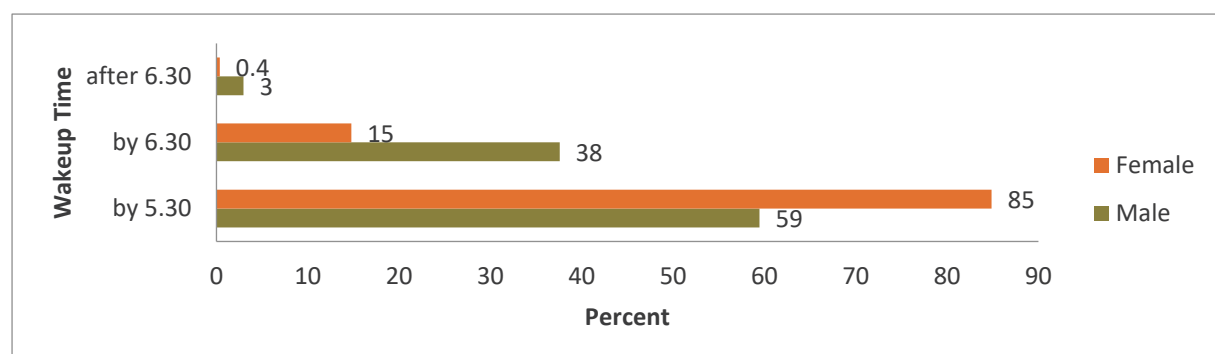
- For the majority of female beneficiaries, RAP work is one of the first times they are being paid cash for works.
- Significantly, a far higher percentage of women are awake by 5.30am compared to men across all groups in order to engage in household chores.
- Across the board, male and female beneficiaries of RAP are able to devote *less* time to normal daily chores or activities in-and-outside the household, although this is more often the case with women than men.
- Female beneficiaries of RAP are engaged in significantly more unpaid care work than male beneficiaries. Female beneficiaries feel more burden to perform unpaid care work *and* work on RAP. However not all women feel they are burdened by the work: conversely some find it empowering because of their ability to spend how they choose.

#### Daily work patterns

To understand how daily patterns of people's lives have or have not changed as a result of working on RAP, we asked beneficiaries how their day pans out. This involved asking questions on what time people would wake up and what sort of activities they would be involved in and assessing whether these patterns have changed at all as a result of working on RAP.

The graph below shows that almost all respondents are awake by 6.30am. The majority of these respondents are generally up by 5.30am. **Significantly, a far higher percentage of women are awake by 5.30am compared to men across all groups.**

*Graph 1: Average time people wake-up before work*



The average time that people start RAP work is 9am. The earliest time is 6am, and the latest start time is 11am. However there is no significant difference between RBGs and RMGs, or between male and female workers.

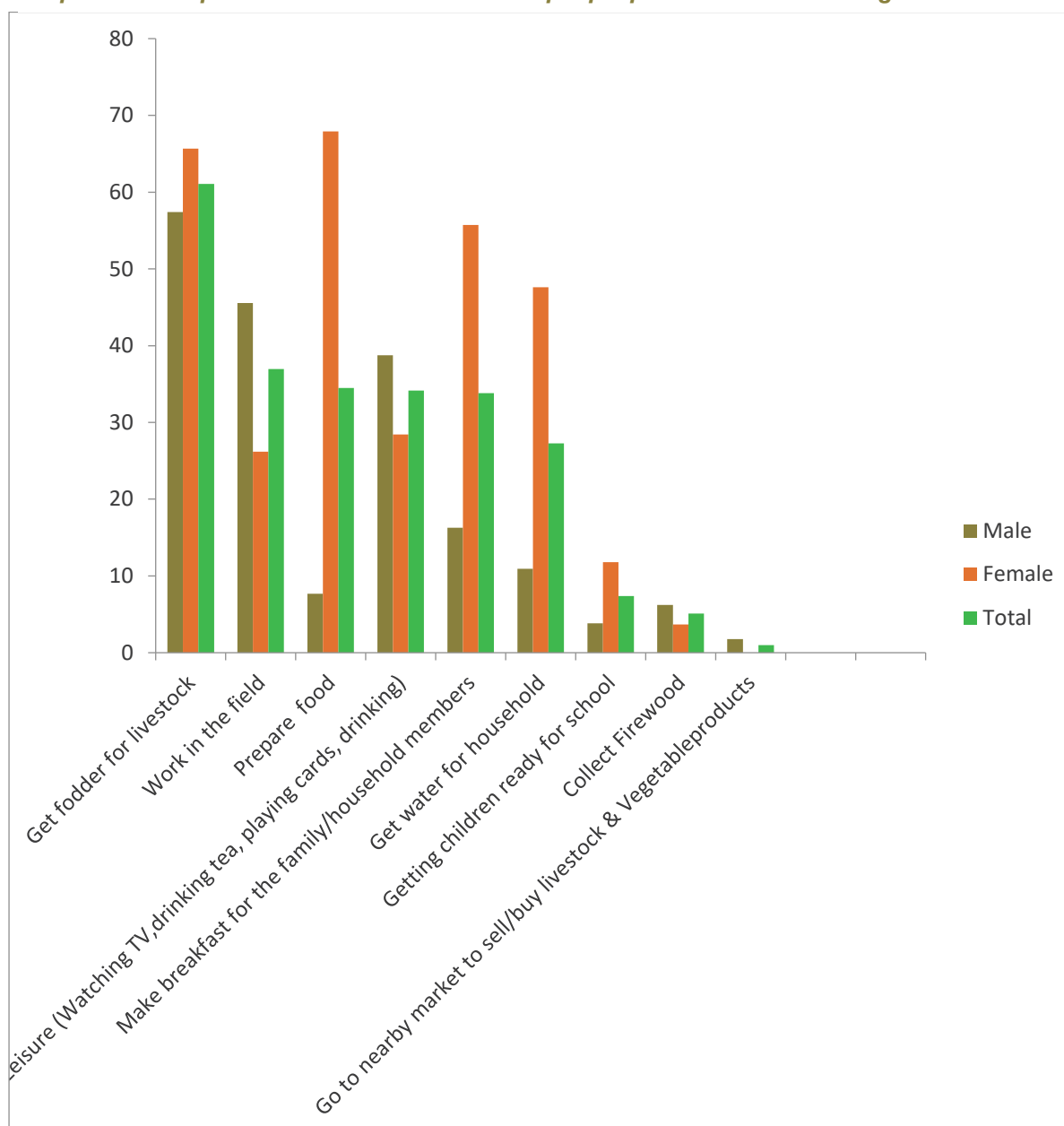
*"I wake up at 5 AM in the morning and cook roti bread from 5 AM till 5:30 AM. I leave home for work at 6 AM and we start work from 7 AM till 1 PM. I reach home at 2 PM. Then after that I collect fuel wood, cook dinner till 5 PM."* **Female RBG worker 2, Kalikot**

*"My daily routine has also changed since I started working for RAP. Now I wake up at 4 AM, then work in the field and then cook breakfast. I eat breakfast at 8 AM then I go to RAP job. We work on the road from 9 AM till 5 PM then I come back home and rest. I don't have to fetch grasses or collect fuel wood like in the past."* **Female RBG worker 3, Kalikot**

*"During workdays I wake up at 6 AM. I leave home accordingly depending upon where we are working that day to ensure that I can report at the job site by 10 AM I eat breakfast between 8:30 AM and 8:45 AM when the work is far away. My mother and wife usually cook morning breakfast. It takes me around half an hour to get fresh in the morning and it takes me around an hour to fetch grass for the livestock. My other family members wake up before 6 AM thus they get adequate amount of time to cook breakfast for me so early."* **Male RMG worker, Achham**

*"Before I started working for RAP, I used to do agriculture. I used to normally wake up at 5 AM. Now I wake up at the same time as well. Normally after I wake up in the morning, I either prepare fodder and grass for the livestock or go collect fuel wood. On alternate days I also come to the market to purchase food in the morning. I manage my household chores according to what needs to be done during that particular day. For example, I collect fuel wood during some days while on other days I fetch grass or go to the market. Children cook morning breakfast and then they go to school. I don't get time in the morning to cook breakfast."* – **Female RBG worker 1, Bajura**

**Graph SEQ Graph \\* ARABIC 2: Tasks/chores people perform in the morning**



We then explored the different ‘chores’ or ‘activities’ that people do before they go to work on RAP. The results are presented in graph 2; multiple responses were allowed. A significant observation from graph 2 is that when looking at the results disaggregated by male and female beneficiary, it is clear **women are engaged in far more unpaid care work than men**. These results are in line with evidence from other research into this topic. Specifically a far higher percentage of women are involved with preparing food and collecting water for the household in the morning compared to men.

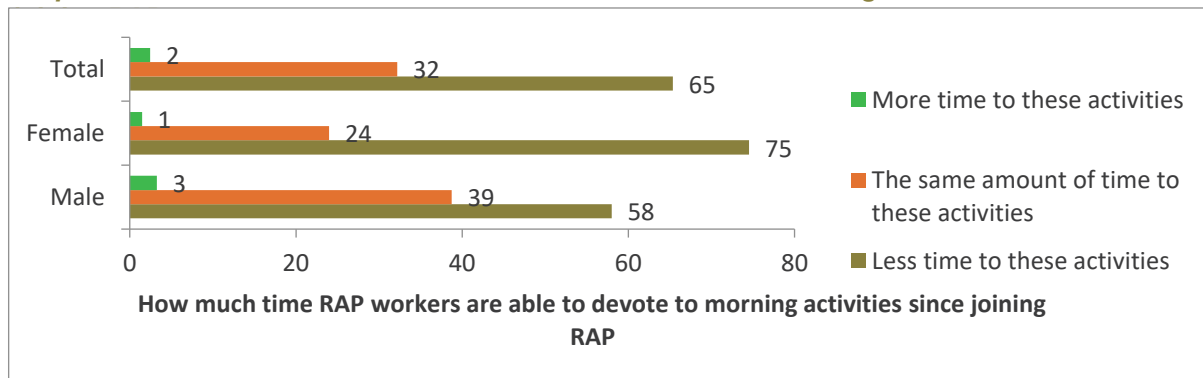
When we asked whether RAP beneficiaries are able to dedicate more time, less time or the same amount of time to these morning activities since joining RAP, the responses, as indicated in the graph below, show that across the board male and female beneficiaries are able to devote less time, with more women indicating they are able to spend less time compared to men (see Graph 3).

Whilst looking at the average return time to home there is no significant difference among districts and groups. **The average time to reach home was 6pm. The average time that people went to sleep was 9pm.** When asked what ‘chores’ or activities RAP beneficiaries are engaged in after they return from RAP

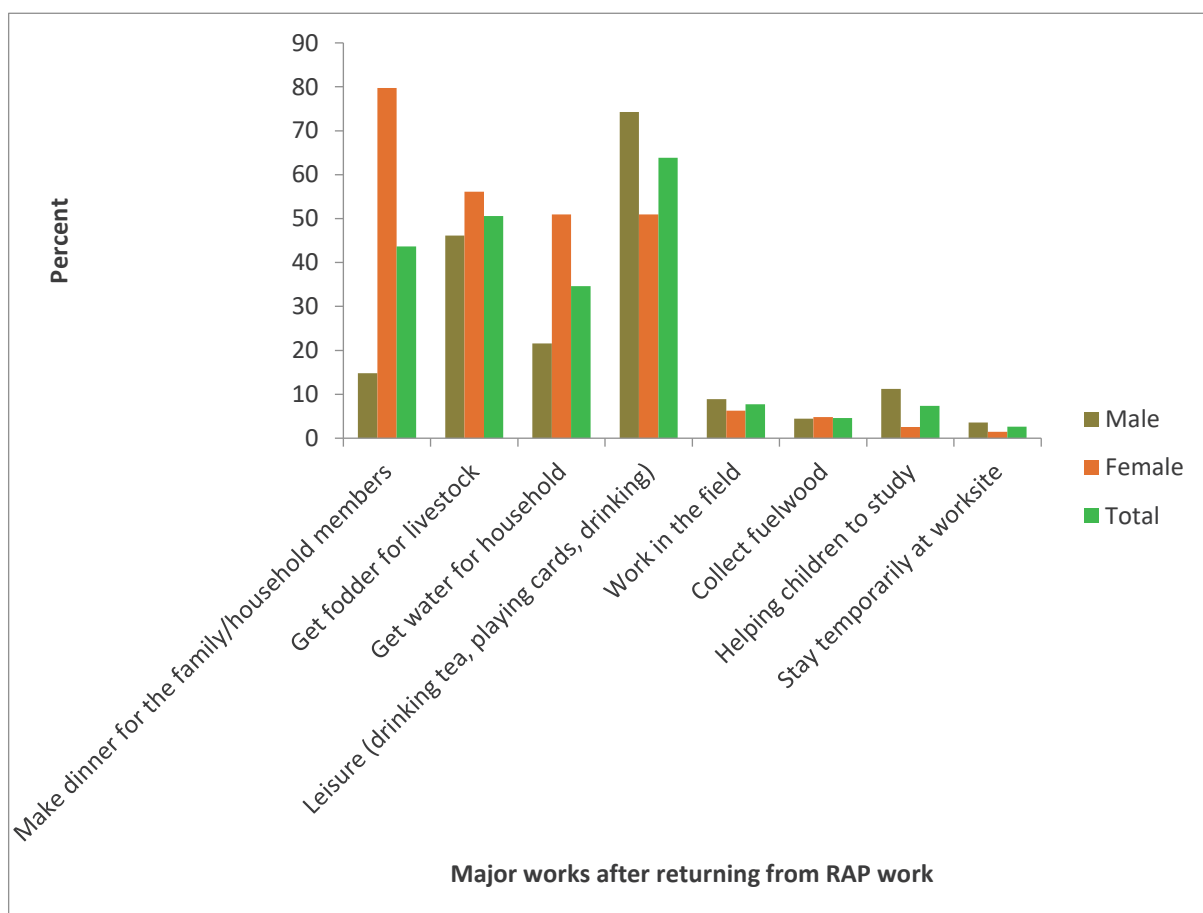
work across all groups, women once again disproportionately responded in stating they are involved in unpaid care work, including preparing food for the household, as the Graph 4 shows.

Again, when asked whether these RAP beneficiaries are able to dedicate more time, less time or the same amount of time to these activities in the evening, the responses show that across the board male and

**Graph 3: How much time RAP workers are able to devote to morning tasks/chores since**



**Graph 4: Tasks/chores people perform in the evening**



female beneficiaries are able to devote less time, with **more women indicating they are able to spend less time compared to men.**

**An extra burden for female beneficiaries?**

The main significance is that the results indicate a stark difference between male and female beneficiaries in terms of what tasks that they are involved in before and after participating in RAP work. The results show that around two-thirds of all respondents are able to devote less time to household activities than before after joining RAP, with a far higher percentage of women having less time to devote compared to men. Given that women wake up earlier to start their day and disproportionately take on more household tasks, this suggests strongly that women's roles (largely defined by prevailing gender and social norms) have not changed and instead are reinforced; women continue to be involved in unpaid care work whilst also being employed by RAP.

However, as Part 3 shows, **for many female beneficiaries, RAP work is one of the first times they are being paid cash for works.** Not all women feel they are burdened by the work: conversely some find it empowering because of their ability to spend how they choose.

*"I don't take RAP job as a burden. In fact this job has been very beneficial for us because we don't have to borrow from anyone and we don't have to run away from anyone. Also our work has made it possible for our village to be accessible to vehicles. This is also a very happy accomplishment."* **Female RBG worker 3, Kalikot**

## Part 2: Perceptions of work quality and work practice

This section focuses on asking beneficiaries about the use of safety gear on the worksite and their perceptions of the quality of work, whether it is safe and whether they think the work is appropriate for men and women. RAP has well-established protocols and the Safety Knot component of RAP is well placed to look into the risk of injuries side (which it is currently doing).

### Summary

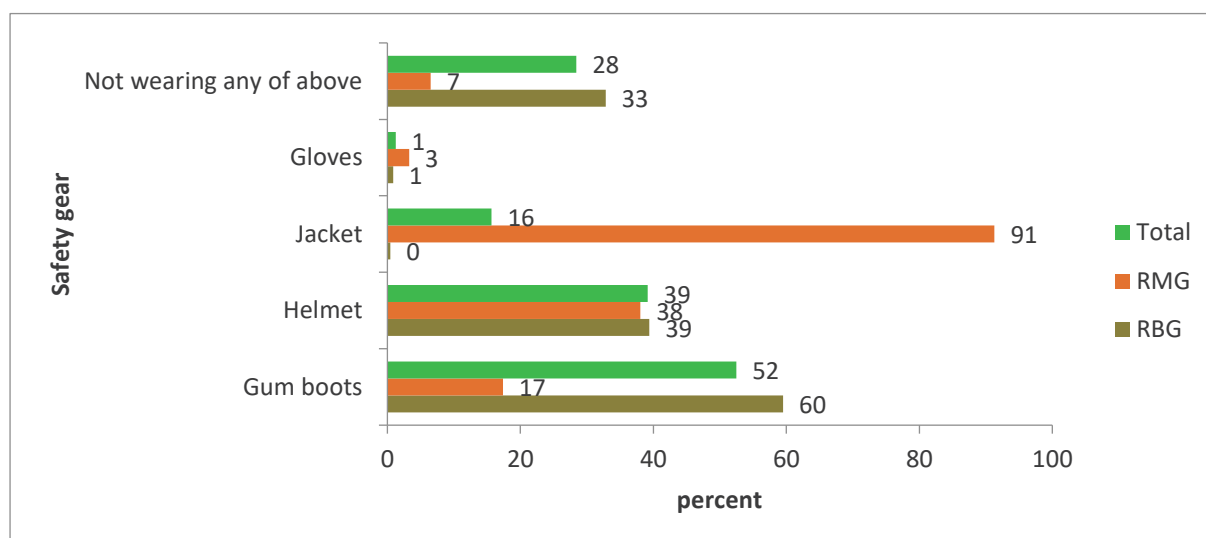
- A significant proportion of RAP beneficiaries do not wear their safety gear all of the time when working. There is a mixed response as to why this is, including that the gear is too uncomfortable or that it is not always considered necessary.
- Most RAP beneficiaries, when they wear safety equipment, feel proud to wear it and do not receive negative comments from people in the local community. This reinforces the point that when people do not wear safety equipment, this is for practical reasons.
- Whilst the percentage of reported injuries is low, the majority of RAP beneficiaries state that injuries are 'likely' or 'highly likely' indicating that there is a high awareness of safety issues. Nearly one in ten people have reported that falling rocks have hit them on the head when wearing a helmet.
- Men and women tend to agree that certain tasks are more suitable for men and others are more suitable for women (e.g. stone breaking more suitable for men, versus soil excavation more suitable for women).

### Wearing safety equipment?

**Note that 97% of RBG members and 65% of RMG members were working on the day of the interview and were interviewed at the work site.** Before asking questions to the beneficiaries, the survey team spot-checked how many beneficiaries were wearing their safety gear if they were working on that day. This is *not* for auditing purposes. Rather the purpose was to then ask the RAP beneficiaries what they thought of wearing safety equipment, irrespective if they were wearing any or not on the day of the interview.

The graph below shows what safety gear the RAP beneficiaries were wearing on the day of the interview *only* for those who were working on the day of the interview. Note that RBG beneficiaries are not given jackets and not expected to wear these. **The results are mixed and show that a significant proportion of beneficiaries of either RBGs or RMGs are not wearing any of their safety equipment on the day of interview.**

Graph 5: Proportion of individuals wearing safety gear on day of interview at the worksite

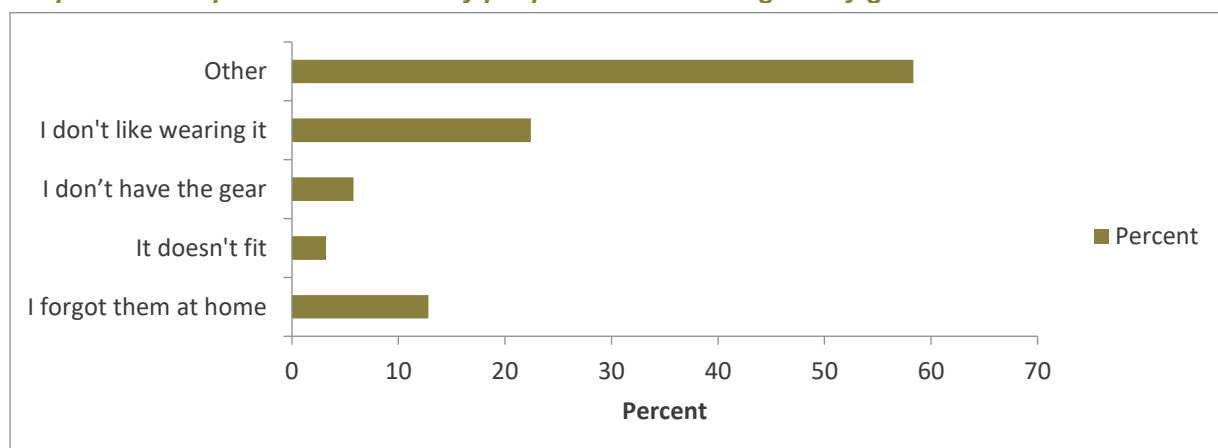


*“RAP has provided me with cap, boots, mask and jackets. I wear mask, boots and cap while digging. I can’t wear my boots while carrying rocks because they are too big, heavy and uncomfortable. We also do this work the most.” – Female RBG worker, Bajura*

*“We wear gumboots and helmets while working in these difficult areas. I am not wearing helmet and gumboots today because we aren’t working at a difficult area. I own safety boots and they are steel-toed. These boots provide safety to our feet from rocks. Although RAP provided us with steel toe boots to wear every day at work, we only wear them while working on steep slopes and rocks. It is mandatory to wear our safety equipment but wearing boots during the summer is difficult because I sweat a lot and boots are heavy.” – Male RMG worker, Achham*

We then asked beneficiaries who were *not* wearing their safety gear *why* they were not wearing some of their gear on that day. The graph below shows a mix of reasons. **Unpacking ‘other’ by analysing the written responses shows that most people are citing: it’s too hot to wear safety gear, the safety gear is not in a good condition, and some thought that it is not required for the work they are doing.** There is no significant difference between RBGs and RMGs, or males and females.

Graph SEQ Graph \\* ARABIC 6: Why people are not wearing safety gear





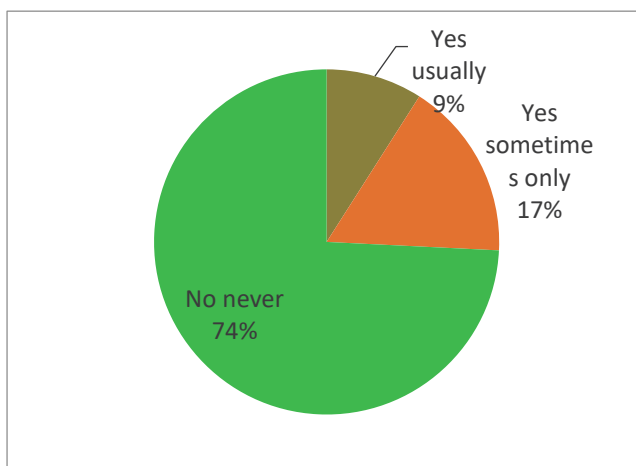
*Photo SEQ Photo \\* ARABIC 1: RMGs at work*



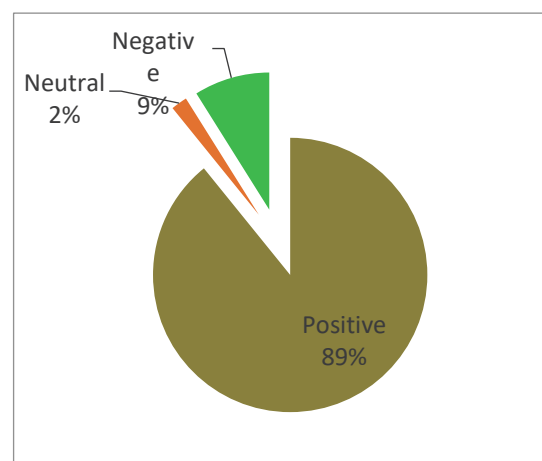
#### Comments on safety equipment

We asked beneficiaries whether anyone within the community ever make any verbal comments about wearing the safety gear. Only a quarter said 'yes usually' or 'yes sometimes' of which the overwhelming majority cited this as positive comments. We then asked how people feel when working on the construction or maintenance work and a large majority of beneficiaries felt proud or recognised by the community for their work.

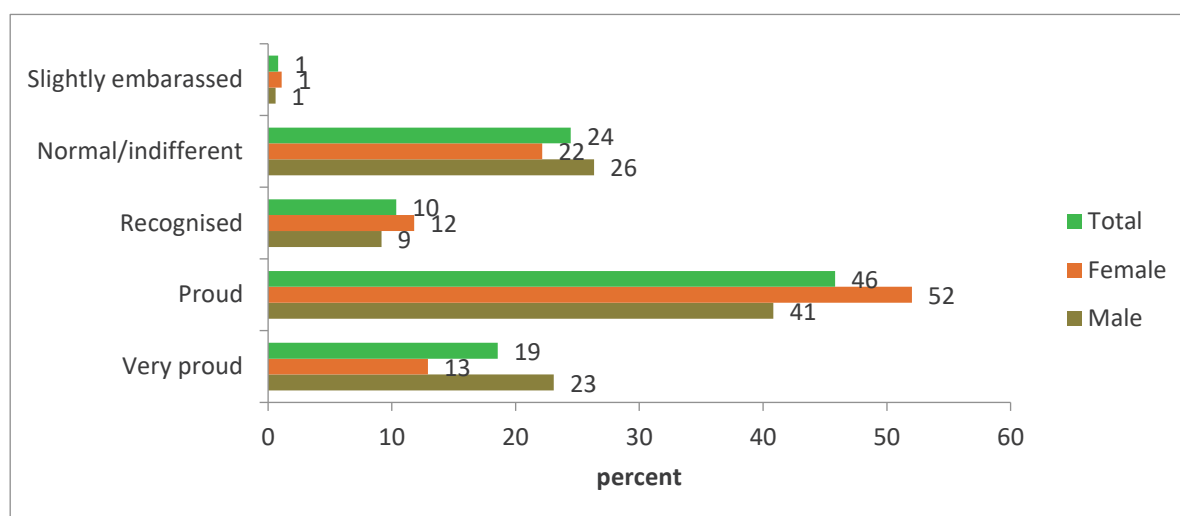
*Graph 7: Whether people receive comments from the community on wearing safety gear*



*Graph 8: Whether comments are positive, neutral or negative*



**Graph SEQ Graph \\* ARABIC 9: How people feel when they wear their safety gear**



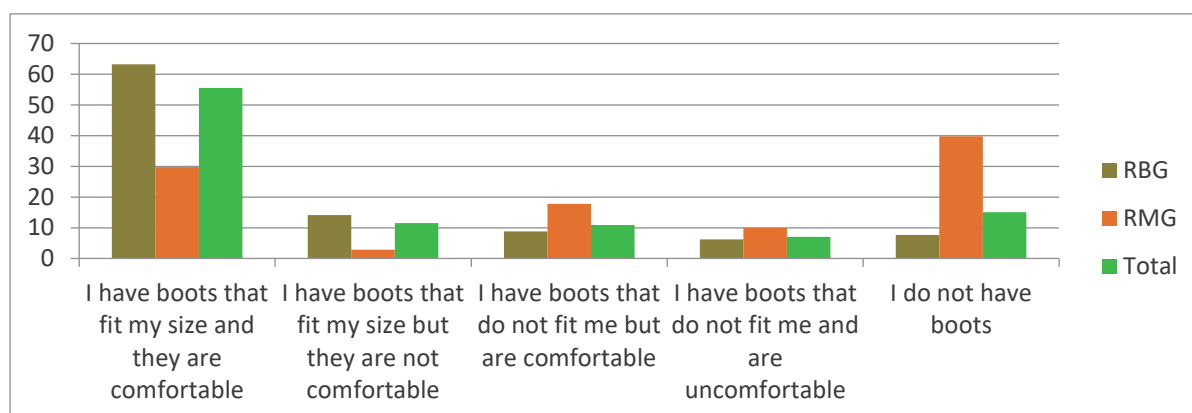
**Photo SEQ Photo \\* ARABIC 2: Female RMG workers at work**



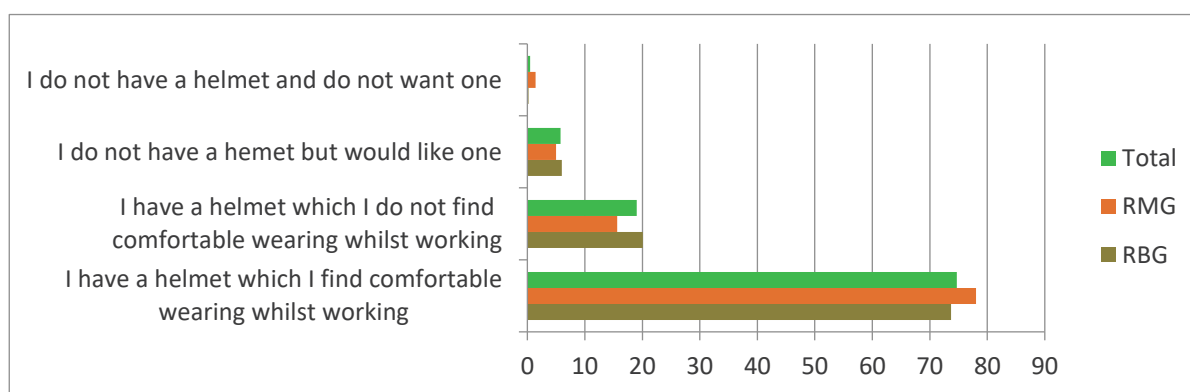
*"Community people look at us from positive view. Community people, drivers and passengers say that we have been doing a good job. The drivers thank us and they say that they have been able to drive all year round on this route since RAP took over maintenance of this road."* **Male RMG worker, Achham**

After observing what safety gear RAP beneficiaries were wearing, we asked what beneficiaries felt about helmets and boots – whether they had any and if they thought they were comfortable to wear or not.

**Graph SEQ Graph \\* ARABIC 10: Whether RAP beneficiaries have boots**



**Graph 11: Whether RAP beneficiaries have helmets**

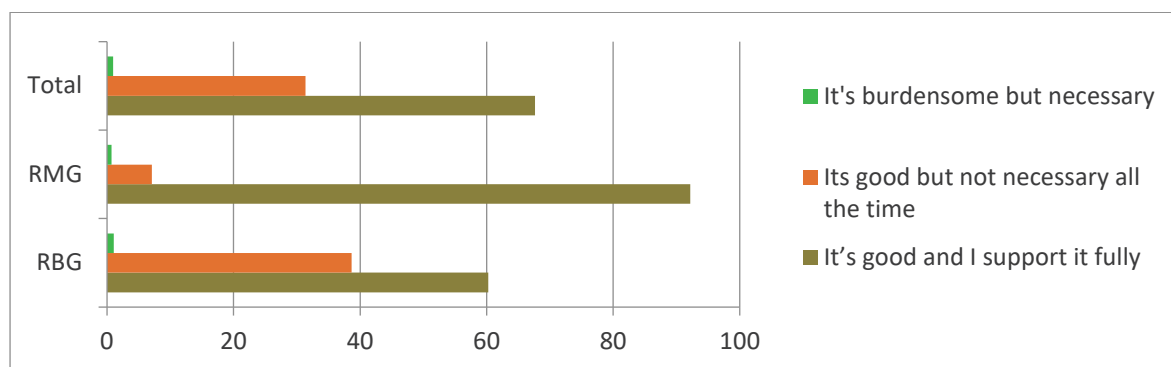


There is a difference between the RBGs and RMGs with regards to who has boots and who wears them. A significantly higher proportion (nearly 40%) of RMGs interviewed stated that they did not have any boots at all, compared to around 7% of RBGs.

When we asked whether RAP beneficiaries found it easy to carry safety equipment, **around three-quarters of respondents said they find the equipment easy to carry and manageable.**

*“We wear gumboots and helmets while working in these difficult areas. I am not wearing helmet and gumboots today because we aren’t working at a difficult area. I own a pair of safety boots and it is a steel-toe boot. This boot provides safety to our feet from rocks. Although RAP provided us with steel toe boots to wear every day at work, we only wear them while working on steep slopes and rocks. It is mandatory to wear our safety equipment but wearing boots during the summer is difficult because it sweats a lot and boots are heavy. Replacements boots are provided by RAP as needed. Till now I received one pair of boots and I will be getting replacements in the near future.”* **Male RMG worker, Achham**

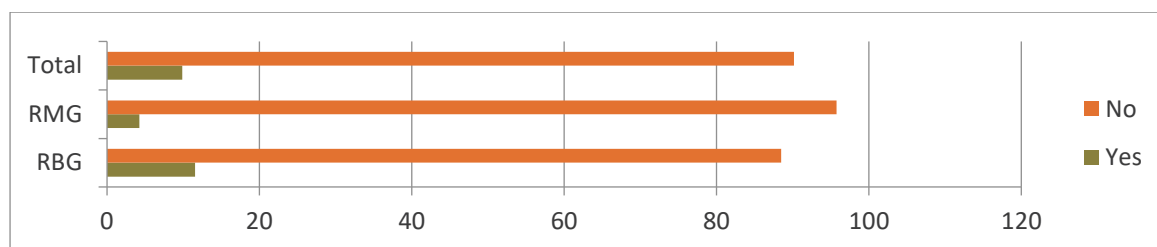
**Graph 12: How RAP beneficiaries feel about using safety gear**



## Safety and injuries

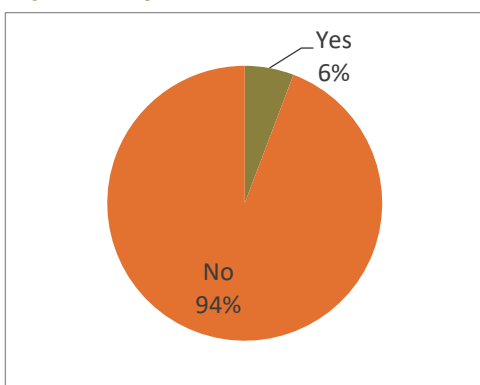
We asked beneficiaries whether a rock had ever hit them on the head whilst they were wearing a helmet. Whilst the majority said 'No', nearly one in ten said that this has happened to them since working on RAP.

**Graph 13: Has a rock ever fallen on your head whilst you are wearing a helmet- Yes or No**

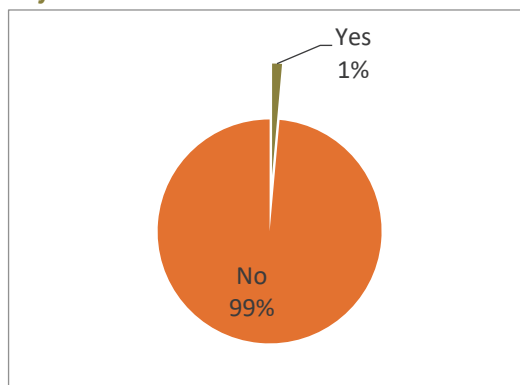


The percentage of people who reported having an injury was low. Amongst RBGs this was 6% and amongst RMGs this was just 1%.

**Graph 14: Percentage of reported injuries: RBGs**



**Graph 15: Percentage of reported injuries: RMGs**





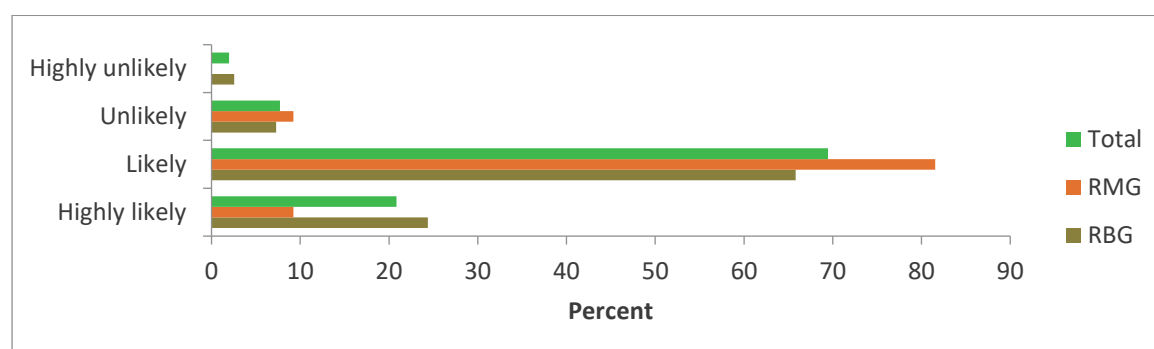
**Photo 3: RMG worker treats a minor injury with first aid kit**



### Perceptions of safety of tasks

When we asked RAP beneficiaries how likely they thought it was to obtain any type of injury whilst working on the RAP road a high majority across groups thought that this was likely, which suggests that people know that the work is dangerous to some extent.

**Graph 14: How likely beneficiaries think it is that they may be injured while working**



We then asked beneficiaries what type of work they classify as safe or dangerous by different type of tasks they are involved in. The table below provides the results. Rock drilling and rock excavation is regarded as the most dangerous work, whilst working in the trenches and putting up gabion walls is considered the least dangerous.

**Table 3: Perceptions of safety by task**

	RBG	RMG	Total
	%	%	%
<b>Rock drilling/splitting</b>			
Safe	3	10	5
Dangerous	71	88	75
Very dangerous	26	2	20
<b>Retaining wall</b>			
Very safe	1	0	1
Safe	40	40	40
Dangerous	55	60	56
Very dangerous	4	0	3
<b>Rock Excavation</b>			
Very safe	0	0	0
Safe	12	18	14
Dangerous	74	82	76
Very dangerous	13	0	10
<b>Elevated work</b>			
Safe	5	9	6
Dangerous	49	88	58
Very dangerous	46	3	36
<b>Soil excavation</b>			
Very safe	12	20	14
Safe	74	70	73
Dangerous	14	10	13
<b>Blasting</b>			
Safe	0	1	0
Dangerous	1	0	1
Very dangerous	0	2	1
Not applicable	99	97	98
<b>Work in trench/ cutting</b>			
Very safe	2	1	1
Safe	43	77	51
Dangerous	50	22	44
Very dangerous	5	0	4
<b>Work in live traffic</b>			
Safe	0.6	87.9	20.9
Dangerous	0.4	12.1	3.1
Not applicable	98.9	0.0	76.0

### Perceptions of suitability of tasks

In exploring the suitability of work, we asked members of RBGs and RMGs what tasks they felt was suitable for different types of people. This took a gendered approach – by asking men and women if they thought each task was suitable for men, women, young workers, older workers, tasks for physically capable and less physically capable.

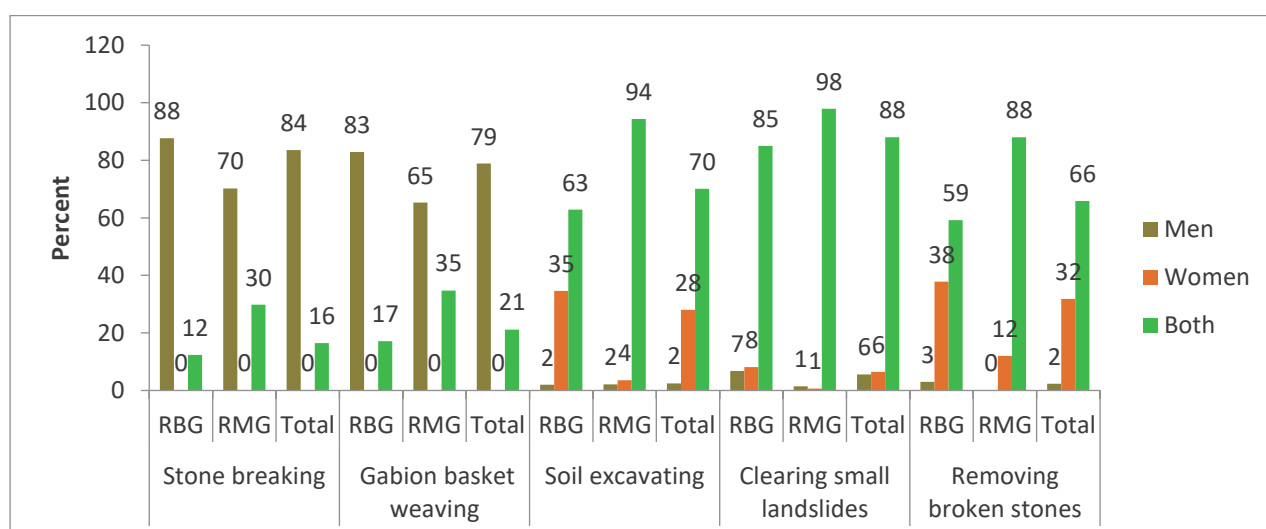
The results are presented in the table below. **Of significance, men and women tended to agree that certain tasks are more suitable for men and certain more suitable for women** (e.g. stone breaking more suitable for men, versus soil excavation more suitable for women).

**Table 4: Men and Women's perceptions of the suitability of each task for different groups of people**

Male (M) and Female (F) Perception on Suitability for Each Task															
Suitable for	Stone breaking			Gabion weaving			Soil excavation			Clearing small landslides			Removing broken stones		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Men	96	98	97	99	99	99	73	79	76	93	93	93	72	76	74
Women	13	22	17	28	35	31	96	99	97	95	96	95	97	97	97
Young workers	38	33	36	19	25	22	36	34	35	31	35	33	38	36	37
Older workers	1	0	1	4	1	2	12	7	10	4	1	3	5	1	3
Physically capable	51	42	47	20	15	17	12	13	12	11	18	14	16	23	19
Not as physically capable	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

We then asked what tasks men and women *actually do* in contrast to their thoughts on the suitability of the tasks. The results are presented in the graph below. There is a tendency for women to be involved in lighter tasks, even when men also state that it is suitable for both – contrasted by certain tasks only being done by men (e.g. stone breaking and gabion weaving). The RAP programme has a flexible approach and people are allowed to do tasks they feel they are best suited for.

**Graph 15: What tasks men and women say they really do**

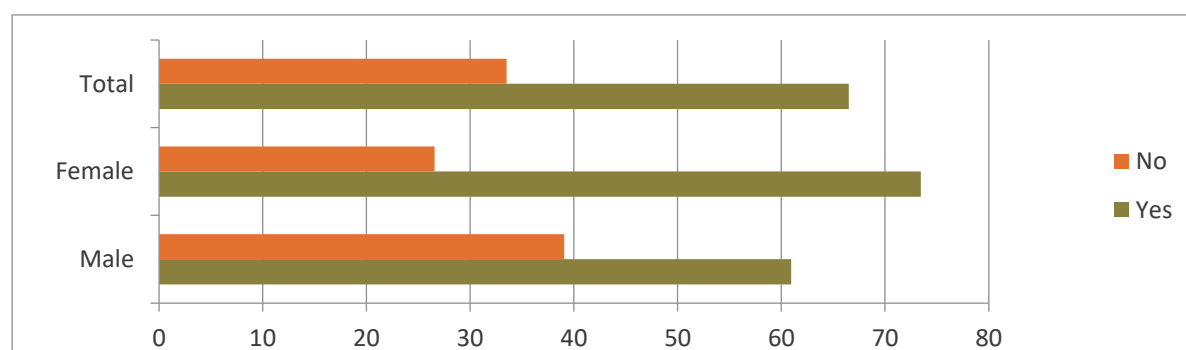


*Photo 4: A female RBG worker carrying and removing broken stones*



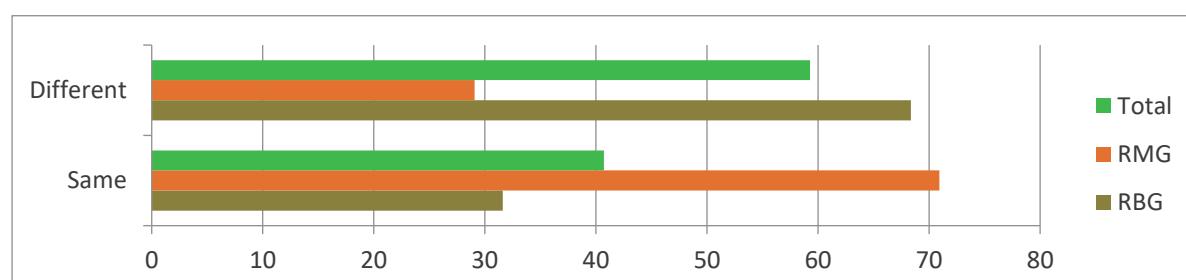
Whilst the above graphs provide a sense of people's perceptions of the suitability of each task and what people say they are involved in, we then asked men and women whether members all do the same work or not. The graph below show mixed results between men and women's responses.

*Graph 16: Breakdown of beneficiaries' response to whether men and women do the same work*



When disaggregated by RBG and RMGs there is a stark contrast with a higher proportion of RMG members stating they do the same work within their group, versus RBG members who overwhelmingly state they do different work within their group.

*Graph 17: Breakdown of whether RBGs and RMGs think workers in the group do the same or different work*





*"We have 20 members in our RBG and everybody works together. Our group consists of 7 women and 13 men. Although there are also men members in our group but we all work together. Men perform all the difficult work such as breaking rocks and we perform lighter works."* **Female RBG worker, Kalikot**

*"There are 20 members in our RMG group out of which 7 are males and 13 are females. Until now it is relatively easy to work in a mixed group. Men break rocks while women carry rocks and dig. In my opinion the RBG group would be more productive if it comprised of all men because they can perform any kind of work. Women can only carry rocks and dig but we cannot break rocks because it is a very difficult physical work. But men of our group don't view working with women as a disadvantage. They like working together with women and they say while working on the road we should all work as if the road is ours."* **Female RBG worker, Bajura**

*"Our team consists of both males and females. Even female members work as hard as they can. If there is something they can't do then we help them. Men usually carry heavy rocks while women cut weeds and carry small rocks. Rest of the work is done by both males and females working together. There is also a lot of work available for the women on this road such as burying potholes, cutting weeds, carrying small rocks etc."* **Male RMG worker, Achham**

## Part 3: Household Consumption and Spending

This section focuses on RAP beneficiaries' feedback on how the cash that they receive for their labour is used.

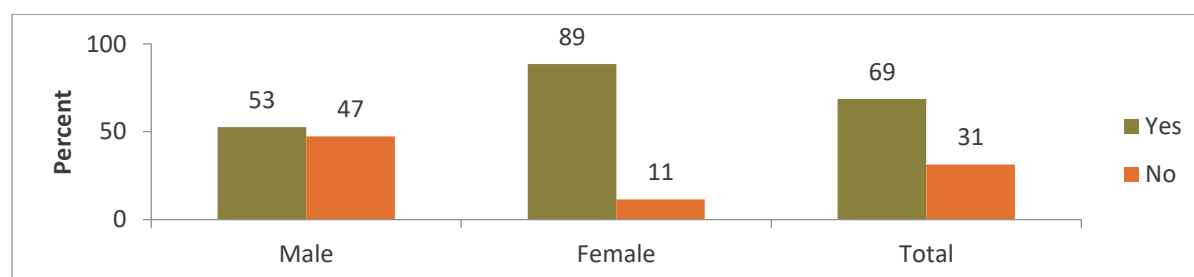
### Summary

- RAP is the first source of paid income for nearly 90% of female RAP beneficiaries. If/when RAP work finishes, most women would resort to unpaid work and relying on cash income from other members of their household.
- All beneficiaries spend cash earned from RAP on food and children's education costs (books, stationery, etc.) This is corroborated in the Midline Impact Assessment from 2016.
- Without cash income from RAP most beneficiaries would use savings or borrow money to pay for their basic daily expenditure. This does not necessarily indicate that without cash from RAP, people would not be able to buy goods. It indicates that it is the regularity of cash income which is the most immediate means to pay for goods.
- Most beneficiaries like to save but there is no clear pattern as to where beneficiaries use their savings. Further research is required to look specifically into this issue given the highly significant amount of money that is saved across the districts within RAP savings groups.

### Use of cash

We asked beneficiaries whether their work on RAP was the first time that they had been regularly been paid cash for their work. As the table below shows there is a stark contrast between men and women, with women far more likely to respond stating this is the first time they are participating in paid work. This marks a change from last year's beneficiary feedback survey, where responses were lower.

**Graph 18: Whether working on RAP was the first paid work**



We then asked participants to describe where they spent their money earned from RAP work. All respondents said that a portion of their cash was used on purchasing food and on their children's education (for those respondents with children of school age). A high proportion of beneficiaries also responded stating that they spent a portion of their cash income on agriculture inputs. Table 5 indicates what percentage of male and female beneficiaries (and the total combined) spend their cash from RAP on different items.

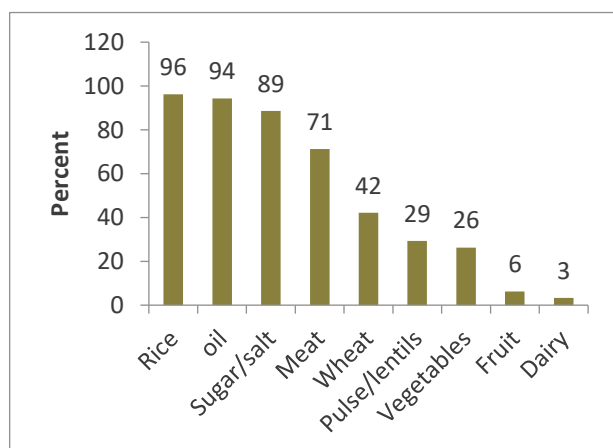
**Table 5: Percentage of RAP beneficiaries using cash from RAP on the following:**

Use of cash from RAP	Male	Female	Total
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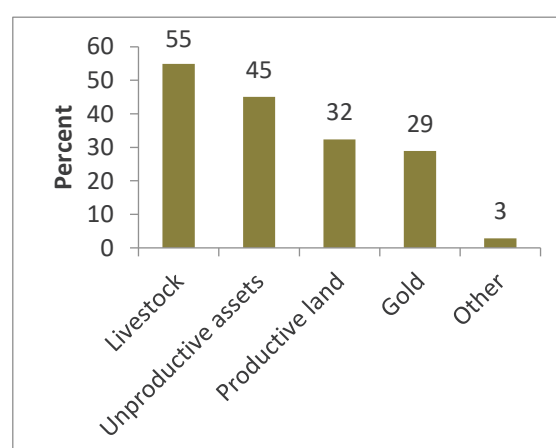
	%	%	%
Food	100	100	100
Children's education	100	100	100
Health	87	85	86
Purchasing assets	66	69	67
Investing in small business/ Income Generating Activities	48	42	45
Agricultural inputs	94	94	94

Regarding food and assets, we further asked what food types and what types of assets people spent their cash income on. As the table on the left shows, almost all cash spent on food is spent on basic staples including rice but also, surprisingly, on meat too.

**Graph SEQ Graph \\* ARABIC 20: Where money**



**Graph SEQ Graph \\* ARABIC 19: Where**



## Managing expenses

To understand whether the RAP cash income was used in conjunction with other income sources, we asked beneficiaries what source of income was used to pay for their expense as described above. This comes almost exclusively from RAP income with some reliance on other sources. This indicates that cash from RAP is the most immediate source of income to pay expenses, but does not mean that this is the only source.

**Table 6: Monthly expenses are paid from which sources of income?**

	RBG	RMG	Total
Source of income for monthly expenses	%	%	%
Wage from RAP job	100	100	100

Daily wage from another job	5	22	9
Earnings from other family members	18	5	15
Sale of agriculture products	8	18	10
Sale of livestock products/livestock	35	40	36
Remittance	9	9	9
Others	3	1	3

We asked beneficiaries a number of questions regarding the number of days of employment they received and how many days they think contributes to paying for expenses and how many days allows them to save. The number of days of employment (by RBG and RMG) is consistent with what RAP actually offers. Employment days are used almost exclusively for consumption, with a few days a month allowing for some saving.

**Table 7: How employment days are used**

	By group		Total
	RBG	RMG	
<b>How many days do you work on RAP in an average month in the working season</b>	25	12	22
<b>How many days of paid work per month helps you meet your basic expenses?</b>	25	21	23
<b>How many days of paid work per month would allow you to save?</b>	27	23	25

There is a mixed picture regarding how beneficiaries manage their daily expenditure when we asked them how they would do this when there is no RAP work. There is a difference between RBGs and RMGs, with the mandatory savings from RAP to RBGs indicating that RBG members are likely to tap into their savings, whilst RMG members are more likely to borrow on credit.

**Table 8: If there is no RAP work, how would people meet their basic expenses?**

	RBG	RMG	Total
Use savings	66	9	52
Borrow cash/money	57	36	52
Borrow on credit (repay later)	38	65	44

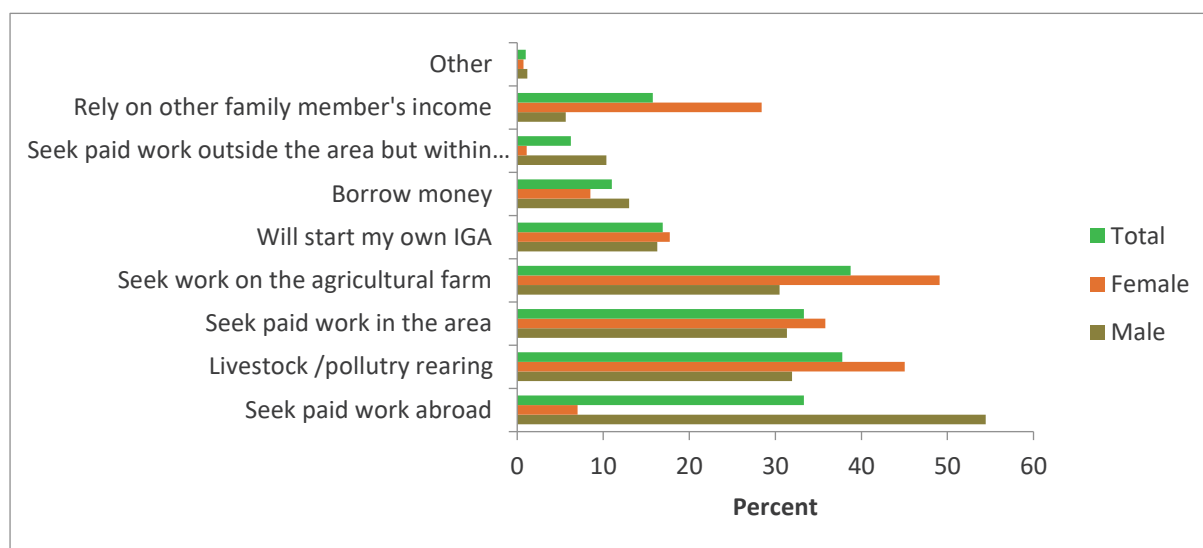
Rely on remittances	10	10	10
Rely on other cash income sources	34	18	31
Other daily labor works	17	35	21
Other	3	6	4

*“We usually get paid Rs. 27,000 for 20 meters of road construction on the bill. We receive an advance of Rs. 8000 for 20 meters of road construction. I am satisfied with the wage provided by RAP because I feel as though what I make is enough for me to sustain my livelihood and I wouldn’t be making this kind of money without working for RAP. My average earning from RAP is around Rs. 13,500 per month. Last time I got paid Rs. 27,000 for two months.”* **Female RBG worker, Bajura**

*“My wage is Rs. 5,250 per month for 8 months out of a year. This money isn’t even enough for me to meet my household expenses and to send my children to school. My children stay at Mangalsen and go to school. I have to pay their room rent and it costs me Rs. 6000/month for their education which includes books and stationary expenses of Rs. 1000/month, Rs.1000/month for tuition fees of private school and Rs. 2000 room rent. I pay Rs. 7000 per year to send my three daughters to Government school. My household food expense is Rs. 2000/month (including Rs. 900 for 6 liters of oil and Rs. 600 for sugar). I go through 50 kg of rice per month and I have to purchase good quality rice from the market for 4 months out of a year. 50 kg of rice costs Rs. 4400. I spend Rs. 1000/month for other expenses. Thus my total household expense is Rs. 10,000/month which means around 50% of my total monthly expenses is covered by RAP job. To earn rest of the money, we are also engaged in vegetable farming which provides us with income of Rs. 2000-Rs. 3000/month all year round. Vegetable farming is done by other members of my family. I help them conduct vegetable farming on my days off. I also own a small retail shop at my house and I run the shop in the morning before I go to work and in the evening after I come back home from work while doing household chores. This shop makes me Rs. 2000-Rs. 3000 profit per month.”* **Male RMG worker, Achham**

From a gendered perspective there is a difference between male and female beneficiaries across all groups. Women are far more likely to rely on other family member’s income and unlikely to seek paid work abroad. Regarding the latter, this is in line with other studies and general understanding of the region where men are expected to migrate abroad for work but women are not. Hence the opportunities for paid work for women is far lower than it is for men – which correlates strongly with the results showing that RAP work is the first time working for cash for many women.

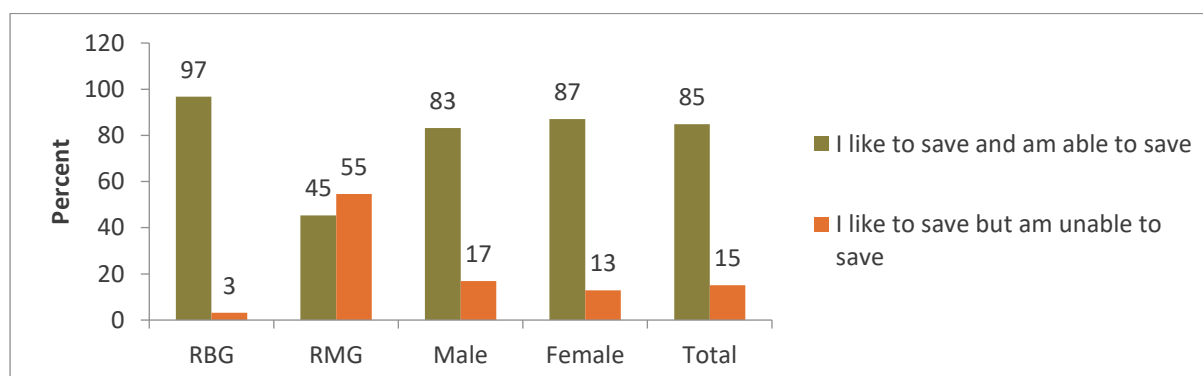
**Graph SEQ Graph \\* ARABIC 21: What men and women will do when RAP work ends**



## Savings

We asked beneficiaries whether they like to save to not (i.e. inclination or propensity to save). All indicated that they would like to save. A significant percentage said that they like to save and are able to save, with this likely being attributable to the mandatory savings by RAP.

**Graph 22: Do beneficiaries save?**



**Table 9: Where do beneficiaries put their savings?**

Where do you put your savings generally?	By Group		Gender		Total
	RBG	RMG	Male	Female	
Banks	3	10	4	3	4
Financial institutions /Development banks	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.2
Saving and credit cooperatives/groups	97	88	95	96	96
At home	0.2	1	0.3	0.4	0.4

*“We don’t have any RMG group savings. There are cooperatives in the village but I haven’t saved money anywhere. The entire income I earn is spent every month. I have bank accounts in Laxmi and Baniya bank. The account in Baniya bank was opened by RAP under my and the treasurer’s name. Every month RAP wage for the entire team comes to that account. We go to Mangalsen to collect the money from that bank account and distribute wage to everyone in the group. We are provided with Rs. 525 as transportation and lunch allowance to go to Mangalsen. Each individual member of our RMG doesn’t have an individual bank account. It is easier for us to distribute cash at the work site rather than each member having individual accounts.”* **Male RMG worker, Achham**

### Use of savings

RBG workers have mandatory savings. After more than 2 years of operation many groups have saved a lot of money. Some of the in-depth case studies provide a detailed picture of where some beneficiaries are spending money used from the savings. Whilst there is no clear pattern as to where people use their savings, there is a gap in the awareness of what happens to savings – whether people remember to save, where they would like to invest savings, what to do with savings when the programme finishes, etc.

*“I have Rs. 79,000 cash saved up at home and I have also loaned Rs. 7000 to another person. I don’t exactly remember how much money I have saved up at the cooperative. The cooperative people told us how much we had saved up but I forgot the amount.”* **Female RBG worker 1, Bajura**

*“People also ask me if I have loaned money on interest. We have a total of Rs. 2 Lakhs saved up in our group. Our Dalit group has made the decision to purchase a truck. While working for RAP sometimes we make Rs. 513 per day and sometimes Rs. 500. We get a day off on Saturday.”* **Female RBG worker 1, Kalikot**

*“There are 20 people in our RBG out of which 13 are men and 7 are women. I make anywhere between ten to fifteen thousand rupees per month from RAP. Other than this, RAP also deducts 10% each time we get paid and puts that money in group savings. The total amount of money that our group has saved is around Rs. 3 Lakhs. The group members can also take loan from this amount. I purchased a sewing machine with the help of RAP money. I spent Rs. 7000 to purchase plates and bowl made up of kash (chares dining plate and bowls). I invested Rs. 150,000 towards agricultural land with 1 ropani area.”* **Female RBG worker 3, Kalikot**

*“We don’t have any RMG group savings. There are cooperatives in the village but I haven’t saved money anywhere. The entire income I earn is spent every month.”* **Male RMG worker, Achham**

*Photo 5: Beneficiary who purchased sewing machine with savings*





## Part 4: Raising grievances

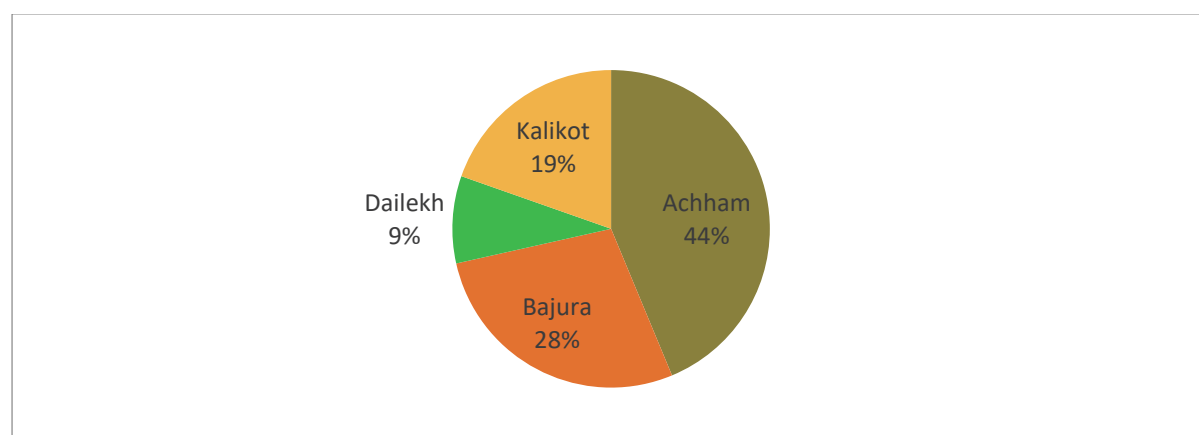
This section concentrates on whether beneficiaries have been able to raise their voices and concerns to the project and whether they feel their voices have been heard or not.

### Summary

- Around a fifth of beneficiaries have heard of the RAP radio show *Bikash ko Bato* – this is close to the figure sampled in a one-off radio outreach survey in 2016, as well as the Beneficiary Feedback survey from 2016.
- The majority of beneficiaries only sometimes raise their voices (i.e. speak out) during social audits and a large percentage never raise any grievances. However the small subset that do speak up generally feel comfortable about doing so people.

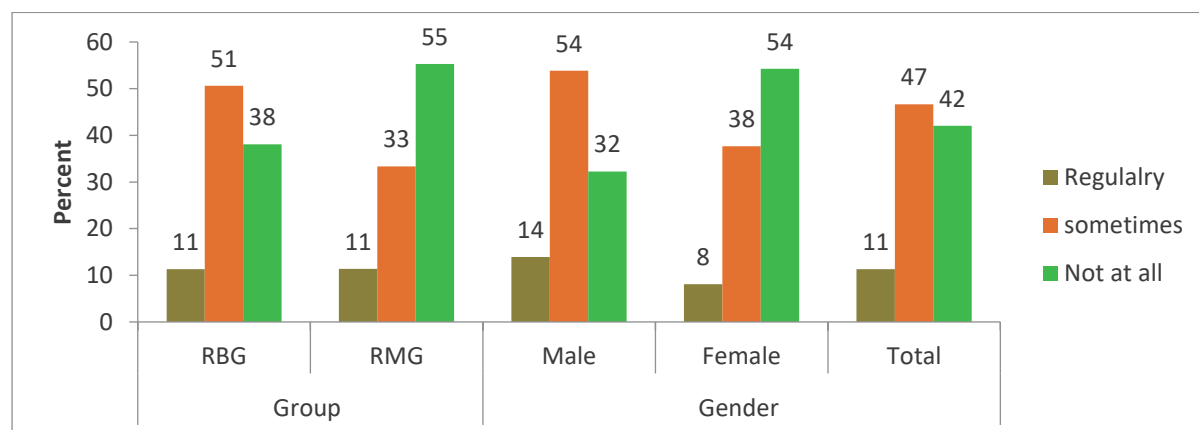
**Only 18% of beneficiaries had heard of the RAP radio show *Bikash ko Bato*.** This is almost the same percentage as in the 2016 Beneficiaries Feedback study. Graph 23 depicts the distribution of the 18% who had heard the radio show within the 4 districts surveys. Listenership was highest in Achham and lowest in Dailekh.

*Graph 23: Distribution of the 18% of beneficiaries who have heard the RAP radio show*



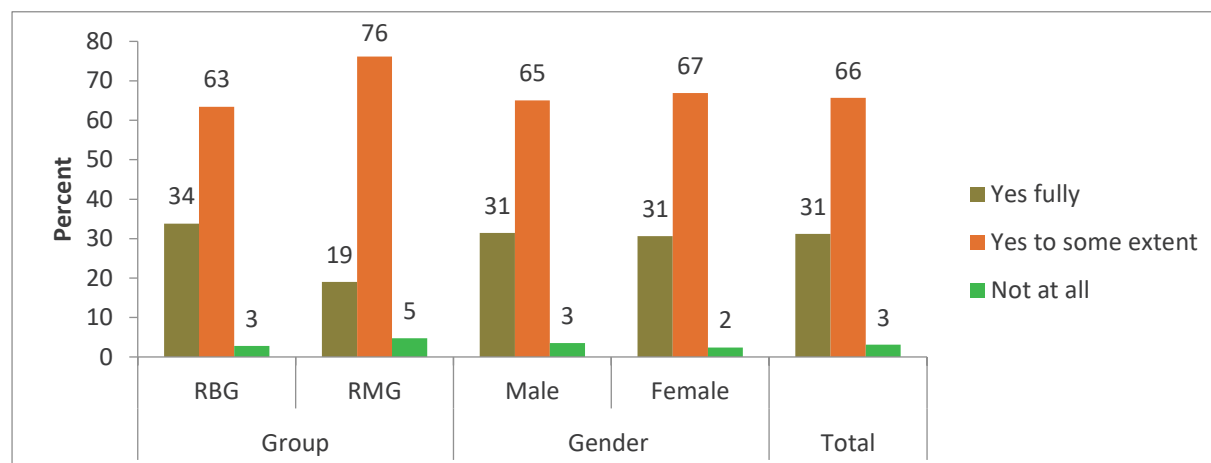
We then asked beneficiaries whether they ever raise concerns at the RAP public and social audits. People do not regularly put their voices forward, with women less likely than men to voice concerns.

*Graph 24: Do you ever talk or voice concerns during public/social audits?*

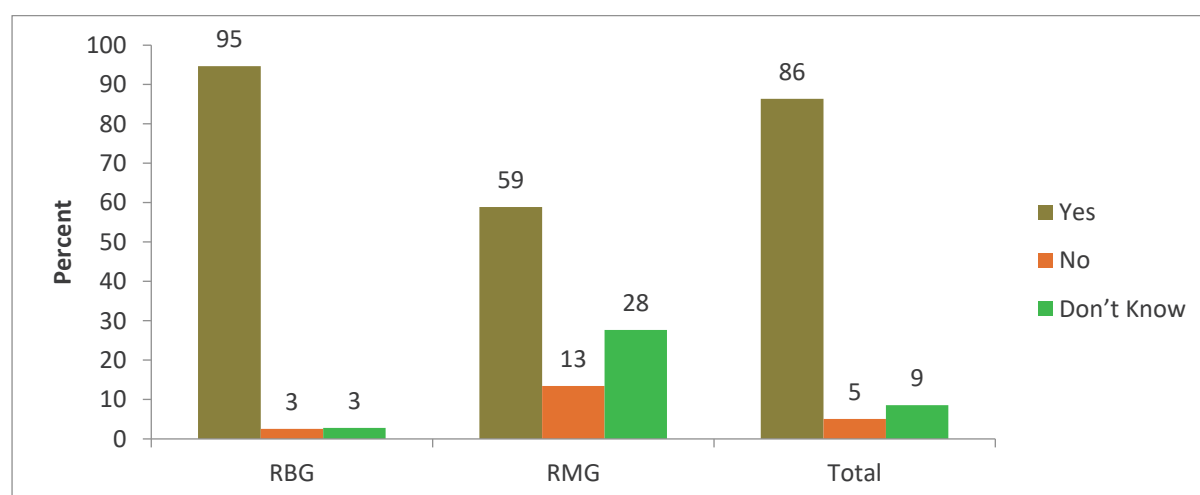


The **subset of the beneficiaries** who put forward their voices during public/social audits were further asked about to what extent their voices had been actively listen to. The figure below describes the results. RMGs are less likely to know about any mechanism to raise their concerns compared to RBGs. Women are less likely to feel comfortable to raise their voice and concerns compared to men.

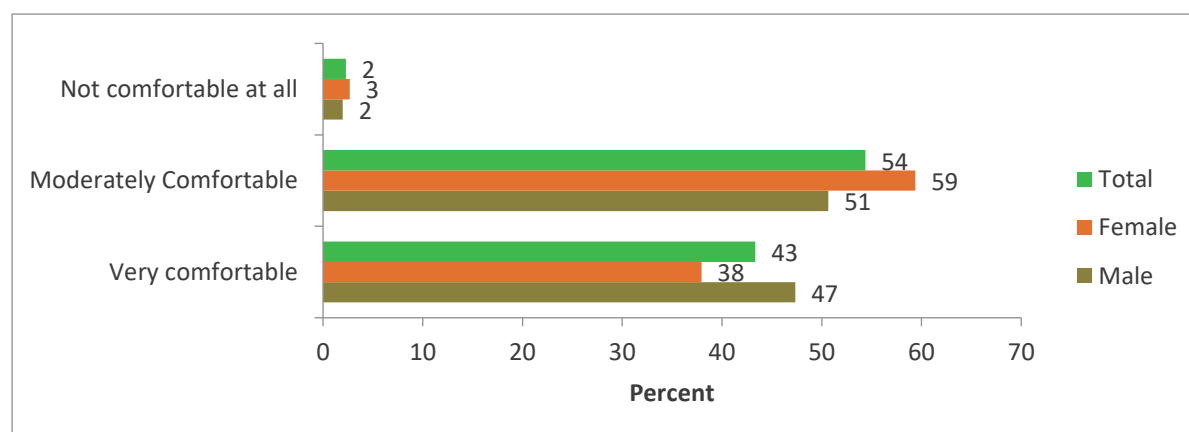
*Graph 25: Do you think your voices have been heard?*



*Graph 26: Do you have any mechanism in place to raise your concerns or grievances?*



*Graph 27: How comfortable do you feel to raise your concerns?*



## D. Findings – Indirect Beneficiaries

### Part 1: Users of the RAP Roads

This section contains feedback from indirect beneficiaries of RAP. For the purposes of this year's feedback, this specifically refers to users of the RAP roads. This includes both drivers of vehicles (e.g. Boleros and pick-ups) that ply along the road and the passengers that use the road. The purpose of this section is not to provide a statistically comprehensive representation of road users' attitudes towards the road; but it is intended to explore and understand the experiences of those using these local roads. The feedback solicited is only from two of the maintenance districts.

#### Summary

- According to the drivers and passengers, there are a number of vehicles (mostly trucks and tractors) that use the roads and each road appears to be well-used.
- Drivers and passengers both feel that the condition of the roads is good enough to drive and better than other roads that are not maintained.
- Drivers appear to be making a profit from transporting passengers along the roads, although some routes are more profitable than others. There does not appear to be a fixed price along the routes, with fares dependent on how many passengers fill up a truck and how far along the road they go. The average fare per paying passenger is between Rs. 200 and 350. This is consistent with what passengers state they pay.
- Drivers and passengers are aware of who the RMGs are and what they do, and that it is RAP who pays these workers. They feel that the quality of the roads has improved due to the RMG workers.
- Prices of essential goods at local shops appear consistently priced. Shopkeepers consider RAP workers to be more 'credit worthy' than others.

### Vehicle Drivers

The vehicle drivers were owners or drivers of Boleros or Mahendra pick-ups (light duty vehicles). The team interviewed them in-depth on a number of issues regarding use of the road, condition of the road, business of road travel and their perceptions of the Road Maintenance Group (RMG) members working along the road. All drivers interviewed are men. **Each were interviewed on different maintained roads within the respective districts of Achham and Dailekh.**

#### Use of the road

**Summary:** Throughout the interviews it is clear that all drivers travel regularly along the RAP roads to take paying passengers along the roads to their destinations. According to the drivers there are a number of vehicles (mostly trucks and tractors) that use the road and each road appears to be well used.

<b>Respondent 1, Achham</b>	<i>"I drive through this route roughly once every month on a rotational number system. When I drive this route I carry passengers from Gairitand to Turmakhand. I have been driving on this road for the past two years. This road is open to two way traffic. Around 3 Jeeps and 10-15 tractors travel through this road per day."</i>
<b>Respondent 2, Achham</b>	<i>"My jeep travels this road roughly 15-20 times per month. I have been using this road for 5 years. This road was initially constructed by VDC and RAP took over this road from 3 years ago. Since RAP took over this road, it has been maintained well. This road is open to two way traffic and roughly 20-25 vehicles travel through this road per day. 6-7 trips are made by Jeeps while rest of the trips are made by tractors."</i>

<b>Respondent 3, Dailekh</b>	<i>"The length of this road is around 10 km. I use this road to drive my Bolero Jeep to carry passengers from Surkhet to Mathilo Dhungeshwor, Danda Parajul and Alparajul. Whenever my vehicle is in good condition and when there are no reserve passengers, I travel to Surkhet every morning from Alparajul and in the evening I return back to Alparajul from Surkhet. This means I drive through this road every day. I have been driving through this road for the past one year."</i>
<b>Respondent 4, Dailekh</b>	<i>"I drive my vehicle on this 9 KM long stretch of road to carry passengers only. Most of the time passengers who go to District Headquarter travel on my vehicle. Sometimes people travelling to Surkhet also travel on my vehicle but I only drop them as far as District Headquarter. These passengers have luggage as well."</i>

### Condition of the road

**Summary:** All drivers felt that the condition of the road was good enough to drive and better than other roads that are not maintained. They noted that driving along these roads still brings 'wear and tear' on their vehicles but they are still able to use it.

<b>Respondent 1, Achham</b>	<i>"I haven't had any instances where my vehicle has had any major damage due to the condition of this road. Being non-paved, the vehicles undergo minor wear and tear while travelling on this road which can be fixed easily. The tyres and suspension are two things that wear out the most while driving on this road."</i>
<b>Respondent 2, Achham</b>	<i>"The general condition of the road is good but the road consists of only temporary excess water drainage canal at the moment. If there was permanent concrete excess water drainage canal on this road then this road would be in better condition during the rainy season. The road gets damaged sometimes during rainy season due to lack of concrete water drainage canals. <b>The condition of the vehicle due to the road is good because RAP maintains the road well</b> and it is now gravelled by road division".</i>
<b>Respondent 3, Dailekh</b>	<i>"<b>This road is of better quality than other non-paved roads.</b> I think a mistake was made while building this road which has led towards creation of steep slopes on the road in some areas. Work still needs to be done to level these slopes. The road is also bit narrow thus for two way movement sometimes I have to back my jeep and find a wider spot to give way to another vehicle."</i>
<b>Respondent 4, Dailekh</b>	<i>"In my opinion this road gets more damaged than Mid-Mountain and other roads. Although this road has RMG, the local people let excess water flow through the road and most of the local people do not have awareness in terms of road preservation which makes this road more vulnerable. If local people who live by the roadside are provided with awareness then this road will be in better shape than other roads."</i>

### Business of Road Travel

**Summary:** Some routes are more profitable than others but all drivers make a profit from transporting passengers along the roads. There does not appear to be a fixed price along the routes, with fares

dependent on how many passengers fill up a truck and how far along the road they go. The average fare per paying passenger is between Rs. 200 and 350.

<b>Respondent 1, Achham</b>	<p><i>I get 14 passengers on this route per month and I make 1 trip per month on a regular basis. Rate from Gairitar to Turmakhand is Rs. 350/person and from Gairitar to Jangleghat is Rs. 7,000 for a reserve<sup>1</sup>. Jeeps do not go all the way down to Jangleghat on number system from Gairitar. During rainy season jeeps do not travel this route on number system. I sometimes drive through this route on reserve during the rainy season. The rate of reserve through this route can sometimes go up as high as Rs. 14000 during rainy season due to the risk involved. This is not the only route I drive thus driving through this route alone is not sufficient to meet my basic expenses.</i></p> <p><b><i>Sometimes I get good passenger numbers to make good profit on this route while at other times the passenger numbers decrease. I make around Rs. 800- Rs. 1000 profit per day when I drive this route.</i></b></p>
<b>Respondent 2, Achham</b>	<p><i>“The Road Committee hasn’t allocated a fixed tariff for Mastamandu-Hattikot route because no jeeps travel through this road on number system due to fewer number of passengers. <b>For reserve we charge Rs.3500 to Rs.4000 depending upon the road condition.</b> Although this road is located near Saphe Bagar, the passenger numbers are low due to the fact that most of the passengers use alternate route to come to Saphe Bagar. They use Thati route but I do not operate my vehicle on Thati route. It takes roughly 1 hour to travel from Mastamandu to Hattikot by Jeep and the distance is 12 KM. <b>Driving my Jeep through this route alone is not very profitable due to lower number of passengers. Hence, I use other routes as well.</b>”</i></p>
<b>Respondent 3, Dailekh</b>	<p><i>“Usually I get 7-10 passengers per trip and we aren’t allowed to carry more than 10 passengers because there are only 10 seats inside the jeep. <b>I get passengers regularly on this road and I have never had to drive empty without any passengers.</b> The amount of luggage is usually high thus it is difficult for my jeep to make uphill climbs. The fare from Dungeshwor to Alparajul is Rs. 200 per passenger and it is a 10 KM drive. I have been getting enough passengers as per the capacity of my vehicle. Sometimes I even have to leave some passengers behind due to lack of room in the vehicle. I am able to save Rs. 800 to Rs. 1000 from each trip.”</i></p>
<b>Respondent 4, Dailekh</b>	<p><i>“Usually I get 7-10 passengers per trip and we aren’t allowed to carry more than 10 passengers because there are only 10 seats inside the jeep. I get passengers regularly on this road and I have never had to drive empty without any passengers. The amount of luggage is usually high thus it is difficult for my jeep to make uphill climb. The fare from Dungeshwor to Alparajul is Rs. 200 per passenger and it is a 10 KM drive. Since this road isn’t paved, the tires of my Jeep usually wear down very quickly and the Jeep consumes a lot of diesel while driving uphill. I have been getting enough passengers as per the capacity of my vehicle. Sometimes I even have to leave some passengers behind due to lack of room in the vehicle. I am able to save Rs. 800 to Rs. 1000 from each trip.”</i></p>

## Perception of RMGs

<sup>1</sup> In rural Nepal, a reserve vehicle refers to hiring the whole vehicle. In practice, it means that a driver will have a set charge for a whole vehicle rental, but will wait for the vehicle to become full with passengers.

**Summary:** All drivers are aware of who the RMGs are, and what they do, and that it is RAP who pays these workers. All drivers feel that the quality of the roads has improved due to the RMG workers and that this has helped improve traffic flow along the road.

<b>Respondent 1, Achham</b>	<i>"I don't know how much they make per month. <b>Their work has made a difference in terms of the road having very few potholes.</b> They also make drainage canals so water doesn't get accumulated on the road during rainy season. Areas of Punyapata and Saleri are vulnerable in terms of becoming slippery to vehicles during rainy season. The funding provided by RAP3 for the maintenance of this road has been fruitful because the condition of the road is good. The quality of this road is better than other LRN roads and offers a smoother ride."</i>
<b>Respondent 2, Achham</b>	<i>"The road maintenance workers wearing orange vests and boots who work on Mastamandu-Hattikot route are RAP workers and they are paid for by RAP3. But I am not aware about how much wage they receive from RAP. They work around 10-11 days per month. In the past before RAP took over this road from the VDC, this road was in a bad shape because it had many potholes and large rocks on the road. The jeep tires used to get damaged a lot. <b>But now RAP RMG workers get rid of rocks and bury the potholes so the general condition of the road is better.</b> Until now RAP maintaining this road has been fruitful because the condition of the road is good and it is a nice smoother ride for the passengers. In terms of quality, this road is better maintained than other non-RAP maintained LRN roads. Number of vehicles on this road is also relatively higher than other LRN roads. There are also many potholes in other non-RAP maintained LRN roads."</i>
<b>Respondent 3, Dailekh</b>	<i>"We recognize people who work on the road wearing orange colour vests and yellow colour helmets. They have been employed by RAP to perform maintenance work on the road. They work around 15 days per month. <b>But I think that these people should work for 30 days per month because if they do so then the condition of the road will improve gradually and it will also be easier for us to drive on this road. Whenever landslides occur on this road we inform the RAP workers over the phone and they go to that area and immediately clear the landslide.</b> We are aware of the fact that RAP pays these RMG workers but I am not aware about the exact amount. In my opinion the investment made by RAP has contributed towards improvement of quality of this road. I don't think that RAP's investment has gone to waste."</i>
<b>Respondent 4, Dailekh</b>	<i>"I have observed people working on the roadside wearing boots, helmet and jacket. These people are part of maintenance team and they are responsible for maintaining and improving RAP's road. <b>RMG workers normally work at various different sections of the road. They perform maintenance of those sections that have been damaged. In my opinion, these workers try as hard as they can to maintain the road but rain water damages the road. Tractors are also responsible for damaging the road and the impact has to be endured by Jeeps and passengers. I sometimes give free ride to RMG workers.</b></i>  <i>Although this road has RMG, the local people let excess water flow through the road and most of the local people do not have awareness in terms of road preservation which makes this road more vulnerable. If local people who live by the roadside are provided with awareness then this road will be in better shape than other roads. "</i>

There is a general consensus that the RAP roads are safe to drive during the dry season but not during the rainy season. Whilst all drivers appear to drive at night on occasions they recognise that this is very dangerous.

*“During rainy season, excess water accumulates on the road due to lack of humepipe and concrete drainage system. Some spots on the road are difficult to cross during rainy season because tractors make huge holes on the road. If these holes were buried by rocks and graveled on top then this road would be easily accessible during all four seasons.” Respondent 1, Achhaem*

*“I drive at night during emergency situations or if I have to transport sick people. But due to its narrowness, the road is dangerous to drive at night. If the road was wider then I would be able to drive at night at ease.” Respondent 3, Dailekh*

## Passengers

The passengers are indirect beneficiaries of RAP maintenance works. The work done to maintain the RAP road for basic access allows vehicles to use it. Four passengers (two male and two female) of Bolero pick-up trucks were also solicited for feedback through in-depth interviews.

## Using the Road

**Summary:** People use the roads for lots of reasons. The main reason is to travel between smaller towns and the bigger towns to visit friends and family.

<b>Passenger 1</b>	<i>“I use this road to travel back and forth from Mangalsen. It’s been one and a half years since jeeps have been routinely travelling on this road. Jeep travels only from Mangalsen to Baldanda.”</i>
<b>Passenger 2</b>	<i>“I use this road to travel from Mujabagar to Jaigad and Mangalsen and back. The main advantage of this road is that it has made easier to travel back and forth to Mangalsen. In the past before this road was built, it used to take 5 hours walk to reach Mangalsen but now it only takes 3 hours to reach Mangalsen by jeep.”</i>
<b>Passenger 3</b>	<i>“Local people ride the Bolero Jeep to go to District Headquarter from Upper Dhugeshwor. Since this is the only passenger vehicle that travels through this road on a daily basis, it is difficult to get seats. There are no other alternate routes and no alternate vehicles thus sometimes we have to walk all the way to Upper Dungeshwor.”</i>
<b>Passenger 4</b>	<i>“Normally I travel on bus from Simada to Chupra and sometimes I travel by jeep as well. The bus seats from Surkhet are normally full of passengers thus we always have to stand while travelling to Chupra.”</i>

## Observations on the road

**Summary:** The roads mean different things to different people. Most recognise that the road is in better condition than other local roads. Being able to traverse the road by vehicle is a big positive that people recognise as they no longer have to walk.

<b>Passenger 1</b>	<i>“This road is very important and profitable to small eateries and hotels located along the roadside. In the past before this road was constructed, we had to walk to Mangalsen to purchase household goods which was a two hour walk. We could only carry limited quantity of goods but now it has become very easy for us to bring</i>
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	<i>household goods from Mangalsen to our village. There are few people who travel on Jeeps to sell their agriculture produce i.e. vegetables to Mangalsen but they say that this isn't very profitable. Mangalsen still gets bulk of fruits and vegetables from Terai."</i>
<b>Passenger 2</b>	<p><i>"This road is also important to Mujabagar Bazaar community because many small businesses such as retail shops, restaurants and hotels have opened up at Mujabagar as the result of this road. People from surrounding villages also use this road to travel to Mujabagar to sell vegetables sometimes.</i></p> <p><i>I personally own a small hotel (eatery) at Mujabagar and this road has contributed towards increase in customers. I opened the hotel (eatery) at Mujabagar after the road was already constructed. My hotel (eatery) business is also at profit due to flow of people in and out of Mujabagar. I make around Rs. 5000 per month as profit from my eatery business. Most of the local people are also very satisfied with the work that RAP has been doing in our area. Before this road was built, I used to have to carry goods from Saphe Bagar to my village which took 3 days to go back and forth. But now I can bring goods from Saphe Bagar to my village in just over 3 hours. This RAP maintained road is better than other LRN roads in terms of quality because it is better maintained with less obstructions and potholes."</i></p>
<b>Passenger 3</b>	<i>"Compared to other non-paved LRN roads, this road is better in terms of quality due to routine maintenance."</i>

## Fare paid

**Summary:** There is no set fare and prices are in line with what drivers say they charge. Fare prices do not seem to have changed since the maintenance work by RAP.

<b>Passenger 1</b>	<i>"1-2 Jeeps travel through this road every day and each Jeep carries 12-15 people. Also 5-6 tractors travel through this road per day. The fare from Mangalsen-Jupu is Rs. 100. It is a 35 minutes' drive with a distance of 10 KM. The fare from Mangalsen-Baldanda is Rs. 150 and it is 45 minutes' drive with a distance of 13 KM. I think the travel wage is reasonable given the time and distance it takes to travel. The numbers of passengers that travel through this road decreases on Saturday (just 1 vehicle passes through this corridor). Sunday and Tuesday sees increase in passenger number because more people go to Mangalsen during these days. <b>The Jeep fare has remained fairly much the same since this road opened to Jeeps. I don't know how much it costs to reserve a Jeep through this route.</b>"</i>
<b>Passenger 2</b>	<i>"The fare from Ramaroshan to Timilsain (zero point) is Rs. 300 per person. The wage remains same during all seasons. But no vehicle can drive pass Seri during rainy season. Fare from Timilsain to Seri is Rs. 200 and it takes 4 hours to reach Ramaroshan from Timilsain. <b>The fare and time of travel is reasonable for the road condition and distance.</b> The distance from Timilsain to Ramaroshan is roughly 44 km."</i>
<b>Passenger 3</b>	<i>"I think the fare of Rs. 200 that they charge per passenger for a distance of 12 KM is high. But the drivers say that the road is non-paved thus tires wear out quickly, suspension gets damaged and fuel consumption is high thus they defend that the fare which they charge is reasonable. They say that if they don't receive Rs. 200 per</i>



	<i>passenger then it isn't even worth driving on this road. If this road was accessible to a large bus and few more Jeeps then I think the vehicle fare would decrease. There has even been a talk about starting bus service on this road but I don't know when that will start."</i>
<b>Passenger 4</b>	<i>"Two buses and two jeeps travel to Surkhet on this road every day and they are normally full of passengers. Normally a bus carries 40 passengers and a jeep carries 12 passengers. We think that fare of Rs. 200 for 17 KM ride is a bit expensive but we pay the fare because it is also convenient for us to ride in a vehicle. The fare is slightly lower during the dry season than rainy season. The reason for this is because the road gets damaged due to rain thus the drivers have to drive slow therefore increasing diesel consumption. During festival season, five buses travel back and forth from Surkhet. The fare is also slightly lower during that time."</i>

### Comfort and safety

**Summary:** Most feel that the road is safe to travel on. However, most recognise that the road is less bumpy than it was before due to the works completed.

<b>Passenger 1</b>	<i>The road is very safe to drive. Jeeps do not get stuck even during rainy season because there aren't spots where water accumulates. Soiling has been done in muddy spots. There is one spot near Kalika temple that gets very wet during rainy season. Jeeps slide sometimes in this area. Area near Dhurali can also get slippery sometimes. There is one spot near Khuli Khola in Dhurali that I can remember is prone to landslides. The entire section of this road corridor from Mangalsen to Baldanda is drivable even at night. But Jeeps do not travel on this road during night on routine basis except during emergencies.</i>
<b>Passenger 2</b>	<i>"This road is relatively safe except for rainy season. RMG have also played an important role in terms of making this road safe.. During the rainy season, Kailash khola and other rivers nearby flood and these rivers cross the road on several sections. Thus, the road becomes inaccessible to Jeep pass Seri during this time. It is possible to drive through this road at night as well (till 9 PM). People drive jeeps at night on this road only during emergencies. There is only one spot near Gajad which can get muddy during rainy season and Jeeps can potentially get stuck. There are areas in Nyachanthali where rocks on the road haven't been cleared properly. I experience bumpy ride while travelling in jeep along this area.</i>
<b>Passenger 3</b>	<i>In terms of safety, there has never been an accident on this road. The condition of the road is also quite good due to the continuous work performed by RMG. However, there are still some challenges that drivers face on this road such as the road is too narrow, there are some slopes and inclinations on the road which need to be smoothened, <b>there are some steep uphill portions on the road that make carrying heavy loads difficult, passengers are fearful that the brakes of the vehicle might fail and drivers drive slowly due to some steep uphill.</b></i>
<b>Passenger 4</b>	<i>"There are some areas on the road where water accumulates and makes the road muddy. Some of the turnings are very narrow which makes it difficult for vehicles to pass each other. Drivers should drive slowly in these areas to make the trip safe. Although some vehicles travel on this road during emergency, but on most occasions</i>

	<i>this road is mainly used only during daytime. It is not safe to drive on this road during night time until this road this made wider and gravelled.”</i>
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## Part 2: Prices of Goods (Interviews with Shopkeepers)

This short section covers prices of basic goods: rice, wheat, lentils, salt, sugar and oil, from 5 shops located along corridors in 2 districts sampled in this year's Beneficiary Feedback process. This is not meant to be representative but provides an indication of the average price per kg/litre for essential food items that RAP beneficiaries spend their cash income on. It may be possible in the future to measure changes in prices as a proxy indicator for changes due to improved access. Some feedback is also provided from the shopkeepers on their interaction with RAP workers.

**Table 10: Price of essential food items in the mid and far west region**

Price per kilogram (or litre for Oil) in Nepali Rupees (April-May 2017 prices)					
Food Item	Shopkeeper 1 Ramnakot VDC, Ward-9, Kalikot	Shopkeeper 2 Mehalmudi VDC, Karnai Employment Project, Kalikot	Shopkeeper 3 Sanigadh- Isthuna- Sipkhana Road Corridor, Kalikot	Shopkeeper 4 Badukhola VDC, Dailekh	Shopkeeper 5 Sirsthan- Namistan Road Corridor, Rabatkot, Dailekh
Rice	38.66	45	42.66	45	44
Wheat	80	Not sold	56	48	50
Lentils	150 (simi variety)	Not sold	180 (musuro and mass variety)	200 (musuro and mass variety)	140-220 (musuro and mass variety)
Salt	50	50	22	30	30
Sugar	140	100	Not sold	110	100
Oil	260 per litre	200	Not sold	Not sold	180

**Table 11: Feedback from Shopkeepers selling goods to RAP beneficiaries**

<p><b>Do the RAP beneficiary families purchase goods on credit from you? Do you provide them with goods on credit? Why or why not?</b></p>	<p><i>"In the past these families didn't have any regular source of income so whenever they acquired goods for credit, it used to take them a long time to pay it back. But since they started working for RAP 3, they mostly conduct business with me in cash and they don't acquire much credit. I don't provide credit to some of the people who don't back pay back the credit despite of having access to money."</i> <b>Shopkeeper 1</b></p> <p><i>"Yes, they purchase goods from me. They also take goods on credit and pay back the money on time. We all live in the same community thus it is also an obligation for me to provide them with credit."</i> <b>Shopkeeper 2</b></p> <p><i>"It is easier to do business with women than men especially when it comes to credit. This is because first of all women tend to take less credit and even when they take credit they pay it back quickly with RAP wage. Sometimes it is very difficult to get money back from men. Men waste their RAP earnings by buying alcohol. I provide credit to very few men. Most of the time it is women who acquire credit from me."</i> <b>Shopkeeper 3</b></p>
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## E. Conclusion: Testing the RAP Theory of Change

This concluding section examines the RAP theory of change (ToC). The ToC covers several key areas of expected change by the programme with several assumptions. A number of changes are expected to occur both in the short and longer term (Outcomes). The table below sets out each of the relevant statements in the theory of change. Based on the Beneficiaries Feedback findings, a summary against each of these benefits is given. It should be noted that the summaries provide an indicative assessment of each statement in the ToC given the qualitative nature of much of the feedback. However, the feedback still provides evidence with which RAP stakeholders can assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of the *causal pathways* of the ToC – how strongly outputs leads to outcomes, and eventually impact (assessed by the MEL midline and eventual endline).

Theory of Change	Feedback
<b>Indirect Beneficiaries (Users of roads)</b>	
<p>New or improved connectivity &amp; access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved <i>reliability</i> of road and decreased road closures</li> <li>Improved conditions for road vehicle passage</li> </ul>	<p>The feedback from indirect beneficiaries of RAP – the users of roads (drivers and passengers) – indicates positive results regarding improved reliability and conditions of the roads. All passengers and drivers interviewed gave positive feedback and have noticed the work that RMGs undertake and their contribution to maintaining an improved road condition. A more comprehensive assessment ought to be conducted but the qualitative feedback indicates that conditions of access is improving due to RAP. Further research is required as to whether this will translate into stimulated economic and market activity.</p>
<b>Direct Beneficiaries (RBGs/RMGs)</b>	
<b>Food and income security</b>	<p>Many direct RAP beneficiaries express that they use RAP wages to purchase food. People are not necessarily food insecure per se, but use the cash to purchase food stocks. RAP wages seem to provide ‘cash’ security rather than income security – it is the regularity of income that appears most important and helps them plan and make decisions for their household and eases credit constraints. This appears to be true only in so far as the duration of the RAP project continues and/or the Government of Nepal continues funding for RMGs. For many women, the income from RAP presents the first time they are receiving paid work, with many indicating a likely return to unpaid care work when RAP ends.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased propensity and capacity to save and invest</li> <li>Purchase of assets</li> </ul>	<p>There is a mixed picture regarding savings – RBG member are able to save partly because savings are made mandatory by the programme; RMGs on the other hand are less able to save. Savings enter a group savings account and beneficiaries tend to purchase small assets with this money. Without a savings group, it does not appear that beneficiaries (i.e. RMGs) make a habit of saving. Where mandatory savings (i.e. with RBGs) exist, there is a question of how sustainable savings groups will be beyond the purview of the project.</p>
Increased skills & confidence	<p>The skills picked up during RAP works could be useful for beneficiaries seeking similar work in the region. Most men state that once RAP ends they</p>

	<p>are likely to seek paid work abroad (India) and women tend to state that they would return to unpaid care work (farming, etc.). It is questionable whether skills will translate into improved productivity in the future. For many women, there is an issue of increased work burdens within the household as they tend to continue to do unpaid care work in addition to working on RAP. However, the majority of beneficiaries feel positively recognised by their community for their work. The provision of regular cash (particularly for women) is empowering as it allows for an expansion of choices regarding spending.</p>
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