Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) in COVID 19 in Province no. 2

Report on Mask Use, Hand Washing and Physical Distancing

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unicef

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1. Background

This survey was conducted by LIFE Nepal in 25 selected municipalities of all eight districts i.e., Bara (4), Parsa (4), Rautahat (4), Sarlahi (1), Dhanusha (3), Mahottari (3), Siraha (2), and Saptari (4) of Province No.2 Nepal. For that, its project staffs and volunteers were mobilized for the data collection in the field during March-April 2021 from project (Humanitarian Response: Risk Communication and Community Engagement-Child Grant and Child Protection Response on COVID-19) beneficiaries who were engaged in COVID awareness campaign through megaphone announcement, radio broadcast, social media , COVID Kura, and BCC (Behavior Change Communication) materials dissemination. Before that, they were oriented on checklist that was developed by a project team in consultation with UNICEF Nepal and local governments.

2. Objective

The overall objective of this survey was to get the status of use of mask, practice of handwash, and maintaining physical distancing by project beneficiaries during and after COVID pandemic. The specific objectives of the survey were:

1. To find out the status of use of mask by project beneficiaries during COVID pandemic.
2. To find out the status of practice of handwash by project beneficiaries during COVID pandemic.
3. To find out the status of maintaining physical distancing by project beneficiaries during COVID pandemic.

3. People Participated in the Survey

Table 1 *District Wise Participants Details*

District	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Bara	3757	42.59	5064	57.41	8821	11.58
Dhanusha	3007	26.73	8244	73.27	11251	14.77
Mahottari	3063	23.46	9992	76.54	13055	17.13
Parsa	3222	31.13	7129	68.87	10351	13.59
Rautahat	856	7.13	11144	92.87	12000	15.75
Saptari	2261	18.20	10161	81.80	12422	16.30
Sarlahi	308	8.56	3292	91.44	3600	4.72
Siraha	1458	31.08	3233	68.92	4691	6.16
Total	**17932**	**23.54**	**58259**	**76.46**	**76191**	**100.00**

It was found that, altogether 76191 people were participated in the survey. Out of them, 17932 (23.54%) were male and 58259 (76.46%) were female. There was maximum participation from Mahottari 17.13 percent and lower participation from Sarlahi 4.72 percent. The reason was high populated municipalities from Mahottari and only one municipality from Sarlahi were covered in this survey. Municipalities' wise details of surveyed participants presented below:

Fig. 1 Gender Wise Participation

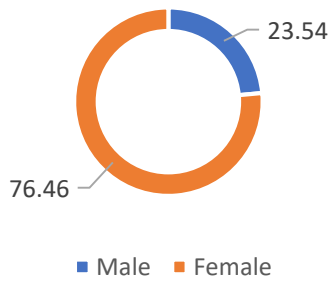


Table 2 *Municipalities Wise Participants Details*

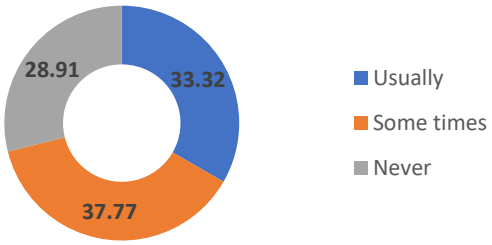
Municipalities	Male	Female	Total
Agnisair Krishnasarban RM	937	2387	3324
Bhagbanpur RM	461	1835	2296
Bideha M	816	2596	3412
Bindabasini RM	364	1896	2260
Bishrampur RM	759	1056	1815
Chhipaharmai RM	778	1922	2700
Durgabhagbati RM	229	2771	3000
Feta RM	1117	1013	2130
Hansapur M	993	2643	3636
Ishnath M	382	2618	3000
Jaleshwar M	911	3773	4684
Kathariya M	45	2955	3000
Khadak M	644	2041	2685
Loharpatti M	887	3008	3895
Malangba M	308	3292	3600
Manra Sisba M	1265	3211	4476
Nagrain M	1198	3005	4203
Pakaha RM	380	1711	2091
Parwanipur RM	1020	1756	2776
Prasauni RM	861	1239	2100
Rajdevi M	200	2800	3000
Rupani RM	262	3133	3395
Sakhuba Nankarkatti RM	997	1398	2395
Sakhuba Prasauni RM	1700	1600	3300
Tilathi Koiladi RM	418	2600	3018
Total	**17932**	**58259**	**76191**

4. Major Findings with Discussion

It covers mainly three areas i.e., use of mask, practice of hand wash, and maintain physical distancing by project beneficiaries during and after COVID:

4.1 Use of mask

Fig.2 Status of Use of Mask



It was found that, out of total beneficiaries participated in survey, one third (n=25386 i.e., 33.05%) of them usually wear mask during and after COVID when they went outside home. Similarly, about two fifth (n=28777 i.e., 37.47%) of beneficiaries wear mask sometimes only when they went outside home while 28.68 percent (n=22028) beneficiaries never wear mask during and after COVID despite of a clearer and strict guideline and instructions from the Government of Nepal and related information dissemination by the project in local languages targeting rural community people through megaphone announcement, social media , radio broadcasting as well as behavior change communication materials dissemination.

Table 3 *Municipalities Wise Use of Mask Details*

Municipalities	Usually wear mask when went outside home	Sometimes wear mask when went outside home	Never wear mask when went outside home
Agnisair Krishnasarban RM	1917	1156	251
Bhagbanpur RM	1161	800	335
Bideha M	1200	1690	522
Bindabasini RM	228	114	129
Bishrampur RM	475	1017	323
Chhipaharmai RM	427	177	0
Durgabhagbati RM	802	1640	558
Feta RM	343	211	202
Hansapur M	984	2395	257
Ishnath M	761	1873	366
Jaleshwar M	2232	2084	368
Kathariya M	673	1934	393
Khadak M	1121	891	673
Loharpatti M	2218	1357	320
Malangba M	1172	2033	395
Manra Sisba M	979	2439	1058
Nagrain M	1336	2424	443
Pakaha RM	276	326	286
Parwanipur RM	242	130	56
Prasauni RM	225	72	4
Rajdevi M	1221	1461	318
Rupani RM	2342	855	198
Sakhuba Nankarkatti RM	986	589	820
Sakhuba Prasauni RM	677	389	0
Tilathi Koiladi RM	1388	720	910
Grand Total	**25386**	**28777**	**9185**

Table 4 *District Wise Use of Mask Details*

Districts	Total Beneficiaries	Usually wear mask when went outside home	%	Sometimes wear mask when went outside home	%	Never wear mask when went outside home	%
Bara	8821	1285	14.57	1430	16.21	6106	69.22
Dhanusha	11251	3520	31.29	6509	57.85	1222	10.86
Mahottari	13055	5429	41.59	5880	45.04	1746	13.37
Parsa	10351	1608	15.53	1006	9.72	7737	74.75
Rautahat	12000	3457	28.81	6908	57.57	1635	13.63
Saptari	12422	6768	54.48	3622	29.16	2032	16.36
Sarlahi	3600	1172	32.56	2033	56.47	395	10.97
Siraha	4691	2147	45.77	1389	29.61	1155	24.62
Total	**76191**	**25386**	**33.32**	**28777**	**37.77**	**22028**	**28.91**

In this way, about one third of people were still not using mask and they are on high risk of COVID and will be an agent of COVID spreading either in the family and community. Through the interaction with selected beneficiaries the qualitative information were taken basically on why people were only using

mask sometimes and what are the reason behind people were not using mask. In addition, the qualitative information includes the people who were using mask from which demographic background and why they were convinced for that.

The rural community people who were either partially used mask or not using mask expressed that they could not afford the cost for using mask as they are socio-economically deprived. In addition, about 40-50 percent of people are illiterate, have not proper access to information regarding COVID via mobile, TV, and FM radio. Most of them even do not understand the COVID message (use of mask) from IEC or BCC materials. Hence, they are not aware on significance of using mask and consequences of not using mask. The people who were using mask expressed that they informed about COVID message through megaphone announcement and they were economically sound.

Table 5 *Municipality Wise Use of Types of Mask Details*

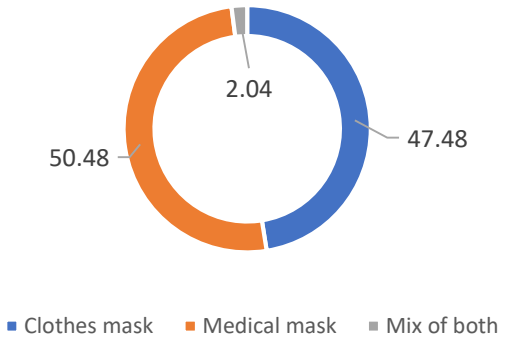
Municipalities	Used medical mask	Used clothes mask	Used mix of both
Agnisair Krishnasarban RM	2060	1013	0
Bhagbanpur RM	1547	414	0
Bideha M	1944	946	0
Bindabasini RM	95	159	88
Bishrampur RM	778	714	0
Chhipaharmai RM	244	360	0
Durgabhagbati RM	1109	1333	0
Feta RM	40	158	356
Hansapur M	1637	1742	0
Ishnath M	1088	1546	0
Jaleshwar M	2505	1811	0
Kathariya M	724	1883	0
Khadak M	1015	997	0
Loharpatti M	2023	1552	0
Malangba M	1965	1240	0
Manra Sisba M	1669	1749	0
Nagrain M	1805	1955	0
Pakaha RM	93	115	394
Parwanipur RM	249	123	0
Prasauni RM	111	186	0
Rajdevi M	912	1770	0
Rupani RM	1371	1826	0
Sakhuba Nankarkatti RM	679	896	0
Sakhuba Prasauni RM	593	205	268
Tilathi Koiladi RM	1087	1021	0
Grand Total	**27343**	**25714**	**1106**

Table 6 *District Wise Use of Types of Mask Details*

Row Labels	Use clothes mask	%	Use medical mask	%	Use mix of both	%

Bara	1181	43.50	1178	43.39	356	13.11
Dhanusha	4643	46.30	5386	53.70	0	0.00
Mahottari	5112	45.20	6197	54.80	0	0.00
Parsa	839	32.10	1025	39.21	750	28.69
Rautahat	6532	63.02	3833	36.98	0	0.00
Saptari	4857	46.75	5533	53.25	0	0.00
Sarlahi	1240	38.69	1965	61.31	0	0.00
Siraha	1310	37.05	2226	62.95	0	0.00
Grand Total	**25714**	**47.48**	**27343**	**50.48**	**1106**	**2.04**

Fig. 3 Types of Mask Used



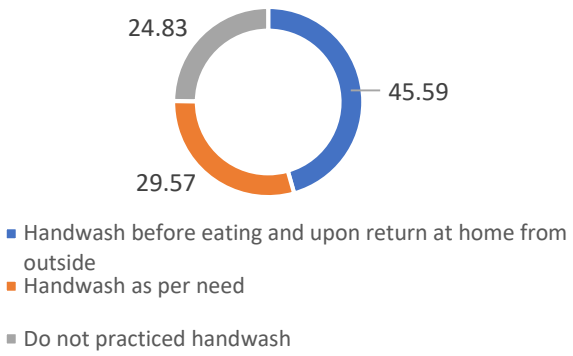
Out of the people who used mask (n=54163), about half of the people (n=27343 i.e., 50.48%) used medical mask, about half of the people (n=25714 i.e., 47.48%) used clothes mask while very few people (n=1106 i.e., 2.04%) shared that they used both types of masks. In this way about half of the people used clothes mask despite of the recommendation for the Government of Nepal for the use of medical mask only for the COVID prevention. The people who were using clothes mask are on high risk of COVID and will be an agent of COVID spreading either in the family and community. People expressed that they were using clothes mask because of reusable (after cleaning). Most of the people were socio-economically deprived and they could not afford medical mask because have to change after a certain hours or daily basis.

4.2 Hand wash practice

Table 7 *District Wise Hand wash Practice Details*

Districts	Hand wash before eating and upon return at home from outside	%	Hand wash as per need	%	Do not practiced hand wash	%
Bara	1548	17.55	1477	16.74	5796	65.71
Dhanusha	5645	50.17	4213	37.45	1393	12.38
Mahottari	6637	50.84	5203	39.85	1215	9.31
Parsa	1357	13.11	1626	15.71	7368	71.18
Rautahat	5208	43.40	5242	43.68	1550	12.92
Saptari	8662	69.73	2828	22.77	932	7.50
Sarlahi	1973	54.81	1293	35.92	334	9.28
Siraha	3708	79.04	649	13.84	334	7.12
Grand Total	**34738**	**45.59**	**22531**	**29.57**	**18922**	**24.83**

Fig.4 Handwash Status



It was found that, out of total beneficiaries participated in survey, about half (n=34738 i.e., 45.59%) of them washed hand before eating and upon return at home from outside during and after COVID. Similarly, about one third (n=22531 i.e., 29.57%) of beneficiaries washed their hand as per need while 24.83 percent (n=18922) beneficiaries did not wash their hand during and after COVID despite of one of the major COVID prevention area.

Table 8 *Municipality Wise Hand wash Practice Details*

Municipalities	Hand wash before eating and upon return at home from outside	Hand wash as per need	Do not practiced hand wash
Agnisair Krishnasarban RM	2311	824	189
Bhagbanpur RM	1920	142	234
Bideha M	1407	1534	471
Bindabasini RM	175	956	1129
Bishrampur RM	588	973	254
Chhipaharmai RM	539	205	1956
Durgabhagbati RM	1129	1282	589
Feta RM	245	181	1704
Hansapur M	2176	892	568
Ishnath M	1300	1381	319
Jaleshwar M	2231	1858	595
Kathariya M	1280	1399	321
Khadak M	2131	300	254
Loharpatti M	2330	1354	211
Malangba M	1973	1293	334
Manra Sisba M	2076	1991	409
Nagrain M	2062	1787	354
Pakaha RM	282	145	1664
Parwanipur RM	513	282	1981
Prasauni RM	202	41	1857
Rajdevi M	1499	1180	321
Rupani RM	2144	963	288
Sakhuba Nankarkatti RM	1788	507	100
Sakhuba Prasauni RM	361	320	2619
Tilathi Koiladi RM	2076	741	201
Grand Total	**34738**	**22531**	**18922**

In this way, about one fifth of people were still not practicing hand wash and they are on high risk of COVID and will be an agent of COVID spreading either in the family and community. According to the

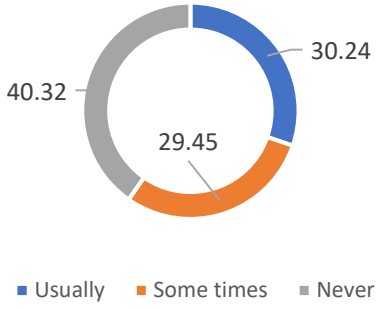
beneficiaries who were not practicing hand wash were facing problem of management sufficient soap and water frequently. In addition, due to their economic deprivation some of them could not afford for that. Similarly, most of them had not proper access to information regarding COVID via mobile, TV, and FM radio. Most of them even do not understand the hand wash message from IEC or BCC materials. Hence, they are not aware on significance of hand wash and consequences of not practicing hand wash. The people who were practicing hand wash expressed that they informed about COVID message through megaphone announcement and they were economically sound as well.

4.3 Maintaining physical distancing

Table 9 *District Wise People Maintaining Physical Distance Details*

District	Usually maintain two-meter physical distancing	%	Sometimes maintained physical distancing with two meters	%	Never maintained physical distancing	%
Bara	819	9.28	1167	13.23	6835	77.49
Dhanusha	2073	18.43	3905	34.71	5273	46.87
Mahottari	3426	26.24	5533	42.38	4096	31.37
Parsa	724	6.99	639	6.17	8988	86.83
Rautahat	2717	22.64	6514	54.28	2769	23.08
Saptari	8443	67.97	2671	21.50	1308	10.53
Sarlahi	946	26.28	1766	49.06	888	24.67
Siraha	3889	82.90	241	5.14	561	11.96
Grand Total	**23037**	**30.24**	**22436**	**29.45**	**30718**	**40.32**

Fig.6 Status pf Maintaining Physical Distancing



It was found that, out of total beneficiaries participated in survey, one third (n=23037 i.e., 30.24%) of them usually maintain two-meter physical distancing when they physically interact with other people. Similarly, about one third (n=22436 i.e., 29.45%) of beneficiaries maintained physical distancing sometimes only while 40.32 percent (n=30718) beneficiaries never maintained physical distancing during and after COVID despite of a clearer and strict guideline and instructions from the Government of Nepal and related information dissemination by the project in local languages targeting rural community people through megaphone announcement, radio and TV program broadcasting as well as behavior change communication materials dissemination.

In this way, most of the people were still not maintaining physical distancing and they are on high risk of COVID and will be an agent of COVID spreading either in the family and community. The rural community people who were not maintaining physical distance expressed that they had not proper access to information regarding COVID via mobile, TV, and FM radio. Most of them even do not understand the COVID message (use of mask) from IEC or BCC materials because about 40-50 percent of people are illiterate. Hence, they are not aware on significance of maintaining physical distance and

consequences of not maintaining physical distance. The people who were using mask expressed that they informed about COVID message through megaphone announcement.

Table 10 Municipality *Wise People Maintaining Physical Distance Details*

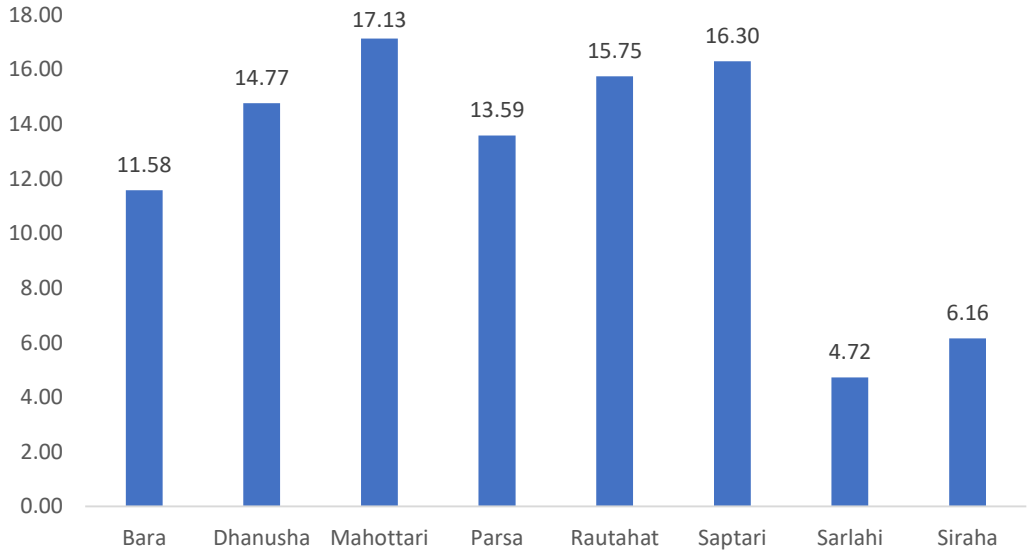
Municipality	Usually maintain two-meter physical distancing	Sometimes maintained physical distancing with two meters	Never maintained physical distancing
Agnisair Krishnasarban RM	2350	673	301
Bhagbanpur RM	1789	120	387
Bideha M	442	793	2177
Bindabasini RM	166	92	2002
Bishrampur RM	333	701	781
Chhipaharmai RM	188	115	2397
Durgabhagbati RM	593	1672	735
Feta RM	87	95	1948
Hansapur M	800	1006	1830
Ishnath M	637	1788	575
Jaleshwar M	952	1931	1801
Kathariya M	414	1869	717
Khadak M	1980	625	80
Loharpatti M	1446	1334	1115
Malangba M	946	1766	888
Manra Sisba M	1028	2268	1180
Nagrain M	831	2106	1266
Pakaha RM	88	118	1885
Parwanipur RM	215	275	2286
Prasauni RM	184	96	1820
Rajdevi M	1073	1185	742
Rupani RM	1922	903	570
Sakhuba Nankarkatti RM	2100	121	174
Sakhuba Prasauni RM	282	314	2704
Tilathi Koiladi RM	2191	470	357
Grand Total	**23037**	**22436**	**30718**

5. Recommendations

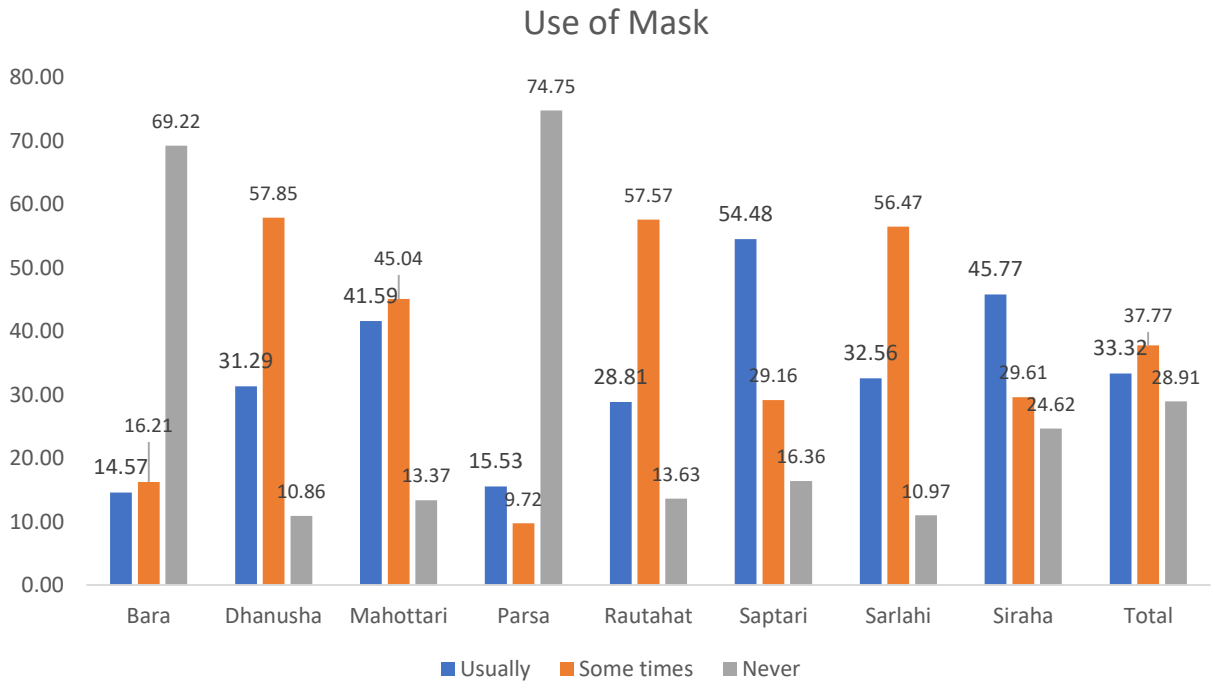
- The people who were using mask, practicing hand wash, and maintaining physical distance from which demographic background and why they were convinced for that are not clear in the absence of demographic information. The best practices from them might be useful for the people who were using mask, practicing hand wash, maintaining physical distance partially or not practicing. Hence, these types of gaps should be considered during the tool's development for the data collection and survey. Though the data was collected on mass scale, such information should be collected on sampling basis incorporating those gaps to make survey findings more precise and relevant.
- The behavior changes communication materials designed and disseminated by the project had only concentrated on the use of mask but not covered the area of use of medical mask, consequences of not practicing hand wash and maintaining physical distance for COVID prevention. Hence during designing behavior change communication materials and developing tools for the data collection such type of gaps should be considered in the day to come.

6. Annexes

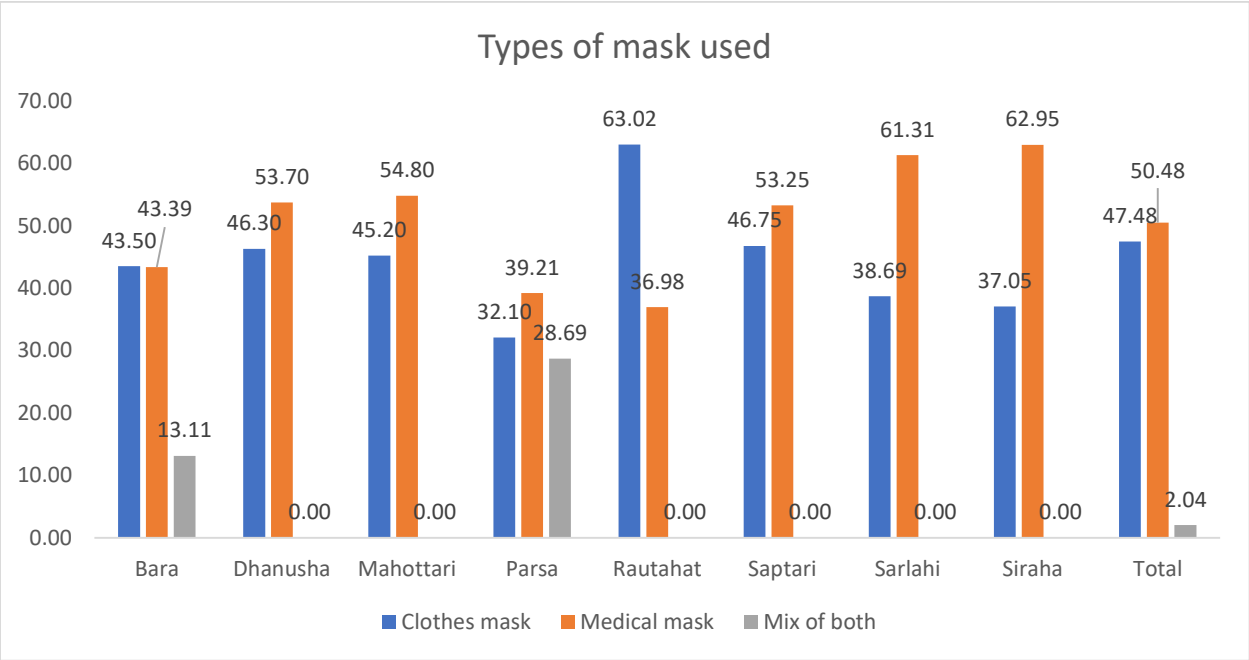
Annex-1 Surveyed participants' details



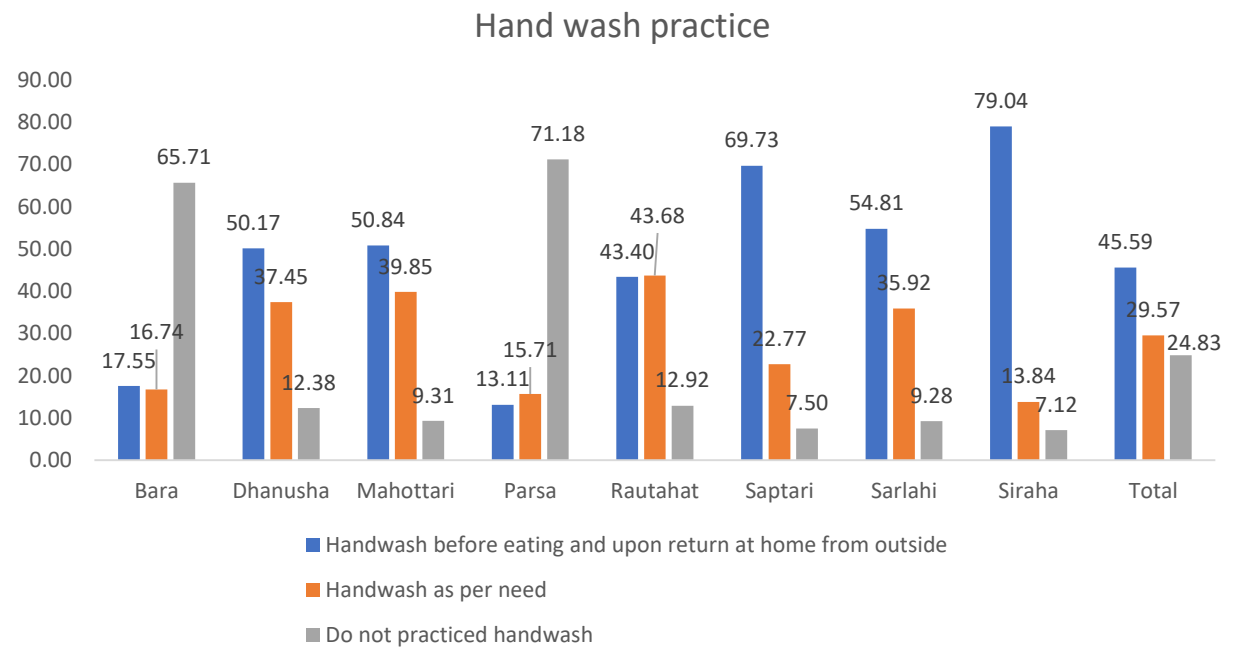
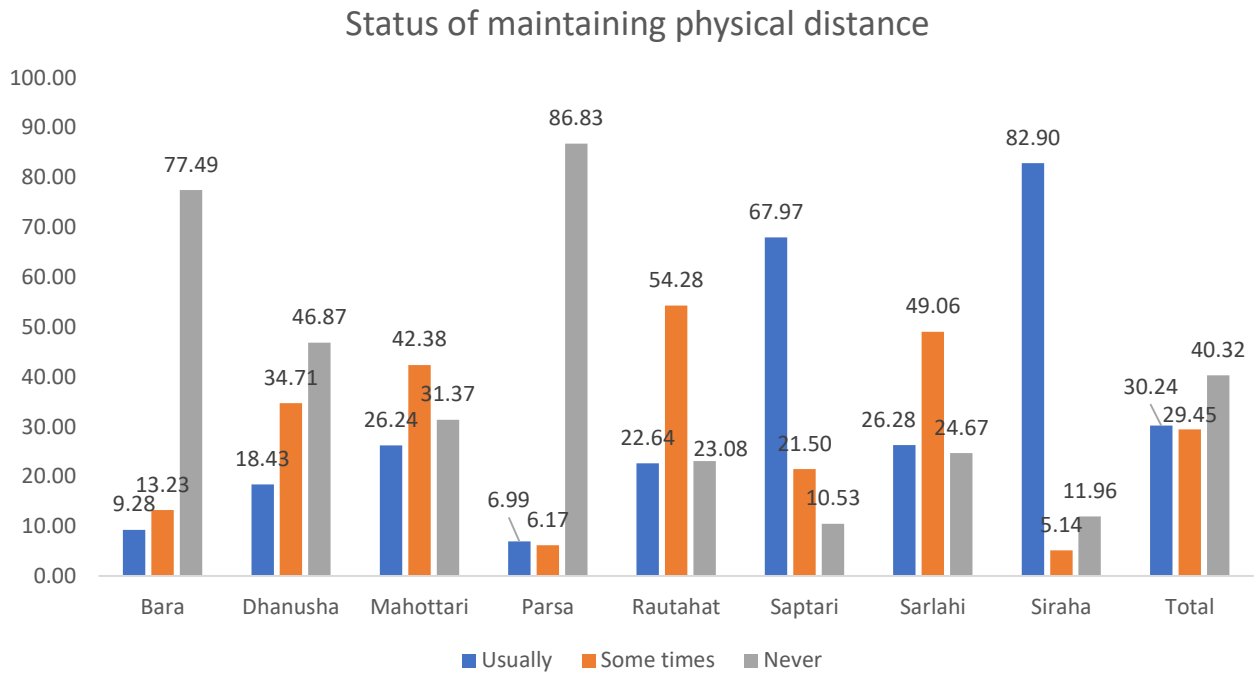
Annex-2 Status of use of mask



Annex-3 Status of use of types mask



Annex-4 Status of hand wash practicing



Annex-5 Status of maintaining physical distance