Bangladesh's Democracy: According to its People

A SURVEY OF THE BANGLADESHI PEOPLE

2018 Edition

The Asia Foundation
Improving Lives, Expanding Opportunities

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Report Author

Pauline Tweedie

Editors

Sara L. Taylor, Shabbir Shawkut, and Ann Bishop

Questionnaire design

Sara L. Taylor, Pauline Tweedie, and Shabbir Shawkut

Sample design

Survey and Research System

Bangladesh Fieldwork and Monitoring

Survey and Research System

Infographic Design

Abdullah Al Noman

Books Design & Printing

Hasan Color Printing & Packaging

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INTRODUCTION

The Asia Foundation is pleased to present the 2018 edition of Bangladesh's Democracy: According to its People. This survey, conducted in January and February 2018, captures the diverse range of attitudes toward democracy and elections, identity, and violence, and compares them with similar surveys carried out in 2006, 2015, and 2017.

More than two-thirds of respondents say the country is going in the right direction in 2018, an eleven point decrease since 2017 but still significantly higher than in 2015. For those who say right direction, overall development, improved infrastructure, and improved economy are the most commonly cited reasons why, while political instability is the most common reason cited by those who say the country is going in the wrong direction. The vast majority of respondents across the country say they plan to vote in the next parliamentary elections, though they are concerned about the potential for political violence and believe that political conflict is the main cause of violence in the country. As in previous years, limited acceptance of and participation by women in political processes continues to pose a challenge to an inclusive democracy while, despite the government's commitment to and commendable progress toward gender equality, there remains a gender divide with regard to access to information and use of the Internet.

We are grateful to the Australian High Commission in Dhaka for their support for this survey. We would like to extend special appreciation to Pauline Tweedie for her support in refining the questionnaire and as the main author of the report, Shabbir Shawkut for his day-to-day support for this effort, and Ann Bishop for editing the report.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the services provided by Survey and Research System at each stage of the survey process, and the respondents across the country who willingly took the time to answer our questions on critical issues, and collectively contributed to a richer understanding of the perspectives of the Bangladeshi people.

Sara L. Taylor
Country Representative
Bangladesh

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2018 edition of Bangladesh's Democracy: According to its People is based on a nationally representative sample of 5,403 Bangladeshis, randomly selected from 633 locations across all eight divisions. It was designed so that the findings presented in this report are representative of the Bangladeshi population at the national and division levels.[1]

National mood

- Over two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) say the country is going in the right direction. This is an an 11 percent decrease from last year but significantly higher than in 2015. Women are slightly less optimistic than men, with 65 percent agreeing that the country is going in the right direction, compared to 71 percent of men.

- Respondents most commonly cite overall development (49 percent) as the reason the country is going in the right direction, closely followed by improved infrastructure (47 percent) and improved economy (45 percent).

- Political instability (61 percent) is the most common reason respondents say the country is going in the wrong direction.

- Almost half of respondents (47 percent) say that inflation and the rising cost of essentials is the biggest problem facing Bangladesh.

- With regard to their local area, 70 percent of respondents say things are going in the right direction, down from 82 percent in 2017.

- Poor road conditions (45 percent) are the biggest local concern.

Elections

- Concerning the next parliamentary elections, 90 percent of respondents say they plan to vote, and 94 percent say they will vote in the next local elections.

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents (61 percent) think that the level of electoral violence will increase or stay the same, compared to the last parliamentary elections.

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[1] *The margin of error at the national level is ± 2.38% at a 95% confidence level; at the division level it is ± 4% at a 95% confidence level. For more information, refer to Annex 1 - Methodology*

Politics

- With regard to discussing politics, 27 percent of men and 13 percent of women say they always or often discuss politics.

- A little more than half of respondents (55 percent) say that elected MPs care about them.

- 82 percent of respondents say they have very little or no influence over national government decisions an increase of 8 percent since 2017.

- A majority of respondents (58 percent) agree that all political parties should be allowed to hold meetings in their area. This is a decline of 19 percent since 2017 but still higher than in 2015, when the number was less than 50 percent.

Security and violence

- When asked about the main causes of violence in the country, respondents rank political conflict first (51 percent), followed by corruption (37 percent) and drugs (31 percent).

- In 2018, people's fear has increased, with 48 percent of respondents expressing fear for their safety sometimes, often, or always, compared to 36 percent for the same three responses in 2017.

- When asked about specific types of violence, political violence and electoral violence are the greatest concerns, with half of respondents (52 percent) worried that they or their family could become a victim of political or electoral violence.

Trust in institutions

- Compared to 2017, all institutions show decreases in perceived integrity of at least 8 percent, with most returning to 2015 levels.

Social cohesion and trust

- More than half of respondents (58 percent) lack trust in other people, saying that you have to be very careful in dealing with people.

- While more then 50 percent of respondents say that most people cannot be trusted, the overwhelming majority (87 percent) say that, if asked, people will come together in an emergency.

- Respondents express strong willingness to interact with those from another religion, in a variety of roles.

Rohingya

- A majority of respondents (65 percent) say they do not welcome Rohingya refugees from Myanmar living in their community

- A slight majority of respondents (55 percent) say the Rohingya should be allowed to stay until it is safe for them to return home or until they can go to another country. Fewer than half (40 percent) say the Rohingya should leave now.

Gender attitudes

- Respondents almost universally support education equality, with 88 percent strongly or somewhat disagreeing that educating boys is more important than educating girls.

- The majority of respondents agree that it is acceptable for women to be leaders, with the highest level of support (87 percent) for women Members of Parliament.

- Almost two-thirds of respondents (60 percent) prefer that MPs are all, or mostly men; however, the majority (55 percent) also say it makes no difference if they are represented by a male or female MP.

Mobile phones and social media

- Mobile phone ownership has increased slightly over the past three years from 79 percent in 2015 to 84 percent in 2018.

- Of those who own mobile phones, 29 percent of men and 17 percent of women can access the Internet with their phones.

- A total of 19 percent of respondents use Facebook, while 80 percent use no social media.

79%

45%

2017

2015

68%

2018

Percent of respondents who say the
country is going in the right direction

More than two-thirds of respondents say the country is going in the right direction.

1 THE NATIONAL MOOD

1.1 Direction of the Country

Generally speaking, do you think things in Bangladesh today are going in the right direction, or going in the wrong direction? (Q1)
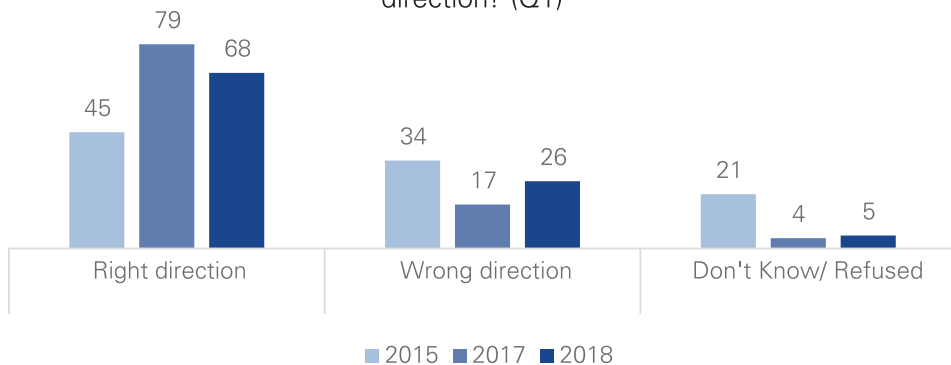
Figure 1.1: National direction – Annual comparison

More than two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) say the country is going in the right direction. This is an 11 percent decrease since 2017, but significantly higher than in 2015. Women are slightly less optimistic than men, with 65 percent agreeing that the country is going in the right direction (compared to 71 percent of men).

Generally speaking, do you think things in Bangladesh today are going in the right direction, or going in the wrong direction? (Q1)
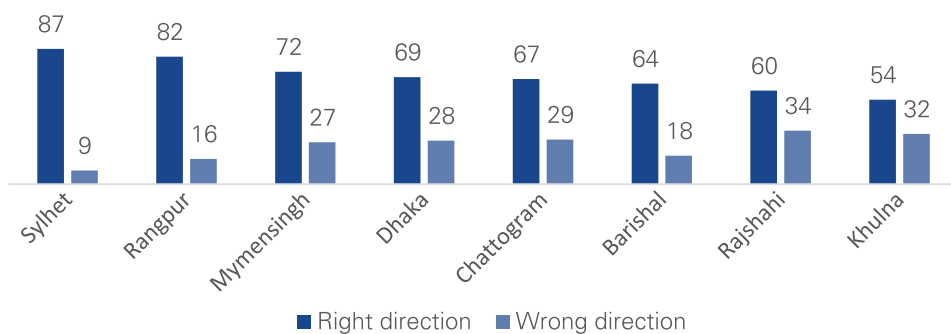
Figure 1.2: National direction – By division

There is considerable variation among divisions on this question, with respondents in Sylhet being the most likely (87 percent) and respondents in Khulna being the least likely (54 percent) to say the country is going in the right direction.

▶ OVERALL

Respondents say things are going in the right direction

45%
2015

79%
2017

68%
2018

▶ **DIVISION COMPARISION(%)**

82 Rangpur

72 Mymensingh

87 Sylhet

69 Dhaka

67 Chattorgram

64 Barishal

60 Rajshahi

54 Khulna

▶ **MAJOR FACTORS**

Five most commonly cited reasons for right directions

49% Overall development

47% Improved Infrastructure

40% Improved Economy

20% Better Security

20% Agricultural Development

Generally speaking, do you think things in Bangladesh today are going in the right direction, or going in the wrong direction? (Q1)
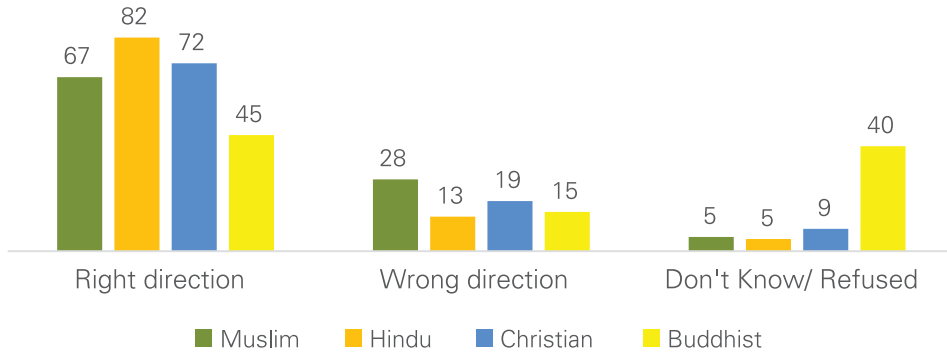
Figure 1.3: National direction – By religion

With regard to religion, Hindus are the most likely to say the country is going in the right direction (82 percent), followed by Christians (72 percent), Muslims (67 percent), and Buddhists (45 percent). However, the latter had a significantly higher non-response rate (40 percent). Also, in comparison with the survey's national non-response rate of 5 percent, the non-response rate in Barishal, Khulna, and the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) was much higher (17 percent, 14 percent, and 40 percent, respectively). For non-Bengali ethnic groups, the non-response rate (27 percent) was also significantly higher than the national average.

Why do you say right direction? Multiple responses allowed (Q2)
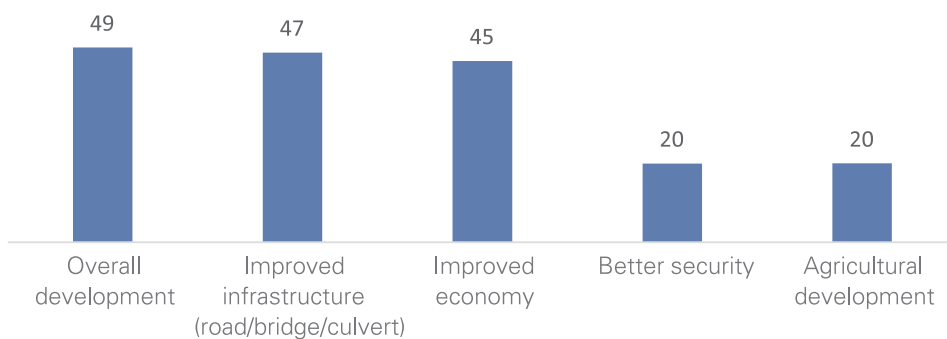
Figure 1.4: Reason for right direction – National

Respondents most commonly cite overall development (49 percent) as the reason the country is going in the right direction, closely followed by improved infrastructure (47 percent) and improved economy (45 percent).

Why do you say right direction? Multiple responses allowed (Q2)

	Overall development	Improved infrastructure (road/bridge/culvert)	Improved economy	Better security	Agricultural development
Barishal	37	55	42	31	24
Chattogram	63	60	59	27	23
Dhaka	50	54	44	22	33
Khulna	52	23	64	20	14
Mymensingh	22	35	71	9	16
Rajshahi	49	31	18	17	15
Rangpur	53	55	22	7	4
Sylhet	31	44	53	21	8
National	49	47	45	20	20
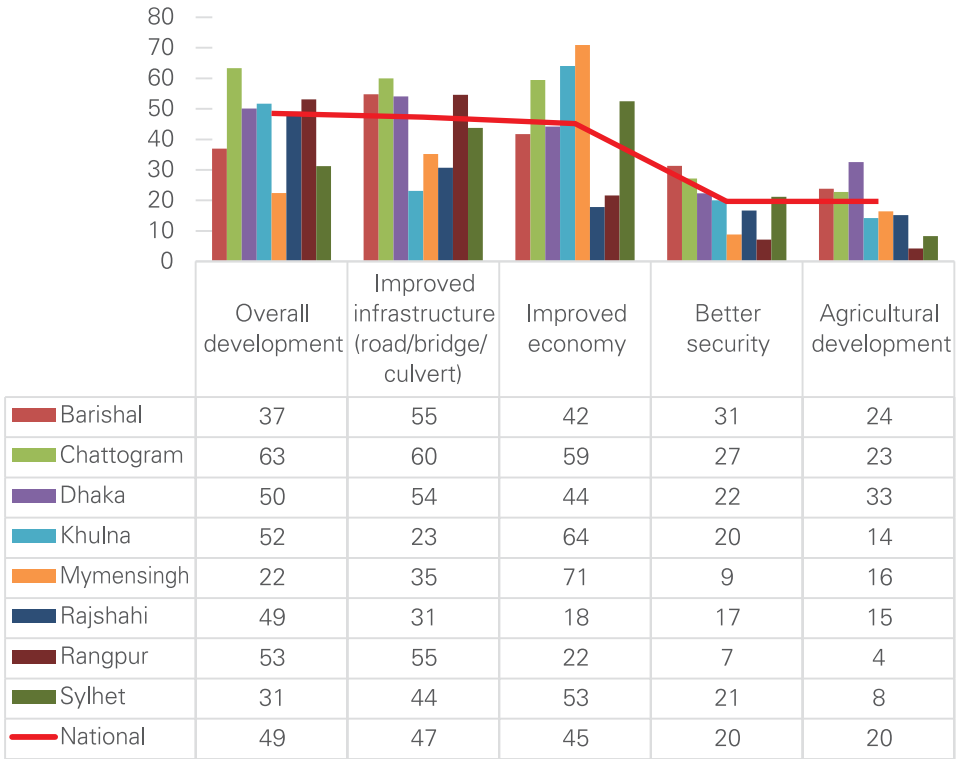
Figure 1.5: Reason for right direction – By division

There is considerable variation in responses across divisions. Overall development is cited most commonly in Chattogram (63 percent) and least in Mymensingh (22 percent), where respondents overwhelmingly cite improved economy (71 percent).

Why do you say wrong direction? Multiple responses allowed. (Q3)

Reason	Value
Political instability	61
Bad economy	42
Increasing corruption	41
One-sided government	35
Decline in law and order	27
No chance to express opinions independently	18
Bad traffic and transport system	16
Increasing terrorism	11
Un-Islamic activities	8
Poor education system	8
Gas shortage	7
Electricity	3
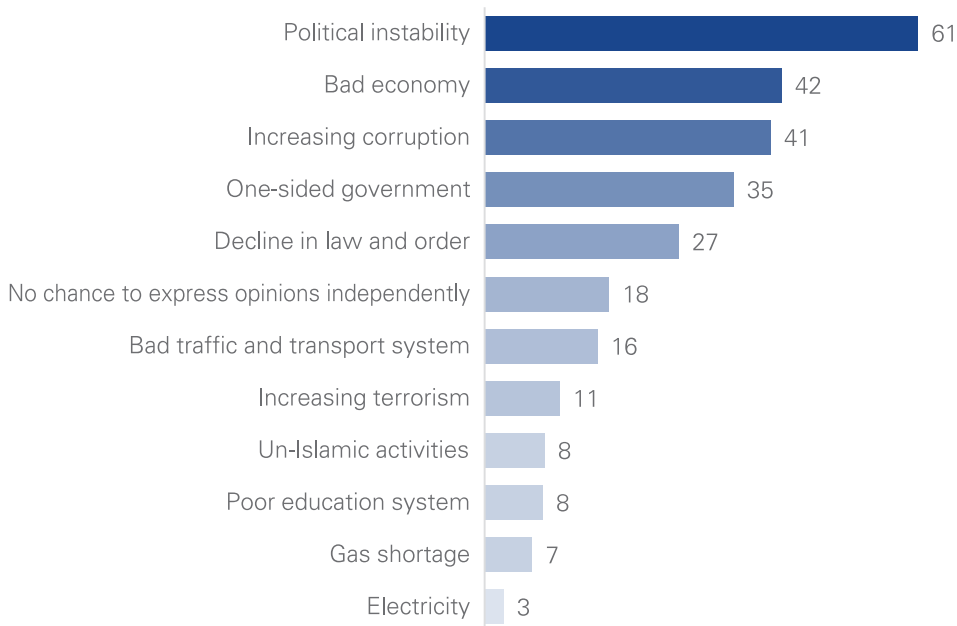
Figure 1.6: Reason for wrong direction – National

Political instability is the most common reason respondents give for saying that Bangladesh is going in the wrong direction. Women are less likely than men to cite political instability (58 percent of women versus 65 percent of men), but women are more likely to cite bad economy (46 percent of women versus 38 percent of men). Respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher are more likely to say one-sided government (58 percent), and SSC or HSC graduates[2] are more likely to say political instability (73 percent).

	Political instability	Bad economy	Increasing corruption	One-sided government	Decline in law and order	No chance to express opinions independently
National	61	42	41	35	27	18
Barishal	30	47	9	25	15	24
Chattogram	74	37	42	28	**46**	22
Dhaka	61	52	50	30	21	9
Khulna	50	52	43	49	26	23
Mymensingh	57	28	9	**56**	5	8
Rajshahi	66	31	33	43	34	27
Rangpur	65	46	**66**	16	21	10
Sylhet	53	19	34	28	17	11

[2]*SSC graduates have completed secondary school (Class 10); HSC graduates have completed higher secondary school (Class 12).*

	Bad traffic and transport system	Increasing terrorism	Un-Islamic activities	Poor education system	Gas shortage	Electricity
National	16	11	8	8	7	3
Barishal	2	3	15	4	2	0
Chattogram	**23**	**19**	9	4	7	1
Dhaka	16	11	15	**18**	**17**	2
Khulna	16	7	1	3	1	0
Mymensingh	4	1	1	1	3	8
Rajshahi	**21**	8	5	6	0	7
Rangpur	2	**17**	8	5	1	2
Sylhet	16	6	14	5	11	6

Table 1: Reason for wrong direction – By division

Again, across divisions, there is considerable variation in the reasons people give for why the country is headed in the wrong direction, with respondents in Rangpur most commonly citing increasing corruption and those in Mymensingh citing one-sided government. Unlike other divisions, respondents in Dhaka are more than twice as likely to cite the poor education system and gas shortage.

1.2 Biggest Problem - National Level

In your view, what is the biggest problem facing Bangladesh at the national level? Q4 (biggest problem)
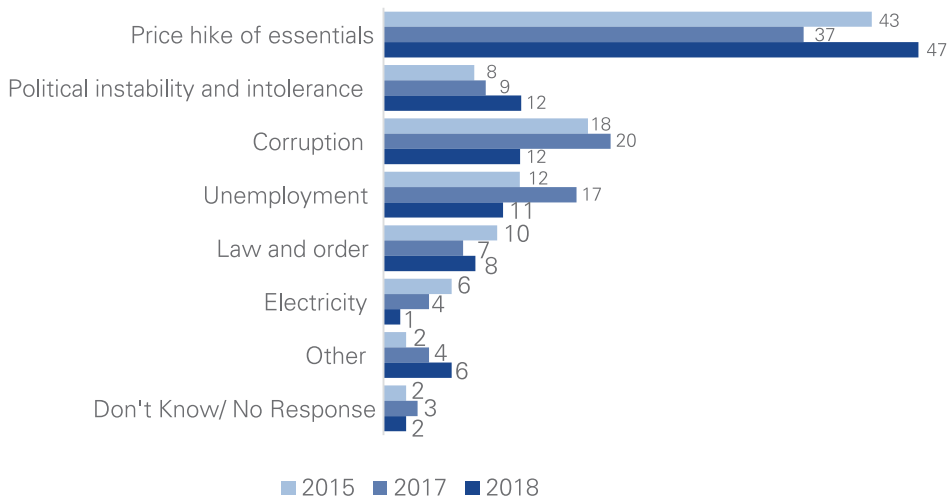
Figure 1.7: Biggest problem national level – Annual comparison

Since 2015, respondents have consistently cited inflation and the rising costs of essentials as the biggest problem facing the country; however, the issue is more pressing in 2018, with 10 percent more respondents saying this is the biggest problem compared to last year. At 12 percent, political instability and intolerance is now tied with corruption as the second biggest problem, closely followed by unemployment at 11 percent.

In your view, what are the biggest problems facing Bangladesh at the national level? Q4 (first and second responses combined)
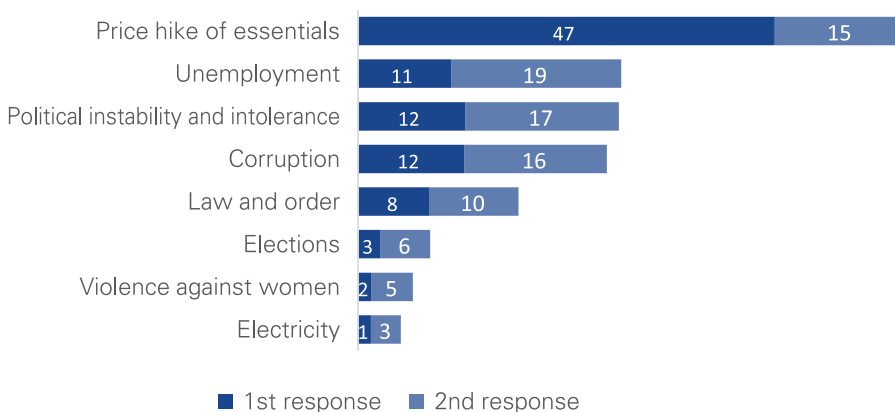
Figure 1.8: Biggest problem - National level, combined

Respondents were able to provide two answers to this question and, when their first and second responses are combined, price hikes of essentials remains the biggest problem at 62 percent, followed by unemployment (30 percent), political instability and intolerance (29 percent), and corruption (28 percent). Elections and violence against women have considerably more responses as a second answer.

There are no significant differences between men's and women's responses; however, respondents over 50 years old express more concern about rising prices (64 percent). Those under 25, who are more likely to have recently entered or are about to enter the labor market, are more concerned with unemployment (37 percent) than those over age 50 (29 percent).

	Price hike of essentials	Unemployment	Political instability and intolerance	Corruption	Law and order
Barishal	65	37	14	26	11
Chattogram	70	24	23	26	30
Dhaka	65	23	33	31	16
Khulna	54	39	19	31	17
Mymensingh	73	38	40	13	23
Rajshahi	52	22	44	29	18
Rangpur	54	39	33	33	9
Sylhet	67	41	22	24	10
National	62	30	29	28	18
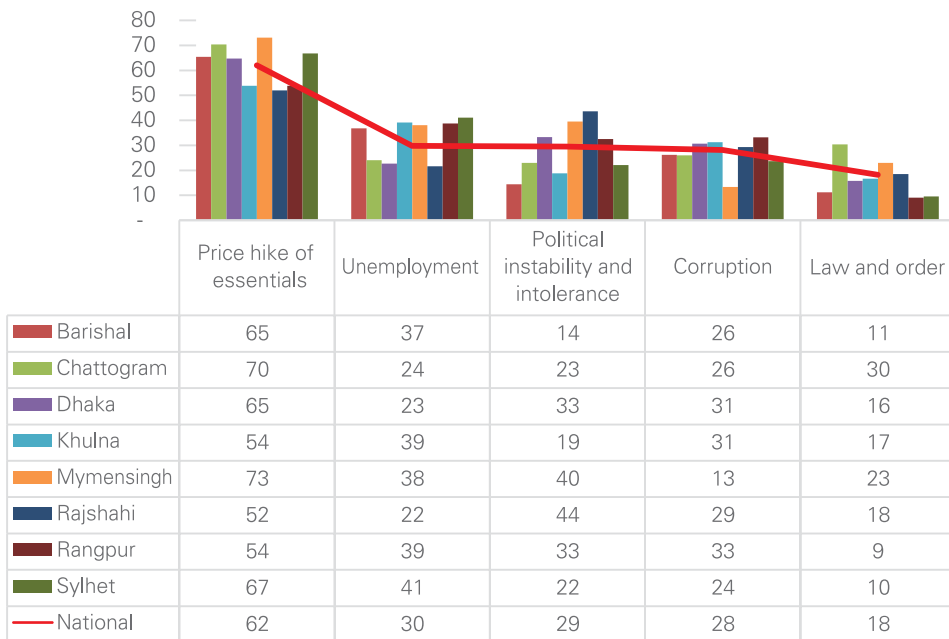
Figure 1.9: Biggest Problem national level, combined – By division

While there is general consensus across divisions that price hikes of essentials is the biggest problem at the national level, there is considerable variation in second responses. In Barishal, Khulna, Rangpur, and Sylhet, unemployment ranks second; in Rajshahi and Mymensingh, political instability and intolerance is second; and in Chattogram, law and order is second.

1.3 Direction at the Local Level

Now let`s talk about your area. Generally speaking, do you think things in your area today are going in the right direction, or in the wrong direction? (Q5)
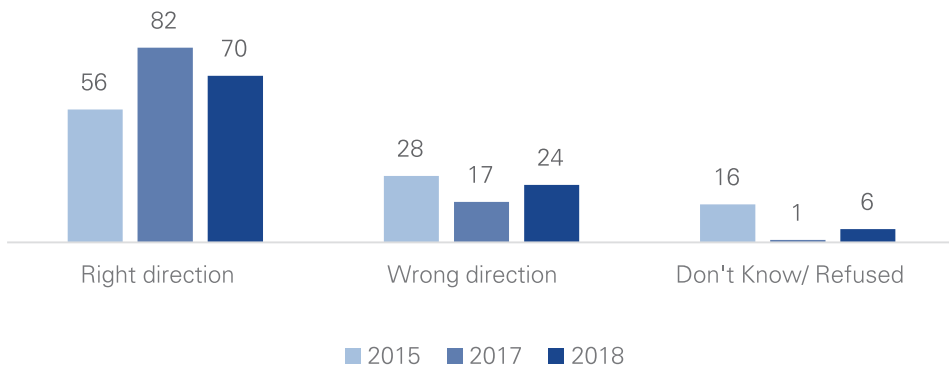
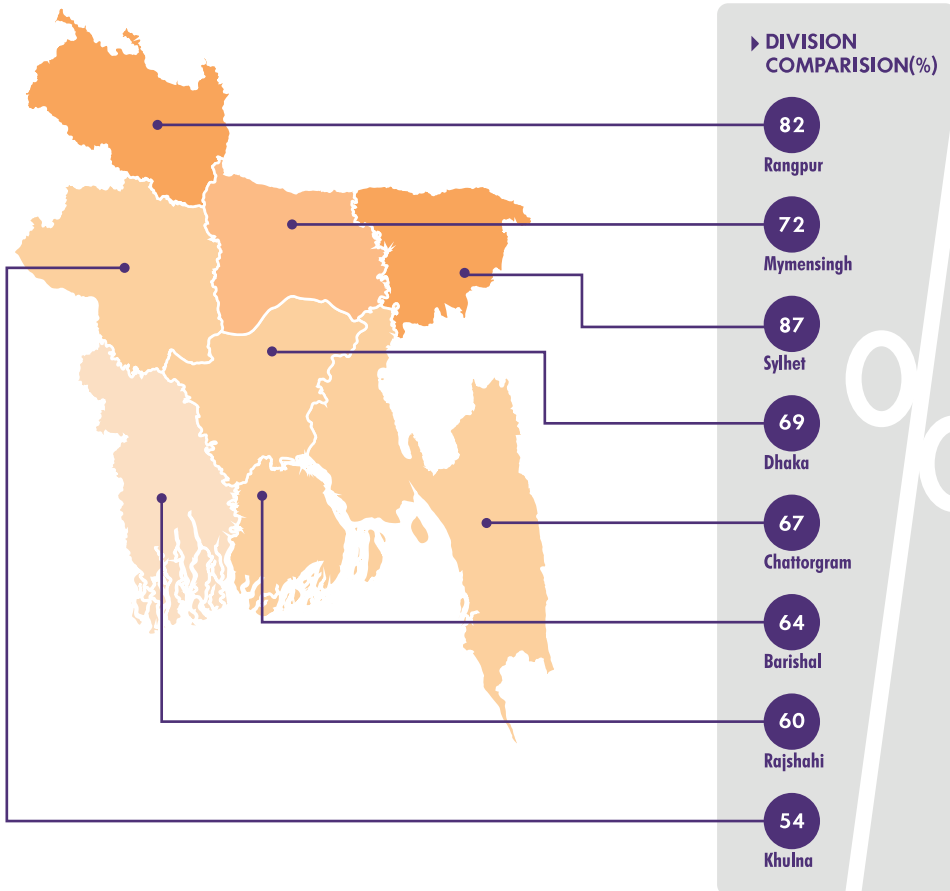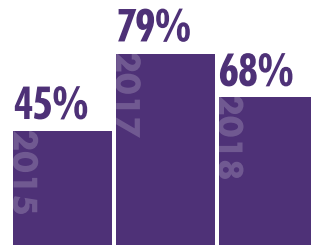**Figure 1.10:** Direction at local level – Annual comparison

While respondents remain more optimistic about the direction of their local area compared to the national level, overall optimism at the local level has declined compared to last year. Optimism increases with age, with 73 percent of those aged 50 and above saying their local area is heading in the right direction, compared to 65 percent of those under 25.

Now let`s talk about your area. Generally speaking, do you think things in your area today are going in the right direction, or in the wrong direction? (Q5)
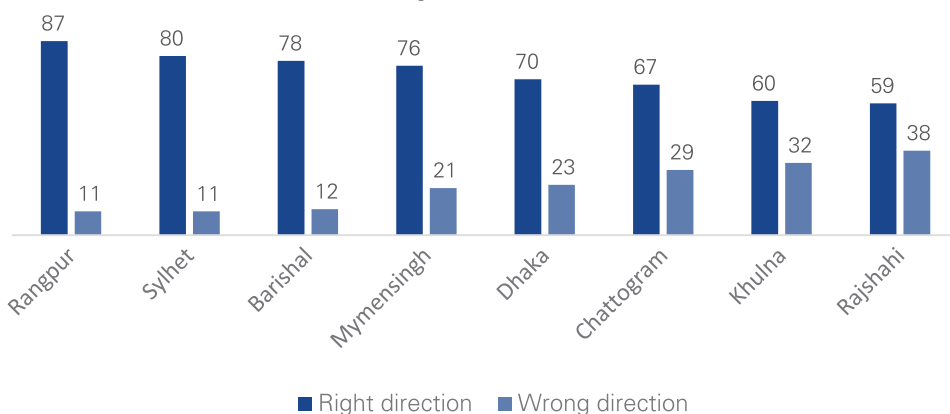
Figure 1.11: Direction at local level – by division

Regarding the local level, respondents in Rangpur (87 percent) and Sylhet (80 percent) are the most likely to say their area is going in the right direction, while those in Rajshahi (59 percent) and Khulna (60 percent) are the least likely. Respondents in Barishal are significantly more optimistic about the local level (78 percent) than they are about the national level (64 percent).

Now let`s talk about your area. Generally speaking, do you think things in your area today are going in the right direction, or in the wrong direction? (Q5)
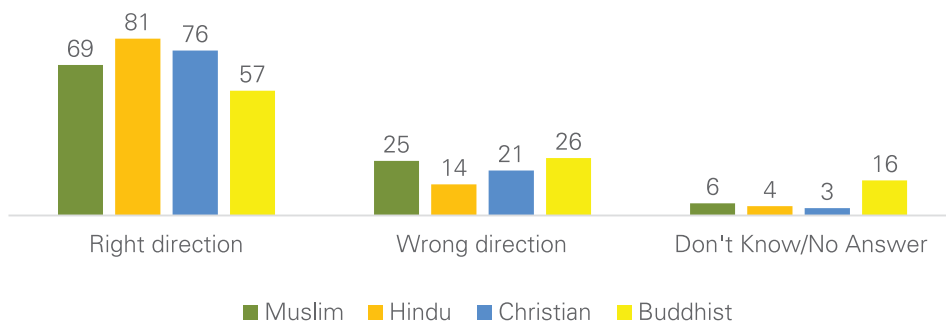
Figure 1.12: Direction at local level – By religion

Similar to responses about the national level, with regard to the local level, Hindus are the most optimistic among religious groups, followed by Christians and Muslims. Buddhists have a higher non-response rate about the direction of their local area (16 percent) than respondents from other religions; however, the rate is significantly lower than the 40 percent non-response rate of Buddhists when asked about the direction of the country.

1.4   Biggest Problem – Local Level

In your view, what is the biggest problem facing
the people of your community? (Q6 biggest
problem first response only)
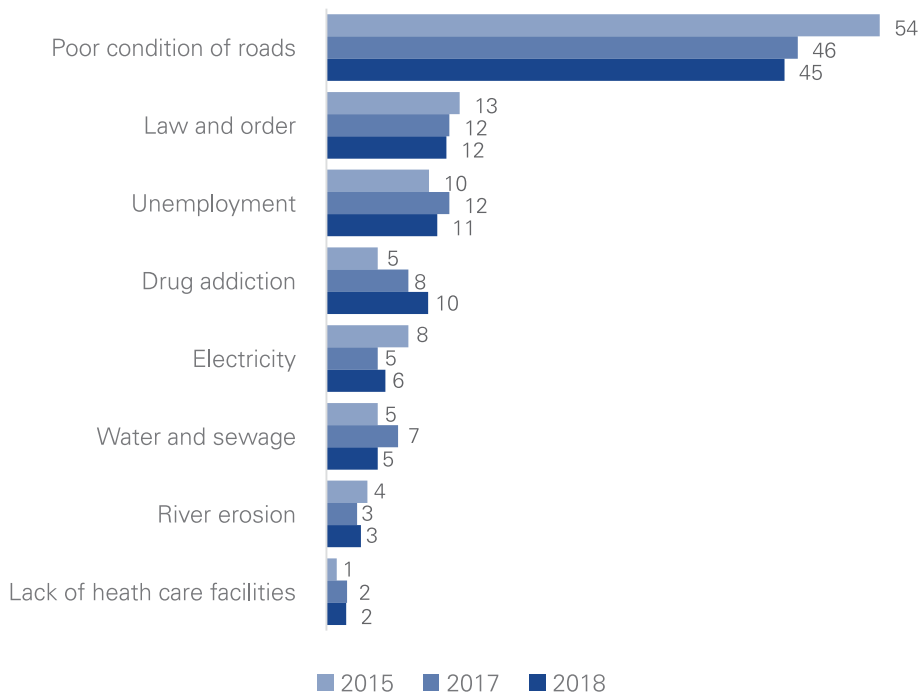
Figure 1.13: Biggest problem, local level – Annual comparison

The ranking of concerns at the local level has remained constant since 2015, with the poor condition of roads by far the biggest concern at 45 percent, followed by law and order (12 percent), unemployment (11 percent), and drug addiction (10 percent).

In your view, what is the biggest problem facing the people in your community? (Q6 first and second responses combined)
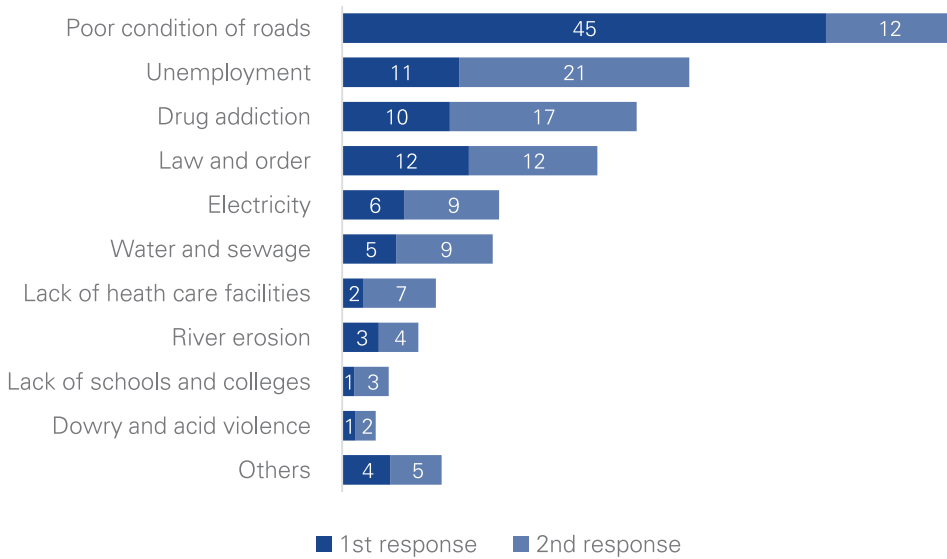
Figure 1.14: Biggest problem local level – Combined responses

When first and second responses are combined, unemployment moves into second place, followed by drug addiction, while law and order falls to fourth place. Rural respondents (60 percent) are more concerned with road conditions than those in urban areas (45 percent), whereas urban respondents (27 percent) are more concerned about lack of water and sewage than rural respondents (10 percent). Urban respondents are also more concerned about drug addiction (32 percent compared to 26 percent for rural residents). Youth (those below age 25) are similarly more concerned about drugs (32 percent compared to 26 percent for those 25 and older). Concern about unemployment increases with education, rising from 26 percent for those who are illiterate to 40 percent for those with university degrees.

In your view, what is the biggest problem facing the people in your community? (Q6 first and second response)

Barishal ■ Chattogram ■ Dhaka ■ Khulna ■ Mymensingh ■ Rajshahi ■ Rangpur ■ Sylhet
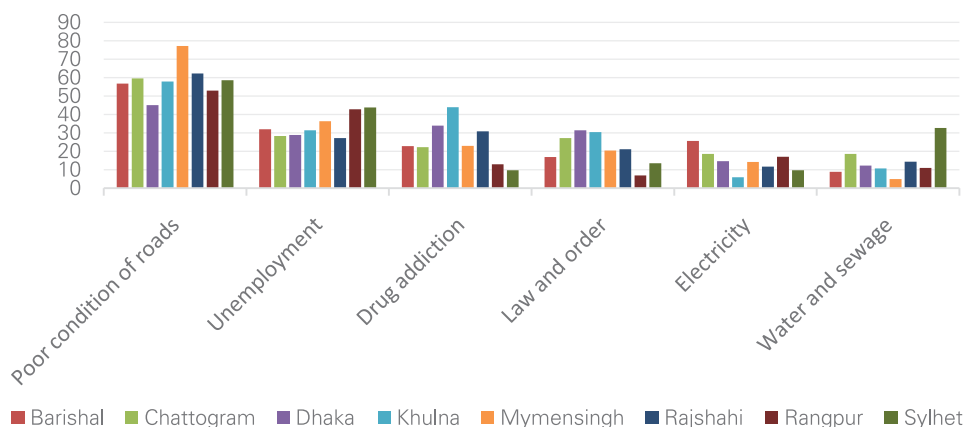
Figure 1.15: Biggest problem, local level, combined responses – By division

	Barishal	Chatto-gram	Dhaka	Khulna	Mymen-singh	Rajshahi	Rangpur	Sylhet
Poor condition of roads	57	60	45	58	77	62	53	59
Unemployment	32	28	29	31	36	27	43	44
Drug addiction	23	22	**34**	**44**	23	**31**	13	10
Law and order	17	27	31	30	20	21	7	14
Electricity	**26**	19	15	6	14	12	17	10
Water and sewage	9	19	12	11	5	14	11	**33**
River erosion	**23**	5	5	5	10	9	9	3
Dowry and acid violence	1	1	5	-	**7**	3	**6**	1
Lack of heath care facilities	4	10	9	7	3	10	**14**	4
Lack of schools and colleges	5	2	**8**	0	2	5	4	3
Shortage of gas supply	-	1	3	0	-	-	0	**7**
Crop damage due to flooding	0	-	0	-	0	0	4	0
Theft/hijacking/ mischief	-	0	2	1	0	1	3	1
Poverty	0	0	0	2	-	1	2	2
Others	1	2	1	4	1	2	3	2

Table 2: Biggest problem, local level combined responses – By division

Respondents in most divisions rank poor road conditions and unemployment as two of the biggest problems in their area. However, the other critical issues vary by division: drug addiction in Khulna (44 percent), Dhaka (34 percent), and Rajshahi (31 percent); water and sewage in Sylhet (33 percent); and electricity in Barishal (26 percent) and Rangpur (17 percent).

2 ELECTIONS

2.1 Voter Participation in Parliamentary Elections

I do not want to know for whom you plan to vote. But tell me: Do you plan to vote in the next parliamentary elections? (Q32)
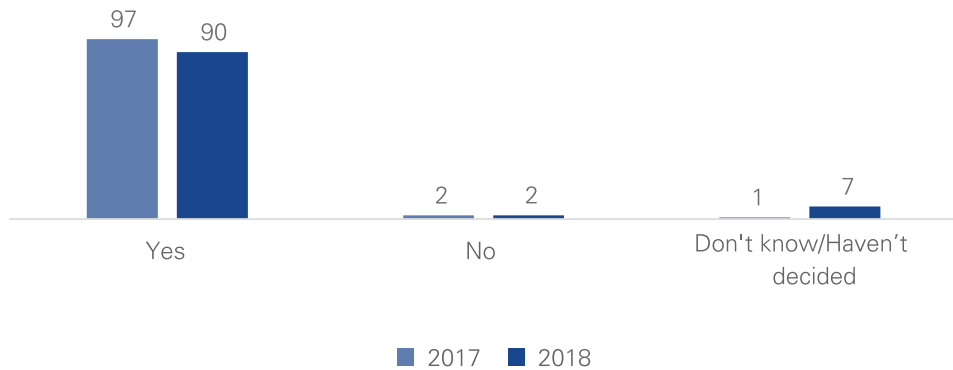
Figure 2.1: Plan to vote in parliamentary elections

Almost all respondents say they plan to vote in the next parliamentary elections. Voting indecision is highest in Barishal (24 percent), Chattogram (12 percent), and Dhaka (11 percent), and university graduates (16 percent) are more than twice as likely to be undecided when compared to the national average (7 percent). Voting indecision is lowest among rural respondents, those over the age of 30, and those with less education.

What are the reasons for voting in the parliamentary elections? (Q33) Multiple responses allowed
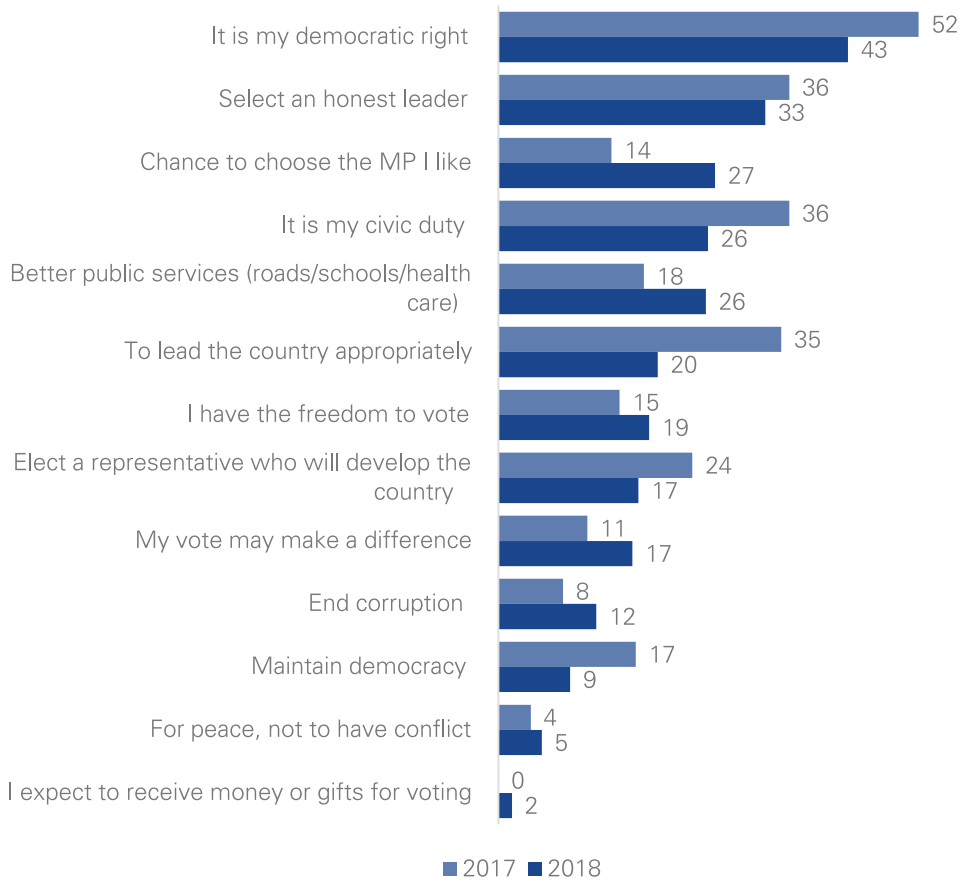
Figure 2.2: Reason for voting in parliamentary elections

Similar to 2017, 43 percent of respondents say they will vote because it is their democratic right. A significant number of respondents say they will vote because they want a representative who will develop the country (17 percent), or want better public services, including roads, schools, and health care (26 percent). In addition, 27 percent say they will vote because they have an opportunity to choose the MP they like, which is a 13 percent increase over last year.

For those who say they will not vote (only 2 percent of total respondents), cheating is the response most commonly cited (43 percent), followed by fear and intimidation (34 percent). For those who are undecided (7 percent of total respondents), most (88 percent) say they will assess the situation at the time of the elections, while 29 percent say they do not know the procedures for voting and/or registering to vote.

2.2 Voter Participation in Local Elections

I do not want to know for whom you plan to vote, but do you plan to vote in the next Union Parishad/Upazila Parishad/municipal/city corporation elections (if applicable)? (Q32 and Q36)
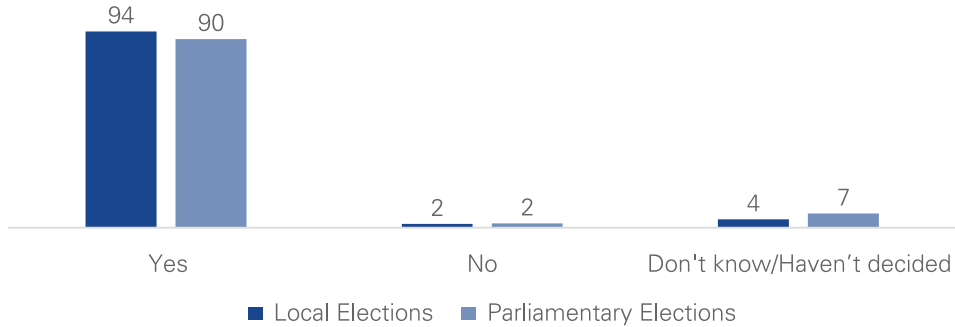
Figure 2.3: Plan to vote in local elections compared to parliamentary elections

Similar to parliamentary elections, respondents almost unanimously say they plan to vote in the next local elections (94 percent). Barishal is the only place with any indecision; 17 percent of respondents say they are undecided.

If the answer to question 36 is 'yes', then why are you interested in voting in the next election (Union Parishad/Upazila Parishad municipality/city corporation)? (Q37) Multiple responses allowed
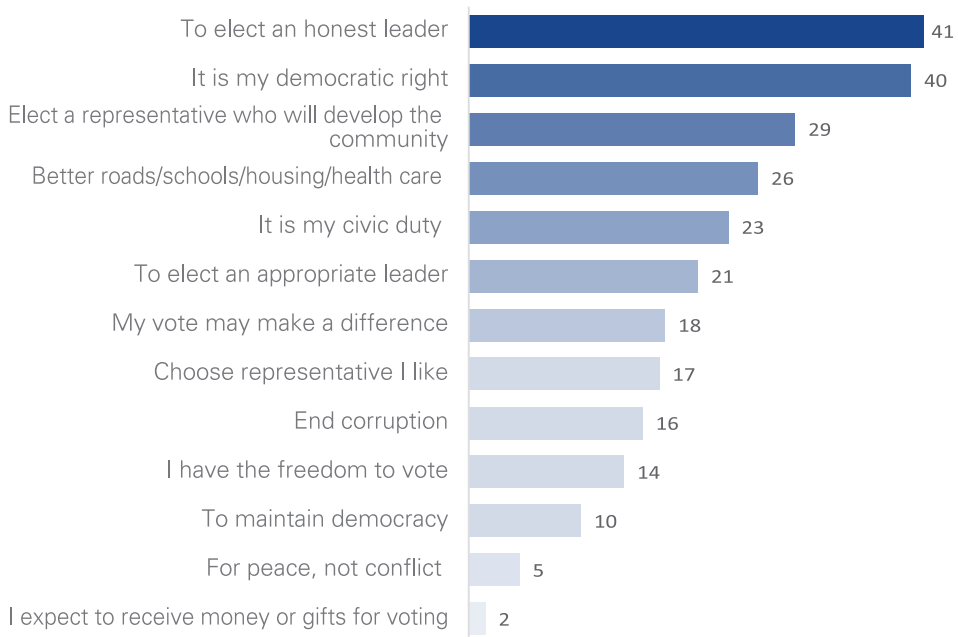
Figure 2.4: Reason for voting in local elections

Similar to responses regarding voting in the national elections, having the democratic right to vote and the desire to select an honest leader are the top two choices for voting in local elections.

2.3 Fairness of the Election Process

I am going to mention some problems that can occur in elections. Do you think it is possible that these problems could happen in the next Bangladesh national parliamentary elections? (Q39)

Problem	2017	2018
Cheating in counting the votes	29	46
Violence against party activists or voters	32	36
Gifts or payments for votes	21	24
Threats from government officials to make residents vote for a particular party	21	23
People being forced to pledge their vote to a particular party	17	22
None of these problems are possible	35	18
People being forced to join a party and vote for it	12	18
News media bias favoring a particular party	6	11
Residents not being allowed to register to vote	8	9
Finding out how people voted without their permission (i.e. violating the confidentiality of voting)	3	5

Figure 2.5: Potential problems during parliamentary elections

In 2018, respondents are more concerned about problems that might occur in the next parliamentary elections than they were in 2017, with 46 percent concerned about vote counting and 36 percent worried that electoral violence may occur. In 2017, 35 percent of respondents said that no problems would occur; in 2018, this has dropped to 18 percent. Respondents in Mymensingh are worried most about electoral violence (52 percent), while those in Rajshahi (61 percent) and Dhaka (59 percent) are most concerned about cheating in counting the votes. Rural respondents are more worried about threats from government officials to make them vote for a particular party (24 percent, compared to 19 percent of urban respondents), and are also more worried than those in urban areas about giving gifts or payments in exchange for votes (25 percent versus 20 percent, respectively). Younger respondents (under 30 years old) are more concerned about cheating in counting the votes (51 percent versus 41 percent for those over age 50). Non-Bengali ethnic groups are more concerned about not being able to register (16 percent compared to 9 percent at the national level).

Do you think that there is any need for a non-party
interim government before the next parliamentary
elections? (Q40)

Figure 2.6: Need for interim government

More than two-thirds of respondents feel that there is a need for a non-party interim government before the next elections. This finding is consistent across all divisions, ages, genders, and other groups.

27% men

Always or often talk about politics

13% women
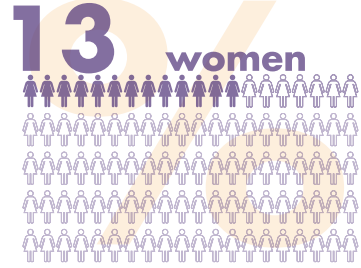
3 POLITICAL INTEREST AND EFFICACY

3.1 Interest in Politics

How often do you discuss political affairs with friends?
Almost all the time, often, not very often, or almost
never? (Q13)
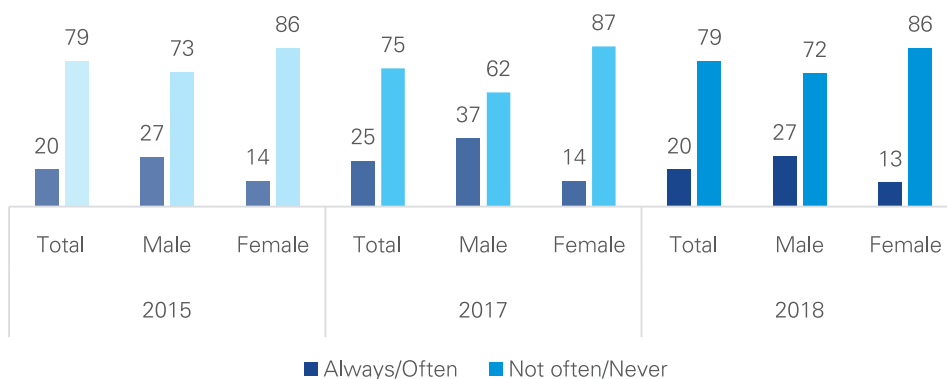
Figure 3.1: Frequency of political discussions

After a slight increase in 2017, people's interest in politics has declined 5 percent in 2018, returning to the same level it was in 2015. Similar to previous years, in 2018, a significant gender gap continues in political interest, with men almost twice as likely as women to discuss politics on a regular basis. Interest is relatively consistent across divisions, with the highest level in Khulna (30 percent) and the lowest in Mymensingh (8 percent). Political interest increases with education, with 30 percent of university graduates regularly discussing politics, compared to 13 percent of illiterate respondents. Only 12 percent of Buddhists are likely to discuss politics compared to other religions.

This level of interest in politics in Bangladesh is relatively consistent with other countries in the region, including Cambodia where, in 2014, 24 percent of people discussed politics always or often, while in Myanmar, only 12 percent of people discussed politics.[3]

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[3] *The Asia Foundation. 2014. Democracy in Cambodia 2014, and Myanmar 2014: Civic Knowledge and Values in a Changing Society.*

3.2 Political Alienation

If you think about the people elected to the National Parliament, suppose someone said: "They care about people like you." Would you agree or disagree? (Q14)
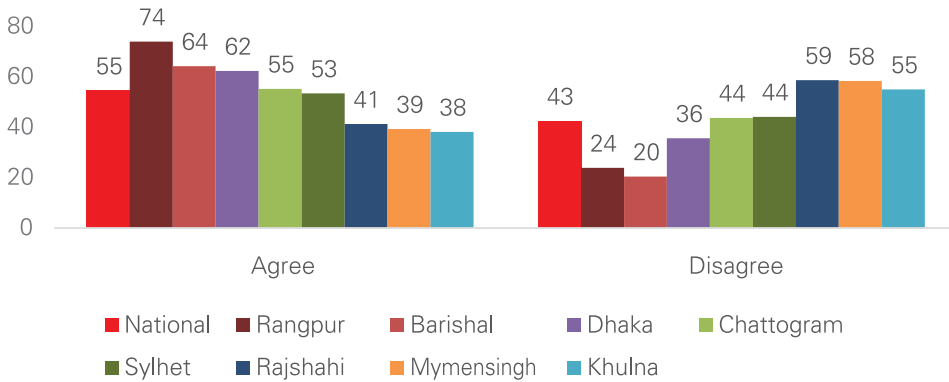
Figure 3.2: Feeling of political alienation

Similar to 2015 and 2017, 55 percent of respondents say that elected MPs care about them in 2018, a finding that is relatively consistent across the indicators for gender, urban/rural, age, education, and religion. However, responses vary considerably across divisions, ranging from a high of 74 percent in Rangpur to a low of 38 percent in Khulna. Compared to the national average for non-response (3 percent), those most likely not to respond are people over age 50 (15 percent), those in the CHT (15 percent), and Buddhists (12 percent).

3.3 Impact of Elections

Do you think that voting in national parliamentary elections will make a big difference, some difference, little difference, or no difference at all to the country's wellbeing? (Q15)
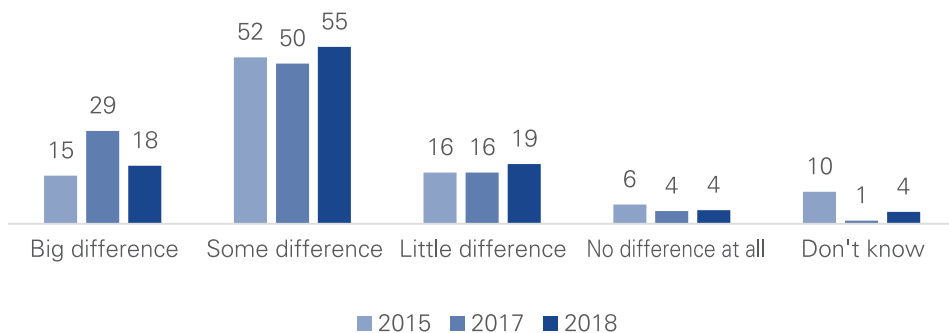
Figure 3.3: Impact of voting

Respondents' perceptions of the impact of voting have remained constant since 2015, with 73 percent agreeing that it will make a big or some difference to the country's wellbeing. However, there has been a shift in the intensity of this sentiment since 2017, with 11 percent fewer respondents saying that voting will make a big difference. Respondents in Rangpur are the mostly likely to say that voting makes a big difference in the country's wellbeing (84 percent), while only 53 percent of respondents in Barishal agree. Barishal also has the highest percentage of respondents who say they do not know if voting will make a difference (18 percent compared to the national average of 4 percent).

Why do you say voting makes a difference? (Q16)
Those who responded big or some difference to
Q15, multiple responses allowed

Improved infrastructure	69
Improved education	31
Improvement in economic status	31
Overall development	30
Improved agricultural development	24
Law and order improvements	22
Decline in law and order	15
Education not improving	14
Increasing employment	13
No development	10
Decreased employment	8
Worsing economic status	8
Lack of infrastructure improvement	5
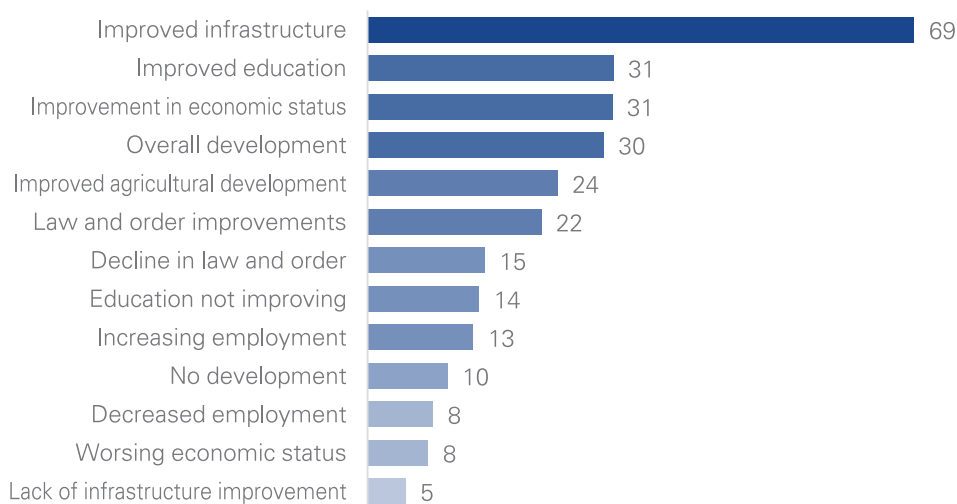
Figure 3.4: What impact does voting have?

When asked why they feel their vote makes a difference, respondents are most likely to cite improved infrastructure (69 percent), improved education (31 percent), improvement in economic status (31 percent), and overall development (30 percent). While the top six reasons are positive, respondents who feel their vote counts also list problems, including a decline in law and order (15 percent), education not improving (14 percent), and decreased employment (8 percent).

3.4 Political Efficacy

How much influence do you think someone like you can have over national government decisions? (Q17)
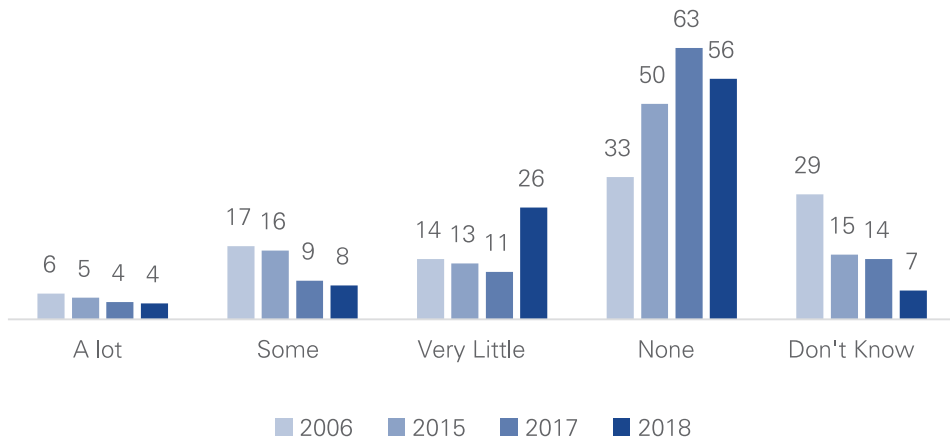
Figure 3.5: Feeling of political efficacy

A high percentage of respondents (82 percent) say they have very little or no influence over national government decisions, an increase of 8 percent since 2017 and 19 percent since 2015. This feeling is consistent across all groups, including those for gender, age, religion, and division. Almost all Buddhists (93 percent) feel this way, as do many in the CHT (88 percent), and 87 percent of respondents under age 25. In 2018 there was a striking shift in the intensity of this feeling compared to 2017. Those saying they have no influence decreased by 7 percent, while those who say they have very little influence rose by 15 percent in 2018. In 2018, the percentage of respondents saying that they do not know is half what it was in 2017.

How much influence do you think someone like you
can have over national/local government decisions?
(Q17 & Q18)
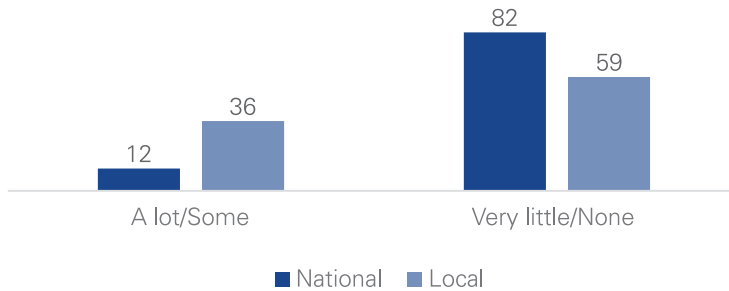
Figure 3.6: Political efficacy –National & local comparison

In 2018, feelings of political efficacy (political influence) at the local level are three times stronger (36 percent) than at the national level (12 percent). While education levels make no difference at the national level, at the local level, university graduates (52 percent) express significantly more political efficacy than illiterate respondents (28 percent). Political efficacy at the local level is highest in Barishal (47 percent), Khulna (46 percent), and Chattogram (42 percent), and lowest in Sylhet (22 percent) and Rangpur (29 percent).

8% increase from 2017

82% of citizens say they have very little or no influence over national government decisions
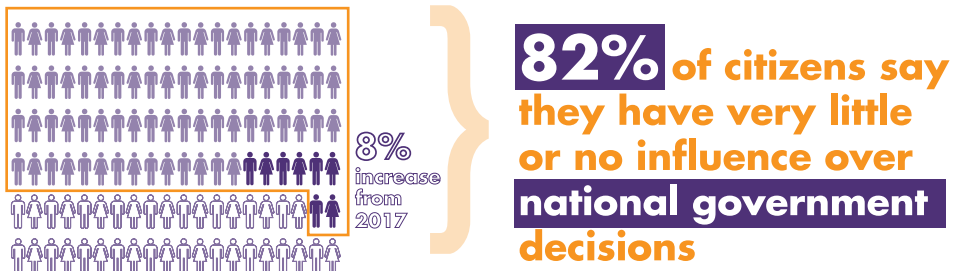
4 POLITICAL PARTIES

4.1 Party Attachment

Suppose a candidate you like, or have voted for in the past, switched to a different (or, "the other") political party before the election, how likely would it be that you would still vote for that candidate? (Q19)
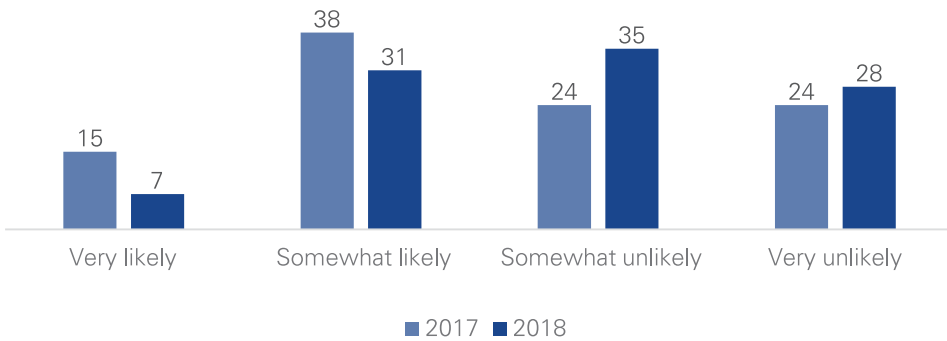
Figure 4.1: Willingness to switch parties to follow a candidate

Compared to last year, respondents are increasingly devoted to the party of their choice, with 63 percent saying they are somewhat or very unlikely to vote for a candidate who switched parties. Respondents in Khulna are particularly loyal to their party, with 93 percent saying they are somewhat or very unlikely to switch parties, whereas respondents in Chattogram (56 percent) and Barishal (48 percent) are most likely to follow their candidate to another party.

4.2 Candidate Attributes

What attribute do you consider most important for
individuals to get elected? (Q20 Most important)
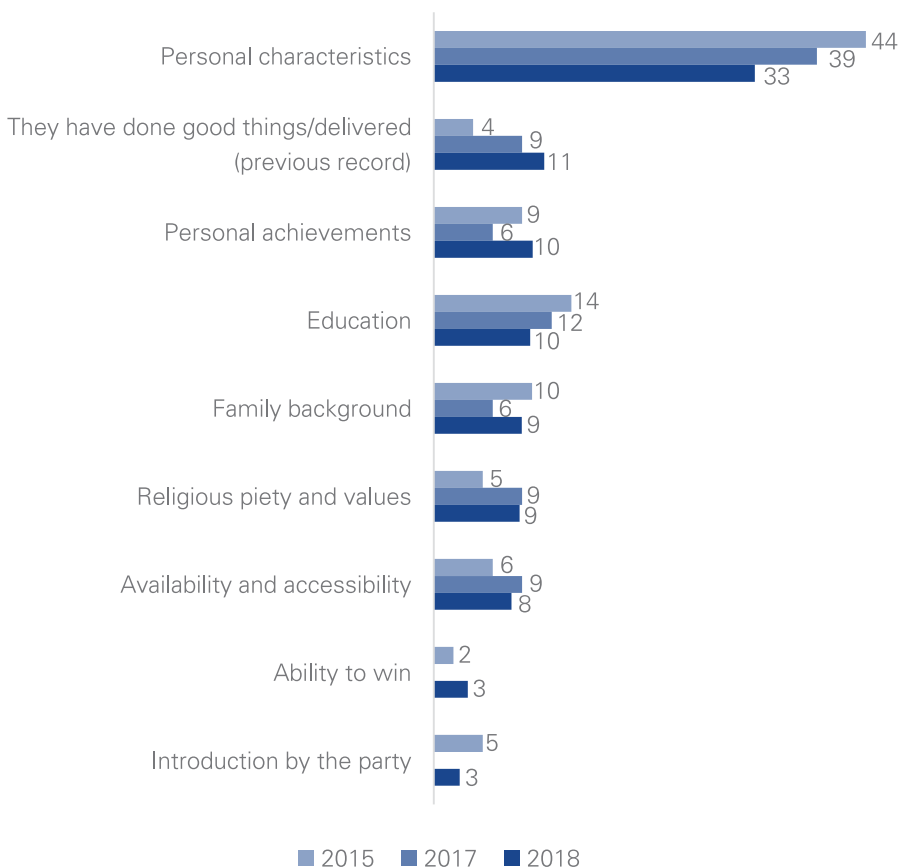
Figure 4.2: Most important candidate attribute

Personal characteristics continue to be the most important factor for deciding whether to
vote for a candidate; however, this has declined consistently since 2015. There is some
variation across divisions, with 31 percent of respondents in Khulna saying that family
background is most important, and respondents in Barishal saying that education is most
important (22 percent). Chattogram respondents are more focused on what the candidates
have delivered (21 percent), while those in Sylhet most value accessibility (18 percent)
and religious values (17 percent).

4.3 Party Attributes

Which attribute do you consider most important for a party to be elected to government? (Q21)

	2015	2017	2018
History of the party	32	27	22
Accomplishments of the party (education, health, etc.)	11	8	21
Programs and proposals	26	27	20
Leaders of the party	8	14	18
Ability to win	10	8	6
My family always votes for a particular party	6	7	7
Connection to religion	7	6	5
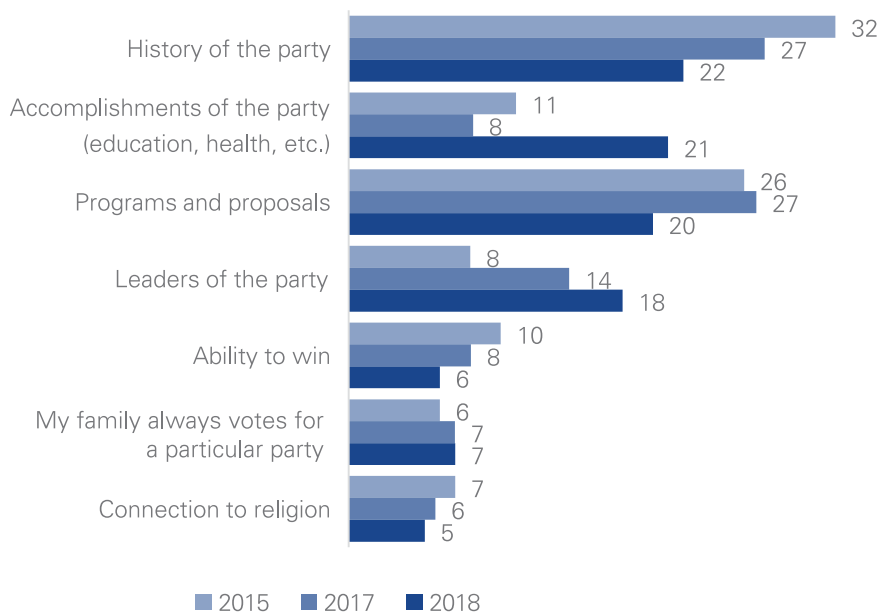
Figure 4.3: Most important party attribute

History of the party (22 percent) remains the most important attribute for party selection; however, the importance of this attribute has declined since 2015. At the same time, respondents are increasingly looking at the accomplishments of the party (21 percent) and leaders of the party (18 percent). Party accomplishments are more important to respondents in Sylhet (34 percent), Mymensingh (30 percent), and Chattogram (28 percent), while respondents value party history in Khulna (52 percent) and programs and proposals in Rangpur (34 percent).

4.4 Differences between Parties

What difference do you see today, if any, between the
different parties in Bangladesh? (Q22)
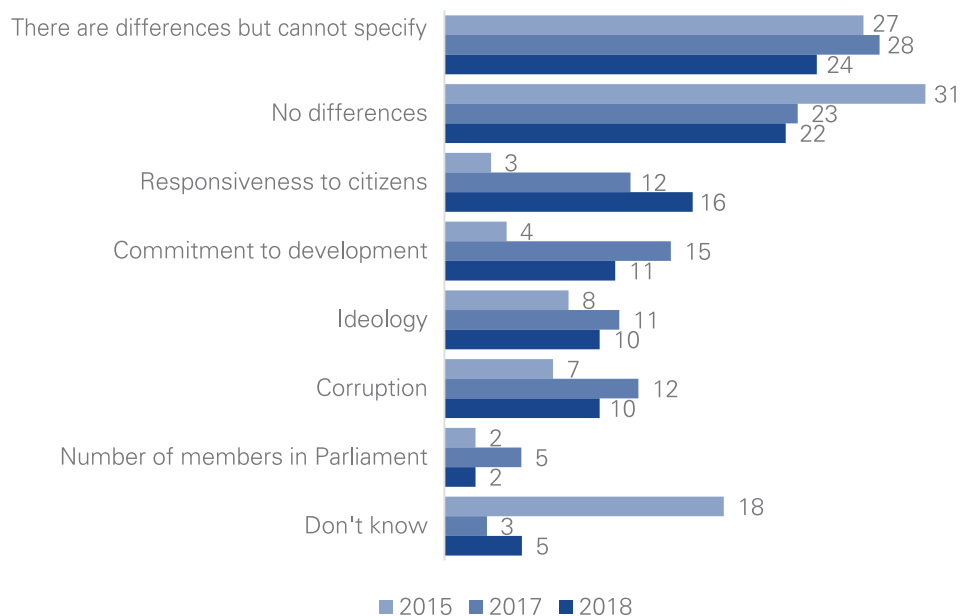
Figure 4.4: Differences between parties

Since 2015, respondents have been increasingly able to identify differences between political parties, with the largest gain in perceived responsiveness to citizens (16 percent). While almost a quarter of respondents (24 percent) cannot identify any differences between parties or say there are no differences (22 percent), there has been a decline in both responses since 2015, especially the latter. There has also been a significant decline in those who say they do not know.

4.5 Party Alienation

I don't want to know which party you support, but in thinking about that party, suppose someone said, "they care about people like you." Would you agree or disagree, strongly or somewhat? (Q23)
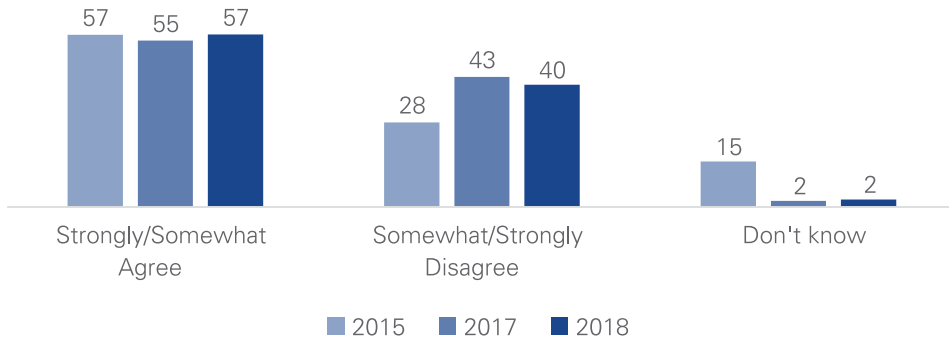
Figure 4.5: Feeling of party alienation

Since 2015, responses have remained consistent, with 57 percent of respondents agreeing that the party they support cares about people like them. This sentiment is highest in Rangpur (71 percent), followed by Dhaka (69 percent) and Barishal (67 percent). This sentiment is lowest in Khulna (37 percent), followed by Mymensingh and Rajshahi (both 45 percent).

4.6 Openness to New Parties

If a new party had a platform closer to your views, how likely would you be to switch to that party? (Q24)
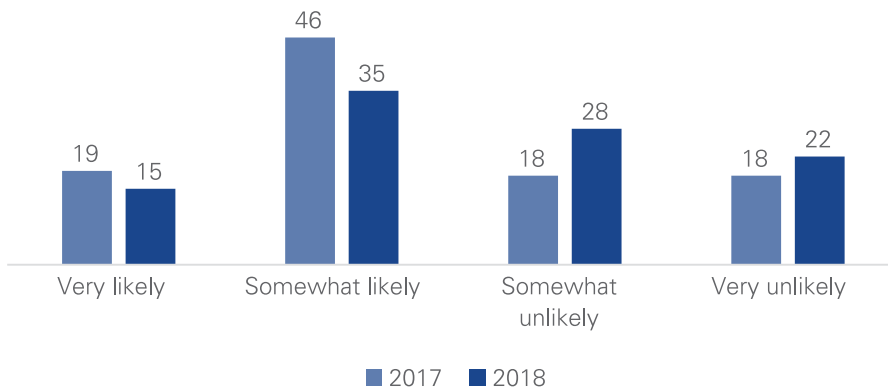
Figure 4.6: Openness to new political parties

Respondents are much less open to new parties in 2018 than they were in 2017, with 51 percent saying it is very or somewhat likely that they would switch. In 2017, 65 percent of respondents said they would switch.

If a new party had a platform closer to your views, how likely would you be to switch to that party? (Q24) Very, or somewhat likely

Division	Value
Barishal	79
Rangpur	64
Chattogram	63
Dhaka	55
Rajshahi	54
Sylhet	33
Mymensingh	23
Khulna	18
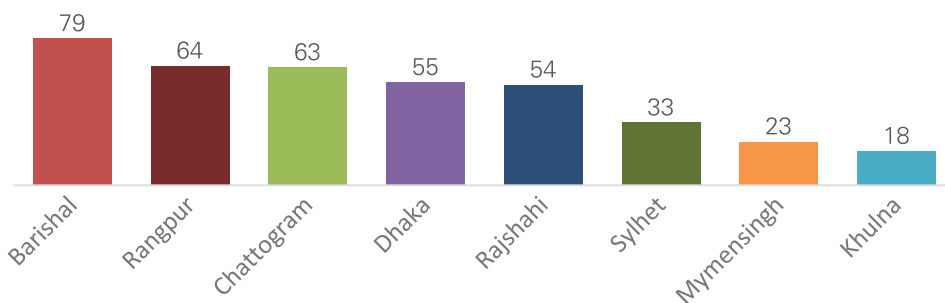
Figure 4.7: Openness to new political parties – By division

Respondents in Barishal (79 percent) are the most likely to switch parties, while the fewest would switch in Khulna (18 percent).

5 POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

5.1 Role of a Member of Parliament

Different people have different ideas about what Members of
Parliament do. What do you think they do? (Q27)
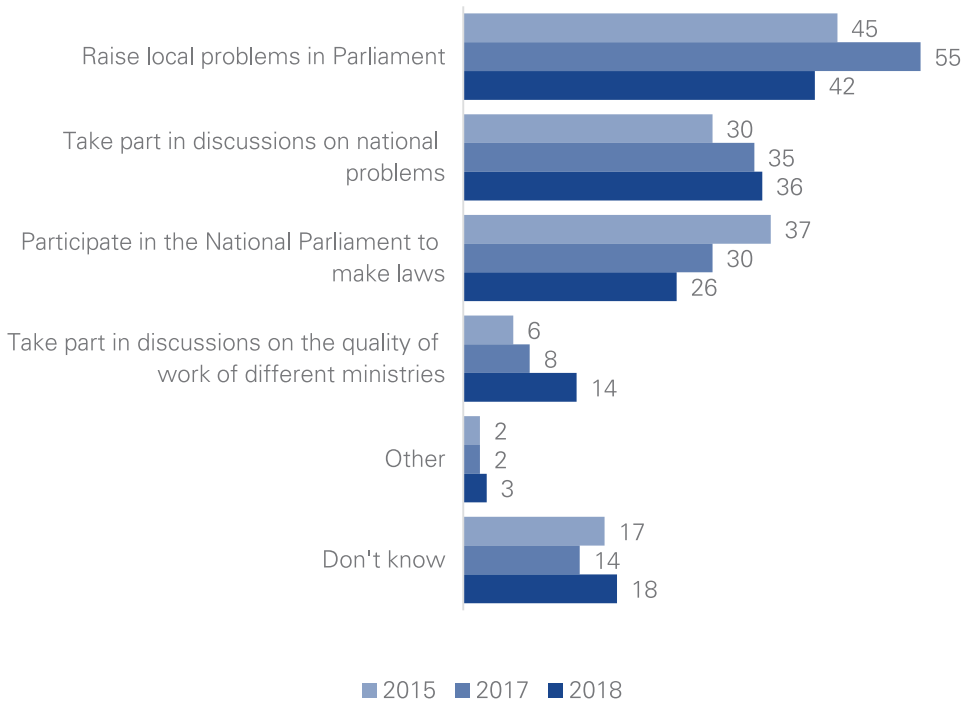
Figure 5.1: Role of MPs – Annual comparison

The majority of respondents (82 percent) are able to identify at least one role of an MP.
Since 2015, the most common response has been to raise local problems in Parliament;
however, respondents are less likely to give this answer in 2018 compared to 2017 and
2015 (42 percent in 2018 versus 55 percent in 2017 and 45 percent 2015). Don't know
responses have remained relatively constant since 2015, with the highest rates among
women (23 percent), respondents in Khulna (30 percent), and illiterate respondents (33
percent).

5.2 Able to Identify MP

Many people do not know the name of the MP who represents their constituency in Parliament. Can you name your MP? (Q25)
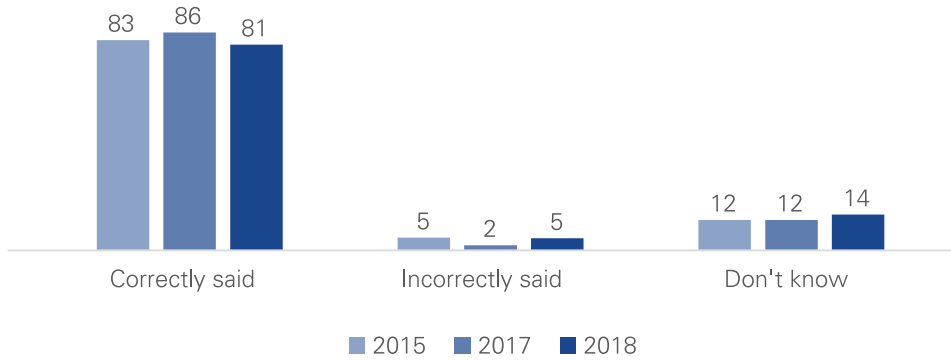
Figure 5.2: Able to identify MP

Respondents continue to be able to correctly name their MP (81 percent); however, there is a significant gender difference, with 90 percent of men correctly identifying their MP compared to 73 percent of women. Education is also a factor, with 96 percent of university graduates correctly naming their MP, compared to 68 percent of illiterate respondents.

5.3 MP Visits to Constituency

As far as you know, has your Member of Parliament visited your community in the last year? (Q26)
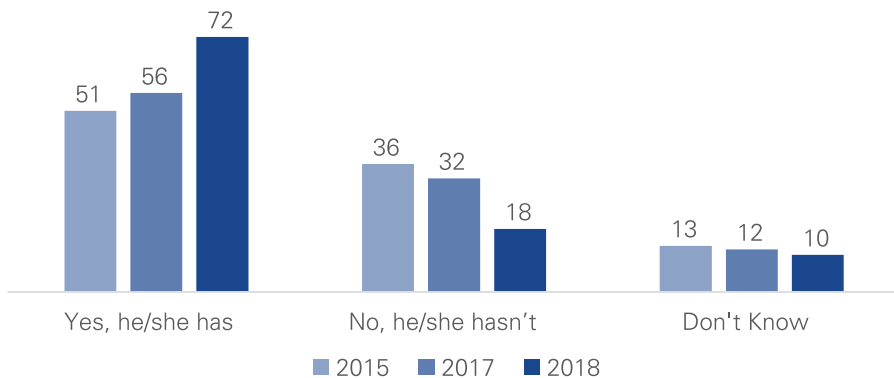
Figure 5.3: MP visits to constituency

Since the 2017 survey, MPs appear to have increased visits to their constituencies, with 72 percent of respondents saying that their MP has visited in the last year.

5.4 Satisfaction with MP

Would you say you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the job your MP is doing?
(Q28)
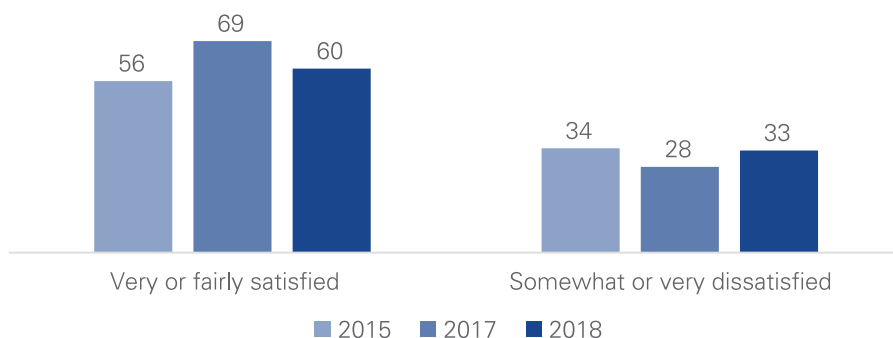
Figure 5.4: Satisfaction with MP

Satisfaction with MPs peaked at 69 percent in 2017, and has declined to 60 percent in 2018. Satisfaction with MPs is highest in Dhaka (77 percent) and lowest in Rajshahi (33 percent) and Mymensingh (41 percent).

MP satisfaction correlated with MP visits (Q26 and Q28)
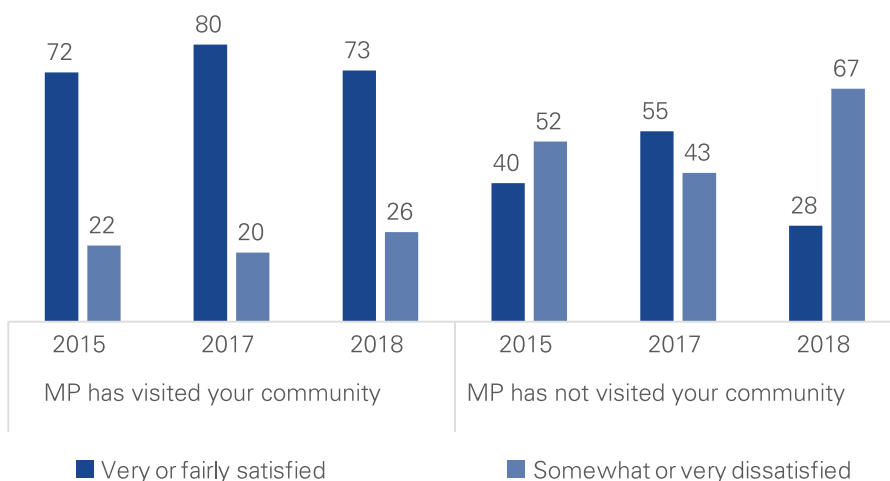
Figure 5.5: MP satisfaction correlated with MP visits

While causality cannot be determined, there is a positive correlation between MP visits and satisfaction, with 73 percent of respondents who say their MP has visited expressing satisfaction with his/her performance. This is in stark contrast to the 67 percent of respondents who say their MP has not visited and also express dissatisfaction with his/her performance, a 23 percent increase since 2017.

This correlation holds true at the division level as well. In Rajshahi, 31 percent of respondents say their MP has not visited, and 64 percent are dissatisfied. Similarly, in Mymensingh, 43 percent of respondents say they have not received a visit from their MP, and 54 percent say they are dissatisfied.

5.5 Local Representation

Do you know the name of your MP? Do you know the name of your Union Parishad Chairperson? (Q25 and Q29)
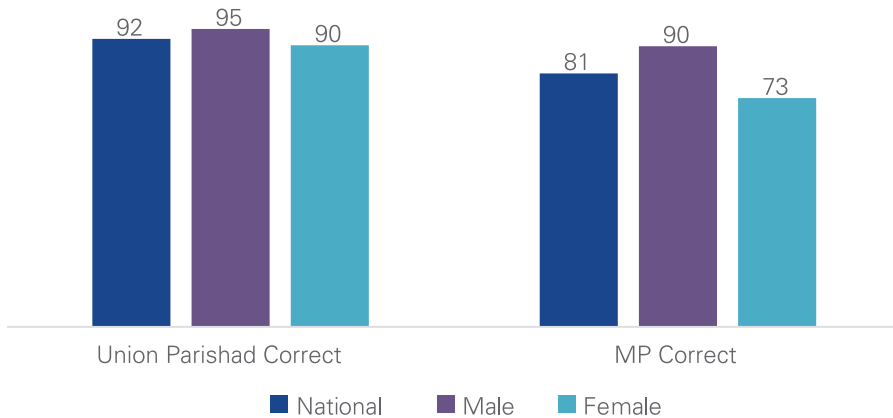
Figure 5.6: Able to identify local representative and MP

Respondents are even more likely to correctly identify their Union Parishad (UP) Chairperson than their MP, with 92 percent correctly identifying him or her. Additionally, the gender disparity all but disappears, with 90 percent of women able to correctly identify their UP Chairperson. These findings are consistent across all ages, religions, and divisions.

Have you contacted your Union Parishad Chairperson or members over the last two years for help in solving any of your personal or local problems? (Q30)
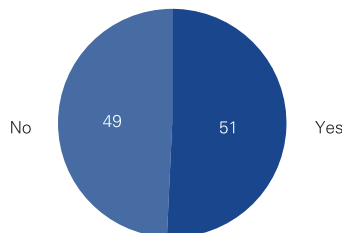
Figure 5.7: Contact with local representative

Similar to 2017, 51 percent of respondents say they have contacted their UP Chairperson or members over the past two years to resolve a problem. This is highest in Sylhet, where 70 percent have been in touch with their UP representatives.

5.6   Satisfaction with Union Parishad Representatives

Would you say you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the job of your Union Parishad representatives? (Q31)
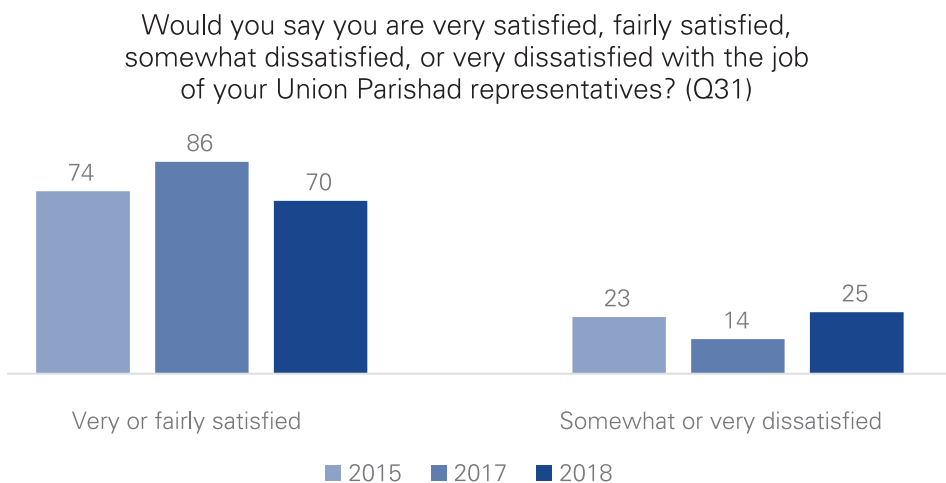
Figure 5.8: Satisfaction with UP representatives

While satisfaction with Union Parishad representatives (70 percent) remains higher than with MPs (60 percent), it has dropped to its lowest level since 2015. Satisfaction is highest in Barishal and Sylhet (both 81 percent), and by far the lowest in Rajshahi (43 percent).
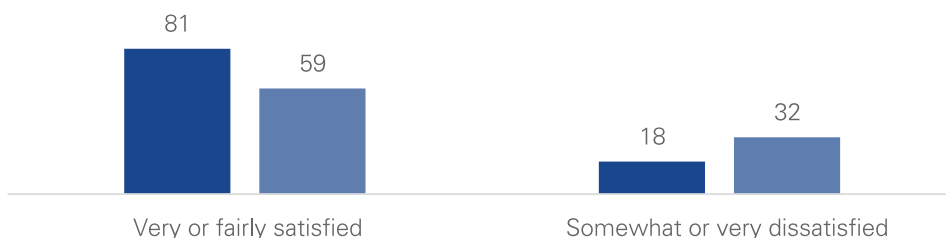
Figure 5.9: UP satisfaction correlated with UP contact

Similar to the national level, contact with local representatives has a strong positive correlation with satisfaction. This is particularly so in Mymensingh, where 90 percent of respondents who have had contact with UP members are satisfied, while only 48 percent of those with no contact are satisfied.

6 DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

6.1 Meaning of Democracy

If a country is called a democracy, what does that mean to you? (Q41)

Answer	2017	2018
Government by the people	15	26
People's freedom	5	21
Equal rights for all	18	19
Opportunity to vote freely	20	12
Freedom of speech/opportunity to talk	12	10
Development in the country	1	5
No democracy in the country	1	2
No answer	26	6
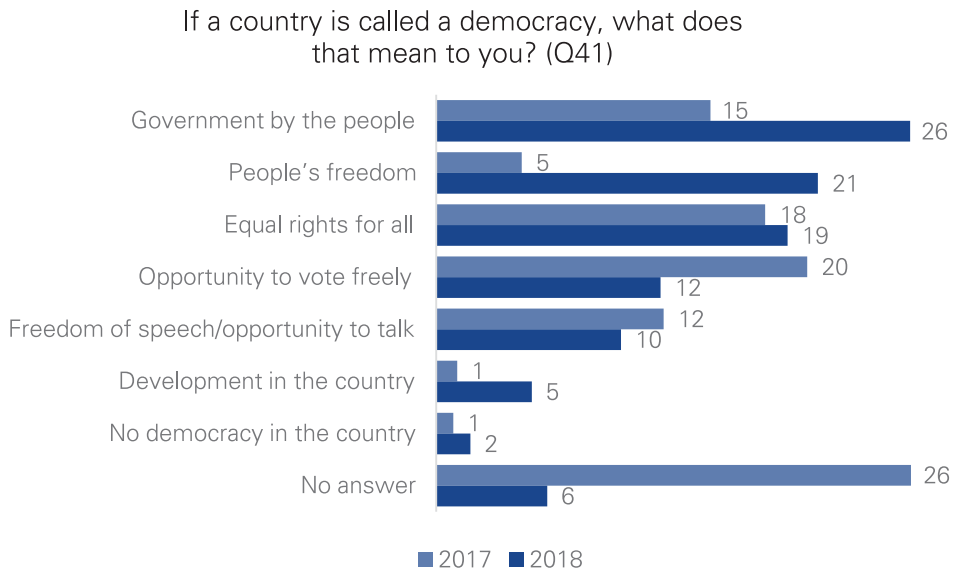
Figure 6.1: Meaning of democracy

Respondents mostly commonly cite government by the people (26 percent) as the definition of democracy, closely followed by people's freedom (21 percent) and equal rights for all (19 percent). The most optimistic finding is that, nationally, the number of respondents who are unable to provide any answer has decreased from 26 percent in 2017 to 6 percent in 2018; however, Rangpur is an outlier in this regard, as 24 percent of respondents are unable to provide a response.

6.2 Political Tolerance

Do you think that all political parties, even the ones most people do not like, should be allowed to hold meetings in your area? (Q44)

	Yes	No	Don't know
2006	55	36	9
2015	42	35	23
2017	77	19	4
2018	58	36	6
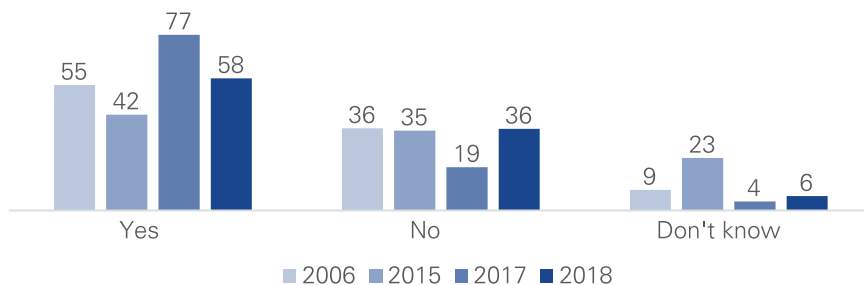
Figure 6.2: Political tolerance

A majority of respondents (58 percent) agree that all political parties should be allowed to hold meetings in their areas. This is a decline of 19 percent since 2017 but higher than in 2015, when the number was less than 50 percent. Mymensingh (82 percent) and Sylhet (72 percent) are the most tolerant in this regard. The most intolerant is Barishal, where 60 percent of respondents say that not all parties should not be allowed to hold meetings. Respondents in Rajshahi are split, with 43 percent saying yes and 44 percent saying no.

Do you think that Islamic parties/groups should be allowed to hold meetings in your area? (Q45)

Yes	No	Don't know
76	17	7
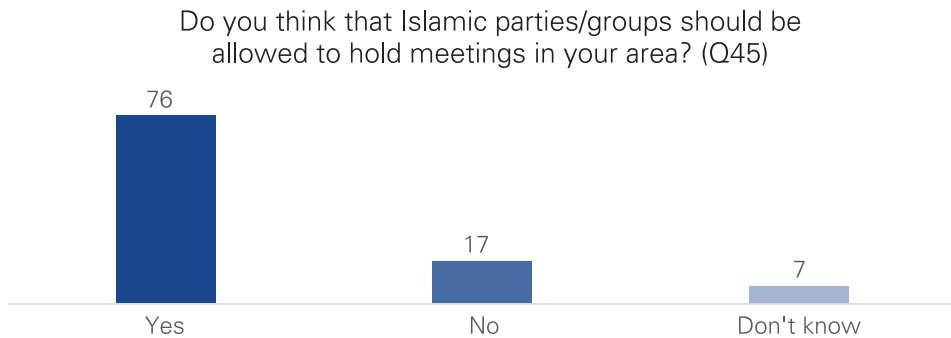
Figure 6.3: Islamic group/party tolerance

When asked about whether Islamic parties/groups should be allowed to hold meetings in their area, 76 percent of respondents agree. Respondents in Barishal are the most tolerant of Islamic group/parties, with 97 percent saying they should be allowed to hold meetings in their area.

Suppose a friend of yours supported a political party that most people do not like. Would you accept that, or would it end your friendship? (Q46)

	Would accept it	Would end friendship	Not sure
2006	80	10	6
2015	42	17	41
2017	80	11	9
2018	60	18	22

■ 2006   ■ 2015   ■ 2017   ■ 2018
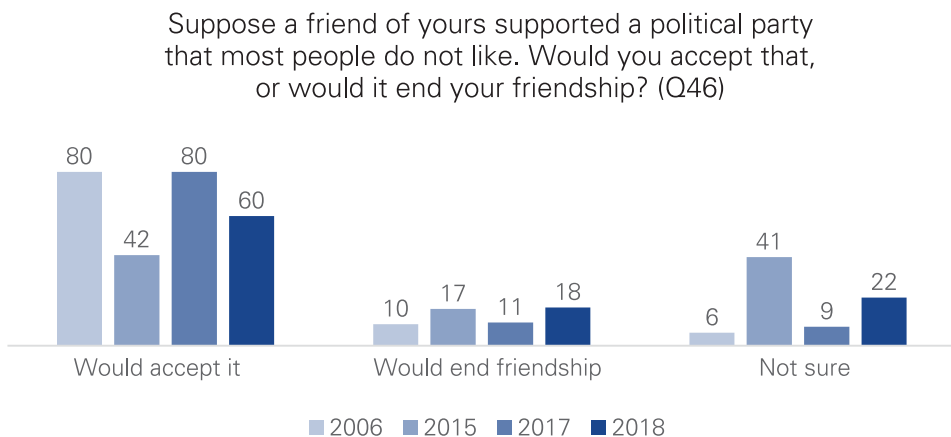
Figure 6.4: Acceptance of a friend supporting another political party

Similar to levels of tolerance for political parties to hold meetings, a majority of respondents say they would accept a friend who supported a political party disliked by most people. Again, there is a decline in those who would accept this in 2018 (from 80 percent in 2017 to 60 percent in 2018); however, acceptance is higher than in 2015 (42 percent). The number of people who are unsure has increased more than two-fold from 9 percent to 22 percent.

Mymensingh and Sylhet remain the most tolerant, with 84 and 83 percent, respectively, accepting the friend's choice. Respondents in Barishal and Khulna are the least tolerant, with 36 and 35 percent, respectively, saying they would end their friendship.

6.3 Protection of Rights

How satisfied are you with the steps taken by public authorities to protect minority rights in Bangladesh? (Q47)
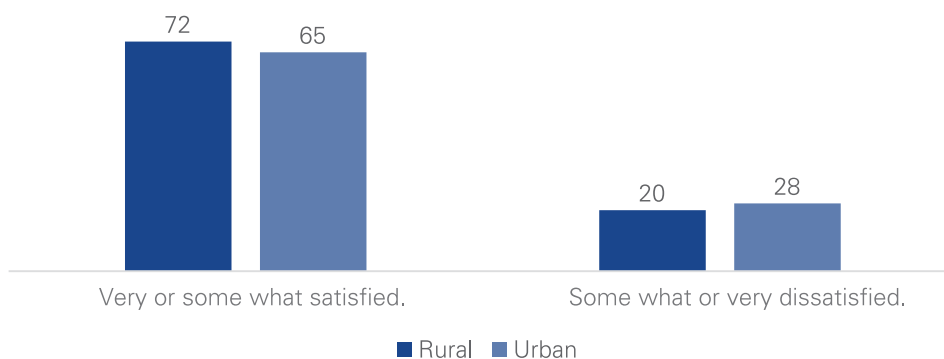
Figure 6.5: Satisfaction with the protection of minority rights

Respondents, including those who identify as non-Bengali, are generally satisfied with the protection of minority rights in Bangladesh (65 percent). This finding is relatively consistent across all genders, ages, education levels, and divisions, with the exception of Buddhists (52 percent were satisfied, and 38 percent were not).

To what extent do people in your locality feel free in expressing their political opinions – very free, fairly free, somewhat not free, or not free? (Q48)
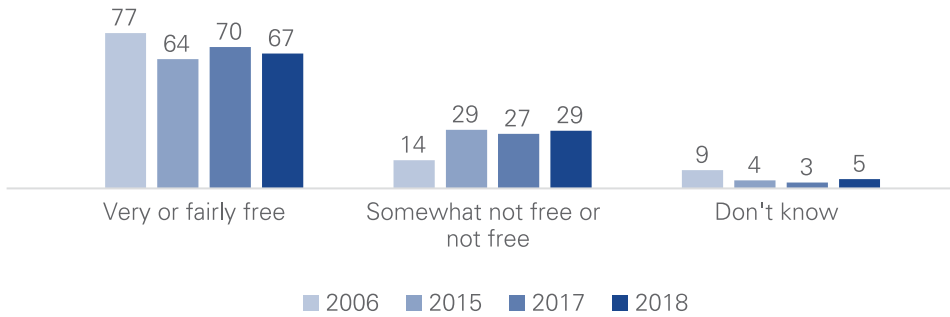
Figure 6.6: Freedom of political expression

Perceptions of freedom to express political opinions have remained relatively constant since 2015, with 67 percent respondents saying they feel very or fairly free in this regard. There are some divisional variations. Respondents in Mymensingh (93 percent) and Sylhet (85 percent) are most likely to respond very free or fairly free, while respondents in Rajshahi are most likely to respond somewhat not free or not free (63 percent).

6.4 Trust in Institutions

Levels of integrity compared to previous years' findings (Percent rating the institution as having very high or high integrity) (Q49)
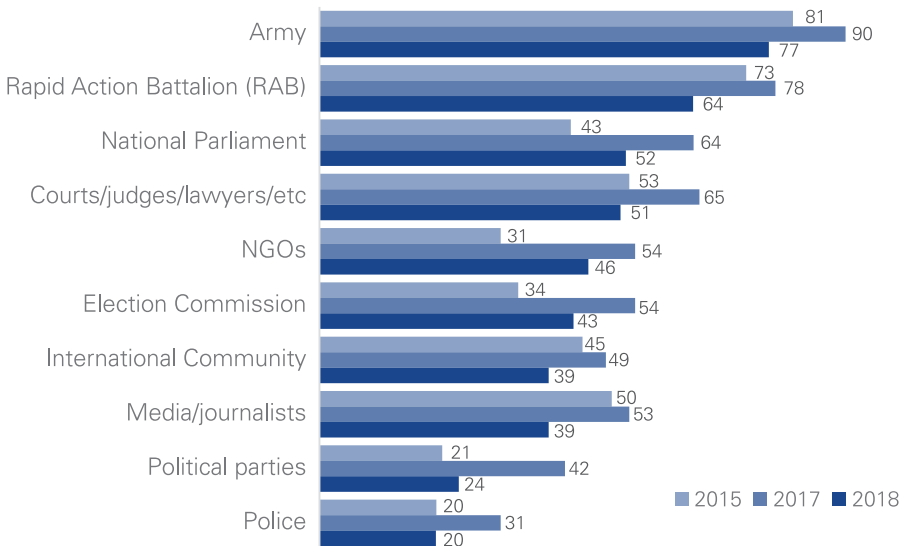
Figure 6.7: Institutional integrity (very high or high integrity) – Annual comparison

	2015	2017	2018	Decline 2017 to 2018
Army	81	90	77	-13
Rapid Action Battalion (RAB)	73	78	64	-14
National Parliament	43	64	52	-12
Courts/judges/lawyers/etc.	53	65	51	-14
NGOs	31	54	46	-8
Election Commission	34	54	43	-11
International community	45	49	39	-10
Media/journalists	50	53	39	-14
Political parties	21	42	24	-18
Police	20	31	20	-11

Table 3: Institutional integrity (very high or high integrity) – Annual comparison

Compared to 2017, all institutions show decreases in perceived integrity of at least 8 percent, with most returning to 2015 levels. This overall reduction is consistent with the 11 percent decrease in those who say that the country is going in the right direction (See 1.1 Direction of the Country). The largest decrease is 18 percent for political parties. While confidence in the Election Commission declined 11 percent, which is consistent with other decreases, it is 9 percent higher than in 2015.

I will read you a list of institutions. For each institution please rate its integrity according to the scale. (Q 49)
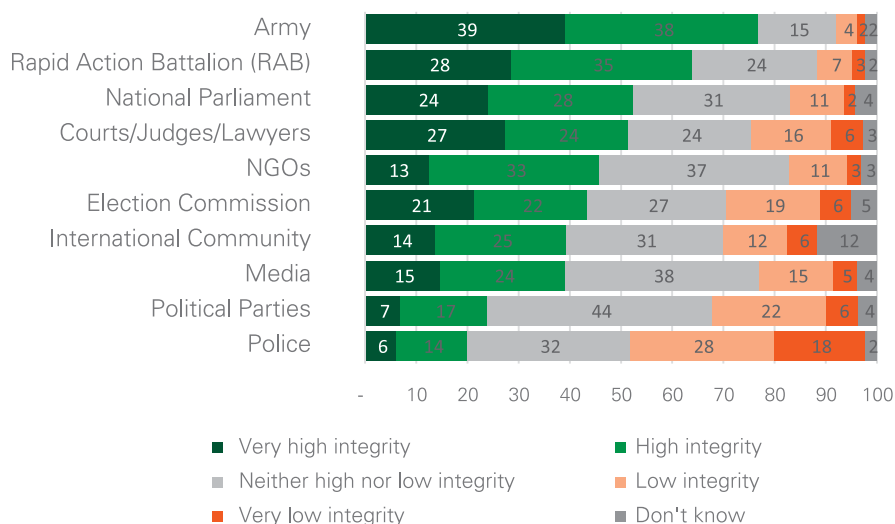
Figure 6.8: Institutional integrity, full scale 2018

As in previous years, the Army and Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) continue to be perceived as having the highest levels of integrity, followed by the judiciary and national Parliament. It is interesting to note that respondents hold the Parliament in high regard, though political parties continue to be viewed negatively. Overall, the rankings are unchanged from last year.

Levels of integrity by division (Percent rating the institution as having very high or high integrity) (Q49)

	National	Variance from National	Barishal	Chattogram	Dhaka	Khulna
Army	77		-2	-10	6	-6
RAB	64		-16	-5	11	-4
Parliament	52		-6	0	0	0
Judiciary	51		-1	-14	-12	17
NGOs	46		-9	-16	-1	-2
Election Commission	43		-21	-2	-2	15
Media/journalists	39		-16	-22	17	10
International Community	39		-7	-3	-7	12
Political parties	24		-4	-2	2	14
Police	20		-4	-12	1	11

	National	Variance from National	Mymensingh	Rajshahi	Rangpur	Sylhet
Army	77		10	-8	4	13
RAB	64		0	-20	7	20
Parliament	52		-2	-9	8	11
Judiciary	51		20	2	2	25
NGOs	46		14	-4	35	-5
Election Commission	43		8	-13	1	22
Media/journalists	39		16	-21	4	8
International Community	39		5	-11	16	12
Political parties	24		-3	-5	-1	-9
Police	20		12	-7	0	13

Table 4: Institutional integrity – By division

Generally, respondents from Sylhet are the most positive in their assessment of all institutions, with the exception of political parties and NGOs, which are rated 9 percent and 5 percent lower than the national average. Conversely, respondents in Rajshahi, Chattogram, and Barishal are less trusting of all institutions.

1

DIVISION COMPARISION

Lowest percentage of people who trust each other

12%
KHULNA

70%
BARISHAL

Highest percentage of people who trust each other

23%
RAJSHAHI

61%
SYLHET

More than half of Bangladeshis

(58%)

41%
RANGPUR

53%
DHAKA

lack trust in other people

44%
CHATTOGRAM

46%
MYMENSINGH

"Most people can be trusted"

RELIGION COMPARISION

Buddhist   59%

Muslim   42%

Hindu   39%

Christian   38%
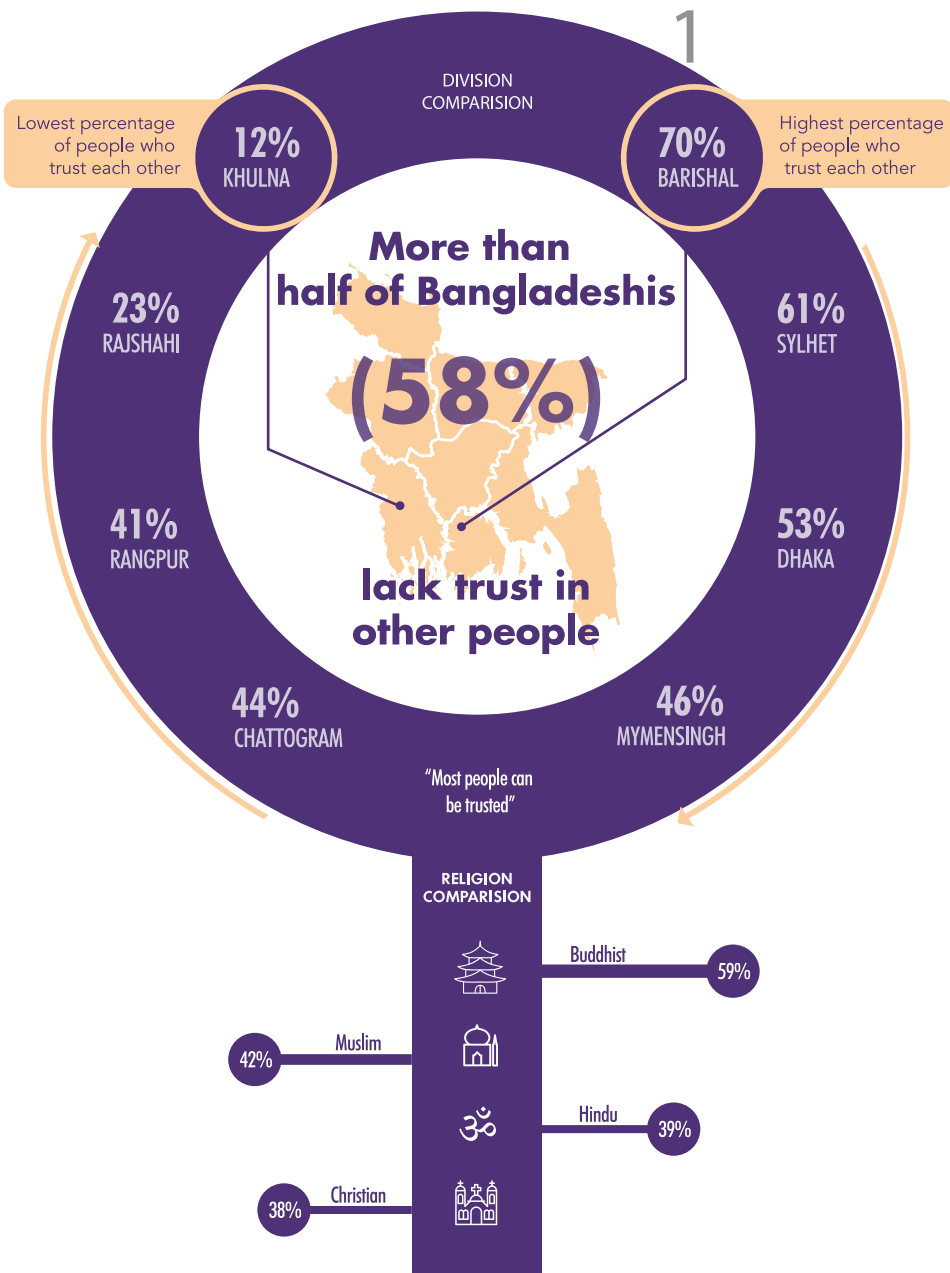
7   SOCIAL COHESION

7.1   Trust in Neighbors

Generally speaking, do you think that most people can be trusted
or you have to be very careful in dealing with people? (Q7)
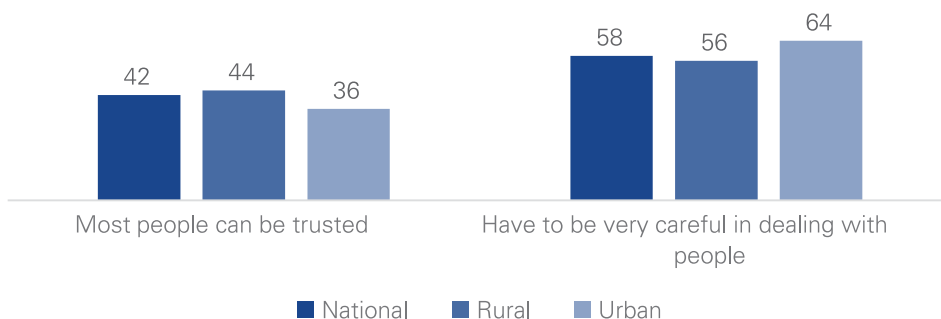
Figure 7.1: Trust in others

The majority of respondents are not very trusting of other people, with 58 percent saying that you have to be very careful in dealing with people. Although this is the first time this question has been asked in an Asia Foundation survey in Bangladesh, the 2004 World Values Survey found that 23 percent of Bangladeshis were trusting, suggesting that trust has nearly doubled in the last 14 years.[4]

Compared to people in Myanmar and Nepal, Bangladeshis are more trusting. In 2014, 77 percent of Myanmar citizens said people cannot be trusted,[5] and in post-earthquake Nepal in 2016, only 6 percent of respondents said people can be trusted.[6] Globally, Bangladesh trails behind Australia (54% in 2014) in terms of trust in others, is comparable with Canada (41 percent in 2009), and is higher than the United States (38 percent in 2014) and the United Kingdom (29 percent in 2009).[7]

[4]R. Inglehart, C. Haerpfer, A. Moreno, C. Welzel, K. Kizilova, J. Diez-Medrano, M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin & B. Puranen et al. (eds.). 2014. World Values Survey: All Rounds – Country-Pooled Datafile Version: http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWVL.jsp Madrid: JD Systems Institute.

[5]The Asia Foundation, Myanmar 2014 Civic Knowledge and Values in a Changing Society, 2014.

[6]The Asia Foundation, Aid and Recovery in Post-Earthquake Nepal, https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Aid-and-Recovery-in-Post-Earthquake-Nepal-Quantitative-Survey-April-2017.pdf, 2017.

[7]R. Inglehart, C. Haerpfer, A. Moreno, C. Welzel, K. Kizilova, J. Diez-Medrano, M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin & B. Puranen et al. (eds.). 2014. World Values Survey: All Rounds – Country-Pooled Datafile Version: http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWVL.jsp Madrid: JD Systems Institute.

Generally speaking, do you think that most people can be trusted
or you have to be very careful in dealing with people? (Q7) People
can be trusted
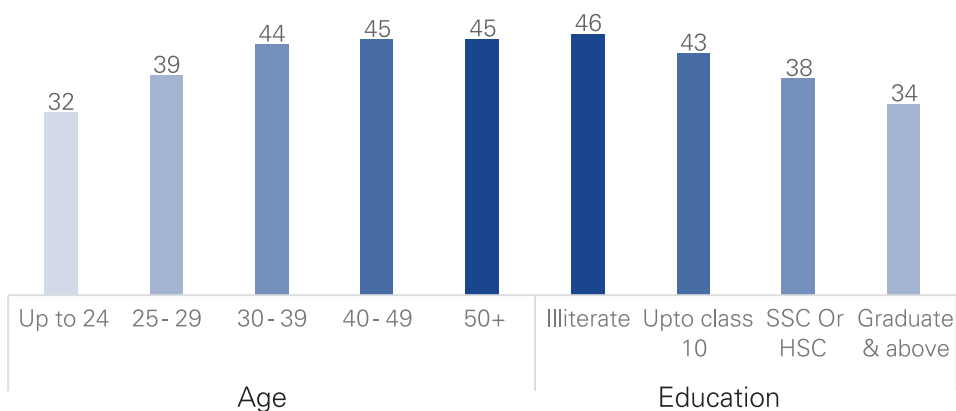
Figure 7.2: Trust in others – By age and education

Men and women show minimal variation in levels of trust, while rural respondents (44 percent) are more trusting than urban (36 percent) respondents. Trust increases with age, and decreases as the level of education rises.

Generally speaking, do you think that most people can be trusted
or you have to be very careful in dealing with people? (Q7) Most
people can be trusted
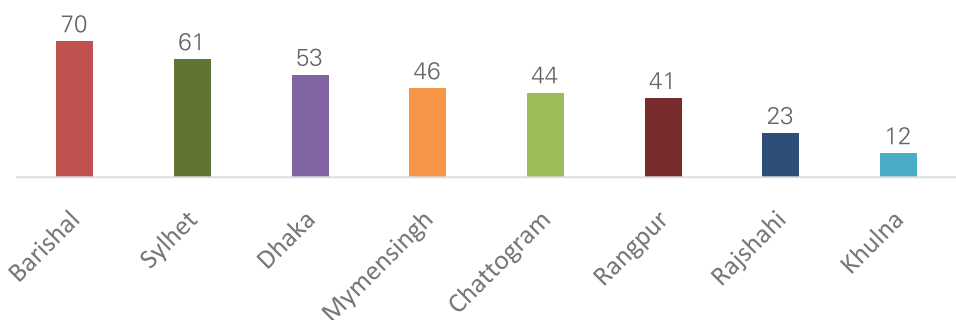
Figure 7.3: Trust in others – By division

There is also considerable variation in levels of trust across divisions, with Barishal (70 percent) and Sylhet (61 percent) having the highest levels, and Khulna (12 percent) and Rajshahi (23 percent) the lowest.

Generally speaking, do you think that most people can be trusted or you have to be very careful in dealing with people? (Q7) Most people can be trusted
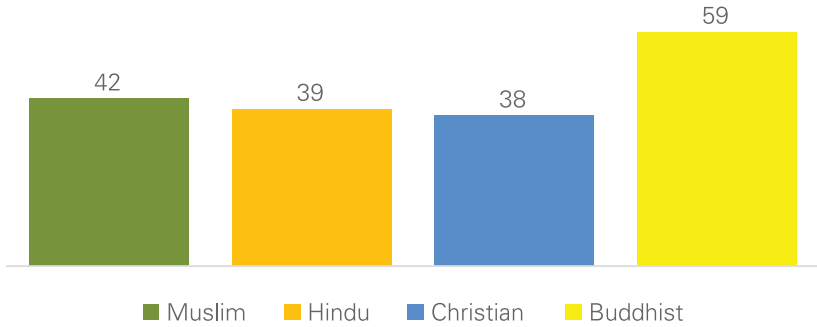
Figure 7.4: Trust in others – By religion

Levels of trust also vary across religious groups, with Buddhists being the most trusting (59 percent).

Generally speaking, do you think that most people can be trusted or you have to be very careful in dealing with people? (Q7) How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? (Q70)

Figure 7.5: Trust in others - By fear for personal safety

Fear is a large factor influencing trust, as those who express little or no fear for personal safety are more likely to say that people can be trusted (48 percent compared to 37 percent of people who have a higher sense of fear).

Generally speaking, do you think that most people of other religions can be trusted or you have to be very careful in dealing with people of other religions? (Q8 compared with Q7)

National — 42 / 41
Barishal — 70 / 52
Dhaka — 53 / 62
Rajshahi — 23 / 13
Graduate & above — 34 / 51
Non-Bengali /ethnic/others — 58 / 37
CHT Area — 65 / 45
Buddhist — 59 / 42
Internet Users — 40 / 54

■ Trust people in general   ■ Trust people of other religions
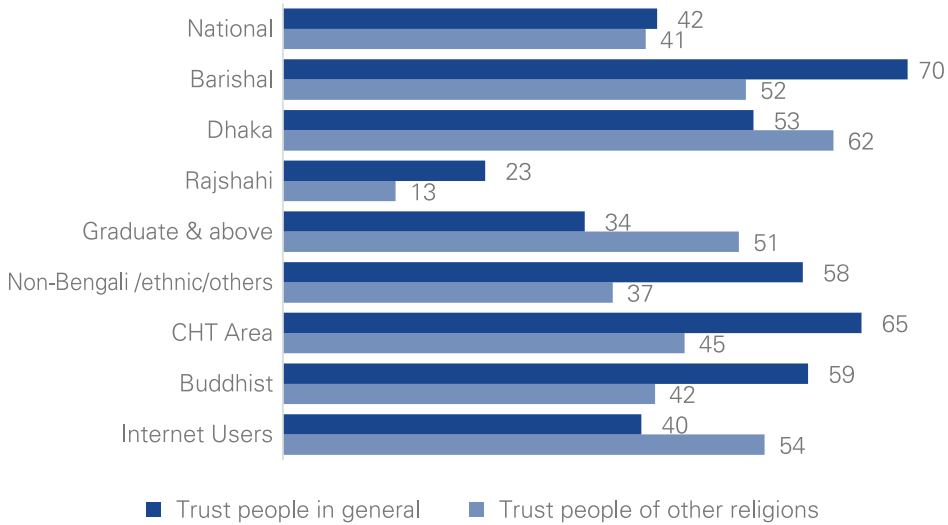
Figure 7.6: Trust in others compared to trust in other religions

When asked about whether people who practice other religions can be trusted, respondents generally express the same level of trust as when asked about people in general. However, there are some variations. While respondents from Barishal and Rajshahi (18 and 10 percent increase, respectively) are more distrustful of people from other religions, Dhaka respondents are more trustful (10 percent increase). University graduates are significantly more trustful (17 percent increase) of people from other religions, as are those who have regular access to the Internet (14 percent). Non-Bengali, CHT, and Buddhist respondents are less trusting of people from other religions (21 percent, 20 percent, and 14 percent decreases, respectively).

If public officials asked people to share water and food because of an emergency situation, would people in your area cooperate? (Q9)

Cooperative: 42 / 45
Not Cooperative: 4 / 7

■ Very ■ Somewhat
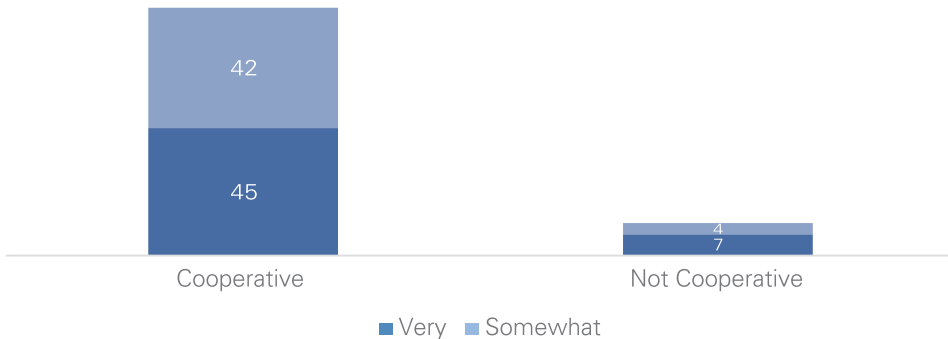
Figure 7.7: Public cooperation in time of emergency

While more than half of respondents feel that most people cannot be trusted (58 percent), the overwhelming majority (87 percent) feel that, if asked, people will come together in an emergency. This is consistent for all demographic indicators, including those for gender, age, education level, and religion. This is also relatively consistent across all divisions, with Mymensingh and Rangpur having the highest level at 95 percent, and Rajshahi the lowest level at 79 percent.

7.2   Religious Tolerance

Willing to have a person of a different religion be your _____?
(Q10)

Teacher	90
Co-worker	87
Neighbor	85
Best friend	84
Community leader	82
Children's caregiver	75
Spouse	58
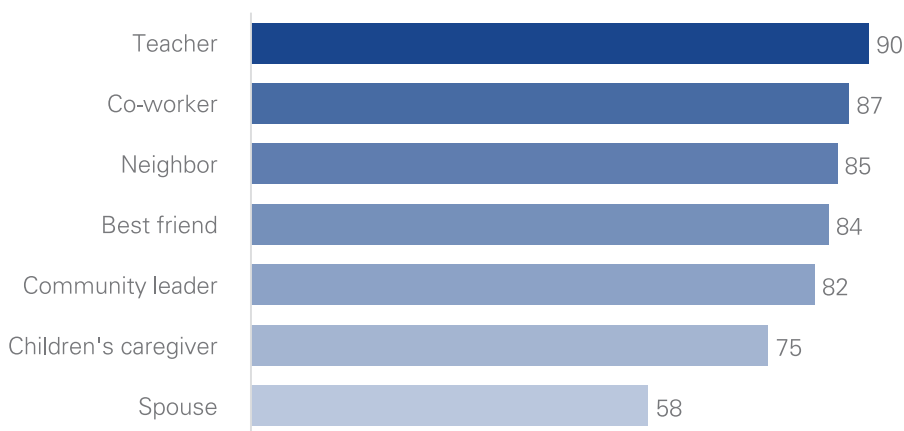
Figure 7.8: Willingness to interact with people from other religions

Respondents express strong willingness to interact with someone from another religion in a variety of roles. People are most reluctant to have someone from another religion as their spouse (42 percent said they would be unwilling), though the majority (58 percent) expressed openness to having a spouse from another religion, with women (62 percent) more willing to do so than men (54 percent).

Willingness to interact with people from other religions (Q10)
Average of all responses

| Rangpur | Khulna | Rajshahi | Dhaka |
| Chattogram | Sylhet | Barishal | Mymensingh |
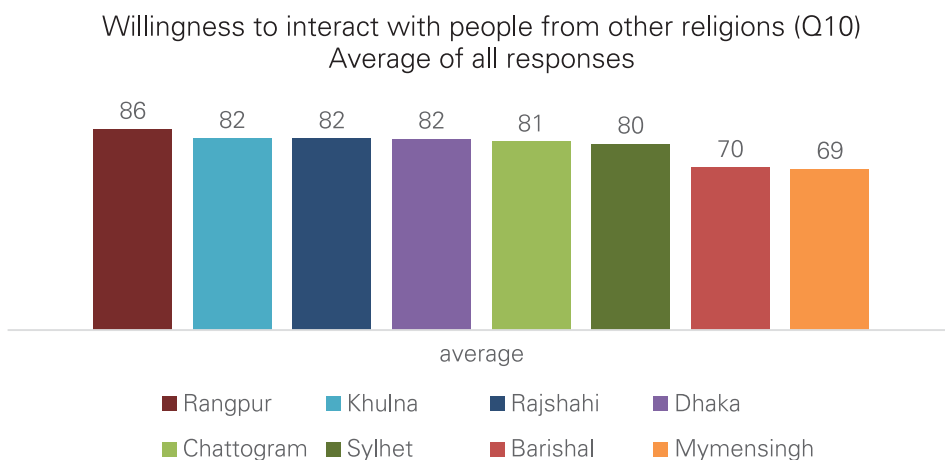
Figure 7.9: Willingness to interact with people from other religions – By division

Respondents from Rangpur are the most open to people from another religion, while those from Mymensingh and Barishal are the least open.

If your son/daughter or brother/sister were to marry outside your religion, how would you feel? (Q42)
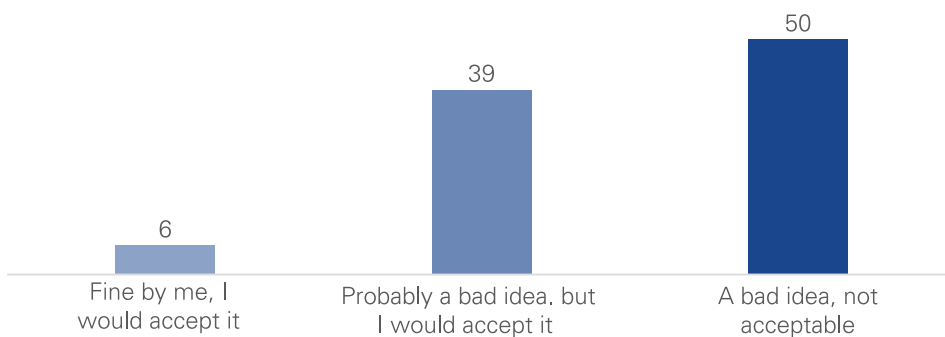
Figure 7.10: Support for inter-religious marriage

Half of respondents say they would not accept an inter-religious marriage for their child or sibling. This sentiment is highest in Khulna, where 70 percent say they would not accept it, and lowest in Sylhet, where 34 percent oppose such marriages.

If your answers is not accept what is the reasons for not accepting? (Q43B)

	Bar value
I will not accept it if he/she is from other religion	72
Think of own values and social status	27
It would be bad to live with people of other religions	31
My religion forbids it	29
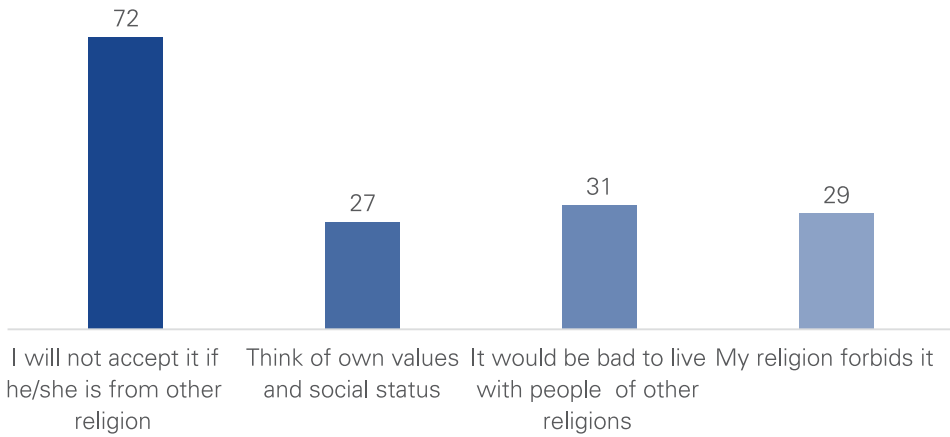
Figure 7.11: Reason for not accepting inter-religious marriage

Most people (72 percent) who would not accept an inter-religious marriage say that they personally would not accept it.

Suppose a different religious group wanted to build a religious building in your village (Q11) Would that be okay?

	2017	2018
Muslim Mosque	73	74
Hindu temple	65	59
Christian church	64	58
Buddhist pagoda	63	58
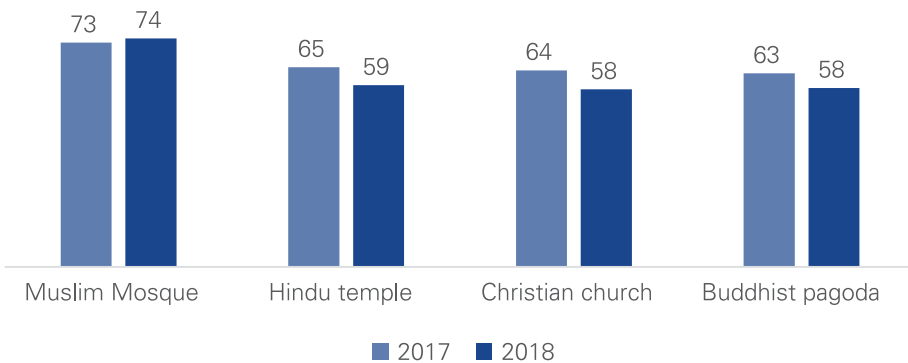
Figure 7.12: Willingness to allow another religion's building – Annual comparison

Suppose a different religious group wanted to build a religious building in your village (Q11) Would that be okay? - Average of all responses
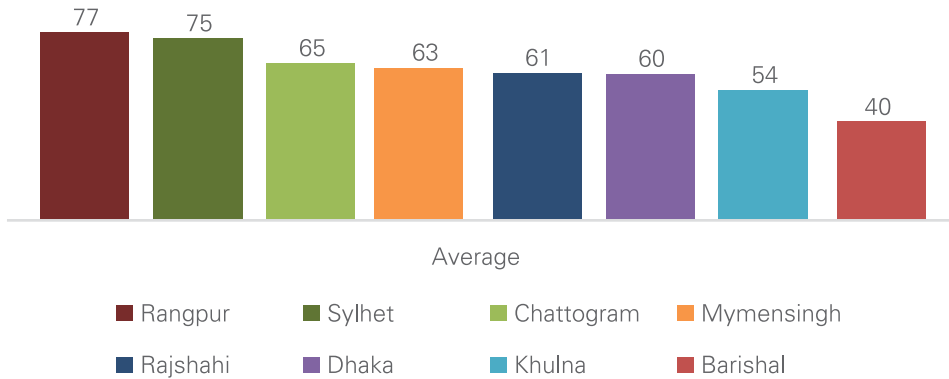
Figure 7.13: Willingness to allow another religion's building – By division

When asked how they would feel if a different religious group wanted to build a religious building in their village, overall, there is a slight decline in acceptance in 2018 compared to 2017. Rangpur and Sylhet respondents are the most open, while those in Barishal are significantly less tolerant on this issue.

How comfortable would you be to deal with a non-believer in your daily life? (Q12)

Figure 7.14: Willingness to interact with a non-believer

While the majority of respondents are open to interacting with people from other religions, when asked specifically about non-believers, level of comfort drops considerably, with three out of four respondents saying they would be uncomfortable interacting with non-believers. This finding is consistent across all genders, ages, divisions, and other categories. Buddhists and CHT respondents are significantly more likely not to respond to this question (18 and 22 percent, compared to 2 percent at the national level).

8 ROHINGYA REFUGEES

8.1 Welcome Rohingya

Do you welcome Rohingya refugees living in your
community? (Q75)
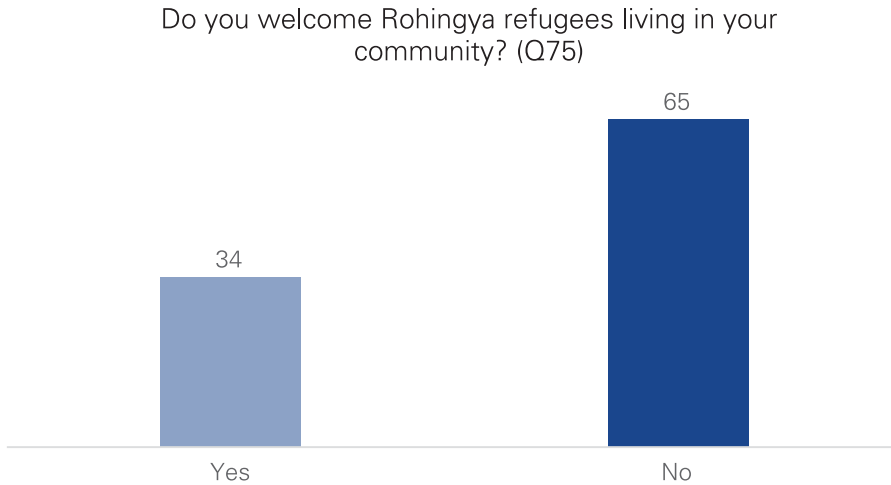
Figure 8.1: Willingness to accept Rohingya in the community

A majority of respondents (65 percent) say they do not welcome Rohingya refugees from Myanmar living in their community. Sylhet is the only division where the majority (53 percent) welcomes Rohingya. University graduates are considerably more welcoming than the national average at 42 percent. Khulna and Rajshahi are the least welcoming divisions at 22 and 23 percent, respectively. Respondents in Chattogram are slightly above the national average in welcoming Rohingya in their community (39 percent).

In your opinion, how long should the Rohingya
refugees be allowed to stay in Bangladesh? (Q78)
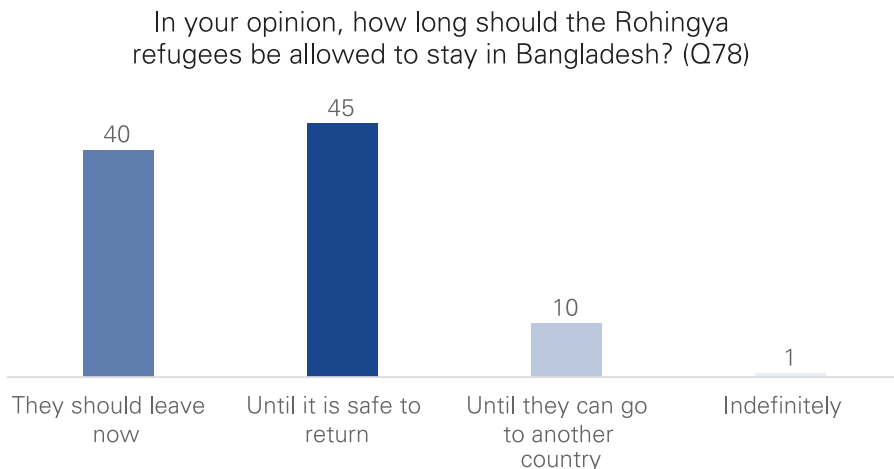
Figure 8.2: Willingness to let Rohingya stay

The overwhelming majority of respondents say the Rohingya should not stay in Bangladesh (95 percent); however, there are differences about how long they should be allowed to stay before leaving. A slight majority says the Rohingya should be allowed to stay until it is safe to return home or until they can go to another country (55 percent), while fewer than half (40 percent) say the Rohingya should leave now. Respondents from Khulna (62 percent) are the most likely to say the Rohingya should leave Bangladesh now. In Chattogram, responses are consistent with the national average.

8.2 Aid for Rohingya

Do you think the Bangladesh government/international community is doing enough to support the Rohingya refugees? (Q76 & Q 77)
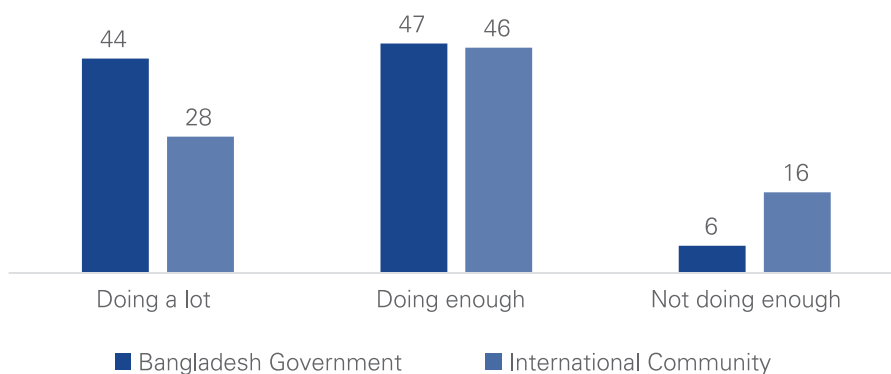
Figure 8.3: Government and international support for Rohingya

Respondents overwhelmingly feel that the government is doing a lot (44 percent) or enough (47 percent) to support the Rohingya refugees. However, feelings about support from the international community are not quite as positive (28 percent say the international community is doing a lot, and 46 percent say enough).

▶ OVERALL

Respondents expressing fear for their safety sometimes, often, or always

2017 **36%** ✓ ↑**48%** 2018
12% rise

▶ DIVISION COMPARISION

21% Rangpur

16% Rajshahi

24% •Mymensingh

5% Sylhet

41% •Dhaka

14% Khulna

17% Chattogram

24% •Barishal
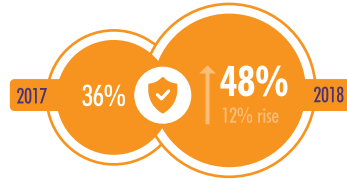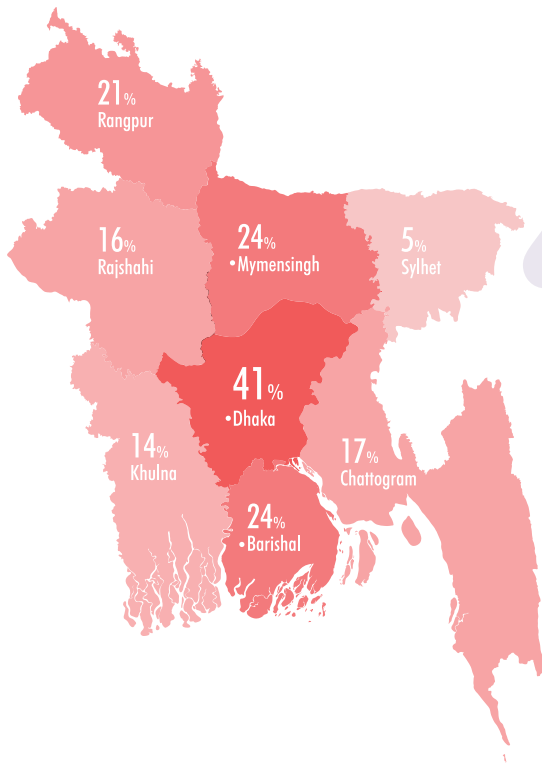
" **Always or often fear for personal safety** "

▶ BIGGEST CAUSES

Four most commonly cited reasons for the cause of violence

1 Political Conflict **31**%

2 Theft, Robbery **11**%

3 Corruption **10**%

4 Drugs **9**%

9   SECURITY AND VIOLENCE

9.1   Causes of Violence Nationally

In your view, what are the biggest causes of violence in Bangladesh? (Q68) Biggest cause

Category	2017	2018
Political conflict	28	31
Theft, robbery, murder	13	11
Corruption	19	10
Law & order situation	7	9
Drugs	6	9
Hartals and political violence	2	6
Extortion	3	5
Creating influence in locality	2	4
Forceful occupation of property	1	2
Mastani	3	2
Human rights violations	2	2
Eve teasing	1	2
Other	10	4
Don't know	4	5

■ 2017 ■ 2018
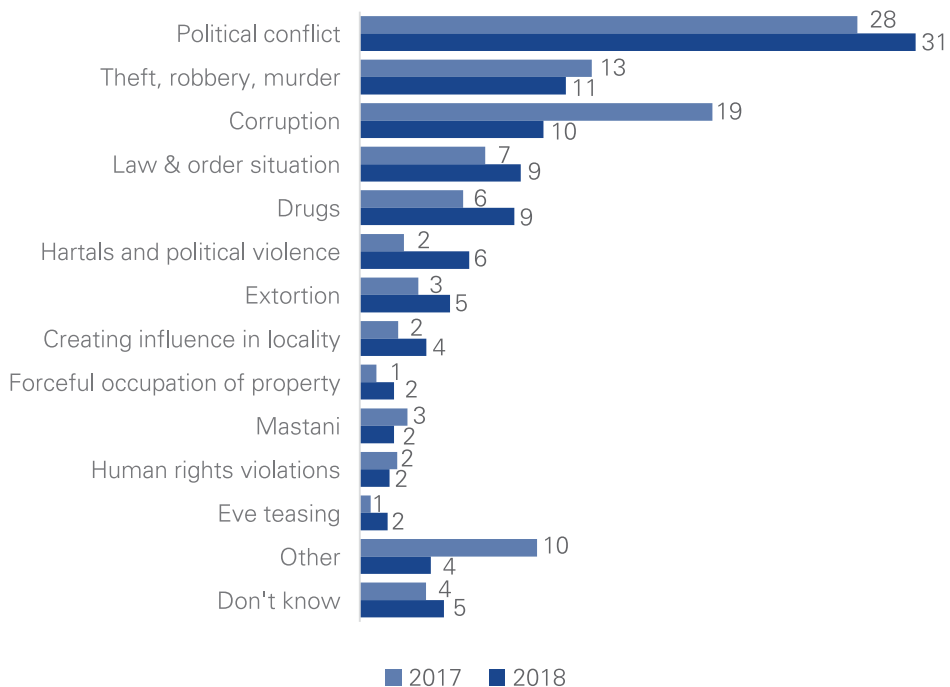
Figure 9.1: Cause of violence – Annual comparison

Political conflict remains the most common response when respondents are asked about the biggest causes of conflict in the country. Perception of corruption as a main cause of violence has decreased from 19 percent in 2017 to 10 percent in 2018, dropping to third place after theft, robbery, and murder (11 percent). Causing trouble for the present government completely disappeared in 2018, compared to 4 percent in 2017.

In your view what are the biggest causes of violence in Bangladesh? (Q68) Biggest and other causes
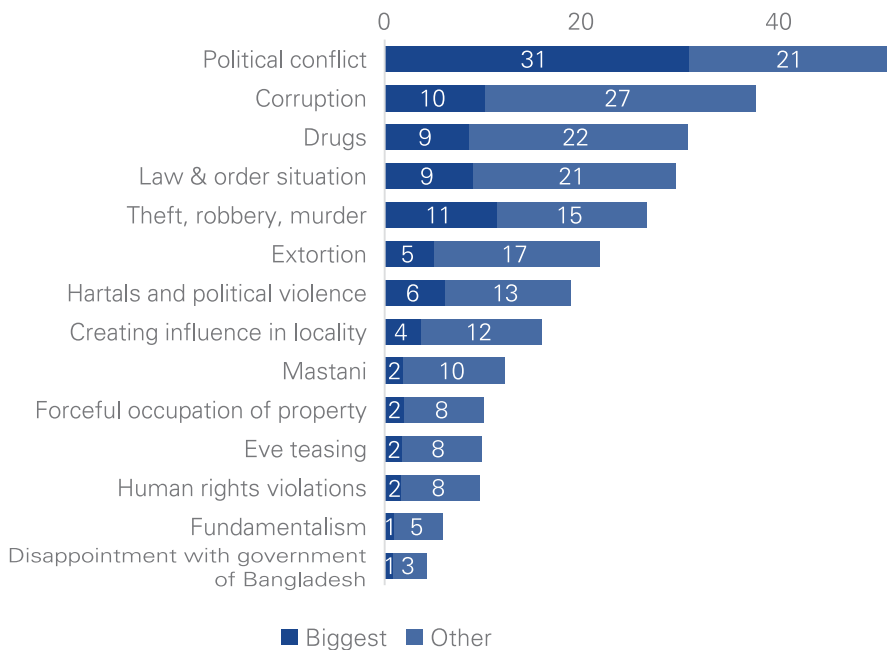
Figure 9.2: Causes of violence – Biggest and other causes

When respondents are asked about the other causes of violence, corruption (37 percent) and drugs (31 percent) increase to second and third place.

In your view, what are the biggest causes of violence in Bangladesh? (Q68) Biggest and other causes
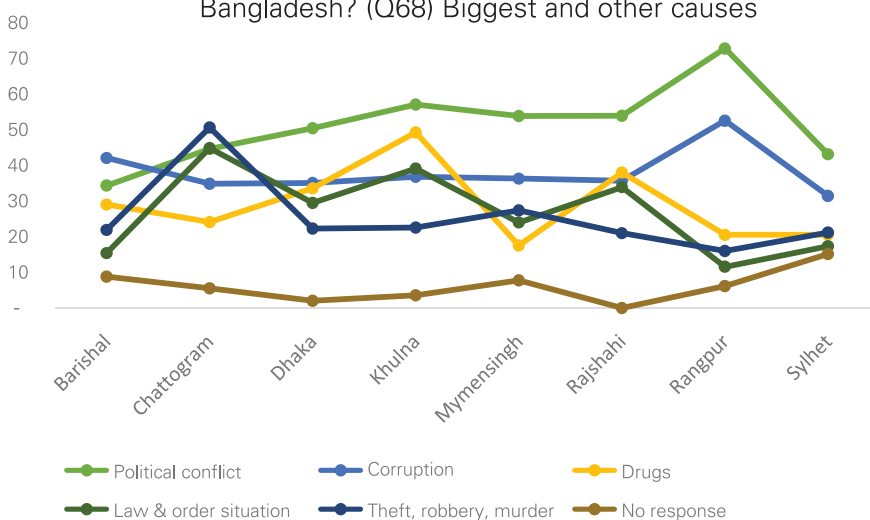
Figure 9.3: Causes of violence – By division

The top five causes of violence cited are the same for all divisions; however, the ranking varies. In Dhaka, Khulna, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Rangpur, and Sylhet, political conflict is the highest response, while the highest response in Barishal is corruption (42 percent) and, in Chattogram, it is theft, robbery, and murder (51 percent). See below for the full table.

	Barishal	Chattogram	Dhaka	Khulna	Mymensingh	Rajshahi	Rangpur	Sylhet
Political conflict	34	45	50	57	54	54	73	43
Corruption	42	35	35	37	36	36	53	31
Drugs	29	24	34	49	18	38	21	21
Law & order situation	15	45	29	39	24	34	12	17
Theft, robbery, murder	22	51	22	23	27	21	16	21
Extortion	22	33	19	27	19	29	7	10
Hartals and political violence	19	25	22	14	8	24	10	17
Creating influence in locality	10	13	14	12	16	28	15	15
Mastani	20	14	14	19	6	14	3	5
Forceful occupation of property	14	12	10	7	9	7	10	15
Eve teasing	12	11	5	16	14	15	6	2
Human rights violations	14	14	9	13	13	10	3	1
Fundamentalism	10	11	2	8	3	4	3	13
Disappointment with government of Bangladesh	3	8	3	3	0	6	0	11
Labor unrest	3	2	4	3	2	1	1	1
International terrorist organizations	2	0	3	1	0	-	2	5
External influence on the attackers	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	2
Others	3	4	2	0	1	1	5	1
No response	9	6	2	4	8	0	6	15

Table 5: Causes of violence – By division

9.2 Causes of Violence Locally

In your view, what are the biggest causes of violence in your community? (Q69) Biggest cause

Cause	2017	2018
Political conflict	15	16
Drugs	14	14
Theft, robbery, murder	15	13
Gain local control	6	10
Corruption	15	7
Law & order situation	7	6
Forceful occupation of property	8	6
Extortion	3	6
Hartals and political violence	1	3
Mastani	5	3
other	8	7
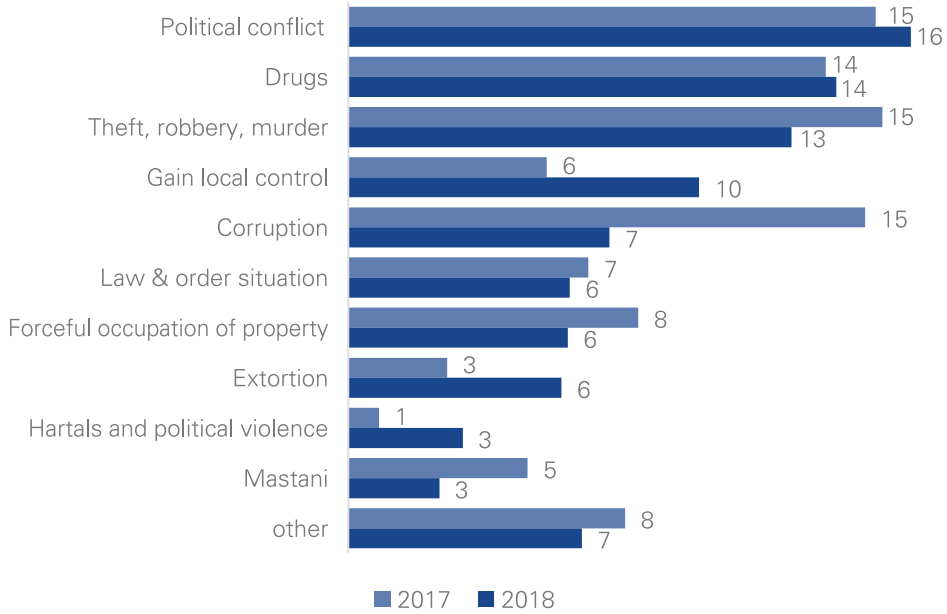
Figure 9.4: Causes of violence locally

Similar to the national level, political conflict (16 percent) remains the most commonly cited cause for violence at the local level, followed by drugs (14 percent). In 2018, to gain local control has moved from eighth position to fourth, with 10 percent of respondents saying this is the biggest cause of violence.

In your view, what are the causes of violence in your community? (Q69) Biggest and other causes

Political conflict — Corruption — Drugs — Law & order situation — Theft, robbery, murder — Extortion — No response
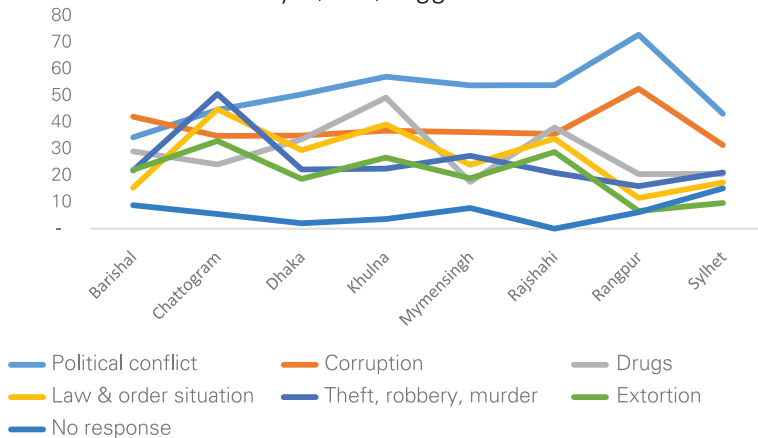
Figure 9.5: Causes of violence locally – By division

Compared to responses about causes of violence at the national level, there is greater variation in responses at the local level. Many divisions cite drugs as the biggest cause of violence, while respondents in Khulna and Mymensingh cite political conflict, and respondents in Chattogram cite theft, robbery, and murder.

	Barishal	Chattogram	Dhaka	Khulna	Mymensingh	Rajshahi	Rangpur	Sylhet
Political conflict	30	35	29	**49**	**37**	40	30	**33**
Drugs	**38**	40	**39**	45	27	**53**	19	11
Corruption	34	27	26	35	31	26	33	31
Theft, robbery, murder	18	**66**	20	23	30	19	21	24
Gain local control	14	19	25	18	31	27	28	31
Law & order situation	18	34	28	39	17	27	5	13
Extortion	22	37	21	22	22	28	5	2
Forceful occupation of property	18	23	18	12	18	9	**34**	20
Mastani	24	22	20	17	5	21	7	9
Hartals and political violence	7	26	18	15	2	17	2	14
Eve teasing	8	8	5	19	5	18	2	1
Human rights violations	10	13	5	14	10	7	1	2
Fundamentalism	11	10	3	8	1	3	0	7
Disappointment with government of Bangladesh	3	10	1	3	0	4	0	9
Labor unrest	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1
International terrorist organizations	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	5
External influence on the attackers	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
Others	8	6	1	1	2	2	4	0
No response	10	9	7	3	8	0	17	29

Table 6: Causes of violence locally – By division

9.3 Fear for Safety

How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? (Q70)
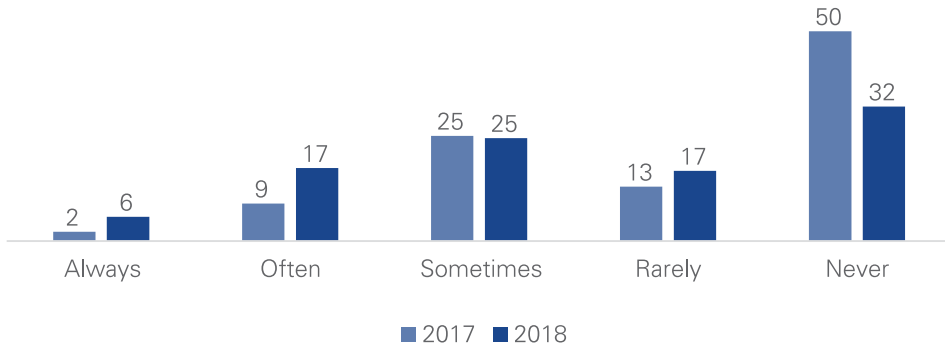
Figure 9.6: Fear for personal safety – Annual comparison

Overall, in 2018, there has been an increase in fear when compared to 2017, with 48 percent of respondents expressing fear for their safety sometimes, often, or always, compared to 36 percent in 2017. While these findings are consistent across gender, age, and religion, urban respondents have a higher level of fear (55 percent report fearing always, often, or sometimes, compared to 46 percent of rural respondents), and fear increases with education (41 percent for illiterate respondents and 57 percent for university graduates). There are also significant differences across divisions.

How often do you fear for your own personal safety , or security, or for that of your family these days? (Q70) By division
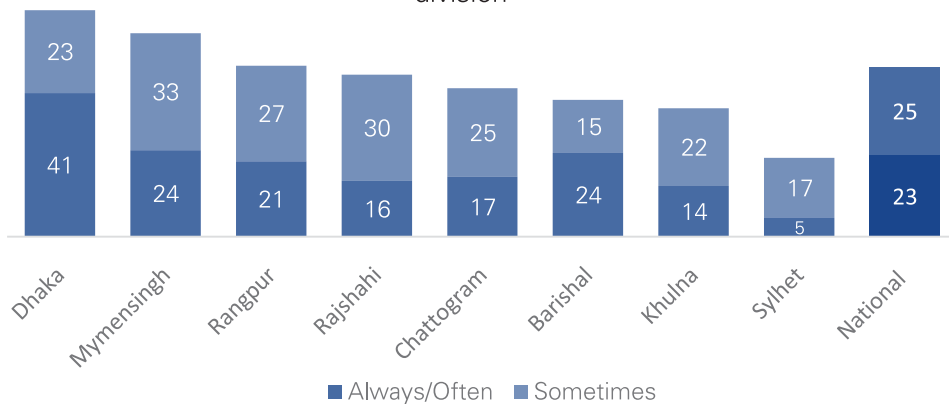
Figure 9.7: Fear for personal safety – By division

Respondents in Dhaka are much more likely to express fear, and at higher levels, than in other divisions, whereas those in Sylhet feel much safer, with 77 percent saying they rarely or never fear for their safety.

9.4 Fear of Violence

How concerned are you that you or your family might be victims of the following types of violence? (Q 71)

| Type	Value 1	Value 2
Political violence	21	32
Electoral violence	19	33
Terrorist attack	15	26
Militant attack	12	21
Criminality	11	20
Religious violence	11	21
Disappearance/murder	11	21
Property mischief	11	20
Domestic violence	9	13
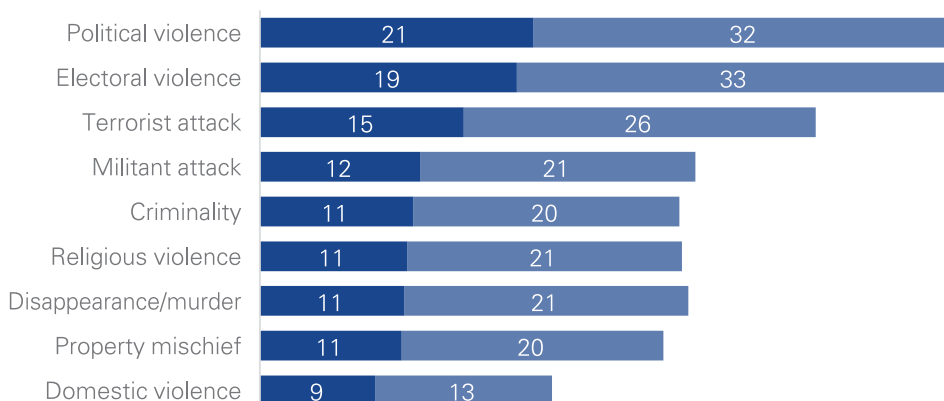
Figure 9.8: Fear of different forms of violence

When asked about specific types of violence, political violence and electoral violence are the greatest concerns, with just over half of respondents (52 percent) worried that they or their family could become a victim of political or electoral violence.

As shown in the four figures below, respondents are also concerned about terrorist attacks (41 percent). Men (44 percent) are more concerned about terrorist attacks than women (39 percent), while Buddhists (28 percent) and illiterate respondents (32 percent) are less likely to express such fear.

Overall, respondents express relatively similar levels of concern about militant attacks (33 percent), disappearance/murder (32 percent), religious violence (32 percent), criminality (31 percent), and property mischief (31 percent). In terms of militant attacks, those in urban areas (41 percent) and the CHT (44 percent), non-Bengalis (43 percent), Buddhists (44 percent), Christians (43 percent), and Hindus (40 percent) are the most fearful.

Regarding the fear of disappearance/murder, Christians are the most fearful (43 percent), and Buddhists the least (20 percent). Muslims' and Hindus' levels of fear lie between the two extremes (32 percent and 31 percent, respectively).

With regard to religious violence, unsurprisingly, religious and non-Bengali are more fearful of religious violence, compared to majority ethnic and religious populations. The level of fear in comparison to the national average of 32 percent is as follows: non-Bengali ethnic groups (52 percent), respondents in the CHT (64 percent), Hindus (46 percent), Buddhists (48 percent), and Christians (45 percent).

Respondents in urban areas (41 percent) fear criminality more than respondents in rural areas (28 percent). Buddhists (10 percent) and respondents in the CHT (12 percent) fear criminality the least.

Fear of violence by gender (Q71)
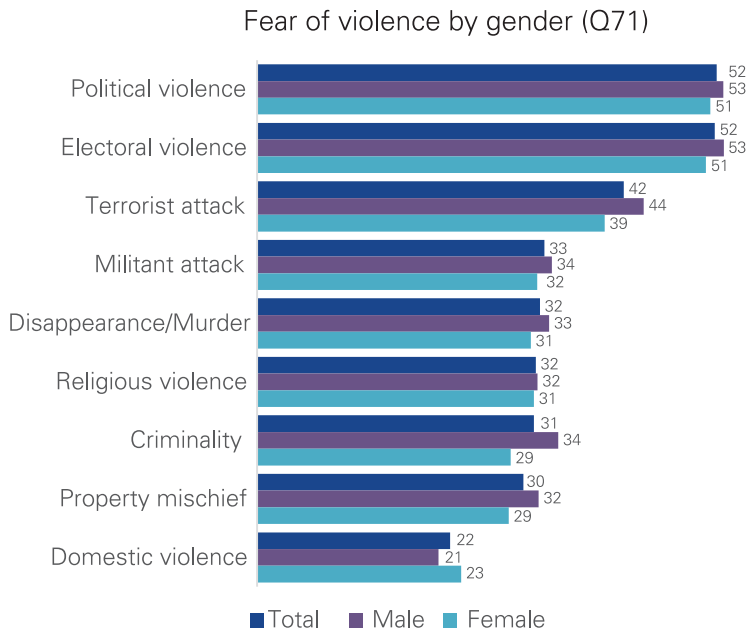
Figure 9.9: Fear of different forms of violence - By gender

Fear of violence by religion (Q71)
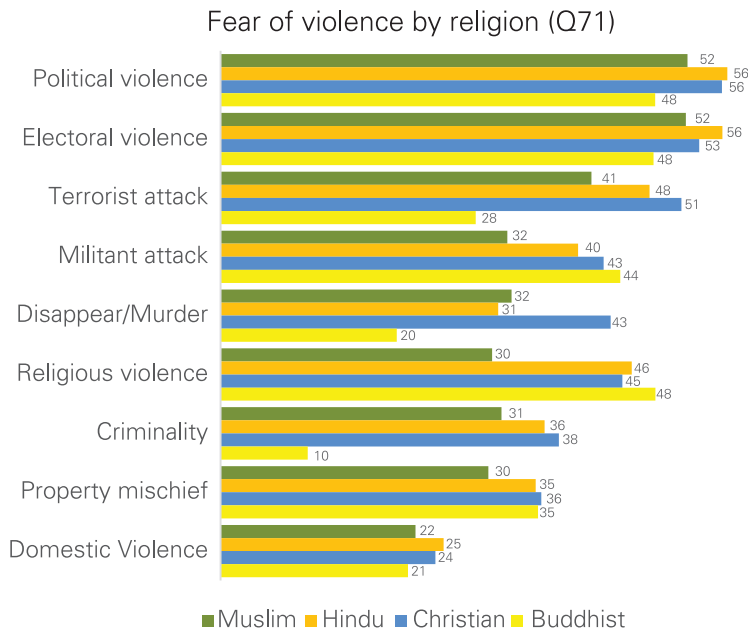
Figure 9.10: Fear of different forms of violence - By religion

Fear of violence by ethnicity (Q71)

	Bengali	Non-Bengali	CHT Area
Political violence	52	59	62
Electoral violence	52	61	63
Terrorist attack	42	46	41
Militant attack	32	43	44
Disappearance/Murder	32	39	27
Religious violence	31	52	64
Criminality	31	32	12
Property mischief	30	34	28
Domestic violence	22	28	19
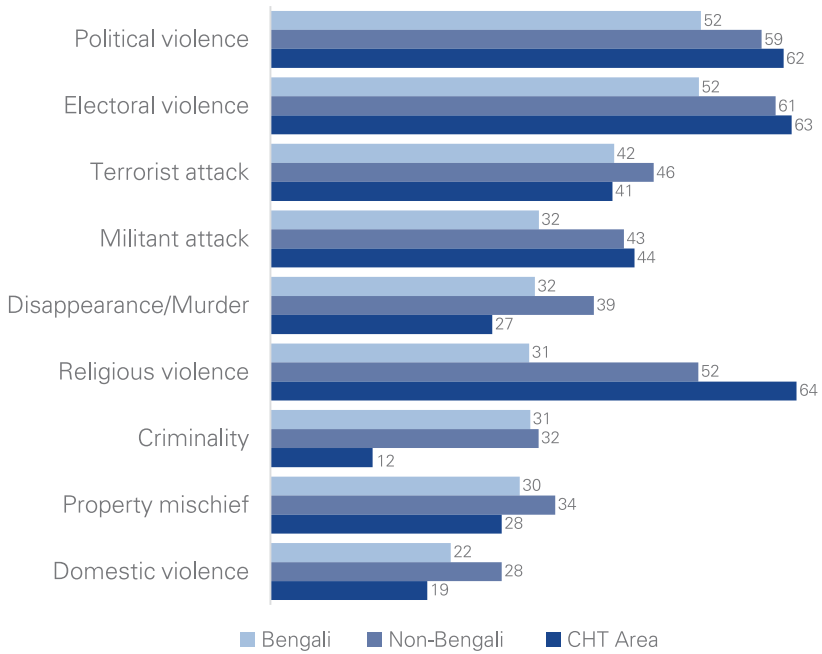
Figure 9.11: Fear of different forms of violence - By ethnicity

Fear of violence by rural/urban (Q71)

	Rural	Urban
Political violence	51	55
Electoral violence	51	54
Terrorist attack	39	49
Militant attack	30	41
Disappearance/Murder	31	37
Religious violence	30	35
Criminality	28	41
Property mischief	28	38
Domestic violence	22	22
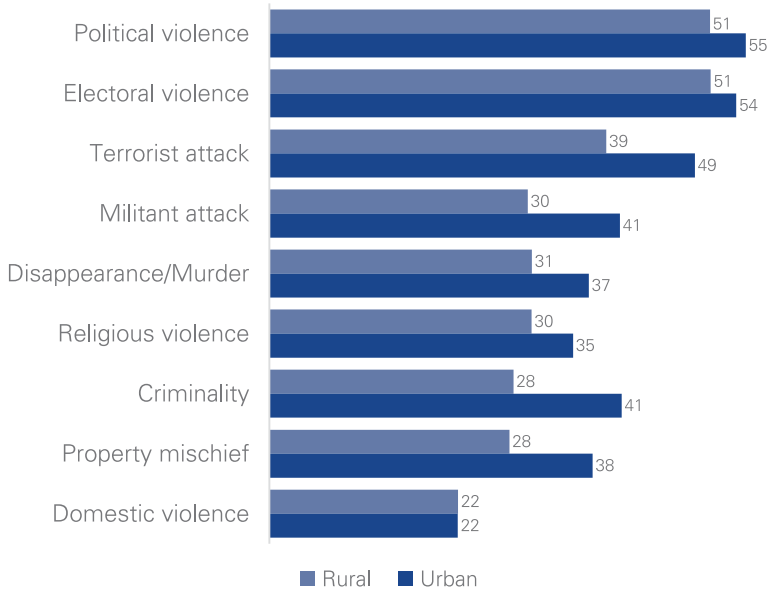
Figure 9.12: Fear of different forms of violence – Rural versus urban

Fear of Violence – Comparison by Division

How concerned are you that you or your family might be the victims of the following types of violence? (Q71) Response: very or somewhat concerned

Division	Political violence	Electoral violence	Terrorist attack	Militant attack	Disappearance/murder	Religious violence	Criminality	Property mischief	Domestic violence
Mymensingh	51	50	48	54	50	54	47	48	51
Khulna	62	60	50	44	46	45	45	45	46
Dhaka	53	52	55	48	38	39	35	38	16
Rangpur	55	58	35	28	23	42	25	32	25
Rajshahi	77	71	40	13	40	16	29	21	12
Chattogram	35	41	30	26	19	21	22	17	12
Barishal	41	37	30	14	18	13	24	18	17
Sylhet	35	33	20	11	9	14	22	15	16

Figure 9.13: Fear of different forms of violence – By division

As shown in the figure above, fear of violence varies considerably by division. Mymensingh and Khulna respondents express the highest levels of fear regarding most types of violence, with an average fear rating of 50 and 49 percent, respectively. Respondents in Sylhet express the lowest levels of fear, with an average fear level of 19 percent. Rajshahi respondents are most concerned about political violence (77 percent) and electoral violence (71 percent), whereas Mymensingh respondents are most concerned about religious violence (54 percent) and militant attacks (54 percent).

9.5 Electoral Violence

Do you think that the number of violent incidents will increase in relation to the next parliamentary elections, compared to the 2014 parliamentary election? (Q72)
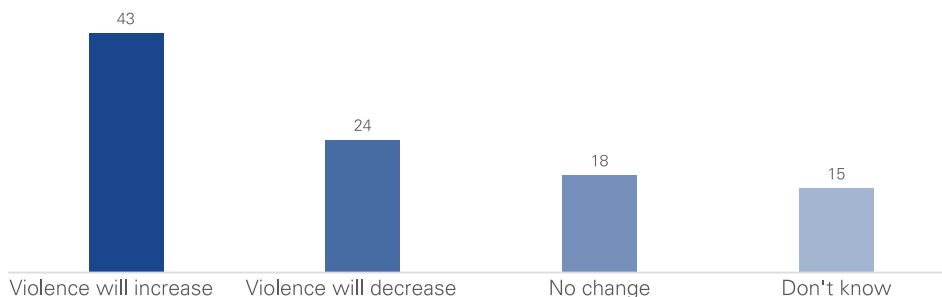
Figure 9.14: Probability of election violence

Do you think that the number of violent incidents will increase in relation to the next parliamentary elections, compared to the 2014 parliamentary elections? (Q72)
Response: Violence will increase
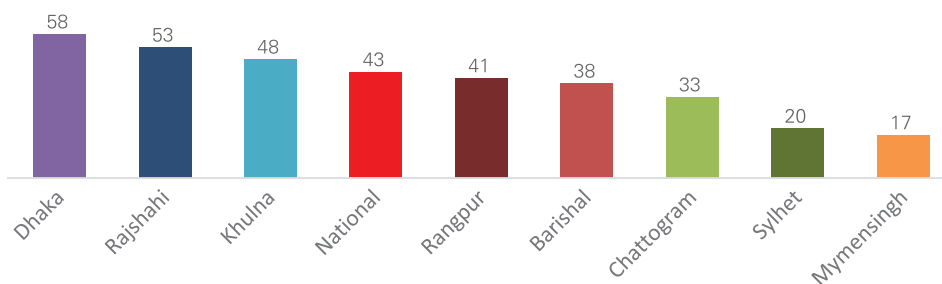
Figure 9.15: Probability of election violence – By division

A majority of respondents (61 percent) think the number of violent incidents related to the next parliamentary elections will increase compared to the 2014 elections (43 percent) or remain the same (18 percent).[8] This opinion is strongest in Dhaka, where more than half of respondents (58%) say violence will increase, and lowest in Mymensingh (17 percent).

---

[8] *The last parliamentary elections were quite violent; 21 people were killed on election day.*

9.6 Fear of Participation

Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (Q73)
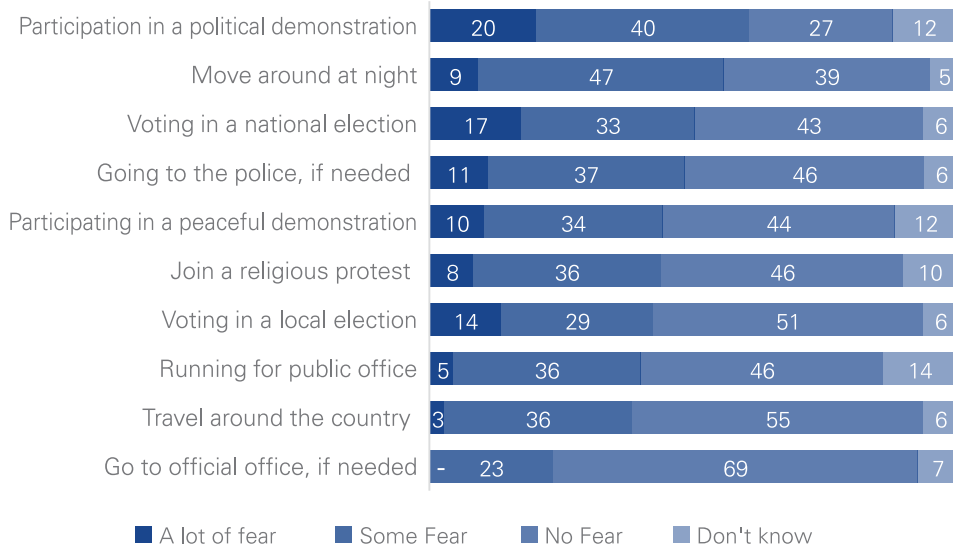
Figure 9.16: Fear of engaging in activities

Respondents express the highest level of fear about participating in political demonstrations (61 percent say they have some or a lot of fear) and moving around at night (56 percent say they have some or a lot of fear). For political demonstrations, respondents are fearful of being harassed by the police (49 percent) or afraid they will be attacked by anti-political activists (20 percent).

Reason to fear participating in a political demonstration (Q73)
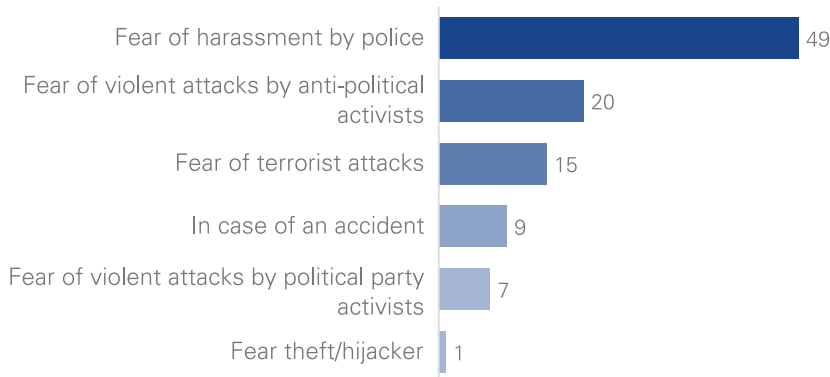
Figure 9.17: Reason for fear of engaging in activities

Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. (Q73) Response: some or a lot of fear

Activity	Female	Male
Participate in a political demonstration	60	61
Move around at night	59	53
Vote in a national election	51	50
Go to the police, if needed	48	49
Participate in peaceful demonstration	45	44
Join a religious protest	43	45
Vote in a local election	43	41
Run for public office	41	39
Traveling around the country	41	36
Go to official office, if needed	24	23

■ Female ■ Male

Figure 9.18: Fear of engaging in activities – By gender

There are minimal gender differences in the levels of fear regarding participation in most activities. However, with regard to moving around at night and traveling in the country, women express slightly higher levels of fear compared to men.

Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. (Q73) Response: some or a lot of fear

Activity	Rural	Urban
Move around at night	54	63
Participate in a political demonstration	60	63
Vote in a national election	49	55
Participate in a peaceful demonstration	42	52
Go to the police, if needed	48	49
Join a religious protest	43	48
Vote in a local election	41	48
Run for public office	39	43
Travel around the country	38	40
Go to official office, if needed	24	23

■ Rural ■ Urban

Figure 9.19: Fear of engaging in activities – Rural/urban

For almost all activities, urban respondents express higher levels of fear than rural respondents.

Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. (Q73) Response: some or a lot of fear

Activity	Muslim	Hindu	Christian	Buddhist
Participate in a political demonstration	61	61	58	67
Move around at night	56	57	61	68
Go to the police, if needed	48	51	39	56
Join a religious protest	44	50	47	44
Travel around the country	38	40	39	53
Participate in a peaceful demonstration	45	41	37	39
Run for public office	40	46	36	24
Vote in a national election	50	52	42	52
Vote in a local election	43	40	36	56

Figure 9.20: Fear of engaging in activities – By religion

For the majority of activities, Buddhists generally express higher levels of fear than other religious groups.

Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities
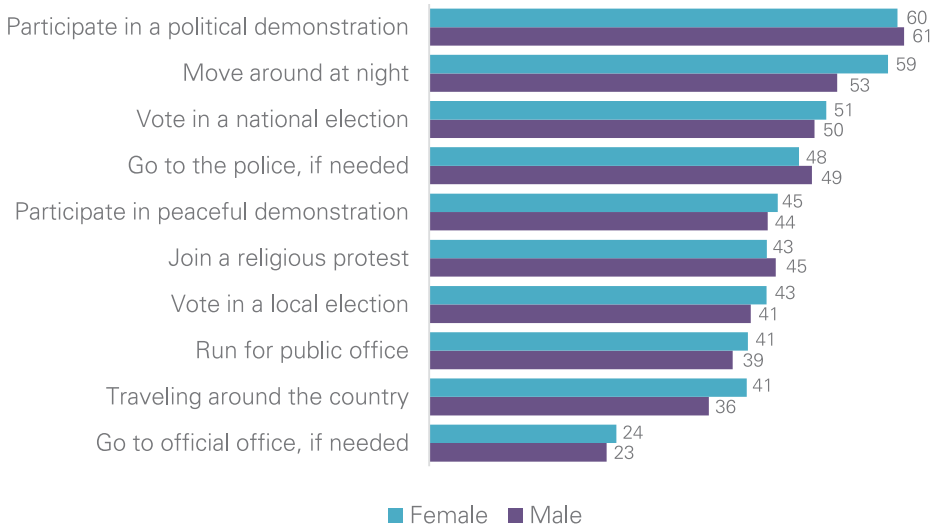or groups. (Q73) Response: some or a lot of fear?

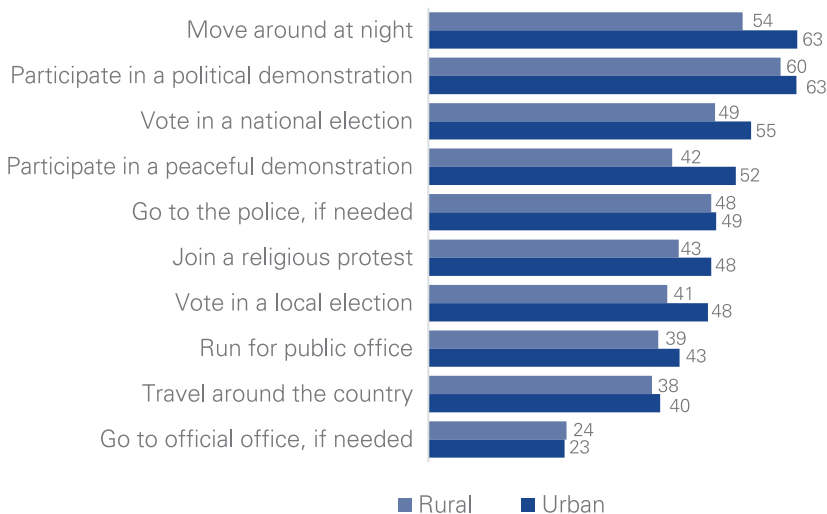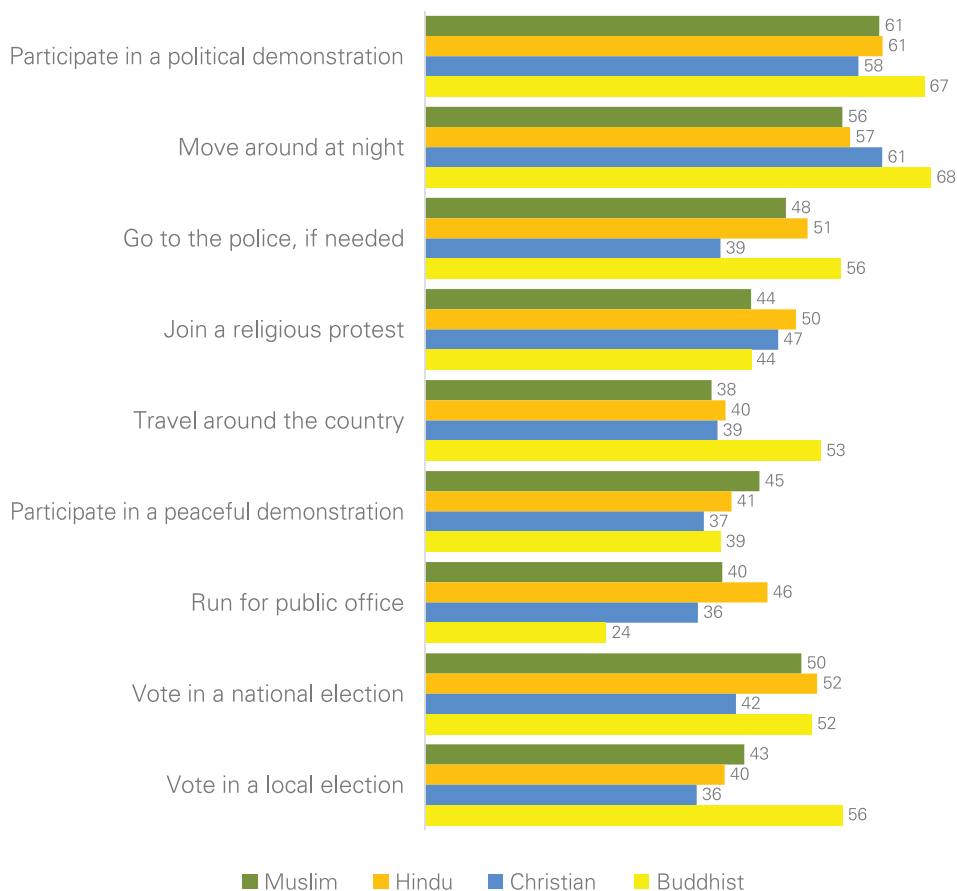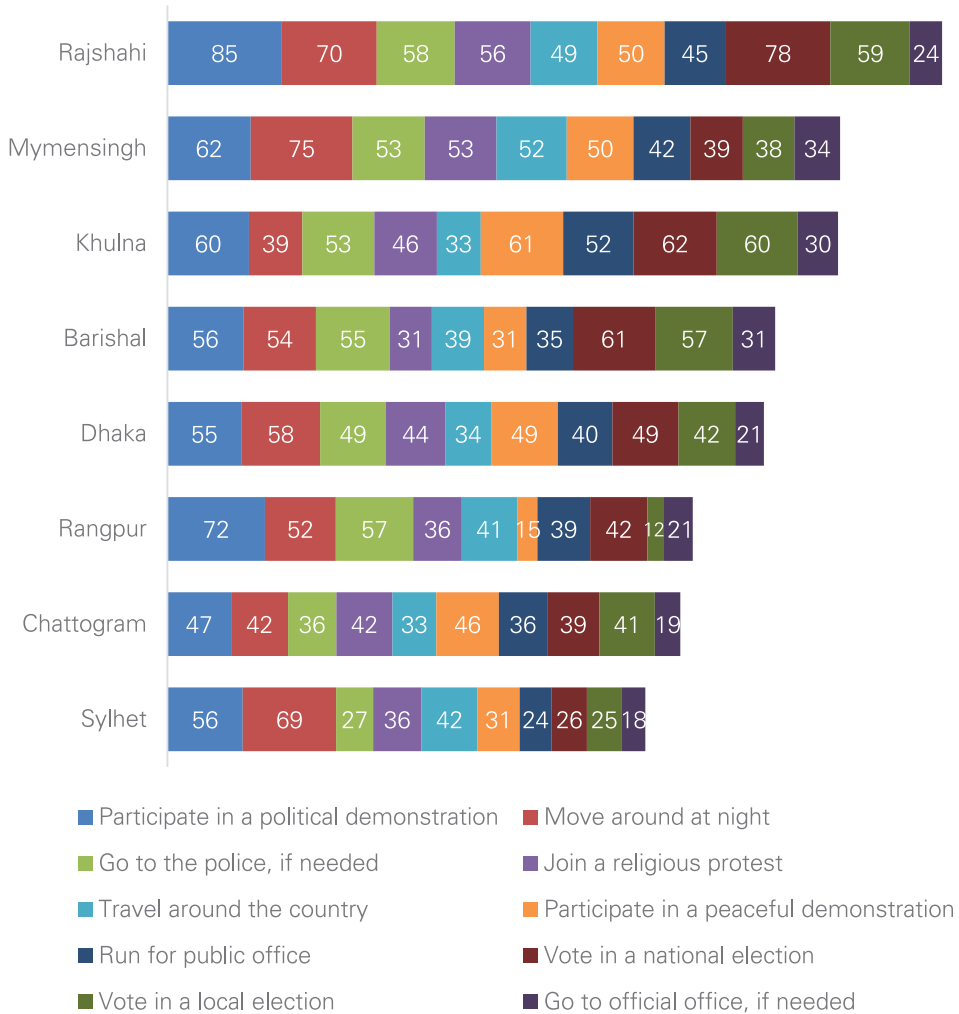| Division	Participate in a political demonstration	Move around at night	Go to the police, if needed	Join a religious protest	Travel around the country	Participate in a peaceful demonstration	Run for public office	Vote in a national election	Vote in a local election	Go to official office, if needed
Rajshahi	85	70	58	56	49	50	45	78	59	24
Mymensingh	62	75	53	53	52	50	42	39	38	34
Khulna	60	39	53	46	33	61	52	62	60	30
Barishal	56	54	55	31	39	31	35	61	57	31
Dhaka	55	58	49	44	34	49	40	49	42	21
Rangpur	72	52	57	36	41	15	39	42	12	21
Chattogram	47	42	36	42	33	46	36	39	41	19
Sylhet	56	69	27	36	42	31	24	26	25	18

Figure 9.21: Fear of engaging in activities – By division

Respondents in Rajshahi express the highest overall levels of fear, with 85 percent
fearful of participating in a political demonstration, and 70 percent fearful of moving
around at night. Overall, respondents in Sylhet are the least fearful, with respondents
expressing much less fear of going to the police (27 percent) and voting in elections.

9.7 Reason for Fear
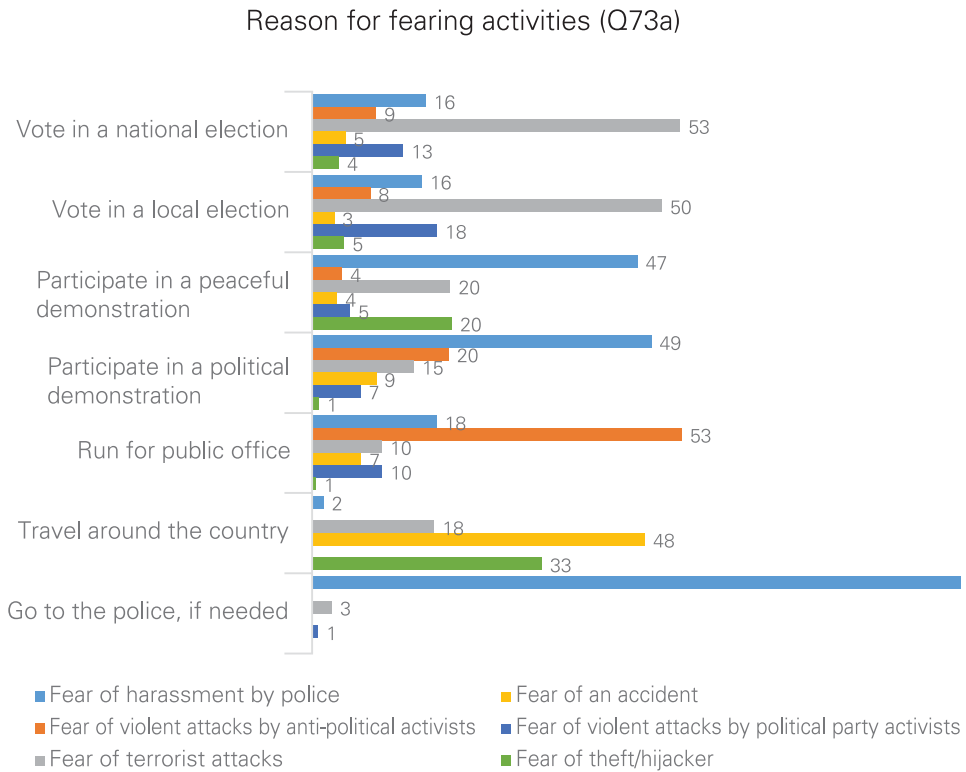
Reason for fearing activities (Q73a)

Figure 9.22: Reason for fear of engaging in activities

Of those who express fear about voting in national or local elections, by far the most common reason is fear of terrorist attacks (53 percent for a national election and 50 percent for a local election). Fear of police harassment is the most common fear respondents have about participating in a peaceful or a political demonstration (47 percent and 49 percent, respectively), while over 50 percent of those expressing fear of running for public office cite fear of attacks by political party activists. Respondents' greatest fear when traveling is accidents, and respondents who fear going to the police almost unanimously say they are afraid of harassment by the police (96 percent).

Support for equality of education

Respondents almost universally support education equality

88%

Respondents who strongly or somewhat support educational equality

Support for equality of education by level

88% Primary Education

85% Secondary Education

84% Madrassa Education

82% Higher Secondary Education

75% Local College/ University

68% College/University across the country

58% Foreign Universities

10 GENDER ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES

10.1 Gender Roles

How often do you do the following tasks (Q50) Response: Daily or 3-5 times per week
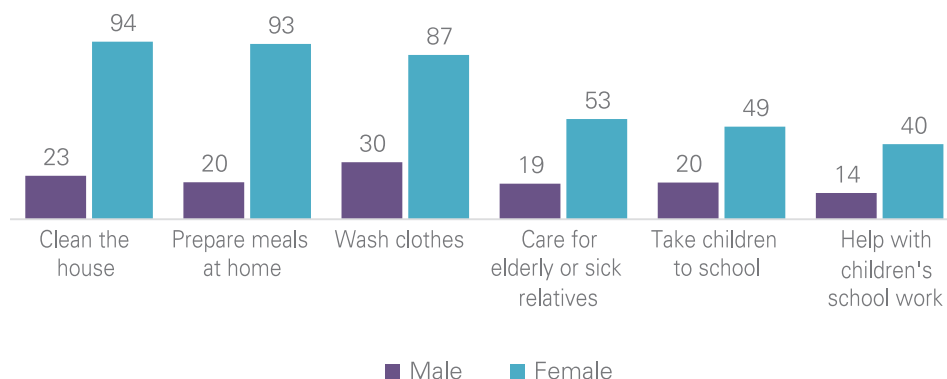

Figure 10.1: Gender division of household tasks

Unsurprisingly women are much more likely than men to be responsible for household chores.

On average, how many hours per day do you have for leisure activities? (Q51) Response: At least some time every day
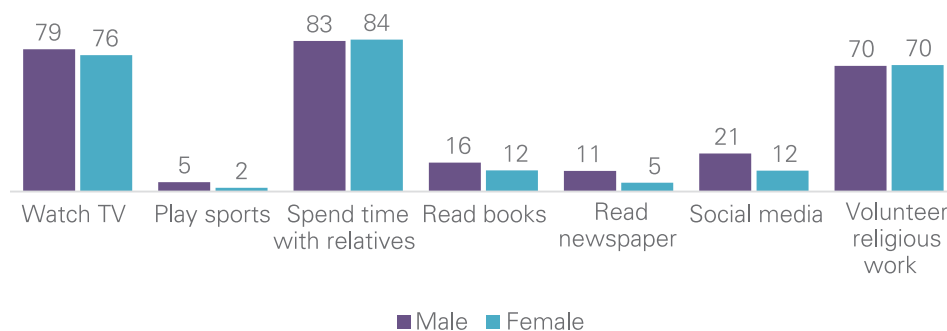

Figure 10.2: Gender division of leisure time

Generally, both men and women have some leisure time every day; however, in comparison with men, women have slightly less time and, in that free time, are less likely to use social media or read the newspaper.

10.2 Gender Attitudes

What do you think is the appropriate age for a man/woman to get married? (Q53 and Q54)
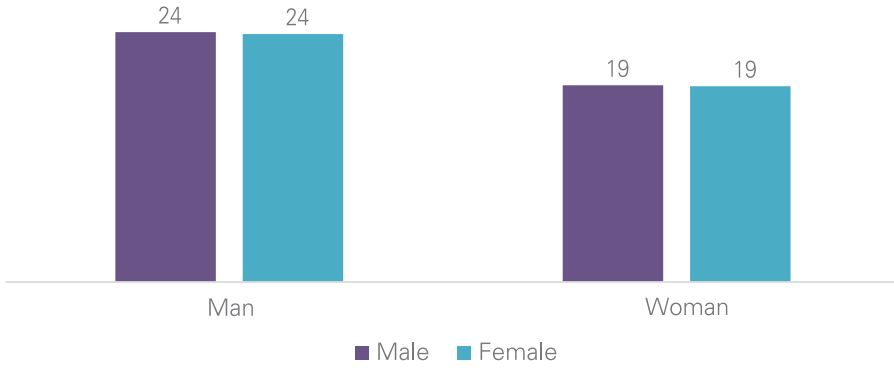

Figure 10.3: Appropriate age of marriage

Men and women both agree that the most appropriate age for a man to marry is 24, and for a woman, it is 19. These findings are consistent across all divisions, ages, and religions.

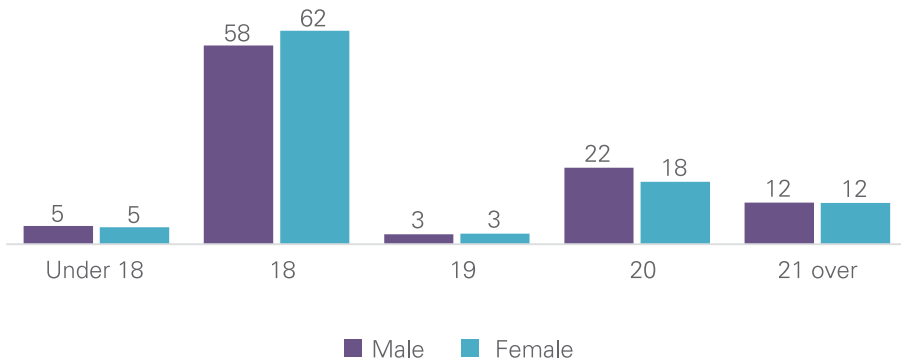### What do you think is the appropriate age for a woman to get married? (Q54)

Figure 10.4: Appropriate age of marriage for women – Responses under age 18, by gender
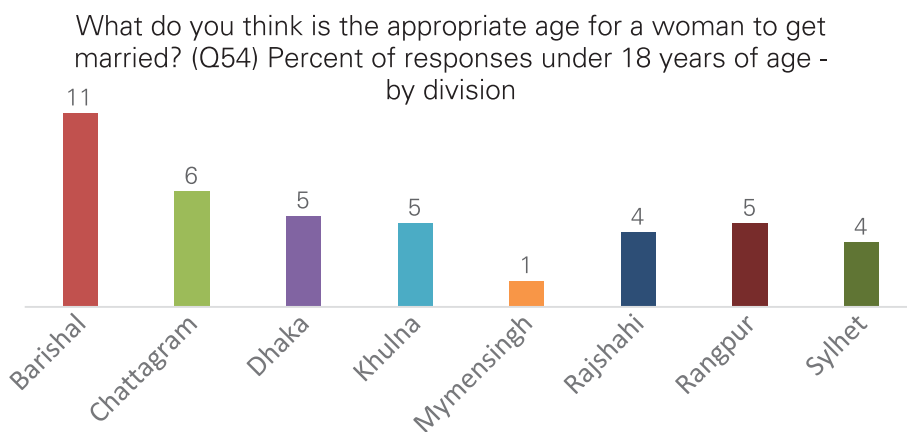
Figure 10.5: Appropriate age of marriage for women – Responses under age 18, by division

While the average age of marriage cited for women is 19, 5 percent of men and women say that the most appropriate age for a woman to marry is under 18.[9] Respondents in Barishal are most likely to give responses below age 18 (11 percent), and those in Mymensingh are least likely (1 percent).
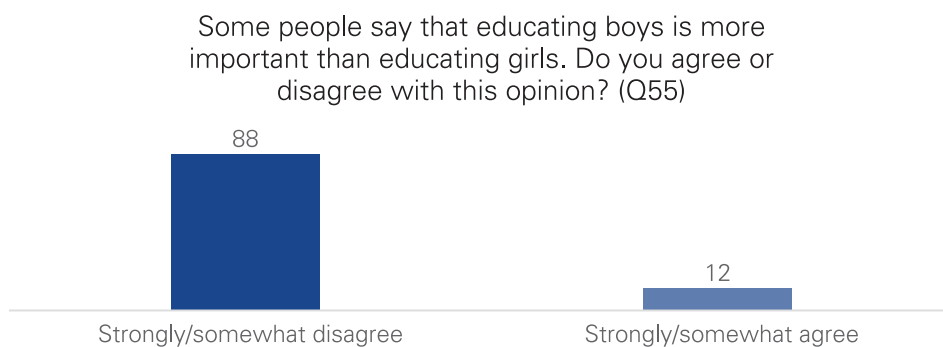

Figure 10.6: Support for equality of education

Respondents almost universally support education equality, with 88 percent saying they disagree that educating boys is more important than educating girls. Support for education equality is highest in Mymensingh (95 percent), Sylhet (94 percent), and Dhaka (92 percent), and lowest in Chattogram (77 percent), where 23 percent agree that educating boys is more important than educating girls. As the age of respondents decreases, support for equal education increases, ranging from 90 percent for those under age 25, to 83 percent for those age 50 and over. Christians are slightly above the average in supporting equal education (92 percent), while non-Bengalis, those in the CHT, and Buddhists are more likely than the national average to agree that educating boys is more important (24 percent, 33 percent, and 36 percent, respectively).

[9] *The legal age of marriage in Bangladesh is 18 for women and 21 for men, with exceptions in "special cases" or in the "best interests" of the adolescent.*

For each of the following types of education, do you agree or disagree with the opinion that men and women should have equal opportunities for education? (Q56) Response: Strongly agree

	Total	Male	Female
Madrassa Education	84	81	86
Primary School	88	86	90
Secondary School	85	84	87
Higher Secondary	82	79	85
Local College/University	75	73	76
College/University across the country	68	67	68
Foreign Universities	58	57	58

Figure 10.7: Support for education equality - By level of education

For each of the following types of education, do you agree or disagree with the opinion that men and women should have equal opportunities for education? (Q56) Response: Strongly agree
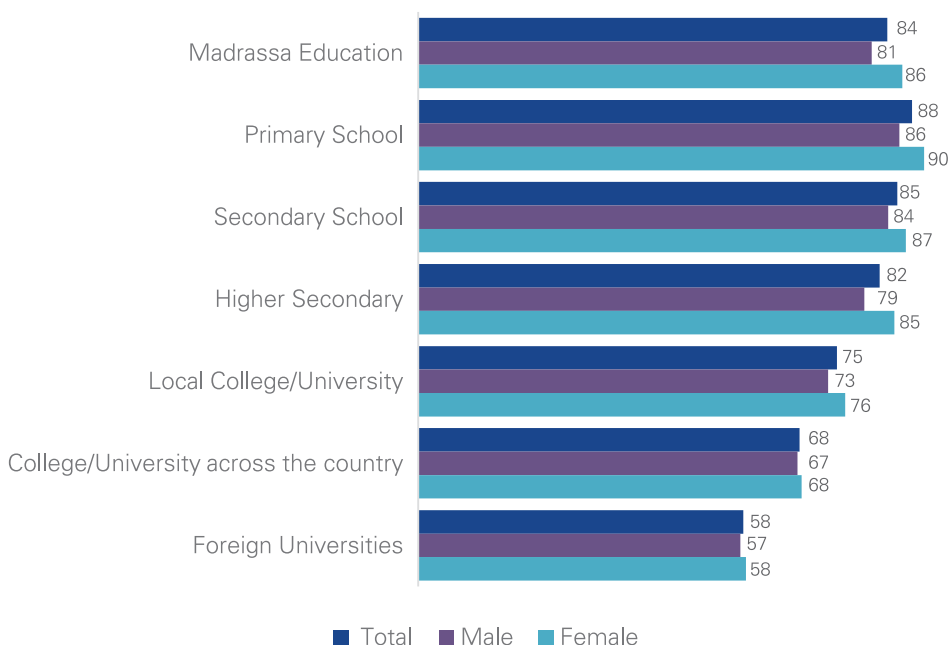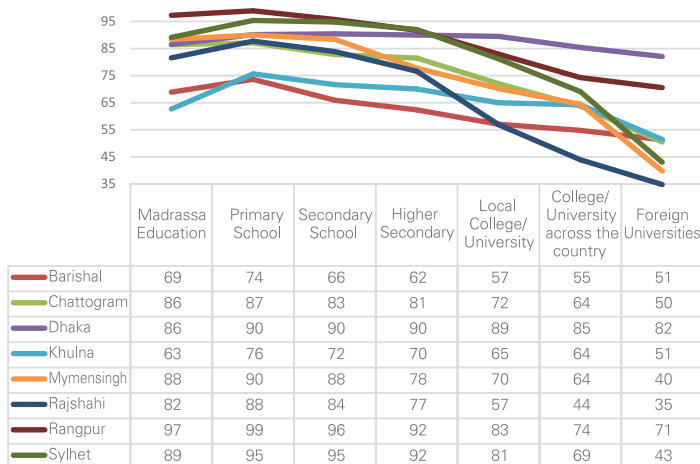
	Madrassa Education	Primary School	Secondary School	Higher Secondary	Local College/ University	College/ University across the country	Foreign Universities
Barishal	69	74	66	62	57	55	51
Chattogram	86	87	83	81	72	64	50
Dhaka	86	90	90	90	89	85	82
Khulna	63	76	72	70	65	64	51
Mymensingh	88	90	88	78	70	64	40
Rajshahi	82	88	84	77	57	44	35
Rangpur	97	99	96	92	83	74	71
Sylhet	89	95	95	92	81	69	43

Figure 10.8: Support for education equality – By division

Nationally, the intensity of support for education equality declines as the level education and the distance from home increase. The support level remains fairly steady from primary (88 percent) to secondary (85 percent) and even higher secondary (82 percent) education. At the tertiary level, three-quarters of respondents still support equal opportunity to attend a local college or university, though this is a 13 percent drop from support for equality at the primary level. Support for equality declines further when respondents are asked about equal opportunity to attend a college or university across the country (68 percent), and drops even further for a university outside the country (58 percent). Respondents in Dhaka and Rangpur express the highest support for equal education across all categories. Respondents in Barishal and Rajshahi express the lowest support for equal opportunities to attend a college or university locally (57 percent in both Rajshahi and Barishal) or across the country (44 percent in Rajshahi and 54 percent in Barishal). Women attending a foreign university have the lowest support in Rajshahi (35 percent), Mymensingh (40 percent), and Sylhet (43 percent).

10.3   Women's Representation in Politics and Leadership

Thinking about women in leadership positions, please tell me, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to be leaders in these types of organizations/institutions? Q 57
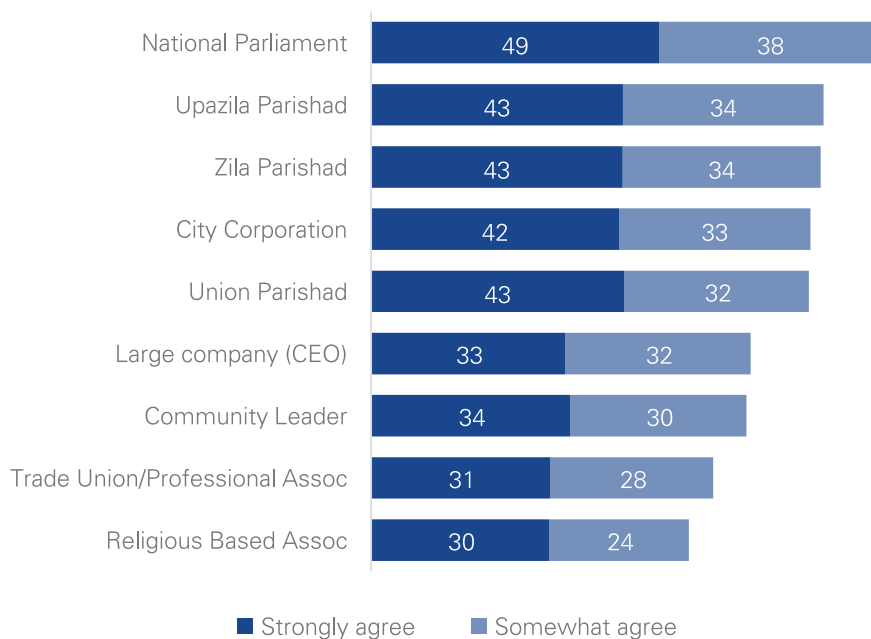Response: Strongly or Somewhat Agree

Figure 10.9: Support for women's leadership

The majority of respondents agree that it is acceptable for women to be leaders, with the highest level of support for Members of Parliament (87 percent).

Thinking about women in leadership positions, please tell me,
do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to be
leaders in these types of organizations/institutions? Q 57
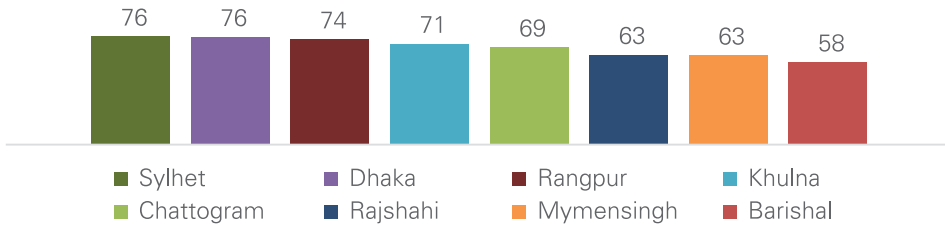Average response for Agree

Figure 10.10: Support for women's leadership – By division

When responses for various types of positions are averaged, Sylhet and Dhaka are the most supportive of women's leadership, and Barishal is the least. Mymensingh is consistently second lowest, with the exception of Parliament (92 percent support) and Union Parishad (84 percent support), where support for women is above the national average of 87 percent for Parliament and 75 percent for Union Parishad.

Do you think that Members of Parliament should be all men,
mostly men, an equal number of men and women, mostly
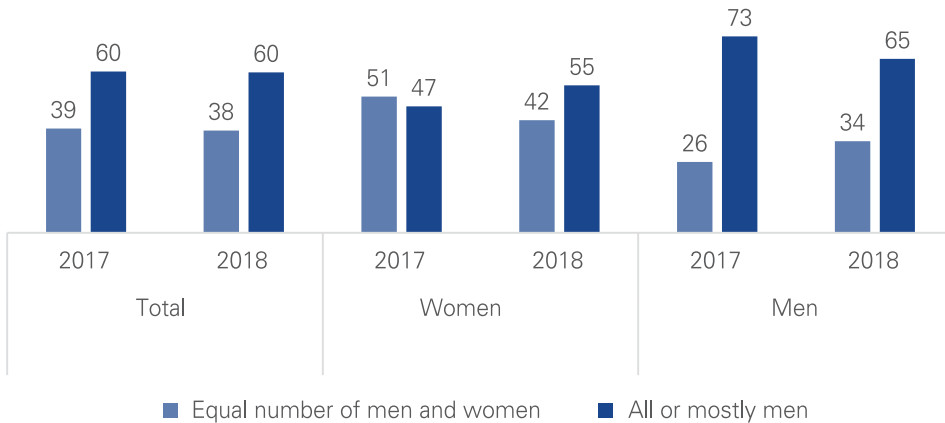women, or all women? (Q58)

Figure 10.11: Women's participation in Parliament – Annual comparison by gender

Compared to the 2017 survey, the majority of respondents (60 percent) continue to prefer that MPs be all or mostly men, and overall support for an equal number of men and women in Parliament has remained constant. Interestingly, since 2017, there has been an 8 percent increase in men preferring an equal number of men and women, and a 9 percent decrease among women. Support for all or mostly men in Parliament increases with age, ranging

from 56 percent for those under 25 to 67 percent for those over 50. Support for all or mostly men also decreases with more education, ranging from 62 percent for illiterate respondents to 52 percent for university graduates. Christians are slightly above the national average of 38 percent in supporting an equal number of men and women (43 percent). Respondents in Chattogram (46 percent) and Dhaka (44 percent) are the most supportive of an equal number of men and women.
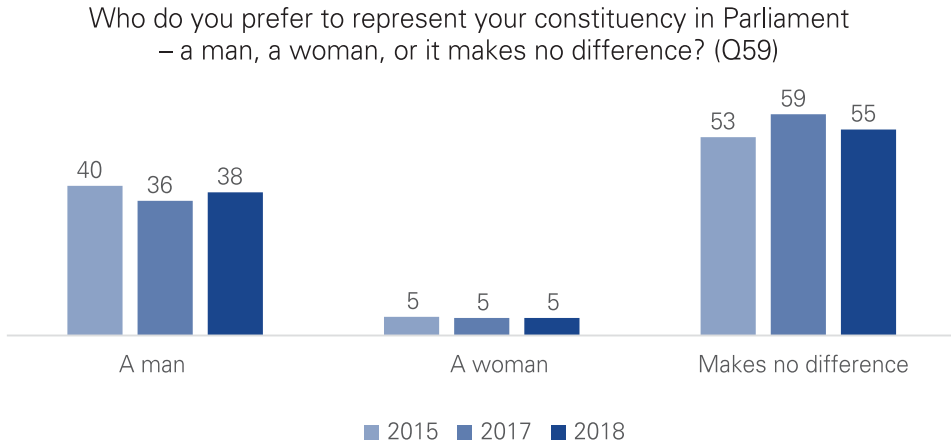
Who do you prefer to represent your constituency in Parliament – a man, a woman, or it makes no difference? (Q59)

Figure 10.12: Gender preference for MP – By gender

Although 60 percent of respondents prefer that MPs be all or mostly men, the majority (55 percent) also say it makes no difference if they are represented in Parliament by a man or a woman. This sentiment is slightly higher among women (59 percent) than men (51 percent), and respondents under age 25 are also most likely to feel this way (59 percent) compared to respondents over age 50 (49 percent).
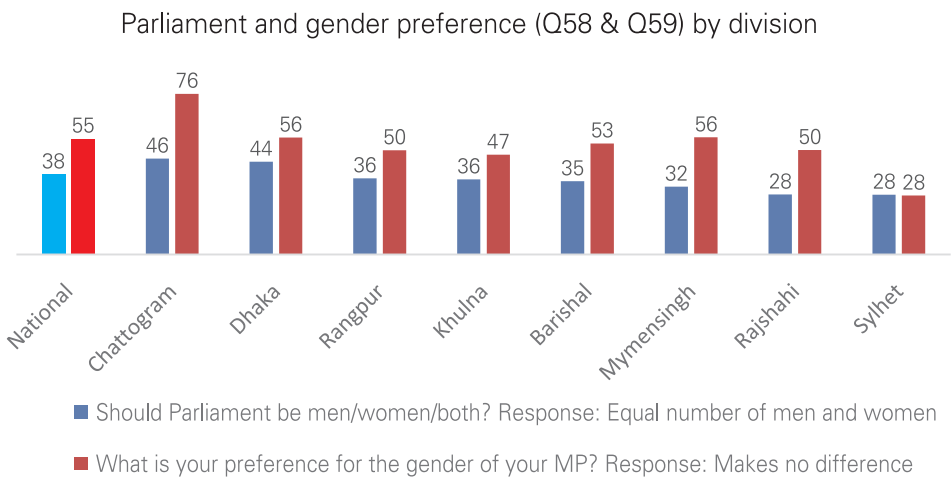
Parliament and gender preference (Q58 & Q59) by division

Figure 10.13: Political leadership and gender – By division

Respondents in Chattogram (76 percent) are the most likely to agree that it makes no difference whether their MP is a man or woman, which is a significantly higher percentage than in all other divisions. However, 60 percent of respondents in Sylhet prefer a man.
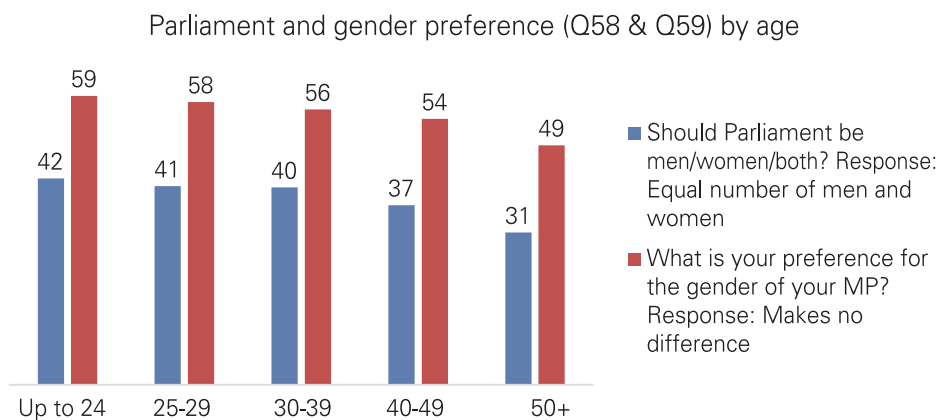
Parliament and gender preference (Q58 & Q59) by age

Figure 10.14: Political leadership and gender – By age

Parliament and gender preference (Q58 & Q59) by level of education

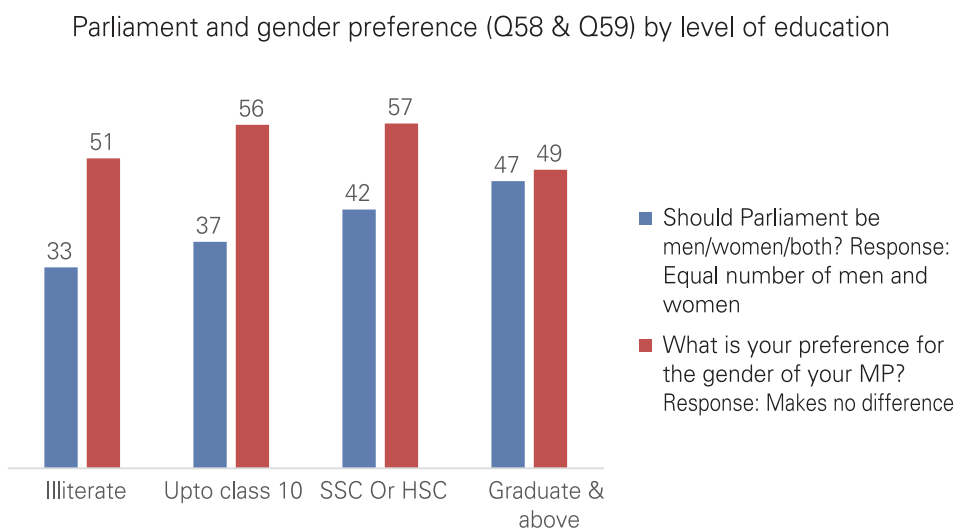**Figure 10.15:** Political leadership and gender – By education

Parliament and gender preference (Q58 & Q59) By religion

Should Parliament be men/women/both?
Response: Equal number of men and women

What is your preference for the gender of your
MP? Response: Makes no difference

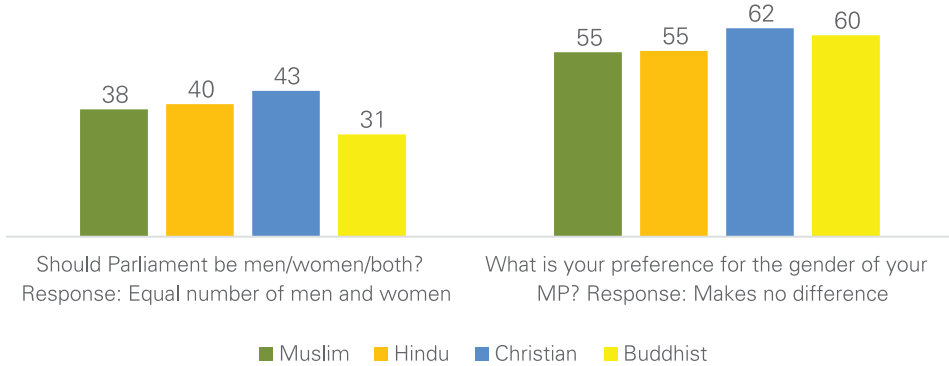■ Muslim ■ Hindu ■ Christian ■ Buddhist

Figure 10.16: Political leadership and gender – By religion

For comparison, in 2014, 38 percent of Cambodians preferred a man, 23 percent preferred a woman, and 39 percent said it made no difference.[10]

10.4   Eve Teasing

Have you witnessed any incidents of eve teasing in the past
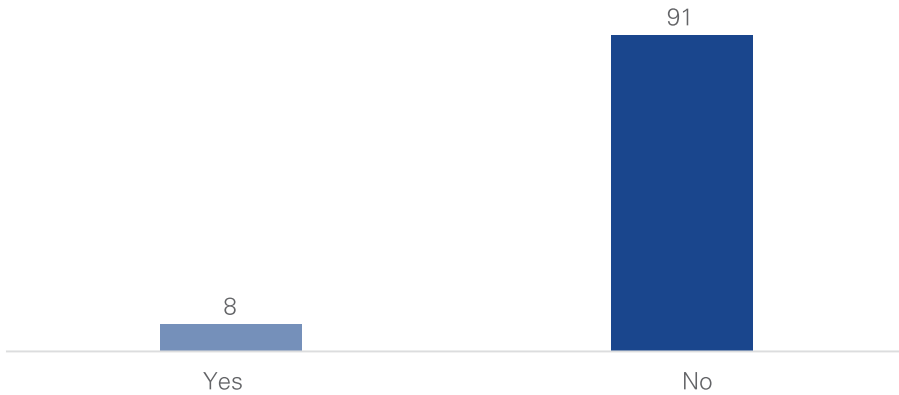three months? (Q74)

Figure 10.17: Prevalence of eve teasing

The majority of respondents (91 percent) say they have not witnessed eve teasing in the past three months; however, those in urban areas (11 percent), those under 25 (14 percent), and university graduates (14 percent) are more likely to have witnessed it.

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[10] *The Asia Foundation. 2014, Democracy in Cambodia 2014.*

11 IDENTITY

11.1 National Identity

What does being Bangladeshi mean to you? (Q64) Multiple
responses allowed

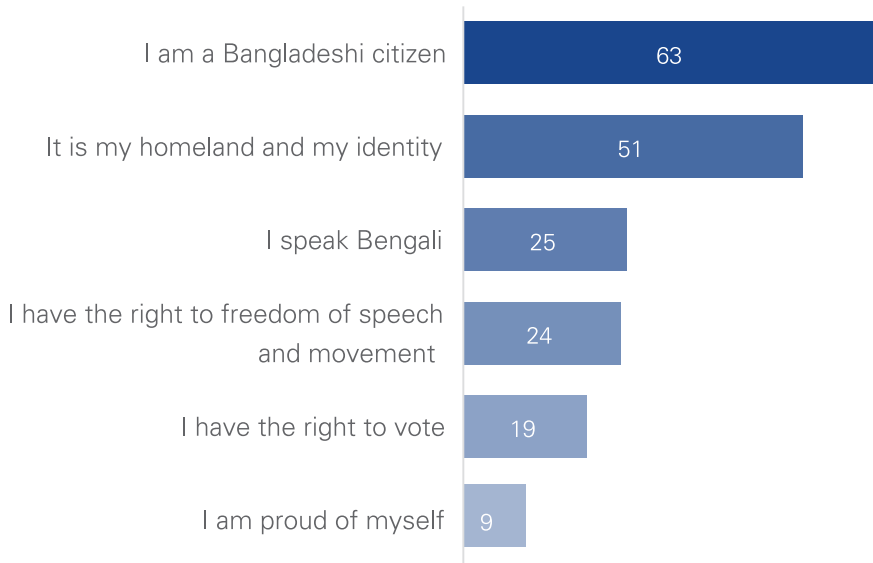|	
I am a Bangladeshi citizen	63
It is my homeland and my identity	51
I speak Bengali	25
I have the right to freedom of speech and movement	24
I have the right to vote	19
I am proud of myself	9

Figure 11.1: Meaning of being Bangladeshi

Almost two-thirds of respondents (63 percent) identify as Bangladeshi citizens. One in two respondents (51 percent) feel an emotional attachment to the country, saying that it is their homeland and part of their identity. One-quarter identify with the language, and a similar number feel that being Bangladeshi affords them certain rights.

What does being Bangladeshi mean to you? (Q64) By religion
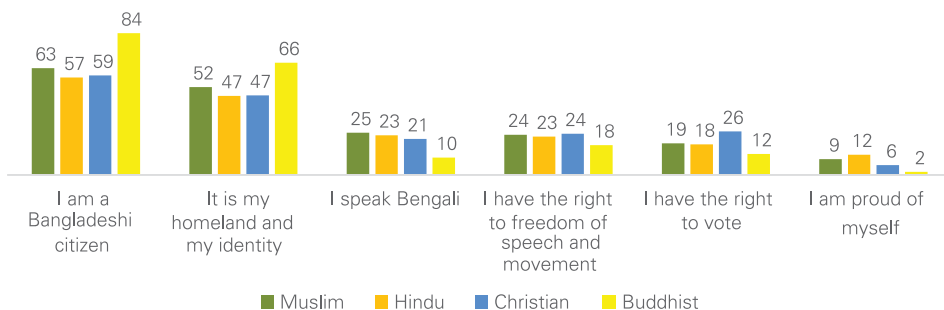Multiple responses allowed

	Muslim	Hindu	Christian	Buddhist
I am a Bangladeshi citizen	63	57	59	84
It is my homeland and my identity	52	47	47	66
I speak Bengali	25	23	21	10
I have the right to freedom of speech and movement	24	23	24	18
I have the right to vote	19	18	26	12
I am proud of myself	9	12	6	2

Figure 11.2: Meaning of being Bangladeshi – By religion

Buddhists, when compared with other religious groups, are more likely to identify as being Bangladeshi citizens (84 percent) and feel emotional attachment to the country (66 percent), and less likely to identify with the language (10 percent), or other rights.

11.2 Frequency of Praying
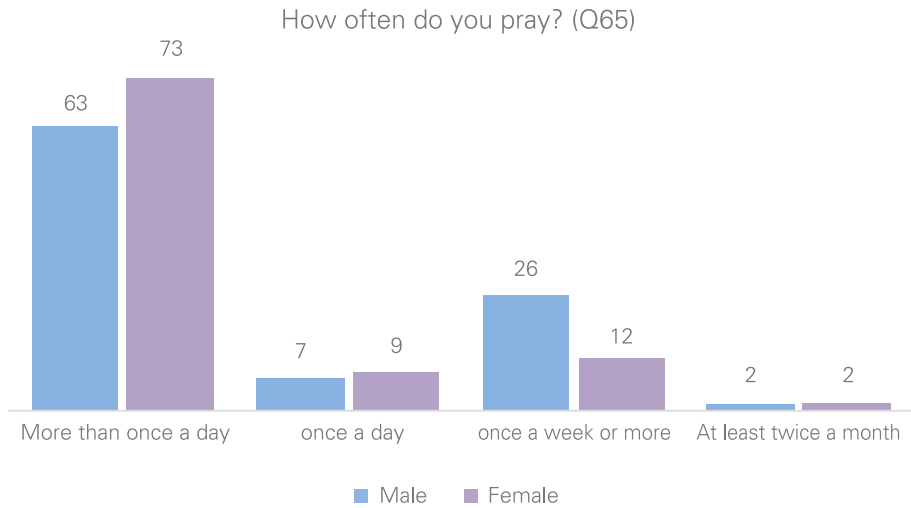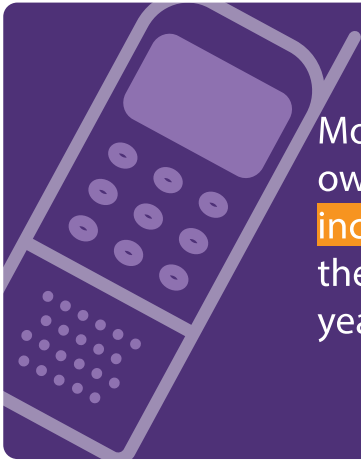
How often do you pray? (Q65)

Figure 11.3: Frequency of praying

More than two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) say they pray more than once a day. Women (73 percent) are more likely than men (63 percent) to say they pray more than once a day, while men are more than twice as likely as women to say they pray once a week or more (26 percent of men versus 12 percent of women). Respondents in Barishal are the most likely to say they pray more than once a day (88 percent), while respondents in Rangpur are the least likely to say they pray more than once a day (50 percent).

Mobile phone ownership has increased over the past three years

2018 — 84%

2017 — 80%

2015 — 79%
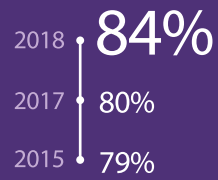
12 INFORMATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

12.1 Mobile Phone Ownership and Usage

Do you own a mobile phone? (Q60)

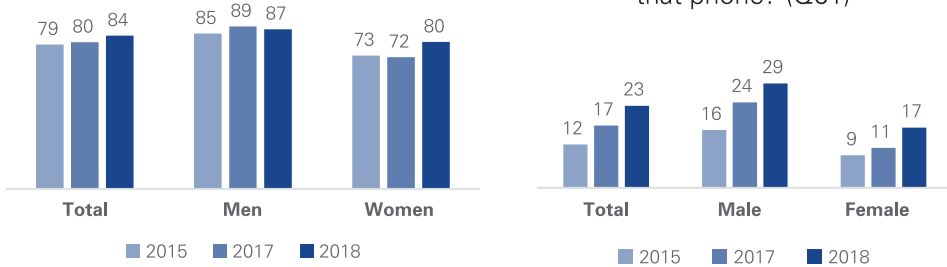Can you access the Internet from that phone? (Q61)

Figure 12.1: Mobile phone ownership and Internet access

Mobile phone ownership has increased slightly since 2015, from 79 to 84 percent. The gender gap in phone ownership has notably decreased since 2017, with 80 percent of women saying they own phones in 2018. Strikingly, the number of respondents who are able to access the Internet from their phones has doubled since 2015 and, while over that time, access by both women and men has increased proportionately, women are still significantly less likely than men to be able to use their phones to access the Internet.

Unsurprisingly, phone ownership is highest in urban areas (90 percent) and among those under 30 years old (92 percent), and these respondents are also the most likely to be able to access the Internet through their phones. Respondents age 50 and above are much less likely than the national average to own a phone (69 percent) as are respondents in Rangpur (73 percent).

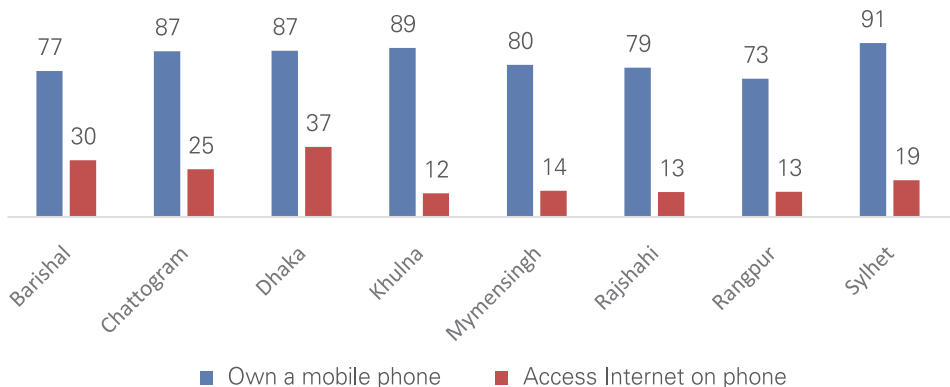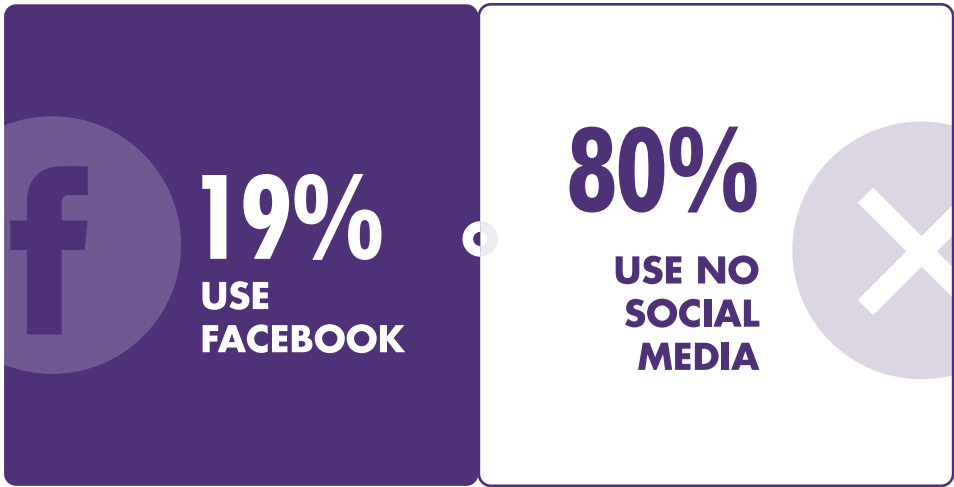Mobile phone ownership and Internet access - By division

Figure 12.2: Mobile phone ownership and Internet access – By division

Mobile phone ownership and Internet access vary by division, with the highest mobile phone ownership in Sylhet (91 percent) and the highest access to the Internet in Dhaka.

19%

USE
FACEBOOK

80%

USE NO
SOCIAL
MEDIA

12.2 Social Media Usage

Which platforms do you normally use to communicate online? (Q62) – National
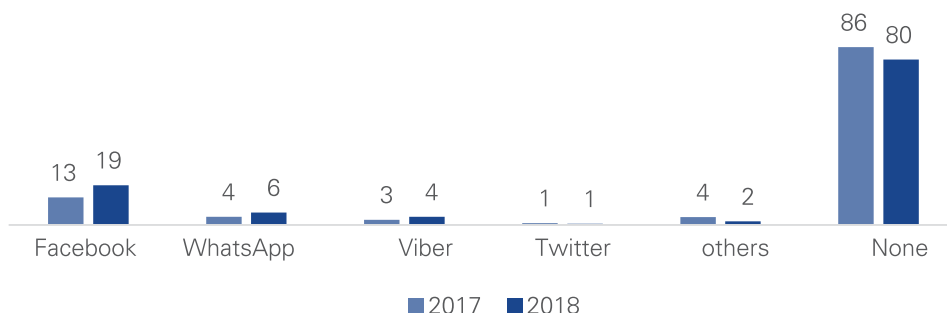
Figure 12.3: Use of social media – Annual comparison

Which platforms do you normally use to communicate online? (Q62)

Figure 12.4: Use of social media – By gender

Facebook remains the most common social media platform, with 19 percent of respondents now using the platform. The number of women using Facebook has doubled from 7 percent in 2017 to 14 percent in 2018. Urban respondents (31 percent) are much more likely than rural respondents (15 percent) to use Facebook, as are those with higher levels of education, and use decreases with age.
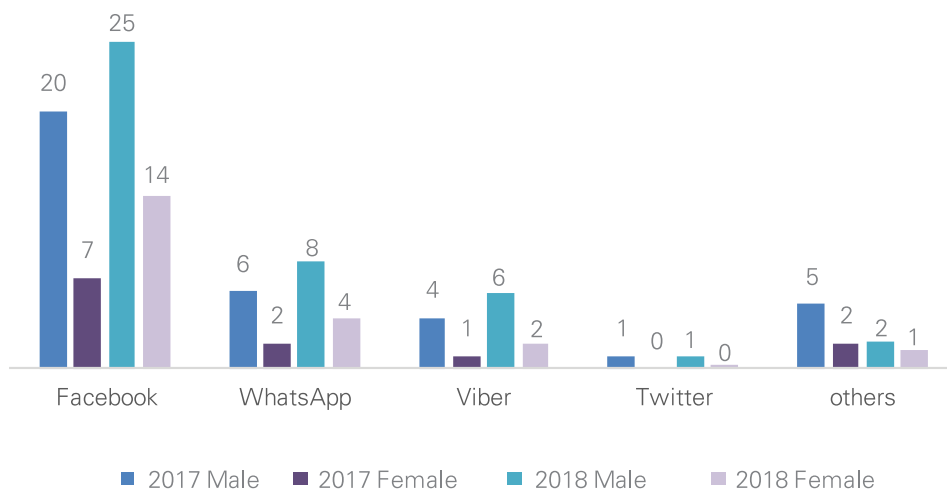
Which platforms do you normally use to communicate online? (Q62) - by division
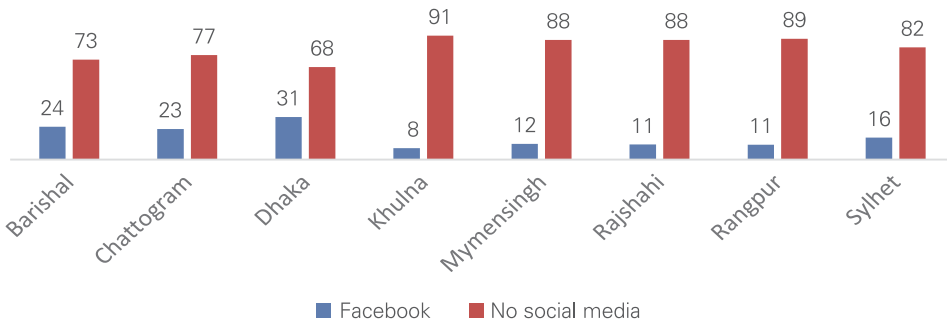

Figure 12.5: Use of social media – By division

While Facebook and other social media platforms are slowly making inroads, 80 percent of respondents still do not use social media. Those in Dhaka are the most likely to use social media, and those in Khulna are the least likely (68 percent and 91 percent, respectively, say they do not use social media).

If you say 'yes' to using Facebook, what do you use it for? (Q63) by Gender
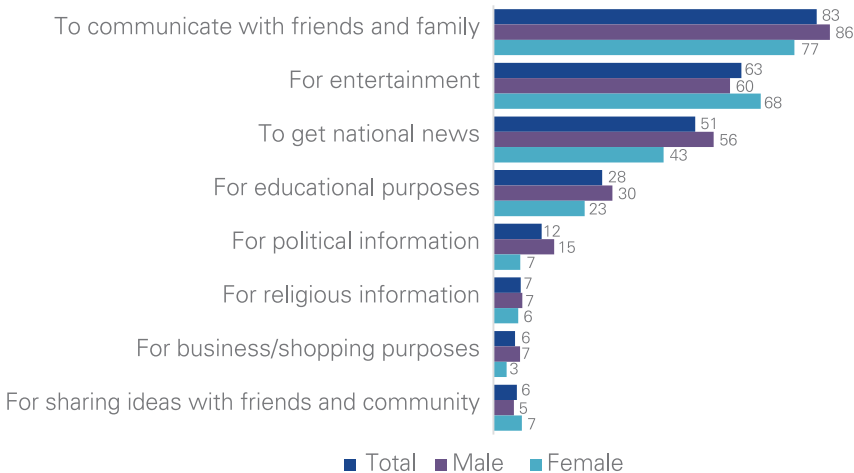
Figure 12.6: Use of Facebook – By gender

Among those who use Facebook, the most common uses are communicating with friends and family, for entertainment, and to get the national news. Women are more likely to use Facebook for entertainment (68 percent, compared to 60 percent of men). In comparison with other age groups and the national average, respondents under 25 are more likely to use Facebook for educational purposes (40 percent) and for religious information (11 percent).

13 DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

13.1 Gender

Gender

49%   51%

Male
Female

13.2 Rural/Urban

Rural/Urban

25%

75%

Rural   Urban

13.3 Age

Age

14%	14%	27%	19%	25%
Up to 24	25 -29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50+

13.4 Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment

15%	62%	16%	6%
Illiterate	Up to class 10	SSC or HSC	Graduate & above
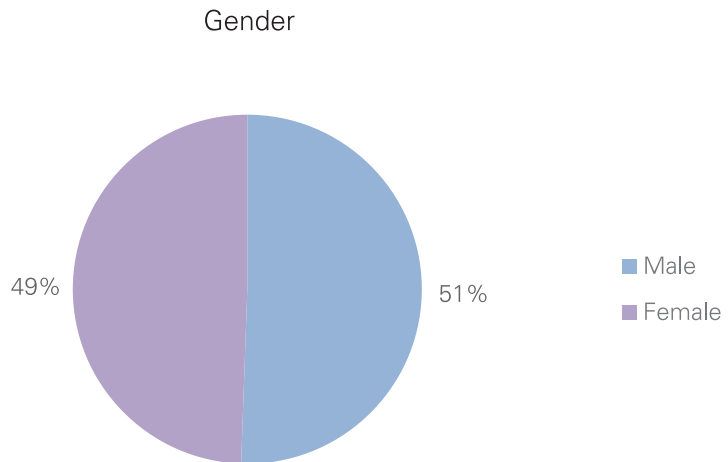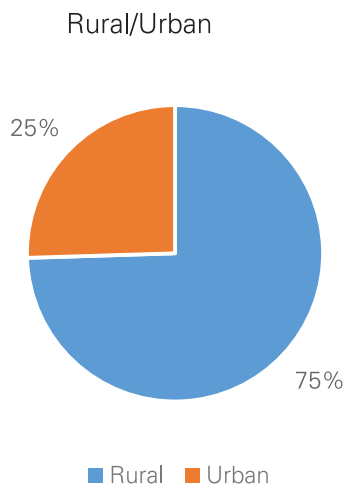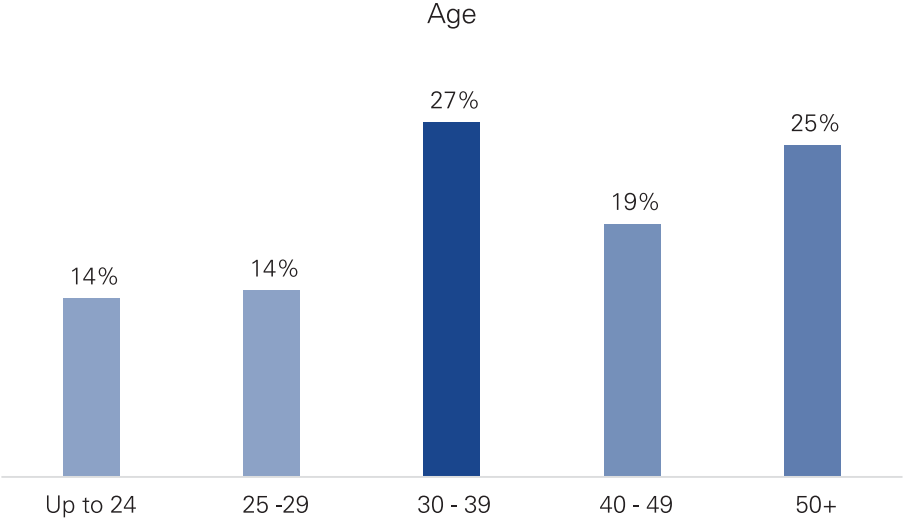
13.5 Distribution by Division
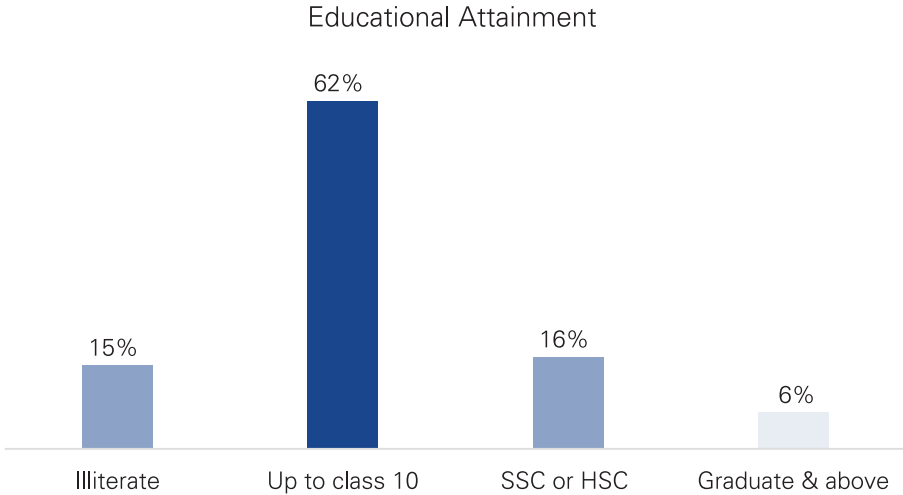
Distribution by division
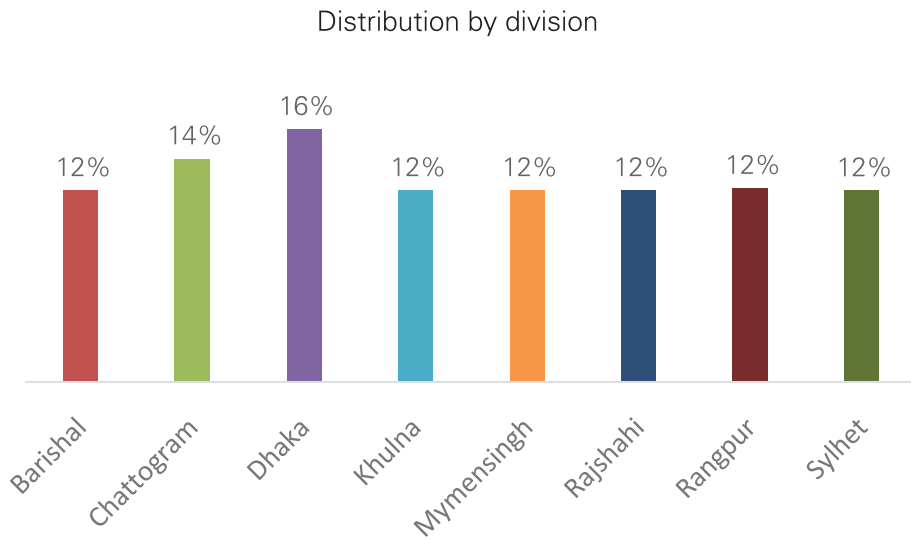
13.6 Religion

Religion
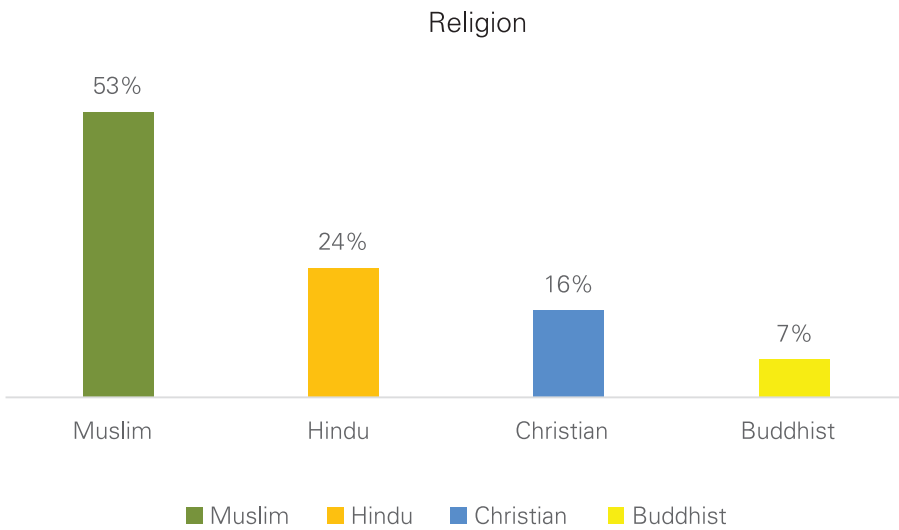
ANNEX 1 – METHODOLOGY

Below is a summary of the methodology used by the Bangladeshi research organization, Survey and Research System (SRS), in carrying out this survey. For a detailed description of the methodology, please contact The Asia Foundation [bangladesh.general@asiafoundation.org].

SRS's national sample comprised 5,304 respondents, divided into clusters of eight respondents, and desegregated by divisions, regions, and other administrative areas, as well by various subpopulations, including different ethnicities. The national sample renders estimates at the national level with margin of error at +/- 3%; further, the sample provides reliable estimates for various subgroups. Exact margins of error vary, depending on the disaggregation. Various elements of the sample survey design and implementation procedures are provided in the example below.

Sample Design

The basic requirements of the sample procedure incorporated probability and random selection procedure, controlling margin of error in the survey, distribution and representativeness of the survey over demographic groups by gender, age, education, etc. as well as distribution by geographic and urban-rural sub-populations. The survey envisaged to adhere to basic statistical requirements as stated.

Determination of Sample Size and Sample Allocation

The survey was designed so that the margin of total error at the national level on the estimate for an attribute - public perception on current election issues, institutions, organizations, policies, respondents of the electorate, influence of social media and advocacy, etc. is contained within +/-3%. The attributes as described are diversified and were expected to vary widely. The precision level desired (limiting margin of error) has been defined in terms of limiting the margin of error at supervision.

The study followed stratified sample design. The final sample and distribution was determined through consultation between SRS and TAF.

In order to limit the margin of error (by divisions) to 4 percent or less, the number of respondents per division was modified to a minimum of 624. Sample proportions of Muslims, Hindus, and others were determined at 90%, 9%, and 1%, respectively, to be consistent with census data. The actual proportions were sometimes marginally adjusted. For Hindus, the margin of error was restricted at 5%. For Buddhists, Christians and other minorities, the margin of error was also considered at 5% or slightly more. Distribution of the sample nationwide, and by division, is shown below.

Division	Total Respondents	Area		Gender		Religion		
		Rural	Urban	Male	Female	Muslim	Hindu	Others
Bangladesh	5,304	3,952	1,352	2,682	2,622	2,806	1,273	1,225
Barishal	624	488	136	313	311	349	155	120
Chattogram	728	544	184	372	356	352	123	253
Dhaka	824	448	376	420	404	463	208	153
Khulna	624	496	128	323	301	317	170	137
Mymensingh	624	488	136	320	304	340	149	135
Rajshahi	624	488	136	295	329	317	167	140
Rangpur	632	504	128	319	313	320	160	152
Sylhet	624	496	128	320	304	348	141	135

Distributions of sample respondents by rural, urban, and geographical sub-populations were carried out, consistent with census data. The distribution of sample respondents and the anticipated margin of error are shown below.

	Respondents	Margin of error (%)		Respondents	Margin of error (%)
Bangladesh	5,304	2.38%			
Barisal	624	4.00%	Rural	3,952	2.76%
Chattogram	728	3.71%	Urban	1,352	4.71%
Dhaka	824	3.38%	Male	2,682	3.34%
Khulna	624	4.00%	Female	2,622	3.38%
Mymensingh	624	4.00%	Muslim	2,806	3.27%
Rajshahi	624	4.00%	Hindu	1,273	4.85%
Rangpur	632	3.97%	Others	1,225	4.95%
Sylhet	624	4.00%			

The final dataset was weighted according to the latest population census (2011), and other demographic indicators.

Selection of Sample Village/Mahallas

Sample selection was carried out by division, as well as urban-rural areas within divisions. The division data related to the population 18 years of age and older, were organized and listed in the order in which they appear in the census records. The ordered list showed relevant population data (for those 18 years and over) for administrative areas: districts, upazilas, municipal areas (wards and unions) villages, and mahallas, etc., individually and their accumulations. These ordered lists were used for selecting sample for the national perception survey. Separate lists for urban/rural areas were created to cover the whole division. An appropriate interval of selection (in terms of the number of clusters (PSUs) – village/mahalla) was calculated and, the requisite number of clusters (sample points) were selected with a random start.

Divisions	Total Respondents	Cluster (PSU)	Rural		Urban	
			Respondents	Cluster (PSU)	Respondents	Cluster (PSU)
Bangladesh	5,304	663	3952	494	1352	169
Barishal	624	78	488	61	136	17
Chattogram	728	91	544	68	184	23
Dhaka	824	103	448	56	376	47
Khulna	624	78	496	62	128	16
Mymensingh	624	78	488	61	136	17
Rajshahi	624	78	488	61	136	17
Rangpur	632	79	504	63	128	16
Sylhet	624	78	496	62	128	16

Sample Household Selection

Investigators went to the sample villages/mahallas, found a landmark, and selected the household nearest to the landmark for interviewing. This was the first household in the sample. Then investigators selected the second household for interviewing 15 households away from the first household, and continued selecting every 15th household until a total of 8 households had been selected for interviewing.

Selection of Respondents in Sample Households Using the Kish Grid System Method

The general principle for the selection of a sample respondent in a household, as described above, was implemented using a general grid system. There were two tasks involved in the selection process: the first task was the enrollment of eligible persons, age 18 years and older, and, the second was the selection of one interviewee from each sample household. Selection of the respondent used the Kish Grid method.

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HEADQUARTERS
465 California Street, 9th floor
San Francisco, CA 94104 USA
Tel: (415) 982-4640
info.sf@asiafoundation.org

WASHINGTON, D.C
1779 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Suite 815
Washington, D.C. 20036 USA
Tel: (202) 588-9420
dc.general@asiafoundation.org

BANGLADESH
House 5 Road 8, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Tel: +880 (2) 984-6944 to 45
bangladesh.general@asiafoundation.org