Bangladesh’s Democracy: According to its People

A SURVEY OF THE BANGLADESHI PEOPLE

2018 Edition

The Asia Foundation
Improving Lives, Expanding Opportunities
Bangladesh’s Democracy: According to its People

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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.

¹The 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 than 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.
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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right direction</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong direction</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know/ Refused</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Right direction</th>
<th>Wrong direction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangpur</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mymensingh</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chattogram</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barishal</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khulna</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
Respondents say things are going in the right direction

- **Overall**
  - 79%
  - 68%
  - 45%

- **Division Comparison (%)**
  - 82% Rangpur
  - 72% Mymensingh
  - 87% Sylhet
  - 69% Dhaka
  - 67% Chittagong
  - 64% Barishal
  - 60% Rajshahi
  - 54% Khulna

- **Major Factors**
  - Overall development: 49%
  - Improved infrastructure: 47%
  - Improved economy: 40%
  - Better security: 20%
  - Agricultural development: 20%
Generally speaking, do you think things in Bangladesh today are going in the right direction, or going in the wrong direction? (Q1)

![Bar chart showing responses by religion](chart)

**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)

![Bar chart showing reasons for right direction](chart)

**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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall development</th>
<th>Improved infrastructure (road/bridge/culvert)</th>
<th>Improved economy</th>
<th>Better security</th>
<th>Agricultural development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barishal</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chattogram</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khulna</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mymensingh</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangpur</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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).
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 are more likely to say political instability (73 percent).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Bad traffic and transport system</th>
<th>Increasing terrorism</th>
<th>Un-Islamic activities</th>
<th>Poor education system</th>
<th>Gas shortage</th>
<th>Electricity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barishal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chattogram</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khulna</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mymensingh</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangpur</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

![Chart showing the biggest problem national level – Annual comparison]

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>1st response</th>
<th>2nd response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price hike of essentials</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political instability and intolerance</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and order</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elections</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence against women</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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).
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)
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](image)

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](image)
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)

![Bar chart showing the biggest problems at the local level for 2015, 2017, and 2018. The biggest problem for all years is the poor condition of roads, followed by law and order, unemployment, drug addiction, electricity, water and sewage, river erosion, and lack of healthcare facilities.]

**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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>First Response</th>
<th>Second Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor condition of roads</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug addiction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and order</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and sewage</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of health care facilities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River erosion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of schools and colleges</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowry and acid violence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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)

![Bar chart showing the biggest problems facing people in various communities, with specific data for each division.](chart)

**Figure 1.15: Biggest problem, local level, combined responses – By division**

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

**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)

![Bar chart showing voter participation in parliamentary elections](image)

**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is my democratic right</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select an honest leader</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to choose the MP I like</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is my civic duty</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better public services (roads/schools/health care)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To lead the country appropriately</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the freedom to vote</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect a representative who will develop the country</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My vote may make a difference</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End corruption</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain democracy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For peace, not to have conflict</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I expect to receive money or gifts for voting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

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)

![Bar chart](image)

**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)

![Graph showing frequency of political discussions](image)

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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3.2 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)

![Graph showing agreement and disagreement by region](image)

*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)

![Graph showing impact of voting](image)

*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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved infrastructure</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved education</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in economic status</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall development</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved agricultural development</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and order improvements</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline in law and order</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education not improving</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing employment</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No development</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased employment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worsing economic status</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure improvement</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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)

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents for each level of political efficacy from 2006 to 2018.]

**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)

![Bar chart showing influence over national/local government decisions](chart.png)

**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).
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)

![Bar chart showing willingness to switch parties to follow a candidate]

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)

![Bar chart showing the most important candidate attributes for 2015, 2017, and 2018.]

- Personal characteristics: 33, 39, 44
- They have done good things/delivered (previous record): 4, 9, 11
- Personal achievements: 6, 9, 10
- Education: 10, 12, 14
- Family background: 6, 10, 9
- Religious piety and values: 5, 9, 9
- Availability and accessibility: 6, 9, 8
- Ability to win: 2, 3, 3
- Introduction by the party: 5, 3, 3

**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)

**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)

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](chart)

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](chart)
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

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)

![Bar chart showing responses to role of MPs]

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)

![Bar chart showing the percentage of people able to identify their MP across years 2015, 2017, and 2018.]

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)

![Bar chart showing the percentage of people who have or have not had MP visits to their community across years 2015, 2017, and 2018.]

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)

![Bar chart showing satisfaction levels](image)

**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)

![Bar chart showing correlation](image)

**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](image)

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](image)
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)

![Bar chart showing satisfaction with UP representatives](image)

**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).

![Bar chart showing satisfaction correlated with contact](image)

**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)

- Freedom of speech/opportunity to talk: 10 (2017), 12 (2018)

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)

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.

**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)

**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

**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)

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
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)
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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National</th>
<th>Barishal</th>
<th>Chattogram</th>
<th>Dhaka</th>
<th>Khulna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAB</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>-5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Election Commission</td>
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<td>-2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media/journalists</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>-22</td>
<td>17</td>
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</tr>
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<td>International</td>
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<td>-3</td>
<td>-7</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rangpur</th>
<th>Sylhet</th>
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<td>NGOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Election Commission</td>
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<td>-13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media/journalists</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-21</td>
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<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
More than half of Bangladeshis (58%) lack trust in other people.

 Lowest percentage of people who trust each other:
- Khulna: 12%
- Rajshahi: 23%
- Rangpur: 41%
- Chattogram: 44%
- Mymensingh: 46%

 Highest percentage of people who trust each other:
- Barishal: 70%
- Sylhet: 61%
- Dhaka: 53%

“Most people can be trusted”

Religion Comparison:
- 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)

![Bar Chart]

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


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

![Bar Chart](image1)

**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

![Bar Chart](image2)

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

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)

![Bar chart showing trust levels comparing national, Barishal, Dhaka, Rajshahi, Graduate & above, Non-Bengali/ethnic/others, CHT Area, Buddhist, and Internet Users.]

**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)

![Bar chart showing 42% cooperative and 45% not cooperative.]

**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).
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)

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)

- 72% I will not accept it if he/she is from other religion
- 27% Think of own values and social status
- 31% It would be bad to live with people of other religions
- 29% My religion forbids it

**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?

- 73% Muslims 74% Mosques 2017
- 65% Hindus 59% Hindu temples 2017
- 64% Christians 58% Christian churches 2017
- 63% Buddhists 58% Buddhist pagodas 2017

**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Rangpur</th>
<th>Sylhet</th>
<th>Chattogram</th>
<th>Mymensingh</th>
<th>Rajshahi</th>
<th>Dhaka</th>
<th>Khulna</th>
<th>Barishal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Okay</th>
<th>Not okay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They should leave now</th>
<th>Until it is safe to return</th>
<th>Until they can go to another country</th>
<th>Indefinitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

![Bar chart showing responses to the aid question]

**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).
CHAPTER 9 - SECURITY AND VIOLENCE

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

DIVISION COMPARISON

Always or often fear for personal safety

BIGGEST CAUSES
Four most commonly cited reasons for the cause of violence

1. Political Conflict 3%  
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

**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

![Bar chart showing the biggest causes of violence in Bangladesh, with political conflict being the most common cause, followed by corruption, drugs, law & order situation, theft, robbery, murder, extortion, hartals and political violence, creating influence in locality, and mastani.]

**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.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Barishal</th>
<th>Chattogram</th>
<th>Dhaka</th>
<th>Khulna</th>
<th>Mymensingh</th>
<th>Rajshahi</th>
<th>Rangpur</th>
<th>Sylhet</th>
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</table>

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft, robbery, murder</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain local control</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law &amp; order situation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forceful occupation of property</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extortion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartals and political violence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastani</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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.

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

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violence</th>
<th>Concerned</th>
<th>Very Concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political violence</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral violence</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorist attack</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Militant attack</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminality</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious violence</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disappearance/murder</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property mischief</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

**Figure 9.9:** Fear of different forms of violence - By gender

**Figure 9.10:** Fear of different forms of violence - By religion
Figure 9.11: Fear of different forms of violence - By ethnicity

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

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

*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

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). This opinion is strongest in Dhaka, where more than half of respondents (58%) say violence will increase, and lowest in Mymensingh (17 percent).

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

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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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>No Fear</th>
<th>Some Fear</th>
<th>Some Fear</th>
<th>A Lot of Fear</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in a political demonstration</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move around at night</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting in a national election</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the police, if needed</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in a peaceful demonstration</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join a religious protest</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting in a local election</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running for public office</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel around the country</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to official office, if needed</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 9.16: Fear of engaging in activities](image)

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear of harassment by police</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of violent attacks by anti-political activists</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of terrorist attacks</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In case of an accident</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of violent attacks by political party activists</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear theft/hijacker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 9.17: Reason for fear of engaging in activities](image)
Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. (Q73) Response: some or a lot of fear

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

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

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

**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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Participate in a political demonstration</th>
<th>Move around at night</th>
<th>Go to the police, if needed</th>
<th>Join a religious protest</th>
<th>Travel around the country</th>
<th>Participate in a peaceful demonstration</th>
<th>Run for public office</th>
<th>Vote in a local election</th>
<th>Go to official office, if needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mymensingh</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khulna</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barishal</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangpur</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chattogram</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2518</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.
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

88% Primary Education
85% Secondary Education
84% Madrassa Education
82% Higher Secondary Education
58% Foreign Universities
68% College/University across the country
75% Local College/University
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

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

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)

![Bar chart showing the appropriate age for marriage by gender and age group.](image)

**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)

![Bar chart showing the appropriate age for marriage for women by gender and age group.](image)

**Figure 10.4:** Appropriate age of marriage for women – Responses under age 18, by gender
What do you think is the appropriate age for a woman to get married? (Q54) Percent of responses under 18 years of age - by division

![Barishal: 11%, Chattogram: 6%, Dhaka: 5%, Khulna: 5%, Mymensingh: 1%, Rajshahi: 4%, Rangpur: 5%, Sylhet: 4%]

**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. Respondents in Barishal are most likely to give responses below age 18 (11 percent), and those in Mymensingh are least likely (1 percent).

Some people say that educating boys is more important than educating girls. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion? (Q55)

![88% strongly/somewhat disagree, 12% strongly/somewhat agree]

**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).

*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.*

88 I BANGLADESH’S DEMOCRACY 2018
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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Parliament</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upazila Parishad</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zila Parishad</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Corporation</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Parishad</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large company (CEO)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leader</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union/Professional Assoc</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Based Assoc</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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

![Bar chart showing support for women's leadership by division.]

**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)

![Bar chart showing participation in Parliament by gender and year.]

**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)

![Bar chart showing gender preference for MP across years.](chart)

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

![Bar chart showing gender preference by division.](chart)

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.

**Figure 10.14:** Political leadership and gender – By age

**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 |
| 38 | 40 | 43 | 31 |
| 55 | 55 | 62 | 60 |

**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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

\(^{10}\)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](image)

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

![Figure 11.2: Meaning of being Bangladeshi – By religion](image)
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

![Frequency of praying chart](image)

> **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).

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

![Bar chart showing social media usage](chart1)

**Figure 12.3**: Use of social media – Annual comparison

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

![Bar chart showing social media usage by gender](chart2)

**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

![Bar chart showing platform usage by division](chart.png)

**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

![Bar chart showing Facebook usage by gender](chart2.png)

**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% Male
51% Female

13.2 Rural/Urban

Rural/Urban

25% Urban
75% Rural
13.3 Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 24</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.4 Educational Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to class 10</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSC or HSC</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate &amp; above</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13.5 Distribution by Division

Distribution by division

- Barishal: 12%
- Chattogram: 14%
- Dhaka: 16%
- Khulna: 12%
- Mymensingh: 12%
- Rajshahi: 12%
- Rangpur: 12%
- Sylhet: 12%

13.6 Religion

Religion

- Muslim: 53%
- Hindu: 24%
- Christian: 16%
- Buddhist: 7%

Color Legend:
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Christian
- Buddhist
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.
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.

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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
<th>Cluster (PSU)</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>Cluster (PSU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>5,304</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>3952</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barishal</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chattogram</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khulna</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mymensingh</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangpur</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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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