

# Profiling of Multidimensional Deprivation among Children in Nepal 2026



## Child Deprivation Analysis



Government of Nepal  
Office of the Prime Minister and Councils of Ministers  
National Statistics Office



United Nations  
Children's Fund



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*September 2026*



Government Of Nepal  
Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers  
**National Statistics Office**  
Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal



The Child Deprivation Analysis was carried out under the country program priorities jointly agreed between the National Statistics Office (NSO) and UNICEF, guided by the rolling work plan. This comprehensive analysis draws on three rounds of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)—2014, 2019, and 2024–25 to provide a detailed picture of child well-being and deprivation in Nepal.

By comparing data across these survey years, the analysis highlights progress made, persistent challenges, and emerging issues affecting children, while also aligning with national development strategies and global Sustainable Development Goals. The findings serve as an evidence base for policy formulation, program design, and targeted interventions aimed at reducing child deprivation and ensuring equitable outcomes for all children in the country.

The objective of this report is to facilitate the timely dissemination and further use of results from the NMICS different rounds. The report contains detailed methodology, and standards used for calculation child deprivation analysis. This report is accompanied by a series of statistical snapshots.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|               |                                                  |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>AHS</b>    | Annual Household Survey                          |
| <b>CBS</b>    | Central Bureau of Statistics                     |
| <b>CRC</b>    | Convention on the Rights of the Child            |
| <b>ECD</b>    | Early Childhood Development                      |
| <b>ECE</b>    | Early Childhood Education                        |
| <b>IYCF</b>   | Infant and Young Child Feeding                   |
| <b>JMP</b>    | Joint Monitoring Programme (WHO/UNICEF)          |
| <b>MICS</b>   | Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey                |
| <b>MODA</b>   | Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis        |
| <b>MPI</b>    | Multidimensional Poverty Index                   |
| <b>NDHS</b>   | Nepal Demographic and Health Survey              |
| <b>NLSS</b>   | Nepal Living Standards Survey                    |
| <b>NMICS</b>  | Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey          |
| <b>NPC</b>    | National Planning Commission                     |
| <b>NSO</b>    | National Statistics Office                       |
| <b>OHCHR</b>  | Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| <b>OPHI</b>   | Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative  |
| <b>SDG</b>    | Sustainable Development Goal                     |
| <b>SPEA</b>   | Social Policy and Economic Analysis              |
| <b>TBN</b>    | Technical Briefing Note                          |
| <b>UNICEF</b> | United Nations Children's Fund                   |
| <b>WASH</b>   | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene                    |
| <b>k</b>      | Number of Dimensions                             |

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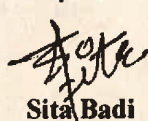
Message From the Minister

It is my privilege to present this Child Deprivation Report, drawn from the findings of the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS) 2024–25, NMICS 2019 and NMICS 2014. This report offers the most comprehensive and up-to-date picture yet of the conditions in which Nepal's children are growing up the progress we have made, and the gaps that remain.

Every child in Nepal has the right to grow up free from deprivation with access to adequate nutrition, safe water and sanitation (WASH), quality education, timely information, secure housing, and protection from violence and exploitation. The evidence in this report shows that while Nepal has made real progress since 2014, deprivation has not declined evenly across all dimensions or all cut-off thresholds. Nutrition and WASH remain among the most persistent dimensions of deprivation for Nepali children, while gaps in access to education and information continue to limit children's ability to learn, participate, and realize their full potential. Children who lack birth registration, who are engaged in child labor, or who experience violent discipline also continue to face significantly higher and more compounded deprivation than their peers. These findings are a call to action, not merely a record of where we stand.

This Ministry remains firmly committed to translating this evidence into targeted policy and programming improving access to nutritious food and quality WASH facilities, strengthening the education system and children's access to information, expanding civil registration and child protection services, and working across sectors and all three tiers of government to ensure that no child is left behind, regardless of where they live or into which household they are born.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the National Statistics Office and UNICEF Nepal. I hope this report will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, civil society, and all who share our commitment to the wellbeing of Nepal's children.

  
Sita Badi

Hon. Sita Badi  
Minister

Minister of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities and Social Security

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Children represent the foundation of Nepal's future, yet those in their earliest stages of development often face complex, interconnected challenges that cannot be captured by monetary measures alone. The descriptive report on **"Profiling of Multidimensional Deprivation among Children in Nepal 2026 "** offers a comprehensive, evidence-based assessment of the lived realities of our young population, providing critical visibility into where child rights and well-being remain unfulfilled.

Utilizing microdata from the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS), this report moves beyond single-sector analyses to examine how overlapping deprivations ranging from severe dietary diversity deficits to inadequate housing, WASH conditions, and exposure to violent discipline impact infants and young children across different socio-economic strata and geographic regions. The findings underscore that mothers' education serves as the most powerful protective factor, while severe physical deprivations remain heavily concentrated among the country's most vulnerable and rural households.

As Nepal continues to advance our national development goals and international commitments toward child rights and poverty reduction, robust and disaggregated data must remain at the center of our strategy. This report is intended to serve as a vital tool for policymakers, government line ministries, subnational authorities, and development partners. It provides the empirical foundation required to target early childhood interventions, align multi-sectoral strategies, and optimize public resource allocation for maximum impact.

On behalf of the National Statistics Office, I hope this publication serves as a catalyst for informed dialogue, targeted policy action, and renewed commitment to ensuring that every child in Nepal develops to their full potential free from multidimensional deprivation.

Laxmi Kumari Basnet  
Chief Statistician  
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**Message from the Deputy Chief Statistician**

Children are not only the future of our nation but also the most sensitive barometers of its socio-economic progress. Traditional poverty metrics, primarily anchored in household income or consumption expenditure, often obscure the specific, complex, and age-dependent deprivations experienced directly by children. Recognizing that child well-being requires a dedicated analytical lens, the National Statistics Office (NSO) has produced this benchmark report, **"Profiling of Multidimensional Deprivation among Children in Nepal 2026."**

This report represents a landmark milestone in Nepal's statistical history. By applying UNICEF's Child Rights-based **Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA)** framework to microdata across three consecutive rounds of the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS 2014, 2019, and 2024–25), we have placed individual children at the core unit of analysis. The findings provide an objective, nationally comparable, and granular dynamic assessment of child deprivation over the past decade.

While the data reflects commendable decadal progress in expanding physical infrastructure, health interventions, and basic social service delivery, it equally highlights persistent structural bottlenecks—particularly in early childhood nutrition, digital inclusion, and regional equities. The concentration of multidimensional deprivation in specific geographic regions such as Karnali and Madhesh provinces, as well as among marginalized socio-economic quintiles, underscores the urgent necessity to move from universal broad-based interventions to sharply targeted, equity-focused policies.

As Nepal progresses toward its graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status and works to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—specifically SDG 1.2 on reducing multidimensional poverty—the evidence generated in this report offers a rigorous empirical roadmap. I strongly encourage planners, policymakers, development partners, and sub-national governments to leverage these insights to align child-sensitive social protection, integrate cross-sectoral service delivery, and utilize localized small-area estimates for equitable fiscal transfers.

I express my sincere appreciation to the technical teams of the National Statistics Office and UNICEF Nepal for their dedication and collaborative efforts in bringing this vital study to fruition. NSO remains committed to generating high-quality, disaggregated, and timely statistical evidence to ensure that no child in Nepal is left behind.

**Dr. Sharad Kumar Sharma**  
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## Prologue

The National Statistics Office (NSO) is pleased to present **“Profiling of Multidimensional Deprivation among Children in Nepal 2026.”** This report offers child-focused statistical evidence to support informed social policy and effective resource allocation.

Drawing on the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) methodology and three Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey NMICS rounds (2014, 2019, and 2024–25), the study complements household level deprivation measures. It examines intersecting child deprivations across fundamental stages and dimensions, incorporating water, sanitation, housing, nutrition, health, education, and information and communication.

Despite Nepal’s significant progress in infrastructure and basic services, multidimensional deprivation remains uneven across geographic areas, socio-economic status, and education levels. Addressing these disparities requires evidence-based, inter-sectoral programmes that prioritize the most vulnerable children, especially those in underserved provinces and poorer wealth quintiles.

As Nepal deepens federalism by incorporating child deprivation metrics into national poverty frameworks and fiscal transfer mechanisms, including Fiscal Grants, it will be essential for informing targeted provincial and local interventions.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Social and Gender Statistics Section of NSO, UNICEF Nepal, and all stakeholders who contributed to this study. I trust this publication will serve as a useful resource for policymakers, researchers, and development practitioners committed to advancing child rights and inclusive development.

**Krishna Tuladhar**

Deputy Chief Statistician

National Statistics Office (NSO)



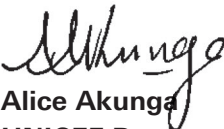
## Foreword

UNICEF Nepal is honored to have partnered with the National Statistics Office in producing this first comprehensive Child Deprivation Analysis. I extend my deep appreciation to the Government of Nepal, and to the National Statistics Office in particular, for its vision in placing children at the center of the country's poverty and welfare statistics, and for its sustained collaboration across three rounds of the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey.

This landmark effort provides an evidence-based understanding of the multidimensional challenges confronting Nepal's children. It highlights disparities across regions, communities, and social groups, and offers critical insights to guide policies and programs that ensure no child is left behind.

This report is more than data it is a call to action. It equips policymakers, practitioners, and partners with tools to design targeted interventions that address the root causes of deprivation. UNICEF is proud to support this pioneering initiative and remains committed to working alongside the Government of Nepal, civil society, and development partners to ensure that every child survives, thrives, and reaches their full potential. These reports fulfill the evidence gap on child-specific indicators for monitoring SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

I invite all stakeholders to use this analysis as a guiding framework for collective action. Together, we can build a Nepal where every child is free from deprivation, empowered to dream, and supported to achieve.

  
Alice Akunga

UNICEF Representative to Nepal





## १. पृष्ठभूमि तथा औचित्य

बालबालिका राष्ट्रको भविष्यका आधारशिला हुन् । मौद्रिक वा घरपरिवारको उपभोग स्तरमा मात्र सीमित परम्परागत गरिबी मापन पद्धतिले बालबालिकाले व्यक्तिगत रूपमा व्यहोर्नुपरेका बहुआयामिक तथा जटिल प्रतिकूलताहरूलाई पूर्ण रूपमा उजागर गर्न सक्दैन । यस तथ्यलाई ध्यानमा राखी राष्ट्रिय तथ्याङ्क कार्यालयले युनिसेफ (UNICEF) नेपालको प्राविधिक सहयोगमा “नेपालमा बालबालिकाको बहुआयामिक वञ्चितीकरण प्रोफाइल, २०२६” सम्बन्धी प्रतिवेदन तयार पारेको छ ।

यो प्रतिवेदन नेपाल बहुसूचक सर्वेक्षण का तीन शृङ्खलाहरू (NMICS २०१४, NMICS २०१९ र NMICS २०२४-२५) को सूक्ष्म तथ्याङ्क मा आधारित भई बालबालिकालाई विश्लेषणको एकाइ मानेर तयार पारिएको नेपालको पहिलो राष्ट्रिय रूपमा तुलनायोग्य र वस्तुनिष्ठ प्रतिवेदन हो । यसले दिगो विकास लक्ष्य (SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 र 10) तथा ‘कोही पनि पछाडि नपरुन्’ (Leaving No One Behind) भन्ने राष्ट्रिय प्रतिबद्धता पूरा भए-नभएको एकिन गर्न ठोस आधार प्रदान गर्दछ ।

## २. अवधारणात्मक विधि

यस प्रतिवेदनमा संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघीय बालकोष (युनिसेफ) को बाल अधिकारमा आधारित ‘बहुआयामिक वञ्चितीकरण विश्लेषण’ (Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis - MODA) विधि प्रयोग गरिएको छ । यस विधिमा बालबालिकाको अधिकारहरूमा आधारित भई खानेपानी, सरसफाइ, आवास, पोषण, स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा र सूचना तथा प्रविधि लगायत सात प्रमुख विषयगत आयामहरू (Dimensions) र सो सम्बन्धी २० वटा सूचकहरू (Indicators) को विश्लेषण गरिएको छ ।

यस प्रतिवेदनमा बालबालिकाको उमेर समूह (०-२३ महिना, २४-५९ महिना, ५-९ वर्ष र १०-१७ वर्ष) अनुसार उनीहरूको जीवनचक्रको आवश्यकताका आधारमा सूचकहरू समावेश गरिएका छन् र बहुआयामिक वञ्चिति मापनका लागि बालअधिकार महासन्धिका (CRC) सूचकहरू र एल्कायर-फोस्टर (Alkire-Foster) पद्धतिमा आधारित तीन प्रमुख सूचकहरू प्रयोग गरिएका छन्:

- **बालबालिकाको वञ्चितीकरणको दर (Headcount Ratio - H):** बहुआयामिक रूपमा वञ्चित बालबालिकाको प्रतिशत ।
- **वञ्चितीकरणको गहनता (Intensity - A):** वञ्चित बालबालिकाले भोगेका आयामको औसत प्रतिशत ।
- **समायोजित बालबालिकाको वञ्चितीकरणको दर (Adjusted Headcount Ratio -  $M_0$ ):** वञ्चितीकरणको दर र गहनताको गुणनफल ( $M_0 = H * A$ ), जसले कुल बहुआयामिक बाल वञ्चिति सूचकांक मापन गर्दछ ।

## ३. मुख्य निष्कर्षहरू

### ३.१ बहुआयामिक वञ्चितीकरणको प्रवृत्ति

नेपाल बहुसूचक सर्वेक्षण NMICS (२०१४ देखि २०२४-२५) को नतिजा अनुसार विगत एक दशकमा भौतिक पूर्वाधार र आधारभूत सेवाको पहुँच विस्तार भई बालबालिका (० देखि १७ वर्ष उमेर) मा हुने गम्भीर प्रकारका वञ्चितीकरण न्यूनीकरणमा उल्लेखनीय प्रगति हासिल भएको देखिन्छ:

- **खानेपानी र सरसफाइ:** अस्वस्थ खानेपानी प्रयोग गर्ने बालबालिकाको दर २०१४ मा ७.० प्रतिशत रहेकोमा २०२४-२५ मा १.९ प्रतिशतमा घटेको छ । सरसफाइको सुविधा नभएका बालबालिका ३२.५ प्रतिशतबाट घटेर ९.० प्रतिशतमा सीमित भएका छन् ।
- **आवास र विद्युत:** कच्ची भुईँ (Floor) भएका घरपरिवारमा बस्ने बालबालिकाहरू २०१४ मा ७२.५ प्रतिशत रहेकोमा २०२४-२५ मा घटेर ४३.७ प्रतिशत र विद्युत पहुँच नभएका बालबालिका १८.६ प्रतिशतबाट ३.८ प्रतिशतमा घटेका छन् ।

- **स्वास्थ्य र खोप:** झाडापखाला लाग्दा उपचार नपाउने बालबालिकाको ५२.८ प्रतिशत (२०१४) बाट घटेर ७.९ प्रतिशत (२०२४-२५) र पूर्ण खोप नपाउने बालबालिकाको २९.८ प्रतिशत (२०१९) बाट घटेर १०.५ प्रतिशत (२०२४-२५) पुगेको छ। दक्ष स्वास्थ्यकर्मीको सहायता विना जन्म भएका बालबालिकाको अनुपात ४३.६ प्रतिशत (२०१४) बाट ८.८ प्रतिशत (२०२४-२५) मा घटेको छ।
- **पोषणको चुनौती:** भौतिक पूर्वाधारमा सुधार भए तापनि पोषण क्षेत्रको प्रगति सुस्त देखिएको छ। सन् २०२४-२५ मा उमेर ६ देखि २३ महिनाका ६०.७ प्रतिशत बालबालिकाले न्यूनतम स्वीकार्य आहार (Minimum Acceptable Diet) पाएका छैनन्। ५ वर्षमुनिका बालबालिकामध्ये २६.२ प्रतिशत पुङ्कोपन (Stunting) र ६.६ प्रतिशत दुबलोपन (Wasting) बाट प्रभावित छन्।
- **सूचना पहुँचको प्रवृत्ति:** परम्परागत संचारका साधन (रेडियो/टिभी) नभएका घरपरिवारका बालबालिकाहरूको ३६.१ प्रतिशत (२०१४) बाट बढेर ५३.३ प्रतिशत (२०२४-२५) पुगेका छन्, जसले सूचना प्रविधिको स्वरूपमा आएको परिवर्तन तथा नयाँ डिजिटल प्रविधि (मोबाइल) लाई अपनाएको दर्शाउँछ।

### ३.२ बालबालिकाको बहुआयामिक वञ्चितीकरणको समग्र स्थिति (उमेर ०-१७ वर्ष)

- **एक वा सो भन्दा बढी खप्तिएको वञ्चिति:** सन् २०२४-२५ को अवस्था अनुसार ८०.२ प्रतिशत बालबालिका कम्तीमा एक प्रकारको ( $k \geq 1$ ) र ५१.६ प्रतिशत बालबालिका एकैसाथ दुई वा सोभन्दा बढी ( $k \geq 2$ ) किसिमको वञ्चितिबाट प्रभावित छन्।
- **बालबालिकाको बहुआयामिक वञ्चिति ( $k \geq 3$ ):** तीन वा सोभन्दा बढी आयाममा वञ्चित बालबालिकालाई बहुआयामिक रूपमा वञ्चित भएको मान्दा, ०-१७ वर्षका २१.४ प्रतिशत बालबालिका बहुआयामिक रूपमा वञ्चित छन्। यी बालबालिकामा वञ्चितीकरणको औसत गहनता (A) ४६.९ प्रतिशत रहेको छ, जसका आधारमा नेपालमा बालबालिकाको बहुआयामिक वञ्चिति सूचकांक (M0) ०.१०० कायम भएको छ।
- **अति गम्भीर वञ्चिति:** चार वा सोभन्दा बढी आयाममा वञ्चित ( $k \geq 4$ ) बालबालिकाको दर २०१४ मा ५.६ प्रतिशत रहेकोमा २०२४-२५ मा ५.१ प्रतिशतमा झरेको छ।

### ३.३ खप्तिएका वञ्चितिहरूको विश्लेषण (Overlapping Deprivations Analysis)

- स्वास्थ्य, पोषण र सरसफाई तीनै आयाममा एकैसाथ वञ्चित बालबालिकाको अनुपात २०१४ मा १९.४ प्रतिशत रहेकोमा २०२४-२५ मा उल्लेख्य रूपमा घटेर २.८ प्रतिशत मा सीमित भएको छ, जसले एकीकृत स्वास्थ्य-पोषण कार्यक्रमको सकारात्मक प्रभाव परेको देखाउँछ।

### ३.४ सामाजिक, आर्थिक तथा भौगोलिक असमानता

- **सम्पन्नताको पञ्चांश (Wealth Quintile):** अति विपन्न २० प्रतिशत घरपरिवारका बालबालिकाहरूमा बहुआयामिक वञ्चितिहरू अत्यधिक उच्च छन्। नेपाल बहुसूचक सर्वेक्षण २०२४-२५ मा आवास आयाममा बन्चित बालबालिका अति विपन्न वर्गका ९८.८ प्रतिशत छन् भने अति सम्पन्न वर्गका ११.७ प्रतिशत मात्र रहेका छन्।
- **मातृ साक्षरता र अभिभावकको शिक्षा:** निरक्षर आमाका बालबालिकामा स्वास्थ्य आयाममा वञ्चिति नेपाल बहुसूचक सर्वेक्षण २०२४-२५ मा २४.१ प्रतिशत रहेको छ भने उच्च शिक्षा हासिल गरेका आमाका बालबालिकामा यो वञ्चिति ५.६ प्रतिशत मात्र छ।
- **प्रादेशिक विषमता:** कर्णाली प्रदेशका बालबालिकामा नेपाल बहुसूचक सर्वेक्षण २०२४-२५ मा आवास आयाममा (८७.६%) र खानेपानी आयाममा (७.३%) को वञ्चिति रहेको छ भने मधेश प्रदेशमा सूचना तथा सञ्चार आयाममा (६२.६%), पोषण आयाममा (५०.६%), शिक्षा आयाममा (२०.०%) र स्वास्थ्य आयाममा (१८.१%) को वञ्चिति रहेको छ, जुन राष्ट्रिय औसतभन्दा धेरै उच्च छ। यसको विपरीत बागमती र गण्डकी प्रदेशमा उक्त आयाममा वञ्चितिको दर राष्ट्रिय औसतभन्दा निकै कम छ।
- **लैङ्गिक समानता:** बालक (२२.७% सरसफाई वञ्चिति) र बालिका (२३.६% सरसफाई वञ्चिति) बीच वञ्चितिकरणको लैङ्गिक अन्तर निकै कम छ। बाल वञ्चितीकरणमा लैङ्गिक भिन्नताभन्दा भौगोलिक, सामाजिक-आर्थिक तथा शैक्षिक असमानता प्रमुख कारकका रूपमा रहेका छन्।

### ३.५ बाल संरक्षण तथा बाल कल्याणकारी सूचकहरू

- **जन्म दर्ता:** नेपाल बहुसूचक सर्वेक्षण २०२४-२५ मा जन्म दर्ता नभएका बालबालिकामा शिक्षा आयाममा वञ्चिति (२१.९%) जन्म दर्ता भएका बालबालिका (१०.८%) को तुलनामा दोब्बर रहेको छ ।
- **बालश्रम तथा अनुशासन:** आर्थिक रूपमा सक्रिय (बालश्रममा संलग्न) बालबालिकामा नेपाल बहुसूचक सर्वेक्षण २०२४-२५ आवास आयाममा (७०.२%) र सूचना तथा सञ्चार आयाममा (५८.१%) को वञ्चिति रहेको छ जुन गैर-बालश्रमिक बालबालिकाको तुलनामा उल्लेख्य रूपमा बढी हो ।

## ४. नीतिगत सुझावहरू

१. **लक्षित तथा समता-केन्द्रित लगानी:** राष्ट्रिय औसतमा सुधार भएतापनि बालबालिकाहरूमा भएको वञ्चितिकरण विशिष्ट क्षेत्र र समूहमा केन्द्रित हुँदै गएकोले व्यापक (Broad-based) पहुँचको सट्टा अति विपन्न, ग्रामीण तथा पछाडि परेका समूहलाई लक्षित गरी स्रोत विनियोजन गरिनुपर्छ ।
२. **प्रादेशिक र स्थानीय नीति निर्माण:** कर्णाली र मधेश प्रदेशका विशिष्ट चुनौती (आवास, खानेपानी, शिक्षा, पोषण) सम्बोधन गर्न प्रदेश-केन्द्रित बहुक्षेत्रीय कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गरिनुपर्छ ।
३. **प्रारम्भिक बाल पोषणमा पुनर्जागरण:** उमेर ६-२३ महिना का बालबालिकाका लागि शिशु तथा बाल आहार (IYCF) सुधार गर्न एकीकृत पोषण तथा सामाजिक सुरक्षा कार्यक्रम विस्तार गरिनुपर्छ ।
४. **मातृ शिक्षा र बाल-संवेदनशील सामाजिक सुरक्षा:** आमाको शैक्षिक स्तरले बाल कल्याणमा बलियो सुरक्षा कवचको काम गर्ने भएकाले महिला साक्षरता र बाल अनुदान (Child Grant) जस्ता कार्यक्रमलाई प्राथमिकता दिनुपर्छ ।
५. **एकीकृत सेवा प्रवाह र नियमित अनुगमन:** स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, खानेपानी तथा सरसफाइ, पोषण र बाल संरक्षणलाई पृथक् रूपमा नहेरी एकीकृत रूपमा सम्बोधन गरिनुपर्छ । साथै नीतिगत निर्णयलाई तथ्यपरक बनाउन राष्ट्रिय तथ्याङ्क कार्यालय मार्फत नियमित रूपमा बालबालिकासम्बन्धी खण्डिकृत (Disaggregated) तथ्याङ्क उपलब्ध हुने व्यवस्था गरिनुपर्छ ।
६. घरपरिवारस्तरमा मापन गरिने बहुआयामिक गरिवी सूचकाङ्क (MPI) र बालबालिकाको बहुआयामिक वञ्चितिकरण विच अन्तरसम्बन्धित विश्लेषण गर्नुपर्ने देखिन्छ ।
७. बालबालिकाको बहुआयामिक वञ्चितिकरणको लघुक्षेत्र अनुमान (Small Area Estimation of MODA) को मापन गरि विभिन्न क्षेत्रबाट प्रदान गरिने अनुदानसँग आवद्ध गर्नुपर्ने देखिन्छ ।

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Children represent the cornerstone of a nation's future. Traditional monetary or household-level consumption-based poverty measurement frameworks fail to fully capture the complex, multidimensional deprivations experienced directly by individual children. Recognizing this critical gap, the National Statistics Office (NSO), with technical support from UNICEF Nepal, has prepared the report titled **"Profiling of Multidimensional Deprivation among Children in Nepal 2026."**

This report serves as Nepal's first nationally representative, objective, and comparable study utilizing microdata from three rounds of the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS 2014, NMICS 2019, and NMICS 2024–25), placing individual children at the core unit of analysis. The findings provide a robust empirical foundation for monitoring progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 10) and fulfilling the national commitment to "Leave No Children Behind."

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The analysis adopts UNICEF's child rights-based **Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA)** framework. Rooted in the fundamental rights of children, the study evaluates 20 indicators across seven primary thematic dimensions: Water, Sanitation, Housing, Nutrition, Health, Education, and Information & Communication.

The methodology incorporates life-cycle-specific indicators tailored to distinct age brackets: 0–23 months, 24–59 months, 5–9 years, and 10–17 years. To measure multidimensional child deprivation based on Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) indicators and the Alkire-Foster method, three key statistical indices were derived:

- **Headcount Ratio (H):** The proportion of children experiencing multidimensional deprivation.
- **Intensity of Deprivation (A):** The average proportion of dimensions in which deprived children experience deprivation.
- **Adjusted Headcount Ratio (M0):** The product of the headcount ratio and intensity ( $M0 = H * A$ ), serving as the overall Multidimensional Child Deprivation Index.

## 3. KEY FINDINGS

### 3.1 Trends in Multidimensional Deprivation (NMICS 2014 to 2024–25)

Over the past decade, significant progress has been achieved in reducing severe child deprivations (ages 0–17 years), driven by expanded physical infrastructure and improved access to basic social services:

- **Water and Sanitation:** The proportion of children using unimproved drinking water dropped from 7.0% in 2014 to 1.9% in 2024–25. Children without access to sanitation facilities decreased sharply from 32.5% to 9.0%.
- **Housing and Electricity:** Children residing in dwellings with unimproved flooring decreased from 72.5% in 2014 to 43.7% in 2024–25. Deprivation in access to electricity dropped from 18.6% to 3.8%.
- **Health and Immunization:** The proportion of children suffering from diarrhea without medical treatment fell from 52.8% (2014) to 7.9% (2024–25). Non-immunized/partially immunized children fell from 29.8% (2019) to 10.5% (2024–25). Births unattended by skilled health personnel dropped from 43.6% (2014) to 8.8% (2024–25).

- **Persistent Nutritional Challenges:** Progress in child nutrition remains slow despite infrastructural gains. In 2024–25, 60.7% of infants and young children aged 6–23 months did not receive a Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD). Among children under five years, 26.2% suffer from stunting and 6.6% from wasting.
- **Emerging Trends in Information Access:** The proportion of children living in households lacking traditional media (radio/TV) increased from 36.1% (2014) to 53.3% (2024–25), reflecting shifting media consumption habits and an evolving digital landscape.

### 3.2 Overall Status of Multidimensional Child Deprivation (Ages 0–17)

- **Single and Multiple Deprivations:** In 2024–25, 80.2% of children experience at least one deprivation ( $k \geq 1$ ), while 51.6% face two or more deprivations ( $k \geq 2$ ) simultaneously.
- **National Multidimensional Child Deprivation Rate ( $k \geq 3$ ):** Defining multidimensionally deprived children as those deprived in three or more dimensions ( $k \geq 3$ ), **21.4% of children aged 0–17 years** are multidimensionally deprived. The average intensity of deprivation (A) among these children is 46.9%, yielding a national Adjusted Headcount Ratio (M0) of **0.100**.
- **Severe Deprivation ( $k \geq 4$ ):** The proportion of children suffering from extreme deprivation across four or more dimensions declined slightly from 5.6% in 2014 to 5.1% in 2024–25.

### 3.3 Overlapping Deprivations Analysis

- The proportion of children simultaneously deprived in Health, Nutrition, and Sanitation dropped significantly from 19.4% in 2014 to 2.8% in 2024–25, demonstrating the positive impact of integrated health-nutrition interventions.
- Conversely, the dual burden of overlapping deprivations in Housing and ICT increased to **35.2%**.

### 3.4 Socioeconomic and Geographic Disparities

- **Wealth Quintiles:** Deprivation remains concentrated among children in the lowest wealth quintile. Housing deprivation affects 98.8% of children in the poorest quintile compared to only 11.7% in the richest quintile.
- **Mothers Education:** Health deprivation is 24.1% among children of illiterate mothers, whereas it stands at just 5.6% among children whose mothers completed higher education.
- **Provincial Disparities:** Karnali Province experiences the highest rates of Housing (87.6%) and Drinking Water (7.3%) deprivations. Madhesh Province records deprivations significantly higher than the national average in ICT (62.6%), Nutrition (50.6%), Education (20.0%), and Health (18.1%). Bagmati and Gandaki provinces exhibit the lowest deprivation rates overall.
- **Gender Parity:** Deprivation rates between boys (22.7% sanitation deprivation) and girls (23.6% sanitation deprivation) display minimal disparity. Geographical, socioeconomic, and educational inequalities drive child deprivation far more than gender differences.

### 3.5 Child Protection and Welfare Indicators

- **Birth Registration:** Children without birth registration experience double the rate of educational deprivation (21.9%) compared to registered children (10.8%).
- **Child Labor and Discipline:** Economically active children (engaged in child labor) face significantly higher deprivations in Housing (70.2%) and Information (58.1%) compared to non-working children.

## 4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD

1. **Targeted and Equity-Focused Investments:** As deprivations become increasingly concentrated among specific vulnerable sub-populations, financial allocation must pivot from broad-based coverage to highly targeted interventions for rural, marginalized, and poorest households.
2. **Province-Specific Policy Formulation:** Customized, multi-sectoral programs must be deployed to address distinct regional vulnerabilities—specifically e.g targeting Housing and Water in Karnali, and Education, Health, ICT, and Nutrition in Madhesh Province.
3. **Revitalizing Early Childhood Nutrition:** Integrated nutrition and social protection schemes must be expanded to improve Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices for children aged 6–23 months.
4. **Maternal Education and Child-Sensitive Social Protection:** Given maternal education’s strong protective effect, policies should prioritize adult female literacy alongside strengthening the reach and efficiency of the Child Grant scheme.
5. **Integrated Service Delivery and Systematic Monitoring:** Social policy must shift from sectoral silos toward integrated delivery spanning Health, Education, WASH, Nutrition, and Protection. Disaggregated child-centric data systems at the National Statistics Office should be continually strengthened for evidence-based policymaking.
6. **Alignment with Household Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI):** Synergies and methodological alignment should be established between household-level MPI and child-level MODA to ensure coherent national poverty reduction strategies.
7. **Small Area Estimation (SAE) for Fiscal Transfer Integration:** MODA small area estimation techniques should be developed to map localized child deprivations, providing an empirical basis for integrating child deprivation metrics into national fiscal equalization grant allocation formulas.

# 1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

## 1.1 COUNTRY CONTEXT: NEPAL

Nepal is a lower middle-income country in transition, home to approximately 29 million people, of whom 10 million (roughly 34 per cent) are children under 18 years of age. Over the past decade, the country has undergone profound socio-economic transformations from the promulgation of the federal constitution in 2015 and subsequent post-earthquake reconstruction (2015–2017) to the disruptive shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022) and ongoing progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite these gains, children remain the most affected age group. Estimates from Nepal's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report indicate persistent rural-urban disparities, with around 28 per cent of the rural population classified as multidimensionally poor compared to about 12 per cent in urban areas (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2021). Inter-provincial disparities are equally pronounced: Karnali Province records the highest MPI incidence at approximately 39 per cent, followed by Sudurpaschim and Madhesh, while Bagmati Province reports the lowest level at around 7 per cent roughly one-sixth of the incidence in Karnali (NPC, 2021).

Historically, Nepal has lacked specialized analytical frameworks focusing exclusively on child deprivation, relying primarily on the national MPI which categorizes the population into binary age cohorts of children (0-17 years) and adults (18 years and older). While useful for broad age-disaggregated comparisons, this approach lacks the granularity required for evidence-based, child-centric policy design (Karim, 2015). Furthermore, observed declines in household monetary poverty have not consistently translated into improved outcomes for children in critical material domains such as nutrition, health, education, water, sanitation, housing and access to information (Fajth et al., 2012). A comprehensive, individualized analysis is therefore necessary to elucidate these disparities and inform targeted, child-centered interventions.

## 1.2 WHY MEASURE CHILD DEPRIVATION INDIVIDUALLY?

UNICEF's Technical Briefing Note 1 establishes the foundational principle that the unit of analysis in child deprivation measurement should be the individual child rather than the household (UNICEF, 2021a). Children experience deprivation differently from adults; their nutritional, educational, health and protection needs are age-specific, and child-voice studies across diverse context have shown that children identify deprivations and priorities that adult based instruments fail to capture (Boyden et al., 2003; Wordsworth et al., 2005; Barnes & Wright, 2012). Common adult equivalent assumptions- such as treating a child as adults are questionable even for calorie intake and clearly invalid for education, immunization and other child-specific requirements (Citro & Michael, 1995; Ruggles, 1990).

Three further limitations compound the cases against the household-based measures. Money does not always purchase what children need, since many essential services- immunization, public schooling, and child protection are publicly provided rather than privately purchased. (UNICEF, 2021a). Household-level measures cannot capture intra-household allocation, so children's specific needs may remain unmet even where household consumption is acceptable (World Bank, 2018).

And household income may rise in ways that actively harm children through child labor or through extended adult overtime that leaves children unsupervised meaning a fall in monetary poverty can mask deterioration of child welfare (Fajth et al., 2012).

Evidence from other contexts illustrates the magnitude of the resulting gap. Data from Latin America and the Caribbean data show that approximately 16 per cent of children are individually multidimensionally deprived

but live in households not classified as monetarily (ECLAC, 2013), and Colombian estimates indicate that household-level measures alone would miss roughly half of all children individually identified as deprived through child-specific indicators (Pinilla, 2019, as cited in UNICEF, 2021a). With children representing approximately one-third of Nepal's population and approaching or exceeding half in some provinces failure to measure child deprivation individually risks systematic underestimation of national poverty, erroneous conclusions about its trends, incorrect policy design and faulty assessment of policy impact (UNICEF, 2021a).

### 1.3 NEPAL MULTIPLE INDICATOR CLUSTER SURVEY (NMICS): OVERVIEW

Nepal has participated in the global MICS programme, coordinated by UNICEF, since 2010, with nationally representative estimates available from 2014 onwards (Khan & Hancioglu, 2019). Three rounds of NMICS are used in this analysis, each providing comprehensive, nationally representative, child-specific data.

| Survey Round  | Reference Year | Household Sample Size (HH)        | Key Features                                                                                  |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NMICS 2014    | 2014           | Sampled=13,000<br>Occupied=12,598 | First nationally representative child-specific survey                                         |
| NMICS 2019    | 2019           | Sampled=12,800<br>Occupied=12,687 | First post-federalization NMICS; province-level disaggregation; improved child modules        |
| NMICS 2024-25 | 2024-2025      | Sampled=12,960<br>Occupied=12,862 | Post-COVID; updated nutrition, WASH and child discipline modules; aligned with SDG monitoring |

NMICS collects data on household members, women and men aged 15–49 years, children under age 5, and children aged 5–17 years. Its modules cover health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, child protection, and household characteristics, all of which align closely with the constitutive rights of child poverty defined by UNICEF (2021b). The harmonized, nationally representative, and child-specific design of NMICS makes it the most suitable data source for individual-level child deprivation measurement in Nepal. However, NMICS 2014 does not include specific sampling weights for children aged 5–17 years, a conservative approach was adopted by applying household weights for this age group.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 UNICEF'S RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO CHILD DEPRIVATION

The framework starts with a simple idea: a child is in deprivation when they lack the things they need to live a decent life clean water, food, shelter, health care, schooling, and similar essentials. This is grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Nepal has ratified and is bound by (United Nations, 1989; UNICEF, 2020).

Not every problem a child faces is “deprivation” in this strict sense. The framework draws a clear line between rights that depend on material things like food, schooling, or a safe home and rights that matter just as much but do not require physical resources, such as freedom from violence or being registered at birth (Hunt et al., 2002; OHCHR, 2004; UNICEF, 2021b). Both kinds of rights are important but mixing them into a single poverty number would blur the picture and make it harder to use the results for policy (Sen, 1992; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe [UNECE], 2020).

### 2.2 THE THREE PILLARS OF THE UNICEF MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

The framework rests on three straightforward choices. First, the child not the household is the unit of analysis: each child's situation is assessed on its own, recognizing that two children in the same household may have very different experiences (UNICEF, 2021a). Second, poverty is multidimensional: it draws on several rights at once rather than a single indicator (de Neubourg et al., 2012). Third, the analysis reports not only how many children are poor, but also how many rights they are missing at the same time, and how concentrated their hardship is. Together these form a richer picture known as the Child Poverty Profile (Alkire & Foster, 2011; UNICEF, 2021d).

### 2.3 DIMENSIONS AND RIGHTS CONSTITUTIVE OF CHILD DEPRIVATION IN NEPAL

Nine rights are treated as part of child poverty: water, sanitation, housing, nutrition, health, education, information, play and clothing (UNICEF, 2021b). For Nepal, the working list depends on what each NMICS round actually measured. The table in Annex 1 below sets out the dimensions, the indicators used, when a child is counted as deprived, and the age groups they apply to. Different ages bring different needs immunization matters for infants, school attendance for older children so age-appropriate indicators are used throughout. Where data are missing, children are conservatively counted as not deprived to avoid overstating deprivation, and thresholds are kept consistent across rounds so that any improvement seen over time is real, not the result of changing definitions (UNECE, 2020).

### 2.4 WEIGHTING APPROACH: EQUAL WEIGHTS ACROSS RIGHTS

All rights are given equal weight in the final score (UNICEF, 2021c). This is a deliberate choice. Human rights are indivisible, no one right is more important than another so giving more weight to, say, education than to health would imply a ranking that the Convention on the Rights of the Child explicitly rejects (United Nations, 1989, 2006). Equal weighting also avoids a practical pitfall: small changes in weights can drastically change which children are counted as deprived, making the results unstable and hard to defend (Hagerty & Land, 2007; UNICEF, 2021c). And it keeps the message simple a child is deprived if missing at least one (or at least two) rights which is far easier to communicate to policymakers and the public. Within each dimension, the underlying indicators may still be combined in different ways; equal weighting applies at the level of the rights themselves.

## 2.5 THE CHILD DEPRIVATION CUT-OFF

Two cut-offs are used. A child is counted as deprived if missing at least one right, and as if in deprivation if missing three or more at the same time. A separate severely deprived group, missing four or more, is also reported. The full distribution of children missing zero, one, two, three rights and so on is preserved in the Child Deprivation Profile, so that readers can apply other thresholds if they wish (UNICEF, 2021d).

## 2.6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILD DEPRIVATION, MONETARY POVERTY, AND CHILD QUALITY OF LIFE

Three things are often confusing but should be kept distinct: child deprivation (what children directly lack), monetary poverty (whether the household has enough money), and child quality of life (broader well-being, including freedom from violence and time to play). They are related but not the same. A child can be materially deprived while living in a household above the poverty line for example, where services are simply not available and a household below the poverty line may still meet children's basic needs through public services (UNICEF, 2021a, 2021e, 2021f).

Because NMICS does not collect income data, the household's wealth quintile, based on assets, is used as a stand-in for economic position. This is cross tabulated with the multidimensional measure to produce five groups of children based on wealth quintile of the household. Non-material aspects of well-being such as violent discipline, economically active child, and birth registration are analyzed alongside the deprivation measure rather than merged into it (Cid Martinez et al., 2021; UNICEF, 2021e). Keeping these three lenses separate makes the picture clearer, not more complicated: each tells policymakers something different about where children stand.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 DATA SOURCES

The primary data source for the analysis is the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS) conducted by the National Statistics Office in collaboration with UNICEF Nepal. The three rounds used are NMICS 2014 (the baseline for trend analysis, covering all 75 pre-federal districts with representativeness at national, ecological and development-region levels); NMICS 2019 (the first post-federalization round, with representativeness at the national level and across the seven provinces, and with updated child protection and ECD modules); and NMICS 2024-25 (the most recent round, with national and provincial representativeness, updated WASH modules aligned to JMP SDG monitoring, expanded nutrition indicators and child discipline data).

### 3.2 CHILD DEPRIVATION ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The method begins by defining the target population as all children under 18 in the NMICS sample, with analysis tailored to specific age groups. Indicators for child well-being are then selected and aligned with international and national standards, ensuring consistency across survey rounds without lowering thresholds over time. Each child is assessed across relevant dimensions using binary deprivation indicators, depending on their age applicability. A deprivation score is calculated by counting the number of dimensions in which a child is deprived, with equal weighting across all indicators. Finally, children are classified by deprivation levels and aggregated measures (H, A, and M0) are computed to capture both the extent and intensity of child poverty for policy use. The analytical procedure follows the step-by-step deprivation approach set out by de Neubourg et al. (2012). (See Annex 2 for stepwise guidance in detail).

### 3.3 AGGREGATION OF INDICATORS AND DIMENSIONS, SAMPLE WEIGHTS AND IMPUTATION OF THE VALUES

The union approach with equal weighting to aggregate indicators within each dimension and across dimension was used to calculate deprivation. The union approach means that an individual needs to be deprived in any one indicator within dimension to be considered deprived in that dimension. Overall deprivation is defined using various cutoffs of number of dimensions.

The 2014 NMICS round predates the introduction of the Foundational Learning Skills (FLS) module, and accordingly, no child-specific weight (*fsweight*) exists for children aged 5–17 years in this dataset. In the absence of a dedicated individual-level weight for this age group, the household sampling weight (*hhweight*) was applied for all analyses involving children aged 5–17 years. It is acknowledged that *hhweight* is calibrated to represent households rather than individual children; consequently, estimates for child-level indicators derived from the 2014 round should be interpreted with caution, as within-household variation in child selection probabilities is not fully accounted for. This constitutes a recognized methodological limitation of the 2014 data and is noted accordingly.

From NMICS 2019 onwards, UNICEF introduced the Foundational Learning Skills (FLS) module alongside a dedicated child-level sampling weight *fsweight* specifically designed for children aged 5–17 years. The NMICS 2019 includes this weight variable, and it was applied in all analyses involving children in this age group. The *fsweight* accounts for the probability of selection at the individual child level, yielding estimates that are representative of the national population of children aged 5–17 years. The 2024–25 round is a MICS7 survey similarly includes the *fsweight* variable for children aged 5–17 years. The *fsweight* was applied in all child level analyses for this round, consistent with the approach used for the 2019 data and in accordance with UNICEF's MICS7 analytical guidelines.

The shift from *hhweight* (2014) to *fsweight* (2019, 2024–25) represents a methodological discontinuity that should be considered when making direct comparisons across survey rounds. Observed differences in estimates between the NMICS 2014 and subsequent rounds may partly reflect this change in weighting approach, in addition to genuine changes in child deprivation levels over time.

Researchers undertaking trend analyses across all three rounds are advised to clearly acknowledge this limitation and, where possible, conduct sensitivity analyses to assess the potential magnitude of the weighting effect on key estimates.

Furthermore, imputation of the values for skilled birth attendance from woman dataset (mother/caretaker) to every child under 2 years of age associated with that mother/caretaker in the household. This was done because deprivation calculation was an interest in the proportion of children who were born in the presence of a skill birth attendant, as opposed to proportion who gave birth in the presence of skilled birth attendance.

### 3.4 TREND ANALYSIS ACROSS NMICS ROUNDS

Trends in child deprivation over approximately a decade are assessed by comparing aggregate estimates across the three NMICS rounds (2014, 2019 and 2024–25). Comparability has been systematically reviewed, including assessment of changes in sampling design, questionnaire content, indicator definitions, deprivation thresholds and age-group coverage to ensure consistency across survey rounds. Based on this assessment, trends in the prevalence (H), intensity (A) and adjusted headcount ratio (M0) are presented in this report at the national level. More detailed trend analyses disaggregated by key dimensions of inequality are undergoing additional validation and harmonization. It will be released as a supplementary annex following the dissemination of the main report.

### 3.5 EQUITY ANALYSIS AND DISAGGREGATION

Estimates are disaggregated across key dimensions of inequality where sample sizes permit reliable estimation. While this report presents disaggregated findings from NMICS 2024–25, corresponding estimates for NMICS 2014 and 2019 are undergoing additional validation and harmonization to ensure comparability across survey rounds and will be released as a supplementary annex report following the dissemination of the main report.

| Disaggregation variable | Categories                                                       | NMICS availability           | Priority |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------|
| Sex of child            | Male / Female                                                    | All rounds                   | High     |
| Province                | Koshi, Madhesh, Bagmati, Gandaki, Lumbini, Karnali, Sudurpaschim | 2019, 2024-25 (limited 2014) | High     |
| Urban / Rural           | Urban / Rural                                                    | All rounds                   | High     |
| Wealth quintile         | Poorest to richest                                               | All rounds                   | High     |
| Mother's education      | None / Primary / Secondary / Higher                              | All rounds                   | High     |
| Age group               | 0-23 months / 24-59 months/ 5-9 years/ 10-17 years               | All rounds                   | High     |

### 3.6 CROSS-TABULATION WITH WEALTH INDEX

The cross-tabulation of multidimensional child deprivation and specific deprivation dimensions with household wealth quintiles reveal a distinct socioeconomic gradient. As households move from the poorest to the richest asset-based quintiles, both the intensity of multidimensional poverty and the prevalence of individual deprivations decline significantly. This analytical approach systematically maps how specific deprivations such as education, health, and living standards within distinct wealth quintile. While the relationship is strictly relational and does not imply direct causality, it effectively identifies which overlapping vulnerabilities disproportionately affect children in the lowest economic brackets.

### 3.7 CHILD QUALITY OF LIFE ANALYSIS

Following Technical Briefing Note 5 (UNICEF, 2021e), non-material dimensions of child well-being available in NMICS are cross-tabulated and correlated with the multidimensional child poverty estimates. The non-material indicators considered in this analysis include birth registration, violent discipline (physical or psychological), child labor (for older age groups) (Cid Martinez et al., 2021). The analysis explores whether children with higher numbers of simultaneous material deprivations also experience worse outcomes across non-material domains, using the Child Deprivation Profile as the analytical scaffold and presenting tables of varying width to convey both the prevalence of each deprivation count and the conditional probability of the non-material outcome

## 4. POLICY RELEVANCE AND USE OF FINDINGS

### 4.1 CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS

The findings from this analysis will directly inform several national policy processes. Nepal's Sixteenth Periodic Plan (2024-2029) requires rigorous, child-specific baseline data disaggregated by province and demographic group to set credible child-related objectives and social-protection targets. Nepal's SDG Voluntary National Review depends on child-specific indicators for monitoring SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). The Social Protection Strategy benefits from individual child poverty profiles to target child grants, school feeding and conditional cash transfers more effectively. Provincial planning processes in each of the seven provinces require province-specific Child Poverty Profiles to design context-appropriate interventions. The National Child Rights Policy and Nepal's reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child gain a stronger evidentiary base from rights-grounded multidimensional measurement (United Nations, 1989; UNICEF, 2020).

### 4.2 CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL EVIDENCE

The analysis contributes to the global evidence based on child poverty measurement in several ways. It provides the first systematic empirical evidence on the gap between household-level and individual child-level poverty estimates in Nepal, complementing analogous evidence from Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2013; UNICEF, 2021a). It adds to the growing body of literature applying UNICEF's MODA methodology in South Asian contexts (Karim, 2015). It informs UNICEF's global child-poverty tracking efforts and demonstrates the feasibility and added value

### 4.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

To ensure full national ownership of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) analysis and align the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) framework with Nepal's national policy priorities, the National Statistics Office (NSO) initiated a collaborative engagement with UNICEF and relevant stakeholder. We established a joint technical working group comprising NSO and UNICEF, defining clear operational roles, timelines, and shared analytical protocols across the three survey rounds.

Through a series of in-person workshops, virtual sessions, and technical exchanges, NSO led the process of finalizing the key thematic domains, contributing indicators, variable selection, and computation methodologies. Based on these consultations, we endorsed seven core thematic areas and twenty specific indicators, mapping their corresponding survey questions and computation variables across all survey cycles.

To uphold methodological rigor, transparency, and direct policy relevance, NSO conducted regular technical review meetings and peer-validation sessions. Finally, to institutionalize evidence-based decision-making and drive policy action, we spearheaded joint dissemination efforts including the release of policy briefs and hosting stakeholder forums in partnership with UNICEF.

## 5. DATA QUALITY CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

### 5.1 DATA QUALITY CONTROL

To ensure data quality when analyzing, multiple SPSS data files from a single survey year across different rounds, several key parameters and processes were followed. There are multiple modules in each MICS survey, five data files namely HL (Household Listing dataset), HH (Household dataset), CH (Children age 0-4 years), FS (Children age 5-17 years), WM (Women's dataset aged 15-49 years) were merged in the single data file for each MICS survey round. In that way, a total of three master data files were prepared. After converting the SPSS files to Stata format, all merging both within a single survey year and across multiple rounds was performed exclusively in Stata. Prior to merging, each converted file was rechecked to confirm that identifiers remained intact. Post-merger validation was then conducted in Stata to verify case counts and detect any duplicates or drops. That included cross-checking frequencies and percentages against published reports for each survey year. Round-specific sampling weights were retained and applied separately across rounds. Finally, all steps including records, conversions, merges, and validations were documented in Stata do-files to ensure transparency and reproducibility. A validation workshop was conducted with provincial ministries, the Provincial Planning Commission, and child-sector stakeholders in Bagmati Province before finalizing the report.

### 5.3 STRENGTHS OF NMICS FOR CHILD DEPRIVATION ANALYSIS

The dataset offers several methodological strengths, including nationally representative samples with child specific questionnaire modules (Khan & Hancioglu, 2019). Three comparable rounds conducted over approximately a decade enable robust trend analysis, while harmonization with the global MICS methodology supports international comparison. Rich household and child-level variables facilitate multidimensional measurement, and age-specific data collection allows analysis at the level of the individual child (UNICEF, 2021a). Additionally, province-level representativeness was achieved in 2019 and 2024-25 rounds.

### 5.4 LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The analysis is subject to limitations related to data availability, sample size, and statistical precision, particularly for some disaggregated population groups. To address these challenges, robust quality assurance and harmonization procedures were applied, confidence intervals are reported, estimates with variation above 30 percent are flagged, and survey rounds are combined where appropriate to improve reliability. These steps enhance the transparency and robustness of the findings.

| Limitation                        | Description                                                                | Mitigation strategy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cross-round comparability         | Module changes between rounds may affect comparability of some indicators. | All changes have been documented, and consistent indicators are applied where feasible to support trend analysis. Any break in the series is clearly presented and explained to ensure transparent interpretation of results.                            |
| Sample size constraints           | Provincial disaggregation by sub-groups may produce large standard errors. | Confidence intervals are reported for all relevant estimates. Survey rounds are combined where appropriate to improve reliability and estimates with coefficients of variation above 30 percent are flagged as less reliable and interpreted cautiously. |
| Absence of direct monetary metric | NMICS does not collect income or consumption data.                         | Use the household wealth quintile (asset index) as a proxy, with explicit caveats                                                                                                                                                                        |

## 5.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND DATA GOVERNANCE

The analysis is conducted in full compliance with NSO data governance policies. All NMICS microdata is accessed through the global MICS official data request process; individual-level data is not shared publicly. All outputs are presented at aggregate level, with no individual or household identification possible or intended. Findings are reviewed by NSO and UNICEF Nepal Country Office before public dissemination.

Child rights principles non-discrimination, the best interests of the child and child participation guide the interpretation and communication of findings throughout (United Nations, 1989). Special care is taken when communicating findings about specific ethnic or caste groups: data is used to inform targeted support and not to label or stigmatize communities. All analysis syntax and data documentation are archived with NSO for institutional memory and future use.



## 6. DEPRIVATION PROFILE OF CHILDREN AGED (0-17 YEARS)

This child deprivation analysis uses data from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), which follows the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child definition of a child as any person from birth up to 17 years of age (under 18 years). Accordingly, the age group 0–17 years represents the overall childhood population covered by the analysis and serves as the umbrella population for presenting deprivation estimates. While not every indicator is measured for every child across this entire age range, each deprivation indicator is assessed for the age group to which it is relevant, and the results are combined to provide a comprehensive picture of the multiple deprivations experienced by children throughout childhood. This approach enables a holistic assessment of children's well-being and highlights areas where targeted interventions are needed to ensure that all children can realize their rights and reach their full potential.



### Why the denominator (N) changes indicator by indicator?

Each indicator has its own "eligible population" — the specific subgroup of children for whom that measurement makes sense or was collected. A single child deprivation table stacks indicators from different modules of the survey, each with a different natural denominator.



## READING BOX — Age Coverage Caution

*Why not all dimensions cover 0–17 years*

### The core issue in one line:

*Health, Nutrition and Early Childhood education are not measured for the same children as the other four dimensions.*

### Why this happens

Some indicators simply don't exist outside early childhood. Exclusive breastfeeding, dietary diversity, and early vaccination timing are only meaningful for infants and young children, a 10-year-old cannot be “deprived” in exclusive breastfeeding because the behavior being measured doesn't apply at that age. So, Health, Nutrition and Early Childhood Education are restricted, by design, to the age band where the indicator is valid typically 0–23 months, sometimes the broader under-5 group.

### How to spot it in the tables:

Check the weighted N column before comparing anything:.

| Dimension                                                                  | Applies to                               | Typical weighted N |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Water, Sanitation, Housing, Information, Child not attending school</b> | Full 0–17 years<br>5–17 years            | ~10,000 to 18,300  |
| <b>Health, Nutrition, Early Childhood Education (ECE)</b>                  | 0–23 months (or under-5)<br>36–59 months | ~2,300 – 5,800     |

*A much smaller N for Health/Nutrition/ Early childhood education isn't missing data — it's the correct, deliberate scope of the indicator.*

### Three rules for interpreting this report correctly:

- 1. Don't compare Health/Nutrition/Early Childhood education rates side-by-side with the other five dimensions** as if they describe the same children. They don't.
- 2. Don't average or sum across all seven dimensions** to produce an “overall” child deprivation rate. That would silently assume Health/Nutrition data exists for ages 5–17, which it doesn't.
- 3. Treat any overlap figure (H Union, H Intersection) involving Health or Nutrition as describing a younger cohort**, even when the table header says “0–17 years.” The overlap is only calculated where both indicators are jointly valid — usually 0–23 or 0–59 months.

**Bottom line:** When a table title says “0–17 years,” check the weighted N for each column first. Different dimensions in the same table may describe different populations — and that's a feature of sound methodology, not an error in the data.

## 6.1 SINGLE DEPRIVATION RATES BY INDICATOR (0-17 YEARS)

| Table SD 1 Single deprivations for children aged 0-17 years, NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25 |            |        |            |        |               |        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Indicator                                                                                        | NMICS 2014 |        | NMICS 2019 |        | NMICS 2024-25 |        |
| Dimension                                                                                        | %          | N      | %          | N      | %             | N      |
| <b>Age group:0-17 Years</b>                                                                      |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| <b>WATER</b>                                                                                     |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| Unimproved drinking water source                                                                 | 7.0        | 22,496 | 3.2        | 20,951 | 1.9           | 18,344 |
| Time to improve water source > 30 minutes                                                        | 3.3        | 20,914 | 1.9        | 20,281 | 0.2           | 17,987 |
| <b>SANITATION</b>                                                                                |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| Unimproved sanitation facility                                                                   | 32.5       | 22,487 | 7.9        | 20,942 | 9.0           | 18,326 |
| Shared improved sanitation facility                                                              | 43.3       | 22,487 | 24.2       | 20,951 | 23.2          | 18,338 |
| <b>HOUSING</b>                                                                                   |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| Rudimentary floor material                                                                       | 72.5       | 22,494 | 55.8       | 20,951 | 43.7          | 18,351 |
| Rudimentary roof material                                                                        | 16.7       | 22,496 | 9.0        | 20,949 | 5.7           | 18,351 |
| Rudimentary wall material                                                                        | 64.5       | 22,494 | 50.2       | 20,951 | 41.9          | 18,351 |
| No electricity                                                                                   | 18.6       | 22,492 | 19.9       | 20,945 | 3.8           | 18,351 |
| Overcrowding (>3 persons per sleeping room)                                                      | 29.7       | 22,341 | 24.9       | 20,951 | 19.9          | 18,351 |
| <b>INFORMATION</b>                                                                               |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| No information device (TV/radio)                                                                 | 36.1       | 22,481 | 33.5       | 18,307 | 53.3          | 17,645 |
| No communication device (mobile/fixed phone)                                                     | 7.2        | 22,496 | 3.7        | 20,951 | 2.9           | 18,351 |
| <b>HEALTH</b>                                                                                    |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| Diarrhoea: no treatment sought                                                                   | 52.8       | 641    | 43.1       | 645    | 7.9           | 262    |
| ARI: no treatment sought                                                                         | 49.9       | 357    | 18.0       | 139    | 0.4           | 143    |
| Full immunization not received (12-23 mo)                                                        | 15.5       | 998    | 29.8       | 1,265  | 10.5          | 1,136  |
| Birth not attended by skilled provider                                                           | 43.6       | 1,975  | 23.5       | 2,525  | 8.8           | 2,101  |
| <b>NUTRITION</b>                                                                                 |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| Stunting (height-for-age < -2 SD)                                                                | 37.4       | 5,114  | 31.5       | 6,456  | 26.2          | 5,726  |
| Wasting (weight-for-height < -2 SD)                                                              | 11.3       | 5,113  | 12.0       | 6,477  | 6.6           | 5,722  |
| Minimum acceptable diet not met (6-23 mo)                                                        | 68.1       | 1,508  | 69.6       | 1,982  | 60.7          | 1,589  |
| <b>EDUCATION</b>                                                                                 |            |        |            |        |               |        |
| No pre-primary attendance (36-59 months)                                                         | 49.3       | 2,284  | 38.1       | 2,859  | 42.1          | 2,557  |
| Children not attending school                                                                    | 5.1        | 16,146 | 7.5        | 13,936 | 4.8           | 12,146 |

Over the decade, Nepal has made significant progress in reducing many forms of child deprivation, particularly those linked to basic infrastructure and household living conditions. Deprivations related to drinking water, distance to water source, housing materials, and electricity declined substantially, with access to several essential services approaching near-universal levels by 2024/25. These improvements reflect broad gains in service delivery and living standards that have benefited a large share of children

However, progress has been uneven across dimensions. Some indicators improved steadily, while others showed stagnation, fluctuation, or reversal. Sanitation deprivation, for example, fell sharply from 32.5 percent in 2014 to 9.0 percent in 2024/25, although gains slowed in the most recent period. Similarly, the share of children not fully immunized rose from 15.5 percent in 2014 to 29.8 percent in 2019 before declining to 10.5 percent in 2024/25, indicating disruptions in service coverage despite overall improvement. By contrast, deprivation measured by ownership of traditional information devices increased from 36.1 percent to 53.3 percent, likely reflecting changes in technology use rather than reduced access to information.

Despite overall improvements, nutrition-related deprivations remain persistent and widespread. In 2024/25, 60.7 percent of children aged 6–23 months did not meet the minimum acceptable diet standard, while 26.2 percent of children were stunted and 6.6 percent were wasted. Compared with rapid progress in infrastructure-related deprivations, the slower reduction in nutritional deprivation suggests that improvements in living conditions have not translated equally into better child nutrition outcomes. These findings indicate that the remaining deprivation burden is increasingly concentrated in areas requiring sustained investments in nutrition, health, caregiving practices, and social protection, rather than in basic service access alone.

## 6.2 CHILD DEPRIVATION PROFILE: DISTRIBUTION OF SIMULTANEOUS DEPRIVATIONS (0-17 YEARS)

**Table CP 1 Child Deprivation Profile: Distribution of Children by Number of Simultaneous Deprivations (0-17 years) NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25**

| Number of deprivation (k) | NMICS 2014 |              |              | NMICS 2019 |              |              | NMICS 2024-25 |              |              |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
|                           | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %             | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper |
| <b>k = 0</b>              | 12.1       | 10.6         | 13.7         | 17.5       | 15.8         | 19.3         | 19.8          | 18.2         | 21.6         |
| <b>k = 1</b>              | 24.7       | 23.1         | 26.4         | 32.2       | 30.7         | 33.8         | 28.5          | 27.2         | 29.9         |
| <b>k = 2</b>              | 30.4       | 29.1         | 31.7         | 30.3       | 29.0         | 31.5         | 30.3          | 28.9         | 31.6         |
| <b>k = 3</b>              | 22.8       | 21.2         | 24.5         | 14.4       | 13.3         | 15.6         | 16.3          | 15.2         | 17.5         |
| <b>k = 4</b>              | 7.2        | 6.5          | 7.9          | 4.4        | 4.0          | 4.9          | 4.2           | 3.7          | 4.7          |
| <b>k = 5</b>              | 2.5        | 2.2          | 2.9          | 1.1        | 0.9          | 1.4          | 0.9           | 0.7          | 1.1          |
| <b>k = 6</b>              | 0.0        | 0.0          | 0.0          | -          | -            | -            | -             | -            | -            |
| “-” no cases reported     |            |              |              |            |              |              |               |              |              |

Simultaneous deprivation refers to a child experiencing two or more deprivations across different dimensions at the same time, such as inadequate nutrition, poor sanitation, and limited access to education. Unlike single-indicator measures, which examine deprivations separately, simultaneous deprivation identifies children facing multiple and overlapping

disadvantages, providing a more comprehensive picture of child poverty and vulnerability. This approach is central to UNICEF’s Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) framework, as children experiencing several deprivations simultaneously are often at greater risk of poor developmental outcomes and social exclusion.



Single indicators show where deprivations exist; simultaneous deprivation reveals whether the same children are affected by multiple disadvantages at once. This helps identify the children facing the most severe and compounded forms of deprivation.

Among children aged 0–17 years, the pattern of simultaneous deprivation shows a clear reduction in the severity of child deprivation over the past decade. The proportion of children experiencing no deprivation increased from 12.1 percent in 2014 to 19.8 percent in 2024/25, while the share facing three overlapping deprivations fell sharply from 22.8 percent to 16.3 percent. This suggests that development gains have increasingly reached children who were previously experiencing the most acute forms of disadvantage. However, progress has been concentrated on reducing severe deprivation rather than eliminating deprivation altogether. In 2024/25, around one in every four children (30.3 percent) still experienced at least two simultaneous deprivations, and the proportion experiencing exactly two deprivations remained virtually unchanged at 30.3 percent across all 2019 and 2024-25 survey rounds. This indicates that while the number of deprivations has declined, overlapping disadvantages remain a persistent reality for many children, highlighting the need for integrated interventions that address multiple dimensions of child well-being simultaneously.

## 6.3 AGGREGATE CHILD DEPRIVATION MEASURES (0-17 YEARS)

The Child Deprivation Analysis provides a comprehensive assessment of children's well-being by examining not only whether children experience deprivation, but also the extent to which multiple deprivations overlap in their lives. This is important because children facing simultaneous disadvantages in dimension such as nutrition, health, education, housing, water, sanitation, or information are more likely to experience poorer developmental outcomes and long-term exclusion than children affected by a single deprivation. The analysis uses three complementary measures: Headcount (H), which measures the proportion of children experiencing multiple deprivations; Intensity (A), which captures the average breadth of deprivation among deprived children; and the Adjusted Headcount Ratio ( $M_0$ ), which combines both the prevalence and intensity of deprivation into a single measure. Together, these indicators provide a more complete picture of child well-being among children aged 0–17 years and help identify whether progress is reducing both the number of deprived children and the severity of deprivation they experience.



### Understanding H, A, and $M_0$ in Multidimensional Deprivation Analysis

*When measuring multidimensional child deprivation as opposed to single-indicator rates such as “% lacking sanitation” — three linked statistics are typically reported together. Each answers a different question about the same underlying data.*

#### 1. Headcount Ratio (H) “How many children are poor/deprived?”

H is the share of children identified as multidimensionally deprived meaning they are deprived in at least a chosen threshold number of dimensions (commonly 2 or 3 out of the total dimensions measured, often called the deprivation cutoff, or “k”).

**Example:** if a child must be deprived in at least 3 of 6 dimensions to be classified as multidimensionally deprived, and 40% of children meet that bar, then  $H = 40\%$ .

**What it tells the reader:** the incidence, or prevalence, of multidimensional deprivation similar in spirit to a standard poverty rate. It does not indicate how severely deprived those children are, only whether they cross the threshold.

**Limitation:** H treats a child deprived in exactly 3 dimensions the same as a child deprived in all 6 it is blind to intensity above the cutoff.

#### 2. Intensity of Deprivation (A) “Among those who are poor, how deprived are they?”

A is the average share of dimensions in which multidimensionally poor children are deprived, calculated only among the children already classified as poor under H.

**Example:** among the 40% of children identified as poor, if they are on average deprived in 4.5 of 6 dimensions, then  $A = 4.5/6 = 75\%$ .

**What it tells the reader:** the depth or severity of deprivation among the poor not how many children are poor, but how bad conditions are for those who are.

**Why it matters:** two populations can share the same H (say, 40% poor) but differ sharply in A — one where poor child barely crosses the cutoff, another where poor children are deprived in nearly everything. A captures that difference; H alone cannot.

#### 3. Adjusted Headcount Ratio ( $M_0$ ) — the combined severity-weighted measure

$M_0$  (sometimes written  $M0$ ) is the product of H and A:

$$M_0 = H \times A$$

**What it tells the reader:** a single number combining how many children are poor and how severely deprived they are, into one adjusted index typically the headline statistic reported (e.g., as the Multidimensional Deprivation Index value).

**Why report  $M_0$  instead of just  $H$ :**  $M_0$  is distribution-sensitive it rises if either more children become poor ( $H$  increases) or already-poor children become more deprived ( $A$  increases), even when the headcount alone is unchanged. A simple headcount rate cannot detect that second kind of worsening.

### Putting it together

| Statistic                                    | What it answers / what moves it                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>H (Headcount ratio)</b>                   | How widespread is deprivation? Moves with the number of children crossing the poverty cutoff.                            |
| <b>A (Intensity)</b>                         | How severe is it among the poor? Moves with the average number of deprivations among the poor only.                      |
| <b><math>M_0</math> (Adjusted headcount)</b> | Overall severity-adjusted level. Can rise even if $H$ is flat, if $A$ worsens — captures deepening as well as spreading. |

### Practical reading tip for report audiences

If  $M_0$  rises while  $H$  stays flat, deprivation is not spreading to more children it is deepening among those already deprived. If  $H$  rises while  $A$  stays flat, deprivation is spreading to new children without necessarily worsening for those already affected. This distinction is often the most policy-relevant insight in the report, and a table that shows only single-indicator prevalence such as a standard MICS indicator table cannot reveal it. Detecting it requires child-level microdata and the  $H/A/M_0$  decomposition.

Table AC 1 presents aggregate child deprivation measures for children aged 0–17 years across different deprivation cut-offs. These measures are important because they go beyond identifying whether a child is deprived in one area and instead assess how many children experience multiple deprivations simultaneously and how severe those overlapping deprivations are. The three indicators provide complementary insights: Headcount ( $H$ ) shows the percentage of children deprived at or above a given cut-off; Intensity ( $A$ ) shows the average share of deprivations experienced by deprived children; and  $M_0$  combines both prevalence and intensity to summarize the overall burden of child deprivation.

For children aged 0–17 years, the results show that child deprivation remains widespread, although the severity of extreme deprivation is relatively limited. At the lowest cut-off,  $k \geq 1$ , around four in five children experienced at least one deprivation across all three survey rounds, declining only slightly from 82.5 percent in 2014 to 80.2 percent in 2024/25. This indicates that single or any deprivation remains common among children. However, the intensity among these children remained almost unchanged, with deprived children experiencing around 28 percent of all possible deprivations on average. As a result, the overall adjusted deprivation measure  $M_0$  remained stable at around 22 percent, suggesting limited change in the broad burden of deprivation when even one deprivation is counted.

At the more policy-relevant threshold of  $k \geq 2$ , around half of children aged 0–17 years experienced at least two simultaneous deprivations. The headcount changed very little over time, from 50.3 percent in 2014 to 48.9 percent in 2019, before returning to 51.6 percent in 2024/25. The intensity remained almost constant at between 35 to 36 percent across all three rounds, meaning that children experiencing multiple deprivations continued to face a similar breadth of disadvantage. This stability suggests that while progress has been made in some individual sectors, the overall level of overlapping deprivation has not substantially declined.

For higher deprivation cut-offs, the table shows that severe and extreme deprivation affects a smaller share of children. At  $k \geq 3$ , the proportion of children experiencing three or more deprivations remained around one in five, increasing slightly from 20.0 percent in 2014 to 21.4 percent in 2024/25. However, the intensity

declined from 47.8 percent to 46.9 percent, indicating a small reduction in the depth of deprivation among this group. At  $k \geq 4$ , the headcount declined from 5.6 percent to 5.1 percent, and  $M_0$  fell from 3.4 percent to 3.0 percent, showing some progress in reducing more severe deprivation profiles. Extreme deprivation at  $k \geq 5$  and above remained very low, affecting less than 1 percent of children in 2024/25.

Overall, the table suggests that Nepal has been more successful in reducing the most severe forms of child deprivation than in reducing moderate overlapping deprivation. Extreme deprivation is now relatively rare, but multiple deprivation remains persistent, with about one in two children aged 0–17 years still experiencing at least two simultaneous deprivations in 2024/25. This highlights the need for integrated, multisectoral policies that address overlapping risks together, particularly in nutrition, health, WASH, housing, information access, and other dimensions of child well-being.

**Table AC 1 Aggregate Child Deprivation Measures by Cut-Off, (0-17 Years) NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25**

| Deprivation Cut-off | NMICS 2014 |       |        | NMICS 2019 |       |        | NMICS 2024-25 |       |        |
|---------------------|------------|-------|--------|------------|-------|--------|---------------|-------|--------|
|                     | H (%)      | A (%) | MO (%) | H (%)      | A (%) | MO (%) | H (%)         | A (%) | MO (%) |
| $k \geq 1$          | 82.5       | 27.7  | 22.8   | 81.7       | 27.1  | 22.2   | 80.2          | 28.4  | 22.7   |
| $k \geq 2$          | 50.3       | 36.2  | 18.2   | 48.9       | 35.7  | 17.5   | 51.6          | 36.1  | 18.7   |
| $k \geq 3$          | 20.0       | 47.8  | 9.6    | 18.5       | 47.4  | 8.8    | 21.4          | 46.9  | 10.0   |
| $k \geq 4$          | 5.6        | 60.5  | 3.4    | 4.9        | 60.3  | 2.9    | 5.1           | 59.7  | 3.0    |
| $k \geq 5$          | 1.2        | 72.7  | 0.9    | 1.0        | 72.7  | 0.7    | 0.9           | 71.7  | 0.6    |
| $k \geq 6$          | 0.1        | 85.7  | 0.1    | 0.1        | 85.7  | 0.1    | 0.0           | 85.7  | 0.0    |
| $k = 7$             | 0.0        | na    | 0.0    | 0.0        | na    | 0.0    | 0.0           | na    | 0.0    |
| na= not applicable  |            |       |        |            |       |        |               |       |        |

## 6.4 OVERLAPPING DEPRIVATION (0-17 YEARS)

While Nepal's children have experienced measurable gains across individual deprivation indicators between 2014 and 2024/25, and while the overall multidimensional deprivation burden for children aged 0-17 has remained largely unchanged at the aggregate level, a closer, dimension-by-dimension analysis of overlap reveals a more nuanced and policy-relevant reality beneath these headline figures. Rather than deprivation improving or stagnating uniformly across the child population, progress has been highly uneven across specific combinations of deprivation: children facing joint health, nutrition, and sanitation deprivation have seen substantial and consistent improvement over the decade, with triple-overlap prevalence falling by more than four-fifths in some cases while children experiencing the combined burden of inadequate housing and lack of information access have seen little improvement, and in some instances, a worsening of overlap. This divergence indicates that the stagnant aggregate deprivation figures documented elsewhere in this report are not the result of uniform inertia, but rather reflect a masking effect, in which genuine convergent progress in some domains is being offset by persistent or deepening overlaps in others. Understanding which combinations of deprivation continue to co-occur in the same children rather than relying solely on single-indicator trends or a single aggregate deprivation score is therefore essential to designing interventions that target the specific, compounding forms of disadvantage that continue to affect Nepal's children today.



## READER'S BOX — Making Sense of Table OD 1.1 (Overlapping Deprivation)

*How to read “dimension overlap” at a glance*

**The one question this table answers:**

*Are deprivations piling up on the same children, or spread across different children?*

*Start here → H Intersection*

This is the number that matters most in every row. It tells you the share of children who are deprived in both (or all) dimensions at the same time — not just one or the other.

**Example:** If  $\text{Housing} \cap \text{Sanitation} = 18\%$ , it means 18% of all children lack decent housing and sanitation simultaneously — a genuine double burden, not two separate problems affecting two separate groups.

**The 5 columns, decoded:**

| Symbol                | Ask yourself...                                       | Tells you                                    |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>H Union</b>        | "How many children are hit by at least ONE of these?" | Total reach of the problem                   |
| <b>H Intersection</b> | "How many children are hit by BOTH / ALL at once?"    | The real overlap — the double/triple burden  |
| <b>M0 (k=1)</b>       | Same as Union, but severity-weighted                  | How deep the "at least one" deprivation cuts |
| <b>M0 (k=2)</b>       | Same as Intersection, but severity-weighted           | How deep the joint deprivation cuts          |
| <b>M0 (k=3)</b>       | Only for 3-dimension rows: all three at once          | The strictest possible burden “triple hit”   |

**Quick interpretation rule:**

- **Union > Intersection** → deprivations are mostly happening to different children (scattered risk)
- **Union ≈ Intersection** → deprivations are mostly happening to the same children (concentrated, compounding risk)

The bigger the gap between Union and Intersection, the more the two problems act independently. The smaller the gap, the more they reinforce each other in the same lives.

**Bottom line:** Don't just scan the row compare Union to Intersection every time. That comparison is the story of overlap.

Table OD 1 examines whether children (0-17 years) experiencing deprivation in one dimension are the same children experiencing deprivation in another or whether these hardships are distributed across different groups of children. The pattern that emerges across the three survey rounds (MICS 2014, 2019, and 2024-25) is one of substantial overall improvement, punctuated by a notable and growing exception around information deprivation. Across most dimension pairs, both the Union (children affected by at least one deprivation) and the Intersection (children affected by both simultaneously) have fallen consistently since 2014. The clearest evidence of this is in health-related pairings. The share of children simultaneously deprived in health and nutrition fell from 37.4 percent in 2014 to 27.3 percent in 2019 and to just 9.0 percent by 2024-25, a reduction of more than three-quarters over the decade. A similar track is evident for health and sanitation, where joint deprivation dropped from 27.5 percent to 3.5 percent over the same period.

This progress is most clearly captured in the three-dimension overlap for health, nutrition, and sanitation. The proportion of children facing all three deprivations at once arguably the most severe form of compounding disadvantage measured in this table collapsed from 19.4 percent in 2014 to 2.8 percent in 2024-25. This suggests that interventions targeting health, nutrition, and sanitation have been effective not only in reducing each deprivation individually, but in breaking the co-occurrence of these hardships within the same children.

Against this backdrop of improvement, the dimensions involving information access stand out as a divergent trend. The intersection of housing and information deprivation rose from 26.1 percent in 2019 to 35.2 percent in 2024-25 now the highest two-dimension intersection figure recorded anywhere in the table, surpassing even housing-sanitation overlap. The union of these two dimensions also increased over the same period (71.1 percent to 73.1 percent), indicating that both the overall reach and the degree of co-occurrence between housing and information deprivation have grown.

This pattern extends to the three-dimension measure combining housing, information, and education. It is the only three-dimension grouping in the table where the triple intersection increased in the most recent round (from 4.3 percent to 5.6 percent), and where the k=2 measure capturing children deprived in any two of the three dimensions also rose, from 22.6 percent to 28.1 percent. This stands in contrast to the health-nutrition-sanitation and housing-sanitation-education groupings, both of which moved firmly in the direction of improvement.

Across all rounds, dimension pairs involving education consistently show a wide gap between the Union and Intersection figures. In 2024-25, for instance, the union of housing and education deprivation stood at 60.0 percent, while their intersection was only 7.9 percent. This pattern repeated for sanitation-education and information-education indicates that education deprivation is largely experienced by a different subset of children than those facing housing, sanitation, or health deprivation. This is a structurally distinct pattern from housing-sanitation or housing-information, where the union and intersection figures sit much closer together, signaling that these deprivations tend to concentrate within the same children.

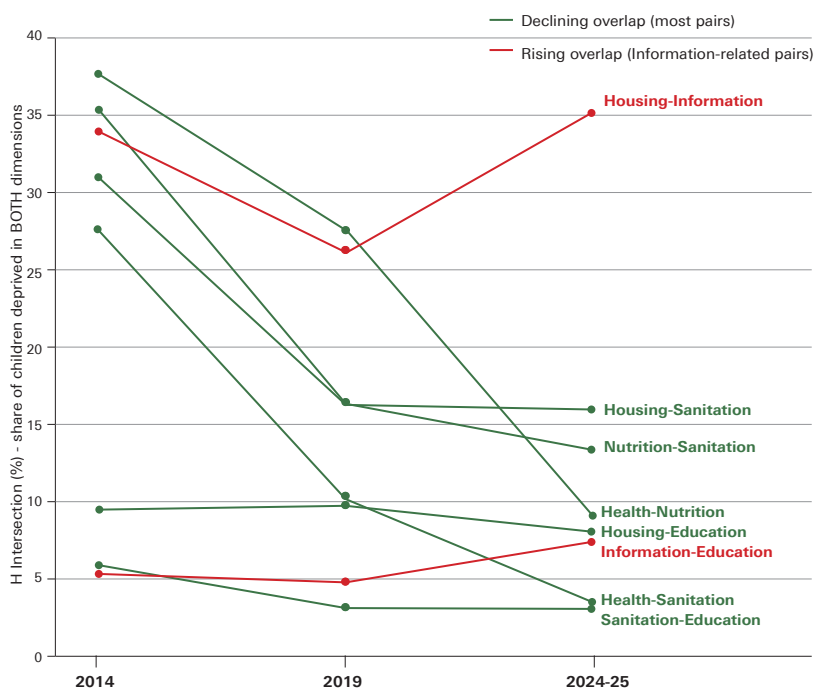
| Table OD 1 Prevalence of Dimension Overlap (0-17 Years) |            |             |          |          |          |            |             |          |          |          |               |             |          |          |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Dimensions                                              | NMICS 2014 |             |          |          |          | NMICS 2019 |             |          |          |          | NMICS 2024-25 |             |          |          |          |
|                                                         | H Union    | H Intersect | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union    | H Intersect | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union       | H Intersect | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) |
| <b>TWO DIMENSIONS</b>                                   |            |             |          |          |          |            |             |          |          |          |               |             |          |          |          |
| Housing-Sanitation                                      | 84.1       | 35.4        | 59.7     | 35.4     | na       | 73.8       | 16.3        | 45.0     | 16.3     | na       | 63.8          | 15.9        | 39.9     | 15.9     | na       |
| Housing-Education                                       | 79.3       | 9.5         | 44.4     | 9.5      | na       | 69.4       | 9.7         | 39.5     | 9.7      | na       | 60.0          | 7.9         | 34.0     | 7.9      | na       |
| Sanitation-Education                                    | 46.0       | 5.9         | 25.9     | 5.9      | na       | 33.3       | 3.1         | 18.2     | 3.1      | na       | 31.2          | 3.1         | 17.2     | 3.1      | na       |
| Housing-Information                                     | 80.3       | 34.0        | 57.2     | 34.0     | na       | 71.1       | 26.1        | 48.6     | 26.1     | na       | 73.1          | 35.2        | 54.1     | 35.2     | na       |
| Information-Education                                   | 41.5       | 5.3         | 23.4     | 5.3      | na       | 38.7       | 4.7         | 21.7     | 4.7      | na       | 55.6          | 7.3         | 31.5     | 7.3      | na       |
| Health-Nutrition                                        | 80.6       | 37.4        | 59.0     | 37.4     | na       | 76.7       | 27.3        | 52.0     | 27.3     | na       | 60.3          | 9.0         | 34.6     | 9.0      | na       |
| Health-Sanitation                                       | 71.6       | 27.5        | 49.5     | 27.5     | na       | 52.3       | 10.0        | 31.1     | 10.0     | na       | 30.5          | 3.5         | 17.0     | 3.5      | na       |
| Nutrition-Sanitation                                    | 79.8       | 30.8        | 55.3     | 30.8     | na       | 74.4       | 16.3        | 45.4     | 16.3     | na       | 63.6          | 13.3        | 38.4     | 13.3     | na       |
| <b>THREE DIMENSIONS</b>                                 |            |             |          |          |          |            |             |          |          |          |               |             |          |          |          |
| Housing-Sanitation-Education                            | 84.7       | 5.4         | 43.3     | 28.4     | 5.4      | 76.2       | 2.5         | 34.3     | 16.9     | 2.5      | 66.7          | 2.6         | 30.3     | 15.4     | 2.6      |
| Health-Nutrition-Sanitation                             | 87.6       | 19.4        | 54.6     | 44.4     | 19.4     | 82.4       | 7.5         | 42.8     | 28.2     | 7.5      | 67.1          | 2.8         | 30.0     | 14.4     | 2.8      |
| Housing-Information-Education                           | 81.2       | 5.2         | 41.6     | 27.4     | 5.2      | 73.7       | 4.3         | 36.6     | 22.6     | 4.3      | 74.7          | 5.6         | 39.9     | 28.1     | 5.6      |
| na: not applicable                                      |            |             |          |          |          |            |             |          |          |          |               |             |          |          |          |

### Reading the trend: H Intersection over time

The chart beside tracks the single most diagnostic figure in the table — H Intersection — across all three survey rounds for each two-dimension pair. Most lines slope downward, reflecting broad progress in reducing compounding deprivation. Two lines, shown in red, move in the opposite direction.

**Watch:** The rising overlap between housing and information deprivation, and its growing entanglement with education, suggests an emerging cluster of digital and infrastructural exclusion or alternatives in place that warrants closer policy attention going forward. Information deprivation may be plausible to replace of television with mobile and laptops.

Trend in Double-Deprivation Overlap (H Intersection), by Dimension Pair



## 6.5 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (0-17 YEARS) NMICS (2024-25)

The analysis shows that deprivation among Nepal's children aged 0–17 years is driven primarily by socioeconomic and geographic inequalities rather than by sex. Household wealth emerges as the single strongest determinant of deprivation, with children from the poorest households consistently facing substantially higher risks across all dimensions than those from the richest households. In some areas, the differences are striking housing deprivation affects 98.8 percent of children in the poorest quintile compared with 11.7 percent in the richest quintile, while information deprivation declines from 71.2 percent to 17.2 percent across the same groups. Similarly, nutrition deprivation is experienced by 55.1 percent of children in the poorest households, compared with 26.2 percent among the richest. These large disparities highlight how poverty severely constrains children's living conditions, access to services, and development opportunities.

Parental education further amplifies these inequalities, particularly through mother's education. Children whose mothers have no education experience with health deprivation rates of 24.1 percent, more than four times higher than the 5.6 percent observed among children whose mothers have higher education. Similar gradients are evident across nutrition and education outcomes, underscoring the important role of parental knowledge, awareness, and capacity to access services. These findings suggest that improving educational attainment especially among women can have far-reaching benefits for child wellbeing.

Geographic disparities are also pronounced. Children living in rural areas generally face higher deprivation in water, housing, information, and nutrition compared with their urban counterparts, reflecting persistent gaps in infrastructure and service provision. At the provincial level, deprivation is concentrated in specific provinces. Karnali Province records the highest levels of water deprivation (7.3 percent) and housing deprivation (87.6 percent), reflecting long-standing infrastructure and accessibility challenges. Madhesh Province experiences the highest deprivation in information (62.6 percent), education (20.0 percent), and health (18.1 percent), indicating barriers related to service access and human development. In contrast, Bagmati and Gandaki provinces consistently report the lowest deprivation rates across most dimensions.

| Table DM 1 Prevalence by Dimension: Nepal Child Deprivation Analysis, 2026 (0-17 years) |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Background variable                                                                     | Water (%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Education (%) | Weighted N | Health (%) | Weighted N | Nutrition (%) | Weighted N |
| Total                                                                                   | 2.1       | 18,344     | 23.2           | 18,338     | 57.5        | 18,351     | 52.2            | 18,351     | 11.3          | 14,703     | 13.1       | 2,341      | 42.8          | 5,764      |
| AREA                                                                                    |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| Urban                                                                                   | 1.2       | 11,874     | 23.9           | 11,870     | 48.5        | 11,881     | 49.0            | 11,881     | 10.6          | 9,498      | 12.2       | 1,514      | 39.9          | 3,727      |
| Rural                                                                                   | 4.0       | 6,470      | 21.8           | 6,468      | 73.9        | 6,470      | 58.2            | 6,470      | 12.7          | 5,204      | 14.7       | 827        | 48.2          | 2,038      |
| SEX                                                                                     |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| Male                                                                                    | 2.3       | 9,474      | 22.7           | 9,464      | 55.8        | 9,474      | 52.1            | 9,474      | 11.9          | 7,559      | 12.5       | 1,207      | 42.8          | 3,070      |
| Female                                                                                  | 2.0       | 8,870      | 23.6           | 8,874      | 59.2        | 8,877      | 52.4            | 8,877      | 10.7          | 7,144      | 13.8       | 1,134      | 42.9          | 2,694      |
| PROVINCE                                                                                |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| Koshi                                                                                   | 2.4       | 2,964      | 20.8           | 2,957      | 60.6        | 2,964      | 48.3            | 2,964      | 8.4           | 2,366      | 12.6       | 384        | 41.5          | 943        |
| Madhesh                                                                                 | 0.8       | 4,341      | 24.6           | 4,348      | 65.1        | 4,348      | 62.6            | 4,348      | 20.0          | 3,269      | 18.1       | 640        | 50.6          | 1,484      |
| Bagmati                                                                                 | 1.8       | 3,258      | 26.1           | 3,253      | 36.1        | 3,258      | 39.6            | 3,258      | 7.0           | 2,687      | 11.8       | 371        | 30.9          | 1,031      |
| Gandaki                                                                                 | 1.8       | 1,348      | 14.1           | 1,348      | 37.9        | 1,348      | 44.2            | 1,348      | 5.6           | 1,112      | 7.2        | 146        | 34.1          | 388        |
| Lumbini                                                                                 | 1.7       | 3,323      | 23.5           | 3,323      | 56.0        | 3,323      | 56.2            | 3,323      | 10.0          | 2,751      | 10.6       | 371        | 44.3          | 931        |
| Karnali                                                                                 | 7.3       | 1,252      | 25.4           | 1,251      | 87.6        | 1,252      | 56.8            | 1,252      | 13.3          | 992        | 14.9       | 187        | 53.6          | 420        |
| Sudurpaschim                                                                            | 3.2       | 1,858      | 23.2           | 1,858      | 68.7        | 1,858      | 52.0            | 1,858      | 9.7           | 1,526      | 8.6        | 242        | 42.3          | 568        |
| WEALTH QUINTILE                                                                         |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| Poorest                                                                                 | 6.1       | 4,118      | 29.5           | 4,120      | 98.8        | 4,125      | 71.2            | 4,125      | 14.6          | 3,291      | 20.6       | 507        | 55.1          | 1,227      |
| Second                                                                                  | 1.6       | 3,942      | 28.1           | 3,942      | 84.6        | 3,942      | 68.8            | 3,942      | 13.6          | 3,161      | 15.7       | 495        | 46.2          | 1,207      |
| Middle                                                                                  | 1.4       | 3,803      | 20.5           | 3,801      | 49.3        | 3,803      | 52.4            | 3,803      | 12.7          | 2,994      | 10.5       | 516        | 44.0          | 1,255      |
| Fourth                                                                                  | 0.4       | 3,541      | 22.1           | 3,541      | 25.9        | 3,541      | 40.6            | 3,541      | 9.7           | 2,859      | 9.3        | 473        | 38.5          | 1,149      |
| Richest                                                                                 | 0.4       | 2,940      | 12.5           | 2,934      | 11.7        | 2,940      | 17.2            | 2,940      | 4.0           | 2,399      | 7.6        | 350        | 26.2          | 927        |
| MOTHER'S EDUCATION                                                                      |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| None                                                                                    | 3.2       | 5,808      | 30.0           | 5,806      | 71.9        | 5,815      | 66.1            | 5,815      | 14.0          | 5,073      | 24.1       | 379        | 50.6          | 1,056      |
| ECED                                                                                    | 4.6       | 103        | 28.6           | 103        | 58.1        | 103        | 51.9            | 103        | 13.3          | 89         | (*)        | 7          | (*)           | 21         |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                                          | 1.6       | 5,319      | 23.6           | 5,319      | 62.1        | 5,319      | 57.8            | 5,319      | 11.3          | 4,273      | 14.9       | 679        | 49.8          | 1,678      |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                                     | 1.9       | 5,800      | 17.9           | 5,796      | 45.8        | 5,800      | 39.5            | 5,800      | 9.1           | 4,306      | 9.3        | 1,028      | 38.2          | 2,442      |
| Higher                                                                                  | 0.6       | 1,243      | 12.7           | 1,243      | 24.2        | 1,243      | 22.5            | 1,243      | 5.4           | 895        | 5.6        | 244        | 27.6          | 559        |
| DK/Missing                                                                              | 0.0       | 31         | 49.9           | 31         | 56.9        | 31         | 67.6            | 31         | 38.0          | 27         | (*)        | 4          | (*)           | 8          |
| FATHER'S EDUCATION                                                                      |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| None                                                                                    | 3.3       | 1,568      | 33.6           | 1,573      | 76.4        | 1,575      | 72.3            | 1,575      | 17.4          | 1,298      | 26.2       | 152        | 52.7          | 345        |
| ECED                                                                                    | 1.3       | 51         | 30.7           | 51         | 50.0        | 51         | 49.5            | 51         | 22.6          | 39         | (*)        | 7          | (*)           | 15         |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                                          | 2.9       | 3,779      | 27.6           | 3,775      | 65.5        | 3,779      | 57.9            | 3,779      | 12.0          | 3,133      | 12.7       | 399        | 45.7          | 1,018      |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                                     | 1.4       | 3,919      | 16.6           | 3,913      | 49.0        | 3,919      | 40.3            | 3,919      | 9.5           | 3,009      | 9.9        | 644        | 41.4          | 1,453      |
| Higher                                                                                  | 1.7       | 1,150      | 10.7           | 1,150      | 27.2        | 1,150      | 24.5            | 1,150      | 5.7           | 881        | 7.7        | 185        | 29.0          | 457        |
| Biological Father not in HH                                                             | 2.0       | 7,866      | 24.0           | 7,866      | 58.5        | 7,866      | 55.6            | 7,866      | 11.3          | 6,337      | 14.3       | 950        | 43.6          | 2,470      |
| DK/Missing                                                                              | (*)       | 10         | (*)            | 10         | (*)         | 10         | (*)             | 10         | (*)           | 6          | (*)        | 4          | (*)           | 7          |
| (*) represents unweighted cases fewer than 25                                           |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |

(\*) represents unweighted cases fewer than 25

In comparison, differences between boys and girls are small and inconsistent across dimensions, suggesting that gender is not a major determinant of deprivation among children aged 0–17 years. Instead, children’s life chances are shaped far more by the economic resources of their households, the education level of their parents, and where they live.

Overall, the findings reveal a clear pattern of overlapping disadvantage. Children growing up in poor households, with less-educated parents, and in deprived provinces such as Karnali and Madhesh face multiple deprivations simultaneously rather than isolated shortfalls in a single domain. This concentration of disadvantages highlights the need for integrated policies that combine poverty reduction, improved access to basic services, and investments in education, particularly mother’s education while prioritizing the most deprived geographic areas. Such targeted approaches are essential for reducing multidimensional child deprivation and ensuring equitable opportunities for all children in Nepal.

## 6.6 CHILD PROTECTION AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION PREVALENCE (0-17 YEARS)

Table QL 1 examines the relationship between multidimensional deprivation and selected child protection and wellbeing indicators birth registration, violent discipline, and children’s economic activity. Overall, the findings suggest that children facing protection-related vulnerabilities are often more likely to experience deprivation across multiple dimensions of wellbeing, although the strength and consistency of these associations vary by indicator.

Birth registration exhibits the strongest and most consistent relationship with deprivation. Children whose births are not registered experience higher deprivation rates across nearly all dimensions. The largest disparity is observed in education, where deprivation among unregistered children (21.9%) is approximately double that of registered children (10.8%). Elevated deprivation is also evident in health (17.2% versus 11.9%), sanitation (29.8% versus 22.7%), and nutrition (48.8% versus 42.0%). These patterns indicate that lack of legal identity is closely associated with broader barriers to accessing essential services and opportunities.

The association between violent discipline and deprivation is less consistent. Children exposed to violent discipline show higher levels of deprivation in sanitation, housing, and information, suggesting a link between deprivation and adverse caregiving environments. However, the reverse pattern observed for health and nutrition, together with unusually low education deprivation rates and smaller sample sizes for some dimensions, indicates that these estimates are likely influenced by differences in age coverage across survey modules. Consequently, findings related to violent discipline should be interpreted with caution.

Economic activity is linked with housing and information deprivation. Economically active children experience substantially higher housing deprivation (70.2% compared with 51.4% among non-working children), representing the largest disparity observed in the table. They also face higher deprivation in information, water, and education. The absence of health and nutrition estimates reflects differences in the age groups covered by the relevant survey modules rather than an absence of relationships. Overall, the results highlight important overlaps between child protection vulnerabilities and multidimensional deprivation. Children who lack birth registration, are engaged in work, or experience violent discipline tend to face greater deprivation in key dimensions of wellbeing, particularly housing, information, and education. However, some observed patterns are influenced by survey design and age-specific module coverage. These findings should therefore be interpreted as indicative associations, while further age-disaggregated analysis would be needed to establish a clearer understanding of the underlying relationships

| Table QL 1 Prevalence by Dimension: Nepal Child Deprivation Analysis, 0-17 years) |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Quality of Life Variables                                                         | Water (%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Education (%) | Weighted N | Health (%) | Weighted N | Nutrition (%) | Weighted N |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>                                                         |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| Not registered                                                                    | 1.6       | 1,184      | 29.8           | 1,184      | 61.0        | 1,184      | 58.8            | 1,184      | 21.9          | 537        | 17.2       | 522        | 48.8          | 830        |
| Registered                                                                        | 2.2       | 17,089     | 22.7           | 17,083     | 57.2        | 17,096     | 51.8            | 17,096     | 10.8          | 14,094     | 11.9       | 1,815      | 42.0          | 4,864      |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>                                                         |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                | 1.6       | 1,895      | 19.6           | 1,892      | 53.2        | 1,895      | 45.1            | 1,895      | 2.7           | 1,849      | 19.0       | 547        | 45.3          | 1,257      |
| Yes                                                                               | 2.6       | 8,168      | 24.9           | 8,167      | 58.5        | 8,173      | 53.2            | 8,173      | 2.1           | 7,931      | 16.1       | 806        | 40.1          | 3,538      |
| <b>ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE</b>                                                        |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                | 1.7       | 8,978      | 23.4           | 8,978      | 51.4        | 8,983      | 50.0            | 8,983      | 3.2           | 8,701      | na         | na         | na            | na         |
| Yes                                                                               | 3.7       | 3,501      | 23.3           | 3,495      | 70.2        | 3,501      | 58.1            | 3,501      | 8.9           | 3,446      | na         | na         | na            | na         |
| na : not applicable                                                               |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |            |            |               |            |

## 6.7 MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (0–17 YEARS)

Multidimensional Child Deprivation provides a broader understanding of child deprivation by recognizing that children often experience several deprivations at the same time. Rather than measuring poverty only through income or a single indicator, the Multidimensional deprivation index captures overlapping disadvantages in dimensions such as housing, nutrition, education, health, water, sanitation, and information. For children aged 0–17 years in Nepal, the results show that deprivation is not primarily a problem of isolated deprivation but of multiple disadvantages occurring simultaneously.

At the national level, 21.4 percent of children aged 0–17 years are multidimensionally deprived at the standard threshold of deprivation in three or more dimensions ( $k \geq 3$ ). These children are deprived, on average, of 46.9 percent of all dimensions considered, resulting in an overall MPI value of 0.100. In practical terms, this means that approximately one in every five children in Nepal faces multiple overlapping forms of deprivation that collectively undermine their wellbeing and development prospects.

A key feature of the findings is that deprivation increases as the definition becomes stricter. While a large majority (80.2 percent) of children experience at least one deprivation ( $k \geq 1$ ), far fewer children experience multiple deprivations simultaneously. However, those who remain deprived under stricter thresholds tend to face much deeper disadvantages. For example, the average intensity of deprivation rises from 28.4 percent at  $k \geq 1$  to 46.9 percent at  $k \geq 3$  and 71.7 percent at  $k \geq 5$ . This indicates that multidimensional poverty in Nepal is concentrated among a smaller group of children who experience particularly severe and interconnected disadvantages.

The results also reveal that household wealth is the strongest predictor of child deprivation. At the standard threshold ( $k \geq 3$ ), 39.5 percent of children in the poorest wealth quintile are multidimensionally deprived, compared with only 2.9 percent of children in the richest quintile. This thirteen-fold difference demonstrates that deprivation remains overwhelmingly concentrated among economically disadvantaged households. The wealth gap is already evident at the broadest threshold, where every child in the poorest quintile experiences at least one deprivation, compared with 40.2 percent of children in the richest quintile. These findings highlight that economic inequality translates directly into unequal childhood outcomes.

Parental education, particularly mother's education, is another major determinant of multidimensional deprivation. Children whose mothers have no education experience a multidimensional deprivation rate of 29.4 percent, compared with only 5.8 percent among children whose mothers have higher education. Similar patterns are observed for fathers' education. Among children whose fathers have no schooling, the multidimensional deprivation incidence reaches 35.5 percent, with an MPI value of 0.171, among the highest levels recorded. These results suggest that parental education influences children's access to services, health practices, learning opportunities, and overall living conditions, reinforcing the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Geographic disparities further deepen these inequalities. Karnali Province records the highest levels of multidimensional deprivation in Nepal, with 29.9 percent of children poor at  $k \geq 3$  and the highest overall MPI burden. Madhesh Province follows closely, with 29.3 percent of children experiencing multidimensional poverty and a high intensity of deprivation (47.6 percent). These figures are substantially above the national average and indicate that children in these provinces face multiple disadvantages simultaneously. By contrast, Gandaki and Bagmati report considerably lower MPI levels, reflecting more favorable socioeconomic conditions and better access to infrastructure and services.

In contrast to the strong effects of wealth, parental education, and geography, child poverty differs very little by sex. At  $k \geq 3$ , multidimensional deprivation affects 20.9 percent of boys and 21.8 percent of girls, while MPI values are nearly identical (0.098 and 0.102, respectively). This suggests that gender alone is not a significant determinant of multidimensional deprivation among children in Nepal, and that broader socioeconomic and geographic factors are far more influential.

Overall, the findings show that multidimensional child deprivation in Nepal is highly concentrated among children facing multiple layers of disadvantage simultaneously. A child living in a poor household, in a disadvantaged province such as Karnali or Madhesh provinces, and with parents who have limited education faces a substantially higher risk of experiencing several deprivations at once. The MPI therefore highlights the need for integrated and geographically targeted policies that address poverty, education, and access to essential services together. Reducing a single deprivation in isolation may improve specific outcomes, but meaningful reductions in multidimensional child deprivation will require addressing the interconnected factors that trap children in overlapping forms of disadvantage.

| Table MP 1. Multidimensional Deprivation Index by Background Characteristics (0-17 Years), Nepal, 2024-25 |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                          |      |      |      |      |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| Background Characteristics                                                                                |      | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |      |      |     |      | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |      |     |      | MPI Value M <sub>0</sub> |      |      |      |      |     |
| Category                                                                                                  | k>=1 | k>=2                       | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k>=6 | k=7 | k>=1 | k>=2                       | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k>=6 | k=7 | k>=1 | k>=2                     | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k>=6 | k=7 |
| TOTAL                                                                                                     | 80.2 | 51.6                       | 21.4 | 5.1  | 0.9  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.4 | 36.1                       | 46.9 | 59.7 | 71.7 | 85.7 | -   | 22.7 | 18.7                     | 10.0 | 3.0  | 0.6  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| AREA                                                                                                      |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                          |      |      |      |      |     |
| Urban                                                                                                     | 75.5 | 45.9                       | 18.8 | 4.2  | 0.7  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 27.5 | 35.9                       | 46.6 | 59.6 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 20.7 | 16.5                     | 8.7  | 2.5  | 0.5  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Rural                                                                                                     | 88.8 | 62.1                       | 26.2 | 6.7  | 1.2  | 0.1  | 0.0 | 29.8 | 36.4                       | 47.2 | 59.9 | 72.1 | 85.7 | -   | 26.4 | 22.6                     | 12.4 | 4.0  | 0.9  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| PROVINCE                                                                                                  |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                          |      |      |      |      |     |
| Koshi                                                                                                     | 78.9 | 50.2                       | 20.0 | 3.5  | 0.9  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 27.8 | 35.5                       | 46.0 | 60.9 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 21.9 | 17.8                     | 9.2  | 2.1  | 0.7  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Madhesh                                                                                                   | 86.6 | 62.5                       | 29.3 | 8.2  | 1.5  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 31.0 | 37.5                       | 47.6 | 59.8 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 26.9 | 23.4                     | 13.9 | 4.9  | 1.1  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Bagmati                                                                                                   | 67.3 | 36.1                       | 13.5 | 3.1  | 0.5  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 25.6 | 35.3                       | 46.7 | 59.2 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 17.2 | 12.7                     | 6.3  | 1.9  | 0.3  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Gandaki                                                                                                   | 67.3 | 33.6                       | 10.0 | 2.0  | 0.3  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 24.0 | 33.8                       | 46.2 | 59.4 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 16.2 | 11.4                     | 4.6  | 1.2  | 0.2  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Lumbini                                                                                                   | 81.2 | 50.9                       | 21.8 | 4.6  | 0.7  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.0 | 36.2                       | 46.4 | 59.4 | 72.3 | 85.7 | -   | 22.8 | 18.4                     | 10.1 | 2.8  | 0.5  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Karnali                                                                                                   | 96.2 | 72.5                       | 29.9 | 7.9  | 1.3  | 0.1  | 0.0 | 30.9 | 36.3                       | 47.3 | 59.7 | 72.9 | 85.7 | -   | 29.7 | 26.3                     | 14.1 | 4.7  | 0.9  | 0.1  | 0.0 |
| Sudurpashchim                                                                                             | 86.6 | 56.4                       | 20.5 | 4.9  | 0.7  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 27.9 | 35.2                       | 46.8 | 59.4 | 72.0 | 85.7 | -   | 24.2 | 19.9                     | 9.6  | 2.9  | 0.5  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| SEX                                                                                                       |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                          |      |      |      |      |     |
| Male                                                                                                      | 79.7 | 51.1                       | 20.9 | 5.1  | 1.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.3 | 36.1                       | 47.0 | 59.9 | 71.7 | 85.7 | -   | 22.6 | 18.5                     | 9.8  | 3.0  | 0.7  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Female                                                                                                    | 80.7 | 52.2                       | 21.8 | 5.1  | 0.8  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.5 | 36.2                       | 46.7 | 59.6 | 71.7 | 85.7 | -   | 23.0 | 18.9                     | 10.2 | 3.0  | 0.6  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| MOTHERE'S EDUCATION                                                                                       |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |      |                          |      |      |      |      |     |
| None                                                                                                      | 90.5 | 65.7                       | 29.4 | 7.1  | 1.3  | 0.1  | 0.0 | 30.6 | 36.8                       | 47.0 | 59.9 | 72.0 | 85.7 | -   | 27.7 | 24.2                     | 13.8 | 4.3  | 1.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| ECED                                                                                                      | 92.0 | 49.5                       | 22.3 | 2.2  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 25.8 | 35.7                       | 44.3 | 57.1 | -    | -    | -   | 23.7 | 17.7                     | 9.9  | 1.3  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Basic (Gr 1–8)                                                                                            | 85.1 | 56.3                       | 23.3 | 6.0  | 1.2  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.9 | 36.3                       | 47.3 | 60.0 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 24.5 | 20.4                     | 11.0 | 3.6  | 0.8  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Secondary (Gr 9–12)                                                                                       | 71.5 | 39.7                       | 14.9 | 3.0  | 0.4  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 25.9 | 35.2                       | 46.2 | 59.2 | 71.8 | 85.7 | -   | 18.5 | 14.0                     | 6.9  | 1.8  | 0.3  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Higher                                                                                                    | 49.6 | 20.9                       | 5.8  | 0.9  | 0.1  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 22.3 | 33.3                       | 45.4 | 58.5 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 11.1 | 7.0                      | 2.6  | 0.6  | 0.1  | 0.0  | 0.0 |



## 6.8 CHILD PROTECTION AND WELLBEING INDICATORS AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (0–17 YEARS)

Beyond differences associated with household wealth, parental education, and place of residence, multidimensional deprivation among children aged 0–17 years also varies according to key child protection and wellbeing indicators, including birth registration status, exposure to violent discipline, and engagement in economic activity. While these factors are closely linked to children lived experiences, the patterns observed are generally less pronounced than the strong socioeconomic gradients associated with wealth and education. Nevertheless, they highlight important dimensions of vulnerability that frequently coexist with deprivation.

Birth registration exhibits the strongest association with multidimensional deprivation. Children whose births have not been registered are substantially more likely to experience multiple deprivations than those with a birth certificate. At the  $k \geq 3$  threshold, 34.5 percent of unregistered children are multidimensionally deprived compared with 20.4 percent of registered children. The disparity becomes even wider at higher deprivation thresholds, where the incidence of multidimensional deprivation among unregistered children is more than three times that of registered children at  $k \geq 4$ . Unregistered children also experience slightly higher intensity of deprivation, resulting in an adjusted headcount ratio ( $M_0$ ) nearly twice that of registered children. These findings suggest that lack of birth registration is closely associated with broader social and economic disadvantages, reflecting barriers to accessing services and administrative systems that often affect already vulnerable households.

Exposure to violent discipline is also associated with higher levels of multidimensional deprivation, although the relationship is comparatively modest. Children who experience violent discipline consistently show higher deprivation incidence across deprivation thresholds than those who do not. At  $k \geq 3$ , 15.3 percent of children exposed to violent discipline are multidimensionally deprived, compared with 11.6 percent among those not exposed. However, differences in the intensity of deprivation remain small, indicating that while deprivation and violent discipline frequently coexist, the association is weaker than that observed for structural socioeconomic factors. This pattern suggests that children living in deprived circumstances may face heightened risks of adverse caregiving environments, reinforcing multiple forms of disadvantage.

Children engaged in economic activity also experience higher levels of multidimensional deprivation. At the  $k \geq 3$  threshold, 19.4 percent of children involved in economic activity are multidimensionally deprived, compared with 12.8 percent of children who are not economically active. The corresponding  $M_0$  value is approximately 1.6 times higher among working children, reflecting both higher incidence and slightly greater intensity of deprivation. These findings are consistent with the close relationship between household deprivation and child labor, whereby economic hardship increases the likelihood that children contribute to household livelihoods, often at the expense of their education, development, and wellbeing.

Overall, the evidence indicates that children who are unregistered, exposed to violent discipline, or engaged in economic activity are more likely to experience multidimensional deprivation than their peers. However, these factors are best understood as manifestations and correlates of broader socioeconomic disadvantage rather than primary drivers of deprivation themselves. The findings underscore the importance of strengthening birth registration systems, preventing child labor, and promoting positive child-rearing practices as essential child protection interventions. At the same time, sustained reductions in multidimensional deprivation will require addressing the underlying structural inequalities related to household economic status, parental education, and geographic disparities that shape children's opportunities and wellbeing.

Table QM 1.1 Background Characteristics and Multidimensional deprivation

| Background Characteristics |      | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |      |      |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |      |      | MPI Value M <sub>0</sub> |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|----------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| Category                   | k>=1 | k>=2                       | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k>=6 | k=7 | k>=1                       | k>=2 | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k>=6 | k=7                      | k>=1 | k>=2 | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k>=6 | k=7 |
| BIRTH REGISTRATION         |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |                          |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| Not registered             | 88.1 | 63.2                       | 34.5 | 14.1 | 2.8  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 32.9                       | 40.2 | 49.9 | 60.0 | 71.5 | 85.7 | -                        | 29.0 | 25.4 | 17.2 | 8.5  | 2.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Registered                 | 79.6 | 50.8                       | 20.4 | 4.5  | 0.8  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.0                       | 35.8 | 46.5 | 59.7 | 71.8 | 85.7 | -                        | 22.3 | 18.2 | 9.5  | 2.7  | 0.5  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| VIOLENT DISCIPLINE         |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |                          |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| No                         | 72.4 | 37.3                       | 11.6 | 0.9  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 24.1                       | 33.4 | 44.0 | 57.1 | -    | -    | -                        | 17.5 | 12.4 | 5.1  | 0.5  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Yes                        | 77.9 | 47.2                       | 15.3 | 0.7  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 25.9                       | 33.4 | 43.5 | 57.2 | 71.4 | -    | -                        | 20.2 | 15.8 | 6.7  | 0.4  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| ECONOMIC ACTIVITY          |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |                          |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| No                         | 74.0 | 42.1                       | 12.8 | 0.6  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 25.0                       | 33.1 | 43.5 | 57.3 | 71.4 | -    | -                        | 18.5 | 13.9 | 5.6  | 0.3  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Yes                        | 86.3 | 55.9                       | 19.4 | 2.4  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 27.1                       | 34.1 | 44.6 | 57.2 | 71.4 | -    | -                        | 23.4 | 19.1 | 8.7  | 1.4  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| "- "no cases reported      |      |                            |      |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |                          |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |

## 7. DEPRIVATION PROFILE OF THE CHILDREN (0-23 MONTHS)

The analysis of multidimensional deprivation among children aged 0–23 months provides a focused assessment of well-being during the first two years of life a critical period for survival, healthy growth, and cognitive development. Children in this age group are assessed using a combination of age-specific Health and Nutrition indicators, such as breastfeeding, complementary feeding, immunization, and growth monitoring, alongside broader household-level dimensions including Water, Sanitation, Information and Housing. Analyzing this age group separately ensures that deprivation is measured using indicators that are appropriate to their developmental stage, while also capturing the environmental conditions that influence early childhood outcomes. The findings highlight the extent to which young children experience overlapping deprivations during the crucial first 1,000 days, providing important evidence to guide policies and interventions aimed at giving every child the best start in life.

### 7.1 SINGLE DEPRIVATION RATES BY INDICATOR (0-23 MONTHS)

| Table SD 1.1 Single deprivations for children aged 0-23 months, NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25           |            |       |            |       |               |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------|------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Indicator                                                                                                     | NMICS 2014 |       | NMICS 2019 |       | NMICS 2024-25 |       |
| Dimension and Indicators                                                                                      | %          | N     | %          | N     | %             | N     |
| <b>Age group: 0-23 months</b>                                                                                 |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| <b>WATER</b>                                                                                                  |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved drinking water source                                                                              | 5.9        | 1,986 | 2.4        | 2,566 | 1.8           | 2,127 |
| Time to improve water source > 30 minutes                                                                     | 3.5        | 1,868 | 1.7        | 2,505 | 0.1           | 2,088 |
| <b>SANITATION</b>                                                                                             |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved sanitation facility                                                                                | 32.8       | 1,984 | 7.0        | 2,565 | 7.8           | 2,128 |
| Shared improved sanitation facility                                                                           | 45.1       | 1,984 | 24.1       | 2,566 | 20.0          | 2,129 |
| <b>HOUSING</b>                                                                                                |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Rudimentary floor material                                                                                    | 73.2       | 1,986 | 57.3       | 2,566 | 44.4          | 2,129 |
| Rudimentary roof material                                                                                     | 16.5       | 1,986 | 9.7        | 2,566 | 6.4           | 2,129 |
| Rudimentary wall material                                                                                     | 64.8       | 1,983 | 52.6       | 2,566 | 42.7          | 2,129 |
| No electricity                                                                                                | 18.8       | 1,986 | 19.5       | 2,566 | 4.0           | 2,129 |
| Overcrowding (>3 persons per sleeping room)                                                                   | 30.3       | 1,976 | 25.8       | 2,566 | 21.1          | 2,129 |
| <b>INFORMATION</b>                                                                                            |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| No information device (TV/radio)                                                                              | 37.8       | 1,985 | 33.1       | 2,246 | 54.5          | 2,129 |
| No communication device (mobile/fixed phone)                                                                  | 5.4        | 1,986 | 3.1        | 2,566 | 2.2           | 2,129 |
| <b>HEALTH</b>                                                                                                 |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Full immunization not received (12-23 mo.)                                                                    | 15.5       | 998   | 29.8       | 1,265 | 10.6          | 1,136 |
| Birth not attended by skilled provider                                                                        | 43.6       | 1,975 | 23.5       | 2,525 | 8.8           | 2,101 |
| Diarrhea: no treatment sought                                                                                 | 49.4       | 312   | 38.4       | 303   | 7.7           | 119   |
| ARI: no treatment sought                                                                                      | 40.8       | 149   | 17.9       | 70    | 0.0           | 58    |
| <b>NUTRITION</b>                                                                                              |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Stunting (height-for-age < -2 SD)                                                                             | 25.0       | 1,909 | 24.8       | 2,447 | 18.8          | 1,849 |
| Wasting (weight-for-height < -2 SD)                                                                           | 15.7       | 1,900 | 15.0       | 2,457 | 8.3           | 1,850 |
| Minimum acceptable diet not met (6-23 month)                                                                  | 68.1       | 1,508 | 69.6       | 1,982 | 60.7          | 1,589 |
| *13 missing cases in 2014, 38 missing cases in 2019 during SBA imputation from woman dataset to child dataset |            |       |            |       |               |       |

**Water:** Access to safe water has improved steadily. The proportion of children in households using unimproved drinking water sources declined from 5.9% in 2014 to 1.8% in 2024–25. Similarly, households requiring more than 30 minutes to reach an improved source dropped from 3.5% to just 0.1%, highlighting near-universal physical access to safe water.

**Sanitation:** Sanitation conditions have strengthened significantly. Children in households with unimproved sanitation facilities fell from 32.8% to 7.8%, while reliance on shared improved facilities decreased from 45.1% to 20.0%. This reflects a shift toward private, hygienic sanitation options, which are critical for reducing disease transmission among infants.

**Housing:** Housing quality improved across all indicators. Rudimentary floor materials declined from 73.2% to 44.4%, rudimentary roofs from 16.5% to 6.4%, and rudimentary walls from 64.8% to 42.7%. Households without electricity dropped from 18.8% to 4.0%, while overcrowding fell from 30.3% to 21.1%. These changes reflect rising household living standards and better environments for child development.

**Information:** The information dimension presents mixed results. Lack of communication devices (phones) decreased from 5.4% to 2.2%, showing improved connectivity. However, deprivation in traditional information devices (TV/radio) rose sharply from 37.8% to 54.5%. This likely reflects a structural shift away from broadcast media toward digital platforms, rather than a true increase in informational exclusion.

**Health:** Health outcomes improved considerably. Births not attended by skilled providers declined from 43.6% to 8.8%. Untreated diarrhea cases fell from 49.4% to 7.7%, and untreated ARI cases dropped to less than one percent. Full immunization coverage improved after a setback in 2019, reaching 89.4% in 2024–25, underscoring stronger health service access and caregiver awareness.

**Nutrition:** Nutrition indicators show progress but highlight persistent challenges. Stunting decreased from 25.0% to 18.8%, and wasting from 15.7% to 8.3%, reflecting better growth outcomes. The proportion of children not meeting the minimum acceptable diet remains high, though it declined from 68.1% to 60.7%, pointing to ongoing gaps in dietary quality and diversity.

## 7.2 CHILD DEPRIVATION PROFILE: DISTRIBUTION OF SIMULTANEOUS DEPRIVATIONS (0-23 MONTHS)

| Number of deprivations (k) | NMICS 2014 |              |              | NMICS 2019 |              |              | NMICS 2024-25 |              |              |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
|                            | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %             | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper |
| k = 0                      | 4.4        | 3.3          | 5.7          | 6.4        | 5.0          | 8.3          | 12.1          | 10.1         | 14.5         |
| k = 1                      | 13.8       | 11.7         | 16.1         | 20.7       | 18.6         | 22.9         | 22.2          | 19.9         | 24.7         |
| k = 2                      | 19.4       | 17.2         | 21.7         | 29.4       | 27.1         | 31.7         | 30.2          | 27.6         | 33.0         |
| k = 3                      | 25.3       | 22.9         | 27.7         | 25.7       | 23.4         | 28.2         | 22.5          | 20.1         | 25.1         |
| k = 4                      | 23.3       | 20.7         | 26.1         | 13.8       | 12.1         | 15.7         | 10.3          | 8.7          | 12.2         |
| k = 5                      | 12.9       | 10.9         | 15.2         | 3.8        | 2.9          | 4.9          | 2.6           | 1.8          | 3.7          |
| k = 6                      | 1.0        | 0.6          | 1.7          | 0.3        | 0.1          | 0.6          | 0.0           | 0.0          | 0.3          |

The child deprivation profile data reveal a clear structural transformation in the distribution of deprivations among children aged 0–23 months. In 2014, the profile was heavily skewed toward severe poverty, with more than one-third of children experiencing four or more simultaneous deprivations. By 2019, this extreme end

of the distribution had contracted sharply, while the middle categories (one to three deprivations) expanded, indicating a shift from severe to moderate deprivation. The 2024–25 results consolidate this trend: the share of children with no deprivation nearly tripled compared to 2014, and those with five or six deprivations became negligible.

### 7.3 AGGREGATE CHILD DEPRIVATION: HEADCOUNT, INTENSITY AND ADJUSTED HEADCOUNT (0-23 MONTHS)

**Table AC 1.1 Aggregate Child Deprivation Measures by Cut-Off, NMICS (0-23 months) NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25**

| Cut-off      | NMICS 2014 |       |        | NMICS 2019 |       |        | NMICS 2024-25 |       |        |
|--------------|------------|-------|--------|------------|-------|--------|---------------|-------|--------|
|              | H (%)      | A (%) | M0 (%) | H (%)      | A (%) | M0 (%) | H (%)         | A (%) | M0 (%) |
| <b>k ≥ 1</b> | 95.6       | 50.9  | 48.7   | 93.6       | 41.3  | 38.7   | 87.9          | 38.8  | 34.1   |
| <b>k ≥ 2</b> | 81.9       | 56.7  | 46.4   | 72.9       | 48.3  | 35.2   | 65.7          | 46.3  | 30.4   |
| <b>k ≥ 3</b> | 62.5       | 63.9  | 40.0   | 43.5       | 58.5  | 25.4   | 35.5          | 57.3  | 20.3   |
| <b>k ≥ 4</b> | 37.3       | 73.4  | 27.3   | 17.8       | 70.7  | 12.6   | 12.9          | 70.1  | 9.1    |
| <b>k ≥ 5</b> | 13.9       | 84.6  | 11.8   | 4.0        | 84.4  | 3.4    | 2.6           | 83.6  | 2.2    |
| <b>k = 6</b> | 1.0        | 100.0 | 1.0    | 0.3        | 100.0 | 0.3    | 0.0           | 100.0 | 0.0    |

For children aged 0–23 months, the aggregate child poverty measures show a clear and consistent decline in multidimensional deprivation over time across all cut-offs, indicating substantial improvement between NMICS 2014, 2019, and 2024–25. At the broadest threshold ( $k \geq 1$ ), the proportion of children deprived in at least one dimension fell from 95.6% in 2014 to 93.6% in 2019 and further to 87.9% in 2024–25, while the adjusted headcount ratio (M0) dropped more sharply from 48.7% to 38.7% and then to 34.1%. A similar downward pattern is seen at higher cut-offs: for example, at  $k \geq 3$ , the headcount fell from 62.5% in 2014 to 43.5% in 2019 and 35.5% in 2024–25, with M0 nearly halving from 40.0% to 20.3% over the same period. Even among children facing more intense deprivation ( $k \geq 5$ ), the share declined markedly from 13.9% in 2014 to 4.0% in 2019 and just 2.6% in 2024–25. Although the intensity of deprivation (A) among the poor remains relatively high within each cut-off group, it is generally stable or slightly declining over time, suggesting that while fewer children are multidimensionally poor, those who remain poor still experience multiple overlapping deprivations. Overall, the findings indicate significant progress in reducing both the prevalence and severity of multidimensional child poverty among infants and toddlers in Nepal, especially for severe forms of deprivation.

### 7.4 OVERLAP ANALYSIS (0–23 MONTHS)

The 0–23-month cohort is the most physiologically vulnerable, and the data confirm that this vulnerability is compounded by simultaneous exposure to multiple deprivations. In 2014, the Nutrition–Housing pair recorded a union headcount of 91.6%, meaning nearly all children in this age group were deprived in at least one of these two dimensions. By 2024/25, this had declined to 79.5%, a meaningful but incomplete improvement. More revealing is the intersection figure: in 2014, 56.1% of infants were simultaneously deprived of both adequate nutrition and adequate housing, falling to 37.1% by 2024/25. This persistent co-deprivation of nutrition and housing in over a third of the youngest children signals a structural entanglement households that cannot provide adequate shelter are disproportionately the same households failing to meet nutritional needs.

The Nutrition Sanitation pair tells a similar story. In 2014, 80.7% of infants were deprived in at least one of these dimensions; by 2024/25, this had fallen to 64.6%. However, the intersection children deprived in both stood at 31.7% in 2014 and only declined to 13.5% by 2024/25, suggesting that while sanitation improvements have reduced co-exposure, the residual overlap remains notable.

The three-dimension analysis deepens this picture considerably. For Nutrition–Sanitation–Housing, the 2024/25 union headcount is 81.8%, meaning an overwhelming majority of infants face deprivation in at least one of these three essential dimensions. The M0 values under k=2 (deprived in at least two of three dimensions) declined from 55.9% in 2014 to 33.2% in 2024/25 — still one in three infants — while the k=3 full-intersection rate (deprived in all three simultaneously) fell from 28.6% to 10.4%. Though progress is evident over the decade, the persistence of simultaneous triple deprivation in more than one in ten infants underscores the irreducible core of extreme material deprivation among this age group.

The health–sanitation pair shows the most dramatic improvement in this cohort. The intersection headcount dropped from 26.5% in 2014 to just 3.8% in 2024/25, while the union fell from 70.6% to 30.4%. This near-halving of health-sanitation co-deprivation in a decade is remarkable, though it must be interpreted alongside the health–Nutrition intersection, which fell from 38.4% to 9.8% over the same period. The rapid decline in health dimension overlaps with other indicators may reflect targeted improvements in basic healthcare access, immunization coverage, or skilled birth attendance rather than purely environmental drivers.

**Table OD 1.1 Prevalence of Dimension Overlap (0-23 months)**

| Dimensions                     | NMICS 2014 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2019 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2024-25 |              |          |          |          |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|
|                                | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union       | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) |
| <b>TWO DIMENSIONS</b>          |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Nutrition-Sanitation           | 80.7       | 31.7         | 56.2     | 31.7     | na       | 76.5       | 16.3         | 46.4     | 16.3     | na       | 64.6          | 13.5         | 39.0     | 13.5     | na       |
| Nutrition-Housing              | 91.6       | 56.1         | 73.8     | 56.1     | na       | 88.7       | 48.9         | 68.8     | 48.9     | na       | 79.5          | 37.1         | 58.3     | 37.1     | na       |
| Sanitation-Housing             | 86.4       | 38.9         | 62.7     | 38.9     | na       | 75.8       | 17.0         | 46.4     | 17.0     | na       | 64.1          | 14.7         | 39.4     | 14.7     | na       |
| Health-Sanitation              | 70.6       | 26.5         | 48.6     | 26.5     | na       | 51.5       | 9.4          | 30.5     | 9.4      | na       | 30.4          | 3.8          | 17.1     | 3.8      | na       |
| Health-Nutrition               | 81.1       | 38.4         | 59.7     | 38.4     | na       | 77.2       | 28.4         | 52.8     | 28.4     | na       | 62.2          | 9.8          | 36.0     | 9.8      | na       |
| <b>THREE DIMENSIONS</b>        |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Nutrition–Sanitation – Housing | 94.6       | 28.6         | 64.2     | 55.9     | 28.6     | 91.0       | 11.7         | 53.9     | 43.2     | 11.7     | 81.8          | 10.4         | 45.6     | 33.2     | 10.4     |
| Health–Sanitation – Nutrition  | 87.9       | 20.0         | 54.8     | 44.4     | 20.0     | 82.9       | 7.3          | 43.2     | 28.8     | 7.3      | 68.0          | 3.0          | 30.7     | 15.1     | 3.0      |
| na: not applicable             |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |

## 7.5 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION 0-23 MONTHS NMICS (2024-25)

Among infants aged 0–23 months, housing and nutrition are the most pervasive deprivations. Housing deprivation affects 58.5% of children nationally and is markedly higher in rural areas (74%) than in urban settings. Nutrition deprivation is similarly widespread, affecting 57.9% of infants overall, with a clear rural disadvantage (62.4% vs. 56.8% in urban areas). In contrast, Water deprivation is relatively limited (2%), though it remains somewhat more common among rural children (3%) than urban children (1.9%). Gender differences are modest, with girls experiencing slightly lower deprivation in Water and nutrition, but slightly higher deprivation in sanitation (21.6%).

| Table DM 1.1 Percentage of children aged 0-23 months deprived by dimensions, NMICS 2024-25 |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Background variable                                                                        | Water (%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Health (%) | Weighted N | Nutrition (%) | Weighted N |
| Total                                                                                      | 2.0       | 2,127      | 20.0           | 2,129      | 58.5        | 2,129      | 53.0            | 2,129      | 13.9       | 2,124      | 57.9          | 2,106      |
| AREA                                                                                       |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| Urban                                                                                      | 1.9       | 1,372      | 19.6           | 1,374      | 49.3        | 1,374      | 45.3            | 1,374      | 12.3       | 1,370      | 56.8          | 1,358      |
| Rural                                                                                      | 3.0       | 755        | 21.6           | 755        | 74.0        | 755        | 58.0            | 755        | 16.1       | 753        | 62.4          | 747        |
| SEX                                                                                        |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| Male                                                                                       | 2.7       | 1,086      | 19.5           | 1,086      | 60.4        | 1,086      | 50.8            | 1,086      | 13.8       | 1,085      | 61.7          | 1,071      |
| Female                                                                                     | 2.0       | 1,041      | 21.6           | 1,043      | 60.9        | 1,043      | 51.6            | 1,043      | 14.3       | 1,039      | 56.9          | 1,035      |
| PROVINCE                                                                                   |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| Koshi                                                                                      | 2.4       | 347        | 16.2           | 347        | 55.3        | 347        | 45.1            | 347        | 12.3       | 347        | 60.5          | 347        |
| Madhesh                                                                                    | 0.8       | 587        | 19.7           | 589        | 65.8        | 589        | 60.5            | 589        | 20.9       | 587        | 69.0          | 586        |
| Bagmati                                                                                    | 1.2       | 339        | 27.6           | 339        | 42.1        | 339        | 45.2            | 339        | 14.6       | 339        | 48.5          | 333        |
| Gandaki                                                                                    | 2.7       | 137        | 16.4           | 137        | 41.5        | 137        | 45.4            | 137        | 8.2        | 137        | 54.4          | 135        |
| Lumbini                                                                                    | 1.1       | 346        | 18.2           | 346        | 59.5        | 346        | 54.3            | 346        | 12.4       | 343        | 54.5          | 335        |
| Karnali                                                                                    | 7.8       | 159        | 24.6           | 159        | 86.5        | 159        | 54.5            | 159        | 16.0       | 159        | 67.5          | 158        |
| Sudurpaschim                                                                               | 2.1       | 213        | 18.3           | 213        | 73.0        | 213        | 48.5            | 213        | 8.7        | 212        | 58.7          | 212        |
| WEALTH QUINTILE                                                                            |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| Poorest                                                                                    | 6.5       | 444        | 26.4           | 446        | 99.0        | 446        | 67.7            | 446        | 21.2       | 446        | 68.7          | 442        |
| Second                                                                                     | 1.6       | 444        | 26.1           | 444        | 85.6        | 444        | 67.1            | 444        | 15.8       | 442        | 62.0          | 441        |
| Middle                                                                                     | 1.2       | 483        | 17.1           | 483        | 52.0        | 483        | 51.3            | 483        | 11.9       | 482        | 57.8          | 479        |
| Fourth                                                                                     | 0.3       | 427        | 19.6           | 427        | 31.3        | 427        | 36.1            | 427        | 9.9        | 427        | 57.7          | 426        |
| Richest                                                                                    | 0.7       | 329        | 9.7            | 329        | 13.5        | 329        | 21.5            | 329        | 8.0        | 326        | 44.9          | 318        |
| MOTHER'S EDUCATION                                                                         |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| None                                                                                       | 4.1       | 336        | 38.4           | 339        | 80.6        | 339        | 74.8            | 339        | 28.5       | 339        | 70.0          | 336        |
| ECED                                                                                       | (*)       | 5          | (*)            | 5          | (*)         | 5          | (*)             | 5          | (*)        | 5          | (*)           | 5          |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                                             | 1.8       | 618        | 22.8           | 618        | 69.6        | 618        | 62.0            | 618        | 17.0       | 614        | 67.3          | 609        |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                                        | 2.4       | 932        | 16.3           | 932        | 55.9        | 932        | 44.2            | 932        | 9.3        | 930        | 55.0          | 924        |
| Higher                                                                                     | 1.9       | 234        | 11.6           | 234        | 34.7        | 234        | 24.5            | 234        | 8.3        | 234        | 44.8          | 229        |
| DK/Missing                                                                                 | (*)       | 2          | (*)            | 2          | (*)         | 2          | (*)             | 2          | (*)        | 2          | (*)           | 2          |
| FATHER'S EDUCATION                                                                         |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| None                                                                                       | 4.7       | 123        | 51.2           | 125        | 80.2        | 125        | 79.1            | 125        | 30.6       | 125        | 68.2          | 125        |
| ECED                                                                                       | (*)       | 7          | (*)            | 7          | (*)         | 7          | (*)             | 7          | (*)        | 7          | (*)           | 6          |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                                             | 3.3       | 356        | 27.2           | 356        | 68.6        | 356        | 55.9            | 356        | 15.5       | 355        | 64.2          | 348        |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                                        | 1.7       | 604        | 14.9           | 604        | 59.0        | 604        | 41.4            | 604        | 10.3       | 600        | 55.3          | 593        |
| Higher                                                                                     | 3.0       | 173        | 10.2           | 173        | 38.6        | 173        | 28.3            | 173        | 10.2       | 173        | 44.5          | 171        |
| Biological Father not in HH                                                                | 1.9       | 861        | 20.1           | 861        | 60.9        | 861        | 57.7            | 861        | 15         | 861        | 62.3          | 859        |
| DK/Missing                                                                                 | (*)       | 4          | (*)            | 4          | (*)         | 4          | (*)             | 4          | (*)        | 4          | (*)           | 4          |
| (*) Figures that are based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases                               |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |

(\*) Figures that are based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases

Across the three dimensions of deprivation examined, wealth exerts a powerful but uneven influence. Housing deprivation shows the sharpest response to wealth collapsing from a near-universal 99% among the poorest quintile to just 13.5% among the richest, a 7.3-fold gap that marks shelter as acutely concentrated among the most economically marginalized. Health deprivation follows a more modest gradient, declining from 21.2% to 8.0%, suggesting that service delivery constraints and geographic barriers introduce risk that household income alone cannot eliminate. Most striking, however, is nutrition: with deprivation rates of 57.7% and 44.9% persisting into the fourth and richest quintiles respectively, hunger and dietary inadequacy emerge as systemic failures of food environments rather than simple functions of poverty a pattern that wealth accumulation, without parallel structural reform, appears largely unable to resolve.

Mother's education emerges as one of the most consistently protective factors across all dimensions of child deprivation. Children born to mothers with no formal education face housing deprivation of 80.6% and nutrition deprivation of 70% rates that fall to 34.7% and 44.8% respectively among children of mothers with higher education, reductions of roughly half in both cases. This gradient holds across all six dimensions examined, reinforcing the well-established relationship between maternal human capital and household welfare outcomes. Yet the data also exposes the limits of education as a standalone solution: sanitation deprivation remains at 16.3% even among secondary-educated mothers, pointing to infrastructure deficits inadequate water systems, poor municipal coverage, unplanned settlement patterns that persist regardless of household-level educational attainment. The implication is twofold. Investments in girls' education and women's schooling retention yield measurable, broad-spectrum reductions in child deprivation and remain among the highest-return social interventions available. But they cannot substitute for direct public investment in basic service infrastructure, particularly sanitation, where structural supply-side gaps create a deprivation floor that education alone may not break.

## 7.6 CHILD PROTECTION AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION PREVALENCE (0-23 MONTHS)

| Table QL 1.1 Quality of Life and dimensions prevalence: Nepal Child Deprivation Analysis, 0-23 month), NMICS 2024-25 |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Quality of Life Variables                                                                                            | Water (%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Health (%) | Weighted N | Nutrition (%) | Weighted N |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>                                                                                            |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| Not registered                                                                                                       | 1.5       | 494        | 26.4           | 494        | 58.7        | 494        | 56.7            | 494        | 18.8       | 493        | 53.1          | 482        |
| Registered                                                                                                           | 2.6       | 1,633      | 19.0           | 1,635      | 61.1        | 1,635      | 49.7            | 1,635      | 12.8       | 1,630      | 61.0          | 1,624      |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>                                                                                            |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                                                   | 2.3       | 1,501      | 18.8           | 1,503      | 60.0        | 1,503      | 52.5            | 1,503      | 13         | 1,497      | 54.8          | 1479       |
| Yes                                                                                                                  | 2.5       | 626        | 23.8           | 626        | 61.8        | 626        | 48.4            | 626        | 17         | 626        | 68.2          | 626        |

The NMICS 2024–25 child deprivation analysis reveals that physical child deprivation among infants aged 0–23 months is deeply intertwined with institutional and protection-based quality of life gaps. Children who lack birth registration face systematically higher rates of sanitation (26.4%) and health deprivation (18.8%) compared to their registered peers. This legal invisibility acts as a structural barrier, effectively cutting off vulnerable families from the vital public health infrastructure, immunization programs, and information networks required during the first two years of life.

Simultaneously, exposure to violent discipline serves as a stark indicator of compounding household distress, showing an alarming overlap with severe physical deprivation. Most notably, nearly 7 in 10 infants (68.2%) who experience violent discipline are also nutritionally deprived significantly from the 54.8% rate seen among

children spared from violent punishment. These findings underscore that improving a child's early quality of life requires looking beyond material infrastructure alone; physical interventions like food security and health services must be explicitly linked with local child protection systems and birth registration drives.

## 7.7 MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (0-23 MONTHS)

Infants and toddlers aged 0–23 months represent the most critical developmental window in the life course. Simultaneous deprivations during this period in nutrition, health services, hygiene, and cognitive stimulation carry cumulative and largely irreversible consequences for long-term human capital formation. At the universal deprivation threshold ( $k \geq 1$ ), the national headcount ratio stands at 87.9%, reflecting near-universal exposure to at least one form of deprivation among children in this age group. The MPI value ( $M_0$ ) at  $k \geq 1$  is 34.1, declining to 20.3 at  $k \geq 3$  and 9.1 at  $k \geq 4$ .

Urban–rural differentials are pronounced and consistent. Rural children ( $H = 92.0\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ ;  $M_0 = 38.3$ ) bear a substantially higher multidimensional burden than their urban counterparts ( $H = 85.6\%$ ;  $M_0 = 31.8$ ). This 6.4 percentage-point gap in headcount widens to 12.3 points at  $k \geq 2$ , indicating that rural children are not only more likely to be deprived but suffer more simultaneous deprivations when they are. The intensity differential ( $A$ : 41.7% rural vs. 37.1% urban at  $k \geq 1$ ) further confirms deeper average deprivation among rural infants. Provincial disparities reveal a stark developmental divide. Karnali Province, Nepal's most geographically remote province, records the highest MPI burden across all thresholds:  $H = 98.7\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ , intensity  $A = 42.5\%$ , and  $M_0 = 42.0$ . At the severe threshold  $k \geq 3$ , Karnali's headcount (48.7%) is nearly double that of Gandaki (23.2%) and Bagmati (28.8%). Madhesh Province, despite being in the southern plains with better road connectivity, shows a high headcount of 91.5%, driven by Terai-specific deprivations in sanitation and nutrition. Bagmati (including Kathmandu Valley) has the lowest MPI at  $k \geq 1$  ( $M_0 = 28.5$ ), may be consistent with its higher urbanization and service delivery capacity.

Sex-based differentials in this cohort are modest but present. Male infants record marginally higher headcount at  $k \geq 1$  ( $H = 89.3\%$ ) compared to females ( $H = 86.3\%$ ), yet female infants show slightly higher intensity ( $A = 39.3\%$  vs. 38.4%), resulting in comparable MPI values (Male  $M_0 = 34.3$ ; Female  $M_0 = 33.9$ ). At  $k \geq 2$ , the female headcount (66.3%) marginally exceeds male (65.1%), suggesting that when female infants are deprived, they tend to experience a slightly broader cluster of deprivations.

Mother's education is one of the most powerful determinants of child deprivation outcomes in this cohort. Children born to mothers with no formal education face a headcount of 96.6% ( $k \geq 1$ ) and an MPI of 47.5, compared to 66.7% and 19.3 for children of mothers with higher education, a reduction of nearly 60% in MPI value. The gradient is steep and monotonic: each successive level of mother's education is associated with significantly lower headcount, lower intensity, and lower MPI. This pattern is similarly observed for paternal education, though the gradient is slightly less steep, with children of fathers with no education recording an MPI of 51.6 at  $k \geq 1$ .

The wealth gradient is the sharpest determinant of deprivation in this cohort. Children in the poorest quintile face 100% headcount at  $k \geq 1$ , declining to 65.0% at  $k \geq 3$  rates approximately seven times higher than those in the richest quintile ( $H = 9.0\%$  at  $k \geq 3$ ). The MPI values span from 49.4 (poorest) to 15.5 (richest) at  $k \geq 1$ , compressing to 38.8 vs. 4.8 at  $k \geq 3$ . Critically, even children in the second quintile exhibit very high MPI (43.5 at  $k \geq 1$ ), suggesting that deprivation risk extends well into the lower middle of the wealth distribution.

Table MP 1.1. Multidimensional Deprivation Index by Background Characteristics (0-23 months) Nepal, 2024-25

| Background Characteristics  |       | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |      |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |       | MPI Value M <sub>0</sub> |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------------------------|------|------|------|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|-------|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| Category                    | k>=1  | k>=2                       | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k=6 | k>=1                       | k>=2 | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5  | k=6                      | k>=1 | k>=2 | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k=6 |
| Total                       | 87.9  | 65.7                       | 35.5 | 12.9 | 2.6  | 0.0 | 38.8                       | 46.3 | 57.3 | 70.1 | 83.6  | 100.0                    | 34.1 | 30.4 | 20.3 | 9.1  | 2.2  | 0.0 |
| AREA                        |       |                            |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                          |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| Urban                       | 85.6  | 60.7                       | 31.1 | 10.9 | 2.3  | 0.0 | 37.1                       | 45.5 | 57.1 | 70.1 | 83.3  | -                        | 31.8 | 27.6 | 17.7 | 7.7  | 1.9  | 0.0 |
| Rural                       | 92.0  | 74.7                       | 43.4 | 16.6 | 3.2  | 0.1 | 41.7                       | 47.5 | 57.6 | 70.0 | 83.8  | 100.0                    | 38.3 | 35.5 | 25.0 | 11.6 | 2.7  | 0.1 |
| PROVINCE                    |       |                            |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                          |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| Koshi                       | 87.1  | 63.5                       | 31.9 | 11.0 | 4.6  | 0.0 | 37.9                       | 45.8 | 58.1 | 73.6 | 83.3  | -                        | 33.0 | 29.1 | 18.5 | 8.1  | 3.8  | 0.0 |
| Madhesh                     | 91.5  | 71.9                       | 42.2 | 18.3 | 3.1  | 0.0 | 41.3                       | 48.1 | 58.5 | 69.5 | 83.3  | -                        | 37.9 | 34.6 | 24.7 | 12.7 | 2.6  | 0.0 |
| Bagmati                     | 76.6  | 53.9                       | 28.8 | 9.1  | 2.6  | 0.0 | 37.2                       | 45.9 | 56.8 | 71.5 | 83.3  | -                        | 28.5 | 24.7 | 16.3 | 6.5  | 2.2  | 0.0 |
| Gandaki                     | 83.9  | 49.3                       | 23.2 | 4.8  | 0.5  | 0.0 | 32.1                       | 43.0 | 53.8 | 68.6 | 83.3  | -                        | 27.0 | 21.2 | 12.5 | 3.3  | 0.4  | 0.0 |
| Lumbini                     | 87.5  | 65.2                       | 33.1 | 10.8 | 0.9  | 0.0 | 37.6                       | 44.8 | 55.9 | 68.1 | 83.3  | -                        | 32.9 | 29.2 | 18.5 | 7.3  | 0.8  | 0.0 |
| Karnali                     | 98.7  | 83.8                       | 48.7 | 17.1 | 3.2  | 0.5 | 42.5                       | 47.1 | 57.1 | 70.2 | 85.8  | 100.0                    | 42.0 | 39.5 | 27.8 | 12.0 | 2.7  | 0.5 |
| Sudurpaschim                | 91.9  | 68.7                       | 35.3 | 12.9 | 1.7  | 0.0 | 38.2                       | 45.4 | 56.9 | 68.9 | 83.3  | -                        | 35.1 | 31.2 | 20.1 | 8.9  | 1.4  | 0.0 |
| SEX                         |       |                            |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                          |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| Male                        | 89.3  | 65.1                       | 35.6 | 13.1 | 2.5  | 0.0 | 38.4                       | 46.5 | 57.3 | 69.9 | 83.3  | -                        | 34.3 | 30.3 | 20.4 | 9.2  | 2.1  | 0.0 |
| Female                      | 86.3  | 66.3                       | 35.3 | 12.7 | 2.7  | 0.1 | 39.3                       | 46.1 | 57.3 | 70.3 | 83.8  | 100.0                    | 33.9 | 30.6 | 20.2 | 8.9  | 2.3  | 0.1 |
| MOTHER'S EDUCATION          |       |                            |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                          |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| None                        | 96.6  | 84.7                       | 62.9 | 33.5 | 7.4  | 0.2 | 49.2                       | 53.8 | 60.9 | 70.4 | 83.8  | 100.0                    | 47.5 | 45.6 | 38.3 | 23.6 | 6.2  | 0.2 |
| ECED                        | 100.0 | 64.9                       | 64.9 | 29.6 | 0.0  | 0.0 | 43.2                       | 57.6 | 57.6 | 66.7 | -     | -                        | 43.2 | 37.4 | 37.4 | 19.7 | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Basic (Gr 1–8)              | 94.5  | 77.2                       | 42.2 | 15.4 | 2.8  | 0.0 | 40.9                       | 46.4 | 57.2 | 69.7 | 83.3  | -                        | 38.7 | 35.8 | 24.1 | 10.7 | 2.3  | 0.0 |
| Secondary (Gr 9–12)         | 85.5  | 58.7                       | 26.7 | 6.2  | 1.4  | 0.0 | 34.8                       | 43.1 | 54.7 | 70.4 | 83.3  | -                        | 29.8 | 25.3 | 14.6 | 4.3  | 1.1  | 0.0 |
| Higher                      | 66.7  | 35.0                       | 11.6 | 2.5  | 0.3  | 0.0 | 29.0                       | 40.2 | 54.0 | 68.5 | 83.3  | -                        | 19.3 | 14.1 | 6.3  | 1.7  | 0.2  | 0.0 |
| FATHER'S EDUCATION          |       |                            |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                          |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| None                        | 99.5  | 91.3                       | 71.5 | 37.1 | 9.9  | 0.0 | 51.8                       | 55.0 | 61.0 | 71.1 | 83.3  | -                        | 51.6 | 50.2 | 43.6 | 26.4 | 8.3  | 0.0 |
| ECED                        | 92.2  | 71.9                       | 22.3 | 9.7  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 35.4                       | 40.8 | 57.2 | 66.7 | -     | -                        | 32.7 | 29.3 | 12.8 | 6.5  | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Basic (Gr 1–8)              | 94.9  | 73.0                       | 42.7 | 18.8 | 3.4  | 0.0 | 40.9                       | 48.1 | 58.7 | 69.7 | 83.3  | -                        | 38.8 | 35.1 | 25.0 | 13.1 | 2.8  | 0.0 |
| Secondary (Gr 9–12)         | 83.8  | 59.1                       | 26.6 | 5.9  | 1.6  | 0.0 | 35.2                       | 43.0 | 54.7 | 71.3 | 83.3  | -                        | 29.5 | 25.4 | 14.6 | 4.2  | 1.4  | 0.0 |
| Higher                      | 71.4  | 38.2                       | 14.7 | 2.6  | 0.4  | 0.4 | 29.8                       | 41.3 | 54.0 | 72.2 | 100.0 | 100.0                    | 21.3 | 15.8 | 7.9  | 1.9  | 0.4  | 0.4 |
| Biological Father not in HH | 89.6  | 69.1                       | 37.6 | 13.8 | 2.1  | 0.0 | 39.5                       | 46.2 | 57.0 | 69.2 | 83.3  | -                        | 35.4 | 31.9 | 21.5 | 9.5  | 1.8  | 0.0 |
| WEALTH QUINTILE             |       |                            |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                          |      |      |      |      |      |     |
| Poorest                     | 100.0 | 93.3                       | 65.0 | 30.1 | 7.7  | 0.2 | 44.3                       | 48.8 | 58.4 | 69.6 | 83.3  | -                        | 49.4 | 48.2 | 38.8 | 21.4 | 6.5  | 0.2 |
| Second                      | 98.2  | 84.7                       | 52.0 | 22.3 | 3.9  | 0.0 | 34.1                       | 41.4 | 53.2 | 67.4 | 83.3  | -                        | 43.5 | 41.3 | 30.4 | 15.6 | 3.3  | 0.0 |
| Middle                      | 92.3  | 65.1                       | 26.5 | 4.9  | 0.2  | 0.0 | 31.1                       | 40.5 | 53.3 | 67.8 | 83.3  | -                        | 31.5 | 27.0 | 14.1 | 3.3  | 0.2  | 0.0 |
| Fourth                      | 82.4  | 49.8                       | 17.9 | 3.3  | 0.2  | 0.0 | 26.7                       | 40.7 | 53.2 | 73.6 | 83.3  | -                        | 25.6 | 20.2 | 9.6  | 2.3  | 0.2  | 0.0 |
| Richest                     | 58.1  | 24.3                       | 9.0  | 1.2  | 0.5  | 0.0 | -                          | -    | -    | -    | -     | -                        | 15.5 | 9.9  | 4.8  | 0.9  | 0.4  | 0.0 |
| '-'no cases in existence    |       |                            |      |      |      |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                          |      |      |      |      |      |     |

## 7.8 CHILD PROTECTION AND WELLBEING INDICATORS AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (0-23 MONTHS)

**Table QL 2.1 Multidimensional Deprivation Index by Child Protection Dimension (0-23 months) , Nepal , 2024-25**

| Background Characteristics | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |      |     |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |      |     | Adjusted Headcount M <sub>0</sub> (%) |      |      |      |     |     |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Category                   | k≥1                        | k≥2  | k≥3  | k≥4  | k≥5 | k=6 | k≥1                        | k≥2  | k≥3  | k≥4  | k≥5  | k=6 | k≥1                                   | k≥2  | k≥3  | k≥4  | k≥5 | k=6 |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>  |                            |      |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |      |     |                                       |      |      |      |     |     |
| Not registered             | 90.3                       | 68.7 | 34.5 | 16.2 | 4.1 | 0.0 | 39.5                       | 46.6 | 59.8 | 70.9 | 83.3 | —   | 35.6                                  | 32.1 | 20.6 | 11.5 | 3.4 | 0.0 |
| Registered                 | 87.1                       | 64.8 | 35.7 | 11.9 | 2.2 | 0.0 | 38.6                       | 46.2 | 56.6 | 69.7 | 83.7 | —   | 33.6                                  | 29.9 | 20.2 | 8.3  | 1.8 | 0.0 |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>  |                            |      |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |      |     |                                       |      |      |      |     |     |
| No                         | 87.1                       | 63.3 | 32.9 | 11.0 | 2.0 | 0.1 | 37.6                       | 45.4 | 56.6 | 69.8 | 83.7 | 100 | 32.7                                  | 28.8 | 18.6 | 7.7  | 1.7 | 0.1 |
| Yes                        | 89.6                       | 71.5 | 41.6 | 17.5 | 4.0 | 0.0 | 41.7                       | 48.1 | 58.6 | 70.5 | 83.3 | —   | 37.4                                  | 34.4 | 24.4 | 12.3 | 3.3 | 0.0 |
| ‘-’ no cases in existence  |                            |      |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |      |     |                                       |      |      |      |     |     |

Table QL 2.1 shows Nepal’s 2024-25 Multidimensional Poverty Index for children aged 0-23 months, comparing outcomes by birth registration status and exposure to violent discipline. Across nearly all deprivation thresholds (k≥1 to k=6), children who are not registered at birth or who experience violent discipline show higher poverty incidence (H), intensity (A), and overall MPI values (M<sub>0</sub>) than their counterparts. The gaps are especially notable at higher thresholds for instance, children facing violent discipline have a poverty incidence of 41.6% at k≥3 versus 32.9% for those who don’t, with a correspondingly higher MPI value (24.4% vs 18.6%). This suggests that inadequate child protection (lack of registration, exposure to violence) is linked with greater and more severe multidimensional deprivation among young children in Nepal.



## 8. DEPRIVATION PROFILE OF CHILDREN AGED (24-59 MONTHS)

Children aged 24–59 months represent a critical stage of development during which foundations for lifelong learning, health, and well-being are established. Investments made during these early years generate some of the highest returns in human capital development; however, many children continue to experience multiple and overlapping deprivations that undermine their growth and future potential. This report presents a comprehensive deprivation profile of children aged 24–59 months, examining disadvantages across key dimensions essential for healthy development, including nutrition, health, water, sanitation, housing, and early learning opportunities. By moving beyond monetary measures and identifying the specific forms of deprivation children face, the analysis provides a deeper understanding of the barriers limiting their development. The findings offer critical evidence to guide policies and programmes aimed at reducing deprivation, strengthening child well-being, and ensuring every child can achieve their full potential and enter school ready to learn.

## 8.1 SINGLE DEPRIVATION RATES BY INDICATOR (24-59 MONTHS)

| Table SD 1.2 Single deprivations for the children aged 24-59 months, NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25 |            |       |            |       |               |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------|------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Indicator                                                                                                | NMICS 2014 |       | NMICS 2019 |       | NMICS 2024-25 |       |
| Dimension                                                                                                | %          | N     | %          | N     | %             | N     |
| <b>Age group: 24-59 months</b>                                                                           |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| <b>WATER</b>                                                                                             |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved drinking water source                                                                         | 6.0        | 3,363 | 3.5        | 4,092 | 1.7           | 3,738 |
| Time to improved water source > 30 minutes                                                               | 2.8        | 3,162 | 1.9        | 3,949 | 0.2           | 3,675 |
| <b>SANITATION</b>                                                                                        |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved sanitation facility                                                                           | 33.3       | 3,362 | 8.1        | 4,087 | 8.7           | 3,727 |
| Shared improved sanitation facility                                                                      | 46.9       | 3,362 | 26.5       | 4,092 | 24.3          | 3,736 |
| <b>HOUSING</b>                                                                                           |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Rudimentary floor material                                                                               | 72.2       | 3,363 | 57.2       | 4,092 | 43.4          | 3,738 |
| Rudimentary roof material                                                                                | 17.5       | 3,363 | 9.5        | 4,091 | 5.6           | 3,738 |
| Rudimentary wall material                                                                                | 64.2       | 3,363 | 51.3       | 4,092 | 43.3          | 3,738 |
| No electricity                                                                                           | 19.4       | 3,363 | 19.6       | 4,088 | 3.7           | 3,738 |
| Overcrowding (>3 persons per sleeping room)                                                              | 33.9       | 3,339 | 28.3       | 4,092 | 23.4          | 3,738 |
| <b>INFORMATION</b>                                                                                       |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| No information device (TV/radio)                                                                         | 37.7       | 3,359 | 34.5       | 3,592 | 52.9          | 3,597 |
| No communication device (mobile/fixed phone)                                                             | 6.8        | 3,363 | 3.2        | 4,092 | 2.6           | 3,738 |
| <b>HEALTH</b>                                                                                            |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Diarrhoea: no treatment sought                                                                           | 56.0       | 329   | 47.3       | 342   | 8.1           | 143   |
| ARI: no treatment sought                                                                                 | 56.3       | 208   | 18.1       | 69    | 0.7           | 85    |
| <b>NUTRITION</b>                                                                                         |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Stunting (height-for-age < -2 SD)                                                                        | 44.7       | 3,206 | 35.6       | 4,009 | 30.5          | 3,655 |
| Wasting (weight-for-height < -2 SD)                                                                      | 8.6        | 3,213 | 10.2       | 4,020 | 5.7           | 3,650 |
| <b>EDUCATION</b>                                                                                         |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| No pre-primary attendance (36-59 months)                                                                 | 49.3       | 2,284 | 38.1       | 2,859 | 42.1          | 2,557 |

For children aged 24–59 months, the data features a clear decline in multidimensional deprivation between 2014 and 2024–25, though progress varies across dimensions. Substantial improvements are seen in access to safe water, sanitation, housing quality, electricity, health care-seeking, and nutrition, reflecting better living standards and service availability. However, challenges remain in education, where pre-primary attendance has not improved consistently, and in information access, where ownership of traditional devices like TV/radio has declined, possibly due to shifts toward digital platforms. Overall, the findings suggest that while young children’s living conditions have improved markedly, persistent gaps in early education and evolving patterns of information access may require closer attention.

**Water:** Access to safe water improved steadily. The proportion of children in households using unimproved drinking water sources fell from 6.0% in 2014 to 1.7% in 2024–25. Similarly, households needing more than 30 minutes to reach an improved source dropped from 2.8% to just 0.2%, showing near-universal physical access.

**Sanitation:** Major progress is evident. Children in households with unimproved sanitation facilities declined sharply from 33.3% to 8.7%. Reliance on shared improved facilities also fell from nearly half (46.9%) in 2014 to 24.3% in 2024–25, indicating better access to private, hygienic sanitation.

**Housing:** Living conditions improved across multiple indicators. Rudimentary floor materials decreased from 72.2% to 43.4%, rudimentary roofs from 17.5% to 5.6%, and rudimentary walls from 64.2% to 43.3%. Households without electricity dropped dramatically from 19.4% to 3.7%, while overcrowding declined from 33.9% to 23.4%. These shifts reflect rising household standards.

**Information:** The picture is mixed. Lack of communication devices (phones) fell from 6.8% to 2.6%, showing better connectivity. However, deprivation in access to traditional information devices (TV/radio) increased from 37.7% to 52.9%, likely reflecting a shift away from broadcast media toward newer digital platforms.

**Health:** Care-seeking practices improved sharply. For diarrhea, untreated cases fell from 56.0% to 8.1%. For ARI, untreated cases dropped from 56.3% to just 0.7%. This suggests stronger health awareness and service access.

**Nutrition:** Child malnutrition indicators show progress. Stunting declined from 44.7% to 30.5%, while wasting fell from 8.6% to 5.7%. These improvements contribute to better nutrition and child growth outcomes, though stunting remains a significant challenge.

**Education:** Pre-primary attendance shows mixed progress. Non-attendance fell from 49.3% in 2014 to 38.1% in 2019 but rose again to 42.1% in 2024–25. This suggests gains were not sustained and highlights the need for renewed focus on early childhood education.

## 8.2 CHILD DEPRIVATION PROFILE: DISTRIBUTION OF SIMULTANEOUS DEPRIVATION (24-59 MONTHS)

| Number of deprivations (k) | NMICS 2014 |              |              | NMICS 2019 |              |              | NMICS 2024-25 |              |              |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
|                            | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %             | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper |
| k = 0                      | 8.4        | 7.0          | 9.9          | 12.1       | 10.4         | 13.9         | 15.1          | 13.3         | 17.2         |
| k = 1                      | 16.1       | 14.2         | 18.2         | 22.6       | 20.6         | 24.7         | 22.1          | 20.4         | 24.0         |
| k = 2                      | 21.4       | 19.5         | 23.4         | 30.4       | 28.5         | 32.3         | 27.0          | 25.3         | 28.8         |
| k = 3                      | 24.4       | 22.6         | 26.4         | 21.8       | 20.0         | 23.8         | 21.8          | 20.1         | 23.7         |
| k = 4                      | 19.6       | 17.4         | 22.0         | 9.7        | 8.6          | 11.0         | 11.0          | 9.7          | 12.4         |
| k = 5                      | 8.5        | 7.2          | 10.0         | 3.0        | 2.3          | 3.9          | 2.8           | 2.2          | 3.6          |
| k = 6                      | 1.5        | 1.1          | 2.1          | 0.4        | 0.2          | 0.7          | 0.1           | 0.0          | 0.2          |
| k = 7                      | 0.1        | 0.0          | 0.2          | 0.0        | 0.0          | 0.0          | 0.0           | 0.0          | 0.0          |

The distribution of children by number of simultaneous deprivations shows a clear improvement over time, with fewer children experiencing high levels of deprivation and more children experiencing none or fewer deprivations. The proportion of children with no deprivation increased from 8.4 per cent in 2014 to 15.1 per cent in 2024–25. At the same time, the share experiencing four or more simultaneous deprivations declined markedly, particularly for k = 4, k = 5, and k = 6. Children with k = 7 deprivations were virtually absent by 2019 and 2024–25. Overall, the findings indicate a downward shift in deprivation intensity, suggesting that while multiple deprivations remain common, the most severe forms of child poverty have reduced substantially over the past decade.

## 8.3 AGGREGATE CHILD DEPRIVATION: HEADCOUNT, INTENSITY AND ADJUSTED HEADCOUNT (24-59 MONTHS)

**Table AC 1.2 Aggregate Child Deprivation Measures by Cut-Off, NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25**

| Deprivation Cut-off | NMICS 2014 |       |        | NMICS 2019 |       |        | NMICS 2024-25 |       |        |
|---------------------|------------|-------|--------|------------|-------|--------|---------------|-------|--------|
|                     | H (%)      | A (%) | M0 (%) | H (%)      | A (%) | M0 (%) | H (%)         | A (%) | M0 (%) |
| $k \geq 1$          | 91.6       | 41.0  | 37.5   | 87.9       | 33.3  | 29.3   | 84.9          | 33.7  | 28.6   |
| $k \geq 2$          | 75.5       | 46.6  | 35.2   | 65.3       | 39.9  | 26.1   | 62.7          | 40.6  | 25.4   |
| $k \geq 3$          | 54.1       | 53.8  | 29.1   | 34.9       | 49.8  | 17.4   | 35.7          | 49.6  | 17.7   |
| $k \geq 4$          | 29.7       | 62.8  | 18.6   | 13.1       | 61.3  | 8.0    | 13.9          | 60.2  | 8.4    |
| $k \geq 5$          | 10.1       | 73.7  | 7.4    | 3.4        | 73.0  | 2.5    | 2.9           | 71.8  | 2.1    |
| $k \geq 6$          | 1.6        | 86.4  | 1.3    | 0.4        | 85.7  | 0.3    | 0.1           | 85.7  | 0.1    |
| $k = 7$             | 0.1        | 100.0 | 0.1    | 0.0        | na    | 0.0    | 0.0           | na    | 0.0    |

The aggregate child poverty measures indicate a broad reduction in multidimensional deprivation among children over the period 2014 to 2024–25, although the pattern of progress varies by cut-off. At lower cut-offs, the headcount ratio (H) declined steadily, showing that a smaller proportion of children are experiencing at least one or two deprivations. For example, at  $k \geq 1$ , the share of children identified as multidimensionally poor fell from 91.6 per cent in 2014 to 87.9 per cent in 2019 and 84.9 per cent in 2024–25, while the corresponding M0 declined from 37.5 per cent to 28.6 per cent. A similar pattern is observed at  $k \geq 2$ , where M0 dropped from 35.2 per cent in 2014 to 25.4 per cent in 2024–25. These changes suggest that both the incidence of multidimensional poverty and the average share of deprivations experienced by poor children have declined over time.

The reduction is even more pronounced at higher cut-offs, indicating a substantial decline in more intense forms of child poverty. At  $k \geq 4$ , the headcount ratio fell by more than half, from 29.7 per cent in 2014 to 13.9 per cent in 2024–25, while M0 dropped from 18.6 per cent to 8.4 per cent. At  $k \geq 5$  and  $k \geq 6$ , the proportions became very small by 2024–25, and children experiencing deprivation in all seven dimensions were effectively absent in both 2019 and 2024–25. However, the results also show that progress slowed between 2019 and 2024–25, and in some cases slightly reversed, particularly around  $k \geq 3$  and  $k \geq 4$ , where both H and M0 increased marginally. This suggests that while the long-term trend remains positive, recent gains have been less pronounced, and a considerable share of children still face multiple overlapping deprivations. Overall, the findings point to a downward shift in both the prevalence and intensity of multidimensional child poverty, with the strongest progress occurring in the reduction of severe deprivation.

## 8.4 OVERLAP ANALYSIS 24–59 MONTHS

For the age group 24–59-month stage, the measurement framework shifts to include Early Childhood Education (ECE) alongside Nutrition, Health, and Sanitation reflecting the developmental centrality of stimulation and learning environments for this age group. This analytical shift is itself consequential: deprivation in ECE access during the preschool years is now understood as structurally parallel to material deprivations, not merely supplementary.

The Nutrition–ECE pair in 2024/25 records a union headcount of 57.3% and an intersection of 19.3%, the latter barely changed from 19.7% in 2019. This stability in co-deprivation is striking while overall rates of each individual deprivation may have shifted, the overlap between poor nutrition and lack of ECE access has proven resistant to change. Children who are both undernourished and without access to early learning environments face doubly constrained developmental trajectories, and the data suggest this overlap has not meaningfully narrowed over five years.

The Sanitation–ECE pair also exhibits relative stagnation at the intersection. Its overlap rate was 9.8% in 2019 and rose slightly to 12.4% in 2024/25, suggesting that environmental sanitation improvements have not consistently reached ECE-excluded children. This may reflect geographic or socioeconomic segmentation where children outside formal childcare remain disproportionately in households with poor sanitation.

Most encouraging for this cohort is the notable progress in the health–nutrition intersection, where deprivation plummeted from 22.1% in 2019 to just 1.2% in 2024/25, alongside a substantial improvement in health–ECE from 23.0% to 4.4%. The overall  $M_0$  ( $k=1$ ) for health–nutrition also saw a positive shift, dropping by 27 percentage points from 48.5% in 2019 to 21.4% in 2024/25. A primary driver of this breakthrough is the marked decline in the prevalence of Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI) and diarrheal diseases, two key age-appropriate indicators reflecting significant gains in early childhood health outcomes and disease control over the five-year period.

The three-dimension analysis for Nutrition–Sanitation–ECE shows a more measured trajectory: the union declined from 80.1% (2014) to 66.5% (2024/25), while the  $k=3$  full-intersection held remarkably steady at 17.1% (2014), 5.5% (2019), and 6.2% (2024/25). The slight uptick from 2019 to 2024/25 in triple co-deprivation for this triplet is a concern, suggesting that a small but persistent hard core of preschool children faces simultaneous nutritional, sanitation, and education deprivation. The  $M_0$  under  $k=2$  for this three-dimension cluster was 21.3% in 2024/25 one in five preschool children deprived in at least two of these three dimensions simultaneously.

| OD 1.2 Prevalence of Dimension Overlap (24-59 months) |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Dimensions                                            | NMICS 2014 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2019 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2024-25 |              |          |          |          |
|                                                       | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union       | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) |
| TWO DIMENSIONS                                        |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Nutrition-Sanitation                                  | 72.5       | 25.5         | 49.0     | 25.5     | na       | 58.2       | 11.2         | 34.7     | 11.2     | na       | 50.3          | 9.6          | 29.9     | 9.6      | na       |
| Nutrition-ECE                                         | 68.7       | 30.1         | 49.4     | 30.1     | na       | 60.4       | 19.7         | 40.1     | 19.7     | na       | 57.3          | 19.3         | 38.3     | 19.3     | na       |
| Sanitation-ECE                                        | 68.6       | 28.2         | 48.4     | 28.2     | na       | 54.7       | 9.8          | 32.3     | 9.8      | na       | 54.4          | 12.4         | 33.4     | 12.4     | na       |
| Health-Nutrition                                      | 78.4       | 31.4         | 54.9     | 31.4     | na       | 74.9       | 22.1         | 48.5     | 22.1     | na       | 41.6          | 1.2          | 21.4     | 1.2      | na       |
| Health-ECE                                            | 79.3       | 26.7         | 53.0     | 26.7     | na       | 72.3       | 23.0         | 47.6     | 23.0     | na       | 51.8          | 4.4          | 28.1     | 4.4      | na       |
| THREE DIMENSIONS                                      |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Nutrition–Sanitation – ECE                            | 80.1       | 17.1         | 48.9     | 38.8     | 17.1     | 71.8       | 5.5          | 35.7     | 21.7     | 5.5      | 66.5          | 6.2          | 33.9     | 21.3     | 6.2      |
| Health– Nutrition – ECE                               | 88.1       | 19.8         | 52.8     | 40.3     | 19.8     | 85.3       | 13.3         | 47.7     | 34.2     | 13.3     | 66.2          | 0.5          | 30.7     | 17.0     | 0.5      |

## 8.5 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION 24-59 MONTHS NMICS (2024-25)

Housing and information deprivation emerge as the most pressing challenges, with nearly six in ten children facing inadequate housing and over half lacking access to information. Early Childhood Education (ECE) deprivation is another critical concern, showing stark disparities: nationally at 42.1%, but much higher in rural areas (45.5%) compared to urban (31.7%), and with Madhesh recording and 73.5% almost double the national average.

Nutrition deprivation, though reduced compared to the youngest cohort (34.2% vs. 57.9%), remains significant, particularly among children of uneducated mothers (44.2%). Health deprivation is relatively low at 5.6%, with minimal rural-urban differences. Provincial variations are striking Karnali leads in housing deprivation (86.4%) and has high ECE deprivation (49.5%), while Bagmati performs best with the lowest housing (39.2%), ECE (19.3%), and nutrition (26%) rates.

Wealth disparities are sharp: the poorest quintile faces near-universal housing deprivation (98.7%) and high information deprivation (67.6%), while ECE deprivation drops from 52% among the poorest to just 13.8% among the richest. Yet even the richest quintile shows sanitation deprivation (14.7%), highlighting infrastructure gaps nationwide.

Mother's education plays a decisive role: children of uneducated mothers suffer higher housing and nutrition deprivation, while those with educated mothers' benefit from reduced housing and information deprivation, and higher ECE participation. Overall, the data underscores how deprivation is shaped by geography, wealth, and mother's education, with housing and ECE emerging as the most persistent barriers to child well-being.

**Table DM 1.2 Percentage of children aged 24-59 months deprived by dimensions, NMICS 2024-25**

| Background variable       | Water (%)  | Weighted N   | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N   | Housing (%) | Weighted N   | Information (%) | Weighted N   | Health (%) | Weighted N | Nutrition (%) | Weighted N   | ECE (%)     | Weighted N   |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>1.9</b> | <b>3,738</b> | <b>24.3</b>    | <b>3,736</b> | <b>59.7</b> | <b>3,738</b> | <b>51.7</b>     | <b>3,738</b> | <b>5.6</b> | <b>217</b> | <b>34.2</b>   | <b>3,659</b> | <b>42.1</b> | <b>2,557</b> |
| <b>AREA</b>               |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |            |            |               |              |             |              |
| Urban                     | 1.2        | 2,414        | 23.2           | 2,412        | 46.8        | 2,414        | 44.6            | 2,414        | 5.1        | 143        | 28.8          | 2,368        | 31.7        | 1,630        |
| Rural                     | 4.0        | 1,324        | 23.7           | 1,324        | 75.4        | 1,324        | 57.0            | 1,324        | 5.5        | 73         | 40.6          | 1,290        | 45.5        | 926          |
| <b>SEX</b>                |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |            |            |               |              |             |              |
| Male                      | 2.6        | 2,041        | 23.4           | 2,040        | 59.0        | 2,041        | 49.8            | 2,041        | 3.6        | 122        | 33.7          | 2,000        | 38.1        | 1,392        |
| Female                    | 2.2        | 1,696        | 23.5           | 1,696        | 60.6        | 1,696        | 50.7            | 1,696        | 7.5        | 95         | 34.7          | 1,659        | 38.0        | 1,165        |
| <b>PROVINCE</b>           |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |            |            |               |              |             |              |
| Koshi                     | 2.1        | 610          | 20.7           | 608          | 56.6        | 610          | 45.0            | 610          | 6.3        | 37         | 30.9          | 596          | 29.7        | 385          |
| Madhesh                   | 1.7        | 903          | 25.5           | 903          | 73.0        | 903          | 63.6            | 903          | 2.8        | 53         | 40.8          | 898          | 73.5        | 641          |
| Bagmati                   | 0.9        | 717          | 25.7           | 716          | 39.2        | 717          | 41.3            | 717          | 4.2        | 32         | 26.0          | 698          | 19.3        | 502          |
| Gandaki                   | 2.0        | 255          | 15.2           | 255          | 44.6        | 255          | 46.2            | 255          | 0.0        | 10         | 27.9          | 253          | 23.3        | 157          |
| Lumbini                   | 1.9        | 628          | 21.6           | 628          | 58.7        | 628          | 53.7            | 628          | 3.6        | 27         | 37.4          | 596          | 35.8        | 432          |
| Karnali                   | 6.8        | 269          | 27.7           | 269          | 86.4        | 269          | 55.9            | 269          | 11.4       | 28         | 45.1          | 262          | 49.5        | 181          |
| Sudurpaschim              | 3.2        | 357          | 26.0           | 357          | 70.4        | 357          | 48.0            | 357          | 5.1        | 30         | 34.7          | 356          | 36.2        | 258          |
| <b>WEALTH QUINTILE</b>    |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |            |            |               |              |             |              |
| Poorest                   | 6.3        | 804          | 27.2           | 802          | 98.7        | 804          | 68              | 804          | 7.5        | 61         | 48.5          | 784          | 52.0        | 561          |
| Second                    | 1.8        | 778          | 27.3           | 778          | 84.2        | 778          | 65              | 778          | 8.2        | 53         | 38.9          | 766          | 45.7        | 532          |
| Middle                    | 2.1        | 797          | 21.7           | 797          | 56.0        | 797          | 51              | 797          | 5.4        | 34         | 32.7          | 776          | 38.9        | 542          |
| Fourth                    | 0.3        | 735          | 24.0           | 735          | 28.3        | 735          | 38.1            | 735          | 0.0        | 45         | 27.7          | 723          | 30.7        | 501          |
| Richest                   | 0.3        | 623          | 14.7           | 623          | 13.2        | 623          | 20.2            | 623          | 2.9        | 24         | 16.5          | 609          | 13.8        | 420          |
| <b>MOTHER'S EDUCATION</b> |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |            |            |               |              |             |              |
| None                      | 4.3        | 743          | 32.8           | 741          | 79.5        | 743          | 66.7            | 743          | 4.8        | 41         | 44.2          | 720          | 36          | 11           |
| ECED                      | (*)        | 16           | (*)            | 16           | (*)         | 16           | (*)             | 16           | (*)        | 2          | (*)           | 16           | 43          | 732          |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)            | 1.8        | 1,091        | 27.2           | 1,091        | 69.6        | 1,091        | 61.4            | 1,091        | 4.0        | 65         | 39.8          | 1,069        | 30          | 1,024        |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)       | 2.4        | 1,546        | 19.7           | 1,546        | 52.9        | 1,546        | 41.7            | 1,546        | 7.0        | 97         | 29.9          | 1,517        | 20          | 222          |
| Higher                    | 1.1        | 336          | 13.3           | 336          | 26.8        | 336          | 26.0            | 336          | 0.0        | 10         | 19.2          | 330          | 50          | 5            |
| DK/Missing                | (*)        | 6            | (*)            | 6            | (*)         | 6            | (*)             | 6            | (*)        | 2          | (*)           | 6            | -           | 0            |
| <b>FATHER'S EDUCATION</b> |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |            |            |               |              |             |              |
| None                      | 3.1        | 224          | 45.0           | 224          | 82.8        | 224          | 72.4            | 224          | 8.7        | 27         | 48.4          | 220          | 66.2        | 174          |
| ECED                      | (*)        | 9            | (*)            | 9            | (*)         | 9            | (*)             | 9            | -          | -          | (*)           | 9            | (*)         | 5            |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)            | 3.1        | 694          | 28.7           | 694          | 71.4        | 694          | 58.9            | 694          | 4.0        | 43         | 38.3          | 670          | 43.3        | 466          |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)       | 1.5        | 876          | 19.0           | 875          | 55.5        | 876          | 40.9            | 876          | 6.8        | 44         | 31.3          | 860          | 33.7        | 594          |

| Table DM 1.2 Percentage of children aged 24-59 months deprived by dimensions, NMICS 2024-25 |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |         |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------|------------|
| Background variable                                                                         | Water (%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Health (%) | Weighted N | Nutrition (%) | Weighted N | ECE (%) | Weighted N |
| Higher Biological                                                                           | 2.5       | 291        | 11.1           | 291        | 26.9        | 291        | 26.3            | 291        | 0.0        | 13         | 20.9          | 286        | 22.3    | 199        |
| Father not in HH                                                                            | 2.6       | 1,640      | 23.5           | 1,640      | 60.6        | 1,640      | 53.5            | 1,640      | 5.1        | 89         | 34.9          | 1,611      | 37.7    | 1,115      |
| DK/Missing                                                                                  | (*)       | 2          | (*)            | 2          | (*)         | 2          | (*)             | 2          | -          | -          | (*)           | 2          | (*)     | 2          |
| (*) Figures that are based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases                                |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |         |            |
| '-' no cases in existence                                                                   |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |            |            |               |            |         |            |

## 8.6 CHILD PROTECTION AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION PREVALENCE (0-23 MONTHS)

| Table QL 1.2 Prevalence by Dimension: Nepal Child Deprivation Analysis, 24-59 month |          |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |           |            |              |            |               |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Quality of Life Variables                                                           | Water(%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Health(%) | Weighted N | Nutrition(%) | Weighted N | Nutrition (%) | Weighted N |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>                                                           |          |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |           |            |              |            |               |            |
| Not registered                                                                      | 2.0      | 362        | 32.7           | 362        | 63.4        | 362        | 59.7            | 362        | 6.9       | 28         | 42.2         | 353        | 45.8          | 231        |
| Registered                                                                          | 2.5      | 3,376      | 22.5           | 3,374      | 59.4        | 3,376      | 49.3            | 3,376      | 5.1       | 189        | 33.4         | 3,305      | 37.4          | 2,326      |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>                                                           |          |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |           |            |              |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                  | 1.7      | 773        | 17.7           | 771        | 53.9        | 773        | 45.7            | 773        | 3.9       | 37         | 32.9         | 747        | 36.9          | 483        |
| Yes                                                                                 | 2.6      | 2,965      | 25.1           | 2,965      | 61.4        | 2,965      | 51.5            | 2,965      | 5.6       | 180        | 34.6         | 2,912      | 38.3          | 2,074      |

For the age group 24-59 months, birth registration appears to have a protective association with child deprivation. Unregistered children show higher deprivation across every dimension, most strikingly in housing (63.4% vs 59.4%), information access (59.7% vs 49.3%), and nutrition (45.8% vs 37.4%). This likely reflects a compounding dynamic: unregistered children come disproportionately from marginalized, hard-to-reach households that already face structural disadvantages. Birth registration may therefore serve as both a marker of state integration and a gateway to services that reduce deprivation in early years of life.

Children experiencing violent discipline face greater disadvantages in sanitation (25.1% vs 17.7%), housing (61.4% vs 53.9%), and information access (51.5% vs 45.7%). Taken together, the data suggest that child deprivation in Nepal's 24-59-month age group is not randomly distributed it clusters around children who are already hidden to state systems and exposed to adversity at home. Nutrition stands out as the dimension showing the sharpest gaps across both variables, warranting particular attention in targeted programming.

## 8.7 MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (24-59 MONTHS)

Children aged 24–59 months (toddlers and preschoolers) constitute the period of rapid language acquisition, motor development, and social learning. The expanded indicator set for this cohort (up to 7 deprivation dimensions) captures a wider range of developmental risks. The national headcount at  $k \geq 1$  is 84.9%, with an average intensity of 33.7% and MPI value of 28.6%. Compared to the 0–23-month cohort, both H and  $M_0$  are marginally lower at  $k \geq 1$ , yet remain critically high, underscoring the persistence of deprivation across the first five years of life.

Rural–urban disparities deepen in this cohort. Rural children record  $H = 93.1\%$  and  $M_0 = 33.9\%$  at  $k \geq 1$  versus  $H = 80.3\%$  and  $M_0 = 25.7\%$  for urban children a gap of 12.8 percentage points in headcount and 8.2 points in MPI. At  $k \geq 3$ , the rural-urban headcount gap expands to 16.1 points (46.1% rural vs. 30.0% urban), implying that rural toddlers are more likely to simultaneously suffer three or more deprivations. This has significant implications for early childhood development (ECD) programming, which must prioritize rural service delivery.

The provincial hierarchy observed in the 0–23-month cohort is largely replicated here. Karnali remains the most deprived province ( $H = 97.0\%$ ;  $M_0 = 37.0\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ ), followed by Madhesh ( $H = 92.3\%$ ;  $M_0 = 36.0\%$ ). Bagmati ( $H = 73.7\%$ ;  $M_0 = 20.3\%$ ) and Gandaki ( $H = 71.6\%$ ;  $M_0 = 20.3\%$ ) are the least deprived. Sudurpaschim ( $H = 88.1\%$ ;  $M_0 = 29.9\%$ ) and Koshi ( $H = 83.2\%$ ;  $M_0 = 25.8\%$ ) fall in the middle range. The persistence of this provincial ranking across both early cohorts suggests structural rather than only the lifecycle determinants.

Gender parity in MPI values at  $k \geq 1$  is near-complete for this cohort: males ( $H = 84.8\%$ ,  $M_0 = 28.4\%$ ) and females ( $H = 85.0\%$ ,  $M_0 = 28.8\%$ ) show negligible differences. However, at  $k \geq 3$ , female toddlers show a slightly higher headcount (36.4% vs. 35.2% for males), suggesting marginally greater depth of deprivation at severe thresholds

The mother’s education gradient retains its strength. Children of mothers with no education record  $H = 95.6\%$  and  $M_0 = 38.4\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ , compared to  $H = 53.6\%$  and  $M_0 = 13.8\%$  for children of higher-educated mothers — a 64% reduction in MPI. The secondary education threshold appears particularly salient: the transition from basic (Gr 1–8) to secondary (Gr 9–12) education is associated with a 9.3-point drop in MPI (33.1 to 23.9 at  $k \geq 1$ ). For paternal education, the pattern is consistent, with children of uneducated fathers recording  $M_0 = 42.2\%$  at  $k \geq 1$  versus 15.1% for children of higher-educated fathers.

Wealth quintile remains the strongest predictor of deprivation. The poorest quintile records  $H = 100\%$  and  $M_0 = 41.5\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ , with  $M_0$  declining to 32.2% at  $k \geq 3$ . The richest quintile records  $H = 52.2\%$  and  $M_0 = 11.2\%$  at  $k \geq 1$  a fourfold difference. Notably, even the fourth (second richest) quintile records  $H = 76.1\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ , confirming that multidimensional deprivation extends substantially beyond the most economically marginalized household.

Table MP 1.2. Multidimensional Deprivation Index by Background Characteristics (24-59 months), Nepal MICS, 2024-25

| Background Characteristics  |                     | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |       |       |       |       |      |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |      |      |     | MPI Value M <sub>0</sub> |      |      |      |                           |      |     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|--------------------------|------|------|------|---------------------------|------|-----|
|                             |                     | k>=1                       | k>=2  | k>=3  | k>=4  | k>=5  | k>=6 | k=7 | k>=1                       | k>=2 | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5 | k>=6 | k=7 | k>=1                     | k>=2 | k>=3 | k>=4 | k>=5                      | k>=6 | k=7 |
| Category                    |                     | 84.9                       | 62.7  | 35.7  | 13.9  | 2.9   | 0.1  | 0.0 | 33.7                       | 40.6 | 49.6 | 60.2 | 71.8 | 85.7 | -   | 28.6                     | 25.4 | 17.7 | 8.4  | 2.1                       | 0.1  | 0.0 |
| AREA                        |                     |                            |       |       |       |       |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |                           |      |     |
| URBAN                       | Urban               | 80.3                       | 55.7  | 30.0  | 11.4  | 2.3   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 32.0                       | 39.8 | 49.4 | 60.0 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 25.7                     | 22.2 | 14.8 | 6.9  | 1.6                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | Rural               | 93.1                       | 75.5  | 46.1  | 18.4  | 4.1   | 0.2  | 0.0 | 36.4                       | 41.6 | 49.9 | 60.5 | 72.2 | 85.7 | -   | 33.9                     | 31.4 | 23.0 | 11.1 | 3.0                       | 0.2  | 0.0 |
| PROVINCE                    |                     |                            |       |       |       |       |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |                           |      |     |
| Koshi                       | Koshi               | 83.2                       | 58.1  | 28.7  | 8.5   | 1.9   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 31.0                       | 38.2 | 48.0 | 60.4 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 25.8                     | 22.2 | 13.8 | 5.1  | 1.4                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | Madhesh             | 92.3                       | 77.3  | 53.8  | 23.2  | 5.3   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 39.0                       | 43.8 | 50.4 | 60.4 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 36.0                     | 33.9 | 27.1 | 14.0 | 3.8                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Bagmati                     | Bagmati             | 73.7                       | 43.0  | 18.7  | 6.1   | 0.8   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 27.6                       | 37.1 | 48.2 | 59.1 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 20.3                     | 16.0 | 9.0  | 3.6  | 0.6                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | Gandaki             | 71.6                       | 42.1  | 19.8  | 7.6   | 1.4   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.4                       | 38.3 | 49.4 | 59.8 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 20.3                     | 16.1 | 9.8  | 4.5  | 1.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Lumbini                     | Lumbini             | 86.9                       | 64.9  | 35.0  | 14.3  | 3.2   | 0.2  | 0.0 | 33.6                       | 40.2 | 50.1 | 60.5 | 72.4 | 85.7 | -   | 29.2                     | 26.1 | 17.5 | 8.6  | 2.3                       | 0.2  | 0.0 |
|                             | Karnali             | 97.0                       | 84.7  | 53.1  | 20.1  | 3.8   | 0.3  | 0.0 | 38.1                       | 41.6 | 49.4 | 60.1 | 72.7 | 85.7 | -   | 37.0                     | 35.2 | 26.2 | 12.1 | 2.7                       | 0.3  | 0.0 |
| Sudurpashchim               | Sudurpashchim       | 88.1                       | 67.5  | 35.9  | 14.4  | 2.8   | 0.2  | 0.0 | 33.9                       | 39.9 | 49.8 | 60.1 | 72.2 | 85.7 | -   | 29.9                     | 26.9 | 17.9 | 8.7  | 2.1                       | 0.1  | 0.0 |
| SEX                         |                     |                            |       |       |       |       |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |                           |      |     |
| Male                        | Male                | 84.8                       | 62.3  | 35.2  | 13.4  | 3.0   | 0.1  | 0.0 | 33.5                       | 40.4 | 49.6 | 60.5 | 71.9 | 85.7 | -   | 28.4                     | 25.2 | 17.4 | 8.1  | 2.2                       | 0.1  | 0.0 |
|                             | Female              | 85.0                       | 63.3  | 36.4  | 14.4  | 2.8   | 0.1  | 0.0 | 34.0                       | 40.7 | 49.6 | 59.9 | 71.7 | 85.7 | -   | 28.8                     | 25.7 | 18.1 | 8.7  | 2.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| MOTHERE'S EDUCATION         |                     |                            |       |       |       |       |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |                           |      |     |
| None                        | None                | 95.6                       | 80.6  | 58.4  | 27.1  | 6.9   | 0.3  | 0.0 | 40.2                       | 45.0 | 51.2 | 60.9 | 72.1 | 85.7 | -   | 38.4                     | 36.3 | 29.9 | 16.5 | 5.0                       | 0.3  | 0.0 |
|                             | ECED                | 91.5                       | 52.6  | 36.4  | 0.0   | 0.0   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.2                       | 38.4 | 42.9 | -    | -    | -    | -   | 25.8                     | 20.2 | 15.6 | 0.0  | 0.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)              | Basic (Gr 1-8)      | 91.7                       | 74.5  | 43.1  | 18.4  | 4.2   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 36.1                       | 41.2 | 50.3 | 60.4 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 33.1                     | 30.7 | 21.7 | 11.1 | 3.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | Secondary (Gr 9-12) | 81.5                       | 52.7  | 25.0  | 7.1   | 0.8   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 29.3                       | 37.5 | 47.4 | 58.7 | 72.1 | 85.7 | -   | 23.9                     | 19.8 | 11.9 | 4.2  | 0.5                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Higher                      | Higher              | 53.6                       | 31.1  | 10.3  | 1.7   | 0.2   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 25.8                       | 34.2 | 45.5 | 58.4 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 13.8                     | 10.6 | 4.7  | 1.0  | 0.1                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | DK Missing          | 100.0                      | 63.8  | 63.8  | 31.9  | 0.0   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 37.1                       | 50.0 | 50.0 | 57.1 | -    | -    | -   | 37.1                     | 31.9 | 31.9 | 18.2 | 0.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| FATHER'S EDUCATION          |                     |                            |       |       |       |       |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |                           |      |     |
| None                        | None                | 94.4                       | 85.7  | 69.1  | 36.5  | 9.0   | 0.6  | 0.0 | 44.7                       | 47.8 | 52.4 | 60.9 | 72.4 | 85.7 | -   | 42.2                     | 40.9 | 36.2 | 22.2 | 6.5                       | 0.6  | 0.0 |
|                             | ECED                | 100.0                      | 60.3  | 40.0  | 0.0   | 0.0   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 28.6                       | 38.1 | 42.9 | -    | -    | -    | -   | 28.6                     | 22.9 | 17.2 | 0.0  | 0.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)              | Basic (Gr 1-8)      | 92.7                       | 73.7  | 42.6  | 16.3  | 3.4   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 35.2                       | 40.6 | 49.4 | 60.1 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 32.7                     | 30.0 | 21.1 | 9.8  | 2.4                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | Secondary (Gr 9-12) | 81.1                       | 55.9  | 25.1  | 8.5   | 1.7   | 0.1  | 0.0 | 30.4                       | 37.6 | 48.7 | 60.1 | 72.0 | 85.7 | -   | 24.6                     | 21.0 | 12.2 | 5.1  | 1.2                       | 0.1  | 0.0 |
| Higher                      | Higher              | 58.8                       | 29.4  | 14.4  | 2.9   | 0.6   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 25.7                       | 37.2 | 46.3 | 59.9 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 15.1                     | 10.9 | 6.6  | 1.7  | 0.4                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | DK Missing          | 100.0                      | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 0.0  | 0.0 | 71.4                       | 71.4 | 71.4 | 71.4 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 71.4                     | 71.4 | 71.4 | 71.4 | 71.4                      | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Biological Father not in HH |                     | 86.8                       | 64.4  | 37.6  | 14.6  | 2.8   | 0.1  | 0.0 | 34.0                       | 40.8 | 49.5 | 60.0 | 71.7 | 85.7 | -   | 29.5                     | 26.3 | 18.6 | 8.7  | 2.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| WEALTH QUINTILE             |                     |                            |       |       |       |       |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |                           |      |     |
| Poorest                     | Poorest             | 100.0                      | 93.0  | 63.9  | 27.8  | 5.5   | 0.2  | 0.0 | 41.5                       | 43.5 | 50.3 | 60.1 | 71.9 | 85.7 | -   | 41.5                     | 40.5 | 32.2 | 16.7 | 3.9                       | 0.2  | 0.0 |
|                             | Second              | 97.9                       | 82.3  | 50.9  | 21.8  | 6.2   | 0.2  | 0.0 | 37.8                       | 42.3 | 50.8 | 61.3 | 71.8 | 85.7 | -   | 37.0                     | 34.8 | 25.8 | 13.4 | 4.4                       | 0.2  | 0.0 |
| Middle                      | Middle              | 90.5                       | 62.5  | 33.4  | 11.5  | 1.7   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 31.5                       | 39.2 | 48.5 | 59.2 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 28.5                     | 24.5 | 16.2 | 6.8  | 1.2                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             | Fourth              | 76.1                       | 45.8  | 16.5  | 4.3   | 0.5   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 26.9                       | 35.2 | 47.0 | 58.7 | 71.4 | -    | -   | 20.5                     | 16.1 | 7.7  | 2.5  | 0.3                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
| Richest                     | Richest             | 52.2                       | 19.4  | 6.2   | 0.4   | 0.0   | 0.0  | 0.0 | 21.4                       | 33.5 | 43.9 | 57.1 | -    | -    | -   | 11.2                     | 6.5  | 2.7  | 0.3  | 0.0                       | 0.0  | 0.0 |
|                             |                     |                            |       |       |       |       |      |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      | '-' no cases in existence |      |     |

## 8.8 CHILD PROTECTION AND WELLBEING INDICATORS AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (24-59 MONTHS)

**Table QL 2.2. Multidimensional Deprivation Index by Child Protection Dimension (24-59 months), Nepal, 2024-25**

| Background Characteristics | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |      |     |     |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |      |      |     | MPI Value M <sub>0</sub> |      |      |      |     |     |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|--------------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Category                   | k=1                        | k=2  | k=3  | k=4  | k=5 | k=6 | k=7 | k=1                        | k=2  | k=3  | k=4  | k=5  | k=6  | k=7 | k=1                      | k=2  | k=3  | k=4  | k=5 | k=6 |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>  |                            |      |      |      |     |     |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |     |     |
| Not registered             | 87.5                       | 64.2 | 45.7 | 22.6 | 3.7 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 36.5                       | 44.6 | 51.1 | 59.5 | 71.6 | 85.7 | -   | 32.0                     | 28.6 | 23.3 | 13.4 | 2.7 | 0.0 |
| Registered                 | 84.6                       | 62.6 | 34.7 | 13.0 | 2.8 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 33.4                       | 40.1 | 49.4 | 60.3 | 71.8 | 85.7 | -   | 28.2                     | 25.1 | 17.1 | 7.8  | 2.0 | 0.1 |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>  |                            |      |      |      |     |     |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |     |     |
| No                         | 79.6                       | 56.9 | 29.4 | 11.4 | 3.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 32.4                       | 39.6 | 49.9 | 61.0 | 71.9 | 85.7 | -   | 25.8                     | 22.5 | 14.7 | 7.0  | 2.1 | 0.1 |
| Yes                        | 86.2                       | 64.2 | 37.4 | 14.5 | 2.9 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 34.0                       | 40.8 | 49.6 | 60.1 | 71.8 | 85.7 | -   | 29.3                     | 26.2 | 18.5 | 8.7  | 2.1 | 0.1 |
| '-no cases in existence    |                            |      |      |      |     |     |     |                            |      |      |      |      |      |     |                          |      |      |      |     |     |

Table QL 2.2. presents MPI data for older children (24-59 months) in Nepal, 2024-25, by birth registration and violent discipline status. Like the younger age group, unregistered children show notably higher poverty incidence than registered children, particularly at  $k \geq 3$  (45.7% vs 34.7%) and  $k \geq 4$  (22.6% vs 13.0%), with correspondingly higher MPI values (23.3 vs 17.1 at  $k \geq 3$ ).

For violent discipline, children who experience it show higher poverty incidence and MPI values across most thresholds (e.g.,  $k \geq 3$ : 37.4% vs 29.4%;  $M_0$ : 18.5 vs 14.7), though the gaps are somewhat narrower than those seen for birth registration. Overall, the pattern confirms that weaker child protection, lack of registration or exposure to violent discipline is linked to greater multidimensional deprivation among children aged 24-59 months as well.



## 9. DEPRIVATION PROFILE OF CHILDREN AGED 5-9 YEARS

Children aged 5–9 years represent a critical stage of childhood marked by entry into formal education and increasing cognitive, social, and emotional development. At this age, children’s well-being depends not only on access to basic services such as safe water, sanitation, housing, and nutrition, but also on educational opportunities and a supportive environment that promotes learning and development. Analyzing deprivation among children aged 5–9 years separately provides a clearer understanding of the age-specific challenges they face and helps identify barriers that may hinder their development, educational progress, and future opportunities. This evidence is essential for designing targeted policies and programmes that ensure children can fully realize their rights and potential during the primary school years.

## 9.1 SINGLE DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION RATE OF CHILDREN AGED (5-9 YEARS)

| Table SD 1.3 Single deprivations for the children aged 0-23 months, NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25 |            |       |            |       |               |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------|------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Indicator                                                                                               | NMICS 2014 |       | NMICS 2019 |       | NMICS 2024-25 |       |
| Dimension and Indicators                                                                                | %          | N     | %          | N     | %             | N     |
| <b>Age group: 5-9 years</b>                                                                             |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| <b>WATER</b>                                                                                            |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved drinking water source                                                                        | 7.0        | 6,332 | 2.6        | 5,290 | 2.0           | 4,984 |
| Time to improve water source > 30 minutes                                                               | 3.7        | 5,886 | 2.2        | 5,154 | 0.3           | 4,882 |
| <b>SANITATION</b>                                                                                       |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved sanitation facility                                                                          | 35.1       | 6,329 | 7.9        | 5,290 | 9.0           | 4,984 |
| Shared improved sanitation facility                                                                     | 34.6       | 6,329 | 25.6       | 5,290 | 24.0          | 4,986 |
| <b>HOUSING</b>                                                                                          |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Rudimentary floor material                                                                              | 74.6       | 6,331 | 55.3       | 5,290 | 43.8          | 4,989 |
| Rudimentary roof material                                                                               | 18.0       | 6,332 | 9.1        | 5,290 | 5.4           | 4,989 |
| Rudimentary wall material                                                                               | 66.4       | 6,332 | 49.4       | 5,290 | 41.9          | 4,989 |
| No electricity                                                                                          | 20.2       | 6,330 | 19.8       | 5,290 | 4.3           | 4,989 |
| Overcrowding (>3 persons per sleeping room)                                                             | 35.9       | 6,298 | 29.5       | 5,290 | 22.9          | 4,989 |
| <b>INFORMATION</b>                                                                                      |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| No information device (TV/radio)                                                                        | 38.0       | 6,328 | 32.8       | 4,599 | 53.8          | 4,774 |
| No communication device (mobile/fixed phone)                                                            | 8.5        | 6,332 | 3.8        | 5,290 | 2.9           | 4,989 |
| <b>EDUCATION</b>                                                                                        |            |       |            |       |               |       |
| Children not attending school                                                                           | 0.6        | 5,715 | 1.8        | 5,104 | 1.8           | 4,789 |

For children aged 5–9 years, deprivation has declined substantially in water, sanitation, housing, and communication access, reflecting broad improvements in living standards. Education indicators show near-universal attendance but with minor stagnation, while the information dimension reveals a sharp decline in traditional media ownership, requiring careful interpretation in the context of digital transitions. Overall, the findings suggest strong progress in basic living conditions, with persistent gaps in information access and the need to maintain universal schooling.

**Water:** Access to safe drinking water improved steadily. The proportion of children in households using unimproved sources declined from 7.0% in 2014 to 2.0% in 2024–25. Similarly, households requiring more than 30 minutes to reach an improved source dropped from 3.7% to just 0.3%, indicating near-universal physical access.

**Sanitation:** Sanitation conditions have strengthened considerably. Children in households with unimproved sanitation facilities fell from 35.1% to 9.0%. Reliance on shared improved facilities also decreased from 34.6% to 24.0%, reflecting greater access to private, hygienic sanitation options.

**Housing:** Housing quality improved across all indicators. Rudimentary floor materials declined from 74.6% to 43.8%, rudimentary roofs from 18.0% to 5.4%, and rudimentary walls from 66.4% to 41.9%. Households without electricity dropped from 20.2% to 4.3%, while overcrowding fell from 35.9% to 22.9%. These changes highlight rising household living standards and improved environments for child growth.

**Information:** The information dimension presents mixed results. Lack of communication devices (phones) decreased from 8.5% to 2.9%, showing improved connectivity. However, deprivation in traditional information devices (TV/radio) rose sharply from 38.0% to 53.8%, suggesting a structural shift away from broadcast media toward digital platforms, rather than a true increase in informational exclusion.

**Education:** School attendance remained high but showed stagnation. The proportion of children not attending school was very low at 0.6% in 2014 but increased slightly to 1.8% in 2019 and remained at that level in 2024–25. While overall attendance is strong, the lack of further improvement highlights the need for sustained efforts to ensure universal participation.

## 9.2 CHILD DEPRIVATION PROFILE: DISTRIBUTION OF SIMULTANEOUS DEPRIVATION (5-9 YEARS)

| Number of deprivations (k) | NMICS 2014 |              |              | NMICS 2019 |              |              | NMICS 2024-25 |              |              |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
|                            | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %             | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper |
| k = 0                      | 11.8       | 10.1         | 13.6         | 20.4       | 18.2         | 22.7         | 21.8          | 19.6         | 24.1         |
| k = 1                      | 26.5       | 24.3         | 28.8         | 38.7       | 36.3         | 41.2         | 31.9          | 29.8         | 34.1         |
| k = 2                      | 35.6       | 33.3         | 37.9         | 31.0       | 28.8         | 33.3         | 31.9          | 29.7         | 34.3         |
| k = 3                      | 24.3       | 21.9         | 26.9         | 9.2        | 7.8          | 10.9         | 13.9          | 12.2         | 15.7         |
| k = 4                      | 1.8        | 1.4          | 2.4          | 0.7        | 0.4          | 1.1          | 0.5           | 0.2          | 0.9          |
| k = 5                      | 0.0        | 0.0          | 0.1          | 0.0        | -            | -            | 0.0           | 0.0          | 0.1          |

Between 2014 and 2024–25, the profile of child poverty among 5–9-year-olds shows a notable shift in the distribution of simultaneous deprivations. In 2014, the majority of children experienced two or more deprivations, with 35.6% facing two and 24.3% facing three, while only 11.8% were free from any deprivation. By 2019, conditions improved significantly: the share of children with no deprivation nearly doubled to 20.4%, and those with three or more deprivations dropped sharply to 9.2%. However, the 2024–25 data reveals a mixed picture. The proportion of children with no deprivation rose slightly to 21.8%, but the share with one or two deprivations remained high at 31.9% each, suggesting that while extreme deprivation (three or more) has declined compared to 2014, moderate deprivation persists stubbornly. This indicates progress in reducing severe poverty among children yet highlights the challenge of breaking the cycle of overlapping disadvantages, as a large segment continues to face one or two simultaneous deprivations that can still hinder their overall well-being and development.

## 9.3 AGGREGATE CHILD DEPRIVATION: HEADCOUNT, INTENSITY AND ADJUSTED HEADCOUNT (5-9 YEARS)

| Cut-off | NMICS 2014 |       |        | NMICS 2019 |       |        | NMICS 2024-25 |       |        |
|---------|------------|-------|--------|------------|-------|--------|---------------|-------|--------|
|         | H (%)      | A (%) | MO (%) | H (%)      | A (%) | MO (%) | H (%)         | A (%) | MO (%) |
| k ≥ 1   | 88.2       | 40.4  | 35.6   | 79.6       | 32.9  | 26.2   | 78.2          | 35.6  | 27.9   |
| k ≥ 2   | 61.7       | 49.1  | 30.3   | 40.9       | 45.1  | 18.5   | 46.3          | 46.4  | 21.5   |
| k ≥ 3   | 26.2       | 61.4  | 16.1   | 9.9        | 61.3  | 6.1    | 14.4          | 60.7  | 8.7    |
| k ≥ 4   | 1.9        | 80.3  | 1.5    | 0.7        | 80.0  | 0.5    | 0.5           | 80.4  | 0.4    |
| k = 5   | 0.0        | 100.0 | 0.0    | 0.0        | -     | 0.0    | 0.0           | 100.0 | 0.0    |

(-) no cases

The multidimensional child deprivation situation for children aged 5-9 years has demonstrated measurable improvement throughout the decade, though substantial challenges remain. The headcount ratio for children experiencing at least one dimension of deprivation ( $k \geq 1$ ) declined from 88.2% in 2014 to 78.2% in 2024-25, indicating that while three-quarters of this age group still face some form of deprivation, the prevalence has contracted by 10 percentage points.

More encouraging are the trends in severe deprivation: children deprived across three or more dimensions ( $k \geq 3$ ) fell dramatically from 26.2% to 14.4%, while those suffering deprivation in all five dimensions virtually disappeared from 0.0% in 2014 to 0.0% in 2024-25. The multidimensional poverty index (M0), which combines both incidence and intensity, improved from 35.6% in 2014 to 27.9% in 2024-25, reflecting both declining prevalence and reduced depth of poverty. However, the persistence of 78.2% headcount at  $k \geq 1$  suggests that deprivations remain concentrated and widespread, particularly in dimensions such as education, health, and living standards. The relatively stable average intensity of deprivation at multiple cutoffs (hovering around 45%-61% for  $k \geq 2-3$ ) indicates that among poor children, the breadth of deprivation hasn't significantly narrowed, pointing to the need for multisectoral interventions addressing education, nutrition, healthcare access, and housing conditions simultaneously.

## 9.4 OVERLAP ANALYSIS (5-9 YEARS)

The 5–9-year cohort introduces Education and Information access as measurement dimensions, reflecting the developmental shift from physical survival to cognitive and civic development. The data reveal a fundamental asymmetry: housing and sanitation remain heavily co-deprived, while education deprivation is largely non-overlapping with other dimensions.

The Housing–Sanitation pair remains the dominant overlap in this cohort. In 2024/25, 64.3% of school-age children were deprived in at least one of these dimensions, with 16.3% deprived in both — virtually identical to the 10–17-year cohort in the same year, suggesting that housing and sanitation co-deprivation is a household-level phenomenon that does not differentiate by child age within a given household.

More structurally revealing is the Housing–Information pair. In 2014, the intersection was 35.8%; in 2019, 34.1%; and in 2024/25, 35.5% essentially unchanged across a decade. One in three school-age children simultaneously lacks adequate housing and access to information. This near-static overlap, while other dimension pairs have shown improvement, points to a residual population in structurally disadvantaged households where the digital and physical infrastructure for development is jointly absent. The M0 ( $k=1$ ) for this pair in 2024/25 stands at 54.6%, indicating that more than half of school-age children are deprived of either housing or information access.

By stark contrast, education deprivation shows minimal intersection with other dimensions. The Housing–Education intersection is only 1.2% in 2024/25, and Sanitation–Education is just 0.3%. Even when information deprivation is added (the Information–Education pair), the overlap is only 1.2%. These near-zero intersections carry an important policy implication: children who are deprived of education access are not predominantly concentrated among the most materially deprived households. Education exclusion, in other words, follows a different gradient than housing or sanitation deprivation — it may be driven more by demand-side or cultural factors than by extreme material poverty.

The three-dimension analysis for Housing–Sanitation–Education in 2024/25 confirms this: the  $k=3$  intersection (deprived in all three) is just 0.2%, nearly identical to 2014 (0.2%) and 2019 (0.3%). Education co-deprivation with material dimensions is structurally thin. In contrast, the Housing–Information–Education three-dimension cluster has a  $k=2$  value of 24.4% in 2024/25, driven almost entirely by the Housing–Information overlaps rather than the education dimension itself.

| OD 1.3 Prevalence of Dimension Overlap (5-9 years) |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Dimensions                                         | NMICS 2014 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2019 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2024-25 |              |          |          |          |
|                                                    | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union       | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) |
| <b>TWO DIMENSIONS</b>                              |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Housing-Sanitation                                 | 85.9       | 37.3         | 61.6     | 37.3     | na       | 78.7       | 23.4         | 51.1     | 23.4     | na       | 64.3          | 16.3         | 40.3     | 16.3     | na       |
| Housing-Education                                  | 80.3       | 0.5          | 40.4     | 0.5      | na       | 76.8       | 1.8          | 39.3     | 1.8      | na       | 58.3          | 1.2          | 29.8     | 1.2      | na       |
| Sanitation-Education                               | 43.3       | 0.2          | 21.7     | 0.2      | na       | 27.8       | 0.4          | 14.1     | 0.4      | na       | 24.4          | 0.3          | 12.3     | 0.3      | na       |
| Housing-Information                                | 81.9       | 35.8         | 58.8     | 35.8     | na       | 80.3       | 34.1         | 57.2     | 34.1     | na       | 73.8          | 35.5         | 54.6     | 35.5     | na       |
| Information-Education                              | 37.7       | 0.3          | 19.0     | 0.3      | na       | 39.9       | 0.4          | 20.2     | 0.4      | na       | 52.1          | 1.2          | 26.6     | 1.2      | na       |
| <b>THREE DIMENSIONS</b>                            |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Housing-Sanitation – Education                     | 86.0       | 0.2          | 41.2     | 25.1     | 0.2      | 79.1       | 0.3          | 34.8     | 16.8     | 0.3      | 64.8          | 0.2          | 27.5     | 11.7     | 0.2      |
| Housing-Information-Education                      | 82.0       | 0.3          | 29.4     | 24.1     | 0.2      | 80.7       | 0.4          | 38.9     | 23.8     | 0.4      | 74.0          | 0.9          | 37.0     | 24.4     | 0.9      |
| na: not applicable                                 |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |

## 9.5 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION 5- 9 YEARS NMICS (2024-25)

For children between the ages of 5 and 9 years, the most pressing challenges are not in schooling but in their living environments. Housing deprivation stands out as the dominant issue nationally, affecting nearly six in ten children, while more than half also lack adequate access to information. These two dimensions, shelter and connectivity shape the everyday realities of young children far more than education, where deprivation is minimally recognized to near-universal primary enrollment.

The rural–urban divide is especially significant at this age. Rural children are almost three times more likely to face water deprivation compared to their urban peers, pointing to persistent inequities in basic services that directly affect health and wellbeing. Gender differences are negligible, though girls show slightly lower water deprivation than boys, suggesting that deprivation patterns are broadly shared across sexes.

Provincial disparities reveal how geography shapes childhood experiences. In Karnali, nearly 80% of children live in deprived housing, and water deprivation is the highest in the country, making it the most disadvantaged province for young children. Madhesh shows the greatest challenges in information access and education deprivation, while Sudurpaschim also struggles with housing and WASH. By contrast, Bagmati and Gandaki provide relatively better conditions, with lower housing and information deprivation, giving children in these provinces a more supportive environment.

Wealth is a decisive factor. Among the poorest quintile, almost every child (98.3%) faces housing deprivation, and two-thirds lack access to information. In stark contrast, children in the richest quintile experience far fewer deprivations, with housing deprivation dropping to just 14.4% and information deprivation to 13.7%. Education deprivation remains consistently low across all wealth groups, underscoring that school enrollment is broadly accessible regardless of income.

Mother's education further amplifies inequalities. Children of mothers with no education face housing deprivation rates of nearly 78% and information deprivation of 66%, while those whose mothers have higher education experience far lower rates around 25% for housing and 22% for information. This suggests that mother education plays a critical role in shaping the environment in which children grow up, even though access to schooling for the children themselves remains broadly secure.

**Table DM 1.3 Percentage of children aged 5-9 years deprived by dimensions, NMICS 2024-25**

| Background variable                                                 | Water (%)  | Weighted N   | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N   | Housing (%) | Weighted N   | Information (%) | Weighted N   | Education (%) | Weighted N   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Total</b>                                                        | <b>2.3</b> | <b>4,984</b> | <b>24.0</b>    | <b>4,986</b> | <b>58.8</b> | <b>4,989</b> | <b>52.5</b>     | <b>4,989</b> | <b>1.8</b>    | <b>4,789</b> |
| <b>AREA</b>                                                         |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Urban                                                               | 1.4        | 3249         | 23.8           | 3,251        | 46.3        | 3,254        | 44.9            | 3,254        | 1.7           | 3,120        |
| Rural                                                               | 3.9        | 1735         | 22.2           | 1,735        | 73.1        | 1,735        | 56.1            | 1,735        | 1.8           | 1,669        |
| <b>SEX</b>                                                          |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Male                                                                | 2.6        | 2,689        | 22.6           | 2,689        | 55.7        | 2,689        | 49.5            | 2,689        | 2.0           | 2,579        |
| Female                                                              | 2.4        | 2,294        | 23.6           | 2,296        | 59.7        | 2,299        | 49.9            | 2,299        | 1.4           | 2,210        |
| <b>PROVINCE</b>                                                     |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Koshi                                                               | 1.5        | 855          | 21.4           | 852          | 58.8        | 855          | 43.1            | 855          | 1.6           | 834          |
| Madhesh                                                             | 1.1        | 1,257        | 26.2           | 1,261        | 71.1        | 1,261        | 65.4            | 1,261        | 2.4           | 1,126        |
| Bagmati                                                             | 2          | 840          | 24.1           | 840          | 38.6        | 840          | 40.2            | 840          | 1.0           | 835          |
| Gandaki                                                             | 1.9        | 394          | 15.1           | 394          | 43.3        | 394          | 47.8            | 394          | 1.4           | 393          |
| Lumbini                                                             | 1.9        | 856          | 23.7           | 856          | 55.6        | 856          | 51.5            | 856          | 1.2           | 840          |
| Karnali                                                             | 6          | 325          | 29.5           | 325          | 79.8        | 325          | 57.7            | 325          | 3.4           | 312          |
| Sudurpaschim                                                        | 4.9        | 458          | 21.1           | 458          | 69.4        | 458          | 45.5            | 458          | 1.9           | 449          |
| <b>WEALTH QUINTILE</b>                                              |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Poorest                                                             | 6.7        | 1,158        | 26.7           | 1,160        | 98.3        | 1,163        | 67.3            | 1,163        | 2.1           | 1,090        |
| Second                                                              | 1.8        | 1,127        | 27.6           | 1,127        | 83.9        | 1,127        | 63.9            | 1,127        | 1.8           | 1,058        |
| Middle                                                              | 1.7        | 1,021        | 21.3           | 1,021        | 47.5        | 1,021        | 50.6            | 1,021        | 1.3           | 976          |
| Fourth                                                              | 0.7        | 967          | 22.3           | 967          | 25.5        | 967          | 40.8            | 967          | 2.0           | 957          |
| Richest                                                             | 0.4        | 712          | 15.1           | 712          | 14.4        | 712          | 13.7            | 712          | 1.3           | 708          |
| <b>MOTHER'S EDUCATION</b>                                           |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| None                                                                | 3.7        | 1,467        | 31.4           | 1,469        | 77.7        | 1,472        | 66.0            | 1,472        | 1.7           | 1,357        |
| ECED                                                                | 4.8        | 31           | 42.9           | 31           | 57.1        | 31           | 38.1            | 31           | 5.3           | 27           |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                      | 2.9        | 1,486        | 23.7           | 1,486        | 64.2        | 1,486        | 57.1            | 1,486        | 2.0           | 1,437        |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                 | 1.9        | 1,666        | 19.7           | 1,666        | 48.5        | 1,666        | 40.9            | 1,666        | 1.7           | 1,634        |
| Higher                                                              | 0.7        | 332          | 14.2           | 332          | 24.6        | 332          | 22.5            | 332          | 0.7           | 332          |
| DK/Missing                                                          | (*)        | 2            | (*)            | 2            | (*)         | 2            | (*)             | 2            | (*)           | 2            |
| <b>FATHER'S EDUCATION</b>                                           |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| None                                                                | 3.7        | 348          | 38.9           | 353          | 83.2        | 353          | 71.1            | 353          | 1.9           | 307          |
| ECED                                                                | (*)        | 12           | (*)            | 12           | (*)         | 12           | (*)             | 12           | (*)           | 12           |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                      | 4.0        | 973          | 27.3           | 973          | 65.4        | 973          | 55.6            | 973          | 1.7           | 931          |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                 | 2.3        | 1,065        | 19.8           | 1,062        | 51.9        | 1,065        | 41.1            | 1,065        | 1.9           | 1,050        |
| Higher                                                              | 2.1        | 300          | 7.9            | 300          | 31.0        | 300          | 21.5            | 300          | 2.1           | 297          |
| Biological Father not in HH                                         | 2.0        | 2,285        | 23.5           | 2,285        | 58.6        | 2,285        | 53.3            | 2,285        | 1.5           | 2,191        |
| DK/Missing                                                          | (*)        | 1            | (*)            | 1            | (*)         | 1            | (*)             | 1            | (*)           | 1            |
| <i>(*) Figures that are based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases</i> |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |

## 9.6 CHILD PROTECTION AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION PREVALENCE (5-9 YEARS)

| Table QL 1.3 Prevalence by Dimension: Nepal Child Deprivation Analysis, 5-9 years) |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Quality of Life Variables                                                          | Water (%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Education (%) | Weighted N |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>                                                          |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
| Not registered                                                                     | 0.0       | 215        | 37.4           | 215        | 64.0        | 215        | 57.6            | 215        | 2.4           | 199        |
| Registered                                                                         | 2.6       | 4,769      | 22.6           | 4,771      | 57.4        | 4,774      | 49.4            | 4,774      | 1.7           | 4,590      |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>                                                          |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                 | 1.7       | 851        | 19.1           | 848        | 50.8        | 851        | 43.3            | 851        | 2.1           | 822        |
| Yes                                                                                | 2.7       | 4,133      | 24.1           | 4,138      | 59.3        | 4,138      | 51.3            | 4,138      | 1.6           | 3,967      |
| <b>ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE</b>                                                         |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                 | 2.1       | 4,340      | 23.1           | 4,345      | 55.7        | 4,345      | 49.7            | 4,345      | 1.6           | 4,159      |
| Yes                                                                                | 5.3       | 644        | 23.0           | 641        | 72.2        | 644        | 49.3            | 644        | 2.4           | 630        |

Birth registration continues to show a protective pattern. Unregistered children face notably higher deprivation in sanitation (37.4% vs 22.6%), information access (57.6% vs 49.4%), and housing (64.0% vs 57.4%), confirming that invisibility to state systems compounds material disadvantage. Violent discipline is associated with consistently higher deprivation across all dimensions, most sharply in housing and information access. Economic activity is the most striking finding. Economically active children show higher housing deprivation (72.2% vs 55.7%) and elevated water deprivation (5.3% vs 2.1%), while sanitation rates are near-identical across groups suggesting child labor is concentrated in the most materially deprived households, but that sanitation deficits are spread more uniformly across communities regardless of labor status. Across all three variables, housing and information access emerge as the dominant deprivation dimensions, with economically active children facing the most acute disadvantage overall.

## 9.7 MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (5-9 YEARS)

The 5–9-year cohort marks the transition into formal primary education, making educational access and quality central deprivation dimensions. The indicator framework contracts to five dimensions for this cohort, with education-specific indicators gaining primacy alongside information, water, sanitation, and housing. The national headcount at  $k \geq 1$  is 78.2%, declining from the under-5 cohorts, while the average intensity at  $k \geq 1$  (35.6%) and MPI (27.9) reflect moderate improvement with age. The substantially lower headcount at  $k \geq 3$  (14.4%) compared to the 24–59-month cohort (35.7%) likely reflects the reduced indicator set.

The rural–urban divide persists strongly. Rural children aged 5–9 years record  $H = 86.6\%$  and  $M_0 = 32.6$  at  $k \geq 1$ , compared to  $H = 71.7\%$  and  $M_0 = 25.2\%$  in urban areas a gap of 14.9 percentage points in headcount and 7.4% in MPI. At  $k \geq 2$ , the gap increases: 56.9% rural vs. 39.5% urban. Karnali continues to lead in deprivation for this cohort with  $H = 95.7\%$  at  $k \geq 1$  and  $M_0 = 37.1\%$  nearly twice the  $M_0$  of Bagmati (21.5%) and Gandaki (18.6%). Madhesh ( $H = 81.0\%$ ,  $M_0 = 31.3\%$ ) maintains high deprivation driven by education access and WASH infrastructure gaps. Sudurpaschim ( $M_0 = 30.7\%$ ) and Koshi ( $M_0 = 27.4\%$ ) remain in the mid-range. The narrowing of absolute MPI values at  $k \geq 3$  across provinces (range: 3.0% to 12.5%) reflects convergence at severe deprivation thresholds, indicating that the remaining high-burden clusters are increasingly concentrated in specific geographic pockets.

Sex-based differences remain limited but show a reversal in pattern compared to earlier cohorts. Female children ( $H = 78.3\%$ ,  $M_0 = 28.4\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ ) now slightly exceed male children ( $H = 75.5\%$ ,  $M_0 = 27.2\%$ ). At  $k \geq 3$ , the female headcount (15.5%) exceeds male (14.2%). While these differences are small, they may reflect the early onset of gender-related deprivations in education and nutrition that become more pronounced in later adolescence.

The mother's education gradient remains strong. Children of uneducated mothers register  $H = 88.1\%$  and  $M_0 = 34.6\%$  versus  $H = 45.4\%$  and  $M_0 = 11.3\%$  for children of higher-educated mothers. The secondary-to-higher education transition is associated with a sharp drop in MPI (16.9% to 11.3% at  $k \geq 1$ ). For father's education, children of uneducated fathers exhibit  $M_0 = 37.1\%$ , versus 11.9% for children of highly educated fathers, a pattern analogous to, though somewhat steeper than, the mother's education gradient.

The wealth deprivation gradient for 5–9-year-olds is almost identical in structure to earlier cohorts (24–59 months) but with modestly lower absolute values. The poorest quintile records near universal deprivation ( $H = 99.9\%$ ,  $M_0 = 43.0\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ ), while the richest records  $H = 34.1\%$  and  $M_0 = 8.0\%$ . The steep wealth MPI gradient at  $k \geq 1$  compresses substantially at  $k \geq 3$  (Poorest  $M_0 = 19.2\%$  vs. Richest  $M_0 = 0.5\%$ ), highlighting that severe simultaneous deprivation is increasingly concentrated among the poorest.

**Table MP 1.3 Multidimensional Deprivation Index by Background Characteristics (5–9 years) , Nepal, 2024–25**

| Background Characteristics | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |            |            |            |            | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |            |            |            |            | Adjusted Headcount $M_0$ (%) |            |            |            |            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Category                   | $k \geq 1$                 | $k \geq 2$ | $k \geq 3$ | $k \geq 4$ | $k \geq 5$ | $k \geq 1$                 | $k \geq 2$ | $k \geq 3$ | $k \geq 4$ | $k \geq 5$ | $k \geq 1$                   | $k \geq 2$ | $k \geq 3$ | $k \geq 4$ | $k \geq 5$ |
| Total                      | 78.2                       | 46.3       | 14.4       | 0.5        | 0.0        | 35.6                       | 46.4       | 60.7       | 80.4       | 100.0      | 27.9                         | 21.5       | 8.7        | 0.4        | 0.0        |
| Area                       |                            |            |            |            |            |                            |            |            |            |            |                              |            |            |            |            |
| Urban                      | 71.7                       | 39.5       | 13.4       | 1.2        | 0.0        | 35.1                       | 47.4       | 61.8       | 80.0       | -          | 25.2                         | 18.7       | 8.3        | 0.9        | 0.0        |
| Rural                      | 86.6                       | 56.9       | 17.5       | 2.1        | 0.0        | 37.7                       | 46.9       | 62.4       | 80.1       | 100.0      | 32.6                         | 26.7       | 10.9       | 1.7        | 0.0        |
| Province                   |                            |            |            |            |            |                            |            |            |            |            |                              |            |            |            |            |
| Koshi                      | 77.3                       | 44.5       | 14.3       | 0.9        | 0.0        | 35.5                       | 46.9       | 61.3       | 80.0       | -          | 27.4                         | 20.8       | 8.8        | 0.7        | 0.0        |
| Madhesh                    | 81.0                       | 54.7       | 19.1       | 1.7        | 0.0        | 38.6                       | 47.6       | 61.8       | 80.0       | -          | 31.3                         | 26.0       | 11.8       | 1.4        | 0.0        |
| Bagmati                    | 64.0                       | 31.1       | 10.5       | 1.8        | 0.0        | 33.6                       | 47.9       | 63.5       | 80.0       | -          | 21.5                         | 14.9       | 6.7        | 1.5        | 0.0        |
| Gandaki                    | 60.0                       | 27.8       | 5.0        | 0.0        | 0.0        | 30.9                       | 43.6       | 60.0       | -          | -          | 18.6                         | 12.1       | 3.0        | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| Lumbini                    | 79.8                       | 46.5       | 16.8       | 1.7        | 0.0        | 36.3                       | 47.9       | 62.0       | 80.0       | -          | 28.9                         | 22.3       | 10.4       | 1.3        | 0.0        |
| Karnali                    | 95.7                       | 66.9       | 19.9       | 2.8        | 0.1        | 38.7                       | 46.8       | 62.9       | 80.6       | 100.0      | 37.1                         | 31.3       | 12.5       | 2.3        | 0.1        |
| Sudurpashchim              | 85.2                       | 52.0       | 15.0       | 1.4        | 0.0        | 36.1                       | 46.3       | 61.9       | 80.0       | -          | 30.7                         | 24.1       | 9.3        | 1.1        | 0.0        |
| Sex                        |                            |            |            |            |            |                            |            |            |            |            |                              |            |            |            |            |
| Male                       | 75.5                       | 44.8       | 14.2       | 1.5        | 0.0        | 36.0                       | 47.0       | 62.1       | 80.1       | 100.0      | 27.2                         | 21.1       | 8.8        | 1.2        | 0.0        |
| Female                     | 78.3                       | 46.5       | 15.5       | 1.5        | 0.0        | 36.2                       | 47.3       | 62.0       | 80.0       | 100.0      | 28.4                         | 22.0       | 9.6        | 1.2        | 0.0        |
| Mother's Education         |                            |            |            |            |            |                            |            |            |            |            |                              |            |            |            |            |
| None                       | 88.1                       | 60.7       | 21.7       | 2.5        | 0.0        | 39.3                       | 48.0       | 62.3       | 80.1       | 100.0      | 34.6                         | 29.1       | 13.5       | 2.0        | 0.0        |
| ECED                       | 94.0                       | 54.7       | 12.3       | 0.0        | 0.0        | 34.3                       | 44.5       | 60.0       | -          | -          | 32.2                         | 24.4       | 7.4        | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| Basic (Gr 1–8)             | 79.8                       | 45.5       | 14.7       | 1.0        | 0.0        | 35.3                       | 46.9       | 61.3       | 80.0       | -          | 28.2                         | 21.3       | 9.0        | 0.8        | 0.0        |
| Secondary (Gr 9–12)        | 56.9                       | 22.7       | 4.5        | 0.3        | 0.0        | 29.7                       | 44.3       | 61.2       | 80.0       | -          | 16.9                         | 10.0       | 2.8        | 0.2        | 0.0        |
| Higher                     | 45.4                       | 10.3       | 1.0        | 0.0        | 0.0        | 25.0                       | 42.0       | 60.0       | -          | -          | 11.3                         | 4.3        | 0.6        | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| DK Missing                 | 85.4                       | 56.8       | 30.8       | 30.8       | 0.0        | 47.7                       | 61.7       | 80.0       | 80.0       | -          | 40.7                         | 35.0       | 24.6       | 24.6       | 0.0        |
| Father's Education         |                            |            |            |            |            |                            |            |            |            |            |                              |            |            |            |            |
| None                       | 89.8                       | 68.8       | 22.9       | 4.1        | 0.0        | 51.8                       | 55.0       | 61.0       | 71.1       | 83.3       | 37.1                         | 32.9       | 14.5       | 3.3        | 0.0        |
| ECED                       | 80.5                       | 35.6       | 24.0       | 0.0        | 0.0        | 35.4                       | 40.8       | 57.2       | 66.7       | -          | 28.0                         | 19.0       | 14.4       | 0.0        | 0.0        |

| Background Characteristics  | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |     |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |       | Adjusted Headcount M <sub>0</sub> (%) |      |      |     |     |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Category                    | k=1                        | k=2  | k=3  | k=4 | k=5 | k=1                        | k=2  | k=3  | k=4  | k=5   | k=1                                   | k=2  | k=3  | k=4 | k=5 |
| Basic (Gr 1–8)              | 84.9                       | 52.6 | 18.5 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 40.9                       | 48.1 | 58.7 | 69.7 | 83.3  | 31.5                                  | 25.0 | 11.4 | 1.2 | 0.0 |
| Secondary (Gr 9–12)         | 60.5                       | 28.3 | 7.1  | 1.1 | 0.0 | 35.2                       | 43.0 | 54.7 | 71.3 | 83.3  | 19.4                                  | 13.0 | 4.5  | 0.9 | 0.0 |
| Higher                      | 47.3                       | 9.5  | 2.2  | 0.3 | 0.0 | 29.8                       | 41.3 | 54.0 | 72.2 | 100.0 | 11.9                                  | 4.3  | 1.4  | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| DK Missing                  | 0.0                        | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 0.0 | -                          | -    | -    | -    | -     | 0.0                                   | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Biological Father not in HH | 79.9                       | 47.6 | 15.6 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 39.5                       | 46.2 | 57.0 | 69.2 | 83.3  | 28.8                                  | 22.4 | 9.6  | 0.9 | 0.0 |
| <b>Wealth Quintile</b>      |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |     |     |
| Poorest                     | 99.9                       | 80.5 | 30.9 | 3.6 | 0.0 | 43.0                       | 48.6 | 62.4 | 80.1 | 100.0 | 43.0                                  | 39.1 | 19.2 | 2.9 | 0.0 |
| Second                      | 97.1                       | 66.3 | 23.1 | 1.9 | 0.0 | 38.8                       | 47.6 | 61.7 | 80.0 | -     | 37.7                                  | 31.5 | 14.3 | 1.5 | 0.0 |
| Middle                      | 81.6                       | 37.0 | 7.8  | 0.8 | 0.0 | 31.2                       | 44.6 | 62.0 | 80.0 | -     | 25.4                                  | 16.5 | 4.8  | 0.6 | 0.0 |
| Fourth                      | 60.2                       | 26.2 | 6.4  | 0.6 | 0.0 | 31.0                       | 45.4 | 62.0 | 80.0 | -     | 18.7                                  | 11.9 | 4.0  | 0.5 | 0.0 |
| Richest                     | 34.1                       | 4.9  | 0.8  | 0.0 | 0.0 | 23.3                       | 43.1 | 60.0 | -    | -     | 8.0                                   | 2.1  | 0.5  | 0.0 | 0.0 |

'-' no cases reported

## 9.8 CHILD PROTECTION AND WELLBEING INDICATORS AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (5-9 YEARS)

| Background Characteristics | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |     |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |       | Adjusted Headcount M <sub>0</sub> (%) |      |      |     |     |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Category                   | k=1                        | k=2  | k=3  | k=4 | k=5 | k=1                        | k=2  | k=3  | k=4  | k=5   | k=1                                   | k=2  | k=3  | k=4 | k=5 |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>  |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |     |     |
| Not registered             | 81.7                       | 51.8 | 22.3 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 38.7                       | 49.6 | 62.2 | 80.0 | -     | 31.6                                  | 25.7 | 13.9 | 2.0 | 0.0 |
| Registered                 | 78.1                       | 46.1 | 14.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 35.5                       | 46.3 | 60.6 | 80.5 | 100.0 | 27.7                                  | 21.3 | 8.5  | 0.3 | 0.0 |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>  |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |     |     |
| No                         | 71.5                       | 37.2 | 12.2 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 33.9                       | 46.7 | 60.4 | 80.0 | -     | 24.2                                  | 17.4 | 7.4  | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| Yes                        | 79.6                       | 48.2 | 14.8 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 36.0                       | 46.4 | 60.7 | 80.4 | 100.0 | 28.6                                  | 22.3 | 9.0  | 0.4 | 0.0 |
| <b>ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE</b> |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |     |     |
| No                         | 76.8                       | 44.9 | 13.8 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 35.4                       | 46.3 | 60.6 | 80.5 | 100.0 | 27.2                                  | 20.8 | 8.4  | 0.3 | 0.0 |
| Yes                        | 87.9                       | 55.8 | 18.4 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 37.1                       | 46.9 | 61.1 | 80.0 | -     | 32.6                                  | 26.2 | 11.2 | 0.8 | 0.0 |

Table MP 2.3 extends MPI analysis to children aged 5-9 years in Nepal, 2024-25, adding a third-dimension economic activity alongside birth registration and violent discipline. Unregistered children again show higher poverty incidence and MPI values than registered children (e.g., k≥2: 51.8% vs 46.1%; M<sub>0</sub>: 25.7 vs 21.3), and children experiencing violent discipline show notably higher deprivation than those who don't (k≥2: 48.2% vs 37.2%; M<sub>0</sub>: 22.3 vs 17.4). Most strikingly, economically active children those engaged in work show substantially higher poverty incidence and intensity than their non-active peers across all thresholds (k≥1: 87.9% vs 76.8%; M<sub>0</sub>: 32.6 vs 27.2), suggesting child labor is strongly associated with greater multidimensional deprivation.

Overall, the data indicates that lack of birth registration, exposure to violent discipline, and economic activity are all linked to higher and more severe poverty among children aged 5-9 years, with child labor showing the starkest disparity



## 10. DEPRIVATION PROFILE OF CHILDREN AGED 10-17 YEARS

Children aged 10–17 years are examined as a distinct age group because adolescence is a unique phase of development characterized by rapid physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. As children grow older, their needs and vulnerabilities evolve beyond basic survival and early learning concerns to include continued education, access to information, adequate living conditions, protection, and opportunities for participation and skill development. Deprivations experienced during this period can have profound and lasting consequences, affecting educational attainment, health and well-being, future employment prospects, and the transition to adulthood. Analyzing children aged 10–17 years separately therefore provides critical insights into the specific barriers faced by adolescents and supports the design of targeted policies and interventions that enable them to reach their full potential and contribute productively to society.

## 10.1 SINGLE DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION RATES BY INDICATOR (10-17 YEARS)

| Table SD 1.4 Single deprivations for the children aged 0-23 months, NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25 |            |        |            |       |               |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Indicator                                                                                               | NMICS 2014 |        | NMICS 2019 |       | NMICS 2024-25 |       |
| Dimension and Indicators                                                                                | %          | N      | %          | N     | %             | N     |
| <b>Age group: 10-17 years</b>                                                                           |            |        |            |       |               |       |
| <b>WATER</b>                                                                                            |            |        |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved drinking water source                                                                        | 7.6        | 10,815 | 3.7        | 9,003 | 2.1           | 7,495 |
| Time to improved water source > 30 minutes                                                              | 3.1        | 9,997  | 1.8        | 8,673 | 0.2           | 7,341 |
| <b>SANITATION</b>                                                                                       |            |        |            |       |               |       |
| Unimproved sanitation facility                                                                          | 30.6       | 10,812 | 8.0        | 9,003 | 9.5           | 7,487 |
| Shared improved sanitation facility                                                                     | 40.3       | 10,812 | 22.3       | 9,003 | 22.9          | 7,487 |
| <b>HOUSING</b>                                                                                          |            |        |            |       |               |       |
| Rudimentary floor material                                                                              | 71.1       | 10,815 | 55.1       | 9,003 | 43.5          | 7,495 |
| Rudimentary roof material                                                                               | 15.7       | 10,815 | 8.5        | 9,003 | 5.7           | 7,495 |
| Rudimentary wall material                                                                               | 63.4       | 10,813 | 49.5       | 9,003 | 41.0          | 7,495 |
| No electricity                                                                                          | 17.5       | 10,728 | 20.2       | 8,999 | 3.6           | 7,495 |
| Overcrowding (>3 persons per sleeping room)                                                             | 24.7       | 10,809 | 20.4       | 9,003 | 15.8          | 7,495 |
| <b>INFORMATION</b>                                                                                      |            |        |            |       |               |       |
| No information device (TV/radio)                                                                        | 34.1       | 10,809 | 33.7       | 7,871 | 52.9          | 7,228 |
| No communication device (mobile/fixed phone)                                                            | 7.0        | 10,815 | 4.0        | 9,003 | 3.2           | 7,495 |
| <b>EDUCATION</b>                                                                                        |            |        |            |       |               |       |
| Children not attending school                                                                           | 7.6        | 10,431 | 10.8       | 8,832 | 6.8           | 7,357 |

For children aged 10–17 years, deprivation has declined substantially in water, sanitation, housing, and communication access, reflecting broad improvements in living standards. Education indicators show progress toward universal attendance, though fluctuations suggest vulnerability to setbacks. The main challenge lies in the information dimension, where ownership of traditional devices has declined sharply, requiring careful interpretation in the context of digital transitions. Overall, the findings suggest strong progress in basic living conditions, with persistent gaps in information access and the need to sustain gains in education.

**Water:** Access to safe drinking water improved steadily. The proportion of children in households using unimproved sources declined from 7.6% in 2014 to 2.1% in 2024–25. Similarly, households requiring more than 30 minutes to reach an improved source dropped from 3.1% to just 0.2%, indicating near-universal physical access.

**Sanitation:** Sanitation conditions have strengthened but show slight stagnation in recent years. Children in households with unimproved sanitation facilities fell sharply from 30.6% in 2014 to 8.0% in 2019 but then rose slightly to 9.5% in 2024–25. Reliance on shared improved facilities decreased from 40.3% to 22.9%, reflecting progress but also highlighting persistent reliance on shared sanitation.

**Housing:** Housing quality improved across all indicators. Rudimentary floor materials declined from 71.1% to 43.5%, rudimentary roofs from 15.7% to 5.7%, and rudimentary walls from 63.4% to 41.0%. Households without electricity dropped from 17.5% to 3.6%, while overcrowding fell from 24.7% to 15.8%. These changes point to rising household living standards and better environments for adolescent development.

**Information:** The information dimension presents mixed results. Lack of communication devices (phones) decreased from 7.0% to 3.2%, showing improved connectivity. However, deprivation in traditional information devices (TV/radio) rose sharply from 34.1% to 52.9%, suggesting a structural shift away from broadcast media toward digital platforms, rather than a true increase in informational exclusion.

**Education:** School attendance improved overall but showed fluctuations. The proportion of children not attending school was 7.6% in 2014, increased to 10.8% in 2019, and then declined to 6.8% in 2024–25. While this reflects progress toward universal schooling, the temporary setback in 2019 highlights the need for sustained efforts to ensure consistent attendance

## 10.2 CHILD DEPRIVATION PROFILE: DISTRIBUTION OF SIMULTANEOUS DEPRIVATION (10-17 YEARS)

**Table CP 1.4 Child Poverty Profile: Distribution of Children by Number of Simultaneous Deprivations NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25**

| Number of deprivations (k) | NMICS 2014 |              |              | NMICS 2019 |              |              | NMICS 2024-25 ss |              |              |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
|                            | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %          | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper | %                | 95% CI lower | 95% CI upper |
| k = 0                      | 14.8       | 12.9         | 16.9         | 21.4       | 19.0         | 23.9         | 23.0             | 20.8         | 25.4         |
| k = 1                      | 28.3       | 26.5         | 30.2         | 36.1       | 33.7         | 38.5         | 31.3             | 29.2         | 33.5         |
| k = 2                      | 32.1       | 30.3         | 33.9         | 30.0       | 28.1         | 32.0         | 30.8             | 28.6         | 33.1         |
| k = 3                      | 21.0       | 19.0         | 23.0         | 10.9       | 9.6          | 12.3         | 13.4             | 11.8         | 15.1         |
| k = 4                      | 3.6        | 3.0          | 4.3          | 1.5        | 1.1          | 2.1          | 1.5              | 1.1          | 2.1          |
| k = 5                      | 0.3        | 0.1          | 0.5          | 0.1        | 0.0          | 0.4          | 0.0              | 0.0          | 0.0          |

The child poverty profile for children aged 10–17 years, based on the NMICS surveys of 2014, 2019, and 2024–25, shows a clear shift toward reduced simultaneous deprivations, though some challenges remain. In 2014, only 14.8% of children experienced no deprivation, while by 2019 this figure rose to 21.4% and further to 23.0% in 2024–25, indicating steady improvement in children’s living conditions. The proportion of children facing just one deprivation increased from 28.3% in 2014 to 36.1% in 2019, before declining slightly to 31.3% in 2024–25, suggesting that while more children are escaping multiple deprivations, a significant share still faces at least one. Those experiencing two deprivations remained relatively stable across the three surveys, hovering around 30–32%. More encouragingly, the share of children suffering three or more deprivations fell sharply: from 21.0% in 2014 to 10.9% in 2019, with a slight increase to 13.4% in 2024–25. Severe deprivation (four or more simultaneous deprivations) has become rare, dropping from 3.6% in 2014 to just 1.5% in both 2019 and 2024–25, while cases of five deprivations have virtually disappeared. Overall, the data reflects a positive trajectory, with more children living free of multiple deprivations, though the persistence of single and double deprivations highlights the need for targeted interventions to ensure that progress translates into complete well-being for all children.

## 10.3 AGGREGATE CHILD DEPRIVATION: HEADCOUNT, INTENSITY AND ADJUSTED HEADCOUNT (10-17 YEARS)

**Table AC 1.4 Aggregate Child Poverty Measures by Cut-Off, NMICS series 2014, 2019 and 2024-25**

| Cut-off | NMICS 2014 |       |        | NMICS 2019 |       |        | NMICS 2024-25 |       |        |
|---------|------------|-------|--------|------------|-------|--------|---------------|-------|--------|
|         | H (%)      | A (%) | M0 (%) | H (%)      | A (%) | M0 (%) | H (%)         | A (%) | M0 (%) |
| k ≥ 1   | 85.2       | 40.1  | 34.2   | 78.6       | 34.4  | 27.1   | 77.0          | 36.1  | 27.8   |
| k ≥ 2   | 56.9       | 50.2  | 28.5   | 42.6       | 46.7  | 19.9   | 45.7          | 47.2  | 21.6   |
| k ≥ 3   | 24.8       | 63.3  | 15.7   | 12.5       | 62.8  | 7.9    | 14.9          | 62.0  | 9.2    |
| k ≥ 4   | 3.8        | 81.3  | 3.1    | 1.6        | 81.1  | 1.3    | 1.5           | 80.1  | 1.2    |
| k = 5   | 0.3        | 100.0 | 0.3    | 0.1        | 100.0 | 0.1    | 0.0           | 100.0 | 0.0    |

The results show that most children experience at least one deprivation, with H at remaining between about 77 and 85 per cent. However, the share declines sharply at higher cut-offs: in 2024–25, only about 15 per cent of children faced three or more simultaneous deprivations. Progress was strongest between 2014 and

2019, particularly for multiple deprivations, as H at fell from 24.8 per cent to 12.5 per cent. From 2019 to 2024–25, this trend partly reversed, with modest increases in H at and; for example, H at rose from 12.5 per cent to 14.9 per cent.

Intensity (A) remains high and stable among multidimensionally poor children. At higher cut-offs, poor children experience about 62–63 per cent of all possible deprivations, indicating that those identified face overlapping disadvantages rather than isolated shortfalls. Since M0 combines incidence and intensity ( $M0 = H \times A$ ), the overall burden fell substantially by 2019 but increased slightly again by 2024–25 for children with 2–3 deprivations, suggesting a renewed concentration of disadvantage in these groups.

The policy implication is twofold: sustain broad-based measures that reduce single deprivations, while giving priority to targeted, multisectoral interventions for children experiencing 2–3 simultaneous deprivations. This group contributes most to the adjusted poverty burden, so even modest improvements could lead to meaningful reductions in adjusted headcount.

## 10.4 OVERLAP ANALYSIS (10–17 YEARS)

The adolescent cohort (10–17 years) exhibits largely similar structural patterns to the 5–9-year group, with the notable exception that in 2014, this cohort showed considerably higher intersections across most dimension pairs reflecting genuine cohort differences.

In 2014, the Housing–Sanitation intersection for adolescents was 33.2% and Housing–Education was 6.7% both substantially higher than the 5–9-year cohort in the same year (37.3% and 0.5% respectively for Housing–Sanitation; these converge by 2024/25 to identical values of 16.3% and 1.2%). The fact that by 2019 and 2024/25 the Housing–Sanitation, Housing–Education, Sanitation–Education, Housing–Information, and Information–Education values are identical between the 5–9 and 10–17-year cohorts is notable. This is likely to reflect that these are household-level structural deprivations rather than child-specific ones — adolescents and younger children in the same household share the same housing, sanitation, and information environment.

Where the 10–17 cohort showed distinct values in 2014 particularly the Housing–Sanitation intersection (33.2% vs. 37.3% for 5–9 year olds) and Sanitation–Education (4.0% vs. 0.2% for 5–9 year olds) — these may reflect genuine differences in how education deprivation registers for older children (secondary non-enrollment or dropout vs. primary non-attendance), a dimension that can more meaningfully co-occur with material deprivation for adolescents who may be kept out of school for economic reasons.

The three-dimension Housing–Sanitation–Education cluster for adolescents in 2014 had a k=3 intersection of 3.6% compared to 0.2% for 5–9-year-olds reflecting precisely this: adolescent education deprivation has a small but genuine overlap with simultaneous housing and sanitation disadvantage, consistent with economic exclusion mechanisms. By 2024/25, however, this has converged to 0.2% for both age groups, suggesting that the economic-exclusion pathway into education deprivation has diminished substantially over the decade.

The Housing–Information–Education three-dimension cluster in 2024/25 shows a k=2 value of 24.4% for adolescents, again driven by housing–information co-deprivation. Adolescents in information-poor, housing-poor households are doubly constrained in their ability to engage with educational resources, a concern that grows in silence as digital and connected learning becomes increasingly central to educational quality.

The dimension overlap analysis across Nepal’s MICS surveys 2014–2024/25 offers a compelling and sobering portrait of child deprivation as a multi-layered, age-differentiated, and often co-constituted phenomenon. Progress has been substantial, particularly in health and sanitation dimensions. Yet the data consistently reveals a hard core of simultaneous deprivations; infants deprived of nutrition, housing, and sanitation together; preschoolers excluded both adequate nutrition and early learning; school-age children and adolescents jointly disadvantaged in housing and information access that resist single-sector solutions. Reducing M0 values under

the stricter k=2 and k=3 cutoffs, which remain stubbornly elevated for the most vulnerable age-dimension clusters, must become the explicit policy frontier if Nepal is to fulfil its commitment to leaving no child behind.

| Table OD 1.4 Prevalence of Dimension Overlap (10-17) years |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Dimensions                                                 | NMICS 2014 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2019 |              |          |          |          | NMICS 2024-25 |              |          |          |          |
|                                                            | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union    | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) | H Union       | H Intersect. | M0 (k=1) | M0 (k=2) | M0 (k=3) |
| <b>TWO DIMENSIONS</b>                                      |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Housing-Sanitation                                         | 85.9       | 37.3         | 61.6     | 37.3     | na       | 78.7       | 23.4         | 51.1     | 23.4     | na       | 64.3          | 16.3         | 40.3     | 16.3     | na       |
| Housing-Education                                          | 80.3       | 0.5          | 40.4     | 0.5      | na       | 76.8       | 1.8          | 39.3     | 1.8      | na       | 58.3          | 1.2          | 29.8     | 1.2      | na       |
| Sanitation-Education                                       | 43.3       | 0.2          | 21.7     | 0.2      | na       | 27.8       | 0.4          | 14.1     | 0.4      | na       | 24.4          | 0.3          | 12.3     | 0.3      | na       |
| Housing-Information                                        | 81.9       | 35.8         | 58.8     | 35.8     | na       | 80.3       | 34.1         | 57.2     | 34.1     | na       | 73.8          | 35.5         | 54.6     | 35.5     | na       |
| Information-Education                                      | 37.7       | 0.3          | 19.0     | 0.3      | na       | 39.9       | 0.4          | 20.2     | 0.4      | na       | 52.1          | 1.2          | 26.6     | 1.2      | na       |
| <b>THREE DIMENSIONS</b>                                    |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |
| Housing-Sanitation – Education                             | 86.0       | 0.2          | 41.2     | 25.1     | 0.2      | 79.1       | 0.3          | 34.8     | 16.8     | 0.3      | 64.8          | 0.2          | 27.5     | 11.7     | 0.2      |
| Housing-Information-Education                              | 82.0       | 0.3          | 29.4     | 24.1     | 0.2      | 80.7       | 0.4          | 38.9     | 23.8     | 0.4      | 74.0          | 0.9          | 37.0     | 24.4     | 0.9      |
| na: not applicable                                         |            |              |          |          |          |            |              |          |          |          |               |              |          |          |          |

## 10.5 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION 10-17 YEARS NMICS (2024-25)

For children aged 10–17, the landscape of deprivation shifts noticeably compared to younger age groups. Housing and information remain the most pressing concerns, affecting more than half of adolescents nationwide. However, education deprivation rises sharply to 6.8%, a significant increase from the 1.8% seen among 5–9-year-olds. This reflects the challenges of secondary school attendance and retention, where dropout and non-attendance become more common.

Rural adolescents are particularly disadvantaged, with education deprivation at 7.9% compared to 6.2% in urban areas, highlighting gaps in access to secondary schooling. Encouragingly, gender differences are minimal, suggesting that boys and girls face similar challenges across all dimensions.

Provincial disparities are striking. Karnali once again emerges as the most deprived province, with nearly nine in ten adolescents living in inadequate housing and the highest water deprivation nationally. Madhesh stands out for education deprivation, with 12.1% of adolescents affected double the national average alongside high housing and information deprivation. Bagmati and Gandaki show the most favorable conditions, with lower housing and information deprivation, while Sudurpaschim struggles with sanitation (26%) in addition to housing challenges.

Wealth divides are especially pronounced in adolescence. Housing deprivation is nearly universal among the poorest quintile (98.7%) but drops to just 9.1% among the richest. Education deprivation follows a similar gradient: 9.2% among the poorest compared to only 1.9% among the richest, underscoring the link between poverty and school dropout. Even sanitation deprivation remains stubbornly high among poorer groups, reflecting persistent practices like open defecation.

Mother's education plays a decisive role in shaping adolescent outcomes. Children with no education face housing deprivation rates of 71.4% and education deprivation of 11.1% nearly ten times higher than those whose mothers have higher education. Information deprivation also falls sharply with mother's education, from 61.6% among children of uneducated mothers to just 22.3% among those with highly educated mothers. This gradient is steeper than in the younger cohort, highlighting how mother's education influences not just early childhood conditions but also secondary school retention and adolescent development.

| Table DM 1.4 Prevalence by Dimension: Nepal Child Deprivation Analysis, 2026 (10-17 years) |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Background variable                                                                        | Water (%)  | Weighted N   | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N   | Housing (%) | Weighted N   | Information (%) | Weighted N   | Education (%) | Weighted N   |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                               | <b>2.2</b> | <b>7,495</b> | <b>22.9</b>    | <b>7,487</b> | <b>55.2</b> | <b>7,495</b> | <b>52.1</b>     | <b>7,495</b> | <b>6.8</b>    | <b>7,357</b> |
| <b>AREA</b>                                                                                |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Urban                                                                                      | 1.4        | 4,840        | 22.2           | 4,833        | 43.8        | 4,840        | 44.8            | 4,840        | 6.2           | 4,748        |
| Rural                                                                                      | 4.8        | 2,655        | 20.6           | 2,654        | 73.0        | 2,655        | 54.9            | 2,655        | 7.9           | 2,609        |
| <b>SEXss</b>                                                                               |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Male                                                                                       | 2.9        | 3,657        | 21.0           | 3,648        | 53.9        | 3,657        | 49.9            | 3,657        | 6.8           | 3,588        |
| Female                                                                                     | 2.9        | 3,839        | 22.1           | 3,839        | 59.1        | 3,839        | 48.4            | 3,839        | 7.1           | 3,769        |
| <b>PROVINCE</b>                                                                            |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Koshi                                                                                      | 2.4        | 1,152        | 16.7           | 1,149        | 55.5        | 1,152        | 45.7            | 1,152        | 6.0           | 1,147        |
| Madhesh                                                                                    | 1.4        | 1,595        | 27.5           | 1,595        | 65.8        | 1,595        | 61.5            | 1,595        | 12.1          | 1,503        |
| Bagmati                                                                                    | 2.0        | 1,362        | 22.0           | 1,358        | 32.6        | 1,362        | 35.5            | 1,362        | 5.7           | 1,350        |
| Gandaki                                                                                    | 1.5        | 562          | 13.2           | 562          | 35.9        | 562          | 42.2            | 562          | 4.9           | 562          |
| Lumbini                                                                                    | 1.9        | 1,493        | 21.1           | 1,493        | 56.4        | 1,493        | 50.1            | 1,493        | 6.3           | 1,479        |
| Karnali                                                                                    | 8.4        | 500          | 21.7           | 499          | 87.6        | 500          | 56.9            | 500          | 7.3           | 499          |
| Sudurpashchim                                                                              | 3.8        | 831          | 26.0           | 831          | 67.3        | 831          | 54.9            | 831          | 6.6           | 819          |
| <b>WEALTH QUINTILE</b>                                                                     |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| Poorest                                                                                    | 7.3        | 1,713        | 25.2           | 1,712        | 98.7        | 1,713        | 68.4            | 1,713        | 9.2           | 1,640        |
| Second                                                                                     | 2.1        | 1,594        | 25.7           | 1,594        | 82.7        | 1,594        | 65.8            | 1,594        | 9.4           | 1,571        |
| Middle                                                                                     | 1.8        | 1,502        | 19.4           | 1,501        | 45.9        | 1,502        | 47.7            | 1,502        | 7.9           | 1,475        |
| Fourth                                                                                     | 1.0        | 1,411        | 23.2           | 1,411        | 21.8        | 1,411        | 35.7            | 1,411        | 4.7           | 1,401        |
| Richest                                                                                    | 0.3        | 1,275        | 11.2           | 1,270        | 9.1         | 1,275        | 15.3            | 1,275        | 1.9           | 1,271        |
| <b>MOTHER'S EDUCATION</b>                                                                  |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| None                                                                                       | 4.8        | 3,262        | 25.6           | 3,258        | 71.4        | 3,262        | 61.6            | 3,262        | 11.1          | 3,155        |
| ECED                                                                                       | 6.9        | 51           | 20.7           | 51           | 69.0        | 51           | 51.7            | 51           | 3.4           | 51           |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                                             | 1.6        | 2,124        | 21.0           | 2,124        | 56.1        | 2,124        | 51.2            | 2,124        | 5.6           | 2,104        |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                                        | 1.6        | 1,656        | 16.1           | 1,653        | 37.8        | 1,656        | 31.1            | 1,656        | 2.7           | 1,648        |
| Higher                                                                                     | 0.5        | 341          | 13.8           | 341          | 21.3        | 341          | 22.3            | 341          | 1.1           | 341          |
| DK/Missing                                                                                 | (*)        | 21           | (*)            | 21           | (*)         | 21           | (*)             | 21           | (*)           | 20           |
| <b>FATHER'S EDUCATION</b>                                                                  |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |
| None                                                                                       | 5.2        | 872          | 26.4           | 871          | 75.7        | 872          | 67.8            | 872          | 13.1          | 817          |
| ECED                                                                                       | (*)        | 23           | (*)            | 23           | (*)         | 23           | (*)             | 23           | (*)           | 21           |
| Basic (Gr 1-8)                                                                             | 3.4        | 1,757        | 24.9           | 1,752        | 63.1        | 1,757        | 52.0            | 1,757        | 8.1           | 1,736        |
| Secondary (Gr 9-12)                                                                        | 0.8        | 1,375        | 14.4           | 1,372        | 42.2        | 1,375        | 35.0            | 1,375        | 3.8           | 1,365        |
| Higher                                                                                     | 2.5        | 387          | 11.7           | 387          | 25.4        | 387          | 22.3            | 387          | 1.0           | 385          |
| Biological Father not in HH                                                                | 3.0        | 3,080        | 22.5           | 3,080        | 57.7        | 3,080        | 52.2            | 3,080        | 6.9           | 3,031        |
| DK/Missing                                                                                 | (*)        | 2            | (*)            | 2            | (*)         | 2            | 0.0             | 2            | (*)           | 2            |
| (*) Figures that are based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases                               |            |              |                |              |             |              |                 |              |               |              |

## 10.6 CHILD PROTECTION AND DIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION PREVALENCE (10-17 YEARS)

| Table QL 1.4 Prevalence by Dimension: Nepal Child Deprivation Analysis, 10-17 years) |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Quality of Life Variables                                                            | Water (%) | Weighted N | Sanitation (%) | Weighted N | Housing (%) | Weighted N | Information (%) | Weighted N | Education (%) | Weighted N |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>                                                            |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
| Not registered                                                                       | 1.8       | 118        | 37.5           | 118        | 67.9        | 118        | 58.9            | 118        | 9.3           | 112        |
| Registered                                                                           | 2.9       | 7,377      | 21.3           | 7,369      | 56.2        | 7,377      | 49.1            | 7,377      | 6.9           | 7,246      |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>                                                            |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                   | 1.9       | 1,043      | 19.2           | 1,043      | 47.5        | 4,638      | 45.5            | 1,043      | 2.8           | 1,028      |
| Yes                                                                                  | 3.4       | 4,035      | 23.5           | 4,029      | 70.1        | 2,858      | 48.9            | 4,035      | 2.7           | 3,964      |
| <b>ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE</b>                                                           |           |            |                |            |             |            |                 |            |               |            |
| No                                                                                   | 2.3       | 4,638      | 21.1           | 4,633      | 67.9        | 118        | 45.0            | 4,638      | 4.5           | 4,542      |
| Yes                                                                                  | 3.9       | 2,858      | 22.2           | 2,854      | 56.2        | 7,377      | 55.5            | 2,858      | 10.8          | 2,815      |

Birth registration replicates the familiar pattern: unregistered adolescents face higher deprivation across all dimensions, with the education gap (9.3% vs 6.9%). Violent discipline shows the starkest housing gap in the entire dataset (70.1% vs 47.5%), suggesting that in this age group, violent discipline is most heavily concentrated in severely deprived households.

Economic activity is the standout finding. Working adolescents show more than double the education deprivation of non-working peers (10.8% vs 4.5%) and markedly higher information access deprivation (55.5% vs 45.0%), confirming that child labor at this age carries a direct and significant cost to schooling and connectedness. Housing and education emerge as the dominant deprivation dimensions for 10–17-year-olds, with economic activity the strongest single risk factor for school exclusion in this age group.

## 10.7 MULTIDIMENSIONAL DEPRIVATION (10-17 YEARS)

Adolescents aged 10–17 years are at a pivotal intersection: deprivations in education, sanitation, information and living conditions during this period have compounding effects on human capital accumulation, labor market outcomes, and reproductive health. The national headcount at  $k \geq 1$  is 77.0% marginally lower than the 5–9-year cohort (78.2%) with  $M_0 = 27.8\%$  and average intensity of 36.1%. The modest improvement in overall MPI relative to younger cohorts may reflect partial recovery in nutrition status and school enrolment gains, though structural deprivations in sanitation and energy persist.

The rural–urban pattern for adolescents mirrors the 5–9-year cohort, with rural adolescents recording  $H = 86.6\%$  and  $M_0 = 32.6\%$  versus  $H = 71.7\%$  and  $M_0 = 25.2\%$  for urban adolescents at  $k \geq 1$ . This rural disadvantage has likely been entrenched throughout childhood and now compounds with adolescence-specific deprivations such as secondary school access and gender-based constraints. The urban–rural intensity gap (A: 37.7% rural vs. 35.1% urban at  $k \geq 1$ ) indicates that rural adolescents experience a broader range of simultaneous deprivations when they are poor.

The provincial hierarchy is maintained in this cohort. Karnali records  $H = 95.7\%$  and  $M_0 = 37.1\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ . Notably, the gap between Karnali and the least-deprived province Gandaki ( $H = 60.0\%$ ,  $M_0 = 18.6\%$ ) widens to 35.7 percentage points in headcount and 18.5 points in MPI at  $k \geq 1$ . The persistence of this provincial deprivation ordering across all four age cohorts is striking evidence that provincial disparities are structurally determined and require province-specific policy interventions rather than purely national-level programming.

Gender differentials are marginally wider in the adolescent cohort than in earlier cohorts. Female adolescents record  $H = 78.3\%$  and  $M_0 = 28.4\%$  versus  $H = 75.5\%$  and  $M_0 = 27.2\%$  for males at  $k \geq 1$ . At  $k \geq 3$ , the female headcount (15.5%) exceeds male (14.2%).

Parental education gradients for the 10–17 cohort are substantially similar to those observed for 5–9-year-olds, consistent with the same household and parental characteristics persisting across the life of a child. Children of mothers with no formal education face  $H = 88.1\%$  and  $M_0 = 34.6\%$ , compared to 45.4% and 11.3% for children of highly educated mothers — a threefold MPI difference. The father’s education gradient shows a similar and complementary pattern, with uneducated fathers associated with  $M_0 = 37.1\%$  and highly educated fathers with  $M_0 = 11.9\%$ .

The wealth quintile analysis for adolescents reveals the same near-universal deprivation in the poorest quintile ( $H = 99.9\%$ ,  $M_0 = 43.0\%$ ) and moderate-but-persistent deprivation in the richest quintile ( $H = 34.1\%$ ,  $M_0 = 8.0\%$ ). The concentration of severe deprivation ( $k \geq 3$ ) in the poorest quintile ( $M_0 = 19.2\%$  vs. 0.5% for the richest) indicates that multidimensional poverty for adolescents is primarily a structural condition of extreme household poverty.

| Background Characteristics | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |             |             |            |            | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |             |             |             |              | Adjusted Headcount $M_0$ (%) |             |            |            |            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Category                   | $k=1$                      | $k=2$       | $k=3$       | $k=4$      | $k=5$      | $k=1$                      | $k=2$       | $k=3$       | $k=4$       | $k=5$        | $k=1$                        | $k=2$       | $k=3$      | $k=4$      | $k=5$      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>77.0</b>                | <b>45.7</b> | <b>14.9</b> | <b>1.5</b> | <b>0.0</b> | <b>36.1</b>                | <b>47.2</b> | <b>62.0</b> | <b>80.1</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>27.8</b>                  | <b>21.6</b> | <b>9.2</b> | <b>1.2</b> | <b>0.0</b> |
| <b>AREA</b>                |                            |             |             |            |            |                            |             |             |             |              |                              |             |            |            |            |
| Urban                      | 71.7                       | 39.5        | 13.4        | 1.2        | 0.0        | 35.1                       | 47.4        | 61.8        | 80.0        | -            | 25.2                         | 18.7        | 8.3        | 0.9        | 0.0        |
| Rural                      | 86.6                       | 56.9        | 17.5        | 2.1        | 0.0        | 37.7                       | 46.9        | 62.4        | 80.1        | 100.0        | 32.6                         | 26.7        | 10.9       | 1.7        | 0.0        |
| <b>PROVINCE</b>            |                            |             |             |            |            |                            |             |             |             |              |                              |             |            |            |            |
| Koshi                      | 77.3                       | 44.5        | 14.3        | 0.9        | 0.0        | 35.5                       | 46.9        | 61.3        | 80.0        | -            | 27.4                         | 20.8        | 8.8        | 0.7        | 0.0        |
| Madhesh                    | 81.0                       | 54.7        | 19.1        | 1.7        | 0.0        | 38.6                       | 47.6        | 61.8        | 80.0        | -            | 31.3                         | 26.0        | 11.8       | 1.4        | 0.0        |
| Bagmati                    | 64.0                       | 31.1        | 10.5        | 1.8        | 0.0        | 33.6                       | 47.9        | 63.5        | 80.0        | -            | 21.5                         | 14.9        | 6.7        | 1.5        | 0.0        |
| Gandaki                    | 60.0                       | 27.8        | 5.0         | 0.0        | 0.0        | 30.9                       | 43.6        | 60.0        | -           | -            | 18.6                         | 12.1        | 3.0        | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| Lumbini                    | 79.8                       | 46.5        | 16.8        | 1.7        | 0.0        | 36.3                       | 47.9        | 62.0        | 80.0        | -            | 28.9                         | 22.3        | 10.4       | 1.3        | 0.0        |
| Karnali                    | 95.7                       | 66.9        | 19.9        | 2.8        | 0.1        | 38.7                       | 46.8        | 62.9        | 80.6        | 100.0        | 37.1                         | 31.3        | 12.5       | 2.3        | 0.1        |
| Sudurpaschim               | 85.2                       | 52.0        | 15.0        | 1.4        | 0.0        | 36.1                       | 46.3        | 61.9        | 80.0        | -            | 30.7                         | 24.1        | 9.3        | 1.1        | 0.0        |
| <b>SEX</b>                 |                            |             |             |            |            |                            |             |             |             |              |                              |             |            |            |            |
| Male                       | 75.5                       | 44.8        | 14.2        | 1.5        | 0.0        | 36.0                       | 47.0        | 62.1        | 80.1        | 100.0        | 27.2                         | 21.1        | 8.8        | 1.2        | 0.0        |
| Female                     | 78.3                       | 46.5        | 15.5        | 1.5        | 0.0        | 36.2                       | 47.3        | 62.0        | 80.0        | 100.0        | 28.4                         | 22.0        | 9.6        | 1.2        | 0.0        |
| <b>MOTHER'S EDUCATION</b>  |                            |             |             |            |            |                            |             |             |             |              |                              |             |            |            |            |
| None                       | 88.1                       | 60.7        | 21.7        | 2.5        | 0.0        | 39.3                       | 48.0        | 62.3        | 80.1        | 100.0        | 34.6                         | 29.1        | 13.5       | 2.0        | 0.0        |
| ECED                       | 94.0                       | 54.7        | 12.3        | 0.0        | 0.0        | 34.3                       | 44.5        | 60.0        | -           | -            | 32.2                         | 24.4        | 7.4        | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| Basic (Gr 1–8)             | 79.8                       | 45.5        | 14.7        | 1.0        | 0.0        | 35.3                       | 46.9        | 61.3        | 80.0        | -            | 28.2                         | 21.3        | 9.0        | 0.8        | 0.0        |
| Secondary (Gr 9–12)        | 56.9                       | 22.7        | 4.5         | 0.3        | 0.0        | 29.7                       | 44.3        | 61.2        | 80.0        | -            | 16.9                         | 10.0        | 2.8        | 0.2        | 0.0        |
| Higher                     | 45.4                       | 10.3        | 1.0         | 0.0        | 0.0        | 25.0                       | 42.0        | 60.0        | -           | -            | 11.3                         | 4.3         | 0.6        | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| DK Missing                 | 85.4                       | 56.8        | 30.8        | 30.8       | 0.0        | 47.7                       | 61.7        | 80.0        | 80.0        | -            | 40.7                         | 35.0        | 24.6       | 24.6       | 0.0        |
| <b>FATHER'S EDUCATION</b>  |                            |             |             |            |            |                            |             |             |             |              |                              |             |            |            |            |
| None                       | 89.8                       | 68.8        | 22.9        | 4.1        | 0.0        | 41.3                       | 47.8        | 63.6        | 80.0        | -            | 37.1                         | 32.9        | 14.5       | 3.3        | 0.0        |
| ECED                       | 80.5                       | 35.6        | 24.0        | 0.0        | 0.0        | 34.8                       | 53.4        | 60.0        | -           | -            | 28.0                         | 19.0        | 14.4       | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| Basic (Gr 1–8)             | 84.9                       | 52.6        | 18.5        | 1.6        | 0.0        | 37.1                       | 47.6        | 61.7        | 80.2        | 100.0        | 31.5                         | 25.0        | 11.4       | 1.2        | 0.0        |

|                             |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |      |       |      |      |      |     |     |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Secondary (Gr 9–12)         | 60.5 | 28.3 | 7.1  | 1.1 | 0.0 | 32.1 | 45.8 | 63.2 | 80.0 | -     | 19.4 | 13.0 | 4.5  | 0.9 | 0.0 |
| Higher                      | 47.3 | 9.5  | 2.2  | 0.3 | 0.0 | 25.1 | 45.2 | 62.6 | 80.0 | -     | 11.9 | 4.3  | 1.4  | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| DK Missing                  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 0.0 | -    | -    | -    | -    | -     | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Biological Father not in HH | 79.9 | 47.6 | 15.6 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 36.1 | 47.0 | 61.4 | 80.1 | 100.0 | 28.8 | 22.4 | 9.6  | 0.9 | 0.0 |
| <b>WEALTH QUINTILE</b>      |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |      |       |      |      |      |     |     |
| Poorest                     | 99.9 | 80.5 | 30.9 | 3.6 | 0.0 | 43.0 | 48.6 | 62.4 | 80.1 | 100.0 | 43.0 | 39.1 | 19.2 | 2.9 | 0.0 |
| Second                      | 97.1 | 66.3 | 23.1 | 1.9 | 0.0 | 38.8 | 47.6 | 61.7 | 80.0 | -     | 37.7 | 31.5 | 14.3 | 1.5 | 0.0 |
| Middle                      | 81.6 | 37.0 | 7.8  | 0.8 | 0.0 | 31.2 | 44.6 | 62.0 | 80.0 | -     | 25.4 | 16.5 | 4.8  | 0.6 | 0.0 |
| Fourth                      | 60.2 | 26.2 | 6.4  | 0.6 | 0.0 | 31.0 | 45.4 | 62.0 | 80.0 | -     | 18.7 | 11.9 | 4.0  | 0.5 | 0.0 |
| Richest                     | 34.1 | 4.9  | 0.8  | 0.0 | 0.0 | 23.3 | 43.1 | 60.0 | -    | -     | 8.0  | 2.1  | 0.5  | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| '-' no cases reported       |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |      |       |      |      |      |     |     |

## 10.8 Child Protection Indicators and Multidimensional Deprivation (10-17 Years)

| Table MP 2.4 Multidimensional Deprivation Index by Child Protection Dimension (10-17 years), Nepal, 2024-25 |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |      |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|----------------------------|------|------|------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| Background Characteristics                                                                                  | Incidence of Poverty H (%) |      |      |     |     | Intensity of Poverty A (%) |      |      |      |       | Adjusted Headcount M <sub>0</sub> (%) |      |      |      |       |
| Category                                                                                                    | 1                          | 2    | 3    | 4   | 5   | 1                          | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5     | 1                                     | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5     |
| <b>BIRTH REGISTRATION</b>                                                                                   |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |      |       |
| Not registered                                                                                              | 93.0                       | 59.4 | 25.3 | 0.9 | 0.0 | -                          | 49.6 | 62.2 | 80.0 | -     | 38.4                                  | 48.8 | 60.7 | 80.0 | -     |
| Registered                                                                                                  | 76.7                       | 45.5 | 14.7 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 0.0                        | 46.3 | 60.6 | 80.5 | 100.0 | 36.1                                  | 47.1 | 62.1 | 80.1 | 100.0 |
| <b>VIOLENT DISCIPLINE</b>                                                                                   |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |      |       |
| No                                                                                                          | 73.2                       | 37.4 | 11.0 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 33.9                       | 46.7 | 60.4 | 80.0 | -     | 33.6                                  | 46.7 | 62.7 | 80.0 | -     |
| Yes                                                                                                         | 76.2                       | 46.3 | 15.8 | 0.9 | 0.0 | 36.0                       | 46.4 | 60.7 | 80.4 | 100.0 | 36.5                                  | 47.2 | 61.2 | 80.0 | -     |
| <b>ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE</b>                                                                                  |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |      |       |
| No                                                                                                          | 71.4                       | 39.4 | 12.0 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 35.4                       | 46.3 | 60.6 | 80.5 | 100.0 | 34.6                                  | 46.5 | 61.3 | 80.2 | 100.0 |
| Yes                                                                                                         | 86.0                       | 55.9 | 19.6 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 37.1                       | 46.9 | 61.1 | 80.0 | -     | 38.2                                  | 48.0 | 62.8 | 80.0 | 100.0 |
| '-' no cases reported                                                                                       |                            |      |      |     |     |                            |      |      |      |       |                                       |      |      |      |       |

This table covers older children and adolescents aged 10-17 years, examining the same three child protection dimensions. Notably, unregistered children show markedly higher poverty incidence at the lowest threshold ( $k \geq 1$ : 93.0% vs 76.7% for registered), though this pattern narrows at higher thresholds. Violent discipline shows a similar but less pronounced gap, with affected children having higher incidence and MPI values at lower thresholds ( $k \geq 2$ : 46.3% vs 37.4%;  $M_0$ : 47.2% vs 46.7%).

Economic activity again shows the clearest disparity, with economically active adolescents experiencing substantially higher poverty incidence across thresholds ( $k \geq 1$ : 86.0% vs 71.4%;  $k \geq 2$ : 55.9% vs 39.4%) and higher MPI values ( $M_0$  at  $k \geq 2$ : 48.0% vs 46.5%). Overall, the data reinforces that lack of birth registration, exposure to violent discipline, and particularly child labor is all associated with greater multidimensional deprivation among adolescents aged 10-17, consistent with patterns observed in younger age groups.

## 11. CONCLUSIONS

This analysis, drawing on three rounds of the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS 2014, 2019, and 2024–25) and applying UNICEF’s rights-based, individual child measurement framework, provides the most comprehensive evidence base to date on multidimensional child deprivation in Nepal. The findings confirm both reasonable national progress and the persistence of deep, structurally embedded inequalities that disproportionately affect specific groups of children across all life-cycle stages.

On the positive side, the trend data show measurable improvement in child deprivation over the past decade. Across nearly every age cohort and deprivation threshold, headcount ratios (H) and adjusted headcount measures ( $M_0$ ) have declined between 2014 and 2024–25, reflecting gains in sanitation, housing quality, electricity access, and reductions in severe multidimensional poverty. These improvements demonstrate that Nepal’s investments in basic services and social development have translated into real reductions in child deprivation.

However, this national progress masks substantial and persistent disparities. The wealth quintile analysis reveals a poverty gradient of striking magnitude: children in the poorest quintile face near-universal deprivation ( $H = 99.9\%$  at  $k \geq 1$  for the 10–17 cohort) compared to just 34.1% among the richest, with adjusted headcount values more than five times higher for the poorest. Parental education shows an equally powerful gradient across the intensity of deprivation.

MPI values nearly three times higher than children of highly educated mothers ( $M_0 = 34.6$  vs. 11.3), with a parallel and reinforcing pattern for father’s education. The provincial hierarchy is remarkably consistent across all age cohorts, with Karnali Province persistently recording the highest deprivation ( $H = 95.7\%$ ,  $M_0 = 37.1$ ) and Gandaki the lowest ( $H = 60.0\%$ ,  $M_0 = 18.6$ ), a gap that does not narrow as children age, indicating that provincial disparities are structural rather than transitional. Rural children consistently fare worse than urban children across every cohort, and gender differentials, while narrower than other dimensions, modestly widen during adolescence, with girls facing slightly higher poverty incidence than boys at higher deprivation thresholds.

The child protection dimension adds a further critical layer to this picture. Children who are not registered at birth, who experience violent discipline, or who are economically active consistently show higher poverty, incidence and intensity than their peers, and these risks compound rather than operate independently, children lacking one form of protection are statistically more likely to lack others.

Critically, these child protection deprivations follow the same socioeconomic gradient as the broader MPI findings: they are concentrated among poorer households, less-educated parents, and structurally disadvantaged provinces, indicating that child protection failures are not isolated problems but symptoms of the same underlying poverty and exclusion that drive multidimensional deprivation more broadly.

Taken together, the evidence demonstrates that Nepal’s remaining child deprivation challenge is no longer primarily about insufficient national-level resources or services, but about reaching specific, identifiable, and persistently disadvantaged groups: the poorest households, children of uneducated parents, rural communities, and lagging provinces such as Karnali, Sudurpaschim, and Madhesh. Without deliberate, targeted action, national averages will continue to improve while these populations are left behind, undermining Nepal’s commitment to ensuring no child is left behind under the SDGs and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## 11.1 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Adopt province specific programming

Given that the provincial hierarchy of deprivation is structurally consistent across all four age group, national child deprivation reduction strategies should allocate resources proportionally to need, with intensified, ring-fenced investment in Karnali, Sudurpaschim, and Madhesh provinces. Provincial governments in these areas should receive enhanced fiscal transfers and technical support to design and implement context-specific child poverty reduction plans, rather than relying on uniform national programming that implicitly under-serves the most deprived provinces.

### 2. Make parental education and maternal empowerment a core child poverty strategy

Because parental education, particularly maternal education, shows one of the strongest gradients in the entire dataset, investments in girls' secondary and higher education at present should be clearly framed as long-term child deprivation prevention strategy. Adult literacy and continuing education programs for mothers with no formal education should be expanded and linked to early childhood development and health services, recognizing that improving maternal education is among the most powerful intervention available to reduce deprivation across the generation.

### 3. Prioritize the poorest wealth quintiles through pro-poor targeting of social protection

The near-universal deprivation among the poorest quintile, differentiated with much lower deprivation among the richest, demonstrates that broad-based universal programs alone are insufficient. Nepal's child grant and social protection programs should be expanded and better targeted toward the poorest two wealth quintiles, with simplified enrollment processes, mobile registration units, and proactive outreach in the poorest and most rural communities to overcome access barriers that prevent the poorest families from benefiting from existing schemes.

### 4. Close the rural-urban divide through infrastructure and service delivery investment

Persistent rural disadvantage across all age group points to continue under investment in rural water, sanitation, electricity, and school infrastructure. Targeted rural infrastructure programs, combined with incentives for health and education personnel to serve in remote and rural areas, should be prioritized to close this gap, particularly in provinces where rural deprivation is most severe.

### 5. Integrate child protection strengthening into poverty reduction, not as a parallel agenda

Because birth registration, violent discipline, and child labor cluster with broader poverty and follow the same socioeconomic gradient, child protection systems should be embedded within social protection and poverty reduction architecture rather than delivered through separate, siloed programs. This includes linking birth registration to cash transfer eligibility, integrating positive parenting modules into existing health and nutrition outreach, and combining child labor elimination efforts with household-level economic support to address its root economic causes.

### 6. Sequence interventions across the child life cycle

Given distinct risk profiles by age with broad household level deprivation dominating early childhood (0–59 months), violence and protection risks persisting through middle childhood (5–9 years), and child labor and educational exclusion intensifying in adolescence (10–17 years) policies should be sequenced accordingly: early childhood development and birth registration in infancy and toddler stage, school retention and violence prevention in middle childhood, and child labor elimination paired with secondary education and vocational alternatives in adolescence.

## 7. Institutionalize regular, disaggregated monitoring to sustain accountability

Nepal should commit to conducting future NMICS rounds with consistent indicators and disaggregation by province, wealth quintile, parental education, and child protection status, enabling continuous tracking of whether the most disadvantaged groups are catching up or falling further behind. This evidence should be directly linked to the Sixteenth Periodic Plan, the SDG Voluntary National Review, and provincial planning processes to ensure that child poverty reduction remains a measurable, accountable national priority rather than a one-time analytical exercise.

## 11.2 AGE SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Deprivation risks and drivers shift across the child life avenue. The recommendations below are sequenced by age cohort so that programming matches the specific vulnerabilities documented in each stage, while remaining consistent with the report's overarching priorities on wealth, geography, and parental education.

### 0–23 MONTHS · Survival, Nutrition & Early Protection

#### KEY FINDINGS

*Near-universal deprivation among the poorest quintile (100% at  $k \geq 1$ ); nutrition is the weakest dimension (57.9% minimum-acceptable-diet dissatisfaction nationally, 60.7% at 6–23 months); housing deprivation affects 58.5% of infants; mother's education is the single strongest protective factor; violent discipline is closely linked to severe physical deprivation (68.2% overlap).*

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ **Scale up infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling:** integrate nutrition messaging and supplementation into every antenatal, postnatal and immunization contact given the persistence of poor dietary diversity despite overall gains.
- ✓ **Link birth registration to routine health contacts:** register births at the point of delivery or first immunization visit so protection status is established before deprivation compounds.
- ✓ **Deliver home-visiting and positive-parenting programmes:** target households already reached by health workers, given the strong overlap between violent discipline and severe multidimensional deprivation in this age group.
- ✓ **Prioritize maternal literacy and health education:** the maternal education gradient is the sharpest in the dataset for this age group, making it the highest-return early intervention point.
- ✓ **Fast-track rural housing and WASH upgrades for household with infants:** housing deprivation is nearly universal among the poorest quintile (99%) and substantially higher in rural areas.

## KEY FINDINGS

*Housing and information deprivation affect roughly six in ten children; Early Childhood Education (ECE) deprivation is a distinct and sizeable concern, especially among the poorest quintile (52% vs 13.8% richest); nutrition deprivation remains significant (34.2%, rising to 44.2% for children of uneducated mothers); the  $k \geq 4$  headcount fell by more than half over the decade, showing this age group responds well to sustained investment.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ **Expand access to Early Childhood Education, prioritizing the poorest quintile:** ECE deprivation drops nearly four-fold with wealth, indicating a targeted subsidy or outreach gap rather than a supply gap alone.
- ✓ **Sustain and deepen nutrition programming through the pre-school years:** malnutrition risk does not end at age two; continue growth monitoring and supplementary feeding into this cohort.
- ✓ **Bundle ECE enrolment with birth registration and health records:** use existing child touchpoints (immunization, health posts) to identify and enroll out-of-ECE children, especially in Karnali and Madhesh.
- ✓ **Continue positive-parenting outreach:** violent discipline remains associated with higher sanitation and housing deprivation in this cohort; extend the same programmes used for 0–23 months.
- ✓ **Target rural and poorest-quintile households for housing/electricity upgrades:** housing deprivation collapses from 99% (poorest) to 13.5% (richest), confirming this is an addressable, wealth-driven gap.

## 5–9 YEARS · School Entry, WASH & Living Conditions

## KEY FINDINGS

*Housing and sanitation dominate deprivation (Housing–Sanitation union of 64.3%); school attendance is near-universal but has stagnated (0.6% –1.8% not attending, 2014–2024/25); rural children face nearly triple the water deprivation of urban peers; wealth and maternal-education gradients remain very strong (poorest quintile  $H = 99.9\%$  at  $k \geq 1$ ); girls now show marginally higher deprivation than boys, a reversal from younger cohorts.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ **Address the stall in school attendance directly:** investigate and remove the specific barriers behind the 2014–2024/25 stagnation (distance, fees, quality, safety) before it becomes an adolescent dropout pipeline.
- ✓ **Close rural WASH gaps as a stand-alone priority:** the rural–urban water and sanitation gap is markedly wider at this age; continue infrastructure investment in Karnali and other lagging provinces.
- ✓ **Monitor the emerging gender reversal:** track girls' deprivation trajectories from age 5 onward and ensure school and protection programmes do not default to boy-focused assumptions.
- ✓ **Continuing birth-registration and anti-violent-discipline outreach through primary schools:** unregistered and disciplined children show consistently higher sanitation, housing and information deprivation at this age.
- ✓ **Maintain housing quality investment for the poorest and least educated households:** the wealth and maternal-education gradients remain as strong here as in earlier cohorts, showing gains have not yet reached the most disadvantaged.

## KEY FINDINGS

*Education deprivation rises sharply to 6.8% the only cohort where schooling becomes a major deprivation driver and is nearly ten times higher for children of uneducated mothers; working adolescents show more than double the education deprivation of non-working peers (10.8% vs 4.5%); the Karnali–Gandaki gap widens to 35.7 percentage points, the largest of any cohort; gender gaps modestly widen, with girls slightly exceeding boys at higher deprivation thresholds; information deprivation compounds with housing to doubly constrain access to learning.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ **Make secondary-school retention, not just enrolment, the policy target:** attendance fluctuated over the decade; pair retention incentives (stipends, transport, safety) with monitoring of dropout risk factors.
- ✓ **Eliminate child labor through household-level economic support, not enforcement alone:** working adolescents show the starkest education and information deprivation gap in the dataset, indicating labor is a symptom of household poverty.
- ✓ **Expand vocational and alternative-education pathways:** for adolescents already out of school or combining work and study, particularly in Karnali, Madhesh and Sudurpaschim.
- ✓ **Deepen the province-differentiated response for this cohort specifically:** the deprivation gap between provinces is widest in adolescence, meaning targeted investment here yields the largest marginal reduction in national disparity.
- ✓ **Track and respond to the widening gender gap:** design adolescent programming (safety, mobility, secondary schooling) that explicitly addresses the slightly higher deprivation now observed among girls.
- ✓ **Extend birth-registration remediation to adolescents missed earlier:** unregistered adolescents still show a large deprivation gap (93.0% vs 76.7% at  $k \geq 1$ ), indicating late registration campaigns remain worthwhile.

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## ANNEX 1:

### List of dimensions, indicators, deprivation threshold and applicable age groups.

| Dimension   | Indicator                           | Deprived if...                                                                                                   | Age group    | NMICS availability |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Water       | Drinking water source               | Child lives in a household without access to an improved water source                                            | 0-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Water       | Distance to water source            | Round-trip time to water source exceeds 30 minutes                                                               | 0-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Sanitation  | Toilet type                         | Household uses an unimproved toilet facility                                                                     | 0-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Sanitation  | Shared toilet                       | Toilet shared with two or more households                                                                        | 0-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Housing     | Floor / roof / walls                | Made of natural or rudimentary, non-permanent material                                                           | 0-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Housing     | Electricity                         | Household has no electricity                                                                                     | 0-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Housing     | Overcrowding                        | More than 3 people per sleeping room                                                                             | 0-17         | (2019, 2024-25)    |
| Information | Information / communication devices | No access to at least one information device and one communication device                                        | 0-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Nutrition   | Stunting                            | Height-for-age below -2 SD (WHO standard)                                                                        | 0-59 months  | ✓ all rounds       |
| Nutrition   | Wasting                             | Weight-for-height below -2 SD (WHO standard)                                                                     | 0-59 months  | ✓ all rounds       |
| Nutrition   | Minimum acceptable diet (IYCF)      | Child <6 months not exclusively breastfed; child 6-23 months without minimum dietary diversity or meal frequency | 6-23 months  | ✓ all rounds       |
| Health      | Immunization                        | Child 12-23 months has not received full immunization                                                            | 12-23 months | ✓ all rounds       |
| Health      | Skilled birth attendance            | Birth not attended by a skilled birth attendant                                                                  | 0-23 months  | ✓ all rounds       |
| Health      | Care for illness                    | Child had diarrhoea / ARI in past 2 weeks, but no advice or treatment sought                                     | 0-59 months  | ✓ all rounds       |
| Education   | School attendance                   | Child of school age not attending school                                                                         | 5-17         | ✓ all rounds       |
| Education   | Early childhood education           | Child 36-59 months not attending pre-primary education                                                           | 36-59 months | ✓ all rounds       |

## ANNEX 2:

### Deprivation calculation Steps

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#### Step 1: Identify the Target Population

All children under 18 years of age in the NMICS sample are included. Because different indicators apply to different age groups, estimates are produced for: children aged 0-23 months; children aged 24-59 months; children aged 5-14 years; children aged 15-17 years; and the full 0-17 age group (Karim, 2015).

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#### Step 2: Select Indicators and Establish Deprivation Thresholds

For each constitutive right, indicators are selected from available NMICS modules. Thresholds follow international standards where applicable (WHO child growth standards for nutrition; JMP service ladders for water and sanitation; national immunization protocols) and national standards otherwise (national curriculum requirements for school attendance). Thresholds are harmonized across NMICS rounds to support comparability, and the principle of non-regression is observed: thresholds are not relaxed between rounds (UNECE, 2020).

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#### Step 3: Construct Binary Deprivation Variables

For each child and each applicable dimension, a binary indicator is constructed, taking the value 1 if the child is deprived in that dimension and 0 otherwise. Where a child falls outside the target age range for a particular indicator, the dimension is treated as not applicable, and the child's deprivation count is calculated over the relevant dimensions only.

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#### Step 4: Calculate the Deprivation Score

Each child's total deprivation count is the number of constitutive rights in which the child is deprived. With equal weights across  $N$  applicable dimensions, each dimension contributes  $1/N$  to the deprivation share (UNICEF, 2021c). The deprivation share ranges from 0 (no deprivation) to 1 (deprived in all applicable rights).

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#### Step 5: Apply the Child Deprivation Cut-Off

Children are classified into the following groups: not deprived (0 deprivations); experiencing one deprivation ( $k = 1$ ); in multidimensional poverty ( $k \geq 3$ ); and severely deprived ( $k \geq 4$ ). The full distribution ( $k = 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, \dots$ ) is preserved in the Child Poverty Profile (UNICEF, 2021d).

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#### Step 6: Aggregate to Produce Child Deprivation estimates

Three summary measures are produced for each NMICS round:  $H$ , the headcount ratio (the percentage of children identified as in poverty at the chosen cut-off);  $A$ , the average deprivation share among the poor (a depth/intensity measure); and  $M0$ , the adjusted headcount, computed as  $H \times A$ , following the Alkire-Foster framework (Alkire & Foster, 2011). The  $M0$  measure is sensitive to both prevalence and depth and is therefore informative for policy targeting.

## ANNEX 3:

### List of Contributor

#### National Statistics Office

|                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
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