

## Poverty and Inequality in Nepal

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### Background

Poverty is a major risk factor to population health and wellbeing. Although poverty is a major social problem in Nepal, very little is known about its causes and consequences and the ways in which poverty is experienced. The extent to which poverty exists among various caste and ethnic groups and the factors that contribute to such disparity is currently unknown. This paper presents preliminary findings from the ongoing research on poverty in Nepal.

### Method

Data from nationally representative sample of population and households from *Demographic and Health Survey* was used. First, multivariate logistics regression was conducted. Second, GIS analyses were performed to examine the spatial relationship between poverty and other variables in the model. Finally, an ethnographic study was conducted to document the lived experiences among a sample of villages in the Himalayan region of Nepal.

### Results

The results show that Tamang, Magar and Tharu indigenous groups are at significantly higher risk of poverty than Brahmin caste group. The more than two-fold variations in poverty between indigenous group and caste group was not solely driven by the mean level differences in individual productivity characteristics. Geographic proximity to caste group was a significant risk factor to indigenous poverty. Lack of self-governance appear to be the underlying causes of poverty among the indigenous groups in Nepal.

### Goals and Objectives

The goals of this proposal is to disseminate findings from the ongoing research; to continue and expand research activities both locally and globally; to engage in and provide research opportunities for students; and to seek institutional support and opportunities for further research and collaboration.