Researching livelihoods and
services affected by conflict

Reconstructing our understanding of the link between services and state legitimacy

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Cover photo: DFID/Russell Watkins.
A doctor with the International Medical Corps
examines a patient at a mobile health clinic
in Pakistan.

About us
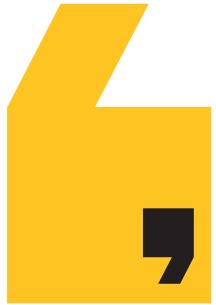
The **Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC)** is a global research programme exploring basic services, and social protection in fragile and conflict-affected situations. Funded by UK Aid from the UK Government (DFID), with complementary funding from Irish Aid and the European Commission (EC), SLRC was established in 2011 with the aim of strengthening the evidence base and informing policy and practice around livelihoods and services in conflict.
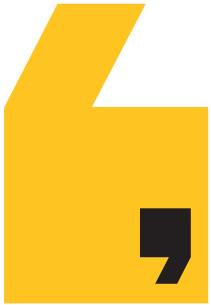
The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is the lead organisation. SLRC partners include: Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA), Feinstein International Center (FIC, Tufts University), Focus1000, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Wageningen University (WUR), Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR), Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Nepal Institute for Social and Environmental Research (NISER), Narrate, Social Scientists' Association of Sri Lanka (SSA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Women and Rural Development Network (WORUDET), Claremont Graduate University (CGU), Institute of Development Policy (IOB, University of Antwerp) and the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS, Erasmus University of Rotterdam).

SLRC's research can be separated into two phases. Our first phase of research (2011–2017) was based on three research questions, developed over the course of an intensive one-year inception phase:

- State legitimacy: experiences, perceptions and expectations of the state and local governance in conflict-affected situations
- State capacity: building effective states that deliver services and social protection in conflict-affected situations
- Livelihood trajectories and economic activity under conflict

Guided by our original research questions on state legitimacy, state capacity, and livelihoods, the second phase of SLRC research (2017–2019) delves into questions that still remain, organised into three themes of research. In addition to these themes, SLRC II also has a programme component exploring power and everyday politics in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). For more information on our work, visit: www.securelivelihoods.org/what-we-do

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Executive summary

This report presents a summary of the findings from the second phase of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) (2018–2020) on how state legitimacy needs to be re-evaluated by international development workers in order to increase the effectiveness of programmes that aim to support state legitimacy.

The first phase of the research, between 2011 and 2017, featured a panel survey every three years from 2012. The survey was carried out twice in Sri Lanka and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and three times in Pakistan, Nepal and Uganda. It included questions on access to and satisfaction with services, and perceptions of government. For a summary of the findings, see Nixon and Mallett (2017).

During the second phase, in-depth qualitative research in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal sought to understand some of the unexpected findings from the panel survey and qualitative studies in SLRC's first phase. The third round of the survey included additional questions that captured people's perceptions of state legitimacy, as opposed to just perceptions of government. This allowed us to draw more conclusions about the relationship between services and state legitimacy, and propose a set of implications to consider when designing programmes to support state legitimacy.

What can we now say about the relationship between services and state legitimacy?

1. State legitimacy is co-constructed, not transactional

In international development, legitimacy is commonly understood as transactional: if the state achieves certain outcomes (e.g. delivers services) and these outcomes are achieved according to processes that the population perceive as right (e.g. services are delivered fairly), then citizens will accept the state's authority. Based on the case studies in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan, we found that state legitimacy was based on a fluid dynamic between people's beliefs about how state power should be exerted and people's experience of the state. State legitimacy was not simply based on whether people's experience of the state aligned with their beliefs about how state power should be exerted. Rather, state and societal groups co-constructed these expectations and beliefs about the state. Group beliefs about how state power should be exerted were influenced by people's identity and their position in the political settlement. State narratives, often directed at particular groups central to the political settlement, further inform these beliefs.

2. Services become salient in the construction of legitimacy if they (re)produce contested distribution arrangements

The results from the third round of the SLRC survey showed that satisfaction with certain services had an impact on perceptions of state legitimacy. In Nepal, we found that being satisfied with public water provision is associated with more positive perceptions of state legitimacy. In Pakistan, it was health services. In Uganda, respondents who were satisfied with education were more likely to perceive the state as legitimate.

These findings indicate that services can play a role in the construction of state legitimacy but, using the quantitative data alone, we were unable to explain why different services mattered in the construction of state legitimacy across different countries. To explore when services became important in the construction of state legitimacy, we examined instances when the legitimacy of authority was contested through protests or non-cooperation. We found services become salient when they are connected to meta-narratives that delegitimise an authority. These meta-narratives tended to be about disputed distribution arrangements, particularly between elite groups and excluded groups. We also found that the salience of a service in the construction of legitimacy can change over time as different parts of a political settlement are disputed.

3. Basic services may not necessarily break or make a state, but they provide 'teachable moments'

Certain services can become salient in the negotiation of legitimacy if they reproduce contested distribution arrangements, but the process of a service gaining salience may be gradual. If a service is gaining salience in the negotiation of legitimacy, people's experiences of the state through that service are more likely to provide 'teachable moments' – moments when people are faced with a representation of the degree to which the state respects them as citizens. When a service is gaining salience or has become salient, people's negative experience of the service is likely to be linked with wider delegitimating narratives about the state. Of course, many factors influence whether people connect an experience of the state to wider delegitimating narratives of the state. These factors include a person's group identity, the collective memory of his/her identity group and his/her exposure to alternative narratives of the state.

4. The state may not need to legitimate its power to all citizens in order to maintain its power

Based on our qualitative research, we found that states varied in the degree to which they legitimated their power to different groups. The extent of legitimation that a state directs at a group depends on how central that group is to the political settlement. Often, states oscillate between moves to legitimate their authority with a group and repressive actions. As groups have different degrees of disruptive power within a political settlement, a state may remain stable while failing to legitimate its power among certain groups. If the state's approach to certain groups is largely repressive, increased investment in basic services in areas where these groups are the majority is unlikely to have an impact on perceptions of state legitimacy.

Implications of our findings for programmes that aim to support state legitimacy

The findings of this research emphasise that the construction of state legitimacy is a dynamic process that looks very different in, say, northern Pakistan from how it does in southern Nepal. It can also change over time in a specific context. This makes the task of supporting increased state legitimacy in post-conflict situations more complicated than is usually assumed.

For one, investing in basic services may not have any effect on people's perception of state legitimacy. Based on the latest research from SLRC, we argue that, even if services are improved so that they align with people's norms and expectations, this may not have any effect on state legitimacy if those services are not salient in the negotiation of state legitimacy.

Where a basic service has become salient, investing in that service may have an impact on state legitimacy. However, the link between the improvement in the service and changes in state legitimacy is likely to be indirect and contingent on a number of factors that may be beyond the control of a donor-funded intervention. For example, if the state fails to address some of the core contested issues within a political settlement, the effect of investment in a service, even if salient, is likely to be curtailed.

Considering these complexities, we lay out some broad principles that can be applied to supporting state legitimacy in conflict-affected areas, based on a revised understanding of the link between services and state legitimacy.

1 If we accept that state legitimacy is a co-constructed process, **supporting state legitimacy becomes not just about fixing institutions to improve service delivery, but also about recognising power dynamics at different levels of state and society. It also means understanding the history of the formation of political settlements, and how this feeds into the construction of narratives about state legitimacy.** The non-material ways in which a political settlement can be maintained are key to understanding the link between services and state legitimacy. Narratives about services may be just as important as the material benefits that different groups stand to gain from the provision or not of particular services, especially if a service is salient in the negotiation of legitimacy. If this is the case, it will be worth paying attention to how changes in the service will feed into those narratives. If particular changes to a service could work to counteract delegitimising narratives of the state, these changes should be prioritised. If certain changes to services threaten the power of dominant groups, then donors could consider investing in promoting narratives that justify those changes.

2 Instead of focusing on the process of service delivery and aiming to increase people's perceptions of fairness across all services, **it may be more strategic for donors to identify which service(s) is/are salient in the construction of legitimacy, and focus resources on addressing the contested issues in the delivery of that service.** A salient service is likely to be a sensitive

state function, such as land ownership or immigration. Donors may need to allocate resources to basic services to lay the basis for a constructive relationship. Funding basic services, even if they are not salient in the construction of legitimacy, remains critical for human development. Additional funding in a service that is salient in the construction of state legitimacy would need to be guided by political settlement analysis with a focus on problem-driven, iterative adaptation to help identify areas within a sector where change is feasible.

3   Instead of designing interventions that aim to increase the inclusivity of services, **a more fruitful approach may be to identify situations where the state is incentivised to co-opt rather than repress groups and work to support the transition from repressive strategies to co-option**. Our research shows that initiatives to increase the inclusivity of a service may be used by dominant groups to delegitimise the state and protect the current political settlement. We also found that states oscillate between co-opting or working to include groups, and repressing them. Instead of thinking about the transition from an exclusive political order to an inclusive one as linear, this should be understood as potentially including co-option and repressive strategies towards different groups over time. Thus, it may be more useful to understand why, in certain circumstances, states work to co-opt a group, rather than repress it. Donors could then think about ways to further incentivise states to rely more on co-option than repression. This will, of course, require astute political analysis and productive relationships between donors and key state actors, and so will not be available as a strategy for all donors.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why did a research programme on livelihoods seek to measure state legitimacy?

The SLRC has been researching the relationship between basic services and state legitimacy for nearly ten years. When research for SLRC phase I was being developed in 2011, the dominant thinking on state-building in the international development sphere was that 'legitimacy deficits' were a driver of fragility. Thus, building state legitimacy became a priority in order to move away from fragility (cf. OECD, 2009; DFID, 2010; Government of UK, 2010). Policy-makers proposed that, if states could be supported to deliver on their basic functions, such as creating the conditions for economic growth and ensuring the provision of services, they would be able to mend or forge state–society relations, and thereby strengthen their legitimacy (Teskey, Schnell and Poole, 2012; Whaites, 2008).

At the time, there was some emerging evidence that supported this theory, though findings were mixed. The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) in Afghanistan, for example, aimed to improve access to basic services including education, health and water, while also creating village governance systems based on democratic processes and female participation. The goal of these activities was to increase Afghans' acceptance of the central government and improve their perceptions of local government.[1] A rrandomised controlled trial conducted across 500 treatment and control villages revealed that the programme had a positive impact on people's perceptions of central and subnational government (measured by whether people felt that representatives acted in the interest of all villagers, some villagers or their own interests), but this effect weakened towards the end of the programme (Beath, Christia and Enikolopov, 2012; 2013). The study also found no evidence that the programme increased people's acceptance of central government authority as the overarching governance entity in their village.[2]

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[1] The NSP has since evolved into the Citizens' Charter (http://www.ccnpp.org/Default.aspx). For commentary on how SLRC research could be used to inform the Citizens' Charter, see https://securelivelihoods.org/publication/politics-over-evidence-questioning-the-link-between-service-delivery-and-state-legitimacy-in-afghanistan/

[2] Acceptance of central government authority was measured through questions asking about identity (national versus ethnic), preference for the government to exercise jurisdiction over local crimes, whether the government should set the school curriculum, preference for centralised government over a federated state, support for the government to issue mandatory national ID and require registration of life events and whether income-earners should pay tax (see also Table 1).

In her analysis of cross-country public opinion data, Sacks (2011) found mixed results on the effect of improvements in public services and people's willingness to defer to government authority (i.e. pay taxes). In sub-Saharan countries, the study found that some public services, including the presence of a sewage system and a school, increased people's willingness to pay taxes. Efforts to improve health services were also associated with increased willingness pay taxes, but satisfaction with water provision was not.

Many policy-makers consider healthcare provision a core service that could improve people's perceptions of state legitimacy, particularly in fragile states such as Iraq and Afghanistan (OECD, 2009; Marine Corps, 2007; United States Department of State, 2009). However, several healthcare researchers warned that most of the evidence linking health services to improved perceptions of legitimacy was anecdotal, inconclusive or reflected organisational interests (Eldon, Hadi and Waddington, 2008; Gordon *et al*. 2010), and risked securitising healthcare provision (Gordon *et al*. 2010).

In Iraq, Brinkerhoff *et al*. (2012) used opinion surveys to gauge people's satisfaction with water services and perceptions of state legitimacy (measured by people's willingness to pay for improvements in water supply). They found a non-linear relationship between satisfaction with water supply and willingness to pay for improvements; at low and high levels of satisfaction people were more likely to be willing to pay for improvements, while people who were 'somewhat' satisfied were least willing to do so.

In countries unaffected by conflict, there is some evidence that a deterioration of services erodes people's willingness to pay for them, and undermines trust in their government (cf. Fjeldstad, 2004), but this effect has not been replicated in places affected by conflict.

Despite the extremely mixed findings on a link between services and state legitimacy, the proposition that service provision could strengthen state legitimacy was attractive. Service delivery was a staple of aid agencies and allowed them to argue that, through investing in public services, aid was contributing to state-building and peacebuilding.

The SLRC programme was designed to investigate how people recovered from conflict. But with so much funding being channelled into service delivery in fragile states, it was important for DFID to test some of the assumptions justifying this focus. Under SLRC I, research was commissioned to understand whether basic services affected people's views of the government in fragile and conflict-affected situations. The results were unexpected: we found no relationship between increased access to services and perceptions of central and local government (see Tables 4 and 5 in the Annex). During the second phase, in-depth qualitative research in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal sought to understand some of the unexpected findings from the panel survey and qualitative studies in SLRC's first phase.

1.2   Overview of the report

This report is in four sections. Section 1 provides the background to the research while Section 2 begins by presenting the methodological challenges we faced in researching the link between services and state legitimacy, in particular measuring perceptions of state legitimacy. Section 3 presents the main findings from research under the SLRC's second phase. We link our arguments with the evidence in a summarised form and direct readers to additional material for more details. The findings are positioned in relation to some of the main debates on this topic in both the policy and academic worlds. Finally, in Section 4, we present the implications of the findings for practitioners.

2 Methodological issues

2.1 The difficulties of measuring state legitimacy

Perceptions of state legitimacy are difficult to assess. First, the concept of the state itself is abstract and can mean different things to different people. Citizens interact with different levels of the state and can hold different, and indeed contrasting, opinions about the legitimacy of local state officials and those working at the national level.

Second, the concept of legitimacy is difficult to pin down. Many studies equate state legitimacy with 'trust in the state' (cf. Brinkerhoff *et al.* 2012) but, as many scholars have pointed out, this does not quite capture state legitimacy (cf. Weber, 1968; Tyler, 2006; Gilley, 2006). According to Weber, legitimacy facilitates the exercise of domination, a particular form of power (Weber, 1968). A legitimate ruler or government elicits willing deference and obedience by justifying its exercise of authority with arguments the populace believes are normatively appropriate. In this sense, legitimacy is a concept meant to capture the beliefs that bolster that willingness. This allows for the possibility that members of the populace might not necessarily trust the state, but believe that the way that it exercises its authority is appropriate. When members of a polity view the political authorities and institutions of that polity as legitimate, they defer to the policies governments enact out of a normative obligation to do so. The widespread existence of legitimating beliefs reduces the transaction costs of governing by reducing reliance on coercion and monitoring. However, capturing the beliefs that bolster willingness to defer to an authority is difficult as there is little agreement about the range of beliefs that produce compliance (e.g. Sacks, 2011).

Gilley (2006) overcame this challenge by drawing on Beetham's three dimensions of legitimacy (Beetham, 2013 [1991]). Whereas Weber emphasised the types of beliefs that elicit compliance and secure legitimacy, Beetham focused on the ways in which legitimating beliefs are constructed through a two-way process between ruler and ruled. According to Beetham, power must first be exercised by the ruler in ways that conform to established rules. These rules may be unwritten, as informal conventions, or they may be formalised in legal codes or judgements. For these rules to be accepted, they must be justifiable in terms of the beliefs held by both dominant and subordinate groups. In this case, rightfulness is drawn from a shared morality that exists in the everyday discourse of citizens. Justification is based upon a 'common framework of belief' between the dominant and the subordinate in any power relationship (Beetham, 2013: 69). Gilley notes that the pervasiveness

of political power and its regularisation into everyday life means that, at any one time, citizens will consciously be able to consider the legality or justification of only a very small fraction of the entire system. This 'legitimacy gap', he argues, gives rise to the need for acts of consent. 'Acts of consent' refers to positive actions that express a citizen's recognition of the state's right to hold political authority and agreement, at least in general, to obey the decisions that result. Thus, power is legitimated through acts of consent by dominant and subordinate groups that signify their acceptance of state authority. See Figure 1 for a summary of Beetham's three dimensions and Table 1 for examples of the indicators Gilley used to measure these dimensions.

Gilley's approach is a more comprehensive way to measure legitimacy than using trust as an indicator (cf. Fisk and Cherney, 2017), using a single indicator as a proxy (Brinkerhoff *et al.* 2010) or, as in the case of the evaluation of the National Solidarity Programme in Afghanistan, using a series of questions to measure the degree to which people were willing to accept the involvement of central government in day-to-day governance (see Table 1 for a summary). However, Gilley's approach assumes that the political concepts that inform his choice of indicators are understood in the same way across cultures, for example that voting expresses a belief that existing political structures provide the appropriate locus for political life. Ethnographic accounts show that voting can take on very different economic, performative and social significance across different contexts. Banarjee's (2007) ethnography of voting

behaviour in India showed that elections in a West Bengal village symbolised much more than an opportunity to choose who should be in power; they offered the chance to express one's citizenship, and in the process one's self-respect and self-worth.

Table 1 lays out the different approaches used by key studies on state legitimacy.

2.2 SLRC Phase I: laying the groundwork

A major feature of the SLRC was a panel survey in conflict-affected areas in five countries: Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Uganda and the DRC. At the time, there were few representative surveys in conflict-prone areas, let alone panel surveys.

The survey was designed primarily to capture how people recover from conflict, with a focus on livelihoods and access to social protection and services to support them in restoring assets and social capital. As data was being collected on people's access to, and satisfaction with, basic services, it made sense to try and measure whether an increase in either or both of these variables would have any impact on people's perceptions of the state. The questions included in the first two rounds of the survey were similar to those used in the evaluation of the National Solidarity Programme in Afghanistan. These measured the extent to which people felt that government representatives at national and local levels acted in their interests. In the first two rounds, people were asked about the extent to which the decisions of those in power reflected their own priorities, and the extent to which

Figure 1: Beetham's three dimensions of legitimacy
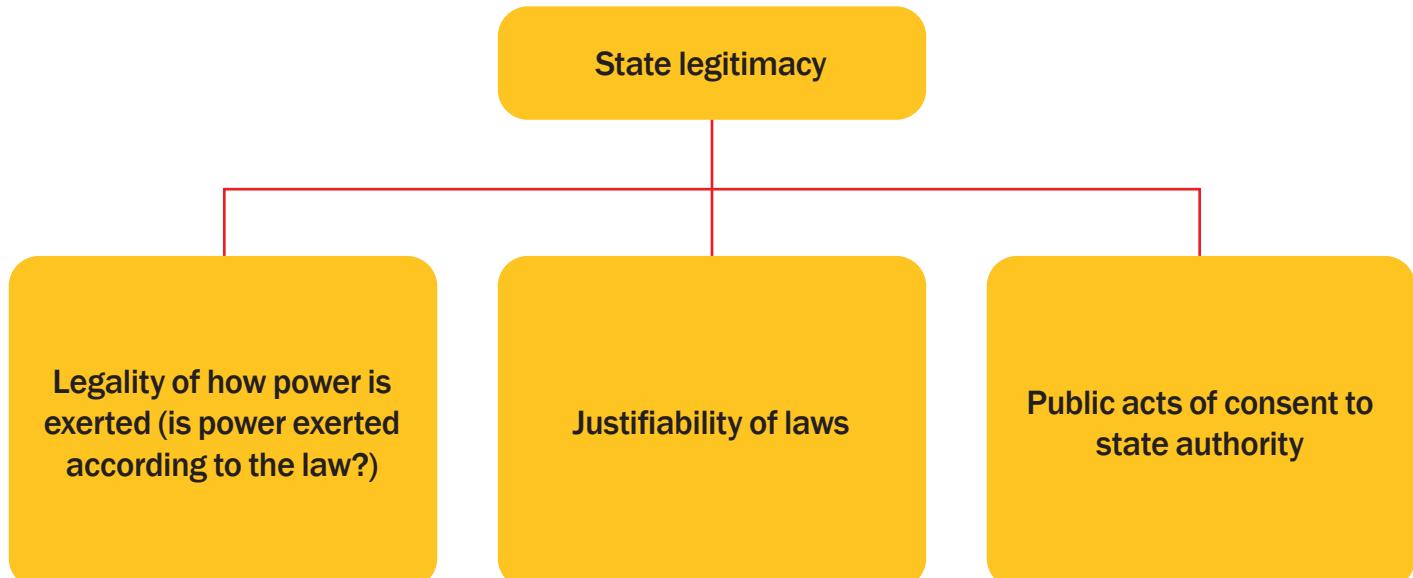
Table 1: Approaches to measuring legitimacy in selected studies over the last 15 years

Study	Date	Proxy for measuring legitimacy
Gilley The meaning and measure of state legitimacy: results for 72 countries	2006	Drew on Beetham's theory of legitimacy to measure a) views of legality; b) views of justification; and c) acts of consent. *Sample indicators for views of legality* • Evaluation of state respect for individual human rights (World Values Survey) • Confidence in police (World Values Survey) • Confidence in civil service (World Values Survey) *Sample indicators for views of justification* • Evaluation of current political system (World Values Survey) • Satisfaction with operation of democracy (World Values Survey) • Use of violence in civil protest (World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators IV 1996–2000) *Sample indicators for acts of consent* • Election turnout (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) • Quasi-voluntary taxes (International Monetary Fund).
Sacks The Antecedents of Approval, Trust and Legitimating Beliefs in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and six Arab Countries	2011	People's willingness to defer to government as key measure of state legitimacy. Specifically, measured people's level of agreement with the statement: 'The tax department always has the right to make people pay taxes'
Brinkerhoff *et al.* Water supply and state legitimacy in Iraq	2012	Willingness to pay for improvements in water supply
Beath *et al.* Evaluation of National Solidarity Programme in Afghanistan	2013	Acceptance of central government's authority *Indicators of acceptance:* • Identifies predominantly as Afghan (as opposed to member of ethnic group) • Prefers that government/police prosecute criminals • Prefers that government (not local authorities) prosecute crimes • Prefers that central government (not religious or tribal leaders) set school curriculum • Prefers centralised government to federated state • Prefers people to have ID cards and register life events with government • Prefers that income-earners pay tax to government
Fisk and Cherney Pathways to institutional legitimacy in nepal	2017	Trust and confidence in the government *Statements used included:* • 'I trust the government' • 'The government operates in the best interests of Nepalese people' • 'I have confidence in the government' • 'I have respect for the government'

the government cared about their opinions. Similar to the evaluation of the National Solidarity Programme, the SLRC survey asked about people's perceptions of both local and central government.[3]

These questions asked respondents about their perceptions of government, not about the state. But in asking people about the extent to which those in power reflected people's priorities and cared about their opinions, it was thought that this would at least provide an indication of the degree to which service provision influences people's perception of government, an 'important step along any imputed causal chain between service delivery and state legitimacy' (Nixon and Mallett, 2017).

In Sri Lanka and Uganda, increased satisfaction with health services was associated with improved perceptions of local government, at the 5% and 10% statistical significance level respectively, but this did not hold for other services (see Tables 4 and 5 in the Annex). In Nepal, Pakistan and the DRC, we did not find that an increase in satisfaction with services was associated with improved perceptions of either local or central government. Having access to a grievance mechanism seemed to be a better predictor of improvements in perceptions of government, but even this was not always the case. In Nepal and Sri Lanka, being aware of a greater number of grievance mechanisms was correlated with improved perceptions of both local and central government (but for the DRC and Pakistan, access to grievance mechanisms was not associated with improved perceptions of either local or central government (see Tables 4 and 5 in the Annex)). For more details, see Nixon and Mallett (2017).

During the first phase of SLRC, two qualitative case studies were commissioned to investigate in more detail why improvements in access to and satisfaction with services had limited effects on people's perceptions of government. In South Sudan, Moro *et al*. (2017) found that, despite services not improving, or in some cases getting worse, people retained a positive perception of the new government. While underperforming in terms of building the state's capacity to deliver basic services, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) remained legitimate as it was credited with achieving liberation from what was seen as a coercive and illegitimate Sudanese government. In Sri Lanka, Godamunne (2015) found that positive perceptions of

the state were not necessarily based on satisfaction with social protection programmes, but were influenced by the end of the war, and increased freedom to travel.

When we published the results from the first two rounds of the survey (see Nixon and Mallett, 2017), we argued that perceptions of government are influenced not just by whether people can access a service, but also by *how* a service is delivered. We promoted an understanding of state legitimacy as transactional, based on both outcomes and processes. While the focus was more on the processes, we argued that, if services could be adjusted to fit with people's expectations and beliefs about the state, then people would be more likely to perceive the state as legitimate. In other words, we understood people's willingness to comply with authority as based on an evaluation of the state's performance on key basic services.

But, using this lens, we were left with several unanswered questions. We could not explain why outcomes mattered in the health service in Sri Lanka and Uganda for perceptions of local government, but not in other countries. While process mattered in some countries, we could not explain why the presence of grievance mechanisms in Pakistan had no effect on perceptions of local or central government. It seemed that outcomes and process only mattered in certain contexts.

2.3   SLRC Phase II: improving the methodology

To improve our analysis of the link between services and state legitimacy, we needed to go back to the drawing board and rethink our understanding of the state – beyond previous focus on government perceptions. Our partners in the second phase – Social Scientists' Association (SSA) in Sri Lanka and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in Pakistan – were critical of the framework used for qualitative research during Phase I. They found that a theory of state informed by Tilly (1985; 1975) and Rokkan (1975) was based on a Western understanding of the state that focused on institutions and control of territory, and did not reflect the lived experience of the state in the case study countries.

Case studies in Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka were undertaken to investigate how people experience the state in their everyday lives, compared with how they thought the state should exert its power. In this way,

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3   Exact questions were: 'To what extent do you feel that the decisions of those in power at the local/central government reflect your own priorities?' and 'Do you agree with the following statement: The local/central government cares about my opinions'.

Figure 2: Areas covered by panel survey in Pakistan
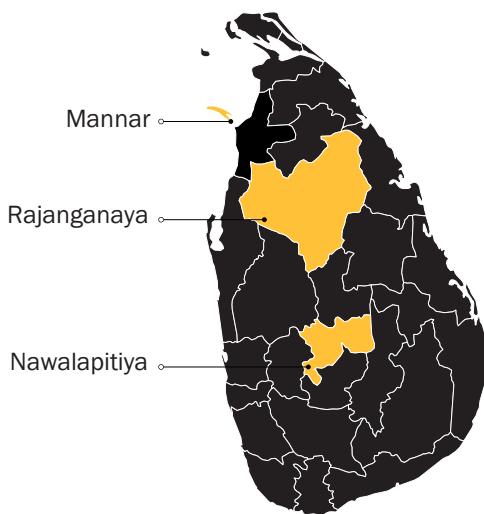
we could explore whether people's experience of the state aligned with shared beliefs about how power should be exerted, enabling us to evaluate the extent to which people perceived the state as legitimate. This approach to evaluating legitimacy draws on Beetham's (2013 [1991]) theory of legitimacy. At the same time, by focusing our research on how people experience the state, we limited the degree to which assumptions about what the state is, particularly assumptions based on Western ideas, influenced the questions we asked.

The case studies were carried out in at least one area where the survey was conducted to allow comparison between the qualitative and quantitative findings. In Nepal and Sri Lanka, additional qualitative research was carried out in areas where particular groups had recently contested the state. This allowed us to study cases of state contestation at the sub-national level.

The second challenge we faced was how best to measure perceptions of legitimacy using the panel survey, to allow comparisons with the qualitative research and to check whether the weak links we found between services and perceptions of government also held when we measured perceptions of state legitimacy. We reviewed the literature and decided to use Beetham's theory to inform a series of questions designed to capture the multidimensional nature of perceptions of state legitimacy. Drawing on Gilley's (2006) work, we designed questions that would measure the legality of how the state exerts power, the justifiability of laws and, finally, acts of consent. While Gilley relied on questions asked in the World Values Survey, ours were specifically relevant to each country. This was especially useful in measuring the justifiability of laws (see Table 2). As with Gilley's study, our questions assume a certain degree of universality in relation to key political concepts. For example, voting is used as an indicator of an act of consent to the democratic political system. However, we cannot be sure that this is the meaning that people in Nepal, Pakistan and Uganda impute to this behaviour. The use of qualitative field research helped to mitigate this shortcoming to some extent.

Figure 3: Areas covered by panel survey in Sri Lanka

Figure 4: Areas covered by panel survey in Nepal

Table 2: Questions designed to capture perceptions of state legitimacy in the third round of the survey

Legitimating process	Logic for question design	Survey question
Legality of how power is exerted	To assess the legality of how power is exercised, we measured a) people's trust in key institutions representing the state b) the degree to which people thought that the transfer of power happened according to the law. We chose the transfer of power as a key moment in which the state either exerts power according to the law or violates the law	To what extent do you trust the armed forces?
		To what extent do you trust the police?
		To what extent do you trust the courts?
		To what extent do you agree the news treats opposition candidates fairly?
		How often during national elections are voters threatened with violence during election process during the campaign and/or on the day of the vote?
		How often during national elections are voters offered money to vote for a candidate?
		How often during national elections is the vote count done fairly?
Justifiability of laws	In each country, we selected controversial laws i.e. where the justifiability of the law was contested. Here we provide a selection of questions taken from each country survey. We also included one of the questions used in the first two rounds of the survey that captured whether the respondent thought that the government cared about their opinion	To what extent do you agree with the following statement: if a motorcyclist does not wear a helmet, the state should punish that person (Uganda)
		To what extent do you agree with the following statement: if a parent does not send their child to school, the state should punish the parent (Uganda)
		To what extent do you agree with the following statement: if someone is caught not paying taxes, they should be fined (Nepal)
		To what extent do you agree with the following statement: if someone is trying to convert a Nepali from one religion to another, then he/she should be punished by the state (Nepal)
		To what extent do you agree with the following statement: businesses should be taxed in Swat and Lower Dir the same as in the rest of Pakistan (Pakistan)
		To what extent do you agree with the following statement: if there is a land dispute, the state should intervene rather than let people sort it out among themselves (Pakistan)
		Do you agree with the following statement: the central government cares about my opinions.
		Do you agree with the following statement: the local government cares about my opinions.
Public acts of consent	To measure public acts of consent, we took voting as an act of consent and participation in protests as an act of dissent. As questions about people's participation in protests were sensitive, particularly in Pakistan, we asked if people would hypothetically take part in a protest in their area	Have you heard of peaceful protests against the government taking place in your area (in the last three years)?
		If there was a protest in your area, how likely is it that you would take part?
		Did you vote in the 2017 national elections?

We used the answers to these questions to construct an index of state legitimacy, following the method used by Gilley. As our approach is theory-driven, rather than statistically driven, and makes no assumptions about what makes states legitimate, but rather seeks to measure what legitimacy is, we used a constitutive approach to constructing an index (Gilley, 2006). The standard scores of each variable were computed and centred around 5 with a standard deviation of 1. The standardised variables from each legitimating process were then aggregated into three mean values. Finally, the three mean values from each legitimating process were aggregated to create a single value (state legitimacy index), with each process amounting to a third of the index.

In the analysis, we ran ordinary least squares regressions with the state legitimacy index as an outcome variable, in order to identify explanatory factors associated with state legitimacy. Since the state legitimacy questions were new to the third survey round, the regressions used cross-sectional data from 2018 only. The surveys were representative within each region but not representative for the country. The aim was to gather data for conflict-affected areas. In Nepal, the survey covered three districts, Bardiya, Ilam and Rolpa, each different in terms of geography, accessibility and service provision '(see Figure 4). In Pakistan, the survey was conducted in three Union Councils (UCs) in Swat (Baidara, Bar Aba Khel and Charbagh) and two in Lower Dir (Haya Sarai and Lal Qilla) (see Figure 2). In Uganda, the survey was conducted in the Lango and Acholi sub-regions.

The sampling strategy for each country was slightly different, but was designed to be representative at the sub-regional level. The strategy was to interview the same respondents interviewed in the first two rounds of the survey in 2012 and 2015, even if they had moved home. We interviewed the same individuals to measure changes over time across the survey rounds.

In 2012, 3176 respondents were interviewed in Nepal, and 2855 of the original sample were re-interviewed in 2015, followed by 2575 in 2018, providing three waves of data for longitudinal analysis. In Pakistan, 2114 respondents were interviewed in the first round of the survey in September–October 2012. In 2015, 1762 in the sample were re-interviewed. In the third and final round of the survey in 2018, 1764 of the original 2114 respondents were re-interviewed. In Uganda, 1857 respondents were interviewed in the first round in January–February 2013. In the second round 1545 were re-interviewed, and 1513 in 2018.

Table 3: Sample sizes in each of the three rounds of the survey and response rates by the end of the panel

Country	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Response rate %	Attrition %
Pakistan	2114	1762	1764	83.4	16.6
Uganda	1857	1545	1513	81.5	18.5
Nepal	3176	2855	2575	81.1	18.9

3 The relationship between services and state legitimacy

3.1 State legitimacy is co-constructed, not transactional

Our argument

Based on the qualitative research, we found that processes of state legitimation were much more co-constructed by citizens and state agents than we had previously thought. Contrary to the dominant idea of state legitimacy resting on state performance, we found that it was based on a dynamic relationship between people's beliefs about how state power should be exercised, and their actual experience of the state. Group beliefs about how state power should be exerted were influenced by people's identity and their position in the political settlement.[4] State narratives, often directed at particular groups central to the political settlement, further inform these beliefs.

Evidence for our argument

The co-construction of legitimacy was evident in all three case studies carried out in Phase II. For example, in Rajanganaya, in North Central Province in Sri Lanka, we found that paddy farmers' beliefs about how state power should be exerted were influenced by having a livelihood that depended on a state-managed irrigation system (which created a group identity) and state narratives that promoted the notion of the paddy farmer as epitomising the essence of Sri Lankan identity (Gunesekara, Surenthiraraj and Tilakaratne, 2019). When the state moved to use some of the water from the irrigation reservoir for drinking purposes, farmers protested. For them, it was more important that the state fulfil its obligations in ensuring that farmers had sufficient water for growing rice, rather than provide drinking water for everyone in the community. Thus, even though the state introduced more inclusive access to drinking water, and potentially improved its performance for a wider group of citizens, this improvement prompted protests from paddy farmers. The farmers' pushback was partly a result of how embedded they perceived their role to be in enabling the state to exist (through their production of rice), but also due to the state's elevation of the lived experience of farmers as representing the essence of Sri Lankan identity, and in the process providing an ideology of the state that the farmers could protest.

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4   A political settlement is defined as an ongoing, conflict-ending agreement among powerful groups around a set of political institutions and a distribution of power expected to deliver an acceptable distribution of benefits (Kelsall, 2018).

When we re-examined the case studies carried out in SLRC's Phase I, we also found evidence of the co-construction of state legitimacy. As mentioned, there is evidence that state legitimacy in newly independent South Sudan was based, not so much on the performance of the state, but on a constructed idea of an independent state free from the oppressive influence of Khartoum. While infrastructure and services improved after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), these improvements were limited to urban areas (Santschi *et al.* 2014; Maxwell *et al.* 2014). Indeed, in rural areas receiving humanitarian assistance under Operation Lifeline Sudan, services were often better during the war than following the signing of the CPA (Maxwell *et al.* 2014). Despite the lacklustre performance of the newly independent state and deteriorating services, many South Sudanese continued to view the state as legitimate (Moro *et al.* 2017). Their evaluation was based on various ideas of the state that had been co-constructed through legitimating narratives produced by the SPLM/A and the identification of different groups with a South Sudanese identity.

The legitimation narratives produced by the SPLM/A included the narrative that, while liberation from an oppressive north had been achieved, the country was comparable to a small child that needed time to learn. In May 2014, Benjamin Marial, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, told the audience at an Oslo donor conference (Voice of America, 2014): 'This is a young country … two years old … breaking a few glasses? I'm sure some of you here are married and have children, and especially the last born. When it runs around, knocking glasses around – you don't throw that wonderful last born through the window into the snow or into the sunshine' (Moro *et al.* 2017). It was not just representatives of the state that promoted this narrative, but also supporters of the SPLM working at different levels of society. For example, an SPLM member in the diaspora commented 'This is a brand new country – there's a lot of need, and it's a huge and tremendous challenge … It's going to take time to get to where we need to be. We are like a small child, learning how to crawl' (Basu and Karimi, 2012).

How does this finding compare with other research on state legitimacy?

Ten years ago, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) produced a comprehensive report on state legitimacy in fragile situations (OECD, 2010). While the report highlighted the importance of shared beliefs and traditions in understanding the construction of legitimacy, its emphasis was on process and performance legitimacy (drawing on a transactional understanding of legitimacy). Based on the second phase of SLRC research, we argue that the interpretation of state processes and performance is filtered through people's group identity and their perceived social and economic position within the state. This filtering is where the construction of state legitimacy takes place, and is influenced both by state actors and by citizens' identity. Our findings differ from the OECD's conclusions in that, rather than process and performance affecting legitimacy, it is the co-construction of narratives about the state, based on a fluid dynamic between group identity and state actions, that influence the degree of legitimacy that a state enjoys.

Is it possible that the process of negotiating legitimacy in places where political order has completely broken down is different from what we observed in Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka? Despite the outbreak of violence in these areas, the central government maintained a degree of control. The analysis by Weigand (2017) of legitimacy in Afghanistan distinguishes between instrumental and substantive legitimacy to describe how the process of legitimation may be different in a country where political order has completely broken down such as Afghanistan. Weigand defines instrumental legitimacy as the extent to which an authority responds to needs, based on a rational assessment of the 'usefulness of authority'. This is analogous to a transactional understanding of legitimacy. Substantive legitimacy is based on a more abstract normative judgement: it is a belief in rightfulness which is underpinned by shared values. Substantive legitimacy is likely to be more long-lasting as it is centred on beliefs, meaning that people may be willing to accept personal disadvantages in order to maintain a system that aligns with their broader beliefs. Based on interviews in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, in 2014 and 2015, Weigand found that some rural Afghans were more likely to cite instrumental rather than substantive reasons for considering the Taliban a benefit in their area. For example, they cited effective conflict resolution systems and lack of corruption, rather than the rightfulness of Islamic law, as reasons why they were happy with Taliban control/influence. It is possible that, in situations of high insecurity, and where people have lived with fluctuating political orders for many years, their standards for judging what is a rightful authority are based more on instrumental (or transactional) legitimacy than on co-constructed legitimacy. Once their basic needs have been met, a more substantive form of legitimacy may be negotiated based on the processes of co-construction we observed in Sri Lanka, South Sudan, Pakistan and Nepal.

However, the distinction between instrumental and substantive legitimacy is not always clear. As Weigand notes, the repeated citing of effective conflict resolution systems and a lack of corruption indicates that people evaluated the Taliban not just on the usefulness of their authority, but also because the procedures they used to resolve disputes corresponded to their shared beliefs about what is right. Thus, even in places where political order has broken down, there is still evidence that legitimacy is based on a two-way dynamic between people's beliefs about what is right and how the rules governing society are exercised. We argue that beliefs about what is right are co-constructed by both the identity groups that people belong to and by representatives of the state. In this sense, legitimacy is not about state performance simply aligning with people's shared beliefs about how the state should perform, but about a more complex construction of competing narratives in which services can play a part.

3.2 Certain services are salient in the negotiation of legitimacy

Our argument

In some circumstances, satisfaction with certain services and receipt of particular benefits has a positive effect on perceptions of state legitimacy. We argue that particular services only become salient in the construction of legitimacy if they (re)produce contested distribution arrangements (i.e. a contested political settlement).

Evidence for our argument

Using data from the third round of the survey, we compared how certain basic state services influenced perceptions of state legitimacy in Nepal, Pakistan and Uganda. The services covered in the survey included education, health and water, as well as access to social protection, livelihood assistance following a crisis (e.g. the floods in western Nepal in 2014, which badly affected the survey area) and perceptions of security.

We did not find any correlation between access to basic services and perceptions of state legitimacy in any of the countries (see Tables 1, 2 and 3 in the Annex). This is comparable with the first two rounds of the survey, which also found no correlation between access to services and perceptions of government. Putting these two findings together, we can surmise that investment that only improves people's access to a service, without any

attention to the quality of service or procedural fairness, is unlikely to have any effect on state legitimacy.

We did find evidence of a relationship between satisfaction with basic services and perceptions of state legitimacy, but this looked quite different across the three countries. In Nepal, being satisfied with their main water source is associated with more positive perceptions of state legitimacy (statistically significant at the 10% level. See Table 1 in the Annex). In Pakistan, higher satisfaction with health services was associated with more positive perceptions of state legitimacy (statistically significant at the 10% level. See Table 3 in the Annex). In Uganda, respondents who were satisfied with education were more likely to perceive the state as legitimate (statistically significant at the 5% level. See Table 2 in the Annex). In each case, we controlled for whether respondents accessed government or private services.

Although we found some evidence that satisfaction with services is associated with perceptions of state legitimacy, this was not consistent across basic services within each country. We looked for whether a substantial increase in satisfaction with a particular service could explain why satisfaction would have an effect on perceptions of legitimacy only in relation to particular services in each country. We found that, between rounds two and three of the survey, there was an overall increase in satisfaction with health services in Pakistan and with education in Uganda, but overall satisfaction with water in Nepal decreased. In Nepal, 11.4% of respondents grew less satisfied with water services between rounds two and three, compared with 7.4% growing less satisfied between rounds one and two. Overall levels of satisfaction in other services increased in all three countries, but this was not always related to perceptions of legitimacy. For example, in Pakistan the proportion of people who were 'very satisfied' with both boys' and girls' education increased between waves one, two and three, but this was not associated with improved perceptions of government between waves one and two, or with positive perceptions of state legitimacy in round three. Thus, substantial increases in satisfaction with a particular service does not explain why this is associated with positive perceptions of state legitimacy.

Receipt of welfare payments is often assumed to increase support for a ruling authority. Welfare payments reflect the extent to which powerful groups have agreed to distribute resources to poorer sections of society, and so reflect the underlying political settlement. In Nepal, we investigated whether there was a link between perceptions of state legitimacy and receipt of social

protection, old age allowance, widow allowance, disability grant, stipends for Dalit children, midday meals and uniforms allowance and livelihood assistance. We found that those who received livelihood assistance were more likely to have a positive positive perception of state legitimacy (see Table 1 in the Annex). We did not find any effect on state legitimacy for other welfare payments. For some welfare payments, such as disability grants, the numbers of people receiving them were too low to measure the effect accurately.

In Pakistan, we looked at whether receipt of social welfare from the major government-funded social protection programmes (including BISP, Zakat from government funds, Sadqa/Nazar, Baitul Mall and RSP), pensions, compensation for rehabilitation of housing (following the Taliban uprising) and livelihood assistance was associated with more positive perceptions of state legitimacy. In the Swat Valley and Lower Dir, none of these welfare payments influenced people's perceptions of state legitimacy (see Table 3 in the Annex).

In Uganda, we measured whether receipt of old age pension, retirement pension or livelihoods assistance, or being a beneficiary of a school feeding programme, influenced perceptions of state legitimacy. While receipt of one or more social protection benefits or livelihoods assistance was associated with more positive perceptions of central government, there was no association between receipt of social welfare or livelihoods assistance on perceptions of state legitimacy (see Table 2 in the Annex).

Based on the survey data, we can conclude that, in some circumstances, satisfaction with certain services and receipt of particular benefits has a positive effect on perceptions of state legitimacy. However, using the survey data alone we could not explain why only particular services and benefits seemed to matter for perceptions of legitimacy. There were no consistencies in the type of service or benefit across countries, and substantial improvements in different services within countries seemed to have varying effects. We decided to use qualitative research in Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka to look for examples of where the state was contested through street protests or non-cooperation with established laws. We looked for both historical and present-day cases and examined the role that services played in those cases. We found that particular services only became salient in the construction of legitimacy if

they (re)produced contested distribution arrangements (i.e. a contested political settlement).

For example, in the 1960s in Swat land was owned and controlled by a minority elite belonging to an ethnic Pashtun group called the Yusufzai. At the time Swat was an authoritarian 'mini-state' within Pakistan, ruled by a Wali[5] with the support of certain Yusufzai families. Although socialism and Islamism were becoming more influential, the Wali and loyalist Yusufzai families were able to suppress dissent. After Swat became part of Pakistan in 1969, land reforms introduced by the new government of Z.A. Bhutto and his party giving small farmers rights to secure land tenure signalled to the lower castes in Swat the illegitimacy of the land tenure system. Expecting Bhutto's land reforms to be implemented, tenants stopped paying rent and there were widespread armed confrontations between landlords and tenants. Thus, tenants' beliefs about how state power should be exerted were co-constructed by narratives promoted by a new government, but also influenced by their membership of lower castes.

What is particularly interesting about this case is that, prior to 1970, there had been quite significant investments in basic services in Swat. At the time of the protests, there were 16 hospitals with 611 beds for a population of just under a million, and patients were provided with free medicine. However, at the time, healthcare was not the salient issue in the negotiation of legitimacy; rather, the right to own land had become the state function over which people were willing to take up arms (McCullough and Toru, 2019).

The SLRC survey data from 2018 suggests that health has now become more salient in the construction of state legitimacy, demonstrating that the salience of a service in the negotiation of legitimacy can change over time. During the qualitative research in Swat, we found that healthcare had become connected with disputed class relations: while lower classes reported feeling a lack of respect when they accessed hospitals and health clinics, higher classes reported getting preferential access to doctors and treatment. In this way, the health system was reproducing the unequal class relations that the Taliban had contested in 2008 (McCullough and Toru, 2019).

In Nepal, as the state was both reimagined and renegotiated following the Maoist uprising, the issue of citizenship became salient in the negotiation of state

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[5]   Arabic for 'protector', used to describe the Governor of Swat.

legitimacy. The Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006, the ending of the monarchy and the creation of an elected Constituent Assembly signalled a widening of the political settlement and efforts by the state to increase its legitimacy in relation to other population groups. The Maoists' demands for greater social inclusion in governance increased marginalised groups' awareness of their rights. In the Terai region, the Tharu and Madhesi formed their own political movements to demand greater access to formal politics. The Tharu campaigned for the abolition of the Kamaiya system that held many Tharus in bonded labour for landowners. The Madhesi claimed that the Nepali government treated them as foreigners, tried to impose the language and culture of the elite Nepali hill castes on them and questioned their loyalty to the state (Cummings and Paudel, 2018).

During qualitative research in the Terai, when people were asked what state functions were important to them, access to citizenship, recognition of Tharu customary law and other minority religious identities (e.g. Muslims) were common themes. For Madhesi and Tharu groups, access to birth certificates and registration processes had become salient in the negotiation of state legitimacy. As one young Madhesi man explained: 'There are many [Madhesi] youths who do not have a citizenship certificate. Without a citizenship certificate, getting a job is not possible. Without citizenship no one can go out of the country to work and earn except for India'. People rarely said that public services such as education, health, water or sanitation were important state functions (for more details, see Cummings and Paudel, 2019).

The survey findings in Nepal broadly align with the findings from the qualitative research: satisfaction with healthcare or education had no significant effect on perceptions of state legitimacy, although satisfaction with water provision did. We were not able to establish why satisfaction with water provision gained salience in the negotiation of legitimacy. We also examined data on access to health clinics. The panel data shows that, in 2015, 46% of those surveyed reported using private health clinics. In 2019, this had decreased to 39%, though this was still a relatively high proportion, indicating a willingness to pay for better services than are available through government-run clinics. However, although almost 40% of the population use private health clinics, this is not a salient issue in the negotiation of legitimacy in the Terai region. While people living in the Terai may have complaints about their health service, it is likely that they do not experience poor government services as a form of discrimination affecting them.

How does this finding compare with other research on state legitimacy?

We find that the degree to which a state function may influence people's perception of state legitimacy depends on whether that state function (re)produces contested distribution arrangements. This is quite different to conclusions from previous research on the relationship between services and state legitimacy. For example, Mcloughlin (2014; 2018) concludes that services may improve state legitimacy when certain normative criteria are fulfilled. Based on our research, unless normative criteria are violated in ways that reproduce contested distribution arrangements, the service is unlikely to be salient in the construction of state legitimacy. For example, if the state delivers healthcare in clinics that do not meet local normative standards of hygiene, this in itself is unlikely to delegitimise the state in any significant way. This seems to be the case in the Terai region in Nepal. In contrast in Pakistan, where the health system reproduces contested distribution arrangements, satisfaction with healthcare increases the likelihood that a person will consider the state legitimate.

3.3 The meta-narrative through which citizens interpret the state matters

Our argument

The account or pattern that provides meaning to people's lives – meta-narrative – is also the lens through which citizens interpret the state and its actions. This is especially relevant in relation to people's perceptions of fairness, as perceptions of lack of fairness in a service matter more when that service is salient in the negotiation of state legitimacy.

The evidence for this argument

In the qualitative research in Pakistan and Nepal, fairness emerged as a key qualifying factor in evaluations of the state. Fairness was interpreted through a meta-narrative of how the state treats its citizens, and in particular the group with which a respondent identified. In Nepal, people frequently spoke of how the state had treated their group unfairly. They were more likely to note how fairly, or not, their group was treated, rather than how the state treated them personally. The group they identified with was usually their ethnic and caste group or their religious group. For example, a Madhesi person was unhappy that: 'In the army and police, there

are no Madhesi. Madhesi people are always rejected for these jobs. They disqualified Madhesi people for no reason.' A Muslim person resented the fact that: 'Nepal government law is not compatible with our religion … the Muslim divorce system is different … we also want our culture and religious values in government law.' Thus, procedural and distributional justice tended to be assessed at the group, rather than the individual, level.

In Pakistan, having to pay bribes to state officials was commonplace across classes and was a common theme when people were asked to recall a recent encounter with the state. However, people in higher socioeconomic groups experienced this differently from lower socioeconomic groups. People in less wealthy groups described having to pay bribes as extortion and a sign that they were treated unfairly by the state. The wealthier, land-owning group (the Yusufzai) viewed paying bribes simply as a transaction that solved a problem. It is of course possible that state officials demanded bribes in very different ways depending on the class of the individual involved.

Does it matter which service the state is perceived as engaging in unfairly? In Nepal, we found that people from different groups focused on different state functions. In Bardiya, hill castes were likely to discuss the distribution of flood reparations as a marker of the state discriminating among caste groups (distributional justice). In comparison, the Madhesi were likely to focus on citizenship rights and government jobs as a sign of state discrimination (procedural justice). Perceptions of fairness, whether procedural or distributional justice, matter for how people judge the state, but these perceptions are likely to matter more when they align with a meta-narrative about discriminatory actions of the state, i.e. when they connect with larger narratives around disputed distribution arrangements. In Nepal, Madhesi politicians communicated a narrative that the state was neglecting Madhesi people because of their ethnicity, influencing how the Madhesi interpreted the state's services in relation to registration papers and citizenship rights. In Pakistan, the Taliban promoted a narrative of the Pakistani state as being for the rich and failing to serve the lower classes. Thus, when the lower classes experienced the state as unfair through the requirement to pay bribes or through the disrespectful treatment they received from healthcare workers, this connected with a larger narrative about a state that only served the needs of the rich.

How does this finding compare with other research on state legitimacy?

In recent literature, perceptions of fairness are identified as critical in influencing whether services will improve state legitimacy. For example, Mcloughlin (2018: 2) concludes that 'perceptions of unfairness in even a narrow service arena can have wider delegitimising effects because services signal the operative value and norms of the state to citizens'. Fisk and Cherney (2017) measure the effects of service delivery, infrastructure and perceptions of distributional and procedural justice on perceptions of legitimacy in Nepal. Following two rounds of a panel survey, they found that procedural justice is more strongly associated with state legitimacy than service delivery, infrastructure or distributional justice.

The qualitative research carried out in the second phase of SLRC supports the conclusion that fairness is an important factor in how people evaluate the state. However, we qualify this: perceptions of fairness are more likely to matter when they connect with a meta-narrative about the state, particularly meta-narratives about distributional arrangements. Thus, in Mcloughlin's case study, the perceived unfairness in the change to admission procedures for third-level education reproduced disputed distribution arrangements between minority Tamils and majority Sinhalese, and so worked to delegitimise the state. However, if there was no disagreement about the distribution of state benefits between Tamils and Sinhalese, it is questionable whether a change in admission procedures would have had the same delegitimising effects.

3.4   Basic services provide 'teachable moments'

Our argument

People's experiences of the state provide 'teachable moments' – moments when people are faced with a representation of the degree to which the state respects them as citizens. When that experience involves a service that has become salient in the construction of state legitimacy, that experience is likely to be linked with meta-narratives about the state.

Background

So far we have argued that state legitimacy is co-constructed between citizens and state actors, and that

certain services become salient in the construction of state legitimacy depending on whether they reproduce contested distribution arrangements. At this point, it is useful to develop a continuum of state legitimacy, ranging from highly legitimate states to illegitimate states. At one end, we have a state that the majority of the population considers legitimate, i.e. the state exerts its power according to established laws (formal or informal), those laws broadly align with people's beliefs about how state power should be exerted and the majority of people regularly produce acts of consent that confirm the authority of the state. At the other end, we have a state that does not exert power according to established laws, there is widespread disagreement about the laws and there are regular acts of dissent (violent and non-violent) that show that various groups consider the state illegitimate. The area in between these two points is where most states are positioned, and where it gets trickier to establish the degree to which a state might be tipping towards being illegitimate, and the role that services play in that process.

In Section 3.2, we showed how certain services could become salient in the negotiation of legitimacy. But at what point will a service become the issue that people are willing to protest about, or engage in non-cooperation with the law? According to Beetham (2013), if a state's legitimacy is strong, dissatisfaction with an aspect of the state (e.g. healthcare provision) may result in protests, but these will not be about the entire system, but rather about the need for particular reform within the system. However, where a state's legitimacy is weak, dissatisfaction with an aspect of the state can take on symbolic and emotional significance, and protests over this function grow to become dissent against the entire system.

The evidence for our argument

The case of healthcare in Pakistan is instructive. Currently, the survey data indicates that those who are less satisfied with healthcare are less likely to perceive the Pakistani state as legitimate. Healthcare has become salient in the construction of state legitimacy, but only to a certain extent. To date, there have been no protests about healthcare provision in Swat or Lower Dir. Equally, there have been no widespread acts of civil disobedience in protest at the poor state of the healthcare system.

Our qualitative research showed that the treatment people received at hospitals and health clinics was influential in their evaluation of the state. However, while dissatisfaction with the treatment lower classes

receive has not yet evolved into fully-fledged dissent, their experiences are connecting with a larger narrative produced by militia groups that the Pakistani state is only for the rich. Of course, many factors influence whether people connect experiences of the state to narratives produced by militia groups, including a person's group identity, the collective memory of his/her identity group and his/her exposure to alternative narratives of the state.

Thus, in Pakistan it is not clear that dissatisfaction with healthcare has yet taken on the symbolic and emotional significance that Beetham argued is necessary to foment dissent against the entire system. In contrast, in Nepal citizenship rights and the new federal state structure became symbolic of the Madhesis' adverse inclusion in the state to such a degree that the Madhesi were willing to engage in widespread protests.

How does this finding compare with other research on state legitimacy?

The idea that interaction with a state service provides a 'teachable moment' is not new. In the high-profile report 'Escaping the fragility trap' by the Commission on State Fragility, Growth and Development (2018), it is argued that 'every interaction of a security official with a citizen is a "teachable moment" that either increases or reduces trust in government' (Commission on State Fragility, Growth and Development 2018: 25). Based on our research, teachable moments are more likely to matter in services that are gaining salience or already are salient in the negotiation of legitimacy.

3.5   The state may not need to legitimate its power to all citizens in order to maintain its power

Our argument

States varied in the degree to which they legitimated their power to different groups. The extent of legitimation that a state directs at a particular group depends on how central that group is to the political settlement. Often, states oscillate between legitimisation and repression. As groups have different degrees of disruptive power within a political settlement (Kelsall, 2018), a state may remain stable while failing to legitimate its power among certain groups. If the state's approach to certain groups is largely repressive, increased investment in basic services in areas where these groups are the majority is unlikely to have an impact on perceptions of state legitimacy.

Evidence for our argument

During the qualitative field research, we found that states varied in the degree to which they legitimated themselves to different groups. The extent of legitimation that a state directs at a group depends on how central that group is to the political settlement. For example, in a tea plantation in Nawalapitiya in Sri Lanka, we found that members of the Estate Tamil Community (ETC) are only 'partial citizens' in the Sri Lankan state. As such, their relationship with the state is very different from the majority Sinhalese or even other Tamils. The ETC had no patronage network through which to informally access state services as other communities did. The predominant mechanism through which the ETC can access the state is strictly formal. For example, it is generally assumed that each estate (company) provides for the needs of its workers, in the absence of which they can file a case at a labour tribunal. However, according to a member of the ETC, such formal mechanisms do not function in practice: 'We can't directly access the labour tribunals. I can't represent myself. I can't go and ask for a lawyer. There is no permission for that' (Gunesekara, Surenthiraraj and Tilakaratne, 2019). Instead, Estate Tamils are forced to depend on trade unions – which are themselves seen as exploitative – for representation. The only solution available to them is to tap into the patronage networks of Sinhalese in nearby villages (for more details, see Gunesekara, Surenthiraraj and Tilakaratne, 2019). As the ETC are a minority, the Sri Lankan state has no incentive to legitimate its power to them. Thus, while the state fails to deliver a range of services to the ETC, representatives of the state feel little pressure to provide patronage to members of this community.

In Nepal, we found that the state oscillated between repression and co-option in relation to marginalised groups such as the Tharu and Madhesi. Since the Maoist insurgency, both the Tharu and Madhesi have increased their disruptive power, organising protests that, at times, have turned violent. The state has generally responded to these protests with repression. Formerly, the Tharu and Madhesi were not central to the political settlement, so the state did not need to legitimate its power to these groups through negotiation and concessions. However, narratives about the state have changed since the insurgency, with more groups demanding increased political representation. Recognising the need to legitimate its power to a wider set of groups, the Nepalese state has conceded to some demands. For instance, following concerted protests by Tharu groups, the government abolished the Kamaiya system, a form of bonded labour common in the Terai where people, usually Tharu, worked for landowners in return for some basic provisions such as food and shelter.

How does this finding compare with other research on state legitimacy?

An important element of Beetham's theory is that the state does not necessarily need to be legitimate to all citizens in order to maintain its power. Midgal makes a similar observation, arguing that a state can protect its authority by 'binding critical elements of the population to the state' (Migdal, 2001: 77). Ensuring the loyalty of this 'critical' sub-group prevents other competing groups from unsettling the state's power. These sub-groups can be described as the 'core legitimacy audience' (Mcloughlin, 2018).

In 'Escaping the Fragility Trap' (2018), moving from open conflict to sustainable peace is presented as a move from an exclusive political order to a more inclusive one.[6] This oversimplifies how states operate. In reality, states can increase inclusivity for some groups while increasing exclusivity for others, or introduce more inclusive measures, only to replace them with more exclusive measures at a later date.

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6   This is also a main argument made by Acemoglu and Robinson (2012).

4 Looking forward: working with legitimacy as a constructed process

This research indicates that the construction of state legitimacy is a dynamic process that can look very different in northern Pakistan from how it does in southern Nepal. It can also change over time in a specific context, as we see with the Swat Valley in Pakistan. This makes the task of supporting increased state legitimacy in post-conflict situations more complicated than is usually assumed.

For one, investing in basic services may not have any effect on people's perceptions of state legitimacy. Based on the findings from the first phase of SLRC, we argued that, if services were delivered in ways that aligned with people's norms and expectations, then state legitimacy could be strengthened (see Nixon and Mallett, 2017). This conclusion was shared by other researchers working on the link between services and state legitimacy (cf. Mcloughlin, 2014). Based on the latest research from SLRC, we now argue that, even if services are improved so that they align with people's norms and expectations, this may not have any effect on state legitimacy. In the Terai region in Nepal, even when people were satisfied with healthcare or education, their perceptions of state legitimacy were not necessarily more positive.

Where a basic service has become salient in the negotiation of state legitimacy, investing in that service may have an impact on state legitimacy, but the link between improvements in the service and changes in state legitimacy is likely to be indirect and contingent on a number of factors that may be beyond the control of a single donor-funded intervention. For example, in Pakistan, improving how lower-class people are treated when they access public healthcare will change the way many experience the state. Instead of experiencing it as disrespectful and discriminatory, positive interactions with healthcare staff could counteract narratives produced by the Taliban that the current Pakistani state is only for the rich. In this way, investing in healthcare in northern Pakistan could support the construction of state legitimacy. However, it will be challenging to incentivise healthcare workers in northern Pakistan to change their behaviour and norms of interaction within the timeframe of a typical donor-funded programme. Even if funding is available for a long-term programme that results in improvements in how lower-class citizens are treated in public hospitals and clinics, this may not be enough to counteract delegitimising narratives produced by militant groups. Militia groups

may be particularly skilled in crafting new narratives that reinterpret government initiatives as potentially dangerous for locals, or as ways to infiltrate local networks. Furthermore, there may be a core contested issue that will overshadow improvements in other areas if not addressed by the government. While a service can become salient in the negotiation of state legitimacy, it is unlikely to be the only state function that influences people's evaluation of the state. In this sense, there will never be one magic solution, or one service, that, if performing well, will lead to improved state legitimacy.

One assumption often made in strategies to support increased state legitimacy in conflict-affected regions is that increased inclusivity leads to improved state legitimacy. Our qualitative research indicates that this is not something we should take for granted. In Rajanganaya in Sri Lanka, the state's attempts to make public water provision more inclusive led to protests by paddy farmers, drawing on narratives of Sri Lankan national identity to protect the status quo.

Practitioners also often assume that the factors that would make a state legitimate in their eyes would also make it legitimate in the eyes of beneficiaries. For example, one of the intended outcomes of the DFID-funded Somalia Stability Fund is that the targeted institutions will be more legitimate and capable. Activities included actions to increase the inclusiveness of the District Administration, with greater representation of women. Increasing the representation of women in local and national governance structures is a laudable and worthwhile endeavour, but it might not necessarily lead to increased legitimacy of these institutions.

Despite these complexities and differences, there is some logic that can be identified in the process of negotiating legitimacy. Much of the dynamic of the construction of state legitimacy in a given context is connected with the political settlement, and how it has evolved over time.[7] By investing time in understanding the political settlement, many of the complexities of supporting state legitimacy can be identified. Below, we lay out some broad principles that can be applied to supporting state legitimacy in conflict-affected areas, based on a revised understanding of the link between services and state legitimacy.

4.1 Implications for policy-makers and practitioners

1 We need to move from understanding legitimacy as a transactional process whereby states perform according to people's expectations, and as a result people acquiesce to its power, to understanding legitimacy as a co-constructed process. With this revised understanding, state legitimacy becomes not just about fixing institutions to improve service delivery, but also about recognising power dynamics at different levels of state and society and the history of the formation of political settlements.

In our research on the link between services and state legitimacy, we found that narratives about the rightfulness of a political settlement can be linked to particular services. At the same time, services that (re)produce contested distribution arrangements within the political settlement can be used to support narratives that delegitimise the state.

Current approaches to political settlement analysis tend to emphasise the material ways in which groups are co-opted into accepting an authority (e.g. Kelsall, 2016). More recently, there has been a recognition of the non-material ways that groups can be co-opted into a political settlement. Phillips (2016) shows how, in Somaliland, a powerful discourse about the country's structural, temporal and physical proximity to war is used to co-opt groups into accepting the current political order, despite that order failing to provide basic services, including security. Kelsall acknowledges that the 'leadership may expend considerable efforts on an ideological strategy for inculcating a belief in the settlement's "naturalness" or "rightfulness" in which it is likely to enlist intellectuals and religious authorities among others' (Kelsall, 2018: 10).

The non-material ways that a political settlement can be maintained are key to understanding the link between services and state legitimacy. The narratives about services may be as important as the material benefits that different groups stand to gain from the provision or not of particular services. If a donor decides to invest in a service that is salient in the negotiation of legitimacy, it will be worthwhile paying

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7   See https://blogs.worldbank.org/dev4peace/why-we-need-rethink-our-understanding-state-legitimacy-address-fragility

attention, not only to how changes in the service alter the material gains for some groups (through classic impact evaluation), but also to the different narratives that develop about those changes. If particular changes to a service could work to counteract delegitimising narratives of the state, these changes should be prioritised. If certain changes threaten dominant groups, donors should consider investing in promoting narratives that justify those changes.

2   Instead of focusing on the process of service delivery and aiming to increase people's perceptions of fairness across all services, it may be more strategic for donors to identify which service or services are salient in the construction of legitimacy, and focus resources on addressing contested issues in the delivery of that service.

Of course, the salient service is likely to be a sensitive state function, such as land ownership and immigration control. Donors may need to allocate resources to basic services, such as education, healthcare and water provision, to lay the basis for a constructive relationship. One or more of these services may be salient in the construction of legitimacy, but even if they are not, investment in these areas remains critical for human development. Additional funding in a service that is salient in the construction of state legitimacy would need to be guided by problem-driven analysis and informed by ongoing political analysis, such as political settlement analysis.

3   Rather than designing interventions that aim to increase the inclusivity of services, a more fruitful approach may be to identify situations where the state is incentivised to co-opt rather than repress

groups, and work to support the transition from repressive strategies to co-option.

Our research shows that initiatives to increase the inclusivity of a service may be used by dominant groups to delegitimise the state and protect the current political settlement. We also found that states often oscillate between co-opting or working to include groups, and repressing groups, making initiatives to increase inclusivity subject to changing state priorities and strategy. While policy documents tend to oversimplify the transition from an exclusive political order to an inclusive one as a linear transition, political settlement theory has generally understood the transition from repressive responses to group demands to co-option through deal-making (cf. Cheng, Goodhand and Meehan, 2018). In this approach, states move from conflict to stability through elite groups striking deals and agreeing to curtail the violence of their members.

What current political settlement theory does not adequately capture is how narratives influence co-option and/or repression. In Nepal, the partial co-option of the Tharu through the banning of bonded labour would not have been possible without a change in the narrative about the Tharu that helped to change how the hill castes perceive them. Thus, it may be more useful to understand why, in certain circumstances, states work to co-opt a group, rather than repress it. Donors could then think about ways to further incentivise states to rely more on co-option than repression. This will, of course, require astute political analysis and productive relationships between donors and key state actors, and so will not be available as a strategy for all donors.

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Annex

Regression tables

In this annex are some of the regressions and indices that were used in the development of the argument presented in the paper. The tables capturing the state legitimacy index (SLI) in 6.1–6.3 come from data in the third wave of the SLRC survey, conducted in 2018 in Uganda, Nepal, and Pakistan. The tables thereafter in 6.4 and 6.5 are the regressions on perceptions of local and central government from the first and second waves of the SLRC survey conducted in five countries in 2012 and 2015.

The results from this same regression analysis of services and perceptions of government from the third round of the survey in 2018 are not presented here, as the SLI was used instead (and within it contains the perceptions of government data).

Annex Table 1: Nepal State Legitimacy Index

Results from regressing respondents' score on the state legitimacy index on a selection of variables. Statistically significant results are marked with a star *, with more stars reflecting a stricter level of statistical significance (* p<0.1 **p<0.05, ***p<0.01).

There are two sets of results on ethnicity for Nepal. After the wave 2 survey, it became clear that the ethnicity categories in the wave 1 and wave 2 survey instruments were not an accurate reflection of how people classified themselves. As a result, the wave 3 survey instrument included more nuanced categories.

State legitimacy index (Consent, Legality, Justification)	Ethnicity wave 1		Ethnicity wave 3	
	coefficient	p value	coefficient	p value
Dependency ratio	0.03	0.37	0.03	0.37
Any household (HH) member in own cultivation	-0.05	0.38	-0.05	0.38
Any HH member in casual labour (any)	-0.05	0.45	-0.04	0.51
Any HH member in selling goods	0.05	0.35	0.06	0.28
Any HH member in own business	0.04	0.45	0.05	0.34
Any HH member in private sector work (any)	0.06	0.28	0.07	0.21
Number of livelihood activities	0.01	0.78	0.00	0.91
Any internal migrant	-0.05	0.36	-0.05	0.38
Any international migrant	-0.01	0.83	-0.02	0.78
Did your household receive any remittances in the past three years?	0.07**	0.05	0.07*	0.07
Natural log of Morris Index	0.02	0.38	0.02	0.52
Coping strategies index	-0.00	0.44	-0.00	0.43
Has anyone in your household experienced a natural shock in the past three years?	0.03	0.48	0.03	0.52
Has anyone in your household experienced a health shock in the past three years?	0.04	0.40	0.04	0.38
Has anyone in your household experienced an economic shock in the past three years?	0.03	0.50	0.04	0.45
Did anyone from your household experience earthquake?	-0.04	0.35	-0.04	0.35

Reconstructing our understanding of the link between services and state legitimacy

State legitimacy index (Consent, Legality, Justification)	Ethnicity wave 1		Ethnicity wave 3	
	coefficient	p value	coefficient	p value
Number of shocks (earthquake excluded)	-0.02	0.35	-0.02	0.38
Number of crimes	-0.06*	0.09	-0.07*	0.09
In the last three years has there been fighting in this area?	-0.09**	0.02	-0.09**	0.02
Feels safe in village	0.03	0.61	0.04	0.49
Feels safe going out of village	0.05	0.27	0.05	0.26
Household size	-0.04*	0.05	-0.03*	0.09
Household size squared	0.00**	0.02	0.00**	0.04
How long does it take to get to the nearest health clinic (in minutes)?	-0.00	0.34	-0.00	0.30
Do you need to pay official fees for the service?	-0.05	0.28	-0.05	0.29
Do you need to pay informal payments for using the service?	0.06	0.23	0.07	0.13
Government runs health centre (ref = anyone else)	0.03	0.49	0.03	0.49
Satisfied overall with health centre (binary)	-0.00	0.97	0.00	0.95
How long does a return journey to the drinking water source take?	-0.00	0.71	-0.00	0.67
I11==Tube well	-0.02	0.73	-0.01	0.80
I11_6== River, well, bottled, other	0.04	0.58	0.05	0.54
Do you have to pay for drinking water?	-0.01	0.83	-0.01	0.81
Is your drinking water clean and safe?	0.08*	0.09	0.08*	0.09
Government provides water (ref = anyone else)	-0.01	0.87	-0.01	0.79
Received social protection in last year	-0.00	0.97	0.00	0.96
Received livelihood assistance in last year	0.06*	0.08	0.07*	0.07
Number of problems with services	-0.01	0.71	-0.01	0.74
Number of grievance mechanisms known about	0.01	0.48	0.01	0.43
Number of meetings known about	0.01	0.55	0.01	0.57
Number of services consulted about	0.02	0.41	0.02	0.33
Respondent gender fixed wave 1	-0.09**	0.03	-0.09**	0.02
Respondent education = Read/write or primary	-0.05	0.23	-0.05	0.17
Respondent education = Secondary or SLC passed	-0.11*	0.06	-0.12**	0.03
Respondent education = Higher than SLC	-0.05	0.52	-0.07	0.34
Respondent age fixed in wave 1	-0.00	0.51	-0.00	0.63
Respondent age fixed in wave 1 squared	0.00	0.62	0.00	0.77
Ethnicity fixed at wave 1= Janajati	-0.03	0.42		
Ethnicity fixed at wave 1= Dalit	-0.07	0.28		
Ethnicity fixed at wave 1= Madhesi	0.03	0.74		
Ethnicity fixed at wave 1= Muslim	-0.09	0.53		
Ethnicity fixed at wave 1= Other	0.05	0.67		
Ethnicity fixed at wave 3= Hill Janjati/Adivasi			-0.05	0.35
Ethnicity fixed at wave 3= Hill Dalit			-0.13*	0.08
Ethnicity fixed at wave 3= Terai/ Madhesi Janjati/ Adivasi			-0.04	0.54
Ethnicity fixed at wave 3= Terai/ Madhesi Dalit			-0.16	0.19
Ethnicity fixed at wave 3= Musalman			0.01	0.96
Ethnicity fixed at wave 3= Marwadi/ Bengali/ Ounjabu (Sikh)/ Jain (Balung) = 0,			-	-
Ethnicity fixed at wave 3= Other			-0.24*	0.06

State legitimacy index (Consent, Legality, Justification)	Ethnicity wave 1		Ethnicity wave 3	
	coefficient	p value	coefficient	p value
Religion = Muslim	-0.04	0.77	-0.16	0.36
Religion = Buddhist	0.00	0.98	0.02	0.82
Religion = Christian	-0.05	0.66	-0.02	0.84
Religion = Kirat	0.07	0.33	0.08	0.32
Religion = None = 0,	-	-	-	-
Religion = Mixed	-0.25***	0.01	-0.26**	0.01
Religion = Other	-0.05	0.69	-0.01	0.95
Female headed household fixed wave 1	0.03	0.55	0.03	0.48
District = Rolpa	-0.16**	0.01	-0.15**	0.03
District = Bardiya	-0.00	1.00	0.01	0.90
Urban rural fixed wave 1	-0.22***	0.00	-0.22***	0.00
Displaced during conflict 1996–2006	0.15**	0.03	0.15**	0.03
Moved to different house or village between waves	-0.00	0.99	-0.01	0.92
Constant	5.22***	0.00	5.21***	0.00
Observations	498		498	
R-squared	0.31		0.31	
r2	0.308		0.312	

Annex Table 2: Uganda State Legitimacy Index

Results from regressing respondents' score on state legitimacy index on a selection of variables. Significant results are marked with a star *, with more stars reflecting a stricter level of statistical significance (* p<0.1 **p<0.05, ***p<0.01).

State legitimacy index (Consent, Legality, Justification)

	coefficient	p value
Gender of respondent	-0.01	0.83
Age of the respondent	0.01***	0.00
Education level of the respondent = 1, Primary school	0.05	0.34
Education level of the respondent = 2, Secondary school	0.02	0.83
Education level of the respondent = 3, Higher education	0.04	0.62
Dependency Ratio (number of children and elderly in HH compared to adults)	0.05**	0.03
Total number of livelihood activities engaged in the HH	0.03	0.27
Casual labour - agriculture activities	0.04	0.52
Casual labour - non-agriculture activities	-0.02	0.71
Any business from your home, market or on the street	-0.09**	0.04
Any business from a shop workshop or building	0.05	0.45
Work for the central or local govt	0.06	0.31
Have a job which is not for the govt	-0.11	0.27
Any health related shocks	0.04	0.36
Revenue related shocks	-0.14	0.15
Any economic related shocks	-0.14***	0.00
Agriculture related shocks	0.13	0.16
Total number of crimes	-0.01***	0.00
Total number of shocks	0.01	0.14
Safe going around in the village (binary)	0.06	0.47
Safe going outside of the village (binary)	-0.02	0.85
Sub-region = 2, Acholi	0.31**	0.03
Household is in an urban area (base = rural)	-0.03	0.63
The household has been displaced due to the conflict	-0.21***	0.00
The household got relocated here due to diverse reasons	-0.08	0.23
Religion = 2, Muslim	0.03	0.87
Religion = 5, Other	-0.43***	0.00
Ethnicity = 2, Langi	0.15	0.27
Ethnicity = 4, Kumam	-0.28	0.12
Ethnicity = 7, Other	0.31	0.23
Female household head in wave 1	-0.06	0.24
Household size	-0.07**	0.05
Household size squared	0.00	0.11
How long does it take to reach the health centre?	-0.00	0.82
Do you need to pay official fees for using the health service?	-0.13*	0.06
Do you need to pay informal payments for using the health service?	-0.12**	0.04
Government-run health centre	-0.02	0.76

State legitimacy index (Consent, Legality, Justification)

	coefficient	p value
Length of a return journey to the drinking water source	0.00	0.11
Water source: tap/pipe water	-0.17**	0.02
Water source: unprotected spring	-0.08	0.15
Do you have to pay for drinking water?	-0.11**	0.04
Government responsible for the water source	0.07***	0.00
Overall satisfaction with health centre (binary)	0.07	0.24
Overall satisfaction with education services (binary)	0.13**	0.04
Government runs the primary school	-0.03	0.28
Is your drinking water clean and safe?	0.02	0.71
Received social protection transfers in the past year	0.09	0.10
Received livelihood assistance transfers in the past year	-0.09	0.12
For how many services did you have problems?	-0.05***	0.01
For how many services are you aware of a grievance mechanism?	0.01	0.48
How many community meetings have been held?	0.00	0.88
For how many services have you been consulted?	0.01	0.80
Log Morris Index	-0.03	0.40
Food insecurity	0.00	0.82
Constant	4.74***	0.00
Observations	451	
R-squared	0.32	
r2	0.324	

Annex Table 3: Pakistan State Legitimacy Index

Results from regressing respondents' score on state legitimacy index on a selection of variables. Significant results are marked with a star *, with more stars reflecting a stricter level of statistical significance (* $p<0.1$ **$p<0.05$, ***$p<0.01$).

State legitimacy index (Consent, Legality, Justification)

	coefficient	p value
Gender of respondent	-0.02	0.51
Age of the respondent	0.00	0.12
Education level of the respondent = 1, Primary school	0.04	0.28
Education level of the respondent = 2, Secondary school	0.01	0.67
Education level of the respondent = 3, Higher education	0.04	0.30
Education level of the respondent = 4, Madrahssa	-0.04	0.78
Dependency Ratio (number of children and elderly in HH compared to adults)	-0.00	0.85
Casual labour - agriculture activities	-0.01	0.89
Casual labour - non-agriculture activities	-0.03	0.40
Any business owned	-0.08	0.50
Skilled Labour	-0.13	0.07
Work for the central or local govt	-	-
Total number of livelihood activities engaged in the HH	0.04**	0.04
Any natural shock?	-0.14*	0.07
Any health-related shocks?	0.01	0.85
Any economic-related shocks?	0.01	0.72
Affected by an earthquake in last 3 years?	0.10	0.17
Total number of shocks	0.01	0.53
Total number of crimes	0.02	0.30
In the last 3 years has there been fighting in the area?	-0.06	0.12
Safe going around in the village (binary)	0.03	0.62
Safe going outside of the village (binary)	-0.05	0.43
Ethnicity wave 3 = 2, Gujar	-0.06	0.26
Ethnicity wave 3 = 3, Mian/Miagan	0.02	0.81
Ethnicity wave 3 = 4, Mullah/Mullian	-0.10**	0.04
Ethnicity wave 3 = 5, Paracha	0.01	0.89
Ethnicity wave 3 = 6, Sayyid	-0.08*	0.08
Ethnicity wave 3 = 7, Yousafzai	-0.00	0.95
Union council in wave 1 = 2, Lal Qila	0.05	0.10
Union council in wave 1 = 3, Charbagh	0.15***	0.00
Union council in wave 1 = 4, Baidara	0.14***	0.00
Union council in wave 1 = 5, Bar Abakhel	0.19***	0.00
Rural household	-0.05	0.14
The household has been displaced due to the conflict	-0.01	0.83
Relocated house or village between waves	0.07	0.23
Female household head	-0.23**	0.03
Household size	-0.02**	0.04
Household size squared	0.00*	0.09

State legitimacy index (Consent, Legality, Justification)

	coefficient	p value
How long does it take to reach the health centre?	0.00	0.81
Do you need to pay official fees for using the health service?	0.04	0.15
Do you need to pay informal payments for using the health service?	-0.04	0.55
Overall satisfaction with education services (binary)	0.03	0.21
Government runs the primary school	-0.03	0.50
Government-run health centre	0.05*	0.07
Overall satisfaction with health centre (binary)	0.07***	0.01
Length of a return journey to the drinking water source	0.00	0.63
Water source: tube well or borehole	0.08**	0.01
Water source: piped water inside house	0.04	0.27
Do you have to pay for drinking water?	-0.05	0.13
Is your drinking water clean and safe?	0.07	0.10
Government responsible for the water source	0.06**	0.05
Received social protection in last year	0.02	0.35
Received livelihood assistance in last year	0.07	0.39
Number of problems with services	-0.05***	0.00
Number of grievance mechanisms known about	0.02***	0.00
Number of meetings known about	0.01	0.20
Number of services consulted about	0.03*	0.09
Natural log of Morris Index	0.01	0.53
Coping strategies index	0.00**	0.02
Constant	4.62***	0.00
Observations	850	
R-squared	0.22	
r2	0.219	

Annex Table 4: Perceptions of local government – regression results from rounds 1 and 2 of the SLRC survey

Results from regressing changes in perceptions of local government between rounds 1 (carried out in 2012) and 2 (carried out in 2015–16) of the survey on a selection of variables. Significant results are marked with a star *, with more stars reflecting a stricter level of statistical significance (*p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01).

	Extent to which local gov decisions reflect my priorities	Fixed effects				
		Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Demographics	Household size	−0.01 0.0 (squared)	0.03 0.0 (squared)	0.06 0.0 (squared)	−0.02 0.0 (squared)	−0.06
	Dependency ratio	0.02	0.01	−0.02	0	0.2
Livelihood	Any household member in own cultivation	−0.09	0.08	−0.07	0.05	−1.83*
	Any household member in casual labour	−0.08	0.07	0.04	0.06	−0.27
	Any household member in selling goods	0.02	−0.01			
	Any household member in own business	−0.11**		0.01		−0.79***
	Any household member in private sector work	−0.10*	0	0.02 (private or public)	−0.05 (private/public)	0.35
	Number of livelihood activities	0.09**	−0.01	0.02	0.10 −0.04 (squared)	0.5 −0.04 (squared)
	Natural log of Morris Index	0.07	0.07*	0.02	0.05*	0.04
	Coping strategies index	−0.03	0	0	0	−0.05**
Migration	Any internal migrant	0.06	−0.06	−0.04	−0.04	1.85**
	Any international migrant	0.02	0.05		−0.10	1.47**
	Did your household receive any remittances in the past three years?	−0.01**	−0.14		0.04	−1.87*

	Extent to which local gov decisions reflect my priorities	Fixed effects				
		Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Shocks	Environmental shock	0.03	–0.11	0.03		1.01**
	Health shock or death in the family	–0.04	0.03	–0.01		0.46
	Economic shock	0.11***	–0.08	0.01	0	–0.62**
	Number of shocks	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.02 (number shocks) 0.03 (idiosyncratic) –0.06 (exogenous)	0.01
	Number of crimes	0.02	–0.03 (crime rate at the UC level (log))	0.09 (any crime) 0.02** (% households experiencing crime, by region)		0.00.01 (serious crimes)
	In the last three years has there been fighting in this area?	0.01		–0.11		
Safety	Feels safe in village	–0.03	–0.37 (neighbourhood safety rate at the UC level (log))	–0.1	0.03	0.29
	Feels safe going out of village	0.05	0.22 (outside village safety rate at the UC level (log))	0		–0.33
Health centre	How long does it take to get to the nearest health clinic (in minutes)?	0.00**	0	0	0.00**	0
	Do you need to pay official fees for the service?	–0.05	–0.17***		–0.03 (official or informal)	0.19
	Do you need to pay informal payments for using the service?	0.05	0.09	–0.09		–0.25
	Government runs health centre (ref = anyone else)	0	0.04	–0.14*	0.05 (private)	0.23
	Satisfied overall with health centre (binary)	0.03	–0.05	0.07	0.09**	0.48*

	Extent to which local gov decisions reflect my priorities	Fixed effects				
		Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Water	How long does a return journey to the drinking water source take?	0.00	0	0	0	0
	Do you have to pay for drinking water?	0.01	0.1	–0.1	–0.15**	0.27
	Is your drinking water clean and safe?	–0.05	–0.03	–0.07	–0.07	0.33
	Who provides/maintains water?	0.14** (gov) ref = anyone else	–0.08 (gov) 0 (NGO) 0.1 (community) ref = self	0.14 (gov) ref = anyone else	0.03 (Self) –0.25*** (NGO) ref = gov	0.53 (gov) 0.3 (private) 0.66* (community) –0.13 (NGO)
SP	Received social protection in last year	–0.05	0.15*	–0.03 (social protection or livelihood assistance)	–0.02	–1.37***
	Received livelihood assistance in last year	0.03	–0.06		–0.01	0.35
Participation	Number of problems with services	–0.01	–0.06***	0.04	0.01	–0.17**
	Number of grievance mechanisms known about	0.02**	0.03		–0.02*	0.12*
	Number of meetings known about	0.03*	0.04	0.0 (known) –0.01 (attended)	0.01	0.36***
	Number of services consulted about	0.01			0.07***	0.03 (RE)
	Constant	0.28	0.74	–0.88**	0.39	–1.24**

	Random effects				
Extent to which local gov decisions reflect my priorities	Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Respondent gender	–0.02	–0.18***	0.01	0.02	0.16
Respondent education	0.04** (literate/ primary) 0.04 (secondary) 0.07* (higher than SLC)	0.02 (primary) 0.02 (secondary) –0.04 (tertiary) –0.03 (Madrassa)	–0.01 (years)	0.07 (literate/primary) 0.07 (secondary) –0.04 (tertiary)	0.02
Respondent age fixed in wave 1	0.0 0.0 (squared)		0	0.01 0.0 (squared)	–0.01
Ethnicity	0.04** (Janajati/ indigenous) 0.05 (Dalit) –0.01 (Madhesi) –0.03 (Muslim) 0.05 (Other)		0.07 (Tembo) 0.01 (Other)ref = Shi	–0.12** (Sinhala Mixed/Other) 0.02 (Sri Lankan Muslim) ref = Sri Lankan/Indian Origin Tamil	
District	–0.05* (Rolpa) 0.01 (Bardiya) ref = Ilam	0.09*** (Swat)	–0.18*** (Nzibira) –0.50*** (Bunyakiri) ref = Nyangezi	0.16*** (Jaffna) 0.06 (Trincomalee) ref = Mannar	0.08 (Lango)
Urban location in wave 1	–0.03	0.05		–0.10*** (rural)	0.09
Displaced historically	0.0 (1996–2006)	0.02 (2007–2009)	–0.05	–0.05 (1990–2000) 0.03 (2001–2005) –0.01 (2006–2009) 0.03 (After 2009) ref = pre–1990	0.29**
Moved to different house or village between waves	0.00			0.18**	–0.04
	0.15	–1.10*	–0.50***	0.19	–1.57
Observations in random effects model	4,376	2,213	1262	2,021	2,225
Observations in fixed effects model	2,688	1,667	886	1,213	1,384
R–squared	0.673	0.827	0.76	0.65	0.233

Annex Table 5: Perceptions of central government – regression results from rounds 1 and 2 of the SLRC survey

Results from regressing changes in perceptions of central government between rounds 1 (carried out in 2012) and 2 (carried out in 2015/16) of the survey on a selection of variables. Significant results are marked with a star *, with more stars reflecting a stricter level of statistical significance (*p<0.1 **p<0.05, ***p<0.01).

		Fixed effects				
	Extent to which central gov decisions reflect my priorities	Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Demographics	Household size	0.02 0.00 (squared)	0.03	0.04	–0.04 0.0 (squared)	–0.03
	Dependency ratio	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.09
Livelihood	Any household member in own cultivation?	–0.05	0.1	–0.03	–0.01	0.26
	Any household member in casual labour?	–0.08	0	–0.02	–0.06	–0.35
	Any household member in selling goods?	0.04	0.04			
	Any household member in own business?	–0.04		–0.04		–0.14
	Any household member in private sector work?	0.01	0.08	–0.06 (private or public)	–0.05 (private or public)	0.56
	Number of livelihood activities	0.04	0.01	0.06	0.04 0.00 (squared)	0.98*** –0.09** (sq)
	Natural log of Morris Index	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.21
	Coping strategies index	0.02	0	0	0	–0.02
Migration	Any internal migrant?	0.06	0.03	–0.09	–0.14***	13.9
	Any international migrant?	0.03	0.09		–0.09	0.35
	Did you household receive any remittances in the past three years?	–0.01	–0.07		–0.05	–1.82***

		Fixed effects				
	Extent to which central gov decisions reflect my priorities	Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Shocks	Environmental shock	0.00	–0.04	0.05		0.14
	Health shock or death in the family	0.01	–0.02	0.05		–0.18
	Economic shock	0	–0.20**	0.09	0 (DS division experienced inflation in last 3 years)	–0.44*
	Number of shocks (earthquake excluded)	0	0.04	–0.02	–0.01 (number shocks)–0.13** (exogenous)0.06 (idiosyncratic)	0.11
	Number of crimes	0.02	–0.07 (Crime rate at the UC level (log))	0.08 (any crime) 0.02** (% households experiencing crime, by region)		–0.03 –0.04 (serious crimes)
	In the last three years has there been fighting in this area?	0.02		–0.06		
Safety	Feels safe in village	–0.01	–0.22 (Neighbourhood safety rate at the UC level (log))	–0.06	–0.12	0.44
	Feels safe going out of village	0.02	0.3 (outside village safety rate at the UC level (log))	–0.06		–0.27
Health centre	How long does it take to get to the nearest health clinic (in minutes)?	0	0.0	0	0	0
	Do you need to pay official fees for the service?	–0.10**	–0.18***		0.04 (official or informal)	–0.04
	Do you need to pay informal payments for using the service?	0.10**	0.01	0.05		–0.24
	Government runs health centre (ref = anyone else)	–0.02	0.03	–0.17**	0.02 (private)	0.43
	Satisfied overall with health centre (binary)	0.03	–0.03	0.06	0.02	0.33

	Extent to which central gov decisions reflect my priorities	Fixed effects				
		Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Water	How long does a return journey to the drinking water source take?	0.00	0.0	0	0	0
	Do you have to pay for drinking water?	0	0.03	−0.06	0.12	0.31
	Is your drinking water clean and safe?	−0.02	0.03	−0.11	0.09	0.12
	Government provides water (ref = anyone else)	0.12**	−0.15 (gov) 0.01 (NGO) −0.02 (community)	0.37***	0.08 (self) −0.07 (NGO) ref = gov	0.92** (gov) 0.52 (private) 1.09*** (community) 0.54 (NGO)
SP	Received social protection in last year	−0.02	0.02	−0.07 (social protection or livelihood assistance)	0.02	0.06
	Received livelihood assistance in last year	0.06	0.01		0.01	0.37
Participation	Number of problems with services	0	−0.02	0.02	−0.02	−0.04
	Number of grievance mechanisms known about	0.02***	0.01		0.04***	0.03
	Number of meetings known about	0.02	0.03	0.0 (known) −0.02 (attended)	0.01	0.16**
	Number of services consulted about	0.03			0.03*	−0.07 (RE)
	Constant	0.07	−0.06	−1.30**	0.25	−1.74***

Extent to which central gov decisions reflect my priorities	Random effects				
	Nepal (Ever)	Pakistan (Ever)	DRC (Ever)	Sri Lanka (Completely/ to a large extent)	Uganda (Ever)
Respondent gender	–0.04**	–0.03	–0.02	–0.02	0.1
Respondent education	0.0 (literate/ primary) –0.01 (Secondary) 0.02 (Higher than SLC)	–0.02 (literate/ primary) 0.03 (secondary) –0.04 (tertiary) –0.06* (Madrassa)	–0.01 (years)	0.10* (literate/ primary) 0.07 (secondary) –0.01 (tertiary)	0
Respondent age fixed in wave 1	0.00 0.00 (squared)		0	0.00 0.00 (squared)	0
Ethnicity	0.05*** (Janajati/ indigenous) 0.06* (Dalit) 0.05 (Madhesi) 0.01 (Muslim) 0.10** (Other) ref = Brahmin/ Chhetri		0.10*(tembo) 0.0 (Other)ref = Shi	0.17*** (Sinhala Mixed/Other) –0.05 (Sri Lankan Muslim) ref = Sri Lankan/Indian Origin Tamil	
District	–0.03 (Rolpa) –0.09*** (Bardiya) ref = Ilam	0.16*** (Swat) ref = Lower Dir	–0.13** (Nzibira) –0.51*** (Bunyakiri) ref = Nyangezi	0.14*** (Jaffna) 0.05 (Trincomalee) ref = Mannar	0.29** (Lango)
Urban location in wave 1	0.01	0.01		–0.05 (rural)	0.18
Displaced historically	0.02 (1996–2006)	0.03 (2007–2009)	–0.07*	–0.07** (1990–2000) –0.02 (2001–2005) –0.05 (2006–2009) 0.02 (After 2009) ref = pre–1990	0.17
Moved to different house or village between waves	0.02		0.03	0.05	0.11
Constant	0.14	–0.13	–0.36*	0.16	–4.03
Observations in random effects model	4,080	2,138	1,255	1,925	2,163
Observations in fixed effects model	2,594		883	1,188	1,368
R–squared	0.69	0.847	.	0.68	0.17

Cover photo: DFID/Russell Watkins.
A doctor with the International Medical Corps examines a patient at a mobile health clinic in Pakistan.