

**The NHRI Nepal Joint Submission for
The Fourth Cycle Universal Periodic Review of Nepal
January 2026**



Submitted by



National Human Rights Commission, Nepal (NHRCN)

National Women Commission(NWC)



National Dalit Commission(NDC)

Submitted to

The United Nations Human Rights Council

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FOREWARD

It is my great pleasure to present “The NHRI Nepal Joint Submission for The Fourth Cycle Universal Periodic Review of Nepal”, which assesses the country’s human rights progress since the third cycle review in January 2021. This report evaluates implementation status of past UPR recommendations provided to Nepal while highlighting both achievements and ongoing challenges in safeguarding human rights.

The National Human Rights Commission of Nepal (NHRCN) has collaborated closely with the National Women Commission (NWC) and the National Dalit Commission (NDC) to ensure this report is comprehensive, evidence-based, and inclusive. To capture diverse perspectives, NHRCN conducted extensive consultations at the national, provincial, district and local levels. These efforts prioritized Nepal’s obligations under core UN Human Rights Instruments. This report has been meticulously prepared to ensure factual accuracy, serving as a tool for transparency, accountability, and advocacy. It reflects our commitment to upholding human rights, and ensuring that the concern of human rights in Nepal are heard in the global discourse.

I commend the commitment of the Government of Nepal in aligning the Sustainable Development Goals and the National Human Rights Action Plan with past UPR recommendations. On behalf of the NHRCN, I extend my deepest gratitude to Hon. Dr. Surya Prasad Sharma Dhungel; thematic commissioner for UPR, the Commissioners, Secretary, UPR Committee members, and the report drafting team for their dedication. I am grateful towards NWC, NDC, government agencies, civil society organizations and human rights defenders, for their valuable inputs supporting the preparation of report.

I look forward to engaging in meaningful dialogue during the UPR process and to collaborating with all stakeholders to ensure that human rights remain at the forefront of national development. Furthermore, I trust that this UPR Report will serve as a meaningful resource for the Government of Nepal, NGOs, and all stakeholders working to advance human rights in Nepal.

Top Bahadur Magar

Chairperson

National Human Rights Commission of Nepal

List of Abbreviations

ADB: Asian Development Bank Institute

APF: Asia Pacific Forum

APIS: Agricultural Price Information System

BHR: Business and Human Rights

BHR-NAP: National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

CEFM: Child, Early, and Forced Marriage

CERD: International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

CoM: Council of Ministers

COPD: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

CPA: Comprehensive Peace Accord

CSO: Civil Society Organizations

DOFE: Department of Foreign Employment

DWSSM: Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management

DPRP: Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Programme

ECT: Electroconvulsive Therapy

ESCR: Economic Social and Cultural Rights

FY: Fiscal Year

GBV: Gender Based Violence

GESI: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

GIWMS: Government's Integrated Website Management System

GLOF: Glacial Lake Outburst Flood

GoN: Government of Nepal

HOR: House of Representatives

HRDs: Human Rights Defenders

ICT: Information Communication and Technology

ILO: International Labor Organization

LGBTQI: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex

MMR: Maternal Mortality Rate

MoALD: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development

MoEST: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

MoF: Ministry of Finance

MoFE: Ministry of Forest and Environment

MoHA: Ministry of Home Affairs

MoLCPA: Ministry of Land Management, Cooperative and Poverty Alleviation

MoLESC: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

MoUD: Ministry of Urban Development

MoWCSC: Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens

MSP: Minimum Support Price

NAP: National Action Plan

NCRC: National Child Rights Council

NHRCN: National Human Rights Commission Nepal

NHRAP: National Human Rights Action Plan

NDC: National Dalit Commission

NLC: National Land Commission

NPM: National Preventive Mechanism

NPR: Nepalese Rupee

NWC: National Women Commission

OAG: Office of the Attorney General

OCMC: One Stop Crisis Management Center

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OHCHR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

OPCAT: Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture

OPMCM: Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers

PCI: Per Capita Income

PEIP: President Educational Improvement Programme

PHMIS: Poor Household Management Information System

PM2.5 : Particulate Matter \leq 2.5 micrometers in diameter

PMEP: Prime Minister Employment Programme

PWDs: Persons with Disabilities

SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

SC: Supreme Court

SESP: School Education Sector Plan

SSA: Social Security Allowance

SSF: Social Security Fund

TJ: Transitional Justice

TRC: Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UPR: Universal Periodic Review

UNHRC: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNODC: United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime

USD: United States Dollar

WASH: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Master Plans

WHO: World Health Organization

WHRDs: Women Human Rights Defenders

(a) Background

1. The NHRCN, an independent constitutional body established under Article 248 of the Constitution of Nepal, is mandated to respect, protect and promote human rights.¹ Accredited with “A” status since its establishment, the NHRCN complies with the Paris Principles. The NWC² is mandated for protection and promotion of women rights, monitoring and integrating gender equality norms into mainstream development endeavors. The NDC³ is responsible for protection and promotion of *Dalit* rights, and facilitates the government for ending caste-based discrimination and for empowerment of the *Dalit* community. The NHRCN, NWC and NDC are constitutional bodies. This submission, prepared for Nepal’s fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR), covers developments from 2021 to early 2025. Building on the past engagement of NHRCN, NWC, and NDC in the UPR process, this report reviews the implementation of third-cycle recommendations, highlights key human rights issues, and offers evidence-based recommendations to strengthen Nepal’s human rights framework and international commitments.

(b) Methodology

2. The NHRCN led a committee to draft this report by coordinating consultations and monitoring across all seven provinces, actively engaging and sharing information with government and non-government stakeholders at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. As such, nationwide consultations included diverse participants, comprising government bodies, security forces, legislatures, political parties, NGOs, CSOs, marginalized groups and media. The report draws on NHRCN, NDW and NDC’s annual reports, publications, response from GoN with regard to Government’s NHRAP and UPR implementation plan, Government reports/surveys and monitoring findings. The NHRCN led report writing committee was formed with a mandate to hold consultations with stakeholders, share and update information and coordinate with entities including NWC and NDC.

¹ Constitution of Nepal, Art, 249 (NHRCN),

² Constitution of Nepal, Art. 252, 253,254 (NWC)

³ Constitution of Nepal, Art. 255, 256, 257 (NDC)

(c) NHRCN, NWC, NDC

3. Regarding Goal 16 of SDGs and Paris Principles, NHRCN has drafted a NHRC Bill⁴ and regulation. The proposed NHRC Bill empowers the NHRCN to oversee human rights compliance across all government levels and private entities. The Bill guarantees comprehensive victim support.⁵ It requires the OAG to pursue legal action on the Commission's serious violation findings. A separate Bill regarding the staff of the NHRCN has been sent to the OPMCM. NHRCN employees do not enjoy terms and services at par with other civil servants. Currently, the updated NHRCN organogram is forwarded to the MoF. NHRCN coordinates with thematic constitutional commissions in accordance with Guidelines on Human Rights Cooperation and Coordination, 2013 and various other agencies. In 2024, APF, UNDP and OHCHR conducted a capacity assessment of the NHRCN.

4. NWC and NDC are functioning with their Office Bearers and officials but the resource provided to the commission is still inadequate. *The GoN should prioritize parliamentary approval of both the NHRC Bill and the legislation concerning NHRCN staff as earliest as possible, and endorse the updated organogram ensuring independence and autonomy of NHRCN. GoN should provide adequate resources to all other constitutional bodies including NWC and NDC.*

(d) Implementation of NHRC recommendations and strengthening national human rights mechanisms including NHRIs

5. As the term of the 5th National Human Rights Action Plan (2020-25) is coming to an end, the Sixth National Human Rights Action Plan is in the drafting phase. Reviewing the implementation of 5th NHRAP, NHRCN monitoring revealed insufficient awareness

⁴ Currently, NHRCN is operating under National Human Rights Commission Act, 2012.

⁵ Including compensation, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. The NHRC bill authorizes the Commission to issue binding directives to institutions found violating human rights and provides for psychosocial counseling for affected individuals and families and immediate interim relief for urgent cases.

among the local government regarding the plan itself. The formation of the NHRAP committee at the local level remains a challenge while resource constraints have hindered effective implementation.

6. NHRCN has made 1,446 recommendations since its establishment. Although GoN has formed a committee to review and report on NHRCN recommendations,⁶ NHRCN records show no recommendations to have been fully implemented over the past four years.⁷ Data shows 13.66% of the recommendations have been fully implemented, 35.09% partially implemented, and 51.23% of the recommendations are yet to be implemented. The number of recommendations not fully implemented has increased by 5.73%. Victims are deprived from receiving compensation as recommended by NHRCN for 4 to 5 years. *The GoN should strengthen the implementation of NHRCN recommendations, along with those from other thematic constitutional commissions, and establish a transparent, government-managed compensation fund for victims of human rights violations as recommended by NHRCN.*

(e) Transitional Justice

7. While the GoN has taken steps to advance the peace process by reconstituting the TRC⁸, transitional justice process continues to face challenges in implementation and credibility as many victim organizations and CSOs are opposing the appointment process of commission members and expressed reservations against newly formed bodies.⁹ The exclusion of victims from key decision-making processes undermines trust and raises questions about the commission's ability to deliver a victim-centered approach. While

⁶ Under the initiative of the OPMCM, a committee including the representatives from MoHA, NHRCN, MoF, and security forces to implement NHRCN recommendations was formed. The formation decision is dated July 20, 2022. Relevant correspondence was sent to the OPMCM and MoF in this regard. Nepal's budget for FY 2025/26 includes a fund to implement this initiative.

⁷ Complaint-related decisions made by the commission in the FY 2024/25, NHRCN, February, 2025, Available at: [□.pdf](#)

⁸ Regarding Goal 16 of SDGs, the GoN amended the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act, 2071, with the third amendment (2024) now in effect to ensure meaningful victim participation and facilitating logical conclusion. Second phase of the implementation plan related to UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 has been introduced to include victims of sexual violence in the justice process, its implementation has not been very effective. Matters such as ensuring witness protection and establishing mechanisms for grievance redressal have not been implemented.

⁹ TJ Commissions have now been formed. During the formation process, dissatisfaction was expressed over the shortlisted candidates on 2082/1/28 (May 10, 2025).

UPR recommendations stressed on the need to expedite investigations into conflict-era GBV, key concerns remain unaddressed.¹⁰ These include doubts over the meaningful participation of victims, insufficient implementation of UNSC Resolutions, weak witness protection and grievance redress mechanisms. Moreover, adequate resources and political commitment should be ascertained.¹¹

8. The TRC faces criticism from victim groups for failing to ensure confidentiality and gender sensitivity. The NHRCN published a report entitled "*National Human Rights Commission and Transitional Justice*," compiling its recommendations and perspectives on TJ since the signing of the CPA¹². NHRCN is consultatively finalizing its position paper regarding TJ.¹³ *Ensure meaningful participation of all sections of victims in the TJ process, free from political intervention.*

(f) Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)

Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

9. The government's "*Vishweshwar with the Poor*" programme reportedly contributed to increased income for impoverished families.¹⁴ Social operators under this initiative

¹⁰ Victims have criticized the formation of transitional justice commissions and rejected the process, citing a lack of transparency and inclusivity. They also report inadequate gender sensitivity and note that conflict-era human rights violations remain unaddressed, with no concrete outcomes yet.

¹¹ GoN has reportedly allocated NPR 1 billion in the budget for FY 2025/26. However, the availability of other resources remains uncertain.

¹² <https://www.nhrcnepal.org/uploads/publication/Transitional Justice and NHRC Nepal 2081.pdf>

¹³ NHRCN held consultations with stakeholders and has appointed a consultant to draft a position paper. Further discussions on June 20, 2025 organized by the NHRCN, revealed that while international actors support engagement with the commissions, some victims are cautiously participating by filing complaints.

¹⁴ Letter received from the MoLCPA in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. The programme focuses on the collection and mobilization of funds (*Akshayakosh*) on a monthly basis.

received capacity-building training, yet challenges persist, including insufficient capital funding, outdated beneficiary records, and low remuneration for administrators. NHRCN monitoring¹⁵ notes progress in basic drinking water and sanitation access but highlights a critical gap between water availability and safety.¹⁶ Regional income disparities remain a concern, reflecting broader inequalities.¹⁷ While provincial plans prioritize income growth, persistent gaps in service access and infrastructure quality highlights the need for socially inclusive development strategies to uplift marginalized communities.¹⁸ *The GoN should provide adequate financial support for poverty elimination programme backed by a centralized database for better outreach of targeted groups.*

Right to Food

10. Regarding Goal 2 of SDGs, Nepal's constitutional commitment to food security, enshrined in Article 36 and operationalized through complementary legislation¹⁹ has seen gradual implementation with regulations adopted on April 22, 2024. A total of 93,298 households have benefited from the agricultural production programme for self-reliance alongside the operation of local food storage systems in remote areas.²⁰ Initiatives of GoN include the drafting of the National Food Plan²¹ along with related programmes.²² But then, Nepal's food insecurity rate remains at 16.5% as of October 2024, with 4.81 million people especially in mountainous areas facing inadequate food access.²³ NHRCN

¹⁵ Monitoring of NHRCN in various provinces of Nepal namely Koshi, Gandaki and Lumbini Province.

¹⁶ Letter received from the MoHP in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN regarding UPR mid-term review. The "One Household, One Tap" programmes has expanded water access, with 34.6% using private taps and 29.8% relying on tube wells, benefiting 1,15,20,075 all over Nepal. Many local governments are preparing WASH master plans, but their implementation lacks investment. About 100 projects related to faecal sludge and wastewater treatment are implemented by the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management.

¹⁷ Relying on the facts from NHRCN Monitoring.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ The Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act, 2018.

²⁰ Letter received from the MoALD in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. Food godowns are being operated at the local level of remote areas in FY 2022/23 with 50% conditional grant benefitting 100 families in Sarlahi and 900 families in Jhapa.

²¹ In accordance with Rule 21 of the Regulations on the Food Right and Food Sovereignty Regulation 2024.

²² Targeted food security and assistance programmes have been implemented by setting nutritional and hygiene standards. Nutrition promotion programmes and nutritious vegetable farming are being carried out to secure food rights across the country.

²³ As of October 2024, 16.5% of the population is food insecure—0.9 percentage points higher than in March 2024, but 6.4% lower than the peak in April 2020. Approximately 4.81 million people have inadequate food consumption. While food prices remain generally stable, higher costs in mountain regions worsen access challenges. Households facing severe food insecurity account for 1.3%.

monitoring reveals transition toward climate-resilient farming practices²⁴ together with targeted initiatives for marginalized communities.²⁵ However, uneven implementation and resource disparities continue to limit effectiveness. *The GoN should finalize and operationalize the National Food Plan alongside targeted support for vulnerable farmers within a year.*

Right to Health

11. Information from GoN indicates progress in healthcare access.²⁶ However, the 2021 census shows the population with access to clean drinking water facilities limited to 25%.²⁷ Only 5% of Nepal's population has access to safely managed sanitation services.²⁸ Malnutrition remains a critical concern²⁹, with 25% of children under-five stunted and 19% underweight. NHRCN monitoring³⁰ highlights moderate progress in reaching marginalized groups³¹ with the need for equitable rural healthcare, better emergency services, and stronger sanitation investments.³² It showed uneven progress in maternal

²⁴ Widespread use of government subsidies (ranging from 50–100%) for inputs, irrigation, livestock, cold storage, and agro-industrial development is a national approach to support productivity, food self-sufficiency and commercialization.

²⁵ Programmes targeting marginalized and vulnerable communities, such as smallholder farmers and indigenous groups have signaled intent to promote inclusive agricultural growth nationwide.

²⁶ Letter received from the MoHP in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN regarding UPR mid-term review; 21% of the population enrolled in health insurance and 77% of households having health facilities within a 30-minute reach. 91.2% of children received 14 essential vaccines, 79% of children aged 12–23 months are universally immunized, and 80% of births were attended by skilled personnel. Over 622,000 pregnant women completed five rounds of vaccinations, and nearly 885,000 women accessed nutrition programmes.

²⁷ National Population and Housing Census, 2021

²⁸ National Population and Housing Census, 2021, The tap/piped water (inside and outside household premises combined) is the main source of drinking water for 57.0 percent of the total households (6,660,841). Other main sources of drinking water for households are well/hand pump 29.8%, jar/bottled water 4.6%, spout 3.9%, uncovered well/kuwa 2.1%, covered well/kuwa 1.5% and river/stream 0.4% of the total households. The 2021 census revealed a 4.5% gap in basic sanitation coverage. Nepal was declared an Open Defecation Free (ODF) country in 2019 but sanitation still remains a concern.

²⁹ The MMR stands at 151 per 100,000 live births, while the under-five mortality rate is 33 per 1,000 live births, with the majority of child deaths occurring in the first year.

³⁰ NHRCN Monitoring covering Koshi, Bagmati, Gandaki, and Lumbini Provinces.

³¹ Returnee migrants, GBV survivors, and low-income populations.

³² Koshi Province is progressing with hospital construction and a proposed 90% lab fee discount for vulnerable groups. All districts have primary hospitals, 15 offer 24/7 specialist care, and services include free cervical screening, adolescent care, infertility support, and migrant/GBV services. In Bagmati Province, free dialysis aided 8,044 patients, 67 pregnant women were airlifted, vaccines and financial aid reached thousands.

and child healthcare.³³ Immunization programmes and cervical cancer screenings are widespread, but quality control issues remain.³⁴ While leprosy training is ongoing, inadequate capacity and leprosy expertise among health personnel remains a concern.³⁵ NHRCN has made 6 policy recommendations to GoN on right to health from FY 2021/22 to FY 2024/25. NHRCN consultation indicates a gap between premium collection and claim regarding the health insurance scheme, hindering the health service. *The GoN should expand health insurance especially for rural and marginalized groups, strengthen nutrition programmes tackling child malnutrition. Adequate staffing and community engagement to improve diagnosis of leprosy is essential.*

Right to Education

12. Regarding Goal 4 and Goal 5 of the SDG, Nepal's Constitution and its complementary legislation³⁶ ensures the right to education. Government data shows a 76.3% literacy rate³⁷, with significant disparities (69.4% for women and 83.6% for men)³⁸. As of FY 2022/23, the PEIP programme is up with 75% physical and 53% financial progress.³⁹ But then, NHRCN monitoring indicates policy implementation gaps in school development and mid-day meal programmes⁴⁰. At just NPR 15 (\$0.11 USD) per day, the mid-day meal allowance is far too low to meet children's nutritional needs. There is unequal access and insufficient support for disabled students.⁴¹ Free education up to grade 12 is a good

³³ Despite progress in institutional deliveries and child mortality reduction, reproductive health challenges remain. Immunization and cervical cancer screenings are widespread but affected by quality issues. In provinces like Lumbini, there are problems of doctor shortages and poor facilities, limited access, extra costs, and cases of expired medicines at health camps.

³⁴ Lumbini Province faces challenges related to the availability of quality laboratories, with occasional inaccuracies in test reporting. Additionally, medicines prescribed by doctors are often not included in the health insurance scheme, which may hinder access to affordable treatment.

³⁵ Nepal Leprosy Fact Sheet 2025, Available at: [Nepal Leprosy Fact Sheet 2025](#)

³⁶ The Act relating to Compulsory and free education 2018, Regulation on Compulsory and Free Education 2020. Under this legislation, initiatives like SESP 2021–2030 are in place providing scholarships for 2.5 million students.

³⁷ National Population and Housing Census, 2021.

³⁸ As per Sixteenth Periodic Plan (FY2024/25 - FY 2028/29)

³⁹ Ten-Year School Education Sector Plan (SESP 2021–2030) covers 28,658 community schools.

⁴⁰ NHRCN Monitoring: While provinces like Koshi and Lumbini have improved facilities with clean water and science labs, mid-day meals often stop at Grade 5 or 6 except in targeted areas like Rapti (Bagmati), where they extend to Grade 12 for Chepang students.

⁴¹ NHRCN monitoring: Inclusive education is progressing, with Braille materials in Gandaki and vocational programmes in Lumbini and Gandaki. Scholarships support marginalized groups, but life-skills and vocational training remain limited. Koshi province has sent science teachers to remote schools.

initiative.⁴² However, there is also a notable gap between the curriculum and modern job skills, alongside the persistent issue of a high student dropout rate⁴³. Dalit scholarships overwhelmingly focus on basic education, with just 0.13% in higher education despite receiving 15% of the total budget.⁴⁴ *The GoN should raise the mid-day meal budget to combat malnutrition, expand resources for students with disabilities, implement school-level mentorship for at-risk students, and rebalance Dalit scholarships to better support higher and technical education.*

Right to Employment

13. Regarding Goal 8 of SDG, Article 33 and 34 of the Constitution guarantees Right to Employment. National Employment Policy 2015, ensures full and productive employment and decent work for all. GoN has enacted various laws and programmes⁴⁵ and ratified 11 ILO Conventions.⁴⁶ With the ongoing national programmes to address unemployment⁴⁷ significant gaps still persist. In the FY 2022/23, the PMEP provided jobs to only 17.6% (621,137) of its 3.5 million registered beneficiaries. Key policies, including the 16th Plan and a scheme to promote self-employment through subsidized loans have been deemed ineffective amidst low financial resources. While efforts are underway to integrate the informal sector into the contribution-based social security

⁴² *ibid.* Lumbini has introduced madrasa education and health programmes, and Chitwan (Bagmati) leads with fully free education up to Grade 12, including science. Despite constitutional guarantees of free education, many schools in Bagmati province (Makwanpur, Sindhuli) and Lumbini province still charge illegal fees. Infrastructure gaps persist, especially in remote areas lacking labs, ICT tools, and teaching materials.

⁴³ As per sixteenth periodic plan, secondary education (up to Class 12) completion rate is only 36.6 percent.

Available at:

https://giwmscdntwo.gov.np/media/pdf_upload/16TH%20PLAN%20English%20transaltion%202081%20final%20for%20web1_g75lujb.pdf

⁴⁴ Details of the Dalit student scholarships approved under the annual programme for fiscal year 2081/82. Available at: <https://moest.gov.np/content/13420/a-v-dalit-student-scholarship-details-sanctioned-under-the/>

⁴⁵ Right to Employment Act, 2018, Right to Employment Regulation, 2018, Sexual Harassment at Workplace Prevention Act, 2015, Labour Act 2017, Social Security Act 2017, Labour Regulation 2018, Labour Audits Criteria 2018, Prime-minister Employment Programme Manual 2075, Skill Development Procedure 2075.

⁴⁶ Available at:

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11200:0::NO:11200:P11200_COUNTRY_ID:103197. The Labor Act, 2017 provides equal pay for equal work, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/laboract2017nepal>

⁴⁷ Letter received from the OPMCM and MoLESC in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. The Prime Minister Employment Programme achieved 75.76% physical and 67.32% financial progress, with 6,21,137 individuals (17.6%) out of 35,31,555 registered beneficiaries receiving employment. 5% interest discount is available on loans in priority sectors. PMEP Operational Guideline-2018 was amended in January, 2022.

system,⁴⁸ only 32% of the population is currently covered by basic social security schemes in FY 2022/23.⁴⁹ NHRCN monitoring reveals implementation gaps in employment programmes.⁵⁰ *The GoN should ensure right to employment providing adequate employment opportunities to youth, along with reforming the PMEP's mechanism to reach the most vulnerable and adequately finance self-employment loan schemes.*

Right to Housing

14. As guaranteed by Article 37 of Nepal's Constitution, the Right to Housing Act, 2018 is in place to implement the right to housing. The state has rolled out programs like the *Janata Awas* and Safe Citizen Housing, making progress by constructing homes for marginalized communities.⁵¹ As of March 2025, 36,325 out of the targeted 55,970 houses have been built under the *Janata Awas* Programme.⁵² National Housing Policy 2011 and Plan 2014 is in place.⁵³ Emergency shelters have been established in disaster-prone areas with upgrading of houses and replacement of thatched roofs.⁵⁴ NHRCN monitoring shows the lack of a holistic approach in housing initiatives failing to integrate essential services like sanitation, water and electricity with significant implementation delays and beneficiaries

⁴⁸ Letter received from the MoLESC in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. Its formal implementation is planned from 2080/01/01.

⁴⁹ Sixteenth Periodic Plan (FY2024/25 - FY 2028/29)

⁵⁰ Key employment programmes like PMEP face poor targeting, low participation, and delays, while subsidized self-employment loans remain largely unimplemented. Skills training often lacks market alignment, follow-up, and inclusivity, with repeated training for the same individuals. Efforts are further hampered by budget delays, lack of training centers, and underuse of skills from returnee migrants. Gandaki has launched a 100-day job programme in all 85 local levels and enrolled 35,000 establishments in social security, with formal employment at 41.5%. Lumbini's FY 2081–2082 policies focus on agro-based industries, with a provincial employment portal and programmes targeting poor, disabled, and elderly households.

⁵¹ Letter received from MoUD in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. Over 7,100 houses for Dalits and Muslims built in Koshi Province, also developing disaster-resilient settlements in Karnali.

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ *ibid.* This policy aims to increase the production of appropriate, safe, and environmentally friendly housing for all income groups and to upgrade existing housing.

⁵⁴ *ibid.* Under the Integrated Modern Safe Settlement Programme, 11 emergency shelters have been constructed across different parts of the country to provide immediate temporary housing to those displaced by natural disasters. In the current fiscal year, emergency shelters have been constructed in Jaleswar Municipality of Mahottari, Tilathi Koiladi of Saptari, Tilagufa Municipality of Kalikot, and Chandan Nath Municipality of Jumla. The Safe Housing Programme has upgraded 6,982 houses and replaced over 88,000 thatched roofs. Out of 1,136 health facilities damaged in the 2015 earthquake, 1,011 have been reconstructed.

facing long waits. Inclusive and disaster-resilient housing models are a good achievement but are yet to be standardized and applied nationwide.⁵⁵ NHRCN has also provided 45 recommendations to GoN on right to property from FY 2021/22 to FY 2024/25. *The GoN should expand effective inclusive models reaching marginalized groups to a national scale and make disaster-resilient, climate-adapted design a standard for all new construction, given Nepal's high disaster vulnerability.*

Poverty and human rights:

15. National Employment Policy and Nepal's newly implemented 16th Periodic Plan (2024/25-2028/29) prioritizes elimination of poverty. As such, 886,801 households have been distributed the poor household identity cards under PH-MIS system⁵⁶ and initiatives like "*Vishweshwar with the Poor*"⁵⁷ has targeted landless Dalits and squatters. 32,965 active cooperatives are creating over 90265 direct and 1.2 million indirect jobs.⁵⁸ However, these efforts face considerable challenges, as evidenced by the national poverty rate of 20.27%, with rural areas taking a lead.⁵⁹ Vulnerable groups face higher poverty with the limited coverage of Nepal's social protection scheme, legal exclusions, and low uptake.⁶⁰ NHRCN monitoring has reflected upon stark poverty,⁶¹ regional disparities and weak implementation. Progress on securing land rights for the landless and housing

⁵⁵ NHRCN Monitoring: While the focus on roof replacement and basic housing is important, the housing lacks basic facilities of sanitation, water, and electricity. With about 70% of identified beneficiaries advancing to the construction phase, implementation appears effective. However, delays for the remaining 30% point to possible issues in funding or administration in Gandaki Province. In waste management, the Banchare Danda landfill site is now operational, with supporting infrastructure underway, and integrated waste centers are nearing completion in Sudurpaschim.

⁵⁶ Letter received from the MoLCPA in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. The development of the Poor Household Management Information System (PH-MIS) for integrated data on poor households has been completed and is currently under testing. So far, identity card distribution has been completed in 64 districts.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* 'Vishweshwar with the Poor' programme is being implemented in 338 local levels across all 77 districts through 434 social mobilizers, focusing on training and capacity building to enhance income and employment. 12,470 individuals are trained in land management, cadastral mapping, and land use planning. In FY 2081/82, NPR 17.13 million was allocated to local governments for this purpose. The "Grants Procedure for Cooperatives 2079" is being implemented to support productive cooperatives in entrepreneurship, production, and employment.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ Nepal Living Standard Survey 2022/23 showcases 24.66% poverty in rural areas compared to 18.34% in urban centers.

⁶⁰ Report of the Special Rapporteur visit to Nepal - on extreme poverty and human rights, Olivier De Schutter (A/HRC/50/38/Add.2), 13 June–8 July 2022, published on 13 May 2022.

⁶¹ Poverty rates in Sudurpaschim (34.16%), Karnali (26.69%), and Lumbini (24.35%).

rights⁶² is slow. The poverty alleviation programmes are often uncoordinated, with skills training frequently mismatching local needs. *The GoN should focus poverty alleviation interventions on rural areas, accelerate nationwide PH-MIS rollout for effective land distribution, ensure land reform for marginalized groups, expand support with effective regulation for cooperatives, and align skills training with local job needs.*

(g) Civil and Political Rights

Right to Life

16. Article 16 of the Constitution guarantees the right to a dignified life. Between FY 2021–2025, NHRCN issued 94 recommendations related to deaths and killings, pointing to protection insufficiency. Suicide rates are alarming with 21% among youth, 15% among children, 39% among indigenous communities, and 46% among agricultural laborers⁶³ reflecting the absence of accessible mental health services. NHRCN monitoring also highlights a rise in suicidal incidents⁶⁴, deaths in poorly supervised juvenile centers⁶⁵, and the use of lethal force by security personnel during protests⁶⁶. Simultaneously, environmental and infrastructure-related risks have intensified. Air pollution is Nepal’s top health threat, causing 26,000 premature deaths annually and reducing life expectancy by 3.4 years.⁶⁷ Road accidents, largely due to unsafe roads, have

⁶² The execution of the People’s Housing Implementation Procedure, 2075 which aims to ensure housing for disadvantaged groups, particularly those belonging to endangered and highly marginalized castes and communities, was found to not have benefited the targeted population in Bagmati Province.

⁶³ Police Mirror, 2024, The number of male suicides is higher than that of females. Provincially, Koshi Province has the highest number of suicides, while Karnali Province has the lowest. Available at: <https://www.nepalpolice.gov.np/publication/3/>

⁶⁴ NHRCN Monitoring of Lumbini Province revealed 6,261 incidents of suicide cases recorded in 2081.

⁶⁵ On August 20, 2023 a boy from Manthali Municipality-3, Ramechhap, died at the Bhaktapur Juvenile Reform Center, reportedly due to negligence by the facility. Just a month later, on September 22, a violent clash at the Jayendu Juvenile Reform Center in Banke led to the death of a 21-year-old boy from Rupandehi and left 10 others injured. Another clash occurred on September 12 at the Birta-based Juvenile Reform Center in Birgunj around 8 p.m., during which a female police officer was injured.

⁶⁶ December 29, 2023 (Balkumari, Lalitpur): During a youth protest demanding participation in the Korean language employment test, police opened fire, resulting in the deaths of Sujan Rawat (Dailekh) and Birendra Shah (Achham). The NHRCN conducted an on-site monitoring visit the same day and initiated a follow-up investigation. Similarly, a clash over upgrading a primary health center on January 5, 2024 (Barhathwa, Sarlahi) led to the fatal shooting of Jayashankar Sah. The NHRCN expressed serious concern and its Madhesh Province Office is conducting a detailed inquiry.

⁶⁷World Bank. *Towards Clean Air in Nepal: Benefits, Pollution Sources, and Solutions*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2025. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099060525033528377/pdf/P176456-fd25d1c4-c05a-4740-9984-ada6a89056a2.pdf>. As per the report, air pollution contributes to 75% of COPD cases, 46% of strokes, 44% of ischemic heart disease, 41% of lower respiratory infections, 38% of lung cancer, 30% of neonatal complications (e.g., low birth weight and preterm birth), and 20% of diabetes.

lost lives of over 24,000 people in a decade, with 2,369 fatalities and natural disasters claiming 745 lives last FY alone. Electrocution deaths are also rising, with 1,339 deaths in 2,267 incidents reported over five years.⁶⁸ *The GoN should formulate programmes/activities to prevent suicides, upgrade juvenile centers to international standards, and enforce electrical and road safety codes. Moreover, clean air strategies with enforceable emission limits are needed, disaster preparedness should be decentralized with strong local bodies and early warnings.*⁶⁹

Right against Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

17. Nepal has taken positive steps by criminalizing torture in the Criminal Code. However, enforcement remains weak as victims still face the burden of filing complaints in the same police offices where abuse may have occurred. NHRCN's recommendation to prosecute the cases on the right against torture counts as 58 from the FY 2021/22 to FY 2024/25. Numerous custodial deaths⁷⁰ further expose the inefficiency to prevent and respond to abuse in detention settings. *The GoN should implement the recommendations of the NHRCN regarding monitoring of prison and detention centers and should ensure a conducive environment for the ratification of OPCAT.*

Right to Freedom of Expression and Opinion and Access to Information

18. While Nepal's Constitution and foundational laws on the rights to information and privacy establish a legal commitment to fundamental freedoms, the current situation reveals a significant gap between policy and practice. Proactive efforts to protect

⁶⁸ Study Report on Electrical Injuries in Nepal: An Analysis of Nepal Police Records, Available at: <https://www.nepjol.info/index.php/mef/article/view/67891/51769>

⁶⁹ Recommendation derived from the NHRCN's findings following its monitoring visit on 27 June 2024, conducted in the aftermath of the massive rainfall, to assess the human rights situation of disaster-affected individuals. Available at: https://www.nhrcnepal.org/uploads/publication/BIPAD_COMPILE_REPORT_FINAL.pdf

⁷⁰ Two recent custodial deaths highlight systemic gaps in prison oversight. In August 2023, Binod Tolangi (20) and Akash Balami (28) died following alleged beatings inside the overcrowded Sankhuwasabha prison, which held 136 inmates despite a capacity of 25. Investigations were launched against 12 individuals, and five police officers were recommended for departmental action. In a separate case, Harish Singh Pali (28) died in Kailali District Prison on March 6, 2025—two days after his arrest for a banking offence. While police cited sudden illness, his family alleged torture, pointing to bruises and head injuries, and refused to accept the body pending investigation.

freedoms are emerging at both provincial and national levels.⁷¹ NHRCN has prepared a Guideline on HRDs, 2012. This is complemented by the multi-faceted work of the NHRCN as it is building a protective framework for HRDs by including the aspect of HRDs in the NHRC Bill⁷², but there are no other specific laws or policies for the protection of HRDs. WHRDs are further vulnerable and face peculiar problems of harassment and judgements on their character.⁷³ GoN has introduced legislative proposals like the Social Media Bill⁷⁴ and the Media Council Bill, which has faced dissatisfaction as a tool to shrink civic space through vague terms and state-controlled regulation.

19. Government mentions only two complaints on excessive use of force and none concerning protesters or journalists⁷⁵ with ongoing training to security personnels.⁷⁶ The pro-monarchy demonstrations in Kathmandu, in March 2025, turned fatal with two deaths and dozens injured.⁷⁷ The risks faced by those on the ground were further highlighted when an NHRCN officer and other rights defenders were attacked⁷⁸ while monitoring the Tinkune protest. HRDs, WHRDs, journalists, lawyers and victims advocating for their rights are facing an increasing wave of retaliatory threats⁷⁹ and harassment from both security forces and protestors. *The GoN should revise the Social Media Bill to protect fundamental freedoms and establish an independent body to ensure accountability for excessive use of force by security personnel. It should formulate laws for protection of HRDs. GoN should expand civic space including creation of a*

⁷¹ A commendable example is Gandaki Province, which has established a dedicated working group to safeguard freedom of expression.

⁷² Consultation with HRDs regarding the NHRC Bill and also the development of model law regarding HRDs.

⁷³ Consultation of NHRCN regarding HRDs, WHRDs and Journalists in all seven provinces of Nepal.

⁷⁴ https://www.law-democracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Nepal.Social-Media-Bill_2025_Eng.pdf

⁷⁵ Response of MoHA to the NHRCN.

⁷⁶ Training on the UN Principles on the Use of Force covered 64,399 Nepal Police and 33,537 Armed Police Force personnel.

⁷⁷ On 28 March 2025, during a violent pro-monarchy protest at Tinkune, two individuals including journalist Suresh Rajak of Avenue Television and demonstrator Sabin Maharjan of Kirtipur were killed, with Maharjan shot by police. Dozens of protesters and civilians sustained injuries, some critically, along with several police personnel. While the protesters' actions were unlawful and condemnable, the police's use of lethal force raises serious human rights concerns. NHRCN was present on the ground to monitor the protest.

⁷⁸ NHRCN High-Level Investigation Report, 2025

⁷⁹ UN experts have expressed concern over reports of ongoing retaliation against human rights defenders for their opposition to the development of the Chhaya Center retail and entertainment complex in Kathmandu. Available at : <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/05/nepal-retaliations-against-human-rights-defenders-over-business-complex>

conducive environment for the exercise of freedom of expression and assembly.

Conditions of detention and Prisoner's/Detainee's Right

20. Nepal's 75 prisons are overburdened, holding 28,613 detainees/prisoners as of July 2024.⁸⁰ This severe overcrowding creates inhumane conditions and a parallel mental health emergency, with high rates of depression and suicide risk. Despite new constructions,⁸¹ a profound gap persists with regard to humane treatment. Similarly, the nine child reform homes,⁸² housing 1,351 children, suffer from systemic deficiencies in sanitation, healthcare, and education. Ineffective implementation of juvenile justice provisions⁸³ has led to ineffective age separation and conflicts involving those over 18 in child reform homes. The NHRCN also made complaint based recommendation⁸⁴ for custody management and the protection of detainees' human rights. *The GoN should prioritize reducing prison overcrowding and upgrading its facilities, implement juvenile standards to ensure proper care and vocational skills with structured reintegration plans for formerly incarcerated individuals and juveniles are essential.*

Access to justice & remedy

21. Nepal has made commendable efforts to ensure the right to justice through constitutional guarantees and the provision of free legal aid to economically disadvantaged groups.

⁸⁰ Including 17,690 prisoners, 10,923 detainees, and 76 dependent children in a system built for 16,000. (Record of Department of Prison Management, GoN)

⁸¹ Letter received from the Department of Prison in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. While the construction work is planned for 18 districts, work is slow. Central Prison Nuwakot and Naubasta Prison, Nepalgunj is in the second phase with those in Morang and Panchthar, Bhojpur, Mugu, Humla, Bajhang, Udayapur, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Surkhet, and 8 additional districts are underway. Relocation of the Rupandehi home and new construction in Kailali are under process.

⁸² Ibid. New facilities under construction in Banke and Morang and Dhakaltar, Tanahun.

⁸³ Section 43(4) of the Act Relating to Children, 2018, provides that if a child in a reform home turns eighteen before completing their term, they shall be housed separately from other children for the remainder of the period, taking into account factors such as behavioral improvement, and continuity of acquired skills and education.

⁸⁴ NHRCN Decision dated April 9, 2025 on complaint no 182: These included the mandatory installation of 24/7 CCTV surveillance with backup systems in custody areas, regular health checks for detainees, daily oversight by supervisory staff, risk assessments for potential self-harm or violent behavior, and improvements in facility infrastructure such as secure cells and adequate sanitation facilities. It emphasized the need for these measures to ensure the safety and dignity of individuals in custody.

However, the practical realization of this right remains a challenge due to procedural delays, case backlogs, and limitations within the legal aid system. Marginalized communities, in particular, face difficulties navigating complex and resource-intensive legal processes. Additionally, the eligibility threshold for legal aid set at less than NPR 40,000 annually (around 300 USD)⁸⁵ has not been updated since 1997, limiting access for many who may still require support. The implementation of court decisions is lowest in monetary penalties (27.83%), moderate in imprisonment (33.19%), and highest in judgment execution applications (49.95%).⁸⁶ More importantly, NHRC complaint based recommendation also stressed the need to work on the part of victims' right to fair justice system.⁸⁷ *The GoN should initiate the amendment of the Legal Aid Act and its regulations, primarily to reflect current economic realities. Furthermore, it should develop a centralized digital tracking system for real-time monitoring of judgment execution status.*

Human Trafficking & Contemporary Forms of Slavery

22. Regarding the implementation of the Goal 5, 8 and 16 of SDG, currently, an amendment Bill relating to human trafficking and transportation in line with the Palermo Protocol⁸⁸ is tabled in the Parliament as the GoN has also expedited its efforts to amend a dozen laws to make them compatible with the Protocol. NHRCN is also reviewing various laws in accordance with the Palermo Protocol. However, despite various government efforts,⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Legal Aid Regulation 1997.

⁸⁶ Annual Report of the Supreme Court of Nepal, 2023/24, Available at: <https://supremecourt.gov.np/web/yearlyreps>

⁸⁷ NHRCN Decision dated January 3, 2024 on complaint no 244. NHRC found reckless negligence on the part of police personnels, and accordingly recommended disciplinary action and monetary compensation to the victim's family as measures to uphold human rights accountability.

⁸⁸ Nepal ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children in June 2020.

⁸⁹ GoN has formulated an Action Plan for the implementation of the additional obligation created by the protocol and MOWCSC has a Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Division under the department designated for Women's Empowerment. GoN has also prepared a draft amendment to revise the National Policy against Trafficking in Women and Children and Sexual Exploitation, 1995 along with the revised draft of the National Plan of Action against Human Trafficking and Transportation, 2011. Additionally, a bill to amend various Nepali laws related to anti-money laundering and business environment promotion is under consideration.

Nepal faces significant and evolving challenges. A draft law is being developed to address forced labour, including traditional bonded labour systems such as *Haruwa* and *Charuwa*. Global Trafficking in Persons Report highlights a concerning 7% drop in victim detection in Nepal from 2020-2023⁹⁰, raising concerns about underreporting and limited victim protection measures. With increase in use of ICT, traffickers increasingly exploit social media with fraudulent job offers to lure their victims, a staggering 58% of whom are children under 18⁹¹. Rescued survivors face re-traumatization due to limited shelters, legal aid, and counseling, while communities often reject them. Meanwhile, human smuggling is rising, with youth smuggled to Western and European countries.

23. NHRCN monitoring indicates human trafficking trends are evolving, reflecting upon the need to strengthen prevention and intervention efforts.⁹² Furthermore, in recent years, the nexus of human trafficking has grown within Nepal's domestic market. Previously, Nepal was primarily a source country for human trafficking, but it has now also become a destination and transit state.⁹³ A total of 166 cases of human trafficking were registered in FY 2023/2024.⁹⁴ *The GoN should expedite the enactment of the Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Amendment Act and amend other laws in line with Palermo Protocol, as the GoN should also prioritize investigating and prosecuting all forms of trafficking, including transnational and internal cases and emerging new forms of modern slavery. It should enhance the capacity of law enforcement officers relating to human trafficking, transportation and smuggling.*

⁹⁰ UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024, Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2024/GLOTIP2024_BOOK.pdf

⁹¹ Information Available at: [https://www.worcnepal.org/uploads/publication/document/1008881434Factsheet_Anbeshi_compressed%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.worcnepal.org/uploads/publication/document/1008881434Factsheet_Anbeshi_compressed%20(1).pdf)

⁹² NHRCN Monitoring observed “NPR 2.5 million programme targeting drug abuse, human trafficking, and transport control is in its payment phase, supported by cross-border coordination meetings. Registration of 40 complaints related to human trafficking across various districts of Gandaki Province indicates a critical and persistent issue. While this figure reflects a certain level of awareness and reporting, this might just be a tip of an iceberg. Addressing these will require a multi-sectoral, victim-centered approach with strong political will, inter-agency coordination, and community involvement. NHRCN monitoring indicates that human trafficking trends are evolving and reportedly increasing, highlighting a growing concern that requires strengthened prevention and intervention efforts.”

⁹³ NHRCN, Trafficking in Persons Report, 2022, available at https://www.nhrcnepal.org/uploads/publication/TIP_Report_Inner_compressed.pdf

⁹⁴ Annual factsheet of Nepal Police, FY 2023/2024

Elimination of Caste-Based Discrimination

24. While Nepal's Constitution provides a strong legal framework against caste-based discrimination, systemic challenges hinder its effective realization. National data from FY 2023/24 shows a 7.41% rise in caste-based cases⁹⁵, 29 incidents registered by Nepal Police⁹⁶, underscoring the persistence of deep-rooted discrimination. Institutional efforts like *Dalit* Coordination Desks and local awareness programmes are positive⁹⁷, but their impact is limited by chronic underreporting⁹⁸. *Dalit* women, children and PWDs face layered discrimination and remain most vulnerable, with heightened risk of sexual violence. The inclusion of *Dalit* women through electoral quotas is commendable, but many are sidelined from decision-making roles, reducing their influence. Nearly 38% of *Dalit* households are landless or near-landless, yet the fundamental right of land distribution for *Dalit* remains unfulfilled. Online platforms are witnessing a significant rise in caste-based discrimination. *The GoN should combat discriminatory societal attitudes by implementing various measures like comprehensive campaigns, create integrated law to ensure the fundamental rights of Dalit, and empower elected Dalit women to influence policy and address challenges faced by their community. Additionally, it should review the reservation expressed by the state on various articles of CERD.*

(h) Collective Rights

Women's Right

⁹⁵ Annual Factsheet on Gender Based Violence, 2078/79 (2021/22), Nepal Police, Available at: <https://www.nepalpolice.gov.np/publication/5/>

⁹⁶ Annual Factsheet on Gender Based Violence, 2080/81 (2023/24), Nepal Police, Available at: <https://www.nepalpolice.gov.np/publication/5/>

⁹⁷ NHRCN Monitoring of Gandaki Province

⁹⁸ NHRCN Monitoring of Lumbini Province

25. Article 38 of the Constitution guarantees the rights of women with complementary laws and policies in place.⁹⁹ However, existing laws fail to incorporate a comprehensive definition of discrimination. GESI Policy, 2020 and National GESI Strategy, 2021 are adopted to institutionalize a gender responsive governance system in all three tiers of government. Female literacy rate¹⁰⁰, female ownership of property¹⁰¹, the no. of households headed by female¹⁰² has increased in the past decade. Currently, 28.17% of women are in the civil service¹⁰³, 39.78% of women are in banking and financial sector in 2022¹⁰⁴, 11% in judiciary, 41.23% in the local level, 33.83% in federal parliament and 36.36% in provincial assembly from 2022 election¹⁰⁵. Despite Nepal's constitutional guarantee of 33% women's representation in legislative bodies, women are not prioritized in the leadership role of political parties. In spite of its wide mandate, MoWCSC receives a limited budget.¹⁰⁶
26. GoN initiatives include control and prevention of GBV with OCMC providing substantial support to GBV victims.¹⁰⁷ It has taken steps to address GBV, human trafficking, and

⁹⁹ National Gender Equality Policy, 2021, Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2009, Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Rules, 2010, Witchcraft Accusation (Crime and Punishment) Act, 2015, Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention) Act, 2014, Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Rights Act, 2018, Chhaupadi Criminalization Act, 2017, Protection and Empowerment of Girls Act 2081 of the Government of Madhesh Province, 2024, Amendment to the Nepal Citizenship Act enabling children of Nepali women and an unidentified father to acquire citizenship by descent, 2023, National Plan for implementing the National Gender Equality Policy, 2023, National Action Plan on Formalization for 2023–2025, on the formalization of domestic workers, 2023, National Strategy to Prevent Gender-biased Sex Selection for 2021–2030, Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health Roadmap until 2030, 2021, Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Strategic Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, 2018 etc.

¹⁰⁰ National Population and Housing Census, 2021 showed female literacy rate at 69.4%.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.* Overall, 23.8 percent of the total households have ownership of land or a housing unit or both (land & housing unit) in the name of female household members.

¹⁰² National Population and Housing Census, 2021 showed 31.55% of the total households (6,666,937) are headed by females.

¹⁰³ Department of National Personnel Records (Civil) available at <https://nijamati.pis.gov.np/pages/downloads>

¹⁰⁴ Women in Data: Nepal available at <https://nepaloutlook.com/women-nepal-gender-data/>

¹⁰⁵ Election Commission, available at <https://result.election.gov.np/>

¹⁰⁶ Budget of GoN for FY 2024/25; Rs. 2.08 billion has been allocated for the MoWCSC.

¹⁰⁷ Over 6,000 Gender Violence Control Committees have been formed locally, with expanded services including 99 OCMCs aiding 11,000+ GBV victims. Helpline 1145 and Center 104 support rescue efforts, while 42 police offices and 232 local units offer dedicated services for women, children, and seniors.

women's empowerment.¹⁰⁸ NWC has been assisting the GBV survivors.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, the prevalence of son preference continues to be a problem.¹¹⁰ GBV is still prevalent with cases rising from 15,754 cases in 2019 to 20,624 in 2024.¹¹¹ Women and girls with disabilities still face discrimination, with weak implementation of the policies.¹¹² Moreover, women working in the entertainment sector including sex workers are facing violence.¹¹³

27. The HoR passed the 2025 Citizenship Amendment Bill, allowing children of Nepali mothers to obtain citizenship even without the father's identity. Despite of laws¹¹⁴ birth certificates are often not issued if the father is missing or unidentified. 26% of children under 5 do not have birth certificates¹¹⁵, and women belonging to specific groups¹¹⁶ have limited access to identification documents. Though laws ensure equal inheritance and ban harmful practices, societal norms and customs still deny women property rights and

¹⁰⁸ The GoN has advanced gender equality through gender-friendly infrastructure, women's shelters, rehabilitation centers, and support for women entrepreneurs. Local governments have established women's rights units with allocated budgets, and inclusive laws along with gender-responsive budgeting are in place. The response to GBV has improved with the introduction of the Sexual Crime Investigation Manual (2020), UN resolution committees, and active Gender Violence Prevention Funds across all provinces and local levels. However, livelihood programmes for GBV survivors have shown limited success, and some municipalities remain dissatisfied with existing gender data systems.

¹⁰⁹ NWC has been handling the complaints of GBV and Domestic Violence cases. The total number of cases in NWC in FY 2024/25 is 1070. From 2019 to 2024, a total of 251 individuals were rehabilitated, 235 children were placed in shelters and free legal consultation was provided to 7445 individuals.

¹¹⁰ National Strategy against Discriminatory Sex Selection, 2021 exists. MoHP and UNFPA, *Nepal's Journey in Fulfilling the ICPD Commitments: The Roadmap towards ICPD30*; There were 112 baby boys born for every 100 baby girls born in 2021, up from 107 baby boys born for every 100 baby girls in 2011, indicating high number of sex-selective abortion.

¹¹¹ In FY 2023/24, Nepal Police recorded 20,624 GBV cases, with 16,416 related to domestic violence and 3,441 to sexual violence—including 2,507 rape cases and 81 murders following domestic abuse. Most victims were women and girls, especially aged 11–14, with 2,335 incidents occurring at home. GBV cases rose by 1.12% from the previous year, with most victims and perpetrators from low-education backgrounds.

¹¹² Despite disability-inclusive policies like the 2021 Health Directives and new programmes like Women First (2022) and the Social Protection Framework (2024) face problems in implementation.

¹¹³ NHRCN received a complaint dated June 11, 2025 urging the need to address the hindrance in their access to justice, facing social exclusion.

¹¹⁴ National ID and Civil Registration Act (2020) and the National ID and Civil Registration Regulation (2021).

¹¹⁵ National Population and Housing Census, 2021.

¹¹⁶ Sex workers, Tibetan long-stay migrant women, Bhutanese refugee women and Nepali women married to refugees.

harmful practices like *Chhaupadi*,¹¹⁷ dowry, and child marriage persists. GoN has included gender in climate adaptation plans, but implementation remains weak.¹¹⁸ Women’s limited access to antenatal and postnatal healthcare services is a significant problem.¹¹⁹ *The GoN should ensure OCMCs, rehabilitation homes and GBV funds are functional, accessible, and adequately resourced within 3 years. Furthermore, it should increase the budget of MoWCSC, improve access to citizenship, property, and healthcare, bring adequate policies to eliminate harmful practices and support marginalized women, including those with disabilities.*

Child Right

28. Article 39 of the Constitution guarantees the rights of children with complementary laws and policies in place.¹²⁰ Nepal has established its first Children’s Court to ensure a child-sensitive approach in judicial proceedings. Various institutional structures of GoN exist to safeguard the child rights.¹²¹ Child Sensitive Social Protection Programmes of the GoN have been found to be effective. NCRC has been actively contributing in the sector of

¹¹⁷ NHRCN decision dated July 16, 2023 A.D on complaint no 794. NHRCN’s suo-moto nationwide investigation regarding unsafe *chhaupadi* practices revealed 15 deaths occurred in Achham District alone, whereby it highlighted constitutional and legal lapses and urged urgent action. It formally recommended the three tiers of government specifically the federal government to enforce constitutional and criminal legal provisions (including amending Section 168 of the Muluki Criminal Code) to ensure victim protection, compensation, psychosocial support, and rehabilitation; initiate regular public reporting on anti-*chhaupadi* efforts; integrate *chhaupadi* awareness into school curricula; and lead targeted awareness and educational campaigns. The NHRC directed provincial and local authorities to fully implement the 2064 B.S. National Guidelines, mobilize women’s development offices, engage community and religious leaders, enforce perpetrators’ legal accountability, and coordinate with police to rescue victims and provide safe shelter—measures aligned with Supreme Court directives from 2005—and noted that the persistence of *chhaupadi* highlights enduring enforcement gaps and deep-rooted social beliefs.

¹¹⁸ Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Strategic Action Plan, National Adaptation Plan, 2023 and establishment of National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority in 2018.

¹¹⁹ Maternal mortality rate is high with 151 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2023.

¹²⁰ The National Children Policy, 2023, Act Relating to Children, 2018, National Gender Equality Policy, 2077, Criminal Code, 2019, Child Labor (Regulation and Prohibition) Act, 2056, Regulation on Children, 2078, Juvenile Justice Administration (Procedure) Rules, 2076, Regulations on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2077, Child Labour (Regulation and Prohibition) Rules, 2062, Emergency Child Rescue Fund Operating Regulations, 2067, Juvenile Justice Procedure Rules, 2063, Standards for the operation and management of children's homes, 2079, Child Helpline Number 1098 Nepal Operating Procedures, 2076, Child Protection Financial Relief Assistance Procedure, 2076, Integrated Procedures for the Rescue, Protection and Management of Street Children, 2076, Street Children Special Protection Directive, 2082 etc.

¹²¹ National Child Rights Council (NCRC) at central level, Provincial Child Rights Committees (PCRC) in all 7 provinces, 377 local child rights committees, 422 child welfare officers, and 295 local child funds are actively working in the sector of child rights. Additionally, there are 88 OCMC, 71 child rescue centers (104), 18 child helplines (1098), and 396 child care homes across the country. Recently, the Child Friendly Local Governance Implementation Guideline, 2021 was adopted.

child rights.¹²² Specific legislations and master plans¹²³ are in place to curb child labor. However, 1.1 million children are involved in child labor out of which 0.2 million children are involved in its worst forms.¹²⁴ It is reflected by its position among the 25 countries with the highest rates globally during the 2014–2022 period.¹²⁵ National Strategy for Ending Child Marriage, 2015 aiming to eliminate child marriage by 2030, is currently under revision. Despite of laws and strategies¹²⁶ child marriage is still prevalent.¹²⁷ GoN is yet to integrate *Kamalari* and child marriage victims into socio-economic systems. NHRCN monitoring reflects the priority of the GoN for child-friendly governance, awareness, and infrastructure, but then, there is limited support for children needing special protection¹²⁸ *The GoN should carry out studies on modern forms of slavery, ensure strong enforcement measure to eliminate child labor through more trained personnel and*

¹²² Intervention of the NCRC to convene child assemblies, devise interactive programmes with children and other stakeholders, support the formation of child clubs, provide technical and procedural support to children on birth registration, etc. has been considered successful.

¹²³ Child Labor (Regulation and Prohibition) Act 2000 and Child Labour (Regulation and Prohibition) Rules 2006, The National Child Labor Abolition Master Plan (2018-2028). The Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security regularly conducts industrial and child labor inspections. In FY 2079/80, three children were rescued, six employers faced legal action, a total fine of NPR 20,000 was imposed, and compensation of NPR 1,55,000 was provided. Grants have been provided to 64 local levels to declare them child labor free, with plans to extend the programme eventually to all 753 local levels. As of 2023, there are 46 sanctioned posts for labor inspectors.

¹²⁴ Nepal Child Labour Report, 2021, National Planning Commission, Central Bureau of Statistics and International Labor Organization, available at: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40asia/%40ro-bangkok/%40ilo-kathmandu/documents/publication/wcms_784225.pdf; In Nepal, 15.3% of children aged 5-17 are employed in child labor, with female children being slightly more vulnerable at 17.3%. With 17 % engagement in child labour, female children are slightly more vulnerable. Additionally, Dalits and *Janajatis* have the highest child labour prevalence with 19.4% and 18.1%, respectively. 34.3% of the overall victims of child labour are engaged in hazardous work. 74% of children working in the informal sector were found to be engaged in hazardous working conditions.

¹²⁵ UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024, Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2024/GLOTIP2024_BOOK.pdf

¹²⁶ GoN operates the toll-free child helpline (1098) from 18 locations, helping prevent 286 child marriages in FY 2078/79 (228 girls, 58 boys).

¹²⁷ In FY 2023/2024, a total of 52 cases of child marriage were officially registered in Nepal compared to 4,656 cases in FY 2020/21. NHRCN monitoring: Efforts to reduce child labor continue through workplace inspections and legal actions, but identification and rehabilitation remain weak, and updated data is lacking. Child labour continues to persist, particularly in sectors such as hotels, restaurants, and brick kilns, underscoring ongoing challenges in enforcing child protection laws and ensuring children's rights. A survey conducted in 604 local levels by the National Child Rights Council in 2020/21 revealed that the number of child marriages, early marriages and forced marriages is 4656, of which only 382 cases have been registered with the police. While registered child marriages may be declining, many go unreported, meaning the true scale is larger. Most victims are aged 15-16, with 24 students affected, highlighting how early marriage disrupts education and deepens poverty and gender inequality.

¹²⁸ NHRCN Monitoring: Provincial governments have enacted child rights laws and are implementing programmes like '*Kishori*' empowerment and the National Master Plan for Eliminating Child Labor (2018-2028), with many areas declared child labor-free. Gandaki hosts a long-term rehab center for street children, and most municipalities have child clubs. However, there is a lack of shelters for children needing special protection. Under the National Strategy to End Child Marriage (2016), district committees are working on education access, legal reforms, and community engagement.

stricter penalties, ensure effective implementations of laws relating to children, plan of action to eliminate child marriage and allocate adequate budget for child protection.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities

29. Regarding Goal 11 of SDGs, the Constitution ensures the rights of PWDs with policies and legislative initiatives in line¹²⁹ prioritizing accessibility and removing barriers, ensuring dignified and quality services. Monitoring reports of the NHRCN, reveals both progress and gaps in disability inclusion efforts. Disability-friendly government websites, disability assistance centers and skill-based training for women with disabilities are some of the significant achievements. However, inadequate accessibility in education and vocational training, poorly implemented employment programmes for disabled women, and unmet social security needs such as housing, healthcare, and assistive devices are the prevalent issues. Many public offices are inaccessible to PWDs, and legal processes are costly and inefficient. With limited income and support, many are forced to abandon their pursuit of justice.¹³⁰
30. Similarly, access to care for persons with psychosocial disabilities in Nepal is limited, especially in rural areas, due to less quantity of hospitals and disability-friendly

¹²⁹ Article 18 (3), 31(3), 39(9), 42(1) (3) (5) and 43 of the Constitution secures PWDs rights. National Policy for PWDs, 2021 prioritizes the disability-friendly governance system in all tiers of state and empowerment of PWDs. The Act relating to Rights of PWDs, 2017 and rules relating to the rights of PWDs, 2020 has been introduced along with Nepal's 10-year Policy for PWDs (2016–2025) to ensure the rights of PWDs. Supporting laws include standards for Province-Level Disability Villages (2020), the Disability Village (*Apangata Gram*) Construction and Operation Operation Procedure (2021). The Procedure aims to establish PWD-friendly villages with rehab centers, skill training, healthcare, and recreation, funded jointly by federal and provincial governments. Grant procedures for child care homes (2020) stipulates that child care homes established for the protection of disabled children must meet certain basic criteria, including having accessible physical infrastructure.

¹³⁰ *Study on Barriers to Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities*, December, 2022, NHRCN, Available at: [Final Inner - Identifying barriers to Access to Justice for persons with disabilities.pdf](#) Many offices lack disability-friendly design and are located in steep or uneven areas, making access difficult for wheelchair users, those with crutches, and the visually impaired. Access to justice is hindered by the fact that key offices like district police, district administration, courts, and local levels often lack effective services. Many require repeated visits, creating significant barriers. Most persons with disabilities have no personal income source and face poor financial conditions. Legal processes involve high costs, including lawyer and documentation fees, transportation, food, and sometimes even lodging if work takes more than a day, expenses many cannot afford.

facilities.¹³¹ There is a severe shortage of psychiatrists, and reports of abuse, forced treatment, and unmodified ECT. *The GoN should strengthen enforcement of disability-inclusive laws, ensure accessibility standards are put in place, create effective programmes for PWDs' education and employment, expand disability-friendly mental health services nationwide, ban abusive practices and provide free/subsidized legal aid.*

Right to Environment and Sustainable Development

31. Article 30 of the Constitution guarantees the right to a clean environment.¹³² Apart from legal and institutional measures, Nepal is experiencing severe and accelerating impacts of climate change, with average annual maximum temperatures rising by 0.056°C per year.¹³³ Forest fires are on the rise and Himalayan region is particularly vulnerable.¹³⁴ Initiatives such as business climate survey, local stakeholder engagement are in place.¹³⁵ The DWSSM has initiated a campaign to conserve small streams and water springs engaging

¹³¹ *A Study on the Situation of Mental Health Rights in Gandaki and Bagmati Provinces - August 2024*, NHRCN, Nepal First Edition. Available at:

nhrcnepal.org/uploads/publication/A_study_on_the_situation_of_Mental_Health_Rights_in_Gandaki_and_Bagmati_Provinces-2024.pdf The study found most mental health facilities in Nepal lack basic amenities, cleanliness, privacy, and adequate care. Psychiatrists are scarce, and inhumane practices like excessive medication and unmodified ECT are common, highlighting the urgent need for reform.

¹³² The Constitution obliges the state to prevent environmental degradation and ensure citizens' access to a healthy environment. The Environment Protection Act, 2019 and its 2020 Rules operationalize this right. Sector-specific laws from the Forest Act 2019 and Water Resources Act 1992, to more localized regulations like the Kathmandu Metropolitan Environment and Natural Resources Protection Act 2021 enhance protection mechanisms and promote sustainable use of natural resources.

¹³³ [UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE, IMPACTS AND VULNERABILITIES IN NEPAL, Climate Change Fact Sheet, Sagarmatha Sambah](#), Extreme weather events are intensifying, with precipitation projected to rise by 7% to 22% by 2100. The total increase of temperature is 2.5°C over the past 45 years. These changes are already causing significant damage, hydropower projects suffered losses of USD 85 million in 2023–2024, over 70% of natural springs show declining discharge, and dengue outbreaks have surged, now affecting 75 districts. The extreme climate risk index is expanding from 4 to 68 districts of Nepal by mid-century.

¹³⁴ More than 5,000 incidents of forest fire reported in 2024. The dangerous glacial lakes are fueling threats, exemplified by the 2024 outburst flood in Thame village, displacing 135 people and destroying vital infrastructure. There are projections suggesting the loss of up to two-thirds of glacier ice by century's end. ICIMOD report highlights increasing monsoon variability and water-related disasters like flash floods and landslides further endanger communities and infrastructure. If current trends continue, Nepal could lose up to 2.2% of its GDP annually by 2050 due to climate-related impacts.

¹³⁵ Letter received from the MoFE in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan. To promote a green economy and climate resilience, Capacity-building training was conducted in 19 local governments along with the identification of 16 sustainable agricultural practices and 31 operational research topics in Karnali and Sudurpaschim Provinces.

all relevant actors.¹³⁶ The draft of the Bill to Amend and Consolidate Laws Related to Waste Management is tabled in the parliament¹³⁷.

32. The NHRCN monitoring showcases modest portion of climate budgets¹³⁸ dedicated to targeted climate actions. Community engagement in forest management, widespread afforestation, and climate-resilient infrastructure¹³⁹ reflect a holistic approach. Institutionalization of sustainable forest practices and green urban initiatives indicates progress in integrating environmental goals into local governance.¹⁴⁰ But then, the participation of indigenous community is still a challenge.¹⁴¹ Communities often lose land and livelihoods as hydropower and clean-energy projects frequently proceed with minimal consultation.¹⁴² On the other, Nepal remains among the world's most polluted countries, with PM2.5 levels far exceeding WHO standards.¹⁴³ Local governance in waste management is poor, affecting people's health.¹⁴⁴ *The GoN should boost climate adaptation funding, invest in sustainable waste management solutions, protect climate-*

¹³⁶ Considering the decline in water table of Terai-Madhesh region and drinking water sources drying up in the hilly areas, the study of reservoir-based projects for source conservation and groundwater recharge is underway.

¹³⁷ Response received from MoUD; the draft of the Bill was tabled in Parliament on 2082/03/06.

¹³⁸ 9.78% of the climate budget allocated to direct climate benefits, 60.28% to indirect benefits, and 29.94% to neutral impacts in Koshi Province.

¹³⁹ Forest efforts in Koshi Province have involved 3,700 community members, 22.5 million seedlings, and plantations over 48,564 hectares. Additional programmes include 13 climate-adapted villages, wildfire control, awareness campaigns, and environmental studies.

¹⁴⁰ In Lumbini Province-5, the government has implemented stream and gully management procedures (2080), enforced national standards for sustainable forest management (2011), and supported green initiatives through municipal-level tree plantations, parks, and riverbank protection. Advocacy and International Participation at the Third National Conference of Human Rights Defenders (2022), called for protective programmes for defenders working on business, environment, disaster, and climate change and COP28 UN Climate Conference (2023) in Dubai .NHRCN has actively advocated for environmental human rights, calling for protective measures for defenders at the 2022 Human Rights Defenders Conference. In 2024, NHRCN concluded the Environmental Human Rights Defenders Conference with a 10-point declaration on air pollution, health, and rights.

¹⁴¹ The indigenous nationalities commission is continuously recommending the implementation of an action plan on the rights and sustainable development of Indigenous Nationalities.

¹⁴² International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Available at: [Nepal - IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs](#)

¹⁴³ WHO Data: Nepal is the third most polluted country globally, with an average PM2.5 concentration of approximately 39–52 µg/m³, 8–10 times above WHO guidelines Kathmandu Valley has frequently topped the global AQI charts, often classified as the world's most polluted city. Air pollution shortens Nepalis' lives by an average of 3–5 years, with even higher impacts in the Terai (up to 7 years) and Kathmandu (around 3.5 years).

¹⁴⁴ Sisdol in Nuwakot District and Banchara Danda (1.9 km from Sisdol), have been used as landfill sites for waste disposal of Kathmandu Valley and surrounding districts for the past 18 years. NHRCN Monitoring revealed unmanaged and haphazard waste disposal adversely affected the health of local residents. The poor condition of the roads has disrupted daily movement, and accessing emergency services has become increasingly difficult. More importantly, the negative health impacts on the local residents had indicated negligence.

displaced persons, adopt right-based approach to development, resilient infrastructure and climate-sensitive health responses ensuring climate justice.

Rights of Migrant Workers

33. A deepening national issue¹⁴⁵ unfolds as 3.5 million Nepali work abroad¹⁴⁶, driven by an inadequate domestic opportunity. While the government has introduced measures like a NAP on BHR (2024-28)¹⁴⁷ and online services¹⁴⁸ to facilitate migrant workers, these efforts are dangerously outpaced by the scale of the problem, with weak rescue and repatriation frameworks. The policies like “Free Visa, Free Ticket”¹⁴⁹ are not adequately implemented leading to extortion by recruitment agencies, trapping workers in debt bondage.¹⁵⁰
34. Nepalese migrant workers face dangerous working conditions, wage theft, and poor protection, leading to high injury with 1,346 deaths reported in the last fiscal year. Either confined to private homes without legal protection or confined to work under harsh conditions, workers are trapped in a state of modern-day slavery, especially in gulf countries. Women migrant workers face compounded risks, including sexual abuse, inadequate reproductive care, and exploitation in low-skill, low-paid jobs with long hours.¹⁵¹ Human trafficking and migrant smuggling linked to foreign employment are

¹⁴⁵ The 2024 joint report by the ILO, ADBI, and OECD notes that the number of Nepali workers migrating abroad increased by 102% between 2019 and 2023—the highest rise among 13 Asian countries compared. Available at: [Labor Migration in Asia: Trends, skills certification, and seasonal work](#)

¹⁴⁶ Tirtha Biswokarma, *Labor Migration from Nepal and Effect on Socio-Economical Status*, American Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol. 10, Issue 1, pp. 66–71 (2024), DOI: 10.21694/2378-7031.24010.

¹⁴⁷ Action plan initiated by Nepal to promote fair and ethical recruitment and business accountability along the migrant worker supply chain.

¹⁴⁸ The Foreign Employment Department introduced an online platform featuring the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS), a digital network designed to streamline foreign labour migration. FEIMS enables electronic tracking of labour permits, facilitates better reintegration support for returnee migrant workers, and strengthens digital migration governance mechanisms.

¹⁴⁹ Nepal’s “Free Visa, Free Ticket” policy, launched in July 2015, aimed to ease the financial burden on migrant workers by requiring employers in selected countries to cover visa and airfare costs, reducing recruitment fees and curbing fraud by agencies.

¹⁵⁰ Despite Nepal’s “Free Visa, Free Ticket” policy capping migration costs at approximately \$75, most migrant workers continue to pay between \$1,500 and \$2,200—an amount exceeding the country’s annual per capita income. *The Diplomat*, December 9, 2024. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2024/12/the-hidden-costs-of-nepals-free-visa-free-ticket-policy/>

¹⁵¹ Wages are frequently below government standards, with common reports of exploitation.

rising.¹⁵² DOFE faces challenges like weaker investigative skills and fake complaints.¹⁵³ The number of Nepali workers in foreign prisons has grown, yet only 7.2% receive legal support.¹⁵⁴ *The GoN should enforce zero-cost migration, ensure ethical recruitment, strengthen recruitment agency oversight, and guarantee justice for migrant workers. While diplomatic missions must support legal aid, bilateral agreements should protect female domestic workers, with resources for rescue and repatriation.*

Refugee Rights:

35. Nepal hosts approximately 20,000 refugees,¹⁵⁵ primarily from Tibet and Bhutan, as well as from the Rohingya community and other countries¹⁵⁶. Nepal is not a state party to the 1951 Refugee Convention. NHRCN has signed a MoU with UNHCR to ensure the refugee rights in Nepal. Nepal does not have specific laws and policies regarding refugees. *The GoN should address human rights concerns of the refugees through laws and policies.*

(i) Rights of Vulnerable Groups

Socially and Culturally Excluded Groups

¹⁵² Report on the Human Rights Situation of Migrant Workers, December, 2022, NHRCN, Available at: [Migration-Migrant Workers Report NHRCN compressed.pdf](#). Smuggling networks are strong and active even in countries not legally open for Nepali foreign employment.(Nepal Police data shows rising migrant smuggling through dangerous routes to countries like the U.S., Canada, and Europe. Victims face exploitation, high costs, and deportation, with strong smuggling networks operating even in banned destinations.

¹⁵³ *ibid.* Smugglers use indirect, dangerous land and sea routes to reach destinations like the U.S., Canada, Europe, and even low-income countries. Victims face exploitation, captivity, and huge costs up to Rs. 5.5 million often ending in deportation. According to DOFE's Director General, key challenges in handling cases include lack of investigative skills, no institutionalized training, insufficient evidence, and the growing issue of fake victims filing cases.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.* The number of Nepali migrant workers in foreign prisons has significantly increased, from 800 in 2016 to 1,030 in 2021, with the highest numbers in the UAE, Malaysia, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. However, only 7.2% received free legal defense support from Nepali embassies. Reasons include lack of budget, unclear spending guidelines, and limited capacity. In some cases, death penalties could have been prevented with timely legal or financial support. Due to limited budget, unclear guidelines, and weak embassy capacity—leading in some cases to preventable death penalties.

¹⁵⁵ UNHCR, Country Statistics Nepal, <https://www.unhcr.org/where-we-work/countries/nepal>

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.* Approximately 7,000 Bhutanese, 12,000 Tibetans, and several hundred Rohingya.

36. While Nepal's Constitution guarantees fundamental rights for every citizen, the lived reality for its most vulnerable communities including *dalits*¹⁵⁷, *madhesis*, single women and specific indigenous groups are marked by a deep and persistent gap between legal promise and practice. Targeted government action has yielded tangible progress for the *Tharu* community¹⁵⁸ but the community still struggles to access sickle cell care due to hidden costs and no local testing.¹⁵⁹ Proportional inclusion policies have failed to break historical hierarchies, leaving *Dalits*, Indigenous Nationalities and *Madhesis* underrepresented and marginalized in decision-making. The *Chepang* community suffers displacement and severe pollution from limestone mining industries¹⁶⁰, while the nomadic *Raute* community faces problems like premature deaths from malnutrition and exploitation in the digital space.¹⁶¹ *The GON should remove barriers to healthcare and inclusion for marginalized groups and ensure their representation; design special programmes for the empowerment of this group.*

LGBTQI Persons

37. Nepal stands out for its progressive legal stance on rights of LGBTQI persons, cemented by constitutional protections and landmark Supreme Court's rulings.¹⁶² However, the crucial federal laws to codify these rights are absent with the final verdict on marriage equality pending. Consequently, the LGBTQI+ community¹⁶³ faces pervasive social stigma and discrimination. This is compounded by barriers to accessing non-judgmental healthcare, digital bullying, and immense bureaucratic hurdles in obtaining legal gender recognition. Moreover, they face obstacles when attempting to acquire citizenship certificates and passports that reflect their chosen identity. *The GoN should ensure gender*

¹⁵⁷ Including Dom, Chamar, Musahar, Badi and Gandharva.

¹⁵⁸ NHRCN Monitoring: The Tharu community in Koshi Province has seen cultural empowerment initiatives, including the identification of 189 heritage sites for conservation and requests to establish 31 living museums. The construction of an "Indigenous and Ethnic Museum" and 16 integrated housing units at Provincial level demonstrate localized efforts to support marginalized groups.

¹⁵⁹ Letter received from the Tharu Commission in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan.

¹⁶⁰ NHRCN Study Report on the Human Rights Situation of Chepang Community, 2025
https://www.nhrcnepal.org/uploads/publication/Study_Report_on_HR_of_Chepang_Community_2082.pdf

¹⁶¹ NHRCN report on the Human Rights Situation of Nomadic Raute Community, 2024
https://www.nhrcnepal.org/uploads/publication/raut_book_englis.pdf

¹⁶² In 2023 Supreme Court of Nepal endorsed an interim order to temporarily register same-sex marriages.

¹⁶³ 2928 individuals officially identified as other gender (sexual and gender minorities) in the National Population and Housing Census, 2021 https://censusnepal.cbs.gov.np/results/files/result-folder/National%20Report_English.pdf

recognition of LGBTQI community, and amend discriminatory laws.

Senior Citizens

38. Nepal has established a strong legal foundation for its elderly population¹⁶⁴ and the National Senior Citizens Policy is in the drafting stage¹⁶⁵. Currently, senior citizens constitute 10.21% of the population¹⁶⁶ and the nation has achieved progress with schemes like old age allowance. However, the Senior Citizens Act has not been properly implemented. Key provisions on specialized healthcare are not effectively enforced, and many senior citizens, particularly in Madhesh Province are denied rights in absence of citizenship¹⁶⁷. NHRCN monitoring indicates prevalence of inadequate facilities in old-age homes.¹⁶⁸ *The GoN should prioritize the effective implementation of the Senior Citizens Act, reform social security, establish and expand geriatric wards in public hospitals. GoN should actively contribute to the adoption of the UN Convention on Rights of Older Persons.*

(j) Business and Human Rights

39. Nepal has advanced corporate accountability by launching its first NAP on Business and Human Rights (2024-2028)¹⁶⁹, focusing on areas like labor, consumer, migrant workers, environment and indigenous people, women and children, non-discrimination, gender and social inclusion. NHRCN has also been involved in monitoring issues of consumer rights and holding the business groups accountable.¹⁷⁰ Areas requiring improvement include establishing robust legal mechanisms for effective implementation and monitoring. There is the need to bridge the gap between national policy and existing realities, especially

¹⁶⁴ Article 41 of the Constitution of Nepal guarantees special protection and social security as a fundamental right which is further supported by the Senior Citizens Act of 2006.

¹⁶⁵ Letter received from the MoWCSC in response to the communication sent by the NHRCN on 17 March 2025, requesting an update on the progress made under Nepal's Third UPR Action Plan.

¹⁶⁶ National Population and Housing Census, 2021 available at https://censusnepal.cbs.gov.np/results/files/result-folder/National%20Report_En

¹⁶⁷ Study Report on the Implementation Status of Senior Citizens Act, 2006, NHRCN, 2024, available at https://www.nhrcnepal.org/uploads/publication/Senior_Citizen_Report-Updated-updated_Print_Ready-06-05-25.pdf

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.* As Nepal stands at a demographic crossroads, projected to become an "ageing society" by 2028 and an "aged society" by 2054, it is imperative to bridge this implementation gap and prioritize the rights of its rapidly growing senior population to ensure they can age with dignity and security.

¹⁶⁹ https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2024-01/vayavasaaya_ra_maanava_adhaikaara_samabanadhaj_raasataraiya_kaarayayaojanaa.pdf

¹⁷⁰ Annual Report of the NHRCN, FY 2024/25.

concerning land and environmental rights in sectors like hydropower and tourism. *The GoN should formulate human rights due diligence law to better access the effective remedies for victims of corporate abuse, and ensure effective implementation of BHR-NAP.*

(k) International obligation and cooperation with UN human rights mechanisms

40. The process for official invitation is underway in response to the requests made for the visit of two UN Special Rapporteurs to Nepal.¹⁷¹ Compliance with treaty body reporting deadlines by state remains inconsistent and frequently delayed. *The GoN should submit periodic treaty body reports on time, and need to implement the treaty body's recommendations to strengthen rule of law and accountability of the government.*

¹⁷¹ Mr. Nicolas Levrat, *Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues*, through a letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ref. No. 2081/82, Reg. No. Ge/HRC/SP/2025/351, dated 2025 January 20, and Mr. Bernard Duhaime, *Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation, and guarantees of non-recurrence*, through a letter, Ref. No. 2081/82, Reg. No. UN/LAW/2749, dated 2024 September 23.