



International
Labour
Organization



Joint EU and UN Programme - Empowered Women, Prosperous Nepal

January/2025

A resilient woman from Dhanusa, Madhesh, turns the 'haat bazaar' - a traditional market, into her livelihood, selling vegetables to support her family. ©Anuj Adhikary

► At a glance



Partners

- Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens
- Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
- Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies
- Ministry of Finance
- Social Security Fund
- National Planning Commission
- National Women Commission
- Provincial and local governments
- Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
- Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre



Donor

European Union and UN (ILO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN WOMEN)



Duration

January 2023 – October 2026



Target groups

- Women and girls
- Men and boys
- People who are non-gender conforming
- Households
- Community actors/networks
- Formal institutions
- Relevant social, economic, and political actors in project intervention areas



Geographical focus

- Federal level
- Provincial level (Madhesh Province, Karnali Province, Sudurpaschim Province) and
- 32 local government units in the 3 provinces

► Background

Despite a progressive and strong legal framework, women and girls in Nepal continue to face significant barriers in accessing equal opportunities, resources, and decision-making platforms. This is visible in the sharp gender gaps across development outcomes. Nepalese women – especially Dalit, Madhesi, indigenous, and women from religious minorities, as well as LGBTIQ+ persons and persons with disabilities suffer intersectional and multiple forms of discrimination. These are magnified by harmful social norms embedded in patriarchal structures and unequal power relations. Moreover, prevailing gender inequality is reflected in barriers women and girls face in access to education, decent work, and income opportunities. In general, women's economic opportunities are characterized by precarity, informality, job insecurity, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions. Women's labour force participation is about half (26.3%) of men's (53.3%); and most women and girls are engaged in unpaid household or care work. The social protection reaches only approximately 30 per cent of women.

► Objectives

To contribute to the full realisation of Nepalese women and girls' human rights, and agency role.

► Achievements

- Gap analyses of legislation in line with ILO Conventions, C081- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 and C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948.
- Formalization Action Plan revised to focus on women in agriculture and forestry.
- Care Economy Working Group institutionalised in the National Planning Commission.
- 50 women entrepreneurs trained on digital finance and care economy.
- Pool of 60 trainers on starting and developing business created in three provinces.
- Understanding on care economy, formalization, labour rights, social security, violence and harassment of around 250 government officials, Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations increased through trainings, workshops and study visits.

► Expected results

- **Outcome 1:** Men and boys, families and communities demonstrate more gender-equitable behaviours and support for positive social and gender norms that promote gender equality and women empowerment, and women and girls have increased agency and voice.
- **Outcome 2:** Women, men, girls, and boys, in all their diversity, access opportunities to exercise their equal economic, labour, and social rights.
- **Outcome 3:** Institutions deliver gender equality outcomes in all spheres, in line with international and national normative frameworks.



A Mithila craft artist from Janakpur during the women's day celebration organized by the Women's Development Center and the ILO. © ILO Nepal

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