



International
Labour
Organization

50 *Years of Work in Nepal*

Reflecting Back and Looking Forward

TOGETHER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE: 1966 - 2016

50 Years of Work in Nepal

Reflecting Back and Looking Forward



First published 2016

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Cover Photo: “My parents were *Kamaiyas*, the ILO and Base supported my education as a result, I am capable of living on my own now,” says Meena Kumari Chaudhary, a former *Kamlari*, which is one type of bonded labourer in Nepal.



The ILO

The International Labour Organization (ILO)

is the United Nations agency for the world of work. It sets international labour standards, promotes rights at work and encourages decent employment opportunities, the enhancement of social protection and the strengthening of dialogue on work-related issues. The ILO has a unique structure, bringing together governments, employers' and workers' representatives.





The ILO in Nepal

Nepal became a member of the International Labour Organization in 1966, and an office was established in Nepal in 1994. The mandate of the ILO is to promote opportunities for all women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The Decent Work Country Programme serves as the vehicle for delivering ILO support in Nepal and to realize the goal of decent work for all.

The ILO has had an important role in Nepal in developing a constructive and congenial social partnership between the Government and workers' and employers' organizations.

Based on this partnership, the tripartite constituents have unionized informal workers, prioritized gender equality and inclusive development, implemented a range of social protection measures, amended labour laws, established a social dialogue mechanism and ratified ILO Conventions.

A journey from 1966 to 2016 in the world of

1966-1975

- Nepal joins the International Labour Organization in 1966.
- The ILO focuses on human resource planning, formulating labour policies and training particularly to promote the tourism sector.
- The ILO recommends that Nepal establish a Department of Labour.
- The Department of Industry and Labour is established in 1971, followed by a number of Labour Offices.
- Nepal ratifies the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) and the Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131) in 1974.



1976-1985

- Nepal ratifies the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) in 1976.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is established in 1981.
- The ILO focuses on employment and skills development planning, vocational training, labour-based technologies, labour policy and administration, cooperative development, social security, management and small enterprise development.
- The launching of the Special Public Works Programme (SPWP) ultimately generates more than two million work days of employment through the use of labour-based technology.
- The SPWP sets benchmarks for technical standards that the Department of Irrigation incorporates as good practices into its future training manuals.
- The Vocational and Skills Development Training Centre is established and the Industrial Training Programme is launched in 1977.

1986-1995

- Nepal ratifies the Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14) in 1986.
- Nepal restores multi-party democracy in 1990, which opens opportunities for freedom of speech and collective bargaining.
- Nepal promulgates the first Labour Act in 1992 and Trade Union Act in 1993.
- The employment-intensive Dhaulagiri Irrigation Development Project completed.
- The ILO assists the National Planning Commission in analysing employment and human resource planning, which feeds vital information into the Government's seventh Five-Year Plan.
- The Office of the Senior ILO Advisor is established in Kathmandu in 1994.



...work in Nepal



- The ILO supports the establishment of the National Occupational Safety and Health Centre in 1994.
- Nepal ratifies the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) in 1995.
- The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour kicks off in 1995, benefiting more than 13,500 working children.

1996–2005

- With ILO support the Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agricultural Roads is established with a mandate to oversee rural development and employment-intensive public works.
- Nepal conducts its first National Forced Labour Survey in 1998, providing information on labour market trends.
- The Ministry of Labour and Transport Management launches the first National Labour Conference in 1997, in cooperation with workers' and employers' organizations.

- The ILO provides technical advice for establishing the first-ever minimum wage for agricultural workers.
- The ILO Office upgrades in 2000 to an Area Office, with a Country Director.
- Nepal develops a National Training Policy in 1999.
- Nepal promulgates the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act in 2000.
- Nepal ratifies the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) in 2002.
- In a landmark move, the Government outlaws the Kamaiya system in 2002.
- Nepal becomes one of three countries to embark on a pilot ILO Time-Bound Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour in seven hazardous sectors.
- The ILO assists the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare in drafting



- a National Plan of Action to combat human trafficking.
- Nepal is the first country in Asia to launch a National Campaign on Social Protection for All, in 2004.
- A pioneering National Dialogue Conference on the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) and Peace Building takes place in 2005.
- The ILO supports projects aimed at women's employment and empowerment, strengthening the tripartite partners, microfinance, social protection, entrepreneurship for women, Start and Improve Your Business, elimination of child labour and bonded labour, gender equality, vocational training, micro and small enterprise policy development, youth self-employment, occupational safety and health, social dialogue, HIV and AIDS at work place and trafficking.
- During this ten-year period, the National Planning Commission, with ILO support, integrates employment and decent work goals into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, following consultations with workers' and employers' organizations on key policies and strategies.

A journey from 1966 to 2016....



2006–2015

- Following the country's move to democratic governance in 2006, the four major trade unions in Nepal sign a Commitment on Peace Building, which leads to the establishment of the Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre.
- Nepal ratifies the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) in 2007.
- Nepal becomes the first country in Asia to ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989, (No. 169), also in 2007.
- United National Interagency Rehabilitation Programme for rehabilitation of ex-maoist combatants supporting peace process in Nepal.
- The ILO provides technical support to formulate a National Employment Policy, which the Government endorses in 2015.
- Workers' organizations sign a joint agreement in 2011 to create a social security fund.
- With ILO technical assistance throughout the ten-year period, ILO constituents draft social protection schemes, the National Action Plans on Convention No.

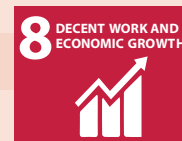
169 and on Child Labour, a National Occupational Safety and Health Policy, a Foreign Employment Act, a Bonded Labour Bill and the revised Labour Act.

- The ILO implements a large labour-intensive public works programme covering 36 districts, as well as projects on child labour, safe labour migration, local economic development, skills development, creating an enabling business environment, women's economic empowerment, green jobs, youth employment, occupational safety and health, prevention of forced labour and human trafficking, HIV and AIDS, informal economy, employment services and entrepreneurship development and programmes to strengthen workers and employers organizations.
- A massive earthquake hits Nepal in 2015 and the ILO responds with early recovery support.
- With workers' and employers' organizations contributing inputs during the drafting process, the Constitution adopted in 2015 covers a number of rights to ensure social security for all Nepalese, along with rights to employment.



- Nepal launches the Future of Work initiative in 2015 to address challenges in the world of work brought about by rapid technological changes.
- The United Nations member states adopt Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

2016–2030



- The Parliament discusses the Revised Labour Act and the Social Security Act, both of which were developed through tripartite consultation and cover workers in the formal and informal economies.
- A new Decent Work Country Programme will be developed.
- The ILO will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2019.
- The ILO will support initiatives on the Future of Work challenges and opportunities and the Sustainable Development Goals.





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Date 4th December, 2016

Message

I am pleased to congratulate the International Labour Organization on the occasion of its 50 years of partnership with Nepal, highlighted in this publication, 50 Years of Development Cooperation with Nepal.

Nepal opened its door for international economic cooperation to enhance and expedite its development process in the early 1960s and became a member of the ILO in 1966.

The ILO started its technical assistance by supporting Nepal's tourism sector in the early 1970s, with the establishment of the Hotel Management and Tourism Training Centre to train workers. Over the years, the ILO has expanded its work in the areas of social dialogue strengthening, job-centric national socio-employment policies and integrated social security policy, labour legislation reform, informal economy formalization, child labour eliminations, labour-intensive rural infrastructure and promoting fundamental rights at work.

The Decent Work Country Programme for Nepal, developed jointly by the ILO's tripartite constituents, provides a good framework at the national level for delivering coordinated support to advance decent work priorities in our country.

Nepal promulgated a democratic Constitution through its Constitution Assembly in September 2015, which provides extensive coverage of fundamental rights, including social, economic and cultural rights. The Constitution provides a number of rights to ensure economic and social security for all Nepalese people, including the right to social security as enshrined in Article 43, no gender-based discrimination in wages and social security for similar jobs (Article 18-4) and the right to employment (Article 33).

The country is moving into a new era of peace and prosperity, focusing on employment generation and economic growth. In this process, we expect the ILO to continue extending the support as an important partner for fulfilling the aspirations of our people for greater socio-economic growth.

I want to thank the ILO for its long-enduring support to the Government of Nepal and its social partners in promoting the Decent Work Agenda to achieve greater prosperity and social justice.

Surya Man Gurung

Minister of Labour and Employment



Message

Congratulations to the ILO at 50 years in Nepal!

We are pleased to congratulate the International Labour Organization for its successful completion of a 50-year journey in Nepal. Thanks to the ILO team, from Geneva to the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the country office, for your contribution in promoting the Decent Work Agenda in Nepal. We are happy to be celebrating your 50 years here, especially in the presence of ILO Director-General Guy Ryder.

Over the past half century, the ILO has been very supportive and encouraging to all trade unions in Nepal. The support that the ILO provided to us during the critical political junctures was much appreciated, particularly during the people's movements in 1990 and 2006. We thank you for the international solidarity that you extended in the transformation of Nepal towards an inclusive and democratic political system that opened a pathway to social justice. The ILO is working for decent work and playing key role in advancing Sustainable Development Goal and Future of Work.

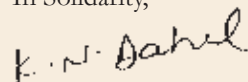
We also recall ILO support to us for developing labour-friendly policies and programmes in Nepal, which were crucial in the adoption of the Labour Act in 1992 and Trade Union Act in 1993 and with many other laws to fight child labour, forced labour and bonded labour that were promulgated during the past two decades. The ILO's continued assistance in the labour market reform process had a crucial role in the drafting of two comprehensive bills (on labour and social security) that are now in the process of promulgation through the Parliament.

The contributions of the ILO through the Bureau for Workers' Activities over the past decade for developing and expanding unions in the informal economy were key for organizing workers in the informal economy and precarious employment. Through this support, Nepali trade unions have expanded their networks to domestic, home-based, agriculture and self-employed workers as well as Nepali migrant workers in the Middle East and in Malaysia. Continued collaboration is crucial for strengthening this network, and we expect to maintain the relationship well into the future.

Nepali trade unions are happy to partner with the ILO in achieving its goal of attaining social justice in the world. Our cooperation and active participation in the ILO Governing Body and in the International Labour Conference will continue in the years ahead. Similarly, we want to express our commitment of collaboration with the ILO country office on implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme through the many activities that are underway in Nepal.

On this auspicious occasion of celebrating 50 years of the ILO presence in Nepal, we Nepali trade unions express our solidarity with you and wish you all the best for your future endeavours.

In Solidarity,



Khila Nath Dahal
President
JTUCC-Nepal





नेपाल उद्योग वाणिज्य महासंघ

Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce & Industry



Message

First and foremost, I congratulate the International Labour Organization on completing 50 years of constructive and commendable services in Nepal. The ILO has made significant achievements over this period of time. On this occasion, I also want to extend my sincere thanks to all ILO Directors and staff in Nepal who, during their individual posting, provided extensive assistance and cooperation for the greater socio-economic transformation of our country.

The Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce & Industry, as a constituent of the ILO, has maintained productive collaboration with the ILO to promote decent work conditions at work and shaping economic and labour policies in the country. The ILO's technical assistance in various aspects has resulted in strengthening capacities, improving workplace cooperation, social dialogue, industrial relations, entrepreneurship development and positively affecting other cross-cutting issues. Yet, there is even more need now for our strong partnership to achieve social justice, promoting employment and decent work.

The ILO's continued support for labour market reform process and formulating different policies and programmes remain important for employers in Nepal. There have been many ups and downs over the past 50 years of political changes, economic crises and technological transformation. Nonetheless, we have together achieved significant progress in the world of work in Nepal.

We commend ILO's contribution in promoting inclusive growth and social justice. We extend our commitment to continue working together to achieve greater gender equity, reduce economic inequalities, and to promote productive jobs. I would like to express FNCCI's unwavering commitment to support promoting decent work and economic growth by deepening our partnership and maximising our joint efforts.

Pashupati Murarka
FNCCI President

“Universal and lasting **peace can be
established only if it is based on
social justice.”**

ILO Constitution, 1919



International
Labour
Organization

Foreword

This year marks 50 years of development partnership between Nepal and the International Labour Organization. Since Nepal joined the ILO in 1966, the ILO has strived to bring forth the diverse voices of the people of Nepal through its tripartite structure. It has been a privilege for the ILO to witness the democratic and progressive political and development journey that Nepal has embarked on over the years and to be an active agent in promoting social justice in the country.

In 2001, the ILO celebrated its 35th anniversary in Nepal. I am happy to note that this partnership has evolved even more since then to address changing needs. The ILO in Nepal continues to work earnestly towards developing a constructive social partnership between the Government of Nepal and workers' and employers' organizations that hinges on dialogue and cooperation. This partnership is crucial for securing common ground for policies and interventions on issues related to promoting employment-centric inclusive growth, improving labour market governance and industrial relations and encouraging respect for fundamental principles and rights at work. I am certain that our partnership will continue to thrive over the coming years.

I would like to thank the development partners, UN system agencies and other organizations for the excellent partnership we have had over the last five decades. The ILO looks forward to working closely in the future as well. The ILO office in Nepal has been privileged to have had highly dedicated staff throughout the years and they deserve special mention.

Through this Photobook we chronicle the 50-year history of the ILO in Nepal while also reflecting on the achievements and challenges. Despite having a presence for half a century, our relevance in Nepal can only be bolstered through constant self-reflection. So as we celebrate 50 years of achievements of the ILO and its constituents in Nepal, we are cognizant of the challenging endeavours ahead. We are honoured to be part of the current historical socio-political juncture of Nepal.

So I invite you to peek into the 50 years of the evolution of ILO's ideas and work in Nepal.

Richard Howard

Director

ILO Country Office for Nepal

DECENT WORK

A better world starts here.

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PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS





⚡ Nepal has ratified 11 ILO Conventions, including seven of the eight fundamental Conventions.



⌘ The ILO provides advice, training and capacity building to its constituents to shape national economic, labour and social policies that are in line with international standards.



⚡ Nepal was the first country in South Asia to ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).

Tharu women with
fishing nets; an ethnic
group in the Terai region.



The ILO facilitated the » social dialogue processes for the ratification of and then preparation of a National Action Plan on the implementation of Convention 169.





⚡ Nepal ratified the ILO Conventions on Forced Labour 1930 (No 29) and Elimination of the Worst forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No.182) in 2002. Nepal Promulgated the Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act in 2000.



⚡ The ILO mandate on gender equality is to promote equality between all women and men in the world of work and is enshrined in its Constitution and reflected in relevant international labour standards and ILO programmes at the country levels; the ILO conducted its first gender audit in 2001 in Nepal.





PROMOTING DECENT WORK OPPORTUNITIES



By participating in the ILO's Employment Opportunities for Women Project during the 2000s, 5,635 women benefitted from the formation of 62 savings and credit groups and increased their access to training entrepreneurship development and variety of other skills.





⌘ With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UN Women, the ILO trained women affected by armed conflict in skills they could use to get into employment.



Increased women's access to financial services and training leads to their economic, social and political empowerment.







The ILO assists the Central Bureau of Statistics in collecting labour market data, including estimates of the employment and unemployment situation in the country.



More than 70 per cent of the economically active population in Nepal is engaged in the informal economy, which constrains their opportunities for decent work.



⚡ Establishment of business help desks, the registration of construction sector subcontractors in partnership with municipalities, training on business development, promotion of occupational safety and health measures and skills testing and certification are some of the initiatives that the ILO undertakes to support the process of formalizing the informal economy in Nepal.



« In socio-economically deprived areas in far-western districts, the ILO trained youths in various skills to increase their livelihood options.

Skilled workforce »
for strong,
sustainable and
balanced growth.





« The ILO promotes Local Economic Development approach to create jobs through tourism value chain upgrading.



« Green jobs create direct wages employment and have direct environmental benefits to Chure conservation.



⚡ Through the ILO programme entrepreneurs in Eastern region are able to sell and earn more through an improved value chain and business enabling environment.



- ⌘ Strengthening the capacity of constituents helps them to take on a significant role in developing the national social, economic and labour agenda and in its effective implementation.



- ⌘ The ILO and Department of Labour target the strengthening of employment centres to provide vital employment-related information to jobseekers.





⚡ Effective employment services play an important role in job matching, enhancing employability, addressing skill mismatches and linking support directly to employers and workers.

Nepal is third among all countries receiving remittances in terms of gross domestic product, at an estimated value of 30 percent of GDP in 2015.

Promoting good governance in labour migration protects Nepali men and women migrant workers from exploitation and helps them make productive use of their incomes and new skills.







In collaboration with the Government, the ILO works to further strengthen legal frameworks to enhance protection measure for migrant workers and to improve access to accurate and relevant pre-departure information to migrant workers crucial to make informed migration choices and to optimize the migration experience.









MORE JOBS AND
BETTER LIVES THROUGH
LABOUR-INTENSIVE
INFRASTRUCTURE



In the 1970s, the ILO focused on creating jobs in Nepal through labour-intensive irrigation and special public work projects.







⚡ The ILO through Strengthening the National Rural Transport Programme (SNRTP) employs local workers, mainly women from deprived groups in coordination with the local governments.

⚡ Women workers for the first time receive wages through bank account.



⌘ SNRTP is one of the largest infrastructure projects of the Government of Nepal. The project aims to assist the government in building bridges and upgrading, rehabilitating and maintaining local road networks and river crossing structures in 36 selected district across Nepal. The ILO provides technical assistance in road and river crossing structures maintenance.

Female engineers ⌘
working for the
ILO/SNRTP.





When Nepal was hit by a powerful earthquake in April 2015, Gori Maya Tamang, 38, lost her husband and panicked about her children's future until she secured a job as a maintenance worker under the ILO Cash for Work Programme and sends her two children to school without stress. The ILO launched the Cash for Work Programme through the Emergency Fund for Early Recovery to support earthquake victims and reconstruction work.



⌘ The ILO provided Training of Trainers for 26 Engineers on “Seismic Resistant Building Construction” to support post-earthquake reconstruction.







REALISING FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK



⋈ Child labourers decreased from 2.6 million in 1996 to 1.6 million children in 2008 due to greater awareness, improved policies and expanded access to education.



⋈ To accelerate actions to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, the local bodies of the Government declared fourteen wards from Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Kavre districts as “child labour free zones” between 2015 and 2016 with the ILO assistance.



⌘ **Ending child labour in supply chains is everyone's business!**

The focus for the 2016 World Day Against Child Labour – on 12 June – was on ending child labour in supply chains.

❧ In July 2000, the Government of Nepal made a landmark decision to outlaw the *Kamaiya* system, and the ILO subsequently supported rehabilitation of *Kamaiyas* and other former bonded labourers, such as *Haliyas*.



❧ The ILO supports rehabilitation of former bonded labourers and raises awareness among the stakeholders for creating conducive environment to ratify Forced Labour Protocol (P29).





⚡ In June 2011, ILO members – governments, trade unions and employers’ associations – adopted the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189), which entitles domestic workers to the same basic rights as those available to other workers in all countries; the revised Labour Act of Nepal that is under discussion in the parliament recognizes domestic workers as formal sector workers.



⚡ ILO constituents adopted and continue to carry out an integrated approach to reducing vulnerability to forced labour and human trafficking.

Awareness raising on safe labour migration at community level. ⚡







EXTENDING SOCIAL PROTECTION



The ILO assists social partners develop social security schemes in the areas of maternity benefits, sickness benefits, workplace benefits and unemployment insurance benefits; also provides technical support to workplaces on HIV prevention, occupational safety and health policies and micro schemes for health insurance.



⚡ A National Occupational Safety and Health policy has been developed in line with the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) and the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) with the technical assistance from the ILO.





TRIPARTISM AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE



« Maintaining good employee relations at work place helps reduce workplace conflict and improve productivity at work.



Formulation of socio-economic and work related policies at the national and industry levels is done through tripartism involving representatives of governments, workers and employers.



⚡ Every five years, the Government, social partners and the ILO prepare the Decent Work Country Programme, which sets the targets and priorities closely linked with national priorities that the ILO will contribute towards, together with its constituents.

The ILO support to »
strengthen capacity of the ILO
constituents to better engage
in social dialogue and thus
better discuss and negotiate to
improve working conditions.

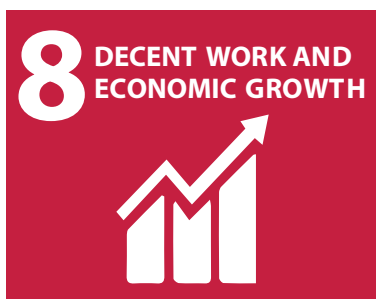


Sustainable Development Agenda 2030



“ If this agenda can become a reality in the next 15 years, we will be turning the tide back in the direction of social justice and assuring a sustainable and fairer society for us and our children”, says

ILO Director-General Guy Ryder



Promote Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Employment and Decent Work for all

ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE OF WORK
ESSENTIAL FOR ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE



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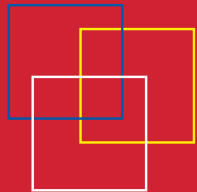
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