

Committee on the Application of Standards

Date: 8 June 2023

Governments appearing on the list of individual cases have the opportunity, if they so wish, to supply written information to the Committee.

► Information on the application of ratified Conventions supplied by governments on the list of individual cases

Nepal (ratification: 2002)

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

The Government has provided the following information.

The Government wishes to underscore the fact that article 39 of the Constitution of Nepal guarantees the rights of children by providing that no child shall be employed in factories, mines or in any other hazardous work. The existing data collected through the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2017–18 indicates that child labour in Nepal has been significantly reduced from 1.6 million in 2008 to 1.1 million in 2018. However, these numbers are still high. That is why the Government has been making effective and efficient interventions. Through the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS), the Government of Nepal has formulated the National Master Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour 2018–28. In 2022, the Ministry launched its Action Plan. The implementing roles are assigned to federal, provincial and local governments and relevant stakeholders. This year, the MoLESS and the ILO in Nepal jointly organized a stakeholders' consultation on the revision of the list of hazardous occupations for children. The participants in the workshop represented civil society organizations, trade unions, employers' organizations, United Nations agencies and development partners. The MoLESS also formed a Technical Tri-partite Committee to review the list of hazardous occupations and recommended its inclusion in the amendment process of the Child Labour Regulation and Prohibition Act, 2000. The Government is also conducting a study and review of current child labour rehabilitation models in Nepal with the intention of making them more sustainable, child-centred and economic. The study results will provide clear guidance for all labour offices to initiate the rescue of children from the worst forms of child labour and provide them with proper support and care. The Government has launched "Child Labour Free Local Level Declaration Program". More than 100 local governments have expressed interest in a child labour free declaration. This is an area-based approach and targets specific geographical locations with the aim of addressing all forms of child labour, including the worst forms. It is a Government strategy to make child labour free zones and it is aimed to reach out to all 753 local areas and involve local governments.

The Government is committed to ending all forms of forced labour. We take this opportunity to highlight the fact that Nepal declared *haruwa charuwa* [agriculture-based bonded labourers] free in 2022. Existing laws and policies have ensured the rights of these people. In recent years, a number of administrative measures have been taken to encourage the school enrolment of children, resulting in 97.1 per cent school enrolment in the current fiscal year. The MoLESS, in partnership with the ILO, has provided skills-based training to former bonded labourers. Their long-term rehabilitation has already begun. An integrated Forced Labour Act has been drafted. We assure the Committee that the Government of Nepal will help to address the remaining issues later. Livelihood support will help families to end child labour.

The Government also reiterates that the Nepal Police Anti-Human Trafficking Bureau has been taking significant action, including community sensitization and the establishment of border checkpoints, to prevent human trafficking in Nepal. The Community Police Partnership (CPP) programme has been launched. The Anti-Human Trafficking Bureau of the Nepal Police has adopted three strategies to curb human trafficking, including the trafficking of girl children. In a preventive approach, it conducts awareness programmes at border checkpoints, including at Tribhuvan International Airport, Gautam Buddha International Airport and the Indian border. It conducts protection activities, such as rescue from destination countries, sends victims to rehabilitation centres for counselling and registers cases. It regularly carries out investigations, prosecution and surveillance. During the current fiscal year, 15 girl children have been rescued from trafficking. But it has been observed that many trafficking cases are not reported in Nepal due to fear and social stigma, so the community police are informing and empowering communities to speak up and report cases to the police. Similarly, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is establishing an Anti-Human Trafficking section at its premises. The Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens has drafted a Ten-Year Action Plan Combat Human Trafficking. Similarly, a human trafficking policy will be drafted. The Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens organizes awareness programmes, sensitizes local governments and engages with the cyber bureau. It also provides skills-based training to survivors of trafficking and supports the rehabilitation centre.

The National Child Rights Council (NCRC) has operated a child helpline (1098) and is providing services through 18 offices covering the whole of Nepal. Missing Children Response Centres rescue children who are in vulnerable situations through 240 units. There are sufficient mechanisms to address children's issues, such as the Ministry of Women itself, the National Child Rights Council, the Provincial Child Rights Committee, local child rights committees and child welfare officers. Some 238 child rights committees have already been formed at the local level. Similarly, children's funds have been established in 213 local areas. Child welfare officers have been assigned to 266 local areas. Child protection system procedures have been prepared in 323 local areas.

The Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation has identified 16,322 *haliya* [bonded labour] families, of which 12,820 have been rehabilitated and 1,135 families are handed over at the local level. Similarly, 27,570 families of *kamaiyas* [bonded labourers] have been identified, of which 27,021 have been rehabilitated and 300 handed over to the local level. Since Nepal became a pathfinder country and a member of Alliance 8.7, an Alliance 8.7 Nepal Secretariat has been established in the MoLESS, which is supported by United Nations agencies on a rotational basis, including the ILO. The Secretariat submits annual reports to the Global Alliance 8.7 Secretariat. This year, in April, the Nepal Secretariat, in close coordination with the MoLESS, submitted Nepal's annual report on child labour, forced labour, human trafficking and modern slavery. It consulted more than ten government

agencies and civil society organizations to collect information. The detailed data for those areas is specified in the annual report. The MoLESS, through the Nepal Alliance 8.7 Secretariat, has initiated data/information gathering on the progress made by various ministries/institutions on child labour, forced labour and human trafficking in Nepal. Integrated software is being developed to store data and information which is useful for planning and initiating targeted interventions to combat child labour, including its worst forms.

The Government has prioritized brick kilns as one of the sectors for regular intervention to protect children and prevent child labour. Several interventions are taking place at the source (villages) and destination (kilns) levels with a view to creating a child labour free brick industry and making the employers more accountable for preventing the use of child labour in the sector. Kindergartens have been set up at brick kiln sites. The National Statistics Office (NSO) will conduct the next Labour Force Survey in Nepal in 2024. The MoLESS has requested the NSO to provide fresh data on child labour, including its worst forms, and to disaggregate data down to the local level. This will give a fresh picture of child labour and pave the way for future interventions in Nepal. The Government of Nepal, working with development partners, trade unions, employers' organizations and other concerned stakeholders, continues to be committed to the principle enshrined in the Constitution of Nepal of 2015 and to meeting its international commitments, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.