A PROGRESSIVE JOURNEY TO GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

ACHIEVEMENTS OF NEPAL
## Key Highlights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constitution of Nepal</th>
<th>Legal Reforms</th>
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<tr>
<td>• “Rights of Women” as Fundamental Rights</td>
<td>• Continuous amendments in a number of Nepal Acts to maintain gender equality</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Citizenship with identity of descent and gender by the name of mother or father</td>
<td>• Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Right Act, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 33% of Federal Parliament Seats reserved for women</td>
<td>• Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention) Act, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Women’s Representation in State Body Ensured</td>
<td>• Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>• President or Vice-President to be from different sex or community</td>
<td>• National Penal Code, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Speakers or Deputy Speakers in House of Representative,</td>
<td>• Local Level Election Act, 2017 (one candidate for mayor or deputy mayor from a political party must be a woman)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of National Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Speaker and Deputy Speaker of State Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Proportionate representation in all state bodies</td>
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<td>• National Women Commission as a Constitutional Body</td>
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<td>• Economic evaluation of contribution and work for the maintenance of children and family as the State Policy</td>
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<td>• Special Opportunity through affirmative action in education, health, employment and social security</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Identity and special provisions for gender and sexual minorities</td>
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<td>• Equal pay for equal value of work</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Representation</th>
<th>Employment and Professions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Women in Federal Parliament: 33%</td>
<td>• Women majors in 18 Local Governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women in State Assembly: 34%</td>
<td>• Women in Civil Service: 23.72% (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women in Local Level Assembly: 41%</td>
<td>• Women health professionals 46.93% (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women Chairpersons in Federal parliament: 9 out of 16</td>
<td>• Female doctors 34.1% (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women holds 90% of Deputy Mayor or Vice Chair of Local Governments, leading four major sectors: Judicial Committee; Revenue Consultation Committee; Budget and Program Committee and Monitoring and Evaluation Committee</td>
<td>• Female Journalists 18%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ratio of women in the small and large enterprises 37.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Female labour force participation 26.3%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sectorial Achievements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Gender Parity Index in Secondary Education: 1.0376 (2017)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Women’s Enrollment Rate in Tertiary Education: 52.2% of total enrollment (206)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Net Enrollment rate of girls at primary level: 97%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Coverage of Immunization to women and children: Almost 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Women Singulate mean age at marriage: 20.6 (2011) against legally marriage age 20 years</td>
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The year 2020, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary was anticipated to be an important year to celebrate the achievements of gender equality. However, the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic could slow down or even “reverse” equality gain made in the last two decades. The Covid-19 pandemic is exposing vulnerabilities across every sphere. I would like to share that the ministry is working to ensure women’s needs are reflected in Covid-19 responses.

This report on “A Progressive Journey to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment” is a very timely contribution towards the formulation and implementation of the targets of Sustainable Development Goals for Nepal. This report is our attempt to showcase the achievements and efforts of the government of Nepal towards Gender Equality.

Nepal has taken multiple approaches through the national and international normative framework to ensure gender quality. Despite the gaps, Nepal is making progress in the area of women’s rights and gender justice. The Constitution of Nepal guarantees equal rights for men and women. Similarly, as a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other important international conventions/protocols, the government has demonstrated its commitment to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. The government of Nepal has ensured inclusivity as fundamental rights and we are committed towards it.

I would like to thank the entire editorial team for coming up with this important document. I am hopeful this publication will not only help us to showcase our achievements in the past two decades but will also work as a guideline to fulfill the gaps in the days to come.

Parbat Gurung
Minister
Women, Children and Senior Citizen Ministry
Nepal has achieved tremendous progress in gender equality and women empowerment, particularly in the last two decades. Women participation in politics is commendable in all three tiers of the government. Similarly, the participation of women in civil service and private sectors is also very encouraging.

Constitution of Nepal has become a milestone in the journey to gender equality. The constitution has provisioned the special right for women, right to equality, right to justice, right to social security among others as fundamental rights. These provisions are under implementation through acts, regulations, policy and programs.

It’s my great pleasure to share the achievements of women right and gender equality in the last two decades through this report; “A Progressive Journey to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment”. As the signatory state of different international conventions and protocols related to women right and gender equality like Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), we are determined towards our goal of substantive gender equality. The report shows our present status of gender equality along with our achievements towards women empowerment. It indicates that we are moving towards achieving the targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mainly in the area of gender equality.

I would like to thank all the stakeholders mainly government and non-government organizations and development partners for joining hands with us in our efforts to achieve this success. We expect similar support in the days to come.

I believe that the information of this report will be useful to policymakers, planners and for anyone interested in the area of gender. I would like to thank the editorial and advisory team for this publication.

Yam Kumari Khatiwada
Secretary
Women, Children and Senior Citizen Ministry
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Addressing High Risk Pregnancy in Remote Areas

Dignified Menstruation

CHANGE
LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN & GIRLS
LEGAL FRAMEWORK TO REALIZE INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND BEYOND

Nepal’s last two decades have remained productive in forging equality and justice in Nepali society. Nepal has experienced several popular movements in the last three decades — from monarchy to multi-party democracy and then to Federal Democratic Republic. The country also witnessed the decade-long armed conflict (1996-2006) and the subsequent peaceful people’s movement in 2006. As an outcome of these movements Constitutional Assembly was formed through a popular general election. The Constitutional Assembly promulgated Constitution of Nepal in 2015 which established Nepal as an inclusive, just, democratic and federal republic.

**Constitution of Nepal**

Constitution of Nepal provides a clear and comprehensive framework to end all forms of discrimination and inequality. It strictly prohibits the violence and discrimination against women and girls. It is strongly anchored in internationally recognized human rights.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Major Provisions</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>• Citizenship with identity of descent and gender</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Right to Equality</td>
<td>• Non discriminatory</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Equal right to the ancestral property</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Opens rooms for making special provisions for socially backward women; gender and sexual minorities and others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Right of Women</td>
<td>• Equal right without gender-based discrimination</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Right to safe motherhood and reproductive health</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Right to obtain compensation in case of suffering from violence</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Right of participation in principle of proportional inclusion</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Right to positive discrimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Equal right to property and family affairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Right to Social Justice</td>
<td>• Right to participate in the State bodies on the basis of inclusive principle (includes gender and sexual minorities as well)</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Right to Social Security</td>
<td>• Social Security Right to those who cannot take care of themselves (including helpless single women)</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 50  | Policies of the State    | • Policies related to social justice and inclusion:  
  • Priority in employment;  
  • Making vulnerable women and girls self dependent;  
  • Rehabilitation, protection and making self reliant to violence victim women and girls;  
  • Measure and value the unpaid household and care work | Directive Principles, Policies and Obligations of the State |
| 84  | Composition of Parliament| • At least one third of members of federal parliament should be women | Representation |
| 176 | Composition of State Assembly | • At least one third of members of the State Assembly should be women | Representation |
| 252 | National Women Commission| • A constitutional body that works for:  
  • Establishing rights and interests of women  
  • Monitor the implementation of laws and international treaties related to empowerment of girls and women | Constitutional Body |
Besides, following Articles of Constitution of Nepal ensures Women’s office in State Structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>President and Vice-President to be from different sex or community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>At least one woman among the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>At least one women out of the Chair and the Vice-chair of National Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>182</td>
<td>One woman out of the State Speaker and the Deputy State Speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215</td>
<td>At least four members of Village Executive Committee to be women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>216</td>
<td>At least five members of the Municipal Executives to be women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
<td>At least three members of District Coordination Committee to be women</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Laws Related to Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls

Several laws were enacted over the last two decades to prevent and control gender-based violence and discrimination and to promote equality and empowerment of women, including those from marginalized and disadvantaged communities. Among them, the 11th amendment of General Code, 1963 in 2002, commonly referred to as the Women’s Bill, 2002, repealed several discriminatory provisions and entitled women to significant rights. This amendment is widely acknowledged as the milestone in elimination of discrimination against women. The amendment provided women access to control over familial property for the first time, established equal inheritance rights to unmarried daughters and sons, as well as granted women the right to their
husband’s property and resources upon divorce.

Similarly, the 12th amendment of General Code in 2007 allowed women the right to keep inherited property:

Major Legal Instruments to Ensure Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls

- National Civil Code, 2017
- National Penal Code, 2017
- Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention) Act, 2015
- Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2009
- Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act, 2007
- Caste based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2011
- Witchcraft Related Accusation (Crime and Punishment) Act, 2015
- Right to Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act, 2018
- National Women’s Commission Act, 2017
- The Labor Act, 2017
- Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2018
- The Legal Aid Act, 1997
- Crime Victim Protection Act, 2018

entitled them to use property without the consent of male members; introduced liberal conditions on the use of inherited property by widows and liberalized divorce rights. It criminalized domestic and sexual violence and established marital rape as a crime.

National Penal Code, 2017 is a landmark in the criminal justice system of Nepal and encompasses many facets of crimes including violence against women and girls (VAWG). It criminalizes acts of violence and willful discrimination and harmful social practices; which include rape, incest, pedophilia, polygamy, forced marriage, non-consensual marriage, child marriage, chhaupadi - the practice of banishment of women during menstruation from their usual residence, dowry system, sex-selective and forced abortions, trafficking of women, sexual harassment at workplace, slavery servitude and so on.

National Civil Code, 2017 prohibits discrimination on any ground in the public places and in the use of public services and utilities. It forbids discrimination in wages and social security on the basis of gender. It establishes equal inheritance rights for daughters and sons, and equal spousal rights to property. It provisions for alimony for women before divorce.

Sexual Harassment at Workplace Prevention Act, 2015 protects the right of every individual to work in a safe environment.

The Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2009 classifies domestic violence as a criminal offence.
punishable under the law. The law attaches importance to the sensitivity of the victim, and provisions for close door hearings through summary procedure. It recognizes domestic violence as a public health emergency case with provision of medical treatment for the victim for which the cost is to be borne by the perpetrator.

**Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act, 2007** criminalizes trafficking in persons for prostitution, organ extraction and engaging women and girls in prostitution or sexual exploitation.

**Caste based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2011** sufficiently criminalizes activities that discriminates people on the basis of caste or untouchability.

**Witchcraft Related Accusation (Crime and Punishment) Act, 2015** prohibits accusing or assaulting a women on charge of practicing witchcraft and stipulates a jail term for five to ten years and a fine of Rs 50,000 if a person is found guilty.

**Right to Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act, 2018** firmly establishes the sexual and reproductive rights of every women and girls. The Act provisions the right to 98 days of paid leave to women working in the Government, NGOs or private offices, and an arrangement for breast-feeding to the baby within the office premises for two years. Under Article 15 of the Act, women can undergo safe abortion with their consent up to 12 weeks of pregnancy and 28 weeks in case of pregnancy due to rape or incest.

**National Women’s Commission Act, 2017** mostly comprises recommendatory and study and research roles for: effective implementation of the Conventions and Treaties to which Nepal is a party and their proper domestication.

**The Labor Act, 2017** ensures equal pay for equal value of work for both men and women. It keeps provision for 98 days of maternity leave, with 60 days of paid leave.

**Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2018** establishes the constitutional right of every child to receive free basic and secondary education. Public funded schools are required to provide easily accessible admission, and ensure that there is no expulsion from school. Scholarships and day meals are to be provided to students in the backward areas and marginalized communities.

**The Legal Aid Act, 1995** supports the victims who are indigent with access to justice through legal counseling, case filing, legal proceedings and court hearings on a pro bono basis.

The Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs has established a legal aid center to provide coordinated legal aid service to women, poor and vulnerable people across the country.

Similarly, the **Crime Victims Protection Act, 2018** ensures the right to justice for the victims of crimes throughout the investigation, adjudication and social rehabilitation phases of criminal proceedings. It reaffirms non-discrimination, and provides special arrangements for cases related to rape and sexual violence.
Major Institutions and Mechanisms for Protection and Realization of Women’s Rights.

- National Women Commission;
- Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens;
- Gender focal point in each Ministry/Agency;
- Department of Women and Children;
- Social Development Ministries in seven Provinces;
- Women Development Units in 753 local bodies;
- Gender Responsive Budget Committee in the Ministry of Finance;
- Women and Children Service Directorate in the Nepal Police;
- 240 Women and Children Service Centres (WCSC) in Police Offices in all 77 districts;
- 10 Rehabilitation Centres for women and girls victims of trafficking and those affected by trafficking;
- 36 Service Centres for women victimized or affected by domestic violence;
- Human Trafficking and Investigation Bureau in the Nepal Police;
- Free service of lawyers available in courts at all levels;
- Access to Justice Commission at the Supreme Court;
- Pro bono legal aid committee coordinated by the District Office of the Attorney General;
- Legal aid chamber at Bar Association Offices;
- Hospital based One-stop Crisis Management Centres (OCMC) in 44 places;
- Foreign Employment Promotion Board for addressing the protection problems related to Nepali migrant workers (working in tandem with Nepali missions abroad);
- Social Service Division of National Planning Commission;
- Judgment Execution Directorate of the Supreme Court;
- National Judgment Execution Coordination Committee in the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers;
- Enhancing Access to Justice through Institutional Reform (2018 - 2020) project launched by Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs;
- The provisions of Judicial Committees under Vice-chairpersons or Deputy Mayors of Rural Municipalities and Municipalities respectively (Article 217 of the Constitution);
A Progressive Journey to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
Achievement of Nepal
A Progressive Journey to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Achievement of Nepal

National Action Plans and Strategies

- SDG Status and Road Map (2016-2030)
- 15th National Plan (2019/20-2023/24)
- Yearly Work Plan against Gender-Based Violence Campaign 2019/20
- The National Plan of Action against Human Trafficking 2011-2021
- National Strategy on Child Marriage 2015
- National Action Plan II on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 (2011/12-2015/16) at the stage of final approval

Institutions and Practices

The Constitution has provisioned for a number of constitutional bodies. The National Human Rights Commission is an ‘A’ rated internationally accredited human rights institution. There are other constitutionally mandated Commissions to work closely in protection and promotion of the rights of the disadvantaged and marginalized communities, including National Dalit Commission; Indigenous Nationalities Commission; Madhesi Commission; Tharu Commission; Muslim Commission.

The National Women Commission (NWC) was first established by an executive order of the Government in 2002 in line with the relevant provisions of CEDAW and the principles underpinning the BPfA declaration. It was later promoted into a statutory body in 2006. The Constitution of Nepal has given NWC an autonomous constitutional status and a historic mandate for monitoring the human rights situation of women and promoting their advancement through equal rights protection and empowerment. It operates “Khabar Garaun 1145” — toll free helpline service to report gender-based violence.

President Women Upliftment Program

The President Women Upliftment Program (PWUP) was launched in 8 March 2017 as a flagship program to meaningfully transform the life of disadvantaged, poor and marginalized women. The program has various components under three clusters of activities.

Cluster I focuses on livelihood improvement, employment generation and entrepreneurship. Cluster II focuses on social awareness. Cluster III has activities such as hel-rescue of pregnant and lactating women, grants for rehabilitation for children with disabilities, adolescent girls and women. At present, the program covers 34 districts, which stand low in comparable Human Development Index.
Heli-Lifting
Addressing High Risk Pregnancy in Remote Areas

Helicopter lifting is one of major activities of President Women’s Upliftment Programme, a flagship national programme dedicated to empowering Nepalese women. Heli-lifting of women at high risk pregnancy and during delivery is becoming popular initiative due to immediate life saving impact. Being a 24/7 services, it is widely acknowledged as a responsible step of State towards its citizen. This initiative has saved the lives of 110 women and their infants from December 2018 to June 30, 2020.

Gender-Responsive Budget System

GRB system was introduced in Nepal since the FY 2007/08 budget. GRB raises awareness of gender issues in budgets and programs, and integrates gender perspective into the budgetary system. It also ensures the participation of
women in formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the budgetary allocations and programs. In the last 13 years, there has been a three and a half fold growth in directly gender responsive budget, from 11.03% in 2007/08 to 38.17% in 2019/20. Similarly, the indirectly gender responsive budget has also increased to reach over 48% of the total budget in 2016/17. In the last fiscal year, it stood at 35.56%, which together with the directly responsive budget was at 73.73%.

**Incorporation of Gender Aspects in Sectoral Policies**

The concept of designating gender focal points and incorporation of GESI principles in the line Ministries have been important tools for integrating gender aspects in sectoral policies. Seven important ministries including Health, MOWCSC, Agriculture, Local Development, Education, etc. are already implementing GESI in their project approach.

**Gender integration in Data**

Nepal is among a few countries that have incorporated the provision that vows to calculate care work carried out by women into the GDP. This is a historical move which is likely to come into practice in the days to come. Gender disaggregated baseline and outcome data are indispensable to make correct assessment for appropriate policy inputs. The Population Census of 2001 first gave attention to data based on factors such as gender, ethnicity, geography and disability in disaggregated form to some extent.

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Source: Ministry of Finance
WOMEN REPRESENTATION & PARTICIPATION
Power and Leadership Development

Nepal’s Federal parliament, Provincial Assemblies and Local Assemblies shows the model of inclusion. The growing level of inclusion is widely acknowledged as a silent revolution, which is continuously changing the power and leadership structure in the society. The representation of women in all three levels legislatures each is more than 33%.

Similarly, nine out of sixteen parliamentary committees in the federal parliament is led by women leaders. The representation also includes the representation of women with the section of the society that has faced multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Dalit (traditionally considered as untouchable) women represent such section. In every municipal ward, representation of Dalit women is 50% of seats reserved for
women. This is also an indication of changing power structure in the society. At the local level executive committees, currently 93% of elected vice-chairpersons and deputy mayors of village/municipal governments are women. Deputy mayors and vice chair person have four important roles in the local government system. Women representatives totaling 14,353 at the local levels and more than 14,600 in the three tiers of government have acquired leadership positions after the election.

**Women in public service**

Women had a small presence of around 8% in public service before 2007 when the Civil Service Act, 1993 was amended. The amendment reserved 45% of the total open competition seats for excluded groups, including women. Women are entitled to compete for 33% seats of this segmented total. Examinations are held only among the members of the group in order to make the public service more inclusive and representative. After this affirmative action, there has been a steady rise of women in public service, from 11.09% in 2008/09 to 23.6% in 2017/18.

The prediction shows that there will be a 50:50 scenario in Nepalese Civil service by the Year 2037 as the given scenario remains unchanged.

There are 38 women joint secretaries and 3 secretaries at present, and the enlarging base shows that there will be more women in the top leadership positions in the future.

The health sector seems more inclusive public sector compared to other sectors. In this sector women are approaching gender parity in health and miscellaneous services, in which their participation is 47% and 44%
respectively.

In past two decades, women are also increasing in number and position in Nepalese security forces. Nepal Police, Nepal Armed Police Force, and Nepal Army also reserve 20% open seats respectively for recruitment of women out of 45% seats reserved for all excluded categories. Since adoption of such an affirmative policy by Nepal Police and Armed Police Force in 2007/08 and by Nepal Army in 2011, there is 4.45% officer level participation of women in Nepal Police, 5.14% in Armed Police, and 5.54% in Nepal Army till 2017/18 (NWC, 2019). Nepal being the second country in Asia to implement NAP on SC resolutions 1325 and 1820 on WPS, this opening for women in security services has demonstrated its commitment to ensure the engagement of women in peaceful transformation of the society and nation.

**Private Sector**

Women entrepreneurs, industrialists, and bankers are also emerging in the private sector. The umbrella organization of private
Women in cooperatives

Cooperatives and community organizations provide women access to productive resources, ideas, technologies, skills and markets for their products and services through group engagements and support. The growth in cooperatives has remained phenomenal over the years, and now the number of primary cooperatives stands at 34,737. Women constitute around 51% of the membership and their representation in executive committee is 39.34%. Among the employees also, the share of women’s participation is around 48%.

Community Forestry:
Women Leadership Emerging from the Grass-Root Balancing the Socio-Economic Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentarian at Federal Parliament and Provincial Assembly</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Mayor</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson (rural municipality)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Chairperson</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward chairperson</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward members</td>
<td>1608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1976</td>
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</table>

Women in community organizations

The participation of women in community forestry has remained an internationally
acclaimed success. Community forests cover 29% of Nepal's forests area. There are 22,266 Community Forests Users Groups (CFUGs) with 244,000 committee members out of which 37% are women. Forest Policy reserve 50% representation for women and proportional representation of Dalits, ethnic and marginalized communities in the executive committee of CFUGs, and prescribe that either the president or secretary is woman.

Forest Act 2019: 50% of the revenue of community forest shall go to the poverty reduction, entrepreneurship development and women's empowerment. Further “Gender equality, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction” is one of the strategic pillar of the Forestry Sector Strategy Program (2016-2025).

**Women’s leadership in non-governmental organizations**

Among the 39,759 NGOs registered with Social Welfare Council in 2014, 2961 or around 8% of the NGOs were categorized as working exclusively on women issues. 64% NGOs worked in the community and rural development sector followed by other sectors such as health, environment, education, child welfare and so on. The role of NGOs as the providers of skill, livelihood support, social services and entrepreneurship training, etc., which were defining features in the 1980s and 1990s, were more diversified and many of them got into activism and lobbying for women's rights movement by the turn of the millennium. A number of NGOs are engaged in intensifying their activism and advocacy for effective implementation of the provisions of CEDAW and the strategic recommendations of BPfA.
SECTORAL & RIGHTS-BASED ACHIEVEMENTS

Gender issues cut across various sectors of the socio-economic development process and are supported by the Constitution.
4.1. Health

The Constitution of Nepal under Article 35 recognizes Right to Health as fundamental right of all citizens. It provisions for women to have special opportunity in education, health, employment and social security on the basis of positive discrimination. The health sector policies and programs have evolved progressively in favour of women, the poor and marginalized communities, backward regions and at-risk population. Succeeding health policies of 2014 and 2019 lay emphasis on an effective and responsive health care system based on equality and justice.

Under the Universal Coverage Strategy, Public Health Insurance Scheme was launched in 2016/17 and is expected to cover all 77 districts from FY 2019/20. Government pays all the premiums of the health insurance for senior citizens above 70 years, poor families, disabled persons and people affected with HIV/AIDS. About 58% of the people claiming benefits from the scheme are women.

Nepal Health Sector Strategy 2016-2021 aims to expand equitable access to and utilization of high-quality family planning services and methods.

The National Safe Motherhood Program accorded priority to maternal and neo-natal health. The ‘Aama’ Program launched in 2008/09 encouraged more women to deliver their babies in health facilities through the birth preparedness package. A maternity incentive scheme with cash incentives was introduced in 2005 to encourage women to visit health facilities for maternity care and improve access to such services. The Every Newborn Action Plan (2016-2035) further strengthens the commitment of the Government and its partners to improving the effectiveness of maternal and newborn health. The percentage of live births taking

![Chart 4.1: Trend in the rise of institutional delivery (in %)](chart)

Source: NDHS, 2016
place in health facilities has shown a steady seven fold plus rise between 1996 and 2016, as the chart 4.1 shows. This positive trend has favorable effect on reducing maternal and newborn mortality.

Chart 4.2 shows an impressive growth in antenatal care (ANC) utilization by women between 15-49 years of age. Compared to 2001 when only 28% women used to have any antenatal check-up, it rose to 84% in 2016. The percentage of women who go for four or more ANC consultation with medical professionals has increased more than fourfold between 2001 and 2016.

The postnatal and newborn health care has also improved significantly. Eighty one percent of women who delivered in a health facility received a postnatal check within two days after delivery (NDHS, 2016).

Nepal made abortion legal since September 2002. The Government began to provide comprehensive abortion care services in March 2004. The Abortion Law allows women to terminate pregnancies of 12 weeks gestation with their own consent. The Right to Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act, 2018 reflects essence of all efforts with emphasis on quality, inclusivity and affordability of care.

On the preventive side, the Multi-sector Nutritional Plan (MSNP, 2013-2017) and its second version MSNP II (2018-2022) target children, girls, pregnant women, and breast feeding mothers from low income group and backward areas to provide them nutrient suppliants and healthy alternatives. Contraceptive prevalence rate has increased from 39% in 2001 to 50% in 2011 and 53% in 2016. Similarly, total fertility rate (TFR) has declined from 4.6% in 1996 to 4.1% in 2001 and to 2.6% in 2011. The 2016 NDHS report records TFR to have further declined to 2.3%. These strategic measures and programs, which have borne visible health outcomes are transforming the life of women and girls.

### Improvement in Lowering Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)

The maternal mortality rate has been decreasing in terms of ratio in 100,000 live births as Table 4.1 below shows. The World Health Organization (WHO) criteria considers a maternal mortality rate (MMR) reduction of 70% or more from 1990 to 2016 as significant progress towards MDG5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of maternal mortality per 100,000 live births</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974/75</td>
<td>818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bank Gender Data Portal on Nepal projects the MMR to have declined even further down to 170 in the recent years.

Life expectancy of female surpassed that of male over the period of 1991 to 2011 census period. Life expectancy of women in this period increased from 53.5 to 69.6 as compared to that of male, which increased from 55 to 67.3. The World Bank gender data show that for 2000 and 2017 life expectancy of female in Nepal remained respectively higher at 63.3 and 71.6 as compared to that of male (61.2 and 68.7 for those years).

Infant and neo-natal death rate per 1000 live births has declined along with favourable changes in women’s reproductive and family health indicators. Neonatal mortality declined from 50% in 1996 to 21% in 2016. Infant mortality and under 5 mortality also registered an impressive decline, indicating a solid achievement in the neonatal and child health sector.

These impressive achievements in decline in maternal and infant mortality have brought international recognition. Nepal was awarded MDG Achievement Award in 2011 for its achievement in reducing maternal mortality rate (MDG5). Nepal also received Motivational Award for its significant achievement in reducing child mortality rate (MDG 4) and Resolve Award by Global Leaders Council for Reproductive Health for considerable achievement in the sector.

4.2. Education

Right to access to free and compulsory basic education has been enshrined in Article 31 of the Constitution. The right of children from ethnic communities to get
education in their mother tongue has also been ensured. The Government of Nepal implemented Education for All (EFA) Plan of Action (2001-2015) to bring all children to school irrespective of their culture, language, ethnicity, geography, gender and economic status. The School Sector Reform Program (2009-2015) and School Sector Development Program (2016 – 2022) have been important tools to carry out this goal. Achieving gender equality in education remains the key output of these programs. The focus is on equity, quality, efficiency and resilience.

The Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2018 makes education free up to secondary level. Consolidated Equity strategy, 2014, Inclusive Education Policy for Disabled Children, 2016; Higher Education Policy, 2017; Pro-poor Scholarship Procedures, 2017; Comprehensive School Safety implementation Procedures, 2018; Policy Paper on Literate Nepal, 2019 are some other policy and legislative initiatives that took place over the last 5/6 years.

Gender issues and rights of the women and girls are being incorporated in the school curriculum to develop understanding and sensitize the students on respect for gender issues. Affirmative action in hiring female teachers at schools is also creating positive environment. Women constitute from 38 to 50 percent of teachers at school. The construction of separate toilets for girls at schools, other gender friendly infrastructure, provision of scholarships under various schemes with cash and non-cash incentives to the students and their parents, distribution of sanitary pads and day meals, etc. are creating a better environment for girls from disadvantaged and marginalized areas and communities to enroll at and attend school and survive through higher levels of education.

The Government has improved school infrastructures and support systems, and introduced special provisions for girls of Dalits, indigenous and disadvantaged groups. Gender-responsive tools such as school outreach program, flexible schooling program, and non-formal sessions are used along with disability and gender-friendly infrastructures.

The net enrolment rate (NER) at primary (grade 1-5) has reached 97.2% and at basic level (grade 1-8) 92.3%. The NER for secondary level (grade 9-12) has reached 43.9% (Education Policy, 2019). During the period of 2014 to 2018 the ratio of female to male teacher at primary level increased from 41.9 to 44.6%. Female enrolment in net percentage has grown impressively in 2017 as compared to 2000 as Table 4.2 shows.

In terms of gender parity in education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, there has been an impressive achievement since 2000. Gender parity in education at all

| Table 4.2: Female enrolment at school at various levels |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Year                          | 2000 | 2017 |
| Primary (female % net)        | 64.6 | 93.3 |
| Secondary (female % net)      | -    | 57.3 |
| Tertiary (female % net)       | 2.3  | 12.4 |

Source: http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/country/nepal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.3: Gender parity index in various levels of education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of girls to boys in primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of women to men in tertiary education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NPC: National Review of SDGs, 2017
levels have been already achieved and the requirement of the future is to sustain this trend and improve in quality achievement. The accompanying table shows the ratio of girls to boys at different levels of education in 2015 compared to the baseline data of 2000.

The percentage of female literacy rate shows more than two fold rise from 25% in 1991 to 58% in 2011. Female literacy rate stood at 43% in 2001. Gaps in literacy rates have been narrowing down during the period 2001 to 2011.

Various policy and program interventions in terms of free and compulsory education for all and provision of targeted scholarships such as 100 Percent Girls Scholarship, Scholarship for ex-Kamalari Girls, Himali hostel scholarships, Dalit scholarship, Karnali Zone Scholarships, etc. are encouraging girls from poor and disadvantaged communities to access education. At the same time, improved school infrastructure such as toilets, hygiene and sanitation, free distribution of sanitary pads and provision of day meals at school are attracting poor children, particularly girls to attend and continue at school. Parents-teacher interactions and incentives of in-kind scholarship schemes to the families have also been supportive in attracting girls to schools.

The Centre for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) provides technical and vocational education (TVE) courses through its own schools/institutes or in collaboration with the private institutions. CTEVT has adopted a gender equality and social inclusion policy in its training courses. The total capacity of long-term TVET courses in the country is almost 60,000 annually. As access to TVET training courses has improved, women’s participation in such courses also has increased substantially. Out of the total 62,041 training graduates applying for skill test in FY 2017/18, 55.7% were female (GON, 2019: Review Report to BPfA + 25).
Under the ADB funded project in 2011-2015, Skills Development Project (SDP) and Skills for Employment Project (SEP) were launched for market-oriented short-term skills training for women, Dalits and other excluded Groups. Women comprised 54% of the total trainees under these schemes (ADB, 2017). Under the SSDP, MOEST has piloted pro-poor and pro-science targeted scholarship (PPTS) in 25 districts from poor and disadvantaged pocket areas. Among those who benefitted, 54.9% are girls. To get more girls from disadvantaged and marginalized communities into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), STEM scholarship has been introduced for talented girls from class eight onwards.

The Enhanced Vocational Education and Training (EVENT) was launched in 2011 and its second phase EVENT II has been launched since 2018. Trainings on 39 skill categories were provided to 15,781 trainees out of which 53.71% were women. These examples show that women’s participation in vocational and technical skill oriented training is on the rise.

4.3. Women in the Economy

Between 1995 and 2014, Nepal’s HDI has increased from 0.343 to 0.540 and the Gender Development Index (GDI) has also increased substantially from 0.310 to 0.912. Nepal scored 0.680 in Global Gender Gap report, and moved 4 places up to hold 101 position among 153 countries in 2020, as compared to 2018. Nepal has also set the objective of graduating from the LDC status by 2022 and getting promoted to an inclusive, equitable and prosperous middle income country by 2030 by achieving the goals and targets set by SDGs.

Gender Component in Economic Policy

Nepal incorporated broad-based, poverty focused and inclusive development policy objectives in the 10th five year plan (2002-2007) and onwards to bring women, marginalized communities and the people from backward and disadvantaged regions.

Bringing women to the mainstream of development through Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF)

PAF was launched in 2004/05 in six districts to bring excluded communities into the mainstream of development through demand driven approach. Its four components are: income generation and micro enterprises, social mobilization, community infrastructure, and capacity building. In the beginning, the participation of women in community organizations was around 60%. As the PAF activities expanded and it covered more districts, which reached 64 in 2017/18, community organizations multiplied in the PAF operated projects in the districts and communities. In FY 2015/16, 33,124 community organizations were formed under PAF in which the participation of women reached 78%, including 68% key positions of presidents and secretaries occupied by women (PAF Annual Report, 2016).

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into the mainstream of development.

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP, 2002 - 2007) was adopted with the objective of eliminating poverty by increasing women, Dalits and other marginalized groups’ access to education, health, services, credit, appropriate technology and necessary training for which gender inclusion and governance reforms were seen as crucial cross-cutting issues. Nepal has been successful in reducing poverty from 42% in 1996 to 25.2% in 2011 and from 21.6% in 2015 to 18.7% in 2018. The MDG target in poverty reduction was largely met. Gender friendly programs and projects designed and launched over the years contributed to achievement of the poverty targets. The Government of Nepal introduced and adopted gender responsive budget system since 2007/08. The development partners’ group have complemented this initiative of GON with adoption of GESI principles and strategies in their assistance programs in order to provide equal rights, respect and opportunities in benefits sharing for women and marginalized groups (GESI Working Group, 2017).

**Entrepreneurship Development**

Women entrepreneurs have been active in diverse areas, including agro-based, food processing, manufacturing, travel and tourism, handicrafts, retail and service industries. The Government has supported entrepreneurship development for women through various programs. Cooperatives are
recognized as the third pillar of development alongside the Government and the private sector. They mobilize around 20% of the national financial resources. They have burgeoned impressively over the years. Until mid-March 2019 there were 34,737 cooperatives with 6.5 million shareholders and Rs.76.34 billion equivalent of share capital. They mobilized savings of Rs. 354.59 billion and credit of Rs. 332.71 billion among the members (Economic Survey, 2018/19). The participation of women in cooperatives is around 51%, including some 39% in executive positions. Cooperatives have been very dynamic in social mobilization, income and employment generation and promoting livelihood and entrepreneurship. Women have been an integral part of the movement and major beneficiaries.

Women in Agriculture

The agriculture sector in general contributes around one third to the GDP of the nation and engages a vast majority of the population. In the recent years, the agricultural GDP has gone down to around 27%. In 2001, around 60% of economically active boys and men and 73% of economically active women and girls were working in the agriculture sector. In 2011, 55% of men and 77% of women and girls were engaged in agriculture, raising the share of women's engagement in this sector by 4 percentage points. The shift of women into the agricultural labour force in this period is attributable to higher male migration rate for foreign employment. Female migration for foreign employment also increased multiple

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Achievement of Nepal
folds by 2012, but it reached only 6% of the total. The share of the women employed in agriculture rose further to 84% as compared to 62% of men in the same sector in 2016/17 period (FAO, 2019). This situation is said to have led to ‘feminization of agriculture’ in the current decade.

The major policy intervention in this period is Agriculture Development Strategy (2016 - 2035) which has been adopted with the objective of making overall advancement of the agriculture related sectors by infusing GESI principles and framework throughout the ADS design process. ADS recognizes female farmers as independent farmers and ensures adequate provision for carrying out activities towards women’s empowerment. It supports the enhancement of women’s access to and control over productive resources and the leadership of women to empower rural women. ADS sets target of 50% farmland to be owned by women only or through joint ownership to be reached by 2035. The Prime Minister Agriculture Modernization Project launched in 2016/17 complements to the strategic vision set by the ADS. Women can access grants from the Project and low-interest credits from financial institutions to launch community based big farming for prosperity and economic empowerment.

Women in Tourism

A total of 11,73,072 tourists visited Nepal for pleasure, adventure and trekking, pilgrimage and other purposes in 2018. In the peaceful and stable environment that followed the constitution writing and elections to all tiers of the federal government set-up, a higher growth in tourist arrivals is much expected. The current year is being promoted as “Visit Nepal 2020” with the objective of attracting two million tourists. Tourism currently contributes around 2% to the GDP, and the earning from this sector is equivalent to 25% of the total value of exports of goods and services. Tourism can be a tool for rapid socio-economic transformation of these places and people, and women can add value to the process through their community approach to management. Urban tourism caters more diverse interests of the tourists and creates employment opportunities for both men and women. Women have been playing more important role in homestays management and operation. A survey carried out by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation (MOCTCA) in 2014 revealed that 57% of the workers in homestays were women. The MOCTA survey also found out that women’s participation in the tourism industry registered with the Department of Tourism was 20% in 2014.
**Women in Banking and Financial Sector**

The banking and finance sector remained one of the fastest growing sectors in Nepal's economy over the last two decades. According to Nepal Rastra Bank, the number of women employees in FY 2018/19 in class A, class B and class C banks and financial institutions was 19,417, which is 39.78% of the total employees in these institutions.

**Women in Formal Sector**

The National Economic Census report, the first of its kind, published by the CBS in July 2019 shows that the number of economic establishments in the country in 2018 was 923,356 out of which 50.1% were registered\(^4\). The number of persons engaged in these establishment stood at 3,228,457. The number of female owners and female managers in these establishments were 247,880 and 273,436, which correspond to 26.8% and 29.6% of the total respectively. It means that participation of women in formalized economic establishments is at around 30%.

The highest number of establishments are in wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (54%); followed by accommodation and food services (14%); and manufacturing (11%). Women managers are in higher ratio in accommodation and food services as well as health services (above 40% in both cases). Women's presence as managers is also significant in wholesale (32%), retail and finance and insurance (25%).

**Ownership of Land and Property**

As ownership of land and property increases women's access and control over productive resources, they are important means for empowerment and equality. Nepal has been leveraging appropriate measures for enabling women to enhance their access to assets over the years. In FY 2011/12, wives were granted rights for joint ownership of house with their husbands. In 2012/13, a 10% rebate on tax was provided to female income. Since 2015/16, industries which

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have a minimum of 33% women, Dalits and peoples with disabilities as employees are entitled to 20% income rebate. Likewise, GON introduced 25% rebate on registration fee for land and property owned by women in 2015/16. Women are also entitled to 35% registration fee rebate on business owned by them. These measures have favorable effect on increasing access of women to land and property. Women owned businesses are also on the rise. According to Population and Housing Census 2011, house and land ownership of women was 11% and land only was 9%. It increased to 26% in 2015 (NPC, 2018).

**Women in Media**

The Constitution, under Article 19 stipulates that any forms of mass media will enjoy freedom and will not be censored, and under Article 27 it guarantees people’s right to information in all areas of their legitimate interests and concerns. One of the objectives of The Mass Media Policy, 2017 remains increasing the participation of women in the mass media and building their capacity. The Mass Media Policy also has the objective of eliminating all discrimination and exploitation existing in society through proportional inclusive and participatory principles based on a system of information and communication technology. Government mass media - Nepal Television, Radio Nepal and National News Agency as well as private media actively report on issues and concerns of women with promptness. They also do advocacy for promotion of women rights and elimination of the social bad practices such as chhaupadi, child marriage, dowry system, witchcraft allegations as well as gender-based violence, including domestic violence and discrimination in private and public life. Government and the NGOs have been collaborating in providing training to media professionals to improve gender sensitivity in reporting and news writing. Government scholarships are provided to female students for journalism study.

According to a study by Sancharika Samuha (Forum of Women Journalists and Communicators) the participation of women in media is around 25 percent. The breakdown shows that a larger number of female journalists are working outside the capital. A further breakdown of the status of female journalists in Nepal showed that the highest percentage of women (47.8%) are working with radio stations while the second largest proportion (40.5%) are working for the print media. The reports show that only 2.4% of women are chief editors and 11.1% were editors.

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5The Press Council of Nepal has developed a code of conduct for journalists which includes a condition to refrain from broadcasting, printing or publishing any news reports, symbols, ideas or pictures that are discriminatory to women and other communities. The code of conduct asks journalists to be sensitive to the rights of the victims of sexual violence and other forms of GBV cases while reporting or writing news stories. The Press Council monitors the compliance of the code of conduct.

Rights Based Achievements

Gender friendly constitutional and legal frameworks developed over the years have played crucial role in advancing equal rights and empowerment of women. Measures taken under such frameworks have been providing outcomes.

Measures to Curb Discrimination Against Women and Girls

A number of legal measures have been put in place to curb discrimination against women and girls and promote equality. MOWCSC and DWC under it have been at the centre-stage of formulating and coordinating the implementation of measures for non-discrimination, equality and empowerment of women since the establishment of MOWCSW in 1995. The GON established GBV Elimination Fund in 2010 to provide support for rescue, relief and rehabilitation of the victims of GBV. A separate Single Woman Security Fund has been operationalized since 2013 to safeguard the rights and interests of single women. Impactful programs have been implemented through various interventions. For example: through the Women Development Program (WDP), until FY 2017/18, 2,063,74 groups with participation of 11,89,015 women were formed, which included women representation from Dalits and ethnic communities proportionately.

Policy, Institutional Coordination and Joint Interventions

Work is ongoing at MOWCSC to frame a Gender Equality Policy to integrate gender perspective in all sectoral activities of the federal, provincial, district level and local level governments, and bring all partners in development into the fold to implement more effective programs. Looking at the cross-cutting and multi-dimensional nature of the problem, a joint Monitoring Centre involving the three key players – NWC, MOWCSC and Ministry of Home Affairs (for Police) is in the process of being established to curb GBV, address rescue, rehabilitation and other needs of the GBV survivors, and mount coordinated response in handling all issues of GBV. GON has declared the current fiscal year 2019/20 as a “Campaign Year Against GBV 2019/20” for which a comprehensive action plan that involves the relevant federal, provincial, district and local level Government institutions and partners has been designed by MOWCSC. The Action Plan comprises four clear strategies – prevention, promotion, cooperation and access to justice, and targeted programs for interventions to deal with specific thematic, sectoral and area specific challenges in GBV.

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7The Fund operating under a Government Regulation provides support for rescue, relief and rehabilitation of the victims of GBV and also bears the amount of the compensation to be provided to the victims under circumstances that the perpetrator has absolutely no means to pay. A revision of the GBV Fund Regulation in 2019 has now enabled the operation of the GBV Fund in all the 753 local level bodies.
Menstruation is a natural phenomenon. Regardless of class, caste, education, religion, and region, there are number of restrictions in mobility and participation across Nepal. Although social taboo against menstruation is prevalent throughout the country, it is more severe in the western villages of Nepal. The practice of Chhaupadi is a traditional practice prevalent under which women and adolescent girls in each menstruation cycle every month, are secluded and banished outside their homes to a makeshift hut or cow shed. A total of 18 women and girls have lost their lives while staying in Chhaupadi since 2005.

Nepal’s legal system also takes “Chhaupadi Goth” tradition as a serious violation of women and girls’ human rights. In this connection, Government of Nepal (GoN) has taken a two folds action to break this tradition. - one is regulatory action and the other is participatory campaign. The campaign has been supported by parliamentarians, political and local religious leaders and civil society. During the campaign more than 8550 “Chhaupadi Goths” were dismantled in two months.
GoN is encouraging a philosophy of Dignified Menstruation with a theme of “Menstrual Talk, Dignity First”, whereby the individuals and families are being convinced to take the menstruation with dignity. Further, it is also becoming a vehicle of empowering the individual and collective agency of girls and women to reengineer the shape of power among male and female. Nepal has led a big social change through dignified menstruation campaign.
Changing Social Norms

As a result of strong legal framework that protects women and girls and the rising level of awareness in the society about GBV and VAWG, more women are coming out of stigma, fear or shame, and reporting cases of domestic violence, GBV, sexual harassment, inhuman and degrading treatment, etc. GBV and domestic violence have been accepted as criminal offences by society and not just as family matters or traditional social practices. This has been supported by the GON policy of zero tolerance against GBV and domestic violence. NWC received 1318 complaints on domestic violence, and 156 complaints on other GBV in FY 2019/20 through its helpline, which it settled in cooperation with its GOs & NGOs partners, and through mediation in certain cases.

Social Security Schemes for Women and Girls

Single women, unmarried or separated, and having crossed 60 years of age are entitled to a social security allowance every month. Similarly, widowed women of any age also get the social security benefits. GON raised the security allowance to RS. 2000 per person per month this year. Boys and
girls from poor and excluded communities living in nine selected districts of Nepal, which fall low in HDI, and those from Dalit families also receive Rs. 400 as security benefits from the Government. According to the National Identity and Registration Department (NIRD) sources, 619,546 single and widowed women from all over Nepal are currently getting these benefits. Such security scheme covers senior citizens aged 70 and above, and family members of endangered indigenous communities, people with disabilities also. For people in employment in the formal as well as informal sectors, the contribution based social security system has been operationalized with a wide spectrum of coverage under the Social Security Act, 2017.

Building Resilience for Women and Girls against Natural Disasters

Nepal is a signatory of both Hyogo Framework for Action (2005 - 2015) and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015 - 2030). Nepal is a disaster prone country with risks of multiple hazards. The Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) prepared by NPC in the aftermath of the earthquakes of 2015 prepared a plan for rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery based on GESI principles. It took into account the special needs of women and children and other vulnerable segments of the population. The National Reconstruction Authority provided women headed households, Dalits and other vulnerable households with Rs. 50,000 more on top of the normal grants for reconstruction of the destroyed house. Women are integral to the survival and resilience of families and communities during and in the aftermath of disasters. Nepal has brought out National Policy for DRR, 2018 which states that access, representation and meaningful participation of women, children, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and economically and socially marginalized communities will be ensured in all structures of DRR based on inclusive disaster management concept. The national policy envisions a Nepal safer and more resilient to disasters by 2030 in line with Sendai Framework for DRR and SDGs. The Disaster Risk Management Act, 2017 also lays emphasis on prioritizing gender perspective in disaster risk reduction and management.

Climate Change and Gender

Nepal is disproportionately affected by climate change compared to its negligible contribution of 0.027 % to the global GHG emissions. With sex ratio of 0.94 in Nepali population and around 77% of women being engaged in agriculture and forestry related occupations, the impact of climate change falls heavily on women. Efforts in climate actions, including adaptation and mitigation therefore require to integrate gender indispensably. Nepal is a party to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Climate Change Agreement 2015. GoN has brought out Climate Change Policy, 2019 to strengthen the climate mitigation and adaptation measures by integrating relevant actions into all cross-cutting sectors and building a climate resilient society capable of responding to all emerging challenges. The policy upholds GESI principles and ensures the role of women, among others, as active participants and beneficiaries in the process.
Nepal has progressed very fast in global indicators and in real life as well in the field of gender equality and Women’s Empowerment. Fundamental Rights of Constitution of Nepal include inclusiveness, representation and social protection.

The current change in women’s representation, sectorial leadership and employment shows that Nepal is moving towards substantive gender equality.

Since, Federalism is a new concept in Nepal, the synergetic effort of all three levels of governance, i.e., Federal, Provincial and Local, is the only way to reach to the substantive equality. Considering this, GoN has set a framework with three main pillars, namely, Gender Mainstreaming, Women’s Empowerment and Rescue, Social Protection and Rehabilitation with the foundation of cooperation, coordination and networking among three levels of Government and Civil society as well. Private sector, cooperatives and CBOs are other actors in this network. Further, the framework also seeks to build an integrated gender information system, largely based on the administrative data. GoN has already prepared the SDG Status and Road Map (2016-2030) with nine targets in SDG 5 alone. Based on these ground work, the gender equality and empowerment of women and girls related SDGs will also be achieved in Year 2030.
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