

Stakeholders Submission for 3rd Cycle of Universal Periodic Review

A. Introduction

1. Nepal is democratic republic nation with a population of 30 million and stands at 147th rank on Human Development Index¹. According to the recent World Bank Report, Nepal has also been upgraded to a lower middle income country.¹ The Country has 39.35% of population of aged 0-15 years among which 48.6% are girls². The rate of people living in absolute poverty is 18.3%, however 28.6% people live under multidimensional poverty³. The literacy ratio of the population is 68.3%.⁴ The country has adopted its seventh constitution in September 2015 that changed the political structure of the nation from unitary government to Federal Structure. The country has 753 local governments, 7 Province Government and a federal government. The list of rights are defined by the constitution of Nepal. The principle of operation among three tier governments is Co existence, Cooperation and Coordination. In overall the federal government has been mandated to govern national issues, citizenship issues, cross boarder concerns, criminal offences and setting up standards for operational laws and policies; the province governments are considered more as rule setting governments and local governments are considered as development and service delivery governments. The 753 local governments has 6743 ward offices as local units to provide services to the people.

2. National Coalition for Girls Rights (NCGR) is a national consortium of civil society organizations across the country that are acting for the rights and development opportunities for girls. The coalition was established in 2019 and reached 35 NGO members. The coalition acts with advocacy actions, members' capacity building, media engagement, political lobbying and influence and monitoring girls' rights

3. NCGR consulted with 100 girls, 77 youths, 47 civil society activists and 50 NGOs working in 70 local governments and 7 provinces, 15 government agencies; reviewed 15 legal policy documents and 15 research and progress reports. NCGR drafted this report considering the progress status made in past five years (since 2015) and also considered the impact of COVID-19 pandemic among girls in Nepal. The information in this submission are valid in the period of November 2019- June 2020.

B. Legal Policy Commitments and Implementation of 2nd Cycle Recommendations

4. Nepal's constitution (2015) has constitutionally provisioned fundamental rights and state policies that are relevant to girls. The constitution has provisioned nondiscrimination based on sex and gender in application of law, in remuneration for work, in rights on parental property, right of equal lineage, right to reproductive health service and facilities, right to compensation for the victims of crime, proportional representation rights in state bodies, mandatory 33 percent representation in all association and organized body, state obligation

¹ Human Development Reports-UNDP

² Population Projection 2011-2031 Central Bureau of Statistics

³ Nepal's Multidimensional Poverty Index: Analysis Towards Action, 2018-National Planning Commission

⁴ Central Bureau of Statistics-Population Monograph of Nepal-2014

for social justice, affirmative actions and reservation to strengthen status of women, girls and othersⁱⁱ. In addition to this the state policies and directive principles have also outlined several obligations to the state that ensures end of gender based discrimination, increase access of girls and women in education, health, economy and leadership as well as protection from violence and abuse. The constitution has also provision a federal parliament committee to monitor the implementation status of state policies and directive principles.

5. Nepal has adopted several domestic laws that protects and promotes rights of girls. Currently there are more than domestic laws that are directly relevant in defending and promoting rights of girlsⁱⁱⁱ. Though there are federal acts, most of the provisions of federal acts have made province and local government mechanism responsible to deliver the legal promises. The province and local governments are severely limited in capacity to implement and deliver the mentioned services; have not adopted province level and local level legal policy measures and have not allocated resources to implement such policies.

6. The government of Nepal has adopted National Roadmap to implement Sustainable Development Goals in 2018 and recently adopted the Fifteenth period plan with a long term development vision of 2040. The Sustainable Development Goals Implementation roadmap^{iv} of government has promised to reduce women's and child's poverty to be limited at 5%; increased state investment on social security up to 25% of National Budget; increase investment from 22% of National Budget on strengthening Gender Parity; reduce adolescents pregnancy from 71/1000 to 30/1000; increase girls participation to be equal to boys in vocational and technical education from current ratio of 53 to 100 boys; reduce physical violence against women and girls and limit it at 5% population; Improved the health status mainly on nutrition and reduce anemia incidences. The Road map adopted at federal level are not reflected in the annual plan, programs and budgets of local and provincial government. Most of the local governments are not aware of SDGs and National roadmap and their obligations to follow the roadmap while developing annual program and budget that Federal Road map on Sustainable Development Goals have provisioned. The government of Nepal has launched *President Women Upliftment Program* as national efforts to improve status of women, however the program has not addressed girls' specific concern and issues and heavily focused on safe maternity for remote located pregnant women.

7. The Government of Nepal has ratified 7 out of 9 core human rights conventions.^v It has also ratified the convention on transnational organized crimes and Palermo protocol to suppress human trafficking. In 2nd cycle of Universal periodic review, the government of Nepal received 30 recommendations that are directly relevant to rights of girls, out of 30 recommendations two have not been initiated and majority are inadequately implemented. For instance, the recommendations to amend domestic violence act, invest on ending child marriages, increase equal opportunity in labor market are some of the examples which are not being implemented adequately. Ratification of Palermo Protocol, taking measures to combat rape and sexual violence, human trafficking are some of the areas where the government of Nepal has implemented actions. The government of Nepal has also criminalized the menstrual discrimination (*Chhaupadi*) against girls and extended the timeline for complaint of rape up to six months. The government policy to provide sanitary pads in school have contributed in continuation of girls in school as well as increased their

attendance.

8. We call Government of Nepal to:

- *Adopt a comprehensive law that prevent and criminalize gender-based violence in both public and private spheres with specific section addressing discrimination against girls.*
- *Amend the Education Act having specific provisions to ensure schools structures are girls friendly s, teachers and administrative staffs are practicing safe, sensitive and gender friendly behaviors and schools have operation complaint mechanism to respond any harassment against girls in school.*
- *Educate and facilitate the province and local governments for adopting girls' rights and protection related policies, programs and increasing the investment.*
- *Include Girls Agenda and interventions for girls in National Programs such as: President Women Upliftment Program.*

C. Girls Right to Education

9. The Act Relating to Compulsory and Free Education (2075) has provisioned free and compulsory education for all children upto basic school and free education up to secondary school. Based on the law, the government has provisioned girls' scholarship support program that provides NPR.450-600 (US\$ 3.80-5.07)/Year/girl (up to secondary school). As a result, the Net Enrollment Rate of Girls in basic school and secondary school has remained equal to boys. However, the transition of girls from secondary school to higher education has remained significantly low in comparison to boys. Girls are facing several limitations. The Education Flash Report (2018/19) of Government of Nepal confirms that the Net Enrollment Rate for Girls in Secondary education is only 43.7% and the Gender Parity index is 0.96 at secondary level. The consultation with girls, civil society leaders in the stakeholder's submission process found that parents are reluctant to invest on girls' education; Girls education is considered as pre condition for their marriage with an earning man and no comparative low priority for parents to invest on girls' education equal to boys. According to the CBS AHS (2016/17) ^{vi}while 26.6% children never attended school in Nepal, about double the number of female had never attended school than males; 18.1% male and 34.5% female. The government spending is significantly low in education with only 10% of fiscal budget in 2018/19. Among the national expenditure in education, public funding covers only 43% and 57% are from private sources including household budget^{vii}. The Adolescents Risk Behaviors Survey (2017) reports that 40% of girls are absent in school at least one day a month due to menstrual concern and stigma.

10. Girls are facing several difficulties in schools and to access education. Most referred problem by the stakeholders are: unsafe and improper toilet facilities in school, community perception of discrimination during menstruation and lack of sanitary facilities during menstruation, abusive behaviors from boys, teachers and other visitors, heavy workload in families limiting time for educational engagement. The government of Nepal has adopted policy to end gender-based violence in school through complaint hearing mechanism, School as Zone of Peace (SZOP) Implementation Guidelines (2011) for ensuring safety and protection of children in school. Yet, these policies are ineffectively implemented and not monitored. In changed governance structure, education governance is local government mandate, the local governments are not sensitized and aware of these policies and

programmatic measures to implement and monitor. There is absence of National Framework on safe and inclusive school that considers issues of girls, younger children, children with disability and making school a safe zone for all.

11. Government of Nepal has integrated Vocational and Technical Education in Formal Schooling Program since past few years. This has resulted increased access of rural children and young population in vocational and technical education program. The Technical and Vocational Education program also benefited to reduce drop out of children who are not performing well in formal academic schooling system. The Participation of girls in vocational and technical schools is significantly low. Research has shown that girls and women participation in nontraditional skill training program is significantly low and in many cases zero, however in some of traditional technical education such as Agriculture, Beautician and Tailoring, Girls has higher participation.^{viii} Moreover, where girls already have a lower according to Echidna Global Scholars Program Policy Paper (October 2019)^{ix}, such programs are especially inaccessible to girls due to factors like distance, low intake capacity, high expense of TEVT compared to general education, and inadequate subsidies and scholarships for girls. Even where there is access, the girls are pushed into gender stereotyped courses and face restrictions on mobility.

12. *We call Government of Nepal to:*

- *Increase national budget investment in education reaching to 20% soon and provide budget planning framework for province and local government to ensure their budget allocation increase by 20% .*
- *Develop and adopt a girls' friendly school infrastructure, separate and safe toilets for girls improving WASH facilities, menstrual hygiene management and implement effective complaint handling mechanism.*
- *Increase Female teachers in school with increasing female teachers' quota during teachers' recruitment*
- *Ensure 33% women's representation in local education committee, school management committee and parents teachers association through enforcement of functional guideline.*
- *Increase the subsidies and scholarships for girls in TEVT programs and take measures to make it accessible in all community schools.*

D. Health - Basic and Reproductive Health Facilities

13. The Government of Nepal has adopted Public Health Act (2018) and Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Right Act (2018). These acts have defined the rights of beneficiaries, duties of health service providers as well as free access to reproductive health information, education and basic health facilities. The Government of Nepal has also adopted National Health Policy (2019) and that has also highlighted the government commitment to ensure children and adolescent safety, access to basic health, promotion of reproductive health and school nursing program. Currently more than 100 municipals have adopted school nursing program and have been found very effective to promote health status of children and girls in school. In order to address the SRH needs of young people, the Government of Nepal launched the National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme in 2011, to provide adolescent-friendly SRH services. A crux of the programme revolves around 'comprehensive sex education in school'—which is incorporated in the

national curriculum. To address issues of adolescent sexual health, the Government of Nepal also developed a National Adolescent Health and Development strategy, which was implemented in 2000. Based on this strategy, sex education was introduced into the school curriculum in Nepal; however, evidence suggests that progress of implementation and pedagogical delivery has been slow. Another difficulty is that these programs do not reach youth whose educational trajectories are curtailed due to early marriage, gender-based discrimination, among other issues.

14. The status of health is not satisfactory among girls. The nutrition status has been found significantly low among 59% adolescents in school (Nepal Adolescent Nutrition Survey, 2014^x, National Health Research Council). The National Demographic Health Survey (2016)^{xi} reports that 17 percent of 15-19 Years girls are pregnant, which is higher in rural area with 22%; in an average the girls are found sexually active from the age of 17 years. According to an article published on The Kathmandu Post, a National Daily, while the use of modern contraceptive means like condoms and IUDs has remained stagnant for about a decade, sales of emergency pills and medical abortion kits have risen significantly, according to ministry officials. The sales of these contraceptives are seen with frequent use, and can have long term impacts on reproductive health.^{xii} The design and structure of the current sex education curriculum, which was updated in 2011, is considered to be inconsistent and ineffective in promoting sexual health as these approaches are surface-level. And national data speaks to this: According to a 2017 report by the World Health Organization and the Government of Nepal, only 59.7 percent of married adolescents aged 15-19 had knowledge of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS and only around 53 percent of those with school-leaving certificate SLC and above education had comprehensive knowledge of HIV and AIDS. The Adolescents Risk Behavior Survey (2017) reports that 6.3% of school going girls have suffered psychological stress and 14.5% has thought of suicide at some point of time. Among the total number of suicides committed by children in the fiscal year 2018/19, 77.77% (21) were girls.^{xiii} The unmet demands for family planning and fertility health in Nepal is 23.7% (in 2016) and the service satisfaction level is 56% (2016); the adolescent of 15-19 Years have higher ratio of unmet demands with 34.9% and among *Dalit* is 27%^{xiv} According to Bulletin of the World Health Organization 2017, "Sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents are being rolled out in Nepal, but many young people have yet to benefit." It further elaborates that adolescent centric health services have poor ownership at local level and poor integration with other health programs."

15. *We call Government of Nepal for:*

- *Address adolescent health issues, including teenage pregnancy, mental health, and nutrition, through the implementation of the National Adolescent Health and Development Strategy and strengthen the National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Program to update the design and structure of the current sex education curriculum.*
- *Expand School Nursing Program as national program to cover all 36 thousand plus schools with specified duties on adolescents and girls' health.*
- *Develop and enforce guidelines for province and local government to adopt adolescents and girls' health program at their local health services.*
- *Promote reproductive health education, enhance accessibility to reproductive health and menstrual hygiene management related facilities among adolescents in free,*

safe and confidential environment.

E. Protection of Girls and Safe Environment

16. Government of Nepal has adopted legislative measures to curb violence and abuse against women and girls. The current legislations - National Criminal Code and Civil Code has criminalized the menstrual discrimination, early marriages (below 20 years). The laws have also extended timeline to complaint the cases of rape and sexual abuse upto 6 months from the incidence. The crime victims' protection act has detailed rights of crime victims that includes interim compensation, compensation from the offender and or state, protection free health and rehabilitation support right of the victim. In addition to this the Domestic Violence Act has criminalized the physical and sexual violence at home, Act against Sexual Harassment at Workplace has provisioned protection measures and complaint system to raise workplace harassment at workplace. There are national funds that provides support to victims, some of those funds are: Gender based Violence Victim Support Fund, Human Trafficking Victim Support Fund, child labor rehabilitation fund.

17. Despite the abolishment of child marriage ensured by the law, the legal provisions are not compatible with the practices and tendencies of the local government. Girls have no agency and are victims of forced marriages, with cases where the local government arranged marriage between an underage girl, and her rapist^{xv}, and the girl ultimately committed suicide. Consequent to the lack of sensitization, paired with political protection^{xvi}, the intersection of patriarchy and caste based discrimination has led to mass killings^{xvii}. (Case Synopsis in **Annex 1**)

18. Despite of government legal measures and protection efforts, the incidences of protection risk to the girls and adolescents have been observed significantly high. The National Child Labor Report (2012) reports that girls ratio of child labor is 17.6%; Nepal Police Record (2018/19) reports 1420 girls are reported raped in one fiscal year (2075/76). Majority of girls who were subjected to rape were aged between 11 and 18 years while 25 girls were aged below five years. 139 women and girls are reported as trafficking victim. Though one fourth of the marriages are reported as early marriage in Nepal only 88 cases were reported in a year. There have been number of incidences reported of Acid attack in the recent years as a form of gender based violence, and revenge attacks. Most of the victims reported have been young girls. Among the total missing children in one year 28% of girls were not found (National Child Rights Council, 2019)^{xviii}. The Child Helpline Recorded 1837 girls reporting violence in a year, when in the same year 1664 boys has reported the cases of violence. The National Human Rights Commission Report on Human Trafficking suggest 35 thousand are estimated as trafficking victim in a year with 1.5 million at risk. Among the urban adult entertainment industries (informal sexual service centers) out of 60 thousand women and girls, 10% are girls under the age of 18 years and 18% of them have started job before the age of 18 years^{xix}.

19. Girls Safety and Protection are at higher risk and the crime victims have less access to justice is due to the gaps in criminal investigation system, lack of women police officers and investigation officers in Nepal police. There are only 10% of police force are women in Nepal as per the record of Nepal police and largely they are in junior position. The forensic

facilities are not well facilitated and gender sensitive in terms of forensic inquiries. The girls are suffering unsafe environment due to the limited safety knowledge and skills, less engagement of men and boys in protecting girls' dignity as well as free access to online porn materials. The government of Nepal has taken steps to block the online porn sites, again that is not effective. The legal policies are not gender sensitive and also not able to consider the broader dimensions of violence and abuse against girls. For instance, the Human Trafficking control act, child labor prohibition and regulation act and labor acts are not gender sensitive and unable to address the gender specific concern.

20. The State of Children in Nepal Report (2019) reports that there is an increasing trend on girl juveniles. In the year 2018/19 there were 21 juvenile girls in correction home. The government of Nepal has established juveniles' correction centers in 4 major locations. The juvenile correction centers are mainly designed and the officials are trained on general juvenile handling. Girls in juvenile correction center faces several difficulties. The officials are not trained on gender sensitivity of girl juveniles and the facilities are not provisioned for girl juveniles.

21. In the fiscal year 2017/2018, 1,200 cyber-crime complaints were recorded in the Police Division alone. Studies report that women are found to be more vulnerable to internet crimes than men. More specifically teenage girls fall under the trap of online perpetrators. According to the Nepal Police data, 90 per cent victims of the crimes committed through social and other electronic media are women. Even with the media reporting on a rise in the number of cybercrimes, the official response has been slow and lackluster. The cases of online blackmailing, rape after the online communication are registered frequently, and there are less number of intervention targeting the cybercrime. All cyber offences are dealt under the Electronic Transaction Act (ETA) which regulates all matters relating to electronic transactions, and hence, is insufficient to deal with all forms of criminal offences against natural persons. Both the police and judiciary have not developed sophisticated tools to investigate cybercrimes and present, there are only two units that deal with cybercrimes.

22. *We call Nepal Government for*

- *Local level sensitization and special training to local level judicial committees, paired with identification and criminalization of political protection to criminals.*
- *Immediately initiate the amendment of Human Trafficking and Transport Control Act and Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act*
- *Develop and Implement Girls Sensitive Investigation protocol in Nepal police and crime investigation authority*
- *Promote Girls access to safety and protection information, legal remedies, mechanism and services.*
- *Adopt separate guideline on handling girl juveniles and define gender sensitive protocol for officials to operate girl friendly juvenile correction centers.*
- *Adopt specific laws on cybercrime against natural person that includes specific section on crime against children.*

F. Girls Leadership and Participation

23. In 2000 the Supreme Court of Nepal made landmark decision to legally recognize children's right to form association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Tilottam Puadel Vs.

His Majesty Government of Nepal, 2000). The Acts Related to Children (2075) has explicitly recognize children's right to form association, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and performance as well as right to information and privacy. Since 1990s the formation of child clubs and promotion of children's leadership gained momentum in Nepal. The Central Child Welfare Board (2018) reports that there are more than 25 thousand child led organizations that has more than 500 thousand children. Though the number of girls and boys are almost equal in child clubs, the leadership opportunities for girls are limited. There is no specific investment for promoting girls leadership in child clubs, community associations and schools clubs.

24. We call Nepal Government for

- *Adopting Girls inclusion guideline to empower adolescent girls through life skills based education and adopt programmatic measures to ensure girls in child clubs, child led organizations and community associations are promoted and strengthened.*

G. Girls in Sports

25. Point 221 of National Budget Book (2019/20) has mentioned that measures will be taken to encourage children's participation in sports from the community level through coordination of all government levels. According to the National Sports Council 2019, 447 boys and 377 girls participated in province level sports competitions, portraying a lower participation from girls by only 8%. The participation of Girls in the 13th South Asian Games (SAG) was equal and the performance was exceptional, winning 30 out of 51 gold medals won by Nepal. However, there is no specific gender inclusion, girls' safety and girls' promotion policy in sports sector. There is discriminatory investment on food and unfirms between girls and boys in sports, girls are promoted mostly indoor and stereotypical games while boys are supported for more outdoor and masculine games. There are only few female coaches in sports. The discrimination against girls, unsafe situation and inadequate support for girls' friendly environment has limited access, progress and project of girls' leadership in sports.

26. We call the Government of Nepal for:

- *Adopt Girls Safety and Promotion Policy in School Sports and National Sports Strategy*
- *To revisit Sports related laws and guidelines to include gender sensitive provisions*
- *To invest more and equally as of boys to enhance girls' participation in sports, promoting female coaches.*

H. Son Preference

27. Traditionally Nepalese society is gender bias. The gender based biasness among families, communities have been observed significantly in several aspects of social, family and economic life. The changing demography of child's population (43% Girls Vs. 57% boys) is a clear evidence of sex selective practices in Nepalese family. The Legal Opportunity to have voluntary abortion of fetus upto 12 weeks have been misused by families, private health facilities in sex selection and sex selective abortion. Though the sex selective abortion and sex identification is criminalized, the law has not been properly enforced due to absence of complaint and limited criminal investigation. Another specific evidence of son preference is

higher number of girls abandoned to child care homes (7,670 Girls Vs. 7194 Boys) (As reported by State of Children in Nepal 2019). The National Demographic Health Survey (2016) reports that 9% of 15-49 Years age group women have practiced abortion; among which 3% considers aborting girl fetus is normal and preferred.

28. We call the Government of Nepal for:

- *Conduct National Inquiry on Son Preference and Discrimination Against Girls and take measures to have continuous surveillance against sex selective abortion .*
- *To run nationwide public sensitization campaign to ensure equal opportunity for girls and fair treatment in families.*

I. Identity

29. There are progressive laws in terms of ensuring birth registration for all the children as their basic right to protection and the local government are very progressive to complete 100 percent birth registration. However, the law against child marriage has brought some difficulties in the birth registration of the children born as the result of child marriage, and registration of children born out of marriage. Although registration in the name of only the mother is permitted by law, the mothers have to go through a longer process, and the local level lacks adequate systems to log the birth registration in the name of the mother; making the process difficult to access, and leaving the children of such mothers without identity.

30. The lack of social acceptance of the LGBTIQ community is also affecting the lives of large number of children and adolescents. Although the LGBTIQ+ movement is gaining momentum, especially in urban areas, the inclusivity of the community is still mostly neglected or forgotten. Despite there being a handful of examples of some public figures openly rejecting the binary gender system, the existing prejudice has forced a number of young girls to keep themselves from living and exploring their true identity. Although the birth registration and citizenship now recognizes other genders, other government systems are not equipped to align with that which is causing problems for registration in educational institutions and certification problems for girls.

We call the Government of Nepal for:

- *Make birth registration in the name of mother equally accessible as a regular birth registration*
- *Make all government systems compatible to recognize people from LGBTIQ+ communities.*

J. Religious Fundamentalism

31. The practice of *Chhaupadi*, which pressures menstruating women and girls to leave their own homes and be confined in segregated sheds which are typically unhygienic, exposed, unsafe, and lacking basic necessities, is still widely prevalent and as high as high as 71 percent in the mid-western mountains of Nepal. This practice was criminalized in 2017 following a number of publicly portrayed deaths of women and girls in menstrual sheds, nevertheless, with little practical outcome on the ground (HRW, 2018). While *Chhaupadi* is perhaps one of the most well-known form of restriction in Nepal, 89 percent of women and

girls throughout the country reported they experience some form of restriction or exclusion during menstruation, according to UNFPA.

32. Dowry is practiced across socio-economic groups and is most prevalent in eastern Terai, especially the east among Hindu or Muslim communities. The practice is predicted to be a key contributor to domestic violence in Nepal and a key driver in child marriage. Dowry-related violence against young women is still a major cause of domestic violence — police records show that the number of incidents rose from 3,609 in 2018 to 4,671 in 2019.

33. *Deuki* is an antiquated exclusively honed in the far western districts of Nepal in which a young girl is offered to the nearby Hindu sanctuary to increase religious legitimacy. Left with deficient salary, no abilities or instruction, and weight brought on by the folkloric conviction that sex with a *deuki* can wash down sins and bring good fortunes, numerous *deukis* are headed to survival sex, a type of prostitution in which sex is exchanged for fundamental necessities, for example, nourishment or shelter. Although Nepal Government has abolished the Deuki practice, it is still practiced in the far western region. "*Jhuma Pratha*"; a ritual similar to the "*Deuki Pratha*" is still practiced in eastern Nepal in Sherpa community.

34. *We call the Government of Nepal for:*

- Monitoring the implementation of laws against harmful practices in the name of religion

K. Girls in COVID-19 Pandemic.

35. The COVID-19 crisis and preventive measures such as mobility control, countrywide lock down and stigma and socially constructed discrimination against girls. With the continuation of lockdown, the cases of violence, abuse, exploitation, murder and suicide are ever rising in the country, and have remained unchecked. Most of the cases of sexual abuse and rape have been identified targeted to the young adolescent girls as reported in media. The national helpline reported 1145 calls related to gender-based violence which is about 20 calls every day, with more than one in five specifically about domestic violence. According to a report published by a NGO (WOREC), as of 9th June 2020, during the lockdown period, 624 women and girls from 55 districts have experienced different types of violence. Among the documented cases 61% i.e. 379 women had experienced domestic violence. There are 61 cases of social violence, 82 cases of rape, 19 cases of attempt to rape, 23 cases of sexual harassment, 12 cases of murder, 2 cases under investigation for identifying it as murder or suicide, 27 cases of suicide, 2 cases of attempt to suicide, 4 cases of attempt to murder, 2 cases of trafficking and 11 cases of cyber-crime have been recorded during the 100 days of lockdown. The justice and protection mechanisms are impeded in COVID Crisis, that only 329 of above mentioned cases are reported and even their investigation and prosecution process are not completed.^{xx}

36. Girls are deprived or unequal in accessing alternative education process (i.e online teaching learning, tele education) due to no access to media, internet facilities and boys preference to provide such services in family as well as increased unpaid and care work burden among girls during the lock down. Local NGOs estimates that less than 10 percent of the school going children had internet access at their homes and large number of households do not even have televisions at their homes and the radio is their only source of

news and information, the survey found.^{xxi} With the mobility control and lock down, girls participation and leadership in local child clubs, community groups and governments have been reduced and they are prevented from practicing leadership at community level

37. Out of the Rs6.8 billion set aside for emergency COVID-19 response, 34% has been allocated for quarantine management, according to a response plan by the Ministry of Health and Population. However, the local governments claim that meeting the quarantine guidelines set by the Government and the WHO is impossible to meet due to lack of medicine, manpower, and money.^{xxii} This has resulted in unsafe quarantines, with no girl friendly infrastructures, or menstrual hygiene/dignity kits.^{xxiii}

38. According to the Nepal Macroeconomic Update, average annual inflation will inch up to 6.0% in FY2020, up from 4.6% a year earlier, reflecting lower production and supply chain disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Headline inflation has averaged 6.5% in the first seven months of FY2020, Nepal's economy is anticipated to grow by 5.3% (at market prices) in fiscal year (FY) 2020, down from 7.1% a year earlier. The temporary closure of international borders over COVID-19 concern has nudged up food prices. The average annual inflation for FY2020 could be higher than anticipated if the situation further worsens due to the COVID-19 pandemic, says the report.^{xxiv} This is bound to push many families under the poverty line and girls will be among the first ones to bear the burden by dropping out of schools, and entering the labor world.

39. *We call the Government of Nepal for:*

- *Reformation of the school examination system and practice community based education system in addition to online education with local government monitoring of girls attendance in alternate forms of education.*
- *Provision of Social Protection Schemes to prevent Dropouts and Child Labour to fulfill economic needs of girls' families.*
- *Increase the existing scholarship amount and special skill based training for girls of employable age.*
- *Mobilize local Female health volunteers and Youth as vigilantes and for referrals, and case management in addition to mobilizing the police for girls specific monitoring.*
- *Make Quarantine centres Girls Friendly, disability friendly, and equipped with dignity kits.*
- *Address the needs of undocumented girls, migrant returnees, their transportation and isolation, in the COVID-19 Response Guidelines.*
- *Identification and documentation of working girls in collaboration with Employers and Trade Unions.*

References

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- ⁱ Nepal Country Economic Memorandum, The World Bank, IBRD.IDA
- ⁱⁱ *The constitution of Nepal has provisioned 30 different rights in fundamental rights section. Among which Art.17-Rights of Freedom), Art. 18- Equality before law, Art.20- Right to Justice, Art. 21- Rights of Crime Victims, Art. 28- Right to Privacy, Art. 29- Rights against exploitation, Art.31- Right to Education, Art. 33- Right to Employment, Art. 35- Right to Basic Health, Art. 38- Rights of Women, Art. 39- Rights of Children and Art. 42- Right to Social Justice are directly relevant to Girls and Women of Nepal.*
- ⁱⁱⁱ *The domestic laws that are in relevance to the girls rights are: Right to Education Act (2018), Public Health Service Act (2018), Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Rights Act (2018), Crime Victims Protection Act (2018), Act Related to Children (2018), National Criminal Code (2017), National Civil Code (2017), Right to Employment Act (2018) and Labor Act (2018), Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act (2000), Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act (2007),*
- ^{iv} Nepal Sustainable Development Goals Status and Roadmap 2016-30, Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission, Kathmandu, 2017.
- ^v Nepal has not ratified Convention on the rights of Migrants and Their Families and Convention on Enforced Disappearance.
- ^{vi} Central Bureau of Statistics Annual Household Survey 2015/16 –Literacy and Educational Attainment
- ^{vii} Education Financing Brief 2018, National Campaign for Education Nepal.
- ^{viii} Bhatta K. **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Vocational Education and Training.** Journal of Advanced Academic Research Vol. 3. No. II. July 2016. (www.phdcentre.edu.np)
- ^{ix} Girls' transitions to work through higher-quality TVET programs in Nepal-Anil Paudel, Echidna Global Scholars Program Policy Paper, October 2019
- ^x Nepal Adolescent Nutrition Survey, 2014, National Health Research Council, Government of Nepal, Ministry of Health and Population.
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- ^{xii} **Arjun Paudel** for the Kathmandu Post, With abortion pills easily available, men are refusing to use condoms, Published on 26th May 2019, <https://kathmandupost.com/health/2019/05/26/with-abortion-pills-easily-available-men-are-refusing-to-use-condoms>
- ^{xiii} Adolescent Risk Behavior Survey 2017, Thapa B , Powell J , Yi J , et al. Adolescent Health Risk and Behavior Survey: A School Based Survey in Central Nepal. *Kathmandu Univ Med J (KUMJ)*. 2017;15(60):301-307.
- ^{xiv} Dev Pant, Prakash, Jhabindra Prasad Pandey, and Kristin Bietsch. 2019. Unmet Need for Family Planning and Fertility in Nepal: Levels, Trends, and Determinants. 2019. DHS Further Analysis

^{xiv} Status of Children in Nepal 2076, National Child Rights Council, 2076.

^{xiv} Swatantrata Abhiyan Nepal & Others (2017), **Access to Justice and Workers Rights Situation in Adult Entertainment Industries of Kathmandu**. Kathmandu 2017.

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