



# NEPAL



## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2018



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### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Nepalese government has integrated SDG goals into its current five-year development plan. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is coordinated by the office of the Prime Minister and the National Planning Commission through the work of relevant ministries.

Trade unions raise concerns regarding the absence of adequate human and financial resources to implement the objectives set by the government in the context of the SDGs, citing the government's approaches to UNDP and other international agencies for bilateral and multilateral aid to finance the proposed programmes.

In addition, trade unions highlight issues around the government's poor resource and fund management as having the potential to hamper the efficient implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Nepalese government organises consultations ahead of the drafting of its annual and tri-yearly development planning. Specific consultations on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda have also been held. However, neither of these types of consultations have so far included trade union representatives, and they are limited to certain sections of civil society such as NGOs and representatives of the media, as well as international institutions (e.g. UNDP).

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



There is no consultation process at all

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



There is no involvement of social partners by the national government on an SDG national plan definition and implementation



## IS THE (DECENT) WORK BEING DONE?

On trade unions priorities SDGs, the government has set the following objectives (to be achieved by 2030): SDG 1 – reduce the poverty rate from 21.6% (in 2015) to 4.9%; SDG 5 – raise the proportion of women to men in professional and technical work from 24% (in 2015) to 40% in 2030; SDG 8 – reduce youth underemployment from 35.8% (in 2015) to 10%; SDG 13 – reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels from 0.10 (in 2015) to 0.05 metric tons per capita; and SDG 16 – reduce the percentage of children working under hazardous conditions from 30% (in 2015) to 0%.

With regards to **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)**, while Nepal has made significant progress since 1995, when 61.9% of the population was living below the international poverty line, the proportion in 2010 remained high, at 15%. Additionally, the percentage of people living in poverty in that year stood at 15.8%. Indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** show that only 62.5% of the population was covered by social protection systems in 2010.

There is a need for improvements to achieve progress on **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**. According to NTUC, 74.8% of women are engaged in unpaid labour within the household. Furthermore, extensive labour migration of men from rural areas has meant that 77% of economically active women work in the low-income agricultural sector.

There are serious concerns about Nepal meeting the targets set by **SDG 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all)**. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 23.4% of youth (15-24) in 2008. Furthermore, indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour)** show that 27.6% of children aged between 5 and 17 years old have been engaged in child labour in 2008, including 29.6% of 5-14 year-olds. Implementation of provisions relating to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** leaves much to be desired in Nepal, as 19 violations of ILO conventions (18 in law and one in practice) have been recorded up to 2015.

Progress remains to be made for Nepal to **reach target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as the share of the top 10% of income earners accounts for 26.4% of overall GDP, while the bottom 20% of income earners account for 8.3% of GDP.

## WHERE TO NEXT? TRADE UNION RECIPE TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

NTUC stresses the need for the Nepalese government to strengthen its financial policy and human resource base in order to effectively and efficiently implement the SDGs. To further ensure the success of its development plans, trade union partners emphasise the need for transparency, participation, dialogue and partnership with social partners, including trade unions.

A number of strategic priorities emerged from the trade union analysis. In order to make meaningful progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda, they recommend that the government of Nepal prioritise the following:

- **Creating employment, decent work and decent wages;**
- **Ensuring gender equality by ensuring women's full and equal access to the world of work;**
- **Establishing robust and regular social dialogue and integrating it into the policy-making process;**
- **Implementing labour law, social protection systems for workers and people living in poverty;**
- **Addressing occupational health and safety and environmental issues.**



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