

Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022



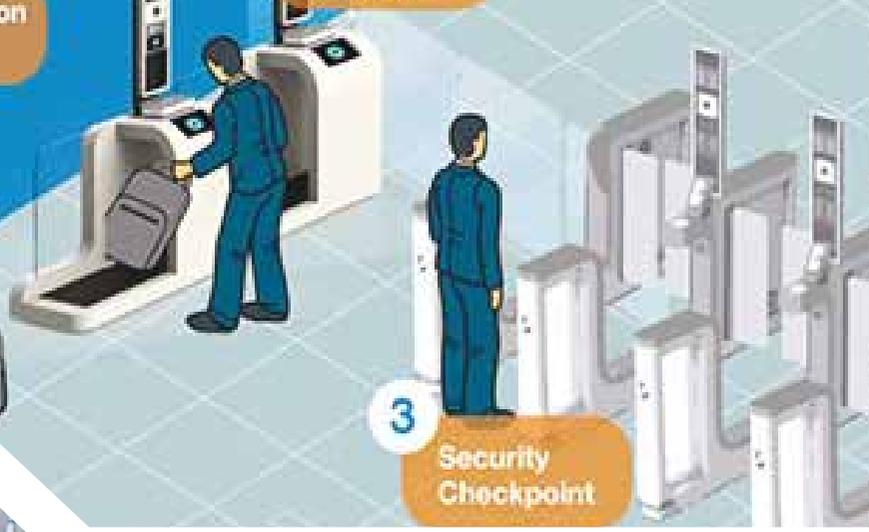
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Government of Nepal
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

NEPAL LABOUR MIGRATION REPORT 2022



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
Kathmandu, Nepal

Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022

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Singhadarbar, Kathmandu

Tel.: 01-4211678, 4211791, 4211733

Fax: 01-4211877

Email: info@moless.gov.np

Website: www.moless.gov.np

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Designed & Printed by:

Luna Creation Pvt. Ltd.

Bagbazar, Kathmandu

Email: info.lunacreation@gmail.com

मा. शेर बहादुर कुँवर
मन्त्री
अम. रोजगार तथा सामाजिक सुरक्षा मन्त्रालय
Hon. Sher Bahadur Kunwar
Minister
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

नेपाल सरकार
Government of Nepal



सिंहदरबार, काठमाडौं, नेपाल ।
Singh Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal

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इमेल: minister@moless.gov.np

वेबसाइट : www.moless.gov.np

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MESSAGE

Labour Migration has been an integral aspect of the socio-economic status of our country. Nepali economy has remained mostly on the foundation of remittances gained abroad by the Nepali youths. In this context, the Government of Nepal is cognizant of both the avenues of creating and promoting internal employment and ensuring foreign employment is safe, dignified and regular. Further, the Government of Nepal is on the way to ensuring foreign employment as an informed choice.

The ministry has started its publication of the Labour Migration Report from the year 2015 and it is the sixth iteration of the report that is likely to provide an operational framework for labour migration governance and the related policy reforms. The report has outlined the government's initiatives on multi-level reform efforts at the local, provincial, national, bilateral, regional and global levels to realize the goal of safe, dignified and systematic labour migration in Nepal. The swiftly-changing global migration landscape has put the spotlight on migration issues, especially with adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the migration related indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. In addition, within Nepal, federalisation has presented immense opportunities to initiate worker-centred reform efforts that ensure safe foreign employment.

I believe that this report remains as the important document for the government of Nepal showing an operational framework for mitigating the gaps and challenges of labour migration in Nepal. I expect the way forward outlined to be applicable and result based.

I thank Eaknarayan Aryal, the Secretary of the Ministry, the steering committee members and the working committee members for their leading role. My thanks also go to the research team members for their commendable work. Also, I extend my thanks to the development partners- the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration and the SaMi Project- for their technical support.

Sher Bahadur Kunwar
Minister
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

Singh Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal

Foreword

It is my pleasure to publish the Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022. The report presents the migration status of three fiscal years 2019/2020, 2020/2021 and 2021/2022. The migration in Nepal has heartened all the aspects of social livelihood of Nepalis though the COVID 19 pandemic had adversely affected the foreign employment for the last two years. Labour migration has presented opportunities for the economy of the country meanwhile there are challenges in making foreign employment management an informed choice.

The statistics in the report portray a comprehensive and overarching picture of migration of Nepal. It is a timely and valuable contribution to better understand where Nepal stands in terms of labour migration. Similarly, it critically analyses the thematic gaps and challenges of labour migration including Nepal-India Migration as well as returnees' disaggregated data and identifies the areas of reform. The report has also presented the bilateral labour arrangements of our country with the countries of destination including the changed migration policies. It is expected that this report fills the gaps of data inconsistencies and unavailability of data on labour migration in Nepal. The report has been prepared with a participatory approach by consulting with provincial and local government, and concerned stakeholders.

Technology based service delivery is one of the key priorities of the Ministry. Pre-approval of job demands, labour approval (new and renew) services and foreign employment services are online and continuously on the way to being paperless, cashless and faceless. This has supported to enhance transparency and efficiency in public service delivery.

I would like to thank the steering committee members, working committee members, Joint Secretary Mr Rajiv Pokhrel, labour migration expert Dr Keshav Bashyal, Under Secretary Mr Kabiraj Upreti and other government officials in the Ministry who were assigned to compile and produce this report. They deserve appreciation for their hard work that has made the continuity of the report possible. My thanks go to Dr Richard Howard, Country Director, ILO Nepal and his team, Ms Lorena Lando, Chief of Mission, IOM, Nepal and her team and the Safer Migration Programme for their technical support and continued collaboration. In addition, I would also like to extend my thanks to all the agencies, organisations and individuals who provided creative inputs at various stages of report preparation and completion.

I expect the report to be a useful and interesting read to academicians, policymakers, civil society, trade unions, media persons and people working in the field of labour migration. I hope such initiation will continue in the future and all stakeholders will support to promote safe migration.

Eaknarayan Aryal
Secretary

Phone: 4211815, 4211984, 4211696, 4211963 Fax: 977-1-4211877

Website: www.moless.gov.np, E-mail: info@moless.gov.np

Steering Committee, Working Committee & Research Team

Steering Committee		
Mr Eaknarayan Aryal	Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security	Coordinator
Mr Rajiv Pokhrel	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security	Member Secretary
Dr Keshav Bashyal	Expert, Labour Migration	Member
Mr Harischandra Ghimire	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Member
Mr Umakanta Acharya	Director General, Department of Foreign Employment	Member
Dr Dwarika Prasad Upreti	Executive Director, Foreign Employment Board	Member
Dr Richard Howard	Country Director, ILO Nepal	Member
Ms Lorena Lando	Chief of Mission, IOM, Nepal	Member

Working Committee		
Mr Rajiv Pokhrel	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security	Coordinator
Mr Kabiraj Upreti	Under Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security	Member Secretary
Mr Tirtha Chaulagain	Director, National Statistics Office	Member
Mr Ramhari Regmi	IT Director, Department of Foreign Employment	Member
Mr Deepak Dhakal	Director, Foreign Employment Board	Member
Mr Raju Shrestha	Computer Engineer, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security	Member
Ms Neha Choudhary	National Project Coordinator, ILO Nepal	Member
Mr Prajwal Sharma	Head of Labour Mobility and Human Development Department, IOM Nepal	Member
Mr Dev Chandra Rai	Senior Programme Officer, Safer Migration (SaMi) Programme	Member

Mr Jhakka Prasad Acharya, Joint Secretary; Dr Thaneshwar Bhusal, Under-Secretary; Ms Shanti Paudel, Mr Prem Pokhrel and Mr Benukraj Karki, Section Officers; and Mr Ramesh Nepal, Computer Officer; at the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security provided invaluable support.

Research & Report Writing Team

Dr Jeevan Baniya, Sadikshya Bhattarai, Sudeshna Thapa, Prajesh Aryal, Sanjit Shrestha, Bipin Upadhyay, Dogendra Tumsa, Dr Arjun Kharel, Samiksha Neupane, Preshika Baskota, Apurwa Baral and Angnima Lama, Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility (CESLAM), Social Science Baha.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADD	Abu Dhabi Dialogue
BLA	Bilateral Labour Agreement
BLMA	Bilateral Labour Migration Agreement
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDO	Chief District Officer
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CESLAM	Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility
CoD	Countries of Destination
CP	Colombo Process
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DoFE	Department of Foreign Employment
DoI	Department of Immigration
DoLOS	Department of Labour and Occupational Safety
EIC	Employment Information System
EMIS	Employment Management Information System
EPS	Employment Permit System
ESC	Employment Service Centre
FEB	Foreign Employment Board
FEIMS	Foreign Employment Information Management System
FET	Foreign Employment Tribunal
FEWF	Foreign Employment Welfare Fund
FEWIMS	Foreign Employment Welfare Information Management System
FY	Fiscal Year
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoN	Government of Nepal
G2G	Government-to-Government
ILO	International Labour Organization
I/NGO	International/ Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoLESS	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWCSC	Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens
MRC	Migrant Resource Centre
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NLFS	Nepal Labour Force Survey
NOC	No Objection Certificate
NPR	Nepali Rupee
NRB	Nepal Rastra Bank
NRNA	Non-Resident Nepali Association
NSTB	National Skill Testing Board
NVQS	National Vocational Qualification System
NVQS-P	Nepal Vocational Qualifications System Project
PAM	Public Authority of Manpower
PDOT	Pre-Departure Orientation Training
PMEP	Prime Minister Employment Program
PNCC	Pravasi Nepali Coordination Committee
PRA	Private Recruitment Agency
ReMi	Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers
RRT	Rapid Response Team
RSP	Remittance Service Provider
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SaMi	Safer Migration
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TMIS	Training Management Information System
TOPIK	Test of Proficiency in Korean
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
USD	United States Dollar
VSDTC	Vocational and Skill Development Training Centre

Executive Summary

The Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022 summarises the major trends and activities in labour migration governance in the country. For analytical purposes, it focuses on quantitative database retrieved from the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS) maintained from 2019/2020 to 2021/22. Together with qualitative data, the report primarily features an assessment of policies and programmes on temporary labour migration of Nepali citizens to several countries of destination. The report is a continuation of earlier labour migration reports.

Temporary labour migration of Nepali human resources to several labour destinations has become a common phenomenon. At the household level, financial support from family members overseas has had a significant impact in advancing the family's educational, financial, entrepreneurial, and social life. Remittances are contributing to the social and economic development of hundreds of thousands of migrant households. Despite severe disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the global economy, hundreds of thousands of Nepalis continued to opt for foreign employment, resulting in a remittance inflow of NPR 961.2 billion (ca. USD 7.5 billion) in 2020.

The labour migration sector in Nepal is governed by a host of institutions, starting with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) as the apex body in setting policy on labour migration. The Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) has the task of regulating the sector, the Foreign Employment Board (FEB) is involved in supporting migrant workers and their families' welfare and reintegration while the Foreign Employment Tribunal (FET) is dedicated to adjudicating legal cases related to labour migration. Provincial ministries and local level units also provide supportive functions to the labour migration sector. Private recruitment agencies (PRAs) play an important function in linking aspirant migrant workers with employers abroad while medical centres, pre-departure orientation training providers, and insurance companies all provide their respective services to ensure the smooth functioning of the labour migration process.

In recent years, MoLESS has been implementing a coordinated effort to strengthen labour migration governance and enhance effective service delivery in Nepal and beyond. These include shifting labour migration-related services such as application for and issuance of labour approval by DoFE and application to the FEB for financial assistance onto online platforms. Similarly, policies related to immigration—especially aimed at migrant workers—in the major countries of destination (CoDs) have seen significant changes. In particular, policies aimed at imposing limits on labour migration or reserving jobs and opportunities for their nationals were evident across all the major Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. A wage protection system and development of accessible complaint mechanisms have also been established in recent years.

Nepal has continued to prioritise entering into and renewing bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) with various labour destinations to ensure safe, orderly and dignified migration of Nepali migrant workers. So far, the government has established specific and formal bilateral labour relations with 10 different countries, mostly in the GCC region. While labour relations with each country have their own distinctive features, formalising agreements provide an important position for Nepal to initiate conversations to ensure decent work for Nepali migrant workers. In recent years, the focus of the Government of Nepal has been on renewing, if not upgrading, the agreement with the hope of incorporating recent reforms in both Nepal and the countries of destination. The renewed labour agreements with Malaysia in 2018 and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2019 stand testimony to Nepal's continued efforts in this regard. Similarly, during their sixth joint committee meeting in December 2021, Nepal and Qatar agreed to upgrade the bilateral labour agreement (BLA) signed in 2005 while the agreements with Israel in 2020 and the United Kingdom in 2022 provide important insights into the government's priority in finding new labour destinations for Nepali human resources.

Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, more than 1.1 million labour approvals were issued. While the number of labour approvals issued saw a significant decline in the COVID-19 years of 2019/20 and 2020/21, there was a revival in 2021/22 when the impacts of the pandemic gradually subsided. Nepal welcomed back 203,934 returnees in 2020/21 and 470,978 in 2021/22. Although the lack of comprehensive data does not permit asserting conclusively, most of these returnee migrants are likely to have migrated again, especially in recent months.

Labour migration from Nepal is still a phenomenon dominated by men with women migrant workers accounting for less than 10 per cent of the total labour approvals issued in 2021/22. Madhesh and Province 1 account for the largest share of migrant workers, with each being home to more than a fifth of the total labour approvals issued in 2021/22. In contrast, Bagmati accounts for the largest share of women migrant workers in foreign employment.

While Nepali citizens migrated to 150 countries between 2019/20 and 2021/22 for employment, the six GCC countries and Malaysia remain the preferred destinations for the overwhelming majority of Nepali migrant workers in the reference period. Countries like Croatia, Cyprus, the Maldives, Malta, Poland, Romania, Turkey, and the UK have also emerged as important employment destinations in the last few years. Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, although most of the women Nepali migrant workers went to the GCC countries, countries like Croatia, Cyprus, Jordan, Malta, Romania and Turkey were the more prominent, and emerging destinations for women compared to men.

Migrant workers' health and safety continue to be crucial issues. In 2021/22, 1395 Nepali migrant workers (including 39 women) were reported to have died, with most deaths certified as having occurred due to 'natural causes' in and by CoDs. More than 150 cases of deaths of Nepali migrant workers have each been reported annually in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE in 2019/20–2021/22. In addition, a significant number of Nepali migrant workers return home with mild to severe injuries and illnesses. The health risks migrant workers face are linked to their exposure to occupational safety

and health hazards, poor working and living conditions, lack of access to social protection, including medical/health services, language and cultural barriers, and forced overtime labour, among others. The FEB disbursed a total of NPR 769.95 million (ca. USD 5.9 million) as financial assistance to 1395 families of deceased migrant workers in 2020/21 through the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund (FEWF).

Nepali migrant workers have been subjected to an exploitative recruitment process, employment contract fraud and abuse by employers. Women migrant workers are especially vulnerable to violence and face risks of abusive treatment in many countries of destination. More than 1300 new cases related to such fraud, abuse and exploitation were filed at the FET between 2019/20 and 2021/22. MoLESS has adopted and implemented a range of policies and legal instruments to address these issues. These include a ban on the use of agents, conferring rights to the Chief District Officer (CDO) to investigate and punish individual agents involved in fraud and cheating, and an ‘employer pays’ model for recruitment.

The government has also prioritised the reintegration of migrant workers through skill development and certification, and also programmes dealing with financial literacy, vocational training, recognition of prior learning, psychological support, and shelter. Through the Reintegration Programme (Operation and Management) Directive for Returnee Migrant Workers, 2022, the government has stressed three diverse yet inter-related dimensions of the reintegration efforts: social integration, employment, and entrepreneurial development.

Recognising the conditions on the ground and in an attempt to redress any shortcomings, MoLESS is considering working on the following areas in the immediate future:

Strengthening legal and policy framework: MoLESS is cognisant that forthcoming revisions of the national labour migration legislation will have to address the issues of irregular migrant workers and those in domestic work, and also deal with the issue of human trafficking and smuggling that are often conflated with labour migration. The recruitment fees and related costs will also be elaborated upon in the forthcoming amendments of the Foreign Employment Act to ensure strict implementation of the principle of ‘employer pays’ and fair and ethical recruitment. MoLESS is also planning to incentivise PRAs practising fair and ethical recruitment and is also re-evaluating the current policy that requires the PRAs to send a certain number of migrant workers annually in order to get their licence renewed since this has led to PRAs focusing on numbers than the service provided.

Enhanced e-governance of labour migration and services: MoLESS recognises the importance of and need for raising awareness among migrant workers and their families using both traditional and new forms of media about the online platforms and services that have been introduced for better and faster service delivery as well as on issues such as their rights, compensation and grievance-registration mechanisms to further enhance safe migration. It is also crucial to address various hindrances constraining public’s access to these digital services.

Decentralisation of services: MoLESS recognises the importance of collaborating with provincial and local governments and other relevant agencies to decentralise various labour migration-related services such as the regulation of PRAs and the pre-departure orientation training (PDOT) centres; access to job opportunities abroad; health check-ups, biometric check-ups, grievance registration and settlement; and insurance claims, financial assistances and scholarships.

Access to justice: MoLESS underscores the need to work closely with the CoDs and take up issues related to wage theft, fair and ethical recruitment, migrants in irregular situations, forced labour, exploitation and abuse during joint committee meetings and other bilateral discussions. MoLESS has been underscoring the need to highlight the plight of irregular migrant workers during bilateral discussions with the CoDs while also strengthening the PDOT curriculum in a manner that adequately addresses these issues. Towards that end, MoLESS aims to provide free legal support services to migrant workers, including through the implementation of the new directives, information dissemination, documentation and translation related services, and by working with diaspora, international organisations, bar councils and trade unions in the CoDs.

Health and safety of migrant workers: MoLESS recognises the need to carry out regular and effective inspection of the workplace and living conditions of migrant workers. In line with this report's findings that a large number of Nepali migrant workers are employed in unsafe employment practices, MoLESS notes the need to organise occupational safety and health training for migrant workers prior to and after their arrival in the CoDs in coordination with Nepali diplomatic missions. MoLESS also realises the importance of informed migration, sensitisation, greater awareness, and the need for implementing country-specific PDOT curriculums as well as post-arrival orientation. MoLESS will continue engaging with CoDs to ensure that employers implement standard occupational safety and health protocols at the workplace.

Social protection: It has been recognised that the establishment of a bilateral social security mechanism could enhance the protection of migrant workers. MoLESS will continue to explore ways by engaging with employers' and workers' organisations on how this can be designed and implemented in a way that is gender responsive and also sensitive to the condition of workers in the informal sector. Priority will be given to the inclusion of migrant workers in the social security scheme in Nepal, namely the Social Security Fund (SSF).

Labour diplomacy: In addition to analysing migration-related policy priorities of the CoDs and gathering feedback on the meeting agenda in advance, MoLESS will continue collaborating with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and other relevant agencies and stakeholders before participating in bilateral and multilateral meetings and events in order to successfully seek the support of the CoDs in its priority areas. MoLESS will continue to engage with national, regional and international partners to protect and promote the human rights of migrant workers. Further, Nepal will actively seek opportunities to play leading roles in forums like the GCM and the UN Network on Migration, the Colombo Process, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Technical

Committee on Labour Migration, to ensure that the issues and concerns of Nepali migrant workers are adequately raised and addressed. MoLESS will also institutionalise the practice of documenting the discussions at preparatory phases and proceedings of such events.

Multi-stakeholder Collaboration: MoLESS is gearing up to improve dialogue at the national, provincial and local levels while also exploring possibilities for setting up an inter-ministerial committee or a working group for better vertical and horizontal coherence among government institutions on matters dealing with labour migration. In line with the GCM's 'Whole of the Government' and 'Whole of the Society' principles, the Ministry will continue engagements and consultations with organisations of returnee migrants, trade unions, CSOs, PRAs, academia and the media to improve policies and practices in the labour migration sector and also before engaging with the CoDs in pursuit of new agreements or review and amendment of existing ones.

Return and reintegration: As also directed by the recent directive on reintegration, MoLESS will take into account local and community occupational and labour market contexts, skills profile, and the capital and knowledge of returnee migrants in designing and implementing sustainable reintegration programmes. Priority will be given to endogenous planning processes and capacity enhancement of local governments, particularly of the employment service centres (ESCs). MoLESS will explore ways to support the shelters set up to assist Nepali migrant workers and returnees.

Skilling, skill recognition and certification: MoLESS recognises the need to collaborate with the CoDs and the private sector in identifying demands and implementing demand-driven country-specific skill training programmes targeted at migrant workers. MoLESS will continue working closely with institutions such as the FEB, the Vocational Skill Development and Training Centre (VSTDC), the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT), and the National Skill Testing Board (NSTB) to design and implement training programmes aimed at migrant workers. It will also promote skills testing and its mutual recognition in CoDs.

Disaster/crisis response and recovery plan: MoLESS acknowledges the importance of developing an emergency crisis preparedness, response and recovery plan and strategy for the protection and support of migrant workers in CoDs and also after their return, particularly given how the COVID-19 pandemic caught the government, non-government and private sectors off-guard. MoLESS is cognisant of the need to mobilise support from relevant stakeholders such as the PRAs, diplomatic missions, international organisations, diaspora organisations, and migrant workers in this endeavour.

Remittances: While acknowledging the importance of policies and schemes to incentivise migrant workers so that they remit through formal channels, efforts are also necessary for proactively curbing the practice of using irregular channels for remittance. MoLESS will work with the concerned governmental institutions, financial institutions and money transfer operators towards this end. Alongside, MoLESS will continue working to expand the existing financial literacy programme for migrant workers and their families besides raising awareness and facilitating access to financial services.

Communication and outreach: MoLESS will continue to strengthen efforts aimed at informed migration through timely, accurate and easily accessible information made available to aspirants, migrants and returnees about safe migration and the risks of irregular migration; their rights and responsibilities; dos and don'ts; occupational safety and health (OSH); culture and language services available to them including in seeking justice in CoDs and on utilising their remittances (social and economic); welfare services; mental and psychosocial issues; access to justice-related services; and opportunities for employment and enterprises after their return to Nepal. Apart from regular PDOTs, such awareness-raising and information dissemination activities will also be carried out through both traditional and new forms of communication.

Migration data and further knowledge: MoLESS will identify gaps and opportunities in labour migration data and the information management system. MoLESS recognises the need to assess existing information systems such as the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS) and the Foreign Employment Welfare Information Management System (FEWIMS) to resolve gaps and discrepancies in the data being recorded, particularly with regard to disaggregation and standardising of data on skills and occupational categorisation, deaths and injuries, grievances and case settlements, etc. While adhering to relevant legal provisions, priority will also be accorded to making the data and information managed by various government agencies publicly accessible.

Chapter 1:
OVERVIEW



The crowds of migrant workers/aspirant migrant workers have disappeared from the Department of Foreign Employment with the shift of foreign employment-related services online.

Chapter 1: Overview

1.1 Background

International migration has become an integral part of Nepali society and has touched almost every Nepali family due to the large number of Nepalis being engaged in transnational migration, primarily for work and education (IOM 2019a; Sharma et al 2014). According to the preliminary findings of the 2021 Census, there are more than 2.1 million Nepali citizens living outside the country, a figure that represents 7.4 per cent of the national population (CBS 2022). Men make up 81.3 per cent (or 1.8 million) of this migrant group. There is also a significant number of Nepali students going abroad for study. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) issued ‘no objection certificates’ (NOCs) to 416,364 Nepalis to study abroad between 2008/09 and 2020/21.¹

It is clear that labour migration² and the inflow of international remittances have brought social and economic benefits to the country and to the families of migrants (Sijapati et al 2017). Although the tradition of migrating to other countries for work is long and varied in Nepal, the trend increasingly in recent years has been of a rather substantial number of Nepalis migrating to various countries around the globe for employment. The Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) has issued over 4.7 million ‘new entry’³ labour approvals to Nepali workers for overseas employment since 2008/09 and renewed over 1.8 million labour approvals since 2011/12.⁴

Labour migration from Nepal increased drastically with the liberalisation of migration policies in the 1990s (Sharma et al 2014), which also coincided with the growth and the shortage of labour in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). Emigration from Nepal in general was further precipitated by the decade-long conflict in Nepal from 1996 to 2006. The six GCC countries and Malaysia remain the most popular destinations for Nepali labour migration, accounting for more than 85 per cent of the workers leaving Nepal (MoLESS 2020a).

- 1 An NOC is a government document provided to Nepalis who want to study abroad. The number of NOC issued to Nepalis is presented in Annex 1.
- 2 In this report, ‘labour migration’ refers to seasonal or temporary migration of a person to another country for the purpose of work while ‘migrant worker’ is a person engaged in labour migration.
- 3 The ‘new entry’ category of migrant workers refers to those going for a new job abroad. Process of migration of workers in this category is carried out either at individual level or via recruitment agencies. Migrant workers returning to the same job on a renewed contract are placed under the ‘re-entry’ category since they have to only renew their labour approvals and normally do it themselves or with minimal support from intermediaries. Former migrant workers going for a new job need to get a new labour approval.
- 4 Ministry of Labour and Employment, *Labour Migration for Employment: A Status Report of Nepal: 2015/2016 – 2016/17* (Kathmandu: Government of Nepal, 2018); MoLESS, *Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020*; and data made available by DoFE. These figures do not include those headed to India since labour approvals are not required for Nepalis to work in India.

A major migration route for Nepalis is the Nepal-India corridor.⁵ A large number of Nepalis migrate to India in search of employment or for business purposes, taking advantage of the open border between the two countries (Bashyal 2020a). Although the everyday flow of Nepali workers to and from India is unrecorded, a national survey from 2017/18 estimated that almost a million Nepali migrant workers were employed or seeking employment in India.⁶ However, the number of Nepalis involved in this cross-border movement in search of jobs or other economic opportunities is believed to be higher as the national census and surveys do not take into account seasonal migration to India (Bashyal 2020c).

With the increase in the number of migrant workers, the country has also experienced an uptick in the remittances, in absolute terms as well as relative to national GDP (Gross Domestic Product). For example, in 2021, the receipt of USD 8.2 billion (ca. NPR 1.06 trillion) as remittances equalled 23.8 per cent of Nepal's GDP (the tenth highest globally on that score) (Ratha et al 2022). However, this has come at some cost. Problems of mortality and morbidity of migrant workers along with issues relating to access to health services and to justice, and indebtedness, both in the countries of destinations and in Nepal, are common (Vital Signs 2022; Bhattarai et al 2022a; Paoletti et al 2014).⁷ Studies show migrant workers also face challenges in terms of rehabilitation and reintegration after their return to Nepal.⁸

Migrant workers are also one of the most vulnerable populations in the world, and that fact was further reinforced by the COVID-19 pandemic, which made their situation even more precarious (Baniya et al 2020a; IOM & NIDS 2020; WOREC 2020). Despite making huge contributions to the economies of both home and country of destination, migrant workers have always been subjected to various forms of human rights and labour rights abuses and also lack access to justice. The COVID-19 pandemic served to exacerbate these problems as various studies and media reports have shown that migrant workers lost jobs, sometimes being terminated without notice, and faced reduced or non-payment of wages and benefits, among others (Baniya et al 2020a; Bhattarai et al 2022a). The return of a large number of Nepali migrant workers after the onset of the pandemic has also highlighted the need for and importance of plans, policies and programmes for their sustainable economic and psychosocial reintegration, including through appropriate utilisation of their remittances.

As a country of origin, Nepal needs to properly measure and understand the dominant trends in labour migration to ensure that positive impacts are harnessed and negative ones minimised. The four reports on labour migration published by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS), covering the fiscal years 2013/14 to 2018/19, have contributed to filling some of the gaps in data and information on labour migration from Nepal.⁹ By providing a fairly comprehensive

5 According to the Foreign Employment Act, 2007, working in India is not recognized as foreign employment.

6 Based on calculation of raw data from the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2017/18.

7 Also, see 'Labour Migration from Nepal-Factsheets for the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Malaysia and South Korea,' Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility (CESLAM) & Foreign Employment Board (FEB), <https://www.ceslam.org/fact-sheets>.

8 See, for instance, Sijapati et al (2019); Bhattarai et al (2022a) and Bhattarai et al (2022b), MoLESS and IOM 2022; Gupta et al 2022.

9 These reports are: MoLE (2014), MoLE (2016), MoLE (2018) and MoLESS (2020a).

picture of labour migration in Nepal, these reports have been instrumental in fostering evidence-based discourse on migration issues while also generating knowledge for future efforts on migration governance.¹⁰ In this regard, this report, which uses data from 2019/20 to 2021/22, is both timely and relevant while also indicating potential future trends since the labour migration landscape in Nepal within this period has witnessed significant changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2 Objectives

The overall objective of the Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022 is to provide a comprehensive overview of labour migration from Nepal with a focus on the fiscal years 2019/20, 2020/2021 and 2021/22.

More specifically, the report aims to provide:

- i. updated information on the major trends of labour migration from Nepal, including:
 - a. districts and provinces of origin of migrant workers,
 - b. migrant workers' sex, age and skills profile,
 - c. countries of destination, and
 - d. modes of obtaining labour approval, renewing labour approval, and return migration;
- ii. an overview of Nepal's labour migration governance, including institutional mechanisms and policy frameworks governing the sector as well as Nepal's commitments in regional and global forums; and
- iii. insights into other aspects of labour migration, namely:
 - a. the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on labour migration, migrant workers and their families,
 - b. migrant workers' health and safety,
 - c. situation of recruitment and access to justice for migrant workers,
 - d. skills training and labour migration,
 - e. reintegration of returnee migrant workers, and
 - f. cross-border migration between Nepal and India for work.

1.3 Methodology

This report is based on a review and analysis of secondary data, consultations with stakeholders, and interviews. The following approach was adopted for data collection, feedback collection and validation.

1.3.1 Analysis of Secondary Data

The trend in labour migration was analysed through secondary data collected mainly by various agencies of the Government of Nepal involved in the labour migration sector in Nepal as detailed below. The

¹⁰ See, for instance, MoLESS (2020a).

data from government agencies were validated by the working committee and representatives from the respective agencies.

Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE): Data on labour approvals issued by DoFE to migrant workers were disaggregated on the basis of sex, district and province of origin, country of destination, and occupation. This data also allowed for an analysis of the mode of obtaining labour approval (individual or via recruitment agency) as well as renewal of labour approvals. The data related to the labour approvals and the data on returnees were drawn from the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS).

Foreign Employment Board (FEB): Disaggregated data on the number of deaths and injuries of migrant workers recorded by the FEB were analysed. In addition, the Board's progress reports were reviewed to take stock of welfare schemes available to migrant workers or their families under the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund (FEWF) in the case of death of or injury sustained by the former. The reports also contained information on pre-departure skills training for potential migrant workers, skill certification of returnees being conducted in coordination with the National Skill Testing Board (NSTB) in order to facilitate their reintegration, and the FEB's efforts to reintegrate returnee migrant workers, particularly after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Foreign Employment Tribunal (FET): Data from the quasi-judicial Foreign Employment Tribunal was analysed to understand the situation of access to justice for migrant workers.

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) and World Bank: The trend of remittance inflow into Nepal was studied using figures available through the Nepal Rastra Bank and the World Bank.

1.3.2 Review of Government Reports and Grey Literature

The report has been further enriched from other data sources, primarily the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)¹¹ but also the National Human Rights Commission, Nepali diplomatic missions in migration destinations, civil society groups, and national and international non-governmental organisations as well as research institutions working in the sector of labour migration.

Annual reports and other documents produced by relevant government agencies in the labour migration sector were reviewed to understand the latest progress on services provided to migrant workers. Among these were government directives for providing welfare services to migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a review of publications, including grey literature, from research organisations and I/NGOs, such as ILO and IOM, working on the issues of migrants and their rights were helpful in analysing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrant workers, the

11 The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) which functioned under the National Planning Commission (NPC) has been renamed as National Statistics Office (NSO) and currently functions under the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (OPMCM). The name change came into effect in 2022.

relief services provided by the state targeted at migrant workers or their families during the pandemic, and tracing the barriers and challenges migrant workers faced in accessing those services.

1.3.3 Review of National and International Legal Framework

This report reviewed foreign employment-related policies, laws and guidelines, primarily the Foreign Employment Act (FEA), 2007, including its amendments; the Foreign Employment Rules, 2008 and its amendments; and the Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 to understand the existing legal provisions and mechanisms guiding labour migration from Nepal. Also examined were bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) with countries of destination, including recent ones such as the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on sending Nepali workers with the status of Specified Skilled Workers (SSW)¹² to Japan and the Agreement Related to Temporary Employment of Nepali Workers in the Labour Market of Israel.

Nepal's experience of and lessons arising from its involvement in global and regional forums on migration, such as the Colombo Process (CP) and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and its initiatives towards meeting commitments under the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)'s fair and ethical recruitment, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8.7 and 10.7, and the Palermo Protocol (Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime) were also reviewed. As was the Bali Process, which focuses on the themes of human mobility, irregular migration, combating human trafficking, migrant vulnerabilities and the human rights of migrants (The Bali Process n.d.; Dhungana & Baniya 2022).

1.3.4 National and Province-Level Consultation

The preparation of the report followed an intensive consultative process from the very beginning. A briefing session was organised on 11 April 2022 with the working committee at MoLESS to discuss the scope of work and finalise the work plan. The report was validated through two levels of stakeholder consultations that included representatives from all three tiers of government, I/NGOs, trade unions, academics, and the private sector, among others. There were three province-level consultations in Province 1, Madhesh and Gandaki; and a national consultation in Kathmandu. The report was thoroughly revised based on comments and suggestions of the participants at the consultations.

1.3.5 Key Informant Interviews

Interviews with representatives of government agencies (MoLESS, MoFA, FEB), PRAs and CSOs were carried out to understand recent policy changes and developments related to labour migration in Nepal.

¹² Status of residence called 'Specified Skilled Worker (SSW)' was introduced in April 2019 by the Government of Japan. Under the SSW, industries in Japan experiencing labour shortage are permitted to hire foreign nationals with specialized knowledge and skills. See: JITCO (n.d.).

1.4 Structure of the Report

The Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022 is structured as follows:

Besides this introductory chapter, dealing with a brief background of labour migration in the context of Nepal, the objectives of the report and the overall methodology used, it consists of five other chapters.

Chapter 2 looks at the institutional framework and recent developments in laws and policies in Nepal governing labour migration to foreign countries, including any recent amendments made, and the roles and responsibilities accorded to provincial and local governments. The chapter also discusses the programmes and activities of key international and national non-governmental organisations working in the labour migration sector in Nepal. It provides an overview of recent developments in the digital governance of labour migration in Nepal; bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) between Nepal and different countries of destination over the past two or three years; policy changes in the key countries of destination, and Nepal's engagement in participating in different international and regional forums, processes and institutions.

Chapter 3 presents detailed data on the labour migration scenario in Nepal, including information on returnee migrant workers. This chapter also looks at labour migration from a regional perspective using data sourced from secondary sources.

Chapter 4 covers seven thematic topics, namely: i) the situation and practices of recruitment in Nepal, including the implementation status of the 'free-visa, free-ticket' policy; ii) health and safety of migrant workers, focusing on data on death and disability of migrant workers and financial assistance; iii) migrant workers' access to justice in Nepal; iv) remittance inflow into Nepal; v) reintegration of returnee migrant workers, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; vi) skills development and certification of migrant workers; and vii) migration of Nepali workers to India.

Chapter 5 reflects on gaps and issues in data related to labour migration. In particular, this chapter focuses on a review of data recorded and collected via FEIMS and FEWIMS.

A comprehensive list of areas for reform based on the findings of this report is presented in **Chapter 6**. The recommendations are discussed under broad categories: national legislation, e-governance, fair and ethical recruitment and access to justice, labour diplomacy and role of Nepal's diplomatic missions, multi-stakeholder collaboration and regional and international cooperation, social protection, health and safety of migrant workers, return and reintegration, skilling, skill recognition and certification, disaster/crisis response and recovery plan, remittances, and migration data.

Chapter 2:
**LABOUR MIGRATION
GOVERNANCE IN NEPAL**



Aspirant migrant workers receiving information and counselling at the Migrant Resource Centre in Morang.

Chapter 2: Labour Migration Governance in Nepal

Labour migration is a multidimensional and multi-structural phenomenon, requiring proper cooperation and collaboration between different agencies and stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels for safer, managed and beneficial migration (ESCAP 2020, 6). This chapter discusses the institutional and legislative frameworks that govern labour migration for foreign employment in the context of the federal governance system of Nepal.

2.1 Institutional Arrangements

The Constitution of Nepal, 2015 introduced a three-tier governing structure, consisting of federal, provincial and local governments.¹³ The Constitution thereby gives the federal government the mandate to make and enforce policies and bilateral agreements related to migration for foreign employment, and the provincial governments and local governments the mandate to formulate and implement policies and plans related to safe migration, skills and reintegration as well as to register and keep records of migrants and returnees.¹⁴ Various other government and non-governmental institutions and actors also deal with issues of labour migration.

2.1.1 Government Institutions

2.1.1.1 Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) is the lead agency at the federal level governing labour migration in Nepal to make it safe, respectful and well-managed. MoLESS also prioritises the optimum utilisation of knowledge, skills and remittance gained through foreign employment in creating employment opportunities for people within the country. The organisational structure of MoLESS has been provided in Annex 2. This section only describes the responsibilities of the various units related to labour migration within or under MoLESS.

Within MoLESS,

- the Employment Management Division is responsible for formulating laws and policies related to foreign employment and for activities related to the regional and international processes and

13 There are seven provinces and 753 local governments containing 460 rural municipalities, 276 municipalities, 11 sub-metropolitan cities and six metropolitan cities under the federal system of governance in Nepal.

14 Schedules 5-9 of the Constitution of Nepal, 2015 define distribution of state power among different levels of government.

- platforms on labour migration as well as research on foreign employment,
- the Foreign Employment Management Section, which implements the laws, policies and standards on foreign employment, engages in labour diplomacy, and provides support to other relevant agencies to make foreign employment safe, decent and well-managed. It is also responsible for liaising with the Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) and the Foreign Employment Board (FEB),
- the Employment Coordination and Information Section has the mandate to formulate and implement strategies to utilise the skills of returnee migrant workers besides working with national and international agencies and the private sector, and
- the Skill Development and Training Section is devoted to preparing skilled human resources, including regulation of related national policies.

2.1.1.1.1 Department of Foreign Employment

DoFE is the key body responsible for managing and regulating labour migration. It contributes to formulating and implementing policies relating to foreign employment; keeps track of labour migration data and disseminates information; provides licences to recruitment agencies and private sector institutions and monitors them; oversees the recruitment processes and practices; carries out research to identify employment opportunities and new destinations for Nepalis; and receives, investigates, and settles grievance cases of migrant workers.

The Complaints Registration and Investigation Section is a special unit within DoFE that investigates all the complaints it receives. While DoFE deals with complaints against recruitment agencies, complaints against individuals as well as institutions not resolved by DoFE are forwarded to the Foreign Employment Tribunal (FET) (see Section 2.1.1.1.7) (Government of Nepal 2007a). DoFE also has the authority to pass orders and impose penalties in certain cases brought against recruitment agencies, and to refer other cases to the police or to the FET as required.

2.1.1.1.2 Foreign Employment Board

The Foreign Employment Board (FEB),¹⁵ an autonomous body under MoLESS, was formed as per the Foreign Employment Act (FEA), 2007 to look after the welfare of migrant workers. The 25-member Board is chaired by the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security and includes representatives from the government, private recruitment agencies (PRAs), trade unions, foreign employment experts, and others working in the field of foreign employment. Among other shared responsibilities, DoFE and the FEB work jointly in the management of the mandatory pre-departure orientation training (PDOT). The FEB also manages the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund (FEWF) (see Section 4.2 for information on FEWF). Among the other roles and responsibilities of the FEB are:

- i. Work for the welfare of migrant workers and their families, including providing financial support to migrant workers and their families in the case of death or injuries sustained by workers,

¹⁵ Previously known as the Foreign Employment Promotion Board (FEPB), the name change came into effect in 2018.

- repatriation of migrant workers and dead bodies, and providing scholarships to the children of deceased migrant workers;
- ii. Conduct social and economic reintegration programmes for returnee migrant workers;
- iii. Carry out studies on different areas related to labour migration, including exploration of new markets;
- iv. Formulate, approve and monitor curricula and fees of pre-departure orientation training;
- v. Determine curricula and fees for skills training and carry out activities related to skill test and monitoring of skills training; and
- vi. Publish and broadcast awareness programmes on foreign employment through the media (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 39; Government of Nepal 2008a, r. 29).

2.1.1.1.3 Foreign Employment Tribunal

The Foreign Employment Tribunal (FET) is a judicial body established as provided under the FEA 2007 (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 64). The FET has its office in Kathmandu and the tribunal convenes only in Kathmandu. The FET has three members with a judge of an Appellate Court as the chair. It takes preliminary action and disposes of cases except for those cases to be dealt with by DoFE.

2.1.1.1.4 Vocational and Skill Development Training Centre and SaMi

Under MoLESS, there are two entities mainly involved in the delivery of technical and vocational education and training: the Vocational and Skill Development Training Centre (VSDTC) and the Safer Migration (SaMi) programme¹⁶ through Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs).

The VSDTC conducts various skills development trainings and similar initiatives to enhance the capability and competitiveness of Nepali youths in both domestic and international labour markets. It has the mandate to produce demand-based skilled human resources and develop curricula for all types of vocational and skills training (MoEST 2018). While the trainings it provides are usually based on market demand, it is also responsible for providing orientation and training to young people seeking foreign employment and monitoring and evaluating skills training provided by institutions authorised by DoFE.

2.1.1.1.5 Migrant Resource Centres

MRCs have been established under the SaMi Programme in 38 districts within the premises of the district administration offices (DAOs) (and one in the Department of Passport in Kathmandu) and 18 sub-MRCs within the Area Administration Offices.¹⁷ In addition, local governments outside the

¹⁶ The SaMi programme, launched in 2011, is a bilateral initiative of the Government of Nepal and the Government of Switzerland, with Helvetas Nepal providing technical assistance for its overall implementation and management. The programme is operated in collaboration with all three tiers of governments under the strategic guidance of MoLESS. It supports migrant workers and their families through access to reliable information, pre-departure skills training, financial literacy training, legal/paralegal support and psychosocial support.

¹⁷ Area Administration Unit is an independent administrative unit under the Ministry of Home Affairs that is authorized to issue documents such as citizenships, passports, national identity card, etc.

working area of the SaMi programme have also established MRCs (one MRC and four sub-MRCs so far)¹⁸ with technical support from the programme. These MRCs and sub-MRCs conduct and coordinate various activities such as outreach and awareness raising, counselling and support services. The operation and management of MRCs is guided by the Migrant Resource Centre (Operation and Management) Directive, 2020.

Box 2.1: Migrant Resource Centre: Key Figures (2019/20–2021/22)

- Information, Counselling and Community Orientation on Safer Migration provided to 425,696 (237,946 men and 112,174 women) individuals.
- Pre-Departure Vocational Skills Training (one-month residential training) provided to 3768 potential migrant workers (2941 men and 827 women).
- Legal Support and Access to Justice: 4228 cases handled in coordination with Pravasi Nepali Coordination Committee (PNCC), legal support provided in 5630 cases through People Forum and 10,142 cases registered/reported at MRCs.
- Psychosocial Support provided to 569 men and 5451 women, including returnees and family members of migrant workers.
- Financial Literacy training provided to 31,429 individuals from migrant workers' families (453 men and 30,976 women).

Source: MRC, 2022.

2.1.1.1.6 Employment Information Centres

Employment information centres (EICs) have been established to provide information about opportunities at home and abroad, on skilled workers available at a place, and the needs of employer(s) in a given context. The EICs are focused on collecting data on job demands locally and posting them on their websites. Previously established under MoLESS's Department of Labour and Occupational Safety (DoLOS), there were 14 EICs. At present, there are seven EICs, one under each of the seven provincial governments.

2.1.1.1.7 Labour and Employment Offices

Labour and employment offices have been established in all the provinces to provide services to workers working inside Nepal and employers as well as to aspirant migrant workers. These offices have the responsibility of issuing and renewing labour approvals. There are 11 labour and employment offices throughout the country with Department of Labour and Occupational Safety (DoLOS) serving as the central coordinating body.

2.1.1.1.8 Employment Service Centres

Employment service centres (ESCs) are established under the Prime Minister Employment Program (PMEP) of MoLESS at all 753 local levels as per the provision in the Right to Employment Act, 2018. The Act has provided for the establishment of ESCs at all local levels to collect data on unemployed persons, identify employment opportunities and disseminate information, provide information on the

¹⁸ Resunga Municipality, Gulmi; Barahathawa Municipality, Sarlahi; Simraungadh Municipality, Bara; Rangeli Municipality, Morang and Lamahi Municipality, Dang.

availability of workers to employers and provide other services related to employment (Government of Nepal 2018, s. 2 & 10).

2.1.1.2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) is responsible for protecting the rights, interests and security of Nepalis, including migrant workers, living abroad (MoFA n.d.-a). With regard to Nepali migrant workers, diplomatic missions in countries of destination provide support to migrant workers while also coordinating between migrant workers and employers as well as between migration-related agencies in both the country of destination and Nepal. As of 2022, Nepal's diplomatic network covers all the major labour countries of destination—the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Japan, Malaysia and South Korea (MoFA n.d.-b).

As per the FEA 2007, MoLESS also appoints¹⁹ labour attachés or labour counsellors to the missions in countries with 5000 or more Nepali migrant workers.²⁰ The government is also required to appoint a woman labour attaché in countries where there are 1000 or more women migrant workers (Government of Nepal 2008a, s. 43). Accordingly, the government has appointed labour attachés in seven countries of destinations: Bahrain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (Jeddah) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Labour counsellors have been appointed in five countries, namely, South Korea, the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (Riyadh) and Malaysia.

Among the responsibilities of labour attachés and labour counsellors include: keeping track of the labour and employment situation of the country they are posted in; assisting in resolving problems arising out of disputes between workers and employers or recruitment agencies; exploring opportunities to conclude bilateral agreements for employment; and providing counselling to workers while discouraging them from working outside of their contract (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 68).

The Department of Passport under MoFA works with diplomatic missions abroad to provide passports to Nepali migrants who need to renew or reapply for their passports while the Department of Consular Services (DoCS) under the Ministry assists in search and rescue, repatriation of dead bodies, financial assistance to families of deceased migrant workers, document attestation, disability and grievance handling, and handling of insurance-specific issues for Nepali migrant workers living outside of the country (MoFA n.d.-c).²¹

2.1.1.3 Department of Immigration

The Department of Immigration (DoI) under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) tracks the exit from and arrival into the country of all individuals, including Nepali migrant workers, and is involved in curbing cross-border crimes such as trafficking in persons. DoI requires Nepalis travelling

¹⁹ Appointment is made as per the Directive and Standard on Selection and Appointment of Counsellor (Labour) and Labour Attachés, 2016.

²⁰ Section officers and under-secretary level officials of MoLESS are appointed as labour attachés and labour counsellors respectively.

²¹ Interview with representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

for foreign employment to have a valid passport and visa along with a labour approval issued by the Government of Nepal while exiting the country.

DoI has recently started collecting and recording data on returnee migrant workers at the Tribhuvan International Airport. The collected data is linked to the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS) (see section 2.3.1 for more information on FEIMS).

2.1.1.4 Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT)

Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) is the main government body responsible for the overall management and supervision of vocational education and skills training in the country. With offices in all the seven provinces, it functions under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). It is the sole agency to run technical and long-term vocational programmes at the Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) and diploma levels.

According to the CTEVT, as of the end of 2020/21, there were 1100 technical and vocational education training institutions (CTEVT 2021). These institutions play an important role in supporting skills development and upskilling of aspirants, migrant workers and returnees, thereby helping them to find better income opportunities in Nepal and abroad.

2.1.1.5 Provincial Ministries with Responsibilities on Labour Migration

With the Constitution of Nepal, 2015 mandating the seven provinces to undertake social development activities and following the Provincial Government (Work Division) Regulations, 2017 (promulgated by each of the seven provinces), the provinces have the responsibility of overseeing matters related to labour and employment. While the names of the concerned ministries are different in the seven provinces (Table 2.1), their mandates with regard to this issue are similar: formulation of plans, programmes and policies for employment generation and human resource development in coordination with local governments, and research, study and exploration of labour markets (MoSD n.d.).

Table 2.1: Ministries in Seven Provinces with Responsibilities Related to Labour Migration

Province	Ministry
Province 1	Ministry of Industry, Labour and Employment
Madhesh	Ministry of Social Development
Bagmati	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
Gandaki	Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, Technology and Social Development as well as Ministry of Tourism, Industry, Commerce and Supplies
Lumbini	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Transportation Management
Karnali	Ministry of Social Development
Sudurpaschim	Ministry of Social Development

2.1.1.6 Local Governments

The Constitution of Nepal, 2015 has granted local governments the authority to formulate and

implement local development plans and projects, and manage local markets and maintain records, including related to labour migration, migrants and returnees (Government of Nepal 2015, s. 8). Accordingly, the Local Government Operation Act (LGOA), 2017 requires the local governments to:

- collect and process data on employed and unemployed individuals, Nepali and foreign workers at the local level, and migrant workers;
- develop an information system;
- conduct financial literacy and skills development training for people going for foreign employment;
- ensure social reintegration of returnee migrant workers;
- utilise knowledge and skills gained by returnee migrant workers; and
- operate and manage ESCs (Government of Nepal 2017a, s. 2).

The Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 also envisions the development of foreign employment-related information systems and special programmes to raise awareness at the village level. Further, the Fifteenth Five-Year Plan of the government of Nepal (2019/2020–2023/24) calls for effective coordination among the three levels of government for the creation of employment opportunities and management of labour. Accordingly, the government is planning to establish a knowledge exchange centre to benefit from best practices observed in the field of employment at home and abroad. The Plan also mentions arrangements to be made for workers going to India for employment to register at the local level, receive identity cards, and join an insurance/welfare fund (NPC 2019, 435).

According to the Reintegration Programme (Operation and Management) Directive for Returnee Migrant Workers, 2022 issued by MoLESS (MoLESS 2022a), proposals are sought from the local governments to operate reintegration programmes for returnee migrants (see section 2.6.1 and 4.5 for details on the Directive). Local government representatives are also included as members of the Programme Implementation Committee to be established in the respective local level as per the Directive.

2.1.1.7 Coordination Mechanism and Committees

The FEA, 2007, the Foreign Employment Rules, 2008, and the Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 have provisions for establishing various committees to ensure effective coordination between agencies working to strengthen labour migration governance (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Committees

Committee	Purpose
Foreign Employment Steering (Directive) Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make the process of selecting workers for foreign employment by the Government of Nepal more organised, competitive and transparent while sending workers abroad to a country Nepal has diplomatic relations with and has signed bilateral agreements or treaties with
Planning Programme and Budget Formulation Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To formulate short-term as well as long-term plans, programmes and budgetary provisions of the FEB

Expert Committee

- To determine whether the health reports submitted by migrant workers are authentic
- If the worker has to come back home by virtue of being given a false health report knowingly due to negligence or with ill-intention, the institution performing such a health check-up is considered responsible and must bear all the travelling costs related to such foreign employment

Note: See Annex 5 for more information on the structure of the committees.

2.1.1.8 Other Regulatory Mechanisms

2.1.1.8.1 Nepal Rastra Bank

As the central bank of the country, the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) regulates all financial and monetary matters, including finances related to foreign employment. The NRB manages and regulates the remittance industry while keeping records and conducting research on various aspects of remittance such as the socio-economic impact of remittance on different groups of people (NRB 2022).

The role of the NRB extends to encouraging migrant workers to remit funds through formal means and cooperating with other government entities to address any transgressions in this regard such as transfers through *hundi*,²² which is considered money laundering under the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2008 (Government of Nepal 2008b, s. 4). The NRB has published guidelines for Suspicious Transaction Reporting (STR) to assist in the identification of illegal activities pertaining to financial transactions (NRB 2020a). Such suspicious transactions are then reported to law enforcement agencies.

The Public Debt Department of the NRB oversees the Foreign Employment Savings Bond scheme (NRB 2012). The NRB also looks after foreign investments from migrant workers, analyses the relationship between remittances and economic factors such as poverty and purchasing power parity, and formulates financial laws and policies based on findings.

The NRB also coordinates with government bodies like DoFE and local governments to provide financial services to returnee migrant workers through different schemes.

2.1.1.8.2 Parliamentary Committees

The Parliamentary Committee on Industry, Commerce, Labour and Consumer Interest provides direction and guidance to the government on various matters, including on labour migration (House of Representative, Nepal n.d.-a). The Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, MoLESS and institutions working on consumer interests lie under the jurisdiction of the Committee. The Committee discusses parliamentary bills related to labour migration (House of Representative, Nepal n.d.-b).

²² The *hawala/hundi* system operates with a broker delivering cash money at the request of another broker servicing a client in a different country. A client in Country A provides a sum of money to a broker in Country A with a correspondent broker in Country B delivering the same amount to the recipient in Country B. The brokers earn by levying a transaction cost to the client.

The Parliamentary Committee on International Relations has jurisdiction over the MoFA and the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and is charged with monitoring, evaluating and giving necessary directives on works carried out by the concerned ministries, departments and other bodies under them. The Committee has the mandate to carry out evaluation of policies and programmes and resource allocation, among others. The Committee, formerly known as the International Relations and Labour Committee, in March 2017 instructed MoLESS to temporarily ban the migration of Nepali migrant workers for domestic work (McCarthy 2021). This ban was not applicable for migration to countries with which Nepal has signed bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs).

2.1.1.8.3 National Human Right Commission

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has been working on the protection of the rights of Nepali migrant workers and has drawn the attention of the Government of Nepal. For instance, the Commission formed a multi-stakeholder task force to assist the Nepali government in dealing with problems migrant workers faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and with their safe repatriation (Nepal, Baniya and Chhetri 2020).

One of the significant initiatives of the NHRC has been cooperation with the national human rights institutions of different countries. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Human Rights Commission of South Korea in 2010 was a major step towards institutionalising such cooperation. Likewise, an MoU was signed with the national human rights institution of Qatar in November 2015 and another with the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia in November 2019 (NHRC 2019). These MoUs have been signed with the objective of protecting migrant workers in countries of destination, to jointly provide assistance for their safety, security and welfare as well as to facilitate bilateral relations between human rights institutions. Signing of such agreements is also significant because they can assist in the development of legislation and national mechanisms to protect workers' rights in countries of destination.

2.1.1.8.4 Supreme Court Decisions and Declarations Pertaining to Labour Migration

Petitions against the verdict of the FET on labour migration-related cases can be filed at the Supreme Court (SC) of Nepal. The SC's verdict thereafter becomes final. Writ petitions are used as

a method by which violations of the rights of migrant workers are brought to the attention of the concerned authorities (People Forum 2019). These petitions filed by activists, civil society, human rights lawyers and other bodies have used the prerogative of the courts of Nepal to attempt to correct any transgressions on the fundamental rights of migrant workers. Some of the orders, decisions and declarations pertaining to labour migration and workers made by the supreme court of Nepal are listed below.

Table 2.3: Supreme Court Decisions and Declarations Pertaining to Labour Migration and Migrant Workers

S. N.	Date	Issue	Order / Decision / Declaration	Order / Decision / Declaration type
1	17 June 2022	Repatriation of migrant workers affected by COVID-19	The SC ordered the government to use the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund to repatriate Nepali workers stranded abroad.	Interim order
2	16 April 2022	Repatriation of migrant workers affected by COVID-19	The SC ordered the government to take care of the health needs of Nepali migrant workers living in foreign countries and to repatriate vulnerable Nepali workers from foreign countries.	Interim order
3	7 April 2022	Repatriation of migrant workers at the Indian border affected by COVID-19	The SC ordered the government to bring all Nepali citizens stranded at the Indian border willing to come home and quarantine them	Interim order
4	21 March 2018	Migrant workers' right to vote	The SC issued a directive instructing the government to formulate a law ensuring migrants' right to vote.	Directive
5	11 November 2010	Appointment of labour attachés	The SC, referring to the FEA, issued a directive order to the government to deploy labour attachés in countries of destination with more than 5000 workers.	Directive
6	15 March 2017	Enhancing complaint handling and investigative capabilities on foreign employment-related cases	The SC issued a show cause notice in the name of the government and the concerned ministries, as well as DoFE and the FEB, to develop a mechanism to handle complaints and investigate crimes related to foreign employment at the provincial and local levels	Show cause order

S. N.	Date	Issue	Order / Decision / Declaration	Order / Decision / Declaration type
7	4 January 2019	Free-Visa, Free-Ticket Policy	The SC issued a directive to the government to effectively implement the 'free-visa, free-ticket' policy.	Directive

2.2 Regulation of Private Entities

Private agencies involved in the foreign employment-related business operate under the FEA, 2007, the Foreign Employment Rules, 2008 and a number of directives and operational guidelines. The FEA, 2007 is the main legislation that governs foreign employment in Nepal and explains the roles of government bodies and state institutions in regulating the foreign employment sector. The 2008 Rules include provisions to make foreign employment more procedural and secure. There are a number of private actors—such as medical centres, banks, insurance agencies, recruitment agencies and orientation centres—involved in the migration process. At present, DoFE maintains a record of 1481 recruitment agencies (of which 860 have an active status), 122 training and orientation institutions, 14 insurance companies, 18 banks, and 222 medical institutions registered with it (DoFE n.d.-a; n.d.-b; n.d.-c; n.d.-d; n.d.-e).

The following sections discuss the services provided by and the management and regulation of private agencies such as PRAs, PDOT centres, health institutions, insurance companies and skill development and training centres in the context of the current federal governance system in Nepal.

2.2.1 Private Recruitment Agencies

Individuals going abroad for employment are required to obtain a labour approval from DoFE to legalise their migration process and to be included in the government's welfare scheme for migrant workers, namely, the FEWF. There are two ways in which workers can obtain labour approvals required for them to leave for foreign employment: on an individual basis or through recruitment agencies.

PRAs are licensed by DoFE under the FEA, 2007. In order to get a PRA licence, an application has to be lodged with DoFE along with a cash deposit and a bank guarantee. In 2019, an amendment to the FEA, 2007 revised the guarantee amounts and increased the cash deposit²³ as listed below (Government of Nepal 2019a).

- PRAs that send more than 5000 workers must deposit NPR 60 million (ca. USD 480,000)—NPR 20 million (ca. USD 160,000) in cash and another NPR 40 million (ca. USD 320,000) as bank guarantee.
- PRAs that send more than 3000 and upto 5000 workers must deposit NPR 40 million (ca. USD 320,000)—NPR 10 million (ca. USD 80,000) in cash and NPR 30 million (ca. USD 240,000) as bank guarantee.

²³ Prior to this revision, private recruitment agencies were required to pay NPR 3 million as guarantee money —700,000 as cash deposit and 2.3 million as bank guarantee to run their business.

- PRAs that send up to 3000 workers abroad annually must deposit NPR 20 million (ca. USD 160,000)— NPR 5 million (ca. USD 40,000) as cash and NPR 15 million (ca. USD 120,000) as bank guarantee.

The FEA, 2007 also has provisions related to punishment for recruitment agencies in case of fraudulent activities and deception of migrant workers. The use of individual agents (both formal and informal) by PRAs was also prohibited through the same amendment.

PRA licences are valid for one year and they are required to renew their licence every fiscal year (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 10). The amendment also allowed for the cancellation of the licence of PRAs if they fail to send 100 workers annually for two consecutive years, if they send workers abroad by submitting fake details and documents, or transfer ownership of the agency without permission from DoFE (Government of Nepal 2019a). MoLESS, however, temporarily suspended the requirement for PRAs to send 100 workers abroad annually, in 2020, 2021 and 2022, by issuing an order in view of the COVID-19 pandemic that prevented the mobility of migrant workers.²⁴ Further, in line with the Act Made to Amend Various Acts, 2019, the government amended the FEA, 2007 prohibiting PRAs from opening branch offices and using agents and sub-agents to recruit potential migrant workers (Government of Nepal 2019a). In September 2022, however, DoFE announced that branch offices can only be opened after receiving its approval (DoFE 2022a). As per this new provision, recruitment agencies aiming to send up to 3000, up to 5000 and more than 5000 workers abroad annually can open up to three, five and six branches, respectively.

The Foreign Employment Related Demand Letter Enquiry Directive, 2018 has made it mandatory for foreign companies seeking to hire Nepali migrant workers to get their job demand letters²⁵ approved by Nepali missions (embassies, consulates, permanent missions, special missions, and other diplomatic missions) in the country of destination. As per the directive, MoFA is mandated to set the fees for verification of such a demand letter. In the GCC countries, the rate is around USD 250 (ca. NPR 32,000) for up to 25 workers and around USD 340 (ca. NPR 43,000) for more than 100 workers (Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers 2019).

PRAs are also regulated by the Directive for Monitoring Team Mobilisation, 2019, which allows DoFE and other related agencies to monitor whether they are following the prescribed laws. The Procedure on the Monitoring of Recruitment Agencies and Training Institutions, 2017 also provides guidelines for the regulation and monitoring of the PRAs by DoFE and other agencies. Likewise, a Rapid Response Team (RRT) was formed under DoFE in December 2021 to combat cases of fraud and check possible irregularities in the foreign employment sector (DoFE 2022b). In this regard, the team can carry out investigations on any activity suspected to be unlawful in the foreign employment sector, whether by institutions or individuals (agents or sub-agents), and subsequently issue necessary directives to the responsible organisations and recommend further action.

²⁴ See for instance: Government of Nepal Council of Ministers (2020, 2021).

²⁵ A demand letter is a letter sent by an employer to a PRA, indicating the number, type, qualification of workers required, remuneration and facilities to which workers are entitled, and other terms of service.

Aspirant migrant workers going for foreign employment on an individual basis need to simply submit an online application to DoFE for further processing. PRAs, on the other hand, are required to follow the following steps to select and send the workers for foreign employment:

- Obtain prior approval from DoFE to recruit workers for foreign employment;
- Publish an advertisement in a national daily newspaper in the Nepali language calling for applications, mentioning a time limit of at least seven days and disclosing all the specifications relating to the employment opportunity;
- Receive and review applications and select workers on the basis of qualifications and experience of applicants and as required by the employer, prepare a list of the selected workers and submit a copy of the list to DoFE;
- Obtain permission from DoFE if it has to take the passports of the selected applicants outside Nepal for the purpose of getting a visa;
- Obtain a labour approval sticker from the Department; and
- Send selected workers for foreign employment within the specified time period mentioned for their entry into the concerned country, if not within three months after obtaining the labour approval.

In order to obtain a labour approval, recruitment agencies are required to submit a number of documents to DoFE on behalf of outbound migrant workers (Table 2.4). Those applying for a labour approval on an individual basis, too, need to submit the following particulars to DoFE.

Table 2.4: Particulars to be Submitted for Labour Approval

Recruitment agencies	Individual Basis
a. Certificate of training (if work requires skills training)	a. Name of the country of destination
b. Certificate of pre-departure orientation training	b. Nature of work to be performed in the country of destination
c. Certificate of sound health	c. Letter of approval issued by the employment-providing institution
d. Certificate of insurance	d. Agreement clearly mentioning the terms and conditions of employment
e. Contract between the recruitment agency and the worker	e. Certificate of pre-departure orientation training
f. Contract between employment providing institution and worker	f. Certificate of sound health
g. Receipt or bank voucher of the amount the worker paid to the recruitment agency	g. Certificate of insurance

2.2.2 Health Institutions

Aspirant migrant workers are required to obtain a health certificate from a government-approved medical institution as a prerequisite for getting a labour approval. These health institutions need to be registered with the government as mandated in the FEA, 2007 and the Foreign Employment

Rules, 2008, and are regulated by these and other complementary directives and procedures such as the Directive for Monitoring Team Mobilisation, 2019 and the Standard on the Enlisting Process of the Health Examination Institution for Workers Going for Foreign Employment, 2013.

In 2018, Malaysia-bound workers were found to be paying additional charges for pre-departure services including biometric and medical tests conducted by the One Stop Centre (OSC) operated by the Malaysia Visa Luar Negara (VLN or Overseas Visa System) Nepal appointed by the Malaysian government to provide visa processing services in Nepal (Mandal 2019). There were only 36 health institutions authorised unilaterally by the Government of Malaysia to provide medical certificates to workers planning to go to Malaysia although the Government of Nepal has authorised 222 health institutions to conduct health check-ups. Consequently, the Government of Nepal decided to scrap all unauthorised fees (more than NPR 18,000 or ca. USD 135) charged to migrant workers going to Malaysia. Later, in 2018, a bilateral agreement was signed with Malaysia to allow other health institutions as well to conduct medical check-ups if they met the standards of both the governments.

2.2.2.1 Country of Destination's Initiatives Regarding Medical Check-up

The Qatar Visa Centre (QVC) was established by the Government of Qatar in Nepal in 2019 to facilitate and streamline the process of migration. The establishment of the visa centre, in addition, aimed to speed up the process of acquiring a visa and submitting biometric details, and provide health check-ups to Nepali migrant workers going to Qatar. In addition to the mandatory health certificate from the 222 authorised health institutions, outbound migrant workers need to undergo additional medical tests. In the past, this test was done after the arrival of migrant workers in Qatar. Now, the QVC conducts such medical tests in Nepal. This provision has eliminated occurrences whereby migrant workers who fail medical tests in Qatar have to return while also reducing the cost for both employers and migrant workers. However, having to undergo health check-ups twice entail additional costs and time for migrant workers. Further, these new institutions are yet to be regulated and governed under the FEA, 2007.

2.2.3 Pre-departure Orientation Training Centres

Another requirement to obtain a labour approval is the pre-departure orientation training (PDOT). According to the FEA, 2007, any institution wishing to operate as a PDOT centre has to receive permission from DoFE. Prior to DoFE granting the permit, the FEB verifies that an institution desirous of conducting orientation programmes has sufficient resources, including infrastructure and human resource. The operation, registration and renewal of PDOT centres are guided by the Orientation Centre Operation Working Procedure, 2019 (Government of Nepal 2019b).

The FEA, 2007 as well as the Working Procedure requires orientation centres to deposit a cash guarantee for registration. In 2021, the government increased the guarantee amount to NPR 500,000 (ca. USD 3800) from the earlier NPR 300,000 (ca. USD 2300) (DoFE n.d.-f). The FEB also updated the curriculum of the PDOT in 2021 making it country specific and adding a chapter on physical and mental health. However, it has not come into effect yet due to the reluctance among PDOT

centres to implement these new measures (Kharel et al 2022a). According to the PDOT centres, the implementation of the country specific PDOTs would result in added financial liabilities and the current fees they receive from migrant workers is not enough to cover these costs.

PDOTs are responsible for providing orientation training to outbound migrant workers on the following subjects:

- Foreign employment laws of Nepal;
- Geographical situation, culture, lifestyle, economic, social and political situation of the country of destination;
- Language of the country of destination;
- Labour and immigration laws and traffic rules of the country of destination;
- HIV/AIDS, communicable diseases, sexual and reproductive health;
- Occupational safety and health;
- Easy and safe travel;
- Conduct, treatment and security of workers; and
- Repatriation of earnings to Nepal.

Like the PRAs, the PDOTs are also regulated and monitored by the Directive for Monitoring Team Mobilisation, 2019 and the Procedure on the Monitoring of Recruitment Agencies and Training Institutions, 2017. In order to curb malpractices of the orientation training centres, DoFE has issued a notice that migrant workers whose biometric details do not match the official database at the labour desk at the two international airports would not be allowed to leave (DoFE 2021a).

2.2.4 Insurance Companies

The FEA, 2007 requires migrant workers going for employment abroad to be covered by an insurance policy valid for the term of their employment contract. With the most recent revision of the FEA, 2007, outbound Nepali migrant workers are required to procure a term life insurance policy of at least NPR 1 million (ca. USD 8200) valid for the term of their work contract and an additional six months (three months before departure and three months after the expiry of labour approval) through DOFE-authorized insurance companies (NPC 2020; Insurance Board 2020).

The Foreign Employment (Term) Life Insurance Directives, 2016 has specified the premium and the extent of coverage required. The premium for a two-year period ranges from NPR 3308 (ca. USD 27) to NPR 9063 (ca. USD 74), depending on the age of the worker (Government of Nepal 2016). An additional NPR 400 (ca. USD 3) is to be paid for a package that covers critical illnesses. Migrant workers and their families are entitled to an insurance pay-out of a minimum of NPR 1 million (ca. USD 8200) and an additional NPR 500,000 (ca. USD 4100) for 15 different types of illnesses defined as critical by the government.²⁶ Insurance companies are also regulated and monitored by

²⁶ These include cancer, kidney failure, primary pulmonary arterial hypertension, multiple sclerosis, major organ transplant, coronary artery bypass grafts, aorta graft surgery, heart valve surgery, stroke, myocardial infarction (first heart attack), coma, total blindness, paralysis, benign brain tumour, and mental illness resulting from an accident (traumatic).

the FEA, 2007 and other supplementing legislation such as the Directives for Monitoring Team Mobilisation, 2019.

2.2.5 Engagement and Roles of Non-State Actors

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs), human rights organisations, activists, and International Non-Governmental Organisations (I/NGOs) also play an important role in empowering migrant workers and protecting and promoting their rights throughout the labour migration cycle. Further, in countries of destination, the role of institutions such as the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) is pivotal in providing support to migrant workers. As such, the NRNA country chapters are engaged in fundraising, emergency support, rescue and repatriation, and providing legal support to migrant workers.²⁷ In addition, trade unions, workers' associations, and diaspora organisations have also been working actively to support migrant workers and protect and promote their rights and interests. Academia are also important stakeholders that support in the creation and dissemination of labour migration-related knowledge that can support evidence-based policy formulation. National and international media also play a vital role in raising awareness regarding migrants' rights and issues surrounding labour migration and foreign employment. They also help create a safe space for migrant workers and their families and serve to alert concerned authorities regarding the needs of migrant workers at times of crisis. A list of NGOs and CSOs working in the labour migration sector has been provided in Annex 6.

2.3 Strengthening of Foreign Employment-Related Services

Over the years, the government has undertaken various measures to improve foreign employment-related services in line with the federal governance system, including by making use of information and communication technology (ICT). This section discusses the progress made in digitalisation of labour migration services, steps taken toward controlling human trafficking and smuggling, and regulation of international remittances.

2.3.1 Progress in Digital Governance

There has been growing recognition of the significance of technology in fulfilling commitments to sustainable development as well as enhancing the migration experience of migrant workers. Instruments such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) highlight the significance of the use of technology in making labour migration efficient and effective while also ensuring decent work (UN 2015; 2018). The GCM also references the use of technology to achieve its objectives related to access to information, documentation, management of border, screening and assessment of the migration procedure, skills development and recognition of skills, remittances and dignified return, readmission and sustainable reintegration.

Digitalisation of labour migration governance can have multifaceted implications—social, economic and political—on how labour migration is managed and governed (ILO 2021a). Nepal is swiftly

²⁷ See: <https://nrna.org/who-we-are/>.

transitioning to digital platforms for sharing information and managing migration data. Digitalisation is expected to help improve migration governance and provide new opportunities for delivering migration-related services. At the same time, this can also create new challenges with regard to data protection, confidentiality, and the resources and capacities required for maintaining and updating the system.

In line with the Digital Nepal Framework, 2019,²⁸ MoLESS formulated a ‘Three Years Work Plan for the Use of Information Technology’ in 2021 (MoLESS 2021a). In relation to foreign employment, the Plan included going online for all the procedures related to labour approval issuance and registration of organisations; integrating the FEIMS and the PMEPP to include returnee migrant workers in the employment programme; and developing a system, i.e., the Foreign Employment Welfare Information Management System (FEWIMS) to facilitate compensation registration and disbursement, search and rescue and other welfare services; and integrating the welfare system with the DoCS to provide services related to repatriation and search. Starting March 2022, the government began issuing electronic stickers (e-stickers) accessible on cell phones or emails to outbound Nepali migrant workers. Migrant workers can now clear immigration at international airports after presenting the printout of the sticker or showing it on their electronic devices. This development replaced the labour desk at the Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) established to check the necessary documents such as labour approvals and certificates of PDOT prior to departure, as provisioned in the FEA, 2007. Nepali migrant workers abroad and within Nepal can now register their complaints and grievances via telephone, or via internet-based communications including email, Facebook Messenger, Viber and Imo through the call centre.²⁹ The call centre was established in May 2019 and has been operating from the FEB secretariat as per the Call Centre (Operation and Management) Directive, 2018 (FEB 2019a).

Figure 2.1: Stakeholders with Log-in Access to FEIMS



Note: Foreign Employment Board, Department of Consular Services, Department of Immigration, Department of Passport and E-Payment Service Providers are integrated with FEIMS but do not have log-in access.

²⁸ The Digital Nepal Framework (DNF) was implemented in 2019 as an approach by the government of Nepal to support the advancement of ICT in Nepal through Digital Connectivity, Digital Skills, and Digital Governance.

²⁹ Call Centre Email: callcenter@feb.gov.np; Toll free number: 16600150005, 1141; IMO Number: +977-9801800013 and Viber Number: +977-9801800013.

DoFE launched FEIMS for the purpose of record-keeping of all statistics related to foreign employment services in the country and the monitoring of the activities of entities involved in labour migration. The system was developed with the objective of reducing challenges being faced as a result of contract substitution, travelling without labour approval, recruitment-related fraud, and general labour migration risks and abuses throughout the migration cycle as well as of ensuring transparency and accountability in the migration process. It can be accessed by all government and government-accredited bodies providing services related to foreign employment, including MoLESS, the Department of Passport, the DoI, DoCS, Nepali diplomatic missions abroad, services providers such as recruitment agencies, medical institutes, PDOT centres, insurance companies, and migrant workers themselves (Figure 2.1).

In order to support the operation and use of FEIMS, the government has implemented the Working Procedure for the Implementation of Foreign Employment Information Management System, 2020 (MoLESS 2020b). The Working Procedure has given the responsibility of making necessary policy arrangements related to FEIMS to MoLESS and provides for the formation of a committee to ensure systematic operation of the information system. In addition to data on outgoing migrants and returnee migrants, including information related to PDOT, health check-up and insurance, the system also integrates information on labour demand attestation by diplomatic missions and the details of employers and recruitment agencies involved. Its integration with Nepali Port has also allowed for the capturing of data on returnee migrant workers. Since its development, FEIMS has also undergone various changes. The most recent upgrade has added aspirant migrant workers to the list of those that can avail of its services. The functions migrant workers and other stakeholders can avail of through this system is shown in Table 2.5.

In line with its policy of digitising services, DoFE has initiated online applications for new labour approvals as well as renewals. Renewal of labour approvals was shifted to the online system from January 2021 while online issuance of institutional approvals began in April 2022 and individual labour approvals in May 2022 (DoFE 2022c). This development followed the provision introduced in 2019 via an amendment to the FEA, 2007 that allowed labour approvals to be renewed (up to two times) through diplomatic missions in country of destination. With these developments, migrant workers do not need to be present at the Foreign Employment Offices/Labour and Employment Office to apply for and receive labour approvals. Further, the government has scrapped the provision of issuing labour approvals under the 'regularisation category' (see Chapter 3.4 for more details on mode of labour approvals) and begun issuing such approvals under the individual category. This, coupled with the provision of the online labour approval application, has meant that migrant workers working in various countries of destination without a valid labour approval can now apply for one under the individual category from the countries of destination as well. Likewise, the PDOT centres and PRAs have been able to apply online for licence renewals starting in fiscal year 2022/23 (DoFE 2022d). Despite these advancements, providing effective and efficient services through FEIMS has been facing some bottlenecks, including in reviewing the online applications for labour approvals and reaching decisions on re-applications, rejections or approvals mainly due to lack of adequate officials and technical capacities of concerned officials.

Table 2.5: Services that can be Availed through FEIMS

Individuals/Organisations	Foreign Employment Information Management System
Migrant Workers/Aspirant Migrant Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search and apply for foreign jobs, including viewing details on country, company, salary, quota, etc. • Apply for new labour approval (both individual and institutional) and renewal of labour approval. • Register individual complaints or complaints against recruitment agencies. • Track progress of applications for labour approvals as well as complaints. • View, download and print labour approval e-stickers. • Access and view or download archives of their previous labour approvals and other documents such as employment contract, visa, medical report, passport, insurance documents, etc. • Apply to add new companies not listed in the system.
Diplomatic Missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attest labour demand and enter details into the system. • Search and view details on migrant workers and companies. • Add and/or blacklist company. • Reset password for migrant workers.
Private Recruitment Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View the attested labour demand as soon as it is attested by a diplomatic mission. • Submit and track status of application to DoFE for pre-approval and final approval. • Request for approval to publish the demand notice in newspaper. • Enter information of interested migrant workers, insert and update migrant worker's interview details, and update the status of successful migrant workers. • Enter visa information of selected workers. • Apply to add new companies not listed in the system. • Apply for registration and renewal of licence as well as update agency details.* • Request for cancellation of approved labour approvals in case a migrant worker does not go abroad even after receiving the approval.
Foreign Employment Office, Kathmandu/Labour and Employment Offices in seven provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View and verify application of attested labour demand, pre-approval and final approval. • View and approve new labour approvals (both individual and via recruitment agencies) and renewal of labour approval. • View and monitor details of migrant workers, companies, labour demand, interview date, venue and other details. • Add and/or blacklist company. • Reset password for migrant workers. • Insert biometric details of new migrant workers.

Individuals/Organisations	Foreign Employment Information Management System
Department of Foreign Employment (Complaints Registration and Investigation Section)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter, view, monitor and update status of the cases of individual and institutional complaints registered. • View, verify and approve applications for new licences and renewal of licence of PRAs and PDOT centres. • Activate or deactivate/block PRAs and PDOT centres. • List and delist medical institutions, banks, insurance companies and e-payment service providers. • View details of PRAs and PDOT centres such as during monitoring and also when assessing complaints registered against PRAs or PDOTs.
Pre-Departure Orientation Training Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for registration and renewal of licence as well as update agency details. • Integrate biometric attendance details of migrant workers in the system.
Medical Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insert medical reports and other related details of (aspirant) migrant workers.
Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter payment details of migrant workers.
Insurance companies/branches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter insurance details of migrant workers.[†]

* Private recruitment agencies need to visit Foreign Employment Office/Labour Employment Office to register and get the log-in details for FEIMS.

† If the insurance is bought online through e-payment services, all information is automatically recorded in the FEIMS. For insurance bought in-person, insurance companies themselves upload/record insurance policy documents of migrant workers in the FEIMS.

Migrant workers and their families can apply for financial support as per the provision in the FEA, 2007 through local governments if a migrant worker dies, becomes handicapped or has an accident while in foreign employment (FEB 2022a). The local bodies have access to FEWIMS, a web-based system that has been developed to provide welfare services, including scholarships and healthcare support, to migrant workers' families. The FEB is also working to integrate the system with insurance companies so that migrant workers and their families can apply for insurance claims through the system. The FEB also manages the Training Information Management System (TMIS), which records information on potential and returnee migrants who receive free skills training provided by the FEB in coordination with CTEVT and affiliated institutions.

The complaint registration mechanism under DoFE has been digitised since July 2022, allowing distressed migrant workers or their representatives to register individual complaints or file a complaint against PRAs as well as make a request for rescue and relief through FEIMS or DoFE's website.³⁰ Similarly, the RRT (see Section 2.2.1 for information on RRT) makes use of technology to seek justice for victimised migrant workers by assisting DoFE in investigating and following up on cases related to fraud, especially those involving unscrupulous activities (DoFE 2022b).

³⁰ See: <http://202.45.146.35/register>.

Starting September 2019, DoFE has made it mandatory for all migrant workers to have a bank account before leaving for work abroad (DoFE 2019). The recent directive from the NRB allows migrant workers to send remittances through digital channels, including mobile banking, internet banking, electronic card and digital wallet services (UNCDF 2021a). NRB has also asked remittance companies within the country to provide services in association with digital wallet operators and has doubled the ceiling of e-payments made by user via pre-paid card, mobile banking and internet banking to NPR 200,000 (ca. USD 1,500) (ibid). Meanwhile, DoFE has signed agreements with various online payment gateways such as eSewa, Khalti and Connect IPS. Migrant workers can now pay for life insurance and contribute to the FEWF through digital platforms as well as via banks (FEB 2022b).

Migrant workers can access information related to foreign employment before and after their migration through the mobile app Baideshik Rojgari. This app provides information on recruitment agencies, PDOT centres, insurance companies, details and the contact information of the foreign diplomatic missions, labour attachés or counsellors and Nepali embassies abroad. Migrant workers can also assess the status of their labour approval application and complaints registered at DoFE and other public information.

With the proliferation of online job search and matching portals, DoFE and the FEB are also adopting online technology for job matching and recruitment. Potential migrant workers, including returnees, can search for jobs abroad as well as in Nepal through platforms like Foreign Job Search,³¹ Employment Exchange Market³² and Foreign Employment Recruitment Management System.³³ Employment Management Information System (EMIS), operating under the PMEP,³⁴ seeks to record unemployed individuals at the local level, including returnee migrant workers and progress in providing temporary employment to target groups. Specifically, EMIS supports PMEP in releasing instalments of the budget to local governments, following up with employment coordinators at ESCs, and providing the necessary support. EMIS is a part of a big picture of establishing the National Employment Management Information System (NEMIS), an information exchange hub between the demand side such as governmental agencies, private business houses, industries, entrepreneurs, educational institutes, and the supply side, namely, professionals, formal and informal sector workers and individuals seeking employment. While these systems are yet to be fully operational and made user friendly, access to them is also limited due to lack of awareness among the general public about these services. Another hindering factor is absence of digital literacy, access to digital tools and the internet.

2.3.2 Governing Human Trafficking and Smuggling

Incidents of human trafficking from Nepal are also sometimes linked with labour migration, wherein foreign employment is used by traffickers as a pretence to lure and transport aspirant workers to destinations where they become victims of debt bondage and forced labour (Kharel et al 2022b). The

31 See <https://foreignjob.dofe.gov.np/>.

32 See <http://jobs.feb.gov.np/>.

33 See <https://ferms.dofe.gov.np/auth/login>.

34 The PMEP aims to provide public sector employment for 100 days to those currently unemployed, across a dozen different sectors, including irrigation, commercial agriculture, drinking water, river control, forestry, tourism, transport infrastructure and other public works across the country through employment service centres (ESCs) set up in the 753 local administrative units to those registered as unemployed.

cross-border movement of people across the open border with India has remained a longstanding challenge for Nepal in curbing instances of trafficking (The Asia Foundation 2022). Trafficking for labour and sex trafficking remain the most notable forms of trafficking from Nepal, and India continues to remain the most popular trafficking transit and destination. Newer destinations as well as trafficking routes have also emerged in recent years (Kharel et al 2022b). Labour intermediaries that facilitate irregular migration are increasingly associated with human trafficking incidents in the guise of labour migration.

The Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2007 and the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Rules, 2008 prohibit trafficking and transportation of any person (Government of Nepal 2007b, s. 3 & 4).³⁵ The Act to Amend Some Nepal Acts to Ensure Gender Equality and Elimination of Gender Based Violence, 2015 added the provision of mutual legal assistance when rescue or legal action is taken in a third country; of the establishment and mobilisation of a rehabilitation fund by the Government of Nepal to operate rehabilitation centres; and of rehabilitation support to the victims while also giving power to the courts to order the government to provide compensation to the victim if the perpetrator is unable to do so (OHCHR n.d.).

As mandated by the Act, the National Committee on Controlling Human Trafficking (NCCHT) under the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC) is working to combat human trafficking in the country as well as on rescue and repatriation. Similarly, provincial and local governments have been given the right to establish rehabilitation centres in coordination with the federal government and a rehabilitation fund for the management and operation of the shelters (PPR 2020). Likewise, the Government of Nepal established a dedicated unit, the Anti-Human Trafficking Bureau (AHTB) under the Nepal Police in 2019 to investigate and prevent cases of human trafficking in Nepal. An MoU was signed between DoFE and Nepal Police on 12 January 2020³⁶ with the aim of making the foreign employment sector more organised, dignified and exploitation free by preventing human trafficking that occurs in the guise of foreign employment; as well as protecting the victims of trafficking and rehabilitating them within the society. The MoU was signed with the major objective of forging collaboration and coordination between the two institutions in order to curb human trafficking; undertake legal proceedings against the perpetrators; and monitor as well as regulate individuals/institutions operating in the labour employment sector without a license. For the purpose of eradicating human trafficking, the institutions are required to disseminate timely and

35 According to the Act, 'human trafficking' is the selling and buying of a person; using someone in prostitution; extracting human organs besides what is determined by law; and engaging in prostitution as a client; while 'human transportation' is defined as: taking someone out of the country for the purpose of buying and selling; and using various means to take someone away for the purpose of prostitution and exploitation.

36 *Baideshik rojgaarilai thap byawasthit, maryaadit ra soshanrabhit banauna tathaa baideshik rojgaariko naam ma huna sakne maanav bechbikhan tathaa oasarpasar garne kaaryalaai niyantran garna, tyasto kaaryabaata pidit byaktiko samrakshan tathaa punarsthaapan garna, Nepal sarkaar shram, rojgaar tathaa saamaajik suraksha mantralaaya, Baideshik rojgaar bibhaag ra Nepal sarkaar, griha mantralya, Nepal prabari bich gariyeko paarasparik samajhdaari patra* (MoU between the Department of Foreign Employment, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Nepal Government and the Nepal Police, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Nepal to make the foreign employment sector more organised, dignified and exploitation free; curb human trafficking that occurs in the guise of foreign employment; and protect the victims of trafficking and rehabilitate them).

accurate information among key stakeholders and mobilise resources effectively at the national and international levels to reduce transnational crimes. The MoU further seeks to identify risk zones vis-à-vis human trafficking occurring in the guise of foreign employment, and empower and mobilise employees of both institutions to eradicate such risks. The institutions are also required to support each other in conducting relevant research and studies towards that end.

Nepal ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Person Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) in 2020, a major international instrument to combat human trafficking. Further, the MoWCSC is formulating a standard operating procedure (SOP) for victim identification.³⁷ It is also working on an integrated database to incorporate data of human trafficking and gender-related violence including data from local governments.³⁸

2.3.3 Regulating Remittance

Knowing the quantum of remittance inflow into the country is necessary to allow the development of an appropriate institutional and regulatory regime to govern remittance (IMF 2009). In Nepal, data on the flow of remittance is sourced from various banks and other formal financial institutions working on remittance transfer and amalgamated by NRB.³⁹ The central bank also reports the informal remittance amount, particularly from India, based on an estimation that takes into account the different variables at play vis-à-vis remittances.

In Nepal, the governance of remittances begins with the identification of the various players and channels involved in the process of sending and receiving remittance. The Nepal Rastra Bank Remittance Bylaw, 2010 defines remittance, remitter, remittance transaction, principle, agent and subagent, and elucidates information on licence, functional requirements and responsibilities of organisations that collect inward remittance.

The formality or informality of the remittance transfer is defined by the legal structure of a country (IMF 2009). Nepal's Foreign Exchange Act, 1962 mandates any individual, firm, company or organisation seeking to make foreign exchange transactions, including remittance transfer, to obtain a licence from NRB. The Bank and Financial Institutions Act, 2017 allows Class 'A' banks to remit or transmit money within and outside Nepal through instruments like bills of exchange, cheques or other financial instruments.⁴⁰ Class 'B' banks can carry on transactions of remittance with prior approval of NRB (Government of Nepal 2017b, s. 2). The Asset (Money) Laundering Prevention Act, 2008 governs Nepal's Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regime and criminalises money-laundering which includes informal remittance mechanisms like *hundi*.⁴¹

37 Interview with a representative from the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC).

38 Interview with a representative from the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC).

39 Interaction with an official from NRB that took place on 21 June 2022 at the Economic Research Department, NRB Office, Baluwatar.

40 According to Bank or Financial Institution Act, 2017, banks or financial institutions are classified into classes 'A' or commercial banks, 'B' or development banks, 'C' or finance companies, and 'D' or micro-finance companies based on the minimum paid-up capital of a bank or financial institution and working areas.

41 The *hawala/hundi* system operates with a broker delivering cash money at the request of another broker servicing a client in a different country. A client in Country A provides a sum of money to a broker in Country A with a correspondent broker in Country B delivering the same amount to the recipient in Country B. The brokers earn by levying a transaction cost to the client.

There has been a strong focus recently on the expansion of the existing infrastructure of formal remittance inflow from migrant workers into the country mainly because of the significance of remittance for the maintenance of a healthy balance of payment situation. In 2019, the government introduced a new policy that required migrant workers to have a bank account or one in the name of their nominee in order to formalise their monetary transactions, including sending money from abroad. Following NRB's Monetary Policy of 2021/2022, an additional interest rate of one per cent is paid on remittance deposits (NRB 2021). This policy is meant to encourage Nepalis to send remittances through formal channels and also encourage savings. The federal budget for the fiscal year 2022/23 also mentions the arrangement of a fee/tariff exemption of 50 per cent during renewal of labour approvals and passports, and consular services for Nepali migrant workers who remit money through formal channels but is yet to be implemented (MoF 2022, s. 58). MoLESS has also formed a taskforce with the mandate to study and make recommendations to the ministry measures to enhance the flow of remittance through formal channels.

Bilateral Agreements also provide a governance mechanism that assists in the formalisation of remittance. Remittance transfers from Saudi Arabia are clear cases in point. The introduction of formal transfer mechanisms between the two countries resulted in an increment of remittance inflows by 15 times from 2012 to 2013 (Gurung 2019).

Another important aspect is the channelling of remittances into productive sectors. The Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 mentions mobilising remittances for human development and in the manufacturing sector and calls for training financial institutions involved in remittance. The Fifteenth Periodic Plan (2019/20-2023/23) recognises the significance of remittances and strategises formulating policy and institutions for domestic capital formation through savings from remittance income channelled through the formal banking system.

The supervision and inspection of the remittance regime is done through the recently formulated Nepal Rastra Bank Remittance Transaction Supervision and Inspection Regulations, 2022 (NRB 2022). The aim of this framework is to make remittance transactions safe and reliable. This includes collection and analysis of data of remitters, identifying and managing existing risks associated with remittance transfer, and undergirding the quality of the supervision regime of remittance throughout the country.

2.4 Laws and Policies for Protection and Welfare of Migrant Workers

The FEA, 2007, the Foreign Employment Rules, 2008 and the Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 list various provisions to ensure safe and orderly migration and protect the rights and interests of

migrant workers. The Fifteenth Five-Year Plan of Nepal (2019/2020–2023/24) has outlined strategies to make labour migration safe, free of exploitation and dignified while maximising the benefits of foreign employment. The proposed action plans in that regard include, but are not limited to, signing labour agreements with major countries of destination and pursuing labour diplomacy, effective coordination with relevant stakeholders, and establishment of a foreign employment council. This sub-chapter discusses the laws and policies and new developments in the legislations and institutional framework for the protection and welfare of migrant workers.

2.4.1 Legislative and Policy Framework: New Developments

Recent developments in the legislative and policy framework aimed at protecting migrant workers are listed below.

- The Directive on the Management of Sending Domestic Workers for Foreign Employment, 2015 was adopted to regulate the recruitment of domestic workers for foreign employment (MoLESS 2015). The Directive has prescribed the age limit for women going for domestic work to various countries, including Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. It also stipulates that domestic workers may only be recruited in countries that have a bilateral agreement with Nepal, and that recruitment agencies involved in sending domestic workers abroad must be separately registered with DoFE. It requires prospective workers to take 30 days' training related to domestic work from a licenced training institution and the employer to bear all the migration costs, including being responsible for repatriation.
- The Foreign Employment Management Service Delivery Working Procedure, 2022 has detailed guidelines on the responsibilities and tasks to be carried out by DoFE's internal units (MoLESS 2022b). The key tasks include policy-related work, issuance, renewal and cancellation of licences of businesses involved in foreign employment and their overall supervision, registration and supervision of organisations involved in providing training during orientation of workers, handling of complaints, and other tasks related to workers' welfare, information management and conducting awareness campaigns and promotional activities related to foreign employment.
- DoFE amended the Directive Related to the Process of Obtaining an Individual Labour approval for Foreign Employment, 2012 in April 2022 to add Albania, Belarus, Croatia, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia to the list of countries where Nepali workers willing to travel with individual labour approvals need to complete a separate authentication process (DoFE 2022e). Prior to this amendment, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were the only countries in the list. The authentication process requires outgoing workers travelling under the individual category to present a self-declaration forms stating their understanding of the process of migration, nature of employment and remuneration, as well as their awareness of the country of destination to which they are migrating. This measure is meant to prevent migrant workers from being defrauded.

Box 2.2: Support to Local Governments

MoLESS through the SaMi programme has been providing technical support to several local governments in developing their capacity and helping to make labour migration part of their institutional set-up. It has, accordingly, supported the formulation of safer migration guidelines, development of migration profiles, incorporation of foreign employment in periodic plans, and the establishment and expansion of labour and employment sections within the organisational structure of local governments. At the province level, the programme has facilitated the development of provincial labour and employment policies.

Activities where technical support was provided till 2021/22		
Local Level	Development of migration profile	75 local governments
	Development of safer migration guidelines	76 local governments
	Incorporation of foreign employment issues in periodic plans	27 local governments
	Establishment/expansion of labour and employment sections	Five local governments (for addressing domestic and foreign employment related issues)
Province Level	Development of provincial labour and migration policies	Four provinces: policy finalised and under the process of approval in Bagmati and Madhesh; under discussion/drafting in Lumbini, and approved in Gandaki.

Source: SaMi Programme, 2022.

- The Directive for the Rescue and Repatriation of Nepali Migrant Workers Stranded due to COVID-19, 2020 provides for using the FEWF to repatriate Nepali migrant workers who left with due process but were stranded in various countries of destination due to the pandemic (MoLESS 2020c). The Directive tasked Nepali missions abroad and recruitment agencies to verify that migrant workers have received air tickets, salary and other benefits they were entitled to from their employers.
- The Disaster Victim Rescue and Relief (Seventh Amendment) Criteria, 2020 guides and directs the government authority to provide the necessary support to victims of natural calamities and their families (Government of Nepal 2020). One of the provisions in the criteria relates to foreign employment whereby a member from the victim's family, upon the referral and decision of the District Disaster Management Committee, can go for foreign employment through MoLESS (ibid, s. 3).

Nepal has commitments to various international conventions and treaties as well. The Sixth Periodic Review of Nepal at the 71st session of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) committee in 2018 explicitly mentions the commitment as well as progress made by Nepal since ratifying CEDAW in institutionalising women's rights, including the rights of migrant women.⁴² However, the parallel shadow report from civil society highlighted the

⁴² Statement delivered at the Sixth Periodic Review of Nepal at 71st session of CEDAW committee by the Leader of Nepali Delegation Hon'ble Minister for Women, Children and Senior Citizens Mrs. Tham Maya Thapa.

need for a nuanced gender-responsive policy making by the government keeping gender aspects at the forefront and aborting any discriminatory and patronising policies and introducing more supportive practices like the deployment of more labour attachés in countries of destination. Likewise, MoLESS has prepared a working procedure for enrolling Nepali migrant workers in the national social security scheme.

2.4.2 Skills Development, Recognitions and Certifications

The Fifteenth Periodic Plan has sector-specific goals and thematic areas with targets relevant to skills development and creation of employment opportunities in Nepal. The Plan envisions the use of skilled returnee migrant workers as a source of knowledge and skills within the country. Through institutions affiliated with CTEVT,⁴³ the FEB has been providing free skills training to unskilled youths who are likely to join the domestic labour market or migrate to various countries of destination. The FEB, in collaboration with the National Skill Testing Board (NSTB), also provides free skill tests to returnee migrant workers.

The Directive on Grant Schemes for Encouraging Foreign Educated and Trained Youth in Agriculture, 2015 aims to encourage youths to enter the agricultural sector. It targets those trained and educated in agriculture education outside Nepal and youths returning from foreign employment and encourages them to apply their capital, knowledge and skills to the development of the domestic agricultural sector. Likewise, an apprenticeship programme has been started under the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies to support unemployed youths, including those returning from foreign employment (MoF 2020). Under this scheme, a Workplace-based (Apprenticeship) Training Operation Working Procedure, 2020 has been developed. Furthermore, skills development of migrant workers is also guided by other legal instruments such as the Employment-oriented Skill Development Training Operation Procedure, 2019 while the Reintegration Programme (Operation and Management) Directives for Returnee Migrant Workers, 2022 has provisions for preparing a profile of returnee migrant workers.

2.4.3 Access to Justice

There have also been efforts to minimise incidents of fraud and deception in labour migration as well as improve mechanisms enabling access to justice. The FEA, 2007 provisions for the establishment of the FET to provide justice to victims of fraudulent migration practices by addressing cases and complaints made by individuals against the employer or recruitment agencies with the exception of those dealt with by DoFE. The Foreign Employment Tribunal Rules, 2012 outlines the approaches and methods to be adopted by the tribunal along with its jurisdiction. An amendment to the FEA, 2007 in 2019 added the provision for complaint registration at the DAO (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 21). Following the amendment, the Chief District Officer (CDO) can mediate cases against individuals while complaints registered against institutions (recruitment agencies) have to be sent to the DoFE within seven days of filing of the complaint. In order to minimise cases of fraud by PRAs,

⁴³ The CTEVT was established under the Technical Education and Vocational Training Council Act, 1988 which aims to accredit the standards of skills, for the generation of proficient human resources and to manage technical education and vocational training in the country.

the amendment to the Act in 2019 also mandated that the demand letter be attested by a Nepali diplomatic mission.

An alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism was instituted at DoFE, aimed at facilitating disputes between migrant workers and employers and/or agents. Likewise, DoFE has also put in place a new rule to allow administrative staff to investigate cases of fraud filed. Whereas previously such cases were under the purview of government attorneys, others can also be involved in identifying and investigating cases of fraud now. This has expedited the justice process. Furthermore, the Directive for the Legal Defence of Nepali Workers in Foreign Employment, 2019 sets out provisions for supporting migrant workers facing legal difficulties in countries of destination by mobilising lawyers for their defence and paying them. The Directive provides guidelines for providing legal defence and advocacy for migrant workers with valid labour approvals who face prosecution for criminal offences during their contract period. The FEB can provide legal assistance worth a maximum of NPR 1.5 million (ca. USD 11,500). Under this Directive, Nepali diplomatic missions receive and review applications from migrant workers or their families; scrutinise the case against the laws of the country of destination; forward valid applications to MoFA, and through MoFA to FEB; solicit funds from the FEB; appoint legal practitioners at the country of destination; and maintain records of all such applications (FEB 2019b).

2.5 Policy Changes in Major Countries of Destination

As a country of origin, it is crucial for Nepal to keep track of and understand the policy landscape in countries of destination that impact labour migration and the rights of migrants. Over the past three years, including during the COVID-19 pandemic, laws and policies related to migrants and their employment in the countries of destination have changed. Among the new provisions are those that reserve (high-skilled) jobs and opportunities for their own nationals and discourage the inflow of migrant workers (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE); are aimed at ensuring better labour standards and rights through the establishment of a wage protection system, standard contracts, insurance for migrant workers, online/accessible complaints mechanisms, granting migrant workers the right to change their employer, and introduction of non-discriminatory provisions, especially in domestic and care work (Bahrain, Israel, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE); introduced short-term/seasonal work visa policies (South Korea and the UK) or policies to attract high/specialised skilled migrants and (Bahrain, Japan and the UK); or have simplified and made access to visa and employment more accessible (Bahrain, Israel, Japan, Kuwait Oman, South Korea and the UK). The key changes are presented in Table 2.6.

The changes in labour migration and employment-related laws and policies in the major countries of destination discussed above have wide-ranging implications for both Nepal and Nepali migrant workers. For instance, the policies to prioritise own nationals instituted in the GCC countries are expected to reduce employment opportunities for aspirant and current migrant workers in these countries. These developments indicate a trend where labour-receiving countries are gradually tightening their migration policies. These policy changes also have implications for the kinds of skill training initiatives in place in Nepal. The potential for employment opportunities abroad dwindling

Table 2.6: Policy Changes in Key Countries of destination

	Changes in Policy
Policies prioritising nationals over migrant workers	<p>Bahrain National Labour Market Plan 2021-2023 discourages the entry of irregular migrants by strengthening labour institutions, and regulates the residency of expats through strict security requirements.</p>
Policies prioritising nationals over migrant workers	<p>Kuwait Blanket ban enforced on hiring migrant workers in the public sector since 2016. New occupational standards introduced in 2015 to limit and regulate the entry of unqualified migrants into the country.</p> <p>Oman Decision No. 235/2022 issued in July 2022 adds 207 more professions to the list of professions reserved for Omani nationals only.</p> <p>Saudi Arabia Ban on employment of migrant workers in sectors such as secretarial, translation, storekeeping and data entry jobs comes into effect in May 2022.</p> <p>UAE Private sector businesses to recruit Emirati nationals to comply with the policy adopted in 2022 to increase percentage of Emiratis in skilled jobs by 2 per cent annually in establishments with more than 50 employees.</p>
Policies concerning employment permits and visas	<p>Bahrain 'Flexi permit' system introduced in 2017, allowing self-sponsorship by migrants in irregular status, ends in October 2022. Multiple entry e-visa valid for six months introduced for trainees or trainers working in the government or the private sector.</p> <p>Japan Since 2018, higher skilled workers in the 'Specified Skill Worker' category allowed to apply for residency, whereby non-Japanese workers are allowed to work in 14 new occupational fields. Technical intern trainees who complete their training can also now switch to the status of Specified Skilled Workers in the same field without having to undergo occupational skills exams and Japanese language proficiency test.</p> <p>Kuwait Digitisation of immigration process initiated in January 2021 making it possible to apply online for work permits.</p> <p>Oman Provisions in the Foreigners' Residence Law amended in May 2021 to allow conversion of visit visas into work permits.</p> <p>South Korea Introduction of medium-term seasonal work programme for the agriculture and fisheries sectors in 2019 allowed hiring of migrant workers for a short period of time of up to five months. The new E8 visa, which allows for stay for at least five months, is an extension of the C4, which allowed up to 90 days of stay.</p>

	Changes in Policy
	<p>United Kingdom From 2019 to 2021, the UK government initiates pilot immigration programme to provide temporary visas for seasonal work in the horticulture sector. In 2022, the 'seasonal worker visa' introduced with migrant workers being allowed to work in the UK for up to six months.</p>
Policies concerning decent work	<p>Bahrain Wage Protection System (WPS) launched in May 2021, allowing for supervision of payment schedule of private companies by the Labour Market Regulatory Authority. Article 25 of Law No. 19 amended in 2021, requiring migrants to work with an employer for a minimum of three years before seeking a sponsorship transfer. Previously, workers could change employment after a single year of employment. In January 2020, a digital apparatus introduced to streamline complaints which provides translation services, assistance in compiling and initiating cases as well as allows migrants to digitally retrieve all documents for filing a lawsuit. Migrant workers can now electronically submit appeals before higher courts, and the Labour Market Regulatory Authority collaborates with the Ministry of Justice to provide administrative support to the migrant workers.</p> <p>Israel Minimum wage increased to USD 2,165 from USD 1,542 in June 2022.</p> <p>Japan Technical Intern Training Act, 2016 enacted by the Japanese government to allow technical intern trainees to switch employers and a mechanism built for reporting human rights violations by employers.</p> <p>Jordan Following the 2019-2022 National Anti-Trafficking Strategy, anti-trafficking hotline number stickers placed on the passports of all migrant workers entering the country.</p> <p>Kuwait Circular issued in 2021 permitting workers to change sponsorship after only a year of employment instead of three years previously.</p> <p>Oman Following an amendment to the law, Residence of Foreigners, 1995, migrant workers allowed to transfer sponsorship without permission after the completion of a two-year contract if the criteria under the Ministry of Labour is met. Formation of a Reconciliation Committee under the Ministry of Manpower in 2019 with the objective of encouraging registration of labour disputes and amicable settlement.</p> <p>Qatar In March 2021, minimum monthly wage set at QAR 1,000 (ca. USD 275) with allowances of at least QAR 300 and QAR 500 for food and housing, respectively. In 2018, workers' support and insurance fund established to ensure and provide care for migrant workers, guarantee their rights and provide a healthy and safe working environment.</p>

	Changes in Policy
	<p>Saudi Arabia WPS initiated in 2020, whereby employers mandated to register with the system. After March 2021, migrant workers allowed to change jobs within the first year under three conditions: if the workers' work permit expires, if the worker is not paid for three consecutive months, or if a labour dispute arises and the employer fails to attend two litigation hearings. Further, this reform has removed the need of migrant workers to seek permission of their employers to exit or re-enter the country and has also allowed migrant workers to seek a job with a new employer upon the expiration of their employment contract without the consent of their original employer.</p> <p>UAE New labour law enacted in February 2022, introducing family leave entitlements and ending unilateral termination of contract by employer and other employee benefits provisions. Ministerial decree passed in 2016, abolishing the requirement for migrant workers to seek permission from their employers to switch jobs and the introduction of the possibility of workers terminating their contracts unilaterally.</p>
Policies concerning domestic workers, caregivers and women migrant workers	<p>Bahrain In 2018, Bahrain becomes the first and only country in the region to incorporate domestic workers into its labour laws through which it accorded full protection to domestic workers against discrimination. In 2020, Bahrain made a commitment towards pay parity by prohibiting gender-based wage discrimination.</p> <p>Israel In 2016, caregivers provided entitlement to a day's rest per week with no more than 25 hours of continued work.</p> <p>Jordan In 2020, Jordan issues regulation supporting social protection of women during maternity.</p> <p>Oman Unclear whether domestic workers are excluded from the amendment to the pre-existing law on the Residence of Foreigners, 1995 by the Royal Oman Police with the enactment of Decision No. 157/2020 that amends Article 24 of Decision No. 63/1996 in 2020, which allowed for the transfer of sponsorship without permission after completion of a two-year contract if the criteria under the Ministry of Labour is met.</p> <p>Qatar Standard employment contract introduced in 2017 for domestic workers whereby working hours, weekly leave, maximum overtime of two hours, compensation for overtime, sick leave, liabilities of the employer and terms for termination need to be stated.</p>

	Changes in Policy
	<p>Saudi Arabia Domestic workers not eligible without conditions for reforms issued with the Labour Reform Initiative by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development in November 2020 and enforced in March 2021 of not needing to get employers' permission to exit or re-enter the country and not having to get the consent of their employer for new employment on the expiry of their current contract. However, when employers transfer workers to another employer without their consent, employer terminates contract during the probation period, in the event of a delay in payment of wages in three consecutive months, failure of employer to pick up worker at the port of arrival and the existence of official complaint by the worker against the employer for mistreatment and violation of human rights, domestic workers are allowed to change jobs.</p> <p>UAE Law enacted in 2017 makes it illegal to charge recruitment fees to domestic workers whether prior to or after employment. Further, the law prescribes that domestic workers can work for a maximum of 12 hours per day and up to 72 hours per week and are entitled to at least eight consecutive hours of rest per day and a rest period of one day per week.</p>
COVID-19-induced changes	<p>Bahrain Following the onset of COVID-19, employers required to house a reduced number of persons per room, maintain physical separation and comply with hygiene and sanitary standards. Short-term free health coverage introduced for migrant workers, with COVID-19-related medical fees being suspended in April 2020. In June 2021, vaccination programme extends to cover irregular migrants.</p> <p>Israel Israel imposes a blanket ban on caregivers' ability to physically leave their place of employment (nursing homes) after COVID-19. Health of migrant workers in the care sector working in nursing homes monitored on a daily basis and additionally required the group to wear personal protective kits at all times.</p> <p>Japan USD 915 cash handout for all residents, including foreigners listed on the Basic Resident Register in 2020. In 2021, foreign businesses also made eligible to apply for the Subsidy Program for Sustaining Business if their monthly income dropped more than 50 percent compared to the same month of the previous year. In May 2021, Temporary Loan Emergency Fund established, whereby foreigners struggling financially could take loans amounting to USD 1825 with a repayment deadline of two years.</p>

Changes in Policy

Kuwait

Amnesty programme announced for irregular migrants in April 2020, whereby the Kuwaiti government took steps to repatriate irregular migrant workers at no cost to the migrant workers. (Nepali migrants could enrol in the programme from 26 to 30 April).

Malaysia

In March 2020, Malaysia suspends admission of less-skilled workers holding temporary employment passes as well as domestic workers and workers in agricultural, manufacturing and service sectors.

COVID-19 screening costs borne by the Social Security Organization (SOCSCO) for those migrant workers who contribute to SOCSCO.

New regulation introduced by the Malaysian government in August 2020 against the cramped and congested living conditions for foreign workers.

The Ministry of Human Resources (MoHR) required employers to pay their workers full-time salary even if they were unable to provide full-time work between 18 March and 3 May 2020 due to Movement Control Order (MCO) issued in March 2020.

Amnesty scheme launched in 2021 for undocumented migrant workers in the face of the growing COVID-19 pandemic to regularise illegal immigrants in four sectors: construction, manufacturing, plantation and agriculture. Only irregular migrants without criminal charges could benefit from the scheme.

Saudi Arabia

Royal Order expands irregular migrants' access to COVID-19 related health assistance without significantly exposing them to civil, criminal or economic liability. The amnesty also ensures free coronavirus testing for its irregular migrant population. Decision taken to leave wage negotiations up to the private sector. Given power asymmetries between employers and employees, it becomes illegal for employers availing of government subsidies to terminate a worker's contract.

UAE

Employers who could not provide work during the COVID-19 pandemic asked to register their workers in a virtual labour market (online registry system) to facilitate their re-employment with other employers and refrain from altering provisions in the employment contracts without the consent of both parties. Methods devised to monitor and register such changes. Temporary repatriation for employed migrant workers provided by allowing employers and employees to reach an agreement on temporary repatriation, requiring employers to pay for return flights. Visas for workers automatically renewed through 31 December 2020, to ensure no one was pushed into irregular status due to the pandemic. Amnesty also announced for foreigners who had overstayed their visas with additional three months given to return home.

over time for both current and aspirant Nepali migrant workers means that the focus of skills training currently offered in Nepal may need to be reassessed and geared towards such occupations where the impact of these policies is likely to be felt less severely. These developments also call for the need to further diversify countries where Nepali migrant workers can seek employment. Among the steps necessary to achieve this is constant vigilance of the global labour market to take advantage whenever opportunities arise.

Policy changes are also directly linked to the issue of migrant workers' welfare such as wage protection, fair recruitment, access to decent work, portability of social security entitlements, and mitigation of possible discrimination. The Government of Nepal is thus faced with new challenges to be addressed for ensuring safe, regular and dignified employment of Nepali migrant workers, and to optimise the outcomes from labour migration which continue to remain the mainstay of the Nepali economy.

2.6 Labour Migration Agreements

Bilateral dialogues and agreements between the countries of origin and countries of destinations are viewed as authoritative tools to regulate labour migration (People Forum 2021, 3). Sound BLMAs, standard employment contracts, and understanding between countries of origin and destination are instrumental in making labour migration safe, orderly and regular. In particular, bilateral labour agreements and memoranda of understanding are significant in terms of establishing norms and obligations that guide the overall procedures for labour migration as well as for the protection of migrant workers in countries of destination.

The FEA, 2007 empowers and encourages the Government of Nepal to enter into bilateral agreements with countries where Nepali workers migrate or are likely to migrate for employment (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 4). The Act also assigns power to the government to send workers on its own or through a governmental agency by signing a treaty or agreement with countries that Nepal has diplomatic relations with. This is commonly referred to as the government-to-government (G2G) model of migration (ibid, s. 6). International agreements such as the GCM calls upon signatories to enter into bilateral labour agreements (BLAs) to facilitate exchange of labour and enhance the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration.⁴⁴

In line with such obligations and commitments, Nepal has entered into agreement with various countries on the issue of labour migration (Table 2.7). There was remarkable progress in the number of agreements signed or renewed in the period between 2017 and 2019 (Government of Nepal 2021). Based on the provisions therein regarding the process of sending workers, the agreements can be categorised as:

- i. Agreements in which the employment process is determined through the G2G model (Israel,

⁴⁴ Develop human rights-based and gender-responsive bilateral, regional and multilateral labour mobility agreements with sector-specific standard terms of employment in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, drawing on relevant ILO standards, guidelines and principles, in compliance with international human rights and labour law (Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, 2018, Objective 5 (21)).

Table 2.7: Agreements with Countries of Destination

Country of Destination	Date of Agreement/ Renewal	Title of Agreement
United Kingdom	2022	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Nepal and the Government of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Recruitment of Healthcare Professionals
Israel	2020	Agreement between the Government of the State of Israel and the Government of Nepal on the Temporary Employment of Nepali Workers in Specific Labour Market Sectors in the State of Israel
UAE	2007/2019	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Nepal and the Government of the United Arab Emirates in the Recruitment, Employment and Repatriation of Workers
Mauritius	2019	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Nepal and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius on the Recruitment and Employment of Workers from Nepal
Japan	2019	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the National Police Agency of Japan and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security of the Government of Nepal on a Basic Framework for Information Partnership for Proper Operation of the System Pertaining to Foreign Human Resources with the Status of Residence of Specified Skilled Worker
Malaysia	2018	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Nepal and the Government of Malaysia on the Recruitment, Employment and Repatriation of Workers
Jordan	2017	General Agreement in the Field of Manpower Between the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Government of Nepal
Japan	2009	Directive for Sending Nepalese Technical Interns to Japan
Bahrain	2008	Memorandum of Understanding in the Areas of Labour and Occupational Training between the Government of Nepal and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain
Republic of Korea	2007	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, Government of Nepal and the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Korea on the Sending of Workers to the Republic of Korea under the Employment Permit System
Qatar	2005	Agreement between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the Government of the State of Qatar concerning Nepalese Manpower Employment in the State of Qatar

- Japan and South Korea), and
- ii. Agreements in which the employment process is managed through private recruitment agencies (Bahrain, Jordan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Qatar and the UAE).

These documents include mutually agreed upon provisions on issues such as recruitment, service charges, employment and repatriation of workers, two-way airfare, visa fee, health check-up, security screening and charges levied, among others. They also include provisions related to accommodation, health check-up and security of the workers during the contract period. Nepal has also been closely engaging with the countries of destination, through joint working committee mechanisms, to negotiate with the governments of country of destination to effectively enforce the provisions laid out in these agreements, and explore newer areas of cooperation and dialogue to enhance the safety and security of migrant workers.

Although there are differences, the recently signed agreements have many common provisions that are informed by global discourses such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment (GPOG), International Organisation for Migration (IOM)'s International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) and principles and objectives laid out in the GCM. For example, in the agreements with Jordan, Mauritius, the UAE and the UK, the Government of Nepal has strongly advocated for the 'employer pays' principle to ensure that workers do not have to bear any costs and fees associated with their recruitment process. The BLMAs with most of the countries (Bahrain, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Qatar, South Korea, and the UAE) also include provisions for Standard Employment Contracts that clearly spell out the terms and conditions of work and ensure that these contracts align with the minimum standards set by the Government of Nepal. Further, the agreements also stipulate the roles and responsibilities of the governments of the country of destination, recruitment agencies and in some cases, those of employers. Provisions on dispute settlement using amicable means and formal arbitration by the concerned judicial authorities are also common across all agreements. The agreement with Mauritius also includes provisions on free legal services including representation and translation services and the agreement with the UAE provides for granting no-cost access to the labour court to aggrieved Nepali workers. Further, the agreements with Bahrain, Jordan, Mauritius and the UAE prioritise investing in skills development of migrant workers in Nepal and ensuring programmes related to skills development are relevant to the country of destination.

Apart from that, the agreements signed with all the countries have provisions that encourage fair treatment of workers and non-discrimination on the grounds of wage and non-wage benefits, legal remedies and freedom of movement, among others. The agreements also allow migrants to switch or change employers in certain cases such as the closure of the employer's business or mistreatment of the worker by the employer.

The agreements have also tried to provide guarantees of international human rights and labour rights of migrant workers. For instance, workers are allowed special leave to visit Nepal in the event of the death of a family member. They also emphasise the safety, security and welfare of the women workers,

with due regard to their special needs. Likewise, employers are required to pay for health and accidental insurance and medical fees of the worker. Priority has also been accorded to ensuring cooperation in setting mutually recognised medical examination standards and procedures. In line with Objective 4 of the GCM, the agreements require that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation. Occupational health and safety measures are also emphasised with the recognition of the fact that many Nepali migrant workers are employed in hazardous works. In case of death of a worker, the agreements make employers responsible for the dignified repatriation of the remains of the worker along with timely settlement of salary, allowances, overtime pay and other benefits.

Lastly, the agreements also have a provision of establishing a joint working group (or joint committee) with representatives from the two countries to ensure proper implementation and monitoring of the agreement and to recommend amendments as needed. The Government of Nepal has strongly prioritised convening joint working group meetings with the government of countries of destination. Table 2.8 presents a list of such meetings Nepal has held with different countries in recent times.

Table 2.8: List of Recent Joint Working Group/Committee Meetings

Joint Working Group/Committee Meeting	Date	Location	Major Issue(s) Discussed
Nepal–UAE Joint Working Committee	15 March 2022	Abu Dhabi	Social security of Nepali workers in the UAE, their safety in the workplace, arrangement of health service and insurance, skills development, increase in salary, and resolving problems of Nepalis who are in the UAE on tourist visas and stranded there.
Nepal–Qatar Joint Working Committee	3 December 2021	Kathmandu	Revising labour agreement signed in 2005, providing employment to Nepali domestic and agricultural workers in Qatar, extending the QVC in Kathmandu to provinces, introducing initiatives to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on labour migration, and supporting the reintegration of returning migrant workers.
Nepal–South Korea Bilateral Consultation Mechanism	9 November 2021	Kathmandu	Renewal of the MoU on the Employment Permit System (EPS), increasing quotas provided to Nepal under EPS, and making way for Nepali workers who passed the Korean language proficiency test to travel to South Korea.

The government has also begun prioritising expansion to newer destinations. In this process, it has reached out to European labour markets to expand the destination choices for Nepali migrant workers. The Five-Year Strategy (2019/20–2023/24) of MoLESS aims to negotiate agreements with more countries of destination. In accordance with this, the Ministry had initiated talks to enter into a G2G agreement with Poland, Romania and Seychelles. A deal was reached with the government of Seychelles in March 2022 to conclude an agreement between the two countries (Onlinekhabar

2022). The new agreement with Mauritius, as well as increases in the number of labour approvals for countries such as Cyprus, Japan, Macau SAR of China, Malta, Romania, and Turkey, (see Chapter 3 on data related to labour approvals), also indicate the government's interest in this regard (ILO 2021b). A pilot G2G programme with Israel was initiated in 2015 in the hopes of expanding work opportunities for Nepali citizens (Embassy of Nepal in Tel Aviv n.d.). Additionally, in 2020, Nepal signed an agreement with Israel to send Nepalis to Israel's specific labour market sectors. It was also agreed that separate implementation protocols for each sector would be formulated to set out procedures for the recruitment of Nepali nationals in such sectors in accordance with the agreement. Following the agreement, an implementation protocol was signed to send auxiliary workers in the caregiving sector in Israel in January 2021, with the possibility of extension to other sectors. A taskforce has been set up at MoLESS to draft implementation protocols that would enable Nepalis to work in Israel's agriculture and construction sectors (MoLESS 2022c). A bilateral agreement on health partnership was signed in August 2022 to send Nepali nurses to the UK. Nurses under the age of 45 with at least two years of professional experience and who have cleared the UK's Nursing and Midwifery Council exam qualify under the agreement. As of publication of this report, the guideline to send Nepali nurses to the UK was being finalised.

2.7 Nepal's Engagement in Regional and International Processes and Forums

Nepal has ratified a number of international human rights instruments⁴⁵ which have been key in shaping migration governance nationally and globally. Besides having the standing of national laws as per the Nepal Treaty Act, 1990, these documents act as guiding frameworks for the management and regulation of national and global labour migration. The ratification of such instruments and policy framework is also relevant for the protection of the rights and interests of workers and their families and acceptance of basic principles concerning their treatment when employed in countries other than their own. Alongside these treaties and conventions, Nepal has expressed its commitments in various international, regional and national fora such as the GCM, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), the Colombo Process (CP), and the 2014 South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Declaration on Migration.

As a member state of the ADD, Nepal has focussed on improving access to justice for migrant workers by increasing the use of digital technology, analysing the skills demands and identifying the key actors in skills development, and developing guidelines to meet the priorities of the ADD member states, addressing the challenges of COVID-19, promoting employability, mobility and labour participation of women migrants and strengthening regional and international cooperation in the coming years (Dhungana and Baniya 2022).

The Sixth Ministerial Consultation of the CP, held in Nepal in 2018, adopted the 27-point

⁴⁵ The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) are major treaties that impinge on migration through the proliferation of fundamental rights.

Kathmandu Declaration which focused on five thematic areas for Nepal to work on, including skills and qualification recognition processes, fostering ethical recruitment practices, pre-departure orientation and empowerment, promoting cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances and labour market analysis (Colombo Process 2018). Likewise, the First SAARC-level Regional Consultation on Labour Migration hosted by Nepal in 2016 resulted in the endorsement of the SAARC Plan of Action for Cooperation on Labour Migration. The Plan seeks to set up an institutional mechanism at the regional level that would facilitate collaboration and cooperation on management of key labour migration issues, facilitate the development of a SAARC Declaration on Labour Migration, identify priority thematic areas for regional cooperation on labour migration and facilitate information exchange and knowledge building on labour migration (SARTUC n.d.).

Nepal's commitment to the SDGs has been reaffirmed in key policy documents, such as the current Fifteenth Periodic Plan and the Long-Term Vision 2100. Nepal is also a champion country of Objective 6 of the GCM to 'facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work'. Nepal has committed to achieving Target 8.7 of the SDGs which is to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. The country is also one of the pathfinder countries for Alliance 8.7,⁴⁶ a global partnership committed to achieving the Target 8.7. The government's priority is to revise the FEA, 2007 and other related Acts to eliminate loopholes that leave room for abuse, have BLAs with countries of destination, mainstream forced labour and human trafficking into regular data collection and integrate databases, establish labour committees and ensure its functionality, identify, map and monitor high-risk groups, promote economic empowerment of families vulnerable to forced labour and human trafficking and create decent jobs in the country and strengthen employment promotion centres (Alliance87 n.d.-b). The preparation of a National Strategy Paper for the implementation of the commitments made by Nepal on labour migration in international and regional forums and institutions, including the UN, is currently underway at MoLESS.

As envisioned in the GCM, the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), an intergovernmental global platform to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all aspects of the Compact, was held in 2022. In the Review Forum, Nepal reaffirmed its commitment to fair and ethical recruitment and making necessary reforms on migration governance to ensure labour migration is safe, orderly and dignified (United Nations Network on Migration 2022). Specifically, issues such as protection of migrant workers at home, ensuring safe migration pathways to tackle human trafficking, facilitation of safe and dignified return and sustainable reintegration of migrant workers and creation of employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities within the country to remove drivers and structural factors leading to migration were mentioned and the need 'to strengthen cooperation between countries of origin, transit, and destination for the effective implementation' of the GCM was highlighted in the forum.

⁴⁶ 'Pathfinder countries go further and faster to achieve Target 8.7. They accelerate efforts, try new approaches and collaborate with others' (Alliance87 n.d.-a).

MoLESS had held several consultation meetings with government agencies and other stakeholders before Joint Committee meetings and before participating in the ADD and the regional and international review of GCM. There has also been a realisation that there are huge benefits to MoLESS proactively engaging in regional and international forums as well as their Technical Working Groups (TGWs) and drafting committees, and leveraging the interests of Nepal and Nepali migrant workers. Sustainable and effective engagement and preparation, however, is constrained by frequent transfers of officials in charge of these activities and lack of institutionalisation of these processes and practices. Concomitantly, the failure of proper and timely assessments of relevant laws and policies of countries of destinations have sometimes undercut the government's efforts for bilateral labour agreements with countries of destination.

2.8 Immigration into Nepal

The Immigration Act, 1992 together with the Immigration Rules, 1994 and the Immigration Procedures, 2008 govern issues of admission, residence and departure of foreign nationals in Nepal, along with the scope, privileges and obligations associated with immigration. In an effort to protect the rights of immigrant workers, the National Employment Policy, 2015 introduced a special measure whereby Nepal commits to ratifying international conventions that ensure the rights of immigrant workers (MoLE 2015). As a complement, the policy also attempts to revitalise the process of documentation and information collection system on immigrants. In this regard, Nepali Port, functioning under DoI, captures arrival and departure of foreign nationals in/from Nepal via the international airports.

With regard to employment of foreign nationals in Nepal, the Labour Act, 2017 stipulates that no international hiring can be done without obtaining appropriate permits (Government of Nepal 2017c, s. 21). In protecting opportunities for its own nationals, the law states foreign personnel can only be retained in skilled labour positions in the absence of qualified individuals from the national talent pool (*ibid*, s. 22). Meanwhile, the Labour Rules, 2018 and the Foreign Citizen Labour Permission Directive, 2018 define in detail the scope and procedure for obtaining work permits in Nepal. Scattered across numerous legislations such as the Industrial Enterprises Act, 2020, the Company Act, 2006, the Association Registration Act, 1977, the Registration of Association Rules, 1978 and the Foreign Investment and Technology Act (FITTA), 2019 are other corollary provisions on immigration.

DoI has led the initiative on digitising immigration data. It has traded the IMMI (Immigration) system in favour of an interface-friendly software named Nepali Port (Poudel 2020). DoI has also introduced a renovated data centre along with new biometric equipment.

Chapter 3:
**STATUS OF LABOUR
MIGRATION IN NEPAL**



A step up of service delivery towards digital transformation.

Chapter 3: Status of Labour Migration in Nepal

The migration landscape of Nepal has changed rapidly with the scale of transnational migration for employment having grown tremendously over the last three decades. The large-scale labour migration of Nepali citizens has been driven by a multiplicity of factors: poverty, lack of employment opportunities at home, conflict and other social, environmental and political factors, and the demand of skilled and low-skilled migrant workers coupled with the offer of higher wages in the countries of destination. For women, it has also been fuelled by patriarchal social norms, gender inequality, stigma surrounding women's work and mobility, and escape from violence, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) from husbands and others in the family (McCarthy 2021).

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the current labour migration scenario in Nepal. The information presented here has been disaggregated by sex, age, place of origin, destination, skill category, and occupation in countries of destination. It does not include migrant workers going to India for work since there is no data that captures the scale of Nepali migration to the southern neighbour as is the case for those who have migrated through irregular channels. Also missing are the significant number of migrant workers who have left on 'tourist visas' with the objective of converting such visas into work visas after finding employment in the countries of destination (DoFE 2020a). The chapter ends with a look at labour migration from a regional perspective in order to situate the migration of Nepali workers in a wider context.

3.1 Current Trends in Labour Migration

Between 2008/09 and 2021/22, more than 4.7 million new labour approvals were issued to Nepali migrants wanting to work abroad.⁴⁷ These numbers increased consistently, reaching a peak in 2013/14, when more than half a million new approvals were issued (Figure 3.1).

The years thereafter saw a decline in the number of workers seeking new approvals. Overall, though, the number of workers who received labour approvals remained more or less comparable at the 500,000-600,000 range per year (Figure 3.2). This is because starting in 2011, instead of issuing new approvals to them, the government allowed those workers who wished to return to the same country of employment and same job after the expiration of their approvals by renewing their approvals.⁴⁸ This enabled these migrant

⁴⁷ Nepalis employed as white-collar professionals in foreign countries such as doctors, nurses and technicians do not carry labour approvals even though the law requires it. (Sijapati et al 2017).

⁴⁸ This provision was introduced after migrant workers were found using the expired labour approval to return to the same country and job. As a result, migrant workers who returned to the country of destination could not avail to the insurance and Foreign Employment Welfare Fund as they only cover the period as mentioned in the labour approval.

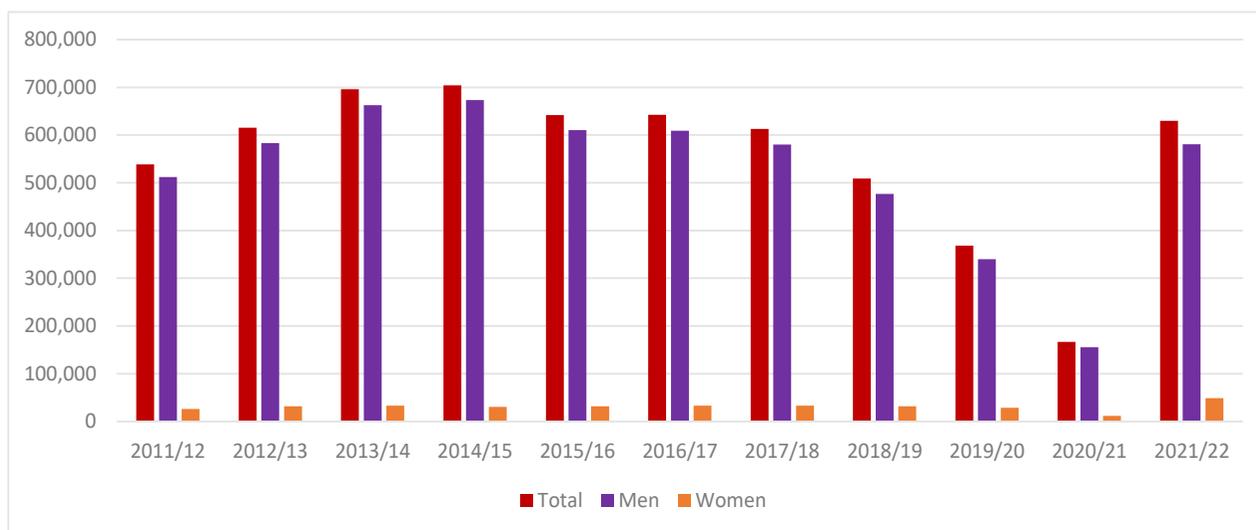
Figure 3.1: New Labour Approvals Issued



Source: Data from 2008/09 to 2018/19 from MoLESS, *Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020*; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

workers to enrol in the insurance and Foreign Employment Welfare Fund for the period of extended contract. Over 1.8 million migrant workers have renewed their labour approvals since 2011/12, indicating the desire of Nepali migrant workers to continue with their jobs abroad after their contracts end, and suggests either satisfaction with their jobs, paucity of opportunities at home or both.

Figure 3.2: New and Renewed Labour Approvals Issued



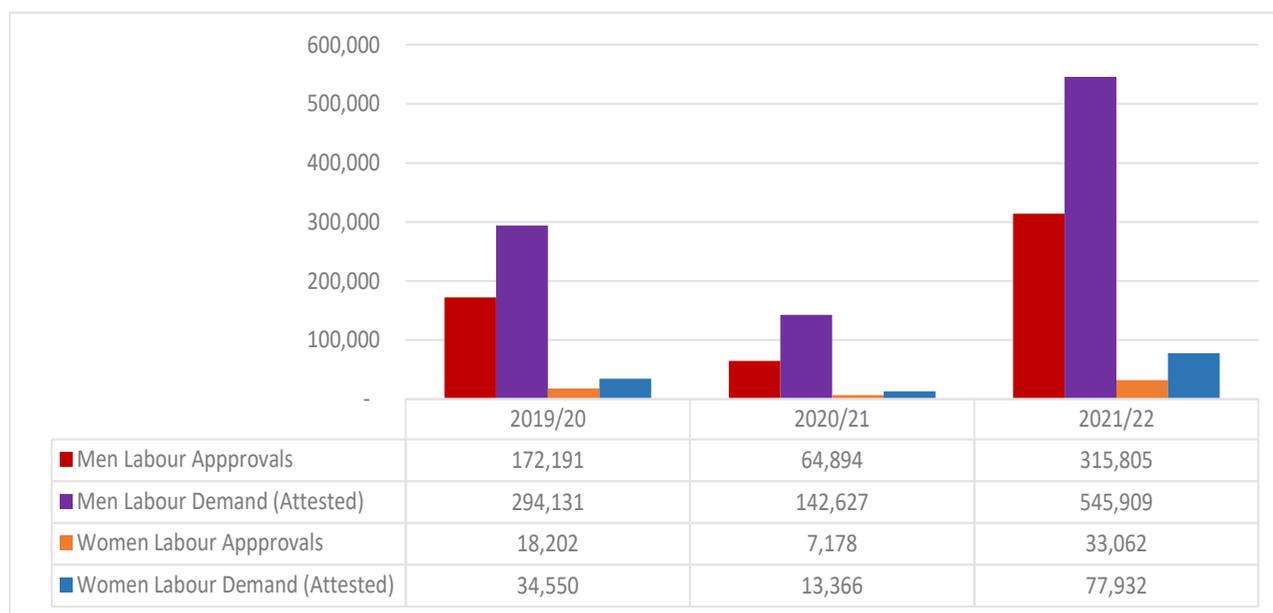
Source: Data for 2011/12 from Ministry of Labour and Employment, *Labour Migration for Employment: A Status Report of Nepal: 2015/2016 – 2016/17* (Kathmandu: Government of Nepal, 2018); Data for 2012/13 to 2018/19 from MoLESS, *Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020*; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

In 2019/20 and 2020/21, however, Nepal's labour migration sector was hit badly by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the virus spread across the globe, countries implemented lockdowns, cancelled or halted flights, and restricted the entry of foreign citizens, resulting in an almost complete halt in mobility for months. Starting February 2020, migrant workers were prevented from entering a number of countries of destination (Table 3.1). On 12 March 2020, the Government of Nepal also stopped issuing labour approvals, resuming fully only in the last week of August 2020. It was reported that 115,000 aspiring migrant workers could not go abroad despite having received labour approvals, and the pre-approval of more than 325,000 workers remained suspended (Mandal 2020). With the removal of travel restrictions and labour demand rising from overseas from June 2020 onwards, there was an uptick in the number of labour approvals issued. As a result, from a low of 166,689 (72,072 new approvals and 94,617 renewals) in 2020/21, the number of labour approvals issued in 2021/22 rose to reach 630,089, nearly matching the record numbers of 2012/13 and 2013/14 (Figure 3.2).

One highly unremarked factor is the huge gap in the number of worker positions attested by the Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) as per the labour demand submitted by the private recruitment agencies (PRAs) and the actual number of approvals issued. Going by the figures for the reference period (2019/20–2021/22), the demand for both men and women migrant workers is around two times the number of labour approvals issued, a figure that was actually even higher in 2020/21 (Figure 3.3). This indicates that Nepal has consistently not been able to meet the demand for its workers abroad.

In the discussion that follows in this chapter, unless otherwise stated, the figures provided are only of

Figure 3.3: Labour Demand Attested vs New Labour Approvals Issued (by sex)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Table 3.1: Timeline Affecting Foreign Employment during COVID-19

23 February 2020	Departure of Nepali workers to South Korea halted as the country became a COVID-19 hotspot.
9 March 2020	Qatar temporarily bans entry of foreign nationals from 14 countries, including Nepal.
12 March 2020	Nepal temporarily suspends issuance of labour approvals for foreign employment.
13 March 2020	Kuwait halts all inbound and outbound flights.
15 March 2020	Saudi Arabia suspends all international flights.
18 March 2020	Malaysia implements Movement Control Order, restricting movement nationwide and prohibiting entry of foreign nationals.
22 March 2020	The UAE suspends all incoming and outgoing flights.
22 and 23 March 2020	Nepal suspends all domestic and international flights and halts long-distance transport services.
24 March 2020	Nationwide lockdown implemented in Nepal.
29 March 2020	Oman suspends domestic and international flights.
June 2020	Malaysia bans hiring of foreign workers to ensure more employment opportunities for its citizens.
29 June 2020	Nepal resumes issuance of re-entry labour approvals for outbound migrant workers.
1 August 2020	Kuwait lifts travel ban, except for citizens of seven countries, including Nepal.
30 August 2020	Nepal resumes issuance of new labour approvals for migrant workers.
23 September 2020	Saudi Arabia eases travel restrictions for foreign nationals with valid exit and re-entry visas, work permits, resident permits or visit visas.
6 May 2021	Nepal halts international flights to and from Nepal as second wave of COVID-19 hits Nepal and other countries.
7 May 2021	Nepal halts in-person issuance of labour approvals.
13 May 2021	The UAE bans international flights from Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh amid increasing cases of COVID-19 in the region.
9 June 2021	Nepal resumes in-person issuance of labour approvals.
22 June 2021	Nepal eases international travel restrictions
1 August 2021	Kuwait allows entry of vaccinated foreign nationals.
3 August 2021	The UAE lifts ban on entry of people from Nepal.
22 October 2021	Malaysia announces lifting of ban on hiring of foreign workers for essential sectors like the plantation sector.
1 April 2022	Malaysia reopens its international border.

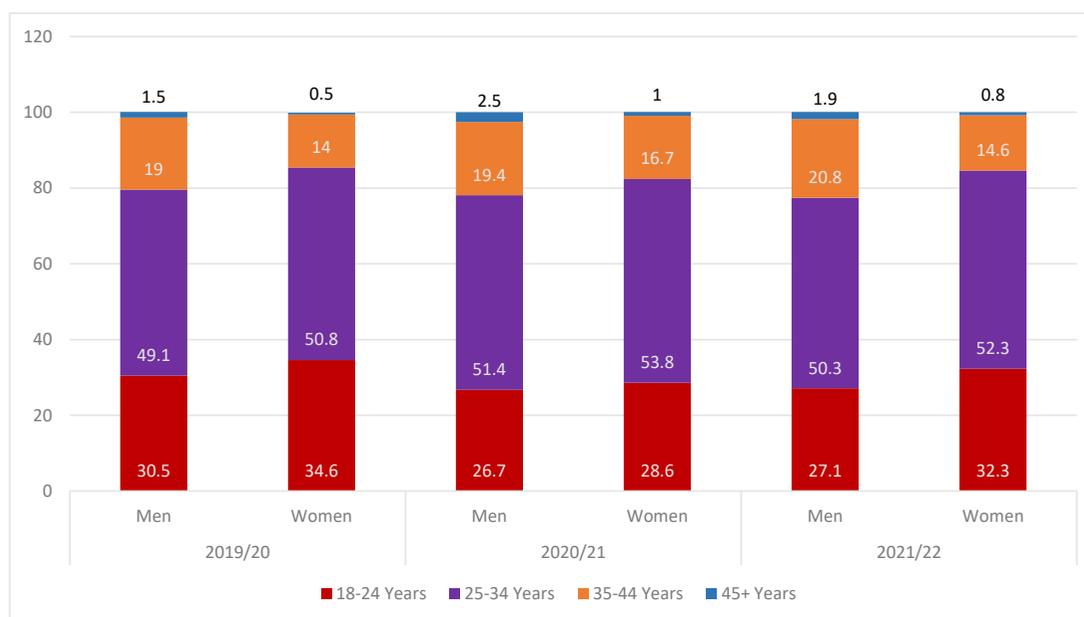
new labour approvals issued. Not including the data on renewals is not likely to change the analysis much since those going on renewed labour approvals would have been captured earlier in the data on new approvals. Some variation is possible though between the two migration stints in terms of occupation, the level of skills, or mode of obtaining labour approvals, but that is likely to be true for only a small proportion of the migrant worker population.

3.1.1 Sex and Age

Labour migration is a phenomenon dominated by men with women accounting for less than 6 per cent of the total number of new labour approvals issued between 2008/09 and 2021/22. However, perhaps indicating what the trend is likely to be in the future, in the three years, 2019/20–2021/22, the proportion of women has consistently been close to 10 per cent. That, of course, does not take into account a significant number of migrant workers who would have migrated through irregular channels and thus remain undocumented. As a result, a substantial proportion of migrant workers, particularly women migrant workers, are not included in the Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) data.

Nearly all migrant workers from Nepal are young adults and from the economically most productive age group of 18 to 44 with half between the ages of 25 and 34 years in the three reference years (Figure 3.4). The median age of migrant workers was just 28.⁴⁹

Figure 3.4: Migrant Workers (2019/20–2021/22) (by age and sex)



Note: This figure only includes new labour approvals.

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

⁴⁹ Median represents the midpoint of the dataset. The mean hasn't been included due to the possibility of data skewness due to errors in self-reported forms by the migrant workers.

Table 3.2: Number of New and Renewed Labour Approvals
(by sex and key countries of destination)

Destination	2017/18			2018/19			2019/20			2020/21			2021/22		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
New labour approvals only	99,315	3,864	103,179	71,322	3,702	75,024	27,453	2,383	29,836	21,076	1,054	22,130	72,475	4,348	76,823
Qatar															
UAE	53,680	6,564	60,244	55,444	7,332	62,776	44,698	7,359	52,057	9,257	2,352	11,609	40,916	12,928	53,844
Saudi Arabia	39,938	1,024	40,962	44,493	1,587	46,080	39,012	248	39,260	23,234	85	23,319	125,160	208	125,368
Kuwait	15,929	1,626	17,555	14,417	1,578	15,995	7,764	1,207	8,971	2	-	2	19,054	3,732	22,786
Bahrain	4,530	332	4,862	4,198	435	4,633	2,892	412	3,304	2,972	174	3,146	6,954	638	7,592
Oman	2,692	367	3,059	2,401	321	2,722	1,705	291	1,996	1,401	155	1,556	3,004	622	3,626
GCC Total	216,084	13,777	229,861	192,275	14,955	207,230	123,524	11,900	135,424	57,942	3,820	61,762	267,563	22,476	290,039
Malaysia	101,172	3,037	104,209	9,828	171	9,999	38,759	400	39,159	103	4	107	24,833	1,258	26,091
Poland	3,197	424	3,621	981	127	1,108	141	43	184	402	51	453	1,295	207	1,502
Maldives	1,235	554	1,789	1,484	490	1,974	614	272	886	579	428	1,007	1,833	902	2,735
Cyprus	155	1,419	1,574	194	1,536	1,730	156	1,302	1,458	98	914	1,012	395	2,827	3,222
Japan	716	45	761	870	89	959	808	131	939	468	85	553	1,897	581	2,478
Malta	372	228	600	1,060	657	1,717	1,118	550	1,668	60	4	64	953	315	1,268
Romania	273	43	316	1,084	94	1,178	1,751	179	1,930	1,743	211	1,954	5,580	838	6,418
UK	34	31	65	42	18	60	25	13	38	207	108	315	2,262	546	2,808
Croatia	3	2	5	6	1	7	579	66	645	949	138	1,087	4,114	1,092	5,206
Others	8,424	2,857	11,281	7,809	2,440	10,249	4,716	3,346	8,062	2,343	1,415	3,758	5,080	2,020	7,100
Total	331,665	22,417	354,082	215,633	20,578	236,211	172,191	18,202	190,393	64,894	7,178	72,072	315,805	33,062	348,867

Destination	2017/18			2018/19			2019/20			2020/21			2021/22		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
New and renewed labour approvals															
Qatar	178,649	4,893	183,542	156,328	4,887	161,215	78,015	3,563	81,578	53,474	1,443	54,917	177,788	7,138	184,926
UAE	102,815	12,126	114,941	106,383	13,472	119,855	80,955	12,440	93,395	35,399	5,076	40,475	101,496	21,139	122,635
Saudi Arabia	107,073	1,341	108,414	115,871	2,033	117,904	82,515	623	83,138	46,744	208	46,952	187,965	726	188,691
Kuwait	24,615	2,534	27,149	23,729	2,267	25,996	14,610	2,247	16,857	846	168	1,014	30,176	5,365	35,541
Bahrain	7,832	622	8,454	7,927	747	8,674	5,525	663	6,188	4,631	309	4,940	11,055	1,007	12,062
Oman	5,186	527	5,713	4,972	465	5,437	3,667	472	4,139	2,866	267	3,133	5,964	885	6,849
GCC Total	426,170	22,043	448,213	415,210	23,871	439,081	265,287	20,008	285,295	143,960	7,471	151,431	514,444	36,260	550,704
Malaysia	133,278	4,033	137,311	40,897	1,249	42,146	58,582	1,123	59,705	1,119	16	1,135	35,180	1,464	36,644
Poland	3,220	426	3,646	1,060	135	1,195	377	71	448	633	72	705	1,606	249	1,855
Maldives	1,751	699	2,450	2,108	696	2,804	1,103	432	1,535	1,089	539	1,628	2,691	1,165	3,856
Cyprus	179	1,887	2,066	228	2,112	2,340	207	1,799	2,006	123	1,132	1,255	528	3,653	4,181
Japan	3,383	93	3,476	4,122	142	4,264	3,547	181	3,728	1,963	116	2,079	5,003	653	5,656
Malta	374	228	602	1,078	671	1,749	1,237	613	1,850	228	87	315	1,402	513	1,915
Romania	278	55	333	1,120	119	1,239	1,821	207	2,028	1,921	226	2,147	6,574	901	7,475
UK	41	35	76	44	19	63	25	13	38	209	108	317	2,267	547	2,814
Croatia	5	2	7	7	1	8	580	66	646	956	138	1,094	4,241	1,103	5,344
Others	11,042	3,463	14,505	10,831	3,108	13,939	7,178	3,916	11,094	3,032	1,551	4,583	7,025	2,620	9,645
Total	579,721	32,964	612,685	476,705	32,123	508,828	339,944	28,429	368,373	155,233	11,456	166,689	580,961	49,128	630,089

Source: Data for 2017/18 and 2018/19 from MoLESS, Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020: 124-31; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

3.2 Countries of Destination

Nepalis have been migrating to several countries for employment. The Government of Nepal has approved 111 countries for labour migration through recruitment agencies albeit with temporary restrictions applicable in the case of Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya (DoFE n.d.-g). Nepalis are also allowed to go to other countries after obtaining individual labour approvals. In 2019/20–2021/22, Nepalis migrated to 150 countries with approval from DoFE.⁵⁰

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—and Malaysia host the vast majority of Nepali migrant workers. These seven countries have consistently been providing employment to more than 80 per cent of Nepali migrant workers since 2013/14, and are also the countries from where Nepali workers receive the highest demand (See Annex 8 for number of labour demands by countries of destination and sex).

The number of Nepali migrant workers going to the GCC countries has fluctuated over the years. This number peaked in 2015/16 with 336,614 new labour approvals issued to the GCC countries (MoLESS 2020a, 14). The number of new approvals for those countries declined to 272,018 in 2016/17 (MoLE 2018) and further in 2017/18 and 2018/19 (Table 3.2). Those figures, however, are misleading since they do not take into account the labour approvals renewed for the same destinations. Including the latter brings the total number of labour approvals to above the 400,000 range in both 2017/18 and 2018/19 as well.

The number of Nepali migrant workers going to GCC countries declined significantly in 2019/20 and 2020/21⁵¹ but picked up in 2021/22. Labour approvals for those going to Kuwait saw a drastic decline in 2020/21 compared to other GCC countries as a result of the 16-month-long break in Nepali migration to Kuwait due to the pandemic (Table 3.1).

The number of Nepali migrant workers to Malaysia, another prominent destination for Nepalis, has fluctuated over the years. The number was the highest in 2013/14 (with 210,099 Nepalis receiving new approvals for Malaysia) (MoLE 2018) but declined in subsequent years, reaching the lowest number of 9999 in 2018/19 (Table 3.2). The decrease in 2015/16 (127,903 new labour approvals) (MoLE 2018) could have resulted from the temporary ban on hiring of new foreign migrant workers by the Government of Malaysia in March 2016 as an effort to encourage hiring of its own citizens (The Kathmandu Post 2016). Also, the Government of Nepal halted issuance of labour approvals to Malaysia in May 2018 to begin discussions on reducing recruitment fees and other related costs paid by Nepali migrant workers (Mandal 2019). These pre-departure fees included payment for online registration with the MiGRANT Management System (MiGRAM), biometric medical

50 These include both individual labour approvals and approvals received via recruitment agencies, which is discussed in more detail in section 3.4.

51 Do note the numbers for these years could be more than officially issued as many aspiring migrant workers travelled on visit visas and ended up staying for employment instead.

test, services of One Stop Centres (OSCs),⁵² and visa fees. That eventually led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries in October of the same year. However, despite the MoU, it took another year to restart sending migrant workers to Malaysia because of issues regarding the provision of pre-visa services for Malaysia-bound workers. The next two years did see a small increment before declining drastically, with the number of approvals issued for Malaysia dropping from 59,705 (including 39,159 new approvals) in 2019/20 to a meagre 1135 (107 new approvals) in 2020/21. That was a direct result of the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, with bans imposed by Malaysia on migrant workers (Mandal 2021). In response to the rapidly spreading coronavirus, Malaysia implemented its Movement Control Order starting 18 March 2020, which restricted movement nationwide and prohibited the entry of foreigners (Baniya et al 2020a). Malaysia banned the entry of foreign workers in June 2020 in order to provide more employment opportunities for its citizens affected by the pandemic. After a 16-month hiatus, the Government of Malaysia announced phase-wise lifting of the entry ban on migrant workers in November 2021, starting with opening of the plantation sector (Lee and David 2022).

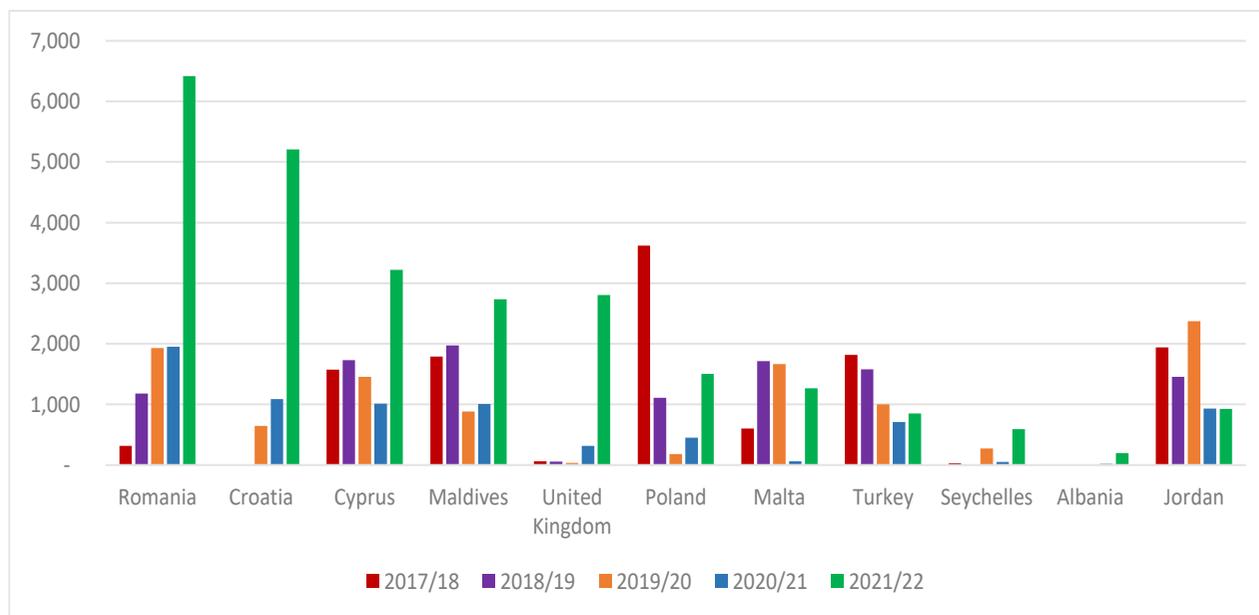
Several countries have more recently emerged as prominent destinations for Nepali migrant workers. Among these are countries from Central and Eastern Europe—Albania, Croatia, Poland, and Romania—and Cyprus and Turkey in West Asia (Figure 3.5). The number of labour approvals issued for the Maldives increased from 2450 (including 1789 new approvals) in 2017/18 to 6591 (2735 new approvals) in 2021/22. Jordan and Malta have also seen a significant increase in the number of Nepali migrant workers going there. The rising popularity of these destinations could be due to the policy introduced by DoFE in 2022 to provide individual labour approvals to workers seeking to migrate to countries like Albania, Croatia, Poland and Romania, among others, so long as they provided a self-declaration that both the country and employment is safe (DoFE 2022e).

The number of labour approvals for Nepalis going to the United Kingdom (UK) increased by 95 per cent in 2021/22 compared to 2017/18. The increase is due to the UK's exit from the European Union, causing labour shortages and resulting in the introduction of various temporary visas by the UK government for migrant workers for seasonal work.⁵³ UK government data shows that 559 Nepali citizens were given temporary visas (including extension of stay) in 2021 and 415 in the first quarter of 2022 (see Section 3.10 for data on visa issuance to Nepalis for skilled and temporary work) (Government of the UK n.d.). Information collected in 2022 by *The Guardian* newspaper and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, UK, reveals that between January and March of 2022, Nepal ranked the fourth highest among the list of source countries for seasonal workers, while the Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford, placed Nepal ninth on the list the previous year (Macgregor 2022). The increase in the number of labour approvals for the UK could be due to the introduction of seasonal work visas, although, most likely, not everyone receiving labour approvals for the UK is part of the seasonal work scheme.

52 The OSC is operated by Malaysia VLN Nepal Pvt Ltd, ISC.

53 Refer to Chapter 2 for more details.

Figure 3.5: New Labour Approvals Issued (by emerging countries of destination)



Source: Data for 2017/18 and 2018/19 from MoLESS, Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020: 124-31; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

In newer destinations, there is variation in the pattern between men and women migrant workers. Data for the reference period (2019/20–2021/22) show that although Nepali women migrant workers go mostly to the GCC countries, countries like Cyprus, Jordan, Turkey, Romania, Croatia and Malta are more prominent destinations for women compared to men (Table 3.3). Cyprus and Jordan in particular are countries where women are dominant. For example, 7.2, 12.7 and 8.6 per cent of women migrant workers in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22, respectively, went to Cyprus compared to less than 1 per cent in case of men migrant workers.

The data on renewals by country of destination shows the majority of renewals were for migrant workers to the GCC countries and Malaysia (Table 3.5). This is not surprising as the renewals correspond to labour approvals issued in preceding years. As labour approvals were issued mostly for the GCC countries and Malaysia over the previous decade, the renewal data also correlates with that trend. Recent years have seen the emergence of countries like Cyprus, Poland and Malta rising in the number of labour approval renewals for those countries.

The renewal trend for women migrant workers shows the prominence of the UAE, with the country accounting for about half of labour approval renewals of women migrant workers from 2017/18 to 2021/22 (Table 3.4). The data also highlights the importance of countries like Cyprus as a country of destination for women migrant workers.

Table 3.3: Proportion of Women Migrant Workers Receiving New Labour Approvals
(by top 10 destinations)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22
UAE	40.4	UAE	32.8	UAE	39.1
Qatar	13.1	Qatar	14.7	Qatar	13.2
Jordan	12.7	Jordan	12.8	Kuwait	11.3
Cyprus	7.2	Cyprus	12.7	Cyprus	8.6
Kuwait	6.6	Maldives	6.0	Malaysia	3.8
Malta	3.0	Turkey	5.8	Croatia	3.3
Turkey	2.9	Romania	2.9	Maldives	2.7
Bahrain	2.3	Bahrain	2.4	Romania	2.5
Malaysia	2.2	Oman	2.2	Jordan	2.3
Oman	1.6	Croatia	1.9	Bahrain	1.9
Others	8.0	Others	5.8	Others	11.3
Total %	100		100		100
Total number	18,202		7,178		33,062

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Table 3.4: Women Migrant Workers Renewing Labour Approvals
(by country of destination)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
UAE	5,562	6,140	5,081	2,724	8,211
Qatar	1,029	1,185	1,180	389	2,790
Kuwait	908	689	1,040	168	1,633
Malaysia	996	1,078	723	12	206
Cyprus	468	576	497	218	826
Saudi Arabia	317	446	375	123	518
Bahrain	290	312	251	135	369
Israel	388	367	230	21	214
Maldives	145	206	160	111	263
Oman	160	144	181	112	263
Other Countries	284	402	509	265	773
Total	10,547	11,545	10,227	4,278	16,066

Source: Data for 2017/18 and 2018/19 from MoLESS, Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

Table 3.5: New Labour Approvals Issued (by province and top 10 destinations)

Province	Year					
	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
Province 1	UAE	13,789	Saudi Arabia	4,343	Saudi Arabia	22,931
	Malaysia	9,333	Qatar	4,317	Qatar	14,146
	Saudi Arabia	8,869	UAE	2,750	UAE	12,881
	Qatar	7,201	Bahrain	726	Kuwait	5,282
	Kuwait	1,979	Romania	500	Malaysia	5,191
	Bahrain	945	Cyprus	357	Romania	1,911
	Jordan	747	Oman	297	Bahrain	1,729
	Cyprus	510	Jordan	266	Cyprus	1,094
	Romania	469	Maldives	255	Croatia	978
	Oman	446	Afghanistan	210	Oman	945
	Other	1,827	Other	749	Other	3,535
	Total	46,115	Total	14,770	Total	70,623
Madhesh	Malaysia	11,883	Qatar	11,007	Saudi Arabia	37,822
	Qatar	10,306	Saudi Arabia	6,339	Qatar	36,358
	Saudi Arabia	9,193	UAE	1,927	UAE	8,756
	UAE	9,038	Bahrain	642	Malaysia	8,351
	Kuwait	2,407	Oman	290	Kuwait	5,013
	Bahrain	440	Romania	109	Bahrain	1,788
	Oman	223	Maldives	80	Oman	496
	Jordan	107	Turkey	56	Romania	277
	Romania	101	Croatia	32	Croatia	251
	Turkey	64	Cyprus	25	Maldives	178
	Other	356	Other	138	Other	776
	Total	44,118	Total	20,645	Total	100,066
Bagmati	UAE	9,772	Saudi Arabia	3,548	Saudi Arabia	16,118
	Saudi Arabia	5,869	UAE	2,413	UAE	12,501
	Malaysia	4,073	Qatar	1,637	Qatar	6,621
	Qatar	3,642	Romania	535	Kuwait	4,400
	Kuwait	1,434	Jordan	480	Malaysia	3,282
	Jordan	1,095	Bahrain	466	Romania	1,687
	Romania	672	Cyprus	391	Croatia	1,548
	Bahrain	552	Maldives	348	Cyprus	1,260
	Cyprus	546	Turkey	326	Bahrain	1,047

	Turkey	471	Croatia	282	Maldives	746
	Other	2,880	Other	986	Other	4,807
	Total	31,006	Total	11,412	Total	54,017
Gandaki	UAE	7,743	Saudi Arabia	2,730	Saudi Arabia	13,773
	Saudi Arabia	5,212	UAE	1,723	UAE	7,844
	Qatar	3,351	Qatar	1,598	Qatar	6,802
	Malaysia	2,920	Afghanistan	542	Kuwait	2,897
	Kuwait	1,057	Bahrain	444	Malaysia	1,967
	Bahrain	618	Romania	417	Croatia	1,249
	Afghanistan	473	Croatia	300	Romania	1,229
	Malta	454	Oman	290	Bahrain	1,174
	Oman	421	Japan	202	United Kingdom	963
	Romania	377	Cyprus	158	Japan	750
	Other	2,255	Other	791	Other	3,888
	Total	24,881	Total	9,195	Total	42,536
	Lumbini	UAE	8,430	Saudi Arabia	4,716	Saudi Arabia
Saudi Arabia		7,294	Qatar	2,750	Qatar	10,079
Malaysia		6,819	UAE	1,975	UAE	8,434
Qatar		4,020	Bahrain	654	Malaysia	4,510
Kuwait		1,476	Oman	366	Kuwait	3,413
Bahrain		558	Romania	244	Bahrain	1,331
Oman		426	Croatia	188	Romania	887
Malta		353	Japan	138	Croatia	849
Jordan		219	Afghanistan	128	Oman	782
Romania		208	Maldives	124	Japan	467
Other		1,431	Other	633	Other	2,834
Total		31,234	Total	11,916	Total	58,683
Karnali		Malaysia	2,534	Saudi Arabia	1,081	Saudi Arabia
	UAE	1,604	Qatar	593	Qatar	1,790
	Saudi Arabia	1,593	UAE	422	UAE	1,659
	Qatar	814	Bahrain	180	Malaysia	1,592
	Kuwait	452	Oman	69	Kuwait	978
	Bahrain	97	Romania	50	Bahrain	370
	Oman	58	Afghanistan	36	Romania	186
	Jordan	41	Maldives	29	Croatia	137
	Romania	37	Croatia	20	Oman	118

	Afghanistan	30	Jordan	13	United Kingdom	75
	Other	145	Other	62	Other	365
	Total	7,405	Total	2,555	Total	13,426
Sudurpashcim	UAE	1,681	Saudi Arabia	562	Saudi Arabia	3,471
	Malaysia	1,597	UAE	399	UAE	1,769
	Saudi Arabia	1,230	Qatar	228	Malaysia	1,198
	Qatar	502	Romania	99	Qatar	1,027
	Kuwait	166	Croatia	65	Kuwait	803
	Bahrain	94	Oman	42	Romania	241
	Romania	66	Bahrain	34	Croatia	194
	Oman	45	Maldives	29	Bahrain	153
	Maldives	30	Poland	19	Oman	118
	Malta	24	Japan	15	Japan	93
	Other	199	Other	87	Other	449
	Total	5,634	Total	1,579	Total	9,516
	Grand Total		190,393		72,072	

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

3.3 Provinces and Districts of Origin

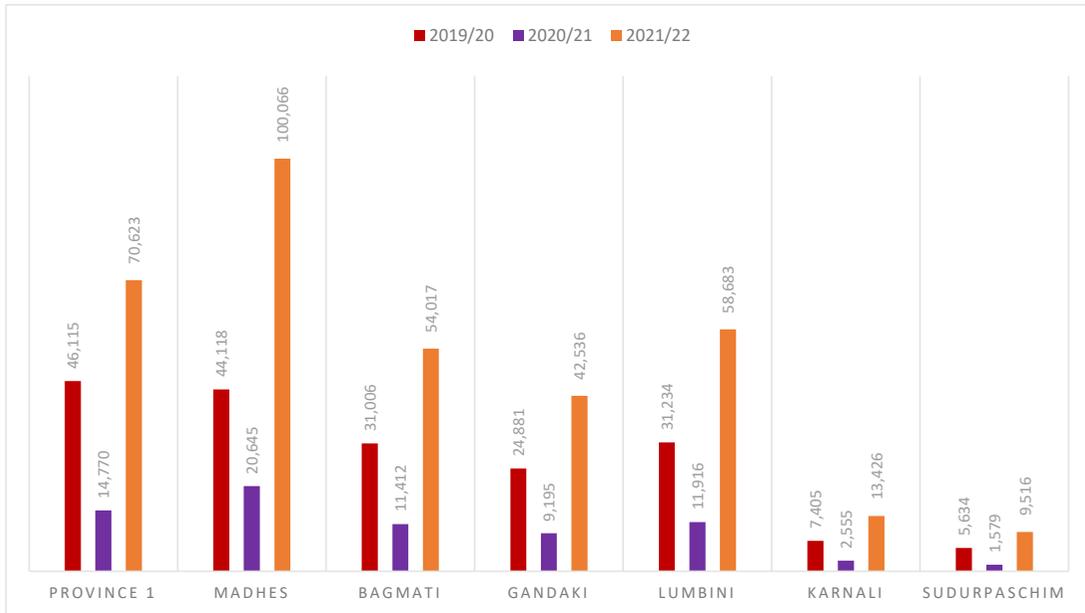
As in the previous years (MoLESS 2020a), the data on labour approvals disaggregated by province and district for the years 2019/20–2021/22 shows that the highest number of migrant workers hailed from Province 1 and Madhesh, with each accounting for more than one-fifth of the total (Figure 3.6). The number of labour approvals issued for migrant workers from Karnali and Sudurpaschim is quite low. This corresponds with national surveys which have shown that the majority of migrant workers from Karnali and Sudurpaschim migrate to India, a migration corridor not included in the data on labour approvals.⁵⁴

Women labour migration paints a different picture though with the highest number of women migrant workers coming from Bagmati followed by Province 1 (Figure 3.7). The share of women from Madhesh is only around 4 per cent. This is likely the result of strict gendered norms among Madhesh, less access to socio-economic capital, and feminisation of agricultural work with so many men having migrated (Sijapati et al 2017; Bennett et al 2013; Doss et al 2022; Gupta et al 2022).

In 2019/20, the UAE was the top destination for migrant workers from Province 1, Bagmati, Gandaki, Lumbini and Sudurpaschim, while for those from Madhesh and Karnali it was Malaysia (Table 3.5).

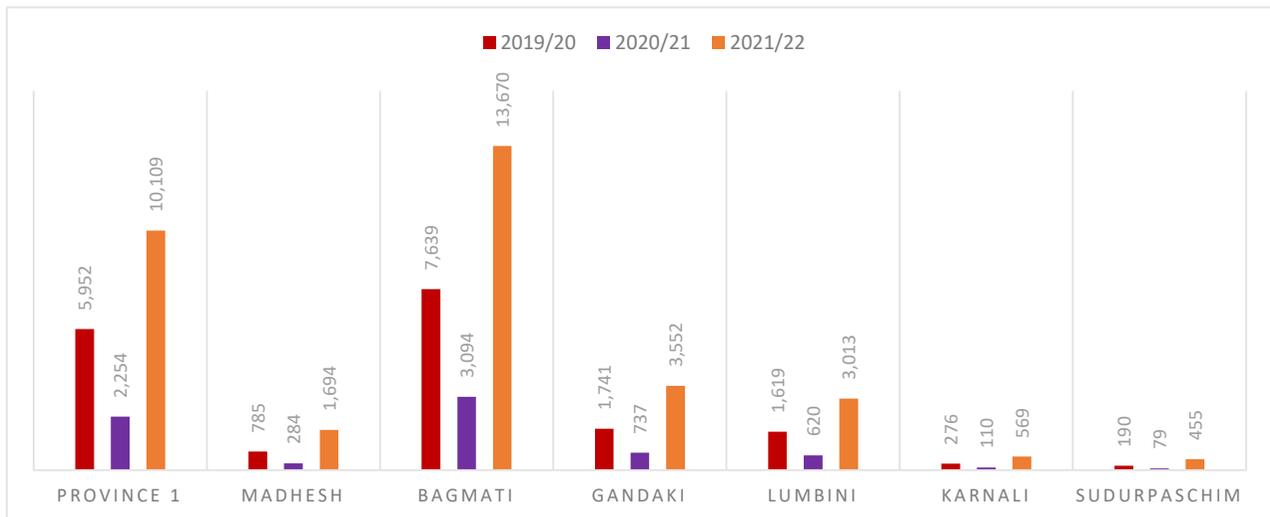
⁵⁴ Analysis based on the raw data set of the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2017/18 shows that more 65.7 per cent of 'absentees' from Karnali province are in India while the proportion is 88.6 per cent for Sudurpaschim province. Migration from Nepal to India is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Figure 3.6: New Labour Approvals Issued (by province)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Figure 3.7: New Labour Approvals Issued to Women (by province)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

In 2020/21, Saudi Arabia became the top destination for migrant workers from all the provinces except Madhesh, from where more of them went to Qatar. The year after, 2021/22, Saudi Arabia was the topmost destination for migrant workers from all the provinces.

The proportion of migrant workers going to the GCC countries and Malaysia is the highest for

Box 3.1: Calculating Number of Labour Approvals for Nawalparasi and Rukum

Following the promulgation of the 2015 Constitution and the institution of a federal system of governance in the country, Nepal was divided into seven provinces and 77 districts. Earlier, Nepal had 75 districts. Two new districts had been formed by splitting Nawalparasi into Nawalparasi Bardaghat Susta East and Nawalparasi Bardaghat Susta West, and Rukum into Rukum East and Rukum West. Though the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS) has been updated to reflect these changes, the system still records the erstwhile districts i.e. Nawalparasi and Rukum. This is because, the data on districts are based on the passport issued and these changes are not reflected in older passports issued prior to federalisation. Hence, the data on labour approvals for these four districts are extrapolations based on the proportion of absentee and total population for the respective districts as per the 2021 census. The same figures were used to calculate the province-level data for Lumbini, Gandaki and Karnali, where these districts are located.

Madhesh province, above 98 per cent for all three years. This proportion is particularly lower for Bagmati and Gandaki with these two provinces showing higher diversity in terms of countries of destination. The impact of COVID-19 on the foreign employment sector can be clearly seen with a decline in the number of labour approvals to all countries of destinations for migrant workers from the seven provinces with those going to Malaysia seeing the steepest drop.

Dhanusha, Jhapa, Siraha, Morang and Mahottari are the top five districts from where Nepali migrant workers originated in 2019/20 and 2020/21 with Sarlahi replacing Morang in 2021/22 (Table 3.6). These five districts accounted for more than a fifth of the migrant workers in the three years. This heavy concentration of migrant workers from the region, as was emphasised during consultations,⁵⁵ points to the need for decentralised and effective services related to labour migration. (Detailed data on labour approvals for the 77 districts disaggregated by sex and mode of migration is presented in Annex 12.)

The stark contrast between men and women at the province level extends to the districts as well. In all the three years, the highest proportion of women migrant workers was from Jhapa with Sindhupalchowk, Morang, Makawanpur and Kavrepalanchowk ranking among the top five (Table 3.7). Thus, more men migrant workers originate from the Tarai district compared to the hills, it is the reverse in the case of women migrant workers.

3.4 Mode of Obtaining Labour Approval

As described in Chapter 2, migrant workers can obtain labour approvals from DoFE, either by applying for one individually or through a private recruitment agency (PRA). Although the vast majority of migrant workers get their labour approvals through PRAs, there has always been a number of migrant workers getting it on an individual basis.⁵⁶

55 As mentioned by stakeholders who participated in the province level consultation programmes in Biratnagar and Janakpur on 29 August 2022 and 5 September 2022 respectively.

56 This figure represents new individual approvals and excludes regularisation. Regularisation has been dealt below. This figure does not

Table 3.6: New Labour Approvals Issued (%) (by top 10 districts)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22
Dhanusha	5.4	Dhanusha	7.5	Dhanusha	6.6
Jhapa	5.0	Siraha	6.4	Siraha	5.1
Siraha	4.5	Mahottari	5.0	Mahottari	4.8
Morang	4.3	Jhapa	4.2	Jhapa	3.9
Mahottari	3.7	Morang	3.6	Sarlahi	3.8
Sunsari	3.1	Sarlahi	3.3	Morang	3.6
Sarlahi	3.0	Sunsari	3.2	Saptari	3.2
Saptari	2.9	Dang	2.7	Sunsari	3.1
Rupandehi	2.4	Saptari	2.5	Rupandehi	2.7
Dang	2.4	Rupandehi	2.1	Rautahat	2.5
Other	63.3	Other	59.5	Other	60.8
Total %	100		100		100
Total number	190,393		72,072		348,867

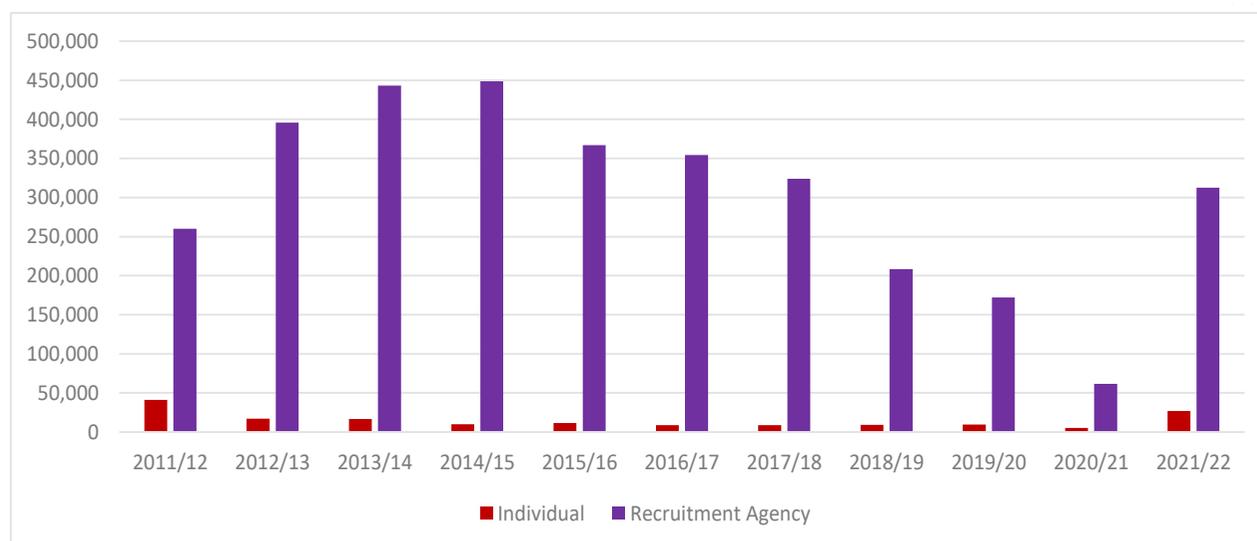
Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Table 3.7: New Labour Approvals Issued to Women (%) (by top 10 districts)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22
Jhapa	9.1	Jhapa	9.1	Jhapa	8.1
Sindhupalchowk	7.8	Sindhupalchowk	8.5	Sindhupalchok	6.1
Morang	5.7	Morang	5.6	Makwanpur	5.6
Makawanpur	5.2	Makawanpur	4.8	Morang	5.3
Kavrepalanchowk	4.6	Kavrepalanchowk	4.5	Kavrepalanchok	5.0
Kathmandu	4.4	Nuwakot	4.0	Nuwakot	4.3
Nuwakot	4.1	Kathmandu	3.9	Kathmandu	3.8
Sunsari	3.6	Chitwan	3.4	Sunsari	3.2
Chitwan	3.1	Sunsari	3.1	Chitawan	3.1
Ilam	3.0	Ilam	2.8	Dhading	3.1
Others	49.4	Others	50.3	Others	52.4
Total %	100		100		100
Total number	18,202		7,178		33,062

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Figure 3.8: Mode of Obtaining Labour Approvals



Source: Data for 2011/12 to 2018/19 from MoLESS, *Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020*; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

The most recent figure of 26,740 individual approvals issued in 2021/22 (i.e., 7.9 per cent of the total) is the highest since 2013/14. While there could be other extraneous reasons, this sharp increase is most likely due to the fact that in May 2022 the government merged the individual labour approval category with the ‘regularisation’ category (see discussion on regularisation below) (FEB 2022c).

3.4.1 Labour Migration through Recruitment Agencies

PRA, generally known as ‘manpower companies’ in Nepal, connect job-seekers with employers abroad and support them in the overall process of migration such as documentation, obtaining visas, and acquiring labour approvals, among other services (ILO 2021b; Kern and Müller-Böker 2015). The foreign labour market is extremely competitive and PRAs often reach out to recruitment agencies in countries of destination or the employers/companies to procure the demand for labour instead of it being the other way around (Kharel et al 2022a). PRAs are able to help aspiring migrant workers expedite the complicated and time-consuming labour migration process (Kern and Müller-Böker 2015).

There are currently 860 PRAs active in Nepal (DoFE n.d.-a), and in 2021/22, 92.1 per cent of new labour approvals were issued through these companies. There are only two PRAs registered to send more than 5000 workers abroad annually. Three others can send over 3000 upto 5000 workers while the rest are all registered to send only up to 3000 (DoFE 2020b). The number of PRAs has gone down in recent years. This may have resulted from the provision the government introduced in 2019 hiking the cash deposit and bank guarantee for acquiring a licence to operate, requiring PRAs to send at least 100 workers abroad every year for two consecutive years while also at the same time encouraging merger of agencies (see Section 2.2.1 for details about this provision) (FEA 2007, s. 13).⁵⁷ PRAs

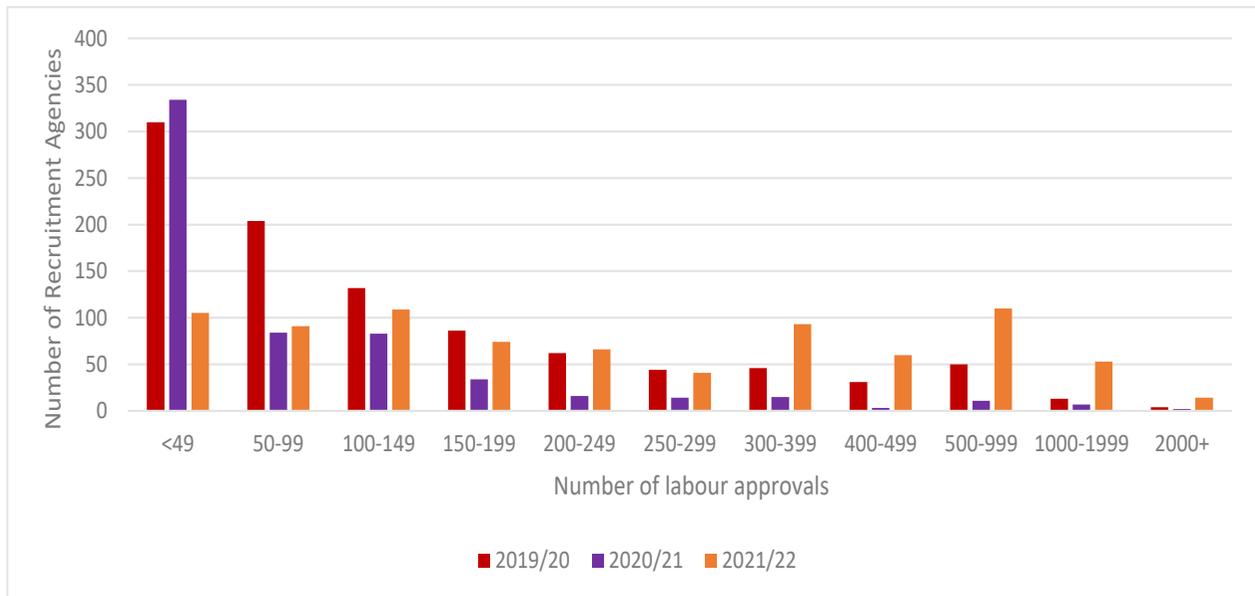
include workers going to South Korea under the EPS system.

⁵⁷ Provision added in 2019.

unable to meet the criterion on minimum workers for two consecutive years forfeit their licence.⁵⁸ The objective behind the new provision was to reduce the number of PRAs through mergers so that they could be more effectively regulated, to make the recruitment practices fair, and to make them accountable for the protection of migrants and their rights in countries of destination.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a clear impact on the ability of the PRAs to recruit workers for foreign employment (ILO 2021b). The number of PRAs that could facilitate migration of more than 2000 migrant workers in 2020/21 was just two compared to 14 in 2021/22 (Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.9: Number of Recruitment Agencies (by number of migrant workers facilitated)



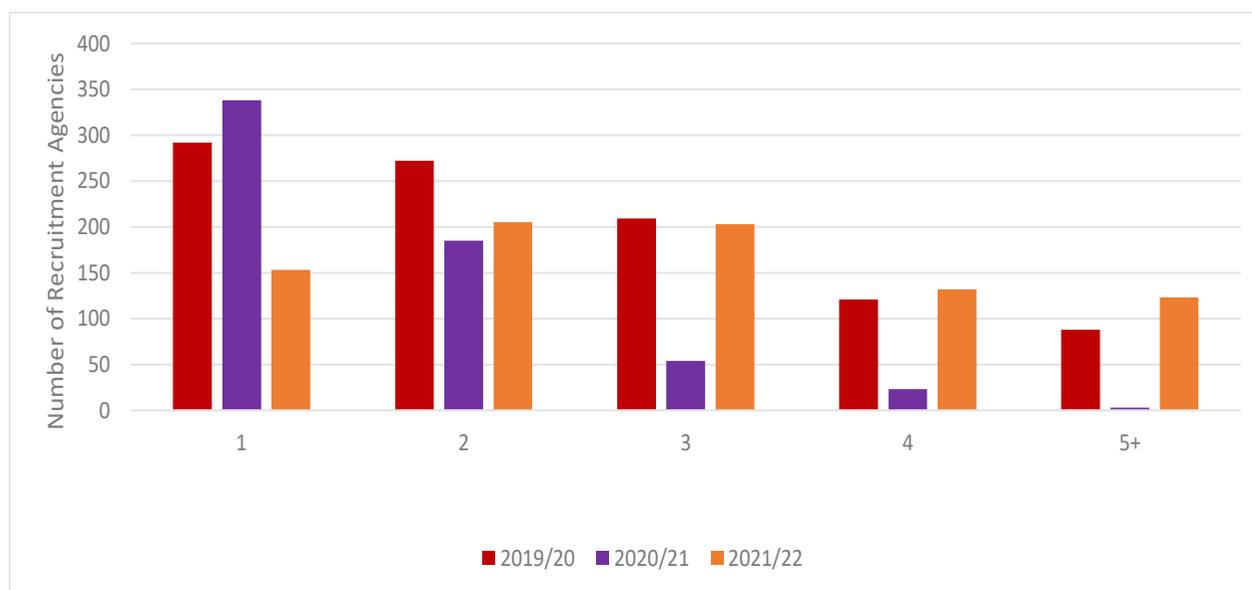
Source: FEIMS, 2022.

The number of countries for which PRAs recruited workers also saw a sharp decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While in 2018/19, there were 94 PRAs that recruited workers for five or more destinations (MoLESS 2020a), in 2020/21 that number was just three (Figure 3.10). The industry, however, recovered in 2021/22, with the number of PRAs facilitating migration to five or more destinations increasing to 123.

Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar are the three countries that have consistently figured among the top five destinations for migration through PRAs. Table 3.8 presents the number of labour approvals for different countries issued in the three reference years.

⁵⁸ Do note the government suspended this provision temporarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 3.10: Number of Recruitment Agencies
(by number of countries for which labour approvals were granted)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Table 3.8: Labour Approvals Issued Through Recruitment Agencies (by country of destination)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22
UAE	46,518	Saudi Arabia	23,298	Saudi Arabia	1,25,237
Saudi Arabia	39,217	Qatar	21,279	Qatar	72,417
Malaysia	38,972	UAE	8,566	UAE	44,650
Qatar	27,517	Bahrain	2,995	Malaysia	25,842
Kuwait	8,397	Romania	1,428	Kuwait	22,047
Bahrain	3,047	Oman	1,317	Bahrain	7,088
Jordan	2,372	Cyprus	996	Romania	5,166
Oman	1,616	Jordan	919	Cyprus	3,211
Romania	1,442	Turkey	331	Oman	2,717
Cyprus	1,442	Afghanistan	149	Croatia	1,437
Turkey	502	Japan	49	Jordan	913
Macau SAR, China	232	Mauritius	46	Japan	523
Japan	189	United Kingdom	30	Israel	297
Malta	158	Poland	16	Mauritius	248
Others	589	Others	2	Other	622
Total number	172,210		61,421		312,415

Note: This figure does not include labour approval issued to those who sought on individual basis and under the regularization category.

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Table 3.9: Number of PRAs Facilitating Migration of Workers Abroad (by country of destination)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Qatar	557	283	536
UAE	427	75	369
Saudi Arabia	475	382	535
Malaysia	447	0	301
Bahrain	142	92	162
Kuwait	154	0	203
Oman	79	55	117
Poland	5	2	0
Cyprus	39	30	32
Japan	20	8	27
Turkey	18	11	5
Romania	19	23	53
Jordan	15	12	15
Malta	9	0	1
Portugal	3	1	0
Macau SAR, China	5	0	0
Maldives	3	0	1
Afghanistan	3	2	0
Mauritius	2	1	3
Russia	0	0	1
Panama	1	0	0
Brunei Darussalam	2	0	2
Hong Kong Sar, China	1	0	0
Israel	0	0	1
United Kingdom	0	1	1
Croatia	0	0	16
Albania	0	0	3
Republic of Seychelles	0	0	1

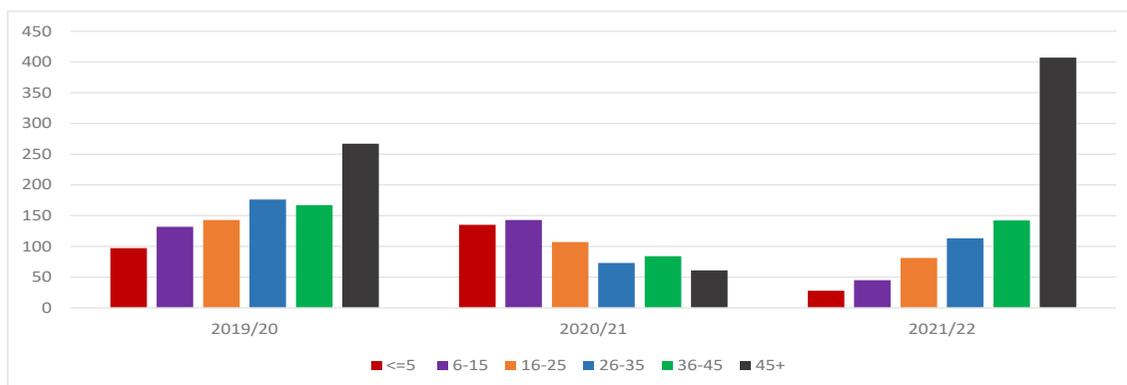
Source: FEIMS, 2022.

The number of PRAs sending workers to particular destinations also gives an indication of the effects of COVID-19. For example, in 2018/19, there were 747 PRAs that had sent workers to Qatar (MoLESS 2020a). This number went down for the next two years to reach 283 in 2020/21 before rising to 536 in 2021/22. This was the case for all the six GCC countries and Malaysia with the figures for Malaysia and Kuwait falling to zero in 2020/21. The decline in the case of emerging destinations

does not appear to be too stark. That could be due to small numbers to begin with. The only country to see an increase in this regard, Romania, is also an emerging destination which saw the number of PRAs facilitating migration increase from 14 in 2018/19 (ibid) to 53 in 2021/22.

PRAs have been providing services to people from most of the districts despite the fact that only 32 of 860 recruitment agencies have branches outside Kathmandu Valley (Figure 3.11) (DoFE 2021b).

Figure 3.11: Number of Recruitment Agencies (by district covered)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

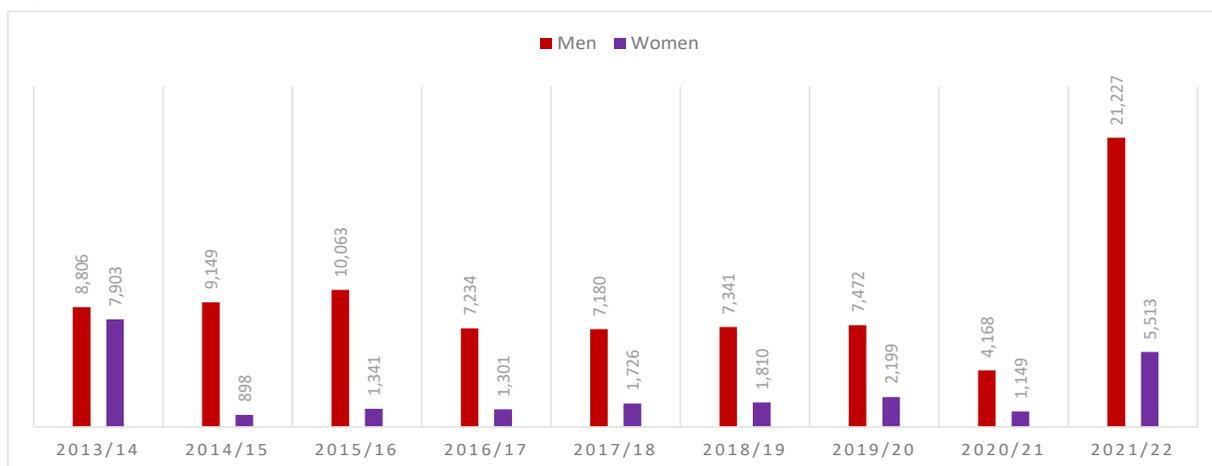
3.4.2 Individual Labour Approvals

The number of migrant workers opting for individual labour approvals began decreasing in 2012/13, following a government directive in 2012 regulating the process of obtaining individual labour approvals as a means of ensuring protection of migrant workers going abroad (MoLESS 2012). The new regulation barred individual labour approvals for those seeking employment as domestic workers and instead made it compulsory to use PRAs for such work (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2018). Hence, while 40,986 migrant workers went abroad on an individual basis in 2011/12, only 17,152 did so in 2012/13 (MoLE 2018). Since then, numbers have remained consistent for men migrant workers while those for women migrant workers have seen a lot of fluctuation year-on-year. From 7,903 women migrant workers obtaining individual labour approvals in 2013/14, the number declined to 898 the following year (Figure 3.12).

This huge decline could also have resulted from the government instituting a ‘temporary’ total ban on migration for domestic work in September 2014, irrespective of destination (McCarthy 2021). The ban was lifted with the introduction of the Directive on the Management of Sending Domestic Workers for Foreign Employment, 2015, which had a number of requirements for sending migrants for domestic work abroad.

From 2013/14 onwards, the number of women getting approvals on an individual basis remained static in the range of 1000–2000, rising to 5513 only in 2021/22. As mentioned above, a policy change merging individual and regularisation categories is likely to have contributed to the increase in the number of individual labour approvals issued in 2021/22.

Figure 3.12: New Individual Labour Approvals Issued (by sex)



Source: Data for 2013/14 to 2018/19 from MoLESS, *Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020*; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

Table 3.10: New Individual Labour Approvals Issued (by country of destination)

2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
Poland	1,662	Maldives	1,817	Malta	1,503	Croatia	1,073	Croatia	3,723
Maldives	1,643	Malta	1,150	Qatar	1,106	Maldives	971	UAE	3,081
Qatar	1,038	Qatar	1,149	UAE	1,028	Romania	522	Qatar	3,053
UAE	740	UAE	888	Maldives	828	Japan	444	United Kingdom	2,666
Malta	466	Kuwait	566	Croatia	639	Poland	424	Maldives	2,657
Czech Republic	379	Japan	399	Japan	597	Turkey	377	Japan	1,860
Japan	350	Czech Republic	375	Portugal	519	United Kingdom	248	Poland	1,491
Republic of Seychelles	347	Republic of Seychelles	329	Romania	486	Qatar	164	Romania	1,245
Germany	290	Oman	322	Turkey	482	UAE	154	Malta	1,229
Kuwait	277	Macau Sar, China	269	Kuwait	462	Oman	144	Turkey	758
Others	1,714	Others	1,887	Others	2,021	Others	796	Others	4,977
Total	8,906		9,151		9,671		5,317		26,740

Source: Data for 2017/18 and 2018/19 from MoLESS, *Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020*: 124-31; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

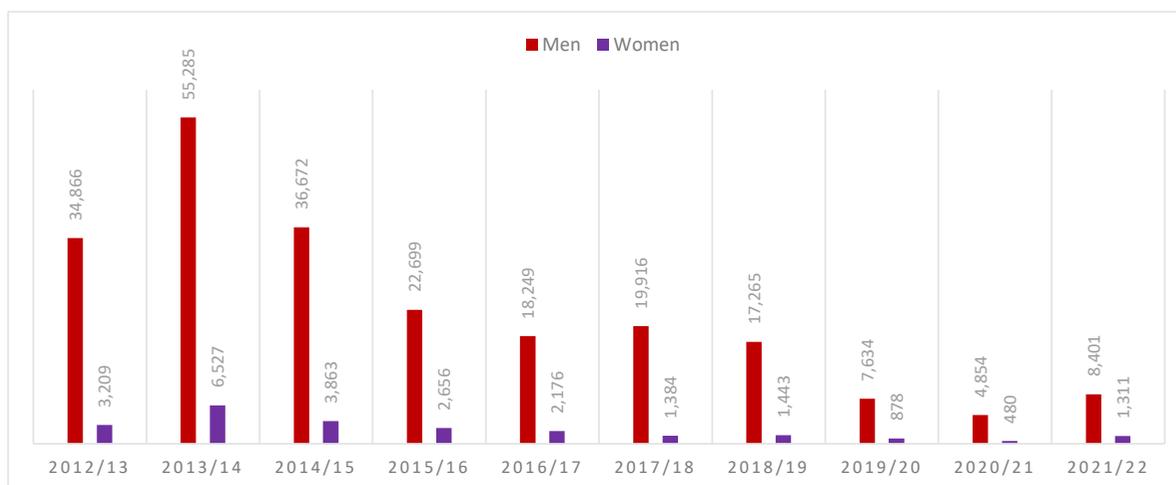
Migrant workers obtaining labour approvals on an individual basis show them headed to a more diverse range of countries compared to those migrating via PRAs (Table 3.10). In the year 2018/19, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to the GCC countries of Qatar, the UAE, Oman and Kuwait, prominent destinations for migrant workers with individual labour approvals included the Maldives, Seychelles, Malta, Japan and the Czech Republic while Croatia, Portugal, Romania and Turkey also featured prominently. In 2020/21 and 2021/22, countries from Eastern and Central Europe, Turkey as well as the UK were among the top destinations.

Before the merger of individual and regularisation categories, 18,232 individual labour approvals and 9712 regularisation labour approvals had been issued till 24 May 2022 in 2021/22. Thereafter, in just less than two months till the end of the fiscal year 2021/22,⁵⁹ 8363 labour approvals were issued in this category.

3.4.3 Regularisation

Labour approvals provided to migrants who travelled to countries of destination as tourists or students but wished to return to the same country as migrant workers after getting employment used to be recorded under the regularisation category. The number of such labour approvals issued declined in 2019/20 and 2020/21 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 3.13). In May 2022, the government decided to merge the individual and the regularisation categories. Thus, starting from 24 May 2022, labour approvals previously categorised under regularisation are now counted in the data for individual labour approvals.

Figure 3.13: Regularised Labour Approvals (by sex)



Source: Data for 2012/13 to 2018/19 from MoLESS, *Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020*; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

59 The Nepali fiscal year ends in mid-July.

Table 3.11 illustrates the pattern of regularisation vis-à-vis countries of destination. The highest numbers are for the GCC countries with the UAE and Qatar at the top in all three reference years. Another important country under this category includes Afghanistan. Since the Government of Nepal has conditional restriction for labour migration to Afghanistan via recruitment agencies, most workers go there through irregular channels. However, labour approvals are being issued to those who return with a demand letter after working in Afghanistan (Coburn 2016).

Table 3.11: Regularised Labour Approvals (by country of destination)

2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
Country of destination	%	Country of destination	%	Country of destination	%
UAE	53.0	UAE	54.2	UAE	62.9
Qatar	14.3	Afghanistan	17.3	Qatar	13.9
Afghanistan	9.2	Qatar	12.9	USA	3.4
USA	3.0	Oman	1.8	Kuwait	2.3
Malaysia	2.1	Malaysia	1.7	Bahrain	2.0
Oman	2.0	USA	1.5	Malaysia	1.8
Japan	1.8	Japan	1.1	Oman	1.6
Bahrain	1.6	Bahrain	1.1	Afghanistan	1.3
Kuwait	1.3	Egypt	0.7	Saudi Arabia	1.1
China	1.2	United Kingdom	0.7	Japan	1.0
Other countries	10.6	Other countries	7.1	Other countries	8.7
Total %	100		100		100
Total number	8,512		5,334		9,712

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

3.5 Skills Profile

The skill of migrant workers is an important determinant for better opportunities, higher salaries and benefits, and stronger bargaining power in the international labour market. In contrast, low levels of skills are associated with lower pay and vulnerable working conditions (MoLE 2018). The relevance of skills is not limited to aspirant migrant workers but also to returnees (MoLESS and IOM 2022). Skilled migrant workers who return to their home country after exposure in countries of destination can provide impetus to the local economy through the introduction of new skills and even business models.

The International Standard Classification of Occupations defines skill as ‘the ability to carry out the tasks and duties of a given job’ (ILO n.d.-a). Education, training and qualifications, also soft skills like communication, teamwork and other-interpersonal skills are usually used to measure skill levels (Taylor et al 2012). These skills may be acquired through formal means such as the education system, vocational training or via informal channels like the labour market where a tremendous amount of on-the-job learning takes place. Nepal classifies its labour migrant workforce into ‘unskilled’, ‘semi-skilled’,

‘skilled’, ‘professional’ and ‘highly skilled’ categories on the basis of the categorisation mentioned in the demand letter. However, this classification does not align with any international system of skills classification (MoLE 2018).

Data on the skills profile of Nepali migrant workers shows that the number of unskilled migrant workers is the highest and has remained so throughout the last decade. That proportion, which was 64 per cent of all the migrant worker population in 2017/18 (MoLESS 2020a) has, however, shown a downward trend, going down just over half in 2021/22 (Table 3.12). On the other hand, the proportion of skilled workers increased from 27.8 per cent to 38.3 per cent from 2017/18 to 2021/22. This could signify an evolution of labour migration from Nepal towards skilled labour markets in countries of destination. The situation of the highly skilled and professionals did not see much of a change though.

Table 3.12: New Labour Approvals Issued (by skills profile)

Type of skill	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Professional	0.09	0.1	0.06
Highly Skilled	0.01	0.02	0.01
Skilled	32.6	36.4	38.3
Semi - skilled	9.5	7.3	7.4
Unskilled	57.8	56.2	54.2
Total %	100	100	100
Total N	190,393	72,072	348,867

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Province-wise disaggregation of skills level shows a higher proportion of unskilled workers from Madhesh (Table 3.13). Likewise, the proportion of highly skilled and professional categories is the highest for Bagmati.⁶⁰

An analysis of the skills profile of migrant workers based on the mode of obtaining labour approvals shows that a higher proportion of the professionals and the highly skilled obtained individual labour approvals (Table 3.14). In contrast, labour approvals for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled categories were mostly issued through recruitment agencies, with higher levels of skills correlating inversely to the use of PRAs. This is illustrative of the fact that more migrant workers applying for highly skilled positions are better equipped to handle the complex recruitment procedures on their own than migrant workers applying for less skilled jobs. It is also important to note that a comparatively higher proportion of labour approvals under the regularisation category were issued to unskilled and skilled workers.

⁶⁰ A comparison of the Human Development Index (HDI) of the seven provinces shows the HDI for Bagmati is highest with 0.661 and Madhesh is the lowest at 0.51. Clearly there are stark differences in the instrumentally important Human Development parameters like Education and Health that are impinging on the opportunities garnered by the population of the respective provinces for labour migration.

Table 3.13: New Labour Approvals Issued (by province and skills profile)

	Province 1	Madhesh	Bagmati	Gandaki	Lumbini	Karnali	Sudurpashchim	Total
2019/20	Professional	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
	Highly Skilled	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Skilled	33.4	24.4	38.0	39.0	32.3	30.6	38.5
	Semi-skilled	9.2	9.0	10.4	10.0	9.6	7.6	8.6
	Unskilled	57.3	66.6	51.4	50.9	57.9	61.8	52.8
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	46,115	44,118	31,006	24,904	31,192	7,424	5,634	190,393
2020/21	Professional	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1
	Highly Skilled	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Skilled	37.8	27.8	43.8	45.8	36.3	30.9	38.8
	Semi-skilled	7.3	5.4	8.7	9.2	7.4	6.9	9.4
	Unskilled	54.9	66.7	47.2	44.9	56.2	62.2	51.6
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	14,770	20,645	11,412	9,204	11,898	2,564	1,579	72,072
2021/22	Professional	0.04	0.05	0.07	0.09	0.03	0.06	0.06
	Highly Skilled	0.01	0.0	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.0	0.01
	Skilled	40.2	30.8	47.0	44.9	37.2	32	40.1
	Semi-Skilled	7.6	5.9	8.3	8.5	7.8	7.0	9.5
	Unskilled	52.1	63.2	44.6	46.5	54.9	60.9	50.3
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	70,623	100,066	54,017	42,537	58,681	13,427	9,516	348,867

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Table 3.14: Labour Approvals Issued (by mode of obtaining approvals)

Year	Skill	Individual	Regularisation	Recruitment Agency	Total	
					N	%
2019/20	Professional	30.9	16.3	52.8	178	100
	Highly skilled	45.0	45.0	10.0	20	100
	Skilled	7.2	6.8	86.0	62,152	100
	Semi-skilled	10.8	8.5	80.7	18,003	100
	Unskilled	2.9	2.5	94.6	110,040	100
	Total	5.1	4.5	90.4	190,393	100
2020/21	Professional	48.4	17.2	34.4	93	100
	Highly skilled	64.7	35.3	0.0	17	100
	Skilled	10.9	12.2	76.9	26,239	100
	Semi-skilled	18.3	16.8	64.8	5,233	100
	Unskilled	3.6	3.0	93.4	40,490	100
	Total	7.4	7.4	85.2	72,072	100
2021/22	Professional	40.3	13.8	45.9	196	100
	Highly skilled	55.6	27.8	16.7	36	100
	Skilled	13.2	4.7	82.1	133,663	100
	Semi-skilled	15.7	5.2	79.1	25,845	100
	Unskilled	2.6	1.1	96.3	189,127	100
	Total	7.7	2.8	89.6	348,867	100
Total	6.8	3.9	89.3	611,332	100	

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

A large proportion of labour approvals for major countries of destination, i.e., GCC countries, are for unskilled work and this figure remained consistent over the three reference years (Table 3.16). In the case of Malaysia, in 2019/20, more than half of the labour approvals issued were under the unskilled category but in 2020/21 (although the total number was only 107 that year) and in 2021/22, more than half were for skilled workers. Figures for labour approvals to Eastern and Central European countries, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, on the other hand, show fluctuations in the skills profile of migrant workers.

Nepal has also begun receiving demands in certain sectors from new/emerging countries of destination. For example, after the launch of Seasonal Workers Pilot Scheme by the UK government in March 2019, Nepal has received demands for seasonal migrant workers in the horticulture sector (Wallis 2022). An increasing number of Nepali aspirant migrant workers are moving into hospitality, sales and service, and driving/machine operation along with the construction sector.

Table 3.15: Labour Approvals Issued
(by mode of obtaining approvals and skills profile)

	Individual			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
	Professional	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Highly Skilled	0.05	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.001	0.001	0.01	0.02	0.02
Skilled	36.0	49.4	46.4	54.1	49.0	49.5	22.4	31.9	31.0	35.4	39.2	38.9
Semi-skilled	21.3	19.7	20.0	22.3	17.6	18.1	7.7	8.5	8.4	14.2	10.0	10.2
Unskilled	42.2	30.2	32.9	22.7	33.0	32.0	69.8	59.6	60.5	50.3	50.7	50.7
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	2,199	7,472	9,671	878	7,634	8,512	15,125	157,085	172,210	10,227	167,753	177,980
Professional	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2
Highly Skilled	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.05	0.05
Skilled	40.6	57.4	53.8	63.8	59.7	60.1	32.1	32.9	32.8	46.8	46.7	46.7
Semi-skilled	19.1	17.8	18.1	16.5	16.5	16.5	4.7	5.6	5.5	14.0	10.8	10.9
Unskilled	39.3	23.8	27.1	19.6	23.3	23.0	63.2	61.4	61.6	38.9	42.3	42.2
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	1,149	4,168	5,317	480	4,854	5,334	5,549	55,872	61,421	4,278	90,339	94,617
Professional	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.01	0.03	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.2
Highly Skilled	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.03	0.03	0.03
Skilled	68.7	65.5	66.2	76.5	62.7	64.6	37.1	34.9	35.1	55.5	56.3	56.3
Semi-skilled	14.6	15.3	15.2	12.3	14.0	13.8	5.7	6.6	6.5	11.3	10.1	10.1
Unskilled	16.3	18.8	18.3	10.8	22.9	21.2	57.3	58.4	58.3	33.0	33.4	33.4
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	5,513	21,227	26,740	1,311	8,401	9,712	26,238	286,177	312,415	16,066	265,156	281,222

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Table 3.16: Labour Approvals Issued (by skills profile and destination)

Fiscal Year	Destination	Professional	Highly Skilled	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	Total
		%	%	%	%	%	N
2019/20	GCC countries	0.08	0.004	29.2	9.6	61.2	135,424
	Malaysia	0.0	0.0	39.5	7.1	53.4	39,159
	Jordan	0.0	0.0	52.4	0.4	47.3	2,374
	South Korea	0.0	0.0	68.0	8.0	24.0	50
	Japan	0.01	0.002	65.7	25.0	7.4	939
	Cyprus	0.0	0.0	9.8	3.0	87.2	1,458
	Malta	0.0	0.0	22.1	15.7	62.1	1,668
	Romania	0.0	0.0	45.8	12.6	41.5	1,930
	Turkey	0.0	0.0	18.9	16.6	64.5	1,000
	UK	0.0	0.0	57.9	34.2	7.9	38
	Poland	0.0	0.0	36.4	36.4	26.1	184
	Maldives	0.01	0.001	51.0	26.5	21.3	886
	Croatia	0.0	0.0	40.6	37.1	22.3	645
	Albania	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	2
Seychelles	0.0	0.0	69.6	17.58	12.09	273	
2020/21	GCC countries	0.03	0.001	33.7	6.2	60.1	61,762
	Malaysia	0.0	0.001	56.1	31.8	10.3	107
	Jordan	0.0	0.0	87.1	1.0	11.9	930
	South Korea	0.0	0.0	93.8	0.0	6.3	16
	Japan	0.0	0.001	78.5	17.0	3.6	553
	Cyprus	0.0	0.0	10.1	2.9	87.1	1,012
	Malta	0.0	0.0	46.9	31.3	21.9	64
	Romania	0.0	0.0	33.1	16.3	50.6	1,954
	Turkey	0.0	0.0	21.3	15.9	62.8	710
	UK	0.0	0.0	81.6	8.3	9.8	315
	Poland	0.0	0.0	38.2	18.5	43.1	453
	Maldives	0.02	0.005	45.6	20.4	30.7	1,007
	Croatia	0.0	0.0	62.5	14.7	22.7	1,087
	Albania	0.0	0.0	38.9	0.0	61.1	18
Seychelles	0.0	0.0	58.0	28.0	14.0	50	

Fiscal Year	Destination	Professional	Highly Skilled	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	Total
		%	%	%	%	%	N
2021/22	GCC countries	0.08	0.006	35.5	6.9	57.6	290,039
	Malaysia	0.0	0.002	53.2	7.0	39.8	26,091
	Jordan	0.0	0.0	41.4	0.4	58.1	927
	South Korea	0.0	0.0	57.2	11.6	30.1	173
	Japan	0.0	0.003	76.4	15.7	7.6	2,478
	Cyprus	0.0	0.001	6.2	3.3	90.4	3,222
	Malta	0.0	0.001	76.2	7.3	16.3	1,268
	Romania	0.01	0.0	33.3	8.1	58.4	6,418
	Turkey	0.0	0.0	40.7	9.7	49.5	852
	UK	0.0	0.0	68.7	18.7	12.6	2,808
	Poland	0.0	0.0	65.1	11.9	22.7	1,502
	Maldives	0.03	0.006	57.9	28.2	12.1	2,735
	Croatia	0.0	0.0	61.7	9.1	29.2	5,206
	Albania	0.0	0.0	47.7	4.5	47.7	199
	Seychelles	0.0	0.001	68.0	19.7	12.1	594

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

3.6 Occupation

This section presents the occupational profile of migrant workers in countries of destination for 2021/22. Although FEIMS does not follow any standard classification system while recording the occupation of migrant workers,⁶¹ since the Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020 had reclassified the occupation data for 2018/19, in order to allow comparability, this successor report also follows the same system and divides the data on occupation into 12 broad categories (Table 3.17).⁶²

The majority of Nepali migrant workers, both men and women, were working in elementary occupations in 2021/22, with a higher share of men working as labourers and women in cleaning and laundry (Table 3.18 and Annex 13). The occupational profile of Nepali migrant workers has remained similar to that of 2018/19, when 54.8 per cent of the migrant workers were in elementary occupations with nearly half the women (48.3 per cent) engaged in cleaning and laundry, and 12 per cent as caregivers, au pairs or nursing aides (MoLESS 2020a). Men, on the other hand, were engaged in a higher diversity of jobs.

61 National surveys such as the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2017/18 uses the Nepal Standard Industrial Classification (NSIC). There are also international standards such as the ILO's International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISC), which classifies jobs into a clearly defined set of groups.

62 Please note that the categorisation of occupations is susceptible to inaccuracies due to imperfect correspondence with the standard categories and due to the manual data entry in the FEIMS.

Table 3.17: Classification of Occupational Categories

1	Agriculture
2	Aviation and cruise worker
3	Construction (carpenter, mason, painter, scaffolder, steel fixer, others)
4	Driver/Machine operator
5	Electrical and mechanical technician (A/C technician, automotive technician, electrician, plumber/pipe fitter, welder, others)
6	Elementary occupations (Cleaning and laundry, packaging/loading/shipping/delivery, unspecified labour, specified labour)
7	Manufacturing
8	Office/Administrative/Associate professionals
9	Others
10	Professionals and Managers
11	Service & Sales (baker/dessert maker, barista/coffee maker, beautician & fitness worker, caregiver/au pair/nursing aide, housekeeper, security guard, tailor, waiter/waitress, retail worker, others)
12	Supervisor and Foreman

Source: MoLESS, Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020.

As with skill levels, the mode of obtaining labour approvals varied based on the occupational profile of migrant workers. Workers who got their approvals under the individual and regularisation categories were engaged in a variety of occupations, including those requiring higher skills, compared to those going via PRAs. Hence, workers migrating for occupations such as office, administrative or associate professionals, and professionals and managers, were much more likely to have obtained their labour approvals individually or through the regularisation process. Concurrently, a higher share of migrant workers who got their approvals through PRAs went for elementary jobs.

Destination-wise disaggregation of the occupational profile of migrant workers shows variation in their job types. Most migrant workers in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were engaged as labourers, and in the cleaning and laundry sectors. In contrast, those going to Malaysia were primarily concentrated in the manufacturing sector. In the emerging destinations like Cyprus, Romania, Croatia and Turkey, a higher proportion of migrant workers were engaged in elementary occupations as in the GCC countries, followed by the sales and service sectors. It is also noteworthy that compared to other destinations, a higher percentage of migrant workers were employed in agriculture, fishery, poultry, animal husbandry and gardening sectors in the emerging countries of destination.

**Table 3.18: New Labour Approvals Issued (2021/22)
(by sex, mode of obtaining approval and occupation)**

	Recruitment Agency			Individual			Regularisation			Total		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener	1.5	0.8	1.5	6.2	7.4	6.5	0.6	0.0	0.5	1.8	1.8	1.8
Aviation and Cruise	0.6	0.9	0.6	3.1	1.2	2.7	2.0	1.3	1.9	0.8	1.0	0.8
Construction	6.1	0.0	5.6	5.9	0.3	4.7	3.9	0.0	3.4	6.1	0.1	5.5
Driver/Machine Operator	8.4	0.3	7.7	3.4	1.1	2.9	5.3	0.6	4.7	8.0	0.4	7.2
Electrical and Mechanical Technician	3.0	0.1	2.7	3.8	0.8	3.2	2.9	0.0	2.5	3.0	0.2	2.8
Elementary Occupations	59.1	64.0	59.5	37.6	32.7	36.6	29.8	27.2	29.4	56.9	57.3	56.9
Manufacturing	9.4	6.7	9.2	4.3	2.4	3.9	1.7	0.2	1.5	8.9	5.7	8.6
Office/Administrative/ Associate Professionals	1.6	3.9	1.8	5.9	12.3	7.2	10.6	24.7	12.5	2.1	6.1	2.5
Professionals and Managers	0.1	0.2	0.1	2.9	4.0	3.1	3.3	5.1	3.6	0.4	1.0	0.4
Service & Sales	9.8	22.7	10.8	24.5	36.6	27.0	37.6	37.6	37.6	11.5	25.6	12.8
Supervisor and Foreman	0.3	0.3	0.3	2.0	0.9	1.8	1.8	2.6	1.9	0.5	0.5	0.5
Others	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total Number	286,177	26,238	312,415	21,227	5,513	26,740	8,401	1,311	9,712	315,805	33,062	348,867

Note: See Annex 13 for disaggregated data on occupation.

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Most of the top five countries of destination for some occupational categories for 2021/22 were the same as in 2018/19 (Table 3.20). In 2021/22, most migrant workers in manufacturing and agricultural occupations were in Malaysia. Japan was the destination with the highest number of professionals in 2021/22, as it was in 2018/19, and it also replaced Cyprus for taking in more caregivers and nursing aides in 2021/22.

**Table 3.19: New Labour Approvals Issued (2021/22)
(by country of destination and occupation)**

	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Malaysia	Kuwait	Cyprus	Romania	Croatia	Turkey	UK	Others
Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener	0.7	0.8	1.6	5.1	1.3	3.6	3.7	6.6	2.7	20.7	3.8
Aviation and Cruise	0.5	0.1	2.3	0.3	0.9	0.0	0.5	0.5	2.8	0.8	2.2
Construction	10.8	3.8	4.7	0.0	2.5	0.03	4.9	18.6	0.2	0.04	6.5
Driver/Machine Operator	7.6	11.9	4.2	1.9	4.4	0.0	0.3	2.7	4.5	0.04	2.4
Electrical and Mechanical Technician	7.4	1.6	1.1	0.07	0.6	0.03	2.2	5.8	0.0	0.6	2.7
Elementary Occupations	57.0	68.9	55.9	14.9	57.8	85.7	59.7	35.2	34.4	56.3	43.0
Manufacturing	0.05	7.7	0.8	66.6	1.5	0.0	4.5	12.5	19.9	2.1	3.5
Office/Administrative/ Associate Professionals	5.1	0.1	4.8	0.4	3.0	0.03	2.7	0.7	5.9	0.6	3.7
Others	0.01	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.04	0.5	0.04	0.4
Professionals and Managers	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.03	0.02	0.2	5.0	1.6	3.0
Service & Sales	9.2	4.6	23.3	10.5	27.4	10.6	21.2	17.0	23.9	16.9	28.1
Supervisor and Foreman	1.5	0.04	0.4	0.05	0.06	0	0.03	0.06	0.1	0.4	0.7
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	76,823	125,368	53,844	26,091	22,786	3,222	6,418	5,206	852	2,808	25,449

Note: See Annex 14 and 15 for disaggregated data on country of destination and occupation.

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

3.7 Labour Migration to South Korea via EPS

Labour migration to South Korea takes place under a different institutional arrangement, a government-to-government (G2G) programme called the Employment Permit System (EPS).⁶³ Every year, South Korea announces an annual employment quota under the EPS programme for workers from 15 countries, including Nepal, to work in agriculture and manufacturing. For Nepal, the annual quota has remained in the range of 5,000–10,000. Potential migrant workers need to pass the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK), a Korean language test for non-native speakers, in order to be eligible for the EPS scheme (Rai et al 2019). Since 2020, potential migrant workers have also been required to pass a skills test.

⁶³ Migration to South Korea under the EPS is guided by the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, Government of Nepal and the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Korea on the Sending of Workers to the Republic of Korea under the Employment Permit System. The EPS data is recorded separately and not included in the general DoFE data on labour approvals issued. The information is also recorded according to calendar year unlike the DoFE data, which is based on fiscal years.

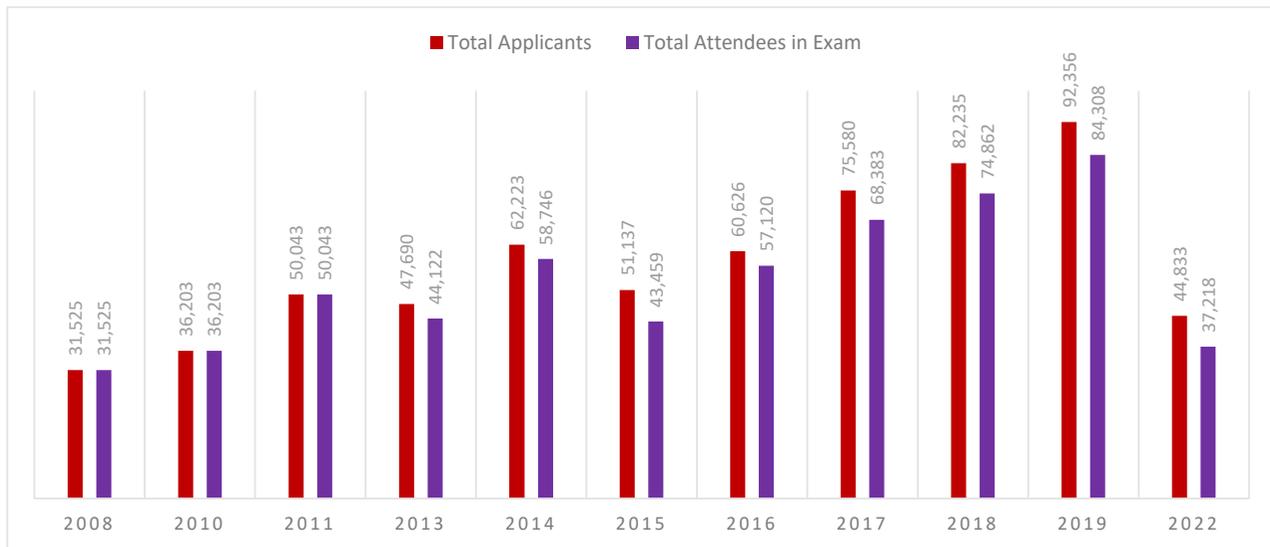
Table 3.20: New Labour Approvals Issued (2021/22)
(by top five destinations and occupation)

Agriculture		Aviation and Cruise		Carpenter		Construction - Others	
Malaysia	1,335	UAE	1,220	Qatar	2,360	Kuwait	30
Saudi Arabia	1,037	Qatar	416	Saudi Arabia	1,198	Croatia	17
UAE	882	Kuwait	212	UAE	608	UAE	12
UK	581	Saudi Arabia	152	Croatia	302	Saudi Arabia	8
Qatar	516	Malta	95	Kuwait	225	Poland	6
Total	6,335	Total	2,761	Total	5,042	Total	80
Mason		Painting		Scaffolding		Steel fixture	
Qatar	3,976	Qatar	968	Saudi Arabia	1,713	Qatar	1,017
Saudi Arabia	900	Saudi Arabia	434	Bahrain	666	Saudi Arabia	537
UAE	874	UAE	182	UAE	445	UAE	397
Croatia	365	Romania	59	Japan	126	Croatia	257
Romania	104	Kuwait	33	Kuwait	122	Kuwait	105
Total	6,614	Total	1,777	Total	3,245	Total	2,380
Driver		Machine Operator		A/C Technician		Automotive Technicians	
Saudi Arabia	12,848	Saudi Arabia	2,067	Qatar	385	Saudi Arabia	434
Qatar	5,359	Malaysia	495	UAE	42	UAE	31
UAE	2,039	Qatar	458	Saudi Arabia	19	Oman	24
Kuwait	994	UAE	209	Bahrain	3	Kuwait	15
Bahrain	137	Oman	117	Romania	3	Poland	10
Total	21,530	Total	3,756	Total	460	Total	541
Electrician		Electro/Mechanical Other		Plumbing/Pipe fitter		Welding	
Qatar	1,490	Saudi Arabia	276	Qatar	3,155	Qatar	388
Saudi Arabia	515	Qatar	247	Saudi Arabia	550	Saudi Arabia	267
UAE	233	Poland	169	UAE	92	Croatia	155
Poland	99	UAE	125	Romania	26	UAE	56
Kuwait	52	Croatia	106	Malta	21	Romania	50
Total	2,548	Total	1,076	Total	3,901	Total	1,087
Cleaning and Laundry		Packaging, Loading & Shipping		Manufacturing		Office/Administrative/ Associate Professionals	
UAE	21,680	Saudi Arabia	3,219	Malaysia	17,372	Qatar	3,900
Qatar	8,419	UAE	940	Saudi Arabia	9,641	UAE	2,587
Kuwait	7,445	Kuwait	520	Croatia	649	Kuwait	689
Saudi Arabia	3,173	Croatia	290	Jordan	575	Bahrain	286

Bahrain	1,800	Poland	284	UAE	452	Japan	193
Total	47,063	Total	6,335	Total	29,895	Total	8,688
Managers		Professionals		Baker/Dessert maker		Barista/Coffee maker	
UAE	201	Japan	227	Saudi Arabia	213	Saudi Arabia	1,105
Saudi Arabia	86	USA	135	Croatia	182	UAE	170
Papua New Guinea	59	Maldives	111	UAE	123	Kuwait	114
Qatar	49	UAE	92	Qatar	122	Maldives	66
Japan	29	Saudi Arabia	56	Romania	64	Mauritius	56
Total	574	Total	878	Total	856	Total	1,699
Beauty & Fitness		Caregiver/Au pair/ Nursing aide		Chef/Cook		Hospitality (Others)	
UAE	555	Japan	261	Saudi Arabia	1,468	UAE	421
Kuwait	468	UK	214	UAE	1,063	Saudi Arabia	297
Qatar	225	Cyprus	143	Kuwait	906	Qatar	240
Oman	140	Saudi Arabia	110	Qatar	904	Kuwait	184
Bahrain	135	UAE	108	Japan	826	Oman	87
Total	1,761	Total	1,155	Total	7,528	Total	1,336
Housekeeping		Retail		Security		Tailor	
Romania	372	UAE	1,978	UAE	5,615	Saudi Arabia	345
Croatia	314	Qatar	1,267	Malaysia	2,414	Qatar	227
UAE	252	Kuwait	294	Qatar	2,395	UAE	104
Jordan	251	Saudi Arabia	190	Kuwait	1,670	Croatia	56
Kuwait	157	Maldives	98	Bahrain	761	Kuwait	40
Total	1,777	Total	4,078	Total	14,089	Total	828
Waiter/Waitress		Foreman		Supervisor		Others	
Kuwait	2,238	Qatar	564	Qatar	628	Saudi Arabia	272
UAE	2,152	Bahrain	7	UAE	223	UAE	217
Saudi Arabia	1,869	UAE	4	Saudi Arabia	42	Kuwait	69
Qatar	1,593	Saudi Arabia	3	Oman	24	Japan	29
Oman	360	Kuwait	1	Maldives	24	Romania	12
Total	9,629	Total	584	Total	1,110	Total	687

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Figure 3.14: Applicants and Attendees for EPS-TOPIK



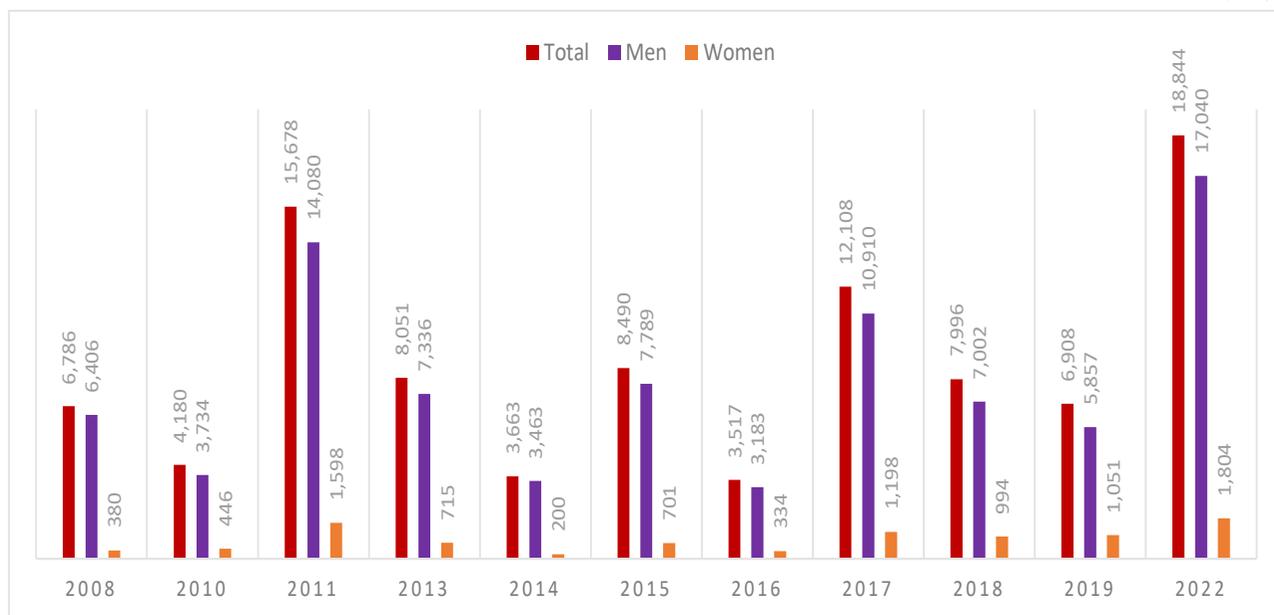
Note: Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the EPS-TOPIK test was not conducted in 2020 and 2021. Also, there was no test taken in 2009 and 2012.

Source: EPS Section, DoFE, 2022.

South Korea has emerged as a favoured labour destination as a result of the higher salary on offer there (Baniya et al 2022a). The proliferation of Korean language institutes in Kathmandu Valley as well as the increase in the number of Nepalis applying for TOPIK exams also attests to its popularity as a destination. In 2008, there were 31,525 applicants for TOPIK, a figure that had trebled to 92,356 in 2019 (Figure 3.14). Simultaneously, the number of applicants who successfully pass the TOPIK exam is significantly lower than the number of test takers (Figure 3.15). Between 2019 and 2022, of those who passed the TOPIK exam and applied for jobs in South Korea, 21,212 went to South Korea (Figure 3.16).

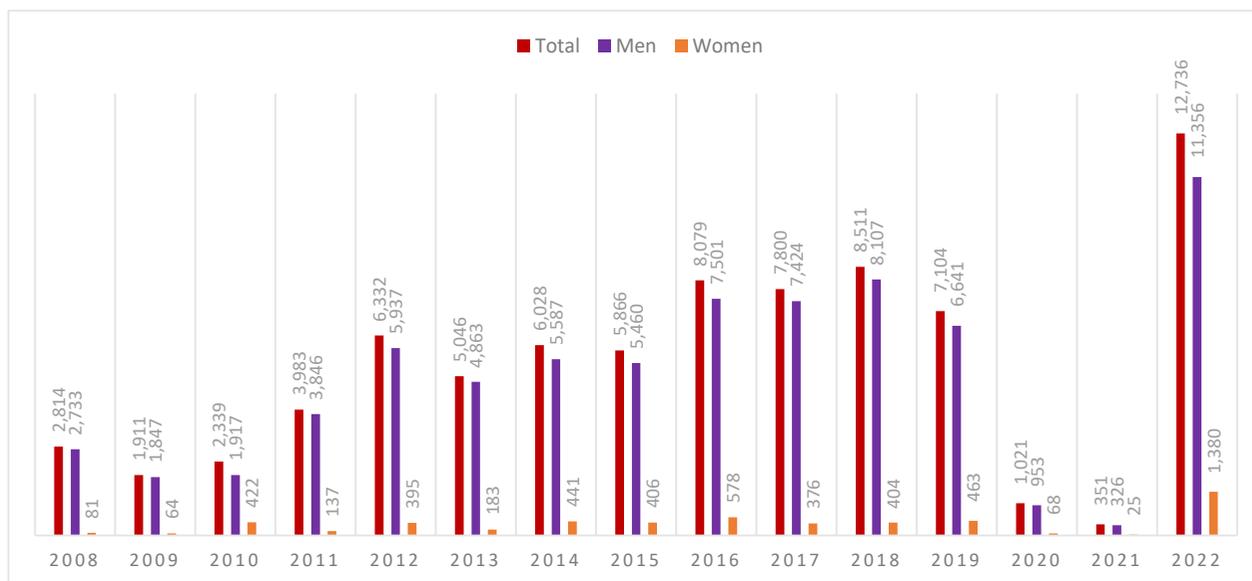
The occupation of Nepalis going under the EPS programme are broadly recorded under two sectors: agriculture and manufacturing. Hence, the data only shows Nepalis engaged in one of these two sectors and does not provide a more detailed breakdown of their engagement. Accordingly, the data shows that more Nepalis are working in the manufacturing sector in South Korea (Table 3.21).

Figure 3.15: Number of Successful Applicants in EPS-TOPIK (by sex)



Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EPS-TOPIK test was not conducted in 2020 and 2021. Also, there was no test in 2009 and 2012. Source: EPS Section, DoFE, 2022.

Figure 3.16: Migrants in South Korea under EPS (2008 to 15 November, 2022) (by sex)



Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EPS-TOPIK test was not conducted in 2020 and 2021. Also, there was no test in 2009 and 2012. Workers who went to South Korea in those years, including 2022 were recruited from among those who applied for jobs and were listed in the employment roster. The data for 2022 is up to 15 November 2022. The government of South Korean has announced that language and skill tests for 2022 will be conducted in phases between May and October 2022. Source: EPS Section, DoFE, 2022.

Table 3.21: Number of Nepali Migrant Workers in South Korea (by sector)

		Agriculture			Manufacturing		
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Regular Workers	2019	1,497	284	1,781	3,568	92	3,660
	2020	172	36	208	525	17	542
	2021	58	15	73	80	1	81
	2022	2,390	995	3,385	5,382	184	5,566
	Total	4,117	1,330	5,447	9,555	294	9,849
Committed Workers*	2019	212	40	252	1364	47	1411
	2020	9	11	20	247	4	251
	2021	65	9	74	123	0	123
	2022	1,088	129	1,217	2,496	72	2,568
	Total	1,374	189	1,563	4,230	123	4,353
Grand Total	2019	5,205	324	2,033	4,932	139	5,071
	2020	181	47	228	772	21	793
	2021	123	24	147	203	1	204
	2022	3,478	1,124	4,602	7,878	256	8,134
	Total	7,595	1,519	7,010	13,785	417	14,202

Source: EPS Section, DoFE, 2022.

* Foreign workers who work in South Korea for four years and 10 months (the maximum period allowed per stint under EPS) without changing their workplace and return to their home country are allowed to return to South Korea for employment three months after their departure from South Korea as 'committed workers'.

3.8 Returnees

The issue of returnee migrant workers and their reintegration has been receiving increased attention, particularly because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The repatriation of a large number of migrant workers during the pandemic spurred the discussion further, particularly with regard to utilising their skills in Nepal. The Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) 2017/18 was the first instance of the Government of Nepal collecting data on returnee migrants. Starting September 2020, when it was integrated with Nepali Port managed by the Department of Immigration under the Ministry of Home Affairs, FEIMS started recording returning migrants as well.

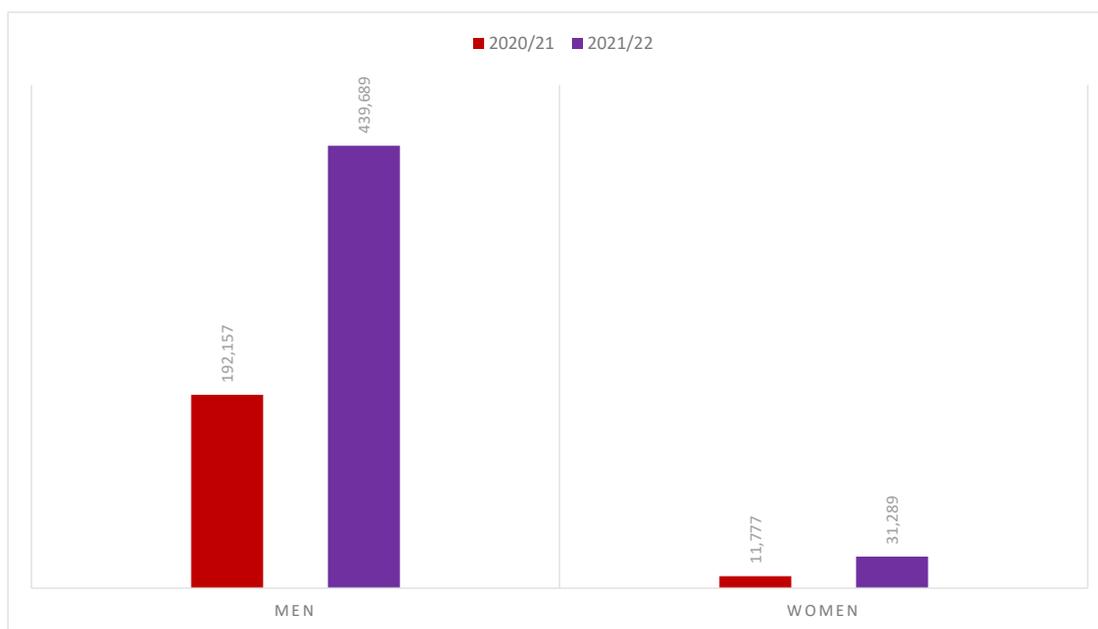
After many expatriate Nepali workers were stranded abroad due to the COVID-19 lockdowns, the COVID-19 Crisis Management Coordination Centre (CCMCC)⁶⁴ began repatriating Nepali citizens, beginning with a first batch of 26 Nepalis from Yangon in Myanmar on 5 June 2020. By January 2021, 235,907 Nepali citizens from 86 countries had returned to Nepal via rescue flights

⁶⁴ This body was initially known as the COVID-19 Crisis Management Centre, or CCMC.

according to the CCMCC (CCMC 2021).⁶⁵ This section presents this data captured in the FEIMS (starting in September 2020).⁶⁶

The number of migrant workers who returned through the Tribhuvan International Airport was 203,934 in 2020/21 and 470,978 in 2021/22 (Figure 3.17). As restrictions on mobility due to the COVID-19 pandemic were in place in 2020/21, fewer migrant workers returned that year. However, as the restrictions were gradually lifted in Nepal as well as in the countries of destination, there was a drastic jump in returnees. Also, as the figure for 2020/21 includes data only from September 2020, migrant workers who returned prior to that period are not included although that number is likely to be small given the then constraints on international travel and also because only a few weeks’ data would have been missing given that Nepal’s fiscal year begins in mid-July. As with the number of labour approvals issued, men returnees vastly outnumbered women, comprising 94.2 per cent and 93.3 per cent, respectively, in 2020/21 and 2021/22.⁶⁷

Figure 3.17: Returnee Migrant Workers (by sex)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

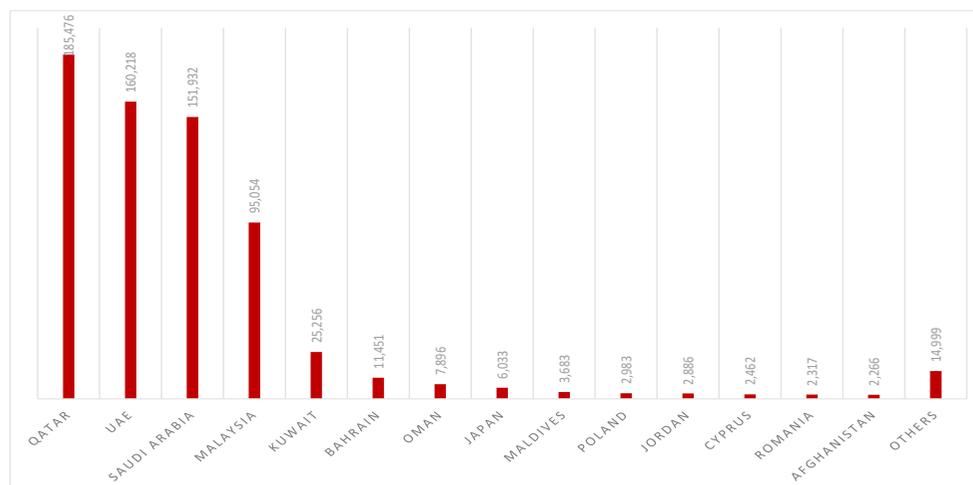
The GCC countries and Malaysia accounted for the highest number of returnees in 2020/21 and 2021/22, which is to be expected since most Nepali migrant workers go to those countries (Figure

⁶⁵ It is important to note that this number doesn't represent the total number of returnees but only indicates the number of migrant workers whose repatriation was assisted by the CCMCC.

⁶⁶ Reintegration of returnee migrant workers is dealt with in a separate section below.

⁶⁷ However, this figure needs to be considered with caution. As with the case of labour approvals, these returnee migrants are those who have migrated after receiving labour approval from DoFE since their record-keeping is based on their approvals. Hence, the figure does not incorporate those migrant workers who migrated through irregular channels.

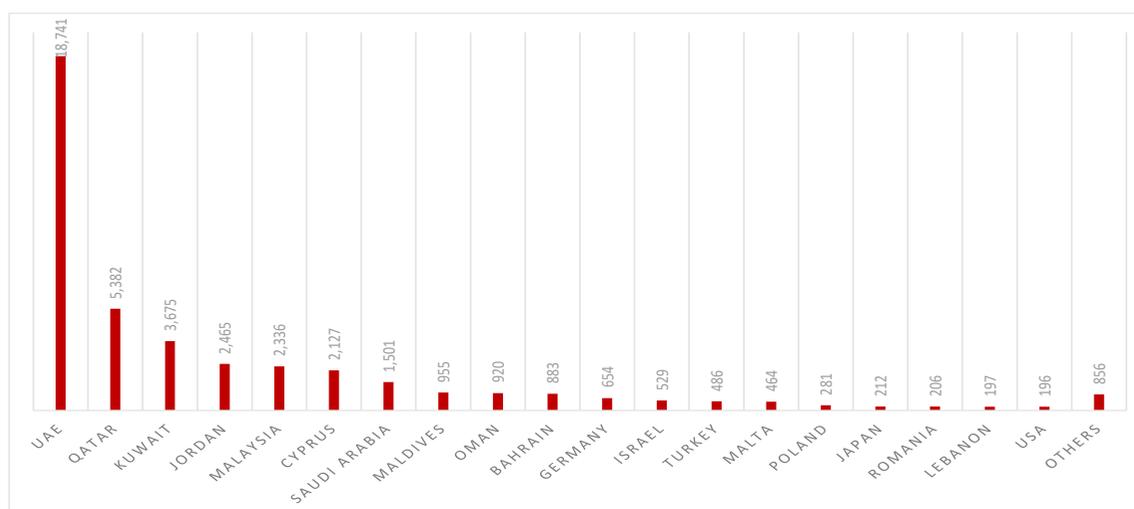
Figure 3.18: Returnee Migrant Workers (2020/21–2021/22)
(by country of destination)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Note: Please look at Annex 16 for gender disaggregated data on this.

Figure 3.19: Women Returnee Migrant Workers (2020/21–2021/22)
(by country of destination)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

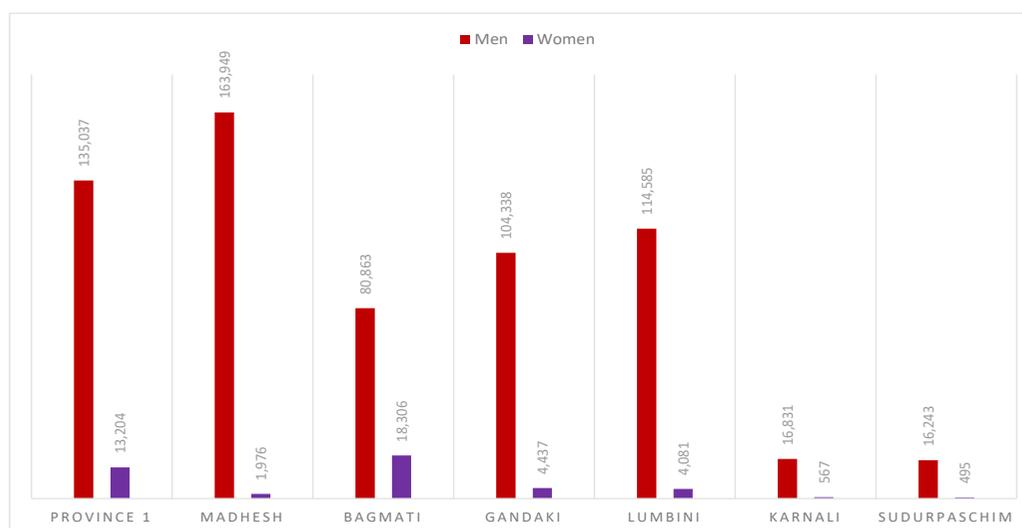
3.18).⁶⁸ Sex-disaggregated data corresponds to the destination for which labour approvals were issued. The UAE features as the primary destination from which women migrant workers returned while a significant number of women compared to men returned from countries like Jordan, Cyprus, East and Central European countries and other Asian countries.

Disaggregated by province, Madhesh had the highest number of returnee migrant workers in 2020/21

⁶⁸ The Nepali port records the destination as the last destination they are returning from (not including the transit during the return flight). In some cases, the labour approvals issued and the individual country from where he/she returns does not match.

and 2021/22, and they were almost all men (Figure 3.20). Women returnees were predominantly from Bagmati and Province 1. Again, there were clear parallels between the issuance of labour approvals and returnees in province-level data. Details of returnee migrant workers for 77 districts are presented in Annex 17.

Figure 3.20: Distribution of Returnees (2020/21–2021/22) (by province)



Source: FEIMS, 2022.

Despite the start of recording of the returning migrants, we are yet to have a clear understanding about social and economic remittances, their migration history and circumstances of return, their socio-economic characteristics, their future and expectations, and their contact details etc. It poses challenges for evidence-based policies and strategies related to their integration and utilisation of their remittances in Nepal. Nevertheless, the three tiers of governments and other stakeholders working on issues of safe migration and reintegration of migrants and their families can benefit to formulate and implement evidence-based policies and programmes as per the data presented in this section about the returnees of different provinces and districts. Likewise, data showing significant number of women returnees even from the countries where the migration for domestic work is not permitted (Table 3.19) indicates policy gaps and associated challenges concerning irregular migration and precarity of their employment and rights as well as need for regularisation and ensuring regular pathways in the future.

3.9 Stock of Migrant Workers

According to the 2011 census, there were 7.3 per cent of Nepalis living abroad (CBS 2012a), a significantly higher proportion than the 3.2 per cent in the 2001 census (CBS 2002). The preliminary data from the 2021 census suggests that proportion to be similar at 7.4 per cent, or 2.1 million (CBS 2021). Although the percentage of Nepalis living abroad has remained constant through the decade, there has been a noticeable increase in the proportion of women in this population (Figure 3.21). In

Table 3.22: Returnee Migrant Workers (2020/21–2021/22)
(by province and country of destination)

	Destination	Men	Women	Total
Province 1	Qatar	36,766	2,125	38,891
	UAE	33,475	5,211	38,686
	Saudi Arabia	31,975	464	32,439
	Malaysia	19,235	804	20,039
	Kuwait	4,661	1,354	6,015
	Bahrain	3,245	327	3,572
	Oman	1,260	316	1,576
	Jordan	71	776	847
	Maldives	565	256	821
	Cyprus	75	702	777
	Others	3,709	869	4,578
	Total	135,037	13,204	148,241
Madhesh	Qatar	64,742	274	65,016
	Saudi Arabia	40,091	87	40,178
	Malaysia	32,378	129	32,507
	UAE	18,832	901	19,733
	Kuwait	4,781	151	4,932
	Bahrain	1,126	43	1,169
	Oman	754	40	794
	Jordan	161	114	275
	Maldives	220	37	257
	Romania	104	7	111
	Others	760	193	953
	Total	163,949	1,976	165,925
Bagmati	UAE	24,301	8,381	32,682
	Saudi Arabia	18,062	579	18,641
	Qatar	15,947	1,956	17,903
	Malaysia	10,434	968	11,402
	Kuwait	3,089	1,268	4,357
	Bahrain	1,409	328	1,737
	Japan	1,203	92	1,295
	Oman	965	282	1,247
	Jordan	74	1,162	1,236
	Cyprus	109	941	1,050
	Others	5,270	2,349	7,619
	Total	80,863	18,306	99,169

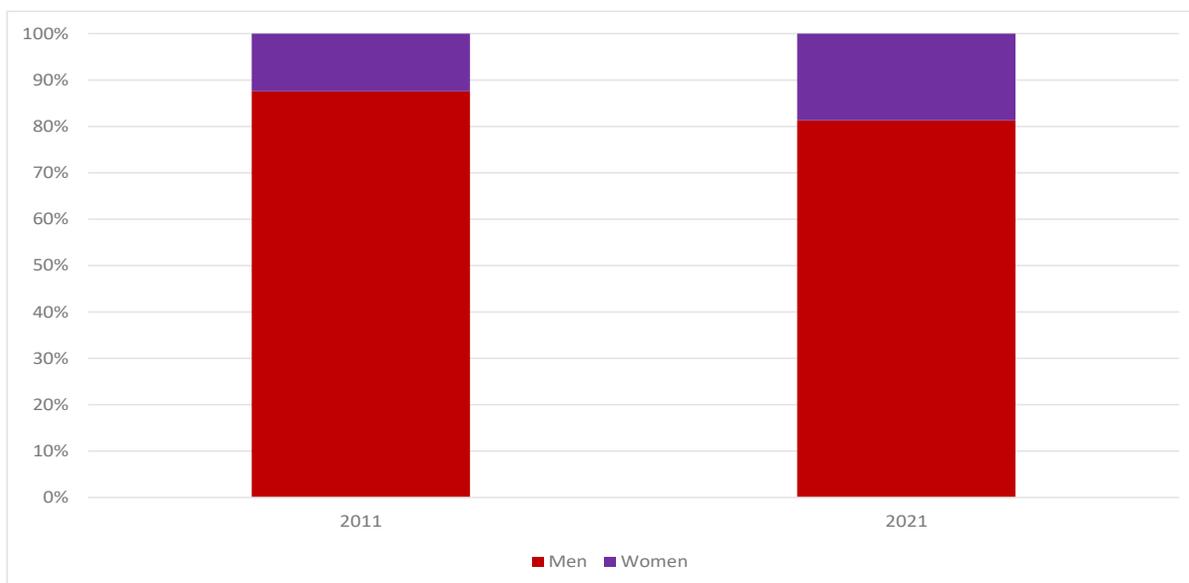
	Destination	Men	Women	Total
Gandaki	UAE	29,759	1,902	31,661
	Qatar	25,043	463	25,506
	Saudi Arabia	25,082	95	25,177
	Malaysia	6,862	153	7,015
	Kuwait	3,948	322	4,270
	Japan	2,638	68	2,706
	Bahrain	2,588	117	2,705
	Oman	1,974	127	2,101
	Afghanistan	1,098	2	1,100
	Maldives	773	141	914
	Other	4,573	1,047	5,620
	Total	104,338	4,437	108,775
	Lumbini	Qatar	31,406	449
UAE		27,218	1,865	29,083
Saudi Arabia		27,748	221	27,969
Malaysia		15,257	189	15,446
Kuwait		3,949	446	4,395
Oman		1,731	136	1,867
Bahrain		1,735	60	1,795
Japan		1,564	22	1,586
Poland		566	16	582
Maldives		447	86	533
Others		2,964	591	3,555
Total		114,585	4,081	118,666
Karnali	Malaysia	4,721	49	4,770
	Saudi Arabia	4,102	47	4,149
	Qatar	3,535	66	3,601
	UAE	3,005	219	3,224
	Kuwait	655	90	745
	Bahrain	254	1	255
	Oman	137	13	150
	Afghanistan	69		69
	Maldives	49	10	59
	Romania	53	3	56
	Others	251	69	320
	Total	16,831	567	17,398

	Destination	Men	Women	Total	
Sudurpashcim	UAE	4,887	262	5,149	
	Malaysia	3,831	44	3,875	
	Saudi Arabia	3,371	8	3,379	
	Qatar	2,655	49	2,704	
	Kuwait	498	44	542	
	Bahrain	211	7	218	
	Oman	155	6	161	
	Romania	114	4	118	
	Maldives	87	9	96	
	Japan	75	1	76	
	Others	359	61	420	
	Total		16,243	495	16,738
	Grand Total		631,846	43,066	674,912

Source: FEIMS, 2022.

absolute terms, that means an increase from 237,400 in 2011 to 406,103 in 2021. This follows the worldwide trend in which an increasing number of women have been migrating for work in what is being termed as the 'feminisation of migration' (Caritas Internationalis 2012).

Figure 3.21: Percentage Change in Absentee Population



Source: National Statistics Office, 2022.⁶⁹

Other than the census data, the recording of data on the stock of migrants and the returnee population is in the developmental phase (such as FEIMS and Nepali Port) (MoLESS 2020a). The most

⁶⁹ National Statistics Office was previously known as Central Bureau of Statistic and functioned under the National Planning Commission. The Bureau was shifted under the Office of the Prime Minister & Council of Ministers in 2022 and renamed as National Statistics Office.

comprehensive data available is of labour approvals issued by DoFE, as presented in previous sections. The databases maintained by the governments of countries of destination could prove to be a more reliable and complete measure of the stock of Nepali workers abroad.⁷⁰ One good example is Japan, where the data on Nepali residents is up to date and available online.

**Table 3.23: Number of Mid- to Long-term Nepali Residents in Japan
(by residence status)**

Status of Residence	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/ International Services	2,046	3,278	5,426	8,541	12,203	15,581
Business manager	865	1,133	1,392	1,531	1,588	1,708
Skilled labour	10,134	12,480	12,706	12,547	12,679	12,524
Specified skilled worker	0	0	0	0	18	135
Designated activities	3,223	4,171	5,005	4,078	2,839	2,932
Technical intern trainee	0	90	81	133	189	118
Student	20,278	22,967	27,101	28,987	29,417	23,116

Source: Immigration Service Agency of Japan, Outline of Japan's Immigration Control and Residency Management System: Data Section (Tokyo: Immigration Service Agency of Japan, 2020). Available at: <http://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/001335873.pdf>; Immigration Service Agency of Japan, Outline of Japan's Immigration Control and Residency Management System: Data Section (Tokyo: Immigration Service Agency of Japan, 2021). Available at: https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/policies/03_00015.html.

3.10 Labour Migration from a Regional Perspective

Migration is a cross-border and international phenomenon with implications extending beyond national boundaries (Dhungana and Baniya 2022). A myopic view of labour migration provides an incomplete and sometimes misleading perspective on the true dynamic of labour migration. At the same time, addressing problems of migrant workers and protecting their rights requires bilateral, regional and global collaboration, as illustrated by the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Improved labour migration governance and overall welfare of migrant workers require working together at all levels (MFA n.d.-a). Besides the advantage of collective action mechanisms, such cooperation can also showcase trends and developments in migration. This fact becomes all the more prominent since the GCC countries and Malaysia are among the prominent destination for South Asian migrants.⁷¹

This section portrays how labour migration and skills of migrant workers from Nepal compares with the rest of the region and also neighbouring Southeast Asia for the two years 2019 and 2020.

⁷⁰ There are challenges in obtaining migrant workers statistics from the countries of destinations. First, many countries do not keep foreign workers' statistics and in some cases that do have some data, for example, in case of Cyprus, the data are not disaggregated by country of origin or are outdated. Second, language barrier also creates difficulty in navigating their online resources. On the other hand, such data could be more accurate since it would also have captured irregular migrants as well.

⁷¹ Only Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have been taken into consideration since the other three countries in South Asia, Afghanistan, Bhutan and the Maldives either do not export labour or do not have any data on the same.

Pakistan has the largest outflow of migrants to GCC countries and Nepal the smallest (Table 3.24). The data from Labour Migration Outflow Database of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific also shows the devastating impact of COVID-19 on migrant workers. There was a stark 68.5 per cent drop in the outflow of migrant workers between 2019 and 2020.

Table 3.24: Migrant Workers in GCC Countries from South Asia (2019 and 2020)

Year	Origin Country	Country of Destination						Total
		Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	UAE	
2019	India	9,997	45,712	28,392	31,810	161,103	76,112	353,126
	Bangladesh	133	12,299	72,654	50,292	399,000	3,318	537,696
	Nepal	3,305	8,973	1,995	29,835	39,279	52,046	135,433
	Pakistan	8,189	126	28,404	19,371	332,764	211,270	600,124
	Sri Lanka	3,017	43,073	9,016	40,783	35,415	32,860	164,164
								1,790,543
2020	India	4,175	8,107	7,206	8,907	44,316	17,891	90,602
	Bangladesh	3	1,744	21,071	3,608	161,726	1,082	189,234
	Nepal	1,202	1	767	7,247	9,061	8,702	26,980
	Pakistan	7,843	419	10,348	7,422	136,736	53,676	216,444
	Sri Lanka	1,050	8,040	2,723	9,689	9,407	10,714	41,623
								564,883

Source: 'Labour Migration Outflow Database,' Situation Report: International Migration in South and South-West Asia, accessed 26 May 2022, <https://sitreport.unescap.org/labour-migration-outflow>.

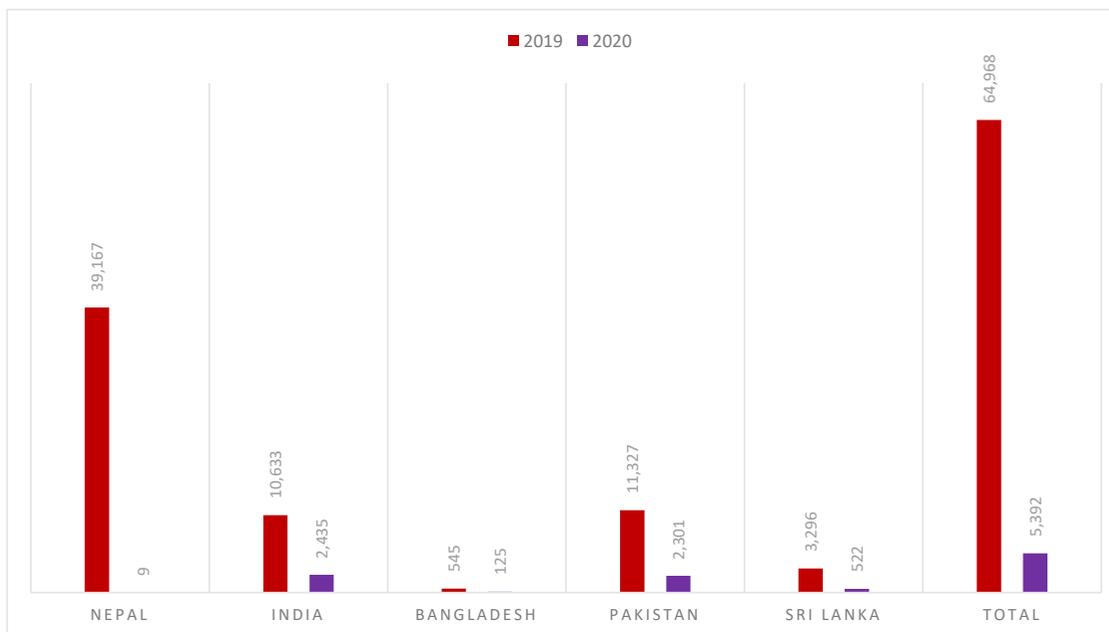
COVID-19 had a debilitating effect on the outflow of South Asian migrant workers to Malaysia. There was a steep drop in the outflow of migrant workers to Malaysia from all the countries, and particularly for Nepal—from 39,167 in 2019 to 9 in 2020 (Figure 3.22) (UN n.d.).

The Immigration Service Agency of Japan annual report on foreign residents in Japan shows that Nepal followed Vietnam and Philippines as the top three developing Asian countries from where migrants originated, making up 3.3 per cent of the total migrant stock in the country in 2019 (Immigration Services Agency of Japan n.d.).⁷² China has the highest migrant stock with 813,675. There was a considerable number of workers from other South Asian countries as well.⁷³ It should

⁷² This report has not included China, which actually has the highest migrant stock in Japan.

⁷³ Mid- to long-term residents refer to 'foreign nationals who do not come under any of the following items (i) Persons granted permission to stay for three months or less, (ii) Persons granted the status of residence of 'Temporary Visitor', (iii) Persons granted the status of residence of 'Diplomat' or 'Official', (iv) Persons recognized by the Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice as equivalent to the foreign nationals mentioned above (i) to (iii) (specifically, the staff of the Japanese office of the Association of Taiwan-Japan Relations (Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan, etc.) and the Permanent General Mission of Palestine in Japan who have the status of residence of 'Designated Activities', and their families), (v) Special permanent residents and (vi) Persons with no status of residence'; Immigration

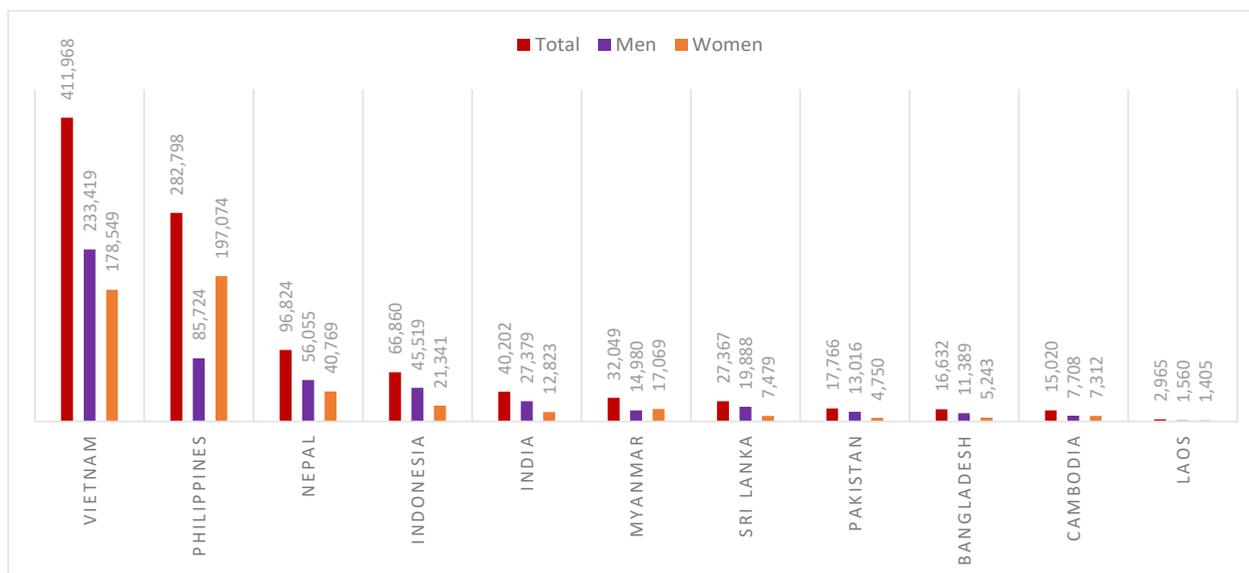
Figure 3.22: Outflow of Migrant Workers from South Asia to Malaysia



Source: ‘Labour Migration Outflow Database,’ Situation Report: International Migration in South and South-West Asia, accessed 26 May 2022, <https://sitreport.unescapsdd.org/labour-migration-outflow> .

be noted though that this data covers all migrants in Japan, including migrant workers, students and those on family stay visas.

Figure 3.23: Total Migrant Stock in Japan in 2019, by Nationality and Sex



Source: Immigration Services Agency of Japan

Service Agency of Japan, Outline of Japan’s Immigration Control and Residency Management System: Data Section (Tokyo: Immigration Service Agency of Japan, 2021). Available at: https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/policies/03_00015.html.

Table 3.25: Mid- to Long-term Residents in Japan in 2020, by Status of Residence

Status of Residence	Origin Country								
	Nepal	Bangladesh	Pakistan	India	Sri Lanka	Vietnam	Taiwan	Myanmar	Philippines
Highly Professional	-	-	-	842	-	435	516	-	-
Business manager	1,708	362	1374	387	1,427	640	787	-	-
Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services	15,581	-	-	8,924	6,233	61,181	13,654	5,767	8,256
Skilled labour	12,524	323	253	5592	217	692	-	-	668
Specified skilled worker	135	-	-	-	63	9,412	-	674	1,059
Technical intern trainee	118	-	-	-	240	41,564	-	3,456	4,818
Student	23,116	3,341	-	-	5,578	65,653	6,206	4,371	-

Source: Immigration Service Agency of Japan, Outline of Japan's Immigration Control and Residency Management System: Data Section (Tokyo: Immigration Service Agency of Japan, 2021). Available at: https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/policies/03_00015.html.

The UK has emerged as an important destination for migrant workers from South Asian and Southeast Asian countries in the last few years. UK data on visa issuance also highlights the increase in the number of visas issued for temporary and skilled workers in 2021 and the first quarter of 2022 (Table 3.26). In terms of temporary workers, Nepal ranks second to India among the South Asian countries on the number of visas issued in recent years.

Table 3.26: Skilled Worker and Temporary Workers Visa Issued by the UK

Country of Origin	Skilled Worker				Temporary Worker			
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019	2020	2021	2022
India	29,552	14,917	30,512	12,758	2,675	1,524	2,033	524
Philippines	5,176	3,651	6,455	308	167	62	84	56
Pakistan	1,226	1,058	1,850	2,217	666	367	387	33
Sri Lanka	329	199	483	585	308	149	297	126
Bangladesh	188	169	349	138	54	21	17	6
Indonesia	116	76	151	44	58	34	29	11
Nepal	90	138	470	224	120	30	559	415
Vietnam	83	43	100	27	42	17	14	3

Note: Data for 2022 includes statistics for the first quarter only.

Source: Statistical Data Set: Managed Migration Datasets, GOV.UK, accessed 2 August 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/managed-migration-datasets#sponsorship>.



Aspirant migrant workers receiving training in carpentry.

Chapter 4:

THEMATIC EXPLORATION



Hon'ble Minister Sher Bahadur Kunwar hearing grievances of migrant workers at the call centre established at the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security.

Chapter 4: Thematic Exploration

This chapter covers seven thematic areas related to labour migration and foreign employment: i) current situation and practices of fair and ethical recruitment in Nepal, including implementation status of the ‘free-visa, free-ticket’ policy; ii) health and safety of migrant workers; iii) migrant workers’ access to justice in Nepal; iv) remittance inflow into the country; v) reintegration of returnee migrant workers; vi) skills profile of migrant workers and skills testing and certification; and vii) labour migration from Nepal to India.

4.1 Fair and Ethical Recruitment

With regard to enhancing fair and ethical recruitment for Nepalis, the government of Nepal has initiated and implemented several policy provisions. The Foreign Employment Act (FEA), 2007 has several provisions relating to fair and ethical recruitment of migrant workers. This includes the requirements to submit contracts concluded between the employer and the worker, and between the recruitment agency and worker to the Department of Foreign Employment (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 25). It also has provisions for protecting workers from deception or coercion and delegates authority to DoFE to investigate contract-related irregularities (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 61). The FEA also prescribes a penalty for private recruitment agencies (PRAs) if migrant workers are paid wages lower than stipulated in the contract. It also requires the PRA to pay the difference between the wage agreed upon and what is actually paid in such cases (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 55). There have also been efforts to restrict contract substitution by mandating employers to verify all job requirements with Nepali diplomatic missions in countries of destination (MoLESS 2018). Similarly, the recent Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (BLMAs) with countries of destination have provisions requiring contracts to contain detailed descriptions of wages and benefits, accommodation, terms and conditions of employment, repatriation, etc.

In 2015, the Government of Nepal adopted the ‘free-visa, free-ticket’ policy for seven labour countries of destination—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Malaysia—in order to shift the cost associated with recruitment to employers and reduce the burden on workers (MoLESS 2020a; Sijapati et al 2017). As per that policy, PRAs can charge migrant workers a maximum of NPR 10,000 (ca. USD 75) as service fee. Workers themselves are required to cover the costs associated with medical tests and pre-departures orientation training (PDOT) (ILO 2021b). Nevertheless, implementation of the policy remains to be difficult (Institute for Human Rights and Business 2018).

Nepal has also signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with Malaysia, Mauritius, Jordan and

the UAE to institutionalise the ‘employer pays’ principle, whereby the employer covers recruitment fees, airfare and other costs associated with the migration process. But various studies have reported that despite these developments, employers and recruitment agencies continue to charge migrant workers hefty recruitment fees and related costs (Bhattarai et al 2022b; Verité 2012). Concerns regarding the proper implementation of the ‘employer pays’ scheme and its monitoring were raised in the 56th Annual Report of the Auditor General of 2018/19. A public interest litigation (PIL) was also filed at the Supreme Court in August 2017, demanding the effective implementation of the ‘free-visa free-ticket’ policy. Following the PIL, in 2019, the apex court issued a directive to the government to adopt appropriate measures to effectively implement the scheme (IOM 2019a).

Meanwhile, the government has been working to improve foreign employment governance and extend support to migrant workers and their families for safer migration. In this regard, migrant resource centres (MRCs) are established to provide accurate information related to labour migration including recruitment process to migrant workers.

Nepali migrant workers are mandatorily provided with PDOT from authorised training providers prior to issuance of labour approval from DoFE. The two-day training provides general and country-specific information to potential migrant workers, including on safe migration. However, it has been pointed out that the mandatory PDOT, which is held after all the recruitment process has been completed, needs to be shifted to the very beginning so that aspirant migrant workers can take advantage of the knowledge they gain from the PDOT as they enter the recruitment process (Kharel et al 2022a). The government has also introduced Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS), which aims to ensure accountability in the recruitment process and strengthen data management through an integrated mechanism, thus, serving as a one-stop portal to manage and regulate the labour migration process (MoLESS 2020a).

Likewise, DoFE has signed an MoU with Nepal Police to curb human trafficking in the guise of foreign employment and enhance fair and ethical recruitment. In order to achieve the objectives laid out in the MoU between DoFE and Nepal Police (see Section 2.3.2), both agencies have agreed on a list of activities to be undertaken by each entity. Accordingly, DoFE has the responsibility of explaining, analysing and presenting foreign employment related crimes and trafficking cases that are recorded in the process of investigation but are not prosecuted under the FEA, 2007, due to limitations within the legal system or due to lack of human resource, to the Crime Investigation Division of the Nepal police and the Anti-Human Trafficking Bureau and provide the necessary support in resolving such cases. In addition, both the institutions are also required to share and exchange relevant national/international news and information with each other; form a joint team to undertake collaborative investigations led by the competent authority between the two; and appoint a communication officer to serve as a point of communication between the two entities. Further, both institutions are mandated with monitoring, investigating and collecting information on unlawful activities concerning foreign employment committed by individuals/institutions operating foreign employment businesses without obtaining a licence and reporting it back to the Department with all the supporting documents if the

case falls under the jurisdiction of DoFE. A representative from the labour and employment office is required to be involved in all such investigations, or representatives from the District Administration Office (DAO) and the Nepal Police in case of unavailability of the former.

Nepal has expressed commitment to strengthen its legal and regulatory framework relating to fair and ethical recruitment at various international and regional platforms. In 2018, Nepal adopted the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), at the core of which is enhancing fair and ethical recruitment of migrant workers. Similarly, it ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols (Palermo Protocol) in March 2020. Measures are currently being taken to amend the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2007 to align it with the Protocol.

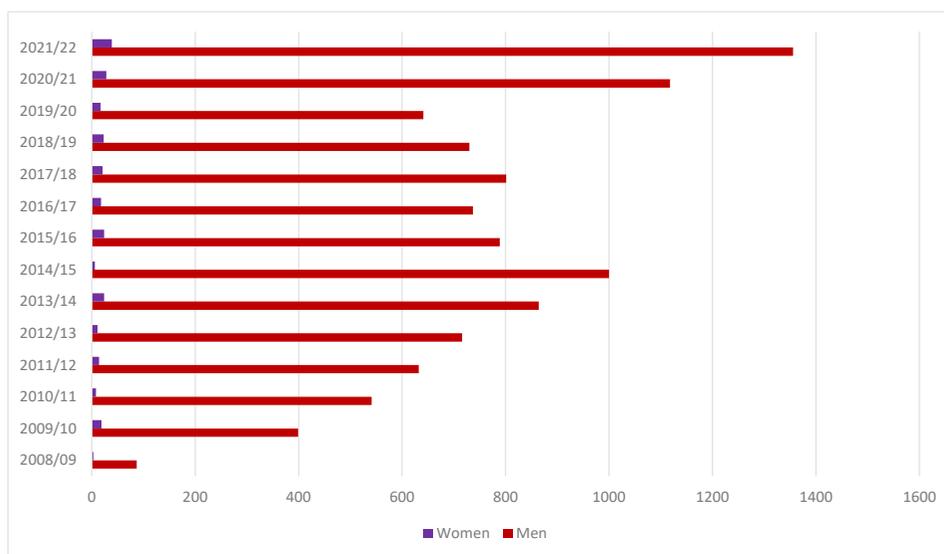
Organisations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as well as the National Network for Safe Migration, trade unions and some PRAs have been playing important roles in spurring discussions on and advocating for the adherence to fair and ethical principles of recruitment. Owing to their sustained efforts, awareness and discussions about fair and ethical recruitment practices have increased among key stakeholders working on labour migration and have also found space in policy discussions and Bilateral Labour Agreement (BLA) negotiations.

4.2 Health and Safety of Migrant Workers

Due to the mandatory medical check-up they undergo, migrant workers start their migration journey as healthy individuals. However, they face several mental and psychosocial health-related problems and risks during their migration cycle (UNHRC 2013; IOM 2004). The health risks migrant workers face emanates from and are aggravated due to their exposure to occupational, safety and health hazards, poor working and living conditions, lack of access to social protection, including medical/health services, language and cultural barriers, forced overtime labour (ILO n.d.-b) and unhealthy diet (Joshi et al 2011), among others. Many migrant workers fall ill, and a significant number of them succumb to illnesses. Low-skilled workers, and those in the informal sector, in irregular situations, and involved in 'dirty, dangerous and demeaning' (3D) jobs in particular are more likely to encounter health problems during or after their migration (UNHRC 2013; IOM 2019b). Nepali women migrant workers, especially those in domestic work and agriculture, are exposed to additional health risks due to long working hours, unprotected work with chemicals, as well as maltreatment in the workplace (Regmi et al 2019). Many Nepali migrant workers are uninsured and face difficulties in accessing the expensive healthcare in the country of destination, and injured and sick migrants are often considered a burden and sent back home by the employers (Aryal et al 2016; Low et al 2015). Nepali migrant workers, in particular the irregular and undocumented as well as temporary migrants, are more at health risks because they are not covered by health and social security in the countries of destination and are also afraid to seek health care and legal redress from their employers for fear of losing their jobs (Baniya et al 2020a).

Likewise, a high incidence of deaths of Nepali migrant workers in various countries of destination every year remains a pressing concern. As is the fact that the causes of death are not accurately assessed in many cases. According to Foreign Employment Board (FEB) data, more than 600 Nepali migrant workers have died in several countries of destination every fiscal year since 2011/12, peaking in 2021/22 with 1,395 deaths, a figure that included 39 women (Figure 4.1).⁷⁴

Figure 4.1: Families Receiving Financial Assistance for Migrant Workers’ Death in Countries of Destination



Note: The data from 2008/09 to 2018/19 is based on the date of application for financial assistance made by migrant workers’ families while for 2019/20 to 2021/22, it is based on date of decision made by the FEB on the application for assistance.

Source: FEWIMS, 2022.

Nepali migrant workers are dying due to various causes. A large number of deaths have been categorised as death from ‘natural causes’, without further elaboration. Since 2008/09, more than 2077 deaths (19.5 per cent of the total) have been termed ‘natural deaths’ (Table 4.1). The risk of deaths Nepalis face in countries of destination is most likely related to their living and working conditions (Vital Signs 2022). Migrant workers face a range of risks at their workplace and place of accommodation which can adversely impact their health and put their lives in jeopardy. These include squalid and congested living conditions, overwork/long working hours, lack of rest day, especially in the case of domestic work, heat stress in agriculture and construction work, stress and dehydration from long workdays, physical and psychological abuse, workplace accidents, and lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) (Vital Signs 2022). Overwork and long working hours and extreme heat have been linked to heart disease and strokes. Traffic accidents are also a common cause of death of Nepali migrant workers.⁷⁵

74 It should be noted here that FEB data on death and injury of migrant workers in this section is based on the financial assistance provided by FEB to the families of deceased migrant workers from the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund [see discussion further below]. The year mentioned corresponds to the year the support was provided and not the actual year the migrant worker died or was injured.

75 Other Causes include Sickness, Disease, Kidney Disease, Cancer, Murder and those that are other miscellaneous causes.

Table 4.1: Causes of Death

Fiscal Year	Cause of Death								Total		
	Cardiac Arrest	Heart Attack	Natural Causes	Traffic Accident	Suicide	Workplace Accident	COVID -19	Other Causes	Men	Women	Total
2008/09	26	2	24	8	9	6	0	15	87	3	90
2009/10	106	10	118	67	25	44	0	48	399	19	418
2010/11	100	48	118	60	62	61	0	100	541	8	549
2011/12	134	37	102	101	66	41	0	165	632	14	646
2012/13	116	32	106	104	81	27	0	261	716	11	727
2013/14	190	79	138	112	96	79	0	194	864	24	888
2014/15	268	90	247	121	113	113	0	54	1,000	6	1,006
2015/16	148	94	246	103	109	81	0	32	789	24	813
2016/17	64	64	252	122	89	61	0	103	737	18	755
2017/18	72	114	126	127	132	67	0	184	801	21	822
2018/19	86	33	136	115	111	62	0	210	730	23	753
2019/20	66	37	87	76	66	41	0	285	641	17	658
2020/21	65	36	162	114	130	21	0	618	1,118	28	1,146
2021/22	33	57	215	129	98	50	207	606	1,356	39	1,395
Total	1,474	733	2,077	1,359	1,187	754	207	2,875	10,411	255	10,666

Note: The data from 2008/09 to 2018/19 is based on the date of application for financial assistance made by migrant workers' families while for 2019/20 to 2021/22, it is based on date of decision made by FEB on the application for assistance.

Source: Data from 2008/09 to 2018/19 are from MoLESS, Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from the FEWIMS, 2022.

Since they are host to most Nepali migrant workers, the GCC countries and Malaysia account for a large proportion of Nepali migrant worker deaths. More than 100 deaths have been reported annually in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE in 2019/20–2021/22 (Table 4.2). The ratio of migrant worker deaths in South Korea is also considerably high with a total of 13 and 14 deaths in 2020/21 and 2021/22, respectively. Although the numbers are small, Nepali migrant workers have also died in newer countries of destinations like Romania and Poland.

The data on the causes of death by countries of destination shows variation in the major causes of death. In Malaysia, it was COVID-19, followed by suicide, traffic accidents and 'natural causes' while in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, it was 'natural causes' and then traffic accidents. The high number of deaths due to traffic accidents and COVID-19 highlight the need for specific attention to the safety and health of migrant workers, including by imparting proper and effective awareness and trainings such as during the PDOT before their migration as well as providing orientation after they reach their destination. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the fact that many families were unable to repatriate the dead bodies of the migrant workers and perform the funeral rites calls for the need to ensure dignified repatriation by both the countries of destinations and Nepal.

Table 4.2: Sex of Deceased Migrant Workers

Country	2019/20			Country	2020/21			Country	2021/22		
	Men	Women	Total		Men	Women	Total		Men	Women	Total
Malaysia	174	1	175	Saudi Arabia	340	2	342	Malaysia	385	2	387
Saudi Arabia	150	2	152	Malaysia	254	1	255	Saudi Arabia	372	4	376
Qatar	116		118	Qatar	205	1	206	Qatar	267	4	271
UAE	100	5	105	UAE	186	12	198	UAE	180	13	193
Kuwait	36	2	38	Kuwait	48	3	51	Kuwait	53	2	55
South Korea	10	0	10	Bahrain	27	2	29	Bahrain	23	0	23
Bahrain	6	2	8	Japan	9	0	9	South Korea	14	0	14
Japan	8	0	8	South Korea	12	1	13	Oman	12	1	13
Poland	3	0	3	Oman	6	0	6	Japan	11	0	11
Oman	3	0	3	Jordan	3	3	6	Romania	6	2	8

Source: FEWIMS, 2022.

Table 4.3: Cause of Death in Major Countries of Destination (2019/20–2021/22)

	Malaysia	Saudi Arabia	Qatar	UAE	Kuwait	Bahrain	Oman	Japan	South Korea
Suicide	80	78	50	58	13	5	1	0	4
Workplace Accident	20	39	28	12	5	1	1	0	3
Natural Death	39	242	102	53	9	1	4	5	3
Heart Attack	14	23	35	26	17	4	0	3	1
Cardiac Arrest	22	28	33	50	18	8	0	0	0
Traffic Accident	40	129	66	52	14	2	1	4	0
COVID-19	122	34	11	5	8	9	6	1	0
Others	480	297	270	240	60	30	9	15	26

Source: FEWIMS, 2022

In the three reference years, most of the deceased migrant workers were from Lumbini Province, Province 1 and Madhesh Province, which are also the provinces that send the highest number of migrant workers (see Section 3.3 for province-wise data on labour approvals). Siraha, Dhanusa, Morang, Jhapa, Mahottari, Sarlahi, Sunsari and Rupandehi topped the list of districts in terms of migrant worker deaths. Likewise, Jhapa (also a district with high out migration of women) in Province 1 accounted for the highest number of women migrant worker deaths.

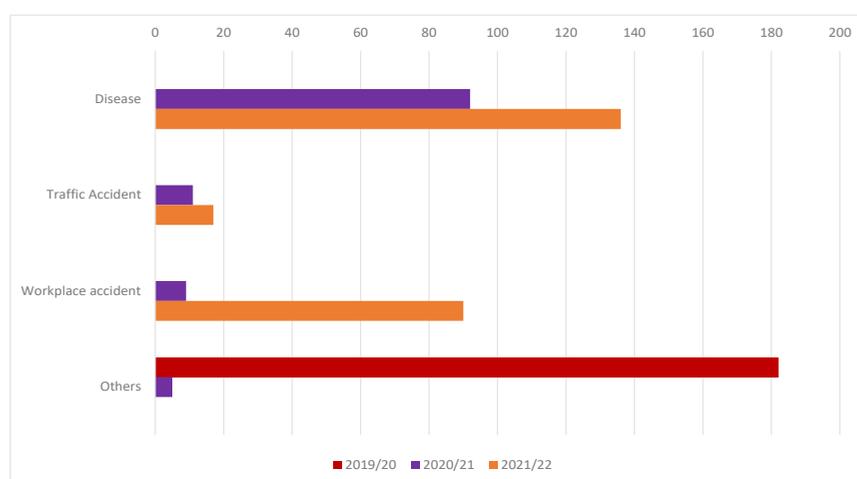
Table 4.4: Migrant Workers' Deaths (by province)

Province	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			Total
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	
Madhesh	167	0	167	270	0	270	312	2	314	751
Province 1	135	7	142	252	8	260	292	15	307	709
Lumbini	113	3	116	221	2	223	333	5	338	677
Gandaki	97	0	97	175	4	179	197	5	202	478
Bagmati	86	7	93	145	13	158	146	12	158	409
Karnali	23	0	23	37	0	37	50	0	50	110
Sudurpaschim	20	0	20	18	1	19	26	0	26	65
Total	641	17	658	1,118	28	1,146	1,356	39	1,395	3,199

Source: FEWIMS, 2022.

In addition to those who die in countries of destination, hundreds of Nepali migrant workers return home with mild to severe injuries and illnesses (Poudyal et al 2020) (Figure 4.2). Anxiety, depression, tuberculosis, accidents and injuries, headaches and suicide attempts are identified as the major health-related vulnerabilities men migrant workers face in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Regmi et al 2019). Notably, migrant workers in such situations are less likely to report their health problems as many of them do not have adequate knowledge and information either about preventing and managing of health risks or of facilities they can avail of in countries of destination (ibid).

Figure 4.2: Major Causes of Injury/Illness of Migrant Workers



Source: FEWIMS, 2022.

Mental health-related problems among Nepali migrant workers are also a major cause for concern (Mahat et al 2020; Vital Signs 2022). The poor mental and psychosocial health of Nepali migrant workers can be attributed to the high expectations of families back home, unfair treatment at work,

poor living conditions, loneliness, lack of social support and poor social life abroad, among others (Regmi et al 2020). This, coupled with the lack of proper access to mental health services, renders migrant workers vulnerable and mentally fragile (ibid). As a consequence, there have been suicides by a significant number of migrant workers in countries of destination (Table 4.1).

Another important health-related issue related to migrant workers in countries of destination is that of workers in a comatose condition (Table 4.5). Twelve migrant workers in Qatar, two in Saudi Arabia, and one each in Oman and South Korea were reported to be in a coma in 2021/22. There are also a number of Nepali migrant workers reported missing. In 2021/22, there were 410 Nepali migrant workers missing in Malaysia, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman.

**Table 4.5: Number of Migrant Workers in Coma (2019/20–2021/22)
(by country of destination and sex)**

	Coma						Missing					
	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	Men	Women										
UAE	2	-	-	-	-	-	8	2	12	4	235	19
Qatar	10	1	11	1	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia (Riyadh and Jeddah)	3	1	1	-	2	-	4	-	2	1	1	1
Oman	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1
South Korea	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malaysia	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	-	250	-	105	-

Source: Information collected from Nepali diplomatic missions in the respective countries of destination.

Province 1, Madhesh and Gandaki are the provinces from where the highest number of migrant workers have sought financial assistance from the FEB for injuries during their migration stint (Table 4.6). In terms of districts, Sarlahi, Morang, Jhapa, Siraha, Sunsari, Baglung, Tanahun, Syangja, Mahottari and Kaski feature as districts with more than 15 cases of migrant workers seeking assistance for injury.

4.2.1 Foreign Employment Welfare Fund

All migrant workers leaving for foreign employment are required to contribute to the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund (FEWF). Payment into the FEWF is done at the time of obtaining the labour approval from DoFE and hence those who leave through irregular channels would not have contributed to it. The FEWF is managed by the FEB and is used to provide various welfare and social protection services such as financial assistance in the event of death and/or injury as well as scholarships to the children of the deceased. Families of deceased migrant workers are entitled to a one-time financial assistance of NPR 700,000 (ca. USD 5,400) while families of migrant workers who fall critically ill or become injured while working abroad, are provided amounts up to NPR 700,000 (ca. USD 5,400) based on the gravity and seriousness of illness (Government of Nepal 2017a, s. 6).

Table 4.6: Injury/Illness of Migrant Workers (by province)

Province	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Province 1	53	2	55	28	1	29	43	6	49
Madhesh	31	0	31	25	0	25	41	2	43
Bagmati	20	3	23	20	1	21	35	8	43
Gandaki	31	1	32	20	2	22	53	2	55
Lumbini	29	0	29	14	1	15	34	1	35
Karnali	10	0	10	3	0	3	10	1	11
Sudurpashchim	2	0	2	2	0	2	7	0	7
Total	176	6	182	112	5	117	223	20	243

Source: FEWIMS, 2022.

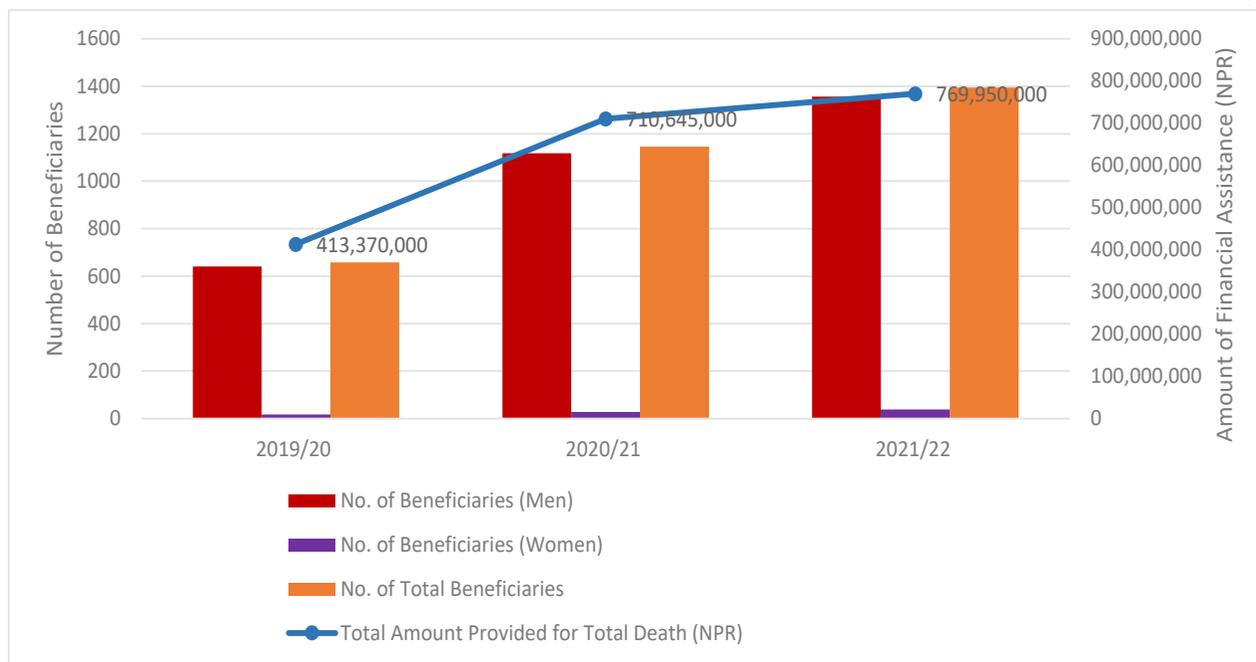
The FEB disbursed a total of NPR 769 million (ca. USD 6 million) to 1395 families of deceased migrant workers and NPR 83 million (ca. USD 647,000) to 243 injured migrant workers in 2021/22 from the FEWF (Figure 4.3). Since 2019/20, more than 150 injured migrant workers have received financial assistance every year.

Migrant workers who suffer grievous injuries have to be repatriated back to Nepal as well. In coordination with the Department of Consular Services (DoCS) at MoFA, the FEB assists such migrant workers to come back to Nepal and also helps families of the deceased to bring back the body. It spent NPR 26 million (ca. USD 200,000) to repatriate bodies of deceased migrant workers in 2021/22. Likewise, in 2021/22, the FEB provided scholarships amounting to NPR 20 million (ca. USD 156,000) to a total of 2595 children of migrant workers from 60 districts, and medical support to families of migrant workers worth NPR 430,000 (ca. USD 3,300).

The global COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the health and safety risks Nepali migrant workers face. In addition to being denied access to basic health facilities such as timely screening, testing and treatment, and access to protective equipment and medication, Nepali migrant workers also faced heightened risks of infection as they were compelled to continue working and live in congested spaces during the pandemic (Baniya et al 2020a). They also suffered high levels of anxiety and other mental health issues (Choudhary and Sitoula 2020). Hundreds of Nepali migrant workers also died after being infected with the virus (Table 4.2). Despite assurances from several countries of destination to ensure healthcare coverage for migrant workers and health services at par with its own citizens, many workers experienced discrimination on that score.

Death, injury and mental health among Nepali migrant workers also have huge ramifications on the livelihood, indebtedness, and social security of the dependent families and the country in general. These challenges have drawn the attention of the Government of Nepal to put in more effort on sensitisation and awareness-raising at home and in countries of destination about the risks

Figure 4.3: Financial Assistance Provided to Deceased Migrant Workers’ Families



Source: FEWIMS, 2022.

and preventative measures to be taken. They also indicate the importance of adequate and effective implementation of country-specific PDOT, stringent pre-departure medical tests in Nepal, and health camps that some embassies organise in countries of destination. At the same time, it highlights the need for regular monitoring and inspection of the workplace by authorities in countries of destination (MoLESS 2020) and making employers responsible for the health and safety of workers. Despite the importance of PDOT in ensuring informed and safe migration, these classes are largely perfunctory at present (Kharel et al 2022a; FEB 2019c).

4.3 Access to Justice

More often than not, migrant workers can be victims of deception not only in terms of how the nature of the prospective job and terms and conditions are misrepresented but also by being given false employment contracts. Overcharging in terms of recruitment fees and other expenses such as for medical tests and PDOT render migrant workers vulnerable to debt bondage (Paoletti et al 2014). This compels migrant workers to work under circumstances they had not agreed to initially since refusal leaves them with no means of repaying their loans or supporting their families (Amnesty International 2011). There are also cases of recruitment agencies and brokers being involved in trafficking or smuggling of migrant workers, leading to exploitation and forced labour (IOM 2019a). In countries of destination, the terms and conditions mentioned in the contract of the workers may not be honoured, and they may be misled about their salary, the nature of employment offered, work hours, and overtime pay or rest days (Amnesty International 2011). Similarly, employers in countries

of destination tend to confiscate identity documents, including passports, of migrant workers in order to exert control over them (Baniya and Bhattarai 2022; Bhattarai et al 2022a). In some instances, they are also subjected to non-payment of wages, inadequate rest, physical and verbal abuse, and threats of violence (Equidem 2022; Paoletti et al 2014). In particular, migrant workers in irregular situation, a majority of whom are known to be women, are extremely vulnerable to domestic violence and face increased risk of abusive treatment (McCarthy 2021; Choudhary and Sitoula 2020). They also face added disadvantages given that they cannot benefit from the FEWF and other schemes of the Government of Nepal, such as support for legal action in countries of destination, owing to their irregular status (McCarthy 2021; Choudhary and Sitoula 2020).

The FEA, 2007 and the corresponding Rules of 2008 outline the justice and compensation mechanisms available to migrant workers in case of any fraud or wrongdoing they face (Government of Nepal 2007a). These laws also regulate the actions of PRAs (and other independent agents), establish standards of conduct, and prescribe punishment in case of failure to comply (Government of Nepal 2007a). Despite the government's effort, access to justice for migrant workers remains a challenge.

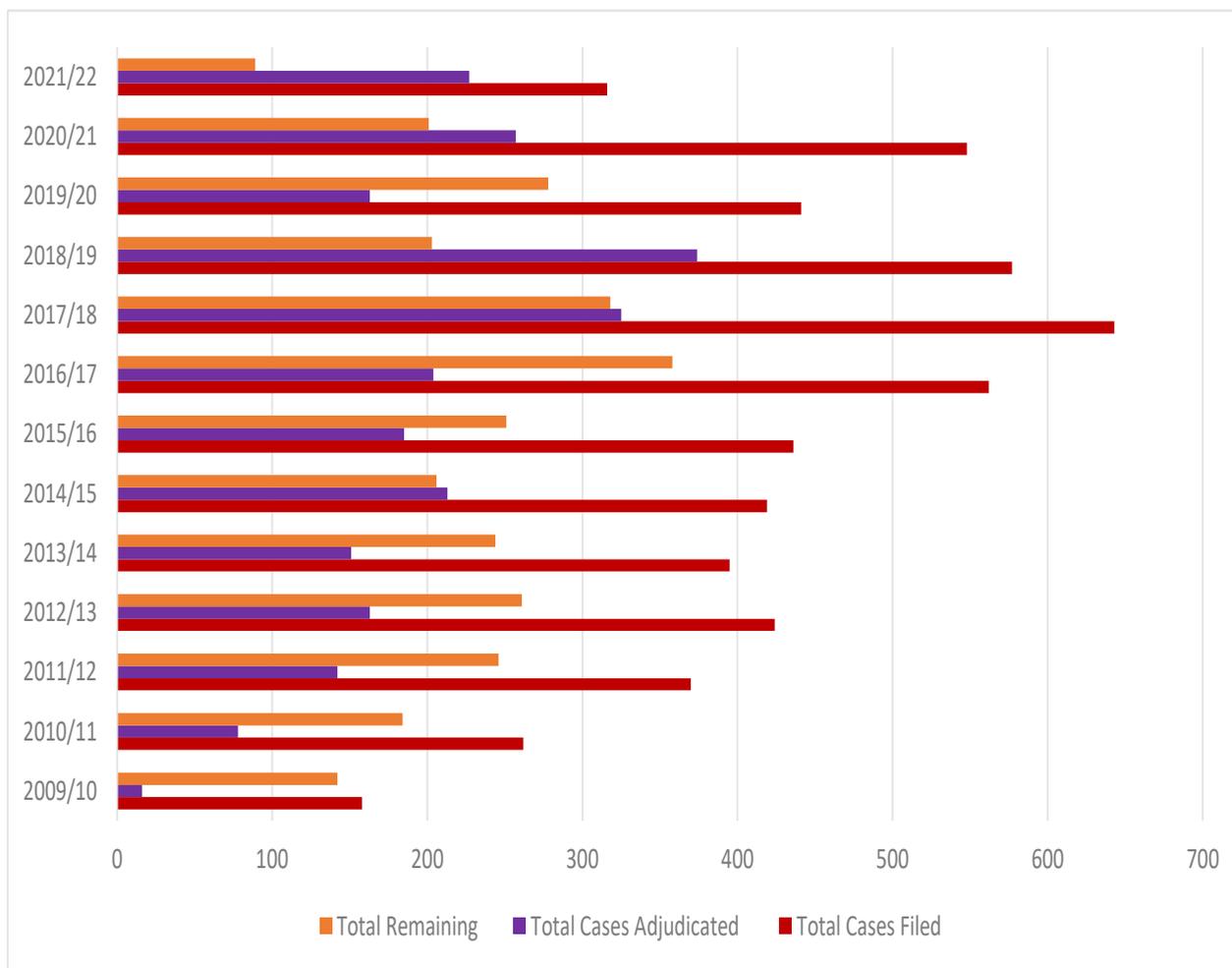
Despite undergoing the mandatory PDOT, which is also meant to make them aware of their rights and ways to seek redressal if necessary, the majority of migrant workers are unaware of government policies, the rights they have, or the recourse available to them in Nepal as well as in the country of destination when faced with problems such as deception (Bhattarai et al 2022b; Bhattarai et al 2022a). Lack of information has been a major obstacle in their access to redress mechanisms (Bhattarai et al 2022a; Paoletti et al 2014). Many remain unaware of the benefits they can avail of through the FEWF and are oblivious of policies such as the 'free-visa, free-ticket' policy.

Migrant workers are often unwilling to file complaints owing to threats and the fear of retaliation by PRAs (Bhattarai et al 2022a). Since they do not always have actual receipts or even contracts, the lack of evidence makes it nearly impossible for migrant workers to substantiate claims (Bhattarai et al 2022a; Amnesty International 2017). In addition, the largely centralised judicial mechanism for labour disputes, the high cost of seeking legal assistance as well as lengthy and complicated judicial processes have also restricted migrant workers' access to justice (International Research and Exchanges Board n.d.). Undocumented workers, particularly domestic workers, face additional difficulties in seeking legal action owing to the nature of their job whereby their freedom of movement is restricted, not to mention the fear of arrest and deportation due to their dubious legal status (People's Forum for Human Rights and CESLAM 2019; NHRC 2019).

In Nepal, DoFE and the Foreign Employment Tribunal (FET) are responsible for handling disputes related to foreign employment. DoFE's Complaint Registration and Investigation Section receives cases against individuals and PRAs from migrant workers or their family members. Complaints against PRAs are handled by DoFE and complaints against individuals not resolved there are forwarded to the FET. Data from the latter shows that 441, 548 and 316 new cases were filed at the FET in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22, respectively (Foreign Employment Tribunal n.d.). However,

since the information is not disaggregated, it is not possible to discern what the data can tell us about migrant workers’ (lack of) access to justice based on gender, age, nature of case, occupation or country of destination.

Figure 4.4: Number of Cases Settled by Foreign Employment Tribunal



Note: The FET was established as per FEA, 2007.
Source: FET, 2022.

Records on legal and paralegal support provided, particularly for cases registered at MRCs, show contract violations and cheating to be the main disputes in foreign employment.⁷⁶ Cases of missing migrants, deaths and issues of repatriation of dead body, medical emergencies of in-service migrants, imprisonment and deportation have also been reported at the MRCs.

⁷⁶ MRCs refer migrants to the SaMi’s partner organisation based on the nature of their cases and also support those in difficulties in countries of destination to partners for assistance and repatriation in close coordination with the Nepali diplomatic mission in the country of destination.

Table 4.7: Cases Registered at Migrant Resource Centres (by sex)

Nature of Case	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Cheating	429	16	933	52	2,051	57
Withholding of passport in Nepal and in destination	152	3	98	3	121	11
Rescue from countries of destination/employer	132	12	179	28	401	28
Withholding of both money and passport	123	1	57	5	179	4
Death-related, including referral to relevant agencies	107	3	485	33	604	36
Withholding of money in Nepal	104	1	51	1	228	4
Contract substitution	89	9	200	19	671	18
Rescue in relation of detention/jail	43	2	167	12	149	14
Cases of missing migrant	26	3	130	29	163	14
Occupational health and safety	20	3	124	13	157	21
Detention and deportation	13	15	12	1	10	-
Non-payment of wages	6	2	59	3	84	3
Return of money and passport due to change in decision to migrate	4	-	20	-	15	1
Abuse from employers	-	-	2	4	5	3
Failing in medical examination	-	-	1	-	5	1
Other	190	5	604	41	184	21

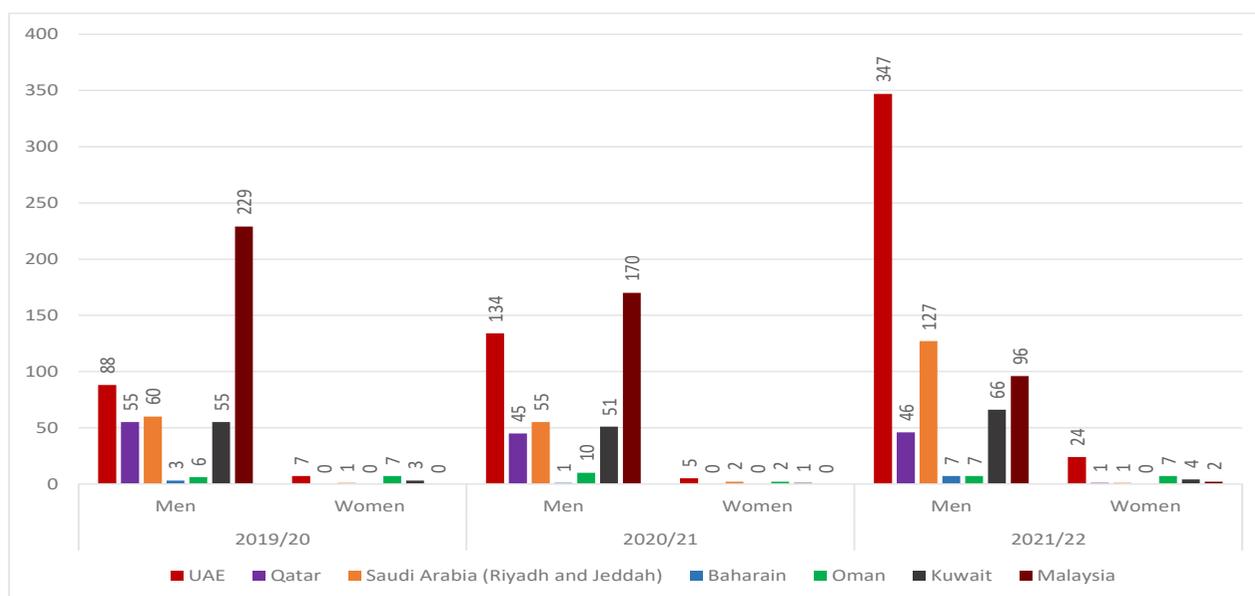
Source: MRC, 2022.

Of the cases handled by various MRCs, ‘cheating’ is highly prevalent in all provinces. ‘Cheating’ is a broad category mostly involving deception and fraud by PRAs during the pre-departure phase. MRCs in Madhesh Province and Province 1 reported 1428 and 764 cases of cheating, respectively, between 2019/20 and 2021/22. Cases concerning ‘death’ are common across all provinces. The term ‘death’ refers to cases handled by MRCs in supporting the repatriation of dead bodies to Nepal. Likewise, MRCs across all provinces also reported a high number of cases related to ‘rescue of migrant workers’, ‘contract substitution’, ‘withholding of money in Nepal’ and ‘withholding of passport in Nepal’.

With regard to access to justice in countries of destination, the lack of easy access to legal and grievance-handling mechanisms, lack of knowledge regarding available complaint mechanisms and related processes, cumbersome reporting procedures, and fear of retaliation, among others, hinder migrant workers’ access to justice (Bhattarai et al 2022a; MFA n.d.-b). Victimized Nepali migrants do not report grievances related to wage theft or exploitation in countries of destination due to lack of knowledge on how they can seek redress, and many migrants who do file complaints remain oblivious about whether their complaints have been registered or investigated (Bhattarai et al 2022b; NNSM 2021). Impediments in accessing justice for migrant workers were further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nepali migrant workers faced non-payment/delayed payment of wages, reduction in salary,

and lay-offs, and were also subjected to abuse and ill-treatment during the pandemic (IOM and NIDS 2020; Bhattarai et al 2022a). Further, while some migrant workers were forced to take unpaid leave and/or were quarantined for months, often without pay, some were forced to continue working despite ill health (Mint 2020). During the pandemic, several Nepali migrant workers were deprived of their right to return due to several reasons such as mobility and travel restrictions enforced by the countries of destination and the Government of Nepal and lack of financial resources (Baniya et al 2022b). Confiscation of travel documents by employers in countries of destination also curtailed migrant workers' right to return (Freedom Collaborative 2022).

Figure 4.5: Number of Migrant Workers in Jail in Countries of Destination



Source: Data obtained by MoLESS from Nepali diplomatic missions.

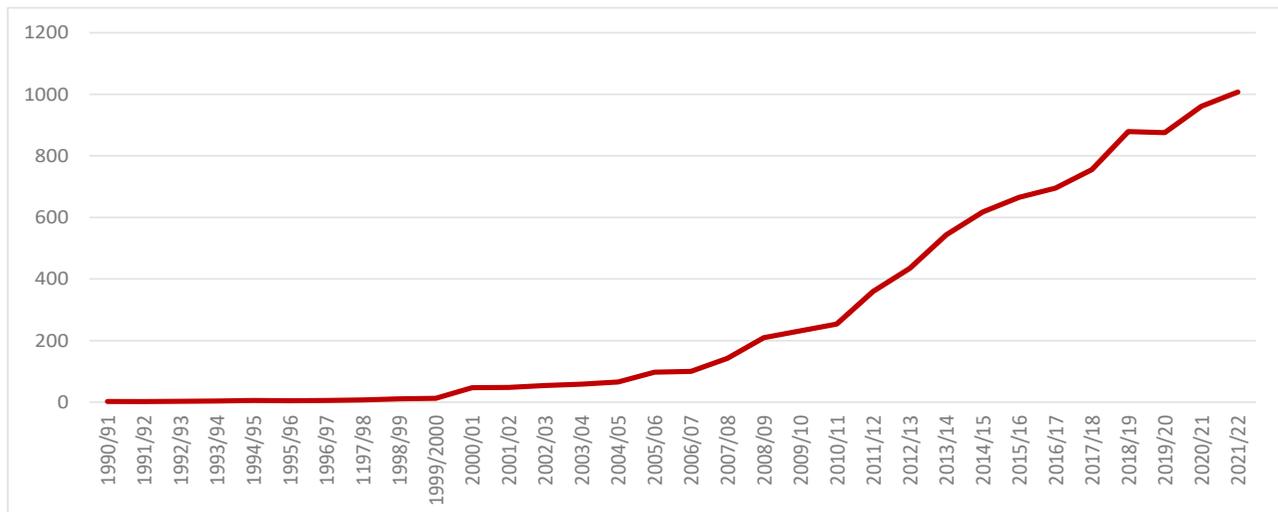
There are also Nepali migrant workers in jail in countries of destination. In 2021/22, 696 men and 39 women migrant workers were in jail in the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Malaysia (Figure 4.5). There have been ongoing discussions on expanding access to legal representation to migrant workers, including those in jails. Accordingly, MoLESS has issued the Directive for the Legal Defence of Nepali Workers in Foreign Employment, 2019 to assist migrant workers with valid labour approvals facing prosecution (FEB 2019b) (see Section 2.6.3 for more information on the provisions in the directives).

Also, grievances related to human and labour rights violations migrant workers faced prior to their repatriation in the wake of the pandemic were not recorded (Nepal et al 2020). Lack of proper evidence puts the migrant workers or their families in a weaker position while seeking justice.

4.4 Remittances

With external remittances equalling about a quarter of the country's economic output,⁷⁷ Nepal ranks seventh globally among the top remittance recipients relative to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (World Bank n.d.-a). Commensurate with the number of migrant workers going abroad, Nepal has seen an exponential growth in remittances received, from NPR 2.1 billion (ca. USD 16 million) in 1990/91 to a mammoth NPR 961 billion (ca. USD 7.5 billion) in 2020/21 (NRB n.d.-a) (Figure 4.6). Remittance inflow has thus solidified its status as one of the mainstays of Nepal's economy and serves as the biggest contributor to the nation's foreign exchange reserves. However, despite continued increment in absolute terms, remittance as a percentage share of Nepal's GDP saw a steady decline from 27.6 percent in 2015 to 23.8 percent in 2021 (Figure 4.7).⁷⁸

Figure 4.6: Remittance received in Nepal (in billion NPR)



Note: According to the Nepal Rastra Bank, the remittance figures exclude pensions received from abroad and any payment received from abroad by business entities for services provided.

Source: 'Annual Reports,' Nepal Rastra Bank, accessed 6 June 2022, <https://www.nrb.org.np/category/annual-reports/?department=red>.

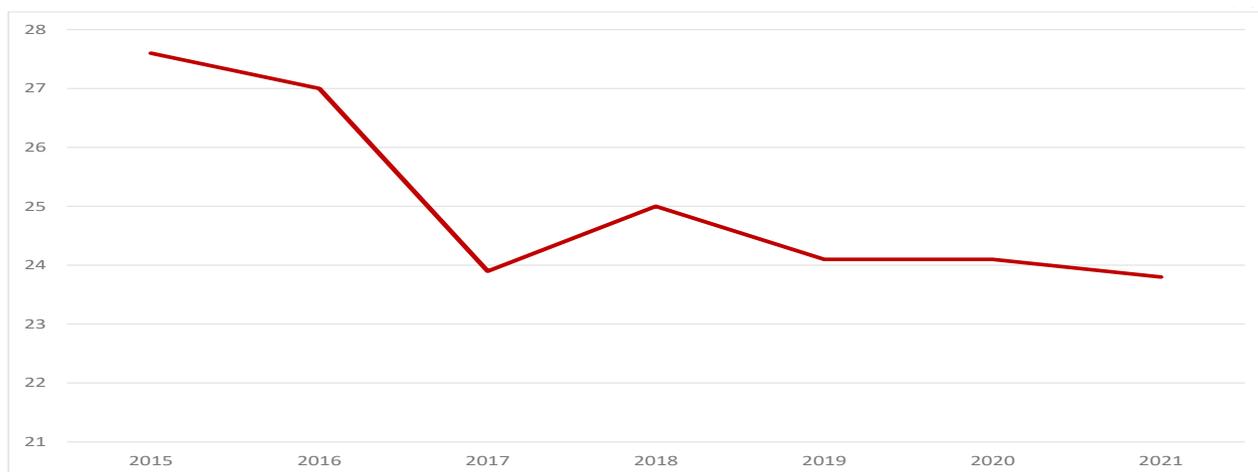
Many households in Nepal receive remittance from abroad. Remittances have contributed to an increase in consumption levels and enabled households to obtain better health care, nutrition, education and housing (NRB 2020b). According to the National Statistics Office, remittances contributed significantly to reducing poverty headcount from 42 per cent in 1995 to 25 per cent in 2010 (CBS 2012b). Besides consumption, remittances have also enabled some capital creation for investment (Sharma et al 2014).

In the immediate aftermath of lockdowns to contain the spread of COVID-19, remittance inflow went down to almost half compared to the corresponding month of the previous year (Table 4.8). However, while remittance inflow slumped in the two months immediately after the declaration of

⁷⁷ This figure is for 2020. The data has been used from 2020 as it allows for comparison with other countries.

⁷⁸ The remittance inflow was 22.1 percent of the Gross Domestic Product in 2012.

Figure 4.7: Remittance as Percentage Share of GDP



Source: 'Personal Remittances, received (% of GDP),' The World Bank, accessed 6 June 2022, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR>.

lockdowns in mid-April 2020, it was followed by a steady recovery after mid-June. No major fluctuations were experienced in the fiscal years 2020/21 and 2021/22 (NRB n.d.-b). This could be attributed to the routing of remittance through formal channels because informal channels became defunct in the wake of the pandemic and also the quick re-opening of the manufacturing sector in the GCC countries.

Table 4.8: Remittance Inflow during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Month	Remittance Received (in billions NPR)		
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Mid-July to mid-August (Saun)	75.4	92.7	76
Mid-August to mid-September (Bhadau)	78.3	73.0	79.4
Mid-September to mid-October (Asoj)	76.5	93.1	83.9
Mid-October to mid-November (Kartik)	74.7	78.9	73.1
Mid-November to mid-December (Mangsir)	72.0	79.1	76.2
Mid-December to mid-January (Push)	70.3	78.5	79.9
Mid-January to mid-February (Magh)	65.9	72.4	71.7
Mid-February to mid-March (Fagun)	79.2	74.4	91.1
Mid-March to mid-April (Chait)	34.5	86.9	93.5
Mid-April to mid-May (Baisakh)	53.9	80.9	87.05
Mid-May to mid-June (Jeth)	94.0	61.1	92.39
Mid-June to mid-July (Asar)	100.2	90.2	103.13
Total	874.9	961.2	1,007.31

Source: Current Macroeconomic and Financial Situation, Publication & Statistics, Nepal Rastra Bank, accessed 7 June 2022, <https://www.nrb.org.np/category/current-macroeconomic-situation/?department=red>.

Data on remittance inflow disaggregated by country for the first four months of the fiscal year 2019/20 indicates that remittances received from the GCC countries accounted for 50 per cent of all transfers. Qatar was the source of the highest share of remittances received in Nepal (17.7 per cent) followed by India (14.2 per cent) and Malaysia (9.7 per cent) (Table 4.9). Remittance inflow from the USA (8.3 per cent) is the highest for any western nation although it must be noted that this could be the result of remittances sent from other countries being rerouted via US-based remittance agencies (MoLESS 2020).

Table 4.9: Remittance Inflow by Country of Destination (First Four Months of FY 2019/20)

Country	Total Remittance Amount (in billions) (NPR)	Percentage Share of Total Remittance Received in Nepal
Qatar	53.93	17.7
India	43.16	14.2
UAE	40.87	13.4
Saudi Arabia	38.15	12.5
Malaysia	29.66	9.7
USA	25.42	8.3
Japan	22.87	7.5
Kuwait	11.52	3.8
Bahrain	8.79	2.9
South Korea	6.15	2.0
UK	5.04	1.7
Australia	1.34	0.4
Others	18.07	5.9
Total	304.97	100

Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, *Nepal Ma Bipreshan Aprabaaha Sthiti (The Situation of Remittance Flow in Nepal)* (Kathmandu: Nepal Rastra Bank, 2020).

Remittances flow into Nepal through both formal and informal channels. The former consists of banks and financial institutions, and domestic and international remittance service providers. According to a Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) study, remittance service providers (RSPs) receive 60 per cent of the remittance sent through formal means while banks and other financial institutions account for the rest (Dahal 2019). There are currently 42 licensed RSPs operating in Nepal (NRB n.d.-c). In terms of banks, Class A commercial banks, a few of the development banks (Class B banks) and other financial institutions are allowed to remit money within and outside Nepal (Government of Nepal 2017b, s. 49).

The issue of reducing remittance costs has gained favour globally with the 2010 G8 and the 2011 and 2014 G20 summits⁷⁹ committing to reducing average remittance cost of remitted amount to 5 per cent (World Bank 2021). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also aim to reduce transfer costs to 3 per cent (UN 2015). A comparative study of remittance transfer costs from countries of destination

⁷⁹ G20 refers to an inter-governmental forum comprising of 19 nations and the EU which work to address issues related to the global economy.

for Nepali workers indicates that remitting money from India to Nepal is the most expensive, 5.29 per cent for USD 200 and 3.01 per cent for USD 500 (World Bank n.d.-b). Remitting from Malaysia to Nepal is the cheapest at 2.77 per cent for USD 200 (ibid). However, this cost is higher in comparison to the cost for remitting money from Malaysia to other South Asian countries such as India and Bangladesh. Also, compared to other South Asian countries, remittance cost from the UK is also higher for Nepal (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Average Remittance Transfer Costs for South Asian Countries

Remittance Transfer Costs in Percentage (4 th Quarter, 2021) ⁸⁰										
Country of destination (Transfer from)	Origin Country (Transfer to)									
	Nepal		Bangladesh		India		Pakistan		Sri Lanka	
	200 USD	500 USD	200 USD	500 USD	200 USD	500 USD	200 USD	500 USD	200 USD	500 USD
India	5.3	3.0	6.7	3.9	N/A*	N/A*	8.1	4.6	8.0	4.6
Malaysia	2.8	1.9	2.6	1.6	2.3	1.5	N/A [†]	N/A [†]	N/A [†]	N/A [†]
Oman	3.1	1.5	3.2	1.5	3.2	1.5	3.2	2.3	3.3	1.6
Qatar	3.0	1.7	2.3	1.1	3.4	2.2	2.9	2.2	4.9	3.7
Saudi Arabia	3.9	2.4	3.4	2.0	4.2	2.5	3.5	2.3	3.3	2.0
UAE	3.3	2.0	5.2	3.7	3.5	2.3	3.9	3.1	4.2	2.9
United Kingdom	4.3	3.3	2.9	1.8	3.9	2.0	2.5	1.9	3.2	1.7
United States	4.1	3.1	3.6	2.4	3.7	2.7	4.9	3.9	N/A [†]	N/A [†]

Source: 'Find and Compare Prices,' Remittance Prices Worldwide, accessed 8 June 2022, <https://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/>.

* Not applicable.

[†] Not available.

A look at remittance transfer costs from various countries over the years demonstrates that the costs have generally decreased considerably from 2017 for all countries (Table 4.11). There was a slight increase for four countries—Malaysia, Qatar, the UAE and the USA—between 2019 and 2020, but costs went down the next year for all countries with the exception of India. Notably, the costs for remittance transfers to Nepal are below the global average and within the SDG target of 3 per cent in the case of Malaysia and just over 3 per cent in the case of the GCC countries.

80 The total cost of sending a remittance includes the fee charged to the sender plus the exchange rate margin. The total cost can be calculated by multiplying the percentages mentioned in the figure with the amount remitted (either USD 200 or USD 500 in the figure).

Table 4.11: Costs of Average Remittance Transfer to Nepal

Period Amount	4th Quarter, 2017		4th Quarter, 2018		4th Quarter, 2019		4th Quarter, 2020		4th Quarter, 2021	
	200 USD	500 USD								
India	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	5.1	2.9	5.3	3.0
Malaysia	2.6	1.5	2.93	2.0	3.2	2.3	3.8	2.8	2.8	1.9
Oman	3.4	1.5	4.4	2.7	4.4	2.6	3.6	1.7	3.1	1.5
Qatar	5.2	3.7	4.9	4.2	4.2	2.8	4.8	3.3	3.0	1.7
Saudi Arabia	5.0	3.5	5.0	3.4	4.2	2.7	4.1	2.4	3.9	2.4
UAE	4.4	2.6	3.5	1.9	3.5	1.9	4.0	2.4	3.3	2.0
United Kingdom	7.0	4.5	4.7	3.4	6.2	4.3	5.9	4.1	4.3	3.3
United States	5.3	3.5	5.9	4.3	4.3	2.9	5.2	3.9	4.1	3.1

Source: 'Find and Compare Prices,' Remittance Prices Worldwide, accessed 9 June 2022, <https://remittanceprices.worldbank.org>

*N/A: not available

Even though there is no systematic data on remittance inflow through informal means, it is believed that informal channels account for a considerable proportion of the total remittance received in Nepal (Dahal 2019). For example, of the total NPR 128.5 billion (ca. USD 1 billion) remitted to Nepal from India in 2018/19, an estimated NPR 38 billion (ca. USD 295 million) (29.6 per cent) was transferred through informal means.⁸¹ Informal means of remitting money include personal networks, agents and *hawala/hundi*, and remittances in the form of consumer items either brought by the workers themselves or sent with someone, among others. These means of transfer fall outside the purview of the regulatory framework and operate outside of or parallel to formal channels. Several reasons contribute to the popularity of the informal means of remittance transfer. For instance, *hundi* is faster and cheaper than formal channels and also provide secrecy and anonymity to the parties involved since it does not involve documentation of any kind (Buencamino & Gorbunov 2018). Migrants using irregular channels are often more likely to remit through informal channels. Low financial and digital literacy among migrant workers and their families along with a lack of migrant-centric products and services have been identified as major barriers to the formalisation of remittance inflows (UNCDF 2021b).

With regard to the use of remittance, the Nepal Rastra Bank estimates that only 3.5 per cent of the amount remitted is being used in productive sectors such as capital formation and investment while some 70 per cent is spent paying back loans and on daily consumption (NRB 2016). Remittances are used to purchase assets and invest in land, and housing, and to pay for the education and health of children of migrant workers as well (Sijapati et al 2017). Lack of entrepreneurial skills among migrant workers and their families (Buckley and Hofmann 2012) and the poor institutional landscape for

81 This is an estimation made by Nepal Rastra Bank. Due to open borders with India, informal channels are frequently used for which an official database doesn't exist. So, the NRB makes an estimation for remittance received through informal channels from India.

investment are among the reasons identified for the lack of productive use of remittances (Bjuggren et al 2008; Chaudhary 2022).

In this context, the Government of Nepal has taken some initiatives to augment remittance inflow through formal means and utilise remittance in the productive sectors. It has been working on policies to include migrant workers in the social security schemes as well. A brief description of some of these initiatives is given below.

- a) **Foreign Employment Savings Bonds:** The Nepal Rastra Bank has been issuing Foreign Employment Savings Bond (FESB) since 2009/10 (MoLESS 2020). In June 2022, it issued the Foreign Employment Savings Bond–2027 for a period of five years at an attractive interest rate of 12.5 per cent (MyRepublica 2022). It has also waived off income tax on the interest earnings on the bond (ibid). However, bonds have consistently been undersold in the past, with only 11 per cent purchased in 2020/21.
- b) **Quotas in IPOs:** The government has started setting aside 10 per cent of the shares in initial public offerings (IPOs) of publicly listed companies for Nepali migrant workers abroad (Ministry of Finance 2022).
- c) **Remit Hydro:** Remit Hydro is an initiative of and a subsidiary of Hydroelectricity Investment and Development Company Limited (HIDCL) (Remit Hydro Limited n.d.). It aims to channel remittance inflows from migrants to build hydroelectricity projects in the country.

4.5 Return and Reintegration

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the return to Nepal of migrant workers in substantial numbers, the Government of Nepal experienced an unprecedented challenge of absorbing returnee migrant workers into the national labour market. The situation was further compounded by the fact that many migrant workers were not able to easily re-migrate to countries of destination due to the continuing economic slowdown around the world.

Reintegration of migrant workers consists of their ‘re-inclusion’ and ‘re-incorporation’ in their home societies, and the re-establishment of economic and psychosocial ties in their country of origin (IOM 2017). It also encompasses the acceptance by their family, peers and community, and the capacity of migrants to utilise development and economic opportunities available at home. Another important aspect of reintegration is associated with creating a conducive environment for returnee migrant workers through local resources and infrastructure to enable them to invest their valuable experience, knowledge, skills and technical know-how gained abroad in their countries of origin (IOM 2019c). As defined by the IOM, ‘reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychological well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers’ (ibid).

Return migration features prominently in Nepal's migration profile. Nepal welcomed back 183,875 returnees in 2020/21, and 450,897 in 2021/22.⁸² However, their sustainable reintegration in the local labour market has remained a challenge. According to the Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) 2017/18, 42.8 per cent of the returnee migrant workers are employed, 13.4 per cent are unemployed and 43.8 per cent are outside the labour force (CBS 2019).

Ensuring sustainable reintegration of returnee migrants is an important agenda in Nepal's labour migration governance. The government has recognised that sustainable reintegration requires harnessing both the social and financial remittances earned by migrant workers abroad in the productive sectors of the national economy (MoLESS 2020). Reintegration is also covered under various laws and policies governing labour migration. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 enshrines a policy encouraging the mobilisation of capital, skills, technology, and experience gained from foreign employment in the productive sectors in the country (Government of Nepal 2015, a. 51) The FEA 2007 authorises the government to use the FEWF to conduct employment programmes targeted at returnees (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 33[a]). Similarly, the Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 calls for effective social and economic reintegration packages for returnee migrant workers (Government of Nepal 2012). The Policy includes a separate section on returnee reintegration and emphasises mobilising their skills and technical knowledge within the country (National Planning Commission 2020).

The Fifteenth Periodic Plan (2019/20–2023/24) has also accorded priority to returnee reintegration. It has expanded the definition of remittances beyond financial remittances to include social remittances, which encompass skills, technological know-how, and experiences (National Planning Commission 2019). The Plan also highlights the need to incentivise returnee migrants to channel social remittances towards the socio-economic development of the country. In addition, the Local Governance Operations Act, 2017 mandates local governments to carry out training and reintegration of returnees (Government of Nepal 2017a, s. 11[q]). It also authorises them to carry out tasks related to their social reunion and mobilisation of the knowledge and skills they gained during foreign employment besides collecting, maintaining and managing data related to the labour force currently in foreign employment (Government of Nepal 2017a, s. 11[q]). Various other sectoral policies—such as the Agricultural Policy, 2004, the Industrial Policy 2011 and the National Youth Policy, 2015—also include provisions relating to reintegration of returnee migrant workers in Nepal.

As a party to the GCM, Nepal is expected to invest resources in the reintegration of returnee migrants and take measures towards their reintegration into society through 'skills recognition'. This involves identifying new skills acquired overseas and matching them with the domestic labour market (UN 2018). Objective 18 of the GCM calls the member states to 'invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences' (UN 2018). The GCM also includes provisions for providing migrants with equal access to social protection, and employment opportunities

82 FEIMS, 2022. Data for FY 2020/21 are calculated from the month of September since DoFE started to record data on returnees into FEIMS for the first time since this month.

(Rimal 2021). In line with the GCM, the government has taken a number of steps to reintegrate returnee migrant workers through nationwide entrepreneurship development programmes. The government currently conducts programmes associated with financial literacy, vocational training, psychosocial support, shelter, and provides direct grants to individuals as part of the reintegration programme (FEB n.d.).

Further, the MoLESS has adopted and implemented a reintegration directive to consolidate reintegration efforts within the country (MoLESS 2022a). Returnee migrant workers can benefit from three different kinds of reintegration programmes under the Reintegration Programme (Operation and Management) Directives for Returnee Migrant Workers, 2022: socialisation of returnees (family and social reunion, psychosocial counselling, leadership development and social networking); employment (skill testing and certification, skill training, modernisation of traditional occupations); and entrepreneurial development (aimed at increasing financial literacy and access, self-employment generating programmes, providing grants and concessional loans in coordination with local and provincial governments, facilitating access to market). The Directive authorises the FEB

Box 4.1: Recent Reintegration Projects

Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers (ReMi): The project (16 July 2022 to 15 July 2026) with a budget of CHF 6.8 million (ca. NPR 861.3 million or USD 6 million) is implemented by MoLESS, Governments of Province 1 and Madhesh Province, and 20 participating local governments. The project is a collaboration between the Government of Nepal and the Government of Switzerland. The latter is providing support for the project through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Helvetas Nepal is providing technical assistance to the project on behalf of SDC. The overall goal of the project is to ensure returnee migrant workers re-establish themselves and actively participate in social, cultural, economic and political life. ReMi aims to achieve this objective through activities consisting of family counselling, support for returnees in distress, referral for advanced psychosocial counselling, coordination with migrant cooperatives and networks for community outreach, information and counselling through Employment Service Centres, support for individual or group entrepreneurship, business development, advance financial literacy training, linkages to labour markets, referrals for skills training, and testing and certification of returnees.

Reintegration of Korea Returnee Migrants Project: Nepal and South Korea agreed on technical cooperation for a seven-year project Strengthening Stage-wise Support System for the Stable Reintegration of Korea Returnee Migrants in Nepal with a budget of USD 8 million (ca. NPR 1 billion) in May 2022.* The project will be implemented by the DoFE–Employment Permit System (EPS) Korea Section in collaboration with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and aims to support the reintegration of returnee migrant workers from South Korea and support the socio-economic development of Nepal.† Under this project, a fund will be maintained to provide financial resources to returnee workers for the enhancement of their entrepreneurial capacity and initiative. Additionally, a one-stop mobile platform will be developed targeting returnee migrant workers to enhance access to comprehensive information regarding reintegration.

* International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mapping of Reintegration Services in Nepal (Kathmandu: IOM, 2022).

† ‘Deal Signed to Support S. Korea Returnee Migrants,’ The Rising Nepal, 1 June 2022, https://risingnepaldaily.com/news/11960?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ceslam_daily_news_compilation_1_june_2022&utm_term=2022-06-01.

to seek proposals from local governments, national NGOs, foreign organisations and agencies of the federal, provincial and local governments to operate programmes on returnee reintegration. The Directives also stipulates that a National Level Returnee Migrant Profile be created at the FEB to identify returnee migrants for the reintegration programme.

The FEB is the main government body responsible for designing and providing various skill development programmes for returnee migrants, and for carrying out returnee integration programmes. A brief description of ongoing programmes targeting returnee migrant workers in Nepal is provided below.

- i. Recognition of prior learning:** In coordination with the National Skills Testing Board (NSTB), the FEB helps returnee migrants certify their skills and experience acquired abroad free of cost. Skills assessment/testing of returnee migrant workers is important in planning for upskilling, resettlement in appropriate occupations, and providing them with additional income-generating opportunities (Neupane and Adhikari 2021) (see also Section 4.6).
- ii. Skills-oriented training:** the FEB also provides skills-oriented training to workers going for foreign employment as well as those returning using funds from the FEWF. This training programme is guided by the Employment-Oriented Skill Development Training Operation Procedure, 2019 formulated by MoLESS (see also Section 4.6).
- iii. Felicitation of returnee entrepreneurs:** MoLESS has been recognising returnee migrant workers involved in various entrepreneurial activities in order to highlight them as a source of inspiration for those returning from foreign jobs and seeking to start a business in Nepal. The Returnee Migrant Worker Entrepreneurs National Honour and Award Management Procedure 2020 (MoLESS 2020d) is aimed at discouraging the flow of youth to foreign countries (The Himalayan Times 2019). The returnee migrant workers thus felicitated are awarded a sum of NPR 100,000 (ca. USD 780) and NPR 50,000 (ca. USD 390).
- iv. Programmes at the provincial level:** Within each province, the concerned ministry has the overall responsibility of formulating policies and programmes related to foreign employment.⁸³ Provincial governments have initiated a number of programmes directed at returnee migrants, including mobilising them in priority sectors such as agriculture and entrepreneurship.

The FEB, in coordination with Nepal Rastra Bank, had implemented a scheme of providing subsidised loans for up to NPR 1 million (ca. USD 7,800) for returnee migrant workers in accordance with the budget speech of the GoN for the FY 2018/19, but this was discontinued since the FY 2019/20. Local governments have also been mandated with certain tasks to support the federal government's

83 The ministries are the Ministry of Social Development in Madhesh Province, Karnali Province and Sudurpaschim Province, the Ministry of Industry, Labour and Employment in Province 1, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security in Bagmati, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, Technology and Social Development as well as the Ministry of Tourism, Industry, Commerce and Supplies in Gandaki, and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Transportation Management in Lumbini.

reintegration efforts (Government of Nepal 2017a). Among the notable achievements in this regard have been the skilling and reintegration of migrant workers. For example, Employment Coordinators under the Prime Minister’s Employment Programme (PMEP) have been appointed in all 753 municipalities and placed in employment service centres (ESCs) established as per the Prime Minister Employment Programme Operation Directives, 2019 (Government of Nepal 2019d).

Table 4.12: Selected National Programmes Facilitating Reintegration of Returnees*

Programme	Focus Area	Date of Inception
Prime Minister Employment Programme	Guaranteed employment opportunities to the unemployed aged 18–59, not exceeding a period of 100 days.	2019
Microenterprise Development Programme for Poverty Alleviation	Helping entrepreneurs develop enterprises under a microenterprise development model.	2010
Prime Minister Agriculture Modernisation Project	Development of agricultural pockets, blocks, zones, and super zones to support modernisation of agriculture.	2016/17
Subsidised loans	Provision of subsidised loan of up to NPR 200,000 (ca. USD 1,500) for small enterprises with priority to the underprivileged.	2008/09
National Youth Council’s youth-oriented programmes	390-hour training on pig farming, poultry farming, mushroom farming and vegetable farming.	-
Rural Enterprises and Remittances Project (RERP) -SAMRIDDHI	Support poor households, migrant families and returnee migrant workers in income generation through creation of micro-, small, and rural medium-sized enterprises.	2015

Source: International Organization for Migration, 2022.

* These programs are not exclusively targeted to returnee migrant workers. However, it is believed that they support reintegration of returnee migrants too.

Table 4.13: Selected Government Projects for Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers

Project	Area of Reintegration	Funding/Collaborating Agency	Date of Inception
Safer Migration Project (SaMi)	Information and counselling to returnee migrant workers and referral to relevant agencies.	Government of Nepal and Government of Switzerland/ Helvetas Nepal	2011
Dakchyata	Skills development of returnee migrants in construction, agricultural and tourism sectors.	European Union/ British Council Nepal/ UNDP/ ILO/IOM	2017
Strengthening Stage-wise Support System for the Stable Reintegration of Korea Returnee Migrants in Nepal	Reintegration of Nepali returnee migrants from Korea by enhancing their employability and entrepreneurial capacity.	Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	2022
Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers (ReMi) Project	Providing reintegration services and supporting the government to prepare reintegration policies.	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	2022

Source: International Organization for Migration, 2022.

Table 4.14: Programmes for Reintegration of Migrant Workers in National Budgets

Fiscal Year 2019/20	Fiscal Year 2020/21	Fiscal Year 2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youths returning from foreign employment with skills in agriculture to be encouraged to undertake organic farming as a business. New and special skills development training to be conducted taking into account the market demand and interests of the unemployed. Priority given to employment with the realisation that higher production, sustainable social security, and self-respect can be developed only through productive labour and employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrangements for access to skills development, training and technology for Nepali citizens to enable them to take advantage of employment opportunities created in the domestic market after return from foreign employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Various skills development trainings in manufacturing and services sector, including handicraft, plumbing, electrical repairing, electronics, cookery, artisan carpentry, masonry, tailoring, beautician and hair dressing, to be conducted at federal and provincial levels to enable laid off workers and those working in areas where 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range and scope of concessional loans provided to micro-, small and medium enterprises, commercial agriculture, youth enterprises, women enterprises and persons returning from foreign employment to be expanded. NPR 13 billion (ca. USD 100 million) allocated for this purpose to provide interest subsidy of 5 per cent. Allocation of NPR 400 million (ca. USD 3 million) for skill development training to push an additional 100,000 people into businesses, including handicraft, plumbing, electrical maintenance, electronics, cooks, blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, tailors, beauticians,

Fiscal Year 2019/20	Fiscal Year 2020/21	Fiscal Year 2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To effectively implement the Prime Minister Employment Programme, an arrangement to mobilise unemployed labour listed with the ESCs in public development and construction activities. 	<p>employment cannot be revived in the immediate future due to the pandemic, by transforming their skills and enabling them to work in a new environment elsewhere. Allocation of NPR 1 billion (ca. USD 7.8 million) to enable at least 50,000 to avail of employment from this programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocation of NPR 4.34 billion (ca. USD 33.8 million) for strengthening technical and vocational education and training institutes and providing skills-oriented training to 75,000 people. Expected to provide employment opportunities to new entrants in the labour market, workers laid off from the informal sectors due to the pandemic and youth returnees from foreign employment. Foreign Employment Welfare Fund is to be utilised in the employment rehabilitation programme. Records of skills, experiences and interests of the workers returning from foreign employment to be maintained and linked with work opportunities within the country. 	<p>hairdressers, vehicles and mobile phone maintenance, particularly targeting young people entering the labour market, workers returning from foreign employment, and those who have lost their jobs at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Prime Minister Employment Programme to be restructured to ensure a minimum of 100 days' employment to the unemployed. An arrangement to be made to conclude procurement contracts so that the unemployed enlisted at the ESCs will be hired in federal, provincial and local projects and programmes, including roads, irrigation, buildings, bridges, river training and tree plantation implemented at the local level. Allocation of NPR 12 billion (ca. USD 93.6 million) to create 200,000 jobs in 2021/22 year through the PMP.

4.6 Skilling, Skills Recognition and Certification

With the aim of developing a competitive and skilled workforce in order to maximise the benefits of foreign employment, the Government of Nepal has continuously prioritised investing in skills development of Nepali youth, including both aspirant and returnee migrant workers (Government of Nepal 2021, 3). This includes synchronising training practices to current labour market requirements, forecasting and strengthening the competencies of prospective migrant workers for jobs abroad, and expanding access to employment-related training in rural communities as a means to improve livelihoods, reduce poverty, and equip aspirant and returnee migrant workers with the skills required in the formal economy (ILO n.d.-c). The government considers skilling of aspirant migrant workers and reskilling and upskilling of current and returnee migrant workers as important steps in ensuring a dignified and productive migration experience for them.

Regional and international agreements to which Nepal is a party also acknowledge the importance of skills training and development as well as certification and recognition of such training. For example, the Colombo Process recognises that ‘skills development, certification and recognition of migrant workers coordinated between the countries of destination and the countries of origin will resolve the issue of skills mismatch, reduce vulnerability of migrant workers and enhance the development outcomes of temporary migration for all stakeholders’ (Colombo Process n.d.). Similarly, Objective 18 of the GCM calls on member-states to invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences (UN 2018).

The FEA 2007 classifies outgoing workers according to their skills in order to provide the requisite training (UN 2018). It also allows for utilising the FEWF to provide skills training to prospective migrant workers (UN 2018, s. 33). The FEA and the corresponding Rules 2008 have given the FEB the responsibility of training prospective and returnee migrant workers (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 39). The FEB is entrusted with formulating and approving the curricula of skills training courses, monitoring the skills training institutions, and carrying out needs assessment of training courses. DoFE is the regulatory body to grant approval to prospective skills training institutions. Although the FEA 2007 had the provision of requiring aspirant migrant workers to undergo skills training prior to departure (Government of Nepal 2007a, s. 30), it was only in 2019 that MoLESS made it mandatory (MoLESS 2019). However, the government is still looking for ways to implement this policy since the PRAs have expressed reservations about the practicality of such a requirement (Naya Patrika 2019; Onlinekhabar 2021).

The Employment-oriented Skill Development Training Operation Procedure, 2019 serves as a guiding document to clearly lay out processes and responsibilities of the FEB, DoFE and registered training providing institutions to conduct free or paid skills training of prospective migrant workers. This document has classified the occupations available for training into four sectors (MoLESS 2019) (Table 4.8).

Table 4.15: FEB’s Skills Training Occupations

Sector 1: Construction	Sector 2: Hotel Management	Sector 3: Services	Sector 4: Other
Masonry, scaffolding, welding, furniture and furnishing, plumbing, electrician, shuttering carpentry, steel fixture, tile-marble cutting and fitting	Cooking, waitering, housekeeping, cleaning, front office-related	Security guard, office secretary, painter, beautician	Garment tailoring, aluminium fabrication

Source: FEB 2022.

The Procedure has allocated 160 hours (30 working days) as mandatory learning hours for skills training (MoLESS 2019). It prescribes that the training be based on curricula developed and approved by the FEB or other skills-training providing institutions of the Government of Nepal. The Procedure further stipulates that prospective migrant workers who avail of free training from the FEB need to pass a mandatory skills test in order to acquire a labour approval (MoLESS 2019). The FEB partners with both governmental institutions such as the Vocational and Skill Development Training Centre (VSTDC) and the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) and licensed private institutions to impart free as well as paid skills training to prospective migrant workers.

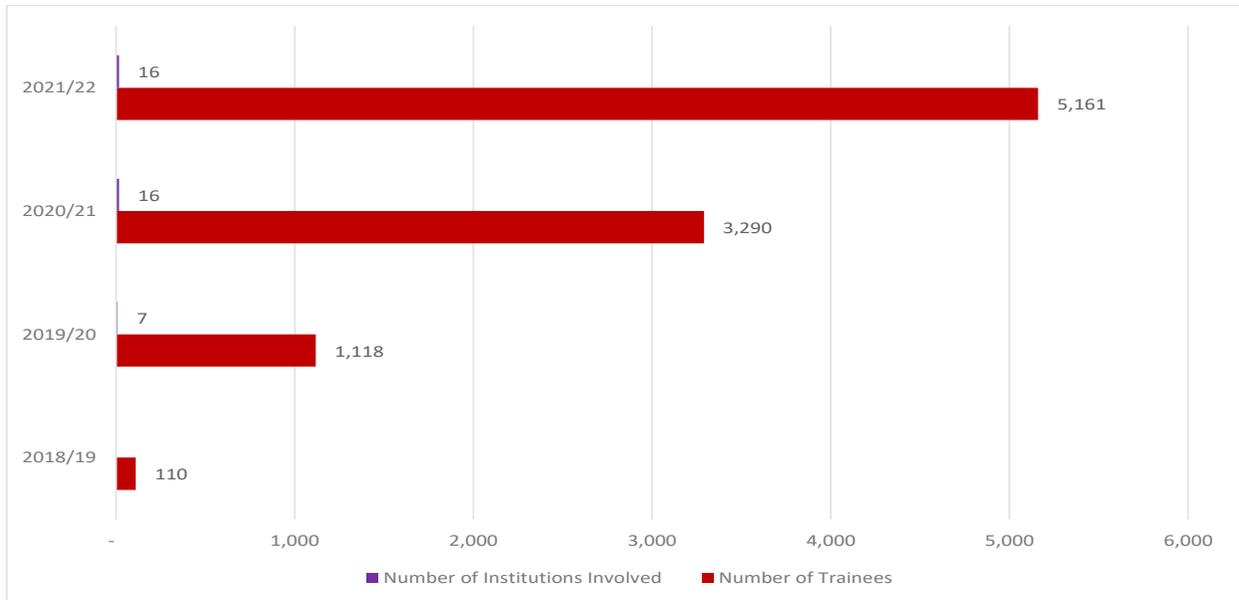
The FEB has been providing free skills development and training to both aspirant and returnee migrant workers in collaboration with the CTEVT (MoLESS 2020).⁸⁴ The FEB recently revised the curricula of 18 vocational and technical subjects in close coordination with the Curriculum Development Committee of the CTEVT and set out a new requirement that trainees take at least 160 hours of training. Likewise, the FEB has designed new skills training curriculum for occupations such as tile-marble cutting and fitting, beautician related work, furniture making, aluminium fabrication, and front office work while also revising the curriculum for caregivers (FEB 2021). In 2020/21, the FEB conducted free skills training targeted at both aspirant and returnee migrant workers in 14 districts through CTEVT-affiliated institutions (FEB 2021).⁸⁵ FEB entered into agreement with these institutions to ensure the delivery of skills training for migrant workers (paid for by the FEB) as well to carry out skills testing through the NSTB. These skills trainings were related to 15 subjects in the construction and hospitality sectors in high demand in both domestic and international markets (FEB 2021).

The FEB has also introduced a Training Management Information System (TMIS) to integrate skills training activities into the FEB’s online system. With this, a record-keeping mechanism that tracks and archives details of individuals trained under the auspices of the FEB has been created. This

⁸⁴ CTEVT is an autonomous national council chaired by the Minister for Education, Science and Technology tasked to regulate TEVT in Nepal.

⁸⁵ The districts were: Mahottari, Dhanusa, Kavrepalanchok, Kathmandu, Dolakha, Chitwan, Kaski, Palpa, Rupandehi, Dang, Banke, Salyan, Jumla and Kailali.

Figure 4.8: Number of Free Skills Training Provided by FEB



Note: The number of institutions involved in providing training for the fiscal year 2018/19 is not available.

Source: FEB, 2022.

initiative has resulted in making skills training an integral component of the pre-departure phase and is viewed as a basis for formulating plans for reskilling and upskilling of migrant workers (FEB 2021). The FEB has initiated programmes to evaluate the occupational skills of returning migrant workers in cooperation with the NSTB. Aspirant and returnee migrant workers who take free and/or paid skills training can get their skills evaluated through the tests conducted by NSTB. This has enabled the certification of skills of migrant workers.

Apart from the FEB, the MRCs at local levels provide migrant workers with information related to free skills training. A regulation recently released by MoLESS, the Migrant Resource Centre (Operation and Management) Procedure, 2022, provides MRCs with the mandate to facilitate foreign employment-oriented skills development training (FEB 2022d). Furthermore, as per the FEA 2007 local governments have also been given the responsibility of providing skills-development training to those migrating for foreign employment.

A National Vocational Qualification System (NVQS) has been established under the Nepal Vocational Qualifications System Project (NVQS-P) (Swisscontact n.d.). This system will increase the employability of youths in national and international labour markets through testing, certification and recognition of their skills and competencies.

This is particularly important in light of the fact that a major cause for concern is that foreign employers do not recognise trainings undertaken in Nepal (Thami and Bhattarai 2015). In-country

training does not cater to the needs of the international market, and thus the skills prospective migrant workers receive in fields that require operating machinery/equipment, for instance, are not recognised by employers in countries of destination (Thami and Bhattarai 2015). Also, certification received by prospective migrants in Nepal is often not recognised during recruitment for skilled positions abroad because of the variation in curriculum in Nepal and what is expected by employers abroad. In line with such observations, the government is working to find ways for a mutual skills recognition system suited to both Nepal and countries of destination. The efforts to secure mutual skills recognition mechanisms are evident in recent BLAs signed with some countries of destination (ILO 2021b). For example, MoU with Mauritius requires the formation of a Joint Working Group with responsibilities including mutual skills recognition, vocational training, and counselling for workers (ibid), while Qatar has expressed its commitment to support the Government of Nepal in establishing skills training centres in all the seven provinces to ensure proper skilling of Qatar-bound Nepali workers (MoLESS 2021b).

4.7 Labour Migration from Nepal to India

The recorded history of migration for work between Nepal and India can be traced back to the Treaty of Sugauli signed between Nepal and the English East India Company in 1816. The Treaty permitted the recruitment of Nepalis into the British Army. That was followed by the tripartite agreement of 1947 between Nepal, India and the United Kingdom, facilitating the recruitment of Nepalis into both the British and Indian Gorkha regiments (Sharma and Thapa 2013). The most significant agreement is the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1950, which, to this day, allow the free flow of nationals of the two countries across the open Nepal–India border (ibid). Besides facilitating cross-border mobility driven by cultural and religious ties shared with India (Bashyal 2020a), the Treaty allows Nepalis to easily migrate to India in search of job opportunities (Adhikari 2017).

For this very reason, the existing legal framework governing labour migration from Nepal as well as international conventions ratified by the government fall short of covering the Nepali diaspora in India (ibid). There is growing concern, however, that discourses and concerns of migration to the GCC countries and Malaysia have eclipsed Nepal-India migration and the issues of Nepali migrant workers in India.

According to the NLFS 2017/18, there were around 1 million Nepalis in India who had migrated for work.⁸⁶ In terms of provinces, Sudurpaschim accounts for the highest number of Nepalis migrating to India (38.2 per cent of the total), followed by Lumbini (29.1 per cent) and Karnali (10 per cent) (Baniya et al 2020a). However, owing to the open border, it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of Nepalis in India at any given time (Bashyal 2020a). Moreover, seasonal migration can also mislead population estimates (Baniya et al 2020b). Likewise, outliers such as those illegally holding dual citizenships of India and Nepal also affect the demographic representation of migrants (ibid, 35 – 36). Developing a gender- and age-based disaggregation of Nepali migrants in India is equally challenging as there is a mismatch in the figures made available by the two governments. For instance, the Indian

⁸⁶ Calculation from the raw dataset from the Nepal Labour Force Survey from 2017/18 provided by Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility (CESLAM). See: Baniya et al (2020).

census quotes a higher number of Nepali women migrants in India compared to the Nepali census (Sharma and Thapa 2013). Hence, according to the 2011 Census of India, there are 810,158 Nepalis (including 533,369 women) in India while the 2011 Census of Nepal puts that figure at 722,256 (including 116,362 women) (Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India n.d.; Khatiwada 2014).

In India, Nepalis have been found to be engaged in a wide range of occupations—serving in the prestigious Gorkha regiment of the Indian Army to working in the tourism sector and as security guards and domestic workers in the private sector (Bashyal 2020b; Sharma and Thapa 2013). Given the long history of migration between Nepal and India, Nepali migrants are spread throughout the country, creating a sizeable network, thus making it easier for new emigrants to find jobs (Bashyal 2020c). In fact, Nepali immigrants residing in India are known to carry cultural characteristics that reflect the Nepali district they originate from (*ibid.*). There is little information, however, regarding the exact population of migrants working in unsupervised sectors such as in commercial sex work, collieries and domestic spaces (Sharma and Thapa 2013). Because these groups are usually beyond surveillance and social policing, it is difficult to track them.

Generally, those migrating to India either come from a poor economic background or are seasonal migrant farmers (World Bank 2009; Seddon 2002). In fact, farmers tend to stay home during the planting and harvesting seasons and go to India for work at other times of the year. As a country of destination, India has gained popularity among poor and rural communities for multiple reasons, including the low cost of migration (Kharel et al 2022c; Shrestha 2017), geographical proximity and the open border besides extant networks in India.

In more recent years, India is being increasingly used as a transit point by migrant workers travelling to third countries using irregular channels. Restrictive migration policies, primarily for women migrants, complex and cumbersome migration procedures, specific country bans imposed on migration, and inadequate awareness of the migration process, among others, have led migrant workers to use these channels as a way of circumventing government rules such as the requirement to obtain labour approvals. While such approaches have rendered Nepali migrant workers more vulnerable to forced labour and exploitation, the open border has also furthered criminal activities such as human trafficking, among others (Kharel et al 2022b; Kunwar 2018).

Chapter 5:

REFLECTIONS ON DATA GAPS



Apply For Work Permit
नया कार्यस्थल प्राप्त करने के लिए



View/Edit Profile
अपनी जानकारी देखें/संशोधित करें



Old Applications
पहले के आवेदन देखें



New Company Add Request
नया कंपनी जोड़ें



Individual Complaint
व्यक्तिगत शिकायत



RA Complaint
संरक्षण आदेश शिकायत



Search Foreign Job Demand
विदेशी नौकरियों की खोज



Migrant workers/aspirant migrant workers can apply for new labour approvals and renewal of labour approval through the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS).

Chapter 5: Reflections on Data Gaps

Migration-related data is important for understanding the pattern on migration, including its causes and consequences and impacts on both countries of origin and destination, identifying vulnerable groups, and subsequently developing migration-related plans and policies to support migrant workers. The Constitution of Nepal, the Fifteenth Periodic Plan (2019/20–2023/24) and various global and regional frameworks, processes and agenda that Nepal is part of (such as Global Compact for Migration, Sustainable Development Goals and Colombo Process) highlight the significance of collecting and managing high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data on labour and migration for evidence-based advocacy as well as development of effective programmes. The COVID-19 situation highlighted the importance of timely and accurate data on the stock of migrant workers as well as the number of returnees for the formulation of effective responses and recovery plans and policies. However, availability and accessibility of migration data continues to remain a challenge.

Migration data in Nepal are available through various sources such as national censuses and surveys, information systems such as Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS), and other data recorded by government agencies dealing with migration and foreign employment. Each type and source of data has its own strengths and limitations in terms of method of collection and the statistics it can generate. In addition to the unavailability of disaggregated data,⁸⁷ this report has identified some key gaps as well as inconsistencies and discrepancies in the labour migration data recorded and maintained.⁸⁸ MoLESS recognises and aims to improve the information management system to address these gaps and challenges at Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE), Foreign Employment Board (FEB), Foreign Employment Tribunal (FET), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB).

Along with the decennial census and periodic national surveys such as the Nepal Living Standard Survey, the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey and the Nepal Labour Force Survey, FEIMS is perhaps the most important platform that collects data on labour migration from Nepal. The FEIMS data, however, is not without its own limitations.

⁸⁷ This issue is also highlighted by Sharma & Sharma, *Enumerating Migration in Nepal*.

⁸⁸ Data gaps can occur when there are statistics missing and when data are available but are not disaggregated, representative or updated (Women Deliver 2020).

- The data on labour approvals issued by DoFE forms the basis of data recorded in FEIMS. This figure, however, excludes Nepali migrant workers who migrate without labour approvals through irregular channels such as via India or by using tourist visas.
- FEIMS also does not cover labour migration from Nepal to India.
- The system does not provide information on the repeat labour approvals, i.e., more than one labour approval issued to the same individual over a period of time.
- Data on district or province of origin captured in FEIMS is based on the district the citizenship certificate was acquired from, not the actual district of residence of migrant workers.
- Data on skill, occupation and salary recorded in FEIMS is largely based on the occupation and skill mentioned in the demand letter and may not reflect the worker's actual occupation.
- The data on skills and occupations of outgoing and current migrants is scattered and non-standardised although efforts to organise the data systematically are underway.
- Just as the number of migrant workers going for foreign employment is based on labour approvals, data maintained in FEIMS on returnee migrant workers does not incorporate those returning from India and those who had migrated without labour approvals.

Foreign Employment Welfare Information Management System (FEWIMS) figures also do not provide an accurate picture of the situation of illness, injury, disability as well as death of migrant workers in countries of destination.

- Migrant workers who die or are injured outside the financial assistance period, the contract (labour approval) period plus an additional one year, are not eligible for support, and are not included in the data.
- It is also not possible to disaggregate the data on financial assistance provided on death of migrant workers and illness based on occupation in countries of destination.
- Data on death and injuries is not available for some years and even when it is, the causes are missing.

There is also a lack of disaggregated data for some variables recorded by government agencies. For example, data on cases related to fraud in foreign employment registered at DoFE and the FET lack disaggregation based on gender and other variables such as place of origin, caste/ethnicity, types/nature of cases registered and their current adjudication status. Remittance data also faces similar issues.

There is also a lack of comprehensive and systematic data on skills and interests of returnee migrant workers, especially since it has received heightened attention after the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, despite the importance of Nepal-India migration for employment, especially seasonal work, migrant flow along that corridor is not recorded in its entirety by the government or the national census and surveys. Migrants are captured under 'absentees' in national surveys and census, the definition of which fails to take into account seasonal migration that characterises this migration corridor to a very large extent.

There is also a lack of coordination and systematic data-sharing among various relevant government agencies such as diplomatic missions, Department of Consular Services (DoCS), FEB, DoFE, FET, insurance providers, etc. Systematic sharing of data collected at local level through employment service centres (ESCs), employment information centres (EICs) as well as District Administration Office (DAO) offices and DoFE on grievances and cases, etc, has also not been regularised through any mechanism.

Having access to timely, representative, robust and high-quality data on migration is essential to inform and contribute to policy discussions and recommendations. The development of management information systems such as FEIMS, FEWIMS and Training Management Information System (TMIS) present an immense opportunity to collect detailed data on migration. An opportunity, therefore, has become available to further develop and improve these information systems to create regular, representative, comprehensive, standard and accessible data on different migration parameters.



Planning Meeting, MOLESS, 2022.

Chapter 6:
Way forward



Nepal-Japan Joint Committee Meeting,
Kathmandu.

Chapter 6: Way Forward

Labour migration has long become an integral part of Nepali society. In order to maximise the benefits of labour migration, the Government of Nepal has been working to make labour migration safe, orderly and dignified. Among the noteworthy developments over the last decade have been adjustments in institutional and legislative arrangements, introduction of newer policies and initiatives, strengthened cooperation at the national, regional and international levels, and greater attempts to understand labour migration and the various aspects related to it.

As mentioned in the preceding chapters, there are still a number of gaps and challenges in both policy and practice that will require attention in the near future. In line with the study and its own priority, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) will continue with its effort on ensuring decent work, gender equality and digital transformation in migration governance. For this purpose, MoLESS will adopt a Periodic Strategic Plan and a Labour Administration Action Plan. With this backdrop, the following areas have been identified as guiding the way forward.

Strengthening Legal and Policy Frameworks

MoLESS recognises:

- that the ongoing revisions to the Foreign Employment Act (FEA), 2007 and the Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 can address many of the concerns regarding the rights and protection of undocumented migrant workers, women and those working as domestic staff while also ensuring social protection coverage for these same groups. The planned changes can also rectify contradictions in Nepal's position on migration in general, including labour migration, while also seeking harmonisation with the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act (HTTCA), 2007.
- that the problem of human trafficking and smuggling being conflated with labour migration can be addressed during the revision of the FEA, 2007. Accordingly, any amendment will have to clarify the specific measures to be undertaken by MoLESS to curb trafficking and smuggling in the context of labour migration and provide the necessary support to victims of trafficking in line with commitments expressed in the Bali Process and the Palermo Protocol. With Nepal's accession to the Palermo Protocol, there is a need for strengthened coordination with the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens and the Ministry of Home Affairs to ensure that both the FEA, 2007 and HTTCA, 2007 and any amendments to these laws align with the Protocol.

Most specifically, the definition of human trafficking could follow the internationally accepted one and avoid the conflation of human trafficking and smuggling with labour migration.

- the possibility of delegating responsibility to labour inspectors based in various labour offices to provide oversight of recruitment practices in coordination with the Chief District Officer.
- that the planned revision of the FEA, 2007 and the Foreign Employment Policy, 2012 can serve as an opportunity to define what is covered within the ambit of recruitment fees and related costs while also supporting government efforts to ensure fair and ethical recruitment, including implementation of the ‘employer pays’ principle, as stipulated in the bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) with countries of destination. The ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment and Definitions of Recruitment Fees and Related Cost can serve as guideposts for these changes.
- that signing BLMAs with more countries of destination is a significant step towards ensuring the protection of migrant workers and their rights. It recognises the importance of discussions and consultations with all the stakeholders prior to drafting and reviewing agreements while also ensuring detailed documentation of the processes followed at home and in countries of destination for future reference.
- the need to deliberate on and discuss changing trends and dynamics in the labour migration and foreign employment sector and the possibility of amending BLMAs to reflect these developments in joint committee meetings with countries of destination as well as in bilateral discussions and regional and international platforms.
- that efforts need to be continued to ensure inclusion of gender-responsive provisions in the BLMAs.

Enhanced E-Governance of Foreign Employment

MoLESS also recognises

- the imperative of migrant workers and their families being aware of and having access to online service delivery platforms while applying for labour approvals or seeking financial assistance from the Foreign Employment Board (FEB).
- that adopting new modes of communication such as social media to provide audio-visual tutorials and publicise infographics can be an effective way to support informed and safe migration. Migrant workers can receive information on topics such as their rights, grievance registration mechanisms, safe migration practices, compensation and other services available to them.

Decentralisation of Services

MoLESS further recognises

- that federalisation has offered a pathway to decentralise services related to foreign employment such as issuing labour approvals, pre-departure orientation training (PDOT), medical check-ups, recruitment, insurance, case registration, mediation and access to justice to the provincial and local level of government. Ensuring ease of access to assistance such as financial assistance for death, insurance claims for illness and injuries or scholarships for children is essential for labour migration to become safe, dignified and beneficial to migrants and their families.
- that monitoring and regulation of actors such as private recruitment agencies (PRAs), insurance companies, and PDOT and health centres can be decentralised to the provincial and local level.
- that there is a need to continue to seek ways to strengthen inter- and intra-governmental coordination mechanisms and pathways as well as put in place a system for coordinating with international agencies and civil society organisations (CSOs) working at the provincial and local levels to enhance decentralised and effective service delivery.

Recruitment Practices

MoLESS will

- explore the designing of incentives for PRAs that practise fairer and more ethical recruitment.
- reconsider the currently suspended mandatory quota for PRAs to send at least 100 workers abroad every year for two consecutive years.
- strengthen monitoring of the recruitment process and practices in coordination with and allocation of resources to DoFE, the labour offices and the district administration offices (DAOs).

Access to Justice

MoLESS will

- continue to engage in discussions with authorities in countries of destination to find amicable ways to address the grievances of migrant workers such as non-payment and/or reduction of wages (wage theft), forced labour, exploitation, and abuse. To the extent possible, efforts will be made to address these issues through bilateral discussions and also to incorporate them into BLMAs in the future.

- continue making efforts to ensure that migrant workers in irregular situations in countries of destination have free and easy access to legal remedies and compensation mechanisms, including for recruitment-related violations. While this can be achieved through bilateral and diplomatic discussions, it is equally important that the government coordinate with CSOs and other stakeholders to use their extensive networks in Nepal and in countries of destination to encourage migrant workers and returnees to register complaints while ensuring they can understand and handle grievance registration and compensation processes.
- endeavour to ensure that migrant workers are well-informed about their rights and of the legal protections available to them. These include accessing mechanisms to register grievances regarding recruitment and labour rights violations at home and in countries of destination. It recognises that information on grievance registration and the compensation-seeking procedure has to be included in the PDOT. CSOs, trade unions and the media can also play an important role through awareness-raising campaigns and information dissemination.

Roles of Diplomatic Missions and Labour Diplomacy

MoLESS acknowledges

- that the human resource and financial capacities of diplomatic missions, especially in countries with a large number of migrant workers, have to be strengthened in order to provide effective services to migrant workers.
- the need for innovative ideas to enhance communication with migrant workers in countries of destination, particularly those living far away from where diplomatic missions are located.
- that it is essential to assign labour attachés to new destinations where more than 5000 Nepalis have migrated for employment. This is especially true for those countries with the potential to attract many more migrant workers but which do not yet have residential Nepali diplomatic missions.
- the importance of engaging with emerging economies to secure early access to new labour markets while also furthering political and socio-economic ties. MoLESS will continue coordinating with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to explore more opportunities for migrant workers in terms of both sectors of occupation and countries of destination. This will go hand-in-hand with efforts to ensure higher salaries and benefits for the workers, better protection of their rights, access to social security and justice, ability to organise themselves and bargain collectively, and social integration in host countries.
- that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for more coordinated efforts between

Nepali diplomatic missions and governments of countries of destination for the safe and dignified repatriation of migrant workers during emergencies.

- the importance of proactively seeking opportunities to chair regional processes such as the Colombo Process and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. These fora provide an opportunity to draw attention to the concerns of Nepali migrant workers at the bilateral, regional, and international levels. By playing a vital role in their organisations, priority issues of Nepal and Nepali migrant workers can be highlighted in such platforms. In close coordination with MoFA, MoLESS will study the relevant laws and policies of the countries of destinations and also gauge their willingness to enter into BLMAs as advance preparation before attending bilateral meetings and negotiations and joint technical committee meetings. The same approach will be adopted while participating in ministerial conferences and other regional and international fora.
- the need for activities such as knowledge generation and sharing on migration and migrants from South Asia through the SAARC Technical Committee on Labour Migration.
- the abundant opportunities to benefit from the UN Network on Migration. In the coming years, MoLESS will not only actively participate in the Technical Working Groups of the Network on Migration but also seek to lead some of the committees. This will allow Nepal an opportunity to lay out its priorities and develop proposals aimed at the capacity enhancement of both Nepali migrant workers and institutions involved in the labour migration sector.
- that the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasised the need for regional and international cooperation. Nepal will continue its effort to create regional and international solidarity to address the labour and human rights concerns of migrant workers in countries of destination. Strengthening regional and international cooperation and collaboration will provide a major boost to the protection of migrant workers.

Multi-stakeholder Collaboration

MoLESS will

- continue taking initiatives to strengthen and enhance dialogue and discussions at the national, provincial and local levels. Establishing an inter-ministerial committee or a working group to improve coordination between government institutions on matters related to migration could be a first step towards that end.
- host multi-stakeholder dialogues and discussions on migration policies and programmes as a means to improve the protection of human and labour rights of migrant workers and foster a rights-based approach to labour migration governance. MoLESS acknowledges the importance of participation of multiple groups in deliberations on policies on migration, foreign employment

and reintegration to ensure the formulation of effective migration policies and legislation. Periodic consultations and dissemination of research findings in collaboration with concerned state and non-state actors in both national and regional platforms are also crucial for a mutual exchange of ideas and understanding of new developments in the labour migration sector.

Social Protection

MoLESS recognises

- the need to provide social protection coverage to all migrant workers and their families. This can be addressed by establishing bilateral social security mechanisms based on the social security schemes of Nepal and the respective countries of destination. Efforts will be made to allow portability of social security benefits across borders, including through BLMAs, and also to ensure 24 hour-insurance coverage for Nepali migrant workers in the countries of destination.
- that migrant workers and their families have to be covered by the social security system through schemes to support left-behind family members of migrant workers. Such schemes also need to be gender responsive, particularly since there are sectors with a large number of women migrant workers such as in domestic work.
- the importance of providing better and long-term support to left-behind families and children of migrant workers, particularly those of deceased or severely injured migrant workers.

Health and Safety of Migrant Workers

MoLESS will

- continue its efforts to ensure migrant workers have access to health care and health-related information in countries of destination and even after their return home. It will push for bilateral discussions and BLMAs with countries of destination towards that end, irrespective of legal status, citizenship, gender or ethnicity.
- seek way to ensure regular and effective inspection of migrant workers' workplace and their working and living conditions as part of the effort to ensure their well-being.
- explore the provision of training on occupational safety and health to migrant workers prior to their departure from Nepal and after their arrival in countries of destination in coordination with both employers and Nepali diplomatic missions.
- scale up outreach programme focused on occupational safety and health (OSH) along with other service-related information for migrant workers both in Nepal and countries of destinations

through social media platforms and digital mediums such as Facebook and YouTube.

- continue efforts to address issues of occupational hazard and long-term health and safety of migrant workers, including gaining a better understanding of the causes of deaths and injuries, through dialogue with countries of destination and also by raising them at international and regional platforms.
- soon implement country-specific PDOT curricula so that migrants can be provided information about various occupation-related risks and the measures to be taken in the countries of their destination.
- begin taking steps to include information on the pros and cons of migration and issues of occupational safety and health at workplaces in the school curriculum.

Return and Reintegration

MoLESS recognises

- that the federal system of governance provides an immense opportunity to align governance structures and policies on labour migration through delegation of mandates and responsibilities to the provincial and local level. Needs-based reintegration programmes can be designed by adopting a bottom-up approach that takes into account local conditions as well as the development plans of provincial and local governments. The recent Reintegration Programme (Operation and Management) Directive for Returnee Migrant Workers, 2022, which provides for local governments to submit proposals for reintegration programmes to the FEB, is a step in that direction.
- the importance of exploring strategies to strengthen cooperation and collaboration with national and international organisations in the reintegration of returnee migrant workers, as per the provision of the Reintegration Directive. In line with the Directive, linking reintegration programmes with existing programmes and schemes of the government and the non-government sector—such as employment programmes,⁸⁹ concessional loan schemes, reintegration initiatives⁹⁰ and bilateral projects⁹¹—can help broaden available options for returnees. It is necessary to explore the potential to tailor such programmes to the needs of the diverse groups of migrant workers coming back to Nepal. National, provincial and local support for reintegration should focus not only on individuals but also consider improving and enhancing the institutional capacities of local governments, businesses and civil society for the effective implementation of reintegration programmes.

⁸⁹ Employment programmes in the name of the Prime Minister and provincial Chief Ministers are some examples.

⁹⁰ Such as IOM's return and reintegration initiatives including its Reintegration Handbook that provides comprehensive approach to sustainable reintegration.

⁹¹ Among these are the Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers (ReMi) supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the reintegration project in partnership with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

- that the government can support the establishment and capacity enhancement of shelter homes (run both by the government and by CSOs) to provide support to distressed, exploited and needy migrants as well as victims of violence in countries of destination and/or in Nepal. Efforts will be made to establish shelters in all provinces as well as in countries of destination, where possible.
- that reintegration plans and strategies need to prioritise the most needy and vulnerable returnee migrants and their left-behind family members.

Skilling, Skills Recognition and Certification

MoLESS is

- working to expand existing skills training programmes for potential and returnee migrant workers with training in many more occupations and upgrading the curricula of existing ones. Following the Government of Qatar's recent pledge to establish training centres in all seven provinces for prospective migrant workers headed to Qatar, MoLESS will explore the possibility of similar schemes with other countries of destination.
- aiming to expand the existing skill training and certification scheme under the FEB tailored for potential migrant workers and returnee migrant workers, and undertaken in collaboration with the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) and the National Skill Testing Board (NSTB), to all the provinces in the future. Returnees as well as employers have to be made aware about such systems and that ease of access to the same is ensured. MoLESS notes that the National Vocational Qualification System (NVQS) framework could be an important tool to ensure recognition of prior learning of returnee migrant workers.

Disaster/Crisis Response and Recovery Plan

MoLESS notes

- that developing an emergency preparedness, response and recovery plan and strategy for the protection of and support for migrant workers in countries of destination and after return is required. This is especially so in light of lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. Such a plan will also have to envisage the roles of all three tiers of government, relevant agencies and social partners as well as of potential coordination mechanisms.
- the role and importance of diplomatic missions, international organisations, civil society, workers' organisations, PRAs, employers, and human rights and diaspora organisations in providing support to migrant workers in countries of destination and at home during disasters, crises, pandemics and wars. MoLESS emphasises the need to ensure participation of these groups in formulating guidelines and practices for disaster response and recovery plans for migrant workers.

- that since BLMAs with countries of destination and existing policies and laws can address the issue of protection of migrant workers in times of crisis, war and pandemic, clearly outlining the roles and responsibilities of concerned authorities in both countries of origin and destination would be helpful.
- that initiatives are required to mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt to eliminate the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave the country.

Remittance

MoLESS recognises

- that the Government of Nepal will continue its efforts to ensure that remittance transfer is easy, fast, inexpensive and conducted through regular channels in line with Targets 10.7 and Target 10.c of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁹²
- the need for more attractive incentives to encourage Nepali migrant workers to remit through formal channels. The effective implementation of the government's scheme to provide a discount of 50 per cent on the passport and labour approval renewal fees as well as for consular services to those who remit through formal channels will be instrumental. It will be important to also ensure that migrant workers are aware of these schemes and that they can easily access them.
- that, in order to ensure higher savings and investment in enterprises and employment generation, MoLESS will work to expand the existing financial literacy programmes for migrant workers and their families being conducted through the SaMi and ReMi programmes of the governments of Nepal and Switzerland.

Migration Data and Further Knowledge

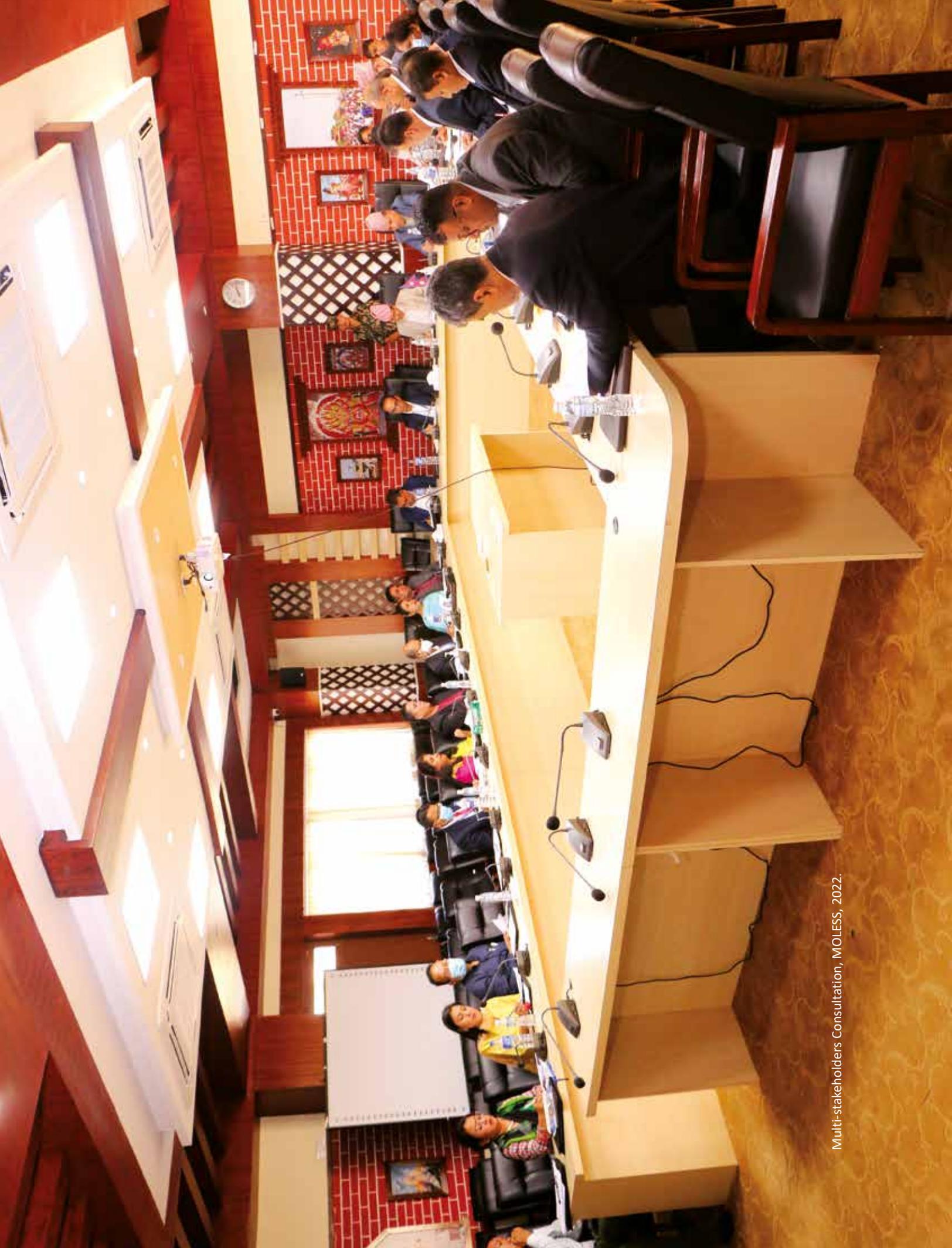
- It is important to generate nationally relevant and internationally comparable data on migration indicators, including on returnee migrant workers, which is timely, representative, comprehensive and accessible. MoLESS recognises the need to improve data collection, recording, management and reporting, and make it interactive with various other systems. Existing ones, in particular, the Employment Management Information System (EMIS) developed under the Prime Minister Employment Programme (PMEP), can be upgraded to collect such information at the local level. MoLESS notes that this system could be made accessible at the ward offices of local governments in order to maintain data related to both unemployment and migration at that level.

⁹² Respectively, 'Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies', and 'By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent'.

- MoLESS recognises the crucial role of local and provincial governments in creating profiles of returnee migrant workers, including of their skills and expertise.
- MoLESS notes that assessing and mapping data sources on migration and foreign employment is important. Such efforts can help identify gaps in the data, such as lack of disaggregation or absence of information on indicators like recruitment fees and remittance transfer costs borne by migrant workers, information that can help inform the SDGs and the GCM and also bilateral discussions with countries of destination.
- Migration desks at checkpoints along the Nepal–India border can be established by local governments to record the flow of migrants across the border. Technical assistance and support for human and financial resources and capacity-building training can be provided in coordination with I/NGOs. Since a major gap in information is on the Nepal–India migration corridor, the National Employment Management Information System (NEMIS) can serve as a crucial source for data on Nepalis’ migration to India for work and also on returnees from there.
- MoLESS will continue working to update and upgrade the existing information management system.
 - ✧ The Ministry notes that data on indicators such as occupation and skills profile of migrant workers recorded in the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS) could follow the standard international classification of occupations and skills.
 - ✧ FEIMS and FEWIMS need to be updated to reflect changes in the administrative structure of the country.
 - ✧ Work on integrating FEWIMS and FEIMS to align the welfare-related information of migrant workers obtaining labour approvals is ongoing.
 - ✧ MoLESS recognises that Nepali Port, which captures real-time immigration data at Nepal’s international airports, can be upgraded to be able to also identify and capture data on returnee migrants who had used irregular channels to migrate.
- MoLESS acknowledges the need to record and maintain disaggregated data for important variables related to foreign employment and migrant workers.
 - ✧ A template can be developed to record disaggregated data on cases related to fraud, deception, etc, registered with DoFE, the Foreign Employment Tribunal, and district administration offices across the country.
 - ✧ Another template can be developed to record gender-disaggregated data on migrant workers going to South Korea under the Employment Permit System (EPS) and also allow for disaggregation for occupation, origin districts and provinces.
 - ✧ There is a need for disaggregated data on deaths and injuries of migrant workers by occupation

in order to support evidence-based discussions on OSH of workers with countries of destination.

- ✧ MoLESS acknowledges that a standard template to document disaggregated statistics on migrant workers in jail, missing, and in a coma in countries of destination is required.
- Dedicated officers or a team of officers can be deployed for the operation and management of the information systems and generation of disaggregated migration statistics. Capacity development training will be required for such officials to enable them to navigate through the system as well as identify discrepancies and irregularities.
- A periodic migration survey at an interval of two to three years could be a potential source of very valuable real-time data on migration.
- Structural barriers facing returnee migrant workers, particularly women, in accessing reintegration support programmes need to be identified. This is crucial since returnees would have become accustomed to a different institutional set-up in countries of destination. Micro-studies can be an important tool to collect such information and thus inform formulation of reintegration policies, plans and programmes while ensuring that issues of gender equality and social inclusion are reflected fully in reintegration support programmes.
- Issue-based studies can be conducted to understand the needs, interests and preferences of returnee migrant workers, particularly women, assess the labour market, and identify sectors with the potential for employment and self-employment. Such studies can be conducted with support from and in collaboration with international organisations, CSOs, research institutes and academics working in the field of migration and reintegration.



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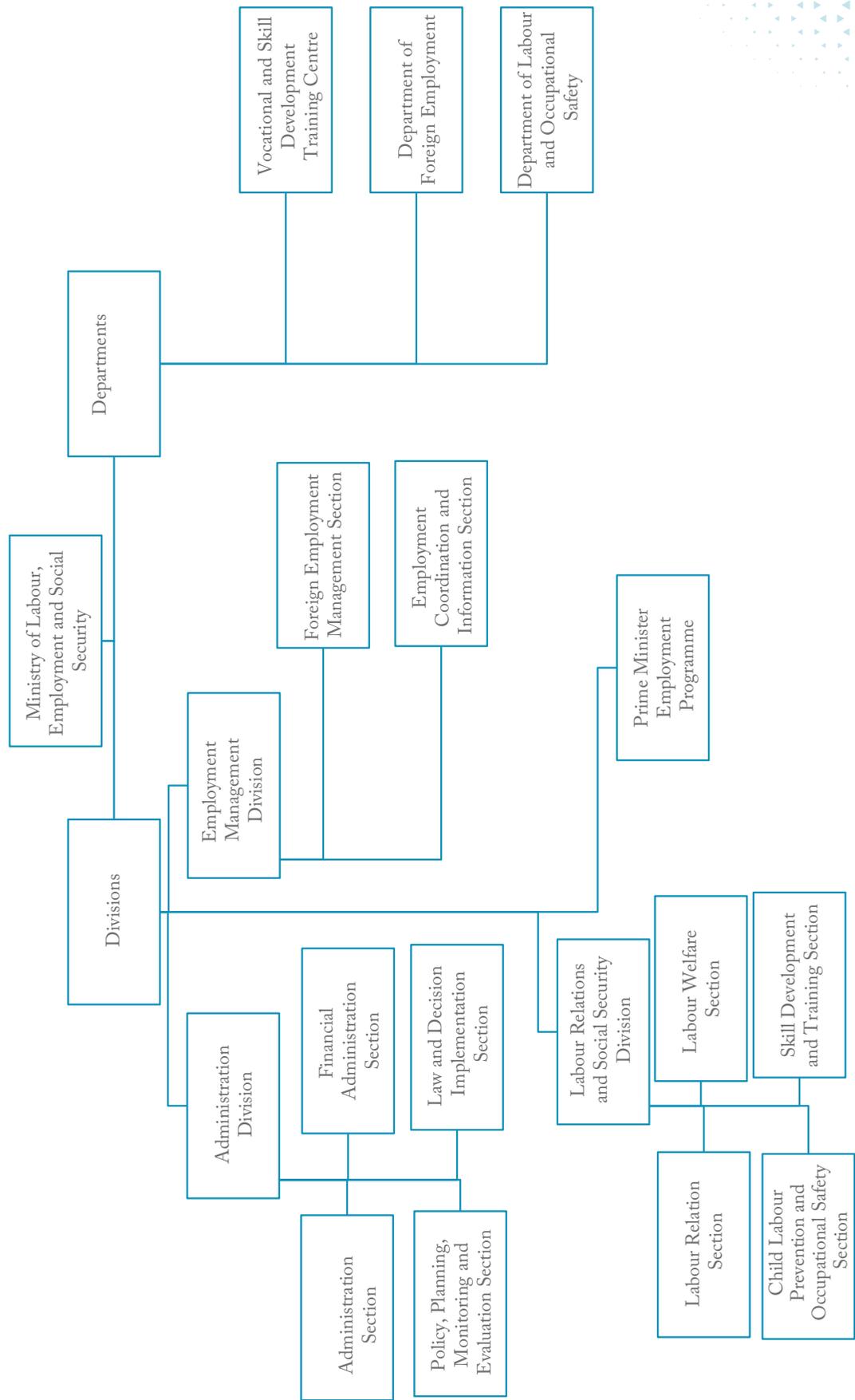
Annex



Annex 1: No-Objection Certificates 2020/21 (2077/78) (Number Issued And Destination)

S.N.	Country	Approved	S.N.	Country	Approved	S.N.	Country	Approved
1	Armenia	4	21	Greece	1	41	Portugal	4
2	United States of America	964	22	Hungary	5	42	Qatar	79
3	Australia	4,849	23	India	2,797	43	Republic Of Korea	2,643
4	Austria	8	24	Ireland	31	44	Romania	4
5	Bahrain	39	25	Israel	1	45	Russia	19
6	Bangladesh	114	26	Italy	45	46	Saudi Arabia	8
7	Belgium	12	27	Japan	8,146	47	Scotland	8
8	Bosnia And Herzegovina	4	28	Kyrgyz Republic	1	48	Singapore	8
9	Canada	2,516	29	Kyrgyzstan	4	49	South Africa	18
10	China	90	30	Latvia	6	50	Spain	23
11	Costa Rica	5	31	Lithuania	9	51	Sweden	45
12	Croatia	29	32	Luxembourg	1	52	Switzerland	6
13	Cyprus	9	33	Malaysia	11	53	Tanzania	1
14	Czech Republic	50	34	Malta	15	54	Thailand	189
15	Denmark	259	35	Netherlands	38	55	Turkey	2
16	Egypt	9	36	New Zealand	91	56	UAE	933
17	Estonia	6	37	Norway	202	57	United Kingdom (UK)	2,354
18	Finland	156	38	Pakistan	18	58	Ukraine	376
19	France	269	39	Philippines	47	Total NOC Approved		27,978
20	Germany	350	40	Poland	47			

Annex 2: Institutional Structure of Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security



Annex 3: Annual Policies, Programmes and Budget 2022/23 of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

- a. **Monetary Aid Distribution Programme [NPR 981.4 million (ca. USD 7.7 million)]**
 - Financial assistance and relief distribution to families of deceased migrant workers and returnees with physical injuries/serious illness
 - Support for health check-ups of families of migrant workers engaged in foreign employment
 - School-level scholarship distribution programme (for 3500 students)
 - Delivery of body to the home of deceased
 - Pre-departure training cost of women migrant workers
 - Expert committee management and other economic costs
- b. **Rescue and Relief Programme [NPR 14.6 million (ca. USD 115,000)]**
 - Legal support to Nepali workers, safe house operation support in seven diplomatic missions and rescue and repatriation
 - Management of information and support section at international airports in Nepal
 - Management of assistance contact office at Nepali embassies in major countries of destination
- c. **Free Skill-based Training Programmes [NPR 202.8 million (ca. USD 1.6 million)]**
 - Free skill training (for 10,000 outbound and returnee migrant workers)
 - Free vocational and skill development training in collaboration with Vocational and Skill Development Training Centre (residential training for 500 individuals)
 - Assessment of usefulness of vocational skills and development training to the trainees
 - Free skill test (for 10,500 individuals)
 - Inspection and evaluation of the infrastructure of institutions providing skills-based training
 - Interaction and evaluation programme for institutions providing skill-based training (two times)
 - Occupational skills and occupational health related training (for 500 trainees)
 - Periodic reflection and revision of curriculum for skills-based training work procedures for domestic workers
- d. **Foreign Employment Orientation Training [NPR 9.7 million (ca. USD 76,000)]**
 - Development of mobile app related to pre-departure orientation training
 - Development of audio and audio-visual training materials (10 episodes)
 - Inspection and evaluation of pre-departure orientation training institutions
 - Management of free orientation training for outbound women workers
 - Reflection on and revision of information sharing leaflets throughout the country
 - Training of trainers for pre-departure orientation training
- e. **Information Sharing and Consultation Relating to Foreign Employment [NPR 25.25 million (ca. USD 198,000)]**
 - Institutional capacity building as well as mobilisation of Migration Resource Centres (MRCs)

with orientation to local levels on MRC guidelines and maintenance of National Migrant Resource Centre (NMRC) database (update, promotion)

- Establishment and operation of labour call centres
 - Production and telecasting of safer migration related television and radio programmes
 - Development, publication and distribution of information materials on foreign employment including brochures, leaflets and factsheets on laws and regulations (including for MRCs)
 - Translation of labour laws of countries of destination (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Malaysia) into Nepali language
 - Celebration of International Migrants Day
 - Carrying out relevant programmes in collaboration with donor agencies and other institutions
- f. **Reintegration Programmes [NPR 152.5 million (ca. USD 1.2 million)]**
- Operation of safe houses with socio-psychological counselling services (for 500 individuals)
 - Financial literacy and entrepreneurship training for returnee migrant workers in collaboration with provincial and local governments (reintegration package for 3000 individuals)
 - Communication, coordination and collaboration meetings with local level governments
- g. **Social and Health and Safety Programmes [NPR 8 million (ca. USD 62,000 USD)]**
- Meetings and collaborations with countries of destination for social security of workers (three meetings in total)
 - Development and dissemination of awareness raising audio-visual material on physical and mental health and safety
 - Feasibility study and conduction of telemedicine services (five studies and 20 conduction)
- h. **Training, Study and Research [NPR 6.2 million (ca. USD 48,000)]**
- Evaluation of occupational plans of FEB
 - Academic studies and research on different aspects of foreign employment
 - Language training to labour attachés/counsellors in Nepali diplomatic missions
 - Formation of working committees through the decision of FEB, management of those committees and mobilisation of expert
 - Internship opportunities/support for Bachelor's level students studying in universities (total six students—three men and three women)
- i. **Collaboration with Stakeholders and Institutional Capacity Building [NPR 14.4 million (ca.USD 113,000)]**
- Interaction and discussion programmes on different agendas in collaboration with Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies
 - Discussion programmes or meetings for collaborations with Non-Resident Nepali Association, Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry and other financial institutions for the security, rescue and rehabilitation of Migrant workers

- Interactions or discussion programmes between counsellor/labour attachés and Secretariat of Foreign Employment Board on solutions of problems migrant workers face
- Interaction programmes with journalists who report on foreign employment related issues (three programmes)
- Capacity building of FEB Secretariat staff
- Interaction and discussion with local governments about the use of digital platform/online procedure (150 local governments)
- Support to the strengthening of service delivery of missions and employment offices in Nepal

Annex 4: Nepali Diplomatic Missions, Permanent Missions of Nepal to The UN and Consulates General of Nepal in Countries of Destination

S. N.	Diplomatic Mission	Country
1.	Embassy of Nepal in Canberra	Australia
2.	Embassy of Nepal in Manama	Bahrain
3.	Embassy of Nepal in Dhaka	Bangladesh
4.	Embassy of Nepal in Brussels and Mission to the European Communities	Belgium
5.	Embassy of Nepal in Brasilia	Brazil
6.	Embassy of Nepal in Ottawa	Canada
7.	Embassy of Nepal in Beijing	China
8.	Embassy of Nepal in Copenhagen	Denmark
9.	Embassy of Nepal in Cairo	Egypt
10.	Embassy of Nepal in Paris	France
11.	Embassy of Nepal in Berlin	Germany
12.	Embassy of Nepal in New Delhi	India
13.	Embassy of Nepal in Tel Aviv	Israel
14.	Embassy of Nepal in Tokyo	Japan
15.	Embassy of Nepal in Seoul	South Korea
16.	Embassy of Nepal in Kuwait City	Kuwait
17.	Embassy of Nepal in Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia
18.	Embassy of Nepal in Yangon	Myanmar
19.	Embassy of Nepal in Muscat	Oman
20.	Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad	Pakistan
21.	Embassy of Nepal in Doha	Qatar
22.	Embassy of Nepal in Moscow	Russia
23.	Embassy of Nepal in Riyadh	Saudi Arabia
24.	Embassy of Nepal in Pretoria	South Africa
25.	Embassy of Nepal in Colombo	Sri Lanka
26.	Embassy of Nepal in Bangkok	Thailand
27.	Embassy of Nepal in Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates

S. N.	Diplomatic Mission	Country
28.	Embassy of Nepal in London	United Kingdom
29.	Embassy of Nepal in Washington D.C.	United States of America
30.	Embassy of Nepal in Madrid	Spain
31.	Permanent Mission of Nepal to the UN and Other International Organisations in New York	United States of America
32.	Permanent Mission of Nepal to the UN and Other International Organisations in Geneva	Switzerland
33.	Permanent Mission of Nepal to the UN and Other International Organizations in Vienna	Austria
34.	Consulate General of Nepal in Kolkata	India
35.	Consulate General of Nepal in Hong Kong	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China
36.	Consulate General of Nepal in Lhasa	Tibet Autonomous Region of China
37.	Consulate General of Nepal in New York	United States of America
38.	Consulate General of Nepal in Jeddah	Saudi Arabia
39.	Consulate General of Nepal in Guangzhou	China
40.	Consulate General of Nepal in Chengdu	China

Source: Diplomatic Missions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed 8 June 2022, <https://mofa.gov.np/embassy-of-nepal/#>.

Annex 5: Coordination Committees

Committees	Guided by	Purpose	Structure
Foreign Employment Steering (Directive) Committee	Section 6(2), Foreign Employment Act, 2007	To make the process of selecting workers for foreign employment by the Government of Nepal to a country which has diplomatic relation with Nepal and with which it has signed bilateral agreements or treaties more organised, competitive and transparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 members • Chaired by Hon'ble Minister or Hon'ble State Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security • Representatives from Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, each registered trade union federation, Foreign Employment Entrepreneur Association, Director General from Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) and Executive Director as members.
Planning Programme and Budget Formulation Committee	Section 29(a), Foreign Employment Rules, 2008	To formulate short-term as well as long-term plans, programmes and determine budget of FEB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 members • Secretary of Ministry of Labour of Labour, Employment and Social Security as the Coordinator • Representative from the Ministry of Finance, who is a member in FEB, Director General of DoFE; President of Foreign Employment Entrepreneur Association and Executive Director of FEB as members.
Expert Committee	Section 72 (3) of the Foreign Employment Act, 2007	To determine whether the health report submitted is sound and authentic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical doctor of eleventh or twelfth level designated by the Ministry of Health and Population as the Chairperson • Medical doctor designated by Nepal Medical Association, law officer at the Ministry of Labour of Labour, Employment and Social Security, chairperson or representative of Nepal Health Practitioners' Federation, and one person designated by the Ministry of Labour of Labour, Employment and Social Security from among returnee migrant workers as members. Law Section at the Ministry of Labour of Labour, Employment and Social Security acts as the secretariat of the expert committee.

Source: MoLESS

Annex 6: List of International Organizations, NGOs and CSOs Working in Labour Migration Sector

Activities/Working Area	National networks, Non- Governmental Organizations and Projects	International Organisations and International Projects	Trade Unions working in the Area of Labour Migration
Information dissemination throughout migration cycle and awareness raising; Vocational Development, Skill Training, Skill Certification and Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agro-Forestry Basic Health and Cooperatives (ABC Nepal) • Aprawasi Mahila Kaamdar Samuha (AMKAS Nepal) • Asia Human Rights and Culture Development Forum • Centre for Labour and Social Studies (CLASS Nepal) • Centre for Migration and International Relations (CMIR) • Conquer Nepal (CN Nepal) • Media Advocacy Group for Social Transformation • Employer Led Market Secretariat (ELMS) • Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies (NAFEA) • Pourakhi • Pravasi Nepali Coordination Committee (PNCC) • Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC Nepal) • Youth Action Nepal, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caritas • Alliance Against Trafficking in Women and children in Nepal (AATWIN) • British Council • Helvetas • International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) • International Labour Organization (ILO) • International Organization for Migration (IOM) • Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) • Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation (Swisscontact) • United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) • World Bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federation of Nepal Foreign Employment Orientation Agencies (FEONA) Nepal • General Federation of Nepalese Trade Union (GEFONT) • International Trade Union Confederation- Nepal Affiliated Council (ITUC-NAC)
Access to justice and legal/paralegal support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aprawasi Mahila Kaamdar Samuha (AMKAS Nepal) • Law and Policy Forum for Social Justice (LAPSOJ) • People Forum for Human Rights • Pourakhi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helvetas • Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) 	

Activities/Working Area	National networks, Non- Governmental Organizations and Projects	International Organisations and International Projects	Trade Unions working in the Area of Labour Migration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PNCC • Youth Action Nepal 		
Capacity Building and Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMKAS Nepal • Asia Human Rights and Culture Development Forum • Centre for Labour and Social Studies (CLASS Nepal) • Pourakhi • Youth Action Nepal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caritas • UN Women • IFAD • IOM 	
Rescue and repatriation, Shelter/ Safe House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABC Nepal • Pourakhi • PNCC • CMIR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEFONT
Pshykosocial Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMKAS Nepal • CMIR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helvetas • Terre Des Hommes 	
Finanacial Literacy for migrant workers and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABC Nepal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helvetas 	

Activities/Working Area	National networks, Non- Governmental Organizations and Projects	International Organisations and International Projects	Trade Unions working in the Area of Labour Migration
Academic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMKAS Nepal • CMIR • Centre for Social Change (CSC) • CN Nepal • Equidem Research & Consulting • International Institute for Human Rights, Environment and Development (INHURED International) • Social Science Baha • LAPSOJ • Media Advocacy Group for Social Transformation • National Network for safe Migration (NNSM) • Nepal Institute of Development Studies (NIDS) • People's Forum for Human Rights • Sakriya Sewa Samaj 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SaMi programme • Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) • Solidarity Center • The Asia Foundation (TAF) • UN Women, • Winrock International • ILO • IOM • IFAD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEFONT • South Asian Regional Trade Union Council (SARTUC)
Migrant Worker's Health and Safety (Basic Health Care and assistance)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IOM 	
Reintegration support for migrant workers and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asia Human Rights and Culture Development Forum • NIDS • PNCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidarity Center • Helvetas • Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) • IOM 	
Educational support to migrant workers families/Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asia Human Rights and Culture Development Forum • CMIR 		

Activities/Working Area	National networks, Non- Governmental Organizations and Projects	International Organisations and International Projects	Trade Unions working in the Area of Labour Migration
Support to survivors and victims of human	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Change Nepal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AATWIN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEONA Nepal
Trafficking and Gender-based Violence (GBV) (Access to Justice, Shelter/Safe home, access to information, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Change Nepal ● Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD) Nepal ● Maiti Nepal ● Pourakhi ● Sathi ● Shakti Samuha ● Sunita Foundation ● Women Forum for Women in Nepal (WOFOWON) ● Chhori 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Solidarity Center ● UN Women ● Winrock International 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GEFONT ● ITUC-NAC ● Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre (JTUCC)
Advocacy and Social Dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ABC ● AMKAS Nepal ● CLASS Nepal ● CMIR ● CSC ● Chhori ● CN Nepal ● FWLD Nepal ● INHURED International ● Media Advocacy Group for Social Transformation ● NNSM ● NAFEA ● People Forum for Human Rights ● Pourakhi ● PNCC ● Sathi ● Shakti Samuha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AATWIN ● ILO ● IOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEONA ● GEFONT ● ITUC-NAC ● JTUCC ● SARTUC

Activities/Working Area	National networks, Non- Governmental Organizations and Projects	International Organisations and International Projects	Trade Unions working in the Area of Labour Migration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunita Foundation • WOFOWON • WOREC Nepal • Youth Action Nepal 		
Provide Technical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Skills for Sustainable and Rewarding Employment (ENSSURE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caritas • Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Nepal • ILO • IOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC)

Annex 7: International Conventions and Treaties Ratified by Nepal

International Agreements/Forums	Date of Ratification/ Participation by Nepal
ILO Conventions	
Migration for Employment Convention, 1949 (No. 97)	1949
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)	1974
Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)	1974
Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)	1976
Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)	1986
Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)	1995
Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)	1996
Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)	1997
Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	2002
Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)	2002
Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)	2007
Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)	2007
UN Conventions	
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948	1948
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1991	1991
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966	1991
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESR), 1966	1966
International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), 1969	1971

International Agreements/Forums	Date of Ratification/ Participation by Nepal
Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979	1979
Convention on Rights of Children (CRC), 1989	1989
Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2002	2011
Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000	2020
Regional and Global Agreements and Forums	
South Asian Association for Regional cooperation (SAARC), 1985	1985
Colombo Process (CP), 2003	2003
Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), 2008	2008
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030	2015
Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), 2006	2006
High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, 2006	2006
Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), 2018	2018

Annex 8: Number of Migrant Workers Based on Labour Demand, by Sex and Destination

	2019/20 (2076/77)			2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
UAE	112,755	17,564	130,319	21,704	5,774	27,478	130,354	34,377	164,731
Malaysia	66,365	1,200	67,565	-	-	-	91,214	4,038	95,252
Saudi Arabia	46,005	97	46,102	37,836	105	37,941	133,482	295	133,777
Qatar	32,182	3,572	35,754	65,062	3,159	68,221	80,080	6,362	86,442
Kuwait	18,263	3,556	21,819	204	61	265	69,935	16,926	86,861
Bahrain	7,828	1,580	9,408	9,600	519	10,119	14,487	2,023	16,510
Romania	5,054	600	5,654	3,743	695	4,438	10,733	2,072	12,805
Oman	3,577	467	4,044	3,470	275	3,745	4,827	1,095	5,922
Macau SAR, China	491	128	619	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mauritius	297	-	297	122	-	122	571	-	571
Cyprus	254	1,429	1,683	195	1,104	1,299	781	3,265	4,046
Malta	232	134	366	45	13	58	417	130	547
Brunei Darussalam	210	85	295	-	-	-	215	100	315
Turkey	200	1,005	1,205	30	75	105	-	-	-
Japan	174	54	228	166	160	326	608	193	801
Afghanistan	100	-	100	350	-	350	-	-	-
Hong Kong SAR, China	77	5	82	-	-	-	8	-	8
Sri Lanka	65	-	65	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jordan	2	3,074	3,076	-	1,426	1,426	702	3,972	4,674
Croatia	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,905	1,655	7,560
Albania	-	-	-	-	-	-	721	458	1,179
Israel	-	-	-	-	-	-	354	821	1,175
UK	-	-	-	100	-	100	300	50	350
Maldives	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	100	150
Russia	-	-	-	-	-	-	105	-	105
Republic of Seychelles	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	60
Total	294,131	34,550	328,681	142,627	13,366	155,993	545,909	77,932	623,841

Annex 9: Number of Nepali Migrant Workers Based on Labour Approvals, by Sex, Countries of Destination and Mode of Labour Approval, 2019/20 (2076/77)

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
UAE	660	368	1,028	3,919	592	4,511	40,119	6,399	46,518	36,257	5,081	41,338
Saudi Arabia	-	-	-	38	5	43	38,974	243	39,217	43,503	375	43,878
Qatar	1,004	102	1,106	1,180	33	1,213	25,269	2,248	27,517	50,562	1,180	51,742
Malaysia	5	-	5	167	15	182	38,587	385	38,972	19,823	723	20,546
Kuwait	360	102	462	104	8	112	7,300	1,097	8,397	6,846	1,040	7,886
Bahrain	83	41	124	119	14	133	2,690	357	3,047	2,633	251	2,884
Oman	180	27	207	170	3	173	1,355	261	1,616	1,962	181	2,143
Japan	529	68	597	135	18	153	144	45	189	2,739	50	2,789
Jordan	-	-	-	2	-	2	69	2,303	2,372	99	154	253
Romania	331	155	486	2	-	2	1,418	24	1,442	70	28	98
Cyprus	12	-	12	3	1	4	141	1,301	1,442	51	497	548
Malta	1,016	487	1,503	5	2	7	97	61	158	119	63	182
Macau SAR, China	246	3	249	81	10	91	214	18	232	942	23	965
Maldives	569	259	828	39	13	52	6	-	6	489	160	649
Turkey	292	190	482	14	2	16	159	343	502	14	41	55
Afghanistan	-	-	-	783	1	784	140	-	140	-	-	-
Croatia	575	64	639	4	2	6	-	-	-	1	-	1
Portugal	467	52	519	-	-	-	106	2	108	-	-	-
Republic of Seychelles	231	20	251	20	2	22	-	-	-	207	14	221
Poland	127	35	162	8	2	10	6	6	12	236	28	264
Brunei Darussalam	13	-	13	-	1	1	87	20	107	308	2	310
Israel	-	-	-	3	11	14	-	-	-	98	230	328
USA	26	6	32	199	52	251	-	-	-	22	7	29
New Zealand	50	3	53	54	21	75	-	-	-	64	7	71

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
China	45	7	52	93	5	98	-	-	-	35	5	40
Czech Republic	55	5	60	1	-	1	-	-	-	111	14	125
Azerbaijan	16	164	180	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	2	4
Republic of Korea	21	-	21	29	-	29	-	-	-	79	-	79
Cayman	26	12	38	12	3	15	-	-	-	46	9	55
Russia	35	3	38	13	-	13	-	-	-	55	-	55
Hong Kong SAR, China	4	-	4	2	-	2	73	12	85	3	4	7
Singapore	4	-	4	78	3	81	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mauritius	15	-	15	1	-	1	58	-	58	7	-	7
Papua New Guinea	39	4	43	3	-	3	-	-	-	27	3	30
Panama	-	-	-	-	-	-	73	-	73	-	-	-
Sri Lanka	28	-	28	33	7	40	-	-	-	3	-	3
Australia	38	3	41	14	2	16	-	-	-	12	-	12
Lebanon	-	-	-	2	3	5	-	-	-	27	36	63
Canada	40	8	48	9	4	13	-	-	-	3	-	3
France	34	-	34	20	2	22	-	-	-	-	1	1
Finland	29	-	29	3	-	3	-	-	-	13	2	15
Cambodia	-	-	-	24	4	28	-	-	-	15	2	17
Germany	15	1	16	16	4	20	-	-	-	3	5	8
United Kingdom	4	1	5	21	12	33	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nigeria	11	-	11	3	-	3	-	-	-	21	1	22
Republic of Congo	12	-	12	10	-	10	-	-	-	13	-	13
Hungary	29	1	30	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	18	1	19	6	3	9	-	-	-	3	-	3
Italy	10	-	10	13	3	16	-	-	-	2	1	3
Spain	6	-	6	19	2	21	-	-	-	1	1	2

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Somalia	-	-	-	12	-	12	-	-	-	15	-	15
Estonia	18	-	18	8	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ukraine	24	-	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bermuda	3	-	3	6	-	6	-	-	-	14	-	14
Kenya	3	-	3	7	-	7	-	-	-	13	-	13
Slovakia (Republic of Slovak)	19	3	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Egypt	8	-	8	5	-	5	-	-	-	7	1	8
Cambodia	-	-	-	11	1	12	-	-	-	6	2	8
Ireland	4	1	5	9	-	9	-	-	-	5	1	6
Tanzania	-	-	-	10	-	10	-	-	-	8	-	8
Turks And Caicos Island	5	-	5	1	-	1	-	-	-	12	-	12
Zambia	3	-	3	3	1	4	-	-	-	11	-	11
Indonesia	11	-	11	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4
Uganda	2	-	2	4	-	4	-	-	-	11	-	11
Angola	1	-	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	10	2	12
Thailand	2	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	11	-	11
Mozambique	-	3	3	3	-	3	-	-	-	8	-	8
Lithuania	10	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Morocco	-	-	-	4	3	7	-	-	-	6	-	6
Sudan	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	10	-	10
Greece	4	-	4	6	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ghana	-	-	-	7	-	7	-	-	-	2	-	2
Philippines	-	-	-	6	1	7	-	-	-	2	-	2
Belgium	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Lao PDR	-	-	-	4	-	4	-	-	-	4	-	4
Mali	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	6	-	6
Equatorial Guinea	2	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	2

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Latvia	3	-	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	3
Vietnam	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	4	-	4
Senegal	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	3	-	3
South Africa	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Colombia	2	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Denmark	3	-	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Djibouti	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	-	4
Gabon	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	2
Luxembourg	3	-	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Slovenia	1	-	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	1
Algeria	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1
Madagascar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Malawi	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	3
Norway	3	-	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Palau	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	2
Sweden	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jamaica	1	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
West-Indies	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	2
Albania	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bahamas	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burkina Faso	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Cameroon	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Comoros	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Cote d'Ivoire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Eritrea	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Georgia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Kazakhstan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Myanmar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Peru	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rwanda	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sierra Leone	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Tajikistan	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Trinidad And Tobago	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uruguay	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Chile	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Co-Operative Republic of Guyana	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominican Republic	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ethiopia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fiji	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Iran	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Kosovo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Malabo	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mexico	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mongolia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sint Maarten	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Sudan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Total	7,472	2,199	9,671	7,634	878	8,512	157,085	15,125	172,210	167,753	10,227	177,980

Annex 10: Number of Nepali Migrant Workers Based on Labour Approvals, by Sex, Countries of Destination and Mode of Labour Approval, 2020/21 (2077/78)

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Qatar	156	8	164	684	3	687	20,236	1,043	21,279	32,398	389	32,787
Saudi Arabia	-	-	-	21	-	21	23,213	85	23,298	23,510	123	23,633
UAE	93	61	154	2,494	395	2,889	6,670	1,896	8,566	26,142	2,724	28,866
Bahrain	80	15	95	50	6	56	2,842	153	2,995	1,659	135	1,794
Oman	131	13	144	93	2	95	1,177	140	1,317	1,465	112	1,577
Romania	391	131	522	4	-	4	1,348	80	1,428	178	15	193
Japan	392	52	444	48	12	60	28	21	49	1,495	31	1,526
Maldives	548	423	971	31	5	36	-	-	-	510	111	621
Cyprus	8	-	8	8	-	8	82	914	996	25	218	243
Malaysia	17	-	17	86	4	90	-	-	-	1,016	12	1,028
Croatia	935	138	1,073	14	-	14	-	-	-	7	-	7
Afghanistan	-	-	-	921	3	924	149	-	149	-	-	-
Kuwait	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	844	168	1,012
Jordan	10	-	10	1	-	1	1	918	919	28	21	49
Turkey	259	118	377	2	-	2	32	299	331	21	44	65
Poland	374	50	424	12	1	13	16	-	16	231	21	252
United Kingdom	150	98	248	27	10	37	30	-	30	2	-	2
Malta	51	4	55	9	-	9	-	-	-	168	83	251
Czech Republic	6	-	6	3	-	3	-	-	-	133	16	149
Republic of Seychelles	38	1	39	11	-	11	-	-	-	75	7	82
USA	9	-	9	62	18	80	-	-	-	8	1	9
Egypt	44	-	44	38	1	39	-	-	-	3	1	4

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Canada	47	10	57	7	1	8	-	-	-	2	-	2
Netherlands	47	5	52	3	4	7	-	-	-	6	-	6
China	3	-	3	21	-	21	-	-	-	39	1	40
Portugal	55	-	55	-	-	-	2	-	2	1	-	1
Ukraine	46	7	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Republic of Congo	3	-	3	15	-	15	-	-	-	31	-	31
Papua New Guinea	40	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	8
Mauritius	-	-	-	-	-	-	46	-	46	1	-	1
Nigeria	15	-	15	11	-	11	-	-	-	17	1	18
Brunei Darussalam	3	1	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	35	-	35
Republic of Korea	12	-	12	3	1	4	-	-	-	18	-	18
Comoros	23	-	23	4	-	4	-	-	-	2	-	2
Singapore	5	-	5	23	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	6	-	6	16	4	20	-	-	-	1	-	1
Israel	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	5	21	26
Germany	7	1	8	9	2	11	-	-	-	5	-	5
Ireland	17	2	19	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	2
Macau SAR, China	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	-	23
Zambia	3	1	4	3	-	3	-	-	-	13	2	15
Kenya	2	-	2	8	-	8	-	-	-	10	-	10
Albania	15	3	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Somalia	1	-	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	15	-	15
Djibouti	3	-	3	6	-	6	-	-	-	9	-	9
Italy	1	-	1	15	2	17	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Spain	5	1	6	11	-	11	-	-	-	-	1	1
Angola	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	10	4	14
Uganda	1	-	1	7	-	7	-	-	-	9	-	9
Mozambique	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	3	11
Cayman	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	1	11
Sierra Leone	9	-	9	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4
Belgium	13	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mali	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	10	-	10
Morocco	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	10	1	11
Finland	7	-	7	-	1	1	-	-	-	4	-	4
Ghana	-	-	-	11	-	11	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sri Lanka	7	-	7	3	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tanzania	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	10	-	10
Lebanon	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	8	9
Bermuda	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	9	-	9
Norway	7	-	7	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Russia	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	7	-	7
Greece	2	-	2	5	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	1
Kazakhstan	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	7
Sweden	4	-	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	3
Estonia	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
New Zealand	2	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	1	3
Rwanda	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	6	-	6
Sudan	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Turks And Caicos Island	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Denmark	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominican Republic	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senegal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	6
South Sudan	3	-	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	2
Tajikistan	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	-	4
Australia	4	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ethiopia	1	-	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	1
Gabon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	5
Iceland	4	-	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Indonesia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	-	4
Latvia	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Lithuania	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Malawi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	5
South Africa	4	-	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Thailand	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	3	-	3
Burkina Faso	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	3
Equatorial Guinea	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Slovenia	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Cambodia	-	-	-	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Colombia	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Hungary	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luxembourg	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Bangladesh	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Central African Republic	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jamaica	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mexico	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Panama	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Republic of Bulgaria	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Algeria	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Brazil	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cameroon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cambodia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Kosovo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Lao PDR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Mongolia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Philippines	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Republic of Macedonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sint Maarten	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Switzerland	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Togo	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uruguay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Total	4,168	1,149	5,317	4,854	480	5,334	55,872	5,549	61,421	90,339	4,278	94,617

Annex 11: Number of Nepali Migrant Workers Based on Labour Approvals, by Sex, Countries of Destination and Mode of Labour Approval, 2021/22 (2078/79)

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Saudi Arabia	26	3	29	93	9	102	125,041	196	125,237	62,805	518	63,323
Qatar	2,861	192	3,053	1,334	19	1,353	68,280	4,137	72,417	105,313	2,790	108,103
UAE	2,068	1,013	3,081	5,208	905	6,113	33,640	11,010	44,650	60,580	8,211	68,791
Malaysia	69	2	71	169	9	178	24,595	1,247	25,842	10,347	206	10,553
Kuwait	379	134	513	70	156	226	18,605	3,442	22,047	11,122	1,633	12,755
Bahrain	237	75	312	179	13	192	6,538	550	7,088	4,101	369	4,470
Romania	1,062	183	1,245	6	1	7	4,512	654	5,166	994	63	1,057
Oman	628	124	752	144	13	157	2,232	485	2,717	2,960	263	3,223
Japan	1,462	398	1,860	77	18	95	358	165	523	3,106	72	3,178
Croatia	2,996	727	3,723	45	1	46	1,073	364	1,437	127	11	138
Cyprus	2	-	2	6	3	9	387	2,824	3,211	133	826	959
Maldives	1,796	861	2,657	22	3	25	15	38	53	858	263	1,121
United Kingdom	2,146	520	2,666	30	26	56	86	-	86	5	1	6
Malta	919	310	1,229	34	2	36	-	3	3	449	198	647
Poland	1,286	205	1,491	9	2	11	-	-	-	311	42	353
Jordan	8	4	12	2	-	2	146	767	913	90	162	252
Republic of Seychelles	324	179	503	31	1	32	59	-	59	401	24	425
Turkey	529	229	758	11	1	12	-	82	82	47	96	143
Brunei Darussalam	88	12	100	1	-	1	164	20	184	313	-	313
Israel	-	1	1	3	5	8	102	195	297	78	214	292
USA	98	23	121	263	66	329	-	-	-	41	6	47
Republic of Korea	84	-	84	88	1	89	-	-	-	108	-	108
Mauritius	12	-	12	-	-	-	248	-	248	10	-	10

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Cayman	140	37	177	4	1	5	-	-	-	39	7	46
Albania	33	41	74	-	-	-	66	59	125	2	-	2
Singapore	106	5	111	73	4	77	-	-	-	1	-	1
Czech Republic	7	-	7	7	1	8	-	-	-	145	25	170
France	118	6	124	29	9	38	-	-	-	2	-	2
Ireland	141	8	149	3	-	3	-	-	-	6	1	7
Ukraine	135	16	151	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Papua New Guinea	85	4	89	2	-	2	-	-	-	55	2	57
Austria	120	25	145	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Afghanistan	-	-	-	125	-	125	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norway	93	1	94	3	1	4	-	-	-	7	1	8
Canada	50	43	93	5	1	6	-	-	-	3	1	4
Italy	22	6	28	54	17	71	-	-	-	2	1	3
Serbia	57	39	96	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	77	3	80	5	-	5	-	-	-	7	1	8
Russia	18	2	20	1	-	1	30	-	30	31	-	31
Portugal	65	11	76	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	2
Australia	53	4	57	3	-	3	-	-	-	16	1	17
New Zealand	22	6	28	5	1	6	-	-	-	40	2	42
Belgium	65	-	65	7	-	7	-	-	-	3	-	3
Republic of Congo	24	-	24	19	-	19	-	-	-	31	-	31
Greece	46	5	51	7	2	9	-	-	-	5	-	5
Nigeria	21	-	21	9	3	12	-	-	-	30	-	30
Germany	31	4	35	13	1	14	-	-	-	5	4	9
Lebanon	-	-	-	2	1	3	-	-	-	19	35	54

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Spain	18	1	19	33	3	36	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bosnia And Herzegovina	46	-	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Denmark	27	13	40	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4
Republic of Bulgaria	41	1	42	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senegal	38	-	38	3	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	1
Comoros	36	-	36	2	-	2	-	-	-	3	-	3
Zambia	6	-	6	12	-	12	-	-	-	23	-	23
Cambodia	1	-	1	19	-	19	-	-	-	18	2	20
Sri Lanka	28	2	30	6	3	9	-	-	-	1	-	1
Thailand	7	2	9	3	-	3	-	-	-	27	-	27
Egypt	24	2	26	7	1	8	-	-	-	4	-	4
Kenya	4	-	4	9	-	9	-	-	-	23	-	23
Uganda	3	-	3	7	1	8	-	-	-	25	-	25
Turks And Caicos Island	12	-	12	2	-	2	-	-	-	19	-	19
Finland	25	2	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	5
Brazil	27	2	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	24	1	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Morocco	11	-	11	5	-	5	-	-	-	10	2	12
Mali	13	-	13	6	-	6	-	-	-	8	-	8
Mozambique	5	6	11	3	-	3	-	-	-	13	-	13
Dominican Republic	23	-	23	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Somalia	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-	24
Bermuda	5	1	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	1	19
Tanzania	5	-	5	3	-	3	-	-	-	17	-	17
Cambodia	2	-	2	6	-	6	-	-	-	14	2	16

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Ghana	9	-	9	6	-	6	-	-	-	9	-	9
Mexico	18	3	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Togo	20	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lithuania	9	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	10
Estonia	6	-	6	1	-	1	-	-	-	9	-	9
South Africa	7	2	9	4	-	4	-	-	-	3	-	3
Angola	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	2	14
Sierra Leone	10	-	10	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	-	4
Djibouti	4	-	4	2	-	2	-	-	-	8	-	8
Slovenia	12	1	13	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mauritania	12	-	12	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sudan	4	-	4	2	-	2	-	-	-	5	-	5
Latvia	4	-	4	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4
Philippines	1	-	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	6	-	6
Republic of Macedonia	6	3	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cameroon	7	-	7	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	3	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Colombia	4	-	4	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	2
Iceland	7	1	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jamaica	6	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Azerbaijan	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	3	2	5
Kazakhstan	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4
Barbados	3	-	3	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lao PDR	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Slovakia (Republic of Slovak)	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
South Sudan	-	-	-	5	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	1
Vietnam	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	4
China	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Hong Kong SAR, China	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	5
Indonesia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	-	4
Luxembourg	2	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	2
Panama	-	-	-	4	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Swaziland	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Algeria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Bahamas	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	2
Equatorial Guinea	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	1
Fiji	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Gabon	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Pakistan	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Peru	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rwanda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	3
Bangladesh	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
British Virgin Islands	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ethiopia	2	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kosovo	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Madagascar	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Mongolia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3

	Individual-New			Regularisation			Recruitment Agency			Renewal		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Antigua & Barbuda	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Burkina Faso	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cote d'Ivoire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Macau SAR, China	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Malabo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Myanmar	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Saint Lucia	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sint Maarten	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Timor-Leste	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trinidad And Tobago	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Armenia	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benin	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chile	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cook Islands	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eritrea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
French Polynesia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iran	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malawi	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Samoa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Tunisia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Uruguay	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	21,227	5,513	26,740	8,401	1,311	9,712	286,177	26,238	312,415	265,156	16,066	281,222

Annex 12: Number of Nepali Migrant Workers Based on Labour Approvals, by Sex and District (2019/20-2021/22)

S N	District	New												New and renew																							
		2019/20 (2076/77)						2020/21 (2077/78)						2021/22 (2078/79)						2020/21 (2077/78)						2021/22 (2078/79)											
		M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T												
Province 1																																					
1	Bhojpur	1,936	195	2,131	528	72	600	2,965	373	3,338	3,645	292	3,937	1,181	109	1,290	5,389	516	5,905	1,671	204	1,875	483	65	548	2,304	331	2,635	3,191	299	3,490	1,043	99	1,142	4,444	490	4,934
2	Dhankuta	2,466	552	3,018	691	199	890	3,167	864	4,031	4,371	789	5,160	1,375	289	1,664	5,661	1,301	6,962	7,767	1,649	9,416	2,384	650	3,034	10,883	2,675	13,558	15,895	2,634	18,529	6,468	1,022	7,490	23,702	4,264	27,966
3	Ilam	2,796	183	2,979	855	71	926	3,904	391	4,295	5,041	285	5,326	1,824	104	1,928	7,317	553	7,870	7,110	1,045	8,155	2,221	403	2,624	10,914	1,743	12,657	13,682	1,636	15,318	5,561	630	6,191	21,427	2,648	24,075
4	Jhapa	1,386	170	1,556	449	69	518	2,106	356	2,462	2,397	257	2,654	847	99	946	3,528	479	4,007	1,386	170	1,556	449	69	518	2,106	356	2,462	2,397	257	2,654	847	99	946	3,528	479	4,007
5	Khotang	2,215	302	2,517	624	104	728	3,085	437	3,522	3,961	409	4,370	1,313	127	1,440	5,506	621	6,127	1,565	148	1,713	402	64	466	2,107	255	2,362	2,702	225	2,927	853	92	945	3,843	363	4,206
6	Morang	688	257	945	232	139	371	1,521	570	2,091	1,156	384	1,540	437	193	630	2,162	738	2,900	5,216	663	5,879	2,082	225	2,307	9,648	1,062	10,710	10,452	1,044	11,496	5,180	365	5,545	19,161	1,670	20,831
7	Okhaldhunga	1,398	141	1,539	336	45	381	1,715	220	1,935	2,369	201	2,570	719	60	779	3,091	302	3,393	1,398	141	1,539	336	45	381	1,715	220	1,935	2,369	201	2,570	719	60	779	3,091	302	3,393
8	Panchthar	1,092	83	1,175	294	32	326	1,469	160	1,629	2,125	126	2,251	687	45	732	2,953	235	3,188	1,092	83	1,175	294	32	326	1,469	160	1,629	2,125	126	2,251	687	45	732	2,953	235	3,188
9	Sankhuwasabha	2,857	360	3,217	935	116	1,051	4,726	672	5,398	5,111	526	5,637	1,821	190	2,011	7,927	911	8,838	2,857	360	3,217	935	116	1,051	4,726	672	5,398	5,111	526	5,637	1,821	190	2,011	7,927	911	8,838
10	Solukhumbu	40,163	5,952	46,115	12,516	2,254	14,770	60,514	10,109	70,623	76,098	9,107	85,205	29,309	3,424	32,733	116,111	15,091	131,202	40,163	5,952	46,115	12,516	2,254	14,770	60,514	10,109	70,623	76,098	9,107	85,205	29,309	3,424	32,733	116,111	15,091	131,202
11	Sunsari	Madhesh Province																																			
12	Taplejung	2,308	205	2,513	779	83	862	5,801	421	6,222	4,879	301	5,180	2,230	130	2,360	9,749	596	10,345	2,308	205	2,513	779	83	862	5,801	421	6,222	4,879	301	5,180	2,230	130	2,360	9,749	596	10,345
13	Terhathum	10,144	48	10,192	5,418	14	5,432	22,799	103	22,902	20,251	81	20,332	12,651	34	12,685	41,141	151	41,292	10,144	48	10,192	5,418	14	5,432	22,799	103	22,902	20,251	81	20,332	12,651	34	12,685	41,141	151	41,292
14	Udayapur	7,014	56	7,070	3,543	22	3,565	16,711	127	16,838	13,711	96	13,807	8,067	40	8,107	28,813	176	28,989	7,014	56	7,070	3,543	22	3,565	16,711	127	16,838	13,711	96	13,807	8,067	40	8,107	28,813	176	28,989
15	Parsa	1,488	74	1,562	550	20	570	3,111	128	3,239	3,011	127	3,138	1,386	45	1,431	5,493	202	5,695	1,488	74	1,562	550	20	570	3,111	128	3,239	3,011	127	3,138	1,386	45	1,431	5,493	202	5,695
16	Rautahat	2,829	90	2,919	1,388	35	1,423	8,480	226	8,706	5,187	126	5,313	2,441	50	2,491	12,309	298	12,607	2,829	90	2,919	1,388	35	1,423	8,480	226	8,706	5,187	126	5,313	2,441	50	2,491	12,309	298	12,607
17	Saptari	5,457	30	5,487	1,810	11	1,821	11,150	83	11,233	9,698	54	9,752	4,069	25	4,094	18,196	131	18,327	5,457	30	5,487	1,810	11	1,821	11,150	83	11,233	9,698	54	9,752	4,069	25	4,094	18,196	131	18,327

S N	District	New												New and renew																									
		2019/20 (2076/77)				2020/21 (2077/78)				2021/22 (2078/79)				2019/20 (2076/77)				2020/21 (2077/78)				2021/22 (2078/79)																	
		M	W	T		M	W	T		M	W	T		M	W	T		M	W	T		M	W	T															
7	Sarlahi	5,491	256	5,747	2,305	90	2,395	12,747	541	13,288	9,335	400	9,735	4,511	145	4,656	19,282	750	20,032	43,333	785	44,118	20,361	284	20,645	98,372	1,694	100,066	82,098	1,231	83,329	45,225	487	45,712	167,123	2,397	169,520		
8	Siraha	8,602	26	8,628	4,568	9	4,577	17,573	65	17,638	16,026	46	16,072	9,870	18	9,888	32,140	93	32,233	Total	43,333	785	44,118	20,361	284	20,645	98,372	1,694	100,066	82,098	1,231	83,329	45,225	487	45,712	167,123	2,397	169,520	
Bagmati Province																																							
1	Bhaktapur	416	159	575	136	63	199	578	266	844	1,010	274	1,284	447	133	580	1,330	449	1,779	1	Bhaktapur	416	159	575	136	63	199	578	266	844	1,010	274	1,284	447	133	580	1,330	449	1,779
2	Chitawan	3,122	557	3,679	1,239	247	1,486	5,658	1,035	6,693	7,581	901	8,482	3,705	411	4,116	12,350	1,585	13,935	2	Chitawan	3,122	557	3,679	1,239	247	1,486	5,658	1,035	6,693	7,581	901	8,482	3,705	411	4,116	12,350	1,585	13,935
3	Dhading	2,525	480	3,005	972	186	1,158	4,552	1,025	5,577	4,727	720	5,447	2,092	302	2,394	7,810	1,417	9,227	3	Dhading	2,525	480	3,005	972	186	1,158	4,552	1,025	5,577	4,727	720	5,447	2,092	302	2,394	7,810	1,417	9,227
4	Dolakha	1,367	463	1,830	440	177	617	2,325	755	3,080	2,423	699	3,122	913	271	1,184	3,802	1,109	4,911	4	Dolakha	1,367	463	1,830	440	177	617	2,325	755	3,080	2,423	699	3,122	913	271	1,184	3,802	1,109	4,911
5	Kathmandu	1,442	791	2,233	482	278	760	1,945	1,251	3,196	3,585	1,551	5,136	1,546	646	2,192	4,688	2,327	7,015	5	Kathmandu	1,442	791	2,233	482	278	760	1,945	1,251	3,196	3,585	1,551	5,136	1,546	646	2,192	4,688	2,327	7,015
6	Kavrepalanchok	2,400	836	3,236	813	324	1,137	4,224	1,642	5,866	4,380	1,283	5,663	1,781	506	2,287	7,013	2,333	9,346	6	Kavrepalanchok	2,400	836	3,236	813	324	1,137	4,224	1,642	5,866	4,380	1,283	5,663	1,781	506	2,287	7,013	2,333	9,346
7	Lalitpur	740	311	1,051	219	114	333	1,020	616	1,636	1,616	530	2,146	626	221	847	2,151	1,025	3,176	7	Lalitpur	740	311	1,051	219	114	333	1,020	616	1,636	1,616	530	2,146	626	221	847	2,151	1,025	3,176
8	Makwanpur	2,383	948	3,331	873	345	1,218	4,736	1,856	6,592	4,571	1,383	5,954	1,884	544	2,428	7,707	2,555	10,262	8	Makwanpur	2,383	948	3,331	873	345	1,218	4,736	1,856	6,592	4,571	1,383	5,954	1,884	544	2,428	7,707	2,555	10,262
9	Nuwakot	2,287	747	3,034	748	287	1,035	3,680	1,422	5,102	4,058	1,079	5,137	1,668	448	2,116	6,417	1,961	8,378	9	Nuwakot	2,287	747	3,034	748	287	1,035	3,680	1,422	5,102	4,058	1,079	5,137	1,668	448	2,116	6,417	1,961	8,378
10	Ramechhap	1,594	395	1,989	505	158	663	2,629	730	3,359	2,913	637	3,550	1,070	256	1,326	4,445	1,095	5,540	10	Ramechhap	1,594	395	1,989	505	158	663	2,629	730	3,359	2,913	637	3,550	1,070	256	1,326	4,445	1,095	5,540
11	Rasuwa	264	168	432	92	190	282	509	313	822	420	223	643	167	215	382	718	400	1,118	11	Rasuwa	264	168	432	92	190	282	509	313	822	420	223	643	167	215	382	718	400	1,118
12	Sindhuli	2,363	362	2,725	902	117	1,019	4,330	734	5,064	3,999	534	4,533	1,567	181	1,748	6,543	989	7,532	12	Sindhuli	2,363	362	2,725	902	117	1,019	4,330	734	5,064	3,999	534	4,533	1,567	181	1,748	6,543	989	7,532
13	Sindhupalchok	2,464	1,422	3,886	897	608	1,505	4,161	2,025	6,186	4,029	2,030	6,059	1,649	843	2,492	6,369	2,922	9,291	13	Sindhupalchok	2,464	1,422	3,886	897	608	1,505	4,161	2,025	6,186	4,029	2,030	6,059	1,649	843	2,492	6,369	2,922	9,291
Total	Total	23,367	7,639	31,006	8,318	3,094	11,412	40,347	13,670	54,017	45,312	11,844	57,156	19,115	4,977	24,092	71,343	20,167	91,510	Total	23,367	7,639	31,006	8,318	3,094	11,412	40,347	13,670	54,017	45,312	11,844	57,156	19,115	4,977	24,092	71,343	20,167	91,510	
Gandaki Province																																							
1	Baglung	2,799	102	2,901	1,128	35	1,163	4,781	223	5,004	6,601	149	6,750	3,123	65	3,188	10,293	310	10,603	1	Baglung	2,799	102	2,901	1,128	35	1,163	4,781	223	5,004	6,601	149	6,750	3,123	65	3,188	10,293	310	10,603
2	Gorkha	2,815	280	3,095	978	125	1,103	4,856	634	5,490	5,819	427	6,246	2,484	197	2,681	9,451	871	10,322	2	Gorkha	2,815	280	3,095	978	125	1,103	4,856	634	5,490	5,819	427	6,246	2,484	197	2,681	9,451	871	10,322
3	Kaski	2,393	313	2,706	803	133	936	4,037	595	4,632	6,439	546	6,985	2,788	223	3,011	10,067	915	10,982	3	Kaski	2,393	313	2,706	803	133	936	4,037	595	4,632	6,439	546	6,985	2,788	223	3,011	10,067	915	10,982
4	Lamjung	2,128	168	2,296	717	62	779	3,195	316	3,511	4,714	257	4,971	2,051	110	2,161	7,360	469	7,829	4	Lamjung	2,128	168	2,296	717	62	779	3,195	316	3,511	4,714	257	4,971	2,051	110	2,161	7,360	469	7,829
5	Manang	19	6	25	4	1	5	22	11	33	26	8	34	7	2	9	31	18	49	5	Manang	19	6	25	4	1	5	22	11	33	26	8	34	7	2	9	31	18	49

S N	District	New												New and renew											
		2019/20 (2076/77)			2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			2019/20 (2076/77)			2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)								
		M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T						
6	Mustang	26	9	35	18	2	20	64	26	90	47	14	61	27	4	31	94	31	125						
7	Myagdi	1,370	123	1,493	439	55	494	1,957	271	2,228	2,980	194	3,174	1,113	75	1,188	4,277	356	4,633						
8	Nawalparasi East	3,278	265	3,543	1,225	94	1,319	6,196	452	6,648	7,390	452	7,842	3,593	164	3,757	12,242	719	12,961						
9	Parbat	1,590	87	1,677	581	48	629	2,282	167	2,449	3,716	138	3,854	1,786	68	1,854	5,872	257	6,129						
10	Syangja	3,134	183	3,317	1,281	81	1,362	5,280	386	5,666	8,808	324	9,132	4,737	154	4,891	14,491	654	15,145						
11	Tanahu	3,611	205	3,816	1,293	100	1,393	6,314	471	6,785	9,150	355	9,505	4,121	172	4,293	14,933	711	15,644						
	Total	23,163	1,741	24,904	8,467	736	9,203	38,984	3,552	42,536	55,690	2,864	58,554	25,830	1,234	27,064	89,111	5,311	94,422						
Lumbini Province																									
1	Arghakhanchi	1,572	65	1,637	658	20	678	2,890	162	3,052	3,978	116	4,094	1,893	48	1,941	6,505	244	6,749						
2	Banke	2,215	192	2,407	907	61	968	4,848	310	5,158	4,034	270	4,304	1,782	86	1,868	7,663	434	8,097						
3	Bardiya	2,111	151	2,262	722	49	771	3,825	222	4,047	3,730	221	3,951	1,375	73	1,448	6,082	347	6,429						
4	Dang	4,310	270	4,580	1,815	112	1,927	7,759	614	8,373	7,191	398	7,589	3,001	173	3,174	11,850	875	12,725						
5	Gulmi	2,362	110	2,472	916	51	967	4,059	201	4,260	6,185	216	6,401	3,295	99	3,394	10,143	403	10,546						
6	Kapilbastu	3,311	84	3,395	1,069	35	1,104	6,649	135	6,784	7,006	161	7,167	3,892	58	3,950	13,771	246	14,017						
7	Nawalparasi West	2,026	164	2,190	758	59	817	3,830	280	4,110	4,568	280	4,848	2,221	102	2,323	7,567	445	8,012						
8	Palpa	2,240	92	2,332	801	53	854	3,827	206	4,033	5,672	180	5,852	2,766	89	2,855	9,127	345	9,472						
9	Pyuthan	1,814	48	1,862	758	18	776	3,483	90	3,573	3,083	71	3,154	1,322	32	1,354	5,714	134	5,848						
10	Rolpa	2,965	71	3,036	1,339	28	1,367	5,083	180	5,263	4,979	107	5,086	1,990	40	2,030	7,722	238	7,960						
11	Rukum East	360	19	379	140	5	145	711	38	749	550	24	574	194	8	202	949	48	997						
12	Rupandehi	4,287	352	4,639	1,394	130	1,524	8,706	575	9,281	10,042	648	10,690	5,129	252	5,381	18,075	1,014	19,089						
	Total	29,573	1,618	31,191	11,277	621	11,898	55,670	3,013	58,683	61,018	2,692	63,710	28,860	1,060	29,920	105,168	4,773	109,941						

S N	District	New										New and renew																									
		2019/20 (2076/77)					2020/21 (2077/78)					2021/22 (2078/79)					2019/20 (2076/77)					2020/21 (2077/78)					2021/22 (2078/79)										
		M	W	T	M	T	M	W	T	M	T	M	W	T	M	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T									
Karnali Province																																					
1	Dailekh	765	27	792	235	16	251	1,238	54	1,292	1,237	35	1,272	438	21	459	1,953	77	2,030	765	27	792	235	16	251	1,238	54	1,292	1,237	35	1,272	438	21	459	1,953	77	2,030
2	Dolpa	34	7	41	10	1	11	62	10	72	49	14	63	14	1	15	80	15	95	34	7	41	10	1	11	62	10	72	49	14	63	14	1	15	80	15	95
3	Humla	34	2	36	10	2	12	50	12	62	47	3	50	12	2	14	69	13	82	34	2	36	10	2	12	50	12	62	47	3	50	12	2	14	69	13	82
4	Jajarkot	651	14	665	169	5	174	912	31	943	884	18	902	227	7	234	1,187	39	1,226	651	14	665	169	5	174	912	31	943	884	18	902	227	7	234	1,187	39	1,226
5	Jumla	183	2	185	93	2	95	396	10	406	253	5	258	117	3	120	481	12	493	183	2	185	93	2	95	396	10	406	253	5	258	117	3	120	481	12	493
6	Kalikot	210	6	216	66	7	73	276	14	290	290	10	300	82	8	90	376	22	398	210	6	216	66	7	73	276	14	290	290	10	300	82	8	90	376	22	398
7	Mugu	85	3	88	23	3	26	124	4	128	115	3	118	32	3	35	152	5	157	85	3	88	23	3	26	124	4	128	115	3	118	32	3	35	152	5	157
8	Rukum West	1,186	66	1,252	465	16	481	2,346	125	2,471	1,814	84	1,898	645	25	670	3,131	159	3,290	1,186	66	1,252	465	16	481	2,346	125	2,471	1,814	84	1,898	645	25	670	3,131	159	3,290
9	Salyan	2,532	66	2,598	899	34	933	4,576	178	4,754	3,681	103	3,784	1,250	46	1,296	5,931	229	6,160	2,532	66	2,598	899	34	933	4,576	178	4,754	3,681	103	3,784	1,250	46	1,296	5,931	229	6,160
10	Surkhet	1,468	84	1,552	485	24	509	2,877	131	3,008	2,290	113	2,403	819	35	854	4,051	187	4,238	1,468	84	1,552	485	24	509	2,877	131	3,008	2,290	113	2,403	819	35	854	4,051	187	4,238
Total		7,148	277	7,425	2,455	110	2,565	12,857	569	13,426	10,660	388	11,048	3,636	151	3,787	17,411	758	18,169	7,148	277	7,425	2,455	110	2,565	12,857	569	13,426	10,660	388	11,048	3,636	151	3,787	17,411	758	18,169
Sudurpashchim Province																																					
1	Achham	244	4	248	60	1	61	369	34	403	382	6	388	135	6	141	587	36	623	244	4	248	60	1	61	369	34	403	382	6	388	135	6	141	587	36	623
2	Baitadi	640	5	645	191	3	194	1,180	33	1,213	1,022	10	1,032	379	5	384	1,781	39	1,820	640	5	645	191	3	194	1,180	33	1,213	1,022	10	1,032	379	5	384	1,781	39	1,820
3	Bajhang	207	5	212	56	1	57	278	26	304	330	5	335	82	1	83	408	28	436	207	5	212	56	1	57	278	26	304	330	5	335	82	1	83	408	28	436
4	Bajura	224	5	229	60	2	62	266	25	291	306	7	313	83	3	86	353	30	383	224	5	229	60	2	62	266	25	291	306	7	313	83	3	86	353	30	383
5	Dadeldhura	355	4	359	95	2	97	624	22	646	597	13	610	210	3	213	962	27	989	355	4	359	95	2	97	624	22	646	597	13	610	210	3	213	962	27	989
6	Darchula	462	13	475	93	4	97	780	24	804	701	14	715	184	4	188	1,110	30	1,140	462	13	475	93	4	97	780	24	804	701	14	715	184	4	188	1,110	30	1,140
7	Doti	278	3	281	99	1	100	476	10	486	473	8	481	172	3	175	751	18	769	278	3	281	99	1	100	476	10	486	473	8	481	172	3	175	751	18	769
8	Kailali	1,494	92	1,586	431	43	474	2,449	187	2,636	2,502	148	2,650	986	60	1,046	4,149	280	4,429	1,494	92	1,586	431	43	474	2,449	187	2,636	2,502	148	2,650	986	60	1,046	4,149	280	4,429
9	Kanchanpur	1,540	59	1,599	415	22	437	2,639	94	2,733	2,755	92	2,847	1,027	38	1,065	4,593	143	4,736	1,540	59	1,599	415	22	437	2,639	94	2,733	2,755	92	2,847	1,027	38	1,065	4,593	143	4,736
Total		5,444	190	5,634	1,500	79	1,579	9,061	455	9,516	9,068	303	9,371	3,258	123	3,381	14,694	631	15,325	5,444	190	5,634	1,500	79	1,579	9,061	455	9,516	9,068	303	9,371	3,258	123	3,381	14,694	631	15,325
Grand Total		172,191	18,202	190,393	64,894	7,178	72,072	315,805	33,062	348,867	339,944	28,429	368,373	155,233	11,456	166,689	580,961	49,128	630,089	172,191	18,202	190,393	64,894	7,178	72,072	315,805	33,062	348,867	339,944	28,429	368,373	155,233	11,456	166,689	580,961	49,128	630,089

Annex 13: New Labour Approval Issued, 2021/22 (2078/79) (by Sex, Mode of Obtaining Approval and Occupation)

	Individual			Regularization			Recruitment Agency			Total		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
	Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener	6.2	7.4	6.5	0.6	0.0	0.5	1.5	0.8	1.5	1.8	1.8
<i>Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener</i>	6.2	7.4	6.5	0.6	0.0	0.5	1.5	0.8	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.8
Aviation and Cruise	3.1	1.2	2.7	2.0	1.3	1.9	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.8
<i>Aviation and Cruise</i>	3.1	1.2	2.7	2.0	1.3	1.9	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.8
Construction	5.9	0.3	4.7	3.9	0.0	3.4	6.1	0.0	5.6	6.1	0.1	5.5
<i>Carpenter</i>	1.8	0.1	1.4	0.9	0.0	0.8	1.6	0.0	1.5	1.6	0.0	1.4
<i>Mason</i>	2.7	0.1	2.1	1.3	0.0	1.1	2.1	0.0	1.9	2.1	0.0	1.9
<i>Painting</i>	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.5
<i>Scaffolding</i>	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.3	1.1	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.9
<i>Steel Fixer</i>	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.5	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.7	0.8	0.0	0.7
<i>Construction (others)</i>	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Driver/Machine Operator	3.4	1.1	2.9	5.3	0.6	4.7	8.4	0.3	7.7	8.0	0.4	7.2
<i>Driver</i>	2.1	0.0	1.7	3.3	0.2	2.9	7.3	0.0	6.7	6.8	0.0	6.2
<i>Machine Operator</i>	1.3	1.1	1.2	2.0	0.5	1.8	1.1	0.2	1.0	1.2	0.4	1.1
Electrical and Mechanical Technician	3.8	0.8	3.2	2.9	0.0	2.5	3.0	0.1	2.7	3.0	0.2	2.8
<i>A/C Technician</i>	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1
<i>Automotive</i>	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2
<i>Electrician</i>	1.3	0.0	1.1	0.9	0.0	0.8	0.8	0.0	0.7	0.8	0.0	0.7

	Individual			Regularization			Recruitment Agency			Total		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
<i>Plumbing/Pipe Fitter</i>	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.4	1.3	0.0	1.2	1.2	0.0	1.1
<i>Welding</i>	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3
<i>Electro/Mechanical Other</i>	1.5	0.7	1.3	0.8	0.0	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3
Elementary Occupations	37.6	32.7	36.6	29.8	27.2	29.4	59.1	64.0	59.5	56.9	57.3	56.9
<i>Cleaning and Laundry</i>	4.3	14.7	6.4	7.9	20.4	9.6	11.3	46.2	14.2	10.7	39.9	13.5
<i>Labour (Specified)</i>	4.7	3.6	4.5	3.2	1.5	2.9	4.2	0.4	3.9	4.2	1.0	3.9
<i>Labour (Unspecified)</i>	24.1	12.6	21.7	15.0	5.1	13.7	41.9	17.2	39.8	40.0	16.0	37.7
<i>Packaging, Loading, Shipping and Delivery</i>	4.5	1.9	4.0	3.7	0.3	3.3	1.7	0.2	1.6	2.0	0.5	1.8
Manufacturing	4.3	2.4	3.9	1.7	0.2	1.5	9.4	6.7	9.2	8.9	5.7	8.6
<i>Manufacturing</i>	4.3	2.4	3.9	1.7	0.2	1.5	9.4	6.7	9.2	8.9	5.7	8.6
Office/Administrative/Associate Professionals	5.9	12.3	7.2	10.6	24.7	12.5	1.6	3.9	1.8	2.1	6.1	2.5
<i>Office/Administrative/Associate Professionals</i>	5.9	12.3	7.2	10.6	24.7	12.5	1.6	3.9	1.8	2.1	6.1	2.5
Professionals and Managers	2.9	4.0	3.1	3.3	5.1	3.6	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.4	1.0	0.4
<i>Manager</i>	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.5	2.4	1.7	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2
<i>Professional</i>	1.9	2.9	2.1	1.8	2.7	1.9	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.7	0.3
Service & Sales	24.5	36.6	27.0	37.6	37.6	37.6	9.8	22.7	10.8	11.5	25.6	12.8
<i>Baker/Dessert Maker</i>	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.9	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2
<i>Barista/Coffee Maker</i>	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5
<i>Beauty & Fitness</i>	0.5	6.6	1.8	0.6	6.5	1.4	0.1	3.2	0.4	0.2	3.9	0.5
<i>Caregiver/Nursing Aide</i>	0.4	6.5	1.7	0.0	1.5	0.2	0.0	2.1	0.2	0.1	2.8	0.3

	Individual			Regularization			Recruitment Agency			Total		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
	<i>Chef/Cook</i>	10.2	2.5	8.6	9.1	1.1	8.0	1.5	0.6	1.4	2.3	1.0
<i>Housekeeping</i>	0.9	5.3	1.8	1.1	2.4	1.2	0.2	2.6	0.4	0.3	3.0	0.5
<i>Retail</i>	1.8	2.6	2.0	6.2	8.3	6.5	0.7	3.8	0.9	0.9	3.8	1.2
<i>Security</i>	3.8	0.6	3.1	7.9	5.6	7.6	4.2	1.7	4.0	4.3	1.7	4.0
<i>Tailor</i>	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.3	0.1	1.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2
<i>Waiter/Waitress</i>	3.9	9.7	5.1	8.0	10.2	8.3	2.0	7.0	2.4	2.3	7.6	2.8
<i>Hospitality (others)</i>	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.9	1.8	1.9	0.2	1.1	0.3	0.3	1.1	0.4
Supervisor and Foreman	2.0	0.9	1.8	1.8	2.6	1.9	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5
<i>Foreman</i>	0.8	0.0	0.6	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2
<i>Supervisor</i>	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.6	2.6	1.7	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.3
Others	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
<i>Others</i>	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total Number	21,227	5,513	26,740	8,401	1,311	9,712	286,177	26,238	312,415	315,805	33,062	348,867

Annex 14: New Labour Approvals Issued, 2021/22 (2078/79) (by country of destination and occupation)

	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Malaysia	Kuwait	Cyprus	Romania	Croatia	Turkey	UK	Others
Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener	0.7	0.8	1.6	5.1	1.3	3.6	3.7	6.6	2.7	20.7	3.8
<i>Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener</i>	0.7	0.8	1.6	5.1	1.3	3.6	3.7	6.6	2.7	20.7	3.8
Aviation and Cruise	0.5	0.1	2.3	0.3	0.9	-	0.5	0.5	2.8	0.8	2.2
<i>Aviation and Cruise</i>	0.5	0.1	2.3	0.3	0.9	-	0.5	0.5	2.8	0.8	2.2
Construction	10.83	3.82	4.68	0	2.49	0.03	4.86	18.63	0.23	0.04	6.51
<i>Carpenter</i>	3.1	1.0	1.1	-	1.0	-	1.7	5.8	-	0.04	0.9
<i>Mason</i>	5.2	0.7	1.6	-	0.2	-	1.6	7.0	0.2	-	1.3
<i>Painting</i>	1.3	0.4	0.3	-	0.1	0.03	0.9	0.3	-	-	0.3
<i>Scaffolding</i>	-	1.4	0.8	-	0.5	-	0.3	0.2	-	-	3.7
<i>Steel Fixer</i>	1.3	0.4	0.7	-	0.5	-	0.3	4.9	-	-	0.2
<i>Construction (other)</i>	-	-	0.02	-	0.1	-	-	0.3	-	-	0.1
Driver/Machine Operator	7.6	11.9	4.2	1.9	4.4	-	0.3	2.7	4.5	0.04	2.4
<i>Driver</i>	7.0	10.3	3.8	-	4.4	-	0.1	1.0	-	0.04	0.9
<i>Machine Operator</i>	0.6	1.7	0.4	1.9	0.1	-	0.2	1.7	4.5	-	1.5
Electrical and Mechanical Technician	7.4	1.6	1.1	0.1	0.6	0.03	2.2	5.8	-	0.6	2.7
<i>A/C Technician</i>	0.5	0.02	0.1	-	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	0.04
<i>Automotive Technicians</i>	-	0.4	0.1	-	0.1	-	0.03	0.2	-	-	0.2
<i>Electrician</i>	1.9	0.4	0.4	-	0.2	-	0.6	0.6	-	-	0.8
<i>Plumbing/Pipe Fitter</i>	4.1	0.4	0.2	-	0.01	-	0.4	0.1	-	-	0.3

	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Malaysia	Kuwait	Cyprus	Romania	Croatia	Turkey	UK	Others
<i>Welding</i>	0.5	0.2	0.1	-	0.2	0.03	0.8	3.0	-	0.2	0.5
<i>Electro/Mechanical (other)</i>	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	-	0.4	2.0	-	0.4	1.0
Elementary Occupations	57.0	68.9	55.9	14.9	57.9	85.7	59.7	35.2	34.4	56.3	43.0
<i>Cleaning and Laundry</i>	11.0	2.5	40.3	5.9	32.7	0.1	6.4	4.7	9.5	0.04	16.0
<i>Labour (Specified)</i>	4.5	5.2	1.3	0.7	2.3	0.03	3.4	4.0	9.6	0.7	7.0
<i>Labour (Unspecified)</i>	41.2	58.6	12.5	7.7	20.6	85.4	49.4	20.9	12.9	52.5	17.0
<i>Packaging, Loading, Shipping and Delivery</i>	0.4	2.6	1.8	0.6	2.3	0.1	0.4	5.6	2.4	3.1	3.1
Manufacturing	0.1	7.7	0.8	66.6	1.5	-	4.5	12.5	20.0	2.1	3.5
<i>Manufacturing</i>	0.1	7.7	0.8	66.6	1.5	-	4.5	12.5	20.0	2.1	3.5
Office/Administrative/Associate Professionals	5.1	0.2	4.8	0.4	3.0	0.03	2.7	0.8	5.9	0.6	3.7
<i>Office/Administrative/Associate Professionals</i>	5.1	0.2	4.8	0.4	3.0	0.03	2.7	0.8	5.9	0.6	3.7
Professionals and Managers	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.03	0.02	0.2	5.1	1.6	3.0
<i>Manager</i>	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.03	0.01	0.03	-	0.02	-	0.9	0.8
<i>Professional</i>	0.1	0.04	0.2	0.1	0.2	-	0.0	0.2	5.1	0.7	2.2
Service & Sales	9.2	4.6	23.3	10.5	27.4	10.6	21.3	17.0	23.9	16.9	28.1
<i>Baker/Dessert Maker</i>	0.2	0.2	0.2	-	0.3	0.1	1.0	3.5	0.1	-	0.3
<i>Barista/Coffee Maker</i>	0.04	0.9	0.3	-	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.4	-	-	1.0
<i>Beauty & Fitness</i>	0.3	0.1	1.0	-	2.1	-	0.3	0.04	5.2	0.8	1.4
<i>Caregiver/Nursing Aide</i>	0.1	0.1	0.2	-	0.5	4.4	1.1	0.02	2.4	7.6	1.4
<i>Chef/Cook</i>	1.2	1.2	2.0	0.5	4.0	5.4	7.9	2.8	7.8	4.2	8.0

	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Malaysia	Kuwait	Cyprus	Romania	Croatia	Turkey	UK	Others
Housekeeping	-	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.7	0.1	5.8	6.0	3.9	-	2.3
Retail	1.7	0.2	3.7	0.2	1.3	-	0.7	0.02	-	-	1.0
Security	3.1	-	10.4	9.3	7.3	0.03	-	-	-	4.2	7.4
Tailor	0.3	0.3	0.2	-	0.2	-	-	1.1	-	-	0.2
Waiter/Waitress	2.1	1.5	4.0	0.5	9.8	0.4	4.4	3.2	4.7	-	4.5
Hospitality (others)	0.3	0.2	0.8	-	0.8	0.03	0.0	-	-	0.1	0.7
Supervisor and Foreman	1.6	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.1	-	0.03	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.7
Foreman	0.7	-	0.01	-	-	-	-	0.02	-	-	0.04
Supervisor	0.8	0.03	0.4	0.1	0.1	-	0.03	0.04	0.1	0.4	0.7
Others	0.0	0.2	0.4	-	0.3	-	0.2	0.04	0.5	0.0	0.4
Others	0.01	0.2	0.4	-	0.3	-	0.2	0.04	0.5	0.04	0.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	76,823	125,368	53,844	26,091	22,786	3,222	6,418	5,206	852	2,808	25,449

Annex 15: New Labour Approvals Issued for Women, 2021/22 (2078/79) (by country of destination and occupation)

Occupation	UAE	Qatar	Kuwait	Oman	Jordan	Malaysia	Cyprus	Bahrain	Romania	Maldives	Croatia	Others	Total
Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	2.6	0.0	1.2	22.5	10.9	6.0	1.8
<i>Agriculture, Fishery, Poultry, Animal and Gardener</i>	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	2.6	0.0	1.2	22.5	10.9	6.0	1.8
Aviation and Cruise	1.1	3.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	2.3	0.0	0.6	1.0
<i>Aviation and Cruise</i>	1.1	3.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	2.3	0.0	0.6	1.0
Construction	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.0
<i>Construction</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Carpenter	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0
<i>Carpenter</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0
Mason	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
<i>Mason</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
Painter	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
<i>Painter</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
Driver/Machine Operator	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	4.8	0.8	0.4
<i>Driver/Machine Operator</i>	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	4.8	0.8	0.4
Driver	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
<i>Driver</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
Machine Operator	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	4.4	0.8	0.4
<i>Machine Operator</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	4.4	0.8	0.4
Electrical and Mechanical Technician	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	2.6	0.9	0.2
<i>Electrical and Mechanical Technician</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	2.6	0.9	0.2
Electrician	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Electrician</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Plumbing/Pipe Fitter	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Plumbing/Pipe Fitter</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Electro/Mechanical Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.9	0.2
<i>Electro/Mechanical Other</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.9	0.2
Elementary Occupations	64.4	63.6	56.6	59.5	3.8	1.2	92.4	52.0	50.0	22.1	28.4	46.7	57.3
<i>Elementary Occupations</i>	64.4	63.6	56.6	59.5	3.8	1.2	92.4	52.0	50.0	22.1	28.4	46.7	57.3
Cleaning and Laundry	58.1	53.4	48.8	56.6	0.0	0.1	0.1	44.7	14.6	12.3	17.9	14.8	39.9
<i>Cleaning and Laundry</i>	58.1	53.4	48.8	56.6	0.0	0.1	0.1	44.7	14.6	12.3	17.9	14.8	39.9
Labour (Specified)	0.4	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	1.9	5.3	0.3	4.7	1.0
<i>Labour (Specified)</i>	0.4	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	1.9	5.3	0.3	4.7	1.0
Labour (Unspecified)	5.7	9.4	7.1	2.6	3.8	1.1	92.3	4.2	33.1	4.3	7.7	24.9	16.0
<i>Labour (Unspecified)</i>	5.7	9.4	7.1	2.6	3.8	1.1	92.3	4.2	33.1	4.3	7.7	24.9	16.0
Packaging, Loading, Shipping and Delivery	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.6	2.3	0.5
<i>Packaging, Loading, Shipping and Delivery</i>	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.6	2.3	0.5
Manufacturing	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	61.7	94.4	0.0	0.2	1.3	0.1	11.3	1.5	5.7
<i>Manufacturing</i>	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	61.7	94.4	0.0	0.2	1.3	0.1	11.3	1.5	5.7
Manufacturing	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	61.7	94.4	0.0	0.2	1.3	0.1	11.3	1.5	5.7
<i>Manufacturing</i>	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	61.7	94.4	0.0	0.2	1.3	0.1	11.3	1.5	5.7

Occupation	UAE	Qatar	Kuwait	Oman	Jordan	Malaysia	Cyprus	Bahrain	Romania	Maldives	Croatia	Others	Total
Office/Administrative/ Associate Professionals	9.8	5.9	5.8	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.0	7.8	3.5	8.5	1.6	3.4	6.1
Office/Administrative/ Associate Professionals	9.8	5.9	5.8	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.0	7.8	3.5	8.5	1.6	3.4	6.1
Professionals and Managers	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	4.5	0.0	5.0	1.0
Manager	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.3
Professional	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	4.5	0.0	3.9	0.7
Service & Sales	22.4	26.4	36.5	38.4	34.2	0.2	5.0	39.3	43.0	38.0	39.5	33.5	25.6
Baker/Dessert Maker	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.4	2.9	0.0	0.2
Barista/Coffee Maker	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	2.4	0.5	0.1	0.3
Beauty & Fitness	2.9	3.6	10.4	22.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.7	2.0	2.3	0.2	1.9	3.9
Caregiver/Nursing Aide	0.8	0.9	1.3	0.2	1.6	0.0	4.9	0.0	2.6	0.4	0.1	18.3	2.8
Chef/Cook	0.4	1.2	0.9	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.5	4.8	3.3	1.7	2.5	1.0
Housekeeping	0.9	0.0	2.0	0.3	32.6	0.0	0.0	1.7	22.6	2.0	20.0	3.8	3.0
Retail	6.5	5.1	2.6	2.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	1.9	0.1	6.1	0.1	0.1	3.8
Security	2.3	2.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	2.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	2.5	1.7
Tailor	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.4	4.2	0.0	0.3
Waiter/Waitress	6.7	12.6	13.4	10.8	0.0	0.1	0.1	10.8	10.3	17.3	9.8	3.8	7.6
Hospitality-Others	1.3	0.8	3.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.4	1.1
Supervisor and Foreman	0.8	0.7	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.9	0.1	0.8	0.5
Foreman	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supervisor	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.9	0.1	0.8	0.5
Others	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.6	0.2
Others	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.6	0.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	12,928	4,348	3,732	622	771	1,258	2,827	638	838	902	1,092	3,106	33,062

Annex 16: Number of Returnee Nepali Migrant Workers, by Sex and Countries of Destination

Country of destination	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Qatar	50,600	1,206	51,806	129,494	4,176	133,670	180,094	5,382	185,476
UAE	46,614	5,614	52,228	94,863	13,127	107,990	141,477	18,741	160,218
Saudi Arabia	45,672	318	45,990	104,759	1,183	105,942	150,431	1,501	151,932
Malaysia	28,633	681	29,314	64,085	1,655	65,740	92,718	2,336	95,054
Kuwait	5,714	803	6,517	15,867	2,872	18,739	21,581	3,675	25,256
Bahrain	3,274	256	3,530	7,294	627	7,921	10,568	883	11,451
Oman	2,175	263	2,438	4,801	657	5,458	6,976	920	7,896
Japan	1,958	81	2,039	3,863	131	3,994	5,821	212	6,033
Maldives	827	224	1,051	1,901	731	2,632	2,728	955	3,683
Poland	1,025	80	1,105	1,677	201	1,878	2,702	281	2,983
Jordan	195	737	932	226	1,728	1,954	421	2,465	2,886
Cyprus	83	566	649	252	1,561	1,813	335	2,127	2,462
Romania	682	65	747	1,429	141	1,570	2,111	206	2,317
Afghanistan	1,125	3	1,128	1,135	3	1,138	2,260	6	2,266
Malta	376	126	502	907	338	1,245	1,283	464	1,747
Seychelles	333	28	361	611	68	679	944	96	1,040
USA	188	38	226	618	158	776	806	196	1,002
Turkey	186	164	350	312	322	634	498	486	984
Germany	48	140	188	115	514	629	163	654	817
Israel	71	132	203	184	397	581	255	529	784
Croatia	237	34	271	446	47	493	683	81	764
Czech Republic	228	25	253	351	64	415	579	89	668
Macau SAR, China	219	9	228	400	32	432	619	41	660

Country of destination	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Portugal	161	4	165	437	10	447	598	14	612
UK	103	12	115	345	75	420	448	87	535
Brunei Darussalam	64	2	66	428	9	437	492	11	503
Lebanon	40	66	106	58	131	189	98	197	295
Canada	34	6	40	140	36	176	174	42	216
Republic of Korea	39	-	39	167	1	168	206	1	207
Singapore	79	4	83	105	7	112	184	11	195
Finland	49	1	50	117	4	121	166	5	171
New Zealand	26	-	26	111	23	134	137	23	160
Mauritius	37	-	37	115	-	115	152	-	152
Australia	20	1	21	122	4	126	142	5	147
Russia	55	-	55	87	1	88	142	1	143
Sri Lanka	54	8	62	42	19	61	96	27	123
Nigeria	43	2	45	70	2	72	113	4	117
China	66	4	70	41	5	46	107	9	116
Papua New Guinea	20	2	22	88	4	92	108	6	114
Cayman	27	2	29	72	12	84	99	14	113
Italy	25	5	30	64	19	83	89	24	113
Republic of Congo	40	-	40	72	-	72	112	-	112
France	27	3	30	64	15	79	91	18	109
Egypt	24	5	29	66	6	72	90	11	101
Spain	29	2	31	59	4	63	88	6	94
Norway	8	2	10	70	4	74	78	6	84
Ukraine	30	2	32	37	7	44	67	9	76
Somalia	32	-	32	41	-	41	73	-	73

Country of destination	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Netherland	20	2	22	45	5	50	65	7	72
Lithuania	23	1	24	44	-	44	67	1	68
Zambia	23	3	26	40	1	41	63	4	67
Mali	27	-	27	33	-	33	60	-	60
Kenya	15	-	15	44	-	44	59	-	59
Denmark	9	9	18	13	25	38	22	34	56
Thailand	10	-	10	44	1	45	54	1	55
Uganda	20	-	20	35	-	35	55	-	55
Azerbaijan	4	2	6	3	45	48	7	47	54
Hong Kong SAR, China	26	3	29	14	8	22	40	11	51
Mozambique	15	5	20	25	5	30	40	10	50
Tanzania	16	-	16	34	-	34	50	-	50
Cambodia	5	4	9	36	2	38	41	6	47
Angola	12	5	17	20	7	27	32	12	44
Bermuda	19	-	19	23	2	25	42	2	44
Djibouti	18	-	18	23	-	23	41	-	41
Ireland	10	-	10	29	2	31	39	2	41
Panama	23	1	24	15	-	15	38	1	39
Morocco	16	1	17	18	3	21	34	4	38
Comoros	9	-	9	23	1	24	32	1	33
Turks and Caicos Island	4	-	4	29	-	29	33	-	33
Chile	8	-	8	20	3	23	28	3	31
Estonia	10	-	10	20	-	20	30	-	30
Albania	3	1	4	20	4	24	23	5	28
Sweden	6	1	7	19	2	21	25	3	28

Country of destination	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Austria	3	2	5	12	10	22	15	12	27
Serbia	5	2	7	17	3	20	22	5	27
Belgium	6	-	6	18	1	19	24	1	25
Greece	7	1	8	15	2	17	22	3	25
Cambodia	5	2	7	13	3	16	18	5	23
Senegal	7	-	7	16	-	16	23	-	23
Africa	9	-	9	13	-	13	22	-	22
Ghana	1	-	1	21	-	21	22	-	22
Indonesia	11	-	11	11	-	11	22	-	22
Sudan	11	-	11	11	-	11	22	-	22
Dominican Republic	2	-	2	18	-	18	20	-	20
Luxembourg	8	1	9	8	3	11	16	4	20
South Sudan	6	-	6	14	-	14	20	-	20
Hungary	4	-	4	13	1	14	17	1	18
Latvia	6	-	6	12	-	12	18	-	18
Equatorial Guinea	6	-	6	11	-	11	17	-	17
Kazakhstan	9	-	9	7	1	8	16	1	17
Mexico	3	-	3	13	1	14	16	1	17
Iceland	1	-	1	12	3	15	13	3	16
Algeria	2	-	2	13	-	13	15	-	15
Colombia	6	-	6	9	-	9	15	-	15
Tajikistan	6	-	6	9	-	9	15	-	15
Ethiopia	7	-	7	6	-	6	13	-	13
Philippines	1	1	2	8	1	9	9	2	11
Sierra Leone	6	-	6	5	-	5	11	-	11

Country of destination	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Slovenia	6	-	6	5	-	5	11	-	11
Gabon	4	-	4	6	-	6	10	-	10
Lao PDR	3	-	3	6	1	7	9	1	10
Rwanda	5	-	5	4	-	4	9	-	9
Togo	3	-	3	6	-	6	9	-	9
Vietnam	3	-	3	6	-	6	9	-	9
Brazil	3	1	4	4	-	4	7	1	8
Malawi	7	1	8	-	-	-	7	1	8
Mongolia	2	-	2	6	-	6	8	-	8
Iran	5	-	5	2	-	2	7	-	7
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	-	3	3	-	3	6	-	6
Burundi	6	-	6	-	-	-	6	-	6
Republic of Bulgaria	2	-	2	2	2	4	4	2	6
Bangladesh	1	-	1	3	1	4	4	1	5
Burkina Faso	3	-	3	2	-	2	5	-	5
Bahamas	-	-	-	4	-	4	4	-	4
British Virgin Islands	-	-	-	4	-	4	4	-	4
Central African Republic	2	-	2	2	-	2	4	-	4
Cote d'Ivoire	2	-	2	2	-	2	4	-	4
Jamaica	-	-	-	4	-	4	4	-	4
Kosovo	1	-	1	2	1	3	3	1	4
Saipan	-	-	-	3	1	4	3	1	4
Uruguay	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	4
Uzbekistan	3	-	3	1	-	1	4	-	4
Myanmar	1	-	1	2	-	2	3	-	3

Country of destination	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Peru	1	-	1	2	-	2	3	-	3
Republic of Macedonia	1	-	1	2	-	2	3	-	3
Sint Maarten	1	-	1	2	-	2	3	-	3
Switzerland	-	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3
Trinidad and Tobago	-	-	-	2	1	3	2	1	3
Slovakia	-	-	-	3	-	3	3	-	3
Antigua and Barbuda	1	-	1	1	-	1	2	-	2
Barbados	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	1	2
Belarus	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2
Madagascar	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2
Pakistan	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	1	2
Tunisia	1	-	1	1	-	1	2	-	2
Benin	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cameroon	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Eritrea	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
Fiji	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
French Polynesia	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
Liberia	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
Mauritania	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
Palau	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1
Saint Lucia	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
Samoa	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1
Vanuatu	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
Total	192,157	11,777	203,934	439,689	31,289	470,978	631,846	43,066	674,912

Annex 17: Number of Returnee Nepali Migrant Workers, by Sex, Province and District

Province	District	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total	
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total		
Province 1	Bhojpur	1,914	137	2,051	4,414	326	4,740	6,791	
	Dhankuta	1,598	105	1,703	3,914	333	4,247	5,950	
	Ilam	2,233	294	2,527	4,859	853	5,712	8,239	
	Jhapa	8,765	997	9,762	20,212	2,865	23,077	32,839	
	Khotang	2,513	125	2,638	5,919	322	6,241	8,879	
	Morang	7,713	631	8,344	17,447	1,741	19,188	27,532	
	Okhaldhunga	1,154	108	1,262	2,672	287	2,959	4,221	
	Panchthar	2,038	139	2,177	4,655	415	5,070	7,247	
	Sankhuwasabha	1,405	91	1,496	3,176	227	3,403	4,899	
	Solukhumbu	598	174	772	1,282	405	1,687	2,459	
	Sunsari	6,360	378	6,738	14,188	1,121	15,309	22,047	
	Taplejung	1,164	72	1,236	2,774	180	2,954	4,190	
	Tehrathum	1,102	51	1,153	2,630	140	2,770	3,923	
	Udayapur	2,480	183	2,663	5,858	504	6,362	9,025	
Total		41,037	3,485	44,522	94,000	9,719	103,719	148,241	
Madhesh	Bara	3,801	126	3,927	7,364	374	7,738	11,665	
	Dhanusha	11,554	46	11,600	28,581	98	28,679	40,279	
	Mahottari	7,907	42	7,949	19,245	92	19,337	27,286	
	Parsa	2,292	64	2,356	4,272	133	4,405	6,761	
	Rautahat	3,246	47	3,293	7,813	161	7,974	11,267	
	Saptari	5,372	21	5,393	12,745	96	12,841	18,234	
	Sarlahi	5,470	168	5,638	12,491	422	12,913	18,551	
	Siraha	8,939	26	8,965	22,857	60	22,917	31,882	
	Total		48,581	540	49,121	115,368	1,436	116,804	165,925

Province	District	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total	
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total		
Bagmati	Bhaktapur	688	152	840	1,413	349	1,762	2,602	
	Chitwan	4,607	410	5,017	10,204	1,029	11,233	16,250	
	Dhading	2,411	301	2,712	5,703	760	6,463	9,175	
	Dolakha	1,249	265	1,514	2,732	740	3,472	4,986	
	Kathmandu	2,403	784	3,187	4,876	1,989	6,865	10,052	
	Kavrepalanchok	2,563	521	3,084	5,289	1,427	6,716	9,800	
	Lalitpur	971	289	1,260	2,048	721	2,769	4,029	
	Makawanpur	2,671	572	3,243	5,587	1,473	7,060	10,303	
	Nuwakot	2,081	469	2,550	4,810	1,072	5,882	8,432	
	Ramechhap	1,421	301	1,722	3,369	739	4,108	5,830	
	Rasuwa	191	61	252	492	215	707	959	
	Sindhuli	2,126	232	2,358	4,551	571	5,122	7,480	
	Sindhupalchok	1,957	876	2,833	4,450	1,988	6,438	9,271	
	Total		25,339	5,233	30,572	55,524	13,073	68,597	99,169
	Gandaki	Baglung	3,793	95	3,888	8,582	176	8,758	12,646
		Gorkha	3,010	204	3,214	7,219	479	7,698	10,912
Kaski		3,710	209	3,919	8,823	604	9,427	13,346	
Lamjung		2,459	119	2,578	6,142	291	6,433	9,011	
Manang		20	7	27	32	19	51	78	
Mustang		31	5	36	72	15	87	123	
Myagdi		1,611	66	1,677	3,643	178	3,821	5,498	
Nawalparasi East		3,980	164	4,144	9,053	462	9,515	13,659	
Parbat		2,196	47	2,243	5,087	172	5,259	7,502	
Syangja		5,264	152	5,416	12,515	420	12,935	18,351	
Tanahun		4,781	153	4,934	12,315	400	12,715	17,649	
Total			30,855	1,221	32,076	73,483	3,216	76,699	108,775

Province	District	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total	
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total		
Lumbini	Arghakhanchi	2,333	60	2,393	5,400	153	5,553	7,946	
	Banke	2,537	80	2,617	5,291	250	5,541	8,158	
	Bardiya	1,835	63	1,898	4,235	246	4,481	6,379	
	Dang	3,752	153	3,905	8,559	479	9,038	12,943	
	Gulmi	3,756	109	3,865	8,495	283	8,778	12,643	
	Kapilvastu	4,929	58	4,987	9,692	183	9,875	14,862	
	Nawalparasi West	2,691	109	2,800	6,133	306	6,419	9,219	
	Palpa	3,077	77	3,154	7,415	227	7,642	10,796	
	Pyuthan	1,560	27	1,587	3,860	75	3,935	5,522	
	Rolpa	2,241	41	2,282	5,449	121	5,570	7,852	
	Rukum East	349	8	357	814	26	840	1,197	
	Rupandehi	6,694	246	6,940	13,510	699	14,209	21,149	
	Total	35,754	1,031	36,785	78,853	3,048	81,881	118,666	
	Karnali	Dailekh	700	15	715	1,510	49	1,559	2,274
		Dolpa	26	5	31	74	15	89	120
Humla		25	1	26	66	4	70	96	
Jajarkot		427	4	431	899	14	913	1,344	
Jumla		135	4	139	301	4	305	444	
Kalikot		167	7	174	344	14	358	532	
Mugu		86	1	87	144	4	148	235	
Rukum West		866	19	885	2,015	68	2,083	2,968	
Salyan		1,687	43	1,730	3,671	116	3,787	5,517	
Surkhet		1,176	37	1,213	2,510	145	2,655	3,868	
Total	5,295	136	5,431	11,534	433	11,967	17,398		

Province	District	2020/21 (2077/78)			2021/22 (2078/79)			Total
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	
Sudurpashchim	Achham	289	7	296	542	11	553	849
	Baitadi	659	4	663	1,246	15	1,261	1,924
	Bajhang	182		182	372	7	379	561
	Bajura	197	6	203	371	14	385	588
	Dadeldhura	377	9	386	741	11	752	1,138
	Darchula	369	5	374	687	16	703	1,077
	Doti	256	3	259	542	11	553	812
	Kailali	1,453	60	1,513	3,098	176	3,274	4,787
	Kanchanpur	1,514	37	1,551	3,348	103	3,451	5,002
	Total	5,296	131	5,427	10,947	364	11,311	16,738
	Total	192,157	11,777	203,934	439,689	31,289	470,978	674,912



Signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of Nepal and the Government of United Kingdom on the recruitment of healthcare professionals.



Multi-stakeholder consultation.



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
Kathmandu, Nepal