



Roadmap of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka for the Alliance 8.7



National Steering Committee on
Elimination of Child Labour (NSC-ECL)

Forced Labour Task Force
(FLTF)

National Anti Human Trafficking
Task Force (NAHTTF)

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Introduction/ Background

The Alliance 8.7 is a global partnership established with the primary objective of ending forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, and child labour. The Alliance was officially inaugurated on September 19, 2016. It was formed through a collaborative effort between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), along with support from various other organizations and governments. The Alliance is dedicated to coordinating endeavors towards achieving Target 8.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which mandates the eradication of forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, and child labour by the year 2030.

Sri Lanka assumed the role of a pathfinder country within Alliance 8.7 in September 2019. As a pathfinder country, Sri Lanka has pledged to expedite actions towards fulfilling Target 8.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aiming to eliminate child labour by 2025 and forced labour, modern slavery, and human trafficking by 2030.

The collaboration between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Sri Lanka's Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, as well as the Department of Labour, has been ongoing for several decades, dating back to Sri Lanka's accession to the ILO, shortly after gaining independence on February 4, 1948. Over the years, this partnership has evolved and grown stronger, encompassing various areas of cooperation, technical assistance, and mutual support in advancing labour rights and promoting decent work. Consequently, communications between Sri Lanka and Alliance 8.7 are facilitated through the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment and it has been decided that the person holding the office as the Commissioner General of Labour in Sri Lanka will be functioning as the focal point of the Alliance 8.7.

There are three coordination mechanisms operating at the national level aimed at addressing the issues of child labour, forced labour and human trafficking. It is believed that reduction of child labour, forced labour and human trafficking automatically reduces the prevalence of modern slavery. In consideration of these circumstances, this roadmap outlines strategies for

eradication across three key areas, namely child labour, forced labour, and human trafficking. Each key area will follow the same priority areas of prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership.

The initiation of this roadmap traces back to the NSC-ECL meeting convened on July 20, 2020. It was decided that the same NSC-ECL would serve as the designated working group for Alliance 8.7. Subsequently, a technical committee comprising six members was established, within NSC-ECL, with the primary objective of identifying priority areas and addressing existing gaps. The initial focus was directed towards eliminating child labour, as per the objective of NSC-ECL.

The appointed technical committee undertook a thorough assessment of existing laws, and steps were taken to expedite the identified law reforms with respect to the Women, Young Persons, and Children's Act, No. 47 of 1956. Notably, amendments were enacted to raise the minimum age of employment from 14 to 16 years, in line with the country's compulsory age of education, with effect from January 18, 2021. In addition to the revision of the minimum age, the NSC-ECL had identified that the list of hazardous employment applicable to persons under the age of 18 years needs to be expanded to suit the current world of work. The DOL pledged to Alliance 8.7 that the expansion of the list of hazardous occupations would be completed and legalized within the year 2021 and was able to enforce the same with effect from November 15, 2021, reinforcing the legal framework in the country.

Moreover, extensive awareness campaigns were undertaken by all stakeholders affiliated with NSC-ECL, both independently and through collaborative endeavors. These initiatives were instrumental in fostering a culture of social responsibility and garnering widespread support for the task to eliminate child labour.

The NSC-ECL was not convened as usual during 2022 and 2023 due to various reasons, including the economic crisis prevailing in the country. However, the NSC-ECL/Alliance 8.7 working group convened on February 6, 2024, unanimously agreed that a comprehensive roadmap for Alliance 8.7 would be submitted before the upcoming Global Coordination Group meeting. A series of technical meetings were convened at the DOL to further identify the

priority area for the development of this roadmap. Through these deliberations, key areas aligned with the objectives of Alliance 8.7 were identified and the selection of priority areas was guided by the four pillars outlined in the National Strategic Action Plan to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking of NAHTTF, which is currently operating effectively.

Finally, a multi-stakeholder strategic workshop was convened on April 2, 2024, including members from the three coordination mechanisms, comprising senior officials of government ministries, departments, and statutory institutions, as well as workers' and employers' organizations, NGOs, and UN agencies. Validation of priorities and activities was conducted through group discussions, presentations, and a discussion forum. It was concluded that representatives from all three coordination mechanisms will meet once in every 3-6 months at the focal point of Alliance 8.7, the person holding the office as the Commissioner General of Labour, to review and streamline the roadmap, ensuring national-level collaboration to achieve the objectives of Alliance 8.7.

Key Area I: Child Labour

Sri Lanka has taken various measures to eliminate child labour, and there were only 1% engaged in child labour, as per the 2016 - child activity survey. The National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour in Sri Lanka, passed by the Parliament in 2017, demonstrates that elimination of child labour has been recognized as a national need. The National Steering Committee on Elimination of Child Labour (NSC-ECL) has been formulated under the National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour, as the coordinated mechanism, with all the relevant stakeholders. Further, it has been identified that Elimination of Child Labour as an ongoing process, which involves a multi sectoral approach. Accordingly, the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment and the Department of Labour with the collaboration of all stakeholders, plan to implement the following road map for the next 3 years, aiming to bring down the prevalence of child labour to an insignificant level by 2025, and even beyond 2025, with regular reviews every two years.

1. Prevention

- Implement training programs for law enforcement agencies, judicial personnel, and other relevant stakeholders to effectively identify and combat child labour. This needs to be a continuous activity to refresh the legal updates and improve coordination.
- Provide vocational training and alternative livelihood opportunities for families relying on child labour to break the cycle of poverty.
- Raise awareness among communities, parents, and employers about the harmful effects of child labour and the importance of education. The continuous assistance of religious leaders, community leaders and distinguished personnel at local level will be requested.
- Implement campaigns to raise awareness about the negative impacts of child labour on children's health, education, and overall development as individually and as a society too at the school level by incorporating these facts into the school curriculum.
- Include small scale business entities in the coverage for awareness and taking pledges via trade organizations on the elimination of child labour.
- Develop tools and modules to educate and raise awareness among the public. ex: leaflets, posters, short videos, documentary programs, stage dramas etc.
- Use social media and mass media for awareness. Ex: including special dialogues in between teledramas, news lines during news telecasts etc.

2. Protection

- Implement programs to improve the economic status of vulnerable families, such as skills training, microfinance initiatives for self-employment, and access to productive assets.
- Provide alternative income-generating opportunities for parents to reduce their reliance on child labour for household income.
- Strengthen social protection programs to provide financial assistance to families in need.
- Provide scholarships, school supplies, and transportation assistance to children from low-income families with the support of the community from the same area (through raising funds from sponsorships)
- Identify the risk- families correctly for implementation. For that, proper data base needs to be maintained regarding the subject. Request financial support from the community considering this as a social responsibility.
- Establish and strengthen child protection systems to provide support and rehabilitation services to children rescued from child labour and the vulnerable children identified.
- Develop specialized services including counseling, education, healthcare, and reintegration into family and community life.
- Work closely with religious places, NGOs, and civil society organizations to provide comprehensive support to vulnerable children and their families.

3. Prosecution

- Review and Strengthen laws by the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment.
- Introduce higher penalties for child labour law violations (At present, the fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees or imprisonment for a period of not exceeding twelve months or both and in addition be ordered to pay compensation ordered by the court to the child, which is not defined).
- Ensure strict and efficient enforcement of law by the DOL. (The department of Labour conducts group inspections with the Department of Police and Probation upon complaints received. The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) maintains 1929 child helpline and most of the child labour complaints are received via 1929.)
- Effective functioning of the NSC-ECL to provide oversight and guidance on policy formulation and implementation.

4. Partnership

- Conduct research and data collection to better understand the root causes and prevalence of child labour in different sectors and regions of Sri Lanka.
- Collect reliable data and analyze to identify the correct picture of child labour in Sri Lanka (reported and non-reported cases in formal/informal sector) to implement activities, designing programming and measuring success in priority areas to make child labour zero. (Last child activity survey has been done in 2016 only)
- Use evidence-based findings to inform policy decisions, program development, and targeted interventions. Ex: Use of administrative data available with all stakeholders.
- Monitor regularly to assess progress towards the elimination of child labour and adjust strategies as needed based on evaluation results.
- Engage with businesses, trade unions, and civil society organizations to secure commitments to eliminate child labour from supply chains and workplaces.
- Encourage governments to prioritize investment in education, social protection, and poverty reduction programs to address the root causes of child labour.
- Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal target of ending child labour in all its forms by 2025.
- Ensure long-term sustainability by integrating child labour elimination efforts into national development plans and securing adequate funding and resources for implementation.
- Empowering communities to identify and address the root causes of child labour within their own contexts which can lead to more sustainable solutions.
- Mobilize community leaders and stakeholders to actively participate in anti-child labour initiatives. Establish community-based mechanisms for reporting and addressing child labour cases.
- Involvement with religious Leaders to influence and to promote child rights and discourage harmful practices such as child labour.
- Obtain technical expertise and support for the implementation of child labour elimination programs from UN Agencies (UNICEF, ILO, IOM).
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and best practice exchanges with other countries.
- Implement this roadmap to effectively combat child labour and create a safer and more equitable future for all children, with all stakeholders in collaboration.
- Monitor and evaluate the progress towards objectives of the NSC-ECL and the targets of Alliance 8.7 by the national focal point with periodic reviews.
- Report progress at national level to the Alliance 8.7 and obtain streamline the priorities and activities periodically.

Key Area II: Forced Labour

Sri Lanka criminalized the offence of forced labour by an amendment to the Penal Code in 2006 and included a definition of forced labour and its manifestations in the penal provision. In addition, there are other statutes which include elements of forced labour or specific aspects of forced labour, such as in relation to women and children. However, other legislation contains elements of the offence of forced labour by and through the definition of rights or standards, and making violations of those rights and standards an offence.

The goal of this part of the roadmap is to identify and significantly reduce forced labour in Sri Lanka by strengthening prevention, enforcement, and victim protection mechanisms. Under the themes of Prevention, Protection, Persecution and Partnership.

1. Prevention

- Strengthen National Task Force on Forced Labour - The already established task force, will include employers' organizations, and worker representatives, and will assist in implementing the Roadmap.
- Conduct a National Forced Labour Assessment. - Partner with the ILO and other research institutions to assess the prevalence, sectors, and root causes of forced labour in Sri Lanka.
- Provide Training and Awareness Campaigns. - Training all labour officers and selected police officers on identifying and prosecuting forced labour
- Develop and Implement National Action Plan - The Task Force will develop and launch a comprehensive NAP based on the Roadmap outlining specific actions, timelines, and responsible parties for addressing forced labour across various sectors.

2. Protection

- Data collection - The DOL and the Police will have a mechanism to collect data on forced labour and publish annually.
- Strengthen Labour Inspections. - The DOL will take necessary measures to incorporate forced labour components in the labour inspection module and continue training labour officers on identification and enforcement.
- Stakeholder Engagement - Engage with employer's and trade unions to promote responsible recruitment practices and develop self-regulatory mechanisms to prevent forced labour

- Establish a Comprehensive Referral Mechanism - Develop a clear and accessible referral mechanism for victims of forced labour to access appropriate services, including legal aid, medical care, psychosocial support, and skills training.

3. Prosecution

- Law Enforcement and Prosecution - Enhance cooperation between law enforcement agencies and the judiciary to effectively investigate and prosecute forced labour cases. Ensure victim protection throughout the legal process.
- Identify and strengthen legal framework - Task Force may identify any legal requirements and take action to introduce necessary legal provisions to prevent, enforce and protect forced labour victims.

4. Partnership

- Improve Coordination/ Communication - Discussing with all relevant stakeholders (Eg: Agriculture, Agrarian Services, Fisheries, Tourism, etc.), Intersectoral coordination (Eg: Communication between agencies such as Labour and Fisheries)

Key Area III: Human Trafficking

The National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (NAHTTF) implements its role as the national coordinating body in spearheading, monitoring and enhancing efforts to combat human trafficking with a holistic approach in accordance with the National Strategic Action Plan to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking (2021-2025).

The Counter Human Trafficking Effort of the NAHTTF is connected with the government process of achieving SDGs to counter trafficking in persons as addressed in three SDGs: 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent work and Economic growth) and 16 (Peace Justice and Strong Institutions). Human Trafficking is identified in SDGs as an issue deeply rooted in development issues including forced labour and child labour. The NAHTTF encapsulate the effort of its member institutions on various technical areas toward counter trafficking effort into a one platform with a multidisciplinary approach which facilitates the approach of the GoSL in achieving the SDGs as a pathfinder country.

Further, forced labour and child labour identified under forms of Human Trafficking begin as a result of search for work prompted by lack of opportunities that creates vulnerabilities towards trafficking in persons that has been addressed by SDG 8 as it identified the ‘lack of access to decent work through regular channels’ as an issue leading to Human Trafficking.

Further, pursuant to the National Strategic Action Plan to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking (2021-2025), GoSL responses to human trafficking are predicated on the following objectives under respective pillars.

1. Prevention: Prevent Human Trafficking

- Increase efforts in creating greater awareness among relevant state and non-state stakeholders at both national and local level on human trafficking and on the referral mechanisms and ultimately contribute to the reduction of levels of vulnerability that lead to trafficking.
- Strengthen co-ordination efforts among task force members for the effective implementation of interventions and strategies to address trafficking.
- Facilitate and improve research and data collection on human trafficking for greater understanding and for evidence-based policy making.

2. Protection: Identify, Assist, and protect the victims of Human Trafficking

- Improve appropriate assistance to and protection of victims of human trafficking in a holistic and victim-centered approach.
- To build institutional capacity of relevant stakeholders to be able to provide effective protection and assistance to victims of TIP

3. Prosecution: Dismantle Human Trafficking Networks and hold Traffickers accountable

- Enhance the capacity of stake holders with appropriate skills and capabilities for effective identification/detection, investigation and prosecution of the crime.
- Implementing strategies/ actions for investigations and prosecutions in an effective manner.

4. Partnership: Crosscutting approaches and institutional effectiveness – Enable Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution through Collaboration/partnership

- Strengthen coordination and partnership with both government and non-government organizations to support a comprehensive response to human trafficking.
- Building and improving national and international coordination and cooperation to address human trafficking.

Stakeholders

a. Public Institutions

1. Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment
2. Department of Labour (DoL)
3. Department of Manpower and Employment
4. Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment
5. Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment
6. Department of Probation and Child Care Services
7. National Child Protection Authority (NCPA)
8. Ministry of Education (MoE)
9. National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA)
10. Vocational Training Authority (VTA)
11. Ministry of Health (MoH)

12. Ministry of Defence
13. National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (NAHTTF)
14. Sri Lanka Police
15. Police Children & Women Bureau (Mukthar Plaza)
16. Presidential Secretariat
17. Ministry of Justice
18. Attorney General's Department
19. Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs,
Provincial Councils and Local Government (MoPubAd&HA)
20. Ministry of Agriculture
21. Ministry of Fisheries
22. Ministry of Plantation Industries
23. Ministry of Industries
24. The National Chamber of Commerce
25. Ministry of Mass Media (MoMM)
26. Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs
27. Department of Census and Statistics (DCS)

b. International Organizations

1. International Labour Organization (ILO)
2. Alliance 8.7
3. International Organization for Migration (IOM)
4. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

c. Private Sector Organizations and NGOs

1. Religious Organizations in Sri Lanka
2. SAFE Foundation
3. Plan International
4. Save the Children
5. World Vision
6. Sarvodaya
7. National Trade unions Federation
8. Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC)
9. Ceylon Worker's Congress (CWC)
10. Sri Lanka Nidahas Sewaka Sangamaya (SLNSS)
11. Jathika Sewaka Sangamaya (JSS)

National Action Plan of the Roadmap for Alliance 8.7

Key Area	Priority	Activities	Collaborating Agencies	Time Frame
Child Labour	Prevention			
	Reduction of School Dropouts	“Making sure the children are going school” to be a condition for giving <i>Aswesuma</i> benefits	DOL, Divisional Secretariats, Welfare Benefits Board	2024 - 2026
	Educational Reforms	Compulsory career guidance around 14 years old	DOL, Ministry of Education	2024 - 2026
		Technical subjects to be encouraged (NVQ courses)	DOL, Ministry of Education, Vocational Training Institutions	2024 - 2026
	Awareness	Awareness programs for both adults and Children (Specially for Children)	DOL, Ministry of Education,	2024 - 2026
		Getting the involvement of religious organizations/ religious leaders to eliminate Child Labour	DOL, Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Dept of Buddhist Affairs, Dept of Hindu Religious & Cultural Affairs, Dept of Muslim Religious & Cultural Affairs, Dept of Christian Religious Affairs	2024 - 2026
	Social protection	Mapping of vulnerable families	DOL, Divisional Secretariats, Religious Institutions	2024
		Establishing a monitoring committee at the Divisional Secretariat level	DOL, Divisional Secretariats	2025 - 2026
		Strengthening SMEs	DOL, Divisional Secretariats Ministry of Industry & Commerce,	2024 - 2026
	Data Collection	Creating a sound data collection mechanism	DOL, DCS	2024 - 2026

Child Labour	Protection			
	Strengthen child protection systems	Providing support and rehabilitation services to children rescued from child labour and the vulnerable children identified	DOL, Department of Probation & Child Care Services, National Child Protection Authority, Department of Police	2024 - 2026
	Prosecution			
	Ensure strict enforcement of child labour laws	The Department of Labour conducts group inspections.	DOL, Department of Police, Department of Probation & Child Care Services	2024 - 2026
	Review and strengthen existing laws	Drafted new legislation will address gaps such as inadequate penalty.	DOL, MOL&FE	2024 - 2026
	Partnership			
Social protection	Sponsorships to the vulnerable children with the funding support from the private sector organizations, international organizations, NGOs and other community level organizations, and donor persons (Eg: Business Community, Old Students' Associations, Religious Organizations and Institutions, etc.)	DOL, Divisional Secretariats	2024 - 2026	

Forced Labour	Prevention			
	Awareness and Capacity Building	Identifying the stakeholders	MOL&FE	2024
		Awareness programs for all stakeholders	MOL&FE, Department of Police	2025 - 2026
	Research and Data Collection	Surveys	DOL, DCS	2025 - 2026
	Sector-wise Forums	Sector-wise forums for formal and informal sectors (Agriculture, Constructions, Security, etc)	Forced Labour Task Force	2024 - 2026
	Protection			
	Establish a Referral Mechanism	Develop a clear and accessible (Comprehensive) referral mechanism	DOL, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and other institutions	2024 - 2026
	Prosecution			
	Strengthening the legal framework	Reviewing the relevant legal definitions from the beginning (Eg: Definition for Forced Labour)	MOL&FE, DOL, Attorney General's Department, Legal Draftsman Department	2024 - 2026
		Reviewing some legal provisions and fines	MOL&FE, DOL, Attorney General's Department, Legal Draftsman Department	2024 - 2026
	Partnership			
	Coordination	Discussing with all relevant stakeholders (Eg: Agriculture, Agrarian Services, Fisheries, Tourism, etc.),	DOL, Forced Labour Task Force	2024 - 2026
		Intersectoral coordination (Eg: Communication between agencies such as Labour and Fisheries)	DOL, Forced Labour Task Force	2024 - 2026

Human Trafficking	Prevention			
	Regulatory Framework	Issuing circular instructions to the relevant government officials	Department of Agriculture, Agrarian Services Department, Ministry of health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Industries, Ministry of Plantation, Ministry of Fisheries	2024
	Public Awareness	Public Awareness using all kind of media (Eg: Digital media, Social media, etc.)	Members of NAHTTF	2024 - 2026
	Protection			
	SOP for Law Enforcement Authorities	Issuing an SOP (Standard Operations Procedure),	Members of NAHTTF	2025
		Awareness and Institutionalization	Members of NAHTTF	2025 - 2026
	Prosecution			
	Enforcement of Labour Law	Taking proactive legal actions	DOL, SLBFE	2024 - 2026
	Partnership			
	National and International Coordination	BIMSTEC sub-group of Human Trafficking	Members of NAHTTF	2024
Reviewing the members of the committees	Adding new members to the committees	Alliance 8.7 Country Coordination Group	2024 - 2026	

Funding Sources

1. Annual Budget – Government of Sri Lanka (GOS)
2. International Labour Organization (ILO)
3. Alliance 8.7
4. NGOs and INGOs
5. Local and International donors

Abbreviations

CGL – Commissioner General of Labour

DOL – Department of Labour

DWTT – Decent Work Technical Team

ECL – Elimination of Child Labour

FPR – Fundamental Principles and Rights

ILO – International Labour Organization

MOL&FE – Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment

NAHTTF – National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force

NGOs – Non-government Organizations

NSC – National Steering Committee

UN – United Nations

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SLBEF – Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment