

**Joint Shadow Report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of
Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

Submitted To:

90 Session of the CEDAW Committee with the permission to publish on the OHCHR
Website for public information and dissemination

Submitted By:

Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO), Kathmandu, Nepal



AND

International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN), Copenhagen, Denmark



Date of Submission: 6 January 2025

Background

This is the joint report of FEDO and IDSN to the CEDAW Committee Review of Nepal scheduled for 5th February 2025. This report advocates exclusively for the human rights of socially, economically, politically, and culturally marginalized Dalit women and girls in Nepal.

FEDO is a Dalit women-led national NGO. It was established by a group of rural Dalit women in 1994. Since its establishment, FEDO has been contributing to creating a discrimination-free society where Dalit women can live dignified lives, enjoy their human rights, participate in policy and decision-making of the government and private sectors at local, provincial, and federal levels, and get equal benefits from the development. www.fedonepal.org

IDSN is a network of national platforms and organisations in caste-affected countries, international human rights groups, development agencies, and national Dalit solidarity networks from Europe. Founded in 2000, IDSN advocates for Dalit human rights and raises awareness of Dalit issues nationally and internationally. FEDO is a founding member of IDSN. www.idsn.org

This joint report aims to complement the information provided in the Nepali government's seventh periodic report to the CEDAW Committee under Article 18 of the Convention, the concluding observations of the Committee made in 2018, and Nepal's replies to the list of issues and questions in relation to its seventh periodic report and the reports of the other international human rights instruments, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). It collaborates with the shadow reports of Nepalese CSOs and national human rights institutions (NHRIs) to the CEDAW Committee.

Dalit is one of the caste groups in Nepal. Dalits are the so-called 'lower' or oppressed caste in the four-fold Hindu caste hierarchy. There are 1.6 million Dalits who reside in all 77 districts of Nepal. Dalit women constitute 15 percent of the total female population of the country¹.

FEDO and IDSN prepared this report in consultation with political, social, and CSO leaders, representatives of NHRIs, government authorities, development and human rights experts, and Dalit Women Human Rights Defenders (DWHRDs) from all seven provinces of Nepal.

This report is presented as a supplementary document to underscore the severe and multifaceted discrimination and vulnerability faced by women within the Dalit community. Its purpose is to strengthen the advocacy for women's rights and draw attention to the challenges specifically encountered by Dalit women. The document aims to prompt further progress of Nepal's efforts in fulfilling its commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

¹Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Nepal. See <https://censusnepal.cbs.gov.np/home/index/en>

COVID-19 hit Nepal hard, with a death toll of 12,031². The country was also affected by disasters, most recently the devastating earthquake in Jajarkot district in November 2023 and nationwide flash floods in 2024. Those most affected by the coronavirus and such disasters are Dalits and other marginalized people with limited access to health facilities, aid, and other services.

Despite the harsh effects of the disasters, this report focuses on Articles 1 and 2 on discrimination against Dalit women and girls, Articles 7 and 8 on the right to participation, and Article 16 on the right to marriage and family life. It includes the longstanding human rights issues of Dalit women and girls, and a list of existing legislation and mechanisms related to their issues, and proposes recommendations to include in the Committee's concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Nepal.

Articles 1 and 2: Discrimination against Dalit Women and Girls

Existing legislation and mechanisms

- Nepal is a party to the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD).
- The government established the National Dalit Commission (NDC) in 2001 to protect and promote the human rights of Dalits, including Dalit women and girls.
- The Constitution of Nepal (2015) prohibits untouchability and discrimination based on caste (Article 24) and gender (Article 18). The Constitution made the NDC a Constitutional body.
- The Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offense and Punishment) Act, 2011 criminalizes caste-based discrimination and untouchability.
- The government has established 175 Dalit Desks³ within the Women, Children, and Senior Citizens Service Centers (WCSCSC) at police stations across the country that handle the cases of caste-based discrimination and associated harmful social and traditional practices.

Prevalence of the Problems

Despite the promising national and international laws and policies in place and the commitments of the government to protecting and promoting the human rights of its citizens, Dalit women and girls in Nepal continue to face discrimination, sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Caste-based discrimination is an additional burden Dalit women and girls live with, on top of intersectional discrimination and traditional harmful practices, including Chhaupadi, dowry, and child marriage.

Dalit women and girls with disabilities, Dalit women and girls belonging to sexual and gender minorities (LGBTIQ+) and religious minorities, elderly and single Dalit women, and Madhesi⁴ Dalit women and girls

² <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/nepal/>

³ The replies of Nepal, www.ohchr.org

⁴ Madhesi refers to people living in the Madhesh Province of Nepal in the southern plain that borders India. Their cultural setting and languages, mainly Maithili and Bhojpuri, are similar to northern parts of India.

are more vulnerable to discrimination as they bear intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and segregation in private and public spheres based on caste, class, gender, religion, physical status, occupation, and distinct linguistic and cultural identities.

‘The Caste-based discrimination free’ declaration of Nepal failed to eliminate the routine abuse and prejudice against Dalit women and girls. At its core, caste-based discrimination has pushed Dalit women and girls to social and economic vulnerability, excluded them from the development and policy-making processes, and deprived them of opportunities to fully realize their social, economic, and cultural rights.

Caste-based discrimination has put Dalit women and girls at risk of multiple forms of violence and narrowed their access to justice mechanisms where the cases of caste-based discrimination often remain unreported due to several reasons linked with the vulnerable social and economic conditions of the Dalit women and girls’ victims of the discrimination.

The lack of accountability of the elected representatives and law enforcement authorities, of whom more than 90% are non-Dalits, towards the effective implementation of the legislation has challenged the human rights of Dalit women and girls, particularly the right to equality and non-discrimination.

There is a notable lack of strategies, resources, and government capacity, in particular, local and provincial governments, to address the intersecting issues and discrimination faced by Dalit women and girls, specifically those with disabilities, those belonging to sexual, gender, and religious minorities, elderly and single Dalit women, and Madhesi Dalit women.

Lack of documentation and denial of reporting of the cases of caste-based discrimination

Although FEDO has documented many cases of gender and caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls across the country, of the total 1,464 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) issued at the National Women Commission (NWC) in 2021-2022, only nine percent of cases were registered by Hill Dalits.⁵ This indicates the lack of access of Madhesi Dalit women and girls to the government mechanisms, as well as the lack of capacity of these mechanisms.

The long-standing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination against Dalit women and girls have discouraged their fight against all forms of discrimination and sexual violence. *The majority of Dalit women facing discrimination did not report the crimes due to fear of retaliation, lack of trust in the legal system, and inadequate support mechanisms. This reluctance to report crimes is a significant barrier to addressing discrimination and human rights abuses against Dalit women in Nepal*⁶.

⁵ 15th Annual Report of National Women Commission

⁶ Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2019 United States Department of State

Discriminatory and unequal behavior towards Dalit women and girls is widespread in the police and other justice mechanisms due to their limited access to power holders and political leaders, who invisibly influence the justice process.

Ineffective implementation of the legislation

The Committee's concern in its concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Nepal regarding caste-based discrimination "*The insufficient implementation of legislation protecting those belonging to minority groups from discrimination, such as the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act of 2011*" remains inadequately addressed. The attached recommendation "*Take all measures necessary to ensure the effective implementation of the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, in line with commitments made in the context of the universal periodic review (A/HRC/31/9, para. 122.35)*" has also failed to be implemented. Nepalese police registered 154 cases of untouchability⁷ against Dalit women in the 2018/2019 to 2022/2023 fiscal years, but FEDO monitored many more cases of caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls. A few are listed below.

- In 2013, a helpless single Dalit woman, aged 62, did not get shelter in the Elderly Home in Morang district after the owner identified her as Dalit⁸.
- A Dalit girl in Silgudhi Municipality-6 in Doti dropped out of school due to caste-based discrimination and migrated to India, putting herself at risk of human trafficking.

The government has reviewed and amended discriminatory laws from the gender perspective⁹. However, the broader gender term is inadequate to address gender and caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls. The government's review and amendment of discriminatory laws did not take into account the Committee's recommendation "*Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that includes a definition of discrimination against women, encompassing elements of direct and indirect discrimination and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in the public and private spheres, and guarantees effective remedies for victims*¹⁰".

Gender and caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls will continue to challenge the achievement of the national goals of happiness set by the Fifteenth Plan (2019/2020 -2023/2024) of the National Planning Commission (NPC)¹¹ and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 5. These goals cannot be translated into reality without eliminating gender and caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls. The failure of the State to address the longstanding gender and caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls has further challenged the implementation of the

⁷ The replies of Nepal, www.ohchr.org

⁸ Nepal Khabar, 9 December 2023, [जसलाई जातकै कारण वृद्धाश्रममा बस्न दिइएन | Nepal Khabar](#)

⁹ Seventh Periodic Report of Nepal

¹⁰ Concluding observations, paragraph 9 (a)

¹¹ Goal 6.1. A society with no discrimination, violence and crime

Committee's recommendation *"Provide targeted financial support and legal aid for women facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, such as Dalit women¹²".*

Nepal's replies to the list of issues and questions in relation to its seventh periodic report concerning legal aid support to Dalit women and girls are inappropriate. As stated in the replies, the Integrated Legal Aid Policy (ILAP) adopted in 2019 has provisions for free legal support to victims of caste-based discrimination and untouchability. However, Dalit women and girls and their organizations have not witnessed any development towards the entitlement of free legal aid to Dalit women and girls, free legal aid in sign language to those Dalit women and girls with a hearing and speech impairment, nor legal awareness education, psychosocial counselling, and mobile free-legal aid services.

Access to justice for Dalit women and girl survivors of gender and caste-based discrimination has been affected due to the limited knowledge of human rights, the human rights-based approach (HRBA), and related laws and policies among the law enforcement authorities, including the police and judicial committees, at provincial and local levels.

Disaggregated data of Dalit women and girl survivors of gender and caste-based discrimination is the foremost challenge. For example, the replies of Nepal to the list of issues and questions concerning legal aid support to the survivors of gender and caste-based discrimination include a list of a total of 1,533 legal awareness programmes carried out for 104,625 members of the population – which is more than 62 percent women. It also lists a total of 24,748 people, with over 68 percent of women having benefitted from the legal aid provided by the "Enhancing Access to Justice through Institutional Reform Project" of the Ministry of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs in collaboration with UNDP. These achievements, which can be applauded, remain meaningless for Dalit women unless disaggregated data is provided, as it does not help to measure the progress of Dalit women's legal awareness.

FEDO has observed limited interactions between the federal, provincial, and local governments on the new development against discrimination. For example, the National Assembly endorsed a 19-point motion in 2023 to end discrimination and oppression against Dalit people in public and private places and create an equal and equitable environment for them. However, many local government representatives, including female Dalit Ward members, are not aware of this development, including the comprehensive implementation plan adopted by the Ministry of Home Affairs to implement the motion.

Discrimination against an Elected Dalit Women

Elected Dalit representatives suffer from caste-based discrimination and untouchability at their workplace. Elected Dalit representatives reported in the consultation meetings that gender and caste-based discrimination has discouraged their meaningful participation in decision-making and local

¹² Paragraph 11 (b) of the concluding observations

planning and development. The following are a few representative cases of caste-based discrimination and untouchability against elected Dalit representatives.

- In July 2020, non-Dalit people padlocked the school when a Dalit woman was elected the Chairperson of the School Management Committee in Siraha District¹³.*
- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) reported cases of caste-based discrimination and untouchability against elected Dalit women representatives in the local governments and government mechanisms, including in the District Coordination Committee (DCC) of Kalikot District where a female Dalit Deputy Chairperson was rejected as Chief Guest in the District Sports Program¹⁴.*
- In 2022, NHRC monitored a case of an elected female Dalit Ward member whom the Ward Chairperson treated inhumanely in a formal meeting in Kaski district¹⁵.*

Recommendations to the Government of Nepal

1. Formulate specific anti-discrimination legislation that should define caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls, keeping in mind the intersecting discrimination against Dalit women and girls with disabilities, elderly and single Dalit women, Madhesi Dalit women and girls, Dalit women and girls belonging to sexual and gender minorities and religious minorities.
2. Keep the nationwide data on caste-based discrimination against Dalit women and girls and elected Dalit women within a clear timeline and make sure that the cases of discrimination are documented and monitored by all 753 local and seven provincial governments in their respective constituencies in coordination with the Dalit Desks, NDC, and Dalit organizations.
3. Enhance the capacity and confidence of women and girl victims of caste-based discrimination to register the cases of caste-based discrimination.
4. Increase the accountability of the police and law enforcement authorities and justice mechanisms to ensure the victims of caste-based discrimination are free from fear and social and political pressure and ensure prompt reparation for them.
5. Involve Dalit women lawyers and Dalit women organizations in raising awareness of ILAP, its implementation and monitoring, and evaluation of legal aid provisioned in ILAP.

¹³ Annual Report 2020-2021, NDC

¹⁴ Annual Report 2020-2021, NDC

¹⁵ 23rd Annual Report 2022-2023 of NHRC

6. Implement the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act of 2011 following the 2018 concluding observations of the Committee and its recommendation that refers to the recommendation of the UPR ([A/HRC/31/9](#), para. 122.35).

Articles 7 and 8. Participation

Existing legislation and mechanisms

- Nepal has made a minimum of 33 percent representation of women mandatory at all levels of elected bodies.
- The Constitution has reserved at least one of the two seats for women, for Dalit women at the Ward Committees, the smallest Unit of the local government. As a result, in the 2022 local elections, 6,567 Dalit women were elected to the 6,743 Wards in 753 local governments¹⁶.
- The Civil Service Act, 2049 (1993) ensures inclusivity by providing a 45 percent reservation of civil service seats to people from marginalized backgrounds, including 33 percent seats to women and nine percent to Dalit people.

Other Constitutional provisions on women's participation¹⁷

Nepal has written several Constitutional provisions for the mandatory appointment of a woman as the Chairperson of NWC. The following provisions exist for the mandatory representation of women in political structures:

- (a) A quota for women to occupy at least one-third of the total capacity (275) of the House of Representatives;
- (b) Either the Speaker and/or the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives should be a woman;
- (c) At least 7 percent of National Assembly seats (out of 56 members in total) should be reserved for women;
- (d) Either the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson of the National Assembly should be a woman;
- (e) Women should occupy at least one-third of seats in Provincial assemblies;
- (f) Four women should be represented on the Local Rural Municipality Executive. Five women should be represented on the Local Municipality Executive;
- (g) At least two women from each ward of the rural municipality and municipality should be members of the Rural Municipality Assembly and the Municipality Assembly respectively.

Prevalence of the Problems

Dalit women's participation is severely lacking in leading positions. Despite the aforementioned promising mandatory representation of women in political structures, the representation and

¹⁶ The Seventh Periodic Report of Nepal, 2023

¹⁷ The Seventh Periodic Report of Nepal, 2023

participation of Dalit women in political and public life and international positions, in line with the human rights principles, recommendations of international human rights instruments, and the SDGs, are far from being achieved.

Dalit women's political participation is not only challenged by non-Dalit people but also by Dalit men in different political parties. Furthermore, Nepal's established women's movement has failed to mainstream Dalit women's political representation and participation.

The seventh periodic report of Nepal puts the country at the highest among other South Asian countries in promoting women's participation in the government. It reports nearly 41 percent of women in the local governments and 33 percent in the parliamentary elections from the 2022 elections. Nevertheless, the participation of Dalit women in the decision-making and implementation of periodic plans and SDGs remains imperceptible.

Representation of the 6,567 elected Dalit women in the local governments is a far-reaching change. However, their influence in decision-making is less impactful. The Committee stated in its conducting observation, paragraph 28 (c) *"the overrepresentation of Dalit women in lower positions at the federal and local levels is one of the concerns of the Committee¹⁸"*. This concern has not properly been discussed at all levels of the government.

Participation in the Constitutional bodies

Except for one Dalit woman member in NDC, not a single Dalit woman is represented in the other Constitutional bodies, namely the NWC, NPC, NHRC, Madhesi Commission, nor National Inclusion Commission.

Participation in the national, provincial, and local governments¹⁹

- Of the 59 members, there are no Dalit women in the National Assembly.
- The 77 District Coordination Committees in the country have no Dalit women as Chief of the Committee.
- Of the 276 Mayors and 460 Chairpersons in the municipalities and Rural Municipalities respectively, there are no Dalit women in leadership positions.
- Of the 6,743 reserved positions for Dalit women as Ward members, only 6,567 Dalit women hold these positions. The remaining 176 reserved positions of Dalit women are either vacant or replaced by non-Dalit women.

¹⁸ Conducting observation, paragraph 28 (c)

¹⁹ Election Commission, Nepal

International participation of Dalit women

Dalit women’s participation is zero in international positions, including diplomats, as the Nepal government representatives.

Dalit women as civil servants

The Civil Service Act-2049 (1993) provides a 45 percent reservation of civil service seats to people from marginalized backgrounds, including 33 percent of seats to women and nine percent to Dalit people. The table below presents the number of Dalit women as civil servants compared to non-Dalit women. Their inclusion is miserable compared with Dalit men. The nominal number of Dalit woman civil servants is a serious concern, especially given that the population (15 percent of the total female population) of Dalit women is higher than women from other gender and social categories.

GESI distribution of civil servants in 2023/2024

GESI Category	Male	Female
Women	0	6333
Adivasi/Janajati	3481	1149
Madhesi	2852	640
Dalit	1061	322
Persons with disabilities	569	143
Backward area	474	98
Open Competition	46299	12336
Not specified	6673	3110
Total	61409	24131

The 1.33 percent representation of Dalit women civil servants should be brought to the attention of the CEDAW Committee and the government of Nepal for their strategic interventions to advance opportunities for Dalit women to make them competent civil servants.

The disaster management - prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery - has excluded women, in particular Dalit and marginalized women, as asked by the Committee to the government of Nepal, *“Please provide information on strategies taken to ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment are a fundamental requirement in addressing such crises, and in elaborating adequate responses, such as policies, the scope of essential services, assistance programmes, recovery efforts and the application of the rule of law. Please also provide information on measures taken to ensure the equal and meaningful participation of women in these processes and to ensure that such crises will not lead to a reversal of progress made in the protection and promotion of women’s rights”*²⁰.

²⁰ List of issues and questions of the Committee, www.ohchr.org.

Recommendations to the Government of Nepal

1. Conduct research and surveys on the representation and participation of Dalit women in the decision-making of the government and private sectors at all levels.
2. Increase Dalit women's representation at all levels of government such as the executive, legislative judiciary, security forces, civil servants, bureaucracy, constitutional bodies, diplomats, universities, and other institutions, including education, health, food, and forest, and their policy-making bodies.
3. Design advanced courses and introduce targeted programmes to enhance the capacity, skills, and leadership of Dalit women to build their confidence and capacity and enable them to compete for senior positions at national and international levels.
4. Double the technical and capacity development support to the elected Dalit women and potential Dalit women leaders to make their representation and participation in the decision-making and policy-making more impactful.
5. Promote zero tolerance for discrimination against Dalit women in all professions and fields, specifically, elected Dalit women, DWHRDs, Dalit women journalists, and Dalit women health workers.
6. Monitor and investigate the allegations of caste-based discrimination and untouchability against Dalit women across all sectors, including social, economic, and political, and dismiss the elected representatives from their positions if proven to be guilty of such discrimination.
7. Implement the CEDAW Committee's previous recommendations in paragraph 29 (a), (b), (c), and (d) regarding women's political and public life at all levels.

Article 16. Right to Marriage and Family Life

Existing legislation and mechanisms

- The Constitution guarantees the right of every person to marry according to his or her choice.
- The Civil Code (2017) criminalizes any kind of discrimination around inter-caste marriage with fines of up to NPR 30,000 or imprisonment for up to three years or both if any person obstructs or prevents inter-caste marriages.

Prevalence of the Problem

Despite the legal protection, caste-based discrimination and untouchability have severely affected the right of Dalit women and girls to choose a spouse or enter into marriage. Almost all inter-caste marriages between Dalits and non-Dalits face caste-based discrimination, violence, and untouchability. Many of them lead to rejection by the couple's families, forced eviction from their villages, forced separation and

divorce, stigma, and harassment. Compared to Dalit men, Dalit women and girls are more impacted by inter-caste marriages due to the patriarchal mindsets of the society where discrimination and stigma are widespread. Furthermore, inter-caste marriages challenge Dalit women and girls' right to freedom and dignity, among other rights.

The social, economic, and cultural values have promoted the practice of early and forced marriages, which was common in the Dalit and Madhesi communities²¹. FEDO identified most of the marriages in the Madhesh Province were arranged by the girls' parents, primarily to prevent their daughters from choosing a Dalit partner.

Caste-based discrimination is at the core of multiple discrimination and inequalities in inter-caste marriages. The following are a few examples that highlight the multi-dimensional aspects of discrimination associated with inter-caste marriages.

- Non-Dalit women and girls who marry Dalits do not face discrimination at their husbands' homes and enjoy the same cultural rights and responsibilities equal to their husbands' during and after marriage. However, the woman's parents do not accept the Dalit partner or discriminate against them even if they are partly accepted.
- Dalit women and girls who marry Non-Dalits face severe caste-based discrimination and untouchability at their husbands' homes whereas the Dalit woman's parents do not discriminate against the Non-Dalit partner.
- Non-Dalit men and boys who marry Dalit women also face discrimination. In 2020, a non-Dalit man was prohibited from seeing the dead body of his father and participating in the funeral in Taplejung district for marrying a Dalit girl²².

FEDO has documented and monitored many cases of inter-caste marriages that resulted in killing, depression, suicide, and other psychosocial problems, including those presented below.

- Under the leadership of a non-Dalit Ward representative, villagers beat up a 23-year-old Dalit boy along with dozens of Dalit members of his village and forcefully took his buffalo. The village Panchayat,²³ in the presence of elected representatives, declared a fine of NRP 150,000 for marrying a non-Dalit girl in Sarlahi district²⁴.
- In 2020, non-Dalit people killed four Dalit boys due to an inter-caste affection between a Dalit boy and a non-Dalit girl in Rukum district.

²¹ Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2019 United States Department of State

²² 23rd Annual Report 2022-2023 of NHRC

²³ A traditional local mechanism in Madhesh Province

²⁴ अन्तरजातीय विवाह गर्दा जनप्रतिनिधि नै सामेल भइ दलित युवकमाथि कुटपिट र जरिवाना, माने धम्कीपछि विस्थापित – Nepal Press

The lack of consultation and interactions of the government with Dalit leaders, DWHRDs, Dalit women's organizations, and Dalit CSOs on matters related to caste-based discrimination and untouchability is a serious concern. The government terminated its announcement made in 2009, which gave a sum of NPR 100,000 (nearly 700 USD) to the couples of inter-caste marriage, without getting the opinions of Dalit women leaders, DWHRDs, and Dalit CSOs who feel the financial support was instrumental in legalizing the marriage. This sum temporarily supported the couples until their families accepted them or they became financially independent.

FEDO and IDSN are concerned about the failure of the government's measures, in the seventh periodic report, to address the life-threatening issues related to inter-caste marriages and their impact on the lives of Dalit women and their children.

Recommendations to the Government of Nepal

1. Take measures to protect the rights of Dalit women and girls and ensure child marriage is forbidden in line with the recommendation of the Committee²⁵.
2. Introduce programmes by expanding partnerships with multilateral and bilateral organizations to change the biased societal attitudes towards caste and inter-caste marriages and provide inter-caste marriage couples with assistance in the areas of skills development, income generation, concessional loans without collateral, and legal and counselling and wellbeing.
3. Amend and rigorously implement the existing legislation, including the Marriage Registration Act, 1971, and the Gender Equality Act 2006, for mandatory registration of inter-caste marriages upon the verbal dissolution of unregistered marriage through the single decision of the husband or ex-husband.
4. Punish the law enforcement authorities for denial of FIR registration in inter-caste marriages between people from diverse backgrounds, including LGBTIQ+, and protect the couples and their dignity during and after inter-caste marriage.

²⁵ Paragraph 43 (c) of the concluding observations