Allowing mothers with children under 05 years of age to go abroad for domestic work has a negative impact on child development - Parliamentary Select Committee on gender equality to make necessary recommendations and report to Parliament

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Allowing mothers with children under the age of 05 years to go abroad for domestic work has a negative impact on the early childhood development of those children, the Parliamentary Select Committee on gender equality to make necessary recommendations and report to Parliament stated.

When women go abroad for domestic work (unskilled labor), the divisional secretariats conduct an investigation and give a family background report and they are given permission to go abroad based on that report.

Women with children under 05 years of age were not given a chance to go abroad, and if they had children above 05 years of age, the care, safety, and education of those children and many other factors were taken into consideration.

But it has been decided at the cabinet meeting held on June 27th to reduce the minimum age of children of mothers who go abroad for domestic work to 02 years and to no longer make it mandatory to submit a family background report which was essential until then.

This has been discussed at length at the joint meeting held with the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus and the Parliamentary Select Committee on gender equality to make necessary recommendations and report to Parliament.

Accordingly, Hon. (Dr.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle, Chairperson of the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus requested the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment to reconsider the cabinet decision which was taken to allow Sri Lankan mothers with children under the age of 05 years to go abroad for domestic work without making the family background report that should have been submitted by the mothers going abroad as a mandatory step.

The Chairperson further stated that due to this decision, the optimal physical and mental development of the children will be adversely affected in the first 05 years since the mother plays the main role in the early childhood development of the children.