

APFSD YOUTH FORUM 2023



Asia-Pacific Regional Youth Call to Action 2023



India

Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels in Asia and the Pacific with Young People at the Forefront

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

In India, there is limited or no data on the Young Key Population (YKP), including the vulnerable and minority groups such as LGBTIQ+, sex workers, people who inject drugs and migrants. Youth-friendly health services or YKP-focused programs are also limited in the country, resulting in an increased risk of HIV infection and sexually transmitted infections. Tokenism in regards to the engagement of YKP in the national decision-making processes is also very prevalent.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

General Recommendations

- Research and piloting to develop innovative and attractive mechanisms like incentives, subsidies or penalties/fees, etc. must be undertaken to aid the implementation of plans/policies/programmes aimed

at fostering sustainability and resilience at individual, community, local (urban/rural), regional and national level.

- Developing a transformative education system leveraging technology and India's youth's strong demographic dividend to initiate knowledge sharing and capacity building about sustainable development goals, environmental concerns, climate change, CSE etc. at an early age through a robust and redefined schooling system.

SDG5: Gender Equality

- To diversify gender consideration and include LGBTIQ+ communities in policy planning, programme planning and development at all levels to overcome gender disparities.
- Leverage India's rich cultural heritage as a tool to induce and enhance equality by changing narratives, advocating for the cause and debunking taboos.

- Implement a standardised mechanism to ensure equal pay.
- Given the prevalence of stress, loneliness and suicides as the consequences of GBV among young LGBTIQ+, there must be programmes designed and implemented to uplift and promote the mental health of young LGBTIQ+ people.
- Implement gender responsive approaches to sustainable development which includes access to comprehensive sexuality education to ensure young people's health and wellbeing.
- Speeding up the development of infrastructure to support public transport rather than EVs or automobiles as the dominion over our streets and pedestrian routes.
- Establish an innovation incubator to maximise the engagement of youth in creating new technologies to solve global crises.
- Green career needs should be promoted as a mainstream career option.

SDG6: Clean Water and Sanitation

- In rural areas, awareness campaigns on the relationship between domestic violence and water unavailability should be conducted.
- Access and training allied to new technologies should be piloted across all highlands, for example the ice-stupas developed in the Ladakh region to effectively reduce barriers to the scarcity of water for agriculture.

SDG7: Affordable and Clean Energy

- Need for transition and upskilling of new technologies such as solar energy, bio-electricity from soil heat, hydrogen fuels, solar street lights, and solar panels at household level in cities, suburbs and villages.
- Inculcation of energy education in the academic curriculum to give students a basic outlook of energy and clear common misconceptions related to energy.
- Increase budget allocation to research and development on the fields of affordable and clean energy.

SDG9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

- Technology Incubators (ATL network or UN networks) must sensitise very young adolescents to learn problem-solving skills through hands-on pieces of training in such frugal technologies for climate action.
- Frugal innovation should be promoted with proper funding mechanisms.

SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

- Update and revisit planning, land use, zoning regulations, urban design and building codes, structural standards for critical infrastructure like water supply, health, education, transportation, etc. through the lens of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, inclusive and universal access principles are strongly recommended in India.
- Following this, ensuring mandatory compliance is crucial for the implementation of the regulations, norms, standards and codes at the building, urban design, zoning and planning levels.
- To mainstream vernacular strategy in construction, designing and planning spaces and infrastructural systems for sustainable and climate-resilient development.
- Develop and provide necessary infrastructure and innovative ways to bring a modal shift in the use of transportation systems from private to public transport and non-motorised transport.
- Develop inclusive and accessible public transport systems by focusing on safety and comfort of women and gender minorities, along with key attention to first and last mile connectivity.
- Develop holistic slum rehabilitation and redevelopment policies, that ensure good living conditions in terms of building codes and access to services, water and light.

SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals

- It is crucial to address the gap of vertical coherence between policies at national, state and local levels while also prioritising short-term targets and agendas based on rationale and impact.
- Awareness, training and capacity-building programmes enabling peer-to-peer and intergenerational knowledge sharing and learning for effective COVID-19 recovery support and sustainability is essential.
- Development of a systematic framework for monitoring and evaluation of projects, activities, schemes, and missions under SDGs ensuring transparency and accountability to the public through a public platform.
- Partnering with Very Young Adolescents (VYAs) aged 10-14 years and the youth population in India to drive localised/unit-level change through adopting and teaching behavioural shift, attitudinal and value system empowerment and lifestyle patterns, leading to mass-level positive impact.
- It is important to plan and pilot partnership models with youth at the forefront in planning, decision making, policy development, programme and action plan development.
- To develop a formal governance framework with a national-level youth council governing the youth actions and participation in planning, decision making and ground-level implementation in the country.
- The collective goal of civic actors as stakeholders should be to help young people and adolescents to recover from losses due to disruption in their education during COVID 19 with a particular focus on members of underprivileged or marginalized communities. Here, even Very Young Adolescents from privileged communities may be involved as peer leaders or peer educators with careful consideration of child rights.

The APFSD country and sub-regional briefs were developed through collective discussions and engagements between youth advocates at the APFSD Youth Forum in Bangkok on March 18-20, 2023. The India drafting team was led by Ayadi Mishra and Riya Sethia, with input provided by Aislinn, Ishika, Jivitesh Gupta, Parth Bhatt, Priyanka Pal, Shivam Gupta, Shreya Bansal and Tharun Satya. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.
