

COUNTRY YOUTH

CALL TO ACTION 2025

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Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science and evidence based solutions for the 2030 agenda and its SDGs for leaving no young person behind in Asia and the Pacific



MYANMAR

SDG 3- Health and Well-being

Situational Analysis

Migrant communities often have limited access to healthcare due to legal restrictions, lack of documentation, and financial constraints. Language barriers and discrimination in healthcare settings prevent many migrants from seeking medical assistance. A lack of health education results in poor awareness of disease prevention, vaccination, and hygiene practices. Migrant learners frequently experience stress, trauma, and anxiety due to displacement, family separation, and unstable living conditions. Limited access to mental health services, including counseling and therapy, leaves many without necessary support. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports a bleak humanitarian outlook for 2025, with displacement numbers continuing to climb. Especially in rural and resource constrained conflict-affected settings, while obstetric complications during pregnancy are direct causes of maternal health issues, socioeconomic factors such as poverty and illiteracy are deeply intertwined with poor health outcomes. Lack of abortion rights, education and resources has resulted in limited awareness of pregnancy risks and preventive practices. Moreover, the freezing of USAID funding has further strained Myanmar's public health sector, leading to severe shortages of medical supplies, healthcare workers, and financial resources. In addition, Myanmar is highly dependent on donor funding. As a former political prisoner, we face many difficulties in health sectors, both in physical and well being problems. Skin diseases amongst people are common because of dirty water, clothes not exposed to sunlight, and not cleaned places/beds, etc. Sexual assaults and harassment currently affect the mental health of young people.

Recommendations

- Strengthen primary healthcare infrastructure in remote areas by expanding the mobile clinics, well-trained community health workers ensuring access to affordable services through neutral medical facilities and humanitarian aid.
- Initiate and support the health networks and solution-based well-being programmes in the most remote areas of the country to improve healthcare, especially for pregnant women, mothers and children.
- Advocate the private and public funding to support the healthcare mainstreaming programmes that are crucial for the improvement of quality of life in achieving SDG 3.
- Expand vaccination programs and ensure immunization coverage despite political instability.

SDG 5- Gender Equality

Situational Analysis

There are a number of inequalities lagging behind regarding SDG 5 in Myanmar. The proportion of women in managerial positions is very low in Myanmar (0.4%) which is the lowest in the ASEAN region. Women's decision making position in political processes is also lower in Myanmar. As such, it still needs room for women empowerment since exclusion of women from decision-making processes make them unable to hear their voices (The ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, 2020). As an emerging form of violence, technology-facilitated gender-based

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violence in intimate and non-intimate relationships is a rising issue despite limited data on its prevalence. Consequently, due to gender hierarchy, and thus women's positions are left behind in every arena such as political, religious, social and economic participation. In married women, physical, sexual and emotional IPV account for around two-thirds, 61.5% and 13.9% respectively, with higher rates in rural areas (Kabir et al., 2019). However, the data will not capture the real incidence due to low disclosure. Most importantly, there is no national law for penalization of domestic violence in Myanmar (Jenny Herdstorm, 2015).

Recommendations

- Ensure women's access to the decision-making table to hear their challenges and voices from grass root levels.
- Ensure effective mechanisms are in place to tackle violence against women and eliminate its prevalence, through strategies including better coverage of awareness raising.
- Prioritize financing for implementation of various gender-related projects in the current turbulent time with needs to achieve gender equality.
- Establish community support networks to share resources, information, and experiences.

SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth

Situational Analysis

The Myanmar labour market remains fragile in challenging conditions. A recent recovery in employment numbers in some sectors has failed to keep pace with population growth. The quality of jobs has declined with more workers pushed into the informal sector. Labour productivity has also fallen with estimates showing an 8 percent drop in 2021 and a further 2 percent loss in the first half of 2022. The disproportionate impact on women is also revealed, with the employment-to-population ratio of women in Myanmar declining by twice as much as that of men (International Labour Organization, 2025). Garment workers (85% are women) are forced to work overtime without compensation and benefits, excessive production targets were given, wage arrears are common and minors were hired illegally. The surveillance of migrant workers has increased and profit is being made by the state out of their hard-earned money. According to the IndustriALL Global Union, a directive was issued in November 2024 allowing the migrant workers for military service through

employment agencies. In that case, Myanmar not only loses natural resources but also human resources. The enforcement of mandatory conscription has led to the forced recruitment of young men, exacerbating labor shortages and instilling widespread fear among the populace.

Recommendations

- The legitimate government must collaborate with other countries to ensure the protection and equal rights of Myanmar citizens working abroad. This includes guarantee of fair treatment, safe working conditions and equal pay for Myanmar.
- Encourage host countries to refuse compliance for migrant worker's data sharing, ensuring their safety.

SDG 14- Life Below Water in Myanmar

Situational Analysis

Myanmar is highly vulnerable to climate-related disasters, including typhoons, flooding, and rising sea levels. Additionally, flooding in Myanmar, as detailed in the Myanmar Flood Situational Report (2024), has caused significant damage to coastal communities, leading to increased sedimentation and pollution in marine environments. These issues threaten marine biodiversity, livelihood of coastal populations under the umbrella of social and political instability. Water pollution and overfishing remains a critical concern for marine life in Myanmar. Poor waste management, industrial runoff, and agricultural pollution threaten marine biodiversity. Reports indicate that water shortages and contamination have led to severe humanitarian crises, particularly in coastal regions like Rakhine State (RFA Burmese, 2024).

Recommendations

- The legitimate government and international stakeholders must collaborate to implement early warning systems and climate adaptation strategies, such as mangrove reforestation and coastal barrier construction to mitigate the impacts of climate change on marine environments.
- The Myanmar Fisheries Federation, in partnership with NGOs and local fishing communities, should implement community-led sustainable fishing programs, enforce fishing quotas, and support alternative livelihoods to reduce overfishing and protect marine biodiversity.



SDG 17- Partnerships for the Goals

Situational Analysis

The pursuit of SDG 17 in Myanmar is facing significant hurdles due to ongoing political instability, economic difficulties, and restrictions on civil society. The military coup in February 2021 has severely disrupted Myanmar's existing partnerships, both domestic and international. This has caused a significant reduction in Official Development Assistance (ODA) with a sharp decline. According to the research, Myanmar's ODA fell from approximately \$1.9 billion in 2019 to \$1.2 billion in 2021, a decrease of over 36% (World Bank, 2024). This decline reflects the erosion of international trust and cooperation, with many countries and organizations scaling back their support for Myanmar in the aftermath of the coup. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are facing increasing restrictions on their activities, which limits their ability to collaborate with the government, the private sector, and international partners (Community of Democracies, 2017). The political crisis has weakened Myanmar's institutional framework, making it difficult to coordinate and implement SDG-related programs. However, by building and rebuilding the network- grassroots, regional, and international partnerships, the country can enhance its ability to mobilize resources and foster sustainable development. Collaborative efforts between the government, private sector, and international community remain essential for achieving SDG 17 in Myanmar.

Recommendations

- Empower youth organizations. Governments must create space for youth-led, youth-serving, women-led, CBOs, CSOs and NGOs to participate in sustainable initiatives through policies that promote collaboration, capacity-building, and financial and technical support.
- Fostering Inclusive Development Partnerships Myanmar must actively involve civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector stakeholders, and marginalized communities in development planning. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) should be promoted to mobilize additional funding and expertise.

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 19-21 February, 2025. The Myanmar drafting team consisted of Aye Myat Myat Win, Aung Tin Myint, Chan Nyein Aung, Khun Sint Phoo Wai, Naw Honey Bo, Naw Hel Mu Taw, Oke Soe Paing, Phyu Nwe Win, and Yadanar. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.
