



Asia-Pacific Regional Youth Call to Action 2024



Australia

Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Eradicating Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises: The Effective Delivery of Sustainable, Resilient and Innovative Solutions in Asia and the Pacific with Young People at the Forefront

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Australia faces a convergence of crises that pose significant threats to the achievement of Sustainable Development. However, despite these challenges, young Australians are driving transformative change towards a more equitable future. The country grapples with persistent issues such as youth unemployment, First Nations disadvantage, and climate change impacts. The COVID-19 pandemic has further strained social safety nets and highlighted the need for inclusive policies that prioritise all youth.

Young Australians, with their energy, innovation, and passion for social justice, are instrumental in driving positive change. We are actively involved in grassroots movements aimed at addressing pressing issues. However, systemic barriers, including limited access to quality education, affordable housing, and employment opportunities, hinder the full potential of our contribution to sustainable development efforts.

To effectively deliver sustainable solutions, it is imperative for Australian policymakers to prioritise youth empowerment, invest in youth-led initiatives, and ensure meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes. By harnessing the creativity, resilience, and lived experience of young people, Australia can advance progress towards the 2030 Agenda, build more inclusive and resilient communities, and create a brighter future for all Australians.



OUR KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

SDG 1: No Poverty

- Increase income support to youth, especially for those who are unemployed or studying, by raising Youth Allowance and JobSeeker payments and introducing targeted supplements to address the additional costs faced by young people.
- Promote access to employment and training opportunities by investing in effective services tailored to the needs of youth, including those who are long-term unemployed, First Nations youth, and youth with disabilities.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

- Increase funding for youth-targeted food assistance programmes by expanding the reach of food relief services and collaborating with community organisations to develop solutions that reach vulnerable youth populations.
- Promote targeted campaigns that reduce the stigma associated with seeking food assistance among youth and encourage individuals to access available support services without hesitation.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

- Prioritise comprehensive gender equality education in schools, ensuring that it is relevant, engaging, and age-appropriate for young people, covering topics such as consent, healthy relationships, gender diversity, and the impacts of discrimination.
- Amplify youth-led campaigns, advocacy efforts, and community projects focused on gender equality to provide opportunities for young people, especially women, girls, and gender-diverse people, to take on leadership roles, participate in decision-making processes, and contribute their perspectives to policy development.

SDG 13: Climate Action

- Ensure comprehensive climate education from primary through to tertiary education, supported by government resources and accessible materials from relevant stakeholders, with a specific focus on incorporating First Nations knowledge systems, and providing opportunities for learning in the country.
- Enhance climate diplomacy efforts with Pacific neighbours by actively engaging in cooperative ventures, providing technical assistance, and supporting capacity-building initiatives to address shared climate challenges in the region.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

- Allocate resources and funding towards youth-inclusive peacebuilding initiatives and encourage the active involvement of young people in grassroots peacebuilding activities, such as empowerment programs, reconciliation efforts, and climate change impact mitigation projects.
- Facilitate youth-led assessments of local contexts and conflict risks to inform peacebuilding strategies and initiatives. Support the development of locally derived indicators of progress that reflect youth perspectives on peace and security.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

- Recognise the importance of youth participation in bilateral and multilateral partnerships aimed at achieving the SDGs. Encourage youth involvement in government-led initiatives that address global development challenges, such as poverty alleviation, sustainable development, and climate action.
- Support initiatives that empower young people to drive innovation, research, and technology transfer for sustainable development. Provide funding and resources for youth-led projects that address key SDG priorities, including education, health, gender equality, climate action, and economic growth.

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 February 15-17, 2024. The Australia drafting team was led by Grace Hull. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.
