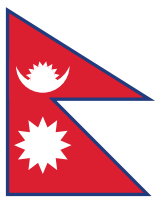




Asia-Pacific Regional Youth Call to Action 2024



Nepal

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

Although Nepal is a negligible contributor to greenhouse gas (GHG) emission, (contributing 0.1% of total GHG) (The World Bank Group, 2021), Nepal is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change. Global Climate Risk (2000-2019) has ranked Nepal as the 10th most affected country in terms of climate risk (Eckstein et al., 2021) and the ND-GAIN (2023) Index ranks Nepal as the 116th country in adaptation readiness. This signifies that Nepal needs both investment and innovations for adapting to climate change.

Poverty still looms large as more than 20% of the total population of Nepal remains below the poverty line (WHH & Concern Worldwide, 2023). This rate is a slight decline over the previous estimate of 25% which is attributed to remittance. But this source of income is not sustainable (WHH & Concern Worldwide, 2023). Likewise, stress of high inflation has led to a large population to cut on food related spendings with a global index highlighting moderate levels of hunger in Nepal.

Similarly, even though the constitution of Nepal commits to equal rights of every citizen, historically entrenched gender inequality with the addition of the disproportionate impact of climate change on women, indigenous people, queer community, and other disadvantaged groups. Gender equality and social inclusion is still a persistent challenge.



Besides, corruption runs rampant in Nepal ranking 108th out of 180 countries (Transparency International, 2023). This ranking has been somewhat consistent throughout the years meaning not much has been done to combat corruption.

OUR KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering this situation, we, the diverse youth of the Nepal of the APFSD Youth Forum 2024, call on all stakeholders, including governments, international organisations, civil society organisations, public and private organisations to:

SDG 1: No Poverty

- Establish a strong system that offers practical, hands-on, skill-based education programmes to foster employment opportunities and long-term viability in the job market for young people of all diverse identities, including indigenous youth, those with disabilities, and individuals from gender and sexual minority groups.
- Establish and strengthen the existing social security system in light of the scientific evidence that provides a basic level of income security for vulnerable populations, leaving no one behind. Ensure the vulnerable communities such as the elderly, children, those with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, those living in extreme poverty, and others are well-protected, thereby advancing a more inclusive and equitable societal safety net.
- Expand the coverage and scope of the National Health Insurance Program to a broader demographics with subsidised provisions specifically targeted towards impoverished households upheld with legal mechanisms to accurately identify and endorse households in need, ensuring that the program reaches those most in need of support.
- The government agencies, especially local governments, must actively facilitate the easy access of financial systems, including banking services and loan facilities, for vulnerable communities such as those with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ individuals, youths, Dalits and others to ensure inclusivity and economic empowerment for all.

- The existing government initiatives such as Prime Minister Employment Program, Youth Start-up fund etc. must be made effective ensuring proper allocation of the budget, proper monitoring and investment on the sustainable initiatives.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

- Create a comprehensive participatory system for the creation of a sustainable agriculture ecosystem, with the incorporation of indigenous good practices that aids a production-based economy, which is attractive to young people in terms of technology, wages, markets, varieties of crops, etc.
- Create a comprehensive participatory system for indigenous agriculture, ranging from documentation of indigenous practices and methodology of farming, identifying its significance or possible drawbacks, and enhancing these local knowledge systems.
- The state should strengthen and enforce Land Usage Policy and Law to ensure that the land viable and suitable for sustainable agriculture is preserved and protected.
- The current trend of private companies acquiring a small chunk of agricultural land and turning it into housing plots must be stopped. Rather the state should identify needs around establishment of new settlements and township, without exhausting the viability of agricultural land.
- Comprehensive awareness programmes should be promoted especially at the local level at Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces about the importance, availability and necessity of the healthy dietary system and food security.
- There should be strong collaboration among the three tiers of the government agencies on the access, promotion of the local agricultural products including providing subsidies and timely availability of the chemical fertilisers.
- The local government must work on awareness, research and promotion of the alternative farming system, especially in urban areas.
- The government agencies must take proactive initiatives such as social security allowances in order to encourage and involve young people in the agriculture system making them realise that even farming can be the one of the secured professional areas for them.

- Increase investments in agriculture programmes, including policy implementation and subsidy programmes - that are fully gender-sensitive and disability-friendly that benefits marginalised farmers. This should also include funding for upgrading to a categorisation of farmers and community participation with quality monitoring. Furthermore, we need to provide training and resources to smallholder farmers to adopt sustainable and modern farming practices, helping to increase their incomes and food security.

SDG 13: Climate Action

- Establishment of a climate change unit in three tiers of governments along with the formulation of local climate plans in all 753 local levels and climate change programmes of actions in all seven provinces in harmony with federal policies. Climate Change Act needs to be formulated that can provide strong legal support to Nepal's climate action.
- Youth must be recognised as agents of change rather than targeted beneficiaries ensuring their meaningful participation in the decision-making processes which promotes good governance. Invest in research and development in partnership with academia, young scholars and civil society organisations.
- Targeting Nepal's goal to be carbon neutral by 2045 A.D, develop a multi-year programme to promote investment on clean energy, green projects, e-transportation with emphasis on public transportation and phasing out from the usage of fossil fuel.
- Nature based solutions, indigenous knowledge and practices should be promoted as climate adaptation and mitigation strategies and an enabling environment for their adoption should be created.
- There is a need to establish an inclusive early warning system and disaster relief packages along with the accessible and inclusive disaster prevention and mitigation strategies and response framework by all tiers of governments in a coordinated way so that the potential casualties can be minimised.
- Climate education must be integrated in the regular school curriculum along with the development of the educational materials into inclusive and accessible formats including local languages so that children and young people in all their diversities will be aware about climate change and take proactive initiatives for climate justice.

- Strengthen the capacity of the government institutions to prioritise and uphold the provision of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services during emergency situations, thereby averting any potential oversight or de-prioritisation of these critical services.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

- Encourage youth involvement in public affairs and governance by creating opportunities for leadership development and civic engagement.
- Create platforms and opportunities for meaningful and inclusive youth participation in decision-making processes, enabling them to contribute their perspectives and ideas to shape policies and programmes related to peace, justice, and governance.
- Invest in expanding data availability, accuracy and disaggregation across SDG targets and indicators by prioritising innovations initiated by youth.
- Implement robust anti-corruption measures and enhance transparency in governance systems and capacities to mobilise available resources to stratify the peoples by providing quality services.
- Increase efforts to prevent trafficking in persons, slavery, sexual exploitation and forced labour including child labour by amending trafficking laws to align with foreign employment and anti-trafficking laws.
- Ensure the right to representation and participation in the state for gender and sexual minorities through a quota system.
- Protect the rights of every citizen considering the diversity in caste, culture, religion, tradition and identity to ensure that no one faces any kind of discrimination.
- Establish and formulate necessary legislation and/or legal provisions to ensure the Jugi community (a community within the Newa indigenous nationality)'s right to housing and right to ownership of their ancestral and traditional housing of Satachhen.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

- Promote meaningful engagement of youth in the decision-making processes, including the establishment of youth-led platforms, inclusion of youth representatives in high-level discussions and decision-making bodies, and the facilitation of spaces and opportunities for young people to contribute and share their perspectives, insights and innovations.
- Ensure capacity building programmes and technology transfer initiatives that enhance the skills and capabilities of local institutions and communities to effectively localise and implement the SDGs.
- Enhancing the effectiveness of collaboration through a comprehensive 4P model (People, Private, Public Partnership) by fostering the active involvement of private sectors.
- Ensure robust partnerships and collaboration among ministries, departments, sectors and stakeholders including civil societies, private sectors, and international organisations to ensure coherence in the cross-cutting areas. Prevent duplication of efforts and maximise synergy both horizontally and vertically across different levels of governance.

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