



YOUTH FORUM 2026

February 18-20 | Bangkok, Thailand

YOUTH CALL TO ACTION MALDIVES

Transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions for the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs for a sustainable future for young people in all their diversity.

Situational Analysis

Maldives, despite being a country surrounded by deep waters, faces water scarcity as a major concern. Latest statistics show that 97% of the country no longer has fresh groundwater, owing to the salt water intrusion from sea level rising. Intrusion of saltwater into the aquifers is making the island population unable to efficiently use the minimal clean water naturally available for them. By 2026, the majority of the islands have full access to clean water. Nevertheless, there are still areas for improvement, especially within certain islands. Most recently, an issue that has not been effectively addressed is the haphazard methods of waste management and its leakage into the water systems. This is an exacerbated issue when paired with scarcity of the clean water available to Maldivians. Moreover, contamination of the subterranean water layer due to excessive usage of pesticides is a growing concern among agricultural island populations. During the dry season in Maldives,

which has extended due to the unpredictable pattern caused by the rising temperatures, more than 100 islands all around the nation run out of clean drinking water and people have to rely on authorities to deliver the needed water. In an attempt to build a sustainable method of water storage, the government is working in collaboration with international agencies present in Maldives on creating climate resilient water sectors through rainwater harvesting and desalination.

Climate change remains one of the biggest threats to Maldives. As the most low-laying country in the world, the impacts of climate change have severe effects on the everyday life of Maldivians. The extreme heat has lasting influences on maternal health and wellbeing, directly having a role in the declining birthrate in the country. Moreover, the rising temperatures are detrimental to the wellbeing of children and long hours of exposure to the heat poses a myriad of health issues.

Co-convended by



In collaboration



In partnership



Maldives upholds sustainability in the great plan for cities and communities. Although, there has been a great deal of criticism towards centralisation and future city plans, for the lack of consideration regarding the environmental impact of these urban plans, specifically extensive dredging and land reclamation projects at the cost of marine life and irreversible damages to our coasts and reefs. Moreover, expansion of currently existing cities like Hulhumale' are underway focusing on adaptive urbanism and economic diversification.

Maldives believes in the crucial role of partnerships and collaboration, especially in a multilateral world. This has been positively reflected in the country's foreign policy. One of the most quintessential examples is that Maldives remains a Climate Change Champion and a key member of AOSIS. Moreover, Maldives has been at the forefront of climate change negotiations and discussions, working closely with

other Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Similarly, Maldives has had a key role in mobilising the loss and damage fund, and working in partnership with other nations in securing funds for climate adaptation plans such as the work done through GCF. It is also worth mentioning the efforts done to conserve marine resources and to implement sustainable tuna fishing practices, in collaboration with other nations and international agencies. Furthermore, Maldives depends heavily on international relations as the tourism focused economy significantly relies on foreign collaboration. Through these relations, numerous trade opportunities are secured as well. Another great testament of partnerships is the recent discussions held in preparation of the National Development Plan for the next 20 years. Local consultations in all of the islands were carried out along with stakeholder meetings, in order to ensure a transparent effort of unity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SDG 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

- » Ensure access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, including the migrant workers' population.
- » Improve water quality by reducing pollution, monitoring safe waste management measures and increasing safe reuse methods.
- » Establish a sustainable mechanism of water management in all islands that routinely face water scarcity during the dry season.
- » Protect and restore water-related ecosystems, namely from saltwater intrusion into the aquifers.
- » Expand global cooperation on capacity building support programs, including WASH related activity programs, solar powered desalination and recycling and reuse technologies.

SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

- » Promote and raise awareness on utilising modern energy sources.

- » Simplify and ensure public access to modern energy sources such as solar panels.
- » Mobilise funds to local agencies and research groups to conduct local and island based clean energy related research.
- » Double the efforts towards the transition into clean energy.
- » Establish a framework on social safety measures that needs to be taken into consideration in an energy related public hazard.

SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- » Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, creating a considerable number of new jobs, including in niche fields.
- » Secure and mobilise funds and fellowships for research and innovation, that specifically focuses on our unique geography.
- » Upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of

clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes.

- » Upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all islands.
- » Establish research and innovation as a sectoral field, equipping the younger generation with the necessary tools, including infrastructural needs, starting from school education.
- » Creating industrial diversification, essentially lowering the youth in NEET.

SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

- » Ensure access for all to adequate and affordable housing, within an area that guarantees the basic human necessities.
- » Provide accessible transport systems for all, including public transport (such as ferry service) with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.
- » Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.
- » Green cities and islands that take the possible environmental impact of the proposed urbanisation plan into account.
- » Increasing the number of third and green spaces within the cities, namely the capital.
- » Equip the islands to be climate resilient with resilient infrastructure and other adaptation

methods.

- » SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals
- » Streamline domestic resource mobilisation through global support to developing countries.
- » Enhance knowledge sharing and skills exchange on mutually agreed terms on a regional and an international level, beyond the United Nations level.
- » Collaborate with technologically advanced agencies and nations to promote the development and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies.
- » Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development
- » Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development, including among youth and children by acknowledging them as important stakeholders.

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 18-20 February, 2026. The Maldives country brief was drafted by Fathimath Muhammad Ahmed. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.