



# YOUTH CALL TO ACTION MYANMAR

*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

Myanmar's progress on SDG 6 has sharply declined due to conflict, weak governance, and underinvestment (Sustainable Development Report, 2025). Before 2021, national data showed high coverage, with 95% for basic water and 97% for sanitation. However, these averages hid serious rural gaps, where only about 60% of people had access to safe drinking water (Sustainability Assessment of WASH, n.d.). Since the 2021 coup, conflict and displacement have damaged infrastructure and restricted humanitarian access. After the 2025 earthquake, 4.3 million people required urgent WASH support, and safe water access

in Sagaing Region fell below 20% (ICRC, 2025). More than half of schools and clinics lack adequate services, open defecation continues in remote areas, and floods and droughts have increased water contamination (Myanmar Humanitarian WASH Project, n.d.). Economic collapse has reduced access to hygiene supplies, with 38% of households lacking soap, while weak data systems limit monitoring and response (Advancing SDG 6 Monitoring, 2025). Overall, SDG 6 faces major setbacks because of fragile infrastructure, rural inequality, and limited access in conflict-affected areas (GWP High Level Round Table, n.d.).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Expand access to clean and sustainable energy systems for local water services through collaboration with civil society organisations (CSOs), community-based actors, and relevant development partners to ensure inclusive implementation.
- » Support the provision of accessible and affordable water purification systems for targeted and vulnerable communities, ensuring safe drinking water in conflict-affected and underserved areas.

Co-convended by



In collaboration



In partnership



- » Strengthen systematic, transparent monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms and improve coordination processes to enhance accountability and enable more accessible and efficient funding pathways for WASH interventions.

## GOAL 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

### Situational Analysis

Myanmar's progress on SDG 7 has significantly deteriorated due to institutional mismanagement, infrastructure damage, and ongoing conflict (Sustainable Development Report, 2025). Before 2021, national electricity access reached around 70%, although rural electrification remained below 50%, and only about 20% of households used clean cooking fuels (World Bank, 2023). Following the 2021 coup, blackouts, fuel shortages, and grid damage further disrupted energy supply. Although some reports indicate high national electrification rates, millions of people in conflict-affected areas such as Sagaing and Rakhine remain without reliable access to electricity (ESMAP Tracking SDG7, 2025). The SDG Index 2025 classifies SDG 7 as facing major challenges. Renewable energy development remains extremely limited. While Myanmar relies heavily on hydropower, this source has become unreliable due to conflict and climate-related risks. Energy efficiency policies are weakly implemented, and more than 80% of households still depend on biomass, including firewood and charcoal, for cooking (Tracking SDG7 Report, 2025). This reliance contributes to indoor air pollution, serious health risks for women and children, and ongoing deforestation. Without coordinated and conflict-sensitive action, Myanmar is unlikely to achieve SDG 7 by 2030, leaving millions exposed to unreliable electricity and harmful household air pollution (UN Myanmar SDG7, n.d.).

### Recommendation

- » Promote gender-responsive clean energy awareness in vulnerable communities by supporting women-led and community-owned initiatives that increase understanding of clean cooking technologies and renewable energy

benefits, with pathways for scaling up locally successful models.

- » Establish transparent community agreements and accountability mechanisms by working with local leaders and initiative groups to define shared responsibilities, protect equipment from theft or damage, and apply clear vulnerability-based criteria in beneficiary selection to prevent conflict and inequitable access.
- » Mobilise humanitarian and climate financing through UN mechanisms including UN OCHA, UNDP, and other donors to power essential services, such as health facilities, WASH systems, schools, and IDP camps, using renewable energy as an integrated approach to humanitarian response and community development.

## GOAL 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Situational Analysis

Myanmar's progress on SDG 9, focused on building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialisation, and fostering innovation, has largely collapsed due to ongoing civil war, widespread destruction of infrastructure, and severe economic implosion, which have disrupted supply chains, halted industrial activity, and undermined investment and technological development (Sustainable Development Report, 2025). Before 2021, Myanmar had achieved modest progress on SDG 9, with electrification reaching about 70% and roughly half of rural roads accessible year-round; however, industry remained weak, contributing only around 25% of GDP with minimal innovation investment (World Bank, 2023). Since 2021, conflict and economic collapse have reversed these gains. Infrastructure has been damaged, factories have closed, and manufacturing output has sharply declined amid blackouts and sanctions. By 2025, rural all-season road access remains below 40%, mobile broadband stagnates at around 40 subscriptions per 100 people, and industry's share of GDP has fallen to about 20%, while SMEs face severe credit constraints (ESMAP; ASEAN SDG Report, 2025). With widespread displacement, disrupted supply chains, and almost no

research and development activity, Myanmar faces major challenges under SDG 9 and risks prolonged economic stagnation without structural recovery and stabilisation (UN Myanmar SDG9, n.d.).

## Recommendation

- » Link infrastructure recovery with employment and skills development initiatives by implementing labor-intensive public works, cash-for-work programs, and vocational training in construction and light manufacturing. These programs should prioritise youth, women, and displaced populations to strengthen local livelihoods and support MSME growth.
- » Promote women-led and community-based MSMEs, especially in vulnerable areas, by expanding access to microfinance, revolving funds, and simplified business registration systems through trusted local civil society organisations. Support should also facilitate market access and safe export channels for locally produced goods to domestic and regional markets.
- » Strengthen student-led research, innovation, and applied technology development by providing small research grants, mentorship, and partnerships with regional academic institutions. Focus areas should include low-cost production methods, agro-processing, renewable energy solutions, and digital entrepreneurship that respond to local needs.

## SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

### Situational Analysis

Sustainable Development Goal 11 seeks to ensure that cities and human settlements are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable through improved access to adequate housing, basic services, sustainable transport, and disaster risk reduction (United Nations, 2015). In Myanmar, progress toward SDG 11 has been significantly constrained by intersecting crises, including political instability, protracted conflict, internal displacement, and climate-related hazards, which have placed severe pressure on urban

governance systems and municipal service delivery. Myanmar's overall SDG performance remains limited, with the country recording an SDG Index Score of 63.6 in 2025, reflecting persistent structural barriers across key development sectors (Sustainable Development Report, 2025). Urban poverty has intensified rapidly, particularly in Yangon, where UNDP reports that approximately 43 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, undermining access to safe shelter, water, sanitation, and livelihoods (UNDP, 2025). Humanitarian assessments further highlight worsening water scarcity, inadequate sanitation, and heightened public health risks in peri-urban and displacement settings (United Nations in Myanmar, 2025). Advancing SDG 11 will therefore require integrated urban planning, strengthened local governance, and inclusive, community-centred resilience strategies.

## Recommendation

- » Strengthen local governance and crisis-response capacity through technical assistance and support from United Nations agencies and development partners, including the establishment of urban resilience committees that enable meaningful civil society and youth participation in settlement and recovery planning.
- » Enhance awareness and individual capacity-building initiatives by providing skills training, education, and community engagement programmes that empower displaced and vulnerable populations to actively contribute to sustainable community development.
- » Provide locally adapted support for camps and displacement settings by prioritising small-community based service delivery, including safe shelter, basic infrastructure, and community-led planning tailored to humanitarian realities.

## SDG 17: PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOALS

### Situational Analysis

Sustainable Development Goal 17 emphasises the critical role of multi-stakeholder partnerships in mobilising finance, strengthening capacity, and

advancing international cooperation to achieve the 2030 Agenda (United Nations, 2015). In Myanmar, however, the enabling environment for effective partnerships has deteriorated significantly since the military takeover in February 2021.

Political instability has disrupted development cooperation frameworks and weakened institutional coordination. Official Development Assistance (ODA) declined sharply from USD 1.9 billion in 2019 to USD 1.2 billion in 2021, reflecting reduced international engagement and trust (World Bank, 2024). At the same time, humanitarian needs have escalated, with millions requiring life-saving assistance amid worsening food insecurity and displacement (United Nations, 2025). Restrictions on civil society organisations further limit inclusive collaboration between local actors, the private sector, and international partners (Community of Democracies, 2017). These challenges underscore the urgent need to rebuild inclusive and trust-based partnerships to support sustainable recovery and SDG implementation in Myanmar.

## Recommendation

- » Create an enabling environment for youth-led and community-based organisations by protecting civic space and ensuring meaningful participation of youth-led, women-led, and local civil society organisations in sustainable development initiatives. Development partners should provide flexible funding, technical

support, and capacity-building to strengthen their institutional sustainability.

- » Strengthen coordinated humanitarian and development partnerships by working directly with trusted local actors during crises and utilising regional platforms such as ASEAN to enhance dialogue, technical cooperation, and conflict-sensitive assistance delivery.
- » Enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration through trusted intermediaries by partnering youth initiatives, local CSOs, and international agencies with institutions such as UNDP to build capacity in financial management, monitoring, and reporting, ensuring transparency, accountability, and long-term impact.

*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 Myanmar drafting team consisted of Khun Sint Phoo Wai, Naw Gay Gay, Chan Nyein Aung, Zin Min Tun, and Kyaw Min Oo. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.*