



# APFSD Youth Forum and Regional ECOSOC Youth Forum Call to Action 2022



## Vietnam

### Building Back Better from COVID-19 While Advancing the Full Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific

#### SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The emergence of COVID-19 is presenting unprecedented challenges in the country. Though there have been significant successes to date in the development process of effective COVID-19 vaccines, the pandemic has created unprecedented hurdles and is predicted to have a substantial influence on Vietnam's economic development this year.

COVID-19 disrupted the learning of an estimated 4.4 million Vietnamese preschool pupils in Vietnam. Many children from poor households, remote areas and ethnic minority groups still struggle to access quality and inclusive education, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19. Lack of access to devices and internet connection has led to the inaccessibility of education during social distancing, especially in remote areas. Teachers have also had trouble adapting to online modes of lessons. The building of a learning environment that is safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective is a big challenge for Vietnam. The gender gap is getting wider in access to vocational training for some ethnic minority groups. Therefore, there must be appropriate policies and measures to fill this gender gap in training.

A key challenge hindering implementation and monitoring of SDG 5 is a lack of adequate gender-sensitive data, including data that is disaggregated by sex, age and other characteristics, as well as a lack of data on trends in SDG 5 implementation.

Women still represent a lower percentage of leadership roles than targeted. Despite great efforts to eliminate early marriage and all forms of gender-based violence, the former is still seen in rural, mountainous and remote areas heavily populated by ethnic minority people. Women (72.9 per-cent) participating in the workforce in Vietnam remain lower than men (83.0 per-cent) and a gender gap remains in terms of salary. Women still do the vast majority of unpaid housework. COVID-19 has led to an increase of domestic violence against women, and has also led to women taken on a greater burden of care work in the home.

To date, numerous policies related to SDG 14 (Life Below Water) have been improved and finalised, such as the Law on Environmental Protection, Law on Vietnamese Sea, Law on Natural Resources and Environment of Sea and Islands, Law on Fisheries, Strategy for Fisheries Development, Strategy for Sustainable Exploitation and Use of Natural

Resources and Protection of Marine Environment, and National Strategy on Biodiversity until 2020 and Vision to 2030. The Law on Fisheries (2017) includes new clauses to regulate illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The investigation, study and evaluation of biodiversity in the sea and islands of Vietnam have been paid special attention.

However, mangrove ecosystems have seriously degraded with 67 per-cent lost as compared to 1943. Therefore, it will be challenging for Vietnam to reach SDG 14.2 by 2030. While the country has established 10 marine reserves, the slow pace of establishment and operation of new maritime reserves is a big challenge to fulfill SDG 14.5. More than 70 per-cent of vessels and boats in Vietnam operate inshore, heightening fishing pressures and imbalances between fishing capacity and aquatic resources.

Numerous policies related to SDG 15 (Life On Land) have been issued, including the Law on Forest Protection and Development, Law on Biodiversity, Law on Forestry and related strategies. The exploitation of natural forest is managed more closely, closing natural forests nationwide by 2017 and about 225,000 hectares of concentrated forests are planted annually. Vietnam has implemented the integration of desertification prevention into climate change responses, natural disaster mitigation and has carried out different activities to conserve endangered, precious and rare species.

However, insufficient coordination and consensus remains in assigning State management responsibilities for bio-diversity. Finance for bio-diversity conservation is too limited to meet State management objectives. The exploitation, trading and consumption of endangered wild animals and plants have not been controlled. The population of wild species continues to decline, with regulations to combat alien invasive organisms yet to be formulated.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Given these scenarios, we, the diverse Nepali adolescents and youth participants of APFSD Youth Forum 2022 call upon our government, international organisations, United Nations agencies, civil society organisations, development partners and other duty bearers:

- More trainings need to be made available for teachers on how to teach online, which also includes diversifying content (i.e. new websites and apps) for online learning.
- Students in rural and remote areas need to be provided with subsidized devices in order to be able to take part in online classes.
- A hotline for assistance for mental health services needs to be created.
- The government must commit to equal opportunity to effective and quality education.
- There must be a concerted effort in raising awareness of gender equality in the context of COVID-19.
- The government must create a hotline specifically for people to report cases of domestic violence.
- Support must be provided to pregnant mothers suffering from COVID-19
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- Promote business rights (i.e. the rights of businesses) as a means of eradicating poverty. Suggestions: Adopt business-friendly policies, legal and regulatory frameworks capable of promoting innovation, employment and inclusive growth.
- Encourage better implementation of policies and laws regarding extensive fishing and dumping waste to the water
- Using renewable energy rather than coal energy, which is originally mined underwater.
- Reduce agricultural intensification by cutting down the excessive use of chemical fertilizer.
- Plant more trees and help mangroves by raising the awareness of children in school on climate change.
- Encourage international communities to build strong connections and partnerships through exchange programs.
- Build an authentic, solid, respectful relationship between all ethnicities and races.

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*The APFSD country and sub-regional briefs were developed through collective discussions and engagements between youth advocates at the APFSD Youth Forum and ECOSOC Regional Youth Forum on March 19-21, 2022 on SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), SDG 15 (Life on Land) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) The Vietnam drafting team consists of Truong Vu, Huynh Van Hoang, and Le Thu Giang. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW, YouthLead, and Y-Peer Call To Action team.*

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