



# Nepal's Youth Call to Action APFSD 2026

## Introduction

The Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance (NAYA) was formed after the 8th Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) Youth Forum to implement follow-up actions around APFSD in Nepal. It comprises 11 youth-led organizations and over 600 diverse individuals advocating Agenda 2030 from across the country.

Visible Impact serves as the secretariat for NAYA. Visible Impact is a young women-led organization in Nepal that is creating a visible impact on the lives of adolescent girls, women, and youth by unleashing their social and economic leadership through participatory innovative interventions. Visible Impact has been working on three core issues: women and girls' championships, new-generation leadership, and global health innovations with a focus on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

Since July 2021, NAYA has been proactively working at the national level to engage young people at the forefront of sustainable development and to link regional and international sustainable development mechanisms with national processes. NAYA has been amplifying key messages including youth-identified issues, recommendations, and actions from the APFSD Nepal Youth Call to Action through targeted social media campaigns, strategic meetings, and high-level dialogues with key decision-makers.

## Situation Analysis

Nepal has shown progress in many indicators of SDG 6, including the increase of safely managed sanitation services, declaration of Open Defecation Free zone and increase in households with basic handwashing facilities.(1,2,4) However, no sufficient data on wastewater treatment and persistence of water-borne diseases in children indicate a need to maintain quality of drinking water and correct wastewater disposal

system. (4,5) Nepal has achieved substantial progress toward SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, capitalizing on its abundant hydropower, solar, and wind resources. Yet, the country faces hurdles in renewable diversification, clean cooking adoption, and equitable rural access. (3,5)

Nepal's progress on SDG 9 remains moderate with progress like gains in digital connectivity and electricity access, while being hindered by factors like stagnation in manufacturing value added (MVA), low ranking of indices Gross Domestic Product, Logistic performance Index (LPI), and Global Innovation Index (GII). (4,6) Nepal exhibits moderate progress on SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) with progresses like slum reductions, increased (Electric Vehicles) EV adoption in big cities, waste management improvements, heritage preservation, and early warning systems. On the other hand, inadequate affordable housing, poor solid waste recycling, underdeveloped public transport spurring private vehicles and underfunded disaster preparedness, transportation-induced air pollution and accidents have hindered the achievement of SDG 11 comprehensively.(4,5) Nepal advances moderately on SDG 17 through mechanisms like the Development Partners Coordination Committee (DPCC), improved domestic revenue mobilization, and digital connectivity gains as it nears graduation from Least Developed Countries (LDC) in 2026. However, the country suffers with remittance dependency, persistent trade deficits, low Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), aid withdrawal from major donors, external shocks (COVID-19, Ukraine war), inequalities in internet access, weak local implementation, and limited aid absorption capacity. (4,5,6)

## Recommendations

This Call-To-Action serves as an outcome document of Nepal Youth Forum 2025 and encompasses the

recommendations of young people of Nepal regarding five clusters of goals being reviewed in APFSD and HLPF 2026. The recommendations are as follows:

### **SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation**

- Prioritize investments in water treatment technologies such as chlorination, filtration, and community-level plants to boost safely managed drinking water coverage, alongside strict water quality regulations, community education on household purification methods, safe child feces disposal, and wastewater drainage via community-led sanitation approaches.
- Promote rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, and integration of climate adaptation into local Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) policies to combat droughts, groundwater depletion, and heat waves, particularly in low-rainfall Terai regions.
- Implement community financing models and gender-sensitive infrastructures to reduce urban-rural, wealth-based disparities, and the disproportionate water collection burden on women and girls, while ensuring their participation in WASH policy decision-making and access to nearby clean sources for safety.
- Strengthen monitoring systems with reliable data collection across all SDG 6 targets for regular progress tracking and gap identification.
- Protect freshwater sources from contamination, promote organic fertilizers to safeguard aquatic life and crops, conduct awareness programs, ensure clean water for livestock, and engage youth in inclusive local WASH strategies.
- Adopt a 'One Health' approach linking SDG 3 (Overall health and well-being) by protecting natural resources and raising awareness on land and water chemicals; enhance SDG 17 through multi-sector partnerships (agriculture, veterinary, health, environment) and coordination among local bodies, development partners, and community activists.

### **SDG 7: Clean and affordable energy**

- Accelerate clean cooking transition by subsidizing electric cooking technologies; scale-up successful pilots like Eco-Zone models and clean cooking explorer tools, co-design culturally appropriate cooking stoves with women as end-

users for affordability and acceptability while promoting women-led micro-enterprises, conduct capacity building sessions at local levels.

- Diversify renewable energy beyond hydropower by fast-tracking solar and wind projects such as Mithila solar photovoltaic project (Mithila PV) and Golyan mega-projects, investing in grid infrastructure for distributed generation, and establishing green funds for youth-led clean energy startups to foster innovation and resilience.
- Promote transport electrification through expanded EV-friendly policies including charging infrastructure including affordable e-bikes and conduct public campaigns highlighting economic, environmental, and energy security benefits.
- Boost energy efficiency by enforcing standards for appliances, supporting industrial energy audits and management, and launching 'switch off' campaigns alongside school and college awareness programs on health and environmental impacts of unclean energy sources.
- Strengthen monitoring, planning, and equity by enhancing data systems with disaggregated indicator; building capacity at provincial and local levels for decentralized energy planning; ensuring that the interventions reach vulnerable populations equitably, mandating youth and women participation in all energy planning level; and fostering partnerships among municipalities, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and private sector for coordinated implementation.

### **SDG 9: Industry, infrastructure and innovation**

- Establish an SDG 9 Delivery Unit under National Planning Commission for quarterly monitoring of key indicators like manufacturing value-addition, logistical productivity, Research and Development (R&D) spending, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) access, clarify subnational roles and integrate SDG 9 into provincial and local plans
- Expand credit guarantee programs and concessional loans for women and youth-led Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) adopting digital tools, alongside industrial risk-sharing mechanisms to build resilience.

- Prioritize rural and Himalayan transport and internet investments to bridge urban-rural gaps and empower women via skilled networks for economic independence.
- Create a National Innovation Fund supporting women, youths, university and industry collaborations and scale up the National Innovation Center (NIC) provincially to work in digital health, agricultural technologies, renewable energy and climate friendly technologies at sub-national levels.
- Raise public-private R&D to 1% GDP by 2030 and integrate vocational education from schools and accelerate digitalization with inclusive and disability-friendly industrial designs.
- Promote sustainable industrialization by incentivizing businesses to adopt energy-efficient renewables like solar, and hydropower; foster multi-stakeholder partnerships (government, private, academia and civil society) incorporating gender and social inclusion, prioritize regional and international collaborations and sharing best practices in innovation and infrastructure.

### SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

- Strengthen coordination between federal, provincial and local for coherent urban planning, enforcing NBC compliance via private sector monitoring, prioritize data-driven municipal decisions, conduct periodic capacity building workshops for officials, and encourage citizen participation to tackle unplanned settlements, prolonged construction delays, and improper project management.
- Expand affordable and climate-resilient housing schemes and slum upgrading activities with basic services like sanitation and water supply, targeted for low-income and vulnerable groups; integrating rainwater harvesting, drainage planning into housing and road construction, adopt Local Adaptation Plan of Action (LAPA) and disaster risk reduction principles, and mobile alert-based inclusive early warning systems for resilience.
- Promote sustainable mobility by expanding electric or non-motorized public transport infrastructure to cut congestion and emissions, private vehicle dependency, and road accidents; improve transportation accessibility and

affordability while regularly monitoring quality of water and air.

- Enhance waste management with proper collection, disposal systems, recycling mandates, anti-dumping measures near forests, residential areas and water areas, and green public spaces to boost environmental sustainability; launch awareness campaigns on waste management and clean city practices.
- Ensure inclusivity by mandating representation of women, youth, marginalized communities, and vulnerable groups in planning policymaking; prioritize local governance strengthening and multi-stakeholder collaborations for equitable urban development.

### SDG 17: Partnerships for Goals

- Enhance domestic revenue mobilization through tax efficiency improvements; develop clear FDI policies with better aid absorption capacity; and establish localized SDG frameworks at provincial and municipal levels to address falling federal GDP ratios, declining tax-funded budgets, and low FDI post-COVID plunge.
- Expand inclusive partnerships engaging private sector, civil society, youth organizations, and cooperatives via strategic utilization of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for SDGs, while mitigating reputational crises impacting Small and Medium Enterprises, through robust financing frameworks at local levels.
- Strengthen digital infrastructure to reduce provincial internet disparities; promote technology transfer systems; and foster academia-industry innovation hubs linking international research to domestic export-oriented businesses for job creation and reduction of remittance dependency.
- Lead regional cooperation prioritizing Global South networks, initiatives on climate adaptation, sustainable finance, mountain development, migration, and brain-drain management, via inter-country platforms for sharing experiences and best practices, alongside regular multi-stakeholder policy coherence reviews.
- Achieve sustainable annual economic growth by prioritizing export diversification beyond limited capacity goods, establishing technology transfer

hubs, and implementing clear subnational implementation strategies to overcome trade deficits and weak private sector engagement.

## Endnotes

This Call-to-Action was prepared by the compilation of recommendations from goal profiles and recommendations received from Nepal Youth Forum. Please refer to individual goal profiles (available at [visim.org](http://visim.org)) for detailed information on each goal. We appreciate the contribution of Ms. Seejan Lamichhane (Visible Impact), Mr. Dipesh Limbu (Visible Impact), s. Sabina Pun (Beyond Beijing Committee Nepal), Ms. Sindhu Sharma (Nepalese Youth for Climate Action), Mr. Sagar Koirala (All in Foundation) and Mr. Jaldeep Sapkota (Blind Youth Association Nepal) for their contribution in creating goal profiles. We further extend our acknowledgement to all presenters, rapporteurs and youth participants of Nepal Youth Forum 2025 for their contribution

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