



NAYA

Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance

PROGRESS REPORT

2021-25





MESSAGE FROM ARROW

It has been five years, that the Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance, NAYA has been founded, and our huge congratulations to team Visible Impact and NAYA Working Group Members, (Asia Pacific Research and Resource Center for Women, Beyond Beijing Committee, Blind Youth Association Nepal, Nepalese Youth for Climate Action, Leo Club of Kathmandu Nepalaya, Rotaract Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town, Sambandha Nepal, YUWA, Y-PEER, Right Here Right Now and Visible Impact).

NAYA was born from a powerful conviction: that young people are not merely the leaders of tomorrow, but the changemakers of today. Formed in collaboration with ARROW and partners like YUWA, NAYA has consistently ensured that youth voices are not just heard, but genuinely integrated into the provincial and national policies that shape Nepal's future, but also inform the regional follow up and review process at Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as well as HLPF.

Through high-level dialogues, youth forums, and direct engagement with the National Planning Commission and federal policymakers, NAYA has built a vital bridge between young advocates and the decision-makers who hold power over Nepal's sustainable development commitments. NAYA, the idea of a national level youth alliance organically born from the Alumni of regional APFSD Youth Forum participants, has also become a stellar example for other countries such as Bhutan, China, Mongolia, PNG, and other countries to form their own national level alliances.

NAYA's work in advancing SDGs with particular focus on gender equality, human rights including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and climate action, is also enabling the localizing the SDGs, thus championing inclusive governance reflecting a deep and unwavering commitment to the 2030 Agenda. NAYA, you have made Nepal proud. You have made the APFSD Youth Forum proud; Your dedication inspires a generation.

Congratulations, and here is to the incredible journey ahead. #NAYA4SDGs

- Sai
Deputy Director, ARROW



THE STORY IN A SNAPSHOT

WHY THIS PROJECT WAS NEEDED

The Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance (NAYA) was established in July 2021 as Nepal's first coordinated national youth alliance dedicated to strengthening meaningful youth engagement in sustainable development and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The alliance was initiated by young people and youth-led and youth-serving organizations from Nepal who participated in the APFSD Youth Forum 2021, with the aim of translating regional commitments into concrete national-level action and follow-up.

At the time of NAYA's establishment, there was no structured national platform in Nepal that systematically connected young people to regional and global SDG review and advocacy mechanisms such as the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) and the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). Youth participation in SDG monitoring, review processes and policy dialogue remained fragmented, limited in reach, and often disconnected from national decision-making spaces. This created a critical gap between international and regional youth advocacy processes and national implementation and accountability for the SDGs. NAYA was therefore created to address this gap by serving as a national coordination and engagement mechanism for youth. It began with a working group of nine youth-led and youth-serving organizations and an initial membership

of around 70 young people representing diverse identities and backgrounds. Since its establishment, NAYA has worked at the national level to place young people at the forefront of sustainable development discourse and to institutionalize youth participation in SDG implementation and monitoring in Nepal.

Through coordinated advocacy, social media campaigns, policy dialogues and high-level meetings with key decision-makers, NAYA amplified youth priorities, recommendations and actions outlined in the APFSD Nepal Youth Call to Action (2021–2026). In order to ensure that national youth advocacy was grounded in local realities, NAYA organized provincial youth consultations across all seven provinces of Nepal and convened a National Youth Conclave ahead of successive APFSD Youth Forums. These consultations created an inclusive platform for more than 1,400 young people from across the country to collectively review progress, challenges, and opportunities related to the clusters of SDGs reviewed at the regional level between 2022 and 2026. NAYA was established to fulfill this need by strengthening youth representation, coordination and accountability in Nepal's SDG processes, and by ensuring that young people are not only beneficiaries of development but recognized and supported as key actors in shaping sustainable development pathways.

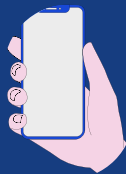


NAYA IN A GLIMPSE

REACH & ENGAGEMENT

100K+

Social Media
Reach



600+



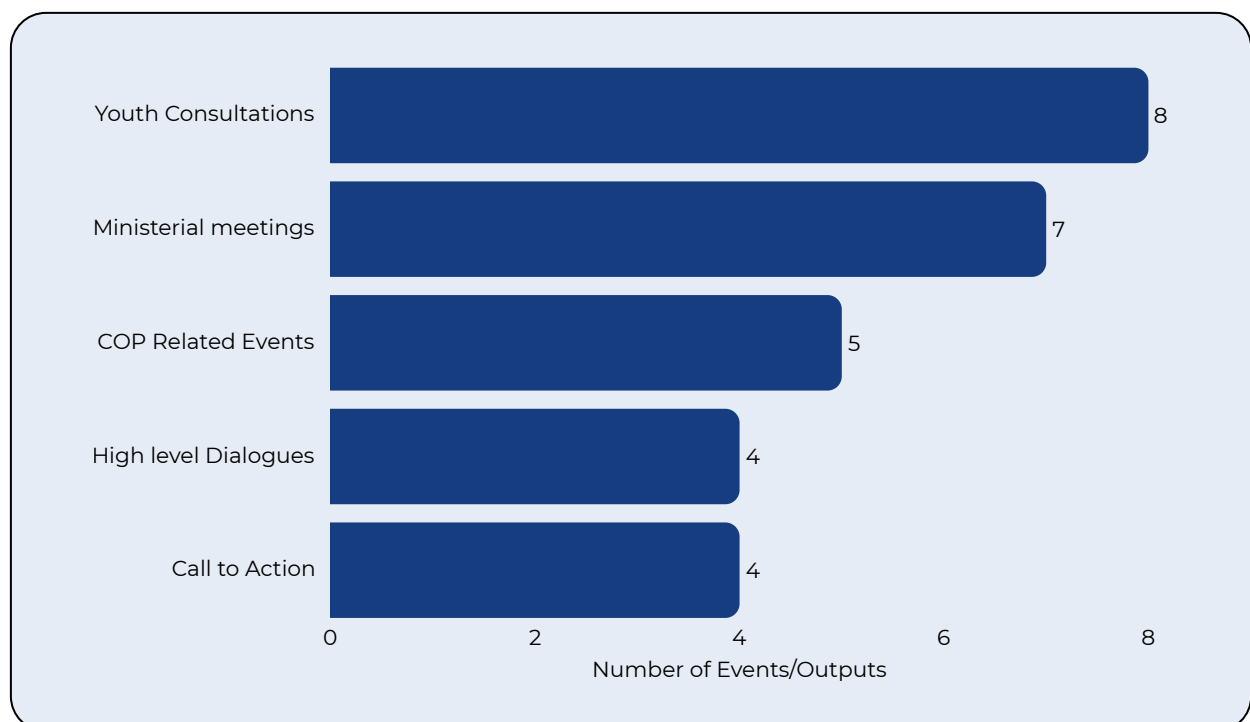
Actively Engaged Youth
Members

THE JOURNEY

FIVE PHASES

**11 WORKING GROUP
MEMBERS**

THE IMPACT





PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS

- NAYA Working Group members have actively participated in and represented NAYA across numerous national and international platforms. They have consistently attended and presented at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) from 2022 to 2026, where they also submitted key calls to action.
- In addition, NAYA members have demonstrated strong engagement in global climate forums, including participation in COP 27, COP 28, COP 29, and COP 30.
- Furthermore, NAYA Working Group members took part in the Ninth South and South-West Asia Subregional Forum, held in December 2025 in Pakistan.



NAYA ADVANCING SDGS IN BANGKOK



VISIBLE IMPACT ENGAGING IN APFSD DIALOGUES



ADVANCING YOUTH-LED POLICY INITIATIVES IN NEPAL



VISIBLE IMPACT ENGAGING IN APFSD DIALOGUES



NAYA as a platform for follow-up actions

-Shiwa Karmacharya, Senior Program Officer
Asia-Pacific Resource and Research Centre
for Women (ARROW)

ARROW, along with regional co-convenors Youth LEAD and YPEER Asia-Pacific Center (YPEER AP), has been organizing the annual Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) Youth Forum ahead of the APFSD every year since 2017. The APFSD is an annual, inclusive, intergovernmental forum to support the follow-up and review of progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the regional level. Since 2022, APFSD Youth Forum has expanded its collaboration to include regional youth networks such as the Major Group for Children and Youth and the Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP (CYMG). In 2025, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform (YECAP) also joined the initiative. The APFSD Youth Forum serves as a distinguished platform for young people across Asia and the Pacific to assess progress, identify gaps and challenges in SDG implementation, exchange innovative ideas, and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of sustainable development in the region. Each year, the Forum produces the APFSD Youth Call to Action, which feeds into the APFSD Intergovernmental Forum, the High-Level Political Forum, and other regional and global processes.

In the wake of the 8th APFSD Youth Forum, the Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance (NAYA) was

established to localize SDG implementation and follow-up actions in Nepal, with young people at the forefront. Integrating youth perspectives into policy and creating meaningful avenues for engagement are critical to accelerating progress toward the SDGs. Not all young people have access to policy spaces, and only a few can directly engage in platforms such as the UN to share their perspectives. Recognizing this gap, NAYA envisioned an inclusive platform that amplifies the voices of young people from across Nepal, particularly those from diverse geographic locations and marginalized communities, ensuring that they can meaningfully contribute to development plans that affect their lives.

Young people are often included in policy spaces in ways that are largely symbolic, with limited influence over actual decision-making. Such tokenistic engagement reduces their role to representation without real power. NAYA, however, has actively challenged this by prioritizing meaningful youth participation. Through its annual National Youth Conclave and the development of the National Youth Call to Action ahead of the APFSD Youth Forum, NAYA ensures that young people's perspectives are not only heard but also systematically documented, consolidated, and fed into formal policy processes. This approach transforms participation from tokenism into genuine engagement, allowing youth voices to shape agendas and influence development outcomes.

Following each APFSD Youth Forum and intergovernmental forum, NAYA organizes high-level dialogues and bilateral meetings with key government stakeholders, including the National Planning Commission and other relevant bodies at both central and local levels. These engagements provide an avenue to present recommendations and key discussions emerging from regional forums while advocating their implementation and promoting strengthened, meaningful youth engagement in national development processes.

For ARROW, as a regional partner and working group member, it has been a rewarding experience witnessing NAYA's journey over the past five years. NAYA has demonstrated dedication and sustainability, maintained self-sufficiency while steadily expanded its membership and influence. Evolving from a small group of participants at the 8th APFSD Youth Forum to a network of over 200

the alliance has shown notable growth, credibility, and reach. What began as a national platform has now developed meaningful connections to regional and international SDG processes, amplifying the voices of Nepali youth on broader sustainable development agendas.

NAYA has gradually become a recognized example of youth-led SDG follow-up in the Asia-Pacific region. Building on NAYA's approach, young people in Bangladesh launched their own annual Youth SDG Summit as a follow-up to SDG commitments. Similarly, alliances in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Mongolia, Bhutan, and China have emerged, actively engaging youth and bringing forward innovative solutions in their respective countries. With its strong foundation and passionate membership, NAYA is well-positioned to keep driving its work and grow the alliance even stronger in the years ahead.



MEETING WITH HONORABLE MINISTER OF LIVESTOCK AND AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT, MR. MADAN PARIYAR



SUBMITTING MEMORANDUM ON TFGBV AND GIRLS EDUCATION TO HONORABLE MINISTER AT MINISTRY OF WOMEN, CHILDREN, GENDER AND SEXUAL MINORITIES AND SOCIAL SECURITY MS. SITA BADI



MEETING WITH MINISTRY OF WOMEN, CHILDREN AND SENIOR CITIZENS



MEETING WITH NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

Advancing Sustainable Development: The Role of Youth Representation in Regional and Global Platforms

-Shilpa Lamichhane, Executive Director
Visible Impact

There is something deeply powerful about a young person realizing that their voice matters. Sometimes, it begins in a small community meeting, a youth discussion, or a local campaign. Other times, it begins when a young person from a small country like Nepal walks into a global conference room filled with diplomats, policymakers and world leaders, carrying with them the stories, struggles and dreams of their communities.

For me, youth representation in regional and global platforms has never simply been about attending conferences. It has always been about carrying voices that are often unheard. It is about ensuring that policies and commitments made in international spaces reflect the realities of people on the ground, especially young people, women, marginalized communities and those who are too often left behind.

As the Executive Director of Visible Impact, I have had the privilege of participating in regional and international forums such as the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) in 2023, 2024, and 2026, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in 2024, and the Subregional Forum on Sustainable Development in Islamabad, Pakistan in 2025. These experiences have shaped not only my understanding of sustainable development, but also my belief in the transformative power of youth leadership.

When I attended the High-Level Political Forum in New York, I remember sitting in

rooms where countries discussed progress on poverty, climate change, inequality, food security, governance, and partnerships.

The conversations were global, yet every issue discussed reminded me of the realities back home in Nepal; communities vulnerable to climate disasters, young people struggling with unemployment, women fighting for dignity and equal opportunities, and rural populations still disconnected from resources and services.

One of the most meaningful moments for me was speaking as a representative of civil society organizations from Nepal during Nepal's Voluntary National Review presentation. Standing there, I felt the weight of responsibility and hope at the same time. I spoke about the importance of inclusive development policies and the need to prioritize the voices of vulnerable and marginalized communities. In that moment, I realized that youth representation is not symbolic participation; it is a responsibility to bring truth, lived realities, and accountability into global conversations.

Regional platforms like APFSD also taught me the value of solidarity. Across Asia and the Pacific, countries face different realities, yet many of our struggles are interconnected. Climate change, inequality, shrinking civic spaces, economic instability, and barriers to education continue to affect millions of young people across the region. Listening to youth advocates from different countries made me realize that while our languages and cultures may differ, our hopes for justice, equality, and sustainable futures are remarkably similar.

Similarly, participating in the Subregional Forum in Islamabad reminded me that sustainable development cannot be achieved in isolation. South Asian countries share deep historical, social, and environmental connections, and our progress depends on collaboration. In these spaces, youth voices bring urgency, innovation, and humanity into policy discussions. Young people often speak not only with data and statistics, but also with empathy, lived experiences, and a vision for a better future.

However, meaningful youth representation does not happen automatically. Behind every young person attending a regional or global forum is usually an organization, a mentor, or a movement that believed in them and created opportunities for them to grow. In my own journey, organizations like Visible Impact, alliances like NAYA have played an important role in nurturing youth leadership and creating spaces for meaningful engagement.

NAYA's contribution goes beyond supporting youth participation in events. It has helped create a culture where young people feel empowered to speak, question, organize, and lead. For many youth in Nepal, international platforms can feel distant and inaccessible. But when organizations invest in young leaders, provide mentorship, and trust young people with responsibility, they help bridge that gap between local realities and global decision-making spaces.

What makes youth participation powerful is not merely presence, but perspective. Young people bring fresh ideas, challenge outdated systems, and constantly remind institutions about the urgency of action. We are the generation inheriting the consequences of climate change, inequality, conflict, and unsustainable development. Yet we are also the generation creating movements, building communities, and reimagining solutions.

At every forum I attended, I returned home carrying more than just knowledge and networks. I carried stories, inspiration, and renewed responsibility. These spaces taught me that sustainable development is not only about policies and declarations;; it is ultimately about people. It is about ensuring dignity, justice, equality, and opportunity for every individual, regardless of where they come from.

As the world moves closer to 2030, the need for meaningful youth representation has become more urgent than ever. Young people must not only be invited into conversations but also recognized as equal partners in shaping solutions. Sustainable development cannot succeed if youth voices remain unheard or tokenized.

I often think about how far one opportunity can go. A young person who is given space to speak today may become someone who transforms policies, communities, and lives tomorrow. That is why investing in youth leadership is not simply an act of inclusion; it is an investment in a more sustainable, compassionate, and equitable future.

My journey through these regional and global platforms has shown me that youth are not waiting to lead someday, they are already leading today. And platforms like NAYA continue to light that path, ensuring that young voices from Nepal are not only present in global spaces, but are also heard, valued, and remembered.



9TH SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST ASIA SUBREGIONAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Empowering Youth Voices: Highlight the inspiring changes NAYA has brought about by enabling youth to actively participate in SDG advocacy and decision- making.

**-Dipesh Limbu, Program Coordinator
Visible Impact**

Rather than standing by, Nepal's youth are proactively entering the rooms where policy is made, bringing the confidence necessary to drive the national development agenda. At the heart of this shift is the Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance (NAYA), a youth-led platform that has steadily transformed how young people engage with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Established in 2021, NAYA began as a small but determined collective of 7 youth-led and youth-serving organizations, with around 50 young members. What started as a focused working group has now evolved into a vibrant national network of over 600 youth and 11 partner organizations. This growth reflects more than just numbers. It signals a growing movement of young people who are informed, organized, and ready to influence Nepal's development trajectory. NAYA was born from the belief that youth shouldn't just be invited to discuss development; they should be the ones directing the narrative. This principle is reflected in NAYA's commitment to diversity and representation. Young people from different provinces, genders, and social backgrounds come together under one platform, bringing a wide range of lived experiences into national conversations. This diversity has strengthened NAYA's voice. It ensures that discussions around development are not limited to a few perspectives but instead reflect the realities of communities across Nepal. More importantly, it has created a space where young people feel seen, heard, and valued.

One of NAYA's most notable achievements has been its ability to move beyond awareness and inspire action. Through digital campaigns, creative competitions, and interactive storytelling, the alliance has made global processes like the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and Conference of the Parties (COPs) more accessible to young people. Instead of simply sharing information, NAYA encourages youth to interpret and express SDG issues in their own ways through art, videos, and personal stories. This approach makes global agendas feel relevant and personal. It also builds confidence, helping young people realize that their voices and ideas matter. As a result, participation is no longer passive. Youth are engaging critically with issues, discussing solutions, and even mobilizing their communities. This shift from awareness to ownership is where real empowerment begins.

A defining strength of NAYA lies in its ability to connect young people with decision-makers. Through Youth Consultations, Policy Dialogues, and High-Level Dialogues (HLDs), NAYA creates structured opportunities for youth to share their perspectives directly with government representatives. These engagements are not symbolic. Each year, Youth Conclaves and consultations bring participants together to analyze challenges related to the SDGs and develop concrete recommendations. These ideas are compiled into documents such as Nepal's Youth Call to Action, which are shared with ministries and national institutions.

What makes this process impactful is the level of engagement it receives. Government officials, including representatives from the National Planning Commission, actively participate in these dialogues. This interaction transforms youth input into something tangible, policy-relevant insights that can influence planning and implementation. In many ways, NAYA is helping shift the narrative from consultation to collaboration, where youth are not just being asked for opinions but are actively contributing to solutions.

NAYA's impact does not stop at the national level. It actively prepares young people to engage in regional and global platforms such as the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), HLPF, and COPs. Through pre- and post-event consultations, youth gain a deeper understanding of global negotiations and are able to reflect on how these processes connect to Nepal's priorities. This preparation ensures that when Nepali youth step onto international stages, they do so with clarity, confidence, and purpose. In 2025, youth engaged through NAYA contributed recommendations to Nepal's position in the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3). Moments like these highlight a significant shift; young people are no longer just participants in global conversations; they are contributors shaping them.

Beyond advocacy, NAYA has played a crucial role in strengthening collaboration among youth organizations. By bringing together groups working on climate action, gender equality, health, and other issues, it has created a network that thrives on shared learning and collective action. This collaborative approach has amplified impact. Joint campaigns, national forums, and coordinated advocacy efforts allow youth to present unified messages, making their voices harder to ignore. Over time, this has contributed to a more organized and visible youth movement in Nepal.

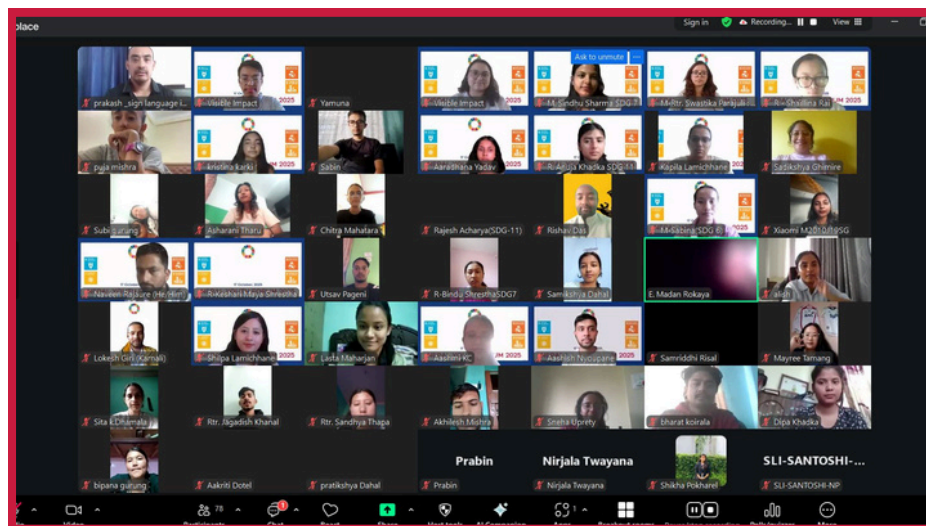
The growing participation in NAYA's initiatives also reflects a broader cultural shift. More young people are stepping forward, eager to engage in civic processes and contribute to change.

At its core, NAYA's impact goes beyond programs and events. It lies in how it changes mindsets. By creating spaces for dialogue, creativity, and leadership, NAYA helps young people see themselves differently. Youth are no longer viewed or viewing themselves as passive beneficiaries of development. They are becoming active contributors, capable of shaping policies and influencing outcomes. This sense of agency is powerful. It encourages sustained engagement and fosters a generation that is not only aware of challenges but also committed to addressing them.

NAYA also promotes an understanding of how different issues intersect. By connecting themes like climate change, gender equality, education, and health, it encourages holistic thinking, an approach that is essential for achieving the SDGs. The journey of NAYA offers valuable lessons for Nepal and beyond. It shows that when young people are given the right platforms, tools, and trust, they can play a meaningful role in shaping development. By combining awareness-building, capacity development, policy engagement, and global advocacy, NAYA has created a comprehensive model of youth empowerment. Its work demonstrates that inclusive and participatory governance is not just an ideal; it is achievable.

As Nepal continues its path toward the SDGs, the role of youth will only become more important. Initiatives like NAYA remind us that empowering young people is not optional; it is essential for building a sustainable and equitable future.

Through NAYA, Nepal's youth are not just imagining change; they are leading it.



NEPAL YOUTH FORUM 2025



NAYA CO-ORGANIZING NEPAL PEOPLE'S FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2025



YOUTH CONCLAVE 2024

Connecting Youth and Policymakers: Sharing experiences in facilitating dialogue and collaboration between young people and policymakers for SDG implementation through NAYA

-Tejaswee Bhattarai, Advocacy Officer
YUWA

YUWA is a youth-led and youth-run organization established in 2009 AD to empower and engage young people as the champions of change. It has been working on various national, regional, and international platforms to raise the voices of young people, especially in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Climate Justice, and Youth in Politics. YUWA has been a part of NAYA since its establishment in July 2021, collaborating with other CSOs to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). NAYA has provided a unique collective platform where youth-focused organizations like YUWA learn from each other and amplify our efforts towards the goals.

Through NAYA, YUWA has helped build a systematic bridge between grassroots youth and high-level policymakers. Each year before the APFSD, NAYA working members including YUWA organize a Youth Conclave virtually to gather the inputs from young people across Nepal where we discuss the SDGs under review that year. These youth inputs are shared from the conclave to the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) Youth Forum, then into the main APFSD proceedings, and hopefully into the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York. This way, through NAYA, Nepali Youth voices have influenced policymaking from the local level to ultimately the global level.

At the national level, inputs from the conclave and Nepali delegates of the APFSD Youth Forum are incorporated into a National Youth Call to Action. As a collective of organizations working on varied SDG areas, NAYA uses the networks and strengths of its member organizations to reach this Call to Action to various ministries. YUWA, registered with the National Youth Council (NYC) and having strong ties with them, has coordinated with the NYC to present the Call to Action and discuss collaboration. Similarly, through the networks of different NAYA partners, we have collectively presented the Call to Action to the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC), the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), and the National Planning Commission (NPC). In April 2025, YUWA also co-organized a High-Level Dialogue with NAYA, where young people directly engaged with Nepal's government delegates to APFSD and discussed the way forward for the government implementation programs to incorporate the youth inputs.

Through NAYA, YUWA has learned that meaningful SDG implementation requires sustained collaboration. NAYA has given us a platform to work with like-minded CSOs, learn from each other, amplify our efforts, and speak with one voice to power, bridging youth voices from local communities to global policy-making platforms.



HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE 2025



HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE 2026

Promoting Inclusive Practice through NAYA Platform: BYAN's Journey (2021 to Present)

-Nir Shrestha, Director
Blind Youth Association Nepal (BYAN)

Since its formation in 2021, BYAN has been an active member of NAYA, contributing as a working committee member. This engagement has strengthened BYAN's institutional presence in national and regional youth spaces and enabled the organization to bring forward the voices and perspectives of young persons with disabilities into broader development discourse. As a youth-led Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPD), BYAN has consistently played a critical role in ensuring that initiatives within the platform are inclusive and accessible.

This has included advocating for the meaningful participation of young persons with disabilities in SDG processes, integrating disability inclusion perspectives across programs, reports, and advocacy initiatives, and supporting inclusive approaches throughout planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

BYAN has actively contributed to a wide range of NAYA-led initiatives including participation in national and regional consultations related to APFSD, engagement in workshops, policy dialogues, and multi-stakeholder meetings, and contributions to youth position papers and SDG reporting processes. In addition, BYAN has supported the facilitation of inclusive discussions and promoted accessibility considerations in events and communications, strengthening the overall inclusiveness of the platform.

BYAN has also played an important role in drafting NAYA's Call to Action and ensuring

that disability inclusion, accessibility, and the priorities of young persons with disabilities are reflected within it. The organization has further contributed by representing and promoting the Call to Action at national, regional, and global levels through various forums, dialogues, consultations, and youth engagement spaces.

Importantly, BYAN's engagement has not been limited to institutional participation but has also been reflected through the leadership and active involvement of its members across different years. Various members of BYAN have contributed to NAYA initiatives through their participation and leadership in regional and global platforms.

For instance, Nir Shrestha, who is currently working as the Director at the BYAN, participated in the APFSD process in 2024 including the Youth Forum, People's Forum, and Intergovernmental Forum where he served as a Youth Delegate representing NAYA. During this period, he also contributed to organizing the National Youth Conclave, enhancing youth engagement at the national level.

In 2025, Mr. Jaldeep Sapkota, who is currently working as the Project Associate as well as the Organizational Focal at the NAYA, represented NAYA at the Youth Forum where he served as a Country Facilitator, presenting national perspectives and youth priorities. He further continued his engagement in 2026 by participating in the Youth Forum, People's Forum, and Intergovernmental Forum, sustaining Nepal's youth representation in regional processes.

These examples represent only a few instances of BYAN's broader engagement. Beyond representation, BYAN members have actively led and contributed to various advocacy initiatives, supported SDG review processes, and contributed to profiling and documentation efforts. Through these contributions, BYAN has consistently worked to ensure that disability inclusion is meaningfully reflected in broader development narratives and policy discussions.

Engagement in NAYA has been a transformative journey for BYAN. The platform has provided significant opportunities to deepen understanding of SDG frameworks, indicators, and reporting mechanisms while also strengthening advocacy skills at both national and regional levels. It has enabled learning from diverse youth movements working across thematic areas such as climate change, gender equality, and SRHR while also reinforcing the importance of intersectionality in advancing inclusive development.

A key reflection emerging from this engagement is that inclusion cannot be treated as an afterthought. It must be intentionally integrated from the outset. BYAN's experience within NAYA demonstrates that when inclusive practices are embedded in processes and structures, participation becomes more meaningful, diverse, and impactful.

NAYA has also served as a critical platform for building networks and partnerships. Through its engagement, BYAN has been able to collaborate with a wide range of youth-led organizations across Nepal, fostering solidarity among diverse and marginalized groups. These interactions have enabled cross-learning, strengthened collective advocacy efforts, and amplified shared voices for sustainable and inclusive development.

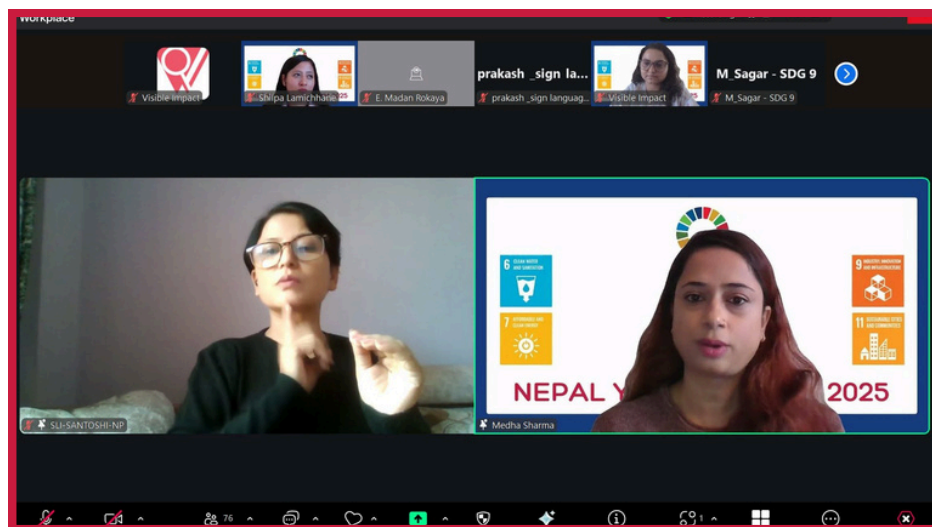
Building on its engagement and learning, BYAN remains committed to further strengthening inclusive practices within NAYA and beyond. Moving forward, the organization aims to institutionalize inclusion within youth platforms by promoting inclusive guidelines and accountability mechanisms while also strengthening the leadership of young persons with disabilities in national and regional forums.

There is a continued commitment to enhancing evidence-based advocacy, particularly in SDG monitoring and reporting processes, as well as expanding outreach to ensure the engagement of grassroots youth with disabilities. Furthermore, BYAN seeks to promote intersectional approaches that link disability inclusion with broader issues such as gender equality, climate justice, and social equity.

BYAN also envisions playing a more proactive role in shaping inclusive policies and ensuring that commitments made at national and international levels are translated into tangible changes at the community level.

BYAN's engagement with NAYA since 2021 reflects a journey of collaboration, leadership, and impact. Through both institutional contributions and the active participation of its members, the organization has played a critical role in promoting inclusive youth engagement in SDG processes. The platform has not only provided space for learning and collaboration but has also enabled BYAN to amplify the voices of young persons with disabilities in meaningful ways.

As the journey continues, BYAN remains committed to working collectively and advocating persistently to ensure that the voices of young persons with disabilities are not only heard but are actively shaping policies, practices, and progress toward sustainable and inclusive development.



A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER INTERPRETING FOR DEAF PARTICIPANTS AT YOUTH CONCLAVE



INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION IN HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE 2026



APFSD PARTICIPANT SHARING HIS EXPERIENCES FROM APFSD 2026

Localizing SDGs in Karnali: SAMBANDHA Nepal's Experience in Adapting and Implementing SDGs at the Local Level through NAYA

-Lokesh Giri, Executive Director
Sambandha Nepal

SAMBANDHA Nepal, a youth-led organization rooted in Karnali Province, has been actively working to bridge the gap between global development frameworks and local realities. As a working group member of NAYA, our engagement has significantly strengthened our capacity to localize the SDGs, ensuring that they are not just global commitments but practical, community-driven actions that respond to the unique socio-economic and the cultural context of Karnali. Karnali, one of Nepal's most remote and underdeveloped provinces, faces persistent challenges including poverty, limited access to quality education and healthcare, gender inequality, climate vulnerability, and deeply rooted social norms. While the SDGs provide a comprehensive global roadmap, their implementation in Karnali requires contextual adaptation, community ownership, and innovative local solutions. Through NAYA's platform, SAMBANDHA Nepal has been able to translate these global goals into locally relevant actions that directly impact the lives of marginalized communities.

One of our key approaches has been integrating SDG localization into youth-led campaigns and community engagement initiatives. Our flagship campaigns, such as "Period-Pride" and "DoKo Abhiyan," directly align with multiple SDGs including SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Through the Period-Pride campaign, we have worked to promote dignified menstruation by

addressing menstrual taboos, increasing awareness on menstrual hygiene, and advocating for policy-level changes in schools and local governments. This initiative has not only improved health outcomes but also contributed to reducing stigma and empowering adolescent girls and young women. Similarly, DoKo Abhiyan, which promotes the revival of traditional sustainable materials as alternatives to plastic, has been instrumental in advancing environmental sustainability while also supporting local livelihoods. By encouraging communities to use indigenous knowledge and locally available resources, we have contributed to climate resilience and economic empowerment, particularly among marginalized youth and women. These initiatives demonstrate how SDGs can be localized through culturally grounded and community-driven approaches.

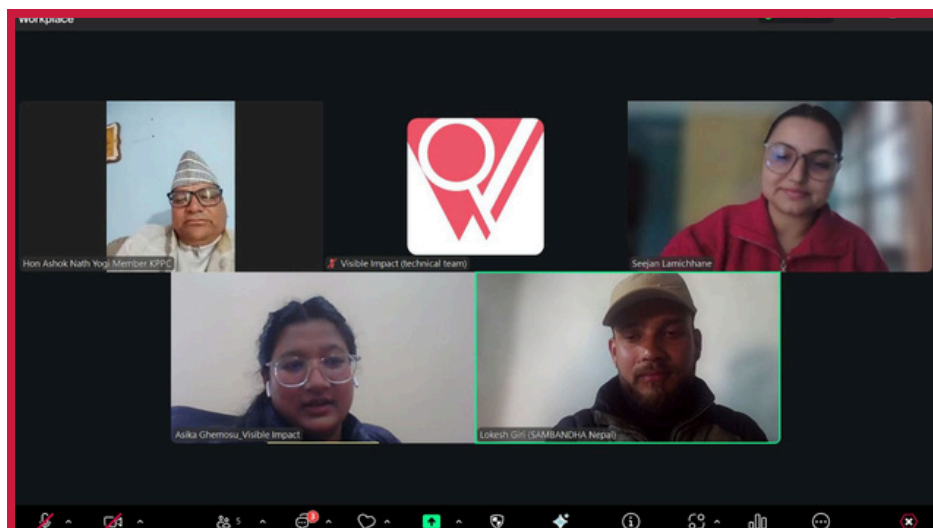
Our collaboration with NAYA has played a critical role in strengthening these efforts. NAYA has provided a platform for knowledge sharing, capacity building, and collective advocacy. Through trainings, workshops, and policy dialogues facilitated by NAYA, SAMBANDHA Nepal has enhanced its understanding of SDG frameworks, monitoring mechanisms, and advocacy strategies. This has enabled us to design more structured interventions and align our programs with national and provincial development priorities. Importantly, with the support and collaboration of NAYA, we have been regularly engaging with the Provincial Planning Commission of Karnali Province to advocate

for the integration of SDGs into provincial planning and budgeting processes. These engagements have created a constructive space for dialogue between youth-led organizations and policymakers, ensuring that grassroots perspectives are reflected in provincial development priorities. One of the most significant impacts of our engagement with NAYA has been the increased participation of youth in local governance and decision-making processes. By equipping young people with knowledge and skills related to SDGs, we have empowered them to engage with local governments, advocate for inclusive policies, and hold duty bearers accountable. Youth-led dialogues, community consultations, and social campaigns have created spaces for marginalized voices, particularly those of women, Dalits, and persons with disabilities, to be heard and recognized.

Furthermore, we facilitated collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including civil society organizations, local governments, and development partners. This multi-stakeholder approach has been crucial in addressing complex development challenges that cannot be solved by a single actor. Through joint initiatives and partnerships, we have been able to scale our impact and ensure sustainability of our interventions. At the local level, we have also worked closely with municipalities and community-based organizations to integrate SDG priorities into local plans and programs. By advocating gender-responsive budgeting, inclusive policies, and evidence-based planning, we have contributed to making local development processes more equitable and responsive. Our efforts have supported local governments in understanding the importance of SDGs and incorporating them into their annual and periodic plans. Despite these achievements, localizing SDGs in Karnali is not without challenges. Limited resources, geographical

barriers, low institutional capacity, and socio-cultural resistance often hinder effective implementation. However, our experience with NAYA has shown that these challenges can be addressed through collaboration, innovation, and sustained community engagement. By leveraging local knowledge and fostering partnerships, it is possible to create meaningful and lasting changes.

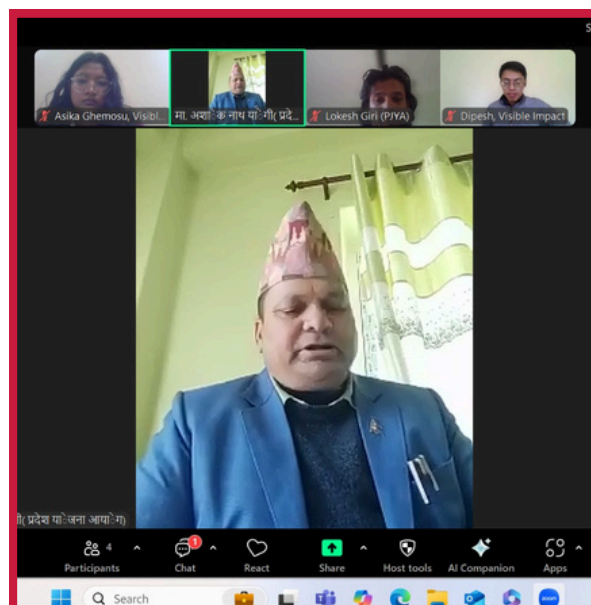
Looking ahead, we remain committed to advancing SDG localization in Karnali and aim to further strengthen youth leadership, expand our outreach to remote communities, and deepen our engagement with local and provincial governments. We also seek to enhance data collection and impact measurement to better demonstrate the outcomes of our interventions and inform future strategies. In conclusion, our collaboration with NAYA has been instrumental in translating global SDG commitments into local action in Karnali. It has enabled us to amplify our impact, build strong partnerships, and institutionalize SDG-responsive planning mechanisms such as engagement with the Provincial Planning Commission. As we move forward, we believe that continued collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity will be key to achieving sustainable and equitable development in Karnali and beyond. SAMBANDHA Nepal is proud to be part of this collective effort and remains dedicated to ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.



VIRTUAL MEETING WITH KARNALI PROVINCIAL PLANING COMMISSION (KPPC) 2026



PARTICIPATION OF KPPC REPRESENTATIVE AS PANELIST AT HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE 2026



MEETING (2025) WITH A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, KPPC

Climate Action as a Sustainable Development Goal: Reflecting on My Journey with NAYA

-Aakriti Dotel, Network Coordinator
Nepalese Youth for Climate Action (NYCA)

My journey with climate action began with a simple belief: that protecting the environment was essential for our future. As an Environmental Science student from Nepal, I engaged in local campaigns, organizing park clean-ups in my own place and raising awareness in schools through Nepalese Youth for Climate Action (NYCA). At that time, I saw climate action mainly as an environmental responsibility. However, becoming a working group member of the Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance (NAYA) transformed that perspective in ways I had not imagined. For Climate Action (NYCA). At that time, I saw climate action mainly as an environmental responsibility. However, becoming a working group member of the Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance (NAYA) transformed that perspective in ways I had not imagined.

When I first engaged with climate advocacy, my focus was largely centered on environmental protection, raising awareness about climate change, organizing campaigns, and advocating policy commitments such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). However, through NAYA, we began to see climate action through a broader lens, one that intersects with social justice, economic equity, and inclusive development.

Working within NAYA exposed me to the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals. Climate action is not isolated; it is intrinsically linked to other goals. In Nepal, the impacts of climate change are not felt equally. Vulnerable communities, particularly women, youth, and marginalized groups, face disproportionate risks from floods, landslides, and other climate-induced disasters. Through discussions and

collaborative learning in NAYA, we came to understand that climate action must be inclusive and equity-driven. It is not just about reducing emissions; it is about ensuring resilience, justice, and dignity for those most affected. Through engagement in policy dialogues and platforms like APFSD though it was virtual, I learned how youth voices can influence national and regional agendas. Climate action, within the SDG framework, requires bridging local realities with global commitments. This shift from isolated activities to systemic thinking has been one of the most transformative aspects of my journey.

A key milestone in NYCA's journey has been the recognition that climate action cannot be pursued in isolation. Addressing climate challenges requires collaboration across sectors and disciplines. Through partnerships and platforms such as the Nepal APFSD Youth Alliance (NAYA), Nepalese Youth for Climate Action has expanded its network to include actors working in: education, public health, gender equality and economic development

This cross-sectoral engagement has reinforced the understanding that:

- Climate change affects food systems and livelihoods
- It has direct implications for health and well-being
- It disrupts education and development pathways

By building networks that go beyond climate issues, NYCA has contributed to more holistic and inclusive approaches to sustainable development. NAYA has also highlighted the

power of youth leadership in advancing the SDGs. As young people, we bring urgency, innovation, and a strong sense of responsibility toward the future. Through collaborative advocacy, we have been able to amplify youth perspectives in national, regional, and global discussions. This includes advocating for climate finance, addressing loss and damage, and ensuring that youth voices, especially from countries like Nepal are meaningfully included in decision-making processes.

The journey of Nepalese Youth for Climate Action highlights an important shift from viewing climate action as a standalone

environmental issue to recognizing it as a multidimensional development challenge. Moving forward, advancing SDG 13 will require: stronger integration of climate action across all development sectors, inclusive approaches that prioritize vulnerable communities, continued investment in youth leadership and engagement, strengthened partnerships at local, national, and global levels. Climate action is ultimately about ensuring a sustainable, equitable, and resilient future. The experience of NYCA demonstrates that when youth are empowered, networks are strengthened, and approaches are inclusive, meaningful progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals becomes achievable.



PRE COP EVENT 2025 AT MOFE



COP 29 DEBRIEF EVENT



MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

Our collaboration with NAYA has played a key role in amplifying youth perspectives in national and regional policy spaces. NAYA has consistently opened strategic spaces for collective advocacy, where YASEN got the chance to mobilize grassroots energy to ground those agendas in real community realities.”

- Dikshya Subedi, Country Coordinator, She Changes Climate Nepal (Member of NAYA)

The Rotaract Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town sincerely appreciates NAYA for creating meaningful opportunities for youth engagement, learning, and collaboration. Through this partnership, club members gained exposure to discussions on sustainable development, youth empowerment, advocacy, and social responsibility, which strengthened their leadership, communication, networking, and critical thinking skills. Interactions with diverse youth leaders, organizations, and policymakers broadened their perspectives and encouraged active, responsible youth participation. The club values NAYA’s inclusive and empowering environment and looks forward to continuing the collaboration to promote sustainable development and collective social progress.

-Madhaw Chaudhary, Rotaract Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town (Core working group member of NAYA)

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My experience with NAYA has been meaningful and transformative for my professional growth. Representing BYAN, I actively engaged in youth-led advocacy, high-level dialogues, and internal meetings focused on inclusive development and disability inclusion. I served as the Master of Ceremony at the National Youth Conclave 2024 and later as a country facilitator at the APFSD Youth Forum 2025, strengthening my leadership, communication, and coordination skills. I also prepared the SDG 17 Goal Profile for the Youth Conclave 2025, which deepened my understanding of partnerships and collaboration for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Overall, my involvement with NAYA enhanced my confidence, advocacy skills, and commitment to inclusive youth participation.

- Jaldeep Sapkota, Blind Youth Association Nepal
(Core working group member of NAYA)

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NAYA has been a deeply enriching connection for me. Through their support, I was better prepared to engage meaningfully in the APFSD Youth and Civil Society Forum. The inputs from their national consultations guided my efforts to facilitate broader youth inputs, enabling more inclusive representation in Nepal's Call to Action and its regional contribution in APFSD 2026. This experience strengthened my ability to connect local perspectives to regional processes. NAYA also created space to learn from experienced participants and navigate these platforms effectively. Overall, I felt included, empowered, and able to contribute meaningfully to a growing community committed to youth engagement.

- James Shrestha, APFSD 2026 participant

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FIVE YEAR REFLECTIONS

1. Sustained multi-stakeholder platform: Over five years, Visible Impact's secretariat role helped grow NAYA from a small post-APFSD gathering into a coalition of 11 working group members and 500+ youth, uniting groups like Ypeer Nepal, RHRN, NYCA, ARROW, BBC, Leo Club Nepalaya, YUWA, Visible Impact, Rotaract Club of Kathmandu-Midtown, and BYAN "under one roof" for coordinated SDG advocacy, demonstrating the value of sustained convening over one-off events.
2. From consultation to policy influence: The annual "Nepal's Call to Action to APFSD" evolved from a youth-consultation output to youth recommendations feeding directly into national and regional conventions, showing a credible pathway from youth voice to national policy input.
3. Deepening reach and impact through phased evolution: Each phase added scope rather than repeating the last. Phase IV expanded into provincial consultations across all seven provinces, while Phase V introduced the LLDC3 National Youth Consultation and detailed Goal Profiles for HLPF 2026, reflecting NAYA's strengthening technical capacities over time.
4. Inclusion as a deliberate practice, not an afterthought: Use of sign language interpreters and consistent integration of indigenous knowledge and disability rights into the SDG review process kept the alliance's advocacy genuinely representative of Nepal's diverse youth population, not just its most connected segment.
5. Health (SRHR), gender equality and climate change embedded in a broader development agenda: By considering gender equality, health and climate change as cross-cutting issues in every SDG theme, NAYA gave Visible Impact took a fresh perspective on intersectionality and kept reinforcing that these issues don't work in silos but are a part of the same sustainable development conversation.

