Young People’s Vision for A Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Asia Pacific
AN OFFICIAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR APFSD 2018

PARTICIPANTS:

BARGAD
FDI
BLUE VEINS
AAHUNG
R-FPAP
RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT
RUWON
YUWA
YOUTH ACTION NEPAL

YUWALAYA
ARI
YIFOS
PKBI
FOKUS MUDA
SWARA
YFP
PAMFLET
PRAVAH

YAN
DURBIN
BLAST
BRAC
NATURAL ACEH
SERAC
VPHA
VISIBLE IMPACT
CDA
2ND ASIAN PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT YOUTH FORUM

FORUM ASIA
ASEAN SOGIE CAUCUS
JURNAL PEREMPUAN
2030 ACT!
YOUTH VOICE COUNT (YVC)
WOMAN HEALTH PHILIPPINES
YPEER
YP FOUNDATION
AYON

AMAN FOUNDATION
THE FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKA
THE UNITED NATIONS MAJOR GROUP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (UN MGCY)
ALIANSI REMAJA INDEPENDEN (ARI)
CAMBODIAN NATIONAL LGBT NETWORK (BC)
SERAC-BANGLADESH
UNITE FOR BODY RIGHTS ALLIANCE
BANDHU SOCIAL WELFARE SOCIETY
NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL SAMOA
CONTENT

Acronyms 5
Acknowledgement 6
Executive Summary 7
Background 8
Summary of Sessions 10
Conclusion 46
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACRONYMS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACWC</td>
<td>ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEP</td>
<td>Adolescent Education Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>AICHR</td>
<td>ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights</td>
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<td>APFSD</td>
<td>Asian Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APINY</td>
<td>United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRCEM</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARROW</td>
<td>Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women</td>
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<td>ART</td>
<td>Antiretroviral Therapy</td>
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<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</td>
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<td>CSE</td>
<td>Comprehensive Sexuality Education</td>
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<td>CSIS</td>
<td>Centre for Strategic &amp; International Studies</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<td>HLPF</td>
<td>High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>ICCPR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</td>
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<td>ICESCR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
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<td>ICIMOD</td>
<td>The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communications Tool</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education and Communication</td>
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<td>IPPF</td>
<td>International Planned Parenthood Federation</td>
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<td>LGBTI</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender &amp; Intersex</td>
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<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Adaptation Plan</td>
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<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>SERAT</td>
<td>Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool</td>
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<td>SOGIE</td>
<td>Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities and Expressions</td>
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<td>SRHR</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights</td>
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<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCAP</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<td>Universal Periodic Review</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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The Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) would like to acknowledge its partners Right Here Right Now, YouthLEAD, David & Lucile Packard Foundation, Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (APRCEM) and YPEER for the collaborative effort in gathering young activists, advocates and representatives from youth-led, youth-serving and youth-allied organisations of diverse social movements in Asia and the Pacific region to collectively pave the way forward in advocating for strategic solutions to achieve a sustainable, resilient and inclusive Asia Pacific using an intersectional analysis and participatory approach. The presence and affirmative speech delivered by Dr. Katinka Weinberger from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) is acknowledged and appreciated.

We are also thankful for the active participation and contribution from the vibrant, energetic young people from Bargad, FDI, Blue Veins, Aahung, R-FPAP, Restless Development, RUWON, YUWA, Youth Action Nepal, AYON, Visible Impact, Yuwalaya, ARI, YIFOS, PKBI, Fokus Muda, SWARA, YFP, Pamflet, Pravah, FP Foundation, CDA, YAN, Durbin, BLAST, BRAC, James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH)-BRAC University, Reproductive Health Services Training and Education Programme (RHSTEP), SERAC-Bangladesh, Unite for Body Rights Alliance, Bandhu Social Welfare Society, Natural Aceh, SERAC, National Youth Council Samoa, VPHA, Forum Asia, ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, Jurnal Perempuan, 2030 Act!, The United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY), Aliansi Remaja Independen (ARI), Youth Voice Count (YVC), Woman Health Philippines, Cambodian National LGBT Network (BC), YPEER, Aman Foundation and The Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka. A special thank you to ARROW staff who provided assistance in the forum preparation and travel and logistics arrangement.

Thanks are also expressed to Sivananthi Thenenthiran, Executive Director and Sai Jyothirmai Racherla, Programme Director from ARROW for the comments and suggestions made during the review and editing of this document. This report was drafted by the workshop rapporteur, Shamala Chandrasekaran from ARROW, with the aim to reflect and recognise the valuable and diverse contributions that each and everyone provided. It is hoped that this report does due credit to the range of expertise and experiences and quality of discussions that took place.

Disclaimer
Unless otherwise stated, the appearance of individuals in this publication gives no indication of sexual orientation or gender identity.
The convening of the second Asian Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) Youth Forum prior to APFSD 2018 marked an important milestone in crafting a unique, meaningful opportunity for greater involvement of the youth in the monitoring and review process of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the regional level.

Themed ‘Young People’s Vision for a Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Asia-Pacific’, the forum was led by strong, vibrant spirit of young people and acknowledged the key role young people play in shaping the holistic response and solutions to the 2030 Agenda. The forum provided a strategic platform for the youth to engage in dialogue sessions designed to discuss the current scenario, opportunities, gaps and solutions focused at advancing the youth agenda around strengthening resilience and sustainable development at national, regional and global levels.

The main focus area of the forum discussions was transitioning into a sustainable, resilient and inclusive Asia Pacific, a critical concern and challenge for many young people in the region with first-hand experience around limited access to comprehensive health, education and decent jobs, high levels of poverty, discrimination and limited political inclusion. Some of the key outcomes of the forum include:

- The forum is recognised by UNESCAP as a young people focused preparatory meeting for the APFSD;
- The forum brought together young people from different youth movements, youth-led and youth-serving organisations from the Asia Pacific region to discuss the APFSD 2018 thematic issue of ‘Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies’ and how young people can engage meaningfully in this process;
- The young people from the region experienced rich exchange of views and ideas on concrete, innovative solutions to issues of relevance to them on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- Young people from the region provided concrete youth-focused recommendations to the APFSD outcome document, and the regional implementation, follow up and review of 2030 Agenda;
- Young people from the region discussed all the SDGs from a youth lens and deliberated on how young people’s issues can be integrated within the 2030 Agenda;
- Young people developed a “YOUTH CALL TO ACTION FOR APFSD 2018” which will be used for advocacy during the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Forum for APFSD 2018, official APFSD 2018 deliberations and outcome documents to fully integrate young people issues in the official APFSD 2018 and related regional processes;
- The forum enabled a multi-stakeholder dialogue involving United Nations agencies from the region and regional organisations to discuss a holistic agenda to move forward on young people’s rights and sustainable development in the region.
In the lead up to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2018, the 5th APFSD will be convened on March 28-30, 2018 in Bangkok. APFSD is an annual ministerial convening of the UN member states in the Asia-Pacific region to review the implementation of SDG-2030 and is facilitated by UNESCAP.

This year’s APFSD, titled ‘Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies’ will primarily focus on the review of implementation status of SDG 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17 in the region. The forum will also focus on the implementation status of the regional roadmap for the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The world’s largest youth population (60%) resides in the Asia Pacific region and face intersecting challenges to sustainable development across all dimensions of economic, social and environment pillars. ARROW and APRCEM, coordinated by its Youth Constituency, YouthLEAD recognise that spaces should be created for young people to meaningfully engage with the monitoring and review process of SDGs at the regional level.

To that end, ARROW collaborated with YouthLEAD, the Youth Constituency of APRCEM, and Co-chair of APRCEM, to organise the first-ever APFSD Youth Forum, prior to APFSD 2017. More than 60 activists, advocates, and representatives from youth-led, youth-serving, and youth-allied organisations from a diverse range of social movements in Asia and the Pacific region, came together to call for sustainable solutions to eradicate poverty and promote prosperity in the region. The forum captured young people’s needs and demands with respect to implementation and accountability of SDGS at both regional and national levels through an intersectional analysis and participatory approach. The APFSD Youth Forum 2017 Call-to-Action, developed as a result of this engagement, looked at the SDGs in the Asia-Pacific region from a youth lens.
Pivotal to the central pillar of creating this meaningful space, the second APFSD Youth Forum was organised by ARROW and APRCEM’s YouthLEAD on March 23-24, 2018 in preparation for APFSD 2018. The aim remained to review the implementation status of Sustainable Development Agenda through a dialogue process. The APFSD Youth Forum 2017 Call-to-Action and the Regional Roadmap for Implementing 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were used as primary frameworks for reference during the review and dialogue process with relevant stakeholders to ensure the approach remains intersectional and holistic. Specific objectives of the youth forum are outlined below:

- To bring together young people from different movements and from diverse constituencies of APRCEM to have a holistic review of the implementation status of Sustainable Development Agenda in Asia through dialogue with UN agencies, member states and other relevant stakeholders, using the APFSD Youth Forum 2017 Call-to-Action and the Regional Roadmap as reference frameworks.
- To utilise this space to enable increased interaction between various stakeholders, including UN agencies, member states, youth-led and youth-serving organisations to realise the commitments around SDGs, with a special focus on young people’s needs in the region.

**WHO?**

The forum brought young people including youth leaders and activists from different youth movements, youth-led and youth-serving organisations from the Asia Pacific region. The forum undoubtedly created a strategic space to discuss the APFSD 2018 thematic issue of ‘Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies’ and how young people can engage meaningfully in this process.

**WHY?**

The forum featured interactive thematic plenary sessions focused on relevant goals of the Sustainable Development Agenda. The dialogues included relevant stakeholders, youth-led and youth-serving organisations addressing regionally-based trends and perspectives. Key findings and recommendations from each plenary session were developed into a statement to be shared and presented at the official CSO and APFSD Forum.

**HOW?**
“We need resilient people especially communities of young people who are armed with the right capacities, right investments to face the challenges, and transform their lived realities to sustainable pathways”

Sai, ARROW

“There is no other platform such as this youth forum that brings together a diverse group of youth to discuss the youth agenda in regards to the SDG”

Gaj, APRCEM

“ESCAP reaffirms its commitment to supporting youth-led and youth-serving organisations, amongst which ARROW and YouthLEAD, in their pursuit of the 2030 Agenda.”

Dr. Katinka, UNESCAP
Sai Jyothirmai Racherla, ARROW

Sai on behalf of ARROW welcomed the delegates and took the opportunity to recognise the strategic partners including the UNESCAP and APRCEM and the key representatives from youth-led, youth-serving and youth-allied organisations from the region.

She introduced ARROW and its work in the region before she briefly recalled the previous APFSD held in 2017 including its achievement in creating an effective and inclusive platform for action-oriented dialogue resulting in the development of a comprehensive Asia Pacific Youth Call to Action which outlined what each of the SDG goals meant to young people, and how young people can meaningfully engage with the 2030 Agenda in the region.

In her stirring speech, Sai highlighted that the forum has come timely breathing in more energy for an accelerated response given the urgency to address youth issues is more than ever in the region. She commended the response to the current forum that gathered more partners, allies, stakeholders and new youth-led and youth-serving organisations from the regional youth movement, demonstrating their commitment towards comprehending and assessing the progress towards the Asia Pacific Youth Call to Action and charting the ways forward for 2018 and beyond.

She noted that the theme, ‘Young People’s Vision for a Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Asia Pacific’ impeccably reflects the quest to create a universe where young people have all the needed capacities to become resilient, face the emerging challenges, and progress towards sustainable development in the region. She also elaborated on historic demographic change, rural-urban migration and climate change as the three key emerging challenges in the region and caught everyone’s attention with the real life examples, stressing the importance of continuous assessment of progress, gaps, adoption of new, evidence-based strategies in ensuring impactful responses.

She ended her opening speech with an impassioned confidence that the two day multi-stakeholder meeting will once again see strong statements and constructive recommendations to be shared at the official APFSD 2018 involving state members.

Gaj Gurung, APRCEM Youth Constituency/YouthLEAD

Gaj from the APRCEM shared on APRCEM’s role in realising the 2030 Agenda for young people in the region. He shared that the APRCEM is a civil society platform to ensure voices of the civil society is heard at intergovernmental meetings. It is important for APRCEM that the CSOs are part of this forum and their voices are represented at APFSD. He added that the ultimate aim would be to have the youth claim their rights in the high-level decision making processes.

Gaj commented that a platform for diverse constituency of youth is lacking and encouraged the delegates to treat this forum as an opportunity to foster collaboration for a more sustained effort among the civil societies. He stressed that there is no other platform that brings together a diverse group of youth to discuss the youth agenda in regards to the SDG. Partnerships between different stakeholders are crucial; activists alone from a country may not be enough to bring about the much needed change.

Gaj also recalled how the first forum has been instrumental in putting together a concrete set of call to action including statements and recommendations around the youth agenda in the region. The call to action document is encouraged to be used as a reference material for this current forum for a more focused and concrete call to action around SDG 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 & 17.

He ended his speech with the hope for constructive discussions in the next two days.
Dr. Katinka Weinberger, UNESCAP

Dr. Katinka from UNESCAP spoke with great enthusiasm on what the APFSD has to offer to the region for realising the 2030 Agenda. Just as the APFSD provides a prominent platform for intergovernmental discussions and knowledge sharing in Asia and the Pacific, she highlighted that the current youth forum offers a unique opportunity to engage, energise and empower young people in the joint commitment towards the 2030 Agenda. She is confident that the forum will contribute in great extent to the forthcoming APFSD.

Her speech emphasised the need for building the region’s capacity around resilience to strengthen the young people’s capacity in facing the impacts of the increasingly complex risks linked to demographic change, rural-urban transitions, exploitation of natural resources, pollution, unsustainable economic development and climate change. She commented that the young people are integral to transformations for sustainable and resilient societies for two reasons: Young people often belong to those that are marginalised and vulnerable – but at the same time it is also very hard to imagine a future where young people are not part of a transformative solution. ESCAP conducted a series of consultations in all five Asia-Pacific sub-regions and gathered the different types of risks and the capacities required to strengthen the resilience of the countries. The types of resilience capacities identified include anticipatory, absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities.

She concluded her speech reaffirming ESCAP’s commitment to supporting youth-led and youth-serving organisations, amongst which ARROW and YouthLEAD, in their pursuit of the 2030 Agenda. ESCAP, in collaboration with diverse partners, will continue supporting the process of making youth policies and programmes more responsive, inclusive and sustainable by working with governments and engaging youth in the discussions. During the 5th APFSD, ESCAP will ensure that the voices of young people are reflected.
YOUNG PEOPLE’S VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND INCLUSIVE ASIA PACIFIC
2nd APFSD YOUTH FORUM | 23-24 MARCH, CONRAD HOTEL BANGKOK

SDG GOALS, APFSD 2018

SDG 6. CLEAN WATER & SANITATION
Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

SDG 7. AFFORDABLE & CLEAN ENERGY
Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

SDG 11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

SDG 12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION
Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

SDG 15. LIFE ON LAND
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managed forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

SDG 17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.
Dr. Kabir Singh, UNESCO

Dr. Kabir gave an overarching view of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) before speaking about the linkages between CSE and sanitation. He addressed the key areas that needed to be focused on for a more comprehensive approach around CSE in the region. He started off with a case study giving the delegates a taste of the current situation involving CSE and sanitation in India. The findings of the case study revealed a serious gap in knowledge on menstruation, not just among the adolescent girls but also among the teachers in schools. The study also revealed that an estimate of 63 million girls in India are currently living in homes lacking toilet facilities, further highlighting the urgent need for improved sanitation in India. He explained, with examples, how menstruation matters in progressing towards the SDG goals.

Dr. Kabir introduced two important tools around CSE in his presentation; International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education and Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool (SERAT). The new technical guidance on sexuality education which identifies the characteristics of effective CSE programmes, outlines approaches for planning, delivering and monitoring CSE programmes and recommends essential topics and learning objectives that should be covered in CSE curricula in school. Monitoring of SDG is an important area of focus for UNESCO. There is an urgent need for youth to convince their countries to report on SDG indicators covering CSE. Currently there are only three countries in the region have chosen to report.
Dr. Kabir encouraged the delegates to use SERAT when they are back in their countries. The tool is developed mainly to review school-based HIV prevention and sexuality education programmes based on evidence and good practices at the international level. This tool is also used for assessing programme effectiveness by focusing on health data and other social criteria (notably gender) when looking at its strengths and weaknesses. It aids in collecting data to inform improvement or reform of programmes and also to inform debate and advocacy by making available data on sexuality education that is understandable, easy to analyse and accessible to different audiences.

Before ending his presentation, Dr. Kabir also introduced APINY or the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth and its role in advancing the youth agenda. APINY aims to increase the effectiveness of UN work in youth development by strengthening collaboration and peer-exchange among relevant UN entities, CSOs and youth, while respecting and harnessing the benefits of their individual strengths and unique approaches and mandates.

APINY formed working groups around specific thematic areas to encourage focused and relevant interactions between members and to create more tangible opportunities for partnerships. Focus for APINY in moving forward would be to develop a partnership with youth to co-chair and to participate in the working groups.

**Esther Moraes, YP Foundation**

Esther’s presentation was centred around CSE with examples on how the young people in India are affected by the implementation gaps involving CSE related policies and guidelines.

Esther noted that India has two policies/programmes that address CSE: the Adolescent Education Programme (AEP) and National Youth Health Programme. The latter uses peer approach to reach out to young people through its programme.

She shared that majority of the young people do not have access to quality information on CSE. When CSE was first introduced in schools, teachers were not comfortable with the material stating the material is not age appropriate. The programme was then banned in many states across the country. The programme was re-introduced in 2009 by the Education and Human Resource Department and was implemented in select government and private schools but remains banned in 5 states to date.

She added that lack of information, education and communication (IEC) materials on CSE are among the major barriers faced by the young people in India. There is a disparity between rural and urban youth in their access to IEC. Youth in the rural areas are disproportionately affected whereby their access to information is very much challenged when compared to the adolescents in urban areas. Also, in comparison to married adolescent girls, unmarried adolescent girls are observed to face more challenges in accessing information on contraceptives. Esther also quoted examples of how diverse gender identity and sexual orientation pose as barriers to CSE in India just before concluding her speech.
Aries Valeriano, UNAIDS Asia and the Pacific

Aries shared on the international and regional HIV situation and trends in the framework of SDG. He had his presentation focused on young people and HIV, particularly in reference to SDG3.3 Good Health and Well-being.

Aries commented that the response to HIV has been notably progressive in the region. The stakeholders have progressed well from talking about just the disease to addressing the people and the communities that are affected by HIV.

During his presentation, Aries highlighted the focus areas for SDG3.3 which include; 1) ending the epidemic of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other diseases; 2) ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care and; 3) fast track commitments to end AIDS in Asia and the Pacific by 2030. He stressed the importance in ensuring that 90% of young people have the skills, knowledge and capacity to protect themselves from HIV by 2020.

In establishing the connection between SDG 3 and young people, Aries mentioned that among the 10 causes of death involving young people, seven are directly linked with SDG 3 targets. Aries added that achieving good health and well-being targets requires an emphasis on working for and with young people.

And as for the HIV trends in the region, although HIV is not anymore among the top 10 causes of deaths in all ages, it still affects young people aged between 15 and 29. A rising HIV prevalence is observed among the young key population. The latest data from UNAIDS show that there are 270,000 new infections in Asia and the Pacific in 2016 and of the 270,000, one third is recorded among young people aged between 15 and 24. In total, there are 510,000 young people living with HIV, which is approximately 10% of the Asia Pacific epidemic.

The current epidemic trend calls for an urgent attention towards HIV services for the young people in the region. For example, in Indonesia, only 9% of the total 17,000 estimated adolescents living with HIV are on antiretroviral therapy (ART). Increasing the number of people accessing ART is important in realising the ending AIDS targets. Aries highlighted that being young and identifying as a member of the key population makes access to HIV services even more difficult.

In the Asia Pacific, all 38 countries still have laws and policies that impede HIV response. There are still substantive number of countries that do not have laws and regulations that allow adolescents aged between 10 and 19 years to seek healthcare services without parental or spousal consent. To improve adolescents’ access to healthcare, Aries suggested the use of online applications to link young people to comprehensive services. He encouraged countries to use smartphone applications as entry points to some of the important health services needed by the youth.

Aries also touched upon the use of global, youth-led political agenda such #uproot that is based on principles of equity, inclusion and solidarity to end AIDS by 2030 and advance sexual and reproductive health and rights by tackling barriers, bigotry and exclusion that jeopardise young people’s health.

Aries ended his presentation stressing on the importance of youth participation in realising the SDG goals. He suggested using the three-lens approach – working with youth as beneficiaries, engaging with youth as participants and supporting youth as leaders for a more impactful outcome.
Le Minh Son, CCIHP, Vietnam

Son spoke about sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and its limiting factors in the framework of SDGs. He shared the common intersecting sexual reproductive health challenges faced by the young people including high prevalence of early/unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. Many of these poor sexual reproductive health outcomes are direct consequences of inadequate access to youth-friendly health services and inaccurate information on safer sex, contraceptive use, abortion, or CSE.

He stressed that socio-cultural factors, laws and policies that limit young people’s sexual reproductive health continue to be significant barriers. Other challenges faced by youth in SRHR also include harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, early and forced child marriage, and violence that risk the lives of female adolescents and youth. He added that young people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions (SOGIE), especially, members of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities are disproportionately affected as they currently face violence, discrimination, physical and psychosocial abuse, and even death based solely on who they are, how they express themselves in public, or whom they choose to love or be intimate with.

Son also elaborated on the reproductive rights mentioned in the SDG targets. He commented that, although sexual rights are not mentioned in the SDGs but aspects of it are covered in some of the targets including 3.7, 2.8, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.6, 10.3, 16.1 and 16.2.

Son ended his presentation emphasising on the role of young people in realising the SDG targets:

- Young people are partners in decision-making, implementation, in monitoring and review; in holding governments accountable.
- Young people are the part of community and critical thinkers, leader and active drivers of change in local communities.
- Young people are to be considered as partners and to be included in decision making process and make the government accountable for progresses in youth agenda instead of just being seen as the beneficiary.

SM Shaikat, Youth Advisory Board, UN Habitat

Shaikat spoke in length providing background information and elaborating on opportunities and the way forward in his attempt to address SDG6 and 11 in the context of sanitation including water use and waste management. He stressed that in order to move forward, we must have a strategic and focused plan. The plan must enable us to demonstrate the capacity we already have in the context of sanitation as water sanitation is an integral part of human rights and is crucial in moving our agenda forward. Shaikat concluded his speech encouraging the delegates to learn from each other’s experience and contribute to designing of innovative ideas to make our cities a resilient and safe one.
PANEL 2
RECOMMENDATIONS

DR. KABIR SINGH, UNESCO

- Equitable school health policies:
  - National: safe and separate water & sanitation facilities.
  - Local: physical safety issues e.g. adequate water/ sanitation facilities, safe environment to protect all students from harassment, discrimination and bullying.
- Skills-based health education: CSE scaled up & monitored.
- Safe learning environment: physical infrastructure.
- School-based health services.

ESTHER MORAES, YP FOUNDATION, INDIA

- CSE programmes must include all seven components of CSE in accordance with best practices as articulated by International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and others, especially around issues of diversity of identities, consent, sexual rights, and pleasure.
- CSE programmes must be integrated into a larger system of non-judgmental and non-discriminatory service delivery, such that once young people have information on their rights to services, they can also access them.
- Mechanisms are developed to ensure that young SRHR advocates, front line healthcare workers and CSOs can support programme design and implementation.
- Teachers and service providers involved in adolescent health programming must be regularly trained on delivering CSE to young people while parents are sensitised to the need for CSE.

ARIES VALERIANO, UNAIDS

- Lifesaving treatment for people living with HIV to be looked into.
- Address policy barriers in regards to drug use and health access.
- Demand government to enhance capacity of young people for effective participation, strengthening of young people, not necessarily in the area of HIV only.
- Importance of partnership and learning from each other—How South East Asia can learn from South Asia and the Pacific.

LE MINH SON, CCIHP, VIETNAM

- Provide and improve access to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services which are accessible, confidential, non-judgmental, non-discriminatory and affordable.
- Provide a safe and open space for youth-led organisation and movements.
- Simplify the process of working and receiving national and international funding for social developmental goals, especially to achieve SDGs. Conditionalities and bureaucratic processes that hinder access to funding need to be removed.
- Investment on strengthening capacities of young people on sustainable development goals must be provided to ensure they take ownership and recognise their contribution and efforts in any joint achievements.
SM SHAIKAT, YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD, UN HABITAT

- Safe sanitation must be prioritised in the cities, through city planners and programmers. If we fail in the cities, we will fail everywhere.
- Increase public and private investments in sanitation programmes, keeping in mind leaving no one behind, based on the idea to ensure equitable access for all, e.g. all cities must have adequate number of public toilets that are safe for women, girls and gender diverse populations.
- Design integrated programmes at local levels to incubate youth-focused and youth-led innovations by targeting the need of girls, women and gender diverse populations.
- Explore more linkages between SDG 6 (6.2) and SDG 11 (11.6) to attract resources for an adequate number of safe sanitation facilities and waste management that impact environmental improvement in informal and semi-formal human settlements.
QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

- **Q:** What is the plan you have in using the information and communications tool (ICT) for young people?
  **A:** ICT is basically a platform that makes CSE related materials available online for young people. We are cognizant to the fact that young people use online source to access information on CSE.

- **Q:** How do we effectively disseminate information/ reach out to communities at grassroots level?
  **A:** There are a lot of local work done in Afghanistan, for example, using the Quran in making reference to child rights. Similar approach can be used in the context of Pakistan.

- **Q:** Data is crucial for advocacy. How can we collect comprehensive data to assess whether or not correct information is provided to the young people? We often hear that the young people are not being provided with correct, accurate information.
  **A:** It depends on your delivery mechanism. One has to be wary that some delivery mechanism including peers and outreach workers who do not always deliver the intended information in a correct and accurate way affect the quality of the information being disseminated. The peers and outreach workers are to be equipped with the necessary skills for a more effective delivery of information.

- **Q:** As we speak about SDG, we speak of human health only. Are there SDGs that address animal and environment health?
  **A:** There are other SDGs that cover animal and environment health.

- **Q:** A new study in Indonesia indicates that peer educators are not able to reach the target group especially the vulnerable ones. Effectiveness of the peer educator approach is now questionable. How do we increase the effectiveness of peer educator approach?
  **A:** Peer educators must come from the same community, must be representative of the population that you intend to reach out to. This is an important criteria in peer selection to ensure the effectiveness of the approach.

- **Q:** Teachers do not teach CSE indicating there is gender power imbalance experienced by the teachers themselves. The teachers may not want to teach in case they are judged negatively by their family themselves.
  **A:** Capacity of teachers need to be built so that they are able to connect to the issue. Public advocacy is another important area. Public should be educated on the importance of CSE, i.e. why it is important to talk about menstruation to young people.

- **Q:** Have you made any specific girls group to participate at advocacy level?
  **A:** Yes, to advocate at state and national levels.

- **Q:** Looking at traditional vs modern approach to health, how do we preserve the traditional approach including traditional healers for a more holistic approach than just limiting to modern approach?
  **A:** While traditional approaches can be more available and affordable, communities are also encouraged to access the formal health system at some point. There are always ways to synergise the both.

- **Q:** How do we lobby for resources and engage the government in our plan? Are there any best practices that you can share to unlock resources and to work with the government and corporate sources to progress on the identified actions?
  **A:** Gender-based violence is an area of attention in South East Asia, so this could be an area to explore for resources. There are also tools on how to access resources. You could start with mapping to demonstrate the need and then proceed with proposal writing.

- **Q:** How do we see HIV more integrated into SRHR work?
  **A:** Services for transgender community would be a good example for integration of HIV into SRHR. Hormone therapy is integrated into HIV services to also address SRHR.
Dr. Jo Sauvarin, UNFPA

Dr. Jo gave a brief overview of SDGs relevant to gender equality, women’s empowerment, SRHR and elimination of all forms of violence against women and the interlinkages between the SDGs.

In her presentation, she highlighted that gender equality and SRHR are important aspects of human rights that are recognised in existing laws and human rights instruments. She elaborated on the objectives of the international treaties and conventions such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

To further facilitate understanding of the scope of problem around realising the goals involving gender equality, she presented some statistics including number of women who experience intimate partner violence, number of child marriages and number of women who cannot make their own informed decisions. According to Dr. Jo, though the prevalence of child marriage had decreased overall, the number remains the highest in Asia and the Pacific.

She proceeded to cover examples of discriminatory laws and how these laws impede progress in the region. She quoted a World Bank study which revealed that 155 of 173 economies have at least one law impeding women’s economic opportunities; 46 of the economies covered have no laws specifically protecting women from domestic violence; 41 economies have no laws on sexual harassment and; lower legal gender equality is associated with fewer girls attending
secondary school relative to boys, fewer women working or running businesses and a wider gender wage gap.

Dr. Jo also covered some key challenges to gender equality particularly those that hold back progress:

- Legislative commitments in place across the region for gender equality and ending all forms of violence — but gaps remain and implementation is weak.
- Push back on human rights including the legitimacy of gender equality and human rights commitments and standards.
- Shrinking space for civil society, including organisations working on gender equality, SRHR, and gender based violence prevention and response.
- Key challenges for young people:
  - Culture of sexual harassment particularly for adolescent girls and young women.
  - Culture of silence on adolescent sexuality.
  - Legal restrictions to young people’s access to sexual reproductive health services affect mainly adolescent girls.

She also spoke about child marriage and the different types of child marriages, adolescent pregnancy and how adolescent sexuality can be integrated with gender issues with a positive approach. Some of the interventions to address adolescent sexuality suggested by Dr. Jo include CSE focused at encouraging gender equitable norms from childhood, empowering young girls in making choices, providing adolescent friendly services including contraceptives, removing legal barriers to adolescents’ access to services, reducing stigmatisation of young women’s sexuality and changing social norms of harassment of girls and young women.

**Anthony Lopez, ACT2030 Philippines**

Anthony started his presentation with an overview of the current situation in the Philippines in reference to the law and LGBTI issues. Anthony mentioned that the Philippines does not have any law criminalising LGBTI but the discrimination towards the LGBTI community is high in the Philippines.

Anthony proceeded to discuss issues affecting young people in the country:

- Implementation of CSE is still lacking in schools. CSE is not fully implemented. Why? Teachers are not trained. CSE is incorporated into different subjects such as biology and anatomy but these subjects do not focus on the specific target areas around CSE.
- CSE component is not accepted as a separate subject by itself. Anthony strongly feels that introducing CSE in schools is important as the Philippines is now seeing the highest number of HIV in its history.
- Women and girls need to have access to comprehensive family planning services to further boost their rights to choose for their bodily decisions, such as when to have children and how many children to have, leading to economic progression.

Anthony also covered the hindering factors in meeting young people SRHR needs:

- Religious leaders in the Philippines are known pastors and this makes it a challenge to make comprehensive laws around CSE.
- The perception that there is no need for anti-discrimination law.
Sara Sheikh, Aahung, Pakistan

Sara focused her presentation on the factors hindering gender equality and discussed changes that can effectively address the gaps in the context of Pakistan. Some of the hindering factors shared by Sara include:

- Patriarchy system – women are not considered to have any kind of say in decision making processes, making women highly vulnerable to abuse.
- Gender power imbalance continuing to negatively influence young people’s access to education and health services.
- Poverty and its effects on women.
- Gender stereotypes in the society are very much ingrained in the young people that they are not aware how much they are affected by it. This stresses the importance of working with the young people from a very young age for positive gender role development.
- Social Welfare and Women Development Ministry have to come together promoting gender equality and women empowerment.

Some of the changes that can potentially address the issues highlighted by Sara include:

- Ministry of Education ensuring school textbooks are not gender biased but neutral as text books are among the major materials children have access to at a very early age.
- Teachers to be trained to deliver the relevant materials in a positive manner.
- The education department also to work on smartphone applications in line with the current trend among the youth for an effective reachability.
- Youth-led and youth-allied organisations are to play important roles, collaborating with other ministries such as the welfare and women ministry.

Maya Zaman, Forum for Dignity Initiative, Pakistan

Maya Zaman spoke on issues faced by young people especially the transgender community in advancing the 2030 Agenda in Pakistan.

She shared inspiring case studies reflecting on Pakistan’s journey towards the progressive laws it has today following continuous advocacy work around transgender issues. However, the implementation of the policies is still weak and needs more attention.

Maya commented that the SDG is not progressive and inclusive as far as the transgender community is concerned. She added that the bodily and biological needs are different for the transgender community. The SDG needs to specifically address the transgender community to affirm their needs.

She also stressed on the importance of having public policies that have progressive and inclusive language aligned to their gender identity. Stigma and discrimination should be addressed to create an enabling environment with healthcare providers that are sensitised when receiving the transgender community.
PANEL 3
RECOMMENDATIONS

DR. JO SAUVARIN, UNFPA

- Young gender and SRHR advocates to mentor younger colleagues to maintain a strong group with expertise on SDGs/gender/SRHR language.
- Systematic use of social media to change social norms on gender equality, harassment of girls and adolescent sexuality.
- Advocacy for CSE as a right, from a young age.
- Young people as clients giving feedback on inadequate sexual reproductive services and positive feedback on youth friendly providers.
- Balance discussions on protection with recognition of evolving capacity (and sexuality) of adolescents.
- Speak up for inclusion of marginalised young people – migrants, LGBTI, disabled, remote rural etc., or include their issues.

ANTHONY LOPEZ, ACT2030, PHILIPPINES

- Governments should ensure meaningful youth engagement in all levels of policy-making, implementation, and evaluation of these policies. Young people should always be at the table, not just as tokens, but as partners for change.
- The protection of LGBTI people must be put in the regional agenda so that protective policies can be placed to safeguard the rights and well-being of young members of this population.
- Evaluate current family planning service mechanisms to ensure that women and girls have an equal share in deciding whether to get pregnant or not.
- Fully implement existing laws concerning CSE, so that it reaches children and young people in vulnerable areas and those part of the young key populations.
- Governments should honor and uphold human rights, especially those of children and young people, at all times and not be perpetrators of its violations. Governments must make sure that the accountability measures are observed and strictly complied with. Instruments such as the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) should be able to carry out their mandates without the slightest risk of being accused of interfering with national sovereignty and independence.
SARA SHEIKH, AAHUNG PAKISTAN

- Globally, regionally and nationally there should be such youth forums that are SDG focused especially SDG 5 that ensures capacity building and strengthening of youth.
- School programmes should be introduced from a very early age that builds capacity among children. Aahung is focusing on a CSE programme that works with more than 200 schools, reaching out to 2,000,000 youth, empowering them and building their capacity at college and university levels - I am a product of Aahung’s one such initiative that aimed to build capacity of youth at university level.
- Holistic approach for monitoring and evaluation.
- Elimination of sexual binaries is also important to make sure that youth friendly spaces are functional and accessible to youth.

MAYA ZAMAN, FDI, PAKISTAN

- To engage young healthcare providers to sensitise them on gender diversity and inclusivity to provide stigma free healthcare services to young transgendered person.
- To allocate sufficient budget for gender inclusive youth friendly health services.
- To cater to the need of young transgender person for hormone replacement therapy.
- To build the capacity of transgender youth advocates on effective engagement with the national task force committee on SDG to ensure a progressive and inclusive environment.
- To build capacity of transgender youth advocates of SRHR to document processes on SDG.
- Inclusivity and share/submit feedback to national task force committee on SDG on a regular basis.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Q: We keep mentioning girls as we speak of child marriage but child marriage equally affects boys, where they are forced to migrate to work and take on responsibilities at a very young age. Boys’ needs must also be addressed.

A: You are right, child marriage affects the boys as well. Programmes prioritise to reach out to the most affected. In such context, girls are more affected as they tend to be younger than the boys and do not have as much space as the boys do.
Dr. Bishwa Tiwari's detailed presentation was focused around ending poverty, hunger and revitalising the global partnership for a sustainable development.

In his presentation, Dr. Bishwa shared data that gave the delegates a quick background understanding on the different poverty levels in the different regions. Extreme poverty is observed to be decreasing in all regions. It is decreasing more rapidly in the developing regions than in the developed regions. He highlighted that South Asia has the largest number of poor after Sub-Saharan Africa.

He continued explaining poverty in terms of its dimensions which include health, education and living standard. He also introduced the indicators relevant to poverty. The current status of multidimensional poverty indicates that of the 5.4 billion people in 103 countries, 1.45 billion (26.5%) are multidimensionally poor, of the 1.45 billion poor, about 48% live in South Asia, and 36% in Sub-Saharan Africa and half of the multidimensionally poor are children aged between 0 and 17.

He also covered food security and ending hunger. The Zero Hunger Challenge was launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2012 and comprises five elements including zero stunted children below the age of two years, 100% access to adequate food all year round, all food systems are sustainable, 100% increase in smallholder productivity and income, and zero loss or waste of food. He highlighted that one of the greatest challenges the world faces is how to ensure that a growing global population – projected to rise to around 10 billion by 2050 – has enough food to meet their nutritional needs. Food security is a complex condition requiring a
holistic approach to address all forms of malnutrition. The number of undernourished people is 815 million in 2016 and is continuing to increase. Globally, the prevalence of stunting fell from 29.5% to 22.9% between 2005 and 2016, although 155 million children under 5 years of age across the world still suffer from stunting (height-for-age). He added that wasting affected one in twelve (52 million) of all children under five years in 2016, more than half of whom (27.6 million) live in South Asia.

The second part of Dr. Bishwa’s presentation covered revitalisation of the global partnership. The 2030 Agenda recognises that a revitalised and enhanced global partnership and ambitious means of implementation is crucial to achieve the SDGs. A revitalised global partnership brings together the UN system, governments, civil society, private sector and other actors, and mobilise all available resources. The 2030 Agenda and SDGs can be met within the framework of a revitalised global partnership for a sustainable development, supported by the concrete policies and actions as outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda. He shared that the 2030 Agenda provides a framework of the global partnership and for effective implementation, finance, technology, capacity building, trade and systemic issues are the five important means of implementation that a country need to pay close attention to. He also commented that not much progress is made around Goal 17 but this discussion has come timely for us to address and make progress in Goal 17.

He concluded his presentation with the following suggestions covering what the governments need to do to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and their effective monitoring:

- Prepare SDG-based planning and M & E framework
- Provide adequate institutional framework as well as resources for the implementation of the plan
- In view of the shrinking public fiscal space, mobilise resources from the private sector
- Widen and deepen the partnership with civil society including youth and women organisations
- Engage in innovations as the business as usual approach would not be enough to achieve the SDGs
- Promote south-south cooperation apart from north-south approach
Fale Lesa, CSIS, Samoa

Lesina delivered one of the most impassioned and eloquent speeches on poverty, highlighting the significance of engaging people with first-hand experience on poverty for a more inclusive approach and solution.

Lesina noted on the tremendous progress made in the last decade in eradicating poverty. However, progress has been uneven. Many people across the globe are still experiencing high levels of poverty. He added, although most part of the region is below the poverty line, poverty is real, it still exists. The impacts of poverty fall disproportionately on the most marginalised groups and communities, possibly undermining the region’s potential for achieving the SDGs.

He warned that we run the risk of complacency if we are satisfied with being below the poverty line. He reminded us that we have not completely eradicated poverty and stressed the importance of ensuring meaningful involvement of those who are directly affected by poverty in charting the way forward. No individuals know poverty as much as someone who has experienced poverty first hand. Although we are here to speak on poverty, we will never truly represent those experiencing poverty or have experienced poverty. The lived-experience matters.

He also touched upon how technology advances, especially those involving labour-saving machines have affected job opportunities among the poor and marginalised population in the region. He suggested that one of the key ways to eradicate poverty in this region is by ensuring the working poor have access to acquiring technical skills. He rationalised that the working poor’s jobs are being replaced by machines and technology, and the only way for them to secure a job is by building their capacity in operating these machines.

He also spoke about how cultural preservation is affected by poverty in Samoa. He mentioned that the communities affected by poverty are more inclined to preserve their cultural heritage. Responding to the needs of communities faced with poverty also translates to preserving cultural heritage especially among the natives in Samoa.

He ended his session with a note that the forum is a timely reminder that no one should be left behind. People directly affected by the issues that are being addressed must be given an opportunity to be part of the conversation.

Sai Jyothirmai Racherla, ARROW

Given that Dr. Bishwa had covered food security issues at large, Sai proceeded straight to discuss the structural barriers affecting access to adequate nutrition and food. Sai mentioned that gender-based discrimination is a critical element influencing young people’s access to adequate nutrition and food. Practice of harmful traditional practices such as early and child marriage and adolescent pregnancies deprive young girls of education and employment opportunities, leaving them in poor bargaining positions and excluding them from critical decision making conversations. These limit their access to adequate food and nutrition, increase their exposure to sexual violence, and leave them with less power for negotiating on sexual and reproductive matters.

She added that, these in turn increase their chances for a risky pregnancy and childbirth, including infant and maternal morbidity and mortality as well. Additionally, pregnant young women have to compete with the nutritional demands of bearing a child – a double burden on their own development, as well as the development of the child growing in them. They are often stunted as a result of undernutrition, and in turn bear undernourished children. Deaths and
disabilities from unsafe abortion are also particularly higher among unmarried adolescents, due to several socio-political and structural barriers in accessing safe abortion services.

**Sangeet Kayastha, YPEER, Thailand**

Sangeet shared on SDG 17 focused at building partnerships in the context of Nepal. He highlighted some of the processes involved in keeping Nepal and its government committed and focused on the SDGs. Sangeet introduced the networks and mechanisms in place in Nepal that work together in partnership with the government to meet the SDG goals. He commented that although all the necessary mechanisms are in place to engage the youth, the current efforts and initiatives are not coordinated enough. He believes that with a more concerted effort, Nepal will be able to progress much further in its youth related agenda.

**Vivek D’souza, QKnit, India**

Vivek’s session infused a sense of curiosity and influenced the participants to focus on certain aspects of policy with respect to the Asia Pacific region and their respective countries through a series of deep, thought provoking questions.

Vivek first questioned the need for a separate SDG to address building partnership despite all other 16 SDGs addressing building partnership in relevance to its respective goals. He basically revisited the purpose of SDG17 through an interactive session. He raised questions that addressed:

- **Partnerships:** What are partnerships - Role and extent of the role of the state, the corporate sector? Is there a clear boundary of responsibilities? With the withdrawal of the state in post liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation era, and takeover of corporates, is there a nexus between state and corporate?
- **Role of CSOs** - Is the role of the CSOs only to recommend or to be on an equal platform with other stakeholders in the process of policy formulation and implementation?
- **Political dynamics in the Asia Pacific region:** Do global partnerships mean touring other countries for partnerships while own country is under internal conflict, strife and violence against marginalised groups?
- **Role of governments and corporates in fighting climate change:** Those who contribute less to climate change are the most affected?
- **Need to revisit and redefine "development":** What is development with respect to the SDGs? Development for WHAT? Development for/ by WHOM? Is it inclusive? Does it take into account the needs and aspirations of all including women and sexual minorities?
PANEL 4
RECOMMENDATIONS

DR. BISHWA TIWARI, UNDP

- Jobs for all.
- Better utilisation of food.
- Good governance.

FALE LESA, CSIS, SAMOA

- We recommend governments to facilitate the transition from an informal to formal employment as this improves not only working conditions and entitlements, but also increases tax revenue, and puts more money towards development.
- We call for greater social protection coverage for those most in need. Especially for girls and women. The full participation of marginalised groups in the job market has an exponential influence on poverty eradication.
- We call for more investment in disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention as both are major contributors to displacement and forced migration, human trafficking, refugees, and other harsh realities such as sex work and drug abuse. This extends to the challenges involving climate change.
- We call for those with lived experience of poverty to drive eradication efforts (recognising the danger of token gestures or of having privilege dictate how policies should be implemented). Authentic representation is the way of the future.
- We call for improved access to technology in remote locations. This will assist farmers, labourers, and indigenous groups by saving them time and money.

SAI JYOTHIRMAI RACHERLA, ARROW

- Right to adequate food and nutrition is a fundamental human right of young people.
- Change current systems of food production and agricultural policies, by upholding food sovereignty and the right to adequate food and nutrition for all including young people, through social security schemes that ensure adequate food and nutrition for children and young people.
- Educational settings - schools can incorporate nutrition education into family life education, health education, AIDS prevention courses and vocational training activities as well as organise sessions for out-of-school youth.
- Health facilities - health centres, clinics and hospitals can offer information about improving iron status. They can also provide services for anaemia screening, reducing blood loss and increasing iron intake.
- Community outreach - peer education projects, workplace educational sessions and social/recreational activities can incorporate nutrition education into their programmes.
- Media and public information - practical information about nutritional needs can be communicated to young people through all forms of mass media (TV, radio, print materials, movies) as well as by traditional media (plays, folk drama, fairs, puppet shows).
- In practice, nutritional education can be addressed within any setting or programme that deals with reproductive and other health issues.
SANGEET KAYASTHA, YPEER, THAILAND

- Use and promotion of new technology not leaving behind existing and traditional means of communication; inclusion of young people from all background, realising voices of young people and localisation of SDGs.
- Simplified version of process and indicators focusing on young people.
- Government accountability for sustainability.
- Focusing on all sectors for partnership contribution.
- Linking existing policies and plans within existing local country and regional mechanisms.

VIVEK D’SOUZA, QKnit, INDIA

- Governments need to redefine definitions and be inclusive, and consider the need of intersectionality under financing for development.
- Demarcating boundaries between the role of the government, corporate intervention, and a much greater role/emphasis on the work of CSOs and legal institutions in bridging the policy gap between the peoples’ aspirations/needs and service delivery.
- Incentivising youth participation: Localising youth participation and integrating it with governments and private sector companies at a micro level (microeconomic policy coordination and policy coherence). Devolution of finance (resource allocation) and decision making authority.
- To enhance, promote and ensure the use of technologies that are safe, secure, sustainable and inclusive.
- Initiating conversations that aim at prioritising the “public” in public-private partnership, and the environment, and holding governments and corporate institutions accountable for their actions.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

- Comment: We need to stop being complacent. When we talk about conservation of culture, we need to rethink especially the ones that are oppressive before we decide to keep them.

- Q: How do we get the attention of young people to engage in youth farming as food farming is necessary for food security?
  A: We need to look at food security and employment from a creative lens. White collar job is not the only option. Youth can be encouraged to be creative with the areas of employment including agriculture.
Aneta gave an overview of ESCAP’s methodology for interlinkages between the SDGs with the focus on climate change.

She spoke about water resources and the link between water and sanitation with climate change. She then introduced the ESCAP methodology developed to assess and support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with the focus on climate change. The methodology aids in visualising the direct and indirect linkages between the SDGs further assisting in identifying leveraging points in the system where decisions could be made on when, where and how to intervene. She explained that the main aim of the methodology is to assist policy makers with integration of the SDGs into national planning, to assess the impacts of policies and identify effective policy interventions (leverage points) for impactful investment and use of scarce resources, and for stakeholder mapping and engagement in collectively developing the aspirational qualitative vision for societal change. The methodology adopts systems thinking model which allows for developing aspirational visionary modelling through a envisaging process that engages various stakeholders. The systems thinking aspirational envisaging cycle allows to create a systems diagram, which describes the causal relationship between the goals and targets, and then develop a full systems model, that through a verification process will evolve into a qualitative model. After data verification and feedback process the systems model allows for readjustment of the aspirational vision.
The systems thinking analytical framework was piloted in Fiji, Tajikstan and Sri Lanka. The experiences and outcome were also shared. She commented that the application of the systems thinking approach in the area of water and sanitation development in Sri Lanka resulted in awareness that implementing the eight SDG 6 targets will require collaborative commitment from specific agencies under different government ministries. The keys to successful implementation included: (a) creating coherent and coordinated interagency institutional architecture for convergence planning, (b) integrated implementation, (c) political traction towards financial commitments, (d) inclusive planning and (e) embedding subsidiarity-based governance. She also commented that the region is faced with gap of data in monitoring the SDG and hence to fill the gap, collection of data has to start from national level.

Nisha Santhar, ARROW

Nisha’s presentation covered the impact of climate change on gender and SRHR including factors hindering progress in interlinking climate change, young people and SRHR, and the necessary structural changes needed for progress. Her presentation was structured around evidence from ARROW partners reflecting the need to emphasise on the interlinkages between climate change and women's and girls’ SRHR.

Climate change is not a gender-neutral phenomenon and is known to impact the health of women and girls disproportionately due to existing gender inequalities that are perpetuated by social practices, structures and institutions. Women's and girls’ access to sexual reproductive health information and services are hampered due to damaged health facilities or suspended sexual reproductive health services during climate extreme situations. Research from ARROW’s partners in Pakistan found that local health outlets damaged by floods are given low priority for reconstruction and rehabilitation during post-disaster periods. Although health facilities are available in government camps or shelters, sexual reproductive health services and medical assistance are still lacking.

She pointed out that climate response, whether mitigation or adaptation projects, cannot be gender-neutral. She stressed that these projects must take into consideration women’s experience, and their skills and needs in the face of climate change as the degree of vulnerability of women varies and it is further determined by factors such as their age, ethnicity, marital status, socio-economic status and education level.

She also shared the impact of climate change on education. She explained that climate change has a direct impact on young girls dropping out or being taken out of schools. The increasing workload in the household and economic hardship experienced by the family cause parents to withdraw their daughters from schools so they could either assist at home or in the farm, or to find a job to supplement the household’s income. This in turn limits their future prospects and hinders their empowerment, including learning to take care of their health and hygiene.

She further explained that climate change also exacerbates the problem of early/child marriage and gender-based violence among women and girls. Extreme climate events worsens the phenomenon of early marriage for girls. Aggravated by poverty, early marriage occurs during extreme events as a coping strategy adopted by poor families.

Women and girls also face an increased risk of violence, with very scarce linkages and information between gender-based violence and climate change. She quoted that climate change in Indonesia has witnessed massive drought, with women bearing the brunt of traveling further distance to collect water, which in turn increases the risk of sexual violence. Climate change has also changed the productivity of the farming and other sectors, which causes a
‘push factor’ migration of women and girls to urban areas and outside the country as maids and migrant domestic worker. This increases the risk of being trafficked, sometimes as sex workers, putting them at greater risk of sexual violence.

The second half of her presentation covered factors hindering progress in interlinking climate change, gender, young people and SRHR. She also addressed the necessary structural changes required to realise progress. Lack of laws or enforcement to integrate gender and rights in climate change work, lack of budget allocation and resources, and lack of youth friendly services were among the identified hindering factors. The recommended structural changes include but are not limited to reviewing and amending existing laws and policies; to enact new ones, for example, laws against child marriage and gender-based violence and to implement them effectively; advocating for allocation of minimal local budget to relevant issues such as healthcare services and information, education and poverty reduction and; providing and improving access to youth-friendly health services and information, including sexual reproductive health, that are confidential, non-judgmental, non-discriminatory, and are affordable. Services are strongly suggested to include contraception, safe abortion and reproductive cancer prevention. She noted that there is a lack of political will from some states to provide such services due to the patriarchy system and structure that uphold traditional customs and cultural practices/religious tenets instead of the rights of young people.

Some of the case studies shared by Nisha include:

Nusarat, a 28 year old mother of six from Jacobbad, Pakistan miscarried her seventh child when travelling to a post-disaster government camp. At the camp, there was a severe lack of adequate medical services and she was not able to seek help for her postpartum complications.  
*Sindh Community Foundation, Pakistan*

21-year old Sumitra from Bangladesh was encouraged to enter into an early marriage during a post-flood devastation period in the hope that it would safeguard her future. She got pregnant soon after her marriage but miscarried because she was unable to access proper food and adequate medical care.  
*Khan Foundation, Bangladesh*

Women staying in shelters and camps during extreme climate change events lack privacy due to overcrowding. They experience harassment and face attempted gender-based violence in camps.  
*Sindh Community Foundation, Pakistan*

**Bindhu Bhandari, ICIMOD, Nepal**

Bindhu shared her experience advocating for a progressive Nepal on issues around climate change, focusing on the type of youth involvement and engagement required for an impactful change.

She started with some facts and figures on Nepal in the context of climate change. Nepal has seven provinces with approximately 30 million population. The youth make up slightly more than 40% of this figure. The strategies, policies and treaties committing to climate change interests in Nepal include the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Paris Agreement. Based on her personal experiences, Bindhu strongly feels the need to challenge the stereotype that, only individuals with relevant background experience to climate change can be involved in its advocacy. She encouraged the youth to explore the scope for a more meaningful and impactful involvement.
And for a more sustained response to climate change in the future, she commented that more voices and involvement of the young people is needed to move the climate change agenda forward. She stressed that creating awareness alone is not enough in achieving the targeted outcome and impact. She added that the availability, ability to use and accessibility to resources is crucial to facilitate effective youth engagement. For a more strategic advocacy work, she suggested for the actions and solutions to be affordable, applicable and replicable at the local context especially in under developed countries for a more visible, measurable and sustainable impact. She ended her presentation with the note that the time is right now and the real actors to act on the climate change agenda are the youth.

Andi Pratiwi, Jurnal Perempuan, Indonesia

Andi shared Indonesia’s experience on the effects of climate change on youth, especially on young women and their current status in the country. According to Andi, Asia Pacific, as home to 60 million of the world’s population, is the most disaster prone region globally. The risk of disaster in this region is aggravated by climate change. Young people living in Asia Pacific amount to 60 percent of the world’s young population aged 15 to 24 years.

Climate change affects everyone but it impacts men, women, boys, girls, and transgender people differently. She added that this difference is caused by gender roles, sexual division of labour and unequal power relations.

Although young people have benefitted from the region’s social and economic dynamism, but significant number of youth across the region still face a variety of challenges in their access to employment, education and healthcare. The situation is worse when natural disasters and extreme weather happens. Extreme weather in Indonesia reduces participation, especially among female youth, in education since the burden of schooling costs becomes higher and the need for adolescents and young people to contribute economically to households becomes greater. Climate change also increases the incidence of malnutrition among adolescents through food shortages resulting from low agricultural yields or loss in livelihood opportunities with potentially long term health consequences, such as complications with pregnancy.

She highlighted that in situations where the occurrence of natural disaster events resulting from climate change are more frequent, the position of girls becomes more vulnerable. Displacement sites for disaster victims are not always made in regards to the interests of girls and women as well as girls with disabilities. Health and sanitation facilities are not exactly responsive towards their needs.

The key message of her presentation was prioritising education for girls as an important step in mitigating climate change. She elaborated that institutions show empowering girls and women through a combination of education and family planning approach is essential in addressing climate change. There are evidences suggesting that for every additional year of schooling a girl receives on average, her country’s resilience to climate disasters can be expected to be improved significantly.

Her presentation also touched upon youth strategic roles on climate change actions. If young people in Indonesia do not have access to good education, health rights and infrastructure, decent work, and space and facility to increase their innovations, the dependency ratio will increase resulting in Indonesia experiencing a demographic disaster. The politicians have an important role to play as they can take stock of the situation and take it as a demographic evidence for change or ignore it resulting in demographic disaster for the nation.
PANEL 5
RECOMMENDATIONS

ANETA NIKOLOVA, UNESCAP
- Climate change is going to impact our lives profoundly in the next decennia and will change our lifestyles drastically.
- Climate change will also influence the strategies for implementation of the rest of the SDGs in a profound way.
- Climate change adaptation is happening and will happen only at the community level where the role of youth is crucial.
- There is a need for capacity development and awareness raising of youth about the impacts of climate change and measures for climate adaptation.
- Fostering innovation of youth for climate action, climate adaptation and climate mitigation, and in general more environmentally sustainable lifestyles is of highest importance.
- Active participation; information and awareness about different aspects of the SDGs.

NISHA SANTHAR & LIM HWEI MIAN, ARROW
- States need to strengthen the implementation of national law that are available to curb early/child marriage and to eradicate gender-based violence. Reporting of incidences and the enforcement of these laws are weak. Enforcement authorities must recognise and respect the rights of girls, and make every effort to protect their rights. (SDG5)
- States need to institute policies to prevent girls from dropping out of school during weather extreme events and to continue to provide schooling and nutrition for girls during displacement, for example education in emergencies programme developed by UNICEF. (SDG2 and SDG4)
- States agencies, including Ministry of Education, should promote free education, including CSE for girls. The ministry should work closely with local governments to ensure that parents are sensitised on the importance of education for girls, as well as families affected by climate change disaster are provided with financial assistance so that they do not withdraw their daughters from school to help the family or force them into early marriage. (SDG1, SDG3, SDG4 and SDG5)
- Girls’ health needs to be emphasised, including their SRHR, through a gendered and rights-based policy framework and support. Public and local authorities need to strengthen access, availability and affordability of healthcare service for girls, particularly those who are most vulnerable, during non-disaster times as well as during and after weather extreme events. (SDG5)
- The need for various ministries (such as Ministry of Women’s Welfare, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Supply and Sanitation, etc.) to integrate gender sensitive climate change intervention strategies into the National Climate Change Policy or National Adaption Plans/National Adaption Programmes of Actions to reduce the existing gender inequality and vulnerability related to women’s health, including SRHR, during climate change. Priorities should focus on food security, nutrition, water and sanitation, poverty reduction, and harmful practices (gender ascribed roles, household food hierarchy systems and child marriage).
BINDHU BHANDARI, ICIMOD, NEPAL

- Activism alone is not enough. Young people need to be integrated in all forms of climate governance including decision making process.
- Provision of youth delegate programme should be mandated for each government.
- Open access to data and research findings for young researchers should be encouraged.
- Transboundary knowledge exchanging platform and hands-on training need to be promoted for emerging climate researchers.
- Governments of Global South need to invest in increased participation of young fellows in international climate change negotiations.

ANDI PRATIWI, JURNAL PEREMPUAN, INDONESIA

- Protection of climate change, government to put in place special programmes.
- Government and CSOs should include actions on SRHR in the climate change policy and programmes. Climate change policy do not have gendered aspects at this moment.
- Government should encourage to understand climate change issues and to raise voice for their strategic goals.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Comment: Typhoon affected major part of the Philippines, affected the women and girls, especially the sex workers population to a great extent. It affected the food and other essential resources the women and girls needed. Climate change and SRHR are interlinked especially in the areas of resources, stakeholder engagement and in crafting effective response to the issue in hand.
The ensuing panel discussion zoomed into synergies between international human rights institutions and the SDGs addressing gaps, challenges, best practices and lessons learned in the exercise of human rights by young people, not excluding seizing the available opportunities in creating the right space for young people in exercising their rights.

The session first addressed the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) experience in the context of Thailand, covering the lessons learnt and how it can be applied in the SDG context. Bearing in mind that UPR holds a significant opportunity towards the realisation of youth concerning agendas, the speaker shared concern around poor engagement of young people in the UPR. The speaker stressed that there is an urgent need to identify ways and further explore the existing mechanisms and policies on how national human rights platforms work especially around the process of UPR reporting at country levels. This will open up opportunities for improved youth engagement in the country’s UPR cycles. Overall, the speaker reiterated that youth involvement and the linkages at the local, grassroots and national movement need to be strengthened for a more effective advocacy strategy in realising the SDGs goals. The speaker also addressed the CSO’s role in ensuring recommendations from the ground are brought to the national level for drafting of implementation of interventions and activities among CSOs. CSOs can monitor country state report that is presented to the council, follow up on the recommendations and bring it to the ground for implementation. CSOs can also play a role in reviewing the implementation plan focusing on the gaps especially on the much needed advocacy response.

Next, the session acknowledged the rapidly changing geopolitical, economic and social landscape within ASEAN. The speaker commented that in 2015, ASEAN governments have adopted the ASEAN 2025 vision, a vision which many believe is an adaptation of SDGs in view
of the parallel timelines. The vision is a continuation of ASEAN Community Roadmap (2009-2015) and consist of four major vision/ blueprint namely: ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025. The speaker commented that all of these visions/ blueprints are interlinked and equally important in achieving a region of peace, freedom and prosperity. The speaker strongly recommended to utilise the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism, especially AICHR and ACWC, and the three pillars of ASEAN community for advancing the implementation and demanding the accountability of the realisation of SDGs. The engagement with AICHR and ACWC can be done through advocating for the theme of their thematic studies, regional dialogue and or high level meeting, as well as inclusion of issues within their annual meeting.

The session also highlighted the lack of credible data in monitoring progress against SDGs, lack of understanding of human rights framework and how these two factors affect a country’s progress in realising the SDG goals. The session discussed how governments can play an important role in building the capacity of CSOs for a more effective involvement of the young people in the UPR process. The session also allowed the floor to hear first-hand experience of discrimination against young people among the LGBTI community. The speaker shared how discriminative statements from political and prominent religious figures resulted in oppressive reaction of the public towards the LGBTI community especially the transgender community in Indonesia. The discrimination is not only obvious in the public places but also in education system where many universities are no longer accepting LGBTI communities as their students. Some universities had issued public statements that they are not involved with LGBTI activities and issues to safeguard their positions.
PANEL 6
RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERALL:

- Utilise existing human rights mechanisms in raising government performance around the SDGs. SDGs should not be mere targets but be framed as governmental obligations. From a human rights perspective, whilst targets are crucial towards progressive realisation of human rights, states are in obligation to avoid regressions.
- Make references to concluding observations and UPR recommendations as basis in formulating national strategies for SDG implementation.
- Create spaces for meaningful participation of young people in monitoring, crafting of strategies, implementation of SDGs and other human rights obligations. Creation of spaces also require investments in building capacity to understand human rights frameworks, advocacy, and monitoring and reporting.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CSO/YOUTH:

- To explore the mechanism, policy and dynamic on how the national Human Rights platforms work especially on the process of UPR reporting. Is it necessary to engage with the government at the national level? Furthermore, youth will need to strengthen local, grassroots and national movement to push for global advocacy. This can be done through focus-group discussions with the engagement of those groups for the creation of UPR Shadow Report.
- To use Human Rights mechanism for fast-tracking SDGs such as the recommendation of UPR, treaty bodies/ UN Resolution (for example 1325), National Action Plans, among others.
- To utilise ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism (especially AICHR and ACWC) and the three pillars of ASEAN community for advancing the implementation and demand the accountability of the realisation for SDGs. The engagement with AICHR and ACWC can be done through advocating for the theme of their thematic studies, regional dialogue and or high level meeting, as well as inclusion of issues within their annual meeting.
- To explore the opportunity of working with UN expert of the Human Rights Council and or special mandate holders cum the UN Special Rapporteur on thematic areas that encompass SDGs such as Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, freedom of expression and opinion, transnational corporation, and human rights defenders, among others.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS AND ASEAN MEMBER STATES:

- Review, amend, and repeal all laws and policies that are against the basic principles of democracy and human rights, and promote free, fair, and peaceful elections, free and independent media, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, transparency, accountability, and access to information.

- There is lack of impactful and comprehensive initiatives to address the alignment of SDGs with ASEAN 2025 Vision, as the effort is often done on a small scale, sketchy and sectoral manner. Therefore, there is an urgent need to strengthen cross-bodies collaboration in ASEAN, to further enhance the alignment of ASEAN 2025 vision and SDGs to promote and protect human rights and fast-track inclusive development for all.

- Strengthen the role of ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism especially AICHR by revising its terms of reference to encompass the protection role, for enabling the body to address the gross human rights violation that hinder the implementation of ASEAN 2025 vision and SDGs.

- Adopt a multi-sectoral approach for ensuring peaceful and inclusive societies. A collaboration between CSOs and states must be present and incorporated in a reporting mechanism to ensure effectiveness and accountability on the progress of SDGs.

- Ensure meaningful participation of young people in all spaces through promoting fundamental freedom in fostering the democratic civic space. Youth participation can be achieved through investments in leadership capacity building, providing opportunities, establishing platforms and affirmative actions.
PLENARY STATEMENT DRAFTING FOR APFSD CSO FORUM 2018 AND APFSD/HLPF 2018
The panel sessions provided rich insights into the breadth and depth of the specific issues of relevance to youth in the context of realising sustainable development in the region. The interactive panel sessions enabled the young people in the room to participate and engage in conversations and exchange experiences about SDGs in their own communities and countries. With this enriching experience, the meeting progressed to a breakout session using the world café discussion method aimed at drafting concrete youth-focused statements capturing the needs and demands of young people with respect to implementation and accountability of SDGs at regional and within national contexts.

The delegates were assigned to four different groups with moderators engaging the group members through guiding statements and questions relevant to the SDGs being addressed.

The outcome of this session is the APFSD Youth Forum 2018 Call-to-Action, a copy of which is included as Annex 1 of this report. It presents youth empowered contribution to the review of implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The statements were presented at the CSO Forum and APFSD 2018 demanding concrete commitments and actions to realise the 2030 Agenda nationally, regionally and globally.
The two-day forum undoubtedly energised and revitalised the collective effort for a coordinated advocacy response towards shaping a sustainable, resilient and inclusive Asia Pacific. The rich, constructive discussions reflected the pivotal space the forum provided for the successful development of youth focused recommendations across the relevant sustainable development goals and recognised that youth leadership and empowerment are key to creating synergies across environmental sustainability and the socio-economic dimensions on the basis of equity, equality and justice.

The forum established that young people play a key role in shaping the 2030 Agenda. The young activists, advocates and representatives from the youth-led, youth-serving and youth-allied organisations in the region gathered as a clearly defined group demonstrating their goals, intentions and needs in promoting innovative solutions to the global challenge of strengthening resilience and sustainable development. Their knowledge, reach and innovative solutions are essential in realising sustainable development.

Building on the present momentum, ARROW is positive that we will together achieve an inclusive Asia Pacific where young people have the capacities and opportunities to become resilient and face emerging challenges in the region and progress towards holistic and rights-based sustainable development.
Young People’s Vision for a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Asia Pacific

STATEMENT FROM THE PREPARATORY YOUTH FORUM FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (APFSD) 2018

23-24 March 2018, Bangkok, Thailand

Who We Are and What We Believe in

We, 65 activists, advocates, and representatives from youth-led, youth-serving, and youth-allied organisations across diverse social movements in Asia and the Pacific region came together in Bangkok to call for resilient and sustainable solutions to the 2030 Agenda that cohesively integrates young people.

We reiterate the Asia Pacific Youth Call to Action developed in 2017, which provides youth focused recommendations across all the sustainable development goals and recognise that youth leadership and empowerment are key to creating synergies across environmental sustainability and the socio-economic dimensions on the basis of equity, equality and justice. We further reiterate the commitments made in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD PoA) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Young people from the region come from diverse backgrounds including people who are poor; people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC); people with disabilities; people living with and affected by HIV; ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples; religious minorities; people living in remote, rural, and slum areas; sex workers; people who use drugs; migrants, displaced, refugees, and stateless people; people with limited formal education; and people of all castes and classes.

Our vision for the theme of Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) 2018, “Transformations Towards Sustainable and Resilient Asia Pacific”, is an inclusive Asia Pacific where young people have all the needed capacities and opportunities to become resilient and face emerging challenges in the region and progress towards holistic and rights-based sustainable development.

WHY THIS CALL

We recognise the largest number of young people globally, about 670 million, live in the Asia and the Pacific Children and youth comprise 24% and 16% of the region’s population respectively, while 68% of its people are of working age and 32% are dependents. The Asia-Pacific is in the midst of a historic demographic transition with young people forming a significant population group. To harness the potential of young people and to fully achieve a resilient, inclusive and sustainable Asia Pacific, transformative investments are critical to address young people’s unique needs.
Asia-Pacific region has been predominantly rural but from 2018 there will be more people living in urban areas than rural areas. The region is home to more than 2.1 billion urban residents, or 60 percent of the world’s urban population, with young people being a key group\textsuperscript{xvi}. Lack of institutional capacities in the region, poor urban planning and governance puts people especially young people at risk of poor living standards, insufficient incomes and vulnerable and unhealthy environments\textsuperscript{xvii}.

The region is making slow progress in its attempts to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for youth and other groups. Approximately 1.7 billion people in Asia do not have access to clean water and sanitation, 780 million practice open defecation and 80\% of wastewater is discharged untreated into waterways, leading to increase in water borne diseases.\textsuperscript{xvii} The problem is particularly prevalent in rural areas, where only 46\% of the population has access to improved sanitation, compared to 75\% in urban areas.\textsuperscript{xviii} Yet many urban centres are also grappling with unplanned and uncoordinated development, resulting in inadequate urban water and sanitation management. Girls, in particular, face significant sanitation challenges with a lack of menstrual hygiene management and hygiene promotion, particularly in South Asia.\textsuperscript{x} The lack of safe, separate, and private sanitation and washing facilities in schools is one of the main factors preventing girls from attending school, particularly whilst menstruating. Convenient access to water increases privacy and reduces risk to girls and women from sexual harassment and assault while fetching water.\textsuperscript{xix}

Access to clean and efficient energy is critical for economic progress, human welfare and environmental well-being and has been acknowledged in the SDG Goal 7, which focuses on sustainable energy – incorporating targets for renewable energy production, energy efficiency, and energy access. Access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy is crucial to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals – from poverty eradication to mitigating the consequences of climate change.

Increasingly, governments around the world and in the region are focusing on renewable energy as an important part of the energy portfolio although not enough investment has been made towards providing communities information on the alternative options available. The Asia-Pacific region has emerged as the global leader in renewable energy investment, installed capacity and consumption. Yet, fossil fuel consumption has risen substantially, limiting the growth of the share of renewable energy (including both traditional and modern forms), and resulting in significant local and global environmental impacts.

The Asia Pacific region has witnessed a very sharp and rapid increase in urbanisation in recent years resulting in unprecedented demographic, economic and social challenges. Multiple strings are attached to urban growth, including exponential growth of slums, informal settlements, and urban poverty. In developing countries, urbanisation is often characterised by infrastructural challenges including, but not limited to, lack of adequate housing, densely populated residential areas, poor sanitation and overburdened social service systems including public health facilities. Local governments have not been able to keep up with growth rates of cities in the region and have failed to provide the required infrastructure to meet the needs of the increasing urban population.

Feminisation of poverty is another very vivid consequence of increasing urbanisation. Women suffer doubly - first at the hand of gender inequality and power imbalances in the society and within their families and second, due to the increased poverty. Lack of infrastructure put women and young girls at greater vulnerability.\textsuperscript{xii} Lack of sanitation and water supply systems impact young girls and women’s menstrual hygiene, putting them at increased physical discomfort and risks of health and limiting their ability to participate in social life.\textsuperscript{xiii, xv} Poorly lit streets and lack of transportation facilities have increased women and girls’ vulnerabilities to sexual harassment and gender-based violence.\textsuperscript{xv, xvi, xvii} Women and girls in urban slums lack access to SRH information, skilled birth attendants, contraceptives and are at increased risks of reproductive health issues and early and unwanted pregnancies.\textsuperscript{xviii}

The Asia-Pacific region is home to some of the world’s most polluted and unhealthy cities, the world’s largest urban slum populations and the largest concentration of people living below the poverty line. Adequate shelter, safe neighbourhoods, clean water and sanitation, healthcare, transport and access to modern energy systems or even a legally defined address, are rights still not shared by all. Moreover, cities in the region are among the most vulnerable to natural disasters and the projected impacts of climate change. Almost three-quarters of the global fatalities caused by disasters between 1970 and 2011 occurred in the Asia Pacific. Consequently, there is an urgent need to address the resilience of the region’s cities.
RECOMMENDATIONS:

**SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.**

1. Ensure universal access to potable water and sanitation in urban, rural, and remote areas through sustainable infrastructure, including the recycling of wastewater.
2. Ensure adequate sanitation facilities in adolescent and youth-frequented spaces in rural, remote and informal settlements, especially in schools, supplemented by proper maintenance facilities. Also ensure that these facilities are gender neutral and disable friendly.
3. Ensure proper water infrastructure and climate change planning systems to promote sustainable use of water resources, limit water-borne diseases, address water scarcity, and enhance monitoring capabilities.
4. Encourage youth-centred initiatives and use of appropriate technologies, including indigenous knowledge on water conservation and management.
5. Ensure proper management of water waste systems as part of disaster risk reduction and management to prevent flood-related disasters and health risks.
6. Implement gender, age and culture-responsive awareness approaches to address stereotyping in water access and management, including consideration of gender-based violence.
7. Ensure access to safe and hygienic sanitation including access to menstrual hygiene management.

**SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.**

1. Prioritise investments in low-carbon, renewable, efficient and clean energy infrastructure and technology over fossil fuels, while ensuring compliance of the private sector and the state with ethical and human rights guidelines. Governments should also subsidise renewable and clean energy to make it accessible, affordable and efficient for all.
2. Ensure the development of a clear policy on youth-adult partnership to participate and to facilitate access and capability of youth to replicate and scale up clean energy models (e.g. Subsidised energy rates for youth and training on innovation).
3. Perform environment impact assessments and social impact assessment while designing and implementing energy projects. Develop young people's capacities in conducting such impact assessments.
4. Ensure meaningful engagement of youth, develop knowledge and skills of young people and address structural challenges on clean energy by incentivising youth entrepreneurship in the area of renewable energy.
5. Communities should be empowered and capacitated to be able to produce and access its own clean energy.
6. Raise awareness, build capacity, and influence agendas around environmental, ecosystems and biodiversity protection and sustainable use of natural resources.
7. Youth should be engaged in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and accountability of policies and programmes around renewable energy.

**SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.**

8. Institutionalise active youth engagement in a democratic, transparent and result-oriented urban decision at all levels, especially for marginalised youth, in order to meaningfully engage them in building of inclusive and resilient infrastructures.
9. Promote age and gender responsive budgeting for youth led urban initiatives.
10. Improve and expand protection for children and youth people through the development of safe zones with adequate access to basic facilities in urban settings.
11. Adopt specific recommendation from the Sendai framework of disaster risk reduction, taking into account that children and youth are agents of change and should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction, in accordance with legislation, national practice and education curricula.
12. Ensure the implementation of minimum initial service package (MISP) which are crucial actions to respond to sexual and reproductive health needs, at the onset of every humanitarian crisis. Integrate, capacitate and train young people in the implementation of MISP in crisis situation.
13. Foster the potential of youth and their engagement at all levels of government to counter and prevent radical polarisation, violence
and extremism and to maintain peace and resolve conflict.
14. Encourage accessibility and representation of youth, especially with lived experiences, in all SDGs decision making processes at local, national, regional and international levels.
15. Relevant ministries and authorities must encourage vertical growth rather than horizontal growth of city infrastructures to counter rapid and uncontrolled urbanisation to promote sustainable cities for young people by 2030.

**SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.**

16. Emphasis on enabling youth to play key roles in decision-making, monitoring, and accountability on natural resources and consumption and production patterns at all levels
17. Developing and promoting consumer education for responsible and informed consumption.

**SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managed forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.**

18. Adopting best practices of waste management and reduction across countries.
19. The state must put in place fines and policies on responsible waste treatment and management for corporations, governments and individuals. Capacity building for municipalities to manage waste considering environmental aspects, sustainability, and human rights.
20. The state must introduce curricula and initiatives for young people on continuous engagement and sustainability for forest conservation.
21. Sufficient resources must be allocated by the state to build new skills and techniques for young advocates of environment and climate change with modern technologies for conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems.
22. Encourage youth centered initiatives in wetlands management and provide them with the training required to do so.
23. Call to an end of any kind of privatisation of natural resources and social goods.

**SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.**

24. Build capacities of young people to meaningfully engage with national, regional and global SDG implementation and follow up and review mechanisms.
25. Make high-quality, timely and reliable data available, disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, citizenship and migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national and local contexts.
26. Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally-sound technologies engaging young people in order to reduce the digital gap.
27. Ensure that youth groups are meaningfully engaged at all levels of the implementation, follow up and review of the SDG road map, including the Asia-Pacific Road Map for Implementing the 2030 Agenda. This should also include related agreements and existing partnerships networks, such as “Every Woman, Every Child,” “Higher Education Sustainability Initiative,” “Sustainable Development Goals Funds (SDGF),” and others.
28. Ensure that public-private partnerships, South-South/ North-South, and Triangular collaborations, which are used to secure resources for youth, continuously engage in SDG processes, follow rights-based, ethical guidelines and labour standards.
30. Closely monitor the means of implementation targets and indicators and involve young people in all the stages, including the intergovernmental monitoring and follow-ups.
31. Enhance youth engagements in transboundary knowledge platforms.
32. Ensure that resources generated are transformative, empowering, and creative beyond the grantee funder relationships and build on local realities.
33. Ensure meaningful and inclusive youth participation, including girls, LGBTIQ and other gender and sexual minorities, in sustainable development policies at national level.
ABOUT THIS STATEMENT

This statement was an outcome of the forum, “Young People’s Vision for a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Asia Pacific”, which was organised in preparation for the Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) from 23-24 March in Bangkok. The Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW), and AP-RCEM’s Youth Constituency, coordinated by Youth LEAD, co-convened the forum. The forum was organised with the support of Right Here, Right Now partnership, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, as well as participants’ self-funding.

ENDORSEMENTS:

1. Aahung, Pakistan
2. ACT2030, Philippines
3. Aliansi Remaja Independen (ARI)
4. Aman Foundation, Pakistan
5. ASEAN SOGIE CAUCUS
6. Association for Youth Organisations (AYON), Nepal
7. Bandhu Social Welfare Association, Bangladesh
8. Bargad Youth Development Organisation, Pakistan
9. Blue Veins, Pakistan
10. BRACU, Bangladesh
11. CamASEAN, Cambodia
12. Cambodia National LGBTI Network
13. CCIHP, Vietnam
14. Channan Development Association, CDA, Pakistan
15. CliMates Nepal
16. Fokus Muda, Indonesia
17. Forum for Dignity Initiative (FDI), Pakistan
18. ISEE, Vietnam
19. Jurnal Perempuan, Indonesia
20. Natural Ache, Indonesia
21. Pamflet, Indonesia
22. PKBI, Indonesia
23. Pravah, India
24. Rahnuma - Family Planning Association of Pakistan (FPAP), Pakistan
25. Restless Development, Nepal
26. Rural Women’s Network (RUWON), Nepal
27. Sanghar SWARA, Indonesia
28. SERAC, Bangladesh
29. The QKnit, India
30. The YP Foundation, India
31. UBR Alliance, Bangladesh
32. Vanuatu National Youth Council, Vanuatu
33. Visible Impact, Nepal
34. YFP, Indonesia
35. YIFOS, Indonesia
36. Youth Action Nepal
37. Youth Advocacy Network (YAN), Pakistan
38. Youth Voice Count (YVC)
39. YPEER Asia Pacific
40. YUWA, Nepal
41. Yuwalaya, Nepal

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2 Resilience is the ability of a society to absorb and recover from shocks, to adapt and transform their structures and means for living in the face of long-term stresses, change and uncertainty. (Source: UNESCAP)


Ibid.


http://arrow.org.my/social-inclusivity-city/

2ND ASIAN PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT YOUTH FORUM
Young People’s Vision for a Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Asia Pacific