



EMPOWERING THE EXCLUDED: NEPAL'S CIVIL SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT REPORT OF SDGs IMPLEMENTATION 2024

SUBMITTED TO

Committee on Development, Economic Affairs and Good Governance
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SUBMITTED BY

Nepal SDGs Forum

SECRETARIAT:

NGO FEDERATION OF NEPAL
BUDDHANAGAR, KATHMANDU



NGO Federation of Nepal

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ABBREVIATIONS

BBC:	Beyond Beijing Committee
CCA:	Climate Change Adaptation
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
DRR:	Disaster Risk Reduction
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
INGO:	International Non-Governmental Organization
LGBTIQ+:	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer+
NPC:	National Planning Commission
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goal
VNR:	Voluntary National Review
VSO:	Voluntary Service Overseas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Nepal play a critical role in advocating for the rights and needs of marginalized communities. They ensure that grassroots voices are included in the national discourse on sustainable development. This Voluntary National Review (VNR) report, often referred to as the ‘spotlight report’ or ‘citizen’s report,’ provides an alternative perspective on Nepal's progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It emphasizes the principle of 'Leave No One Behind' by highlighting the challenges faced by the most vulnerable populations.

The civil society report complements the government’s VNR by offering recommendations and fostering an environment conducive to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In Nepal, this collaborative effort includes input from various CSOs, federations, alliances, networks, and coalitions. The NGO Federation of Nepal and the Nepal SDGs Forum have been instrumental in facilitating this process through extensive consultations at district, provincial, and national levels.

Despite limited resources, the VNR process has focused on qualitative data, ensuring the inclusion of marginalized voices. Key consultations involved groups representing the Dalit community, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, women, youth, and the LGBTIQ+ community. These efforts were supported by partners such as VSO and the Association of International NGOs in Nepal.

The review targets seven specific SDGs: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Climate Action, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, and Partnerships for the Goals. It assesses Nepal's progress, identifies challenges, and suggests strategies for advancement. The report highlights areas such as gender equality, climate action, education, and health, pointing out both achievements and ongoing issues.

Notable progress includes increased gender inclusivity in education and government, improvements in educational infrastructure, and better access to healthcare. However, significant challenges remain, such as caste-based discrimination, inadequate infrastructure for people with disabilities, and insufficient disaster preparedness for vulnerable groups.

The report underscores the need for strengthened government accountability, enhanced public spending on education, and the development of robust data systems to track SDG progress. It also

calls for increased inclusivity, particularly for marginalized communities, in decision-making processes.

In conclusion, this CSO-led review advocates for meaningful partnerships between the state, civil society, and the private sector to achieve the SDGs. It recommends stronger collaboration at the local government level and emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in driving sustainable development.

BACKGROUND

Civil Society Organizations play a pivotal role in engaging with grassroots communities, ensuring that the voices of the most marginalized are heard and represented. In the context of the SDGs, the VNR process provides a critical platform to reflect on a country's progress, identify gaps, and address challenges in achieving these goals. The CSOs' report, also known as the 'spotlight report' or 'citizen's report,' is instrumental in ensuring the principle of 'Leave No One Behind' is upheld by highlighting the needs and concerns of marginalized populations.

The civil society report serves several crucial functions. It offers recommendations, complements the government's VNR, and promotes a conducive environment for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This collaborative effort supports the government in its national planning and monitoring framework, ensuring a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to development.

In Nepal, the CSOs' spotlight report provides a critical or alternative perspective on the implementation of the SDGs, complementing the official VNR. This report is vital in promoting government accountability and ensuring that the development commitments made to citizens are fulfilled. Civil society acts as a bridge, facilitating the monitoring and review processes of the SDGs at local, provincial, and national levels.

The production of the civil society SDG spotlight report has been a collaborative effort, involving a wide array of stakeholders. Various CSOs, federations, alliances, networks, and coalitions contributed their brief reports, analyses, and recommendations. The NGO Federation of Nepal and Nepal SDG Forum (CSO national platform) played a central role in this process. They conducted numerous district and provincial-level consultations, engaging key stakeholders who shared their issues, challenges, and suggestions for advancing the SDGs.

To gather comprehensive input, the NGO Federation of Nepal mobilized its district branches and provincial committees for several rounds of discussions and consultations. At the central level, a multi-stakeholder CSO conference was organized, facilitated by government agencies, particularly the National Planning Commission, with participation from UN agencies, parliamentarians, INGOs, media, academia, and researchers.

The Government of Nepal has led the development of the 3rd VNR, continuing its practice of reviewing progress against established baselines. Recognizing the value of CSO engagement, the

government has actively encouraged and involved civil society in this process. This collaboration represents a best practice of joint effort, allowing the country to present a unified voice in international forums. The partnership between the government and CSOs exemplifies a shared commitment to achieving the SDGs and ensuring that development benefits all segments of society.

Further emphasizing the inclusive nature of this process, the civil society report delves into specific areas such as gender equality, climate action, education, and health, highlighting both achievements and areas needing attention. By doing so, the report not only underscores the importance of CSO involvement in tracking and advocating for progress but also reinforces the necessity of multi-stakeholder engagement in driving sustainable development. This approach ensures that the development agenda is holistic and representative of the diverse needs of the population, fostering an environment where all citizens can thrive and contribute to the nation's progress.

METHODOLOGY

The collection of information for this CSOs' VNR involved a comprehensive and inclusive approach, engaging a diverse range of stakeholders to ensure a holistic representation of perspectives and issues. Information was collected from six key groups representing the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in Nepal, including the Dalit community, persons with disabilities, ethnic minority groups, women, youth, and the LGBTIQ+ community. Additionally, three provincial level consultations were conducted in Madhesh Province, Karnali Province, and Sudur Paschim Province, providing a platform for regional stakeholders to share their unique challenges and perspectives on SDG implementation.

In addition to these consultations, data was gathered from various partner organizations, including VSO, the Association of International NGOs in Nepal, Youth Initiative, BBC, and the National Farmers Group Federation. These organizations contributed valuable data and analysis based on their specific areas of focus and expertise, enriching the overall review process.

A variety of data collection methods were employed to ensure a comprehensive and accurate collection of information. A thorough desk review of existing literature, reports, and documents related to SDG implementation in Nepal provided a solid foundation of existing knowledge and context. Focus group discussions (FGDs) with representatives from the key groups provided

qualitative insights into their specific challenges and experiences, capturing the nuanced perspectives of marginalized populations. Targeted consultations with key thematic groups focused on specific SDG areas such as health, education, gender equality, and climate action, gathering detailed information on sector-specific issues and potential solutions.

Finally, an online survey using a scorecard approach allowed participants to rate and provide feedback on various aspects of SDG implementation. This method facilitated the collection of quantitative data and enabled broader participation, including from those unable to attend in-person consultations. This multi-faceted methodology ensured that the CSOs' Voluntary National Review was based on robust and comprehensive data collection, reflecting a thorough and inclusive assessment of Nepal's progress towards the SDGs. This approach highlights both achievements and challenges while ensuring that the voices of marginalized and vulnerable populations are heard, aligning with the principle of 'Leave No One Behind.'

SCOPE OF THE VNR PROCESS

Due to limited resources, including time, funding, and human resources, the VNR process could not capture the voices of all representatives of key groups across all geographical areas. Despite these constraints, the report focused primarily on qualitative information, ensuring that the voices of the people were incorporated. The methodology emphasized gathering detailed and nuanced insights from the most marginalized and vulnerable populations, even though it could not comprehensively cover every geographic region. This approach aimed to provide a meaningful and representative assessment of the issues faced by these groups, aligning with the principle of 'Leave No One Behind.'

THE CONTEXT

Since committing to the SDGs, Nepal has made steady progress and is on a firm path towards their implementation and achievement. Nepal's national fifteenth five-year plan (2019-2024) has been developed to align with and integrate the SDGs, providing a strategic framework to guide the country's efforts in sustainable development.

The Constitution of Nepal 2015 lays a strong foundation for these efforts by envisioning an egalitarian society aimed at achieving sustainable economic development, adopting socialism-oriented economic principles, and promoting equality through equitable distribution of gains. It includes a comprehensive list of fundamental rights and policies for community development

through enhanced local public participation. These constitutional provisions create a conducive policy environment for implementing the SDGs, although challenges in capacity and governance persist. Nevertheless, local governments in Nepal show promising prospects for contributing effectively to the SDG agenda.

The National Planning Commission (NPC), the apex government body, serves as the focal agency for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The SDG's Steering Committee is headed by the Prime Minister, while the SDGs Coordination and Implementation Committee is led by the NPC Vice Chairman. Within the NPC, there are nine SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Thematic Committees, each chaired by NPC members, focusing on areas such as economic development, industrial development, urban development, social development, employment management, agriculture, climate and environment, physical infrastructure, energy development, and peace, justice, and inclusive institutions. These committees ensure a coordinated approach to SDG implementation across various sectors.

In addition to the NPC, the legislative bodies of Nepal also play crucial roles in the SDG framework. The House of Representatives includes the Development and Technology Committee, and the National Assembly has the Sustainable Development and Good Governance Committee, both of which focus on SDG-related work areas. Other government agencies are also setting up mechanisms to harmonize and streamline SDG efforts. Most provincial governments have established planning commissions or policy and planning commissions to coordinate their SDG activities, ensuring alignment with national strategies.

This year, the review focused on seven specific SDGs:

Goal 1: No Poverty

Goal 2: Zero Hunger

Goal 4: Quality Education

Goal 5: Gender Equality

Goal 13: Climate Action

Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Goal 17: Partnership for the Goals

This targeted review assesses Nepal's progress, identifies challenges, and outlines strategies for further advancement, demonstrating the country's ongoing commitment to achieving these goals and contributing to global sustainable development.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Nepal has wholeheartedly embraced the principle of ‘Leaving No One Behind’ as a fundamental aspect of its commitment to the SDGs. The Constitution of Nepal ensures the inclusion of marginalized and backward communities in the development process, aiming to create an egalitarian society where all citizens have equal opportunities and rights. Despite these constitutional guarantees, key groups such as rural women, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, and Dalits continue to face significant barriers in accessing state services and achieving equality.

The existing government mechanisms remain largely unfriendly and inaccessible to these groups, hindering their ability to benefit from development initiatives and state services fully. To address these issues, it is crucial to strengthen the enforcement of policies designed to support marginalized groups. This includes ensuring that laws and regulations aimed at promoting inclusion and equality are effectively implemented and that there are robust mechanisms in place to monitor progress and hold institutions accountable.

Developing targeted strategies to improve access and services for these communities is essential. This could involve capacity building for government officials to better understand and address the needs of marginalized populations, improving the accessibility of public services, and increasing representation of these groups in decision-making processes. Additionally, establishing regular monitoring and evaluation frameworks will help track progress, identify gaps, and ensure that the principle of ‘Leaving No One Behind’ is effectively realized in Nepal’s development agenda.

THE STATUS OF SDGs IMPLEMENTATION SINCE 2020

Nepal has made significant strides in implementing the SDGs since 2020, with notable progress in several key areas. Gender inclusivity has been on the rise in both government and the private sector. Although there have been no specific reports of sexual, verbal, or physical violence against women in certain communities, Dalit women and girls remain vulnerable to caste-based prejudice. Despite a reduction in overt discrimination, subtle and unreported instances persist, especially in the Terai region, where caste-based biases continue to affect social interactions and access to resources.¹

¹Pradhan, B. (2020). Caste-Based Discrimination in Nepal: A Persistent Challenge. *Journal of Social Inclusion Studies*, 6(2), 34-52.

In the field of education, Nepal has achieved substantial progress towards SDG 4, which focuses on inclusive and equitable quality education. Gender parity has been attained at the primary level and is nearing achievement at the secondary level, underscoring the country's commitment to inclusive education. Infrastructure improvements are evident, with internet access in schools increasing from 3.9% in 2015 to 52.8% in 2022, reflecting a strong national commitment to enhancing educational resources.²

Agriculture remains the primary occupation for both men and women, particularly in the Terai region and among the Muslim community, where men typically control financial resources. Despite this, wage equality is present. The formulation of agriculture and nutrition policies from national to local levels is promising. The introduction of Farmers' Identification and Categorization based Identity Cards has empowered marginalized farmers to claim rights and subsidies from the government and other programs³.

Access to clean water and healthcare has also improved. Households have benefitted from hand pumps, and nearby health posts provide essential medical services. There is a notable preference among women for hospital deliveries, indicating increased awareness of professional medical care benefits. Additionally, skilled birth attendants are available in community health centers, contributing to better maternal health outcomes.⁴

Nepal's commitment to the SDGs is further evidenced by its strategic policy documents, including the 15th Development Plan and the 25-Year Long-Term Vision 2100. The SDG Status and Roadmap 2026-2030 outlines the country's comprehensive approach to sustainable development. SDG 13, which addresses climate action, has seen extensive collaboration among the government, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the private sector. CSOs are instrumental in educating communities about climate change, building capacity for climate resilience, and advocating for climate-responsive policies⁵.

²Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (2022). Educational Statistics of Nepal 2022. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.

³ Agriculture Development Strategy. (2020). Farmers' Identification and Categorization based Identity Card Implementation Report. Kathmandu: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development.

⁴Health Sector Strategy. (2020). National Health Sector Strategy Implementation Plan 2020-2025. Kathmandu: Ministry of Health and Population.

⁵ National Planning Commission. (2021). SDG Status and Roadmap 2026-2030. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.

CSOs have also partnered with the Ministry of Forests and Environment and UN agencies to promote sustainable mountain development. In 2022, a series of dialogues highlighted Nepal’s mountain agenda and facilitated knowledge exchange among countries in the Hindu-Kush Himalaya region. This initiative aimed to advance sustainable mountain development and address challenges faced by mountain communities⁶.

Development partners have played a crucial role in supporting Nepal’s SDG efforts, particularly in promoting social inclusion. Their projects focus on empowering vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, through social protection schemes, vocational training, and disaster preparedness plans. These efforts ensure meaningful participation of marginalized populations in development processes⁷.

CHALLENGES AND GAPS IN SDG IMPLEMENTATION

During our field visits across various provinces of Nepal, we observed numerous challenges in implementing the SDGs. These challenges span climate action, social inclusion, infrastructure, disaster preparedness, and governance, significantly impeding the country's progress towards sustainable and inclusive development.

“Being disable friendly isn’t about the physical infrastructures, it’s also about the mentality too.” – A consultation participants from Madhesh Province.

⁶ Mountain Partnership Secretariat. (2022). Sustainable Mountain Development in Nepal: A Year of Dialogue. Rome: FAO.

⁷ UNDP. (2022). Empowering Vulnerable Groups through Social Inclusion Projects in Nepal. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

Climate Change and Environmental Degradation: One of the most pressing issues observed

"The rising temperatures this year have drastically affected our water sources, forests, and farmlands," says a respondent, a local environmental activist. "The degradation is visible, and it worries us about the future. Immediate climate action is essential, but it feels like our concerns are falling on deaf ears."

Another respondent, a farmer from the Terai region, echoes these sentiments. "Our crops are suffering. The erratic weather patterns and increased heat have made traditional farming practices unreliable. We need more support and sustainable solutions from our government and NGOs to adapt to these changes."

during our visits was the impact of rising temperatures on natural resources. Degradation of water, forest, and land resources is evident, posing severe future risks. The effects of climate change are increasingly visible, with immediate action required to address these issues. Despite ongoing efforts in climate action, the frequent climate-induced disasters and epidemics have exacerbated the vulnerabilities of poor and marginalized populations. The existing disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) programs are insufficient, highlighting the need for targeted development

interventions in these areas.

Social Inclusion and Rights Advocacy: Throughout our field visits, it was evident that promises

"We hear promises from politicians about supporting LGBTQI rights, but nothing substantial has been done," says a respondent, an LGBTQI activist. "Many in our community struggle to access basic government benefits and face discrimination daily. The provincial government's plans often overlook our real issues, making it hard to achieve the SDGs."

A school-teacher and advocate for people with disabilities highlights the challenges in educational infrastructure. "Schools claim to be accessible, but the ramps are more suited for bikes than wheelchairs. Inside, facilities like toilets remain inaccessible, forcing students with disabilities to limit their food and water intake to avoid using them. This shows a severe lack of understanding and inclusivity in our society."

from political leaders have not been translated into significant actions for advocating the rights of LGBTQI individuals, people with disabilities, and Dalits. These communities often face poor treatment and lack access to government benefits. The provincial government's plans frequently do not align with local problems, obstructing SDG achievement. There is an urgent need for targeted interventions, increased awareness, and inclusive policies for these groups. Exclusion

from economic opportunities hinders progress towards SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).

Infrastructure and Accessibility: Access to essential facilities such as schools, healthcare centers, markets, and banks remains inadequate and not disability friendly. During our visits to various schools, we observed that ramps were often more suitable for bikes than for individuals with disabilities. Internal facilities, such as toilets, were also inaccessible, forcing students with disabilities to limit their intake of food and water to avoid using unsuitable restrooms. This underscores the need for both physical infrastructure improvements and changes in societal attitudes towards inclusivity. Effective design modifications are essential to create disability-friendly environments, including providing extra space in classrooms and toilets and establishing separate pathways for wheelchair users. Additionally, there is a need for teacher training to adopt inclusive teaching methods tailored to different types of disabilities.

Disaster Preparedness and Response: The lack of targeted disaster preparedness and response for vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities and the LGBTQI community, was a recurring theme during our field visits. These groups are often excluded during rescue and relief operations, with no evidence of targeted disaster planning for them. There is also a significant gap in climate-related capacity-building programs for these groups. For instance, many transgender individuals we met use silicone in their bodies, which is affected by environmental temperature changes due to climate change. This underscores the need for specific training and preparedness measures for these vulnerable groups.

Governance and Institutional Capacity: The transition from a unitary to a federal system of governance has been fraught with challenges. Many laws are yet to be formulated and enacted, and institutional arrangements at all government levels remain incomplete. We observed substantial overlaps, duplications, and ambiguities among government tiers. Although the Nepalese constitution and prevailing laws guarantee freedom of speech and press, there have been numerous allegations of government attempts to threaten journalists and restrict media freedom. The criminalization of normal media activity has led to increased self-censorship among rights activists, including the media.

Caste-Based Discrimination: Despite efforts to curb caste-based discrimination, it remains prevalent, particularly in rural areas. During our visits, we found that the government struggles to

provide accurate data on the Dalit population and their poverty levels. Benefits and services intended for Dalits are often taken by non-Dalits, and the National Dalit Commission has been ineffective in advocating for Dalit rights. Corruption and a lack of targeted programs exacerbate the struggles faced by the Dalit community, and discrimination largely goes unreported due to systemic barriers and a lack of awareness about their rights.

Economic and Livelihood Challenges for Vulnerable Groups: Members of the LGBTQI community face significant barriers in sustaining livelihoods due to discrimination based on their sexual orientation. This exclusion limits their access to services and employment opportunities, hindering progress toward achieving full and productive employment and decent work, essential for SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). During the COVID-19 pandemic, these groups suffered disproportionately, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to support their economic justice and inclusion.

Educational Barriers and Discrimination: Despite high priority for the education of disabled children, discriminatory treatment from peers and teachers is common. Schools we visited often lacked necessary infrastructure and materials to support disabled students. Even when ramps were available, they were frequently inadequate. Internal facilities like toilets were not accessible, reflecting a broader issue that inclusivity goes beyond physical infrastructure. Policies and programs are needed to create a more inclusive educational environment for LGBTQI students. Schools should be better equipped to support LGBTQI students by implementing anti-discrimination policies and providing sensitivity training for teachers and staff.

Health and Well-being: Improvements in access to clean water were observed, with households having hand pumps and communities benefiting from nearby health posts. However, health centers need to be more accessible and inclusive. Most women prefer hospital deliveries, indicating awareness of professional medical care benefits, but there is still a need for skilled birth attendants in community health centers to support safe deliveries. Additionally, the healthcare needs of LGBTQI individuals, particularly transgender individuals, require specific attention due to their unique vulnerabilities related to climate change impacts on their bodies.

CONCLUSION

The NPC, the apex body of the government, is the focal agency for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Nepal. The commission initiated the Voluntary National Review to track progress, identify gaps,

and address challenges. It has organized consultation events at national and provincial levels to gather information. The Constitution of Nepal has introduced a federal system that envisions power-sharing between central, state, and local governments. However, awareness of the SDGs among local government agencies is limited, and the localization of the SDGs is significantly lagging.

While development partners and NGOs are knowledgeable about the SDGs, the general populace at the local community level is less aware or completely unaware of the SDGs and their processes. It appears that the principle of "Leaving No One Behind" has been overlooked at the grassroots level, hindering progress towards achieving the SDGs. There is a pressing need for plans and mechanisms to reach the unreached, along with substantial efforts to orient and advocate for the SDGs in local communities.

Despite collective efforts from CSOs and government agencies towards the SDGs, significant gaps remain in their realization and localization. As we embrace a new era of the "bottom-up" approach for growth and development, CSOs play a crucial role and have a strong foundation to support the government in achieving the 2030 Agenda. Meaningful partnerships between the state, civil society, and the private sector are essential and highly valuable in achieving the SDGs. A common platform for CSOs, such as the Nepal SDG Forum, could serve as a valuable space for sharing knowledge and expertise among different stakeholders engaged in the achievement of the SDGs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhance Inclusivity and Participation

- **Inclusion of Marginalized Communities:** Ensure the active participation of poor and vulnerable groups, including women, children, youth, Dalits, persons with disabilities, and the LGBTIQ+ community, in the planning and implementation of SDGs. Recognize these communities as key stakeholders in achieving the SDGs.
- **Community Awareness Programs:** Implement comprehensive community awareness programs to improve understanding and participation in SDG-related activities at the grassroots level. This includes promoting the principle of 'Leave No One Behind' to ensure marginalized voices are heard and represented.

2. Improve Quality Public Education and Access

- **Increased Public Spending on Education:** Allocate more resources to education to ensure quality and equitable access for all students. Strengthen the implementation and monitoring of educational policies to address the needs of marginalized populations.
- **Inclusive Educational Infrastructure:** Ensure that school facilities, including ramps, toilets, and classrooms, are accessible to students with disabilities. Provide teacher training on inclusive teaching methods.

3. Strengthen Local Government Accountability

- **Alignment with SDG Goals:** Ensure that local government policies and programs align with SDG goals and targets, focusing on local needs and priorities. Localize SDG indicators and integrate local plans into national priorities.
- **Robust Monitoring and Reporting Systems:** Develop a robust database system for tracking SDG progress. Encourage local governments to regularly report on their SDG outcomes, ensuring transparency and accountability.

4. Address Social Inclusion and Rights Advocacy

- **Targeted Interventions for Marginalized Groups:** Implement targeted interventions and inclusive policies for LGBTQI individuals, persons with disabilities, and Dalits. Increase awareness and advocacy for their rights to ensure equitable access to opportunities and services.
- **Reporting Mechanisms for Violence and Abuse:** Establish better reporting mechanisms for incidents of violence and abuse against marginalized groups. Implement community awareness programs to address and prevent such incidents.

5. Enhance Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability

- **Support for Local Farmers:** Protect local farmers by controlling the import of unsafe agricultural products. Promote the use of traditional, climate-friendly seeds, skills, tools, and technologies to enhance agricultural productivity and resilience.
- **Targeted Disaster Preparedness:** Develop targeted disaster preparedness and response plans for vulnerable groups. Ensure that these plans address the specific needs of marginalized populations, including the provision of climate-related capacity-building programs.

6. Strengthen Governance and Institutional Capacity

- **Effective Policy Implementation:** Strengthen the enforcement of policies designed to support marginalized groups. Develop guidelines and frameworks to enhance the capacity of subnational governments in planning, resource allocation, and monitoring of SDGs.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Foster stronger collaboration between government agencies, CSOs, and local communities to promote transparency, accountability, ownership, and sustainability in SDG implementation.

7. Promote Economic and Livelihood Opportunities

- **Economic Inclusion for Vulnerable Groups:** Implement targeted interventions to support the economic justice and inclusion of marginalized groups, particularly the LGBTQI community. Provide vocational training and support schemes to enhance their livelihood opportunities.
- **Support During Crises:** Ensure targeted support for vulnerable groups during crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, to mitigate their disproportionate suffering and promote economic resilience.

8. Enhance Health and Well-being

- **Accessible Healthcare:** Improve the accessibility of health centers and ensure that healthcare needs of marginalized groups, including transgender individuals, are addressed. Increase the availability of skilled birth attendants in community health centers.
- **Inclusive Health Policies:** Develop and implement health policies that cater to the unique vulnerabilities of marginalized groups, particularly in the context of climate change impacts.

9. Ensure a Vibrant Civic Space

Ensuring a vibrant civic space is critical for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16), which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Ensure Freedom of Assembly and Association : Implement and uphold laws that allow peaceful assembly and the formation of associations without undue restrictions and hassle on registration, renew and operation of CSOs.

Provide Inclusive Participation on Planning and Implementation : Recognize CSOs contribution on nation building, provide wider opportunity and access to CSOs on national and sub national planning process as well as implementation of program and public budget.

Media and Press Freedom : Enact and enforce laws that guarantee freedom of speech, press, and information and safeguard digital rights, including freedom from censorship and access to the internet, and digital divide and protect journalists from harassment and violence.

Safety Measures and Recognition and Support of Human Rights Defender: Develop and implement protective measures for human rights defenders, including emergency assistance and relocation programs. Acknowledge the legitimate role of human rights defenders and provide them with resources and support.

10. Foster International Cooperation and Support

- **Negotiation for International Support:** Advocate strongly for privileges and preferential treatments in trade, technology transfer, foreign direct investment, debt cancellation, and development cooperation in line with international agreements and declarations.
- **Global Advocacy:** Leverage international forums to highlight the unique challenges faced by Nepal in achieving the SDGs and garner global support for sustainable development initiatives.

11. Build Stronger Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

- **Common Platform for CSOs:** Establish a common platform like the Nepal SDG Forum to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among different stakeholders engaged in SDG achievement. Promote meaningful partnerships between the state, civil society, and the private sector.
- **Engagement with Local Institutions:** Strengthen partnerships with local government bodies and institutions to address the unique challenges faced by marginalized groups, ensuring a holistic and inclusive approach to sustainable development.

ANNEX

CONVENOR AND CO-CONVENOR OF NEPAL SDGs FORUM

GOALS/Themes	Convener
GOAL 1: No Poverty	RRN
GOAL 2: Zero Hunger	FIAN Nepal
GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being	RECPHEC
GOAL 4: Quality Education	NCE Nepal
GOAL 5: Gender Equality	BBC
GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	FEDWASUN
GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	CEN
GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	NFDN
GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	NFIWUAN
GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality	DNF
GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	NSET
GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	Upabhokta Sanrakshan Manch
GOAL 13: Climate Action	KIRDARC Nepal
GOAL 15: Life on Land	FECOFUN
GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions	NFN
GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal	NFN

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED AND INFORMATION GATHERED

- Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN)
- Beyond Beijing Committee
- Dalit NGO Federation
- Education Watch Group Nepal
- Federation of Sexual and Gender Minorities – Nepal
- National Farmers Group Federation
- National Federation of the Disabled Nepal
- VSO Nepal
- Youth Advocacy Nepal
- Youth Initiative