



UNDP NEPAL

YOUTH STRATEGY

2018-2022

*COVER: Artists in the process of
creating an 'SDG Mandala' at
Patan Durbar Square as part of
UN Day celebrations in 2017.
Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhushi*

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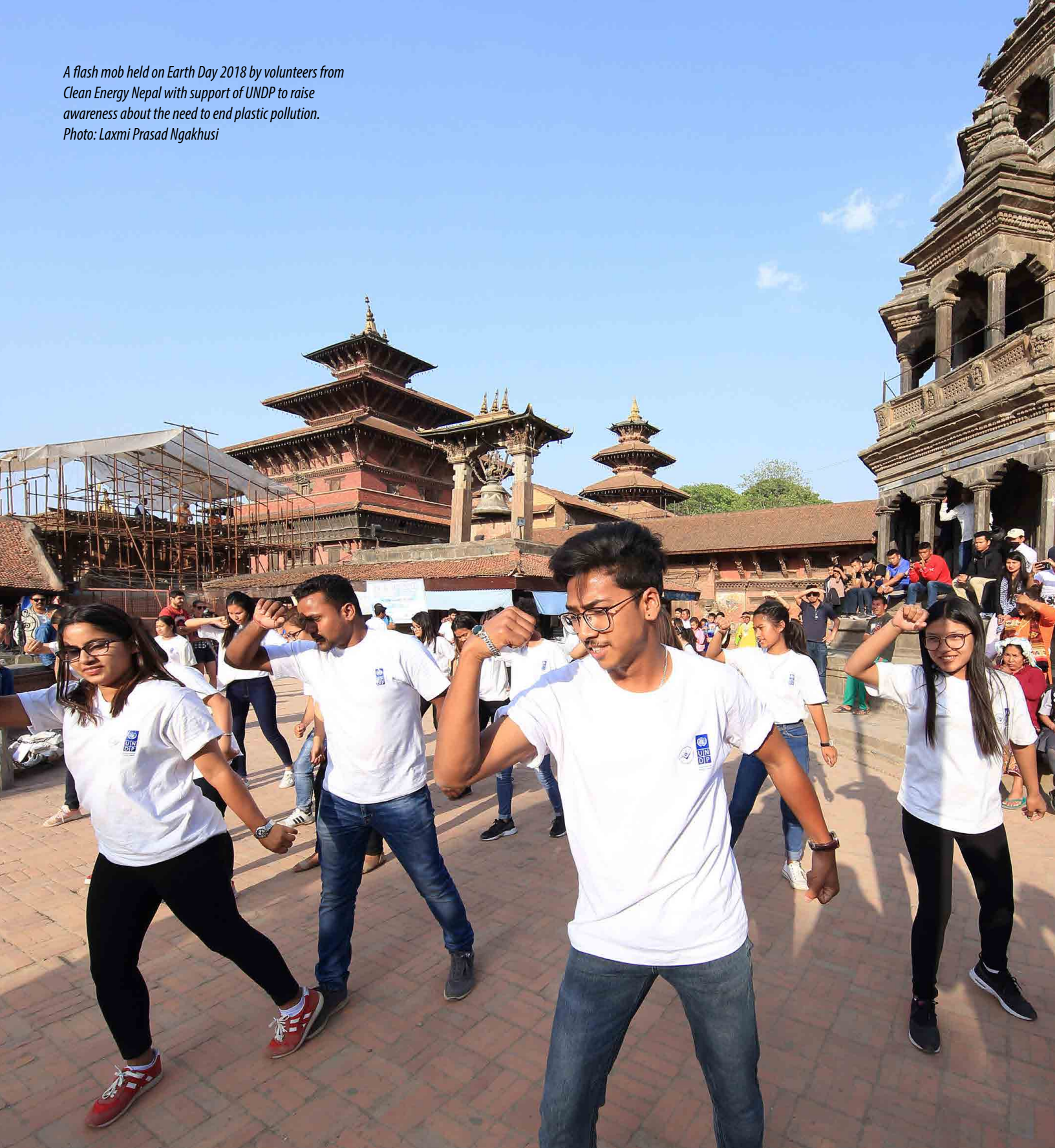
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*A flash mob held on Earth Day 2018 by volunteers from Clean Energy Nepal with support of UNDP to raise awareness about the need to end plastic pollution.
Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhusi*



YOUTH IN NEPAL



Participants of the first Youth Co:Lab Nepal National Dialogue organized by UNDP in partnership with various youth organizations in November 2017. Photo: UNDP Nepal

Context

The world at present has more young people than ever before, and 85 percent of them live in developing countries. The opportunities available to today's youth in terms of communicating, acting and influencing are unprecedented, as are the challenges they face. From climate change, to unemployment, to multiple forms of inequality, discrimination and exclusion, young people, particularly those belonging to vulnerable or marginalized groups, have many hurdles to overcome.

At the root is the issue of limited and unequal access to resources, education, healthcare as well as economic, social and political opportunities. Ensuring protection from various forms of abuse and exploitation is another challenge, especially in the case of young girls and women who are at risk of gender-based violence and multi-layered discrimination. Youth are often targeted and perceived as spoilers during conflicts, and their roles as peace-builders go unrecognized. They are also rarely engaged meaningfully in decisions affecting

their everyday lives. Safeguarding the rights of young people, and investing in their education, decent work and employment opportunities, livelihood skills, access to basic services and civic and political participation are therefore essential steps in securing a better future.

In Nepal, youth will continue to constitute the dominant demographic cohort until 2035, covering

the entire period of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—from 2015 to 2030—and beyond. UNDP, in supporting the implementation of the SDGs in Nepal, is guided by a roadmap that incorporates strong engagement with youth. Several youth organizations and networks are active in Nepal, and UNDP aims to engage with them, while working for youth as beneficiaries and supporting them as leaders and agents of change.

DEFINING YOUTH

The United Nations defines “youth” as persons between the ages of 15-24¹ whereas the government of Nepal extends the definition to those between 16 and 40 years of age, which accounts for over 40 percent of the country’s population, according to the Population and Housing Census Report 2011. Among them, nearly 46 percent are men and more than 54 percent women. Taking into account a broad range of contextual issues, UNDP Nepal uses a more flexible definition of youth in order to align with Nepal’s socio-cultural context and the national youth priorities.

1. United Nations (1981), *Secretary General’s Report to the General Assembly (A/36/215)*

Youth issues in Nepal

Numerous factors are impeding the development of Nepal's youth, including shortage of employment opportunities—as a result of which overseas migration and brain-drain has increased, with its own repercussions: limited participation in political processes, involvement in illicit activities, vulnerability to climate change, and multiple forms of discrimination.

Youth and employment

Unemployment rates are higher for young people than for the whole of the Nepali population. The unemployment rate for those aged 15–29 is 19.2 percent. Young women also fare worse than men regarding their employment ratio (33.4 and 42.8 percent, respectively) and their labour force participation rate (43.0 and 51.7 percent, respectively). In addition, close to 27 percent of all unemployed youth have been looking for work for more than one year. These young people will experience increasing difficulty finding decent jobs that allow them to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.²

Youth and migration

Over 1,500 young Nepalis leave the country on a daily basis to enter overseas job markets.³ According to data from the World Bank, Nepal receives remittances worth about 28 percent of the country's GDP.⁴ In the last two decades, the country has seen a dramatic rise in internal and international migration, from rural areas to urban centers, and from Nepal to India and Middle East countries.⁵



Over 1,500 young Nepalis leave the country on a daily basis to enter overseas job markets. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhushi

2. Labour market transition for young women and men in Nepal, ILO and the Master Card Foundation (2014)

3. Agriculture Rural Development and Youth in the Information Society (2013). Scenario of Youth Migration in Nepal. Available at: <http://ardyis.cta.int/fr/actualites/actualites-du-projet/item/197-scenario-of-youth-migration-in-nepal>. and At soaring rate, Nepalis seeking jobs abroad come home dead (2016). Available at: <http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20161220/business/312209759>

4. World Bank (2018) Personal remittances, received (% of GDP). Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=NP>

5. Gautam Tika Ram (2008). Migration and the Problem of Old Age People in Nepal. Available at: <http://lib.icimod.org/record/13468/files/6058.pdf>

According to *Labour Migration for Employment: A Status Report for Nepal 2013/14*, overseas employment is heavily male dominated; roughly 95 per cent of all labour permits are given to men. However, other data that captures those working in India (where labour permits are not required) or those leaving to work abroad through informal channels indicates that female migration might be as high as 12 percent of the total workforce abroad.⁶ Poverty, limited employment options, delayed political transitions and instability are some of the contributing factors to the increase in youth migration.

Youth and participation

The commitment and contribution of young people has been crucial to the success of many political milestones that have shaped the establishment and strengthening of democracy in Nepal. These include, among others, movements to bring about the end of the Rana rule in 1951; the dissolution of the Panchayat regime and establishment of a constitutional monarchy in 1990; as well as the 2nd people's movement of 2006 which opened the way for Nepal's transformation into a federal democratic republic. Despite these examples, the meaningful political engagement of youth and youth issues in general have not been given an important place in the country's key priorities.

Young people continue to remain at the margins of the political, social and economic spheres. Formal political processes and institutions are still characterized by limited youth participation.

Even in the youth wings of political parties, almost all leaders are above 35 years of age.⁷ Young men and women are thus very often disillusioned with political leadership and excluded from policy development and decision-making institutions. The political activism of young Nepalis has therefore not always been channeled through significant formal mechanisms. Youth participation has also been hindered by the absence of local elections between 1997 and 2017.

Youth and peacebuilding

The armed conflict that lasted from 1996 to 2006 had significant implications on youth in Nepal. While many young people became victims of human-rights abuse, sexual violence and torture during that period, many others—particularly marginalized youth who did not have access to viable livelihood and employment options—were pulled into illicit activities and acts of violence. Much attention is thus needed to enable the social, political, economic and, in some cases, cultural reintegration of these young men and women into society.

Youth and resilience

Nepal ranks 4th, 11th and 30th out of 198 countries in terms of relative vulnerability to climate change, earthquakes and flood hazards respectively.⁸ As the severity of climate change increases, and with it, the frequency of extreme events, the existing vulnerabilities of young people risk being exacerbated.

6. <http://ilo.org/kathmandu/areasofwork/labour-migration/lang--en/index.htm>

7. Leaders of the youth wings of political parties in Nepal include: Nirudevi-Yuwa Sangh-42 years, Ji Jung Basnet-Nepal Tarun Dal-46, Nainsingh Mahar-44-Nepal Student Union, RC Sharma-38-Young Communist League, Ranjit Singh-37-Sadbhawana Party Youth Wing, Krishna Singh-38-Terai Madhesh Loktantrik Party, Sunil Chaudhary-38-Singhiya Yuwa Forum

8. *Disaster Risk Reduction in Nepal: Achievements, Challenges and Way forward*. Government of Nepal, Ministry of Home Affairs.

On the other hand, however, if their networks and capabilities can be effectively harnessed, youth also have great potential to contribute to the recovery and resilience of their communities with regard to the impacts of natural disasters, as was seen in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake.

Youth and diversity and vulnerability



Monica Shahi, the first recipient of Nepal's third gender passport, at a Gaijatra Pride Parade. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhusi

Young people in Nepal are not a homogeneous constituency, and their needs and life experiences vary dramatically. Different groups require specific attention with regard to the particular challenges of exclusion, inequality and discrimination they face. These include young women vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation; highly marginalized indigenous youth; disadvantaged young women and girls; Dalit youth; young people with disabilities; youth without basic education; unemployed youth; migrant workers and their families; rural landless and land-poor youth; young bonded and forced laborers; young urban slum dwellers and squatters; conflict-affected youth; young people especially vulnerable to climate risks; sexual and gender minority youth; and young people living with HIV, among others.



There are a number of policies, plans and infrastructures in place for the empowerment of young people in Nepal, to enable them to contribute to development processes. These commitments, if translated into action, can help youth take up their roles as active citizens for transformational change.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH

Several key national-level structures and policies have prioritized youth issues:

Constitution of Nepal

The Constitution of Nepal, promulgated in 2015, promotes policies to encourage youth participation in the all-round development of the country. For this, it emphasizes the creation and provision of opportunities for young people in the fields of education, health and employment, aimed at boosting their personal development and empowerment.

Ministry of Youth and Sports

The Ministry of Youth and Sports was established in 2009 with the mandate of promoting and supporting youth development in Nepal. The ministry's core areas of work include developing youth policies, strategies and plans; creating implementation mechanisms; and ensuring resources are allocated to execute these policies and plans. It is also

Nepal's Constitution recognizes the need to create opportunities for young people in the fields of education, health and employment. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhusi



responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Youth Policy. It has launched several programs for youth welfare, such as the Local Youth Partnership Program 2009/2010. The Ministry of Finance, meanwhile, allocates a portion of the annual budget to youth development activities, such as the Youth Self-Employment Program, the Grand Youth Sports Competition, and the Youth Mobilization Program, among others.

National Youth Council

The Ministry of Youth and Sports has formed an autonomous and executive National Youth Council. This council consists of representatives of concerned ministries, representatives of youth organizations of political parties and office-bearers appointed by the government. The Council's main objectives are to coordinate, harmonize and facilitate youth-related programmes launched by governmental and non-governmental institutions, as well as the private sector.

Youth Vision 2025

This 10-year strategy for youth development was prepared by the National Youth Council under the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and mainly focuses on areas of education, employment, health, social security, leadership development and sports and

entertainment. It is to be implemented through the National Youth Council and its chapters at sub-national levels.

National Youth Policy

The National Youth Policy was developed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports to empower young people. It aims to do this by building youth capacity to contribute to a prosperous, modern and just Nepal, and integrating young people in national development through meaningful participation and leadership. The policy was developed in the context of the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007, which mandated that the state “shall pursue a special policy to mobilize youth human resources for the development of the country.”

Nepal's 14th Development Plan

The 14th Development Plan (2016/17-2018/19) includes a chapter on youth development,⁹ in which it recognizes the role of young people as major contributors to socio-economic development and sustainable peace, and the need to provide them opportunities to exercise their potential. This acknowledgement of youth in the government's plan represents an important step forward, a victory for the coalition of organizations advocating on behalf of Nepal's youth.

9. Government of Nepal's National Planning Commission (2016), 14th Development Plan. Available at: http://www.npc.gov.np/en/category/periodic_plans#.

According to the plan, the policies and programmes of the government for the fiscal year 2073-74 (2016-2017) have highlighted provisions targeted at youth. 50,000 young people, for instance, will be self-employed every year through the Youth Self-Employment Programme, which is to be scaled up. As part of this, unemployed youth will also be granted access to concessional loans on the basis of project ideas.

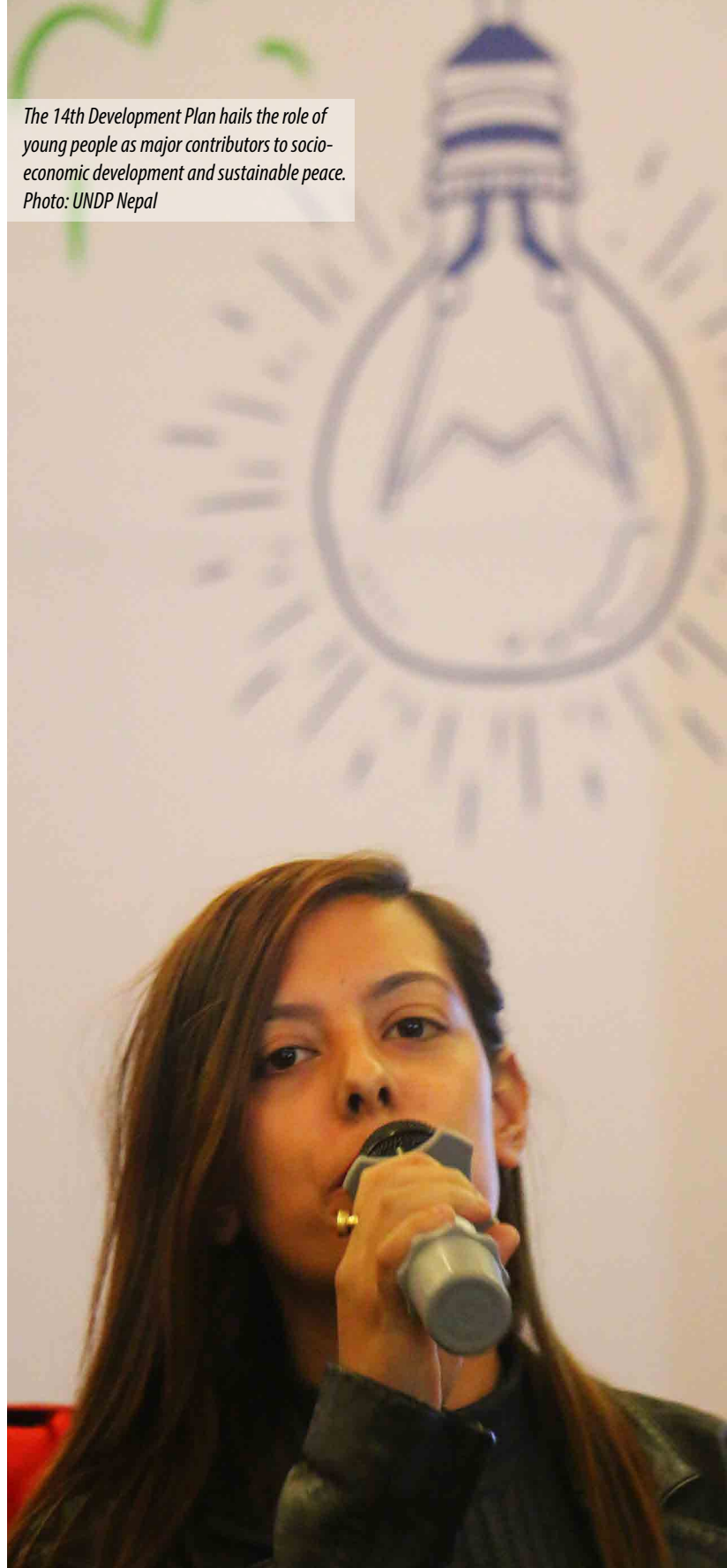
Youth organizations

National Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society Organizations play a vital role in youth empowerment in Nepal. There are almost 46,500 NGOs affiliated with the Social Welfare Council, among which around 20 percent are youth organizations. There are also around 190 INGOs working under agreement with the council, some of which directly work on youth issues. UNDP Nepal has partnered with several of these organizations in collaborative efforts for youth engagement and empowerment.

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It is clear that though some strides have been taken to bring youth issues into the national spotlight, there is still a great deal more to be done. To facilitate better partnerships between the government and youth, and to bring even more attention to youth welfare, UN agencies, as well as different development partners, are also implementing several initiatives.

The 14th Development Plan hails the role of young people as major contributors to socio-economic development and sustainable peace.
Photo: UNDP Nepal



UN YOUTH INITIATIVES

The United Nations in Nepal has undertaken considerable effort to mainstream young people in its work. Youth is a cross-cutting issue in the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2018-2022, for instance, and there are a number of youth-related initiatives created within the UN system for action on the issue.



The 2014 UN Traineeship Programme Cohort at their orientation session. Photo: UNDP Nepal

UN Country Team Youth Group

This platform brings different UN agencies in Nepal together to discuss national priorities and needs related to youth and the ways in which the UN system could respond to these. UNDP is an active member of this group, and works through it to improve coordination and coherence within the UN system and among its partners in government, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

UN Traineeship

UN agencies in Nepal have been collaborating in running a joint traineeship programme designed specifically to help university graduates belonging to socially-excluded groups develop their professional competencies and employability prospects. The trainees work full time with the UN for a period of 11 months with a focus on on-the-job training, access to mentoring and practical experience.

UN Volunteers

Volunteerism is widely recognized as a powerful means of transforming the pace and nature of development and draws upon the inherent core values of self-help, solidarity and social cohesion. UNDP Nepal has long experience of working with the UN Volunteers programme

to promote young people's participation in different contexts, including in the promotion of local governance systems and/or disaster response and early recovery initiatives. This work will be further strengthened in the future.

UN Youth Advisory Panel

The UN recognizes the role of youth as agents of change in maintaining and promoting peace, security, justice and human rights. It additionally places high importance on establishing productive dialogues and improving knowledge-sharing between UN agencies and young people on the ground. It was for this purpose—to help build a more youth-responsive and inclusive UN with the meaningful participation of young people—that the UN Youth Advisory Panel was formed in 2008.



The UN places great importance on establishing dialogues and improving knowledge-sharing between UN agencies and young people on the ground. Photo: UNDP Nepal



In addition to being part of these inter-UN mechanisms, UNDP Nepal hopes to collaborate with other development partners in working on youth issues, including NGOs, INGOs, and bilateral and multilateral entities, to help empower young people to engage in their own development. It also draws on regional and global initiatives by working closely with the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub and UNDP Headquarters in New York.

*UN Volunteers under UNDP conducting surveys of earthquake-affected households in Sindhupalchowk.
Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhushi*

UNDP NEPAL YOUTH STRATEGY

The UNDP Nepal Youth Strategy recognizes the key role played by young people in different spheres of development—economic growth, democratic governance and building resilience, among others—and with the objective of mainstreaming youth in all areas of UNDP’s work as agents of positive change.

The strategy encapsulates UNDP’s commitment to prioritizing, analyzing and addressing youth issues, needs and concerns, and supporting young people in contributing actively to local and global transformations. The document is guided by the UNDP Global Youth Strategy and focuses on three pillars or outcome areas, very much aligned to the outcomes of UNDP Nepal’s Country Programme 2018-2022:



**ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT OF
YOUTH**



**YOUTH CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT**



**YOUTH
ENGAGEMENT IN
RESILIENCE BUILDING**

This strategy seeks to identify elements for implementation at the national level through the UNDAF, UNDP Nepal's Country Programme, as well as specific projects and programmes. The efforts of UNDP's ongoing initiatives related to poverty and inclusive growth; democratic governance; and environment, climate and disaster risk management are all well placed to be channeled towards corresponding needs of youth.

The strategy is guided by the core principles embedded in international and regional frameworks and conventions, as well as other key documents of the UN system. It leans on the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the World Programme of Action for Youth; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the UN Security Council Resolution 2250. It also supports the work of the UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth and the UN Interagency Network on Youth Development, as well as the implementation of the UN System-wide Action Plan on Youth.



Pillars/Outcome areas

The expected outcomes of the UNDP Nepal Youth Strategy pertain to three main areas:

Increased economic empowerment of youth

Outcome I focuses on enhancing the number and quality of jobs for young people, helping boost their productivity and facilitating their movement into more productive sectors. Besides the financial implications, improved youth employment also has important societal benefits, including promotion of social justice and gender equality. The programme on youth economic empowerment focuses on:

■ **Engaging youth in livelihood promotion activities with a focus on eco-tourism, agriculture and marketing**

■ **Promoting youth entrepreneurs and enhancing their capacity to undertake a leadership role in micro-entrepreneurs' associations/networks at both national and local levels**



An engineer supported by UNDP works on a machine designed to mechanize the processing of Himalayan Nettle (Allo) for the benefit of entrepreneurs across Nepal. Photo: MEDEP

EXAMPLE: MICRO-ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

To create stable income for women and people from socially-excluded groups living below the poverty line, UNDP and Nepal government started the Micro Enterprise Development Programme in 1998. Since then, it has evolved into a model of enterprise development with the potential to lift thousands out of poverty. Out of the 130,000+ micro-entrepreneurs that the project has created, 60 percent are youth (16 to 40 years). As of July 2018, the project has been fully internalized by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies into its own Micro-Enterprise Development for Poverty Alleviation project.



A software developer and a micro-entrepreneur work together during the launch of the Idea Factory in 2016. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhusi

EXAMPLE: IDEA FACTORY

The Idea Factory, developed by UNDP Nepal in partnership with the Microsoft Innovation Center Nepal, was an innovative platform to encourage potential young entrepreneurs to develop and incubate business ideas to match their capital, interests, skills and other factors. The workshop resulted in the creation of an online marketplace dedicated to helping UNDP-supported entrepreneurs sell their products directly in to national and international buyers.

Inviting banks and financial institutions to work with youth entrepreneurs as a potential market for financial service providers

Promoting and supporting government institutions and private organizations to develop Youth Enterprise Development Facilitators

Promoting innovation to support potential entrepreneurs in developing ideas for start-ups and small business ventures

EXAMPLE: YOUTH CO: LAB NEPAL

Youth Co:Lab, UNDP's Asia-Pacific youth entrepreneurship initiative, positions young people front and center to solve the region's most pressing challenges. Not only does it support youth entrepreneurship, Co:Lab also works closely with the region's governments and leading firms to look at how the entrepreneurship ecosystem can be reinforced to enable young people to take the lead on new pathways to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Co:Lab thereby deepens understanding of youth-led solutions, and elevates the role of young people as development partners alongside government, private business and social movements.

The first ever UNDP Nepal Youth Co:Lab 1.0 was held in November 2017, bringing together 60 young innovators and entrepreneurs, along with different representatives from government agencies and the private sector, to examine and discuss the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Nepal. The 15 most outstanding entrepreneurs from that event then took part in an Idea Competition in January 2018. Two social ventures—Food Mario and Himalayan Innovations—were selected as the winners and given the chance to pitch their ideas to an audience of investors in Bangkok, Thailand in March 2018. Further iterations of the initiative have been planned for 2018 and beyond.



Youth civic engagement

Outcome II recognizes the need to support young men and women in understanding their civic and political rights and the channels through which they may exercise these rights and contribute to decision-making processes that impact their lives. Efforts under this outcome include strengthening youth participation in formal political mechanisms, platforms and institutions, and creating space for interactions and exchange between young people and political actors and policy-makers. The programme focuses on:

Promoting local youth clubs and networks and linking these to formal and informal platforms to ensure young people's participation in local-level planning processes

Providing electoral education to youth and first-time voters through Electoral Education and Information Centers

Enhancing the capacity of young people to promote social cohesion through inclusive platforms to be established in conflict hotspots

EXAMPLE: SOCIAL COHESION AND DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME

UNDP's Social Cohesion and Democratic Participation programme was launched in January 2016 to strengthen social cohesion and prevent escalation of tensions in the context of the promulgation of Nepal's new constitution and impending transition to federalism. More than 350 youth, women, civil society members, journalists and political leaders were engaged in reinforcing social harmony in their communities via different initiatives undertaken by the project at the local level.



Local youth from Bara take part in a workshop organized by UNDP to promote peaceful elections in the district. Photo: SCDP/UNDP Nepal

Supporting the efforts of the mock parliament platform to strengthen the civic and political participation of youth, and to promote interaction between young people and policy-making bodies

EXAMPLE: YOUTH MOCK PARLIAMENT

UNDP, in collaboration with the Association of Youth Organizations in Nepal and the National Youth Council, organized mock parliaments for young people in all seven provinces of Nepal to familiarize participants with parliamentary procedures and policy formation processes. More than 1,000 youth—half of whom were female, while 5 percent were Dalits, 17 percent Janajatis, and 19 percent Madhesis, besides 10 LGBTIQ youths and 20 youths with disabilities—directly participated in these events, where they discussed a variety of development issues: including environment, gender equality, peace and migration, among others. Visibility of these programmes was optimized by live TV and radio broadcasts and print media coverage in all the provinces, creating a momentum for active and constructive participation of youth in political life. A few participants went on to contest in the local-level elections in their districts.

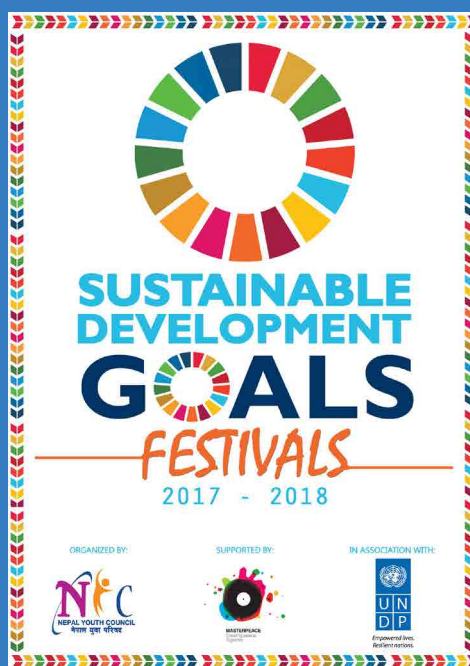


Voting simulation at a mock youth parliament session held to mark Women's Day 2017. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhushi

Supporting young women to take up leading roles in conflict prevention and social cohesion, and promoting the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other related resolutions at the community level

Exploring the role of social media and other information and communication technologies in enabling access to information and fostering political participation, in particular that of women, girls and various marginalized sections of youth, such as young people living with HIV and disability, Dalits, or those belonging to ethnic, religious and sexual minority groups

Working with youth-led organizations and networks to promote the SDGs and create a pool of resources at the national and sub-national levels to cascade knowledge and experience for the purpose of localizing the SDGs



EXAMPLE: SDGS FESTIVAL

The SDGs Festivals were a series of events organized by the Nepal Youth Council with UNDP support in all seven provinces around Nepal in a bid to help localize the Global Goals. Each of the events saw the participation of young leaders and youth belonging to different think tanks, along with provincial government representatives, and other community stakeholders, who jointly explored potential mechanisms to localize the SDGs in their respective provinces and municipalities. Over 1,000 young people across the country were engaged to discuss the role of youth in the SDGs localization process.



*Young UNDP-supported engineers carrying out assessments in earthquake-ravaged Sindhupalchowk.
Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhushi*



Youth engagement in resilience building

Outcome III is centred on the mobilization and empowerment of youth as positive agents of change, particularly in post-crisis and natural disaster contexts. UNDP Nepal recognizes the importance of enhancing the capacity of young men and women to anticipate, prevent, recover from, and transform in the aftermath of shocks, stresses and change. The active involvement of young Nepalis in the rescue and relief efforts in the wake of the devastating earthquakes of 2015 was an exceptional example of how youth are often the first responders to disasters and contribute to building resilience in their communities. Some of the initiatives under this outcome are:

■ **Supporting livelihood stabilization of young men and women as early on as possible in post-disaster settings as an important building block for resilience and social cohesion**

■ **Mobilizing youth in disaster preparedness, awareness and post-disaster efforts, in particular those focusing on community infrastructure rehabilitation and local governance**

■ **Supporting the conducting of need assessments and other procedures leading up to the formation of ECO Disaster Risk Reduction clubs**

EXAMPLE: SAFE DEBRIS MANAGEMENT, DEMOLITION & DISASTER WASTE MANAGEMENT

Prior to the 2015 earthquakes, Nepal did not have adequate expertise in safe debris management, demolition and disaster waste management, particularly at the scale that would be required following earthquakes. It therefore became crucial to rapidly train teams of engineers to undertake structural assessments and demolitions. 105 young Nepali engineers received intensive and thorough instruction in safe debris management, demolition and disaster waste management from international demolition experts.

Out of the 105 engineers, UNDP mobilized 92 in partnership with the UNV programme. The engineers received on-the-job training and participated in technical workshops, before going on to supervise the demolition and debris management in various quake-hit private and public buildings. They also transferred components of technical knowledge to over 4,000 people engaged in debris management, demolition and waste management through a cash-for-work scheme.



UNDP and the UNV programme mobilized 92 engineers to supervise demolition and debris management in various quake-hit private and public buildings following the 2015 earthquakes. Photo: UNDP Nepal

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Under the framework of its three outcome areas, and through various interventions, UNDP Nepal's Youth Strategy aims to protect and promote the rights of young people, and encourage their active contribution to development.

Approaches

UNDP offers added value to the UN system's work on youth, drawing on its multi-disciplinary approach towards development in policies and programming. For the UNDP Nepal Youth Strategy in particular, a four-pronged approach has been adopted, which seeks to:

SUPPORT through capacity development young people and youth organizations;

ENGAGE through outreach, advocacy and mainstreaming of youth issues in all spheres of development;

INFLUENCE through thought leadership, global policy debates and networks, that include the voices of marginalized youth, and build on improved data collection to monitor the post-2015 development process; and

SUSTAIN through support to national policy, more effective strategies to protect young men and women from exploitation and neglect, and support their informed and active participation in all spheres of society.



UNDP Nepal's Youth Strategy seeks to engage young people through outreach, advocacy and mainstreaming of youth issues. Photo: UNDP Nepal

Implementing principles

The UNDP Nepal Youth Strategy embraces 10 guiding principles:

Working with and for young people as initiators, collaborators and target groups, by further integrating youth across UNDP programming to create mechanisms that empower, engage and include young people—especially the vulnerable and marginalized.

Protecting youth human rights by promoting a human rights-based approach to programming and developing the capacity of young people to claim and exercise their economic, political, social, civil and cultural rights.

Reflecting the pivotal significance of gender equality and empowerment of young women understanding that sustainable human development will not be fully achieved unless women and girls are able to contribute on an equal basis with men and boys to their societies.

Seeking sustainable human development through livelihood creation for poor youth and, in all actions, being guided by processes that enlarge young people's choices by expanding their capabilities and opportunities in ways that are sustainable from the economic, social and environmental standpoints, benefiting the present without compromising the future.

Being guided by national ownership and leadership, including youth leadership, about how best to meet young people's aspirations and with UNDP helping to develop the policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities and institutional capacities that can sustain results for youth.

EXAMPLE: LEGAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

In partnership with the Nepal Bar Association, UNDP conducts a Legal Internship Programme to facilitate the entry of more women and people from vulnerable groups into the legal profession. The six-month programme aims to boost young lawyers' confidence and skills so that they are able to better contribute to strengthening rule of law and access to justice in Nepal. So far, five batches comprising 135 young lawyers have graduated from the programme.

Ensuring youth participation and voice in pursuit of equitable access for young women and young men to development opportunities, recognizing young people as agents of positive change for their own development, strengthening youth civic engagement and participation in politics and public institutions.

EXAMPLE: HUMAN RIGHTS APPATHON

500 young IT students and graduates from across Nepal put their skills to the test in an appathon to develop applications and websites that could help solve human rights problems. The top prize went to Team Right Avengers for their app that links victims of human rights violations with the right authorities. The Appathon was conducted jointly by UNDP Nepal, the Microsoft Innovation Center Nepal, the National Human Rights Commission and the Ellaine Memorial Foundation.

Encouraging innovation for transformational change, by investing in the development of new and innovative tools and approaches, and considering throughout, the potential to replicate and scale up successful experiences.

Advancing south-south and triangular cooperation between developing countries to promote the



Young innovators at the Yantra 6.0 Robotics Competition organized by the Robotics Association Nepal with UNDP support. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhushi

exchange of knowledge, experiences, best practices and other resources that promise development solutions for youth .

Optimizing youth volunteerism to engage young people in tackling development challenges, gaining both skills and strengthening trust and solidarity in society, and creating opportunities for participation.

Sharing inter-generational knowledge by supporting the two-way transfer of information and experiences between younger and older generations, strengthening dialogue between traditional community leadership, elders and young people.

COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH TOOLS



UNDP uses its communications tools to establish fruitful partnerships with youth groups, youth associations and students. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhushi

UNDP Nepal's Communications Strategy places high priority on engaging with and mobilizing youth in its efforts to create a wider development constituency, and to further spread the message of the SDGs to a larger audience. UNDP will use its communications tools—such as social media, lectures, interactions, innovation challenges, quizzes and contests—in establishing more fruitful partnerships with youth groups, youth associations and students. The lecture series, in particular, has the potential to reach out to thousands of university and college students and civil society actors across the country, to raise awareness on the SDGs, and discuss the role of youth in the implementation, monitoring and supervision of efforts directed at achieving these goals.

While youth are an overall target group for UNDP Nepal, special attention will be given to empowering, engaging with and mobilizing young people belonging to marginalized and vulnerable groups. Focus will also be placed on key young influencers whose networks can be harnessed for advocacy and action.

SUSTAINABLE & INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS



Volunteers from youth organizations and colleges join the drive to clean UN Park on UN Day 2017. Photo: UNDP Nepal

Progress on youth empowerment depends heavily on how UNDP will be able to mobilize resources, how stakeholders come together to align their activities related to youth and development, and how effectively youth perspectives are mainstreamed into policy and programmes.

Partnerships with civil society and youth-based or youth-led organizations: UNDP will engage with youth experts and practitioners, youth-based and youth-led organizations, civil society organizations working with young people, and expert groups on youth. Support for, and partnerships with, these individuals

and organizations will aim to facilitate youth empowerment and action in their areas of interest, as well as their representation and participation in policymaking and programming processes at all levels. It will also strengthen youth advocacy efforts through skills-building and capacity development. UNDP will continue working with existing organizations and networks and promote new partnerships to reach out to more young people at the community and district levels.

Partnerships with government counterparts at the national and sub-national levels:

UNDP today has greater opportunity and scope to work with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Youth Councils to implement the National Youth Policy and Vision 2025. UNDP is well placed to advocate for youth priorities in all levels and sectors of government bodies, and facilitate coordination mechanisms and harmonization of youth policies.

Partnerships for better coordination and coherence within the UN system:

UNDP aims to contribute to improved coordination and coherence within the UN system by undertaking joint initiatives and programmes with relevant UN agencies and strengthening existing mechanisms such as the UNCT-Youth Group, UN Youth Advisory Panel and UN Youth and Students Association Nepal. UNDP Nepal also prioritizes the task of incorporating learning from its current experience and deepening the focus on youth in the UNDAF cycle.

This Youth Strategy is intended to serve as a guideline for UNDP Nepal in identifying key entry points for systematic and coordinated action to support youth empowerment, effective advocacy and mainstreaming of youth issues, policy development, technical and programmatic partnerships, youth-related research and knowledge management, and impact assessment. Importantly, the three main pillars or outcomes that hold up the strategy are perfectly aligned with the outcomes of UNDP's Country Programme 2018-2022.

This strategy reflects UNDP's bid for heightened engagement with young people, in recognition of their roles as both development beneficiaries and actors. In trying to address the aspirations of youth, it also seeks to create an enabling environment for inclusive and meaningful participation of young people in development discussions, formal planning, programming and decision-making processes.

This cannot be achieved, however, without the input and involvement of different partners and stakeholders, for which UNDP must collaborate with relevant multilateral, international and regional organizations and development partners. Going forward, UNDP will continue to explore further opportunities for resource mobilization, and improved outreach and engagement in its broader effort to promote sustainable youth development.

Young hearing-impaired participants at a voter education programme organized by the Electoral Support Project/UNDP on the International Day of the Deaf in 2016. Photo: Rochan Kadarya/ESP







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