



# Sustaining the Sustainable Development Goals





**PRAKSIS** is a semiannual publication of the Network for Social Democracy in the Asia-Pacific. It seeks to combine theory and practice by providing cogent analyses to inform the strategy of the progressive movement and help shape the policy direction that should guide the region's governments.

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# A Future Where No One is Left Behind

Nepal has taken early steps in implementing the SDGs. Our national strategic planning documents such as *Sustainable Development Goals—Status and Roadmap: 2016-2030*<sup>1</sup> and *Nepal: SDGs Needs Assessment, Costing and Financing Strategy*<sup>2</sup> act as tools to mainstream the 2030 goals from the national to local levels.

The country has achieved remarkable progress in terms of economic development. Poverty has been significantly reduced, leading to macroeconomic stability. Nepal has set as its aspiration a 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali.' Social justice is at the heart of this long-term vision, which includes graduating from least developed country by 2026 and achievement of the SDGs by 2030.

Our current 15th Plan (2019/20-2023/24)<sup>3</sup> is fully in line with the SDGs and provides a clear roadmap towards prosperity. Other development instruments such as the annual budget, sectoral

strategies and medium-term expenditure framework are also mainstreamed with the SDGs. The SDGs Steering Committee, as well as the public, private and cooperative sectors, and civil society, are working together to promote and ensure the alignment of the SDGs in all development endeavors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought an unprecedented situation in Nepal's socio-economic front, challenging the achievements of the SDGs. Nepal is exploring ways to minimize its multidimensional impacts by implementing the recovery strategy with the help of the SDGs.

The status of the SDGs in Nepal are as follows:

**SDG 1- End Poverty:** Nepal's progress in reducing poverty has been remarkable. The part of the population living below US\$1.90 a day is at 15 percent. The per capita gross domestic national

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Commission (2017). *Sustainable Development Goals—Status and Roadmap: 2016-2030*. Kathmandu.

<sup>2</sup> National Planning Commission (2017). *Nepal: SDGs Needs Assessment, Costing and Financing Strategy*. Kathmandu.

<sup>3</sup> The 15th Plan is part of the series of Five-Year Plans of Nepal which are all aimed at providing a roadmap for the country's development. The First Five-Year Plan was introduced in 1956 — *the editor*.



Image: www.adb.org

“There has been a steady decline in levels of poverty, although regional and ethnic differences continue to exist.

income has increased well beyond expectations. There has been a steady decline in levels of poverty nationwide, although regional and ethnic differences continue to exist. The structural roots of poverty need to be addressed through programs that increase access and control of the poor over resources and assets.

**SDG 5- Gender Equality:** While gender empowerment measures show improvement, inequality in wages in both the public and private sector continue. There has been significant progress in women's representation in elected positions. There has been a rise of women entrepreneurs and one third of women have secure ownership of property. The legal framework

for gender equality has favored women, but inequality remains. We need to do more! We are working towards creating a more gender equal country through policies, judicial system and legislation.

**SDG 13- Climate Action:** Nepalis are nature lovers and nature worshipers. Socially and culturally, we are and have been aware of our surroundings. The adaptation plan (national, local and community level) preparation and implementation have been progressing well. However, to integrate this into our policies, we have added climate action into all development policies and programs.

## Constitution of Nepal

The Constitution of Nepal includes several SDGs as fundamental rights of citizens or as directive principles of state policies. For instance, basic and secondary education, basic health, clean water and sanitation, food, clean energy and housing are stated as fundamental constitutional rights; they also form the core of the SDGs.

This makes localization of SDGs at province and local levels of fundamental and critical importance for universal, equitable and inclusive outcomes to ensure that *no one is left behind*.

## Mainstreaming SDGs in Planning Process

### The 14th Plan

The launch of the 14th Plan (2016/17–2018/19) marked the first year of the SDGs' internalization in the development planning process. The five priority development strategies of the Plan—infrastructure, social sector, economic sectors, governance—were broadly tied to specific SDGs.

## Long-term Vision and the 15th Plan

The 15th Plan (2019/20–2023/24) has a long-term development vision reflected in the slogan *Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali*. The vision is to graduate from a least developed country status by 2026, eradicate multidimensional poverty, attain the SDGs, and achieve all-round prosperity and happiness by 2043.

## Engaging Legislators and Parliament

For me, the SDGs are not just development goals; they have to be continuously and innovatively included in legislation, debated, reviewed and enacted by parliament. As a parliamentarian myself, I have put forth issues of equality and climate justice in the parliament.

Nepal is a country with a lot of potential. We are committed to ensure that every citizen lives a life of dignity and equality and work towards a more sustainable future so that no one is left behind. ■

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