

## **Nepal: Voluntary National Review, 2024**

### **Main Messages**

Nepal has incorporated the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its national policies, plans and programs. It has been consistently working to localize these efforts at the sub-national and community levels. Collaborative endeavors of the government and stakeholders have helped in bringing significant socio-economic changes in the country.

Up to the midpoint of SDGs implementation, an average progress of 41 percent has been achieved. Certain areas have witnessed remarkable progress, while a significant number of targets are either progressing too slowly or even regressing. Compared to the 2022 targets, 41 percent indicators have exceeded their targets, 35 percent displayed some kind of positive progress, 20 percent have shown negative progress and 3 percent remain unchanged. Based on the current pace of progress observed between 2016 and 2022, the country is projected to attain about 60 percent of SDGs by 2030.

The progress on *poverty reduction* was very encouraging during the first four years, but around 4 percent of the people fell into extreme poverty due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Progress towards *zero hunger* remained a bit slow during this period. There is gradual progress on *healthy life and wellbeing*; however, incidence of anemia among women of reproductive age as well as under-5 children mortality worsened during the period. Similarly, basic water supply and sanitation facilities has increased, but more focus is needed on safe-water supply. A remarkable progress has been observed in access to electricity, per capita energy consumption, and adoption of cleaner cooking methods. In *decent work and economic growth*, there is positive progress in real GDP growth; however, employment-related indicators and financial inclusion faced setbacks. The road density has gone up during the period, while the progress in industrial sector lagged far behind.

Progress has been made in reducing income inequality; however, further emphasis is needed to bridge the gap between disadvantaged groups and the rest of the society to ensure equal access to resources, opportunities, and services. Significant progress has been observed in enhancing safe housing and planned new cities. Efforts are needed to minimize the environmental impact of changed consumption pattern. In climate action, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparation of local adaptation plans have exceeded the national targets. A notable achievement has been made in community-based forest management, afforestation, and the conservation of iconic species like tigers and rhinos. On Goal 16, encouraging trends emerged in controlling child trafficking and sexual violence, however stagnant scores on transparency and accountability have become a

setback. Thus, the overall progress made so far indicates the need for intensified and concerted efforts to enhance partnerships for achieving the remaining targets by 2030.

Nepal is preparing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Voluntary National Review (VNR) of SDGs in participation with representatives from line ministries, associations of the sub-national governments, private sector, cooperatives, civil society, human rights commission and marginalized groups. The VNR focuses on accelerating the achievement of SDGs. The prioritized themes include *Decent Job and Social Protection, Food System Transformation, Transformation of Health and Education, Sustainable and Resilient Urbanization, Gender Equality, Social Inclusion, Climate Action, Digital Transformation, and Data Management*. The upcoming 16<sup>th</sup> Plan, which is based on the broad aspiration of “*Good Governance, Social Justice, and Prosperity*,” emphasizes on the acceleration of implementation of the SDGs to achieve the national development goals.

The updated *SDGs: Needs Assessment, Costing and Financing Strategy (2024)* has estimated that total investment requirement for achieving the defined targets for the period of 2024-30 is US\$ 163 billion, amounting to annual average of US\$ 23 billion. The average SDG investment requirement reaches to 45 percent of GDP in 2030. This requirement is obviously high, but is achievable with mobilization of larger financing sources in productive areas thus improving the efficiency of investment.

Nepal is graduating from the LDC status in 2026, which will have significant implications to the country’s trade, aid, and investment environment. Ensuring financing of the SDGs, capacity building, strengthening institutions and fostering collaboration to create a conducive environment for research, and innovation, will be essential in the coming years. This will help to fulfill the overarching aspiration of “*Leaving No One Behind*” and “*Reaching the Furthest Behind First*”.