

SDG 16 Plus in Nepalese Context



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Chapter 1: SDG 16 Plus in Nepalese Context

SDG 16 deals with the core issues of peace, justice and strong institutions, and thus is known as the cornerstone to remaining other goals. SDG 16 is to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. It promotes citizens' access to justice by advocating to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels"¹ This Goal has 12 targets to be achieved by 2030. Progress towards targets will be measured by 23 indicators.

Nepal is going through the second year of implementation of Fifteenth Five Year Periodic Plan. Developed in line with the Constitution of Nepal promulgated in 2015 and the SDG framework, this plan also includes a 25-year vision for transforming Nepal into a high-income country assuring USD 12,100². The SDG targets and indicators were officially entered in Nepal's Fiscal Year 2016-17. Constitution of Nepal progressively incorporates global agenda of sustainable development and social, economic, political and cultural issues. The acts framed and enacted as per the mandate of the Constitution and the Fifteenth Five Year Periodic Plan now in implementation since 2016 are the major instruments to review how the SDG targets and indicators are being reflected and to what extent we are in track to fulfil the global commitments.

National Planning Commission (NPC) is the official body in Nepal to coordinate with line ministries, government authorities, civil society and private sectors for the successful implementation of the SDGs. The NPC organized series of public consultations and collaborative work of the multi stakeholder working groups on SDGs and approved for Nepal the 16 goals (except SDG 14), 158 targets and 479 indicators (including 245 national indicators). Regarding SDG 16, Nepal has shown commitment to fulfil all the globally accepted 12 targets and 23 indicators.

Looking upon the given 12 targets, that is, reducing violence, ending exploitation manifested in trafficking, and promoting rule of law, state has to fulfil the other goals together as they are interconnected such as gender (Goal 5), inequality (Goal 10), and education (Goal 4), particularly, ensuring that *all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development* through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and *appreciation of cultural diversity* and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

This report presents a review of the SDGs 16 Plus in the context of Nepal. It makes an overview of operating, functioning and progress achievement and gaps on the targets and indicators of the SDG 16 plus agenda. It mainly focuses on the national progress review of the SDG 16 in line with the themes like quality education (particularly target 4.7), gender (Goal 5), reducing inequality (Goal 10), and makes effort to develop understanding on the SDG 16 Plus.

Chapter II: Understanding SDG 16 Plus

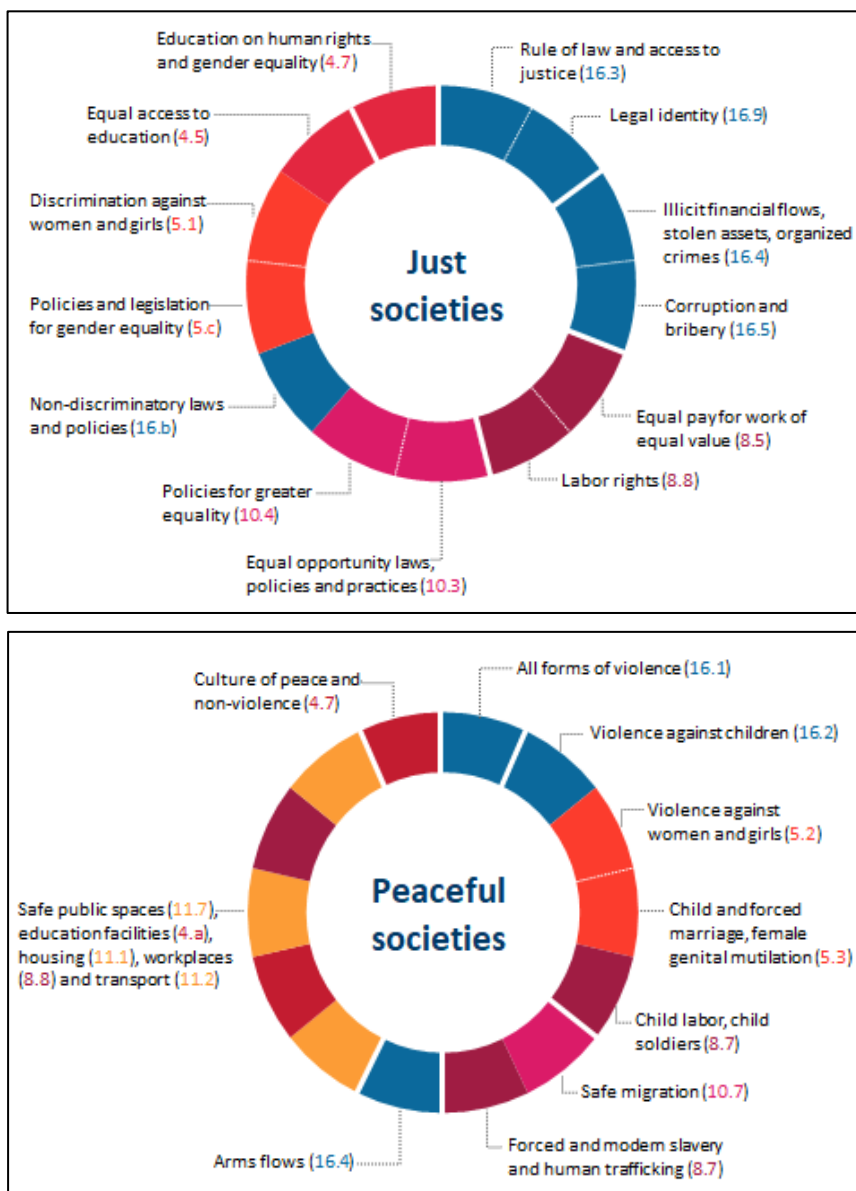
SDG 16 deals with the core issues of peace, justice and strong institutions. This Goal has 12 targets to be achieved by 2030. Progress towards targets will be measured by 23 indicators.

¹ Referred to as common online review platform which is dedicated to compiling information from countries participating in the voluntary national reviews of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development which can be obtained from United Nations official website on SDGs: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16>

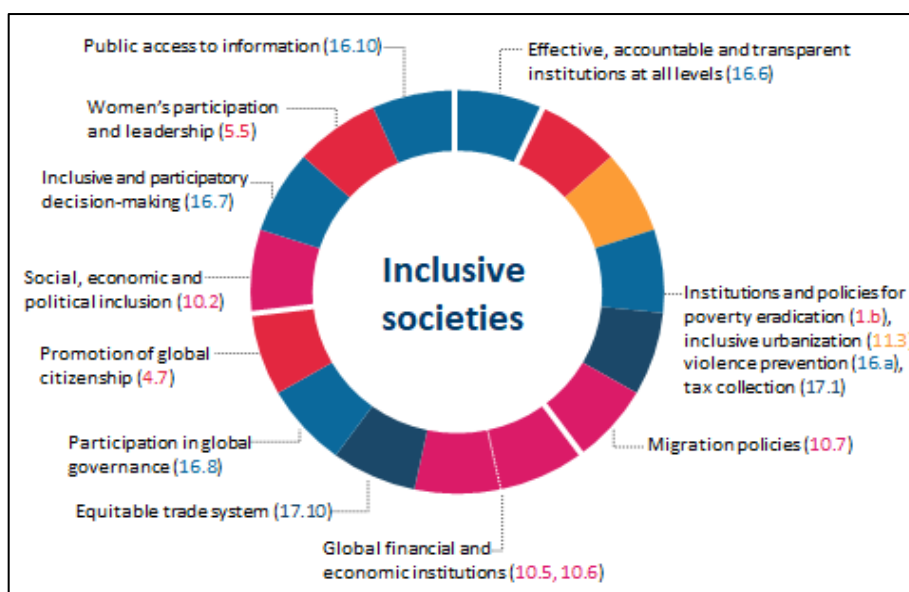
² https://npc.gov.np/images/category/15th_plan_English_Version.pdf.

The concept of SDG 16 plus is a discourse, that is, a cornerstone to remaining other 16 goals. This Goal has both vertical as well as horizontal relation, that is, the 12 targets and 23 indicators set-forth under this are impossible to achieve unless the similar targets and indicators mentioned in other goals are fulfilled. The basic concept of SDG 16 Plus is that “this goal should not be seen in isolation”. According to the *Pathfinders* which are a group of 31 UN member states, international organizations, global partnerships, civil society and the private sector, 36 SDG targets directly measure an aspect of peace, inclusion, or access to justice, with only a third of these found in SDG 16. They have officially named this relation as the SDG16+ targets³.

Figure 3.1: 36 targets relating to peace, justice and inclusion (SDG 16)



³ See further <https://www.sdg16.plus/roadmap>.



Source: <https://www.sdg16.plus/roadmap>.

For instance, 24 targets from seven other goals directly measure an aspect of peace, inclusion, or access to justice. Target 16.1 which aims to “significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere” can be fulfilled once we are able to fulfil the target Target 5.2, that is, eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls and goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities). Similarly, Target 16.2, that is, “End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children” cannot be achieved unless we “take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms” mentioned in Target 8.7.

Some SDG 16 targets seek layers of other targets to meet, that is, “Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels” such as:

- i. 3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services
- ii. SDG 4.a.1 on school facilities
- iii. 1.4.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services
- iv. 3.7.1 Access to reproductive health
- v. 4.1.1 Educational achievements (Percentage of children/young people)
- vi. 10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income
- vii. SDG 10.3.1 Proportion of the population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed⁴.

Some targets/indicators have both horizontal and vertical relations such as Indicator 16.1.1, that is, “significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere is related with 15.2.1: “Progress towards sustainable forest management” and Indicator 5.2.2: “Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence” whereas target 16.2, that is, “End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of

⁴ See UN Metadata Repository: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>.

violence against and torture of children” can be fulfilled only after meeting the targets 5.2 and 8.7”⁵. This concept in a sense is a campaign for “shift from SDG 16 to SDG 16 Plus”⁶ which needs “transformative strategies” to “provide a basis for integrated action and partnerships”.⁷ Three transformative strategies have been devised by the Pathfinders: “Prevent”, “Renew” and “Involve”. The “Prevent” Strategy highlights the need to “Invest in prevention so that all societies and people reach their full potential” whereas the “Renew” strategy stresses to “Transform institutions so that they can meet aspirations for a more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable future” and the “involve” strategy stresses on including and empowering people so that they can fulfil their potential to work for a better future.⁸

Nepal has 237 global targets and 257 additional targets, making the total targets 494. In Goal 5, Gender Equality, Nepal has a total of 36 targets that include 14 global targets and 22 added by Nepal. In Goal 10, Reduced Inequalities, Nepal has added 13 indicators making the total targets 27. Likewise, in SDG 16, Peace, Justice and Institutions, Nepal has added 7 national targets to the 24 global targets, making the total targets reach 31.

Nepal has classified the targets into three tiers. Of the 494 targets, 174 fall under Tier I, 269 under Tier II and 51 under Tier III⁹. Lack of data in SDG 16 Plus is obvious since 28 of the 31 indicators in SDG 16 have no data yet.

Nepal Government has come up with additional indicators which is good to comprehensively work and assess the situation. However, it would be pointless if the data and monitoring is not possible for these indicators. Alternatively, prioritizing the indicators and focusing on them without compromising the fundamental sectors would be useful. The government has claimed that the SDGs are integrated in the periodic plans but the coverage of all the indicators and ways to allocate resources in a calculated way to measure the progress is not adequate. Budget coding claimed to have been practiced at the federal level has not been implemented at the province and local levels. The spirit of collaboration and partnership as well as transparency and accountability measures are weak. Covid-19 has impacted the livelihood options and this has been a major shift in many ways which may benefit some and may cause loss to others. This is likely to increase another dimension of inequality. In this context, the government needs to assess the situation and plan for bridging the gaps.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ <https://www.sdg16.plus/roadmap>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Three different tiers of indicators according to UN classification are: Tier I: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, and data is regularly produced by countries. Tier II: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data is not regularly produced by countries. Tier III: No internationally established methodology or standards are available yet for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being developed.

Chapter IV: SDG 16 Plus and Whole of Society Approach or Leave No One Behind

Assessment of the Situation

In line with the spirit of *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, partnership and collaboration in implementation as well as the benefits and impacts need to be inclusive of all the actors and beneficiaries in the society.

Nepal Sustainable Development Goals Progress Assessment Report 2016–2019 published by National Planning Commission (NPC) Nepal contains some useful information relevant to multistakeholder partnership and inclusion. The report has assessed that there is 36% financial contribution of private sector, and 4% contribution of cooperative and non-government sector. A partnership strategy of the government is expected to bring on board all the relevant stakeholders that includes NGO sector and CSOs in the implementation and monitoring of SDGs. Legislators in the parliament also remain at the forefront of monitoring and evaluation through the 14-member parliamentary committee on SDGs and governance.

The report mentions that "NGOs/INGOs, cooperatives, CSOs and the private sector have continued to contribute to poverty alleviation efforts at the local level through various programs and initiatives."

SDG strategies for each of the goals include the stakeholder partnership which include public and private sector, local governments, civil society organizations, NGOs, cooperatives, development partners. Nepal Government's SDG progress report has also acknowledged the capacity building of the stakeholders. However, "concrete strategies in mobilizing and facilitating the multiple stakeholders in the achievement of specific SDG targets, however, seem to be lacking". The report also mentions, "NGOs and cooperatives have a far and wide-ranging reach on areas and communities where they work. Their role is most effective with regard to SDG 1 (end poverty), SDG 3 (health and well-being), SDG 4 (education), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 6 (water and sanitation), SDG 10 (reduce inequalities), SDG 13 climate action) and SDG 15 (terrestrial systems). Partnerships should build on the strength of non-government and non-state actors in creating awareness, mobilizing resources and communities, and in ensuring transparency and accountability. Partnerships should build on complementarity between government and the non-governmental sector." There is a realization about the collective role and participatory action and inclusive progress, but a lot remains yet to be done.

When it comes to the proportion of women in decision-making positions in public institutions, this is still 13.9 percent in 2019. Although the participation of women in overall has increased, no progress has been made in terms of participation in the decision-making positions in public life.

The policy provisions regarding right to equality, right to justice, right against preventive detention, right against untouchability and discrimination, right to information, right against exploitation, right of women, right of Dalits, and right to social justice, among several other

fundamental rights of citizens have been useful in promoting broader participation. Objective of the constitutional commissions that include National Commission on Women, National Dalits Commission, National Commission on Inclusion, Madhesi Commission, Tharu Commission, and Muslim Commission has been to ensure protection of the interests of the various communities. These policies and institutions have been considered by the government in the context of the implementation of SDGs. The effective implementation would be supportive indeed.

SDG Steering committee headed by the Prime Minister includes the representatives of CSOs and cooperatives as invitee members. But the same kind of representation needs to be instituted at subnational levels. Close coordination and space to civil society given by the government during the VNR 2020 were appreciated. Government's VNR team in the virtual HLPF included the representatives of CSOs. Recommendations and reports submitted by CSOs were well-received by the NPC.

Analysis and Recommendations

The Multidimensional Poverty Index has dropped to 28.6 percent and the proportion of the population below the national poverty line stands at 18.6 percent. In the period of 22 years from 1996 to 2018, income poverty dropped from 41.6 percent to 18.7 percent. Annual economic growth rate of real GDP per capita stands at 5.6 percent. But what concerns is that economic growth should benefit all leading to reduction of inequality, poverty, deprivation, and marginalization.

In many cases these problems are caused by structural issues and deeply rooted system. For these reasons, structural transformation or uprooting deeply rooted systems are necessary, while promoting fair redistribution of wealth and meaningful inclusion. While there are many deprived and marginalized social groups to attend, resources are inadequately allocated. More serious is the implementation and management capacity of the government agencies, especially at the subnational level. Children, youth, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ), older people, Dalit, Madhesi, Muslim, farmers, workers, indigenous groups, people with disabilities, poor and other forms and dimensions of marginalization, deprivations and exclusions are interrelated and intersecting across the Goals.

Adequate consideration of these groups across the goals and targets based on the robust management of data is not only crucial but also a complex aspect. Baseline and progress data are unavailable for many SDG indicators. Lack of data has made it impossible to track progress, to monitor inclusive growth and improvement and make sure that no one is left behind. Lack of disaggregated data has affected transparency, accountability and just distribution of resources and focus. In addition, progress cannot be ascertained in lack of data. The data revolution as part of the SDGs seems to have been ignored; undermining the participatory approaches and innovative solutions.

Whole of society approach can help leaving no one behind since different social and economic strata and groups can be engaged, they can identify gaps and raise voices while making contributions on their end. Participation, inclusion, equality, solidarity and harmony are the

constitutional provisions. Participation and development of public, private and cooperative economy and the mobilization of resources has been duly acknowledged by the constitution. If this is to be realized, the whole of society approach is a means to bring civil society, communities, CSOs, and academia together in planning, implementation, monitoring and review processes. This is not only to tap and mobilize resources and skills but also to build ownership, co-contribute, find innovative solutions and generate sustainable outcomes. Due acknowledgement of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders, CSO networks, thematically focused organizations and involving them would be useful in order to take the whole society ahead in the path of prosperity and happiness.

Leaving no one behind largely depends on initiatives and effectiveness on generating and management of disaggregated data. The most important concern for Nepali CSOs seems how the principle of 'leaving no one behind' will be realized and whether the government's efforts are adequate.

Chapter V: SDG 16 Plus for Fundamental Rights, Freedoms and Justice

Constitution of Nepal has comprehensively provisioned 31 fundamental rights in a way to include and address all the major human rights concerns and in the interest of marginalized and vulnerable communities. Competitive multiparty system of governance, periodic elections, separation of power, commitment to rule of law, fundamental freedoms are some underlying features of the constitution of Nepal shaping other policy and legal provisions. Independent constitutional bodies that include Election Commission, Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority, National Human Rights Commission, National Information Commission, National Women Commission, National Dalit Commission, National Inclusion Commission, Indigenous Nationalities Commission, Madhesi Commission, Tharu Commission, and Muslim Commission are provisioned so as to build an inclusive, just, transparent, accountable and human rights friendly society.

Known as the enabler of the SDGs, Goal 16 Plus encompass other Goals/Targets. SDG 16 Plus are associated with the basic needs, services and rights of the people and are expected to create a favourable environment, policies, institutions and accountability for the implementation.

In the context of Nepal, SDG 16 Plus is highly significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, access of the people to basic health, education and livelihood opportunities are very limited and the enhancing quality services in health, education and drinking water are concerning. Human security and social protection are in the basic stage. SDG 16 Plus can be instrumental in planning, resource allocation and implementation of the programmes in a way to safeguard the lives of the people, improve quality of life and subsequently improve human rights situation in the country.

International reports and indexes have reflected the situation of Nepal as below:

- International IDEA categorizes the regime type of Nepal as "mid-range performing democracy since 2008 except for the period between 2013 and 2016 when its democratic performance was low".

- Democracy Index 2019, shows that Nepal has been ranked 92nd with an overall score of 5.28, with categorization of "hybrid regime"¹⁰.
- Nepal's progress in SDG 16 is stagnating.¹¹
- Rule of Law Index¹² 2020 shows Nepal in the 61st position with the score of 0.53. Nepal's position is below global average (0.56).
- Freedom House report 2020¹³ classified Nepal as a 'Partly Free' with a score of 56/100. Nepal seems worst at safeguards against official corruption, openness and transparency of government operations, prevalence of due process in civil and criminal matters, laws, policies, and practices to guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population, and if individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation.
- World Freedom Index 2017¹⁴ has placed Nepal in the 102nd position, with 59.98 total freedom score, out of the 169 countries of the world.
- Human Freedom Index¹⁵ (data of 2017) shows Nepal in the 107th position out of 162 countries with a score of 6.51.
- CIVICUS Civic Space Monitor¹⁶ has rated Nepal's civic space as Obstructed.
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF) World Press Freedom Index¹⁷ places Nepal in the 112th position, with a score of 35.10, out of 180 countries in the global press freedom rankings in 2020.
- With a score 33/100, Transparency International Corruption Perception Index 2020¹⁸ ranks Nepal in the 117th position out of 180 countries / territories.
- According to Global Peace Index¹⁹, Nepal has scored 1.974 and has been counted as the 73rd peaceful country out of the 163 countries.

In the scenario as illustrated above, SDG 16 Plus will be a tool for the civil society to work and contribute to develop just, inclusive and peaceful society.

In addition to this, Nepal is still young in federal system of governance. After Constituent Assembly declared Nepal a Federal Democratic Republic in 2008, Constitution of Nepal promulgated by the Constituent Assembly in 2015 needs to be implemented in order to institutionalize the federalisms and constitutional provisions for human rights, social inclusion, good governance and service delivery through the federal level, seven provinces and 753 local governments. The multiple tiers of government, institutions and structures and the corresponding policies, roles and responsibilities are still in the formative stage. Lack of coordination, harmony and overlapping roles and responsibilities and weak governance justify the stronger significance of SDG 16 Plus in Nepal.

¹⁰ The Economist Intelligence Unit, <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>

¹¹ <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>

¹² <https://worldjusticeproject.org/our-work/research-and-data/wjp-rule-law-index-2020>. Last visit on 16 September 2020.

¹³ <https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores>, (Last visited on 18 Sept 2020)

¹⁴ <https://www.worldfreedomindex.com/> (Last visited on 18 Sept 2020)

¹⁵ <https://www.cato.org/human-freedom-index-new> (Last visited on 18 Sept 2020)

¹⁶ <https://monitor.civicus.org/> (Last visited on 19 September 2020)

¹⁷ <https://rsf.org/en/ranking> (Last visited on 19 September 2020)

¹⁸ <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi#> (Last visited on 19 September 2020)

¹⁹ <http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/global-peace-index/> (Last visited on 19 September 2020)

Policies, institutions and functioning particularly at the province and local levels have been weak and they lack transparency. Local governments lack capacity and have not been able to harmonize their plans and actions according to the SDGs, human rights and other national frameworks. Localization of SDGs and institutional capacity building of the local governments with strong role of CSOs is significant in Nepalese context.

Chapter VI: An Assessment of SDG 16 Plus in Nepal

National Planning Commission (NPC), Government of Nepal launched the Progress Assessment Report 2016–2019 on 8 February 2021. The report published amidst the availability of limited data, has some useful data which would be useful to estimate and evaluate and to generate insights. Some of the useful data especially related to SDG 16 Plus are cited as below:

Targets and indicators		2015	Target 2019	Progress 2019	Target 2022	Target 2030
4.5.1.1	Gender parity index (GPI) (primary school)	1.02	1.01	1.06	1.01	1
5.a.2	Women's ownership of property (land and house)	26	29.7	33.93	32.5	40
10.1.1.1	Consumption inequality (measured by the Gini coefficient)	0.33	0.28	0.30	0.25	0.16
10.1.1.2	Income inequality (measured by the Gini coefficient)	0.46	0.4	0.32	0.35	0.23
10.1.1.3	Share of bottom 40 percent of population in total consumption (percent)	18.7	17.4	25.7	21.2	23.4
10.1.1.4	Share of bottom 40 percent of population in total income (percent)	11.9	13.1	20.4	14.7	18
10.1.1.4	PALMA Index	1.3	1.22	1.34	1.16	1
16.1.1.1	Direct deaths from armed and violent conflict (number)	1628	-	659		
16.1.3	Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months	23.6	-	13.5		
16.1.4	Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live			59.7		
16.2.1.1	Children aged 1-14 years who experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment during the last one month) (percent)	81.7b	60	77.6	44	0
16.2.2	Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation	0.000369	-	0.0003		

1	Children trafficking to abroad (including India) per annum (reported number)	64c	47	23	34	0
16.2.3	Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18			2.1		
16.5.1	People's perception on corruption (percent of people with at least one instance in the past 12 months that require to give a bribe/present) (Corruption index score)	29	21	10	15	0
16.6.1	Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)	76	81.1	77.9	84.9	95
16.7.2.1	Proportions of decision-making positions held by women in public Institutions	15	20.3	13.9	24.3	35
16.9.1	Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	58	66	77.2	79	100

Source: SDG Progress Assessment Report 2016–2019, NPC Nepal, 2021.

In its self-assessment, Nepal Government has ranked the progress of Nepal on SDG 5 and SDG 16 both as 'medium'; whereas in reducing inequality, it is better with the ranking 'satisfactory'.

To take a few examples of good progress, women's ownership of property seems to be on track. The share of the bottom 40 percent for consumption as well as income has improved, as have indicators of social, economic and political empowerment. There is an overall reduction in violence and child trafficking. However, transparency, accountability and good governance scores have not improved. Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget has also not improved. Nepal is also behind the target in terms of the proportions of decision-making positions held by women in public institutions.

On Goal 5, progresses have been seen on Increase on gender empowerment measurement index. There has been found reduction on women experiencing physical and sexual violence and on average hours spent in domestic work (but this needs to be verified). Significant increases have been observed on proportion of seats held by women in parliaments and local governments, number of enterprises owned by women and women's ownership of property (land and house).

On Goal 10, Increase is observed on economic and political empowerment index. There has been found significant improvement on primary school enrolment and completion, proportion of farm households covered by microfinance. Reduction has also been observed on reduced non-performing loans and increase on global competitive index as well as decrease on doing business index.

On Goal 16, improvement has been seen on proportion of population that feel safe walking along around the area they live. People have observed reliability of police services and improvement has been observed on psychological aggression or physical punishment against children, lesser incidences of sexual violence, reduction on corruption index, Increase on primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget and proportion of population satisfied with their las experience of public services. Improvement has also been observed on decision making positions held by women in public institutions, effectiveness of independent national human rights institutions and proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed.

3.5 Areas of improvement

Despite the progress in track above, the following areas of improvement have been observed.

On **Goal 5**, wage equality for similar work between men and women did not decrease. The gender inequality index could not meet the target of 0.38 from 0.49. The lifetime physical and/or sexual violence could not meet the target of 22.2 from 28.4. Children's experience of psychological aggression or physical punishment could not meet target 59.9 from 81.7. The pettiest observation is that child marriage: increased from 24.5% to 27.1 despite target (18%). Ratio of women to men participation in labour force turned to be very poor (0.61) despite target (0.95). Similarly, the Ratio of women to men in professional and technical workers could not meet target (28) from baseline 24. Painstaking efforts also need to be taken care on the proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care. It has been found to be decreased. Finally, use of internet by women aged 15 -24 years could not meet target.

On **Goal 10**, Gini coefficient of consumption inequality did not meet the target 0.28 and remained stagnant to 0.30. The income inequality though showed a slow progress (0.32). The palma ratio, that is, share of bottom 40% of population in total population could not meet the target (17.4). Social Empowerment Index remained constant. Childhood free of stunting (ratio of richest vs poorest quintile) got slow speed of decrement (from 1.60 to 1.54) and thus did not meet the target (1.44). Ratio of wage index to consumer price index showed a pity result, that is, decreased from 2.94 to 1.97 despite target of 2.96. Similarly, the recruitment cost borne by migrant labor could not meet the target, that is, remained as USD 900 despite target USD 867. A recent study published by International Organization for Migration (IOM) in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) showed that *Nepal does not have a well-managed migration policies*.²⁰ Progress on reduction on remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted is not obtained.

On **Goal 16**, prevention, justice and compensation to the victims of violence was found to be increased. Transparency, accountability, and corruption in public sector remained stagnant

²⁰ On 18 December 2019, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) published a Migration Profile of Nepal which recommends to formulate the comprehensive migration policy by establishing an institutional coordination mechanism. <https://www.iom.int/news/nepal-migration-profile-calls-upskilling-workers-compete-global-job-market>.

and birth registration coverage data was found to be fluctuating that is decreased from 58 percent in 2015 to 56 in 2019 despite the target of 66 percent.

Many challenges surround in accelerating and meeting the SDGs. Too many indicators could be useful but have been a challenge to monitor the progress. Data for only about 44% of the indicators are said to have been available. In such situations, observing and monitoring the progress in terms of leaving no one behind would not be possible. Limited knowledge and capacity to plan and implement SDGs at the local level would hinder the progress and reporting. Annual resource gap of around 28% is a challenge but low capital expenditure is additional challenge. Partnership and synergy are required but the mobilization of non-government sector, cooperatives and private sector, and also the assessment of the contribution of these sectors are necessary. Covid-19 has exacerbated the situation.

Chapter VII: Role of CSOs in Implementation, Monitoring and Review of SDG 16 Plus in Nepal

SDGs as a set of economic, social and environmental goals bring together various stakeholders including Government, civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector, cooperatives and general public. SDG 17.17 calls for efforts to encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships. Partnership building is vital to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Similarly, Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGOS) facilitate the participation of nine sector of civil society in UN negotiations; they are business and industry, children and youth, farmers, indigenous peoples, local authorities, NGOs, scientific and technological community, women, workers and trade unions. It means, civil society as a whole is in priority at UN mechanism which has institutional representation.

All 193 member states of UN committed to involve civil societies when they declared 2030 Agenda but most of them are yet to design CSO engagement strategy. Because of some legislative hurdles, procedural difficulties and questioning on the capacity of CSOs, CSOs are not getting the space and role as expected in implementation of the SDGs. Notably, Nepal Government has recognized CSOs' VNR report as a reference during first VNR; included CSO representatives in the government delegation team in the second VNR process in 2020. NPC has been regularly involving CSOs in the federal level especially in consultations during planning, monitoring and reporting process and there are thematic committee led by members of the NPC. A CSO representative is an 'invitee' in the High-Level Steering Committee formed under the leadership of Prime Minister but CSOs have been continuously lobbying for provisioning a permanent membership/representation.

Alongside the continuous lobbying for civil space, CSOs in Nepal have played an important role to build awareness and capacity of community-based organizations, CSOs as well as the government agencies through dialogues, meetings, talks, trainings, workshops and publications. A CSO platform called Nepal SDGs Forum was established in February 2016. Nepal SDG Forum's province committees have been formed in all the seven provinces and are actively engaged in their roles. Thematically focused organizations and networks are associated with Nepal SDGs Forum. Evidence based advocacy, especially issue-based advocacy, led by various CSOs legitimate the inclusive process with ownership so that all the

active movements established and issues are recognized. Research, collecting data, preparing monitoring report, review of budget from SDG perspectives, awareness and localization efforts are some ways CSOs have been engaged. Initiatives of Nepal SDGs Forum are contributing to strengthen multistakeholder approach.

Following points summarize the role of Nepali CSOs in SDG and SDG 16+:

- Review of existing policies (awareness and capacity building, localizing global goals in local context, SDG 16+ links with other goals, target and indicators)
- Developing concept for new policies (research, assessment, reviews and citizen-led data initiatives, innovation and sustainable solution)
- Implementation supports (participation, socialization mobilization, support to service provider)
- Monitoring, evaluation and feedback on ongoing implementation and its status (critical reviews, evidence-based advocacy and lobby, multistakeholder engagement, partnership, coordination, networking, VNR reporting from CSO perspectives).

CSOs as watchdog as well as partners of government can play multiple roles to support to achieve SDGs but for that conducive environment and capacity building of CSOs in areas that include peace, justice, human rights, democracy and development process is necessary. Similarly, as CSOs lack resources, allocating budget to mobilize through CSOs and also increase their access to resources and funding is crucial.

The provincial policy/planning commission of Nepal, inter ministries coordination mechanism in both way vertical and horizontal, local bodies which are the very powerful in terms of resources and directly concern with these development agendas need to develop SDG guidelines and road map in the close consultation with civil society, academia, thematic experts and other concern authority. Role of parliamentarians, province level Policy and Planning Commissions and local governments would determine the space CSOs get and how community mobilization would be valued.

Chapter VIII: Conclusion and Recommendations

This report is an attempt to explore and understand the goals and indicators of SDGs associated commonly as SDG 16 Plus. Apart from the sectoral aspects or goals, these are enablers and accelerators which ensure that the growth and development ultimately leading our society to equality, inclusion, justice, freedom, human security and dignity, good governance and rule of law. Unless the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are ensured, it is impossible to make our societies peaceful and prosperous. The national aspiration of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' cannot be realized unless SDG 16 Plus is integrated and implemented.

In the sixth year of SDG implementation, Nepal has made progress in preparatory works for the SDGs and satisfactory progress has been observed in some indicators. Generating resources and putting the plans into actions are challenges. Civil society is mostly concerned about leaving no one behind but the status cannot be truly visualized in lack of disaggregated data. If the current trend goes on, realizing SDGs in Nepal would be impossible.

Recommendations to Government (Federal, Province and Local)

- Take urgent measures in order to improve governance, transparency, accountability and effectiveness of the implementing agencies and empower the oversight bodies at all levels: federal, province and local.
- Introduce rules, regulations and programmes and implement them in order to safeguard the fundamental rights of the people, as enshrined in the constitution of Nepal and/or enacted into relevant laws.
- Create and strengthen forums and systems for learning and sharing of lessons, best practices, innovative solutions, constructive feedback and insights. Put emphasis on Goal 16 as a critical enabler and accelerator as it cuts across many themes and the SDGs.
- Establish policy, institutional, implementation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms with participation of CSOs at the local government level.
- Institutionalize participatory review of SDGs at the province and local government levels.
- Create alternative ways, in participation and mobilization of CSOs, for meeting the data gaps.

Regional Institutions

- Support networking, exchange of knowledge and ideas and develop learning and sharing platforms.
- Identify common issues and challenges and make lobby and advocacy.
- Support for innovative solutions to the obstacles to meeting the SDGs and realizing 'leave no one behind'.

Global Institutions

- Contribute to promoting rule of law and human rights and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.
- Promote and enforce global partnership for development.
- Strengthen accountability mechanisms for SDGs.
- Support civil society organizations for them to mobilize, participate, strengthen accountability and then to support governments in meeting the SDGs.
- Support underdeveloped nations like Nepal to generate resources, secure funding, and preference treatment in business and trade.

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About NFN

NFN is an umbrella organization of NGOs working in various fields of social welfare and development in Nepal. Established in 1991 for the promotion and protection of social justice, human rights and pro-poor development, NFN has evolved as a national organization working for the entire NGO movement in Nepal. It is actively working to unite, organize and mobilize civil society to create a peaceful, democratic and just Nepal.

NFN is a democratic organization run by a team of NGO professionals who volunteer their services to achieve the vision of NFN.

The Executive Committee is comprised of 51 members. Among them 47 are democratically elected members, including a president, a senior vice-president, two vice presidents, Secretary General, two deputy secretary generals, treasurer, seven secretaries, in-charge and deputy in-charge in each province and members. Immediate past president remains as an ex-officio member and other three members are nominated by the Executive Committee.

NFN is an autonomous, independent and politically non-partisan organization, governed by its own Constitution. It has prepared and enforced an NGO Code of Conduct (CoC) to increase the accountability and transparency of NGOs.

NFN has about 6,345 member NGOs affiliated to it through 77 district chapters. To coordinate and mobilize its member NGOs to carry out various programs effectively and efficiently, NFN has seven province committees comprised of 7–9 members in each province. Together, they work as a catalyst to support member organizations in leadership and professional skills development, and to enable them to contribute to sustainable development. The focus is on capacity building of local member NGOs and, in particular, on improving their management, governance, skills and competencies.

Nepal SDG Forum's secretariat is located at the central office of NFN which also coordinates and facilitates other thematically focused CSOs and networks in Nepal. More information about NFN and Nepal SDGs Forum can be obtained by visiting the websites: <http://www.ngofederation.org>, and <https://nepalsdgforum.org>.