



## Input for the HR75 Youth Declaration

Coordinated by: Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW)

Country: Nepal

Contributing national partners from RHRN Nepal:

- Blind Youth Association of Nepal (BYAN)

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1. *What are the challenges the world is facing now, how they will affect the future of human rights, and what future do you want for human rights?*

The world faces significant and interrelated challenges in the twenty-first century which threaten human rights in a number of ways. As a young person, the challenges are not only threatening but also limiting our opportunities to fully explore, acknowledge and enjoy the basic foundations of life, like security, shelter and equality. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development faces a critical threat due to interconnected crises, including COVID-19, climate change, and conflicts. These challenges are contributing to the distressing regression in poverty reduction, hunger eradication, education, and delivery and utilisation of essential health services. (*The Sustainable Development Goal Report, 2023*)

While the significant impact of influential advocacy campaigns throughout history have led to the expansion of rights frameworks, there also exists critical gaps in governance across history that imperil the lives, and identities of individuals because of their gender, caste, ethnicity, age, background or other constructs. As a young person, the future of human rights is an arc that identifies and pursues to close this gap.

Today, there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 per cent of the global population. (*United Nations, 2019*) The structural systems and barriers in the governance and positioning of young people into the systems have contributed to generation inequality. The existing inequality in terms of gender and identity, which continues to persist in various forms like gender-based discrimination, technology facilitated violence, abuse, harassment and many more affects young people's access to equal opportunities and rights, limiting their ability to fully participate in society, decide for themselves. Addressing inequality and discrimination is crucial for ensuring a future where human rights are upheld for all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds and identities.

Across the globe, young individuals are grappling with dire public health consequences, a direct result of pervasive global health disparities and the detrimental impacts of extreme fundamentalism. We are consistently besieged by



insufficient accessibility, archaic laws and regulations that impede fair healthcare provisions, discriminatory healthcare frameworks due to decades of misguided preferences rooted in traditional systems of decision-making, and severely constrained alternatives for young people and adolescent friendly health care access.

Due to the prevailing inequality, considerations related to gender and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) have been notably omitted in the context of COVID-19 pandemic and climate emergencies. However, it is imperative to recognize that there exist significant repercussions for more vulnerable individuals like the increase in sexual and gender-based violence. (*The link between climate change and sexual and reproductive health and rights: an evidence review, 2021*) During emergencies, the allocation of resources for SRHR services tends to be marginalized. This results in disruption of essential services, diminished availability of services, downgrading of healthcare facilities, diversion of already scarce resources, and constraints on the availability of SRHR products and information. (*Sexual and reproductive health and rights in humanitarian settings: a matter of life and death, 2023*)

Globally, young people are denied their opportunities for sexuality education as well, leaving them at the risk of poor outcomes like early marriages, increased cases of gender-based violence, unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), unsafe sexual practice, reinforcing stereotypes and many more. Additionally, the absence of CSE has impeded the development of healthy relationships, communication skills, and informed decision-making, leaving young individuals vulnerable to exploitation, coercion, and manipulation.

The challenges that the world faces today extend beyond physical realms and also encompass the digital landscape. Digital platforms also open avenues for digital divide and the spread of misinformation. The urgency of addressing these challenges becomes evident as they affect privacy, freedom of expression, and access to information. There is a growing concern about digital inequality and exclusion, causing lack of access to essential digital tools, resources and services to some and increasing the gaps in realisation of the technological advancements during the most vulnerable and marginalised situations.

In envisioning the future of human rights, young people in their diversity are at the forefront of development and change, demanding for and protecting their rights and ensuring intergenerational equity in decision-making processes.

2. *What are your recommendations to decision and policymakers, including governments, civil society, international organizations, the United Nations, and others, to advance human rights in the future?*

Integrating inclusive and intersectional perspectives into responses to crises like climate emergencies and pandemics is vital. Considering the diverse experiences of women and young girls is crucial due to their disproportionate vulnerability.



Governments must ensure equitable digital access for marginalised communities by implementing secure digital platforms and technologies. It is important to ensure access to information to all the marginalized and diverse groups by making the info-com platforms and system accessible and inclusive for all.

Collaboration with educational institutions, civil societies, and digital platforms is essential to provide evidence-based comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) for adolescents both in and out of school. Involving young people in decision-making processes and policy co-design is important, reflecting their diverse experiences.

Prioritizing feminist public policies addresses gendered dimensions of power and politics, dismantling discriminatory norms.

Governments should invest in accessible healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health, following Universal Health Coverage (UHC) principles.

Accountability frameworks should center on youth perspectives and address power imbalances. Civil society organizations must lead in inclusive youth participation, advocating for impactful change. UN agencies and organizations should promote youth-led movements and involve young people in decision-making.

These recommendations urge immediate action for a future where human rights are not just upheld but championed. Decision-makers, institutions, and organizations must respond urgently and resolutely.

### *3. What commitments and actions can young people take towards advancing human rights in the future?*

Young people are pivotal in shaping the future of human rights as advocates, catalysts, and leaders. We commit to concrete actions that champion justice, equality, and dignity for all. Our commitment goes beyond rhetoric, channeling our energy into meaningful progress.

At the core is our determination to amplify intersectional voices, creating inclusive platforms that advocate for diversity. Grassroots movements, digital activism, and community engagement will dismantle discriminatory norms, allowing everyone to exercise their rights without prejudice.

In collaboration with governments and civil society, we'll co-create solutions for pressing challenges. Focusing on climate change, digital equality, gender parity, and healthcare, we'll design policies that prioritize justice. Innovative partnerships will bridge governance gaps and uphold rights.

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is a fundamental right. We'll champion it, engaging with institutions and policymakers to ensure its availability. Empowering young people with knowledge will create a generation that respects all individuals' rights.



Technology's potential will be harnessed for good. We'll counter disinformation, promote digital literacy, and bridge the digital divide. Responsible online activism will call for regulations that ensure privacy and equitable digital access.

Collaborating with intergenerational allies, we'll advocate for policies that respect wisdom while prioritizing the future. Our resilience will be unwavering. Through peaceful protests and dialogues, we'll tirelessly champion human rights.

With creativity, collaboration, and determination, we'll ensure rights and dignity are upheld today and for generations to come.