

Kathmandu Declaration

We, the delegates of the **Sixth Annual Regional meeting of OneWorld South Asia**, held at Dhulikhel on February 27-28, 2007 in partnership with **FIT Nepal**, reflected on the mid-term progress made towards realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in South Asia. As a concerned group of 190 representatives from civil society, government, academia and the corporate sector across South Asia, we recognise that the MDGs are still an unmet need of the people in the region. Concerted efforts need to be made to accelerate progress towards the inclusive realization of these goals especially in the interest of human rights, dignity and security of the marginalized people.

Looking at the progress on the MDGs in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and having analyzed factors that accelerate or constrain success, we recommend the following imperatives:

1. There is a need to strengthen targeted decision making, with special focus on traditionally marginalized groups such as women, tribals and minorities for their overall wellbeing.
2. Timely access to knowledge and information plays an important role in furthering the rights of the marginalized. Critical information on government processes and good practices must be appropriately disseminated through user friendly, locally acceptable and viable tools for ensuring the requisite levels of awareness.
3. Women in traditional societies are a repository of local knowledge that can lead communities towards self-reliance and sustainability. Local knowledge, oral traditions and practices must be captured, harnessed and adapted for current needs.
4. Responsive governance must be promoted at all levels so that resources allocated for human development can be utilized effectively within an overall framework of transparency.
5. Reliable infrastructure in both rural and urban areas must be made available for equitable human development through effective multi-stakeholder partnerships.
6. Capacity development and orientation of all stakeholders on the importance of achieving the MDGs as an entry point to improve the quality of human life is necessary.
7. Appropriate legal and regulatory mechanisms such as the Right to Information Act in India that allow people to access critical information, must be set up across the region.
8. Natural resources need to be used in a manner that mitigates ecological imbalances in the region and brings about eco-friendly economic development.

9. Development in conflict-affected areas can be furthered by making available relevant knowledge on conflict issues to initiate active dialogue and promote harmony - through ICTs and new media tools for large scale outreach.
10. All stakeholders- the government, private sector, academia and the civil society must work together and in tandem so that progress is meaningful and scarce resources can be put to effective use.