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### High-level political forum on sustainable development

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Item 2 of the provisional agenda\*

**Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the  
decade of action and delivery for sustainable development**

### **Compilation of main messages for the 2020 voluntary national reviews**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat transmits herewith the main messages of voluntary national reviews presented by 47 States members of the high-level political forum on sustainable development at its 2020 meeting, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [67/290](#) and [70/1](#).

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\* [E/HLPF/2020/1](#).



## Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

### Introduction

Argentina has undertaken to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development following its committed effort to implement the outcome of the Millennium Summit of the United Nations. In 2003, President Kirchner incorporated the Millennium Development Goals into his government agenda by establishing the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies as a focal point, having participated since 2013 in dialogues and consultations on the United Nations post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. In September 2015, during the presidency of Cristina Fernández, Argentina committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda. In December 2015, the Government of Mauricio Macri extended the mandate of the National Council as a pivotal governing body.

### Achievements

In 2016, Argentina formed the National Inter-Agency Commission on the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Sustainable Development Goals, led by the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies. In the same vein, the progress-monitoring matrix was created; it includes indicators, public policies and budgetary investment linked to Sustainable Development Goal targets. The partnership with the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses made it possible to combine the political and technical dimensions of the 2030 Agenda. The commitment to leave no one behind, based on States' human rights obligations, necessitated multiple approaches: the revision of international targets to ensure the inclusion of targets that explicitly address vulnerability; the revision of technical specifications relating to indicators, from a rights perspective; linking the targets of the Goals Argentina is working to achieve with the National Plan of Action on Human Rights; training in the human rights-based approach; and the publication of accessible documents on the 2030 Agenda, among other topics. The localization processes were informed by the lessons learned from the implementation and follow-up at the national level, promoting coordination and feedback. Participation in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and the high-level political forum on sustainable development has been a priority for our country.

### Challenges

The political, economic and social context of 2020 is completely different from that in which the first voluntary national report was presented. By 2017, Argentina had begun a political cycle marking a return to neoliberalism. In December 2019, a new government administration took power. Its governance has been centred on State leadership, democracy and social justice, albeit against a backdrop of social vulnerability and economic fragility conditioned by an unsustainable foreign debt. The current Government reaffirmed its commitment to the 2030 Agenda, focusing on the "Argentina against Hunger" programme, in addition to the effort to combat the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Early on, Argentina made preventive social isolation measures mandatory to prevent the spread of COVID-19; began the construction of 12 prefabricated emergency hospitals; and created a special fund to procure equipment and supplies for laboratories and hospitals. Argentina provided workers and the real economy with support. The following measures have been adopted: allocations for school and community have been increased; an extraordinary bonus has been paid to retirees, pensioners and holders of the Universal Child Allowance and the Universal Pregnancy Allowance; sectors affected

by the pandemic have been exempted from employers' contributions; unemployment insurance has been strengthened; a ceiling price has been set for items in the basic food basket; emergency household income has been supplied and service cuts for non-payment have been prohibited; small- and medium-sized enterprises have been provided with credit and mortgage credit facilities have been extended; a temporary freeze on rent has been decreed and evictions have been suspended; a guarantee fund for small and medium-sized enterprises and an emergency assistance programme for jobs and production have been established; and a 60-day prohibition on dismissals and suspensions has been declared. These measures have mitigated the impact of the disease and prevented the collapse of the health-care system, in addition to alleviating the negative economic and social repercussions of the pandemic. In a post-pandemic world, Argentina will have to strengthen domestic production and continue to eradicate long-standing social inequities as well as those exacerbated by COVID-19. Getting Argentina back on its feet requires re-establishing priorities in order to reach everyone, starting with those who have least. Achieving the Goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda remains a challenge and a prospect on the horizon for our country.

## Armenia

[Original: English]

### **Institutional arrangement**

The Republic of Armenia has been firmly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Beginning in 2015, the National Council on Sustainable Development has actively worked on creating the necessary infrastructure for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals as part of its institutional and systemic approach towards a Goal-related policy.

The renewed National Council on Sustainable Development, now headed by the Deputy Prime Minister, has been recently established with broader representation and a mandate to coordinate and monitor the Goal implementation and nationalization processes. This is an inclusive and collaborative endeavour between the Government and wider participatory networks, including civil society, academia and the United Nations country team, that correspond to a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

### **National ownership**

The Government of Armenia is in the process of incorporating the 2030 Agenda into its national reform agenda and strategies. Currently, the Government is developing a transformation strategy for 2050, which includes 16 "mega goals", with their own targets, indicators, tasks and solutions. The Strategy is considered to be an implementation framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, and the mega goals largely correspond to those Goals.

### **Successful path for development**

Armenia was named country of the year 2018 by *The Economist*, reflecting the country's remarkable improvement in 2018. That year was one of fundamental democratic transformation manifested by the peaceful Velvet Revolution, which demonstrated the considerably high degree of political maturity and legal literacy of the Armenian public.

Since 2018, the Government has been implementing a wide range of reforms to ensure the full and unimpeded realization of civil and political rights, including rule of law, an independent judiciary, a campaign against corruption and the strengthening of its

democratic institutions, which has widely contributed to the successful implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16, in particular. That progress has been asserted also in reports of reputable international organizations, such as Freedom House and Gallup.

The Armenian democratic transition has been manifested by the Democracy Index 2019 of the Economist Intelligence Unit. Armenia managed to show notable improvement and made substantial steps towards democracy, upgrading its position by 17 points (ranking eighty-sixth), despite a fall in the average global score of the Index.

Another important achievement was the considerable improvement in position by Armenia on the Corruption Perception Index published by Transparency International. Armenia progressed by 28 points (ranking seventy-seventh), which became possible owing to high political will and the elimination of systemic corruption.

The Government has launched nationwide economic reforms, specifically aimed at modernizing Armenia's economy, with a particular emphasis on advancing the high-tech industry and developing the innovation ecosystem.

In 2019, the gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate in Armenia was 7.6 per cent, which was the highest among States members of the Eurasian Economic Union, neighbouring countries and European countries. The poverty rate continued to decline, reaching 23.5 per cent, in comparison with 29.8 per cent in 2015. The extreme poverty rate has fallen twice since 2015, reaching 1.0 per cent. The Government aims to eliminate extreme poverty by 2023.

Underlining the principle of leaving no one behind, the Government initiated a number of reforms targeting vulnerable groups and the reduction of gender inequality; the accessibility and quality of health services, such as through the adoption of a law on tobacco control and the launch of air ambulance services for health emergencies; accessible education, such as through the transition to universal inclusive general education by 2023; and the revision of State educational standards, fostering labour market-oriented skills.

### **Overcoming challenges**

There are still gaps in the process of Sustainable Development Goal achievement. Efforts need to be doubled to overcome the general challenges revealed during the review process, such as the following:

- Legislation concerning equality
- Mitigation and adaptation to climate change
- Energy diversification and the sustainable use of natural resources
- Judicial reform

### **Coronavirus disease**

The continued spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is expected to considerably weaken the progress of Sustainable Development Goal implementation in many countries, including Armenia. The Government has undertaken substantial measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to ensure the proper functioning and preparedness of the health system. To mitigate the expected socioeconomic slowdown, the Government initiated an assistance package amounting to \$300 million (2 per cent of GDP), including the following:

- Direct grants to small and medium-sized enterprises and micro-entrepreneurs
- State-sponsored targeted loans
- Compensation for utility payments

- Financial support to vulnerable groups
- Tuition fee support

The spread of COVID-19 has also negatively influenced the voluntary national review preparation process, owing to the cancellation of planned meetings and workshops, which were replaced by online tools.

## **Austria**

[Original: English]

For decades, Austria has been implementing sustainable development principles in their environmental, social and economic dimensions.

Sustainable development is a constitutional State goal.

Austria promotes competitiveness and innovation while safeguarding the diversity of natural resources, ecosystem services and social progress.

Austria has successfully implemented numerous Sustainable Development Goals and continues this commitment.

### **Governance**

Following the mainstreaming approach, all federal ministries have been integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into their strategies and programmes since 2016 and have been devising corresponding action plans and measures.

The interministerial working group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development handles the general coordination and communication of essential measures for implementing the Goals.

The Sustainable Development Goals are anchored in nationwide Austrian strategy documents outlining its climate and energy strategy, three-year programme on development policy, health targets, youth strategy and foreign trade strategy. References to the Goals are also included in the strategies of the federal states.

Following a multi-stakeholder approach, representatives of federal states, cities, municipalities, social partners and stakeholders from civil society and the business and scientific communities are interacting with the inter-ministerial working group and are committed to implementing the Goals.

Austria's activities in the European Union, international organizations and in development cooperation projects also serve to implement the Goals.

As the seat of several international organizations, Austria promotes sustainable development.

The Government Programme 2020–2024 further strengthens targeted coordination in implementing the 2030 Agenda by systematically involving relevant stakeholders.

### **Digitalization**

Digitalization is also an Austrian priority in implementing the 2030 Agenda, through the following:

- Expansion and promotion of broadband and 5G, digital skills and applications, digitalization in the health sector and in citizen-oriented public services, in order to enable everyone to benefit
- Use of digitalization to cut resources and energy consumption and reduce carbon dioxide emissions

- Holistic approach for sustainable use of digital transformation, such as smart cities
- Use of digitalization in communication and management of crises and pandemics

Austria will strengthen digital governance, drawing on the knowledge of all stakeholders to enable digital technologies to be used in all areas related to the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Women, young people and leaving no one behind**

Austria's well-developed social and health-care system is key in combating poverty and social exclusion and in ensuring high-quality health care to everybody, including disadvantaged and highly vulnerable groups.

Targeted measures improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities, older persons, young people and children, among others.

Along with strengthening primary health care, promoting women's health and assuring quality care, Austria will place special emphasis on fighting poverty among children, women and older persons.

The involvement of young people in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is key, as follows:

- Extending voting rights to 16-year-olds opened up democratic participation to young people
- Youth empowerment is central in decision-making and participatory processes regarding the Sustainable Development Goals and in implementing the Austrian Youth Strategy

The equality of women and men is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as follows:

- It is vital to systematically integrating a gender-specific perspective into the implementation of all 17 Goals
- As a cross-cutting issue, gender equality builds on the commitment of actors from all fields and on cooperation with non-governmental organizations and civil society
- Challenges include eliminating gender stereotypes, closing the gender pay gap, promoting women in leading positions, expanding childcare services, especially in rural areas, fighting violence against women, and integration

### **Climate action**

Austria aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2040. To this end, we are determined:

- To implement an eco-social tax reform
- To draw up a mobility master plan for 2030
- To introduce an affordable, nationwide annual pass for public transport
- To present a plan for phasing out oil, coal and natural gas fossil fuels for room heating
- To massively increase renewable energy

At the European Union level, Austria supports carbon border adjustments and the earliest possible phasing out of the financing and subsidizing of fossil fuel infrastructure.

Austria advocates the decarbonization of energy systems without nuclear power, the latter not being a viable option for combating climate change.

## Indicators measuring advances in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals since 2017

There have been positive developments with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals, such as:

- A high percentage of land being organically farmed, making Austria a European Union leader in nutrition and food production
- A rising education level and a level of lifelong learning above the European Union average
- Renewable energy accounting for one third of total energy consumption (as from 2018), with the ratio of carbon dioxide emissions by industry and gross value added declining in 2010–2017
- Austria ranking among the top countries in digital public services

However, significant challenges remain, and action is needed in several areas, such as:

- Women performing considerably more unpaid work than men, and a substantial, although narrowing, gender pay gap still persisting
- Rising energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from traffic and land use (2010–2018)

## Bangladesh

[Original: English]

Bangladesh has adopted a people-centred development approach under the visionary and dynamic leadership of the Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. Since assuming office in 2009 with a landslide popular mandate, the Government has invested heavily in building a human-centred and inclusive modern democracy as envisioned by the “Father of the Nation”, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bangladesh has achieved the highest cumulative gross domestic product growth globally in the past ten years and has maintained strong macroeconomic stability, resulting in impressive socioeconomic development, increased per capita income and reduced poverty. Bangladesh fulfilled all three criteria for graduation to a developing country in March 2018.

The Government adopted a comprehensive response plan embracing health and socioeconomic recovery measures to control and contain the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Prime Minister announced stimulus packages of about \$11.6 billion (3.3 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP)), to be implemented in three phases: the immediate term; the short and medium term; and by fiscal year 2023/24.

The voluntary national review process in Bangladesh is led by the Sustainable Development Goal Implementation and Review Committee. Our whole-of-society approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals has integrated the views of relevant stakeholders from the central to the local levels.

The initiatives taken by the Government after the 2017 voluntary national review are as follows: (a) preparing a Goal-related action plan with new projects and programmes; (b) launching the SDG Tracker to monitor implementation in terms of indicator-related data updates; (c) finalizing a Goal-related financing strategy, which included updated financing needs to add an estimated \$928.5 billion required for fiscal years 2016/17 to 2029/30; (d) convening a first national conference on Sustainable Development Goal implementation review, attended by representatives from the Government, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, the private

sector and development partners; (e) forming a National Data Coordination Committee to harmonize data generation; (f) developing a framework of collaboration between the Government and the United Nations system entities in Bangladesh; and (g) approving 40 priority indicators for localizing the Sustainable Development Goals, 39 of which will reinforce the implementation of the other indicators, while the additional local indicator is intended to reflect the concept of leaving no one behind, addressing the vulnerable issue where each district and subdistrict is lagging behind.

Neonatal and under-5 mortality rates have reached the targets set for 2020. The country is on track to reaching targets with regard to the prevalence of tobacco use, family planning needs and reducing poverty and hunger rates. The Government's commitment is evident in the enhanced budgetary allocation and extensive coverage given to social protection. Gender parity in primary and secondary education has been achieved. The annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person and manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP has exceeded the target set for 2020. Access to electricity is 96 per cent on track with the commitment to provide electricity to every household by 2021. Numerous initiatives have been taken to ensure the safety, well-being and security of vulnerable sections of society, including women and children.

However, the 2020 voluntary national review has revealed some challenges. Sustained GDP growth has not resulted in reducing income inequality. Although the health sector has shown notable success, attaining universal health coverage remains a challenge. The same is true for ensuring quality education in multilevel educational streams. Ensuring sustainable urbanization remains a challenge. Climate vulnerability will continue to be a threat to our economy. More target-oriented efforts are needed to facilitate domestic resource mobilization at the desired level.

The voluntary national review of Bangladesh incorporates several good, innovative and collaborative practices from which other countries can benefit. We are also interested in learning from the experiences of others to address our own challenges.

We attach great importance to meaningful international cooperation for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. A global partnership is required, in the form of finance and technology, to implement the national social security strategy and the health financing strategy and introduce the national voluntary pension scheme, integrated water resources management, innovative domestic resources mobilization and modern and commercial agriculture focusing on smallholder farmers. We also need to allocate resources for human capital development and institution-building. While enormous efforts are being made to transform Bangladesh digitally to ensure good governance, enhance efficiency and reduce waste, we need greater cooperation in technology transfer to seize the opportunities created by the fourth industrial revolution phenomenon.

Our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development complement our endeavours to achieve our national aspiration of becoming an upper middle-income country by 2031 and a developed country by 2041.

## **Barbados**

[Original: English]

In 2018, the Government of Barbados announced and began implementation of the Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan to restore macroeconomic stability and place the economy on a path of strong, sustainable and inclusive growth, while safeguarding the financial and social sectors. The Plan outlines the policies that reflect the Government's alignment of its anti-poverty and sectoral strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in the areas of fiscal policy to achieve greater equality; increased social protection access and social spending floors;



improved financial innovation, regulation and inclusion; and climate-resilient, carbon-neutral and marine-conscious public and private investment for growth.

On the basis of its Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan, Barbados signed an Extended Fund Facility with the International Monetary Fund in October 2018. The Plan and the Facility are perhaps unprecedented as a series of fiscal adjustment and structural reform measures that managed to shift the burden of the adjustment away from labour and the most vulnerable towards capital and the visitor economy. A successfully completed domestic and external debt restructuring process, changes to the revenue and expenditure models and ring-fencing and even increases in health, education and social protection investments have led to significant improvements in key social and economic indicators included in the Sustainable Development Goal framework.

This was the environment in the first quarter of 2020, when the Government of Barbados was preparing to deliver its voluntary national review. It was also the moment in which the global community was called upon to completely reprioritize and reorganize expenditure, global supply chains and economic structures in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Overnight, we have seen the sharpest, deepest and most far-reaching economic recession since the Great Depression, presenting, beyond the disease itself, a further threat to lives and livelihoods. Entire industries have halted activity, millions find themselves unemployed and decades of global, human development progress are at immediate risk of being reversed. Small, vulnerable, highly indebted, tourism-dependent States like Barbados are among the hardest hit. The tourism-dependent islands of the Caribbean see, on average, over 45 per cent of their gross domestic product from this sector, with comparable levels of employment. As at 8 May 2020, the National Insurance Scheme, the Government's national social security programme, had received over 35,000 unemployment claims, representing one quarter of the workforce.

For this reason, and as this event has served to reset every development baseline, we propose to present the Barbados 2020 voluntary national review in the context of the country's broad-based COVID-19 response, which not only has seen a sharp scaling-up of social protection investment and fiscal and financial inclusion policies, but also has implications on the achievement of other targets on which we will report. In this voluntary national review, Barbados will discuss the ways in which its Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan and the COVID-19 response are likely to affect Sustainable Development Goal achievement, as well as the opportunities that the Plan and response create to fast-track progress in achieving the Goals and targets outlined below. Lastly, in its voluntary national review, Barbados will discuss the perennial challenge of its capacity to monitor achievement and address Goal 17, on the global partnership for development, which has perhaps never been more relevant than it is today, as the world battles a global pandemic, with countries having varying levels of access to the key resources needed in this fight.

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
1	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors (1.3) Increase access to economic resources and basic services (1.4) Reduce vulnerability to disaster and climate crisis (1.5)	
3	Reduce mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment (3.4) Improve health coverage (3.8)	
4	Increase youth and adult access to technical and vocational skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (4.4)	

Goal	Target	Indicator
6	Increase water-use efficiency and reduce water scarcity (6.4)	
7	Increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix (7.2)	
8	Promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products (8.9)	
10	Adopt fiscal, wage and social protection policies that progressively achieve greater equality (10.4)	
13	Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters (13.1)	
17	Foster global coordination to partner with developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and to address the external debt of highly indebted developing countries to reduce debt distress (17.4)	

## Benin

[Original: French]

### **Main theme: “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development” with an in-depth review of all the Sustainable Development Goals**

Benin is participating in the 2020 high-level political forum on sustainable development, having taken part in the 2017 and 2018 forums, to share with the international community its progress, good practices, experiences and future vision in the context of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. For this year’s forum, the voluntary national review of Benin will be based on the following key messages:

**1. Localization of the priority targets of the Goals to strengthen local action for accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

Having ranked the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals in order of priority and integrated them into the national planning framework, Benin has successfully completed the process of localizing these targets, selecting the 10 most important for each of the country’s 77 communes.

**2. “Leave no one behind” special initiative to eradicate poverty and build human capital**

This initiative is built around nine critical starting points chosen on the basis of an intersectoral needs analysis, and the ripple effects and synergies between the priority targets of the Goals.

**3. Summary assessment for more effective achievement of the Goals**

This assessment enabled Benin to take stock of the results achieved after four years and to make appropriate adjustments to speed up implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**4. Implementation of the political declaration adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the Sustainable Development Goals summit of September 2019: development of a 10-year action framework for accelerating the achievement of the Goals**

The Government is committed to making the next decade one of ambitious and accelerated action and is ramping up its efforts to achieve greater

progress with the development of a 10-year action framework for accelerating the achievement of the Goals.

**5. Investment in data and statistics with a view to leaving no one behind**

Benin has adopted a third national strategy for the development of statistics and has established a task force to improve the depth of information on indicators. The need for disaggregated data requires the country to compare its approaches with those of other countries.

**6. Improvement of living conditions through key actions**

Benin has invested in innovative measures that have resulted in new paving, asphaltting, sanitation and street lighting in several cities, as well as improved access to drinking water and energy. Far-reaching reforms have also been adopted aimed at putting digital transformation at the heart of development.

**7. Forums and round tables geared towards mobilizing adequate and well-managed funding**

The 2018 costing of the Sustainable Development Goals indicated that Benin would need financial and technological resources equivalent to about 60.8 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP), but annual available domestic fiscal resources are barely equivalent to 18 per cent of GDP. The country has therefore invested in the organization of sectoral round tables and forums with a view to identifying pathways and means of mobilizing resources.

**8. Main challenges and issues**

The process of preparing the voluntary national review report brought to the fore several major challenges and issues. In particular, the country needs to:

- Improve integration of the targets into development policies and strategies at all levels.
- Further strengthen its statistical information system.
- Continue to mobilize resources to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Goals.
- Take into account ripple effects and synergies between actions designed to support achievement of the Goals.
- Successfully realize the Goals at the local level.

## **Brunei Darussalam**

[Original: English]

Brunei Darussalam strives to build on its Millennium Development Goal achievements to take greater strides towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The 2030 Agenda complements Brunei Darussalam's national vision for 2035, which is aimed at achieving a population with a high quality of life and building a dynamic and sustainable economy with an educated, highly skilled and accomplished work force by 2035. The country's nation-building efforts are supported by a strong sense of community spirit and high regard for family values, while upholding the country's rich traditions and cultures. The Government makes it a priority to continue to guarantee the welfare of its people at all levels, thus ensuring that no one is left behind.

In our voluntary national review, we outlined our journey, challenges and accomplishments with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals thus far and the

further progress that we aspire to achieve. In preparation for the review, an inter-ministerial special committee was established, spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance and Economy and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and comprising other relevant government Ministries, with the active engagement of relevant stakeholders, including non-government organizations and civil society organizations. These inclusive and transparent engagements ensure greater awareness and ownership of the report, which truly reflects a holistic and comprehensive perspective of our efforts to achieve the Goals. The voluntary national review also provided an opportunity to review our strategies, policies and institutional mechanisms and identify the implementation gaps.

Today, Brunei Darussalam enjoys one of the highest standards of living in Asia, where its people continue to prosper and live in a safe and harmonious environment, with access to universal health care, quality education and infrastructure. The education and health standards in Brunei Darussalam are among the highest in the developing world. The high level of enrolment contributed to its high literacy rate of over 95 per cent.

Brunei Darussalam has been certified free from infectious diseases, namely, polio, malaria, measles and, recently, rubella. The country also has low maternal mortality rates and has reached the Sustainable Development Goal targets for neonatal and child mortality rates. A full 100 per cent of the population has access to clean drinking water, while 92 per cent enjoys access to improved sanitation systems.

Brunei Darussalam is continuously providing affordable and sustainable housing and adequate financial support for the poor and for older and differently abled persons. It has made significant progress in deepening connectivity, both physical and virtual, where 97.54 per cent of the country is connected by roads and mobile penetration has consistently exceeded 100 per cent since 2012.

The World Economic Forum recognizes Brunei Darussalam's significant progress towards gender equality in such key areas as education, health and economic participation. Brunei Darussalam ranks highly in girls' enrolment in secondary and tertiary education, wage equality for similar work and for employing women legislators, senior officials and managers. Brunei Darussalam is proud to be among the carbon-neutral countries, and its national climate policy is aimed at making further progress in safeguarding its environment and natural resources.

Our country's resilience and unity are best observed in our rapid response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which significantly contained the outbreak. The Government has mobilized resources to ensure adequate capacity of the health system, including by establishing quarantine centres and building a new virology laboratory. To mitigate the negative impacts to businesses and employment and to ensure swift economic recovery post-COVID-19, the Government intervened with tax allowances, the deferment of payments of loans and re-skilling and up-skilling for affected workers. Education institutions also swiftly responded, by retrofitting to online learning at home.

Brunei Darussalam appreciates the importance of global partnerships to successfully achieve the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, the country welcomes technical assistance and capacity-building programmes aimed at strengthening its capacity and will continue to support the efforts of regional and international organizations, in particular the work of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue, the Commonwealth and the United Nations.

Brunei Darussalam's voluntary national review report reflects the country's commitment to the 2030 Agenda. The challenge now is to make, sustain and monitor further progress and to ensure that achievements are inclusive and all-encompassing. The review also serves as a reminder that Brunei Darussalam not only has to continue,

but has to further deepen its efforts, as a country and as a partner in the global community, towards a sustainable future for all.

## **Bulgaria**

[Original: English]

Sustainable development is an important priority for the Government of Bulgaria. Bulgaria is committed to doing its part for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, both nationally and internationally.

Bulgaria is a staunch supporter of multilateralism and a rules-based international order, with the United Nations at its centre. We took an active part in the negotiation process that resulted in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and supported a review mechanism that would allow for a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Voluntary national reviews offer such an analysis.

Bulgaria's first voluntary national review presented a valuable opportunity to take stock of the progress made, identify challenges and map out future steps for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It covers all 17 Goals.

Advancement of the 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved by Governments alone. It requires the commitment and active participation of all sectors of society. During the drafting process, multiple stakeholders were involved: youth, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia, local-level representatives and vulnerable groups. The voluntary national review contains an outline of some of the initiatives undertaken in Bulgaria towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Wider public feedback was sought through an online consultation process, via the Government's public consultation portal.

Bulgaria attributes equal importance to the three dimensions of sustainable development. Our policies are guided by respect for human rights, gender equality and the principle of leaving no one behind. That principle is at the heart of the most important strategic documents aimed at the inclusion of persons with disabilities, vulnerable groups, the Roma, young people, older persons and disadvantaged children, among others.

Bulgaria holds a leading position in Europe in the proportion of women working in the information technology sector, at 27 per cent. In addition, 53 per cent of the scientists and engineers in our country are women. We are working towards reducing the gender pay gap, promoting equality in decision-making processes and combating gender-based violence.

Bulgaria is a strong advocate for the rights of the child and promotes their integration in all aspects of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Bulgaria is among the few countries that has a United Nations youth delegate programme, which it has had since 2007, as part of the country's efforts to empower youth to meet global challenges.

Sound public finances and the conducive macroeconomic environment have ensured consistent economic growth in recent years: 3.8 per cent of gross domestic product per capita in 2018.

Bulgaria has already achieved a 20.5 per cent share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption and plans to raise that share to 27.0 per cent by 2030.

Bulgaria recognizes the crucial importance of data to measure progress in sustainable development. As a State member of the European Union, Bulgaria strives to meet European Union targets for the Sustainable Development Goals. Last December, the National Statistical Institute launched Monitorstat, a web-based platform for tracking

Goal-related progress. It contains all indicators of the Eurostat Sustainable Development Goal framework and multiple indicators from the global Goal framework.

However, key challenges to Sustainable Development Goal implementation persist. Reversing the negative demographic trend is among the main objectives. Poverty and inequality, including between regions, pose an obstacle to Goal implementation. Underperformance in reading, mathematics and science mean that more effort is needed to provide quality education for all.

We have ambitious plans for the future. By the end of 2020, the Council of Ministers is expected to adopt the National Development Programme: Bulgaria 2030, in which three main strategic goals will be addressed: accelerated economic development, demographic upswing and the reduction of inequalities. The Programme will contain an outline of 13 national priorities in five development areas: an intelligent and innovative Bulgaria, a green and sustainable Bulgaria, a connected and integrated Bulgaria, a responsive and just Bulgaria and a spirited and vital Bulgaria. All 13 national priorities are explicitly linked to specific Sustainable Development Goals and will have indicator frameworks specifically developed for them. The Programme reflects a whole-of-government approach to sustainable development and takes into account the interlinkages between the Goals.

One of the most important tasks ahead is the creation of a national mechanism for the coordination and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Such a mechanism should be located within the executive power. Among its main objectives will be monitoring Goal implementation, ensuring coordinated dialogue and designing sustainable development policies. Raising awareness about the 2030 Agenda and communicating with stakeholders will also be among the Government's main objectives.

## **Burundi**

[Original: French]

In joining the global movement to adopt and take ownership of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Burundi undertook to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into its national development plan for the period from 2018 to 2027, as well as its sectoral strategies and local development plans

At the operational level, Burundi contextualized the Goals through a participatory and inclusive process involving all stakeholders. The process led to the prioritization of a set of 49 targets and 101 national indicators, which the Government is committed to achieving and monitoring.

Through the realization of the Goals and the implementation of its national development plan for the period 2018–2027, Burundi has committed to structurally transform its economy in order to achieve strong, sustainable, resilient and inclusive growth that creates decent jobs for all and leads to improved social welfare for a united, democratic and prosperous country.

While Burundi continues to face various challenges, it remains determined to reduce poverty and eradicate hunger through sectoral policies and strategies focused on structural public investment. Other challenges to be addressed are related to: (a) the availability of relevant, comprehensive and disaggregated data that are updated in real time to reflect current realities; (b) the mobilization of internal and external financing; and (c) adaptation to climate change and compliance with international environmental standards.

Burundi has made significant progress in terms of social protection, including by: (a) implementing a social safety nets project designed to facilitate cash transfers

to poor households; and (b) establishing a social protection support fund to finance social protection programmes.

The Government has made access to health care, especially for the most vulnerable groups, a priority. A clear illustration of this is its implementation of the national health policy, through which it aims to ensure that 90 per cent of the population lives no further than 5 kilometres from a health-care facility. In addition, the Government has achieved its target of offering free medical treatment for pregnant women and children aged 0 to 5 years.

With regard to education, the State's proactive policy of sending all school-age children to school has led to near parity at the primary school level and a gross school enrolment ratio of 111 per cent in 2019. The increase in this sector's share of budget expenditure from 34 per cent in 2016 to 36 per cent in 2020 is a clear indicator of the importance that is attached to education, and has been channelled into the strengthening of the education system and the provision of formal education.

With regard to the empowerment of women and girls, which is expected to contribute to poverty eradication, a guarantee fund has been set up to facilitate women's access to credit, thereby supporting their economic empowerment.

The Government has made noteworthy progress in terms of access to drinking water, as is evidenced by the increase in the rates of access between 2010 and 2019, from 75 per cent to 83 per cent in urban areas and from 60 per cent to 63 per cent in rural areas over the same period.

To address climate change, the Government plans to build resilience, create climate-resilient opportunities for investment and make the green economy a source of decent jobs through the implementation of the national disaster risk management strategy. A community disaster risk management project for climate change related disasters is currently being developed to guide action in the reconstruction and emergency phases of disasters.

The Government reaffirms its commitment to the Goals and will concentrate on the major actions and recommendations outlined in the road map for accelerating progress towards the Goals, while continuing the process of contextualizing the Goals through its various sectoral and local plans.

## **Comoros**

[Original: French]

### **Preparation for the voluntary national review of the Union of the Comoros to the 2020 high-level political forum on sustainable development**

#### **Key messages of the voluntary national review of the Union of the Comoros to the forum**

##### **I. Introduction**

The Union of the Comoros has been committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals since their adoption in 2015. With the support of the United Nations system, specifically the United Nations Development Programme, the country has contextualized and prioritized the targets of Goals by involving public institutions, civil society, the private sector and development partners in the process.

This resulted in the selection of 68 Goal targets with indicators linked to the country's priorities, specific challenges and statistical capacity.

The "Emerging Comoros" plan, which covers the period up to 2030, is the document that guides action towards the Goals. Adopted in 2019 at the instigation of the President of the Union of the Comoros, the plan is intended to support the joint implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. It is based on five strategic pillars and five catalysts that enable intersectoral links to be better taken into account, for a coherent and effective implementation of development policies and programmes.

## **II. Progress towards the Goals**

### **Social capital**

The proportion of the population without access to services has fallen by almost 10 per cent in a 10-year period. The share of the population living below the national poverty threshold is 23.5 per cent, while 18 per cent live below the international poverty threshold (on less than \$1.9 per day). Thirty-three per cent of the population has electricity, 18 per cent has access to drinking water and 36 per cent has sanitation. The Government is aiming to bring these rates up to 100 per cent by 2030.

The health-care system is inadequate in various ways in the face of an epidemiological profile marked by a number of diseases that are spreading in an endemoepidemic pattern and other emerging non-communicable diseases, including diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. The health situation in the country is precarious. The arrival of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is making the challenges even more daunting.

### **Human capital**

There is gender parity at the primary and secondary school levels. In higher education, the University of the Comoros has about 16,000 students (in the 2018/2019 academic year), which is 16 times its initial cohort (in 2003/2004). Greater efforts are needed to improve the quality of teaching and the placement of young graduates. The gross preschool enrolment rate and the literacy rate have increased over the past 10 years, but disparities persist, particularly between urban and rural areas.

### **Economic capital**

In the "Emerging Comoros" plan, the blue economy is recognized as an engine for development. Fishing accounts for 6.7 per cent of national wealth. The agricultural sector employs 57 per cent of the working population and provides about 90 per cent of export earnings, mainly from the sale of agricultural products. The Government is planning to develop several sectors, including tourism and seabed mining. It is setting up an urban development and infrastructure programme. The Comoros is classified as a middle-income country.

### **Natural capital**

The climate issue is a major factor in the country's development, and it affects the entire environmental sector. The Government plans to expand the national system of protected areas to cover more than 25 per cent of the country, increase renewable energy capacity from 0.6 per cent to 40 per cent by 2030, strengthen disaster resilience, adapt agriculture, restore watersheds and build disaster risk management capacity.



### III. Mechanisms for coordination, resource mobilization and partnerships

Under the oversight of the Head of State, the Secretary-General of the Government manages coordination, with support from the Economic Advisory Committee. The institutional framework for monitoring progress towards the Goals, which is the same framework used to assess progress against the “Emerging Comoros” plan, is structured around people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership and involves all stakeholders. The current challenge is to make it operational.

In addition, the Government is working to mobilize resources and partnerships for the implementation of the “Emerging Comoros” plan. The 50 per cent increase in public investment between 2016 and 2018 and the mobilization of 4.3 billion euros at the development partners of the Comoros conference in Paris in 2019 are part of these efforts. The Government is also carrying out administrative, legal and institutional reforms to enhance competitiveness, including through new technologies.

### IV. Support needs

The Comoros needs technical and financial support in these sectors:

- Blue economy
- Agribusiness
- Digital transformation
- Planning and budgeting capacity
- Resource mobilization
- Data collection, analysis and publication
- Vocational and technical higher education

### Costa Rica

[Original: Spanish]

#### Fostering ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals

The starting points for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals are combating poverty and inequality, achieving sustainable consumption and production and building resilient infrastructure and sustainable communities. These were defined in accordance with a multidimensional approach, the Political Constitution and national priorities, through the use of statistics.

The country has national indicators for all 17 Goals, disaggregated by sex, territory, activity status, age, disability and other categories, on a case-by-case basis. Progress in the production of indicators shows that from 2017 to 2019 the number of available indicators increased, from 117 to 136, while the number of unavailable indicators decreased, from 32 to 14.

The National Development and Public Investment Plan for the years 2019 to 2022 incorporates the Goals in various forms. Sixty per cent of all the indicators contained in the Plan are linked to Goal indicators. The Plan is monitored every six months. In addition, there is a national evaluation policy in place for the years 2018 to 2030, and the country is a regional hub for Goal evaluation with the programme

for competence development and networking of evaluation performers in Latin America as a contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

The Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, whose priority measures make it possible to ensure that populations are included and leave no one behind, complements the Goals. In addition, 42 Goal indicators are used to follow up on the Montevideo Consensus.

The judiciary has established institutional governance that contributes to 94 of the 169 global targets and has emphasized that this should include the Goals in its plans and budgets, as well as in the jurisprudence of the Supreme Court of Justice. Since 2017, the judiciary has drafted three annual reports on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **Leaving no one behind**

Costa Rica has specific public policies for children, adolescents and youth; older persons; women; migrants; persons with disabilities; and indigenous peoples and people of African descent. The approach taken is centred on sustainable development and population. In addition, public policy design has led to innovation in decision-making with a multidimensional approach to poverty, as well as in the use of such tools as the single electronic health record, to provide vulnerable groups with care or in the event of an epidemic.

Actions of note to address climate change include the adoption of the National Decarbonization Plan for the years 2018 to 2050, the new nationally determined contribution and the national risk analysis protocol; with goals and objectives that are measurable, attainable and have an impact on the population.

Universal periodic review recommendations accepted by Costa Rica were aligned with Goal and population indicators; most of the indicators were linked to Goals 16, 5, 10, 4, 8, 1 and 3, in descending order. Such cross-border issues as access to transnational justice, migration and climate change are also being addressed.

As a participatory mechanism in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, an online survey was conducted to enable the various members of the Advisory Committee to report on their progress in the 17 Goals covered in this report.

Fifty-nine per cent of the Goal indicators analysed have exhibited a positive trend and enhanced development, while 13 per cent are on a stable or regular trajectory, and a negative trend has been observed in a mere 28 per cent of indicators. The Goals whose indicators have exhibited the most progress are Goals 1, 2, 12, 13 and 15, while greater challenges have been posed by the indicators associated with Goals 16, 8, 6 and 11.

With regard to the means of implementation, given the uncertainty that developing countries will receive full support at the international level for their efforts to achieve the Goals, the total official support for sustainable development framework seeks to provide a comprehensive picture of international public goods; providing a global perspective instead of a national one, and revealing the funding gaps between regions. Commitment is therefore necessary to promote its overall implementation.

Given that Costa Rica is classified as a middle-income country and has graduated, it has a dual role in international cooperation, as both recipient and provider of technical cooperation. Most cooperation projects contribute to the achievement of Goals 13, 17 and 11, while the least progress is reported on Goals 14, 9, 5 and 1, hence the need to adapt country priorities to those of cooperating partners in order to ensure effectiveness.

A national strategic plan for the years 2020 to 2050 is currently being developed as a long-term development strategy, based on a decarbonized, resilient, inclusive and research, development and innovation-intensive economy.

## Democratic Republic of the Congo

[Original: French]

Following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, in 2016 the Democratic Republic of the Congo began the process of establishing the Congolese Sustainable Development Observatory, an entity for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on progress towards the Goals. Through the Observatory, and on the basis of a broadly participatory and inclusive approach, the country has taken the following steps:

- Contextualization and prioritization of the Goal targets
- Localization of the Goals at the subnational level
- Alignment of the national strategic development plan and the sectoral and provincial strategies with the prioritized Goal targets

At the same time, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has developed its Goal indicator framework. It conducted statistical mapping to inventory the sources of statistical data that would be useful in relation to the various indicators and to identify any gaps in statistical data. The country also developed a multi-year programme for the collection of statistical data through a household survey, which should feed into the sustainable development indicators. The Democratic Republic of the Congo created an innovative survey to gauge people's perception of progress on the Goals, which led to the development of a sustainable development perception index.

In addition, stakeholder awareness has been raised in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and public policies have been implemented aimed at achieving the Goals. For example, as soon as the Goals were adopted, awareness-building was carried out among both civil society and ministries. Moreover, it is in this context that civil society has taken actions geared towards the achievement of the Goals and has provided insights to inform public policies. Below is a summary of the outcomes of the public policies put in place and the challenges that have arisen.

Social reforms have been carried out, including to expand social protection coverage. The proportion of the budget allocated to the health sector has steadily increased and bold measures are being taken to achieve universal health coverage. Furthermore, the Government has adopted a new strategic approach to effectively combat hunger and malnutrition. Additional efforts are being made to reduce extreme poverty and inequality.

With a view to achieving universal access to education, the Government has made primary education free. A quality control mechanism has also been established and the system for the recruitment of teachers has been reformed. Gender equality is a priority for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Reforms of the legal framework relating to women's rights have, inter alia, led to a revision of the Family Code. Nevertheless, efforts are still needed, in particular to eliminate some cultural burdens.

Moreover, the significant decline in growth has increased inequality and deprived the Government of resources, which has also affected the provision of essential social services. Despite the substantial water supply, ensuring access to water is a challenge, as is ensuring access to electricity. The energy supply is very inadequate, in spite of the country's enormous potential. The deregulation of the

energy sector has thus far not had the hoped-for effects. However, a number of ongoing projects are expected to increase the electricity supply.

On the environmental front, several climate change mitigation and adaptation projects have been initiated, but they require strengthened synergies between sectors. In addition, significant investment in the collection of environmental information and data is needed for a better understanding of the sector. Various programmes for biodiversity conservation and protection, including in parks and nature reserves, are regularly undertaken.

As a post-conflict country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo still faces occasional security problems. However, large-scale military operations have reduced the number of armed groups. The country has taken bold action to curb corruption and provide access to justice for all. There have also been very positive advances with regard to respect for human rights.

Overall, while progress is being made towards achievement of the Goals on the basis of a multi-stakeholder partnership, additional efforts are needed. A framework for accelerating progress on the Goals has been envisaged. However, resource mobilization continues to be the major stumbling block.

## **Ecuador**

[Original: Spanish]

Having pledged to leave no one behind, Ecuador reaffirms its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals by submitting its second voluntary national review.

The world situation has changed, as has the degree to which the Goals are being implemented. The fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the indirect effects of isolation mean that economic reactivation can be conducive to implementing the 2030 Agenda. The challenges that the international community faces can only be overcome through an effort governed by the principles of cooperation and solidarity, with a view to strengthening the multilateral system, not by promoting isolationist conceptions of development.

The challenges for Ecuador as a result of COVID-19 were accentuated by the dramatic drop in oil prices and the decline in foreign currency income from the export of other products and services. Owing to its dollarized economy, Ecuador requires greater flexibility from multilateral financial organizations, in order to honour its commitments under more favourable conditions, and a review of the situation of middle-income countries. Such flexibilities would facilitate the implementation of policies that reduce poverty, the primary goal of the 2030 Agenda. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,<sup>1</sup> poverty in the Latin American and Caribbean region could increase by 3.5 per cent and extreme poverty by 2.3 per cent as a result of the pandemic.

Although mobilizing resources to achieve the Goals has been a global challenge, Ecuador has made the strengthening of public-private partnerships built for efficient public financing part of its economic and financial policy. Policies and strategies for non-refundable international cooperation have been consolidated to promote South-South cooperation in particular.

Ecuador regards the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity to generate synergies between various actors for true sustainable development at the economic, social and

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, “*Latin America and the COVID-19 pandemic: economic and social effects*” (3 April 2020).

environmental levels. Two executive decrees and a ministerial agreement were issued, making it possible to incorporate the 2030 Agenda into public policy and lay the groundwork for monitoring the implementation of this instrument.

By 2020, the country has directly aligned each Goal with the objectives, policies and targets of the National Development Plan for the years 2017 to 2021. As a result, it has been possible to identify stakeholders, prioritize and target resources, and to strengthen national planning, follow-up and evaluation exercises.

While the decade of action is being undertaken as a national priority, there is a need to adjust policies, taking a risk-management approach, and to ensure an agile and coordinated response on the part of international financial agencies. Efforts to strengthen public health systems and provide essential services must prevail so that recovery from COVID-19 does not undermine the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Guidelines were established for updating development and land-use plans so as to bring them into line with the 2030 Agenda. Ownership of the Goals outside the large cities is a pillar on which work should be done in an incremental manner, since the role played by local governments needs to be strengthened and adapted to policy, according to the needs of each territory, in order to establish links between the different levels of government and promote alliances that promote the implementation of this instrument.

Ending poverty, protecting the planet and improving living conditions are part of a universal call.

Ecuador considers it essential to promote mechanisms for linkage and coordination between key stakeholders, including academics, representatives of public and private companies and local government officials. Stakeholder participation by 2020 has helped to identify 350 initiatives at the national level, contributing to the development of the 2030 Agenda in the country. These processes have become mechanisms for identifying opportunities that promote transparency and accountability.

Ecuador firmly believes in the 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda and is certain of the support of allies and friends who know that collective action is the best way to move towards creating optimal living conditions for humankind, through a profound transformation rooted in sustainable development.

## **Estonia**

[Original: English]

Estonia is devoted to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both domestically and internationally. In addition to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, Estonia is also focusing on maintaining the viability of Estonian cultural space, pursuant to its Sustainable Estonia 21 strategy. The Sustainable Development Goals are the basis for the Estonia 2035 strategy, which lays out Estonia's long-term strategic objectives and relevant policy measures. The Sustainable Development Goals are also being implemented by integrating them into government-level development plans.

### **Process**

This is the second voluntary national review prepared by Estonia since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. The preparation of the review was coordinated by the Government Office, in cooperation with the interministerial working group on sustainable development, the Commission for Sustainable Development and several

non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It is based on the Government's activity reports, data collected from NGOs and enterprises and proposals from ministries and the Commission.

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is monitored through a mechanism based on Estonian sustainable development indicators and regular data-based reviews compiled by Statistics Estonia, in cooperation with the Government Office and various ministries. The list of indicators was renewed in 2017 to harmonize it with the global Goals. All central government indicators are available in the data-driven Tree of Truth online portal,<sup>2</sup> which illustrates the status of global and national sustainable development goals, by governance area.

### **Main conclusions**

Estonia has been generally successful in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. In the past four years, results in several areas have been maintained or improved. In 2019, Estonia was ranked tenth in the *Sustainable Development Report 2019: Transformations to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*.<sup>3</sup>

Mapping the actions and indicator-based analyses indicates that Estonia is successful in several Sustainable Development Goals. Our strengths lie in accessible and quality education, effective health-care organization, the high employment rate with minimal long-term unemployment and the high proportion of renewable energy in our overall energy consumption.

Nevertheless, several areas still require work. We need to focus on establishing gender equality (although decreased, the wage gap still remains among the highest in Europe); decreasing the risk of poverty for women and disabled people, including families with disabled children; establishing effective waste management and recycling; decreasing greenhouse emissions; and maintaining natural diversity. We also want to improve the health of our citizens, including mental health, and decrease the number of preventable deaths.

The global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic that started at the beginning of 2020 has affected the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in several areas, including the economy, employment, health care, education, culture and innovation. Specific impacts could be evaluated in future reviews.

The principles for Estonian development cooperation and humanitarian aid are established in the Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2016–2020. Starting in 2020, Estonian development cooperation follows the new development plan for foreign policy and a separate strategy for development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Pursuant to Estonian foreign policy objectives and international agreements to direct more resources to vulnerable countries, Estonia will continue to react flexibly to the needs of less developed and post-conflict countries, developing island States and landlocked developing countries in areas where Estonia can offer clear added value (for example, in health care or in improving the availability and quality of education).

### **Next steps**

The most recent important milestone in strategic planning is establishing the Estonian long-term strategy, Estonia 2035, which helps to integrate the Sustainable

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<sup>2</sup> The Tree of Truth web-based online portal of Statistics Estonia provides the standard for important government indicators. The portal is available at <https://tamm.stat.ee/>.

<sup>3</sup> Available at [https://s3.amazonaws.com/sustainabledevelopment.report/2019/2019\\_sustainable\\_development\\_report.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/sustainabledevelopment.report/2019/2019_sustainable_development_report.pdf).

Development Goals into sectoral strategies in a stronger and more systematic manner. We will continue to incorporate sustainable development into different policy fields.

Estonia and other States members of the European Union agreed to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into the European Semester, the European Union instrument for economic coordination. The instrument enables a centralized assessment of the Goals at the European Union level, to increase the significance of the Goals in Estonia and throughout the European Union.

We will also continue to raise awareness on the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2020, we plan to participate in the European Sustainable Development Week, discuss the Goals at the Estonian Opinion Festival and host an Estonian sustainable development forum. We are supporting and expanding the Coalition for Sustainable Development and creating a platform for sustainable development to enable the Government, the private sector, NGOs and citizens to gain knowledge, take responsibility and take action with regard to achieving the Goals.

## **Finland**

[Original: English]

### **Voluntary national review process**

Finland's second voluntary national review is focused on the progress achieved between 2016 and 2020. The review builds on existing institutional, follow-up and monitoring mechanisms and relies on data, evaluations, research and reports.

The voluntary national review was prepared by the Prime Minister's Office in close cooperation with all ministries, Finnish civil society and other stakeholders, such as municipalities and businesses. The report includes chapters written by stakeholders and institutions. The assessment of the progress on each Sustainable Development Goal consists of two independent assessments: one by government officials and one by civil society actors.

The Governments of Mozambique and Switzerland supported Finland in the preparation of its voluntary national review by reviewing the draft report and sharing their views.

### **Sustainable Development Goal progress, 2016–2020**

Finland is at the forefront of many international sustainability comparisons and studies. Finland is close to reaching many of the Sustainable Development Goals related to social and economic sustainability.

Finland's key challenges are related to consumption and production patterns, climate action and the state of biodiversity. Obesity is an increasing problem. Challenges related to gender equality, such as gender-based violence and labour market disparities, including the gender pay gap, still remain.

Finland takes global responsibility by, for example, contributing to international crisis management and supporting developing countries. However, Finland has not been able to restore its official development assistance to the level preceding the cuts in 2016. Spillovers need more attention.

### **Leaving no one behind**

Universal social security and service systems and good educational opportunities for the entire population have prevented exclusion.

Persons belonging to visible minorities and persons with disabilities continue to experience discrimination. National legislation and policy actions promoting equality and preventing exclusion are aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Finland pursues a human rights-based foreign and security policy. Finland has achieved good results in strengthening the rights of women and girls, promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights, advancing the rights of persons with disabilities and enabling developing economies to create jobs and livelihoods. The role of civil society is essential in reaching people in vulnerable positions at home and abroad.

### **Incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals into national processes and policies**

National implementation plans are submitted to Parliament as government reports. The aim of the current Government is to transform Finland into a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society by 2030.

A sustainability assessment has been integrated into the annual cycle of policy planning, budgeting and reporting. Since 2018, Finland has taken notable steps in sustainable development budgeting. The integration of environmental sustainability into policy has proven easier than the integration of social sustainability. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has also been integrated into national research programmes and innovation ecosystems.

Policy coherence and trade-offs pose a significant challenge. Trade-offs are often very difficult to reconcile, even when identified. Discussion on the importance of interlinkages has increased.

### **Tools and innovations for implementation**

A multi-stakeholder approach is highly valued in Finland. The Finland We Want By 2050: Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development is one of Finland's key instruments for engaging the whole of society: the public sector, businesses, civil society and private individuals.

The previous Government had commissioned an independent evaluation of national sustainable development policy, which provided input for the current Government's programme. The next evaluation will take place in 2023.

Innovative institutional mechanisms support national implementation. The Expert Panel for Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda Youth Group have taken on a prominent role. The national monitoring system includes innovative participatory elements.

Finland hosts one of the United Nations Technology Innovation Labs and the United Nations Office for Project Services Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investments and Global Innovation and Technology initiatives. Finland supports taxation capacity-building and the development of local innovation ecosystems in developing countries.

### **Governance for sustainable development**

The Government and Parliament engage in regular dialogue on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the National Audit Office of Finland has integrated the Agenda into its audit programmes.

The engagement of youth, the private sector and cities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has further increased. Three cities have prepared voluntary local



reviews. The region of Åland has integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its core strategies.

A systemic and long-term approach is needed to achieve transformations in sustainability. The preparation of a national 2030 Agenda road map in 2021 will support this approach.

## **Gambia**

[Original: English]

### **Delivering good governance, accountability and a revitalized economy for sustainable development in the Gambia**

#### **Introduction**

The Gambia has demonstrated its commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into its National Development Plan (2018–2021), thereby providing an opportunity to implement the Goals. The Government continues to engage the private sector, civil society and development partners in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. While there is a need to increase awareness about the Goals, the participation of stakeholders has increased ownership of the Agenda.

#### **Partnerships and institutional arrangements**

The Government has aligned the Sustainable Development Goals with National Development Plan institutional arrangements to enhance coordination. These include a ministerial steering committee and sector-based technical working groups. The multi-stakeholder voluntary national review coordinating committee will be maintained and transformed for overall Goal coordination.

#### **Peace**

With regard to governance, a new draft constitution has been completed that espouses respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms and rule of law. It features strong advocacy for gender balance and the fair representation of women, youth and persons with disability in the National Assembly, other statutory bodies and State-owned enterprises. In the judiciary, a balance in gender representation was achieved; there is also a female judge on the Supreme Court and the President of the Court of Appeal is a woman. At the political level, a woman was elected mayor of the capital city. The Truth Reconciliation and Reparations Commission, established to conduct research and investigations into human rights violations of the previous regime, with a view to facilitating community and national reconciliation, has submitted its interim report to the Government.

#### **Prosperity**

Gross domestic product (GDP) grew steadily, but erratically, in the past three years: 6.5 per cent in 2018, 4.8 per cent in 2017 and 1.9 per cent in 2016, driven mainly by tourism, rain-dependent agriculture and remittances, and vulnerable to external shocks. The collapse of Thomas Cook in late 2019 and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in 2020 dealt a heavy blow to tourism, leading to loss of revenue and jobs, with initial estimates indicating a slowing of GDP growth from the projected 6.0 per cent to 3.2 per cent. On the fiscal front, the COVID-19 pandemic will widen the fiscal deficit from the projected 1.5 per cent to 2.1 per cent of GDP in 2020.

Overall, 48.6 per cent of the population is poor, with a variation between urban (32.6 per cent) and rural (69.5 per cent) areas.

Regarding agriculture and food security, about 75 per cent of the population depends on crops and livestock for livelihood. The sector witnessed a slight revival in 2018, growing by 0.9 per cent compared with the sharp contraction of 4.4 per cent in 2017. However, erratic rainfall in the 2019/20 cropping season reduced agricultural production by about 23 per cent. The country is therefore not on target to achieving food and nutritional security, which is being further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Rural dwellers, who are mainly subsistence farmers, will require support for the next cropping season, mainly in the form of farming inputs and implements.

### **People**

In the social sector, significant progress has been recorded with respect to access to education, water and nutrition. Gains were registered with respect to school enrolment and retention; the proportion of the population with access to safe drinking water; the prevalence of underweight and wasting among children under 5 years of age; the prevalence of stunting among children in general; the prevalence of pregnant women with anaemia; and the prevalence of underweight non-pregnant women.

### **Planet**

With respect to environmental resilience and climate change, the Gambia is ranked among the two most ambitious developing countries in the world. Its nationally determined contribution has ambitious conditional and unconditional targets that meet the 1.5°C global warming commitment under the Paris Agreement.

The key long-term development challenges facing the Gambia are related to its undiversified economy, small private sector and internal market, limited access to resources, high public debt, high population growth rate and inadequate skills to create jobs for the youthful population. Data for development remains a challenge; the Government has therefore developed a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics and is exploring innovative financing for the Strategy. The country's current vision for 2020 is being evaluated to guide the formulation of a subsequent long-term vision.

To accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the National Development Plan, the Government has initiated its Programme for Accelerated Community Development, which takes into account the synergies among the Goals and is aimed at reducing the gap between urban and rural areas.

## **Georgia**

[Original: English]

Georgia is committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and to fulfilling the core pledge to leave no one behind that underpins the Agenda. The Government's policies and priorities are well aligned with the Goals, making them a solid basis for the country's reform agenda. The level of integration of Goals nationalized into Georgia's development planning, in line with its European Union integration aspirations, is very high: the country's 36 sector strategies and the association agreement between the European Union and Georgia together incorporate 96 per cent of the country's nationalized Sustainable Development Goal targets.

As Georgia presents its second voluntary national review, it is important to mention that, overall, the country has progressively advanced towards achieving its

nationally set targets. An analysis of the review shows that Georgia has made significant progress, not only making itself well on-track for the 2030 Agenda, but also marking the need for acceleration in some areas. The report provides an in-depth review of three priority areas: economic growth; human capital development and social welfare; and governance. The report highlights the country's main achievements, challenges and best practices and identifies areas where further work is needed.

Notwithstanding several challenges, and keeping in mind that 20 per cent of Georgian territory is under Russian occupation, the country managed to sustain stable economic growth in 2019, with annual real gross domestic product growth of 5.1 per cent, and, in recent years, its World Bank classification has shifted from the lower-middle to the upper-middle income category. However, inclusive growth remains a major challenge for the Georgian economy. The Government has prioritized knowledge-based and innovation-driven economic development and actively supports an increase in innovative activities by individuals and micro-, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including start-ups, as well as their participation in the digital economy. Over the past five years, Georgia also took active steps towards responsible production and consumption. The country pursues reform in all of its environmental sector policies, including water resources, forestry, air quality and waste management systems.

The quality of, and accessibility to, knowledge, education and health-care and social services are key elements for the sustainable development of society. In line with the pledge to leave no one behind, Georgia has introduced a universal health care programme, enabling full access to health-care services for each citizen. Education has been selected as one of the key priorities of the country's development agenda. Georgia considerably reformed its education system, making it more accessible to everyone, updating and enhancing national curricula, improving the infrastructure of education institutions and popularizing vocational education to overcome skills and/or education mismatch issues in the Georgian labour market. In order to accelerate societal cohesion, the Government has redesigned existing social programmes, making them more effective and better targeted. Overall, the proportion of total government spending on essential services such as education, health care and social protection has increased.

Georgia has achieved tangible progress in democratic governance by building effective, transparent, inclusive and accountable State institutions. It is committed to furthering public administration and open governance reforms, to increase the transparency and accountability of State institutions. The country continues to further develop its already robust public service delivery, bringing in innovation and technology for increased efficiency. Georgia has made significant progress in putting in place the legal framework to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on all possible grounds. While Government has streamlined its efforts aimed at leaving no one behind, people residing in the Russian-occupied regions of Georgia are deprived of the benefits of development and continue to suffer from persistent violations of their fundamental rights, including the rights to life, health and freedom of movement, the right to receive an education in their native language, illegal detentions and the kidnapping of local residents.

Despite significant progress, challenges still remain, for which future steps are being designed and applied, as the country entered the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals. Nevertheless, it is abundantly clear that the ongoing pandemic, with its anticipated outcomes, will have a complex negative impact on the whole world in the long term. Addressing these lifetime challenges require more concerted, innovative, complex and resolute solutions by the strong leadership of

Member States, development partners, international organizations and civil society. Georgia remains fully dedicated to this purpose.

## Honduras

[Original: Spanish]

Honduras is preparing to present its second voluntary national report, on the understanding that the efforts made thus far have not always yielded the expected results. However, the country's challenge is to integrate the National Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals into public- and private-sector planning. The voluntary national report will highlight the ownership aspects of the National Agenda as an opportunity to redirect national development priorities, in addition to how the country deals with the current situation and the period following the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

As a result of the passage of the National Agenda, 17 goals were adopted, and 68 targets and 99 indicators were prioritized. A range of stakeholders, representing the central Government, decentralized institutions, municipalities, regional development councils, academia, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, productive sectors, churches, women's organizations and other entities were involved in the participatory process.

The goals, indicators and targets of the National Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals are interlinked with the instruments of the National Development Planning System: the Vision for the Country and Plan for the Nation Act (2010–2022) and the Government's Strategic Plan (2018–2022). They incorporate the targets contained in the National Agenda into budgetary frameworks and operational planning instruments, at both the central and municipal government levels.

An act was issued, establishing the National Commission on the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals as the highest governing body responsible for monitoring the National Agenda, with the participation of key stakeholders in Honduran society: the Government, academia, private enterprise, workers, peasants, organized civil society and local governments, all of which receive the support of technical bodies to ensure the implementation of the National Agenda.

The indicators contained in the National Agenda will be monitored and evaluated through the platform of the presidential system for results-based management of the Ministry of General Government Coordination, based on a strengthened national statistical system.

In order to address the structural challenges faced by the country and implement strategies and actions, the aim is to create conditions conducive to achieving progress towards National Agenda targets. In addition, relevant national initiatives have been identified for the achievement of the Goals by various stakeholders, bringing together the universal principles of comprehensiveness, a multi-scale approach and leaving no one behind.

As part of the effort to mobilize resources for the National Agenda, exercises have been carried out to link the public investment plan with overall budgetary resources. However, further development is needed in this regard, at both the central Government level and the decentralized level, especially in the municipalities. The international cooperation, private sector and civil society agendas are aligned with the National Agenda.

The implementation and follow-up processes of the National Agenda have yielded significant achievements and good practices. However, there have been more reports of challenges relating to monitoring, such as adaptation of the National

Agenda to the results-based management model, the availability of timely and quality data, and the availability of resources to fund implementation, among others. The closing of social, economic and environmental gaps has had an impact.

In general, the drafting of the second voluntary national report provides an excellent opportunity to strengthen and expand the ownership of the National Agenda among various stakeholders in Honduran society. The report serves as an extremely useful element to rethink and reorient public policies, programmes and actions, to move indicators and make progress in implementing targets set out in the National Agenda.

The ownership and adoption of the National Agenda will be paired with a communication strategy at the government level, to convey clear messages about the role of each actor in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Similarly, Honduras hopes that the framework in which it is to present its second voluntary national report will be a space that facilitates dialogue and exchange of experiences and knowledge on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

With regard to the implementation of the National Agenda in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, an effort will be made to address this question in the voluntary national report in two ways: first, by identifying immediate interventions to address the crisis, which the 2030 Agenda already addressed and which include tending to the needs of poor and vulnerable populations, and second, by listing measures to be implemented after the crisis, to promote, inter alia, sustainable growth and social protection.

## India

[Original: English]

India, home to one sixth of all humanity, holds the key to the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In its second voluntary national review, India has made a paradigm shift to a whole-of-society approach, with the Government of India engaging subnational and local governments, civil society organizations, local communities, people in vulnerable situations and the private sector.

India's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals is reflected in its convergence with the national development agenda as reflected in the motto of "collective efforts for inclusive growth". Based on evidence from the SDG India Index, which measures progress at the subnational level, the country has developed a robust Goal localization model, centred on adoption, implementation and monitoring at the state and district levels.

The narrative below further encapsulates India's progress across the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Empowered and resilient India**

India has successfully lifted more than 271 million people out of multidimensional poverty through economic growth and empowerment. Enhanced access to nutrition, child health, education, sanitation, drinking water, electricity and housing has led to reduced inequalities, especially among people in vulnerable situations.

### **Clean and healthy India**

Through a nationwide initiative triggered by the Clean India Mission and the National Nutrition Mission campaigns, India achieved 100 per cent rural sanitation and sharp reduction in stunting and child and maternal mortality rates. Universal health coverage has been institutionalized through the world's largest health

protection scheme, which provides an annual cover of \$7,000 to 100 million families, covering nearly 500 million individuals.

India is at the forefront in the call for joint global action to address the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The country has extended medical assistance to several countries and operationalized the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation COVID-19 Emergency Fund with an initial contribution of \$10 million. Domestically, India's response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes an initial \$22.5 billion economic stimulus package, comprehensive health coverage for front-line workers and direct cash transfers for the most vulnerable.

### **Inclusive and entrepreneurial India**

Social inclusion is pursued by universalizing access to nutrition, health, education and social protection and by developing capabilities for entrepreneurship and employment. Financial inclusion is pursued through the following three initiatives: near-universal access to bank accounts, aided by a national financial inclusion scheme; a national unique identity number for over 90 per cent of the population; and expansive access to mobile phones. Those initiatives have propelled new avenues of credit, insurance and direct benefit transfers to the poor, including to more than 200 million women, thereby accelerating their economic empowerment.

### **Sustainable India**

India's climate action strategies call for clean and efficient energy systems, disaster-resilient infrastructure and planned eco-restoration. Acting on its nationally determined contribution commitments, India has electrified 100 per cent of its villages, reduced 38 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually through energy-efficient appliances, provided clean cooking fuel to 80 million poor households and set a target to install 450 GW of renewable energy and restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030. Globally, India stands third in renewable power, fourth in wind power and fifth in solar power. India launched the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and the International Solar Alliance to leverage global partnerships for climate action and disaster resilience.

### **Prosperous and vibrant India**

India is one of the fastest-growing emerging market economies, with a young population and burgeoning innovation and business ecosystem. With a gross domestic product of \$2.72 trillion in 2018/19, India strives to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2025 and to pursue an inclusive and sustainable growth trajectory by stimulating manufacturing, building infrastructure, spurring investments, fostering technological innovation and boosting entrepreneurship.

In the spirit of South-South cooperation, in order to realize the 2030 Agenda, India supports developing countries through the \$150 million India-United Nations Development Partnership Fund. In this spirit of regional and global partnerships, and of the country's commitment to leave no one behind, India steps into the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, drawing confidence from its experience in addressing challenges. The Government of India will continue to work collaboratively with all domestic and global stakeholders to accelerate efforts for a sustainable planet for future generations.

## Kenya

[Original: English]

Kenya's long-term development blueprint, Vision 2030, is implemented through five-year medium-term plans. The current and third medium-term plan, for the period 2018–2022, aimed at achieving accelerated, high, inclusive, broad-based and sustainable economic growth, social economic transformation and development, mainstreamed the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. Furthermore, mainstreaming the Goals into performance contracting, actions plans and subnational County Integrated Development Plans for 2018–2022 position Kenya to better implement both the Goals and Agenda 2063.

Through a policy gap analysis conducted in 2018, the country's preparedness to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was assessed by elaborating on how the Sustainable Development Goal targets align with the national planning frameworks. It recommended enhancement of national policy framework, which informed the need to review the existing and development of new policies.

The Government and its partners use targeted awareness-raising and sensitization strategies through focus group discussions, sensitization forums, workshops and discussion panels. Similarly, social media communication platforms are continuously used to disseminate the Sustainable Development Goals to the public. The 2017 voluntary national review revealed a low level of awareness on the Goals, and a country-wide assessment was undertaken in 2019. The findings from the assessment were used to inform awareness campaign strategies and the development and distribution of targeted information, education and communication materials, including for translating the Goals into local languages.

The multi-stakeholder Inter-Agency Technical Committee was set up in 2016, chaired by the Government, to coordinate Goal-related activities. The Committee is now co-chaired by the Government, the private sector and civil society, and a subcommittee was established as secretariat. Subnational governments have appointed and trained Sustainable Development Goal Champions to steer the Goal achievement process.

Kenya follows whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches and has institutionalized stakeholder engagement in implementation, monitoring and awareness through their umbrella bodies, namely, the Kenya Parliamentary Caucus on Sustainable Development Goals and Business, the Kenya Private Sector Alliance, the Council of Governors for the subnational governments and the National Youth Council. A multi-stakeholder engagement framework, developed through consultation, serves to strengthen engagements and coordination mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda.

In order to continuously strengthen capacities to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals in policies, planning, budgeting, implementation and reviews, Kenya has undertaken training of trainers at the national level and 150 officers at the subnational level. A curriculum on the Goals has been developed in collaboration with the Kenya School of Government, for use during its training sessions.

In order to empower the vulnerable, policies and strategies focused on education, health, employment, social protection, financial inclusion, gender and agricultural productivity are in place. Special funds for youth, women and persons with disabilities are also in place. Regional disparities are addressed through targeted funds from the national Government to regions being left behind.

Kenya prioritized special needs education by increasing financial allocations to learners in special and integrated schools.

A high-level political commitment was made to eliminate female genital mutilation by 2022. Kenya signed a regional declaration and costed an action plan on ending cross-border female genital mutilation in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Water Sector Trust Fund was awarded a prestigious United Nations Public Service Award in 2019, in the category “Delivering inclusive and equitable services to leave no one behind”, for its Upscaling Basic Sanitation for the Urban Poor programme. The Fund was the only institution in Africa to win the award in 2019.

Services to plastic recycling plants, including machinery and equipment used in construction, are exempted from value added tax to promote plastic waste management.

Mobile money has led to near-complete financial inclusion across the country and increased credit availability to small traders, further facilitating business across distant physical locations.

The Government prioritized the Big Four Agenda, focused on food and nutrition security, health care, manufacturing and affordable housing, which will accelerate the achievement of Goals 2, 3, 8 and 11.

Sustainable Development Goal monitoring is institutionalized through a comprehensive progress report, prepared biennially. On a pilot basis, five subnational governments (Kwale, Kisumu, Busia, Marsabit and Taita-Taveta) have developed local voluntary reports on the Goals. This will be scaled up.

In response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Government established a national coordination committee to evaluate the evolving risks and provide advice on appropriate measures for preparedness, prevention and response. An emergency response fund for COVID-19 response activities has been established, with an initial contribution of 40 billion Kenya shillings by the Government. The fund continues to grow, with contributions from development partners, corporations and individuals, and is being used for surveillance, laboratory services, isolation units, equipment, personal protective equipment, supplies and communications; increased social protection coverage and cash transfers; food relief; and the expedition of the payment of existing obligations to maintain cash flow for businesses during the crisis. Some containment measures in place include the cancelling of public gatherings; the imposition of a curfew from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m.; the closing of learning institutions and non-essential social spaces; and the encouragement of social distancing and teleworking.

Following the dissemination of the voluntary national review report, an action plan will be developed to address short-term gaps and challenges and an acceleration strategy developed to address further gaps and challenges with regard to the long-term realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

## **Kyrgyzstan**

[Original: Russian]

### **Introduction**

The Kyrgyz Republic is committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Sustainable Development Goals have been incorporated into public policies and are reflected in the National Development Strategy (2018–2040) and the “Unity, Trust and Creation” programme (2018–2022), which are based on a human-centred approach. The conceptual idea of the strategy up to 2040 is to ensure high-quality and decent standards of living for people through



the perspective of sustainable economic growth. The Kyrgyz Republic adheres to the global commitment “to leave no one behind”, with a special focus on and priority attention given to the most vulnerable groups.

The process of preparing for the voluntary national review was multilateral and multisectoral, based on a partnership with all stakeholders. The review reflects the country’s basic and practical approaches to the achievement of the Goals, the challenges and successes, and the areas where further work is needed. The first voluntary national review in the Kyrgyz Republic covers 16 of the Goals (as Goal 14 was not considered). The review covered the situation surrounding the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the report included information on the country’s response to the pandemic.

### **Fulfilling the commitment “to leave no one left behind”**

Fulfilment of this commitment in the Kyrgyz Republic implies the need to set priorities in order to improve the quality of life and the enjoyment of fundamental rights by those groups of society that are most excluded from the development process. It is recognized that the country has structural problems and a lack of resources to implement the key areas of sustainable human development.

The use of a multidimensional approach to evaluation has demonstrated the complexity of the task of “leaving no one behind”, given the full range of risks and vulnerabilities identified. The evaluation process included thematic consultations with government agencies, civil society organizations and development partners. This work focused on the interrelationship between the following main elements: discrimination; geographical location; socioeconomic status; indicators of life and death; and vulnerability.

The work carried out and the methodology used in monitoring the achievement of the Goals and evaluating the “leaving no one behind” approach have made it possible to go beyond national averages and to identify the diversity of specific situations in the most vulnerable groups, the intersecting and key factors of discrimination, inequality and exclusion, and the risks for increased deprivation.

### **Achievements**

In order to achieve the Goals by 2030, the Kyrgyz Republic has set a key priority: human development-oriented policies. To that end, national plans are being implemented to guarantee legal and judicial protection of human and civil rights and freedoms, and to reduce inequality, eradicate poverty, mitigate the effects of climate change, reduce disaster risk, invest in human development, develop skills and knowledge for all segments of society, create jobs and support healthy lifestyles and promote gender equality.

Poverty has been virtually eliminated in the Kyrgyz Republic. General education is free, generally available and compulsory. The Kyrgyz Republic was one of the first countries to fully address the problem of statelessness. This applies to individuals and society as a whole, allowing for the comprehensive and transformative nature of the Goals to be applied to ensure political participation, economic empowerment and the social development of all segments of society.

The National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic up to the year 2040 provides opportunities for sustainable economic and social development, including the development of digitalization, entrepreneurship and the introduction of innovative and environmentally friendly technologies for present and future generations. In 2019, the Kyrgyz Republic took the lead in the group and segment of Central Asian

middle-income and low-middle income countries in terms of its achievement of the Goals and the progress made, as measured by six interrelated reforms.

Since the launch of the Goals, the Kyrgyz Republic has ratified a number of important international agreements, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Paris Agreement, which provide additional opportunities to accelerate progress in achieving the Goals.

### **Challenges**

Despite the achievements, the level of national multidimensional poverty is very high and of great concern.

Relatively stable economic growth rates, averaging 5.3 per cent, are insufficient to ensure a significant improvement in the well-being of the population. Poor implementation of innovations and poor infrastructure development complicate the economic development of the country and reduce opportunities for aligning living standards in both urban and rural areas. Ensuring employment and labour productivity growth remain topical issues.

### **Conclusion**

The Kyrgyz Republic will continue to work actively to achieve the Goals, create an environment for human development, tap the potential and ensure the well-being of all individuals by protecting their health, freedom and rights, and more fully ensure gender equality, employment and stable incomes.

The Kyrgyz Republic will actively implement reforms aimed at creating a competitive digital economy, establishing an attractive environment for entrepreneurs and investors, and using innovative and environmentally friendly technologies. The Kyrgyz Republic will work to ensure that each region makes a worthy contribution to the country's economic development and that each region has favourable living conditions and access to quality services.

## **Liberia**

[Original: English]

Liberia's Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development 2018–2023 is the second in a series of 5-year national plans under the Liberia Vision 2030 framework and follows the Agenda for Transformation (2012–2017). The Pro-Poor Agenda aligns with Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular with regard to its three dimensions, economic, social and environmental, with special emphasis placed on human rights and peace. Established technical groups, with diverse membership from the Government, civil society organizations, bilateral and multilateral partners and business representatives, are leading and guiding the process of implementing the national plan in order to achieve the Goals.

Despite many years of conflict, followed by the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease, Liberia has made remarkable progress on key national aggregate indicators, such as per capita income growth (\$550), its human development index value (0.465), life expectancy at birth (63.7 years) and mean years of schooling (9.6 per cent). Since implementation of the new national plan began in 2018, the education sector has better access to the Internet and free education is available in all public schools and universities. The health sector has seen upgrades in equipment and doctors' qualifications in specialized medical fields. In addition, over 75 km of primary roads and 43 km of urban roads have been constructed, and 65 km of water pipeline has

been laid. More than 40 institutions have now been migrated to an e-governance platform to improve performance. However, absolute poverty has been on the rise since 2014. The legacy of entrenched inequality, widespread infrastructure deficits and economic deprivation remain barriers to sustainable peace, growth and sustainable development, which may be further exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Government and its development partners are therefore now focusing more on accelerating economic growth. To this end, roads and other infrastructure development are being prioritized to create physical corridors and a new integrated and multisectoral approach to spatial development is being implemented. These efforts, along with increased social spending in the neglected regions of the country, will lift large majorities out of extreme poverty and food insecurity; strengthen local value chains; create local markets where they do not exist; raise labour productivity in agriculture and forestry, artisanal mining and fishing; and increase access to basic social services across the country.

The decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals has now commenced with the COVID-19 pandemic, which is exposing structural fragilities in countries around the world, and Liberia is no exception. This emergency calls for both an immediate health response and a longer-term socioeconomic recovery response. Liberia brings to this challenge its long-term partnerships with regional and intergovernmental bodies, such as the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Community of West African States and the Mano River Union. A robust national response mechanism is currently in place, structured around key pillars, including, in particular, case management and investigation, infection prevention and control, laboratory testing, vigorous contact tracing and psychosocial support.

Despite the economic shocks caused by COVID-19, Liberia remains deeply committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, post-COVID-19 recovery engagements will play out in a major way in accelerating actions to achieve the Goals. The focus will be on subnational development, human capital development, the protection of children's rights and the reduction of systemic biases against women in the social and political arena, with a greater emphasis on social cohesion and sustaining peace. Moreover, Liberia will continue to build a nation based on the principles of inclusion, harnessing its human capital of young people, who comprise more than half the population, towards the equitable distribution of revenues generated from natural resources, and relying on a rights-based approach to development. The eradication of extreme poverty, which is central to the 2030 Agenda, will be most urgent.

In line with the philosophy of leaving no one behind, the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index will be a key measurement tool. To monitor impact in the remotest areas, statistical systems will be ramped up to capture citizens' feedback. To measure inclusion and inequality, the human development index will be used. Subnational disaggregation on access to health, education and opportunities to make a decent living will be measured through the multidimensional poverty index. Surveys, censuses, sector assessments and project evaluations conducted with development partners will be used to generate evidence of outcomes and impacts across the various regions of the country.

## Libya

[Original: Arabic]

The aim of this first voluntary national review regarding the Sustainable Development Goals is to provide an accurate picture of the development efforts undertaken by Libya in order to build a modern State, characterized by sustainable and integrated socioeconomic and environmental development, and create a better future for its people. To that end, Libya is monitoring progress in meeting the goals it has set in line with its current priorities, such as education, health and energy, and in implementing of national sustainable development strategies and plans. The report also outlines the challenges facing Libya in achieving the Goals.

The approach taken by Libya to the implementation of its sustainable development programme is based on its experience with the Millennium Development Goals. The Ministry of Planning, which is responsible for drawing up national development policies and plans, has established a Sustainable Development Commission in order to put in place an institutional framework for monitoring achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Members include experts and specialists from the relevant sectors and entities. A key part of the Commission's mandate is to work with the various sectors in order to align the Goals with and integrate them into the country's national development strategies and plans, monitor progress on their achievement, and prepare and finalize the country's voluntary national reviews.

The voluntary national review for 2020 was prepared in line with an operational plan developed for that purpose. The plan included an implementation mechanism with a set time frame, and a working group was formed for each of the selected Sustainable Development Goals. A select team then consolidated the working groups' reports in the final review.

Broad community input into the voluntary national review was led by the Ministry of Planning, which used the Libyan Sustainable Development Forum as a platform for dialogue, interaction and the exchange of experiences, and to coordinate the efforts and integrate and promote the participation of all stakeholders. The Forum, through its seminars, workshops and meetings, has been a crucial source of support for the work of the Commission on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Through the Ministry of Planning, Libya has developed a range of national strategies and plans to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and has aligned its national strategies in certain areas, such as its 2030 national renewable energy and energy efficiency strategy and the water resources development plan for the period 2020–2022, with the Goals. The Ministry has also adopted a three-year, cross-sectoral development plan for the period 2020–2022, which provides for, in particular, the integration of the Goals into the proposed national development plan.

Libya views sustainable development as crucial to the national interest. Achieving the Goals requires the involvement of all sustainable development stakeholders. The Libyan Development Agency, a non-governmental organization under the aegis of the Ministry of Planning, has therefore been established as a vehicle for promoting sustainability in civil society and the private sector, both of which are involved in its work. Its aim is to contribute to the achievement of the Goals and, thereby, to ensure sustained growth in the national economy.

As part of efforts to promote small and medium-sized businesses and entrepreneurship among young men and women in sustainable economic activities, forums and workshops on that subject have been held. A national entrepreneurship

platform has also been set up to encourage young business owners and help stimulate economic development.

Many ministerial competencies have been devolved to the municipal level as part of a process of decentralization and strengthening the role of municipalities and local authorities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The many difficulties facing Libya in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, foremost among them political instability and the fragile security situation, are discussed in the voluntary national review. Illegal migration and the number of displaced persons also pose a significant challenge to implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as does the rentier nature of the Libyan economy, which depends on oil and gas. If the supply of that wealth dries up, so too will the financial resources required for development and reconstruction programmes. Similarly, the poor quality and dearth of data, information and indicators needed to measure and assess current conditions is hindering efforts to achieve the Goals.

In submitting its first voluntary national report to the high-level political forum, Libya hopes to highlight its efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, it is fully aware that it has a long way to go and that fulfilling the required commitments will depend on the capacity to meet the existing challenges. That, in turn, will require joint international and regional support for national efforts. Libya is committed to achieving the Goals for the good of Libyans and the sustainability of resources for future generations.

## **Malawi**

[Original: English]

### **Introduction**

The Government of Malawi integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its national development planning framework, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III. This process cascaded down to the local development planning process, including the indicator frameworks, in order to customize the global indicators. Progress reporting on Sustainable Development Goals therefore happens in the context of both district and national plans.

### **Country ownership**

The development planning process in Malawi is highly participatory. The post-2015 global consultation process enabled Malawi to provide effective input into the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Goals were later translated into the three main local languages to increase awareness at the subnational level.

In reviewing progress on the Sustainable Development Goals for the voluntary national review, Malawi engaged a multi-stakeholder technical and steering committee that comprised the State, non-State actors and umbrella bodies. Those groups met and harnessed input from their constituents, employing mostly virtual means amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak.

### **Leaving no one behind**

Malawi is implementing its National Social Support Programme II (2018–2023), which has led to the expansion of social support provision nationwide and a mechanism for scaling up during disasters, epidemics and/or pandemics.

Malawi implements the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by promoting human rights standards in a manner consistent with its commitments under

international law. Malawi ensures the protection and fulfilment of the rights of everyone in its jurisdiction, with a focus on the most vulnerable.

Malawi prioritizes the collection of disaggregated data in order to better identify the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people. Collection methods include multidimensional poverty analyses, integrated household surveys and a population and housing census.

Malawi has increased its efforts aimed at the elimination of violence against women and children, through such interventions as the Spotlight Initiative, whereby girls and women who are at risk of violence are able to access essential services, including sexual and reproductive health services, and there is accountability for perpetrators of violence.

### **Institutional mechanisms**

Malawi has recently established the National Planning Commission, which localizes the Sustainable Development Goals in its national vision and in the resulting medium-term development plans that apply at all levels. It is also overseeing the implementation of those plans.

Malawi is strengthening sector working groups to facilitate the quick realization of development objectives through sector-wide approaches to the planning, implementation and monitoring of various development policies.

### **Progress on Goals and targets**

Malawi is making significant progress on 29 of the 169 Sustainable Development Goal targets, especially on Goals 3 and 4, on health and education respectively. Moderate progress is being made on 59 targets and poor progress is being made on 81 targets. The 29 targets for which Malawi is making good progress include a significant decline in the under-5 mortality rate, the achievement of gender parity in primary schools and a close-to-target net enrolment rate in primary schools.

Malawi is experiencing insufficient long-term progress on Sustainable Development Goal 1, on poverty eradication, with negative trends showing on these targets owing to recurring disasters and insufficient investment in empowerment activities. However, although more than half the population lives below the poverty line, the rate of extreme poverty has significantly dropped. The rate of child marriage remains high, affecting 42 per cent of girls.

### **Means of implementation**

Malawi's partners have rallied their support towards achieving national development objectives by aligning their country assistance strategies. However, an increase in support for productive sectors is required.

Malawi encourages stakeholder engagement and support for predictable financing mechanisms and enhanced monitoring and evaluation with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals and ensures that civil society organizations are especially empowered in that regard.

Malawi is committed to increasing coordination, accountability and transparency in resource use among stakeholders through its Aid Management Platform.

### **Data management**

Malawi has developed a National Statistical System Strategic Plan (2020–2023) to ensure evidence-based planning and the timely availability of official statistics for

monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Growth and Development Strategy and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Key challenges**

Social inequalities and ineffective monitoring and evaluation accountability systems are posing a considerable challenge to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal targets;

A prolonged global and national economic slowdown caused by COVID-19 will adversely affect progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, as there is a diversion of focus and resources from national development priorities towards containing the spread of the pandemic.

### **Way forward to accelerate Sustainable Development Goal implementation**

The way forward will involve guiding external support towards building domestic capacity for revenue mobilization (including for containing COVID-19), providing specific support for priority sector implementation capacity and fighting corruption, which erodes implementation resources.

## **Micronesia (Federated States of)**

[Original: English]

### **Striving towards self-reliance and maintaining sustainability**

#### **Introduction**

The Constitution of the Federated States of Micronesia, ratified in 1978 at the dawn of the country's young nationhood, contains the affirmation of our common wish to live together in peace and harmony, to preserve the heritage of the past, to protect the promise of the future and to become the proud guardians of our own islands, "now and forever".

This nation of 607 islands, atolls and islets, spread across 2.6 million km<sup>2</sup> of the Western Pacific Ocean is fully committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both at the national level and within its four island states of Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk and Yap. The Federated States of Micronesia identified 89 Sustainable Development Goal targets, with an accompanying 90 indicators, linked to its Strategic Development Plan 2004–2023.

The current implications of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis must now also be factored into our efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, whereby the country has been redirecting resources to proactively implement measures to prevent the virus from entering our shores in order to protect and maintain sustainable communities.

#### **Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into state and national processes**

The Strategic Development Plan is a national strategy that is aimed at achieving sustainable economic growth and self-reliance. Sustainable development is prioritized in the Plan through health, education, agriculture, fisheries, private sector development, transportation, communication and the cross-cutting sector of energy. Many sectors have their own policies that align with the Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition:

- In July 2016, the country established a Sustainable Development Goal working group. This internal coordination mechanism draws from departments and associated agencies within the Government and solicits input from civil society actors and the chambers of commerce. A critical component of the working group is the establishment of state focal points for effective implementation and reporting.
- The country has prioritized the production and use of data to monitor Sustainable Development Goal achievement and inform national policies and programming, through the upcoming 2020 population and housing census; the household income and expenditure survey, including a multidimensional poverty index; a national social indicators survey; a draft strategy for the development of statistics for the period 2020–2024; a national Sustainable Development Goal dashboard developed on the basis of an assessment of the Goals in 2017; and a comprehensive performance audit of the implementation of the Goals.

### **Challenges and potential areas of support**

Although the United Nations has agreed in principle to the request to set up a multi-country office in the Federated State of Micronesia, the accelerated establishment of this entity is a critical step for the on-the-ground support and expertise needed to achieve our national sustainable development goals and accelerate the implementation of the global Sustainable Development Goals, including strategic support for human rights frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the commitments stemming from the 25-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Nairobi in 2019.

Although negotiations are forthcoming, the pending termination of the funding provisions (title II of United States Public Law 108-188) of the Compact of Free Association Treaty with the United States, as amended, looms. Such funding provides considerable support to key sectors in maintaining public infrastructure and socioeconomic prerogatives. Coupled with limited human resource capacity in such priority sectors as education and health, the delivery of necessary services to citizens will be affected.

Our livelihood as a big ocean State is threatened by the existential threat of climate change, overfishing and vulnerability to natural disasters and sudden shocks like COVID-19. More support for developing social protection, preparedness and recovery will be needed, in particular in the areas of health, sanitation, waste management, education, gender-related considerations and critical water and food security.

Data-related complexities remain a significant challenge in defining targets for monitoring Sustainable Development Goals in the country.

### **Conclusion**

The year 2020 marks the start of the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, because we have only 10 years to accelerate our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. To stand up and be counted among the nations of the world, a country must have something of value. The Federated States of Micronesia has such value in its proud history, its vibrant cultures, its progressive values, its vaunted ecosystems and its heritage of living in peace and harmony with our environment. The Federated States of Micronesia values its people as a fundamental



resource for advancing the 2030 Agenda and will therefore continue to pursue gender equality; universal access to health care, including ensuring the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of all citizens; and safe and dignified lives for all, in particular women, girls and adolescents.

## Morocco

[Original: French]

On the instructions of His Majesty King Mohammed VI and with his active engagement, the Kingdom of Morocco joined the international community in 2015 in endorsing the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. From the outset the Kingdom has considered these Goals to be a structural dimension of its national development model, the reform of which is today the subject of a wide-ranging national debate.

For Morocco, the achievement of the Goals is part of a vast investment effort that began in the early 2000s and for which a third of its gross domestic product has been mobilized to develop economic and social infrastructure, combat poverty and social inequality and develop its natural resources, with particular attention paid to the impacts of climate change.

These efforts have enabled the country to strengthen its accumulation of physical capital, build its human capital and accelerate its transition to clean development, and thus to improve the content of its economic growth in terms of creating employment, reducing poverty and social and geographical inequalities and lowering the dependence on fossil fuels. This was also done in a context marked by the international financial crisis of 2008 and three years of drought over the last decade.

As a result, average economic growth was 4.2 per cent over the period from 2000 to 2018; unemployment fell to 9 per cent; the poverty rate fell from 8.9 per cent in 2007 to 2.9 per cent in 2018; and inequalities have declined by harnessing the potential of all regions of the country. Thanks to investment in renewable energy, renewable sources now provide 34 per cent of the capacity of the national electricity mix. Efforts have also been made to revitalize towns, improve hydraulic sanitation and expand forest cover.

Following the consolidation of its development model, several institutional reforms have been carried out in accordance with the provisions of the national Constitution of 2011. Through these reforms, institutions for consultation and deliberation have been established, including on the advancement of women, the protection of children and assistance to persons with disabilities. A national Charter on the Environment and Sustainable Development has also been adopted.

With a view to coordinating efforts to achieve the Goals while ensuring their monitoring and evaluation, a national commission for sustainable development was set up, under the authority of the Head of Government, with the participation of the various ministerial departments and the High Commission for Planning, the institution responsible for statistics. Within this framework, a statistical platform dedicated to the Goals has been created and a computable general equilibrium model has also been developed to monitor and evaluate efforts to achieve the Goals on a regular basis.

However, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has disrupted the development efforts of Morocco, having directly impacted the economy as a whole negatively but also having indirectly impacted the country's primary partners. Morocco reacted quickly to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. A containment

strategy was adopted very early on, which helped to manage the pressure on the health-care system. At the same time, Morocco has taken a set of actions to ensure the continuity of basic public social services, in particular education and training services, including through teleworking and digitization. A special fund for the management of the pandemic has been established with substantial budgetary resources and financial contributions from all actors, including businesses, households and civil society.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that in economic terms, despite the support provided to households and businesses, the pandemic will have caused an overall potential loss of 8.9 percentage points in economic growth in the second quarter of 2020.

As part of its commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of its Goals at the international level, Morocco has made global partnerships, especially South-South cooperation, a strategic focus of its foreign policy and, in this context, has afforded Africa a central place.

## Mozambique

[Original: English]

Mozambique is inspired by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as it induces rapid sustainable economic growth and accelerated and inclusive development in order to reduce poverty in the world. The country aligned its national instruments of economic and social management with the 2030 Agenda, to ensure the integrated implementation of national public policies.

To ensure sustainable economic growth, Mozambique is committed to increasing production, productivity and employment through the implementation of the following structuring projects: (a) the exploration of oil and gas in the Rovuma basin, with prospects of placing more than 17 million tons per year of liquefied natural gas on the market, starting in 2023; (b) the modernization of agriculture to increase productivity and consolidate the foundations of family farming, driven by the allocation of 10 per cent of the State budget for agriculture; and (c) industrialization to induce entrepreneurship and employment for young people, thus ensuring the improvement of the business environment, with a view to attracting national and foreign investment.

In order not to leave anyone behind, Mozambique continues to reinforce the provision of basic social services for more than 22 per cent (608 thousand families) of the most vulnerable population living below the poverty line and to create more jobs for young people (2 million in 2019). Furthermore, the empowerment of women and gender equality efforts have continued, including the strengthened participation of women in decision-making bodies (47.6 per cent of Cabinet members and 37.6 per cent of Members of the Assembly are women). It is to be noted that the Speaker of the Assembly is a woman.

In the provision of quality primary health services for all, Mozambique prioritizes the expansion of infrastructure and modern equipment, resulting in an increase in the coverage rate for institutional deliveries from 71 per cent (2015) to 87 per cent (2019), the reduction of in-hospital maternal deaths from 87 (2015) to 59 (2019) per 100,000 live births and the reduction of the maternal mortality rate from 500.1 (2007) to 451.6 (2017) per 100,000 live births, according to the 2017 census.

With regard to access to drinking water, the opening of sources and the construction of water supply systems have been prioritized, resulting in an increase in the proportion of households with access to safe water, from 34.5 per cent (2007)

to 48.7 per cent (2017). In terms of sanitation, efforts are focused on building improved latrines and septic tanks, resulting in an increase in the proportion of households with access to improved sanitation, from 15.1 per cent (2007) to 39.6 per cent (2017) (2017 census).

With regard to quality inclusive education for all, efforts are focused on building and equipping new classrooms, training teachers, updating the curriculum and engaging girls in teaching. Those efforts have resulted in an increase in the net schooling rate from 86.4 per cent (2016) to 93.5 per cent (2019), the distribution and allocation of more than 58 million student books for primary education and the construction of 3,618 classrooms, benefiting more than 434,000 primary and secondary school students.

Mozambicans are aware that transparency, accountability, good governance and the effectiveness of institutions, peace, justice, human rights protections and the fight against corruption are essential elements for inducing rapid sustainable development. In that regard, the Government ensures the systematic improvement and publication of its management, control and accountability instruments, informed by inputs from civil society and development partners.

Given the limited resources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, it is necessary to engage development partners and reinforce the mobilization of domestic resources, such as by involving the private sector, widening and modernizing the tax base, using tax incentives as a way to attract more investment and implementing technological reforms.

Because of its geographical location, Mozambique is cyclically vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which requires a redoubling of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, especially in building resilient socioeconomic infrastructure.

Despite the adversities imposed by climate vulnerability, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and armed attacks in Cabo Delgado, Manica and Sofala Provinces, which affect the normal course of implementation of both the national agenda and the 2030 Agenda, the country continues to record progress and the life expectancy of Mozambicans has improved from 49.4 years in 2007 to 53.7 years in 2017 (2017 census).

## Nepal

[Original: English]

The Sustainable Development Goals have been well integrated into Nepal's national development frameworks. Nepal developed its Sustainable Development Goals Status and Road Map 2016–2030, its Needs Assessment, Costing and Financing Strategy for the Sustainable Development Goals and its Guideline for the Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, in which baselines, targets and implementation and financing strategies are outlined for each Goal. Necessary institutional set-ups are also in place for effective implementation.

Guided by the overarching national aspiration expressed by the motto, “prosperous Nepal, happy Nepali”, Nepal has mainstreamed the Sustainable Development Goals in its the fifteenth periodic development plan (2019/20–2023/24). Nepal has also integrated the Goals, targets and milestones of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into its 25-year Long-Term Vision 2100 (2043 A.D.). Specific Goal-related codes are assigned to all national development programmes through the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework. Furthermore, the Goals have

been integrated into the periodic plans of subnational governments and include effective monitoring and evaluation guidelines.

An assessment of Sustainable Development Goal implementation over the past four years has shown some encouraging results. As at fiscal year 2017/18, the incidence of poverty had been reduced to 18.7 per cent (Goal 1). Similarly, the prevalence of underweight, stunting and wasting among children under 5 years of age has decreased significantly (Goal 2). In the health sector, infant, maternal and child mortality rates have been reduced (Goal 3). Gross enrolments in basic and secondary-level education stand at 93 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively, compared with the 2019 targets of 98.5 per cent and 72 per cent (Goal 4).

In the Constitution, it is stipulated that 33 per cent of representation in national and provincial parliaments must be women. Currently, the representation of women in local-level governments is about 41 per cent. The gender parity target for enrolment in secondary-level education (grades 9–12) set for 2019 has been achieved (Goal 5).

Similarly, over 90 per cent of the population has access to drinking water, and about 99 per cent has access to basic sanitation facilities (Goal 6). Over 88 per cent of the population has access to electricity, and the target of per capita electricity consumption set for 2019 has been achieved (Goal 7). In 2019, the annual economic growth rate was 6.9 per cent, and per capita income increased to \$1,051 (Goal 8). In the infrastructure sector, road density is 0.54, compared with the 2019 target of 1.3. Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment has increased to 15.1 per cent, compared with the target of 8.3 per cent for 2019. However, the share of industry in the country's gross domestic product (GDP) is only 15.1 per cent, compared with the target of 17.7 per cent (Goal 9).

These results show that 2019 targets for social, economic and political empowerment have been achieved. However, reducing income and consumption inequality remains a challenge (Goal 10). People living in safe housing reached 40 per cent, compared with the 2019 target of 37.8 per cent. Compared with the target of 23 planned new cities, 27 have been established by 2019 (Goal 11). The targets for the use of plastics (grams per day per capita) and land use for agricultural production (cereal as a percentage of cultivated land) set for 2019 have also been achieved (Goal 12).

Likewise, the 2019 targets related to the preparation of local- and community-level adaptation plans have been achieved (Goal 13). The proportion of forest under community-based management has reached 42.7 per cent, compared with the target of 39.8 per cent for 2019. The target for protected areas, which was set at 23.3 per cent, has also been achieved (Goal 15). The indicators on rule of law and on voice and accountability for Nepal show improved performance compared with previous years (Goal 16). Internet density (per 100 people) reached 65.9 per cent in 2019, exceeding the target of 65 per cent (Goal 17).

Given the scenario described above, additional support in finance, technology and capacity-building are vital for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Currently, although total government revenue as a proportion of GDP has increased and the target set for 2019 has been achieved, there remains a huge gap to finance the achievement of the Goals.

Moreover, the socioeconomic shock of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has caused unprecedented disruption in the transportation, service, tourism and hospitality sectors and in revenue and remittances. The fallout will be in the areas of income, poverty, employment and economic growth, as the existing financing gap widens. That situation is certain to have a bearing on Nepal's ambition for smooth and sustainable graduation from the least developed country category.

Other prominent challenges include localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, the lack of adequate data and the need for coordination and follow-up. Therefore, closer cooperation and greater coherence and coordination among the federal and subnational governments of Nepal, development partners, civil society, the business community, volunteers and the general public will be critical. An enhanced level of global partnership is equally important.

## The Niger

[Original: French]

The present report, which is the product of extensive consultations carried out despite the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, covers all the Sustainable Development Goals apart from Goal 14.

With regard to the principle of leaving no one behind, a social protection policy is being implemented that is specifically designed to support women, vulnerable children, unemployed youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, rural populations, persons in precarious employment and persons living in insecure areas. A programme on decent work that incorporates youth entrepreneurship is also under way.

Progress has been made towards several Goals.

Goals 1 and 2: The poverty rate fell from 45.4 per cent in 2014 to 40.3 per cent in 2018,<sup>4</sup> due in part to the implementation of a food and nutritional security policy as part of the “Nigeriens Feeding Nigeriens” initiative. However, the number of poor people has increased by approximately 451,000, mainly due to population growth. Poverty will be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; specifically, the employment rate is anticipated to fall by 4.3 per cent and an estimated 1 million additional people are likely to become food insecure.

Goal 3: Infant and child and maternal mortality rates have fallen significantly. Infant and child mortality decreased from 318 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1992 to 126 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015, an average decrease of 8.6 percentage points per year; and maternal mortality decreased from 700 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 520 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015, an average decrease of 7.2 percentage points per year. This progress is partly related to the policy of free health care for pregnant women and children under 5 years of age, who comprise about 28 per cent of the total population. However, only 40 per cent of pregnant women received qualified medical attention in 2018.

Goals 4 and 5: Gross school enrolment rates remain modest. In 2018, 70.6 per cent of children were enrolled in primary education and 33.4 per cent were enrolled in the first cycle of secondary school, despite a regular increase in enrolments. In order to reduce gender inequality, major reforms are being undertaken to prevent early marriages and pregnancies through the schooling of girl children. However, geographical and gender disparities persist, and achieving quality education remains a challenge. Children in urban areas are 1.5 times more likely to be enrolled in primary education than those in rural areas and 5 times more likely to be enrolled in the first cycle of secondary school, and 2.6 million children and adolescents are not in school.

Goal 8: The effects of the “Nigeriens Feeding Nigeriens” initiative and oil exploitation resulted in average annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 5.7

<sup>4</sup> Provisional data subject to change based on the results of the poverty surveys conducted by the National Statistical Institute.

per cent over the period 2016–2019, compared to a population growth rate of 3.7 per cent. However, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, economic growth in 2020 is expected to be 1 per cent.

Goal 10: the Niger had a Gini coefficient of 0.340 in 2018, lower than that of neighbouring countries.

Goals 13 and 15: Implementation of the national environment and sustainable development policy continues. The rate of progress against the target of recovering 213,000 hectares of land per year has gradually increased: from 36 per cent in 2016 to 45 per cent in 2017 and 68 per cent in 2018.

Goal 16: Governance has improved. The country's score on the Ibrahim Index of African Governance stands at 51.2, above the African average. However, major challenges remain, related to the efficacy of public administration and to border security.

Goal 17: Domestic resource mobilization has increased, despite many challenges in collecting taxes. Indeed, the tax burden rate rose from 9.6 per cent of GDP (base 2015) in 2017 to 11.1 per cent in 2018. Migrant remittances were estimated at 2.4 per cent of GDP in 2017.

The 2020–2030 decade of action for the acceleration of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals will be thwarted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is destroying our efforts and jeopardizing our chances of achieving the development goals we have set ourselves in the Niger 2035 Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth. This justifies the comprehensive response plan drawn up by the Government, which is costed at \$2.6 billion. The plan covers two years and is structured around three primary areas: health, the economy and the social situation.

## Nigeria

[Original: English]

Nigeria's 2020 voluntary national review on the Sustainable Development Goals is focused on the key issues of ending poverty (Goal 1); ensuring health and well-being (Goal 3); promoting education (Goal 4); achieving gender equality (Goal 5); promoting an inclusive economy (Goal 8); providing an enabling environment for peace and security (Goal 16); and strengthening partnerships (Goal 17). This focus is based on Nigeria's current development priorities and the development objectives of the administration of the President, Muhammadu Buhari. The voluntary national review is being developed while the country faces huge challenges from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, testing Nigeria's public health systems and from the collapse in oil prices, affecting an economy still receiving 86 per cent of its public revenue from oil and gas.

In its 2017 voluntary national review, Nigeria outlined the institutional dimensions for creating an enabling policy environment for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals through its Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017–2020). The focus of the Plan, on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, makes it consistent with the aspirations of the Goals.

### **Sustainable Development Goal 3, on ensuring health and well-being**

While Nigeria has some poor health outcomes, such as high rates of maternal mortality, there have been improvements in the under-5 mortality rate (from 157 to 132 per 1,000 live births). COVID-19 has challenged our public health system. A key lesson for protecting the public in times of such pandemics is the need to prioritize

hygiene and universal access to clean water and soap. Nigeria's current access to basic drinking water stands at 64 per cent. There must be more investment in public health. It is also necessary to ensure that the most vulnerable are reached through universal access to essential services.

#### **Sustainable Development Goal 4, on promoting education**

A key challenge facing the country has to do with children who are out of school, a demographic challenge related to the interplay between poverty (Goal 1), education (Goal 4), employment (Goal 8) and the digital economy (Goal 17). The country has a population of approximately 200 million people and displays significant regional disparities, with 78 per cent of children in south-western Nigeria able to read full or partial sentences, but only 17 per cent of children in north-eastern Nigeria able to do so. With only 1.6 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) devoted to education, the country needs to increase the resources allocated to providing quality education.

#### **Sustainable Development Goal 8, on promoting an inclusive economy**

In terms of promoting an inclusive economy (Goal 8), Nigeria's informal economy is one of the largest on the African continent, estimated at 53 per cent of its labour force and accounting for 65 per cent of its GDP. It is estimated that 75 per cent of all new jobs are in the informal sector. Young people have a combined unemployment and underemployment rate of 55.4 per cent, or 24.5 million (approximately 13.1 million unemployed and 11.3 million underemployed). This is the "youth bulge" that needs to build the skills required to move into secure and less precarious forms of employment. Ensuring that young people are well educated and able to transition to productive employment through the digital economy can help to reduce poverty (Goal 1) and help to diversify growth beyond dependence on oil and gas. The Generation Unlimited intervention, which targets employment for 20 million young people, is another good example. The banking sector can play an important role in supporting the country's efforts to leverage greater private sector-led growth by providing access to finance, in particular for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, the Government of Nigeria can dramatically shift to digitalization and strengthen its transition to e-government, so as to facilitate the provision of social protection to its poor and vulnerable population.

#### **Alignment of national planning with Sustainable Development Goals**

Good strides have been made in the process to nationalize the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria. First, there has been an ongoing realignment of the national statistical system with the requirements and indicators of the Goals. Second, Nigeria has developed a home-grown integrated simulation model, an analytical framework for assessing how policymaking can better address the indivisible nature of the Goals. Third, in its 2020 voluntary national review report, Nigeria has drawn on past evaluations across the seven priority Goals mentioned above and has presented an ongoing evaluation of the country's performance with regard to Goals 3 and 4. This attempt to systematically use evaluations is an innovation in the context of the voluntary national review. Nigeria should strengthen evidence-based planning and accountability mechanisms at the national and subnational levels for accelerating the decade of action for the Goals. Once the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan has been completed, the national development plan for 2021–2030 will be pivotal in advancing the achievement of the Goals in Nigeria.

#### **North Macedonia**

[Original: English]

North Macedonia is fully committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the European Union integration process; this commitment is demonstrated through the government reform agenda, which is focused on key development objectives meant for all citizens. In that regard, the National Council for Sustainable Development identified Sustainable Development Goals 1, 4, 8, 13 and 16 as the five priority Goals for the period 2018–2020. North Macedonia’s existing policy framework addresses a number of aspects of sustainable development, while the rapid integrated assessment conducted in 2019 showed an alignment of 83 per cent between the national policy framework and the overall 2030 Agenda.

The national voluntary review was prepared using a participatory approach with various stakeholder groups. Below are North Macedonia’s main achievements and challenges in each of the five areas of the 2030 Agenda:

### **People**

Poverty has been reduced by 21.9 per cent among the poorest sections of society. The Gini coefficient has decreased, from 37 per cent in 2013 to 31.9 per cent in 2018. In December 2019, under new legislation, the average amount of financial assistance paid per household increased by 142 per cent compared with the average amount paid under the old legislation. Through a deinstitutionalization process, all children under the age of 18 accommodated in public care institutions were resettled in smaller community homes.

The country faces serious challenges in dealing with non-communicable diseases and, in particular, a high mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases and cancer. The outmigration of medical personnel remains a severe challenge for the health sector. On a positive note, the infant mortality rate decreased from 11.9 per cent in 2016 to 5.7 per cent in 2018.

North Macedonia aims to provide an environment for inclusive education. The country’s ranking on the Programme for International Student Assessment scale showed improvement in the most recent review, carried out in 2018 and published in 2019, especially in science, but remains low, which makes investments in education a key priority for the Government.

### **Prosperity**

Before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis, active employment measures put in place through the operational plan for employment led to the lowest-ever unemployment rate, 16.6 per cent. Contract enforcement, the informal economy and skills mismatches continue to pose challenges for the business environment.

North Macedonia is small economy, strongly integrated into the European Union and Central European Free Trade Agreement markets. Through its plan for economic growth, the country managed to attract foreign investment and largely diversify exports to encompass higher-value products.

Its energy policy and legislation are now fully aligned with the Energy Community of the European Union, prioritizing energy efficiency and renewable energy; coal, however, still accounts for 60 per cent of electricity production.

### **Planet**

The country is highly vulnerable to climate-induced natural disasters, including earthquakes, floods, heat waves and forest fires. At the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris in December 2015, the Government committed itself to reducing emissions from fossil fuels by as much as 36 per cent by 2030 compared with the baseline scenario. In terms of nature protection, the process of identifying



and designating Natura 2000 sites around the country, as an obligation stemming from the European Union acquis, has resulted in nine potential Natura 2000 sites to date and is still ongoing.

### **Partnerships**

As a generational commitment, North Macedonia's strategic decisions have been made while focusing on becoming a State member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union and being a responsible State Member of the United Nations. In 2020, we have witnessed the achievement of two key foreign policy priorities: North Macedonia became the thirtieth State member of NATO, the strongest political and military alliance in the world, and it will soon begin negotiations for its accession to the European Union.

### **Peace**

North Macedonia's legal framework for the protection of human rights is largely in line with European standards, and the principle of gender equality is enshrined in its national legislation, although implementation remains a challenge. The climate for freedom of the media and freedom of expression has improved as a result of amendments to the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services.

The Government has made significant progress in enhancing the regulatory framework to address corruption and ensure the impartiality and efficiency of the judiciary.

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In order to achieve the 2030 Agenda and address challenges such as COVID-19 in the coming years, the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia will remain fully committed to the development of the institutions and partnerships that will enable sustainability for the present generation and future generations.

### **Panama**

[Original: Spanish]

#### **Panama: free of poverty and inequality, the sixth frontier**

In 2015, Panama committed to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and in 2017, the country presented its first voluntary national report. From the very beginning, through the "Panama 2030" national strategic plan with a State vision, strategies based on the five dimensions of sustainable development, namely, people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships, have been promoted to ensure that no one is left behind.

The Government, through its strategic plan for the years 2020 to 2024 entitled "United We Stand", is taking into account multiple challenges that stem from the inequalities affecting the population, especially the most vulnerable; those challenges have been compounded by the systemic effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health emergency. The Government has set out to develop economic and social strategies to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. In addition, there is a need to increase public investment in order to improve infrastructure and attain greater technological development. These actions will have a discernible impact on education, health and the social sector, thereby enhancing the quality of life of the population without neglecting the protection of the environment and biodiversity and the fight against climate change. This will provide the natural resources necessary for

the development of the country and the well-being of the population and fulfil the commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the Goals.

In that context, the Government is leading efforts to reduce poverty and inequality through the “Beehive Plan: Panama free of poverty and inequality, the sixth frontier”, whose mission is to promote social justice, equity and opportunities; with priority given to early childhood, so as to leave no one behind. The Beehive Plan is linked to the 17 Goals and their targets and indicators, by promoting social inclusion through partnerships between public institutions, civil society, private enterprise, academia and the community. It is focused on improving the services provided by the State. It also aims to develop benefits and services with service models that protect rights and that citizens find satisfactory; and to encourage income-generating activities to improve quality of life, ensuring that the most disadvantaged populations are included from a productive and financial standpoint. In line with the principles of intersectorality, decentralization, citizen participation, equal opportunities, interculturality and sustainability, the goal of the initiative is the territorialization of the 2030 Agenda by integrating teams, aligning and facilitating coordination between the central Government and local governments and establishing a permanent information system, prioritizing those who have been left behind.

Inclusive, permanent, equitable and quality education is the centrepiece of the Government’s proposal. This entails promoting an education that serves the national interest and ensuring universal equal access to education in line with the 2030 Agenda and technological and scientific progress, thereby enhancing the quality of the education system in an inclusive, equitable and innovative manner that affords citizens a comprehensive civic education. Special, inclusive and professional attention is given to early childhood education and the continuing education of both students and teachers.

The challenges in improving the health-care system are strengthening primary care, expanding coverage in remote areas and automating the management of the system, which is essential to well-being. This strategy is aimed at ensuring that all households, including families living in the most extreme poverty, have access to drinking water, sanitation services, quality health care provided by qualified practitioners and essential supplies and medicine.

Addressing the challenge of strengthening information systems for decision-making and public policy reorientation could be a topic for international cooperation on which countries could share their experiences and knowledge.

## **Papua New Guinea**

[Original: English]

### **Introduction**

Papua New Guinea adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway to achieve the country’s Vision 2050. The Sustainable Development Goals were integrated into the Medium-Term Development Plan III (2018–2022) and other national policies, legislative and budgets. Progress has been both good and challenging for the thematic areas of some key sectors, owing to internal and external pressures. The country’s first voluntary national review report provides an indication of the progress of implementation and serves to affirm ownership of the Goals.

### **Sustainable Development Goal progress**

Since 2000, notable progress was made in the areas of health (Goal 4), education (Goal 5), climate action (Goal 13) and partnership for the Goals (Goal 17), as follows:

- The maternal mortality rate decreased from 220 (2015) to 145 (2017) per 100,000 live births.
- Immunization coverage improved from 60 per cent (2016) to 80 per cent (2019).
- Net enrolment in primary education improved from 68.0 per cent (2014) to 87.7 per cent (2017).

Positive trends are expected with regard to other Sustainable Development Goals, owing to significant policy shifts and innovative financing and implementation modalities in the areas of zero hunger (Goal 2), gender equality (Goal 5), clean water and sanitation (Goal 6), affordable and clean energy (Goal 7) and sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11).

While key enablers are in place for achieving most of the Sustainable Development Goals, internal and external pressures continue to hinder progress in the areas of decent work and economic growth (Goal 8), responsible consumption and production (Goal 12), life below water (Goal 14) and peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16).

### **National ownership and institutional arrangements**

In 2015, Papua New Guinea took strong ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals and integrated them into its national planning frameworks. It introduced the National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development for Papua New Guinea and adopted the Papua New Guinea Planning and Monitoring Responsibility Act 2016. The voluntary national review process has been guided by the proposed Sustainable Development Goal-Medium-Term Development Plan governance mechanism, comprising a national steering committee, an interministerial committee, a multisectoral Sustainable Development Goal council and sectoral technical working groups.

### **Means of implementation**

The Medium-Term Development Plan III is first of the three national delivery mechanisms of the Sustainable Development Goals. The national development budget is a significant tool used to fund the Goals and the Plan, through a capital investment programme. The Papua New Guinea Development Cooperation Policy 2018–2022 provides a protocol for development partners to align their efforts with national priorities.

### **Multisectoral stakeholder engagement**

The meaningful partnerships between the Government and development partners are evident in their active engagement in the localization of Sustainable Development Goals and the development of the Medium-Term Development Plan III. The partnerships were established through the Development Cooperation Policy 2018–2022, public-private partnerships, a State-civil society partnership policy, the Open Government Partnership and the Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council.

A proposed Sustainable Development Goal multi-stakeholder engagement strategy is focused on improving whole-of-government institutional arrangements, coordination and society-wide approaches, so as to leave no one behind.

### **Leaving no one behind**

Disparities in income and access to basic services are hampered by rugged terrain and a remote and isolated rural population, gender disparities among women and girls, a large youth population and migration patterns. Often forgotten are the marginalized and most vulnerable groups of people.

For service delivery at the district, ward and community levels, the national Government has put in place the District Development Authority Act 2014 to manage the District Services Improvement Programme, aimed at funding the sector development priorities of the districts, wards and communities, apart from health and education.

### **Challenges**

Major challenges hampering progress with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals include limited technical and financial capacities; a lack of coordination; poor accountability and governance in development; and leaving no one behind. Three specific challenges are outlined below.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) also affected the 2020 budget and revenue generation, as a result of the major drop in commodity prices and the reduction in domestic business activities in Papua New Guinea. Significant policy and fiscal trade-offs were therefore made on the limited budget available, through its reprioritization to other critical, life-saving basic services, with a COVID-19 stimulus package of 4.4 billion kina to fund preventative measures in the country.

Innovative financing for development from development partners is yet to be explored from off-shore creative financing sources for development financing, from both domestic sources and from traditional donor funding modalities.

The data and evidence ecosystem is being challenged with regard to tracking progress of Sustainable Development Goal achievement, owing to rugged topography, limited capacity throughout the country, a lack of coordination and a lack of funding. The recent successful conduct of the demographic and health survey and the preparation of the 2021 census, as well as the establishment of a periodic reporting platform for the Goals, will lead to progress on the 2030 Agenda.

## **Peru**

[Original: Spanish]

### **Introduction**

This document gives an overview of the main questions relating to the National Development Strategic Plan in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) emergency, as the primary mechanism for achieving the objectives set forth in national policies, the long-term vision, the General Government Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **Formulation of the National Development Strategic Plan under extremely adverse circumstances**

In 2017, the need to formulate the long-term national development plan within the framework of the national strategic planning system was acknowledged.

In 2018, a more rigorous framework for national policies, providing for goals to be defined and implemented, was established.

In 2019, after two years, the National Accord Forum approved the Vision of Peru up until 2050. It is an agreement reached between society and State by consensus.

The Vision and the General Government Policy (2018) encompass the five dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships; along with State policies, they serve as the framework for country-specific development goals.

The national development plan is the tool for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It includes provincial and departmental development plans whose formulation has been severely affected by COVID-19.

### **Integration of economic, social, environmental and institutional policies at the local level: the challenge of diversity**

Under normal circumstances, the formulation of the National Development Strategic Plan integrates dialogue on policy and planning between the local level and the district, provincial and departmental levels through concerted development plans provided for in the Constitution of Peru since 2002. At the district level, participatory mechanisms are still weak. Plans for each territory include the private and public sectors in complex and diverse local contexts. The national emergency declared on account of COVID-19 brought the formulation of the National Development Strategic Plan to a halt.

Advances in the area of sustainable development include:

- (a) Universal health coverage, which was adopted in 2019, with Peru also addressing gaps in services and in the provision of primary care;
- (b) The formulation of concerted development plans with a long-term focus, which began in the 26 departments in 2019;
- (c) The General Government Policy, which was formally adopted in 2018, with efforts to implement it under way that emphasize the enhancement of national policies centred on national objectives and the development plan.

### **Challenges and next steps**

The main challenges for Peruvian society and the Government today are preventing deaths and damage caused by COVID-19 and beginning to recover the capacity to produce priority items essential to the well-being of people facing complex realities in their communities through a preventive approach.

To that end:

- (a) Immediate agreement must be achieved on priorities for dealing with the emergency and making the transition to a new normal. Discussions until 2021 will begin on taking account of activities conducted under extremely adverse conditions in the General Government Policy and in the State policies enshrined in the National Accord. This work is resuming remotely, taking into account the extraordinary national and global situation.
- (b) The focus will be on activities associated with conditions and products essential to the population. Increasing attention is being focused on safety, hygiene and prevention in such sectors as agriculture, fishing, forestry, livestock, trade, transport and tourism. Prevention and avoiding damage are central to the effort to safeguard human life in the transition to the new normal state of affairs in public and private activities, including a progressive, sustained improvement in services and social welfare in the shortest time frame possible.

(c) In the remaining months of 2020, the revised national priorities will make it possible to formulate development plans in a simplified manner for as many provinces as possible by continuing to make remote online use of institutional mechanisms for national and local participation. Integrating these mechanisms at the departmental level will yield 26 development plans – albeit very imperfect ones – for the departments, serving as inputs for the National Development Strategic Plan in critically adverse and uncertain conditions.

(d) The National Development Strategic Plan will accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, placing people, households and communities at its centre and will integrate economic, social, environmental and institutional policy objectives into their lives.

## **Republic of Moldova**

[Original: English]

### **Republic of Moldova and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The country is committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through the combined efforts of key stakeholders to eliminate all forms of poverty, combat inequalities and tackle environmental and climate change, in order to ensure that no one is left behind.

Besides the focus on fulfilling the commitments under the association agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova, the country registered noteworthy progress since making its commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda. While significant progress was registered in achieving Sustainable Development Goals 1, 8, 13 and 17, the results obtained in the achievement of Goals 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 are moderate. Although efforts were undertaken to develop all the areas associated with the social dimension, the impact of those efforts on achieving Goals 4, 6, 10, 12, 15 and 16 was less noticeable.

### **Key challenges**

In its ambition to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, the country is facing a myriad of challenges.

People and their capabilities represent the main wealth of the country. But demographic decline is a key challenge. Emigration, especially of young and skilled people, low fertility issues, reduced life expectancy and an ageing population are cumulatively generating an annual population decrease of over 1.7 per cent.

Inequalities persist and the risks of food poverty and energy poverty are high. Prompt measures are necessary to ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable and reduce income and non-income inequalities.

The high vulnerability of the health system to global epidemics, for instance the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, has demonstrated the need for reform to ensure universal access to essential services, safe, qualitative and affordable medicines and vaccines.

The country's dependence on external energy sources point to the need to promote energy efficiency and undertake relevant measures, by intensifying and diversifying (including industrially) available renewable energy resources, as this is an essential condition for the economy's sustainable development.

The reduced use of innovation and research in solving societal problems limits the competitiveness of the State and its capacity to respond to the multiple problems

negatively influencing sustainable development. In recent years, only one fifth of all enterprises have reported innovation activities.

The area of environmental protection is faced with limited institutional capacities and insufficient financing from the national public budget, as the volume of financial resources annually allocated to this area is well below what is required to meet existing challenges.

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals depends on the level of financing allocated. Underfinancing in different social areas persists.

The peaceful settlement of the Transnistrian conflict is imperative. At present, this conflict remains a challenge to territorial integrity and impedes the implementation of systemic structural reforms across the entire territory of the country, which would ensure broad sustainable and inclusive development, assumed by the country. The Moldovan authorities are deeply committed to a peaceful, sustainable and all-encompassing settlement of the conflict, while observing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, within the limits of internationally recognized borders.

The monitoring and evaluation system for Sustainable Development Goal implementation is affected by the lack of data for about one fourth of the nationalized sustainable development goals and by insufficient disaggregated data for over 30 per cent of the indicators.

## **Conclusions**

The country is committed to the accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through the implementation of the association agreement with the European Union and, implicitly, the 2030 Agenda. Mainstreaming of the Goals into the main strategic document of the country is an important step, but it is not enough. The targets and indicators of the Goals, especially those measuring vulnerabilities, need to be encompassed in all policies, the efficient implementation of which would be secured by the allocation of sufficient financial resources.

It is also essential to enhance the system for Sustainable Development Goal implementation monitoring and evaluation. The implementation of the Goals requires a joint effort, through the development of comprehensive and sustainable partnerships. It is important to ensure that all people participate in implementing the Goals, regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, religion, nationality or financial situation.

## **Russian Federation**

[Original: Russian]

The Russian Federation is committed to the tasks identified by the international community in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustained efforts have been made at the national level to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Work in this area has been a direct continuation of the Millennium Development Goals, and the concept of sustainable development was formulated and integrated into the national development strategy of Russia as early as 1996.

The Russian Federation is a multi-ethnic social State with policies focused on people and their rights, freedoms, welfare and quality of life. These principles are put into practice on the basis of sustainable human development by implementing public and private initiatives that are aimed at the development of education, health-care and social security systems, infrastructure (transport, digital and energy), the economy as a whole and the conservation of the environment. All these priorities correspond to

the Sustainable Development Goals and are the basis for the international activities of Russia in the relevant areas.

The Goals are implemented in the Russian Federation by sectoral government bodies as part of the national development agenda for the period up until 2024. This work comes within the framework of 12 national projects and a comprehensive plan for the modernization and expansion of mainline infrastructure. These documents, directly or indirectly, cover more than 100 Goal targets.

For the first time, the Russian Federation is submitting a voluntary national review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To prepare for the review, 17 thematic working groups were established for each of the 17 Goals. The groups included representatives of the legislative branch and of federal and regional bodies of the executive branch, municipal self-governing bodies, the Bank of Russia, development institutions, civil society organizations, research organizations and the business community. More than 200 experts and over 100 organizations were directly involved in the preparations for the voluntary national review. The draft review, and each individual chapter, went through open public expert discussions.

During the preparation of the voluntary national review it was therefore possible:

- To ensure the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the process of preparing and discussing the document.
- To establish a dialogue between representatives of the State, society, business and science.
- To explore and take into account different views on the Goals and ensure wide public interest in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of its Goals.
- To undertake in-depth analysis of the alignment of national goals and targets with the 2030 Agenda and its Goals and to assess the interim results of their implementation.

The result of the analysis carried out are as follows:

- Russia is successfully implementing a human development policy in terms of education coverage at all levels, health care and employment.
- In line with the principle of “leaving no one behind”, Russia is focusing its efforts on four aspects: support for the poor (economic aspect); support for persons with disabilities (social aspect); the elimination of spatial inequality between regions (territorial aspect); and support for indigenous and small peoples (national aspect).
- Russia continues to improve the quality of life of its citizens, including through the development of social support, transport infrastructure, the urban environment, the digitalization of public services, increased access to financial services for the population, employment opportunities and the introduction and implementation of improved environmental norms and standards.
- Russia conscientiously fulfils its obligations in the fight against global climate change, implements modern environmental safety standards and works to improve energy efficiency and preserve biodiversity and unique natural capital.
- Russia actively participates in international cooperation in the field of sustainable development, provides assistance to countries, including those affected by emergency situations, takes steps to strengthen multilateral development institutions, and implements projects and initiatives for integration and cooperation in the Eurasian space and beyond.



The long-term development policy of Russia therefore balances the three key pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and is geared towards a broad partnership in the implementation of development objectives.

For each of the Goals, the Russian Federation has seen some positive results in recent years. The most success has been achieved with Goal 1 (on poverty eradication), Goal 4 (on quality education) and Goal 8 (on decent work and economic growth). However, a number of challenges in certain areas have yet to be tackled through the joint efforts of the State, business and society.

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda in our country has not stopped, even during emergency situations. For example, in the context of the coronavirus diseases (COVID-19) pandemic, Russia is actively working to prevent the spread of infection and to help those in need of treatment and supervision at home and abroad. A set of measures is also being implemented to reduce the negative impact of restrictive measures against the spread of the virus on the population and businesses.

## **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

[Original: English]

### **Introduction**

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines focuses its development plans on being a country that is diverse, modern, internationally competitive and committed to the social development of its people and environmental sustainability. The country's vision of improving the quality of life for all Vincentians is built upon the principle of putting people at the centre of its development. This vision is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and set out in the country's National Economic and Social Development Plan (2013–2025).

The country's vision is further elaborated through five interrelated development goals that place emphasis on ensuring a better quality of life for all through re-engineering economic growth; enabling increased human and social development; promoting good governance and increasing the effectiveness of public administration; improving physical infrastructure, preserving the environment and building resilience to climate change; and building national pride, identity and culture.

### **Development pathway in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals**

The commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals is operationalized through the National Economic and Social Development Plan, in which the country's development objectives are aligned with the related global Goals and targets. This integration represents a first and critical step to localizing the Goals. A rapid integrated assessment of the country's planning framework revealed that this small island developing State currently has 62 per cent of all its planning and policy documents aligned with the Goals and their accompanying targets.

### **Governance and institutional framework for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals**

The Government recognizes that an institutional mechanism is necessary to facilitate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Government ministries and agencies are responsible for the alignment of all policies and key programmes with the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These policies facilitate the integrated assessment of the pace of the progress in realizing the Goals, alongside local development objectives.

With regard to the 113 Sustainable Development Goal targets that were found to be applicable to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Statistical Office was tasked with creating mechanisms for data mining these indicators, so that the monitoring and evaluation framework for Goal implementation could be completed to facilitate better tracking, reporting and analysis of progress.

The advancement of the 2030 Agenda will be underpinned by extensive stakeholder consultations and involvement. Although political commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals is high, it is recognized that Goal implementation requires a holistic approach involving the public and private sector, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, the media and, importantly, the involvement of young people as future leaders. A focus has therefore been placed on continuing to strengthen mechanisms to enhance the participation of all stakeholders in achieving the Goals.

### **First voluntary national review**

The voluntary national review illustrates how national processes are shaping the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the country, as well as the challenges being faced – including financing gaps – in implementing the Goals, how these challenges are being addressed and how progress is being tracked towards achievement of the targets of the Goals. The preparation of the report at the time of a global pandemic emphasizes the way in which not only current known vulnerabilities, but also new and emerging global issues, can suddenly affect the development trajectory of countries and further highlights the challenges and opportunities that must be considered for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. As a country with a strong ethos on inclusiveness, the preparation of the voluntary national review required innovative solutions, as the country battled issues related to mitigating mechanisms as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, heightening the role of technology in preparing the review.

The concept of leaving no one behind fully resonates with the country's development pathway, as it targets issues related to reducing inequalities, eliminating all forms of poverty and empowering women and youth. While notable strides have been made, it is also recognized that there remains much to be accomplished. The 2030 Agenda provides a clear guide to enabling the advancement of development around its five principles: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships. Prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had already begun a cohesive process of implementing measures to build a sustainable society, through environmental, economic and social improvements underpinned by good governance, and, despite challenges, the country remains fully committed to this task for the benefit of future generations.

## **Samoa**

[Original: English]

### **An improved quality of life for all**

In its second voluntary national review, Samoa will assess progress on all the Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on the people-related Goals to tell our story. Since our first report, we have improved the integration of the Goals into national processes for better data collection, monitoring and evaluation and improved linkages to budget and planning processes, development assistance and other international obligations. Stakeholder engagement improved using existing platforms.

Overall, Samoa has shown resilience to multiple and frequent natural hazards and disasters and external shocks from the global economic crisis, the 2009 tsunami, Tropical Cyclone Evan in 2012 and Tropical Cyclone Gita in 2018. Despite steady economic growth, with peak growth of 7.1 per cent in 2015/16 following the recovery from these disasters and external shocks, there was an increase in the basic needs poverty, from 18.8 per cent in 2013 to 22.7 per cent in 2018, and declining economic growth due mainly to industry slowdown, following the closure of the Yazaki Samoa manufacturing plant in August 2017. There was also a rise in the unemployment rate, from 8.7 per cent in 2012 to 14.5 per cent in 2017.

While resilience in terms of governance, coordinated response and recovery has strengthened, the recent tragic results of the measles epidemic in 2019 highlighted significant gaps in our health system, although the lessons learned have placed Samoa in a better state of preparedness towards a national response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. As at 1 May 2020, Samoa remains free of COVID-19. Steps taken to prevent the spread of measles, and now COVID-19, are affecting the economy, with a decline in gross domestic product per capita and expanding budget deficits due to a decreasing number of visitors and lower earnings from tourism for the first time since the second quarter of 2018.

Investing in human capital has always been at the top of the national agenda. So far, there have been mixed results on the global maternal and child health targets but improvements in primary health-care service access. High morbidity and mortality rates from non-communicable diseases have been reported. Despite these results, good progress has been made in addressing the risk factors of such diseases, with alcohol and tobacco use declining and levels of physical exercise and healthy eating increasing over the past 10 years. The recent measles outbreak revealed gaps that are being addressed by a thorough review of the vaccination and health information management systems.

Results on universal access to education, especially in the primary and secondary levels, are positive, with the assistance of the School Fee Grant Scheme. Challenges remain with regard to declining literacy and numeracy rates, poor results in science and maths and very poor-quality results for boys. In response to the school closures stemming from the state of emergencies declared for the measles epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic, the education system has innovated and is delivering school lessons online and through the use of e-learning materials.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are key in Samoa's national development approach. While there is overall positive progress in the participation of women in decision-making at all levels, there is a high prevalence of gender-based violence and domestic violence.

The population has near universal access to essential services such as safe drinking water, sanitation services and electricity. Efforts towards digital transformation have resulted in increased access to mobile technology and internet and the enabling of such services as financial inclusion. The challenge is to maintain and improve the quality of water and sanitation, ensure affordable information and communication technology and more clean energy consumption.

Samoa continues to invest in climate-resilient infrastructure and ensures the integration of climate change considerations across all sectors. The forest cover remains stable; however, there have been no major improvements in the status of threatened species in Samoa.

Institutions and mechanisms have been established to enhance a human rights-based approach to development and to link the implementation and review of human rights obligations with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Reports on the means of implementation have been positive. Despite progress in many areas, key gaps remain. With the current COVID-19 situation, the sustainability of any gains is now in question.

Key takeaways include the importance of strong and decisive leadership, systems and capacities; constructive partnerships at all levels; the use of country systems; and the effective management of significant amounts of national data and reports, supported by data analysis capabilities.

Challenges highlighted in the report include limited capacity for implementation, data analysis and management at all levels; uncoordinated partner support efforts for Sustainable Development Goal achievement; and increased vulnerability to external shocks, disasters and emerging threats, including health crises.

## Seychelles

[Original: English]

### **A resilient, responsible and prosperous nation of healthy, educated and empowered Seychellois, living together in harmony with nature and engaged with the wider world: the vision of a nation celebrating its 250 years**

Seychelles remains committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as it changes the way we perceive development and forces us to move beyond measuring progress in purely economic terms. The country's first voluntary national review covers all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Sustainable Development Goals in the national strategic planning framework**

For Seychelles, the voluntary national review process immediately followed the launch of its Vision 2033 and National Development Strategy 2019–2023. Developed by means of broad public consultations, the two national documents provide an outline of the medium- to long-term pathways to sustainable development for the country, based on national priorities. The process also enabled the mapping of the Sustainable Development Goals onto the six thematic pillars of the Strategy, thus ensuring that the enabling environment, which is imperative for implementation, is provided for.

### **Leaving no one behind**

The preamble of the Constitution of Seychelles stipulates that Seychelles will develop a democratic system which will ensure the creation of an adequate and progressive social order guaranteeing food, clothing, shelter, education, health and a steadily rising standard of living for all Seychellois. It is against this background that the Sustainable Development Goals are being implemented.

Seychelles has in place an extensive social protection system, which makes provision for both cash transfers and in-kind assistance. These provisions include a universal retirement pension for citizens aged 63 years and older and statutory disability benefits (Goals 1, 2, 3 and 10), among other benefits.

With an exclusive economic zone of 1.4 million km<sup>2</sup>, Seychelles has embraced the concept of the blue economy, which presents an integrated approach to ocean-based sustainable development. In October 2018, Seychelles launched the world's first sovereign blue bond, aimed at mobilizing resources for empowering local communities and businesses in transitioning to sustainable fisheries and safeguarding our oceans, while the blue economy is sustainably developed (Goals 8, 12, 13 and 14).

Seychelles is currently ranked forty-third on the world human capital index and is also the only country in the African region and the Indian Ocean to have attained the very high development category in 2019. This is testimony to its continued investment in health and education and to its people-centred development model. The country boasts a 10-year free and compulsory education and free primary health-care system (Goals 3 and 4).

As a small island developing State, we remain committed to environmental sustainability and resilience (Goals 13 and 14). In the face of growing threats such as coastal erosion and flooding due to climate change, the Government has adopted an integrated approach by placing more emphasis on various adaptation strategies and has recently launched its coastal management plan. The Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan initiative is another significant commitment, and, in March 2020, Seychelles legally designated 30 per cent of its territorial waters as marine protected areas, 10 years ahead of international targets.

### **Partnerships**

The Sustainable Development Goals are interrelated and cannot be achieved by Government alone, which is why domestic partnership with the private sector and civil society is of the utmost importance.

Global partnership also has an important role to play, with synergies across the broader global agenda, such as Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. Some of our greater successes have been in instances where we joined forces with others.

### **Challenges**

Being a small island developing State, and given its geographical location, Seychelles remains highly vulnerable to external factors. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has brought to the fore the risk that a health-related outbreak can have on an economy like ours, which is highly dependent on tourism and wherein we import most of what we consume. The effects of climate change have been further exacerbated by recent events of coastal erosion. Other key challenges to address are increasing financial resources mobilization, the strengthening of the national statistical system and an ageing population, none of which can be ignored. There is also a lack of awareness with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals, which can further impede their achievement.

### **Conclusion**

The voluntary national review process has allowed us to take stock of how sustainable our policies are, what the gaps are and what we can do better. In this decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, more than ever, we recognize that there is no room for complacency, and COVID-19 has further highlighted that fact.

As we all rebuild our economies, we must rebuild better, towards a sustainable and inclusive future.

### **Slovenia**

[Original: English]

Slovenia recognizes the importance of sustainable development, both locally and globally, and reaffirms its commitment to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2017, the Government adopted the Slovenia

Development Strategy 2030. With the overarching objective of ensuring a high quality of life for all, the Strategy builds on five strategic orientations and 12 interlinked development goals and incorporates the 17 Sustainable Development Goals into that framework. The aim of the Strategy is to balance economic, social and environmental development.

Slovenia's commitment to balanced and fair development across the globe is reflected in its contribution to development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Slovenia shares global responsibility for eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia to 2030 puts two cross-cutting themes at the heart of national action: environmental protection and gender equality.

In 2018, Slovenia committed itself to conducting its second voluntary national review in 2020 and to reporting on the progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. An all-inclusive process was kicked off, bringing together government departments, public institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, the private sector, youth organizations and local stakeholders. The majority of vulnerable groups were included in the development of the report. A series of regional consultations and thematic workshops helped stakeholders to identify challenges to and best practices in achieving the Goals at the national and regional levels.

Rates of poverty and social exclusion risk have seen a steady and persistent drop, as many integration and social activation programmes are being provided to vulnerable groups. Besides supporting disease prevention programmes, Slovenia advocates health promotion, raising awareness about health-related risk factors, such as lifestyle choices and diet. This action contributes to improved health outcomes with regard to alcohol use, unhealthy eating habits and communicable diseases. Mental health programmes are among key public health priorities, owing to high suicide and self-harm rates. Educational institutions have recorded a high participation rate and an extremely low school drop-out rate. According to the Programme for International Student Assessment scale, Slovenia is ranked as having a high-performing education system. Nevertheless, gaps still exist between knowledge and skills, in particular among people with low education levels and older citizens, two groups who participate less often in lifelong learning.

Between 2017 and 2020, Slovenia recorded stable economic growth, coupled with a steady reduction in long-term unemployment and involuntary temporary employment. Quality of life for all citizens and stable economic development depend on how well labour market mechanisms are adjusted to demographic change. Helping young people find quality jobs early and adopting strategic migration policies are essential in this context. Slovenia needs to improve its "flexicurity" systems to increase employment levels, reduce labour market segmentation and optimize workforce allocation. It is important that Slovenia catch up with the most advanced economies in a sustainable and steady manner. Slovenia recognizes that the shift to a low-carbon economy is key but acknowledges that that shift represents a systemic challenge requiring well-thought-out action. The transition to a circular economy will ride on research, development and innovation, which can open up countless opportunities in industry, infrastructure, mobility, among other sectors. Digitalization and other available technological solutions will help to accelerate the shift to a circular economy.

Slovenia prides itself on having abundant water resources that provide clean and safe water. In 2017, groundwater provided drinking water for most of the Slovenian population. In 2016, the right to drinking water was enshrined in the Constitution. In

the sector of clean and available energy, the Government adopted the National Energy and Climate Plan 2030, paving the way towards climate neutrality by 2050. A set of carefully planned measures ensures a balance between the three pillars of the energy policy: sustainability, security of supply and competitiveness. Slovenia must take more action in the transport sector to reach the national emissions reduction targets. Green procurement, which is aimed at promoting local and organic food production, is another crucial mechanism underlying the shift to climate neutrality. Slovenia has put in place measures to preserve sustainable farming practices and family farms, to protect and promote traditional cuisine, to foster sustainable forest management and to preserve farmed landscape.

Amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Slovenia is facing challenges that call for coordinated action by all stakeholders in health care, the economy, social care and humanitarian protection. Well-thought-out measures will mitigate the socioeconomic impact of the crisis, ensuring that it does not disproportionately affect the most vulnerable population groups.

## **Solomon Islands**

[Original: English]

The National Development Strategy 2016–2035 is the blueprint for sustainable development in Solomon Islands. In it, the Government sets out its vision and priorities for advancing human and economic development and ensuring peace and security and the protection of the natural environment. Relevant elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 and other relevant international and regional frameworks have been integrated into the Strategy, through its five long-term objectives of inclusive economic growth; poverty reduction; access to quality health and education; resilient and environmentally sustainable development; and effective governance. The targets and benchmarks for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level are also set out in the Strategy.

The preparations for the National Development Strategy and the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals have been consultative and inclusive efforts. Similarly, the voluntary national review process captured broad stakeholder views, facilitated through a dedicated national coordinating committee. The review provided an opportunity to share the country's national development priorities and its related Goal implementation progress.

The Solomon Islands is the third largest archipelago in the South Pacific, comprising a total of 997 islands spread over an exclusive economic zone of 1,340,000 km. It has a population of 639,157 that is predominantly rural. It also has a very large informal sector. The level of biodiversity in Solomon Islands is globally recognized. While such complexity and diversity provide opportunities, they also pose significant challenges to our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**

Solomon Islands has promoted economic growth through investments in the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism and mining sectors. The Government, together with development partners, has provided technical and financial support to programmes aimed at achieving sustained growth and employment.

Ensuring access to basic education and improving the quality of education remain important priorities for Solomon Islands. The Government has implemented free education and other targeted policy measures, which have led to increased primary and secondary school enrolment rates and improved gender parity, with more girls both starting and remaining in school. Solomon Islands continues to maintain high levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy, scoring higher than regional proficiency levels for the fourth and sixth years of primary school.

Solomon Islands has made impressive gains in health outcomes over the past two decades and is progressing towards achieving universal health coverage. Current priorities include detecting and treating non-communicable diseases; addressing shortages of health workers; and increasing the availability of treatment facilities across all health centres. While there is no discrimination in access to basic health care, disparities remain, largely owing to its population being spread over difficult terrain. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic underscores the threat of infectious diseases, given limited containment capacity and the adverse impact of the outbreak. Solomon Islanders remain vulnerable to health risks stemming from natural disasters, as well as from outbreaks of malaria, tuberculosis, dengue fever and measles.

Human rights, gender issues, peacebuilding and security concerns remain policy priorities, which are being addressed. Reducing domestic violence remains a challenge, and mechanisms have been established to help affected women and children. Employment opportunities for women in senior management roles have improved, although more progress is needed.

Solomon Islands remains vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. Policy frameworks such as the National Climate Change Policy, nationally determined contributions and the National Disaster Risk Management Plan underpin measures currently in place. The effective implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures is dependent on the timely availability of financial and technical resources.

Principles of good governance and transparency remain important national priorities. The Government recently passed the Whistle-blowers Protection Act and the Anti-Corruption Act and established the Solomon Islands Independent Commission against Corruption. Ongoing good governance programmes at the national, provincial and community levels are aimed at empowering civil society, addressing corruption and strengthening the judicial system and law enforcement capacity.

### **Moving ahead**

A major challenge to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals lies in institutional capacity and effectiveness in managing the rapidly changing development context, including with regard to population growth, sociocultural and environmental change and global economic systems. A deeper integration of legislation, policies, plans, budgets and activities for transformative change is necessary. Finding a sustainable pathway for Solomon Islands requires unlocking the needed means of implementation and ensuring durable and genuine partnerships, in order to enable the full and effective implementation of the Goals.

## **Syrian Arab Republic**

[Original: Arabic]

The Syrian Arab Republic participated in the United Nations summit at which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted. It did so because it attaches great importance to international multilateral cooperation as a means to



advance development and achieve well-being and is committed to international consensus in that regard. Moreover, it is convinced that the world needs a comprehensive plan of action to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development in an integrated and balanced way. Because this Agenda applies to all countries, it takes into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respects national policies and priorities.

By the end of the first decade of the millennium, our country had achieved good, stable rates of economic growth and carried out ambitious reform plans, within the means available at the time, across the board. The structure of the economy improved as its dependence on the oil sector declined in relative terms. Qualitative factors contributing to growth also improved. Great strides were made in human development, especially in the areas of health, education, housing and the empowerment of women. In short, Syria was classified as one of the countries that were on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

That situation, however, changed dramatically after 2011, when a complex war broke out that has destroyed much of our capacity and caused the displacement, migration and flight of large numbers of Syrians. Various factors contributed to the outbreak of war, most notably terrorism and foreign military intervention involving States that play a major role in international decision-making and hold considerable sway at the United Nations and other international organizations.

Those interventions, in violation of international law, in addition to the unilateral coercive economic measures imposed on our country, are today serving to prolong the war and the crises that spring from it and causing new waves of displaced persons and refugees. Some of what is happening simply amounts to extortion. Certain countries are applying international political and financial pressure by engaging in human trafficking and the exploitation of Syrian refugees and profiting thereby in several ways, including by using them as pawns to gain benefits from other countries.

The continuation of this situation is in itself a violation of international law and the purposes and principles of the United Nations. It also flouts the right of peoples to development, whether in terms of sovereignty or the right to choose their own development paths, and to sovereignty over the resources that are a prerequisite for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Syrian Arab Republic has always sought to be an active member of the international community, committed to upholding international law and convinced that international partnership for development and peace is the way to achieve the well-being of humankind. However, we do not feel that our quest for partnership has been reciprocated by many powerful parties in the international system. Rather, we are confronted by military intervention, political and economic blockade, and the disruption of reconstruction efforts. The slogan of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, that no one will be left behind, implies that one should stop holding whole countries back from the path of development, as is happening to Syria, where the blockade is hurting our people and our development efforts.

Our messages to the international community, and for ourselves, with regard to how we should go about achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and leaving no one behind, are as follows:

1. Achieve peace and security in our country, while striving to halt acts of aggression, terrorism and gross violations of international law and the sovereignty of Syria, with a view to reaching a political solution based on the will of the people, vanquishing terrorism, achieving national reconciliation, bringing refugees and displaced persons home and ensuring security and stability.

2. Condemn unilateral coercive economic measures, which contravene the Charter of the United Nations and international law, violate the right to development and hinder attempts to improve standards of living, and demand that they be curtailed, thereby ensuring that the legitimate authorities regain control over the natural resources that drive the economy and reconstruction.

3. End the exclusion of Syria from membership of international and regional organizations, unfreeze its assets and lift prohibitions that prevent Syrian institutions from playing their part in providing people with the necessities of life.

4. Provide sufficient and unconditional international assistance for reconstruction and to rebuild the Syrian economy on a sustainable basis and integrate it into the global economy.

5. The Syrian Government will roll out comprehensive national policies to stimulate development, building on the implementation of its post-war development plan, which is the national expression of the Sustainable Development Goals.

6. Broaden and institutionalize participation in the implementation of development plans, in particular by including the private sector, academia, civil society and the media, and strengthen cooperation with the United Nations system in Syria, and with other international and regional organizations, to ensure the optimal use of resources.

7. The Syrian Government will establish mechanisms and conduct activities to guarantee the participation of the Syrian people at every component of society and throughout the country in efforts to achieve the development goals.

8. The Syrian Government wishes to see the creation of a just international partnership, bound by international law and the principles of human rights, justice and equality, to pursue development that leaves no one behind, and calls on all international and regional actors to be our partners in achieving this.

9. Demand that the Governments of certain countries change their negative stance on the lifting of unilateral coercive economic measures, normalize their relations with the Syrian Government and support its development efforts, in order to foster an environment conducive to the safe and dignified return of refugees and displaced persons and to provide them with the basic services they need.

10. Ensure the active participation of developing countries in the management of global economic institutions, in particular the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 10.

## **Uganda**

[Original: English]

Uganda's development journey has been guided by a deliberate and well-planned effort to transform it from a peasant society to a modern, industrial and prosperous one. Since adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, Uganda has been steadfast in its efforts to realize the aspirations of its people. Since 2018, the economy registered strong recovery and had been projected to grow at a rate of 6.0 per cent in 2019/20, before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak. Income per capita increased from \$833 in 2016/17 to \$891 in 2018/19, and Ugandans are living longer, with an average life expectancy of 63.7 years. Gains have been registered in the education sector, as manifested in improved literacy levels and increased enrolment at all levels.

The Government recognizes the need for high-quality and inclusive development planning to consolidate gains and advance achievement of the

Sustainable Development Goals. The Third National Development Plan (2020/21–2024/25) had been the subject of a wide consultative process and will be a vehicle for accelerating the achievement of the Goal and Uganda Vision 2040. Using integrated Goal-achievement modelling approaches, the Government has fully mainstreamed the Goals, identifying key accelerators based on their relative return on investment. In addition, sectoral and local government plans and policies will also be enhanced to address inclusiveness, a key principle of the 2030 Agenda.

The Government has continued to strengthen institutional coordination for Sustainable Development Goal implementation. As part of efforts to operationalize the national Goal coordination framework, the President appointed the Minister in Charge of General Duties in the Office of the Prime Minister as Cabinet Focal Point on the Goals. A fully fledged national secretariat has been established to support the Goal coordination architecture, to ensure that Uganda stays on track in implementing the Goals. While the Government is enhancing statistical capacity to monitor and report progress, it is also building strong institutions at the subnational level, to accelerate the implementation of the Goals through localization and voluntary local reviews.

To strengthen efficient development planning and resource utilization and enhance cross-sectoral synergies, programme-based budgeting was adopted for the Second National Development Plan and advanced further in the third. Uganda has developed a comprehensive Public Financial Management Reform Strategy (July 2018–June 2023), in which several financial management challenges are acknowledged and recommendations are presented to address them. The Domestic Revenue Mobilization Strategy (2019/20–2023/24) was completed and efforts are under way to prepare an integrated national financing framework, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which will boost the innovative mobilization and utilization of resources.

As Uganda advances in the implementation of its plans, it is committed to ensuring that no one is left behind. The Government has put in place laws and policies to support the inclusion of vulnerable persons. For instance, the Public Finance Management Act (2015) ensures gender- and equity-responsive budgeting. The Government increased funding for livelihood grants for young people and other special grants for women. The Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment scheme has improved social security and reduced vulnerabilities for persons aged 65 years or older. Uganda continues to support more than 1.4 million refugees through a globally acclaimed programme model.

As the Government fast-tracks progress on the 2030 Agenda, it has embraced the global wave of digital transformation, which presents significant opportunities. This fast-tracking is being accomplished through strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and the National Information Technology Authority, in order to minimize possible exclusions that could affect some population segments with limited capacity to embrace that wave. Although the 2030 Agenda is strongly anchored in environmental integrity and sustainability, increasing effects of climate change are reducing Uganda's natural capital. The Third National Development Plan therefore includes ambitious climate actions, set out through the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted Uganda's progress in some sectors, it has also given impetus to the country's industrialization drive. As a result, growth projections are down to 3.9 per cent for fiscal year 2019/20. Given the toll that the pandemic has had on jobs, hitherto promising sectors could significantly affect efforts to reduce poverty, vulnerability and inequality. However, it has also

awakened discourse on how Uganda should build its systems to generate the required resilience to withstand such shocks.

Moving forward, the Government will sustain and strengthen collaboration with all actors and commits itself to the regional integration agenda as a means of accelerating efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

## **Ukraine**

[Original: Russian]

### **Political commitment, institutional readiness**

Ukraine reaffirms its commitment to the values and goals defined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since 2015, Ukraine has been implementing reforms aimed at socioeconomic and democratic transformation. The Sustainable Development Goals have been integrated into public policies based on the principle of “leaving no one behind”.

### **Sustainable Development Goals in Ukraine**

The outcome of the inclusive process of adapting the Goals for Ukraine to the specifics of national development was a system of Sustainable Development Goals consisting of 86 targets with 183 monitoring indicators. At the initiative of the Ministry of Economy, the Government established a Sustainable Development Goals Interdepartmental Working Group to coordinate work on achieving the Goals. Responsibility for the Goals was distributed among the relevant ministries in terms of tasks. The President of Ukraine adopted a decree which established the Goals as a reference point for the development of forecasting and policy documents. A monitoring system was also developed and the degree to which the Goals are incorporated into existing government strategies and programmes was analysed (covering 162 regulatory legal acts and 4,300 activities). In March 2020, the new Cabinet of Ministers adopted its own political programme with a commitment to the Goals.

### **Sustainable Development Goals: calendar of events**

2016: adaptation of the Goals.

2017: setting 86 national Goal targets with 183 benchmarks and national indicators for the Goals.

2017: the first national baseline report on the Sustainable Development Goals in Ukraine.

2018: introduction of annual monitoring of the Goals.

2019: the first monitoring report on the Goals (statistical data), a thematic report on the Sustainable Development Goals for Children and a national report on Sustainable Development Goal 8.

### **Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: achievements and challenges**

By the end of 2019, Ukraine as a whole has made progress on 15 of the 17 Goals. The main achievement is the reduction of poverty: from 58.3 per cent in 2015 to 43.2 per cent in 2018. Notable progress has been achieved through improved wage standards and increased housing subsidy coverage (from 12 per cent in 2014 to 64 per cent in 2017). Ukraine is implementing the “New Ukrainian School” framework for educational reform and joined the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018. Since 2019, a retail electricity market and a full-scale electricity

market have been introduced in Ukraine. As a result of improved conditions for the development of small and medium-sized businesses over the period from 2016 to 2019, the positive balance of foreign trade in information and communications technology services increased by 2.5 times and high-speed 4G Internet has been introduced. Since 2015, Ukraine has established 1,029 amalgamated territorial communities and State support for local and regional development has increased by 41.5 times. The main obstacles to development remain continuing armed aggression, worn-out infrastructure, inefficient public administration, insufficient resources and financing. The new challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic also complicate the situation. In response to these challenges, the following needs have been emphasized: to update reform of the health-care system; to strengthen coordination and professionalization of the authorities; to restore the full production cycle of certain goods (chemical and pharmaceutical industries); to reform the social assistance system; and to modernize social protection for the most vulnerable groups, especially children, in conjunction with integrated social services, digitalization of administration processes and the implementation of distance education.

### **The vision of transformation processes in Ukraine for the next decade**

#### *Economic dimension:*

The expectation is to stimulate the development of science and innovation and the development of the circular economy; the implementation of infrastructure projects; rapid productivity growth of the agrarian and industrial complex; assistance in business development; digitalization of the economy; and the creation of new decent jobs, taking into account structural changes.

#### *Social dimension:*

Consistent action on reforms in the areas of education, health care and decentralization should raise living standards and reduce all forms of inequalities. The priority is to reduce multidimensional poverty.

#### *Environmental dimension:*

Proposals include environmental policy changes, upgrading waste management and ending the unsustainable use of land, forest and water resources.

#### *Good governance:*

Efforts will be directed towards establishing the rule of law and improving the effectiveness of the central and local government authorities. It is important for Ukraine to ensure respect for human rights, children's rights and gender equality.

### **Unresolved issues requiring support**

The attempted annexation of Crimea and the armed aggression in the east of Ukraine that began in 2014 are a threat to peace, security and cooperation in Eastern Europe. Active hostilities have caused significant human (over 13,000 people) and economic losses and large-scale internal displacement (about 1.4 million people). The destructive consequences of the armed aggression remain critical. Solving the problems related to the conflict through a political settlement and reintegration of the part of the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine will make a significant contribution to achieving the Goals.

## Conclusions

The key to the successful achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals within a decade is consistent implementation and monitoring of Goal-focused policies and finance. Our priority is to achieve the Goals by bringing people's living standards closer to the European average. The well-being of the country as a whole and of every family, person and child depends on this.

## Uzbekistan

[Original: English]

In 2015, the Government of Uzbekistan committed itself to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2018, 16 national sustainable development goals and 125 corresponding targets were adopted. Simultaneously, an inter-agency coordination council for implementing the national road map for Goal achievement was established. A web portal was launched (available at <http://nsdg.stat.uz>), with data on some 100 indicators, and work is under way to establish data collection on the remaining 100 indicators.

The bicameral parliamentary commission on the Sustainable Development Goals, civil society, young people and leading national non-governmental organizations are actively involved in Goal promotion and implementation, including the preparation of the country's first voluntary national review.

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Uzbekistan coincided with large-scale reforms in the framework of the national action strategy for 2017–2021. The strategy and its five priority areas have been confirmed as a pathway to achieving the Goals. Work is under way to integrate the Goals into national and regional development strategies and programmes, including the concept for the comprehensive socioeconomic development of the Republic of Uzbekistan to 2030. The Government is assessing the results of the reforms by monitoring 23 global ratings indices, including the Sustainable Development Goal index, where Uzbekistan is currently ranked fifty-second.

The country's long-term objective is to become a high middle-income country by 2030, doubling its per capita income and reducing poverty and inequality (Goals 1 and 10). To achieve this, Uzbekistan is implementing structural reforms to strengthen the market economy, alongside currency and tax reforms and systemic agricultural reforms (Goal 2). A range of measures have been taken to improve the business climate, stimulate entrepreneurship and formal employment, including among young people and women (Goals 5 and 8), and to attract investment and promote innovation (Goal 9). Current challenges include ensuring sustainable employment for young people and women and improving the effectiveness of the social protection system.

In health care (Goal 3), measures are being taken to improve the quality and accessibility of services by improving the financing and insurance system, stimulating private investment, improving the training and professional development of medical personnel and developing medical science and the widespread introduction of e-health. Current priorities in the field of education (Goal 4) include improving the quality and coverage of education at all levels and encouraging increased public and private investments.

The reforms in Uzbekistan are guided by one principle: human interests are above all, which is closely aligned with the fundamental principle of the 2030 Agenda, leaving no one behind. Since the adoption of its national sustainable development goals, Uzbekistan has made significant progress in improving the protection of human rights and strengthening the rule of law. The country has

established a system of public reception offices reporting to the President, administrative reform is ongoing, e-government is being improved, and reforms are being implemented to ensure the independence of the media and bloggers and to enhance the role of civil society.

The country has also prioritized strengthening the role of women and protecting their rights. Recently, laws have been adopted on gender equality and the protection of women from violence, the proportion of women in parliament has doubled (up to 32 per cent), and women have been promoted to leadership positions at all levels of State and local authority (Goals 5 and 16).

Uzbekistan pursues a foreign policy of openness, cooperation and peace. In recent years, the country has opened its borders and is deepening cooperation with Central Asian countries in the rational use of transboundary resources and trade. Collaboration with United Nations entities and international financial institutions (Goal 17) is being strengthened. Following the liberalization of the visa regime, annual tourist arrivals exceeded 6.7 million people in 2019 (compared with 2.5 million in 2017).

With regard to the environment, Uzbekistan prioritizes the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change (including under the Paris Agreement), with a special focus on the Aral Sea region, conservation and the efficient use of water, land and energy resources, as well as biodiversity conservation (Goals 13, 14 and 15).

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic threatens to slow down Uzbekistan's progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. The Government is taking decisive measures to curb the spread of the pandemic and mitigate its socioeconomic consequences. An anti-crisis programme has been adopted, along with a \$1 billion fund, to support businesses and employment and to expand social assistance to the vulnerable.

## **Zambia**

[Original: English]

The Government of the Republic of Zambia is strongly committed to the implementation of the transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In its first voluntary national review, the country underscores this commitment. By integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into its national planning framework and by putting in place strong coordination and reporting mechanisms, Zambia further demonstrates its resolve to anchor its development trajectory to the 2030 Agenda.

The 2020 voluntary national review is the outcome of participatory and inclusive consultations based on whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches.

### **Achievements**

With regard to the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into the national development planning framework, Zambia has embraced an integrated multisectoral approach in its Seventh National Development Plan (2017–2021). The country has nationalized the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 of the African Union, among other frameworks, into the Plan, mainstreaming 86 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. Consequently, implementation and reporting on the Goals are coordinated through institutional structures at the national and subnational levels, using the cluster approach. This approach has fostered the concept of doing more with less and has strengthened synergies and partnerships, resulting in

multisectoral responses to development challenges and leading to achievements that include the following:

- **Reducing poverty and vulnerability.** The Government has been providing for half of households in extreme poverty by expanding its social cash transfers programme from 38 districts in 2014 to all 116 districts in 2019. Households not covered under the programme are being supported through other social protection programmes, which include support for vulnerable farmers, women, girls and schoolchildren. The integrated nature of the response, coupled with enhanced coordination, has contributed to the reduction in the multidimensional poverty index, from 50 per cent in 2016 to 44 per cent in 2019.
- **Creating a conducive environment for sustainable economic growth.** Zambia being a landlocked developing country, connectivity within the country and with its eight neighbouring countries is essential to facilitate trade and access to markets, promote tourism and improve service delivery. To this end, the Government has significantly invested in infrastructure, including roads, airports, energy and health and education facilities, thus creating a conducive environment for sustainable development.
- **Addressing the effects of climate change and protecting the environment.** In line with the Paris Agreement, Zambia has pledged to reduce its emissions by 38,000 Gg of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030. So far, cumulative emissions fell by 39 per cent (14,846.9 Gg of carbon dioxide equivalent) between 2015 to 2019. Zambia is promoting such sustainable initiatives as renewable energy, which has seen the country diversify its energy mix from 99 per cent reliance on hydroelectric power production in 2011 to 80.6 per cent in 2019. Solar energy currently accounts for about 90 MW (3 per cent of the country's total energy production). Climate-smart agriculture, water harvesting techniques and green infrastructure are among the climate change adaptation interventions being promoted. Zambia is, however, seeking strategic partnerships to accelerate its adaptation agenda.
- **Promoting human development.** Human capital is key to responding to the development challenges of the twenty-first century, especially gender equality, health, new technology, innovations and skills development. Notable achievements include the following:
  - Enabling legislation has been enacted to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls, providing for gender equity and equality in all spheres of life.
  - The maternal mortality rate declined from 398 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2014 to 252 in 2018. The child mortality rate declined from 31 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 19 in 2018. Immunization coverage increased from 68 per cent in 2014 to 75 per cent in 2018.
  - In 2018, the completion rate for primary education stood at 97.3 per cent, while the rates for junior and senior secondary education stood at 87.7 per cent and 36.0 per cent, respectively.

### **Challenges and areas of support**

Data limitations continue to pose a huge constraint on Sustainable Development Goal monitoring and evidence-based planning. Notwithstanding, Zambia enacted the Statistics Act, 2018, with a view to addressing data challenges.



The expansionary fiscal policy, driven by the need to invest in infrastructure development, has resulted in a significant resource gap that has hampered Sustainable Development Goal financing and threatened the country's debt sustainability.

The adverse effects of climate change and the recent coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic pose major threats to achieving Sustainable Development Goal targets in Zambia.

In line with Sustainable Development Goal 17, Zambia seeks strong partnerships to help it to promote the green growth agenda and deal with its constrained fiscal position, while addressing the adverse effects of climate change and COVID-19.

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