

# 2019 - LESOTHO KEY MESSAGES VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

## Domestication of SDGs and the VNR Process

1. Lesotho is highly committed to the implementation of the SDG Agenda, which is operationalised through the National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II), 2018/19 – 2020/22/23. The NSDP II is also aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063 and Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan.
2. The preparation of the NSDP II and the VNR process has been very inclusive through a multi stakeholder consultative and validation approach led by the Government of Lesotho.
3. Through, the NSDP II, Basotho set employment creation and inclusive growth as the overriding goal for combating poverty and inequality. The key pillars for achieving this goal are:
  - Promoting inclusive and sustainable growth (All 17 SDG)
  - Strengthening human capital (SDG 3, 4, 5, 10)
  - Building enabling infrastructure (SDG 6, 7, 9, 11) and
  - Strengthening governance and accountability( SDG 5, 16,17 )

The cross-cutting themes are: environment and climate change, Gender, vulnerability and marginalised groups

## SDG Coordination Mechanisms

4. The multi-level National Coordination Structure on Sustainable Development has been established, the highest level being the National Oversight Committee that is chaired by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister. There are also different multi-stakeholder technical groups as well as Parliamentary forum.

## Leaving no one behind

5. Despite Lesotho registering moderate economic growth between 2010 and 2016 and having relatively good social protection system in Africa, poverty levels (49.8%), unemployment (25.3%) and inequality are high. For these reasons, the Government of Lesotho has made the combat of poverty and addressing the underlying issues the key priority. It also recognises the need to pay special attention to the most vulnerable groups including women, children youth, elderly and people living with disability as well as closing rural – urban disparities

## Climate Change and Building Resilience

6. Lesotho has extreme climatic conditions characterized by droughts and other natural hazards having significant implications for health, agriculture, food security, poverty and vulnerability. For a country with 70% of its population depending on agriculture and given the economic importance of the unique bio-diversity, including water, climate change is one of the major sources of vulnerability. Due to limited resilience, 28% of the population are food insecure and will need humanitarian assistance in 2019.
7. Lesotho's National Resilience Strategic Framework ensures comprehensive and sustainable climate and disaster risk management, resilience and early warning systems.

## Data for SDGs and Role of Bureau of Statistics

8. Lesotho assessed its data and statistical capacity to report having selected 152 SDG indicators, with 34 customized for national monitoring and reporting. Lesotho established baselines for prioritised indicators, however only 53% of selected indicators had available data with disaggregation challenges as key.

## **Building Human Capital - Healthy, Educated and Skilled Population**

9. HIV and AIDs pandemic and TB incidence remain biggest health challenges, with HIV prevalence of 25.6% among adults (15-59 years), compounded by the increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases. Adolescent girls and young women are 15 times more likely to get HIV than adolescent boys. TB incidence rate is estimated at 665/100 000 resulting in 70% TB/HIV co-morbidity. There is urgent need to improve resource use efficiency and build resilient sustainable health systems and nutrition programmes to improve health of the population and the grey matter of children.
10. Lesotho has achieved net enrolment rate in primary education of almost 90% for girls and boys. However, only 70% of students joining primary education complete the last grade and enrolment in pre-school is still only 42% .Significant challenges persist with quality of education and relevance which is linked to high youth unemployment at 43%. Significant Investment is required to improve education and skills base and deal with brain drain.

## **Political Landscape**

11. Following a period of cyclic political instability resulting in three national elections in under five years, the country has committed to inclusive national reforms to guarantee long-term stability and economic transformation.

## **Partnerships and Financing for SDGs**

12. Lesotho's Partnership Policy is aligned to Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and promotes partnerships for development. The GoL has developed Financing Strategy for NSDP II and initiated Financial Resource Mapping for SDG to analyse investments and potential funding mechanisms required.

## **Accelerating Implementation of SDGs**

- Mobilization of investment, technical and financial resources, advocacy and partnerships for SDGs.
- Strengthening data collection, monitoring and evaluation and performance management
- Strengthening national capacity for research, technology and innovations.
- Strengthening legal, policy and institutional capacities for effective governance.