

# GHANA'S VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

## MAIN MESSAGES

### **1. National ownership**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been integrated into the national development agenda and the budget. The SDGs are being implemented through the decentralised planning system, which allows for the participation of all stakeholders, including traditional authorities, civil society organisations, private sector, academia, United Nations Agencies, and other development partners.

### **2. Institutional Arrangement**

A three-tier structure—High-Level Ministerial Committee, multi-stakeholder Implementation Coordinating Committee and Technical Committee—provides oversight, coordination and implementation of the SDGs respectively, across the public and non-state sectors. Ghana audit service carries out SDGs-related assessments, while the national human rights institution ensures that rights are protected. With over 300 members, the CSOs platform on SDGs, serves as focal point for engagement between CSOs, private sector and government. To support the President's role as the Co-Chair of the UN Secretary General's Eminent Group of Advocates, an SDGs Advisory Unit has been established in the office of the President.

### **3. Multi-stakeholder partnerships**

Ghana's "whole-of-government" and "whole of society" approach to the implementation of Agenda 2030 has fostered partnerships and stakeholder collaboration. Partnerships between business leaders, traditional authorities and government have been institutionalised. Engagement with the youth has been enhanced through the CSOs' sub-platform on youth.

### **4. Awareness creation**

Ghana is implementing a communication strategy to increase public awareness. Media sensitisations and targeted engagements have been held with school children, street children, young people, market women, artisans, persons with disabilities (PWDs), commercial drivers and farmer groups. Government is partnering with the media and CSOs to scale up awareness and knowledge on the SDGs.

### **5. Leave no one behind**

Significant disparities in income, access to basic services and decision-making exist across the country. Those at risk of being left behind include vulnerable women and children, unemployed youth, PWDs, the aged, rural populations, those in precarious employment, and people in hard to reach areas. Efforts to reach those furthest behind include expanding coverage of the social protection system; improving infrastructure, increasing productivity in the agricultural sector; promoting youth development; and pursuing vigorously, a decent work agenda.

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### **6. Synergies across the goals**

The inter-linkages between the SDGs create co-benefits that can be leveraged for effective policy and investment decision-making, and trade-offs. Government's promotion of clean cookstoves (SDG 2), will reduce health risks (SDG3), particularly for women (SDG5), create jobs (SDG8), while positively impacting on climate (SDG13) and terrestrial ecosystems (SDG15). The intensive use of agro-chemicals to boost agricultural productivity poses risks to water resources (SDG6), human health (SDG2), soil health and ecosystems (SDG5), which are being addressed through education on proper application of inorganic fertilisers and good irrigation practices, and the promotion of large scale compost plants.

### **7. Progress of Implementation of the Goals**

In general, 67 of the 101 indicators Ghana is currently monitoring showed improvements since 2013, while about 20 worsened. Between 2013 and 2017, Ghana achieved a decline in the proportion of the population living below the international (13.6% to 11.9%) and national poverty lines (24.2% to 23.4%), while child poverty was unchanged at 28.3%. Prevalence of stunting was 18% in 2017, down from 19% in 2014. Maternal deaths have reduced from 358 per 100,000 live births (2015) to 310 (2017). Gender parity in basic education has been achieved, access to secondary education improved through the implementation of the Free Senior High School Policy. Unemployment rate has increased from 5.2% in 2013 to 14.1% in 2017, however the environment for job creation has improved with the passaging of the new Companies Act. The Right to Information Bill has been passed into law to improve access to information.

### **8. Data**

Ghana has developed a National Data for Sustainable Development Roadmap with three priority objectives: filling data gaps; encouraging data use; and strengthening the entire data ecosystem. Administrative data are being harnessed to generate timely and disaggregated information for monitoring. Ghana is also exploring new sources of data—geospatial and call details records from the telecommunication industry. A quality assurance framework is also being developed with CSOs, academia and the private sector to fully leverage data within the ecosystem. A national SDGs reporting platform has been launched to make disaggregated data available.