



NIGERIA'S 2020 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

MAIN MESSAGES

Nigeria's 2020 Voluntary National Review (VNR) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focuses on the key issues of poverty (SDG-1) and an inclusive economy (SDG-8), health and wellbeing (SDG-3), Education (SDG-4), Gender equality (SDG-5), and the enabling environment of peace and security (SDG-16), and partnerships (SDG-17). This focus is based on Nigeria's current development priorities and the development objectives of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. This VNR is being developed while facing huge challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic testing Nigeria's public health systems, and of the collapse in oil prices, for an economy still getting 86% of public revenue from oil and gas.

Nigeria's 2017 VNR outlined the institutional dimensions for creating an enabling policy environment for the implementation of the SDGs through its Economic and Recovery Growth Plan (ERGP) (2017-2020). The ERGP's focus on economic, social and environmental dimensions of development makes it consistent with the aspirations of the SDGs.

SDG3-Health and Wellbeing: While Nigeria has some poor health outcomes, such as high rates of maternal mortality, there have been improvements in the under-five mortality rates (from 157 to 132). COVID-19 has challenged our public health

system. A key lesson in protecting the public in times of such pandemics is hygiene and the need to prioritize universal access to clean water and soap. Nigeria's current access to basic drinking water stands at 64%. ***There must be more investment in public health and to ensure the most vulnerable are reached through universal access to essential services.***

SDG4-Education: A key challenge confronting the country has to do with Out-of-School-Children, a demographic challenge that relates to an interplay between employment (SDG-8), education (SDG-4), poverty (SDG-1) and the digital economy (SDG-17). With a population of approximately 200 million people, *regional disparities are significant*, with 78% of South Western children able to read full or part sentences, while only 17% of North Eastern children can. ***With only 1.6% of GDP devoted to education, the country needs to increase the resources to provide quality education.***

SDG8-Inclusive Economy: In terms of inclusive economy (SDG-8), Nigeria's informal economy is one of the largest on the continent - estimated at 53% of the Labour force and accounting for 65% of GDP. It is estimated that 75% of all new jobs are informal. Youth have a combined ***unemployment and under-employment rate of 55.4%*** or 24.5 million¹. This is the youth bulge that needs to be building the required skills to move into secure and less precarious forms of employment. Ensuring youth are well-educated and able to transition to productive employment through the digital economy can help reduce poverty (SDG-1) and help diversify growth beyond dependence on oil and gas. **The Generation Unlimited** intervention, which targets employment for 20 million youth 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, particularly for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises***

¹ 13.1 million unemployed and another 11.3 million under-employed

(MSMEs). In addition, the Nigerian government can dramatically shift to digitization and strengthening its transition to e-government to facilitate its social protection to the poor and vulnerable population.

Alignment of national planning to SDGs: Good strides have been made in the domestication process of the SDGs in Nigeria. First, there is an ongoing re-alignment of the National Statistical System (NSS) with the requirements and Indicators of the SDGs. Second, Nigeria has developed its home-grown '***Integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDG Model)*** - an analytical framework for assessing how policy making can better address the indivisible nature of the SDGs. Third, the Nigeria's 2020 VNR report has drawn on past evaluations across the Seven priority SDGs and has an ongoing evaluation of the country's performance in SDG 3&4. This attempt to systematically use evaluations is an innovation in the VNR context. ***Nigeria should strengthen the evidence-based planning and accountability mechanisms at State level for accelerating the SDG decade of action.*** The post-ERGP National Development Plan (2021-2030) will be pivotal in advancing the achievement of the SDGs in Nigeria.