



# The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ghana

Why they matter &  
How we can help



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## The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ghana

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. Adopted by 193 countries, including Ghana, the SDGs came into effect in January 2016, and aim to foster economic growth, ensure social inclusion and protect the environment.

The SDGs encourage a spirit of partnership between Governments, private sector, research, academia and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) – with support of the UN. This partnership ensures that the right choices are made now to improve life, in a sustainable way, for future generations.

Agenda 2030 has five overarching themes, known as the five Ps: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships, which span across the 17 SDGs. They tackle the root causes of poverty covering areas such as hunger, health, education, gender equality, water & sanitation, energy, economic growth, industry, innovation & infrastructure, inequalities, cities & communities, consumption & production, climate change, natural resources, and peace & justice.

The SDGs are not standalone goals. They are all interconnected. Working to achieve one goal leads to achieving another. They should be seen as indispensable pieces in a big and complex puzzle.

Supported by the UN system, Ghana is aligning its development priorities in collaboration with CSOs and the private sector on achieving the SDGs jointly. Together, we will have a greater impact: the lives of all people will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for the better.

This publication suggests why each of the goals should matter to us and what we can do, as individuals, to contribute to their successful implementation in Ghana and to ensure that no one is left behind.





## 1 NO POVERTY



The goal is  
to end  
poverty  
in all  
its forms  
everywhere.

### Why it matters

Ghana was the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to reduce poverty by half, and thus met the Millennium Development Goal 1. Nevertheless, deep poverty remains in most rural areas, especially in the three northern regions. In urban areas, where poverty incidence has seen some substantial decline, greater disparities and inequalities are being noticed.

Poverty has many dimensions but its causes include lack of education, low productivity of work, low income, social exclusion, and high vulnerability of certain populations to disasters and diseases.

Poverty is detrimental, and if nothing is done to overcome poverty, we will continue to suffer its impact on economic growth and social cohesion, political and social tensions, and, in some circumstances, instability and conflicts.

## How we can help

- 🌍 Women and youths should have equal access to land as men, in order to be able to generate income, for example, through farming.
- 🌍 Young people can take advantage of opportunities to learn a skill, stay in school or invest savings in starting a business, and policy makers, communities and families can help make those opportunities available to all youth. Ensuring access to education today will help youth and their communities in the future.
- 🌍 If young people have the opportunity to actively engage in policymaking they can ensure that their rights are promoted and that their innovative ideas contribute to transforming lives and shaping communities.
- 🌍 Policymakers can help create an enabling environment to generate productive employment and job opportunities for the poor and the marginalised. Carefully formulated strategies and fiscal and social protection policies can also stimulate pro-poor growth and reduce poverty.
- 🌍 The private sector can play a role in creating economic opportunities for the poor by focusing on segments of the economy where most of the poor are active, namely on micro and small enterprises and those operating in the informal sector.
- 🌍 Science provides the foundation for new and sustainable approaches, solutions and technologies to tackle the challenges of reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development. For example, it has enabled access to safe drinking water, reduced deaths caused by water-borne diseases, and improved hygiene to reduce health risks related to unsafe drinking water and lack of sanitation.





## 2 ZERO HUNGER



The goal is to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

### Why it matters

Extreme hunger and malnutrition remain a barrier to sustainable development and create a trap from which people cannot easily escape. People who are hungry and malnourished are less likely to be productive. They are also more prone to diseases and thus often unable to earn a sufficient income and improve their livelihoods.

Poor harvesting practices, as well as food wastage have contributed to food scarcity.

Nutrition is particularly poor in Northern Ghana. Everyone wants their families to have safe and nutritious food to eat. A world with no hunger can positively impact our economies, health, education, equality and social development. It's a key piece of building a better future for everyone. Additionally, with hunger limiting human development, we will not be able to achieve the other global goals on education, health and gender equality without addressing the issue of hunger.

## How we can help

- 🌍 Make land choices in favour of agriculture. Preserve land for planting and livestock rearing.
- 🌍 Buying and consuming locally-produced foods is a great way to encourage local farmers and markets to produce more, and to ensure that food is always available at affordable prices.
- 🌍 We can all support good nutrition and eating habits, especially for children, by choosing foods with high nutrient value, in the right amounts and balance for improved health and well-being.
- 🌍 Try backyard farming if you have the space. You will be amazed about the volume of healthy and nutritious food you can produce for your family and the savings you can make.
- 🌍 Help eradicate food waste. You can make changes in your own life. At home, school, work and in the community, speak to others about making these changes too.
- 🌍 You can use your power as a consumer and voter to demand that government put in place the right incentives for businesses to make the choices and changes that will make Zero Hunger a reality.
- 🌍 Use only approved agrochemicals for farming and apply in recommended amounts to ensure that food is safe for consumption.
- 🌍 Identify and adopt good post-harvest and preservation practices.
- 🌍 Join conversations about ending hunger and improving hunger, whether on social media platforms or in your local communities.







### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



The goal is to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

### Why it matters

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages is important to building prosperous societies. Access to good health care is a human right, and that is why the Sustainable Development Agenda offers a new chance to ensure that everyone can access decent quality, reliable health care—not just the wealthiest.

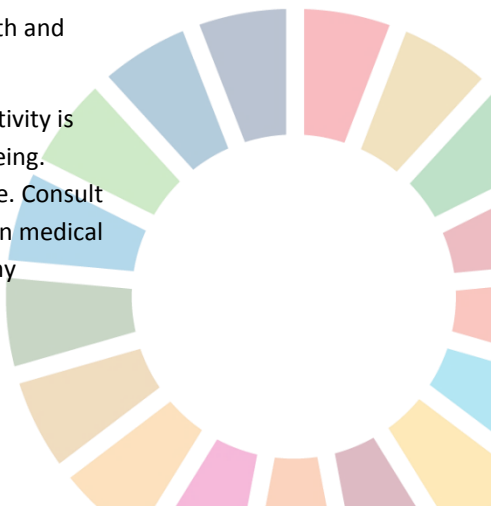
The overall survival rates of children in Ghana have improved over the past ten years. Malaria is the leading cause of death for children under five, and malnutrition is a significant indirect cause of child mortality. Continued reduction of HIV prevalence indicates progress, but prevention of mother-to-child transmission and coverage of paediatric antiretroviral therapy remain unacceptably low, and stigma and discrimination continue to hamper uptake of services.

Poor nutrition is of particular concern in Northern Ghana. Thus, maternal and child health remain critical, and SDG 3 is pivotal for the attainment of health-related goals.



## How we can help

- 🌍 You can start by promoting and protecting your own health and the health of those around you, by, for example, making well-informed choices, practicing safe sex, knowing your HIV status, and vaccinating your children.
- 🌍 Everyone, especially women and girls, should have adequate access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.
- 🌍 Seek medical attention early to save your life, and make sure to visit approved health centres and certified hospitals.
- 🌍 If you are part of a Civil Society Organisation or a Non-Governmental Organisation, you can raise awareness in your community about the importance of good health, healthy lifestyles as well as people's right to quality health care services.
- 🌍 You can also hold government, local leaders and other decision-makers accountable to their commitments to improve people's access to health and health care.
- 🌍 Regular exercise and physical activity is known to improve overall wellbeing. Make it a regular part of your life. Consult your physician if you have certain medical conditions before engaging in any strenuous physical activity.





## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



The goal is to ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.

### Why it matters

Education reduces inequalities, can break the cycle of poverty, foster tolerance, reach gender equality, and empower people to live more healthy lives and attain more productive livelihoods. Education is both a goal in itself and a means for attaining all the other SDGs. It is not only an integral part of sustainable development, but also a key enabler for it.

Ghana has been a regional leader in the delivery of Education for All, reaching the education MDGs well ahead of time. In 2016, net enrolment ratio reached 92% at the Primary level, and 50% at JHS level. Gender parity has been achieved at the kindergarten, primary, and JHS levels. Nonetheless, many students in Ghana do not benefit from a quality education, and girls are disproportionately disadvantaged, especially during the transition to senior secondary education. Often, the school environment is not conducive to learning: classes are overcrowded, water and sanitation facilities are lacking, and trained teachers and school books are in short supply.

## How we can help

- 🌈 Send your children, boys and girls, to school, and know that all school-aged children have the right to be in school.
- 🌈 School proprietors can make sure to create a child friendly environment to make children want to come to school. Teachers are called on to not misuse their position. Everyone is encouraged to report incidence of sexual harassment, discrimination, abuse or any kind of violence against students.
- 🌈 Remember that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) are also forms of education. Promote TVET, and teach TVET skills through theory and practice. Provide practical, hands-on (vocational/technical competences) activities in school and connect students to workplace learning.
- 🌈 Include education on reproductive health in the curriculum. Furthermore, parents can educate their children on sex and sexuality, and teenagers can seek information about their reproductive health.
- 🌈 We can ask our governments to place education as a priority in both policy and practice. We can lobby our governments to make firm commitments to provide free school education to all, including vulnerable or marginalised groups. Policy makers can ensure that our schools are inclusive by making them disability friendly, including, for example, making learning material in braille available.
- 🌈 The private sector can invest resources in the development of educational tools and facilities and join forces with educators to ensure that technical and vocational education is up-to-date and relevant to the job market.
- 🌈 NGOs can be important partners of youth and other groups to foster the importance of education within local communities.





## 5 GENDER EQUALITY



The goal is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

### Why it matters

The number of men and women in the world is roughly equal. However, gender inequality persists everywhere – in business, education, politics etc. This stagnates social progress. Equal opportunities for men and women accelerate achievement across other development outcomes.

In Ghana, there is low representation of women in decision making, evidenced by only 12.7% representation in the national Parliament. Practices such as early marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, or witch camps still exist. The incidence of violence against women and girls, and inadequate access to productive resources, such as land and credit, persist.

In Ghana, there are still complex issues concerning male dominance and patriarchy that need to be addressed in order to step up efforts towards achieving sustainable development.

## How we can help

- 🌍 Parents can help by giving equal access to education to their children, girls and boys alike.
- 🌍 Do not give away your girl child into marriage; allow her to complete her education.
- 🌍 If you are a teacher, report any form of girl child abuse.
- 🌍 If you are a girl, you can stay in school, help empower your female classmates to do the same and fight for your right to access sexual and reproductive health services.
- 🌍 Everyone should stand up against rape, and all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls.
- 🌍 If you are an employer, ensure equity for women and men in the work place.
- 🌍 Promote equal work and equal pay for men and women.
- 🌍 If you are a woman, show concern in decision-making processes and participate in decision-making.
- 🌍 Support women in their political careers.
- 🌍 Stop female genital mutilation.
- 🌍 Grant women access to and control of land.
- 🌍 If you are a woman, you can address unconscious biases and implicit associations that can form an unintended and often invisible barrier to equal opportunity.
- 🌍 If you are a man or a boy, you can work alongside women and girls to achieve gender equality and embrace healthy, respectful relationships.
- 🌍 As government, fund education campaigns to curb cultural practices like female genital mutilation, and change harmful laws that limit the rights of women and girls and prevent them from achieving their full potential.





## 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



The goal is to ensure access to safe water sources and sanitation for all.

### Why it matters

Access to water, sanitation and hygiene is a human right, yet billions worldwide are still faced with daily challenges accessing even the most basic of services.

Proper water and sanitation is key for achieving the SDGs, including good health and gender equality. By managing our water sustainably, we are also able to better manage our production of food and energy and contribute to decent work and economic growth. Moreover, we can preserve our water ecosystems, their biodiversity, and take action on climate change.

Despite the fact that Ghana achieved the MDG for access to improved water supply early, but not on access to improved sanitation, statistics today show that fewer than two in five Ghanaians drink safe water, two out of every five schools are without toilets, and three out of every five schools are without water supplies.

## How we can help

- Keep our water sources clean and safe: Don't litter; dump your refuse in bins not in water bodies.
- Encourage municipal and regional authorities to work with the private sector to make sanitation and waste management viable business opportunities at affordable prices in all neighbourhoods.
- Don't dispose chemicals in water bodies.
- Plant trees to protect the water bodies.
- Farm at least 50 meters away from water sources.
- Do not defecate in the open.
- Support one house, one latrine.
- Wash hands with soap after visiting the toilet, before eating, cooking, or feeding the baby.
- Use water wisely, don't waste it. Minimise water usage whenever you can.
- Fishermen should avoid using chemicals to catch fish.
- Stop illegal mining as it endangers our water bodies. Government is called to enforce regulations on small-scale mining, and promote alternative livelihoods for youth and communities.
- You can also get involved in the World Water Day and World Toilet Day campaigns that aim to provide information and inspiration to take action on hygiene issues.







## 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



The goal is to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

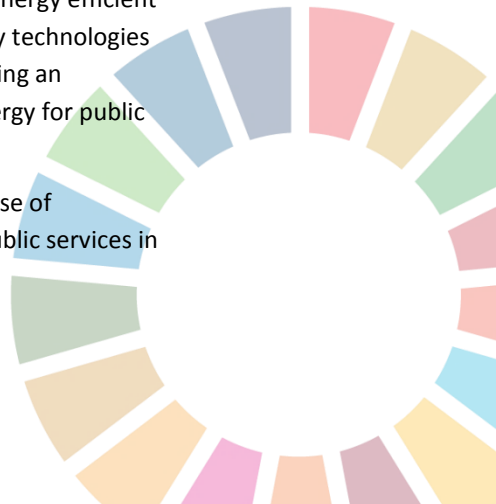
### Why it matters

Our lives depend on reliable and affordable energy services. A well-established energy system supports all sectors: businesses, medicine, education, agriculture, infrastructure, communications and high-technology. A lack of access to energy supplies is a constraint to human and economic development: women and girls have to spend hours fetching water, clinics cannot store vaccines for children, many schoolchildren cannot do homework at night, and people cannot run competitive businesses.

During 2016 Ghana largely overcame problems of irregular electricity supply that had affected business and households previously. Long-term challenges persist however, including meeting financial arrears in state-owned energy enterprises, implementing new electricity regulatory and payment schemes, and managing electronic waste.

## How we can help

- 🌍 Use energy wisely: unplug or turn off appliances that are not in use; switch lights, A/C and other appliances off when leaving home or the office. Use energy efficient bulbs and appliances.
- 🌍 Don't steal power. Report electricity theft and illegal connections. Pay your electricity bills promptly.
- 🌍 Plant trees around your environment.
- 🌍 Use clean and improved cooking stoves.
- 🌍 Install solar home systems to meet basic electricity needs.
- 🌍 Encourage public investments in public transport, and make walking and bike paths safer and more accessible.
- 🌍 Government and the building sector are encouraged to ensure the incorporation of energy-efficiency in buildings.
- 🌍 Government is encouraged to accelerate the transition to an affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy system, by investing in renewable energy, prioritising energy efficient practices, adopting clean energy technologies and infrastructure, and supporting an increased use of alternative energy for public facilities.
- 🌍 Government can promote the use of renewable energy to provide public services in off-grid areas.





## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



The goal is to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

### Why it matters

Poverty eradication is only possible if more people, especially young people, have stable and productive employment. Decent jobs mean safe working conditions, with fair wages, that provide opportunity for people to lift themselves out of poverty. Women and girls must enjoy the same access to opportunities for employment as boys and men. Society, as a whole, benefits when more people contribute to Ghana's growth. A growing youth population can boost economic growth if employment opportunities are available, but unmet expectations of an increasingly educated youth population can lead to social conflict and political instability.

The SDGs aim to encourage sustained economic growth by achieving higher levels of productivity, including through technological innovation. SDG 8 aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men by 2030.

## How we can help

- Encourage Government commitment and practical measures to improve the enabling environment for business, to make it easier to invest and create more jobs.
- As an employer, you can provide decent working conditions: ensure work that is productive and delivers fair income; guarantee work place safety; participate in social benefit schemes, health insurance and pensions; invest in training that improves workplace productivity and prospects for personal development; create equal opportunities for women and men; pay your employees their due wages and benefits; mentor young entrepreneurs; encourage creativity and innovation in the workplace.
- Enhance industry-school relationship for improved skills training. You can encourage entrepreneurship, increase and promote Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), equip TVET schools for quality skills training and improve standards, and especially support girls in TVET.
- You can gain additional skills to improve your employability: enrol in skill training, and get a career mentor.
- If you are a business owner, register your business, pay your taxes, and demand quality public services in return – in public safety, schools, infrastructure, water and sanitation, parks and green spaces.
- Additionally, ensure that policymakers make youth employment a priority, making the transition from education to a decent job easier by investing in education and training of the highest possible quality that provide youth with skills that match the labour market demands.
- Ensure employees enjoy social protection, and advocate for more extensive, well-managed social protection programmes that promote the public welfare, women’s economic empowerment, and decent work for all.
- Enforce laws to stop child and forced labour.
- Everyone can contribute to creating a decent work environment. You can help your colleagues, and report workplace harassment or work-based abuse.





The goal is to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.

### Why it matters

Sustained investment in infrastructure and innovation are key drivers of economic growth and development. Bridging the so-called digital divide is crucial to ensure equal access to information and knowledge, and, as a consequence, to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. Ghana has articulated an ambitious vision for agricultural modernisation, industry diversification, and job growth – especially targeting young people.

Industrialisation has an impact on all other areas of development and will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in their entirety. It depends in turn on meeting SDGs on education and energy.

The growth of new industries means improvement in the standard of living for many. If industries pursue sustainability, this approach will have a positive effect on the environment. Decent infrastructure like roads, information and communication technologies, sanitation, electrical power and water remain a challenge in Ghana. Failing to improve infrastructure and promote technological innovation could translate into poor health care, inadequate sanitation and limited access to education.

## How we can help

- Everyone can be ambitious to learn (basic) IT skills which might be useful in a future job.
- ICT can be included in the curriculum at any school level; students should have access to computers and other technology, and benefit from ICT training.
- Promote public investment in science and technology research that can spin off opportunities for new business and better jobs.
- Invest in ICT infrastructure.
- Improve living standards associated with employment in or around manufacturing, and ensure that technology and innovation target meeting the everyday needs, especially of the poor, for local jobs, reliable energy, nutritious food, safe transportation, and resilience to natural hazards.
- Establish standards and promote regulations that ensure company projects and initiatives are sustainably managed.
- Develop domestic pharmaceutical industries that meet product standards and can increase access to affordable medicines.
- Minimise the use and discharges of effluents in all industrial applications, including by small-scale businesses.
- Promote the removal of toxic substances from drinking water, as well as effectively manage national and trans-boundary water bodies suffering from industrial pollution.
- Additionally, ask policymakers to develop and implement smart policies that channel national resources towards investments that are in line with nationally devised paths towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development, that ensure no one is left behind in benefiting from industrial development, and that open pathways to prosperity for women and men alike.







## 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



The goal is to reduce inequalities within and among countries.

### Why it matters

Inequalities based on income, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnicity, religion and opportunity continue to persist across the world, including in Ghana.

Inequality threatens long-term social and economic development, constricts poverty reduction and destroys people's sense of fulfilment and self-worth. This, in turn, can breed social unrest, crime, disease and environmental degradation.

Most importantly, we cannot achieve sustainable development and make the planet better for all if people are excluded from opportunities, services, and the chance for a better life.

Equality for all can and should be achieved to ensure a life of dignity for all Ghanaians.



## How we can help

- 🌍 We are all in this together: Don't discriminate based on disabilities, sex, ethnic group or religion. Discourage stigmatisation from society.
- 🌍 As an active member of your community, you can support the development of your community, and join forces with your fellow citizens to be stronger.
- 🌍 Engage the youth as their voices matter; they are the future.
- 🌍 Ask who in Ghana, in your community, is at risk of being excluded and of being left behind. Which groups have little or no voice and are at risk of not being able to live in dignity, of not having basic human rights recognised and protected? Ensure that access to legal protection, health care, and jobs includes people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (LGBTIs), underage sex-workers, the prison population, and injection drug users.
- 🌍 Policies to ensure the security and personal safety of all Ghanaians should be comprehensive, implemented fairly, and enforced to protect those who have little or no voice in society.
- 🌍 If you own a business, employ qualified people without discriminating based on disabilities, sex, ethnic group or religion.
- 🌍 Pay your fair share of taxes, and make sure they are used to ensure that all Ghanaians can live in dignity, free from abject poverty. Manage your business effectively to help grow the economy and increase jobs.
- 🌍 Create opportunities for women to access loans for trade; to enter non-traditional occupations, and to have equal rights to own and manage land.
- 🌍 Additionally, ask policy-makers to be careful that economic and social policies are applied fairly, and pay particular attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised communities. Discriminatory laws, policies and practices need to be eliminated.
- 🌍 Safe, regular and responsible migration should be promoted, through planned and well-managed policies.





## 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



The goal is to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

### Why it matters

The future we want includes cities with opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation, and protected green spaces for all to enjoy.

Ghana is urbanising rapidly with over 50% of its population living in urban areas. Cities face many challenges to improve resource use and reduce pollution and poverty, while rural-to-urban migration increases.

Ghana's national urban and housing policies aspire to address a variety of urban and housing problems, while respecting the human rights of all urban residents, including those in slum neighbourhoods. They also place increasing importance on building up resilience to extreme weather conditions in the implementation of transportation infrastructure, sanitation and health schemes, private sector growth, housing, and environmental protection plans.

## How we can help

- Each and every one of us can take an active interest in the governance and management of the city we live in.
- As an active member of your community you can help develop a vision for your building, street, or neighbourhood, and act on that vision. Are there enough jobs? Are you close to healthcare? Can your children walk to school safely? Can you walk with your family at night? How far is the nearest public transport? What's the air quality like? What are your shared public spaces like? The better the conditions you create in your community, the greater the effect on quality of life.
- Reduce, reuse, recycle. Use reusable material instead of plastic to protect the environment.
- Practice car sharing to reduce emissions.
- Plant a tree in your compound.
- If you are a land owner, cultivate your land; it is your gold mine.
- Promote cultural diversity to enrich people's lives.
- We can also ask policy-makers to enforce policies that make Ghana's cities resilient to climate change and natural disasters to avoid human, social and economic losses; promote sustainable urban development, slums and livelihood improvement, and increased resilience in disaster-prone communities as part of the sustainable urban development; reserve lands for recreational activities; support the building of eco-friendly infrastructure; allow access to arts and culture; and enhance city dialogue for peacebuilding.
- Local authorities and communities can renew and plan their cities and human settlements so as to foster community cohesion and personal security and to stimulate innovation and employment.





**12** RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



The goal is to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

### Why it matters

Sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, long-lasting infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all.

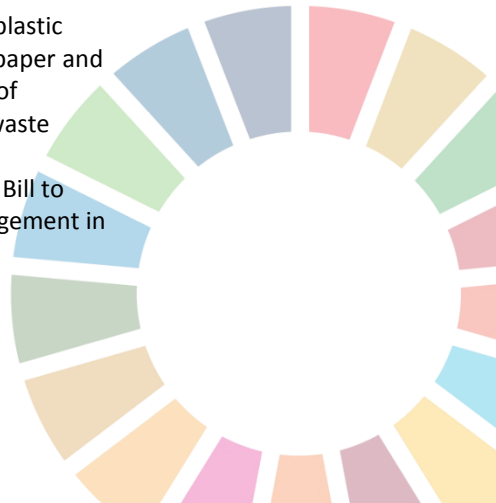
If we don't act to change our consumption and production patterns, we will cause irreversible damage to our environment.

It is in the business interest to find new solutions that enable sustainable consumption and production patterns. A better understanding of environmental and social impacts of products and services is needed.

One major concern in Ghana that needs a sustainable solution is the pressing issue of water pollution, for example because of unsustainable farming practices and galamsey activities.

## How we can help

- Reduce, reuse, recycle.
- Every one of us can consume responsibly. Reduce your waste and your consumption of plastic (one of the main pollutants of the ocean).
- Recycling paper, plastic, glass and aluminium keeps landfills from growing. Someone's waste is someone else's business opportunity in waste management and recycling.
- Do not litter the environment with waste.
- Businesses can use their innovative power to design solutions that can both enable and inspire individuals to lead more sustainable lifestyles, reducing environmental impacts and improving well-being.
- Businesses can adopt sustainable production practices, for example, use traditional, improved variety of planting materials, or improve food processing.
- Both public and private sectors can adopt green procurement, meaning purchasing products and services that cause minimal adverse environmental impacts.
- Policy-makers could outlaw on plastic bags and encourage the use of paper and reusable bags; discount buyers of reusable products; incentivise waste recycling; and enforce the implementation of the E-Waste Bill to regulate electronic waste management in the country.





## 13 CLIMATE ACTION



The goal is to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

### Why it matters

Severe weather conditions and rising sea levels are affecting people and their property everywhere. In some parts of Ghana, we experience extreme flooding and droughts. This impacts agriculture productivity and livelihoods. The poor, vulnerable and the marginalised are badly affected.

If left unchecked, climate change will undo a lot of the progress made in development over the past years. It can also exacerbate current threats such as food and water scarcity, which can lead to conflict. Doing nothing will end up costing us a lot more than if we take action now, which will lead to more jobs, greater prosperity, and better lives for all while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building climate resilience.

We can address climate change by increasing our efforts. We must rely more on sustainable energy and transform energy, industry, transport, food, agriculture and forestry systems. We also need to anticipate, adapt and become resilient to the current and future impacts of climate change.

## How we can help

- 🌍 Do not litter. Think about the environment. It supports lives.
- 🌍 Keep the drains clear. It saves lives from flooding.
- 🌍 Bike, walk or take public transport if possible. If you must drive, try carpooling.
- 🌍 Turn off the lights if you don't need them. Use natural lights whenever possible.
- 🌍 Replace old appliances with energy efficient models and light bulbs.
- 🌍 Maintain your car and machines. A well-tuned car will emit fewer toxic fumes.
- 🌍 Donate what you don't use. Others in need will give your gently used clothes, books and furniture a new life.
- 🌍 Stay electronic where possible and don't print unnecessarily. No paper, no need for forest destruction.
- 🌍 Speak up! Ask your local and national authorities to engage in initiatives that don't harm people or the planet.
- 🌍 Inform and prepare yourself to know what to do if you live in an area at risk to experience floods, or other natural disasters, in order to stay safe.







## 14 LIFE BELOW WATER



The goal is to conserve and sustainably use the world's oceans, seas and marine resources.

### Why it matters

Oceans provide key natural resources including food, medicines, biofuels and other products. They help with the breakdown and removal of waste and pollution, and their coastal ecosystems act as buffers to reduce damage from storms. Maintaining healthy oceans is part of responding effectively to the climate changes we already see and to reducing further damage to our global climate. The beach or seaside can be a great place for tourism and recreation if not ruined by inadequate urban sanitation or the downstream effects of glamsey.

In Ghana, the sea contributes to poverty reduction as it provides jobs and income to fisher folks, and supplements the protein needs of families.

The marine environment is also home to a stunning variety of beautiful creatures which should be preserved.

## How we can help

- ❁ Dumping untreated solid wastes, including plastic materials, into the sea can choke fish, affect the quality of life in oceans, and jeopardise the future of fishing communities.
- ❁ We should make ocean-friendly choices when buying products or eating food derived from oceans, and consume only what we need.
- ❁ Improve sanitation at the beaches by refraining from littering during visits and supporting clean-up exercises. Stop social acceptance of open defecation.
- ❁ For open ocean and deep sea areas, sustainability can be achieved only through increased international cooperation to protect vulnerable habitats. Establishing comprehensive, effective and equitably managed systems of government-protected areas should be pursued to conserve biodiversity and ensure a sustainable future for the fishing industry.
- ❁ Enforcement of laws and sanctions regulating marine resources, including sea and fish, can deter others from engaging in illegal fishing practices.
- ❁ Say *No* to pair-trawling and light fishing and use recommended nets for fishing to allow time for fingerlings to mature.
- ❁ Using chemicals to catch fish kills fish stocks including those you may not target and make your fish catch unsafe for human consumption.
- ❁ Government should protect fishing livelihoods against the impacts of offshore oil and gas exploration.
- ❁ Promote the conservation of marine life and resources by telling others about their importance to human life.





15 LIFE ON LAND



The goal is to sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

### Why it matters

In Ghana, forests provide livelihood for more than 2.5 million people. Besides helping to balance the ecosystem, they play a significant role in the provision of food, clothing, shelter, furniture, potable water supply sources and bush meat.

The forests are also highly valued as sources of natural medicines, which are essential components of health treatment, which is commonly used in conjunction with mystical and ritual practices.

Forests are essential to realising our shared vision for people and the planet. They are central to our future prosperity and the stability of the global climate. That is why the Sustainable Development Goals call for transformative action to safeguard them and to combat desertification, reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

## How we can help

- ❁ Stop illegal mining in forest reserves (galamsey). It is destructive and affects forests, productive lands, and water bodies. In some cases, it has endangered water quality and public health and jeopardised livelihoods in farming and grazing.
- ❁ Well-managed protected areas support healthy ecosystems, which in turn keep people healthy. Be involved locally to ensure that communities are part of the development and management of these protected areas.
- ❁ Buy only certified lumber and wood products from legal sources. Patronising lumber produced from illegal chainsaw operations encourages the destructive practice.
- ❁ Try growing at least one tree in your life time. The cumulative effect of your effort and that of others will help make the world a better place.
- ❁ Indiscriminate bush burning destroys useful vegetation and beneficial soil animals. Talk to others to desist from it.
- ❁ Extending farm lands into forest reserves illegally leads to deforestation and forest degradation. Stop illegal farming in forest reserves.
- ❁ Wetlands protect some of Ghana's biodiversity and are important for agriculture, water supply and recreation and other ecosystem services. Help protect them and use them sustainably.
- ❁ Plant woodlots for fuel rather than removing commercial tree species.
- ❁ Reduce your consumption of paper. Less paper means less dependence on trees. Go digital where possible.
- ❁ Protecting the natural environment and wildlife can create new business and jobs in tourism that values nature.
- ❁ Speak up against forest destruction. If you do not act now it will impact both the health of the planet and our communities.





## 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



The goal is to promote peaceful, inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

### Why it matters

Peaceful, just and inclusive societies are priority goals in themselves as well as necessary to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals. People everywhere need to be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives, no matter their faith, ethnicity or gender.

National and local institutions must be in place and accountable to deliver basic services to citizens equitably and without bribes.

Lack of access to justice means that conflicts remain unresolved and people cannot obtain protection and redress.

Institutions that do not function according to legitimate laws are prone to arbitrariness and abuse of power, and less capable of delivering public services to everyone.

## How we can help

- Be the change – promote inclusion and show respect towards people of different backgrounds, ethnic origins, religions, gender, or different opinions. Together, we can help to improve conditions for all.
- Do not start or perpetuate violence in any form. It has a pervasive impact on people’s development and well-being. Mob violence is unjust and denies victims the opportunity to a fair trial and tramples on fundamental human rights.
- Take advantage of your right to elect responsible leaders at national level and in your local community.
- Participate in dialogue sessions and make your voice heard. Your good ideas and constructive feedback can bring about social change. As others express themselves, be tolerant of their views too.
- Exercise your right to hold your elected officials to account as a responsible citizen. Ask probing questions.
- As a civil society organisation, raise awareness in your community about the realities of violence and the importance of peaceful and just societies.
- As an elected community or area representative, provide timely information and feedback to your constituency. As a citizen, exercise your right to freedom of information and share your opinion with your elected representatives.
- Resist any attempt to pay or accept a bribe. Bribery slows down efforts to make local and national institutions effective and accountable.
- Pursue alternative dispute resolution, or seek redress from established local and national institutions such as the law courts. It is not appropriate to take the law into your own hands at any time.
- Choose the path of peace always, especially during national elections. Be civil in your language and follow laid down procedures for elections.







## 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



The goal is to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

### Why it matters

We are all in this together. The Agenda, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, is universal and calls for action by all countries, both developed countries and developing countries, to ensure no one is left behind.

We will need to mobilise both existing and additional resources — technology development, financial resources, capacity building. Developed countries will need to fulfil their official development assistance and partnership commitments.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships will be crucial to leverage the interlinkages between the SDGs to enhance their effectiveness and impact and accelerate progress in achieving the Goals.



## How we can help

- 🌍 Identify how you can pursue the SDGs in your daily life and do your part as a responsible global citizen.
- 🌍 Are you a fan of the Sustainable Development Goals? Help spread the word. Create awareness and advocate the SDGs on all platforms.
- 🌍 Encourage your governments to partner with businesses for the implementation of the SDGs.
- 🌍 Register your initiatives on the SDGs partnerships platform to inform, educate, network, and be inspired.
- 🌍 Civil society, business and representatives of various interest groups need to participate in the review of progress undertaken regularly in each country to ensure no one is left behind.
- 🌍 Volunteer to work with like-minded people in your community who have a desire to accelerate Ghana's development and promote peace. Your volunteering spirit will help make a positive impact on people and the planet.
- 🌍 Donate or help to raise funds. Even a small amount can go a long way. The money you raise will help create jobs and livelihoods – and restore dignity and opportunity for people in Ghana and around the world. It will also transform lives and communities – and help eradicate poverty once and for all.
- 🌍 Primarily, it will be the responsibility of countries to make needed resources available to effectively mobilise and monitor the SDGs.
- 🌍 At the regional level, countries must share experiences and tackle common issues. On an annual basis, at the United Nations, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) takes stock of progress at the global level, identifying gaps and emerging issues, and recommending corrective action.



## **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

By endorsing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the world community reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable development. Through this Agenda, 193 member states pledged to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection, and to do so in partnership and peace.

The 2030 Agenda is universal, transformative and rights-based. It is an ambitious plan of action for countries, the UN system, and all other actors. The Agenda is the most comprehensive blueprint to date for eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, and protecting the planet. It goes beyond rhetoric, lays down a concrete call to action, and encourages us to take bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path.

### **How we got here**

The 2030 Agenda is a culmination of more than four decades of multilateral dialogue on tackling environmental, social and economic challenges faced by the world community. Adopted as a result of extensive negotiations among member states, the accountability for its implementation primarily rests with national governments.

### **“The Ghana We Want”**

Being one of 50 countries in which the post-2015 agenda consultations were held (2012-2013), Ghana was directly involved in the development of the SDGs and as such the goals reflect the aspirations and needs of the people of Ghana.

### **Achieving the SDGs in Ghana in partnership**

All stakeholders – including public and private sector and CSOs – are expected to contribute to the realisation of the SDGs. Jointly, they are ensuring that the SDGs are localised in Ghana, and that no one is left behind.

The National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) is responsible for coordinating and reporting on SDG-related activities, and for integrating the SDGs in national and regional development plans, such as the African Union’s Agenda 2063. The decentralised national development planning system comprises District Planning Authorities at district level, Regional Co-ordinating Councils at regional level, and sector agencies, Ministries and NDPC at national level.

The SDGs form an integral part of Ghana’s long-term national development plan, and are reflected in the medium-term development frameworks. They provide guidelines for MDAs and MMDAs development plans, and all sector and district plans are to comply with the guidelines. It is on this basis that the NDPC approves plans for budgetary allocation.

The CSO Platform on SDGs was established in 2016 to unite civil society groups in Ghana to plan, strategise and coordinate initiatives for the achievement of the SDGs.

## Core Principles of the Agenda

- Universality:** The Agenda is universal in scope and commits all countries, irrespective of their income levels and development status, to contribute towards a comprehensive effort towards sustainable development. The Agenda is applicable in all countries, in all contexts and at all times.
- Leaving no one behind:** The Agenda seeks to benefit all people and commits to leave no one behind by reaching out to all people in need and deprivation, wherever they are, in a manner which targets their specific challenges and vulnerabilities. This generates an unprecedented demand for local and disaggregated data to analyse outcomes and track progress.
- Interconnectedness and Indivisibility:** The Agenda rests on the interconnected and indivisible nature of its 17 SDGs. It is crucial that all entities responsible for the implementation of SDGs treat them in their entirety instead of approaching them as a menu list of individual goals from which they pick and choose.
- Inclusiveness:** The Agenda calls for the participation of all segments of society, irrespective of their race, gender, ethnicity and identity to contribute to its implementation.
- Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships:** The Agenda calls for establishing multi-stakeholder partnerships for mobilising and sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources.

## Dimensions of the Agenda

At the heart of the 2030 Agenda are five dimensions: **people, prosperity, planet, partnership and peace**, also known as the 5 Ps. Traditionally, viewed through the lens of three core elements – social inclusion, economic growth, and environmental protection – the concept of sustainable development has taken on a richer meaning with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda which builds upon this traditional approach by adding two critical components: **partnership** and **peace**. Genuine sustainability sits at the core of these five dimensions.



## How the SDGs are being monitored

At global level, the SDGs and their 169 targets are being monitored using 230 global indicators. The global indicator framework has been agreed on by the UN Statistical Commission. The review process is being informed by an annual SDG Progress Report prepared by the UN Secretary-General. The annual UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development plays a central role in reviewing the progress of the SDGs at the global level. The monitoring process as outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is to ensure that financial resources are effectively mobilised to support the 2030 Agenda.

