



Nigeria's Third Voluntary National Review

A Whole-of-Society Perspective on
the Sustainable Development Goals

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



14 LIFE BELOW
WATER



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



June, 2025



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABP	Anchor Borrowers' Programme
AGILE	Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment
Agritech	Agricultural Technology
BHCPF	Basic Health Care Provision Fund
BRACED	Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo, Delta (Commission)
CHE	Current Health Expenditure
CRA	Child's Right Act
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CWG-VNR	Core Working Group on Voluntary National Review
DAWN	Development Agenda for Western Nigeria
EFInA	Enhancing Financial Innovation and Access
EKZ	Ekiti Knowledge Zone
ERGP	Economic Recovery and Growth Plan
FAAC	Federation Account Allocation Committee
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
Fintech	Financial Technology
FMoF	Federal Ministry of Finance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
GVAP	Global Vaccine Action Plan
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDC	Inclusive Data Charter
IGR	Internally Generated Revenue
ILO	International Labor Organization
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPTP	Intermittent Preventive Treatment in Pregnancy
IPRT	Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit
iSDG	Integrated Sustainable Development Goals
JONAPWD	Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities
KADCHMA	Kaduna Contributory Health Management Authority
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
LGAs	Local Government Areas
LMICs	Low and Middle-Income Countries

LSETF	Lagos State Employment Trust Fund
LT-LEDs	Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategy
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MNCH	Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCFLS	Nigeria Child Labor and Forced Labor Survey
NDHS	Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey
NEDC	North-East Development Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NMIS	Nigeria Millennium Development Goals Information System
NSS	National Statistical System
OOP	Out-of-Pocket
OSSAP-SDGs	Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals
PEBEC	Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council
PHC	Primary Health Care
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIP	Social Intervention Programmes
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
Tech	Technology
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSO	Technical Services Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VLR	Voluntary Local Review
VNR	Voluntary National Review
VVF	Vesicovaginal Fistula
WARIF	Women at Risk International Foundation
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
YESSO	Youth Employment and Social Support Operation

Foreword



It is with great sense of responsibility that I present Nigeria's 2025 Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, Nigeria has demonstrated unwavering commitment to their implementation. This is evident in the timely establishment of appropriate policy, legal, and institutional frameworks to guarantee effective implementation through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

Specifically, since 2016, Nigeria has integrated the SDGs into national and sub-national development frameworks, including the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017–2020); the Medium-term National Development Plan (2021–2025); Nigeria Agenda 2050; and the Renewed Hope Agenda

of my administration. These efforts have been complemented by key institutional reforms, including the Nigeria Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) for Sustainable Development. Despite local and global challenges, including dwindling financial resources, climate change, security concerns and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigeria remains resolute in reforming the economy, improving infrastructure, reducing inequality and ensuring environmental sustainability.

As a demonstration of our commitment to the 2030 Agenda, Nigeria has presented two VNRs to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in 2017 and 2020. The 2025 VNR represents Nigeria's third review, and this report provides a comprehensive reflection on our progress, issues and challenges, and outlines our renewed strategies to fast-track the achievement of the SDGs across the country. The report meticulously highlights the efforts of national and sub-national governments, alongside the contributions of our development partners, civil society, the private sector, academia, and concerned citizens. It underscores our commitment to inclusive, broad-based and sustainable national development that leaves no one behind. Indeed, the VNR is more than a review—it is a reaffirmation of our



pledge to transform the lives of Nigerians and to contribute to a just and truly egalitarian society.

Methodologically, the VNR focuses on five priority reporting SDGs: Goal 3 on good health and well-being; Goal 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth; Goal 14 on sustainable blue economy; and Goal 17 on partnerships and the means of implementation—while providing a broader reflection on national progress across all 17 SDGs. The report underscores Nigeria's key achievements and highlights challenges, including data limitations, regional disparities, fiscal constraints, and the effects of global shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing climate crisis.

I commend the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (OSSAP-SDGs), and all stakeholders who have contributed to the review and development of Nigeria's 2025 VNR report. Your commitment is a clear testament to our shared vision of a just, equitable and prosperous Nigeria.

As we approach 2030, I call on all stakeholders to stay the course towards a future that is economically sustainable, Socially inclusive, environmentally resilient and filled with opportunity for every Nigerian.

His Excellency, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR,
President and Commander-in-Chief of
the Armed Forces Federal Republic of
Nigeria

Acknowledgment



The preparation of Nigeria's 2025 Voluntary National Review (VNR) was made possible through the collective efforts and dedication of a broad range of stakeholders committed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I extend our deepest appreciation to the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, for his leadership and support provided to the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (OSSAP-SDGs), as well as to all the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) implementing the SDGs in Nigeria. Our sincere gratitude goes to the Federal MDAs; the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS); state and local governments; and other relevant institutions, whose

commitment to data sharing and sectoral inputs greatly enriched this report. Special thanks are extended to the State SDG Focal Offices and stakeholders across the six geopolitical zones for hosting and participating in the regional consultations that provided granular and valuable local perspectives.

I wish to express our profound gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Malick Fall, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) for their ongoing leadership and guidance in the implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria. Special thanks to Ms. Elsie Attafuah, the UNDP Resident Representative in Nigeria, for her leadership and support throughout this process. Similarly, I appreciate all the members of the Core Working Group on the VNR (CWG-VNR) for providing essential technical guidance and quality assurance throughout the entire process. Their dedication and expertise ensured the production of a high-quality report that reflects our collective commitment to the SDGs in Nigeria.

I recognize and appreciate the critical roles played by the Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG), Civil Society Strategy Group on SDGs (CSOSG-SDGs) and the Sustainable Development



Solutions Network (SDSN). Our sincere appreciation goes to the civil society organizations, academia, private sector representatives, development partners, the disability community, media, and citizens who participated in the consultations and provided valuable feedback. I would especially like to thank UNICEF and Sightsavers Nigeria for organizing stand-alone consultations for children and youth, and persons with disabilities, respectively. Special recognition is due to the children and youth who participated in these dedicated consultations, ensuring that their voices and aspirations are reflected in Nigeria's sustainable development agenda. This helped ensure a transparent and participatory

review process.

Special acknowledgement is due to Peltom Global Services Limited, the consultancy firm that provided technical advisory and support services for the entire VNR process. Their professionalism in facilitating the six regional consultative workshops and the development of the report is highly appreciated. Finally, this VNR stands as a testament to our shared commitment to sustainable development and a more inclusive and prosperous Nigeria.

Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire, OFR
Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs



Opening Statement by the President

Nigeria commenced the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016. In the same year, the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (OSSAP-SDGs) was established to provide horizontal and vertical intergovernmental coordination; representation, advocacy and partnership building; resource mobilization; and monitoring, evaluation and reporting for the SDGs.

Since 2016, the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017-2020); the Economic Sustainability Plan of 2020, developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; the Medium-Term National Development Plan (2021 – 2025); Nigeria's Agenda 2050; and the Renewed Hope Agenda of the current administration have all been inspired by the SDGs and our national development priorities. These frameworks prioritize inclusive growth, food and national security, infrastructural development, industrialization, social investment and inclusive governance as key drivers of Nigeria's inclusive, broad-based and sustainable national development. Appropriate policy, legal, and institutional frameworks have been established to ensure effective implementation. Notable examples include the Nigeria Integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDG) model; the realignment of the National Statistical System with the requirements of the SDGs; and the design and implementation of the Nigeria Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) for Sustainable Development.

After eight years of carefully integrating the SDGs into national and sub-national development planning, Nigeria has made some progress on 18 (34.6%) of the 52 key performance indicators reported in the country's SDGs Progress Report (SPR) 2024. Stagnation was recorded in 16 indicators (30.8%), while regression was observed in 18 (34.6%) indicators.

Nigeria has conducted and presented its Voluntary National Review (VNR) twice at the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), in 2017 and 2020. The 2017 VNR highlighted institutional mechanisms for effective implementation, while the 2020 VNR focused on development priorities under the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) and the three cardinal objectives of the previous administration: economic growth, security, and the fight against corruption. The 2025 VNR emphasizes evidence-based, inclusive solutions aimed at accelerating progress through a “whole-of-government” and “whole-of-society” approach. Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic have necessitated



*Consultation with Children and Youth.
Photo Credit: The Presidency, Federal Republic of Nigeria*

domestic adaptation of key strategies and mobilization of local resources from government, civil society, and the private sector to ensure the successful implementation of the SDGs. The VNR development process involved rigorous involvement across all levels of Nigerian society, including youth, women's groups, persons with disabilities, civil society, private sector, government MDAs, and policymakers from all six geo-political zones.

Regional meetings offered unique opportunities to identify region-specific implementation issues, challenges and opportunities. Stakeholders provided key recommendations and implementation strategies for accelerating progress.



Key Highlights

■ Policy and Institutional Frameworks for SDGs Implementation

Nigeria's transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has followed a phased strategy: building on existing foundations (2016–2020), scaling up implementation (2021–2025), and accelerating efforts (2026–2030) to ensure no Nigerian is left behind.

During the review period, OSSAP-SDGs collaborated with key partners to integrate the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of the SDGs into the Federal Government's Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017–2020, the National Development Plan 2021–2025, and Nigeria's Agenda 2050. The domestication of the Integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDGs) Simulation Model enabled MDAs to align resources with SDG priorities.

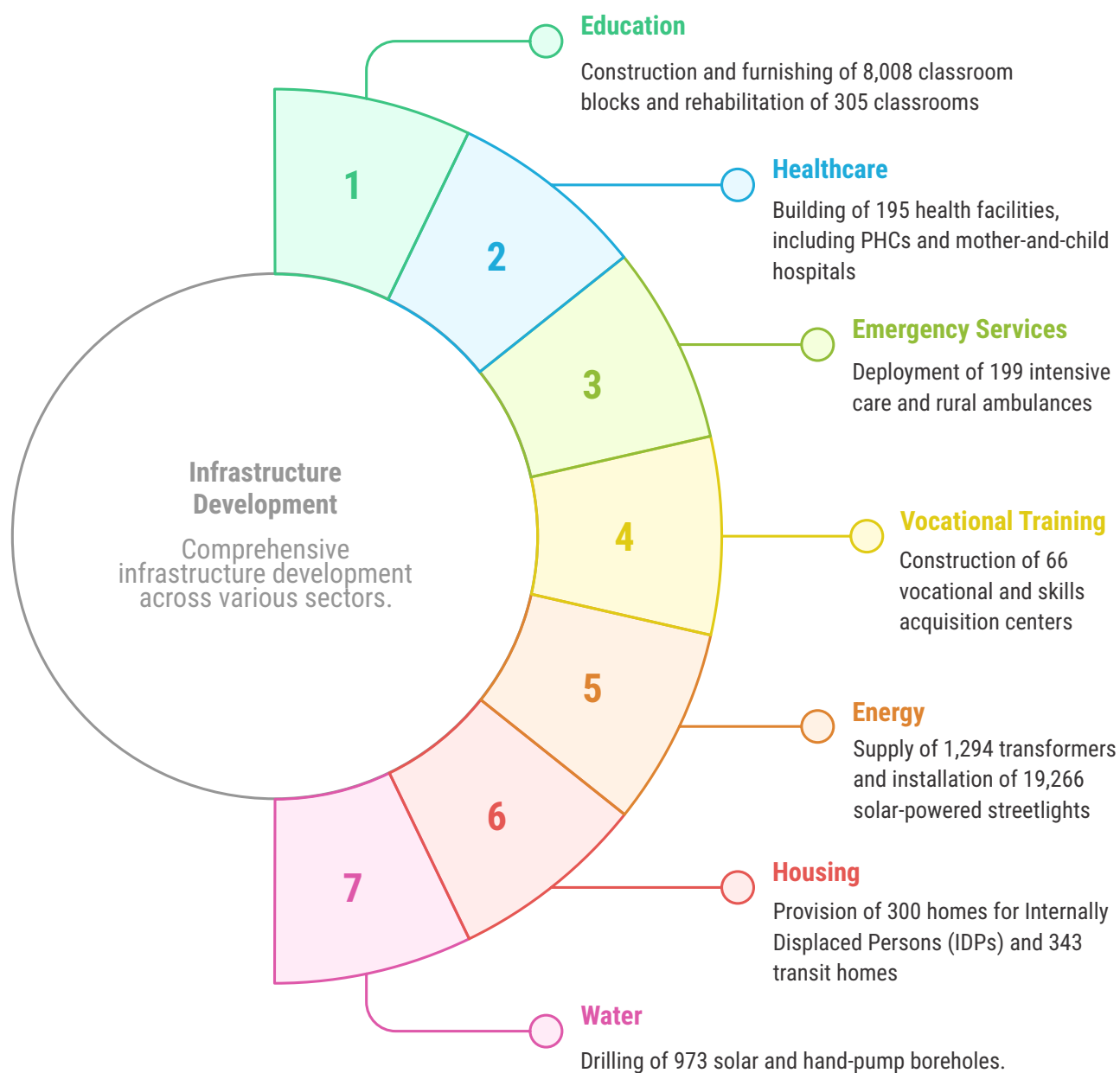
Significant achievements include Nigeria's submission of two VNRs (2017 and 2020) to the UN High-Level Political Forum, highlighting policy and institutional mechanisms for SDG integration. In 2022, Nigeria launched its INFF, developed in collaboration with UNDP and the European Union. Its ongoing implementation is being led by the Federal Ministries of Finance, and Budget and Economic Planning, and coordinated by OSSAP-SDGs.

Several coordination platforms have been established to foster stakeholder engagement, including the Presidential Council on the SDGs, the Development Partnership Forum, the Private Sector Advisory Group, the Civil Society Organizations Strategy Group (CSOSG-SDGs), and the SDGs Standing Committees of the National Assembly. These initiatives demonstrate Nigeria's commitment to localized, inclusive, and results-oriented SDG implementation.

Between 2016 and 2025, OSSAP-SDGs has implemented extensive special interventions to fast-track SDG achievements in Nigeria, including:



Comprehensive Infrastructure Development Initiatives





Key Achievements in Institutional Capacity

Nigeria has made significant progress in strengthening institutional capacity to advance national development objectives and effectively implement the SDGs. Key achievements include:

1. SDG Coordination Mechanisms

OSSAP-SDGs leads national coordination, policy alignment, and reporting for the SDGs. It has established horizontal and vertical coordination structures across federal, state, and local governments, supported by focal persons and an Inter-Ministerial Committee. The Office compiles annual SDG reports and submits quarterly updates to the Presidential Council on SDGs.

2. Public Finance Management Reforms

Nigeria has pursued comprehensive reforms in tax administration, budget coordination, and debt management.

■ **Tax System:** Modernization through digitization and law reform by the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and State Revenue Services

■ **Budgeting:** Improved fiscal accountability and coordination jointly led by the Federal Ministries of Finance, and Budget and Economic Planning

■ **Debt Strategy:** Focus on sustainability through debt portfolio balancing, restructuring, and innovative instruments such as thematic bonds.

3. Financial Sector Reforms

Strengthened regulatory frameworks and enhanced institutional capacity include:

■ Expansion of financial inclusion and credit access

■ Adoption of sustainable finance taxonomies and Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures recommendations.

■ Increased oversight by the Central Bank and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).



4. Tackling Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs)

Efforts to reduce IFFs include improved tax compliance data, Know Your Customer (KYC) enforcement regulations, and interagency coordination involving the Ministry of Finance, FIRS, and financial institutions.

5. Investment Promotion

Progress in improving the investment climate includes:

- Enhanced mandate for the Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC)
Institutional reforms in Government-Owned Enterprises (GOEs)
- Greater alignment of privatization with commercial governance standards.

6. Strengthening the National Statistical System

Through the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria has realigned its National Statistical System (NSS) with SDG indicators. The NSS tracks and reports SDG indicators annually to support evidenced-based policymaking. Indicator selection and data validation for the VNR involved broad stakeholder consultations and underscored the need for improved statistical capacity (SDG 17.18.2).

7. Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks

A national Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Framework has been developed to track progress on the INFF. OSSAP-SDGs leads this initiative, ensuring evidence-based accountability and resource allocation.

8. Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement

The VNR process reflects strong institutional mechanisms for inclusion. The multi-stakeholder Core Working Group (CWG), led by OSSAP-SDGs, engaged MDAs, CSOs, private sector actors, academia, and sub-national governments through structured consultations and established platforms such as the Private Sector Advisory Group and Donors' Forum.



Integration of SDGs into National Development Planning

Nigeria's integration of the SDGs into national development planning involves aligning the goals with significant development plans (ERGP, NDP, Agenda 2050); mainstreaming the three dimensions of sustainable development; incorporating SDGs into sectoral plans and budgets; extending integration efforts to the sub-national level; and utilizing supporting tools such as the Nigeria iSDG Model, Nigeria INFF and the Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit (IPRT). Nigeria has effectively integrated the SDGs into its national and sub-national planning frameworks through various mechanisms and strategies:

1. Alignment with NDPs

The SDGs have been linked to Nigeria's medium-term and long-term development plans. Following the 2016 economic recession, Nigeria developed the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017-2020, which focused on economic, social, and environmental dimensions consistent with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The current NDP (2021–2025) and Nigeria Agenda 2050 have scientifically mainstreamed and integrated the SDGs into their thematic pillars and strategic priorities. The NDP aims to unlock Nigeria's potential across all economic sectors for inclusive, broad-based and sustainable national development.

2. Integration into Sectoral Policies and Budgets

Relevant SDGs have been integrated into the policies and plans of Federal MDAs. Since 2016, the government deepened the integration of SDG-related programmes into sector plans and work plans of relevant MDAs. The SDGs have also been integrated into budgetary processes, leveraging frameworks such as Zero-Based Budgeting (ZBB), Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF), Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), and Medium-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS). SDG costs are reflected in annual budgets, with plans for future MTEF and budgets to explicitly incorporate the SDGs.

3. Integration at the Sub-National Level

Nigeria's strategic approach to SDGs implementation extends to both national and sub-national levels. State Governments and the Federal Capital Territory have been supported to mainstream the SDGs into their medium- and long-term development policies and plans. Many State Development Plans (SDPs) are aligned with the SDGs, and some states actively incorporate the three dimensions of sustainable development into their programmes. Efforts are underway to encourage local government areas to develop miniature development plans consistent with the SDG framework. Conditional Grant Schemes (CGS) are also



utilized to accelerate progress by requiring counterpart contributions at the state level, motivating sub-national governments to plan and mobilize resources for national developmental priorities like the SDGs.

4. Use of Analytical and Financing Frameworks

The iSDG Model is a home-grown policy simulation tool developed to help align national development strategies and programmes with the SDGs. It supports policymakers and planners in evidence-based policy analysis, planning, and implementation at national and sub-national levels. The INFF is being implemented as a tool to strengthen planning and financing processes and overcome impediments to financing sustainable development. A central component, the Integrated Financing Strategy (INFS), integrates and aligns public and private financial policies, regulatory frameworks, instruments, and business processes with sustainable development, linking financing sources, policies, and practices to National Development Plan objectives. Similarly, Nigeria has customized the IPRT to support alignment of national development plans with global and continental agendas, tracking progress and enhancing planning capacities.

A Brief on Nigeria VNRs

Nigeria has demonstrated a strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda through the periodic conduct of VNRs as a follow-up and review mechanism for reporting progress on the SDGs at the HLPF. The VNR preparation process in Nigeria is participatory, inclusive, and evidence-based, incorporating consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including federal and state governments, CSOs, the private sector, academia, parliamentarians, and MDAs. CSO participation ensures the integration of diverse perspectives in the reporting process.

The **2017 VNR** focused on institutional frameworks and policy integration for SDG implementation. It highlighted the SDGs' alignment with the ERGP (2017–2020), baseline assessments on 69 indicators, and measures taken to foster national ownership, policy mainstreaming, inter-sectoral coordination, and resource mobilization.

The **2020 VNR** examined priority SDGs - poverty (SDG 1), economic growth (SDG 8), health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), peace and security (SDG 16), and partnerships (SDG 17)–in alignment with national development priorities.

The review was undertaken amid major external shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic and declining oil revenues. It critically assessed progress and identified systemic challenges impeding SDG attainment.

The **2025 VNR** focuses on priority SDGs—health (SDG 3), gender equality (SDG 5), economic growth (SDG 8), life under water (SDG 14), and partnerships (SDG 17), in line with national development priorities. The review was undertaken through a nationwide, inclusive consultative process.

Key findings across Nigeria's VNRs reveal mixed progress. While there have been notable improvements in national awareness, political commitment, and policy integration, persistent challenges include data gaps, external economic shocks, structural weaknesses, insecurity, low investment, and high financing costs. Nigeria plans to continue submitting biennial VNRs until 2030 (2022, 2024, 2026, 2028, and 2030) to sustain momentum and reinforce national accountability.

The Review Process

The 2025 VNR process enhanced inclusivity, deepened understanding of Nigeria's SDG implementation framework, and produced context-specific recommendations. It reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to aligning development efforts with the SDGs through structured national and sub-national dialogue, guided by disaggregated data and lived experiences.

Aligned with Paragraph 74 of the 2030 Agenda and the thematic focus of the 2025 HLPF, the process was nationally led and reflected a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, ensuring alignment with national priorities and realities across economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

Key components of the VNR process included:

Institutional Coordination

The VNR was coordinated by the National Core Working Group (CWG-VNR) in collaboration with OSSAP-SDGs and State SDG offices across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. Regional consultations were held in March 2025 in Akwa Ibom, Enugu, Gombe, Kaduna, Lagos, and the FCT. The VNR Report was validated in April 2025 in Abuja, with attendance was from a broad sector group.

Stakeholder Engagement

The regional consultations brought together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including MDAs, CSOs, private sector actors, academia, youth and women

groups, persons with disabilities, development partners, and SDGs Desk Officers. These dialogues enhanced awareness of institutional SDG frameworks, gathered stakeholder perspectives, and identified enablers, barriers, and recommendations for accelerating progress.

Data-Driven Reviews

Nigeria's 2024 SDG Progress Report served as the evidence base for consultations, providing an objective assessment across all 17 SDGs and selected indicators. Consultations used structured questions to examine implementation status, challenges, and opportunities in each geopolitical zone.

Special Reviews for Inclusion

Persons with Disabilities

In March 2025, Sightsavers facilitated dedicated regional consultations, both in-person and virtual, to ensure inclusive participation by PWDs, including representation through the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD). These sessions addressed accessibility barriers and gender representation.

Children and Youth

UNICEF and UNFPA co-hosted a national consultation in March 2025 in Abuja for children and young people aged 9–18+, supplemented by an online survey with 1,477 respondents. The sessions provided a safe and child-friendly space for youth to share insights and recommend actionable solutions, supported by expert facilitation and gender inclusion.

Private Sector

A tailored version of the data collection instrument was shared with and administered in March 2025 to member companies of PSAG under the auspices of the United Nations Global Compact. It explored private sector engagement with the SDGs, their collaborative actions to achieve the SDGs in Nigeria, the extent to which the sector is engaged in implementing the SDGs in Nigeria, how the engagements can be improved, the challenges and opportunities for the achievement of the SDGs in Nigeria. The synthesized responses informed the final report.

Institutional Participation

Federal Ministries including Budget and Economic Planning, Finance, Health, Education, Youth and Sports, Women Affairs, and Environment, along with state-level agencies actively contributed policy and operational insights to the VNR process.



Key Findings of SDGs Progress Review

1. The 2022 Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) revealed **worsening poverty**, with 63% (133 million people) of Nigerians considered multi-dimensionally poor. Regional disparities persist, with 65% of the poor living in the North and 35% (nearly 47 million) in the South. Poverty levels vary significantly across states, from 27% in Ondo to 91% in Sokoto state. Moreover, while multidimensional poverty affects 67.5% of children and adolescents aged 0-17, this share drops to 58.7% among people aged 18 and above.
2. According to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) reports, household members with **access to improved sanitation facilities** increased from 35.9% in 2016 to 57.5% in 2021.
3. **Social protection coverage remains low**, with only 11% of residents covered by at least one programme, according to the 2022 ILO Social Protection report. Nigeria's government spending on essential services, such as education, health, and social protection, is low relative to its needs and in comparison, to other countries. The 2021 MICS reveals that only 21.9% of people living in households receive some form of social transfer or benefit, but among the two lowest wealth quintiles, this figure drops to 17%.
4. In 2021, 73.4% of household populations experienced food insecurity. The **prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity doubled** between 2015 (34.7%) and 2021 (69.7%). Similarly, the Cadre Harmonise across 26 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) indicates a sharp rise in the number of food-insecure people between October and December, from 17.01 million people in 2022, to 25 million people in 2024.
5. **Undernutrition remains a challenge**, particularly for Nigeria's younger populations. Stunting among under-five children increased from 36.8% in 2013 and 2018 to 40% in 2023-2024, according to the National Demographic and Health Survey.
6. **Progress on maternal health has declined** with the proportion of women who had antenatal care (ANC) provided by skilled providers going down from 67% in 2018 to 63% in 2023-2024, according to the NDHS. Skilled attendant at delivery also increased marginally from 45% in 2018 to 46% in 2023-2024.
7. **Nigeria recorded slight improvements in child health** with a decline in under-five deaths from 132 per 1,000 live births in 2018 to 110 per 1,000 live births in

- 2023-2024. Infant mortality rate slightly improved from 67 per 1,000 live births in 2018 to 63 per 1,000 live births in 2023-2024. Neonatal mortality also increased slightly from 39 to 41 deaths per 1,000 live births.
8. Under education, the **primary school net attendance ratio increased** from 60.9% in 2016 to 68.4% in 2021. However, secondary school net attendance slightly declined from 46.9% to 46.7% during the same period.
 9. **Digital infrastructure in Nigeria is advancing rapidly.** According to the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the ICT sector's contribution to GDP grew from 9.88% in Q4 of 2021 to 18% in Q2 of 2022.
 10. **Nigeria has the highest number of child brides in Africa**, with 22 million girls being married before the age of 18. The median age of marriage is lowest in the North-West and North-East regions, at 15.8 and 16.8 years, respectively. Rural girls are more likely to marry early than their urban counterparts.
 11. **The prevalence of female genital mutilation or cutting has been slow.** The MICS reports show that incidences have dropped from 18.4% among women aged 15-49 in 2016 to 15.1% in 2021. Despite this overall decline, 6.7% of girls aged 15-19 still undergo FGM/C. Nigeria is therefore far from achieving global elimination goals.
 12. Access to electricity in Nigeria remains a significant challenge, with only 60% of Nigerians having access as of 2022. This leaves around 92 million people without electricity, making Nigeria **the country with the largest energy access deficit globally**.
 13. **Solar energy capacity has significantly improved** in Nigeria over the last few years as an alternative power source, increasing from 4 megawatts in 2014 to 112 megawatts in 2023.
 14. Ranking 23rd in Africa, **Nigeria's GDP per capita remains low**. In the last eight years, it has declined significantly from \$2,679.6 in 2015 to \$1,621.1 in 2023.
 15. The 2022 Nigeria Child Labor Survey found that 50.5% of **Nigerian children are engaged in economic activities**, with 39.2% involved in **child labor** and 22.9% in **hazardous work**. Male (39.6%) and rural (44.8%) children are disproportionately affected.

16. **Nigeria has become the hub for financial technology** (fintech) innovation. The sector has revolutionized payment systems, making financial services more accessible to unbanked Nigerians. In 2020 alone, the sector raised approximately \$439 million, accounting for 20% of all capital raised by African tech start-ups. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital financial services.
17. **Household disposable income in Nigeria has declined** from \$419.50 in 2019 to \$209.4 in 2024. The disposable income per capita has also reduced from \$2.06 in 2019 to \$1.68 in 2020 and \$1.37 in 2023, projected at \$0.91 in 2024.
18. **A significant portion** – 53% of Nigeria's urban population lived in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing in 2023, a rise from approximately 30% in 2015.
19. **Nigeria faces significant climate risks**, including flooding, erosion, landslides, tidal waves, sandstorms, oil spillage, insect infestations, and other natural and artificial disasters. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) reports that 68 deaths occurred and 129,000 people were displaced due to the 2020 flood incidents. Nigeria ranks as the second-highest country globally for climate risk to children and ranked 180 out of 192 countries in 2022 for climate-response readiness.
20. **Diaspora remittances increased** from \$19.7 billion in 2016 to \$24.3 billion in 2018, dropping during the COVID-19 pandemic to \$17.2 billion in 2020 before **recovering** to \$20.16 billion in 2022.

Partnership and Coordination

Nigeria has established a comprehensive, multi-tier coordination structure to support effective implementation of the SDGs at both national and sub-national levels. This inclusive coordination framework reflects the country's commitment to integrated SDG implementation, financing, and performance tracking across all tiers of government.

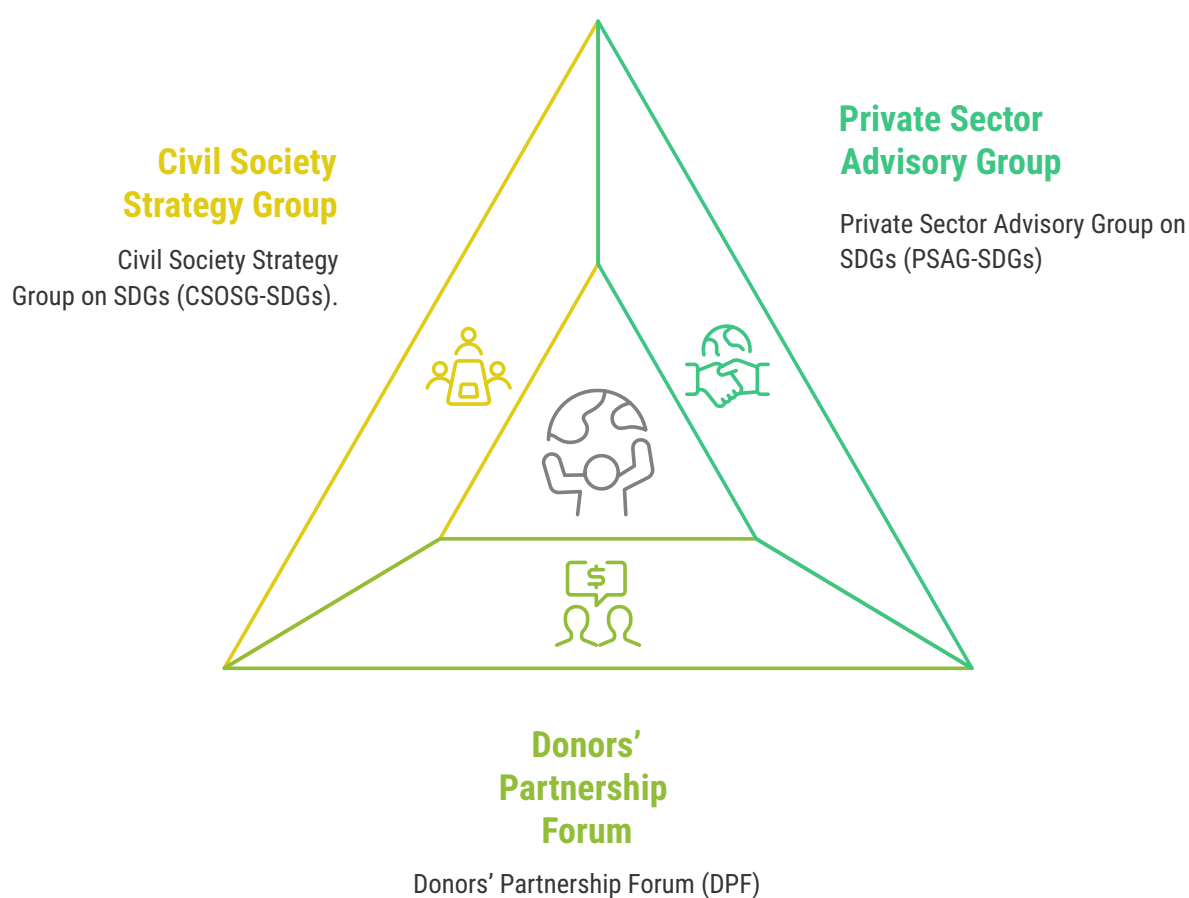
National Coordination and Institutional Leadership

OSSAP-SDGs serves as the lead coordinating institution. It is responsible for mobilizing political support, aligning national SDG objectives with sectoral plans, supporting the MTEF, and overseeing SDG performance monitoring and evaluation (M&E). OSSAP-SDGs collaborates with all federal MDAs, state

governments, CSOs, private sector actors, and development partners.

To institutionalize stakeholder collaboration, OSSAP-SDGs established platforms including:

SDG Support Structure



Financing and Budget Coordination

The Federal Ministry of Finance (FMoF) plays a central role in aligning the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) with national budgeting processes through the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy (MTRS) and MTEF.

Alongside OSSAP-SDGs, FMoF co-leads INFF coordination, ensuring coherence at all levels of governance.



Key INFF coordination mechanisms include:

■ **National Steering Committee**

Co-chaired by the Honourable Minister of Finance and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, this high-level committee comprises representatives from MDAs, UN Development System, European Union, multilateral development banks, and the private sector. It provides strategic leadership and oversight for the design and implementation of the Nigeria INFF.

■ **Core Working Group (CWG-INFF)**

Co-chaired by the Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning and UNDP, this group includes representatives from the institutional membership of the National Steering Committee. The CWG provides technical leadership and coordination for INFF implementation.

VNR Process Coordination

The **CWG-VNR**, co-chaired by OSSAP-SDGs and UNDP Nigeria, provides leadership and technical input into the VNR process. It played a significant role in developing the 2020 VNR and continues to guide ongoing review efforts.

Mainstreaming and Sub-National Coordination

Each MDA appoints an SDG sector focal person to integrate SDG targets into departmental programmes. The National Statistical System (NSS), in partnership with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and OSSAP-SDGs, is being strengthened to enhance data collection, disaggregation, and SDG indicator monitoring.

At the sub-national level, state governments are mainstreaming SDGs into State Development Plans, and working toward community-level coordination. For example, Kaduna state has established a Project Support Unit (PSU) and Technical Working Group (TWG) to coordinate inter-agency efforts. These efforts are further supported by INFF state-level workshops that foster alignment and cross-sectoral engagement.

Legislative Engagement

Strong collaboration with the National Assembly Appropriation Committees ensures that SDG-aligned legislation and budget proposals are integrated into national financing frameworks. Both chambers of the National Assembly



contribute to aligning budgets with SDG targets and ensuring legislative support.

Good Practices

Nigeria has recorded several notable achievements, innovative practices, and successful reforms in SDG implementation, offering lessons and models for other countries:

■ Strengthening Institutional Mechanisms for SDGs Implementation

The establishment of OSSAP-SDGs within the Presidency reinforces political ownership and strategic alignment of SDG efforts. Similar institutional arrangements exist at the state and local government levels. In addition, the creation of the Presidential Delivery Unit (PDU) within the Office of the Vice President is enhancing delivery of national development priorities and the SDGs. The domestication and customization of Nigeria's iSDGs Policy Simulation Model and the NSS realignment are also major institutional successes.

■ Leading Global Discussions on Evaluation

Nigeria has led the global negotiations for a stand-alone UN Resolution on country-led SDGs evaluation. This highlights Nigeria's role in shaping international norms and promoting the adoption of robust, country-led evaluation approaches. Nigeria also actively participates in international forums, such as the annual Financing for Development (FfD) conference and UN General Assembly side events, to cross-fertilize ideas and share experiences.

■ Participatory VNR Process

Nigeria's approach to VNR preparation is integrated, participatory, inclusive, and evidence-based. It involves a wide array of stakeholders, including federal and state governments, CSOs, Volunteer Involving Organizations (VIOs), organized private sector, academia, parliamentarians, youth groups, women's organizations, persons with disabilities, and media organizations. This inclusive approach to reporting demonstrates a commitment to multi-stakeholder engagement in the SDG process.



Key Challenges

Despite these efforts, Nigeria faces several persistent challenges in SDGs implementation:

- Shrinking fiscal space due to foreign exchange instability and oil subsidy removal has weakened states' purchasing power
- Weak collaboration among state MDAs on SDG activities hinders progress
- Limited resources for awareness creation at the state and local government levels impact stakeholders' roles and expectations
- A poor culture of record keeping and reporting at the LGA and community levels impacts the quality, timeliness, and completeness of routine service data
- Non-prioritization and misallocation of limited resources by MDAs
- Security threats in some of the implementing states or LGAs.





Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background on Nigeria

Nigeria is a vast country in West Africa occupying 923,768 km² and is bordered by the Gulf of Guinea, and the countries of Benin, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The Niger and Benue Rivers traverse the country, shaping its geography and economy. The country's capital city, Abuja, lies at the nation's center, while Lagos is the country's primary seaport, economic hub and its most populous city. As of 2023, Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was estimated at \$362.81 billion, reflecting its position as one of Africa's largest economies. The economy is marked by youthful demographics, abundant natural resources, and an emerging middle class. These factors signal immense potential but also underline significant structural challenges.

The present administration has introduced significant economic reforms aimed at stabilizing the economy and boosting investor confidence. Measures such as the removal of fuel subsidies, unification of foreign exchange rates, and tighter fiscal policies have been implemented to address long-standing macroeconomic imbalances. These reforms have garnered international attention and support even as challenges like inflation, infrastructural deficits, and market volatility persist.

With an estimated population of 232.7 million at the close of 2024, Nigeria is the most populous country on the African continent and the sixth largest globally. Three-quarters of Nigerians are under the age of 35, highlighting the urgency of investing in youth education and sustainable livelihoods. With an average family size of 5.6 people per household and a current population growth rate of 3.2%, Nigeria's population is projected to grow by 30% (60 million people) between 2020 and 2030, potentially reaching 400 million by 2050.

The Nigeria Living Standards Survey (2020), puts the average household size in Nigeria at 5.06 persons per family, with a higher value of 5.42 in rural areas against the value of 4.50 in urban areas. The highest household size was recorded in Jigawa state (8.15 persons), while the lowest was in Ekiti state (3.50 persons). About 10 million Nigerians representing 5.2% of the population, are PWDs. According to UNICEF, women head one



in five households, and one-third of households have a head of household with no education¹.

These household characteristics inform how best to adapt and align current pro-poor policies to ensure no one is left behind in the country's current and future state of prosperity. The IMF in a 2020 country report indicated that to raise living standards, reduce poverty, and create better opportunities for the growing youth, Nigeria must scale up investments in human capital, particularly through education and health, and improve infrastructure in transportation, electricity, water and sanitation².

Nigeria is rich in natural resources, yet the economy remains dependent on primary products, through oil, gas and agriculture. Nigeria has struggled to reduce its oil dependency (87% of GDP) to become a more diversified economy. Agriculture, although contributing only 21% to the country's GDP, employs 75% of the population (UNDP, 2020).

Politically, Nigeria is a federal republic, operating a three-tier presidential system of government at the Federal, State and Local Government Area (LGA) levels, and with an Executive President as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Each tier comprises three arms of government, i.e. the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) provides for a separation of powers among these arms of government and shares key sectoral responsibilities across the three tiers of government. Nigeria is also divided into six geo-political zones that allow for ease of policy engagement, planning and federal interventions. Many of the zones share common ethnic, social and economic attributes. Nigeria's fiscal decentralization allows each tier of government to plan and manage resources according to local priorities. This system acknowledges and accommodates ethnic, cultural, and regional diversities while ensuring that local issues can be managed closer to the community level.

Over the past decade, the country has faced mounting public security challenges with wide-ranging socio-economic impacts. These issues have spread nationwide, disproportionately affecting women and girls, and placing them at heightened risk of gender-based violence (GBV), displacement, exploitation, and severe psychological trauma. Insecurity stalls gender equality by widening gender gaps in education, health, economic empowerment, and governance.

¹<https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/media/3576/file/WASH%20NORM%20Report%202019.pdf>

²<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2020/05/22/Nigeria-Technical-Assistance-Report-Additional-Spending-Toward-Sustainable-Development-Goals-49456>



1.2. Socio-Economic Context

As Africa's most populous country, Nigeria plays a pivotal role in shaping the continent's development trajectory. It is classified as a lower-middle-income country with a mixed economy driven by oil exports. It however shows great potential in agriculture, services, manufacturing, and digital innovation. Despite vast natural and human resources, structural socio-economic challenges continue to impact Nigeria's development outcomes and progress towards the SDGs.

The country's economy has shown signs of resilience and gradual recovery following the dual shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and global oil price volatility. Economic reforms such as the removal of fuel subsidies and unification of exchange rates, aim to improve fiscal sustainability, but have also spurred inflationary pressures, exacerbating the cost of living for many households. Unemployment and underemployment remain high, particularly among youth and women, while regional disparities persist in access to basic services and infrastructure.

Nigeria's demographic structure presents both opportunities and challenges. With over 60% of its population under the age of 25, the country stands to benefit from a demographic dividend if investments are made in education, health, and job creation. However, issues such as insecurity, weak institutions, and limited access to quality social services continue to hinder inclusive and sustainable development.

Nigeria's commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs provides a critical framework for addressing these challenges. Ongoing national development efforts, including the implementation of the National Development Plan (2021–2025) and Nigeria Agenda 2050, are aligned with the SDGs and emphasize inclusive economic growth, human capital development, and environmental sustainability. Strengthening institutional capacity, fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration, and mobilizing adequate financing remain central to achieving Nigeria's SDG ambitions.

1.3. Nigeria's Unique Attributes and Regional Diversity

Nigeria is among the most ethnically diverse countries in Africa, with close to 250 languages spoken, reflecting the magnitude of its different ethnolinguistic groups. Administratively, Nigeria is a federal republic, with 36 states, a Federal Capital Territory (FCT), 774 local government areas and around 9,572 political wards. The country is renowned for its unique attributes that have shaped its cultural diversity,



traditions, and dynamic socio-economic environment.

Nigeria stands out as a hub of cultural richness and economic potential. Prominent ethnic groups include the Hausa-Fulani in the North, Yoruba in the South-West, and Igbo in the South-East. These groups contribute to Nigeria's vibrant cultural mosaic through their festivals, music, art, and cuisine. With 527 languages and over 1,150 dialects spoken across the country, Nigeria exemplifies linguistic diversity.

Traditional practices vary widely but often emphasize communal bonds and respect for elders. Unique customs include the tradition of having three types of weddings—traditional, court, and religious—to honour family, legal, and spiritual obligations. Economically, Nigeria is a powerhouse in Africa due to its vast natural resources, particularly oil and gas. However, agriculture remains vital to rural livelihoods, with crops like cocoa, palm oil, and millet sustaining millions.

Nigerian culture continues to evolve while maintaining its core traditions. This adaptability is evident in how modern influences blend with ancient customs across art forms, fashion, music, and daily life. The country's six geopolitical zones are each with unique social, economic and ecological attributes:

■ **North-Central**

Comprising Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau states, and the FCT, this region is geographically and ethnically diverse, serving as a cultural and political melting point. It features highlands, valleys, and river systems (Niger and Benue), supporting agriculture and livestock rearing. With Abuja, the nation's capital located here, the region is rich in mineral resources and growing tourism, but experiences communal and ethno-religious tensions.

■ **North-East**

States in this region include Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe states. Known for its agricultural base and natural beauty attracting tourism, it has suffered from developmental setbacks due to the Boko Haram insurgency, particularly in Borno and Yobe states. Resources include millet, maize, sorghum, groundnuts, sesame, cotton, rice, livestock. Reconstruction efforts in states focus on education, healthcare, and youth empowerment.

■ **North-West**

This comprises Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara states. This largely agrarian region is the leading producer of millet, sorghum, maize, groundnuts, and cotton. Cattle rearing and leatherwork are significant means of livelihood. With Kano as the major commercial hub of Northern

Nigeria, the region faces security challenges, including banditry and kidnapping. Its level of development varies, with urban centers having better education and healthcare access when compared with rural areas.

■ South-East

Made up of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo states, the South-East is known for its rich culture, strong entrepreneurial spirit, and high educational attainment. Characterised by high population density and a young population, it has a strong commercial culture in trade, manufacturing, agriculture and technology. Hubs like Onitsha and Aba excel in manufacturing and trading. It also has a vibrant diaspora and high literacy rates, but faces severe gully erosion, infrastructural and more recently, security challenges.

■ South-South

Comprising Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers states, this resource-rich and culturally diverse region is Nigeria's oil and gas hub. It grapples with environmental degradation, economic inequality, and calls for better resource control. It is a melting pot of ethnic groups and home to the Niger Delta—a large wetland. Beyond oil, it has growing sectors in agriculture, commerce, and tourism, with major cities like Port Harcourt, Uyo, and Benin City.

■ South-West

It includes Ekiti, Lagos, Ondo, Ogun, Osun, and Oyo states. A powerhouse in commerce, technology, education and innovation, this economically vibrant region contributes over 30% to Nigeria's GDP. It hosts fintech giants like Flutterwave, Paystack, as well as the Lekki Free Trade Zone.

1.4. National Development Planning and Alignment with the SDGs

Nigeria's Agenda 2050 is a long-term economic and social development blueprint aimed at transforming the country into an upper-middle-income economy by 2050. It emphasizes inclusive growth, poverty reduction, and climate resilience in alignment with the SDGs.

The United Nations and key stakeholders launched the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015. Nigeria adopted the Agenda, and, in 2016, established OSSAP-SDGs to coordinate implementation at both national and sub-national levels. Nigeria published its SDGs Indicator Baseline Report in 2016 and presented its VNRs in 2017 and 2020. Since then, the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of the SDGs have been integrated into national and sub-national government plans and annual budgets, including the NDP (2021-2025) and



Nigeria's Agenda 2050. Nigeria's INFF for Sustainable Development was launched in September 2022.

The core objectives of Agenda 2050 include:

1. **Economic Transformation** by creating a private-sector-led economy grounded in stable macroeconomic policies, increased domestic savings, and investment. This also includes expanding the country's agro-ecological zones, promoting the cultivation of export crops, and modernizing agriculture to boost food security and reduce malnutrition (SDG 2, 8, and 9). Agenda 2050 also emphasizes diversifying the economy by strengthening the mining and industrial sectors (SDG 9).
2. **Social Development** through sustained investments in education, healthcare services, and youth training and empowerment to improve Nigeria's human capital (SDG 3 and 4). It also aims to reduce poverty by 50% by 2030 through job creation and social protection programmes (SDG 1).
3. **Environmental Sustainability** and adopting green and circular economy strategies to reduce emissions by 50% by 2050 and achieve net zero by 2060 (SDG 13 and 7), as well as improving water management, sanitation, and waste disposal (SDG 6, 11, and 15).
4. **Regional Equity** that addresses disparities between states to ensure balanced development across the country (SDG 10).
5. **Governance and Institutional Strengthening** to enhance transparency and accountability (SDG 16).

Agenda 2050 is built on seven pillars that guide the country's long-term development plan. These pillars address key economic, social, and environmental challenges while promoting sustainable and inclusive growth. These include alignment with medium-term plans and annual budgets, progressive economic growth and development, adequate provision of relevant infrastructure, good governance and strong institutions, development of social and human capital, environmental and regional development and proper implementation, communication, monitoring and evaluation of the plan.

Agenda 2050 positions Nigeria to advance its SDG targets by aligning economic growth with social equity and climate action, although its success hinges on sustained governance reforms and stakeholder collaboration. The implementation framework consists of the Medium-Term Plans, structured through five-year national development



plans and annual budgets. Nigeria's Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategy (LT-LEDS), aligned with the Paris Agreement, targets net-zero emissions by 2060. Additionally, the country uses UNDP's Integrated SDG Insights for data-driven monitoring and policy trade-offs analysis, balancing growth with environmental protection.

Despite these efforts, Agenda 2050 identifies key challenges to its operationalization, including high poverty rates, regional inequalities, and climate vulnerabilities (e.g., desertification, flooding), over-reliance on fossil fuels, and limited funding for environmental programmes.

1.5. Reforming the Economy – Nigeria's New Economic Development Model

Nigeria's economic development strategy is anchored in the NDP (2021–2025) and Nigeria Agenda 2050, both of which aim to foster inclusive, sustainable growth and align national priorities with the SDGs.

The NDP (2021–2025), which succeeded the ERGP (2017–2020), focuses on economic diversification, infrastructure development, and human capital enhancement. It targets the creation of 21 million full-time jobs and aims to lift 35 million people out of poverty by 2025. The plan emphasizes collaboration among the private sector, sub-national governments, and civil society to promote inclusive development.

Complementing the NDP, Nigeria Agenda 2050 envisions Nigeria as an upper-middle-income economy with significant improvements in per capita income. It projects an average annual real GDP growth of 7%, aiming to reduce the number of Nigerians living in poverty to 2.1 million by 2050. The agenda also focuses on achieving a sustainable environment consistent with global concerns about climate change.

Recent economic reforms, including the removal of fuel subsidies and exchange rate unification, have contributed to economic growth, with the economy expanding by 4.6% year-on-year in the fourth quarter of 2024. These reforms have improved fiscal sustainability but have also led to short-term challenges such as high inflation. Continued implementation of tight monetary and disciplined fiscal policies is essential to address these challenges and sustain growth.

Nigeria's new economic development model underscores the importance of structural reforms, strategic investments, and inclusive policies to achieve sustainable development and meet the SDGs.



1.6. Key Institutional Frameworks for SDGs Implementation

Nigeria's transition strategy from the MDGs to the SDGs focused on three phases: building on existing foundations (2016-2020), scaling up SDGs implementation (2021-2025), and accelerating implementation efforts (2026-2030) to ensure 'no Nigerian is left behind'.

OSSAP-SDGs worked with key partners to ensure the integration of the SDGs' economic, social, and environmental dimensions into the ERGP (2017-2020) of the federal government. Many core areas, such as food security, agriculture, energy, infrastructural development, industry, macroeconomic stability and inclusive growth, were given due attention in the NDP (2021-2025) and Nigeria's Agenda 2050. The domestication and customization of the Nigeria iSDGs Model enabled MDAs to channel resources towards the SDGs.

Key achievements include presenting two VNRs in 2017 and 2020 to the UN HLPF, which highlighted policy, institutional and legal mechanisms for creating the enabling environment for SDG mainstreaming into national policies, plans, and programmes.

In September 2022, Nigeria launched its INFF for Sustainable Development on the margins of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly. The initiative, led by OSSAP-SDGs in partnership with UNDP and the European Union, is currently being implemented by the Federal Ministries of Finance, and Budget and Economic Planning.

To enhance collaboration, several coordination platforms have been established, including the Presidential Council on the SDGs, the Development Partnership Forum on SDGs, the PSAG, CSOSG-SDGs and the National Assembly Standing Committees on SDGs.

Between 2016 and 2023, OSSAP-SDGs executed several special intervention projects to support the efforts of the different MDAs. These include building and furnishing 8,008 blocks of classrooms, rehabilitating 305 additional classrooms, constructing 195 health centers (including primary healthcare centers and mother-and-child hospitals), and supplying 199 intensive care and rural ambulances. In addition, 66 vocational and skills acquisition centers were constructed; 1,294 transformers supplied; 19,266 solar-powered streetlights constructed; 300 homes built for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); 343 transit homes built, and 973 solar and hand-pump boreholes constructed, amongst other interventions.

1.7. Nigeria's Key Achievements in Institutional Capacity for the Implementation of the SDGs

Nigeria has made significant strides in strengthening institutional capacity to support SDG implementation and the NDPs.



Figure 1 - Institutional efforts to support SDG implementation

Key achievements include:

— Establishment of Institutional Frameworks

Frameworks have been established at national and sub-national levels support the effective implementation of the SDGs. These include the domestication of the Nigeria iSDG model and the realignment of the NSS with the requirements and indicators of the SDGs. The country has also initiated implementation of the INFF and sub-national frameworks.

— SDG Coordinating Office

OSSAP-SDGs was established as a dedicated office within the Presidency to

coordinate SDG interventions, track national progress, and oversee performance reporting. The office has built internal capacity through staff training, institutional reviews, skills capacity assessment, technical recruitment, and communications support. Coordinating structures exist for horizontal and vertical coherence of programme information and effective performance management across the three tiers of government. These structures involve MDA focal persons, state focal persons, LGA focal persons, and an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on SDGs. State governments and the Federal Capital Territory have replicated similar organizational and institutional structures. A proposed Presidential Committee on the Assessment and Monitoring of the SDGs will be anchored by OSSAP-SDGs.

— **Integration into National Development Frameworks**

The SDGs have been fully integrated into national policy and planning frameworks, including the ERGP (2017-2020), the NDP (2021-2025), and Nigeria's Agenda 2050. This integration covers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the SDGs.

— **Public Finance Management Reforms**

Since 2015, reforms such as the Government Integrated Financial and Management Information System (GIFMIS), the Treasury Single Account (TSA), the Integrated Personnel Payroll Information System (IPPIS), and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) have been undertaken. The adoption of IPSAS is considered a strong tool for achieving vibrant public finance management through transparent and accountable reporting.

— **Strengthened Financial Sector Institutions**

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has implemented significant reforms in the financial sector over the past decade to deepen its capacity on finance development. These reforms include enhanced capitalization, digitalization of processes, expanded financial inclusion, improved risk management, and strengthened corporate governance.

— **Anti-Corruption Mechanisms**

Nigeria has made efforts to set up laws, frameworks, and agencies to tackle Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and corruption, including the establishment of the Constituency Project Tracking Group. The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) investigates and prosecutes corruption cases and has established Anti-Corruption and Transparency Units in MDAs. While challenges persist, significant investment is planned to enhance



law enforcement agencies' human and institutional capacity to address IFFs.

■ **Investment Promotion**

The Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) plays a key role in coordinating efforts to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) and acts as a one-stop investment center. The NIPC's One-Stop Investment Center (OSIC) facilitates investments by bringing relevant government agencies together in one location.

■ **Infrastructure Regulation**

In 2005, the Infrastructure Concession and Regulatory Commission (ICRC) was established by law to regulate the relationship between government and the private sector in infrastructure development through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs).

■ **Partnership Platforms**

To advance implementation, platforms have been established with organized sectors, including the PSAG and the Development and Donors' Forum on the SDGs. This aims to leverage partnerships for effective implementation.

■ **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

The INFF includes a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to monitor and evaluate its action plan. Periodic M&E efforts are planned for capacity-building programmes to measure impact and identify areas for improvement. A process for the independent evaluation of priority SDGs is also underway.

Chapter 2: Progress on Goals and Targets: SDG Progress Report 2024

2.1. Progress against key indicators

■ SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

1. Maternal health outcomes remain poor and fall significantly short of SDG targets

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Nigeria continues to face alarmingly high maternal, and new-born and child (MNCH) mortality rates, far exceeding global targets. These outcomes are exacerbated by socio-economic disparities in accessing essential MNCH services and high out-of-pocket health expenditure.

Maternal mortality has worsened, reaching an estimated 1,047 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2020, over ten times the SDG target. Key MNCH service indicators show stagnation or decline: skilled ANC attendance decreased from 67% to 63% (2018 vs. 2023-24), while skilled birth attendance and postnatal checks saw only marginal increases. ANC quality indicators like four or more visits (52%), iron supplementation (68%), and tetanus toxoid (58%) also reveal gaps and significant regional disparities.

Nigeria is responding to these challenges through a range of government strategies and programmes, focusing on:

■ Government Commitment

The Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has set targets to reduce maternal mortality by at least 20% and infant mortality by 15% by 2027. Strategies include training frontline health workers and implementing the Safe Motherhood Strategy (2024–2028) and the Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative.

■ MAMII Programme

The flagship Maternal and Neonatal Mortality Reduction Innovation and Initiatives (MAMII) programme takes a holistic approach to targeting high-burden LGAS, including emergency transport, referrals, free C-sections, capacity building, health insurance, and community surveillance.

■ State-Level Actions

States such as Lagos have developed tailored strategies like the Lagos state Every New-born Action Plan (LaSENAP), to reduce neo-natal deaths and stillbirths.

■ Quality Improvement

Initiatives like Project Aisha in Lagos and Kaduna improve maternal health outcomes by strengthening healthcare worker competencies. Several other development partners are also implementing complementary initiatives.

■ Support and Advocacy

Organizations like the TY Danjuma Foundation are working to increase access to quality care, while the Africa Health Budget Network's Collaborative Advocacy Action Plan (CAAP) promotes accountability and increased funding for MNCH.

2. Family planning uptake remains low

Despite its well-documented benefits, such as improved maternal and child health, reduced poverty, and enhanced gender equality, family planning uptake in Nigeria remains limited. According to the MICS, contraceptive prevalence rose from 13.4% in 2016 to 21.7% in 2021. More recent NDHS surveys show a marginal rise in

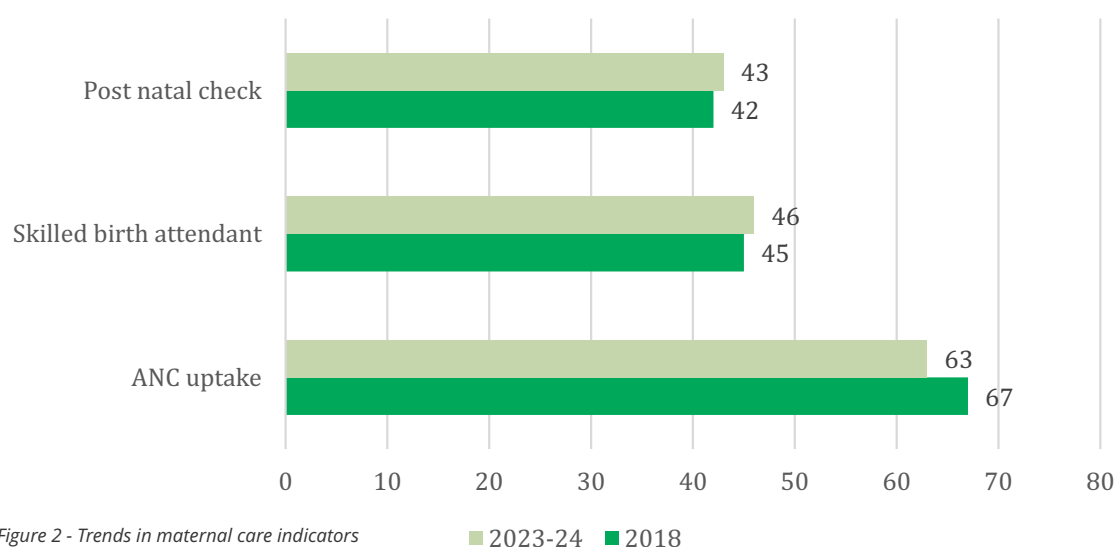


Figure 2 - Trends in maternal care indicators

contraceptive prevalence from 17% in 2018 to 20% in 2023/2024. The unmet need for family planning—defined as the percentage of fecund women aged 15-49 years who wish to delay or stop childbearing but are not using contraceptives—rose from 19% in 2018 to 21% in 2023 and 2024.

Barriers including funding constraints, regional disparities, and socio-cultural resistance remain. Continued political will, increased investment, and innovative outreach are essential to accelerate contraceptive uptake and improve reproductive health outcomes in Nigeria.

Nigeria is actively working to increase contraceptive use through a combination of government policies, donor-supported programmes, and community engagement. Key initiatives include:

- **The Challenge Initiative (TCI)**

This is a flagship programme empowering local governments to lead sustainable family planning services, focusing on capacity building, youth-friendly services, and expanding access in underserved areas.

- **Government Commitment**

Nigeria aims to reach a 27% modern contraceptive prevalence rate by 2030, guided by the National Family Planning Blueprint and aligned with the FP2030 global initiative. However, recent budget cuts to family planning funding pose challenges.

- **Community and Youth Engagement**

Programmes emphasize addressing cultural barriers, involving men, and providing youth-centered reproductive health services to improve acceptance and demand.

- **Sustainability Focus**

Efforts prioritize local ownership, strengthening health systems, and reducing dependency on donor funding to ensure long-term impact.

3. Child health outcomes show slow progress

Despite Nigeria's National Child Health Policy, under-five mortality remains alarmingly high, threatening Nigeria's ability to meet the SDG target for 2030. While under-five and infant mortality rates slightly improved between 2018 and 2023-2024, neo-natal mortality has slightly increased. Significant disparities persist across states, regions, and socio-economic groups, with the North-West and rural areas experiencing much higher rates than the South-West and urban regions. These inequalities highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions.

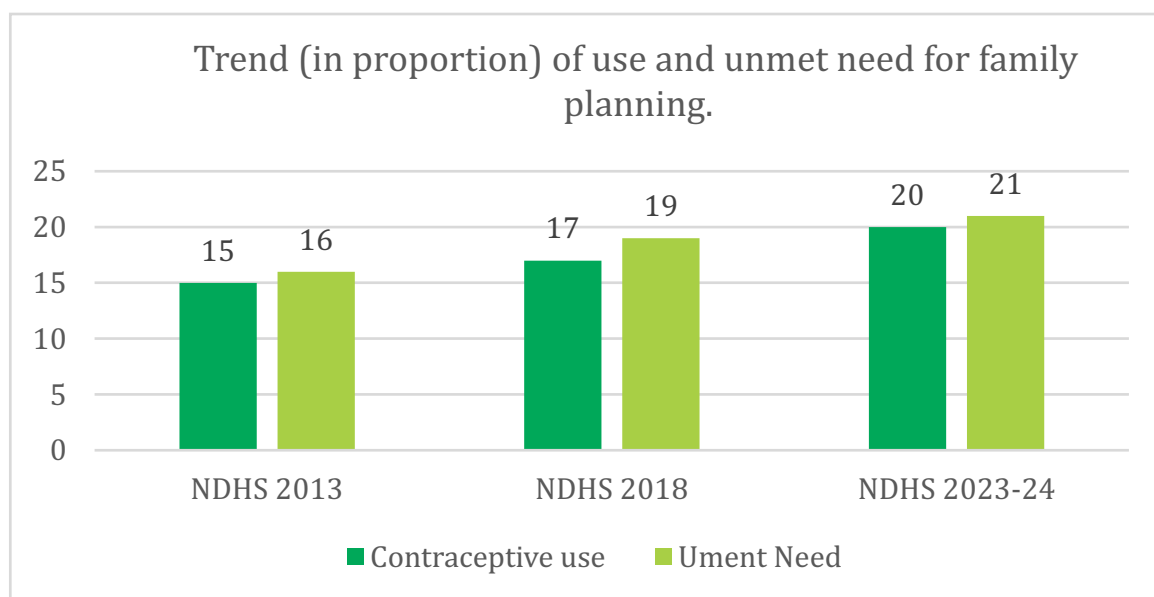


Figure 3 - The percentage of women aged 15–49 using or needing contraceptive methods.

Key initiatives to reduce child mortality, improve nutrition, prevent infectious diseases, and strengthen health systems in line with Nigeria's commitment to universal health coverage and the SDGs include:

■ **Health Workforce Strengthening**

Large-scale training of frontline health workers helps to improve the quality of maternal, new-born, and child health services.

■ **Targeted Service Delivery**

Programmes like the Maternal & Neonatal Mortality Reduction Innovation Initiative (MAMI) focus on expanding access to child health services in high-burden areas.

■ **Advocacy and Financing**

The Collaborative Advocacy Action Plan (CAAP) promotes increased budget allocations and domestic funding for child health.

■ **Malaria Control**

Expanded malaria vaccination, distribution of insecticide-treated nets, and innovative vector control methods aim to reduce child mortality from malaria.

■ **Nutrition Programmes**

The Nutrition 774 Initiative addresses malnutrition through coordinated community interventions.

■ Immunization and Medicine Access

Support from partners like CHAI enhances vaccine coverage and access to essential medicines for common childhood illnesses.

■ Emergency and Humanitarian Response

This involves strengthening rapid medical response for vulnerable children affected by crises.

4. Immunization coverage is improving, but remains below global targets

Nigeria's national immunization goal is 90%, in line with the GVAP. While full vaccination coverage (essential antigens for children 12-23 months) increased from 31% in 2018 to 39% in 2023-24, it remains significantly below the target. Alarming, the proportion of zero-dose children has risen to 31% (2.1 million), the highest globally. Vaccination rates are substantially lower in the northern regions compared to the southern regions, with only two states exceeding the 90% target for Penta3 coverage. Nigeria is strengthening immunization coverage through coordinated national and partner-led efforts focused on reaching underserved children and enhancing health systems. Key initiatives include:



■ Targeted Catch-Up Campaigns

The Immunization Recovery Plan and The Big Catch-Up programmes focus on vaccinating zero-dose and missed children, especially in priority local government areas affected by COVID-19 disruptions.

■ Funding and Partnership Support

GAVI-backed Full Portfolio Planning has unlocked significant investments to expand vaccine access and strengthen routine immunization services.

■ Community Engagement

Programmes like CHIPS leverage local influencers and community health workers to build trust and increase vaccine uptake.

■ Digital Innovations

New digital platforms improve vaccine tracking and client registration to enhance service delivery.

■ Sustainable Financing

Increased government budget allocations and health financing reforms aim to ensure long-term immunization programme sustainability.

■ Advocacy and Outbreak Response

Engagement with traditional and religious leaders combats vaccine hesitancy, while rapid responses target polio and other outbreaks.

5. Out-of-pocket health spending remains high

Nigeria's health expenditure remains relatively low by global standards, with out-of-pocket (OOP) payments still constituting a significant share of healthcare spending. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), OOP payments account for 70-80% of total health expenditure in Nigeria, meaning a substantial portion of healthcare costs is borne directly by individuals and families at the point of service.

In 2017, an estimated 76.6% of Current Health Expenditure (CHE) were financed through OOP expenditures, reflecting a heavy burden of health financing on households. This reliance on personal funds for healthcare remains high, with 75% of health expenditures funded through OOP in 2023. This makes Nigeria one of the countries with the highest share of household health expenditures in the world. Ongoing initiatives to address Nigeria's high out-of-pocket (OOP) health expenditure focus on expanding health insurance coverage, strengthening primary healthcare, improving health financing mechanisms, and promoting sustainable domestic investments. Key efforts include:

■ **National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) Act and Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**

The NHIA law mandates all Nigerians to subscribe to health insurance as a way to reduce OOP spending by providing financial risk protection and expanding access to quality healthcare services.

■ **Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF)**

Established under the National Health Act, BHCPF finances supply- and demand-side interventions at the primary healthcare level, targeting vulnerable populations and reducing direct payments for health services.

■ **Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII)**

Launched in 2023, this sector-wide approach upgraded over 2,100 primary healthcare centers (PHCs) and plans to upgrade 3,000 more by the end of 2025, improving access and reducing the need for costly secondary care that drives OOP expenses.

■ **State-Level Health Financing Reforms**

A key example, Kaduna state aims to cut OOP health spending by 50% through a health financing policy that increases government health expenditure, expands health insurance coverage, and improves accountability and transparency in health financing.

■ **Improved Health Financing and Domestic Resource Mobilization**

Technical assistance programmes support Nigeria in increasing budget allocations to health, enhancing tax collection, introducing innovative levies (e.g., on mobile phone use), and reducing dependency on donor funding. These reforms aim to raise fiscal space for health and reduce OOP spending below 30% of total health expenditure by the end of the current National Strategic Health Development Plan.

■ **Public-Private Partnerships and Health Market Reforms**

The government is urged to create an enabling environment for private sector investment in health infrastructure and local production of medicines and vaccines, with strong accountability mechanisms to protect the poor and improve service quality.

■ **Sustainable Financing and Strategic Purchasing**

Establishing national and state purchasing organizations to pool resources and strategically buy health services helps to improve efficiency and equity in health spending, further reducing the financial burden on individuals.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

1. The prevalence of early marriage is declining very slowly



Nigeria's 2003 Child's Right Act (CRA) prohibits child marriage (before the age of 18). Implementation has been uneven, particularly in states with Islamic legal systems, where adoption of the CRA is limited. Consequently, Nigeria has the highest number of child brides in Africa—approximately 22 million. While there has been a decline in the proportion of girls marrying before the age of 15, 30.3% still marry before age 18. Child marriage is more common in rural areas and varies regionally, with the North-West and North-East having lower median ages of marriage. Bauchi state has exceptionally high rates of child marriage and polygynous unions with significant age gaps between spouses.

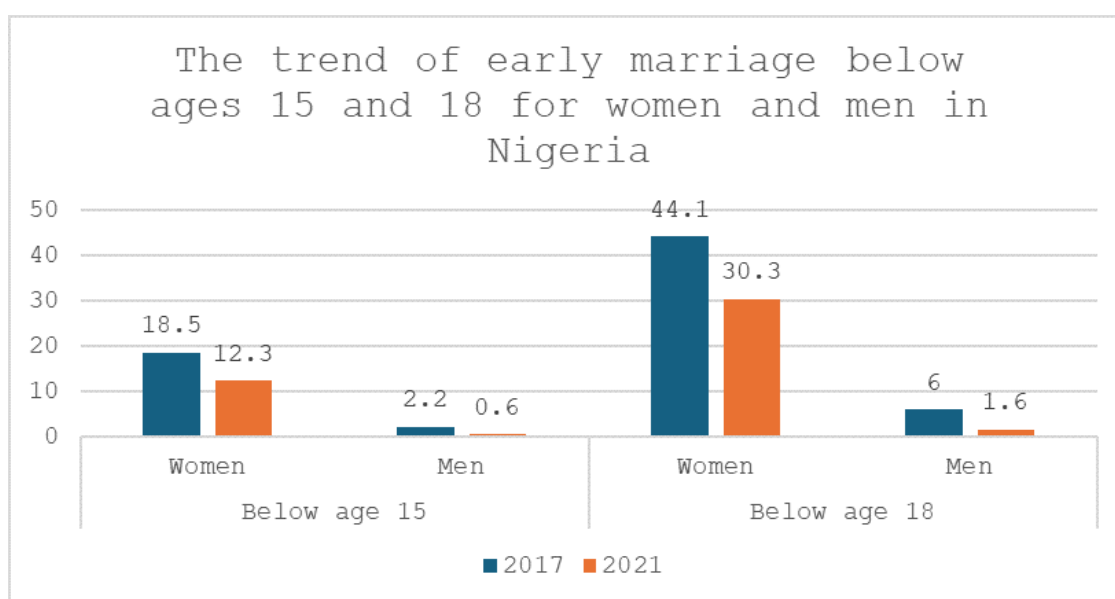


Figure 4 - The trend of early marriages in Nigeria

Nigeria is tackling early child marriage through a combination of legal reforms, community engagement, education, and empowerment programmes:

Legal Frameworks

Efforts are underway to enforce the minimum age of marriage through legislation, though implementation challenges remain due to customary and



religious practices.

- **Community Mobilization**

This involves engaging traditional and religious leaders to shift cultural norms and raise awareness about the risks of early marriage.

- **Education Access**

Education-focused programmes support girls' return to school and create safe learning environments, especially in vulnerable regions.

- **Economic Empowerment**

Girls are being provided with life skills and economic opportunities to reduce poverty-driven early marriages.

- **Advocacy and Partnerships**

Collaborations with international initiatives like the Spotlight Initiative and African Union campaigns amplify efforts.

2. Trafficking in persons requires more concerted action

Nigeria remains a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking, with women and girls disproportionately affected. Victims are subjected to forced labor, sexual exploitation, and child trafficking, both internally and abroad; particularly in Europe and the Middle East. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) continues to lead anti-trafficking efforts through investigations, rescues, and public awareness campaigns. However, enforcement and prosecution gaps persist. Nigeria's 3rd NAP identified human trafficking (internal and cross-border), luring and recruiting women and girls for labor or sexual exploitation as one of the emerging women peace and security issues that requires urgent attention.

Nigeria is combating human trafficking through coordinated national and international efforts focused on prevention, enforcement, and victim support:

- **National Action Plan**

Implementation of the 2022-2026 plan strengthens coordination, data management, and capacity building among key agencies.

- **NAPTIP Leadership**

The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons leads rescue, prosecution, rehabilitation, and awareness campaigns.

- **School-Based Education**

The STEAP programme empowers students and communities through anti-

trafficking clubs and advocacy.

■ **Legal and Policy Reforms**

Ongoing efforts to strengthen laws and increase budget support for anti-trafficking enforcement.

■ **International Cooperation**

Nigeria fosters regional partnerships and cross-border collaboration to enhance trafficking prevention and prosecution.

Despite policy and institutional reforms that the country has achieved, coordinated action remains crucial for sustaining these results. The achievements include eight gender-responsive instruments adopted or revised and integrating survivor protection principles. Institutional capacity for justice and survivor support was enhanced through training for over 200 justice and security actors, and the establishment of SOPs and cooperation protocols in Lagos and Edo states, leading to more structured and accountable service delivery. At the community level, over 1,150 male champions and 100 women-led organizations have scaled up prevention systems in high-risk areas, resulting in 60% of targeted communities establishing functioning surveillance mechanisms with improved awareness and reporting. However, implementation remains uneven, with systemic exclusion posing a risk, especially for women with disabilities.

3. Female genital mutilation/cutting remains prevalent

Nigeria has a high prevalence of FGM/C, accounting for a significant portion of global cases. Prevalence varies widely across states, with the South-East and South-West having the highest rates. Progress in reducing FGM/C has been slow, remaining far off from global elimination targets.

Nigeria is actively working to eliminate FGM/C through a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach:

■ **National Policy and Legal Frameworks**

Nigeria has enacted the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (2015), which criminalizes FGM/C, and is supported by the National Policy and Plan of Action for the Elimination of FGM (2021–2025). These frameworks provide a legal basis and strategic guidance for coordinated action against FGM/C.

■ **Multi-Partner Joint Programmes**

The UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of FGM operates in several states. It combines human rights-based, culturally sensitive approaches

with community engagement to shift social norms and promote abandonment of the practice.

■ **Community Engagement and Advocacy**

CSOs, women's rights groups such as Circuit Pointe, and local leaders actively participate in awareness campaigns, education, and mobilization to change attitudes and behaviors related to FGM/C, particularly in high-prevalence states.

■ **Evidence-Based Interventions**

Projects such as the "Stop Cut Project" in South-West Nigeria have demonstrated success in reducing FGM/C prevalence by raising awareness of health risks and legal consequences, strengthening advocacy coalitions, and empowering communities to reject the practice.

■ **Health Sector Involvement**

The Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare supports medical care for FGM/C survivors and integrates FGM/C prevention messaging into sexual and reproductive health services.

■ **Data and Research**

Continuous situation analyses and surveys inform policy and programming, helping to identify gaps, track progress, and tailor interventions to specific cultural contexts.

4. Women's ability to make informed decisions remains limited

A woman's ability to make choices regarding her sexual and reproductive health is a key determinant of her overall health outcomes. However, many women are unable to access sexual and reproductive health services due to harmful and discriminatory social norms and practices, lack of agency, and limited financial resources.

According to the National Demographic and Health Survey, the proportion of women making informed decisions about sexual relationships, contraceptive use, and reproductive healthcare declined from 51% in 2013 to just 29% in 2018. This sharp decline highlights the need for increased investments in girls' education and empowerment programmes.

The proportion of women participating in three key decision-making areas—managing their health, making major household purchases, and visiting family, slightly increased from 31.3% in 2013 to 33.5% in 2018. Progress towards universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights (SRHR) in Nigeria remains partial and stagnant. Without comprehensive SRHR legislation,



expanded services, and active community engagement, Nigeria is unlikely to meet its commitments for universal access.

Despite women's exclusion from formal peace processes, Nigeria has implemented National Action Plans (NAPs) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) since 2013. The recently validated third-generation NAP aims to institutionalize gender equality and women's participation as a national security imperative. Key initiatives include establishing functional WPS structures, fostering advocacy partnerships, and creating *#HeforShe* networks in northern states to challenge patriarchal systems and promote women's leadership.

Nigeria is advancing women's empowerment and decision-making capacity through a range of targeted initiatives focused on economic inclusion, education, legal reforms, and community engagement:

■ **Economic Empowerment and Financial Inclusion**

Programmes such as the Nigeria for Women Project (NFWP) and its 2024 scale-up support Women Affinity Groups (WAGs) provide access to financial services, business mentorship, skills training, and market linkages; helping women build sustainable livelihoods and economic independence. Micro-grants and financial literacy initiatives, such as those by Women Impacting Nigeria (WIN), also enable women entrepreneurs to grow their businesses and make informed economic choices.

■ **Education and Skills Development**

Initiatives such as She Code Africa equip women and girls with digital and STEM skills, expanding their opportunities and confidence to participate in the technology economy and beyond. Vocational training centers and community-based education programmes also target rural and marginalized women.

■ **Legal and Policy Frameworks**

The government continues to strengthen gender-responsive laws such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act and the Child's Right Act, while advocating for full implementation and enforcement to protect women's rights and autonomy.

■ **Community and Cultural Engagement**

Organizations like Arise Nigeria work with traditional leaders and communities to address harmful practices, promote gender equality, and create safe spaces for women and girls to access information and resources needed for informed decision-making.

■ **Addressing Social Norms and Gender-Based Violence**

Behavioral campaigns and advocacy efforts aim to shift gender norms, engage men as allies, and reduce barriers like violence and discrimination that restrict women's choices.

■ **Integrated Family and Social Support**

The National Family Strengthening and Development Programme (NFSP) and related initiatives provide holistic support to families, enhancing women's agency within households and communities.

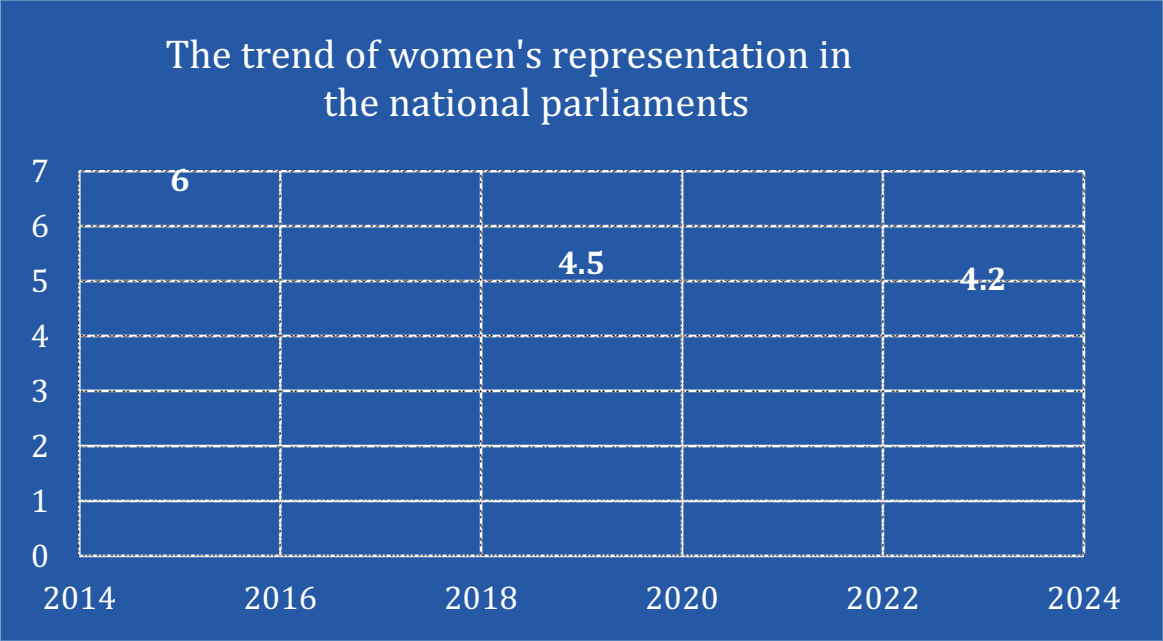


Figure 5 - Percentage of women's representation in the national parliament

5. Fewer women are in parliamentary positions

In 2024, Nigeria recorded the lowest proportion of female representation in the Senate (3.62%) and the House of Representatives (4.4%). Female representation in Nigeria's national parliament has steadily declined since 2015, dropping from 6% in 2015 to 4.2% in 2024. After seven general election cycles since the return to democracy in 1999, the number of women in the Senate has fallen back to 1999 levels.

Despite these low figures, Nigeria has made strides in promoting women's political participation and governance. High-level advocacy by the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies continues to push for gender-responsive legislation and institutional reforms to create a more enabling environment for women in leadership. The Young Women in Politics Academy is also building

capacity and interest among young women. Overall, diverse stakeholder interventions have led to both short- and long-term improvements in women's political leadership and gender-sensitive reforms, including the passage of Gender and Equal Opportunities Bills in several states and an Affirmative Procurement Bill in Kaduna.

Nigeria is actively pursuing a number of initiatives to improve the very low representation of women in parliamentary positions, currently at about 4% in the National Assembly:

■ **Seat Reservation for Women Bill**

This landmark bill proposes the creation of 74 additional seats exclusively for women in the federal parliament and three special seats in each state assembly. If passed, it would increase women's representation to around 17%. The bill passed its second reading in 2024 and is awaiting public hearings and final approval.

■ **Affirmative Action Policy (35% Quota)**

Although Nigeria has had a policy since 2006 mandating 35% of political positions for women, it has not been fully implemented due to a lack of political will. The Seat Reservation Bill is a practical step towards realizing this goal.

■ **Civil Society and Advocacy Efforts**

Organizations like ElectHer and Women in Politics Forum provide mentorship, training, funding, and grassroots mobilization to support female candidates and promote awareness about women's political participation.

■ **Increasing Female Political Participation**

The 2025 elections saw a record number of women contest and win legislative seats, with more women running for governorships and state legislatures. Young women leaders are leveraging digital platforms to mobilize support and advocate for gender equality.

■ **Addressing Barriers**

Efforts continue to tackle cultural, economic, and political barriers such as patriarchal norms, financial constraints, political violence, and weak party support structures.

■ **Legislative Champions**

Key lawmakers, including the House Deputy Speaker Benjamin Kalu, actively champion women's representation through bills and public advocacy.

■ Regional and Continental Context

Nigeria currently ranks the lowest in Africa for women's parliamentary representation, contrasting with countries like Rwanda and Tanzania that use quotas and reserved seats to boost female participation.

In the area of **ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls**, Nigeria has made strides in eliminating legal discrimination against women through the Revised National Gender Policy (2021–2026) and its domestication in several states, along with activating gender focal points in MDAs. However, the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill remains unpassed at the national level, leaving discriminatory legal gaps in areas like citizenship, inheritance, and family law. This legislative void partially weakens Nigeria's compliance with international human rights standards and risks slowing progress toward gender equality.

On **elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation**, Nigeria has established legal and policy frameworks. These include Section 42 of the 1999 Constitution, National Gender Policy (2006), and the VAPP Act 2015. So far, the VAPP Act has been domesticated in 35 states, to combat sex-based discrimination and violence. Nigeria has continued to make reform efforts on security sector legislation and the integration of gender policies, training security agencies, and institutionalizing gender manuals. These efforts enable structures like Mixed Observers Teams and Community Safety Platforms to address security concerns and provide support in conflict settings, particularly in the North-East. However, effective implementation is hindered by weak enforcement, discriminatory social norms, inadequate funding, limited political will, and fragmented coordination, underscoring the need for stronger mechanisms and harmonized laws to fully realize gender equality.

Nigeria has also taken steps to **recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work**. In 2024, foundational investments in data enabled the NBS to advance the Time Use Survey for sex- and age-disaggregated data on time allocation. This data forms the basis for integrating unpaid care work into national economic analysis. Additionally, Zonal Coordination Mechanisms have facilitated widespread training on Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting and advocated for state-level investments in care infrastructure, with states like Kano and Edo incorporating these principles into their budgets and increasing allocations for gender equality and care services.



Meaningful **participation and leadership of women in governance, peace negotiations, and security decision-making** are central to Nigeria's National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), which advocates for a 50% affirmative action quota. Female representation enhances transparency, prioritizes gender-based violence issues, and fosters trust and social stability. Sustained advocacy and functional WPS structures at national and sub-national levels have improved women's public life participation, while the integration of women-led peace structures has led to greater institutional recognition and support.

Nigeria has made tangible progress in **promoting women's equal access to economic resources**, including implementing gender-responsive procurement reforms in Kaduna and Lagos states, and finalizing its first National Policy on Women's Economic Empowerment. For enhancing women's **empowerment through technology**, programmes have trained over 5,000 women and girls in digital literacy and ICT for entrepreneurship, and mobile referral platforms have aided GBV reporting in humanitarian contexts. However, a persistent gender digital divide remains, particularly among rural women, with no national strategy or comprehensive survey data. Regarding **adopting and strengthening policies for gender equality**, Nigeria has made critical institutional gains, with the Federal Budget Call Circular for 2025 mandating Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and 26 states developing GRB-integrated work plans or establishing gender commissions.

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

1. Per capita GDP has declined

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

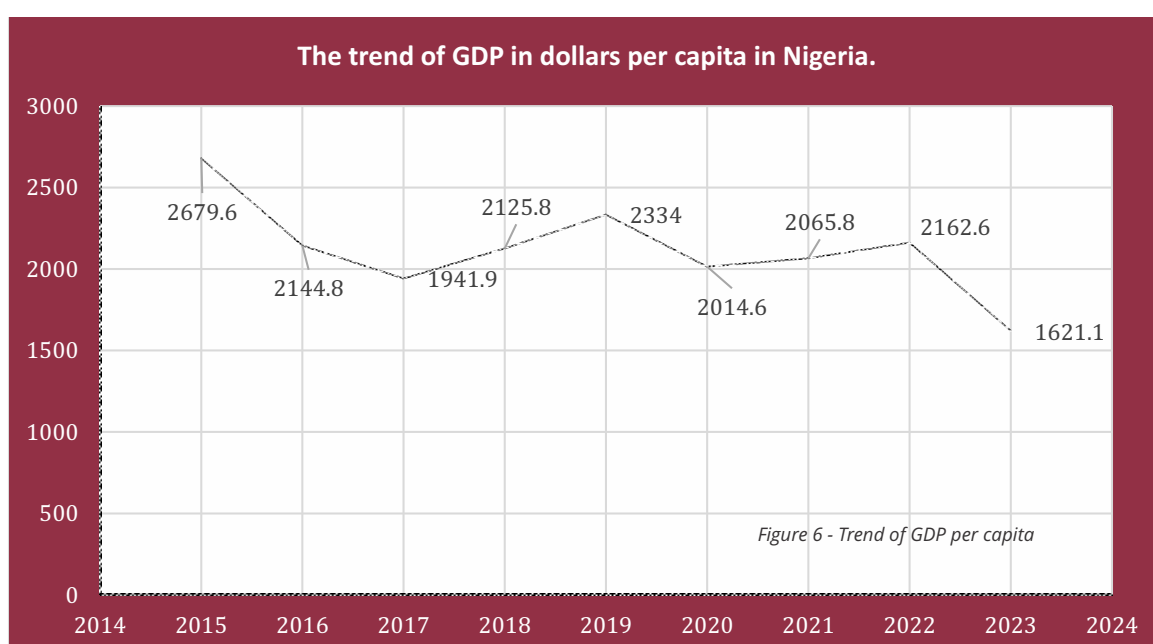


Over the past eight years, Nigeria has experienced a steady decline in GDP per capita from \$2,679.6 in 2015 to \$1,621.1 in 2023—highlighting persistent structural economic challenges. Despite being Africa's largest oil producer, the country remains heavily reliant on the oil and gas sector, exposing the economy to global price shocks and reinforcing the urgency for economic diversification.

Key sectors such as telecommunications, banking, and retail have driven growth, while agriculture remains a major employer. Recent diversification efforts have expanded into manufacturing, food processing, entertainment, tourism, and technology. Nigeria's large and youthful population is a key driver of labor supply and domestic demand.

However, economic progress has been hindered by limited industrialization, insufficient job creation, and the compounded effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted production, weakened revenue collection, and intensified insecurity. These factors continue to challenge sustained GDP growth.

To increase per capita GDP, Nigeria is pursuing a multi-pronged strategy aimed at transforming the economy, reducing poverty, and creating jobs:



■ **Macroeconomic Reforms and Stability**

The government has implemented significant reforms, such as the removal of petrol subsidies and foreign exchange market liberalization, to restore fiscal space, control inflation, and to improve investor confidence. These reforms are expected to boost growth from 3.3% in 2023 to about 4.1% in 2025, laying a foundation for higher per capita income.

■ **Economic Diversification and Growth Targets**

The National Development Plan (2021-2025) and Nigeria Agenda 2050 set ambitious goals to increase per capita GDP to \$6,000 by 2030 and \$33,000 by 2050. These plans focus on diversifying beyond oil, investing in infrastructure (power, transport, housing), enhancing human capital, and improving governance to stimulate inclusive growth and job creation.

■ **Private Sector Engagement and Industrialization:**

The government seeks to attract private sector investment to bridge infrastructure gaps and accelerate industrial growth. Increased oil production (targeting over 2 million barrels per day) alongside non-oil sector development is expected to drive GDP growth towards a 7% target in 2025, which is critical for raising per capita income.

■ **Fiscal Policy and Digital Economy**

Strategic fiscal policies include expanding digital payment platforms to improve tax collection and increase non-oil revenues, providing resources for development spending and social protection programmes supporting poverty reduction and economic inclusion.

■ **Poverty Reduction and Job Creation**

Nigeria aims to reduce poverty to 0.6% and unemployment to around 6% by 2030 through sustained economic growth, human capital development, and social inclusion initiatives. The National Development Plan targets the creation of 21 million full-time jobs by 2025, which is essential to raising household incomes and per capita GDP.

2. Most Nigerians still work in the informal sector of the economy without adequate protection

As of 2023, 92.7% of Nigeria's workforce was engaged in the informal sector; 95% of women and 90% of men. While providing essential income, these informal jobs often lack labor protections, leaving workers vulnerable, especially during economic downturns. The scarcity of formal job opportunities pushes many Nigerians to emigrate in search of better prospects.

The formal sector employs only 7.3% of the labor force, prompting various government efforts to shift more workers into protected, formal employment:

- **Job Creation and Skills Development**

The National Development Plan (2021-2025) aims to create 21 million full-time jobs by 2025 through infrastructure investment, economic diversification, and improved business environments to absorb more workers into formal employment.

- **Support for MSMEs**

SMEDAN's "GROW Nigerian" initiative provides guidance, resources, training, and market access to MSMEs. This helps them scale and formalize operations, thereby creating more formal jobs.

- **Youth Employability and Vocational Training**

Public-private partnerships, such as those involving the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) and West Africa Vocational Education (WAVE), focus on equipping youth with practical skills, entrepreneurship training, and mentorship to enhance employability in the formal sector.

- **Digital Economy and Gig Work**

The expansion of the gig economy and digital platforms is creating new formal and semi-formal employment opportunities, especially in urban centers. These opportunities are supported by fintech innovations and AI-driven job roles.

- **Labour Policy and Productivity Initiatives**

The Ministry of Labor and Employment, National Directorate of Employment (NDE), and National Productivity Centre (NPC) are implementing programmes like the Labor and Employment Empowerment Programme (LEEP) to boost productivity and formal job creation.

- **Addressing Skills Mismatch**

Efforts are underway to align education and vocational curricula with labor market needs, emphasizing digital literacy, AI skills, and entrepreneurship to prepare workers for formal sector demands.

3. Child labor remains widespread

Despite protective legislation through the CRA, child labor remains widespread in Nigeria. The ILO estimates that 15 million children under age 14 are working, many in hazardous conditions. Recent data shows a troubling increase, with over 50% of children engaged in economic activities, 39.2% in child labor, and 22.9% in

hazardous work. Male and rural children are disproportionately affected. Stronger enforcement of child protection laws, alongside investments in education and social welfare, is crucial to address this growing problem.

Nigeria is implementing a comprehensive set of initiatives to eliminate child labor, aligned with international standards and national commitments:

- **National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour (2021-2025)**

This roadmap guides accelerated efforts to eradicate the worst forms of child labor by 2025 and all child labor by 2030. It incorporates emerging challenges such as forced labor and aims to harmonize actions across all geopolitical zones.

- **Alliance 8.7 Pathfinder Country Commitment**

Nigeria is part of this global coalition committed to ending child labor, forced labor, human trafficking, and modern slavery by 2025, coordinating with international partners like the ILO, UNICEF, and the US Department of Labor.

- **Legal and Policy Frameworks**

Nigeria has ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182, and domesticated them through laws such as the CRA and VAPP Act. The government continues to review and strengthen legislation, including setting 15 years as the minimum working age.

- **Institutional Structures**

The National Steering Committee on Child Labor and corresponding state and local committees coordinate multi-sectoral efforts, including community monitoring and enforcement.

- **Digital Reporting Tools**

The National Child Labor Website and Child Labor Reporting App, launched in partnership with the ILO, enable real-time reporting and data collection to improve transparency and responsiveness.

- **Education and Social Protection**

Partnerships with UNICEF and NGOs provide free education and social support to vulnerable children, addressing root causes of child labor such as poverty.

- **State-Level Initiatives**

States like Lagos have implemented targeted programmes involving Ministries of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, focusing on child welfare, poverty

alleviation, and protection.

■ **Awareness and Advocacy**

Community campaigns engage parents, religious leaders, and employers to highlight the risks of child labor and advocate for children's rights.



SDG 14: Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources for Sustainable Development

1. Plastic pollution of water bodies is on the increase



Plastic pollution is a significant environmental and health threat in Nigeria, with plastics comprising a substantial portion (around 34%) of solid waste. Microplastics are prevalent in water bodies. The plastic pollution crisis has worsened, with millions of tons of plastic waste generated annually. While policy interventions like single-use plastic bans exist, they face challenges due to high population density and inadequate waste management infrastructure.

Nigeria is actively implementing multiple initiatives to combat plastic pollution in its water bodies through regulatory, community, and industry-driven approaches:



■ **Single-Use Plastic Bans**

The Federal Government plans to ban single-use plastics by 2025, advancing from an earlier target of 2028, aiming to reduce plastic waste at the source. Lagos state has already announced a ban on single-use plastics and sachet water starting January 2025 to promote sustainable waste management and environmental health.

■ **Regulatory and Stakeholder Engagement**

The National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), in partnership with UNEP and other stakeholders, is promoting circular economy solutions to reduce plastic pollution, especially from sachet water packaging. This includes regulatory measures, industry engagement, and awareness campaigns.

■ **National Policy and Roadmap**

Nigeria has formulated a national policy on plastic pollution and a roadmap for solid and plastic waste management, supported by a Presidential Committee on Sustainable Blue Economy. These policies reflect commitment at the highest government levels to tackle marine and freshwater plastic pollution.

■ **Community and Civil Society Actions**

NGOs and coalitions such as GAIA and local environmental groups are actively raising awareness, advocating for bans on non-recyclable plastics (e.g., styrofoam, microbeads), and promoting inclusive approaches involving community, religious, and political leaders.

■ **Plastic Waste Management and Recycling Initiatives**

The Nigeria Plastic Solutions Activity (2023-2025) focuses on transforming plastic waste management in Lagos and Anambra states by enhancing the capacity of collectors, recyclers, and small businesses. It promotes circular economy models, technical skill development, and better market linkages to reduce environmental and health risks.

■ **International Commitments**

Nigeria has pledged at global forums, such as the 2022 UN Ocean Conference, to reduce marine plastic pollution, establish marine protected areas, and participate in multilateral agreements on ocean governance.

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of Implementation and Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

1. Nigeria's revenue compared to the size of the economy remains low

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



As a share of GDP, Nigeria's revenue remains significantly low, limiting its ability to fund public services and infrastructure. In 2023, government revenue stood at 9.6% of GDP, far below the levels of other countries like South Africa (29.2%), the United States (31.2%), and Germany (46.3%). The tax-to-GDP ratio in Nigeria increased slightly from 5.5% in 2020 to 6.7% in 2021, but this remains 8.9 percentage points lower than the African average³. Non-tax revenues contributed 4.0% of GDP in 2021, with rents and royalties accounting for the largest share (3.0% of GDP, or 75.5% of non-tax revenues). This was again lower than the average non-tax revenues for African countries (5.8% of GDP).

Nigeria is undertaking several key initiatives to increase its revenue as a proportion of the economy, aiming to reduce fiscal deficits, enhance economic stability, and finance development:

— Tax Reforms and Revenue Mobilization

The government has set an ambitious target to raise the tax-to-GDP ratio from 9-10% in recent years to 18% by 2025, surpassing Africa's average of 16.5%. This involves broadening the tax base beyond corporate taxes, improving tax administration, and increasing compliance through reforms led by the Fiscal Policy & Tax Reforms Committee established in 2023.

— Value Added Tax (VAT) Increase

The planned VAT rate hike from 7.5% to 10% is expected to boost non-oil revenues and push the overall revenue-to-GDP ratio to about 10.3% in 2025, although this remains below international averages.

— Diversification of Revenue Sources

Efforts focus on expanding non-oil revenue streams, including improved collection of customs duties, excise taxes, and digital economy levies, to reduce dependence on volatile oil revenues.

³ <https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/topics/policy-sub-issues/global-tax-revenues/revenue-statistics-africa-nigeria.pdf/>.

— Fiscal Policy and Budget Management

The 2025 budget, titled “Budget of Restoration,” allocates significant resources to debt servicing (over ₦14 trillion) and capital expenditure, reflecting a balance between managing fiscal pressures and investing in growth-enhancing sectors. However, the government faces a projected fiscal deficit of about 3.9% of GDP, underscoring the need for enhanced revenue mobilization.

— Improved Transparency and Governance

Reforms targeting government-owned enterprises and public financial management aim to increase efficiency and reduce leakages, thereby improving overall revenue collection.

— Challenges and Outlook

Despite these reforms, the IMF projects that government revenue as a percentage of GDP may slightly decline to around 14% in 2025-2026 due to economic pressures. Sustained efforts in tax reform, economic diversification, and fiscal discipline are critical to achieving long-term revenue growth relative to GDP.

2. Remittances continue to play a major role in the economy

Remittances from the Nigerian diaspora continue to be a key source of economic support, contributing approximately 6% of the country's GDP. These funds are instrumental in supporting daily expenses, healthcare, education, and small business initiatives for many households. Between 2016 and 2022, remittance inflows fluctuated, rising from \$19.7 billion in 2016 and peaking at \$24.3 billion in 2018 before declining to \$17.2 billion during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. By 2022, remittances recovered to \$20.16 billion, reflecting resilience in diaspora contribution⁴.

Nigeria is actively implementing several initiatives to increase diaspora remittances and boost the economy:

— Non-Resident Bank Verification Number (NRBVN) Platform

Launched by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in May 2025, this digital platform allows Nigerians abroad to obtain a BVN remotely, facilitating easier access to banking services, including sending remittances and investing in Nigerian assets. The NRBVN incorporates strong Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and compliance protocols to ensure security and build international confidence.

⁴ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1012368/remittance-inflows-to-nigeria/>.

— **Non-Resident Nigerian Accounts**

The CBN introduced Non-Resident Nigerian Ordinary Accounts (NRNOA) and Non-Resident Nigerian Investment Accounts (NRNIA) to enable diaspora Nigerians to remit foreign earnings, manage funds, and invest in Nigeria in local or foreign currencies.

— **Policy Reforms and Market Liberalization**

Reforms such as the “willing buyer, willing seller” foreign exchange regime have increased remittance inflows significantly—from \$3.3 billion in 2023 to \$4.73 billion in 2024 by improving transparency, competition among International Money Transfer Operators (IMTOs), and simplifying operational procedures.

— **Engagement with IMTOs**

The CBN has expanded the number of IMTOs and strengthened collaboration to enhance the supply of foreign currency and provide efficient, cost-effective remittance channels for Nigerians abroad.

— **Foreign Exchange Code**

The introduction of the Nigerian Foreign Exchange (FX) Code promotes transparency and stability in the FX market, which supports remittance flows and economic confidence.

— **Government Targets**

The CBN aims to achieve \$1 billion in monthly diaspora remittances, recognizing the critical role remittances play in supporting household incomes and providing foreign exchange for the economy.

— **Challenges**

Proposed legislation in the U.S. to impose a 5% tax on remittances could potentially affect Nigerian diaspora remittance flows, highlighting the need for continued engagement and advocacy.

3. Internet use is growing steadily

Mobile internet penetration in Nigeria has been growing steadily, driven by the availability of affordable smartphones and expanded telecom networks, particularly in rural areas. Between 2018 and 2022, internet user penetration rose from 26% to over 38%, with the total number of internet users exceeding 83 million in 2022. However, there is a notable gender gap in internet usage. The 2021 MICS shows that 37.8% of men aged 15-24 used the internet, compared to 21.3% of young women in the same age group. Bridging this digital divide is essential for inclusive development and empowerment.



Nigeria is undertaking significant initiatives to sustain and expand internet use through major investments in digital infrastructure and policy measures:

- **\$3 Billion Telecom Equipment and Fiber Optic Infrastructure Investment**

By June 2025, Nigeria will receive \$3 billion worth of telecom equipment and fiber optic cables, including \$1 billion in equipment and \$2 billion in fiber infrastructure. This will expand the fiber backbone by an additional 90,000 km, increasing broadband penetration to over 70% and reducing broadband costs by more than 60%.

- **Fiber Network Expansion Project**

Beginning in the last quarter of 2025, a \$2 billion fiber network project will deploy 90,000 km of fiber optic cables, increasing the existing network from 35,000 km to 125,000 km. This aims to improve internet accessibility nationwide, especially in rural and underserved areas, boosting digital inclusion and economic growth.

- **National Broadband Plan (2020-2025)**

The plan targets 70% population penetration and internet speeds of 15 mbps in rural and 25 mbps in urban areas, by 2025. Achieving these goals requires doubling investment in telecom infrastructure from \$86 billion to \$136 billion to bridge the digital divide, particularly in rural communities.

- **Infrastructure Protection and Collaboration**

To address frequent fiber cable damages, the Ministry of Communications and Ministry of Works established a Joint Standing Committee to safeguard broadband infrastructure, ensuring network reliability and sustainability.

- **Focus on Digital Inclusion and Economic Growth**

These infrastructure investments support Nigeria's broader digital economy agenda, aiming to foster innovation, support MSMEs, enhance e-governance, and create jobs by expanding affordable, high-speed internet access.

Chapter 3: Voluntary National Review

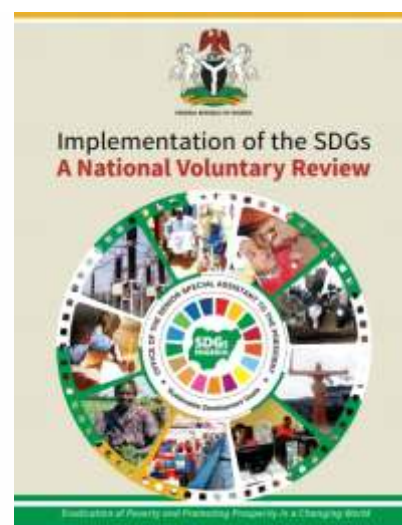
3.1. The Purpose

The Voluntary National Review is a multifaceted, country-led, and voluntary process central to the follow-up and review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It provides a structured platform for countries to assess and present progress on the 17 SDGs at the UN HLPF. The VNR reflects national realities and priorities, while maintaining a long-term, globally-oriented perspective. Its key purposes include:

- Facilitating the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges, lessons learned, and best practices in implementing the 2030 Agenda. The peer learning and exchange aim to accelerate SDG implementation and help to identify areas where countries may require support or technical guidance
- Enabling countries to assess their progress towards achieving the SDGs, pinpointing implementation gaps, and determining areas needing additional effort or policy adjustment
- Providing a platform for broad and inclusive stakeholder engagement and fostering partnerships involving governments at all levels, CSOs, the private sector, youth, and other relevant actors to ensure ownership of the review process and its outcomes
- Supporting national implementation of the SDGs by integrating them into national and sub-national policies, plans, and budgetary processes, with the expectation that it will strengthen coordination across government and society and drive political ownership of the SDGs
- Contribute to greater transparency and accountability in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. By publicly reporting on their progress, countries demonstrate their commitment to the SDGs and allow for review and dialogue by stakeholders.

Figure 7 - Trajectory of the Nigeria VNR focus through the years

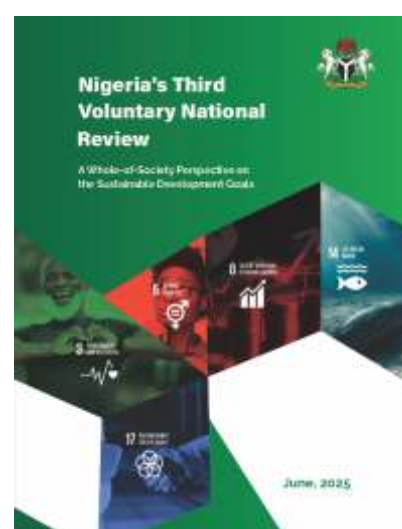
Focused on institutional frameworks and policy integration for SDG implementation. It highlighted the alignment of the SDGs with Nigeria's Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP 2017–2020), baseline assessments on 69 indicators, and measures taken to foster national ownership, policy mainstreaming, inter-sectoral coordination, and resource mobilisation.



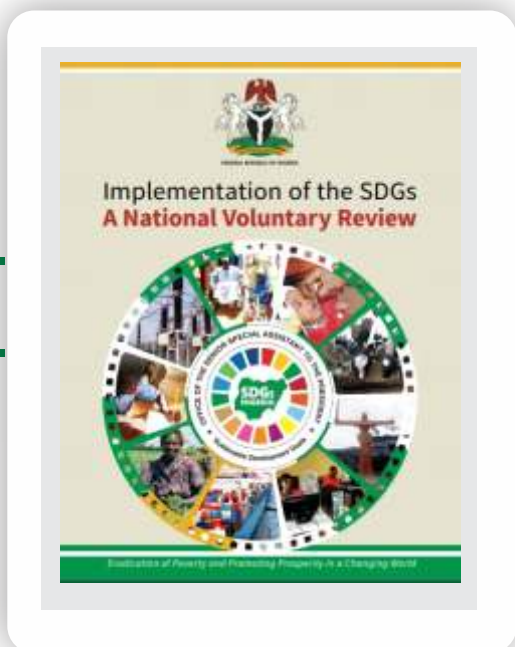
Examined priority SDGs - poverty (SDG 1), economic growth (SDG 8), health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), peace and security (SDG 16), and partnerships (SDG 17) - in alignment with national development priorities. The review was undertaken in the context of major external shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic and declining oil revenues. It provided a critical assessment of progress and identified systemic challenges impeding SDG attainment.



Focused on priority SDGs—health (SDG 3), gender equality (SDG 5), economic growth (SDG 8), life under water (SDG 14), and partnerships (SDG 17) - in alignment with national development priorities. The review was undertaken through a nationwide and inclusive consultative process.



3.2. 2017 VNR – Key Highlights and Prospects



Nigeria's first VNR, presented in July 2017, highlighted foundational efforts implementing the SDGs. It outlined the institutional framework required to foster an enabling policy environment for SDG implementation, primarily through Nigeria's ERGP (2017–2020). The ERGP's emphasis on economic, social, and environmental development aligns closely with the SDGs. The key highlights include:

— Institutional Framework for SDG Implementation

A major milestone was the establishment of institutional mechanisms to achieve effective implementation of the SDGs across the country. This included the appointment of a

Senior Special Assistant on the SDGs (SSAP-SDGs) within the Presidency with the mandate to coordinate SDG implementation. Experienced public servants were deployed to the OSSAP-SDGs, and similar office structures established at state and local government levels; indicating widespread national commitment.

— Integration with the NDPs

The 2017 VNR outlined the institutional dimensions needed to create an enabling policy environment for implementing the SDGs through the ERGP 2017-2020; including economic, social, and environmental priorities. The SDGs were also previously aligned with Nigeria's Vision 20:2020 plan.

— National Ownership and Awareness

The report emphasized the strong political commitment and national ownership of the SDGs. This ownership extends across all levels of government and includes a wide range of public and private sector institutions, as well as CSOs. Awareness and advocacy campaigns were launched to build understanding and promote engagement across public institutions, civil society, and the private sector.

— **Resource Mobilization Efforts**

Nigeria pursued fiscal reforms to improve funding for SDG implementation. The Conditional Grants Scheme was restructured to require state-level counterpart funding, incentivizing sub-national governments to develop and finance SDG-aligned interventions.

— **Special Intervention Programmes**

The Social Intervention Programme (SIP) was featured as a critical tool for reducing poverty and supporting vulnerable populations. Conditional cash transfers were delivered through the National Social Register, reaching underserved communities.

— **Monitoring and Evaluation**

A functional M&E unit was established within OSSAP-SDGs, initially focusing on tracking directly-funded projects. Nigeria also planned to advance this effort on outcome and impact level performance monitoring and ensure proper integration of SDG indicators into the national M&E framework for the ERGP. The development of an SDGs Information Management System (NMIS), based on the experience with the MDGs, is also ongoing to serve as a repository for SDG-related data.

— **Identified Challenges**

The 2017 VNR acknowledged that Nigeria was battling an economic recession at the commencement of SDG implementation, which became a major challenge. The continued heavy reliance on oil and gas as a driver of economic growth and the humanitarian crisis in the North-East were also noted as difficulties impacting SDG efforts.

— **Areas for Support**

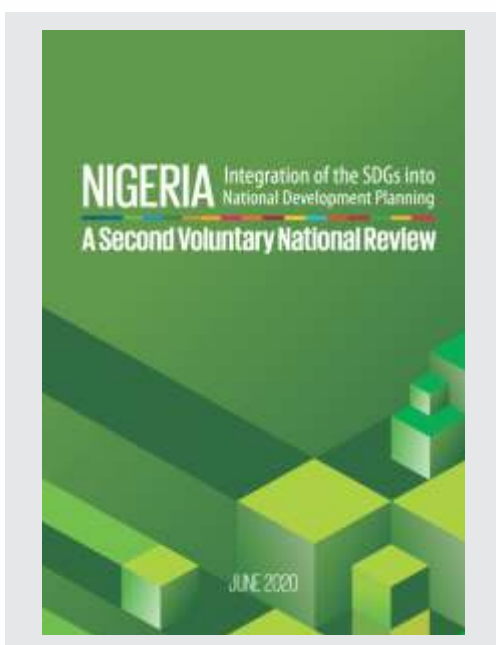
The report identified priority areas where Nigeria needed support, including technology transfer and capacity building, particularly in data, information, and performance management.

— **Methodology and Inclusivity**

The VNR preparation process was integrated, participatory, inclusive, and evidence-based, involving consultations with a wide array of stakeholders, including government agencies, CSOs, the private sector, academia, and development partners.

The 2017 VNR envisioned the ERGP as a strategic vehicle for managing Nigeria's economic transition while aligning with the SDGs. The planned integration of the SDGs into the revised National Long-Term Plan (Nigeria Vision 20:2020) and the advancement of the monitoring and evaluation system towards outcome-based assessment were also highlighted as key steps towards sustainable development. Institutional structures and early-stage resource mobilization efforts laid the groundwork for deeper progress in achieving the SDGs.

3.3. 2020 VNR – Key Highlights and Prospects



Nigeria's second VNR was presented in July 2020. This review focused on critical issues related to the SDGs based on Nigeria's development priorities embedded in the ERGP (2017-2020) and reinforced by the three cardinal objectives of President Buhari's administration; notably the economy, security and the fight against corruption.

The VNR highlighted the key areas of focus, including poverty eradication (SDG 1), an inclusive economy (SDG 8), health and well-being (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), peace and security (SDG 16), and partnerships (SDG 17). These priorities were aligned with the

development agenda and the core objectives of the previous administration. The 2020 VNR was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which tested Nigeria's public health system, and the sharp decline in oil prices, a critical shock for an economy where oil and gas account for 86% of public revenue. Due to those disruptions, the report was based on pre-pandemic data, emphasizing the need for strategic responses that harness Nigerians' entrepreneurial and innovative potential at all levels.

The 2020 VNR assessed progress within the framework of the ERGP, tracking Nigeria's performance on seven priority SDGs with the following key highlights:

— **Focus on Priority SDGs**

The review tracked progress on seven SDGs aligned with the ERGP, prioritizing poverty reduction, health, education, economic inclusion, gender equality, peace and security, and partnerships.

— **"Whole-of-Society" Approach**

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigeria adopted a "whole-of-society" approach, conducting virtual consultations to ensure diverse participation from public institutions, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

— **Integration with National Development Planning**

The VNR demonstrated efforts to integrate the SDGs into national development planning; highlighting the commitment to mainstream the Goals into medium- and long-term development plans, including the successor plan for the ERGP.

— **Mixed Progress on SDGs**

Progress was uneven across indicators, with modest achievements in some goals and indicators, while challenges persisted in others. For instance:

- SDG-1 (Poverty and Basic Services) showed moderate improvements in creating social safeguards and delivering basic services
- SDG-3 (Health) showed some progress in reducing the maternal mortality ratio between 2016 and 2018, but overall figures remained poor
- SDG-4 (Education) outcomes remain hampered by a high number of out-of-school children
- SDG-17 (Means of Implementation) revealed marginal improvements in total government revenue as a proportion of GDP between 2016 and 2018.

A color-coded system utilized to indicate the likelihood of achieving each SDG, was included in the report. The review acknowledged data limitations, with some SDG indicators lacking recent data at the time of drafting the report.

— **Impact of COVID-19 and Oil Price Collapse**

The development of the 2020 VNR coincided with the onset of the COVID-19

pandemic and the collapse of oil prices, which presented significant challenges to Nigeria's public health system and economy (with 86% of public revenue derived from oil and gas). Data presented in the report was primarily before the advent of the pandemic.

■ **Domestication Efforts**

The report highlighted good strides in domesticating the SDGs in Nigeria. This included the ongoing realignment of the National Statistical System with SDG requirements and indicators for effective tracking and monitoring. Nigeria had also developed its home-grown Nigeria iSDG Model, an analytical for SDG-based policy assessment and costing. Furthermore, the 2020 VNR drew evidence from 46 evaluations to inform progress and identify areas for strengthening.

■ **Use of Evaluations**

The systematic use of evaluations to assess progress and align national and state planning was highlighted as an innovation in the VNR context.

Prospects and Way Forward: Nigeria's second VNR showcased the country's commitment to the SDGs through institutional frameworks and integration into national plans. While acknowledging mixed progress and the significant challenges posed by the pandemic and economic factors, the report outlined prospects for future action centered on strategic national development planning, economic diversification, and enhanced monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

■ **Post-ERGP NDP (2021-2030)**

This plan was identified as pivotal in advancing the achievement of the SDGs in Nigeria, with a need to focus more on health, education, peace and security, and economic diversification. It is also called the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2021-2025.

■ **Priority Actions**

Drawing on President Buhari's 2019 keynote address on the iSDG, the VNR emphasized priority actions for the long-term National Development Plan (2021-2030), focusing on poverty reduction and the economy (SDG 1 and 8), security, and the fight against corruption (SDG 16). The administration reiterated its priority of lifting 100 million Nigerians out of poverty over the next ten years, although the COVID-19 pandemic posed a risk to this aspiration.

— **Strengthening Evidence-Based Planning**

The need to strengthen evidence-based planning and accountability mechanisms at the state level was highlighted for accelerating SDG implementation.

— **Addressing Economic Diversification**

The VNR underscored the critical development challenge of diversifying sources of economic growth, moving away from heavy reliance on oil and gas and stimulating sectors like agriculture.

— **Continued SDG Integration**

The SDGs were expected to be further integrated into the revised National Long-Term Plan.

— **Advancing Monitoring and Evaluation**

Plans were in place to advance the SDGs monitoring to outcome and impact-level performance monitoring, ensure proper integration of SDG indicators into the national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for the NERGP, and review and rebrand the Nigeria Millennium Development Goals Information System (NMIS) into an SDGs Information Management System (NSIS).

— **Periodic Reviews**

The proposal was made for Nigeria to present its VNR every two years to enable careful review of progress and challenges during the Decade of Action.

3.4. 2025 VNR – Key Highlights, Unique Attributes and Prospects

Nigeria is among 37 countries presenting a VNR report at the 2025 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This third VNR critically reviews Nigeria's efforts, challenges and lessons learned from Nigeria's SDGs implementation during and immediately after the COVID-19 pandemic. The combined effect of COVID-19 and the rising armed conflicts amongst nations of the world (including the Russia-Ukraine war) has created significant shocks to the global economy. This has led to lockdowns, travel bans, and supply chain disruptions causing a severe contraction in economic activity of many countries particularly the Low Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). Global GDP fell by about 3.4%, translating to



a loss of over two trillion USD in economic output. Progress made on SDGs implementation across countries and continents has slowed down, stagnated or sometimes reversed. Nigeria has experienced its fair share of global challenges despite commitments from SDGs stakeholders at all levels.

This VNR also pays particular attention to the progress on health and wellbeing (SDG3), gender equality (SDG5), inclusive economy (SDG8), life under water (SDG14) and partnerships (SDG17) using the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

Notable progress and actions since the 2020 VNR include:

1. Integration of SDGs into National Plans and Budgets

The economic, social, and environmental dimensions of the SDGs have been integrated into national and sub-national government plans and annual budgets, such as Nigeria's Agenda 2050, the NDP (2021 - 2025), Nigeria Economic Sustainability Plan (2020), and the National Poverty Reduction with Growth Strategy (2021).

2. The domestication and Customization of the Nigeria iSDGs

The iSDG is a home-grown analytical framework and policy simulation model used to align national development strategies with the SDGs. This enables line MDAs to channel resources towards SDG areas.

3. Special Intervention Projects

OSSAP-SDGs has executed special intervention projects across pro-poor sectors aimed at fast-tracking the achievement of the SDGs. Examples include constructing classrooms and health centers, providing ambulances, establishing vocational centers, and installing transformers and solar-powered street lights.

4. Launch of the INFF

Nigeria's Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) for Sustainable Development was launched in September 2022.

5. The 2022 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) Progress Declaration

In line with the 2022 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) Progress Declaration, Nigeria has made deliberate efforts to strengthen the linkages

between the Global Compact for Migration and the SDGs by mainstreaming migration-related commitments in the VNR process. Stakeholder consultations for the 2025 VNR included migration actors, such as the Federal Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and the Nigeria Immigration Service. This approach ensures that migration-related data, challenges, and contributions are captured in the national SDG narrative.

6. Renewed Hope Agenda

The current administration's "Renewed Hope Agenda" has identified eight priorities that align significantly with the SDGs.

7. Realignment of Nigeria's NSS

OSSAP-SDGs in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), successfully realigned the NSS with the requirements and indicators of the SDGs. The Office also signed a data bond with the Statistician-General of the Federation, Heads of MDAs and the governments of the 36 States of the Federation.

The Review Process

The 2025 VNR process enhanced inclusivity, improved understanding of Nigeria's SDG implementation framework, and produced contextspecific recommendations. An inclusive, participatory and evidence-based approach was adopted:

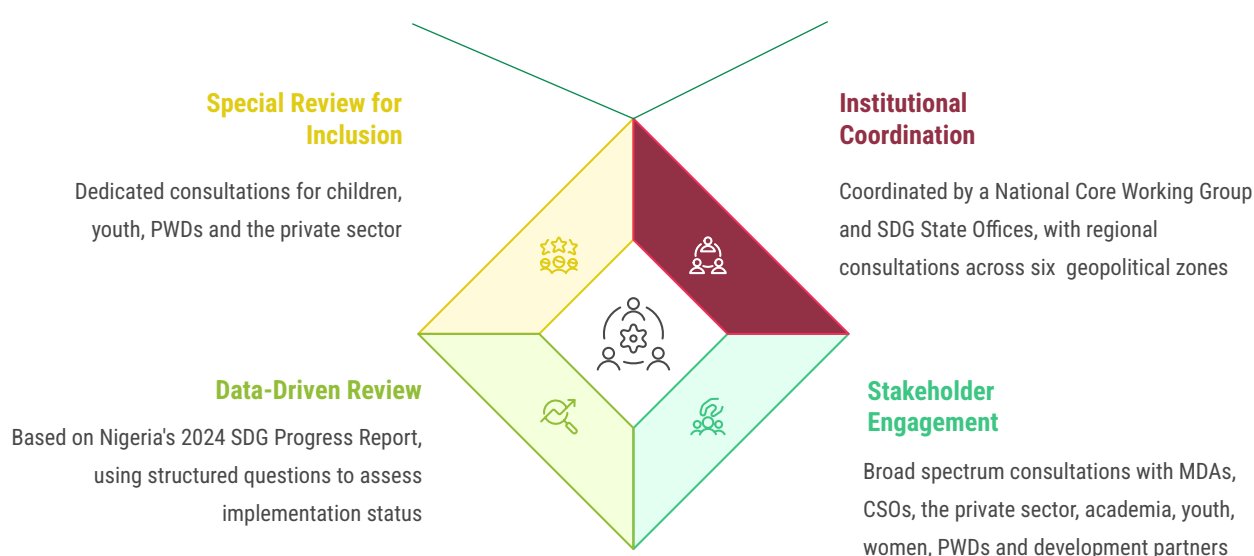


Figure 8 - Nigeria's 2025 VNR process

The third VNR was designed and conducted in the spirit of the HLPF theme of “Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development”. To this end, Kaduna and Lagos states conducted their Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR), with the results fed into the third VNR. Other key partners, such as Sightsavers Nigeria, conducted VNR consultative meetings in March 2025 for persons with disabilities to provide a comprehensive perspective of disability inclusion in the implementation of SDGs in Nigeria. In April 2025, UNICEF and UNFPA jointly organized a VNR consultation for children and young people nationwide to spotlight their voices, ideas, and priorities.

Critical Components of Nigeria's Processes	Voluntary National Reviews		
	2017	2020	2025
1. Integration of SDGs into the NDP	✓	✓	✓
2. Focus on specific SDGs	✓	✓	✓
3. Use of Evaluation evidence	X	✓	✓
4. Recognition of the transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda in improving the quality of life of the population	✓	✓	✓
5. Multidimensional approach to addressing the challenges of the 2030 Agenda is highlighted	✓	✓	✓
6. Conduct of Regional Consultations	X	✓	✓
7. Creative use and incorporation of VLRs	X	X	✓
8. Standalone/Specialised Consultations with PWDs and Children and Youths	X	✓	✓
9. Specific focus on vulnerable groups	✓	✓	✓
10. Use of Audio-visual presentation	X	✓	✓

Table 1 - Comparative analyses of Nigeria's three VNRs

3.5. Voluntary Local Reviews

Like VNRs, Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) are multifaceted. However, their purpose is to enhance the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs at the sub-national level and contribute to the country's VNRs.

African member states specifically requested the development of Africa VLR Guidelines to support and strengthen capacities for VLR preparation on the continent, considering their unique contexts and aiming to link local and national priorities on the SDGs. In Nigeria, to date, two states - Kaduna and Lagos, have successfully conducted VLRs.

3.5.1. Lagos State

The Lagos State VLR was conducted in 2023, and the report was published in June of that year with an accompanying Momentum Case Analysis from March 2023 and a Data Compendium Playbook from May 2023. The VLR process was created across six core streams of work:

- 1. SDGs Baseline Assessment**

This involved a detailed assessment of Lagos state's current performance across the 17 SDGs against set UN targets and benchmarks with comparable cities.

- 2. SDGs Prioritization**

Prioritizing a subset of SDGs in line with Lagos state's context and immediate development agendas helps to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda.

- 3. SDGs Data Compendium**

This involved localizing SDG indicators for Lagos state's VLR and compiling SDG datasets from various sources like public sources, Lagos-focused surveys, MDAs, NGOs, and experts. The compendium serves as the database and source of truth for the data used in the VLR, aiming for transparency on data sources and methodologies. Data for 91 indicators across the 17 SDGs were obtained and reported, drawing on four primary sources: public sources, Lagos-focused research (like resident surveys), MDA-provided data, and private databases. The Lagos Residents Survey, in particular, gathered input from over 21,000 respondents across various demographics and informed the assessment of progress for 13 SDGs across 39 indicators, providing insights into residents' perspectives on development, quality of life,

safety, and more.

4. SDGs Momentum Case and Gap Assessment

This estimates the 2030 performance of the SDGs for Lagos based on historic trends and ongoing initiatives and determining the gaps to be closed. It also involved defining targets for Lagos based on UN recommendations and benchmarks, establishing likely performance based on trends and current initiatives, and identifying challenges.

5. Action Plan

The plan detailed high-impact interventions to accelerate progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda; aiming to close gaps and drive action across three structural and two cross-cutting areas, which are nuanced to Lagos' context. The plan was developed using a 3-step approach: identifying critical intervention areas, defining high-impact initiatives, and mapping crucial stakeholders. The structural areas are to stimulate economic growth and create jobs, improve living conditions, and enhance human capacity development. The cross-cutting themes include advancing climate and sustainability agenda, as well as promoting inclusive and equitable development, with initiatives for these themes embedded in the structural areas. The plan includes 22 comprehensive "high impact" initiatives with 84 specific activities.

6. Implementation Roadmap

The implementation roadmap outlined coordination and governance mechanisms.

Based on current momentum, the Momentum Case analysis found that Lagos is on track to achieve only approximately 2 of 10 prioritized SDG targets by 2030. Several SDGs were identified as being off-track, indicating projected misses on the 2030 targets. SDGs or indicators identified as on track included Enrolment (>95%) and Proficiency (relatively flat at 87%) in Quality Education and Population using the internet (>90%).

The Action Plan includes 14 gaps that must be addressed. Five emerging intervention areas were mapped to the drivers of SDG gaps. These include stimulating economic growth and creating jobs; improving living conditions of 'Lagosians'; enhancing human capacity; advancing climate and sustainability agenda; and promoting inclusive and equitable development. The VLR action plan aggregates interventions from existing plans like the Lagos State Development Plan 2052 and other state plans, and defines new interventions. It also promotes 12 "big

ideas" as a subset of high-impact initiatives to accelerate towards the 2030 targets. The proposed action plan is intended to be executed by a wide range of stakeholders, including the private sector, Lagos State Government (LASG) MDAs, and social actors, with different roles such as advocacy, implementation, and performance review.

Key Successes and Good Practices

Structured VLR Process

The VLR was created across 6 core streams: SDGs Baseline Assessment, SDGs Prioritization, SDGs Data Compendium, SDGs Momentum Case and Gap Assessment, Action Plan, and Implementation Roadmap. This structured approach provides a clear framework for the review.

Localized and Prioritized SDGs

The process involved localizing SDG indicators for Lagos State's VLR and prioritizing a subset of SDGs aligned with the state's context and development agendas. This tailoring ensures relevance and focus.

Comprehensive Data Compendium

A Data Compendium was created as the "Source of truth for SDG data" and serves as the "database" for the VLR. This compendium aggregates data from multiple sources, provides transparency on data sources and methodologies, and is intended as an MVP (Minimum Viable Product) for a continuous SDG database for Lagos.

Leveraging Diverse Data Sources

Data for 91 indicators across the 17 SDGs were obtained by leveraging four main data sources: public sources, Lagos-focused surveys, MDAs, and private databases. This multi-source approach strengthens the data basis.

Large-Scale Resident Survey

The Lagos Residents Survey was a significant component, which gathered input from over 21,000 respondents across various demographic segments. This survey provided inputs based on residents' perspectives and informed the assessment of 13 SDGs across 39 indicators. The report details tips and best practices for designing and conducting such surveys, including leveraging digital tools, managing the process centrally, defining objectives, using multi-stage sampling, ensuring questionnaire quality, and managing vendors. The plan is for the resident survey to be conducted annually.

— **Rigorous Data Quality Check**

The process includes a thorough data vetting mechanism, with confidence levels assigned to sources, and manual validation against other available datasets and expert insights.

— **Identification of On-Track SDGs/Targets**

The Momentum Case analysis identified specific SDGs or indicators where Lagos State is on track based on current momentum. These include areas like Enrolment (>95%) and Proficiency (>87%) in Quality Education, and Population using the internet (>90%). The EKO EXCEL initiative is highlighted as sustaining improvement in public schools' learning outcomes.

— **Development of a High-Impact Action Plan**

A detailed action plan was defined to accelerate progress and close identified gaps. This plan aggregates interventions from existing state plans (like the LSDP 2052) and defines new ones.

— **Promotion of "Big Ideas"**

The action plan promotes 12 "big ideas" as a subset of high-impact initiatives to accelerate progress towards the 2030 targets.

— **Multi-Stakeholder Implementation Approach**

The proposed action plan is intended to be executed by a wide range of stakeholders, including the private sector, LASG MDAs, and social actors. The report outlines different roles for these stakeholders, such as advocacy, implementation, financing, and performance review, indicating a comprehensive approach to ownership and action.

— **Guidance for MDA Data Aggregation**

The report provides tips and best practices for aggregating data from MDAs, acknowledging them as key data providers and emphasizing the need to enhance their data collection capabilities.

Lessons Learned

— **Structured VLR Process**

The VLR was undertaken through a structured process involving six core streams of work: Baseline Assessment, Prioritization, Data Compendium, Momentum Case/Gap Assessment, Action Plan, and Implementation

Roadmap. This framework itself is presented as the foundation of the VLR effort.

— **Importance of a Data Compendium**

The creation of a dedicated Data Compendium is highlighted as crucial. It serves as the "Source of truth for SDG data" used for the VLR, acting as a central database for aggregated data. It is intended to provide transparency on data sources and methodologies. This compendium is also framed as an "MVP" (Minimum Viable Product) for a continuous SDG database for Lagos state.

— **Leveraging Diverse Data Sources**

A key practice was obtaining data for 91 prioritized indicators by leveraging four main data sources: public sources (global/local databases and reports like NDHS, NBS, UN Habitat, EFInA, FAO, Oxford Economics), Lagos-focused research (specifically the Resident Survey), MDA-provided data (from various Lagos State Ministries, Departments, and Agencies), and private databases (from NGOs and experts like WARIF, UNICEF, Junior Achievement Nigeria).

Best Practices for Data Aggregation from MDAs

These include:

- Mapping SDG indicators to responsible MDAs
- Determining readily available data and sources
- Identifying overlaps and streamlining efforts
- Identifying data gaps and putting strategies in place to begin aggregating missing data
- Harmonizing data formats and standards
- Determining the frequency of data collection for each dataset
- Periodically training specific individuals in MDAs ("SDG Champions") to be responsible for aggregating their MDA's data.

2. Value and Methodology of a Large-Scale Resident Survey

The Lagos Residents Survey is highlighted as providing crucial inputs based on residents' perspectives. It gathered feedback from over 21,000 respondents across

various demographics and informed the assessment of 13 SDGs across 39 indicators. The report explicitly details tips and best practices for designing and conducting such surveys, drawing from the 2023 VLR experience.

- **Frequency:** The survey should be conducted annually to update the data compendium.
- **Management:** Managing the end-to-end process (design, coding, testing, launch/monitoring) centrally.
- **Tools:** Leveraging digital tools is recommended for efficiency.
- **Design:** Define clear objectives (capturing resident perception), and target audience, and use a suitable sampling technique (multi-stage sampling was leveraged in 2023).
- **Questionnaire Quality:** Design questionnaires for clarity, neutrality (avoiding bias), completeness of answer choices. Consider respondent fatigue and include clear instructions for programmers. Expert review and fact-checking (like recording GPS locations) were used to ensure data integrity.
- **Execution:** Conduct kick-off calls promptly with vendors (<24 hours), be available for coders' questions, use the phone for complex issues, proactively check progress, and maintain proper version control.
- **Testing:** Testers should be explicit in comments (record Test ID, include question number, descriptions, screenshots, priority level) and send comments in batches.
- **Monitoring:** Proactive monitoring, including soft launches, ensures data quality and allows for early course correction. This includes identifying "cheaters/bad respondents".

3. Rigorous Data Quality Checking:

A two-level quality check mechanism was used: an automated rules-based check to define confidence levels, followed by a manual review and validation against other sources and expert insights. This process highlights the importance of ensuring the reliability of the data used for the VLR.

Main Challenges, Gaps, and Opportunities

Data Gaps:

While data for 91 indicators were obtained, many indicators still lack data, for example, no data is available for any indicators under Goal 15 (Life on Land)

Data Quality and Standardization:

The process involves rigorous quality checks and highlights the need to enhance MDA data collection capabilities and harmonize data formats and standards

MDA Capacity:

MDAs are key data providers, and there's a need to enhance their data collection capabilities

Survey Execution Pitfalls:

The resident survey identified common pitfalls like "Radio silence" and inefficient "Email only" communication with vendors, highlighting the need for proactive communication and availability. Managing data quality during fieldwork (e.g., preventing "cheaters/bad respondents") requires active monitoring. Budgeting for potential unforeseen costs is also noted

"Big Ideas":

The plan promotes 12 "big ideas" as a subset of high-impact initiatives to accelerate progress. These cover areas like developing a Green Plan, establishing carbon credit schemes, revamping waste management policy, establishing urban social gardens, supporting job markets, accelerating upskilling, addressing brain drain in key sectors, transforming the education sector, establishing talent accelerator programs, accelerating healthcare access, developing new urban centers, and establishing an SDG data repository

High-Impact Initiatives:

Beyond the "big ideas," the plan defines 22 comprehensive "high impact" initiatives, broken down into structural areas (5 for Economy, 13 for Living Conditions, 4 for Human Capacity Development)

Multi-Stakeholder Implementation:

The action plan is proposed to be executed by a wide range of stakeholders

(private sector, LASG MDAs, social actors) with defined roles like policy support, finance, implementation, advocacy, awareness, and performance review. This highlights the opportunity for collaborative action

I Improving Data Collection:

The VLR process itself identifies opportunities for improvement, particularly in data management. This includes leveraging diverse data sources, formalizing the Data Compendium as an MVP for a continuous database, implementing rigorous quality checks, enhancing MDA capabilities and data sharing, and annualizing the Resident Survey with refined methodology and central management. The plan to establish an SDG-focused data repository is a key opportunity to improve data quality and reporting.

3.5.2. Kaduna State

Kaduna state has shown strong leadership in advancing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs at the sub-national level. It became the first Nigerian state to conduct and present a VLR, tracking local progress on the SDGs. This builds on its earlier milestone of presenting the first sub-national SDGs Report at the UN General Assembly in 2017, supported by significant investments in its statistical system to enable accurate data collection and monitoring.

To institutionalize SDG implementation, Kaduna established a Project Support Unit (PSU) within the Planning and Budget Commission, appointed a State SDG Coordinator, and formed a Technical Working Group comprising relevant ministries. This structure ensures effective cross-sector coordination and supports integration from the state to the community level.

Kaduna has prioritized inclusive, transparent processes, engaging the private sector, CSOs, media, and academia in its VLR consultations. Despite economic challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, global energy shocks, and food insecurity, the state remains committed to SDG financing. It has developed an integrated SDG financing framework with support from the UNDP and the Federal Government and is seeking further technical assistance to assess investment needs and resource gaps. Through these efforts, Kaduna state affirms its commitment to inclusive, evidence-based planning and the principle of leaving no one behind, embedding the SDGs into its development agenda across all levels of governance.



Key Successes and Good Practices

- Social Protection:**
Implementation of inclusive policies such as the State Social Register, Disability Act, and Disability Trust Fund to support vulnerable populations
- Localisation of SDG Indicators:**
Effective domestication of SDG indicators to align global goals with state-specific priorities
- SDG Reporting Leadership:**
Production of the 2017 and 2021 SDG Reports, setting a national benchmark for sub-national SDG accountability and reporting
- Multi-Stakeholder Coordination:**
Establishment of the Kaduna State Development Cooperation Framework (K-DCF), which brings together government, development partners, CSOs, NGOs, and the private sector in regular forums to enhance policy coherence and collaboration
- Urban Governance and Environmental Action:**
Creation of Metropolitan Authorities across the three senatorial zones to promote sustainable urban development and clean cities (SDG 6)
- Economic Diversification:**
Launch of the Kaduna Mining Development Company Ltd to explore and develop the state's mineral resources (SDG 8)
- Thought Leadership:**
Successful organization of two international SDG Summits in 2019 and 2023 to share knowledge and showcase progress
- Digital Identity and Data Management:**
Establishment of the Kaduna State Residents Identity Management Agency (KADRIMA), in collaboration with NIMC, to provide a legal digital identity for residents. KADRIMA developed a Master Data Management (MDM) system—an integrated, state-wide platform enabling MDAs to access, verify, and update resident data for improved service delivery and policy planning.



Lessons Learned

- I Policy Integration:**
Embedding the SDGs into legislation, policies, plans, and budgets at both state and local government levels enhances coherence and implementation
- I Strengthened Data Systems:**
Significant investment in statistical reforms has improved the Kaduna State Bureau of Statistics' capacity to conduct independent surveys and strengthened the System of Administrative Statistics (SAS), enabling efficient data collection and verification
- I Institutional Coordination:**
Establishing the SDGs Project Support Unit (SDGs-PSU) has provided a structured mechanism for monitoring and coordination of SDG implementation
- I Peace and Development Nexus:**
Recognizing the critical role of peace, the government integrated security and social cohesion into development planning, leading to the creation of the Kaduna State Peace Commission.

Main Challenges, Gaps, and Opportunities

- I Absence of a Long-Term Vision Aligned with Agenda 2030:**
The state lacks a long-term development plan aligned with the SDGs timeline or a forward-looking strategy like the national Agenda 2050. There is also no clear framework for determining the means of implementation and investment requirements for the SDGs
- I Lack of Investment Needs Assessment:**
An evidence-based assessment of total investment requirements and funding gaps is missing, hindering the development of a comprehensive SDG financing strategy in line with the INFF
- I Limited Fiscal Space:**
Budget constraints, driven by low internally generated revenue, limit the state's ability to mobilize and allocate sufficient resources for SDG-related investments

I Insecurity:

Ongoing security challenges continue to disrupt economic activity and hinder sustainable development efforts.

3.6. Global Peer and Learning Process

As part of its genuine commitment to delivering an inclusive, participatory, and evidence-based 2025 VNR, Nigeria actively engaged in a series of structured peer-review processes with fellow countries which are also presenting their VNRs in 2025. These engagements served as platforms for mutual learning, constructive dialogue, and the exchange of best practices, enabling Nigeria to both share its own experiences and draw valuable insights from the diverse strategies and innovations of other nations. This collaborative approach, which took two forms, reinforced Nigeria's dedication to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in the implementation of the SDGs.

3.6.1. Two-way Peer Review: Nigeria and Finland

Both Finland and Nigeria conducted their third respective VNRs in 2025. Both countries share similar views on the purpose of the peer review and learning within the global VNR process. The review has been helpful in strengthening the VNR process and, more crucially, in reinforcing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in both countries.

The process began with the formal written expression of interest for the two-way peer review process in early May 2024. This was followed by a formal meeting on the margins of the HLPF in July 2024. The first virtual peer review meeting was held in October 2024, where the timelines and criteria for the review were discussed and agreed upon. Subsequent meetings were held virtually and on the margins of the two global VNR Workshops in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in December 2024 and Berlin, Germany, in April 2025.

Methodologically, Nigeria and Finland reviewed each other's entire 2025 VNR process and the draft VNR Reports, with critical feedback provided at every stage. This is carefully reflected in a short statement included in the 2025 VNR Reports of both countries.

To The Government of Nigeria

16.5.2025

Finland's country peer review for Nigeria in the preparation of its 2025 VNR

Finland thanks Nigeria for the rich and fruitful process of reviewing each other's Voluntary National Reviews for 2025. The collaboration started in May 2024 with an official invitation from Finland to Nigeria to participate in a two-way review process. Nigeria kindly accepted the invitation. The collaboration continued with a planning meeting at the High-Level Political Forum in 2024, followed by stocktaking meetings in October, February and April. In the meetings, both countries gave overviews of how the work on their VNRs had progressed and how the VNR process was going overall. Countries also discussed new developments and challenges in a spirit of confidentiality. In addition, they exchanged draft material during the process.

The countries agreed to provide a written review of each other's VNRs to be included in the final review. Nigeria's VNR fulfils the criteria for a VNR set by the UN. It is well-structured and informative. The review has been edited in a format that is interesting to the reader and focuses on key points. There is also a valuable link between the review and the Statistical Annexe. Finland welcomes the photos of people from various events looking straight into the camera, signalling to the reader Nigeria's ambition to give a voice to the people, including youth, and appreciates that the responsibility for the work has been shared among civil servants from the local to the national level. The VNR builds a link between Nigeria's three reviews –conducted in 2017, 2020 and 2025 – forming a logical arc from institutional structure to development priorities and, in this review, a whole-of-society approach. Considering the administrative structure and the size of the country, the inclusion of society has been efficiently and justly formulated. The focus on vulnerable groups and children is well justified and implemented.

One of the report's highlights is the reflection on Goal 17, Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. The section discusses the enablers, harnessing facilitators and barriers related to this goal. This gives an excellent opportunity for Nigeria to revisit the 2025 VNR with whole-of-society engagement, to draw up a coherent roadmap from here to 2030, and to build progress towards sustainable development.

Taina Kulmala
Head of Unit

Eeva Furman
Leading Specialist

Prime Minister's Office, Government of Finland

Finland's peer review statement on Nigeria's 2025 VNR

3.6.2. International Peer Learning Group 2025

Recognizing the VNR as a learning process and an opportunity to strengthen implementation capacity, Nigeria participated in an international peer-learning group with Finland, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, South Africa, and Thailand.

Peer countries were involved in two physical meetings on the margins of the two global VNR Workshops in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in December 2024 and Berlin, Germany, in April 2025. In between, countries participated in three virtual peer-learning meetings to share global best practices in SDG implementation and the VNR process. As part of these, the VNRs of the respective countries were compared over time to identify similarities and differences and examine lessons learned.

The two-fold process has strengthened Nigeria's capacity to conduct a VNR that meets global standards. Nigeria's unique context and institutional frameworks serve as inspiration for peer-reviewed countries to strengthen their respective frameworks for the future. Such reviews promote and underpin South-South and Triangular Cooperation in implementing the SDGs.



Peer-Learning Group Dialogue for VNR 2025

Chapter 4: Methodology and Stakeholder Engagement

4.1 VNR Preparatory Process

The preparation of Nigeria's Third Voluntary National Review followed a structured, inclusive, and participatory approach to ensure comprehensive national ownership and alignment with the principles of the 2030 Agenda. The methodology adopted combined evidence-based reporting, multi-stakeholder engagement, peer learning, and a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

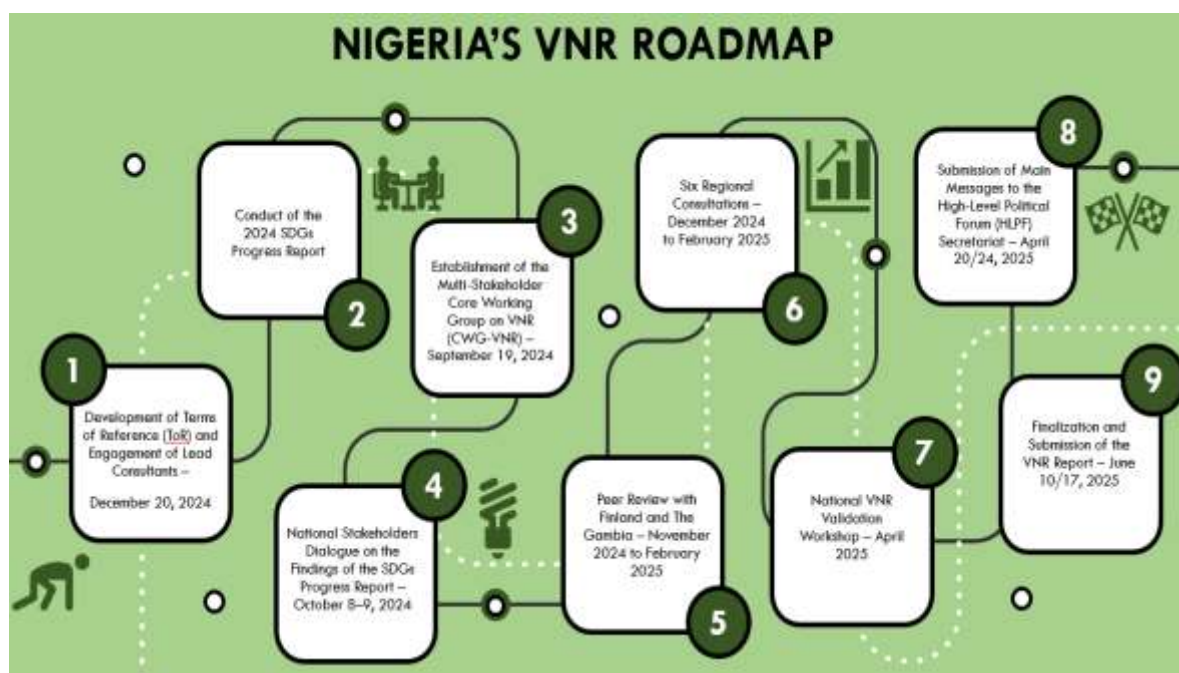


Figure 9 - VNR comprehensive roadmap

Key steps in the process included:

1. Development of Terms of Reference (ToR) and Engagement of Lead Consultants – December 20, 2024

To guide the scope of work for the VNR, Terms of Reference for the consultants were developed. An indigenous Technical Services Organization (TSO) was subsequently engaged to lead the drafting process, coordinate stakeholder consultations,



synthesize inputs, and ensure the quality and coherence of the final report.

2. Conducting Nigeria SDGs Progress Report 2024

As a foundational step, a comprehensive assessment of Nigeria's SDG progress was undertaken, involving a critical review of sectoral performance data, policy documents, and statistical evidence. The resulting 2024 SDGs Progress Report served as the primary reference document for an evidence-based VNR process.

3. Establishment of the CWG-VNR – September 19, 2024

A Core Working Group was constituted, comprising representatives from federal and state governments, CSOs, academia, the private sector, youth groups, and development partners. The CWG-VNR provided strategic direction, technical guidance, and oversight throughout the VNR preparation process, ensuring a coordinated and participatory approach.

4. National Stakeholders Dialogue on the Findings of the SDGs Progress Report – October 8–9, 2024

A national dialogue convened stakeholders to review the findings of the 2024 SDGs Progress Report, validate data, identify gaps and opportunities, and generate collective inputs to inform the VNR narrative.

5. Peer Review with Finland and The Gambia – November 2024 to February 2025

To enhance the quality and credibility of the VNR, a peer review exercise was conducted with Finland and The Gambia. This exchange of experiences and constructive feedback enriched the content of the report and strengthened Nigeria's commitment to international best practices on VNR preparation.

6. Six Regional Consultations – December 2024 to February 2025

Working closely with the TSO, OSSAP-SDGs conducted regional consultations across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. The consultations involved stakeholders from all levels of government and society, including state and local governments, CSOs, the organized private sector, academia, women's groups, youth organizations, and PWDs. Discussions focused on draft summaries of SDG progress, challenges, and recommendations, ensuring inclusivity and representation from marginalized and vulnerable groups.

7. National VNR Validation Workshop – April 2025

A national validation workshop was held to review and finalize the draft VNR. Stakeholders, including those engaged throughout the process, were invited to validate the content, confirm key messages, and endorse the report for submission.

8. Submission of Main Messages to the HLPF Secretariat – April 20/24, 2025

Nigeria submitted its main messages, summarizing key achievements, challenges, and priorities identified in the VNR, to the HLPF Secretariat as part of the formal preparatory process for presentation at the global forum.

9. Finalisation and Submission of the VNR Report – June 10/17, 2025

Following final refinements and endorsements, Nigeria's Third VNR Report was completed and formally submitted to the HLPF Secretariat for presentation in July 2025 at the Ministerial Segment of the HLPF on Sustainable Development.

4.2. The Process – Whole-of-Government and Whole-of-Society Approach

To ensure that the 2025 VNR is robust, inclusive, and aligned with the theme of the 2025 HLPF, Nigeria complied with Paragraph 74 of the 2030 Agenda, which emphasized voluntary, country-led, follow-up and review mechanisms rooted in national priorities, realities, and policy space. The processes adopted by Nigeria reflected the integrated and universal nature of the SDGs, which encompass economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

While highlighting progress in the five SDGs prioritized for the 2025 HLPF, the report also identified implementation gaps related to financing, capacity development, data and statistical expertise, performance management, results tracking, technology, and partnerships.

The Regional Consultations were opportunities to engage key stakeholders in reviewing SDGs' progress and reflecting on issues, challenges, and prospects as part of Nigeria's VNR process. These meetings were designed and coordinated by the CWG-VNR in close collaboration with SDG Offices in Akwa Ibom (for the South-South region), Enugu (for the South-East region), Gombe (for the North-East region), Kaduna (for the North-West region), Lagos (for the South-West region), and the FCT (for the North-Central region). The consultations held in March 2025, gathered key insights to strengthen the VNR, with one-day sessions aimed at:

Using the Nigeria's SDGs Progress Report of 2024 as a statistical baseline, participants reflected on implementation experiences and proposed solutions to accelerate progress on the five selected goals. To facilitate the reviews, key questions explored state-level performance within each geo-political zone, enabling factors and barriers to implementation.

Government participation underscored the whole-of-government approach, with

active involvement from MDAs, such as the Ministries of Budget and Planning, Finance, Health, Education, Youth and Sports, Women Affairs, Environment; as well as State Primary Health Care Agencies, and Education Boards.

Stakeholder representation included CSOs, NGOs, women's groups, PWDs, youth SDG groups, senior citizens, academic/scientific community, development partners, parliamentarians, organized private sector, SDGs Desk Officers of the line MDAs. In addition, two national parallel consultations were held by Sightsavers for persons with disabilities, as well as UNICEF and UNFPA for children and youth; to ensure the inclusion of their voices and perspectives in the VNR.

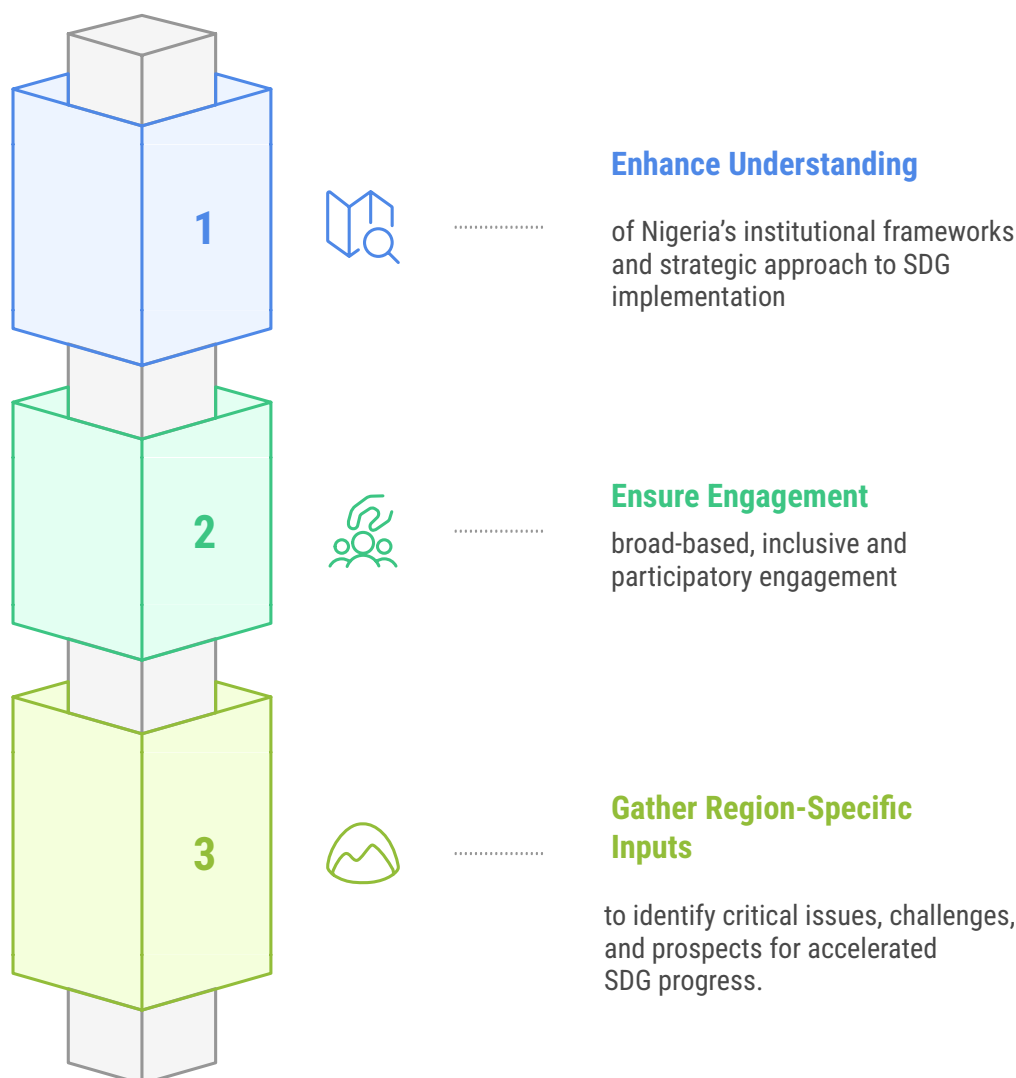


Figure 10 - Key VNR insights utilizing a whole-of-society approach



Special consultation with children and youth on the VNR



*South-West regional consultation on Nigeria's 2025 VNR – Lagos.
Photo credit: The Presidency, Federal Republic of Nigeria*



*South-South regional consultation on Nigeria's 2025 VNR – Uyo.
Photo credit: The Presidency, Federal Republic of Nigeria*

4.3. Special Review: Persons with Disabilities

According to the 2018 National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS), Nigeria's disability prevalence rate stands at 7%. However, using WHO and World Bank estimates of 15%, the number of persons with disabilities in Nigeria may exceed 30 million.

A major challenge to inclusive development remains the absence of internationally and nationally comparable disability-disaggregated data, which hampers effective planning for the substantial inclusion of PWDs in programming.

In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on full and effective participation, Sightsavers supported the participation of PWDs in all six regional consultations. Additional regional meetings were organized by Sightsavers in-person (as in the case of the South-West, hosted in Lagos on March 3rd, 2025) or virtually, to ensure accessibility. Attendees were drawn primarily from the umbrella organization for PWDs in Nigeria – the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD). Each state chapter was represented by its Chairman and Woman Leader, ensuring gender representation. Through the organization of meetings across regions and using virtual platforms, the consultations reduced geographical and mobility barriers, thus enabling participation from a broader range of individuals, including those in remote or underserved areas. Persons with disabilities face significant barriers to health, gender equality, economic opportunities, environmental sustainability and global partnerships - core areas reflected in SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14, and 17, which are addressed in the 2025 VNR.

Key actions identified through the consultations include:

1. Improve Data Collection and Monitoring

A critical priority is to bridge the gap in disability-driven/disaggregated data across all indicators to effectively measure the progress of PWDs and to identify vulnerable groups. There is a need to invest in reliable data collection in this area, potentially through a national database. This aligns with the broader need for reliable data to track progress towards the SDGs and the VNR process that focuses on evidence-based reporting and addressing data gaps.

2. Ensure Implementation of Disability Rights Legislation

Full and effective implementation of existing disability inclusion policies, such as the Disability Rights Act (2018/2019), is essential across all levels of government. This includes establishing effective enforcement mechanisms and holding sub-national governments accountable for ensuring accessibility and inclusion in

public services. Participants noted the challenge of non-domestication and slow implementation of disability law.

3. Increase Targeted Financing and Investment

Allocating a larger proportion of government budgets at national and sub-national levels to support programmes that improve the lives of PWDs is a priority. This requires prioritizing disability inclusion in national development plans and budget cycles, and ensuring targeted investment in human capital development for PWDs. Nigeria's INFF process aims to mobilize financing for sustainable development priorities, and to align budgets with development plans and SDG priorities. The MTEF process involves setting policy priorities and allocating public spending towards SDGs, including identifying aggregate SDG spending.

4. Enhance Access to Basic Services and Infrastructure

This encompasses improving access to healthcare, education, and physical infrastructure for PWDs; in particular, providing priority access to healthcare, expanding Universal Health Coverage for specific disability inclusion, and creating tailored insurance products. In education, effectively implementing policies and allocating budgets for inclusive education, especially at the primary level, is crucial. Furthermore, prioritizing accessible infrastructure development (electricity, transportation, digital technology) and investing in affordable and accessible assistive technologies are key needs. Improving basic services is listed as a priority action area. Health (SDG 3) and Education (SDG 4) are prioritized SDGs in Nigeria's VNRs and development plans. Infrastructure is also a key priority area for financing.

5. Strengthen Social Protection and Economic Opportunities

Designing and implementing PWD-specific social intervention programmes is needed to address extreme poverty at the grassroots level. Beyond general inclusion in social programmes, creating more inclusive economic opportunities and job creation programmes, including targeted skills acquisition and enhanced access to finance for MSMEs led by PWDs, are vital. Social Protection is identified as a cluster for implementing financing strategies. Poverty reduction (SDG 1) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8) are national development priorities integrated with the SDGs.

6. Promote Meaningful Participation and Inclusion

A key action is to promote improved participation of PWDs, especially through organizations like JONAPWD, in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and intervention programmes. Ensuring the active



contribution of PWDs to shaping policies that impact them is seen as vital for transparency and learning. The VNR process itself emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholder participation and inclusion.

7. Address Stigma and Discrimination

Combating stigma and discrimination requires dedicated efforts, such as proposing a national campaign to raise awareness about the rights of PWDs. Such a campaign should target schools, communities, and workplaces to address misconceptions and negative attitudes from healthcare workers and the public. Communication and advocacy are important aspects of the SDG implementation plan.

4.4. Special Review: Children and Young People

In March 2025, to ensure the inclusion of children and youth voices in the 2025 VNR report, UNICEF collaborated with UNFPA and relevant government stakeholders to organize a national consultation meeting in Abuja. The consultation provided a platform for children to share their perspectives on the SDGs and propose solutions based on their lived experiences. Participants included over 80 children and youth aged 9–18+ from rural and urban areas across Nigeria; representing a broad range of socio-economic, linguistic, gender and ability backgrounds. The online survey received 1,477 responses, with a notable diversity of inputs from across most states.

In line with UNICEF's policies on meaningful child participation, the consultations guaranteed a safe, inclusive and child-friendly atmosphere. Children provided informed consent, and parental permission was obtained in advance from parents and caregivers. Experienced moderators helped to facilitate discussions, supported by a gender specialist who oversaw the sessions and addressed delicate issues. The consultation centered on the five SDGs and was structured to ensure equity, inclusion and participation. Attendees included government officials from the Ministries of Youth Development, and Women Affairs, as well as from OSSAP-SDGs, enriching the discourse. Plenary sessions featured sector experts who introduced and explained the VNR and SDGs, followed by breakout sessions where children critically analyzed issues and shared their stories.

During the participatory group breakouts, children and youth developed and prioritized several recommendations based on the key challenges they face, which were presented at a final plenary session. The process was designed to ensure that the proposals genuinely reflect the concerns and aspirations of Nigeria's youth, particularly children from underprivileged areas. As a contribution to Nigeria's 2025 Voluntary National Review, children and youth participants from diverse backgrounds highlighted the following key priority areas for action:



Figure 11 - Priority areas for SDG action identified by children and youth in Nigeria



4.5. Special Review: Private Sector

The consultation process on Nigeria's draft VNR on the SDGs also included active participation from the private sector across various geo-political zones, where stakeholders contributed ideas, raised concerns, and shared best practices. These collaborative actions highlight the significant role the Nigerian private sector is playing in the country's pursuit of the SDGs.

Private sector actors reported actively contributing to SDG implementation, particularly in fintech, telecommunications, agribusiness, renewable energy, and private healthcare. This engagement takes place through direct investments, collaborative groups like the Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG) Nigeria, and initiatives like the Nigerian Business Coalition Against AIDS (NiBUCAA), and the Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria (PSHAN).

The government is engaging the private sector through initiatives like the SDG Investment Brokering initiative and the promotion of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). The SDG Investor Maps initiative provides market intelligence to guide private sector investment in SDG-aligned sectors. The Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles (NSBPs), developed by the CBN and the Bankers' Committee, aim to integrate environmental and social considerations into banking operations in alignment with the SDGs. Nevertheless, challenges remain, including inconsistent policies, infrastructure deficits, funding constraints, and inadequate data and monitoring systems. Strengthening public-private partnerships, regulatory support, and sustainable financing mechanisms is crucial to scaling up the impact of private sector involvement.

4.5.1 Unique Attributes of Nigeria's Private Sector

Nigeria's private sector is notable for its dynamism and resilience, shaped by five key characteristics. First, it is dominated by SMEs and microbusinesses, which account for over 90% of firms and contribute more than half of GDP, despite facing limited access to finance. Second, a strong entrepreneurial culture drives innovation, with home-grown solutions thriving in fintech, e-commerce, and agritech, making Lagos a leading African tech hub. However, the sector remains heavily influenced by oil and gas, with many firms reliant on petroleum-linked revenues. Businesses often adapt through partnerships and agility in navigating regulatory uncertainty and infrastructure gaps. Finally, there is growing momentum for sustainability, with firms embracing ESG principles, advancing financial inclusion, and mobilizing investments in support of development goals.

4.5.2. Collaborative Actions Implemented to Achieve the Prioritized SDGs

Nigeria's private sector actively partners with government agencies, NGOs, and international bodies to advance the SDGs. The **Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG) Nigeria**, modelled after the UN's Global Private Sector Advisory Group, leads strategic public-private collaborations for SDG implementation. Key initiatives include:

SDG Initiatives by Organizations

SDG	Organization	Focus
 SDG 3 (Health)	NIBUCAA	Workplace programs for HIV/AIDS, malaria
 SDG 3 (Health)	PSHAN	Private resources for primary healthcare
 SDG 3 (Health)	IHS Towers	Support vulnerable communities
 SDG 5 (Gender Equality)	WIMBIZ	Leadership programs and SME financing
 SDG 5 (Gender Equality)	UN Global Compact Nigeria	Corporate gender equality commitments
 SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth)	Fintech firms and banks	SME loans and digital payment solutions
 SDG 14 (Life Below Water)	PSAG Nigeria members	Sustainability projects
 SDG 17 (Partnerships)	Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles	Align financial sector with SDGs

Table 2 - Private sector initiatives on key SDG areas

4.5.3. The Extent of Involvement of the Private Sector in Implementing the SDGs in Nigeria

The Nigerian private sector plays a significant and evolving role in implementing the SDGs. Engagement varies across industries, with some sectors actively integrating SDG principles into their business models, while others face barriers to full participation. An assessment of the extent of private sector engagement, categorized by different levels, are presented below:

High Engagement Areas:

Financial Services & Fintech: Leaders in financial inclusion via mobile banking (Flutterwave, Paystack), SME financing (Access Bank, GTBank), and digital payments.

Renewable Energy: Solar mini-grids (Lumos, Arnergy) and off-grid solutions expand clean energy access.

Telecoms & Digital Innovation: MTN, Airtel, and edtech firms (Ulesson) boost connectivity and digital learning.

Agribusiness: Dangote, Olam, and agritech startups (Thrive Agric) enhance food security and farmer support.

Healthcare: Private hospitals and pharma firms (Emzor, Helium Health) improve access and local drug production.

Moderate Engagement Areas: Manufacturing & Circular Economy: Nestlé, Unilever adopt recycling, but eco-friendly practices remain limited.

Affordable Housing: Lafarge's initiatives exist, but most real estate targets high-income buyers.

Gender Inclusion: WIMBIZ and corporate programmes advance women's leadership, but broader adoption lags.

Low Engagement Areas: Climate Action: Minimal investment in climate resilience; oil/gas and construction sectors lag in emissions reduction.

Policy Collaboration: PSAG engages, but corruption and weak regulation hinder deeper public-private partnerships.

R&D: Low investment in innovation compared to peers, limiting SDG-aligned tech breakthroughs.



4.5.4. Private Sector-Related Challenges and Opportunities for Achieving the SDGs in Nigeria

From the private sector viewpoint, achieving the SDGs in Nigeria presents a mix of challenges and opportunities. Despite funding, infrastructure and policy challenges, the private sector continues to leverage opportunities to drive sustainable development. Public-private partnerships, innovative financing models, and digital transformation remain critical enablers to advancing the SDGs.

Challenges identified include weak governance and policy inconsistencies, high taxation, limited access to affordable finance, infrastructure deficits, socio-economic and workforce issues (skills gap, low purchasing power), security concerns, environmental issues, heavy reliance on imports, limited public awareness of SDGs, and inadequate data and monitoring systems.

Opportunities lie in expanding the green economy and clean technology, digital innovation, urban development, youth empowerment, agribusiness, food security, healthcare investments, digital financial inclusion, strengthened partnerships, and the growing impact investment and ESG financing landscape.

4.5.5. Strategies for Improving the Private Sector Engagement in the Implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria

To enhance private sector engagement in achieving the SDGs in Nigeria, stakeholders have proposed a comprehensive set of strategies focused on enabling policy, financing, partnership, and institutional support mechanisms. Central to these is the need for consistent and streamlined policies, including reducing bureaucratic hurdles and fostering coherence across economic and investment regulations. Providing tax incentives, such as corporate tax reductions and duty waivers for SDG-related imports, is a powerful motivator for private sector participation.

Strengthening public-private partnerships is a recurring theme, particularly through collaborative SDG initiatives in infrastructure, health, and education. Mobilizing finance remains critical, with emphasis on expanding access to green bonds, impact funds, and SDG-linked credit facilities, especially for SMEs. Developing capacity within businesses and promoting long-term investments in social enterprises are also highlighted as priorities.



Private sector-led advancements in infrastructure and technology, such as off-grid solar, fintech innovations, and digital education platforms, are encouraged, alongside workforce development initiatives that equip youth and marginalized groups with relevant skills. There is also a call for enhanced data-driven decision-making through SDG reporting frameworks, impact assessments, and the establishment of business summits and awards to promote transparency and accountability.

Further recommendations include building sector-specific SDG clusters, fostering voluntary sustainability reporting, improving infrastructure, and encouraging innovation hubs and incubation programmes. A coordinated, multi-stakeholder platform is proposed to align dispersed efforts, underpinned by strong leadership, institutional capacity, and active stakeholder engagement to ensure policy coherence and sustained momentum towards the SDGs.

4.6. Special Review: Promoting Volunteerism as a Means of Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Volunteerism has increasingly become an integral part of Nigeria's development landscape, with increasing incorporation into sectoral policies and strategies. This reflects an institutional recognition of the significant role volunteers play in advancing national priorities and achieving the SDGs. Volunteerism has enhanced service delivery, mobilized civic participation, and expanded the reach of government and non-governmental initiatives, especially in marginalized communities.

One notable example is the National Youth Policy (2019–2023), which situates volunteerism at the heart of youth empowerment and civic engagement. Through this policy, initiatives such as the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) have been strengthened, mobilizing thousands of graduates to deliver services across health, education, infrastructure, and governance. Similarly, the National Health Policy integrates volunteers into public health efforts, notably during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where volunteers supported awareness campaigns and contact tracing.

In employment and economic development, the N-Power Volunteer Corps under the National Employment Policy provided temporary placement for young Nigerians, equipping them with valuable work experience.

Volunteerism has also been leveraged in gender-focused policies, with initiatives



under the National Gender Policy empowering women and promoting inclusive participation in community development. In education, the National Policy on Education promotes community involvement and volunteer engagement in school support activities, significantly improving learning outcomes in underserved areas.

Following Nigeria's 2020 VNR, new initiatives further emphasized the contributions of volunteers in achieving the SDGs. For instance, the ADVISER Initiative (SDG 3) used volunteers to increase immunization uptake among children in Oyo state. Similarly, the N-Power Teach Programme (SDG 4) improved primary education by deploying volunteers in public schools, while the EQUIP Initiative (SDG 5) engaged volunteers to provide entrepreneurial training to over 60,000 women and youth.

In support of SDG 8, volunteer-led youth groups such as the Nigeria Youth SDGs Network (NGYouthSDGs) advanced employment through digital skills training. Environmental sustainability initiatives (SDG 13) like beach clean-ups in Lagos, spearheaded by volunteers and corporate partners, have raised awareness and driven grassroots climate action.

Recent policy developments, such as the National Policy on Inclusive Volunteerism (2020) have established frameworks for structured volunteer engagement, including a National Volunteer Database. This progress, however, is tempered by challenges such as inadequate funding, limited recognition, coordination gaps, and safety concerns for volunteers. Addressing these issues requires sustained investment, formal incentives, centralized monitoring systems, and community sensitization to mainstream the culture of volunteerism. Nigeria's evolving volunteerism landscape demonstrates strong alignment with national development priorities and the 2030 Agenda.

Enhanced institutional support, strategic partnerships, and community ownership will be key to scaling the impact of volunteers in development across the country.

Chapter 5: The Regional Consultations – Perspectives on Prioritized SDGs

These perspectives were obtained through the various consultative workshops held across the country, including those for PWDs, children and youth, and the private sector. A common review tool was used to elicit responses on Nigeria's reported performance, as reflected in the accompanying Nigeria's SDGs Progress Report of 2024. The responses have been aggregated and presented under each of the five SDGs prioritized for the HLPF.

5.1 SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Reported progress:

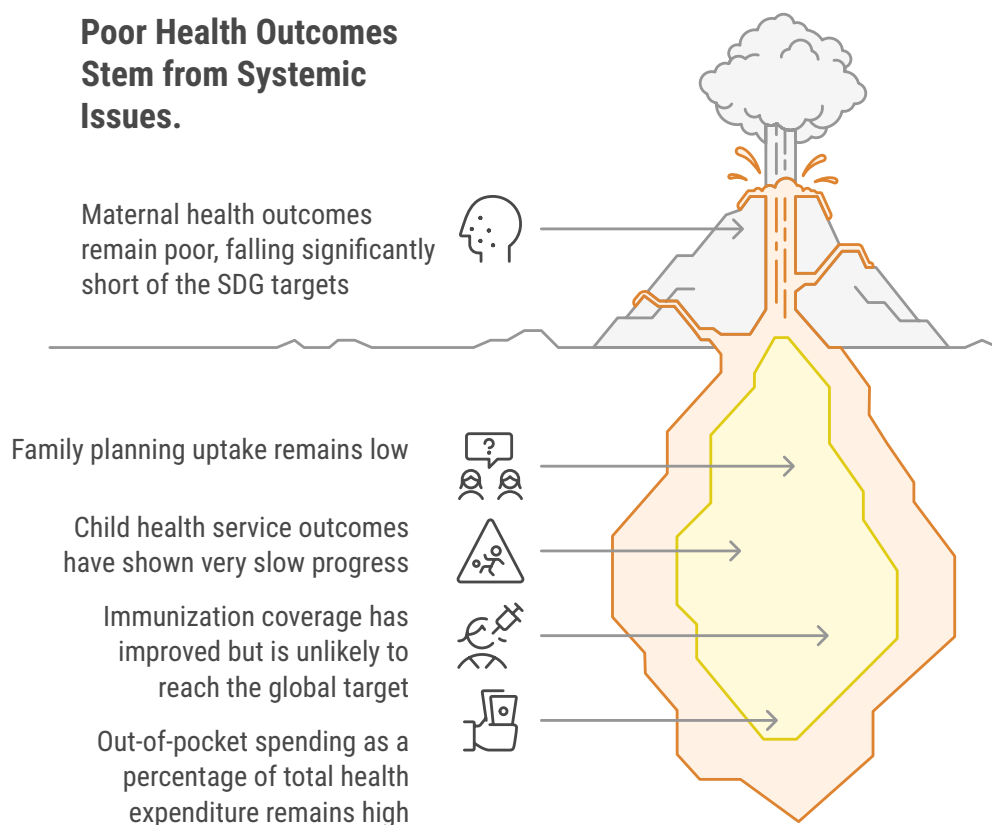


Figure 14 - Reported progress on SDG 3



Summary of enablers of SDG 3 results

The positive results recorded under this goal were attributed to a blend of strategic reforms, innovative practices, and strengthened partnerships, all of which have coalesced to drive progress toward equitable and quality healthcare for all. The following enablers have proven instrumental in this journey and offer critical pathways to deepen impact and close persistent health gaps:

1. Strengthening the Health System

Nigeria's commitment to SDG 3 is evident in the ongoing enhancement of organizational and institutional capacities, particularly within the Federal and State Ministries of Health, and primary healthcare development agencies. Streamlining governance frameworks and adopting integrated approaches have fostered more efficient service delivery, policy coherence, and data-driven decision-making.

2. Empowering the Health Workforce

A resilient health system is built on the foundation of a motivated and well-supported workforce. Efforts to recruit, train, and retain skilled health professionals, especially in underserved and rural areas, have improved access to care. Initiatives to enhance remuneration, provide career growth opportunities, and ensure decent working conditions have further boosted morale and productivity across the health sector.

3. Increased Health Financing and Resource Optimization

Significant progress has been made through increased budgetary commitments at both federal and sub-national levels, including earmarking funds under the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF). Transparent financial management and robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks have enabled the judicious use of resources, reduced wastage, and improved outcomes.

4. Strategic and Inclusive Partnerships

Nigeria's SDG 3 trajectory has been supported by powerful alliances. Technical and financial collaboration with development partners like USAID, UNICEF, WHO, and the World Bank has enabled innovation, knowledge exchange, and scale. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) and the active engagement of CSOs have catalyzed community-based solutions, especially in hard-to-reach communities.

5. Expanding Infrastructure and Service Delivery

Massive investments in renovating and equipping healthcare facilities, along with the provision of essential drugs, family planning commodities, and



emergency services, have improved the quality and availability of health services. States have responded to context-specific needs, ensuring better coverage for maternal, neonatal, child, and adolescent health.

6. Community Engagement and Behavior Change Communication

Through intensified advocacy, health education, and sensitization campaigns, communities are increasingly taking ownership of their health. This has translated into improved health-seeking behaviors, increased demand for preventive services, and reduced stigma around issues such as HIV/AIDS and mental health.

7. Context-Specific Innovations

Tailored interventions have driven localized successes. Notable examples include the “PHC Under One Roof” policy in the North-East, which consolidates healthcare delivery for efficiency; oxygen plant installations in several states, which have addressed gaps in emergency and COVID-19 response; and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) projects in many states, which have reduced disease burden and improved health indicators.

8. Enabling Policy and Good Governance

The political will of governments at all levels, coupled with inclusive and gender-sensitive policies, has been pivotal. Strengthened regional coordination mechanisms have ensured the alignment of health priorities with broader development goals, while providing accountability platforms to track SDG 3 milestones.

Maximizing the Impact of Key Enablers

The results achieved in SDG 3 can be harnessed by scaling up successful interventions, fostering collaboration, ensuring sustained funding and political will, and addressing identified facilitators. Specific examples include:

1. Replicating Successful Models

Successful social health insurance schemes like those of Delta, Ekiti, Kaduna, etc., that provide affordable and accessible healthcare can be studied and adapted for implementation in other states and regions facing high out-of-pocket spending. Similarly, the free eye screening initiative in Abia state could be replicated for other health issues in different regions.

2. Leveraging Collaborative Initiatives

The joint immunization campaigns and the regional disease surveillance and

response system established through the South-East Governors' Forum highlight the effectiveness of regional collaboration. These models of interstate cooperation can be expanded to address other shared health challenges, such as maternal and child health, and can be adopted by other regions. The North-East Development Commission (NEDC)'s role in the North-East also shows how regional bodies can drive health-related progress.

3. Maximizing Facilitators

Facilitators of progress, such as government will and commitment, capacity building and staff development programmes, and sustained political will, need to be actively maximized. This includes ensuring continued government support (monetary and non-monetary), increased budgetary allocations for health, and creating a favorable environment to attract International Development Assistance. The emphasis on public-private partnerships and the involvement of CSO must also be strengthened.

4. Strengthening Primary Healthcare

The focus on establishing and equipping PHCs in several states indicates a recognition of the importance of primary healthcare. These efforts should be continued and expanded across all regions to improve access to essential health services. Early childhood development initiatives should also be strengthened by building the capacity of frontline workers and parents to improve children's early learning and cognitive skills, besides providing adequate nutrition. To address early malnutrition challenges, efforts should be made to raise awareness about the importance of balanced nutrition among all stakeholders.

5. Enhancing Human Resources for Health

The employment, training, and retraining of health personnel in the North-East and the massive recruitment of new health workers in Ekiti state have demonstrably improved service delivery. Providing better incentives to retain doctors and nurses and addressing issues like staff attrition are crucial for sustaining these gains.

6. Utilizing Technology and Innovation

The Telemedicine programme in Anambra state and the use of drones to deliver medications in Cross River state showcase the potential of technology. Investing in technology and digital health solutions can improve access, efficiency, and data management in the health sector.



7. Addressing Socio-cultural Factors

Recognizing that harmful cultural and traditional practices can hinder health outcomes such as immunization uptake and maternal health service utilization, sustained advocacy and community sensitization through community stakeholders, youth, traditional leaders, and religious clerics are essential to create community buy-in and ownership.

8. Focus on Mental Health

Increasing support for youth mental health through creative expression, such as public art displays and improving public parks and facilities, is essential.

Barriers to achieving other SDG 3 results and how to address them

Several barriers hinder Nigeria's ability to achieve more results for SDG 3. These barriers can be broadly categorized as follows:

1. Poor Health Outcomes and Service Delivery Gaps

Maternal health outcomes remain poor, falling significantly short of SDG targets. This is due to inadequate healthcare facilities and skilled birth attendants, and limited access to emergency obstetric care, especially in rural areas. Family planning uptake remains low, often due to resistance from cultural and religious beliefs and inadequate awareness and misinformation about contraceptive methods. Child health service outcomes have shown very slow progress, with a high prevalence of malnutrition and childhood diseases.

While immunization coverage has improved, it is unlikely to reach the global target, with vaccine hesitancy due to misinformation and supply chain issues causing shortages in remote areas. Out-of-pocket spending as a percentage of total health expenditure remains high due to the lack of widespread health insurance. Additionally, high infant mortality rates exist alongside a need for improved mental health services, which remain underfunded. There is also limited investment in medical research and disease surveillance systems.

2. Systemic and Structural Issues

Inadequate healthcare infrastructure and equipment, particularly in rural areas, combined with limited funding and resources for healthcare services, a persistent shortage of health personnel (exacerbated by the brain drain), staff attrition driven by factors such as frequent retirement and the lack of consistent employment opportunities within the health sector, further impede progress.

The poor terrain in some regions poses a significant challenge to accessibility



to health facilities, hindering service delivery. Weak institutions and a lack of political will, including a lack of synergy and weak coordination of SDGs interventions in some regions, remain obstacles. Finally, inadequate data collection, poor data management, and protection mechanisms hinder the ability to effectively monitor progress and make informed decisions.

3. Socio-cultural and Economic Barriers

A range of interconnected socio-cultural and economic factors present significant challenges to healthcare access and utilization. Harmful cultural and traditional practices contribute to low immunization uptake, poor attendance for antenatal and postnatal care, and reduced rates of hospital deliveries. Socio-economic barriers further impede access to essential healthcare services.

Gender dynamics also play a role, with challenges related to gender inclusion and low male involvement in maternal health issues. Myths and misconceptions surrounding family planning, immunization, and modern medicine lead to reduced uptake of these vital services. The intertwined issues of poverty and gender can also limit access to healthcare. Furthermore, low awareness and limited education within communities can hinder the understanding and utilization of available health services. Finally, cultural and ideological barriers can impede the effective implementation of health programmes.

4. External Factors

The level of insecurity in the country has been an added challenge, which continues to disrupt health service delivery and access.



5.2. SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Reported progress:

The prevalence of early marriage is declining very slowly

Trafficking-in-persons requires more concerted action

Female genital mutilation or cutting is still common in Nigeria

Women's ability to make informed decisions remains limited

Summary of enablers of SDG 5 results

The regional consultations identified various enablers that have contributed to progress on SDG 5. These enablers are foundational and, when strategically harnessed, can accelerate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls across the country:

1. Government Commitment and Legal Reforms

Government agencies at both federal and state levels have strengthened political will, enforced gender-sensitive policies, and implemented comprehensive legal and institutional reforms essential to deepening gender equality in the country. Initiatives like the creation of gender-focused ministries and policy frameworks are transforming intent into action. It has been reported that women now constitute a reasonable proportion of cabinet members in several states and that some state governors are actively pursuing gender-balanced cabinets.

2. Civil Society and Grassroots Mobilization

CSOs and grassroots movements are pivotal in the efforts in driving behavioural change and promoting women's rights at the community level. Their proximity to local populations makes them effective conduits for sensitization, advocacy, survivor support, and the collection of vital gender-disaggregated data. Targeted, results-oriented capacity development interventions are galvanizing their expanding grassroots reach, stronger legal backing and funding, especially from development agencies.

3. Traditional and Religious Institutions

Cultural gatekeepers such as clerics, chiefs, and elders, continue to hold

immense sway in influencing social norms across the country. Engaging with these stakeholders has contributed to reducing early marriages and harmful practices such as female genital cutting, with the North-East region recording the highest reduction rate.

4. Access to Education and Empowerment Opportunities

Education continues to be a powerful gender equalizer. Promoting compulsory education, particularly for girls, delays early marriage and equips young women with the knowledge and confidence to make informed life choices.

Maximizing the Impact of Key Enablers

The results achieved in SDG 5 can be amplified by:

1. Promoting Equal Opportunities and Dismantle Systemic Barriers

Enforce comprehensive measures to ensure equal opportunities for all, particularly women and marginalized groups. This includes strengthening legal protections, institutional mechanisms, and affirmative action policies that remove systemic barriers to inclusion, leadership, and meaningful participation in political, economic, and social spheres.

2. Facilitate the Passage of Gender Equality Legislation

Prioritize the approval and implementation of key legislative frameworks such as the Gender Equality Bill and the Reserved Seat Bill. These proposed laws are critical to achieving gender parity in governance and decision-making and demonstrate a national commitment to upholding the rights and representation of women in all spheres of public life.

3. Protection Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Several development partners integrate GBV risk mitigation into their programmes, including establishing and strengthening GBV referral pathways, providing survivor-centered support services, and ensuring safe and dignified access to assistance in both humanitarian and return/reintegration settings.

4. Support to Victims of Trafficking

Some development partners support returnees and migrants to receive direct assistance, including psychosocial support, economic empowerment, and reintegration, through Nigeria's Counter-Trafficking and Return & Reintegration Programmes.

5. Implement Policies that Address Structural Gender Inequities

Adopt and enforce gender-responsive policies that promote equal access to

quality education, decent employment, and economic empowerment. Government efforts must go beyond rhetoric to ensure that legislative reforms are translated into tangible benefits that bridge existing gender gaps and foster inclusive development.

6. Engage Traditional Leaders as Champions of Cultural Transformation

Actively involve traditional and community leaders in promoting gender equality by addressing cultural norms and practices that perpetuate discrimination. Their influence can be instrumental in shifting mindsets, dismantling harmful traditions, and advocating for more inclusive social norms.

7. Promote Male Engagement in Gender Advocacy

Increase sensitization efforts targeted at boys and young men on gender issues, while encouraging male participation in volunteerism and advocacy. Engaging men as allies is essential for advancing gender equality and fostering a society that values shared responsibility in achieving equity.

8. Ensure Inclusive Development and Leave No One Behind

Uphold the principle of inclusivity by ensuring that policies and programmes reach the most vulnerable and underserved populations. Deliberate efforts must be made to integrate the voices and needs of women, girls, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups into national development agendas.

9. Strengthen Legal Frameworks and Promote Women's Leadership and Digital Inclusion

Enhance legal protections against gender-based violence through stricter enforcement, survivor-centered services, and accountability mechanisms. Simultaneously, support women's leadership across sectors and promote digital inclusion initiatives that enable women to access, use, and benefit from technology as a tool for empowerment.

Barriers to the achievement of other SDG 5 results and how to address them

These barriers include the following:

1. Economic, Socio-Cultural, Policy, and Security and Safety

These continue to hinder gender equality. To mitigate these, participants suggested implementing appropriate laws and policies, creating awareness, promoting economic empowerment for women, and addressing security and safety.



2. Harmful Socio-Cultural Practices

Socio-cultural barriers and harmful traditional practices contribute to the slow decline in early marriage and limit women's ability to make informed decisions regarding reproductive health, economic and financial choices, education, career, and marriage. These practices also affect low immunization uptake, poor attendance for antenatal and postnatal care, and low hospital deliveries. To address these, participants recommend community sensitization and mobilization through community stakeholders, youth, traditional leaders, and religious clerics, as well as sustained advocacy involving CSOs and faith-based organizations to advocate for behavioural change. Eradication of harmful practices through strict sanctions was also a key suggestion.

3. Weak Coordination and Inadequate Funding

Inadequate coordination among government agencies and stakeholders, along with insufficient funding for gender-related interventions, are significant obstacles. Training and mentorship programmes have been proposed to improve coordination, while increasing alternative revenue sources, improving fiscal management, leveraging international development funds, and increasing funding to the Ministry of Women Affairs.

4. Child Trafficking and Labor in Plateau state

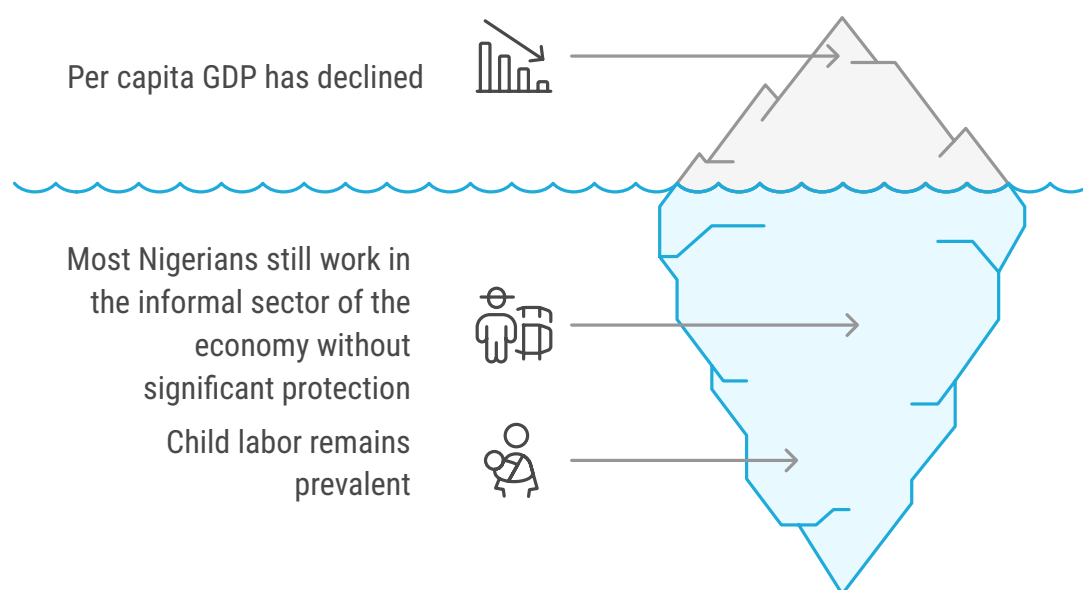
A persistent increase in child trafficking and labor in Plateau state, which disproportionately affects girls, remains a concern that hinders gender equality.

5.3. SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Reported progress:

Nigeria's Economic Challenges: Beyond the Surface

Figure 15 - Reported progress on SDG 3



Summary of enablers of SDG 8 results

Several factors have enabled the achievements of results under SDG 8, as highlighted by the participants in various consultative meetings:

1. Government Commitment

Sustained political will and commitment from the government have been crucial in promoting economic growth and decent work. This includes ensuring policy continuity and implementing long-term economic development plans across administrations. In the South-West, governments have committed to regional economic integration and development through increased capitalization of Odua Investment Company Limited—a regional development platform with substantial commercial interest in hospitality, real estate, manufacturing, and agriculture.

2. Civil Society and Development Partner Engagement

Strong collaboration among stakeholders, including civil society and development partners, has played a significant role.

3. Investment in Infrastructure

Investment in infrastructure is a key facilitator of sustained economic growth. The completion of the Lagos-Ibadan Standard Gauge Railway in the South-West has boosted regional trade and economic activity by significantly reducing travel time.

4. Increase in Government Funding

An increase in government funding, through the Federal Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) and Internally Generated Revenue (IGR), has provided needed resources. Maximizing this requires expanding IGR, strengthening tax reforms, and ensuring the efficient allocation of funds to productive sectors.

5. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

The establishment and use of PPPs have been vital in increasing private investments in infrastructure, technology, and SMEs through tax incentives and regulatory improvements.

6. Stakeholder Collaboration

Strengthening multi-sectoral partnerships between government, the private sector, civil society, and youth organizations has been a significant enabler.

7. Targeted Initiatives

Specific programmes and initiatives have contributed to SDG 8 achievements:

- I** The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) has provided loans to small businesses, supporting job creation and formalizing informal businesses in the state.
- I** The Ekiti Knowledge Zone (EKZ) has trained young people in ICT skills, resulting in increased employment in the technology and innovation sectors.

8. Inclusive Recruitment Practices

In the South-West, inclusive recruitment practices that accommodate non-indigenes and persons with disabilities, along with providing support such as sign language interpreters, have fostered decent work opportunities.



Implementing a new minimum wage also contributes to this goal.

9. Focus on Economic Recovery in the North-East

This includes:

I Enhanced Agricultural Productivity

Initiatives such as the Anchor Borrowers' Programme (ABP) have provided farmers with access to input loans, boosting agricultural output and creating employment opportunities.

I Skills Development and Youth Employment Programmes:

Programmes like the Nigerian Youth Employment and Social Support Operation (YESSO) have equipped young people with vocational skills, enhancing their employability and participation in the labor force.

I Support for Microfinance and Small Businesses

The presence and activities of microfinance institutions and small business support programmes have fostered entrepreneurship by providing financial resources and training local entrepreneurs.

I Women's Economic Empowerment Programmes

Targeted programmes like the Women Empowerment Fund have focused on increasing women's participation in various economic sectors, improving household incomes and promoting gender equality.

I Collaborative Initiatives

Regional initiatives such as the North-East Regional Initiative (NERI), Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP), Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), and YESSO have collectively contributed to economic recovery and development through various interventions.

10. South-South Models of Implementation

Specific examples from the South-South Region include:

I Effective Implementation of Policy Documents Leading to Stakeholders' Buy-in

In the South-South region of Nigeria, the effective implementation of policy documents that integrate SDG 8 objectives into regional development plans has been a significant facilitator of progress in the region. This has led to significant stakeholder buy-in, which has, in turn,

fostered collaborative efforts which promote inclusive and sustainable economic development.

I Investment in Key Sectors:

Strategic investments in key sectors such as youth empowerment and the oil and gas industry have contributed to job creation and socio-economic advancement in the region. By prioritizing these sectors, the South-South has generated decent employment opportunities, reduced poverty, and stimulated long-term economic resilience.

Maximizing the Impact of Key Enablers

The suggestions proffered include:

1. Introduce Incentive Schemes to Retain Skilled Professionals

Implement robust incentive programmes to retain teachers and medical practitioners who currently seek better employment opportunities abroad. These may include competitive remuneration packages, career development pathways, housing and transport support, and recognition programmes. Strengthening local working conditions will not only reduce brain drain but also enhance the quality of education and healthcare services nationwide.

2. Promote Inclusive Employment for the Less Privileged

Create sustainable employment opportunities for underserved populations by promoting access to small-scale jobs, vocational training, and community-based enterprises. Targeted initiatives, such as public works programmes, microenterprise support, and skills acquisition schemes, can empower marginalized groups and contribute to local economic development.

3. Strengthen Support for the Model United Nations Initiative

Continue and expand government support for youth-focused platforms like the Nigerian Model United Nations (NigMUNs). Enhancing this initiative, through funding, partnerships, and training, will provide young people with opportunities to engage in diplomacy, develop leadership skills, and gain exposure to international dialogue, fostering a generation of globally minded leaders.

4. Foster Strategic Partnerships with the Private Sector

Establish collaborative frameworks with private sector manufacturers and producers to drive innovation, job creation, and industrial growth. Through public-private partnerships (PPPs), the government can leverage private sector expertise, investment, and networks to advance national development

goals and improve service delivery across sectors. UN agencies should play a proactive convening role to bring together different organizations and bodies, ensuring effective collaboration and convergence between the government and CSOs.

Barriers to the achievement of other SDG 8 results and how to address them

Several barriers have impeded the achievement of more results under SDG 8. These barriers are diverse and affect the different regions in Nigeria.

1. Insecurity and Political Instability

Ongoing insurgency in the North-East and rising regional insecurity in the North-West continue to erode public safety, disrupt economic activities, and displace vulnerable populations. These conditions reduce investor confidence, stall infrastructure development, and deepen humanitarian crises, thereby hampering progress toward sustainable development.

2. Governance and Resource Mismanagement

Endemic corruption, weak institutional accountability, and poor public resource management remain significant bottlenecks to effective service delivery. The absence of transparent processes and stable political leadership undermines policy continuity and equitable development, creating systemic inefficiencies across all levels of governance.

3. Insufficient Funding and Limited Financial Access

Inadequate budgetary allocation for development priorities, compounded by limited access to affordable credit, stifles economic expansion. SMEs which are vital engines of job creation, struggle to grow under restrictive financial conditions and complex loan requirements.

4. Infrastructure Deficits and Data Gaps

Widespread deficiencies in transportation networks, electricity supply, and digital connectivity constrain both public and private sector productivity. Additionally, the lack of comprehensive and reliable data weakens evidence-based policymaking and hinders the ability to track progress toward national and global development goals.

5. Social and Cultural Barriers

Deep-seated cultural norms continue to restrict the participation of women and persons with disabilities in the workforce. Gender inequality, inadequate legal protections, and inaccessible workplace environments reinforce exclusion, limiting the country's ability to harness the full potential of its human capital.

6. Unemployment and Environmental Challenges

High levels of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among youth and women, threaten social stability and economic inclusion. Meanwhile, the increasing frequency of climate-related disasters and environmental degradation poses additional threats to livelihoods and development gains, especially in already vulnerable communities.

5.4. SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Reported progress:



Summary of enablers of SDG 14 results

The achievement of reported results under SDG 14 has been enabled by several key factors across different regions as follows:

1. Government Policies and Institutions

The establishment of specialized ministries, inter-ministerial committees, and regulations on industrial waste and fishing practices have been crucial. State governments have also shown commitment through investments in water resource management and increased funding for environmental programmes.

2. Community Empowerment and Engagement

Local communities have been educated and engaged in conservation efforts, such as community-based conservation programmes to prevent pollution and protect aquatic life.

3. Stakeholder Collaboration

This includes partnerships with NGOs to address water pollution and waste recycling, collaborations with international organizations like the World Bank, UNDP, and FAO for specific projects and funding, and engagement with the private sector and academic institutions. Regional collaborations

through bodies like the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the establishment of platforms for multi-stakeholder partnerships have also been important.

4. Public Awareness and Education

Campaigns have contributed to a better understanding of the importance of conserving marine resources and the dangers of harmful practices like using chemicals in fishing and improper waste disposal. The use of social media influencers has also been identified to maximize awareness.

5. Targeted Projects and Initiatives

These include water body dredging to improve water quality, afforestation efforts to protect water systems, the establishment of waste management mechanisms like designated dumping sites and "pick and earn" campaigns for plastics, and initiatives to restore fishing grounds and provide clean water access in vulnerable communities.

6. Increased Capacity Building and Knowledge Development

State and regional-level training, skills development, and academic research have strengthened implementation capacity.

7. Technological Innovation and Economic Incentives

Investment in research and development of sustainable technologies, promotion of agro-tech and smart farming practices, and the implementation of extended producer responsibility are noted as ways to further progress.

8. Data Collection and Monitoring

This has been recognized as being important for effective policy formulation and measuring the impact of interventions. Adequate and tested data from various sources informs decision-making and strengthens implementation.

Maximizing the Impact of Key Enablers

The suggestions preferred included:

1. Strengthen Legal Frameworks

Enact and enforce strict environmental laws to promote climate action, regulate deforestation, ensure cleaner urban environments, and protect wildlife habitats.

2. Enhance Urban Climate Resilience

Prioritize urban planning strategies that increase green cover and improve drainage systems to mitigate the impacts of flooding and urban heat waves.

3. Regulate Industrial Waste Management

Implement strict monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure the sustainable disposal of industrial waste, including penalties for non-compliance.

4. Support Eco-Friendly Entrepreneurship

Provide incentives and start-up support for small-scale, environmentally sustainable businesses to encourage green economic growth.

5. Invest in Renewable Energy

Increase public and private investment in clean energy infrastructure, such as solar, wind, and hydro, particularly in regions with limited energy access.

6. Promote Green Job Creation

Expand employment opportunities in the renewable energy sector through targeted skills development and job placement programmes.

7. Raise Community Awareness on Marine Conservation

Launch initiatives to educate children and community members on the importance of protecting marine life, water bodies, and promoting sustainable water use.

8. Utilize Creative Media for Environmental Education

Use culturally relevant tools, such as street plays and community theatre, to raise awareness of climate and environmental issues, especially in low-literacy communities.

Barriers to the achievement of other SDG 14 results and how to address them

1. **Plastic pollution of water bodies** is a significant and increasing problem across multiple regions due to inadequate waste management. This is exacerbated by a lack of effective waste management infrastructure.
2. A generally **inadequate policy framework and enforcement** related to marine and aquatic resource management exists. This includes insufficient laws regulating environmental sanitation and gaps in enforcing existing environmental protection laws.

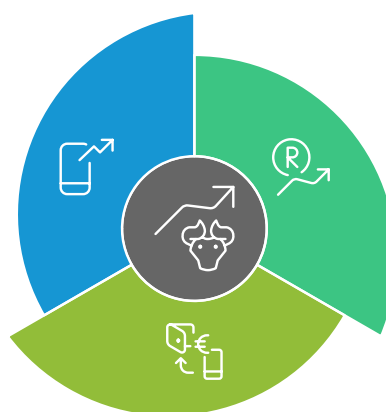
3. **Lack of adequate funding and technology** limits the capacity to implement solutions and monitor progress towards SDG 14. This includes insufficient investment in waste management infrastructure and expanded technology intervention.
4. **Insufficient data and monitoring systems** hinder the ability to track progress, understand the extent of the challenges, and inform effective interventions. The need for adequate and tested data from various sources is highlighted.
5. **Behavioural and cultural challenges**, including improper waste disposal practices and community resistance, impede the effectiveness of conservation efforts. Developing culturally sensitive messaging is essential to address this.
6. **Water pollution from various sources** beyond plastic, such as industrial waste, oil spills, sewage disposal, and agricultural runoff, continues to degrade water quality and harm aquatic life.
7. **Insecurity along waterways**, particularly in the South-South region, poses threats and disrupts economic activities dependent on water resources.

5.5. SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Reported progress:

Economic Dynamics in Nigeria

Nigeria's revenue remains low compared to the size of the economy



Internet use is growing steadily

Remittances continue to play a major role in the economy

Summary of enablers

1. **Government commitment** at both federal and state levels facilitated progress through sustained political will and commitment by governments, prompt inauguration of development commissions, increased budgetary allocations to sectors like health, and the establishment of agencies like the NEDC.
2. **Strong partnerships and collaboration with international organizations and development partners** offered significant advantages, including funding, technical expertise, and programme implementation support, as evidenced by the involvement of EL-Press, AGILE World Bank Intervention, NG-CARES, UNICEF, WHO, USAID, and the World Bank.
3. **The active engagement of CSOs, VIOS and CBOs** played a crucial role in reaching rural communities, raising awareness, and implementing community-led monitoring and advocacy. Notable examples include the Kwatam Development Initiative and various other CSOs involved in regional coordination.
4. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** complemented government efforts and drove progress in sectors such as tourism development in Ondo state, infrastructure projects, and attracting private investment.
5. **Remittances from the diaspora** continued to be a major contributor to economic activity, providing vital financial inflows for development, education, and business investments across regions. The Government, in collaboration with stakeholders, is taking steps to implement Global Compact for Migration Objective 20 (promote faster, safer and cheaper remittance transfers and foster financial inclusion of migrants), leveraging remittances for local development while also enhancing diaspora engagement through strategic frameworks.

The steady growth of **internet use and the expansion of the digital economy** has enhanced communication, facilitated business development, and improved access to information and services, thereby contributing to overall economic growth.

6. The establishment and strengthening of **regional bodies and collaborative platforms**, such as the DAWN Commission, the Odua Group, the South-East Governor's Forum, and the Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo and Delta State (BRACED) Commission, fostered regional integration, policy coordination, and resource mobilization.
7. Specific **programmes and funds**, such as the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), the North-East Development Commission (NEDC), and the Conditional Grant Scheme (CGS) projects in Adamawa state, directly addressed various SDG targets and contributed to tangible results.

Maximizing the Impact of Key Enablers

The following suggestions were identified:

1. **Implement Enforceable Waste Management and Drainage Infrastructure in Underserved Areas**

Establish and enforce designated refuse disposal sites and develop effective drainage systems, particularly in riverine and rural communities. These measures are critical to preventing water source contamination, reducing the incidence of waterborne diseases, and promoting environmental sustainability. Regular community clean-up campaigns and sanitation enforcement should be integrated into local governance structures to ensure long-term impact.

2. **Develop Comprehensive Recycling Systems for Plastics and Non-Biodegradable Waste**

Introduce and scale up structured recycling initiatives to manage plastic waste and other non-biodegradable materials. This includes establishing recycling collection points, supporting waste-to-value enterprises, and promoting community awareness on sustainable waste disposal practices. Strategic partnerships with private sector actors and environmental organizations can enhance innovation, create green jobs, and reduce the environmental footprint of communities.

Barriers to the achievement of other SDG 17 results

Various regional consultations revealed several key barriers:

1. Across multiple regions, **inadequate funding** posed a significant challenge to the implementation of SDG 17-related initiatives. This was further compounded by issues such as **low or no cash backing of public budgets**

and delays in the release of counterpart funding from the Federal Government.

2. **Low levels of awareness and education** about the SDGs among the general populace, particularly in rural communities, impede effective engagement and participation. This lack of understanding hindered community-led initiatives and the active pursuit of sustainability in programmes aligned with the SDGs.
3. **Weak institutional frameworks and coordination challenges** were also noted as substantial obstacles. This included a lack of synergy and coordination for SDG interventions, fragmented efforts among government agencies and other stakeholders, and **inadequate inter-agency collaboration**. Delays in execution due to changes in administration and the absence of robust institutional initiatives were also reported.
4. Several reports indicated **limitations in technological capacity and infrastructure**. This encompassed **low or limited compliance with modern technology**, poor infrastructure, including roads, power supply, and ICT development, and poor internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas.
5. Difficulties in establishing and maintaining **consistent partnerships** with various stakeholders, including state and federal MDAs, and private sector organizations, were reported. Furthermore, a perceived **aversion to working with governments** and perceived partisan behavior from some stakeholders also posed challenges.
6. In certain regions, **insecurity** disrupted development efforts and hindered economic activities, which are crucial for mobilizing resources and fostering partnerships for SDG achievement.
7. The South-East region faced challenges related to **environmental degradation**, such as severe gully erosion, which diverted resources and attention from partnership-focused initiatives.
8. A concern regarding **donor fatigue** in some regions, like Ekiti, was also reported, making it difficult to secure external funding for SDG 17-related projects.

Chapter 6: Lessons from the Review

6.1. Key Highlights

The consultative meetings across the regions revealed critical lessons for advancing the achievement of the SDGs. These include the need for sustained government commitment, effective stakeholder coordination, adequate and timely funding, robust institutional frameworks, community engagement, and strengthened data systems.

The discussions emphasized the importance of a holistic approach to SDG implementation, recognizing the interconnectedness of the goals, regional variations, persistent challenges related to funding and capacity, and the value of local innovation and adaptation. The meetings also underscored the urgent need for enhanced data collection, management, and monitoring to track progress and inform decision-making. The lack of credible data emerged as a recurring challenge, with a call for integrated data management systems and the development of a universal SDGs reporting template for MDAs and local government representatives.

The key lessons are presented in more detail as follows:

Government Commitment and Political Will

Sustained political will and commitment from the government at all levels are fundamental facilitators for SDG implementation. This includes policy continuity across administrations.

Coordination and Synergy

A significant barrier is the lack of synergy and coordination among government agencies, between federal and state levels, and with other stakeholders. Establishing multi-stakeholder platforms and ensuring coherent, coordinated, and effective monitoring and evaluation are crucial for the efficient use of resources and personnel. The DAWN Commission is a promising model for other regions to emulate.

Funding and Resource Allocation

Persistent funding gaps require not only increased and timely allocations but also exploration of innovative financing mechanisms.

Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building

Strengthening organizational and institutional operations, including capacity building and staff development programmes, is essential. This includes employing more skilled personnel, improving working conditions, and providing continuous training and retraining.

Data Collection and Monitoring

The lack of credible data to measure the extent of implementation and the need for enhanced data collection within regions are barriers. Establishing updated and integrated data management systems is crucial for tracking progress and evidence-based decision-making.

Community Engagement and Awareness

Low awareness of SDGs among rural communities and harmful cultural and traditional practices hinder progress. Community sensitization and mobilization through community stakeholders, community volunteers, youth, traditional leaders, and religious clerics are essential to address socio-cultural barriers and gain community buy-in and ownership.

Interconnectedness of the SDGs

Discussions across different goals highlight the interdependence of achieving them. For instance, improving health outcomes (SDG 3) is linked to economic growth (SDG 8) as a healthy population is more productive. Similarly, achieving gender equality (SDG 5) is crucial for inclusive economic growth and overall well-being. Progress in providing clean water and sanitation (part of SDG 6, though not a focus of these specific reports) is essential for health (SDG 3). The success story of family planning leading to a woman's educational attainment (SDG 4) and societal impact also demonstrates this interconnectedness.

Critical Influence of Regional Contexts

Each region's unique socio-economic backgrounds and specific challenges significantly impact SDG implementation. The North-East's challenges are heavily influenced by insecurity and displacement. The South-South's context on the other hand, is shaped by its oil-rich status and coastal environment, leading to issues like oil spills and waterway insecurity. The South-West, being a major economic hub, grapples with issues like urban congestion and youth unemployment alongside its strengths in technology and innovation. In the South-East, its entrepreneurial spirit is contrasted with challenges such as gully erosion and infrastructure deficits. The lessons learned and strategies for implementation must be tailored to these specific regional realities.

Importance of Multi-Stakeholder Engagement

The consultative meetings consistently emphasized the need for collaboration and partnerships among various actors. This includes government agencies at all levels, CSOs, the private sector, traditional and religious institutions, international development partners (WHO, UNICEF, World Bank, USAID), academic institutions, and local communities. The establishment of platforms like the DAWN Commission and the North-East Development Commission (NEDC) are examples of efforts to foster this collaboration.

Persistent Challenges Related to Funding and Capacity

Inadequate and inconsistent funding remains a significant barrier across multiple SDGs and regions. Delays in funds disbursement and the need for increased financial resources are recurring concerns. Alongside funding, capacity gaps in human resources, technical expertise, and institutional operations hinder effective implementation. This necessitates continuous capacity building, staff development programmes, and strengthening organizational structures.

Value of Local Innovation and Adaptation

The consultative meetings highlighted examples of local innovations and adaptations that contribute to SDG progress. The Kaduna State Health Insurance Scheme, the Bauchi State Health Contributory Management Agency, the LSETF, Amotekun security network in the South-West, the Ekiti Knowledge Zone (EKZ), and the use of drones for medication delivery in Cross River state demonstrate context-specific solutions. Community-led initiatives for plastic waste recycling in Gombe and the use of cultural beliefs for wildlife conservation in Imo state further underscore the importance of local ingenuity.

6.2. Leaving No One Behind

In 2023, the Federal Government endorsed the National Accessibility Regulation to make public infrastructure accessible to persons with disabilities. International partners have also supported agencies like the NBS and OSSAP-SDGs to improve the production and use of disability-disaggregated data. OSSAP-SDGs also led the domestication of the Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) and development of Nigeria's IDC Action Plan (2023-2028) to promote inclusive data actions for marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities. Several "leave no one behind" initiatives that specifically target vulnerable populations or promote inclusiveness were highlighted by participants at the regional VNR meetings including:

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages.

- In the **North-East region**, the Kaduna State Health Insurance Scheme (KADCHMA) includes initiatives like free health insurance for vulnerable citizens and the positioning of enrolment booths in markets to reach a wider population. The VVF Center in Ningi, Bauchi state, offers free surgery and treatment to women with VVF issues. This specifically targets a marginalized group of women facing significant health challenges. Bauchi state has established the Agency for People with Disabilities and the Agency for Orphans and Vulnerable Children.
- In the **South-West**, during teacher recruitment, non-indigenes and persons with disabilities were accommodated, with sign language interpreters, accessible environments, and extra time provided. Lagos enrolled more PWDs in the Ilera Eko health insurance scheme.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- In the **South-West**, an inclusive approach was adopted during the recruitment of 8,000 teachers, including PWDs. This inclusivity was demonstrated by providing sign language interpreters, accessible environments, and extended time for candidates with disabilities.
- Shelters for survivors of gender-based violence were established in the **South-East** region, directly addressing the needs of this highly vulnerable group. Similarly, Akwa Ibom state's one-stop center for victims of sexual assault provides targeted interventions by offering both legal prosecution support and medical treatment.
- Plateau state in the **North-Central** region, demonstrated gender inclusiveness with the appointment of a female Accountant General, approved funds for comprehensive women empowerment, the establishment of a Gender Commission and Gender Court, and provided waivers to facilitate women's right to land ownership.

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

- Teacher recruitment in the South-West accommodated non-indigenes and PWDs, providing employment opportunities to diverse groups.



Poverty Alleviation programmes in Adamawa included training for 1500 participants and a Conditional Cash Transfer programme benefiting 2000 households.

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

- The SDGs Advocate Programme (SDGs-AP) trained 16,000 Nigerian youth and educated 1,000,000 junior secondary school students on the SDGs, aiming to empower the next generation with relevant knowledge and skills.
- Kwatam Development Initiative (KDI) in Kaduna state is involved in community engagement through community-led monitoring and advocacies to rural stakeholders. It aims to ensure that local communities are involved in and benefit from SDG-related programmes.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Next Steps

The 2025 VNR underscores Nigeria's enduring commitment to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs. This third VNR reflects an inclusive, participatory, and evidence-based review process that has drawn extensively from national and sub-national consultations, lived experiences, and disaggregated data across the country.

Despite global and domestic challenges—including the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic shocks, and security concerns—Nigeria has made measurable strides in aligning its national development plans with the SDGs. Key efforts include:

1. Institutional Frameworks

OSSAP-SDGs provides horizontal and vertical inter-government coordination efforts and guides the integration of the SDGs into national and sub-national development frameworks. Nigeria's phased implementation approach transitioned from the MDGs to the SDGs across three stages: foundation (2016–2020), scale-up (2021–2025), and acceleration (2026–2030).

2. Policy Integration

The SDGs have been systematically integrated into national plans, including the ERGP (2017–2020), the NDP (2021–2025), and Nigeria's Agenda 2050. Analytical tools, such as the Nigeria iSDG Model have enabled alignment of the SDGs with national development priorities.

3. Special Intervention Projects

Between 2016 and 2023, OSSAP-SDGs executed several impactful projects including the construction of over 8,000 classroom blocks, 195 health facilities, deployment of ambulances, and installation of solar-powered street lights, among others.

4. Integrated Financing Framework

The Nigeria INFF was launched in September 2022 to provide sustainable pathways for financing the country's development priorities.

5. Partnership and Localization

There has been deliberate effort to localize the SDGs through regional consultations across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, integrating diverse stakeholder perspectives and tailored regional recommendations.

6. Emphasis on Inclusivity

The VNR process emphasized inclusiveness and evidence-based participation, incorporating voices from youth, women, persons with disabilities, and non-state actors; reflecting Nigeria's commitment to a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to SDG implementation.

Despite these achievements, significant challenges persist. Data limitations, limited fiscal space, and structural economic vulnerabilities remain key obstacles. The Review identified specific areas for strengthening, including statistical capacity, multi-stakeholder partnerships, financing for development, and inclusive governance mechanisms.

As Nigeria moves forward, the country is focused on deepening SDG integration through the implementation of the NDP (2021–2025), Nigeria Agenda 2050, and the Renewed Hope Agenda. These frameworks prioritize inclusive economic growth, human capital development, national security, and resilient infrastructure. The country will continue its biennial VNR reporting through 2030, reinforcing accountability and facilitating continuous learning and adaptation.

To sustain progress and meet the SDG targets, Nigeria will prioritize:

- Strengthening evidence-based policymaking through improved data systems and evaluation mechanisms
- Enhancing resource mobilization strategies, particularly through public-private partnerships and impact-driven investments
- Deepening multi-level governance and stakeholder engagement to ensure that no one is left behind
- Accelerating transformative actions in key areas such as health, education, climate action, gender equality, and inclusive economic growth; and
- Strengthening active participation of different groups of Nigerians to their country's sustainable development and peacebuilding efforts through



volunteerism and other means of citizen engagement.

Nigeria's VNR journey is a clear demonstration of genuine commitment to build a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient society. The path forward demands strong leadership, inclusive policy implementation, and robust collaboration across all sectors of society.

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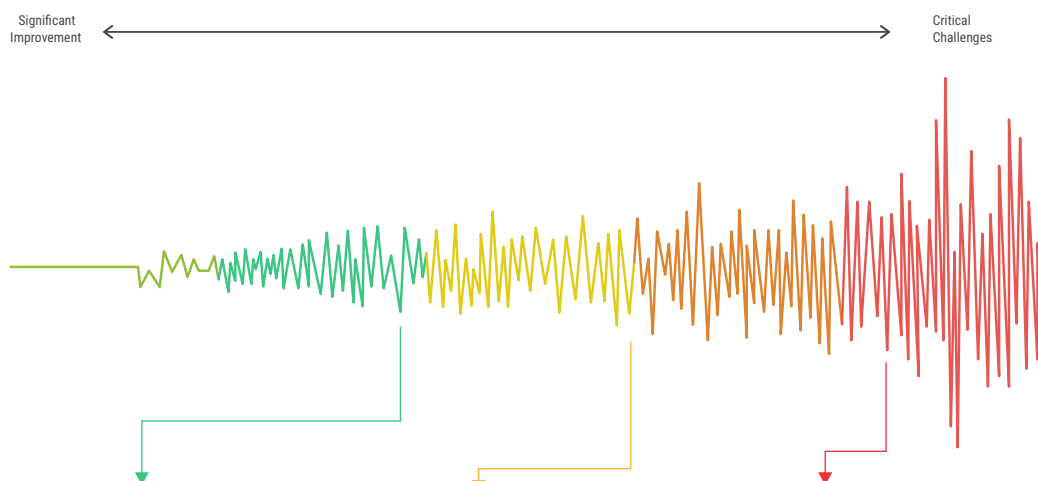
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Annexes

Annex 1: Nigeria SDG Progress Report - Dashboard on Selected SDGs Indicators

SDG progress ranges from significant improvement to critical challenges.



SDG 1

Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services

Proportion of population living below the national poverty line

Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems

Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP)

Proportion of total government spending on essential services

SDG 2

Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population

Average income of small-scale food producers

Prevalence of malnutrition among children under 5 years of age

Prevalence of undernourishment

SDG 3

Coverage of essential health services – ANC uptake

Maternal mortality ratio

Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

Proportion of women who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods

Neonatal mortality rate

Proportion of population with large household expenditures on health

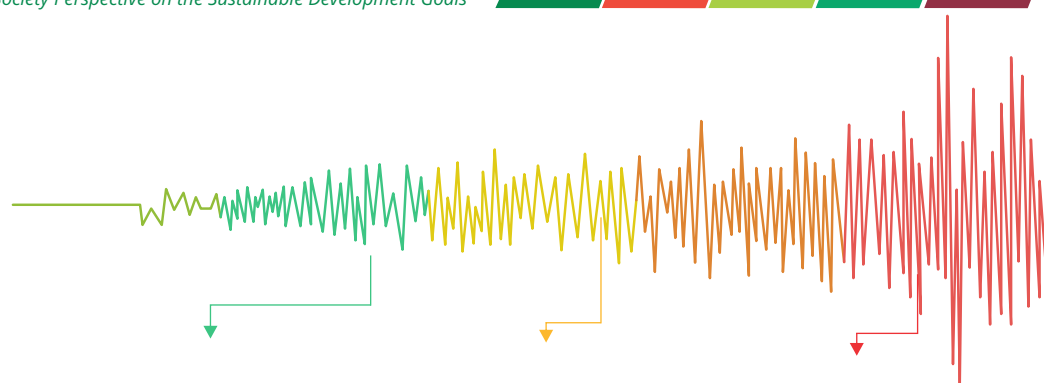
Under-5 mortality rate

Coverage of essential health services - Immunization

SDG 4

Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills

Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)



SDG 5

Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18

Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care

Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation,

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments

External mortality ratio

Neonatal mortality rate

SDG 6

Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services.

Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water.

SDG 7

Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology

Proportion of population with access to electricity.

Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption – solar energy capacity.

SDG 8

Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology

Proportion of informal employment in total employment.

Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption – solar energy capacity.

SDG 9

Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP.

Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita

Proportion of medium and high-tech industry value added in total value added - fintech innovation

Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labor.

SDG 10

Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita - household disposable income.

Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against – vulnerable populations

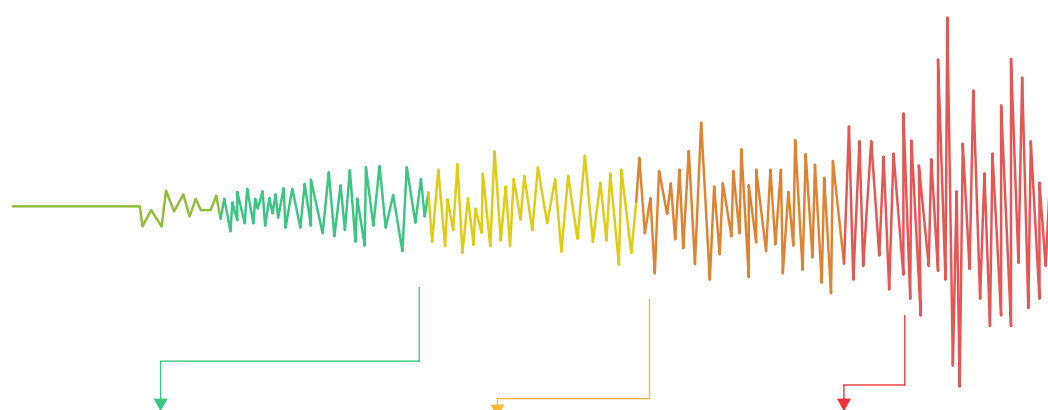
Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita – consumer spending

Proportion of the population who are refugees, by country of origin – number of refugees

SDG 11

Proportion of the population that has convenient access to public transport.

Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing.



SDG 12

Domestic material consumption - domestic material consumption per capita.

Hazardous waste generated per capita.

SDG 13

Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters.

Total greenhouse gas emissions per year.

SDG 14

Plastic debris density.

Total greenhouse gas emissions per year.

SDG 15

Progress towards sustainable forest management

SDG 16

Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority.

Number of victims of intentional homicide.

Proportion of population subjected to sexual violence in the previous 12 months.

SDG 17

Volume of remittances as a proportion of total GDP.

Proportion of individuals using the Internet.

Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP.

Annex 2: Nigeria SDGs Progress Report (2024)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fcdiPh2t9IqWszS8YwM1F6sqkjmluYy9/view?usp=sharing>

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