



Republic of Ghana



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REPORT OF THE 2023 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS SUMMIT HELD FROM 18TH TO 19TH SEPTEMBER 2023 AT THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

**SUBMITTED TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF, OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT, JUBILEE HOUSE**







1. Introduction



Ghana's Side Event at the 2023 SDGs Summit

The 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly and the 2023 SDG Summit was convened from the 18th to the 19th of September 2023 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. This historic gathering was the convergence of world leaders, dignitaries, and visionaries towards a common purpose – the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ghana, a nation with a rich history and a deep commitment to international cooperation, was proudly represented by a distinguished delegation. At the forefront of this delegation was His Excellency, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, providing unwavering leadership and vision. Alongside him were key figures such as the Ministers for Finance, Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Energy and Sanitation and Water Resources, the Head of Local Government Service, the Director-General of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) and the Executive Director of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Furthermore, the Ghanaian delegation included representatives from various vital ministries and agencies, including the Ministry of Sanitation and Water

Resources, Ministry of Works and Housing, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Environmental Protection Agency, National Development Planning Commission, among others.

The 2023 SDG Summit was a pivotal moment in the ongoing global pursuit of the 2030 Agenda. It culminated in a historic political declaration, a testament to the dedication and resolve of nations worldwide to take concrete action towards funding for universal health coverage, strengthening international cooperation for pandemic preparedness, and reaffirming their shared commitment to the 2030 Agenda. This gathering, convened by the President of the General Assembly, occurred at the halfway point towards the 2030 deadline, marking a significant milestone in our collective journey.

This report delves into the key highlights and outcomes of Ghana's participation in the 2023 SDG Summit. It captures the nation's commitment to sustainable development, the collaborative spirit exhibited on the international stage, and the potential for transformative and accelerated actions in the years leading up to 2030.



2. Ghana Side event on the theme “Accelerator Actions and Innovative Financing to Deliver on the SDGs by 2030”

The Government of Ghana in collaboration with the Governments of Uganda, Nigeria, Kingdom of Tonga, Copenhagen Consensus, IRC and United Nations of Ghana organised a side event on the theme “**Accelerator Actions and Innovative Financing to deliver on the SDGs by 2030**”. The event was held on 18th September 2023 at the Nigerian Mission in New York. The side event aimed to share country experiences in prioritisation and financing opportunities to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

The Director-General of the NDPC at the opening session of the side event indicated that for the SDGs to be achieved, countries need to prioritise and identify innovative financing opportunities for the implementation of the SDGs. Thus, as a country this event provides an opportunity for identifying opportunities that exist that can be tapped into for ensuring the achievement of commitments under the SDGs.



Ms. Vida Duti, the Country Director of IRC, in her statement indicated that investing in Africa’s water security is an accelerator for the achievement of the other SDGs. She mentioned that investment in WASH would realise rights to water, health, education, energy, food security, a healthy environment, gender equality, and

many other societal gains for this generation and those to come. The international high-level panel on water investment in African report, African rising Investment tide, she mentioned, asserts that the delivery of water interventions across Africa falls short of the continent’s real needs. Currently only Us\$10-19billion is being invested in Africa’s water and sanitation needs, which she added, falls short of the US\$30billion that Africa requires annually to meet its water security and sustainable sanitation. To accelerate the actions on resource mobilization, a five-year agenda plan focusing on climate resilient, public private financing and gender responsive approaches to drive financing in the WASH sector had been developed. Innovative financing, she said should start with efficient use of available funds before exploring the options of getting new ones. In the WASH sector, it comes to having effective and efficient service providers who are at least covering their cost. The SDGs is about interconnectivity and not individuality of the goals, this shift in discourse, she indicated, re-echoes the need to adopt a systems approach to cushion the SDGs agenda and a reflection on our choices on investment.





The representative of the Republic of Uganda highlighted that with the current trajectory, concerted efforts are required to achieve the SDGs. He emphasised the actions been taken by the government to address the SDGs including the investment been made. He highlighted on the collaborations with development partners as an entry to raising funding for achieving the SDGs. He however, highlighted that there still exist some challenges especially in raising all the needed revenue to fill the gap in funding the implementation of the SDGs.



The Director of Planning and Innovation, AUDA-NEPAD, Mrs. Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, highlighted on the importance of recognising the SDGs and Agenda 2063 as one agenda and therefore implementing the SDGs through the AU Agenda 2063. She mentioned the linkages between the SDGs and Agenda 2063, and the need for countries to have a unified implementation and reporting arrangements for the two Agendas. She congratulated Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda for their efforts in the implementation and reporting on the SDGs and Agenda 2063. That notwithstanding, she mentioned that gaps still persist. The evaluation of the first 10-year implementation of the Agenda 2063 shows great political commitment and will of African leaders towards achieving the Agenda. At the UN High Level Food Systems Summit, Africa was the only continent that came with a common position on issues relating to climate change including issues of adaptation and mitigation of climate change. However, the review of

the first 10 years shows poor progress in the implementation of the AU Agenda, these include limited resilient mechanisms to insulate the Agenda 2063 against external shocks, inadequate domestication and awareness creation, including synergies that needed to be created between the two agendas which affected issues of ownership and accountability. Issues of resource gaps was also highlighted as a critical area that affected implementation. In the second decade of the implementation of the AU Agenda, it is important to co-create, invest, implement and deliver on the aspirations of the African people. And in order to do that, strong partnership is needed. Team Africa resource mobilization campaign has been instituted to mobilise financing for the achievement of the AU agenda 2062 and the SDGs.



The speaker of Parliament of the Kingdom of Tonga, Lord Fakafanua, presented Tonga's prioritisation process, indicating that although external shocks such as COVID-19, Russian-Ukraine war, flooding, among others have reversed gains made toward the achievement of the SDGs, the case cais worse for a small Island such as Tonga where climate change has hindered achievement of the SDGs. Therefore for the Kingdom of Tonga, SDG 13 is the number one priority and is intrinsically linked to SDG 2, 3, 6, 14, 15, 7, 11 and 12. These he said are challenges that no single country can address. Thus, developed countries that



have benefitted economically from the first industrial revolution and burning gasoline oil in the second industrial revolution have the moral obligation to be at the forefront of the fight against climate change and support vulnerable island states such as Tonga. Therefore, targeted actions and innovative financing is critical to help cushion Islands states and facilitate their achievement of the SDGs.



Presentation by Copenhagen Consensus on SDG Priority Areas

The presentation by Dr. Bjorn Lomborg, drew attention to the promises made globally on the SDGs and the current trajectory, which shows that some progresses have been made towards the achievement of the SDGs, but the world is far away from the promises made and projections show that at the current trend, it will take the world 70 years to achieve the SDGs instead of the 15 years that was promised. Therefore, the need for prioritisation and asking the critical question of where resources need to be spent. The presentation highlighted the need for a critical analysis and evaluation of all options in the prioritisation process for effective outcomes. Experiences from Indonesia where prioritisation was done and interventions implemented yet failed to achieve the desired outcome— “double for nothing” initiative.



Presentation of Ghana's SDG Technical Report

Dr. Richard Osei Bofah's presentation focused on Ghana's prioritisation process, highlighting that Ghana moved from the 169 SDG targets to five priority targets. He indicated that for Ghana, having strong institutions is a trigger for achieving most of the SDG targets. Target 8.5 was also considered key for Ghana to accelerate the achievement of all the other SDG goals. Further, target 4.1 was also considered for building the human capital. Target 6.2 and 7.3 were all triggers that will accelerate Ghana's achievement of the SDGs. He reiterated that there was extensive participation of key institutions in the prioritisation process and indicated that extensive engagement of stakeholders will continue to ensure ownership and buy-in.





Panel Discussions on financing the SDGs aimed to address the financing gaps required to achieve the SDGs.

The Panel discussion was made up of the Mr. Ken Ofori-Atta, Minister for Finance; Dr. Pauline Chiwangu, Country Representative of UN Women Uganda; Dr. Kodjo Esseim Mensah-Abrampa, Director-General of NDPC; and Mrs. Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, Director of Planning and Innovation, AUDA-NEPAD. The panel deliberated on actions and innovative financing required for achieving the SDGs.

Key outcomes from the discussions were as follows:

- » Create platforms for knowledge sharing to enhance the development of programmes that can tap into existing global funds including climate funds;
- » Limit dependence on grants and aid and explore the alternative of leveraging our available resources for development;
- » Prioritise actions that have a better benefit cost ratio;
- » Enhance women economic empowerment to ensure trickle-down effect on the achievement of all SDG Goals; and
- » Enhance African connectivity by re-enforcing the benefits of AfCFTA





3. Other Side Events

3.1. Financing Localisation or Localising Finance

The government of the Republic of Egypt in collaboration with its partners organised a side event under the theme **“Financing Localisation or Localising Finance”**. The side event highlighted country experiences in financing the implementation of the SDGs at the national and local levels and the global efforts and contributions of Development Partners and Financial Institutions towards the implementation of the SDGs. The event also highlighted opportunities inherent in financing the Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Director-General of NDPC representing Ghana, indicated that, in terms of

financing local development, the government is obliged to provide 5 percent of the national revenue to the local level and local assemblies are required to generate internally generated funds (IGF). The 2021 Population and Housing Census has provided valuable information that has helped local assemblies improve revenues collection and the maximisation of technology has limited human interface thereby ensuring that pilfering is reduced. In addition, the passage of the Public-Private Partnership Act has provided the environment for attracting interest in direct private investment in infrastructure at the local level.





3.2. Accelerator Actions and Partnerships for SDG Delivery by 2030

This side event was organised by the Governments of Uganda and Ghana to share experiences on the effect of partnerships on the implementation of both countries SDGs as well as identify key accelerators for enhanced delivery of the SDGs. Ghana's experience focused on the pillars for accelerating partnerships, namely, development logic, legitimacy, ownership, and inclusiveness. Further, it highlighted on the integration of the SDGs into development plans and long-term frameworks as well as the existence of a well-structured coordination architecture that ensures whole-government and whole-society approach to delivering the SDGs. Also, highlighted were the efforts by Government to address data gaps and the seemingly need to strengthen the use of the data to influence, review, and shape policies. The event also highlighted the need to foster effective collaborations and partnerships, enhance means of implementation of the SDGs, address gender inequality, prioritise the interventions with the most impacts, and create the necessary environment to draw partnerships especially from Civil Society Groups (CSOs).

The event witnessed participation from key partners such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, Copenhagen Consensus Center, Reality of Aid Network and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC).





4. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that despite some progress, the world remains far from fulfilling the promises made to achieve the SDGs within the initially envisaged timeframe. The need for prioritisation has emerged as a crucial element in driving progress. The side events have underscored the need for a coordinated, innovative, and inclusive approach to SDGs implementation and financing. The partnerships forged and the lessons shared provide a valuable roadmap for countries and organisations committed to realising the SDGs by 2030. The SDGs are a global responsibility, and with concerted efforts, prioritisation, and innovative financing, we can collectively work towards a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future for all.



Annex 1: Pictures of Ghana's Side Event at the UN Summit







