

PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2020

MAIN MESSAGES

Introduction

Papua New Guinea (PNG) adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA Pathway) to achieve the country's Vision 2050. The SDGs were integrated into the Medium-Term Development Plan III (2018-2022) with other national policies, legislative and budgets. Progress has been good and challenging for thematic areas of some key sectors due to internal/external pressures. This first Voluntary National Review Report (VNR) provides progress of implementation and rejuvenate ownerships of SDGs.

SDG Progress

Since 2000, notable progress was made in Health (Goal 4), Education (Goal 5), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Partnership for the Goals (SDG 17):

- maternal mortality rate decreased from 220 (2015) to 145 (2017) per 100,000 live births;
- immunization coverage improved from 60 per cent (2016) to 80 per cent (2019);
- net enrollment ratio in primary education improved from 68 per cent (2014) to 87.7 percent (2017).

Positive trends are expected in other SDGs due to significant policy shifts and innovative financing and implementation modalities for Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7), Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), and Gender Equality (SDG 5).

While key enablers are in place for most SDGs, internal/external pressures continue to hinder progress in Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16), and Life Below Water (SDG 14).

National Ownership and Institutional Arrangements

In 2015, PNG took strong ownership and integrated SDGs into national planning frameworks and introduced National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development (StaRS) and legislated National Responsible Planning and Monitoring Act in 2016. The VNR process have been driven through the proposed SDG-MTDP Governance Mechanism (national steering committee, inter-ministerial committee and multi-sectoral SDG Council and sectoral technical working groups).

Means of Implementation

The MTDP III is first of the three national delivery mechanisms of the SDGs. The National Development Budget is a significant tool to fund SDGs and MTDP III through the Capital Investment Programme. The Development Cooperation Policy 2018-2022 provides protocol for development partners to align to national priorities.

Multi-Sectoral Stakeholder Engagement

The meaningful partnerships between the government and Development Partners are evident in their active engagements in the localisation of SDGs and the development of MTDP III. The partnerships were through Development Cooperation Policy 2018-2022, Public-Private Partnership, CSO Partnership Policy, Open Government Partnership and through the Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council.

A proposed SDG Multi Stakeholder Engagement Strategy focuses in improving Whole of Government institutional arrangement and Coordination and Society Wide Approaches to leave no one behind.

Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)

Disparities in income and access to basic services are hampered by rugged terrain and remote and isolated rural population, gender disparities amongst women and girls, vast youth population, and migration patterns. Often forgotten are the marginalised and most vulnerable groups of people.

For service delivery at the districts, wards and communities' levels, the National Government has put in place District Development Authority Act (2014) to manage the Service Improvement Programme to fund their own sector development priorities apart from health and education.

Challenges

Major challenges hampering the progress of SDG include; limited technical and financial capacities, lack of coordination, poor accountability and governance in development and LNOB. Specific challenges include:

COVID-19 also affected 2020 budget and revenue generation from the major drop in commodity prices and reduction of domestic business activities in PNG. As such significant policy and fiscal trade-offs were made on the limited available budget in its reprioritization to other critical, life-saving basic services with COVID-19 stimulus package of K4.4 Billion in funding preventative measures in PNG.

Innovative Financing for Development from Development Partners is yet to be explored from off shore creative financing sources for development financing then from both the domestic sources and from the traditional donor funding modalities.

The **data and evidence ecosystem** are being challenged to track the progress of SDG due to rugged topography, limited capacity throughout the country, lack of coordination and lack of funding. Recent success of Demographic and Health Survey and preparation of 2021 Census. The periodic reporting platform of SDG will improve good governance.