



GHANA'S 2022 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

MAIN MESSAGE

Policy and institutional environment

The “whole-of-government” and “whole of society” approach have been sustained as the plans and budget of planning bodies at all levels of the country respond to the 2030 Agenda. This multistakeholder approach was demonstrated in the fight against COVID-19 and more dominantly within the health sector. An all-inclusive government and private sector approach was adopted that aimed at strengthening vital health services and capacity development. The climate action ambitions have also been stepped-up in the revised commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Effects of COVID-19

Government had to reprioritise its investment to protect life at the expense of other sectors that were necessary for the SDGs. This decision is encapsulated in the President’s statement **“We know how to bring the economy back to life. What we do not know is how to bring people back to life”**. Government increased investment in medical laboratories, particularly those capable of conducting PCR test from 2 to 16 nationwide in 2020.

The prioritisation resulted in GH¢17.7 billion (or 4.6% of GDP) in unplanned expenditure to contain the pandemic since 2020. Additionally, the country recorded a revenue shortfall of GH¢13.7 billion and a drop-in real GDP growth rate from the average performance between 2017 to 2019 (7.0%) to 0.5% in 2020. These affected investments needed to sustain the country’s trajectory.

Other socio-economic effects included 36% of firms closing during the 3-week partial lock down and over 38% of firms reducing their workers’ wages. Outpatient department attendance, childhood immunisation and all-cause mortality performed below their respective targets. About 35% of basic school children and 28% of SHS students could not be engaged in any form of learning while at home largely due to lack of access to computers, phones and textbooks.

Status of SDGs

These developments have reversed the progressive trends observed in poverty reduction, pro-poor expenditure particularly education and social protection. Family planning acceptor rate, and net enrolment ratio amongst others.

This notwithstanding, the country has sustained the achievement of gender parity, increased access to drinking water services and electricity coverage reaching 87.7% and 86.6% in 2021 respectively.

Other indicators requiring attention include unemployment rate which increased from 8.4% in 2017 to 13.4% in 2021. Additionally, only a third (33.4%) of households’ solid waste are collected.



Measures Towards Recovery

Further to recovery efforts, emergency preparedness and response strategies have been integrated into national development agenda (2022-2025). A three-and-a-half-year GH¢100 billion Ghana COVID-19 Alleviation and Revitalisation of Enterprises Support (Ghana CARES) was instituted in 2020, and a strategy for domestic vaccine production has been rolled-out to establish a National Vaccine Institute. A programme (YouStart) to support youth-led start-ups and small businesses with soft loans up to GH¢50,000 has also been set-up. An infectious disease centre has been established with the support of the Ghana COVID-19 Private Sector Fund. Call Data Records of mobile phone users were innovatively used to gather evidence on the effectiveness of COVID-19 restrictions policy and provided recommendations.

Impact of Recovery Measures

Real GDP growth increasing from 0.5% (2020) to 5.4% in 2021. Waves I to III COVID-19 tracker surveys (June 2020-December 2021) show the following:

- Households with children under 15 years eating fewer meals than usual reduced from 21.4% to 17.7%
- Households that reported reduced incomes declined from 77.4% to 68.2%
- Households that needed healthcare and were able to assess it increased from 93.9% to 95.7%
- Children missing vaccination reduced from 29.4% to 20.6%
- Children engaged in any type of learning activity increased for primary (62.2% to 71.3%) and secondary (72.0% to 79.8%)

Emerging challenges

The need to restore the economy amidst current global and national economic challenges such as rising oil prices, fiscal deficits, depreciation of the local currency, and youth unemployment. Broadening social protection coverage for the vulnerable including PWDs towards social and economic inclusion. Addressing infrastructure inadequacies in key sectors such as health, education, and sanitation services as well as supporting digitalisation drive. Mitigating impacts of climate change and variability for green growth.

Emerging Opportunities

Improving innovative resource mobilisation through partnerships, integrated national financing frameworks and harnessing the benefits of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement towards addressing financing gaps for the SDGs. Leveraging on the demographic dividends.