



SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM MAIN MESSAGE

Brunei Darussalam remains committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in line with its National Vision, *Wawasan Brunei 2035*, progressing the nation towards its goals of having a highly skilled and educated population; a high quality of life; and a dynamic and sustainable Economy. The Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) is timely, as a reflection of the SDG journey following global disruptions. Developed through a participative multi-stakeholder approach, this VNR highlights several developments within the SDGs ecosystem including mainstreaming of SDGs with *Wawasan Brunei 2035*; enhancements in institutional arrangements; improvements in evidence-based monitoring and timely reporting of progress. Whole-of-nation partnerships coupled with international cooperation, substantiate the findings of SDGs progress and the identified opportunities to address gaps for the remaining 7 years.

National Progress and Challenges

As a country with a high Human Development Index with a value of 0.829, Brunei Darussalam continues to strengthen efforts in several dimensions. The nation remains resolute in maintaining several key areas in particular the commitment to Universal Health Coverage with improvements in health infrastructure, equipment, medicines, and personnel. This has contributed to a low maternal and child mortality rate, a high proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, and a high percentage of routine vaccination coverage rates. The resilience of the health system was tested by the COVID-19 pandemic but through aggressive action including regular public communications and a strong sense of solidarity, a low death rate with a high recovery rate was achieved.

Economic diversification has made a good stride of progress in stimulating economic growth and more importantly, creating job opportunities. People's livelihood is further improved by significant investment in better infrastructure, improved food, and nutrition

security as well as full access to basic needs, particularly electricity, water, and sanitation. Free education at all levels and lifelong human capital development remain important drivers to maintaining a prosperous society, among others, with high youth and adult literacy rates; good enrolments rate, and stable gender parity. There are also more innovative efforts, especially in the provision of social protection from poverty and hunger among vulnerable groups. The Brunei community also continues to prioritise efforts in climate change, addressing biodiversity loss, and maintaining natural ecosystems. Renewable energy is currently being explored, with initiatives to improve energy efficiency and promote sustainable livelihood.

There are however areas for improvement. At present, data gaps remain a significant challenge. As such, there is only a partial assessment of SDG progress, even though the SDG National Tracker established by UNESCAP, has greatly improved data monitoring and reporting. For example, even though there are aggressive climate change actions through the National Climate Change Policy (BNCCP), more data is needed to effectively monitor outcomes and impacts for Goal 13. There are also other additional compounding factors. For example, whilst there have been improvements in Goal 4 in uplifting the quality of teachers and responding to the needs of special needs students, the education system now has to deal with learning loss due to school closures during the pandemic. Another area of concern is actions needed to support transformations in human consumption behaviours, such as increasing the uptake of recycling and sustainable practices. Strong partnerships are therefore essential to accelerate progress and scale up interventions.

The Way Forward

Brunei Darussalam is confident that the SDGs can be achieved through solidarity and building synergies in efforts with strength and resilience. Brunei Darussalam will continue its efforts to strengthen key areas including investments in human capital; progressing in quality of life which includes governance, social and environmental areas; and accelerating economic diversification to reduce poverty, inequalities and improve social and economic resilience. Ongoing efforts will also be continued through strengthening statistical capacity to better identify vulnerable populations; develop evidence-based policies; strengthen collaboration

with all relevant stakeholders and through deeper policy coherence and implementation. These would be particularly relevant in designing and mobilising behavioural changes needed for a deeper change toward sustainable development. Together with a stronger multilateralism approach to SDG, action to the 2030 Agenda will further transform the future of the planet and its people. Brunei Darussalam will continue its SDG journey with resilience, adaptation, and partnership.
