



# HEALTH AND HEALTH-RELATED SDGs PROGRESS IN GHANA

## PROGRESS REPORT

2023

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### 1.0 Overview

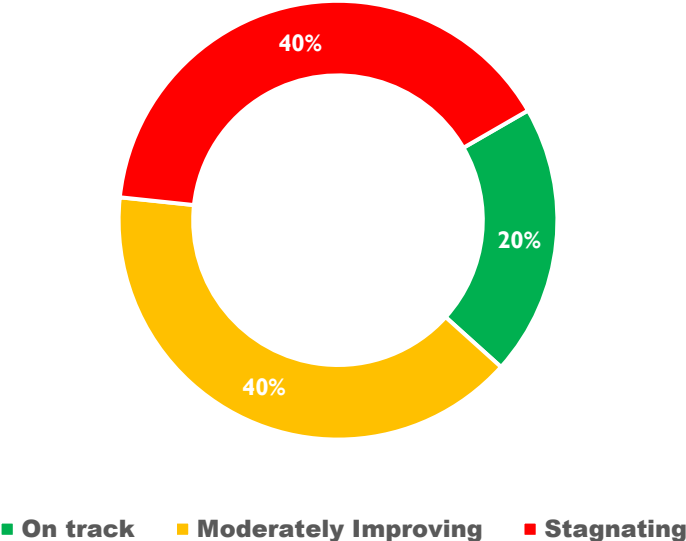
A scoping review using qualitative evidence synthesis techniques conducted in 2022 tracked the implementation progress of health and health-related Sustainable Development Goals (HHSDGs) in Ghana between September 2015 and October 2022. The review aimed to conduct a baseline national situational analysis of the HHSDGs in Ghana whilst providing in-depth and updated literature on their implementation progress and bottlenecks. Of the 51 records reviewed, SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 3 (Health and wellbeing), SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and SDG 13 (Climate change and climate action) were the identified HHSDGs in Ghana. Generally, Ghana has made significant progress in meeting some HHSDG global targets however, others face major challenges and require acceleration. SDG 2 (Zero hunger) has met some global targets particularly for significantly reducing overweight among children under five years and efforts to further reduce stunting among children under five, are on track. However, progress has stalled for SDG 3 (Health and wellbeing), SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and SDG 13 (Climate change and climate action). While the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted Global economies leading to reversals in years of progress made through internal and external funding and aid respectively, this review documented significant in-country challenges in implementing HHSDGs in Ghana. These included: poor data tracking and management, poor inter-institutional and inter-ministerial collaboration, rapid population growth and urbanization which interferes with urban planning and sanitation; poor behavioural tendencies among the Ghanaian population, budget incredibility, poor health resourcing and inadequate agricultural mechanized systems.

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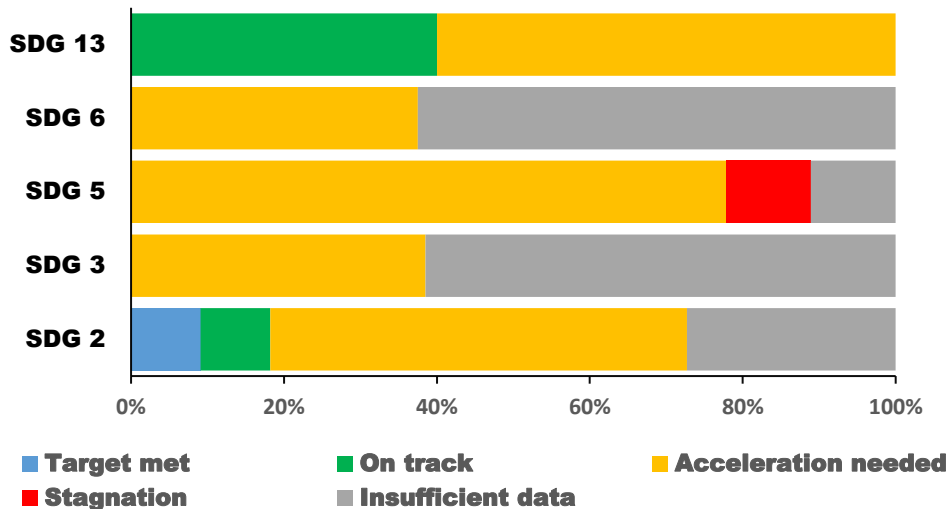
**2.0 Evaluation of HHSDG Progress**

Figure 2.1 shows the overall progress evaluation of the HHSDGs in percentages based on the cumulative progress of the 5 HHSDGs (SDGs 2,3,5,6 and 13) between September 2015 and October 2022. Generally, less than half (40%) of the HHSDGs are stagnating and or off-track and an additional 40% moderately improving to be achieved by 2030. For example, the SDG 2 and 3 are stagnating whereas 5 and 6 are moderately improving but require acceleration as detailed in Figure 3.1 below. Furthermore, one-fifth (20%) of the HHSDG targets are on track to achieving the SDG goals by 2030.



**Figure 2.1 Ghana’s HHSDG progress as of October 2022**

Figure 2.2 illustrates the trend in progress of the five HHSDG goals based on assessed targets. This assessment gives a visual presentation of individual HHSDG progress based on cumulative HHSDG targets and indicators. In a snapshot, close to 10% of SDG 2 targets have been met whereas less than 10% are on track to achieving the SDG goals by 2030. However, more than 50% require acceleration for their targets to be achieved by 2030. Close to 30% of the targets had data gaps. On the other hand, nearly 40% of the targets in SDG 3 and SDG 6 need acceleration to achieve set targets by 2030 based on the available data. However, data insufficiency remains a challenge to adequately evaluate their progress. About 10% of SDG 5 targets are stagnating with an additional 10% of data gaps. However, close to 80% require acceleration.



**Figure 2.2 Progress assessment for the 5 HHSBG Goals based on assessed targets as of October 2022**

### 3.0 Ghana’s HHSBG status as of October 2022

Ghana has made significant progress in implementing the HHSBGs since its launch in 2015. Figure 3.1 summarizes Ghana’s HHSBG progress performance by goal as of October 2022. Generally, the HHSBGs related to hunger and sustainable food systems (SDG 2) and health outcomes (SDG 3) are stagnating with major challenges. For example, moderate to severe food insecurity declined from 49.5% in 2017 to 47.7% in 2020 but severe food insecurity increased from 8% in 2017 to 9.5% in 2020 [1]. Similarly, skilled birth attendants visit by pregnant women decreased from 59.1% in 2019 to 58.7% in 2020 [1,2]. In addition, mental health issues are under-represented in SDG progress reports in Ghana largely due to the limited literature profiling the progress and challenges reported at the various levels of healthcare. For example, in the scoping review conducted for this report, only three (3) out of forty-two (42) SDG 3 reports considered issues related to mental health [3–5]. Specifically, this dearth of data may be associated with the unavailability of sustainable data tracking systems and poor information management as described in Table 5.1.1 below. Although gender equality (SDG 5) and clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) are moderately improving, major challenges remain. For example, an existing ministry has been revamped to incorporate gender-related issues, national gender policies launched, and laws amended to protect women, girls, and boys; quotas reserved for girls and women in education and leadership of government institutions [1,6,7]. Similarly, Ghana exceeded the global 74% target of providing access to safely managed drinking water for 86% households in 2020 against the 80% output achieved in 2015 [8]. However, Ghana continue to battle open defecation among 9.9-44.2% of the population [3,5,8–10]. On the other hand, SDG 13 is on track however, challenges impede its progress. For example, Ghana has shown commitment towards climate action by joining global climate action

agreements, engaging in policy interventions and agricultural adaptation re-strategization [1,2]. Also, Ghana tapped into global technological advancements to deploy zero-carbon emission medical drones to supply essential medicines and products to remote communities which conforms with the United Nations’ agenda to achieve zero net carbon emissions [11].

Ghana’s HHSDG progress performance is comparable with that of the World and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) sub-region. The SDG Index and Dashboards report a stagnating SDG 2 with major challenges, moderately improving SDG 3 with some challenges, moderately improving SDG 5 with significant challenges, moderately improving SDG 6 with significant challenges and stagnating SDG 13 with significant challenges at the midpoint of 2030 Agenda [12]. Generally, Ghana’s HHSDG progress is on track and synchronized with the global HHSDG Sustainable Development Report [12]. However, Ghana’s SDG 3 progress is particularly stagnating and presents major challenges that deviate from the global status on the dashboards. Similarly, the 2023 SDG for SSA reports stagnating SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 5 and SDG 6 with major challenges [12]. However, SDG 13 is on track with few challenges remaining.



Figure 3.1 Ghana’s HHSDG progress performance as of October 2022

## **4.0 Ghana's progress status on HSDG-specific targets**

**Specific HSDG targets were tracked and progress is reported below:**

### **4.1 Good Health and Wellbeing (SDG 3)**

Ghana's progress on the 13 health goals embedded in SDG 3 was tracked and presented in Table 4.1.1 below. The health SDGs 3.1 (Maternal mortality), 3.2 (Child mortality), 3.3 (Communicable diseases), 3.4 (NCD and Mental Health) and 3.8 (Universal Health Coverage Index) have made significant progress, however, some challenges remain and hence require acceleration. This progress is largely influenced by Ghana's health and health-related programs and policies formulated and implemented over the period under review. For example, Ghana launched an Artificial intelligence-enhanced medical drone in the healthcare supply chain in April 2019 [13]. These drones serve as a sustainable healthcare supply chain management system for real-time delivery of essential medicines, blood and blood products to hard-to-reach indigenous communities in Ghana. This intervention has significantly reduced the duration of vaccine stockouts and the proportion of people who miss vaccinations by 30% and 44% respectively [14]. Others include the government initiative and action plan for local vaccine production [7]. On the other hand, there was insufficient data to adequately review Ghana's progress on the remaining health goals as outlined in table 4.1.1. Ghana's health progress resonates with the global health status on the SDG progress chart 2023 [15]. Comparatively, Ghana has improved in reducing maternal mortality from 580 per 100,000 live births in 2007 to 301 per 100,000 live births in 2021 with further acceleration needed to meet the target of 70 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030 [1], whilst the global health maternal mortality progress stagnates [16]. Conversely, Ghana is challenged with data gaps on the health impact of pollution, Tobacco control, substance abuse; research and development for health; health financing and workforce; management of health risks; road traffic accidents; and sexual and reproductive health (Table 4.1.1). Also, the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) has suffered a decline in population coverage from 38.4% in 2013 to 35.8% in 2018 largely due to poor program financing [17]. However, stakeholder engagement, education, communication; donor support from developmental parties and efforts to improve accessibility through the mobile renewal system using USSD codes seek to boost coverage [17]. Although poor health financing remains a significant challenge to achieving SDG 3, Ghana made GH¢3,055.98 million core expenditure as of 2018 [6] and GH¢4,402.7 million budget was allocated in 2021 [7].


**Table 4.1.1 A summary of Ghana’s HHSDG progress according to major health goals**

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	Health goals	Status	Data coverage	Source
	3.1 Maternal mortality	●	2017-2021	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	3.2 Child mortality	●	2017-2020	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	3.3 Communicable diseases	●	2020	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; Sachs et al, 2022 [128]; NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	3.4: NCD and Mental Health	●	2018	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; Kusi-Mensah et al (2022) [3]; Amu et al (2021) [4]
	3.5 Substance abuse	●		
	3.6 Road traffic accidents	●		
	3.7 Sexual & reproductive health	●		
	3.8 Universal Health Coverage Index	●	2019	Sachs et al, 2022 [2]
	3.9 Health impact of pollution	●		
	3. a Tobacco control	●		
	3. b R&D for health	●		
	3. c Health financing and workforce	●		
	3.d Management of health risks	●		

● Target met ● On track ● Acceleration needed ● Stagnation ● Insufficient data

In addition, the review tracked Ghana’s progress using specific health indicators such as life expectancy, health technology and innovations; specific Infectious diseases; healthcare accessibility, universal health coverage; health financing, and health insurance. These are summarized in Table 4.1.2 below. Ghana has made commendable progress particularly by significantly improving access to skilled birth attendants and drastically reducing teenage pregnancy and the proportion of adolescents who give birth annually. However, other health indicators such as Life expectancy at birth, National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) coverage, Childhood Immunization, Antenatal care (ANC) coverage, HIV incidence, TB incidence, Malaria incidence and Health innovations /Medical technology require acceleration to meet global targets 2030. Ultimately, it is challenging to rate Ghana’s progress in health funding and health infrastructure due to insufficient and unavailable data.

**Table 4.1.2 Ghana's health progress according to specific health indicators under review**


3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	Health indicator	Status	Data coverage	Source
	Life expectancy at birth	●	2019	Sachs et al, 2022 [2]
	NHIS coverage	●	2019-2022	Akweongo et al (2021) [18]; Yambah et al (2022) [19]; Agyemang-Duah et al (2019) [20]; Sheff et al (2020) [21]
	Childhood Immunization	●	2020	Sheff et al (2020) [21]
	ANC coverage	●	2020	Sheff et al (2020) [21]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	Skilled birth attendance	●	2017-2018	GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC (2020) [8]; UNICEF, 2023 [5]
	Adolescent birth	●	2018	UNICEF, 2023 [5]
	HIV incidence	●	2017-2020	GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	New HIV Incidence in children under five	●	2020	UNICEF, 2023 [5]
	New HIV incidence in girls 15-19 years	●		UNICEF, 2023 [5]
	New HIV incidence in boys 15-19 years	●		UNICEF, 2023 [5]
	TB incidence	●	2018-2020	GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	Malaria incidence	●	2018-2020	GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC (2020) [8]
	Health funding	●		
	Health infrastructure	●		
	Health innovations/Medical technology	●		Damoah et al (2021) [13]; NDPC, 2022 [1]

● Target met ● On track ● Acceleration needed ● Stagnation ● Insufficient data

The sub-level evaluation demonstrated Ghana's health progress performance stratified by the administrative regions and type of settlements in Ghana (Table 4.1.3). Fifteen (15) out of the new sixteen (16) administrative regions in Ghana have met SDG targets for childhood immunization coverage. However, the Volta region is on track to achieving targets. Urban settlements have met SDG targets for pregnant women to access the services of skilled birth attendants. However, rural settlements are on track to meeting these SDG targets. Similarly, all ten (10) old administrative regions as of 2017 had met SDG targets of supporting pregnant women to give birth under the supervised care of skilled birth attendants. These are towards the broader goal of reducing home deliveries, and maternal and neonatal mortality rates by at least 50% by 2030.



**Table 4.1.3 Sub-level evaluation of Ghana’s health progress**


	Health indicator	Status	Data coverage	Source
	Childhood immunization coverage (by region)		2020	NDPC, 2022 [1]
	Ahafo	●		
	Ashanti	●		
	Bono	●		
	Bono East	●		
	Central	●		
	Eastern	●		
	Greater Accra	●		
	North East	●		
	Northern	●		
	Oti	●		
	Savannah	●		
	Upper East	●		
	Upper West	●		
	Volta	●		
	Western	●		
	Western North	●		
	Skilled birth attendance (by settlement)		2016-2017	NDPC (2020) [8]
	Rural	●		
	Urban	●		
	Skilled birth attendance (by region)		2016-2017	NDPC (2020) [8]
	Greater Accra	●		
	Ashanti	●		
	Brong Ahafo	●		
	Volta	●		
	Eastern	●		
	Western	●		
	Central	●		
	Upper East	●		
	Northern	●		
	Upper West	●		

● Target met ● On track ● Acceleration needed ● Stagnation ● Insufficient data

## 4.2 Zero Hunger (SDG 2)

Table 4.2.1 summarizes Ghana's progress in ensuring food security, and fighting hunger and malnourishment. Overall, Ghana has made good progress in efforts to meet SDG 2 nutritional goals. Ghana is on track to reducing stunting among children under 5 and the target met for fighting child overweight thus 2.9% as of 2020 [5]. However, acceleration is required to meet global targets for drastically reducing undernourishment and ensuring food security; reducing malnutrition and wasting among children under 5; enabling small-scale food producers to invest in sustainable and mechanized agriculture. There is insufficient data to track Ghana's progress on genetic resources for agriculture, agricultural export subsidies and food price anomalies. Ghana's SDG 2 progress was built on core government programs and interventions. For example, key national programs and government initiatives such as Planting for Food and Jobs, Rearing for Food and Jobs, Planting for Exports and Rural Development, Greenhouse villages, the Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Program and Agricultural Mechanization were launched between 2016 and 2020 [7,22]. In 2017, the Girls' Iron and Folic Acid Tablets Supplementation (GIFTS) program and the Micronutrient Powder Initiative were introduced as a school-based program to fight anaemia and to improve nutrition among menstruating girls 10-19 years [1]. On SDG 2 financing, Ghana made GH¢833.73 million core expenditure in 2018 [6] and GH¢1196.87 million budget allocation in 2021 [7].

**Table 4.2.1 A summary of Ghana's HHSDDG progress according to major nutritional goals**

	Nutritional goals	Status	Data coverage	Source
	2.1 Undernourishment and Food Security	●	2016-2022	Nanewortor et al (2021) [23]; Lelea et al (2022) [24]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]
	2.2 Malnutrition	●	2017-2020	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC, 2022 [1]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]
	2.2.1 Stunting among children under 5	●	2020	UNICEF, 2023 [120]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC (2020) [8]
	2.2.2 Wasting among children under 5	●	2017	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]
	2.2.3 Overweight among children under 5	●	2020	UNICEF, 2023 [5]
	2.3 Small-scale food producers	●	2022	Lelea et al (2022) [24]
	2.4 Sustainable agriculture	●	2021	Issahaku et al (2021) [25]
	2.5 Genetic resources for agriculture	●		
	2. a Investment in agriculture	●	2018-2021	MoF, 2018 [6]; MoF, 2021 [7]

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2. b Agricultural export subsidies	●
2. c Food price anomalies	●

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● Target met   ● On track   ● Acceleration needed   ● Stagnation   ● Insufficient data

The review established Ghana's sub-group progress of SDG 2 (zero hunger) according to the type of settlement and regional progress performance. These are demonstrated in Table 4.2.2. Food security targets are on track in urban communities whereas rural communities continue to stagnate. Greater Accra, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions as captured under the old administrative regional system are on track to achieving SDG 2 targets of ending hunger and ensuring food security by 2030. However, acceleration is required for Volta, Eastern, Western and Central regions to attain food security. On the other hand, three (3) regions in the Northern part of Ghana (Upper West, Northern and Upper East regions) are stagnating towards achieving food security. Stratified by sex, SDG 2 targets aimed at reducing stunting to 10% among children under 5 have been met among females while males need acceleration. Similarly, urban dwellers have met the SDG targets for stunting whereas rural settlements require acceleration. Stunting reduction is on track in the Greater Accra region but stagnating in the Northern region of Ghana.

**Table 4.2.2 Sub-level HHSDG progress of nutritional goals**




Nutritional goals	Status	Data coverage	Source
Food security (by settlement)		2016-2020	NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
Rural	●		
Urban	●		
Food security (by region)		2016-2020	NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
Greater Accra	●		
Ashanti	●		
Brong Ahafo	●		
Volta	●		
Eastern	●		
Western	●		
Central	●		
Upper East	●		
Northern	●		
Upper West	●		
Stunting among children under 5 (by sex)		2020	NDPC, 2022 [1]
Males	●		
Females	●		
Stunting among children under 5 (by settlement)		2016-2022	NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
Rural	●		
Urban	●		
Stunting among children under 5 (by region)		2016-2022	NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
Greater Accra	●		
Ashanti	●		
Brong Ahafo	●		
Volta	●		
Eastern	●		
Western	●		
Central	●		
Upper East	●		
Northern	●		
Upper West	●		

● Target met ● On track ● Acceleration needed ● Stagnation ● Insufficient data

### 4.3 Gender Equality (SDG 5)

Ghana's status in achieving gender equality is summarized in Table 4.3.1. Generally, most gender goals related to discrimination against women and girls, child marriage, economic inequalities, skewed leadership, access and right to reproductive health and policies are progressively improving. For example, female representation in Ghana's parliament stabilized from 14% (2019) to 14% (2020) but increased to 15% in 2021, female ministerial appointments increased from 22% (2019) to 25% (2020) and appointment of female Supreme Court Judges increased from 26% (2019) to 28% (2020) and 31% in 2021 [1]. Also, child marriage among girls before attaining the age of 18 years declined from 23.2% in 2015 to 19% in 2017 [8]. Various stakeholders play vital roles in achieving this progress. For example, Ghana Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have facilitated the release of land to women in the Ellembelle District and its environs in Ghana under the advocacy of equal opportunities for all [26]. Similarly, government interventions and policies support gender equality in Ghana. For example, the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection was formed to replace the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs in 2013 and the National Gender Policy was adopted in 2015 [6]. Also, a quota system was adopted to appoint 30% of women for government appointment and all public institutions as well as the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill in parliament to increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels and ranks [22]. In addition, Ghana enacted and amended gender-related laws such as the Children's Amendment Act, 2016 (Act 937), Ghana Aids Commission Act, 2016 (Act 938), Right to Information Act, 2019 (Act989), Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) and Real Estate Agency Act, 2020 (Act 1047) to protect the rights and interests of women and children [1]. However, acceleration is needed to reach global targets including sustainable financing of SDG 5. For example, out of the GH¢34.3 million budget allocated for the ministry in 2018, only 14% was allocated for gender equality objectives [6]. Ghana is stagnating with efforts to fight violence against women and girls with insufficient data to track target 5b (Technology for women empowerment). For example, defilement cases declined from 1889 in 2018 to 1720 in 2019 but increased to 1750 in 2020. Similarly, rape cases were reduced by only 1 case from 504 in 2019 to 503 in 2020 [1].

**Table 4.3.1 A summary of Ghana's HHSDG progress according to gender equality targets**


	Gender equality goals	Status	Data coverage	Source
5.1 Discrimination against women & girls	●	2018-2022	Lelea et al (2022) [24]; Yakovleva et al (2022) [27]; Doherty (2018) [28]; Gbagbo and Nkrumah (2022) [29]; CSPG, 2019 [26]	
5.2 Violence against women & girls	●	2008-2017	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; NDPC (2020) [8]	
5.3 Early marriage	●	2017	UNICEF, 2023 [5]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]	
5.4 Unpaid care and domestic work	●	2019-2022	Lelea et al (2022) [24]; Friedman et al, (2019) [30]	

5.5 Women in Leadership	●	2017-2022	Yakovleva et al (2022) [27]; Doherty (2018) [28]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
5.6 Reproductive Health Access & rights	●	2020	Akazili et al (2020) [31]
5. a Equal economic rights	●	2019-2022	Lelea et al (2022) [24]; Yakovleva et al (2022) [27]; Friedman et al, (2019) [30]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]
5. b Technology for women empowerment	●		
5. c Gender equality policies	●	2013-2021	Yakovleva et al (2022) [27]; Gbagbo and Nkrumah (2022) [29]; MoF, 2018 [6]; MoF, 2021 [7]; NDPC, 2022 [1]; Anaafo, 2021 [22]

● Target met ● On track ● Acceleration needed ● Stagnation ● Insufficient data

Sub-level evaluation of Ghana's progress in achieving gender equality was performed according to the type of settlement and administrative regions in Ghana (Table 4.3.2). The SDG 5 targets to end child or early marriage are met in the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Western regions of Ghana. However, the Volta, Northern and Upper West regions are stagnating. Similarly, the goal to eliminate harmful practices such as female genital mutilation against the girl child is on track in urban settings of Ghana but stagnating in rural communities. Efforts to eliminate female genital mutilation in Ghana are stagnating in the Upper East and Upper West regions. However, the elimination targets require acceleration in the Ashanti and Northern regions of Ghana.

#### 4.3.2 Sub-level HHSDG progress of gender equality goals

 Gender equality goals	Status	Data coverage	Source
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Early marriage (by region)		2015-2017	NDPC (2020) [8]
Greater Accra	●		
Ashanti	●		
Brong Ahafo	●		
Volta	●		
Eastern	●		
Western	●		
Central	●		
Upper East	●		
Northern	●		
Upper West	●		
Female Genital Mutilation (by settlement)		2015-2017	NDPC (2020) [8]
Rural	●		
Urban	●		
Female Genital Mutilation (by region)		2015-2017	NDPC (2020) [8]
Greater Accra	●		
Ashanti	●		
Brong Ahafo	●		
Volta	●		
Eastern	●		
Western	●		
Central	●		
Upper East	●		
Northern	●		
Upper West	●		


● Target met ● On track ● Acceleration needed ● Stagnation ● Insufficient data

#### 4.4 Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6)

Nationally, acceleration is required to meet the water and sanitation SDG goals in 2030, particularly goals 6.1 (Safe drinking water), 6.2 (Access to sanitation and hygiene) and 6.3 (Water quality). For example, access to safe drinking water and safely managed sanitation have been increasing steadily thus from 80% in 2015 to 86% in 2020 and 11% in 2015 to 13% in 2020 respectively [8]. Open defecation continues to impede the progress of sanitation in Ghana among close to 18% of the population commonly in rural settings (32%) [8]. However, there was not enough data to track the progress of the remaining goals including targets 6.4 (Water-use efficiency), 6.5 (Transboundary water cooperation), 6.6 (Water-related ecosystems), 6. a (International cooperation on water and sanitation) and 6. b (Participatory water and sanitation management) as presented in table 4.4.1. Several policies, programs and interventions have been implemented in efforts to meet global targets for clean and sanitation. For example, the Ministry for Water and Sanitation was established in 2017 to spearhead this national agenda with GH¢126.9 million

core expenditure as of 2018 [6]. However, GH¢750.40 million was allocated in the budget for water and sanitation in 2021 [7]. Similarly, the government of Ghana launched the “Water for All” program, the Community-Led Total Sanitation Program, the Toilet for All Agenda project, the Greater Accra Resilient and Integrated Development Project and the construction of a faecal sludge management infrastructure [7].

**Table 4.4.1 A summary of Ghana’s HSDG progress according to clean water and sanitation targets**

	Clean water and sanitation targets	Status	Data coverage	Source
	6.1 Safe drinking water	●	2017-2023	Kusi-Mensah et al (2022) [3]; Kumasi et al (2022) [32]; UNICEF, 2023 [5]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	6.2 Access to sanitation & hygiene	●	2017-2023	Kusi-Mensah et al (2022) [3]; Mensah (2021) [33]; Mensah et al (2021) [34]; Abubakari et al (2021) [9]; Quarshie et al (2021) [35]; Foggitt et al (2019) [36]; Cobbinah et al (2020) [37]; UNICEF, 2023 [5]; Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	6.3 Water quality	●	2021-2022	Adomako et al (2021) [38]; Arthur-Holmes et al (2022) [39]
	6.4 Water-use efficiency	●		
	6.5 Trans-boundary water cooperation	●		
	6.6 Water-related ecosystems	●		
	6. a International cooperation on water and sanitation	●		
	6. b Participatory water and sanitation management	●		

● Target met  
 ● On track  
 ● Acceleration needed  
 ● Stagnation  
 ● Insufficient data

In addition, this review tracked Ghana’s progress in achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all; access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene infrastructure for all and end open defecation. These were evaluated according to the type of settlement and administrative regions in Ghana (Table 4.4.2). Access to safe drinking water is on track and progressing in urban communities. However, rural communities require acceleration to improve access to safe drinking water. The Ashanti, Bono, Central, Greater Accra, Upper East and Upper West administrative regions are on track to meeting access to safe drinking water goals by 2030. However, the Ahafo, Bono East, Eastern, Volta, Western and Western North regions require acceleration to achieve these goals.



On the other hand, four (4) out of the new sixteen (16) administrative regions (North East, Northern, Oti and Savannah) are stagnating to achieve the water goals. Although access to sanitation and hygiene infrastructure in urban settings of Ghana needs acceleration, progress is stagnating in the rural communities.

**4.4.2 Sub-level HHSDG progress of water and sanitation goals**


6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	Clean water and sanitation	Status	Data coverage	Source
	Access to safe drinking water (by settlement)		2020	NDPC, 2022 [1]
	Rural	●		
	Urban	●		
	Access to safe drinking water (by region)		2020-2021	NDPC, 2022 [1]
	Ahafo	●		
	Ashanti	●		
	Bono	●		
	Bono East	●		
	Central	●		
	Eastern	●		
	Greater Accra	●		
	North East	●		
	Northern	●		
	Oti	●		
	Savannah	●		
	Upper East	●		
	Upper West	●		
	Volta	●		
	Western	●		
	Western North	●		
	Access to sanitation and hygiene (by settlement)		2016-2020	NDPC (2020) [8]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	Rural	●		
	Urban	●		

● Target met ● On track ● Acceleration needed ● Stagnation ● Insufficient data

## 4.5 Climate Action (SDG 13)

As indicated in table 4.5.1, Ghana is on track with climate action goals 13.2 (Climate change policies) and 13a (UNFCCC commitments). For example, Ghana has been a member and a signatory to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change since 2016 and is committed to reducing total greenhouse gas emissions [8]. In addition, Ghana has developed and launched strategic climate change documents such as the National Climate Change Policy, National Climate Change Master Plan, Implementation Plan for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), Investment & Implementation Plan, National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, 2016 National REDD+ Strategy, 2016-2040 National Forestry Plantation Strategy and the 2018-2021 Medium-term Development Policy Framework [10]. In 2010, the Ministry of Finance of Ghana formed the Natural Resources, Environment, and Climate Change (NRECC) unit and developed a set of Climate Change Finance Tracking Tools in 2016 to enhance the coordination and management of funds [6]. According to Ghana's SDG Budget Baseline Report 2018, GH¢121.69 million core expenditure was made on climate action initiatives [6]. However, GH¢166.20 million in budget was allocated for climate action in 2021 [7]. Other government-led initiatives such as the Drive Electric Initiative and the Artificial Intelligence-powered medical drones were launched in 2019 to promote electric vehicles to reduce carbon emissions [1,13]. On the other hand, acceleration is required to achieve goals 13.1 (Resilience and adaptive capacity), 13.3 (Climate change awareness) and 13b (Climate change planning and management).

**Table 4.5.1 A summary of Ghana's HHSDG progress according to climate targets**

	Climate targets	Status	Data coverage	Source
	13.1 Resilience & adaptive capacity	●	2017-2023	Issahaku et al (2021) [25]
	13.2 Climate change policies	●	2010-2021	GoG, 2019 [10]; MoF, 2018 [6]; MoF, 2021 [7]; NDPC, 2022 [1]; CSPG, 2019 [26]
	13.3 Climate change awareness	●	2019-2020	Odonkor et al (2020) [40]; CSPG, 2019 [26]
	13. a UNFCCC commitments	●	2020-2022	Sachs et al, 2022 [2]; NDPC (2020) [8]
	13. b Climate change planning and management	●	2018-2021	Damoah et al (2021) [13]; Issahaku et al (2021) [25]; GoG, 2019 [10]; MoF, 2018 [6]; MoF, 2021 [7]; CSPG, 2019 [26]

● Target met  
 ● On track  
 ● Acceleration needed  
 ● Stagnation  
 ● Insufficient data


## 5.0 Challenges impeding Ghana's HHSDG progress

Ultimately, the review chronicled major challenges that stall the progress of HHSDGs in Ghana. These ranged from a myriad of challenges towards HHSDG policy or legislative implementation at the level of Governance to behavioural tendencies of the Ghanaian population. However, poor data tracking and HHSDG progress evaluation systems; and poor information management resonated as a key challenge in all individual HHSDG implementations. Notably, the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative toll on almost all the HHSDG goals. Specific challenges are tabled below:

### 5.1 Good Health and Wellbeing (SDG 3)

Poor health financing emerged as the most severe challenge that impedes the progress of achieving the health SDG by 2030. Other health challenges include the wide health affordability gap between the rich and the poor; geographical difficulties in accessing healthcare, inequitable posting of health staff, poor health policy implementation, poor NHIS coverage and large disbursement gap; the COVID-19 pandemic; and poor information management and data tracking systems. The least severe but highly neglected challenges that impede Ghana's health progress are the failure to fully implement the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) [41] hence inadequate disability-friendly health facilities; inaccessible sexual, reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services; policy discontinuation by previous governments; and poor commitment for mental health issues.

**Table 5.1.1 A summary of Ghana's Health challenges**


	Challenges	Severity	Data coverage	Source
	Inadequate disability-friendly health facilities	●	2020	Abrokwah et al (2020) [42]
	Poor healthcare affordability	●	2020-2021	Abrokwah et al (2020) [42]; Ofosu et al (2021) [43]; Umar et al (2020) [44]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
	Poor healthcare accessibility	●	2019-2020	Abrokwah et al (2020) [42]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]
	Poor health financing	●	2016-2022	Akazili et al (2020) [31]; Ofosu et al (2021) [43]; Gbagbo and Nkrumah (2022) [29]; International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Akologo, 2016 [46]; GoG, 2019 [10]; Forkuo, 2019 [47]; Ankiilu, 2022 [48]; Blaboe, 2019 [17]
	Inaccessible sexual, reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services	●	2020	Akazili et al (2020) [31]

Inadequate health workforce (Unequitable distribution of workforce)	●	2019-2022	Akazili et al (2020) [31]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
Policy discontinuation and changed leadership priorities (changes in the political landscape)	●	2019	Assan et al (2019) [49]
Poor health policy implementation	●	2021	Ofori et al (2021) [43]; Gbagbo and Nkrumah (2022) [29]
Poor NHIS coverage and large disbursement gap	●	2019-2021	Ward et al (2021) [50]; Sheff et al (2020) [21]; Umar et al (2020) [44]; Blaboe, 2019 [17]
Mental health issues missing from reports	●	2020	NDPC (2020) [8]
COVID-19	●	2022	NDPC, 2022 [1]; Ankiilu, 2022 [48]
Poor information management and data tracking	●	2019-2022	Ankiilu, 2022 [48]; Blaboe, 2019 [17]
<p>● Severe: ≤ 1 data source      ● More severe: 2-4 data sources      ● Most severe: &gt;4 data sources</p>			

## 5.2 Zero Hunger (SDG 2)

Similarly, poor financing of the agriculture sector is the most severe challenge to achieving zero hunger in Ghana by 2030. This is followed by the common use of non-mechanized systems, high production and food processing costs due to high import duties, high cost of supplies including seeds and fertilizers; poor HHSDG data management and progress tracking systems; climate change, environmental degradation, the COVID-19 pandemic, food hikes and high food inflation. Lastly, high population growth, poor road network, land encroachment and farm destruction by nomadic farmers commonly lead to insufficient food supply to meet market demands, post-harvest losses and farm losses respectively.

**Table 5.2.1 A summary of challenges impeding Ghana's nutritional goals**

 Challenges	Severity	Data coverage	Source
Poor mechanized systems and improved agricultural practices (hybrid seeds, and technology)	●	2018-2022	Quarshie et al (2022) [51]; NDPC (2020) [8]; MoF, 2018 [6]
Poor agriculture financing and investments	●	2016-2022	Quarshie et al (2022) [51]; International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Akologo, 2016 [46]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; Anafo, 2021 [22]; Forkuo, 2019 [47]
High production and processing costs (high import duties, high	●	2018-2022	Quarshie et al (2022) [51]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; MoF, 2018 [6]


cost of supplies: seeds, fertilizers etc.)			
Poor data management and tracking	●	2016-2022	Akologo, 2016 [46]; Ankiilu, 2022 [48]
Population growth	●	2020	NDPC (2020) [8]
Climate change	●	2018-2022	NDPC (2020) [8]; MoF, 2018 [6]; MoF, 2021 [7]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
Environmental/Land degradation	●	2018-2022	NDPC (2020) [8]; MoF, 2018 [6]; MoF, 2021 [7]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
COVID-19	●	2022	NDPC, 2022 [1]; Ankiilu, 2022 [48]
Poor road network	●	2022	NDPC, 2022 [1]
Food hikes/high food inflation (unstable food pricing)	●	2018-2022	MoF, 2018 [6]; NDPC, 2022 [1]
Illegal mining/Galamsey	●	2022	NDPC, 2022 [1]
Land encroachment and destruction by nomadic farmers	●	2022	NDPC, 2022 [1]

● Severe: ≤ 1 data source      ● More severe: 2-4 data sources      ● Most severe: >4 data sources

### 5.3 Gender Equality (SDG 5)

Poor information management systems and data tracking tools to evaluate SDG 5 progress; poor program financing; poor coordination and lack of decentralization of gender programs to local assemblies pose a more severe challenge to achieving gender equality by 2030. In addition, the fragmentation of support services for gender-based violence victims, the patriarchal society in some Ghanaian communities, inadequate lactating-mother-friendly infrastructures to support corporate lactating mothers to effectively practise exclusive breastfeeding; delay in passage and poor implementation of gender laws and policies; and some cultural practices continue to stall the progress of the gender equality goals.

**Table 5.3.1 A summary of challenges impeding Ghana's gender equality goals**

 Challenges	Severity	Data coverage	Source
Fragmentation of support services for gender-based violence victims	●	2020	Akazili et al (2020) [31]
Patriarchal society	●	2019	Friedman et al, (2019) [30]
Inadequate lactating mother-friendly infrastructure/ institutions	●	2022	Gbagbo and Nkrumah (2022) [29]
Poor data and information management systems (eg. Lack of data tracking tools,	●	2016-2022	Akologo, 2016 [46]; International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Anaafo, 2021 [22]; CSPG, 2019 [26]


lack of access to expenditure records)			
Poor program financing/ Poor budget allocation	●	2016-2022	Akologo, 2016 [46]; International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Forkuo, 2019 [47]; CSPG, 2019 [26]
Poor coordination and decentralization	●	2016-2022	Akologo, 2016 [46]; International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Forkuo, 2019 [47]
Delays in the passage of laws and poor policy implementation	●	2020	NDPC (2020) [8]
Cultural practices	●	2020	NDPC (2020) [8]

● Severe: ≤ 1 data source      ● More severe: 2-4 data sources      ● Most severe: >4 data sources

## 5.4 Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6)

Poor financing for the production of clean water and implementation of sanitation programs; and poor budget credibility emerged as the most common and severe challenges to achieving SDG 6 by 2030 in Ghana. In between, unsanitary behavioural practices and superstitious perceptions by the Ghanaian population, the high cost of installing and maintaining toilet facilities by the Government and landlords; and unequal distribution of social amenities such as toilet facilities and waste management bins pose a challenge to the SDG 6. Though not the most severe, poor law enforcement on sanitation, limited town planning monitoring systems, poor coordination and decentralization of water and sanitation programs, poor data tracking and management systems and poor project management and monitoring systems form the basis for poor progress performance in the implementation of SDG 6 goals.

**Table 5.4.1 A summary of challenges impeding Ghana’s water and sanitation goals**


 Challenges	Severity	Data coverage	Source
Poor behavioural practices and superstitious perceptions	●	2020-2021	Quarshie et al (2021) [35]; Cobbinah et al (2020) [37]; NDPC (2020) [8]
High cost of installing and maintaining toilet facilities	●	2019-2020	Foggitt et al (2019) [36]; Cobbinah et al (2020) [37]
Poor law enforcement on sanitation	●	2019	Foggitt et al (2019) [36]
Limited town planning monitoring systems	●	2020	Cobbinah et al (2020) [37]
Poor budget credibility/ poor financing	●	2016-2022	International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Akologo, 2016 [46]; GoG, 2019 [10]; MoF, 2018 [6]; Forkuo, 2019 [47]
Poor coordination and decentralization	●	2016	Akologo, 2016 [46]

Poor data tracking and management systems	●	2016	Akologo, 2016 [46]
Unequal distribution of social amenities/limited resources	●	2018-2019	GoG, 2019 [10]; MoF, 2018 [6]
Poor project management/monitoring systems	●	2018	MoF, 2018 [6]
● Severe: ≤ 1 data source      ● More severe: 2-4 data sources      ● Most severe: >4 data sources			

## 5.5 Climate Action (SDG 13)

Poor financing for climate action programs and poor budget credibility among key stakeholders are the most severe challenges to attaining SDG 13 climate goals. This is followed by low awareness of climate change among the Ghanaian population hence there is low prioritization of information services on climate action; and poor data tracking and information management systems. Finally, most human institutions in Ghana may not have the required capacity to appreciate and effectively manage climate change hence poorly coordinated and centralized climate programs.

**Table 5.5.1 A summary of challenges impeding Ghana's climate action goals**

 Challenges	Severity	Data coverage	Source
Low awareness	●	2020-2021	Antwi-Agyei et al (2021) [52]; NDPC (2020) [8]
Low prioritization/ appreciation of information services on climate action	●	2020-2021	Antwi-Agyei et al (2021) [52]; NDPC (2020) [8]
Poor human institutional capacity	●	2021	Antwi-Agyei et al (2021) [52]
Poor coordination and decentralization	●	2021	Antwi-Agyei et al (2021) [52]
Poor budget credibility/ poor financing	●	2016-2022	International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Akologo, 2016 [46]; NDPC (2020) [8]; GoG, 2019 [10]; MoF, 2021 [7]; Forkuo, 2019 [47]; CSPG, 2019 [26]
Poor data tracking and information management systems	●	2016-2022	International Budget Partnership, 2022 [45]; Akologo, 2016 [46]; NDPC (2020) [8]
● Severe: ≤ 1 data source      ● More severe: 2-4 data sources      ● Most severe: >4 data sources			

## **6.0 Conclusion and recommendations for achieving HHSDG global goals 2030 in Ghana**

Ghana has made significant progress in implementing some HHSDG goals. This is evident in the commitments demonstrated by various Governments and stakeholders from September 2015 to October 2022. However, Ghana needs to develop a more cost-effective, integrated, coordinated and evaluated strategy in real time to accelerate progress toward meeting the HHSDG targets in Ghana by 2030. Valuable data were missing for Mental Health whereas there was insufficient data to reliably evaluate Ghana's HHSDG progress on child labour, intimate-partner violence, non-intimate-partner violence, caregiver violence among children 1-14 years; air quality; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure in schools. This report recommends the use of real-time data monitoring tools and offline data collection and management algorithms and dashboards to facilitate continuous and effective data entry and data access irrespective of geographical location and internet connectivity. In addition, the government needs to integrate stakeholders such as Corporate Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), academia, Think Tanks and various partners in private practice in its SDG implementation strategies for a synergistic output with additional priority given to vulnerable groups. A decentralized and coordinated approach to promote regional integration, collaborations and knowledge exchange including cross-national collaborations should be prioritized to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 SDG agenda. Similarly, as much as a more stable funding mechanism is needed, there should be efforts to ensure budget credibility to abate the usual chorus of insufficient funding. Also, studies should be conducted to evaluate HHSDG interventions and programs and to assess the intersection of HHSDGs, particularly on how one or more HHSDGs impart or influence others. Finally, to achieve HHSDGs by 2030, the Ghanaian population must be sensitized enough through community involvement and engagement to buy into the implementation strategies, policies and interventions deployed.

To address some of the challenges identified, Ghana's team aimed to have a national-level multi-disciplinary, autonomous, independent and inclusive Think Tank to facilitate, promote and create the momentum needed to build effective multi-sectoral strategies to address the challenges hindering progress to achieving the HHSDGs. The Ghana Think Tank was established in August 2023 with membership comprising government officials, academics, and members of the civil society. See Table 6.1.

The Think Tank constitute of experts in the area of climate change (ie. Green Africa Youth), health (including mental health) and gender inequalities (i.e., Basic Needs Ghana Ghana National Association of Persons with Disability), relevant government institutions (i.e., United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), civil society and advocacy groups (i.e., Ghana Monitoring and Evaluation Forum, National Development Planning Commission) with focus on the HHSDGs. Representatives were appointed ensuring broad geographical and gender representation. Two "general" Think Tank meetings were held in August and November 2023. In addition, several "caucus" Think Tank meeting were held to tap the expertise of members on specific issues during the synthesis of the evidence on Ghana's progress toward the attainment of the HHSDGs.



Table 6.1. Ghana Think Tank members

S/N	Name	Name of Institution
1.	Dr. Opere Djan	National Development Planning Commission, NDPC nana.oparedjan@ndpc.gov.gh 0244149954
2.	Mrs. Vera Karikari Bediako	Gender Department, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
3.	Mr. Labram Musah	Vision for Alternative Development, VALD labrammusah@valdgh.com 0243211852
4.	Mrs. Dede Abena Bedu Addo	Ghana Monitoring and Evaluation Forum abbedums@gmail.com 0277534204
5.	Ms. Margaret Impraim (representative)	Green Africa Youth Organization support@youthclimatecouncil.com
6.	Mr. Peter Badimak Yaro	Basic Needs Ghana peter.yaro@basicneedsghana.org 0244572733
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