

QUESTIONNAIRE

ON CULTURAL RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Q.1. What is your understanding of what “development” should aspire to?

Development should aspire to improve the well-being and quality of life of people (present and future generations) by ensuring the balance between the natural resource, socio-cultural, economic and institutional pillars of sustainability.

Q.2. How is development defined in your country?

Ghana’s development¹ entails integrating the three pillars of sustainability namely the socio-cultural, economic, and natural resources (environment) into policies, plans and programmes. Ghana has identified institutional development as the fourth pillar of sustainability in recognition of the important role strong and efficient institutions play in delivering sustainable development outcomes.

Q.3 Has your country developed and adopted a (sustainable) development strategy?

Ghana has integrated and mainstreamed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into all National Medium-Term Development Policy Frameworks (NMTDPF)². These frameworks inform MTDPFs at the sector and district levels. There are four (4) development dimensions³ being pursued in the national policy framework which include the social, economic, environmental, and Institutional development and governance.

Q.4 Who are the main stakeholders defining, driving and monitoring the (sustainable) development process?

The main stakeholders in the development process are Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), Academia, Think Tanks, Traditional Authorities (TAs), Private Sector, and the public/citizens. Some specific institutions include the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), the Ministry of Finance, Ghana Statistical Service, Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Environmental Protection Agency, Send Ghana, Ghana Infrastructure Investment Fund, the Ghana Institute of Planners, the Ghana Institute of Surveyors, the Institute of Chartered, among others.

Q.5 Are there participatory processes influencing and informing the definition and evaluation of (sustainable) development policies? If so, how?

Yes, Ghana adopts a consultative and participatory approach to the development and implementation of its (sustainable) development policies. At the National level, sector and district levels, development-related policies, plans and programmes adopt a participatory approach during the formulation, implementation, and monitoring stages.

Q.6 Have the development priorities, or the assistance provided by international organisations impacted negatively on some aspects of your country’s (sustainable) development policies?

¹ The Republic of Ghana (2019). Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at:

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23420Ghanas_VNR_report_Final.pdf

² Available at: https://ndpc.gov.gh/media/MTNDPF_2022-2025_Dec-2021.pdf

³ Available at: <https://ndpc.gov.gh/>

No, development partner support is one of the major sources of support for Ghana's sustainable development policy implementation. Ghana, like many other nations, receives assistance in the form of financial and technical, among others.

Q.7 In designing the strategy to achieve the SDGs, what consideration has been given to their cultural dimensions and cultural rights? Which aspects have been considered?

The strategy to achieve the SDGs broadly considers issues relating to the four (4) pillars of sustainability i.e., natural resources (environment), economic, socio-cultural, and institutional (governance) dimensions.

Cultural dimensions including traditional knowledge, traditions, practices, diversity, heritage, norms, customs, and values to environmental sustainability are considered. This allows for the preservation and judicious use of environmental resources, raising awareness on various topical issues. The socio-cultural focus also fosters access, participation, inclusion, equity, and ownership of the SDGs.

Q.8 How was the planning, implementation and monitoring of the strategy adapted to the cultural values, world views, practices, and identities of the concerned persons? How was respect for diversity integrated into the process?

Ghana has used the unique position of traditional authority or chieftaincy institutions to promote the national development goal within the framework of the "whole of society" approach to SDG implementation. Chieftaincy is one of Ghana's oldest and most venerated institutions. Traditional leaders function as development agents because of their capacity to mobilize people and resources for development initiatives such as health clinics, police stations, and schools. These traditional leaders are supported in various programmes and projects to aid the government's efforts to achieve the SDGs.

Q.9 How were the persons concerned involved? Their diverse cultural resources, knowledge and capacities in various contexts are capitalized on. Has the strategy to achieve the SDGs been designed in a way that is culturally adequate and inclusive?

The ambition and scope of the SDGs make it difficult for the government to achieve the goal on its own. Government recognize that the traditional or cultural authorities are best positioned to facilitate the mobilization of local development stakeholders, particularly NGOs, private businesses, local communities, and national and international organizations to promote inclusive sustainable development in their respective localities. Multi-stakeholder participation, as well as local-level adaptation, implementation, and monitoring of the SDGs, promotes inclusion and relevance.

Q.10 Have international development and financial agencies taken into account cultural rights in sustainable development initiatives?

Yes.

Q.11 Were cultural resources and creative capacities leveraged in achieving the SDGs, what were in your experience the results, successes, weaknesses, or lessons learned?

Yes.

Ghana has made considerable progress not just in mainstreaming the SDGs across multiple layers and levels of governance, but also in executing them. Structures exist at the national, sector and local levels to aid in the implementation of the SDGs. Monitoring, the SDGs Targets and indicators have been localized.

These procedures have supported the execution, monitoring, and assessment of government and other actors' actions and efforts to achieve the SDGs.