

Agenda 2030: Sustainable Development Goals - Time to Act is Now

By Sindiso Moyo

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known, as global goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The Heads of State and Government, in 2015 unveiled the 17 SDGs building on the successes and lessons of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), while including new areas such as climate, economic, inequality, innovation, sustainable energy consumption, peace and justice among other priorities. The goals are interconnected; often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.

The SDGs came into effect in January 2016 and they will continue to guide global developmental agenda for 15 years up to 2030. The legacy of the MDGs provides nations with valuable lessons and experience to work on the SDGs. But for millions of people around the world the MDGs remains unfinished business. For instance Zimbabwe need to go the last mile on ending hunger, achieving full gender equality, improving health services and getting every child into school beyond primary. The SDGs are therefore an urgent call to shift the world onto a more inclusive sustainable development path.

At regional level, progress on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was not uniform, however there was notable progress in others areas such as improvement in enrolments children in primary schools, particularly girls, increasing the representations of women in parliament, and reducing child and maternal deaths and the proportions of people infected by HIV. Building on this progress, several African countries are taking steps to translate the ambitions articulated in the 2030 agenda into tangible outcomes for their people through integrating the SDGs into their national visions and plans.

SDGs Prioritization in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has since developed the Country Position Paper on SDGs, which articulates the roadmap the country has developed to ensure that the country will effectively implement and coordinate programs around the SDGs. The position paper highlights that the government has decided that it will implement all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals as they are all important to the country. The prioritization exercise is said to be guided by the country's vision, the need *to focus on enabling Goals, resource availability and our unfinished*

business in the MDG's.

However, in terms of focus and prioritisation, Government has decided that it will focus and prioritise the following ten SDGs:

- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment;
- Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all;
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture;
- Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation;
- Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development;
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages;
- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all; and
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Achieving the SDGs requires the partnership of governments, private sector, civil society and general citizens alike to make sure that **No One Is Left Behind** and that whatever benefits that are realised out of this development initiative at global, regional and national levels are enjoyed by everyone. As such the National Association of Non Governmental Organisations (NANGO) feels Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) has more role to play in complementing the efforts of the government in achieving the SDGs; and also in playing their traditional watchdog role to ensure that the government delivers its developmental obligations and promises to the people. In this regard, NANGO has since developed a framework to enhance the monitoring and programming of members around the SDGs. The role of CSOs is key in ensuring that by 2030 the country will achieve the majority of the SDGs and its ultimate objective. *(In our next article we will give a critique of the prioritisation and justification of*

the 10 SDGs by the Government of Zimbabwe.)

The National Association of Non Governmental Organisations (NANGO) is the official coordinating umbrella body of Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in Zimbabwe. Its aim is to strengthen, represent and coordinate the work of NGOs in Zimbabwe by creating space, dialogue and engagement to enable the fulfilment of members' visions and missions.

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