

Climate Action

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THE UNEP NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDC) ACTION PROJECT: ENABLING REALISATION OF SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES IN GHANA THROUGH CLIMATE CHANGE

Ghana contributes between 0.05–0.13% of global emissions. A negligible amount by all accounts. But just as is the case with the rest of the continent, this country stands out for its vulnerability. The Notre Dame Vulnerability index rates Ghana as highly vulnerable, with a low readiness score. The country is ranked the 68th most vulnerable and 81st least ready country. Increasing community incomes stands out as the core of resilience building. It will ensure communities can afford alternatives to enable them buffer against climate change. The targeted implementation of Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), provides a strategic pathway of building this resilience. And this, we urgently need to explore.

UNFCCC focal point for Ghana Mr. K.Y. Oppong-Boadi discussing with his team and UNEP team on the NDC action project

Accelerating realisation of key socioeconomic priorities and investments using Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) platform.



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Round table discussions and contributions for the Ghana Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) as various stakeholders provide their inputs and suggestions to shape the strategy structure.

In Ghana, increasing disease prevalence with the changing climate means average malaria care costs will consume up to 30% of poor households' income. In agriculture, a major economic sector that employs two-thirds of Ghanaians, and accounts for about a third of national income and export earnings, yields decline of up to 18% are attributable to climate change. Due to compounding climate change, Ghana's overall GDP will decline by up-to 1.5% by 2050.

Ghana's vulnerability is driven primarily by the relatively low levels of socioeconomic development. In some regions of Ghana, over 70% of people still live below the poverty line. In some two districts, as many as 9 out of 10 people, live below the poverty line. 48% of youth between age 15-24 years have no jobs – only about 10% of graduates who enter the labour market secure jobs within the first year of graduating. These populations are unable to afford the goods and services they need to buffer against the worse of the changing climate effects. This underpins vulnerability of the country. This interconnection between vulnerability and socioeconomic development is inseparable. This is the

context of Ghana's NDCs, that will be explored.

Ghana joined the rest of the countries in Africa and the globe, in ratifying the Paris Climate Change Agreement. They were among the first. By this, they turned their good intentions to act against climate change, into globally accountable commitments. But even more remarkable, is the business unusual commitments captured in these NDCs. Ghana's NDCs are framed in the context of enabling realisation of their socioeconomic development priorities – key amongst them, food security, creation of income, job & enterprise opportunities for youth and the entire population, and expansion of macroeconomic growth.

Through its conditional and unconditional NDCs, Ghana aims to balance both mitigation and adaptation actions with realisation of its leading socioeconomic priorities. Among key ones highlighted include - creating thousands of jobs, driving food security - including through integration of agro-processing enterprises, reversing degradation, reducing deforestation and enhancing its biodiversity.

Unconditional NDCs for instance prioritise climate resilient agriculture in vulnerable landscapes. Here, upscaling conservation agriculture and climate smart agriculture approaches by up to 10% are key priority actions. They also prioritise value-addition based utilization of forest resources.

The country also aims to reduce pollution – including indoor pollution, mitigate emissions, enhance energy security leveraging renewable sources – among key priorities. These priorities align with goals set forth in the Ghana’s long-term National Development Plan 2018-2057. A plan set to convert Ghana into a high-income, socioeconomically inclusive and environmentally sustainable country. The NDCs action project, is aligned to deliver on this paradigm. It is founded on three core principles: country ownership; balanced focus on adaptation and mitigation; and the integration of national development and climate change priorities on how this strategic approach of the project can deliver optimally for Ghana.

This hinges on establishing ambitious & attractive investment pathways, that will attract financing from both state and non-state sources to accelerate optimal implementation of Ghana’s NDCs. According to the latest analysis - including from the 2019 UNEP emissions gap report, Ghana is required to implement ambitious NDC actions. Actions that will move the needle towards seeing the cumulative global ambition increase by three to five times. Doing so while maximising on the socioeconomic aspects, is the gap this project will need to fill. And for this, there is the need to prioritise the following key aspects in informing Ghana’s NDCs implementation investments;

Integrating socioeconomic fundamentals. From the NDCs, to the long-term national development plan of Ghana, 2018-2057, sustainable development principles are a common thread. They all aim to accelerate realisation of key socioeconomic priorities – food security; income & job opportunities; expanding, competitive & inclusive economy; but all achieved without compromising the environment. The unconditional NDCs for instance, prioritise driving these socioeconomic aims while cutting emissions including through reversing land degradation by 12% by 2025 and 15% by 2030.



Stakeholders during the UNEP NDC action project listen carefully to deliberations towards NDC investment strategy being discussed.

“ Conditional NDCs on the other hand target driving these socioeconomic aims while cutting emissions by 27% by 2025 and 45% by 2030. ”



UNEP and UNEP DTU colleagues discussing on the strategy of implementing the UNEP NDC project action



Top Left ,a group picture of different stakeholders in attendance at the NDC meeting. Top right presentation on the laid out framework for the strategy to be implemented to help Ghana invest in its NDCs. Bottom left is Dr Richard Munang UNEP's climate change coordinator for Africa giving his input to the meeting, finally bottom right is various stakeholders who are in attendance at the meeting.

The big question is – in this era of global competition, which sectors offer Ghana the most comparative advantage, the shortest route to achieve this. This strategic direction question, was reflected at the highest level of government during the President’s State of the Nation Address to Parliament in February of 2018. This address coincided with entry of the long-term development vision of Ghana. Accordingly, the elevation of agriculture as a critical primary sector, set on a pedestal to actualize industrialization, processing & manufacturing and drive inclusive, competitive growth, was a hallmark of this address. The NDCs prioritise land-based actions that align with this approach.

Unconditional NDCs for instance prioritise climate resilient agriculture in vulnerable landscapes. Here, upscaling conservation agriculture and climate smart agriculture approaches by up to 10% are key priority actions. They also prioritise value-addition based utilization of forest resources – where up to 413,000ha of forest are earmarked. Promotion of sustainable utilisation of forest resources is another unconditional priority area where continuation of reforestation programmes of 10,000ha per year is on the cards.

On the conditional side, the country aims to expand adoption of market-based cleaner cooking solutions – including scaling

up access and adoption of 2 million efficient cook stoves by 2030. The country also aims to scale up renewable energy penetration by 10% by 2030. These are among action out of which the country aims to enhance food security, create jobs, reduce indoor pollution and enhance health, reduce domestic energy costs, to increase disposable incomes of families among leading socioeconomic benefits. The NDCs implementation investment plans we support Ghana develop cannot miss out on this critical integration of delivering the country’s socioeconomic priorities.

Divesting from sectorial silos through intersectoral policy coherence. Ensuring NDCs drive the above socioeconomic aspects means we cannot look at sectors in isolation – but in complementarity. For example, the country aims to leverage on clean cooking subsector to deliver jobs & incomes through manufacture of stoves & value addition, enhance health through reduction of pollution and increase household disposable incomes through reduction of domestic energy options.

All this while maintaining its forest sinks to drive mitigation and preventing degradation to enhance resilience of its agricultural lands. Delivering such an integrated solution calls for collaboration across different sectors – at the minimum, environment / forestry, energy, agriculture and planning.

Investments in these sectors must be prioritised coherently to ensure they do not work at cross-purposes. This will require that from the onset, investment policies across the different respective line-ministries are implemented in a harmonised & complementary manner. To this end, the NDCs implementation investment plans we support Ghana develop cannot miss out on this critical aspect of establishing mechanisms for cross-sectorial policy implementation coherence.

Incentivising non-state actor contribution. In Ghana, the youth as the majority population – with up to 57% being under 25 years, stand out as the most significant non-state actor group to engage & incentivise. The critical importance of leveraging youth – as key non-state actors in complementing realisation of government’s development agenda, including NDCs. Youth already engaged in enterprise actions that drive NDCs – in accessible areas like waste-to-energy, waste-to-biofertilizer recovery, clean-energy agro-value-addition among others should be integrated as critical investor group in implementing Ghana’s NDCs. And their actions should be accounted for in computing Ghana’s NDCs implementation progress.

Building on ongoing work and established progress. This NDCs action project in Ghana is occurring at the backdrop of

the recently concluded EU-UNEP Africa LEDS project where Ghana was among beneficiaries. This flagship project was endorsed at the highest level of continental environmental & development policy – the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) as providing the framework approach for optimal NDCs implementation in Africa. Where implementation accelerates realisation of key socioeconomic priorities alongside meeting ambitious climate aims - the Paris Agreement objective of a below 2°C warming world. In Ghana for instance, this flagship project helped the country establish a policy and analytical structure for informing optimal NDCs implementation investment. This structure highlighted waste recovery and forestation as key drivers of optimal NDCs in Ghana

The last component is innovative Financing. To sustainably finance NDC actions that are meaningful to a majority, financing models must go beyond socially driven to investment finance. And for this, building on existing structures for pooling resources and diversifying risks e.g. cooperatives is key. And these should target financing of enterprise actions. NDCs finance investments should target a systems approach. This aspect needs to be included in investment plans for Ghana.





Group photo of experts who were in attendance at the UNEP NDC action project meeting for spearheading the strategy for investment to improve the socioeconomic set up

This is a very clear potential for success for Ghana socioeconomic advances to drive practical action that will unlock the climate, social, economic and enterprise benefits of various social enterprises in Ghana, this will make the country a shining example in Africa, of how climate action policies can ensure there is better standards in social enterprises and thus also improves quality of life.

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