



Subregional Office for West Africa

Second joint meeting

**38th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts for North Africa
26th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts for West Africa**

Accra, Ghana, 1st to 3rd November 2023

West Africa Sustainable Development Report, 2023

Accelerating SDGs in West Africa: *Transformative pathways for greater progress*

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
ARFSD	African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GGW	Great Green Wall
GNI	Gross National Income
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ITU	International Communication Union
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NDCS	Nationally Determined Contributions
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UN-SDSN	United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network
USD	United States dollars
VNR	Voluntary National Reviews
WDI	World Development Indicators
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Introduction

At the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda deadline, the world in general and Africa in particular are not on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), because only 15% of the SDG goals are on track¹. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, progress towards the SDGs was uneven across goals and countries, with many developing countries lagging behind the goals and related targets. The pandemic and the subsequent Russia-Ukraine conflict have set back progress towards the SDGs almost everywhere and slowed implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The West Africa Sustainable Development Report is an annual flagship publication of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Sub-Regional Office for West Africa (SRO-WA). The report assesses the progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development and the corresponding goals of the Africa Agenda 2063 in the 15 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Member States. The report informs Member States and policy makers on the status of the implementation and provides policy recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the global and continental agendas.

Documenting the progress achieved is important for accountability, and lessons learned from member States' engagement on Agenda 2063 and the SDGs will help to strengthen efforts and mobilize partners going forward. The sub-regional report provides insights into the geographical performance assessment in the spirit of the national, regional, and global level SDG progress reports produced annually in line with the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development and Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD). It also looks at transformative empowerment and advocacy tools that will contribute to accelerating the SDGs program implementation in West Africa to enable the region to meet the target date of 2030 and deliver a 'Rescue Plan for People and Planet'².

Scope and methodology

The 2023 West Africa Sustainable Development Progress Report provides a comprehensive summary of the progress of all the 17 SDGs in West Africa, with a special emphasis and analysis of the 5 SDGs that are aligned to the 2024 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) namely SDG 1(No poverty), SDG 2(Zero hunger), SDG 13 (climate action), SDG 16 (peace, Justice and strong institutions) and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). The report covers all the 15 Western African countries and exhibits trends, document progress, lessons learned and challenges in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and recommend actions to accelerate progress. The 2023 report generates evidence around the progress West Africa is making on these goals to inform policy options for the member States taking into account the high frequency of socioeconomic and geopolitical shocks ongoing during the last five years.

Data Source and Limitations

The report uses the latest available harmonized data and estimates, obtained mainly from the ECA Stats database, SDG global database and other credential international sources for the reason of comparability within and between countries and subregion. Data is disaggregated by geographical location (by country and subregion) and by gender (where data are available) to the extent possible based on availability. Data gaps remain a major challenge for adequate reporting of Africa's progress towards the realization of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. The international data is supplemented by national data to demonstrate best

¹ <https://bitly.ws/UZTY>

² In line with the main goal of the [2023 SDG Summit](#) that will take place on 18-19 September 2023 in New York

practices. Another key limitation is the challenge to capture in a wide extent the impact of ongoing regional and international shocks/crisis (Ukraine-Russian war, insecurity in the Sahel, Covid-19, etc.) on the SDG progress.

Chapter 1: Tracking progress of the SDGs

This chapter conducts an analyses of SDGs trends in West Africa at the subregional level, with a step further in focusing on the SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17, that are aligned to the 2024 High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

1.1 Factual changes and key challenges of SDGs progress in West Africa

According to the 2023 SDG Index report, global achievement of the SDGs experienced a modest increase, from 64 percent in 2015 to 66 percent in 2019. However, with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, all momentum towards achieving the SDGs came to a deceleration. As of 2022, the global SDG Index was below 67%. At continental level Africa SDG index stood at 53%. Notably, the majority of West African countries, specifically 80 percent of the countries (table 1), have achieved SDG Index scores surpassing the continental average. Furthermore, with an SDG Index score of 68.8%, Cabo Verde exceeded the global score of 67 % in 2022.

Table 1: The 2023 SDG Index: score and rank of West African countries

Rank	Country	Score
89	Cabo Verde	68.8
120	Côte d'Ivoire	62.3
121	Senegal	61.8
122	Ghana	61.8
129	Gambia, The	58.3
131	Mali	58
136	Togo	56.3
137	Sierra Leone	55.7
140	Benin	55.1
142	Guinea	54.9
146	Nigeria	54.3
153	Burkina Faso	52.4
157	Liberia	49.9
161	Niger	48.3

Source: Implementing the SDG Stimulus. Sustainable Development Report 2023 (SDSN,2023)

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

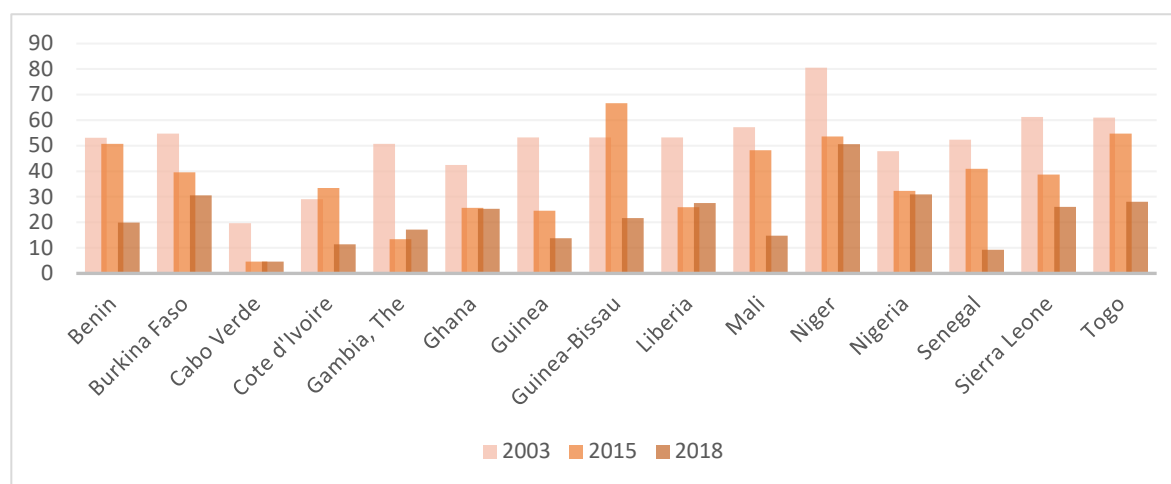
Target 1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$2.25 a day.

Analysis of countries' progress towards eradicating extreme poverty in West Africa reveals that no country is on track to achieve the target by 2030, although Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea, Mali and Senegal were on encouraging trends prior to the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Indicator 1.1.1 Proportion of the population living below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographic location (urban/rural)

According to data from the World Bank, the proportion of the population living in extreme poverty³ has fallen overall, from an average of 35.4% in 2015 to 27.3% in 2018, regardless of the negative repercussions of the multiple subsequent crises. The lowest proportions in 2018 were recorded in Cabo Verde (4.6%), Senegal (9.3%), Côte d'Ivoire (11.4%), Guinea (13.8%) and Mali (14.8%). Conversely, some countries (Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria) still recorded more than 30.0% of the population living in extreme poverty in 2018, with Niger reaching up to 50.6% (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proportion of population living with less than \$2.15 a day (2017 PPP), (in percentage)



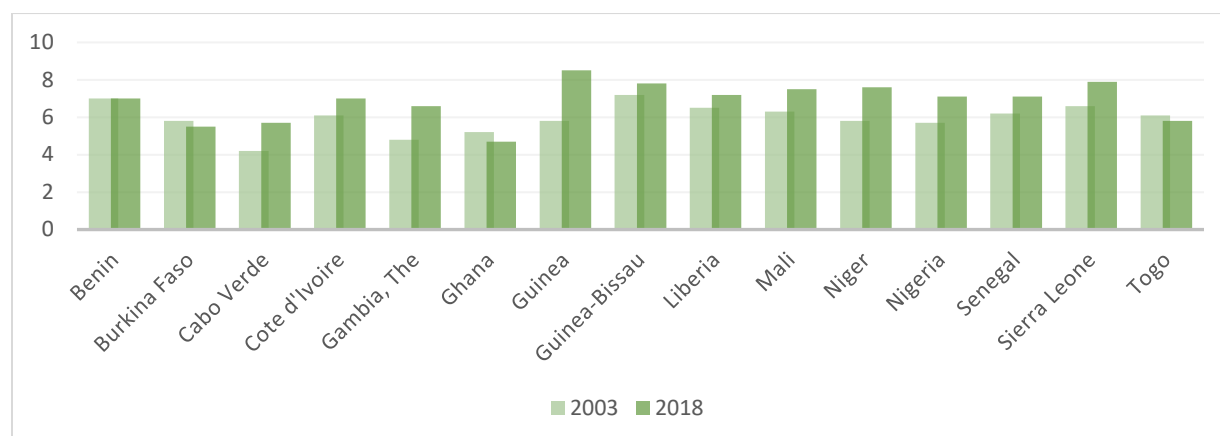
Source: World Development indicators (WDI) 2023, consulted 12 September 2023

In terms of inequality, even if there are significant changes, it remains at the levels that still reinforce poverty. Indeed, the average income of the richest 10% of the world's population fell from 53 times to 38 times higher than the average income of the poorest 50% between 1980 and 2020⁴. In West Africa, although weak, this trend is also noticeable, as the income share of the poorest 20% increase in 73% of countries with more than 30 percentage points increase in Cabo Verde, Guinea, Gambia and Niger (Figure 2).

³ With less than US\$ 2,15 a day per person

⁴ <https://bitly.ws/UCEP>

Figure 2 : Income share held by lowest 20%



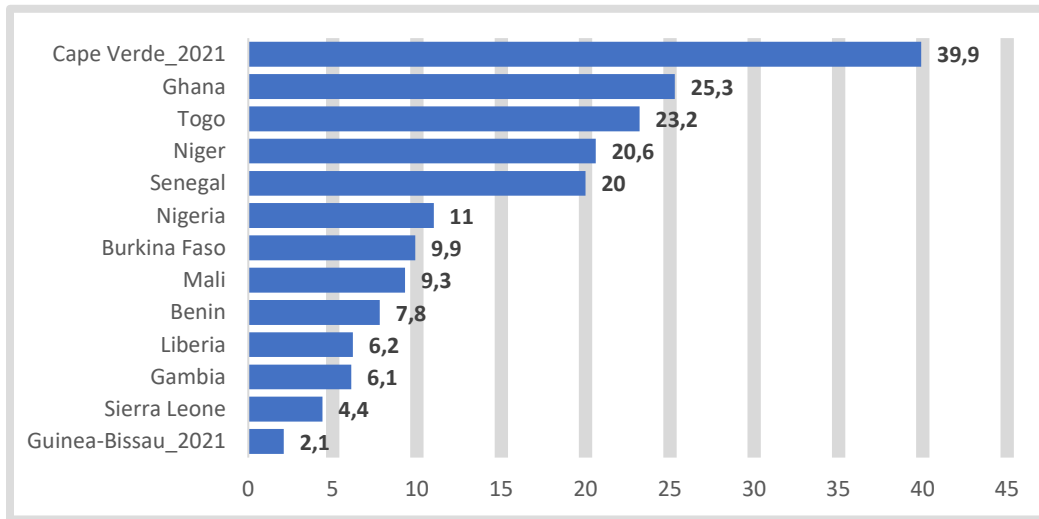
Source: WDI 2023, consulted 13 September 2023.

Target 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

Considering government reduced ability to take strong and appropriated action due to limited fiscal space stemming from its responses to the series of successive crises and shocks, government reforms and measures should target the safeguarding and strengthening of household purchasing power through subsidies and targeted social safety net programmes. These actions aimed at preserving and enhancing purchasing power, expressed in GDP per capita, play a pivotal role in policy measure to fight against extreme poverty. Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria exemplify this stance within the West African context (WDI database 2023, consulted 13 September 2023).

Access to affordable social protection services is critical for the wellbeing of population. In 2020, less than 15% of the population on average of West Africa were covered by at least one social or security protection system, with only Cabo Verde (39.2%) and Ghana (25.3%) having at least 1 in 4 people benefiting from a social protection measure.

Figure 3 : Proportion of population covered by at least one measure of the national social protection system, percentage 2020



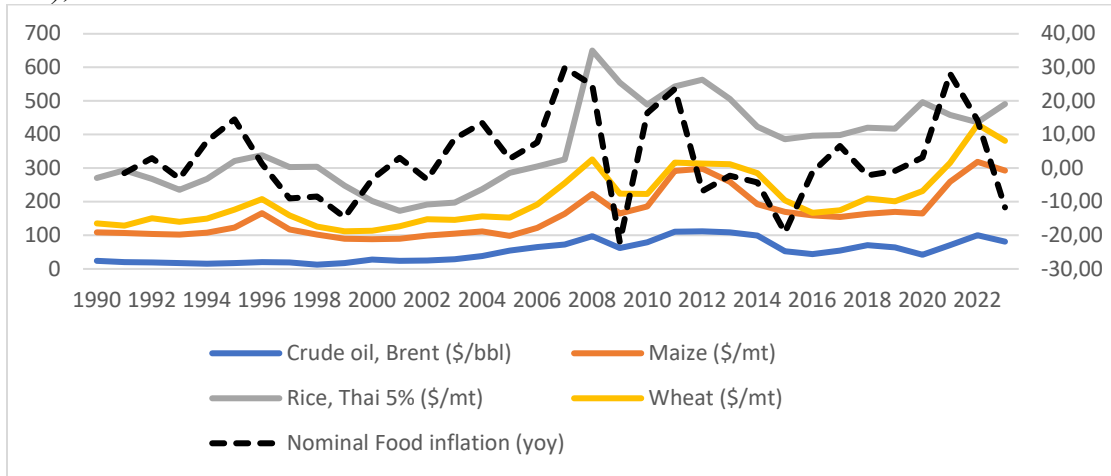
Source: ILOSTAT, World Social Protection Data Dashboards; <https://bitly.ws/UDP9> consulted on September 2023

In terms of public expenditures on basic services, 10 of the 15 countries in the sub-region were allocating less than 20% of government spending to the provision of basic essential services (health, education, social protection, etc.) in 2020 (UNESCO, 2023).

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote Sustainable Agriculture

The rise in local prices for essential cereal and energy products has been driven by the peak in world prices for the main food products and inputs that occurred in 2021-2022, as a main result of COVID-19 shocks and Russia Ukraine-crisis (Figure 4).

Figure 4 : Agricultural and key cereal world price trend, annual average and food inflation (yoy, right axis), 1990-2023

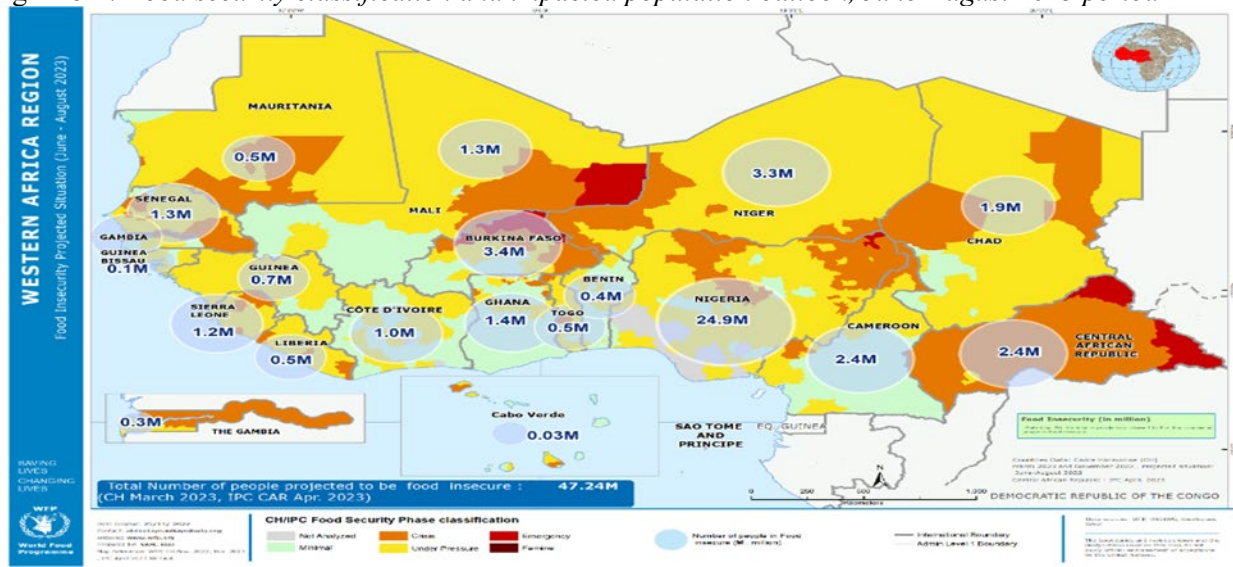


Source: ECA calculations based on data from World Bank commodity price data, July 2023

Target 2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

In West Africa, more than 47.24 million people are expected to become food insecure in 2023, around 76% of them are from the United Nations Sahel region four countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria (Figure 5).

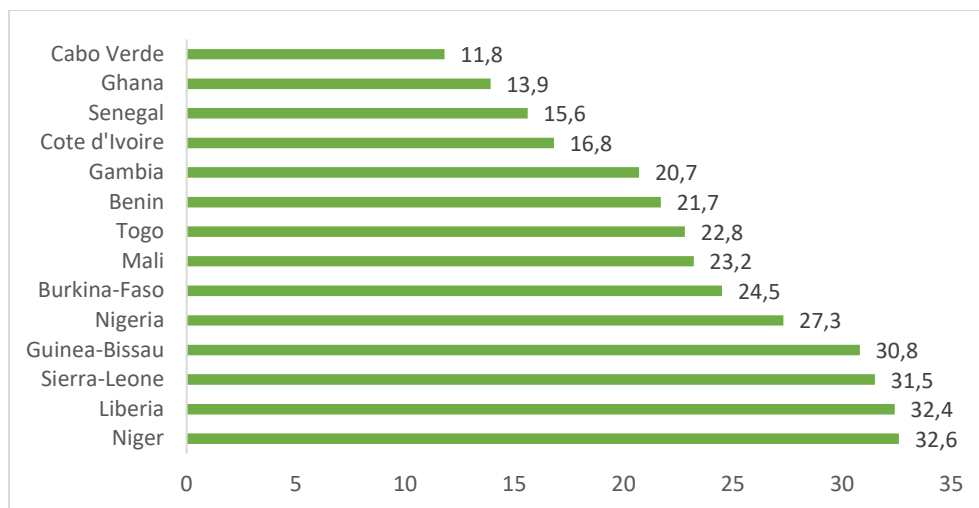
Figure 5 : : Food security classification and impacted population outlook, June-August 2023 period



Source : World Food Programme (WFP), June 2023

According to recent data from Welthungerhilfe and Concern worldwide Global Hunger Index, 3 countries (Niger, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) experienced alarming hunger in 2022.

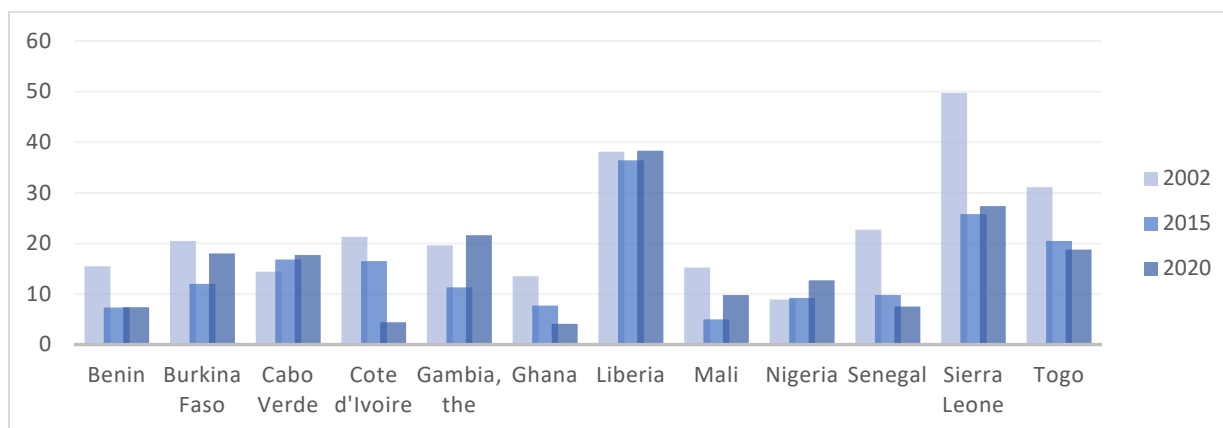
Figure 6 : Global Hunger Index, 2022



Source: <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/> accessed on September 2023

From recent available data from World in data database, the nutritional situation in the sub-region remains worrying.

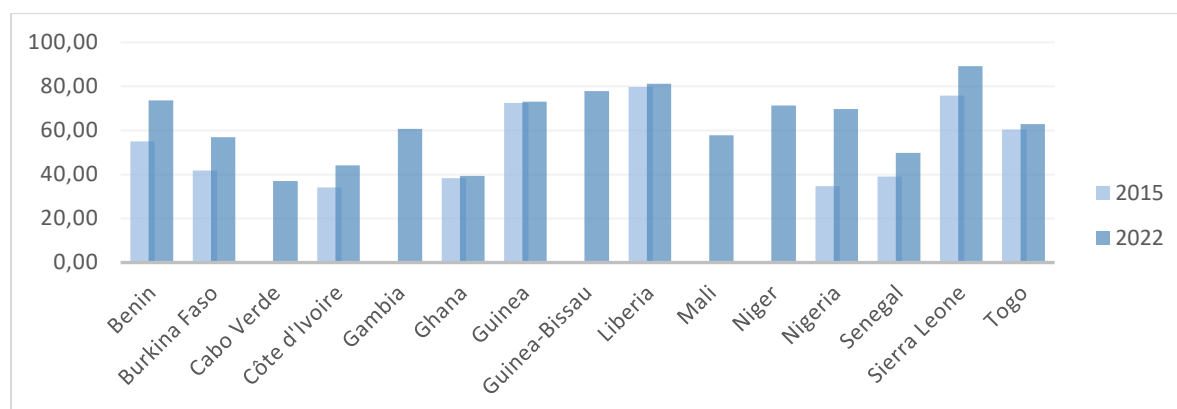
Figure 7 : Prevalence of undernutrition in the population, percentage



Source : World in data <https://ourworldindata.org/hunger-and-undernourishment>, September 2023

West Africa continue to experience high prevalence of food insecurity, with a slight increase between 2015 and 2022, from an average of 52.9 to 53.1% (Figure 8).

Figure 8 : Moderate or severe prevalence of food insecurity in the population (percentage)

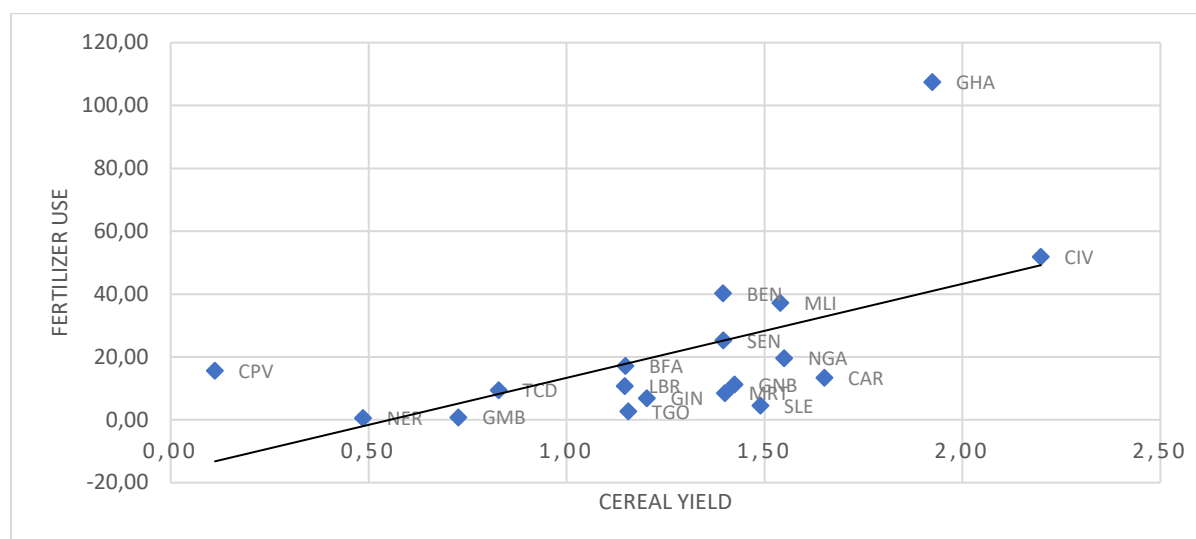


Sources: FAO, 2023/ <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS>, accessed in September 2023

If extreme poverty, hunger and famine are to be eradicated at the same time, agricultural yields in general, and cereal yields in particular, must be increased in sustainable manner.

Moreover, sustainable improvement in food availability and, by extension, food self-sufficiency in the sub-region will necessarily require a sustainable increase in domestic food production. Sustainable growth in agricultural and cereal productivity through higher yields requires increased investment in improved farming practices and techniques and in the capacity to adapt technologies to national and local realities, as well as the strengthening of knowledge transfer in the region (FAO⁵, 2020).

Figure 9: Cereal production yield (t/ha) and fertilizer use (kg/ha arable land), 2020



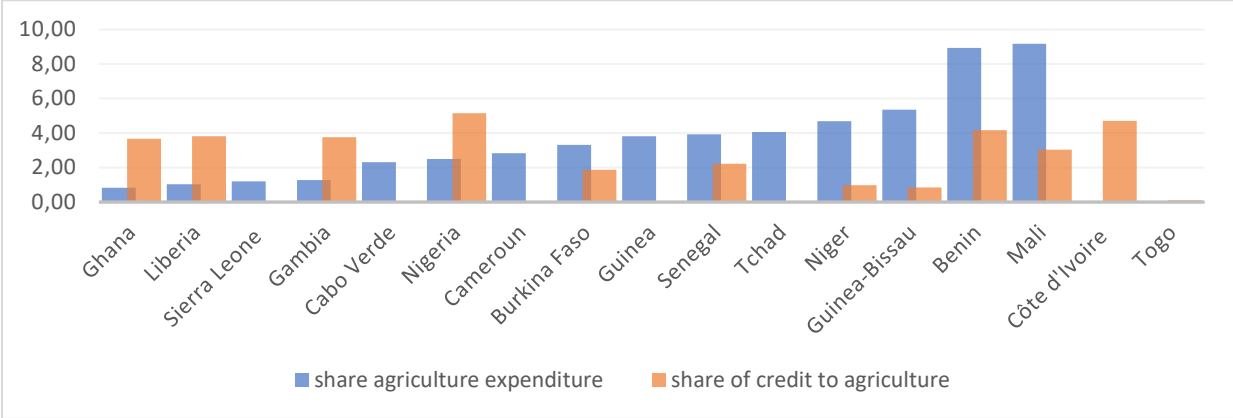
Source: ECA calculation from world⁶ in data and FAO data, 2023

⁵ <https://rb.gy/lcfks>

⁶ <http://bitly.ws/LIS3>

In West Africa, the dynamics of cereal yields are positively determined by the level of fertilizer use (Figure 9). Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, which have highest yields in West Africa, have also recorded the highest rates of fertilizer use in the sub-region, although these rates remain well below the recommendation of the Abuja Declaration of June 2006, which was targeted at least 50 kg per hectare of arable land by 2015. To reinforce the effective increase of the fertilizer, the Malabo Declaration in 2014 called for the allocation of at least 10% of national budgets to agricultural investment. Based on recent available data, no country in West Africa has reached this 10% target by 2021, although Mali and Benin stand out (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Share of government expenditure and credit to agriculture sector, per cent of the total, 2021, where data are available



Source: Author from World7 in data, July 2023

In General, the implementation of Goal 2 in West Africa is a crucial endeavor in addressing food security and ending hunger in the region. While progress has been made, challenges persist, particularly in the face of external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and geopolitical conflicts. It is imperative for governments, international organizations, and local communities to work collaboratively in devising innovative strategies, investing in sustainable agriculture, and promoting equitable access to nutritious food. To this regard, it is crucial to achieve at least 50kg/ha of arable land, in line with the AU's Abuja Declaration of 2006. This should translate upstream into the continent's autonomy in fertilizer production, taking advantage of the repercussions of the Russia-Ukraine war on the region. The journey towards a hunger-free West Africa requires sustained dedication, but the potential benefits for the region's well-being and development are immeasurable.

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

In West Africa, Under-5 mortality rate has decreased significantly from an average of 104.26 cases of death per 1000 live births in 2010 to 74.95 cases in 2021. However, the sub-region is still far from achieving the target of 25 deaths per 1000 live births except for Cabo Verde that have already met the target and Senegal that is on track to meet the target. Data from the 2023, world development indicators show that, except Cabo Verde that have already achieved the target of reducing maternal mortality ratio below 70 per 100,000 live births, all west African countries are far from achieving the target of reducing maternal mortality ratio below 70 by 2030. Five West African countries have very high maternal mortality ratio with more than 500 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2021.

⁷ <http://bitly.ws/LIS3>

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

West African countries are making progress in implementing SDG4. Completion rate varies among countries. Cabo Verde have achieved universal completion rate for primary in 2019. Ghana, Sierra Leone and Togo have reached above 90 percent primary level completion rate. For several countries in Western Africa, boys' primary school completion rates are higher than for girls. The gender disparity in these countries persist through lower secondary and upper secondary levels. Ghana, Cabo Verde, Nigeria, and Togo stand out as countries with youth literacy rates that are relatively higher when compared to other countries in the region.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Women in West Africa remain largely under-represented in the political sphere. Senegal had the highest (43%) proportion of seats held by women in parliament in West Africa in 2022. In Benin, the Gambia and Nigeria the proportion of seats held by women in parliament was below 10 percent in 2022.

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Efforts are being made to increase access to safe drinking water sources, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. In West Africa, where access to clean water and sanitation services remains a significant challenge in many areas, only five West African countries namely, Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali and Senegal had more than 80 percent of their population using at least basic drinking water services in 2020. In all west African countries except Cabo Verde and Senegal the percentage of people using at least basic sanitation services was below 50 percent in 2020.

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Available data indicates that, in more than half of West African countries, access to electricity is below 50 percent and access to clean fuels and technology for cooking is below 30 percent in all West African countries except in Cote d'Ivoire (32 percent) and Cabo Verde (81 percent) in 2020.⁸ West Africa has one of the lowest rates of electricity globally with only about 42 percent of the total population and eight percent of rural residents having access to electricity⁹.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

West Africa performed well on SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth during the period 2000 to 2020. Growth in West Africa is estimated to have slowed to 3.9 percent in 2022 from 4.4 percent in 2021. It is projected to further slow down to 3.8 percent in 2023 and pick up to 4.2 percent in 2024. Growth declined in all countries of the sub-region in 2022, with the exception of Cabo Verde, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Togo¹⁰.The Russia-Ukraine conflict and its associated impacts on global demand, energy, foods, and

⁸ World Bank World Development Indicators 2023

⁹ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/energy/putting-africa-path-universal-electricity-access>

¹⁰ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/REO/SSA/Issues/2023/04/14/regional-economic-outlook-for-sub-saharan-africa-april-2023>

fertilizers prices, has further worsened key macroeconomic indicators (growth, inflation, fiscal deficit, current account balance) and social indicators of the subregion in addition to COVID-19.

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

West Africa's manufacturing value added per capita has globally increased by about 19% on average over the period 2015-2021. This increase was most noticeable in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Senegal and Togo. Nigeria, on the other hand, underperformed over the period¹¹. African industrialization index 2022 indicates that, West Africa had a score of 0.4887 in 2021.

In terms of internet connectivity, West Africa is making good progress towards universal access to a mobile broadband connection. In 2021, 13 out of 15 West African countries had more than 90 percent of their population covered by at least 2G (second Generation) mobile network.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Income inequality is a significant concern in many West African countries. For example, in countries like Nigeria and Ghana, income inequality has been a persistent issue, with a small proportion of the population holding a significant share of wealth.

West Africa has experienced significant internal and cross-border migration, often driven by inequalities. Addressing the root causes of migration and displacement, such as poverty and conflict, is important for achieving SDG 10.

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

A significant proportion of urban residents in West Africa lived in informal settlements or slums with inadequate housing and basic services. Proportion of urban population living in slums was above 50 percent in 9 out of 15 West African countries in 2018. This is more than twice of the global average of 24.2 percent during the same period. West Africa's underperformance demonstrates the extent of the efforts to be made by central governments and city authorities in terms of investment in improving frameworks in urban and peri-urban areas.

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

According to Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) West Africa has the highest food loss percentage of 23.57 percent in 2021. Many West African countries depend on fishing for livelihoods and food security. Sustainable fisheries management is crucial to prevent overfishing and maintain marine ecosystems.

West Africa has a significant agricultural sector. Promoting sustainable farming practices, reducing food waste, and improving access to markets for small-scale farmers can contribute to boost the progress toward the achievement of SDG 12.

¹¹ The 2022 West Africa SDG report

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Year 2023 is marked as the mid- point in implementing the Sendai Framework 2015 – 2030 as well as the Paris Agreement, Urban Agenda, and other related agreements, conventions, and agendas. The world is seriously off track to meet the Paris agreement climate targets and SDG 13. Global warming as of 2022 stood at 1.2°C, with warming continuing at more than 0.3°C per decade.

The 2023 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report states that finance, technology and international cooperation are enablers for accelerated climate action. In a same vein, The African climate summit held in Nairobi, Kenya in September 2023 stressed the importance of decarbonizing the global economy for equality and shared prosperity. African leaders called for investment to promote the sustainable use of Africa’s natural assets for the continent’s transition to low carbon development and contribution to global decarbonization.

Emissions from ECOWAS countries represent 1.8% of global greenhouse gas emissions and on average less than one tons of CO₂ per capita per year. In West Africa, the increase in temperature is 1.5 times higher than at the global level¹².

However, according to the sixth IPCC assessment report, West Africa’s climate has warmed even more than the global average in the past few decades and West Africa’s average annual and seasonal surface temperatures have increased 1–3°C since the mid-1970s, with the highest increases in the Sahara and Sahel.

Given the vulnerability of West Africa to climate change, integrating climate action and environmental sustainability into development plans is essential. This includes promoting renewable energy, sustainable agriculture practices, ecosystem conservation, and resilience-building measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Addressing these vulnerabilities requires a combination of local and international efforts to build resilience and reduce the impacts of climate change on the region.

Target 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Indicator 13.1.1: Number of deaths, missing persons, and persons affected by disasters per 100,000 people.

According to OCHA flooding situation review update in September 2023, the rainy season, which began early this year, continues to cause significant human and material damage in several West African countries. More than 800 people have died as a result of heavy rains, particularly in Niger, Nigeria, Gambia, and Guinea. Between 5 July and 04 September 2023, 70 people were reported to have died after drowning and after their homes collapsed. The floods forced more than 173,000 people to leave their localities, while their homes and other property were destroyed¹³.

Indicator 13.1.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030

¹² <http://www.climatestrategy.ecowas.int/>

¹³ <https://www.unocha.org/> accessed on September 2023

Globally, the number of countries with national strategies for disaster risk reduction increased from 55 in 2015 to 126 in 2022, with 102 countries reporting having risk reduction strategies at the local government level.

At the sub-regional level, the ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy¹⁴ (RCS) that contributes to the implementation of the African Union Strategy on Climate Change (2020-2030), is fully in line with the Paris Agreement and is aligned with and contributes to the achievement of the ECOWAS Vision 2050.

Moreover, in March 2022, the UN Secretary-General launched the Early Warnings for All initiative¹⁵ which called for every person on Earth to be protected by early warning systems by 2027. In response to this call ECOWAS has inaugurated its new Disaster Operations Centre in Abuja in June 2023, to strengthen regional coordination and improved data and information exchange among its Member States.

Target 13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning.

Indicator 13.2.1 Number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

All West African Countries have submitted their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the UNFCCC, of which thirteen except for Nigeria and Senegal have re-submitted revised and more consolidated versions. Nigeria submitted third national communication in July 2021 and Senegal submitted its first national communication in December 2020.

Moreover, all West African countries have developed and are implementing national and local public disaster risk reduction strategies and programmes, particularly in relation to the Sendai framework on disaster reduction. All the countries also have strategies for adapting to the effects of climate change, and these are being integrated into national development Vision and plans. These dimensions are also taken into account in spatial management and development strategies and master plans for towns and urban centres (ECA¹⁶, 2021).

Financing flows for climate action in West Africa reached an average of \$7.9 billion in 2019/2020. Public finance in West Africa (\$6.8 billion, or 87 percent of the total) was on average more than six times the private finance (\$1.03 billion, or 13 percent). To fulfill their existing NDCs, West African countries collectively require approximately \$36.3 billion annually from 2020 to 2030, translating to a cumulative requirement of around \$400 billion for the entire decade. This makes the estimated annual climate financial gap at 28.5 billion (AfDB, 2023).

Target 13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of

¹⁴ The overall objective of the ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy is to: Support Member States to tackle the challenge of the fight against climate change, in particular for the achievement of their commitments under the Paris Agreement.

¹⁵ <https://www.undrr.org/>

¹⁶ ECA West Africa 2020 SDG progress report for West Africa

meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible

Indicator 13.a.1: Amounts provided and mobilized in United States dollars per year in relation to the continued existing collective mobilization goal of the \$100 billion commitment through to 2025

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) plays a crucial role in supporting climate-related initiatives in West Africa, a region particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of climate change.

The 2023 Green Climate fund progress report, indicates that, as of December 2022 the GCF is the world's largest climate fund with USD 12 billion portfolio of climate projects supporting adaptation and mitigation projects in 129 countries. GCF support to Africa reached USD 4.0 billion in 2022¹⁷. This latter covered West Africa and target areas such as renewable energy, climate resilient agriculture, water resource management, community adaptation and partnerships and capacity building.

For the Great green wall initiative where five west African countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal) are members, the GCF approved 35 funding proposals, totaling approximately USD 12.3 billion (including USD 3 billion of GCF finance, and USD 9.3 billion in co-finance) for the 11 countries.

The CATALI.5°T initiative with total project value of 40.1 million USD will establish funding support for climate start-ups and other micro and small enterprises in Latin America and West Africa, which are well placed to make a difference in delivering climate action by demonstrating market feasibility of innovative, low emission technologies, and business models¹⁸.

In general, West Africa is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. Addressing climate change and promoting environmental sustainability are critical for achieving several SDGs. West African countries need to enhance climate resilience, promote sustainable natural resource management, and transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient economies.

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Growing economies and declining stocks have led to a lower contribution of sustainable fisheries to GDP at the global level. The most significant regional declines have been observed in smaller and developing countries, which are, on average, the most reliant on fisheries for national income. This has led to a positive trend in the contribution of sustainable fisheries in regions such as West Africa, where it rose as a proportion of GDP from 0.24 percent in 2011 to 0.34 percent in 2019.¹⁹ West Africa is also implementing institutional frameworks that recognize and protect access rights for small-scale fisheries.

¹⁷ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/>

¹⁸ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/>

¹⁹ Food and Agricultural Organization FAO. 2023. Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators 2023. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc7088en>

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

West Africa is a region rich in wildlife and forest biodiversity. Within ECOWAS, its 15 member countries host approximately 66.85 million hectares of forests, corresponding to 13 percent of the total land area²⁰.

Many West African countries face challenges related to deforestation and forest degradation, often driven by factors like agriculture expansion, logging, and infrastructure development. Efforts to combat deforestation include initiatives to promote logging practices and reforestation projects.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Africa continent in general and West Africa in particular continues to underperform across all dimensions of governance and security.

Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

West Africa and the broader Sahel zone faces political instability and conflicts, as by the intensification of violence in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. The threat of violence spreading to neighbouring countries such as Togo and Benin presented some of the continent's most pressing security concerns. The ECOWAS subregion also experienced a series of coups and unconstitutional changes of Government in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Niger between 2020 and 2023.

According to the Global Terrorism Index for 2023, the Sahel region has emerged as the focal point of terrorism, surpassing both South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in terms of terrorism-related fatalities in 2022. In 2022, terrorism-related deaths in the Sahel constituted a staggering 43 percent of the global total, a stark contrast to the mere one percent reported in 2007. Of particular concern are two countries, Burkina Faso and Mali, which collectively accounted for 73 percent of terrorism-related fatalities in the Sahel during 2022 and 52 percent of all such deaths on the African continent. The surge in violence in Burkina Faso has also spilled over into neighboring nations, resulting in Togo and Benin registering their highest-ever scores on the Global Terrorism Index²¹.

Target 16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms

Indicator 16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months

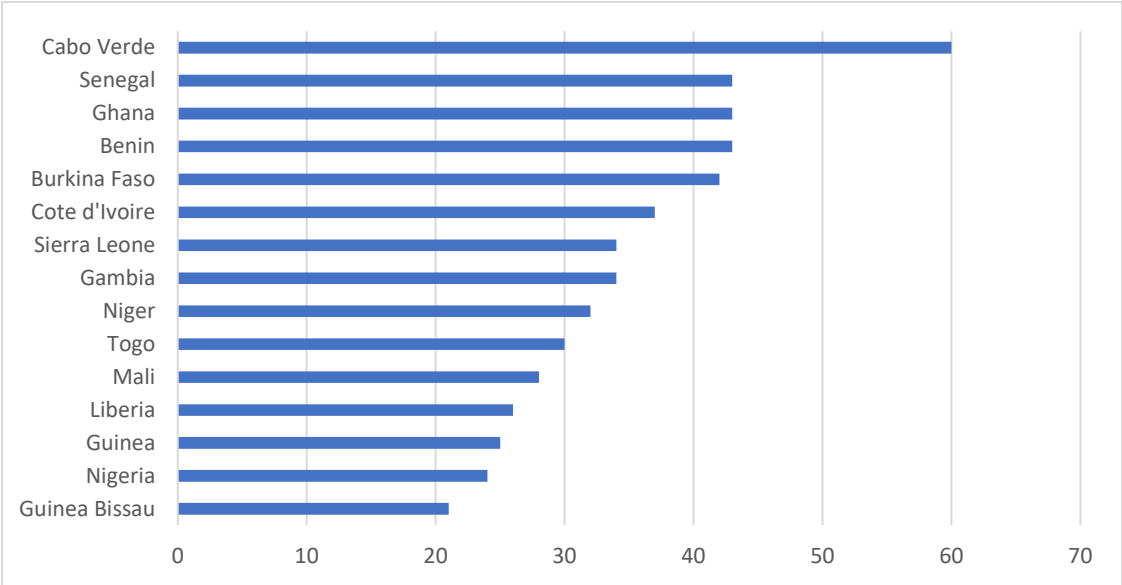
²⁰ <https://www.un-redd.org/>

²¹ Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2023: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism, Sydney, March 2023. Available from: <http://visionofhumanity.org/resources> (accessed 10 September 2023)

Corruption remains a significant challenge in many countries across West Africa. While the situation varies from one country to another, some common themes include high corruption perception, bribery and embezzlement and lack of accountability due to weak governance.

Several West African countries consistently rank low on corruption perception indices, indicating that corruption is perceived as a widespread problem. In West Africa, with the exception of Cabo Verde, all countries exhibit a corruption index below 50%, indicating a notably high level of corruption within the subregion (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Corruption perception index 2022



Source: Transparency International; [high level =0 ; Low level =100] data accessed on September 2023

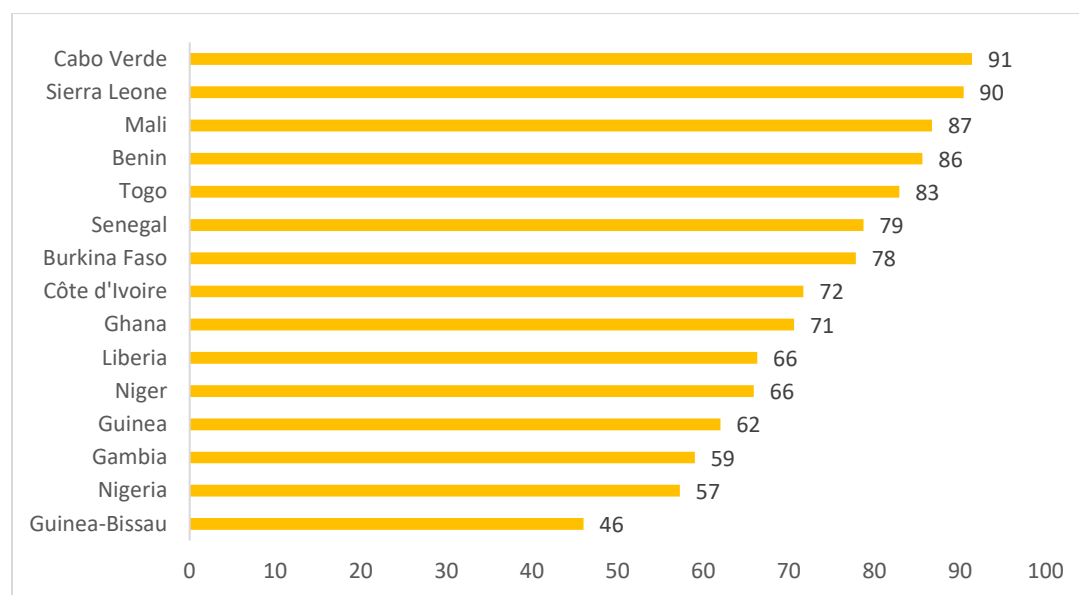
Target 16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age

According to data from the UNICEF²², eight out of 15 West African countries have below 75 percent of children under five who were registered by the civil registration authority and no country in the subregion has universal registration coverage for children under five as of 2022 (Figure 12). In order to ensure universal birth registration by 2030, the African Union Commission and UNICEF launched the “No name campaign” on birth registration on June 2020, as an advocacy campaign within the broader framework of the African Programme on acceleration and Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (APAI-CRVS) Systems. The campaign calls for the transformation of birth registration systems on the basis of three key game changers: interoperability, digitalization and decentralization.

²² United Nations Children’s Fund, A Statistical Update on Birth Registration in Africa, UNICEF, New York, 2022

Figure 12: Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered (2013-2022)



Source: <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/birth-registration/>, accessed on September 2023

While West Africa has made strides in implementing Goal 16, significant efforts are still required. A steadfast commitment from governments, civil society, and the global community is imperative to further promote peace, justice, and robust institutions in the region.

West African countries should prioritize conflict prevention, peacebuilding efforts, and inclusive governance to create an enabling environment for sustainable development. Investing in justice systems, promoting social cohesion, and addressing the root causes of conflicts contribute to long-term stability and progress. Youth involvement is critical for the long-term stability and development of the region thus engaging and empowering young people is important in efforts to promote peace, justice and strong institutions in the subregion.

Accurate and timely data are essential for evidence-based policymaking and accountability. Therefore, national statistics offices in West Africa should strengthen their capacity to enable them to collect and produce timely and reliable data for monitoring of Goal 16.

Goal 17. Strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Adequate and targeted financing is crucial for SDG implementation and increased investment in sustainable development projects, both from domestic and international sources, is needed. This includes public funding, private investments, official development assistance, and innovative financing mechanisms.

Africa's financing options have deteriorated significantly over the past year mainly because of the tightening of global monetary policy, driven by the rapid pickup in global inflation after the onset of Covid-19 crisis and Russia-Ukraine war. In addition, the effort made by countries to respond to these crises and the associated increasing social demand have contributed to reduction of fiscal space of all countries.

Target 17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity

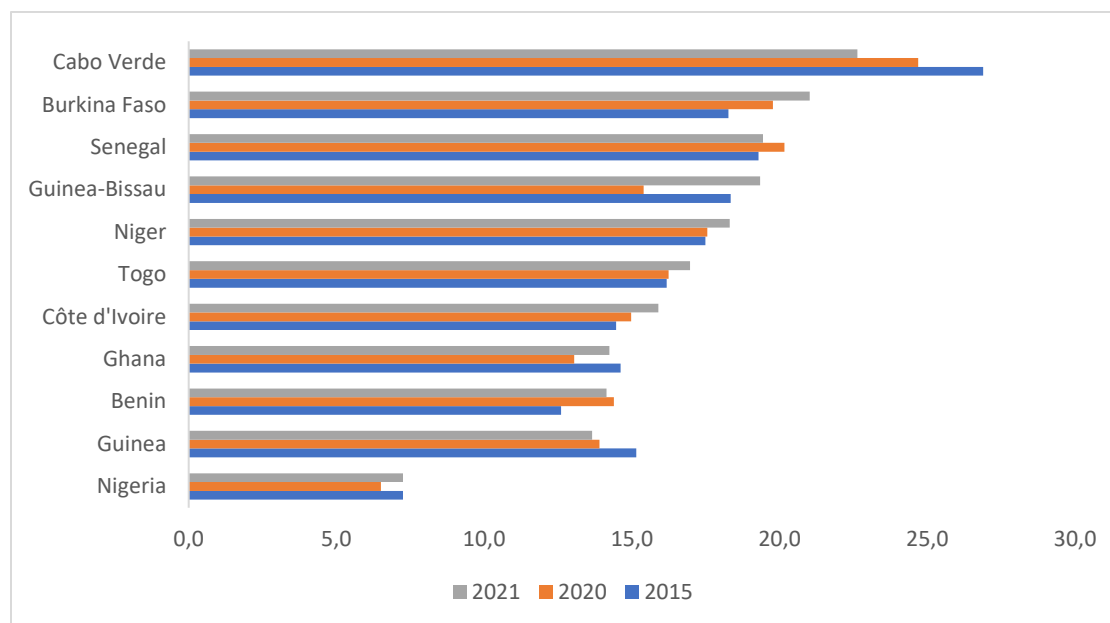
Indicator 17.1.1: Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP

In general, Africa's domestic revenue generation as a proportion of GDP is still lower as compared to some world regions. For instance, in 2021 Africa's average revenue-to-GDP ratio (23 percent) was lower than the world average (32.8 percent), least developed countries average (28.7) percent and that of Latin America and the Caribbean (23.5 percent).

In West Africa, the level is still below compared to the African average although the subregion registered an increase over the period 2000 to 2015 and showed a slight decline in 2020 and increasing slightly again in 2021.

This overall weak performance can be attributed to several factors, including limited capacity for domestic revenue mobilization, the predominance of an informal sector that escapes fiscal collection, the absence or inadequacy of taxation in various sectors, notably agriculture, governance issues, and corruption, as well as illicit financial flows.

Figure 13: Government revenue, percent of GDP (% of GDP) by country



Source: IMF, 2023

West African nations exhibit distinctive features of structural fiscal deficits due to inadequate domestic resource mobilization. From 2014 to 2020, fiscal deficits in West Africa averaged 3.6% of GDP, which was below the continental average of 5.4%. In 2021, the region saw an increase in the average fiscal deficit, reaching 5.6%, and this figure remained unchanged in 2022, despite a decline in deficits observed in all other regions across the continent. In 2022, West Africa experienced a higher fiscal deficit compared to other regions (AfDB, 2023).

Many West African countries are rich in natural resources and proper management and taxation of these resources can contribute significantly to increase domestic revenue. Governments in West Africa should improve tax collection systems to improve revenue by implementing fair tax policies, reducing tax evasion and broadening the tax base.

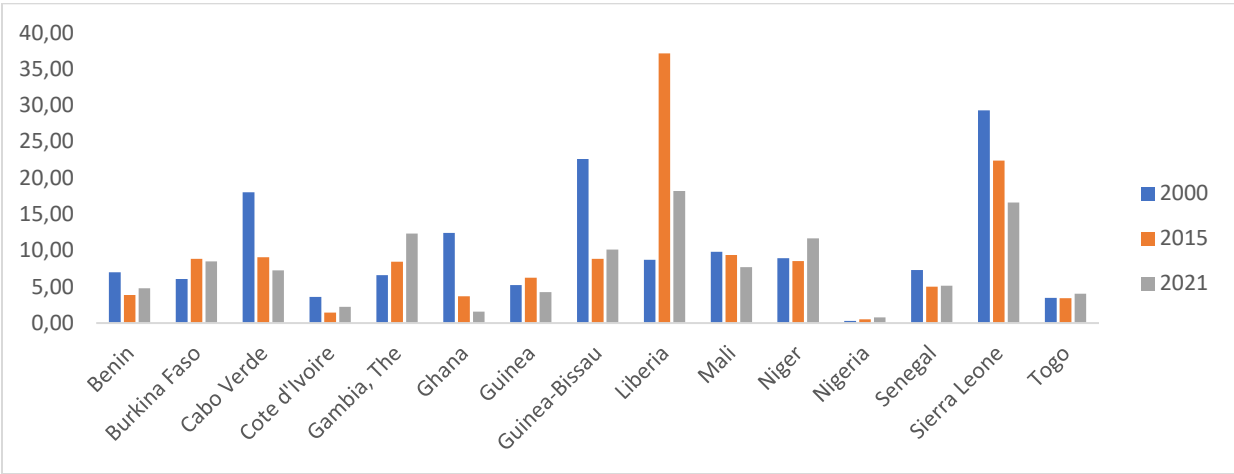
Target 17.2: Developed countries to implement fully their ODA commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 percent of GNI for ODA to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 percent of ODI/GNI to least developed countries.

Indicator 17.2.1: Net ODA, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of OECD DAC donors' GNI

Official Development Assistance (ODA) plays a crucial role in Africa by supporting government or public financing capacity. Developed States made commitments to allocate a minimum of 0.7 percent of their respective Gross National Income (GNI) to assistance for developing States, including African countries. According to OECD, ODA by DAC member countries amounted to USD 204.0 billion in 2022, representing an increase of 13.6% in real terms over 2021. However, preliminary data in 2022 show that net bilateral ODA flows from DAC countries to Africa was USD 34 billion, representing a drop of 7.4% in real terms compared to 2021.

Most West African countries recorded an increase in ODA (11 out of 15 countries) in 2021 relative to 2019. However, all West African countries except Guinea Bissau registered a decline in ODA received as percentage of their GNI in 2021 as compared to 2020 (Figure 14). The rise in ODA in 2020 was prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic and by a large rise in budget support lending, especially from the IMF

Figure 14: Net ODA received (%GNI)



Source: World Bank World Development indicators 2023

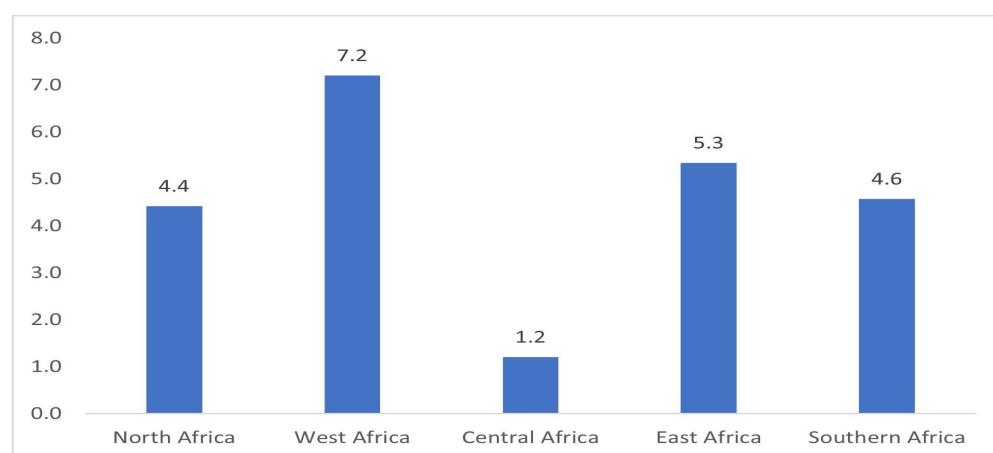
Target 17.3: Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources

Indicator 17.3.2: Volume of remittances (in USD) as a proportion of total GDP

Remittance flows remain a major source of external finance for developing countries and play a crucial role in the economies of West African countries in terms of their contribution to foreign exchange reserves and supporting household consumption and investment. The increase in remittance flows to the sub-region supported the current accounts of several countries dealing with food insecurity, floods and debt-servicing difficulties.

West Africa was the subregion with the highest volume of remittances in 2022 in percentage of GDP as compared with the rest of African subregions (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Average sub-regional distribution of remittances as a share of GDP in 2020



Source: World Bank, world development indicators 2023, accessed in August 2023

At country level, the highest volume of remittance was recorded in Gambia, Cabo Verde, Guinea- Bissau and Senegal in 2022. Nine West African countries registered a decline in the volume of remittance received as percentage of their GDP in 2021 as compared to 2020. The decline in remittances could be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic (World Bank, WDI, August 2023).

While remittances are crucial, challenges such as high transaction costs and limited access to formal financial services have been barriers to maximizing the benefits. Policy initiatives that focused on financial inclusion are important to address these challenges.

Target 17.4: Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress.

Indicator 17.4.1: Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services

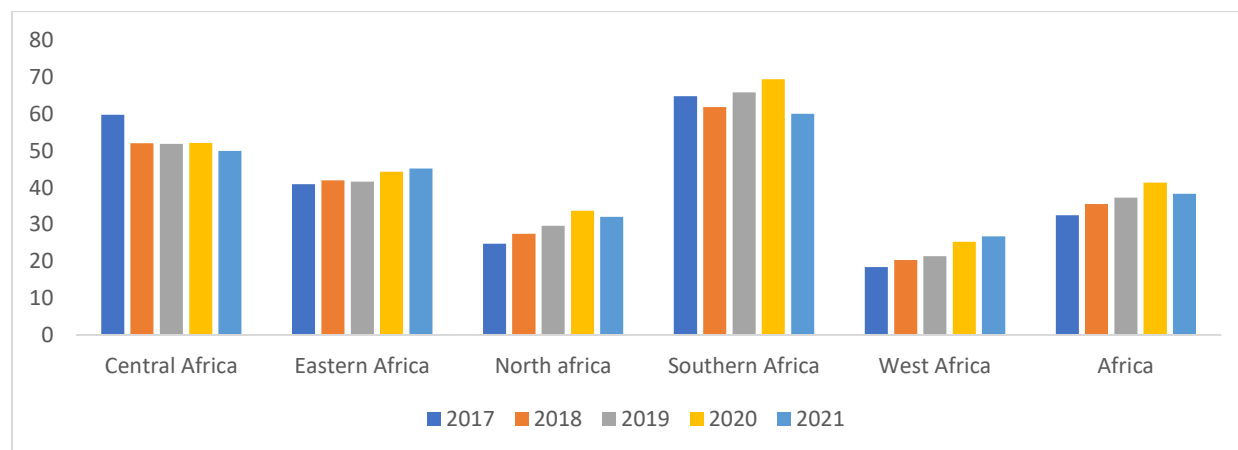
Developing nations are facing an unprecedented surge in their external debt burdens in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation is exacerbated by factors like surging inflation, rising interest rates, conflicting priorities and limited fiscal capabilities. These circumstances emphasize the pressing requirement for debt relief and financial assistance.

According to the 2023 UN Sustainable development report, globally, the debt levels of many countries reached record highs during the pandemic, posing a potential threat to economic growth. The total external debt of low- and middle-income countries reached \$9 trillion in 2021, recording a 5.6 per cent increase from 2020 (UN, 2023).

The ECA²³, estimates that Africa’s average public debt will likely drop to 62.1 per cent of GDP in 2023 from 67.4 per cent in 2022, even as some countries remain in debt distress.

Total external debt as percentage of GNI showed an increasing trend in West Africa from 2017 to 2021 (Figure 16) even if the level in 2021 is lower than both the regional average (38.4) and of all other subregions. There is a significant increase in external debt in all subregions in 2020 which can be attributed to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation and constrained fiscal capacity.

Figure 16: Total external debt (% of GNI)



Source: ECA statistics flash, May 2023

An increase in debt servicing was recorded in nine west African countries in 2021. The highest increase was registered in Guinea Bissau from 9.1 percent of exports of goods and services in 2020 to 38.6 percent of exports of goods and services in 2021. Benin, Ghana and the Gambia also registered significant increase during the same period. Burkina Faso, Senegal, Cote d’Ivoire and Liberia registered a decline in total debt

²³ ECA Africa’s quarterly economic performance outlook in 2023

service as percentage of exports of goods and services in 2021 as compared to 2020 (World Bank, WDI, September 2023).

Target 17.8: Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology

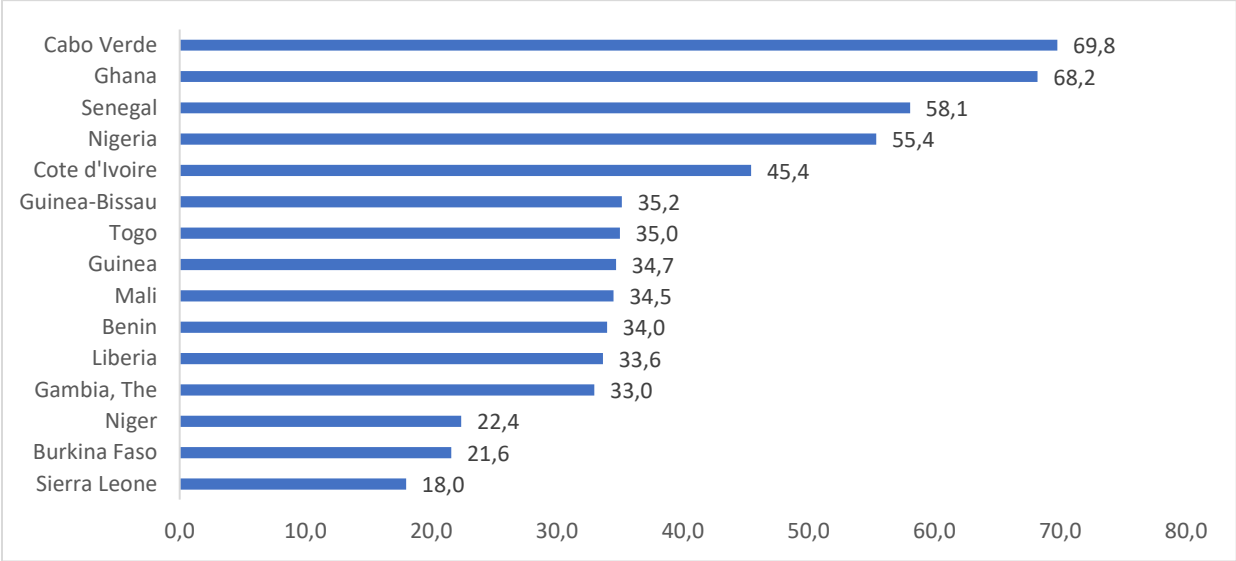
Indicator 17.8.1: Proportion of individuals using the Internet.

The proportion of individuals using the internet in Africa has increased from 16.2 individuals per 100 inhabitants in 2015 to 39.7 individuals per 100 inhabitants in 2022. The proportion of internet users in West Africa increased from 18.9 percent in 2015 to 53.9 percent in 2022 and it is higher than the continental average and LDCs average (ITU, September 2023).

West African countries have made varying levels of progress in improving internet coverage and usage. Overall, while internet coverage has been improving in the sub-region, there are still disparities between countries. Only four West African countries namely Cabo Verde, Ghana, Senegal and Nigeria have more than 50 percent of their population using the internet in 2021(Figure 23). Government policies, economic development and investment in infrastructure play a major role in determining access.

Therefore, Efforts to expand internet coverage, especially in rural areas is essential to ensure that benefits of the digital era are accessible to all and can contribute to the achievement of most SDG Goals.

Figure 17: Individuals using the Internet (% of population) in West Africa in 2021



Source: World Development Indicators accessed in September 1, 2023

Overall, West African countries are making progress on Goal 17, however the pace is not adequate to reach the goal. West African countries should engage with regional organizations, civil society, private sector entities, and development partners to leverage expertise, resources, and knowledge. Collaborative initiatives can include joint projects, knowledge sharing platforms, and innovative financing mechanisms to address development challenges collectively.

Figure 18 :Snapshot of progress on SDGs in West Africa, 2020



Source: <https://ecastats.uneca.org/unsdgsafrica>, accessed in August 2023

All these performance trends under each goal, which does not consider all the effects of shocks from 2020 onwards, could deteriorate under the effects of Covid-19, the ongoing surge in food and fuel prices following the war in Ukraine and the exacerbation of terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel region. The latter comprises seven out of fifteen west African countries, namely Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Guinea, Niger, Mali, Nigeria, and Senegal.

Chapter 2: SDGs Transition and Best practices: Perspectives from selected countries

At the half-way mark of the Sustainable Development Goals, UN has engaged with countries and leaders to rescue SDGs. Given the current trajectory, only 15 percent of the SDGs' target are projected to be achieved by 2030. In this regard, best practices gathered from countries on selected SDGs are highlighted. In addition, an assessment of two selected West African countries, Niger and Ghana, is presented, while the main findings are still common for most of the remaining West African countries based on the situation analysis presented above.

In line with the 2024 HLPF that will focus on 5 SDGs (SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17, and given the theme of the 2023 session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts (ICSOE), analysis will focus on three of the six major transitions identified by UN to have the potential to drive progress across the SDGs, namely Food system, Energy, and Climate.²⁴

2.1 Best practices in achieving SDGs in selected countries in West Africa

National Best practices in implementing Goal 2 in West Africa



Nigeria²⁵

In July 2023, Nigeria has declared a state of emergency over food security. The President Tinubu said: “We declared a state of emergency and unveiled a comprehensive intervention plan on food security, affordability, and sustainability, taking decisive action to tackle food inflation”. The government decided to deploy some savings from the fuel subsidy removal into the agricultural sector. In this regard, a proposal of 500 billion naira (\$643 million) is submitted to parliament in order to finance some relief including subsidized transportation, fertilizers for farmers, and monthly support to citizens.

Niger²⁶

In 2022, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement launched an emergency plan targeting more than 86,500 families, or almost 607,000 people spread across the country's eight regions. The most vulnerable section of the population was provided with food, livestock feed, veterinary medicines and cash support to meet their basic needs. Mrs Zaliya Ousmane, a beneficiary of the emergency plan in the Kieché / Dosso department, gave the following account of this initiative: "I was able to buy goats with the money I received. This herd now helps me to generate income, which means I can be financially independent.

Liberia²⁷

²⁴ Six major transitions identified by UN to have the potential to drive progress across the SDGs: Food system, Energy, Education, Digital, Job& social protection and Climate.

²⁵ <https://bitly.ws/V2Ly>

²⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/country/ner>

²⁷ <https://bitly.ws/W2mD>

The world food program (WFP) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, is working with 200 women to establish 20 school gardens in 20 selected schools that implement Home Grown School Feeding. The school garden initiative is also geared towards empowering women to meet their food security and nutrition needs. Each of the 200 women is entitled to USD 60 for work completed in 20 days per month in the garden over a period of 4 months. At the end of October 2023, each woman will receive a package of seeds and agricultural tools to support their own garden or farm.

Guinea-Bissau²⁸

Under the financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) fund, a Social Protection project implemented under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Solidarity, Families and Women in collaboration with WFP, UNICEF and UNFPA is successfully supporting 1,500 identified beneficiaries who are provided with MTN SIM cards with mobile money accounts where cash-based money transfers are operated to each of the beneficiary. The first cash transfers are intended for the Catio sector in September 2023.

Moreover, the Project Supporting Urgent Food Security Needs in Guinea-Bissau (PAUSA) has completed the first phase of distribution of agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides across all 9 regions of Guinea-Bissau, supporting 44,327 farmers. The ongoing implementation of the second phase of the project, which involves acquiring and delivering agricultural equipment aims to strengthen poultry and egg production, as well as distributing vegetable seeds and salt vegetable production materials to smallholder women farmers across the country.



National Best practices in implementing Goal 13 in West Africa

Several West African countries have adopted national best practices to implement Goal 13, which focuses on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. These practices help address the region's unique climate challenges and promote sustainability. The following are some national best practices from West African countries:

Ghana Carbon Market engagement: Ghana has shown increasing interest and commitment towards engaging with carbon markets as part of its efforts to combat climate change. Carbon markets provide mechanisms for buying and selling carbon credits, which represent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. As Party to the Paris Agreement, Ghana has voluntarily decided to implement Article 6.2 cooperative approaches on carbon market. Ghana is cooperating with the Governments of Switzerland, Sweden, and Singapore to implement the projects. The cooperation is expected to increase private sector participation in carbon market, create jobs, promote technology transfer and unlock business opportunities in the climate change space (Ghana VNR,2022).

Senegal Climate-Smart Agriculture: The Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) concept reflects an ambition to improve the integration of agriculture development and climate responsiveness. It aims to achieve food security and broader development goals under a changing climate and increasing food demand. Senegal has

²⁸ <https://bitly.ws/W2xd>

promoted climate-smart agricultural practices, including drought-resistant crop varieties and improved irrigation techniques, to adapt to changing weather patterns and improve food security²⁹.

Burkina Faso Water Resource Management: Burkina Faso's approach to water resource management is a crucial component of its climate resilience strategy. The country has undertaken various initiatives to effectively manage its limited water resources and ensure their availability for agricultural activities and communities, especially during periods of drought and water scarcity. The initiatives include the construction of small-scale reservoirs and dams to improve water availability for agriculture and communities during dry periods.



National Best practices in implementing Goal 16 in West Africa

Several West African countries have implemented best practices to advance Goal 16, which focuses on promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions. These practices aim to address issues related to governance, security, and access to justice. Below are some national best practices from the sub-region:

Nigeria Anti-Corruption Initiatives: Nigeria has taken steps to combat corruption through agencies like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC). These agencies investigate and prosecute corruption cases, and Nigeria has also encouraged public awareness campaigns against corruption³⁰.

Liberia

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): After the Liberian civil war, the TRC was established to promote truth, reconciliation, and accountability. It provided a platform for victims and perpetrators to share their stories and promote national healing.

Community-Based Conflict Resolution: Liberia has invested in community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, involving traditional leaders and local councils to resolve disputes at the grassroots level.



²⁹ <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/>

³⁰ <https://www.unodc.org/>

Innovative financing mechanisms to support SDGs in West Africa: Country Examples

Nigeria:

Fidelity Bank Green Bonds: Fidelity Bank, a Nigerian commercial bank, issued Nigeria's first green bond in 2018. The bond raised funds for financing eligible green projects, such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable transportation. This innovative financing mechanism attracted investors interested in both financial returns and supporting environmentally sustainable initiatives.

The Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles: In Nigeria, the Central Bank of Nigeria introduced the Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles (NSBP) in 2012. Under the NSBP, banks commit to integrating environmental and social considerations into their business operations and financing decisions. This mechanism incentivizes banks to finance projects aligned with the SDGs and encourages sustainable lending practices³¹.

Senegal:

Impact Hub Dakar's Impact Fund: Impact Hub Dakar, a social innovation hub in Senegal, established an Impact Fund to support social enterprises addressing development challenges in West Africa. The fund provides early-stage funding, mentorship, and business development support to selected social entrepreneurs. It mobilizes resources from impact investors, foundations, and corporate partners to finance socially impactful ventures³².

The Senegal National Renewable Energy Program (PNREL): The PNREL in Senegal is a comprehensive program that aims to increase the share of renewable energy in the country's energy mix. It utilizes innovative financing mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, concessional financing, and blended finance models, to attract investment in renewable energy projects. The program contributes to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) by promoting sustainable energy access and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Ghana:

The Ghana Home Loans Green Mortgage: Ghana Home Loans introduced a Green Mortgage product that incentivizes environmentally friendly housing in Ghana. The mortgage product offers favorable terms and conditions for individuals constructing or purchasing energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable homes. This innovative financing mechanism encourages sustainable housing practices and supports SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

2.2 SDGs country cases analysis

Niger

Progress in SDG 's goals and indicators

Statistical evidences from the ECA SDGs Africa Dashboard provide the following assessment: (i) Overall, Niger's SDG performance Index stood at 52.2 (ranked 149/163), lower than the regional average score of

³¹ <https://www.accessbankplc.com/>

³² <https://dakar.impacthub.net/>




53.6, (ii) Niger registered good performance on 3 SDGs: SDG16, SDG15 and SDG 17, and moderate progress on 8 SDGs: SDGs 2 ,SDGs 3, SDG5 , SDG6, SDG7, SDG 8, SDG 10 and SDG12, The country is still facing key challenges and stagnation in implementing 2 SDGs: SDG 4 which declined since 2000, and SDG 9. This assessment suggests that Niger risks missing many of the targets. Indeed, 16 targets will be achieved by 2030, the trend of 17 targets has been backwards and 54 targets have been in right direction but insufficient to achieve the targets by 2030.

In addition, about 30% of SDG indicators are not reported, which reflects the lack of statistical data due to the lack of regularity of the main data collection operations, and the weak financing of the national statistical system.

Figure 19: SDG targets by success possibility by 2030, based on Africa SDGs Progress Dashboard

SDG 1		1.a	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.1						
SDG 2		2.c	2.2	2.5	2.a								
SDG 3	3.a	3.8	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.9	3.c	3.d	3.2	3.5	3.b
SDG 4	4.c	4.b	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.a							
SDG 5			5.5										
SDG 6		6.4	6.2	6.6	6.a	6.b							
SDG 7			7.1	7.2	7.3	7.b	7.a						
SDG 8		8.8	8.1	8.1	8.2	8.4	8.6	8.a					
SDG 9	9.b	9.4	9.2	9.3	9.5	9.c	9.a						
SDG 10	10.a	10.4	10.7	10.2	10.b								
SDG 11		11.5	11.1	11.b									
SDG 12			12.2	12.4	12.a								
SDG 13		13.1	13.2										
SDG 15			15.1	15.2	15.4	15.a	15.b	15.5					
SDG 16			16.2	16.3	16.5	16.6							
SDG 17		17.1	17.1	17.12	17.3	17.4	17.6	17.8	17.17	17.9			

Legend:

	The target is likely to be reached on the current trend
	The target is in the right direction, but progress is too slow for the target to be met
	The trend is moving away from the target

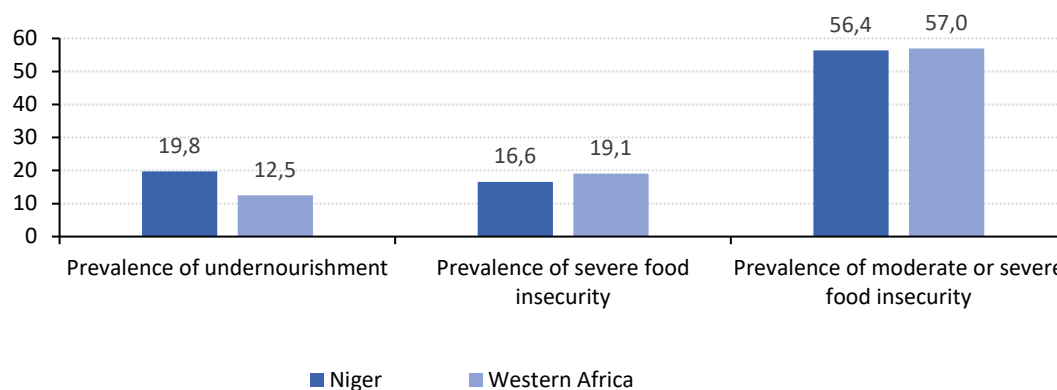
FOOD SYSTEM TRANSITION

Key trends:

- In Niger, conflict, droughts, floods, and high food prices have contributed to moderate to severe food insecurity, affecting over half (56.4%) of the population between 2019 and 2021.

- Agriculture is the most important sector in Niger, providing the main source of income for more than 3/4 of the rural workforce.
- Very low fertilizer use, at around 0.6 kilograms per hectare (kg/ha), far below the 50kg/ha threshold recommended by the African Union's 2006 Abuja Declaration to ensure a green revolution in Africa.

Figure 20 :Food insecurity in Niger and West Africa (%), (2019 – 2021)



Source : ECA's calculation based on data from FAO (2022)

Challenges:

- Persistent food insecurity in West Africa, driven by conflict and climate-related factors, threatens the well-being and livelihoods of millions.
- Niger's agricultural sector faces challenges related to climate change, low productivity, and poor water management, leading to recurrent agricultural shortfalls and food insecurity.

Opportunities:

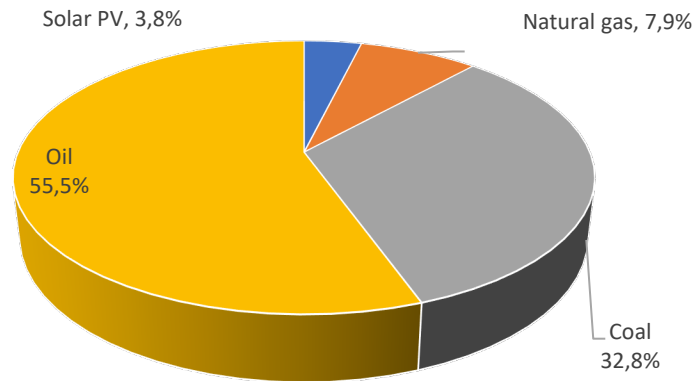
- Niger has launched the "Nigériens Nourish Nigériens" (3N) initiative to enhance food production and resilience.
- The country possesses abundant natural resources, including agricultural land, surface water, and groundwater, which can be harnessed for irrigation and agricultural development.

ENERGY TRANSITION

Key trends:

- Niger faces challenges in energy supply, with a low national electricity access rate of 14.7% in 2020, primarily relying on biomass and petroleum products.
- The energy consumption per capita is 0.146 toe, far below the African average of 0.66 toe and the world's average of about 1.86 toe.
- Firewood is the main source of energy for households in Niger (90.9 percent of consumption) followed by electricity accounting for 2.9 percent.

Figure 21: Electricity generation in Niger by sources, 2020



Source: UEMOA Energy Information System, 2023

Challenges:

- Niger heavily depends on energy imports from Nigeria, leading to exposition to external shocks. The energy imports provided more than 70% of demand in 2020.
- Household energy consumption in Niger is dominated by firewood, while electricity accounts for a small fraction of energy consumption.

Opportunities:

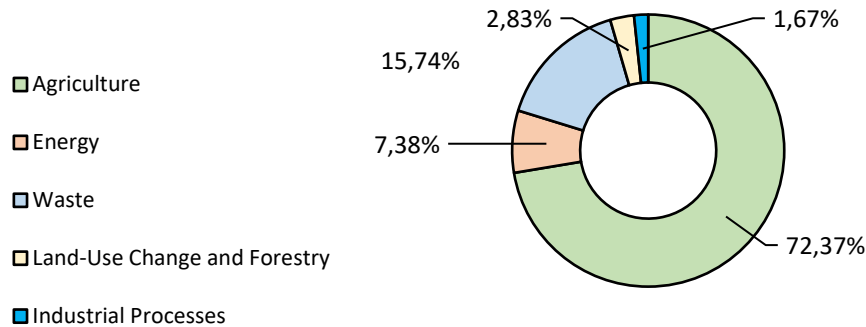
- Niger has considerable potential for renewable energy sources, including abundant sunshine, uranium reserves, and hydroelectric capacity along the Niger River.

CLIMATE CHANGE TRANSITION

Key Trends:

- High vulnerability to climate change, ranking 7th among the most vulnerable countries.
- Low levels of pollutant emissions, with agriculture being the primary contributor.

Figure 22: Niger's Greenhouse gases emissions participation, 2019



Source: Data from Climate Watch, 2023

Challenges:

- Climate change leads to a range of interlinked negative impacts, including food insecurity, health challenges, and destruction of livelihoods and infrastructure.
- Anticipated temperature rises and uncertain rainfall patterns leading to extreme weather events.

Opportunities:

- Submission of the National Determined Contribution (NDC) outlining specific targets and actions for mitigation and adaptation.
- Focus on sectors such as agriculture, livestock, forestry, water resources, fisheries, wildlife resources, and health in NDC implementation.
- Unconditional and conditional pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the energy sector, with targets for 2025 and 2030.
- Implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation projects with support from the UN and other development partners.

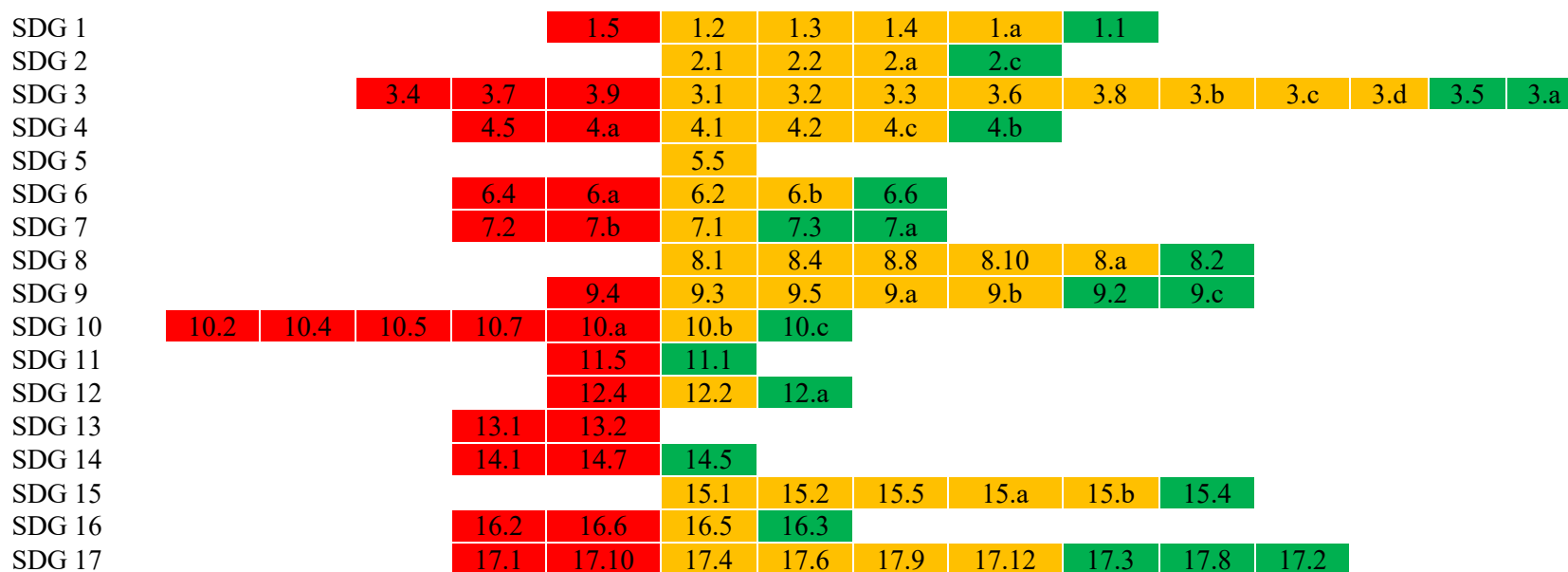
GHANA

Progress in SDG 's goals and indicators

Ghana's overall SDG performance index stood at 63.4 per cent (ranked 110/163), against a regional average of 53.6 per cent, across all of SDGs (Sustainable development report 2022). The country is on track to meet achievements in two SDGs (SDG 12; SDG 13); moderately improving in seven SDGs (SDG 1; SDG 4; SDG 5; SDG 6; SDG 7; SDG 8; SDG 9) and stagnating, facing significant challenges on six SDGs (SDG 2; SDG 3; SDG 11; SDG 14; SDG 16; SDG 17). However, Ghana is decreasing on SDG 15. There are no data to track SDG 10.

According to Africa SDGs Progress Dashboard, 47.3% of SDG targets couldn't been measured, which reflects the challenges of the monitoring SDGs linked to the unavailability of data, particularly disaggregated data, and the capacity to monitor. For the remaining SDG targets, 11.8 per cent (20 targets) are already achieved or will be achieved by 2030, 25.4 per cent (43 targets) have been in the right direction but insufficient to achieve the targets by 2030, however the trend of 15.4 per cent of SDG targets (26 targets) has been backwards.

Figure 23: SDG targets by success possibility by 2030, based on Africa SDGs Progress Dashboard



Legend:

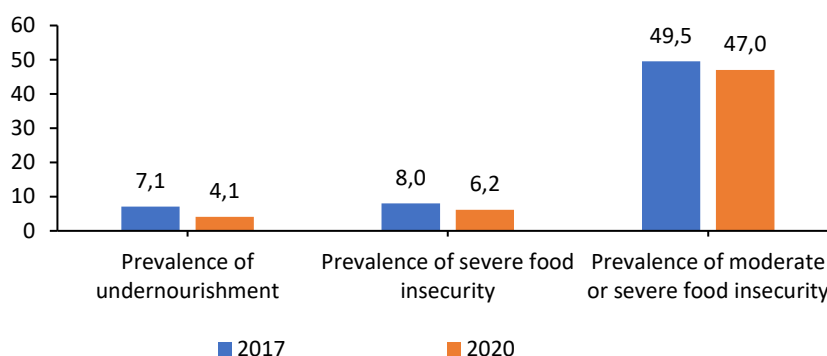
- The target is likely to be reached on the current trend
- The target is in the right direction, but progress is too slow for the target to be met
- The trend is moving away from the target

FOOD SYSTEM TRANSITION

Key trends:

- Ghana experienced a decrease in global food insecurity levels from 2017 to 2020, but the prevalence of severe food insecurity increased during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The agricultural sector is a significant contributor to Ghana's economy, employing 38.3 percent of the workforce.
- Food crop production has been on an upward trend, reaching 48.98 million metric tonnes in 2021, compared to 32.33 million metric tonnes in 2014.

Figure 24: Food insecurity in Ghana (%)



Source: Ghana Statistical Services 2022; FAO, 2022

Challenges:

- Ghana's food system is largely informal and vulnerable to climate change, leading to floods and droughts, especially in the northern region.
- The focus on staple crops has led to insufficient production of nutrient-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, and animal-source foods, resulting in low affordability and availability.
- High post-harvest losses, particularly for maize, yam, cassava, and fish, highlight the need for improved storage facilities.

Opportunities:

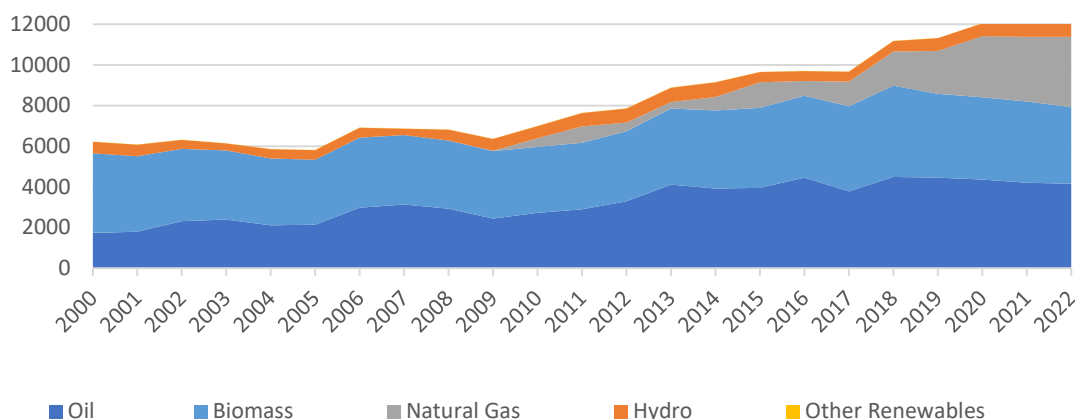
- Ghana is making efforts to transform its food system, with increasing crop processing and potential for developing value chains for cocoa, palm oil, cashew, rubber, and cassava.
- The country's diverse agro-ecological zones, fertile soils, and abundant water resources make it an attractive destination for agricultural investments.
- The Ministry of Food and Agriculture is promoting the use of organic fertilizers, enhancing access to advanced agricultural technologies, and prioritizing sustainable environmental management.

ENERGY TRANSITION

Key trends :

- Ghana made significant progress in achieving universal access to electricity, with 86.8 percent of households connected to the national grid in 2022.
- The use of electricity as the primary source of lighting increased, with 95.2 percent of the urban population and 72.6 percent of rural areas relying on electricity.
- Total energy supply in Ghana increased significantly, mainly due to commercial oil and gas production from fields discovered since 2007.
- The energy consumption profile in 2022 showed the transport sector consuming 38.4 percent, the residential sector consuming 37.3 percent, and the industry sector consuming 19.2 percent.
- The electricity generation mix consisted of 34.1 percent from hydro, 65.3 percent from thermal, and 0.6 percent from renewables in 2022. Renewable generation per capita improved.

Figure 25: Total Energy supply by source (Ktoe, 2000-2022)



Source: Ministry of Energy Statistic 2022; Energy Commission 2023- Ghana Energy database System

Challenges :

- Ghana's heavy dependence on oil and gas for its economy faces challenges due to global commitments to achieving net-zero emissions by 2040.
- Despite efforts to increase renewables, the share of renewable energy consumption in total final energy consumption has declined since 2017.
- A significant portion of households still relies on wood and charcoal for cooking, posing environmental and health challenges.

Opportunities:

- Renewable and alternative energy programs in Ghana are gradually improving the share of renewable energy in the energy mix, with incentives for local manufacturing and assembly.
- Ghana's National Energy Transition Framework 2022-2070 aims for a "fair and equitable" energy transition, aligning with global commitments while balancing economic interests.

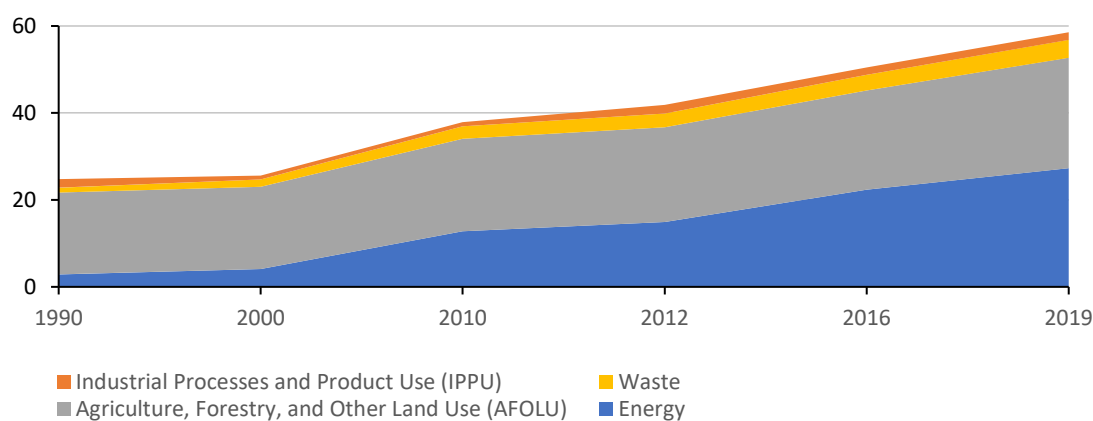
- The country's critical mineral resources like gold, manganese, bauxite, iron ore, silica sand, and lithium can be leveraged for the energy transition, potentially making Ghana a hub for emerging sectors like electric vehicles and domestic value creation.

CLIMATE CHANGE TRANSITION

Key Trends :

- Ghana is experiencing a range of climate-related impacts, including floods, droughts, coastal erosion, and storms, affecting millions of people.
- Greenhouse gas emissions in the country have been increasing, with a notable contribution from electricity generation and biomass use.

Figure 26: Greenhouse gas emission 1990-2019 (MtCO₂e)



Source: Environmental Protection Agency, Third Biennial Update Report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2021

Challenges:

- Climate-related damages, including direct losses from flooding, pose significant challenges for the country's infrastructure and economy.
- Negative impacts on key sectors such as agriculture, health, and energy are affecting livelihoods and well-being.

Opportunities:

- Ghana has made ambitious climate commitments, including ratifying the Paris Agreement and submitting an updated NDC, creating opportunities for climate action and international collaboration.
- The country's total investment requirement for NDC actions presents opportunities for funding and investment in climate mitigation and adaptation projects.
- Participation in initiatives like the Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest Finance (LEAF) coalition offers avenues to address deforestation and combat climate change.

Chapter 3: Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusion

Addressing the interconnected nature of the SDGs requires integrated approaches that consider the interlinkages among different goals and targets. Collaboration and partnerships among governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and international actors are essential for pooling resources, sharing knowledge, and driving collective action towards the SDGs.

An assessment of West African countries' progress toward eliminating extreme poverty underscores that none are currently on course to meet the 2030 target. Some of the countries were showing positive trajectories before the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, these advancements face potential setbacks due to the prolonged repercussions of the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which could result in millions of people sliding back into poverty and enduring ongoing structural insecurity. This situation is most dire in the Sahel countries of West Africa and demands heightened attention, accompanied by targeted reforms and policy measures.

West Africa represents a vital commitment to tackling food security and eradicating hunger in the region. Despite notable advancements, persistent challenges loom, especially in light of external influences such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and geopolitical conflicts.

Climate change exerts its influence on a multitude of facets within poverty and overall welfare, encompassing aspects like individuals' health, nutritional status, educational opportunities, the security of essential resources like food, water, and shelter, and the trajectory of economic development. Simultaneously, climate change also significantly impacts the delicate balance of our natural environment. Achieving effective solutions to address climate change hinges on recognizing the interconnectedness of climate, human well-being, and biodiversity as complex, interdependent systems.

Achieving the ambitious targets set out in the SDGs and Agenda 2063 requires adequate and targeted financing, mobilization of additional finance, including domestic resources to fund public goods and services, calling for collaborative efforts on a global scale. Increased investment in sustainable development projects, both from domestic and international sources, is needed. This includes public funding, private investments, official development assistance, and innovative financing mechanisms. Support is required to mobilize resources, develop financial instruments, and ensure effective and transparent use of funds.

Recommendations

Accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in West Africa requires a comprehensive and coordinated effort involving various stakeholders. The following are some proposition of strategies that can contribute to accelerating SDG implementation in West Africa:

1. Promote sub-regional autonomy in the production of agricultural inputs in general and fertilizers in particular in order to increase yields in the long term and, by extension, agricultural and cereal productivity in particular through the increase of fertilizer use rate in West Africa.
2. Reiterate the effective implementation in the medium term of the 2014 Malabo Declaration in order to boost investment (public and private) in the agricultural sector, mainly in deepening the mechanization and the modernization of cultivation methods and techniques as well as by promoting and encouraging agribusiness by paying attention to small agriculture producers.

3. *Integrated and Holistic Approaches*: Adopting integrated and holistic approaches to development planning and implementation is key. This involves breaking down sectoral silos and promoting cross-sectoral coordination to address interconnected challenges. For example, integrating efforts in education, health, and poverty reduction can have synergistic effects, leading to more sustainable and equitable outcomes.
4. *Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development*: Promoting sustainable and resilient economic development is crucial for SDG progress. West African countries should prioritize economic diversification, promote value addition in key sectors, and foster entrepreneurship and innovation. Emphasizing sustainable practices in industries such as agriculture, renewable energy, and manufacturing can create jobs, reduce poverty, and contribute to environmental sustainability.
5. *Inclusive and Equitable Development*: Eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities require inclusive and equitable development approaches. West African countries should prioritize social protection programs, promote gender equality, address marginalized and vulnerable groups' needs, and ensure that no one is left behind in development efforts.
6. *Digital Innovation and Technology*: Harnessing the potential of digital innovation and technology is a transformative pathway for SDG progress. West African countries should invest in digital infrastructure, expand internet connectivity, and promote digital literacy. Leveraging technologies such as e-commerce, mobile banking, and digital platforms can enhance access to services, improve productivity, and foster inclusive economic growth.
7. *Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability*: Given the vulnerability of West Africa to climate change, integrating climate action and environmental sustainability into development plans is essential. This includes promoting renewable energy, sustainable agriculture practices, ecosystem conservation, and resilience-building measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
8. *Mobilizing Domestic Resources*: West African countries need to enhance domestic resource mobilization to fund SDG implementation. This involves diversifying revenue sources, improving tax collection systems, reducing illicit financial flows, and promoting public-private partnerships for sustainable investment in key sectors.
9. *Enhanced Data Collection and Monitoring*: Improving data collection, analysis, and monitoring systems is crucial for evidence-based decision-making and tracking progress towards the SDGs. West African countries should invest in strengthening statistical capacities, conducting regular data collection, and establishing monitoring mechanisms to measure SDG indicators accurately.
10. *Regional Cooperation and Partnerships*: Collaboration among West African countries and regional organizations is essential for addressing common challenges and promoting knowledge sharing. Strengthening regional cooperation can facilitate the exchange of best practices, joint projects, and policy harmonization to accelerate progress across the region.
11. *Private Sector Engagement*: Engaging the private sector is crucial for accelerating the SDGs and AfCFTA is a key locomotive for private sector. Encouraging responsible business practices, promoting sustainable investments, and facilitating public-private partnerships can contribute to job creation, economic growth, and innovation in West Africa.
12. *Peace, Security, and Stability*: Ensuring peace, security, and stability is a fundamental transformative pathway for SDG progress. West African countries should prioritize conflict prevention, peacebuilding efforts, and inclusive governance to create an enabling environment for sustainable development. Investing in justice systems, promoting social cohesion, and addressing the root causes of conflicts contribute to long-term stability and progress.

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