

# Voluntary National Review: Equatorial Guinea 2022





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# Acronyms and abbreviations

**7M:** 7th March

**AAUCA:** Afro American University from África Central

**ADEFNAGE:** Forestal Enterprises Association

**ADIGE:** Agenda Digital Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial

**ANDGE:** National Development Agency of Equatorial Guinea

**ANIF:** National Financial Investigation Agency

**APA:** Parents' Association

**BAD:** African Development Bank

**BBPP:** Biodiversity Protection Programme for Bioko Island

**BDEAC:** Development Bank of Central African States

**BEAC:** Bank of Central African States

**BM:** World Bank

**CAFI:** Central African Forest Initiative, CAFI (Central African Forest Initiative)

**CEEAC:** Economic Community of Central African States

**CEMAC:** Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa

**CLAD:** Latin American Centre for Development Administration

**CMNUCC:** United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

**CNE:** National Statistical Council

**CNIAPGE:** National Centre for Computerisation of Public Administration

**COMIFAC:** Central African Forestry Commission

**CONADERSA:** National Conference on Rural Development and Food Security

**CONAP:** National Planning Council

**COREP:** Gulf Regional Fisheries Commission

**CPD:** Country Cooperation Programme

**CPE:** Statistical Programmes Committee

**DAES:** United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

**DGP:** Directorate General for Planning

**ECOSOC:** United Nations Economic and Social Council

**EDES:** Economic and Social Development Strategy

**EDS:** Demographic and Health Survey

**EITI:** Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

**ENDE-GE:** National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

**ENDE:** National Statistical Development Strategies

**ENDS 2035:** National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2035

**ENPADIB 2015:** National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan

**ENSAI:** National School of Statistics and Information Analysis

**ENSEA:** National Graduate School of Statistics and Applied Economics

**EPA:** Training and Employment

**ESBA:** Basic Secondary Education

**F CFA:** African Financial Community Franc

**FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

**FIDA:** International Fund for Agricultural Development

**FMI:** International Monetary Fund

**FNUAP:** United Nations Population Fund

**FVC:** Green Climate Fund

**GE:** Equatorial Guinea

**H2020:** 2020 Horizon

**ICCAT:** International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

**IFORD:** Demographic Research and Training Institute

**III CEN:** Third Economic Conference

**INAP-GE:** National Institute of the Public Administration of Equatorial Guinea

**INCOMA:** National Institute of Environmental Conservation

**INDEFOR:** National Institute of Forestry Development and Protected Area Management

**INEGE:** National Statistical Institute

**INPYDE:** National Institute for Business Promotion and Development

**INSTTIC:** Higher Institute of Telecommunications, Information Technology and Communications

**INV:** Voluntary National Report

**IPCC:** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

**ISSEA:** Sub-regional Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics

**LNOB:** Leave No One Behind

**MCDI:** Medical Care Development International

**MEEUD:** Ministry of Education, University Education and Sport

**MICS:** Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey

**MINASIG:** Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality

**MINSABS:** Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

**OCDE:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**OCHA:** Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

**OCR:** Resident Coordination Office

**ODM:** Millennium Development Goals

**SDG:** Sustainable Development Goals

**OFAC:** Office of Foreign Assets Control

**OHADA:** Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa

**OIT:** International Labour Organisation

**OMC:** World Trade Organisation



**OMS:** World Health Organisation  
**ONG:** Non-Governmental Organisation  
**ONU:** United Nations  
**ONUDI:** United Nations Industrial Development Organisation  
**OROP:** Regional Fisheries Management Organisations  
**OSC:** Civil Society Organisations  
**PANA:** National Action Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change  
**PAV:** Expanded Programme on Immunisation  
**PDDAA:** Detailed Programme for the Development of Agriculture in Africa  
**PEI:** Institutional Strategic Plan  
**PESA:** Special Programme for Food Security  
**PIB:** Gross Domestic Product  
**PMA:** Least Developed Country  
**PNDES 2035:** National Sustainable Development Plan 2035  
**PNDR:** National Summary Data Page  
**PNI-REDD+:** National REDD+ Investment Plan  
**PNLP:** National Malaria Control Programme  
**PNLS:** National AIDS Programme  
**PNSDG:** Plan Nacional de Operacionalización del Distrito Sanitario  
**PNOT:** National Spatial Development Plan  
**PNSA:** National Food Security Programme  
**PNUD:** United Nations Development Programme  
**PNUMA:** United Nations Environment Programme  
**PRAMUR:** Rural Women’s Self-Employment Project  
**PRODEGE:** Equatorial Guinea Education Development Programme  
**PYMES:** Small and medium-sized enterprises  
**SEBIVIRHA:** Beef Cattle and Resources Commission  
**SEN:** National Statistical System  
**SIDA:** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome  
**SIGOB:** Information and Management System for Democratic Governance  
**SNAP:** National System of Protected Areas  
**SNMB:** National Forest Monitoring System  
**SNU:** United Nations System  
**SPSS:** Statistics Package for Social Science  
**TICS:** Information and Communications Technology  
**UA:** African Union  
**UNGE:** National University of Equatorial Guinea  
**UNICEF:** United Nations Children’s Fund  
**UNOCA:** United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa

**VIH:** Human Immunodeficiency Virus  
**VUE:** One-Stop Business Shop  
**ZLECAF:** Continental Free Trade Agreement

## OPENING STATEMENT

**Francisco Pascual  
Obama Asue**

*Prime Minister of the  
Government in charge of  
Administrative Coordination*

Among the current challenges facing the African continent is the development of strong and sustainable economic growth sufficient to address the issues of social inclusion, employment and quality education, which will allow for improvements in quality of life and maintaining those higher standards of living in economic, social and environmental aspects. Our regional economy, in general, is highly dependent on development aid, which is not sustainable over time and has yet to achieve the desired impact. In the case of Equatorial Guinea - recently defined as a middle-income country - the economy, to a large extent, depends on the evolution of the price of hydrocarbons, which allows us to make significant progress in social development in times of prosperity, but, in leaner times, causes development to slow or even move backwards. Recent events such as the 2014 economic crisis (with its fall in oil prices) the COVID-19 pandemic and the Bata explosions of March 2021, have highlighted the urgency of advancing a different way of producing, providing services, learning, creating, caring for ourselves, communicating and even interacting among ourselves as a society. Externally with other institutions, it is clear that we need to be able to reduce inequalities and uncover mechanisms to reduce risks in the face of unexpected shocks, to maintain and improve our current standard of living without compromising the future.

Today, more than ever, with the commitment to eradicate poverty and leave no one behind, the Sustainable Development Goals have provided a guide to achieve a sustainable social, economic and environmental development of our country. For this reason, following our commitment to the 2030 Agenda, we developed our first Voluntary National Review. This report is an extensive, multidimensional effort including various national public and private actors. Many of them have been working in isolation until recently, and this report shows that we must have a global and coordinated vision among all the actors involved to achieve our goals.

The Voluntary National Review 2022 is released in the face of an interconnected, complex, dynamic and constantly changing economic situation, which affects our society and our environment and compliments the economic diversification policies adopted forums held previously, such as the Third National Economic Conference (III CEN) in 2019 and the production of several documents such as the Equatorial Guinea Agenda 2035, the Support Programme for Economic Diversification 2020-2025, the Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development 2025, the Roadmap for the Improvement of the Business Climate, among others.

Equatorial Guinea has competitive advantages and capacities which allow us to articulate public policies and actions in this new global agenda. That is why we have integrated the SDGs into our vision of the State. Ultimately, our aim is to achieve a better, more prosperous Equatorial Guinea.

## MESSAGE FROM THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

**Anna Marttinen Pont**  
*Resident Coordinator  
of the United Nations in  
Equatorial Guinea*

As Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System, and on behalf of the country team, I congratulate the Government for submitting its first Voluntary National Review of progress and challenges on the path towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The agencies, funds and programmes working for Equatorial Guinea, both resident and non-resident, recognize the country's commitment to the 2030 Agenda, and the initiative shown by its government in the decision to submit this Report.

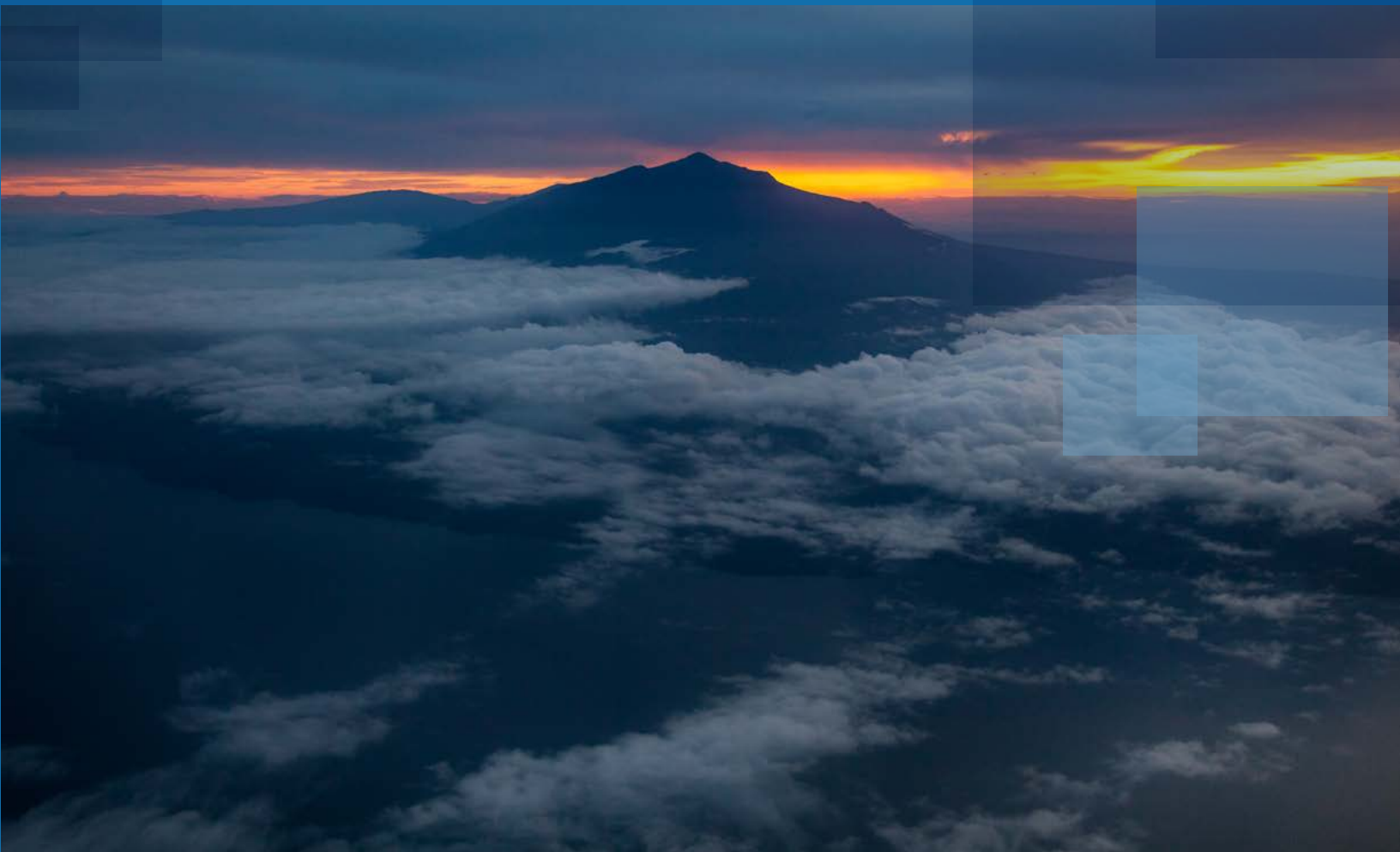
Throughout the technical support of the United Nations, we have especially appreciated the willingness to make this an inclusive process, where the Government has invited the business sector, civil society and academia to join consultations, and whose contributions have helped to paint a picture of joint commitment towards achieving sustainable development.

It is our hope that this first Voluntary National Review will provide a baseline, based on lessons learned, challenges and opportunities, for the adoption of a joint roadmap to accelerate the pace towards the Sustainable Development Goals targets by 2030. It opens the opportunity for a new dialogue between government, private sector, civil society and development partners within the National SDG Commission.

We congratulate the Government's efforts to carry out the II National Household Survey and the I Business Census, the enactment of the Law on Combating and Preventing Corruption and other provisions it is adopting to help achieve a more prosperous, peaceful and inclusive coexistence. We also encourage the continued deployment of the National Statistical System at sectoral and sub-national levels, for evidence-based public policy. Moreover, we are convinced that the ongoing commitment to improving governance in the public sphere will enhance the country's chances of successfully implementing its ambitious development vision.

The United Nations has been a strong supporter of Equatorial Guinea's development for many years, and plans to continue our support of the country in the challenges it faces and the priorities it sets. The new National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2035, aligned with Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063, is an opportunity for a green economic transformation and the formulation of a social protection system to *leave no one behind*.

# HIGHLIGHTS



Equatorial Guinea committed to the 2030 Agenda in 2015. Since then, several actions have been undertaken to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the road to implementation has faced significant challenges, which we can overcome together.

## A. Country's efforts to adopt the 2030 Agenda

### 1. SDG integration in national planning

After a period of economic and financial adjustment, the Government of Equatorial Guinea decided to reorient the Horizon 2020 National Plan, taking into account the achievements made and challenges encountered in its implementation with the support of development partners. In compliance with the obligations arising from its membership of the African Union and the United Nations, the Government also decided to integrate the SDGs and Agenda 2063 into its planning schemes.

This decision was finalised at the Third National Economic Conference 2019, with the theme "Consolidating Social Equity and Economic Diversification". The result of this was the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (Equatorial Guinea Agenda 2035), which contains a global vision for Equatorial Guinea and its role at the international level and specifies the priority axes on which this development will be based:

1. Poverty Eradication, integrating SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 17
2. Social Inclusion and Sustainable Peace, including SDGs: 5, 10, 16 and 17
3. Productivity and Industrialisation, covering SDGs: 8, 9 and 17
4. Environmental Sustainability, containing SDGs: 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17

### 2. SDG coordination and monitoring mechanisms

The National SDG Coordination Commission oversees the SDGs in the country. It is located in the Office of the Presidency of the Government and integrates the public and private sectors, as well as civil society.

In 2019, a workshop organised to prioritise the SDG targets

concluded with 158 targets prioritised out of the 169 in the Agenda. The National Statistical System is tasked with producing 237 indicators that constitute the National Indicator Framework, of which 121 were categorised as "very urgent". The indicator production process started in 2019 with the development of the Second National Household Survey (suspended due to COVID-19 and resumed in 2022).

### B. Results achieved in a challenging environment

Equatorial Guinea made progress towards the 2030 Agenda during its transition from the Horizon 2020 Plan to the Equatorial Guinea 2035 Agenda. The report on the "Pathway travelled (2008-2018)" in the implementation of the Horizon 2020 Plan showed that Equatorial Guinea:

1. Made progress in economic diversification: non-oil GDP increased from 26% of real GDP in 2007 to 42% in 2017.
2. Made substantial progress in infrastructure development: from 600 to 2,530 km of paved roads.
3. Developed reforms to improve governance and the business climate, such as the 2011 constitutional reform limiting presidential mandates and the creation of the one-stop business shop.
4. Increased the country's installed electricity capacity from 97MW to 394MW.

However, major challenges are still hampering the country's ability to make the desired progress. The 2014 oil shock and the fall in oil prices during COVID-19 significantly reduced export revenues and public revenues related to the sector. The pandemic also stalled non-hydrocarbon economic activity through closures and mobility restrictions. Meanwhile, public spending needs increased in response to the pandemic and the 7M Bata explosions.

### C. Way forward

We have the utmost confidence that we can achieve our purpose by working together, achieving the implementation of plans without conflicting efforts, promoting synergies and building resilience. It is not just a purpose, it requires dedication, patriotism and transparency. In this regard, Equatorial Guinea commits to:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Information obtained from the General Directorate for Planning.

1. Continue efforts in its economic diversification to reduce poverty, inequalities and improve social and economic resilience.
2. Promote good governance, ensuring judicial independence and legal certainty.
3. Strengthen its statistical capacity and public administration information management to: better identify vulnerable populations, develop evidence-based policies, improve transparency and social inclusion in order to create development opportunities.
4. Improve their business environment and expand Agenda funding opportunities to ensure the success of development plans.
5. Increase investments in human capital, in particular for youth and with a gender-sensitive lens.
6. Balance economic, social and environmental needs for the sustainable development of the country.
7. Ensure that development reaches those most likely to be left behind, including by ensuring that development is spread throughout the territory.
8. Reducing macroeconomic imbalances.
9. Maintain fiscal sustainability.
10. Strengthen debt management and the banking sector.





# INTRODUCTION





During the 70th United Nations General Assembly, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to guide their economic, social and environmental policies towards a more equitable world and to continue the work begun with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Equatorial Guinea adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the aim of eradicating poverty, protecting the planet and thus enabling all people to live in peace and prosperity, on the one hand, and, on the other, to mobilise the means and resources necessary for its implementation through partnerships and inclusive plans.

In accordance with paragraph 72 of the 2030 Agenda, Equatorial Guinea committed not only to the implementation of the SDGs, but also to a coherent, voluntary, participatory, transparent and integrated assessment of the progress made in their implementation.

As a sign of its commitment to the SDGs, Equatorial Guinea decided to include these goals within its National Strategy for Sustainable Development "Equatorial Guinea Agenda 2035", which was created at the Third National Economic Conference (III CEN) held in 2019. This event included more than 1,400 speakers, from all sectors and actors involved in the national socio-economic development, becoming the first participatory planning exercise ever carried out in the country, fulfilling one of the fundamental premises of modern development, the promise to leave no one behind.

In order to make every structure and department, as well as every citizen, responsible actors in contributing to economic efficiency, social progress and environmental quality, a National Commission for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs in the country was established. As part of this commission's activities, 158 of the 169 targets contained in the 2030 Agenda were prioritised and a National SDG Indicator Framework was developed to monitor the targets.

The country prepares its first VNR with the objective of presenting the self-assessment made in the achievement of the activities related to the SDGs, as well as the challenges and achievements linked to the four blocks contained in the 2035 Agenda:

**Block i Poverty Eradication**

SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 6, SDG 8 and SDG 17.

**Block ii Social Inclusion and Sustainable Peace**

SDG 5, SDG 10, SDG 16 and SDG 17.

**Block iii Production, Productivity and Industrialisation**

SDGS 8, 9 AND 17.

**Block iv Environmental Sustainability:**

SDG 7, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 15 and SDG 17.

The country faces global challenges, such as early socio-economic recovery from the the COVID-19 pandemic and internal challenges including stability after the 7M (7 March 2021) explosions at the Nkuantoma military camp in Bata, the country's economic capital and most populous city, which resulted in both human and infrastructure losses. The health and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic caused a setback in many of the activities of the development plan, although the crisis also provided an opportunity to refocus the Agenda 2035, leading to the adoption of measures to accelerate its implementation from the four identified blocks. As for the 7M Explosions, the country is still in mourning after the first anniversary of the loss of parents, children, siblings and colleagues, and after which progress has been made in comforting the families and those affected by this tragedy, responding to the call for solidarity.

In this sense, this VNR comes at a crucial time for countries, especially for Equatorial Guinea; a time when social, economic, environmental and governance policies have been put to the test and invite us to cooperate with each other in order to offer future generations a sustainable and equitable world, in which all converge. Furthermore, this VNR shows the country's roadmap towards sustainable development beyond the 2030 Agenda, as the National Sustainable Development Strategy ends in 2035.

One of the country's current policies is diversified and sustainable economic growth, which will be driven by strong and coordinated measures for the improvement of human capital, the creation of decent and sustainable jobs and the establishment of good governance. Furthermore, Equatorial Guinea intends to continue the transformation of its economy, focusing on key sectors for economic diversification, such as the sustainable agri-food sector, and inclusive value chains that uphold the fundamental principles and rights of workers, improve occupational health and safety, and ensure environmental protection in order to increase productivity in all sectors of the national economy.

Regarding the content of this report, it begins with a description of the methodology used for the elaboration of the VNR. Then, an analysis is presented on the policy and

national environment in which the 2030 Agenda evolves, encompassing the creation and ownership of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, their incorporation into national frameworks, the integration at social, economic and environmental levels, the premise of leaving no one behind, the institutional mechanisms for monitoring the SDGs and the structural issues of the country. Subsequently, the VNR focuses on progress towards goals and targets, where difficulties are evident, as well as important areas for improvement in terms of data availability in the country. Finally, the means of implementation and next steps for the country on the Sustainable Development Goals are addressed.





# METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS FOR EXAM PREPARATION



The production of the first Voluntary National Review of the Government of Equatorial Guinea was carried out in a participatory manner with the various institutional actors linked to the SDGs in Equatorial Guinea, under the coordination and supervision of the National Commission for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs Equatorial Guinea 2030. For the provision of inputs and the definition of their scope, authorities and technical teams from public institutions of the State, civil society organisations, academic institutions, the private sector and the United Nations collaborated.

## A. The task team

The VNR was carried out by the Technical Secretariat of the National SDGs Commission chaired by the Directorate General of Planning (DGP), the National Development Agency of Equatorial Guinea (ANDGE), the National Institute of Statistics (INEGE) and the United Nations, which also hired consultants from the NGO Data-Pop Alliance to support the coordination of the report and the drafting of different sections. It should be noted that the country's intention is to develop national technical capacities, including in the production of this report. For this reason, it was intended that the country's technicians would have the main role in the realisation of the report, with the technical guidelines of the United Nations and Data-Pop Alliance.

## B. Data collection

Four workshops were organised on 11, 14, 16 and 18 March 2022, including one for each thematic axis of the development strategy. In each workshop, all societal actors were invited in-person, grouped into: Public Sector, Private Sector, Academic Sector, Civil Society and the United Nations System. An additional workshop was also held on 26 April for Civil Society at the UN to capture their perspectives in more detail.

The workshops aimed to gather perspectives on the progress, challenges and next steps of the different actors involved in the implementation of the SDGs under each strategic axis of the NSDS 2035. To this end, attendees addressed topics related to the SDGs of each axis related to:

1. The context of SDG implementation in the country and the environment in which it evolves.
2. The integration of the SDGs in the country, with respect to the institutional framework and the involvement of all sectors in their implementation.

3. The evaluation and monitoring of the SDGs in the country.
4. The means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
5. Next steps.

During the workshops, participants from each sector had to share their responses, thus allowing other sectors to hear their perspectives and contribute to the discussion. The contributions received were integrated into the different sections of the report.

In addition, interviews, information and data requests were made to the various ministries of the country and institutions in charge (INEGE, ANDGE, among others) to gather information on indicators, policies, laws, progress and challenges related to the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, the SDG indicators database of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division (UNDESA) was used to complement the information that could not be obtained through the requests listed above. This database contains official national statistics, official data from United Nations System (UNS) agencies in Equatorial Guinea and other multilateral agencies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as well as data estimated or modelled by the UNS. The database was analysed by INEGE technicians, to verify whether the country's official statistics covered the estimated or modelled UNS data. If not, these data were included in the report in order to have a better perspective of the SDGs, as these constitute the best data available at the moment.

## C. Indicator analysis

Two types of analysis were carried out at the indicator level, one on the availability of information and the other on the progress of the indicators. The analysis of indicator progress is descriptive, focusing on identifying the evolution of the indicators, the reasons and the implications for the country.

The analysis of the availability of information was based on the country's National SDG Indicator Framework. This framework contains the indicators adopted by the country, including those that were designated as proxies for the global agenda indicators, as well as their classification within the axes of the development plan and their respective SDGs. This framework is available in Excel format. In it, the availability of indicators was classified according to their existence at the national level and in the following disaggregation: regions, provinces,

urban/rural, gender, age and employment status. To analyse the availability of disaggregated indicators, indicators from the national framework that require one of the above-mentioned disaggregated categories were identified. Similarly, indicators that are specific to one of the disaggregated categories were included, such as the maternal mortality ratio, as this is specific to a disaggregation by sex (women). This led to a total of 64 indicators requiring disaggregation.

With this information, the availability of indicators was analysed by total indicators (indicators available over the total number of indicators), by SDG (indicators available for each SDG), by axis of the development plan (indicators available in the four axes of the plan and in the transversal axis that focuses on SDG 17) and the availability of disaggregated indicators (indicators with at least one disaggregation available over the total number of indicators that require disaggregation).

#### D. Challenges, constraints and mitigation

The main challenges regarding the implementation of the VNR are related to the lack of interoperability of information, the lack of data and the need to increasingly involve the different actors of society at all levels (national, regional and local) in order to have more holistic perspectives of the country's reality.

**With regard to the interoperability of information,** information in Equatorial Guinea is not currently centralised in digital databases that facilitate its consultation, which would allow for analysis to be carried out in less time. Several of the documents analysed are printed, so accessing them took time and required contacting several people within the ministries to obtain them. In addition, due to the time required to obtain the information and the deadlines for the completion of the report, it was not possible to access all the information requested. The mitigation strategy in this regard focused on producing the report with the available information and supplementing, as much as possible, the missing information during the technical review processes of the document by the SDGs Commission and the United Nations. However, the interoperability of information remains an area for improvement in the country for the realisation of future VNRs.

**Regarding the lack of information,** the analysis of indicator availability shows that the country has 28.7% of the indicators. In addition, several of these data were collected before 2015, for example, through the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey, or the 2006 Household Survey. In this sense, the country needs to update and increase the

amount of information available, which will allow better monitoring of the agenda, better identify vulnerable populations and make evidence-based decisions to guide the country's policies and programmes. To mitigate the lack of information in the INV, data developed by the UNS, including estimated and modelled data, were included, as they are the best available source. The report indicates when these data are used. In the medium and long term, INEGE is taking actions to improve data availability, including a household survey with technical assistance from the World Bank.

**Regarding the involvement of all stakeholders,** the VNR was able to secure the participation of members of different sectors of society, mostly at the national level. However, NGO attendance at the first workshops was not as high as expected. Therefore, a second workshop was convened at the UN to gather information from the NGOs. For future reports, it would be desirable to involve more actors, such as parliament, government at regional and local level, and a larger number of private sector and civil society organisations.

This VNR represents an important step forward towards the implementation of the SDGs in Equatorial Guinea linked to the normative and institutional framework, to the public policies carried out by the different bodies within the framework of each SDG and to the progress made according to the available indicators. Throughout the report, the absence of data is highlighted as a major challenge for the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and the initiatives that the country is taking to address it.





# POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT





The Government of Equatorial Guinea, has integrated the 2030 Agenda into its planning scheme, in order to create an enabling environment to achieve the goals outlined by the SDGs. This section presents the efforts, results and challenges the country has had in formulating policies and creating an enabling environment for the achievement of the SDGs.

Since the environment of the 2030 Agenda is related to the country context prior to its adoption, a brief description of the country context prior to 2015 is presented. Subsequently, the process of mainstreaming the SDGs into national frameworks, the institutional mechanisms to follow up on the 2030 Agenda and the ownership of the SDGs by different groups in society are detailed. Next, in the section on leaving no one behind, the main effects of the COVID-19 crisis, the 7M and groups in situations of vulnerability are detailed. Finally, it discusses the country's structural challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda and finding a balance between economic, social and environmental development.

## A. Context of the country at the time of the arrival of the SDGs

Two important factors set the context in which Equatorial Guinea adopted the 2030 Agenda in 2015. The first is the National Economic and Social Development Plan of Equatorial Guinea Horizon 2020 (PNDES GE H2020), which outlined the country's development vision from 2008 and was planned until 2020. With this plan, the Millennium Development Goals Agenda came to an end and the 2030 Agenda began. The second aspect is the 2014 oil crisis, which limited the country's capacity to finance the Horizon 2020 Plan and led to a reorientation in the form of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2035 in 2019.

### 1. The PNDES Equatorial Guinea Horizon 2020

#### Objective

In 2007, Equatorial Guinea held its Second National Economic Conference (II CEN). It designed a new

development vision for the country, which was consolidated in the National Economic and Social Development Plan "Equatorial Guinea Horizon 2020". This plan sought to direct the resources generated through the exploitation of hydrocarbons towards the eradication of poverty and the construction, between 2008 and 2020, of an inclusive, diversified and emerging economy. In this context, four key strategies were defined:

1. Building world-class infrastructure to improve productivity and accelerate growth.
2. Massively strengthen human capital and improve the quality of life of citizens.
3. Build a diversified economy based on four sectoral pillars: the energy and mining sector, fisheries and aquaculture, agriculture and services (financial and tourism).
4. Implement quality governance at the service of citizens.

### 2. Main achievements and challenges of the first phase of PNDES H2020

At the end of the first phase of the PNDES, the following results were found:

#### Economy

1. The country experienced significant growth during the oil era. Between 2000 and 2012, the country's GDP increased 14-fold<sup>2</sup>.
2. The oil sector's share of GDP declined steadily from 91% to 86% between 2007 and 2012<sup>3</sup>.
3. The secondary sector developed, doubling in size from 17.9% in 2007 to 38.4% in 2012<sup>4</sup>.

#### Infrastructure

1. Transport became a priority in public investment policy: 43% of these investments were made between 2007 and 2012<sup>5</sup>, with the modern national transport network linking the main urban centres throughout the country.
2. In 2012, the country had more than 2,500 km of asphalted roads, making Equatorial Guinea's road

2 República de Guinea Ecuatorial, "Evaluación de la Primera Fase del Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Económico y Social Guinea Ecuatorial Horizonte 2020 (2008-2012)", (2014) <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=informe+de+primera+evaluacion%20de%20PNDES+2012>.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

network six times larger than the average for sub-Saharan Africa at the time.

3. A national logistics infrastructure was put in place, with nine ports and five airports.
4. Electricity production almost quadrupled from 2007 to 2012.
5. The energy production capacity per inhabitant was twice that of Gabon, and 7 to 10 times that of the other CEMAC countries.
6. A new city (Malabo II) was built and the development of urban infrastructures throughout the country accelerated, with new schools, health centres, and all within the framework of planned urbanisation.

## Human Capital

1. The country brought the number of pupils per classroom to 22<sup>6</sup> in primary and 24 in secondary education.
2. The quality of education at that time was still inadequate:
  - a. The repetition rate was currently 26% in the first year in 2008<sup>7</sup>.
  - b. Although the number of teachers increased, it was found that they did not have the necessary level of training.
  - c. El 84%<sup>8</sup> of pupils left the school system without any qualifications.

## Social Welfare

1. Health infrastructure was developed.
2. The Social Development Fund was created.
3. Vaccine coverage was extended.
4. The Road Map for the Reduction of Maternal and Neonatal Mortality was created.
5. The government took over almost 60% of the

population's health expenditure, approaching the European profile (74%)<sup>9</sup> and far from the average African percentages (47%).

6. Infant mortality rates were 111 per 1,000, compared to 66 per 1,000 in the MDGs.
7. Maternal mortality was 290 per 100,000 live births, against the MDG target of 250.
8. The health system continued to suffer from insufficient medical staff, with 3 doctors and 5 nurses per 10,000 population<sup>10</sup>.

## Business environment

1. According to international indicators, the business climate in Equatorial Guinea was not very favourable<sup>11</sup> administrative procedures were slow, the legal framework was insecure and the support system for the private sector was ineffective.
2. Despite a large number of civil servants, a lack of organisation and capacity was evident.
3. There were also shortcomings in the management of public enterprises (water, electricity, telecommunications, social protection, transport, etc.).
4. The population continued to have difficulty in accessing these services despite significant efforts in terms of infrastructure.

## 3. The oil crisis

From 2014 onwards, the oil crisis interrupted the progress made in the PNDES. Between 2014 and 2015, the average price of Brent Crude Oil fell by 47%, from 98.94 to 52.4 USD/barrel<sup>12</sup>, which pushed the Equatoguinean economy into economic recession. Real GDP (base 2006) fell by -9.1% in 2015<sup>13</sup>. In the same year, 83.5% of state revenues came from hydrocarbons<sup>14</sup>. Dependence on oil then led to a -19.8% reduction in state revenues compared to the previous year<sup>15</sup>. In this sense, the consequences on

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 República de Guinea Ecuatorial, "Evaluación Primera Fase Plan Nacional de Desarrollo".

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 INEGE "Guinea Ecuatorial en Cifras, 2016", (2016) <https://www.inege.gq/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/GUINEA-EN-CIFRAS-2016.pdf>.

13 GDP continued to decline in the following years, by -8.8% in 2016 and -5.7% in 2017. Information obtained from: INEGE "Guinea Ecuatorial en Cifras, 2020", (2021) <https://inege.gq/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Anuario-Estad%C3%ADstico-de-G.E.-2020.pdf>

14 The share of hydrocarbons in state revenues remained high, accounting for 76.2% in 2016 and 79.8% in 2017. INEGE, "Guinea Ecuatorial en Cifras, 2020".

15 Estimate made by comparing Equatorial Guinea's executed revenues in 2014 from the 2017 Statistical Yearbook and the State revenues from 2015 to 2017 from the 2020 Statistical Yearbook. In 2016 this reduction was -45.5% and in 2017 revenues increased slightly, by 9.7%, but remained below pre-crisis revenues. INEGE, "Anuario Estadístico Guinea Ecuatorial 2017", (2017) <https://www.inege.gq/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ANUARIO-GE-2017.pdf>

the economy were unfavourable, and Equatorial Guinea entered the 2030 Agenda period facing an economic crisis and the need to revise its own development plan.

## B. Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Goals Into National Frameworks

In 2015, Equatorial Guinea adopted two agendas: the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063. However, as mentioned above, the oil crisis affected the country's ability to finance its development plans. Therefore, in 2019 Equatorial Guinea organised the Third National Economic Conference, which adopted the Equatorial Guinea Sustainable Development Strategy 2035 (ENDS 2035).

The ENDS 2035 marks the mainstreaming of the SDGs into the country's policies. The strategy integrated the 2030 Agenda, the African Union Agenda 2063 and lessons learned from the PNDES H2020 to redirect Equatorial Guinea's development. Since then, the Government of Equatorial Guinea has undertaken efforts to align its programmes and policies to the 2030 Agenda in order to create an enabling environment to achieve the goals and targets pursued by the SDGs.

### The ENDS 2035

The ENDS 2035 was structured around four Strategic Axes. In order to ensure the insertion of the 2030 Agenda into the Strategy, the SDGs were integrated into each axis as follows:

#### I. POVERTY ERADICATION



The aim is to put an end to poverty by covering basic needs (nutrition, health, education, access to drinking water and the improvement of other living conditions), with the following expected results:

1. Define objectives that facilitate the eradication of poverty in Equatorial Guinea.
2. Establish a diagnosis of the main deficiencies that define poverty in Equatorial Guinea (intensity of poverty and its dimension).
3. Establish 7 active and passive policies that have a direct impact on the country's shortcomings with respect to Block I.

#### II. SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE



It addresses the fight against inequalities, focusing on eliminating their causes and not their consequences, through the implementation of clear and concrete policies that promote equal opportunities, and that, in addition, boost social investment. The expected outputs are:

1. A Road Map to establish mechanisms that guarantee the institutional independence of legal bodies and an effective separation of constitutional powers.
2. A Road Map to establish mechanisms to strengthen institutions and fight corruption.
3. In this block, five policies and three active and passive reforms have been established, which have a direct impact on the shortcomings of Block II.

#### III. PRODUCTION, PRODUCTIVITY AND INDUSTRIALISATION



It addresses mainly economic aspects such as investment to boost industrialisation. It is based on the principle that ensuring the country's emergence is impossible without a healthy and balanced economy in terms of decent job creation and industrial innovation.

1. The expected output is a Road Map to diversify and increase the country's economic activity.
2. Nineteen policies and two active and passive reforms have been set out, which have a direct impact on the shortcomings of Block III.

## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



It addresses environmental sustainability, production assurance, urban planning and responsible consumption in the lives of future generations. The expected outputs are:

1. Strategies to raise public awareness of climate change and the danger it poses to life on planet earth.
2. A Roadmap to promote and stimulate responsible production and consumption.
3. A legal framework to prioritise the country's planning process and tools to ensure the environmental sustainability of cities.
4. Two active and passive policies have been established, which have a direct impact on the shortcomings of Axis IV.

## C. Institutional Arrangements

The Government of Equatorial Guinea has designed structures, programmes and policies aligned with the 2030 Agenda by promoting equal opportunities and social investment.

To ensure the planning, implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda in the country, the Government of Equatorial Guinea established the National SDG Coordination Commission, a Technical Secretariat for SDG Coordination and Working Groups for each of the four axes of the NSDS 2035. Their functions and members are detailed below<sup>16</sup>.

### 1. National SDGs Coordination Commission

Equatorial Guinea created the National Commission for the Coordination of Sustainable Development Goals

(Decree 113/2019), whose purpose is to ensure adequate planning, implementation and monitoring of the prioritised goals of the 2030 Agenda. The Commission must meet three times a year, after being convened by the President or by 1/3 of its members. In addition, the Prime Minister, in charge of Administrative Coordination and the Minister of Finance, Economy and Planning, are empowered to issue the necessary provisions to comply with the decree.

#### Functions of the Commission:

1. Approve the prioritisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development targets that converge with the National Development Plan and their integration into the National Development Plan.
2. Adopt the national framework of indicators for monitoring the SDGs.
3. Approve the national policy for planning, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs with a forward-looking approach, integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions.
4. Coordinate the implementation of the National Strategy for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the prioritised SDGs.
5. Advise the Executive Branch and all demands submitted to it on strategies and policies for the achievement of the SDGs.
6. Approve and promote the Communication and Dissemination Plan on the 2030 Agenda of the SDGs.
7. Promote and support the exchange of experiences on the implementation and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda within and outside the country.
8. Promote reforms of relevant legal or regulatory frameworks and operational and functioning rules that facilitate the implementation of the SDGs.
9. Validate the National Voluntary Review Reports and any other document and instrument referring to the implementation and fulfilment of the prioritised SDGs in Equatorial Guinea.
10. Propose the necessary measures to enable the allocation of financial resources for the implementation of the SDGs.
11. Facilitate public-private partnerships aimed at achieving the SDGs.

<sup>16</sup> Information obtained from the Decree number 113 2019, from September 9th, "by which the National Commission for the Coordination of the Sustainable Development Goals was created".

12. Any others arising from the exercise of its competence or assigned to it by any regulatory provision or higher body.

### Members of the Commission

The Commission is composed of:

1. The Prime Minister of the Government in charge of Administrative Coordination as Chairman.
2. The Minister of Finance, Economy and Planning as First Vice-Chairman.
3. The Minister of the Interior and Local Government as Second Vice-Chairman.
4. The Minister of Education, University Education and Sports.
5. The Minister of Justice, Worship and Penitentiary Institutions.
6. The Minister of Industry and Energy.
7. The Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Environment.
8. The Secretary of State for Planning and Monitoring of the National Development Plan.
9. A representative of the Senate.
10. A representative of the Chamber of Deputies.
11. A representative of civil society.

In terms of technical support, the Commission has the following structures:

1. The Technical Secretariat for the Coordination of the Sustainable Development Goals in Equatorial Guinea.
2. Four Working Groups by Thematic Blocks.

### Functions of the Technical Secretariat

The Technical Secretariat for the Coordination of the Sustainable Development Goals in Equatorial Guinea is the technical and logistical support body for the National Commission and the Technical Committee for the Coordination of the SDGs. The Technical Secretariat shall meet once a month, after being convened by the President or at the request of one third of its members. Minutes will be taken of each meeting, reflecting the matters addressed and the agreements adopted, a function that will be carried out by one (1) member of the SDGs Coordination Technical Secretariat. The committee has the following functions:

1. Promote that the SDG targets committed by Equatorial Guinea are incorporated in the different planning instruments, such as policies, plans, programmes, projects, as well as in national, institutional and sectoral budgeting.
2. Prepare the reports on the SDGs that Equatorial Guinea must submit to the United Nations and other international and national bodies.
3. Elaborate and implement communication strategies to report on the SDGs and disseminate the progress achieved.
4. Implement a strategy for follow-up, monitoring, control and continuous evaluation of the SDGs.
5. Develop the indicator framework for monitoring SDG targets.
6. Propose the framework for adapting the prioritised targets to the National Development Plan.
7. Provide current and prospective analytical support and technical recommendations for the Commission's decision-making.
8. Follow up on the execution of the resolutions taken by the Commission in relation to the implementation of the SDGs.
9. Coordinate the elaboration and propose to the Commission the strategies for implementation and socialisation of the 2030 Agenda for the SDGs.
10. Propose to the Commission improvements to the legal framework and public policies that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.
11. Comment on and submit to the Commission, for acknowledgement or approval, reports related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for the SDGs.
12. Coordinate the participation of representatives of the public sector, civil society, academia, the private sector, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, local governments and experts on related issues to the achievement of the SDGs.
13. Propose accountability mechanisms to know the progress and gaps in the implementation of the goals related to the SDGs.
14. Perform functions derived from its competencies and other functions delegated to the National SDGs Coordination Commission.

15. Prepare the corresponding minutes of the meetings of the National Commission and the SDGs Technical Coordination Committee.

### **Members of the Technical Secretariat**

The Technical Secretariat for the Coordination of the Sustainable Development Goals in Equatorial Guinea will be composed of:

1. Directorate General of Planning, which will hold the Presidency.
2. National Institute of Statistics of Equatorial Guinea.
3. National Development Agency of Equatorial Guinea.
4. The United Nations Development Programme.

### **Functions of the Working Groups**

The country has 4 Working Groups to address and analyse issues of interest related to the SDGs. The groups are aligned with the axes of the national development plan and must meet at least 4 times a year, although the chairperson of the Commission can convene meetings as he/she deems necessary. The Working Groups have the following functions:

1. To carry out the prioritisation process of the goals included in the 2030 Agenda.
2. Support the sectoral monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs.
3. Assist and facilitate the formulation of the district SDG action plan.
4. Collect and analyse data and information required for the formulation of the national SDG roadmap.
5. Identify factors influencing the implementation of the national and district roadmap in the sectors of each group.
6. Develop work plans in their respective sectors.
7. Collaborate in the development and implementation of the SDG communication strategy.

### **Members of each Working Group:**

#### **Poverty Eradication:**

1. Secretary General of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, who chairs it.

2. Director General of Planning, Educational Development and Education for All.
3. Director General of Public Health and Health Prevention.
4. Director General of Labour.
5. Director-General of Agriculture, Plant Health, Research and Vocational Training.
6. Director General of Social Affairs.
7. Representative of UNICEF
8. Representative of the WHO.
9. Representative of Civil Society.
10. Representative of the Private Sector.
11. Representative of the Academic Sector.

#### **Social Inclusion and Sustainable Peace:**

1. Secretary General of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, who chairs it.
2. Director General of International Organisations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.
3. Director General of Local Corporations.
4. Director General of Justice.
5. Director General for Gender Equality.
6. Director General for Citizen Security.
7. Director General of Penitentiary Institutions.
8. Representative of UNFPA.
9. Civil Society Representative.
10. Representative of the Private Sector.
11. Representative of the Academic Sector.

#### **Production, Productivity and Industrialisation:**

1. The Secretary General of the Ministry of Trade and Promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises, who chairs it.
2. The Director General of Industry.
3. The Director of Fishing Resources.
4. The Director General of Tourism.
5. The Director General of Economy and National Accounts.
6. The Director General for the Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.
7. The Director General of Telecommunications.
8. A Representative of the UNDP.
9. A Civil Society Representative.



10. A Representative of the Private Sector.
11. A Representative of the Academic Sector.

#### **Environmental Sustainability and Territorial Development:**

1. The Secretary General of the Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources, who chairs it.
2. The Director General of the Environment.
3. The Director General of Mines and Quarries.
4. The Director General of Hydrocarbons.
5. The Director General of Territorial Action and Urban Planning.
6. The Director General of Water Resources and Coasts.
7. The Director General of the National Institute for Forestry Development and Management of Protected Areas (INDEFOR).
8. A Representative of the FAO.
9. A Representative of the Civil Society.
10. A Representative of the Private Sector.
11. A Representative of the Academic Sector.

In addition, public institutions, within the scope of their competencies, dependencies and autonomies, must collaborate in the fulfilment of the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

## **2. Tracking Device**

In order to accompany the above-mentioned bodies in the monitoring and evolution of the SDGs at national level, the following measures have been carried out:

**Establishment of the National Planning Council (CONA-P)**<sup>17</sup>, chaired by the Prime Minister of the Government, is an eminently technical entity that promotes the implementation of a strategic vision of the country in the social, economic and environmental fields, through the design, orientation and evaluation of the country's public policies, the management and allocation of public investment and the implementation of these in plans, programmes and projects of the government whose functions are:

1. To follow up and monitor the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Promote the implementation of a strategic vision of the country in the social, economic and environmental fields, through the design, orientation and evaluation of public policies.

**Creation of the National Agency for the Development of Equatorial Guinea (ANDGE)**<sup>18</sup>, as the entity in charge of monitoring, supervision and technical evaluation of the implementation of the National Development Agenda, some of its functions are:

1. Ensure technical and strategic monitoring and analysis of issues related to sustainable development.
2. Promote research activities that can provide evidence-based vision and direction for greater socio-economic prosperity, thereby responding to the need for growth models adapted to changing national and international environments.
3. Develop communication strategies to raise awareness of the Agendas at national level and mobilise all key actors for their implementation.
4. Organise workshops, training, forums and awareness-raising activities on topics of interest related to sustainable development.

There are regular meetings where all sectors involved in the Sustainable Development Goals participate<sup>19</sup>, including parliamentarians, in order to exchange views on the monitoring of progress in the implementation of the SDGs, as well as to present the difficulties and shortcomings they face in the implementation of the SDGs.

**In terms of quality of national statistical data, the National Institute of Statistics of Equatorial Guinea (INEGE) is available**<sup>20</sup>, que tiene como misión la coordinación del sistema estadístico whose mission is the coordination of the national statistical system and the generation and dissemination of useful and quality statistical information in order to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the socio-economic development of the country. Additionally, it aims to be a governing organisation of the national statistical system, recognised nationally and internationally for the reliability, timeliness, transparency

17 Decreto Núm. 69/2021 de fecha 29 de abril

18 Decreto Núm. 69/2021, de fecha 29 de abril

19 Decreto Num. 69/2021 de fecha 29 de abril

20 [www.inege.gq](http://www.inege.gq)

and effectiveness of the statistical information it collects, produces, analyses and disseminates, in order to facilitate correct decision-making.

### 3. Efforts to improve monitoring of the SDGs

**Equatorial Guinea has undertaken several efforts to follow up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including multi-stakeholder engagement and mobilisation of support through partnerships.** However, specific efforts within the framework of the NSDS 2035 are not yet effective, as the first five-year plan is in the process of quantification, making follow-up actions and review difficult. Nevertheless, the country has carried out actions prior to the NSDS 2035 that provide relevant information to the 2030 Agenda.

Within the framework of the PNDES 2020, the III CEN stands out as one of the major dialogue processes carried out to demonstrate the country's economic and social development. In addition, it is worth highlighting the preparation of the Annual Report, which is an analytical document that includes the status of the PNDES 2020, as well as the progress of its programmes and investments, offering a comprehensive and analytical balance of the Government's management, covering all the policies and programmes framed in the development plan in an exhaustive manner.

Activities are currently being developed within the framework of the functions assigned to ANDGE that have an impact on the objectives of the NSDS 2035. ANDGE, as the entity in charge of monitoring and technical evaluation of the implementation of the Equatorial Guinea 2035 Agenda, is making contact visits to all Ministerial Departments to request collaboration and institutional support. Visits are also being made to diplomatic missions to request alliances, exchanges and dialogue with other related agencies. Support is also provided by the United Nations, through the cooperation frameworks established for development in Equatorial Guinea.

This VNR has been another opportunity to promote dialogue and analysis on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In this context, the Technical Secretariat of the National SDGs Coordination Commission has developed several workshops in the framework of the elaboration of the Voluntary National Review (VNR), whose objective was to inform stakeholders on the SDGs, and to present the state of implementation of the SDGs in the country in order to obtain feedback on how each sector can contribute to the implementation of the SDGs. These workshops were conducted in an inclusive manner, with Government, private

sector, civil society, academia/research and UN agencies working to highlight the involvement of each of these actors in the implementation of the SDGs. The proposal of the Survey "Measuring selected SDG indicators" is also underway, in the framework of the elaboration of the next Voluntary National Reviews, in order to measure the progress of each SDG.

The country has undertaken several efforts to improve its statistical production, which contributes to the monitoring of the country's development and the 2030 Agenda. The need to strengthen the country's statistical capacity is highlighted in several sections of this report. This section mentions the main actions taken in this area.

The Country's statistical law has been reformed to respond to the new needs of the National Statistical System (NSS) and the statistical needs of the SDGs, as well as to bring it in line with the African Charter on Statistics and the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. This reform resulted in the enactment of Law No. 3/2020 dated 16 October, Regulating Statistical Activity in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

The National Statistical Council (CNE), the highest body of the SEN, has been implemented and is in charge of defining the orientations and guidelines related to the programming, production and dissemination of the country's official statistics, in compliance with international statistical standards. It has the following functions:

1. Approve the National Statistical Development Strategies (NSDS) and the annual and multi-annual plans of the NSS prepared by the Statistical Programmes Committee (SPC).
2. Ensuring that the bodies responsible for carrying out the statistical operations envisaged in the NSDS have the human, technical, material and financial resources necessary for their implementation.
3. Approve statistical coordination instruments.
4. To review and approve the statistical programmes of public structures and bodies.
5. Raise public awareness of the importance of statistics.
6. Agree, at INEGE's proposal, on sanctions for infractions committed by natural and legal persons in violation of the rules contained in the law regulating statistical activity in Equatorial Guinea.

The Statistical Programmes Committee (SPC), the second body of the NSS, has been implemented and is responsible



for identifying the statistical operations to be carried out in the NSS, following the guidelines and orientations established by the NEC. It has the following functions:

1. To ensure the execution of the resolutions adopted by the CNE, in accordance with the law regulating statistical activity in Equatorial Guinea.
2. To prepare the NSDS, as well as its annual and multi-annual plans for statistical activities.
3. To ensure compliance with the statistical dissemination calendar by the actors of the NSDS.

**A Statistical Service has been implemented in each of the ministerial departments.** The Ministerial Statistical Services are statistical structures through which sectoral ministries participate in the production of official statistics. They have the following functions:

1. Serve as Focal Points for INEGE.
2. Collect, update and maintain all statistical information generated by their Ministerial Department in the performance of their functions.
3. To periodically submit to INEGE the statistical information at its disposal.
4. To draw up the sectoral statistical plans on matters pertaining to his or her department.
5. To apply and ensure compliance with the rules of statistical secrecy in the production of statistics.

**Similarly, work has been done to train human resources for statistical production.** Between 2015 and 2021, the country has trained one hundred and thirty-three civil servants in statistics for the implementation of the Ministerial Statistical Services, more than twenty Senior Statistical Technicians, two Masters in Agricultural Statistics, four Statistical Work Engineers and a Master in Demography. Three additional staff members are currently being trained: a Master in Poverty Analysis, a Statistical Engineer Economist and a Demographer. This group has been trained by the Sub-regional Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISSEA) of CEMAC, the Institute for Training and Demographic Research (IFORD) in Yaoundé, the National School of Statistics and Applied Economics (ENSEA) in Abidjan and the National School of Statistics and Information Analysis (ENSAI) in France. More than 95% of those trained during this period have been absorbed by the NSS, either by INEGE or by Ministerial Departments.

INEGE, the coordinator and central and executing body of the NSS, has been provided with adequate financial

resources to ensure its proper functioning and to increase the statistical offer.

In the year in which the SDGs were adopted, 2015, the country carried out the following statistical operations: (i) the IV General Population and Housing Census, (ii) the I Labour Force Survey, Training and Employment (LFS) and, (iii) the I General Census of Agriculture. New technologies were used for data collection in these studies.

The disaggregation of data is an aspect included in the statistical law, so that, during the process of data collection and compilation, the NSS makes the necessary provisions in the disaggregation of the indicators by the different relevant variables (age, sex, administrative region, population groups, among others), as much as possible, always bearing in mind the principle of statistical secrecy, which is a practice that is being disseminated in the recently implemented Ministerial Statistical Services.

Among the main challenges in data collection and management, one can highlight the need for:

1. An integrated and functional system for the routine collection of socio-demographic data, which allows for the continuous and timely production of indicators in this sector.
2. Respect for the periodicity of some statistical operations, such as the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), the LFS, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), the Continuous Survey of Living Conditions, among others, due, to a certain extent, to the unavailability of funds for their periodic execution.
3. An incipient statistical culture in the country, which can make it difficult to collect data from some sources.
4. Well-trained and specialised human resources in statistical areas to ensure that the growing national statistical demand can be met.
5. A spacious institutional building of its own, containing INEGE's headquarters, as well as the installation of INEGE antennae in all provinces to ensure data collection in each of them, thus reducing logistical costs.

Currently, INEGE makes use of new technologies for data collection, such as tablets, data capture programs designed using the CSPro tool or Survey Solutions (a tool designed by the World Bank). Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that, to date, INEGE continues to use charts

for data collection with many sources. For its part, apart from Microsoft Excel, the Institution uses the Statistics Package for Social Science (SPSS) for data analysis.

The country's lack of statistical literacy has been a major impediment to data collection. For example, in 2015, due to a lack of awareness of the importance of statistics and their obligation to collaborate with INEGE, many sources were reluctant to share the data generated within the framework of their functions.

As a result, INEGE gradually implemented statistical awareness and dissemination activities. These included the production of publicity videos <sup>21</sup>, awareness-raising talks at the National University of Equatorial Guinea and various secondary schools in the country, visits by students to INEGE's facilities and television competitions on topics related to statistical culture, details of which can be found in the various INEGE activity reports posted on its website ([www.inege.gq](http://www.inege.gq)). All these activities were mainly implemented on the occasion of the African Statistics Day (18 November) and World Statistics Day (20 October, every five years) to raise awareness among the general public on the importance of statistics in decision-making in all aspects of their socio-economic life.

Despite the country's efforts in recent years to increase statistical production, there are still significant gaps in statistical provision at the national level, particularly in socio-demographic statistics. Several actions are being undertaken to address these gaps, among which the following can be highlighted:

1. With the technical assistance of the World Bank, the II National Household Survey and the I Business Census are currently being carried out. The Household Survey will provide data on poverty, living conditions of the population, health, education and employment, among others. The Census of Enterprises will provide a range of data on the economy, the national private sector, national production, etc., and inform the conception of socio-economic policies, the follow-up of the National Development Plan, and international development agendas such as the SDGs.
2. The elaboration of the National Strategy for Statistical Development (NSDS) for the period 2022 - 2025, which includes all the emerging statistical operations to be carried out during this period.

3. The use of administrative records for the production of official statistics, with the implementation of the Ministerial Statistical Services, providing them with the technical and financial capacities to utilise the records in their respective departments, in order to convert them into statistical information.
4. INEGE and other structures of the NSS produce regular reports on the socio-economic reality of the country, which are disseminated through the national media, are available on the INEGE website and are accessible free of charge. Moreover, social networks (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn) are used for statistical dissemination.
5. The country has adhered to the Enhanced General Data Dissemination System of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with the creation of the National Summary Data Page (NDSP), where available statistics are published, according to IMF data dissemination standards.

## **D. OWNERSHIP OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

The Government of Equatorial Guinea has involved different sectors of society and levels of Government in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through various Ministerial Departments and General Directorates, aligning their policies and programmes to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Likewise, the Government has relied on the support of the UN Agencies, the academic sector and civil society organisations to implement projects related to the Agenda.

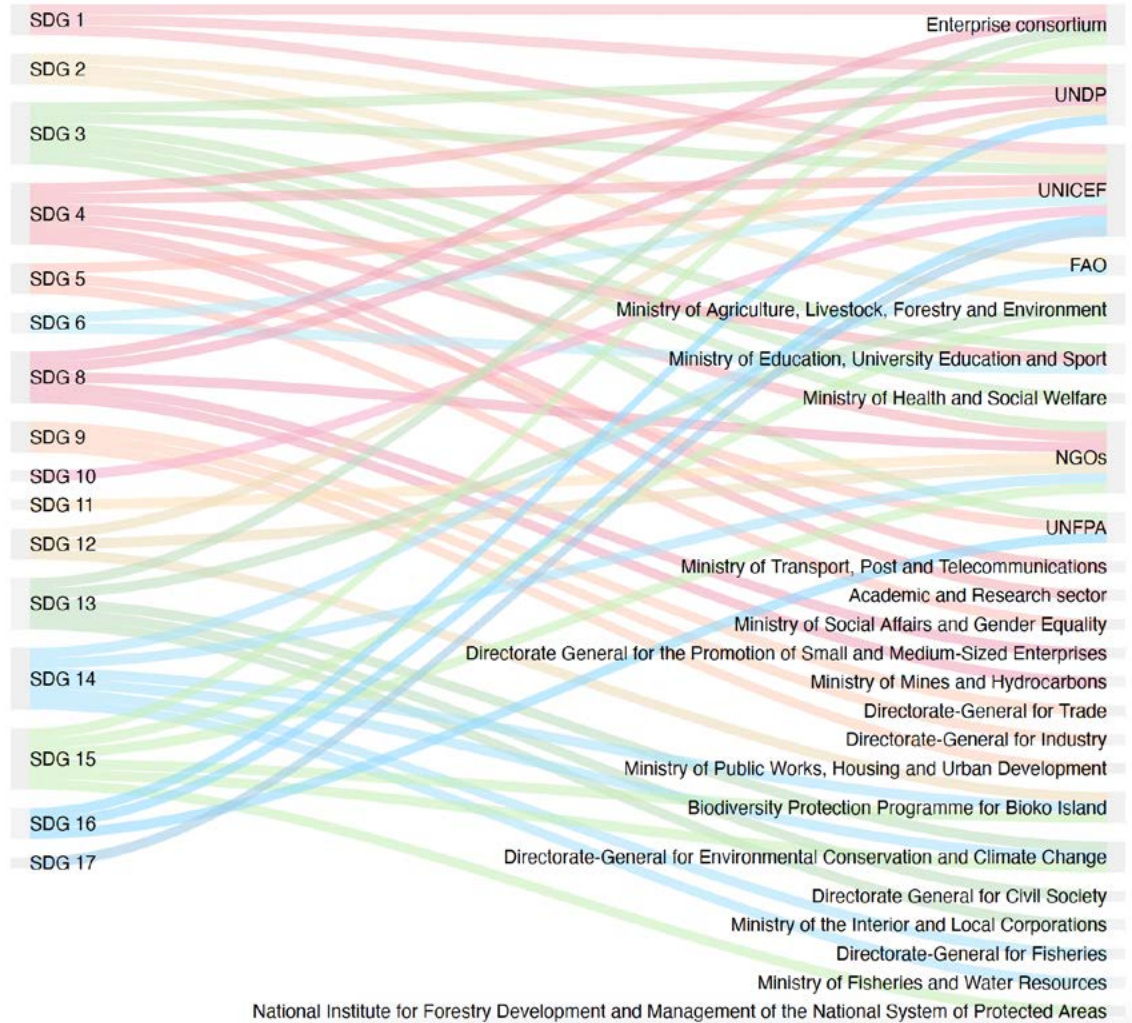
The information contained in this section stems from the workshops and consultations carried out with different sectors of society in the framework of the VNR, highlighting the participation of different sectors of society in the implementation of the Government's plans, as well as some progress and challenges gathered during the consultations. It should be noted that several of the actions mentioned in the workshops started before the creation of the 2030 Agenda. However, they are included as workshop participants found that these actions contribute to progress on the SDGs.

The relationship between the actions taken by the different entities present in the workshops and the SDGs is summarised in the figure below<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> These videos can be downloaded from INEGE's website: [www.inege.gq](http://www.inege.gq)

<sup>22</sup> It is important to note that the diagram presents the relationships between the actions and the SDGs that were discussed during the workshops. Therefore, it does not contain an exhaustive list of the actions taken by the different actors. In addition, the relationship is presented, but not a measure of the impact of the actions on the SDGs, which may be the subject of future INV analysis.

Figure 1. Relationship between actions taken by actors and the SDGs



Source: by the authors based on the results of the workshops.

## I. POVERTY ERADICATION



## Food Security

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Environment has taken actions to mitigate hunger and poverty, which are aligned with SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), including strategic plans and annual programmes. For example, the government has formulated the PNSA (National Food Security Programme) to respond to current challenges that directly affect national production systems<sup>23</sup>. Through the PNSA, farmers, fishermen and livestock farmers have been incorporated into associations and cooperatives assisted in the programme, by means of sectoral production programmes for the improvement of value chains, under the assistance and strengthening of

<sup>23</sup> Information obtained through the VNR workshop seminar (2022). <https://minhacienda-gob.com/clausura-de-los-talleres-sobre-el-informe-nacional-voluntario-de-los-SDG-en-guinea-ecuatorial/>

the agricultural system throughout the national territory.

In order to leave no one behind, the Government of Equatorial Guinea convened the National Conference on Rural Development and Food Security (CONADERSA), which aimed to implement the SPFS (Special Programme for Food Security). In the implementation of this programme, financial support was provided to various agricultural producers, livestock farmers and fishermen. They were also provided with tools, various materials and cash credits. Currently, there are not enough resources available to finance strategic food security programmes. In this context, the Committee for National Food Security was created, which aims to analyse financing aspects and elaborate a monitoring plan for programmes, strategies and projects in this area. The country is also becoming involved in international cooperation, i.e. South-South cooperation and other forms of cooperation on food security issues with technical assistance from the FAO. The country has a partnership agreement in this area.

Regarding the challenges and difficulties faced by the government in implementing hunger reduction, food security, nutrition improvement and agriculture promotion in the country, the workshop participants reported that there is no coordinated, solid and stable planning of the programmes formulated and validated by the government, while the mechanism for their financing is deficient. To ensure the success of these policies, participants suggest:

1. Institutional reforms.
2. Implementing the agricultural extension system.
3. Training and updating of cultural techniques to increase productivity.
4. Technological innovations for the current changes in the productive sector.

## Education

The Ministry of Education, University Education and Sports, together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), is constantly working to promote and disseminate lifelong learning opportunities for all, thus contributing to SDG 4 to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education. The targets and respective indicators of this SDG constitute a reference for the definition of the regulatory frameworks for cooperation not only at the Ministerial level, but also at the National Government level.

MEEUD, with technical and financial support from UNICEF, completed the national WASH situation analysis in 94% of

the country's schools (1,276 schools) by 2021. Preliminary results show that 52% of schools have at least one water source; 32% reported having safe drinking water, and 35% reported having functioning toilets. Schools in rural and remote districts consistently tend to have less access to improved water sources and basic sanitation. This highlights the need for progressive resource allocation to overcome disparities that ultimately affect children's learning and attendance. This type of analysis contributes to SDG 4 and SDG 6 on Clean Water and Sanitation.

Similarly, in 2021, MEEUD conducted learning assessments with technical and financial support from UNICEF in Bata and Malabo districts, with around 14,032 primary school pupils assessed. This initiative is a milestone for the country to formally assess learning and skills acquisition at district level, including both public and private schools. Preliminary results indicate that 10,487 students (75%) passed the assessments. According to the results, there were no significant discrepancies between public and private schools (72.5% in public schools versus 76% in private schools).

The Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications is implementing a computer system and education, which consists of setting up a computer room in all secondary and baccalaureate schools nationwide.

The Government of Equatorial Guinea is collaborating with UNICEF through the Country Cooperation Programme (CPD) signed for the period 2019-2023. The CPD is aligned with the UNDAF and the SDGs. Within this framework, UNICEF Equatorial Guinea signs biannual work plans with key government counterparts, which are monitored on a regular basis. In terms of poverty eradication, the CPD is aligned with the SDGs: 1, End Poverty; 2, Zero Hunger; 3, Health and Welfare; 4, Quality Education; 6, Clean Water and Sanitation, under its second programmatic axis of Survival, Development and Learning. This has three outputs: Child Health, Education and Child Friendly Districts.

The results in education are focused on improving access to and quality of services, with special emphasis on the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and adolescents. In the Work Plan signed with the MEEUD for the period 2021-2022, the following four lines of action were prioritised<sup>24</sup>:

1. Distance learning for pre-school and primary school (TV and radio).

24 Seminar-workshop VNR.



2. Generation of evidence and data for the education sector through learning assessments in mathematics, languages, natural and social sciences for students in 3rd and 6th grades of primary school.
3. Involvement of school communities (APA) for the maintenance, cleanliness and conditions of water, sanitation and hygiene in public preschools and primary schools.
4. Access to inclusive education for children and adolescents with disabilities.

**The Academic and Research Sector**<sup>25</sup>, has integrated the 2030 agenda into education programmes, providing equal opportunities for young women and men to access the academic and social training provided to them.

## Health

In line with SDG 3, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, with technical support from UNICEF, carried out a situation analysis based on the seven pillars of the National Health System, with the aim of updating the National Health Policy adopted in 2002 and drafting the National Health Development Plan (PNDS). These documents aim to guarantee universal health coverage for the entire population of Equatorial Guinea.

In addition, as part of the Government of Equatorial Guinea's response to COVID-19, UNICEF has worked to prevent the spread of the virus and to provide continuity of education services by distributing supplies (learning materials, hygiene kits, personal protective equipment, etc.) to schools in priority areas of the country. In addition, technical training was provided to teachers on infection prevention and the maintenance of water, sanitation and hygiene conditions in schools. This was done in the framework of the activities of the National Technical Committee on Infection Prevention and Control, composed of technical staff from the Ministry of Education, University Education and Sports and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

In addition, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has collaborated with UNICEF to control vaccine-preventable diseases among children through the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI). Under this programme, coverage increased from 24% in 2016 to 68% in 2021. This effort

has been achieved through continued advocacy with the government to allocate resources for vaccine procurement and institutional capacity building.

UNICEF has also collaborated with the Government of Equatorial Guinea in the fight against HIV within the framework of the Plan for the Elimination of Vertical Transmission of HIV, Hepatitis and Syphilis, through improvements in HIV diagnosis in children, as well as child treatment<sup>26</sup>. To reduce the impact of HIV on children, UNICEF has supported the National AIDS Control Programme (PNLS) in integrating early HIV diagnosis and establishing the family screening approach to increase the number of children receiving treatment, reaching 40% coverage.

Through collaboration with the government, UNICEF and other partners conduct equity to identify vulnerable populations and address the effect of inequalities in their access to social services. For example, in the case of immunisation, they conducted an analysis of inequities in access to vaccination and, therefore, to other associated health services, which has allowed the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) to focus its attention on the most disadvantaged populations. They also carried out an assessment of vaccination considering residence profiles and other vulnerabilities that affect access.

**UNICEF, in collaboration with other development partners, has been involved in the development of a National Health District Operationalisation Plan (NHSOP)**<sup>27</sup> in Equatorial Guinea, and the launch of the pilot project for the Baney Health District, which brings together all the programmes of the Ministry of Health. The intention is to learn from the Baney experience, before extending it to the entire national territory.

UNDP has contributed to Equatorial Guinea's progress towards achieving the SDGs through, among others, the Equatorial Guinea Digitalisation Support Project. With the implementation of this project, it has been possible to strengthen the action of MINSABS in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, through the support to the Government for the acquisition of six anti-epidemic robots that could facilitate the massive control of temperature and respect for personal protection rules (distance, use of masks) in areas of great affluence (airports, hospitals).

On the other hand, and through the Joint Programme of the United Nations System for the acceleration of

<sup>25</sup> Seminar-workshop VNR.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Seminar-workshop VNR.

vaccination against COVID-19 in Equatorial Guinea, UNDP has supported MINSABS to implement the digital registration of vaccinations, the constitution of the National Database of Vaccinated Persons and the issuance of digital certificates. In collaboration with the University of Oslo, 20 MINSABS trainers have been trained to train the 100 digital vaccination registration agents, and all the equipment necessary for the operation of the digital system has been donated to the Ministry.

## II. SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE



### Gender equality

**Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality**<sup>28</sup>, has integrated policies and programmes into government action plans to achieve gender equality goals, involving other actors in the implementation of its actions, contributing to SDG 5 on Gender Equality. Awareness raising programmes have also been carried out on the ground through social media. Although funding has been insufficient, reports have been prepared in the area to monitor the country's progress, such as the Evaluation Document of the National Multisectoral Action Plan for the Promotion of Women and Gender Equality. Some of the actions taken by the Government in this area include the elaboration of a National Policy for the Promotion of Women and Gender Equality, as well as the elaboration of a National Multisectoral Plan of Action for the Promotion of Women and Gender Equity.

**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**<sup>29</sup> participated directly in the SDG prioritisation sessions and was integrated into the Social Inclusion and Sustainable Peace Block. Likewise, the organisation contributes to gender equality in

the country in the following areas: Sexual and Reproductive Health, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and Population Dynamics (SDGs 3, 5 and 16).

### NGOs also contribute to the fight against sexual violence.

For example, according to UNICEF, 9 NGOs in the country signed a work plan with the UN system that includes zero tolerance for sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment.

Actions contributing to gender equality, undertaken by the Government with the support of the UNS, highlighted in the workshops were<sup>30</sup>:

1. The internal diagnosis of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Promotion of Women.
2. The Organic and Functional Manual (Process Management Model).
3. The Ministry's Organic and Functional Regulations.
4. The Organic and Structural Management System of the Women and Development Committee.
5. Financing of a mission of two cadres from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality to attend the International Conference on Agenda 2063 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).
6. The provision of knowledge on the concepts of Domestic Violence and Gender Approach to members of the judiciary, legislature, as well as local authorities nationwide, on gender issues for better understanding and treatment, through workshops supported technically and financially.
7. Support for the organisation and participation in the conference on Gender Violence, in Djibloho, in November 2020, between Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon and Gabon.
8. The country developed a proposal for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on the "Women, Peace and Security" Agenda.
9. Supporting activities to commemorate special events, such as: 8 March, International Women's Day; 31 July, International Day of African Women; 25 November, International Day for Non-Violence against Women, etc.
10. For the dissemination of the SDGs, at the UNS level, a Communication Strategy has been

28 Information obtained from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, in the framework of the request for information for the VNR.

29 Seminar-workshop VNR.

30 Ibid

elaborated for the National campaign for the promotion of the SDGs in which UNFPA is a member and actor, focusing on communication towards individuals, families and communities.

11. Elaboration of the National Multisectoral Plan of Action for the Promotion of Women and Gender Equity.
12. Implementation of the Rural Women's Self-Employment Project (PRAMUR), since 2000.
13. Occupational Training Project for Single Mothers.
14. Programme to support the schooling of children from low-income families.
15. National Project for the Education of Adult, Young and Adolescent Women.
16. The Organic and Structural Management System of the Women and Development Committee.
17. Financing of a mission of two cadres from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality to attend the International Conference on Agenda 2063 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).
18. Implementation of the Food Bank project in 2019.
19. Aid programmes for the disabled and the elderly.
20. Programme for the management of social aid through the Government in favour of families in extreme need in Equatorial Guinea.

**In order to boost resource mobilisation and funding** for actions related to gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, the following strategic actions have been undertaken<sup>31</sup>:

1. Development and implementation of a Resource Mobilisation Plan to finance the future Multisectoral Plan for Gender Equality in implementation of the new Policy.
2. Putting in place mechanisms for better management of PIP funds for the optimal financing of the future Multisectoral Plan for Gender Equality.
3. Putting in place mechanisms for greater management of funds mobilised through the UNS towards the financing of the future Multisectoral Plan for Gender Equality.

The main challenges facing the government in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls were identified during the evaluation of the National Multisectoral Plan of Action for the Promotion of Women and Gender Equity in 2016. These are:

1. The deficient legal framework for the protection of women's rights in general and in particular, in terms of protection against gender-based violence and other areas of women's and girls' economic and social life.
2. The non-adoption of the draft National Gender Policy and the elaboration of a Strategic Plan and operational implementation plans.
3. The lack of a Multisectoral Plan to combat gender-based violence established in coordination with other sectors and institutions.
4. The low representation of women in the different decision-making bodies at the political, administrative and civil society levels (Government, Parliament, Senate, Ombudsman, Civil Society).
5. The low technical capacity of national human resources in the field of gender to carry out quality implementation of gender equality programmes, projects and initiatives.
6. The lack of a specific programme for awareness raising and advocacy towards authorities and development partners for the promotion of women and gender equality, as well as for the protection of other vulnerable groups.
7. The lack of a database on women and development to enable the availability, management and use of statistical information on women and development in Equatorial Guinea and the African continent.

### **Legal framework, peace, justice and strong institutions**

The Ministry of Justice, Worship and Penitentiary Institutions, from its General Directorate of Justice, has integrated the SDGs into legislation (parliament), strategies, policies, plans and programmes, drafting the Penal Code, which has been submitted to the inter-ministerial council (Council of Ministers) and to Parliament. It is currently before the Senate for reading and approval<sup>32</sup>.

31 Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, VNR.

32 Seminar-workshop VNR.

**The Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons**, through its General Directorate of Mines and Quarries, has regularised the mining and quarrying sector, developing a legal framework, with the updating of the Mining Law N. 1/2019, dated 29 November, of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and the Mining Regulation N. 1/2020, dated 13 April<sup>33</sup>, on Mining Operations of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. Among other issues, the mining regulations include articles on environmental protection and the recruitment of Equatoguinean personnel.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources through its **Directorate-General for Fisheries**<sup>34</sup>, has developed a Fisheries Management Plan. This Plan is pending approval and incorporates different actors and stakeholders. Fisheries Legislation<sup>35</sup> in force is that which regulates the objectives of conservation and sustainability of marine resources, which are in accordance with national policies. **This allows for a better integration of programmes and policies with SDG 14.** In this sense, annual reports have been prepared, which can be found in the final document of the Fisheries Resources Assessment Project in Equatorial Guinea<sup>36</sup>. The government also organises dissemination seminars and training courses for stakeholders in the fisheries sector, through the relevant line ministries and directorates general.

Participants at the consultations reported that strict compliance with the above-mentioned Law and its implementing regulations will ensure policy coherence and increased benefits for the conservation and sustainability of marine resources.

The Ministry of Trade and Enterprise Promotion, through its **Directorate General of Competitiveness and Consumer Protection**<sup>37</sup>, is drafting trade, competition and quality laws, in order to have legal instruments to develop the activities that make up the SDGs.

The **Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality** indicated in the workshops that, in 2012, there was a Basic Law that included gender non-discrimination in its articles. In addition, the Ministry<sup>38</sup> has worked with parliament on the formulation of draft legislation.

1. The Draft Bill on Comprehensive Protection to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against

Women and Domestic Violence has been drafted (pending approval since September 2015).

2. Technical and financial support in the preparation of the draft bill for the Family and Individuals Code in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, whose approval is still pending to date.
3. The Organic and Functional Regulations of the Ministry.
4. Technical and financial support in the drafting of the Code of the Family and Persons in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the approval of which is still pending to date.
5. Drafting of the National Gender Policy (pending approval since 2016).
6. Drafting of the Preliminary Draft Law Regulating the Social Protection System (pending approval, year 2020).
7. Implementation of the Law on the Adoption of Minors in Equatorial Guinea, year 2021.

**The UNDP, through its Support Project for the Digitalisation of Equatorial Guinea**, has reviewed the National Digital Agenda of Equatorial Guinea (ADIGE) with the Ministry of Telecommunications and has trained 40 young graduates of the INSTTIC in ICT entrepreneurship and the preparation of Business Plans. With the CNIAPGE, a joint proposal for a Digital Government Strategy has been drawn up to advance in the planning of the computerisation of the country's public administration.

UNDP has also collaborated with the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform to digitise the Ministry's document management and administrative procedures through the TRANSDOC Module of SIGOB (UNDP's System for Democratic Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean). In this Ministry, a total of 4 digital procedures have been made available online through SIGOB's SOL Platform, which has provided agility and transparency to the key services selected by the institution. Both implementations have included the training and transfer of knowledge to a team of technicians for the maintenance

33 República de Guinea Ecuatorial, "Reglamento Minero N. 1/2020", (2020), <https://mmie.gob.gq/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/REGLAMENTO-1%E1EF%80%A22020-DE-OPERACIONES-MINERAS.pdf>.

34 Seminar-workshop VNR.

35 Information obtained from the Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources in the framework of the data request for the VNR.

36 FAO, "Evaluación de recursos pesqueros marinos en Guinea Ecuatorial", (2021), <https://www.fao.org/publications/card/es/c/CB7500ES/>.

37 Seminar-workshop VNR.

38 Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, VNR.



and support of the system, the training of almost 80 officials involved in the administrative processing, the provision of complete computer equipment for the operation of the digital systems, and the connection of the Ministry to the fibre optics and the Government Data Centre.

On the other hand, in order to improve the Ministry's capacity to obtain support and share experiences, the UNDP has obtained and financially supported the accession of Equatorial Guinea as an observer country of the Latin American Centre of Administration for Development (CLAD), where it will be represented by the Ministry of the Civil Service and INAP-GE has joined the School of Public Administration of CLAD, together with the Schools of civil servants of the other 17 member countries.

In addition, through the Project for Strengthening Democratic Governance in Equatorial Guinea, UNDP will support the Government's actions to achieve the SDGs, through partnerships with the CNIAPGE, with which through SIGOB Modules (PEI, ACOM), the image of the organisation and its positioning as the main provider of digitisation/information services for State institutions will be boosted, as well as providing expert support for the development, approval and dissemination of the Digital Government Strategy of Equatorial Guinea.

Together with the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform, UNDP has supported the training of 4,000 new civil servants by strengthening the capacities of INAP-GE, providing training of trainers, reviewing and updating the content of the training modules, and providing the necessary equipment for the implementation of INAP-GE's computer classrooms.

Finally, through different SIGOB Modules (PEI, ACOM, SOL Platform, TRANSDOC) new technologies and digitalisation will be incorporated as tools for transparency and efficiency in the management of the Ombudsman's Office.

## Child protection

Regarding social inclusion and sustainable peace, quality governance at the service of the citizens of Equatorial Guinea<sup>39</sup>, The Government of Equatorial Guinea works with UNICEF under the first programme component: Child Protection and Equity. This has three outputs: Evidence

Generation, the Social Protection System and Child Protection. This component is aligned with SDGs: 1, End Poverty; 5, Gender Equality; 10, Reducing Inequalities; 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; 17, Partnerships to Achieve the Goals).

In the area of child protection, UNICEF has oriented its efforts, together with government and civil society partners, towards achieving a strong, comprehensive and effective national child protection system that harmonises social policies with a multi-sectoral approach and addresses the multiple socio-economic vulnerabilities faced by children and their families. Priorities in this area have focused on the following activities<sup>40</sup>:

1. Strengthening the child protection system against violence, abuse, trafficking and exploitation.
2. Harmonisation of national policies and legislation to international standards.
3. Modernising the country's civil registration system, with the Birth Registration campaign in the Island Region during 2020 and 2021, with significant progress in changing the behaviour of communities and access to services for families. In addition, three important advances were made in this area.
  - a. A discussion is taking place on the new draft of the civil registry law, which will constitute a significant advance in the modernisation and updating of the country's civil status legislation.
  - b. The training of civil registry officials, technical officials and community leaders, and the appointment of new officials to provide greater coverage for a universal civil registry system.
  - c. The implementation of the digital civil registration system, which will improve the management of vital statistics and administrative records.
4. The response to the COVID-19 epidemic and the explosions of 7 March 2021 in Bata, in terms of child protection.

<sup>39</sup> Seminar-workshop VNR.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

### III. PRODUCTION, PRODUCTIVITY AND INDUSTRIALISATION



#### Trade, business and infrastructure development

In order to promote the productive and industrial sector, the Ministry of Trade has adopted the SME financing scheme, through UNDP and the National Institute for Promotion and Business Development (INPYDE). It has financed around 20 innovation projects, with amounts ranging from 1 to 4 million FCFA<sup>41</sup>. Likewise, all sectors and levels of government have been involved through the offers and opportunities that the Ministry provides to interested parties. For example, development partners such as UNDP, ADB, BDEAC, foreign and local investors offer support to the Ministry in terms of training, organisation of seminars and the donation of funds for industrial projects<sup>42</sup>.

The Ministry of Trade and Business Promotion, through its General **Directorate for the Promotion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)**<sup>43</sup> has integrated the SDGs into strategies, policies, plans and programmes. For example, with the aim of improving the business climate, a time-saving business creation body, called the one-stop business shop, has been set up, which contributes to SDG 8 on promoting decent employment and economic growth. The country's actions for the improvement of the business climate are monitored by the National Technical Committee, created in 2019 by a presidential decree. In terms of legislation, the Directorate<sup>44</sup> proposed in 2021 to update the SME law in Equatorial Guinea. However, this proposal was not implemented due to lack of funding.

The Business Consortium has provided training and microcredit to women, especially those in the rural or agricultural sector to support their economic activities, which contributes to SDG 1 on poverty reduction and SDG 8.

The Ministry of Trade and Business Promotion, through its **Directorate General for Trade**<sup>45</sup> has implemented the

infrastructure programme at the national level, carrying out the construction of the road network linking the different provinces, contributing to SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. Different actors and stakeholders have also been involved by creating mechanisms for interaction with the private sector.

The Ministry of Industry and Energy, through its **General Directorate of Industry**<sup>46</sup> has drafted the General Law on Industry, Law on Industrial Parks. Also, the Project for the creation of a Standardisation, Metrology and Certification Agency is being prepared, which is expected to contribute to **SDG 9**.

The **Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Urban Planning** through its General Directorate of Urban Planning has created Local Urban Planning Standards and Plans, which are aligned with the SDGs. In order to involve all sectors and levels of government in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, urban inspectors have been appointed in the different urban planning districts and municipalities. The Institute of Urban Planning and Cadastre has also been established based on the Land Ownership Laws<sup>47</sup>, **thus supporting progress on SDG 9**.

**With the Ministry of Trade and Promotion of SMEs**, UNDP has prepared an Assessment of Entrepreneurship in Equatorial Guinea in general and in the New Technologies sector in particular, as well as promoted (through grants) the creation of 10 start-ups, through the One-Stop Business Shop, to promote economic diversification and young entrepreneurship in the ICT sector (incubation phase of the Guinea On competition).

In partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Handicraft Promotion, and in collaboration with the CNIAPGE, UNDP has proposed the implementation of an Electronic Tourist Visa, which will involve a sequenced digital processing in collaboration with 4 other State institutions. In addition, in order to promote and facilitate activities in the tourism sector, the digitalisation of six procedures is being implemented to be made available to the public online, such as authorisation to open tourist establishments, incorporation into the National Register of Hotel Establishments, tourist agent's card, etc.

41 Seminar-workshop INV.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Seminar-workshop INV.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

Through its blue economy and green economy project, UNDP has particularly promoted SDG 8. Equatorial Guinea is a country rich in natural resources and characterised by a young population, with young people representing more than 60% of the entire population. Given its geography, the country has a significant opportunity to promote blue and green economy activities, contributing to poverty eradication and sustainable development through the creation of employment opportunities, while preserving well-functioning aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Indeed, in a context marked by the adverse effects of climate change, ecosystem degradation and loss of natural resources, more sustainable production and consumption patterns must be supported. In this spirit, UNDP, in partnership with the ILO, wants to support the country in creating the conditions for the sustainable development of its natural capital, while maximising the national potential to create decent jobs through the promotion of activities related to the blue and green economy.

The national context is characterised by the existence of SMEs operating in some sectors of activity related to the blue and green economy, such as fisheries, aquaculture and small-scale agriculture. Potential activities around natural capital management that can be promoted include access to renewable energy in rural areas, sanitation, waste collection and recycling, reforestation, coastal zone protection, etc.

Based on the above, in partnership with the ILO, UNDP aims to support the country in: (i) assessing the national context in terms of existing and potential activities and small initiatives around the promotion of the blue and green economy, including profiling of development partners in this area, (ii) defining an institutional, strategic and monitoring and evaluation framework for activities promoting the blue and green economy, and the creation of decent employment, including through the promotion of labour-intensive activities in the blue and green economy, (iii) identifying, training and supporting, including through a competitive grant component, youth and women active in promoting the blue and green economy to develop viable small businesses and decent jobs, (iv) mobilising the private sector, multinationals, employers' organisations and other partners to support the empowerment of youth and women promoters of aquatic and terrestrial natural capital conservation initiatives and businesses.

This project is in line with the Country Programme's theory of change to empower youth by building their capacities in natural resource management and access to decent employment.

#### IV ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT.



#### Environment and biodiversity

In the framework of the objectives pursued by the conservation of terrestrial ecosystems, the government is aligning all national policies to the SDGs, mainly highlighting SDG 15, which refers to the life of terrestrial ecosystems, and SDG 13 on climate action, within the framework of the National Strategy 2035.

With regard to the actions that the government has undertaken to implement the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems (SDG 15), the following are highlighted: The ratification of the convention to combat desertification and drought, the creation of specialised institutions (INDEFOR-AP and INCOMA), the drafting of laws, law on the use and management of forests, law regulating the environment, law on protected areas and the law on land tenure, among others. INDEFOR-AP and INCOMA often report on specific issues, such as biodiversity, vegetation and soils.

For the implementation of SDG 13 on Climate Action, the Government has undertaken actions on biodiversity conservation, forest protection, responsible use of marine resources and mines; while local governments work on urban environmental conservation: rubbish collection, conservation of green spaces and roads, beaches and responsible use of water resources and agricultural land.

The Government, through the Ministry of Interior and Local Corporations and other sectors, is working at the local level on integrating the community into development processes related to SDG 13 on Climate Action. This has involved women, social and local health leaders for

better performance of environmental integration in the communities. According to Ministry representatives at the INV workshops, this process has led to improvements in the use of available resources and their conservation. In addition, the Ministry has promoted the legalisation of NGOs working in the environmental sector and in the SDGs through the general directorate of civil society, thus incorporating different actors and stakeholders in the Agenda.

The Directorate General for Environmental Conservation and Climate Change has also involved the sectors and levels of government in the environmental sector through laws, inter-sectoral committees, information and communication programmes in the implementation of activities. Regarding the implementation of the SDGs in the environment sector (SDGs 13, 14 and 15), institutional arrangements involve key ministries, parliament, human rights institutions and civil society among others, through inter-sectoral meetings and committees for decision-making linked to environmental conservation<sup>48</sup>. To ensure policy coherence and identify benefits in the environment sector, it works closely with other sectors on a range of issues, including climate change, energy, transport, civil aviation and finance. It also works with the international community, which provides updates and technological advances in environmental conservation<sup>49</sup>.

Following the **Third National Economic Conference**, the Directorate General of Civil Society, has integrated the SDGs into strategies, policies, plans and programmes by organising meetings with civil society organisations (CSOs) to inform them about the need to accompany the Government in the implementation of the SDGs and the 2030 agenda. To this end, the legalisation of several NGOs working in the environmental sector and on the SDGs has been promoted, thus incorporating different actors, stakeholders and their interests, thus contributing to SDG 13. During the workshops, the need to strengthen CSOs by training their members regarding transparency and accountability in their activities was mentioned<sup>50</sup>.

**The Ministry of Fisheries and Environment**<sup>51</sup> has integrated the objectives of conservation and sustainability of marine resources into its policies and programmes, developing a Fisheries Management Plan that is pending approval, which

seeks to involve all sectors and levels of government in an inclusive and active manner. Reports on the sustainability of marine resources have also been prepared. In this context, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) developed the Marine Fisheries Resources Assessment in Equatorial Guinea (2022) in the framework of the Technical Cooperation Programme requested by the Government. This assessment made it possible to increase knowledge of the country's fishery resources, the generation of abundance indices and distribution maps of demersal and pelagic marine resources of commercial interest, and the training of Ministry of Fisheries staff to create a biological-fisheries data collection systems<sup>52</sup>. Overall, to keep the conservation and sustainability of marine resources under inclusive and participatory review at national level, a continuous assessment is being carried out, with the support of International Organisations, such as FAO, and other Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), such as COREP and ICCAT.

Likewise, for the dissemination of the SDGs, several awareness campaigns have been carried out at all levels (education programmes at all levels, UNGE, posters, radio, TV programmes, etc.) whose main theme is environmental conservation, bushmeat consumption and awareness of environmental laws in the country. Such efforts contribute to the development of SDG 14 on Underwater Life.

The Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons, through its General Directorate of Mines and Quarries, has incorporated different actors and stakeholders, regularising the mining and quarrying sector, developing a legal framework, with the updating of the Mining Law N. 1/2019, dated 29 November, on Mines of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and the Mining Regulation N. 1/2020, dated 13 April, on Mining Operations of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. To this end, we work with the Ministry of Forestry and Environment on environmental issues, accompanied by the Ministry of the Interior and Local Corporations through Delegations in the different districts<sup>53</sup>.

**The National Institute for Forestry Development and Management of the National System of Protected Areas (INDEFOR)**, has integrated the SDGs into its strategies, policies, plans and programmes, creating a National System of 13 Protected Areas, which occupy 18.5% of the

48 Seminar-workshop VNR

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Information obtained from the ministries of Fisheries and Water Resources in the framework of the request for information for the VNR.

52 FAO "Evaluación de los Recursos Pesqueros Marinos".

53 Seminar-workshop VNR.

land area according to the law of 2000, thus contributing to SDG 15, on the life of Terrestrial Ecosystems. This law is in the process of being updated, in order to further integrate the SDG targets. Among other actions taken by the Institute, alternative projects are offered for the promotion of agriculture, livestock, health centres, among others, to avoid the incursion (entry) of the local population into these areas<sup>54</sup>.

**The Bioko Island Biodiversity Protection Programme (BBPP) (research and conservation)**<sup>55</sup> has carried out several awareness campaigns at all levels (education programmes at all levels, posters, radio and TV campaigns) with the main theme being environmental conservation, bushmeat consumption and awareness of environmental laws in the country. BBPP has implemented actions aligned with the goals and targets (SDG 12 on Responsible Consumption, SDG 14 on Underwater Life and SDG 15) through<sup>56</sup>:

1. Programmes in collaboration with INDEFOR-AP in the management of the Caldera de Luba Scientific Reserve (monitoring of marine turtles for 20 years; terrestrial monitoring of forests in collaboration with local communities).
2. Workshops on the legal management of protected areas in Equatorial Guinea, and above all the development of a validated management plan for the Luba Caldera Scientific Reserve (necessary for UNESCO World Heritage status).
3. Studies to better understand the biodiversity of Equatorial Guinea with the collaboration of the National University of Equatorial Guinea (UNGE) and international institutions.
4. Research and education programmes for UNGE students.
5. Employment programmes for local people, involving them in research and alternative livelihood programmes, such as ecotourism.
6. Studies on the dynamics of forest animal consumption in Equatorial Guinea.
7. The implementation of sustainable income

projects in the communities of Bioko Sur (chicken coops, fishing equipment, pig farms, bakeries, etc.).

From the environmental sustainability perspective, the Enterprises Consortium (**private sector**)<sup>57</sup>, has been involved in the implementation of the SDGs through the association of forestry companies ADEFNAGE, working with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Environment, to combat the effects of deforestation, indiscriminate logging of trees below recommended diameters and conservation of the forest ecosystem, to combat climate change<sup>58</sup> (**SDG 15**). The Consortium has also taken action to combat the indiscriminate felling of trees with non-recommended smaller diameters.

The **Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and the Environment**<sup>59</sup>, holds specific meetings on sustainable development for the ratification of instruments, agreements, protocols and conventions, which contribute to the development of SDG 15 on Terrestrial Ecosystem Life and SDG 13 on Climate Action. The Ministry has also organised awareness campaigns in neighbourhoods, district and provincial capitals on the importation of biological resources. Advertising and information spots have also been placed on television to raise awareness about biodiversity. Talks are organised in schools with the distribution of posters, leaflets and other materials related to biodiversity conservation.

Additionally, the laws of the Forestry and Environment sub-sector are being updated in order to insert the relevant aspects of today's issues, degradation of terrestrial ecosystems, as well as combating drought, as these were elaborated in the 1990s.

Regarding the main results of policy changes or new policies and plans in force, at the level of the sub-sector Forests and Environment<sup>60</sup>, the "Equatorial Guinea Agenda 2035" proposes the revision of laws in the forestry and environment sector, opening up to the international community through accession to climate agreements and treaties. As a result, greater integration, greater knowledge

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Seminar-workshop VNR

58 Ibid.

59 Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, VNR.

60 Seminar-workshop VNR



of the reality of the sector, and greater dissemination of the country's image are expected. The National Land Classification Commission was also created to improve the use and management of forests<sup>61</sup>. This Commission is currently being restructured to make it functional. Also, the Government has created the Directorate General of Environmental Conservation and Climate Change. Through it, the SDGs have been aligned with national policy frameworks with the Country Pilot Project, which seeks to address and solve problems arising from the effects of Climate Change.

The main challenges and difficulties identified during the Climate Change workshops are: the need to generate a change of mentality in the perception of Climate Change issues and the designation of the necessary economic, human and technological means to strengthen legal aspects and social awareness.

Through the SEE4ALL project, UNDP seeks the implementation of an approved framework for approved clean energy and established mechanisms for scaling up and replication of investment in on- and off-grid systems. As secondary outcomes, the project aims at the elaboration of the country's Electricity Law incorporating renewable energy, the manual of procedures for evaluating renewable energy project proposals, the renewable energy action plan, and the cost-benefit study on renewable energy.

In addition, the project aims at generating clean energy technology and business models in the main island and mainland regions. Secondary outputs include two water assessments conducted on the Belebu and Midjob Amvom rivers, the rehabilitation of the Bikom (Bata) water power plant, the raising of the Riaba and Musola II power plants and the construction of the Abog Nsu mini-power plant, currently underway.

Another objective of the project is the promotion of other clean energy technologies (solar and wind) and business models on islands and in remote areas. Derived results include multi-city assessments and the implementation of several mini-hydro power plants. Finally, the project resulted in a wide distribution of information and knowledge on sustainable energy solutions and the strengthening of technical capacity in clean energy, both individual and institutional. Adjacent to this was the production of an awareness-raising manual, the training of technical staff in the administration on renewable energies and the sensitisation of all social strata on renewable energies.

## 5. Civil Society's perspective on the integration of the SDGs

In the context of this report<sup>62</sup> a workshop has been held with NGOs in the country, with the aim of gathering information and exchanging on the status of implementation of the SDGs, the progress that has been made and the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the SDGs.

### Alignment with the SDGs

A first point to note is that not all NGOs had knowledge about the 2030 Agenda. Some reported that they gained knowledge about the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals through UNDP awareness-raising workshops. However, throughout the workshop it was found that Civil Society activities are generally aligned with the SDGs, as they work on issues such as:

1. Health
2. Environment
3. Decent work and economic growth
4. Sustainable Cities and Communities
5. Responsible Consumption and Production
6. Quality Education
7. Biodiversity conservation
8. Social inclusion and equity

Civil society has collaborated with the Government in activities related to these issues and therefore with the 2030 Agenda, mainly on issues such as the protection of children and adolescents, protection and conservation of the environment and mass HIV testing. Collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality was highlighted.

### Needs for better implementation of the SDGs

Civil society points to the following needs for better implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals:

1. Increase political, social and economic transparency in the country.
2. Increase access to information, without which the ability to identify vulnerable people and the capacity of NGOs to develop their action plans is limited.
3. Conduct campaigns to raise awareness of the

61 Information obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Environment, for the VNR.

62 Information obtained through the workshop seminar for NGOs in the framework of the VNR.

importance of education, with a parent-to-child approach.

4. Campaigns to fight taboos and myths present in the culture that hinder the country's development, around HIV as one example.
5. Making the necessary changes to address the economic downturn, which prevents the development of comprehensive policies in education, health and agriculture.
6. Greater engagement with the government for the development of the civil society sector, through the creation of new bodies, increased political will and the generation of more CSOs.
7. Support to increase funding, in several cases the main source of income comes from NGO members' contributions, although some NGOs rely on contributions from government, the UN, international organisations and the private sector.
8. Improve the relations and perception of NGOs with the government and the population, which requires greater transparency in the use of resources by some members of civil society.

## E. LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

In recent years, Equatorial Guinea's economic growth has led to significant progress in development, especially in terms of basic infrastructure. However, this progress did not translate into an increase in the well-being of the population in general, particularly after the oil crisis, the population has been confronted with more challenges, which were intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic and the 7M explosions. This section presents a summary of the main consequences of the pandemic and the explosions, as well as the population groups most at risk of being left behind.

### 1. Agenda 2030 vis-à-vis COVID 19 in Equatorial Guinea<sup>63</sup>

The health crisis caused by COVID-19 quickly turned into a socio-economic crisis, with strong implications for the country. The government has conducted studies to understand the impact of COVID-19 in order to develop plans to mitigate the crisis.

The pandemic affected the country's economic situation through two main channels, the fall in oil prices and the disruption of the country's economic activity. The fall in oil prices negatively affected exports and related government revenues. Domestic economic activity was affected by the health measures imposed to mitigate the massive contagion of the population. These implied the closure of many business establishments, which had a negative impact on the country's economy.

As a result, the country's real GDP growth for 2020 was reduced to -6.0%, down from -1.9% projected for that year in December 2019, according to the IMF's October 2020 World Economic Outlook (WEO). GDP growth in the hydrocarbon sector slowed to -7.2% (from -5.0% previously) and non-hydrocarbon also slowed to -4.7% from 1.7% previously.

The country's external balance was susceptible to external trade restrictions. In particular, more than 50% of exports and about 65% of imports in 2019 were with Europe and China. As a result, the country's current account and net external assets at the Bank of Central African States (BEAC) were expected to weaken.

The fall in oil prices had a negative impact on state revenues, while there was an increase in public spending as a result of the response plan to mitigate the health crisis. The IMF's October 2020 WEO projected the overall fiscal balance at -4% of GDP, compared to a projected surplus of 1% before the crisis. All affected sectors generated about 56% of 2019 GDP and 30% of 2015 employment. In addition, the health security measures may have particularly affected women, who are more active in the informal economy and in small businesses.

COVID-19 has been a huge challenge for the government. The health contingency plan has involved an increase in financial resources for the health sector for the refurbishment and equipping of fixed and temporary health facilities, testing points, training of staff, health communication, etc. The pandemic response plan was structured around the pillars promoted in the UN COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Framework. Its main outputs and funding requirements are detailed below.

<sup>63</sup> The information presented in the Agenda 2030 section against COVID 19 in Equatorial Guinea was obtained from the Report: República de Guinea Ecuatorial, "Plan Nacional de respuesta y recuperación socioeconómica frente a la Covid-19 en Guinea Ecuatorial", (2021).



**Table 1.** Expected Outputs of the National Response and Recovery Plan for COVID-19

Pillars	Expected results (outputs)
Health first	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Essential health services maintained and strengthened during the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>2. COVID-19 surveillance and response system strengthened during the pandemic.</li> <li>3. Contributed to strengthening the resilience of the health system.</li> <li>4. Information management for evidence generation and policy formulation strengthened.</li> </ol>
Protection of persons: social protection and basic services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved conditions of hygiene, sanitation and availability of drinking water for the population nationwide.</li> <li>2. Policy framework in place to restore learning and well-being of all students.</li> <li>3. Strategies and programmes developed to strengthen food and nutrition security at the community level.</li> <li>4. Supported the process of developing a policy framework and social protection mechanisms articulated and focused on the most vulnerable population.</li> <li>5. Information management for evidence generation and policy formulation strengthened.</li> </ol>
Employment protection and economic recovery	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved coherence and monitoring of policies to support the labour market.</li> <li>2. Strengthened capacities of youth, women and local partners for entrepreneurship and social innovation.</li> <li>3. Supported the transition towards a diversified economy of production, sustainable consumption and digitalisation.</li> </ol>
Macroeconomic response and multilateral cooperation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mechanisms have been implemented to strengthen public financial management and transparency;</li> <li>2. Policy frameworks and mechanisms to accelerate economic diversification have been strengthened;</li> <li>3. Mechanisms have been put in place to stabilise the financial sector;</li> <li>4. Mechanisms have been implemented to strengthen the management of multilateral cooperation;</li> <li>5. Improved capacities for information management for policy formulation strengthened; Strengthened policy frameworks and mechanisms to accelerate economic diversification; Mechanisms in place to stabilise the financial sector; Mechanisms in place to strengthen multilateral cooperation management</li> </ol>
Social cohesion and community resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Capacities of at-risk populations and groups and community organisations are strengthened, favouring social cohesion and the resilience of communities;</li> <li>2. Existence of spaces for social dialogue, advocacy and political participation facilitated with the participation of populations and groups at risk;</li> <li>3. Strengthened institutional capacities for ICT management and adoption of a national disaster preparedness and response mechanism.</li> </ol>

**Source:** República de Guinea Ecuatorial, Plan Nacional de Respuesta ante el Covid-19 (2021)

The funding requirements for this plan are presented below:

**Table 2.** Funding requirements for the National Response and Recovery Plan for COVID-19

Pillars	Planned	Available	To mobilise
Health first	119.332.131	893.109	118.439.022
Protection of persons	17.829.580	5.742.671	12.086.909
Employment protection and economic recovery	4.388.000	1.903.000	2.485.000
Macroeconomic response and multilateral cooperation	29.016.983	103.000	28.913.983
Social cohesion and community resilience	2.162.439	563.000	1.599.439
TOTAL GLOBAL USD	172.729.133	9.204.780	163.524.353
TOTAL GLOBAL XAF	95.019.196.471	5.019.366.534	89.169.829.898

**Source:** República de Guinea Ecuatorial, Plan Nacional de Respuesta ante el Covid-19 (2021)

## 2. The 7 March explosions

In addition to the health and economic crisis in the wake of COVID-19, Equatorial Guinea sustained an additional shock in form of the 7 March 2021 (7M) explosions at a Gendarmerie armoury in Nkoantoma and at the Bata Special Forces barracks. Bata is the economic capital and most populous city in the country, and these blasts have seen the destruction of a number of buildings and neighbourhoods, including a newly built hospital and Bata's only existing COVID-19 testing laboratory. Damage includes the death of some 107 people and some 700 injured, with 37 permanently disabled<sup>64</sup>.

Initial assessments by the National Red Cross indicated that at least 3,900 people were directly affected by this event, with significant damage to water and sanitation infrastructure, schools, food supply and livelihoods. The Multisectoral Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) revealed that the physical damage from these explosions may have directly affected around 19,000 people. Of these, 4,500 people were displaced, and 8,000 people were in need<sup>65</sup>.

According to the Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT), an estimated 727 buildings were

damaged within an initial radius of 700 m, of which 147 were totally destroyed. According to the Household and Building Damage Assessment (HBDA)<sup>66</sup> following the explosions in the city of Bata conducted by UNDP, most of the buildings received a medium impact, but 33% were severely damaged or destroyed. In addition, the explosions generated a total amount of 142,262 m<sup>3</sup> of debris in the 1,900 buildings assessed.

Approximately 60% of the people living in the affected area are under 18 years of age and some 238 pregnant or breastfeeding women were identified. 80% of households reported a decrease in income, and in 60% of households whose income depends on a single person, that person became unemployed. This loss of employment, which affected women more than men, is related to the losses suffered by businesses in the area. The damage assessment (HBDA) shows that 91% of the commercial buildings assessed were affected, and 53% were completely out of operation<sup>67</sup>.

Government action, coupled with humanitarian aid and international collaboration, has enabled affected people to meet their basic needs. These explosions have been an

64 Cruz Roja, "Operation Update Report, Equatorial Guinea: explosions in Bata", (2021), <https://adore.ifrc.org/Download.aspx?FileId=429313>.

65 Ibid.

66 PNUD, "Informe de Evaluación de los daños en los hogares y edificios (HBDA) 'Household and Building Damage Assessment'", (2021), [https://www.gq.undp.org/content/equatorial\\_guinea/es/home/library/hbda-report-2021-7m.html](https://www.gq.undp.org/content/equatorial_guinea/es/home/library/hbda-report-2021-7m.html).

67 PNUD, HBDA.

obstacle to the goal of leaving no one behind, requiring a comprehensive and effective response to this emergency. The first phase prioritised responses under the criteria of saving lives and protecting the most vulnerable people. This meant that more than 615 affected people received medical treatment and food and shelter support was provided to affected families, including the allocation of government financial assistance. This was followed by recovery and reconstruction activities to restore public infrastructure, rehabilitate private accommodation and establish a long-term economic recovery plan. In particular, 24 public and public schools damaged by the explosions were rehabilitated<sup>68</sup>.

With the support of international experts, the Government of Equatorial Guinea conducted demining and clearance of unexploded ordnance from the affected areas. The reconstruction of the military base and the design of an improved ammunition storage infrastructure for military bases throughout the country, preferably through underground constructions, are also planned to ensure public safety and prevent future accidents. The report on the 7M Response and Recovery Plan, prepared by the Office of Resident Coordination (OCR) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), presents the funding requirements for this recovery<sup>69</sup>.

**Table 3.** Funding Requirements for the National 7M Response and Recovery Plan

Sector	Requested amount (USD)
7M plan	175.000
Water, sanitation and hygiene	1.300.000
Education	5.310.000
Food security and livelihoods	1.517.800
Accommodation	710.000
Protection	150.000
Nutrition	1.453.465
Health	10.616.265

Source: OCR, OCHA

### 3. Vulnerable population groups<sup>70</sup>

In order to meet the objective of leaving no one behind, it is necessary to identify vulnerable groups in order to understand their economic and social situation. The following is a presentation of vulnerable population groups that have been identified in the country, particularly in view of the consequences of the pandemic. It is worth noting that attendees at the NGO civil society workshop were asked about the least favoured social strata of the population, and they stated that the most vulnerable population groups are the same as those described in this section.

#### Women

One of the most vulnerable population groups in Equatorial Guinea are women. In particular, women were most affected by the pandemic. They suffered from limited mobility, loss of employment and other circumstances that resulted in women and girls being exposed to violence. The EDSGE-1 (2011) indicated high levels of prevalence of gender-based violence, with 63% of women having experienced physical violence since the age of 15, mostly by their intimate partner, as well as by parents and guardians. In general, 32% of the women reported having suffered sexual violence at some point in their lives.

One possible cause for this is women's economic dependence, as there is a significant inequality in employment between men and women. According to the EDSGE-1 (2011), only 46% of the women surveyed had worked in the last 12 months, compared to 92% of men, which has resulted in consequences in terms of women's autonomy. With the arrival of the health crisis by COVID-19, this gap increased because the activities with the highest presence of women were the most affected, such as hospitality, tourism and commerce, increasing women's vulnerability.

#### Children and adolescents

Children and adolescents are another of the most vulnerable population groups. The PRODEGE statistical yearbook 2017-2018<sup>71</sup> points out that of students who start primary education, only 32% progress to sixth grade

68 Explosiones de Municiones en Bata, Informe Síntesis del Plan de Respuesta y Recuperación del Gobierno de La República De Guinea Ecuatorial.

69 OCHA y ORC Guinea Ecuatorial, "Guinea Ecuatorial: Explosiones de municiones en Bata Plan de Respuesta y Recuperación", (2021), [https://reliefweb.int/attachments/fa04ef98-e264-3cdf-807e-edef9f3b2408/202104-ERP-Bata\\_Explosions-SPA.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/attachments/fa04ef98-e264-3cdf-807e-edef9f3b2408/202104-ERP-Bata_Explosions-SPA.pdf).

70 Unless otherwise indicated, the information presented in the section on population in vulnerable situations was obtained from: República de Guinea Ecuatorial, Plan Nacional de Respuesta, COVID-19 en Guinea Ecuatorial.

71 Ministerio de Educación, Enseñanza Universitaria y Deportes, "Anuario Estadístico de la Educación Infantil y Preescolar, Primaria, Secundaria y Formación Técnica Profesional (2018-2019)", (2019), <http://www.prodegeguineaecuatorial.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Anuario-2018-2019.pdf>.

without dropping out or repeating a grade, and only 9% reach the end of secondary education. Although there are no significant differences in enrolment between boys and girls, the risk of dropout is higher for girls in secondary education. Girls, who represent between 49.1% and 50.7% of students in lower secondary education (ESBA), come to represent 48.3% of students in the first year of baccalaureate and 46.3% in the second year of baccalaureate.

On the other hand, according to the Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (IGME) estimates, infant mortality (< 5 years) stood at 78.5 per 1,000 live births in 2020, while the average for Sub-Saharan Africa was 53 per 1,000 live births. Vaccination coverage improved from 61% in 2019 to 64% in 2020, however, this year's vaccination coverage data still shows that more than half of the districts (12/18), have not reached at least 80% coverage for routine vaccination. These figures could have worsened in a context of restricted movement to carry out vaccination campaigns, and with the health sector's human, material and financial resources focused on the fight against the pandemic. However, the Ministry of Health, with the support of UNICEF and WHO, has developed effective strategies for the recovery of unvaccinated children during the period of the COVID-19 crisis.

While children are the group least at risk of serious complications from COVID-19, they are vulnerable to the effects of such a crisis, for example, because of the fear and anxiety they may experience due to parental or caregiver stress, or fear of not being able to meet their needs. These changes pose risks to their well-being and development. Although data are not available for the period of the pandemic, it can be deduced that the pandemic had a negative impact on school attendance, not only because of social isolation measures and school closures, but also because of the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on their families (as was the case in most developing countries). Based on previous data it can be seen that about 220,000 schoolchildren were able to miss school with the closure of schools (PRODEGE, 2018), especially children from poorer families and those with special education needs. Not going to school increases their exposure to violence, abuse and labour exploitation, prompting them to drop out of school.

With the closure of borders, given the high food dependency on the outside world, access to healthy food becomes more difficult, affecting the nutrition, immunological capacity and physical and mental development, present and future, of children and adolescents.

## People in rural areas

People living in rural areas are generally older and therefore belong to the population group most at risk of mortality from COVID-19 infection. In addition to age, local governments are less equipped with the material and financial means to implement crisis prevention and response measures.

With travel restrictions, rural areas are at risk of shortages, as they are heavily dependent on imported goods arriving in the two big cities, Malabo and Bata. Access to health services and specialised health personnel, generally concentrated in the country's two large cities, are also affected. Access is also limited to basic services such as drinking water, sanitation, electricity, internet and technological tools. Around 50% of households in Equatorial Guinea depend on insecure water sources, a phenomenon that is more prevalent in rural areas, where access to improved water sources decreased from 41% to 31%.

## Senior citizens

Another highly vulnerable population group is the elderly. The demographic characteristics of the country reveal an older adult population of only 2.58% (MEPIP, 2015). The Study on the Situation of the Elderly in Equatorial Guinea (2012) found that only 5.5% of households with elderly people received any financial support through social assistance, of which 56.7% received less than 50,000 XAF (just over USD 90) per month. The same study found that of those over 55, 34.8% were in employment and it was estimated that the other 65.2%, in addition to not having employment, were living in poverty. With regard to monthly household income, approximately 82.8% of households lived on less than 50,000 XAF and only 4.1% of the elderly population was retired or pensioned. The study states that most of the tested population is living below the poverty line with 348 XAF (about 0.65 USD) per day and that most of the country's elderly are in extreme poverty. With the onset of COVID-19, there is an increased risk that this population group will lose access to other essential health services, due to the potential overcrowding of hospitals and other health care facilities.

## Informal sector workers

Recently, another highly vulnerable group has been identified; informal workers. The lower economic output caused by the COVID-19 crisis and the compulsory confinements in particular, put the livelihoods of informal workers at risk. This means that in many cases, they lose

their only means of income generation, and since they have no savings, they are vulnerable to falling into extreme poverty because they regularly work on the streets or in crowded public spaces.

Although there is no official quantification of this group of people in Equatorial Guinea, the ILO estimates that in 2018, 77% of jobs in the country were in the informal sector. This high figure of informal employment highlights the vulnerability of the economy itself. Informal workers live on the income they earn on a day-to-day basis, generally in poor conditions and without access to social protection. As a result, they have a very high exposure to diseases and are extremely vulnerable to measures such as compulsory lockdowns and closure of public places.

## G. STRUCTURAL ISSUES

The Government of Equatorial Guinea has undertaken important efforts to advance the 2030 agenda. However, it faces significant structural challenges that have prevented the desired implementation of the Agenda. These challenges can be classified into: 1) the country's productive apparatus to invest in development, 2) the capacity of the institutional framework to implement the plans, and 3) the human development of the population achieved thus far.

### 1. The country's productive apparatus: diversifying the economy to ensure the country's sustainable developments

The country's first challenge in implementing the 2030 Agenda is its dependence on hydrocarbons. Despite development in recent decades, the planning, financing and execution of development plans, including progress on the SDGs, are still subject to fluctuations in their prices. Oil revenues allowed the country to undergo a transformational change in its basic infrastructure for economic and social development. The assessment of the country's progress in the PNDES H2020, "The Road Ahead"<sup>72</sup> showed significant advances such as:

1. The increase in access to electricity, which in 2007 was 43% of the population and rose to 67.9% in 2017.

2. The increase in the number of asphalted roads: from 600 to 2,530 km between 2006 and 2017. Added to the number of gravelled roads, the country had 3,971 km of roads in 2017.
3. The growth in the number of mobile phone subscribers from 200,000 in 2007 to almost 735,000 in 2017.
4. The considerable expansion of internet access, from 2% to 24% of the population between 2007 and 2017.

Economic growth also led to the country's graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) to Middle Income Country (MIC), showing the significant potential of hydrocarbon-linked growth. In 2013, Equatorial Guinea's graduation was approved at the UN General Assembly, as the country's GNI per capita considerably exceeded the graduation threshold (USD 1,190). For example, in 2009, with a per capita income of more than USD 7,500, the country exceeded the threshold more than four times over<sup>73</sup>. It is noteworthy that Equatorial Guinea was the first country to graduate under the per capita income criterion, since, as a general rule, countries graduate when they exceed the exit thresholds in at least two of the three criteria analysed, namely GNI per capita, the Human Capital Index and the Economic Vulnerability Index.

However, the oil price shock of 2014 pushed the country into an economic recession that significantly reduced the state's capacity to finance the PNDES. Real GDP growth contracted from 2014 onwards. In 2015 it reached a low of -9.1%, in 2017 it peaked at -5.7% and in 2020 it reached -5.8%<sup>74</sup>. The country's revenues were strongly affected, as hydrocarbons constituted around 80% of state revenues (2015: 84%, 2016: 76% and 2017: 80%) and 85% of exports (2017)<sup>75</sup>.

As previously mentioned, the economic and financial crisis linked to oil led the country to revisit its development plan "Horizon 2020" and delay the implementation of its programmes. For this reason, the 2030 Agenda was incorporated in the country in 2019, during the Third National Economic Conference, for which the National Strategy for Sustainable Development was developed, aligned with the SDGs.

72 Agencia Nacional Guinea Ecuatorial 2020, "Camino Recorrido en la Implementación de la Agenda de Desarrollo Sostenible Guinea Ecuatorial Horizonte 2020 (2008-2017)", (2017), <https://minhacienda-gob.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/1.5-Camino-Recorrido-V0-A.pdf>

73 Ministerio de Economía, Planeación e Inversiones Públicas, "Informe sobre la reclasificación de Guinea Ecuatorial como País de Renta Media por la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas", (2015), <https://minhacienda-gob.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Informe-ENTG-Ok.pdf>.

74 INEGE, "Portal de datos resumidos: Producto Interno Bruto", (2020), <https://eguinea.opendataforafrica.org/kgjqqjng/producto-interno-bruto>.

75 Agencia Nacional Guinea Ecuatorial 2020, Camino Recorrido.



**Despite progress in economic diversification, the country's dependence on hydrocarbons is still significant and limits its development. Between 2007 and 2017, non-oil GDP increased from 26% to 42% of real GDP<sup>76</sup>.** However, as discussed above, state revenues and exports still depend on the oil sector. The primary sector outside hydrocarbons accounted for 2.3% of nominal GDP on average between 2016 and 2018, with agriculture accounting for around 1.6% between these dates. Petroleum product refining has the largest weight in the secondary sector, rising from 14.25% to 21.32% of nominal GDP between 2016 and 2018. It is followed by construction, although its importance has declined from 6.97% to 4.51% in the same period. The agri-food industry has remained at around 3.2% over the same time period. The tertiary sector includes sectors with an important weight in nominal GDP, such as commerce (2016: 8%, 2018: 6.4%), and transport and communications (2016: 7.6%, 2018: 6.57%)<sup>77</sup>. In this sense, these sectors need to grow significantly in order to diversify their economies. Finally, COVID-19, which was accompanied by a further drop in oil prices, restrictions on mobility and transport of goods and people, coupled with the 7M explosions, increased pressure on state revenues and further limited the state's ability to move forward with the development plan.

Due to the macroeconomic situation and the crises the country has faced in recent years, the NSDS 2035 has not yet been implemented. The situation has created challenges that impede the implementation and financing of the plan and, subsequently, progress towards the 2030 agenda has been delayed. Given the current context, the country needs to reorient its public investment towards productive sectors outside hydrocarbons and increase its revenue sources from those sectors as well. Diversification of the economy is increasingly imperative in order to increase production in other sectors and meet the country's development agendas.

## **2. The institutional framework: continuing to improve implementation capacity, transparency, statistical capacity and the business climate**

The second challenge corresponds to improving institutional capacities for the proper implementation of the country's development agenda, as well as that of the SDGs and the African Agenda 2063. In the NSDP GE2020, the country committed to the implementation of quality

governance to the citizens, to ensure the implementation of its plan with strong and transparent institutions. In turn, it has recognized the importance of increasing the country's statistical capacity to better track the progress and impact of the country's actions. The country is also committed to implementing improvements in its business climate, to encourage private sector growth and foster economic diversification, to make progress on human rights, and to improve its subregional, regional and international cooperation framework.

One of the main improvements in terms of the country's governance corresponds to the constitutional reform of 2011, which aimed to promote the participation and representation of citizens in the newly constituted bodies. This culminated in the creation of the Senate, the Court of Auditors, the Ombudsman and the Economic and Social Council, and the presentation, discussion and annual publication of the General State Budget before Parliament, in order to strengthen transparency. Legal instruments to fight corruption were strengthened with the Anti-Corruption Magistracy and Prosecutor's Office and the National Financial Investigation Agency (ANIF).

Progress has been made in the modernization and training of the public administration. In this regard, at the end of 2017, "more than 90% of the Ministries and at least 40% of the Autonomous Entities had new or modernised headquarters<sup>78</sup>. The training of civil servants in the Government also improved. The number of civil servants with A level (bachelor's, master's, doctorate) increased from 7% to 17% between 2007 and 2017. B-level civil servants (university graduates, technical engineers, higher level vocational training, among others), went from 29.9% to 40% and C-level civil servants (Administrative Assistants and equivalents), from 63.1% to 43% in the same period. Likewise, at least 2,033 employees received training to improve their skills in the use of modern tools such as computers, photocopying machines, scanners, among others. In 2017, 50% of the ministries were computerised with internet access and 6 ministries had a website.

Likewise, actions have been taken to improve the country's business climate and attract foreign investment. However, efforts are still needed to improve the country's attractiveness. The Ventanilla Única Empresarial (VUE) was created to accelerate the processes of business creation in the country. In 2016, a ministerial order was issued by

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> INEGE, "Anuario Estadístico de Guinea Ecuatorial 2021", (2021), <https://inege.gq/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Anuario-Estadistico-de-Guinea-Ecuatorial-2021.pdf>.

<sup>78</sup> Agencia Nacional Guinea Ecuatorial 2020, Camino Recorrido.

the Prime Minister to reduce the business registration process from 15 procedures to 4 steps. Similarly, the company registration process was expected to go from taking 120 days to 10 days and reduce the cost of setting up a company by 45%. In turn, the presidential decree (29/2022), appointed for the first time members of the Court of Auditors. The implementation of such a Court will allow improvements in the fiscal management of individuals or entities that handle funds or assets of the nation, which is also expected to improve the country's attractiveness for foreign investments. However, in 2019 the country ranked 178th in the Doing Business indicator<sup>79</sup> and although the indicator was discontinued, the country still needs to make additional efforts to improve its business climate and increase foreign direct investment to foster economic diversification.

However, there are still opportunities for improvement in the institutional framework to accelerate the implementation of the country's commitments. As mentioned above, the NSDS 2035 has not yet been implemented. Consultants are currently working on the five-year plan (2020-2025) to operationalize and define the financing needs of the plan. However, this stage is 2 years behind schedule, among other reasons due to the complications caused by COVID-19. In this sense, actions are required to accelerate the fulfilment of the plan and that they can help to face additional shocks, as demonstrated by the 7M explosions, which had a significant impact on the population and once again affected the financial situation of the State. In addition, the country needs to accelerate the implementation of other laws that seek to improve the prosperity of its population, such as the social protection law that is still in draft form.

In turn, more efforts are needed to overcome the lack of data, which hinders the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda, the formulation of evidence-based policies and strategies, limits the effective prioritisation of spending, and impedes the identification of progress to date. In 2020, the country's World Bank statistical capacity indicator was 36.6, which

places it, along with the Central African Republic, as the third lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>80</sup>. As mentioned above in the Institutional Mechanisms section, Equatorial Guinea has been working to strengthen the country's statistical capacity. In particular, of note is Law 3/2020 of October 16, which redefines the institutional framework for the production of official statistics and facilitates coordination between the National Institute of Statistics of Equatorial Guinea (INEGE) and ministerial departments. However, improvements are needed in the data collection capacity of the ministries, and the updating of some statistical operations that would help monitor the country's progress. Finally, despite the country's progress in its Unified Social Registry (RUS), which seeks to create a centralised database that allows for the classification of its vulnerability, it has not yet been completed and represents an essential instrument for targeting social investment.

### **3. Human development: the need to strengthen human capital, the quality of life of citizens through poverty eradication, social inclusion and sustainable peace**

The socioeconomic development framework is where the country presents one of its greatest challenges. Despite the lack of data, available information suggests that a large proportion of the population remains vulnerable. In this sense, the country's economic growth has not yet translated into prosperity for the majority of its population.

Despite the lack of poverty data, the proportion of people in extreme poverty may still be considerable. The last monetary poverty measurement conducted in the country was in 2006<sup>81</sup>, which found 76.8% of the population to be in extreme poverty (excluding Annobon). Since then, there have been no measurements to compare the country's progress in terms of monetary poverty<sup>82</sup>. In 2011, the Demographic and Health Survey found that 43.7% of the population fell below the third wealth quintile<sup>83</sup>. In the report on the country's progress in meeting the MDGs<sup>84</sup>

79 World Bank, "Ease of Doing Business: Equatorial Guinea", (2019), <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IC.BUS.EASE.XQ?locations=GQ>

80 World Bank, "Statistical Capacity Score (Overall Average) (Scale 0-100): Equatorial Guinea", (2020), <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IQ.SCI.OVRL?contextual=region&end=2020&locations=GQ&start=2020&view=bar>.

81 AFRISTAT, DGSCN (2007). "Profil de la Pauvreté en Guinée Equatoriale en 2006". file:///Users/AndresLozano/Downloads/GNQ\_EEH2006%20Rapport%20d'analyse.pdf

82 The 2011 Demographic and Health Survey has an index of economic well-being, based on the possession of some household consumption goods and housing characteristics. This measure found that 47.7% of the population fell below the third wealth quintile. However, this measure is not directly comparable to monetary poverty, as it is based on the possession of assets and not on household consumption. Therefore, there is no measure to understand the evolution of monetary poverty in the country. Republic of Equatorial Guinea (2012). "Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud (EDSGE-I) 2011". <https://EDSGE-1program.com/pubs/pdf/FR271/FR271.pdf>

83 República de Guinea Ecuatorial, "Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud (EDSGE-I) 2011", (2012), <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR271/FR271.pdf>.

84 INEGE, "Anuario Estadístico de Guinea Ecuatorial 2021", (2021), <https://inege.gq/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Anuario-Estadistico-de-Guinea-Ecuatorial-2021.pdf>



an equivalence is made between the population below the third wealth quintile and the population below the poverty line. From there, it is determined that poverty decreased from 76.8% to 47.7% between 2006 and 2011 and is projected to decrease to 17.38% in 2015. However, sharp declines in GDP and state income since the end of 2014 suggest that this ratio may remain significant.

Access to education has also progressed, although the quality of education may have significant shortcomings. Equatorial Guinea's 2021 statistical yearbook<sup>85</sup> showed that between the period of 2015-16 and 2018-19 the number of pupils in primary education increased by 4.6%, from 112,812 to 118,004. During the same period, in secondary school there was an increase of 28.4%, from 41,761 to 53,651. However, despite the fact that the number of people sitting for the selectivity tests, which allow for university entrance, has significantly increased, (from 4,230 in 2012 to 9,407 in 2020) this has not been correlated with an increase in admissions. The proportion of failures also increased considerably, from 56.6% in 2012 to 73.8% in 2020.

To improve the quality of education the country also needs to improve teacher training. While secondary education preparation is better, primary, early childhood and preschool education experience greater disparities. The 2018-2019 Statistical Yearbook<sup>86</sup>, showed that the highest percentage of teachers without the minimum academic qualification are working in early childhood and preschool education. In secondary education, of the 3,215 teachers in the 2018-2019 school year, 2.3% have no baccalaureate or Basic Secondary Education (ESBA), 5.2% completed baccalaureate and 91.6% have a degree higher than baccalaureate. For the same year, of the 5,222 elementary school teachers surveyed, 28.8% had not completed the baccalaureate or did not have an ESBA. 19% completed high school and 51% had a degree higher than high school. 9.3% were characterised as Diploma Teachers. Of the 2,904 teachers in early childhood and preschool schools, 71.5% did not complete high school or do not have an ESBA, 11.5% completed high school and only 15.1% had education beyond high school.

In terms of employment, the country needs to better train the population so that it can meet the professional demand in more productive sectors, required to foster economic

diversification, raise its employment levels and support the country's growth. The last employment measurement dates back to 2015<sup>87</sup>, where it was found that for an active population rate of 60.2%, the employment rate reached 50.6%, 9.6% of the active population was unemployed and 39.8% was inactive. It is necessary to increase the educational level of the population to increase their chances of finding employment in more productive sectors. In 2015, the majority of the working population had secondary education training (45.9%), while vocational training accounted for 8.3% and university education for 6.9%. Of the employed population, almost 60% are in low-income occupations. These include occupations in elementary professions (21.7%), farmers (20.8%) or service workers and salespeople (17%).

In terms of public health, more effort is required in the fight against infectious diseases. According to the 2021 Statistical Yearbook, in 2020, malaria was the leading cause of death in the country, representing 31% of the total causes of morbidity. In addition, Equatorial Guinea has one of the highest incidences of tuberculosis in the West African area, reaching 280 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in 2020. According to information from the Ministry of Health, this increase is due to the high rate of HIV prevalence, which is associated with the threat of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in the country.

In this area, the Government, through the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, has equipped health infrastructure to increase the population's access to health services. These health centres have been equipped with state-of-the-art devices that guarantee high diagnostic coverage for tuberculosis, such is the case of:

1. Genexpert and TB-LAM.
2. Training of health personnel in the proper diagnosis and treatment of TB cases.
3. Free tuberculosis services (diagnosis and treatment), etc.
4. All these efforts have allowed people affected by tuberculosis, including their families, to have better access to health centres and to be better cared for by health personnel. In turn, this has improved the notification system of new cases in each health centre, which influences the increase in incidence.

85 INEGE, "Anuario Estadístico de Guinea Ecuatorial 2021", (2021), <https://inege.gq/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Anuario-Estadistico-de-Guinea-Ecuatorial-2021.pdf>

86 Ministerio de Educación, Enseñanza Universitaria y Deportes, Anuario Estadístico de Educación 2018-2019.

87 INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

In terms of gender equality, the country has reached balance in some important sectors, although the participation of women in public positions is low. In the three branches of the State, women represented 16.6% in 2020 and in the mayor's offices they represented 27%. In primary and secondary schools, parity during 2018-19 was close to 50%, favouring men in primary education (51.1%) and women in secondary education (50.2%).

Overall, the challenges compiled here indicate that the country needs to:

1. Accelerate economic diversification, redirecting public spending towards productive sectors outside hydrocarbons, with support from foreign investment.
2. Continue improving its institutional framework and implementing its development plan more rapidly.
3. Improve its statistical capacity.
4. Implement planned reforms and implement additional policies to improve its business climate.
5. Promote the development of human capital, training it to adapt its labour supply to the demand related to economic diversification.
6. Join efforts in the fight against communicable diseases, malaria and HIV.
7. Ensure gender equality, particularly in terms of women's participation in public office.

## **D. INTEGRATION OF THE THREE DIMENSIONS**

The country's structural issues have an impact on the challenges Equatorial Guinea faces in integrating economic, social and environmental dimensions into its development. These include the need to diversify the economy and improvements at the institutional level to promote the sustainable development of non-hydrocarbon economic sectors. As development in these sectors progresses, the country has taken steps at the level of legislation, programs, cooperation and the ratification of agreements for sustainable development to promote better integration of the three dimensions.

The country is aware of the need to diversify its economy away from hydrocarbons to ensure sustainable economic, social and environmental development. In this sense, diversification has been a central theme in both its PNDES

GE H2020 and the NSDS 2035. However, hydrocarbons are currently the State's main source of income, and although they are not a source of employment for the majority of the population, revenues from this sector contribute significantly to the State's ability to finance social and environmental programmes. Several of the country's efforts are focused on stabilising the macroeconomic framework affected by the oil crisis, in order to make the necessary investments in the country's other productive sectors.

Economic diversification involves the development of productive sectors in the country such as agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, logging and tourism. The development of these sectors is expected to have positive effects on both the economic and social level, for example, through the generation of employment, improvements in food security and the increase of resources at the national level; which would lead to an improvement in the quality of life of citizens.

However, these sectors have not yet reached the level required to advance the diversification agenda. As mentioned above, these sectors represent a low percentage of the country's GDP. According to the interviews conducted for this report, agriculture is still mainly subsistence and barely covers basic needs. Fishing is mostly artisanal and fishermen acquire fishing materials from neighbouring countries. Recreational tourism has yet to develop, in part because of difficulties in obtaining visas, which prevents potential foreigners from entering Equatorial Guinea.

To promote the growth of these sectors, in addition to improving the environment for their development, it is necessary to develop value chains in the country and improve domestic and international market conditions. In order for the development of these sectors to provide benefits to the country, it is necessary to improve the supply of products through their transformation at the national level. However, there are still areas for improvement in this area. According to the interviews conducted, the country needs to increase foreign investment in these sectors. Likewise, there is a need to improve the processing of products. For example, timber processing within the country still does not reach the 60% promoted by the 2005 law on forest use and management. Likewise, the country's internal and external market conditions need to be improved to increase demand in these sectors. Household consumption for these products is limited by the poverty rate, which has increased due to inflation that has taken

hold since the pandemic (with a 4.8% increase between 2019 and 2020)<sup>88</sup>. Moreover, taking into account the size of the population, (estimated at 1,454,789 by INEGE for 2020<sup>89</sup>), the country must integrate with international markets in order to complement the demand for eventual domestic production.

These goals cannot be achieved without improvements at the institutional level, which include increasing inter-sectoral coordination, improving the business climate and data availability. Interviews for this report show that better coordination between sectors is needed. In this area, conflicts and attributions between bodies stand out. Regarding the business climate, the country needs to continue working on the aspects of transparency mentioned above. The need to create incentives for the creation of new businesses in these sectors is also highlighted. Finally, an increase in the availability of information is required to plan, monitor and evaluate the economic, environmental and social environment of the country's development.

Additionally, growth in these sectors creates environmental and biodiversity challenges for the country if they are not done responsibly. Agriculture and logging require strong laws, policies and programmes to prevent the deterioration of soils, forests, flora and fauna. The development of the fishing industry requires mitigating the negative effects on the ecosystem and marine life. For its part, tourism can have consequences on marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Meanwhile, the country takes into account social and environmental considerations through legislation, which seeks to ensure that the use of these resources for economic growth is done within a framework that considers the environment and promotes social development. For example, the 2017 fisheries law<sup>90</sup>, maintains that fishing and aquaculture exploitation must occur in a balanced manner and under the precautionary principle, with measures that allow the protection, conservation and regeneration of resources and their ecosystem. This includes guaranteeing the principle of maximum sustainable catch and the generation of evidence (tests, analyses or scientific studies) for better monitoring and decision-making. It also takes into account that the development of this sector must find a balance between industrial, semi-industrial and artisanal fishing, in particular, allowing the latter to guarantee food security and the income of artisanal fishermen. Among other actions, a national environmental committee has

been created in Law N 7/2003 Regulating the Environment, where all levels of the administration are represented. However, this committee is not yet functional.

The collaboration of the Government of Equatorial Guinea with the UNS through programs contributes to the integration of the 3 dimensions. Mainly, through the promotion of the 2030 Agenda and support in overcoming the country's structural barriers. For example, in aspects mentioned throughout the report on economic development and poverty reduction, food security and environmental care, care for youth and children, improvements in health, including sexual and reproductive health, and improving the country's statistical capacity, including measuring vulnerability.

It also highlights the country's participation in bodies that favour cooperation, including south-south cooperation such as CEMAC, and in conventions to favour the country's economic and trade environment, as well as to curb climate change. The country has also developed its National Action Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (NAPA) and the National REDD+ Strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Equatorial Guinea also ratified the Paris agreement (2018), is a member of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and participates in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) meetings since 1990 (more information about these initiatives in the Progress on Goals and Targets section, under the Environmental Sustainability and Territorial Development axis).

88 INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

89 INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

90 República de Guinea Ecuatorial, "Boletín Oficial del Estado: Actividad Pesquera. Ley Núm. 11/2.017, de fecha 20 de noviembre, Reguladora de la Actividad Pesquera y Acuícola en la República de Guinea Ecuatorial", (2017).

# IV

## PROGRESS ON GOALS AND OBJECTIVES





## A. Prioritisation of goals and objectives

The Government of Equatorial Guinea enacted Decree No. 113/2019 dated September 9, creating the National Commission for Monitoring the 2030 Agenda on the SDGs, which is responsible for ensuring the proper planning, implementation, and monitoring of the prioritised goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In December 2019, as a result of the Seminar on Prioritization of the goals and objectives of said Agenda, with the participation of the Agencies of the United Nations System, the Private Sector, Civil Society, among others, 158 goals out of 169 were prioritised<sup>91</sup>.

In order to measure and monitor progress on the prioritised goals and targets, the National SDGs Commission had to draft the National SDGs Indicators Framework, through its Technical Secretariat, which was validated in a workshop that lasted from May 4 to 8, 2020.

Results of the Seminar Workshop on prioritisation of goals and targets.

- Block 1 on Poverty Eradication is made up of 5 SDGs:** SDG 1 “END POVERTY”, SDG 2 “ZERO HUNGER”, SDG 3 “HEALTH AND WELL-BEING”, SDG 4 “QUALITY EDUCATION” and SDG 6 “CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION”. This block has a total of 45 targets prioritised at the national level and a total of 75 indicators were retained; of which 13 are from the global framework and 61 are proxy indicators.
- Block 2 on Social Inclusion and Sustainable Peace is made up of 3 SDGs:** SDG 5 “GENDER EQUALITY”, SDG 10 “REDUCING INEQUALITIES” and SDG 16 “PEACE, JUSTICE AND SOUND INSTITUTIONS”. With a total of 30 targets prioritised at the national level, a total of 47 indicators were retained in this block; of which 38 are from the global framework and 9 are proxy indicators.
- Block 3, on Production and Industrialization,** includes SDG 8 “DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH” and SDG 9 “INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE”. This block has 29 indicators; of which 27 are from the global framework and 2 are proxy indicators.
- Block 4 on Environmental Sustainability is made up**

of SDG 7 “AFFORDABLE AND NON-POLLUTING ENERGY”, SDG 11 “SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES”, SDG 12 “RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION”, SDG 13 “CLIMATE ACTION”, SDG 14 “UNDERWATER LIFE” and SDG 15 “LIFE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS”. A total of 65 indicators were retained in this block; of which 43 are from the global framework and 22 are proxy indicators.

The summary of the results of the National Indicator Framework Validation workshop is presented below:

**Table 4.** Indicators by block and type

Block	Global framework indicator	Proxy indicator	Total
Transversal	6	15	21
Poverty eradication	62	13	75
Social inclusion and sustainable peace	38	9	47
Productivity and industrialisation	27	2	29
Environmental sustainability	43	22	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>237</b>

Source: INEGE, Seminario de Validación del Marco Nacional de Indicadores ODS

## B. Availability of indicators

At the time of developing the VNR, Equatorial Guinea had 28.7% of the 237 indicators of the national framework. In addition, it had 30.8% of the indicators that require disaggregation<sup>92</sup>. In this sense, the challenge in terms of the country’s statistical production is high, since the lack of data makes it difficult to formulate evidence-based policies, identify vulnerable populations, understand the impact of the policies and programmes developed in the country, as well as the challenges the country faces. It

<sup>91</sup> Informe del Seminario de Validación del Marco Nacional de Indicadores ODS (2020)

<sup>92</sup> For this analysis, 64 indicators were found that require disaggregation. Of these, 28.1% of the indicators have at least one of the following disaggregations: gender, age, disability, urban/rural or geographical. Also included were those indicators whose measurement influences living conditions in a group determined by the disaggregations. For example, indicator 3.1.1 on the maternal mortality ratio is included as it provides information on the mortality risk for pregnant women.

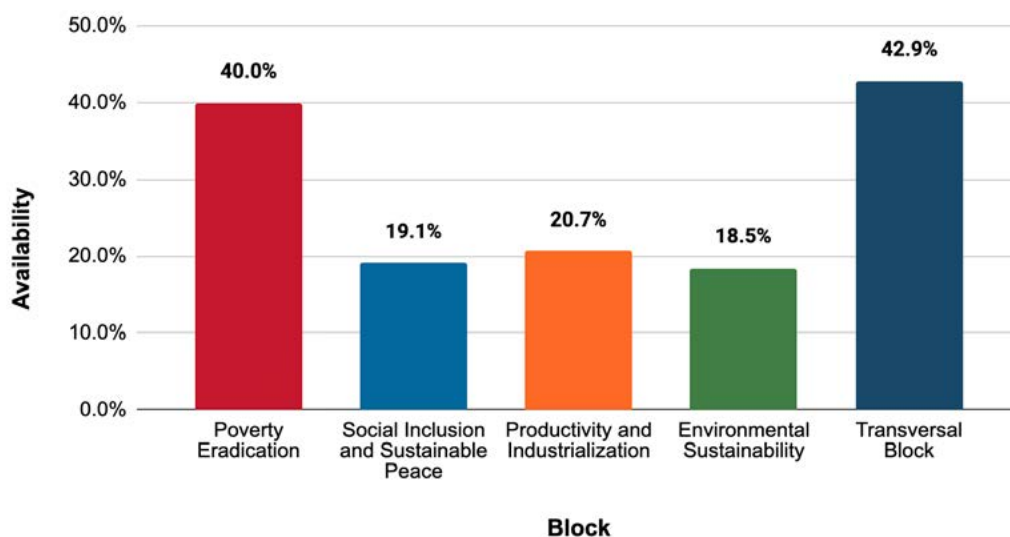
is also important to mention that the temporal distance between available indicators is wide, with data (such as the poverty profile) dating back to 2006, several indicators measured in the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey, others that have been updated through the 2015 census and some from 2020, such as macroeconomic information and health and education data from INEGE's Statistical Yearbook 2021. In addition, several data requests were made to ministries during the development of the report and, although it takes time to produce the requested indicators, these may increase the amount of data available in the short term.

The lack of data creates a cross-cutting challenge for the advancement of each axis of the NSDS 2035, both because of the lack of data and because of its potential loss of validity over time. As mentioned earlier, many of the measurements relevant to the indicators were taken before 2015. In this sense, although the Poverty Eradication axis has a greater amount of information (40%), it is possible that these indicators have changed due to the country's economic crisis. Likewise, it is difficult to know if there has been progress due to the contingency measures imposed since then. The Transversal Block contains the SDG 17 indicators, which shows the presence of macroeconomic and country data and efforts in terms of statistical production, such as the IV Population and Housing Census of 2015 (Indicator 17.19.2) and the adequacy of the Statistical Framework with the 10 fundamental principles

of the production of Official Statistics (Indicator 17.8.2). However, it is necessary to make up for the absence of general data and in particular in the axes of Social Inclusion and Sustainable Peace, Productivity and Industrialization and Environmental Sustainability, which have less than 25% of the information available.

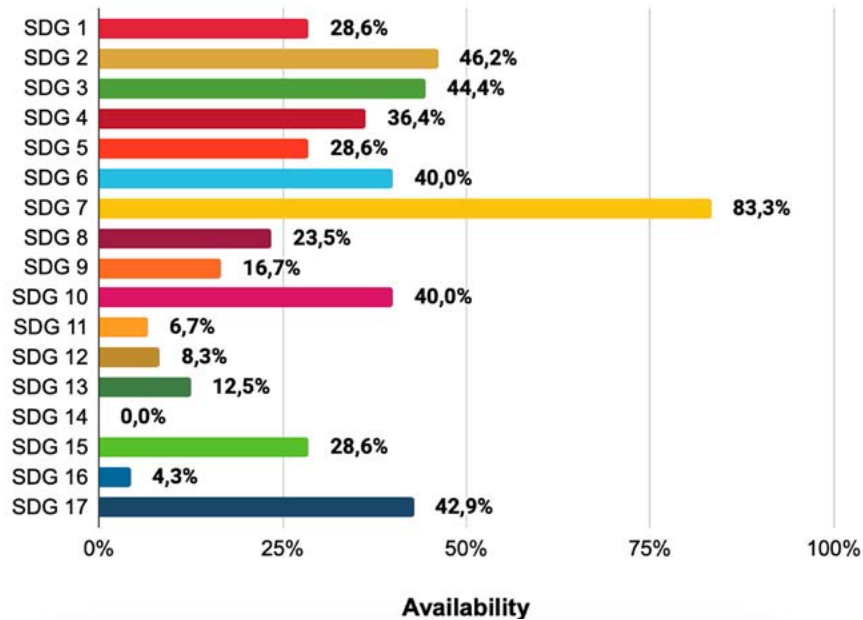
Faced with the challenge of the lack of data, Equatorial Guinea has taken steps, although support is still needed to accelerate and improve results. In this regard, the household survey is being carried out with the World Bank (2022), which is expected to increase the amount of information available in the country. At the same time, progress has been made in the Unified Social Registry, which aims to identify vulnerable populations. Likewise, Law 3/2020 redefines the institutional framework for the production of official statistics and facilitates coordination between the National Institute of Statistics of Equatorial Guinea (INEGE) and ministerial departments. Although attendees from the ministries at the INV workshops pointed to the lack of data as a significant challenge, they also recognized that INEGE has made important progress, for example, the permanent presence of INEGE technicians in the ministries to facilitate the production and sharing of information. Although support is still needed to improve the country's statistical capacity, these changes are pointing the way to improvement.

Figure 2. Availability of SDG Indicators by PNDES 2035 Block



Source: created by authors based on INEGE data availability analysis.

Figure 3. Availability of Indicators by SDGs



Source: created by the authors based on the analysis of INEGE data available.

### C. Status and trend of the SDGs

The progress made in each SDG for each thematic axis of the NSDS 2035 is presented below<sup>93</sup>.

#### I. POVERTY ERADICATION



The main objective of this block is to put an end to poverty through the coverage of basic needs: ending hunger, improving health, education, access to drinking water and the improvement of other living conditions. The policies, programmes and projects adopted by the Government towards the eradication of poverty at all territorial levels demonstrate the Government’s concern and ambition to meet this challenge, highlighted in the results below:

1. The poverty profile published in 2006 shows that

the population living below the poverty line is 76.8%. According to the MDG report estimate, this figure went to 43.7% in 2011 and was projected to 17.38% in 2015.

2. Regarding the nutritional status of the population, malnutrition remains a problem in Equatorial Guinea, due to a high rate of moderate and severe underweight.
3. The National Malaria Control Program is working on the prevalence indicator, being the main cause of morbidity and mortality in the country and great progress has been made, with a reduction from 82% in 2012 to 28% in 2013.
4. HIV/AIDS prevalence studies in the population aged 15-49 years have shown an increase in infection rates between 1989 (1.1%) and 1997 (3.48%), which remains high in 2004 (3.2%), and is confirmed by data from the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey, which reveals a significant increase in this prevalence by 93.7%, being 6.2%, significantly higher in women (8.3%) than in men (3.7%). However, the number of infections has increased in recent years, reaching 5.3% in 2020, compared to 3.2% in 2004.
5. The gross enrollment rate increased significantly, from 89% in the 2001/2002 school year to 99% in

93 Information on SDG 17 is developed in the sub-section on Productivity and Industrialisation.



2007/2008. The net enrollment rate also evolved positively, from 51% in the 2001/2002 school year to 76% in 2008/2009.

6. The 2011 Demographic and Health Survey showed that the proportion of households using drinking water (from an improved source) is 56%. This proportion is higher in urban areas (82%) than in rural areas (33%).

### SDG 1. End poverty

Since the discovery of large oil deposits in the mid-1990s, Equatorial Guinea has experienced strong economic growth. According to the Millennium Development Goals<sup>94</sup> report in 2015, the proportion of the population living below the poverty line went from 80%, in 2000, to 76.8% in 2006 and 43.7% in 2011 (EDSGE, 2011), with a reduction of 33.1% in that period (between 2006 and 2011), at a rate of 6.58 percentage points per year (indicator 1.2.1). According to projections made based on the available data, with this rate of reduction, the proportion of the population below the poverty line should have been 17.38% by the end of 2015. The percentage of those living in poverty is still higher in rural areas as compared to urban areas. The Continental Region of the country has a higher percentage than the Insular Region. This deviation is due to the more rural character of that part of the country.

Despite the efforts made, the percentage of people living below the poverty line is still considerable. The analysis of the environment shows that improvements can be achieved in this regard, if the country continues to effectively utilise its internal resources and capacities, with a strong investment in the productive sectors, such as agriculture, fishing, tourism, etc.

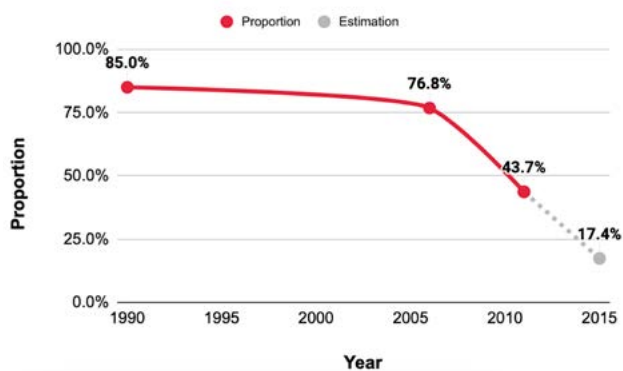
**The causes and manifestations of poverty have not been well studied or analysed in the country.** It is important to note that variables related to poverty and vulnerability in Equatorial Guinea are limited and the data unreliable, a fact well known to development partners. This results in a limited understanding of causes and manifestations of poverty incidence, as well as vulnerability and marginalisation.

The Government is working to ensure that all men and women, particularly those living in poverty and vulnerability, have equal access to economic resources and

basic services. Resources have been significantly mobilised towards providing essential services such as education and health. In 2017, the Country Program for Decent Work in Equatorial Guinea (PPTDGE 2019-2023) was launched for social justice through the improvement of living and working conditions of workers and respect for their labour rights. Given the lack of an updated poverty profile study and consolidated statistics, it is difficult to quantify the progress achieved or the persistent challenges that remain in terms of poverty eradication in the country.

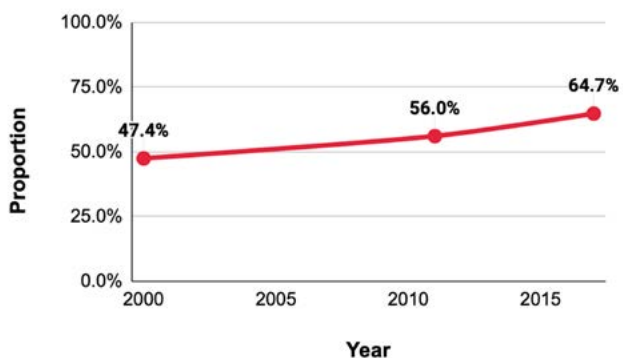
In the case of the proportion of the population that has access to basic services such as drinking water and sanitation (indicator 1.4.1), increases have been observed in recent years, standing at 64.7% and 66.3%, respectively<sup>95</sup>.

Figure 4. Indicator 1.2.1 population below the poverty line



Source: Republic of Equatorial Guinea, MDG Report 2015

Figure 5. Indicator 1.4.1 Proportion of the population with access to basic drinking water services

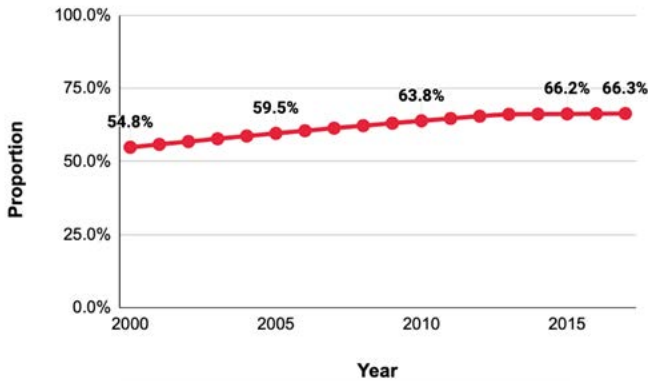


Fuente: UNSTATS

94 República de Guinea Ecuatorial, Informe ODM 2015.

95 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 1.4.1. Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/da7d9e13a45b4734b5eef4b8355cdb6c/explore?location=4.212078%2C1.232241%2C2.60>.

**Figure 6.** Indicator 1.4.1 Proportion of population with access to basic sanitation services



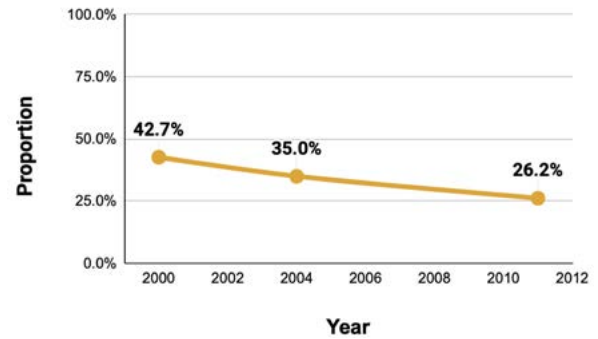
Source: UNSTATS

**SDG 2. Zero Hunger**

Regarding the nutritional situation of the population, malnutrition remains a development problem in Equatorial Guinea due to a moderate and severe emaciation rate of 19% between 2000 and 2006 (MICS/UNICEF). Moderate and severe emaciation was seen in 7% in children under five years of age, but the most significant problem seems to be the relative stunting, which stood at 39% between 2000 and 2006 (Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and Investments/UNICEF). This rate indicates insufficient nutrition and frequent illnesses in children under five years of age. Stunting may be related to low birth weight and poor access to clean water and basic conditions. Malnutrition is strongly associated with infant and child mortality. Although most of these indicators are not available for more recent periSDG, according to the 2011 EDSGE-1, of the 1,094 children interviewed, 9.2% were critically stunted and 26.2% were moderately stunted (indicator 2.2.1).

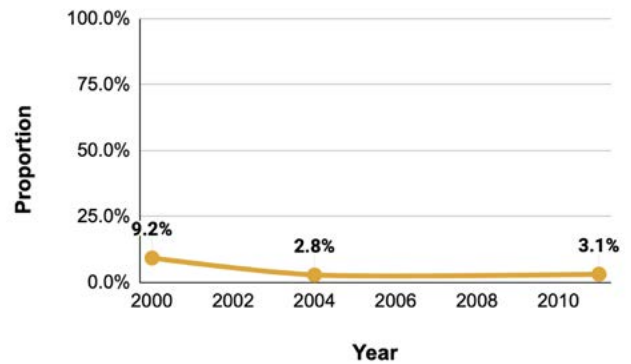
Indicator 2.2.2 in the figure below shows that in 2011, 3.1% of children were moderately or severely wasted. Although this figure is considerably lower than in 2000 (9.2%), there has been a slightly increasing trend since 2004, when this proportion reached 2.8%.

**Figure 7.** Indicator 2.2.1 Proportion of children who are moderately or severely stunted<sup>96</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

**Figure 8.** Indicator 2.2.2 Proportion of children with moderate or severe wasting<sup>97</sup>

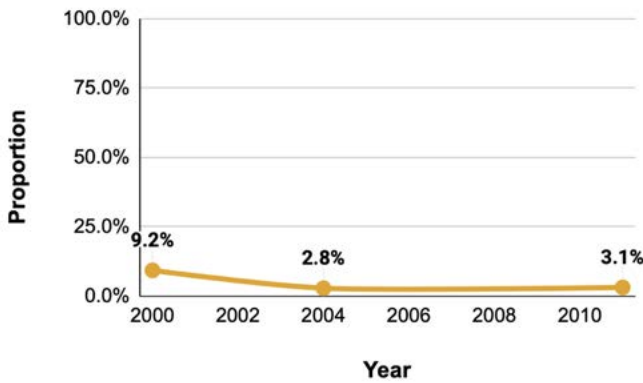


Source: UNSTATS

On the other hand, indicator 2.a.2 shows that in recent years there has been a reduction in resources used for agriculture, which is a possible explanation for food insecurity in Equatorial Guinea.

96 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 2.2.1 Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5a63ad2e92ff4a3491d8aaf9794f4f4be/explorer?location=3.345725%2C1.735981%2C2.60>.  
 97 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 2.2.2 Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/492afdc8d9ac4b23a282e31d9aa4b817/explorer?location=3.345725%2C1.735981%2C2.60>.

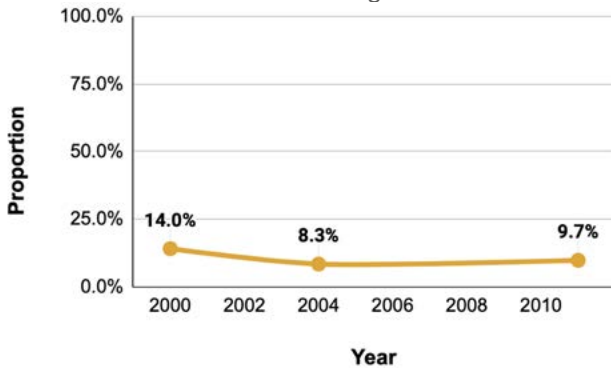
Figure 9. Indicator 2.a.2 Official flows received for agriculture<sup>98</sup>



Sources: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Finally, the following figures show a decrease in the proportion of children under 5 years of age who are moderately or severely overweight, which went from 14 to 9.7% between 2000 and 2011 (indicator 2.2.2). However, the total number of moderately or severely overweight children increased from 14 to 15 thousand in the same period<sup>99</sup>.

Figure 10. Indicator 2.2.2 Proportion of children under 5 who are overweight<sup>100</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

The economic slowdown and the challenges caused by COVID-19 have blocked the national productive system and have broken the value chain established for the supply of national production to the markets. In the absence of consolidated statistics, it could be said that

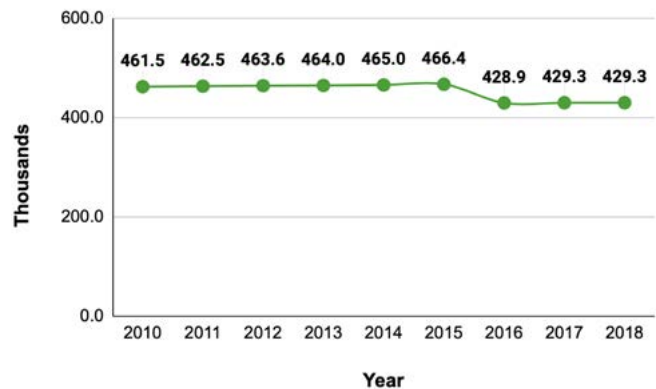
**domestic consumption of agrifood products continues to be dependent on imports.** Therefore, there has been little progress in the eradication of hunger, mainly due to the following issues: (i) national production continues to hover at the subsistence level and is therefore unable to supply national markets, (ii) there have been insufficient improvements in techniques for the national productive system and scarce training in areas of food production (iii) lack of private investment in the productive sector and unreliable transportation and marketing network for products, which causes price increases.

### SDG 3. Health and Well-being

**Equatorial Guinea has made great progress in the health sector and population welfare. The implementation of the Demographic Health Survey in 2011 has provided essential indicators of progress in health, especially in maternal mortality, infant mortality, communicable diseases such as HIV, tuberculosis, malaria and others. It is therefore vital to conduct regular surveys to help identify and address persistent disparities and progress made.**

The figure below shows the number of people requiring interventions for neglected tropical diseases (indicator 3.3.5). It shows a significant drop after 2015, which indicates an improvement in health performance.

Figure 11. Indicator 3.3.5 Number of people requiring interventions for neglected tropical diseases<sup>101</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

98 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 2.a.2, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/3d63cd7f64c949dd9fcb969bdf21a258/explore?location=3.330962%2C1.232241%2C2.60>.

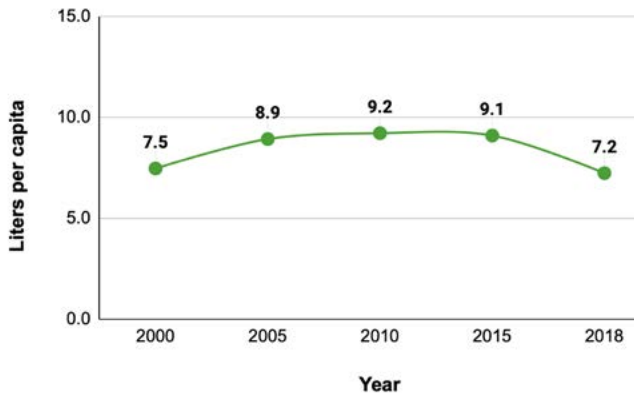
99 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 2.2.2, Equatorial Guinea", (2022) <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/04fb88034f964dc388d358fc40e5b020/explore>

100 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 2.2.2 (%), Equatorial Guinea", (2022) <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/b5fb26ce076d4b40a1ff1aab760a8bbb/explore?location=4.126856%2C1.735981%2C2.60>

101 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 3.3.5, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/e13bac22fcde46beaac59381a90d4b23/explore>.

With respect to the population’s drinking habits, the following figure (indicator 3.5.2) shows per capita alcohol consumption among the population over 15 years of age. A drop in consumption is observed after 2015, which is desirable because alcohol consumption impacts both the prevalence of diseases, injuries and other health conditions, as well as disorders and their outcomes in individuals.

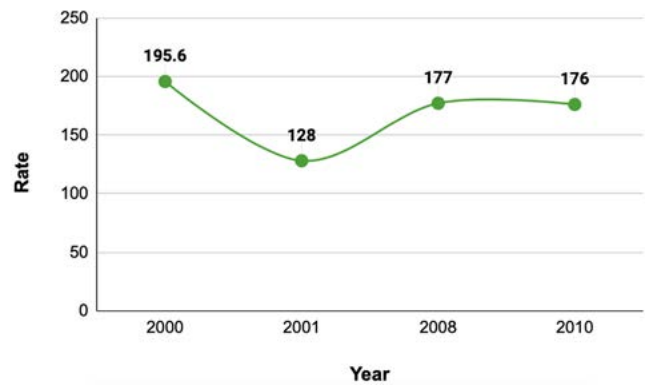
**Figure 12.** Indicator 3.5.2 Annual per capita alcohol consumption among the population over 15 years of age<sup>102</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

Another indicator for this SDG is the proportion of women of reproductive age whose need for family planning is met through modern methods, SDG (indicator 3.7.1<sup>103</sup>). According to data from the 2011 EDSGE-1, this proportion is 20.7%, which indicates that a large proportion of women do not have access to these family planning techniques, leading to consequences in other aspects of women’s lives. Although the adolescent fertility rate (indicator 3.7.2) declined after 2000, it has shown an upward trend since 2005.

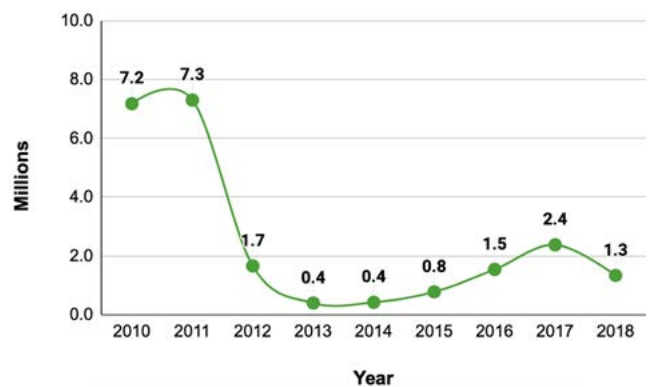
**Figure 13.** Indicator 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate per 1000 females (15-19 years)<sup>104</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

Regarding health services, a relevant indicator is the number of physicians per 10,000 people (indicator 3.c.1). According to data from the Global Health Observatory, this indicator in Equatorial Guinea is 4 doctors, which is a modest number<sup>105</sup>. In turn, according to OECD data, after 2011 the assistance received for medical research and basic health sectors (indicator 3.b.2) was reduced, which may have had an impact on the quality of services offered.

**Figure 14.** Indicator 3.b.2 Official assistance received for medical research and core health sectors (millions of constant 2018 dollars)<sup>106</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

102 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 3.5.2, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/9321fc4d3030468db59cc6fd4338d281/explore>.

103 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 3.7.1, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/8bbefc76b440bc99d369eedf31bfe7/explore>.

104 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 3.7.2, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/aef421a8c221463abbc7e222f3b278c5/explore>.

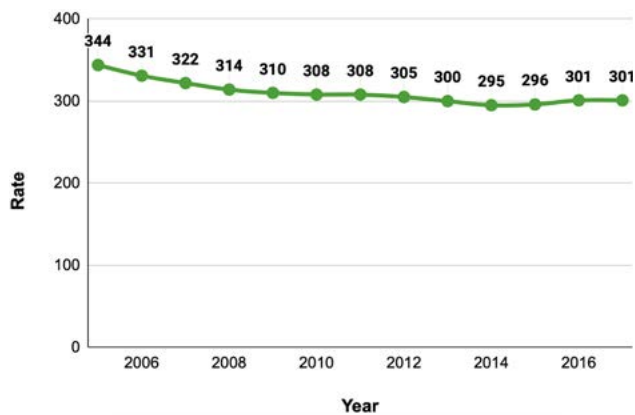
105 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 3.c.1, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/0c82548fd1854bcfa3e528728480f18e/explore?location=3.816791%2C1.735981%2C2.60>.

106 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, Indicator 3.b.2, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/4ced890b6fc94cd58f5a475ebe5b2507/explore>.

In the 1994 population census, Equatorial Guinea was among the countries with the highest maternal mortality rate in Africa, with a rate of 352 per 100,000 live births. Poor access, utilisation and quality of emergency obstetric and neonatal care, poor referral and counter-referral system, low operational capacity of programs to raise women’s awareness of their sexual and reproductive rights in general and of the risks related to motherhood in particular, poor functioning of the health information and epidemiological surveillance system for maternal and neonatal mortality, among others, were listed as root causes of maternal mortality, which formed the basis for the development and adoption of the road map to accelerate the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality in 2008. Indirect causes of maternal deaths continue to be anaemia, malaria during pregnancy, malnutrition and HIV/AIDS.

In recent years, the maternal mortality rate (indicator 3.1.1) has declined significantly. Government investments, health care and the strengthening of family planning services have been the determining factors for the decrease in maternal mortality. Maternal mortality (annual number of female deaths per 100,000 live births) in Equatorial Guinea has declined in recent years, falling from 344 in 2005 to 301 in 2017<sup>107</sup>.

**Figure 15.** Indicator 3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio per 1,000 live births in Equatorial Guinea



Source: UNSTATS

Infant mortality has decreased in recent years. According to the 2011 GE DHS, in the period 2007-2011, the under-five mortality rate (indicator 3.2.1) fell from 113 deaths to 81.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018<sup>108</sup>.

Although, according to specialists, malaria remains one of the main causes of death in Equatorial Guinea, the government created the National Malaria Control Programme (PNLP) under the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and is being supported by the NGO Medical Care Development International (MCDI) for the implementation of malaria control interventions on Bioko Island and in the Mainland Region. Its prevalence has been reduced from 82% in 2012 to 28% in 2013.

Equatorial Guinea is one of the countries with the highest number of TB cases in the West African region, with an incidence rate of 172 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has created the National Programme for the Fight against Tuberculosis, however, between 2015 and 2016 the number of cases of the different types of TB increased. To combat TB, the government, through the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, has increased the number of public or private units accredited for diagnosis and treatment free of charge. Improved treatment for severe forms of TB has been procured and GeneXpert, a modern tool capable of detecting resistant forms of TB, has been implemented nationwide.

HIV/AIDS (indicator 3.3.1) in Equatorial Guinea is one of the main causes of morbidity and mortality in the population. According to information provided by INEGE, prevalence studies in the population aged 15-49 years have shown an increase in infection rates between 1989 (1.1%) and 1997 (3.48%), which remained high in 2004 (3.2%), and is confirmed by data from the EDSGE-1 2011, which reveals a significant increase in this prevalence of 93.7%, being 6.2%, significantly higher in women (8.3%) than in men (3.7%). In recent years the number of infections has increased, standing at 5.3% in 2020, compared to 3.2% in 2004.

#### SDG 4. Quality Education

Following the policies and programmes adopted at the Second Economic Conference held in 2007, as well as the recommendations adopted by the Government in the National Economic Development Plan to Horizon 2020, significant results have been achieved. The gross enrolment rate has increased significantly, from 89% in the 2001/2002 school year to 99% in 2007/2008, and the net enrolment rate has also increased from 51% in the 2001/2002 school

107 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 3.1.1, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/b7e5eecaaddb495f93d30f8a7e0f75d4/explore?location=4.006894%2C1.385045%2C2.60>.

108 Estimated by the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) according to INEGE.



year to 76% in 2008/2009. The disparities between boys and girls in primary school enrolment are relatively low, 51% for boys and 49% for girls, according to data from the last school census conducted in 813 schools in the country, with a total of 81,099 pupils. On the other hand, in order to improve the level and quality of primary education and to homogenise it with the rest of the countries in the sub-region, a sixth grade was added to the education programme in the 2005/2006 school year.

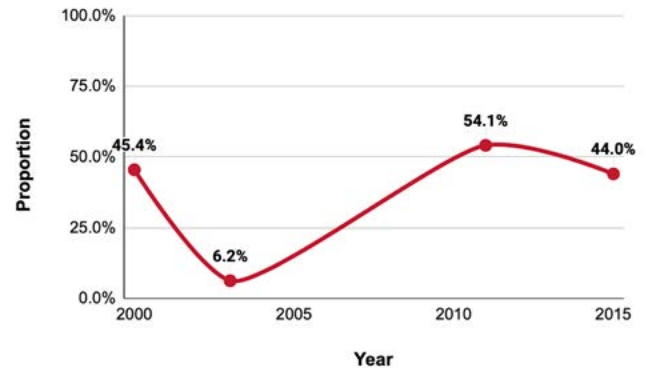
Despite the gradual increase in the net enrolment rate, the completion rate is relatively low, a situation that can be explained by problems linked to repetition, dropout and over-age enrolment. These phenomena result in a low completion rate for both boys and girls (12.56% for boys and 11.46% for girls), according to the 2007/2008 school census. The promotion rate of students at primary and secondary school levels, for the 2018-2019 school year, are respectively 87% and 88.4%. Of the 15,396 primary school students who repeated the 2018-2019 school year, 55.2% of them were male and 44.8% were female. At secondary level, of the 6,241 students who repeated the 2018-2019 school year, 55.9% were male and 44.1% female. The dropout rates for the last school year observed and for which official data is available is 2.9% for the primary education level, taking as a reference the 2017-2018 school year that presented a total of 113,561 students enrolled in the country's schools. Already for the secondary education level, for the same 2017-2018 school year, the dropout rate was equivalent to 4.3%, taking into account the total of 50,043 students enrolled<sup>109</sup>.

Currently, with the new Economic and Social Development Strategy (EDES), implemented by the government, as well as the creation of educational, professional centres and universities at the national level, has allowed to significantly increase the schooling rate, reducing the parity rate thanks to the policies and awareness-raising carried out by the Social Equality and Gender sector, the number of trained teachers increased in proportion to the previous data.

Participation of children in pre-primary or primary education in the year prior to the official primary school entry age (indicator 4.2.2) was 44% in 2015, considerably higher than in 2005, although with a slight decreasing trend. While this is a high figure compared to other African countries, it is still low considering the importance of pre-primary

education for children's future cognitive development, with more than half missing out on this service.

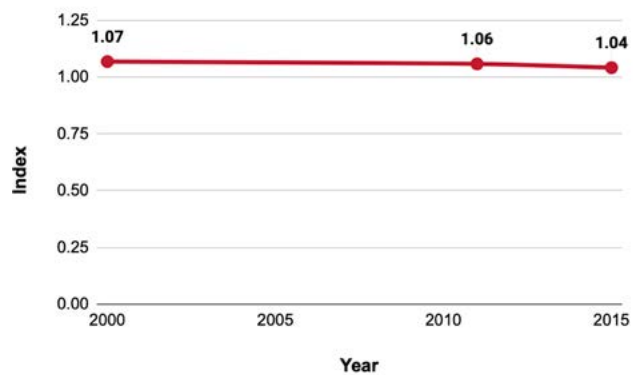
**Figure 16.** Indicator 4.2.2 Participation of children in pre-primary or primary education in the year before the official primary school entry age<sup>110</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

With respect to gender parity, a relevant data consists of the participation rate in organised apprenticeship (one year before the official age of entry to primary school). A very slight decrease in this parity index is observed between 2000 and 2015, so at this level Equatorial Guinea has remained close to gender parity.

**Figure 17.** Indicator 4.5.1 Gender parity index for participation rate in organised learning in the year before the official primary school entry age<sup>111</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

109 Ministerio de Educación, Enseñanza Universitaria y Deportes, Anuario Estadístico de Educación 2018-2019.

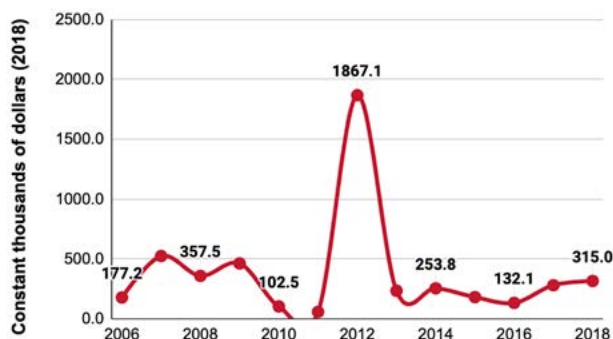
110 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 4.2.2, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/2d2733e36b3a4b47a2cad4018ea89ca/explore?location=3.881223%2C3.112443%2C2.69>.

111 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 4.5.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/a7536473e746435480cf3d7138e21b8c/explore?location=3.863101%2C3.112443%2C2.61>.



The flow of resources obtained for scholarships remained stable during the period considered in the figure below (indicator 4.b.1).

**Figure 18.** Indicator 4.b.1 Flows of resources raised for scholarships<sup>112</sup>

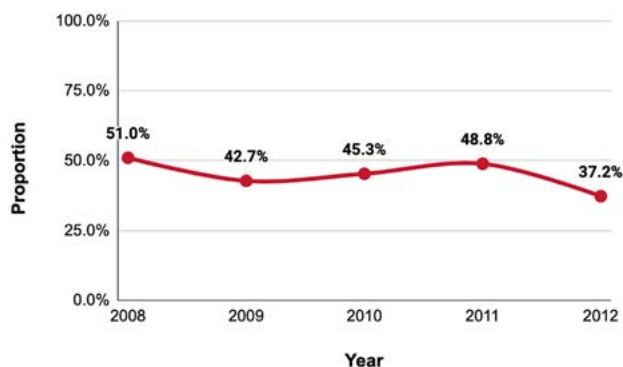


Source: UNSTATS

A relevant indicator for measuring educational quality is the proportion of primary education teachers who have the minimum organised training required for teaching (indicator 4.c.1). According to the following figure, this proportion decreased from 51% in 2008 to 37.2% in 2015. This result indicates that the educational quality in primary schools has decreased, since all teachers should be well trained in terms of pedagogy, and according to this data, the country is far from achieving this ideal. When it comes to the professional qualification of the teachers that make up the country's teaching staff, the challenges to the quality of education are reflected in the minimum training rates presented by a large part of the existing teaching staff. Of the 2,904 Early Childhood and Preschool school teachers, according to the data and categories available for the 2018-2019 school year, the distribution of the staff according to their academic qualification was presented as follows: 6.3% of them are characterised as Diploma Teacher; 4.8% as Degree Teacher/University Diploma; 1.8% as Bachelor's Degree; 2.2% as Master's Degree; 11.5% as Completed Baccalaureate; 30% as Not Completed Baccalaureate; 41.5% as Not Completed ESBA; and 1.9% as Not Reported. For the same year, of the 5,222 teachers in elementary schools, 23.5% of them are characterised as Diploma Teacher; 19.6% as University Degree/Diploma

Teacher; 6.8% as Bachelor's Degree; 1.1% as Master's Degree; 19% as Completed Baccalaureate; 18.8% as Not Completed Baccalaureate; 10% as Not Completed ESBA; and 1.2% as Not Reported. For the secondary level, of the 3,215 teachers available in the 2018-2019 school year, 9.3% of them were characterised, according to their academic qualification, as Diploma Teacher; 37.7% as University Degree/Diploma Teacher; 29.6% as Bachelor's Degree; 15% as having a Master's Degree or Higher; 5.2% as Completed Baccalaureate; 2% as Did Not Complete Baccalaureate; 0.3% as Did Not Complete ESBA; and 0.8% as Not Reported. The data show that the highest percentage of teachers who do not have the minimum academic qualifications to teach their students are in the Early Childhood and Preschool schools<sup>113</sup>.

**Figure 19.** Indicator 4.c.1 Proportion of primary school teachers with the minimum organised training required for teaching<sup>114</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

## SDG 6. Clean Water and Sanitation

According to data from the 2011 EDSGE-1, it can be observed that about six households out of ten (56%) are supplied with water through an improved source (82% for urban areas). The percentage for public taps is 21%, tap in the dwelling or yard 10%, protected wells 10%, bottled water 7% and wells 5%. The other improved sources (protected source and rainwater) represent only 2% for all households.

The degree of implementation of integrated water resources management (indicator 6.5.1) was 24% in

<sup>112</sup> UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 4.b.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/74034aff16a0446abdd1711db3dea492/explore>.

<sup>113</sup> Ministerio de Educación, Enseñanza Universitaria y Deportes, Anuario Estadístico de Educación 2018-2019.

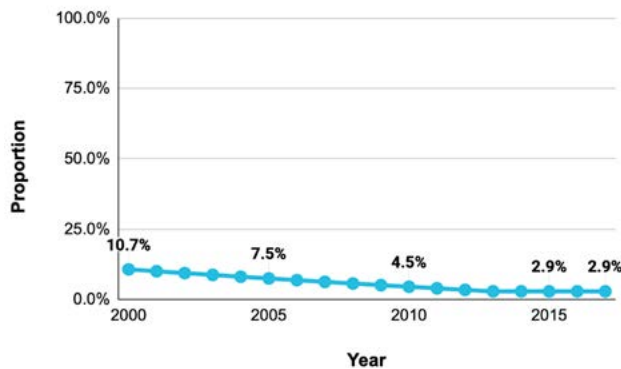
<sup>114</sup> UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 4.c.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/f4395f0a763e474aaba9f709c5336ba0/explore?location=3.805107%2C1.735981%2C2.60>

2018 according to data from Environment Live, UNEP<sup>115</sup> indicator 6.5.1). For its part, in 2017, the proportion of transboundary basins (river and lake basins and aquifers) with an operational water cooperation agreement (indicator 6.5.2) stood at 0.0%<sup>116</sup>.

Regarding the level of definition in legal or political procedures for the participation of service users/communities in the planning program in rural drinking water supply (indicator 6.b.1), it was placed as “clearly defined” in 2012, according to UN-Water’s Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS)<sup>117</sup>.

The proportion of the population practising open defecation has decreased considerably over the period presented in the figure below (indicator 6.2.1) standing at 2.9% in 2017<sup>118</sup>.

**Figure 20.** Indicador 6.2.1 Proportion of the population practising open defecation



Source: UNSTATS

Finally, in 2014, the level of water stress (freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources) (indicator 6.4.2) stood at 0.2% according to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)<sup>119</sup>.

## Shortcomings, challenges and measures

To ensure the availability of data and to respond to the challenges of poverty eradication, the Government has adopted a number of provisions, which are detailed for each SDG:

**SDG 1.** To accelerate household poverty reduction, the National Development Plan Equatorial Guinea 2030 envisages the development of Small and Medium Enterprises and Industries (SMEs/ SMLs). It has therefore planned the formation and development of national SMEs/SMLs in the industrial, commercial and service sectors, support and guide the creation of national economic clusters, promotion of learning centres, support for the development of export support infrastructures, complemented by a support mechanism that provides information on markets and market access conditions, and create a credit guarantee fund for SMEs/SMLs.

In addition, it aims to eliminate and prohibit de jure and de facto monopolies, create production and processing units for national products for commercial enterprises operating in the country, cede land to enterprises for the creation of industrial zones, promote the participation of SMEs/ SMLs in public markets by awarding them sub-contracts for works attributed to foreign companies, support SMEs/ SMLs in improving their means of production, strengthen the Chambers of Commerce, so that they can play their role effectively, establish simple and efficient administrative and legal processes, as well as institutional strengthening to support SMEs/SMLs and to promote and encourage the creation of institutions specialised in the financing of well-focused micro-projects.

**SDG 2.** To improve household food availability and reduce protein-calorie malnutrition, the National Development Plan of Equatorial Guinea Agenda 2030 provides for the development of a green revolution through the implementation of a rural mapping indicating agricultural areas, as well as a general cadastre of agriculture and livestock, implement a National Food Security Programme (PNSA), establish a programme for the modernisation and intensification of agricultural holdings based on a

115 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 6.5.1, Equatorial Guinea”, <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/22231915504447c0bdd7eea8c8ac2e5b/explore?location=3.816791%2C1.735981%2C2.60>.

116 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 6.5.2, Equatorial Guinea”, <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/a3c8f2f6aae64c3fbfe905b3e211b22e/explore?location=4.514713%2C1.232241%2C2.60>.

117 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 6.b.1, Equatorial Guinea”, <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/e59cc651e8004c2189b0f344b547601d/explore>.

118 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 6.2.1, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/1232697c70f44d58ae0611f3f186a1f9/explore>.

119 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 6.4.2, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/4095771b6e864686bb37494f7075b435/explore?location=5.211988%2C37.725636%2C2.89>.

strategy of agricultural diversification and development to meet national demand for food and produce a surplus for export, strengthen the capacities of the ministries in charge of agricultural and rural development, build and equip bromatological and pedagogical laboratories for food quality control and soil analysis, create a food code (CODEX ALIMENTARIUS) with the support of the FAO.

In addition, there are plans to establish agricultural mechanisation parks in each province and district to support and sustain farming initiatives, import improved seeds on an annual basis in order to increase yields per hectare, draw up and publish a law on land leasing, plan human resources training according to the needs of the agricultural sector, encourage the creation of regional, provincial and/or district production centres, according to the comparative advantages of the localities, restructure the operational cells of the agricultural sector, encourage the creation of companies and cooperatives in the agricultural sector to eliminate the uncertainty that holds back private investment in the sector, encourage and support agricultural collaboration, strengthen agricultural qualification plans and programmes, and promote modern and intensive breeding and livestock farming to meet animal protein needs.

**SDG 3.** Achieving this goal by 2030 means adopting social protection mechanisms with a universal health insurance system and improving basic services such as food, nutrition, access to drinking water, hygiene and sanitation. This set of actions is a priority for rural and peripheral areas. The development of an integrated plan for child survival and development, nutrition, water and sanitation and HIV/AIDS are equally necessary to achieve the SDG.

It is important to rapidly increase and maintain at a high level immunisation coverage of at least 90% for vaccine-preventable diseases, prioritising the Reach Every District (DAC) strategy at the national level and the strengthening of prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT).

Achieving this objective also requires the intensification of prenatal and postnatal consultation services, the strengthening of human and material resources, as well as the implementation of emergency obstetric care in the various health centres and hospitals. It is also necessary to develop an effective system for collecting, analysing, disseminating and updating health statistics.

**SDG 4.** The development priorities in education are those formulated at the second National Economic Conference, namely: (i) expanding school coverage and

quality of education at all levels, (ii) eliminating gender disparities for equitable access to education and training, (iii) providing budgetary funds to the education and training sector, (iv) organising a conference on education for effective management of the sector, (v) promoting private sector involvement in sport and all its forms, and (vi) creating a network of boarding schools for boys and girls to ensure their comprehensive education. To this strategic recommendation, social protection mechanisms are added through initiatives involving the implementation of scholarship programmes benefiting children from poor families, the development of a school canteen programme, the provision of free school materials and equipment to children, and support to vulnerable families for their children's schooling.

Short-term actions aimed at improving children's learning conditions (classroom, nutrition, water, electricity and air conditioning) and teachers' working conditions should be envisaged within the framework of the implementation of the EFA programme, focusing on rural and poorest areas of the country.

In partnership with UNESCO, the Government will launch a comprehensive programme for the development of science, technology and mathematics education covering all levels (pre-school, primary, secondary, secondary, technical, vocational and higher education) over a four-year period in the framework of improving the quality of education.

**SDG 6.** With the celebration of the II National Economic Conference in 2007, a series of 11 goals were established in terms of Drinking Water and Sanitation, with which the country tries to show the importance and progress achieved in terms of drinking water and sanitation.

To ensure the availability of water and its sustainable management and sanitation for all, the Government is implementing a series of water supply and sanitation projects such as:

1. The Rehabilitation and Extension of the Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Network of the city of Malabo, a project funded by the European Union.
2. Project for the construction of the wastewater and rainwater drainage and sanitation network system in the city of Malabo, currently under implementation.

For the integration of the SDGs into legislation (parliament), two major strategies have been adopted, namely:

1. Elaboration of the National Hydrological Plan.

- The implementation of a project for the inventory of water reserves available in the subsoil for mapping and sustainable management.

The Government through its Ministries, international institutions and private sector companies have worked on dissemination campaigns through channels such as (TV, radio and in-person canvassing) so that every inhabitant is aware of the work being done to achieve this objective.

## II. SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE:



The main challenge to highlight in the axis of social inclusion and sustainable peace is the absence of data to measure the indicators and from there, take appropriate measures for the achievement of the objectives of social inclusion and sustainable peace. As mentioned above, INEGE is currently working on a household survey, which is expected to provide inputs for evidence-based decision-making and to advance the objectives of this axis. Existing data show the following results:

- In terms of women’s social inclusion, seats held by women have increased from 5% to 21% between 2005 and 2020.
- Levels of intimate partner violence are worrying, and besides, almost one third of women aged 20-24 are in early unions.
- There has been an increase in the amount of development assistance received, although it has not yet reached pre-crisis levels of 2008.
- The wage share of GDP is around 50%, a low level but higher than the average for sub-Saharan Africa.
- In 2011, 53.5% of children under 5 had been registered with a civil authority, leaving almost

half of children without a legal identity, which is a barrier to the exercise of their rights.

- According to 2017 data, the amount of statistical capacity-building assistance received was considerably low, relative to the statistical capacity-building needs in Equatorial Guinea.

These results highlight the importance of institutional strengthening, not only in terms of statistical capacities, but in general terms.

### SDG 5 Gender Equality

SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Available indicators indicate that there has been some progress, but much work remains. There have been improvements at the institutional level and in the development of women’s political rights, but there are significant failures in the domestic sphere, with high levels of physical and sexual violence, as well as child marriage and early unions.

According to data from the latest EDSGE, in indicator 5.2.1 we can see that the proportion of women and girls aged 15-49 with a partner ever subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former partner in the previous 12 months was 43.6% in 2011<sup>120</sup>, which places Equatorial Guinea as a country with a high level of physical and sexual gender-based violence.

Due to lack of data, it is not possible to analyse how this aspect has evolved after 2011 and in particular after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

**Table 5.** Proportion of women and girls aged 15 and over who have experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence at the hands of a current or former partner in the last 12 months, broken down by form of violence and age

	Physical violence	Psychological Violence	Sexual Violence
Between 15-19	42,3%	57,3%	8%
Between 20-24	65,8%	47,7%	8,7%
Between 25-29	73,3%	58,7%	10,6%
Between 30-39	66%	45,9%	4,3%
Between 40-49	63,5%	41,7%	10,7%

Source: República de Guinea Ecuatorial, EDSGE-I

120 UNSTATS, “UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 5.2.1, Equatorial Guinea”, (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/f8c1ee9060634df7b6fe7afb676bb6d3/explore?location=5.391546%2C1.735981%2C2.60>.

Regarding child marriage and early unions, the available data source is also the EDSGE-1. Indicator 5.3.1, i.e. the proportion of women aged 20-24 in early unions, was almost 30%<sup>121</sup>. This percentage is considered high as it is almost one in three women, although it is lower than the average for sub-Saharan Africa<sup>122</sup>. Child marriage represents a constraint on their all-round development and a violation of their rights, with negative consequences for both girls and society as a whole. However, there is no information on Equatorial Guinea's performance on this indicator after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

The proportion of women aged 20-24 married before the age of 15 was 8.6% in 2011<sup>123</sup>. In line with the previous indicator, this is a high percentage, although lower than the average for sub-Saharan Africa.

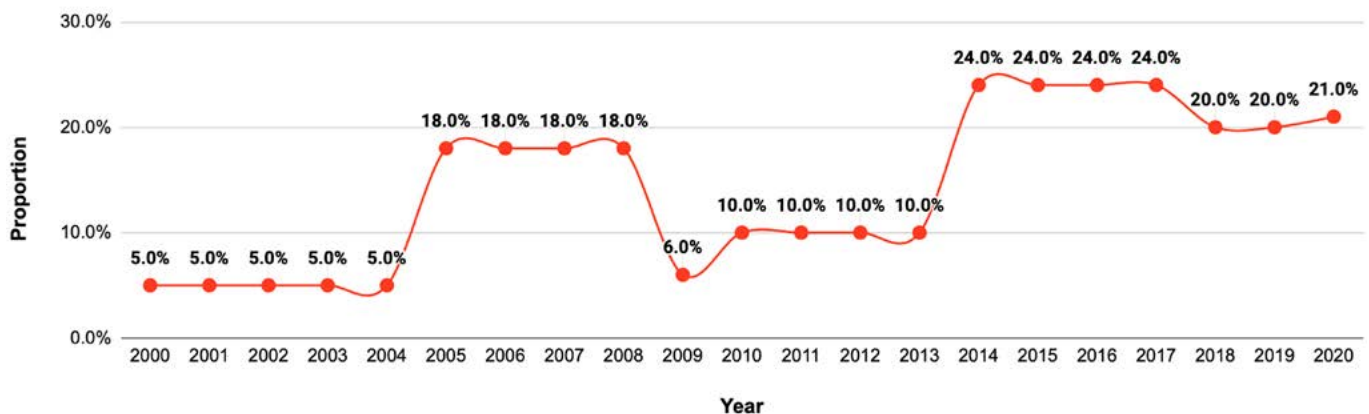
Indicator 5.5.1, i.e. the proportion of seats held by women in single or lower houses of parliament has seen a significant increase between 2005 and 2020, rising from 5% to 21% over a 15-year period, being 18.9% in 2019<sup>124</sup>. Thus, there has been an improvement in the exercise of women's rights in the political sphere and in equity in decision-

making, although the country is still far from achieving gender parity in parliament. In this sense, progress on this indicator is relevant in itself, but also for progress on SDG 5 as a whole, since greater representation of women in decision-making spaces can directly influence different aspects of the lives of women, girls and adolescents.

In the case of local government deliberative bodies, the proportion of seats held by women was 26.9% in 2018<sup>125</sup>.

Indicator 5.6.2, on the extent to which national laws and regulations ensure full and equal access to sexuality education for women and men aged 15 years and older, stood at 30% in 2020.<sup>126</sup> Law N 4/2020 dated 5 November, on Sexual Health and Assisted Human Reproduction Techniques in Equatorial Guinea, could not be disseminated as of today due to the arrival of the pandemic (COVID-19).

Figure 21. Indicator 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in parliament



Source: UNSTATS

121 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 5.3.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/e7711ef62b724b8e96418cccc2a9411f/explore>.

122 UNICEF, "Child Marriage Around the World", (2020), <https://www.unicef.org/stories/child-marriage-around-world>.

123 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 5.3.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/1c2d5bb11ff6488fb9640e37181965f4/explore>.

124 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 5.5.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/53dc94ee1fa248498b42a26f01241b84/explore>.

125 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 5.5.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/560526cc586e4935b65f960299612b96/explore>.

126 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 5.6.2, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/a74dd157c55248908c27fd195204edf2/explore>.



**SDG 10 Reducing Inequalities**

This SDG aims at reducing inequality within and between countries and ensuring that no one is left behind. In this sense, the information available for the calculation of the indicators is insufficient, and it is not possible to make conclusive analyses. In any case, while there are signs of high levels of inequality in Equatorial Guinea, there are also small indications of progress. On the one hand, the amount of development assistance received has increased in recent years, while at the same time there has been an increase in the wage share of GDP.

International development assistance is a key tool for reducing inequalities between countries. Resources are transferred from developed to developing countries, which reduces the resource differential between countries, and although it depends on the use of such international assistance, it often leads to a reduction of inequalities within the country in some sense. The following graph shows indicator 10.b.1, i.e. the total amount received in development assistance between 2000 and 2018<sup>127</sup>.

Since 2015, the year of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda at the international level, there has been a slight upward trend in the amount of development assistance received in Equatorial Guinea, although the country is still far from the amount received prior to the 2008 crisis. In order to achieve a more accelerated reduction in inequalities, more development assistance would be desirable.

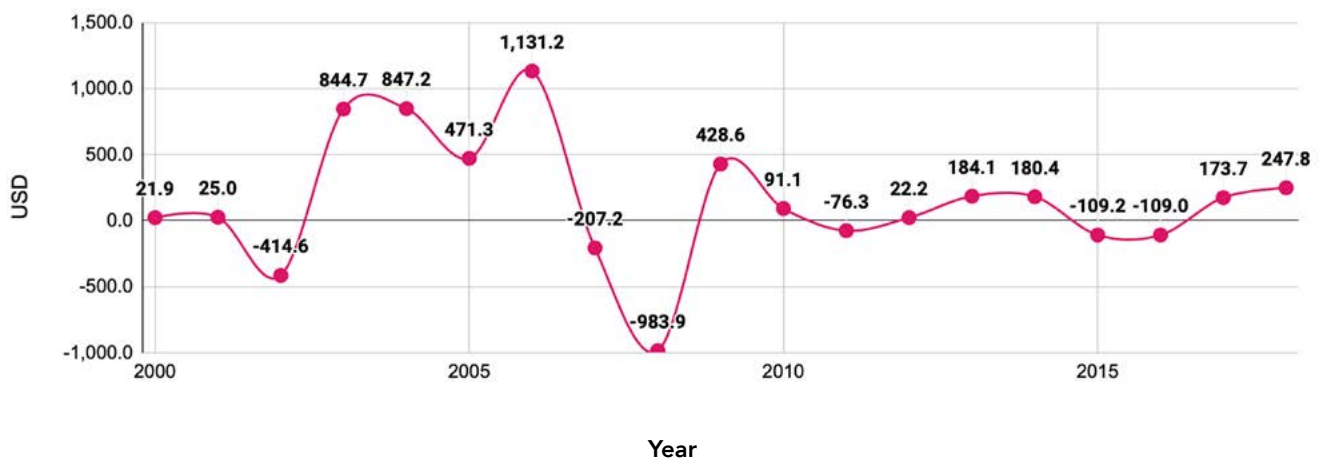
**SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**

SDG 16 aims to achieve peace, justice and strong institutions. Conflict, insecurity, weak institutions and limited access to justice are major constraints to development. While as with other SDGs, Equatorial Guinea does not have information for an evidence-based assessment of progress on these aspects, it does have information on the registration of children with civil authorities, which is a key indicator, as legal registration is fundamental to access to justice and rights. This indicator is a basis for strong institutions in the country.

Indicator 16.9.1 refers to the proportion of children under 5 whose births have been registered with a civil authority. The registration of children at birth is both an end in itself, in the sense that it provides the right to a name and nationality, and a means to other ends, as legal identity ensures access to basic services such as health and education, while proving age in a legal manner. Therefore, it is the first step in securing recognition of the child and his or her rights, so that any violation of his or her rights does not go unnoticed.

According to data from the 2011 EDSGE-1, about 53.5% of children under 5 years of age whose births were registered with a civil authority<sup>128</sup>. This implies that almost half of children under 5 have not been registered with a civil authority, with consequent implications in terms of other rights such as health and education. Thus, although with the available data we cannot observe the evolution of

Figure 22. Indicator 10.b.1 Amount received in development assistance



Source: UNSTATS

127 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 10.b.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/7400656d5d8f4c9c876c2863e5c35dfd/explore?location=5.916007%2C-178.767759%2C2.50>.  
 128 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 16.9.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/f54c2f7bbdb94e65889cb76a171f1d83/explore?location=8.461608%2C-178.264019%2C2.51>.



this indicator in the recent period and even more so after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, it is clear that there is still much room for improvement.

### Shortcomings, challenges and measures

In view of the challenges in terms of gender equality, Equatorial Guinea has implemented multiple measures to advance the rights of women and girls. In particular, it has worked on updating the legal and institutional framework to favour social equality and the promotion of women. Some examples are the Basic Law, the General Labour Law, the General Education Law, the Presidential Decree prohibiting the imprisonment of women for reasons associated with dowry reimbursement, the Ministerial Order prohibiting prostitution of minors, the financial support of the First Lady to women's associations and groups, access to land for rural women, strengthening of women's capacities in agricultural activities, the Action Plan of the National Programme of Education for All (EFA), the National Multisectoral Plan for the Promotion of Women and Gender Equity, the creation and implementation of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality (MINASIG). In addition, the improvement of the functioning of this ministry through the Global Framework Strengthening Project, which allows the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality to support a large number of women's groups in the management and legalisation, as well as in marketing techniques for their products within the framework of the Rural Women's Self-Employment Project (PRAMUR).

With regard to inequalities in general terms, measures are still insufficient. However, it should be noted that to ensure that no one is left behind, Article 15.1 of the Basic Law states: *"Any act of partiality or discrimination duly established on tribal, ethnic, sex, religious, social, political or other similar grounds is punishable or punishable by law"*.

The decline in economic growth has led to a decrease in public investment and has accentuated the economic and social vulnerability of the most vulnerable segments of the population. For this reason, the Draft Law on Social Protection has been created, a regulatory framework that defines the concepts, vulnerability and poverty profiles of the country's population. It also sets out the agreed guidelines for the process of drafting Equatorial Guinea's National Social Protection Policy (currently in parliamentary procedure). This can have a major impact on reducing inequality. Currently, Equatorial Guinea's contributory social insurance system of the National Institute of Social Security (INSESO) is the sole provider of social benefits for workers in the formal sector of the economy, which

constitutes a minority sector of the economically active population, and therefore needs to be strengthened and modernised.

For the execution of the process of elaboration and design of the Social Protection System of Equatorial Guinea, an organisational structure has been created for the definition, management, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the different social programmes. This structure is composed of:

1. An Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, a governing body, with technical, political and financial decision-making capacity, aimed at piloting the design process of the Social Protection System.
2. An Executive Secretariat, an institutional body in charge of managing the social programmes included in the Social Protection System.

**A single social registry is in place, which will allow working with updated statistical data, evaluation and monitoring. It has already been implemented for the response to 7M Bata.**

In terms of building strong institutions, the National Vision Horizon 2020 has placed good governance at the service of citizens at the heart of its programme with the main objective of modernising the administration so that it can provide citizens with quality public services and improve the efficiency of state actors and the transparency of public management. This programme aims to strengthen the technical capacity of civil servants, computerised public services and reduce administrative procedures.

**In addition, the following institutions have been created: (a) Court of Accounts; (b) National Economic and Social Council; (c) Ombudsman; (d) National Commission for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative; (e) Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office; (f) State Secretariat for Audits.**

### III. PRODUCTIVITY AND INDUSTRIALISATION



The productivity and industrialisation axis seeks to achieve a healthy and balanced economy that promotes the generation of decent employment and industrial innovation. During the transition between the

PNDES Horizon 2020 and the PNDES 2035, economic diversification and aspects related to SDGs 8, 9 and 17 have remained a priority for the country's development. However, the economic recession has limited growth and financing in these areas. The main trends in this axis, according to available data, are:

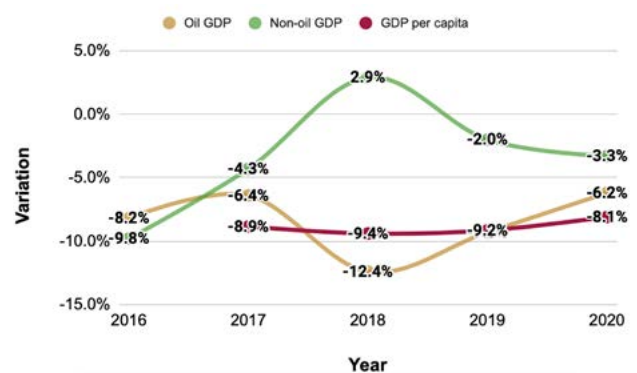
1. Real GDP per capita growth has been negative, mostly due to the decline in oil GDP.
2. The share of non-oil GDP in the economy increased, however, this is related to the contraction of the oil sector, as the non-oil sector has also contracted, but to a lesser extent.
3. Real GDP per person employed also grew negatively<sup>129</sup>. Equatorial Guinea also has room for improvement in terms of labour rights.
4. One of the major achievements of the PNDES Horizon 2020 was the development of basic infrastructure, including the development of roads, airports, ports and connectivity infrastructure. However, there is still room for improvement in internet access, particularly in the government.
5. The oil crisis reduced the government's ability to continue its investments in the infrastructure sector. Government revenues have declined, as has investment in infrastructure. COVID-19 also reduced maritime and aviation flows, reducing revenues in these sectors.
6. The contribution of trade to the country's real GDP has been declining. However, development assistance for trade has seen increases in recent years.
7. Faced with the challenges of producing statistics, Equatorial Guinea has invested and taken steps to improve its statistical capacity. For example, a household survey is currently underway, which will allow it to update indicators and get a better idea of the impact of the efforts and challenges faced by the country. However, the challenges in statistical production are still significant.

## SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth

Sustained economic growth in the country has been strongly affected by the economic recession brought about by the 2014 oil crisis. As will be outlined in this section and according to available information, this has negatively impacted SDG 8 indicators and consequently the rest of the 2030 Agenda goals. The challenges faced by the country since this crisis, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforce the need to accelerate economic diversification to achieve economic development and decent employment.

Real GDP per capita growth has been negative, mostly due to the decline in oil GDP (Indicator 8.1.1). Between 2017 and 2020, real GDP per capita has been on an annual declining trend of -8.9% on average. This is mainly due to the contraction of oil GDP, which between 2016 and 2020 had negative growth of -8.5% (annual average), reaching its lowest value in 2018, where its growth was -12.4%<sup>130</sup>. In addition to falls in crude oil prices, this contraction is related to the decrease in oil production, which declined by 24.2% between 2015 and 2020<sup>131</sup>. Although non-oil GDP has had a better balance, its growth was also negative, with an annual average growth of -3.3% in the same period<sup>132</sup> and 2018 being the only year where its growth was positive, reaching 2.9%. In turn, according to INEGE data, population growth is estimated at 3.49% per year, with the population increasing from 1,268,165.00 to 1,454,789.00 between 2016 and 2020, respectively<sup>133</sup>.

Figure 23. Indicator 8.1.1. Real GDP per capita growth, oil and non-oil (2016-2020)<sup>134</sup>



Source: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

129 This measure assumes that the number of people employed has remained constant since 2015.

130 Simple averages based on: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

131 Percentage change between crude oil production (Bbls) between 2015 and 2020, based on data from: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

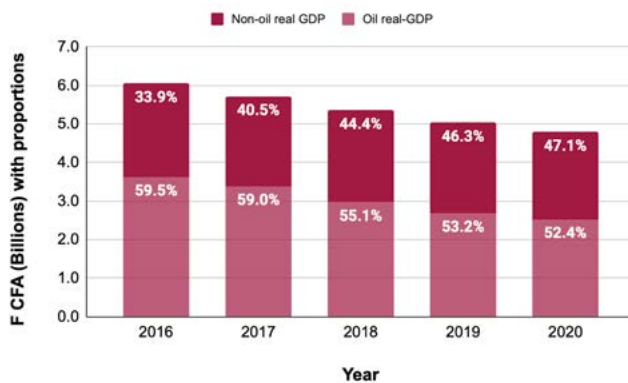
132 Simple averages based on: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

133 Simple averages based on: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

134 The values for 2019 and 2020 are estimates.

During this period, the economic importance of non-oil GDP increased. In 2016, real oil GDP accounted for 59.5% of real GDP, while in 2020 it accounted for 52.4%<sup>135</sup>. However, taking into account the declining trend of both oil and non-oil real GDP, this change is due more to the contraction of the oil sector and not to a growth of the non-oil sector. In this sense, diversifying the Equatoguinean economy towards more productive sectors is becoming increasingly urgent.

Figure 24. Real GDP (Billion F CFA) and share of oil and non-oil GDP in real GDP (2016-2020)<sup>136</sup>

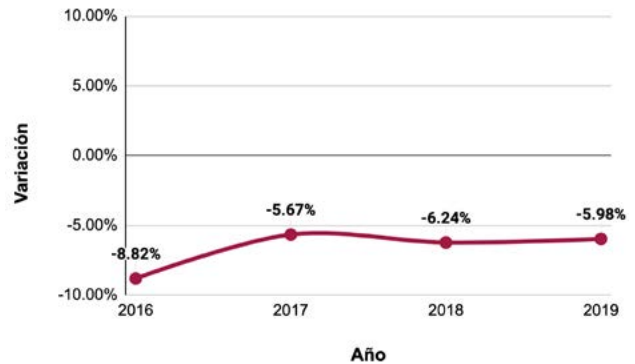


Source: INEGE (2021) "Anuario Estadístico de Guinea Ecuatorial 2021"

Due to the contraction of real GDP and the lack of employment measurement since 2015, real GDP per person employed also had a declining trend (Indicator 8.2.1). Between 2016 and 2019 the annual growth rate of real GDP per person employed declined by an annual average of 6.68%. This is under the assumption that the employed population rate in 2015 (50.6%), the date of the last estimate, has remained constant since then<sup>137</sup>. In 2015, the employment rate was higher for men (53.9%) than for

women (46.5%). Similarly, there was higher employment in rural areas (53.9%) than in urban areas (47.5%).

Figure 25. 8.2.1 Change in real GDP per person employed (2016-2019)<sup>138</sup>



Source: estimations from INEGE based on INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021

Equatorial Guinea has room for improvement in terms of labour rights (indicator 8.8.2). According to ILO data, the level of national compliance with freedom of association and collective bargaining stood at 10 in 2017<sup>139</sup>. It is noteworthy that the country ratified Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and Convention 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining in 2001<sup>140,141</sup>.

Development assistance for trade has seen increases in recent years, however, the contribution of trade to the country's real GDP has been declining (Indicator 8.a.1). According to OECD estimates, development assistance for trade grew between 2015 and 2018, from USD 66,110 to USD 523,830 (constant 2018 US\$)<sup>142</sup>. At the same time, official commitments pledged by donors for aid for trade increased, especially in 2018. While these

135 Simple averages based on: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

136 Percentages do not add up to 100% (difference <1%) as GDP values have been rounded. Values for 2019 and 2020 are estimates.

137 Estimated by INEGE, based on data from the Statistical Yearbook of Equatorial Guinea 2021. The assumption of a constant 2015 employment rate is used (i.e. the total number of employed persons is the same during the period), as no extraordinary events of an economic or social nature occurred.

138 The values for 2019 and 2020 are estimates.

139 The indicator "aims to measure the level of national compliance with fundamental labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining). It is based on six textual sources from the [ILO] supervisory body and also on national legislation. National legislation is not enacted for the purpose of generating a statistical indicator of compliance with fundamental rights, nor were any of the ILO textual sources created for this purpose. Indicator 8.8.2 is developed from these sources and its use does not constitute a disclaimer of the divergent views of the respective ILO constituents on the findings of the sources". The indicator "is not intended as a tool for comparing compliance among ILO member States". Data and explanatory text obtained from: UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 8.8.2, Equatorial Guinea" (2022). <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/56b57ab206464ca8be1b79d40636b99c/explore>

140 OIT, "Ratifications of C087 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)", (2022), [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11300:0::NO:11300:P11300\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312232](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11300:0::NO:11300:P11300_INSTRUMENT_ID:312232).

141 OIT, "Ratifications of C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)", (2022), [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11300:0::no:11300:p11300\\_instrument\\_id:312243](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11300:0::no:11300:p11300_instrument_id:312243).

142 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 8.a.1, disbursements, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5106611c6f4a4b62a7e8d7fe54b34b/explore>.

were below US\$ 500,000 between 2015 and 2017, they rose to US\$ 7.04 million (constant 2018 US\$) in 2018)<sup>143</sup>. However, trade still faces growth struggles in the country. Trade value added in real terms had significant declines, particularly between 2016 and 2017 (-10.4% and -13.4% in real terms, respectively). From 2018 onwards, the trend changed slightly, with growth of 1.1% in 2018, and smaller contractions in 2019 and 2020 (-0.7% and -0.6% in real terms, respectively).

**Table 6.** Indicator 8.a.1 Aid for Trade Commitments and disbursements

Year	Disbursements (millions of 2018 dollars) <sup>144</sup>	Commitments (millions of 2018 dollars) <sup>145</sup>
2015	0.06611	0.06623
2016	0.04295	0.07667
2017	0.34615	0.36583
2018	0.52383	7.04925

Source: UNSTATS

### SDG 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

SDG 9 promotes building resilient infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation. The country has made significant progress on this goal. For example, the development of the country's basic infrastructure has been one of the major achievements of the PNDES Horizon 2020. However, as mentioned above, its progress was strongly affected by the 2014 oil crisis and subsequently by COVID-19 and the fall in oil prices in 2020.

During the implementation of the Horizon 2020 plan, important developments were achieved in terms of infrastructure. For example, the transport infrastructure

network grew significantly between 2007 and 2017. The country went from a road network of 600 km of paved roads to 2,530 km between these two dates. Adding the 1,441 km of gravelled roads in 2017, the country reached a total of 3,971 km of roads<sup>146</sup>. With the port and airport infrastructures built, rehabilitated or expanded, the country reached 9 ports and 5 airports in 2017<sup>147</sup>. Similarly, in 2017, more than 90% of the Ministries and nearly 40% of the Autonomous Entities had new or modernised headquarters.

**The country also made significant progress in connectivity infrastructure, although there is still room for improvement, particularly in terms of internet access in the government.** From 2012 to 2017, 1,724 km of national terrestrial fibre optic network were built, connecting 95% of municipalities (except Annobón and Corisco). Although information on mobile network coverage is not available (indicator 9.c.1), the number of mobile network subscribers grew from 200,000 in 2007 to 734,956 in 2017<sup>148</sup>. The proportion of internet users grew from 2% in 2007 to 24% in 2017<sup>149</sup>. According to the G.E Telecommunications Regulatory Body (ORTEL), the number of broadband internet subscribers was 5,763 during 2019 (Indicator 17.6.1). Within the Government, 14 of the Ministerial Departments (50%) were computerised and connected to the internet, and 6 had a website<sup>150</sup>. Under the Public Administration Computerisation Plan, 2,033 civil servants were trained in the use of computers, photocopying machines, scanners, VoIP phones, among others<sup>151</sup>.

**However, the oil crisis reduced the government's capacity to continue its investments in the infrastructure sector. Similarly, the country has also seen a sharp decline in the construction sector, limiting future progress in infrastructure development.** Investment spending declined by 77.5% between 2017 and 2020, from CFAF 862,115.7 million to CFAF 193,647.3 million in that period<sup>152</sup>. In the face of this contraction, infrastructure investment expenditure declined by 89.7% from FCFA 590,344.8 million to FCFA 60,675.1 million between 2017

143 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 8.a.1, commitments, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/30d25ad9687146008aa05e8b4cd18eaf/explore>.

144 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 8.a.1, disbursements, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5106611c6f4a4b62a7e8d7fe5e54b34b/explore>.

145 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 8.a.1, commitments, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/30d25ad9687146008aa05e8b4cd18eaf/explore>.

146 Agencia Nacional Guinea Ecuatorial 2020, Camino Recorrido.

147 Ibid.

148 Agencia Nacional Guinea Ecuatorial 2020, Camino Recorrido.

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid.

151 Ibid.

152 INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

and 2020<sup>153</sup>. The real value added of the construction sector fell by 48.8% from CFAF 281.5 billion to CFAF 144.2 billion between 2016 and 2020<sup>154</sup>.

**Similarly, the pandemic reduced air and maritime transport (indicator 9.1.2), which reduced the returns the country receives on its infrastructure investments.**

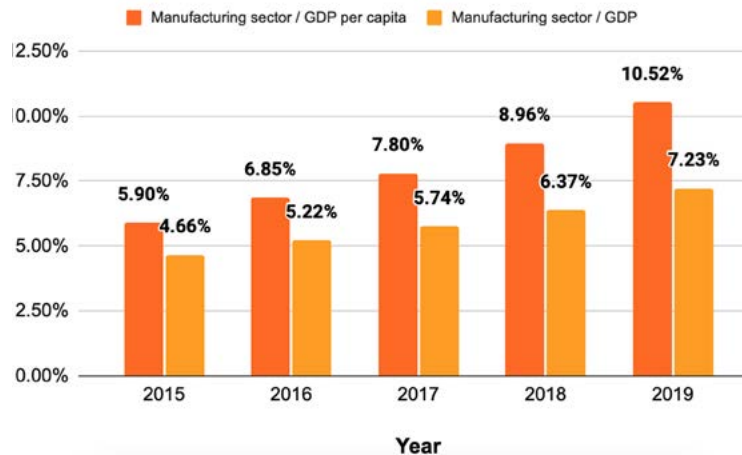
While in 2019 the number of flights was 24,708, of which 29% were international, in 2020 the number of flights fell to 491,054, of which 23.4% were international. Consequently, the number of passengers also fell from 1,008,508 to 491,054 between 2019 and 2020. In terms of maritime transport, the number of vessels observed in the country's main ports (Malabo and Bata) fell from 4040 to 337 on the same dates<sup>155</sup>. It is important to emphasise that, although investment in the construction of infrastructures has decreased, income due to the crises has also decreased and expenditure related to their maintenance has been maintained. In this sense, the country needs to accompany its infrastructure investments with growth in the productive sectors of the economy, which could recover revenues to sustain and continue to increase the country's infrastructure. In this context, the country's manufacturing sector has seen growth relative to GDP (indicator 9.2.1). In 2016, the manufacturing sector constituted 4.55% of GDP, and continued to grow to account for 7.23% in 2020.

### SDG 17 Partnership to Achieve the Goals

This section details the means of implementation for the country's development from the perspective of state revenues and building Equatorial Guinea's statistical capacity. Overall, the indicators analysed in this section show significant challenges in both aspects.

Due to the economic downturn created by the oil crisis, public revenues have seen a significant reduction since 2015 (indicator 17.1.1). Public revenues fell from 26.6% to 14.1% of GDP between 2015 and 2020. During this period, the majority of state revenues came from oil, accounting for 83.5% of public revenues in 2015 and falling to 74.5% in 2020<sup>156</sup>. Tax revenues declined in importance in GDP, from 11.2% in 2015 to 7.6% in 2020<sup>157</sup>. This change was mainly due to a drop in oil-related tax revenues from 8.5% of GDP in 2015 to 5.3% in 2020<sup>158</sup>. During this period, the share of the national budget financed by domestic taxes increased from 37.6% in 2015 to 54.5% in 2020<sup>159</sup> (indicator 17.1.1)<sup>160</sup>.

**Figure 26.** Indicators 9.1.2 and 9.2.1. Share of the manufacturing sector in GDP and GDP per capita



**Source:** estimations from INEGE based on INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021

153 Ibid.

154 Obtained from GDP at constant 2006 prices in INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

155 INEGE estimates based on data available in INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021..

156 INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.

157 Ibid.

158 Ibid.

159 Ibid.

160 Remaining macroeconomic indicators (indicator 17.12.1) are available at: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021.



**Table 7.** Indicator 17.1.1 Ratio of government revenue to GDP by type of Source (%)

Income	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 <sup>estim rev.</sup>	2020 <sup>estim</sup>
Non-oil income	4,4	4,0	3,5	3,7	3,9	3,6
Taxes	2,7	2,5	2,1	2,3	2,7	2,3
Non-Taxes	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,3	1,2	1,4
Oil income	22,2	12,9	13,9	16,2	14,8	10,5
Taxes	8,5	3,8	3,9	3,6	6,4	5,3
Non-taxes	13,7	9,1	10,1	12,6	8,4	5,3
Total income	26,6	17,0	17,5	19,9	18,6	14,1

Source: Anuario Estadístico de Guinea Ecuatorial 2020-2021

**Table 8.** Indicator 17.1.2 Proportion of the national budget financed by internal taxation

Income	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 <sup>estim rev.</sup>	2020 <sup>estim</sup>
Income Taxes/spending	37,6	18,1	18,0	18,5	54,5	54,5

Source: INEGE, Anuario Estadístico 2021

As mentioned above, Equatorial Guinea has invested and taken steps to improve its statistical capacity. However, as seen throughout the section on the country's progress on the SDGs, the country still faces significant challenges in this area. The alignment of the country's statistics with the 10 fundamental principles of official statistics (Indicator 17.18.2) is ensured by the law Regulating Statistical Activity in Equatorial Guinea (number 3/2020 of 16 October, chapter 1). Similarly, between 2016 and 2020 the country had a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (ENDE-GE 2016-2020), which was mainly financed by the government (Indicator 17.8.3). Currently, the strategy for the period 2022-2025 is pending approval. Regarding investments, between 2015 and 2021 the Government has invested more than 20,522.1 million FCFA for national statistical capacity building, i.e. more than USD 33 million (indicator 17.19.1).<sup>161</sup> In terms of statistical production, the country has a general population census, conducted in 2015 (indicator 17.19.2). In addition, a household survey is currently being conducted with the support of the World Bank, which will allow the updating of development indicators, including those of the SDGs.

### Shortcomings, Challenges and Actions

One of the most important challenges the country faces on its path to economic growth is regaining macroeconomic balance. In this context, the IMF has supported the country in addressing the critical challenges it has been exposed to. In 2019, the IMF approved a three-year arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) of 205,009 million Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) (approximately US\$ 282.8 million, 130% of the country's quota in the Fund), with an immediate disbursement of SDR 29,287 million (approximately US\$ 40.4 million) and future disbursements according to progress<sup>162</sup>. In addition, in response to the health contingency and the 7M explosions, the IMF approved the disbursement of SDR 47.25 million (approximately US\$ 67.38 million) under the Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) in 2021<sup>163</sup>.

To access these funds and carry out the structural reforms the country needs, Equatorial Guinea committed to increase transparency, improve governance and fight corruption. In terms of transparency, two escrow accounts

161 Information provided by INEGE. INEGE annual subsidies from 2015-2021, training of the agents of the ministerial statistical services, fellows to statistical institutions, among others (1 USD= 620.37 FCFA).

162 IMF, "Comunicado de Prensa No 19/472", (2019), <https://www.imf.org/es/News/Articles/2019/12/18/pr19472-equitorial-guinea-imf-executive-board-approves-us-million-three-year-eff-arrangement>.

163 IMF, "Comunicado de Prensa No 21/266", (2021), <https://www.imf.org/es/News/Articles/2021/09/15/pr21266-equatorial-guinea-imf-exec-board-approves-emergency-support-covid-19-accidental-explosions>.



were opened at the BEAC, one for pandemic expenditures and the other for emergency expenditures in Bata, both of which were audited and the government committed to adhere to good practices in procurement and contract awarding. The anti-corruption law was also passed, in line with international obligations and in the context of the UN Convention against Corruption. Imputed net external assets (AEN) in the BEAC turned positive in mid-2019, but remained low<sup>164</sup>. The IMF notes that it is important for the government to follow through on the commitment to prepare and publish the list of significant public assets for privatisation and on the adoption of regulations in line with the anti-corruption law. The country still needs to implement measures to stabilise the banking sector (regularisation of arrears and recapitalisation of the country's main bank), as well as to increase efforts to protect social spending, improve social spending and continue reforms in public revenue and the public financial management framework<sup>165</sup>.

**To boost the country's economy, the NSDS 2035 proposes sectoral resolutions in regulation and governance, as well as in the development of industries, trade, telecommunications, electricity, human capital, tourism, agriculture and livestock, fisheries, petrochemicals and forestry.** All of the resolutions relating to the economic growth axis can be found in the PNDES 2035. Some of these resolutions were grouped by theme and are presented below (non-exhaustive list). These resolutions aim to:

Increase the country's financing, through the modernisation of the legal framework and improvements in fiscal management to attract investment and increase foreign direct investment in sectors related to economic diversification. Control mechanisms are to be implemented to improve the management of public finances and improve legal and fiscal security to boost the financial sector. In this regard, in March 2022, the members of the court of accounts were appointed, which aims to increase transparency in the fiscal management of the nation's assets (Decree 29/2022). At the same time, inter-ministerial collaboration to increase FDI in petrochemicals and to adopt mechanisms to prolong the availability of oil and gas reserves by increasing investment in exploration activities.

Human capital formation, through investments in local capacities, training in specific sectors and alignment between business demand and educational supply. To this

end, investments are sought to improve the skills of local workers, train civil servants and young people in the use of ICTs and promote their use in schools. At the sectoral level, the aim is to ensure training in the timber sector and to adopt a strategy for human resources training in the fisheries sector. Additionally, a gender-sensitive approach is also sought in order to reduce poverty and improve food security in the country. Finally, dialogue should be encouraged between the business and the education sectors so that curricula are adapted to the needs of the private sector.

Promote trade, through regulatory reforms, tariff measures and the promotion of e-commerce. In this sense, regional integration is to be promoted through the implementation of regional trade agreements, improving the application of the CEMAC customs code, the reduction of tariff barriers and an action plan for the country's ports to serve as gateways to countries in the region. The legal framework is to be improved by increasing the transparency of trade regulation, creating a specialised commercial law court and ensuring compatibility with OHADA law. It also seeks to effectively implement the ASYCUDA WORLD programme in order to improve customs management, promote exports through instruments that facilitate exports of national products and the completion of the process of integration into the World Trade Organisation. The aim is to develop regulations to promote e-commerce. The PNDES 2035 also seeks to strengthen the capacity of women to benefit from trade activities.

Promote business development through changes in regulation and the creation of special zones and business financing. To develop the business sector, a strategy for business clusters is to be implemented and the One-Stop Business Shop is to be strengthened. In particular, for SMEs, the aim is to adopt the "national provisions" that seek to reduce the minimum capital required to create a Limited Liability Company (LLC) and to allow economic operators to draw up the statutes of their LLC themselves. In addition, given the need to develop the ICT sector in the country, a fiscal policy is to be adopted to provide incentives and create a special development zone for ICT companies (Free Trade Zone and ICT Investment Fund). Likewise, public mechanisms will be adopted for the financing of national entrepreneurship in the fishing sector.

Increase access to electricity and telecommunications, through infrastructure development and internet access.

164 Ministerio de Hacienda, Economía y Planificación, "informe trabajo con el FMI", (2019), <https://minhacienda-gob.com/informes/>.

165 FMI, "Comunicado de Prensa No 21/266", (2021), <https://www.imf.org/es/News/Articles/2021/09/15/pr21266-equatorial-guinea-imf-exec-board-approves-emergency-support-covid-19-accidental-explosions>.

The plan aims to increase installed electricity capacity and move towards renewable energies (wind and solar) and the implementation of electricity infrastructure interconnections between Cameroon and Gabon. To overcome connectivity difficulties, the country wants to ensure access to fibre optics and the mobile network (3G/4G and 5G).

Improve the country's statistical capacity in terms of economic and industrial development. To this end, one of the resolutions seeks to establish a fisheries data system in line with international standards. It also proposes a series of feasibility studies on the development of aquaculture, a special economic zone for national furniture production, the construction of a storage tank complex (petrochemicals) and the construction of a refinery. An in-depth diagnosis of the country's forestry potential is also being sought.

## VI. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT



The axis of environmental sustainability and territorial development seeks to conserve the environment, while at the same time guaranteeing responsible and sustainable production, consumption and urban development in the country. Equatorial Guinea has had to find a balance between its important natural potential, composed of its diversity in fauna and flora, and the development of infrastructures that allow for economic development and

the provision of infrastructures for its population. The main findings of this axis are:

1. A marginal increase in the proportion of the population with access to electricity between 2012 and 2017.
2. Improvements in the country's energy efficiency despite the economic crisis.
3. The country's dependence on generating energy through non-renewable sources increased.
4. Air pollution in urban areas was above WHO-recommended limits.
5. The 7M caused the highest number of deaths and people affected that the country has seen in recent years.
6. All key marine areas are protected, but protection of marine areas under national jurisdiction is low.
7. The country's forest area has decreased marginally in recent years, however, most of the land area is covered by forests.
8. The risk of species extinction has remained stable in the country in recent years.

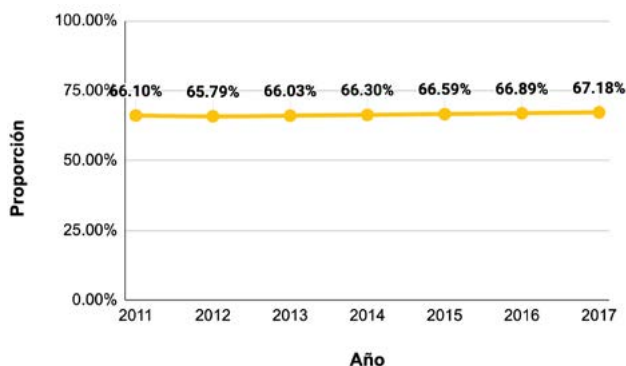
The main challenge to combat environmental problems and climate change in Equatorial Guinea requires raising awareness of the importance of this issue among those in power to promote investment in research on the biodiversity of fauna and flora and, consequently, specialised investment in instruments to implement the Early Warning System for disaster forecasting and prevention throughout the country through duly identified Red Dots; This will allow the gradual collection of data on impact, process and product indicators that would serve to measure the country's Environmental Performance Index, avoiding the use of proxy indicators.

### SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

**SDG 7 seeks to ensure access to affordable, secure, sustainable and modern energy. In this regard, access to electricity increased marginally between 2012 and 2017.** The proportion of the population with access to electricity increased from 66.1% to 67.2% between these two dates (Indicator 7.1.1)<sup>166</sup>.

<sup>166</sup> The report on The Road Ahead (El Camino Recorrido) estimated the proportion of the population with access to electricity at 67.8% in 2017, a slight difference of less than one percentage point. Data for this indicator were estimated (2011-2014) and modelled (2015-2017) by the World Bank and found in: UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 7.1.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022) <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/e6c832737537456484b99ee6683b84de/explore>.

Figure 27. Indicator 7.1.1, proportion of population with access to electricity<sup>167</sup>



Source: UNSTATS

Moreover, despite the economic crisis, estimates indicate that the country's energy efficiency has improved in recent years. The level of energy intensity is a proxy for the country's energy efficiency and measures the energy required to produce one unit of GDP. The indicator is measured as the ratio of the country's energy supply to its GDP in 2011 purchasing power parity dollars (Indicator 7.3.1). Between 2011 and 2018, this indicator fell from 2.58 to 1.75 megajoules per dollar (PPP 2011). It is worth noting that the reduction in GDP due to the crisis should have increased the value of the indicator (if energy supply had remained constant). In this sense, the reduction of this indicator indicates that the country's energy supply continued to increase despite the economic crisis.

However, the country is increasingly dependent on non-renewable sources for energy generation. According to UNSD estimates, the share of renewable energy in total energy consumption decreased from 50.4% to 12% (Indicator 7.2.1)<sup>168</sup>. This phenomenon may have two explanations. First, the growth in the use of oil and gas for energy production in the country. Second, the oil crisis halted construction projects, which has prevented the use of hydrological resources for energy production. For example, the Sendje hydroelectric dam, which would have the largest power production in the country (120-200MW), was started in 2012 but was suspended in 2016 due to lack of funds in the government<sup>169</sup>. Although it was resumed in 2018<sup>170</sup>, it is still under construction.

### SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 11 aims to make cities more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. In urban areas of the country, air pollution was above the WHO recommended limits, which can have significant consequences on the health of the population. The latest measurement of population-weighted fine particulate matter in the air (Indicator 11.6.1) was conducted by WHO in 2016 and corresponds to an estimation using satellite data. It found that the annual average concentration of fine airborne particles less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5) was 49.1 micrograms per cubic metre, when the WHO safe maximum is 10 micrograms per cubic metre<sup>171</sup>. This pollution can derive mostly from the

Figure 28. Indicator 11.6.2, annual population-weighted average concentration of fine suspended particulate matter (PM 2.5)



Source: UNSTATS

167 UNSTATS, "UN Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 7.1.1, Proportion of population with access to electricity", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/e6c832737537456484b99ee6683b84de/explore?location=5.976114%2C1.735981%2C2.60>.

168 Data estimated by the United Nations Statistics Division (2019). UNSTATS "Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 7.2.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/3cece1f2bb4e49efa22d45bc34076805/explore>.

169 GUINEA INFOMARKET, "Historia y Construcción de la Central Hidroeléctrica de Sendje", (2020), <https://www.guineainfomarket.com/economia/2020/03/21/historia-y-construccion-de-la-central-hidroelectrica-de-sendje/>.

170 Ibid.

171 WHO estimate. Estimates for this indicator are based on satellite data. Taken from: UNSTATS "Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 11.6.2, Equatorial Guinea", (2020), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/f612a34532324b998489902f86812cd2/explore?location=1.669416%2C-61.909136%2C2.51>.

use of fossil fuels for human activities (industries, transport, electricity generation) and exposes the population to respiratory diseases and infections (such as lung cancer), which can even lead to increased mortality rates.

### SDG 12: Responsible Production and Consumption

SDG 12 seeks to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. In Equatorial Guinea, estimates show that the material footprint, i.e. the amount of raw materials used in the country, has increased over the last decade. After a reduction between 2000 and 2010, in which the material footprint went from 2 to 1.2 kg per unit of GDP respectively (constant 2010 dollars), this indicator increased again, reaching 1.7 kg per unit of GDP (Indicator 12.2.2).

### SDG 13: Climate Action

SDG 13 aims to take urgent action to combat climate change and its effects. Although Equatorial Guinea has not been severely affected by natural phenomena, 7M caused the highest number of deaths and affected people the country has seen in recent years. Prior to these explosions, the number of people affected and killed by disasters was significantly lower. According to data collected by INEGE from the fire brigade, the number of people killed by disasters in 2017, 2018 and 2019 was 7, 1 and 4 respectively and the number of people affected by them was 863, 190 and 997 in the same period (Indicator 13.1.1)<sup>172</sup>. The 7M explosions caused the death of 107 people, and directly affected 780 households, or at least 3,900 people<sup>173</sup> (more information about 7M in the leave no one behind section).

### SDG 14: Underwater Life

SDG 14 seeks to conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas and marine resources. In the country, the latest available data indicate that protection of marine areas under national jurisdiction is low. However, the total number of marine key biodiversity areas is covered by protected areas. According to data from the Global Database on Protected Areas, in 2018, only 0.5% of the marine environment under national jurisdiction (up to 200 nautical miles from the coast) had protection, i.e. 1,500 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>174</sup> In this sense, Indicator 14.5.1 is below the target of conserving 10% of coastal and marine areas. However, protected areas cover 100% of marine key biodiversity areas (KBAs) (2019), implying that key marine areas designated so far are protected.

### SDG 15: Terrestrial Ecosystem Life

SDG 15 seeks to ensure sustainable forest management, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. In this regard. It should be noted that most of Equatorial Guinea's land area is covered by forests. However, infrastructure development, subsistence agriculture, and the lack of protection of forest areas, lead to a decrease and degradation of the forest area. According to FAO data, based on country data, the land area covered by forests was 93.2% (Indicator 15.1.1)<sup>175</sup>. This proportion declined to 88.8% in 2015, and has since declined annually by 0.34% (Indicator 15.2.1)<sup>176</sup>, reaching 87.3% in 2020. In 2015, the proportion of degraded land in the total area was 19% (Indicator 15.3.1)<sup>177</sup>. The study on the causes of deforestation and forest degradation in the country (2004-2014)<sup>178</sup> attributed these changes to infrastructure expansion (96%) and to a lesser extent to the growth of the agricultural sector (4%). The main cause of forest degradation was subsistence agriculture (41%), followed by infrastructure development (36%)<sup>179</sup>. In addition, the

172 Information obtained by INEGE through the National Fire Company of the Ministry of the Interior and Local Corporations of Equatorial Guinea.

173 OCHA y ORC Guinea Ecuatorial, Explosiones Bata, Respuesta y Recuperación.

174 UNSTATS, "Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 14.5.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/be1eb5aebdf24e43a91a769e3d6fbd2b/explore?location=12.197991%2C1.735981%2C2.18>.

175 UNSTATS, "Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 15.1.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/4787e933dac34421b4b11427a0b78fbc/explore?location=13.541658%2C1.232241%2C2.22>.

176 UNSTATS, "Sustainable Development Goals, indicador 15.2.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/494e02b3371a4a48acc40fbefc23e7ae/explore?location=0.691401%2C51.329897%2C3.00>.

177 UNSTATS, "Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 15.3.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/1a14f2c331744324a66f01521443d7bf/explore?location=13.325289%2C21.671980%2C2.93>.

178 MAGMBA y FAO, "Estudio de las causas de la deforestación y degradación forestal en Guinea Ecuatorial 2004-2014", (2018), <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/es/c/CA0399ES/>.

179 The relative weight of the causes of deforestation and forest degradation was determined by random sampling at 430 points analysed with satellite images. In addition, a field observation was carried out in 115 additional points and national experts in botany and cartography were consulted. MAGMBA

proportion of forest areas in legally established protected areas was 11% in 2020<sup>180</sup> (indicator 15.2.1), implying that the degradation of the country's forest area may continue.

The risk of species extinction has remained stable in the country in recent years. The red list index, which measures the aggregate extinction risk of various species in the country, has remained at 0.82 from 2000 to 2020 (Indicator 15.5.1)<sup>181</sup>. This indicator is close to 1 when the country's species are not at risk of extinction and 0 when all species are considered extinct. In this sense, although the risk is relatively low, the lack of change in the indicator shows that actions have not yet been taken to protect the country's species in a forceful manner.

### Shortcomings, challenges and measures

In relation to the above, the main causes of biodiversity loss are:

1. Deforestation and forest degradation, described earlier in this document.
2. Over-hunting, which threatens to cause the extinction of species vital to ecosystem functioning, food security and livelihoods, as well as to the potential for ecotourism. In rural areas, human-wildlife conflicts exist. Elephants and other species destroy crops, making them targets for hunting.
3. Air, soil and water pollution. Freshwater (lakes, lagoons, rivers, deltas, marshes) and marine ecosystems are often used as receptors for urban, agricultural and industrial waste. There is a lack of environmental impact assessment studies.
4. Non-compliance with current legislation. In this regard, government measures adopted since 2017 reflect the commitment and political intention to enforce laws to reduce biodiversity loss and promote a new model of sustainable management.

Like other countries in the region, Equatorial Guinea is defining its development model and faces the dual challenge of developing the economy and reducing poverty, while limiting negative impacts on its natural capital, and in particular on its valuable forests. Faced with this challenge, the country reaffirms its political will to develop its territory and its economy in an orderly,

sustainable and inclusive manner, and to make the most of the multiple benefits of Equatorial Guinea's forests for the good of the country, the region and our planet.

As evidenced by its regional and international commitments, Equatorial Guinea is determined to contribute to global efforts to combat climate change, both in terms of adapting to it and mitigating its effects.

In 2013 Equatorial Guinea developed the National Action Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (NAPA), with the aim of strengthening the country's resilience to the negative effects of climate change, which are already beginning to be felt by the population.

In a complementary manner, Equatorial Guinea began its REDD+ readiness process in 2012, recognising the importance of forests in mitigating climate change and the need to halt and reverse greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions linked to deforestation and forest degradation.

In this context, the country has developed the National REDD+ Strategy (EN-REDD+), with the support of the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) and the UN-REDD Programme. The long-term objective of the EN-REDD+ is to "contribute to the global fight against climate change and to the sectoral development of the country to achieve the well-being of the Equatoguinean people through REDD+, with an approach based on competitiveness, sustainability, integrated territorial management, food security, and social and gender equity". The EN-REDD+ will contribute to the country achieving the climate objectives stipulated in its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) and the development objectives set out in the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES) Horizon 2020 (RGE, 2007).

The EN-REDD+ sets ambitious targets to meet its objectives:

1. Reduce GHG emissions linked to agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) by 20% by 2030, and 50% by 2050.
2. Maintain forest area at around 93% of the national territory.
3. Reduce the rate of forest degradation to 0.45% per year.
4. Strengthen the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP).

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and FAO, Estudio de las causas de la deforestación.

180 UNSTATS, "Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 15.2.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/7b45bb09038a47e694f5297ce43371fb/explore?location=15.384521%2C179.016246%2C2.49>.

181 UNSTATS, "Sustainable Development Goals, indicator 15.5.1, Equatorial Guinea", (2022), <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/4787e933dac34421b4b11427a0b78f8be/explore?location=2.506387%2C1.232241%2C2.00>.



5. Increase the area of productive forests with sustainable management plans to 80% by 2030.
6. Achieve sustainability and improve the efficiency of the forestry and agricultural sectors.
7. Mitigate and compensate for possible negative impacts on forests from future productive activities.

Implementation will be carried out by a REDD+ Steering Committee (CP-REDD+) and a National REDD+ Coordination (CN-REDD+), which will act as the entities responsible for governance and as an executive-technical body, respectively. Furthermore, the EN-REDD+ establishes the fundamental aspects for the future estimation of GHG emissions and removals through the Forest Reference Emission Levels (FRELs) or Forest Reference Levels (FRLs); the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and the Safeguards Information System (SIS), adopting a gender approach. In this way, the EN-REDD+ covers all the pillars that underpin the readiness phase of the REDD+ process.

To finance this ambitious strategy, the country proposes a mixed financial framework, with six potential sources of funding, including national and international, public and private resources. The EN-REDD+ has been formulated through a consultation process with the most relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, during its implementation, special emphasis will be placed on the active participation of stakeholders, both men and women.

Equatorial Guinea ratified the Paris Agreement in 2018, thus demonstrating its commitment to contribute to global efforts against climate change, both in terms of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In 2019, Equatorial Guinea's Country Programme for the Green Climate Fund was developed, setting out priority actions to address climate change.

The changes observed in Equatorial Guinea's climate are consistent with changes occurring globally. Several documents have been produced by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to address the effects of climate change, both in terms of adaptation and mitigation, among which the following stand out:

1. The National Adaptation Action Plan 2013 (NAPA), which makes a detailed analysis of the observed evidence of climate change and national circumstances to address these changes, states. "The country is highly vulnerable to climate change, given the magnitude of expected impacts and the country's low adaptive capacity in terms of high poverty rates, unequal distribution of resources

and lack of strong sustainable implementation of its development plan";

2. The 2015 Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) show the emissions reduction strategy in the five identified sectors: (1) Energy, (2) Agriculture and land-use change, (3) Transport, (4) Forestry and (5) Waste;
3. Causes of Deforestation and Degradation Study (2018), collects the most degraded areas in the country, as well as the most deforested areas. It describes the causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Equatorial Guinea;
4. National REDD+ Strategy (2018), sets out the measures that the country would take to reduce the effects of the drivers or causes of deforestation and forest degradation, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
5. National REDD+ Investment Plan (2019) (PNI-REDD+), which sets out the main activities in which the country wishes to invest in the implementation of the REDD+ mechanism, a document produced with technical support from FAO and under funding from the Central African Forest Conservation Initiative (CAFI);
6. The Country Programme (2019), the country is developing the country programme with the Green Climate Fund, which is the document that captures the country's main funding priorities;
7. The National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (ENPADIB 2015), to name a few.

The country is a member of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and has participated in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) meetings since 1990. The country's active international participation in environmental protection and climate change issues contrasts with the fragile implementation of international treaties signed domestically. The regulatory and institutional framework on the aforementioned issues is still weak, which conspires against the implementation of signed agreements and commitments made by the government.

An important step was achieved with the implementation of Law No. 7/2003, which is considered the Law Regulating the Environment in Equatorial Guinea. Regardless of the fact that Article 6 of the country's Fundamental Law explicitly protects nature, the country's legal framework on environmental issues is currently being shaped by the



implementation of other laws, including the Mining Law (Law No. 9/2006) and the Hydrocarbons Law (No. 8/2006), among others.

In the regulatory framework, there are still legal loopholes that allow activities that favour the increase of GHGs or go against the policies of adaptation to the impacts of climate change. Moreover, inspection and oversight activities to monitor the implementation of the existing laws themselves are imaginary, which needs to be overcome as quickly as possible.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea has a firm commitment to contribute to the fight against Climate Change, which has been made clear with the signature on 22 April 2016 and the Ratification on 16 July 2018 of the Paris Agreement, demonstrating the political will of the Government in this regard. On the other hand, there is currently a national strategy to develop resilience to it and contribute with its modest efforts to reduce GHG emissions, taking into account the common responsibility that all nations have in their fight against the main environmental problem facing humanity: climate change.

In May 2019, the third National Economic Conference (III CEN) was held under the title "Consolidating social equity and economic diversification", where the country's

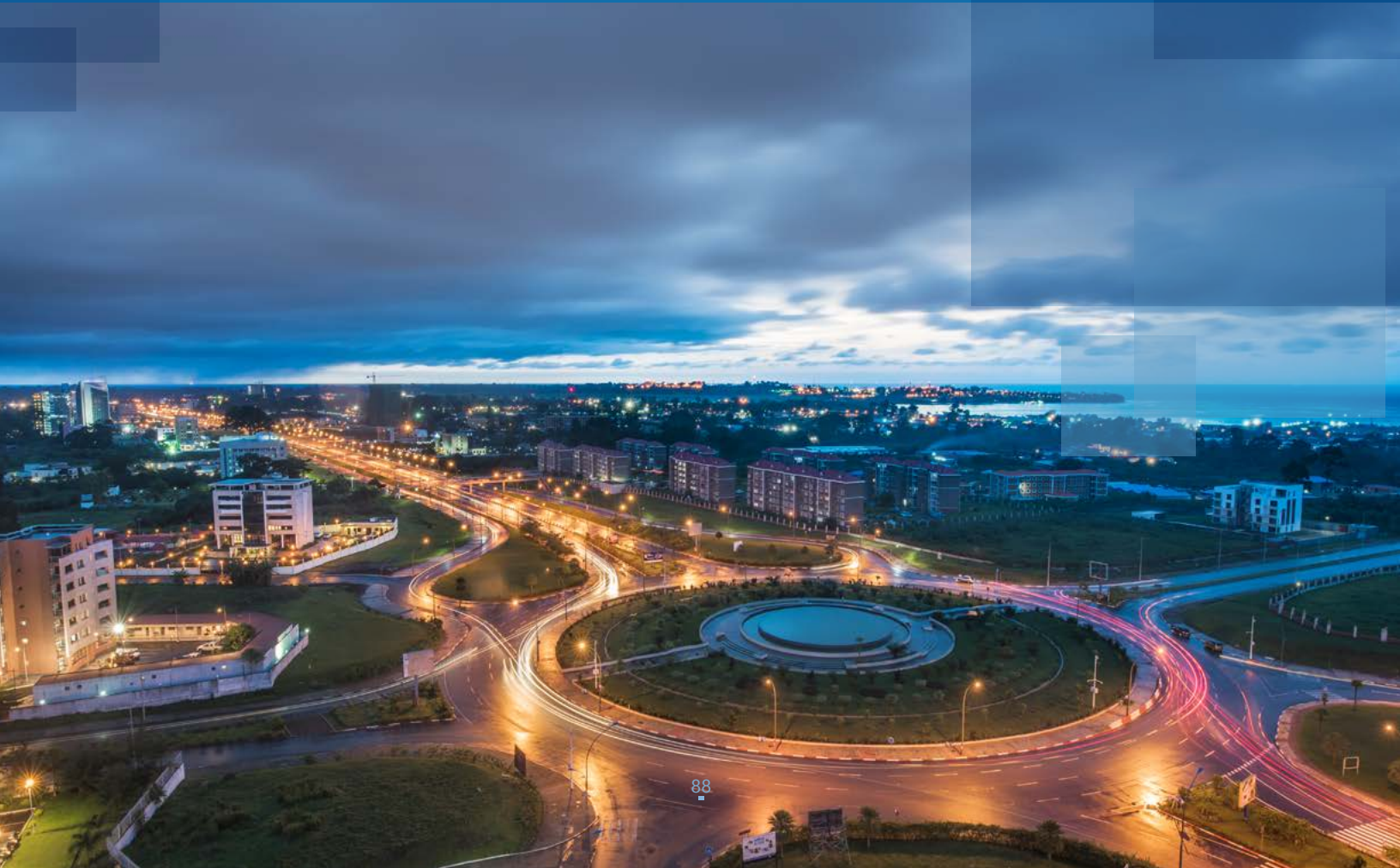
challenges were presented, analysed and discussed and, consequently, the design of the bases for the achievement of sustainable and inclusive economic growth, resulting in the diversification of the sources of growth and social welfare. At this Conference, the bases were established to reorient the current PNDES towards a National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Equatorial Guinea, with a time horizon of 2035 (ENDS 2035).

Following the III CEN, Equatorial Guinea's socio-economic policies have prioritised the elaboration of a National Spatial Development Plan (PNOT) as one of the main National Planning instruments. Based on this, it has adopted its National Strategy for Sustainable Development through Decree No. 69/2021 of 29 April, called Equatorial Guinea Agenda 2035. This agenda shows the importance given to the issue of the Environment and Land Management in national policy, where the country wishes to initiate steps for the development of a National Land Management Plan as a key element for sustainable productive diversification, the reduction of conflicts due to the different uses of the territory and the loss of forests.





# MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION



In relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Government of Equatorial Guinea, through its ministerial departments, has not been able to identify exact current resource flows, but some claim that they have adopted measures necessary to implement development in their area of action.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources reports that at departmental level there is a funding line for capacity building needs that the government has been promoting, particularly in knowledge sharing based on statistical data, technology and partnerships. For its part, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality notes that current resource flows are minimal. The steps it uses for requesting national resources are done through Annual Action Plans that are submitted to the Government for funding, which in most cases are not funded, and if they are, it is usually with delays, and also with funding from the UN System Agencies in the country<sup>182</sup>.

Regarding the steps that have been taken to identify critical gaps and estimate the additional resources needed to implement the 2030 Agenda, the ministerial entities have identified the necessary steps that should be taken into consideration for the proper implementation of the 2030 Agenda in their respective ministerial departments, some of them present the following:

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, needs financial and technical support to develop the following activities:

Boosting the leadership of the technical coordination of the promotion of women and gender equity through the following strategic actions:

1. Adoption and implementation of the draft Organic and Functional Regulation of MINASIGE and equipping it with adequate and motivated professional staff.
2. Creation of a Management and Implementation Unit for the future Multisectoral Gender Equality Plan in application of the new National Gender Policy in the process of adoption and implementation.
3. Creation and implementation of a Multisectoral Committee for Coordination and Evaluation of the Multisectoral Plan for Gender Equality.
4. Creation and implementation of a Technical Committee for the Follow-up of the Beijing + 25

Action Plan.

5. Adoption of an Advocacy Plan to increase women's access to resources and decision-making in all spheres and levels of management.

Strengthen the institutional and legal framework for the promotion of women and gender equality through the following strategic actions:

1. Adoption and implementation of the new National Gender Policy to serve as a reference in the process of elaborating National Gender Development Plans.
2. Implementation of an Advocacy Plan for the adoption and implementation of the three draft laws (Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Gender Violence, Regulation of Traditional Marriage and the Family and Individuals Code).
3. Updating and implementation of the National Network of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians of Equatorial Guinea.
4. Strengthening the participation of CSOs in the planning, execution and monitoring of the future Strategic Plan for Gender Equality.

Improve the programmatic and technical management framework for the promotion of women and gender equality through the following strategic actions:

1. Elaboration and adoption of a Multisectoral Plan for Gender Equality to Horizon 2030.
2. Elaboration and adoption of an Operational Plan for Gender Equality (2020 - 2025).
3. Implementation of a Plan for the collection, analysis, dissemination and conservation of data on the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls.
4. Review, adoption and implementation of the Rural Women's Self Employment Project (PRAMUR) to improve women's agricultural productivity through the following strategic actions:
  - a. Revision, adoption and implementation of the Adult Women and Young Adolescent Literacy Programme to accelerate the elimination of illiteracy in the country.
  - b. Revision, adoption and implementation of a

182 VNR Workshop Seminar.

### Multisectoral Programme to Combat Gender Violence.

Boost resource mobilisation and financing for gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment through the following strategic actions:

1. Development and implementation of a Resource Mobilisation Plan to finance the future Multisectoral Gender Equality Plan for implementation of the new Policy.
2. Putting in place mechanisms for greater management of PIP funds for the optimal financing of the future Multisectoral Plan for Gender Equality.
3. Putting in place mechanisms for greater management of funds mobilised through the UNS towards the financing of the future Multisectoral Plan for Gender Equality<sup>183</sup>.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources, through its Directorate General of Fisheries, has elaborated a Plan with the collaboration of the African Development Bank (ADB), which describes the implementation of financing systems to support maritime, inland and aquaculture fisheries structure<sup>184</sup>.

Regarding the level at which the country is involved in international cooperation, according to the information acquired in the workshops, it has been noted that in the different ministerial departments the Government is actively involved in international cooperation in each sector, for example, within the fisheries sector, the country is involved in International Cooperation with the signing of several protocols with International Organisations, Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, as well as the implementation of South-South cooperation, in the field of training of technical staff. The Ministry of the Interior and Local Corporations applaud the Government's efforts and its interest in improving international cooperation, but consider that there is still a need for cooperation that brings innovation and improvements to the country's difficulties<sup>185</sup>.

The partnerships in which the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is involved through its ministerial departments are detailed as follows:

1. Within the framework of the fishing sector, there are alliances in the maritime artisanal fisheries; semi-industrial and industrial fisheries, in addition to bilateral and multilateral cooperation alliances with the governments of other countries<sup>186</sup>.
2. At the level of the Ministry of the Interior and Local Corporations there are many alliances and all within the framework of the fight against Climate Change (CC) (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and others), on the other hand, they point out that the private sector has no record of fighting against CC in the country, therefore they propose that it is necessary to convene a national conference on this issue to identify all actors and define roles and obligations. The Government is leading and making efforts in the fight against CC, the Ministry of the Interior through the Directorate General of Civil Society (DGSV) has made its action more dynamic, the waste sector is increasingly improving its collection and socio-environmental education, and the Directorate of Civil Protection (DGPV) has extended its action throughout the country to deal with CC emergencies. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality works closely with and receives technical and operational advice from international organisations such as the United Nations and Spanish Cooperation, and has partnerships with UNOCA, ECCAS, and the African Union<sup>187</sup>.

In terms of the problems identified, the creation of resilient infrastructures, the strengthening of capacities and the instruction of new technologies in the fight against CC have been pointed out. In addition, the importance and need for continuous improvement in the development process was expressed. For the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the framework of the fight against climate change, it was also pointed out that it is necessary to have well-identified and valued sectoral experts, without neglecting external technical science. These should be taken as mandatory elements and/or tools<sup>188</sup>.

At the level of the Directorates General of the different

183 Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, VNR Workshop Seminar.

184 Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources, VNR Workshop Seminar.

185 VNR Workshop Seminar.

186 Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources, VNR Workshop Seminar.

187 Ministry of Interior and Local Corporations, VNR Workshop Seminar.

188 Ibid.

ministerial departments, all have pointed to the lack of funding from the government as an obstacle to the successful implementation of their projects<sup>189</sup>.

Some of them detail the following:

1. The Directorate General of Civil Society (DGSC) points out that CSOs have financial difficulties in carrying out their programmes, in the sense that the General Law on Associations and the NGO Regulatory Law do not establish any mechanism for accessing the subsidy given by the government to NGOs. Instead, the laws state that organisations may receive funding through donors, international organisations, etc.
2. The Directorate General of Fisheries notes that the difficulties faced by the government for adequate funding are mainly due to the drop in the price of oil.
3. DG Industry states that the process they follow to apply for the necessary financial funds to implement their projects is quite long and slow.
4. The Directorate General of Justice states that the funds arrive quite late when it is time to implement a programme or project.
5. The National Institute for Forestry Development (INDEFOR) has suffered a reduction in its funding (annual grant by 50%), and given that many international organisations consider Equatorial Guinea to be a middle-income country, it is difficult to access external funding.
6. The General Directorate of Environmental Conservation and Fight against Climate Change mentions the main actions financed by the government in the framework of the Fight against Climate Change, including:
  - a. The construction of Hydroelectric Power Plants, which have made it possible to generate 40% of the energy consumed in the country through renewable sources.
  - b. The construction of the Turbo Gas plant, a transitional energy that is less polluting than diesel.
  - c. The construction of breakwaters and dykes in various parts of the country, as well as the canalisation of urban rivers.

The other actions carried out have been financed by various partners, international organisations and financial institutions, the most important of which are:

1. Global Environment Facility (GEF).
2. Green Climate Fund (GCF)
3. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
4. The Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)
5. African Development Bank (ADB)
6. The World Bank (WB)
7. DG Trade argues that commercial banks are not encouraged by the government to offer affordable financial products to SMEs and entrepreneurs.
8. DG Competitiveness argues that to develop the department's activities and plans, funding is needed, which has been requested but not obtained.

The Government has identified good actions to identify critical gaps and estimate the additional resources needed to implement the 2030 Agenda in each directorate<sup>190</sup>.

1. The Directorate General for Civil Society has a draft project for the reform of the General Law No. 11/1992 on Associations and Law No. 1/1999 on the Regime of Non-Governmental Organisations, which aims to update and modernise these legal instruments to adapt them to the current environment.
2. The external donations received by the Directorate General for Environmental Conservation and Combating Climate Change have enabled the following activities to be carried out in recent years: elaboration of a National Strategy for Forest Management and its investment plan (REDD+), a National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) document and its update, the first National Communication on Climate Change, the Sixth Report on Biodiversity Conservation, the study on the causes of deforestation and forest degradation, the forest emission baseline, the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory, the National Action Plan on Renewable Energies<sup>191</sup>.

189 Ibid

190 Ministry of Interior and Local Corporations, VNR Workshop Seminar.

191 Directorate General of Fisheries, VNR Workshop Seminar.



3. The Directorate General of Fisheries has the Tuna Fishing and Processing Project on the island of Annobón, which would require the training of skilled personnel. This project will allow the country to export the product abroad, providing employment for its citizens and reducing imports<sup>192</sup>.
4. The Directorate General of Justice relies on the work it carries out with some UN agencies, which finance programmes and projects. In addition, workshops and conferences are held which are fully financed by the UN system. In addition, there is the possibility of technical assistance, also funded by the UN. The law on corruption is an example of how the country has developed its own law on the basis of the UN general treaty on corruption. Another example is the Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa (OHADA), which establishes uniform acts that are binding on state parties. This organisation is responsible for additional costs and dissemination at the national level<sup>193</sup>.
5. The Directorate General of Urban Planning and Cadastre notes that among the challenges they face for the proper implementation of the SDGs are the creation of urban inspectors, the development of national mapping, the development of local urban planning in the Districts and Municipalities. Training of personnel in urban planning, exploitation of currently trained personnel.

Some of the programmes and plans developed are budgeted, such as the national REDD+ investment plan. The total budget of the PNI-REDD+ for the period 2020-2030 is 185 million USD, divided between 110 million USD for national programmes and 75 million USD for local integrated programmes<sup>194</sup>.

Regarding the alignment of financial systems and resource allocations to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, at the proposal of the Directorate General for Environmental Conservation and Climate Change, specific projects such as the creation of a hydrometeorological service and others with additional budgets have been developed. The Directorate General is negotiating with several international partners for the financing of these activities<sup>195</sup>.

Regarding the level of the country's involvement in international cooperation, the Government has participated and is part of several international cooperation programmes at the level of each Directorate General. Some of these are presented below:

1. CSOs participate in various international and sub-regional cooperation programmes. Some NGO members are representatives in some international organisations, such as the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and interact with UN agencies.
2. The General Directorate of Mines and Quarries states that there are good relations with mining companies, such as SEFA Golf and Blue Magnoliam, which are currently operating in the exploration phase, and others that are in the negotiation phase, where mining bidding rounds have been held and are expected to be held again. The sector has been promoted with the encouragement of national capital, with the implementation of several mining campaigns, seminars, as well as the provision of material for artisans with the aim of increasing artisanal gold production. The mining areas to be exported have been delimited, and model mining licences and authorisations have been developed. A national geological services platform has been set up for basic scientific research work, monitoring geological hazards, subsoil administration, ensuring mineral management, and coordinating research projects in accordance with the Mining Act.
3. In the field of environmental conservation, the country has developed close cooperation with international development partners, which has led to the signing of almost 90% of environmental conventions, participates in international fora and is a member of several sub-regional and regional bodies, including the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), etc.
4. At the level of the country's National Institute for Forestry Development, a collaboration agreement is being signed with Cameroon for the Rio Campo Ma'an Transboundary Complex.

192 Directorate General of Justice, VNR Workshop Seminar.

193 Directorate General of Fisheries, VNR Workshop Seminar.

194 Information obtained from Plan Nacional de inversión REDD+ DE GUINEA ECUATORIAL.

195 VNR Workshop Seminar.

5. At the level of the Directorate General of Fisheries, the country is involved with third countries, participating in decision-making where it is a member. As it does with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the Commission for Beef Cattle and Resources (SEBIVIRHA). There are opportunities for example with COREP (Regional Gulf Fisheries Commission) the EU because of the opportunities offered by that commission.
6. The Directorate General for Industry assures that it is working well, as they currently have a collaboration with UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) and with China on energy issues. Additional partnerships have been signed with other countries, but are still pending.
7. The Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, through its general directorates, is involved in various partnerships. In terms of the environment, the country is involved in several partnerships (agreements, treaties, protocols). There are also opportunities to expand partnerships and the directorate is working on this.
8. The Directorate General of Justice points out that our country's involvement is participatory through the treaty for the creation of OHADA. At the African continent level, the country's Head of State is the signatory and ratifies treaties so that they can enter into force in the country and thus become an integral part of the country's internal legislation. However, there are treaties that must first pass through parliament for discussion and subsequent ratification by the head of state.
9. The DGSC suggests that alliances could be expanded by joining the WTO to facilitate the development of trade, as well as finalising the application for membership of the EITI (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative).
10. The Directorate General of Urban Planning and Cadastre states that the Government of Equatorial Guinea is not a member of any regional or international organisation in the field of urban

planning and cadastre; the only alliance the Government has is with the inter-African school of urban planning and cadastre in Lome (Togo), in terms of education.

11. The Directorate General of Agriculture says that the country has signed a partnership agreement with the FAO for the implementation of the NPFS. Within the framework of the AU, the Detailed Programme for the Development of Agriculture in Africa (PDDAA) has been drawn up within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The elaboration of the food systems agreement with the UN system is underway<sup>196</sup>.

The Consortium of companies (private sector) states that they do not have resources due to a lack of financial and material resources. The Bioko Biodiversity Protection Programme (research and conservation) states that its current source of resources comes mainly from external funding, including: the US Government, the EXXONMOBIL International Foundation, the United Nations and Drexel University (USA)<sup>197</sup>.

For the academic and research sector, the main source of resources is training. The UNGE (National University of Equatorial Guinea), as part of the education sector, provides knowledge and human resources to the country, as well as training scholarships, support measures and technical training assistance. The UNGE's main resource is its teachers and researchers, which is why agreements have been signed with other universities for the training of teachers and researchers. This allows for the acquisition and management of knowledge for the challenges presented by the national economic development plan. Some of these agreements have not yet materialised due to financial issues of the competent bodies and whose allocations are insufficient for the real needs of the university. There is also a lack of internal management of financial resources by the university<sup>198</sup>.

At the level of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the main current sources of resources in its sector that make possible the implementation and promotion of the 2030 Agenda or SDGs covered today are the following: TRACK2, Multi-donors, GEF, Japan, Government of Equatorial Guinea<sup>199</sup>.

196 VNR Workshop Seminar.

197 Ibid.

198 National University of Equatorial Guinea, VNR Workshop Seminar.

199 VNR Workshop Seminar.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is made possible by the voluntary contributions of individuals and corporations: partners, donors, companies and public administrations. In recent years, UNICEF programmes and projects developed in the country have been financed through funds raised from our national, regional and global offices, in addition to the UNICEF national committees<sup>200</sup>.

Among the difficulties faced by these organisations in implementing the 2030 Agenda are mainly the lack of resources, the need to enable resource mobilisation strategies to attract foreign investment, and the lack of budget allocation specifically for the promotion of the SDGs in the country.

The government contributes to the implementation and promotion of the 2030 Agenda to the extent of its possibilities. For example, for UNDP, through technical and financial assistance, financing of public/private projects, payment to companies for the elaboration of studies relevant to the country, etc.

UNICEF, through the Programme of Cooperation 2019-2023 signed with the Government, has a total budget of 17,390,000 US dollars. In order to respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Bata emergency in 2021, UNICEF mobilised additional resources in the last biennium, including not only financial resources, but also material resources or inputs, and technical experts. An example of this was the mobilisation of experts who collaborated with GE-Projects and the Directorate General of Water Resources to conduct the analysis of the quality of water sources in Bata's ground zero affected by the explosions<sup>201</sup>.

In this way, as opportunities identified by these agencies from their sectors to expand partnerships for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the following are detailed: UNDP, specifically, is working on a strategy to mobilise resources for the financing of sectoral projects that would contribute to the implementation of the SDGs, while UNICEF, through its programmes of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), is working on a strategy to mobilise resources for the financing of sectoral projects that would contribute to the implementation of the SDGs: UNICEF through its UNDAF and CPD programmes, both aligned with the SDGs, which plan to identify synergies, potential partnerships both programmatic and resources with different actors from the State, civil society, academia,

the private sector and, in the specific case of UNICEF, with community associations and adolescents and youth<sup>202</sup>.

To this end, they identify the country's need for more effective implementation of the SDGs:

1. Training on the SDGs and development of the VNR and the LNOB.
2. Training in the development of action plans aligned with the SDGs.
3. Training on poverty, gender, social exclusion and socio-economic development.
4. Strengthen the institutional capacities of the country's different departments and institutions to improve their ownership and promotion of the SDGs.
5. Include the SDGs in the different plans, projects, programmes and sectoral policies of the public administration.
6. Promote the SDGs through information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns to all groups such as: NGOs, associations, cultural centres, adolescents and youth, political, social and community leaders, companies, IEC project agents/advocates, etc.
7. Results-based management with a human rights approach.
8. Public budget management guided by the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, equity, transparency and accountability.
9. Knowledge management, including the generation of reliable, disaggregated and regularly updated statistical evidence and data.
10. Review and harmonisation of legislative and policy frameworks with international standards<sup>203</sup>.

200 Ibid.

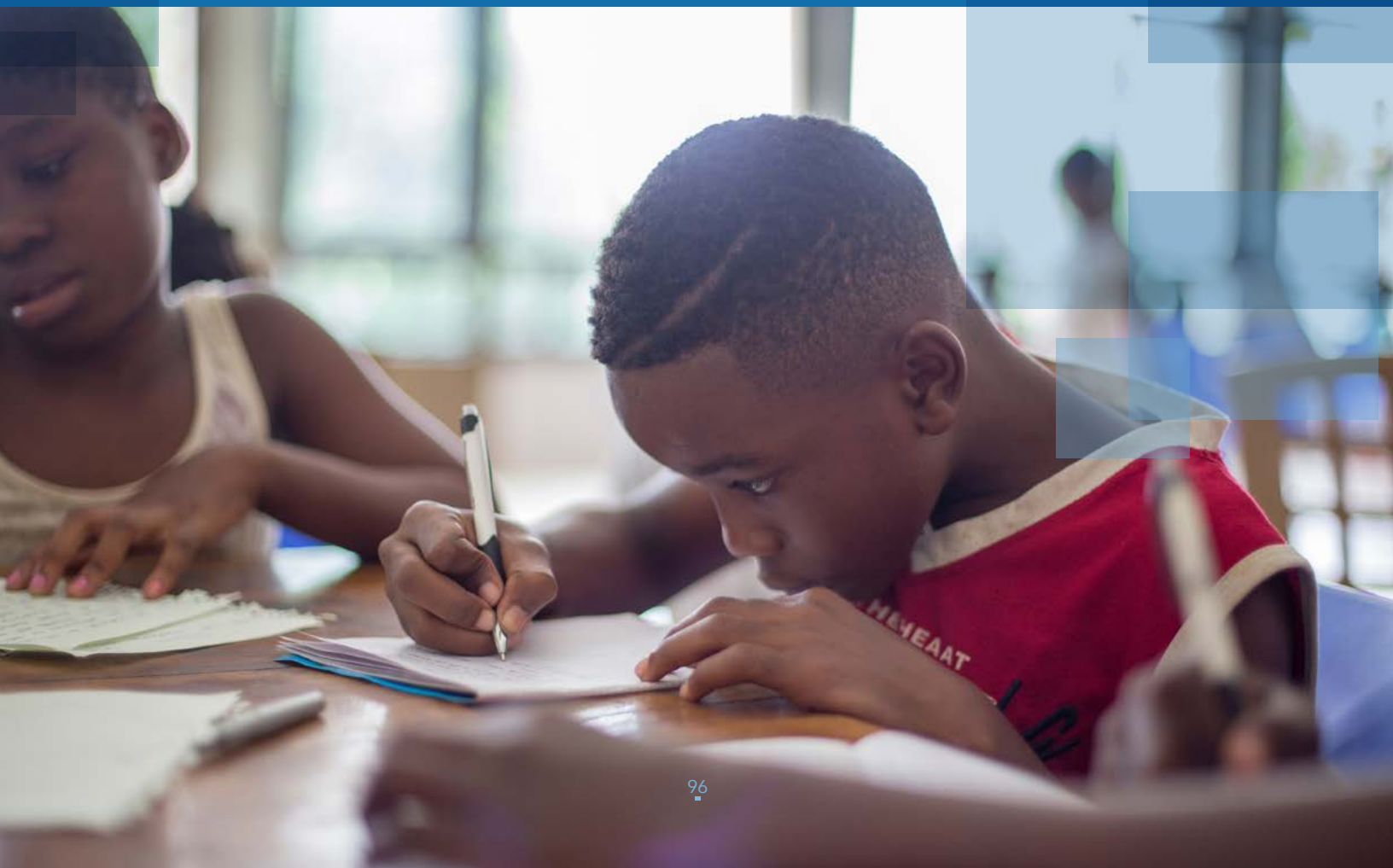
201 Ibid.

202 Ibid

203 Ibid.



# VI | NEXT STEPS



The elaboration of this VNR has involved a multi-sectoral participatory exercise in which synergy between all actors has been sought in order to assess the level of implementation of the SDGs in the country and the commitment of each of these actors. It reaffirms the need to work together in all dimensions and sectors to improve the quality of life of citizens and thus participate in the development of the population.

The Government is aware of the need to redouble efforts and of the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for our country and the world, but in order to achieve the SDGs it is necessary to exhaust all available avenues and tools. The government's commitment to the SDGs goes beyond the 2030 Agenda, as they were integrated into the NSDP 2035.

With regard to mines and quarries, the government plans to continue working together with all stakeholders to achieve the goals set out in its action plan. Implementing a dynamic of joint work that evaluates good practices and opportunities, enabling challenges to be overcome<sup>204</sup>.

The establishment of a Ministry of the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change marked a major change in our Government's policy, and environmental directions and actions became a priority for the Government team, which saw the importance of participating and getting involved with the rest of the world for the conservation of the planet. In the same vein, a major energy transition never before seen in the country took place in 2010, moving from a 100% use of Diesel energy to a 40% use of renewable energy today. The conversion is progressive, but more changes are expected in the coming years<sup>205</sup>.

In 2013, the territory of Equatorial Guinea was covered by 98% forest and 2% non-forested land (e.g. urban areas, surface water). Seventy-four% of the forested area consisted of dense forests and 24% of mixed forests<sup>206</sup>. Today, the great diversity in natural resources has allowed the government to designate a total of 13 protected areas: Pico Basilé National Park, Los Altos de Nsork National Park, Monte Alén National Park, Piedra Bere Natural Monument, Piedra Nzas Natural Monument, Nendyi Beach Scientific Reserve, Luba Caldera Scientific Reserve, Rio Campo Natural Reserve, Punta Ilende Natural Reserve,

Corisco and Elobeyes Islands Nature Reserve, Mount Temelon Nature Reserve, Annobón Nature Reserve and Muni River Estuary Nature Reserve, and new protected areas are planned (the creation of the University National Park at AAUCA (Afro-American University of Central Africa) is underway)<sup>207</sup>.

To maintain and preserve the forests, Equatorial Guinea, from the National Institute of Forestry Development, is working to update the Hunting Law (Law No. 8/1988)<sup>208</sup> on fauna, hunting and protected areas to increase the legal framework and provide legal coverage for the conservation of our fauna and flora as essential elements to combat global warming.

The update of the Environment Law, which is also on the priority agenda, includes aspects prioritised in the SDGs (SDG 13 and SDG 15) and is accompanied by an action plan that integrates actions on climate, biodiversity management, the conservation of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, etc.

Following this report, the government plans to continue with actions to raise awareness and disseminate the SDGs so that all spheres take ownership and acquire the same level of information about them through seminars, workshops, campaigns, etc.

One of the great challenges facing the country is the financing of some of the programmes and projects included in its NSDS 2035. Capacity building of the actors involved in the development and implementation of the government's actions on the SDGs.

Sufficient funding is needed to carry out:

1. Continuous training of teachers and staff working in the UNGE.
2. Research that responds to the country's challenges.
3. Monitoring actions are needed for the indicators retained in the National Indicator Framework (talk about the prioritisation exercise)<sup>209</sup>.

**Civil Society**<sup>210</sup> in all its aspects and themes works directly with the most vulnerable and excluded sectors of the population. They work in a total of 14 sectors including

204 Ibid.

205 Ibid

206 Atlas forestal de Guinea Ecuatorial.

207 VNR Workshop Seminar.

208 Ibid.

209 Ibid.

210 VNR Workshop Seminar.



education, health, sports, human rights, the environment, etc. In order to achieve their projects and contributions to society, the government has envisaged a package of measures to subsidise NGOs by including them in the general state budget. The Law on the Regime of Non-Governmental Organisations is to be updated so that these associations have more access to government funding.

Emphasis will be placed on accompanying them and informing them of government actions through the Civil Society department incorporated into the government apparatus. Equatorial Guinea, like other African countries, inherited colonial architecture. With our 2020 Development Plan focused on providing the country with modern infrastructure, the Government invested in urbanising the cities and creating new urban districts, building social housing throughout the country (No. of urban districts created).

In terms of urban planning<sup>211</sup>, a national cadastre plan is urgently needed, as well as the updating of the national cartography and the Government's price scale for free land. The country's geography provides the country with rivers and reservoirs running through the cities, some of which are very large. For the future, it is important to build riverbanks and wetlands, update the national cartography, and train provincial inspectors in urban planning.

Justice is one of the pillars of our national emblem: "Unity, Peace and Justice", and Equatorial Guinea is working to improve the legal and juridical conditions for the defence of human rights and the protection of societies. The country has tried to reduce, to a large extent, inequality through laws so that the maintenance of peace is real and tangible. To assist all strata of society, various laws have been drafted to address the diverse needs of vulnerable groups. Clearly, much remains to be done, but the important thing is to do it gradually and steadily.

While internally the country enjoys peace guaranteed by the Head of State, internationally there are many attacks and grievances. Therefore, the justice department needs an increase in its budget allocation to cover the costs of defending our national sovereignty in international court cases. There is hope that an important law such as the Penal Code will be passed. This law seeks to achieve a greater degree of freedom, security and, in short, lasting peace. This law will help to avoid imbalances between the SDGs.

In addition, as a next step, it is necessary to look for

investors to support the government's actions related to agriculture. In 2000, the country launched the SPFS, which is a programme to support vulnerable groups throughout the country in agricultural, livestock and fisheries production. In the 1990s, a PADREM project agreement was signed with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which produced good results in Ebebiyin, Nsok-Nsomo, and Mongomo. The reactivation of these projects can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, mainly in the strategic axis of poverty eradication.

The academic sector<sup>212</sup> is involved in the country's procedures. The Government of Equatorial Guinea is committed to the training of human resources. Along these lines, the following steps are proposed for the next steps:

1. Raise awareness in society in general and in particular in the Academic Sector, in order to carry out actions that allow environmental sustainability to be achieved.
2. To make society aware of the need to care for the environment, which belongs to each and every one of us.
3. To create recycling systems in the different training centres.
4. The creation of green spaces, which is one of the greatest contributions offered by some educational centres, as well as many other entities. However, there is a need to promote the conservation of these spaces, as there is often a lack of maintenance and harmful actions such as breaking the branches of plants, stepping on the grass, etc.

The country is aware of the existing disparities in terms of gender equality, protection of women and children and adolescents. For this reason, Equatorial Guinea has made great strides in recent years and a Framework Law on Social Protection has been drafted and will soon be approved by the Directorate of Social Affairs and Equality. There is also a multisectoral national action plan for the promotion of women and gender equality, which is in the process of being approved by the parliament and the senate. In the same vein, several laws will be enacted in line with SDG 5, such as the preliminary draft of the Comprehensive Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women, the preliminary draft of the Family Code Law, the

211 Ibid.

212 VNR Workshop Seminar.

preliminary draft of the Traditional Marriage Law and the approval and validation of the roadmap of the national action plan on the UN Security Council on women, peace and security. In addition, access to government and UN financial resources will be sought to implement projects and programmes pending implementation due to lack of funding.

Special ministerial departments have been created for the protection of the elderly, children and working adolescents, and programmes are being developed to provide coverage and assistance to these groups, since the former are the country's past, the experience and the architects of national sovereignty, and the latter are the future of the Equatorial Guinea we are preparing.

Internal and external trade is one of the activities to be promoted. Equatorial Guinea aspires to become a member of the WTO (World Trade Organisation) in the coming years, the Continental Free Trade Agreement (ZLECAF) and other organisations. Our development plan also includes activities to promote local industry. This includes promoting the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) programme, which aims to promote inclusive economic growth and sustainable development, helping to lift more people out of poverty, using trade as a tool to achieve this goal.

The SDGs are already integrated into the sectoral activities of UN Agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA) at all levels<sup>213</sup>. UNICEF remains committed to promoting the achievement of the SDGs, particularly SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5, 6, 10, 16 and 17, as reflected in its planning, monitoring and reporting tools. UNICEF offers to join the efforts of government counterparts, civil society and other UNS agencies to strengthen knowledge and comprehensiveness in achieving the SDGs.

The absence of updated legal frameworks that reflect that needs still exist, for example, in the education sector, as well as the lack of mechanisms for monitoring, follow-up, review and evaluation of existing regulations, can be considered among the barriers to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and, specifically, of the results expected under SDG 4. The low conception of education as an inalienable human right by the State, population, community and other segments, must be improved.

The State, at its various levels and powers, is the main actor in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with a role of convening and articulating all other actors committed to sustainable development. The UN agencies have a role to

play in supporting the State in this effort. UNFPA foresees:

1. UNFPA Country Programme (CP).
2. Support the process of Adoption of the Djibloho Declaration by the country.
3. Support the implementation of Resolution 1325 at the country level.
4. Launch the UN SDG Communication Plan.

**It is very important to take strategic actions that will enable the achievement of the following objectives:**

1. Finalise the administrative formulation of the Platform of Committed Women.
2. Support the elaboration, adoption and implementation of an action plan capable of operationalising the Platform of Committed Women.
3. Intensify advocacy with the relevant authorities on the urgent need for a legal framework that is adequate to today's demands and that guarantees women and girls the exercise of their rights.
4. Approve and enact the legal initiatives promoted by MINASIG in order to provide them with legal instruments that will allow them to have a basis for action for the exercise of their functions of protection and defence of the rights of women and girls.

**UNFPA considers:**<sup>214</sup>

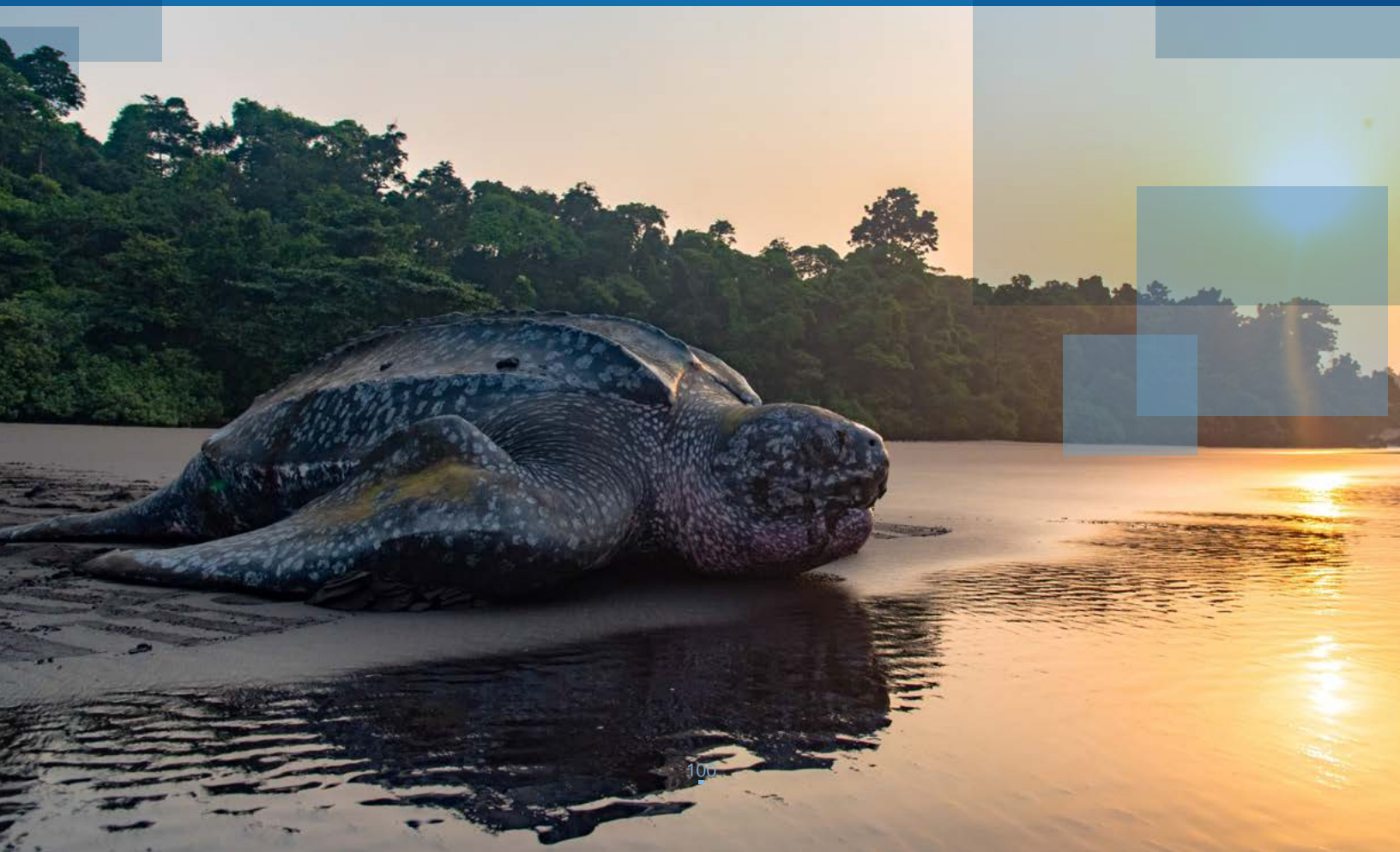
1. The main challenges for the Government are to harmonise the national legal instruments so that they are applicable throughout Equatorial Guinea.
2. To involve UNFPA as a partner of the government in the materialisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Equatorial Guinea.
3. Implement SDG 5 in UNFPA's strategies for achieving gender equality.

The VNR is the major support for our development plan as the SDGs are integrated in our NSDS 2035, as proof of our commitment and transparency in the process of implementing them.

213 VNR Workshop Seminar.

214 VNR Workshop Seminar.

# VIII | CONCLUSION



Following the adoption, dissemination and integration of the 2030 Agenda into national development frameworks, the Government has carried out a series of actions through Ministerial Departments and General Directorates to align their 2030 Agenda action plans to achieve the SDGs.

The Government of Equatorial Guinea has adopted and ratified the SDGs through the incorporation of the SDGs into its National Sustainable Development Plan 2035 through Decree No. 69/2021, dated 29 April, following its approval at the Third National Economic Conference, held in the city of Sipopo from 2 to 4 May 2019.

Some of the problems and challenges facing the country are the lack of funding for the programmes to be implemented, the lack of coordinated, solid and stable planning to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, the many difficulties that still exist in the country to achieve gender equality, and finally the lack of awareness of the Equatoguinean population on the issue of climate change.

It is necessary to make more realistic action plans in line with the true needs of the country, and therefore a more exhaustive study of the reality facing Equatorial Guinea is required. To this end, it is essential to improve statistical capacity, because without this, it is not possible to know ground truths and to draw up appropriate action plans to obtain results.

The country needs not only financial support to be able to implement all the plans and actions on the Agenda, but also the technical support of international institutions, since they have the knowledge and experience necessary to achieve results in Equatorial Guinea.

Working on the incorporation of the SDGs into public and economic policies, the Government of Equatorial Guinea works closely with all actors in the financial system, international organisations, the public and private sector and civil society. Despite the efforts made, it is recognised that there is a lack of funding and resources for a more effective implementation of the SDGs by the above-mentioned actors.

In terms of lessons learned during the review process, the first point to highlight is that without the collaboration, participation and strong commitment of all actors involved, the achievement of the SDGs in our country is not feasible. The challenge of moving towards a more sustainable, inclusive, resilient and comprehensive development is only possible through cooperation and the generation of synergies.

For future revisions, the country needs to strengthen the institutional capacities of the different departments and

public and private institutions for better ownership and promotion of the SDGs, through Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns on issues of poverty, gender, social inclusion, economic diversification and environmental sustainability, which would facilitate the process of elaboration and involvement of the sectors.

Another lesson is that it is important to continue to redouble efforts and further strengthen the statistical system at the national level, as the generation of reliable, disaggregated and regularly updated statistical data makes it possible to quantify the results achieved, both progress and challenges and gaps in strategic planning and budgeting in relation to the implementation of the SDGs, as well as inequalities affecting the population in general and especially the most vulnerable.

**Key commitments for the next steps include the need to:**

1. Continue efforts in its economic diversification to reduce poverty, inequalities and improve social and economic resilience.
2. Promote good governance, ensuring judicial independence and legal certainty.
3. Strengthen its statistical capacity and public administration information management to: better identify vulnerable populations, develop evidence-based policies, improve transparency and social inclusion in order to create development opportunities.
4. Improve their business environment and expand Agenda funding opportunities to ensure the success of development plans.
5. Increase investments in human capital, in particular for youth and through a gender approach.
6. Join efforts in the fight against communicable diseases, malaria and HIV.
7. Ensure gender equality, particularly in terms of women's participation in public office.
8. Balance economic, social and environmental needs for the sustainable development of the country.
9. Ensure that development reaches those most likely to be left behind, including by ensuring that development is spread throughout the territory.
10. Reducing macroeconomic imbalances.
11. Maintain fiscal sustainability.
12. Strengthen debt management and the banking sector.



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