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ADVANCING GHANA'S SDGs: OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION



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Executive Summary

Ghana has made progress in several areas of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including poverty reduction, education, and access to energy. However, gaps remain in climate action, sustainable cities, water security, and responsible consumption and production.

This brief reviews the SDR findings and highlights the SDGs most relevant to Ghana's development. It argues for a stronger role for environmental partnerships to accelerate Ghana's progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Public - Private partners are positioned to support the government and stakeholders with technical solutions in environmental management, climate-smart interventions, and sustainable industry practices.

ACRONYMS

- BTO – Build–Transfer–Operate
- EE – Energy Efficiency
- ESDD – Environmental and Social Due Diligence
- ESG – Environmental, Social, and Governance
- ESIA – Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
- ESM – Environmental and Social Management
- ESMP – Environmental and Social Management Plan
- ESS – Environmental and Social Safeguards
- ETP – Effluent Treatment Plant
- FRA – Flood Risk Assessment
- GI – Green Infrastructure
- RAP – Resettlement Action Plan
- RE – Renewable Energy
- RWH – Rainwater Harvesting
- WASH – Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
- WM – Waste Management



Context: Ghana and the SDGs

Ghana was one of the first countries to adopt and integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its national development agenda. However, progress has been mixed.

Access to water services has expanded in recent years, yet challenges remain, particularly with reliability and quality, which continue to lag behind.

Rapid urbanization, weak waste management systems, and repeated flooding events continue to erode resilience and strain urban infrastructure.

On energy and climate, Ghana has established policies and committed to NDCs, but actual implementation and financing remain limited (Takase et al., 2022; "Renewable Energies in Ghana" study, 2022).

The 2025 SDG report ranks Ghana 120th out of 167 countries, with an overall score of 63.1.

SDG DASHBOARD AND TRENDS



↓ Decreasing → Stagnating ↗ Moderately improving ● No information ↑ On track/maintaining SDG achievement



Key SDGs

While all SDGs are important and interrelated, the below are relevant to advance Ghana in making headway to achieve the 2030 Agenda.



AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Progress: Electricity access now reaches about 90%, showing strong national commitment to universal access and renewable integration.
Gap: Renewable energy beyond hydropower remains minimal, and rural access gaps persist.



CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Progress: Access to improved water sources has expanded, but safe, reliable water remains elusive for many.
Gap: Uptake of decentralized water solutions, such as rainwater harvesting, remains low (Owusu & Teye, 2015).



SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Progress: Urban development policies are in place.
Gap: Infrastructure development lags behind urban growth, with flooding, drainage failure, and waste mismanagement persisting as major issues.



CLIMATE ACTION

Progress: Ghana has official climate policy and submitted NDCs.
Gap: Financing, technical capacity, and consistent implementation are weak, especially for adaptation efforts (Takase et al., 2022).



Policy Options

Ghana has several pathways to consider, each with its own opportunities and risks.



A GOVERNMENT-LED APPROACH

This would place responsibility solely on the state to develop infrastructure and deliver programs. While this ensures central oversight, limited financial and technical resources could slow down progress.



A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

Led by households, local groups, and NGOs, brings strong participation at the grassroots level. However, without coordination, these efforts often remain fragmented and struggle to reach large-scale impact.



PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

PPPs with companies like Cleaneart offers a balanced path forward. Through strategic partnerships with firms like Cleaneart, Ghana can attract investment, apply proven technologies, and encourage innovation. This approach allows sustainability goals to be embedded into both policy and practice, creating long-term impact. (RECOMMENDED)





Strategic Partnership Opportunities

Water and Wastewater Management (SDG 6 & SDG 11)

Gaps include intermittent supply, poor drainage, and limited wastewater treatment. Cleaneart can deploy decentralized treatment systems in public institutions and communities, scale RWH and treatment using BTO models, and introduce wastewater reuse (e.g., greywater for irrigation). We also design and implement ETPs for industries and municipalities, and provide technical support for water quality monitoring.

Energy (SDG 7 & SDG 13)

The sector faces challenges including heavy dependence on fossil fuels, high costs, and slow adoption of modern renewables (Takase et al., 2022). Cleaneart can execute RE projects (solar PV, biogas, mini-hydro), implement EE upgrades and smart energy systems, and integrate clean energy into WASH operations to cut costs. We also develop net-zero strategies and carbon pathways for industry and municipalities, supported by training and capacity building in sustainable energy technologies.

Environmental & Sustainability Solutions (SDG 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15)

Challenges include urban flooding, waste mismanagement, climate vulnerabilities, and unsustainable resource use. Cleaneart offers ESIA, ESMs, and ESMPs in line with national and international standards, and conducts ESDD for project risk screening. We also lead ESG audits and reporting, design RAPs and livelihood restoration plans, and deliver FRA, modeling, and GI deployment. In addition, we provide WM systems built on circular economy principles.



Conclusion

Ghana's trajectory toward the SDGs shows promise, but achieving hard targets in water, urban resilience, waste, and climate requires action, not intention. Cleanearth offers the integrated, high-capacity approach Ghana needs, as a solution partner, not just a participant. With the right policy support, incentives, and partnerships, Cleanearth can help turn Ghana's SDG commitments into measurable outcomes, fostering sustainable transformation across the country.

Why Cleanearth?

Technical Expertise

Deep knowledge in environmental, water and energy solutions and sustainable development implementation

Strategic guidance to bridge policy design with practical implementation

Policy Advisory

Implementation Capacity

Proven ability to deliver measurable outcomes at scale



References

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