

# REPORT OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

## THEME: LOCALIZING THE SDGS IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF CSOs AND OTHER KEY ACTORS

**DATE: WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST, 2018**

**VENUE: GRAND IBRO HOTEL ANNEX, WUSE ZONE 5, ABUJA.**

### INTRODUCTION:

Given the scope and ambition of the SDGs, it is clear that governments alone cannot achieve the agenda. They must also facilitate participation of all sectors of society, including civil society organization (CSOs), the private sector and the general public at the local level.

A 1-Day National Conference on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was held in Abuja, Nigeria with the Theme: Localizing the SDGs in Nigeria: The Role of CSOs and other Key Actors which aims to unravel the potential roles of CSOs and other key actors in the effective implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria as well as to enhance their engagement, impact and effectiveness in global development processes.

### ATTENDANCE:

A wide range of participants (350) from Civil Society, Academia, United Nations, African Union, Key Government Ministries and Agencies including grassroots organizations attended the conference.



### AGENDA:

#### Session 1. Opening Ceremony

The Conference started at 11:00am with the recitation of the National Anthem by all that were present.

Amb. Caroline Usikpedo Omoniye, the National Coordinator gave a welcome remark. She appreciated everyone present and enjoined everyone to make sure they return with vital points to ensure the implementation of SDGs in our various localities.

She said the role of CSOs in localizing SDGs in Nigeria is of much importance. Adding that in July 2017 high level CSOs, political forum stated their commitment to the implementation of SDGs. Also, to hold the government responsible for the implementation.

CSOs commitment is as a result of the less attention which has been given to implementing MDGs in Nigeria in the time pass. So, there is a call for localizing SDGs in Nigeria. This requires commitment and the working together of CSOs, government, private individuals, advance actors, citizens, youth and the locals. Hence, the celebration of CSOs Advance Forum today.



Amb. Caroline added the key objectives of CSO Advance Forum as follows:

- To implement SDGs at all level
- To fashion out strategies and programmes for the implementation of SDGs.
- To protect and promote human right.
- To promote civic engagement in localizing SDGs.

She further said that participants will be enlightened on how they can get engaged / involved in the implementation of SDGs.

#### **FORMAL OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE:**

Prof. Roibito Ekanem, the Chair of the Board of CAS2030 welcomed all participants. She said today marks one year of implementing SDGs in Nigeria. This is amazing "Therefore, she declared the conference opened.



#### **GOODWILL MESSAGES:**

Africa Union ECOSOC Chair, Dr. Tunji Asaolu brought in a goodwill message. He commended the leadership of CSO advance forum. He said that what we are doing is very good and in line with the objective of AUECOSOC. Also, he appreciated the opportunity given him to speak.



Minister of Health representative commended the effort of the organizers, coordinator, Amb. Caroline Usikpedo and representative of all bodies present. He advised CAS2030 board members to follow up invitation especially when government official/office are involved for maximum response. He said he is the head of SDGs as applies to Health. He is happy to witness this day. That this event is a partnership at work. That the theme of the programme is timely. Localizing SDGs in Nigeria. That government actor must work with CSOs, SDGs cannot be implemented without collaboration. That collaborative effort of stakeholders will give rise to collective successes.



Still speaking, he said CSOs have been supportive. Their constructive criticism has made the health sector to improve in diverse ways. That partnership is the major drive to implementing the SDGs in Nigeria. Partnership is the key to actualizing SDGs. In order to actualize SDGs, everyone should be carried along, no one should be left behind. He said that CSC forum is a worthy partner in progress. The key objective of this programme is to fashion

out innovation as written in the invitation letter, this is the way. This is encouraging. We will be happy to partner with CSOs to implement SDGs in Nigeria. Finally, he appreciated and commended the effort, work and role of CSOs in Nigeria.

Comrade Hamzat Lawal , Executive Director of CODE spoke on budget and planning: he said budget and planning is important in implementing and achieving SDGs. He added that the seventeen goals require money to be actualized. That millions of naira has been budgeted but we don't know how they are spent. So, CSOs and other actors, individual have to get involved in order to see SDGs implemented.



Niger State SDGs Director General, greeted the house and said "it is my honour and privilege to attend this event. I brought greetings from Niger State as well". SDGs programmes are been recognized in Niger State and we are very glad to partner with Civil society Advance Forum in actualizing SDGs.



## KEY NOTE ADDRESS:

**Dr. Priscilla Achakpa, ED, WEP Nigeria and Rev. Fr. Patrick Ngoyi – Africa Working Group**

Rev. Fr. Patrick Ngoyi-Africa working group standing on existing protocols, he apologized for coming late. He started by saying "I am not too sure that people in development are conscious of what happened in New York 2015.

I remember vividly when Pope Francis said that you are going to launch SDGs today you must not fail the people, you must not fail your country you must not fail the environment.

Whatever development programmes you do must not kill people must not destroy the environment. This is SDGs. That is what SDGs stand to achieve. Dealing with poverty and ensuring protection of the environment is what SDGs entails.



That SDGS was drafted from MDGs, CSO, Government Agencies and key stakeholders were involved. People spoke a lot concerning SDGs in 2015.

A new development agenda was stated, that human beings should live well, the environment and the benefit of those who are coming behind us should be considered. He said science and technology has limited the environment, resulting in destruction such as flooding, climate change, desertification etc. In this new development, everyone has a role to play. Illustratively, he said, SDGs says we need granites to build roads, but we must be conscious of what will happen to the environment and people, the water bodies, resource, sources and other aspect of the environment. We need professional from different field to analyze the best ways to quarry granite without affecting the environment, women and other lives. This can only be achieved by researching. However, he asked, how many government offices, agencies are into researching? Who is going to research?

From analysis and experience Africa is already been left behind. We have a lot of graduate who do research for no one, no company. That Germany has set up research institutes. But do we have same in Nigeria? How many states have research institutes in Nigeria? All we have are universities that conduct research for no one. Who will invest into research?

Now, the German government is paying people for using electricity. The government is investing in her economy. Why can't our government do the same? Why are we not using the resources we have? How can we be meeting in New York and not meeting at home?

SDG means the CSOs, media, government and private sectors to come together. There is a call for global mutual responsibility. He said CSOs are mainly concerned about donors. There

should be alternative source of money to drive SDGs. That SDGs council should be set up by the government and private so that we can drive and achieve SDGs implementation in Nigeria.

Dr. Priscilla Achakpa, ED WEP Nigeria, apologized for coming late, she said "it is not of my character and it will never be" Addressing the audience, and she said there are so many issues in Nigeria.

The issues of the political environment today, can we localize SDGs? There is serious political unrest, people are dying, killings everywhere and can we localize SDGs in the midst of all this? What can we tell the people? Crisscrossing of politicians decamping from political party to political party, Nigeria has become a battle ground how do we strive in such an environment?



There is issue of desertification; people are force to migrate why are they moving? What can CSOs do? Another issue of concern is partnership. We cannot do it alone we need partners.

WEP is currently working with 11 organizations. We generate data, Triple NGO gathers data as well. We must use these data to benefit us. How do we make these data accessible to the people?

The issue of gender is another issue of concern. Goal 5 of the SDGs is all about gender parity. But statistics in government is 6% of women. The men counterparts do not give women much space in governance. They will always say that power is not given but taking. So, women should participate in governance. Issue of female genital mutilation, issue of policies, the role of CSO is to take policies to create awareness. Also, we must look at issues and policies around people with disabilities. How can we mainstream people with disability in our programs even as CSO?

She said Nigeria must recognize the youth. Youth empowerment is very vital to their development. There are graduates youth who are ready to work for free. Use them, train them and empower them with practical experiences. Make the youth useful. Issue of aging: There are older people who have retired but not tired. Let's make them useful and relevant but not vulnerable to themselves.

Report shows that there are SDGs offices across the 26 states. How are these offices involved with CSOs. Have we tried to engage with National Bureau of Statistics both Federal and at the State level? There is need for this.

She further said since the role of CSOs is very important, there is need for them to be transparent and accountable. They should publish their account. Let's evaluate ourselves.

Dr. Priscilla Achakpa highlighted the result got from their work with the 11 states:

- High poverty rate
- Many schools have no computers but JAMB says they must be computer literate.
- An average percent of the state do not have water and toilet.
- None of the state has women as Governor.

Finally, she commended the effort of the organizers of the conference. You made it possible even at this time where our country, Nigeria is on fire.

### **Presentation of the SDGs SONG BY MRS. IJEOMA OBIANYUNWA AJIAMAH**

She came on stage, and introduced the SDG song to participants and said that SDGs Song talks about leaving no one behind, that the United Nations has given everyone a clarion call. The song answers or addresses goal 4. That education is good, don't just wait. That everyone can learn either formally or informally.



This followed immediately by the cutting of SDGs / CAS2030 Anniversary Cake.



## **Session 2: Presentations**

### **(A) THE ROLE OF CSOs AND OTHER KEY ACTORS IN ACHIEVING SDGs**

**Session Chair – Pastor Mrs. Bridget Affiah**

**Presenter: Mr. Oyebisi Oluseyi- Nigeria Network of NGOs**

**Discussants –**

1. **Mr. Busayo representing Hamzat Lawal of CODE**
2. **Mrs. Ijeoma Obianjunwa-Ajiamah**

Pst. Mrs. Bridget Affiah, Delta State Co-ordinator (CAS2030) said, this actually the first national conference and the first thing we should do is to evaluate ourselves. This is very important, she stressed. That many agencies should, come together to do things together. This is the only way we can achieve SDGs.



Mr. Oyebisi Oluseyi – Executive Director, Nigeria Network of NGOs speaking on the roles of CSOs in localizing SDGs in Nigeria, said it is important that CSOs define their space. What are they? What are doing? Who are CSOs? Any space outside the government. They are non profit making organization. That you as a citizen is part of CSOs, they work with communities. They look at their needs and provide solutions. Speaking to CSOs, look at your community, identify needs and relate them to any goals within the SDGs. That is, follow a goal within the SDGs. Then have a target for your organization. He further said that CSOs should produce evidence they should have a business model for whatever they do. That SDGs is more knowledge based. What are government budgets for SDGs at the Federal, State and Local level? That by 2019 we should start showing evidence and accounts, this will make our voices alive and stronger.

Still speaking on the role of CSOs, Mrs. Ijeoma Obianjuwah said every organization should come on board with passion. They should come with some money. They should dedicate 5% to 10% of their income to solving problems, as their CSR. Although they can seek fund from donors. That CSOs should be accountable and sustainable. They should seek peace. They should generate correct data to measure progress. She said, instead of posting pictures on facebook, we should share information on SDGs to educate people. Who do not know about SDGs. Lets share information that can enhance the implementation of SDGs. For example, on songs on social media.

Busayo representing Hamzat Lawal of CODE said innovations drive the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Bring innovation into what you do as an organization. Open up for young people to bring in new innovations Organizations should collect and produce data that are verifiable instead of concocting data or figures. When you go to a community, you must identify their problems and proffer solution using the bottom-top approach. Transparency and financial accountability is very much important. There should be another organization that will hold CSOs accountable. That without accountability you cannot attain



your goals. You should be able to show your organization's budget. Why do we want to work in 25 local governments when we have not done well in one? Do well in one and let that be a model. Collaboration is a new innovation to achieving SDGs. We should have the understanding that partnership is a key. POP culture is essential to your organization, for example, bring in a celebrity who can announce what you do and this will give you more views, voice and space.

Finally, development is God's work; if you love God then, do development work.

### **COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

- Have we been able to identify what went wrong with MDGs?
- How does SDGs, fit in civic education in Nigeria?
- How can CSOs come together to create a movement?
- How do we mobilize to collect data and improve?



This session ended with the swearing in of CAS2030 board members and National Executives by Bar. Joseph.



### **(B) THE ROLE OF STATE/LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER KEY ACTORS IN ACHIEVING SDGs**

**Session Chair –Mrs. Bose Ironsi - Board Member CAS2030/ED Women's Right and Health.**

**Presenters:**

- 1. Mr. Abdullahi Baba Aroh, Director General Niger State SDGs**
- 2. Dr. O.C. Nwani – Director, Office of the Secretary to Delta State Government and Former Director- Delta state Directorate of SDGs**

### 3. **Amb. Richard Umar – Board Member, CAS2030 / ED. Youth Voyage Nigeria**



Dr. Abdullahi Baba Aroh, Director General Niger State SDGs said we must let government know the problem and we have to engage in creative thinking. We must let government know that everybody has to be involved in order to achieve SDGs. No one is to be left behind. Each government should have its own development plan. And each government should give offices to SDGs. We should have linkage with other Stakeholders as we carry out our work. Government should engage people in diverse economic programs. States play a role in identification of projects through needs assessment. After needs assessment things should be done devoid of political involvement. We must do our best for the sustainability of SDGs.

Dr. O.C. Nwani said the funding of SDGs programme is 50/50. That the State government identifies problems through need assessment. And monetary evaluation essential. The government should be willing to channel funds to SDGs project. Lastly, government has to show leadership. Leadership at all levels and aspect.

Final remark by Dr. O.C. Nwani said that they will provide a space for this organization.

Amb. Richard Umar Abubakar said politicians are politicizing . Use of technology, Apps designed by youth is vital in promoting SDGs. Goal 17 talks about partnership. CSOs should partner with government. We have grown pass the era of criticizing the government. Let's work with the government.

Dr. Abudllahi said we need to develop a model. Amb. Richard said this is the first national conference he wants a situation where we can collectively work from our local environment.

#### **COMMENTS QUESTION AND ANSWERS**

Constance said because of politics there is deprivation in Nigeria.

Peter Tijani from Kano asked "how do you include a people into a project so as to claim ownership?" How are we going to ensure that the grammar here translate to action?

#### **ANSWERS**

The government should show leadership by creating trust fund for SDGs

#### **(C) Regional Perspectives:**

# Aligning the SDGs and the AU Agenda 2063

**Session Chair – Pastor Mrs. Bridget Affiah**

**Presenter: Dr. Tumji Asaolu – Chair, African Union ECOSOC**

**Discussants –**

- 1. Mr. John Baaki – Program Manager WEP Nigeria/Women Major Group**
- 2. Dr. Emen Omokaro – Director Partnership /Inst. Engagement / ED. Dave Omokaro Foundation / MG on ageing Major Group**
- 3. Mr. Ekamem Ito – Program Officer, Education as Vaccine / Youth & Children Major Group**

Dr. Tunji Asoalu representing African Union ECOSOC enjoined us to promote ourselves. He said Agenda 2063 is our goals that he is still fighting government to create an office for Agenda 2063.



## WHAT IS AGENDA 2063?

It is a framework formulated to guide Africa for the next 50 years. It envisioned the Africa we want. How do we want to see Africa in the next 50 years? It goes beyond us; it's looking at our generation to come, our children. OAU focuses on development, social, political and science at the grassroots level. Agenda 2063 was adopted in January 2015. It has every ten years implementation plan. Agenda 2030 came up June 2015 and is inline with Agenda 2063.

He said Africa is the best in the world. We are the best. He countered Rev. Fr. Patrick who said that Africa is lagging behind. That it was only AU that presented a Periodic report to the UN.

Agenda 2063 is a concrete implementable framework. It is to be implemented at the national, regional and continental level.

Reconciling agenda 2063 to agenda 2030 that is the SDGs, we can pull our resources together.

These two agenda have common goals. We are doing the same thing. For example SDGs 17 aligns with goal 7 of agenda 2063.

How do we harmonize agenda 2063 and 2030?

- Integrated adherence approach

- Joint domestication
- Single periodic report

In respect to Agenda 2063 UN has been very supportive both agendas can work together in harmony. We can all domestic resources mobilization. Let's bridge the gap.



Still discuss on how to align Agenda 2063 to SDGs, Mr. John Baaki from Women Environment Programme pointed out the similarities between both goals agenda. Goal number 2 of Agenda 2063 agrees with goal 8 and 9 of the SDGs.

Goal 5 of agenda 2063 is in line with goal 4 and 8 of the SDGs. Agenda 7 of 2063 is in harmony with goal 17 of the SDGs.

Do We Still Run With These Two Agendas?

AU 2063 is seen as a plan to implementing SDGs. If all the countries of the world are running with UN agenda, then we Africa should harmonize. It cost resources to run with both agendas. Both agendas speak about a better world, protection of our environment, peace, justice and gender parity.

Dr. Emem Omokaro said Africa is peculiar. There is no competition between the two, Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030. That the two agenda do not see economic growth. If you pause and look at our population dynamics, underdevelopment and poverty rate, you know that Africa is peculiarly challenged. Looking at infant mortality maternal mortality, these make Africa peculiar. Both agendas have similarities. So we look at both and pick goals or agenda that addresses the issues that make Africa peculiarly challenged.

Why are some people's voice not heard? Because they don't focus on who they are when we focus on whom we are we will have result. Focus on areas where we are challenged integration, human right, marginalization of women and inclusiveness, leaving no one behind. These two agendas focus on integration.

Still speaking on how to align both agendas, Mr. Ekamem Itoro said agenda 2063 and 2030 converge around people, there should not be any disharmony both agenda have their strength and weakness. Agenda 2063 aspiration 1. Prosperity for Africa- it highlights the vulnerability around women. It is specific compares to SDGs. He said "what we do in my organization is to make sure that everything the government agrees to be captured". SDGs are quite ambitious. It will not be easy for government to implement these goals, so we the stakeholders, young people and women should come together to achieve both agendas.

## **QUESTIONS**

Chief Clifford asked the following questions:

1. What are the verifiable indicators that AU put in place to monitor progress?
2. How can we localize agenda 2063 here in Nigeria?
3. What are the strategies put in place to localize Agenda 2063
4. What are the feedback mechanisms in creating awareness?

Dr. Omakaro said she has not seen any forum where these agendas have been discussed. But we have successfully aligned both agendas, 2063 and 2030. We are here because UN strictly put it that CSOs have roles to play in the implementation. This created spaces and platform for people to engage. Everybody is just fitting in I do not think we are engaging separately.

Dr. Amos Obi said Africa is lagging behind with 250years. If Africa must come on board, there must be key on how to get fund. How source do we fund? He said Agenda 2063, says that the funding needs should be sourced locally. But it has become our culture to depend on donors. That it is best to look inward. Corruption is one major problem; but we have to work to get resources to fund the achievement of the two agenda.

A Barrister, commenting he said we have discussed AU 2063 and agenda 2030, we have to marry both and bring them to our workplace. Do reanalysis of how they link. Discuss this among ourselves, the CSOs I think we have to discuss with the donors as well.

Dr. Priscilla Achakpa said she is among from the on set of both agenda 2063 and 2030. That she tried to engage the government they do not rely solely on donors.

There are times in my organization when we use our finance to push the government to drive while we sit at the passengers' seat; she said we need to work with the government. Be in partnership with one another. That the time of running others down is over she added that a lot of foreign organizations are doing direct implementations. This is bad, there is need to work with the national working commission.

Giving his last remark Itoro, said it is important that every key stakeholder should hold the government accountable if only we know what the documents hold. There is need for integration for both agendas to work. It does not mean that all the countries in the world will work with all the goals. See what your priority is and work at your local government or home.

Dr. Omakaro further added that the aim of the 2 agendas is inclusiveness justice, peace, vulnerability of women, human right and development. The agendas have caused us to have a voice as CSOs. Agenda 2063 and 2030 have made our voices stronger.

## **AFTERNOON SESSION**

### **THE LAUNCH OF INNOVATION FOR CHANGE (I4C) HUB AFRIQUE –NIGERIA**

Innovation for Change (I4C) Hub Afrique Nigeria was launched formerly with 154 CSOs in attendance with Exhibition of Innovation for Change Hub Afrique stand displayed.

Amb. Caroline Usikpedo, board member of Innovation for Change presented the background of Innovation for Change. During the presentation talked about the need for innovation for change chapter in Nigeria that the I4C looks into the challenges facing civil society organizations in the World including Africa and Nigeria as one of them.

There are restrictions of freedom of association everywhere in the World including Nigeria. Every day government is coming up with oppressive laws and policies and we cannot keep quiet. This is the reason for I4C in Nigeria. I4C will fashion out the new ways CSOs can tackle government oppressive policies and increase open civic space in Africa. She further said that the aim is to connect, engage the people, CSOs and strengthen all of them to have a strong voice.

I4C goal is to strengthen the CSOs in African Countries, in which Nigeria will not be left behind. The guiding principle is to build on what already exists.

She stated that, I4C are here to support grassroots and local actions, develop new practices and learning's and other legal innovations. All this gears towards increasing the dwindling civic space in our society.

Participants were informed on the main actors of the I4C whom are the International Communities, Counterpart International among others as well as the trust funds.

Next was the Capacity building workshop with two presenters. Peter Hassan Tijani presented a paper on behalf of Yankuzo Yisha'u Esq. ED- Center for Human Rights and Social Advancement.



Titled: Strengthening Voices for Social Accountability and Human rights.

Since 1990, governance has been a problem in poor countries , the voices of the citizens are silent. Citizens can be organized in CSOs, political parties to make their voices stronger and clear.

He said, voices referred to a variety of mechanisms through which people air voices, opinions, suggestions , peaceful protest and their mind.

Voice has intrinsic value, the voice of the people matters, if people do not speak out their needs cannot be made known to the government, so people need to voice out their needs for results.

On accountability, UNDP requires that officials are answerable to the people, and therefore should accept responsibility for failure, that A is accountable to B and B accountable to A. accountability is all about relation between parties. Relationship between citizens and states.

He stated 3 types of accountability as follows

1. Social Accountability- Social mobilization , press reports etc
2. Political Accountability - checking public office holder and
3. Managerial Accountability.

He said to achieve accountability; there must be effective civic engagement, that civic engagement should be used as an instrument for engaging and achieving the SDGs. That CSOs can advocate and campaign for the SDGs.

Since 2015, Nigeria has experienced a crack and criticism through block and violation of human rights. There is a bill at the national level requiring all NGOs to take permission before spending any fund received from donors.

The bill has contravened national and International laws. The Innovation for has aim to fight such criticism and violation prevalent in the Nigerian society and the World at large.

## **Recommendations**

Innovation for Change (i4c) Hub Afrique

1. Should expand its activities to Rural areas so as to ensure participation of citizens
2. Should focus on capacity building, engage with CSOs, trade unions, religious groups and other relevant bodies
3. Should engage in building of a broader platform for performance and achievement' And concluded by saying Information is "key".

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Presentation: Innovative Skills for Social Accountability and Human Rights**



By Dr. Amos Obi – Global Innovator for the United Nations.

He said there is need for a global strategy to meet our needs. An innovative strategy, innovative thinking, has to be practical. It has to go beyond talking. He asked, after these grammars, what next? There should be practical framework and action.

We see the rising injustices, oppression, looting of money and looted money recovered but cannot be accounted for, and poverty is on the increase. Is there no way we can mobilize people to find solution to all these?

United Nations Human Rights sets human rights to a standard of living. There is need for innovative approaches. What are innovative approaches?

This can only be possible by working with key stakeholders across the government, private sector, academia, civil society and the media Synergy. Innovative approaches require innovative skills to achieving localization of SDGs.

Innovative skills as a bridge to meet the social challenges

Stiil speaking Dr. Amos said the world is digital. What can we do with digital space of technology? The digital technology can be used differently to meet our social challenge of hunger and poverty. To stop hunger in our society, is a digital development. He said schools are no longer in the classrooms, but on the internet but Africa is lagging behind.

How can we help people in the typical grassroots which are uneducated? He answered, Innovation for liquid fertilizers.

### **What can you do?**

Teach everyone the SDDs, including the children. He added that Africa is the cradle of civilization, but the least developed in the World.

This can be solved if we know the rudiments of innovation.

Next was the formal launch of Innovation for Change –Nigeria- A grand artistic style was use for the official launch of Innovation for Change –Nigeria with a total number of 154 participants.

Miss Ngozi Izuora spoke on the I4C mission which is to protect, respect, strengthen, expand and recover civic space.

She talked about the strategic objectives of the I4C and the African Regional Challenges stating that we cannot pretend that everything is well, when

The civil society space is shrinking

There is a growing pressure for restricted freedom, restriction on funding, barriers to registration and open political harassment, fragmented response and weak advocacy in civic space.

### **Breakout sessions**

Participants were facilitated into 6 break out groups according to zones – south south, South-east, South-West, North West, North east , North Central.

Group work was carried out and presented by each group.





**COMMUNIQUE ADOPTED AT THE END OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY ADVANCED FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, HOLDING AT GRAND IBRO HOTEL, ABUJA, AUGUST 1, 2018**

Over 300 Civil society organizations and other stakeholders from all over the country gathered in Abuja, August 1, 2018 at Grand Ibro Hotel Annex, Abuja for the first National Conference on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) organized by the Civil Society Advanced Forum on SDGs (CAS2030). The theme of the Conference is Localizing the SDGs in Nigeria: The Role of CSOs and other Key Actors.

The one day conference featured a welcome address by the National Coordinator of CAS2030, Amb. Caroline Usikpedo, Keynote address by Rev Fr John Patrick and Dr Priscilla Achakpa as well as discussion panels on the role of CSOs and other key actors in achieving SDGs; the role of State/local governments and other key actors in achieving SDGs and aligning the SDGs and the African Union agenda 2063.

The occasion also featured the official launch of the Innovation for Change (I4C) Hub Afrique, and Strengthening Voices for Social Accountability and Human Rights/Innovative Skills for Social Accountability and Human Rights.

The Conference which registered over 300 participants drew delegates from State government, particularly officials of the State SDGs offices, Federal Ministry of Health, Embassy/diplomatic missions, civil society, the African Union, civil society organizations and community level activists.

The Board of Trustees, the Coordinating Council and the Executive Committee of CAS2030 were formally inaugurated during the opening session of the conference.

The participants observed as follows:

- The SDGs is about reaching the unreached persons in all strata of the society. The SDGs is an agenda that is all inclusive – government, academia, private sector, media, CSOs, community members, persons with disability as well as the elderly.
- The SDGs is about protecting the environment and ensuring sustainability.
- CSOs need funds to enable them play their roles effectively in the achievement of the SDGs.
- The Nigerian political arena is volatile and not conducive for SDG implementation.
- There is need to address the SDGs vis-à-vis existing challenges in the country - climate change, conflicts, trafficking, and social vices.
- A lot of data is generated by civil society and other actors but this is not being considered in policy formulation and implementation.

## **Resolutions**

- The implementation of the SDGs should be focused on policies, which should be driven by research and the people.
- CSOs should work with data and raise awareness for accountability.
- CSOs should monitor how projects are being implemented to ensure success of agenda 2030.
- Social media should be used to share information on reaching all to collaborate for success to ensure no one is left behind.

- Partnership should be built among the different actors to enhance synergy and prevent duplication of efforts.
- Verifiable data should be developed to inform required development projects at the local level.
- Gender inequality, needs of women, youths and physically challenged persons, older persons must be addressed at all levels.
- CSOs should develop a template for SDGs implementation for easy tracking and monitoring.
- CSOs should move beyond criticism to forming strategic partnership with government in the implementation of the 2030 agenda.
- Government and development agencies should budget for the implementation of SDGs.
- CSOs should contextualized the SDGs in the communities.
- CSOs should use both traditional and social media as well as sensitization to create awareness on the SDGs.
- Intensive advocacy and campaigns for relevant policies and development programs should continue at all levels.
- Open spaces for CSO to engage with government and create linkages with the local communities to ensure no one is left behind.

- All states should link up with the Open Government Platform to ensure everyone is aware of government policies and programs on the SDGs.
- Capacity enhancement of CSO on technology to be able to engage at the global level.
- Improve the ability of CSOs to mobilize and solidarize with countries affected by the shrinking civic space.
- Promoting social accountability by all concerned through the publication of financial statements of organizations and institutions.
- Periodic information sharing among the stakeholders to create awareness about ongoing initiatives and programs.

Stakeholders present at the conference commended the efforts of the organizers and enjoined participants to continue in their efforts to advocate for the implementation of SDGs.

Signed:

Prof Roibito Ekanem – Baord Chairperson

Amb Caroline Usikpedo – National Coordinator

Amb Balisum Luka Gideon – Board member

Amb Richard Abubakar Umar – Board Secretary

Mrs Bose Ironsi – Board member

Chief Emem Okon – Chairperson, Coordinating Council

Pastor (Mrs) Bridget Affiah – Delta State Coordinator

1st August, 2018

*[Handwritten signatures and dates]*

01-08-2018  
1/8/2018

## Conference Partners:



**INNOVATION  
FOR CHANGE**  
WHERE PEOPLE CONNECT TO CREATE TOMORROW



**Institutional Partners:**

- OSSAP- SDGs –Nigeria
- Niger State Sustainable Development Goals Office
- Directorate of SDGs, Delta State
- Federal Ministry of Health
- Africa Union ECOSOC