

Uganda's Third VNR Report Presented: Next, Implementing the Recommendations



Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja
(Photo: https://x.com/sdgs_ug)

Uganda presented her third Voluntary National Review (VNR) at this year's UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) that took place from 8 to 17 July 2024 in New York. The VNR was presented by the Rt. Hon Prime Minister - Robinah Nabbanja. It was under the theme "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions", and concentrated on five SDGs (SDG 1, 2, 13, 16 & 17).

According to the VNR, Uganda has made progress in reducing the proportion of the population living in monetary and multidimensional poverty (SDG1). The incidence of monetary poverty (all ages) declined from 21.4% in 2016/17 to 20.3% in 2019/20. On SDG2, Uganda's VNR notes that the nutritional status of children in Uganda under-five years of age has been improving over the years. The prevalence of stunting in children under five years of age reduced from 45% in 2001 to 38% in 2006, then to 33% in 2011, further declining to 29% in 2016 and finally to 24% in 2022

On SDG13, the VNR notes that Uganda has experienced the effects of climate change, including extreme weather patterns that have induced excessive heat, droughts, irregular rainfall, flooding, and landslides, which have disrupted the development and well-being of people, particularly those in disaster-prone areas like highlands and mountain slopes. In addition, they have disrupted the already stretched service delivery by destroying infrastructure. The VNR actually singled out climate change and refugees from neighboring countries as new and emerging issues.

The VNR also notes that Uganda is committed to promoting peace, justice, and strengthening institutions (SDG 16), with progress reported in fostering financial integrity and stability, that has resulted in its removal from the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) grey list.

When Uganda presented the second VNR to the HLPF in July 2020, a number of follow-up recommendations were made. The Uganda National NGO Forum made an assessment to ascertain the progress in implementing the VNR 2020 recommendations/commitments. From our view, the recommendations made on the VNR in 2020 could still apply to the VNR 2024. For example, despite steps taken since 2020, there remains a need to streamline the youth and innovation hubs through the local government structures, the youth councils to further enhance youth participating in planning and policy-making processes. This was also ably aired out during the Pre-CSO HLPF workshop held on July 4, 2024. Similarly, scaling up multi-sectoral integration of VNR commitments at both local and central government levels and across sectors to harness the inter-sectoral linkages that contribute towards achieving the SDGs and to use available resources efficiently is still work in progress.

VNRs aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to tracking progress and accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multistakeholder support and partnerships to implement the SDGs. **Read the Third Uganda VNR 2024 Report from: <https://ugandavn.com/>**

Pact for the Future: *Why Addressing Climate Finance is Fundamental*



The *Summit of the Future* due 22-23 September 2024 is a high-level event, bringing world leaders together to forge a new international consensus on how we deliver a better present and safeguard the future. Given the current global challenges, multilateral cooperation remains vital, but this depends on trust amongst the UN member states as well as the global citizens. Indeed the UN has described this Summit as ‘an opportunity to put ourselves on a better path’.

The scope of the *Summit of the Future* will encompass elements that will be reflected in the outcome document, entitled *A Pact for the Future*. These elements are Sustainable development and financing for development; International peace and security; Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation; Youth and future generations; and Transforming global governance.

With regards to sustainable development and financing for development, the Summit of the Future must be an accelerator for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in full and on time through urgent and scaled-up action, policies and investments, including through the SDG Stimulus endorsed by governments at the SDG Summit last year.

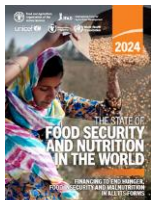
According to the UN Secretary General, It aims to provide at least \$500 billion US dollars annually in affordable long-term finance for developing countries. It calls for urgent action on debt, including breathing space for countries facing impossible repayment schedules. Its offset addresses the challenging market conditions faced by developing countries and accelerate progress towards the SDGs, including through investments in renewable energy, universal social protection, decent job creation and the digital transformation. The UN Trade and Development (2023) estimates that nearly 57% of the African population, or about 751 million people, live in countries that spend more on interest payments than in the social sectors like climate action that need increasing (global) solid responsiveness.

Furthermore, as the African Development Bank Group President Akinwumi Adesina noted at a high-level roundtable on climate finance convened during the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Spring Meetings in April this year, “Africa is in the eye of the storm from climate change, accounting for 9 out of the 10 most vulnerable countries to climate change globally”. He added: “But Africa is not getting what it needs to adapt to climate change. Africa received just \$30 billion per year for climate adaptation, while its needs are \$277 billion per year, leaving a huge financing gap.”

Also UNEP’s Adaptation Gap Report that was released ahead of the UN Climate talks in Dubai last year finds that the adaptation finance needs of developing countries are 10-18 times as big as international public finance flows – over 50 per cent higher than the previous range estimate. According to this Report, as a result of the growing adaptation finance needs and faltering flows, the current adaptation finance gap is now estimated to be US\$194-366 billion per year. At the same time, adaptation planning and implementation appear to be plateauing. This failure to adapt has massive implications for losses and damages, particularly for the most vulnerable.

So as the world gears up for the Summit of the Future, there are clear pointers of what needs to be done through multilateral approaches irrespective of political ideology, faith, gender or any socio-economic inclination. One of these is climate action that knows no borders.

Elimination of Hunger, Food Insecurity and Malnutrition by 2030' Off-track – Global Report (2024)



The *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024* (SOFI 2024) report presents a critical analysis of global food security and nutrition trends. Based on the theme, “Financing to End Hunger, Food Insecurity and All Forms of Malnutrition”, the report emphasizes the urgent need for increased financing to end hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition in all its forms.

But regional trends show a stark contrast with hunger continuing to rise in Africa, affecting 20.4 per cent of the population, while remaining stable in Asia at 8.1 per cent. This is a significant concern given that the region houses more than half of those facing hunger worldwide. FAO’s Chief Economist - Mr. Maximo Torero highlighted that Africa faces a unique challenge as it is the only region where hunger has risen owing to all three major drivers: conflict, climate extremes and economic downturns. Of them all, he emphasized that war remains “a major driver” of hunger, exacerbating the food crisis across countries.

The SOFI 2024 report also finds that access to adequate food remains out of reach for billions globally and in Africa, a full 58 per cent of the continent’s people are moderately or severely food insecure. A number of recommendations are put forward need to be examined in relation to extent to which they address the structural challenges intensifying the current food crisis

The SOFI 2024 report highlights the need to increase public spending on food security and nutrition by boosting budgets for programs that reduce hunger and malnutrition and involving local communities in their planning and implementation to improve effectiveness and sustainability. In effect the SOFI 2024 report laid bare the void in finance. As Mr. Torero explained: “One of the major recommendations is to come up with a common definition so that we understand what we are financing and the key elements to include in this definition. This will enhance accountability for donors and provide a clearer picture of financial flows.”

On the vulnerable populations, the SOFI report 2024 calls for policies that focus on supporting vulnerable groups, like small farmers, women, and children, by improving nutrition for pregnant women and young children through exclusive breastfeeding and providing essential vitamins and minerals. Related to this, the report calls for promotion of climate-resilient agriculture, as developing and implementing climate-resilient agricultural practices is critical to mitigate the impact of climate change on food production. This includes investing in research and development of drought-resistant crops and sustainable farming practices. “We need to understand that our agri-food systems are under increasing risk and uncertainty due to climate change...donors must adopt greater risk tolerance to activate effective finance,” Mr. Torero said.

Every year, the SOFI 2024 report jointly prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the UN Children’s Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization monitors and analyses the world’s progress towards ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition. It also provides in-depth analysis on key challenges for meeting SDG Targets 2.1 (universal access to safe and nutritious food) and 2.2 (end all forms of malnutrition) in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. **Read the full SOFI 2024 report from:** <https://www.fao.org/publications/home/fao-flagship-publications/the-state-of-food-security-and-nutrition-in-the-world/en>