The Peoples Score Card

Report 2024

July 2024

SDGs Kenya Forum



# Table of Contents

[Table of Contents 2](#_heading=h.gjdgxs)

[List of Tables 2](#_heading=h.30j0zll)

[List of Figures 3](#_heading=h.1fob9te)

[1.0 Introduction 4](#_heading=h.3znysh7)

[1.1 Background 4](#_heading=h.2et92p0)

[1.2 SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Progress Since 2015 4](#_heading=h.tyjcwt)

[2.0 Methodology 7](#_heading=h.1t3h5sf)

[2.1 Organizations that Contributed to the People’s Score Card 7](#_heading=h.4d34og8)

[2.2 SDG Coverage by CSOs Based on People’s Scorecard Survey 8](#_heading=h.17dp8vu)

[2.3 Counties in Which Reporting CSOs Work in Kenya 9](#_heading=h.26in1rg)

[3.0 Key Score Card Findings 10](#_heading=h.35nkun2)

[3.1 Areas of Progress and Impact 10](#_heading=h.1ksv4uv)

[3.2 Most Pressing Challenges in SDGs Implementation 12](#_heading=h.2jxsxqh)

[3.3 Progress of Overall SDG Implementation 14](#_heading=h.3j2qqm3)

[3.4 Cross Cutting Issues Affecting SDG Implementation 15](#_heading=h.2xcytpi)

[3.5 Climate Change and SDG Implementation 16](#_heading=h.2bn6wsx)

[3.6 Leave No One Behind 18](#_heading=h.1pxezwc)

[3.7 Collaborations and Partnerships 20](#_heading=h.3o7alnk)

[3.8 CSOs Engagement with National and County Governments 22](#_heading=h.ihv636)

[3.9 CSOs Demands of Government for an Enabling Environment for Sustainable Development 22](#_heading=h.32hioqz)

[4.0 Conclusion and Summary of Lessons Learned 24](#_heading=h.41mghml)

# List of Tables

[Table 1: Key Issues and Action Steps Arising from VNRs 4](#_heading=h.3dy6vkm)

[Table 2:Names of CSOs that Contributed to People's Score Card 6](#_heading=h.2s8eyo1)

[Table 3: Progress Made on Reported Goals 9](#_heading=h.44sinio)

[Table 4: Key Challenges Impeding SDGs Implementation 11](#_heading=h.z337ya)

[Table 5: Rating of SDGs Implementation Progress by CSOs 13](#_heading=h.1y810tw)

[Table 6: Emerging and Cross Cutting Issues and SDGs Implementation 14](#_heading=h.1ci93xb)

[Table 7: CSOs Rating of Kenya's Commitment to the Paris Agreement 16](#_heading=h.3as4poj)

# List of Figures

[Figure 1: SDGs on Which CSOs Reported in the Score Card 7](#_heading=h.3rdcrjn)

[Figure 2: Counties in which Reporting CSOs Work 8](#_heading=h.lnxbz9)

[Figure 3: Knowledge of Paris Agreement Among CSOs 16](#_heading=h.qsh70q)

[Figure 4: Effectiveness of Strengthened Laws, Policies and Accountability Mechanisms to Protect the Rights of Disadvantaged Groups 18](#_heading=h.49x2ik5)

[Figure 5: Improved Funding and Impact on Marginalized Communities 19](#_heading=h.2p2csry)

[Figure 6: Impact of Improving Accessibility in Rural and Urban Areas on Leave No One Behind 19](#_heading=h.147n2zr)

[Figure 7:CSOs with Collaborations with Academic Institutions, Think Tanks and Research Bodies 20](#_heading=h.23ckvvd)

[Figure 8: CSO Collaborations with the National and County Governments 23](#_heading=h.1hmsyys)

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Civil Society is indispensable in driving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[[1]](#footnote-1). Their active engagement spans across planning, executing, and monitoring various sustainable development initiatives, ensuring the inclusivity of diverse perspectives throughout the process. By involving a wide range of stakeholders, Civil Society helps to ensure that no one is left behind in the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Moreover, their role extends to holding duty-bearers accountable, promoting transparency, and building public trust by ensuring that commitments made by authorities are met. This accountability is critical in achieving the SDGs, as it helps to highlight areas where progress is lagging and where additional efforts are needed.

To further this mission, the People’s Scorecard has been developed by Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD[[2]](#footnote-2)) as a strategic tool for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to systematically track and provide context to the progress of SDG implementation within their countries. It serves as a framework for rating the effectiveness of various policies and initiatives aimed at achieving the SDGs - alongside the Voluntary National Review process. The goals of the People’s Scorecard include improving the inclusivity of national civil society activities, applying a standardized template for evaluating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and facilitating discussions on issues highlighted in the Scorecard to foster transformative change. Additionally, the Scorecard contributes to the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) by providing a structured approach for CSOs to report on progress, challenges, and lessons learned. This integration of civil society perspectives into the VNR process helps to create a more holistic and accurate picture of a country’s progress toward the SDGs, ultimately driving more effective and inclusive policies.

## 1.2 SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Progress Since 2015

The 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) succeeded the MDGs in January 2016. Since then, the Kenyan government and other stakeholders have committed to adapting the agenda to the local context, ensuring its implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. Kenya's development agenda is guided by Kenya Vision 2030, a long-term blueprint aimed at transforming the country into a rapidly industrializing middle-income nation by 2030. This vision encompasses three key pillars—Economic, Social, and Political—that provide frameworks for integrating the dimensions of sustainable development.

Kenya Vision 2030's pillars are supported by enablers such as infrastructure, ICT, and public sector reforms, among others. The actualization of this vision is carried out through five-year Medium-Term Plans (MTPs), with the current one covering 2023-2027. The Fourth Medium Term Plan (MTP IV), running from 2023-2027, guides the final phase of Kenya Vision 2030. It aims to harmonize the implementation of various programmes and projects meant to increase money in common people’s pockets and improve standards of living. The goal is to align the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) of all 47 counties with MTP IV and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), focusing on strategic sectors like agriculture, health, housing, and the digital economy.

The need for a well-structured engagement approach in SDG implementation is central to various stakeholders in Kenya. The Inter-Agency Technical Working Group (IATG), chaired by the National Treasury State Planning – SDGs Unit, and co-chaired by the SDGs Kenya Forum and Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), ensures coordinated efforts. Institutional frameworks have been established nationwide, prioritizing SDGs in planning at both national and county levels. The IATG collaborates with national and county governments, parliament, academia, media, private sector, and other organizations committed to the 2030 Agenda. The third Voluntary National Review (VNR) presented in 2020 highlighted Kenya’s commitment to tracking and reporting SDG progress. The biennial reports continue to showcase best practices, challenges, and lessons learned, ensuring the country remains on track toward achieving its sustainable development goals.

Since 2017, CSOs in Kenya have been submitting progress reports to inform the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process. Except for 2018, due to a biennial reporting cycle adopted in 2017, these reports have detailed progress and mirrored government-led VNR processes. The SDGs Kenya Forum leads these efforts, integrating CSO insights into the national VNR reports. The Forum actively participates in four key national processes: the National Interagency Committee on SDGs, County SDGs Champions, the Interagency Committee on Gender Statistics, and the National Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Process. The table below highlights key issues from the 2017, 2019, and 2020 CSO VNRs, noting what remains to be implemented.

**Table 1: Key Issues and Action Steps Arising from VNRs**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2017 CSO VNR | 2019 CSO VNR | 2020 CSO VNR | 2024 CSO VNR |
| Key Issues | **Key issues** | **Key Issues** | **Key Issues** |
| 1. The renegotiation of roles and relationships between national and county governments, between Government and Development Partners, members of the legislative assemblies, and between state and non-state actors. 2. Additional resources such as recruitment of agricultural extension officers, more health personnel, more teachers at all levels to ensure the teacher-pupil ratio is improved, the construction, rehabilitation, refurbishment and equipping of health and education facilities are just among the things necessary in the implementation. 3. Efforts by the Judiciary to modernize its ICT infrastructure, increasing the number of High courts in the country and assigning more judges to remote areas. | 1. Lack of financing for certain projects. 2. Laxity in corruption and tax evasion measures. 3. Lack of knowledge on responsible consumption. 4. Lack of clarity on budgetary allocations. 5. Lack of political commitment towards gender equality. 6. Insecurity for school children in certain areas | 1. While Kenya’s economy was improving, as reflected in the reduction in extreme poverty and improvement in human development indicators, there are disparities among counties. 2. There are deliberate efforts by CSOs to reduce gender inequality through implementation of specific programmes across different SDGs. 3. Direct implementation of programmes related to sustainable development and strong partnerships with government, as well as other CSOs is a key accomplishment of Kenyan CSOs. 4. Non-state actors avail data and analytical support to subnational policymakers, other civil society organisations and the academia for tracking the progress of people out of poverty and investment towards pro-poor sectors. 5. Financing is still the main area where three quarters (75%) of CSOs require support. 6. CSOs highlighted data gaps as a key hindrance to implementation of SDGs. These include inconsistencies in the quality of data that is available to CSOs to conduct research, to design and implement programmes/ interventions and to monitor implementation of SDGs. | 1. Inadequate coordination among various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society, and the private sector. 2. Limited access to adequate financing for the implementation of SDG-related initiatives. 3. Gaps in data availability and quality, impacting effective monitoring and evaluation of SDG progress. 4. Low levels of public awareness and engagement in SDG-related activities. 5. Inadequate infrastructure to support SDG implementation, particularly in rural areas. |
| Next Action Steps | **Next Action Steps** | **Next Action Steps** | **Next Action Steps** |
| 1. Enhance awareness campaigns and build capacity to enable county governments to effectively implement the SDGs. 2. Conduct evaluations of the capabilities of both National and County Governments in achieving the SDGs. 3. Develop and complete a framework for collaboration between the Government and Non-State Actors on the SDGs. | 1. Strengthening data collection, including data collected by CSOs and citizens. This should lead to not only recognition of their availability but also designing a mechanism to integrate such data in the official planning system. 2. CSOs create awareness around wealth creation and financial literacy. 3. Enacting harsh penalties for tax evaders. 4. The government is reducing its debt appetite. 5. Prioritizing the fight against corruption. | 1. Most CSOs planned to continue implementing most of the activities they implemented in 2019, including advocacy, capacity building/training, providing technical support to national and county governments. 2. A number of CSOs that provide direct services to vulnerable groups planned to expand the scope of their programmes to reach more/new beneficiaries in 2020. 3. CSOs planned to strengthen partnerships among themselves and with the government to accelerate implementation of SDGs. | 1. Establish robust inter-agency coordination frameworks to streamline SDG implementation. 2. Develop innovative financing solutions to reduce reliance on donor funding. 3. Standardize data collection methodologies to ensure consistency and accuracy. 4. Implement comprehensive public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the SDGs. 5. Invest in infrastructure development to support SDG initiatives, especially in underserved areas. |

# 2.0 Methodology

The development of the People's Scorecard involved a systematic data collection approach, engaging multiple Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working across all the 47 counties in Kenya through a purposive sample. A total of 24 CSOs working on different SDGs participated in providing data that was used in the scorecard. The scorecard, which included both qualitative and quantitative sections, was distributed online. Each CSO, especially those designated as SDG Group Leaders, was tasked with specifying the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) they were actively working on, providing a rating on key implementation, policy and monitoring focus areas that are relevant to the scorecard. The data collected underwent a review and consolidation process to form the final People’s Scorecard report. This multi-step process involved extensive data validation to ensure accuracy and reliability. The diverse responses were systematically analyzed to identify common themes, trends, and unique insights. The final report, therefore, represents diverse views of the participating CSOs, offering valuable insights into the current state of SDG implementation and highlighting areas for further improvement and action.

## 2.1 Organizations that Contributed to the People’s Score Card

**Table 2:Names of CSOs that Contributed to People's Score Card**

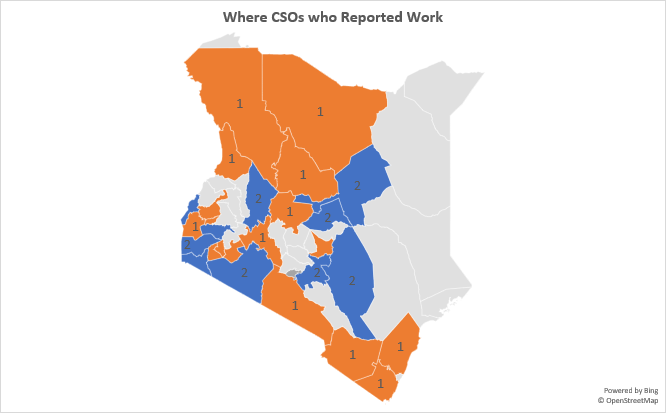
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Serial | Organization |
| 1 | Pathways Policy Institute |
| 2 | Citizen Network for Rural Development Kenya |
| 3 | Bunyala ARG Climate Industrial Park Limited |
| 4 | Kenya Female Advisory Organization |
| 5 | Usalama Reforms Forum |
| 6 | Ageing Concern Foundation (ACF) |
| 7 | Sight Savers |
| 8 | Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd |
| 9 | Art Affair for Development Goals |
| 10 | Children Agenda Forum |
| 11 | Integrated Development Facility -IDF |
| 12 | Centre for Rights Education and Awareness |
| 13 | Kenya AIDs NGO Consortium |
| 14 | Jesuit Hakimani Center |
| 15 | Impact CBO |
| 16 | Local Development Research Institute (LDRI) |
| 17 | Community Implementing Initiative |
| 18 | Zamara Foundation |
| 19 | Better Lives |
| 20 | Pamoja Community Based Organisation |
| 21 | Elimu Kwanza Initiative |
| 22 | Go Mashinani Errands |
| 23 | Polycom Girls |
| 24 | Young Professionals for Development (YPD) |

## 2.2 SDG Coverage by CSOs Based on People’s Scorecard Survey

**Figure 1: SDGs on Which CSOs Reported in the Score Card**

## 2.3 Counties in Which Reporting CSOs Work in Kenya

**Figure 2: Counties in which Reporting CSOs Work**



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| County | Number of CSOs |
| Baringo | 2 |
| Bomet | 1 |
| Busia | 2 |
| Embu | 1 |
| Homabay | 2 |
| Isiolo | 2 |
| Kajiado | 1 |
| Kakamega | 1 |
| Kilifi | 1 |
| Kisii | 1 |
| Kisumu | 2 |
| Kitui | 2 |
| Kitui | 2 |
| Kwale | 1 |
| Laikipia | 1 |
| Machakos | 2 |
| Marsabit | 1 |
| Meru | 2 |
| Migori | 2 |
| Nairobi | 6 |
| Nakuru | 1 |
| Narok | 2 |
| Nyamira | 1 |
| Samburu | 1 |
| Siaya | 1 |
| Taita Taveta | 1 |
| Turkana | 1 |
| Vihiga | 1 |
| West Pokot | 1 |

# Key Scorecard Findings

## 3.1 Areas of Progress and Impact

The CSOs were asked to provide specific goals (and areas) in which they have seen the most impact concerning SDGs implementation. Based on the findings, significant progress has been achieved in various areas including no poverty (SDG 1), zero hunger (SDG 2), good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), climate action (SDG 13), and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16). Over the past three years, significant progress has been observed across various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Kenya. Notable advancements include improvements in health infrastructure and a reduction in maternal mortality rates, attributed to enhanced health systems and better access to prenatal and emergency care (SDG 3). Efforts to increase access to modern contraception have led to a significant decline in unintended pregnancies and maternal deaths (SDG 3). Additionally, entrepreneurial training and financial literacy programs have empowered youth and women, reducing economic inequalities and boosting confidence levels among marginalized groups (SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 10).

Enhanced social protection measures and improved food security initiatives have bolstered resilience among vulnerable populations (SDG 1, SDG 2). Initiatives such as the introduction of high-yielding maize varieties and training caregivers and peer educators have contributed to reducing malnutrition in children under five years (SDG 2). Educational campaigns have led to increased school enrolment for girls and reduced absenteeism through menstrual health management (SDG 4). Women's participation in decision-making spaces has increased, and policy advocacy has supported the proportion of seats held by women in both National Parliament and County Assembly (SDG 5).

Climate action initiatives, such as afforestation and building resilience against climate change, have gained traction, contributing to environmental sustainability (SDG 13). The implementation of policy frameworks within counties has led to system changes in climate action, as the community gains knowledge on climate causes and interventions (SDG 13). Policy advocacy and governance reforms, including police and security sector reforms, have also been instrumental in fostering peace and justice (SDG 16). Progress in safe spaces and universal health coverage initiatives, such as the Linda Mama programme and emergency response services, further illustrate comprehensive efforts towards sustainable communities (SDG 11). These collective efforts demonstrate a holistic approach to achieving the SDGs, addressing both immediate needs and long-term development goals. The table below summarizes key goals and specific progress made.

**Table 3: Specific Examples of Progress Made on Reported Goals**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SDGs | Progress and Impact |
| SDG 1: No Poverty | 1. Income and food for smallholder farmers. 2. Enhanced social protection to cushion vulnerable groups. |
| SDG 2: Zero Hunger | 1. Reducing malnutrition cases in children under 5 years and teenage pregnant mothers. 2. Introduction of new high-yielding maize varieties to farmers has improved production. 3. Food security in ASAL areas. |
| SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being | 1. Progress on health systems strengthening. 2. Health infrastructure has greatly improved following advocacy work in Laikipia county. 3. Reduced malnutrition in children under 5 years due to training caregivers and peer educators. 4. Reduced maternal mortality rates due to improved access to prenatal care, skilled birth attendants, and emergency obstetric care. 5. Increased access to contraceptives, leading to a decline in unintended pregnancies, maternal deaths, and newborn deaths. 6. Reduction of teenage pregnancies in the slums by 70% due to awareness and provision of free contraceptives. 7. Universal health coverage (UHC) initiatives, such as the Linda Mama programme and emergency response services. |
| SDG 4: Quality Education | 1. More enrollment of girls in schools across Baringo County due to continued awareness on empowering women and girls through education. 2. Training over 10,000 girls on menstrual health and distributing sanitary towels and innerwear, reducing absenteeism during menstrual cycles. 3. Entrepreneurial training for the youth. |
| SDG 5: Gender Equality | 1. Proportion of seats held by women in both National Parliament and County Assembly has increased. 2. Women groups have been supported to access resources from the WEF in Bomet County. 3. CREAW’s programs supported 37,182 GBV survivors with various services. 4. CREAW supported 1,000 women through the Jasiri Fund, providing financial resources and opportunities for economic empowerment. 5. Empowerment of women and girls through comprehensive sexuality education and dismantling harmful practices like child marriage and FGM. 6. Rights to property ownership and equal wealth distribution and inheritance for both genders. 7. More girls are becoming economically empowered through financial literacy. |
| SDG 10: Reduced Inequality | Sight savers report they have seen marked improvement in confidence levels of youth with disabilities. |
| SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities | Progress in safe spaces being constituted by the County Government. |
| SDG 13: Climate Action | 1. Building resilience against climate change. 2. Afforestation and tree planting. 3. System changes in climate action due to improved information. 4. Community gaining knowledge on climate action, causes, and interventions. |
| SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions | 1. Security sector reforms and peacebuilding. |

## 

## 3.2 Most Pressing Challenges in SDGs Implementation

**Table 4: Key Challenges Impeding SDGs Implementation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Thematic Area | Specific Challenges |
| Financing | 1. Financing for health remains the biggest challenge and which needs urgent addressing; we need to move the health budget to 30-35%. 2. Financing frameworks for gender transformative programs is a pressing challenge. There is a need to ensure sustainable funding and resources to maintain long-term programs. 3. Donor fatigue and competition for resources threatens the sustainability of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) programs. |
| Policy | 1. Discriminatory political representation of older persons. Specifically, there is a national council for older persons. 2. We have policy priorities differ with actual practices ‘on the ground’ and what is actually reported. For example when it comes to the National Government Reporting, we have found that some of the indicators cannot be measured; a good example of an indicator is ‘Women and girls have safe spaces to conduct business’.. 3. We still do not have clear policies on malnutrition cases and especially to the marginalized communities |
| Governance | 1. There is insufficient accountability among stakeholders (both state and non-state), leading to inefficiencies and ineffective execution of programs. Better coordination mechanisms are yet to be instituted. 2. Poor coordination between government agencies, civil society, and the private sector hampers collaborative efforts and the coherent implementation of SDG initiatives. |
| Capacity | 1. Many organizations face challenges due to inadequate skills and expertise necessary to efficiently manage and coordinate implementation SDG-related programs. For example, (small holder) farmers still lack ready access to local farming extension information from county governments. 2. There is a significant need for ongoing training and professional development to equip individuals and organizations with the required knowledge and capabilities to track achievement of SDG targets. |
| Infrastructure | 1. Unorganized and unstructured markets (both physical and digital) for farmers and access to technology in farming remains lacking. |
| Data and Monitoring | 1. Developing robust monitoring and evaluation systems is essential to demonstrate the effectiveness of interventions. But this is not taking place because of both lack of funds and expertise for this function. 2. There are significant gaps in the availability and quality of data, which impedes the effective tracking and evaluation of SDG progress. 3. Many organizations struggle with implementing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks, resulting in inconsistent and unreliable data for assessing the impact of SDG initiatives. |

Based on the qualitative insights gathered from the scorecard, the most pressing challenges in SDG implementation is as follows: Financing remains the most significant challenge, with many organizations highlighting the lack of adequate financial and personnel resources to support health, gender transformation, and especially to deal with the issues of monitoring results and ensuring data quality. Policy-related issues are also prevalent, including limited political goodwill, inadequate policy frameworks, and the need for stronger leadership so that policies actually get implemented.

Infrastructure and data monitoring are additional areas of concern; as stated earlier, the capacity for organizations to deal with data collection and monitoring systems is limited.

## 3.3 Progress of Overall SDG Implementation

The respondent Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) rated the progress of SDGs implementation across the following key thematic areas: (1) Availability of policy or legal framework; (2) Availability of plans and strategies; (3) government agencies; (4) implementation progress; (5) capacity building; (6) Monitoring, evaluation and reporting; (7) transparency and accountability; and (8) the overall progress of the SDGs. Please note that this feedback was requested across each of the SDGs each organization focuses on. The summary table below shows how CSOs rate the progress of SDGs implementation, monitoring and reporting in the Kenyan landscape in 2024.

**Table 5: Rating of SDGs Implementation Progress by CSOs**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Thematic Area | Rating | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Policy or legal framework | 1= No Framework;  5= Strong Framework | 0.0% | 28.1% | 50.0% | 15.6% | 6.3% |
| Plans and Strategies | 1= No plans & Strategies;  5= Strong Plans | 0.0% | 21.9% | 46.9% | 28.1% | 3.1% |
| Government agencies Commitment | 1= No Agencies;  5= Clear Agency Lead | 3.1% | 37.5% | 37.5% | 18.8% | 3.1% |
| Implementation progress | 1= No Implementation;  5= Strong Implementation | 6.2% | 40.6% | 31.3% | 18.8% | 3.1% |
| Capacity Building | 1= No National Capacity Building;  5= Strong National Capacity Building | 6.3% | 37.5% | 25.0% | 21.9% | 9.4% |
| Monitoring, evaluation and reporting | 1= No Monitoring;  5= Strong Regular Monitoring | 3.1% | 50.0% | 31.2% | 6.3% | 9.4% |
| Transparency and accountability | 1= No Transparency and Accountability;  5= Strong Transparency and Accountability | 25.0% | 25.0% | 28.1% | 15.6% | 6.3% |
| Overall Progress | 1= No Progress;  5= Strong Progress, on Target | 0.0% | 31.3% | 53.1% | 9.4% | 6.3% |

The survey results indicate that CSOs in Kenya have a moderate or low level of satisfaction with the progress of SDGs implementation across various thematic areas. On one hand, the implementation progress and the commitment of government agencies reveal a significant portion of respondents expressing concerns, with a notable percentage rating these aspects as weak or very weak (46.8% and 40.6% respectively). On the other hand, the availability of policy or legal frameworks and plans and strategies show a substantial percentage of respondents rating them as average or above (71.9% and 78.1% respectively), with a minority indicating very strong frameworks or plans exist. This suggests that while foundational policies and strategies might be in place, there are gaps in active implementation and clear leadership by government agencies.

Moreover, areas such as capacity building and monitoring, evaluation, and reporting received mixed reviews, with notable percentages indicating weak or non-existent efforts (43.8% and 53.1% respectively). Transparency and accountability also scored low, with half of the respondents rating them poorly, indicating a perceived lack of openness and integrity.

Overall progress of SDG implementation was rated mostly as average (53.1%), with a small percentage acknowledging strong progress. These findings highlight the need for strengthened implementation efforts, enhanced capacity building, robust monitoring systems, and improved transparency to ensure the effective realisation of SDGs in Kenya.

The table below summarizes key changes on scoring for the scorecard since it was first deployed in the year 2020.

**Table 6: Comparing the scorecard in 2020 and 2024.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Thematic Area | Rating | Highest Rating 2020 | Highest Rating 2024 | Notes |
| Policy or legal framework | 1= No Framework;  5= Strong Framework | Some Policy/  legal framework  available  44% | 50% concurred that some policy implementation has commenced. | Unlike 2020, it is perceived that we now have some traction on policy implementation |
| Plans and Strategies | 1= No plans & Strategies;  5= Strong Plans | Plans & strategies  agreed  44% | 46.9% still rather indicate that some plans do exist | Whereas in 2020, there was consensus on plans, it is perceived that these plans exist and implementation has commenced. |
| Government agencies Commitment | 1= No Agencies;  5= Clear Agency Lead | Some Agencies  with clear  mandate available  61% | 75% indicate that mandates either not clear or more needs to be done to clarify this. | This finding suggests that perceptions on implementation mandates are still overlapping or not clear in 2024 |
| Implementation progress | 1= No Implementation;  5= Strong Implementation | Implementation  of policies,  plans  and strategies  in planning  phase  50% | 40.6% indicate that plans are underway | The finding suggests that the rate of implementation still remains very low. More efforts are required in actual implementation across SDGs |
| Capacity Building | 1= No National Capacity Building;  5= Strong National Capacity Building | Planning on  awareness  and capacity  building  has started  44% | 37.5% report that capacity building is still not strong. | Similar to SDG implementation, building capacity has stagnated. |
| Monitoring, evaluation and reporting | 1= No Monitoring;  5= Strong Regular Monitoring | Monitoring,  evaluation  & reporting  plans are  agreed  41% | 50.0% report that monitoring and evaluation is weak. | There is slight improvement from the 2020 scorecard; but more resources and skills are required to improve data quality and analysis |
| Transparency and accountability | 1= No Transparency and Accountability;  5= Strong Transparency and Accountability | Initial planning  for transparency  &  accountability  mechanism  50% | 78.1% indicate that transparency and accountability during implementation is lacking or low | Whereas in 2020 there was traction to set up mechanisms for accountability, 2024 perceptions show that there accountability/transparency is weak |
| Overall Progress | 1= No Progress;  5= Strong Progress, on Target | Some progress  has been  made overall  on attainment  of SDGs  61% | 53.1% feel that only moderate success has been achieved. | Overall, the rate of implementation of SDGs has stagnated and actually regressed. |

## 3.4 Cross Cutting Issues Affecting SDG Implementation

This year, CSOs were further requested to identify cross-cutting issues that impact implementation as follows: 1) climate change, 2) conflict and instability, 3) resource mobilization and financing, 4) technology as impacting societal digital divide and 5) social protection. The CSOs assessed the impact of these cross-cutting issues on SDG implementation as shown in the table below.

**Table 7: Emerging and Cross Cutting Issues and SDGs Implementation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cross-Cutting Issue | 1  Not at all | 2  A Little | 3  Somewhat | 4  Quite A bit | 5  Very Much |
| Climate Change | 3.1% | 12.5% | 34.4% | 25.0% | 25.0% |
| Conflict and Instability | 9.4% | 21.9% | 34.4% | 18.8% | 15.6% |
| Resource Mobilization and Financing | 3.1% | 9.4% | 34.4% | 34.4% | 18.8% |
| Technology as Impacting Digital Divide | 0.0% | 15.6% | 31.3% | 37.5% | 15.6% |
| Social Protection | 3.1% | 18.8% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 28.1% |

Climate change emerged as a significant concern, with half of the respondents rating its impact as "quite a bit" or "very much" (50.0%), indicating substantial challenges in managing environmental changes.

Similarly, conflict and instability were notable issues, with 34.4% of respondents acknowledging a moderate impact, while a combined 34.4% felt it affected SDG implementation "quite a bit" or "very much." SDG 16 focuses on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies to support sustainable development. It aims to provide universal access to justice and build accountable, inclusive institutions at all levels of government and society. Governments, local communities, civil society organizations, non-governmental bodies, and religious institutions must come together to tackle issues such as violence, insecurity, conflicts, corruption, and bribery. By embracing inclusivity and ensuring participation of all citizens, these diverse groups can work towards building peaceful and accountable societies that enable sustainable development[[3]](#footnote-3).

Resource mobilization and financing also posed substantial challenges, with a significant portion of respondents (53.2%) rating the impact as "quite a bit" or "very much," highlighting the financial constraints in achieving SDG targets.

Technology's role in impacting the digital divide was another key issue, with a majority (53.1%) indicating a significant impact, reflecting concerns about unequal access to technological advancements. To help bridge this divide, the Universal Service Fund[[4]](#footnote-4) in Kenya could be leveraged to invest in infrastructure and initiatives that expand access to digital technologies, especially in underserved communities.

Social protection received varied responses, but a notable 53.1% rated its impact as moderate to very significant, suggesting that social safety nets are crucial for sustainable development.

## 3.5 Climate Change and SDG Implementation

Climate change significantly impacts the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Kenya, presenting a complex array of challenges. As a "threat multiplier," climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities and disrupts progress across multiple SDGs, particularly those related to poverty, food security, water availability, and economic stability. The adverse effects of climate change in Kenya include frequent and prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, and extreme weather events such as floods and landslides. These conditions have led to severe agricultural losses, water scarcity, and displacement of communities, directly undermining efforts to achieve SDGs related to zero hunger, clean water, and decent work.

|  |
| --- |
| **Vignette 1: Limiting global warming below 2°C above pre-industrial levels:**  To effectively limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, as called for in the Paris Agreement, countries must pursue a comprehensive suite of mitigation strategies across different sectors of the economy. A critical first step is transitioning the energy system away from fossil fuels and towards renewable sources like solar, wind, hydroelectric, and geothermal power. Improving energy efficiency through technological advancements and policy incentives can also significantly reduce emissions in buildings, transportation, and industry.  Protecting and restoring forests is another crucial element, as these natural carbon sinks play a vital role in absorbing and storing atmospheric greenhouse gases. Adopting sustainable agricultural practices and land use management can further contribute to emissions reductions from the land use sector. Putting a price on carbon, through mechanisms like carbon taxes or cap-and-trade schemes, creates powerful economic incentives for businesses and consumers to shift towards low-carbon alternatives.  Investing in the development of carbon capture and storage technologies provides an additional pathway to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Governments can drive this transition by enacting comprehensive climate action plans and supportive policies across different domains. Critically, engaging and empowering citizens, communities, and the private sector to take their own climate action is essential to achieve the scale of emissions cuts required. Through this multifaceted approach, countries can make meaningful progress towards the global goal of limiting warming to well below 2°C. |

From the perspective of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) operating in Kenya, climate change poses substantial hurdles to sustainable development initiatives. The agriculture sector, a critical component of Kenya's economy, is particularly vulnerable, with climate variability threatening food security and livelihoods. The Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Strategy aims to address these challenges by promoting sustainable agricultural practices and enhancing resilience. However, the implementation of such strategies requires robust evidence-based policies and significant financial investment to be effective. CSOs stress the need for increased climate action and better integration of climate adaptation measures into national development plans to mitigate these impacts and support the achievement of SDGs​. The following figure shows the perceptions of CSOs on the degree to which Kenya has adhered to the Paris Agreement.

**Figure 3: Knowledge of Paris Agreement Among CSOs**

In this next section, CSOs responded to how Kenya has demonstrated commitment to the Paris Agreement.

**Table 8: CSOs Rating of Kenya's Commitment to the Paris Agreement**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Commitment | 1  Not at all | 2  Slightly | 3  Moderately | 4  Quite A bit | 5  Strongly Adhering |
| Limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. | 0.0% | 18.8% | 59.4% | 15.6% | 0.0% |
| Kenya has set its own voluntary targets and plans (NDCs) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. | 3.1% | 34.4% | 37.5% | 12.5% | 6.3% |
| Kenya is reporting on its emissions and progress towards their NDCs on a regular basis. | 0.0% | 37.5% | 40.6% | 15.6% | 0.0% |

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Kenya have expressed mixed views on the country's commitment to the Paris Agreement. A significant majority (59.4%) feel that Kenya has moderately adhered to the goal of limiting global warming (see Vignette 1) to well below 2°C, with efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. This suggests that there is an acknowledgement that Kenya has made some efforts to limit global warming, but these efforts have been moderate or moderate in their effectiveness.

|  |
| --- |
| Vignette 2: Kenya’s Nationally Determined Contribution[[5]](#footnote-5)  Here is a summary of the key points about Kenya's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in coherent paragraphs:  Kenya's NDC outlines an ambitious plan to abate greenhouse gas emissions by 32% by 2030, aligning with the country's sustainable development agenda and a low-carbon, climate-resilient pathway. This commitment covers emissions across several key sectors, including energy, industry, agriculture, land use, forestry, and waste, focusing on carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide.  To achieve these mitigation targets, Kenya's NDC includes a comprehensive set of priority actions. These include increasing the share of renewables in the national electricity grid, enhancing energy and resource efficiency, aiming for at least 10% tree cover nationwide, and pursuing land degradation neutrality. The NDC also emphasizes scaling up nature-based solutions, REDD+ activities, clean energy technologies, low-carbon transportation, climate-smart agriculture, and sustainable waste management.  Importantly, Kenya aims to finance 21% of the mitigation costs from domestic sources, while seeking 79% in international support in the form of finance, technology, capacity building, and development assistance. Regarding adaptation and loss and damage, the NDC focuses on enhancing the climate resilience of communities, sectors, and the overall economy, including through disaster risk reduction, climate-smart agriculture, and investments in the blue economy. |

Regarding Kenya's own voluntary targets and plans (known as Nationally Determined Contributions or NDCs - see Vignette 2) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change, the majority of CSOs (37.5%) view the country's commitment as moderate. Only a small fraction (6.3%) see strong adherence to these targets. The perception of Kenya's regular reporting on emissions and progress towards their NDCs also varies, with 40.6% rating it as moderate and none strongly agreeing that the reporting is transparent and sufficient. This suggests that while Kenya's efforts to address climate change are recognized, there is room for the country to strengthen both the ambition and implementation of its climate action plans, as well as improve transparency around reporting on its emissions and progress.

## 3.6 Leave No One Behind

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Kenya have identified several groups that are most at risk of being marginalized and left behind in the country's development agenda. These groups include persons with disabilities, the elderly, children, youth, women, minority groups, indigenous communities, and those residing in arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs). Additionally, persons with albinism, intersex individuals, and stateless persons face significant exclusion from mainstream development efforts. Additional groups identified by CSOs include men addicted to alcohol and drugs, young people, particularly adolescents, people with different sexual orientations and gender identities, artists,, people on the streets, and those from low populous groups. CSOs emphasize that these groups often encounter systemic barriers to accessing essential services such as education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, which exacerbates their vulnerability and limits their ability to participate fully in society. This marginalization is further compounded by socio-economic inequalities, discriminatory practices, and inadequate policy implementation.

In response to these challenges, various CSOs are actively working to ensure these marginalized groups are included in Kenya's development processes. For instance, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) has been instrumental in advocating for the inclusion of marginalized groups in national policies and development plans. KNCHR's collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) led to the inclusion of questions on disability, albinism, and intersex status in the 2019 National Population and Housing Census, a significant step towards recognizing and addressing the needs of these groups. Similarly, ActionAid Kenya focuses on empowering women and girls in rural areas through education and economic empowerment programs, aiming to reduce gender-based inequalities and improve their socio-economic status. The Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) works to amplify the concerns of marginalized communities such as indigenous peoples, women, youth, and those living in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs). The organization collaborates with local and international partners to develop and implement policies that address the unique challenges these groups face due to climate change. For instance, PACJA supports indigenous communities in advocating for their land rights and promoting sustainable land management practices that enhance resilience to climate impacts​.

To ensure these groups are not left behind, CSOs rate the following action points as being important:

* Strengthening laws, policies and accountability mechanisms to protect the rights of disadvantaged groups.

**Figure 4: Effectiveness of Strengthened Laws, Policies and Accountability Mechanisms to Protect the Rights of Disadvantaged Groups**

* Increasing funding and resources for programs targeting marginalized groups (e.g., women, youth, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities) would help address inequalities.

**Figure 5: Improved Funding and Impact on Marginalized Communities**

* Improving accessibility (e.g., infrastructure, transportation, services) in remote and rural areas would help ensure no one is left behind in development progress

**Figure 6: Impact of Improving Accessibility in Rural and Urban Areas on Leave No One Behind**

## 3.7 Collaborations and Partnerships

The majority of respondent Civil Society Organizations indicated that they are partnering and collaborating with research bodies, think tanks and academic institutions to collect, analyze and disseminate data and research related to sustainable development goals. According to these CSOs, accurate and reliable data and research is fundamentally important for improving SDG monitoring and reporting, ensuring that impact and progress are accurately captured. However, the CSOs noted that despite such partnerships, significant data and research gaps like unavailability of data and inadequate awareness of data sources still pose significant challenges in SDG monitoring and reporting.

**Figure 7:CSOs with Collaborations with Academic Institutions, Think Tanks and Research Bodies**

The SDGs Kenya Forum is a leading partnership organization, actively collaborating with various institutions to promote sustainable development across multiple sectors. CSOs are collaborating with other institutions like the Institute of Public Finance Kenya and several universities such as Taita Taveta University, University of Maseno, Masinde Muliro University, and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST). These academic institutions contribute through research, education, and community engagement. Further, the Kenya School of Government and the African Centre for Governance and Security collaborate on governance and security issues. Partnerships extend internationally, CSOs partnering with the University of California. Health-related collaborations involve prominent institutions such as the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) and the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC). Other significant educational partners include Mount Kenya University, the University of Nairobi (UON), Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), and the Technical University of Kenya.

Local Development Research Institute (LDRI) and The African Institute for Children Studies are vital for policy and child-focused initiatives. Open Institute contributes to advocacy and policy reform through generation of citizen data and evidence, while the Kenyatta University Department of Public Law supports legal research and education. Partnerships with schools, as well as agricultural and research institutions like JKUAT, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI), and Alupe University, drive advancements in agriculture and technology. Finally, collaborations with the Institute of Economic Affairs and government bodies such as National AIDS and STI Control Program (NASCOP), Ministry of Health (MOH), and National Council For Population & Development (NCPD) ensure comprehensive support for health and economic policies.

## 3.8 CSOs Engagement with National and County Governments

Respondent organizations have noted that policy dialogues between CSOs and government counterparts, both at the national and subnational levels, are ongoing, primarily driven by the leadership and convening abilities of the SDGs framework. For instance, Development Initiatives conducted a county disability-inclusive budget tracking in partnership with the Western Disability Empowerment Network and United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK). Oxfam has influenced strategies to strengthen government systems and structures, while the Forest Action Network (FAN) has been active in advocating for forest policy. HelpAge International has organized meetings with policymakers, and county governments like Makueni have formed SDGs Secretariats and Task Forces.

CSOs have been invited by the government, through the State Department of Planning's SDGs unit, to contribute to the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process in both 2017 and 2020. Despite these invitations, there has been agitation for more substantial contributions from non-state actors in providing data and evidence on SDG attainment and collaborating further on these efforts. In 2022, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), in close collaboration with the SDGs Kenya Forum and partner CSOs, has developed quality criteria for Citizen Generated Data (CGD) as part of a quality assurance framework for non-state actors to collect reliable data[[6]](#footnote-6). The KNBS and SDGs Kenya forum have further invited CSOs to avail their datasets for validation for inclusion in the official statistics through the Performance for Monitoring Action project[[7]](#footnote-7).

## 3.9 CSOs Demands of Government for an Enabling Environment for Sustainable Development

To enable effective progress on sustainable development, CSOs are encouraging the government to prioritize inclusion, collaboration, and adequate funding. Including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in county committees and forums ensures diverse perspectives in decision-making, while fostering public participation through Community Led monitoring and SDGs Community Dialogues enhances accountability. Joint collaboration between county and national governments, along with partnerships with NGOs, can leverage combined efforts for sustainable development, particularly in areas like agricultural innovation and equitable food distribution.

Adequate funding and resources are critical for the success of sustainable development initiatives in Kenya. According to the 4th schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, many of the specific functions required to support sustainable development fall under the devolved responsibilities of county governments. County governments thus play a pivotal role in driving sustainable development at the subnational level, including through mainstreaming these priorities into county development plans and financing locally-led projects. Effective coordination and resource-sharing between the national and county governments is therefore essential to ensure sustainable development goals can be achieved across all levels. CSOs encourage the government to secure budgetary allocations for devolved functions such as feeding programmes in early childhood education, extension services in the agriculture department, address funding issues related to gender and social inclusion, and ensure sufficient resources for community awareness programs. Implementing policy and regulatory frameworks, such as establishing a national council for older persons and aligning security policies with SDG Goals, will create a supportive environment for sustainable development. Infrastructure improvements, such as enhancing road networks and electricity supply, along with providing nutritional supplements and youth-friendly services, are essential for uplifting vulnerable populations.

Awareness and education are fundamental to sustainable development. CSOs are encouraging increasing collaborations to upscale community awareness programs, providing entrepreneurship training, and supporting women and girls with free contraceptives and sanitary towels to empower individuals and promote economic growth. Transparency and accountability are equally important, necessitating the publicizing of supplementary budgets and fostering a genuine commitment to the SDGs beyond funding advantages. Social contracting will ensure effective use of resources and enhance trust between the government and stakeholders, creating a comprehensive approach to achieving sustainable development goals. As shown in the figure below, the majority of CSOs at 87.5% are collaborating and partnering with the national and county governments in different areas of SDG implementation.

**Figure 8: CSO Collaborations with the National and County Governments**

# 4.0 Conclusion and Summary of Lessons Learned

The People’s Scorecard highlights significant strides made in Kenya's progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Key areas of progress include improvements in health infrastructure, reduction in maternal and child mortality rates, and increased access to modern contraceptives. There has been a notable impact on education, with increased enrolment of girls in schools, and efforts in gender equality have empowered women through financial literacy and access to resources. Environmental sustainability initiatives, such as afforestation and climate action awareness, have gained traction, contributing to broader environmental goals. Additionally, social protection measures have bolstered resilience among vulnerable populations, and policy advocacy has facilitated progress in various sectors, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to sustainable development.

However, the implementation of the SDGs is not without its challenges. Financing remains a critical barrier, with CSOs highlighting the need for increased budgetary allocations and sustainable funding mechanisms. Policy-related issues, including inadequate frameworks and the need for stronger political commitment, continue to hinder progress. Capacity building is crucial, as many organizations face challenges due to insufficient skills and expertise necessary for effective program management and implementation. Furthermore, data collection and monitoring systems require significant improvement to ensure accurate tracking of progress and accountability. Addressing these challenges will necessitate coordinated efforts, innovative solutions, and robust policy interventions to enhance the effectiveness of SDG implementation.

In summary, the active involvement of CSOs in Kenya's SDG agenda has demonstrated the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in driving sustainable development. The lessons learned emphasize the need for comprehensive strategies that address financial constraints, policy improvements, capacity enhancement, infrastructure development, and effective data management. By fostering inclusive and collaborative approaches, Kenya can continue to make significant strides towards achieving the SDGs, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of sustainable development

1. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=2125&menu=1515> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://action4sd.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://uonjournals.uonbi.ac.ke/ojs/index.php/ahr/article/download/820/776> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [ca.go.ke/universal-service-fund](http://ca.go.ke/universal-service-fund) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/KEN210108.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.knbs.or.ke/reports/kenya-statistical-quality-assurance-framework-booklet/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [knbs.or.ke/citizen-generated-data/#:~:text=The%20Kenya%20National%20Bureau%20of,System%20(NSS)%20and%20beyond](http://knbs.or.ke/citizen-generated-data/#:~:text=The%20Kenya%20National%20Bureau%20of,System%20(NSS)%20and%20beyond). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)