

Country statements



(1) Strategies for leaving no one behind in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Sri Lanka is expected to prepare a holistic policy framework on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

This exercise requires evidence-based policy research to identify economic, social and environmental priorities of the county, extensive consultation with relevant government agencies, civil society and the business sector and coordination with relevant international organizations including UN agencies. Based on this process, Sri Lanka will have to prepare a detailed implementation strategy/plan that will be incorporated in the medium to long-term development plans of the country within the next 15 years.

A Road Map for SDGs and its implementation

A high-level ‘**Sustainable Development Council**’ headed by the President consisting of relevant ministers, a senior civil society leader, a senior representative of the business sector, a senior representative academic/research institutions.

The **Ministry of Sustainable Development**, acts as the focal point for coordinating, facilitating, and reporting on the implementation of SDGs in Sri Lanka.

SDG Consultation and Coordination Committee: In order to ensure the ownership and support of all stakeholders, first, extensive consultation with all relevant government agencies, the civil society.

External support: In addition to internal consultation and coordination, the government may wish to consider setting up of an external advisory body consisting of UN agencies, the World Bank, ADB and other relevant international and regional agencies to provide substantive inputs to the process.

Mainstreaming SDGs in national development plans: It is of paramount importance to fully incorporate SDGs in national development plans and policy frameworks as these goals cannot be achieved in isolation.

SDG Technical Committee: While there should be a coordinating ministry such as Ministry of Environment, Economic Policy and Planning or Ministry of Finance to facilitate the process, the government will have to strengthen existing institutions

Accountability: The Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 emphasizes the importance of accountability in implementing the agenda.

Data and monitoring: A new dimension of SDGs vis-à-vis MDGs is the recognition of the significance of data for which the arrangements will have to be made at the outset to avoid any difficult situations in monitoring the progress of implementing the Road Map.

Financing for SDGs: The successful implementation of the SDG Road Map will largely depend on the availability of financing

The Sri Lankan academic community including the state universities could play a crucial role in the process of preparing the country to achieve sustainable development agenda by 2030. Being the first ‘green’ university in Sri Lanka, the NSBM, is well-placed to provide a substantial contribution to these tasks.



Situation of Sri Lanka

- The **Ministry of Sustainable Development**, acts as the focal point for coordinating, facilitating, and reporting on the implementation of SDGs in Sri Lanka.

- Another significant step is the enactment of the **Sustainable Development Act No. 19 of 2017** which lays the foundation for a well-organized institutional mechanism to implement the SDGs utilizing the existing system of public institutions.

Country's commitment to sustainable development.

The current policy framework of the country further reflects the Sri Lanka's strategic development framework, reflected through its long-term development plan, **Vision 2025**, its medium-term plan, the Public Investment Programme 2017-2020, and the 'Blue Green' Budget of 2018 align significantly with the SDGs.

- Sri Lanka has made great results in the provision of services in many sectors including education, health and near universal domestic electricity supply.
- However, despite many positive achievements in the health sector, such as holding the malaria free status and reduction of maternal mortality,
- Challenges have been risen from population aging and non-communicable diseases.
- The Government has taken steps to address these challenges by developing long, medium and short term plans, and allocating resources to realize those plans.
- The principle of leaving no one behind forms the core of the SDGs and thus, the achievement of the SDGs mandate the adoption of **an inclusive growth approach**.
- Welfare policies and programmes that include health system, education system, and social protection programmes further contribute to ensuring that no one is left behind. Sri Lanka declared the year 2017 as the year of eradicating poverty.

Current National Policy Framework

Vision 2025

Government's vision to make Sri Lanka a prosperous country by 2025 by creating an environment where all citizens have the opportunity to achieve higher incomes and enjoy better standards of living by transforming the country into a knowledge-based, highly competitive, social-market economy.

Sustainable Development Act

The Sustainable Development Act No. 19 of 2017 enforced in October 2017 provides the legal framework to implement the SDGs using the existing system of public institutions, applying the mainstreaming principle where the Sustainable Development Council (SDC) plays a central coordinating role.

Strategic for advancing Women's Economic Empowerment



The Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs which is in the process of drafting national legislation, such as the Women's Rights Bill and the National Plan of Action. It proposes to establish a SDC as the national coordinating body for implementing SDGs.

Government policies are currently being formulated to address gender violence—six new shelters have been set up in various locations for the protection of survivors of violence and a digital database system has been developed to collect gender-based violence data.

National Framework for Women headed Households (2017–2019) has also been introduced, especially to improve the socioeconomic situation of women affected by conflict.

Micro finance programme and self employment support.

These programme support the economic empowerment of rural women, and encourage **girls to enter technological fields to improve employment opportunities.**

The Government has further focused on increasing **political participation of women, with an amendment to local electoral law to reserve 25%** of all seats to women being passed in 2016.

Key Strategies

- Implementing social programmes for women on business development training and technology transfer, create markets and market linkages, share business information and facilitate access to credit for the business.
- Implementing a range of special programmes by both government and non-government institutions especially focusing the Women Headed Households and vulnerable women.
- Boost the supply of child care facilities to enhance women labor force participation through a comprehensive programme to establish day care centers with the support of stakeholders.
 - Carry out a comprehensive survey and develop a data base
 - Revise Child Care policy and standard regulations to standardize the existing centers and care givers
 - Promote all government and private institutions to start the day care centers. Ensure and safeguard the right of women
 - Enact the Bill of Rights of Women
 - Establish a “National Commission on Women” to enforce the bill of rights

To enforce strict legal punishment for sexual and violent crimes against women establishing a “National Commission on Preventing Sexual and Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Leaving no one behind supporting vulnerable groups in the context of the 2030 Agenda SDGs

Protection of Senior Citizens

- Policies directed towards the elderly - National Committee on Ageing was established in the Department of Social Services.
- National Policy for the Elders was formulated with the objective to prepare the population for a productive and fulfilling life in old age and to ensure the independence, participation, care, self fulfilment and dignity of the elderly.
- As it was necessary, legislation on the Protection of the rights of Senior Citizens.

Persons with Disabilities

Disability Legislation: Parliamentary Act No. 28 of 1996 to Protect the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Program of Action to achieve equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

- Conducting early intervention programs for the disabled children
- Development of vocational skills of the persons with disabilities and provision of job placement services
- Provision of artificial limbs
- Provision of special identity cards
- Rehabilitation of drug addicts.
- Vocational Training Programme
- Inclusive education
- Social Protection Scheme

Vulnerable Children

For a balanced growth of a child, health and education are the two most important services he/she should receive. Both of these services are available free of charge within the country ensuring the proper physical and mental growth of the child. Although Sri Lankan children are in a better status compared to other South Asian countries, there are several challenges to be addressed.

- **Issues and Challenges**
High malnutrition and obesity among children
Poor quality of early childhood education
Increased violence/abuse against children
Unsystematic implementation of Early Childhood Development Programmes
Provision of foster parent or institutional care for destitute and orphans
Inadequate access to health, nutrition and education facilities by vulnerable children.

Leaving no - one behind

Inclusion is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, envisioning a world where all are empowered and no one is left behind.

The principle of leaving no one behind forms the core of the SDGs and thus, the achievement of the SDGs mandate the adoption of an **inclusive growth approach**.

The Government of Sri Lanka has taken significant measures – legislations, policies and programmes to ensure that no one is left behind.

The country's foundation for inclusiveness

The country's foundation for inclusiveness can be found in the Constitution of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka which entitles every Sri Lankan the fundamental rights to:

- ✓ freedom of thought,
 - ✓ conscience and religion;
 - ✓ freedom from torture;
 - ✓ right to equality;
 - ✓ freedom from arbitrary arrest,
 - ✓ detention and punishment, and prohibition of retrospective penal legislation; and freedom of speech, assembly, association, occupation, movement, etc.
- The country's long-standing welfare policies and programmes further contribute to ensuring that no one is left behind.

Prepared by:
M.T.R. Shamini Attanayake
Director General,
National Institute of Social Development,
Ministry of Housing Social Welfare, Sri-Lanka.

Ministerial Delegation of Sri Lanka

- 1. Mr. Sarath Rupasiri , Additional Secretary,(Development)**
Ministry of Housing & Social Welfare.
- 2. Mrs. Dhammika Liyanegge , Additional Secretary, (Research Statistics & Planning)**
Ministry of Housing & Social Welfare.
- 3. Mrs. M.T.R.Shamini Attanayake - Director General,**
National Institute of Social Development
Ministry of Housing & Social Welfare.
- 4. Mr. H.k. Ranaweera Director, Social Security and Welfare,**
Department of Samurdhi Development
Ministry of Housing & Social Welfare