



 *St. Kitts and Nevis*

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

of the

2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by
Ministry of Sustainable Development
Government of St. Kitts and Nevis 2023



SAINT CHRISTOPHER (ST. KITTS) AND NEVIS
VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW
OF
2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Message from Hon. Dr. Terrance Drew, Prime Minister

Across the Globe, countries are fighting to withstand the fallouts from the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War and the increasing threat of climate change. The unique vulnerabilities of the Global South continue to generate instability and development challenges including economic and climate-induced migration. In the face of global uncertainty, small island developing states such as Saint Kitts and Nevis have no choice but to refocus, recreate and redesign our paths forward to foster greater levels of sustainability and resilience building and to ensure that no one in our societies is left behind. It is in this vein that Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to embrace the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** as our

guidepost for development. As we approach our 40th anniversary as an independent nation on September 19, 2023, we renew our commitment to accelerating the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a participatory manner.

Our government has embarked on a mission to transform Saint Kitts and Nevis into a 'Sustainable Island State' - a vision premised on inclusivity, protecting and supporting the most vulnerable, sustainable economic growth, and building resilience across all facets of society. Our commitment to Good Governance and the building of strategic partnerships are key, because no small island developing state can thrive, or survive, without upholding social justice and the rule of law. No small island developing state can be sustainable without the support of its regional and international partners. Further, we must continue to extend a hand of engagement to our citizens and residents, our stakeholders, our private sector and our civil society organizations.

Saint Kitts and Nevis has made significant progress in the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. While the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily slowed our progress, it also exposed new avenues and opportunities for development that can accelerate the achievement of the SDGs over the next seven (7) years. The journey to 2030 must be characterized by a redoubling of our efforts and greater acknowledgement and communication of our implementation and resource gaps. Accordingly, this Voluntary National Review (VNR) provides a frank assessment of our constraints, challenges, but determination in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. In preparing this VNR, it is our hope to excite the commitment of our partners to take renewed actions, bilaterally and multilaterally, to support Saint Kitts and Nevis in making even greater strides in SDG implementation.





Message from Hon. Dr. Joyelle Clarke, Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment, Climate Action and Constituency Empowerment

Saint Kitts and Nevis is at the vanguard of regional progress toward achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Despite this success, the challenges of COVID-19, Climate Change and burgeoning global polycrisis have exacerbated existing socioeconomic vulnerabilities and exposed national deficits in social protection and empowerment programmes. Indeed, these challenges and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda have changed the

way we perceive development in purely economic terms to one that is more inclusive and places greater emphasis on the social and environmental dimensions. Moving forward, higher levels of collective ambition will be required to realize more inclusive, equitable and resilient growth.

Saint Kitts and Nevis' approach to accelerating SDG implementation will continue to focus on people. While much of our public is aware of the SDGs, there is still much work to be done to foster a deeper understanding of the roles that the community and every individual play in the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. Public buy-in and connection to the SDG vision is vital. Our first VNR has compelled us to pause and take stock of the alignment of our COVID-19 recovery plans with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. It also coincided with the formulation of our new National Development Plan for the next fifteen (15) years which focuses on transforming our country into a Sustainable Island State. In this regard, the VNR process has sharpened our strategic focus on our vulnerabilities, gaps and risks relating to external shocks and climatic phenomena.

Strategic partnerships continue to be our pathway to successfully implementing the SDGs. We have created the necessary partnership scaffolding with all stakeholders in society, thereby increasing opportunities to engage and co-create inclusive policies for development. However, it is evident that public funds are inadequate to sustain our comprehensive, holistic, development plan that is needed to accelerate SDG implementation with maximum impact. It is therefore imperative that international financial institutions and multilateral development banks explore new and innovative financing mechanisms that are informed by a multidimensional vulnerability index as an assessment tool in determining access to Official Development Assistance. Alarming, international commitments to mobilize and shift resources to those who need it most, do not appear to be commensurate with our herculean local efforts.

Preparing this VNR report has been challenging given systemic and capacity issues with the collection and maintenance of SDG-related data and the complexities associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding, I want to say a special thanks to UNECLAC, the UN Multi-country Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean through its UN Country Coordination Officer, and our consultancy and VNR coordination teams, for their unwavering support in making our first VNR a reality.



Message from Hon. Mark Brantley, Premier of Nevis

The Nevis Island Administration, and by extension the people of Nevis, are pleased to be an integral part of this first Voluntary National Review of the Federation's progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Our Administration holds fast to the belief that our people belong at the centre of our developmental plans. Our policies and programs will continue to be people-focused holding true to the guiding principle of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that we should Leave No One Behind.

Despite our success in managing the COVID-19 pandemic and the significant progress made in restoring macroeconomic stability, we are fully aware that many of our citizens continue to face hardship having been adversely affected over the past three years. We therefore pledge to continue to work at growing our economy and creating a resilient, productive and inclusive society. We will continue to incentivize the creation of sustainable jobs; diversify our economic base; increase investments to improve resilient health care delivery; invest in our education infrastructure infusing ICT; foster skills development through our Technological Vocational Enhancement Training (TVET) program; increase investments in agriculture and the light manufacturing sector to boost food and nutrition security and reduce our huge import bill; preserve and expand as necessary, social safety nets to protect and empower our most vulnerable citizens; and fast track our transition to renewable energy.

The stark reality for Nevis is that our local resources are exceedingly limited. If we are to grow and develop in a sustainable manner that brings tangible benefits to our people, then enhanced and impactful partnerships with foreign investors, our local private sector, civil society and the international community, will be required. We will continue to strengthen our partnership with the Federal government in Saint Kitts through our groundbreaking geothermal energy project on Nevis and by seeking additional opportunities for collaboration for the benefit of both islands. More importantly, we commit to continually integrate the SDGs into our medium-term planning in order to foster the best outcomes for the sustainable development of our people.





LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATGS - Agricultural Transformation and Growth Strategy	ECCU - Eastern Caribbean Currency Union
AVEC – Advanced Vocational Education Centre	ECLAC – Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
BURP - Basseterre Urban Revitalisation Plan	ECPA - Enhanced Country Poverty Assessment
CANARI - Caribbean Natural Resources Institute	ECTEL – Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority
CAP - Caribbean Community Agricultural Policy	ECSE – Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange
CAPE - Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination	EGDI - E-Government Development Index
CARICOM - Caribbean Community and Common Market	EMIS - Education management information system
CBO – Community-based Organizations	EMTCT – Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission
CCRIF - Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility	EIA – Environment Impact Assessment
CDB - Caribbean Development Bank	EPS – Education Policy and Strategy
CDEMA - Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency	EU – European Union
CDP- Comprehensive Disaster Plan	EEZ – Exclusive Economic Zone
CDM – Caribbean Disaster Management	EV (Electrical Vehicle)
CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	FAD - Fish Aggregating Devices
CEO – Chief Executive Officer	FAO - United Nations’ Food and Agricultural Organization
CFBC - Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College	FNS - Food and Nutrition Security
CFYR - Community, Family and Youth Resilience	FREESH – Fund for the Realization of Economic Empowerment through Subsidizing Housing
CFP - Common Fisheries Policy	FSRC - Financial Services Regulatory Commission
CFRM - Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism	GBV - Gender Based Violence
CO2 – Carbon-di-Oxide	GCF - Green Climate Fund
CBI - Citizenship By Investment	GDP – Gross Domestic Product
CNCD – Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases	GEPAP - Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan
CPI – Consumer Price Index	GHG – Greenhouse Gas
CSEC - Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate	HDI - Human Development Index
CSI – Coalition of Service Industries	HFLE - Health and Family Life Education
CSME - CARICOM Single Market and Economy	HLPF - High-Level Political Forum
CSO – Civil Society Organization	HIS – Health Information System
CXC - Caribbean Examination Council	HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
DBI – Doing Business Index	ICT - Information and Communication Technology
DM - Disaster Management	IEP (Individual Education Plan)
EC – Eastern Caribbean	IICA - International Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
ECCB – Eastern Caribbean Central Bank	ILO – International Labour Organization
ECD – Early Childhood Development	





IMF – International Monetary Fund	NDE – National Disaster Executive
IMO – International Maritime Organization	NDPF - National Development Planning Framework
IOM – International Organization for Migration	NEDD – National Entrepreneurial Development Division
IPFS - International Platform on Sustainable Finance	NEET – Not in Education, Employment and Training
IPOSKN – Intellectual Property Office of St. Kitts and Nevis	NEMA – National Emergency Management Agency
IPR - Intellectual Property Rights	NEOC - National Emergency Operations Centre
IRENA -International Renewable Energy Agency	NEVLEC – Nevis Electric Company Limited
ITU – International Telecommunication Union	NGO – Non-government organization
IUU - Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated [fishing]	NHC - National Housing Corporation
IWRM – Integrated Water Management	NHI – National Health Insurance
kWh - Kilowatt Hour	NIA - Nevis Island Administration
LAIS – Land Administration Information System	NIPA – Nevis Investment Promotion Agency
LGBTI - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Intersex	NOW - Non-traditional Occupation for Women
LLC – Limited Liability Companies	NPLs – Non-Performing Loans
MD -Doctor of Medicine	NQF - National Qualification Framework
Mbps – Megabytes per Second	NPRS - National Poverty Reduction Strategy
MDG – Millennium Development Goals	NSDCC - National Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee
MGD - Metric Gallon per Day	NSPPAP - National Social Protection Policy and Action Plan
M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation	NSTP - National Skills Training Programme
MMA - Marine Management Area	NTA – Nevis Tourism Authority
MIS – Management Information System	NWD – Nevis Water Department
MMR – Measles, Mumps and Rubella	OAS – Organization of American States
MMR – Maternal Mortality Ratio	OECS - Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States
MoSD - Ministry of Sustainable Development	OFDA- Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
MoSDGA - Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs	PAHO – Pan- American Health Organization
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding	PAP - Poverty Alleviation Programme
MRI – Magnetic Resonance Imaging	PEP – People’s Employment Programme
MSME – Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	PGPD - Public Good Project Developer
MW – Mega Watt	PLR – Policy, Legal and Regulatory
NAS - National Adaptation Strategy	PMT- Proxy Means Test
NBSAP- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	PPT – Power Point
NCCC - National Committee on Climate Change	PSB – Public Sector Debt
NCDs - Non-Communicable Diseases	PSMA - Port State Measures Agreement
NDA - National Designated Authority	PTA – Parent Teacher Association
NDP - National Disaster Plan	PV – Photovoltaic
NDC - Nationally Determined Contribution	PWDs -Persons with Disabilities
NDC – National Disaster Council	





RDA - Recommended Dietary Allowances	UNCTAD – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
R&D – Research and Development	UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme
RHI - Reef Health Index	UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
RFNSAP - Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan	UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
RWH – Rainwater Harvesting	UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
RSCNPF – Royal Saint Christopher and Nevis Police Force	UNFSA - United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, 2015
SAMOA – SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action	UNICEF – United Nations Children Fund
SBDC – Small Business Development Centre	UNISDR - United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
SBR - Single Beneficiary Registry	URP - Urban Resilience Plan
SDG – Sustainable Development Goals	USAID – United States Agency for International Development
SDR - Special Drawing Rights	VNR - Voluntary National Review
SEAF - Small Enterprises Assistance Fund	UWI – University of West Indies
SEDU – Small Enterprise Development Unit	UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
SGF – Sustainable Growth Fund	URP - Urban Resilience Plan
SIDF – Sugar Industry Development Foundation	WB - World Bank
SIDS - Small Island Developing States	WEEFI - Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion
SKELEC – St. Kitts Electric Company Limited	WEW – Women Empowering Women
SKIPA – St. Kitts Investment Promotion Agency	WSD – Water Supply Department
SKN – St. Kitts and Nevis	WTO – World Trade Organization
SKNGIS - St. Kitts and Nevis Geographic Information System	
SKNMMA - St. Kitts and Nevis Marine Management Area Management Plan	
SKNMS - St. Kitts and Nevis Meteorological Services	
SKWMC - St. Kitts Solid Waste Management Corporation	
SSB – Social Security Board	
SSMC - St. Kitts Sugar Manufacturing Corporation	
SSS - National Social Security Scheme	
STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	
STEP - Skills Training Empowerment Programme	
STI – Sexually Transmitted Diseases	
TSA – Tourism Satellite Account	
UN – United Nations	
TVET – Technical and Vocational Education and Training	





INTRODUCTION

St. Kitts and Nevis is a high-middle income Small Island Developing State (SIDS) in the Eastern Caribbean. The estimated population in 2021 was 47,606¹. The twin-island nation is classified as a High Human Development country with a per capita income of USD25,653, and the country is ranked 74th among 189 countries in the 2020 Human Development Report. Over 95 percent of the population has access to essential services such as electricity, potable water, sanitation services, and shelter², with adequate access to health care and education.

The Sugar Industry was once a significant employer and contributor to the economy until its closure in 2005. During the last decade, the country depends heavily on services (68% of GDP), particularly tourism, which accounts for 22% of GDP and 42% of employment, with agriculture and manufacturing collectively accounting for 8% of GDP. The National Adaptation Strategy, in force up to 2017, identified four pillars for the Federation's post-sugar development focus. These included Agriculture Diversification, Information and Communication Technology, Tourism, and Financial Services. The Government's Citizenship By Investment Programme (CBI)³ also became a substantial contributor to the post-sugar economic stability.

In 2015, Saint Kitts and Nevis committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, the planet, and global prosperity, expected to be implemented by all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, through bold and transformative steps urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. The SDGs raise the bar to achieve a paradigm shift in many key development areas. The transformative agenda focuses on the five Ps (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership).

The Voluntary National Review (VNR) presents an opportunity for United Nations member states to take ownership of the SDGs – while considering national realities – in a voluntary, transparent, and participatory way. St. Kitts and Nevis' review approach focuses on efforts to follow the fundamental principles of the Agenda 2030, including focusing on the people furthest behind and pursuing global partnerships as a means of implementation. Incidentally, St. Kitts and Nevis is continuing to strengthen its efforts to ensure that the SDGs remain at the forefront of its national development agenda.

Achieving the SDGs is a complex and systematic endeavour that requires involvement from a wide range of stakeholders across different backgrounds, thus creating social and institutional partnerships as well as the joint responsibility of public entities, businesses, and citizens for the implementation of the SDGs. Consequently, international partnerships and collaboration are also crucial for Saint Kitts and Nevis to achieve the SDGs.

¹World Bank Development Indicators, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/st-kitts-and-nevis>

²World Bank Development Indicators, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/st-kitts-and-nevis>

³SKN has one of the longest-running CBI programmes, where investors obtain second citizenship and passport by investing in the host country's economy. The options include investment in a real estate project or a contribution to the Sustainable Growth Fund (SGF); the latter, along with application and due diligence fees, significantly augments government revenues. CBI revenues have also helped to reduce the outstanding public debt to sustainable levels and to build fiscal buffers, the equivalent of 25.0% of GDP at the end of 2019.





METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS FOR PREPARATION OF THE VNR

The Voluntary National Review (VNR) process was used as an opportunity to review St. Kitts and Nevis' progress towards the 2030 Agenda, foster national ownership, build awareness, and encourage the involvement of key stakeholders. We used existing arrangements to facilitate and accelerate the VNR process. In 2018, the Ministry of Sustainable Development (MoSD) through the Department of Economic Affairs and Public Sector Investment Planning, was assigned the responsibility to coordinate, monitor, and report on the implementation of the SDGs. A National Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee (NSDCC) was also established in 2020 to provide the required updates regarding actions to facilitate the achievement of the SDGs within respective sectors and facilitate reporting to regional and international entities.

A core VNR team was established within the MoSD and worked in close collaboration with SDG focal points and members of the NSDCC, which acted as our bridge to various other institutions falling under their purview. A Development Specialist was also recruited to work with the VNR Team to support data collection, analysis, and drafting of the VNR report. The VNR process was inclusive and participatory, with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels. The stakeholders included public sector officials, civil society organisations, the private sector, school children, and academia. These organisations were also present during the various fine-tuning exercises conducted by the core VNR team. We requested lead Ministries to inform and involve their respective Ministers in the process. At the meetings, participants identified critical barriers, opportunities, and emerging issues under each thematic area, and recommended actions to respond to the problems identified. The outputs from the consultations are reflected in the VNR report.

We developed a Stakeholder Engagement Plan and an SDG Communications Strategy to ensure inclusiveness and multi-stakeholder participation in the process. For this, we set out an SDG Questionnaire with specific questions and rigorous criteria to gather information. This constituted a solid basis for the development of each SDG chapter. Broad-based and comprehensive consultations, as well as one-to-one dialogues, were held intermittently from November 2021 to June 2023 involving both public and private stakeholders, Civil Society, NGOs, and academia in St. Kitts as well as on the island of Nevis. We held validation workshops with a cross-section of stakeholders. We also conducted specific consultations and working sessions with the St. Kitts-Nevis Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

Throughout, the buy-in from the Cabinet of Ministers was vital. VNR sensitization sessions were held with the Cabinet, supported by ECLAC, and are expected to lead to our first Cabinet-level SDG subcommittee to strengthen oversight of our national monitoring efforts.





PROGRESS ON GOALS AND TARGETS

4

⁴. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal/countryprofiles/KNA#goal-1>





PEOPLE



01
NO POVERTY



02
ZERO HUNGER



03
GOOD HEALTH
& WELL-BEING



04
QUALITY
EDUCATION



05
GENDER
EQUALITY



SDG 1: No Poverty

End poverty in all forms everywhere

01
NO POVERTY



Poverty Rate

17.1%

Female-Headed of Total
Households in Poverty

57%

Human Development
Index

0.777

Access to Basic Goods
and Services

95%

Saint Kitts and Nevis is classified by the UN As a high-income country with a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.777 — positioning the twin-island nation in the high human development category, ranking it 76 out of 191 countries and territories⁵ in 2021. During the last decade, the country made significant improvements in the standard of living and expansion of opportunities for its citizens due in part to improved macroeconomic management, economic expansion, improvements in social services, and expanded social protection reach to households living in poverty⁶. Over 95 percent of the population has access to basic services such as electricity, potable water, sanitation services, and shelter⁷. Access to health care and education also remains favourable.

Saint Kitts and Nevis has made modest progress on SDG 1, toward poverty reduction despite intermittent socio-economic and weather-related events. We use a consumption-based monetary measure to estimate an absolute poverty rate. In that those persons who live in households that are consuming at levels below an estimated minimum acceptable standard are defined as poor. The proportion of the population who is classified as poor based on the national definition reduced from 21.8 percent in 2007/08⁸ to 17.1 percent in 2018⁹, and the level of indigence (extreme poverty) is zero.

⁵. https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf

⁶. Ministry of Sustainable Development (2020). Annual Progress Report on the Strategic Priorities of the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis January-December 2019, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, Basseterre.

⁷. World Bank Development Indicators, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/st-kitts-and-nevis>

⁸. <https://www.stats.gov.kn/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/St.Kitts-and-Nevis-CPA-Vol.1-Final-Report-2008.pdf>

⁹. Estimate from the Enhanced Country Poverty Assessment Database (2018).



Poverty is concentrated in female-headed households and in households with higher numbers of children. Female-headed households comprised over 40% of all households but represent 57% of all households living in poverty. Further, children are over-represented among those living in poverty¹⁰. Poverty is also noted to disproportionately affect the elderly, despite targeted social transfers. Irrespective of the geographic regions, the incidence of poverty is higher among the urban population. We are making special efforts to address the feminization of poverty. For example, the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs (MoSDGA) along with the Republic of China (Taiwan) implemented the Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion (WEEFI) Project. WEEFI was intended to empower women through entrepreneurship training and financing (a grant of USD3000) to start and expand their businesses.

The multidimensional nature of poverty requires that it be addressed on a wide range of fronts, and in this regard the reduction in poverty in St. Kitts and Nevis is in no small measure due to actions focused on expanding economic opportunities and improving livelihoods (responding to economic vulnerabilities), extending social services to cover all persons and expanding social protection coverage (responding to social vulnerabilities), and reaching those who are socially excluded (responding to those who are especially vulnerable, including the elderly, unemployed youth, persons with disabilities and persons with compromised health conditions). These efforts are elaborated in progress reporting against the National Adaptation Strategy, which reports specifically on efforts around social development and poverty reduction including reporting on efforts to strengthen labour markets, employment creation, social assistance, and community development¹¹.

The MoSDGA is responsible for providing services and programmes aimed at improving standards of living. Driven by the mandate to build resilience and self-efficacy amongst the population, MoSDGA provides comprehensive social protection services to all citizens, nationals, and legal residents to protect against or rebound from risk, shocks, and vulnerabilities. Other Ministries and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) also sought to implement poverty reduction programmes and services which help to reduce poverty and help to break the cycles of exclusion and inequality.

In 2021, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis (GoSKN) drafted a new National Social Protection Policy and Action Plan (NSPPAP), to ensure equitable and inclusive social protection interventions and strategies that build towards a robust social protection system. An inter-agency committee was established to supervise the implementation of the strategy. Both the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (2012-2016) and the National Social Protection Strategy (2013-2017) preceded the NSPPAP. They guided the establishment of a sustainable, comprehensive, and integrated social protection system, which aimed to reduce and eliminate poverty by improving life chances for every member of society. This encompassed the strengthening and integration of a wide range of policies and programmes across the social sector including social safety nets, social welfare services, social insurance, and labour market policies.

¹⁰ CDB (2017). Country Strategy Paper 2017-2021 – St. Kitts and Nevis, prepared by the Caribbean Development Bank, St. Michael, Barbados.

¹¹ Ministry of Sustainable Development (2020). Annual Progress Report on the Strategic Priorities of the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis January-December 2019, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, Basseterre.





The COVID-19 pandemic reality brought unprecedented challenges and changes to everyday life. The top priority of the GoSKN was the health and protection of its citizens, as well as providing support to cushion the social and economic fallout from the pandemic. The Government expanded its social protection service provision in response to the pandemic, with the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) and a food voucher programme playing important roles. Lessons learned from the response to the pandemic highlight the critical role social protection plays in the national emergency response, and the importance of social protection in post-pandemic recovery, including strengthening household resilience and skills relevant to the emergent labour market. Furthermore, the fiscal buffers allowed the government to cushion the deep social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. GoSKN was able to draw on these reserves to finance the health response, and an extensive stimulus package (5.0% of GDP) that included income support for displaced workers; additional funding allocated to social protection; and temporary waivers and moratoria on water, electricity, and mortgage payments.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

MEND and RISE Cash Transfer Programmes

As part of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Government launched two pilot cash transfer programmes to assist indigent and poor families. MEND (Mould, Empower, Nurture, Direct) was implemented in St. Kitts, and RISE (Restore, Inspire, Secure, Empower) in Nevis. The programmes aimed to help families become more resilient and break the cycle of poverty by investing in human capital development and connecting them to a wide range of social services. The beneficiaries included children, the elderly, people with disabilities and pregnant women. In both MEND and RISE, women played a central role as cash transfer recipients and as focal points of programme activities.

Both programmes effectively promoted a multidimensional approach to poverty reduction that maximised the complementarity of their pillars: Identification, Family Dynamics, Health and Wellness, Education, Housing, Employment and Income, and Family Safety. The cash transfer was complemented by several services: from psychosocial support to health assistance, counselling at school, assistance to accessing housing policies and courses related to employment and disaster preparedness.

Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP)

PAP is a benchmark programme within the safety net of social services offered to the most vulnerable citizens. Launched in 2018, the programme provides social assistance (\$500) to households earning a monthly income of less than \$3000. However, given the social fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, the criterion for qualification of the stipend has been extended to include persons who were directly impacted by the pandemic. This included tourism industry workers, taxi operators who lost their incomes and a host of others whose incomes were severely impacted. Temporary PAP Relief was awarded to 932 recipients during the height of the pandemic. At the end of December 2020, 4804 households were beneficiaries of this initiative. This social safety net programme supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals one, two and three: no poverty, zero hunger and reduced inequalities. As further support to needed families during the pandemic, the MoSDGA expanded the care package programme to include households with loss of or reduced income because of the pandemic. As of December 2020, the MoSDGA provided more than 250 care packages to households.



Community, Family and Youth Resilience (CFYR) program [*Family Matters*]

In 2018-2019, the GoSKN through a grant from USAID piloted the Family Matters Intervention Programme. The programme is an adaptation of the Prevention and Intervention Family Systems Model created by the Los Angeles Mayor's Office for Gang Reduction and Youth Development Programmes. It targets young persons who are assessed as having four or more risk factors for delinquent behaviour. In 2020, the Family Matters Intervention Programme was expanded to additional communities.

STEP

The Skills Training Empowerment Programme (STEP) is a short-term initiative coordinated by the National Skills Training Programme (NSTP) that is designed to ensure that participants acquire the required technical skills to meet the demands of the labour market. The STEP succeeded the People Employment Program (PEP) a GoSKN initiative founded in December 2012 to create empowerment opportunities for unemployed nationals. Technical skills training is complemented by the provision of training in the fundamental areas of employability skills; entrepreneurship; social and life skills; basic numeracy; communication; and information technology. STEP is intended to offer certified skills training in a more sustainable and market-driven manner and promote entrepreneurship to engender the intensified growth and development of SMEs in the Federation.



STEP Trainee

Social Housing Programme

Poverty is exacerbated by inadequate and poor housing conditions. As part of our social protection programme, the GoSKN via the National Housing Corporation (NHC) has invested in the construction of over 2000 social and low-income housing units and distributed over 5000 house lots. Similarly, in the last decade (2013-2022) the Nevis Housing & Land Development Corporation (NHLDC) constructed an estimated 315 affordable homes as one of the measures implemented by the Nevis Island Administration to increase Nevisians' standard of living. This was also supported by duty-free concessions for first-time homeowners, which contributed to a significant reduction in the cost of construction.



Beneficiary of Social Housing Programme

More recently, in April 2023 the Federal Government and the NHC entered into a contract with a Trinidadian developer to finance and deliver 2400 affordable smart homes over a period of four years consistent with the 2023 National Budget commitment. As a result, Kittitian and Nevisian families could acquire their own homes at a subsidised rate through the government's longstanding social housing scheme. The social housing programme has improved the lives of our citizens through homeownership, a positive effect on self-empowerment and the socio-economic profile of the Federation. For example, according to the 2019 national report to the CEDAW Committee, most persons who access government housing were female. In 2017, the NHC allocated 60 percent of the 2,247 applications made for housing to women and 28 percent to men.

Opportunities and Way Forward

In the future, poverty in all its forms must be alleviated and ultimately eradicated. For St. Kitts and Nevis, this translates into ensuring opportunities for all, enabling all members of society to take part in the country's development. Poverty reduction will require the right policies and frameworks to be in place to allow the poor a clear and viable pathway out of poverty. This can be achieved through the existing frameworks and schemes of the Government, private sector, and civil society, with added coordination. For instance, the specific needs of households that are identified as deprived in certain categories/ dimensions may be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

The datamining of the housing (NHC and NHLDC), PAP and STEP databases provide an opportunity for the GoSKN to strengthen the multidimensional framework in alleviating poverty and improve the targeting of the most vulnerable. Further, the 2018 Enhanced Country Poverty Assessment (ECPA)¹² needs to be updated and published, considering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This will help to determine the types of programs to be implemented and targeting mechanisms to be deployed.

¹². The project consists of five components namely the Survey of Living Conditions/Household Budgetary Survey, the Institutional Assessment, the Macro-Economic and Social Assessment, the Participatory Poverty Assessment and the Poverty and Vulnerability Mapping. The surveys and database were completed in 2019 based on a 2018 baseline.

Moreover, appropriate social protection mechanisms – as highlighted in the National Social Protection Policy and Action Plan (NSPPAP) – will be of strategic importance for ensuring the efficiency and efficacy of the various forms of social assistance. Improved targeting will eliminate waste and, in turn, free up additional resources for development and poverty reduction.

Advancing the poverty reduction priorities for Saint Kitts and Nevis requires financing and technical support in implementing the NSPP Action Plan. There is a need to build capacities within the public sector to bolster service delivery such as strengthening human resources and technological capacity for the digital transformation of service delivery as well as project management, programme budgeting and management expertise in government entities.



SDG 2: Zero Hunger

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

02
ZERO HUNGER



Agriculture Labour
Force

2.7%

Contribution to GDP

$\leq 1.5\%$

Children Obesity Rate

26%

Agriculture % of
National Expenditure

2.0%

Chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have replaced malnutrition and infectious diseases as major health issues in Saint Kitts and Nevis.¹³ Obesity threatens the health of both children and adults throughout the Federation. Over a quarter (26 percent) of school-age children in SKN are obese, putting them at risk of diabetes and hypertension. There is an estimated 33.6% of adult (aged 18 years and over) women and 18.1% of adult men living with obesity. The problem is exacerbated by the dependence on imported processed foods relative to the availability and cost of nutritious foods such as fruit and vegetables. Poverty exacerbates these issues and creates barriers to food security, with the poorest quintiles spending more on food (40.6 percent of total household expenditure) compared to the national average.

The agriculture industry is recognized as important for food security, social protection, sustainable entrepreneurship, livelihoods, and promoting and supporting good health. However, over the last two decades, the sector has seen a decline in productivity and competitiveness and contributes less than 1.5 percent to GDP with 80 percent of food being imported. The sector represents about 2.7 percent of the total employed labour force.

Low productivity in the agriculture sector is a major problem with both direct and indirect impacts on food security and improved nutrition. Agriculture expenditure as a proportion of national expenditure accounted for 2% on average over the period 2015 to 2021.

The industry is largely subsistence farming or small-scale commercial farming primarily for the domestic market. In terms of demographics, the farm holdings are predominantly held by men, with women underrepresented in direct farming and fishing operations. Women are more involved in small-scale agro-processing and agricultural marketing. The main agricultural products are vegetables, fruits, peanuts, roots, and tubers. There is also an active trade in livestock with the production of pigs, chickens, and goat meat; and fisheries resources - conch, lobster, reef fishes and coastal pelagic species.

¹³ UNICEF (2017), Situation Analysis of Children in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean.



The development of the agriculture sector is guided by the Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Plan of Action (2012), the Agricultural Development Strategy (2013-2016), and the St. Kitts Strategy and Action Plan for Agriculture (2017-2021) as well as recommendations from the OECS Action Plan on Agriculture (2012-2022), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Regional Food Security Plan 2011-2025 and the CARICOM Agriculture Policy.

Agriculture has been identified as a major pillar of St. Kitts and Nevis' national strategy for recovery and transformation. As a net food importer, St. Kitts and Nevis is cognizant of the risks associated with a high reliance on external food sources and that sudden and/or extreme climatic changes or increases in demand in major source markets can result in a domestic food shortage. As such, the government has set a goal of a 25% reduction in food imports by the end of 2025¹⁴.

Agriculture and the COVID Response

According to a recent World Food Programme (WFP) study¹⁵ on the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, low-income households had to reduce their food intake and change their diet as a coping mechanism due to financial constraints. These constraints include heads of households losing their jobs or having reduced working hours.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the challenges towards ensuring better nutritional outcomes and has further curtailed the delivery and implementation of various initiatives that were in line to address nutrition issues. Due to concerns over the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on national food security, the COVID-19 Taskforce and Cabinet examined issues and recommended solutions for food security and securing supply chains that cover multiple aspects including land use, crop production, financial resources, investment, and infrastructure.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

- An illustration of food security during the COVID-19 pandemic was the GoSKN distribution of EC\$10 million among the farmers and fisherfolk communities, through initiatives such as the conducting of research, purchasing of inputs, and subsidizing of fuel for fisher folks and land preparation. All with an effort to increase food yields while at the same time securing farmer livelihoods. An immediate outcome from the stimulus package was increased crop production by end of 2021 and approximately 650 farmers and fisherfolk livelihoods secured.
- The Back Yard Gardener initiative prompted the public to become more aware of food security and grow their backyard garden. A total of nine hundred and forty-eight (948) persons participated in the initiative and received an assorted package of corn, lettuce, string beans, cabbage and beets.
- The distribution and construction of over 75 shade houses to farmers over the last five years as part of the GoSKN's thrust to build climate resilience in agriculture. The promotion of protected agriculture systems was based on the availability of land, intensive crop production, protection from extreme weather, protection against pests, weeds and diseases, more efficient use of productive resources, improvement in crop quantity and quality, increased yields, and increased farmers' incomes. The increased use of climate smart farming methods is also seen in an uptick in viable hydroponic farming operations across the Federation.

¹⁴. <https://caricom.org/wp-content/uploads/25-by-2025-Reduction-in-the-Regional-Food-Bill.docx>

¹⁵. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/caribbean-covid-19-food-security-livelihoods-impact-survey-round-1>





Shade House / Hydroponic Farming, Nevis

- Specific to Nevis, the Nevis Island Administration (NIA) provided 22 shade houses to farmers as part of their climate-smart agriculture initiative to improve the reliability and quality of crop and vegetable farming.
- The Water, Energy and Food Nexus Project, in collaboration with FAO, supports 20 farmers (12 in St. Kitts and 8 in Nevis), of whom 30% are women in the areas of capacity building and solar power drip irrigation and water harvesting systems.
- The acquisition/construction of a poultry processing plant toward establishing a Nevis Poultry Industry to support import substitution. For example, in 2022, an estimated 520,000 pounds of chicken and its byproducts were imported into Nevis at a value of \$1.5mn. The Department of Agriculture (DoA) has engaged stakeholders in poultry farming, allocated 60 acres of land and designed a package of fiscal incentives for farmers to venture into the sector. The DoA is currently developing a hatchery to supply the stock of small chicks to egg-producing and broiler farmers in the Federation.
- Further, in June 2023, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Marine Resources and Cooperatives signed an agreement with the Republic of China (Taiwan) International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) for the roll out of the St. Kitts and Nevis Layer Chicken Industry Sustainable Development Project. The project will, among other things, result in the establishment of a hatchery on St. Kitts and one on Nevis. Each hatchery will have the capacity to produce over twenty-thousand day-old chicks per year for both meat and egg production.
- Additional technical assistance and support from the FAO in areas such as:
 - Provided support for the formulation of a Digital Agriculture Strategy. Over 100 persons benefited from capacity strengthening via an online digital promotion course;
 - New Agricultural Transformation and Growth Strategy 2022-2031 to provide a framework and solutions to create sustainable, resilient, and inclusive agri-food systems (FAO).

Opportunities and Way Forward

The agriculture industry is a strategic pillar and contributor to the country's employment level, especially in rural communities. Further, achieving the desired levels of food production locally, which can satisfy nutritional needs and support value-added production, requires a multistakeholder approach targeting yields, distribution, and storage. The achievement of this goal has positive implications for health, poverty, economic and environmental SDGs.

To attain food security, investments and interventions must target the livelihoods and productivity of small-scale farmers. Therefore, more programmes offering agricultural support, such as knowledge sharing and technical support, must be pursued to build capacity and measures to improve land tenure, water access, irrigation, climate-smart agriculture techniques and technology, and market access.

The draft St. Kitts and Nevis Agricultural Transformation and Growth Strategy 2022-2031 identified several initiatives to improve the industry's contribution to economic development. These include targeting specific crops with growth potential, greater use of technology, and the provision of external services which meet the needs of the agricultural community. Key to implementing the strategy is policy coordination between Nevis and St. Kitts, investments in infrastructure and the adoption and use of technology. There is also a need to strengthen the human resources and technological and scientific capabilities of the agricultural officers within St. Kitts and Nevis. Support is required from development partners, both regional and international, private sector and community groups.





SDG 3: Good Health & Wellbeing

Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages

03
GOOD HEALTH
& WELL-BEING



Life Expectancy at
Birth

75 yrs

Under Age 5 Mortality

9.8/1,000

Government Expenditure
on Health

5.39%

NCDs

62%
of all deaths

Saint Kitts and Nevis recognizes that a healthy population is our greatest asset, and the public health of its citizens is crucial in achieving sustainable economic growth.

The Federation has already achieved some of the targets under SDG3 well ahead of 2030. In the last thirty years, life expectancy at birth increased from 66 years to 75 years. Progress has been made in key areas such as childhood immunization, antenatal care, and neonatal mortality rates. The proportion of the target population with access to 3 doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP3) was 96.0 % in 2021. The infant mortality rate per thousand live births improved from 25.1 in 1990 to 12.3 in 2021¹⁶. The neonatal mortality rate fell from 14.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 9.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2021. Further, maternal deaths are very low, environmental health risks have been reduced, and credible gains have been recorded in building core capacities to implement international health regulations.

¹⁶ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal/countryprofiles/kna#goal-3>





Indicator	2021	Close to, Better than or Worse than Latin America & Caribbean (LAC) Countries Average
Life Expectancy at Birth (Female)	76.8 years	<i>Close to LAC</i>
Life Expectancy at Birth (Male)	74.2 years	<i>Close to LAC</i>
Neonatal mortality (per 1000 live births), 2016	9.8	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Under Age 5 Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)	9	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Child Immunization (DT3) (%)	96.0	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Maternal Mortality Ratio	16.2	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	99	<i>Better than LAC</i>

Source: WHO Database, Health at a Glance, World Bank Development Indicators

Public health services are delivered through a network of 21 health facilities at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels with 14 in St. Kitts and 7 in Nevis. Most parishes within the Federation have at least one health facility within three miles of every household. The health team at the primary level provides services such as medical clinics, maternal and child health, community mental health, dental care, screening for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Indicator	2021	Close to, Better than or Worse than LAC Countries Average
Hospital beds per 1,000 population	4.8*	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Doctors per 1,000 population	2.7	<i>Close to LAC</i>
Nurses per 1,000 population	4.2	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Psychiatrists per 100,000 population	5.5	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Health Spending per capita (USD, ppp)	1442	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Out-of-pocket expenditure on health (% of health spending)	48	<i>Worse than LAC</i>

Source: Health at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020 (*as at 2012)





Adequate access to health care is a function of several indicators including medical infrastructure availability (number of hospital beds per 1,000 population), and human resources availability (doctors per 1,000 population, nurses per 1,000 population, and psychiatrists per 100,000 population). Government expenditure on health in 2019 was estimated at 5.39 percent of GDP which is consistent with other Caribbean countries but below the average of developed countries. Approximately 52 percent of health expenditure is funded through public sources while the balance is via private spending, which includes out-of-pocket (OOP) payments and insurance disbursements.

Despite significant progress in the health sector, St. Kitts and Nevis faces several challenges, including a high prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer due largely to unhealthy diets and lifestyles; policy and legislation; human resources for health and infrastructural and plant maintenance.

NCDs account for 62 percent of all deaths compared to 85 percent a decade ago. The highest-ranking causes of years lost due to premature deaths are neoplasm, cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes mellitus. The burden of chronic and age-related diseases increases along with the demand for quality healthcare, and this has led to an upward trending healthcare expenditure. The GoSKN has expressed concerns about the morbidity and mortality associated with chronic NCDs attributed to tobacco use, limited physical activity, unhealthy diets, and the harmful use of alcohol as some of the main lifestyle factors that are driving the upsurge of NCDs. The consumption of alcohol is about 8.9 litres per capita similar to the consumption pattern of countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region but above the world average of 5.8 litres per capita ¹⁷.

The overall strategic direction of the health sector is guided by the National Strategic Plan for Health (2017-2021) which aims to provide equitable access to quality health services that are available and affordable to all users in the Federation. To address the increasing incidence of NCDs, the Government launched the National Multi-Sectoral Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases in St. Christopher and Nevis (2018-2022).

The NCD Plan defined a multi-sectoral approach to reduce preventable morbidity and premature mortality due to NCDs, as well as to control the risk factors attributed to these diseases. It targeted a 10 percent relative reduction in preventable, premature deaths as a result of NCDs in St. Kitts and Nevis by 2021. An NCD Commission was re-instated to coordinate and create an enabling environment for the promotion of health and wellness through the prevention, control, and management of NCDs.

In 2017, St. Kitts and Nevis was certified by the World Health Organization (WHO) for having eliminated mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT) of HIV and Congenital Syphilis. The Ministry of Health (MOH) adopted the United Nations 90-90-90 targets, to measure interventions toward the global ambition of eliminating HIV by 2030. The targets are: 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status; 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy, and 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression. As of end-2020, an estimated 185 individuals were living with HIV/AIDS, of which a total of 60% (111) individuals were receiving anti-retinal treatment and 57% recorded a suppression in viral load.

¹⁷: <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO>





GoSKN has strengthened its response to Mental Health. Since December 2016, it opened the Dr Arthur Lake Mental Health Treatment Centre, increased the number of psychiatrists and mental health workers, and adopted a community-based approach to deliver mental health services. Recently, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic period, there have been increased mental health promotion and prevention campaigns through various media platforms that seek to reduce the stigma and promote mental wellness and awareness among residents.

In the 2023 Budget address, GoSKN outlined its intent to increase public investments in health care toward the PAHO benchmark of 6.0 percent of GDP through infrastructure upgrades, equipment purchases and additional health personnel. In addition, the Budget signalled an intention to establish a National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme following extensive public consultation.



Dr. Arthur W. L. Lake Mental Health Day Treatment Centre

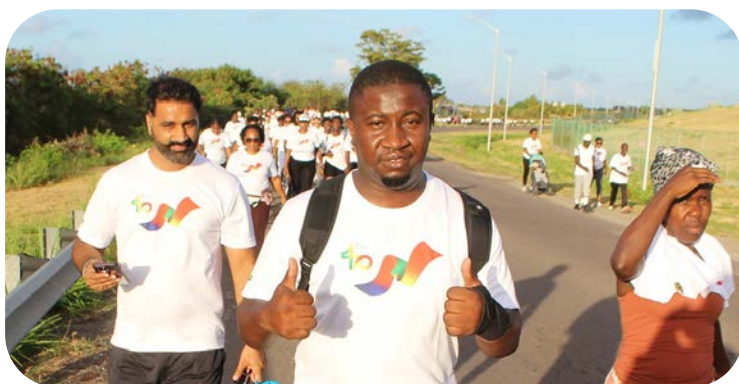
COVID-19 and Health

The COVID-19 reality brought unprecedented challenges and changes to everyday life. The top priority of the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis was the health and protection of its citizens, as well as providing support to cushion the social and economic fallout from the pandemic. The Government implemented prompt public health interventions, including non-pharmaceutical measures, and active contact tracing, with extensive and targeted testing, which proved effective in controlling outbreaks. As of May 2023, 82.8% of the adult population in Saint Kitts and Nevis had received their first shot and 77.7% were fully vaccinated against COVID-19.



Bright Spots and Success Stories

- The adoption of the Republic of China (Taiwan) sponsored Metabolic Disease Project aims to minimize the incidence of NCD's through the prevention and management of diseases such as heart disease, obesity, hypertension, cancer, diabetes, hyperlipidemia by the reduction of associated risk factors. The project has been designed to run for four (4) years and will be a tremendous help in combating the effect of NCDs given the closure of the Renal Clinic which has been a major success in helping to combat diabetes mellitus. Additionally, the MOH was able to increase its trained staff compliment as graduates from the Stanford University Diabetes Self-Management Programme were added to the cadre of trained personnel in 2020. They are equipped to train others in self-care activities and can be utilized in the MOHs community outreach efforts to influence lifestyle change, screen, and detect new cases of Chronic NCDs and link those cases to management and care.
- The reduction from 85 percent to the current average of 62 percent of NCD related deaths can be attributed to the success of the Metabolic Screening Project and the overall Non-communicable Diseases programme coordinated by the Ministries of Health in St. Kitts and Nevis. Over the period 2021 to 2022, the Metabolic Screening Project recorded increases in the total screening exercises [79 in 2021 and 138 in 2022]; and the total number of persons screened [4,053 in 2021 and 6,348 in 2022].
- The SKN Moves initiative remained a linchpin in the fight to reduce adult and youth obesity. The initiative has taken root and has garnered the participation of multi-sectoral collaborators and participants since its inception. The GoSKN continues to implement several programmes to combat the challenges posed by non-communicable diseases (NCDs). One such programme, SKN MOVES was launched on August 15, 2019, in



SKN Moves Walk, May, 2023

both St. Kitts and Nevis. SKN Moves is part of a regional initiative Caribbean Moves adopted by CARICOM in 2018 that encourages a lifestyle change particularly by promoting good health by focusing on three (3) main aspects: physical activity, healthier diets, and knowing one's health status. The national health education plan focuses on the importance of diet and exercise which should be routine practice to prevent and control NCDs.

- Having eliminated the mother to child transmission of HIV and syphilis status the focus has shifted to sustainability and the MOH continues to strengthen the prevention, management and control of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Continual efforts are being made to prepare a plan of action to guide the 2030 report on the 90/90/90 targets and to achieve the targets identified by the United Nations. That is 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status; 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy; and 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression. Statistics for 2020 show that over the past four (4) year period 2017-2020 approximately 185 individuals were living with HIV/AIDS. As of the end of 2020, a total of 60% (111) individuals were receiving anti-retinal treatment and 57% recorded a suppression in viral load.



The Joseph N. France General Hospital on St. Kitts was granted Baby-Friendly Certification after meeting the “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding” which is the Global Standard against which maternal facilities are assessed and accredited in October 2022. The initiative was spearheaded by the Nutrition Surveillance Unit within the Health Promotion Unit of the Ministry of Health. Activities are underway to have the Alexandra Hospital in Nevis Baby-Friendly certified.

The MoH also has an ongoing collaboration with Stanford University Self-Management Programme which to date has facilitated the training of forty-two (42) persons in the train-the-trainers workshops since its inception in 2015. In 2019 many of these persons delivered training to over 100 persons on how to better manage their NCD.

During the last five years, PAHO provided technical assistance and support in key areas such as:

- Conducted consultancy to review legislation and draft a National Health Insurance and Security Act and draft legislation to support the development of a Health Protection Scheme
- Combatting NCDs, cervical cancer prevention and development of control strategies
- Reviewing draft policy for Sugar Sweetened Beverages (SSB) taxation
- Strengthening of radiology services in St. Kitts and Nevis
- Workshop for healthcare professionals in Nevis to address mental health





SDG 4: Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

04
QUALITY
EDUCATION



Functional Literacy
Rate

97.8%

Education Index

0.67%

Enrolment Rate in
Secondary Education

98%

Gross Enrolment
Rate in Tertiary
Education

25%

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, education and human resource development are recognized as the drivers of sustainable national socio-economic development. Since 1983, St. Kitts and Nevis has had a system of universal education at the primary and secondary level. The formal education framework consists of the following main levels: pre-primary (early childhood), primary, secondary, tertiary non-university education and training (vocational), and tertiary university education and training. Moreover, public education is supplemented by private initiatives at all levels, from early childhood to tertiary education. The private education sector is very vibrant and a dedicated stakeholder in providing quality education in St. Kitts and Nevis. Civil society has also played an important role in supporting the education sector.

The education sector consumes a large share of our annual budget. Over the past five years, an average of 12 percent of the national budget was allocated to the education sector. Investing in education has a multiplier effect on our economy. In St. Kitts and Nevis, we witnessed major growth in our GNI per capita, from USD 2,071 in 1983 to USD 23,358 in 2021. This is corroborated by the Education Index score of 0.67 in the Human Development Report 2021. The closer the index is to 1 the higher the human development.

The Education Act of 2005 provides the regulatory system for the delivery of educational services in Saint Kitts and Nevis whilst, the 2017-2021 Education Sector Plan (ESP) outlines the education strategies and priorities to pursue its educational outcomes. The ESP laid out specific benchmarks for expanding access to rigorous and relevant educational opportunities at all levels of society, in line with transitioning the Federation to become a more knowledge-based society where all students embark on a level playing field, and merit and achievement are the sole determinants of success. The education sector also is guided by the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) education strategy which provides a framework for the Member States to align their national strategies and plans. Further, the ICT in Education Policy and Strategy is consistent with the broader objectives of the ESP and conveys how ICT should be deployed to enhance teaching and learning and information management. The GoSKN also undertook a Situation Analysis on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in 2022 to evaluate the existing framework and identify policy and strategies for ESD implementation in St. Kitts and Nevis.



Early Childhood Education

St. Kitts and Nevis adopted an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy in 1982, which was subsequently replaced in 2009, with the aim of achieving universal access to early childhood education for every child. The investments in ECD resulted in widespread access to high-quality early childhood development and care with a net enrolment rate (3-4) of 93.9 percent in 2019. SKN maintains a teacher to student ratio of 1:17 within ECD institutions. Nonetheless, quality at this level is compromised by several factors. Few providers are teacher-trained (8% of teachers and 25% of supervisors), and unlike the mandate for new and untrained teachers at the primary and secondary level, who are expected to attend the Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College (CFBC) Teacher Education programme after two years of service, teacher training or certification is not compulsory for ECD providers.



Early Childhood Exposure to Culinary Arts

Primary and Secondary Education

St. Kitts and Nevis' concerted efforts in the education sector have achieved universal access to primary and secondary education. Current enrolment in primary schools stands at 98 percent, with enrolment in secondary schools at 90 percent.

Kittitians and Nevisians in Grades 3-6 attained reasonable proficient literacy and numeracy achievement, as guided and measured by the National Test of Standards (NToS). For 2015-2019, average performance across subjects for Grades 3-6 was 58%, 54%, 50%, and 55%, respectively. Average scores on Grade 6 Language Arts (47% in St. Kitts and 54% in Nevis) and Mathematics NToS (54% in St. Kitts and 63% in Nevis), indicate that literacy and numeracy skills needed for secondary school are underdeveloped in many students. The modest performance highlights quality issues in curriculum and assessment, as well as the teaching-learning environment.

At the secondary level, the national pass rate on Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) exams has averaged 79%, which is markedly higher than the regional average of 61% (2019). However, in St. Kitts and Nevis, only 71% of secondary school students take the CSEC examination, with approximately 29% of students, leaving secondary school without a standard benchmark of achievement. In 2019, in terms of literacy and numeracy, approximately 85% of secondary students sat and passed English A and 48% sat and passed Mathematics. Furthermore, less than 25% of males and females who take CSEC exams pass at least five, including Mathematics and English, which is the entry requirement for many entry-level positions in the world of work and for matriculation to higher education programmes.

St. Kitts and Nevis recognizes the critical importance of education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) for advancing socio-economic development. Unfortunately, students' results for STEM-related subjects in the CSEC examinations were not at the desired level. It is therefore of utmost importance that enhancing the educational outcomes in these subject areas are prioritized and additional resources are diverted to them.



To support the access and participation of children from low-income households, the GoSKN and the Nevis Island Administration (NIA) have implemented social assistance programmes to defray the costs of school meals, textbooks, examinations, and uniforms, where applicable. Of importance, access to education for persons with physical disabilities and the growing number of non-English speaking (eg. Dominican Republic) immigrants are constrained as the public schools/institutions are not adequately resourced.

Tertiary and Technical Education

Tertiary enrolment in St. Kitts and Nevis is estimated at around 25 percent. Higher Education is provided mainly by the Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College (CFBC), established in 1988 (as an amalgamation of four previously existing institutions), the Nevis 6th Form College and the University of the West Indies (UWI) Open Campus. The CFBC also has arrangements with UWI and the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), where credits obtained at the CFBC are transferred into Bachelor's degree programmes. Private universities include the Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine, Windsor University School of Medicine and the Medical University of the Americas (Nevis).



CFBC Student Receives Ross University Scholarship

For students who do not enroll in tertiary education, alternatives include the National Skills Training Programme (NSTP), a division of the Ministry of Education formerly known as the Youth Skills Training Center; the Advanced Vocational Education Centre (AVEC), a post-secondary vocational training institution that prepares individuals (from 16 years old) to enter the workforce and other programmes such as the training component of the People's Employment Programme (PEP), now the Skills Training Empowerment Programme (STEP). The CFBC also has a Division of Technical, Vocational Education and Management Studies and, for adult learners, a Division of Adult and Continuing Education. In Nevis, the Ministry of Education has its own Adult Education Programme.

COVID-19 and Education

School children of all ages have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, primarily by the closure of schools in March 2020, resulting in both direct and indirect impacts. The direct impact has been the disruption to children's education. To mitigate this and to ensure that students remained engaged in learning, virtual platforms were used to prepare students for upcoming examinations. Indirect impacts of school closures have been in relation to the huge increase in time that children have been required to spend at home, given that school closures were also accompanied by restrictions on socializing with family members and friends outside the home, leading to several psychosocial issues as children may have found it more difficult to adapt to these sudden changes resulting in frustration, anger, anxiety, and depression.

Challenges

Despite all these encouraging statistics, we are fully aware that, as we stand at a crossroads in our socio-economic development, our education system is not as responsive to our needs as it should be. Capacity remains a central issue for us. This issue stems primarily from not enough persons working in critical areas due to budgetary constraints.





There is a need to increase numbers in critical areas like special education, literacy, and early childhood but owing to budgets and limited numbers of persons allocated, progress is slow. In other instances, due to a lack of local capacity in terms of knowledge and skills, we are also unable to fill the critical posts. Planning and stakeholder engagement has not traditionally been an area of deficiency for the Ministry of Education. We do, however, need to address the issues in implementation and monitoring, if these are directly related to the staffing concerns raised above.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

- Increased access to Early Childhood Care (ECC) via the Early Childhood Subvention Policy, where low-income families receive a monthly subsidy towards payment of childcare fees to access private providers (no cost for enrolment in the public ECC).
- The professionalization of the teaching profession. This included the adoption of a series of policy frameworks and revised practices such as, national teaching policy framework, revised career pathway for educators, framework for continuous professional development, Professional Standards for Educators, Performance Appraisal System, and framework for the Establishment of a National Teaching Council.
- The delivery of education by adopting online platforms (Microsoft Teams) in support of the virtual classroom to combat the learning deficits created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools have adopted the dual faceted system for the delivery of education, resources were committed to teacher training and upgrading the internet bandwidth at all schools to ensure reliability in connectivity.
- The Ministry developed a new curriculum and has begun phased implementation at the upper primary and lower secondary grades, we have also redesigned the national assessment process and will introduce a new national assessment in 2023. A pilot assessment is being held this year to inform the full rollout of the new assessment in 2030.
- The opening of the Spectrum Services Centre which addresses the needs of children with Autism. Training of personnel in special education is ongoing in the areas of Autism.
- Federal Government in conjunction with the Nevis Island Administration embarked on a CDB funded Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) Enhancement Project which involved the construction of physical training facilities, the provision of equipment as well as scholarship training and other short-term courses for the instructors. As of April 2023, the Gingerland Secondary School TVET Center was constructed, with the Charlestown Secondary School in its design phase. Nevisian instructors have also been trained or are currently receiving training under the project in the areas of Cosmetology, Industrial Technology, Agricultural Science, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science to facilitate the program at the two centers.





Gingerland Secondary School TVET Wing

- The January 2023 launch of the Enhancing Learning Continuity Project by the MoE and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) directly responds to the inequitable access to ICT and technological tools by students and teachers to deliver hybrid education services as highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The project will ensure students and teachers have equal access to the requisite technologies for distributed teaching-learning, schools are equipped with broadcasting devices, and teachers are adequately trained to support student learning in a hybrid environment. Key outputs include the distribution of over 7500 devices (laptops and tablets), 400 broadcasting kits (laptop, webcams and tripods) and the outfitting of 25 schools with IT infrastructure.
- St. Kitts-Nevis Robotic Association (SKNRA) has promoted the adoption of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) within the high schools and community groups across the Federation since its launch in March 2020. SKNRA has held a series of after-school robotics programmes and a National Robotics Competition, resulting in a 30-member team participation in the Global Robotics Olympics. As a registered non-profit organisation, SKNRA aims to set the standard and regulates the production and research in ICT and Computer Science, while promoting STEAM within the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).
- GoSKN and the Development Bank of St. Kitts and Nevis (DBoSKN) partnered to reduce the interest rates on existing student loans from 9% to 5%, effective June 1, 2023 — approximately 1,129 persons benefited from reduced borrowing costs on a loan portfolio of \$65mn. The financial relief will enable graduates to redirect the cost savings to purchase a home and/or invest in businesses. Earlier, in April 2023, the DBoSKN and the GoSKN launched the Graduate Finance Project, offering 5% interest on student loans, to new students on a maximum of EC\$100,000.00 for a grace period of four and a quarter years (4 years, 3 months), with a fifteen (15) year repayment term. Both initiatives will improve access to tertiary education while reducing students' initial debt burden.

Opportunities and Way Forward

Although St. Kitts and Nevis has a well-developed education system, the focus now is on achieving quality education for all. In moving forward, the country is committed to promoting greater and more effective inclusiveness in education and lifelong learning. Moreover, more coordinated efforts will be made to address the current skills mismatch, so that education is always responsive to the needs of the economy. In overcoming the identified challenges in the education sector, it is our priority to build on our successes and implement our strategies accordingly.



SDG 5: Gender Equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

05
GENDER
EQUALITY



Women in Parliament

31.2%

Females in Tertiary
Education

66.6%

Females CEOs (2017)

17%

Female Managers
(2014)

25%

The Government of St. Kitts and Nevis is committed to gender equality and through its gender mainstreaming efforts, will seek to promote the economic, social, cultural, and political empowerment of women and men. In St. Kitts and Nevis, women account for 51 percent of the population while 49 percent are men.

The National Gender Machinery (NGM) in the Federation comprises the Saint Kitts Department of Gender Affairs within the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs, and the Department of Gender Affairs on Nevis in the Ministry of Health and Gender Affairs, Nevis Island Administration (NIA). The Department of Gender Affairs, Saint Kitts (DGASK) implements the gender agenda for Saint Kitts and coordinates comprehensive reporting on the Federation's policy and programming for gender equality. The Gender Affairs Department, Nevis, promotes gender equality, women's rights, and development consistent with the relevant national and international legislative agenda.

The principal mandate of the St. Kitts and Nevis National Gender Machinery (NGM) is to promote education and programming on gender equality and women's empowerment appropriate to the circumstances of boys/men and girls/ women. The mandate places particular attention on the issues of vulnerable populations. This work references a legal and policy framework guided by international and regional commitments. The main obligations are the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará). Saint Kitts and Nevis produces periodic reporting on its progress on gender achievement targets, consistent with the requirements of these treaties.

In 2021, GoSKN drafted the first National Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan for Saint Kitts and Nevis, to achieve gender equality for all men and women, boys and girls, as a human right, in accordance with national laws and regional and international treaties to which the country is a party. Men and women have different experiences of poverty and its impacts. Females were more likely than males to be among the indigent in Saint Kitts. Lack of employment and poverty places a greater dependence upon men for financial support. Women reported their unemployment compromises power relationships with men and heightens their vulnerability. Poverty among women is linked to their multiple roles and responsibilities: unpaid care for the family, undervalued domestic work, low-level service and care sector jobs, underemployment in retail jobs, and other subsistence work.





Single mothers/female-headed households in the Federation have higher dependency ratios and face a higher risk of poverty. Twenty-five percent of female-headed households have five or more members, in contrast to 3% of male-headed households. Poverty compounds risks for children and young men and women. The experiences of poverty are likely to be compounded by health issues and physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse.

Employment trends indicated trades determined by sex. More men were in agriculture and fisheries, craft, plant and machine operations, and more women as clerical and support workers and service and sale workers. Men also outnumbered women in technical and associate professional categories.

At the tertiary level, females are entering higher institutions of learning in greater numbers than males, resulting in more women professionals than men but fewer women managers than men. For example, the ILO Caribbean company survey 2017¹⁸ found on average 17% of CEOs in St. Kitts and Nevis were women, compared to the Caribbean average of 27%. Similarly, according to the Caribbean PROTEqIN Survey (2014), St. Kitts and Nevis had 25% of females in management positions. In the public sector, as of 2014, there was parity in the number of men and women appointed as Permanent Secretaries in Saint Kitts, a role traditionally occupied by men. Since then, this trajectory has shifted drastically resulting in 90% of Permanent Secretaries, as at June 2023, being women. Fewer women operate as department heads. In Nevis, 15% of women were in the post of Permanent Secretary, and 28% held a department head role. (CEDAW Reporting 2002-2018).

The Country Gender Assessment for Saint Kitts and Nevis (2014) highlighted issues that affect women who face obstacles in accessing and controlling resources associated with the challenges of employment, poverty, and violence. Existing socio-economic practices affect the life chances of women and continue to perpetuate disadvantages. Access to productive resources, assets, services, and infrastructure presents different realities for men and women. Women face gender disparities in access to and control over land and productive resources and services. Legislative and administrative actions may address some constraints, but in some cases, inadequate human resource practices and prejudices affect some women's rights to land, housing and property. Policy and legal barriers in accessing financial services (credit, savings, loans, insurance, etc.) and cultural norms are deterrents to women developing and growing enterprises, improving productivity and keeping bank accounts. Lack of ownership over assets that can be used as collateral to leverage loans constrains more women than men.

Domestic violence is the most common form of gender-based violence, which predominantly affects women and girls. Data from the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force reveal an increase in reporting rates of domestic violence incidents. Statistics show that women represented over 80% of victims during the period 2011-2017. The Special Victims Unit of the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force was established to handle such cases. Fear of retribution, social stigma, or lack of confidence in the authorities contribute to many cases not being reported.

Saint Kitts and Nevis is a patriarchal society where males dominate power structures. Some of the privileges associated with power are not open to females. Embedded socio-cultural attitudes and behaviours perpetuate ideas and practices along patriarchal gender lines, which can create disadvantages that affect the life chances of women.

¹⁸ Women in business and management: Gaining momentum in the Caribbean. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_645810.pdf



In Saint Kitts and Nevis, women are underrepresented in terms of decision-making and representation in political bodies, most notably Parliament. In 2022, the proportion of women in Parliament improved from 27 percent in 2021, to 31.2 percent in October 2022¹⁹. Notwithstanding, this improvement is small when compared to the highest regional average of 46.7 percent in Grenada. On the other hand, at the local government level, the Nevis Island Administration has a higher proportion of women (55.5%) in its National Assembly. The CEDAW Committee recommended in response that the Government improve women's access and participation, including measures to encourage women to enter diplomatic careers. The CEDAW country report raised the lack of women's interest in involvement in politics. This phenomenon is expected in the Caribbean and beyond. Many factors contribute to women's lack of interest or barriers to entering political life.

The responsibility of most women for family and childcare is undervalued and not adequately supported to enable them to participate more equitably in politics, power, and decision-making at all levels.

COVID-19 and Gender

Women in the Caribbean have been disproportionately affected by the crisis. It has amplified disparities relating to unemployment, underemployment, lower-paying jobs, and poor health options. UN Women's (April 2020) rapid assessment on GBV and COVID-19 conducted in four Latin America and 15 Caribbean countries and territories revealed that the pandemic has an immense impact on women and girls and violence against women and girls. The findings state "available data, media reports, and anecdotes all point towards the increase of vulnerability and risk factors of violence for women and girls during the pandemic." In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the impacts of COVID-19 may persist for some time. The tourism and hospitality industry has been the hardest hit. In Nevis, the Gender department has already begun to conduct an "Economic Impact Assessment for COVID-19 from a Gender Lens". The findings will help streamline precise requirements for Nevis in this action area, consistent with broader deliverables in the various domains.

¹⁹ Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) data (2022). <https://data.ipu.org/>



Women of Federal Parliament, March 2023



Dashboard of SDG Targets – People

This dashboard shows a snapshot of the stakeholders' assessment of how St. Kitts and Nevis is progressing with respect to achieving the SDG targets under People.

	The SDG target has been met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress
	Fair progress but acceleration is needed (the enabling policy and legal framework in place, resources are allocated, implementation of initiatives.
	Limited or no progress
	Moving away from the target/target at risk of not being met by 2030/strategic intervention needed urgently

SDG Targets Goal #1 – No Poverty	
SDG Targets Goal #2 – Zero Hunger	

SDG Targets Goal #3 – Good Health and Wellbeing	
SDG Targets Goal #4 – Quality Education	
SDG Targets Goal #5 – Gender Equality	



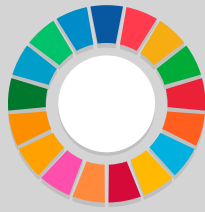


People Dimension Bright Spots:



People Dimension Strategies and Actions To Accelerate The SDGs:





PROSPERITY

07

AFFORDABLE
AND CLEAN ENERGY



08

DECENT WORK
AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH



09

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10

REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES





SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

07

AFFORDABLE
AND CLEAN ENERGY



Access to Electricity

100%

Cost of Electricity

US \$0.26/
KWH

% of Renewables in
Energy Mix

2%

Renewable Energy
Target 2030

50%

Access to electricity has widespread impacts on indicators of wellbeing, including health, education, food security, gender equality, livelihoods, and poverty reduction. One of the key priorities of the Federal Government is to reduce the cost of energy and improve energy security. Energy security is viewed as key to improving its competitiveness as an investment destination as well as in improving economic resilience and reducing the nation's carbon footprint.

Access to electricity by the population improved from 93.5 percent in 2001 to 100 percent in 2017. St. Kitts and Nevis, like many other Caribbean islands, heavily relies on fossil fuels for electricity generation and transport, leaving the country vulnerable to international oil price fluctuations that directly impact the cost of electricity. Most of the electricity is generated through diesel power plants (95%), with only 3% coming from wind and 2% from solar power. Rising energy costs negatively impact communities, households, and businesses. The government subsidizes the fuel charge for residential customers, partially shielding that sector from price volatility. In 2017, the primary energy supply in the country reached around 3478 TJ, where 3438 TJ (99%) corresponded to oil. Renewables, such as wind and solar, accounted together for the remaining 1% of the total primary energy supply.

St. Kitts and Nevis' electricity utility rates averaged \$0.26 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), lower than the Caribbean regional average of \$0.33/kWh.²⁰ While the nation's carbon footprint is relatively low, vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change necessitate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Each island has its own respective Electric Utilities: Saint Kitts Electricity Company Limited (SKELEC) and Nevis Electricity Company Limited (NEVLEC). Each is publicly owned and is run by a board of directors appointed by the government. The Ministry of Public Infrastructure's Energy Unit is responsible for oversight of the electricity sector. While the 2011 Public Utilities Commission Act created a Public Utilities Commission (PUC), responsible for regulation and oversight of the electricity sector, funding and staff have not been allocated to create the commission, and tariffs were last set by the Cabinet in 2017.

²⁰ https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/09/f79/ETI-Energy-Snapshot-Antigua-Barbuda_FY20.pdf





The key provisions of St. Kitts and Nevis' National Energy Policy (NEP) include connecting large-scale independent power providers and many distributed renewable energy systems to the electrical grid. However, the NEP requires that all suppliers procure a license before generating electricity. The license cannot exceed 25 years, which should accommodate nearly all renewable energy technologies even though some can have a longer usable lifetime. The Revised National Energy Policy (2014) establishes that the Federation of SKN aims to become an island nation with a sustainable energy sector with reliable, renewable, clean, and affordable energy services. SKN being reliant on imported fuels needs to invest a significant share of its government revenues in importing and distributing fossil fuels (Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis, 2014). This dependency could be foregone by transitioning to renewable energy technologies, and the government could release public budget funds and increase its liquidity for further sustainable development and climate change mitigation and adaptation interventions. This would also reduce the vulnerability to volatility on fossil fuel prices and unexpected movements in the market.

Our commitment to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change that deals with greenhouse gas emission is powering our efforts to facilitate the use of renewable energy for our people. While the nation's carbon footprint is relatively low, vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change necessitate adaptation and mitigation efforts. The government pledged a reduction of CO₂ emissions of 61% by 2030 (compared to 2010), as part of its revised NDC, which is in great part to be achieved by transitioning to 100% renewable energy for power generation. St. Kitts and Nevis intends to expand power generation through renewable sources such as distributed solar (rooftop), utility scale solar, wind, and geothermal.

In parallel to these electricity generation measures; St. Kitts and Nevis also pledges to reduce electricity demand by 5% across the two islands by 2030. When looking at per capita electricity consumption in St. Kitts and Nevis, it is substantially higher than other countries in the region (3,570 kWh per year as compared to the regional average of 2,170 kWh). Additionally, St. Kitts and Nevis' electricity grid has high distribution losses relative to other countries in the region, with 20% of electricity generated lost. The revised NDC aims to reduce transmission and distribution losses to 10% in St. Kitts and 6% in Nevis by 2030.



Bright Spots and Success Stories

- St. Kitts and Nevis intend to expand power generation through renewable sources such as distributed solar (rooftop), utility-scale solar, wind, and geothermal.
- Several local entities have installed solar for self-supply. For example, the St Christopher Air and Sea Ports Authority established a 0.75 MW installation at the airport, and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank also installed a 1 MW solar farm.



RLB Airport Solar Farm

- A CDB US\$4.5mn LED lighting project replaced all street and sports lamps in St. Kitts and Nevis, with LED lamps, resulting in reduced energy consumption, less money spent on the importation of fuel, less pollution, and a reduction in SKELEC's and NEVLEC's demand.
- For distributed solar, an amendment to the Saint Christopher Electricity Supply Act in 2015 made it legal for electricity customers to install solar panels on their roofs.
- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) provided grant funding for the construction of solar farms on both St. Kitts and Nevis.
- The GoSKN in conjunction with SKELEC, is reviewing expressions of interest offered by private investors for several solar and wind farms along with waste-to-energy projects.



Geothermal Exploration, Nevis

- In October 2022, GoSKN announced plans to accelerate its transition to renewable energy with an initial scoping of a geothermal project aimed at energy security and strengthening the energy-water-food nexus. The GoSKN has partnered with the NIA, NEVLEC and SKELEC, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), on the national energy security agenda. As of December 2022, the CDB approved US\$17 million in financing for a geothermal energy development project in Nevis to reduce electricity costs, reduce carbon emissions, and increase energy security. The grant will pursue the drilling of two geothermal production wells and one injection well. In the first instance, the project aims to establish a geothermal power plant with a capacity of ten (10) megawatts, more than enough to meet all the domestic electricity demand in Nevis.

Opportunities and Way Forward

The GoSKN envisages a sustainable island state that is driven by a green transition away from fossil fuel with a mix of renewable energy sources, including wind, solar and geothermal energy.

GoSKN is actively working on fiscal incentive packages to attract investments in renewable energy. Diversifying the energy supply and promoting efficiency and conservation is paramount and will contribute to improving livelihoods and prosperity by lowering energy costs for consumption and production and reducing the carbon footprint. There is also a need to strengthen the human resources and capabilities of the officers within the Energy Units, SKELEC and NEVLEC, to complement the energy transition.





SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

08
DECENT WORK
AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH



Average annual GDP
Growth per capita
(1990-2019)

2.7%

Unemployment Rate

5.4%

Inflation Rate
2015-2019

2-3%

Debt/GDP 2022

64.7%

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the long-term growth rate of St. Kitts and Nevis. Since the first two cases of COVID-19 were discovered in St. Kitts and Nevis on 24th March 2020, the imposition of restrictions in nationwide economic and social activities (lockdown) and social distancing measures to minimise the impact of the health crisis, led to a dramatic decrease in economic growth in 2020. The Government has since implemented measures to provide economic relief to the most vulnerable. The large outlay in government spending to preserve lives, livelihoods and secure business development has resulted in the reduction in financial resources. This coupled with the decline in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) due to the impact of the pandemic in investor source markets has created fiscal shortages which have resulted in an economic downturn in the Federation. More specifically, real GDP growth fell from a pre-COVID-19 growth rate of 4.8% in 2019 to -14.5% in 2020, with recovery taking place in 2021 to 2022 with -0.9% and 8.9% respectively.

With St. Kitts and Nevis being dependent on services, particularly tourism, both for income and jobs, the impact of COVID-19 has dealt a heavy blow to its economic situation. In travel and tourism alone, the income contribution from these sectors has decreased from 52% of GDP to 22% of GDP and the employment contribution from 58.6% of total employment to 41.6% of total employment, many of whom operate in the informal sector. Unemployment rate is about 5.4% for 2020, having increased from 2019. By gender, the unemployment rate is higher for men (9.5% against 6.5%) in St. Kitts and 4.7% of women against 4.1% of men in Nevis. The labour force participation is male dominated on both islands; with 76.0% participation for men and 70.2% for women in St. Kitts and in Nevis 78.3% are men and 69.8% are women. Approximately 73.2% of poor households are headed by females²¹.

Monetary discipline has been afforded by the dollar being pegged to the US dollar (XCD\$2.7:US\$); keeping inflation low (-0.3% in 2019) and contained. For fiscal policy, in the five (5) years prior to COVID-19, St. Kitts and Nevis ran fiscal surpluses, which turned into a deficit of 3.5% in 2020. St. Kitts and Nevis has managed their public debt well in the 5 years preceding the pandemic, reducing public debt from around 65% in 2015 to 51% in 2019. The response to COVID-19 in 2020 resulted in a modest increase in public debt to 64.7% of GDP as at end-2022, which is still far below the peak (of 157%) in 2005.

²¹ Data sourced from the Department of Statistics (National Statistics Office), Ministry of Sustainable Development St. Kitts and Nevis, SLCHBS (2018)





Like many in this sub-region, St. Kitts and Nevis depends heavily on others for trade, with trade openness above 100% of GDP, with its exports and imports being highly concentrated by destination and product. Multidimensional vulnerability, measured by the 2021 Economic Vulnerability Index has improved with St. Kitts and Nevis now ranked 80th (of 143 Developing and Emerging Markets) most vulnerable from 17th (of 145 countries) in 2018. In 2021, the Federation was also classified in the medium to high vulnerability classification for multidimensional vulnerability by the CDB. However, this will not account for the huge challenges posed by COVID-19, which in 2020 had a deep impact on the St. Kitts and Nevis economy.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

Small Business Development Centre (SBDC)

In August 2016, the Small Business Development Centre (SBDC) was created within the Ministry of International Trade, Industry, Commerce and Consumer Affairs to provide proficient and ongoing technical assistance to support our MSMEs in the areas of business plan development and training, assistance with import duty concession applications and general business counseling.

Ministries of Small Business & Entrepreneurship; and Sports & Creative Economy

Ministries were created in December 2022, with mandates to transform the Entertainment, Creative, Cultural and Innovative industries in St. Kitts and Nevis. St. Kitts and Nevis is home to exceptionally talented individuals and groups. Among these are practitioners in music, visual arts, theatre, literary arts, photographers, videographers, application, and website developers, to robotics innovators. To date, a Code of Practice for the film and photography industry has been drafted, which has drawn much attention since the emergence of MSR Media (a boutique filming company originating from the United Kingdom) and its associated filming in Nevis. The Ministries also work closely with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) and the Caribbean Collective Organisation for Music Rights (ECCO) to train all creatives and bring awareness to matters concerning copyright.

The GoSKN identified the following sectors as priorities for business development and economic diversifications: I. Film and Photography II. Music and Entertainment III. Arts, IV. Technology and Innovation.

Impactful Tourism Marketing Strategy

Alongside the removal of all COVID-19 related travel restrictions in August 2022, and the debut of a new “Venture Deeper” marketing campaign in St. Kitts in September 2022, the GoSKN and Tourism Authority have implemented an aggressive campaign to invite cruise, yacht and air traffic back to our shores. This has resulted in an estimated 18.4% increase in cruise arrivals in 2022, and strategic arrangements made in 2023 for additional airlift including InterCaribbean Airways and JetBlue.

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

The Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs (MoSDGA), along with the Republic of China (Taiwan) are implementing the Women’s Employment and Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion (WEEFI) Project. WEEFI is intended to empower women through entrepreneurship training and financing (a grant of USD 3,000) to start and expand their businesses.





National Development Planning Framework (NDPF)

In 2023, the GoSKN completed the NDPF (2023-2037) with a focus on economic diversification and a path toward a sustainable island state. Key strategic pillars in the NDPF include strengthening public and private institutions; mainstreaming gender, youth and Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) across government initiatives; energy security and climate resilience; economic diversification, sustainable industries and the Blue and Orange Economies.

Ministry of Economic Development and Investments (MoEDI)

GoSKN established the Ministry of Economic Development and Investments in 2022/23 to facilitate the implementation of the National Development Planning Framework 2023-2037 toward a Sustainable Island State (SIS). The key pillars under the SIS agenda are food security; green energy transition, economic diversification; sustainable industries and the Orange Economy; and the COVID-19 recovery and social protection.

Skills Training Empowerment Programme (STEP)

The Skills Training Empowerment Programme (STEP) is a short-term initiative coordinated by the National Skills Training Programme (NSTP) that is designed to ensure that participants acquire the required technical skills to meet the demands of the labour market. Technical skills training is complemented by providing training in the fundamental areas of employability skills; entrepreneurship; social and life skills; basic numeracy; communication; and information technology. STEP is intended to offer certified skills training in a more sustainable and market-driven manner and promote entrepreneurship to engender the intensified growth and development of SMEs in the Federation.

Opportunities and Way Forward

- The tourism sector is an important source of income and employment for St. Kitts and Nevis. At present resources are dedicated to increasing air access to and from the major tourism source markets and diversifying the sector in terms of markets and products. There are opportunities to incentivize sustainable tourism investments and to update and align the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan with the SDGs. Moreover, stakeholders highlight the importance of undertaking a Tourism Satellite Account to adequately estimate the overall contribution of the sector to economic activity.
- Consistent with the sustainable island state agenda, there is an opportunity for increased climate and green investments from development partners both regionally and internationally.
- To assess the future labour demand, stakeholders highlight the importance of undertaking intermittent labour demand surveys and crafting a decent work agenda across Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).
- To complement the work related to advancing entrepreneurship and the creative economy, there is the need to undertake a Private Sector Diagnostic and national MSME Strategy to ensure alignment with the NDPF and Gender Strategy and facilitate sector-specific investments, MSME grants and incentives.



St. Kitts *Welcomes* ***JetBlue***



"The announcement of JetBlue's year-round 3x weekly service scheduled to begin on November 2nd, 2023, has been eagerly awaited for many years, and it fills us with immense gratitude to witness our aspirations materialize before our eyes.

Minister of Tourism

Honourable Marsha T. Henderson

St. Kitts



09

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Rank ICT Development
Index

37/176

% Of Households Owning a
Computer

72%

% Of Households with
Internet Access

73%

% Contribution of
Industries outside of
Tourism to GDP

23.7%

It is universally recognised that adequate infrastructure is essential in creating and achieving higher levels of competitiveness. Quality infrastructure for transport (air and sea), water, telecommunication and electricity has facilitated the development of the country's tourism sector. Over 95 percent of the population has access to basic services such as electricity, potable water, sanitation services, and shelter.

The transport infrastructure in St. Kitts consists of roadways, railways, and air transport, with roadways forming the backbone of the island's internal transport system. The paved road network is estimated at 163 kilometres or 101 miles (of a total of 383km/238 miles of roads). On a per capita basis, this translates to 7.15 meters, ranking St. Kitts and Nevis 74th in the world for per capita roadways available to people. The Federation has two airports, Robert Llewelyn Bradshaw (RLB) International Airport in St. Kitts and the Vance Amory International Airport in Nevis. RLB has a modern terminal, a long runway, and the navigational equipment required to accommodate the large jet aircraft used in modern air travel. Nevis, on the other hand, has a smaller terminal and receives most of its tourists through St. Kitts. A deep-water port was opened in Basseterre in 1981, and more recently, the government has invested in cruise ship facilities in the capital, creating the Port Zante terminal that can receive up to four cruise ships at once with the second of two cruise piers constructed in 2019. Other ports and harbours are less developed. On Nevis, the Long Point Cargo Port processes international cargo and there is a smaller ferry pier in Charlestown.

GoSKN's medium term development agenda focused on ensuring adequate infrastructure to support the productive sectors. The contribution of industries outside of tourism, including construction, mining, manufacturing, electricity, water, and gas, was 23.7 percent in 2019, up from 19.8 in 2012.

Manufacturing contributed 4.4% percent to GDP in 2021. The manufacturing sector has seen a decline in its contribution to GDP and employment over the last decade, mainly due to intense market competition with low-cost producing countries. Most of the manufacturing industry comprises light manufacturing sectors such as electronic components, the local manufacture of which is encouraged by incentives such as tax- and duty-free concessions.

The high cost of labour is one of the contributing factors to the relatively limited scope of the manufacturing industry. SKN has one of the highest costs of labour in the region, which results in the country being seen as uncompetitive among potential manufacturers and investors.





ICT development underpins the full gamut of social and economic development – from eGovernment to improving health services, education and industrial development and is key to achieving sustainable development goals.

St. Kitts and Nevis has led in the deployment of Information Communication Technology (ICTs) to enhance efficiencies and the delivery of services. For example, in 2017, the ICT Development Index ranked St. Kitts and Nevis 34 among 176 countries, the highest ranked country in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and fourth in the Latin America and Caribbean region behind the US, Canada, and Barbados. The index developed by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) considers ICT readiness, ICT capability and ICT use in constructing the index. The overall scores and rankings showed St. Kitts and Nevis was among the best performers across the three sub-indices – access, use and skills.

SKN prioritises technological adaptation and innovation as it is viewed as a necessary condition to effect transformative change for sustainable and inclusive outcomes. In terms of the new growth drivers, emphasis is placed on developing St. Kitts and Nevis as a leading digital society that attracts global talent and technology companies; modernising and driving digital capabilities in government and the private sector; developing the blue economy; building out a creative sector with an emphasis on film production and entertainment; and developing the agricultural sector and blue economy in support of the national food security targets and exports.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

Island Main Road and Old Road Bay Rehabilitation Projects

From 2018 to 2022, two comprehensive capital projects, the Island Main Road Rehabilitation Project, and the Old Road Bay Rehabilitation Project (38 km combined), were completed by local contractors and self-funded with some development aid from the Republic of China (Taiwan). Works included upgrading the asphalt surfaces, construction of sidewalks and drainage infrastructure including major culverts, coastal revetment work and enhancing road markings.



Nevis Island Main Road Rehabilitation and Safety Improvement Project

The USD9.5mn project rehabilitated 3.4km of road from Cliff Dwellers Estate to Nisbet Plantation. It included major works such as drainage infrastructure improvement, replacing and strengthening the foundation of the asphalt pavement, reshaping the geometric profile of the carriageway, and paving of a new asphalt surface. The rehabilitation of major thoroughfares on both St. Kitts and Nevis have served to improve passenger and pedestrian safety, reduce disaster risks, improve cargo and passenger throughput and reduce the commute time around both islands.



Oualie Water Taxi Enhancement

During the period 2017 to 2022, the Nevis Air and Sea Ports Authority (NASPA) has invested in the enhancements of the ferry port (water taxi) infrastructure at Oualie Beach with the construction of a 316-foot T-shaped pier, bathroom facilities, ticket booth and waiting area to facilitate the increased passenger throughput and demand for visitors to Nevis. To date an estimated nine (9) boat operators transport passengers (schedule and charter trips) between the two-mile distance in approximately 7-10 minutes.



Enhanced ICT Infrastructure

Broadband is a critical tool in a modern St. Kitts and Nevis and is widely used for communication, education, national security, healthcare, energy management and many more. Further, St. Kitts and Nevis has already achieved high telecommunications service levels. The country's overall mobile penetration is 137 percent, but only 34 percent of mobile connections are 3G/4G broadband enabled. Many people have two cell phones, one from the two main telecommunications providers, Digicel and FLOW, which is also the sole provider of landline telephone connections.



Internet Supporting Education

The country also has a broadband services provider, The Cable, which is upgrading its network on both islands to increase internet speeds by up to 50 percent. The current investments in ICT infrastructure will enable the Federation to accelerate its digital transformation and move to a new stage in its economic development.

Provision of Digital Services

St. Kitts and Nevis has made significant strides in moving towards a digital economy. During the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Kitts and Nevis has seen an increase in the use of online government information and services such as payment of taxes, accessing social services, purchasing of food and delivery services. There had been an emergence of new entrepreneurs in the digital industry who were developing websites, mobile applications, infographics design and dissemination, as well as new digital businesses which provide mobile payment information such as JADCASH and CaribePay, and 869ToGo which offers food delivery services. Non-Governmental Organizations, faith-based institutions, and the private sector have also utilized online services to reach the public. There was an increased use of online collaboration and conference tools by community groups, churches, businesses, and government. Businesses have increased investment in technology to augment the way they deliver goods and services

Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 9

- Update the National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) to provide a strategic, national spatial development framework that addresses current development issues.
- 'Climate proof' physical infrastructure to withstand heavy rainfall events, and more intense storms and hurricanes.
- Renew and upgrade critical infrastructure, especially seaports and airports, and improve waste disposal systems as a foundation for maintaining and enhancing the country's competitiveness.
- Implement initiatives to improve the country's information technology infrastructure and strengthen the regulatory environment. The goal will be to secure the most cutting-edge, reliable and growth-inducing ICT network for SKN and harness the benefits of advanced ICTs, which requires appropriate infrastructures, services, and skills.
- The introduction and adoption of Electric and Hybrid Vehicles inclusive of public transportation to reduce our carbon footprint. Work has commenced with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) to facilitate this transition.



SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries.

10
REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



Vulnerable, Poor and
Indigent

27%

Gini Coefficient

0.306

Reduce Income during
COVID-19 Pandemic

41%

Human Capital Index

0.59

SDG 10 encompasses the universality of the 2030 Agenda in ensuring the inclusion of all regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. Our socio-economic progress goes hand in hand with building an inclusive and equitable society where every citizen feels part of the development process, and no one is left behind.

SDG 10 calls for reducing inequalities by 2030, recognizing rough interlinkages across various development outcomes and differentials in education, health, housing and social protection, as well as access to justice and information.

St. Kitts and Nevis use a consumption-based Gini coefficient to measure inequality. It is calculated from the consumption expenditure data collected through household surveys. This monetary measure allows the categorisation of the population into the poorest to richest quintiles and deciles for comparison and analysis. The Gini coefficient reduced from 0.397 in 2007/08 to 0.306 in 2018 ²² showing an improvement in the income distribution.

The reduction in the poverty rate and the Gini coefficient between 2008/09 and 2018 can be partly attributed to improved economic conditions and a stable macroeconomic environment evidenced by an annual average of 2.7 percent growth in the country's real gross domestic product (GDP), notwithstanding the impact of the global financial crisis.

The containment measures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to sharp reductions in output and incomes due to the contractions in supply and demand and the increased joblessness associated with the temporary closure of some businesses. This has deepened existing inequalities, hitting the poorest and most vulnerable communities hardest as they lacked the resources and tools to cope with the economic downturn.

COVID-19 highlighted the disparities in health, consumption patterns, and income levels, among others. Data from Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey (Wave 1 May 2020) indicates that 51 percent of households reported reduced incomes. This affected households' consumption habits, with about 15 percent of households eating fewer meals than usual.

²² Statistics Department, Enhanced Country Poverty Assessment, database.





Further, the proportion of households that needed healthcare but was only partially/sometimes available was 47 percent in May 2020. This has deepened existing inequalities, hitting the poorest and most vulnerable communities hardest as they lacked the resources and tools to cope with the economic downturn.

St. Kitts and Nevis' response included interventions that targeted direct cash transfers to the poor and most vulnerable in society, including the unemployed, the informally employed and the elderly. As of March 2023, there were 4694 PAP beneficiaries, of which 346 were unemployed, 277 disabled, 1,898 elderly and 2,173 low-income employees.²³

The GoSKN undertook measures aimed at reducing income inequality through wage and social protection policies. An important strategic goal under the government's current mandate is to revise the minimum wage. In April 2023, via the Minimum Wage Advisory Committee – the government, workers, employers, and civil society presented a position paper to revise the national minimum wage to ensure all workers are paid above the poverty line and to reduce the gap with the highest paid workers. The committee considered the inflation rate/consumer price index and employment rate to ensure an increase in the purchasing power of those employed in the lower income bracket. The last minimum wage increase was approximately a decade ago in 2014. Approximately 9,655 workers representing 38 percent of those who are actively employed are eligible for the increase in the minimum wage.

Human capital—the knowledge, skills, and health accumulated over their lives—is a central driver of sustainable growth, poverty, and inequality reduction. The Human Capital index (HCI)²⁴ provides a new definition of human capital and quantifies the contribution of health and education to the productivity of the next generation of workers. Worldwide a child born in 2020 can expect, on average, to be 56 percent as productive as she could be when she grows up. In St. Kitts and Nevis, a child born today will be 59 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health. This is higher than the average for Latin America and the Caribbean region but lower than the average for High-income countries. Countries can use the measure to assess how much income they are foregoing because of human capital gaps, and how much faster they can turn these losses into gains if they act now. The HCI, therefore, suggests that those born today receive 59 percent of their education and health needs.

²³. <https://www.sknis.gov.kn/2023/03/02/close-to-five-thousand-pap-beneficiaries-paid-as-the-evaluation-of-the-programme-continues/>

²⁴. The HCI was launched in 2018 as part of the Human Capital Project, a global effort to accelerate progress toward a world where all children can achieve their full potential. Measuring the human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by her 18th birthday, the HCI highlights how current health and education outcomes shape the productivity of the next generation of workers. In this way, it underscores the importance for governments and societies of investing in the human capital of their citizens.



Bright Spots and Success Stories

- Economic and social inclusion of persons with disabilities were advanced through legislative and policy frameworks. In 2022/23, the GoSKN established the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Ageing, and Disabilities to ensure special attention is paid to some of our most vulnerable residents. The planned policy and legislative agenda are intended to impact the lives and social and economic prospects of vulnerable persons and persons with disabilities. For example, the Ministry's Quarterly Senior Enrichment Programme, focuses on physical well being and healthy lifestyles; spiritual development, social and personal development; lifelong learning and skills development, and advocacy and community engagement. On Nevis, the NIA has launched since 2013 a structured Seniors' Recreational and Health Check Programme and instituted free electricity and water utility service to seniors 65 and over.
- Social inclusion through communication, such as sign language, has improved recently via the GoSKN public media engagement but is not mainstreamed in the local sphere.



*Donation of Equipment for Persons with Disabilities:
Republic of China (Taiwan)*

- Consistent with the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September 2020, the GoSKN has advanced work on a Special Needs Policy which will allow for a more coordinated and integrated approach to ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of our society.
- Across a range of sectors, the Government has been implementing policies and programmes that support reducing inequality by promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. These actions include initiatives under no poverty (Goal 1), zero hunger (Goal 2), health and well-being (Goal 3), quality education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5) and sustainable economic growth (Goal 8).

- In June 2023, the Parliament passed a suite of legislation geared towards finding a balance between protecting the constitutional rights and freedoms of the Rastafarian community and the citizens and residents of St. Kitts and Nevis. This included the Smoking (Designated Areas) Bill, the Rastafari Rights Recognition Bill, the Freedom of Conscience (Cannabis) Bill and the Drugs Misuse Amendment Bill. The Smoking Act allows the Chief Medical Officer to designate specific public spaces as areas for smoking. Meanwhile, The Rastafari Rights Recognition Act now gives Rastas in the Federation sacramental rights to Cannabis.
- In December 2022, St. Kitts and Nevis partnered with the United Nations (UN) and three other Eastern Caribbean countries (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Grenada) to pilot a US\$2.9mn Resilient Caribbean: Engaging and Training Youth, Strengthening Integrated Social Protection Sector Delivery Joint Programme. The two-year project, will seek to respond to current challenges facing Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including limited contributory social protection coverage, access for high numbers of workers in the informal sector, and lack of coherent and gender-responsive labour market programming. Through enhancing access to social protection, the initiative will reduce the vulnerabilities of households and increase their capacity to respond to climate-related risks, increase the social safety net for workers in the informal economy, particularly young workers, and support the transition to formal employment by empowering youth to enter the labour market through entrepreneurship and skills development pathways.



Launch of UN Resilient Caribbean Project, October 2022

Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 10

- Accelerate the path towards a sustainable island state to eradicate poverty, increase employment, enhance food security, manage water resources, and increase energy conservation and efficiency.
- Expand the existing social protection mechanisms to consider unemployment benefits as well as sustainable livelihoods, and access to insurance mechanisms for the vulnerable as well as financial inclusion.
- Build the capacity to ensure that policy development is undertaken through an inequality lens.
- Build the capacity to recognize/address the systemic issues and barriers (lack of access to basic social amenities, crime and violence and its psychosocial impact) to improve the well-being of the most vulnerable.
- Develop a multidimensional poverty index as a means of addressing issues of inequality.



- Disaggregated data to inform targeted responses to the needs of the most vulnerable.
- Develop a National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development to ensure the safe, orderly, and regular migration in and out of Saint Kitts and Nevis and better integrate migration policy into the broader framework of development policies.

Youth Voices: SDGs Youth Panel

The United Nations Resident Coordinator Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean in collaboration with the Department of Youth Empowerment hosted an SDGs Youth Panel Discussion on June 21, 2023, at CUNA Conference Room, Basseterre, St Kitts. The event allowed representatives of youth-led and youth-focused organizations and other youth stakeholders to dialogue and to explore ways and means of promoting youth engagement with the SDGs. Participants took part in brainstorming sessions on the five pillars of the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships (5Ps). The brainstorming sessions concluded with a panel discussion on the 5Ps, where panelists voiced their views, concerns and recommendations to galvanize actions on how to transform Saint Kitts and Nevis into a more inclusive, environmentally friendly, and safe place to live, work and raise a family. Youth leaders advocated for increased focus on the poor and vulnerable and the need to actively participate/engage with their government representatives and policymakers in the design and implementation of SDG-type interventions.

Views expressed included:

PEOPLE

- Health must be viewed holistically in terms of mental and physical, and nutrition
- For persons to live prosperous and productive lives, awareness of and access to healthy food options, and more specialized medical services and facilities, are critical. Traditional dietary regimes and assumptions will need to change.
- The stigma associated with mental and emotional wellbeing needs to be addressed through easier access to trained professionals
- Progress in health care is being made but can be more consistent. The impact of climate change on health needs to be given a larger voice.
- Youth are prepared to actively participate in SDG implementation. However, information communicated needs to be age-appropriate and targeted. Youth can easily leverage social media, online engagements, and implement surveys, fitness drives, etc.
- Youth need to be at the policy-making table.
- Social media can be leveraged to pursue non-traditional and skills-based education in areas such as innovative and climate smart farming methods
- There is a need for more impactful job attachments for youth including developing skills in ICT. Although youth are strong with social media, there is still a need to 'bridge the digital divide'
- The public school system can learn from the private school system in terms of adaptability to various learning challenges and disorders





PROSPERITY

- ‘Brain Drain’ is a serious challenge for the country and region as the majority of young persons pursue careers and lives overseas following university education
- More creativity is needed in growing the economy to ensure that youth feel they have access to rewarding and sustainable employment that can compensate them for their education level
- Older professionals should leverage the ideas of youth working in their fields
- Maintenance of public infrastructure remains an issue, particularly schools, hospitals, community centres and health centres.
- It is inexcusable that both public and private buildings within our urban centres still do not have access facilities for persons with disabilities.

PLANET

- Youth need to be at the policy-making table, and provided with access to information regarding the impact, mitigation and adaptation to climate change
- Increasing global temperatures are affecting agricultural production and prospects
- ‘Back-Yard-Gardening’ needs to be championed. A shift in culture is needed for youth to see agriculture as a viable career option – including promoting innovative and climate smart farming options (eg. hydroponics). Education will play a big part.
- There need to be greater incentives for individuals to get involved with climate action. For example, the importation of electric vehicles. A transition to EV will require a retraining of the workforce to address the maintenance and repair of same.
- The gender dynamic of water is severely under appreciated in St. Kitts and Nevis. Women suffer disproportionately when there are water shortages or water rationing.
- Sanitation services can be improved for females at public and private facilities.
- The mentality to ‘reduce and reuse’ already exists in the Federation. This needs to be leveraged to change behaviour systematically including banning of single-use plastics, mandatory waste separation, setting specific days for collection of different types of waste, etc.

PEACE

- A recent uptick in crime should concern all of us. Although some incidents may appear to be targeted, there are several persons both directly and indirectly affected including family members, bystanders, and the general public. Peace must be concerned with ensuring that society is free from fear at all times.
- Youth unemployment remains an issue and will lead to crimes if not addressed holistically and creatively.
- The government’s thrust to recognize the rights and take care of marginalized groups, such as the Rastafarian community, is to be commended.
- Upholding public institutions is important for peace and prosperity. The Office of the Ombudsman has been underserved but is a critical function of the government to ensure fairness and integrity in public life.
- Registration of youth groups needs to be expanded and maintained to ensure the larger





voice of national youth is represented, as opposed to a few recurring groups. There needs to be a stronger linkage between local youth groups and established UN frameworks including the Youth Advisory Group.

- The topics associated with the SDGs are familiar and can be made easily digestible for youth. The interlinked nature of the SDGs lends to easier understanding. However, a public education campaign will be necessary.

PARTNERSHIP

- Partnerships are important for more developed countries to share best practices and technology, particularly in areas such as education and health care.
- They are also important to support the provision of financial and technical assistance, and scholarships for St. Kitts and Nevis.
- Partnerships are also important with the local corporate community for the provision of scholarships. Scholarships should address non-traditional areas to achieve SDG implementation.
- Development of trade partnerships is critical to ensure improved access to a wider variety of goods and services locally
- Given that the SDGs are interlinked, youth groups should consider working together to achieve their implementation, bringing their different expertise and resources to the table to achieve common goals.
- While partnerships are strengthened through the OECS, CARICOM and otherwise, St. Kitts and Nevis can do more to build new partnerships on the international stage
- Youth groups can more easily organize into groups to address SDG challenges. For example, the St. Kitts-Nevis Robotics Association is exploiting opportunities with respect to ICT and employment generation. However, funding support is needed from the Government.
- Youth have innovative minds and can assist with advocacy (door-to-door; social media).
- Youth are encouraged to get involved with SDG implementation as their achievement directly affects their future.

The value of the Youth panel was recognized by both the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Ageing and Disabilities and the UN Country Coordinating Officer in terms of the knowledge exchange and how it complements other SDGs stakeholders' engagement and the presentation of St Kitts and Nevis Voluntary National Review at the UN High Level Political Forum (July 2023).



SDG - Youth Forum Panel





SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



Urban Population

57%

Population Exposed to 2
or more Hazards

40%

Population with Access to
Shelter

~ 95%

Natural Hazard Risk to
GDP

65%

According to the Urban Resilience Plan for Greater Basseterre (2022-2037), the GoSKN is committed to transforming urban spaces and human settlements to ensure they are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Managing rapid urbanisation remains challenging and involves ensuring adequate housing and infrastructure, addressing the environmental impact of urban extension, and reducing vulnerability to natural disasters. The urban population (within the Greater Basseterre area) represents about 57 percent of the total population.

Land is linked to urban development. Pressure for approvals to use the land for manufacturing, industry, tourism, and expansion of urban settlements continues to be strong. Land use decisions need to be taken within the ambit of integrated urban development plans based on cost-benefit analyses into which factored environmental criteria, the so-called sustainable development approach. In no other sector is the need for sustainable development so great as in the urban sector. The URP seeks to respond to the pressure points of shelter, employment creation, food supply, water, waste disposal, energy, transport, health and social services in the Greater Basseterre area within a framework of integrated planning.

Saint Kitts and Nevis is identified among the world's top 60 countries exposed to risk of mortality from 2 or more hazards. An estimated 40% of the population of St. Kitts and Nevis is considered at risk. Additionally, St. Kitts and Nevis is among the top 40 countries with significant economic risks from 2 or more hazards as a percentage of GDP. GDP risk is estimated at 65%. Critical infrastructure, concentrated in the vicinity of Greater Basseterre, for power generation, drinking water, and air and sea transport, among others, are particularly at risk, and alternative services are limited. The major seaport/port of entry is in the capital Basseterre and a smaller one is in Charlestown, Nevis. The islands are also served by two international airports: one on St. Kitts and a smaller airfield/terminal in Nevis. Damages to these facilities disrupt critical services to the functioning of the country.

Population growth and urbanisation have put increasing pressure on land, housing, and other resources. Many urban dwellings are poorly built (wood and sheet metal roofing) and are less resilient to natural hazards such as tropical cyclones and manmade hazards such as fires.

Despite the country's high level of human development, many citizens cannot afford decent housing. The focus is on making adequate housing more accessible to citizens, reducing urban congestion, improving poor living conditions, and improving housing aesthetics. Several new housing projects are being implemented to allow public servants such as teachers, nurses, and police to access affordable housing.





An increased focus has been placed on urban and rural planning. Urban and rural planning is being integrated with land-use planning to maximise economic potential and efficiency through the appropriate location of economic and residential activity, reducing poverty and vulnerability and improving living standards. Emphasis is being placed on ensuring that adequate provisions are made to accommodate road and utility services within settlements, reducing vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change. As such, priority has been given to increasing access to adequate housing and improving the living conditions in communities and addressing urban congestion.

The COVID-19 pandemic may significantly impact persons already challenged by, inter alia, inadequate housing, poor waste management systems and overcrowded public transport. This exacerbates existing challenges linked to urbanisation and the repercussion for sustainable cities.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

Urban Resilience Plan for Greater Basseterre (2022-2037)

The Urban Resilience Plan for Greater Basseterre (2022-2037) is a 15-year plan to guide investment in the resilience of greater Basseterre. Its vision is “implementation of the Urban Resilience Plan for Greater Basseterre, under the leadership of an urban resilience corporation, contributes to the protection of homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure from environmental hazards, improved housing and living conditions for existing residents, a commercially vibrant heritage district working in synergy with tourism development, physically accessible and well-used network of public spaces, with residential and commercial buildings relying on renewable energy and efficient use of water.”²⁵ Within the guiding principle of a broad understanding of resilience; responding to known shocks and stressors; building existing momentum and capacity; and a partnership approach to implementation, the Plan has five themes – *protect, revitalize, access, shift and engage*, 11 objectives and 43 projects for a resilient Greater Basseterre.

Update (2023) of the National (St. Kitts) Physical Development Plan: Vision 2040

The ongoing update establishes a vision to 2040 where: St. Kitts is a sustainable island state with safe and livable communities, a thriving local economy, and healthy and diverse ecosystems. Kittitians have access to safe and affordable housing, live in well-serviced settlements, have access to locally produced food, fresh water, meaningful employment, and clean energy. Land and natural resources are used efficiently and new development embraces sound environmental practices and planning principles. Residents and tourists alike are able to enjoy and experience the island’s natural beauty and cultural heritage now and for generations to come. The update of the Plan will include a ‘greening exercise’ for the building codes.

Social Housing Programme

As part of our social protection programme, the GoSKN via the National Housing Corporation (NHC) has invested in the construction of over 2000 social and low-income housing units and distributed over 5000 house lots.

²⁵ Urban Resilience Plan for Greater Basseterre 2022-2037





Similarly, in the last decade (2013-2022) the Nevis Housing & Land Development Corporation (NHLDC) constructed an estimated 315 affordable homes as one of the measures implemented by the Nevis Island Administration to increase Nevisians' standard of living. This was also supported by duty-free concessions for first-time homeowners, which contributed to a significant reduction in the cost of construction.

More recently, in April 2023 the Federal Government and the NHC entered into a contract with a Trinidadian developer to finance and deliver 2400 affordable smart homes over a period of four years consistent with the 2023 National Budget commitment. As a result, Kittitian and Nevisian families could acquire their own homes at a subsidised rate through the government's longstanding social housing scheme.

GEF Small Grants Programme

Since 2014, the GEF Small Grants Programme, St. Kitts and Nevis (SGPSKN) has approved 60 community-based projects in St. Kitts and Nevis in the form of seed monies and technical assistance up to USD50,000 per project in the areas of biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as land degradation. Several of these projects have contributed to sustainable urban solutions.

Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 11

- Review and as necessary, adjust arrangements for surveillance, review and control of developments surrounding historical and cultural sites.
- Finalize St. Kitts Physical Development Plan in 2023, including greening building codes, and put in place appropriate institutional arrangements for implementing this Plan, the NDPF and URP.
- Formulate Urban Resilience Plans for Cayon, Sandy Point and Charlestown, Nevis
- Develop local area development planning and prepare local, sustainable development plans.
- Continue efforts to significantly increase access to housing.
- Create sustainable mechanisms to facilitate low and middle-income beneficiaries who are most in need of housing and shelter, especially those that are unable to access housing loans and are otherwise unable to finance adequate housing solutions.

Dashboard of SDG Targets – Prosperity

This dashboard shows a snapshot of the stakeholders' assessment of how St. Kitts and Nevis is progressing with respect to achieving the SDG targets under Prosperity.

	The SDG target has been met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress	SDG Targets #7 – Affordable and Clean Energy	
	Fair progress but acceleration is needed (the enabling policy and legal framework in place, resources are allocated, implementation of initiatives.	SDG Targets #8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth	
	Limited or no progress	SDG Targets #9–Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	
	Moving away from the target/target at risk of not being met by 2030/strategic intervention needed urgently	SDG Targets #10 – Reduced Inequalities	
		SDG Targets #11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities	



Prosperity Dimension Bright Spots:



Prosperity Dimension Strategies and Actions To Accelerate The SDGs:



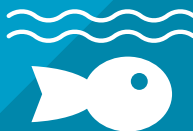


PLANET

12
RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION AND
PRODUCTION



14
LIFE BELOW
WATER



15
LIFE ON LAND



06
CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



13
CLIMATE ACTION





SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

06
CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



Access to Drinking
Water

99%

Access to Sanitation
Services

85%

% Of Population served
by
Public Water Supply

~ 82%

Fresh Water Resources
per Capita

<1000m³

In St. Kitts and Nevis, improving access and availability to clean water and sanitation services is a priority. As of 2021, several targets under SDG 6 were way advanced in terms of the 99 percent access to clean and safe water and 87 percent improvement/access to sanitation services. The public water supply system is managed by both the St. Kitts Water Services Department (WSD), and Nevis Water Department (NWD), supplying some 6-7 million gallons of water daily (MGD) to approximately 24,500 (metered) customers. Households make up approximately 82 percent of total potable water demand, tourism 11 percent, businesses approximately 6 percent while farming, schools, and unmetered government buildings make up roughly 1 percent. On St. Kitts, 2021 daily demand was estimated to be 6 MGD. On Nevis, 2021 daily demand was estimated to be 1.1 MGD.

Rainfall is the primary source of water in St. Kitts and Nevis. The annual mean rainfall for both islands is estimated at 1200 mm at low elevations and exceeds 3000 mm near the highest summits²⁶. All water in St. Kitts comes directly from streams, springs, or wells. St. Kitts has six surface water systems and seven major groundwater basins. It is estimated that 20% of the rainfall becomes groundwater flow or groundwater recharge. On the other hand, Nevis is largely dependent on a system of groundwater wells.

SKN with less than 1,000 m³ freshwater resources per capita, is amongst the most water-scarce countries globally.²⁷ To date, water demand already matches supply because of low average precipitation relative to demand. The islands are experiencing an (statistically significant) observed decrease in annual precipitation. On the demand side, water scarcity in SKN is increasing due to several factors including the continued expansion of the tourism industry, increasing demand for irrigated agriculture, annual population growth, urbanization, increasing societal affluence, and ineffective water management practices and strategies.

The demand for water is expected to increase significantly, especially in the agricultural and tourism sectors where water use could double over the next ten years, and there is need for greater investment in water conservation and demand side management. There is already a shortfall between water supply and demand in St. Kitts, resulting rationing and the need for new hotel developments to utilise desalination plants which raises their operation costs. St. Kitts and Nevis faces challenges with respect to the distribution of water due to aging infrastructure, leakages, high unaccounted-for water due to corrosion and leaking pipes, and inadequate storage to keep pace with peak demands.

²⁶ CIMH 2018

²⁷ CIMH and FAO 2016





Non-revenue water remains an issue due to leakages, billing and metering errors and unauthorized uses and is estimated at 53% in St. Kitts and 30% in Nevis. Further, SKN continues to grapple with increasing saltwater contamination of groundwater supplies due to sea-level rise and increasing storm surge, as well as decreasing aquifer recharge and safe yield.

Sanitation

With respect to sanitation, about 85 percent of households use water closets. Even though there have been improvements in sanitation services over the years, an estimated 6% of the national population is using pit latrines and has no access to toilet facilities. Further, in the absence of a central sewage system/treatment plant on the island, there are risks of water contamination, the pollution of the water table as well as downstream coastal waters, and water-borne disease proliferation is exacerbated.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

Increasing Water Supply and Storage Capacity

To improve the access to a safe and reliable supply of water the GoSKN undertook several initiatives during the period 2015-2023:

- The commissioning of the Wingfield Well in 2016 added 100,000 gallons of water to the Rural West System.
- Drilling of two wells in the Shadwell area, which provides WSD with an additional one (1) MGD. In June 2023, the GoSKN commenced well-drilling in the Cayon area to alleviate perennial water shortages.
- With the support of GEF, USAID and the EU, 69 schools, community centres and health centres have been retrofitted with 400-1000 gallon water storage tanks
- In 2020, the GoSKN secured financing under the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) to construct ponds/dams and associated distribution infrastructure to service at least 100 farms in the Federation.
- During the review period 2015 to 2022, the Nevis Island Administration benefited from a USD11.0mn water enhancement project from the Caribbean Development Bank, resulting in the construction of six (6) new reservoirs, storage tanks, three pumping states and over 20 miles of pipe for distribution.
- The October 2021 passage of the Nevis Physical Planning and Development Control Regulations 2021 stipulates that buildings for human habitation must have a cistern or rainwater catchment and storage facility as a response for water conservation and management on the island.
- In December 2022, the GoSKN partnered with the St. Kitts Marriott Resort to supply up to 300,000 gallons of water per day to the Frigate Bay Area, via the hotel's desalination plant.

Technology Adoption and Mitigating Water Loss/Risks

In 2017, the GoSKN procured and installed Water Monitoring Devices in wells to assess water levels in real-time. This technology allows the WSD to respond quickly to potential risks to water resources such as drought and salt intrusion as well as monitor in real-time the water table and aquifer levels. In 2018/19, the WSD piloted 50 smart meters on Porte Zante to determine the way forward to reduce water loss. The smart meters were placed at several locations in Port Zante, allowing for radio frequency reading of the meter which minimizes manpower time, promotes social distancing, and increases the timely and reliable collection of data.





Installation of Desalination Plant

Desalination has been identified by the GoSKN as a key water solution for long-term sustainability. As of June 2023, installation of a desalination plant and geotechnical exploration in the Canada area, St. Kitts has commenced following a donation from the United Arab Emirates. It is estimated that the plant will produce 30,000 gallons per day to supply approximately 2,000 persons to augment the Cayon and Keys water supply system. Complementary initiatives are underway with the drilling of new wells, upgrading pipes, and enhancing the technical skills of the staff and water engineers.

Opportunities and Way Forward

Given the urgency to improve the access to a safe and reliable supply of water within the Federation, both households and enterprises/commercial consumers have to guard against water leaks, and take simple steps to use water more efficiently, such as using water-efficient appliances and re-using water for household purposes, as well as consider installing rainwater harvesting systems as a way to help reduce consumption of treated water and reduce dependence on external sources. Augmenting capacity to treat and store water appropriately remains pivotal in meeting national water needs.

The water sector has been identified as a priority for climate adaptation, owing to risks of decreasing freshwater supply and saltwater intrusion of aquifers.

Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 6

- Water resources assessment and integrated water planning strengthened
- NRW planning capacity strengthened (SKN)
- Treated water storage volume increased
- Priority research and works conducted to improve climate and disaster resilience of water infrastructure including wells and pumping stations to climate change risks
- Infrastructure upgraded to integrate energy efficiency (Nevis)
- National legislation and regulations reformed to support the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient water (SKN)
- National policy developed to support the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient water sector (SKN)
- Climate and disaster risk management framework for drought management strengthened
- Institutional capacity/arrangements strengthened to support the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient water sector
- Building awareness and sensitization of the public on issues relating to hygiene and the use of water and waste is key, including the gender dynamic of water.
- Design a dedicated emissions/waste management policy for key sectors such as tourism and manufacturing, which includes incentives for greening businesses and/or adopting green technologies etc.
- Prepare a comprehensive waste management strategy, that addresses household waste management (grey and blackwater and/or management of liquid waste particularly in the urban areas), latrine management/aerobic tank septic tanks/communal tanks as well as the tourism sector and environmental impact management (including mangrove restoration). Complete pilot grey water treatment system for Basseterre with GEF support.



- Baseline studies and feasibility studies for addressing waste challenges and waste-to-energy solutions must be undertaken in close collaboration with the SKWMC.
- To foster the practice of waste minimization, reuse, recycling and recovery, guidelines should be developed. A more aggressive education and awareness-raising campaign on waste reduction and avoidance must be put forward.



Water Conservation Campaign, St. Kitts



Water Pod, Nevis



SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

12

RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION AND
PRODUCTION



Waste Generation

1.67 kg

/Person/Day

Access to Waste
Management Services

95%

Sustainable consumption and production patterns align with the Government's thrust for a sustainable island state. Concepts such as the green economy, circular economy, and low carbon development are essential to Saint Kitts and Nevis' recent National Development Planning Framework (2023-2037) and GoSKN strategic priorities. Achieving sustainable consumption and production patterns requires strategic interventions at the policy level, which promote sustainable and inclusive growth whilst minimizing negative ecological impacts.

Through several of the national policies and strategic frameworks such as St. Kitts and Nevis' National Energy Policy (2014), St. Kitts and Nevis Agricultural Transformation and Growth Strategy 2022-2031, National Climate Change Policy (2017), National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2018), St. Kitts and Nevis Revised National Determined Contribution (2021), and St. Kitts and Nevis Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment as part of the Third National Communication to the UNFCCC (2021) the government in tandem with the private sector and civil society are committed to pursuing inter alia: sustainable and efficient use of natural resources, renewable energy development, energy efficiency and conservation, reduction in emissions, and the adoption of clean technologies to spur sustainable development.

St. Kitts and Nevis produce 32,363 metric tons of waste per year (1.67 kg/person/day), which is much higher than the global average of 0.99kg in Latin America and the Caribbean ²⁸. This poses a significant problem since residents have little to no access to recycling services, and the island has limited landfill capacity. In particular, the proliferation of plastics and styrofoams, indiscriminate dumping, and limited environmental education have led to increased litter in the forest, water, and beaches. These environmental consequences, in turn, threaten the local people who depend on healthy marine ecosystems for their food and livelihoods.

Ninety-five percent of all households benefit from public solid waste collection, while most businesses employ a private collection system. Notwithstanding, there are problems related to waste management.

- Plastic pollution has been an issue in St. Kitts and Nevis, negatively impacting its marine environment and coastal communities and adding to its waste management problem.
- The waste disposal sites in Nevis and St. Kitts are not properly lined and sealed, so leachates of toxic materials and other chemical wastes can enter groundwater and other ecosystems such as mangroves.

²⁸ <https://www.sknis.gov.kn/2022/05/19/waste-recycling-promotions-continue-both-on-st-kitts-and-on-nevis%ef%bf%bc/>



Bright Spots and Success Stories

- St. Kitts Sustainable Destination Council of the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with the private sector and civil society, run periodic environmental awareness campaigns, for example, 'plastic free July', to foster efforts in the tourism industry around objectives of environmental sustainability, sustained profits, and social responsibility.
- In 2022, the US\$1.0mn St. Kitts and Nevis Solid Waste Management and Recycling Project (SWMRP), a partnership between the Federal Government of St. Kitts and Nevis and the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan), was launched to accelerate waste management and recycling initiatives. The Nevis Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) piloted the SWMRP and initiated a plastic recycling system at the Lowlands landfill. In December 2022, a Recycling and Packaging Plant was established in Nevis with investments in equipment and machinery such as compression balers, one breaker, a forklift, and a recycling truck.

Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 12

Sustainable consumption and production practices require the efforts of the government, CSOs and the private sector to play their part in sustainability efforts by ensuring that they participate in activities to reduce their ecological footprint, such as reducing waste, conserving water and energy and engaging in more sustainable consumption patterns such as reducing the use of plastics, among others.

- Develop and roll out public awareness campaigns for waste management, recycling, and sustainable consumption.
- Invest in a sanitary landfill for St. Kitts and give consideration for the establishment of waste disposal sites for hazardous waste as well as white waste and e-waste.
- Expand the sustainability and resource efficiency considerations incorporated into national tourism policies and plans, thereby creating a more sustainable tourism sector and associated tourism products.
- Ensure that future investments (local and foreign) consider cleaner technologies in production and also take on board environmental stewardship guidelines to achieve higher levels of resource efficiencies.
- Create additional mechanisms to engage in more recycling programmes to reduce the amount of waste disposed.
- Pollution in the energy sector (electricity and transport) is reduced by ensuring that increased use of renewable energy and the infrastructure for electric vehicles are put in place.





SDG 13: Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13

CLIMATE ACTION



Of Persons Affected
by Natural Disasters
(2006-2014)

768

Of Hurricanes / Extreme
Events (1989-2017)

10

Hurricane Damages
1989-2017

US\$700m

GoSKN adopted the
Sendai Framework
for Disaster Risk
Reduction

As a SIDs, combatting climate change is a high priority for St. Kitts and Nevis. The country is highly vulnerable to climate change and its associated impacts, including extreme weather events, more frequent and severe tropical cyclones, sea-level rise, increasing temperatures and changing precipitation patterns. Further, the state of the environment directly impacts the tourism, agriculture and fisheries sectors, the leading income-earners, and job-creating industries in the Federation.

St. Kitts and Nevis is already experiencing climate impacts head-on, affecting agricultural production, water resources, coastal zones and vulnerable communities and groups. Climate change is projected to increase the severity and negative impacts of hurricanes and other natural disasters in SKN, resulting in more widespread flooding (exacerbated by poor drainage systems and maintenance); landslides; coastal damage; water contamination; and loss of arable land. Sea level rise is expected to have a significant adverse effect on coastal low-lying areas where much of the development in St. Kitts and Nevis is concentrated.

St. Kitts and Nevis is also being impacted by drought. Drought ranks as the single most common cause of severe food shortages in developing countries and is a key issue for food security. Projections of relative change in precipitation indicate an expected decline in rainfall. Depending on the scenario, precipitation in St. Kitts and Nevis may decrease by 2-3% by 2040 and by 2-11% by 2080. St. Kitts and Nevis is particularly vulnerable to low and unreliable rainfall and extended drought periods. Dry conditions that are projected will likely make rain-fed agriculture difficult and increase food insecurity. Decreased availability and competition for freshwater will likely increase water insecurity, leading to water shortages and increased rationing of water.

The increasing intensity of tropical cyclones and resultant damages have been strongly linked to the drivers of climate change. In the 1989-2017 period, St. Kitts and Nevis has experienced impacts from twelve tropical cyclones, amounting to over US\$700 Million in damages. In 1998, Hurricane Georges, a Category 3 storm, hit St. Kitts and Nevis and was among the most devastating storms experienced in the region. Damage to St. Kitts was extensive, with lesser impact to Nevis. In total, Georges caused an estimated US\$445 million in damages including damages to some 80% of the housing stock. There was extensive damage to electric power infrastructure and the impact on tourism was felt for some time after the storm. In 2008, Hurricane Omar passed some 150 km east of the islands





as a Category 4 storm, causing significant damage to coastal infrastructure from wind and storm surge. Both hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 caused significant damage to the housing stock and coastal infrastructure. These storms have affected all sectors of the country, with particularly severe impacts for agriculture, critical infrastructure, transportation, housing, tourism, electricity, and water. These extreme events have also resulted in deaths, heavy coastal erosion, negative health impacts, displacement of thousands of residents, loss of personal effects, soil erosion, saltwater intrusion in freshwater supplies and other forms of non-economic loss and damage.

Tropical Cyclones Loss and Damage

Extreme Event	Economic loss and damage (total estimated damages, USD)	Non-economic loss and damage (non-exhaustive)
Hurricane Hugo, 1989	\$41 Million	1 death, heavy shoreline erosion, cases of gastro-enteritis due to poor water quality
Hurricane Luis, 1995	\$197 Million	Soil erosion
Hurricane Georges, 1998	\$445 Million	5 deaths, ~3,000 people displaced from their homes
Hurricane Jose, 1999	\$3.8 Million	
Hurricane Lenny, 1999	\$41.9 Million	Coastal erosion, loss of personal effects, ~100 people displaced from their homes
Hurricane Omar, 2008	\$11 Million	54 people displaced, coastal erosion
Hurricane Earl, 2010	\$3 Million	Beach and coastal erosion
Subtropical Storm Otto, 2010	\$20.1 Million	Beach erosion
Hurricane Irma, 2017	\$19.7 Million	
Hurricane Maria, 2017	\$7.9 Million	Beach erosion, eroded cliffs, salt water intrusion into fresh water supply

Disaster management is a priority at all levels of government. The 2013 revision of the National Disaster Plan imparted a greater level of organization to the preparedness and response process. Since Hurricane Georges, disaster preparedness and awareness has improved. Citizens react when informed of impending storm events and are more aware of the seriousness of preparing for possible events.

St. Kitts and Nevis is a ratified signatory to the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement and has adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in its disaster risk and management practices. The Sendai Framework represents a significant policy document for reducing disaster risks, including those arising from climate change. The Sendai Framework is a 15-year, voluntary, non-binding agreement which recognizes that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders.





The National Climate Change Policy (2017) provides the legal mandate and policy framework for climate action in St. Kitts and Nevis. The National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2018) operationalizes the National Climate Change Policy and was developed using a participatory approach, gaining input and recommendations from diverse stakeholder groups through national consultations. The Strategy details specific adaptation objectives and measures across eight sectors (agriculture, coastal and marine ecosystems, forest and terrestrial ecosystems, finance and banking, human health, infrastructure and physical development, tourism and water) and five cross-cutting areas (stakeholder capacity building and engagement, information management, research and monitoring, integrated adaptation and disaster risk reduction and inter-sectoral coordination) for the time period of 2018-2030.

St. Kitts and Nevis Department of Environment, with oversight from the National Climate Change Committee has the overall responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. An Adaptation Sub-Committee of the National Climate Change Committee will be established to facilitate this process comprising key implementing agencies from the public sector as well as relevant civil society organizations and private sector representatives.

Alignment with National and Sectoral Development Plans and Budgets: Saint Kitts and Nevis' revised NDC and Implementation Plan are aligned with existing development plans and strategies such as the National Physical Development Plan (2006), Revised National Energy Policy (2014), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2020, Strategy and Action Plan for Agriculture (2017-2021), Water Sector Adaptation Plan (2021), and others. The Implementation Plan also builds upon the National Climate Change Policy (2017), the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2018), the Gender Equity Policy and Action Plan (2021) and is based largely on the priorities outlined in the Third National Communication to the UNFCCC.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

- The GoSKN via NEMA has strengthened the National Multi-Hazard Early Warning System/protocols following the passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, using technology, including videos, to ensure all residents, citizens and tourists are able to obtain real-time information, alerts, warnings, and advisories in times of emergencies and disasters.
- GoSKN introduced the Hurricane Relief Fund (HRF) in 2017/18 following the passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria which caused significant damage to the housing stock and coastal infrastructure. The HRF was a six-month initiative via the Citizenship by Investment (CBI) programme to support the recovery efforts, resulting in a cash injection of US\$11.5mn and an estimated 900 households benefiting from the reconstruction efforts. The HRF was the precursor to the Sustainable Growth Fund (SGF), which was conceived to facilitate sustainable development, with a focus on education, tourism, and entrepreneurship.
- Since 2019, the GoSKN has leveraged the Green Climate Fund Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme to strengthen country ownership and build institutional capacity across public and private sectors, and civil society, to implement a transformational climate action agenda.
- Despite the difficulty of accessing climate finance, due to the country's high-income status and recent onboarding towards accreditation with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the GoSKN has accessed the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Program and successfully coordinated over US\$10mn in funding to support communities in the areas of climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation. Further, the GoSKN is in the process of benefitting from the costing of the NDCs with assistance from the NDC Partnership.



- Climate change is currently, a cross-cutting theme across all the GoSKN development and public investment initiatives. For example, in 2020 the GoSKN and the Republic of China (Taiwan) are undertaking work under the 'St. Kitts and Nevis Enhancing Agricultural Adaptive Capacity to Climate Variability Project' to adapt present agricultural practices towards achieving sustainable agriculture (SDG 2) and addressing the impact of Climate Change on agriculture (SDG13).

Opportunities and Way Forward

- Strengthen plans and operational frameworks for promoting the integration of climate change considerations across GoSKN and related agencies management processes.
- Audit of the Disaster Management mechanism in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, using the Caribbean Disaster Emerging Management Aging Comprehensive Disaster Management Audit Tool (CDEMS CDM Audit Tool). The CDM audit tool was created in 2011 to synchronise the CDM Strategy which was endorsed by the GoSKN in 2014 with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).
- Strengthen technological capacities of relevant institutions, e.g. enhancing the institutional framework and information technology infrastructure and developing/enhancing early warning systems in collaboration with NEMA and other national and regional agencies.
- Engage civil society and private sector in planning processes for climate action to allow those actors to bring in their perspective into decision making.
- Develop national adaptation plans for health, agriculture, food security, and tourism among others based on the results of vulnerability and adaptation assessments that also should be implemented.
- Increase focus on data and risk modelling as key to climate change adaptation across all sectors.
- Prepare training materials and amend relevant curricula at the primary and secondary school levels to ensure that climate change issues are incorporated into the schools' curricula.
- Strengthen partnerships with multilateral climate funds such as the GCF, GEF and Adaptation Fund (AF) to accelerate mitigation and adaptation interventions towards meeting NDC targets.



Hurricane Destroys Old Road Bay Road



SDG 14: Life Below Water

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development

14
LIFE BELOW
WATER



Exclusive Economic
Zone

40x

More than the
Land Space

Areas of Marine
Protected Area

41,040 ha

% Of the Population
Living on Coastline

60%

Fisheries Contribution
to GDP

0.5%

St Kitts and Nevis is home to abundant marine resources, beautiful sandy beaches, verdant landscapes, and clear waters.

Oceans are the foundations of the economic development of small island states and the vastness of our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in comparison with the paucity of our land area makes us a large ocean state. St. Kitts has 167 km of coastline, while Nevis has 94 km. The ocean shelf is small (~742 km²), but the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is large (10,206 km²). Tourism is the main economic driver and long stretches of the coast have been developed for hotels, yachts, cruise ships, shops, and water activities. Local communities have a long cultural heritage linked to their coastal waters.

The narrow continental shelf supports coral reefs and seagrass beds, while transitional nursery areas like wetlands have a few mangrove stands. Like many Eastern Caribbean islands, nearshore waters are affected by coastal development, sedimentation, pollution, unsustainable fishing, storms, and coral bleaching. St. Kitts and Nevis is protecting marine resources by increasing governmental protection through laws and regulations, monitoring, and community outreach.

St. Kitts and Nevis marine resources are largely unexplored, and this offers untapped economic potential. Estimates indicate that the Caribbean region, and St Kitts and Nevis in particular, stand to benefit from this emerging industry that is worth approximately USD\$2.5 trillion through the diversification of the economy in areas such as aquaculture, marine renewable energy, biotechnology, and oceanic invertebrate harvesting in products such as sea cucumbers ²⁹. We are committed to harnessing this potential and maximizing opportunities from our oceans to make them a pillar for future growth. Recognizing this, the Government continues to place a strategic focus on fisheries, oceans, and the blue economy.

St. Kitts and Nevis boast a representative cross-section of Caribbean marine life, including endangered corals, marine mammals, fish species, and sea turtles. Marine species number approximately 460 species, that can include about 126 species that are threatened or endangered.

²⁹ <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/marcom/newsroom/entry/8026>





With respect to the fisheries sector, the Government continues to focus on the sustainable growth of the sector through diversification of the industry and maintaining access to international markets. Notwithstanding, the biodiversity of the fishing resources in the country is increasingly threatened by overexploitation, habitat destruction, unsustainable fishing practices, pollution, climate change, and ghost fishing.

The fisheries sector plays an important role in food security, both as a source of food for the local population and as a source of employment and income. Fish consumption is estimated at 32.3 kg and is among the high consumption levels globally. Because most of the population or about 60 per cent lives within a few kilometers of the coastline, the fisheries sector plays an important role in rural development. The Fisheries sector contributed 0.5% of St. Kitts and Nevis' GDP in 2014. In 2014, Fisheries were estimated to employ about 805 people in the primary sector, with a total volume of production of about 66 thousand tonnes, from which 714 tonnes resulted from small-scale fisheries in national waters.

The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) as a federal entity has two locations: one in St. Kitts and the other in Nevis. This national agency executes government policy on fishery matters pursuant to the St. Christopher and Nevis Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Resources Act (FAMRA) and subsidiary regulations.

In 2016, the GoSKN passed the Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Resources Act to support existing and future marine management areas, within its waters and coastal areas. St. Kitts and Nevis Marine Management Area (SKN MMA) was declared and encompasses a two-mile radius of sea space around the coastline of both islands which includes the Monkey Shoals area. The seaward boundary allows for the inclusion of critical coastal marine habitats and fish species that require effective management, conservation, and development measures to protect and enhance marine biodiversity. The MMA focuses on planning for and management of the sustainable and long-term use and health of St. Kitts and Nevis EEZ. By 2020, target 14.5 of the SDGs, which aims to conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, has been exceeded by St Kitts and Nevis.

The marine environment is impacted by land-based sources of pollution particularly from untreated sewage, dredging, sediment loading due to soil erosion (i.e., deforestation) and from wave action during the passage of hurricanes. Further, the islands' coral reefs which contribute to the formation and protection of beaches are under continuous stress from both the natural and manmade impacts. The main driver of this degradation is anthropogenic influences, including over-exploitation of marine resources and sediment and pollution from inland sources. A National Reef Health Index (RHI) conducted in 2016 to describe the overall condition of reefs, reef health and their resilience gave a score of 2.3 (out of 5).

Four primary coral health indicators are assessed:

- Coral cover: proportion of reef surface covered by live stony corals which form the three-dimensional network of the reef.
- Macro-algal cover: proportion of reef surface covered by fleshy algae.
- Herbivorous Fish Abundance
- Commercial Fish Abundance



Bright Spots and Success Stories

- The GoSKN recognized the importance of the Fisheries sub-sector as a valuable source of nutrition and livelihoods, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, made substantive investments/assistance to the fisherfolk. In 2021, over 230 fishers received fishing gear and other relevant supplies; resulting in an overall fish landed value of \$6.9 million.
- DMR collaborated with the Bureau of Standards to enhance food and safety surveillance. This included enforcing important standards in the fish processing and service facilities as well as improving the technical guidance and resources necessary to assist marine users.
- The FAMRA legislation allows for the declaration of marine managed areas which can enable the protection of our marine resources, especially the fishing priority areas that can support sustainable fishing practices and conservation zones where levels of protection can exist.



Local Fisherman with Catch

Opportunities and Way Forward

St. Kitts and Nevis will continue to pursue the following strategies and actions to conserve and sustainably use its marine resources:

- There is a need for a dedicated management regime to regulate activities and enforce the existing legislation and regulations for conservation and environmental management, which includes the gazetting of the SKN MMA.
- Regulations for the FAMRA need to be developed.
- Develop and promulgate the Blue Economy Strategy and Policy.
- Allocate finance to support skills/capacity building and technology for exploring, studying, and utilizing the immense potential offered by the marine environment.
- Deepen Bilateral and Multilateral partnerships to support the sustainable management of our marine areas including shared fish stocks.
- An update to Nevis Development Plan to respond to coastal protection needs.
- Access to finance, insurance, and capacity building for fisherfolk to develop the fisheries sector and explore value-added products in small-scale fisheries while reducing the reliance on imported fish.



SDG 15: Life on Land

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

15
LIFE ON LAND



Forest area as a
proportion of total land
area

42.3%

Key Biodiversity Areas

56.8%

Endemic Species

121

Government Expenditure
on Environment
(2018-20)

0.03%

St. Kitts and Nevis is home to rich terrestrial biological diversity. Vegetation types vary across the two islands, from small sections of Elfin Woodland at high elevations in St. Kitts to rainforest in the upper watershed of the Wingfield River to dry scrubland in the South-east Peninsula. On Nevis, the vegetation varies from Elfin Woodland on Nevis Peak to dry scrubland and riparian forest along dry river channels. Of the 2,000 species of flowering plants found in the Eastern Caribbean, 243 species were trees and 121 species are unique to St. Kitts and Nevis. SKN is home to several endangered, resident and migrant bird species, including the threatened Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) and the Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalliidougallii*).

Wetlands (salt ponds) are numerous on the island of St. Kitts and constitute important ecosystems; these salt ponds and their surrounding vegetation (e.g. mangroves) serve as important habitats for wildlife, and even during dry spells the mud flats are important to shore birds and wading birds. These salt ponds have an average depth of one meter or less and some virtually dry up during dry spells. The ponds are replenished when they receive runoff from neighbouring hillsides; in addition, the low profile and fragile nature of the seaward berms allows seawater to breach the ponds during storms, periodically replenishing them with seawater. Otherwise, there are no natural surface water connections to the open sea, which makes St. Kitts' ponds unique within the Caribbean.

"Ponds of the Southeast Peninsula" is one of three terrestrial Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) identified in St. Kitts and Nevis. Two additional terrestrial KBAs exist on St. Kitts, namely the Central Forest Reserve and Cayon to Keys sites. The Southeast Peninsula is composed of low hills, eight salt ponds, coastal cliffs, and beaches. The Cayon to Keys KBA consists of an area of 6,000 ha, and is located in the Saint Mary Cayon Parish on the northeast coast of St. Kitts. The parish is approximately 6 square miles and consists of forest-draped and scrub covered mountains, black-sand beaches and cliffs. The town of Cayon dominates the central portion of the parish, with the smaller villages of Lodge and Ottleys to the North. All the lands surrounding these villages are covered in farms and abandoned sugar cane estates, up to 1,000 ft above sea level, after which forests become more dominant. The beaches of Saint Mary Cayon hold important biodiversity and ecological importance due to their use for the laying of eggs by Leatherback Turtles.

Nevis' wetlands are at risk owing to the accelerated development projects underway with the removal of mangrove in key areas. At present, the Nelson Springs wetland is being rehabilitated via GEF Small Grants with anecdotal evidence of increased marine life in the pond.





The St. Kitts Central Forest Reserve is a declared National Park covering 5,060 ha; and comprising all areas on the island of St. Kitts over 300 meters elevation. The dominant feature of the reserve is Mt. Liamuiga (1,156 m), the highest point on St. Kitts. It is part of the mountain range which runs north to south and forms the northern part of the island. Human settlement is limited to the lower elevations, where sugarcane fields were farmed and villages dot the coastal area. Canyons, or ghauts, radiate from the peak. There are three more terrestrial protected areas established or in the process of establishment, namely Brimstone Hill Fortress (15 ha), Royal Basseterre Valley (200 ha) and Nevis Peak National Park (2,250 ha).

The Department of the Environment is the lead government agency for environmental management and SKN's focal point for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Ministry of Sustainable Development also ensures that national development activities are guided by the principles of environmental sustainability. This mandate is exercised by key agencies with responsibility for physical planning, development control, and environmental management activities. Environmental management and sustainable development are guided by a series of regional and national policies, as well as legislation, including the St. George's Declaration of Principles of Environmental Sustainability in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS); the National Environment Policy (NEP); the National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS); the National Conservation and Environment Protection Act (NCEPA); the Solid Waste Management Corporation Act; the National Physical Development Plan; and the Nevis Physical Development Plan.

St. Kitts and Nevis is facing increasing environmental pressures, which are limiting the country's ability to achieve its sustainability objectives, due to its geographical location, topography and recent economic developments.

In the lowland coastal areas of St. Kitts and Nevis, intensive land use has removed all vestiges of the natural vegetation. Although the mountain peaks are still covered by forest, they do not have virgin forest characteristics. The lower slope areas of both islands are dominated by secondary growth on abandoned sugarcane farms. Most of the country's major watersheds are concentrated in the central area of the islands, and the area's forest resources provide a reliable rainwater storage service. However, growing deforestation mainly due to land clearing for agricultural production in the middle and lower slopes is causing increased runoff and decreasing water availability and quality downstream, and slowing the process of aquifer recharge. Despite this decline in water availability, cropping continues to be rainfed, whereas urban and tourism water needs are being met from increasingly pressured groundwater sources.

Coastal areas are also subject to negative impacts from improper shoreline development mainly for the constantly growing tourism industry, sand mining, land-based pollution, and the destruction of reefs and mangroves. Residential and tourism development, including squatting and unregulated settlements, are the most important factors driving land degradation today in SKN; other important factors include deforestation, overgrazing and hoof damage, discharge of grey water and fires; and on Nevis, the operation of privately owned quarries, which are a major contributor to siltation in terrestrial and coastal waters.

Pollution is also contributing to ecosystem degradation on St. Kitts, as urban areas lack adequate treatment facilities for domestic sewage and waste water, and enforcement of maintenance of domestic soakaways. Rapid urban growth in the upper watershed of the Basseterre Valley Aquifer is a risk to water quality (22% population increase in St. Peter's Parish over the period 2001 to 2011, and although the Basseterre wellfield is protected as a national park the upper catchment is not afforded this protection. Package sewage treatment plants are also utilised in the residential and tourist areas of Frigate Bay, but there has been a noted increase in illegal solid waste disposal on St. Kitts; with the current situation land-based sources of pollution enters streams and seeps underground,





creating a threat for public safety. Pollution from litter and dumping is also a major issue on both St. Kitts and Nevis which is further contaminating water resources and exacerbating ecosystem degradation, while expanded distribution of human settlements and shelters has resulted in more pollution and solid waste generation.

There is a clear lack of community support for the conservation of biological diversity (except sea turtles) and the designation of protected areas, and effective partnership for biodiversity and conservation; and the GoSKN does not have adequate legislation, management policies, and institutional capability to support the management of a national protected areas conservation system, or a protected areas conservation service or agency.

The significant area of abandoned sugarcane farms in the lower mountain slopes of both islands have provided habitat for a number of other invasive species and pests, such as yellow mite, white flies, and the African Green or Vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus sabaeus*), as well, other non-native species have also been introduced, including the Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*), the Norway or Brown Rat (*R. norvegicus*), the House Mouse (*Mus musculus*), the Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*), and feral populations of the Domestic Pig (*Sus scrofa domesticus*). The spread of human settlements into highland areas is also having a significant negative impact on biodiversity. In the past, settlement was primarily limited to coastal zones, but with the closure of the sugar industry in 2005, 'new' lands became available for settlement, including informal settlements (squatting) in vulnerable and ecological sensitive areas that have resulted in deforestation and soil erosion, as well as tourism development in ecologically sensitive areas that also poses a threat to biodiversity.

Knowledge of local species, indigenous biodiversity and pests/invasive species is scarce and dispersed (the country has not had a biodiversity census since 1949) and as a result the understanding of the importance and role that biodiversity conservation plays in sustaining the SKN economy is limited and there is lack of understanding at all levels of the value and contribution of biodiversity to the national development agenda and human wellbeing. Enforcement of existing rules and guidelines has proven to be insufficient and the reliance on voluntary standards for investment planning, particularly in the tourism and construction industry, has proven inefficient. Institutional arrangements for the implementation of Building Codes both for public and privately funded developments are insufficient, and the implementation of the existing National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) is constrained by insufficient information and data on land uses and ecosystem services. Additionally, guidelines for Sustainable Land Management have been developed, but there is little evidence that they have been institutionalized.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

Nevis Physical Development Plan

As of May 2023, the draft Nevis Physical Development Plan was circulated for public review and is expected to be tabled before end-2023. The Plan outlines a future for Nevis in terms of sustainable development and land use policies for the next 15 years covering every sector on the island.

GEF-5 St. Kitts and Nevis Conserving Biodiversity & Reducing Habitat Degradation in Protected Areas (PAs) and their Areas of Influence Project

The project was implemented by the Department of Environment during the period 2014-2019 with funding from the GEF and support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project aimed to expand the existing PA system through the establishment of two new terrestrial PAs and three new marine PAs (the first marine PAs in the country). In addition, the Project aimed at addressing systemic issues by implementing key elements of SKN's Protected Areas System Plan, including the establishment of a



centralized agency for protected areas management, the introduction of user fees to offset PA management costs, the creation and revision of PA site management plans and the implementation of key conservation actions (biodiversity inventories, coral reef conservation) within specific PA sites, thereby strengthening PA management capacities and the ability to reduce or eliminate threats to biodiversity including habitat destruction and over-exploitation of marine biodiversity resources. While some targets envisioned by the project are still being pursued, at the local level public sensitization and capacity development assisted local stakeholders in becoming more knowledgeable about their environment and biodiversity and conservation measures. Several tangible outputs were also produced, including (i) the conduct of a national terrestrial ecological inventory (ii) the recruitment and training of Protected Areas Park Rangers, and (ii) the construction of a Nevis Peak Interpretation Centre and a Keys Marine Species Rehabilitation/Interpretation Center.

GEF-6 Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in Saint Kitts and Nevis Project

With implementation during the period 2020-2025, the project aims to support SKN to address the drivers of development which have adverse impacts on land and other natural resources as a result of competing demands and reorient all sectors of the economy towards sustainable resource use policies and practices, which together can provide economic opportunities for the country's population while also sustaining ecosystem services and globally significant biodiversity. The Project objective is to transform degraded forest landscapes areas into biodiversity and climate-friendly areas of sustainable agricultural/agroforestry production. Key outputs include (i) the restoration of 500 hectares of degraded forests, farmlands and mangroves, (ii) improved water infrastructure to 100 hectares of farmlands, (iii) graduate scholarships for civil servants in relevant fields, and (iv) the creation of knowledge management platforms for biodiversity, sustainable land management and climate change information.

Opportunities and Way Forward

- The focus must be placed on local training programs for emerging scientists, and local research into biodiversity issues and sustainable land management.
- Rolling out public education programmes to increase environmental awareness and good environmental stewardship practices.
- Develop and employ methodologies for the economic valuation, assessment, and accounting of natural resources. It is important to map and assess important biodiversity areas so that physical planning development, national planning processes, investment decisions and budgets can take these into consideration.
- Make provision for the protected areas to be managed through public-private partnerships involving communities and NGOs.



Protecting Nesting Leatherback Turtles- Keys Beach



Nevis Peak Interpretation Centre

Dashboard of SDG Targets – Planet

This dashboard shows a snapshot of the stakeholders' assessment of how St. Kitts and Nevis is progressing with respect to achieving the SDG targets under Planet.

	The SDG target has been met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress
	Fair progress but acceleration is needed (the enabling policy and legal framework in place, resources are allocated, implementation of initiatives.
	Limited or no progress
	Moving away from the target/target at risk of not being met by 2030/strategic intervention needed urgently

SDG Targets #6 – Clean Water and Sanitation	
SDG Targets #12 – Responsible Consumption and Production	
SDG Targets #13 - Climate Action	
SDG Targets #14 - Life Below Water	
SDG Targets #15 - Life on Land	

Planet Dimension Bright Spots:



Planet Dimension Strategies And Actions To Accelerate The SDGs:





PEACE



16.
PEACE, JUSTICE &
STRONG INSTITUTIONS





SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



Government Effectiveness,
Accountability and
Political Stability(WGI)

75 percentiles

Intentional Homicide
per 100,000

19/100,000

% of Women Victims
in Domestic Violence
Incidents

80%

National Security Budget
as % of GDP (2019/20)

3.1%

The GoSKN recognizes that the safety and security of the residents of St. Kitts and Nevis is a matter that must be given the highest priority. It has been increasingly recognized as a cross-cutting issue that has significant implications for state expenditure on areas such as health and the costs borne by both the private sector and citizens to operate businesses and ensure personal safety.

During the last decade, the rate of homicide, as measured by the number of homicides per 100,000 was halved from 43 per 100,000 population in 2010, to 19 per 100,000 population in 2020. Some of the interventions used over the years to address homicide and crimes, in general, are the introduction of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), the strengthening of security mechanisms at the ports of entry, and strategic social empowerment projects in vulnerable communities. The causes of crime are related to several factors, including concentrations of young people living in poor, single-parent families, with low education, in areas of rapid urbanization, high unemployment, and exposure to domestic violence and antisocial behaviour; inequality in income distribution; and a chronic drug culture associated with an inflow of illegal firearms.

Domestic violence is the most common form of gender-based violence, which predominantly affects women and girls. Data from the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force ³⁰ reveal an increase in reporting rates of domestic violence incidents. Statistics show that women represented over 80% of victims during the period 2011-2017. There was an escalation in the number of domestic violence cases reported during the pandemic period 2020 to 2022. For example, police records indicate a 400% increase in domestic violence cases with a total of 359 reports in 2020 compared to a total of 87 reports in the previous year 2019. Moreover, in the first half of 2022 (January to June), 238 cases of domestic violence were reported of which 82% of the complainants were female. The Special Victims Unit of the Royal St Christopher and Nevis Police Force was established to handle such cases. Fear of retribution, social stigma, or lack of confidence in the authorities contributes to many cases not being reported.

Strong focus is placed by the government on governance issues as it relates to rule of law, justice, transparency and accountability, the delivery of public goods and services and the participation of citizens in various developmental processes. St. Kitts and Nevis' performance on the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators has been mixed over the period 1996 to 2020. On 3 of the indices, the country scored above the 75th percentile – Government Effectiveness, Voice and Accountability, and Political Stability dimensions. The rating reflects GoSKN's policy efforts to strengthen public administration and governance systems in support of its growth objectives.

³⁰ Ibid





GoSKN adopted a ‘whole-of-government’ approach to governance at the public sector level since the IMF/economic reform programme of 2011-14, which included strengthening tax administration, public procurement, public investment management, and the mechanisms of coordination and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), with a view to greater inclusiveness. Conversely, St. Kitts and Nevis performed below the 75th percentile in the Rule of Law, Control of Corruption, and Regulatory Environment indices. Historically, an environment of violent crime erodes social stability and makes rule of law a critical area of concern, creating inefficiencies in the economy, and the diversion of resources from investment to crime protection.

Over the period under review, strides were made in increasing transparency and accountability in governance. The legal anti-corruption framework of St. Kitts and Nevis contains many of the necessary provisions to stem corruption but also has some gaps. The Integrity in Public Life Act (2013) establishes a code of conduct for civil servants and the Integrity Commission is one of the principal anti-corruption institutions in the country. The law requires all public officials to declare all their assets to the Integrity Commission. The Integrity Commission often lacks the resources to undertake investigations into alleged acts of corruption.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

- The Yes To Success (YTS) Skills Training and Diversion Programme [Nevis, 2015] offered young offenders a chance, through a diversion program, to bring about meaningful change in general behaviour; encourage deterrence from a life of crime and assist with developing positive attitudes and actions to become productive citizens. The project targeted at risk youth (ages 16-29) in conflict with the law to acquire income-earning and life skills. Over the period 2015 to 2021, 146 youth benefited from the training. YTS was funded by the GoSKN, European Union and the OECS USAID Juvenile Justice Reform project. In terms of cost benefit analysis, it was estimated that the GoSKN directly saved EC\$100 to EC\$150 per day for each participant who would have otherwise been kept in juvenile detention facilities or prison at risk of gravitation to serious criminal activities and/or recidivism.
- The Explorers Youth Club is a government and community policing initiative aimed at empowering the youth with social and employable skills. It has a registered membership of approximately 1400 children and teenagers.
- The Alternative Lifestyle Project (ALP) or ‘Peace Programme’ has contributed in part to the downturn in major criminal activity over the period 2018-2021. This gang intervention programme targets the provision of assistance to former gang members either to establish start-up businesses or compensation for productive work under a government-ascribed programme.
- During the period 2018-2021 a CCTV Surveillance System was rolled-out across the Federation, with financial support provided by the Republic of China (Taiwan). Phase I installed over 300 cameras in Basseterre, with an additional 400 cameras installed in rural areas around St. Kitts and in Nevis as part of Phase II. In Nevis, there was the construction of a CCTV surveillance command centre.
- The passage of the Domestic Violence (Amendment) Bill [2022] in November 2022 sought to improve access to justice for victims of domestic violence. Prior to the amendment, victims of domestic violence had their matter heard before the High Court as the primary court of adjudication which posed a challenge for persons unable to pay the associated legal fees. The amendments will change the jurisdiction of the Courts to include both the Magistrates and the High Court so that individuals have easier access to justice through the Magistrate’s Court while still having the option of High Court hearings for more serious grievances and matters.
- GoSKN continue to promote access to justice via reforms aimed at institutional strengthening and to provide alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. As it relates to the formal justice system, technological and physical improvement at the Sir Lee Llewellyn Moore Judicial and Legal Complex in St. Kitts and Nevis Magistrates Court.
- In 2019, 25 persons received certificates after being trained as Court-Connected Mediators. The restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of courts however, the courts were able to pivot to a virtual



format with the installation of audio-visual equipment across the island. This operational change increased the number of judgements and a further reduction in the number of backlog cases in the nation's courts.

- In December 2021, the Legal Complex was outfitted with an annex, that houses a third magistrate's court chamber, a mediation centre dedicated to criminal and family matters and a Law Library available to the public. The investments are expected to enhance the administration of justice.
- In its efforts to eliminate corruption and bribery in all forms, the GoSKN established St. Kitts and Nevis Integrity Commission (SKNIC), whose mandate is to investigate, institute and conduct criminal proceedings to combat corruption and is guided by the standards established under the United Nations Convention against Corruption. To build awareness, the SKNIC has engaged in a series of public engagements within the schools and media to educate the public on the functions of SKNIC and how to identify corruption and its effects.
- As of February 2023, GoSKN increased its efforts to strengthen transparency and accountability in governance with the passage of the Anti-Corruption Bill, 2023, Integrity in Public Life (Amendment) Bill, 2023, and the Freedom of Information (Amendment) Bill, 2023. For example, the Anti-Corruption Bill, 2023, is intended to define and create criminal offences of corrupt conduct and to create the office of a Special Prosecutor to receive complaints and investigate and prosecute acts of corrupt conduct of persons in public life. The good governance agenda was further complemented with the appointment of an Ombudsman in March 2023, to investigate any administrative action of a government authority for the purpose of deciding whether there is evidence of maladministration.

Opportunities and Way Forward

The following key strategies will need to be accelerated if St. Kitts and Nevis is to advance the achievement of SDG 16:



Police - Youth Engagement

- Providing avenues to ensure that justice is available and accessible to all.
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the justice system.
- Enhancing institutional capacity in modern detection techniques and crime-solving.
- Enhancing the rehabilitation programmes within penal reform institutions.
- Improving the legislative framework governing public administration.
- Strengthening the institutional capacity for monitoring and evaluation.
- Wider participation of civil society in decision-making and governance.
- Provide adequate financial, technical, and other resources (human or otherwise) to the Integrity Commissions and Anti-Corruption Bodies, to facilitate greater autonomy in the use of those resources to meet their mandate.
- Encourage governments to develop, implement, review and update Codes of Conduct, to reduce conflicts of interest and promote an ethical culture; and
- Advocate that anti-corruption is placed in curricula in formal education systems.



PARTNERSHIP



17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development



St. Kitts and Nevis recognises the importance of its international, regional, domestic, and non-state stakeholder partners as crucial to continued development. The Federation's open economy has led to expanded international trade and greater global economic engagement, which in turn has been partly responsible for continuous growth over the two decades. The United States, Canada, United Kingdom, European countries, and CARICOM among others have lent their support to our development efforts and aspirations from our early days. At the local level, we have a whole-of-society approach in our policy discussions, and we hold consultations with a broad spectrum of partners. During our annual Budget exercise, we consult with key stakeholders, including the private sector, trade unions, civil society, and the public at large. To sustain this growth and for the successful implementation of SDGs, we must rely on partnerships as Government cannot do it alone.

It is well recognized globally that financing the implementation of the SDGs is a complex task and would require coordination among the public and private sectors, international development partners and civil society. Coupled with coordination, is the need for meaningful commitment of all stakeholders to advance the priorities of sustainable development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing Development establishes a strong foundation to support the implementation of Agenda 2030. The Action Agenda is an integral part of the sustainable development framework, as it recognises the importance of financing flows being aligned with the economic, social, and environmental priorities of states.

For St. Kitts and Nevis, implementation of the SDGs is primarily resourced by the Government with modest support from international development and bilateral partners through loans, grants, and technical assistance. Over the last decade (2011-2020), on average, 90.0 percent of the national budget was funded from domestic resources, including taxes and other revenue streams. The remaining 10.0 percent was provided through external funding in the form of loans and grants.

Securing adequate financial resources to implement national priorities and achieve the SDGs remains challenging, particularly, given St. Kitts and Nevis' classification as a High-Income Country (HIC). This status has impacted the eligibility of the country to access much-needed grants and concessionary loans. The socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the critical importance of partnerships to achieve the SDGs. In this regard, the development of financing and mobilization strategies are needed to identify and quantify the funding gap for implementing national priorities to achieve the SDGs.

As a CARICOM member, St. Kitts and Nevis can utilize the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) platform for addressing the challenges of globalization. The CSME provides the framework for increasing the competitiveness of goods and services by removing barriers to trade and opening new opportunities for CARICOM nationals. The CSME has become increasingly necessary for the region since the present global economic climate and trading regimes have put a greater demand on Caribbean countries to become more competitive in all their activities. The Federation is also integrated into the global economy through the efforts of the CSME and the OECS Economic Union.



St. Kitts and Nevis in unison with other members of CARICOM and the OECS Economic Union grouping, has advocated for increases in concessional financing and aid from the international community for vulnerable SIDs classified as HICs. They called for a suspension of per capita income as a criterion for concessional financing, debt relief, including suspension of debt payments, and budgetary support through a mix of grants and low-cost loans. This sentiment is being echoed by organizations such as ECLAC that are advocating that borrowing is not an option for Caribbean countries, stating that access to concessional funding and debt relief is needed to face the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and recover faster and build forward better within the context of achieving the SDGs.

St. Kitts and Nevis is reaffirming its status within the OECS as a digital and services-driven society. There is increased emphasis and investments in the ICT infrastructure within the government and the private sector, introducing state-of-the-art technology to improve productivity, and using technology to reach development targets more quickly and efficiently. The Federation is perhaps the most connected nation in the OECS, according to the ICT Development Index (IDI). St. Kitts and Nevis was ranked 1st in ICT Development within CARICOM and #37 in the world of 176 countries ³¹.

The availability of quality, accessible, open, timely and disaggregated data is vital to plan, implement and track progress towards the SDGs and indicators that are key in driving economic growth for the country. There is an urgent need to improve data gathering, standardization and dissemination in relation to the SDG indicators. While ECLAC has assisted St. Kitts and Nevis in creating policy coherence and building institutional capacity to deliver on the SDGs, it is crucial that the federal government, the Nevis Island Administration (NIA), and the wider stakeholder communities take ownership and understand the fundamental role they play in the successful implementation of the SDGs.

³¹ <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/Digital-Development.aspx>



St. Kitts and Nevis Diplomatic Week, April 2023

Dashboard of SDG Targets – Peace and Partnerships

This dashboard shows a snapshot of the stakeholders' assessment of how St. Kitts and Nevis is progressing with respect to achieving the SDG targets under Peace and Partnerships.

	The SDG target has been met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress
	Fair progress but acceleration is needed (the enabling policy and legal framework in place, resources are allocated, implementation of initiatives.
	Limited or no progress
	Moving away from the target/target at risk of not being met by 2030/strategic intervention needed urgently

SDG Targets #16– Peace Justice and Strong Institutions	
SDG Targets #17 - Partnerships for the Goals	



UN Multi-country Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean provides Invaluable Support



Peace Dimension Bright Spots:



Peace Dimension Strategies and Actions to Accelerate the SDGs:





CONCLUSION: WAY FORWARD

St. Kitts and Nevis' SDGs progress and its wider developmental record are substantive and positive, when compared regionally. Despite this success, some challenges remained, and the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing socioeconomic vulnerabilities. Moving forward, it will require higher levels of ambition, and even greater economic performance for St. Kitts and Nevis to achieve the SDGs, realize inclusive and resilient economic growth, and attain the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This Voluntary National Review (VNR) provides insights into the progress as well as challenges towards achieving the SDGs and the wider sustainable development agenda. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has backtracked some developmental progress, it also offers opportunities for St. Kitts and Nevis to build back better and reset development towards a more inclusive and sustainable future. This includes reviewing past policies and implementing new ones with an emphasis on inclusion, sustainability, and resiliency.

The Report has also provided us with the opportunity to consolidate our relationship with all segments of society. We need to sustain the momentum created and ensure that we engage in a more holistic manner with all our stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, NGOs, academia, and beneficiaries of programmes. While several of our national policies are aligned to the SDGs, we still face difficulties in ensuring coherent action and coordination with our stakeholders on a large scale. This is amplified when we must report regularly to different international frameworks, including the SDGs, the SAMOA Pathway, UN ECLAC, and related agencies. We would also advocate for the international community to design a common monitoring and reporting mechanism, via a common platform, for the various initiatives, thus reducing the burden and possible duplication of effort for our limited human and financial resources. The VNR process also highlighted the importance of sustaining a coordinated and inclusive approach in the implementation of national policies, including the SDGs.

St. Kitts and Nevis place high importance on raising awareness of climate change matters given the serious threat rising temperatures and sea-level rise, pose to small island developing states. This will remain a top priority of the Government. It is apparent that public funds are inadequate to sustain all projected developments to contribute to the advancement of the goals, and it is imperative that other avenues are explored to facilitate new and innovative financing mechanisms either through public-private partnerships or other potential partnerships for successful implementation, monitoring and reporting.

The VNR process has highlighted the urgent need to strengthen the National Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee (NSDCC). Instilling stronger coordination between governmental bodies and other stakeholders would enable better synergy and coherence for policy planning across government. This could also prove useful in identifying areas of duplication, as well as contributing more positively to achieving more harmonization of policies. The establishment of a formal data exchange mechanism would thus be highly recommended for enhancing cross-sectoral communication amongst stakeholders.

In addition, reporting on the SDGs compels the GoSKN to produce various sets of data, which may not necessarily be readily available. The recent UN ECLAC scoping mission and the VNR stakeholder engagement identified the gaps that exist in data collection and dissemination, the difficulty that stakeholders encounter in obtaining reliable statistics, and in instances where the data is being collected, it would in many instances lack granularity, thus constraining in-depth data analysis.





As such, there is an urgent need for more robust data collection, processing, and dissemination efforts. Presently, the Department of Statistics is the only institution engaged in the generation of data nationally; while other governmental bodies do collect data, this is done using systems and methods suitable for their organizations and not necessarily in the format needed for such reporting needs. It is vital that this issue is addressed going forward.

Means of Implementation

Attention is also given to the key implementation processes in supporting SDG achievement at the national level. The means of implementation can be provided under three headings:

- governance for oversight and priority setting;
- planning, budgeting, monitoring, and evaluation; and
- financing of the goals.

Several key measures to strengthen implementation include:

- Establishment of a Cabinet-level SDG Subcommittee to strengthen oversight
- Reinvigorating governance of the goals by emboldening the NSDCC and its oversight mechanisms
- Maintaining and expanding the SDG alignment of planning and budgeting at the national level and cascading these practices to state and local governments
- Building capacity to track SDG financing needs.
- Strengthening the Department of Statistics' capacity and systems, particularly in collecting and reporting on SDGs data at the national and sub-national levels.
- Diversifying sources of financing for the SDGs by encouraging financing from the private sector, CSOs, and individuals.
- Integrate the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental - across all policy areas in the development of new policies, ensuring that there is equal treatment and consideration of each pillar in all key areas of national development. This involves policy integration and coherence and infusion of the goals and targets into national policy development as well as sectoral and government policies.





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