**THE CENTRE LSD Q2 POLICY DIALOGUE ON THE SDGS IMPLEMENTATION IN NIGERIA: PROGRESS, THE GAINS AND THE GAPS - HELD AT CENTRE LSD CONFERENCE ROOM, ABUJA, APRIL 22ND, 2022**

**COMMUNIQUE**

**PREAMBLE**

 The African Centre for Leadership Strategy & Development (Centre LSD) on 22nd April 2022 organized its Q2 Policy Dialogue series on the theme ***Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Implementation in Nigeria: The Progress, the Gains, and the Gaps***. The Policy Dialogue was organized for stakeholders to review the implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria.  The policy dialogue worked to build a shared understanding of the status of SDGs implementation in Nigeria among stakeholders and to collectively come up with strategies including design implementation plan for fast-tracking implementation in the remaining 8 years leading to 2030.

The Policy Dialogue was a hybrid event featuring a physical gathering in Federal Capital Territory and online participation across the country and globally.  The event had in attendance experts on SDGs, Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals (OSSAP-SDGs), and Civil Society Organizations.

***PRESENTATIONS***

During the Policy Dialogue, technical presentations were made by 2 speakers and was followed by a panel discussion which had 4 panelists.  The presentation by the key speakers as well as the panel discussion focused on the status of SDGs implementation in Nigeria.  Based on the presentations by key speakers and deliberations by panel discussants as well as participants of the policy dialogue, various issues were identified, and way forward outlined to ensure the fast-tracking of the nation’s achievement of its specific SDGs targets by 2030. Some of these key issues and suggestions include the following:

**THE ISSUES**

1. ***Impact of Nigeria’s Debt Servicing on SDGs Implementation:***  The cost of servicing Nigeria’s foreign debt is impacting negatively on SDGs implementation as resources are channeled to servicing debt and not financing the SDGs.
2. ***Dearth of Sector Disaggregated Data:***  There is currently dearth of accessible national disaggregated data, disaggregated in sector specific formats to aid SDGs planning, implementation, and review in Nigeria. This is also manifest in information gap between OSSAP-SDGs and citizens relating to the status of the implementation of the SDGs in the country at National, and subnational levels.
3. ***Weak Multi-Stakeholders Coordination and Participation in SDGs Implementation:*** Multi-stakeholder engagement in SDGs implementation in Nigeria has remained weak since the signing of the SDGs in 2015. Consultations and engagement with civil society actors as a key element of SDGs planning, implementation as well as other actors in the *‘Leave No One Behind’* principle seem to have been relegated.
4. ***Poor Performance of Nigeria in SDGs global rankings:*** the poor rating of Nigeria’s performance in the global ranking of SDGs performance should be of utmost concern to policy makers and Nigerians. Of reference is the 2021 Global SDGs Index which ranked Nigeria, 160 out of 165 countries of the world that were ranked.
5. ***Weak Engagement of Actors at the Subnational Level:*** the implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria has become so weak in the past 7 years resulting in poor engagement of States and Local Government Areas with the SDG.
6. ***Weak Procurement and Project Implementation Monitoring Mechanism:*** Corruption in the budgetary and public procurement processes as well as poor project implementation monitoring mechanism have combined to continue to undermine the achievement of the SDGs and the development targets of the country at large.

**RECOMMENDATION**

In the light of the foregoing, the following were identified as what should be done to ensure the fast-tracking of the implementation of SDGs in Nigeria:

1. ***Sustain SDGs Funding through Alignment of National and Subnational Budgets and Development Plans:*** There is need for sustained financing of SDGs programmes through innovative mechanisms including the creation of special and dedicated funding for OSSAP - SDGs.
2. ***Make SDGs a Key Issue in 2023 General Election & Campaign:*** CSOs to step up advocacy and engagement with political parties and contestants towards making the integration of SDGs into political parties and candidates manifestoes for 2023 General Elections.
3. ***Need for the Reactivation of the Activities of the Presidential Committee on the SDGs:*** Participants calls for government at national level to reignite and regularize the meeting of the national committee on SDGs as the highest policy body for the SDGs implementation in Nigeria.
4. ***Improve Citizens Action on SDGs:***  OSSAP-SDGs should provide a platform to ensure robust engagement with citizens, private and CSOs stakeholders to ensure that ‘No One is Left Behind’ in SDGs implementation in Nigeria.
5. ***OSSAP – SDGs and Development Partners to Support the Creation of a Platform for 3rd Party Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for SDGs Implementation in Nigeria:***  with the opaqueness that have characterized SDGs interventions in Nigeria, there is the need for improved transparency in SDGs project procurement and implementation process through 3rd party monitoring and evaluation of SDGs projects and programmes.
6. ***Centre LSD to Establish a Resource Hub to facilitate Stakeholders Access to information and Data on SDGs Implementation in Nigeria:***  Centre LSD should create a resource hub on the SDGs to help circulate available information to the public and other stakeholders engaged in SDGs implementation in Nigeria.

**CONCLUSION**

Participants were resolute on the need to work together to ensure that the SDGs are well implemented which will lead to the development of the country. They also commended the Federal Government (FG) for realignment of the National Statistical system with the SDGs.

**SIGNED:**

1. Monday Osasah, African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development.

2 Eze (Dr.) George-Hill Anthony, FCBPA, AF-AH, FIMC, FAIPA, TLM, CACC Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group Regional Accountability Centre

**3.** Amb. Caroline Usikpedo-Ominive. The Niger Delta Women's Movement.

4. Tim Aniebonam, GATE

5. Uche Madubuko

6. Chimene Samuel Paul Ambassadors Initiative for Development & Empowerment (AIDE)