Voluntary National Reviews: The 2030 Agenda Follow-up and Review Architecture

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Voluntary National Reviews concept

• Voluntary national reviews (VNRs) are part of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

• The VNRs are intended to track progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda, including the SDGs and targets, in all countries, in a manner that respects their universal and integrated nature and all dimensions of sustainable development
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<th>Voluntary</th>
<th>encourage reporting and include developed and developing countries</th>
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<td>Country-led</td>
<td>country-driven reviews of progress at national and sub-national levels</td>
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<td>Rigorous and based on evidence</td>
<td>informed by country-led evaluations and data which is high-quality, accessible, reliable and disaggregated</td>
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<td>Learning experience</td>
<td>facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, part of a process</td>
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<td>National circumstances</td>
<td>reviews in accordance with national circumstances, policies and priorities, together with relevant partners</td>
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<td>Open, Inclusive, Participatory</td>
<td>Including supporting reporting on progress by all relevant stakeholders</td>
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Structure of VNR Report

- Opening statement
- Highlights
- Introduction
- Methodology and process for the preparation of the review
- Policy and enabling environment
- Progress on Goals and targets
- Means of implementation
- Next steps
- Conclusions
- Annexes
VNR roadmap - 4 basic phases

- Phase 1: Planning (including setting scope & structure) & institutionalizing
- Phase 2: Gathering inputs, data
- Phase 3: Writing & review
- Phase 4: Presentation & follow up
Data and indicators
Reliable and credible, relevant to the context (nationalization/localization needed); goals & target prioritisation;

Policy coherence and integration
Incorporation of the SDGS into national frameworks - Integration of the 3 dimensions - Institutional mechanisms; structural issues/barriers - means of implementation;

Stakeholder engagement and advocacy
to promote ownership and action, better understand drivers and solutions - internal SE to support institutionalization - external SE for participation and outreach;

Leaving no one behind
Support marginalized and vulnerable groups – throughout report.
Timeline for 2020 VNRs

1st GLOBAL VNR WORKSHOP
October 2019
TBC

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES
December - March

2nd GLOBAL VNR WORKSHOP
February 2020
TBC

MAIN MESSAGES
Mid-May 2020

REGIONAL VNR PREP WORKSHOPS
(March-May)

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES
Apr-May (draft)

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES
Mid-May - June
(finalise)

FINAL REPORTS
Mid-June 2020

3rd GLOBAL VNR WORKSHOP
July 2020
New York

HLPF VNR PRESENTATIONS
Ministerial Segment
July 2020
New York
VNR countries at the 2020 HLPF (June 2019)
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/

• 24 countries presenting for the first time:
  • Austria, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, DPRK, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Micronesia, Mozambique, North Macedonia, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Zambia

• 22 countries presenting for the second time:
  • Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belize, Colombia (3rd), Costarica, Finland, Georgia, Honduras, India, Jordan, Monaco, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Panama, Peru, Qatar (3rd), Samoa, Slovenia, Uganda, Zimbabwe.
16 ESCAP VNR countries at the 2020 HLPF

- 8 countries presenting for the first time:
  1. Brunei Darussalam
  2. DPRK
  3. Kyrgyz Republic
  4. Micronesia
  5. Papua New Guinea
  6. Russian Federation
  7. Solomon Islands
  8. Uzbekistan

- 6 countries presenting for the second time:
  1. Armenia (2018)
  2. Bangladesh (2017)
  3. Georgia (2016)
  4. India (2017)
  6. Samoa (2016)
What do VNRs report on?

Analysis of goals and targets:
- a snapshot of the status of the goals and targets;
- achievements and good practices;
- the impact of country interventions at home and abroad;
- gaps and challenges;
- SDG interlinkages;
- emerging issues;
- future implementation plans.
VNRs as a MEANS to ACCELLERATE IMPLEMENTATION

- VNR as part of the policy cycle
- Dissemination - How to reach the broad public?
- How to address the challenges highlighted with the VNR process?
- How to institutionalize the monitoring and review process?
- Share the findings at regional level to enhance peer learning and regional cooperation.
## Why doing a VNR: opportunities

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<th>CREATING MULTI STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS</th>
<th>HIGHLIGHT COUNTRY PRIORITIES</th>
<th>ENHANCED MONITORING ACCOUNTABILITY, EVALUATION, REPORTING</th>
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<td>STRENGTHENING POLICY INTEGRATION &amp; COHERENCE</td>
<td>FINANCING PRIORITIZING INVESTMENTS, MULTIPLYING INVESTORS POOL</td>
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<td>STAKEHOLDER BUY IN OWNERSHIP &amp; ACTIVATION</td>
<td>AWARENESS RAISING, &amp; ADVOCACY</td>
<td>LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND</td>
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Intended benefits of the VNRs

- **CATALYZER** – the preparatory process provides a great chance for including all relevant stakeholders in the SDG implementation
- **STOCKTAKING** – for many countries the VNR has been a kick-starter for mapping existing policies and their compatibility with the SDGs, implementation gaps and data availability
- **COORDINATION** – VNR preparation requires a coordinated effort and for many countries the institutional arrangements made have proved useful also for SDG implementation
- **“WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT” APPROACH** – VNR provides a chance for obtaining buy-in from civil servants and creating incentives for integrated policy-making and service delivery
- **AREAS FOR SUPPORT** – the report can be a great tool for identifying and communicating the areas in which the country requires additional support for implementation
- **COMMUNICATION TOOL** of the agenda to citizens, civil society, academia, sub-national and local governments etc.
Decide what purpose the report will serve – awareness? Baselining? Aspirational?

Engage a broad range of stakeholders early on

Focus on quality, not quantity

Include a statistical annex, if suitable

Include analysis, lessons learned and detailed examples

Avoid mere listings of strategies and programmes

Show both strengths and weaknesses

Identify areas where additional support is needed

Spell out the next steps in implementation
VNRs as a MEAN to ACCELERATE IMPLEMENTATION

- VNR Dissemination - How to reach the broad public?
- How to address the challenges highlighted with the VNR process?
- How to institutionalize the monitoring and review process?
- Share the findings at regional level to enhance peer learning and regional cooperation.
VNR presentation at the HLPF

- Simplify complex messages through videos, infographics, data visualizations
- Highlight key messages
- Touch on critical issues on implementation
- Share best practices
- Provide space for stakeholders’ views
- Team up with other reporting countries
ESCAP’s and UN support for the VNRs

**SDG Rapid Response Facility**
Respond to requests from countries and UN country teams to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Technical assistance is provided in ESCAP’s core areas of expertise.

**SDG Help Desk**
One-stop online gateway to tools, knowledge products, expertise, good practices, advice and opportunities for peer-learning and regional South-South cooperation.

**Strengthening the VNR process through support to stakeholder engagement, policy coherence and data & statistics**
Questions?

Thank you!