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

Riccardo Mesiano

Environment and Development Division
ESCAP
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
# VNR elements

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<th><strong>Voluntary</strong></th>
<th>encourage reporting and include developed and developing countries</th>
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<td><strong>Country-led</strong></td>
<td>country-driven reviews of progress at national and sub-national levels</td>
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<td><strong>Rigorous and based on evidence</strong></td>
<td>informed by country-led evaluations and data which is high-quality, accessible, reliable and disaggregated</td>
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<td><strong>Learning experience</strong></td>
<td>facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, part of a process</td>
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<td><strong>National circumstances</strong></td>
<td>reviews in accordance with national circumstances, policies and priorities, together with relevant partners</td>
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<td><strong>Open, Inclusive, Participatory</strong></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
Building blocks for VNR preparation

- **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.
High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development

- Convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
- When? 6-15 July 2021; including the three-day ministerial meeting of the forum from 13 to 15 July
- Expectations:
  - To present a focused report in writing;
  - To make a brief oral presentation during the 2021 HLPF
  - Guidelines proposed by the Secretary-General take the format of sections of a report, to make them user-friendly and ease comparison. To facilitate effective peer learning, it is expected that reports, and/or executive summaries of the reports are shared before the presentation takes place.
VNR countries at the 2021 HLPF
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/


- Countries with one asterisk * are second timers and those with two asterisks ** are third timers.
12 ESCAP VNR countries at the 2021 HLPF

3 countries presenting for the first time:
1. DPRK
2. Myanmar
3. Marshall Islands

7 countries presenting for the second time:
1. Bhutan
2. China
3. Japan
4. Lao PdR
5. Malaysia
6. Pakistan
7. Thailand

2 countries presenting for the third time:
1. Azerbaijan
2. Indonesia
VNR as a Tool

VNRs as a MEANS to ACCELERATE 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.
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 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.
ESCAP’s and UN support for the VNRs

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

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
Questions?

Thank you!