Training Toolkit on Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation
Module 4.2

Reporting SDGs
Module 4.2: Reporting SDG

Importance of SDG Reporting
SDG National Reporting
Voluntary National Review
Participation of LRGs in the Reporting Process
Voluntary Local Reviews
SDG Tracker
SDG Dashboard
Key Takeaways

Contents
Learning Outcomes

- Learn and adapt approaches to National SDG reporting
- Understand the elementary building blocks and the basic, practical information on the steps that countries may take when preparing VNRs
- Provide a deeper analysis of the core principles that should underpin the VLR process, while also outlining different approaches and practical steps to undertake it
- Provides specific guidance to help LRGs prepare their VLR
I. Importance of SDG Reporting

Serves as a way to be **more transparent and accountable**, both inwards and outwards.

**Strengthen coordination between agencies and between national and sub-national tiers of government**

How does reporting contribute to the SDGs?

It **provides key information, feedback and learning mechanisms** at every stage of implementation.
II. SDG National Reporting

SDG reporting refers to the act of publishing and disseminating data and statistics on the SDG indicators for key stakeholders, including UN custodian agencies, government policymakers, businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutions, and the general public.

**SDG National Reporting Initiative, 2018**

**Why SDG Reporting Matters?**

**AN UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY**
The data requirements for reporting on the SDGs represent an unprecedented opportunity for countries around the world to track and evaluate their progress. SDG reporting can be a tool to help countries achieve their goals.

**REPORTING CHALLENGES**
Despite the importance and benefits of SDG reporting, many countries have yet to provide benchmark data on the SDGs, and many are still grappling with how to report on their achievements.
II. SDG National Reporting (Cont.)

Strategic Considerations for SDG Reporting

**POLICY**
- National alignment of SDGs
- Coordinating data across ministries & departments
- Privacy, security & legal

**DATA**
- Availability of official data
- Disaggregation
- Timeliness
- Metadata & standards
- Openness
- Accuracy & reliability

**TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**
- TECHNICAL OPTIONS
  - Open-source
  - Proprietary
  - Hybrid
- FEATURES & FUNCTIONALITY
  - Data input & management
  - Visualization & analysis

**SUSTAINABILITY**
- Institutional framework
- Partnerships
- Long-term technical strategies

**FINANCING & CAPACITY**

Source: SDG National Reporting Initiative, 2018
II. SDG National Reporting (Cont.)

SDG Reporting Approaches

Adding an SDG module within an existing platform

Building a new platform dedicated to SDG reporting

Leveraging a regional platform

Source: SDG National Reporting Initiative, 2018
III. Voluntary National Review

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.

Structure of VNR Report

1. Opening statement
2. Highlights
3. Introduction
4. Methodology and process for the preparation of the review
5. Policy and enabling environment
6. Progress on Goals and targets
7. Means of implementation
8. Next steps
9. Conclusion
10. Next steps
III. Voluntary National Review (Cont.)

VNR Roadmap – 4 basic phases

- Planning (including setting scope & structure) and institutionalizing
- Gathering inputs, data
- Writing and review
- Presentation & follow-up

Building blocks of VNR preparation

- Data and indicators
- Policy coherence and integration
- Stakeholder engagement and advocacy
- Leaving no one behind
III. Voluntary National Review (Cont.)

**General Timeline for VNRs**

- **Global Preparation I**
  - November (Current year)

- **Global Preparation II**
  - Feb/March of Next Year

- **Deadline II**
  - June Next Year
  - Submission of Final Reports

- **Deadline I**
  - May Next Year
  - Submission of main messages

- **VNR Presentation**
  - July Next Year

**Module 4.2: Reporting SDG**

**Training Toolkit on Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation**
III. Voluntary National Review (Cont.)

Why participate in VNR?

- Creating multi-stakeholder partnership
- Strengthening policy integration & coherence
- Stakeholder buy in ownership & activation
- Highlight country priorities

Intended benefits of the VNRs

1. CATALYZER
2. STOCKTAKING
3. COORDINATION
4. WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH
5. AREAS FOR SUPPORT
6. COMMUNICATION TOOL

- Awareness raising & advocacy
- Enhanced M&E, reporting
- Finalizing prioritizing investments, multiplying investors pool
- Leaving no one behind
III. Voluntary National Review (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VNR Year</th>
<th>No. of Counters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: United Nations

Who is in charge of leading the 2030 Agenda and its review in your country?
How is the consultation process organized?

III. Voluntary National Review (Cont.)
III. Voluntary National Review (Cont.)

Some key points from 2020 VNRs Synthesis Report

**Bringing SDGs into the local context**
- Countries referred to whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches
  - For example, Ecuador adopted a decree declaring the 2030 Agenda public policy of the national government and assigning to national secretariat for planning responsibility for aligning planning instruments with the Agenda, in coordination with public administration and different levels of government.

**Institutions for implementing the 2030 Agenda**
- Multi-stakeholder engagement mechanisms
- Coordinating mechanisms at multiple levels of government,
  - For example, Burundi undertook the SDG localization exercise by initiating the process of integrating the SDGs into municipal community development plans.
  - In Austria, the States have put local SDG Focal Points in charge of coordinating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

**Reporting challenges in making these arrangements as effective as possible**
- For instance, for Nepal, localization of SDGs continues to present one of the prominent challenges.
III. Voluntary National Review (Cont.)

Refer to the following handbook in preparation of presenting voluntary national reviews (VNRs)

• Refer to the VNR Handbook (online or printed copies) pages 12-18 covering topics of stakeholder engagement and SDG ownership.
• Where would the participation of local and regional governments benefit the VNR process and SDG monitoring as a whole?
• How could this engagement with national to local government best take place?

Your Roadmap to Reporting

Activity 2

Your role in the reporting process
IV. Participation of LRGs in the Reporting Process

Greater efforts are needed to involve LRGs in the VNRs and institutional mechanisms for coordination and follow-up.

New institutional frameworks for collaborative governance

LRG participation in the preparation of the VNRs 2016-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total countries reporting (per year)</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid/high consultation of LRGs</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weak consultation of LRGs</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No consultation of LRGs</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No elected LRGs (2)</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No information available (3)</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Towards The Localization of the SDGs, 2020
### IV. Participation of LRGs in the Reporting Process (Cont.)

#### Key points when working with authorities in charge of the VNR

- Reaching out to national focal points at the highest political level
- Maintaining permanent contact with national focal points at the technical level
- Clarifying modalities and procedures of participation for LRGs in the VNRs
- Co-organizing a conference on event presenting the national consultation strategy
- Fostering the localization of the SDGs and its mechanisms
- Fostering a bottom-up approach

#### Building alliances with local, national and international stakeholders

- CSOs and the private sector are often contributing and can share strategies towards the SDGs with local governments
- Academia, experts and research center can support the reporting process by providing geographically disaggregated data and information
- Many international organizations and networks have considerable experience working with LRGs and are strongly committed to the localization of SDGs
V. Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR)

An emerging process by which sub-national governments can report on their progress on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.

- Leave No One Behind
- Interconnectedness
- Multi-stakeholder
- Universality
- Risk-Taking and Partnership

The Rationale of VLR
“Voluntary Local Review (VLR) is a process in which local and regional governments (LRGs) initiate voluntarily an assessment of their progress of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. This makes it possible for LRGs to share experiences, challenges, and lessons learnt as well as to open their door for new partnerships, filling the gap of means of implementation for their local vision.”

(Iнститут по глобални еколошки стратегии)
V. Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR) (Cont.)

Localization: Making the SDGs their own

Alignment → Analysis → Action → Accountability → Awareness


Module 3.1: Regional and Global Trends of Localization
### V. Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR) (Cont.)

**VLRs: The value proposition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A tool for better policy and organizing</th>
<th>A tool to communicate vision, progress, and accountability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage internal coordination and policy coherence</td>
<td>Articulate a comprehensive vision for sustainable development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set concrete, time-bound targets for progress</td>
<td>Enable local accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply data to solutions</td>
<td>Articulate global challenges for a local audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage stakeholders</td>
<td>Increase international visibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalyze new models of governance</td>
<td>Enable peer networks and exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalize and sustain long-term development efforts</td>
<td>Increase influence in global policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Align with other levels of government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR)

Map of currently available VLRs

## Who is involved in VLR?

**City hall departments and specialized offices**

- Busia, Kenya: Officials and resources from County offices. The VLR is prepared within an institutional ‘agreement’ or consensus that includes the national institutions that collect most of the relevant data.

- Bristol, England: Prepared by university institutions, backed by City Hall plus support of a ad hoc alliance of stakeholders (Bristol SDG Alliance). No real mention of the overarching strategy. VLR comes later than VNR. Delegation to the UN. Spearheading a municipal movement approaching reporting. Strong self-awareness and direct link to opportunities and shortcomings of the UN system.

- Cauayan City, Philippines: City Hall. No mention of the Philippines’ strategy or the VNR/monitoring process as such.

**Citizens’ associations, civil society initiatives, fora of local stakeholders**

- Busia, Kenya: Spontaneous report.


- Cauayan City, Philippines: Spontaneous report.

**Academia**

- Bristol, England: University institutions.

### Institutional actors, process and ‘enabling’ environment of currently available VLRs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government</th>
<th>Blueprint</th>
<th>Institution in charge</th>
<th>Refers to VNR/national SD strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Busia, Kenya</td>
<td>Spontaneous report</td>
<td>Officials and resources from County offices</td>
<td>The VLR is prepared within an institutional ‘agreement’ or consensus that includes the national institutions that collect most of the relevant data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol, England</td>
<td>UNDESA Guidelines</td>
<td>Prepared by university institutions, backed by City Hall plus support of a ad hoc alliance of stakeholders (Bristol SDG Alliance)</td>
<td>No real mention of the overarching strategy. VLR comes later than VNR. Delegation to the UN. Spearheading a municipal movement approaching reporting. Strong self-awareness and direct link to opportunities and shortcomings of the UN system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauayan City, Philippines</td>
<td>Spontaneous report</td>
<td>City Hall</td>
<td>No mention of the Philippines’ strategy or the VNR/monitoring process as such</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews 2020
Vertically, most VLRs do not link directly with national strategies, but some do and are a substantial part of the national monitoring process.

The city of Helsinki, for example, developed its VLR as a purely local and municipal effort. They build on the trailblazing example of New York’s review and engage several city-hall offices in the process of producing the document.

- *de-siloing* local administration and policy-making

Barcelona’s strategic planning to take on “the challenge of sustaining in the long-term decent living for all the citizens” acknowledges explicitly the need for an “organic arrangement” of city hall institutions when approaching the SDGs.

- Improve local governments’ global relations

Source: Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews 2020
V. Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR) (Cont.)

What is the content of the VLR?

There is no official template and no VLR design, idea or concept should be discarded. **Participation with any means is essential**

**Diversity is key:** the community of local and regional governments is approaching VLRs with the resources they have available, and this translates into long and short reviews, more or fewer SDGs analyzed, a focus on policy or a focus on strategy.

**Many kinds of leadership:** academic institutions can help systematize or standardize information; proactive city hall departments can coordinate with other offices and local stakeholders; global LRG networks can offer guidance and coordinate among various partners.
How is the VLR made?

Currently available VLRs and their use of indicators, data and civil society involvement in information management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LG</th>
<th>Use of indicators</th>
<th>Local data</th>
<th>Civil Society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suwon, Rep. of Korea</td>
<td>While limited to SDG 11, each target revision is based on the official indicators</td>
<td>Data is adapted to locally-sourced information and figures, and accompanied by policy outcomes and achievements</td>
<td>ICLEI is a co-author, and a city-wide research council has been involved. There is no methodological note, and it is not possible to retrace the components, authors and contributors of the report. Civil society is not mentioned throughout the report as part of the implementation process except for 11.3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deqing, China</td>
<td>Extremely effective work on data collection in accordance with the UN baseline indicators for each SDG. Mix of geospatially-derived and statistical</td>
<td>On the one hand, several local institutions have participated in the data collection process. On the other hand, several indicators were addressed via geospatial technology which, in a sense, being a reading of the territory’s reality, is the ‘most’ local data</td>
<td>Academia is a substantial contributor to this study, although it is hardly the driver or catalyst</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews 2020
V. Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR) (Cont.)

Guidelines, templates and recommendations

- Political legitimacy
- Methodology and timeline
- The ‘enabling environment’: strategy and process
- SDG implementation analysis
VI. SDG Tracker

Engagement with the SDGs requires us to tell stories; we need interactive and engaging data.

- SDG-Tracker is the first project to track the latest data across all of the 17 SDGs in a user-friendly way.
- It provides an interactive hub where users can explore and track progress across all of the SDG indicators for which there is data available.
- It is essential that people understand how the world stands today and the progress we must make to achieve the SDGs.
VI. SDG Tracker

Objectives
• Create a data repository for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs and other national development goals
• Facilitate the tracking of progress against each goal and target;
• Improve situation analysis and performance monitoring;
• Enable predictive analysis for achieving the goals within the set time-frame.

Main features
• Data from any geographical location
• Can be customized for any language
• Target setting and progress tracking
• Data to policy making
• Multiple visualization and reporting schemes
• Correlation among multiple SDG indicators
• Dashboard for the Ministries/Directorates

www.sdg.gov.bd
Module 4.2: Reporting SDG

VII. SDG Dashboard

VI. SDG Tracker
VII. SDG Dashboard

**Sustainable Development Report 2020**

The Sustainable Development Goals and Covid-19

Jun 30, 2020

The Sustainable Development Report 2020 presents the SDG Index and Dashboards for all UN member states and frames the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in terms of six broad transformations. It was prepared by teams of independent experts at the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Bertelsmann Stiftung.

**Explore the SDR 2020 Dashboards**

The interactive SDR 2020 Dashboards provide a visual representation of countries’ performance by SDGs to identify priorities for action.

**Resources**
- Rankings
- Executive Summary
- Country Profiles
- About the Authors
- Press Release
- Download the Data
- GitHub
VII. SDG Dashboard

SDG India

https://sdgindiaindex.niti.gov.in/#/
Other Useful Sources

• UN Statistics Division
  https://unstats.un.org/capacity-development/meetings/National_Platforms_for_SDGs
• SDG Report Platform www.sdgreports.org
• Data Dashboard for 80 SDG Indicators https://w3.unece.org/SDG/
• UN Women Data Hub https://data.unwomen.org/
• Africa SDG Index and Dashboards https://africasdgindex.org/
• Asia-Pacific SDG Gateway – ESCAP https://data.unescap.org/
Your Roadmap to Reporting

Activity 3

Involving Stakeholders
Group Activity: Stakeholders Engagement

- To facilitate the discussion, participants would be provided with a handout to aid the discussion.
- Encourage them to create their own mind maps based on the following question:
- Which stakeholders should be involved in the process in your territory: private sector, academia, CSOs, foundations, international organizations (think of some specific stakeholders)?

Include on your mind map:
1. A list of all the stakeholders (including specific institutions and providing names).
2. Choose five main stakeholders
3. The Pros & Cons of each of the five stakeholders
4. Ideas about how to engage them (specific actions)
5. Share key lessons/good practices for engaging the stakeholders in your countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Stakeholders</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>How to engage them</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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### VIII. Key Takeaways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Key Takeaway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>There is no one-size-fits-all approach to SDG reporting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Tools and best practices related to SDG reporting are not limited to national governments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>SDG national reporting platforms (NRPs) are valuable only when they serve the needs of end users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Strengthen LRG voices in voluntary national reporting to achieve a qualitative leap in SDG implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


• UCLG (2019). Towards the localization of SDGs. [https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/towards_the_localization_of_the_sdgs_0.pdf]

• Online Voluntary Local Review (VLR) Lab. [https://www.iges.or.jp/en/projects/vlr/about]


• https://sdg-tracker.org/

• www.sdg.gov.bd

• https://sdgindiaindex.niti.gov.in/#/