

National Workshop on Effective Governance for Sustainable Development in Mongolia

Strengthening Local and National Coordination for the SDGs – the role of VNRs and VLRs

Carol Pollack, Inter-Regional Advisor, DSDG/UNDESA



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

The role of local governments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

- Although the SDGs are global, their achievement will depend on our ability to make them a reality in our cities and regions.
- All of the SDGs have indicators directly related to the responsibilities of local and regional governments, especially in their role in the provision of basic services.
- This is why local and regional governments must be at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.



THE AGENDA 2030 AND VOLUNTARY REVIEWS

The 2030 Agenda creates a system for regular monitoring and review of progress made



“We commit to fully engage in regular and inclusive reviews of progress at subnational, national, regional and global levels”(2030 Agenda, para. 77).



What are Voluntary Local Reviews?

- Reviews regarding the implementation of SDGs carried out by local and regional governments
- They tend to follow the model of Voluntary National Reviews
- Like the VNRs – they are more than a report. They provide an opportunity to:
 - Analyze, in a participatory manner, the advances and key challenges relating to sustainable development at the local level
 - Identify priorities for the localization of the SDGs in the future





The Practice of Carrying out VLRs

- Growing numbers of local governments are carrying out VLRs.
- The practice of carrying out VLRs is being taken up not only by capital and large cities but also smaller cities, provinces, and districts, including in rural areas.
- Member States are also increasingly benefitting from VLRs in their national level reviews.
- While VLRs lack the official status of VNRs, there has been increased recognition of them at the international level, including at the High-level Political Forum.

VLRS in the World

Figure 1. Map of Voluntary Local Reviews, either available or planned to be published, on May 31, 2021.



Source: own elaboration from UNICEF, UNCLD, European Commission's Joint Research Centre, KOFIL, LocalOSIO Hub-databases.

Benefits of VLRs

- Support the elaboration of integrated policies and coordination within government;
- Support for improved collection of data and provide a more complete & granular picture of SDG implementation and challenges, including geographical inequalities;
- Can serve as a catalyst for increased engagement with key stakeholders;
- Presents an opportunity to amplify the voices of marginalized segments of society and ensure that no one is left behind;
- Facilitate dialogue between different levels of government and contribute to voluntary national reviews;
- Sharing lessons learned and identifying good practices and new and replicable solutions
- Provide an opportunity to identify priorities for the localization of the SDGs in the future



Linkages with the HLPF

- The HLPF is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development
- Meets annually under ECOSOC in July, every four years under the General Assembly
- Member States submit their Voluntary National Reports
- VLRs are not officially part of the Forum, but have been discussed
- Cities and regions are represented at the Annual Forum of Local and Regional Governments, a special event of the HLPF



VNR/VLR Linkages: the case of Italy

In 2022, Italy presented its second VNR, in which it highlights "Italy's firm conviction that regional and local authorities have a key role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda."

The VNR focuses particularly on three thematic areas, one of which is the localization of the SDGs, and the report includes a significant section on this topic.

The report also includes an annex with the NVRs of several regions, metropolitan cities and cities.

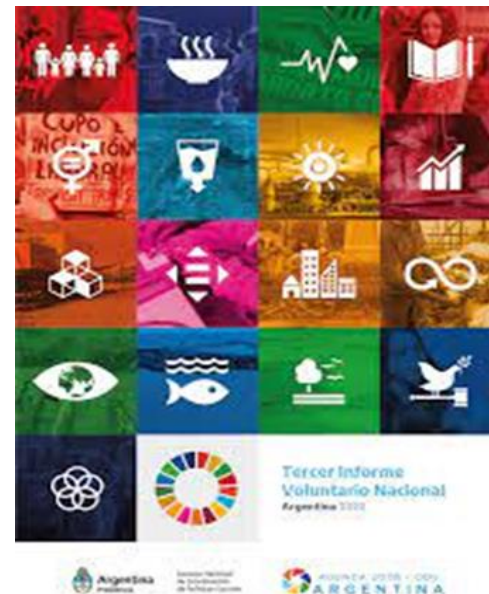


VNR/VLR Linkages: the case of Argentina

In 2022, Argentina presented its 3rd National Voluntary Report, highlighting the central role of provincial and local governments in the implementation of the SDGs.

The VNR includes a section on territorialization of the Agenda in Provinces and Municipalities, which describes the institutional framework that Argentina has created for the localization of the SDGs, including the SDG Federal Network, which includes focal points in each province and is coordinated by the national government.

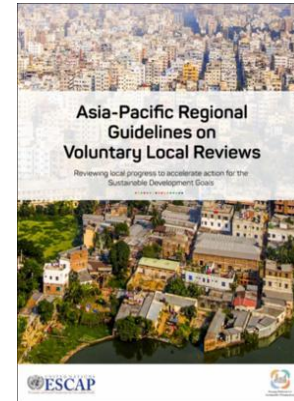
It includes information from provinces and municipalities on their efforts to localize the SDGs, and describes technical cooperation agreements signed between the three levels of government to advance SDG implementation.



Guidance materials for VLRs

For those interested in preparing VLRs, a number of guidance materials exist:

- UN entities have prepared guidance materials including:
 - DESA's Global Guiding Elements for VLRs
 - The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has prepared regional guidelines on VLRs, and additional region-specific guidelines have been prepared for Africa and Europe
 - UN Habitat and UCLG's Guidelines for VLRs
- Several governments have prepared guidance materials
- Materials prepared by research institutions
- DESA maintains a repository of VLRs submitted to it by local governments on its website at: <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews>



* We invite you to share with us any guidance materials or VLRs that you have prepared, so that we may share them with others via DESA's website.



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a modern skyscraper with a glass facade, set against a bright blue sky filled with white, fluffy clouds. The building's lines converge towards the top of the frame, creating a sense of height and scale. The text 'Thank you' is superimposed in white over the lower portion of the building.

Thank you