

FROM REPORT TO ACTION

**HOW ACTION ORIENTED VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW INFORM POLICIES THAT FURTHER
IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

EXPERIENCE OF MWANZA CITY, TANZANIA VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW

BY


AMIN .A. AMIN

INTRODUCTION

The cities of Mwanza(Tanzania) and Tampere (Finland) joint their efforts under the North South Local Government Cooperation Program since the beginning 2002. The history of Cooperation goes back to 1988, when Tampere and Mwanza became twin sister cities . The cooperation project has engaged in supporting development projects and capacity building of Mwanza city ensuring the improvement of service delivery.

October 2022, The city of Mwanza (Tanzania) and city of Tampere (Finland) established a two-way collaboration to drive the implementation of the SDGs in their territories and to monitor progress through the development of Mwanza VLR that signed memorandum of Understanding with UN Habitat to coordinate the implementation of localizing the SDG in Mwanza. We utilize **Goal no 17 of SDG , Partnership for the goals to realize the Mwanza VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW.**

The realization of Mwanza VLR was been done in cooperation and support from **UN-Habitat , UN Association of Tanzania (UNA), UN Association of Finland, Tampere city and Mwanza city council**



Objectives:

The general objective of VLR in Mwanza city was Assessing progress in implementing the SDGs in Mwanza City.

Specific Objectives:

- Communicating local progress in implementing the SDGs to government actors, civil society organizations, residents, and other local government agencies.
- Assessing strengths and weaknesses of Mwanza City, and identifying opportunities for best practices in implementing the SDGs.
- Contributing and complementing the Voluntary National Review with local knowledge in order to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Amplifying community voices in monitoring of progress and achievement of SDGs at the local level

Indicator Selection:

Indicators of Mwanza VLR have been carefully chosen based on their alignment with the city's mission and strategic objectives, taking into account data accessibility and availability. In total, eight goals are reviewed: **SDG1, SDG3, SDG4, SDG5, SDG6, SDG11, SDG16, and SDG17**

Global urban monitoring framework (UMF)

Total of 8 SDGs and 24 indicators were selected in Mwanza VLR from the **SDG catalog** and the **Global Urban Monitoring Framework (UMF) (UN-Habitat, 2022)**, a comprehensive framework of urban indicators of sustainable development. **UMF** as well as the SDGs are important for the VLR, for their relevance in the global monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and their applicability to urban contexts.

The Guiding principles

UN-Habitat supported the guiding principles which enabled the development of an action oriented VLR that builds the comprehensive assessment of SDGs. Principles like Practical , Evidence Based Recommendation and Actionable steps to accelerate progress toward SDGs at the local level.

Data collection:

was based on assessing the trends and developments pertaining to specific indicators under the selected SDGs spanning the period between **2020 and 2022**. The data were secondary and primary from Mwanza city council, Government related Agencies, Stake holder consultation forum(meeting with different organizations, representatives, Community hearing and participation and local political leaders) and Bureau of Statistics



Role of local and regional governments in SDG implementation

Local and regional governments are government authorities that are responsible in providing services at the grass root level. Where the intended communities and people are available and leave. The local authority play a very crucial and important role in the implementation of SDGs and their roles can be seen as follows:

- To informing, educating the community about the SDGs and their relevance for local development.
- To mobilize local actors and resources to support the SDGs
- To create sense of ownership and commitment.
- To influence national policy-making in ensure SDGs reflect local needs and priorities
- To create an enabling environment for local action.
- To promote multi-level governance and coordination ensuring coherence and alignment of policies and plans across different levels of government.
- To translate the SDGs into local policies, plans, programs and projects, taking into account the local context and specificities.
- To integrate the SDGs into their existing local development strategies and frameworks, and align them with their budget and resource allocation processes.
- To foster partnerships and collaboration with other local actors, such as civil society, private sector, academia and media in leverage their capacities and contributions to the SDGs.


- To track and measure the progress and impact of their actions towards the SDGs using indicators and data relevant to the local level.
- To report and communicate their results and challenges, and share their experiences and good practices with other LRGs and stakeholders.
- LRGs to participate in national and global review and accountability mechanisms, such as the Voluntary National Reviews and the High-Level Political Forum, to showcase their achievements and advocate for their needs and interests.

The benefits of conducting a VLR?

Voluntary local review of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by local and regional governments (LRGs) to foster SDG localization and demonstrate local governments' capacity and commitments. The voluntary local review demonstrate several benefits to the community in general such as

- Raising awareness and educating citizens and stakeholders about the SDGs and their relevance for local development.
- Influencing national and international policy-making to ensure that the SDGs reflect local needs and priorities, and that they create an enabling environment for local action.

Benefits of conducting a VLR:

- Translating the SDGs into local policies, plans, programs and projects, taking into account the local context and specificities.
 - Integrating the SDGs into existing local development strategies and frameworks, and aligning them with budget and resource allocation processes.
 - Fostering partnerships and collaboration with other local actors, such as civil society, private sector, academia and media, to leverage their capacities and contributions to the SDGs.
 - Tracking and measuring the progress and impact of local actions towards the SDGs, using indicators and data that are relevant at the local level.
 - Reporting and communicating local results and challenges, and sharing experiences and good practices with other LRGs and stakeholders.
 - Participating in national and global review such as the Voluntary National Reviews and the High-Level Political Forum, to showcase local achievements and advocate for local needs and interests.
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challenges in SDG implementation

1. Data gaps:

LRGs face challenges in accessing, collecting, analyzing and using data that are relevant and disaggregated for the SDGs at the local level. Data gaps can affect the quality and accuracy of the VLRs, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the SDG progress and impact. Data gapes enable Mwanza VLR to track only **8 SDGs**.

Recommendations

- The need to improve the quality and accessibility of data at the local level
- There is a need to use local indicators and data sources.
- Need to have local data base for statistical information's from all government stakeholders.

2. Capacity gaps:

lack of necessary expertise & financial resources to effectively implement and review the SDGs. Capacity gaps can limit the ability to design & execute local policies, plans, programs and projects aligned with the SDGs.

Recommendation :

Capacity buildings program to local employees such as training, guidance, mobilize finances , fostering innovation but also utilize the partnership for the goals to support the voluntary local review of SDGs i.e. **mwanza –Tampere Cooperation , UN-Habitat , UN Association of Tanzania & Finland**

CONT:-

3.Policy gaps

LRGs face challenges in ensuring policy coherence and coordination among different levels of government and sectors, as well as in influencing national and international policy-making to reflect local needs and priorities. Policy gaps can affect the enabling environment for local action, as well as the vertical and horizontal integration of the SDGs.

Recommendation:

- Ensuring policy coherence and coordination for the SDGs at all levels, by establishing and strengthening multi-level governance and dialogue mechanisms, local and regional governments should have specific desks that are responsible in integrating SDGs into strategic planning and master plan of the local authority but also who will be responsible in advocating for the recognition and empowerment of LRGs in the 2030 Agenda

Contribution of VLR:

Strategies:

local and regional governments have used the VLR process as an opportunity to revise and update their existing local development strategies and frameworks, or to develop new ones, to align them with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. For instance Tanzania is conducting several stakeholders engagement on the implementation of SDG country wise and in several platforms from meeting with communities, NGO's , Civil Societies , Digital Platforms through mobiles phones where citizens are required to sharing their views and advices on the implementation of SDGs. **(The leave no one behind)**

Limited Resources: Local authorities often face budgetary constraints and limited access to financial resources, which can impede their ability to invest in sustainable development initiatives

Regulatory Barriers: Local authorities may encounter challenges in navigating complex regulatory frameworks and bureaucratic processes that govern urban development

Lack of Technical Expertise: Building and implementing sustainable development initiatives requires specialized knowledge and skills, which local authorities may lack.


Public Awareness and Engagement: Local authorities may struggle to generate public awareness and engagement around sustainable development issues

Data and Monitoring: Local authorities may lack comprehensive data and monitoring systems to track progress towards sustainable development goals.

Infrastructure and Planning: Many local authorities are stuck with old infrastructure, sprawling urban development, and inadequate urban planning, which can hinder the implementation of sustainable solutions.

inters sectoral Collaboration: Achieving sustainable development often requires collaboration among various sectors, including government, businesses, civil society, and academia

Recommendations

- Awareness raising to the public on **SDGs**
 - Establishing mechanism for stakeholder engagement and citizen participation in policy making process related to SDGs
 - Capacity building to local authority employees on SDGs and how to track
 - Establish the SDGs Desk at local authority to be responsible for follow up and tracking
 - Appoint an SDG focal point at local Authority
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- **Adopting a holistic approach that integrates the goals into urban planning and development**
 - **Conduct a comprehensive assessment of their current urban development status and identify the areas where they can make the most impact.**
 - **To engage with local stakeholders, including community members, civil society organizations, businesses, and academia. Collaborative partnerships are essential for achieving the SDGs, as they bring together diverse perspectives**
 - **Open for the international partnerships and networks to access knowledge, best practices, and financial resources**
 - **integrating the SDGs into urban planning and development requires cities to establish clear targets, indicators, and monitoring mechanisms to track progress and assess performance and make informed decisions and adjust their strategies based on SDG**
 - **SDG capacity building and knowledge sharing among local government officials, urban planners, and other stakeholders involved in urban development.**
 - **Cities can leverage technology and innovation to support the implementation of the SDGs, using data analytics, digital platforms, and smart city solutions to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of urban development efforts.**
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- **Integrating the SDGs into urban planning and development, cities can contribute to the global effort to achieve sustainable development while improving the quality of life for their residents.**
 - **Engaging local communities in urban planning for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation is crucial for ensuring that the goals are relevant and impactful at the grassroots level**
 - **Conduct community consultations**
 - **Facilitate co-design Approach method that is participatory which result in urban development projects that are more responsive to the diverse needs of the community and better aligned with the SDGs.**
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