PREPARING AND PRESENTING VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS AT THE HLPF
HOW CAN THE VNR PROCESS SUPPORT NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA?

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Strengthens political will, national ownership, institutions and coordination

Identifies areas where support is needed

Provides an important communication tool

Changes mindsets

Draws lessons and provides critical reflections on the process

Provides impetus to continue national implementation after the VNR has been presented at the HLPF
PRINCIPLES OF VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

Voluntary
encourage reporting and include developed and developing countries

State-led
country driven reviews of progress at national and sub-national levels

Platform for partnerships
including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders

Learning experience
facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, part of a process

National circumstances
reviews in accordance with national circumstances, policies and priorities, together with relevant partners

Open, Inclusive, Transparent
Facilitates communication with all stakeholders
BENEFITS OF VNRS

CATALYZER
STOCKTAKING
COORDINATION
“WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT” APPROACH
“WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY” APPROACH
AREAS FOR SUPPORT
COMMUNICATION TOOL
WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MAXIMIZE BENEFITS FROM THE VNRS?

- Embed VNRs into institutions and link the VNRs to report to other mechanisms and conventions
- Undertake costing analysis for SDGs and align with national budgets
- Strengthen policy coherence, interlinkages among SDGs and assess trade-offs
- Monitor SDG implementation including through parliaments and supreme audit institutions
- Measure impacts of strategies and polices put in place
- Report at the national level before and after a VNR has been presented at the HLPF

Strengthen VNR follow-up by implementing lessons learned from other countries at HLPF.

Take actions in the executive and legislative branches of government.
WHO IS ENGAGED IN THE VNRS?
GLOBAL STATUS OF VNRS

STATUS OF VNRS 2016 - 2019

- Prepared and Announced
- Not Prepared

AFRICA
- 18
  - 36

AP
- 13
  - 42

EEG
- 5
  - 18

LAC
- 12
  - 21

WEOG
- 3
  - 26

Number of Countries

- 2019: 51
- 2018: 46
- 2017: 43
- 2016: 22

Regional Distribution

- Western European & Others Group
- Latin America and Caribbean Group
- Eastern European Group
- Asia-Pacific Group
- African Group

Countries in Special Situations

- Least Developed Countries
- Landlocked Developing Countries
- Small Island Developing Countries

- 2016
- 2017
- 2018
- 2019
TIMELINE FOR 2019 HLPF VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

1st GLOBAL VNR WORKSHOP
16-17 October 2018
Geneva

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES
December - March

2nd GLOBAL VNR WORKSHOP
19-20 February 2019
Bonn

REGIONAL VNR PREP WORKSHOPS
(March-May)

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES
Apr-May (draft)

MAIN MESSAGES
17 May 2019

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES
May - June (finalise)

FINAL REPORTS
14 June 2019

3rd GLOBAL VNR WORKSHOP
14 July 2019
New York

HLPF VNR PRESENTATIONS
Ministerial Segment
17 – 19 July 2019
New York
## 2019 VNRs

### VNR Countries at the HLPF in 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Time Presenters (41)</th>
<th>Second Time Presenters (8)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
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<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>Palau</td>
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KEY ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER FOR NATIONAL REVIEWS

OFFICIAL INDICATION OF INTEREST

- Initial preparation and organization
  - Stakeholder engagement

VNR preparation

- VNR preparation
- Stakeholder engagement plan
- Drawing on existing reports
- Stakeholder engagement plan
- Drafting
- Review & Approval
- Preparing presentation
- Planning follow-up

- Coordination structure
- Data
- Resources
- Developing a workplan/roadmap

SUBMISSION OF MAIN MESSAGES
17 MAY 2019

HLPF Presentation

Implementation & follow-up

SECOND-TIME PRESENTERS
15 JUL 2019
FIRST-TIME PRESENTERS
16-18 JUL 2019
MINISTERIAL SEGMENT 2019 HLPF
WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A VNR?
To promote comparability and consistency and help countries structure their VNRs, the Secretary General has developed a set of common reporting guidelines.
SG GUIDELINES: HIGHLIGHTS

VNRs should:

- be open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people and will support reporting by all relevant stakeholders.

- be people-centered, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.

- maintain a longer-term orientation, identify achievements, challenges, gaps and critical success factors and support countries in making informed policy choices.

- Help to mobilize the necessary means of implementation and partnerships, support the identification of solutions and best practices and promote the coordination and effectiveness of the international development system.
VNR HANDBOOK

Supplement to the SG’s guidelines

Provides basic, practical information on the steps that countries may take when preparing VNRs

Available in English, Arabic, Chinese, French, and Spanish
COMPONENTS OF A VNR

Highlights (summary)
- overall progress, best practices, lessons learned, key challenges and support needed

Introduction
- context and objectives of the review, key features of the country context, policy architecture and policy tools for integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development

Methodology of the review
- discuss the process for preparation of the national review
- whole-of-government approach and mechanisms for stakeholder engagement
Components of a VNR

Policy and Enabling Environment

a) Creating ownership of the SDGs;
   - efforts made towards all stakeholders to inform them on and involve them in the SDGs

b) Incorporation of the SDGs in national framework;
   - initiatives undertaken to adapt the SDGs and targets to its national circumstances
   - policy coherence and interlinkages
   - implementation challenges and way forward

c) Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development

d) Leaving no one behind

e) Institutional mechanisms
   - how the country has adapted its institutional framework in light of the 2030 Agenda, coordination and integration to achieve policy coherence

f) Structural issues
Components of a VNR

Goals and targets
- Brief information on progress and the status of all 17 SDGs
- Critical difficulties in reaching goals and how they have been addressed

Means of implementation
- How MOI are mobilized, difficulties, and what additional resources are needed.
- How financial systems and resource allocations are aligned with 2030 Agenda
- Technology; capacity development and data needs; multi-stakeholder partnerships

Next steps
- Next steps to enhance implementation, national and sub-national level, dissemination

Conclusion
- Summary of analysis, findings and policy implications and how to apply lessons learned in the future

Annex
- Statistical annex with data and/or annexes to showcase best practices or comments from stakeholders
Possible content of main messages:

• Key plans/strategies for implementation of SDGs
• Priority SDGs (if any)
• Main challenges encountered & areas of progress
• Stakeholder involvement/consultation
• Means of implementation
The HLPF has proven to be an integrative platform for follow-up and review of 2030 Agenda and SDGs at the global level.

Thematic focus on the theme and SDGs produced valuable in-depth analysis and recommendations.

Voluntary national reviews are instrumental to gain insight at the national level for follow-up and review.

Regional forums for sustainable development represent a valuable link between national and global levels.

Engagement of all stakeholders at all levels is the only way to implement 2030 Agenda and SDGs.
BEST PRACTICES IN VNR DEVELOPMENT

Start early
Designate coordinator(s) and the “penholder(s)”
Engage a broad range of stakeholders early on
Focus on quality, not quantity
Include a statistical annex, if suitable
Address implementation of all 17 SDGs
Include analysis, lessons learned and detailed examples
Avoid mere listings of strategies and programmes
Showcase both strengths and weaknesses
Identify areas where additional support is needed
Spell out the next steps in implementation
VNR PRESENTATION AT HLPF

Highlight the main messages lessons from the VNR

- **Order of presentation** – proposed by the President of ECOSOC, countries agree among themselves
- **Who** will present? More than one presenter? Different ministries, civil society?
- **Time:** 15 minutes for each country to present, including use of multimedia, e.g. short films
- **Interactive:** Questions from other Member States, as well as Major Groups and other Stakeholders
VNR PRESENTATION AT HLPF

POSSIBLE FORMATS for VNR PRESENTATIONS

- Single country presentation, followed by Q&A
- 3-5 countries present consecutively with Q&A after all countries have finished presenting
PRESENTING YOUR VNR AT THE HLPF

Who will present? Consider the most senior official; various government departments, representatives from any Major Group including private sector

What to present:

Key messages of the VNR process; how the review has aligned with national development priorities; opportunities for partnerships moving forward. Audiovisuals are welcome!
IMPORTANT DEADLINE #1

17 May 2019: Submit the main messages of the VNR report

Maximum 700 words

Should have the main conclusions of the VNR report

A few words on the process and relations

Messages allow countries and stakeholders to prepare for the HLPF – so include lessons, challenges and needs

Official UN document: will be edited and translated into UN languages

Published online: in 2018: https://undocs.org/E/HLPF/2018/5
**IMPORTANT DEADLINE #2**

**14 June 2019: Submit the VNR report**

- No maximum number of words
- Should be in UN language – consider a second language for wider reach
- Will not be translated into official languages by the UN
- Will be posted on the HLPF 2019 website: sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019
- Also linked on the VNR database: sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/
See how others have done it... VNR database

Search by ..
- Year
- Keyword
- Country

sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE VNR PROCESS
Inform

One-way communication, where governments inform stakeholders of their plans for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda.

Consult

Government presents plans and options for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda, and receives feedback from stakeholders.

Involve

Stakeholders are meaningfully engaged with governments in generating plans and options for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. Action plans based on decisions that arise from this input.

Collaborate

Governments and stakeholders decide together on the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. This is long-term, complex and demanding, requiring resources.

Empower

Final decision making placed in the hands of the stakeholders. Stakeholders collectively decide what should be implemented.
Numerous countries have requested inputs from stakeholders and organized consultations to collect them.

Represent: Some included Stakeholder representatives in their official delegation sitting on the podium during the VNR presentation at the HLPF, ready to answer potential questions.

Present: Several countries have included presentations and comments from different stakeholders in their 15 minute Presentation or in their official report.
In the **Maldives**, the government works with the official “Public Service Media” in disseminating information related to the SDGs. Capacity building workshops have been organized for journalists from various media in order to enhance and develop their skills to report on the SDGs.

In the **Netherlands**, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) launched the Municipalities4Global Goals campaign to promote awareness of the SDGs among municipalities and help them contribute to the goals.
Levels of Participation - Consult

In **Sierra Leone**, consultations were held both in the capital and in each of the country’s districts. The consultations engaged officials from the federal government, parliament, local governments, the private sector, trade unions, civil society and universities on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country.

**Brazil** established the online portal “Participa.br”, a social media instrument providing participation tools for citizens, networks, social movements and organizations, enabling dialogue among governmental bodies and society, through public consultations, debates, conferences and online events.

**Chile**, in cooperation with UNDP, designed focus groups that sought to prioritize the voice and participation of different populations such as persons with disabilities, immigrants, and indigenous peoples.
The **Australian government** along with **Global Compact Network Australia**, have set up a website to provide Australia with a live and ongoing platform to centralize and showcase action being taken across government, business, civil society and academia to advance the SDGs in the Australian context. Organizations that are undertaking concrete initiatives to help Australia deliver on the Sustainable Development goals are invited to submit case studies to the platform’s database which include the initiatives’ impact.

Levels of Participation - Involve/Collaborate

The **Estonian** Sustainable Development Commission is an advisory body consisting of civil society umbrella organizations and covers different fields of sustainable development. The Commission meets 4-5 times per year to discuss drafts of strategic action plans before they are adopted by the government and to publish focus reports with policy recommendations.

In **Norway**, the indigenous peoples’ assembly, the Sámeddigi (Sami Parliament) engages in dialogues on the 2030 Agenda with line ministries and formal consultation mechanisms. Consultations have strengthened the Sámediggi’s role as a representative voice for the Sami people and increased the awareness of Sami issues within the government. Sami culture is taken into consideration in policies particularly for fisheries and ecosystems protection, restoration and sustainable use of natural resources.
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN VNRS AT THE HLPF

MGoS participation in VNR presentations at the HLPF

- Each country has 10-15 minutes to present
- After presentations, there is time for Q&A, in which Major Groups and other Stakeholders can participate
- Participation in the VNR sessions is coordinated by the MGoS HLPF Coordination Mechanism

There are also a number of “VNR labs” which occur during the HLPF, and provide room for informal dialogue between Member States and Major Groups and other Stakeholders on specific topics related to the VNRs
RESOURCES

UN Secretary-General’s updated voluntary common reporting guidelines for VNRs at the HLPF
Handbook for VNR Preparations
Q&A for VNRs at the 2019 HLPF
All the above can be found at HLPF VNR database https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/
Thank you!

We look forward to your participation!
For the latest information and to register (April 2019), visit
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019
Contact link on website