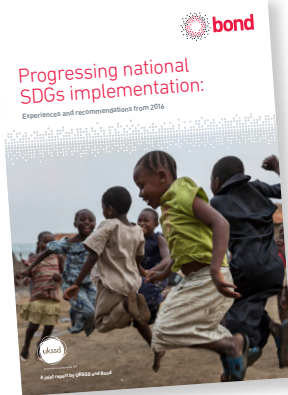# Progressing national SDGs implementation:

An independent assessment of the voluntary national review reports submitted to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2017

The Second Edition in annual series commissioned by civil society organizations

Executive Summary

In July 2018, governments will convene for the Sixth Meeting of the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development to examine their progress on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Forum is mandated to carry out regular, inclusive, State-led and thematic reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with inputs from other intergovernmental bodies, regional processes, major groups and other stakeholders. Countries present these voluntary national reviews (VNRs) on an annual basis at the HLPF. As outlined in the 2030 Agenda, this follow-up and review process is meant to promote accountability to citizens, support effective international cooperation and foster exchange of best practice and mutual learning.[1]

This review documents and analyses the 42 English, French and Spanish VNR reports submitted in 2017 to the HLPF, as well as a sample of civil society reports also produced in 2017 for the HLPF.[2] The VNR report for the Netherlands provided information on all countries in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, including Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. As such, the analysis is based on data for 45 countries. The review of VNR reports includes recommendations for improving the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the VNR process and reports, and strengthening the accountability mechanisms around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The review identifies best practices in implementation of the 2030 Agenda with a view to providing recommendations on how governments, civil society organisations (CSOs) and other stakeholders can improve their efforts. It also provides recommendations on how countries can improve their VNR reporting to the HLPF by meeting and building on the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines for VNRs at the HLPF.

It should be noted that the analysis in the review is based largely on the VNR reports, and where available, civil society reports. No additional research was conducted to verify the accuracy and confirm the validity of the information governments included in reports. Where relevant, findings from other assessments of the VNR reports for 2017 have been noted. Nevertheless, this is a clear limitation of the findings.

COUNTRIES REPORTING TO THE HLPF IN 2017
Afghanistan, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Monaco, Nepal, Netherlands (including Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten), Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Slovenia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe.

The review reveals that the majority of countries reporting in 2017 appear to have established foundational elements for implementation. The review sets out what governments reported in terms of awareness raising, incorporation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs into national policies and plans, development of institutional mechanisms for implementation, national plans, consultation with local stakeholders, partnership development, and monitoring and evaluation of progress. However, the VNR reports remain patchy. Furthermore, the level of engagement by governments on these different pillars of 2030 Agenda implementation is not uniform either within or across countries. Much can be learnt and applied from emerging standard practice and best practice to date by different countries. Best practices identified from the VNR reports are highlighted throughout this review. The VNR reports show that greater efforts are needed to ensure a high-level of

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1 See United Nations. 2016. *Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level.* Report of the Secretary-General. A/70/684. New York: United Nations. Available at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/684&Lang=E.

2 Details on the methodology, including the analytical framework, used for the assessment of all the VNRs can be found in Annex 2.

implementation across all pillars of implementation within countries and by all countries to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda, and realise the SDGs.

Findings, best practice and recommendations

INCORPORATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA INTO NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND POLICIES

The majority of countries (40) reporting in 2017 have in some way incorporated the SDGs into national development plans and related policies and frameworks and are able to demonstrate concrete actions in their move towards implementing the 2030 Agenda. A limited number of countries (2) state that their national policies and frameworks already align to the SDGs. However, with the exception of 'leaving no one behind', important principles in the 2030 Agenda – namely universality and the human rights based approach – are not mentioned in most VNR reports. Countries tend to focus on the SDGs rather than the transformational principles of the 2030 Agenda.

BEST PRACTICE
Integrate Agenda 2030 priorities into national policies and frameworks and develop a roadmap to accelerate implementation.

Explicitly link the implementation of each SDG to relevant national and international human rights frameworks.

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

• Fully integrate the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs into national plans and strategies based on an evaluation of existing policies, approaches and progress to identify gaps, adapt policies and target areas where further progress is needed. The fact that existing policies already align to the SDGs is not sufficient.

• Operationalise the principles of the 2030 Agenda in approaches to implementation – recognising the universal, rights based and interlinked nature of the agenda that seeks to leave no one behind and ensure sustainable development within planetary boundaries. This must include grounding plans and strategies in human rights, purposefully working to put the last first and consistently reach marginalised communities, and supporting the universality of the agenda - more specifically, addressing domestic and global dimensions of sustainable development. VNR reports should demonstrate how approaches to sustainable development are meaningfully changing based on the principles of the 2030 Agenda and not just the SDGs.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

Most countries (36) appear to be making use of councils or committees to govern 2030 Agenda implementation, with leadership residing with cabinet ministers (14) or an implementation council or committee outside parliament (11). A minority of countries (18) have formally included non-state actors in governance arrangements; whereas, most countries simply note their commitment to engage non-state actors. While the commitment by countries to engage non-state actors through governance and institutional mechanisms is welcome, this serves as standard rather than best practice. For countries that have formally included non-state actors, representation is more prominent in technical working groups rather than on councils or committees. In terms of who governments engage, civil society and the private sector are most commonly cited, followed by academia, development partners, parliament and government institutions. Formal inclusion of representatives from major stakeholder groups is essential, and is something civil society will be monitoring actively to ensure practice changes and improves.

BEST PRACTICE
Formal inclusion of non-state actors in governance arrangements contributes to inclusivity, a whole of society approach in 2030 Agenda implementation and the promotion of partnership.

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

• Clearly establish leadership and governance structures to support 2030 Agenda implementation and lay out lines of accountability between various national stakeholders.

• Formalise non-state actor engagement in governance structures to realise the 2030 Agenda.

BASELINE OR GAP ANALYSIS

Most countries (38) state that they are making use of policy and/or data assessments to inform their policies and approaches to SDG implementation, though information on the results of such assessments is not readily available in the VNR reports. The most commonly cited gaps – identified by these assessments - include lack of sufficient information on specific goals or targets, and overarching data limitations. There is a clear need to understand the status of official data and research related to 2030 Agenda implementation to facilitate scrutiny of government policies and identify where data gaps can be filled by supplementary data from citizens or research bodies.

BEST PRACTICE
Assess policies, data availability and baselines to inform prioritisation and nationalisation of the 2030 Agenda.

Ensure an evidence-based approach to implementation.

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

- Conduct an assessment that identifies gaps in existing policies and programmes, and set out baselines from which to measure progress and assess where additional efforts are needed.

- Clearly articulate how the assessment was conducted and provide a summary of the gaps identified for each goal.

INTEGRATION AND POLICY COHERENCE

While countries tended to cover all dimensions of sustainable development in their VNR reports, including through detailed analysis, the majority of countries (34) did not report on the full set of SDGs in 2017. Limited references to linkages between goals by 19 countries in the goal-by-goal analysis may also indicate that countries are not sufficiently ensuring integration in their approaches to 2030 Agenda implementation. Policy coherence for sustainable development does not feature strongly in VNR reports, with only a limited number of countries (11) providing an assessment of the impact of their domestic and foreign policies on sustainable development outcomes globally. Twenty-two countries link climate change and the Paris Agreement to the 2030 Agenda. Fifteen (15) link to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Fifteen (15) also referred to policy coherence for sustainable development.

BEST PRACTICE
Detailed assessment of all 17 SDGs with appropriate linkages to all dimensions of sustainable development and reference to domestic and global efforts to realise the 2030 Agenda.

Summarise best practice, lessons learned, gaps and priorities, and areas where support is needed in the goal-by -goal analysis to facilitate learning and global partnership.

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

- Assess all 17 goals in their VNR reports, respecting the indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

- Ensure all dimensions of sustainable development are addressed in SDG implementation and VNR reporting. Linkages and synergies between the different dimensions of sustainable development should be clearly stated in policies, supported through implementation and included in reporting - all to help ensure clear integration.

- Include a summary of best practice, lessons learned, gaps and priorities, and areas where support is needed in the goal by goal analysis to facilitate learning and global partnership.

- Link implementation of the 2030 Agenda to both the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including in VNR reporting.

- Provide an assessment of domestic and global dimensions of sustainable development in the goal-by-goal analysis, demonstrating contributions to realising the SDGs at home and abroad, and supporting policy coherence for sustainable development.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Reports that included a dedicated chapter on leaving no one behind tended to do a better job at describing who is being left behind and what efforts are being made to reach the furthest behind people. Only 14 countries provided an indication of the availability of data to leave no one behind (LNOB), the bulk of which (11) noted that additional disaggregated data by sex, region, ability, age, social status, and/or particular groups are needed. Nevertheless, the bulk of countries (33) identified those at greatest risk of being left behind, often pointing to women, children and youth, persons with disabilities and elderly people. To LNOB, countries highlighted the use of broad social policies that set minimum standards as well as policies and initiatives that target specific groups and/or reduce domestic inequality. As reports do not provide information on data to LNOB or evaluate the impact of their policies on vulnerable groups, it is not possible to assess which policies and programmes are successfully reaching the people who are furthest behind first.

BEST PRACTICE
Dedicate a chapter in the VNR report to leaving no one behind that details who is being left behind, the available data, and efforts to leave no one behind and reduce domestic inequalities.

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

- Include a specific chapter on LNOB in VNR reporting.

- Provide information on the status of data collection or plans to improve data availability to inform efforts to LNOB. Ensuring no one is left behind means knowing who is being left behind, by how much, and in what areas.

- Highlight existing and planned efforts to LNOB, including how policies and programmes are being adapted to reach the people who are furthest behind first.

- Target domestic inequality in 2030 Agenda implementation, including in support of SDG 10 on reducing inequality, and outline the current status of domestic inequality and how it is being addressed in VNR reports.

RAISING AWARENESS AND CREATING OWNERSHIP

Most governments (41) state that they have carried out initiatives to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda and selected national priorities, in consultation with national stakeholders, and that this is an area for ongoing effort. National priorities tend to reflect all dimensions of sustainable development, and to a lesser extent, governance issues. National priorities are yet to be matched with national targets and indicators for SDG implementation for most countries however. For those that have selected targets and indicators, there tend to be two main approaches. Some countries have made their selections based on a mapping of existing available data and priorities through a government-led process. Others have taken a more inclusive approach that includes consultation with non-state actors on targets and indicators as part of the nationalisation process.

In terms of localisation, reports reveal wide variance in terms of the extent to which local governments have been engaged in SDG implementation so far. Reports indicate that further efforts to localise the SDGs at country level are needed.

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

- Adopt innovative ways to raise awareness of the SDGs among the general public, with a view to long term engagement, including in partnership with civil society and other non-state actors.

- Identify national sustainable development priorities and develop associated national targets through an inclusive and participatory process to complement global targets and indicators.

- Provide support to sub-national levels of government to raise awareness of the SDGs and develop capacities for local level implementation, including translation of the SDGs into local plans, programmes, and monitoring efforts.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW PROCESSES

In their VNR reports, countries state that they are consulting with stakeholders in the selection of national priorities and preparation of VNRs for the most part. However, VNR reports provided varying degrees of details in terms of the actual consultation processes. Civil society reports are available for 18 of the countries reviewed in 2017 at the HLPF. A number of civil society reports note that there is still a need to translate the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs into local languages.

> **BEST PRACTICE**
> **Select national targets and indicators through inclusive consultation with local stakeholders.**
>
> **Solicit verbal and written inputs from all stakeholders in the preparation of VNR reports and provide stakeholders with an opportunity to review and comment on the first draft.**

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

- Ensure stakeholder engagement on the 2030 Agenda is accessible, transparent, timely and inclusive. This means making use of varied and inclusive approaches to consultation such as online and offline methods, publicising consultation opportunities widely and with appropriate lead time, including at sub-national events in different parts of the country, and ensuring that information is available in local languages.

- Solicit verbal and written inputs from all stakeholders in the preparation of VNR reports and provide stakeholders with an opportunity to review and comment on the first draft.

- Include and support non-state actors and parliamentarians to participate in the HLPF in line with the principles of inclusivity and partnership in the 2030 Agenda.

- Support multi-stakeholder platforms that promote dialogue across the SDGs and with different sectors with a wide range of stakeholders. This will help to promote greater understanding of shared goals and objectives and potential synergies, build momentum and strengthen partnerships in implementation.

IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA

The Secretary General's common reporting guidelines ask member states to outline their best practices, lessons learned in accelerating implementation, challenges to implementation and where they would like to learn from peers. In 2017, countries reported on their challenges and to a lesser degree, lessons learned. However, few countries explicitly noted their best practices or areas in which they would like to learn from others. Data availability and monitoring progress are the most commonly cited challenges in implementation across VNR reports with developing countries often highlighting the need for support from development partners. In many cases, the information provided is general in nature, and not specific enough to be actionable. Reporting on these elements is critical to peer learning as well as the development of partnerships to address country-level challenges. These findings suggest that there may be a need for the United Nations to explore with member states why there is underreporting on these dimensions particularly given the focus of the HLPF follow-up and review process on knowledge and lesson sharing.

Most countries have not costed implementation but have identified public and private, domestic and international sources of finance to support implementation. Reporting was most prominent for international public finance in discussions on the means of implementation followed by capacity development and technology. The development of strategic partnerships, particularly in terms of South-South and triangular cooperation is seen as an important way to support the means of implementation going forward. A limited number of countries (5) called on traditional development partners to meet the official development assistance commitments. The same number of countries referred to the need to finalise trade packages for developing countries. Countries most commonly noted the general need for capacity development to realise the 2030 Agenda. In terms of next steps in implementation, a number of reports note the need for further localisation of the 2030 Agenda through engagement with local governments and for improving capacity to monitor progress.

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

- Clearly report in their VNR reports on best practices, lessons learned in accelerating implementation, challenges going forward and where opportunities exist to learn from peers.

- As an essential part of the process, start integrating the SDGs into national and local budgets to ensure that resources are allocated

for implementation, building on the good practice of identifying sources of finance to implement the 2030 Agenda at country level.

- Report on all means of implementation. Such information is critical for assessing gaps, including in terms of identifying where greater domestic and international efforts are needed. Member states failed to meaningfully operationalise Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals on Global Partnership. Member states should ensure that Goal 17 of the SDGs is fully implemented.

- Bolster donor country efforts to support development partners' capacity development priorities, including strengthening statistical systems and the capacities of local stakeholders to implement the 2030 Agenda.

- Increase official development assistance to support 2030 Agenda implementation. Aid providers should ensure they meet their commitment of providing at least 0.7% official development assistance as a percentage of gross national income, and 0.15 % to least developed countries.

- Align South-South cooperation to the national priorities defined by recipient partners in a data-driven and accountable way.

- Implement trade agreements and agendas that benefit developing and developed countries, including the Doha Development Agenda, and the Nairobi (2015) and Bali (2013) Packages.

- Scale up efforts to address systemic issues that impact SDG implementation, in particular international peace and security, illicit capital flight, tax avoidance and tax evasion, among other things.

PARTNERSHIP TO REALISE THE SDGS

For the most part, the VNR reports stress the important contributions of non-state actors and others, and the critical importance of multi-stakeholder partnership for 2030 Agenda implementation. Yet, VNR reports do not consistently provide real examples of specific stakeholder contributions beyond consultation processes and participation in implementation structures.

Reports also do not address the enabling environment for civil society (and the increasingly shrinking space that is available to civil society organisations around the world), nor other challenges that civil society organisations face in contributing to the 2030 Agenda; rather they highlight specific initiatives from civil society. Civil society reports indicate that lack of awareness on the 2030 Agenda by the general public and other development stakeholders. Limited finance for CSO activities are the most prominent barriers to effective civil society participation in 2030 Agenda implementation.

It seems that parliamentarians are primarily contributing to the 2030 Agenda through committee work, though reporting on the role of parliamentarians is limited. Similarly, VNR reports as a whole provide limited examples of the specific roles and initiatives supported by the private sector and academia, suggesting that more work is needed to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda and promote partnership with these stakeholders. Finally, VNR reports for developing countries revealed that most do not identify priorities for development partner support for delivery of the 2030 Agenda, though the roles development partners can play in supporting implementation are more commonly featured.

BEST PRACTICE
Submit a *national* report for the VNR that systematically outlines the contributions made by a wide range of stakeholders, not just the national government.

✔ Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

• Support civil society to engage in 2030 Agenda implementation by creating a more enabling environment, and through institutionalised dialogue and consultation, inclusion in formal governance arrangements, finance, and where needed, capacity development.

• Integrate the 2030 Agenda into parliamentary committee work, recognising the critical role parliamentarians play as citizens' representatives and in ensuring national level accountability for progress.

• Support and develop partnerships with a variety of non-state actors, including academia and the private sector.

• Where relevant, clearly stipulate and provide details in their VNR reports on priority areas for support from the international community, laying out the roles development partners can best play to support the acceleration of 2030 Agenda implementation.

MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING
The majority of countries provided information on monitoring and evaluation at the national level. There is some limited information on data availability for overall SDG monitoring. However, information on data availability, including disaggregated data is often unclear or not articulated. The review shows a need for countries — regardless of their income level — to strengthen data availability for SDG monitoring. Regular reporting, for the most part annual, is promised by 15

countries in descriptions of national reporting. A minority of countries plan to report to parliament. In the 31 reports that articulate national reporting provisions, only one country, Japan, notes when it will submit a follow-up report to the HLPF (2019).

Despite the emphasis on the importance of regional review as part of follow-up and review in the 2030 Agenda, of the 31 countries reporting in 2017, none referred to peer learning or review activities at the regional level in relation to 2030 Agenda implementation; that said, some countries referred to other SDG related activities at the regional level or in special country groupings.

BEST PRACTICE
Provide an account of national level reporting and accountability processes for 2030 Agenda implementation in VNR reports.

Integrate the 2030 Agenda into parliamentary committee work, recognising the critical role parliamentarians play as citizens' representatives and in ensuring national level accountability for progress.

✔ Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

• Report on data availability, including disaggregated data, and their efforts to improve data availability - given the importance of data for SDG monitoring and accountability, as well as leaving no one behind.

• Link reviews of progress for 2030 Agenda implementation to parliamentary oversight mechanisms, in order to ensure accountability at the national level.

• Spell out in their VNR reports how they plan to review progress at the national level and be accountable to their citizens for progress on the 2030 Agenda beyond reporting to the HLPF; and articulate plans for future HLPF reporting. These elements are important for ensuring accountability for progress on the 2030 Agenda, identifying gaps in implementation, allowing for course correction and ensuring transparency in reporting processes.

• Identify opportunities to realise the 2030 Agenda domestically and globally through engagement more formally in regional level initiatives and with like-minded countries. Such engagement offers opportunities to share best practice with and learn lessons from peers.

USE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S COMMON REPORTING GUIDELINES

Most countries include the majority of elements of the common reporting guidelines in their VNR reports, with notable exceptions being the thematic analysis and statistical annex. However, many of the VNR reports are not structured according to the outline in the guidelines. This can hinder comparison of shared challenges and good practices.

The absence of details in many VNR reports makes it difficult to understand country needs, hold stakeholders accountable and identify the best entry points for support. There are a number of specific recommendations for member states and the United Nations pertaining to VNR reporting emanating from the findings of this assessment of the 2017 VNRs against the common reporting guidelines.

Despite the missing elements noted above, VNR reports still tend to be very long, repetitive and unnecessarily detailed, with some sections of the guidelines asking for repetition of the same information. How member states are expected to differentiate from the goal-by-goal analysis and the analysis of the HLPF theme – particularly when it is linked to specific goals – is unclear. Similarly, there tends to be significant repetition between analysis of SDG 17 on partnership for the goals and the means of implementation. This suggests that the United Nations may need to explore the challenges faced by member States in reporting on these elements and provide further guidance to ensure that the reporting elements that can most contribute to learning and garnering support for implementation are present in VNR reports.

Member states

Based on the findings, many member states still need to:

- Follow, as much as possible, the guidelines as proposed by the Secretary General to ensure that all elements of 2030 Agenda implementation are captured and facilitate comparison of shared challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

- Include a statement from a head of state to demonstrate commitment and give profile to the agenda.

- Include an executive summary as a tool to provide a snapshot of context, best practice, challenges and lessons learned.

- Include an introduction which is useful for scene setting and setting out components of the report while avoiding repetition in the opening statement and executive summary.

- Include the methodology for the VNR, with sufficient details that clearly articulate how the drafting process occurred, timing, how stakeholders were engaged, and lessons learned. This will provide greater clarity on what was done, and how other member states can draw from the experience of different countries.

- Continue to provide information on efforts to raise awareness and foster ownership, in particular key initiatives and successes and lessons learned in this process.

- Report on all SDGs with specific attention to gap and baseline analyses that provide a clear articulation of where gaps exist.

- Continue to provide information on institutional mechanisms for 2030 Agenda implementation, including governance arrangements.

- Provide a detailed assessment of their forward-looking agenda, outlining where they need to go and the steps to get there, based on gaps and lessons learned to date. This should include next steps in terms of follow-up and review with concrete commitments to be fulfilled by states, strengthening the VNR process and clarifying what stakeholders can expect in the years following VNR reporting at HLPF.

- Include a statistical annex in their VNR reports as suggested by the common reporting guidelines.

United Nations

Based on the findings, the United Nations still needs to:

- Explore the challenges faced by states in adhering to the guidelines and provide further guidance where needed.

- Provide further guidance to member states on the following:

  – key elements required to help ensure integration of the three pillars of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) into and across national frameworks.

  – the main elements to be reported in the thematic analysis, with reference to how this element should differ from the goal-by-goal analysis.

  – how to report on the means of implementation, recognising the differences between developing and developed countries, and those that are both recipients of official development assistance and providers of South-South cooperation.

- Within the United Nations common reporting guidelines:

  - streamline how SDG 17 is analysed, more specifically, by combining the analysis of partnerships for the goals with the means of implementation, considering the significant overlap between these issues.

  - revise the statistical annex provisions for reporting on data availability to include disaggregated data, with reference to global and national level indicators. This will provide a better picture of countries' overall capacity to monitor SDG implementation.

  - mainstream the sections on next steps and conclusion. Rather than encouraging countries to provide a summary of the main report in the conclusion, the conclusion should focus on providing greater details on next steps.

Contents

1.0 Introduction

In September 2015, United Nations (UN) member states agreed on an ambitious agenda to promote sustainable development – the <u>2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</u> and the <u>Sustainable Development Goals</u> (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda includes a comprehensive set of 17 goals and 169 targets that serve as a universal, indivisible agenda that applies to all countries, rich and poor, who have promised to ensure no one is left behind in the implementation of the goals. Importantly, the 2030 Agenda also includes a political declaration and principles that represent a transformative approach to sustainable development.

Photo: © naturepl.com / Frederic Larrey / WWF

PRINCIPLES OF THE 2030 AGENDA

Human-rights based approach

Leaving no one behind and combating inequality

Preserving the planet and inter-generational responsibility

Integrated nature of sustainable development and the equal importance of the economic, social and environmental pillars

Inclusivity, solidarity and participation

Transparency and accountability

In July 2018, governments will convene for the Sixth Meeting of the United Nations <u>High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development</u> (HLPF) to examine their progress on implementing the 2030 Agenda. The HLPF is the main global venue for governments, civil society and other stakeholders to share their efforts to implement and monitor the goals – both at a procedural and substantive level. The Forum is mandated to carry out regular, inclusive, State-led and thematic reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with inputs from other intergovernmental bodies, regional processes, major groups and other stakeholders. As outlined in the 2030 Agenda, the follow-up and review process is meant to promote accountability to citizens, support effective international cooperation and foster exchange of best practice and mutual learning. To date, 64 countries have presented <u>voluntary national reviews</u> (VNRs).[1]

1   Togo volunteered for 2016 and 2017.

Progressing national SDGs implementation

Parallel to these VNR reports, civil society organisations (CSOs) and coalitions from different countries have also produced their own reviews and analysis, assessing their respective governments' implementation of the 2030 Agenda and reporting on that implementation. These CSO reports represent an essential complement to the official processes – in particular, given the limited dialogue that several governments have pursued with domestic civil society around their respective VNR process.

This publication documents and analyses the VNR reports and a sample of civil society reports produced in 2017 for the HLPF.[2] It does so with a view to providing recommendations for improving implementation and the VNR process and reports, and strengthening the accountability around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It identifies best practices in implementation and provides recommendations on how governments, CSOs and other stakeholders can improve efforts to implement the SDGs. The report also provides recommendations on how member states can improve their reporting to the HLPF by meeting and building on the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines for VNRs at the HLPF.

The review includes an assessment of all English, French and Spanish VNR reports submitted in 2017, which account for 42 of the 43 VNR reports. Belarus' VNR report is only available in Russian and was not examined. The VNR report for the Netherlands provided information on all countries in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, including Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. Considering the effort made by the Kingdom of the Netherlands to undertake this in-depth analysis of all four countries, this research has also analysed each report separately and refers to the different countries throughout the analysis. As such, the analysis that follows is based on data for 45 countries, unless otherwise stated. The box below provides a list of the countries examined. Annex 1 also provides an overview of the countries according to region and income level.

Countries reporting to the HLPF in 2017

AFGHANISTAN

ARGENTINA

AZERBAIJAN

BANGLADESH

BELARUS

BELGIUM

BELIZE

BENIN

BOTSWANA

BRAZIL

CHILE

COSTA RICA

CYPRUS

CZECH REPUBLIC

DENMARK

EL SALVADOR

ETHIOPIA

GUATEMALA

HONDURAS

INDIA

INDONESIA

ITALY

JAPAN

JORDAN

KENYA

LUXEMBOURG

MALAYSIA

MALDIVES

MONACO

NEPAL

NETHERLANDS (INCLUDING ARUBA, CURAÇAO AND SINT MAARTEN)

NIGERIA

PANAMA

PERU

PORTUGAL

QATAR

SLOVENIA

SWEDEN

TAJIKISTAN

THAILAND

TOGO

URUGUAY

ZIMBABWE

2   Details on the methodology, including the analytical framework, used for the assessment of all the VNRs can be found in Annex 2.

Progressing national SDGs implementation

The review has two main sections. The first is an assessment of 2030 implementation through a review of the VNR reports. Building on the framework presented in Bond et al's 2016 assessment of the VNR reports,[3] this review assesses countries in terms of ten pillars of implementation:

INCORPORATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA INTO NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND POLICIES

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

BASELINE OR GAP ANALYSIS

INTEGRATION AND POLICY COHERENCE

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

RAISING AWARENESS AND CREATING OWNERSHIP OF THE 2030 AGENDA

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW PROCESSES

IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA

PARTNERSHIP TO REALISE THE SDGS

MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

The assessment framework broadly captures the key themes outlined in the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines. It also gives special attention to the spirit of the 2030 Agenda through, for example, the examination of efforts to leave no one behind and partnerships. Annex 2 provides an overview of the assessment framework.

The second main section in the review pertains to VNR reporting against the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines. It looks at the extent to which countries are following the guidelines and provides a comparison of 2016 and 2017 VNR reports.

Throughout the main sections of this report, best practices, including case studies, are highlighted based on government reporting through the VNR reports. Recommendations are also presented in each section. In addition, this report this report includes an annex (Annex 3) that presents two-page country profiles for the 45 reporting countries based on the ten pillars of implementation. The profiles include a traffic light ranking for compliance with the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines.

It should be noted that the analysis in the review is based largely on the VNR reports, and where available, civil society reports.[4] No additional research was conducted to verify the accuracy and confirm the validity of the information governments included in reports. Where relevant, findings from other assessments of the VNR reports for 2017 have been noted throughout the report. Nevertheless, this is a clear limitation of the findings.

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3   Cutter, Amy. 2016. *Progressing national SDGs implementation: Experiences and recommendations from 2016*. London: Bond. This second edition builds on the eight pillars of analysis from the first edition by adding two more that focus on partnerships to realise Agenda 2030 and the means of implementation. It also provides an annex (Annex 3) of two-page profiles for the country VNR reports reviewed.

4   Civil society reports are available for 18 of the countries reviewed in 2017, the majority of which can be found here: http://action4sd.org/tools-resources/

2.0 Assessment of 2030 Agenda Implementation

Photo: © Simon de TREY-WHITE / WWF-UK

Chapter Summary

The VNR reports reveal that most countries reporting in 2017 have set out the foundations for 2030 Agenda implementation and are now ready to take action. Governments have carried out awareness-raising activities, consulted local stakeholders, identified national priorities and have either integrated or have begun integrating the SDGs into national plans and policies. A number of governments have also established SDG action plans.

Institutional mechanisms for implementation and coordination are set up for the most part, with countries making use of councils or committees to govern implementation and leadership residing with cabinet ministers or an implementation council or committee outside parliament. A minority of countries have formally included non-state actors in governance arrangements. Most countries, however, only note their commitment to engage non-state actors.

Countries are making use of policy and/or data assessments to inform their policies and approaches to SDG implementation, though information on the results of such assessments is not readily available in reports. While countries tended to cover all dimensions of sustainable development in their reports, including with detailed analysis, the majority of countries did not report on the full set of SDGs in 2017.

Limited references to linkages between goals may also indicate that countries are not sufficiently ensuring integration in their approaches to 2030 Agenda implementation. Moreover, the analysis of SDG progress in reports suggests that many countries have yet to establish new programmes specific to implementing the 2030 Agenda. For the most part, analysis is in terms of pre-existing policies and programmes that happen to be aligned to and supportive of progress on the SDGs.[5] Policy coherence for sustainable development does not feature strongly in reports. Across reports, countries do not consistently refer to the Paris Agreement on climate change or the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

In terms of efforts to leave no one behind (LNOB), a principle recognised by most countries, reports that included a dedicated chapter on LNOB tended to do a better job at describing who is being left behind and efforts to address LNOB. Reports provided little information on the status of data to LNOB, but showed that women, children and youth, persons with disabilities and elderly people have the greatest risk of being left behind for most countries. To ensure no one is left behind, countries highlighted the use of broad social policies that set minimum standards as well as policies and initiatives that target specific groups. Similar approaches were listed for countries that referred to reducing domestic inequality.

Most countries have identified national priorities in consultation with local stakeholders. National priorities tend to reflect all dimensions of sustainable development, and to a lesser extent, governance issues. Efforts to establish ownership at the local level are mixed across reports, showing a wide variance in terms of the extent to which local governments have been engaged in implementation so far.

With respect to implementation, countries report on their challenges and, to a lesser degree, lessons learned. Few countries explicitly noted their best practices or areas in which they would like to learn

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5   Together 2030 and World Vision's review of main messages has a similar conclusion on the state of implementation. See Together 2030 and World Vision. 2017b. *Voluntary National Reviews: What are countries prioritizing?* Together 2030. http://www.together2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/FINAL-Together-2030_VNR-Main-Messages-Review-2017.pdf

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from others. Data availability and monitoring progress are the most commonly cited challenges to implementation across VNR reports.

Most countries have not costed 2030 Agenda implementation but have identified public and private domestic and international sources of finance to support implementation. Reporting was most prominent for international public finance in discussions on the means of implementation followed by capacity development and technology. The development of strategic partnerships, particularly in terms of South-South and triangular cooperation is seen as an important way to support the means of implementation going forward. A limited number of countries (5) called on traditional development partners to meet the official development assistance commitments. The same number of countries referred to the need to finalise trade packages for developing countries. Countries most commonly noted the general need for capacity development to realise the 2030 Agenda. In terms of next steps in implementation, a number of reports note the need to further localise the 2030 Agenda through engagement with local governments and to improve capacity to monitor progress.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Integrate Agenda 2030 priorities into national policies and frameworks and develop a roadmap to accelerate implementation.

For the most part, all reports stress the important contributions of non-state actors and others, and the critical importance of multi-stakeholder partnership for 2030 Agenda implementation. Yet, a limited number of reports provide examples of specific stakeholder contributions beyond consultation processes and participation in implementation structures. Reports do not address the enabling environment for civil society, nor other challenges that civil society organisations face in contributing to the SDGs but rather highlight specific initiatives supported by civil society. Parliamentarians are contributing to the 2030 Agenda through committee work, though reporting on the role of parliamentarians is limited. Similarly, the VNR reports provide limited reporting on the specific roles and initiatives supported by the private sector and academia overall, suggesting that more work is needed to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda and promote partnership with these stakeholders. Finally, VNR reports for developing countries revealed that most do not identify priorities for development partner support. That said, the roles development partners can play in supporting implementation are more commonly featured with provision of official development assistance most commonly cited.

The majority of countries provided information on monitoring and evaluation at the national level. There is limited information on data availability for overall SDG monitoring however. Information on data availability, including disaggregated data, is often unclear or not articulated. Regular reporting, for the most part annual, is promised by 15 countries in descriptions of national reporting. A minority of countries plan to report to parliament.

2.1 Incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into national frameworks and policies

2.1.1 Incorporating the 2030 Agenda into policy frameworks

The majority of countries (23) reporting in 2017 have incorporated the SDGs into national development plans and related policies and frameworks directly. The remainder of countries have taken one of two approaches. Eight (8) countries have developed a specific SDG implementation strategy. Nine (9) countries have incorporated the SDGs directly into national development plans *and* developed an SDG implementation strategy. Typically, the SDG implementation strategy sets out the 'how' of SDG implementation with substantive priorities integrated into existing policies. For the four countries that have not incorporated the SDGs into national plans or through a specific strategy, three are in the process of doing so. Only one country – Cyprus – suggests that the SDGs are already effectively captured in existing policies (and as such, do not need to be incorporated). Monaco's VNR report refers to an SDG diagnostic, but it does not outline clearly whether there will be changes made at the strategic or operational levels to implement the 2030 Agenda (though the report does highlight efforts already underway and planned for some SDGs).

🇰🇪 **A case study in best practice: Kenya's policy approach to 2030 Agenda implementation**
According to its VNR report, Kenya has taken steps to incorporate the SDGs into national policies and developed a roadmap for implementation. The country's 2nd Medium Term Plan was in its third year of implementation when the SDGs were adopted, however early consultations on Agenda 2030 informed the plan. The 3rd Medium Term Plan is set to mainstream international and regional commitments, including the 2030 Agenda and Africa Agenda 2063. Kenya's efforts to mainstream the SDGs in policy and planning includes integration through Performance Contracts and Strategic Plans for ministries, departments and agencies.

Kenya also developed a SDGs Roadmap to guide the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the SDGs in consultation with national and local government, civil society and development partners. The roadmap addresses key considerations for SDG implementation: stakeholder mapping and establishing partnerships, advocacy and sensitisation, localisation, mainstreaming and accelerating implementation, resource mobilisation, tracking and reporting, and capacity building.

Kenya's approach is an example of best practice. The approach addresses substantive elements of SDG implementation in terms of national priorities, but also the steps needed to accelerate implementation.

Source: Excerpt adapted from Kenya's VNR report.

2.1.2 Evidence of change or business as usual?

The majority of reports (43) show evidence of change to realise the 2030 Agenda in terms of incorporating the SDGs into national policies, developing institutional mechanisms for implementation, efforts to build partnerships and/or attention to monitoring and evaluation of progress. Only two countries – Cyprus and Monaco – suggest "a business as usual approach." In the case of Cyprus, as noted above, the VNR makes clear that the country's existing policies and legislation already align to the SDGs and provides little evidence of substantial change (though the report notes that institutional changes are underway in the country that hinder implementation). Monaco similarly outlines existing plans for some of the SDGs, but is unclear on strategic changes – despite having established an inter-ministerial working group under the authority of the head of government and led by the Department of External Relations and Cooperation.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Explicitly link the implementation of each SDG to relevant national and international human rights frameworks.

2.1.3 Integrating the 2030 Agenda Principles

The 2030 Agenda is informed by a number of key principles, including universality, human rights, integration, partnership, inclusivity, pursuing development within planetary boundaries and leaving no one behind. These principles represent the spirit of the 2030 Agenda and serve as transformative elements of implementation. The assessment framework looked at whether reports reference human rights based approaches, leaving no one behind and universality to provide an indication of the extent to which the 2030 Agenda principles are informing implementation.[6] As shown in Figure 1, the majority of countries (39) refer to the

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6   Other principles are captured in the sections that follow through the examination of integration, stakeholder engagement and partnership.

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principle of leaving no one behind in their reports. Universality is the next most commonly referenced principle. Seventeen (17) countries – 16 of which are high-income and upper-middle-income countries[7] – refer to the universal nature of the SDGs. No low-income countries referred to universality. Finally, only ten countries – largely high-income countries or those in the Latin America and Caribbean region – referred to the 2030 Agenda as human rights-based. An additional nine countries however, refer to human rights in some respect in their reports. Overall, countries tend to focus on the SDGs rather than the broader 2030 Agenda and its transformational principles.

FIGURE 1. REFERENCE TO PRINCIPLES OF THE 2030 AGENDA

Does not refer to principle   Refers to principle

Human rights based approach
35   10

Leave no one behind
6   39

Universality
28   17

0   10   20   30   40   50

Number of countries
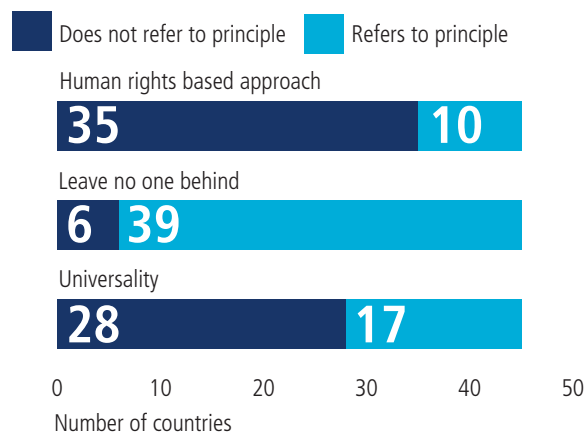
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Fully integrate the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs into national plans and strategies based on an evaluation of existing policies, approaches and progress to identify gaps, adapt policies and target areas where further progress is needed. The fact that existing policies already align to the SDGs is not sufficient.

- Operationalise the principles of the 2030 Agenda in approaches to implementation recognising the universal, rights based and interlinked nature of the agenda that seeks to leave no one behind and ensure sustainable development within planetary boundaries. This must include grounding plans and strategies in human rights, purposefully working to put the last first and consistently reach marginalised communities, and supporting the universality of the agenda - more specifically, addressing domestic and global dimensions of sustainable development. VNR reports should demonstrate how approaches to sustainable development are meaningfully changing based on the principles of the 2030 Agenda and not just the SDGs.

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7   One lower-middle-income country, Honduras, also referred to universality.

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🏛 2.2 Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms

All countries reporting in 2017, with the exception of Curaçao , outlined their governance arrangements with respect to 2030 Agenda implementation. This is an improvement over reporting in 2016 when only one country directly addressed the question of governance.[8] This likely reflects the fact that countries reporting in 2017 have had more time to establish governance arrangements for implementation.

2.2.1 Leadership

Leadership for 2030 Agenda implementation is not always clearly articulated in reports. However, in most cases it is possible to identify where leadership lies based on governance arrangements. Countries appear to be taking a wide range of approaches with respect to leadership for implementation (Figure 2).

The most common leaders for 2030 Agenda implementation are cabinet ministers (14) and implementation bodies (11) outside parliament. This likely reflects the predominant use of councils or committees to govern implementation as discussed below. The next most prominent forms of leadership are by a lead department (8) and head of government or state (8).

FIGURE 2. LEADERSHIP FOR 2030 AGENDA IMPLEMENTATION

FORM OF LEADERSHIP

Form of leadership	Number of countries
Head of government or state	8
Individual cabinet minister	3
Multipe cabinet ministers	11
Parliamentary committee	0
Implementation body outside parliament	11
Lead department	8
Other	1
Not articulated in the VNR	3

Number of countries

8   Cutter, 2016.

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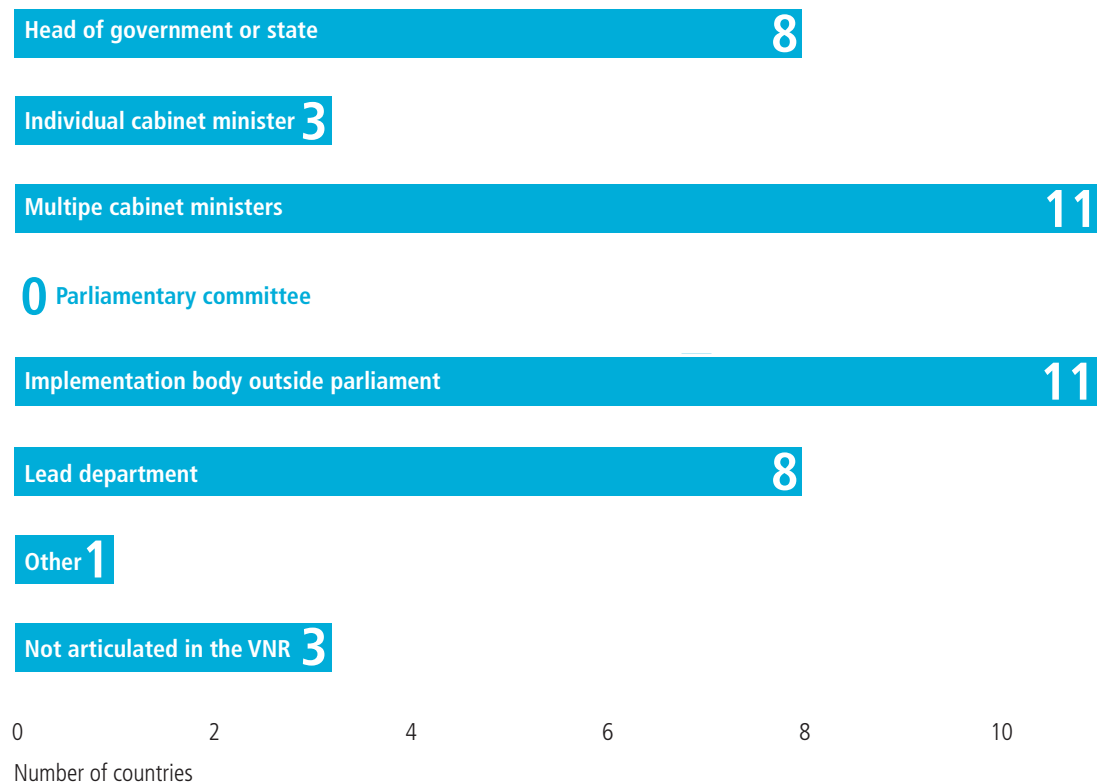
2.2.2 Governance arrangements

The preferred approach to governance arrangements appears to be through the use of new or existing councils or committees – with 21 countries establishing a new council or committee and 15 making use of existing councils or committees by updating or adapting their respective mandates. In this context, four countries that established a committee or council, and three that made use of an existing committee or council, also highlighted that implementation was driven through a lead department or several government institutions. Five countries outlined how implementation is carried out through government departments with no mention of other governance structures. One (1) country – Nigeria – created a specialised office to oversee implementation while India has appointed a local government think-tank to drive implementation. Regardless of the governance structure involved, most reports outline the main responsibilities for governing bodies and their associated structures as overseeing and driving nationalisation of the 2030 Agenda, policy alignment, coordination, implementation and monitoring. Many countries have also developed technical and substantive working groups or other specialised bodies to support implementation.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Formal inclusion of non-state actors in governance arrangements contributes to inclusivity, a whole of society approach in 2030 Agenda implementation and the promotion of partnership.

2.2.3 Non-state actor engagement in governance arrangements

Figure 3 provides data on how stakeholders outside government institutions are engaged in governance and institutional mechanisms for implementation. Information is presented for different groups, according to methods of engagement. Participation in councils, committees or technical working groups that oversee implementation refers to instances in which the stakeholder is a formal member. Data presented as 'commitment to engage' refers to instances in which no formalised participation has been set out, but the expectation of engagement is well established, generally through the mandate of governance mechanisms and institutions carrying out implementation. Organisations that fall into the category of 'other' include particular interest groups such as trade unions.

Figure 3 shows that the most prominent form of engagement with non-state actors is commitment to engagement through governance or institutional mechanisms. For countries that have formally included non-state actors, representation is more prominent in

technical working groups than on councils or committees. In terms of who governments engage, civil society and the private sector are most commonly cited, followed by academia, development partners, parliament and government institutions.

While the commitment by countries to engage non-state actors through governance and institutional mechanisms is welcome, this serves as standard rather than best practice. Furthermore, for seven countries, non-state actor engagement in governance arrangements and institutional mechanisms to support implementation is not mentioned. In four countries, the information that is provided is unclear on the role of non-state actors in this respect. Four (4) countries reported that engagement with non-state stakeholders is occurring, but did not provide details.

Formal inclusion of representatives from major stakeholder groups is essential, and is something civil society will be monitoring actively to ensure practice changes and improves. Such engagement contributes to ensuring whole-of-society ownership over the 2030 Agenda, building trust between stakeholders and supporting inclusive multi-stakeholder approaches to implementation.

A case study in best practice: Including non-state actors in governance arrangements in Malaysia
According to the VNR report for Malaysia, an important lesson learned by the government is the importance of formalising the engagement of non-state actors in the development process. By including non-governmental organisations, CSOs and private sector representatives in Cluster Working Committees, Malaysia formalised their participation. Despite limited resources, Malaysia saw greater self-organisation among non-governmental organisations and CSOs, which led to the formation of a Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance. Some organisations have mapped their strategies and activities to the SDG framework. Other stakeholders such as SUHAKAM, a statutory body, and TalentCorp, a government agency under the Prime Minister's Department, have done likewise. Working with the United Nations Country Team and other partners, the Global Compact Network Malaysia is also working to more effectively engage the private sector on the SDGs. The formal inclusion of non-state actors has, as a result, opened up opportunities for discussion and deliberation on charting the way forward for national development. New ideas and perspectives were discussed that further emphasised joint responsibilities and plans to drive the SDGs forward.

Source: Excerpt adapted from Malaysia' VNR report.

FIGURE 3. PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

LEAD COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE   **TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS**   **COMMITMENT TO ENGAGE**

Academia
4   5   5

Civil Society
6   9   12

Development partners
2   4   3

General reference to non-state
1   2   3

Government institutions
2   7   3

Local government
2   1   2

Other
3   4   4

Parliament
3   3

Private Sector
6   8   9

Youth
1   2   1

0   5   10   15   20   25   30

Number of countries
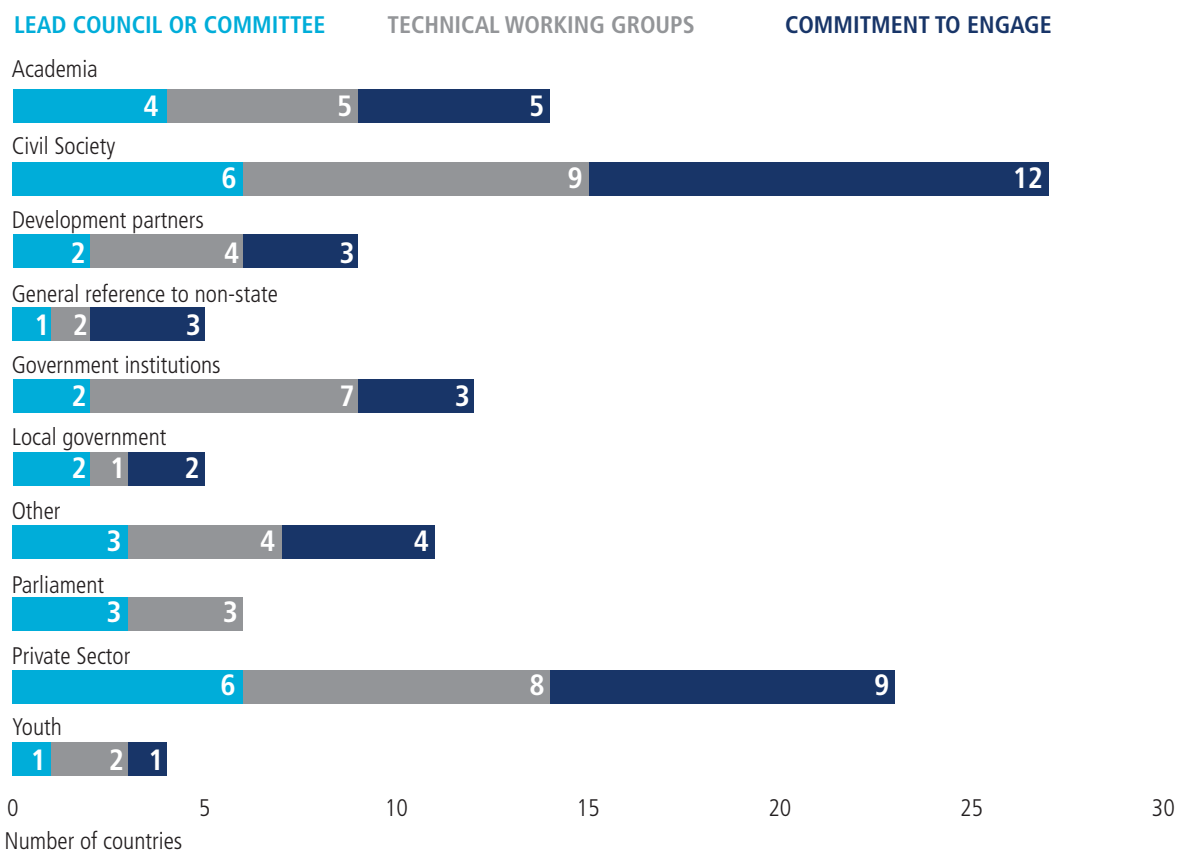
2.2.4 Engaging peers on the 2030 Agenda

Just over half of the countries examined (25), referred to participation in regional activities that specifically address the 2030 Agenda.[9] These VNR reports tend to highlight participation in regional (and international) dialogues on Agenda 2030 -related issues, including addressing substantive areas such as climate change and inequality, and monitoring the SDGs, as well as efforts to incorporate the SDGs into regional activities. A minority of countries (ten) referred to coordinating on the 2030 Agenda through special country groupings. Engagement is also typically in the form of addressing SDG specific challenges facing certain country groupings, as well as efforts by countries to promote SDG-related issues through particular country groupings. Despite the emphasis on the importance of regional review as part of the follow-up and review in the 2030 Agenda, no country reporting in 2017 made reference to peer learning and review activities at a regional level in relation to implementation.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Assess policies, data availability and baselines to inform prioritisation and nationalisation of the 2030 Agenda, and ensure an evidence-based approach to implementation.

✅ **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Clearly establish leadership and governance structures to support 2030 Agenda implementation and lay out lines of accountability between various national stakeholders.

- Formalise non-state actor engagement in governance structures to realise the 2030 Agenda.

- Identify opportunities to realise the 2030 Agenda domestically and globally through engagement more formally in regional level initiatives and with like-minded countries. Such engagement offers opportunities to share best practice with and learn lessons from peers.

9   Most reports refer to regional activities more generally but in particular with respect to coordination on the 2030 Agenda.

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2.3 Baseline or gap analysis

2.3.1 Status of assessments

As shown in Figure 4, most countries (38) noted that they carried out some kind of assessment of the SDGs or some SDGs, or plan to carry out an assessment.[10] By comparison, in 2016 ten of the 16 VNR reports reviewed noted that they had carried out an assessment.[11]

2.3.2 Content of baseline or gap assessments

Thirty-three (33) countries provide information on the content of their assessments. Some provide a one or two sentence overview of the assessment while others provide significant details in terms of how and when the assessment was carried out, and what it covered.

There are three main types of assessments noted in the VNR reports – mapping of country policies against the SDGs, assessment of data availability and/or establishment of baselines, or a combination of both. The most common type of assessment noted in VNR reports is with respect to data availability and/or the establishment of baselines (16 countries) (Figure 5). Eight countries mapped or plan to map their policies against the SDGs while another eight countries have or plan to assess policies and data availability. One (1) country provided information on their assessment however it is unclear exactly what the assessment entailed.

FIGURE 4. GAP OR BASELINE ANALYSIS

Assessment carried out for all SDGs	28
5	Assessment carried out for some SDGs
5	Assessment planned
6	Not articulated in the VNR

0   5   10   15   20   25   30

Number of countries

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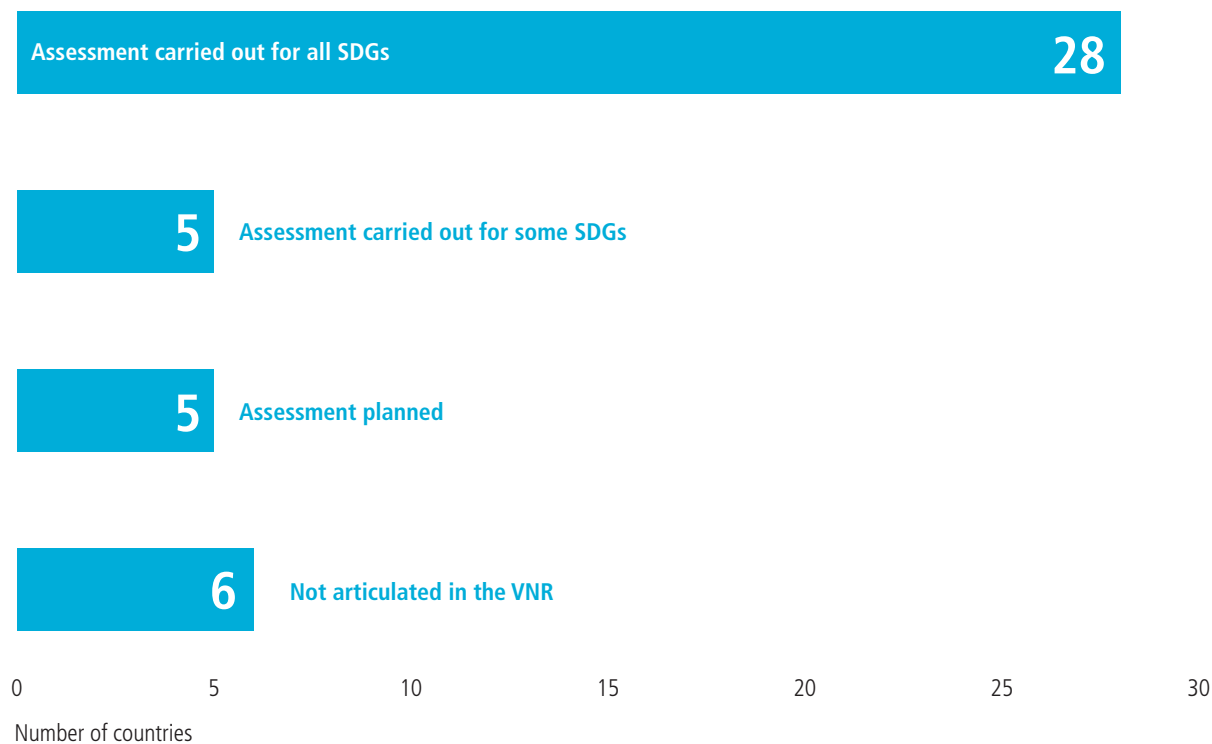
10 The European Union has resisted developing a gap analysis for quite some time but has recently expressed its intention to develop a "distance analysis" to identify how far the current policy reality is from the SDG target.

11 Cutter, 2016.

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FIGURE 5. TYPES OF SDG BASELINE AND GAP ASSESSMENTS LISTED IN VNR REPORTS

ASSESSMENT OF DATA AVAILABILITY AND/OR BASELINE ESTABLISHMENT
16 COUNTRIES

8 COUNTRIES

MAPPING POLICIES AGAINST THE SDGs
8 COUNTRIES
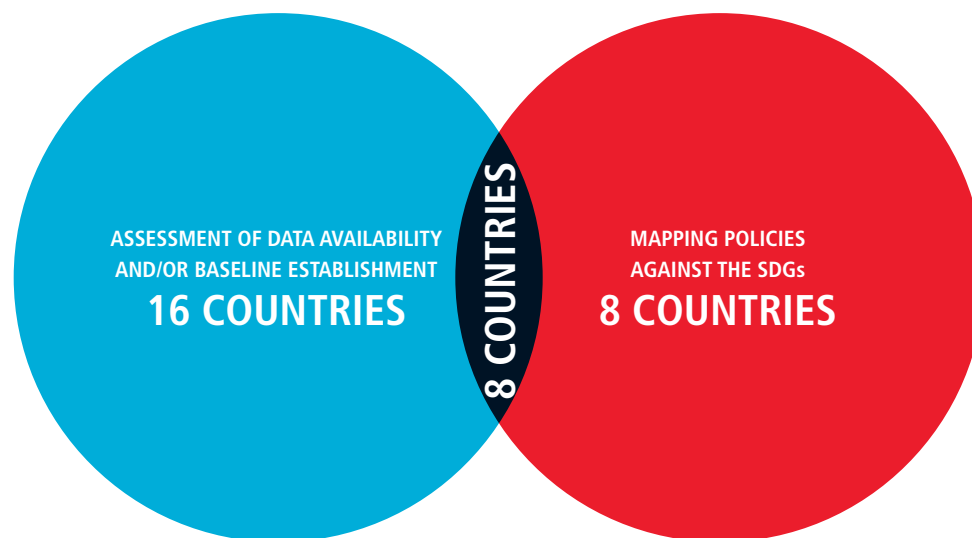
BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Detailed assessment of all 17 goals with appropriate linkages to all dimensions of sustainable development and reference to domestic and global efforts to realise the 2030 Agenda.

A case study in best practice: Benin's rapid integrated analysis to support 2030 Agenda implementation
Benin conducted a rapid integrated analysis to assess the degree of alignment between 47 policy and strategy documents and the SDGs. It also looked at the existence of monitoring and evaluation indicators similar to the SDGs. The analysis revealed that approximately 70% of its policies and strategies are aligned with the global SDG indicators. However, data are available only for 46% of the 145 SDG indicators considered a priority for the country.

Source: Except adapted from Benin's VNR report.

2.3.3 Results of assessments

Most countries do not provide consolidated findings from their assessments of policies and/or baselines. Information on gaps and priorities are often presented in the goal-by-goal analysis however. The most commonly cited gaps that emerge as a result of the assessments include goal or target specific gaps, and overarching data gaps.

✅ **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Conduct an assessment that identifies gaps in existing policies and programmes, and set out baselines from which to measure progress and assess where additional efforts are needed.

- Clearly articulate how the assessment was conducted and provide a summary of the gaps identified for each goal.

✪ 2.4 Integration and policy coherence

2.4.1 SDG coverage

For countries reporting in 2017, most chose to report on a limited set of SDGs, typically drawing from the HLPF theme goals and either removing goals deemed irrelevant to the country or including additional goals to the theme set by the HLPF (Table 1). Landlocked countries, for example, did not report on SDG 14 on life under water, though these countries still consume marine resources and as such have an impact on the marine environment. Only 11 countries reported on the full set of SDGs. Seven (7) countries did not prepare a goal-by-goal analysis, but rather presented progress through a thematic discussion with references to individual goals.

TABLE 1. GOAL BY GOAL REPORTING IN THE 2017 VNR REPORTS

SDG coverage	Countries	
All SDGs examined (11 countries)	ARGENTINA BELGIUM BENIN KENYA LUXEMBOURG MALDIVES	NETHERLANDS PORTUGAL SLOVENIA SWEDEN THAILAND
SDGs covered by the HLPF theme (8 countries)	AZERBAIJAN BANGLADESH BRAZIL CHILE	INDIA INDONESIA PANAMA TOGO
Limited set of country-selected SDGs (19 countries)	AFGHANISTAN ARUBA BELIZE BOTSWANA COSTA RICA CURAÇAO CYPRUS EL SALVADOR ETHIOPIA GUATEMALA	MALAYSIA MONACO NEPAL NIGERIA QATAR SINT MAARTEN TAJIKISTAN URUGUAY ZIMBABWE
SDGs not examined though a goal-by-goal analysis (7 countries)	CZECH REPUBLIC DENMARK HONDURAS ITALY	JAPAN JORDAN PERU

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Figure 6 provides an overview of the goals most commonly featured in VNR reports according to the approach taken to a goal-by-goal analysis.

FIGURE 6. COVERAGE OF SPECIFIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
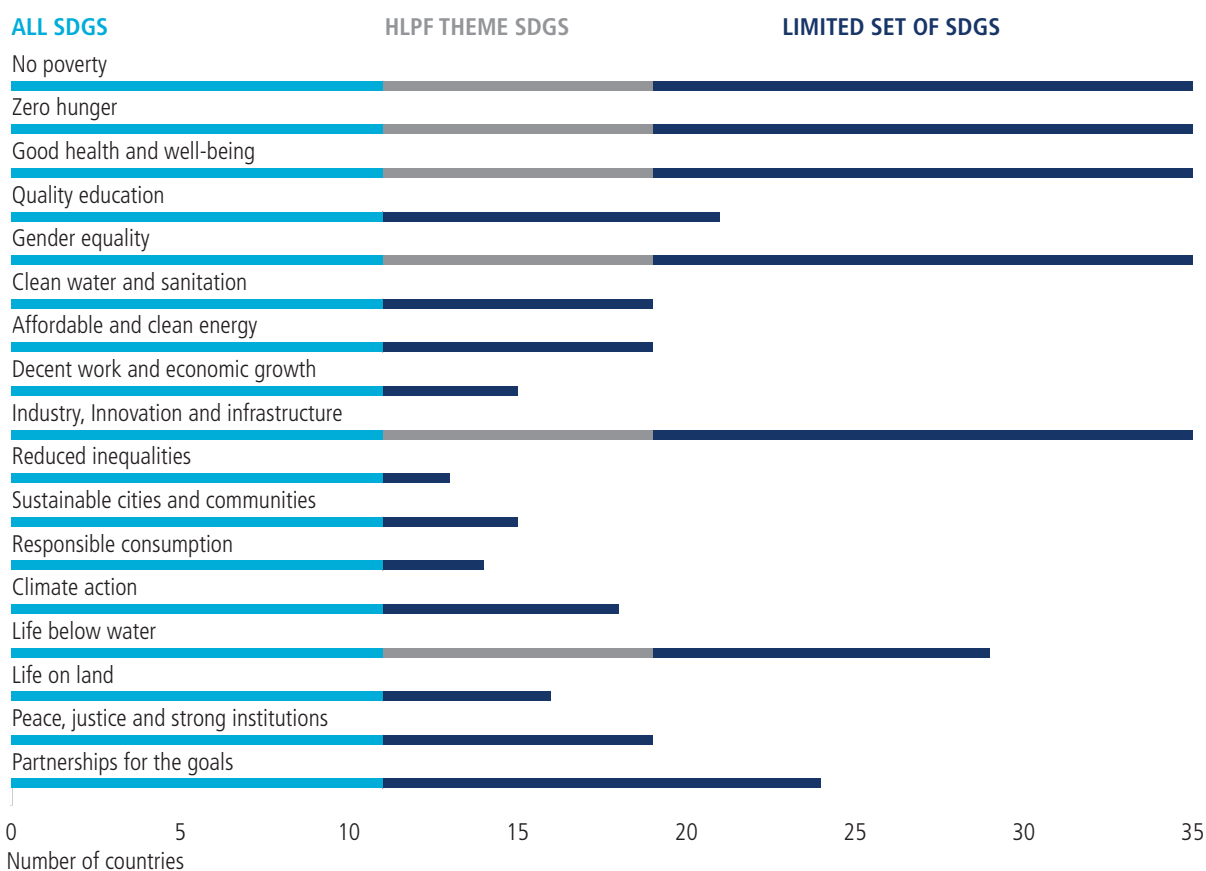
The majority of countries that included a goal-by-goal analysis in their VNR report (29 of 36) provided detailed analysis that tended to include reference to overall trends, policies, and initiatives. A small number of countries also provided information on goal-specific challenges and lessons learned. Fifteen (15) countries provided a summary of progress in their examination of goals, while one country, Honduras, provided no details. One issue that emerged from the extensive examination of the 2017 VNR reports is that countries tend to provide a significant amount of detail on efforts relating to goals, but do not provide information on best practice, lessons learned, gaps and priorities going forward. Though reports are detailed, the information provided is not necessarily conducive to promoting peer learning and garnering support to address challenges in implementation.

2.4.2 Integration

Most countries(33) gave equal attention to all three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental - in their VNR report overall. Countries that noted they were emerging from an economic crisis – Cyprus, Azerbaijan, and Zimbabwe – included all dimensions in their VNR reports, but gave greater focus on economic. Brazil also gave greater attention to economic dimensions. Reflecting some of their most pressing sustainable development challenges, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Botswana, Argentina and Monaco addressed all dimensions, but gave greater focus to social. Finally, Afghanistan and Nepal, and Qatar included all dimensions, but gave limited attention to environmental.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Summarise best practice, lessons learned, gaps and priorities, and areas where support is needed in the goal by goal analysis to facilitate learning and global partnership.

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🔴 A case study in best practice: Ensuring integration through Japan's principles for SDG implementation

According to its VNR report, Japan's approach to SDG implementation is guided by Implementation Guiding Principles. These include universality, inclusiveness, a participatory approach, an integrated approach, and transparency and accountability. Japan plans to appraise all concrete measures to promote the SDGs against these principles. Under the principle of an integrated approach, the government will endeavor to address economic, social and environmental dimensions holistically, and foster linkages and synergies between priority areas for SDG implementation. For example, in Japan's current review of its Basic Environment Plan, the government is identifying integrated solutions to multiple challenges and ensuring participation by all stakeholders. In follow-up and review, implementation activities will be monitored in terms of accordance with the guiding principles.

Source: Excerpt adapted from Japan's VNR report.

🔵 A case study in best practice: A practical approach to integration in Panama

In June 2017, Panama released the first version of its Multidimensional Poverty Index. The index analyses a number of dimensions of well-being, including education, health, jobs, environment and sanitation, housing and basic services. The index provides insights on the number of people living in income poverty and the data has been used to improve the management and integration of social policies, including with participation by non-state actors. The data also enabled the disaggregation of information by geographic areas, confirming a fact already known: in the indigenous regions of Panama the rate of poverty is higher than in any other part of the country. Overall, the results of the index provided impetus for Panama to consider various dimensions of well-being, adopt cross-cutting approaches to social policies and identify vulnerable groups being left behind. Panama's VNR report expressly pointed to the value of adopting the Multidimensional Poverty Index to improve the integration of the social, economic and environmental fields.

Source: Summary provided by CIPEI based on Panama's VNR report.

In the goal-by-goal analysis, 22 countries made references to applicable social, economic and environmental linkages between goal areas. However, 19 countries made limited reference to linkages between dimensions, tending to take a silo approach in their goal-by-goal analysis. Two (2) countries – Brazil and Qatar, made no linkages between dimensions of sustainable development in their analysis. These results raise red flags and may indicate that countries are not sufficiently ensuring integration in their approaches to 2030 Agenda implementation.

2.4.3 Policy coherence for sustainable development

The review of VNR reports looked at the extent to which countries made linkages to international agreements related to the 2030 Agenda and policy coherence for sustainable development. It shows that countries are more likely to link climate change and the Paris Agreement to the 2030 Agenda, than the Addis Ababa Action Agenda or policy coherence for sustainable development. All countries reference climate change, however only 27 explicitly refer to the Paris Agreement and ten provide no information on how they tackle climate change.[12] Table 2 provides an overview of the main approaches to tackling climate change as outlined in the VNR reports. It shows that 22 countries refer to national policies and plans related to climate change mitigation and adaptation in their VNR reports, while 15 highlight efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, typically providing information on national targets. Another 14 specifically point to improving energy efficiency and renewable energy usage.

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12 Afghanistan, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Curaçao , Denmark, Ethiopia, Honduras, Indonesia, Nepal, and Nigeria.

TABLE 2. EFFORTS TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

DEVELOPMENT AND/OR IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL CLIMATE POLICIES (22 COUNTRIES)	BANGLADESH BOTSWANA BRAZIL COSTA RICA CYPRUS CZECH REPUBLIC ITALY JAPAN	JORDAN KENYA LUXEMBOURG MALAYSIA MALDIVES NETHERLANDS PANAMA PERU	PORTUGAL SWEDEN TAJIKISTAN THAILAND URUGUAY ZIMBABWE
REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (15 COUNTRIES)	BANGLADESH BELGIUM CHILE CYPRUS CZECH REPUBLIC	INDIA JAPAN LUXEMBOURG MONACO NETHERLANDS	PORTUGAL SLOVENIA SWEDEN TAJIKISTAN THAILAND
IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY USAGE (14 COUNTRIES)	ARUBA BELGIUM CHILE CYPRUS INDIA	ITALY JORDAN LUXEMBOURG MALAYSIA MONACO	PORTUGAL SLOVENIA TAJIKISTAN THAILAND
CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE FINANCE / INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE (10 COUNTRIES)	BELGIUM INDIA ITALY JAPAN	JORDAN LUXEMBOURG PORTUGAL	QATAR SLOVENIA SWEDEN
REDUCING CLIMATE AND DISASTER VULNERABILITIES (9 COUNTRIES)	BELIZE EL SALVADOR KENYA	MALDIVES NETHERLANDS PERU	SINT MAARTEN TOGO ZIMBABWE
REFORESTATION AND/OR CONSERVATION EFFORTS (8 COUNTRIES)	BANGLADESH GUATEMALA INDIA	KENYA LUXEMBOURG MALAYSIA	SINT MAARTEN PANAMA
SECTOR SPECIFIC INITIATIVES (6 COUNTRIES)	BANGLADESH COSTA RICA	GUATEMALA JORDAN	MALDIVES MONACO
EDUCATION INITIATIVES (5 COUNTRIES)	BELGIUM KENYA	THAILAND	ZIMBABWE
ADAPTATION (5 COUNTRIES)	BENIN BRAZIL	JORDAN LUXEMBOURG	ZIMBABWE

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Only 15 countries make reference to the linkages between the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The same number of countries referred to policy coherence for sustainable development in their reports – a finding that is similar to the results of the 2016 assessment of 16 VNR reports.

Figure 7 provides an overview of the extent to which countries assessed the impacts of their domestic and foreign policies on the realisation of the 2030 Agenda globally. Countries were included if they made at least one reference to their domestic and/or foreign policies contributing to the SDGs globally. Nearly all countries that were counted as assessing both domestic and foreign policies were high-income, with the exceptions of Jordan and Argentina. No country systematically examined the impact of domestic contributions on the SDGs globally through an examination of, for example, consumption patterns, agricultural policies or migration. Generally, reports made reference to one or two contributions from domestic policies. Roughly half of the countries that referred to foreign policy contributions (8 of 17) were high-income countries, while the remainder were lower and upper-middle -income countries, typically referring to their contributions in terms of international public finance, technology transfer and capacity development.

In terms of overall approaches to policy coherence for sustainable development, five countries refer to policy coherence more generally,

highlighting the need for government to do the following: ensure integration in SDG implementation and go beyond sectoral approaches; improve coherent coordination, including with non-state actors; enhance horizontal and vertical coordination; and establish institutional mechanisms to ensure coherence and coordination. For the 11 countries that included information on policy coherence for sustainable development specifically, they tended to focus on strengthening institutional, analytical and control mechanisms, policies to support policy coherence for sustainable development, and the use of assessments of new legislation, policies and initiatives in terms of policy coherence for sustainable development.

It should be noted that while a number of countries reference policy coherence for sustainable development, only a limited number provide information on their actual contributions in the goal-by-goal analysis. Aruba, Belgium, Curaçao , Monaco, Portugal, Slovenia, Sint Maarten, Sweden and the Netherlands refer to foreign and domestic contributions to the SDGs in their goal-by-goal analysis. This approach shows how each country supports implementation of the SDGs both at home and abroad. Reporting on goal-by-goal contributions also has potential to prompt greater policy coherence for sustainable development across countries by bringing into focus the impacts of domestic and foreign policies on sustainable development at home and abroad. Such an approach could be replicated by all stakeholders.

FIGURE 7. ASSESSING IMPACTS ON THE SDGS GLOBALLY

Domestic and foreign policies	11
Domestic policies	0
Foreign policies	17
No assessment	17

0   5   10   15   20

Number of countries

Progressing national SDGs implementation
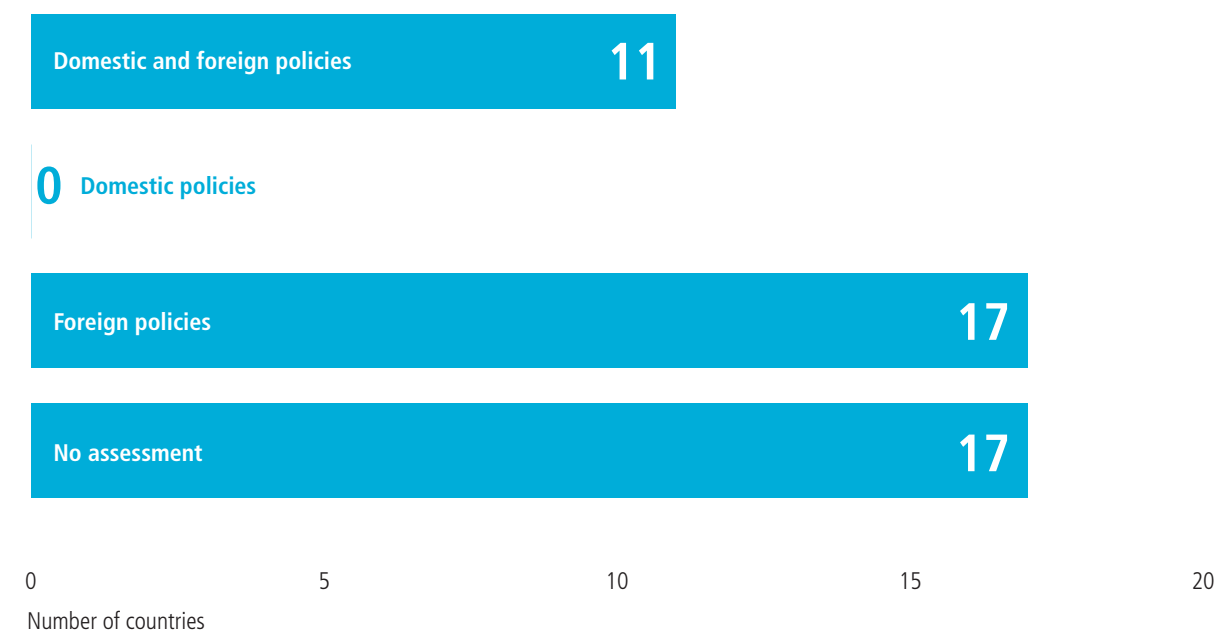
🇸🇪 A case study in best practice: Sweden's approach to policy coherence for sustainable development

Sweden sees the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 as coherent parts of the new global framework for sustainable development. Sweden sees its Policy for Global Development and efforts to support the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as important means to implement the 2030 Agenda, both at home and globally. The VNR report notes that a coherent approach is needed from policy design to actual implementation to realise policy coherence for sustainable development. Sweden also presented a detailed report, *Towards Achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: Report on the Implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development*, to the Financing for Development Forum in May 2017 in New York that explicitly links the SDGs with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The report contains a large number of examples of activities and measures by Swedish actors including government, the private sector and CSOs to implement the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. According to the report, the intention of the report is to show what Sweden is doing to operationalise the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and stimulate international discussions.

According to Sweden, coherence for equitable and sustainable development must permeate all policy areas and dimensions of work – horizontally between policy areas and vertically from the local level to the regional, national and global levels, and from goal to implementation. Sweden faces several challenges in the area. The most important one is consistently and tangibly realising policy coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Source: Except adapted from Sweden's VNR.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assess all 17 goals in their VNR reports, respecting the indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

- Ensure all dimensions of sustainable development are addressed in SDG implementation and VNR reporting. Linkages and synergies between the different dimensions of sustainable development should be clearly stated in policies, supported through implementation and included in reporting - all to help ensure clear integration.

- Include a summary of best practice, lessons learned, gaps and priorities, and areas where support is needed in the goal by goal analysis to facilitate learning and global partnership.

- Link implementation of the 2030 Agenda to both the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including in VNR reporting.

- Provide an assessment of domestic and global dimensions of sustainable development in the goal-by-goal analysis, demonstrating contributions to realising the SDGs at home and abroad, and supporting policy coherence for sustainable development.

✋ 2.5 Leave no one behind

Ethiopia and Kenya included a chapter on leaving no one behind (LNOB) in their VNR reports, even though LNOB was not a theme for the 2017 HLPF or required by the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines. For the remaining countries that referenced LNOB, approaches were mixed in terms of how the principle was incorporated. Some reports referred to the principle at a more general level, often in contextual sections of the report complemented by references to vulnerable groups (though not LNOB) throughout. Others made reference to LNOB in the goal-by-goal analysis of the VNR report. In comparison to others, the two VNR reports that included a specific chapter on LNOB did a better job of identifying who is being left behind and efforts to going forward.[13]

2.5.1 Data to leave no one behind

Efforts to LNOB should be informed by an assessment of disaggregated data and efforts to improve data availability. This is important for knowing who is being left behind and monitoring progress. However, only 14 countries provided an indication of the availability of data to LNOB, the bulk of which (11) noted that additional disaggregated data by sex, region, ability, age, social status, and/or particular groups are needed.

2.5.2 Understanding who is at risk of being left behind

Despite the lack of information on data availability to LNOB, most countries (33) identify the main groups in society that are vulnerable or at risk of being left behind.[14] They do not, however, provide information on the levels of progress achieved for identified groups across the SDG targets, with the exception of those pertaining to SDG 5 on gender equality or for targets that have historically been disaggregated by gender, such as education. Table 3 provides an overview of the main groups identified as vulnerable or being left behind. It shows that women, children and youth, persons with disabilities and elderly people are the most often cited groups as being left behind or at risk of being left behind. It also shows similarities in terms of who is at risk of being left behind across countries of different levels of income and regions.

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **Dedicate a chapter in the VNR report to leaving no one behind that details who is being left behind, available data, and efforts to leave no one behind and reduce domestic inequalities.**

Photo: © WWF-US / James Morgan

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13 Together 2030 and World Vision (2017b) made a similar conclusion in their analysis of the 2017 VNRs.

14 In rare instances to countries provide a concise paragraph on who is being left behind. Rather, they refer to particular vulnerable groups (not always with reference to LNOB) in the goal-by-goal analysis.

Progressing national SDGs implementation

TABLE 3. GROUPS IDENTIFIED AS BEING LEFT BEHIND BY COUNTRIES IN THE 2017 VNR REPORTS

GROUP	COUNTRIES			
WOMEN (28 COUNTRIES)	AFGHANISTAN	CHILE[16]	KENYA	PERU[18]
	ARGENTINA	COSTA RICA	LUXEMBOURG	PORTUGAL
	AZERBAIJAN	EL SALVADOR	MALDIVES	SLOVENIA[19]
	BANGLADESH	ETHIOPIA	MONACO	TAJIKISTAN
	BENIN	GUATEMALA[17]	NEPAL	THAILAND
	BOTSWANA	INDONESIA	NIGERIA	TOGO
	BRAZIL[15]	JORDAN	QATAR	ZIMBABWE[20]
CHILDREN AND YOUTH (27 COUNTRIES)	AFGHANISTAN	BOTSWANA[23]	JORDAN	SLOVENIA
	ARGENTINA	CHILE	KENYA	SWEDEN
	AZERBAIJAN	EL SALVADOR	LUXEMBOURG	TAJIKISTAN
	BANGLADESH	ETHIOPIA	MONACO[24]	THAILAND[25]
	BELGIUM	GUATEMALA	NEPAL	TOGO
	BELIZE[21]	INDONESIA	NIGERIA	ZIMBABWE
	BENIN[22]	JORDAN	PERÚ	
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (21 COUNTRIES)	AFGHANISTAN	COSTA RICA	MALAYSIA	SLOVENIA
	ARGENTINA	GUATEMALA	MONACO	SWEDEN
	AZERBAIJAN	JAPAN	NIGERIA	TAJIKISTAN
	BANGLADESH	JORDAN	PERÚ	THAILAND
	BOTSWANA	KENYA	PORTUGAL	ZIMBABWE[26]
	CHILE	LUXEMBOURG	QATAR	
ELDERLY PEOPLE (16 COUNTRIES)	ARGENTINA	GUATEMALA[27]	MONACO	TAJIKISTAN
	AZERBAIJAN	JAPAN	PORTUGAL	THAILAND
	COSTA RICA	MALAYSIA	SLOVENIA	TOGO

15 Recognising that women face interrelated inequalities related to region, class and ethnicity.

16 Women in situations of vulnerability.

17 Women living with HIV, elderly women, migrant women and women sex workers.

18 High-Andean women.

19 Women who experience domestic violence.

20 Women with disabilities.

21 Boys are being left behind in education.

22 From the poorest families.

23 Orphans.

24 Girls.

25 Underprivileged children and children with disabilities

26 Women with disabilities.

27 Elderly women.

TABLE 3 CONTINUED. GROUPS IDENTIFIED AS BEING LEFT BEHIND BY COUNTRIES IN THE 2017 VNR REPORTS

GROUP	COUNTRIES			
MIGRANTS, REFUGEES, INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE (10 COUNTRIES)	AZERBAIJAN ARGENTINA BELGIUM	CHILE EL SALVADOR LUXEMBOURG	MONACO PORTUGAL	SLOVENIA SWEDEN
OTHER (10 COUNTRIES)	AFGHANISTAN[28] BELGIUM[29] COSTA RICA[30]	GUATEMALA[31] JAPAN [32] NEPAL [33]	TOGO[34] PERÚ[35]	MONACO[36] SLOVENIA[37]
ETHNIC MINORITIES, INCLUDING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (9 COUNTRIES)	AFGHANISTAN ARGENTINA BANGLADESH	COSTA RICA GUATEMALA	PERÚ PORTUGAL	SLOVENIA THAILAND[38]
POOR PEOPLE OR FAMILIES / BOTTOM 40% BY INCOME (9 COUNTRIES)	BENIN BOTSWANA KENYA	LUXEMBOURG MALAYSIA	MONACO NEPAL	NIGERIA PORTUGAL
PARTICULAR REGIONS OR COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING RURAL LOCATIONS (7 COUNTRIES)	ARGENTINA GUATEMAL	INDONESIA MALDIVES	NIGERIA TAJIKISTAN	TOGO
PEOPLE WITH LOW LEVELS OF LIVELIHOOD (4 COUNTRIES)	BELGIUM	ETHIOPIA	JORDAN	PORTUGAL

28   People affected by conflict.

29   Single parent households and families with three or more dependent children.

30   LGBTI/Q people.

31   LGBTI/Q people.

32   Single parent households.

33   Farmers

34   Farmers and people living with HIV.

35   People living with HIV.

36   People affected by security crises.

37   People with mental health problems, homeless people, and at-risk users of illicit drugs.

38   Children.

Progressing national SDGs implementation   **22**

2.5.3 Efforts to leave no on behind

Most countries (33) provided information on efforts to LNOB. Efforts generally entail the use of specific policies and dedicated programmes or vulnerable groups. Some countries point to overarching programmes such as social protection policies. As VNR reports do not provide information on data to LNOB or evaluate the impact of their policies on vulnerable groups, it is not possible to assess which policies and programmes are successfully reaching the people who are furthest behind first. However, research shows that the use of deliberate laws and policies that target groups left behind, alongside universal policies and strong national leadership, can be an effective approach to reaching marginalised communities.[39] Research also shows that the longer governments take to act, the more difficult it will be to LNOB. For example, eradicating the number of people living under US$1 per day in sub-Saharan Africa requires governments to reduce poverty twice as fast as during the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015). This figure grows to 4.5 times as fast if governments do not act until 2024.

2.5.4 Targeting domestic inequality

Addressing inequality is a fundamental part of the 2030 Agenda. Roughly half of countries (23) referred to efforts to reduce inequality. Countries cited inclusion of inequality as an issue to be addressed in government strategies (8), through special programmes that target groups facing inequality (8), through social protection schemes (6) and through legislation (2).

✅ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Include a specific chapter on LNOB in VNR reporting.

- Provide information on the status of data collection or plans to improve data availability to inform efforts to LNOB. Ensuring no one is left behind means knowing who is being left behind, by how much, and in what areas.

- Highlight existing and planned efforts to LNOB, including how policies and programmes are being adapted to reach the people who are furthest behind first.

- Target domestic inequality in 2030 Agenda implementation, including in support of SDG 10 on reducing inequality, and outline the current status of domestic inequality and how it is being addressed in VNR reports.

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39   Samman, Emma. 2016. *10 Things to Know about 'Leave no one Behind.'* London: ODI. https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/11811.pdf

2.6 Raising awareness and creating ownership of the 2030 Agenda

2.6.1 Awareness raising

All countries but four – Italy, Portugal, Qatar and Sweden – refer to awareness-raising efforts on the 2030 Agenda. For five countries – Belize, Denmark, Nepal, Panama, and Tajikistan – their reports only refer to efforts by non-state actors to raise awareness or they identify the need for the government to take steps to raise awareness. The remainder of the VNR reports note government efforts to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda, largely through consultation with non-state actors and through public events and initiatives, usually in partnership with civil society. Some governments have adopted innovative approaches to raising public awareness, as noted in the case study below. Many countries recognise that awareness raising is an area for ongoing effort throughout the course of 2030 Agenda implementation and part of public engagement strategies. Reporting on awareness raising in 2017 VNR reports has improved over 2016.[40]

A case study in best practice: Innovative and interesting ways to raise awareness on the 2030 Agenda and engage the general public

The review of the 2017 VNR reports revealed a number of initiatives by countries to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda moving beyond public consultations. Afghanistan, Jordan, Kenya and Zimbabwe use social media to raise awareness among the general public. Danish civil society, the Maldives and Zimbabwe made use of media – television and radio – to raise public awareness. In Belgium, SDG Voices is bringing news about the SDGs to communities from eight highly diverse organisations ranging from a retail supermarket chain, to a municipality, to several big and small civil society organisations. Aruba, Azerbaijan, Belgium, and Japan have created online portals on the SDGs to engage the public and promote awareness. Malaysia is planning to run an SDG roadshow to raise awareness around the country. In Japan, the United Nations Information Centre and Sophia University co-hosted a SDGs photo contest for students in 2016. The winner of the photo contest received a prize from Japan's Foreign Minister. In order to raise awareness about the SDGs and award national projects which contribute to their implementation, a contest entitled The Czech SDG Awards was organised in 2017 in the Czech Republic that encouraged non-state actors to submit project ideas for SDG implementation.

Source: Compiled by author from referenced countries' VNR reports.

[40] Cutter 2016 found that only 11 out of 16 VNR reports referred to awareness raising.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Go beyond consultation meetings to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda, such as through the use of media and social media, competitions and roadshows.

2.6.2 Nationalisation: Identifying priorities

Developing national priorities in the context of 2030 Agenda implementation is part of generating ownership, adapting the goals to country-specific contexts, and ensuring relevance of the 2030 Agenda at a local level. (Although, the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda means that when it comes to the goals, countries may be a leader on some, but must be a laggard on none.) In the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, the selection of national priorities is meant to be conducted through a participatory, inclusive approach that takes into consideration the views of all stakeholders in society. Best practice in this regard includes establishing principles to ensure inclusive ownership over 2030 Agenda priorities and adopting consultation processes that allow all sectors in society to contribute (case studies below).

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Ensure inclusivity and participation in the nationalisation of the SDGs in line with the principles of the 2030 Agenda.

The majority of countries (34) have selected national priorities for SDG implementation. For the 11 countries that have not, three – Azerbaijan, Sweden and the Maldives – noted that they are in the process of selecting national priorities. The remaining countries are all from Latin America and the Caribbean. Argentina has made a conscious decision not to select national priorities, arguing that the country's situation requires that all goals are considered together. The remaining countries do not articulate why national priorities have not been selected.

Progressing national SDGs implementation

A case study in best practice: Jordan's principles for ownership and the VNR

Jordan's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the departmental focal point for 2030 Agenda implementation, prepared a stakeholder engagement strategy to ensure the widest participation from all non-state actors in implementation and the VNR. The strategy proposed a variety of consultation mechanisms including taskforce meetings, workshops, focus groups and debates. It also included several outreach tools like printed materials and social media engagement to ensure broad engagement on the 2030 Agenda.

The strategy took into consideration the challenges to meaningful participation faced by non-state actors, namely: difficulties reaching the most marginalised, the tendency to involve larger non- governmental organisations rather than smaller, community based organisations and individuals, and time constraints. The figure below provides an overview of guiding principles for Jordan's nationalisation and VNR processes including ownership, building from previous experience, recognition of successes and challenges, interconnectedness of the SDGs, innovation, and participation.

Source: Except adapted from Jordan's VNR.

Ensure ownership and leadership by the Jordanian Government, coordinated by MOPIC, supported by the UN agencies, with open channels for all other national stakeholders

- Make every effort to ensure meaningful and respectful pacticipation of all stakeholders and Major Groups and Organizations (MGOs)

- Build on the results of the MDGs, the Post-2015 agenda and initiatives started in 2016

- Place equal importance on both the process and the final product

- Use innivative tools and approaches in the review and consensus building process

- Ensure successes and best practices and celebrated, while actively and openly seeking to identify and analyze challenges and obstacles.

- Seize the opportunity to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.

- Ensure discussions and analyses reinforce the inter-connectedness of the SDG goals and avoid institutional and sectoral silos.

Progressing national SDGs implementation

It is difficult to provide a detailed overview of the national priorities across reports because the approach to articulating national priorities varies greatly. Some countries listed national priorities with reference to specific SDGs. Others noted priority areas, such as economic growth or social inclusion that apply to more than one goal. Others still point to particular targets within goals that are behind and therefore a priority.

FIGURE 8. NATIONAL 2030 AGENDA PRIORITIES

Dimension of sustainable development
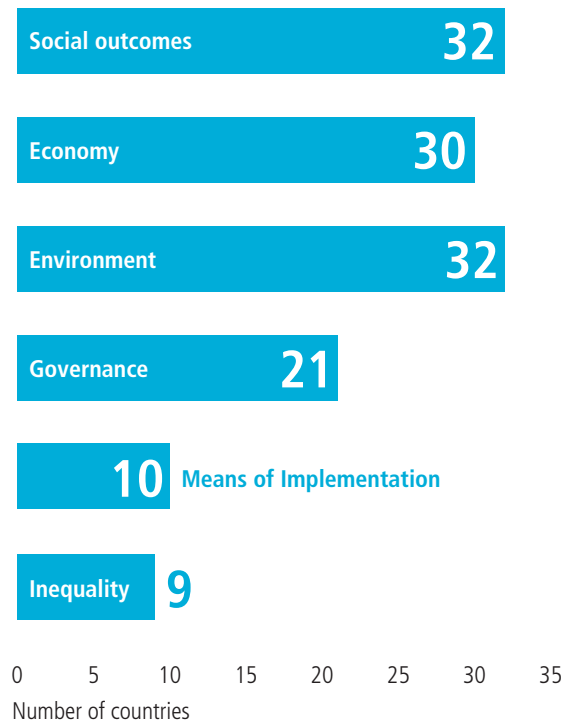
Figure 8 gives an overview of the broad priority areas selected across 36[41] countries in the 2017 VNR reports. It provides an overall indication of national priorities across reporting countries. It shows that most countries include all three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – in their selection of national priorities. Governance is also a prominent theme with 21 countries including governance issues. A minority of countries also refer to efforts that support the means of implementation (10) and efforts to reduce inequality (9).

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **Select national targets and indicators through inclusive consultation with local stakeholders.**

41   Azerbaijan and Sweden's draft priorities are included.

> **A case study in best practice: Broadening the nationalisation process in Guatemala**
>
> Guatemala's nationalisation process was guided by a strategy for ownership and follow-up of the SDGs into the national plan. The strategy established a clear, continuous and extensive process for inclusive participation with stakeholders, integrating the LNOB principle.
>
> The National Council for Urban and Rural Development, the main body responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs in Guatemala, developed the strategy. It established a four-phase work programme that included the following: 1) socialisation of the SDGs; 2) establishment of national priorities based on the commitments assumed by the country in the 2030 Agenda; 3) validation of the priorities; and 4) approval of the validated priorities. The government held 65 workshops with governmental and non-governmental institutions. Priorities were defined based on three main inputs: the results of the first-phase meetings; the objectives included in the national development plan of Guatemala; and the concrete availability of sufficient and disaggregated data. Specialists in planning, public policies, international cooperation and public investment from national and subnational governments used these inputs to develop the priorities. The priorities were then provided to the stakeholders that had participated in the first phase for validation. This resulted in the national prioritisation of 17 goals and 129 targets, formally adopted in December 2016 by the National Council of Urban and Rural Development.
>
> Source: Summary provided by CEPEI based on Guatemala's VNR.

2.6.3 Nationalisation: Developing national targets and indicators

As the case study above illustrates, the development of national targets and indicators (and the process by which it is done) is an important part of generating ownership over 2030 Agenda implementation and establishing realistic country-level ambitions. There tend to be two main approaches to selecting national targets and indicators. Some countries have made their selections based on a mapping of existing available data and priorities through a government-led process. Others have taken a more inclusive approach that includes consultation with non-state actors on targets and indicators as part of the nationalisation process.

Progressing national SDGs implementation   26

Thirteen countries have completed the process of developing national targets and indicators to inform domestic level implementation of the SDGs. Curaçao , Nigeria, Thailand and Togo developed national targets only. Another ten countries developed national indicators only, largely making use of existing data that reflects country context and priorities. Nigeria established national targets for 2020 and 2030, the only country in the group of VNR reports to explicitly reference more than one target deadline.

Fifteen countries have not prepared national targets or indicators. Of these five are planning to develop national indicators, and in some instances targets. For three countries — El Salvador, Honduras and Kenya — the status of national target and indicator development is unclear.

2.6.4 Localisation of the 2030 Agenda

The majority of countries (33) provided information on the status of efforts to localise the 2030 Agenda. The reports show wide variance in terms of where countries and their local governments are in terms of localising the SDGs. This suggests that more efforts are needed going forward to promote the localisation of the SDGs. Eight countries reported that further engagement with local government is a next step in their implementation process; others noted plans to establish local SDG governance mechanisms (2), to mainstream policies at the local level (6) and to support local governments in the implementation process through, for example, capacity development and financing (9). For eight countries, VNR reports note that local governments have been consulted on the 2030 Agenda. Finally, in eight countries local governments have already put in place policies, plans and/or governance structures for implementation. A number of civil society reports noted that despite these efforts, local governments are not fully engaged on the 2030 Agenda as of yet.

A case study in best practice: Localisation of the SDGs in Argentina and the Netherlands
Argentina and the Netherlands are among the countries that highlighted examples of local governments taking action on the SDGs in their VNR reports.

In Argentina, Vicente López is a municipality of approximately 270,000 residents in the province of Buenos Aires. Its current administration is focussed on three priorities: health, education, and the fight against poverty. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the local government aligned its policies with the SDGs, resulting in increased political coherence between local, national and international agendas. This alignment process also generated a number of additional benefits. The municipality realised that working towards the

SDGs helped the local government improve its planning skills under a human rights-based integrated approach. Aligning local and international policies improved municipal information systems and exposed new data needs. Finally, by strengthening communication between local authorities, civil society, business located in the territory, and other stakeholders, local accountability improved.

In the Netherlands, many local governments and local government associations are taking action on the SDGs. Utrecht has launched the Utrecht4GlobalGoals campaign that awards inspiring initiatives helping to achieve the SDGs. Under the Municipalities4GlobalGoals campaign, Utrecht (along with another Dutch city, Oss) was designated 'Most Inspiring Global Goals Municipality in the Netherlands' by the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities. Utrecht has set itself some ambitious new targets. It wants to have the lowest unemployment rate in the Netherlands by 2018, increase the number of solar panels from 4,000 in 2015 to 15,000 by 2020, and make 75% of its residents aware of the SDGs by 2030. HeelUtrechtU, a digital information platform, lets residents share SDG-related stories, as well as share, nominate and get in touch with SDG initiatives. The Utrecht4GlobalGoals online platform allows people to request a grant for local initiatives online. Currently, the municipality is focusing on Goal 11 on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. To measure progress, the municipality has developed local indicators and a baseline. In addition, a pilot for areas undergoing urban development will be launched, with Goal 11 acting as a decision-making framework.

Sources: Summary provided by CIPEI for Argentina based on its VNR; except adapted from the Netherlands' VNR.

✅ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt innovative ways to raise awareness of the SDGs among the general public with a view to long term engagement, including in partnership with civil society and other non-state actors.

- Identify national sustainable development priorities and develop associated national targets through an inclusive and participatory process to complement global targets and indicators.

- Provide support to sub-national levels of government to raise awareness of the SDGs and develop capacities for local level implementation, including translation of the SDGs into local plans, programmes, and monitoring efforts.

💬 2.7 Stakeholder engagement in the development of national priorities and follow-up and review processes

2.7.1 Consultation on defining national priorities

Only six VNR reports did not provide information on whether non-state actors were consulted in the selection of national priorities.[42] Three (3) countries — Argentina,[43] Denmark[44] and Honduras[45] — did not consult non-state actors at all. For the 31 countries that noted consultations with non-state actors took place on the selection of national priorities, these consultations occurred largely in online and offline forms, including through non-state actors participating in 2030 Agenda governance arrangements. VNR reports provided varying degrees of detail in terms of consultation processes. Some provided a full account of consultation events and those involved; others provided more of a general overview, asserting that consultations had occurred with a broad cross-section of non-state actors.

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **Soliciting verbal and written inputs from all stakeholders in the preparation of VNR reports and provide stakeholders with an opportunity to review and comment on the first draft.**

2.7.2 Consultation in the preparation of VNRs

The majority of countries (34) reported that non-state actors were engaged in the VNR. Only three countries did not engage non-state actors — Guatemala, Honduras, and the Maldives. For the remainder, the report either did not refer to non-state actor engagement, or information that was available was unclear. As with the case of consultations on national priorities, most countries made use of offline and online consultation formats. Some also provided stakeholders with a chance to review and comment on the VNR report. Denmark invited parliamentarians and other stakeholders to be a part of the official delegation to the HLPF.

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **Invite and support parliamentarians and other non-state actors to participate in the VNR process and to attend the HLPF as part of the official delegation.**

🇮🇩 **A case study in best practice: Indonesia's principles for inclusive and transparent engagement with non-state actors in the VNR**

Indonesia developed a set of six principles for non-state actor engagement in the VNR to ensure inclusivity and effective participation. They include:

1. Sharing schedules with stakeholders;

2. Conducting public campaigns to encourage active participation in the entire preparation process;

3. Using various channels, online and offline, to give the public an opportunity to provide input;

4. Involving all stakeholders, both different levels of government and non-state actors (such as academics and experts, philanthropic foundations and business actors, civil society organisations and the media) to ensure representation from all groups;

5. Documenting and publicising the process to ensure accountability and transparency; and

6. Using easy-to-understand language to make the process more accessible.

Source: Except adapted from Indonesia's VNR report.

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42 Aruba, Belize, Panama, the Maldives and Uruguay do not set out national priorities. Argentina also does not, but it is included in the set of countries that did not consult national stakeholders as the decision to not prioritise the SDGs was taken without consultation with non-state actors.

43 As noted, Argentina choose not to select national priorities. Non-state actors were not consulted on this decision.

44 The report refers to engagement by various government ministries but makes no mention of non-state actors. A civil society report notes that they made recommendations for Denmark's Action Plan, but makes no reference to consultation.

45 There is no clear evidence that non-state actors have been included in the VNR development process or in the definition of priorities for development, which still seem to be incomplete.

2.7.3 Civil society reports

The authors of this review identified civil society reports for 18 of the countries reviewed in 2017 at the HLPF.[46] The majority of them (for 15 countries) are in the form of shadow reports, largely in response to a survey prepared by Action for Sustainable Development. In some cases, more than one organisation responded to the survey prepared by Action for Sustainable Development or an additional shadow report was prepared. India and Nepal have two reports each as a result. Spotlight reports were also prepared for Bangladesh, Brazil and Kenya. In addition, Cyprus and Denmark included a civil society report in the annex of their VNR reports, while Slovenia included a chapter in its report written by the National Youth Council of Slovenia, outlining youth priorities for the SDGs.

Generally speaking, the responses to Action for Sustainable Development's questionnaire broadly support the evidence presented in the VNR reports, with some exceptions as identified in the country profiles in Annex 3. A number of reports note that there is still a need to translate the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs into local languages. Moreover, they show that only a limited number of governments invited non-state actors to participate in the official delegation to HLPF 2017, though some organisations noted that, at the time of writing, an invitation could be forthcoming.

🇩🇰 **A case study in best practice: Moving towards the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform on the 2030 Agenda in Denmark**

Among the key recommendations to the Danish government from Danish CSOs is the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform. As a first step, Global Focus (the membership body for Danish non-profit organisations) and the 92 Group (a forum for collaboration between Danish environmental and development organisations) arranged a multi-stakeholder roundtable meeting in February 2017 with relevant partners from other sectors. The meeting demonstrated that a cross-sectoral discussion could result in more than 100 recommendations on Denmark's implementation of the SDGs. With over 130 participants – including participants from the Danish Ministry of Finance, civil servants from different Danish ministries, municipalities, public institutions and stakeholders from all sectors – the meeting reflected interest and demand to create an institutional multi-stakeholder platform that brings all stakeholders together.

In the coming months, the two networks will continue their efforts, together with other relevant stakeholders, to establish a multi-stakeholder platform to continue dialogue on the implementation of the SDGs in Denmark's domestic and foreign engagements, focusing discussions on progress, challenges, new partnerships, and lessons learned. Without multi-stakeholder dialogue, there is a risk that businesses, civil society organisations, government entities and research institutions will continue to work in parallel, as opposed to collaborating together on the implementation of the SDGs. Similarly, without multi-stakeholder dialogue, there is a risk that valuable opportunities for making linkages and share knowledge between different sectors and goals will be missed.

Source: Except adapted from Denmark's VNR report.

✅ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure stakeholder engagement on the 2030 Agenda is accessible, transparent, timely and inclusive. This means making use of varied and inclusive approaches to consultation such as online and offline methods, publicising consultation opportunities widely and with appropriate lead time, including at sub-national events in different parts of the country, and ensuring that information is available in local languages.

- Solicit verbal and written inputs from all stakeholders in the preparation of VNR reports and provide stakeholders with an opportunity to review and comment on the first draft.

- Include and support non-state actors and parliamentarians to participate in the HLPF in line with the principles of inclusivity and partnership in the 2030 Agenda.

- Support multi-stakeholder platforms that promote dialogue across the SDGs and with different sectors with a wide range of stakeholders. This will help to promote greater understanding of shared goals and objectives and potential synergies, build momentum and strengthen partnerships in implementation.

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46   Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, India, Japan , Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia , Nepal, Nigeria, Thailand, The Netherlands, Togo, and Zimbabwe.

🔁 2.8 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

2.8.1 Best practice, lessons, challenges, and learning from others

The Secretary General's common reporting guidelines ask member states to outline their best practices, lessons learned in accelerating implementation, challenges to 2030 Agenda implementation and what they would like to learn from peers. Reporting on these elements is critical for the promotion of peer learning and the identification of areas for greater support by domestic and international stakeholders. Figure 9 shows that for the most part, countries are only reporting on their challenges in implementation (36) and to a lesser degree, lessons learned in accelerating implementation (21). Only 12 countries explicitly noted their best practices in their reports, while six identified areas in which they would like to learn from others. In many cases, the information provided is general in nature, and not specific enough to be actionable. Reporting on these elements is critical to peer learning as well as the development of partnerships to address country-level challenges. These findings suggest that there may be a need for the United Nations to explore with member states why there is underreporting on these dimensions particularly given the focus of the HLPF follow-up and review process on knowledge and lesson sharing.

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **Report on best practice, lessons learned to accelerate 2030 Agenda implementation, challenges and areas countries would like to learn from peers.**

FIGURE 9. COUNTRIES HIGHLIGHTING AREAS REQUESTED IN THE COMMON REPORTING GUIDELINES

12	Best practices
Lessons learned	21
Challenges	36
6	Peer learning

Number of countries
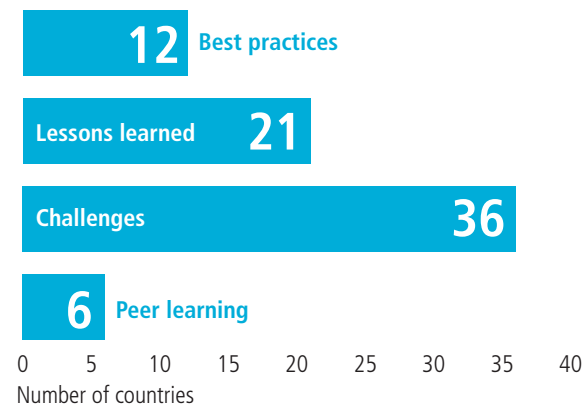
Figure 10 provides an overview of the main challenges identified in reports.[47] In most cases, countries present challenges in terms of headlines with limited detailed information. For the nine countries that presented challenges in the goal-by-goal analysis, information tends to be more detailed.

FIGURE 10. CHALLENGES IN SDG IMPLEMENTATION

9	Areas of limited progress in SDGs
7	Capacity and technical gaps
4	Climate change and environment
14	Country level coordination
Data availability and monitoring	23
15	Finance and resource mobilization
4	Global systemic issues
11	Governance
7	Localization
9	Multi-stakeholder participation
13	Policy development
6	Public awareness
3	Technology

Number of countries

Figure 10 shows that issues related to data availability and monitoring progress on the SDGs are the main challenge shared by the 36 countries that reported challenges. Financing the SDGs, ensuring effective coordination of implementation efforts at the country level, integrating the SDGs into policies, and governance issues are the next most prominently cited challenges. Goal specific challenges (such as establishing universal health care) and establishing and solidifying multi-stakeholder approaches were each

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47   Issues mentioned by a small number of countries (1-2) and not captured in Figure 8 include number of poor people, inequality, meeting the needs of vulnerable groups, understanding local needs, LNOB, legal environment, reporting, follow-through on implementation plans, incorporating the SDGs into budgets, donor coordination, and cultural constraints.

cited by nine countries while capacity and technology gaps, and localisation were each cited by seven.

The 21 countries reporting on lessons learned provided a range of lessons pertaining to establishing good foundations for implementation, building partnerships and monitoring. The most commonly cited lessons pertained to the need to do the following: establish strong partnership and collaboration in implementation with stakeholders across society (9); mobilise the public and raise awareness (7); and ensure integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development through policies and in implementation (5). Countries also noted the importance of investing in statistical system strengthening (3), having strong political commitment (3), prioritisation (2), making use of targeted interventions to reach particular groups or address certain sectors (2), and the value of efforts to ensure coordination and coherence in implementation (2).[48]

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Articulate clear and detailed challenges in 2030 Agenda implementation to inform how the country can best be supported by domestic and international communities.

Of the 12 countries that presented best practice in their VNR reports, a number highlight specific programmes that achieved progress on priority issues. The countries that identified best practices in implementation more generally are outlined in the case study below.

A case study in best practice: Reporting by countries of their respective best practice in 2030 Agenda implementation

In **Azerbaijan**, challenges to achieving the Millennium Development Goals were duplication between local and international partners, and weaknesses in the process for collecting statistical and administrative data. To eliminate these challenges, the secretariat and working groups for the State Programme on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development (2003-2005), worked together with national counterparts and international partners to strengthen the country's institutional capacities. The joint interventions were successful.

One of the strengths identified by **Indonesia** in its approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda is the involvement of all stakeholders in the planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting phases. Indonesia's report indicates that the country is open to sharing its experience mainstreaming the SDGs into national development process through an inclusive process.

While not explicitly identified as best practice, **Malaysia's** VNR report notes that development achievements were made possible through the use of pragmatic and comprehensive development plans, recognition of inclusivity as critical for sustaining long-term prosperity and unity, and improvements to service delivery through collaborative partnerships with the private sector, non-governmental organisations and civil society.

In **Nigeria**, the Conditional Grants Scheme that provides grants to local governments for SDG implementation is an acclaimed global good practice according to the VNR report. It is being scaled up to reflect Nigeria's strong commitment to the implementation of the SDGs.

Panama's VNR report identifies three good practices: 1) the creation of instruments for targeting and designing social protection policies; 2) the process of alignment between SDGs, the Strategic Government Plan 2015-2019 and the agreements of the National Agreement for Development, and 3) the redefinition of the methodology and instruments to measure the multidimensionality of well-being, poverty and exclusion.

Sources: Excerpts adapted from the VNRs reports submitted by Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria and Panama.

Finally, six countries noted areas in which they would like to learn from others.

- Afghanistan would find value in a systematic review of the use of relevant technologies in the SDG efforts of developing nations.

- Azerbaijan would like to learn about experiences in nationalisation, planning comprehensive coordination procedures to accelerate and track implementation, and effective cooperation between public institutions and non-state actors, including with respect to mobilising the capacities of non-state actors to achieve SDG targets.

- Ethiopia highlighted a desire to learn about insights in achieving the SDGs pertaining to women, in particular ways to increase

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48 Other lessons learned, identified by only one country, include focussing on poverty, the role of parliament as key to ownership, the importance of decentralisation, optimisation of resources, building local capacity, balancing costs and needs in monitoring, transparent and open monitoring, flexibility and innovation to overcome bureaucratic bottlenecks, domestic resource mobilisation, importance of assessing data availability, importance of capacity development and technical assistance, effectiveness of large investments in social sectors, critical role of public policy, value of delegated coordination of SDG implementation, resource mobilisation, development of financial strategies, importance of long term visioning, establishing permanent coordination mechanism, effective governance structures, and follow-up.

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the participation of women in secondary and higher education, practical ways for regional states to bring about institutional competence of women and successful experiences in generating, collecting, capturing and utilising gender-disaggregated data.

- Indonesia is keen to learn from other countries' experiences on SDG implementation in general.

- Thailand stands ready to learn best practices and mechanisms in policy coherence from other countries. The government notes that it would like to cooperate with international institutions that would support and provide recommendations on implementing measures, good practices, creating statistical data and monitoring and evaluation on material footprints and domestic material consumptions in the future.

- Qatar notes the need to promote cooperation and lessons sharing on renewable energy.

2.8.2 Financing the 2030 Agenda

To examine how countries plan to finance the SDGs at country level, the analysis of VNR reports included an assessment of whether countries had costed out SDG implementation and identified sources of finance. Figure 11 provides an overview of the results. Nearly half of countries (22) do not articulate plans to cost implementation or sources of finance. The bulk of these countries are high-income or upper-middle-income countries. Bangladesh is the only country that costed country level implementation of the SDGs and identified sources of finance. According to its VNR report, a preliminary assessment reveals that Bangladesh may require around US$ 1.5 trillion worth of additional resources to fully implement the SDGs. In terms of sources of finance, the report discusses the role of domestic and international public and private finance. Benin, Ethiopia, Jordan, Nepal and Nigeria are planning to cost SDG implementation and have identified sources of finance, with all countries noting their efforts to improve domestic resource mobilisation and the importance of international partners. For the remaining 16 countries that identified sources of finance, they tended to include domestic resources, private investment, and where applicable, official development assistance. A number of countries also noted the importance of strategic partnerships as a means to mobilise resources. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Denmark, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Tajikistan and Thailand referred to budgetary allocations specifically to support the SDGs, however the extent to which the SDGs are earmarked within budgets is not clear.

FIGURE 11. RESOURCING COUNTRY LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA

1 Costed, finance sources identified

Costing not mentioned, finance sources identified **16**

5 Costing planned, finance sources identified

Not articulated in the VNR **22**

0   5   10   15   20   25
Number of countries
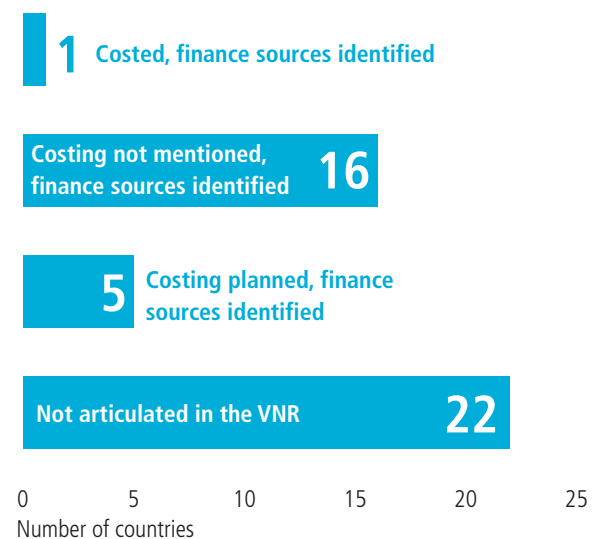
A case study in best practice: Financing sustainable development locally in Costa Rica

The National Bank of Costa Rica is the first financial institution in the country to include the 2030 Agenda within its strategic management. The Bank adopted the definition of "Stakeholders" proposed by the Financial Initiative of the United Nations Program as "groups that may affect or be affected by the development of the company's activities." The bank's sustainability model is based on the three dimensions of sustainable development, understood as economic growth with equity and social welfare, making appropriate use of environmental resources. As a result of this model, the Bank established strategic lines of actions such as financial inclusion, financial education, financial deepening, entrepreneurship, linkages of integrated policies and management instruments, and environmental management. They will use these tools to prioritise working with women living in poverty, young people, indigenous populations and people with disabilities – all identified as nationally vulnerable groups.

As a next step, the Bank will define priority issues for the entity and for the interested parties, in order to continue promoting the alignment of its business strategy with the SDGs.

Source: Summary provided by CEPEI based on Costa Rica's VNR report.

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FIGURE 12. REPORTING ON THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

▮ Reported   ▮ Not reported

Capacity development

| 13 | 32 |

International public finance

| 7 | 38 |

Technology

| 15 | 30 |

Trade

| 23 | 22 |

Systemic issues

| 28 | 17 |

0   10   20   30   40   50
Number of countries
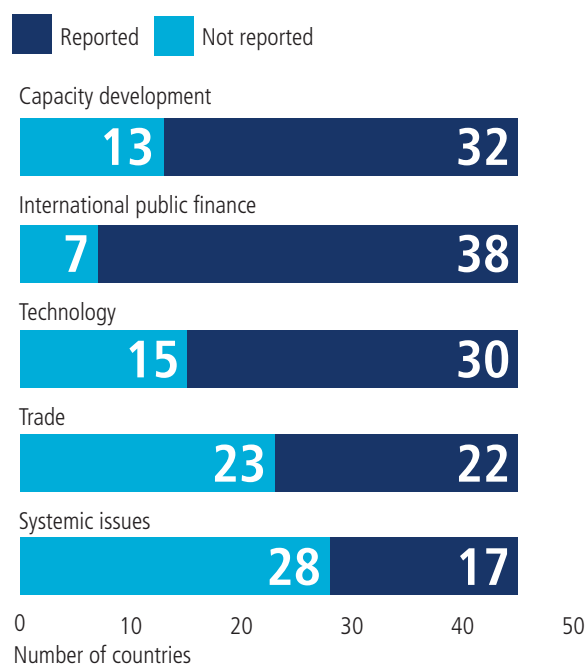
2.8.3 Means of implementation

The assessment framework looked at how countries addressed means of implementation issues in their VNR reports, including capacity development, international public finance, technology, trade and systemic issues. Figure 12 provides an overview of the number of countries reporting on these issues. It shows that most countries report on the role of international public finance – either from their perspective as a provider or recipient – followed by reporting on capacity development and technology. The inclusion of SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure in the HLPF theme for 2017 seems to have contributed to reporting on technology, particularly through the goal-by-goal analysis. While reporting on public finance was generally good, just under half of countries reported on trade, and only 17 referred to systemic issues such as security, regional instability, illicit capital flows and the status of the global economy.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

For the countries that note capacity development challenges, the bulk (19 of 32) referred to the need for capacity development in a general way to realise the SDGs. Eight countries referred to South-South cooperation, with providers noting their efforts to support capacity development and partner countries stressing the value of South-South cooperation for capacity development. Eight members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee highlighted their contributions

through official development assistance. Capacity development to address data challenges (5), local level capacities (4) and to support civil society (2) were also cited.

INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC FINANCE

In terms of international public finance, 12 official development assistance providers and two providers of South-South cooperation provided information on their contributions, namely Qatar and Thailand. An additional five providers of South-South cooperation only referred to their programmes. Three (3) members of the Development Assistance Committee committed to increasing their official development assistance: Czech Republic, Italy, and Slovenia. Indonesia committed to increasing South-South cooperation.

Only two recipient countries provided information on the amount of international public finance received – Bangladesh and Zimbabwe. Five (5) developing countries called on providers of official development assistance to meet their commitments. Eight (8) countries (providers and recipients) noted the importance of establishing strategic partnerships to maximise international public finance, often through enhanced South-South and triangular partnerships. Ten (10) countries referred to the general importance of international public finance (official development assistance and/or South-South cooperation) to realising the SDGs.

TECHNOLOGY

Countries that reported on technology tended to look at domestic and international aspects of the technology agenda regardless of income level. Seventeen (17) countries (of the 30 that reported) outlined national investments in technology and research and development. Eight (8) countries highlighted the need for technology transfer while another eight noted their efforts to support technology transfer. Five (5) countries noted the general importance of technology to realise the SDGs.

TRADE

Just over half of countries reporting on trade (13 of 22) highlighted commitments to sustainable and/or fair trade that benefits all countries, in particular least developed countries. Five (5) countries specifically referred to the need to finalise trade packages for developing countries. Six (6) developing countries noted their ambitions to improve trade capacity. Cyprus, Malaysia and Thailand were the only countries to report on trade flows from developing countries into their markets.

SYSTEMIC ISSUES

The most commonly cited systemic issue impacting 2030 Agenda implementation was peace and security, with a number of countries

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(8 of 17) either noting their efforts to address peace and security or the impacts of peace and security on prospects for realising the SDGs nationally. Six (6) countries cited the impact of the global economy, and in particular the 2008 financial crisis, on their ability to implement the SDGs. Three countries referred to the need for more and better cooperation on international tax matters. Addressing illicit capital flows was noted as an issue for three countries as well.

✅ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Clearly report in VNR reports on best practices, lessons learned in accelerating implementation, challenges going forward and where opportunities exist to learn from peers.

- As an essential part of the process, start integrating the SDGs into national and local budgets to ensure that resources are allocated for implementation, building on the good practice of identifying sources of finance to implement the 2030 Agenda at country level.

- Report on all means of implementation. Such information is critical for assessing gaps, including in terms of identifying where greater domestic and international efforts are needed. Member states failed to meaningfully operationalise Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals on Global Partnership. Member states should ensure that Goal 17 of the SDGs is fully implemented.

- Bolster donor country efforts to support development partners' capacity development priorities, including strengthening statistical systems and the capacities of local stakeholders to implement the 2030 Agenda.

- Increase official development assistance to support 2030 Agenda implementation. Aid providers should ensure they meet their commitment of providing at least 0.7% official development assistance as a percentage of gross national income, and 0.15 % to least developed countries.

- Align South-South cooperation to the national priorities defined by recipient partners in a data-driven and accountable way.

- Implement trade agreements and agendas that benefit developing and developed countries, including the Doha Development Agenda, and the Nairobi (2015) and Bali (2013) Packages.

- Scale up efforts to address systemic issues that impact SDG implementation, in particular international peace and security, illicit capital flight, tax avoidance and tax evasion, among other things.

2.9 Partnership to realise the SDGs

Most VNR reports are government reports. They largely focus on the activities of the highest level of government with some reference to the activities of local government and non-state actors, usually in a specialised chapter on partnership or implementation efforts. The VNR reports for Belgium, Nigeria and Uruguay, however, include contributions from non-state actors and often local governments throughout, emphasising their roles and contributions in the goal-by-goal analysis. Denmark's VNR report includes an extensive annex that outlines how civil society, the private sector, local and regional governments, youth and academia are contributing to the SDGs. Stakeholders were asked to formally provide inputs on their contributions to the SDGs domestically and internationally. The integration of contributions to 2030 Agenda implementation in these reports provides a national story on implementation efforts, not just what is being done by the government. This approach also respects the principles of inclusivity and participation that embedded in the 2030 Agenda.

2.9.1 Non-state actor participation in SDG implementation

All countries, with the exceptions of Belize, Benin, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Panama, Qatar and Tajikistan provide information on local non-state actor participation in implementation beyond consultation on priorities and participation in governance arrangements.[49] For the most part, all VNR reports stressed the important contributions of non-state actors and others (even those that did not provide specific examples of partnership), and the need for multi-stakeholder partnership for 2030 Agenda implementation.

SIX STAKEHOLDER GROUPS INVOLVED IN SDG MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

🇳🇱 A case study in best practice: The Netherlands' approach to partnership

The Netherlands' sees a wide range of stakeholders as critical to SDG implementation. In support of the 2030 Agenda, over 100 organisations have signed up to the Netherlands' SDG Charter, committing to form partnerships to contribute to the SDGs. Individuals and organisations can showcase their activities online at https://gateway.sdgcharter.nl.

Source: Except and figure adapted from the Netherlands' VNR report.

49   This section deals with the forms of engagement and participation that have not yet been addressed in the earlier sections of the report – as such looking beyond engagement through consultation and governance arrangements.

2.9.2 Civil society

All countries refer to the importance of civil society in the implementation of the SDGs, particularly with respect to public engagement and awareness raising. Despite this recognition, in general, VNR rports do not refer to the importance of fostering an enabling environment for civil society to be able to contribute.[50]

According to analysis from the CIVICUS Monitor, of the 45[51] countries examined, only seven are considered "open" or in other words, the state enables and safeguards civic space.[52,53] In 12 countries, the space for civil society is "narrowed" meaning that the rights to freedom of association, and peaceful assembly and expression have been subject to violations.[54] What is most concerning is that more than half of the countries under review are evaluated to be "obstructed," "repressed" or "closed." Under the Monitor, countries in which "civic space is heavily contested by power holders, who impose a combination of legal and practical constraints on the full enjoyment of fundamental rights" are listed as obstructed. This rating applies to 15 countries.[55] Countries rated as "repressed" are those in which civic space is heavily constraints and civic engagement can lead to harassment, intimidations, imprisonment, injury and death. Seven (7) countries that submitted a VNR report are considered repressed.[56] Finally, one country, Ethiopia, was ranked as "closed" which refers to a situation when there is a complete closure of civic space in law and practice with an atmosphere of fear and violence prevailing.

Only two reports refer to the need to build capacity for civil society specifically to support implementation – Azerbaijan and Zimbabwe. Slovenia reported that its experience developing the VNR highlighted the need for a more comprehensive approach to dialogue with civil society. A fair portion of the VNR reports (25) provide information on specific partnerships and initiatives carried out by civil society to realise the SDGs. Figure 13 provides an overview of the most commonly cited activities carried out by civil society in this regard. It shows that countries tend to highlight civil society contributions to the 2030 Agenda in terms of specific projects, formation of and participation in coalitions, and awareness-raising activities. This is a very narrow perception of the roles that civil society organisations play in broader society.

FIGURE 13. CIVIL SOCIETY CONTRIBUTIONS HIGHLIGHTED IN VNR REPORTS

Civil society reports prepared in response to the questionnaire developed by Action for Sustainable Development, noted above, included information on civil society contributions to the 2030 Agenda, in addition to serving as a useful source to fact-check the VNR reports submitted by countries. Responses for 13 countries highlight the extent to which CSOs have developed their own implementation plans for the 2030 Agenda, and identified best practice in the effective delivery of the SDGs and challenges to implementation.[57] Generally speaking, national civil society coalitions responded to the questionnaire.

Table 4 provides an overview of the current status of CSO implementation plans for the SDGs. It shows that CSOs are still in the initial stages of 2030 Agenda implementation in terms of developing plans for the countries examined. Nevertheless, six CSOs reported engagement in either advocacy efforts or consultations and awareness raising. Five (5) CSOs referred to the preparation or implementation of projects to support the SDGs.

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50   The Netherlands refers to support for the CSO enabling environment in fragile states. Portugal lists empowerment of civil society organisations and collaboration with them as priorities that aim to create a favourable development environment in partner countries.

51   Rankings are not available for Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten.

52   Czech Republic, Denmark, Luxembourg, Monaco, Portugal, Slovenia and Sweden.

53   See https://monitor.civicus.org/Ratings/ for a full description of ratings.

54   Argentina, Belgium, Belize, Botswana, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Italy, Japan, Panama, the Netherlands, and Uruguay.

55   Benin, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, the Maldives, and Togo.

56   Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Qatar, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Zimbabwe. Though not reviewed for this report, Belarus, which submitted a VNR report in 2017, was also listed as repressed.

57   Available for Argentina, Chile, Czech Republic, India, Japan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Nepal, the Netherlands, Thailand, Togo and Zimbabwe.

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TABLE 4. STATUS OF CSO 2030 AGENDA IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

ACTIVITY	COUNTRY
Implementation plans not yet developed	**ARGENTINA,[58] CZECH REPUBLIC, KENYA, NETHERLANDS**
Plans under development	**ZIMBABWE, THAILAND, MALAYSIA, NEPAL, NIGERIA[59]**
Plan prepared	**JAPAN**
Consultation and awareness raising occurring	**INDIA, KENYA, NEPAL, NIGERIA**
Advocacy	**CHILE, THAILAND**
Alignment with government and donor plans beginning	**KENYA, LUXEMBOURG,[60] MALAYSIA**
Projects under development/being implemented	**CHILE, INDIA, NEPAL, TOGO, THAILAND**
Supporting localisation	**NEPAL, TOGO**

CSO reports that provided case studies on effective delivery by CSOs include Kenya, Luxembourg, Nepal, Thailand, and Zimbabwe.

- In **Kenya**, SaferWorld prepared a report on implementing the 2030 Agenda that identifies six conditions for SDG implementation including the following: 1) political will and technical support; 2) relevance and utility for national actors; 3) space for a vibrant civil society and engagement; 4) effective accountability mechanisms; 5) ensuring integration (connections across silos); and, 6) implementing the SDGs in the spirit of SDG 16 on peace, justice and effective institutions. Groots Kenya is championing community dialogue. VSO organised community dialogues and is mobilising volunteer involving organisation networks to ensure accountability. Help Age is mobilising older persons and carrying out advocacy. And World Wildlife Fund has produced a report on standards and certification schemes to transform markets and contribute to the SDGs.

- A consortium of development non-governmental organisations in **Luxembourg** prepared an inventory of activities on global education for sustainable development.

- In **Nepal**, CSOs are promoting efforts on SDG 5 on gender equality by engaging government institutions on how gender equality can be mainstreamed across the SDGs. They have also co-hosted side events internationally on SDG 5 with government institutions, and carried out awareness-raising efforts (a flash mob on International Women's Day) and consultations with a range of stakeholders on unpaid labour and leaving no one behind.

- CSOs in **Thailand** have been making strides on climate change adaptation. In one project, non-governmental organisations communicated climate risks and prepared a community adaptation plan, improving preparedness at the community level. They are now using findings from the work to advocate for long term adaptation processes under the SDGs.

- In **Zimbabwe**, Poverty Reduction Forum Trust carried out an awareness-raising campaign on the SDGs through radio programmes and by working with local journalists. In addition, a Reference Group on the SDGs was established that is improving coordination of CSO contributions.

CSOs noted a wide range of challenges that prevent CSO delivery of the 2030 Agenda. Figure 14 provides an overview of the main challenges identified.

58 Tools are needed to develop implementation plans.

59 The Nigeria Network of NGOs trained over 200 organisations on how to integrate the SDGs into their development plans, however no plans are publicly available yet.

60 Though there is a low level of awareness among environmental and human rights non-governmental organisations.

FIGURE 14. CHALLENGES TO CSO DELIVERY OF THE 2030 AGENDA

AWARENESS
CZECH REPUBLIC, KENYA, JAPAN, NETHERLANDS, NEPAL, NIGERIA,

FINANCE
ARGENTINA, CHILE, KENYA, NETHERLANDS, NIGERIA, THAILAND, TOGO, AND ZIMBABWE

PARTICIPATION
CHILE, MALAYSIA, THAILAND

LACK OF GOVERNMENT ALIGNMENT
CHILE, INDIA AND THAILAND

With respect to lack of awareness, CSOs point to different stakeholders. For example, Japan, Kenya, Nepal and the Netherlands point to the public. Kenya also includes local government and development workers, while the Czech Republic, Nigeria and the Netherlands point to a lack of awareness among CSOs. With respect to participation, the Chilean context is characterised by a lack of participatory spaces and decision making, while in Thailand, those left behind are not sufficiently included. In Malaysia, CSOs that are seen as unfriendly to the government do not get invited to participate. In Chile and India, the SDGs are not sufficiently aligned to government policies, while in Thailand, the lack of indicator development makes it difficult for CSOs to move forward on such a large agenda. Civil society in the Czech Republic are hindered by capacity gaps and in Zimbabwe by a poor enabling environment. CSOs in Togo lack support by government to engage, and in Japan, ministries that have historically been responsible for domestic issues are not keen to take on international commitments. In Nepal, there is a lack of national leadership and coordination, and systems for local implementation are not developed. In Kenya, there is a need for multi-stakeholder platforms to support implementation; duplication of efforts is occurring across stakeholders. Finally, in Thailand, there is a need to ensure effective civil society representation, managed by CSOs, in governance structures for SDG implementation.

2.9.3 Parliamentarians

Several countries (15) outlined efforts by parliamentarians to support SDG implementation (beyond consultations and engagement through governance arrangements). Argentina, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Cyprus, Denmark, Kenya, Japan, Nepal, the Netherlands, Thailand, Sweden, and Zimbabwe have either included or plan to include the SDGs in parliamentary committee work. Belgium's parliament is currently exploring how it can be better engaged in SDG implementation, while India's has hosted dialogues on the SDGs.

A case study in best practice: Engagement on the SDGs by Brazil's parliament

In December 2016, the Brazilian National Congress created a nonpartisan Joint Parliamentary Front to Support the SDGs, bringing together more than 200 house representatives and senators. Among other objectives, the Front aims to maintain and consolidate joint action in favour of SDG-focused policies and to foster the regulation and discussion of laws to encourage sustainable development.

Source: Excerpt adapted from Brazil's VNR report. Translation provided by CEPEI.

2.9.4 The private sector

Twenty-three (23) countries provide information on specific initiatives with the private sector beyond consultations and engagement in governance arrangements. That said, most, if not all, VNR reports point to the important role of the private sector in supporting implementation more generally. Local United Nations Global Compact Networks feature strongly in many reports, playing a key role in socialising and organising the private sector for 2030 Agenda implementation. The most commonly cited activity (8 of 23) is the establishment of specialised forums or associations that typically raise awareness and promote coordination on the SDGs. Seven (7) countries listed specific projects supported by the private sector, while six noted the organisation of events by business associations or other groups of private sector partners. Five (5) countries noted company specific commitments to the SDGs or sustainability. Two (2) reports highlighted research on the role of the private sector in 2030 Agenda implementation. Despite these efforts, nearly half of the reports do not report specific efforts by the private sector, suggesting that more work is needed to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda and promote partnerships with the private sector in implementation (and be able to present, as noted above, a more comprehensive report on *national* implementation).

🇩🇰 A case study in best practice: Measuring collective impact on the SDGs

In its contribution to the Danish VNR report, the business community recommended that the national statistics office, the Danish government, the private sector and other non-state actors, collaborate to identify how the impacts of Danish initiatives on the SDGs are measured. The business community would like to see such cooperation lead to a multi-stakeholder-based dataset for sound decision-making that could be used in the government's annual review of SDG progress. Further, the Danish business community plans to investigate how results can be measured and reported beyond government reporting. The Danish private sector will share what it has learned – good and bad – to support a constructive learning environment, which the business community hopes other stakeholder groups will support as well.

Source: Except adapted from the annex of stakeholder inputs in Denmark's VNR report.

2.9.5 Academia and experts

A limited number of countries (14) presented examples of academic or expert contributions to SDG implementation – beyond consultations and participation in governance arrangements. Belgium, Monaco, Portugal, the Netherlands and Uruguay highlighted specific projects and partnerships. Afghanistan, Honduras and Zimbabwe gave examples of tertiary education institutions supporting events, such as symposiums on the 2030 Agenda. Italy and Thailand noted the role of the academic community in supplying scientific inputs into policy making processes. Japan and Sweden highlighted participation by academics in scientific councils or advisory groups. In Indonesia, a number of universities have set up centres of excellence on the SDGs while universities in Argentina are looking at how they can integrate the SDGs into research, training, and extension activities. As with the case of the private sector, greater steps are needed to encourage engagement by academics and experts on the 2030 Agenda.

2.9.6 Other stakeholders

Twenty countries referred to other stakeholders in their VNR reports. Participation by youth and youth organisations is most commonly cited (13), with governments taking steps to consult with youth on their priorities, and youth organisations in some countries carrying out advocacy related to youth priorities. Six (6) countries noted the important role of media in disseminating information on the SDGs, while two countries pointed to activities by trade unions to support the SDGs.

2.9.7 Development partners

The role of development partners in 2030 Agenda implementation is relevant for 33 of the reporting countries in 2017. The United Nations Secretary General's common reporting guidelines ask countries to outline their main priorities for development partner support. VNR reports for 22 countries identified roles for development partners while 17 identified priority areas. However, where information is available, it is vague and presented as headlines for support (e.g. capacity development is needed to implement the SDGs).

With a few notable exceptions, VNR reports are not specific enough to be helpful in terms of informing future areas for development partner support and the establishment of partnerships. This finding suggests that countries may require further support from the United Nations or other partners to articulate their needs clearly and at appropriate levels of detail.

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In terms of priority areas for support, strengthening systems to collect data and monitor SDG implementation is highlighted by ten countries. Goal specific priorities were outlined by seven countries. Four countries referred to technology needs and transfer. Resource mobilisation and policy support were identified as priorities by two countries each. In supporting country priorities, the provision of finance (largely in the form of official development assistance) is the most common role identified by countries (12) followed by technical assistance (10). A limited number of countries also noted the role of development partners in technology transfer (2), knowledge sharing (2), aligning to national priorities (2), participating in country level coordination (2), and facilitating access to finance (1). Seven (7) explicitly noted that they received support to carry out their VNR, in partnership with the United Nations.[61]

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **Provide an analysis of data availability in the goal-by-goal analysis.**

✅ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Support civil society to engage in 2030 Agenda implementation by creating a more enabling environment, and through institutionalised dialogue and consultation, inclusion in formal governance arrangements, finance, and where needed, capacity development.

- Integrate the 2030 Agenda into parliamentary committee work, recognising the critical role parliamentarians play as citizens' representatives and in ensuring national level accountability for progress.

- Support and develop partnerships with a variety of non-state actors, including academia and the private sector.

- Where relevant, clearly stipulate and provide details on priority areas for support from the international community, laying out the roles development partners can best play to support the acceleration of 2030 Agenda implementation.

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61   Azerbaijan, Benin, Botswana, Jordan, Kenya, Nigeria, and Tajikistan.

2.10 Measurement and reporting

The Secretary General's voluntary common guidelines note that it would be useful for countries to include information on how they intend to review progress, including at the national level. The majority of VNR reports (31) include provisions for monitoring and reporting on progress at the national level. Of the 14 countries that did not report this information, ten are from Central and South America.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Provide an account of national level reporting and accountability processes for 2030 Agenda implementation in VNR reports.

2.10.1 Data availability

TABLE 5. DATA AVAILABILITY FOR GLOBAL SDG INDICATORS

PERCENTAGE	COUNTRIES
11-20%	**GUATEMALA**
21-30%	**AZERBAIJAN, MALDIVES**
31-40%	**JAPAN, PANAMA, THE NETHERLANDS**
41-50%	**BELGIUM, ITALY, NIGERIA, PERÚ**
51-60%	**DENMARK**
61-70%	**INDONESIA**
71-80%	**BANGLADESH**
81-90%	**MALAYSIA**

It is impossible to assess the current status of data availability for SDG monitoring based on the information presented by countries in the VNR reports. For the majority of countries (31), information on data availability is unclear or not articulated. Even in cases where countries provide a percentage in terms of the number of indicators for which data is available, the calculation is based on different approaches. Some countries refer to available data in terms of a

strict accounting against global indicators. Others provide figures in terms of instances where the global indicator is available or a national proxy indicator exists. Table 5 provides an overview of data availability according to country calculations. Data availability is based on available data and proxy or partial data. The data presented does not attempt to reconcile the differences in how countries calculate data availability. Rather the table provides an indication of where countries situate themselves in terms of data availability, and further demonstrates the need for countries – regardless of their income level – to strengthen data availability for SDG monitoring.

2.10.2 Disaggregated data

As noted in the section on LNOB, information on disaggregated data is not well reported in the VNR reports. Where it is reported, it is clear that disaggregation still remains a huge challenge. This includes in the discussions in VNR reports on data and monitoring as well as in the statistical annexes provided by countries. Of the 14 countries that provided information on disaggregated data, only 10 identified gaps in terms of forms of disaggregation available. Gender disaggregated data is highlighted as lacking for all ten countries reporting gaps. Disaggregation by region (7), age (6), disability (6) and administrative unit (2) are the next most prominently noted gaps. Disaggregation by education level, ethnicity, income, migrant status, social group and social status were each listed once in terms of gaps.

2.10.3 Efforts to improve data availability

A majority of countries (31) reported on efforts to improve data availability. Figure 15 provides an overview of the main efforts being undertaken. Capacity development and technical assistance for statistical system strengthening are the most commonly cited efforts, followed by building new datasets, including through the expansion of existing surveys and the development of new ones.

FIGURE 15. EFFORTS TO IMPROVE DATA AVAILABILITY

Build new datasets — 12
Capacity development and technical assistance — 18
Coordination — 8
Improved data dissemination — 4
Resource mobilisation — 6
Use of technology — 3

Number of countries
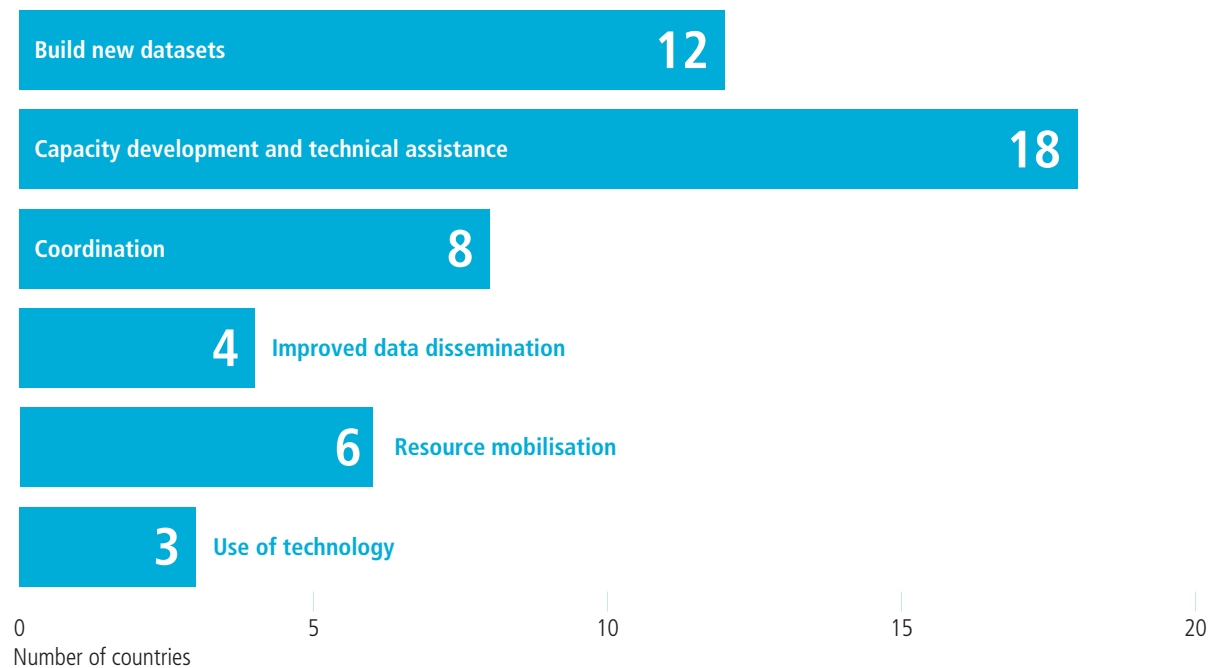
A case study in best practice: Brazil's Web Tools

A number of web tools have been created by the Brazilian government and civil society to support planning and the dissemination of the 2030 Agenda in the localisation process. These tools provide information to Brazilian people about the 2030 Agenda and Brazil's implementation process, expanding transparency and generating opportunities of participation. *The 2030 Agenda Platform* provides information on SDG follow-up in Brazil and monitors national indicators based on outcomes realised by government institutions. It also creates a channel for public participation (http://www.agenda2030.com.br/). Five other web tools are highlighted in the VNR report:

DialogaBrasil allows citizens to make suggestions and inform the development of public policies by the federal government, including those to reach SDGs targets (http://dialoga.gov.br/). *Participa.br* is a participation tool for citizens, networks, social movements and organisations. It enables government bodies to engage in dialogue with society through public consultations, debates, conferences and online events (http://www.participa.br/). *SDGs Strategy* is a site that brings together civil society, the private sector, local governments and academia representatives, aimed at broadening the debate on the SDGs and how to implement them (http://www.estrategiaods.org.br/). *Map of Civil Society Organizations* is a georeferenced platform, including data on CSOs, which allows

groups to disseminate information on the 2030 Agenda and activities carried out (http://mapaosc.ipea.gov.br/). *Municipal Vulnerability Atlas* presents the Social Vulnerability Index (based on indicators from the Human Development Atlas). It can map exclusion and social vulnerability in 5,565 Municipalities and maps Human Development Units of the main metropolitan regions of Brazil (http://ivs.ipea.gov.br/ivs/).

Source: Summary provided by CEPEI based on Brazil's VNR report.

2.10.4 National reporting on 2030 Agenda implementation

In the 31 VNR reports that articulate national reporting provisions, none refer to regional accountability mechanisms or peer learning, and only one country, Japan, notes when it will submit a follow-up report to the HLPF (2019). Generally, VNR reports do not refer to reporting by non-state actors on their contributions to 2030 Agenda implementation. Fifteen (15) countries that outlined national reporting plans highlighted reporting according to a set schedule, ten of which plan to report annually. Three (3) countries noted intentions to report periodically to the HLPF, while five noted that they will report to parliament, and one noted reporting to the head of state. The use of departmental reports (6) and dashboards (5) on progress were also noted by some countries.

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BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Link accountability for progress on 2030 Agenda implementation to regular, planned parliamentary reviews.

🇧🇪 A case study in best practice: Belgium's commitment to parliamentary review

Belgium's National Sustainable Development Strategy commits all authorities involved to jointly establish a report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda twice per government term, including in dialogue with non-state actors and parliamentarians. The aim of this report will be to highlight the progress made in achieving the SDGs, to identify gaps, and to consecutively develop recommendations for adaptation and/or prioritisation in dialogue with the stakeholders. The Inter-Federal Statistical Institute is responsible for the systematic monitoring of progress, and has set up a specific working group to that end. SDG indicators will be progressively incorporated into a comprehensive inter-federal SDG follow-up and review mechanism.

Source: Except adapted from Belgium's VNR report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Report on data availability, including disaggregated data, and their efforts to improve data availability - given the importance of data for SDG monitoring and accountability, as well as leaving no one behind.

- Link reviews of progress for 2030 Agenda implementation to parliamentary oversight mechanisms in order to ensure accountability at the national level.

- Spell out plans to review progress at the national level and be accountable to citizens for progress on the 2030 Agenda beyond reporting to the HLPF. Articulate plans for future HLPF reporting. These elements are important for ensuring accountability for progress on the 2030 Agenda, identifying gaps in implementation, allowing for course correction and ensuring transparency in reporting processes.

3.0 Assessment of VNR reports against the UN Secretary General's common reporting guidelines

Photo: © Greg Armfield / WWF-UK

Chapter Summary

The majority of countries include most elements of the common reporting guidelines in their VNR reports, with notable exceptions being the non-inclusion of a thematic analysis and statistical annex. That said, many of the VNR reports are not structured according to the outline in the guidelines. This can hinder comparison of shared challenges and good practices. As noted elsewhere in this review, overall, the VNR reports show an absence of details in terms of challenges and lessons learned, examples of best practice, details on the areas in which countries would like to learn from others, and identification of priorities for development partner support. This makes it difficult to understand country needs, hold stakeholders accountable and identify the best entry points for support.

In comparison to 2016, the 2017 reports followed the Secretary General proposed guidelines more closely. A greater proportion of VNR reports include a statement by the head of government or other official in 2017 than in 2016. Compared to reporting in 2016, the proportion of countries that do not include an executive summary has increased, though the majority of countries included one overall. Thirteen countries did not include the methodology for the VNR in 2017, compared to one country in 2016. A higher proportion of countries (93%) reported on their efforts to raise awareness and create ownership over the 2030 Agenda versus 2016 (69% of VNR reports included this element). All countries but one reported on their efforts to incorporate the SDGs into national frameworks in 2017 (versus all countries but two in 2016). Though 75% of countries reported on integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in 2017, it appears that further guidance is needed. Often the narrative presented in reports repeats how

the SDGs are incorporated into national frameworks, rather than articulating the processes that have been put in place to ensure alignment with the more integrated and holistic approach that the principles of the 2030 Agenda espouse. While all countries reported on goals and targets in 2017, the majority (32) only partially met this component because they did not report on the full set of SDGs or only provided a thematic analysis of the goals. As was the case in 2016, roughly half of countries reporting in 2017 included the thematic analysis. All countries reported on institutional mechanism in 2017 compared to 75% in 2016. In comparison to other components of the guidelines, there is less reporting on the means of implementation which may be the result of the focus on SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals in the HLPF given the overlap between the goal and means of implementation. Of the 29 countries that reported on the means of implementation in 2017, most only did so partially. There appears to be a need for the United Nations to provide further guidance on this component of the guidelines, particularly in recognition of the different roles played by developing and developed countries to support implementation. While most countries (34) reported on their next steps in 2017, they were often presented in the conclusion, and tend to be vague. While a greater proportion of countries included a statistical annex in their report in 2017 than in 2016 (53% over 38%), the reports still revealed significant variance in terms of the quality and quantity of reporting on this component. Finally, 34 countries included a conclusion in their 2017 VNR report. Conclusions tended to repeat elements from the overall report, in particular open statements and executive summaries. Potential exists to streamline the conclusion and the section on next steps in VNR reports.

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The United Nations Secretary-General has proposed a set of common reporting guidelines to help countries frame their VNR reports to the HLPF. The guidelines are voluntary; countries ultimately decide how to present their findings. They were updated in December 2017 for reporting in 2018. The original 2017 guidelines include the following elements listed below.

- An **opening statement** by the Head of State or Government, a Minister or other high-ranking Government official.

- A **summary** that synthesises the findings of the review, highlighting good practice, lessons learned, key challenges and support needed.

- An **introduction** that sets the context and objectives for the review with a discussion of national priorities and critical challenges.

- Presentation of the **methodology for the review**, outlining the process for preparation of the national review.

- Policy and enabling environment issues pertaining to:

  - **Creating ownership** of the SDGs, outlining efforts towards all stakeholders to inform them on and involve them in the SDGs;

  - **Incorporation of the SDGs in national framework**, in terms of the critical initiatives countries undertook to adapt the SDGs and targets to its national circumstances, and to advance their implementation;

  - **Integration of the three dimensions** though a discussion of how the three dimensions of sustainable development are being integrated and how sustainable development policies are being designed and implemented to reflect such integration;

  - A brief analysis of progress on all **goals and targets**, including whether a baseline has been defined;

  - **Thematic analysis** of progress and initiatives related to the HLPF's thematic focus for the year – Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world; and

  - Institutional mechanisms, described in terms of how the country has adapted its institutional framework in order to implement the 2030 Agenda.

- Presentation of the **means of implementation (MOI)**, including how MOI are mobilised, what difficulties this process faces, and what additional resources are needed.

- An outline of **next steps** the country is taking or planning to take to enhance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

- A **statistical annex** with data, using the global SDG indicators as a starting point and adding priority national/regional indicators and identifying gaps.

- Finally, a **conclusion** that provides a summary of the analysis, findings and policy implications.

All the VNR reports presented in 2017, with the exception of Belarus as noted above, were reviewed against the guidelines to identify which of the suggested components each country addressed in their VNR report.

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3.1 Overall assessment of use of guidelines

As shown in Figure 16, most countries include most elements of the guidelines in their VNR report, with notable exceptions being the thematic analysis and statistical annex. The findings from the 2016 assessment of the VNR reports against the guidelines remain relevant.[62]

Photo: istockphoto

Many of the reports are not organised according to the structure outlined in the guidelines. As noted by Together 2030 and World Vision, this can hinder comparison of shared challenges and good practices.[63] In addition, the VNR reports, overall, show an absence of gap analysis, details in terms of challenges and lessons learned, examples of best practice, details on the areas in which countries would like to learn from others, and identification of priorities for development partner support, as noted in the analysis above. This makes it difficult to understand country needs, hold stakeholders accountable and identify the best entry points for support. This is clearly a gap in existing VNR reports and in the HLPF process. It should be a strong area of focus of the United Nations at future HLPFs and warrants substantially more attention from countries in their future VNR reporting.

Despite these missing elements, VNR reports still tend to be very long, repetitive and unnecessarily detailed, with some sections of the guidelines asking for repetition of the same information (Indonesia's VNR report suggests that there is a need for the new guidelines to streamline repetitive elements). How states are expected to differentiate from the goal-by-goal analysis and the analysis of the

HLPF theme – particularly when it is linked to specific goals – is unclear. This suggests that the United Nations may need to explore the challenges faced by member States in reporting on these elements and provide further guidance to ensure that the reporting elements that can most contribute to learning and garnering support for implementation are present in VNR reports.

🇲🇾 A case study in best practice: Malaysia' 2017 VNR report

Though Malaysia's VNR report did not follow the guidelines perfectly (integration of the three dimensions was the only section not included), the VNR report is accessible to read, with appropriate levels of detail. It provides links to national plans, a progress update, and information on successes, lessons learned, and where further efforts are needed, including with support from others. Though the VNR report is still long in terms of number of pages, the use of graphics, tables, boxes, and bullet points provides information to readers in varied and accessible ways without the report being too text heavy.

Source: Assessment by author based on review of Malaysia's VNR report.

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62   Cutter, 2016.

63   Together 2030 and World Vision. 2017a. *Guiding for Accountability Together 2030 recommendations for a revised set of guidelines for Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).* Together 2030. http://www.together2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/REV-FINAL-T30-Recommendations-for-VNR-guidelines-October-2017-2.pdf

FIGURE 16. THE EXTENT TO WHICH COUNTRIES INCORPORATE ELEMENTS OF THE SG COMMON REPORTING GUIDELINES

🟢 The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines

🟡 The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines

🔴 The report does not address this component

2017 VNR REPORTS	STATEMENT BY HOSG	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	INTRODUCTION	METHODOLOGY FOR REVIEW	CREATING OWNERSHIP	INCORPORATION IN NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS	INTEGRATION OF THREE DIMENSIONS	GOALS AND TARGETS	ERADICATING POVERTY AND PROMOTING PROSPERITY	INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS	MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION	NEXT STEPS	STATISTICAL ANNEX	CONCLUSION
Afghanistan	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢
Argentina	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🟡
Aruba	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Azerbaijan	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Bangladesh	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Belgium	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Belize	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🔴
Benin	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡
Botswana	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟢
Brazil	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡
Chile	🔴	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢
Costa Rica	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Curaçao	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Cyprus	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢
Czech Republic	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴
Denmark	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
El Salvador	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢
Ethiopia	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Guatemala	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟡
Honduras	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟢
India	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴
Indonesia	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Italy	🟡	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Japan	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴
Jordan	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢

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	STATEMENT BY HOSG	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	INTRODUCTION	METHODOLOGY FOR REVIEW	CREATING OWNERSHIP	INCORPORATION IN NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS	INTEGRATION OF THREE DIMENSIONS	GOALS AND TARGETS	ERADICATING POVERTY AND PROMOTING PROSPERITY	INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS	MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION	NEXT STEPS	STATISTICAL ANNEX	CONCLUSION
Kenya	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢
Luxembourg	🟢	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🟡
Malaysia	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢
Maldives	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢
Monaco	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢
Nepal	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴
Netherlands	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Nigeria	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Panama	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢
Peru	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢
Portugal	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟡	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Qatar	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢
Slovenia	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟢
Sint Maarten	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Sweden	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢
Tajikistan	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢
Thailand	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Togo	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢
Uruguay	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟢
Zimbabwe	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢

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2016 VNR REPORTS	STATEMENT BY HOSG	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	INTRODUCTION	METHODOLOGY FOR REVIEW	CREATING OWNERSHIP	INCORPORATION IN NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS	INTEGRATION OF THREE DIMENSIONS	GOALS AND TARGETS	ERADICATING POVERTY AND PROMOTING PROSPERITY	INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS	MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION	NEXT STEPS	STATISTICAL ANNEX	CONCLUSION
China	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Egypt	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢
Estonia	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢
Finland	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟢
France	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴
Georgia	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢
Germany	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴
Montenegro	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Norway	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢
Philippines	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢
Republic of Korea	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢
Samoa	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Sierra Leone	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Switzerland	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
Turkey	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟢
Uganda	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢

✅ **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Follow, as much as possible, the guidelines as proposed by the Secretary General to ensure that all elements of SDG implementation are captured and facilitate comparison of shared challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

- Explore the challenges faced by states in adhering to the guidelines and provide further guidance where needed.

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3.2 Detailed assessment of use of guidelines

3.2.1 Statement by head of government

A greater proportion of VNR reports include a statement by the head of government or other official in 2017 than in 2016.[64] In 2016, only four of the 16 (or 25%) examined did so, while in 2017, reports for 32 of 45 (or 71%) countries included an opening statement. The high number of reports including opening statements bodes well as an indication of political support to the 2030 Agenda.

✅ Include a statement from a head of state to demonstrate commitment and give profile to the agenda.

3.2.2 Executive summary

The majority of reports include an executive summary (37). However, compared to reporting in 2016, the proportion of countries that do not include an executive summary has increased (seven of 45 (or 16%) countries versus one of 16 (or 6%) countries in 2016). Executive summaries are important for ensuring accessibility and dissemination of key findings from the VNR.

✅ Include an executive summary as a tool to provide a snapshot of context, best practice, challenges and lessons learned.

3.2.3 Introduction

In 2017, all countries included an introduction, or outlined most elements for the introduction per the guidelines. In 2016, only one country – China – did not meet this requirement.

✅ Include an in introduction which is useful for scene setting and setting out components of the report while avoiding repetition in the opening statement and executive summary.

3.2.4 Methodology for review

Thirteen (13) countries reporting in 2017 did not include a section on the methodology for the review, in comparison to one of 16 in 2016. For those that included information on the methodology, information was generally helpful for understanding the VNR process and stakeholder engagement. In a limited number of cases, information presented provided insufficient detail to be useful in terms of understanding the key elements of how the VNR was carried out.

The 2016 assessment of VNR reports suggested that countries use this section to focus on sharing lessons learned and providing information that can support other countries to carry out a VNR – elements such as leadership, drafting process, data sources, methodology, and engagement mechanisms. For the most part, the 2017 reports provide this information, though it is not presented in terms of lessons learned.

✅ Include the methodology for the VNR, with sufficient details that clearly articulate how the drafting process occurred, timing, how stakeholders were engaged, and lessons learned. This will provide greater clarity on what was done, and how other member states can draw from the experience of different countries.

3.2.5 Creating ownership

The proportion of countries reporting on their efforts to raise awareness and create ownership over the 2030 agenda improved in 2017 with 42 (93%) countries reporting, versus 11 (69%) in 2016. Though 2017 reports include varying levels of detail on efforts to raise awareness and to create ownership, generally speaking, the reports are clear on the efforts undertaken. The 2016 report encouraged countries to share lessons, key initiatives and successes in creating ownership in their reports; thankfully, many reports provided information on key initiatives and their outcomes in 2017.

✅ Continue to provide information on efforts to raise awareness and foster ownership, in particular key initiatives and successes and lessons learned in this process.

3.2.6 Incorporation of SDGs in national frameworks

Only one country did not include information on how the SDGs have been incorporated into national frameworks in 2017 – Monaco (versus two countries in 2016 – China and France).[65] Though this information was included with varying degrees of detail, countries are adhering to this element of the guidelines.

✅ Continue to provide information on efforts to incorporate the SDGs into national frameworks, in particular key initiatives and successes and lessons learned in this process.

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64   Throughout the analysis, reference to the 2016 report refers to Cutter, 2016.

65   As noted above, Monaco's VNR report does not outline clearly whether there will be changes at the strategic or operational level to implement the 2030 Agenda.

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3.2.7 Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development

Though a larger proportion of countries reported on how they integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development in the 2017 reports (30 or 75%) compared to 2016 (9 or 56%), it appears that countries require further guidance on this section. Often the narrative presented in VNR reports repeats how the SDGs are incorporated into national frameworks, rather than articulating the processes that have been put in place to ensure alignment with the more integrated and holistic approach that the principles of the 2030 Agenda espouse. This finding was similarly highlighted in the review of VNR reports for 2016, along with the need for countries to share lessons learned on taking an integrated approach to SDG implementation.

✅ Provide further guidance to member states on key elements required to help ensure integration of the three pillars of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) into and across national frameworks.

3.2.8 Goals and targets

The analysis of goals and targets was met or partially met by all countries examined in 2017 (this figure was ten for the 16 countries examined in 2016). The majority of countries (32) only partially met this component, however, because they either only reported on HLPF theme goals, on a limited set of goals as selected by the country, [66] through a thematic analysis of the goals based on national priorities, or through people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership.

The goal-by-goal analysis section tends to be long, overly detailed in terms of country level policies and initiatives, and with an insufficient focus on lessons learned, priorities going forward and areas where support is needed in light of existing policies and initiatives.[67] In addition, the 2016 assessment noted the value of including gap and baseline analyses in VNR reports, and beyond just at a general level.

✅ Report on all SDGs with specific attention to gap and baseline analyses that provide a clear articulation of where gaps exist.

3.2.9 Thematic analysis – Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world

Roughly the same proportion of countries (50%) did not report on the thematic analysis in 2017 as in 2016.[68] There is a need for the guidelines to streamline the thematic analysis and make it clearer to Member States what is required for this section. Otherwise reports tend to be very repetitive with the goal-by-goal analysis.

✅ Provide further guidance to member states on the main elements to be reported in the thematic analysis, with reference to how this element should differ from the goal-by-goal analysis.

3.2.10 Institutional mechanisms

All countries reported on institutional mechanism in 2017, with the majority of countries (39) fully meeting instructions as per the guidelines. Four (4) countries did not include this component in 2016. Information in this section is useful for providing options and examples to other countries regarding SDG coordination and implementation. The 2016 assessment suggested that governance arrangements should be added to this reporting element. In 2017, most VNR reports included reference to governance and leadership arrangements for implementation.

✅ Continue to provide information on institutional mechanisms for 2030 Agenda implementation, including governance arrangements.

3.2.11 Means of implementation

A fair portion of the VNR reports (29 or 64%) included reference to the means of implementation; however, more than half of these (16 of 29) did not follow the instructions as per the guidelines. In 2016, seven of 16 (or 44%) countries reported on the means of implementation, with six reporting as per the guidelines. In comparison to other components of the guidelines, the limited reporting on the means of implementation may ironically be a result of the annual focus on SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals in the HLPF. Many elements of the means of implementation are captured by SDG 17 and as such, countries that report on both tend to have more repetition. One (1) country, Bangladesh, combined these sections in its VNR report.

In terms of the content for this section, there is a need for the United Nations to provide further guidance, particularly to recognise the different roles played by developing and developed countries,

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66 Together 2030 and World Vision (2017a) have also identified partial reporting on the goals as a trend.

67 Together 2030 and World Visions (2017a) have similarly identified this challenge and recommend that VNRs should highlight good practices, lessons learned, and specific and general challenges of SDG implementation rather than outline initiatives as they do.

68 For 2016, eight of 16 countries reported. For 2017, 23 of 45 countries reported.

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as noted in the 2016 assessment. The role of providers of South-South cooperation is also unclear. Some South-South cooperation providers refer only to their role as a provider of cooperation, others to their role as recipients, and none to their dual role in international cooperation. There is also significant variation in the substance of reporting in this section, with countries addressing the means of implementation from a variety of perspectives, and in ways that do not easily lend themselves comparison across different country types.

Provide further guidance to members states on how to report on the means of implementation, giving due recognition to the differences between developing and developed countries, and those that are both recipients of official development assistance and providers of South-South cooperation.

✅ The United Nations common reporting guidelines should streamline how SDG 17 is analysed, more specifically, by combining the analysis of partnerships for the goals with the means of implementation, considering the significant overlap between these issues.

3.2.12 Next steps

As was the case in 2016, most countries (34) reported their next steps in SDG implementation.[69] Next steps are often presented in the conclusion, and tend to be vague - e.g. further localisation of the agenda is a next step. The provision of detailed explanations on next steps is important for articulating future directions and thinking, for signalling when countries will report next to the HLPF, and for supporting accountability in SDG implementation. This enables stakeholders to follow-up on whether countries have carried out the actions identified in their VNR reports.

✅ Provide a detailed assessment of the forward-looking agenda, outlining where the country needs to go and the steps to get there, based on gaps and lessons learned to date. This should include next steps in terms of follow-up and review with concrete commitments to be fulfilled by states, strengthening the VNR process and clarifying what stakeholders can expect in the years following VNR reporting at HLPF.

3.2.13 Statistical Annex

Over half the (24 or 53%) countries reporting in 2017 did not include a statistical annex in their VNR report. In 2016, six of 16 countries (or 38%) did not include this information. While this is a positive improvement in terms of the number of countries including this type of information, the VNR reports still revealed significant variance in terms of the quality and quantity of reporting on this element. Some only presented data for the HLPF theme goals, while others provided robust introductions to the statistical annex on data mapping studies and monitoring efforts, coupled with the results of data assessments and available data. Very few reports provide information on disaggregated data and data availability overall. The 2016 assessment noted that the statistical annex could include information on reporting. As noted in the discussion above, a fair number of countries (31) provided this information in 2017, generally as part of their discussion of institutional mechanisms.

✅ The guidelines on the statistical annex should include provisions for reporting on data availability, including disaggregated data,[70] with reference to global and national level indicators. This will provide a better picture of countries' overall capacity to monitor SDG implementation.

✅ Countries should include a statistical annex in their VNR reports as suggested by the common reporting guidelines.

3.2.14 Conclusion

The majority of countries (34) prepared a conclusion as part of their VNR report. This is a similar finding to the 2016 assessment that found that 12 of 16 countries prepared conclusions. Overall, conclusions tended to repeat elements from the overall VNR report, in particular open statements and executive summaries. Given that the main messages of the report are covered by the executive summary, the conclusion could be streamlined with the next steps section, removing the additional summary of the VNR report and providing greater detail on next steps.

✅ The UN common reporting guidelines should mainstream the sections on next steps and conclusion. Rather than encouraging countries to provide a summary of the main report in the conclusion, the conclusion should focus on providing greater details on next steps.

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69 Thirteen (13) out of 16 countries reported next steps in 2016.

70 This recommendation is also supported by Together 2030 and World Vision (2017a).

4.0 Conclusion

The VNRs are the main mechanism for accountability on SDG implementation at the global level through the HLPF, and contribute to national level accountability. They also serve as a vehicle to promote best practice and lessons learned in SDG implementation. From the assessment made in this review on the VNR reports produced in 2017, there is still a long way to go before country VNRs generate both an appropriate level of accountability, and serve as a key resource for learning and peer exchange.

Photo: © Nutrition International

That said, there are a lot of positives. Through their VNR reports, countries have also highlighted the value of the VNR process. Curaçao and the Netherlands used the VNR to create momentum on SDG implementation by raising awareness and encouraging participation by stakeholders in implementation. The process of preparing the VNR report helped to consolidate networks and increase the breadth and depth of existing relationships. Thailand used the VNR to create ownership over 2030 Agenda implementation, noting that the process is not only about reporting and sharing good practice and challenges. The process is also about taking stock of sustainable development efforts, mobilising public awareness and contributions, and strengthening SDG implementation. Thailand notes that the VNR is a practical tool that should be encouraged.

In 2018, 48 countries will present VNR reports to the HLPF. This report has identified best practice in SDG implementation and VNR reporting that can support countries as they implement their VNRs. The key recommendations from the report are consolidated below. Looking forward, we hope that this review has provided useful insight that will help shape and guide the process as countries return to New York in July to tell the world how they are working to advance a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.

Annexes

Progressing national SDGs implementation:

An independent assessment of the voluntary national review reports submitted to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2017

The Second Edition in annual series commissioned by civil society organizations

Annex 1. VNR reports reviewed

All VNR reports are available through the United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

Table A1. Provides an overview of the countries reviewed. Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten and the Netherlands submitted a joint report, making the number of countries reporting at the 2017 HLPF 45. Of these countries, six are low-income, ten lower-middle-income, 11 upper-middle-income and 18 are high-income countries – according to World Bank country classifications.

An equal number of the countries reviewed are from Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean[1] with 14 each according to United Nations classifications. Countries from Europe make up the next largest share at ten, while the seven African countries reporting are from sub-Saharan Africa.

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1   Three of the 14 Latin America and Caribbean countries are from the Caribbean.

Progressing national SDGs implementation: Annex 1. VNR reports reviewed   **a2**

TABLE A1. COUNTRIES REVIEWED IN THE ANALYSIS OF 2017 VNR REPORTS

COUNTRY	REGION[1]	SUB-REGION[2]	INCOME LEVEL[3]
Afghanistan	Asia	Southern Asia	Low-income country
Argentina	Americas	South America	Upper-middle-income country
Aruba	Americas	Caribbean	High-income country
Azerbaijan	Asia	Western Asia	Upper-middle-income country
Bangladesh	Asia	Southern Asia	Lower-middle-income country
Belgium	Europe	Western Europe	High-income country
Belize	Americas	Central America	Upper-middle-income country
Benin	Africa	Western Africa	Low-income country
Botswana	Africa	Southern Africa	Upper-middle-income country
Brazil	Americas	South America	Upper-middle-income country
Chile	Americas	South America	High-income country
Costa Rica	Americas	Central America	Upper-middle-income country
Curaçao	Americas	Caribbean	High-income country
Cyprus	Asia	Western Asia	High-income country
Czech Republic	Europe	Eastern Europe	High-income country
Denmark	Europe	Channel Islands	High-income country
El Salvador	Americas	Central America	Lower-middle-income country
Ethiopia	Africa	Eastern Africa	Low-income country
Guatemala	Americas	Central America	Lower-middle-income country
Honduras	Americas	Central America	Lower-middle-income country
India	Asia	Southern Asia	Lower-middle-income country
Indonesia	Asia	South-eastern Asia	Lower-middle-income country
Italy	Europe	Southern Europe	High-income country
Japan	Asia	Eastern Asia	High-income country
Jordan	Asia	Western Asia	Lower-middle-income country
Kenya	Africa	Eastern Africa	Lower-middle-income country
Luxembourg	Europe	Western Europe	High-income country
Malaysia	Asia	South-eastern Asia	Upper-middle-income country
Maldives	Asia	Southern Asia	Upper-middle-income country

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COUNTRY	REGION[1]	SUB-REGION[2]	INCOME LEVEL[3]
Monaco	Europe	Western Europe	High-income country
Nepal	Asia	Southern Asia	Low-income country
Netherlands	Europe	Western Europe	High-income country
Nigeria	Africa	Western Africa	Lower-middle-income country
Panama	Americas	Central America	Upper-middle-income country
Peru	Americas	South America	Upper-middle-income country
Portugal	Europe	Southern Europe	High-income country
Qatar	Asia	Western Asia	High-income country
Slovenia	Europe	Southern Europe	High-income country
Sint Maarten	Americas	Caribbean	High-income country
Sweden	Europe	Channel Islands	High-income country
Tajikistan	Asia	Central Asia	Lower-middle-income country
Thailand	Asia	South-eastern Asia	Upper-middle-income country
Togo	Africa	Western Africa	Low-income country
Uruguay	Americas	South America	High-income country
Zimbabwe	Africa	Eastern Africa	Low-income country

(Footnotes)

1   According to UN classifications.

2   According to UN classifications.

3   According to World Bank classifications for the 2018 fiscal year.

Annex 2. Methodology

A2.1 Research team

The research was led by Shannon Kindornay, Independent Consultant and Adjunct Research Professor at Carleton University. Ms. Kindornay developed the framework for analysis, building on the pillars of analysis in the 2016 review.[2] More specifically, this second edition builds on the eight pillars of analysis from the first edition by adding two more that focus on partnerships to realise Agenda 2030 and the means of implementation. It also provides an annex (Annex 3) of two-page profiles for the country VNR reports reviewed. She reviewed 31 of the English language reports, managed contributions from other members of the research team and carried out the analysis that informs this review.

Javier Surasky, Governance for Development Research Area Coordinator from the Centro de Pensamiento Estratégico Internacional, CEPEI reviewed 11 reports for Latin America and the Caribbean[3] (all Spanish reports with the exception of Belize and Brazil), provided written inputs to the review, including best practice case studies for the region and country profiles, and commented on a draft version of the report. Nathalie Risse, Thematic expert on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), reviewed the French reports for Benin, Luxembourg, and Monaco, prepared the country profiles and provided comments on a draft version of the report.

A2.2. Research approach

With the exception of Belarus, the research team examined all VNR reports to the HLPF in 2017, according to the framework outlined in Table A2.1. The framework includes ten pillars of analysis:

INCORPORATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA INTO NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND POLICIES

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

BASELINE OR GAP ANALYSIS

INTEGRATION AND POLICY COHERENCE

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

RAISING AWARENESS AND CREATING OWNERSHIP OF THE 2030 AGENDA

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW PROCESSES

IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA

PARTNERSHIP TO REALISE THE SDGS

MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

2   Cutter, 2016.

3   Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay.

In addition to these pillars, the framework includes an assessment of the extent to which countries followed the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines.

The framework was initially tested against four VNR reports. Minor revisions where then made to the framework, largely in the form of options for set-answer questions and the addition of more components of analysis. For open ended components of the analysis (instances in which researchers could not provide a set answer such as yes or no), text was drawn directly from the VNR reports to ensure the highest level of accuracy. In some cases, researchers paraphrased information when the text from VNR reports was more than 200 words. In addition, information from available civil society reports was also included in the framework. For set answer components, relevant information was listed in a 'notes' section of the framework. For open ended components, text from civil society reports is available directly following the text from VNR reports. To ensure consistency in the analysis, all data was reviewed by the lead researcher and clarifications were sought from the research team where necessary.

A2.3 Data sources

All reports are available through the United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. The analysis presented in this review is based solely on official VNR reports and where available, civil society reports. Secondary literature was used in a limited number of instances to show consistency between the analysis in the review and those carried out by others. No additional research was conducted to verify the accuracy and confirm the validity of the information governments included in their reports. This is a clear limitation of the findings.

Civil society reports are available for 18 of the countries reviewed in 2017. Reports for Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, India, Japan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Thailand, The Netherlands, Togo, and Zimbabwe can be found on the Action for Sustainable Development website. In some cases, more than one organisation responded to the survey prepared by Action for Sustainable Development on 2030 Agenda implementation and the VNR or an additional shadow report was prepared. India and Nepal have two reports each as a result. Spotlight reports were prepared for Bangladesh, Brazil and Kenya available on the website. In addition, Cyprus and Denmark included a civil society report in the annex of their VNRs reports, while Slovenia included a chapter in its report written by the National Youth Council of Slovenia, outlining youth priorities for the SDGs. Nigeria's VNR report included a CSO validation statement as an annex.

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Country name	n/a	Provide country name	Short version, e.g. Ethiopia rather than Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
Region	n/a	Based on United Nations Statistics Division classifications.	Region as stipulated in the classification.
Sub-Region	n/a	Based on United Nations Statistics Division classifications.	Intermediate region as stipulated in the classification.
Income level	n/a	World Bank classification for the 2018 fiscal year.	Low-income country
			Lower-middle-income country
			Upper-middle-income country
			High-income country
Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and policies	SDGs in national frameworks and policies	Refers to how governments are incorporating the SDGs into national frameworks and policies broadly.	SDGs incorporated into national development plans and related policies and frameworks
			SDGs incorporated through a national SDG implementation strategy
			SDGs incorporated into national development plans and related policies and frameworks and through the use of a national SDG implementation strategy
			SDGs have not been incorporated through a national strategy or into national development plans and related policies and frameworks
			Not articulated in VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and policies	Evidence of change to realise the SDGs	Refers to the extent to which the VNR report shows that steps are being taken to deliver the SDGs.	Provide summary assessment. Evidence of a change in approach could include: 1) changes to key policies and frameworks; and /or the 2) creation of particular initiatives to address a gap identified as a result of the SDGs. Where evidence of change is limited, ask whether the report appears to be business as usual with an SDG spin and provide your assessment.
Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and policies	Reference to principles of Agenda 2030 – human rights based approach	Whether the VNR report refers to the use of a human rights based approach in the implementation of the SDGs.	Yes
			No
Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and policies	Reference to principles of Agenda 2030 – universality	Whether the VNR report refers to the universality of Agenda 2030.	Yes
			No
Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and policies	Reference to principles of Agenda 2030 - leave no one behind	Whether the VNR report refers to leaving no one behind.	Yes
			No

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms	Governance arrangement for delivering the SDGs	Refers to the use of existing or new governance mechanisms to oversee SDG implementation and ensuring coordination.	Existing council or committee
			Creation of new council or committee
			No council or committee with implementation through government institutions
			Council or committee established with implementation through lead department
			Existing council or committee with implementation through lead department
			Creation of specialised office
			Council or committee established with implementation through government institutions
			Other
			Unclear from the VNR report
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms	Leadership on SDG implementation	Refers to the key government actor responsible for leading on SDG implementation.	Head of government or state
			Individual cabinet minister
			Multiple cabinet ministers
			Parliamentary committee
			Specific SDG implementation body or committee outside parliament
			Lead department
			Other
			Not articulated in the VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms	Non-state actor official engagement in SDG implementation governance arrangements	Refers to if and how non-state actors are included in official SDG implementation governing structures.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms	Examples of best practice in developing inclusive governance arrangements for SDG implementation	Examples of best practice as identified by reviewers.	Provide direct text from the VNR or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms	Regional coordination on the SDGs	Extent to which the country is engaged in coordinating efforts at the regional level.	Participates
			Does not participate
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms	Activities at regional level	Description of how regional coordination on the SDGs is occurring.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			VNR makes no mention of regional activities
Leadership, governance and institutional mechanisms	Engagement in special country groupings on the SDG	Description of the grouping to which the country belongs (for example, land locked, small island, least developed, etc.) and the activities it is pursuing as noted in the VNR report.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			VNR report makes no mention of participation in country groupings
Baseline or gap analysis	Gap analysis or baseline study carried out	Evidence that the country conducted a gap analysis or baseline study to assess existing policies in relation to the SDGs.	Assessment carried out for all SDGs
			Assessment carried out for some SDGs
			Assessment planned
			No assessment carried out
			Not articulated in the VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Baseline or gap analysis	Content of the gap analysis/baseline study	Description of the key elements examined through the gap analysis or baseline study conducted.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			No assessment carried out
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Baseline or gap analysis	Gaps identified	Areas identified in the VNR report where additional progress is needed as a result of the gap/baseline analysis. This information is sometimes found in the description of individual goals (i.e. areas where more efforts needed).	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			No assessment carried out
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Integration and policy coherence	Overall SDG coverage by the VNR	Refers to the composition of SDGs examined in the VNR report.	All SDGs examined
			SDGs covered by the HLPF theme examined
			Limited set of country selected SDGs examined
			SDGs not examined

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Integration and policy coherence	Specific SDGs examined by the VNR	Refers to the specific SDGs examined in the VNR report.	All 17 SDGs
			List the specific SDGs examined, by short title only and include their numbering, separated by semi-colons, no period at end of list. (1. No poverty; 2. Zero hunger; 3. Good health and well-being; 4. Quality education; 5. Gender equality; 6. Clean water and sanitation; 7. Affordable and clean energy; 8. Decent work and economic growth; 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure; 10. Reduced inequalities; 11. Sustainable cities and communities; 12. Responsible consumption and production; 13. Climate action; 14. Life below water; 15. Life on land; 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions; 17. Partnerships for the goals)
			No specific goal-by-goal analysis but rather analysis based on people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership
			No specific goal-by-goal analysis but rather analysis based on country priorities
Integration and policy coherence	Detailed analysis	Refers to the level of detail in which the VNR report examines the SDGs.	Detailed examination of all or most of the goals, targets and indicators mentioned in the report
			Summary of examination of goals, targets and indicators provided with limited details
			No detailed examination or summary of the goals, targets and indicators mentioned in the report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Integration and policy coherence	Economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development	Extent to which the VNR report addresses all three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – in the report.	Equal attention to economic, social and environmental dimensions
			All dimensions addressed but greater focus on economic
			All dimensions addressed but greater focus on social
			All dimensions addressed but greater focus on environmental
			All dimensions addressed but limited focus on social
			All dimensions addressed but limited focus on economic
			All dimensions addressed but limited focus on environmental
			Only social dimensions addressed
			Only economic dimensions addressed
			Only environmental dimensions addressed
Integration and policy coherence	Integration in SDG implementation	Extent to which the analysis of specific SDGs in the VNR report reflects the integrated nature of the agenda.	Reference to applicable linkages between economic, social and environmental dimensions in analysis of specific goals, targets and indicators
			Limited reference to linkages between economic, social and environmental dimensions in analysis of goals, targets and indicators
			No mention of linkages between economic, social and environmental dimensions in analysis of goals, targets and indicators
			No detailed analysis of specific goals, targets and indicators

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Integration and policy coherence	Examples of good practice in taking an integrated approach to SDG implementation	Examples of best practice as identified by reviewers.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
Integration and policy coherence	Reference to policy coherence for sustainable development	Whether the report refers to policy coherence for sustainable development:	Yes
			No
Integration and policy coherence	Assessment of domestic and foreign policies on SDG outcomes	Whether the report includes a systematic assessment of how domestic and foreign policies impact the realisation of the SDGs in country and globally.	Assessment of domestic and foreign policies on realisation of SDGs globally
			Assessment of domestic policies on realisation of SDGs globally
			Assessment of foreign policies on realisation of SDG globally
			No assessment of domestic or foreign policies on realisation of SDGs globally
Integration and policy coherence	Overall approach to policy coherence to sustainable development	Reviewer summary of how policy coherence for sustainable development is addressed in the report. This sub-category will be used to provide greater content on the types of policy coherence for sustainable development issues raised in reports. Also provide information for countries that do not focus on policy coherence but mention participation in South-South Cooperation or efforts to address global issues related to the SDGs.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Integration and policy coherence	Linkages to climate change and the Paris Agreement	Whether the report links SDG implementation to climate change and delivering on the Paris Agreement.	Climate change and the Paris Agreement explicitly linked to the SDGs
			Climate change referenced but no mention of the Paris Agreement
			No mention of climate change or the Paris Agreement
Integration and policy coherence	Tackling climate change	How the reports links climate change and the Paris Agreement to the SDGs.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Integration and policy coherence	Linkages to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda	Whether the report links SDG implementation to the Addis Ababa Action agenda.	Yes
			No
Leave no one behind	Data to leave no one behind	Availability of data and baselines to ensure no one is left behind.	Additional data required to LNOB
			Efforts to LNOB informed by existing baselines/available data
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Leave no one behind	Targets of efforts to LNOB	Groups within society as mentioned by the VNR report that will be targeted in efforts to LNOB.	Provide list of groups mentioned by the VNR report (e.g. indigenous peoples, women; people with disabilities, etc.)
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Leave no one behind	Efforts to leave no one behind	Efforts as outlined in the VNR.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Leave no one behind	Reducing domestic inequalities	Efforts specifically geared towards reducing domestic inequalities as outlined in the VNR report.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary
			Not articulated in the VNR report

Progressing national SDGs implementation: Annex 2. Methodology   **a15**

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Raising awareness and creating ownership of the 2030 Agenda	Awareness-raising efforts carried out by government	Whether the government took efforts, including working in partnership with others, to raise awareness about the SDGs at country level.	Yes
			No
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Raising awareness and creating ownership of the 2030 Agenda	Nationalisation of the SDG agenda at country	Does the VNR report indicate that the country has identified national priorities within the context of the SDGs?	National priorities selected
			No national priorities selected
Raising awareness and creating ownership of the 2030 Agenda	Preparation of national targets and indicators	Has the country defined its own national targets and indicators?	Yes
			No
			National targets only
			National indicators only
			Unclear from the VNR report
Raising awareness and creating ownership of the 2030 Agenda	National priorities under the SDGs	List the national priorities identified under the SDGs.	Provide direct text from the VNR report if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Raising awareness and creating ownership of the 2030 Agenda	Localisation of the SDG agenda at country level	Extent to which the VNR report outlines how the SDGs are being implemented at the local level.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Stakeholder engagement	Consultation with national stakeholders on SDG priorities	Articulation of how non-state actors were involved in the defining of national priorities under the SDGs.	Non-state actors engaged in identification of national priorities
			Non-state actors were not engaged in the identification of national priorities
			The VNR report does not set out national priorities
			Not articulated in the VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Stakeholder engagement	Non-state actor engagement in the development of VNR reports	Whether non-state actors were engaged in the development of the VNR report.	Yes
			No
			Unclear from the VNR report
Stakeholder engagement	Best practice in non-state actor engagement	Examples of best practice in consultations on national report, and/or engagement in implementation and the development of VNR reports.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
Stakeholder engagement	Civil society report	Does a civil society shadow (report prepared for the HLPF in response to government report) or spotlight (report prepared on the country's progress on the SDGs not necessarily linked to government report and/or the HLPF) report exist?	No
			Spotlight and shadow report
			Shadow report
			Spotlight report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Best practices as identified by the country	The Secretary General guidelines for the VNR report invite countries to outline 2-3 best practices.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in VNR report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Lessons learned in accelerating implementation	The Secretary General guidelines for the VNR report invite countries to outline 2-3 lessons learned in accelerating implementation of the SDGs.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Challenges in implementing Agenda 2030	The Secretary General guidelines for the VNR report invite countries to outline 2-3 challenges they face in implementing the SDGs.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Reference to financing Agenda 2030 at country level	Whether the report references financing needs to realise the 2030 Agenda at country level and how efforts will be funded. Include in notes section description of efforts (domestic resource mobilisation, etc.)	Country level implementation has been costed and the country has identified sources of finance
			Country level implementation has been costed but sources of finance are not identified
			Costing for country level implementation not mentioned but sources of finance identified
			Costing for country level implementation is planned and no sources of finance have been identified
			Costing for country level implementation is planned and sources of finance have been identified
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Means of implementation - technology	Whether the report refers to technology in the discussion of the means of implementation and/or goal analysis. Include description of the country's own efforts and gaps as well as support by development partners (or support given if examining a high-income country).	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Means of implementation - capacity development	Whether the report refers to capacity development in the discussion of the means of implementation and/or goal analysis. Include description of the country's own efforts and gaps as well as support by development partners (or support given if examining a high-income country).	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Means of implementation - international public finance	Whether the report refers to international public finance (official development assistance, South-South and Triangular cooperation) in the discussion of the means of implementation and/or goal analysis. Include description of the country's own efforts as well as support by development partners (or support given if examining a high-income country).	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary. Not articulated in the VNR report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Means of implementation - trade	Whether the report refers to trade in the discussion of the means of implementation and/or goal analysis. Include description of the country's own efforts as well as support by development partners (or support given if examining a high-income country).	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary. Not articulated in the VNR report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Means of implementation - systemic issues	Whether the report refers to systemic issues. Policy coherence and data issues are captured by different sub-categories. Include issues related to global macro-economic stability (e.g. impact of global crises on country), respect for policy space, and other systemic issues mentioned by the country (e.g. global peace and security concerns are sometimes listed as impacting overall sustainable development progress).	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary. Not articulated in the VNR report
Implementing the 2030 Agenda	Learning from peers	Areas in which the country would like to learn from others as identified in the VNR report.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary. Not articulated in the VNR report
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Local non-state actor participation in implementation	Whether non-state actors are engaged in implementation of the SDGs.	Yes No

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Multi-stakeholder implementation of the SDGs – civil society	Articulation of how and which national civil society actors are involved in the implementation of the SDGs beyond participation in consultations, governance or institutional mechanisms.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not specifically mentioned regarding multi-stakeholder implementation efforts in VNR report
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Multi-stakeholder implementation of the SDGs – private sector	Articulation of how and which national private sector actors are involved in the implementation of the SDGs beyond participation in consultations, governance or institutional mechanisms.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not specifically mentioned regarding multi-stakeholder implementation efforts in VNR report
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Multi-stakeholder implementation of the SDGs – academia/ experts	Articulation of how and which national academia or experts are involved in the implementation of the SDGs beyond participation in consultations, governance or institutional mechanisms.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not specifically mentioned regarding multi-stakeholder implementation efforts in VNR report
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Multi-stakeholder implementation of the SDGs – parliamentarians	Articulation of how and which parliamentarians are involved in the implementation of the SDGs beyond participation in consultations, governance or institutional mechanisms.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not specifically mentioned regarding multi-stakeholder implementation efforts in VNR report
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Multi-stakeholder implementation of the SDGs – other	Articulation of how and which other national actors not belonging to the stakeholder groups of civil society, the private sector or academia/experts are involved in the implementation of the SDGs beyond participation in consultations, governance or institutional mechanisms.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not specifically mentioned regarding multi-stakeholder implementation efforts in VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Priority areas for development partner support	Articulation of key areas in which the government requires additional support to realise the SDGs. The Secretary General guidelines suggests that countries include this in their VNR reports.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
			If not applicable (high-income country), state Not applicable
Partnership to realise the SDGs	The role of development partners	Articulation of the type of support required from development partners as indicated in the VNR report.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
			If not applicable (high income country), state Not applicable
Partnership to realise the SDGs	Support provided to government to carry out the VNR	Meant to provide some indication of country capacity to participate in the VNR process.	Provide direct text from the VNR report if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
			If not applicable (HIC), state Not applicable

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Measurement and reporting	Data availability	Description of the percentage of SDG indicators for which data is available (existing indicators and proxy indicators combined).	0%
			1-10%
			11-20%
			21-30%
			31-40%
			41-50%
			51-60%
			61-70%
			71-80%
			81-90%
			91-100%
			Unclear from the VNR report
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Measurement and reporting	Availability of disaggregated data	Description of the availability of disaggregated data.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Measurement and reporting	Efforts to improve data availability	Description of how the government plans to improve the availability of good quality data for SDG monitoring.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report
Measurement and reporting	National reporting on the SDGs	How the government plans to report on the SDGs.	Provide direct text from the VNR report or if longer than 200 words, provide a summary.
			Not articulated in the VNR report

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Statement by HoSG	Opening statement by the Head of State or Government, a Minister or other high-ranking Government official.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Executive Summary	A synthesis of the findings of the review highlighting good practice, lessons learned, key challenges and support needed.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Introduction	The context and objectives of the review with a discussion of national priorities and critical challenges.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Methodology for review	This section may discuss the process for preparation of the national review.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Creating ownership	Policy and Enabling Environment, Creating ownership of the SDGs. Refers to efforts made towards all stakeholders to inform them on and involve them in the SDGs.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Incorporation in national frameworks	Policy and Enabling Environment, Incorporation of the SDGs in national framework. Refers to critical initiatives that the country has undertaken to adapt the SDGs and targets to its national circumstances, and to advance their implementation.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Integration of three dimensions	Policy and Enabling Environment, Integration of the three dimensions. Refers to how the three dimensions of sustainable development are being integrated and how sustainable development policies are being designed and implemented to reflect such integration.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Goals and targets	Policy and Enabling Environment, Goals and targets: Provides brief information on progress and the status of all SDGs, including whether a baseline has been defined.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity	Policy and Enabling Environment, Thematic analysis: Provides analysis of progress and initiatives related to the HLPF's thematic focus for the year – Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Institutional mechanisms	Policy and Enabling Environment, Institutional mechanisms: Refers to how the country has adapted its institutional framework in order to implement the 2030 Agenda.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Means of implementation	Description of how means of implementation are mobilised, what difficulties this process faces, and what additional resources are needed.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Next steps	Provides outline of what steps the country is taking or planning to take to enhance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component

TABLE A2 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING VNR REPORTING TO THE 2017 HLPF

CATEGORY	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Statistical annex	An annex with data, using the global SDG indicators as a starting point and adding priority national/regional indicators and identifying gaps.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component
Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines	Conclusion	A summary of the analysis, findings and policy implications.	The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines
			The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines
			The report does not address this component

Annex 3. Country Profiles

A3.1 Overview of country profiles

The review provides an aggregate analysis of the key findings for the 45 countries examined. As such, with the exception of the best practice case studies, there are limited references to individual country progress against the pillars of analysis that make up the review.

This annex presents two-page profiles for all 45 countries according to the pillars of analysis of the review. As much as possible, the information presented in the profiles is drawn directly from country VNR reports with edits made for readability, and information summarised where necessary to limit the profiles to two pages. The country profiles necessarily provide only a summary of where countries stand vis-à-vis the pillars. The information presented is selective and used to illustrate, as much as possible, the overall state of 2030 Agenda implementation as outlined in the VNR report, as well as best practice. Where available, country profiles include civil society validity check statements, which have been used selectively to indicate instances where information diverges from government and civil society reports.

A3.2 The traffic light system

Each country profile includes a traffic light that indicates the extent to which the country followed the Secretary General's common reporting guidelines. All countries were rated according to the following system for each of the 14 components in the guidelines:

- The report addresses this component as instructed in the guidelines

- The report addresses this component to some extent in this or another section of the report but does not fulfil the brief as laid out in the guidelines

- The report does not address this component

Green indicates that the country included 11 or more of the 14 components set out in the guidelines, and half or more of the components were fully met as per the guidelines.

This rating drops to yellow for countries that included 11 or more components, but met less than half fully. Yellow is reserved for countries that included between eight and ten of the components, with more than half of those included fully met.

This rating drops to red for countries that included between eight and ten components, but met less than half fully. Red indicates that the country included seven (or half) of the components or less.

Afghanistan – Green

In 2017, Afghanistan submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government reported that it has incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national policies through the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework. The framework outlines immediate and long-term development priorities, key reforms and priority investments needed to achieve the SDGs. Generally, the government's policy is to align what it calls Afghanistan-SDGs' targets and indicators with national policies, strategies and development plans. There are 10 National Priority Programmes. The VNR report does not mention the principles of universality, a human rights-based approach or leaving no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Under the president's leadership, Afghanistan is making use of an existing council, the High Council of Ministers, to oversee the SDG nationalisation, alignment and implementation process. The SDGs Secretariat, which was established within the Ministry of Economy, prepares national documentation, coordinates development efforts across sectors and reports on these efforts semi-annually and annually to the High Council of Ministers and Cabinet. Commissions and technical working groups have been formed to support implementation. An Executive Committee on the SDGs will be established within the Office of the Chief Executive to issue recommendations and practical solutions to the Economic Committee of the High Council of Ministers, which is chaired by the Ministry of Economy. The High Council of Ministers is expected to engage with non-state actors. Representatives of non-state actors are included in technical working groups.

Baseline or gap analysis

The High Council of Ministers tasked all government budget entities and stakeholder technical committees to review the SDG targets and indicators and adjust them to the national context and development priorities. Afghanistan has 125 national targets and 190 national indicators.

⚙ Integration and policy coherence

The VNR report reviews a limited set of SDGs by focusing on the High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" goals (SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals) and excludes SDG 14 on life below water (Afghanistan is landlocked). The report provides a detailed assessment of the goals, but makes limited references to the linkages between them and has a limited focus on the environmental dimension compared to the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. Policy coherence for sustainable development is not mentioned, but the report notes that the government is working on the formulation of standard concepts, mechanisms and strategies to ensure policy coherence and the integration of the SDGs into development plans.

✋ Leave no one behind

Although it does not mention leaving no one behind, the report notes that special priority will be given to ensuring that girls and women, people with disabilities, young people, ethnic minorities and people affected by conflict and crisis are enjoying well-being and not suffering from extreme poverty. The report mentions the launch of a whole-of-government policy to create a favourable environment for the sustainable realisation of Afghanistan's constitution and thus enable the government to deliver on the rights and obligations befitting the equal citizens of a democratic polity.

⊚ Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report mentions that the Ministry of Economy conducted a series of constructive consultation and awareness-raising programmes for provincial departments and influential stakeholders at the sub-national level and will continue to do so. During the nationalisation process, the government divided the 17 SDGs into eight socio-economic sectors (security, education, health, governance, infrastructure, social protection, agriculture and rural development, economic) to simplify planning and implementation processes for relevant institutions. Although efforts have been largely at the national level, the report notes that national targets and indicators will be adjusted at the provincial level.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

To develop national targets and indicators and prepare the VNR report, the report states that a series of national consultation conferences, seminars, meetings and workshops were held. Government institutions, experts, local governments, parliament, academia, civil society organisations and the business community took part. The report notes that strong engagement of stakeholders led vibrant awareness-raising campaigns and needs to be continued going forward.

💬 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report notes a number of challenges for SDG implementation, including financing, formalising cross-sector partnerships, localising the SDGs, data availability and management, and monitoring and evaluation. The Afghanistan-SDGs will be incorporated into the budget planning process at the national and sub-national levels for annual development projects. Afghanistan is a donor-dependent country with 95% of its development budget coming from donors. There is a need for the government and development partners to make more progress on following globally agreed principles for aid effectiveness.

❖ Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report recognises the importance of partnerships and notes that the government supports funding modalities that foster stronger collaboration among civil society, academia, youth, groups promoting gender equality, the business sector, development partners, United Nations agencies and other relevant institutions. However, it does not lay out specific initiatives and partnerships with different sectors to realise the SDGs, aside from awareness-raising events with universities and youth organisations.

📋 Measurement and reporting

The report does not provide an indication of the availability of data but notes that generating accurate data is challenging due to a lack of technical capacity, inadequate resources and insecurity in the country. Efforts have been made to improve coordination in the national statistical system and the accuracy of data.

Government institutions will report their SDG efforts to the Ministry of Economy, which will then prepare standard progress reports annually and semi-annually for the High Council of Ministers, Cabinet and United Nations. The government plans to establish a SDG repository and web-based data system. In doing so, the existing results-based monitoring and evaluation system and Millennium Development Goal data repository within the Ministry of Economy will be fully utilised.

Argentina – Yellow

In 2017, Argentina submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government has made significant progress on aligning the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with its national priorities, institutionalising them and monitoring their progress. The president's political will is highlighted as a key asset. Although Argentina has no national development plan, the SDGs are aligned with eight government priorities: macroeconomic stability, establishment of a national productivity agreement, development of infrastructure, sustainable human development, the fight against drug trafficking and improvement of security, institutional strengthening, modernisation of the government, and intelligent participation in the world.

The report considers human rights as a main issue in the SDG adaptation and implementation processes. The report also highlights that, while the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes the SDGs, it is important not to lose sight of the vision, principles and means of implementation set forth in the Declaration.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies, under the office of the president, was created in 2002. It led the national Millennium Development Goal implementation process and was appointed the main institution for leading SDG implementation and localisation at the national level. The council receives inputs from non-state actors such as civil society, academia and the private sector.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, the government carried out an assessment for some SDGs and established baselines for their follow-up. The procedures followed to establish baselines are not fully explained in the report, which refers to them in a broad way.

Integration and policy coherence

Even though it mentions the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and their inter-linkages, the report does not provide details on how they were taken into account in the process of defining national goals and targets.

The government recognises the value of policy coherence for SDG implementation and considers the fight against poverty to be a cross-cutting issue around which policy coherence must be built.

The report does not include an assessment of the impact of domestic or foreign policies on SDG outcomes but reflects on how the 2008 global financial crisis has affected Latin America generally and Argentina specifically. South-South cooperation is considered a way to support partners' efforts to implement the SDGs.

Leave no one behind

The report mentions leaving no one behind in a few places but does not go into detail on existing inclusive approaches or how the principle might be achieved in SDG implementation at the national level. It offers only very general data on the current status of vulnerable and marginalised groups in the country. To ensure that no one is left behind, the report notes that implementation must incorporate the 2030 Agenda's preamble, vision, shared principles and commitments, means of implementation, and follow-up and review.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report includes references to different meetings organised by the government to raise awareness about the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda in partnership with civil society, academia, the private sector and local governments. The country is undertaking a process of defining national goals, targets and indicators that involves all ministries, working together in six clusters: education; science and technology; sustainable agricultural production; housing, habitat, urban development and infrastructure; labour and employment; and social protection. Each cluster is responsible for proposing national versions of a predefined set of global SDGs and possible national indicators. At the same time, the government signed framework agreements with nine provinces and is working with municipalities on implementation.

Stakeholder engagement

The report discusses meetings with representatives of civil society and inputs from the private sector and academia. A civil society report was prepared in response to global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's civil society questionnaire on engagement in SDG implementation and the VNR process. The United Nations Global Compact Network Argentina identified five SDGs on which the country's private sector is highly engaged: SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production, SDG 13 on climate action and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report highlights the case of actions undertaken by the municipality of Vicente López in Buenos Aires Province as best practice. It identifies lessons learned about appropriation and institutionalisation, the global-local balance, linkage with multiple international initiatives, the indivisibility and integrity of the SDGs, operationalisation of abstract goals, opportunities to strengthen statistics, and coherence in implementation and follow-up processes. National challenges are also identified, such as improving monitoring capacities, reducing inequalities and gaps, mobilising the means of implementation, and establishing multi-stakeholder approaches.

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **The local government of Vicente López decided to focus on three priorities, namely health, education and the fight against poverty, link each to SDG targets and implement policies and programmes based on the 2030 Agenda. As a result, Vicente López has achieved a significant decrease in its infant mortality rate.**

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report underscores the role of non-state actors in SDG implementation. In mid-2016, the government and Interuniversity National Council agreed to initiate a process towards integrating the SDGs into university activities.

Measurement and monitoring

The report analyses data availability for each SDG as well as links between the SDGs and the government's goals set by the president. The report recognises that data gaps and methodological weaknesses exist and will be considered in the National Statistical Plan. No further details are provided. Nonetheless, the report stresses the key role of the national statistical office. It does not mention how the government will report at the national level.

Aruba- Red

In 2017, Aruba submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as part of the submission by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, of which it is a constituent country.

Incorporating the SDGs

At the time of the High-level Political Forum, the VNR report notes that Aruba was in the process of finalising a roadmap for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation that will allow it to identify areas requiring further attention. A field mission provided details on the current situation with regard to the SDGs at the national level, using the United Nations' Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support approach. The report includes a commitment to leaving no one behind but does not mention universality or the human rights-based nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Leadership, governance and institutions

In January 2017, Aruba established a National SDG Commission consisting of representatives of the Ministry of General Affairs and Department of Economic Affairs, Commerce and Industry. The commission is tasked with coordinating SDG implementation in the country. It works closely with non-state actors, but they are not formally represented. Aruba also participates in regional SDG-related activities including through partnerships. Aruba stated that it is working on overcoming the limitations to sustained and sustainable development confronted by small island developing states, including through the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway.

Baseline or gap analysis

In addition to the field mission, Aruba is preparing to have its statistics bureau draw up a baseline measurement of SDG status. Its report will highlight areas where implementation is lagging behind and clarify where political decisions need to be made. Preliminary findings show that existing policies address over 80% of SDG indicators.

Integration and policy coherence

The report covers all SDGs except SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth and SDG 10 on reduced inequalities. Only summary information is provided and for some goals, the summary is a paragraph or less with limited information on progress. Nevertheless, the report gives equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, though it makes limited references to the linkages between dimensions in the analysis of goals. The report makes reference to policy coherence for development and each subsection in the review of SDGs discusses implementing the SDGs at home and abroad, though information is provided at a summary level with limited details.

Leave no one behind

There is no information on who is at risk of being left behind in Aruba or the status of data to ensure no one is left behind. However, the report notes Aruba's aim to ensure social well-being and good living standards for everyone in a sustainable and inclusive future. Aruba is combining sustainable economic growth, social equity and environmental awareness in order to enhance quality of life, raise living standards for all and ensure that no one is left behind.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

To foster awareness of the SDGs, a website (www.sdgaruba.com), Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/SDGAruba/) and Twitter account (@SDGAruba) were established. These are used to share information with the population on the SDGs and Aruba's implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Aruba has established an indicator working group to assess the relevance of the SDG indicators and localise them, but national priorities had not been selected at the time of reporting.

Stakeholder engagement

Although the report notes that the field mission on the current status of SDGs in Aruba included discussions with non-state actors, there is no further information on consultation during the nationalisation or VNR processes.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report notes that collaboration between different sectors is an ongoing challenge, which sometimes requires external support and an exchange of lessons learned between countries. It mentions that SDG implementation must be further aligned with existing policies.

There is no Aruba-specific information for most sections on means of implementation in the report. However, to the extent that Aruba contributes to the Kingdom of the Netherlands' international development efforts, the combination of foreign trade and development cooperation is highlighted as a positive contribution. Aruba is also committed to close cooperation with the kingdom and international partners to enhance security, peace and prosperity within its region.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report notes that Aruba is actively involving as many stakeholders as possible in SDG implementation. The National SDG Commission conducted a survey of stakeholder involvement around the themes of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. Aruba will continue to involve the private sector, trade unions and civil society organisations in consensus-based decision making on major policy issues.

Aruba signed the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework for the Caribbean. The framework guarantees national ownership while promoting regional synergies in implementing the SDGs. It primarily focuses on priority areas for the Caribbean. It gives countries a platform to access the United Nations system's global expertise and experience at both the national and regional levels.

Measurement and reporting

Aruba does not provide an indication of data availability, including disaggregated data, to monitor progress on the SDGs. It attaches importance to underpinning the SDG with indicators, though more technical support is required and financing this process remains a challenge.

The report refers to annual reporting on the SDGs but does not elaborate on how such reporting will occur.

Azerbaijan- Green

In 2017, Azerbaijan submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have not been formally incorporated into Azerbaijan's national policies, though they are included in the United Nations-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (2016-2020). The government plans to develop an appropriate action plan to coordinate policies and activities related to the SDGs and make more efficient use of available resources and opportunities. The report refers to a human rights-based approach, universality and leaving no one behind as principles in SDG implementation.

Leadership, governance and institutions

By presidential decree, Azerbaijan established the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development. Its responsibilities include identification of national priorities and relevant indicators, ensuring alignment of government programmes and strategies with the SDGs, and preparation and submission of national progress reports. The council is supported by a secretariat and four working groups (on economic development and decent employment, social issues, environmental issues, and monitoring

and evaluation) that include representatives of non-state actors, namely relevant ministries, academia and research institutions, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and international partners. The country is considering establishing a multi-stakeholder group to improve engagement with non-state actors.

Baseline or gap analysis

Working groups have reviewed existing strategies, programmes and policy documents for compliance with the SDGs and prepared plans to close gaps. The goal-by-goal analysis in the report generally outlines efforts that should be taken going forward, rather than identifying gaps in terms of targets or priority issues.

Integration and policy coherence

The report looked at High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" goals: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. While the economic, social and

environmental dimensions of sustainable development were all included, the report has a relatively greater focus on economic aspects. There are limited references to different dimensions of sustainable development in the goal-by-goal analysis. Policy coherence for sustainable development is not discussed. However, the report outlines an approach to policy coherence that encourages coordination of activities and policies between government institutions.

Leave no one behind

Additional data are required for Azerbaijan to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. Vulnerable groups include refugees and internally displaced people, the elderly, people with disabilities, children and youth, and women. Taking into consideration vulnerable groups, Azerbaijan is reevaluating measures to support development, and opportunities and resources to overcome gaps and plan more efficiently for the use of resources.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

Although several conferences and events were held that provided information on the SDGs to non-state actors and parliamentarians, more work is needed. With partners, the government intends to create an online portal that raises awareness about national and global SDGs, targets, implementation phases and indicators. The portal will be used for consultation and reporting.

Notwithstanding existing national priorities, Azerbaijan plans to finalise the nationalisation of the SDGs by the end of 2017 and integrate them into national policies, plans and budgets. The government started the implementation process by adapting the SDGs to local conditions and setting baselines, targets and indicators.

According to the report, close attention is being paid to ensuring the inclusion of national, regional and local government executive bodies in SDG action plans given their prominent role in implementation.

Stakeholder engagement

The report notes that consultation took place on national priorities through the working groups under the Coordination Council for Sustainable Development. The VNR process was guided by the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development secretariat and working groups.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report identifies strengthening institutional capacities for implementation as best practice based on Azerbaijan's experience with the Millennium Development Goals. Key challenges for the

country include the lack of detailed indicators for several areas and disaggregated data availability. The report notes that the aggression policy of Armenia continues to hinder Azerbaijan's ability to make greater achievements. In terms of learning from others, Azerbaijan welcomes ongoing discussions on the nationalisation of the SDGs, coordination procedures and tracking implementation. It is also interested in ways to establish effective multi-stakeholder partnerships.

In terms of means of implementation, the report mentions Azerbaijan's contributions through South-South cooperation, including scientific and technical capacity development. It notes the need to identify Azerbaijan's needs and opportunities for capacity development, with improving statistical and institutional capacity as well as the capacities of civil society organisations to engage in the SDGs being highlighted.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

According to the report, partnerships have yet to be developed with a broad range of stakeholders, though some specific projects with civil society are mentioned. It notes that the government, while acting as coordinator for the attainment of nationalised SDGs, will be facilitating and supporting SDG-focused initiatives of civil society organisations, academia, business and professional associations, other stakeholders and partners. In terms of development partners, Azerbaijan expects that they will support its efforts in the development and diversification of the non-oil sector of the national economy, strengthening export capacity, improving the efficiency of health care and social services, and strengthening environmental protection. The VNR report was prepared with support from the United Nations Development Programme.

Measurement and reporting

The national statistical office indicates that 70 SDG indicators can be reported based on official statistical data, though administrative data may cover an additional 30 indicators. Azerbaijan needs to strengthen capacity for generation and analysis of disaggregated data. There is a need for the country to expand the coverage and depth of national information systems relating to the SDGs and improve statistical coordination. The United Nations Development Programme is currently providing support in this area. The government plans to prepare annual VNR and periodic progress reports to be submitted to the country's leadership and the High-level Political Forum.

Bangladesh - Green

In 2017, Bangladesh submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the government, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) priorities are reflected in the medium-term development plan, the Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020), which came out almost simultaneously with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A SDG Action Plan is being developed, with government institutions identifying projects and initiatives linked to SDG targets. Ministries are also preparing action plans. The government is in the process of integrating SDG targets into its Annual Performance Agreements system so that long-term objectives can be translated into annual work plans for ministries.

Leadership, governance and institutions

An Inter-ministerial SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee was formed at the Prime Minister's Office. The General Economics Division of the Planning Commission serves as the secretariat. The position of principal coordinator (SDG affairs) was created to head the committee. The VNR report does not mention formal inclusion of non-state actors in the committee.

Baseline or gap analysis

Although the report indicates that an assessment was carried out in terms of mapping available data and examining policies against the SDGs, no further details are provided. Only some goal analyses outline gaps or challenges.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report notes the importance of focusing on inequality in SDG implementation. The report cautions the government in its use of an export-led growth paradigm, encourages greater investment in social services and criticises international financial institution policy conditions that hinder policy space for the government.

Integration and policy coherence

The report examines the High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" goals: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good

health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. The report gives equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and makes references to applicable linkages between them in the goal-by-goal analysis. It does not mention policy coherence for sustainable development.

✋ Leave no one behind

Bangladesh requires additional data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. The report notes that ethnic minorities, tribal communities, women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities are at risk of being left behind. It mentions the establishment of a comprehensive National Social Security Strategy to consolidate all safety net programmes to support citizens who are most in need. Those left behind have been given priority under the strategy, which is contributing to poverty reduction and reducing inequality. In addition, the report includes an annex with specific initiatives to leave no one behind, including a range of social and economic initiatives to support people with disabilities and the expansion of financial and information and communications technology services to all.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

The government translated all the SDGs, targets and indicators into Bengali and made the translation widely available in government offices all over the country. National priorities have been selected, including poverty (SDG 1), hunger (SDG 2), health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4 on quality education), gender (SDG 5), water and sanitation (SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation), power (SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy), growth and employment (SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth), infrastructure development (SDG 9), inequality (SDG 10 on reduced inequalities), urbanisation (SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities), environment and climate change (SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 14 and SDG 15 on life on land) and governance (SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions). The government wants to encourage inclusive and enhanced stakeholder participation for local-level ownership. Currently, there is limited engagement at the local level.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report underlines the need to strengthen the democratic process and institutions to create an enabling environment for an inclusive process and participatory governance, including spaces for civil society at all levels.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, Bangladesh adopted a "whole of society" approach to ensure wider participation in formulation of a SDG Action Plan and implementation of the SDGs. For the VNR process, the government shared a draft VNR report with government institutions, the national statistical office, civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations, youth organisations, members of marginalised segments of society, the private sector, development partners, academia and the media to ensure that it contained diverse opinions and evolved as an inclusive national document.

🖳 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

According to the report, challenges identified by the government include mobilising resources, ensuring effective and efficient resource utilisation, enhancing non-state actors' engagement, improving data availability and management, and localising the SDGs. Technology is identified as a constraint.

A preliminary assessment indicates that Bangladesh may require around US$1.5 trillion worth of additional resources for full implementation of the SDGs. The country has identified public and private national and international sources of finance. The report notes the important roles of South-South cooperation and official development assistance, the latter of which has declined. It stresses the importance of trade packages for developing countries to enable SDG implementation.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report highlights the government's consultation initiatives with different stakeholders on how they can support SDG implementation. It particularly notes the role of development partners in supporting climate change-related efforts in Bangladesh.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Bangladesh's government held several consultations with members of parliament to seek guidance in localising the SDGs and their targets. The honourable speaker of the parliament proposed to form several committees comprising of members of parliament to work on specific goals and targets and provide regular suggestions and guidance to the government.

Measurement and reporting

A review of data indicates that Bangladesh has available data for 70 global SDG indicators and partially available data for 108 indicators. The discussion of each SDG in the report provides an overview of data availability. The report notes efforts to establish a national repository for all kinds of disaggregated data including data disaggregated by gender, age, income and geographic location. Going forward, the capacity of the national statistical office will need to be enhanced. To facilitate the results-based monitoring system within government, a macro-level data repository system called SDGs Tracker is being prepared. The report does not mention plans for national reporting.

Belgium – Yellow

In 2017, Belgium submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government's first National Sustainable Development Strategy was approved in 2017. It focuses on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Belgium and aims to create the basis for a coherent approach to sustainable development policies. Belgium recognises the universal, human rights-based nature of the 2030 Agenda and the importance of leaving no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Inter-Ministerial Conference for Sustainable Development is composed of federal, regional and community ministers responsible for sustainable development and development cooperation. It serves as the central coordination mechanism for dialogue between the various federal and provincial authorities implementing the 2030 Agenda in Belgium. Institutional mechanisms exist at the federal and provincial levels to support sustainable development as a result of Belgium's pre-existing commitments to sustainable development prior to the adoption of the SDGs. Leadership resides with multiple cabinet ministers at the federal level and at the level of the minister-president or a specific cabinet minister for provinces. Non-state actors are not formally part of governance arrangements, though Belgium has a longstanding tradition of involvement and consultation with civil society through formal consultation mechanisms.

Baseline or gap analysis

The government sees the VNR report as the "first edition" and primarily as a stocktaking exercise. The report is a starting point that provides a partial baseline and a benchmark for: guiding further action in a federal context with multiple decision makers and hence multiple priorities per policy area; future gap analysis, progress monitoring and impact assessment; improving collaboration with civil society; and strengthening accountability towards national and provincial parliaments, civil society and the population. Analysis of each SDG includes identification of priority areas where further progress is needed.

⚙ Integration and policy coherence

With individual analyses of all SDGs and a statistical annex, the report is comprehensive. The analysis of goals tends to focus on initiatives taken at different levels of government and by non-state actors. The report also focuses on domestic and international dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, providing equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, with references to linkages between goals.

Policy coherence for sustainable development is mentioned in the report and the government notes a range of institutional mechanisms that have been established to promote coherence.

✋ Leave no one behind

Belgium's efforts to leave no one behind consider who is being left behind in the country as well as globally. Informed by existing data, the government identifies low-skilled people, single-parent households, people living in very low work intensity households and people with a migration background as at risk of being left behind. Young people and families with three or more dependent children are also at a higher risk of poverty. Efforts that specifically target leaving no one behind are noted in some of the goal analyses. The fight against inequality is cross-cutting for Belgium and discussed across goals. In recent years, social protection systems have been working to further reduce inequalities, such as by increasing the minimum pensions of self-employed workers to reduce the gap between their pensions and those of other types of workers.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

Belgium is stepping up SDG advocacy efforts. A notable example is a website (www.sdgs.be) that serves as a registry for SDG-related initiatives and aims to inform and engage the population, associations and authorities. About €20 million is spent annually to inform the population about the SDGs and involve people in realising various goals and targets.

Priorities at the national level include sustainable food, sustainable building and housing, sustainable public procurement, means of implementation, awareness raising and contributions to the follow-up and review of the SDGs. Local governments – cities, municipalities and provinces – are involved in SDG implementation with efforts that are outlined throughout the report.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

An important new feature of the National Sustainable Development Strategy is a commitment to engage in a broad dialogue with the most prominent stakeholders including civil society, the private sector and parliaments in SDG reporting at the national level. The government will prepare a report offers an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input on priorities. According to the government, non-state actors were involved in preparing the VNR report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda Civil society representatives who were consulted in the context of the VNR process indicated that they expect additional attention from all relevant policy makers to Belgium's challenges, including lifelong learning, water and air quality, energy intensity and renewable energy, greenhouse gas emissions, people at risk of poverty, and mobilisation of the necessary means of implementation. The report notes that Belgium requires more efforts to increase official development assistance and aims to be designated a Fair-Trade Country by 2020.

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **Belgium's VNR report was discussed in the federal parliament during a joint session of its Committees on Foreign Relations, Environment and Health.**

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

Parliaments at the federal and provincial levels are currently studying how to engage more on the SDGs. Efforts are underway to make sure the universal and integrated character of the 2030 Agenda can be more adequately reflected in parliaments' role in holding executives to account. The report outlines specific initiatives by civil society organisations and other non-state actors in the analysis of each goal.

📋 Measurement and reporting

Roughly half of the SDG indicators are currently available for Belgium. Data for many indicators can be disaggregated by sex, age, income and education level. Additional indicators will be progressively added to monitor progress on the SDGs.

The National Sustainable Development Strategy commits all authorities involved to jointly prepare a report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda twice per government term, including in dialogue with non-state actors and parliamentarians.

Belize – Yellow

In 2017, Belize submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government adopted a long-term development strategy called Horizon 2030: National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030, which is built on four pillars: democratic governance, education, economic resilience, and healthy citizens and a healthy environment. The VNR report is unclear about whether the development strategy takes into account the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, namely human rights, universality or leave no one behind.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
The VNR report presents the Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation (BOOST) programme as good practice. BOOST is a World Bank-validated co-responsibility cash transfer programme and food pantry scheme that establishes a coordinated social safety net arrangement.

The government also drafted a medium-term strategy, Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy 2016-2019. This document, which situates sustainable development at its core, is considered the conceptual and institutional mechanism for implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Leadership, governance and institutions

According to the VNR report, the government decided to implement and follow up on the 2030 Agenda through existing government institutions. The Policy and Planning Unit of the Ministry of Human Development and Sustainable Development Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Immigration, working in a coordinated manner, are the main institutions responsible for those tasks.

The report lacks references to how non-state actors will be engaged in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation governance arrangements and how the government will interact at the regional level to advance and strengthen implementation.

Baseline or gap analysis

The government did not carry out a baseline study or gap analysis. Nevertheless, the report makes broad references to gaps when analysing SDG 1 on no poverty and SDG 3 on good health and well-being without giving further details. The report also makes references to the existence of a data gap in the country without describing it.

Integration and policy coherence

The report only addresses four SDGs: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 14 on life below water. Even so, the medium-term strategy clearly considers development as a comprehensive process with social and environmental dimensions. Without references to policy coherence for sustainable development, the report mentions the links between the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement on climate change, but not the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development.

Leave no one behind

The principle of leave no one behind is not addressed in the report systematically. There is only a broad mention of it in the opening statement and a specific reference when analysing efforts to ensure gender parity in primary schools under SDG 5 on gender equality.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, management challenges must be addressed to improve inter- and intra-ministerial collaboration and cooperation on raising awareness of the SDGs.

There are no concrete references to non-state actors' involvement in the process of defining national goals, targets and indicators.

The government's priorities set in the Horizon 2030 framework and adoption of global SDG targets and indicators as part of its Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy are introduced as primary steps in the localisation of the SDGs.

Stakeholder engagement

The report is unclear about whether and how stakeholders are participating in implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Only very general references to rural communities, political parties, women, youth and "other marginalised groups" are made. The only specific reference to a multi-stakeholder approach regards the Belize Enterprise for Sustainable Technology facilitating a consultative process for the drafting of the VNR report in which academic institutions, civil society organisations and representatives of United Nations agencies participated.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

When referring to implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the report highlights various challenges: improving data collection and management; advancing the localisation of the SDGs; protecting the poor and most vulnerable groups in the context of rising levels of poverty and social exclusion, constrained fiscal space and institutional capacity gaps; scaling up access to neonatal care; overcoming the national dependence on foreign health-care workers; establishing new financing mechanisms for funding the national health insurance system and making it universal; stopping pollution from rising; overcoming the lack of legal enforcement and the population's limited access to justice; and bringing more women into political life and managerial positions.

International public finance is the only means of implementation analysed in the report. According to the report, the economic environment leads the government to reduce budget allocations to ministries engaged in SDG implementation. As a consequence, the government must seek to improve partnerships with international public financing agencies and the private sector to ensure adequate resourcing. The report notes that a resource mobilisation strategy for SDG implementation was completed. The strategy is based on four axes: expenditure management, enhancing revenue generation, improving financial options, and better partnerships with the development community. No additional information is given.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report mentions civil society, academia and the private sector as partners in SDG implementation, but does not give specific details on how their work will be aligned or promoted by the government.

As a pilot country in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs' Division for Sustainable Development's national-level rollout of the 2030 Agenda, Belize is being supported by United Nations agencies in its first steps to implement the SDGs.

Measurement and reporting

Data availability to implement and follow up on the 2030 Agenda is unclear from the report. The government indicates that one of the next steps to be taken is strengthening national capacities for effective data collection and disaggregation.

Benin - Green

In 2017, Benin submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

In September 2016, Benin adopted a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation roadmap during a National High-level Seminar on SDGs and the Paris Agreement on climate change. The government developed a national SDG target prioritisation report, the results of which are expected to feed into various planning and programming documents, including the new National Development Plan 2018-2025 and its operational document, the Growth Programme for Sustainable Development.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Benin established a General Directorate for SDG Coordination and Monitoring in the Ministry for Planning and Development, which is responsible for, among other things, developing a progress report on SDG targets implementation and follow-up. The government also set up an orientation committee headed by the state minister for planning and development and a technical steering committee. Parts of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for SDG implementation, these committees seek to ensure inter-sectoral coordination and

alignment of strategic documents with SDG priorities. They are composed of representatives of the government, the private sector, civil society organisations and other stakeholders.

The government also has four thematic clusters that work on integrating the SDGs into national frameworks: the social cluster (focused on SDGs 1 to 6), the economic cluster (focused on SDGs 7 to 11), the environment cluster (focused on SDGs 12 to 15) and the governance cluster (focused on SDG 16). These clusters involve officials in charge of strategic planning and programming, in different sectors, as well as civil society representatives, decentralised communities, academics and technical and financial partners.

Baseline or gap analysis

Benin assessed the degree of alignment between 47 policy and strategy documents and the SDGs. The assessment revealed that approximately 70% of these key policies and strategies are aligned with the SDGs. It also highlighted the need to improve cross-sectoral synergies towards the SDGs and found that data were available for 46% of the 145 SDG indicators considered to be a priority for the country.

Integration and policy coherence

The VNR report examines all the SDGs, giving equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development with appropriate linkages made between those dimensions. It does not mention policy coherence for sustainable development but outlines the need to work on improving cross-sectoral synergies as well as sectoral coherence in ministries.

Leave no one behind

The report outlines the need to target "vulnerable" and "marginalised" people in general, including children from the poorest families and women. It also calls for increasing investments in timely collection and analysis of disaggregated data to identify marginalised groups.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The government organised more than 50 meetings seeking to discuss SDG relevance for the country. The meetings mobilised approximately 5,000 participants, including government officials, representatives of civil society, workers unions, youth, the private sector and academia, journalists, social media activists, parliamentarians, and technical and financial partners. According to the report, the SDG implementation roadmap, which was prepared by the government, outlines activities for information, education and communication around the SDGs.

Stakeholder engagement

In 2017, Benin carried out a SDG "prioritisation" process that involved representatives of government, the private sector and civil society, as well as technical and financial partners. The process resulted in the selection of 49 targets and 80 indicators, which are outlined in the VNR report and cover the 17 SDGs. From the VNR report, how non-state actors were involved in the development of the report is unclear.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report indicates that the government intends to develop a resource mobilisation document for financing actions on sustainable development, which will be based on an assessment of the costs of implementing SDG priority targets selected by the country. It notes that the Government Action Programme 2016-2021 budget is currently used to operationalise the SDGs, and outlines the importance of global partnerships and bilateral, multilateral, South-South and triangular cooperation for resource mobilisation.

Among implementation challenges, the report outlines: the "governability" of the SDG process, such as coordination, expenditure, and monitoring and evaluation; the availability of statistical information; building capacity for implementing the SDGs, including at the local level; and effective financial resource mobilisation.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The orientation committee includes representatives of civil society, the private sector, the "Youth Parliament," and other stakeholders such as representatives of the National Association of Municipalities of Benin, of the Women's Federation, and of the Associations of People with Disabilities. Non-state actors are also involved in the four thematic clusters. However, the report does not outline specific initiatives.

The report clearly highlights the need for partnership and cooperation (bilateral, multilateral, South-South and triangular) for resource mobilisation. Benin received support from technical and financial partners, including the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to prepare its VNR report.

Measurement and reporting

Benin's national statistical system only provides data for 46% of the 145 indicators associated with the country's priority targets. The report notes a lack of data for environment-related SDG indicators. It indicates that the government has been reviewing its National Strategy for the Development of Statistics in order to identify efforts needed to correct the "statistical gap" and plans to establish an updated database of indicators related to the environment.

With technical support from the Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa, Benin also plans to set up a monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism that will cover all of the SDGs. The General Directorate for SDG Coordination and Monitoring is responsible for drafting SDG implementation and monitoring reports, which need to be approved by the chairman of the orientation committee, the state minister in charge of planning and development, before being issued more widely.

Botswana – Yellow

In 2017, Botswana submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Botswana prepared a draft National Framework for Sustainable Development, which is intended to support and provide an overarching guide for integrating the principle of sustainable development into all government policies and strategies as well as the practices of government institutions and non-state actors. According to the VNR report, sustainability is also at the cores of Vision 2036 and the 11th National Development Plan. A National Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Roadmap was also prepared.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Botswana's National SDGs Roadmap sets out three areas of focus: coordination, ownership and leadership; implementation and building on existing structures; and data and progress tracking and reporting. It includes a plan of action for the next five years that will be broken down into annual work plans. The plan proposes the mobilisation human and financial resources.

The report does not refer to the universal, human rights-based nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The government established a National Steering Committee that is co-chaired by the government and United Nations to implement the SDGs. The SDGs Secretariat is within the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and supported by the United Nations. A Technical Task Force and four Thematic Working Groups were also established. According to the government, the National Steering Committee includes representation by government, the private sector, development partners, youth groups, parliament, Ntlo ya Dikgosi (formerly House of Chiefs), civil society organisations, trade unions and other non-state actors. The Technical Task Force and Thematic Working Groups also have multi-sectoral membership.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, Botswana mapped the SDG indicators that are relevant to its national development plans. The government is planning to compile the baselines of those indicators for which data are readily available. The results of the mapping are not available in the report.

Integration and policy coherence

A limited set of SDGs are covered in the VNR report, including SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals (of the High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" goals, only SDG 14 on life below water was excluded). The report addresses the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, but has a relatively greater focus on social aspects. While references to social and economic aspects were almost always made in the detailed examination of goals, references to environmental aspects were limited. The report does not mention policy coherence for sustainable development.

Leave no one behind

The report acknowledges the need for data disaggregated by gender, region and social status, which are not readily available. Most available data are not up to date. The government identifies women, people with disabilities, the poor, vulnerable individuals, the destitute and orphans as at risk of being left behind.

The report notes the government's efforts to eliminate extreme poverty as an attempt to leave no one behind. Botswana has a range of social programmes specifically geared to the poorest and most marginalised, including the Integrated Support Programme for Arable Agricultural Development that provides crop farmers with subsidies to increase productivity in the agricultural sector. Such programmes have been majorly contributing to the reduction in extreme poverty seen in the country, according to the report.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, the 2030 Agenda has been promoted through awareness campaigns and several dialogue sessions undertaken jointly by the government and United Nations agencies for local authorities, civil society, academia and parliament.

National priorities include development of diversified sources of economic growth, human capital development, social development, sustainable use of natural resources, and implementation of an effective monitoring and evaluation system as outlined in the 11th National Development Plan. With respect to localisation of the 2030 Agenda, the report notes that awareness campaigns were held at the district level focusing on awareness raising and identifying key challenges faced by individuals.

Stakeholder engagement

The report notes that consultations were held to develop Vision 2036 and sub-national plans that align with the SDGs. It also mentions that representatives of government, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, local authorities, development partners and academia participated in a workshop to provide inputs for the VNR report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report outlines several lessons for SDG implementation. The government harnessed the efforts of community and traditional leaders, opinion leaders, the media and political leaders to address certain social challenges faced by the country. The approach made community-led interventions more effective, particularly in the area of gender-based violence. Similarly, coordination of efforts on poverty issues was entrusted to the Office of the President to increase attention. Botswana's experience also shows that growth is necessary but not sufficient to realise sustainable development outcomes. Notably, the government found that the involvement of women in all levels of consultation on the SDGs was key to their adoption at the local level.

In terms of challenges facing Botswana, the report notes that the country's upper middle-income status makes accessing certain pools of international finance difficult. There is a need for the country to harness strategic partnerships, including those that involve its strong research infrastructure. Botswana also needs to address data gaps and establish a robust evaluation system. The government recognises the need to diversify development finance from traditional aid to more strategic partnership approaches, including South-South cooperation.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report highlights the role of non-governmental organisations in SDG awareness campaigns, noting their efforts to identify relevant SDG targets for inclusion in plans and budgets. Debswana (the biggest diamond producer in the country) and the Botswana Stock Exchange are also actively advocating the SDGs. The report notes the critical role of United Nations agencies in supporting SDG implementation and in the VNR process.

Measurement and reporting

Data availability is unclear from the report since a statistical annex includes some data but only for the goals examined in the report. There is a need for disaggregated data in terms of gender, region and social status. The report notes that significant resources will be needed to improve data availability. It does not mention national reporting mechanisms for SDG implementation.

Brazil - Yellow

In 2017, Brazil submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

As a result of a mapping out exercise carried out in the second half of 2016, the government reviewed the alignment between Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets and its Multi-Year Plan 2016-2019, the main instrument for medium-term planning of government actions, programmes, objectives and initiatives.

Nevertheless, the VNR report did not mention if the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were taken into account. It did not make references to universality and human right, while the principle of leave no one behind is only mentioned in a quotation from the 2030 Agenda and when SDG 5 on gender equality is examined.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report underscores that creating committees will not be sufficient as long as there is lack of transparency, access to information and monitoring of fundamentally important areas as well as a shortage of effective government accountability mechanisms.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The government established a National Commission for the SDGs to be the main institutional mechanism for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The commission plays an advisory role and is responsible for conducting an inclusive and consultative process with federated entities (all sub-national levels under the Federal Government), parliament, the private sector, trade unions, academia and civil society.

At the regional level, Brazil participates in the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean. At the same time, Brazil identifies itself as a BRICS country.

Baseline or gap analysis

The government did not carry out a baseline study or gap analysis. The report makes broad references to gaps while analysing SDG 1 on no poverty and SDG 3 on good health and well-being without giving further details. The report also makes some references to the existence of a data gap in the country without describing it.

Integration and policy coherence

The report only examines the SDGs covered by the 2017 High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world," namely SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. Linkages between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development are not considered, even though the 2030 Agenda is acknowledged a strategy for economic, social and environmental development. The analysis undertaken is largely towards tax considerations.

The Paris Agreement on climate change is not mentioned in the report, though climate change is referred to as a threat. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is also not mentioned.Policy coherence for sustainable development is not discussed, but the report highlights global issues that may hinder the achievement of the SDGs in the country.

Leave no one behind

The report does not address the principle of leave no one behind systematically. It mentions the disaggregation of data as a condition for prioritising the most vulnerable people on the road to sustainable development as well as the worrisome situation of vulnerable groups who face overlapping disadvantages, such as women suffering gender inequalities interrelated with regional, class and racial inequalities.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

In order to raise awareness about the SDGs, the government invited representatives of civil society, the private sector and local governments with experience in engagement and awareness raising to support the 2030 Agenda. In addition, its SDG localisation process involves proposals for engagement of the private sector, academia and civil society organisations, among others, in the dissemination of the 2030 Agenda. The creation of a SDG Brazil award is under consideration.

Stakeholder engagement

To contribute to the drafting of the VNR report, the government introduced an electronic form to collect information on initiatives developed by civil society. Several non-state actors with experience in engagement and awareness raising to support the 2030 Agenda were invited to submit information, which provided inputs for the development of section six of the report titled "Initiatives for the achievement of the SDGs." Non-state actors are involved in the identification of national priorities through the National Commission

for the SDGs and a set of social media and web-based platforms such as Participa.br and Dialoga Brasil.

Notably, a group of civil society organisations drafted a Spotlight Synthesis Report: The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Brazil, in which highlights the lack of effective government accountability mechanisms, most of the policy committees or councils in the country being in a state of crisis and those who stand up for rights are killed in the burgeoning wave of institutionalised violence.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report includes references to technology, capacity development, trade, and national and international public and private finance as means of implementation. Some implementation challenges are noted, such as improving long-term planning, coordinating the dialogue among stakeholders, expanding investments in infrastructure, and enhancing management and governance instruments. The impact of systemic issues is also considered, including the economic slowdown and uneven recovery after the global financial crisis still affecting Brazil's capabilities to advance the 2030 Agenda.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

According to the report, networks of stakeholders have been created to mobilise and engage the population in the SDG implementation and follow-up processes, broaden, democratise and enhance the debate on sustainable development in Brazil, and propose and mobilise effective means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda.

The creation of a nonpartisan Joint Parliamentary Front to Support the SDGs is highlighted. It brings together more than 200 parliamentarians to maintain and consolidate joint action in favour of the SDGs as well as foster the adoption of laws aimed to promote enabling environments for sustainable development.

Measurement and reporting

The government began the evaluation of the sufficiency of its databases to determine the availability of indicators to monitor the SDGs. A preliminary study, which was conducted in 2016 and took globally agreed indicators as a basis, identified the following national situation: 105 indicators in Tier I (Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, and data are regularly produced by the country); 39 indicators in Tier II (Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by the country); and 68 indicators in Tier III (No internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator).

Chile - Green

In 2017, Chile submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The VNR report affirms that the Government Program 2014-2018 is consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially with the proposed reforms that seek to advance Chile in terms of inclusive growth and reducing inequalities and poverty in all its forms. Policies and programmes have been initiated and strengthened to advance the coverage and quality of the social protection system that was established in 2000.

The principles of human rights, universality and leave no one behind are considered in the VNR report. It states that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation requires paying special attention to specific segments of the population, such as indigenous peoples, children and adolescents, women in situations of vulnerability, people with disabilities and immigrants.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Chile created the National Council for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the main institutional mechanism for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which is composed of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism; the Ministry of the Environment; and the Ministry of Social Development, the latter of which serves as a technical secretariat and receives technical support from the national statistical office. A government network for the SDGs that includes the 23 ministries has been also organised. Committees and working groups that bring together government institutions, the private sector, civil society and academia, with the support of the United Nations system, have been established.

The report affirms that Chile participates in regional activities aimed at advancing the 2030 Agenda, but does not mention any of them specifically.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, Chile engaged in information-gathering activities for the initial establishment of national baselines for the SDGs in both 2016 and 2017, a process that has not yet been completed.

Integration and policy coherence

The report analyses the SDGs covered by the 2017 High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world," namely SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. Analysis includes references to policies linked to each goal.

From the point of view of the government, implementation of the 2030 Agenda is an opportunity to reinforce its commitment to achieving sustainable and inclusive development. The report considers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way. Policy coherence for sustainable development is not discussed, though the analysis of SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals highlights global issues that may hinder the achievement of the SDGs at a national level. Mentions of climate change and the Paris Agreement on climate change are explicitly linked to the SDGs, but there is no mention of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Leave no one behind

The report does not include an analysis of data availability to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. Certain vulnerable groups are targeted by policies, including indigenous peoples, children and youth, women in situations of vulnerability, people with disabilities and immigrants, among others. Efforts at the national level to reduce inequalities are highlighted.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

In order to raise awareness about the SDGs, various government institutions organised activities that involved representatives of the National Council for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or its technical secretariat. Civil society organisations, the private sector, academia and international organisations have also organised activities to raise awareness. Chile has not yet identified national SDG priorities.

Stakeholder engagement

The report was discussed in meetings with representatives of civil society organisations and received input from the private sector and academia. A civil society report was prepared in response to global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's civil society questionnaire. Local governments are participating in the SDG implementation process by signing framework agreements with the national government.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report refers to technology, capacity building, trade and international public financing as means of implementation and underlines the role of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. Seven key challenges are identified, such as strengthening information systems in order to collect data that allow monitoring of the SDGs, changing the logic and inertia within sectors to work out of silos and with multiple stakeholders on 2030 Agenda implementation, and installing the 2030 Agenda as a commitment that goes beyond a single period of government.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Even though multiple stakeholders, such as the private sector and academia, are repeatedly mentioned in the report, only civil society has a clearly articulated role laid out. International cooperation is underlined as a key tool to implement the SDGs.

Measurement and reporting

Chile adopted a law on incorporating the United Nations' fundamental principles of official statistics. A bill that will further institutionalise the national statistical system and improve it based on principles recognised by the United Nations and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is currently being debated in parliament. Also, a series of innovations have been introduced in the National Socioeconomic Characterisation Survey, which is the main survey of households in the country, to improve the measurement of indicators related to the SDGs and their targets.

Costa Rica – Yellow

In 2017, Costa Rica submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government carried out the first phase of alignment between its National Development Plan 2015-2018 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which included an analysis of the linkages of programmes related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The analysis found that 94 programmes and projects under implementation in the country are linked to all 17 SDGs, all 169 targets and 181 of the 241 indicators.

The VNR report includes several references to the principles of universality, leaving no one behind and human rights. Regarding the latter, national development policies in Costa Rica, as defined, include both 2030 Agenda commitments and human rights bodies recommendations to the country.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The government created a High-Level Council of the SDGs to be the main institutional mechanism for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The council is chaired by the president, minister of planning and economic policy, minister of environment and minister of foreign affairs.

Technical advice will be provided by a Technical Secretariat of the SDGs, led by the minister of planning and economic policy and supported by a Statistical Advisory Body, which is led by the national statistical office.

Civil society organisations, faith-based organisations, academia and the private sector contribute to SDG implementation at the national level. They signed a National Pact for the Advancement of the SDGs, in which the main government institutions also participate.

Baseline or gap analysis

An assessment of gaps is carried out in the report. Costa Rica has the necessary information to measure 80 indicators, 73 indicators are not nationally constructed but can be built based on nationally available data, and 33 indicators are not produced. Another 57 indicators are acknowledged as inadequate for the country. These findings are not properly explained in the report.

⚙ Integration and policy coherence

The report covers the SDGs selected by the 2017 High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world." The analysis of each goal includes references to existing government policies linked to its implementation and references to linkages between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. However, the report does not reference policy coherence for sustainable development, the Paris Agreement on climate change or the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

✋ Leave no one behind

In Costa Rica, the reduction of poverty is seen as a country-wide challenge that must be addressed in a multidimensional way. However, the leave no one behind principle is not addressed in a concerted manner and hardly considered in relation to data requirements, with the only practical reference being to targeted groups, such as women, the elderly, Afro-descendants, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ, and indigenous peoples.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

In order to raise awareness of the SDGs, the government invited several representatives of civil society, the private sector and local governments to support the 2030 Agenda. As a result, non-state actors have participated in the process of establishing national SDG priorities and the three main issues have been highlighted as areas that must be prioritised in Costa Rica's path to sustainable development: the fight against poverty, sustainable production and consumption, and infrastructure and sustainable communities. The first and third issues are major challenges for the country. Localisation of the SDGs at the national level is not mentioned in the VNR report.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

Non-state actors engaged in the identification of national priorities by participating in processes led by the national government aimed to define areas of joint action to promote the 2030 Agenda, Human Rights, inclusive growth and environmental protection.

On September 9, 2016, Costa Rica became the first country in the world to achieve a multi-stakeholder high-level political commitment to implement joint and comprehensive policies and actions that comply with the 17 SDGs proposed in the 2030 Agenda. The so-called National Pact for the Advancement of the SDGs was signed by the national government, civil society, organisations based on faith, universities, local governments and the private sector.

🔁 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Costa Rican VNR includes references to technology, capacity development, international public finance, trade and systemic issues as MoI.

Even when costing for country-level implementation is not mentioned, the Report highlights that the National Bank of Costa Rica becomes the first financial institution in the country to host the 2030 Agenda within its strategic management.

The VNR also mentions a set of upcoming short-term measures, such as establishing national targets for the SDGs; developing a plan of action at the national level that articulates stakeholders work; continuing the training and information efforts on the SDG implementation processes; advancing multi-sectoral and participatory dialogues aimed to build common agendas of action to address specific SDGs; and consolidating the national High-Level Consultative Committee of the SDGs.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

To contribute to Costa Rica's VNR report, the government held consultations with certain excluded groups, namely Afro-descendants, the elderly, people with disabilities and LGBTIQ. The report underscores the role of non-state actors in SDG implementation.

📋 Measurement and reporting

Costa Rica has begun to evaluate the adequacy of its databases to estimate the availability of indicators to monitor the SDGs.

The availability of disaggregated data and efforts to improve disaggregation are not mentioned in the report. The report does not mention national reporting on the SDGs.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
In September 2016, Costa Rica became the first country in the world to sign a National Pact for the Advancement of the SDGs. Parties to the agreement are the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, civil society, faith-based organisations, public universities, local governments and the private sector.

Curacao - Red

In 2017, Curaçao submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as part of the submission by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, of which it is a constituent country.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the VNR report, Curaçao integrated high-priority Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its National Development Plan. The plan focuses on education, the economy, sustainability, national identity, and good governance and leadership. It includes various aspects of nation building and capacity development. Curaçao prioritises four SDGs that provide measurable targets responding to local challenges: SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth and SDG 14 on life below water.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The report does not outline governance and institutional structures for SDG implementation. It does, however, highlight participation in regional and special country groups – small island developing states – and discuss challenges and opportunities in SDG implementation.

Baseline or gap analysis

The country is preparing to have its statistics bureau draw up a baseline measurement of SDG status. This work will highlight areas where implementation is lagging behind, clarify where political decisions need to be made and help gradually enhance data for SDG indicators.

Integration and policy coherence

The report covers SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 15 on life on land, SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. While the report gives equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, information

is presented at the summary level with limited references to linkages between dimensions in the goal-by-goal analysis. Some references are made to Curaçao's global contributions to the SDGs, though with limited details.

✋ Leave no one behind

In Curaçao, efforts to leave no one behind are central to the government's efforts to build an inclusive, sustainable economy and reduce poverty across the entire population. However, the report neither outlines the status of data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind nor refers to who is at risk of being left behind.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

The government has used the momentum created by the VNR process to encourage ministries and key stakeholders to raise awareness of the SDGs and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a whole. Since 2014, Curaçao's national dialogue on the theme "Kòrsou ta Avansá" ("Curaçao is Advancing") has provided a platform for the government, businesses and trade unions to discuss policy paths. The dialogue's success adds value in promoting stakeholder awareness of the SDGs and 2030 Agenda as a whole as well as involvement in implementation. The report does not outline efforts to localise the SDGs.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, civil society, the statistics bureau, young people and the private sector contributed to the first national SDG review. The national dialogue played a key role in drafting and launching Curaçao's National Development Plan.

🔄 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The government is using the SDGs, and particularly the SDG indicators, to enhance cooperation between ministries in drawing up multi-year budgets for policy programmes on youth, safety and economic growth. The Ministry of General Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Governance, Planning and Public Service started working towards programme-based financing for the government's multi-annual budgets. While coordinated national efforts on implementation still need to be developed, Curaçao is already taking action on various SDGs.

According to the report, ensuring broad involvement and collaboration between different sectors is an ongoing challenge and SDG implementation must be further aligned with existing policies. There is also a need to further increase public awareness.

There is no Curaçao-specific information for most sections on means of implementation in the report. However, to the extent that Curaçao contributes to the Kingdom of the Netherlands' international development efforts, the combination of foreign trade and development cooperation is highlighted as a positive contribution.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

In addition to the activities noted above, the report points to the role of youth representatives actively involved in SDG implementation. In 2017, Curaçao established a democratically elected National Youth Council to engage young people in policy making and shaping their future. More than 300 young people participated in national youth dialogues aimed at ensuring broad support for the National Action Programme for Youth Development, which is linked to the SDGs. The programme focuses on five priority areas, including creating jobs, promoting national identity and encouraging young people to remain in school. The council has linked its policies to the SDGs.

Curaçao signed the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework for the Caribbean. The framework guarantees national ownership while promoting regional synergies in implementing the SDGs. It primarily focuses on priority areas for the Caribbean. It gives countries a platform to access the United Nations system's global expertise and experience at both the national and regional levels.

📋 Measurement and reporting

Curaçao faces challenges in gathering usable, timely data to track SDG implementation. Data collection priorities are thus included in the National Development Plan. Together with the United Nations Development Programme, the statistics bureau is launching a National Socioeconomic Database to monitor SDG indicators that are relevant to Curaçao, make data more readily available and enhance uniformity by taking the SDG indicators as a guide for data collection. The initial focus of data collection will be indicators related to the four SDGs prioritised by Curaçao, with indicators for other SDGs incorporated later. More technical support is required and financing this process remains a challenge.

The report makes reference to annual reporting but is not specific about how.

Cyprus – Green

In 2017, Cyprus submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Cyprus has not prepared a long-term sustainable development strategy due to the government's focus on short- and medium-term measures for tackling the country's economic crisis. A combination of national and European Union policies and legislation cover most Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and serve as the basis for progress on them. The report refers to the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the need to leave no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Cyprus is making use of ministries and other government institutions, such as the national statistical office, to implement the SDGs under the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An inter-ministerial group was established and comprises contact points mostly from the strategic planning units of each ministry. Civil society organisations have called for the creation of a Government Authority for Sustainable Development. While individual ministries engage with them, non-state actors are not formally included in governance arrangements.

Baseline or gap analysis

There has been no baseline or gap analysis according to the report. The government notes that more consultations need to be undertaken to refine the set of indicators and define appropriate baselines and targets for each one.

Integration and policy coherence

The report covers all of the SDGs with the exception of SDG 10 on reduced inequalities. A statistical annex includes preliminary data while the goal-by-goal analysis highlights overall trends and efforts to improve sustainable development outcomes. The report covers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, but has a relatively greater focus on economic aspects and makes limited references to the linkages between dimensions. Policy coherence for development is not mentioned.

Leave no one behind

The report does not provide information on data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind or identify who is at risk of being left behind. There is no information on efforts to leave no one behind or reduce domestic inequalities.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report notes that there were extensive efforts to promote sustainable development to the population in 2015. The government then worked with civil society to carry out numerous projects promoting all or specific SDGs. The government is planning an extensive public information campaign.

Priorities were set based on the government's priorities as well as horizontal focal areas, such as youth. Coordination through government institutions led to the selection of five priority SDGs, with youth being a cross-cutting priority: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 14 on life below water.

The report's statistical annex includes a selection of indicators for each of the 17 SDGs. The national statistical office selected the indicators, largely drawing on the European Union's set of SDG indicators.

Stakeholder engagement

The government circulated an online survey on the SDGs and SDG priorities, which was ongoing at the time of the VNR process. According to the government, communication and coordination with civil society was done at various levels and for various government sectors. A presentation was also made on the SDGs and Cyprus's progress to the parliament's Environment Committee upon a request by the president.

A separate study was conducted by the non-governmental organisation Center for the Advancement of Research & Development in Educational Technology on the participation of Cyprus's civil society in SDG implementation. The results are summarised in the VNR report, with the full report included in an annex.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report outlines best practice in terms of policies in Cyprus such as the provision of free and easily accessible education to everyone at all education levels, supplying excellent quality drinking water to consumers, efforts to combat human trafficking, and promotion of international cooperation on issues such as the protection of cultural property and marine pollution.

Cyprus is prepared to share its expertise and play a leading role in the Mediterranean region for the establishment of synergies and partnerships that help refugees and migrants adjust to new cultures and environments as well as to make good use of their qualifications.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report notes that government institutions and civil society organisations need to deepen their collaboration and mutual support. While civil society organisations' relationships with certain institutions can be long-lasting and seamless, they depend on the specific projects, initiatives and obligations that emerge periodically for both parties. There is a need for dedicated liaisons within institutions. The government has undertaken some efforts to address this issue.

The greatest challenge in SDG implementation is the absence of a specific, horizontal coordination body to coordinate the domestic implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with all relevant stakeholders and engage the population. Another challenge is the absence of a longer-term sustainable development strategy that includes the three dimensions of sustainable development. Cyprus is going through institutional restructuring that has hindered its ability to develop a coordination mechanism for strategy. The country's economic crisis has caused a considerable setback to its path towards sustainable development due to the government's attention to crisis management and shorter-term planning.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report highlights engagement with civil society on SDG awareness raising and the private sector on corporate social responsibility.

Measurement and reporting

The report makes use of the European Union's set of SDG indicators, noting that this approach has the advantage of using data that are readily available with no significant new data collection needed. It is unclear how many of the global SDG indicators are available for Cyprus. A preliminary set of SDG indicators has yet to be discussed and agreed with the various stakeholders involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of national SDG policies. The report does not outline national reporting on SDG implementation.

Czech Republic - Yellow

In 2017, the Czech Republic submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Following a multi-stakeholder consultation that began in 2015, the Czech Republic adopted a national strategic framework for sustainable development titled Czech Republic 2030 in April 2017. The framework serves as an overarching framework for sectoral, regional and local strategies. The country is in the process of developing an implementation strategy to support the framework.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The prime minister is the chair of the Government Council for Sustainable Development. The council includes representation by non-state actors and has nine thematic committees that address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It is supported by a secretariat based in the Sustainable Development Department at the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. The institutional location of the secretariat allows the horizontal integration, cross-sectoral

coordination and mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development in national policy making.

Baseline or gap analysis

The Czech Republic carried out a baseline assessment for all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based above- or below- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development country average scoring. The assessment led to the identification of priority areas where more progress is needed to realise the SDGs, including gender equality, quality of earnings, improving energy efficiency and meeting official development assistance commitments.

Integration and policy coherence

The report covers the three dimensions of sustainable development through a summary examination of SDGs and their associated targets and indicators, but does not provide details for each SDG. The Czech Republic recognises the importance of policy coherence for sustainable development, though the report does not include an assessment of the impacts of domestic or external policies

on SDG outcomes. Nevertheless, the report notes that the Czech Republic aims to strengthen its institutional, analytical and control mechanisms to ensure policy coherence for sustainable development in order to reduce the adverse impacts that the country's policies have beyond its borders.

Leave no one behind

The report does not offer data on the current status of vulnerable and marginalised groups in the country or outline targeted efforts to leave no one behind and reduce domestic inequalities. Rather, the report states that in order to achieve all of the SDGs by 2030, the social system should increase its outreach to the most vulnerable groups following the principle of leaving no one behind.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, over 300 entities provided their expertise and feedback in the preparations for Czech Republic 2030. The framework sets out 97 specific goals in six key areas for the country: people and society, prosperity, resilient ecosystems, regions and municipalities, global development, and good governance. The inclusion of regions and municipalities as priorities in the framework indicates the importance of localising the SDGs for the country. The government plans to provide methodological and coordination support for SDG implementation at the sub-national level. Notably, a contest called The Czech SDG Awards was organised in 2017 to raise awareness about the SDGs and award national projects that contribute to their implementation.

Stakeholder engagement

For the country, the development of Czech Republic 2030 represented an unprecedented level of stakeholder involvement. The framework was drafted through close cooperation with ministries, local and regional authorities, parliamentary representatives and a wide range of other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia and labour unions.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report did not highlight best practice, lessons learned and challenges in implementation or make reference to financing the SDGs.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report mentions the role of non-state actors in SDG implementation. In addition to its own efforts, including The Czech SDG Awards, the government expects Czech Republic 2030 to be supported by voluntary commitments. This approach allows civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders including individuals to participate in the implementation process and encourages partnerships between various segments of society.

Measurement and reporting

The Czech Republic has data available to cover 95 of the 169 SDG targets. The report does not provide an indication of the availability of disaggregated data or indicate how data availability will be improved.

The government plans to report biannually on Czech Republic 2030 through an analytical report titled Report on Quality of Life and its Sustainability, which will assess the compliance of sectoral and regional strategic documents, programmes and measures and progress towards national objectives. It will maintain a national Database of Strategies, an online platform that links the goals and targets of various strategies with data sources for indicators. It also welcomes the elaboration of a shadow report by stakeholders not represented in the Government Council for Sustainable Development.

Denmark – Green

In 2017, Denmark submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government introduced a national action plan on how to follow up on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and already integrates sustainable development into policy making. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs constitute the platform for the country's development cooperation and humanitarian action as reflected in the government's new strategy titled The World 2030. Denmark recognises the universal, human rights-based nature of the 2030 Agenda and the need to ensure that no one is left behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for coordination of national implementation and the national action plan adopted by the government. Ministries are responsible for integrating the SDGs into their policies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the SDGs in the context of the United Nations and other international forums as well as in foreign and security policy, trade policy and development policy. Efforts are mainly coordinated through the inter-ministerial SDG working group and bilaterally between the Ministry

of Finance and other ministries. Non-state actors are not formally involved, but participate in a parliamentary network on the SDGs.

Baseline or gap analysis

An initial SDG data-mapping exercise was conducted in 2016. The government plans to finalise the SDG data-mapping exercise as a next step. In parallel, the national statistical office will analyse the data currently available and evaluate which data are best suited for follow-up, a process in which more data and new data sources will be examined. Based on estimates from the national statistical office, data for roughly 51–60% of the SDG indicators are available.

Integration and policy coherence

All of the SDGs are covered in a statistical annex but not the main text of the report. Rather, a summary of progress against the themes of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership is provided, which gives equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. However, the report makes limited references to linkages between dimensions in the thematic analysis.

With respect to integration and policy coherence for sustainable development, the report notes that Denmark already assesses the economic, environmental and gender equality consequences of new legislation. As such, several of the SDGs are already covered by existing procedures. The government supports policy coherence in national and international sustainable development efforts and ministries integrate sustainable development into policy making. As part of the national action plan, the government will assess the consequences of new legislation and major initiatives for the SDGs when considered relevant for Denmark and the impacts are significant. The development of an assessment framework to this end is ongoing.

Leave no one behind

Although Denmark recognises the importance of the principle of leaving no one behind, the report does not provide details on data, who is at risk or efforts to leave no one behind and address domestic inequalities.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report notes that there is a need for the government to raise awareness among the population. Non-state actors, however, have been active. The World's Best News is a multi-stakeholder initiative originally initiated by the Danish civil society organisations to communicate the SDGs to the population.

Denmark's action plan is centred on the themes of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships. The government formulated 37 targets that in most cases integrate and cut across several SDGs. They reflect the government's ambition to prioritise. Each target has one or two national indicators, which are generally measurable and quantifiable.

The government, municipalities and regions agreed to cooperate to achieve the SDGs and integrate sustainable development into policy making.

Stakeholder engagement

The report refers to engagement by various ministries in the development of the action plan but does not mention non-state actors. A civil society report notes that civil society organisations made recommendations for the action plan, but makes no reference to consultation.

For the VNR process, stakeholders from civil society, the private sector, local governments, youth and academia highlighted their contributions to achieving the SDGs nationally and internationally. The Ministry of Finance held an initial meeting with relevant stakeholders prior to the drafting of main messages and another meeting was held shortly before the submission of the VNR report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Denmark attributes its success on sustainable development to responsible economic policies, personal freedom, gender equality, education for all, anti-corruption, a social safety net, protection of the environment and climate, an open democracy, transparent and accountable institutions, and respect for human rights.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Denmark's government invited members of parliament and other stakeholders to participate in the Danish delegation at the High-level Political Forum and accommodated requests from other stakeholders as well.

Implementation of the action plan and sustainable development in general is funded by budget allocations approved by parliament during annual budget negotiations for the coming fiscal year. Denmark provides 0.7% of gross national income in official development assistance and will continue to do so according to the government. Denmark is also preparing to launch a SDG Fund that will combine public and private funds to mobilise further private capital. The government promises to promote the interests of the least developed countries in trade.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report highlights specific examples of partnerships and includes an annex with details on the contributions from various non-state actors. For example, civil society is upscaling partnership-driven implementation efforts and strengthening accountability measures in Denmark. Several larger companies are actively working to integrate the SDGs in their business models, strategies and investments.

Measurement and monitoring

Overall, Denmark has data for 51–60% of global indicators. Disaggregated data are generally available. The government plans to publish annual progress reports on its 37 targets, which will be sent to parliament. Every fourth year, the progress report will be replaced by a more comprehensive status report that also contains initiatives for achieving the SDGs and possible adjustments to the action plan. Denmark committed to conduct two more VNR reports before 2030.

El Salvador – Green

In 2017, El Salvador submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government aligned the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with its National Plan for Development, Protection and Social Inclusion 2014-2019 and national sector plans as the main means of SDG implementation.

El Salvador is one of 15 countries that participate in the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support programme for accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also participates with six other countries in a pilot initiative to monitor SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions at the national level.

The VNR report does not consider the principles of human rights, universality or leave no one behind in a systematic way.

Leadership, governance and institutions

According to the report, national implementation is carried out by government political and technical bodies in a coordinated manner.

However, the government recognises the need for a broad and long-term governance framework for the 2030 Agenda and the report mentions that the creation of a National Council for Sustainable Development is planned.

Baseline or gap analysis

A baseline study was carried out, but the only finding noted in the VNR report is the identification of feasible indicators based on the availability of national information. The key elements considered in the study are not specified in the report.

Integration and policy coherence

The VNR report examines the 2017 High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" SDGs plus SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. The analysis provides limited details on each goal and its targets and indicators. However, multiple references to applicable linkages between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development are made. The report considers poverty eradication as a cross-cutting variable for analysis and notes the

country's disagreement with the logic of international cooperation that allocates resources based on gross domestic product.

Policy coherence is considered but not analysed in the report, even though the Paris Agreement on climate change and Addis Ababa Action Agenda are mentioned.

Leave no one behind

The report does not identify efforts to leave no one behind, but considers groups identified as at risk of being left behind, such as women, youth and migrant workers, in defining national targets.

The issue of the existence of national inequalities receives special attention, with the adoption of the National Plan for Development, Protection and Social Inclusion 2014-2019 before the 2030 Agenda being noted.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

El Salvador prioritises nine SDGs with their 88 targets, and 29 SDG targets from eight goals that are not deemed priorities. The SDGs identified as national priorities are SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

According to the report, the localisation of SDG implementation at the sub-national level is imperative because local policies and actions will be required to achieve the SDGs.

Stakeholder engagement

Non-state actors were engaged in the identification of national priorities and consulted as part of the preparation of the VNR report. The report mentions that the involvement of non-state actors, such as civil society, academia and the private sector, cannot be done by decree, but requires investment in long-term alliances and dialogue on specific issues.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report analyses technology, capacity development and international public finance as means of implementation to advance the SDGs in the country.

Regarding financing, international public finance, climate finance and national and international private funding are taken into account.

The report presents a broad set of lessons learned on issues such as ownership and institutionalisation, political commitment, financing strategies, multi-stakeholder engagement, and data and statistics.

It also notes some challenges for SDG implementation at the national level: developing a long-term strategy oriented to fulfil the SDGs and articulating it through a network of institutions and sectoral public policies, promoting specific capacities to follow up the 2030 Agenda, achieving effective governance of the implementation process and its sustainability over time, and mobilising domestic and international resources to fund the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in El Salvador.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Regarding partnership to realise the SDGs, the report repeatedly refers to the importance of the engagement of civil society, academia and the private sector in SDG implementation. Access to climate finance and technology is identified as a priority for development partner support. The VNR also includes many references to different activities through which civil society, academia and the private sector have worked to support implementation processes.

Nevertheless, the VNR lacks specific tasks and ways in which each stakeholder can participate in the SDG implementation process in the future and includes no mentions of expected roles to be played by them.

South-South and triangular cooperation are presented as regional and inter-regional tools to facilitate and support SDG implementation at the national level.

Measurement and reporting

Although it clearly identifies a series of problems that El Salvador faces in producing timely and disaggregated data, the report does not suggest measures to overcome them. Rather, it establishes overall objectives to be achieved, such as strengthening capacity to generate statistical information through the institutionalisation of a National Statistical Information System, improving levels of data disaggregation, promoting inter-institutional coordination in the field of statistics and improving the quality of administrative records. National reporting on SDG implementation is not outlined in the report.

Ethiopia – Green

In 2017, Ethiopia submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Ethiopia integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its national development plan, the second Growth and Transformation Plan (2015-2020). Ratified by parliament, the plan provides legal backing for SDG implementation. The VNR report lists sector-specific initiatives that address certain SDGs. Although the SDGs have been incorporated into the national development plan, the report notes that SDG-related policies in many areas had already been drafted with implementation underway. To what extent the SDGs are impacting or will impact existing policies and programmes is unclear.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Political responsibility for SDG implementation is not spelled out in the report. However, the report notes that the National Planning Commission reports on SDG implementation to the prime minister. Ethiopia has no governing council or committee for SDG implementation. Rather, responsibility for implementation is integrated across government at all administrative levels. Each

government institution is responsible for consulting with non-state actors through Ethiopia's Public Wings system, which provides an organised way for non-state actors to engage the government.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report includes a baseline assessment for the SDGs captured under the 2017 HLPF theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world." It also notes that baseline data are available for SDG indicators that follow on from the Millennium Development Goals. Areas where additional efforts are needed to realise the SDGs include child health, gender equality and ensuring food security in light of climate change impacts.

Integration and policy coherence

The report examines a limited set of SDGs (most of which are covered under the High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world"), namely SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 7 on affordable

and clean energy, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, and SDG 14 on life below water. Although it covers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development of sustainable development, the report tends to have a relatively stronger focus on social aspects. In the examination of individual goals, the report makes references to applicable linkages between the three dimensions.

Policy coherence for sustainable development is not mentioned in the report. The impact of global systemic issues and trends on the realisation of the SDGs in Ethiopia is noted, including slowdown of the global economy and limited appetite of international partners to finance the SDGs. Notably, the impacts of climate change are strongly featured in the report, particularly in terms of hindering progress.

Leave no one behind

The report includes a detailed discussion of how Ethiopia plans to leave no one behind with the SDGs. Children, youth, women, the disabled, the elderly and those who have low levels of livelihood are identified as requiring additional support. The report outlines a range of initiatives to target specific groups. It notes the importance of the use of decentralised governance as a means to reach the poorest and most marginalised as well as affirmative action programmes and pro-poor policies, including a productive safety net in rural and urban areas. Domestic inequality is not addressed.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

Working with the United Nations Country Team in Ethiopia, the government undertook efforts to engage stakeholders on the national development plan at the national and regional levels and plans to continue raising awareness of the SDGs working with the United Nations. National priorities are identified in the national development plan, which focuses largely on the country's economy, with SDG targets included therein. Whether national SDG targets and indicators have also been established is unclear. At the local level, regional governments and city administrations are expected to contribute to implementation of the national development plan and thus the SDGs.

Stakeholder engagement

Civil society, private sector and academic stakeholders were engaged in national consultations on the SDGs. The national consultations conducted at regional levels were complemented by group discussions on four topics: leaving no one behind, eradication of poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world, achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, and strengthening the means of implementation for SDGs in Ethiopia.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report highlights lessons from Ethiopia's efforts to eradicate poverty, including the importance of government policies centred predominantly on poverty, decentralised governance that allows for participation and addressing local issues, high levels of government commitment, and public mobilisation for development. Key challenges include the impacts of climate change, slowdown of the global economy, low commitment by the international community to mobilise finance for the SDGs, the global unpredictability of peace and security (which impacts financial and aid flows), rent-seeking behaviour and lack of good governance at the country level, and capacity gaps.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report notes the role of civil society, the private sector, professional associations and academia in providing feedback on priorities and performance in the implementation of the national development plan. It does not outline how these stakeholders will engage in the implementation of the SDGs beyond consultations.

Ethiopia expects development partners to engage in the preparation of plans and performance monitoring. The provision of feedback on performance evaluation and identification of priority and focal issues to be addressed in subsequent stages of SDG implementation are also expected.

Measurement and reporting

The report does not provide an overview of data availability for SDG monitoring, including disaggregated data, though notes that data on water ecosystems are limited. Ethiopia recognises that there is a need to improve data collection by tackling resource and capacity gaps.

Parliament and the executive branch of government will monitor and support performance on the SDGs and the national development plan. Monitoring reports will be submitted to parliament every year.

Guatemala – Yellow

In 2017, Guatemala submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its K'atun National Development Plan: Our Guatemala 2032, which was approved in 2014. The results of that adaptation process are reflected in the Strategy of alignment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the National Plan and Policy of Development K'atun Our Guatemala 2032, which was adopted in June 2016. The VNR report repeatedly refers to the principle of leaving no one behind. Nevertheless, it makes very few mentions of the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda and considers human rights in a siloed way.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The SDG implementation and follow-up process is led by the National Council for Urban and Rural Development, which was created in 2002 as the main body for dialogue with, promotion of and participation of civil society. The council is the highest authority in the Development Council System and composed of 14

representatives of civil society and all government cabinet members. The president chairs the council's meetings.

Guatemala's regional activities towards 2030 Agenda implementation are not consideredin the VNR

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, the national statistical office designed a management strategy for the generation of statistics, which is currently being implemented. It presents baselines for each SDG analysed.

The report also identifies a series of problems for statistical management in Guatemala, which are highlighted as obstacles for SDG follow-up: statistics dispersion among institutions, gaps in the application of standards and methodologies, lack of quality available data, lags in updating information, deficiency in timely attention to information requests, and inadequate disaggregation of information.

Integration and policy coherence

The report briefly analyses a limited set of the SDGs, namely SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good

health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure. Limited references are made to linkages between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in the analysis of goals, targets and indicators. The report does not make references to the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda or policy coherence for sustainable development.

Leave no one behind

The report mentions that disaggregation of information is inadequate, since only about 55% of the 38 indicators that are produced can be disaggregated, with some limitations. Guatemala's capacity to meet the commitment to leave no one behind is affected. Those at risk of being left behind are noted in the analysis of certain SDGs. For example, the analysis of SDG 3 on good health and well-being notes the vulnerability of LGBTI groups, people infected with HIV, sex workers, the elderly, migrants and disabled women. The reduction of domestic inequalities is not articulated in the report.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

As part of the efforts to define national priorities, multi-stakeholder meetings were organised to disseminate and raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda. Guatemala prioritised the 17 SDGs, 129 of their 169 targets, and 200 of their 241 indicators. Adaptation to the national context was not carried out. The VNR report discusses prioritised targets and indicators in the analysis of each selected SDG, making it impossible to identify prioritised targets related to SDGs not included in the report. Localisation of the SDGs at the national level is not analysed in the VNR.

Stakeholder engagement

The multi-stakeholder meetings that led to defining national priorities were carried out by the national statistical office, the Secretariat of Planning and Programming of the Presidency, United Nations agencies and funds, and the Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment Institute of Rafael Landívar University. Its findings were discussed in multi-stakeholder validation workshops in November 2016. Non-state actors were not engaged in the preparation of the VNR report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report identifies a set of lessons learned from failures in Millennium Development Goal implementation efforts, such as the lack of national adaptation, insufficient information availability, shortage of financial foresight, absence of a long-term vision of the country's development priorities, absence of a coordination and monitoring mechanism, and deficit of government and non-state actors' awareness of the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition, challenges for SDG implementation are identified: creating institutional technical and political arrangements aimed at implementing the 2030 Agenda, incorporating development priorities in planning methods, considering the risks and vulnerabilities arising from the climate change threat, strengthening public finance for development financing, improving transparency and efficiency of public expenditure, promoting inter-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination and the participation of all Guatemalan stakeholders in the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda, and organising a methodical SDGs follow-up. Technology, capacity development, trade and international public financing are not addressed as means of implementation systematically.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The participation of local non-state actors in SDG implementation is mentioned in the report. For example, the report states that promotion of inter-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination and the participation of all Guatemalan stakeholders in the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda is necessary. Civil society, academia and the private sector are considered by the report, but other stakeholders are not mentioned.

Measurement and monitoring

For Guatemala, data are available for 38 of the 241 SDG indicators (16%). The report points out that only 21 of those 38 indicators (55%) can be disaggregated. To improve data availability, Guatemala participated in the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean's National statistical capacity questionnaire for the production of the SDG indicators from the global monitoring framework and in the United Nations Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators, both defined in the report as bodies that work on the definition and improvement of the 2030 Agenda's indicator framework and strengthening national statistical capacities. The report does not refer to national reporting on SDG implementation.

Honduras – Green

In 2017, Honduras submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government adopted two documents that establish its long-term development strategy: the Country Vision 2010-2038 and National Plan 2010-2022. Both were approved before the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted. The government also produced a mid-term strategy, the Development Assistance Programme for Honduras 2017-2021. Together these documents make up what is known as the Honduras Framework for Sustainable Development, which is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Nevertheless, the VNR report makes very few mentions of the main principles that give shape to the 2030 Agenda's ambitions: human rights, universality and leave no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

A high-level commission leads the political process of implementing the SDGs. In its work, the commission is supported by a technical committee, which provides technical advice and implements the commission's decisions. The Presidency of the Republic of Honduras stated that the Secretariat of General Coordination of Government is responsible for leading the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and coordinating the work of the high-level commission and technical committee.

At the same time, non-state actors, including academia, civil society organisations, the private sector, workers' and peasants' organisations, and minorities, were invited to share their perspectives on SDG implementation during socialisation workshops organised by the government. To improve human resource capacities, Honduras has actively participated in 15 different events at the global and regional levels and thus trained 31 national assistants.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report does not make references to baseline or gap analysis.

Integration and policy coherence

The report does not analyse specific SDGs. While analyses national public policies, references to SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality

education, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals are included

The report does not mention the Paris Agreement on climate change or Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Climate change receives little attention and there is no assessment of policy coherence for sustainable development. Nevertheless, the report considers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way.

Leave no one behind

The leave no one behind principle is addressed in the report, though not systematically. The report mentions the principle in the executive synthesis and the chapters on multi-stakeholder participation in the implementation of 2030 Agenda at the national level and the national governance framework for the SDGs.Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report introduces priorities set in the relations between Honduras and various development partners and points out the need to move forward with the definition of national priorities in the context of the 2030 Agenda, but without providing details. It also indicates that 102 local governments made first steps towards the elaboration of community and municipal development plans, which will be relevant in the localisation of the national SDG agenda.

Stakeholder engagement

There is no clear evidence that non-state actors were included in the VNR process or in defining priorities for development, a process that appears to be incomplete.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report does not reference funding for the 2030 Agenda. Technology, capacity development, trade and international public finance are not mentioned as means of implementation. Some lessons learned are noted, such as inadequacy of measuring poverty in a unidimensional manner and usefulness of working together with various domestic stakeholders and development partners. Challenges to national implementation are also highlighted: coordination, planning and budgeting processes; strengthening local institutional capabilities; building adequate databases; promoting stakeholder participation and ownership; using mechanisms and instruments previously approved by the country as SDG implementation tools; elaborating and submitting country reports linked to the SDGs.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The high-Level commission for SDG implementation includes representatives of the national and local governments, civil society organisations, the private sector, unions and academia.

The report notes that the process of stakeholder involvement advances slowly due to obstacles to bringing some non-state actors on board, especially the private sector. Still, significant progress was made in a dialogue with academia.

The report underlines the relevance of international development cooperation as a tool for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and highlights priority areas for partnerships: the fight against extreme poverty, health, strengthening democracy, citizen security, decent work creation and environmental protection.

Measurement and monitoring

The report mentions the challenges of building quality, accessible, credible, and understandable databases that allows an adequate level of data disaggregation. It also notes that an analysis of the capabilities of the national statistical system must be conducted.

The report does not outline national reporting for SDG implementation.

India - Red

In 2017, India submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the report, the government prepared a draft Three Year Action Agenda covering 2017–18 to 2019–20, which addresses specific challenges facing the country and details measures to fast-track the national development agenda. In parallel, work on a 15-year vision document and seven-year strategy is in advanced stages. Most of the state governments have matched strategic insights from the national development agenda and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with their own contexts and priorities.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The National Institution for Transforming India, a think tank in India, provides coordination and leadership for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation. The prime minister is the chairperson of the institution. State planning and development departments are also operating as focal points for facilitating the process of SDG implementation by providing information and support. The report does not mention how non-state actors are involved in governance and institutional mechanisms for SDG implementation.

Baseline or gap analysis

The National Institution for Transforming India carried out a detailed mapping of the 17 SDGs and 169 targets to nodal central ministries, centrally sponsored schemes and major government initiatives. The results of the mapping exercise were circulated and placed on the website of the National Institution for Transforming India to facilitate better awareness, common understanding and faster implementation of the SDGs. According to the report, most sub-national governments have carried out a similar mapping of the SDGs and targets to the departments and programmes in their respective states. The report does not identify gaps based on these assessments.

Integration and policy coherence

The report examines the High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" goals: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. It provides a detailed examination with equal attention to the economic, social and environmental

dimensions of sustainable development and references to applicable linkages between them. While it looks at the impact of foreign policies on the SDGs globally, the report does not mention policy coherence for sustainable development.

✋ Leave no one behind

The report makes references to the principle of leaving no one behind but does not provide information on data to ensure that no one is left behind or who is being left behind. It notes a number of programmes that target vulnerable groups, including providing essential health services to the entire population, with a special emphasis on the poor and vulnerable groups. To address multi-dimensional poverty, data from the Socio-Economic Caste Census of 2011 are being used to identify beneficiaries for development programmes based on various deprivations, aligned with the policy of ensuring that no one is left behind.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

Working individually and in coalitions, civil society organisations have partnered with the government to provide inputs, create awareness and offer feedback on SDG implementation. While it does not detail national priorities, the report notes that the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation developed a list of draft national indicators in light of the global SDG indicators.

> **Civil society validity check**
>
> A civil society report notes that local governments are not yet actively engaged on the 2030 Agenda.

The national development agenda, which covers the SDGs, guides the capacity building of local governments as well as planning processes. In addition to integrating the SDGs into local policies and plans, local governments will also receive increased financial resources for SDG implementation, including through special purpose grants.

> **Civil society validity check**
>
> A civil society report states that there was no public consultation on the VNR report.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, the 15-year vision document and seven-year strategy are being prepared with active participation of sub-national governments, while non-state actors are engaged in the selection of national priorities. For preparation of the VNR report, a series of consultations at the national and sub-national levels were conducted in which state governments, local governments, civil society organisations, technical experts, academics, international organisations and other stakeholders participated.

Two civil society reports were prepared in relation to the VNR process. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan provided an assessment of the VNR report's messages. VSO India responded to global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's questionnaire on engagement in SDG implementation and the VNR process.

🔁 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report does not identify best practice, lessons learned or challenges for India. The discussion of means of implementation notes efforts by the government to raise domestic resources through tax reform, improve budgeting, and increase foreign direct investment flows. The report highlights the need for technology development and transfer for developing countries and efforts to tackle illicit financial flows. It also notes the obligation of developed countries to provide financial assistance to developing countries, especially for global public goods, such as climate change mitigation.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

Parliament has organised discussions on the SDGs, including at the southern Asian regional level. Civil society organisations have been preparing education and communication materials, conducting capacity building workshops and awareness campaigns, supporting sub-national governments with SDG integration, highlighting issues for necessary policy action, and conducting research on and documenting the SDGs as well as their relevance to the rights and entitlements of various vulnerable segments of society. Corporate sector organisations have held consultations and initiated actions in various areas including environmental sustainability, innovative climate action and inclusive development strategies on various themes.

📋 Measurement and reporting

The report does not outline data availability for SDG implementation but notes an emphasis on assessing and improving the availability of data as well as putting in place transparent monitoring systems. The government plans to strengthen the mechanisms for SDG monitoring and reporting through a dashboard that is currently under development, with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme. The government plans to have bi-annual reviews conducted with state governments to identify good practices and challenges as well as undertake appropriate course corrections.

Indonesia – Green

In 2017, Indonesia submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been aligned with "Nawacita," Indonesia's national development vision, which is integrated into the development policies, strategies and programmes of the National Medium-Term Development Plan 2015-2019 and translated into a Government Work Plan with an associated budget. Implementation occurs at the sub-national level through regional plans (Indonesia is an archipelagic country with over 17,000 islands). The government plans to formulate a 15-year SDGs Road Map, a SDGs National Action Plan and SDGs Regional Action Plans.

Leadership, governance and institutions

To implement the SDGs, the government set up a National Coordination Team. The team includes a Steering Committee, an Implementing Team, Working Groups, an Experts Team and a SDGs Secretariat operating under the Ministry of National Development Planning/National Development Planning Agency, which is responsible for coordination of SDG implementation and reporting by involving all stakeholders. The president and a number

of ministers provide leadership for implementation. Members of the Implementing Team and Working Groups include representatives of government, philanthropic organisations, the private sector, civil society and academia as well as experts.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the VNR report, Indonesia carried out a data assessment for all SDGs that provides an initial picture of Indonesia's SDG data. The report identifies gaps in the goal-by-goal analysis, pointing to specific targets and issues such as maternal and under-five mortality rates, unmet need of family planning, digital gaps and the need for improved marine conservation and use of fisheries resources.

Integration and policy coherence

The report examines the High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" goals: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. It provides a detailed examination

with equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and references applicable linkages between them. While it refers to the impact of foreign policies on the SDGs globally, the report does not reference policy coherence for sustainable development. It refers to applying coherent coordination to data-related issues, but notes that coherent coordination between the government and non-state actors still faces the challenge of establishing synergy between programmes.

Leave no one behind

Additional data are required for Indonesia to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. To address this challenge, Indonesia has developed metadata of SDG indicators and a data portal to support the provision of disaggregated data. The national statistical office has made some efforts to develop disaggregated data for the district and city levels from existing surveys. Indonesia identifies children, women, and specific regions and communities as falling behind. The report points to infrastructure development, particularly in eastern regions, as a key strategy to reduce poverty and inequalities.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The government prepared a communication strategy to develop awareness of and commitment to the SDGs and promote participation by all stakeholders in implementation.

National development priorities that converge with the SDGs include human development, development of leading economic sectors, and equity and addressing regional inequality. Efforts on these priorities are supported by factors including legal certainty and enforcement, security and order, politics and democracy, and governance and bureaucratic reform. The government also identified national indicators.

According to the report, socialisation of and consultation on the SDGs at the sub-national level was done in 31 of Indonesia's 34 provinces and around 50 districts or municipalities. Allocations in regional budgets are made for SDG implementation.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, all stakeholders, namely the government, civil society organisations, philanthropic organisations, the private sector, academics and experts are always involved in national planning processes, with a similar approach being adopted for the VNR process.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

In preparing the VNR report, Indonesia adopted a set of six principles to ensure inclusivity and transparency:

1. **Sharing schedules with stakeholders;**

2. **Conducting public campaigns to encourage active participation in the entire preparation process;**

3. **Using various online and offline channels to provide opportunities for the public to provide input;**

4. **Involving all stakeholders to ensure representation of all groups;**

5. **Documenting and publicising to ensure accountability and transparency of the process; and**

6. **Using easy-to-understand language to reduce the information gap between stakeholders.**

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report highlights the involvement of all stakeholders as a strength in SDG implementation. It includes specific lessons learned in the examination of each goal. Major challenges include the large number of poor people, gaps between higher and lower income groups and among regions, environmental degradation, reporting against global indicators, and ensuring data disaggregation to leave no one behind.

Financing the SDGs is an issue. Although the government allocates funding for the implementation of the SDGs, the amount is insufficient to fulfil needs. The government is exploring non-government financing such as private fund mobilisation and foreign cooperation.

Indonesia has increased its knowledge-sharing activities through South-South and triangular cooperation. It is assisting other developing countries to achieve the SDGs and leave no one behind.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Civil society and the media are supporting SDG implementation. For example, civil society and faith-based organisations have actively facilitated implementation and carried out advocacy efforts directed

at the national and local governments, while several national radio stations broadcast about SDG issues regularly. Philanthropic organisations and private sector actors have established a platform called Philanthropy and Business Indonesia for SDGs that holds routine meetings to coordinate, share information and socialise the SDGs within the private sector. Several universities have established a Center of Excellence on SDGs.

Measurement and reporting

Regarding global SDG indicators, Indonesia has between 61-70% available, including through proxy indicators. The government is addressing data gaps through better coordination and the development of its One Data initiative. To monitor SDG implementation, governors report annually on SDG achievement to the minister of national development planning/head of the National Development Planning Agency and minister of home affairs. This information is then consolidated and submitted to the president.

Italy – Red

In 2017, Italy submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Italy has incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by drafting the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2017/2030. The strategy is an update of the Environmental Action Strategy for Sustainable Development in Italy of 2002. The government sees the new strategy as the first step towards a holistic policy framework in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By the end of 2017, an action plan will be developed that includes quantitative targets, monitoring and review mechanisms and analytical models capable of measuring the impacts of policies on national priorities. Italy recognises the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda and the need to leave no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Presidency of the Council of Ministers coordinates and manages the national sustainable development strategy, with the support of the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. These ministries are respectively responsible for the domestic and external dimensions

of the 2030 Agenda. The report notes plans to further develop a governance system for the implementation and evaluation of the new strategy. The Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea is responsible for ensuring participation by civil society and relevant stakeholders through the creation of a Forum on the Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, the preparations for the national sustainable development strategy included an assessment in terms of Italian performances with regards to the SDGs and their 169 targets. Strengths and weaknesses were identified from which to build national priorities. The report does not outline the findings of this assessment.

Integration and policy coherence

The report does not examine the SDGs, but provides a summary analysis based on the framework of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. For each of these areas, the report notes linkages to the SDGs. It gives attention to the economic, social

and environmental dimensions of sustainable development with reference to applicable linkages. The report refers to the impacts of foreign policy on sustainable development, but does not refer to policy coherence.

Leave no one behind

There is no information presented in the report on the status of data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind, identify who is being left behind or reach those being left behind. However, it notes that fighting inequalities is increasingly an inevitable goal for governments. Measures to address inequalities include the Support for Active Inclusion initiative, which introduces a financial benefit for disadvantaged families, and the Income for Inclusion initiative, a newly adopted law that provides a structural instrument to combat poverty.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report does not discuss awareness raising. However, Italy is preparing an action plan. The strategic objectives envisaged within the national sustainable development strategy include: decrease poverty, inequality, discrimination, unemployment (particularly among youth and women); ensure environmentally sustainable economic growth; increase opportunities for training, study and social progress; and restore the competitiveness of Italian companies through a "fourth industrial revolution" based on innovative and sustainable technologies. The report includes targets associated with national priorities. Italy includes 38 "Indicators for Equitable and Sustainable Welfare" among its SDG indicators.

With respect to localisation, the government points to the State and Regions Conference as a means to enhance local and regional authorities' participation in implementation.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, there was a consultation process during the preparations for the national sustainable development strategy. Universities, non-governmental organisations, ministries and other government institutions were consulted. The report does not mention consultations during the VNR process.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report does not outline best practice, lessons learned or challenges. It highlights the focus of Italy's international development cooperation, which aims to: eradicate poverty and reduce inequality; improve people's living conditions and promote sustainable development; protect and affirm human rights, self-dignity, gender equality, equal opportunities, and democracy principles and rule of law; and prevent conflicts and support peacekeeping processes, reconciliation, post-conflict stabilisation, and democratic institution building and strengthening. Italy has set the target of increasing official development assistance to 0.3% of gross domestic product in 2020 and 0.7% in 2030.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Aside from involvement in national planning and plans to further involve stakeholders in implementation, the report does not provide detailed information on partnerships.

Measurement and reporting

In 2017, the national statistical office published 100 SDG indicators. In total, 173 indicators related to sustainable development were made available. The government plans to improve the coverage and number of indicators to identify relevant trends in progress on the SDGs.

The government plans to provide an annual review of implementation and results of the national sustainable development strategy. It will also explore criteria to define and create an associated monitoring system and establish a reference framework for further evaluation of activities under the strategy.

Japan - Yellow

In 2017, Japan submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Japan adopted a national strategy to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development titled Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Implementation Guiding Principles. The document includes a vision for Japan to be a leader in sustainable development, five implementation principles, eight priority areas, 140 specific measures and an approach to follow-up and review processes. Japan refers to the universal, human rights-based nature of the Agenda 2030 that aims to leave no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

In 2016, the government established a new cabinet body called the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, which is headed by the prime minister and comprises all ministers. The Global Issues Cooperation Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs serves as the secretariat. The division facilitates all of the processes related to the SDGs under guidance and support from the Prime Minister's Office.

According to the report, the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held roundtable meetings on the promotion and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which was attended by representatives of a wide range of stakeholders, including non-governmental and non-profit organisations, academia, the private sector and international organisations.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report does not mention baseline or gap analysis.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report notes that the document provides a list of already existing policies and programmes related to the eight priority areas. There are no new policies and programmes aimed at tackling the SDG-related challenges that Japan is facing.

Integration and policy coherence

The report does not examine the SDGs but provides a detailed analysis based on country priorities, giving equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and recognising linkages between dimensions.

Japan plans to implement the SDGs in accordance with the principles of universality, inclusiveness, a participatory approach, an integrated approach, and transparency and accountability. These principles are meant to be taken into account in all priority areas over the course of implementation, with activities assessed against the principles. The principle of an integrated approach means that the government will endeavour to address challenges with due consideration to the three dimensions of sustainable development and foster synergies among priority areas.

Leave no one behind

The report does not provide information on data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. Those at risk of being left behind in Japan include single-parent households and children from these households, the elderly and young people, people with disabilities, and those in vulnerable circumstances. Japan highlights its Plan for Dynamic Engagement of All Citizens to leave no one behind. Under the plan, the government is implementing measures to build a new economic system that enhances child care support and social security as a broader economic policy. Special programmes have been developed to support single-parent households and households with multiple children, as well as people with disabilities.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, the Ministry of the Environment regularly convenes stakeholders' meetings to share information between stakeholders and raise awareness of the SDGs. Japan plans to raise public awareness through communication campaigns in collaboration with others. To engage youth, Japan is promoting Education for Sustainable Development, as well as encouraging learning about the SDGs in all settings including schools, households, workplaces and local communities.

Japan has selected national priorities and indicators. Its eight priority areas include: empowerment of all people; good health and longevity; creating growth markets, revitalisation of rural areas, and promoting science technology and innovation; sustainable and resilient land use and promoting quality infrastructure; energy conservation, renewable energy, climate change countermeasures, and a sound material-cycle societies; conservation of the environment; achieving peaceful, safe and secure societies; and strengthening the means of implementation of the SDGs.

The government plans to support local governments to contribute to the SDGs. Certain cities have developed initiatives, some of which are highlighted in the report.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, non-state actors were engaged in identifying national priorities and preparing the VNR report. A civil society report was also prepared in response to global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's questionnaire on SDG implementation and the VNR process.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report notes that most local governments are waiting for directions from the national government and not engaged. A few exceptions exist for local governments with powerful independent leaders.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The government plans to use financial resources as policy incentives to foster individual and collective efforts of government institutions to implement the SDGs.

According to the report, Japan provided approximately US$16.8 billion in official development assistance on a gross basis in 2016. A national Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy recommended that Japan increase efforts to help meet the technology needs of partner countries through international cooperation.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report includes a government commitment to cooperate with local governments, non-governmental and non-profit organisations, academia, the private sector, international organisations and other entities, parliamentarians, scientists and cooperatives to implement the SDGs. The report highlights a range of initiatives by stakeholders, including parliamentarians, civil society, the private sector and the media.

Measurement and reporting

Japan expects to be able to cover around 40% of the global SDG indicators, provided that proxy indicators (which use data produced in the national context that are not exactly the same as those used for a global indicator) are included.

Japan plans to follow up and review progress with a focus on the High-level Political Forum Summit in 2019. Specific implementation measures will be monitored to discern whether they are being implemented in accordance with the main principles of the SDG Implementation Guiding Principles.

Jordan – Green

In 2017, Jordan submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

To implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the government developed a SDG Roadmap that focuses on community awareness, prioritisation and mapping, capacity development, mainstreaming in national and sub-national planning frameworks, costing, strengthening the national statistical system, and monitoring and evaluation. The report does not mention the universal, human-rights based nature of the 2030 Agenda or the importance of leaving no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Higher Steering Committee for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation is headed by the prime minister and includes relevant ministers, parliamentarians and representatives of the private sector, civil society organisations, women, youth, and local communities. This committee is a restructured version of the Higher National Committee for Sustainable Development. A Coordination Committee with 18 working groups was also established. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation serves as the focal point for SDG implementation.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, mapping and ensuring coherence of SDGs, targets and indicators with national policy and planning frameworks are part of the SDG Roadmap. The government engaged in mapping the goals, targets and indicators with those in the Jordan 2025 document as well as the objectives, policies, initiatives and indicators of the Executive Development Programmes, which constitute the country's national plan for the coming years. The mapping demonstrated that all goals and most targets are important for Jordan, albeit to varying degrees, especially at the target and indicator levels.

Integration and policy coherence

The report does not examine the SDGs but provides a detailed analysis based on people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership with equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including references to

applicable linkages between dimensions. It does not mention policy coherence for sustainable development, but includes an assessment of domestic and foreign policies towards the realisation of the SDGs globally, with a particular emphasis on Jordan's contributions in terms of hosting refugees.

Leave no one behind

The status of data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind is unclear. Jordan identifies women, youth, children, people with disabilities and the working poor as at risk of being left behind. The report notes that Jordan's SDG consultation process gave special attention to ensuring the inclusion of women, youth, children, people with disabilities, and representatives of Syrian and other refugee communities. Jordan provides limited direct interventions to support those most in need. The government is also making use of decentralised approaches to address the needs of and regional disparities among governorates.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, the government used the VNR and nationalisation processes to raise awareness through consultations and other ways, such as social media.

Four main areas emerged as critical for the population in the upcoming period: strengthening links between education and the labour market, and entrepreneurship to reduce unemployment and ensure decent work; combating stereotypes to achieve gender equality and decrease geographical disparities, reducing poverty and ensuring equal access to social services; enhancing accountability, respecting human rights and contributing to regional stability; and enhancing awareness of environmental issues, promoting renewable energy and addressing water scarcity. The government is planning to include SDG indicators directly into its plans going forward.

In terms of localisation, the SDG Roadmap includes mainstreaming the SDGs within sub-national plans or at the governorate level, starting with two governorates on a pilot basis and then gradually reaching all governorates. There is a need for greater engagement in SDG implementation at the sub-national level.

Stakeholder engagement

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation prepared a stakeholder engagement strategy to ensure the widest participation from all stakeholders in SDG implementation and preparation of the VNR report.

The strategy laid out consultation plans and took into account challenges for meaningful participation, namely difficulties in reaching the most marginalised, the tendency to involve larger non-governmental organisations rather than smaller community-based organisations and individuals, and time constraints.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Jordan highlights a number of lessons learned for SDG implementation, including the importance of genuine partnership and an increased role for the private sector, strong coordination among all government institutions and non-state actors to avoid duplication of efforts, the importance of quality technical assistance and capacity development, and the need for an increased focus on promoting ownership and raising awareness.

A key challenge highlighted in the report is the adverse effect of regional instabilities on Jordan. Financing for development has become critically important in light of Jordan's role in hosting Syrian refugees. Jordan is working on tapping into and leveraging traditional and non-traditional sources of finance such as official development assistance, public and private partnerships, and Islamic finance. The government calls on development partners to implement their commitments under the Jordan Compact adopted in London in 2016 and in the Jordan Output Document adopted in Brussels in 2017.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Civil society organisations have been heavily engaged in strengthening national ownership through awareness raising and consultations. Jordan is also working with its development partners to combine financing for development with stronger policy guidance, more effective technical assistance and enhanced capacity building. The United Nations Country Team in Jordan provided support for the VNR process.

Measurement and reporting

Data availability is unclear from the report, but the SDG Roadmap mentions strengthening the national statistical system and improving data availability through technical and financial support. A monitoring system is under development, the outputs of which will include regular progress reports and an online monitoring dashboard.

Kenya – Green

In 2017, Kenya submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Kenya Vision 2030 is well aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its implementation is directly linked to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Under Kenya Vision 2030, the Second Medium Term Plan for the 2013–17 period was in its third year when the SDGs were adopted, but early consultations on the 2030 Agenda informed the plan. The Third Medium Term Plan is set to mainstream international and regional commitments, including the 2030 Agenda and Africa's Agenda 2063. The SDGs have been incorporated in government institutions' performance contracts and strategic plans. A SDGs road map was also prepared to guide the transition process from the Millennium Development Goals to SDGs.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Following on its role in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the Ministry of Devolution and Planning is mandated to coordinate SDG implementation and monitoring in Kenya. The ministry is supported by the Inter-Agency Committee on the SDGs, which comprises representatives of government, United Nations agencies, civil society and the private sector. A SDG Inter-Agency Technical Working Group provides strategic oversight of SDG programme design and implementation. It makes decisions on strategic programme choices at the national level and has the responsibility of ensuring that various government institutions implement the SDGs and report on progress in a timely manner.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
Kenya developed a SDGs road map to guide implementation in consultation with national and local governments, civil society and development partners. Activities covered by the road map include mapping stakeholders and establishing partnerships, advocacy and sensitisation, localisation, mainstreaming and accelerating implementation, resource mobilisation, tracking and reporting, and capacity building.

Baseline or gap analysis

The VNR report notes that Kenya has baseline data between 2009 and 2014 for most SDG indicators. There is a lack of baseline data to measure progress on the implementation of environment-related SDGs, including with respect to marine life. Areas where additional efforts are needed to realise the SDGs include ensuring healthy lives and well-being, adequate, safe and reliable water, and access to electricity.

Integration and policy coherence

The report covers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in its detailed analysis of all 17 SDGs. However, there are limited references to the linkages between the dimensions in the discussions of specific goals.

Policy coherence for sustainable development is not discussed. Yet, the report notes that Kenya will take an integrated approach and ensure that local-national linkages are coherent in implementation.

Notably, the importance of addressing climate change features strongly in the report, which outlines a wide range of efforts to address climate change and its impacts.

Civil society validity check

Agenda 2030 has not been officially translated into local languages. Civil society organisations would like this issue to be addressed by the government and development partners to ensure no one is left behind when implementing the SDGs in Kenya.

Leave no one behind

The report includes a chapter on leaving no one behind. It notes the importance of ensuring progress for poor people, women, youth and people with disabilities, as well as social protection programmes that target particularly vulnerable groups to ensure no one is left behind. The government sees social protection as a key way to address domestic inequality.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, the government supported a number of consultations with a wide range of local stakeholders during the lead-up to the adoption of the SDGs and the development of the SDGs road map.

To ensure ownership of the SDGs, the government examined the extent to which the global goals converge with Kenya's development objectives. National priorities are organised around three pillars – economic, social and political – that capture the main elements of the SDGs. The SDGs are being localised in Kenya through mainstreaming into County Integrated Development Plans.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, non-state actors were consulted throughout the process of identifying national priorities for the SDGs and during the preparation of the VNR report. They were invited to prepare inputs and reports for the VNR process and part of the VNR report drafting team. Civil society organisations prepared a spotlight report ahead of the High-level Political Forum as well as a shadow report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report mentions four main challenges for SDG implementation – inadequate disaggregated data, high stakeholder expectations, inadequate funding, and ensuring proper mainstreaming of the SDGs into policies, plans and budgets.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report notes the formal involvement of civil society in SDG implementation including through the Inter-Agency Committee on the SDGs. A private sector SDG Forum is being planned and a youth caucus is at the early stages of formation. A Parliamentary SDGs Caucus will also be formed. The report does not set out priorities for support by development partners or the role that they should play. It does, however, note that the United Nations country office and civil society organisations provided financial and technical support during the VNR process.

Measurement and reporting

Kenya has 128 indicators available to monitor the SDGs, but whether the report refers to global or national indicators in this context is unclear. Data are specifically unavailable for neglected tropical diseases, cancer, outbreak diseases, water-related issues and climate issues.

The SDGs will be tracked at the national and sub-national levels through monitoring and evaluation of policies, projects and programmes outlined in Second Medium Term Plan using a results-based monitoring framework. SDG indicators will be integrated into regular surveys.

Luxembourg – Red

In 2017, Luxembourg submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

In 2017, the government adopted a 2030 Agenda implementation report. The report was prepared by the Interdepartmental Commission for Sustainable Development as the starting point for analysing the effectiveness of policies put in place and developing the means and tools required for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation.

The VNR report is a first step towards the elaboration of Luxembourg's next national plan for sustainable development that will be aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The country intends to develop a new general strategy for cooperation, accompanied by a development effectiveness action plan, and bring related instruments into compliance with the 2030 Agenda.

Leadership, governance and institutions

In Luxembourg, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure and the Ministry of Cooperation are responsible for leading the 2030 Agenda implementation process. The Interdepartmental Commission for Sustainable Development – a governmental entity composed of officials from ministries and departments – is the central instrument for coordination. Its composition has been reviewed, following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, to include all ministers. The VNR report also notes that a close link has been established between the commission and the Inter-ministerial Committee for Development Cooperation to ensure coherence and complementarity.

Luxembourg also has the Superior Council for Sustainable Development, which represents civil society and acts on its own initiative or at the request of the government. It is mandated to provide research and studies in all areas related to sustainable development, and to advise the government on any measures related to national sustainable development policies and the implementation of the country's international commitments.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the VNR report, Luxembourg's 2030 Agenda national implementation report provides a mapping of the SDGs and their

targets and analyses them for their national application. An annex in the VNR report includes a table that synthesises sustainable development trends discussed in the current National Plan for Sustainable Development and compares them with the SDGs to assess coherence between the plan and 2030 Agenda. The VNR report discusses priority areas where additional progress is needed and links them to the SDGs. The priority areas are social inclusion, diversification of the economy, sustainable transport, environment protection and climate protection.

Integration and policy coherence

The report looks at all of the SDGs and provides a detailed assessment, with equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It provides an assessment of domestic and foreign policies on the realisation of the SDGs globally. It links national priorities to all of the SDGs except SDG 2 on zero hunger and SDG 14 on life below water and notes that the 17 SDGs will be the basis of the country's cooperation policy and framework for general strategy.

The report refers to policy coherence, policy coherence for development and policy coherence for sustainable development. It states that an integrated approach will have the effect of ensuring political coherence by exploiting the gains from interconnections between different policy areas, avoiding difficult trade-offs and mitigating possible conflicts between certain objectives and their negative consequences. It also notes that the approach pursued by Luxembourg through its National Plan for Sustainable Development aims to take into account all policies that are likely to have an impact on the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Leave no one behind

The report notes that social equality and the protection of the poorest people are among the fundamental priorities of government policy, particularly in terms of social protection and security. Many examples of efforts taken by Luxembourg to meet the commitment to leave no one behind are outlined in the report in the context of social inclusion, including those on access to accommodation, modernisation of family policy and the integration of migrants. Groups targeted in the country's efforts to leave no one behind include women, poor families, children and youth, migrants and refugees, and people with disabilities.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The Superior Council for Sustainable Development has initiated a communication campaign on the 2030 Agenda in the form of an online platform to raise awareness and highlight opportunities and solutions related to the implementation of the 17 SDGs in Luxembourg.

Outlined in the VNR report and linked to several SDGs are Luxembourg's national priorities, which include ensuring social inclusion and education for all, diversifying the economy, planning and coordinating land use, ensuring sustainable mobility, stopping environmental degradation and protecting the climate. The report indicates that the government initiated the process of selecting indicators to monitor the evolution of sustainable development at the national level.

Stakeholder engagement

The Superior Council for Sustainable Development is mandated to advise the government on how to involve national stakeholders in the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The VNR report is unclear about whether non-state actors were engaged in its preparation or if they were consulted on national SDG priorities. The Superior Council for Sustainable Development plans to organise a workshop with young people from 16 to 26 years of age to discuss their expectations and priorities for Luxembourg and the world in 2030.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report indicates that Luxembourg's official development assistance has been 1% of its gross national income annually since 2009. It highlights the need to leverage complementary private investment to support development. The government is committed to financing sustainable development, notably by setting up a Luxembourg Sustainable Development Finance Platform aimed at bringing sustainable project promoters closer to their financial contributors and potential investors.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The Superior Council for Sustainable Development established an inventory of actions for the 2030 Agenda that are implemented by the private sector and civil society organisations, municipalities and citizens. According to the VNR report, the Luxembourg Directorate for Cooperation holds meetings every six weeks with the Cooperation Circle of Development NGOs (le Cercle de Coopération des ONG de développement) to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The report also includes specific examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships related to the SDGs.

Measurement and reporting

The report does not mention much about data availability, disaggregated data and national reporting on the SDGs. While unclear in the report, the next national plan for sustainable development that will be aligned with the 2030 Agenda might serve as a reporting tool on SDG implementation.

Malaysia - Green

In 2017, Malaysia submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

To guide Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation, the government formulated a National SDG Roadmap. The VNR report does not reference the universal, human rights-based nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The national multi-stakeholder governance structure for SDG implementation is led by the National SDG Council, which is chaired by the prime minister. The council plans and monitors implementation and is supported by a National Steering Committee, which includes five SDG Cluster Working Committees. Task forces were also established for each of the goals. The SDG Cluster Working Committees identify indicators for each goal, develop and implement programmes and report progress to the National SDG Council. Each committee includes representatives of government, civil society organisations (CSOs), the private sector, academia, United Nations agencies and youth.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
By including non-governmental organisations, CSOs and private sector representatives in SDG Cluster Working Committees, Malaysia has formalised their participation in the national development process.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report notes that Malaysia conducted studies on data readiness and gaps, but provides no further information on the approach to and results of the analyses. Gaps for the SDGs are presented throughout the report in terms of areas where further progress is needed, such as enhancing the social protection system and achieving holistic marine and coastal management at both the federal and state levels.

⚙ Integration and policy coherence

The report examines a limited set of SDGs:

SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 15 on life on land and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. A summary of each goal is provided, with the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development being covered equally and references being made to applicable linkages between them. Policy coherence for sustainable development is not mentioned in the report. However, a study was conducted in 2015 on policy coherence, governance, human capital and data responses for the SDGs. Malaysia plans to replicate the multi-stakeholder governance structure for SDG implementation at the state level to enhance vertical and horizontal policy coherence.

✋ Leave no one behind

Additional data are required to meet the commitment to leave no one behind in Malaysia. Those at risk of being left behind include the bottom 40% of households in terms of income, the elderly and people with disabilities. The report notes that efforts to increase the incomes of the bottom 40% of households have been made by the government and one of the pillars of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020 is to enhance inclusiveness towards an equitable society.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, the government held several events to promote awareness and participation of non-state actors in SDG implementation. The government is also planning to organise "road shows" to raise awareness, increase knowledge and create a sense of ownership of the 2030 Agenda.

The Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020 is premised on the three goals of the country's longer-term vision, namely high income, inclusivity and sustainability. According to the report, the plan puts people at the centre of all development efforts and aims to ensure that no segment of society is left behind in participating in and benefiting from the country's development. Malaysia plans to localise the SDGs by replicating the national multi-stakeholder governance structure at the state level.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

According to the VNR report, non-state actors were engaged in the identification of national priorities. A civil society shadow report notes that the government organised two national symposia, which were not explicitly stated in the VNR report, as well as set up the National Steering Committee to consult and get feedback from all ministries, civil society and the private sector in the preparation of the VNR report.

A civil society report was prepared in response to global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's civil society questionnaire on SDG implementation and the VNR process.

🖥 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

While not specifically identifying what follows as best practice, the report notes that Malaysia's development achievements have been made possible through the use of pragmatic and comprehensive development plans, recognition of inclusivity as critical for sustaining long-term prosperity and unity, and improvements to service delivery through collaborative partnerships with the private sector, non-governmental organisations and civil society. It also highlights four lessons, namely the importance of breaking down silos to address complex issues, local capacity, public participation and social trust, and balancing the costs and benefits of measuring all SDG indicators.

The report recognises that Malaysia has benefited from official development assistance, but notes that as Malaysia reaches developed country status, such assistance will no longer be accessible. In anticipation of this situation, the government is exploring alternative methods to finance development needs. The report also highlights Malaysia's provision of South-South and triangular cooperation and its trade policy that allows almost 90% of products by least developed countries to enter the country on a duty-free basis.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

The Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance is an informal grouping of CSOs that have come together for networking, joint cooperation, action and liaison with the government in commitment to the effective implementation of the SDGs in Malaysia. The alliance comprises four umbrella civil society organisations and 25 individual organisations and institutions, which means that there are more than 200 CSOs involved in discussions and mapping exercises intended to identify areas for grassroots involvement on the SDGs. The United Nations Global Compact Network Malaysia co-organised a one-day SDG Business Summit that brought together more than 300 business leaders, policy makers and corporate social responsibility practitioners for discussions and insights on the SDGs. In terms of international partners, Malaysia will need funding and technical assistance to develop national indicators and baselines to assess progress.

Measurement and reporting

Based on a preliminary assessment of data availability, 82% of the global SDG indicators are identified as available, partially

available or partially available but in need of further development. The report notes the need to improve the availability and use of data disaggregated by gender. Malaysia plans to strengthen the national statistical system with the development of new indicators and assistance to government institutions to expand their data coverage. An integrated database system will be developed to enable systematic data compilation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and sharing of SDG datasets and information across institutions and regions.

Maldives -Green

In 2017, the Maldives submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government will promote the mainstreaming of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in sectoral policies, plans and strategies, develop a review and follow-up mechanism to provide coherence between government institutions, and ensure the integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development into the SDG implementation process. Some institutions overseeing certain sectors, namely education, health, energy, waste management, fisheries, water and sanitation, and local governance, have incorporated the SDGs into policy documents and action plans. The report does not reference the universal, human rights-based nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The National Ministerial Coordination Committee, which is constituted of cabinet ministers, provides overall policy guidance and political support towards SDG implementation. It is supported by a Technical Committee on SDGs, which brings together experts from various government institutions and civil society. The SDGs Division at the

Ministry of Environment and Energy coordinates work related to SDG implementation including monitoring, reporting and follow-up.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report notes that a stocktaking of data availability was carried out, including an assessment of various ministries responsible for data collection. It identifies gaps in relation to strengthening the national statistical system. It also highlights gaps in terms of SDG progress in the goal-by-goal analysis.

Integration and policy coherence

All SDGs are examined in the report, though only through a summary with limited details. The report gives equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development but makes limited references to linkages between them. It does not mention policy coherence for sustainable development.

Leave no one behind

The report notes that the gap between lower-income groups and the affluent is widening and there are considerable socio-economic

and socio-cultural divides between urban and rural islands, as well as genders and age groups, with regards to access to basic social services.

It highlights initiatives to address the needs of different vulnerable groups in the country, such as the creation of opportunities for people with disabilities in the job market and safety net mechanisms for vulnerable groups.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, the current focus is on creating awareness of the SDGs among all stakeholders to improve engagement in the implementation process. Focused awareness sessions are planned for parliamentarians, local councils, members of the judiciary, non-governmental organisations, students and the general population for the third quarter of 2017. Efforts have also been made to forge new partnerships with the media and intensify existing ones.

The report does not set out national priorities, though notes that national priorities for SDG targets will be identified through consultations with implementing institutions and input from civil society and the private sector. In terms of localisation, the Local Government Authority has aligned its Development Plan (2017-2021) with the SDGs, which will be implemented by island councils.

Stakeholder engagement

The VNR report does not outline stakeholder engagement in setting national priorities or preparing the report. It does, however, note that stakeholders will be engaged in identifying national priorities for SDG targets.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

According to the report, the lack of technical expertise, particularly in terms of data collection and management, remains a major hurdle in SDG implementation. This lack is compounded by the lack of trained staff and adequate resources for data collection and management. Other key challenges include securing funds required for SDG implementation and capacity building to achieve the goals throughout the implementation process. In addition, due to the population dispersion, additional efforts are needed to leave no one behind.

Financing and resource mobilisation from domestic sources and development partners are needed to attain SDG targets. Supported by international financial institutions, the government initiated ambitious and transformational reforms towards modern taxation in

2009. The report also references official development assistance and South-South cooperation as sources of finance.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report recognises that the realisation of the SDGs requires strong coordination and cross-sectoral collaboration between government institutions, development partners, local governments, the private sector and civil society. A national forum is being organised, which will bring together non-governmental and civil society organisations from across the country to discuss mechanisms for contribution and participation. The forum will focus on empowering and catalysing action on the ground while promoting the participatory nature of the SDGs.

The report also points to the importance of engaging the media and population in promoting national ownership of the SDGs. The government plans to continue engagement with the Public Service Media in disseminating information related to the SDGs. Furthermore, a capacity building workshop is scheduled for journalists from various media outlets in order to enhance their skills for reporting on the SDGs.

Information sharing and awareness sessions have been conducted for state-owned enterprises to encourage their participation in implementing the SDGs.

In terms of international partners, the country requires technical assistance and financial support for institutionalising a monitoring framework for the SDGs. Aligning monitoring of the SDGs with that of sectoral plans and other international reporting obligations will require capacity building in data collection and management.

Measurement and reporting

The report outlines data availability for the Maldives: 27% of SDG indicators have data that are collected through current statistical efforts, 23% of indicators require data that can be collected with additional effort, there is no established mechanism to compile data for 15% of indicators, and data are unavailable and no methodology for collection exists for 35% of indicators. The need to strengthen the maintenance of administrative data is a key priority. The report notes that development of a monitoring framework is planned for late 2017. The framework will be used to report on the SDGs and their targets.

Monaco – Yellow

In 2017, Monaco submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The report notes that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a priority for the government and five ministries worked together to carry out a SDG "diagnosis" (diagnostic). It does not specify how the SDGs are or will be articulated in national frameworks and policies more broadly, but based on the diagnosis, the government has already undertaken many efforts to implement the goals.

Leadership, governance and institutions

An inter-ministerial working group, under the authority of the Minister of State (head of government) and led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, has been created. It is composed of a representative from each ministry and involves the General Secretariat of the Government, General Inspectorate of the Civil Service and Monegasque Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (Monaco Statistics).

Baseline or gap analysis

The VNR report and SDG "diagnosis" illustrate Monaco's efforts to implement specific SDGs, namely SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

The report also briefly outlines the outcome of an assessment of the 17 SDGs, which shows that four have partially been achieved in the country: SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production and SDG 17 partnerships for the goals. According to the report, the other 13 SDGs have already been achieved.

Integration and policy coherence

The VNR report highlights efforts taken by Monaco to meet SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 9 on industry,

innovation and infrastructure, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

The report addresses the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, but has a relatively greater focus on social aspects. It makes limited references to the linkages between dimensions in the analysis of the goals. It does not refer to policy coherence for sustainable development but assesses national and international initiatives towards the realisation of the SDGs globally.

Leave no one behind

People with disabilities, the elderly, children, refugees, women and girls, and poor populations are among the groups that are targeted by Monaco to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. As part of the measures to ensure that no one is left behind, the report notes Monaco's international development efforts, including projects in Tunisia and Niger. The government offers support to all people who live in the country and cannot meet basic needs due to health, disability, age or exceptional circumstances. It also gives special attention to the poorest populations in marginalised areas in order to reduce social and territorial inequalities in access to health benefits.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report indicates that an inclusive approach has been adopted to encourage local stakeholders to take ownership of the SDGs and sustainable development issues, but does not provide details about the actions carried out. It notes that the government supports local non-governmental organisations to develop actions related to the 2030 Agenda, but does not elaborate further. It also outlines initiatives at the local level that are related to specific SDGs. For instance, it indicates that the Responsible Trade label "Commerce engagé" (Responsible Trade) was introduced in 2014 to encourage responsible consumption and promote local economies that generate less packaging, less waste and fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

Stakeholder engagement

No information is provided in the report on whether domestic stakeholders were consulted on SDG priorities or non-state actors were engaged in the preparation of the VNR report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report indicates that Monaco's official development assistance will reach more than €500 per inhabitant in 2020 and that the country devotes more than 60% of its assistance to least developed countries.

According to the report, Monaco provides capacity development in developing countries in specific SDG areas. For example, it has developed support measures related to climate change adaptation and capacity building for the most vulnerable countries, particularly small island developing states.

The report outlines several initiatives put in place to strengthen scientific research, innovation, research and development and to provide support for technological innovation, including for the development of renewable energies and thalassothermy (SDG 14 on life below water). It also outlines efforts to facilitate access to information and communications technology nationally and in some LDCs.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report does not clearly specify how civil society organisations are or will be involved in SDG implementation, but notes their involvement in specific initiatives such as the Industry Observatory, an advisory entity created by the prince of Monaco to monitor the evolution of European regulations, which is related to SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure.

The report also refers to public-private partnerships in relation to initiatives currently in place to achieve the SDGs. For instance, it indicates that based on a public-private partnership, high school students benefit from the My Solidarity Class (Ma Classe Solidaire) project, which seeks to make them aware of sustainable development and social economy challenges as well as mobilise them around innovative and impactful solidarity projects. Other examples of partnership projects include the Monaco Blue Initiative, an international think tank co-organised by the Oceanographic Institute and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, which brings together experts and high-level political and economic decision makers to explore challenges related to the sustainable management of oceans and innovative solutions to address them.

Measurement and reporting

Measurement and reporting are not covered in depth by the report. With regards to data and indicators, the report mentions that Monaco complies with the global SDG indicators but notes that some of them cannot be applied at this time due to unavailability of data and statistics. It indicates, however, that complementary indicators will be considered to improve monitoring of the SDGs and government policies.

Nepal – Yellow

In 2017, Nepal submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The report notes that the government has begun to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the Fourteenth Plan (2016/17–2018/19). The annual programmes and budgets for 2016/17 and 2017/18 have been aligned with the SDGs by introducing SDG coding in all programmes. The report also lists a number of sectoral plans into which the SDGs are being integrated.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report states that there are no representatives from civil society organisations on the main SDG implementation committees.

Leadership, governance and institutions

According to the report, the government formed three levels of committees to implement the SDGs. The prime minister and chairman of the National Planning Commission chair the high-level SDGs Steering Committee. A SDGs Coordination and Implementation Committee and nine SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Thematic Committees were also established. Committees are mandated to include "invitee" members from the private sector, cooperatives, civil society and the media, among others.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report states that major medium- and long-term sectoral plans and strategies were reviewed for their alignment with the SDGs. The results of this review are not included, but unfinished business from the Millennium Development Goal period is noted.

Integration and policy coherence

The report examines SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals (all High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" goals, with SDG 14 on life below water excluded). It provides detailed examinations and covers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, but with a limited focus on the environment and limited references to the linkages between goals.

✋ Leave no one behind

Additional data are required to meet the commitment to leave no one behind in Nepal. The government notes that sectoral plans, long-term strategies and perspective plans need further aligning with the SDGs, with attention to disaggregating targets and indicators at the sub-national level by sex, age, social group and disability. The report identifies poor and marginalised people, smallholder farmers, peasants, children and women as at risk of being left behind. The Constitution of Nepal is the main guiding document for all new policies, plans, programmes and other interventions that ensures no one is left behind. According to the report, prioritisation needs to be given to the SDGs that have multiplier effects and larger impacts on those being left behind.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report outlines civil society awareness-raising programmes on the SDGs and does not refer to government initiatives. The Fourteenth Plan has five major pillars that link to the SDGs: infrastructure (SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities), social (SDG 3 on good health and well-being and SDG 4 on quality education), economic (SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities and SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production), governance (SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals) and cross-cutting (SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 13 on climate action and SDG 15 on life on land). According to the report, country-specific SDG targets and indicators have been developed.

New provincial and local government levels are being formed. As such, the SDGs have yet to be fully aligned and incorporated in planning and budgeting processes at the sub-national level.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

The report does not mention stakeholder engagement in the identification of national priorities, but notes that the National Planning Commission invited comments, suggestions and feedback from all stakeholders on the VNR report by uploading a draft version for review on its website. In addition, a few consultation meetings were held with representatives of the private sector, cooperatives, civil society, youth and the media.

Two reports were prepared by civil society for the VNR process. Several civil society organisations submitted a joint report to the National Planning Commission. VSO Nepal and Beyond Beijing Committee responded to global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's questionnaire on SDG implementation and the VNR process.

🔄 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report acknowledges that partnerships between the government, the private sector, cooperatives, civil society and development partners during the Millennium Development Goal period were instrumental in contributing to greatly reduced levels of poverty and improved social indicators. Nepal's sector-wide approaches in health, education, and water and sanitation are highlighted as best practice since these sectors have demonstrated better results than others. The report also points to a number of challenges. The SDG indicators need to be aligned with the annual work plans of all government institutions to help monitor progress on the SDGs. The availability of disaggregated data needs to be improved. Large investments in infrastructure are also needed.

A SDG needs assessment, costing and financing strategy is underway to articulate financing needs. The report refers to domestic and external resources to support SDG implementation, including taxes and official development assistance. Nepal needs better coordination and cooperation with its development partners and the international community for technology transfer to enable it to achieve the SDGs. Partnerships are also being strengthened with the private sector, cooperatives, civil society, development partners and the international community to meet large capacity building needs.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

The constitution has a provision to form a parliamentary committee to monitor and evaluate the implementation of policies, including SDG implementation. Civil society organisations have formed a SDG forum. The private sector is seeking incentives to increase investments in production and infrastructure, while cooperatives have undertaken initiatives under the slogan of "Cooperatives for Sustainable Development" and organised many SDG-related initiatives.

📋 Measurement and reporting

Nepal's database of development information is limited and available statistics are insufficiently disaggregated. The government highlights the need for new surveys or to tailor existing surveys to fill data gaps and create baseline data for a number of targets. The national statistical office established an inter-ministerial SDG Indicators Coordination Committee to coordinate tracking progress on the SDGs.

The National Planning Commission and ministries use results-based monitoring frameworks to track progress using indicators mostly drawn from the SDGs.

Netherlands – Red

In 2017, the Netherlands submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as part of the submission by the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the report, the Netherlands has incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into policies, but limited details are provided.

Leadership, governance and institutions

In the Netherlands, responsibilities for SDG implementation have been assigned to relevant ministries, with the minister for foreign trade and development cooperation in charge of overall coordination. According to the report, a SDG network of focal points with representatives from each ministry and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities has been established and meets regularly. It is chaired by a specially appointed high-level coordinator for national SDG implementation, who is assisted by a small secretariat. The report does not mention formal representation of non-state actors in governance or institutional arrangements.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, the Netherlands was one of the first countries to conduct a baseline survey of national efforts to achieve the SDGs. The country is planning a report by the national statistical office that will highlight areas where implementation is lagging behind and help enhance data availability for SDG monitoring.

The Netherlands needs to accelerate progress in areas where it is underperforming, like increasing the use of renewable energy, climate action, gender equality and biodiversity. Data also show that there is room for improvement in the areas of social inclusion and addressing environmental pressures. In 2015, more people in the Netherlands were living below the national poverty line than in 2006.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a summary examination of all SDGs with equal attention to economic, social and environmental dimensions and reference to applicable linkages between dimensions. Each subsection in the review of SDGs discusses implementing the SDGs

at home and abroad, though information is provided at a summary level with limited details.

According to the government, the adoption of the SDGs has reinvigorated attention to policy coherence for development. Having aligned non-aid policies with the interests of the poor, it sees itself as a frontrunner in this context. In 2016, the Netherlands adopted an action plan on policy coherence for development with time-bound goals and actions aligned with the SDGs, which focuses on important areas such as climate, remittances, responsible business conduct, access to medicine and food security.

Leave no one behind

According to the report, delivering on the promise to leave no one behind requires effective and early actions to ensure that everyone benefits from economic growth. Men and women, rich and poor, straight and gay, young and old must all be involved in creating and sharing the benefits of sustainable development. The Netherlands has a broad set of policies aimed at contributing to the empowerment and participation of disadvantaged groups, such as policies encouraging women's labour and social participation, ensuring safety of women and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, and promoting gender equality in education.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The government established a website (www.sdgnederland.nl) to inform the population about the SDGs, initiatives already underway and ways in which people can contribute to achieving the SDGs.

National priorities focus on areas where the Netherlands is underperforming (noted above). The SDG network of focal points with representatives from each ministry and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities is responsible for localising the 2030 Agenda. The report refers to the roles of provincial, municipal and water authorities in SDG implementation. In addition, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities launched the Municipalities4GlobalGoals campaign to promote awareness of the SDGs among municipalities and help them contribute to the goals. The report highlights specific initiatives for several municipalities.

Stakeholder engagement

The report does not mention the involvement of non-state actors in identifying national priorities or preparing the VNR report. However, a civil society report states that non-state actors were engaged in the VNR process through involvement in the first annual national SDG report provided to parliament. Civil society organisations contributed to sections in the report on their activities, alongside the private sector, research institutes, local and regional governments, and youth organisations. This report to parliament was used as a source for the VNR report, in which Partos (a platform for Dutch civil society organisations working in international development) ensured that the positions of civil society organisations were taken into account.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report notes the ongoing challenges of ensuring broad involvement and collaboration between different sectors, further aligning the SDGs with existing policies and ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development.

The Netherlands notes efforts to support partner countries including promoting domestic resource mobilisation and innovative financing mechanisms, as well as building expertise to forge partnerships with the private sector to contribute to achieving the SDGs. Moreover, by combining foreign trade and development cooperation, the Netherlands sees itself as investing in a strong global economy and a safer, inclusive and more stable world, where extreme poverty will be eradicated and inequality reduced. Making global value chains sustainable is another part of the aid and trade agenda. The country's official development assistance has remained above or close to the international target of 0.7% of gross national income for a number of years.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

In support of the SDG agenda, over 100 organisations signed up to the Netherlands' SDG Charter, committing to form partnerships to contribute to the SDGs. The report provides a detailed description of how civil society, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders are supporting the SDGs.

Measurement and monitoring

According to the government, data are currently available for 37% of the SDG indicators. The national statistical office aims to support 50% of indicators with data in 2018.

The Netherlands issued its first annual national SDG report in May 2017, which included an overview of existing policies and activities by national and local governments, the private sector including the financial sector, civil society organisations, knowledge institutions and youth organisations. Members of parliament debated the report on 2017's Accountability Day. According to a civil society report, the Committee for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation examines the annual SDG report provided to parliament.

Nigeria – Green

In 2017, Nigeria submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the report, the Medium-Term Plan (2017-2020) is consistent with the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The plan provides a framework for harmonisation and coordination of federal policy initiatives aimed at economic recovery and the achievement of the SDGs, as well as initiatives at the sub-national level. The government prepared the SDGs Transitioning Strategy and Action Plan, the Millennium Development Goals End-point Report 2015 and national SDG indicator baselines.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Within the Presidency of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the president established the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the SDGs. An inter-ministerial committee was established to ensure cohesion and coordination and a Presidential Council on the SDGs will be established to provide high-level political and policy guidance and leadership. The CSO (civil society organisations) Advisory Group on SDGs liaises with the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the SDGs. The office

has a number of objectives with respect to facilitating civil society engagement on the SDGs.

Baseline or gap analysis

The government has begun a SDGs needs assessment and policy analysis to establish baseline data and collect information for public investments across sectors and regions. The government also carried out a SDG data-mapping exercise to assess data availability.

Integration and policy coherence

The report includes a detailed examination of a limited set of SDGs with a relatively greater focus on the social dimension of sustainable development: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

Leave no one behind

The report identifies the poor, women, the elderly, people with disabilities and internally displaced people as those being left

behind. To leave no one behind, Nigeria identified poor and vulnerable households through the establishment of a National Social Register. The government is providing a monthly conditional cash transfer of 5,000 naira to identified households as part of a national social safety net programme. The medium-term plan includes objectives to meet the commitment to leave no one behind, namely enhancing the social safety net and addressing region-specific exclusion challenges. An overview of programmes to ensure no one is left behind is available in the report.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the SDGs undertook numerous publicity and advocacy programmes to create and enhance awareness about the SDGs in partnership with others. Media briefings were coupled with publications in newspapers and electronic media as well as on social media platforms.

Nigeria's national priorities include restoring growth, investing in people through social inclusion, creating jobs and improving human capital, building a globally competitive economy through investment infrastructure and improving the business environment, building strong governance institutions and driving performance and results through vigorous delivery. The report outlines national SDG targets for 2020 and 2030.

In terms of localising the SDGs, all 36 state governments, along with the Federal Capital Territory, have replicated the same organisational and institutional structures for SDG implementation as those at the national level. SDGs Offices have been created within state and local governments following success stories using this approach during the Millennium Development Goal period. The federal government is using the Conditional Grants Scheme to incentivise state and local governments to respectively set aside and utilise 50% and 20% of the costs of select SDGs-related projects in their annual budgets.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, non-state actors were engaged in identifying national priorities and preparing the VNR report. The report provides significant details on consultations for the VNR process and the government sees the report as a joint statement by multiple national stakeholders.

A civil society report was prepared in response to global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's civil society

questionnaire on SDG implementation and the VNR process. The VNR report also includes a civil society validation statement as an annex.

> **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**
> **A Core Working Group was established to lead on the VNR process, with members from relevant government institutions, development partners, civil society organisations, the private sector, and a consultant assisting in drafting the VNR report.**

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Key lessons from SDG implementation include the importance of technology-based, open and transparent progress tracking and reporting systems, innovative and adaptive practices and programme delivery mechanisms, domestic resource mobilisation and new sources of financing, assessing data availability and ensuring that baseline data are available. Major challenges include over-reliance on the oil and gas sector, the infrastructure deficit and technology gaps, economic recession, weak government institutions, and weak data production and management systems across the three levels of government. A huge financing gap for full SDG implementation is also anticipated. The government plans to estimate the cost of SDG-related programmes, projects and activities.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Although the CSO Advisory Group on SDGs endorsed the report, it also noted that Nigeria needs to be more committed to strengthening ownership and deepening awareness of the SDGs with more engagement of civil society and the private sector. The report outlines activities by parliament, civil society, the private sector and development partners to support SDG implementation.

Measurement and reporting

The report contains the results of the SDG data-mapping exercise – baseline data are available for 120 indicators. The Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the SDGs aligned the national statistical system with the SDGs by collaborating with partners. Priority was given to administrative data through support to various government institutions to improve routine data collection.

The report notes that the government is progressing towards the establishment of a Presidential Committee on the Assessment and Monitoring of the SDGs to serve as the top national monitoring, review and performance accountability body for the SDGs. The committee will formulate a framework for performance tracking, reporting and accountability.

Panama – Green

In 2017, Panama submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a guideline for leading its national development efforts. To that end, it advanced a process of national ownership and strengthened links with citizens and civil society organisations. The national strategic plan Panamá 2030 aligns the SDGs, Strategic Government Plan 2015-2019 and priorities defined in the National Agreement for Development. As a consequence, regulatory and institutional changes were introduced, among them the implementation of an investment plan focused on the sectors of greatest need and the creation of a permanent SDG progress monitoring system.

The principles of universality, human rights and leave no one behind are considered in the VNR report.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT
In June 2017, Panama released its first version of the Multidimensional Poverty Index. The government now not only has better knowledge about the number of people living in income poverty in the country, but has also generated useful information that allows it to improve the management and integration of social policies, which will in turn facilitate alignment between different government institutions and between the government and non-state actors.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Inter-institutional and Civil Society Commission for the Support and Follow-up of the SDGs was created in 2015 and has been operational since 2016. Its main bodies are the Superior Directorate and Technical Committee. The first is composed of the minister of Social Affairs Office, the executive secretary of the Office of the

Secretary for Presidential Goals and the president of the National Consultations for Development. The second gathers the Technical Secretariat of the Social Cabinet, a high-level delegate of the Office of the Secretary for Presidential Goals and the executive secretary of the National Consultations for Development. Established in 2008, the National Consultations for Development brings together representatives of the private sector, workers, non-governmental organisations, churches, academic institutions, indigenous peoples, political parties and the government.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, Panama's inventory of SDG indicators is scheduled to be finalised in the second half of 2017. It will include the definitions of baselines, national objectives, measurement methodologies and the first draft of data management protocols.

Integration and policy coherence

The report examines the SDGs covered by the 2017 High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world," namely SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

Panama's VNR gives equal consideration to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Nevertheless, the analysis of goals pays hardly any attention to possible interactions between those dimensions, even when the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development is pointed-out as part of national development policies and SDGs alignment process.

Without referring to policy coherence for sustainable development, the report indicates that the government promotes a national cooperation plan called Panamá Coopera 2030, which is linked to the Strategic Government Plan 2015-2019 and the SDGs. In the same line, the report mentions the Paris Agreement on climate change as a tool to tackle climate change and promote development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as a means of implementation.

Leave no one behind

The principle of leave no one behind is not mentioned in the report. Several references to inequality are made, but concrete efforts to reduce inequalities are not noted.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report does not include references to efforts to raise awareness of the SDGs by the government. National priorities for the SDGs

have not yet been defined. The government announced that a process aimed to determine national baselines as well as intermediate and final targets will soon be launched.

Stakeholder engagement

The report does not discuss how non-state actors will be involved in defining national priorities for the SDGs beyond being engaged by government institutions. Regarding non-state actors' engagement in the drafting of the VNR report, interested groups were met and interviews with relevant socio-political actors were conducted. However, meeting participants and interviewees are not clearly identified.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report notes two lessons learned: public policy in Panama, rather than facing budgetary challenges, seems to face problems in terms of its adequacy and relevance for offering effective services; and universal public policies' capacities to work under different socio-cultural realities are limited.

Some challenges are also highlighted, such as: building a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for public policy; moving towards result-oriented planning, managing and investing; guiding the public policy cycle towards results; designing integral and aligned policies that can cover different dimensions of well-being; and considering social interventions' cultural relevance.

Although technology, capacity development and international public finance are considered as means of implementation, only the latter is examined in detail.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Even though the key roles of civil society and the private sector are mentioned several times, the report lacks specific tasks and ways in which they can participate in SDG implementation. Neither academia nor parliamentarians are mentioned as stakeholders in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development implementation.

Measurement and reporting

According to the report, data for monitoring and follow-up of SDG implementation at the national level are available for 75 of the global indicators (31%). There are no references to data disaggregation or efforts to improve data availability.

There is no mention of how the government will continue reporting in the future.

Peru - Green

In 2017, Peru submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

At the time of adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the government had the Bicentennial Plan: Peru to 2021, which was adopted in 2011 and is in force until 2021. After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the government decided to align the plan with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and extend its validity until 2030. The alignment process began in 2017.

According to the VNR report, both SDG implementation and the alignment of the Bicentennial Plan with the SDGs have taken into account the principles of human rights and leave no one behind and even made references to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. However, there are no references to the universality of the 2030 Agenda in the report.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Presidency of the Council of Ministers is responsible for promoting and coordinating national policies at the national level, but the main responsibility for implementing and following up the SDGs is the National Centre for Strategic Planning. The centre is the head institution of the Peru's National Strategic Planning System, which also includes national and sub-national institutions and the Forum of the National Accord. that involves government officials, political parties with representation in parliament and civil society organisations. The institutional framework is completed by the Government Compliance and Sector Innovation Office attached to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the national statistical office and a Roundtable for Consultation on the Fight against Poverty.

Civil society organisations, experts, academics and representatives of political parties participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The government also works with civil and business associations representing the private sector.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, the national statistical office presented a technical document showing Peru's progress on the global SDG indicators, the definition of national baselines, and data availability for each indicator.

⚙ Integration and policy coherence

The report does not analyse specific SDGs, but rather provides a general analysis of the SDGs based on critical areas for sustainable development: people, planet, prosperity, peace and alliances. It addresses the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a general but balanced way. It only mentions policy coherence once, pointing out the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's investment policy framework as a tool to improve policy coherence at the international level.

✋ Leave no one behind

The report does not address the principle of leave no one behind in a systematic way. Nevertheless, Afro-descendants, indigenous Amazonian peoples, high Andean women, children, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, youth and domestic workers, among others, are identified as vulnerable groups. The government seeks to address domestic inequalities in an inclusive way by coordinating efforts of the national and regional governments, public and private universities, research centres and regional consultation groups.

The government also adopted the 2017-2021 United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which is guided by three cross-cutting axes -namely interculturality, gender and human rights; and is aimed to reach vulnerable groups in the country, explicitly spelling out the leave no one behind principle.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

In order to raise awareness and increase ownership of the SDGs, the government invited civil society organisations, the private sector and local governments to develop a social dialogue in which perspectives on national development paths were exchanged.

At the same time, a concerted follow-up on the SDGs through the Roundtable for Consultation on the Fight against Poverty was carried out, which took into account the national, regional, provincial and district levels.

National SDG priorities have not yet been established.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

To contribute to the drafting of the VNR report, the government held consultation workshops with non-state actors. Regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, non-state actors participate in the ongoing definition of national priorities through their representatives in government institutions, consultation spaces and seminars.

🔄 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

There are no references to lessons learned in the report.

Some challenges are identified, such as updating the Bicentennial Plan, ensuring disaster risk management processes are in government policies and plans, coordinating technical teams of different institutions to define or improve common indicators and procedures, and improving the quality and coverage of administrative records.

International technical cooperation, which is identified as a tool to support the country's development, is the only means of implementation addressed in the report. Some general references to international public finance and trade as support for development can be found in an annex.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

In order to mobilise and engage the population to follow up and work towards SDG implementation, civil society organisations, academia, the private sector and local governments have created networks intended to broaden, democratise and enhance the debate on the SDGs and means of implementation in Peru.

📋 Measurement and reporting

According to the report, the government is still evaluating the adequacy of its databases to monitor progress on the SDGs. As of April 2017, 110 of the global indicators (45%) had available data and national baselines. The report highlights that the government is better placed on indicators around "people" (47 of 77 indicators defined), than "planet" (only 12 of 55 indicators defined). The indicators are detailed in the report's statistical annex. The government will produce annual follow-up reports that cover lessons learned, information about indicators and actions undertaken by stakeholders.

In the same way, the National Statistics and Information Institute is building a situational matrix of SDG indicators, including references to the sectors and institutions that generate relevant information, and a set of indicators with local coverage.

Portugal – Red

In 2017, Portugal submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The Council of Ministers adopted the first intra-governmental guidelines on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2016. Portugal's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) priorities are embodied in the National Reform Programme and streamlined into national strategies, plans and policies. The country recognises the universal, human rights-based nature of the 2030 Agenda and the importance of leaving no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Planning and Infrastructure are responsible for overall coordination of SDG implementation. Respectively, their roles are played out through two commissions, one responsible for inter-ministerial coordination on foreign policy and development cooperation and the other for domestic and international components of the 2030 Agenda. A network of focal points at different government institutions has been established to enable better coordination and exchange of information in a consistent and integrated manner, which contribute to monitoring progress and provision of regular updates.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, Portugal's baseline analysis of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda began with the collection of data and information on all 17 SDGs, after which national policies contributing to their implementation were mapped. The report identifies gaps in the goal-by-goal analysis such as disparities in education outcomes and the need to increase renewable energy.

Integration and policy coherence

All 17 SDGs are examined in detail in the report, though trend data are not covered. The report gives equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and makes reference to applicable linkages between goals.

The report refers to policy coherence for development in line with the SDGs, noting that Portugal has already achieved relevant legal and institutional milestones and granted the necessary political support involving both government and civil society. A National Plan

for Policy Coherence for Development, aligned with national SDG priorities, will intensify joint work between ministries, parliament and representation in other countries.

Leave no one behind

The report identifies senior citizens, people in extreme poverty, people with disabilities, low-income workers and Roma communities as at risk of being left behind. Women and refugees are also mentioned with respect to education outcomes. Portugal prioritises the fight against poverty and social exclusion among vulnerable groups, with a particular focus on child poverty through support provided to families with children and ensuring access to all levels of education. The report notes specific strategies that address the needs of different vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and homeless people. A significant number of initiatives are highlighted under SDG 10 on reduced inequalities, including combating social, economic, political and cultural inequalities.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report does not mention efforts to raise awareness of the SDGs. National priorities, however, have been selected: SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities, SDG 13 on climate action and SDG 14 on life below water.

Local authorities play a significant role in SDG implementation within their territories through local-level initiatives. In line with the 2030 Agenda, the 2020 Sustainable Cities Strategy aims to advance sustainable urban planning and development and take action to strengthen territorial development, including economic, social, environmental, cultural and governance dimensions.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, a public consultation on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national and local levels took place in 2016. It was led by a group of non-governmental organisations with support from the Institute for Cooperation and Language and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe. The process included online and offline opportunities for engagement. The main recommendations drawn from the consultation were presented during a seminar in parliament in 2017, thereby contributing to the planning of and debates on implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country. Non-state actors were consulted during the preparation of the VNR report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report highlights efforts to improve technology transfer to partner countries and contributions through official development assistance. In 2016, Portugal's official development assistance amounted to 0.17% of gross national income. Least developed countries were the main beneficiaries (53.2%), followed by lower-middle-income countries (30%). Portugal focuses on intensifying trilateral cooperation as a way to promote the pooling of resources, knowledge and the sharing of experiences.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The government indicates that the empowerment of civil society organisations and collaboration with them are priorities. Several partnerships between civil society organisations and partner countries, other European Union countries, and government institutions, foundations, universities, municipalities and the private sector have been encouraged and supported. The United Nations Global Compact Network Portugal coordinates the SDG Alliance Portugal, a multi-stakeholder platform that informs, implements, monitors, evaluates and raises awareness about the contributions of civil society organisations and the private sector to the SDGs at the national level.

Measurement and reporting

Official statistics are not available for all indicators. According to the report, statistical information for the majority of global SDG indicators is available (with information being identical, similar or partial). A quarter of the indicators are out of the national scope (like indicators to measure the specific circumstances of developing countries) and the remaining indicators do not have statistics available or are under consideration.

The national statistical office has made available on its portal (www.ine.pt) a thematic file on "Sustainable Development Goals" that provides an overview of SDG indicators. No further information on SDG reporting is presented in the report.

Qatar - Yellow

In 2017, Qatar submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the report, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are part of the second National Development Strategy for the 2017–22 period. Qatar adopted sustainable development as a strategic choice in Qatar National Vision 2030. The Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics has incorporated the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 17 SDGs and 169 targets) into the work of national task teams and sector projects.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The report highlights the creation of several mechanisms to support SDG implementation. A supervisory committee representing all ministries, an advisory committee representing non-governmental organisations and the private sector, and eight national task teams were created to develop sector strategies representing ministries, other government institutions, the private sector, civil society organisations and others. Another team was created to develop the performance management system for the National Development Strategy through regular monitoring and tracking with national stakeholders.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report does not include baseline or gap analysis.

Integration and policy coherence

The report includes a detailed review of a limited set of SDGs: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. It has a limited focus on environmental dimensions of sustainable development and does not mention linkages between economic, social and environmental dimensions in the goal-by-goal analysis. It does not refer to policy coherence for development, but outlines Qatar's foreign policy contributions to the SDGs. It does not mention the Paris Agreement on climate change or Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Leave no one behind

The report identifies people with disabilities and women as at risk of being left behind. The government highlights mandatory hiring of people with disabilities (2% of total labour) as one initiative to leave no one behind.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report does not mention awareness-raising activities. National priorities noted include: social protection, family cohesion and women's empowerment; economic infrastructure; a comprehensive health-care system; cultural enrichment and sports excellence; quality education and training; a qualified and committed labour force; natural resources; infrastructure; global partnerships for development; a sustainable environment; security and public safety; and institutional development and modernisation. National indicators have been selected and are accessible through a key performance indicator dashboard that contains the most important indicators related to sustainable development according to the government.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, non-state actors were engaged in identifying priorities through the national task teams. Sector strategies were prepared to serve as inputs for planning the second National Development Strategy. The extent to which non-state actors were engaged in the preparation of the VNR report is unclear.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report highlights lessons learned during SDG implementation with respect to integrating the goals into national plans, involving non-state actors, working to accelerate preparations and establishing ownership of implementation. A key challenge is avoiding duplication of efforts. To address it, the government promoted participation by all stakeholders in sector project planning and design and ownership was determined against sound and consensual principles, with projects incorporated into annual action plans. Other challenges include adequate human resources, data availability, effective communication in all sectors, non-state actor involvement in implementation, and establishment of an enabling legal framework.

The report highlights efforts to build science and technology infrastructure and invest in human capital through several national and international universities, allocating a research and development fund and committing around 2.8% of annual government spending to these purposes.

Qatar considers assisting the least developed countries to achieve the SDGs to be a major objective of several initiatives. Its official development assistance in 2015 amounted to 0.78% of gross domestic product.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

While the report mentions participation in the identification of national priorities and governance by non-state actors and a commitment by the government to further engage them in implementation efforts, it does not mention specific activities and partnerships.

Measurement and reporting

The report does not provide an overview of data gaps, though it notes that gaps in health care data exist. The Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics has undertaken efforts to improve data availability in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division and regional and Arab organisations. These efforts include a roadmap outlining the SDG indicators to be used to monitor implementation progress and inform reports. The roadmap also outlines efforts to strengthen the national statistical system.

By the end of 2022, Qatar will review the goals and targets that have been achieved in order to incorporate those that remain unattained into the third National Development Strategy for the 2023–28 period. In line with international best practices, a central monitoring mechanism in the form of a performance measurement dashboard will be developed, regularly updated and shared with officials and decision makers. The focus will be on the top five to eight priorities under the second National Development Strategy with a limited number of related key performance indicators (a maximum of 15 to 20). Indicators will be monitored on a monthly basis where possible and quarterly basis.

Sint Maarten - Red

In 2017, Sint Maarten submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as part of the submission by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, of which it is a constituent country.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government is currently integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its National Development Plan, which will focus on the national priorities of human development, good governance, environmental protection and the preservation of cultural heritage. According to the report, the government will launch initiatives to mainstream the SDGs as part of the plan's implementation strategy and organisational governance.

Leadership, governance and institutions

A "Think and Act" commission, which represents the three ministries that are most involved in SDG implementation, has been established. The report does not outline engagement by non-state actors in governance and institutional SDG implementation mechanisms.

Baseline or gap analysis

An initial assessment linked the government's policy programmes and results to the SDGs. In addition, an SDG report is being drawn up by the Department of Statistics to help guide future implementation. The SDG report will highlight areas where implementation is lagging, thus clarifying where political decisions need to be made. According to the VNR report, the SDG report will also help gradually enhance data for SDG indicators.

More progress is needed in further reducing poverty among vulnerable groups, enhancing environmental protection of water and land, and improving the effectiveness and accountability of government institutions.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a summary examination of all SDGs except SDG 2 on no hunger. Equal attention is given to economic, social and

environmental dimensions overall, though few references are made to the linkages between dimensions in the goal-by-goal analysis. The report includes an assessment of domestic and foreign policies on the realisation of the SDGs globally, though very limited information is provided. Climate change policies and the Paris Agreement on climate change are explicitly linked to the SDGs.

Leave no one behind

According to the report, Sint Maarten embraces its responsibility to promote sustainable and inclusive development that leaves no one behind. Delivering on this responsibility requires early and effective actions to ensure that everyone benefits from economic growth. Men and women, rich and poor, straight and gay, young and old must all be involved in creating and sharing the benefits of sustainable development. The government will concentrate on using fiscal, wage and social protection policies and reforms to ensure sustained income growth for the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average. Policies are being adjusted to empower groups such as women and girls and promote social, economic and political inclusion. An action plan to implement the Integrated Youth Policy aims to reduce youth unemployment and promote young people's health. The government supports youth organisations that are working to reduce high-risk behaviour among young people.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report notes that the government developed a communication plan to inform the population about the SDGs, which focuses on reaching young people by including the SDGs in school curricula. It also introduced the StMaartenInfo database to compile development data as well as a user portal for policy development initiatives. In its initial three-year phase, the "Think and Act" commission will conduct an information and communication campaign using a bottom-up approach to make the SDGs more widely known and obtain inputs from groups inside and outside government. While it has identified national priorities, the government has not developed national targets and indicators.

Stakeholder engagement

Efforts to engage non-state actors in the identification of national priorities and preparation of the VNR report are not outlined in the report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report identifies the provision of public goods and services and the government's ability to deal with a changing natural environment as key challenges for governance. Although the SDGs are increasingly well known within government, the population is not yet familiar with them. Collaboration between different sectors is an ongoing challenge that sometimes requires external support and exchanges of lessons learned between countries. The government notes that SDG implementation must be better aligned with existing policies.

There is no Sint Maarten-specific information for most sections on means of implementation in the report. However, to the extent that Sint Maarten contributes to the Kingdom of the Netherlands' international development efforts, the combination of foreign trade and development cooperation is highlighted as a positive contribution.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Sint Maarten acknowledges that it is no longer enough to act only at the national level. It has therefore taken on responsibility as a Regional Authorising Officer for the European Union-funded 11th European Development Fund Regional Programme, in which 12 overseas countries and territories take joint action to enhance marine biodiversity and promote sustainable energy. This partnership is expected to achieve more than individual countries could by themselves. The programme ties in with multiple SDGs.

The report does not outline the efforts of parliamentarians, civil society organisations or the private sector.

Measurement and reporting

The report makes reference to annual reporting but does not provide specific details.

Slovenia - Green

In 2017, Slovenia submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the report, Slovenia used the preparation of the VNR report to contribute to the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030, a new national development strategy that will align all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with national priorities and targets. Also, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is closely aligned with the Vision of Slovenia 2050. The country recognises the universality of the SDGs and the need to leave no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Permanent Inter-ministerial Working Group on Development Planning was established by the government at the beginning of 2017 as a coordination mechanism to promote policy coherence. It is coordinated by the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy and composed of two representatives from each ministry who work as focal points for development policies and the 2030 Agenda. The report does not outline how non-state actors are engaged in governance or institutional mechanisms related to SDG implementation.

Baseline or gap analysis

A preliminary gap analysis of the government's policies and existing measurements, including the 17 SDGs and 169 targets, was initiated in 2016 and used to inform the mapping of the objectives of the new national development strategy. According to the VNR report, all ministries have been asked to analyse their existing strategies and activities in light of the 2030 Agenda.

In addition, a comprehensive analysis for the VNR report identified where Slovenia stands, which indicators are already measured and what actions the country is taking towards achieving the SDGs. Gaps identified in the report include poor nutritional status, tobacco use, mental health, energy efficiency, productivity, sustainable mobility and use of public passenger transport, establishing a circular economy, corruption, and judicial efficiency.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a detailed examination of all SDGs, with equal attention to economic, social and environmental dimensions, and refers to applicable linkages between dimensions in analysis of specific goals.

The report notes that policy coherence for sustainable development will be checked at the policy-making stage. Slovenia's next step is to establish an integrated and coherent policy framework for sustainable development to ensure synergies among sectoral, domestic and foreign policies.

Leave no one behind

The report identifies children and adolescents, the elderly, women who experience domestic violence, people with mental health problems, homeless people, at-risk users of illicit drugs, people with various forms of functional disability, Roma, and immigrants as at risk of being left behind. It highlights preventive, curative and so-called maintenance social security programmes for the most vulnerable groups with high risk of social exclusion. These programmes, which are carried out by non-governmental organisations, complement the social security services and measures carried out by the government. Special attention is given to people with mental health problems who are part of vulnerable groups.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, Slovenia embraced the VNR process as a significant and helpful way to raise awareness among stakeholders and internalise ownership by ministries. By the end of 2017, analysis of progress on the SDGs against existing policies will be added to national targets and action plans that will serve as guidelines towards achieving the SDGs. The country prioritises high quality of life reflected in good opportunities for work, education and creativity, living a decent, safe and active life in a healthy and clean environment, and inclusion in democratic decision making and the co-management of society. The new national development strategy will seek to balance five strategic directions: a resilient, inclusive, safe and responsible society, a highly productive economy that provides value for all, learning for and through life as a value and driver of development, efficient and competent governance driven by cooperation, and a well-preserved natural environment.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the VNR report, although its preparation was government-led and -driven, the report was also informed by contributions from representatives of civil society, the private sector and youth. Representatives of these groups were also included in the process of drafting the Vision of Slovenia 2050, upon which the new national development strategy is based. The report mentions several consultation events.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report highlights that the most important lesson learned during the VNR process was the need for an integrated approach. One of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development should not prevail over the other two and consideration of inter-linkages between economic, social and environmental policy areas, as well as ensuring consistency with international engagements, is of great importance for successful SDG implementation.

Regarding means of implementation, Slovenia's action plan includes the gradual increase of official development assistance as a share of gross national income with a view to meet its commitments. Its official development assistance in 2016 was estimated to be US$80 million, which represents 0.18% of gross national income.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report does not provide details about the contributions of most stakeholder groups to the SDGs. It does, however, point to the creation of a dialogue mechanism to engage non-state actors going forward and a systematic assessment of areas where partnerships can be established. In preparing the report, gaps in the area of partnership were identified and, above all, the need for a more comprehensive approach to dialogue with civil society, which would promote sustainable development at the national level. Aspects of international development cooperation were also highlighted. It includes a special chapter on Slovenian youth and the 2030 Agenda that was prepared by representatives of the National Youth Council of Slovenia. The council conducted a survey of youth priorities for the SDGs, the results of which are presented in the report.

Measurement and monitoring

According to the government, Slovenia will strive to increase the amount of available data for SDG indicators. Future efforts will focus primarily on the establishment of a mechanism for the systematic collection of data by the national statistical office and all government institutions that have relevant databases.

Slovenia plans to report on the SDGs as a regular part of annual reporting on the implementation of the new national development strategy. More detailed analysis in future VNR reports is also planned.

Sweden - Yellow

In 2017, Sweden submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The government signalled its intention to design a national action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A draft action plan was introduced in 2017. Parliament has taken note of and adopted several of the government's communications and bills that have bearing on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as communications about the Policy for Global Development. A national government procurement strategy with seven directional goals that contribute to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation has been produced. Guidelines for the annual dialogue between government institutions include discussing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as goals and targets that concern specific institutions. All ministries have produced action plans.

Leadership, governance and institutions

According to the report, the national cabinet is responsible for implementing the 2030 Agenda and each cabinet minister has an area of responsibility. The minister for public administration is responsible for coordinating and promoting implementation nationally. The minister for international development cooperation and climate leads the work on Sweden's contributions to implementation internationally. Immediately under the ministers is a smaller consultation group for the 2030 Agenda comprising state secretaries from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Environment and Energy and the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation. An inter-ministerial working group for the 2030 Agenda, in which all ministries participate, exists.

In 2016, the government appointed a national delegation with a commission to support and stimulate the work on implementation of the 2030 Agenda both nationally and internationally. The delegation is responsible for dialogue on sustainable development with government institutions, municipalities and county councils, social partners, the private sector, civil society and the research community. Members of the delegation have broad experience and knowledge from different sectors.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report mentions the preparation of a comprehensive report on the basis of existing data and statistics to provide a preliminary

systematic assessment of Sweden's progress on the SDGs. The national statistical office uses more than 120 indicators, of which around 100 have an exact, partial or approximate correspondence with the global indicators. Identified challenges include finding methods to quickly and effectively contribute to lowering greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development, supporting sustainable oceans and marine resources, achieving sustainable consumption and production, reducing income disparities, increasing the disposable income of certain vulnerable groups, realising gender equality, and achieving equity in health and equal opportunities for lifelong learning.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a detailed examination of all 17 SDGs with equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, though few references are made to linkages in the goal-by-goal analysis. Sweden prioritises coherence for equitable and sustainable development – horizontally between policy areas and vertically from the global to the local level, and from goal formulation to implementation. The country plans to strengthen policy coherence.

Leave no one behind

People with disabilities, newly arrived immigrants, those born outside Europe and young people are identified as at risk of being left behind. Government institutions are required to work for all citizens to be able to participate, attain equality in society and counteract discrimination. One of the government's objectives is to eliminate avoidable health inequalities within a generation. National strategies to ensure equal rights and opportunities have been produced for people with disabilities, LGBT persons, Roma, and people experiencing racism, related forms of hostility and hate crimes.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report mentions awareness raising as important but the government's activities are not listed.

The draft action plan proposes the following national SDG priorities: an equitable and gender-equal society, sustainable cities, a circular economy of benefit to society, a stronger private sector with sustainable business models, sustainable and healthy food, and enhanced knowledge and innovation. National indicators for all 169 targets in the 2030 Agenda and an integrated follow-up system will be developed and adopted.

Some municipalities are in the first phase of linking the 2030 Agenda to their operations, while others have included the

SDGs in their management systems and strategies. The report also includes specific examples of efforts by county councils.

Stakeholder engagement

Non-state actors are engaged in the identification of national priorities and the VNR process according to the report.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report does not outline best practices, lessons learned and challenges. With respect to means of implementation, it notes that Sweden's official development assistance has amounted to about 1% of gross national income annually since 2006. Sweden works for open and equitable global trade. The country also wants low- and middle-income countries to have greater influence in international economic and financial institutions in line with their growing role in the global economy.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Many non-state actors are active in terms of efforts on the SDGs. Civil society is driving opinion and critically reviewing the actions of the government and other authorities to ensure that they are living up to the 2030 Agenda. The government has engaged representatives of the financial sector about that sector's role in implementing the SDGs and Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The private sector is committed to the SDGs through, for example, the Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development, a network working for good leadership in the field of sustainable development. In 2015, the government established the Scientific Council for Sustainable Development, which includes a panel of prominent researchers representing multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches. The council supports dialogue between the government and research community. The report also highlights contributions from trade unions.

Measurement and reporting

Data availability for the global SDG indicators is unclear from the report.

The government notes that it has intensified its work to integrate the 2030 Agenda into institutions' follow-up processes. In 2017, all ministries summarised and reported their implementation efforts. The government submits communications about the Policy for Global Development, which includes references to SDG implementation, to parliament every two years.

Tajikistan - Green

In 2017, Tajikistan submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The National Development Strategy for the period up to 2030 and the Mid-term Development Program of Tajikistan for 2016-2020 are the two key national policies that integrate the SDGs. The report notes that Tajikistan now faces the task of incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into sectoral policies and localising the SDGs at the regional level. SDG implementation will be ensured through the implementation of three five-year medium-term development programmes.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Ministry for Economic Development and Trade, which is acting as the secretariat of the National Development Council under the president, leads on SDG implementation, formation of technical working groups and assignment of government institutions to implementation tasks. Within the framework of coordination, the country plans to establish a platform for interaction among development partners that involves a larger number of stakeholders and enables timely decision making. The report does not mention inclusion of non-state actors in formal governance or institutional mechanisms.

Baseline or gap analysis

Tajikistan has assessed all of the SDGs except SDG 14 on life below water, noting that the goal is not important for the country since it does not have access to open water. In 2016, the Rapid Integrated Assessment of national-level strategies and sectoral programmes and plans was carried out to ensure that the SDGs were integrated. It found that about 64% of relevant SDG targets are reflected in the two key national policies. A broad review of 10 national strategies showed that 78% of relevant SDG targets are being mainstreamed.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a summary examination of a limited set of SDGs with equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and reference to the linkages between dimensions in the goal-by-goal analysis. Following an overview of progress on the Millennium Development Goals, the report examines SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, and SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure.

✋ Leave no one behind

Tajikistan requires additional data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. The report notes that women, children and the elderly, rural communities and people with disabilities are at risk of being left behind. It notes that Tajikistan should pay special attention to monitoring and evaluation of disaggregated data as well as SDG localisation issues in order to meet the needs of vulnerable groups. It outlines the need to empower women economically, politically and socially and mentions that attention should be paid to the elimination of regional discrepancies and multidimensional poverty to overcome inequality.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

The report notes the need to raise awareness of the SDGs through a targeted approach. It also identifies four strategic goals for the next 15 years, namely ensuring energy security and efficient use of electricity, moving out of the communication deadlock and transforming Tajikistan into a transit country, ensuring food security and access to quality nutrition, and expanding productive employment. The selection of national targets and indicators is identified as future work for the government in the report.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

According to the VNR report, national consultations allowed Tajikistan to draw conclusions based on analysis of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, review the previous national development strategy and determine future priorities for long- and medium-term development. Based on the work done and inputs from stakeholders, Tajikistan has started working on a long-term national development strategy. The VNR report was prepared through a series of consultations at the national level, with the participation of representatives of the government, parliament, sectoral bodies, local authorities, development partners, civil society, academia, the private sector and the media.

🔄 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Sectoral strategic, programme and budget priorities do not currently match new national strategies or Tajikistan's international obligations for the SDGs. The report notes that this mismatch hampers practical implementation of national strategies, makes monitoring and evaluating outcomes difficult, and hinders effective coordination of donor assistance. Other challenges include coordination of actions, development of the monitoring and evaluation system with consideration of the SDGs, introduction and implementation of the SDGs at the local level, and financing SDG implementation. The report also notes challenges related to individual SDGs.

National strategies, as well as national and regional budgets, envision significant improvement of the investment climate for both foreign and domestic investors, which would increase budget capacities to meet social needs.

The government notes the need for capacity building to speed up accomplishments in social development through the SDGs and highlights the importance of funding from development partners. It expects development partners to increase funding through grants in light of the SDGs.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

The report mentions that participation of non-state actors in SDG implementation is planned but does not mention existing activities. It notes that ensuring stakeholder participation is critical, so that parliament, civil society and the private sector contribute alongside government institutions. The government hopes development partners will support the development of a monitoring and evaluation policy that serves as the basis for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes funded by the government as well as initiatives funded by development partners.

To prepare the VNR report, a working group composed of experts from government institutions was created. United Nations agencies, development partners, civil society representatives, scientists and others contributed to discussions and provided thematic information.

📋 Measurement and reporting

The status of data for SDG monitoring is unclear. The report notes that developing a single list of SDGs and associated indicators that will be priorities over the next five years, as well as monitoring them alongside progress on the two key national policies, is critical.

Thailand – Green

In 2017, Thailand submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

According to the report, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been integrated into the 20-Year National Strategy Framework and Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021). As a result, the plans and budgets of all government institutions will be aligned with the SDGs. The report notes the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the importance of leaving no one behind.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The National Committee for Sustainable Development, chaired by the prime minister, is responsible for formulating polices and strategies on sustainable development at the national level, including the SDGs, and oversight of their implementation. It established three sub-committees to advance mobilisation of the SDGs, raise awareness, and compile data and statistics to support the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board is the national focal point for the SDGs and serves as the secretariat of the National Committee for Sustainable Development. The committee has 37 members from government institutions, the private sector, academia and civil society.

Baseline or gap analysis

The National Committee for Sustainable Development examined gaps and discrepancies between national indicators and baselines and proposed global SDG indicators. As of March 2017, most SDGs and 180 indicators had been analysed, with 113 national-level indicators found to comply with the global indicators.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a detailed examination of all 17 SDGs with equal attention to economic, social and environmental dimensions and reference to applicable linkages between dimensions in the goal-by-goal analysis.

The report notes that a review of Thailand's readiness to achieve the SDGs reveals the need to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development despite having some mechanisms in place to support policy coherence.

✋ Leave no one behind

Thailand requires additional data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. The report notes that under-privileged children, children with disabilities, children part of ethnic and other marginalised groups, the elderly, people with disabilities, and women are at risk of being left behind.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report notes that a number of groups are left out of the development process, including fisherfolk, farmers, indigenous communities, women, and those expressing sexual orientation and gender identity.

The report mentions a range of activities in the education sector to reach all children and initiatives to support people with disabilities and the elderly. To address inequality, Thailand aims to increase the income growth of the bottom 40% of the population to 15% per year during the next five years. Various schemes have been implemented to support and generate income for the poor. In addition, the government has increased the standard minimum wage.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

The government states that it used the VNR process to raise awareness of the SDGs. The Thailand Sustainable Development Foundation and Thai Publica online media have also regularly organised events to promote sustainable development and create platforms for the private sector, civil society, academia and the media.

Thailand's national priorities include the following: enhance and develop potential of human capital; create a just society and reduce inequality; strengthen the economy and sustainable competitiveness; promote environment-friendly growth for sustainable development; reinforce national stability for prosperity and sustainability; improve government administration; corruption, protection and good governance; advance infrastructure and logistics; develop science, technology, research and innovation; develop regions, cities and economic zones; and promote international cooperation for development. National SDG targets were selected by using a consultative approach. There is no mention of localisation in the report.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report states that there were no consultations on the VNR report but rather meetings on the SDGs more generally. In addition, the draft of the VNR report was not communicated and shared.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

The report notes consultations on national priorities and the VNR process. Two civil society reports were prepared – one in response to the global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's questionnaire on SDG implementation and the VNR process and the other looking specifically at SDG 1 on no poverty.

🔁 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

SDG implementation is mainly funded by the government's annual budget. The government needs more resources to achieve the SDGs and aims to enhance the effectiveness of tax collection. Thailand's official development assistance includes concessional loans for infrastructure projects in developing countries and technical assistance that focuses on capacity building, knowledge and experience sharing in fields which Thailand has expertise. Its official development assistance was approximately US$212.97 million in 2016. A duty-free, quota-free regime for least developed countries has been in place since 2015, complementing its outbound investment promotion in developing countries.

🔗 Partnership to realise the SDGs

The parliament established a sub-committee on monitoring the implementation of SDGs with a mandate to follow up and promote the role of the parliament in supporting SDG implementation. Civil society organisations organised their own SDG regional forums to present their views, concerns and priorities. Members of the United Nations Global Compact Network Thailand and other private entities are very active in mainstreaming the SDGs into business operations. Academia was instrumental in designing the methodology and processes for prioritising SDG targets in accordance with the national context as well as statistical methods, which ensure objectivity. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported youth in organising a youth forum on sustainable development to voice their opinions on SDG implementation.

Measurement and reporting

Although the report notes the need for disaggregated data, such as by age, sex and disability, data availability for SDG monitoring is unclear. Efforts are being made to improve data availability through improving inter-agency cooperation, developing datasets, using technology, building capacity and mobilising additional funding.

Monitoring and reporting the results of SDG implementation every six months is listed as a next step in the VNR report.

Togo – Green

In 2017, Togo submitted its second voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The report highlights Togo's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ownership over the goals through its National Development Plan for the 2018–22 period. The plan integrates the goals based on their associated targets, 60 of which have been prioritised by the country. Certain sectoral policies or plans have been or are currently being updated to reflect the SDGs based on their associated targets.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Togo has an existing institutional mechanism for the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of development policies, namely the National Steering Committee on Development Policies, which is chaired by the prime minister. A unit was established at the Presidency of the Republic in charge of monitoring sustainable development and international agreements and determining the broad guidelines for matters relating to development. According to the report, through the National Steering Committee on

Development Policies, the government presents an annual balance sheet on development progress to its partners, notably civil society, the private sector, and cooperation and development partners.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report does not refer to baseline or gap analysis.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a detailed examination of SDGs under the 2017 High-level Political Form theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world," specifically SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. It gives equal attention to economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development but makes limited references to the linkages between dimensions. Policy coherence for sustainable development is not mentioned.

✋ Leave no one behind

The report does not mention the availability of data to meet the commitment to leave no one behind. However, it notes that young people, women, people with disabilities, people living with HIV, people living in rural areas, farmers and the elderly are at risk of being left behind. The Community Development Emergency Programme is the backbone of a number of inclusive projects and remains one of the key components of the National Development Plan that aims to leave no one behind. The programme's objective is to intensify socio-collective and economic infrastructure in areas with little or no access to safe drinking water, energy, schools, health centres, rural feeder roads and markets, among other things. The needs to eradicate poverty, address inequality and achieve social inclusion in Togo are also priorities in the National Development Plan.

📡 Raising awareness, creating ownership

According to the report, Togo carried out several awareness and outreach activities dedicated to the SDGs to ensure a shared vision at all levels. The activities included training and sensitisation workshops at the national, regional and local levels for the benefit of national and regional administration, parliament, civil society, the private sector, and technical and financial partners. In addition, awareness campaigns that specifically targeted Togolese youth were carried out.

The government used a SDG target prioritisation grid to adapt the SDGs. As a result, 60 SDG targets were adopted in the National Development Plan. The plan includes five strategic axes: improve the well-being of the people and enable them to fulfil their potential; improve the productivity and competitiveness of growth sectors; strengthen infrastructure that supports growth; ensure sustainable management of the territory, the environment and living conditions; and strengthen governance and consolidate peace.

The report does not identify specific measures related to localising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but notes the importance of the country's decentralisation process for SDG implementation and regional data collection efforts.

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Togo's government undertook a stakeholder mapping process to analyse how it can engage different stakeholders to facilitate progress on the SDGs. This initiative identified stakeholders and determined the role that they can play in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and strategies oriented towards the SDGs. This process also identified stakeholder expectations, notably in terms of development issues and challenges, and reflected on strategies and actions that will meet them.

💬 Stakeholder engagement

The report refers to consultation processes with non-state actors on national priorities and the VNR process, as well as engagement through the National Steering Committee on Development Policies. However, when asked whether there has been regular policy dialogue with relevant ministries during the preparation of the VNR report and since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, a local civil society organisation noted that this has not really been the case. A civil society report was prepared in response to the global civil society platform Action for Sustainable Development's civil society questionnaire on SDG implementation and the VNR process.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report notes that while local governments are involved, their participation is very limited and selective, with only mayors and prefects participating largely through workshops organised occasionally at the regional level by the regional directorates of the Ministry of Planning and Development.

🔁 Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report highlights the need for Togo to optimise its resource and partner mobilisation strategies for the realisation of its development objectives. The government has embarked on the implementation of reforms geared at mobilising both domestic and external resources for economic emergence. The report notes several challenges including inadequate financial, technical and human resources and the persistence of social-cultural constraints.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

Parliamentarians have participated in events on the SDGs. Civil society has been active in awareness raising and promoting ownership of the goals. A civil society report notes that the private sector's commitment has not yet been defined because it lacks understanding of the SDGs.

Measurement and reporting

Data availability for SDG monitoring is not mentioned in the report. Nevertheless, the report notes that Togo aims to strengthen statistical production by operationalising the National Institute of Statistics, Economic and Demographic Studies.

A unit was established at the Presidency of the Republic to monitor sustainable development and international agreements.

Uruguay – Green

In 2017, Uruguay submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

Throughout 2016, Uruguay developed a social dialogue that brought together government, civil society organisations, academia, the private sector and international organisations, among others. The government decided to work on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a cross-cutting way at all levels of government to guide policies towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a result, the SDGs are expected to be incorporated into the strategic planning of each government institution.

The VNR report does not mention universality or human rights as principles, but the link between the SDGs and human rights is reflected in Uruguay's consideration of international agreements on human rights when analysing each of the SDGs considered in the report. Uruguay considers the leave no one behind principle to be of high relevance.

Leadership, governance and institutions

The Council of Ministers is the main political body responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Office of Planning and Budget monitors and articulates SDG promotion actions. The Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation oversees matters related to international cooperation, while the national statistical office is in charge of the elaboration of national indicators.

Regarding regional-level involvement, several experiences are listed, such as the national statistical office's participation in the Statistical Conference of the Americas, the country's engagement in an ad hoc working group in charge of preparing a proposal regarding indicators for the regional follow-up to the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, and the country's data being included in the Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation. The regional level is examined in the analysis of each SDG considered in the report.

Baseline or gap analysis

The report does not make relevant references to baseline or gap analysis.

Integration and policy coherence

The VNR report covers the 2017 High-level Political Forum theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" SDGs plus SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, on which the country carried out an implementation pilot experience. Each goal is analysed according to the following structure: presentation of the objective, normative framework and public policies, status of goals and indicators, and main advances and challenges.

The VNR dedicates equal attention to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Nevertheless, limited references are made to linkages between economic, social and environmental dimensions in the analysis of each particular goal.

The report also establishes a clear link between the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement on climate change but does not mention the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. There are no references to policy coherence for sustainable development.

Leave no one behind

Data, targets or efforts to meet the commitment to leave no one behind are not articulated in the report. However, the following groups are mentioned throughout the analysis of the SDGs: women, people with disabilities, children, the elderly, people deprived of their liberty, Afro-descendants, and people and households living in poverty or highly vulnerable to poverty.

Raising awareness, creating ownership

Concerning the establishment of national SDG priorities, the report merely states that the end of work on the Millennium Development Goals and the launch of the 2030 Agenda offer an excellent opportunity to analyse the country's current situation and set national objectives for the years to come.

Regarding awareness of the 2030 Agenda and ownership promotion, the key mechanism adopted by the government was the 2016 social dialogue, a series of open meetings established by the Presidency of the Republic of Uruguay to discuss perspectives on national development.

In the report, the analysis of each SDG includes references to sensitisation actions.

Stakeholder engagement

The preparations for the VNR report involved a consultation process with various government institutions, civil society organisations, the private sector, academia, and international organisations. The United Nations Development Programme supported the process.

Even though national SDG priorities are not yet set, multi-stakeholder dialogues for their determination are ongoing.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

The report neither identifies lessons learned nor general challenges for SDG implementation, but refers to challenges faced by each SDG considered. It mentions technology as a MoI. The only references to best practices are in the analysis of SDGs, namely SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, and SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. There are no references to capacity development, international public finance or trade as means of implementation.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

The private sector, civil society organisations and academia participated through the 2016 social dialogue. The VNR report refers to specific alliances with each of them in the analysis of SDGs. It highlights the role of the United Nations Development Programme in backing the social dialogue and the support of the UN system in Uruguay in drafting the VNR report. It underlines that Uruguay was a pilot country in a United Nations Development Programme initiative on designing national sets of indicators for SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

Measurement and reporting

An annex in the VNR report examines the availability of indicators and data for each of the 17 SDGs. It highlights that 44% of the 241 global indicators are available in the national statistical system, 32% have data that are not regularly collected and 25% do not have an established methodology for data collection. Indicators are available for SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. The report does not mention data disaggregation, efforts to improve data availability or how the government plans to report on the SDGs in the future.

Zimbabwe – Green

In 2017, Zimbabwe submitted its first voluntary national review (VNR) report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Incorporating the SDGs

The Zimbabwe National Position Paper on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was prepared in 2015. According to the VNR report, the SDGs have been mainstreamed and integrated into the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation for ease of implementation and to ensure synergies between the SDGs and the country's economic plans.

Civil society validity check

A civil society report notes that the SDG realignment process was very government-centric.

Leadership, governance and institutions

Thematic clusters were established for mainstreaming and localising the SDGs. Clusters are supported by the SDG Secretariat, which consists of the Office of the President and Cabinet, Ministry of Macroeconomic Planning and Investment Promotion, United Nations Development Programme and the national statistical office. A steering committee, chaired by the chief secretary to the president and cabinet, was established to provide overall guidance and strategic leadership on SDG implementation. It includes representation by permanent secretaries of all ministries, heads of the United Nations agencies, cluster chairs and co-chairs, the private sector, civil society, parastatals and development partners. A technical committee was established to spearhead technical processes and provide technical backstopping. The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations has come up with 10 thematic sectors covering the SDGs that are part of the government's thematic clusters.

Baseline or gap analysis

According to the report, Zimbabwe mapped and selected 244 country-specific indicators. The country adopted 2015 as the base year and progress is underway to generate baseline data for the indicators. The report refers to gaps in the goal-by-goal analysis such as seasonal food insecurity, maternal mortality, access to electricity, and forest degradation and deforestation.

Integration and policy coherence

The report provides a detailed examination of country-selected SDGs: SDG 1 on no poverty, SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 15 on life on land, SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. It covers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development but has a greater focus on the economic dimension. All priorities for SDG implementation selected by the government are framed in terms of how they contribute to the economy.

> **Civil society validity check**
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> A civil society report notes that the SDGs are only available in English, yet the Constitution of Zimbabwe recognises 16 official languages.

Leave no one behind

Additional data are required to meet the commitment to leave no one behind in Zimbabwe. The report notes that the country has insufficient timely and disaggregated data for most indicators, which makes tracking and monitoring progress difficult. It identifies women with disabilities, widows and children as the most vulnerable groups, though does not mention the guiding principle of leaving no one behind or efforts to target these groups specifically. Raising awareness, creating ownership According to the report, the Zimbabwe National Position Paper on Sustainable Development Goals aims to raise public awareness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Activities include an advocacy campaign involving parliamentarians, consultations and a public awareness campaign on the SDGs conducted through the media.

> **Civil society validity check**
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> According to a civil society report, participation was not effective since the process was rushed, with insufficient time for civil society to effectively organise and provide meaningful inputs for the process.

Zimbabwe is committed to all of the SDGs with emphasis on the following goals listed in order of priority: SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG

2 on zero hunger, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 13 on climate action and SDG 5 on gender equality. National priorities are elaborated in national development policies and strategies.

Plans are in place to strengthen the capacities of sub-national authorities to align policies and strategies at that level to achieve the SDGs.

> **Civil society validity check**
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> One civil society report notes that to date initiatives on the SDGs have been ad hoc and limited to ministries at the national level. However, another civil society report mentions that through support from the United Nations Development Programme, local governments were sensitised on the SDGs to assist in developing policies.

Stakeholder engagement

According to the report, non-state actors were engaged in the identification of national priorities and preparation of the VNR report. Regarding the VNR process, the report mentions consultations and interviews as well as a SDG dialogue with civil society.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Zimbabwe has learned that prioritisation is key for SDG implementation. The integration and alignment of goals are essential for effective implementation, which means mainstreaming the SDGs in national development plans and budgets. Parliament plays a vital role in promoting ownership of the goals. Challenges include limited fiscal space, urbanisation, relatively low per capita allocations to enabling factors such as health and education, gaps in policy implementation and coherence, and insufficient timely and disaggregated data for most indicators.Donors provided US$800 million in 2016, which somewhat eased the tight fiscal situation in Zimbabwe. The report mentions the need to enhance the capacities of civil society and the national statistical office to contribute to the SDGs.

Partnership to realise the SDGs

A Parliamentary Thematic Committee on SDGs, which brings together chairs of portfolio committees, was established. The report makes reference to specific contributions by civil society (some noted above), the private sector and youth. There are opportunities and scope to

strengthen South-South partnerships by promoting regional cooperation and integration, technology transfers and knowledge sharing.

Measurement and reporting

The report does not mention data availability, but notes the need to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of high quality, reliable and timely data disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, disability, region and other relevant characteristics. The national statistical office requires technical assistance to strengthen its capacity in terms of incorporating SDG targets and indicators into the national statistical system. The report does not outline provisions for national reporting.