VNR LABS
HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

Localizing the SDGs and VNRs: reporting on progress, challenges and opportunities

Wednesday, 17 July, 18:30 – 20:00

United Nations Secretariat Building (S-1522/23)

CONCEPT NOTE

Organized by: UNDESA (Division for the Sustainable Development Goals/DSDG and Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government/DPIDG)

In collaboration with: Local 2030, United Nations Development Programme, UN-Habitat and Global Taskforce of local and regional governments

Description: The Agenda 2030, and the 17 SDGs that are at its core, cannot be achieved without successful implementation at the local level, which makes them a reality for communities, households and individuals, particularly the most vulnerable and those at risk of being left behind. Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) should thus be able to capture not only what central governments are doing, but also what local and regional governments as well as other local stakeholders are doing in support of SDG implementation.

In this connection, many Member States are engaging local stakeholders on SDG localization, including in the process of elaborating VNRs. Additionally, a number of local and regional governments have been engaging in preparing voluntary local reviews, bringing along local data and their specific perspectives on local implementation of the SDGs.

Local data is critical for tracking progress on the SDGs. Since many of the SDG targets fall under the responsibility of local and regional governments (e.g., waste collection, health and education services), it is essential that national statistical systems can obtain and incorporate local data produced by local governments, local communities, universities and research centers.

Against this background, the Lab will discuss how countries are responding to the need to reflect the local implementation of the 2030 Agenda in VNR reports; how local and regional governments have been integrated in the VNR process; and challenges and opportunities as related to the localization of the SDGs. Furthermore, it will discuss experiences with integration of timely and disaggregated data from local and regional governments into

national follow-up and review of the SDGs; and how VNRs present an opportunity to strengthen coordination between national statistical systems and local data providers.

Objectives: The objective of this VNR Lab is to examine how VNRs can support the localization of SDGs by engaging local governments and local stakeholders in the process, while also discussing how national governments are capturing sub-national perspectives in their VNRs, including through integration of local data.

Additionally, the Lab aims to:

✓ Provide an opportunity to Member States that have presented VNRs to share challenges and recommendations as related to the localization of the SDGs.
✓ Identify how different Member States are capturing the implementation of the SDGs at the local level in their own VNRs.
✓ Encourage other Member States to include the local implementation of Agenda 2030 in their future VNRs.
✓ Discuss the role of local stakeholders, in particular, local and regional governments, in providing timely and disaggregated data in support to national SDG follow-up.
✓ Discuss how local data can be better collected and integrated into VNRs.

Methodology: The VNR Lab on localization will take place under the Chatham House rule to allow for candid discussions. This applies to the use of Twitter and social media during the event.

A small number of speakers will be identified to allow time for interactive discussions.

Tentative speakers

Speakers will be identified amongst the following groups:

- National delegations
- Local and regional government delegations
- Local stakeholders

Languages: The VNR Lab event will take place in English only.