Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines on Voluntary Local Reviews

August 2022
Follow-Up and Review of the 2030 Agenda

- High Level Political Forum (HLPF)
- Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)
- National Reporting and Voluntary National Reviews (VNR)
Voluntary National Reviews

Creating multi-stakeholder partnerships

Strengthening policy integration and coherence

Stakeholder buy-in, ownership and activation

Awareness raising and advocacy

Financing prioritizing investments, multiplying investors pool

Enhanced monitoring, accountability, evaluation, reporting

Leaving no one behind

Opportunities provided by VNRs
What is a Voluntary Local Review?

A process through which local governments undertake a voluntary review of their progress towards delivering the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

A VLR allows the local government to listen to the needs of its people and reflect them into local policymaking.

A VLR invites self-reflection, by diagnosing the state and pointing to pathways for better localization of the SDGs.

A VLR provides for a process that is data-driven and can be used to plan for action to achieve the future we want.

A VLR gives a local take on the global conversation on sustainable development.
• Guidelines co-produced with 16 PPSU members including UN-Habitat, UNDP, UCLG ASPAC, Urbanice Malaysia, IGES and others
• Fully aligned with UNDESA’s Global Guiding Elements for VLRs
Regional Guidelines on VLRs

Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines on Voluntary Local Reviews

Unique
Simple
Complete
Responsive
Getting Started: The VLR Process

Key phases in the VLR development process:

- Planning and institutionalizing
- Gathering inputs and data
- Report writing
- Follow-up

Guidelines content:

2.1 Institutional ownership and arrangement
2.2 Linking priorities and structuring delivery
2.3 Stakeholder engagement
2.4 Measuring progress
4.1 Preparing the VLR report
4.2 Following up on the VLR
3.3 Operationalizing VLR-VNR integration
Planning and institutionalizing

High-level political support
- Endorsement from Mayor/Governor
- A sign of the city’s commitment to sustainable development

Structuring the delivery
- City-led, city-wide or regional review
- Model of institutional arrangement

Linking priorities
- Mapping city policies and strategies against the SDGs or the five pillars of the 2030 Agenda
- Mapping against indicator frameworks developed by national government
Stakeholder engagement

- What do you want input on?
- Why do you need input on this?
- Who and which groups do you need to consult to get this input?
- When is the best time in the process?
- How will you engage them and get their feedback?

Multi-stakeholder coalitions
Gathering input and data

Setting own indicators
- Relevance
- Influence
- Availability
- Type
- Combination
- Frequency

Adopting existing indicator sets
- UN-Habitat’s City Prosperity Index
- UNECE and ITU’s KPI4SSC
- EC-JRC’s SDG VLR Handbook
- ISO 37120 by WCCD
- GCoM’s CRF
- Mayors Indicators

Evidence-based decision making
Integrating National and Local Review of the SDGs

- Fill information gaps
- Enhance vertical and horizontal coordination
- Broaden stakeholder engagement
- Strengthen legitimacy of local follow-up and review of the SDGs


Systems Thinking approach
Operationalizing VNR-VLR Integration

Basis for effective integration

- **PROCESS**: Information from VLRS fully integrated within the VNR
- **VLRS used to engage wider and more diverse stakeholders**

**Top-down**

- VNR used as a reference to conduct a VLR
- VLR used as an avenue to address structural issues that SNGs are not mandated to respond to

**Bottom-up**

Actions to consider

- **PROCESS**: Set up a national mechanism to support and consolidate the VLRS
- **VLRS**: Design and communicate the VNR timetable to allow SNGs to submit VLRS that actually inform the VNRs
- **REPORT**: Design the VNRs and VLRS as an interconnected stakeholder engagement mechanism
VLR E-learning Platform

Interactive
Visually engaging

Practical
Tested tools and resources

Targeted
Different content for different users

vlr.unescap.org
VLR reports

1. Opening statement.
2. Highlights.
3. Introduction.
4. Methodology of the process of preparation for the review.
5. Policy and enabling environment:
   (a) Engagement with the national government on SDG implementation;
   (b) Creating ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals and the VLRs;
   (c) Incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals in local and regional frameworks;
   (d) Leaving no one behind;
   (e) Institutional mechanisms;
   (f) Structural issues.
6. Progress on goals and targets.
7. Means of implementation:
   (a) Finance;
   (b) Technology and innovation;
   (c) Capacity-building;
   (d) Policy and institutional coherence;
   (e) Multi-stakeholder partnerships;
   (f) Data and monitoring.
8. Conclusions and next steps.
9. Annexes (when necessary).
Lessons Learned

- High-level political support
- Enabling environment
- Dedicated team
- Technical capacity
- SDG awareness
- Meaningful stakeholder engagement
- Vertical coordination
THANK YOU

Follow us:

unescap

unitednationsescap

www.unescap.org

unescap

unescap

united-nations-escap